



September/October 2009

# Communique

Local 1180, Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO

EXTRAORDINARY  
ABU GHRAIB  
GUANTANAMO  
RAPE  
SLEEP DEPRIVATION  
ELECTRIC SHOCK  
BEATINGS  
WATERBOARDING  
SOIL  
CONFINEMENT  
ENHANCED  
INTERROGATION  
DENIAL  
ASPHYXIATION  
HANGING  
WHIPPING  
STARVATION  
SENSORY DEPRIVATION  
INSECT BITES  
DOG BITES  
DISFIGUREMENT  
CRISIS  
BLACK SITE  
HEAD SLAUGHTER  
BONE BREAKING  
EXTR

LETTERS

**CONTINUE THE TORTURE**

I believe that torture is a normal feature of gaining information from combatants in a time of war. If the IRAQI insurgents capture US soldiers, or civilians, they torture and behead their victims. Sometimes they use LIVE TV FEEDS or INTERNET STREAMS.

Why shouldn't the US do the same? The usual answer is that we have "A moral obligation to treat the terrorists better." WHY??

They do not care about the US. They do not adhere to the Geneva conventions. They do not have a

UNIFORM to identify their military affiliation. They are not part of any military unit. They act independently throughout the Middle East —bombing and killing at will. We are supposed to show how morally superior we are, but this only translates as physical weakness.

Continue the torture. Never give up. Bomb the nukes.

**Ira Valfer**  
PAA III, HRA-FIA.

**BEING IN A UNION IS BEST**

Last year I had a problem and I called your office [Arthur Cheliotos] and you took care of it for me. I really appreciate that but that is not what I'm writing to you about.

I want union and non-union members to know that being in a union is one of the best things in life that you can do for yourself. When I first started working in the early 70s, and of course I was in the union, I had three small children. When I took them to the doctors and dentists I paid just \$5. I got medication much cheaper, etc., etc.

Now I am 75 years old and I need oxygen night and day. I, of course, have Medicare and if I didn't have a pension, besides Social Security, I could not make it.

So I just want to point [out] to people that don't join a union [you] will be very sorry, especially when you retire...

**Ellen Frankel**

**Sound Off on hiatus**

The *Communique* thanks all the people over the years who have contributed to *Sound Off*. In the past year we have received fewer submissions and generally from the same people, all of whom we appreciate. We are publishing the one submission we received

for this issue's *Sound Off* as a letter. The question was "Is torture justifiable?" We hope that members will send in letters on subjects of any nature. Should there be requests that *Sound Off* be revived we will comply.

**2009 L. 1180 Democratic Primary Endorsements**

**Mayor**

**Public Advocate**

**Comptroller**

**Bill Thompson, Jr.**

**Bill deBlasio**

**John Liu**

**Manhattan District Attorney**

**Brooklyn District Attorney**

**Richard Aborn**

**Charles Hynes**



Bill Thompson, Jr.

**Tuesday,  
September 15  
is Primary Day**

**You must be a registered Democrat to vote.**

**New York City Council**

District #	Candidate
1	Alan Gerson
2	Rosie Mendez
3	Christine C. Quinn
4	Daniel R. Garodnick
5	Jessica S. Lappin
6	Gale A. Brewer
7	Robert Jackson
8	Melissa Mark-Viverito
9	Inez E. Dickens
10	Ydanis A. Rodriguez
11	Oliver Koppell
12	Larry Seabrook
13	Jimmy Vacca
14	No endorsement
15	Joel Rivera
16	Helen D. Foster
17	Maria del Carmen Arroyo
18	Annabel Palma
19	No endorsement
20	S. J. Jung
21	Julissa Ferreras
22	Peter Vallone, Jr.
23	Mark Weprin
24	James Gennaro

District #	Candidate
25	Helen Sears
26	Jimmy Van Bramer
	Deidre Feerick
	Both qualified
27	Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
28	Thomas White, Jr.
29	Lynn Schulman
30	Elizabeth Crowley
31	James Sanders
32	Frank Gulluscio
33	Joanne Simon
34	No endorsement
35	Leticia James
36	Albert Vann
37	No endorsement
38	No endorsement
39	Brad Lander
40	Mathieu Eugene
41	Tracy Boyland
42	Charles Barron
43	Vincent Gentile
44	No endorsement
45	No endorsement
46	Lew Fidler

District #	Candidate
47	Domenic Recchia, Jr.
48	Michael Nelson
49	Deborah Rose
50	No endorsement
51	No endorsement



**COMMUNIQUE**

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New York Administrative Employees Local 1180  
Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO  
6 Harrison Street, 4th Fl., New York, NY 10013-2898  
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Retiree Benefits: 212-966-5353  
Claim Forms Hotline: 212-925-1091  
Retiree Division: 212-226-5800  
Tape Message: 212-226-1180

**For out-of-town retirees:**  
Retiree Division: 800-801-2882  
Retiree Benefits: 888-966-5353

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Linda Jenkins, *1st Vice President*  
William F. Henning, Jr., *2nd Vice President*  
Gloria Middleton, *Secretary-Treasurer*  
Gwen Richardson, *Recording Secretary*

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PAT ARNOW

## The goal: To build a better movement

By Chude Mondlane

**Lily Dalke**  
Human Rights First

Lily Dalke grew up in a small Quaker community in Pennsylvania. Because her church studied other faiths it helped her “to understand where [I] fit into the larger world.” Dalke said her faith “helped me develop a critical consciousness in the effort towards social justice.”

In her senior year at Sarah Lawrence College she chose to go on a study abroad program in Senegal because, although her friends had gone for the “Parisian” experience, she said, “I had taken a course on colonialism and architecture which inspired me to take more courses in African Studies and I wanted to go to a place where it would be more difficult for me to integrate.” Initially, she thought she would have to do a lot of explaining as an American but found that “as I traveled I was amazed at the

love and admiration people have for the United States and people’s ability to be critical, but at the same time love the ideals of what the U.S. stands for.”

