



# THE DISPATCHER

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VOL 69, NO 10 • NOVEMBER 2011

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Historic Islais Creek Copra Crane moved landside. [page 7](#)



**Reefer madness hits west coast ports:** Companies using cut-rate maintenance and repair contractors in Vietnam appear to be responsible for conditions that caused some refrigerated container units to explode, killing three dockworkers in foreign ports. ILWU members took action in October and November to protect each other – and the public – from being harmed.

## ILWU protects members and the public from explosive containers

**T**he ILWU is taking steps to safeguard dockworkers and the public from thousands of potentially explosive refrigerated shipping containers that have been arriving from overseas ports.

### Killings spark company report

The ILWU first learned about the hazard on October 20. Officials at the world's largest carrier, Maersk, notified an industry group earlier in October – but only after three dockworkers in foreign ports had been killed by explosions involving refrigerated shipping containers, known as "reefers."

### Company cost-cutting to blame?

Experts in the shipping industry have apparently known since early 2011 that counterfeit or substandard refrigerant was being used by

vendors in Vietnam who provided low-cost maintenance and servicing of reefers.

### What's causing the explosions?

One theory is that the fake refrigerant may react with aluminum in the reefer's compressor, resulting in a mix that burns or explodes when it comes into contact with air. It can apparently result in compressor ruptures, spontaneous combustion, explosions and fire.

### Workers killed in Vietnam & Brazil

The story went public after World Cargo News reported on October 26 that a dozen explosions had "been linked to refrigeration units that had received gas repairs in Vietnam..." The report noted that that three workers have been killed so far by the exploding containers—two in Vietnam and one in Brazil.

### What to do with the containers?

Many reefers were being quarantined at locations around the world, but questions remained about what to do with potentially at-risk containers after they arrived on West Coast docks.

"It's impossible to know which containers might pose deadly combustion hazards just by looking at them," said ILWU Coast Committeeman, Leal Sundet. "Our union wants to see workers protected on the docks and the public protected in the community — which is why we're insisting that any dangerous containers be identified and removed from circulation before another person is killed. The terminal operators need to put safety first and work with us to ensure that only safe containers leave the docks."

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Postmaster: Send address changes to The Dispatcher, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800.



## LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

*Dear Editor,*

I recently graduated from college in Ohio and came to Oakland in search of work with the labor movement. When I arrived, the Occupy Oakland protest was just beginning, so I got involved and watched the movement develop. I've been deeply inspired by the Occupy movement because it is focused on the economic injustice facing all of us who are the "99%." But several events during the past few weeks – especially the so-called "general strike" and port shut-down – have left me with serious concerns about the direction that Occupy Oakland is heading.

I attended a meeting with 3,000 people on October 25 where the "general strike" was proposed. Because I come from a union family that's been through several large strikes, I expressed concern that the general strike was unrealistic and couldn't be organized in a week. I also asked why there were no discussions with union leaders, no understanding that union members can't strike because it is prohibited in their contracts, and no recognition that non-union workers would be fired for striking. When these concerns were raised the next day by a young woman at a planning meeting, her questions were quickly dismissed by a man who said that they didn't need support from union leaders and that most workers in the area would simply join the general strike on their own.

In the days that followed, I wasn't sure what to think, especially after several men in ILWU jackets who were introduced to us as ILWU leaders. Their speeches emphasized that ILWU members were supporting the general strike and plan to shut down of the Port of Oakland.

But on the day of the general strike, the only ILWU members I saw were longshore workers leaving the port after their shift. A few truck drivers and longshoremen honked their horns to show solidarity, but many were irritated that we had stopped traffic and closed the port. As the evening wore on, it became clear that a lot of things can go wrong when a general strike is called without first securing support from workers and unions.

Some of the problems were caused by small groups of self-styled radicals who took advantage of the fact that Occupy Oakland had no elected leaders – and no way to hold extremists accountable. Some of these radicals told us that blockading port workers from going home would strike a blow against capitalism. But for most of us, it was horrible to see longshore workers and the low-paid port truckers held hostage and unable to go home. We saw two female truck drivers beg for an hour to be

released so they could go home and pick up their kids. When the women began to cry, the extremists simply continued their blockade. One protestor on a bike even mocked these women by pretending to wipe away tears with his handkerchief, further insulting the frustrated workers.



More problems were caused by small groups of anarchists who broke, sprayed graffiti, splattered paint, and started fires in the street. Many of us condemned these actions to the press, but the extremists seem to be gaining more influence in Oakland – which threatens to destroy our ability to maintain support from the 99% who are concerned about corporate greed, the need for good jobs, and making the rich pay their fair share.

I'm only 22 years old, but I've read enough history to know that a relatively small group of extremists can destroy positive movements for change if they are allowed to go unchallenged. The disrespect shown by some of the Oakland Occupiers toward workers and "middle Americans" at the Port is similar to mistakes that were made by radicals in the 1960's and 1970's who foolishly thought they could transform society without winning the support from a majority of working people. Mark Rudd, an extremist in the 1960's who belonged to a destructive group known as "The Weathermen," recently reflected on the damage that he and others inflicted a generation ago by using violent tactics, hostile rhetoric and provoking fights with the police. It's sad to see that Occupy Oakland seems to be repeating those mistakes which only serve to drive away the working families and other allies who we need in order to honestly say: "We are the 99%!"

I'm glad to see that so many Occupy groups are forming across the country. Fortunately, most seem to be avoiding the mistakes that happened in Oakland. All of us can help by getting involved and encouraging everyone to stay positive and stick with the 99% - and not allowing our movement to be de-railed by extremists.

