

SERVING THE LOCAL 825 MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS VOL. 5 ISSUE 5

Local 825 pays tribute to its retirees Closing in on 100, a 70-year member looks back



Greg Lalevee and John Wood traveled to Fayetteville, Pa., to recognize the lifetime achievements of Nathan Eccard as an operating engineer whose work for three IUOE locals spanned a lifetime. The 97-year-old veteran learned to operate a bulldozer during the Depression by studying the movements of a 12-yearold engineer. From his first job at 70-cents an hour, Nathan went on to earn higher wages and important health, welfare and pension benefits. Having achieved financial security, he enjoys a comfortable retirement not far from the Maryland state line, about 26 miles from where he was born. Page 3.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

7 - Labor Day UNION HOLIDAY

8 – District 1 Meeting Kerri Brooke Caterers 755 S. White Horse Pike, Hammonton

9 – District 2 Meeting Ramada Plaza 160 Frontage Road, Newark

13 - Rosh Hashanah

14 – District 3 Meeting Russian Hall 464 Outwater Lane, Garfield

16 - District 4 Meeting Holiday Inn 68 Crystal Run Road, Middletown, NY

16 - Health Fair, District 4 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Holiday Inn 68 Crystal Run Road, Middletown, NY

22 – Yom Kippur

23 – PAC Meeting 6 p.m. Hilton East Brunswick 3 Tower Center Boulevard East Brunswick

27 - Third Annual IUOE Local 825 Motorcycle Poker Run

OCTOBER 5 – District 1 Meeting Kerri Brooke Caterers 755 S. White Horse Pike, Hammonton, NJ Blood Bank 4-7:30 p.m.

7 – District 2 Meeting Holiday Inn, 2870 Hwy. 35, Hazlet

7 - Blood Bank 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Holiday Inn

12 – District 3 Meeting Holiday Inn, 1000 International Drive, Mt. Olive, NI

12 - Blood Bank 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Holiday Inn

12 – Columbus Day

14 - District 4 Holidav Inn 68 Crystal Run Road, Middletown

14 - Health Fair 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Kerri Brooke Caterers, 755 S. White Horse Pike, Hammonton, NJ

Contact Information

Local 825 Headquarters

65 Springfield Avenue, 3rd FL Springfield, NJ 07081 (973) 671 - 6900 (973) 921 - 2918 FAX

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Greg Lalevee, Business Manager



Keeping promises: why our retirees matter

t our annual meeting on July 13 we singled out nearly 50 long-term retirees for their service in categories of 50, 55, 60, 65 and 70 years.

Although we typically host retiree get-togethers to recognize service and maintain the friendships and camaraderie that have formed over decades of working together, we wanted to do something more this time around.

Why? As Dick Cardell put it (see story on page 4), to show how important it is to keep a promise. Throughout our working lives, the Local has promised to be there for us. This is one way to demonstrate that we are true to our word.

Equally – or maybe more – important are the benefits that our retirees rely on to live in health and comfort in their senior years.

It also shows our younger members that - sooner or later - "someday" comes for all of us. And there is no better place to be than Local 825 when planning for "someday."

70-vear veteran

We were happy to visit with one of our longest serving members,, Nathan Eccard, 97, and celebrate his 70-year membership. Nathan lives comfortably in his double-wide mobile



ELEC continues to promote economic development and public policies that support infrastructure, pipelines, and construction that leads to

Health & Welfare office NY Training Center 65 Springfield Avenue, 2nd FL Middletown Training Center Springfield, NJ 07081 6 Wesley Court (973) 671 - 6800 Middletown, NY 10941 (973) 921 - 0706 FAX Office: (845) 692-3393

NJ Training Center 338 Deans Rhode Hall Rd. Dayton, NJ 08810 (732) 798-2170 (732) 798-2175 FAX

home in Fayetteville, Pa., and still drives his 2003 Ford F150 Lariat. His interesting history of an operating engineer is told on page 3. We feature several other retirees begin-

ning on page 4, as they share a little about their lives in retirement and discuss how important their years in the union and their benefits are to them today.

Tappan Zee construction tour

Also in this issue, John Wood, Mark Longo, Daniel Ortega and I toured the Tappan Zee Bridge construction site by boat in June and were impressed by all the cranes and the progress being made.

