



THE DISPATCHER

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PETER HALEY © THE NEWS TRIBUNE (Tacoma, WA) 2008

Oil-spill responders strike against discrimination in Tacoma

Emergency response workers in Tacoma who protect the waters of the Puget Sound went on strike the week of August 18 to protest illegal discrimination and intimidation by their employer, the Marine Spill Response Corporation (MSRC).

Newspaper coverage of the one-week strike was positive, including a report in the *Tacoma News Tribune* which read, "The workers say MSRC is punishing them for unionizing and refusing to let them participate in spill-response training exercises in Everett this week."

Klete Freudenstein, one of the striking workers, said he was missing an opportunity to keep current on the latest developments in the emergency response field. A large color photograph of Local 23 longshore supporters on the picket line accompanied the *News Tribune* article. Supporters also included pensioners and members from ILWU locals across Washington, and the Bellingham Jobs with Justice.

"It makes no sense to deprive response workers of trainings that

are designed to make us more effective at spill response," Freudenstein told the *Dispatcher*. "We just want to do the best job possible."

On June 27, the National Labor Relations Board's Seattle office issued a complaint, charging that the company "has been interfering with, restraining and coercing employees" and "discriminating in regard to... terms and conditions of employment."

After employees voted to join the Inlandboatmen's Union in 2006, one MSRC manager physically assaulted one of the spill responders; Tacoma Police took another report of an MSRC supervisor who carried a gun in his vehicle to work and threatened violence against workers.

The morning the response workers went on strike, about 100 gallons of diesel leaked into Tacoma's Foss Waterway. The strikers were not called to respond, but workers assured the *Tribune* that they would leave the picket line immediately if asked, explaining, "The environment is our number one concern."

MSRC is the largest spill-response company in the country, and Tacoma isn't the only place where

MSRC is dragging its feet on a first contract. Workers at MSRC's operation in Long Beach also voted to join the IBU but have no contract yet.

MSRC came under intense scrutiny last year after company officials took nearly 24 hours to provide a full complement of responders following the *COSCO Busan* oil spill disaster that dumped 58,000 gallons of bunker fuel into San Francisco Bay on November 7, 2007.

Strong-arm tactics by employers have increasingly been used nationwide to intimidate workers from joining or forming unions. In response, Congress is proposing the Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800, S. 1041). The legislation has already passed the U.S. House of Representatives, but big business lobbyists have blocked passage in the U.S. Senate by a few votes. The Act would establish strong penalties against threats and discrimination like the ones MSRC officials have used against their employees. Presidential candidates Sen. Barack Obama supports the reform legislation; Sen. John McCain is strongly opposed to the workers' rights protections.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The story behind the proposed longshore contract – and what's ahead this Fall

The proposed longshore contract is in good hands now that rank-and-file members are reviewing the document and will soon be voting in ratification elections. The final say over the new contract will be up to longshore division members – and that's just the way it should be in a democratic union like the ILWU.

Some of you may be interested in the background and strategy that was behind the proposal. I have to begin by thanking the members of the Negotiating Committee, Safety Committee, and Longshore Caucus – all of whom did a tremendous job. The Caucus delegates spent two full weeks back in late January and early February deciding what issues and priorities should guide our 15-member Negotiating Committee. The Committee then sat down with Pacific Maritime Assn. (PMA) officials on March 17th to negotiate, and held firm until they got the agreement they wanted on July 28th.

As good as the Caucus and Negotiating Committee members were – and they were very good – **this agreement couldn't have been won without the solidarity and support from rank-and-file members up and down the coast.**

The best example of that support – and a real turning point in the negotiations – came on May 1st when thousands of dockworkers up and down the coast gave up a day's pay to protest the war in Iraq. Your courage won

praise and admiration from members of Congress, ordinary citizens, and union members around the world – and it sent a powerful message to the employers that we were united and willing to take action to back up our beliefs. Some PMA members didn't think we'd have the guts to go through with the action; others thought we'd splinter into factions. But all of them were proven wrong on May 1st when we stood together and shut down the West Coast ports. From that point on, the tone of the negotiations was fundamentally different because the companies saw we had the unity to back up our words with action.

Another factor in reaching this agreement was the process we used to resolve differences inside the Negotiating Committee. It's no secret that there are different points of view in the ILWU, and those differences are part of our democratic tradition. So to reach agreement among ourselves, we decided that no important decisions would be made unless everyone on the Committee could agree. It took extra time, and there were some difficult sessions, but the Negotiating Committee succeeded in reaching consensus on every important decision. We made sure that all points of view were heard and differences were respected. This approach took more time and lots of patience, but it made our Committee stronger and more united – and that allowed us to achieve a better agreement because everyone felt that they had a stake and a voice in the process.

While we tried to be patient with each other on our own Committee, we

laid down some tough deadlines for the employers, especially on July 1st when we refused to extend the contract. We told PMA that time was running out to reach a fair agreement, and that the patience of 26,000 longshore workers was reaching the breaking point. When several weeks passed after July 1st without enough progress, the rank-and-file went into action with a measured, disciplined response by taking "unit breaks." Taking our breaks together showed the companies that we were united on the docks and willing to exercise unity on the job. This and other strategies were enough to push us across the finish line and get a good agreement – without provoking a lock-out or federal intervention. In the end, the Committee got the agreement they wanted that met the key Caucus goals, including: maintaining our health benefits, improving pensions for members, pensioners, and widows, strengthening manning requirements in key ports, and the first jurisdictional improvements in 40 years. Altogether, the contract proposal raises employer costs by \$477 million dollars, an increase of nearly 25%.

