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WINTER 2005

LOCAL ONE CONTINUES THE TRADITION AT RADIO CITY'S "CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR"



The Local One Crew at the world famous Radio City Music Hall's "Christmas Spectacular." Their dedication is measured in decades and their extensive experience results in a smooth and seamless show families remember all their lives.

Inside this issue:
News, People of Interest, Pictures and
Hints you might like to know

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***In charity there is no
excess.***

—Francis Bacon

On an unusually warm day in early November, we visited backstage at Cablevision's Radio City Music Hall and met some of the many stagehands that make the *Christmas Spectacular* not only a great show to see, but a New York City tradition. Regardless of the weather outside, it's Christmas inside at the Music Hall.

Once inside the brass clad stage door, we met Karen Affinito, the Public Relations Manager for Radio City Music Hall. She led us

downstairs to the stage level. We walked down a tiny hall, left the world of normal size humans, and entered the world of giants. As we stepped on the stage the 100 foot wide proscenium arch soared 60 feet above our heads. Looking out at about 6000 seats we were struck by the immensity and yet the strange intimacy of such a huge hall. Everything is size XXL. The gridiron is 105 feet in the air and can carry enormous amounts of weight. One can't escape the

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we move through the holiday season towards the end of a very successful 2005, there are several notable items that require mentioning.

The holidays are usually a happy and prosperous time at Radio City Music Hall's *Christmas Spectacular*. That spirit was diminished by the much publicized labor dispute between Cablevision and Musicians Union Local 802. Now settled, I will only submit that I offered to assist Local 802 with the hope that our members and others would not suffer the loss of this show, as well as full benefits and wages. My appreciation goes to those who supported us despite reading and hearing distortions from the press spins. For those who jumped to conclusions without the facts, see Local One's press release on the web for factual information. The lesson learned is to not always believe what you see or hear in the press but believe in Local One's commitment to what is honorable and right.

Our membership should be proud of the support you give your leadership in averting strike actions with our largest employer, the Metropolitan Opera House, and our newest employer, The Nokia Theatre's AEG Live. Your strength and influence clearly attained a new MET agreement that avoided wage and benefit freezes imposed on other labor organizations at The Opera House as well as an undesirable six year term that management was unsuccessful in imposing. While Nokia growing pains are expected, keep in mind that this contract now encompasses total scope and jurisdiction while gaining many new job opportunities with an employer who once boasted that there was no way the Union would get in. Welcome to Local One.

I am extremely pleased with our Political Action Committee as we continue to receive the newly found recognition of being a viable political influence. The elections saw all of our endorsed politicians claim victory, especially NY City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. He has offered thanks to Local One and the I. A., as well as an open line of communication with his administration in the future.

We continue our own battle with Cablevision over the still open agreement at Madison Square Garden. I am committed to fully focusing on convincing this employer to set aside their anger with our problems of the past and finally come to an Agreement by the end of this year on behalf of a terrific crew that proudly represents us in the arena and the theatre downstairs at MSG.

Your Trust Fund Trustees are extremely pleased and proud to report that the Pension Fund will distribute one million dollars in equal distribution of \$1,300 to each of our retirees and widows in time for Christmas.

Our continuous battle to preserve our medical plan will require additional adjustments in 2006 to stop further bleeding. We can confirm that our tiered system health plan has reduced our 2006 projected \$10.7 million deficit to \$5.9 million. Unfortunately, a continuing \$5.9 million deficit would soon bankrupt our plan and push us into what many other Unions are experiencing--total elimination of health coverage. We believe an additional 3 million dollars in savings is absolutely necessary to sustain ourselves with hope for help in the future that addresses persistent double figure health care cost increases. Our membership should expect a special meeting after the New Year to exchange updated information about this ongoing struggle.

In closing, I am pleading with the membership to understand the severity of what must be done with our health care. You must all understand that this is not only a fight undertaken by this Fund's Trustees, but a fight undertaken by all Local One brothers and sisters who will not tolerate the thought of our families someday going without health coverage.

I wish all of you Happy Holidays and much success in the upcoming New Year.