Dalke loved the experience, but when her 10 months in Senegal were completed she was more than ready to go home, now New York. “I wanted to be somewhere near my family and friends, and I wanted to be where there was a queer community because I had to be closeted in Senegal, and I also wanted there to be a Quaker and a West African community,” she said.

### Marriage is an option

Speaking about same sex marriages, she said, “I don’t know if I necessarily want to get married. In the gay community there is an

argument going on: should we be fighting for gay marriage or equal rights for partnerships, or should we be fighting for healthcare for our partners. I can see both sides of the argument and don’t think we need pick one or the other.”

### Working for women’s rights

Dalke worked at Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) where she instructed women going into construction jobs on the role of unions. “We established partnerships with the construction unions to place women, but it isn’t only the physical challenges women face in the profession, but the challenges of the work environment. There

## UNION PROUD

is this expression that “you have to work twice as hard as a woman to be considered half as good as a man.”

After NEW she went to Human Rights First as a legal assistant in the Refugee Protection Program, a program that deals directly with individuals seeking asylum in the US. “I got interested in asylum in high school. I joined a club associated with Pennsylvania Amnesty International and corresponded, for what turned out to be 10 years, with a man in immigration detention.”

### Get young people involved

Dalke said that she was excited by the presence of the union in her work place, and that even though she had worked at NEW introducing workers to unions, she “didn’t understand the day-to-day mechanisms of filing a grievance or what the bargaining process actually looked like.” She ran for shop steward to learn more about the process. “I wanted to test HRF to see if it was living up to its ideals and, if not, what were some of the problems. I learned that even though the organization I worked for often didn’t take into account what the union advised, there is the reality of accountability in that they have to listen and be open to criticism of their management poli-

**There is this expression that “you have to work twice as hard as a woman to be considered half as good as a man.”**

## ROVING REPORTER ASKS . . .

### If you could retire next week what would you do?

**Reagan Stevens**  
Administrative Manager,  
Brooklyn District Attorney

First I’m taking a vacation with my family. Then I’m volunteering through NYC Service or ReServe to work with organizations that support physical fitness activities and improving health, in general, for our most needy kids and families. I’ll pick up my daughter from school when it ends, everyday, while she still wants to be associated with her mother!

I’ll play more basketball and do more physical activity.



GARY SCHOICHT

**Courtney Nelson**  
PAA II, HPD

My bags are packed for travel. I’m not sure where I’m going, but it will be for a few months outside of the country. When I get back I’ll open either a bed and breakfast or a jewelry store, somewhere other than NY, to keep busy. With retirement money and the profits from my new business, I’ll live the rest of my life without worry.



GARY SCHOICHT

*Courtney Nelson is the Roving Reporter.*

cies, and that they cannot act with impunity.”

Lily Dalke will be pursuing a master’s degree in Labor Studies at CUNY’s Joseph Murphy Institute, helped by a full scholarship from Local 1180. One of her concerns is the need for the union to reach out to its younger members. “I recently went to the Youth Unionist Conference in Albany and I have been thinking about ways of getting young people more involved through Facebook and other forms of networking.

“There are so many forces working against unions. We need to start talking about what needs to be done to build a better movement.”

## PAA prep classes showed the bigger picture



GARY SCHOICHER

**IN THE BEGINNING** Moria Miller (PAA, Parks Department) had mixed feelings about the PAA classes presented by Local 1180 prior to the June 20th test. Sometimes the phrasing was unclear; other times it seemed that things weren't explained well; and sometimes it wasn't interesting enough to keep her attention. As she went along (Miller attended all but three or four classes) she became more accustomed to "the thinking that went into taking [and teaching] the class. I saw the bigger picture." Miller noticed that each time she took a practice test her scores got better.

"It was good to be around people from other agencies, especially people who had worked for the City for a long period. It was interesting when they discussed the answers and whether or not they agreed with the correct answer," Miller said.

### Practical tips for test taking

Had she not gone to the classes she might not have brought the required #2 pencils, a watch to keep track of the time, water to quench the thirst that develops during a three hour test, and even the umbrella to keep off the rain while waiting outside to go in. She also would have missed the tips from instructor and classmates on dealing with the normal stresses of test taking.

The test took Miller an hour to complete. "It was what I was expecting. I went in nervous. A few test questions popped up that were ambiguous, hard to interpret. A lot of them were re-phrasings of what we'd seen in class. There were some new questions, but even though they were not covered in class they were easy to figure out. I went back to eight of the eighty questions, checked all the dots, and done.

"The class was beneficial because it prepared me for the type of questions that would be asked and the strategic thinking that goes into answering the questions."

## Letter to DCAS

**JUST MONTHS** after giving promotional and open competitive tests for the Principal Administrative Associate title that 17,000 took, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) has scheduled another test for January 2010. Some wonder if DCAS is in it for the money. \$800,000 was collected from the 20,000 applicants for the June test and how much more will be collected for the January test?

In response, President Arthur Cheliotis sent a letter to Martha K. Hirst, the commissioner of DCAS:

"The Department of Citywide Services Civil Service Exam Schedule for 2010 includes a promotional exam for Principal Administrative Associate #0518 scheduled for January 9, 2010. Since DCAS just gave both promotional... and open competitive... exams for this title on June 20, 2009 and about 17,000 people took those exams I question the need to schedule another exam at this time.

"We can expect that both promotional and open competitive lists will be established from the June 20, 2009 exams with sufficient num-

bers for agencies to utilize these lists to replace provisionals. Since promotional lists have priority over open competitive lists my concern is that my members who took the open competitive exam on June 20 will not have an opportunity to become permanent civil service employees because another promotional list will be established. That would be grossly unfair to my members who paid their \$40 fees and spent numerous hours preparing for the open competitive exam in hopes of gaining permanent status."

The union requested a meeting with the commissioner and is awaiting a response.