By mid-September, the rank-and-file will cast their ballots and make their voices heard on this new proposal. Compared to what longshore workers have just been through, I can't help thinking how different life is for most Americans, since 90% of workers now have no union, no contract, no voice on the job, and little hope for a better future. I'm not saying this because I think we should be content with what we've got. Just the opposite. Most of us know longshore workers have good



Robert McEllrath
International President

jobs today because generations before us sacrificed and took risks to make things better in the ILWU and for the whole working class. Now it's up to us to continue that legacy and push forward to make progress for future generations – and not just inside our union, but for all workers. Those of us who have good union jobs have to roll up our sleeves and help the other 90%.

That's why I'm personally getting involved in the November elections and encouraging every family we know to vote for a President and a Congress that support unions instead of candidates who just pay lip-service to workers. Barack Obama is the only Presidential candidate who supports the Employee Free Choice Act – a new law that would do more to help working families and unions than anything in the past 50 years – by giving workers a fair shot at having a union. That's why I'll be spending some of my time and part of my paycheck this fall to elect politicians who promise to support unions and working families – and I hope you'll consider doing the same.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

Our Pensioners Club meets every month at the Memorial Hall in San Pedro. We have over 550 members from Locals 13, 63, and 94 and our officers and executive board represent a good cross section of longshoremen, clerks and foremen. Several have held key offices in years past. They have attended numerous ILWU conventions and longshore division caucuses and been members of Coast Negotiating Committees.

Collectively we like to think that we understand the dynamics of our contract and what is required to protect the interests of the active workforce and dependents, as well as the retired members, their dependents, and surviving spouses. This is the ILWU family and as you all know, there is true meaning and commitment for all of us to adhere to the ILWU slogan "An injury to one is an injury to all."

As a group of retired members, we collectively have discussed at our Executive Board and membership meetings the state of America's economy and the Bush administration's failed policies including the tragic loss of American lives in Iraq. We're also concerned about the shipment of manufacturing jobs overseas with tremendous tax breaks for companies that take their work offshore.

Going into negotiations this year, our Negotiating Committee under the leadership of President McEllrath and the International Officers and Coast Committee had a tough nut to crack, a lot tougher than some negotiations in years past. They prioritized in our opinion the most important issue, no takeaways for our health coverage. It is called "Maintenance of Benefits". They achieved this by hanging tough and not moving off of "MOB" from early March until the latter part of May.

No other union in this country has achieved this under the current economic conditions. The new contract has a lot of improvements for the active workforce and improvements for retired members, spouses, and widows. Did we get all we wanted? Hell No! We never have! Did the employers get all they wanted? Hell No! They never have either! But to come out of these negotiations better than we expected is a real victory that every rank and file member can be proud of.

The rank and file solidarity in shutting the coast down on May 1, in protest of the Iraq War was something that the employers never thought could happen. Give yourselves credit for your coast-wide unity and your support for the Union Officers and Negotiating Committee!

We as Pensioners are proud to salute you, the Active Workforce! On another note of vital importance to all of us, The Obama/Biden Democratic Ticket is the first time that Organized Labor has two committed candidates that stand for the working men and women of this country, they need and deserve our vote and financial support for their campaign, it really is your campaign for a piece of the American dream. Step up to the plate!

**Al Perisho, President,
Southern California Pensioners Group, ILWU**

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

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Editor and Communications Director

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Joseph R. Radisich, Vice President
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Shocking death on Oakland docks demands answers and action

Decades of experience on Oakland's waterfront didn't protect Delmont Blakeney from being killed late Saturday night, August 23rd, after he was struck by a container and pushed overboard into the chilly bay waters fifty feet below. Blakeney apparently survived the initial blow and resulting fall into the water, but fellow dockers could only watch helplessly above as he struggled below in the icy water – because management failed to provide ladders that would have allowed for a swift rescue. By the time workers were able to finally locate a utility ladder – which had to be modified before it could be used – more than 30 minutes had passed and Delmont had lost consciousness. He could not be revived after being carried up to the dock by his co-workers who helped administer emergency first aid. Paramedics rushed him to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Blakeney had been overseeing work on the NYK Starlight, while the final containers were being removed from the aft of the ship that was moored at Berth 59 which is managed by SSA, the large multi-national terminal operator owned in part by Goldman Sachs.

Officials from Local 91, Local 10, and Local 34 rushed to the docks Saturday night after the incident where they remained until the early morning hours, then held a series of meetings with OSHA investigators, terminal operators, and representatives from the Port of Oakland. While no investigations or reports were available at press

time, serious questions are being asked about this incident, including:

Were there permanent ladders installed at one time on the dock that were recently removed?

If those ladders were removed, who made the decision, who approved it, what was the rationale, and why wasn't the union consulted?

Even if permanent stairs were removed from the dock, why didn't management provide portable ladders, stationed at regular intervals along the dock, as an essential part of the employers obligation to provide a safe workplace?

This is the third death in less than 12 months on the Oakland docks. Reginald Ross was killed on September 24th while containers were being loaded at Berth 57. Shipping Agent Edward Hall was killed December 3rd after being struck by a truck.

Blakeney was a Walking Boss and member of Local 91. His career on the waterfront began in 1963 at Local 10. Blakeney transferred to Local 91 in 2003 to become a Walking Boss who was respected and admired for his extensive knowledge of the docks. Blakeney often ran the Matson dock in Richmond and usually worked on ships when he was dispatched to Oakland. He is remembered by co-workers for his decency and fairness. His safety speeches were legendary because of his gift for using humor to deliver a serious message to the workers he coached and supervised.

"Delmont was charismatic, friendly, and knowledgeable. He had a wealth of experience and never hesitated to share it with others. He was the kind of boss that guys really liked working for," said John Castanho, former Coast Safety Committee Chairman and Local 10 member.