I remain in solidarity, fraternally yours,

Jim



RADIO CITY CARPENTRY CREW



Left to right, bottom row: Francis Rapp (12th Christmas Show season), Mike Dunleavy (10), Dave Adderly, Flyman (20); second row: Jose Pol (7), Mike Poveromo (7), Bill Seelig (1st), Kurt Ganzer (7), Alan Butcher (18), Gerard Fortunato, Sean Fox, Head Carpenter (10), Frank Dwyer, Jr. (3); third row up: John Corrigan (7), Tom Lowery (8), Bill Beysel (15), Steve Ried (3); fourth row up: Russel Mecionis, Jr. (1), Ryan Louie (3), Robert Bowman (6), Robert Ranellone (16); top row: Marchand Mc Reynolds, III (6), Vincent Roccisano (8), Gabe Harris (6). not pictured Kip Rackett (9).

feeling that this theatre was built for titans 20 feet tall. On Broadway a counterweight set has 4 to 5 lines, here there are 8 per set. The Broadway counterweights are 28-pound pig iron bricks, here they are 60 to 68 pound bricks made of iron or plasma cut steel.

itself, two are 70 feet by 16 feet, and the smaller one in the center is 70 feet by 14.5 feet. (For comparison, the payload doors on the Space Shuttle are 60 feet by 22.67 feet.)

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Our backstage tour began on the prompt side of the stage (many of the Radio City stagehands use the opera term *prompt side* for stage right) and, even before the curtain went up, we watched as the stagehands and the Rockettes did their almost choreographed moves around each other as the stage was readied for the final dress rehearsal. The work lights went off, the blue running lights came on and, after a brief announcement, the music began as the Rockettes climbed the stairs and got into position for the opening of the show. Once the Rockettes were in place, the red lights flashed overhead and a buzzing noise was heard as carpenters roped off access to the wings in preparation for the elevators to move.

There are three main elevators on the stage

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RADIO CITY ELECTRICS CREW



Left to right bottom row: Pete Walker (One Season), Tom Arrigoni (21), Mike LoBue (One), Nick Garcia (27), Ed Kramer (26), Tony Lamacchia (37), Marty Fuller, Head Electrician (30), John Lemacchia (42), Joe Faretta (27), Jimmy Kerwin (30), Walter Usiatynski (25), Mike Jenkins (4); second row up: Richard Rober (30), Joe Redmond (4), Otis Davis (25); third row up: Warren Davis (18), George Sennefelder (27), Chris Rober (36), Gene Travers (30), John Warburton (24); fourth row up: Tim Gorey (8), Rob Taylor (21), Eric Titcomb (27), Mike Scaperotta (11); top row: Shaun Lamacchia (8), Brendon Tendrich (One), Glen Ilovichny (27)

Once the three main elevators are leveled, a center turntable, 43 feet in diameter, can rotate either clockwise or counterclockwise at two speeds, and can also be raised and lowered independently. Brother Chris Rober (37 years at the Music Hall) is in charge of maintaining the hydraulics. The system is still the original water, yes water, hydraulic system. There is an open reservoir in the basement where the water to drive the great lifts is stored. Since it is water and not oil, the few leaks that seldom occurs can simply be cleaned up with a mop. This raises other issues though: water doesn't lubricate and bacteria grows in it. To solve the germ problem an anti-bacterial agent is added to the water and to solve the lubrication problem, water soluble cutting oil is added. When asked about the most memorable effect he has done with the hydraulics, Chris immediately mentions the time Peter Allen rose through the blackened stage floor on the rotating turntable, looking to the audience as though he were floating up, spinning in the air.

The elevators are ably run by Brother Eric

Titcomb who has been with the Music Hall for 27 years. At his console, Eric runs his cues and acts as a traffic cop. Through the din of the backstage noise comes his steady voice as he warns "Stand clear: Hat people coming through" and those lingering off stage make way for the dressers who, each carrying at least four large Rockette soldier hats, quickly pass by. Later, during the "Living Nativity" portion of the show, Eric's voice could be heard telling the dancers: "Camels coming through dears, Camels coming through!" Eric runs the stage elevators, orchestra elevator, 43-foot diameter turntable, contour curtain, steam curtain, work lights and footlights. His control board is the gleaming 1932 brass original. In 1999 a computer control console was installed to allow for 10 preset positions for each elevator, but the main control panel used for every performance is still the 73-year-old original. During World War II the Federal Government had guards placed at the Music Hall because the elevator system design is what was used on our aircraft carriers, making the Music Hall stage a wartime military secret!