**Ben Master**  
Oakland, CA

Send your letters to the editor to: *The Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800 or email to [editor@ilwu.org](mailto:editor@ilwu.org)

## Pensioners Tackle Lack of Diversity/Declining Membership

The PCPA convention was a huge success. Although the turnout was good, more pensioners should have attended.

At the PCPA Executive Board meeting that preceded the convention there was discussion relating to the lack of membership diversity. There is a real concern that people of color and women are not joining our Pension Clubs. The PCPA, just like the ILWU, is sensitive to that issue. We understand there are differences amongst us and we celebrate the rich heritages that every race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation and nationality brings to the ranks of the ILWU. We urge everyone to join the Pension Club in their area. Each of us has much to offer, and our participation is and will continue to be welcomed, appreciated and acknowledged.

Overall, and unlike the old timers who preceded them, newer retirees are not joining their local Pension Clubs.

It is downright mind-boggling. With all the attacks being waged on America's working class none of us can afford the luxury of just standing by, hoping the other person will take up the slack. Incredibly, however, that is what is happening. Too many people are retiring and walking away. They had better wake up and take a look around.

Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security are under attack. Co-payments and deductibles are going up. Medicare premiums are too.

We are lucky. We do not have co-payments and deductibles. They, and our Medicare premiums, are paid by the ILWU-PMA Benefits Plans. We are a rare breed within the working class. We have virtually zero medical expenses. And look at what a prescription costs us...a lousy dollar, that's it, just a buck!

We retirees get the same health care coverage that the actives get. But, brothers and sisters, as Republicans

and Democrats continue to rob Medicare, that program is left with fewer dollars to reimburse our doctors. That means the ILWU-PMA Benefits Plans will have to pay higher co-payments and deductibles on our behalf. As you know, the Benefits Plans are funded by the PMA employers. The more the PMA has to pay, the more difficult it will be for our Union to negotiate Maintenance of Benefits for actives, dependents, retirees, and surviving spouses.

If we ever lost part of our coverage we'd see people riding in from the weeds yelling and screaming that the Union did not fight hard enough to maintain their benefits. They would tell those of us who stayed around to fight the fight that we did not do enough. They would blame us for their apathy.

Every retiree, just like their active sisters and brothers, has a vested interest in doing what we can to keep what we have, to improve on what we



*PCPA President, Rich Austin addresses the 44th Annual PCPA convention held in Seattle on September 19-21.*

have, and to see to it that future generations have no less health care coverage and benefits than what we enjoy today. We want to make sure that the union we are passing on to them is strong and united. We all need to suit up and show up! We all have to be willing to fight to keep what we've won over the years.

– Rich Austin, PCPA President

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The *Dispatcher* (ISSN 0012-3765) is published monthly except for a combined October issue, for \$5.00 a year and \$10.00 a year for non-members by the ILWU, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109. Periodical postage paid at San Francisco, CA. The *Dispatcher* welcomes letters, photos and other submissions to the above address © ILWU, 2011. Postmaster: Send address changes to The *Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800.



# Southern California ILWU members join fight to repeal Ohio anti-union bill

Over 90 Southern California union members from over 40 unions traveled to Columbus, Ohio to assist in defeating ballot measure, "Issue 2," which would have upheld a controversial state law restricting collective bargaining rights for public sector workers. The measure was soundly defeated, overturning the controversial anti-union legislation, SB 5, passed in Ohio earlier this year.

We knocked on doors and reminded people to get out and vote on Election Day. But more importantly, we talked about the negative impact that Issue 2 would have had—not only for Ohio—but also for all workers in America. We explained that voting down Issue 2 would repeal Senate Bill 5, and would restore the rights for the public unions of Ohio to collectively bargain.

My group included two other brothers from the ILWU. We knocked on over 280 doors and got 99% positive feedback. Only one person we talked to said they would support Issue 2. You can't change everyone's mind but those that were on the fence were quickly brought to the side that supports the middle class. It is not the fault of workers that America is suffering huge unemployment rates and the biggest recession in decades. The politicians need to stop blaming us for the problems that their friends on Wall Street created.

When people asked us why we came from California to Ohio to fight Issue 2, we told them that the motto of the ILWU was "An Injury to one is an injury to all." Had this bill passed in Ohio, it would have hurt workers nationwide by undermining collective bargaining rights. We went to Ohio because it is not okay to stand silently by while Ohio Gov. Kasich makes

## November election results may signal a positive shift for unions

The results of several key elections held on November 8th indicate that voters may be less willing to scapegoat union members and immigrants – and more willing to hold the 1% and Wall Street accountable for what's wrong in America.

- ✓ Ohio voters overwhelmingly rejected a ballot measure by anti-union Governor, John Kasich that would have stripped public employees of their basic union rights.
- ✓ Arizona voters defeated Russel Pearce, the extremist anti-union legislator who promoted his "papers, please" immigration law that sparked a nationwide boycott. Voters replaced Pearce with a more moderate representative.

✓ Wisconsin's working families are gearing-up to recall Governor Scott Walker, who has been losing favor with voters after pushing an anti-union agenda. Union and working families tried to recall anti-union legislators last summer. They removed two anti-union State Senators, but failed to recall a third Senator who was key to gaining a majority that would stand with working families.

Delegations of ILWU members from Local 13, 63 and 94 in Southern California made separate trips during this past year to Ohio, Arizona and Wisconsin. In each case, the goal was to show ILWU solidarity for these important fights – and bring information back home to co-workers.