Delmont Blakeney, Local 91

photo courtesy of Blakeney family

"The entire ILWU family extends our deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the family of Delmont Blakeney. His death leaves us saddened and frustrated, knowing that many important questions need to be answered – both to honor his legacy – and to protect his many friends and co-workers who remain on the docks."

**Fred Gilliam,
President of Local 91**



Local 10 member Carl Perry

The two men who went into Local 10 together in 1963 couldn't have foreseen that their fates would be linked nearly five decades later when both found themselves seriously injured and struggling to survive the chilly waters of San Francisco Bay in August of 2008.

Carl Perry – known by his co-workers as "Gaylord" – was working as a lineman on August 7th, doing a job he'd done thousands of times before. After helping secure lines from the container ship Yang Ming North at Berth 55 in the Port of Oakland, Perry remembers hearing a loud noise – almost like an explosion – as the line suddenly snapped, releasing thousands of pounds of pressure. The heavy line smashed into him, shattering his arm bone to pieces and hurling him off the dock into the water below. His flotation jacket helped keep his head above water, but he couldn't do anything with

"There was no ladder to get me out. They didn't have anything in place. ...I was trying to keep my head up and out of the water. All I could do was try to hold onto the line with my good arm."

– Carl "Gaylord" Perry

his broken arm; the intense throbbing pain was deadened only slightly by the icy chill of the water surrounding him and the shock response triggered by the trauma he was suffering. His co-workers were rushing to help him from above, and they quickly threw him a line, which he grasped firmly with his good arm, but he worried constantly about being swept under the pier by the current.

The freezing cold of the water made him start to shiver immediately, as he tried to focus his mind on staying alive.

"All I could think about was surviving."

The rescue Perry desperately needed didn't arrive. The fancy new Coast Guard patrol boat, that always seemed to be near the docks on other days was nowhere near today. Perry couldn't see the helpless looks that his co-workers were exchanging on the dock above as they frantically searched for a ladder to rescue him – but they couldn't find one anywhere nearby. Without a ladder, there was no way to get Perry out of the chilly water around the pier where he remained trapped with a badly broken arm.

Perry was relieved at first when a tugboat finally approached to help him, but the big tractor tug sat so high off the water that the crew couldn't reach him and had to give up after several attempts. The shivering was becom-

ing intense now that nearly 40 minutes had passed.

"There was no ladder to get me out. They didn't have anything in place. There was no plan and no operation to help people like me who fall in or get pushed into the water," he said. "I was trying to keep my head up and out of the water. All I could do was try to hold onto the line with my good arm."

With time running out, a pilot boat finally approached and came alongside. Because it sat lower on the water, the crew was able to carefully lift him out of the water. They wrapped him in blankets and helped him reach an ambulance that transferred him to the

hospital where he was treated for hypothermia.

"I didn't stop shivering until after 6 o'clock that night, and I went into the water early that morning," he said.

Perry is now undergoing a lengthy and painful recovery at home with an arm so badly shattered that it required five hours of surgery and the insertion of two steel plates.

"One of my linemen called me the morning after Delmont died to give me the news. We started together in '63, worked together on the docks, and we both went into the water..." he says, pausing a bit to express his feelings after losing his longtime friend.

"I'm fortunate, lucky, and blessed."

Three workers have died in the past 12 months at the Port of Oakland. The latest victim was Local 91 member Delmont Blakeney who was killed on August 23rd while he supervised containers that were being unloaded from the NYK Starlight at Berth 59 Operated by SSA.



photo by: Jim West

ILWU volunteers needed for November election

With the Presidential election and balance of power in Congress at stake, ILWU members and pensioners are once again working to provide a voice for working families in the November election.

"It's no wonder that people get hooked on campaigning – it's exciting to see your hard work make a difference on the issues that you care about," said Dawn Des Brisay of Local 40, who is coordinating the ILWU's election campaign effort from now through November 5. "I'm excited to work with ILWU volunteers to elect candidates who will improve health care, union rights and other issues that affect working families every day."

Des Brisay said that, while each person's vote is a personal decision, "It's easier to make a wise decision when you have the facts. Our goal is to make sure that every union member has information about where the candidates stand on issues they care about."

The ILWU political program will focus on informing members in five "swing states," areas that are most likely to have a national impact when it comes to electing a pro-working families President and Congress. The states considered to be most "up for grabs" in areas that are close to ILWU members – which cuts down on costs for volunteers – include Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico, Alaska and Colorado. Four of these states have an important U.S. Senate race, and all are considered to be in play for the Presidential race.

"There are important races in California, Washington and Hawaii, too," said Des Brisay, "but to have the biggest impact, the union should focus on states where we have the best chance to change the national balance of power toward workers."

Like previous years, most campaign work will be done by volunteers from the ILWU ranks who want a more worker-friendly Congress and President. ILWU workers in all divisions are encouraged to volunteer for campaigns and candidates, to do everything from calling union members on the phone, to knocking on doors, to handing out fliers at worksites and registering voters.

These time-tested voter contact methods can make a big difference. In 2006, union activists played a major role in shifting the majority in Congress more toward working families.

The union vote made a big difference in several state legislatures as well, including Oregon, where Local 8 member Megan Premo worked full-time with other labor union activists in the 2006 election. Their work paid off when Oregon voters elected 92 percent of Senate candidates and 83 percent of House candidates who were endorsed by the state labor federation.

Travel Funds Available for Longshore Members and Pensioners

Longshore Division members and pensioners who are interested in traveling to volunteer their time for the ILWU political program may qualify for travel funds from the Coast Pro Rata Committee. Those who are interested should email Des Brisay at dawn@desbrisay.com, or call her at 503-703-2623 for information.