RADIO CITY PROPERTIES CREW



Left to right bottom row: Ted Wondsel, Property Master (14), Vito Alongi (10); second row up: Rob Toscano (2), Tommy McDonough (12), Glen Ingram (6), Kenny McDonough (14), Tom Stewart (7), Tom Fedigan (First), Andy Bentz (2); third row up: Will Smith (4), Anthony Lombardo (18), Mike Gillin (4), Danny Paulos (10); top row: Jeff Wondsel (3), Robert Sepulveda (4)

Brother Tony “Bumpy” Lamacchia, who has worked backstage at the Music Hall since 1968, assures us that “with Eric on the board there is nothing to worry about”. Bumpy has been driving the Band Car (the part of the deck where the orchestra is situated) for 35 years. The Band Car is a platform the exact shape of the orchestra pit that can be driven upstage and downstage to the pit elevator and then lowered to allow the audience to view the stage. As with everything else in the Music Hall, the Band car is a pretty impressive piece of machinery. Bumpy has pictures of it holding 60 musicians, two harps and a Steinway piano. When the car is in motion Brother Tim Gorey stays next to the umbilical cord of cables to ensure its safety. The entire massive apparatus is driven by a 130 volt 5 horsepower DC motor drawing almost 60 amps. During the show, Bumpy drives the Band Car by lying in its base on his belly searching for marks on the floor. Once it is in position, Bumpy has 12 to 15 seconds to connect the plugs before the band starts to play.

Many of the stagehands have been with Radio City for decades. Everyone knows where everyone should be during the show. Even with the various carpenters, electricians, prop people and wardrobe folks in constant motion backstage, there is still room enough for a dancer swing to rehearse her steps offstage in perfect time with the Rockettes on stage. All the while, the new LED screen is in use upstage.

The new LED screen, added this September, is 70 feet wide by 40 feet high and weighs in at more than 23 tons. It is brand new and beautiful. According to the house flyman Brother Dave Adderley (20 years at the Music Hall), who showed us the rigging for the LED screen, the screen is so heavy that it had to be anchored to the structural steel of the building rather than simply spotting it to the gridiron. It hangs on three counterweight sets. Two slave arbors have about 4 tons each and the main arbor holds the rest of the weight. Empty, the main arbor weighs nearly 2 tons.

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THEATRICAL
PROTECTIVE UNION
LOCAL No. ONE,
IATSE, AFL-CIO, CLC



SPOTLITE

The Official Newsletter of
Local No. One, IATSE

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ALL QUESTIONS, COMMENTS
AND SUBMISSIONS GREATLY
APPRECIATED

Upcoming Monthly Membership Meeting
dates are:

December 18, 2005

January 22, February 26, March 26, 2006

**COME TO YOUR
UNION MEETINGS!
IT'S INFORMATIVE AND
PART OF YOUR DUTY AS
A MEMBER.**

Organized in 1886, Local Number One has served the entertainment community in theatre, television, and other entertainment venues proudly and professionally. With almost three thousand members covering an expanding jurisdiction throughout the greater New York metropolitan area, our experience and knowledge covers the range of expertise required for any application. From fabrication to installation to safe operation, we can do it.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT JAMES J. CLAFFEY, JR.; VICE PRESIDENT WILLIE WALTERS; TREASURER DONALD B. KLEINSCHMIDT; SECRETARY ROBERT SCORE; CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES JOHN M. DIAZ, SR.; THEATRICAL BUSINESS MANAGERS MICHAEL WEKSELBLATT AND KEVIN MCGARTY; TELEVISION BUSINESS MANAGERS ROBERT NIMMO AND EDWARD McMAHON III; TRUSTEES WILLIAM NGAI AND DANIEL THORN; REPLACEMENT ROOM OFFICER PAUL DEAN, SR.; ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY EDMOND SUPPLE, SR.; AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY ROBERT (TOBY) McDONOUGH

ANNUAL LOCAL ONE HOLIDAY PARTY

Members and their families are cordially invited to attend. Plenty of food, refreshments, and Holiday music will be provided with a possible appearance by Santa Claus!