## The trials of the PAA test

By Adrienne Meryl-Stern

**W**ere you one of the 17,000 people who took the PAA exam on June 20?

Regardless of how well you were prepared, no one was ready for what went wrong on the day of the test. Of course, hundreds of people had to wait in the rain, but Seena Sweet and others assigned to take the test at JHS 8 in Jamaica experienced greater distress. When test takers arrived for the 2:30 p.m. exam, they were crowded into the auditorium

### No one was ready for what went wrong on the day of the test.

and made to wait until 5:40 p.m. to take the test. Most of that time, they were confined to that one room and were unable to communicate with anyone outside because cell phones were prohibited. Since the cafeteria was being used for testing, they could not get food.

By the time the test began, no true explanation had been given for the delay. Rumors were flying around that the test was over-booked, that someone had died, but, in truth, someone was ill because an ambulance had been called. Not ideal testing conditions. Sweet said she was "hungry, tired, and lacked the ability to concentrate," but she had prepared and felt good going into the test. She is worried that she will be unfairly compared to other people who took the test under better conditions. "It is inexcusable that they were not prepared and they mismanaged the testing sites."



GARY SCHOICHER

### Special meeting for new Admin Manager members

125 of the 400 newest members of Local 1180 attended a meeting at Local 1180 on July 1 to learn about the union and ask the questions that had them most concerned. Most left with the realization that they are better off being in the union than unionless.

# CWA Convention 2009



Labor Secretary Hilda Solis applauds CWA and CWA applauds right back.

## Hilda Solis: The Dept of Labor is back in business

**MY FATHER WAS** a Teamster shop steward working in a battery recycling plant for more than twenty years. My mother worked at a toy factory and was a member of the United Steel Workers Union.

They joined the Teamsters and the Steel Workers for many reasons—to ensure they received a fair wage and good benefits, that their workplace was safe, that they were paid the overtime they earned, and that they could retire with dignity. And these are the principles I take with me to the Department of Labor.

President Obama and I believe that the government has a fundamental responsibility to protect workers from unsafe work places and to protect workers from unjust labor practices.

Under my watch, enforcement of our labor laws will be intensified to provide an effective deterrent to employers who put their workers' lives and their employment at risk.

Let me be very clear—the Labor Department is back in the enforcement business. In a single year we will be adding nearly 670 additional investigators, inspectors, and other program staff.

Workers need a fair and efficient

way to organize and bargain a first contract—that's why we need the Employee Free Choice Act. I co-sponsored the Employee Free Choice Act as a member of

Congress and as Secretary of Labor. I'm looking forward to working with the White House to make the strongest case for why we need the Employee Free Choice Act.

## Senator Tom Harkin: Restore the right to organize

**FOR THOSE OF YOU** who have been here many times, let me just say that it may *look* like the same Washington. Of course, the biggest change ... is that we have a president who understands working people and believes in unions! This economy is broken. And our best bet for fixing it is to restore the right to organize in this country. When nearly 60 percent of workers want to join a union, but only seven percent are in one, something is broken.

So our goal is to restore some measure of balance and fairness to the organizing process.

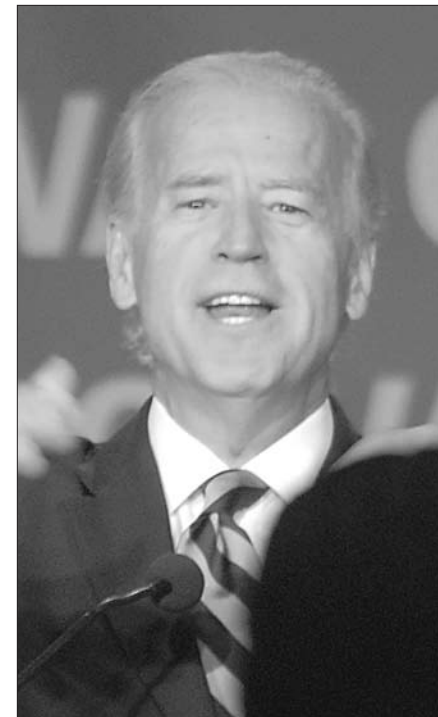
Here is my bottom line: I am seeking to craft a compromise that will maintain three core principles:

- Giving workers real freedom to choose a union
- Ensuring that workers who



organize will get a first contract

- And providing meaningful penalties for repeated violations of workers' rights.



PHOTOS: GARY SCHOICHT

## VP Joe Biden: Restore labor to its position

**AFTER EIGHT YEARS** of being ignored and worse, my message to you is simple and clear from the President and me—welcome back. Welcome back. Labor is in the house. Welcome back to the table as equal partner with every other interest in America. Welcome back. This is an administration that understands and believes in the same basic things that you believe in, this is an administration that is listening to you, and this is an administration that will

**Welcome back to the table as equal partner with every other interest in America.**

work with you and is working with you. Our administration and labor, as I said, are in this for the same exact reason: to give hard-working Americans a level playing field, a fighting chance.

We can't restore this nation's economy without restoring the middle class in this country. There is no way ... to restore the middle class without organized labor being restored to its position that it should be in.

EXTREME HEAT  
EXTREME COLD  
PHARMACOLOGY  
EXTREME  
STRETCHING  
EXTRAORDINARY  
RENDITION  
ABU GHRAIB  
GUANTANAMO  
SLEEP DEPRIVATION  
ELECTRIC SHOCK  
BEATING RAPE  
WATERBOARDING  
SOLITARY  
CONFINEMENT  
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DENAILING  
ASPHYXIATION  
HANGING WHIPPING  
STARVATION  
SENSORY  
DEPRIVATION  
INSECT BITES  
DOG BITES  
DISFIGUREMENT  
CRUSHING  
BLACK SITE  
HEAD SLAPPING  
BONEBREAKING

# Human Right

**BILL HENNING:** Last month [April] was marked by a storm of revelations about the Bush administration's use of torture against al-Qaida suspects. President Obama released key memos written in the Bush years condoning the use of torture. The Senate Armed Services Committee released a report proving that torture techniques were being explored long before the White House created its legal justifications. A leaked Red Cross report exposed the involvement of medical professionals in the act of torture and much more.