Most travel will take place in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 5 election, but the time to apply is by mid-September. Space is limited, and while applicants don't need experience, they must have a commitment to working long hours on the campaign.

"There's a real camaraderie when you work on a campaign," said Des Brisay. "And we hope we will remember this year as the time when the ILWU helped turn our country around for working families."

Where do the candidates stand on some top issues facing working families?

<p>The Freedom to Join a Union: <i>Do the candidates support the Employee Free Choice Act and the freedom to join a union?</i></p> <p>The EFCA would allow more workers to join a union by closing loopholes that make it easy for anti-union employers to fire pro-union workers and cause endless delays in contract negotiations.</p>	<p>Sen. Obama voted for the Employee Free Choice Act, and has pledged to sign it as president.</p>	<p>Sen. McCain said he is "strongly opposed" to the Employee Free Choice Act, and helped kill it in the U.S. Senate.</p>
<p>Better health care: <i>Do the candidates support affordable health care for all Americans?</i></p> <p>ILWU convention delegates passed a resolution in 2006 supporting health care for all Americans through a "single-payer" system similar to the Medicare program, guaranteeing the highest quality health care for everyone – and the right to choose one's own doctor. Neither Sen. McCain nor Sen. Obama supports a single-payer plan.</p>	<p>Sen. Obama's plan will offer a new health plan to all Americans which is similar to what members of Congress have, and would limit more abuse by insurance companies.</p>	<p>Sen. McCain's plan will shift the health care responsibility from employers to workers. His plan will tax families who receive employer-paid health care benefits.</p>
<p>Fairer taxes: <i>Do the candidates support fair taxes for middle-income working families, or will they continue tax giveaways to the super-rich and big corporations?</i></p> <p>President George W. Bush and previous administrations focused on cutting taxes for corporations and the super-rich. Both candidates were asked recently who was "middle class" and thus eligible for special tax relief.</p>	<p>Sen. Obama said he would focus on helping families making less than \$200,000 a year.</p>	<p>Sen. McCain said he considered incomes of \$4-5 million dollars a year to be middle-class.</p>
<p>Iraq War: <i>Who will end the war in Iraq and bring our troops home?</i></p> <p>On May 1, West Coast longshore workers shut down the ports and gave up a days pay to support the troops by ending the war in Iraq.</p>	<p>Sen. Obama first spoke out against the war at its start in 2002. He said he is "fully committed to ending the war in Iraq as president," with a phased, 16-month removal of American troops.</p>	<p>Sen. McCain has consistently voted to support Pres. Bush's strategy of escalating the war. McCain has said he would support "a hundred years" of war in Iraq.</p>

Union rally heats up the high desert:



Over 100 Rite Aid warehouse workers joined dozens of supporters from other unions and community groups that came from all over the Southland to rally in Lancaster on August 25th for a fair contract at the giant distribution facility where workers voted to join the ILWU in March. The ILWU Southern California District Council mobilized dockers from Port Hueneme, miners in Boron, and members from locals in LA and Long Beach. It was over 100 degrees outside when workers rallied in front of the Rite Aid warehouse gates, and not much cooler inside the one-million square-foot facility where employees have been pushing for improvements, including air conditioning. The 600-plus workers are now negotiating a contract with Rite Aid, but the company is moving slowly and continues to retaliate and harass employees with higher production standards, tougher break policies, discipline, and firings. Over 50 workers have been fired or disciplined since employees voted to join the union in mid-March, including nearly a dozen union supporters. The company is using tactics that would be outlawed by the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) – a bill that's passed the U.S. House of Representatives but remains stalled in the U.S. Senate. The November elections could break that logjam if voters elect candidates that will stand up for working families. U.S. Senator Barack Obama strongly supports the EFCA; Senator John McCain is strongly opposed.

Dispatcher staff photo

Local 6 members celebrated the Labor Day weekend with a group trip to the ballpark. Over one hundred members with their families and friends saw the Minnesota Twins play the Oakland A's on Saturday, August 30th in a game that included a fireworks show. The tailgate party before the game was also popular, with the local providing soda, beer, burgers and dogs... At the end of September, Local 6 is starting an important new program to revive their organizing culture. It begins with a lost-time meeting for Chief Stewards. The first meeting will be a one-day training, which will be followed by quarterly meetings that will focus on organizing workers who want to join the ILWU... The local has a half-dozen contracts coming up in the next few months; more details in our next report.

Local 8 members saw ships with the big red "K Line" logo roll up the Columbia River for the first time in four years on July 30th. The Japanese line's service restores a direct connection between Portland's biggest export markets at the ports of Tokyo, Kobe and Nagoya, while inbound calls will include stops at several Chinese ports on the way back to Portland. The "K" Line business will replace Yang Ming operations, which should result in a net volume increase because the "K" Line vessels are larger than Yang Ming's by about 2,000 twenty-foot-equivalent-units (TEUs). Yang Ming will continue serving Portland by sharing space with several other carriers.

Locals 8, 40 and 92 teamed up with the Port of Portland on August 14th for the fourth annual Seaport Celebration at Terminal 6. Local 8 President Jeff Smith and Secretary Bruce Holte hosted a visit by the "Good Day Oregon" television news crew on August 12. Several days later, the station did a live broadcast from Terminal 6 as Smith donned a pirate hat and Holte assisted in securing a birds-eye video shot from a crane. The celebration that followed on Saturday morning was bustling at the seams, with twice as many families attending as last year. Dozens of members from Locals 8, 40 and 92 assisted by distributing free hot dogs, and demonstrating equipment used by longshore workers on the docks. Celebrants were also treated to a live pirate band, a giant bouncy pirate ship and toy boat races, and ship-piloting simulators.

