Public Employees of Upper Darby Township Join Local 153

At a time when public employees are under attack nationwide and threatened to be weakened by a forthcoming Supreme Court decision, over 90 employees of the Township of Upper Darby, Pennsylvania approached Local 153 for help in forming a union among the municipality’s employees. Upper Darby is located approximately 10 miles outside of Philadelphia.

Director of Organizing Nick Galipeau responded immediately and met with the employees to discuss the issues. Following those discussions, an overwhelming majority of the employees signed cards authorizing Local 153 to represent them.

One of the major concerns of the employees is the changeover in the administration of the Township in the November, 2017 elections, which has raised job security concerns.

The union made a demand for recognition and the Township has agreed to meet to discuss that issue and the scope of the bargaining unit. Once the bargaining unit is established and recognition is granted, the union looks forward to negotiating a first-time contract with the Township providing job security and setting the terms and conditions of employment in a binding agreement with grievance and arbitration procedures.

The job titles of employees cover a wide range, including police support, parks and recreation, property maintenance, senior citizens, public works, health department, finance, payroll, animal care, and sanitation, among others.

Organizing Director Galipeau urges all public employees to join together and form a union—which offers improved wages, working conditions and job security. He can be reached at Local 153 at 212-292-4665 or visit the website at opeiu153.org for more information.
Elections Matter!

We are reminded so many times on how important it is to vote to determine the leaders in Washington, DC, who get to set the agenda when they are in the majority. One of those times was in 2016, followed by the passage of the GOP Tax Plan signed into law by President Trump.

If we think back to October, 2016, the bookies in Las Vegas were taking sure bets that Hillary Clinton would be elected President of the United States. It wasn’t a question of whether or not she would win because the betting for the most part centered on the question of by how much. Of course, we all know how that turned out.

Candidate Donald Trump promised hundreds of changes which he said would help the middle class and would “Make America Great Again.” The overwhelming majority of his promises were not fulfilled—not in favor of the middle class—but rather to the benefit of the wealthiest Americans. The agenda of the far right has been adopted and embraced by President Trump and his allies in Congress.

That’s why we should always remember that elections matter. We have to choose leaders who do what they say in the campaign and not misrepresent who they really are or what they stand for.

For example, if you look at the changes in the GOP Tax Plan you can easily see that the middle class does not do well. In fact if you happen to live in New York, New Jersey or Connecticut, you did even worse. That’s because to “punish voters in blue states,” the GOP designed the Tax Plan to limit deductions on state and local income taxes which, in effect, substantially increases the tax bill for middle class Americans. This is also so unfair because many of the blue states such as New York, New Jersey and Connecticut were already sending more money to Washington, DC than they received in return. Nationally, most states received substantially more in federal expenditures than they originally sent, mostly red states. In other words, the average American in non-blue states “received” more than she or he “paid” in federal taxes. Of the 50 states, Connecticut’s per capita taxes paid to the federal government were the highest in the country, followed by New Jersey as number 4 and New York as number 6!

Also, while the GOP was cutting the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% on a permanent basis, the “so called” tax cuts for middle class Americans expire in 2025.

As you know, I have previously emphasized in this column how important it is to vote in every election, not just the elections that we pick and choose. I say this because voters registered in one of our major political parties always seem to vote at the same level in every election, while voters in another major political party seem to vote at different levels in different elections. As a result, candidates who support issues important to middle class families lost and candidates who support enriching the wealthiest Americans won. Examples of this would be in 2010, 2014 and 2016, where the turnout of voters in support of middle class families was less and the turnout of voters in support of the wealthiest Americans remained the same. By contrast, when President Obama was on the ballot in 2008 and 2012, middle class families won big.

I am also reminded about the election in 1992 when Bill Clinton was elected President with a popular vote of 43% while his opponent, incumbent President George W. Bush got 37%. The balance of the votes went to third party candidate Ross Perot with 19%, and minority parties received the rest. And in 1992, nearly half the eligible voters didn’t vote at all. In effect, Bill Clinton had the support of about 22% of the eligible voters! These numbers tell the story of how important it is to vote because the outcome can be quite different if you stay at home.