## ILWU Southern California District Council elects new officers

The ILWU Southern California District Council (SCDC), held its annual election of officers in October. The SCDC coordinates political and legislative affairs in conjunction with ILWU locals between Fresno and San Diego.

Cathy Familathe, an ILWU Local 63 marine clerk, was selected by delegates to return as SCDC President. She previously served as head of the District Council between 2006 and 2008.

Longshoreman Floyd Bryan of ILWU Local 13 was elected Vice Presi-

dent. Bryan is a longtime member of the SCDC and this is his first position as an officer. He will also serve as Legislative Committee Chairman for the SCDC.

ILWU Local 26 President Luisa Gratz continues as Sec.-Treasurer, one of the many posts she has held within the SCDC.

Volunteers are routinely need to help the Council carry out tasks such as phone banking, precinct walking, leafleting and educational activities. If you would like to get involved, contact the SCDC at 310-521-8796. If you would like to become a delegate to the Council, please contact your individual local for more information.



Ten rank and file members of Local 13 and Local 13 Allied Division joined the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor on November 2, 2011 for a 5-day get out the vote campaign in Columbus Ohio to help defeat the anti-union Senate Bill 5/Issue 2. "This was an incredible experience," said Jeff Linares. "These Ohio union members were so happy that we came to help. Cops even shook our hands!" In the picture from left to right; Donovan Russell, Trina McDaniel, Ray Montoya, Frank Toscano, Adam Kavanaugh, Luke Hollingsworth, Jeff Linares, Sal Pardo, Ryan La Pinta, David Magallanes.

appalling statements that he "wants to break the backs of unions." Anyone, no matter what part of America they live in, is going to get the support of the ILWU against people who think they can bully around the working class.

One of our union brothers, Ray Montoya, knocked on a school teach-

er's door. She thanked him for coming to her door and talking to her about Issue 2. Once she found out he was from California, she gave him a huge bear hug. That's why we went to Ohio. Because knocking on doors matters more than a Koch Brothers polished advertisement.

– Luke Hollingsworth

## ILWU endorses Norman Solomon in Nor Cal Congressional Race



From left to right: ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, Willie Adams; candidate Norman Solomon; and ILWU International Vice President Ray Familathe.

The ILWU endorsed Norman Solomon for California's 2nd Congressional District. That seat has long been held by Representative Lynn Woolsey who will be retiring. The congressional district stretches from the north anchorage of the Golden Gate Bridge and up the entire 286-mile California coastline to Crescent City and the Oregon border.

"We're supporting Norman Solomon because he's the strongest advocate for working families and the best qualified to make real change in Washington," said ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams.

Adams says Solomon was the only candidate who scored 100% on the key issues, including:

- ✓ Protecting Social Security without raising the retirement age or restricting benefits;
- ✓ Protecting Medicare and moving toward a "Medicare for all" system for all Americans;
- ✓ Opposing unfair trade agreements with countries like Colombia where human rights are ignored and union members are being assassinated.
- ✓ Raising taxes on the richest 1% and corporations to make sure they pay their fair share.

"Norman Solomon impressed us with his independence and willingness to take on the corporate special interests who are blocking progress in Washington," said Adams.

# ILWU members join Occupy protests along West Coast

Protests have spread rapidly in the “Occupy Wall Street” movement which began on September 17th in New York City’s Zuccotti Park. By October 9th, Occupy protests had taken place or were ongoing in over 95 cities across 82 countries and in over 600 communities in the United States. As of November 17, the Meetup page of the “Occupy Together” website listed Occupy protests in 2,609 cities worldwide.

Up and down the West Coast, ILWU members have been participating in Occupy actions by attending marches and rallies, donating food and other supplies and participating in the mass public meetings known as “general assemblies.” In San Pedro, CA ILWU members have been attending

the Occupy general assembly, sometimes making up nearly half of the 50-person meetings.

ILWU International President Robert McEllrath sent a letter of solidarity to Occupy Wall Street on October 5th. “Most of us are tired of seeing a handful of the richest corporations and executives behave as though they’re entitled to live like kings at everyone’s expense,” McEllrath wrote. “Your decision to bring these and other issues to corporate America’s doorstep is courageous – and involves some risks. We weren’t surprised that some of you have faced beatings and pepper spray from overzealous police. Your crusade to shine a light on the corruption and injustice that’s infecting Wall Street is bound to ruffle some feathers.”

If you have been participating in any of the Occupy protests, please send your experiences and photos to editor@ilwu.org.



# ILWU protects members and the public from explosive containers

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## Companies reject safest solutions

ILWU officials in Oakland, California, asked the companies to provide complete transit documentation in order to know which containers had transited Vietnam during the last year. The goal was to remove potentially lethal containers from circulation until more information could be obtained and an agreement reached on a safe solution.

## Failure to disclose sparks action

When terminal operators failed to provide the necessary safety information, work came to a halt at Oakland’s SSA terminal on October 29 and the TraPac terminal on October 30. The dispute continued as companies argued over how much information and transparency they were willing to provide. Companies fired several gangs of Local 10 members who refused to work on containers that

were unsafe or lacked proper documentation. An area arbitrator issued four rulings that sided with the companies, setting the stage for a hearing by the Coast Arbitrator.

## Coast Arbitrator ruling

On November 6, Coast Arbitrator John Kagel ordered four rulings by the Northern California Area Arbitrator to be held in abeyance, and directed Northern California employers to follow stricter protocols established by Washington State Area Arbitrator Herald Ugles that required companies to provide records for all reefers that transited Vietnam in 2011.