Devon Chafee is advocacy counsel at Human Rights First, a nonprofit human rights organization based in New York and Washington, D.C. Her specialty is U.S. counterterrorism and national security.

She has served as an observer to the military commission's proceedings in Guantanamo Bay, and is the co-author of a Human Rights First report on the use of so-called "enhanced" interrogation techniques.

Devon Chafee is also the shop steward for the Local 1180 members at Human Rights First in Washington, D.C.

Lets start with the stunning revelation in a document released by President Obama in April that CIA interrogators waterboarded al-Qaida suspect Khalid Shaikh Mohammed 183 times in the space of a single month in March 2003, and suspect Abu Zubaida 83 times, also in a single month, in August 2002.

This would seem to put to an end the idea that the United States did not engage in torture.

**DEVON CHAFFEE:** Well, clearly it does ... We saw high-level officials of the Bush administration going before the Senate, going before Congress, and trying to minimize the import of the use of these techniques. They would say things like, "Oh, well, we only waterboarded three individuals, and we didn't do this a lot; it was only in specific cases." When you have revelations that waterboarding was used 180 times, the severity of these techniques becomes crystal-clear.

Also, you have the new attorney general, during his confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, stating outright that waterboarding was, in fact, torture, and that he considered waterboarding torture, which is something that the Bush administration officials would never conclude.

**HENNING:** The Bush administration functionaries continue to refer to "enhanced" or "harsh" techniques that many people say are euphemisms for torture. Isn't torture explicitly outlawed under international law?

**CHAFFEE:** That is true.

**HENNING:** Obviously, the Bush regime was hiding behind the language. What is the meaning of that language? You, in your report for Human Rights First, talked about "enhanced" interrogation techniques. Does that have any meaning?

**CHAFFEE:** We call them "enhanced" techniques because the word enhanced makes it sound as if these techniques are somehow more effective, and what we have found through various revelations, and what we've heard from interrogation experts is that these techniques are counterproductive, that they are not effective. In fact, they become obstacles to gaining actionable intelligence information, in that they tend to elicit false information and make it more difficult to get information from a detainee in interrogations. And in general, they obstruct our counterterrorism effort by harming U.S. moral authority in the world by adding fodder for terrorism recruitment and things of that nature.

It's important to highlight that torture is illegal. There are other abuses that are also illegal under both international law and U.S. domestic law — cruel, inhumane, degrading treatment or punishment is illegal both under the Convention Against Torture and under the Detainee Treatment Act that was passed in 2005 under an amendment that was sponsored by Senator McCain.

There are other war crimes that can also be criminally prosecuted and there is other conduct that is also prohibited in interrogations.

# s First lawyer on torture

Before the 9/11 attack, before the Bush administration began looking into the use of these types of cruel techniques, before the fact that we knew when interrogations had indeed violated the law, the military could train through Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, which sets the baseline for humane treatment standards. [There is] an Army field manual that is based on the requirements of international law, human rights, and humanitarian law, and there was consensus that ... we knew when a technique violated the law and when it did not.

The legal opinions, such as the ones the Obama administration released on April 3, muddied those waters, and misconstrued the law by omitting key case law that any lawyer would think would be important to include.

**HENNING:** I heard, I think it was Ted Koppel, on a recent NPR radio interview, trying to simplify this, rather than going into all the legal justifications or the legal definitions of torture. He said, quite simply, and I think it's a pretty effective definition, that anything that we would argue should not be done to U.S. military personnel who are captured by an enemy probably falls into that realm that we would call torture.

**CHAFFEE:** It's what we call the Golden Rule standard: If you don't want it done to U.S. troops, then you shouldn't do it to fighters that you take into your custody. That's the premise that humanitarian law is based on. It's also the principle that is included in the U.S. Army field manual that is used by our military when they're doing interrogations in the field.

Part of the reason why Human Rights First works with a lot of retired admirals and generals and other high-level military officers, and part of the reason why these officers are so involved in this work, and think that these issues are so important, is because they understand that when the United States has a reputation for mistreating its prisoners it weakens the standards that protect U.S. personnel when they're taken into enemy

custody, and it endangers our troops when they are out in the field.

**HENNING:** To close the circle on this waterboarding technique, waterboarding is not a new technique. It's been around since the Middle Ages, since the time of the Inquisition, and it was always, always, always recognized as torture.



Devon Chaffee

**CHAFFEE:** It was used by the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, it was used in the Inquisition, but in general it was used to elicit false confessions. It has always been recognized as one of the more infamous forms of torture.

**HENNING:** It would seem that in the case of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the so-called mastermind of 9/11, waterboarding him 183 times in a single month is in the realm of punishment and not an attempt to elicit information.

The other thing that I want to mention is that to posit that the torture techniques are not effective is almost beside the point. Whether they're effective or not is not the right debate to be having about this issue. What do you think?

**CHAFFEE:** I think that clearly, the law is the law. The executive branch has an obligation to the American people to follow the law, and should not be breaking the law. Also, there is a moral obligation not to engage in cruel treatment and torture against your fellow man. I think in the eye of the public, people should know that these techniques did not make them safer, that in fact, what their government did was sell its soul for nothing.

They could have gotten this information through other means. In fact, it was counterproductive for U.S. national security. So, I agree with you that, to a certain extent, it's beside the point, but I think that is important for the American people to fully understand. It's important information in order to safeguard against the use of these techniques in the future.

**HENNING:** There were other bombshells in the Senate Armed Services Committee report, which was also released in April, evidence that the Bush White House began planning for torture in December 2001, and by early the following year the CIA began training interrogators in torture methods. Now, this timeline makes it clear that the agency was pursuing abusive techniques before they had any high-value al-Qaida suspects and before the Department of Justice lawyers issued their supposed legal justification for the techniques, which, I believe, was in August of 2002. So, from your perspective, wouldn't this undercut President Obama's argument that CIA officials deserve leniency because the White House offered them bad legal guidance?