Giving Back

We thank our members for their volunteer work ... in this issue, some helped "spruce up" the Wawayanda location and others prepared Wood Park in Cinnaminson Township for construction of pitching cages for local youth.

Poker Run – 3rd straight

Finally, our Third Annual Poker Run has been scheduled for September 27, see page 10 for details and signup information.

jobs for members.

Wawayanda Office

96 Bates Gates Road

(845) 374-2564 FAX

(845) 374-2559

Wawayanda, NY 10973

Our current focus is advocating for the federal Highway Trust Fund.

We encourage all members to follow ELEC on Facebook and Twitter. See page 9 for more ELEC information.

ELEC Office

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Union Plus®

(offered through Wells Fargo Home Mortgage) Debra Botulinski (908) 608-2013

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Operating dozers since the '30s, Nathan Eccard loved life at the controls

By the time today's average Operating En-gineer began working, Nathan C. Eccard had already helped to build the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Baltimore Tunnel, the New York Thruway and the Hope Creek nuclear power plant in Salem, New Jersey.

Today, at 97, the Pennsylvania native enjoys his retiree benefits and looks back at a long and rewarding career as a heavy equipment operator who loved his work, his life and his wife, Eunice before she passed away 14 years ago.

Nathan was born on Feb. 10, 2018, in his parents' log cabin on Bagtown Road (longsince renamed Crystal Road) in Mt. Lena, Maryland, southeast of Hagerstown.

His parents, Claude and Bernice Eccard, operated a fruit farm, growing mostly peaches but also apples, raspberries and strawberries. One of 11 children, Nathan grew up helping his parents on the farm.

Learning his trade

As a youngster growing up in the Great Depression, Nathan would pass the time sitting on dirt banks, watching bulldozers move mountains and build roads that connected places like Hagerstown with Fredericks. He learned to operate a bulldozer by watching them work, over and over.

Toward the end of the 1930s, a local contractor got the job of straightening out a bad curve in one of the local roads. Nathan begged for a chance to work and his career as an operating engineer was launched.

70-cents an hour

In 1939, as an experienced dozer man, Nathan was hired at 70-cents-an-hour to work on the Harrisburg-to-Pittsburgh section of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. An average weekly paycheck was \$27.

He joined the IUOE Local 37 out of Baltimore on Feb. 3. 1941.

"You only got paid for

hours you worked. If it rained, they sent you home. Being a WPA (Works Projects Administration) job, you could only work eight hours a day. But if something came up where you had to work over, the foreman wouldn't put it in his book. Then on a rainy day they'd give

you a couple hours to make it up."

The job lasted until 1942. By then, the United States was at war on two fronts.

Supporting the war effort

To support the war effort, the Glenn L. Martin company received a \$5.5 million contract to build two plants to manufacture military aircraft at the Middle River Airport. The job

was 80 miles from home, but Nathan jumped at the opportunity to help build the runways.

Nathan and Eunice married in 1947 and after that, a succession of jobs took the young couple to as many as seven states. Nathan would research where the big jobs were,



The IUOE "Good Standing For Life" membership card.

then he and his wife would pack up in a mobile home and go after them.

NY Thruwav and Local 825

In 1952 he travelled to Newburgh, NY, and was hired to work on the New York Thruway. As a member in good standing with IUOE Local 37, he obtained a work permit

> from Local 825 and began a relationship that was to last more than 60 years.

Thruway work was steady for more than two years. At the end of each day, he'd look forward to a home-cooked meal with his wife in their mobile home. There was a trailer park that filled up with fellow operating engineers and every now and then, they'd change locations to be near the next worksite.

They were happy with their way of life but decided that constant moving would not be conducive to raising or educating children and so the couple did not have children.

From airfields to the underground

When his Thruway work was done, Nathan remained in the area and built the runway at Newburgh's Stewart Field Airport. He returned to Marvland after that to work on the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel from 1956 to 1957.

Months later, in September 1958, he ob-

tained a permit from the northern Virginia Local 77 and was hired to work on the 10,000-acre site of the new Dulles International Airport, 26 miles west of Washington, D.C. The job kept him busy until 1961 or 62.