Please, everyone listen. We cannot afford to have what happened in 2016 happen again. In 2018, every eligible voter must vote to ensure that the will of the majority of Americans is carried out.
Workers Win Big at EmblemHealth

Over 800 workers employed by EmblemHealth (formally GHI and HIP) rallied to win big in contract negotiations with the company. The arduous negotiations started in November, 2017 and spanned more than eight difficult bargaining sessions.

The employer demanded numerous concessions from the workers that included a 40-hour work week (now 35 hours), increases in health insurance premiums and substantial reductions in the amount of leave that an employee can take in the event of illness and other circumstances. The negotiating committee held strong and told the employer in no uncertain terms that they were not going to accept reduced conditions. Finally, the employer understood the resolve of the committee and withdrew all of its regressive proposals.

The excellent agreement includes 11% in compounded wage increases of 4% retroactive to January, 2018, 3% effective January, 2019 and 4% effective January, 2020.

Another highlight of the agreement is a provision for automatic enrollment of all employees in the employer’s 401(k) plan with immediate vesting and employer contributions of 3%. Employees may contribute up to an additional 4% and the employer will match that amount. Therefore, employees can enjoy as much as 7% in employer contributions to their 401(k) plan.

All benefits accrued and contributions made to the employers defined benefit and cash balance plans will be frozen as of March 31, 2018. Detailed pension statements are being prepared and will be distributed to employees no later than October 18, 2018. The agreement provides for the pension program to be fully funded and accessible upon retirement.

Senior Business Representative Myra Hepburn led the successful negotiations with a committee consisting of Local 153 Executive Board member and Chief Shop Steward Anthony Walters, Assistant Chief Shop Stewards Grace Adams-Cunningham, Eleanor Campbell (Syracuse, NY), and Maurice Vosges and committee members Monique Davis, Yvette Jackson, Carol Cramer (Albany NY), Nancy Flores and Michael Adonis.

Due to advances in technology, the entire bargaining unit was able to attend a ratification meeting consisting of Local 153 members in New York City, Albany and Syracuse at the same time. The contract was enthusiastically ratified, virtually unanimously, on January 25th.

The contract expires December 31, 2020.
Membership Meetings Matter!

Local 153 News has featured a Membership Meetings Matter article in each of its last six editions and there is a good reason for this: Membership meetings matter!

At its January membership meeting Local 153 featured a review of benefits, an inspiring talk by Anthony Harmon, the President of the New York Chapter of the NAACP, a film that left everyone present talking about paid family leave, and a raffle that once again featured nifty prizes. As always, the meeting also gave members the opportunity to talk with Local 153 officers and Business Representatives.

The meeting was opened by Local 153 President Steve Turkeltaub. After the previous meeting was reviewed, Business Manager Michael Goodwin introduced some of the people who were in attendance at the meeting. He then introduced a 20-minute mini-version of the film Zero Weeks. A film weaving powerful stories together with insightful interviews from leading policy makers, economists, researchers and activists, Zero Weeks lays out a compelling argument for guaranteed paid family leave for every American worker. The film looks at paid family leave from an emotional, medical, financial and global perspective.

Zero Weeks is the fourth documentary by award-winning director, Ky Dickens. As a female director, with a track record for creating poignant work known for shifting policy and public opinion, Dickens was the ideal filmmaker to tackle this project. Dickens was inspired to make this film after facing financial depletion, emotional turmoil and other problems due to a lack of paid family leave after the birth of her first child. Following the film, Local 153 Director of Organizing Nick Galipeau spoke briefly about the importance of paid family leave.

It was clear from members’ reaction that the film hit home. As we reported in an earlier edition of Local 153 News, paid family leave was finally enacted in the state of New York. The program began on January 1 of this year, making the film and Galipeau’s report even more timely.