Three days later after a seven-hour hearing, the Coast Arbitrator issued a decision with a definition for at-risk reefers: “A reefer container which, in 2011 in Vietnam, at Cat Lai or elsewhere in that country, had maintenance and repair work to the mechanism of the reefer unit that involves refrigerant fluids is an at-risk con-

## Something’s happening here.

IBU President Alan Coté joined hundreds of other union members at a big march to support Occupy Portland on October 26th. “The dedication of these young people is bringing new life to the fight against corporate greed that’s hurting the 99% of us,” said Coté. In addition to marching, the IBU donated \$100 worth of cheeseburgers to help feed hungry protestors. For Occupy Seattle, the IBU donated a Sani-Can portable toilet to help protestors continue the fight.



## Northern California ILWU members march with Occupy Oakland:

Bay Area ILWU members joined a march of thousands to protest the clearing of the Occupy encampment in front of Oakland’s City Hall on Oct. 25th. In the photo above from left to right are ILWU Local 6 Secretary Treasurer Fred Pecker, Local 6 members Ron Zampa, Howard Williams, Carey Dall and Local 75 Secretary-Treasurer Patrick Kim.

## Longshore leaders visit Occupy Portland.

ILWU Longshore Division Safety Committee members took some spare time to tour the Occupy Portland site in October. (L-R) Adrian Diaz of Local 63, Tim Podue of Local 13, President Cameron Williams of Local 19, President Jeff Smith of Local 8, Mickey Main of Local 8, and Pete Favazza of Local 13.



**Potentially dangerous:** Container companies saved money by using cut-rate contractors in Vietnam to service refrigerator compressors like this one. The decision led to the deaths of three dockworkers and triggered an expensive global safety problem when compressors began exploding.

ainer. If that maintenance and repair work did not involve that mechanism, but to other unit mechanisms such as electrical systems or, for example, repairs to exterior dents which do not implicate the refrigeration mechanism of the reefer unit, the container is not at-risk.”

Companies are now providing the union with transit information for all reefers and are providing maintenance and repair records for any that transited Vietnam in 2011. As a result, at-risk containers are now being

identified and set aside in safe areas, according to safety protocols.

## Compromise to protect workers and the public

“Arbitration decisions usually involve compromises,” said ILWU International President Bob McEllrath, “but this ruling met our main goals of protecting workers and the public. McEllrath credited the victory to “everyone on the docks who stood up for safety and refused to back down when lives were at stake and pressure from the companies was intense.”

# IBU workers hold the line at Georgia-Pacific

After months of battling the billionaire Koch brothers on the warehouse floor, in the streets and at the bargaining table, IBU members have reached an agreement with Koch-owned Georgia-Pacific at the Kelly Point warehouse in Portland.

As part of the national corporate attack on working families and unions, Georgia-Pacific made it clear early on they were out to gut the IBU members' collective bargaining agreement at Kelly Point—including the erosion of health care benefits and the twisting of job rules to permit supervisors to fire people much more easily.

IBU members at Kelly Point decided last spring that it was time to step up and organize a campaign to defend their hard-won job protections and benefits:

- On June 30th, IBU members coordinated a joint action with a local community coalition known as Portland Rising, which brought more than 150 chanting supporters to the Kelly Point parking lot, brandishing picket signs. At the same time, IBU members inside marched on their supervisor to demand that the company return to the bargaining table and negotiate a fair contract.



**Striking fast and hitting hard:** On September 9th, members expressed their objection to the company's continued unlawful behavior by walking off the job in a "lightning strike." Every single worker in the warehouse joined the picket line.

- Several weeks later, the corporate customers who depend on receiving paper products from the Kelly Point warehouse—including COSTCO, Office Depot, Staples, and Target, and others—were notified by the union that Georgia-Pacific's refusal to bargain fairly could have an unwelcome impact.
- On September 9th, members expressed their objection to the company's continued unlawful behavior by walking off the job in a "lightning strike." Every single worker in the warehouse joined the picket line, which was honored by several truck drivers and caused some serious disruption of shipping schedules. Members then quickly ended their action

and returned to work before bosses could react.

- Soon after, Kelly Point employees marched once again on their supervisor to demand compensation for unpaid break time. Their action together forced managers to eventually comply and offer more break minutes as a remedy.
- In late October, IBU members leafleted customers at busy COSTCO stores in Hawai'i and Portland, which depend on supplies from the Kelly Point warehouse. Union members warned consumers about possible shortages of toilet paper and other Kirkland-brand paper products.

The Kelly Point workers decided to settle their contract with the company in October. They had secured their pensions, defeated company proposals to expedite termination of employees and hammered out terms for health care benefits.

"We didn't get everything we were pushing for, but we got more than we would have without a fight," said Shawn McClary. "And for the first time, we all stood up together and did things as a group."

"We learned a lot," said Jose Flores. "I think all of us feel stronger and better prepared for the battles ahead."

## IBU members picket Golden Gate Bridge Board of Directors to demand fair contract

On October 28th, The Golden Gate Bridge Labor Coalition, composed of 15 unions that represent workers on the Golden Gate Bridge, Golden Gate Ferry and Golden Gate Transit, held an informational picket outside of the Golden Gate Bridge District Board of Directors meeting. The coalition, which includes including the Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU), has been negotiating with the District for seven months to achieve a fair contract.