Local 10 members are still in shock over Delmont Blakeney's death on August 23rd. He was a fixture in their union for four decades and was loved by members. In the days following his death, terminal managers say they're purchasing new safety equipment that all three locals (10, 34, & 91) have requested... Local 10 has signed a new collective bargaining agreement with Eagle Marine Services, Ltd. that defines what Maintenance and Repair (M&R) work will be done by ILWU members... Local members will vote on the new Longshore contract on Friday September 12. Voting at the dispatch hall begins at 5:30 in the morning and continues until 8pm at night... Notices are being mailed out to Class A members with reminders if they're behind in dues or fines; most will be visiting the dues office in the coming weeks to clear their books and get up to date... While local President Melvin Mackay was on the Longshore Negotiating Committee, Vice President Harold Brinkley was acting President. Mackay resumed his full duties on Monday, September 2nd.

Local 13 longies are mourning the loss of Billie Padilla, who died August 24th. She was among the first women on the waterfront (registered on October 25, 1975, #34396) and paved the way for others who followed in her footsteps. Her accomplishment was even featured in a *National Geographic* magazine article. "She was strong, proud, not afraid of hard work, and didn't hesitate to speak her mind," said Local 13 Health Benefit Officer Jerry Avila who was the local's Dispatcher in 2006-2007... Local 13 members will vote September 9-11 for their local officers, with a run-off on September 23rd. As before, they'll host their annual blood drive during the election and usually collect 40-80 units of blood at each drive... Jimmy Monti was one of the Local 13 participants who drove to

Lancaster to support Rite Aid workers and took photos to share with other members back home.

Local 19 President Herald Ugles lauded the Port of Seattle's \$5.5 million contribution in July toward an interchange that will relieve congestion at the Port. "The SR 519 project will improve safety for pedestrians through the SafeCo Field area and allow freight to move more quickly and efficiently from port terminals to I-5," said Ugles. "These improvements will help secure good, family-wage jobs for Seattle for many years." The long-sought connection between Terminal 46 and Seattle's freeway system should be completed by 2012. The project will break ground in November after more than ten years of planning.

Local 26 was pro-active in dealing with a former bookkeeper who was arrested in August after a federal grand jury indicted the woman for embezzling \$108,000 from Local 26 members over a three-year period. The good news is that the local discovered what was happening, fired her in November 2006, and called in the feds to do a thorough investigation and make sure that the embezzler would be caught and prosecuted. The former employee recently entered a "not guilty" plea in court, but the evidence against her is substantial and compelling. President Luisa Gratz has been forthright with the news media and local members about what happened. "Stealing dues money from workers is one of the lowest things in life that you can do, and we hope she's prosecuted to the full extent of the law," said Gratz... The Local is keeping busy, negotiating four important contracts, including a big one with PMA that covers 350 security guards. They're also negotiating with Georgia-Pacific which manufactures gypsum wallboard and related products, Ryerson Steel, and the Henry Company which manufactures commercial and industrial coatings.



Local 34 Ship Clerks' Association Secretary-Treasurer Allen Fung presented a check in August to Alise Franklin who is a member of Local 10, daughter of retired Local 34 member Fred Franklin, and founder of Grieving Mothers On a Mission (GMOM). Alise formed GMOM following a tragic accident that took the life of her five-year-old son Keonnu, after the boy found a semi-automatic handgun in a relative's bedroom. GMOM held a Children's Memorial Day event in Oakland on June 8 - the anniversary of Keonnu's death. Now Alise is working with state legislators in Sacramento to lobby for new gun control laws, including a ban on the manufacture of toy guns and educational programs to warn children about the danger of guns. "This is just a small gesture from Local 34, which raised \$740 at our June monthly membership meeting for a huge cause that affects everyone in the ILWU family and the communities we live in," said Fung. For information, contact alisefranklin@gmomfoundation.org.

Local 46 is holding a workshop to train members about grievances and arbitrations - and getting a good response with 38 participants so far. Local Executive Board member Victor Gallardo is coordinating the effort. The class is also open to community members, including a recent law school graduate who's been helping the United Farmworkers union. The class only costs \$20 and offers credit toward a degree from the local community college. Local 63's Patricia Aguirre is helping teach this class which is similar to the one that was offered earlier to members in LA and Long Beach (see below). Some of the students are already getting more involved, including a group that recently travelled to Lancaster on August 25th to support the Rite Aid workers.

Continued on page 7

How does a good Longshore contract matter even if you don't work on the docks?



"We see how the longshore workers do things together as a team and how organized they are. They've supported the guards 100 percent in our drive to join the ILWU. We wouldn't have gotten this far if they weren't backing us up. They've been willing to help us in any way we need. If they weren't so strong, we wouldn't be able to get that support. They deserve a good contract because they work hard. They're outside working today even though it's over 90-degrees, and their jobs are dangerous."

Heather Jones
Security Guard
Port of Longview, WA

"The shipping agents would replace us with non-union tugs in two seconds if they could. IBU members work the tugboats and ferries on the West coast. The longshore workers help protect our jurisdiction and keep the whole waterfront union. In the back of our minds, we remember when they came to the aid of Washington State Ferry workers in the 1980's. Longshore workers started shutting down the ports to help settle our strike, and that's when we joined the ILWU. They're a powerful force that's helped us in the past, they helped us with struggles with employers like Hornblower in San Francisco, and they'll stand with us in the future."



Jay Ubelhart
Deckhand-Washington State Ferries
IBU-Puget Sound Region



"The longshore contract sets the standard for a living wage. We deserve fair, honest pay for the work that we do here. I unload containers that come from the Port of Oakland into our San Francisco warehouse. Since the cost of living here in the Bay Area is a little higher than some other places, we need wages that can help us make ends meet."