Business Manager Goodwin delivered remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a holiday in whose honor was observed nationwide the day before the membership meeting. He then introduced Anthony Harmon, the President of the New York Chapter of the NAACP.

Brother Harmon took the podium and thanked Michael Goodwin, Myra Hepburn and the Executive Board for the invitation to the meeting and expressed strong appreciation for the long-standing relationship between OPEIU Local 153 and the NAACP.

Harmon said that Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a day on, not a day off, adding that Dr. King should be remembered as a drum major of peace and righteousness and that he loved serving humanity.

Harmon also said that there is a lot of work in human rights still to be done. He stated that he will be attending the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. conference for Civil Rights in

Continued on page 5
Continued from page 4

Memphis, Tennessee April 1-6 and urged everyone to attend. His remarks were warmly received by the membership.

Business Manager Goodwin returned to the podium and made a presentation about the benefits available through membership in Local 153. Many of those benefits are listed in this edition of Local 153 News.

Following Goodwin’s remarks, nine really nice prizes were raffled off—six for members who were present at the meeting and three more for members who are unable to attend due to residing a long distance from New York City. The out-of-towners who won prizes are Kimberly Rorick, EmblemHealth, who won an Amazon Echo; Cheryllann Natale, Knights of Columbus, who took home a Fitbit Charge 2; and Kathleen Cohen, IBEW Health Fund, who won an HP Notebook Laptop Computer. A photo of the six winners who were present at the meeting and the list of prizes they won can be found on the back page of this edition. Members who cannot attend a membership meeting due to their residential distance from New York City can register for the raffle at opeiu153.org—which is Local 153’s website.

Israel McKinney, a Local 153 member employed at the Nomo Soho Hotel, visited with Business Manager Michael Goodwin following the meeting.

Federation of Catholic Teachers Secretary/Treasurer Joanne Perrotta, Organizer Jennifer Farrell and President Julia Pignataro attended the recent membership meeting.

NAACP New York Chapter President Anthony Harmon speaking at the membership meeting.

Carmen Cortez, Ana Torres and Sakina Ruiz (l. to r.) were among the many members who attended the recent Local 153 membership meeting.

NAACP New York Chapter President Anthony Harmon speaking at the membership meeting.

Memorial Union employees Natalie Goodwin and Jacqueline Soberal. Ms. Soberal later won one of the nifty prizes that were raffled off.

Members who cannot attend a membership meeting due to residing a long distance from New York City can register for the raffle at opeiu153.org—which is Local 153’s website.

John Jennings, Yankee Stadium, and Sharon Sykes and Twanna Jackson, HTC Health Centers, pause at a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
New Contract at Actors Equity

Local 153 members employed at Actors Equity Association, seen here, have a new contract, Local 153 Senior Business Representative Myra Hepburn has reported. Hepburn singled out the hard work of the bargaining unit’s negotiating committee as a major factor in reaching the deal. She saluted Shop Stewards Kaitlyn Hoffman and John Lynes, Membership Associates Diana DiCostanzo and Meghan Mackowiak, and Contract Associates Corey Jenkins and Nate Stolldorf. “The talks between the Negotiating Committee and the Actors Equity management were less of a negotiation and more of a progressive and honest conversation,” Hepburn said. “They worked together to rebuild a contract that has made a positive impact on Local 153 members at Actors Equity.”

Labor Movement Adds 75,000 New Members in New York State

According to the latest report by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York State gained 75,000 union members in 2017 to remain the most unionized state in the country. Union membership increased to 23.8 percent of the workforce.

“The labor movement has a long and proud history in New York State, and our numbers continue to grow,” said New York State AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento.

“We are proud to add an additional 75,000 members to the labor movement, allowing us to provide even more dedicated working men and women with good, solid, middle class jobs and an opportunity for a better life. In fact, the report shows that more than 30 percent of new jobs created in New York are union jobs,” Cilento added.

“The labor movement provides the best way for working people to get ahead; particularly at a time when the rights of working men and women are under attack by the fringe right in Washington. We remain committed to fighting for all working people because, when the labor movement is thriving we not only raise the wages, benefits and conditions of employment of union members, we raise the standard of living and quality of life of all working people,” said Cilento.