**CHAFFEE:** What President Obama said was that he would not support prosecution of those who reasonably relied on the office of Legal Counsel and the Department of Justice legal advice. But I think what he has left open and what the attorney general has left open is if there are cases where you know individuals were involved in ... whether it be designing a program, or engaged in these techniques and they were either acting outside the bounds of that legal advice, or if they were acting before such legal advice was issued, I think that there is still room for the administration to pursue prosecutions in those cases. And I think that the administration has purposely left those windows open.

We certainly hope that it will take seriously the need for accountability, both to prevent a culture of impunity from developing within the intelligence community, and to ensure that these techniques are not used in the future.

*This interview is taken from the Communique radio program which is heard every Wednesday at 1 p.m. on WNYE, 91.5 FM.*

## A guide to organizations working to end torture

**\*Amnesty International** | Working to Protect Human Rights  
Protecting human rights worldwide, AI focuses on the release of prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners.  
[www.amnesty.org/](http://www.amnesty.org/)

**\*Human Rights First**  
Human Rights First is a non-profit, nonpartisan international human rights organization based in New York and Washington DC.  
[www.humanrightsfirst.org/](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/)

**\*Human Rights Watch**  
Human Rights Watch is an international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights.  
[www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

\*The first three organizations are union shops represented by Local 1180.

**American Civil Liberties Union: Torture**  
The ACLU's resource on reports of torture and abuse of detainees in U.S. military custody. Includes documents and background information on reports of extraordinary rendition.  
[www.aclu.org/safefree/torture](http://www.aclu.org/safefree/torture)

**Center for the Victims of Torture**  
Works to heal the wounds of torture on individuals, their families and their communities and to stop torture worldwide.  
[CVT.org](http://CVT.org)

**World Organization Against Torture**  
Fighting against torture, summary executions, forced disappearances, and all other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in order to preserve human rights.  
[www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

**Association for Prevention of Torture (APT)**  
Independent non-governmental organization working worldwide to prevent torture and ill-treatment.  
[www.ap.t.ch](http://www.ap.t.ch)

**European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)**  
Visits places of detention to see how detainees are treated and, if necessary, recommends improvements.  
[www.cpt.coe.int](http://www.cpt.coe.int)

**Anti-Torture Organizations**  
Resources for fighting torture by the United States and others around the world.  
[www.tortureawareness.com/orgs.html](http://www.tortureawareness.com/orgs.html)

# A mayor for all New Yorkers

**A**s a member of the executive board of the New York City Central Labor Council I had the opportunity in July to interview Mayor Bloomberg. He spoke about development in our city and how when he flies his helicopter up the Hudson River he sees how much development there has been on our side of the river. That for me summed up why I would not cast a vote for the CLC to endorse him for re-election. Bloomberg just doesn't get it. He doesn't understand how tough it is for the average working person to survive in our city. From on high he sees a wonderful city through the eyes of a Wall Street executive. Despite causing the economic collapse of the global economy he expects business to continue as usual.

Bloomberg's billions give him great power. Certainly, campaign finance rules don't apply. I'm sure, like me, your mailbox will have another 'Note from Mike' in a day



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN  
by Arthur Cheliotis

**Thompson's view encompasses the lives of the people who live in New York City.**

or two. What an obscene waste of money. With his rich friends who run the media they figured that even though New Yorkers voted twice for term limits a handful of rich people have the equivalent power to change it for their rich friend and say they acted in the public interest.

#### City jobs are good jobs

Bloomberg talks about creating good jobs. City jobs are good jobs that keep families and neighborhoods in our city stable. Yet Bloomberg threatens to lay-off city

workers, demands cuts in health benefits and pensions, while warning that we shouldn't tax the rich.

When Bill Thompson came to Local 1180 for an interview he pointed out that New York has become unaffordable for a vast number of its residents. He talked about small business owners, homeowners, and working men and women struggling with the high cost of living in New York. He spoke of skyrocketing water rates, rising MTA costs, the high price of day care, and soaring property taxes. He spoke to the reality of the members of

Local 1180, struggling every day to survive. Thompson's view encompasses the lives of the people who live in New York City, in the neighborhoods of all five boroughs.

Certainly, the economic system in our city isn't working for most New Yorkers who work hard and live by the rules but are betrayed by a city government that will give tax breaks to financial companies while whittling away the benefits ordinary working people need to live.

#### Elect Bill Thompson

We need a mayor who knows what life is like on the streets of New York, in the neighborhoods of all five boroughs. We do not need another term for the Mayor of Wall Street, flying his helicopter on high, admiring taxpayer subsidized monuments to greed and deception.

We need a mayor for all five boroughs, a mayor for all New Yorkers. We must elect Bill Thompson.

# One-sided class war no more

**O**ver thirty years ago, Doug Fraser, then president of the United Auto Workers, famously complained about the "one-sided class war." This followed the failure to pass labor law reform in the early days of the Carter administration because of a Republican filibuster in the Senate. Two Democrats, refused to vote to close debate so the measure could be voted on by the full Senate. Pressure from business said the two Democrats.

#### Compromise on EFCA

Thirty years later, labor once again can claim credit for having won the White House for the Democrats, with an exciting new president recognizing the valuable role working people played in his election. The Democrats have a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. Labor's top 2009 legislative priority, the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, which promised to end the torturous ordeal workers are forced to undergo in order to join a union, was within grasp. If a major-



2ND VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN  
by Bill Henning

**Why were corporate voices allowed to skew the debate with impunity?**

ity of workers in a given enterprise decided they wanted a union and signed a petition or a card saying so, they would have one.

But not so fast. The two Democrats from Arkansas (Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor), the Pennsylvania Republican turned Democrat (Arlen Specter), and even the one from California (Dianne Feinstein) have balked at supporting labor's top agenda item. In July the New York Times reported a compromise was in the works that would strip the card check provision in the Employee Free Choice Act. In its place was a vague commitment to a streamlined election—five days was men-

tioned—and maybe even a pledge to give unions access to work places to talk with prospective members, a practice currently banned. One could anticipate further pushback on another of EFCA's provisions, the prospect of binding arbitration for first contracts because employers often stall any effort to reach a voluntary agreement.