Cesar Garibay, Local 6
Forklift driver, Pier 23
San Francisco, CA

"ILWU longshore has a reputation for militancy and muscle that employers can't take for granted. A good longshore contract helps set the standard for non-longshore locals and ILWU affiliates like the ARA. We'll be negotiating our own contract soon, and we'll look at the longshore contract as part of that process."

Carl Young, Secretary-Treasurer
American Radio Association
(Electronics and Information
Technology Affiliate of the ILWU)



"I work in the mine out here in Boron with a lot of guys who don't always understand our connection with what happens at the docks. It's especially true for the younger guys who are new to the union. They don't know much about what goes on at the docks, and a lot of longshore workers probably don't know much about what we do here at the mine. But we should be more involved with each other. Solidarity is key. That's why we've been helping the Rite Aid warehouse workers in Lancaster."

Phil Ferguson, Local 30
Millwright, Rio Tinto Mine
Helendale, CA

My solidarity journey to India

This January I visited India to make friends with the dockers there and learn about their working conditions and changes they are experiencing. I did so purely on a personal basis, not in any official ILWU capacity.

I visited the Indian port cities of Kolkata and Chennai, formerly known as Calcutta and Madras. Jeff Engels, West Coast Coordinator for the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), helped me make contact with Chinmoy Roy, a docker in Kolkata who is also the local ITF rep. When I visited, Chinmoy was organizing an ITF "Flags of Convenience" action against ships that were abusing sailors and calling on Indian ports.

Chinmoy explained that Kolkata actually has two ports, the old port in the suburb of Kidderpore, and the newer Haldia Port, 90 kilometers south of Kolkata and up the Hoogly River from the Bay of Bengal. With major container handling facilities, Haldia ranks as the main port.

I visited with Chinmoy in the office of the Calcutta Port Shramik Union, one of several Indian docker unions and met their Secretary-Treasurer, Parbati Das. These unions negotiate contracts under the umbrella of the All India Port and Dockworkers Federation.

Parbati Das introduced me to Rabin Roy, an RTG driver with a degree in mechanical engineering. I discovered technical degrees are a prerequisite for heavy equipment jobs. I also learned that each dockworker has one job and stays with it throughout his career. When all the work in a particular job category is finished, then related work is found to keep the workers busy until there is work again in the main task.

I toured the Kidderpore port later that day. Because of Indian national security regulations, I was not permitted to take any photographs of the port. One of my guides was D. Chakravarthy,



photo by: Frank Kroger

The Port of Chennai (formerly Madras) is one of several visited by Frank Kroger on his trip to India in early 2008.

who works in the port's electric power control center. He has an electrical engineering degree. My second guide was P.B. Das, a marine clerk with a bachelor-of-science degree in biology.

I saw two Indian-made RTGs and two reach stackers that were servicing three small container ships. Containers were brought to the ship on a reach stacker and loaded using ship's cranes. Dockers turned the twist locks on the rack by hand, climbing on containers with a ladder. I saw a single mast shore crane that was not being used because activity was at a minimum during a shift change. In the distance I observed a 'T' shaped crane, which was as high as the cranes used in the U.S. It appeared that this crane moved containers between ship and shore by rotating the entire top of the 'T.'

For my visit to the port of Chennai, (formerly Madras) I contacted G. M. Krishnamurti, the local ITF representative. He invited me to his union office where we had a good talk comparing dock work in India and the U.S.

Krishnamurti explained that with the expansion of the Indian economy, Indian ports have experienced 10 percent annual growth rates. There are

moves to privatize some of the 16 Indian ports, which are now government-run, putting pressure on Indian dockworkers.

Private companies are now on the docks and are attempting to make changes; replacing full-time dockers with temporary contract workers, and using unskilled workers to operate heavy equipment that previously required technical training.

Mr. Krishnamurti arranged for K. Shanmugam to take me to the Port of Chennai office building where I had a bird's eye view of the port. The building was only a few blocks away and I rode on the back of Mr. Shanmugam's motorcycle. High atop the building, we could see the container cranes and a train loaded with containers. I mentioned our double-stacked container trains and Mr. Shanmugam reported that the only double-stacked train in India ran from the port of Mumbai. Mr. Shanmugam pointed to the freight hall where he worked as a supervisor directing the flow of containers.

I also saw the marshalling yard from which large marble slabs are exported to China. The Chinese use the marble as a raw material and re-export it.

We could see a bulk coal carrier was being discharged, using dump trucks that unloaded the powdered coal at a rail yard, creating a huge mountain of coal. The coal was then transported by train to power stations in South India. The port also exports bulk iron ore. Small Indian automobiles are exported from Chennai to Indonesia, the Philippines and Mexico.

We returned to Mr. Krishnamurti's office. He had to go to the Chennai airport to deal with a labor dispute involving a U.S. airfreight company. He gave me a ride back to my hotel in his official car. We said goodbye to each other, and this marked the end of my unofficial visit with dockers at the Indian ports of Kolkata and Chennai.

I appreciated the hospitality extended to me during my impromptu visit. While the life of an Indian docker is quite different from that of an ILWU longshore worker, I also saw that we shared a mutual understanding and solidarity for our work on the docks – no matter where we live and work.

– Frank Kroger, Local 19



New Zealand show of solidarity. Dockers around the world showed their support to help ILWU Longshore Division workers win a good contract, including these members from the Maritime Union of New Zealand.



photo by: Holly Hulscher

Local 23 member Dave Hermansen (on right) with buddy Ken DesMarets were among hundreds of volunteers who helped make Tacoma's Tall Ships Festival a success in early July. All told, Pierce County union volunteers from two dozen unions donated more than \$500,000 worth of time to make the community event a success.