The report released in January, 2018 shows that nationwide, union members continue to earn more than non-union members. Union members had median usual weekly earnings of $1,041 in 2017, compared to nonunion workers who had median weekly earnings of $829. That adds up to more than $11,000 in income per year.

The New York State AFL-CIO is a federation of 3,000 affiliated public sector, private sector, and building trades unions throughout the state representing 2.5 million members, retirees and their families. New York State AFL-CIO, which is the largest and most diverse labor federation in the country, is committed to helping working families achieve a better life. For more information on the labor movement in New York, visit www.nysafcio.org
Madison Square Garden Tour Guides Win First-Ever Union Contract

After a full year of spirited negotiations with Madison Square Garden executives, Tour Guides at MSG ratified an agreement guaranteeing wages that will increase from $13.39 per hour to $17.00 per hour by 2019, plus signing bonuses. Tour Guides at MSG organized in October, 2016 in order to improve base wage rates, which had hovered around $13.00 per hour for over a decade. The first contract also includes job protections such as grievance and arbitration language, which provides for workplace due process for the first time in the group’s history.

Regarding the new contract, member-organizer Daniel Rovin said, “When our managers rejected our attempts to create a tip pool for Tour Guides we organized with Local 153 and negotiated raises for everybody. We are proud of the progress we have made with our union, and we look forward to continuing the work that we started with Local 153.”

OPEIU Local 153 is proud to have Madison Square Garden Tour Guides as part of our membership, and continues to work with other tour groups in expanding union membership within the tour industry. Tour Industry workers are encouraged to call Local 153 Director of Organizing, Nick Galipeau, at 212-292-4665.

Health Benefits and Compensation for Workers Impacted by 9/11

If you were in lower Manhattan, south of Canal Street, between September 11, 2001 and May 30, 2002, you may be entitled to free healthcare and compensation benefits. OPEIU Local 153 is working in collaboration with Napoli Shkolnik PLLC and Pitta & Baione LLP to represent individuals seeking 9/11 benefits.

Conditions eligible for free healthcare and compensation include cancer, respiratory illnesses, sleep apnea, and GERD (persistent heartburn). Families of those who passed away from an eligible condition may also be eligible for compensation.

The federal government has provided $12 billion in funding for the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund. The Health Program provides free monitoring, medication, and treatment, while the Fund provides tax-free compensation as a lump sum payment.

Time is of the essence to determine if you are eligible. The Fund is due to expire in 2020 and there are critical filing deadlines. Please contact either firm below to determine your eligibility.

CALL TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE.

NAPOLI LAW
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
(877) WTCHECO
ZADROGACLAIM.COM
360 LEXINGTON AVENUE, 11TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

P&B
PITT & BAIONE LLP
(844) WTC-COMP
911BENEFITS.COM
120 BROADWAY, 28TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10271
Once again, the annual Local 153 luncheon for retirees was held at holiday time in December. The event was the scene of much good cheer, and there was even great holiday joy for the retired members of our Union who weren’t able to attend! That’s because it was announced that the Pension Fund’s Board of Trustees had approved an additional retirement check—which is the equivalent of one month’s pension payment—for all eligible retirees.

As always, the annual holiday luncheon gave Local 153 retirees the chance to greet old friends and former co-workers. Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin,
Annual Retirees Luncheon Spreads Holiday Cheer

Pensioners Receive Additional Check!

Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan, President Steve Turkeltaub and President Emeritus Juan Alvarez were among those on hand to greet the retired members of our union who attended.

Local 153 Retirees Association President Charles Ponti, Sr. spoke by telephone with some of the officers and guests. Brother Ponti will turn 105 years of age in 2018!

All who were present at the joyful 2017 retirees luncheon readily agreed that it was a very special event, as the photos on these pages clearly show.
Taxpayer Service for Members and Family

Local 153 is recommending that all members and their families who have problems with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and have not been able to get their problems resolved on their own should contact the Taxpayer Advocate Service.