WHERE: 1050 RESTAURANT, 50TH ST & 10TH AVE., IN MANHATTAN
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2005, 3 TO 7 PM

*The Officers and Staff of
Local One
wishes all our
members
and their families
a warm Happy Holidays and
much prosperity
for the coming year.*

BROTHER JOHN CAGGIANO RETIRES AFTER 35 YEARS



From hanging around during the "Jackie Gleason Show" to being the long time House Electrician of the Shubert Theatre, Brother John Caggiano retired from Local One on September 30th. President Jim Claffey (left) presents John with a 35 year membership pin on his last day in the theatre. Our very best of wishes to John and his wife Susan for a well deserved life change. (Photos by Randy Morrison)

FRANK ACQUAVIVA MAKES HIS 45TH APPEARANCE AT THE LABOR DAY PARADE



Brother Frank A. Acquaviva and his wife Margaret of the Usherette Union have been marching in the Labor Day parade for over 45 years. In 1960 Frank drove the vehicle for Penny "Blondie" Singleton, President of AGVA, and Ralph Bellamy, President of Actor's Equity. Frank is certainly one of the longest living member walking in the parade!

A NOTE FROM CHAIRMAN JOHN DIAZ

Since June 2005, I have been working with the New York Committee of Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) to help fight battles for you with both the State of New York and the Federal Government. The battle with the State of New York is for better Workers Compensation benefits and the battle with the Federal Government was regarding the four bills just passed that jeopardized OSHA and our safety.

Before I took on these battles, I researched the laws and the history behind them. I read with great interest about the people who created them or stood behind them and about the people who changed the Workers Compensation laws over the years. I became amazed as to where these people first met and how they moved on to Albany. I am now familiar with them and now see their names every day of my working life.

I read that most of the changes came about as a result of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire that occurred in Greenwich Village New York City March 25, 1911. At this fire, which was one of the most deadly fires in New York City history, 146 immigrant workers – both men and women (26 men 120 women) – lost their lives. As a result, this one fire became the focal point for the changes. The cries for help came not only from the workers but also from the wealthy women who met at the Metropolitan Opera House on March 31, 1911. Women such as Alva Smith Vanderbilt Belmont, Mary Drier and Frances Perkins took the fight from the Metropolitan Opera House to Albany where they met the Tammany twins Wagner and Smith.

Now as I read about this history, not only am I reading about my place of employment (the Metropolitan Opera House) but I am seeing people's names that I am familiar with going into work (Belmont Room). In addition, I found out that the society I grew up hearing was the most corrupted political machine in the history of New

York, was actually comprised of the very same politicians that got these laws passed. These are the very same laws that I am now fighting to protect.

Tammany Hall grew to become a political machine. As most people knew it, Tammany Hall was really called The Society of Saint Tammany. It was the way for Irish immigrants to get jobs and keep them for their fellow Irish immigrants. As times changed, so did Tammany. More immigrants were becoming German, Italians, Polish, and Russian Jews. Tammany Hall would soon begin to use these immigrants to keep the political machine running.

Under orders from the then Tammany boss Charles (Silent) Murphy, New York State Senator Robert Wagner (a German immigrant at eight years old) and Assemblyman Alfred Smith (later Governor then Presidential candidate) joined forces with the wealthy women of the Metropolitan Opera House and together they changed and rewrote the Workers Compensation laws, as well as writing the Wagner Act that not only protects our unions but your rights to join one too.

Protect Workers Compensation by writing your elected representatives

Almost 95 years have passed, and now with supposedly more honest politicians in office than the days of Tammany Hall, we find that today's politicians are changing the laws for the worse and hurting the American workforce. In my mind I now wonder, who are these honest politicians truly working for? The Workers Compensation Law in New York State has not changed since 1992. The maximum payment is \$400 -- the lowest in the United States. This payment has not been increased; however, the cost of Workers Compensation has tripled during those same years. The OSHA rules that were just changed made it harder to bring the employer up on charges. If you win the penalty is still the same; however, if you lose, it is now triple the legal fees.

I am an Officer of this Local. If I do not come through for my members, then I know I will not be elected again. Let us tell our Senators and members of the Assembly and Congress that if they do not start to represent us appropriately, then maybe they will not get our vote. Write to these people and tell them to do their jobs and fight for you. Do it in the name of the 146 brothers and sisters who gave up their lives just doing their jobs.

YOUR PENSION FUND FUNDING by DON KLIENSCHMIDT

I confess that some of the facts stated in this article have been liberally stolen from *The NY Times Magazine* cover article, "We Regret To Inform You That You No Longer Have A Pension", which appeared on October 30, 2005.