#### When will we ever learn

Our movement has not learned its lessons from 30 years ago. We have allowed the shrill corporate voices to dominate the debate: Home Depot CEO Bernie Marcus declared that if the bill were passed, it will bring about "the

demise of a civilization;" while hotel magnate and funder of right-wing causes Sheldon Adelson called EFCA "one of the two fundamental threats to society"—the other being radical Islam.

#### This time we'll fight back

Meanwhile our side appealed to civil discourse and reason: "Corporate CEOs have employment contracts—why shouldn't workers?" Where was the outrage from our side? Why weren't we urging people to shop the local Ace hardware instead of Home Depot? Why were corporate voices allowed to skew the debate with impunity?

And where were the millions of workers who consistently say they would join a union if they had the opportunity? Our side did a terrible job of mobilizing them, instead focusing on an institutional demand for unions, rather than for the workers who benefit from unions.

It's not too late. This time we need to take the gloves off and stop being so polite. No more one-sided class war. This time, we fight back.

## RETIREMENT

# Look before you leap

**ONE DAY ABOUT** eight years ago, Carlos Martinez was at his job and not liking it. He was a PAA at Gouverneur Hospital working at Housing Works as an administrative assistant. He was 51 years old in his 25th year of City employment.

On the bulletin board he saw a notice for a “package.” Cash, “not too much,” and a continuation of benefits. The City would add two and a half years to his pension if he took the buyout.

He had one week to make up his mind.

He took it.

About a year after he retired, he said, “I realized I was in financial trouble. Bills were piling up. I was taking loans and overusing my credit cards.” It wasn’t that he was a spendthrift; Martinez was helping his kids, his ex-wife, and his sister and to do so he took a loan against his pension which resulted

in his pension being permanently reduced and less income was coming in.

He worked as a home health aide for two years and has recently finished a course of training and

### You have to school yourself on the ins and outs [of retirement]

an internship to become a medical assistant. He hopes to get a job with a physician or in a clinic.

“I don’t fully regret leaving early, but it could have been better,” Martinez said. “The benefits I have from the union are better than I would have now, but I couldn’t live the life I wanted to live, like traveling with my pastor. Everything looked good until I had to live with it. You have to school yourself on the ins and outs; do research,



GARY SCHOICHER

**Carlos Martinez**

figure out how to maximize your retirement.”

Carlos Martinez’s words of advice to people contemplating early retirement: “Look at both sides of the coin. You may love one, but look at the other.”

## Making retirement work

By Lorraine Gamble-Lofton

**O.K.** for the past 25 years, like me, you have thought about it, talked about it, and yes, even dreamed about it. At the water cooler you’ve commiserated with your co-workers, you called 1180’s health and benefits division, and when you thought that you were really grown you jumped on the train and headed for NYCERS. There is an expression that goes, ‘If you’ve failed to plan, you’ve planned to fail’. Former 1180 Board member Barbara Bailey planned.

“You have to have all of your ducks in a row,” she said. So when I got ready, I stopped shopping for big-ticket items that would make me have a monthly payment. I sat down and figured out how much it would cost me every month to live, and when I retired I stuck to my budget. I became more frugal and started saving even more than I used to, especially through my credit union because they paid higher interest



GARY SCHOICHER

**Barbara Bailey singing with the NYC Labor Chorus**

than the banks.”

When asked why she decided to retire and how she prepared for it, Bailey said, “I didn’t let anyone pressure me into it. I just decided that I needed more time for myself to enjoy life. I thought it out and planned carefully. I also made some new friends who were already retired.”

### Living life (large)

One of the many things Bailey did when she retired from the NYPD after 25 years of service was to start the 1180 Retiree Division, serving as its first director and then assistant director (she had not retired in order to go back to work).

Since her 2001 official retirement, Bailey has been nothing but busy and involved with living life. She enjoys working as a Big Apple Greeter, being involved with the activities of the union’s Retiree Division, and is an active member of her local senior center and a book club. She is a co-founder and president of the New York City Labor Chorus, a group that sings all over the world. When asked what she had done most recently, she said, “Well, I just returned from Wales, where the chorus performed. And Paris, I did on my own, since I had never been. Now I can do my favorite thing, travel, travel, travel.”

## More 50-plus workers delaying retirement dates

According to a new survey from Watson Wyatt Worldwide, 44 percent of workers age 50 or older are making plans to delay their retirement date. The number one reason being cited by three quarters of those workers is the unexpected loss to their 401(k) accounts. In the late 1990s, the average age for retirement was 62. In the 1950s, the average age of retirement for men was 67. Half of those surveyed now say they plan to retire at age 66 or later.

### Dos and don’ts of early retirement

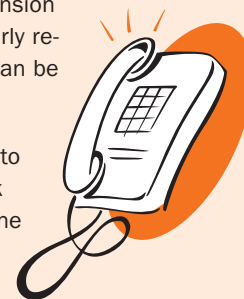
“A lot of people are retiring early because they are disgruntled,” said Joseph Galletta, a retired Local 1180 member who offers retirement counseling to 1180 members. “And they don’t worry about the future. If you can’t afford living working, retiring is worse,” he said.

For that reason, Galletta advises people who are planning to retire to plan their retirement. “We encourage people to come in a few years before their retirement date so they can know what they will receive and learn about Local 1180’s welfare benefits.”

They will learn that if they are 55 they might not receive a COLA (cost of living allowance) for 10 years. They will learn that retiring with credit card debt is not a good idea—if you borrow from your pension the cost is 10 percent “per year for the rest of your life.” They will learn that once you retire you can no longer borrow against your pension. They will learn that incurring new fixed expenses, such as buying a home and having a mortgage, is a bad idea. They will learn that their welfare benefits include two prescription drug plans and the costs and benefits of each. They will learn of the pension penalties of early retirement that can be costly.