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) is an independent organization within the Internal Revenue Service that helps taxpayers and protects taxpayers’ rights. Their job is to ensure that every taxpayer is treated fairly and that the taxpayer knows and understands their rights under the Taxpayer Bill of Rights.

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights describes 10 basic rights that all taxpayers have when dealing with the IRS. The TAS taxpayer rights page can help you understand what these rights mean to you and how they apply. These are your rights, so it’s important that you know and use them.

The TAS website is taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov and can help you with common tax issues and situations such as what to do if you made a mistake on your tax return, if you got a notice from the IRS, or you’re thinking about hiring a tax preparer.

TAS can help you resolve problems that you can’t resolve with the IRS. The services TAS offers are free. If you qualify for TAS assistance, you will be assigned to an advocate who will do everything they can to get your problem resolved and will stay with you every step of the way. TAS advocates are all experienced in dealing with the IRS, so they know how to work with the IRS to get your problem resolved.

TAS can help you if:

• Your problem is causing financial difficulty for you or your family.

• You face an immediate threat of adverse action.

• You’ve tried repeatedly to contact the IRS, but no one has responded or the IRS hasn’t responded by the date promised.

For your convenience TAS has offices in every state. They can be reached at taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov or by phone at 877-777-4778.

We urge members and family in need to check out this important service!

OPEIU, Local 153 Members Support CUNY Faculty

A December rally in support of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), a union that represents faculty and professional staff members at CUNY was held at Baruch College, where CUNY’s Board of Trustees was holding a meeting. The protest drew almost 1,000 people, including the two seen here, José Negroni, a Local 153 member who is a professor at Long Island University and Medgar Evers College, CUNY, and Mark Hamilton, a legal advocate who is a member of OPEIU Local 8, located in Cascadia, part of the state of Washington. Negorin stated that the protest was designed to raise pay for CUNY’s adjunct faculty members and expressed the hope that continued militancy will bring them fair treatment.
WHEREAS, OPEIU Local 153 is the labor center for American workers and a tireless fighter for economic justice and civil, labor and human rights for workers across the globe; and

WHEREAS, in the current environment it is more important than ever for labor to stand strong with all members of our community in the continuing fight for economic, social and racial justice; and

WHEREAS, April 4, 2018 will mark 50 years since the tragic assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, where he was standing shoulder to shoulder with striking AFSCME-represented sanitation workers who were seeking respect, dignity, economic justice and safe and humane working conditions; the sanitation workers’ slogan—“I Am a Man”—became the rallying cry for this workers’ movement; and

WHEREAS, much progress has been made during the past 50 years, but much more remains to be done—the struggle for justice inseparably binds the labor and civil rights movements; as Dr. King said to civil rights leaders, “Our needs are identical with labor’s needs: decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old-age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children, and respect in the community”; and

WHEREAS, the 50th anniversary of the strike and Dr. King’s murder is more than a commemoration of a historical moment and the honoring of true American heroes; it is a sober reminder of the important work ahead of us. Indeed, the concentration of wealth and power that Dr. King identified as the driver of injustice in its many forms is more severe today than at the time of his death. The revival of a “Poor Peoples’ Campaign” is not an indulgence in nostalgia, but an essential activity in the fight for justice for all workers and poor people from diverse backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2018, labor and our allies across the spectrum of social and economic justice movements will come together in Memphis to renew our commitment to Dr. King’s dream;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the labor movement embraces the legacy of Dr. King and its responsibility to honor the strikers, and commits to redoubling our efforts on behalf of all working people. OPEIU Local 153 stands in support of the “I AM 2018” activities, including the April 2018 events in Memphis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all unions affiliated with OPEIU Local 153 are urged to provide financial and other support for the “I AM 2018” program.

Employees of Labor Press Join Local 153

After months of bargaining, employees of Labor Press have ratified a contract with OPEIU Local 153.