"We are picketing to protest the Districts unrelenting and unfair demand for major cuts and givebacks in every contract," said San Francisco

IBU Regional Director and Coalition Chairperson, Marina Secchitano.

"In 2004 we agreed to \$650,000 in reductions of our members' benefits," Ms. Secchitano explained. "Not satisfied with our members sacrifice, the District has demanded more concessions in every contract since. Meanwhile Bridge District management has negotiated substantial increases in their own salaries and pensions. Our members have run out of patience with the gross unfairness and inequality of this situation."

The Coalition is concerned by the attempts to retroactively cut the medical benefits of retired employees. "These people devoted their working lives to the District. They are entitled to receive the health care that they were promised," Secchitano said. "We will not abandon our retired members."



**Americas Cup comes to San Diego with ILWU help:** The final leg of the Americas Cup sailboat race will take place on San Francisco during the summer of 2013, but San Diego is hosting a race in November that will train the teams for the final race in two years. "We negotiated to make sure that the race logistics involved ILWU labor," says Local 29 President Ray Leyba. The San Diego race required moving 120 containers, including some that carried the hi-tech 45-foot catamaran boats that can hit speeds of 35 mph. "It took four shifts for us to unload and it will probably take three to put everything back," said Leyba. The race sponsors initially wanted longshore workers to donate their time, but that made little sense for an event that's being funded by the world's richest corporations who are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on the events. Longshore locals in the San Francisco Bay Area are still working out details with officials from the Port of San Francisco and Americas Cup.



# UW Labor Archives preserves workers' history

Labor archives are playing a central role in preserving working people's history, supporting related research, and educating people about the importance of unions in shaping the political and social landscape in the US. From its earliest days, the ILWU has understood the power of its own history in shaping and informing its actions and policies. When the union was less than a decade old, it established a library to preserve its records and also collect reference material useful to the union.

The union's commitment to preserving its history has also helped it shape its story, to educate members and the general public about such key topics as the importance of the hiring hall, industry-wide contracts, and militant solidarity struggles.

The ILWU's commitment to preserving labor's legacy also extends to projects outside its hiring halls and offices. This can be seen in the union's longstanding relationship with the University of Washington and its role in helping establish the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies and supporting the newly opened Labor Archives of Washington State.

For nearly 20 years, the Bridges Center has been host to an increasing array of labor related programs, many designed in conjunction with members of the ILWU and the Puget Sound area labor movement. Begun with funding and support from ILWU members looking for a lasting tribute to Harry Bridges, the Bridges Center's programs include scholarships and research support to faculty and students that have helped expand understanding of labor history in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The Center's website contains online resources that represent some of the best Internet sources on the history of the ILWU, labor, and civil rights, with emphasis on the Pacific Northwest. The Center has also worked with the ILWU Library to digitize some of

the union's more delicate and valuable historical material to make it available online, including the Waterfront Worker, the important rank and file bulletin before and during the 1934 strike, and the charters for the Longshoremen's Union of the Pacific, a union that predated the ILWU.

Last year, the work of the Bridges Center established the Labor Archives for Washington State (LAWS) in conjunction with the Special Collections Division of the University of Washington Libraries along with input from labor movement leaders and the ILWU. In 2009, both the ILWU International Convention and the Longshore Division Caucus passed resolutions in support of a new labor archives at the University of Washington. The Longshore Caucus voted to contribute \$150,000 in support of the archives and many ILWU locals and individual members dug into their pockets to provide additional donations, which helped make the project a reality.

It's been over a year since LAWS hired fulltime archivist, Conor Casey, and officially opened its doors. The archive is a welcome addition to the world of labor history and is of particular importance to the ILWU.

The Organizing Committee for the Labor Archives of Washington State was filled with labor, academic, and community leaders. ILWU leaders and affiliates played a large role in this group, including Holly Hulscher and Conrad Spell from Local 23; Terri Mast of the Inlandboatmen's Union; Ian Kennedy, pensioner and former President of Local 52; former IBU president David Freiboth; and former ILWU Librarian and Education Director Gene Vrana—and many now serve on the LAWS advisory board.

This partnership between labor and the University of Washington provides LAWS with the credentials to not only preserve labor history, but to serve a vital role in educating people about labor's historical importance. In a short time, the archives has already hosted a number of events, including the Legacy of 1934 exhibit produced by the Coast Longshore Division.



IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast holds a meeting flier from the early 1980s about the murder of her husband, Silme Domingo, and fellow activist Gene Viernes. The documents are a part of the UW Labor Archives which will celebrate a 20th Anniversary with the Harry Bridges Center next year. This year's fundraising event on Nov. 13 set a new record for donations and attendance – and marks the 3rd year in a row they've met a \$50,000 matching grant set by the ILWU Coast Committee. This year the center awarded a record number of scholarships to worthy students, including the first scholarship given in honor of Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes. The Center honored Terri Mast with a "Distinguished Supporter Award" for her years of leadership and help for the Center and Archives. Mast says, "We've had great support from many ILWU locals, other unions, and individuals – but we still need contributions so we're inviting other ILWU locals to step forward and help if they can."

One of the LAWS's latest achievements is an online portal to digital items in its collection. This portal (<http://content.lib.washington.edu/lawsweb/>) provides an excellent resource for students, union members, and the general public to access photographs, artwork, and documents related to Washington State Labor and beyond. It provides a glimpse into nearly 100 years of labor history via access to primary resources, such as fliers, photographs, and documents that come from the collections stored in the University of Washington libraries. The portal is an excellent place to start for those interested in learning from the past who cannot make a trip to the university library.