NEWS & NOTES

Continued from page 5

Local 63's Executive Board Member and Longshore Division Education Committee Chair Patricia Aguirre had such a good time teaching her "Grievance and Arbitration" class that attracted 40 workers from LA/Long Beach, that she's now offering to teach classes at other locals in Southern California. After she's done helping Local 46 at Port Hueneme, she'll be available to help other locals. She discovered the class was also a good way to involve members who were interested in union organizing. Class members made several trips to help the Rite Aid workers in Lancaster – including a group that made housecalls this past spring – just before employees voted to join the ILWU. ...Local 63 sponsored a booth in August at the "Taste of San Pedro," an event that attracted 15,000 visitors who out came to sample food from local restaurants around the ports of LA/Long Beach. It was the first time that the local participated in this event and the response was positive. Local 63's booth featured a video screen that played "We Are The ILWU" – which helped spark some good questions and conversation from the visitors who dropped by.

Local 63 OCU sent their top officers to show solidarity with Rite Aid workers at the big August 25th rally in Lancaster. President John Fageaux and Vice President Steve Schwab made the trip from the docks to the desert and back. Fageaux spoke at the rally, encouraging Rite Aid workers to remember that thousands of ILWU members were behind their fight for a good contract. The rally took place just down the road from a giant inflatable rat that was installed in front of the warehouse by friendly Ironworkers from Local 416 who wanted to send Rite Aid management a message they could understand.

ILWU Canada members at Viterra are continuing their fight to win a decent contract and beat union-busting at the big grain shipping company in Saskatchewan. Workers got good news in August when the ILWU-affiliated Grain Services Union (GSU) was certified by the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) to represent a unit of workers who do operations and maintenance work for Viterra in rural parts of Manitoba. But company executives continued their hard-line stand against the union in August. "I am not sure who's designing Viterra's collective bargaining strategy, but it seems to be a three way tie between arrogance, ignorance and negligence," said Hugh Wagner, GSU General Secretary. "By comparison, GSU has taken a sensitive approach and has made it clear that the union does not want to impede

the ability of farmers in Saskatchewan to experience a successful harvest." On August 18, GSU members established a picket line at one of Viterra's leading inland terminal operations in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, that interrupted production for two hours at the start of the morning shift because local workers honored the picket line. That action followed informational picketing at Viterra's White City grain terminal on August 15. The union is considering whether to declare outgoing Viterra shipments as "hot cargo" that would trigger solidarity support from longshore workers and other unions. GSU members working in Viterra's Regina head office bargaining unit have been locked out and on strike since July 7th. Union members who do operations and maintenance work in rural parts of Saskatchewan have been engaged in a "work-to-rule" campaign. Delegates representing the rural Saskatchewan workers voted on August 28 to increase pressure on Viterra with actions that may include shutdowns.



Celebrating Harry Bridges Day in Long Beach - Hundreds of Long Beach residents enjoyed a free pancake breakfast on July 27th, with help from ILWU volunteers and local officials who served up the meals to celebrate "Harry Bridges Day." On hand to help serve the food were volunteers from the ILWU Southern California District Council (SCDC), Ladies Auxiliary No. 8, Local 13, Local 63, Local 94, and Local 13 Allied Division. Joining at the serving line were Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster (far right), Congresswoman Laura Richardson (2nd from left), and state Assemblyman Warren Furutani (left). Also helping were State Senator Alan Lowenthal, Board of Equalization Chair Judy Chu, Long Beach Vice-Mayor Val Lerch, and Long Beach council members Patrick O'Donnell and Dee Andrews, who hosted the event which took place at McBride Park, across from Poly High School. Two Poly students, Chanel Washington and Faith Fimalino, thanked the ILWU for helping to pay their college bills. Both received grants from Local 13's seventh-annual Harry Bridges Scholarship program, which awarded grants to 39 students from 13 Harbor Area-area schools.



Exhibit is a hit in Washington State: The first appearance in Washington of the ILWU exhibit "The Men Along the Shore and the Legacy of 1934" was such a hit that the original 4-day stop was extended by more than two months. After a special training, Local 23 volunteers set the exhibit up at the Working Waterfront Museum on July 2nd for the Tall Ships Festival. ILWU Communications staff created a supplementary panel, displayed on the easel that highlights Puget Sound-area photos in the exhibit. Community interest was so high that the museum asked the ILWU Library if they could keep it all summer. The exhibit will now stay until the end of the Maritime Festival in mid-September. Local 23 volunteers pictured are Fred Miller, Judy Miller, Mike Jagielski, Dirk Graham, Holly Hulscher, and John Russi. Requests to host the exhibit in your area are handled by Gene Vrana, ILWU Director of Educational Services and Librarian, 415-775-0533.



Photo by Hector Navajas

Workers at Blue Diamond Growers in Sacramento continue to win community support for their fight to have a free and fair election that would allow them to join the ILWU. Workers participated at a special community breakfast on August 22nd with a panel of religious leaders from the Sacramento Valley who gathered to discuss the plight of workers in their region. Roman Catholic Bishop Jaime Soto (far right) helped convene the meeting. The Bishop met with workers before the event and again on August 30th.