Return to the Garden State

At that time in Clinton Township, Hunterdon County, work had begun on two dams that

> would contain the Round Valley Reservoir. The Eccards pulled up stakes and headed back to New Jersey for a job that lasted through 1965.

> Nathan's final job was working on the Hope Creek Nuclear Power Plant in Salem County, which was built over a 12-

year period from 1974 to 1986.

From his first job that paid 70 cents an hour, Nathan ended his working career at \$16 / hr. which also allowed him to make \$22 an hour operating a big loader, which became \$44 in overtime. He earned \$56,000 when he retired in 1985 at age 68.

Comfortable in retirement

Retired now for 30 years. Nathan resides comfortably in a double-wide mobile home in Colonial Estates, Fayettville, Pa., 26 miles from his birthplace on the Pennsylvania Maryland border. He drives his 2003 Ford Lariat to the local Walmart for groceries and visits one of his sisters in Hagerstown.

He enjoys meeting with friends, swapping stories about construction jobs and the heavy equipment he operated for years.

"The union gave us a better life," Nathan says. "I never really thought about living this long but the union benefits have certainly taken care of me."



Greg likes Nathan's construction photo of the Hope Creek nuclear plant.



In 1939. 40 hours of work earned \$30.00 from the PA Turnpike, with 30 cents going to social security.

Retirees still unite to remember old times

Their stories and lifestyles offer a window to the future

There are many retirees who have left their 40-year status in the rear-view mirror and racked up a considerable number of years. Here are snapshots of some of these retirees, who recall their service and provide a glimpse of what life after work is like.

Grover Blend, 65 years

Despite being retired, Grover Blend and Patricia, his wife of nearly 61, years keep very busy with their eight children, sixteen grandkids, and four great grandchildren.

His 65 years with Local 825 provide important memories. Working on jobs throughout New Jersey, on almost all the pieces of heavy equipment, cranes were his specialty."

He found his affiliation with Local 825 to be "a great opportunity." Its benefits continue with his pension checks and excellent health insurance. His advice to those following in his footsteps is to "do your best work and stay in touch with your union."

Richard Cardell, 59 years



Richard Cardell praises Local 825 as a union that keeps its word.

"They delivered on the pension and benefits and supplied a lifetime of good career memories and close friends," Richard says. A member

since 1956, he says he was paid very well to do work that he loved as a crane operator.

"It was fantastic," he remembers. "I trained as an oiler, picked up gear on a hook, locked it up, warmed it up, and ran the rig to get the kinks out ... I was the boss."

Today, he enjoys keeping in touch with his fellow retirees and chatting about the good old days, when he isn't with his bride of 59 years, Eleanor.

Joseph Hobbs, 55 years

Joe started working as a mechanic and a welder with Cummins diesel, then Hoffman cranes.

"I did everything they asked me to," says Joe. He worked at the Meadowlands sports complex, Giants Stadium (the first one) and the Racetrack in 1972.

"The union was a good place to be ... espe-

cially with the benefits. They always kept me working." Joe retired in 1994. He built a house in North Carolina and stayed there 9 years but couldn't sit still and started welding again."

Married, Joe has a daughter and granddaughter and now lives in Hammonton.

Frank Feola, 55 years

Frank Feola served in the Navy and on his discharge in 1956 went to work for Cummins in Newark.

"We had more security than if you were outside the union," Frank says. "Everytime you called in, everyone always tried to help you. All the dispatchers tried to keep you going ... they shared the work, even when it was scarce."

"I remember Joe Whittles kept after every company I ever worked for to make sure I never lost any benefits ... he was always on top of them."

Today at 81, Frank and his wife Virginia live quietly in East Amwell Township, Hunterdon County.

Frank Vaccaro, Jr., 54 years



Local 825 has a family dynasty in Frank Vaccaro Jr., which includes his father, uncle, and son. Frank got his permit and joined the union in 1960, operating everything from cranes and bulldozers, to scrapers, and loaders.

"I've been a lead engineer and a shop steward, too ... anything for a day's pay," he grins. "I gave my life to this local and it has been very good to me."