A sixty-five year old who has a \$100,000 savings or 401K balance could go to an insurance company and buy a life time annuity at today's low rates which would pay them \$654 a month. So, if they had an "annuity fund" balance of \$400,000 they could buy one for \$2,616 a month, which would last until they draw their final breath. Hummm...does that mean "my" pension at sixty-five years of age with 38 years of credit (\$3,000 a month) will be worth the same as having an "extra" \$458,562 in my annuity account? How's that for a union benefit! Add Social Security's present value and I am already a millionaire! We all are, or will be, when we retire "thanks" in no small part to the "real value" of our pension plan. One of our recent retirees told me his financial planner said his early 55/30-lifetime pension benefit was worth over \$600,000 at today's current rates.

I did not realize that the first private pension plan was offered in 1875 by American Express, a stagecoach delivery service. Railroads soon followed suit where employees were required to work a minimum 30 years to qualify for benefits. This was a "management" tactic to help retain employees. But it wasn't until after World War II when the legendary labor leader John L. Lewis staged a strike to win pensions for miners that "unions" began to look at pensions as a "negotiated" benefit. This eventually led to a so-called pension stampede, and by 1960 (our pension plan was started in 1963) 40% of the private-sector labor market was covered. However, companies might have established plans, but many were derelict when it came to funding them. An example was Studebaker, who agreed to pension increases three times between 1954 and 1959 only

to collapse in 1963. Auto workers, some who had been with the company as long as 40 years, lost the bulk of their pensions because the promise was on paper and not in the bank. And this was not the exception.

I like to believe our forefathers, who established the Pension Fund of Local No. One, took all of this into account. No promises accepted, only \$\$\$\$ that we would invest ourselves. Thus came into existence the multi-employer Pension Fund of Local No. One. Yes, it took a strike by Actors' Equity to get the ball rolling, but in the end, our fund was formed with our share of N. Y. City's box office tax on legitimate theatre productions, referred to as the 4.5% tax-relief award. The rest came from our long negotiating history throughout our industry.

In 1974, to stem companies from defaulting on their promises, congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, or ERISA, which, among other protections, established the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp. to insure private pensions. All private pension funds, whether a single employer or a multi-employer fund like ours, pay a per-participant insurance premium to the P.B.G.C. to help pay for company pension plan defaults. This is what you read about in today's papers when companies such as United, US Airways, Bethlehem Steel, and Delphi file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and stick the P.B.G.C. with their pension liabilities. Companies who made promises larger than the money they put aside to fund them were based on the assumption that future successes in the marketplace would fund future liabilities in their pension plans. "Our" premiums help to bail them out, although sometimes at a much lower rate than originally promised. However, this is *not* how *our* Pension Plan was set-up.

The Pension Fund of Local No. One, I.A.T.S.E. promises a monthly pension benefit based upon the *monies received* through negotiations, *not monies promised*, and an assumed historical rate of investment return on the funds already collected. It is this combination of collection and investment that "guarantees" your pension benefits will be there for you

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***"YOUR" Pension
Money is safe and
in the bank***

TUBE TALK TOO

by
Ed Mc Mahon

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our members and their families a happy, healthy and safe holiday season. I would also like to give thanks to our older members, retirees, and former officers who have built a strong foundation for this Local. We continue to preserve and improve our contracts in television. We have expanded our jurisdiction and secured numerous outside jobs that have provided new opportunities for our brothers and sisters to work. This is only made possible by the talent and quality of workmanship that our members bring to their respective workplaces.

At CBS, the Broadcast center has been revived with the return of *The Guiding Light* soap opera. The heads of Studio 42 and 45 have performed admirably, along with providing full time work for extra men in the studio. The carpenter, electric, and service crews continue to be busy. These additional earnings to the Local should provide a significant increase to our Pension and Welfare Funds. We have worked hard to do what is best for the entire membership. It is rewarding to see our members working at CBS and providing for their families.

At ABC, all Studios continue to be open, however, in T.V. 1 *The Millionaire*, is scheduled to close Christmas week. I kindly ask all heads of department to please keep in mind our unemployed Local One brothers and sisters.

At NBC, *Saturday Night Live* and *The Today Show* continue to shine for our members. We have met with legal and labor relations to address scheduling and crewing of remotes to protect our jurisdiction. I commend shop steward Pip Biancamano for his effort and dedication to the Local on this matter.