LAWS collects a variety of material and its collections stem from donations by individuals and organizations within the labor movement. The archives contain a wealth of records from locals and labor organizations that document the local, national and international dimensions of the labor movement with focus on the Pacific Northwest. The Washington State Labor Council and various county labor councils in Washington State have their records stored at LAWS. Of particular interest to the ILWU, the archive has the records for the Inlandboatmen's Union and ILWU Local 1-1, the first ILWU Local chartered in the state of Washington. A number of prominent ILWU members and supporters have also donated collections to the LAWS, including former Local 23 President Phil Lelli and Revels Cayton from the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union. The archives also have a significant collection of oral history interviews from participants in labor struggles throughout the years.

Recently, the archives launched a project to digitize the records relating to the Inlandboatmen's Union Region 37 and the United Cannery Workers. These collections will become an important part of the existing digital collections portal. The archive is also currently processing the records of Cindy and Silme Domingo and the records of the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes. Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes were both second generation Filipino-Americans,

two courageous reformers who were murdered in their union hall in 1981 because of their efforts to rid their Local 37 of corruption and to build greater ties between the ILWU and a labor movement in the Philippines that was engaged in a struggle against the brutal dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. The trial transcripts from the Domingo v. Marcos court case are being digitized and will be added to the digital collections portal in the future.

The archive actively collects historical artifacts and they are available to consult with organizations or individuals interested in donating historical material. One of Casey's goals is to make collaborative strides with unions and individuals to enrich the Pacific Northwest's labor heritage for future generations. He suggests records management strategies for labor organizations and provides information on how they can participate in the Labor Archives by donating their records. He also facilitates workshops through the county labor councils to help organizations learn the best strategies for preserving their records. The LAWS website hosts a "How to Keep Union Records" section with handy guides for unions and members of the public to figure out how to manage their records, how to donate them, and which records to retain. Conor recently co-taught a "Basics of Archives" workshop through the Washington State Records Commission to give people a more detailed overview of what to consider when starting and managing an archive.

The ILWU's partnership with the Bridges Center and the Labor Archives of Washington State provides a powerful tool for locals and individuals to preserve the union's legacy. The relationship highlights the union's ongoing commitment to its own history and the history of the labor movement in general. With the brutal attacks that the labor movement has seen in recent years, that history can serve as an important reminder of past struggles and achievements and a way of informing current and future leaders of the historical importance of a vibrant labor movement.

– Robin Walker,  
ILWU Librarian and Archivist



## The Men Along the Shore and the Legacy of 1934 at CCSF

City College San Francisco is hosting the ILWU's exhibit, *The Men Along the Shore and the Legacy of 1934* in the Rosenberg Library as part of their Fall 2011-Spring 2012 library exhibition series, *All Together Now*. Alongside the display are original historical artifacts on loan from Harvey Schwartz, curator of the ILWU Oral History Collection.

*The Men Along the Shore and the Legacy of 1934* documents the early history and formation of the ILWU through the "Big Strike" of 1934, in which longshore workers along the Pacific Coast banded together to fight unfair hiring practices and poor working conditions, achieving a union-controlled hiring hall and a coastwide contract. The strike's success was won with the support of workers across a variety of industries who walked out in a general strike in San Francisco in solidarity with the longshoremen.

The exhibit runs through April 1, 2012 at the Louise and Claude Rosenberg, Jr. Library, City College San Francisco, Ocean Campus, 50 Phelan Avenue, San Francisco.

# Protecting Social Security and Medicare

By John Castanho, Benefits Specialist

**S**ocial Security is one of the largest and most successful social programs in the history of our country and has kept millions of Americans out of poverty. However, this safety net is now in the crosshairs of many politicians. Calls to privatize Social Security or reduce benefits for workers which would have been considered a radical proposal just a few years ago are now a part of the mainstream debate in Washington's current hysteria over budget deficits. I have received a lot of calls from ILWU members concerned about the proposed cuts to Social Security and Medicare programs. Because so many members were interested in knowing about the history of these programs, I have written a very brief overview of them.

## Social Security

Social Security is a vital Social safety net for millions of families. A reduction in benefits would be a disaster for retired workers who depend on the program to keep them out of poverty. Currently, over 156 million Americans pay into the Social Security trust fund, and in 2010, it had a \$2.6 trillion surplus. In 2009, over \$675 billion in benefits were paid out, which equals 4.7% of the nation's GDP. Today there are 53.9 million beneficiaries who are collecting Social Security benefits, which averages out to one in four U.S. households. If it were not for these benefits, the rate of poverty for the elderly would increase from 9.6% to 45%. It is imperative that we all do everything we can to ensure this program stays in place for generations to come.

The widespread lack of income during the Great Depression led to the passage of the *Social Security Act of 1935*, which established four basic programs aimed at providing economic security for Americans. These included: old-age medical insurance; unemployment insurance; federal grants for assistance for the aged, the blind, and children; and federal grants for maternal and child welfare, public health work, and vocational rehabilitation. Several benefits have been added over the years to the old-age insurance program portion of Social Security, including survivors insurance (1939) and disability insurance (1956).

All of the benefits of the Social Security programs are financed through a system of payroll and self-employment taxes, known as FICA taxes. Employees and employers each pay into these programs as follows: employees pay 4.2% of wages (up to \$106,800) for Social Security and 1.45% of all wages for Medicare; employers pay 6.2% of the employee's wages (up to \$106,800) for Social Security and 1.45% of the employee's wages for Medicare.