Frank misses the work and the camaraderie of the men. As for retirement, Frank is finding it hard because, "Reading the paper and sitting on the porch is not for me, I'm a go-getter."

If he could advise operating engineers just entering the union, Frank would tell them to take an interest in their jobs, be productive, and do their best to make the local look good, since they can count of it taking excellent care of them in return.

Jim Leo, 50 years



Retired in 2008 and enjoys his time as a frequent golfer at the Warrenbrook golf course, where he also works one day a week.

Jim began working as a laborer in 1965 and eventually became a foreman. A fascination with heavy equipment made him an easy target for a Local 825 business agent.

"All I needed to do was get in the seat and make it run," he remembers.

Jim learned to run excavators – loaders, backhoes, mostly dirt work – and was a lead engineer for 30 years.

"I loved it," Jim says now. "To me the local was everything."

"The union benefits are fabulous. When you're younger, you take it for granted ... it's part of the package," Jim says. "When you get older, you see how great it really is. "This is a terrific organization."

Harold Drugac, 50 years



Harold Drugac felt honored to join Local 825 in 1965. A certified welder and mechanic, he was happy to be a union man, doing the work he loved.

"It was wonderful, getting up every day,

with steady jobs in locations all over New Jersey," he said. He recalls his "brother-workers, always willing to help each other work as a team. "The lead engineers were always there to steer us in the right direction."

Harold misses both the work and "the guys" now that he is retired. "The pension helps a lot, and the annuity fund was always there for us."

Danise, his wife of more than 60 years, is enjoying having him home. When he is not spending time with her, he is fishing, hunting, trail-walking, meeting weekly with his buddies and checking items off their bucket lists.

Neil Esposito, 45 years



Neil Esposito says that today's training center for operators didn't exist when he got his permit in 1968 and became a member in 1978.

"You started out like an apprentice.

My father and his three brothers were in this local as well. When I returned from the Air Force, my dad headed me toward operator work."

Enjoying the retirement schedule of not getting up early and being able to tinker around the house and garden, Neil is very grateful for his union membership.



John Wood and Greg Lalevee present Vincent Locascio with his plaque recognizing his 55 years of service to Local 825.

Steven Fastiggi, 44 years



Steven Fastiggi was initiated into Local 825 in July 1971 and retired in 2000. "I was a dirt man, did cherry pickers, and ran all the equipment, except the cranes," he reminisced. "Everyday was fun."

A first generation American, he took pride in his work. "All I ever wanted was to be part of this union ... it was a dream come true. I had a passion for heavy equipment because my dad was a contractor and I was all about the metal."

Living with his daughter, cutting the grass, he is happy to own a mini excavator. "But, I miss the work, the laughs, and fun," he says. "Everyday was an adventure."

Lee Hubbard, 42 years



A former member of United States Marine Corp, Lee Hubbard did rigging for the military and was trained by them. After his serving his country, he joined Local 825 in 1973 and served on its

Executive Board for a decade. He worked on the old Newark Airport doing a great deal of asphalt and dirt work.

"I liked the work, the men were great, and the jobs were good," he recalls. "We were like a family, watching out of each other. Even after a 40-hour work week, we welcomed overtime."

Lee advises aspiring operating engineers to "Go to college, get an education and learn the equipment. Getting into this local is fantastic. You'll be able to support your family."

Larry Birkhead, 42 years



Starting his career with a permit in June of 1969, Larry Birkhead joined Local 825 in 1973 and retired in 2012. Operating everything he was allowed to – excavators, front-end loaders, and bulldozers – were all a

part of his days. Larry loved the work, his fellow operators and the way the workers took care of one another.

"Of course, I liked pay day the best," he joked. "When I first retired, I missed the work but I'm very busy now," Larry says, "and I don't miss the commute."

"Membership in this union has meant life-long friends and security. The pension is there and I know healthcare will be there too when I need it.