There is much to learn and think about for anyone thinking of retirement.

Retiring early adds another layer. Local 1180 will help. You only have to call the Benefits Department (212-966-5353) and make an appointment.



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MAY 13, 2009

**Call to order:** 6:15 pm

**Present:** Arthur Cheliotis, Linda Jenkins, Bill Henning, Gloria Middleton, Gwen Richardson, Gerald Brown, Charles Garcia, Alan Goldblatt, Michael Lamb, Harlan Reid, Lenora Smith, Gina Strickland, Clarona Williams, Hazel Worley

**President's Report:**

- Arthur spoke about May 26th, the day we will go to Albany to lobby for due process rights for our non-competitive members in HHC. Those employees must be employed for five years before they have full due process rights.
- The Working Families Party will conduct candidate screening on Saturday, May 16, 2009.
- The Mayor is no longer demanding \$600 million in healthcare concessions. His demand remains \$200 million.
- Arthur met with HRA Commissioner Doar about the Admin. JOS. salary negotiation.

Doar promised to meet with OMB once more.

- Arthur met with a Local 371 officer who gave him more information on the JOS settlement.

- City Council Speaker Christine Quinn reassured Arthur that the residency issue will be settled.

- Arthur spoke about the upcoming CWA Convention, the healthcare rally, and the Employee Free Choice Act.

- Report accepted.

**1st Vice President's Report:**

- The next hearing dates at OCB for the Customer Information Representative title are May 19 and 20. The Care Manager-Registered Nurse hearing is June 11, 2009.

- Enrollment kits for the Administrative Managers are being put together. We are meeting with OLR on May 19 to discuss benefits.

- Linda is preparing material for members who will be laid off.

- The prep course classes for the PAA exam are still going on.

- May is Labor History Month, a report on Haymarket will be part of the agenda.

- Report accepted.

**2nd Vice President's Report:**

- Bill spoke about organizing and bargaining: Amnesty International is almost done, 50 people may be laid off.

- The first bargaining session with the Nation Institute was held.

- We have organized a new group, Picture the Homeless.

- The play, "Exit Cuckoo," will close on Sunday. Everyone should see it.

- Bill spoke about the "single payer health plan" and urged us to create some noise about it.

- The NYCOSH awards fundraiser is coming up, Bill asked if anyone plans to attend.

- Report accepted.

**Secretary/Treasurer's Report:**

- Gloria distributed the Transaction Detail and Profit and Loss Reports.

- She and Bill have negotiated new rates for the radio show.

- The checking account has a balance of

\$615,198.68, and the Smith Barney account balance is \$150,052.55.

- The board members will stay at the Capitol Hilton for the Convention.

- Lenora Smith and Hazel Worley will attend the LCLAA celebration honoring Charles Garcia.

- Report accepted.

**Jerry** reported on the plans for the May 26 Lobby Day. On June 1st, CWA will be at the Today Show to rally for EFCA.

**Alan** reported that over 70 members and their family members attended the NAMI march.

- The Disability Committee had a guest speaker who educated them on Alzheimers. He suggested that all of the committees collaborate on a forum sometime in the fall.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

The next meeting is 7/1/09.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gwen Richardson,  
Recording Secretary

## Let them eat cake and cookies, and breadsticks, too

**NLRB rules for Stella D'oro strikers**

Just when you thought you'd never be able to eat those Stella D'oro breakfast treats or the cookies with the chocolate dot in the center, the National Labor Relations Board, on June 30, upheld the unfair labor practices charge against Brynwood Partners, the private-equity firm that owns the company, and ordered all of the 136 striking employees returned to their jobs with back pay and interest.

Brynwood Partners announced it would appeal the ruling and was going to close the Bronx plant in October, anyway. Then Brynwood was going to sell the company to Lance Inc., the non-union company that makes Cape Cod potato chips. The plan was up in smoke when the union and its supporters picketed Goldman Sachs which owns a stake in Lance Inc. and then threatened a protest at Barclays which also owns a share of Lance Inc.

The BCTCM (Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union) has asked the NLRB to grant an injunction to stop the plant closing. New York senators Gillibrand and Schumer have written letters in support of the injunction. The New York City Council passed Resolu-

tion 2090-2009 on July 30 "supporting the continued operation of the Stella D'oro Biscuit Company in the Bronx and supporting the efforts of Local 50 and the workers at Stella D'oro Biscuit Company to maintain their jobs and prevent the closure of the Bronx factory."

Michael Filippou, an executive board member of BCTGM Local 50, testified at the City Council: "I worry about my older co-workers in the Packing Department at Stella

D'oro. These mostly immigrant women each pack 10,000 trays—or 100,000 cookies—every day. In many cases, the repetitive motions have ruined their hands and backs...They have given the company their youth and their health... Where will these women find other jobs? What will happen to their families."

136 workers, mostly women, mostly immigrants, stayed out of work for a year. No one crossed

the picket line. They endured heat, cold, rain, snow, and too much indifference, particularly in the beginning, from much of official labor. According to one community activist, "The success of the strike and the fortitude of the workers was largely propelled by the community support that gave them the knowledge that they were not alone. The longer they were out the more respect they garnered and the more resources became available."

Lest you begin to indulge your Stella D'oro taste buds: the boycott, while not officially still on, is not called off.

**Youth at 1180**

Suzanne M. Lynn, Deputy Commissioner of DYCD (Department of Youth and Community Development) was the guest speaker in a program presented by the Committee on Arts, Entertainment & Events called "Youth and Union" in Local 1180's SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) on July 10. Staff and union members spoke of their work/union experiences.

## Retired from work, not from the union

(Thank you IBT 237)



PHOTOS: GARY SCHLICHTER



From marching for health care reform in Washington with the Retired Members Chapter to cheering on the Staten Island Yankees to a Long Island wine tasting to a trip to the Dutchess County Fair, as well as Tai Chi, computer classes, dance classes, fitness walks, and seminars and workshops covering retiree benefits and/or bringing the latest information concerning everything from arthritis to Alzheimer's disease, Local 1180's Retiree Division keeps retired members busy and informed, and an active part of the union.