Benefits are payable to workers as early as age 62. If a person elects to receive benefits prior to full retirement age, then their monthly benefits will be permanently reduced (unless they qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance benefits). The retirement age for non-reduced benefits is predicated upon the year in which the person was born. For more information regarding your full retirement age, please refer to the annual mailing that is sent to you from Social Security, contact your local Social Security office, or visit their website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

## Medicare and Medicaid

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wanted national health care provisions to be included in the Social Security Act. However, they were left out because he believed the idea would be unpopular among the American public. Years later, President Harry Truman took on the fight for national medical care, and he tried unsuccessfully to include it into his 1948 Fair Deal program and the debate of national medical care program became narrowed down those aged 65 and over.

Finally after nearly two decades of national debate, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Social Security Amendment in 1965. It established Medicare, a hospital insurance program for people aged 65 and older, and Medicaid, a health insurance program for the poor. Medicare consisted of a basic program of hospital insurance for persons aged 65 and older. Medicaid was established as a supplementary medical insurance program to aid the poor.

Generally, people aged 65 and older who have been legal residents of the United States for at least five years are eligible for Medicare. Medicare benefits are divided into four parts: Part A is Hospital Insurance; Part B is Medical Insurance; Part C is for Advantage Plan enrollees; and Part D covers prescription drugs. Parts A and B were part of the original 1965 legislation, with part C being added in 1985 (HMO's), and Part D was added through the *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization act of 2003* (enacted in 2006). People who enroll in Medicare pay a monthly Part B premium, and also pay for any drugs that are not covered by Part D.



**Historic Islais Creek Copra Crane moved landside:** *The Islais Creek Copra Crane located at the Port of San Francisco's Pier 84 was dismantled and moved by a crew of union building trades workers. The move was undertaken in mid-October as an emergency measure by the Port of San Francisco after engineers monitoring the dock on which the crane sat had concerns about the platforms continued stability. The nonprofit Fund for Labor Culture & History and the Copra Crane Labor Landmark Association (CCLA) have been working to preserve the crane for the past 16 years. ILWU pensioner, Bill Ward, serves as the CCLA's president and ILWU pensioner, Don Watson, serves as its Secretary Treasurer.*

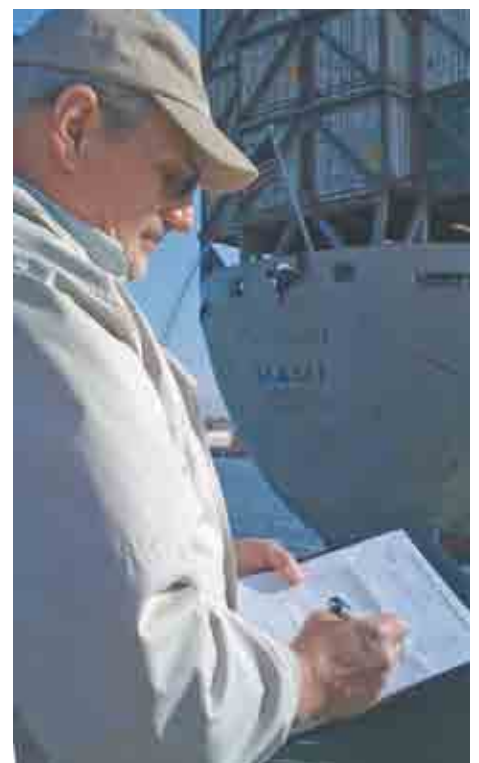
*Fundraising is currently underway to restore the historic crane which will include fabricating new brackets to hold the crane sections together, sandblasting and repainting the structure, and installing new piles to serve as a foundation for the crane in the original location.*

## American Radio Association uses member survey to improve trainings

**A**fter attending the ILWU's Leadership, Education and Development Institute (LEAD) last September, Leslie Lincoln, chairwomen of American Radio Association's (ARA) Education Committee, developed a survey to obtain feedback from members on courses that the ARA could develop for future training. This survey was done with the approval of the ARA National Council and working through ARA TIME (Technology Institute for Maritime Electronics) in an effort to respond to training needs of the membership.

The survey was well received and implementation of members' ideas will contribute to the union's collective strength and preserve jurisdiction over the Global Marine Distress Safety System (GMDSS), maritime communications and repair and maintenance of bridge electronics.

ARA believes it is essential to continuously upgrade the skills of the Master Radio Electronic Officers who