These members were recognized at the semiannual meeting for their years of service:

50 YEARS

Louis Caropreso Harold Drugac Edward Flanagan Jr. Robert F. Garthwaite James Leo Joseph Sanzari William Seal John Smith Raymond Gauthier Ronald Olori Angelo D'Alessio Frank York

55 YEARS

David Dahncke Sr. Joseph Hobbs Robert Mabie Edward Robbins Lloyd J. Spillane Robert Dierling Francis Feola James Fraynert Vincent Locascio Bernard Rexford Louis Root

60 YEARS

Paul Breece Robert DeGraw Richard Fanning Salvatore Giangrande William Heitman Leo Hogan Vincent Mosera Philip Sargent Raymond Schoonmaker Wayne Sager Robert Dering Joseph F. Drebes William H. Styles

65 YEARS

Phillip Beane Grover Blend Charles E. Butler Alexander Natale John O'Berg Earl C. Poore Kenneth Shinn John Shively John Sullivan Harold Yingling Dominick Daddetto

70 YEARS

Nathan Eccard

Members cross the Princeton Ridge with 42-inch pipe

Work through 90-plus degree heat keeps Williams Transco on schedule

ocal 825 is at work on portions of Williams Transco's \$650 million natural gas pipeline through the environmentally sensitive area known as the Princeton Ridge. When complete, the new line will transport gas to produce enough energy to heat about 2 million homes.

Three sections are included in the Princeton Ridge line: Pleasant Run, Leidy Lane and Skillman Loop. The Leidy Lane section is complete and work is under way on the Pleasant Run and Skillman Loop sections.

Great care is being taken at every step to install the 42-inch pipeline, using narrow rights of way and taking other steps to reduce environmental impacts to the areas and nearby homeowners.

Horizontal directional drilling (HDD) is done to tunnel under streams, wetlands and roads instead of digging open trenches. Temporary sound barriers are installed to reduce noise levels for nearby residents and the areas are carefully restored to conditions that in many instances are better than they were in previously.

Business Manager Greg Lalevee was joined by Lead Engineers Pat Flynn and Joe Eichele recently to review progress on part of the 6.36-mile Skillman Loop and to thank the members for their work in temperatures exceeding 90 decrees.



This photo shows how this pipeline crosses through some neighborhoods.



Lead engineer Pat Flynn, Charles Lavair, Shane McCaffrey and Greg Lalevee meet at the Gibralter Rock Quarry staging area.



Fellow lead engineers Pat Flynn, a 39-year veteran and Joe Eichele, at 31 years reviewing the Cherry Valley Road worksite.



Sidebooms support the pipeline while welding takes place below.



Pipeline passes beneath neighborhood roads.



Once work is done, gravel and matts are removed, the area is graded, seeded and restored to its prior condition.

A tricky maneuver calls for this pipe to be turned upside down and around before being lowered into place.







Lt. Gov. addresses semiannual meeting

More than 400 members packed the East Brunswick Hilton Ballroom in July to hear NJ Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno discuss the state of New Jersey's economy and of efforts to attract and retain businesses to New Jersey and spur construction.

Guadagno – considered by some to be a future gubernatorial candidate – received enthusiastic applause from the members.



Training Updates

Sprucing up Wawayanda & updating the equipment

ocal 825 members did some sprucing up in Wawayanda in July, planting some 30 Norway spruce, Eastern white pine and red maple trees along the roadside berms.

Thanks to Joseph Cacioppo, Wayne McEwan and Douglas Brush, who were among those who helped prepare the site for planting.

The site continues to move forward, with the preparation and grading work on the areas where the new Training Center and Union Hall will be constructed. The next phase will be the finalization of the overall blueprints, the pump house and the bid process.

New equipment purchases

We continue to ensure that we offer the newest

equipment. The Training Center has recently purchased:

- 2013 Cat 420 Combo hoe
- 2012 Cat D6K Dozer
- 2013 Cat skid steer with Sweeper and cold planer attachments
- 2013 Peterbilt 388 Tri-axle log truck, rear mount Serco 8500 boom
- 2011 Volvo DD-90 Asphalt roller
- 2013 950 Loader

Training the trainers

Three Training Center instructors attended the IUOE Regional Training conference on July 28 & 29, hosted by Local 17. They were Craig Boyd, Mike Schiavonne and Bobby Kennedy.

Training Center mechanics plan to attend a training course for the new Tier 4 engines, hosted by IUOE Local 150, on Sept. 28 and Oct. 2.