At Fox T.V., their *Morning Show* and *Evening News* continue to roll a long. *The Martha Stewart Show*, located at Chelsea Studios on 26th Street, and

Metro Studios continue to provide valuable man hours of work for the members. Gotham Scenic Shop, under Brother John Prisco, continues to provide quality work and much needed employment for shop employees.

On the outside, we continued to impress the Boxing World with our talented Local One members. We recently crewed an event for F.I.S.T. (Fighters Initiative for Support and Training) and J. A. B. (Joint Association of Boxers) a charitable dinner and two fine nights of boxing were enjoyed by all, special thanks to Brothers Charlie Deverna, Manny Diaz, Carmine Gallo and Jim Burke for their outstanding representation of Local One. Our brother member and professional boxing referee, Arthur Mercante Jr. was on hand at the F.I.S.T. event to work the bouts. He has been an honorable ambassador for Local One to the boxing community.

We are also entering our second season of work with the *NBA on ESPN* and ABC at Times Square Studios. As we approach the Holiday season and the end of the year 2005, we can proudly reflect on our accomplishments and work together.

We will face new challenges. I believe with our dedicated Executive Board and strong International President Short, Local One will continue to be successful in the Theatre and Television Industry. We are truly blessed to be a part of the greatest Union in the world. Happy Holidays to all.

NEW YORK CITY OPERA IN JAPAN



Earlier this year, IATSE members toured Japan with the New York City Opera as part of the Aichi World Expo, stopping in Tokyo and Nagoya. Left to right: Kerry Smith, Joe Mensching, Pete Campbell, Chris Robinson, Skip Kirtland, Rob Baxter, Justin Borowinski and Dennis Robbins. Kneeling: Mark Walters and Marty Prudenti.

RADIO CITY:

During Santa's first entrance, as he is being lowered on a snowflake which rotates to reveal Santa in front of a chimney, there are snowflakes falling on the LED screen upstage. Later during the "Here comes Santa Claus" number the nearly 60 live Santas onstage are augmented by many more on the LED screen to create a multitude dancing into the heavens. It is a welcome addition to the show and adds just the right amount of pizzazz.

Local One members seem to find a home at Radio City Music Hall. Brother John Lamacchia, the Head Stage Electrician and assistant to House Head Electrician Brother Marty Fuller, has been at the Music Hall for 43 years. Joe Redmond, who apprenticed at the Music Hall, said that in addition to himself there

are other stagehands who also did their apprenticeships at the Music Hall and are still working there today.

We spoke to many Local One members in addition to those mentioned above and could not have written this article without their generosity, courtesy and contributions. There were so many of you who were so forthcoming and welcoming that our pens could not keep up with the flood of information. Our thanks go in no particular order other than how they appear in our notes to Brothers Vinnie Roccisano, Fran Rapp, Nick Garcia, Jeff Wondsel, Mike Dunleavy, and Rob Taylor.

Thank you for upholding the good name of Local One with good work in such truly "Spectacular" fashion.



Left: Brother Eric Titcomb at his console downstage right, with the original control panel behind him.

Right: The Brothers stage left pausing during their backstage juggling act. Scenery is stored in all available areas--in the wings and trap space underneath--using the stage elevators during the show.

**DON** (Continued from Page 9):

when you retire and until your death or the death of your surviving spouse. It is the conservative and prudent investment of those monies which re-enforces that promise and pays for any future increase or improvement.

By the way, here is a sobering national statistic--Remember in 1960 when more than 40% of the private work force was covered by pensions? Today that number is less than 20% and dropping.

Companies like Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Dell, and Starbucks, to name a few, never created pension plans and have at best 401K plans which promise nothing more than what is paid into or "matched" by the employer, usually 3%. The investing of those monies and their results, not unlike our own self-directed Annuity Fund, is the responsibility of the individual with no promises for any future benefits made by the employer.

When retirement comes for these employees, they may not have enough to live on if they did not invest wisely, and most people do not, because they will not have a pension to fall back on.

So, when you read about the horrors of retirees losing part or all of their retirement benefits, because some company has declared bankruptcy or because a retiree ran out of savings, you can sleep good at night knowing that "your" pension money is safe and in the bank, invested for the long term. And, it will be there for "you" for the rest of your life!

God bless the union!

Fraternally yours,

Donald B. Kleinschmidt
Treasurer

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President James Claffey pays the world famous Apollo Theatre brothers and sisters a visit during the set up of "It's Showtime at the Apollo"