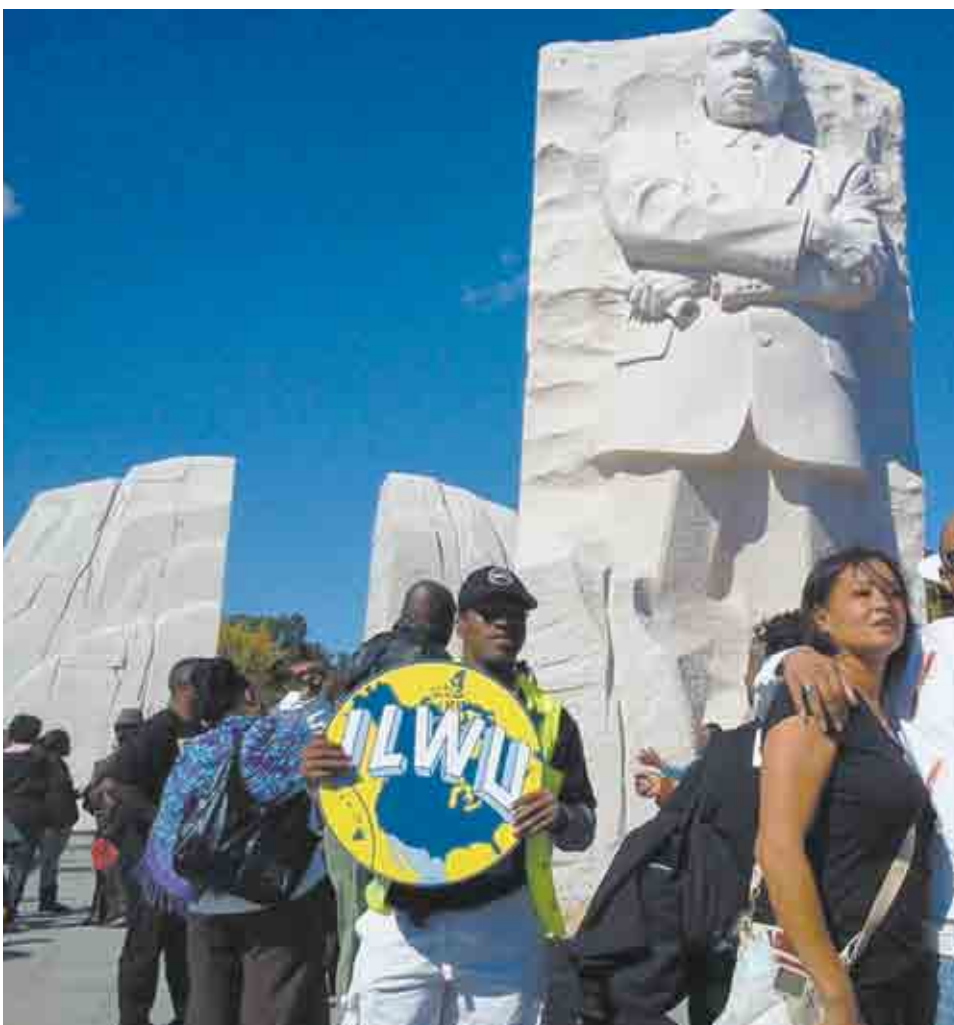
serve aboard ARA's contract vessels and whose high tech skills are greatly needed in the maritime industry.

Pictured is James Sword, Permanent Radio Electronics Officer serving aboard the Matson ship, SS MAUI, October 15, 2011. Sword fills out a member's survey, an idea inspired by the ILWU LEAD Conference in 2010.

— Leslie Lincoln



**Local 26 Secretary-Treasurer AJ Wright retires:** On October 15th ILWU Local 26 Secretary-Treasurer, AJ Wright, was honored for his 43-year membership and his decades of service. He served in many capacities in Local 26 over the years—as Chief Steward, Executive Board member, Trustee, Business Agent and Secretary-Treasurer. Pictured in the photo from left to right are: Ed Calleros, ILWU Local 26 Vice President; ILWU Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams; ILWU Local 26 President Luisa Gratz; Retiring ILWU Local 26 Secretary Treasurer AJ Wright; ILWU International Vice President Ray Familathe. In addition to recognition from Local 26 and the International officers, Wright also received honorable recognition from Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster and Congresswoman Janice Hahn for his years of service to Local 26 and the working class of Southern California.



**Dr. Martin Luther King memorial opens in Washington:** Local 19 member Tyrone Harvey reports, "On October 15, 2011 I had the honor to be present along in Washington, DC with other union members in a march from the Washington Monument to the newly opened monument in the National Mall honoring Reverend Martin Luther King. We all gathered to listen to several speakers from labor talk about the importance for Congress to pass a jobs bill to get Americans off the unemployment rolls and back to work."



In early September, representatives of Mancomunidad de Municipios Garifunas de Honduras (MAMUGAG), an organization of Afro-Honduran communities, met with ILWU International Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams, Local 10 President, Richard Mead, Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker, and Local 75 Secretary-Treasurer, Patrick Kim. The Garifuna peoples of Honduras are descendants of Central American indigenous peoples and the West Africans. Their culture is a mix of West African and Arawak and Carib Indigenous Central American peoples. They have been historically oppressed in Honduras and suffer from systematic discrimination and neglect. Their delegation to the ILWU was aimed at securing assistance in transporting donations of heavy equipment that will be used to construct critical infrastructure in their communities.

## A Helping Hand...

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## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

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James Butler; **Local 52:** Warren L. Maurice; Richard H. Paulson (Roxanne Wright); **Local 63:** Dudley H. Hay; Michael N. Kelly (Carolyn); Billy J. Hurd (Artie); **Local 75:** Thurman E. Brown; **Local 94:** Hugo Hagstrom; Eugene A. Harris

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 10:** E. J. Rogers (Mary); Frank Davis Sr. (Barbara); Charles Neal; **Local 13:** Leo Jones; Lloyd Hills; Ernest A. Combs (Christine); John A. Pesich; Robert E. Costa; William Mikkelsen (Julia); Clarence James; **Local 23:** Brian R. Brenno (Sandra); **Local 26:**

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 8:** Elsa M. Lind; **Local 10:** Beatrice C. Roman; Virginia Gomes; Willie Irving; Nellie Hukill; Lillian Brown; **Local 12:** Esther Spurgeon; Local 13: Dorothy Muro; Molly F. Samudio; **Local 21:** Valley Roberts; **Local 34:** Florence C. Murray; Bonnie Evans; **Local 52:** Marjorie K. Akana; Agnes K. Westad; **Local 54:** Donna M. Hill; **Local 63:** Maxine Patalano

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