TRAINING CENTER CALENDAR

ALERT:

Always check your expiration dates on your certifications

NEW JERSEY TRAINING CENTER

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2015

All classes begin at 7 a.m., except CCO classes, which start at 8 a.m.

OSHA 30

Four Saturdays: 9/12, 9/19, 9/26 & 10/3

Rigging Saturday, 9/12 Saturday, 9/12

OSHA 8-Hour Refresher Saturday 9/19

OSHA 40-Hour class9/21 through 9/25

OSHA 10-Hour class 10/1 & 10/2

CCO Four Saturdays: 10/3, 10/10, 10/17 & 10/24

CCO Test Day, Sunday 10/25

OSHA 8-Hour Refresher Saturday 10/10

Signal Person class Saturday 10/24

If there is a Training class that you need to attend, please contact Craig Boyd (845) 596-3666 at the Training center.

ELEC News

ELEC joins in CICNY tour of TZB construction

ELEC's Greg Lalevee, Mark Longo and Daniel Ortega, along with Local 825 President John Wood, networked with developers and builders to tour the construction site of the Tappan Zee crossing.

The tour was hosted by Ross Pepe of the Construction Industry Council of Westchester and Hudson Valley and provided an up-close look at the progress that crews have made to date.





Tappan Zee Constructors (TZC), provided a running commentary of the bridge construction throughout the trip. TZC is a joint venture comprised of Fluor Enterprises, Inc., American Bridge Company, Granite Construction Northeast, Inc., and Traylor Bros., Inc.

The first span of the new twin-span bridge is on schedule to open in 2016 and

the entire project should be complete in 2018. It is designed and constructed to last more than 100 years without major structural maintenance and to withstand "a 2,500-year earthquake," which would be much stronger than any ever experienced in the region.

The 3.1-mile twin span cable-stayed bridge is the single largest bridge construction project in New York's history.



ELEC scores a hit with builders, developers & public officials



ELEC and Local 825 business agents teamed up for an evening out with builders, developers and public officials at a Rockland County Boulders game in June.

Greg Lalevee, Mark Longo, Kate Gibbs and Daniel Ortega were joined by John Wood and Local 825 business agents to spend time with builders and planners during the "Boulders" face off against the Kansas City T-Bones.

The home team may have lost the game but ELEC and Local 825 business agents kept their eyes on the ball, combining a business with pleasure, entertaining special guests, who included Ed Day, Rock-





land County Executive; Alan Seidman, Executive Director of the Hudson Valley Construction Contractors Association; Matt Pepe of the Construction Industry Council NY; David Swan of Swan Crane; Jim Smith of Advance Testing Company; and Al Samuels, President of the Rockland Business Association.



International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825

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BETTER BUILDING BEGINS HERE

Pitching in for ... pitching cages!

to help lay the groundwork for pitching cages last week at Wood Park, Cinnaminson Township.

The job was to clear, grade and install drainage pipe in a 70' by 80' area in preparation for construction (see photo).

Retired Business Manager Marty Campbell, from Local 14 Insulators, reached out to IUOE Local 825's Training Center and



asked for help. Mr. Campbell was very appreciative of our volunteers and Business Manager Greg Lalevee for their efforts.

A banner is being made to hang from the pitching cages to thank IUOE Local 825 for their work. In the first photo are – from left to right – Keith Adolf, Mike Schiavone, Marty Campbell, Tom Lewicki and Chris Szpila. Mike is also shown operating the dozer.





Third Annual Poker Run, to benefit the Local 825 Scholarship Fund, will be held on Sunday Sept. 27.

This year's ride will start at the Local 825 Training Center, 338 Deans Rhode Hall Road, South Brunswick, NJ, and end with food and music at Moose Lodge, 1240 East Veterans Highway, Jackson, NJ.

Registration is \$25 per rider and \$15 per passenger. Register early and save \$5. Late registration will be available that morning, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.,m.

All proceeds from the ride will benefit the Scholarship Fund, a 501 C 3 organization, and are tax deductible. Make checks payable to "Local 825 Scholarship Fund" and send to 65 Springfield Ave., Springfield, NJ 07081.

For more information, contact Melissa at 973-671-6911.