The contract provides for 2% wages increases for each of the 3 years of the agreement and establishes a $15/hr. minimum wage. Seniority, grievance procedure, vacations, sick leave and personal days are incorporated. Employees are eligible to join the new OPEIU 401(k) Plan, among other benefits.

Labor Press CEO, Neal Tepel, stated, “We are so proud of our employees who understand the meaning of collective bargaining and wanted to practice what we preach. This contract truly makes Labor Press an integral part of the labor movement”.

Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153
Statements of Revenue and Expenses — Cash Basis
For the six months ended December 31, 2017

Mr. Richard Lanigan
Secretary-Treasurer
Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153
265 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011

Dear Mr. Lanigan:
We compiled the statements of revenues and expenses — cash basis of Office and Professional Employees
International Union, Local 153 — for the six months ended December 31, 2017, in accordance with standards
established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

GENERAL FUND
Cash balance and investments—July 1, 2017  $ 451,269

Revenue Received
Dues $ 3,597,792
Initiations 31,810
Health and Pension Funds—Reimbursed Administrative Expenses 124,201
O.P.E.I.U.—Reimbursed Administrative Expenses 88,832
Federation of Catholic School Teachers—Reimbursed Admin. Expenses 15,317
O.P.E.I.U.—Subsidy 75,000
Transfers from Local 153 GF Reserve Fund 136,225
Sale of Discounted Movie Tickets (Membership Benefit) 8,953
Cancel Old Outstanding Checks 10,839
Total Revenue Received 4,088,969

Expenses Paid
Salaries 753,626
Officers’ and Business Agents’ Expenses 22,920
Automobile Expenses 73,265
Per Capita Taxes:
Office and Professional Employees International Union 984,695
O.P.E.I.U. Strike Benefit and Defense Fund 222,349
Long Island Federation of Labor 2,760
New York City Central Labor Council 22,081
dues to Affiliated Organizations 2,640
Arbitration Expenses 1,525
Organizing Expenses 39
Negotiation Expenses 6,978
Lost Time Wages 5,394
Shop Stewards’ Expenses 10,188
Conferences and Conventions 21,588
Executive Board and Trustees’ Meetings 17,862
Consultants 13,094
Rent and Electric 370,507
Temporary Help 1,496
Telephone, Internet and Cable 19,067
Office Machine Maintenance and Rentals 34,732
Office Supplies and Printing 38,717
General Office 6,807
Postage and Mailing 21,794
Insurance 41,146
Computer Maintenance and Support 17,911
Flowers 1,058
Auditing and Accounting 31,556
Automatic Data Processing 2,565
Staff 401(k) Administrative Fees 385
Employee Health Benefits 304,211
Life Insurance 9,664
Employee Pension Trust Funds 213,875
Purchase of Discounted Movie Tickets (Membership Benefit) 7,530
Member and Retirement Awards 133
Tickets, Ads, Contributions, etc. 48,832
Educational and Publicity 17,313
O.P.E.I.U. Local 153 Newsletter 13,674
Transfers to Local 153 Defense Fund 289,209
Transfers to Local 153 GF Reserve Fund 221,948
Retiree Activities & Expenses 5,165
Member Social Activities 1,995
Raffle Winners and Gifts 1,411
Interest 107
Holiday Expenses 7,467
Employees Withholding Taxes 336,145
U.S. Government and NYS Payroll Taxes 54,312
Expenses Paid before Withholding Taxes 4,281,736
Less: Employees Withholding Tax Deductions 336,145
Total Expenses Paid 3,945,591
Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Investments 143,378
Cash Balance and Investments—December 31, 2017 $ 594,647

### DISPOSITION OF FUNDS

**HSBC:**
- Checking Account $ 524,276
- CHCP Settlement Account 24,063
- Retirees Account 16,409
- Banco Popular 28,699
- Petty Cash 700
- State of Israel Bond (at cost) 500
- Total $ 594,647