For information call the Retiree Division at 212-226-5800

## Scholarship named for former DEP PAA

The New York Water Environment Association has created a memorial scholarship in the memory of Lucy Grassano. Grassano was a Principal Administrative Associate and long-time employee of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Wastewater Treatment. The scholarship will be used to further the career of secretaries, administrative assistants,

and operators in the water quality field.

A committee has been established which will accept applications and award a scholarship at NYWEA's 2010 Annual Meeting this coming winter.

If you are in need of any further information, contact Robert Adamski at 718-833-7579.



## Residency bill passed

**BY A NEARLY UNANIMOUS VOTE**, the City Council voted July 29 to override the Mayor's veto of the repeal of the residency law. Effective immediately, all Local 1180 members with at least two years of city service are free to live in the New York counties adjacent to the five boroughs, or those next to them: i.e., Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, and Orange.

## PERSONAL NOTES

### CONGRATULATIONS

The *Communique* and its editorial committee congratulates writer **Adrienne Meryl-Stern** on her marriage to Edward Stern on August 1. Congratulations, also, to her mother, Renee Udcoff, PAA at HPD (Housing Preservation and Development) and her grandmother, **Adeline Schwartz**, an 1180 retired member.

Congratulations to **Earline Brown**, shop steward from DOHMH (Department of Health/Mental Health), on her retirement on May 29, 2009 after 38 years of city service. CWA 1180 wishes her well.

Congratulations to staff reps **LaChaune Hackett** and **Harlan Reid** and to PAA **Lincoln Bonner** on their graduation from Cornell University's Advanced Labor Union Leadership program. Reid and Bonner won first prize and Hackett second prize for their class projects.

### PASSINGS

Sincere condolences to Elmhurst Hospital Center shop steward **Priscilla Carrow** on the passing of her mother, Geraldine Evans. Priscilla is a Coordinating Manager at HHC's Elmhurst Hospital Center.

Our condolences to the family of **Harriet Gardner** who died on June 25. She retired from the Department of Health in 1976 where she was the first woman assistant director at the Bureau of Vital Records.

## CALENDAR

All meetings are held at 6 p.m. at the Local 1180 office at 6 Harrison Street, Manhattan, unless otherwise indicated. (Take the 1 train to Franklin or the A/C/E to Canal.) For more information, committee chairs can be contacted through the union office, 212-226-6565.

**September 1 (Tuesday)**  
Arts & Entertainment Committee  
(chair: Harlan Reid)

**September 2 (Wednesday)**  
People with Disabilities Committee  
(chair: Alan Goldblatt)

**September 3 (Thursday)**  
Equity Committee  
(chair: Gloria Middleton)

**September 8 (Tuesday)**  
Education Committee  
(chair: Linda Jenkins)

**Women's Committee**  
(chair: Bernice Selman)

**September 9 (Wednesday)**  
Community Services Committee  
(chair: Pat Ruffin)

**September 10 (Thursday)**  
Hispanic Committee  
(chair: Venus Williams)

**September 16 (Wednesday)**  
General Membership meeting at  
32 BJ, 101 Ave. of the Americas

**September 17 (Thursday)**  
Retired Members Chapter, 12:30 p.m.  
(chair: Adelle Rogers)

**September 23 (Wednesday)**  
Caribbean Heritage Committee  
(chair: Gina Strickland)

**October 1 (Thursday)**  
Equity Committee  
(chair: Gloria Middleton)

**October 6 (Tuesday)**  
Arts & Entertainment Committee  
(chair: Harlan Reid)

**October 7 (Wednesday)**  
People with Disabilities Committee  
(chair: Alan Goldblatt)

**October 8 (Thursday)**  
Hispanic Committee  
(chair: Venus Williams)

**October 13 (Tuesday)**  
Education Committee  
(chair: Linda Jenkins)

**October 14 (Wednesday)**  
Community Services Committee  
(chair: Pat Ruffin)

**October 15 (Thursday)**  
Retired Members Chapter, 12:30 p.m.  
(chair: Adelle Rogers)

**October 20 (Tuesday)**  
Women's Committee  
(chair: Bernice Selman)

**October 21 (Wednesday)**  
Membership Meeting

**October 28 (Wednesday)**  
Caribbean Heritage Committee  
(chair: Gina Strickland)



# Inside Communique

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Bill Thompson, Jr.

**Union Proud: HRF steward wants to build a movement **3****

**PAA test: The good, the bad, and the ugly **4****

**CWA CONVENTION Biden, Harken, and Solis: What they said **5****

**Learning how to retire: dos and don'ts **9****

## Communique wins awards

The *Communique* won numerous awards at contests sponsored by the Communications Workers of America (5), the Metro New York Labor Communications Council (3), and the International Labor Communications Association (6). We received first places in three categories: General Excellence, Best Front Page (pay equity), and Best News Story (Books and Rattles organizing) from CWA, as well as a Second Place for original cartoon and an Honorable Mention for Best Photograph.

At MNYLCC and at ILCA we won first places respectively for Best Graphic Design and Best Illustration for our cover, "It's Your Body. Take Care Of It." *Communique*, the radio show, won first and second place in the ILCA category Long Audio Programs. "Blaming Workers First" discussed the crisis in the auto industry from the workers' point of view, and "Equal Pay for Equal Work" discussed pay disparities based on gender.



## Family Day at 1180

**Board games, floor games, and food for all courtesy of the Arts and Entertainment Committee**

July 25 brought families to 1180 to play games, eat, and socialize and the lower level became a playground for a day. Photos from left: "Bingo," the one word you only want to hear yourself say; dunking like Mike with a little help from your friends; board game and posing handsome; Twister(ing) with your kids; and a smile to end it all.



PHOTOS: GARY SCHOICHE