**DEFENSE FUND**

Cash Balance—July 1, 2017 $ 460,266

**Revenue Received**

- Transfers from Local 153 General Fund $ 289,209
- Cancel Old Outstanding Checks 3,149
- Interest Income 90
- Total Revenue Received 292,448

**Expenses Paid**

- Membership Benefits:
  - Disability Benefits 48,300
  - Life Insurance (Death Benefits) 37,367
  - Member Financial Assistance 10,000
  - Member Discharge Insurance Benefit 3,480
  - Member Health Care Claim 500
- Labor Day Expenses 5,628
- Rally Expenses 2,504
- Education and Publicity 9,221
- Payments to Affiliated Organizations 78,535
- Legal and Arbitration 111,427
- Consultants 5,000
- Tickets, Ads, Contributions, etc. 26,000
- Total Expenses Paid 337,962
- Increase (Decrease) in Cash (45,514)
- Cash Balance — December 31, 2017 $ 414,752

**DISPOSITION OF FUNDS**

- Amalgamated Bank — Checking Account $ 78,410
- Amalgamated Bank — Savings Account 3,120
- Chase Bank — Savings Account 223,652
- Amalgamated Bank — Letter of Credit Account 83,092
- Amalgamated Bank — Letter of Credit Account 26,498
- Total $ 414,752
**LOCAL 153 GF RESERVE FUND**

Cash Balance—July 1, 2017 $112,724

**Revenue Received**

- Transfers from Local 153 General Fund $221,948
- Interest Income 134

Total Revenue Received 222,082

**Expenses Paid**

- Transfers to Local 153 General Fund 136,225
- Office supplies and Printing 107

Total Expenses Paid 136,332

Increase in Cash 85,750

Cash Balance—December 31, 2017 198,474

**DISPOSITION OF FUNDS**

Amalgamated Bank of New York:
- Money Market Account 198,474

Total 198,474

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**Letters to the Editor**

Local 153 hears from many, many members and we regret that we don’t have space to publish everyone’s comments. But we do want to sincerely thank members who communicate with us, whether it is through a letter or email or a visit to one of our membership meetings.

Since our last edition of Local 153 News, we have received a large amount of letters from retirees expressing appreciation for the extra pension check they received in December. We don’t have space to print all their comments, quite obviously, but here are just a few:

Majorie Fitzgibbons wrote, “Your thoughtfulness is so appreciated!”

Mickey MacDonald said, “Thank you for all you do for the retirees.”

Camille Serignece said, “The extra check really helps when a person is on a fixed income. Thank you so much!”

There were many other letters of appreciation received, and not all of them concerned the extra pension check retirees received in December. As an example, Isreal M. Scott, a Local 153 member employed at the NoMo SoHo Hotel, expressed these words of gratitude in a letter to Business Manager Michael Goodwin:

“It was so great to see you and the wonderful support staff at the Local 153 general meeting last night. I enjoyed the speech from our guest speaker and learning about the new paid family leave benefits.

“Second, I want to sincerely thank you and your helpful executive assistant for seeing me impromptu back in late September regarding my FMLA concerns. At your advice I returned to the NoMo SoHo and waited for my superiors to render their stance and as per our examination of the bargaining agreement it worked out. My situation turned out to be a “good win” on all fronts due to your experience and advice. Through further diligence I was awarded over $8,000 in retroactive pay. That is why I remain a strong member and proponent of the union, especially OPEIU Local 153. Blessings to you and yours in this new year!”

Here are some of the cards and letters of appreciation the union received from retirees after they received an extra pension check in December.
Local 153 Membership Benefits

▶ DEATH BENEFIT
$5,000 Death Benefit + Additional $2,000 OPEIU Total $7,000.
$5,000 AD&D Benefit + Additional $2,000 OPEIU Total $7,000. (Death by accident total $14,000).

Eligibility – Membership in good standing with payment of dues for 12 months during the last 14-month period prior to death, exclusive of the month of death.

For more information, please call 212-741-8251

▶ SUPPLEMENTAL DISABILITY BENEFITS
Supplementary Disability – Flat once-a-year Benefit will be paid to a member in good standing with 12 months membership as follows:

• 6-12 Weeks – Maximum of $300
• 13-18 Weeks – Maximum of $600
• 19-24 Weeks – Maximum of $900
• 25 Weeks or more – Maximum of $1,200

For more information, please call 212-292-4664

▶ TOWING BENEFIT
Two towing/service calls per year for members and family living in the same household, valued at up to $80 each. You will need a “producer code” for “plan letter C”.

For information, call 212-741-8270

For towing and service call information, call 800-617-2677

▶ 401 (K) NATIONAL PLAN
OPEIU has established a voluntary 401 (k) program that charges considerably less management fees than standard 401 (k) plans. Members will be able to enroll in this benefit shortly.

▶ STUDENT DEBT REDUCTION PROGRAM
Students with $10,000 or more of outstanding student debt have an opportunity each year to reduce the amount they owe.

▶ FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION BENEFIT
Members may earn tuition-free an Associate Degree online through Eastern Gateway Community College. The free college benefit provides degrees in Associate of Arts, Associate of Criminal Justice, Associate of Business Management and Associate of Arts in Early Childhood Education, with more free online degree programs to come. To obtain a brochure about this program call Local 153 at 212-741-8282 and press “7” for member benefits.

▶ GENERAL VISION SERVICES “Vision Pass”
Eyeglasses discount packages for you and your family.

Call the union for a “vision pass” 212-741-8250/8251

▶ ENTERTAINMENT
Discount movie tickets ($8.50/Regal – $10.25/AMC) and theme park discount tickets such as Great Adventure.

Call 212-741-8261

▶ DRIVER SAFETY CLASS
Accident prevention/defensive driving workshop at discount rate for drivers with NY & NJ state licenses.

Call Victoria at 212-675-3210

Members in good standing can take an online course at a low cost of $10 with up to 30 days to complete the course. To register, visit Local 153 website www.opeiu153.org.

▶ AFL-CIO UNION PLUS BENEFITS
Discounts for services such as dental, vision, health clubs, legal services, pet and car insurance, car rentals, mortgages, etc.

Visit unionplus.org

▶ WORKING ADVANTAGE
Discounts for theater and events, entertainment, sporting events, shopping, travel, etc.

Visit workingadvantage.com
Create an account using ID#: 924400144

▶ SCHOLARSHIPS
Howard Coughlin, John Kelly Labor Studies, Union Privilege and Lavina Michl Wright with grants of up to $6,500.

Visit opeiu153.org

▶ DEFENSE FUND
Where an authorized strike is called, members will receive $290 per week.

▶ UNION SUPPORT SERVICES
For members and their families who suffer with substance abuse, depression or stress.

Call 212-741-8251

▶ PUBLICATIONS
Steward Update, Local 153 News and OPEIU’s White Collar.

▶ RETIREE ASSOCIATION
National Council of Senior Citizens Active on Social & Political Issues.

Call 212-741-8262

▶ EDUCATION FOR UPGRADING SKILLS

Call Victoria at 212-675-3210

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Attend the next membership meeting on May 15 and you may win a great prize like these members!

Local 153’s next membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 15 at 6:00 p.m. at Gertrude Lane Auditorium, 305 West 44th Street. Members who attend will be able to take part in a raffle with great prizes like those seen here, won by members at the most recent membership meeting. From left to right are: Jacqueline Soberal, Millennium Broadway, the proud new owner of an IHome Bluetooth Waterproof Speaker; Dat Quach, Aramark, who won an AMPMAX Portable Charger; Sharon Sykes, NYHTC, who now has an Amazon Echo, Shaniqua Dennis, NYHTC Harlem, who won a Utopia 360 Virtual Reality Headset; Francisco Gomez, CWA Local 1180, who took home an HP Notebook Laptop Computer; and Elizabeth Lopez, CitiField, who now owns a Fitbit Charge 2. Also pictured, second from left, is Anthony Harmon, President of the New York Chapter of the NAACP, who was a guest speaker at the meeting.