TRANSITIONS

RECENT RETIREES

Local 7: Richard L. King; **Local 8:** Keith L. Preskey; Larry L. Smith; Raymond R. Gendron; **Local 10:** Robert A. Costa; **Local 13:** William E. Buckley; Ronald J. Kittell; Larry P. Lopez, Sr.; Rudy M. Urquides; Marlin L. Nielsen; Joe F. Katnich; Gwendolyn H. Taylor; Henry V. Valverde; David L. Urbeck; Robert L. Negrete; Darrel W. Robbins; Dennis Martinez; Ernest A. Morris; **Local 14:** Ronald M. Wahlund; **Local 23:** Richard J. Angelus; Robert R. Marshall; Paul A. Southard; **Local 34:** Samuel B. Wallace, Jr; Gerald F. Morten; **Local 46:** Donato C. Pizano; Roberto Nava; **Local 52:** Donald M. Gaddie; Ernest Williams; **Local 63:** Dennis R. Saylor; David H. Olsen; Caesar A. Perez; Richard J. Pinedo; Steven G. Gebich; Norman G. Jorgensen; Larry V. Jones; James P. Fallon; Joe Vela; John R. Brunac; John C. Trainotti; Dennis J. Barbieri; Mario D'Ambrosi; Anthony R. Podue; James D. Shrake; **Local 91:** Bobby G. Johnson; **Local 92:** Donald F. Mantei; Delbert L. Brown; Daniel R. Carlson; **Local 94:** Michael L. Iiams; Clarence Bland; **Local 98:** Albert Pollard.

DECEASED

Local 8: Leonard Weilert; Atlas Wear; **Local 10:** Mathew Brooks Jr.; James T. Davis; Lawrence Mc Clarty; Guadalupe A. Vasquez; Paul H. Jordan; Norman Rutter; Edward Clay; John Evans; Douglas Lee; Robert Reed; David Washington; Tommie Thomas, Jr.; Stephen F. Barron; Magdaleno R. Gonzalez; Abraham Lewis, Jr.; Mary E. Briggs; Margaret B. Conley; Albina Falcon; Jacqueline Gianforte; Miriam Chambers; Annie M. Mosley; **Local 12:** Thomas M. Laskey; Jennie S. Steiner **Local 13:** Mark M. Beiley; Baldomero Mungaray; Levi M. Martinez; Jose U. Fierro; William Garcia; William McFadden; Ted. E. Kelm; Robert Gutierrez; Vernon R. Statham; Armando Ramos; Edward D. Matamoros; Carolyn L. Lisenby; Louise S. Dalton; **Local 19:** Roy Cutchlow; Clifford Vinje; Ralph V. Heino; Joseph A. Jurich; Virgil Liudah; Lawrence R. Hennem; Roberta Stallcop; **Local 21:**

Gerald E. Basie; John Stennick; Robert Stennick; Lyle A. Peterson; Donald Kaut; Anna M. Leupold; **Local 23:** Edward Merz; Harry Hilliard; Richard L. Carlson; Mildred L. Clemensen; **Local 24:** Beverly Brown; **Local 25:** Mary W. Latshaw; **Local 27:** Juanita M. Heilman; **Local 29:** William E. Parris; William G. Price; **Local 32:** Robert B. Burgess; **Local 34:** Clayborn Zuber; Lawrence B. Lundgren; **Local 40:** Larry D. Overberg; **Local 46:** Jose Juarez; **Local 52:** Thomas J. Sullivan; Arthur S. Drugge; **Local 53:** Gifford Minshall; **Local 63:** William J. Schroeder; Manuel Hernandez; Floyd Jones, Jr.; Roy H. Stephans; John M. Trainotti; Charles R. Griffin; George Bodnar; **Local 91:** Bobby G. Johnson; **Local 94:** Brady Davis; Debra Pallares; Louis Police, Jr.; George Pudoff; **Local 98:** Jack D. Hansen; June A. Johnson. (Survivors in parenthesis.)

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 10: Lillie Watts; Olga Brunetti; Luz Juarez; Anna Dal Poggetto; Lutitia Smith; Florence E. Bergquist; **Local 13:** Maxine R. Toman; Louise Lisenby; Anka Matulich; **Local 19:** Denise R. Kuhn; **Local 21:** Nina D. Johnson; **Local 34:** Winifred R. Glynn; Maxine Jorgensen; Claire W. Costello; Terry A. Simpson; Rowena Linehan; **Local 63:** Beatrice E. Stetson; **Local 92:** Byrdene Kernan; **Local 98:** Patricia Donoghue.

NEW SURVIVORS:

Local 4: Kay L. Hubbard (Don); **Local 10:** Jacqueline Thomas; Jacqueline Thomas (Tommie Thomas Jr.); Margaret Brooks (Mathew Brooks Jr.); Evelyn Pride-Lewis (Abraham Lewis, Jr); **Local 13:** Anita F. Shaver (Howard); Rachel C. Beiley (Mark); Sylvia Ramos (Armando); Maria G. Parra (Jose); Karen R. Patterson (Arnold); Melia S. Savea (Faleono); **Local 23:** Helen Hilliard (Harry); Kathleen L. Booth (Robert); **Local 29:** Sharon M. Price (William); **Local 63:** Patricia A. Jones (Floyd Jones Jr); Barbara Stephans (Roy); Mary Griffin (Charles); Sharon Lewis-Bodnar (George Bodnar); **Local 94:** Kellee Durbin (Gerald); **Local 98:** Doris A. Hansen (Jack).

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ILWU STAFF CHANGES



Gail Lorentz retired in July as Welfare Plan Manager at the ILWU/PMA Benefit Plan where she worked 21 years. Gail began working as a clerical employee at Local 10 in San Francisco back in 1970, then moved to the Benefit Plan office in 1987. "The best part of my job has been meeting all the members and families from so many diverse backgrounds, and helping them to access the benefits that they worked for," said Gail. She plans to travel with her husband, starting with her 50th high school reunion in Ohio. She'll also be volunteering on community projects. The new Welfare Plan Manager is Beth Sharpe.



Tom Price retired from the ILWU this summer after working on the Dispatcher for the past 12 years. Tom's work as Assistant Editor will be missed; his contributions included photography, reporting and interviewing, feature and short-subject writing, layout and design.

In addition to his technical skills, Tom loved learning and explaining the ILWU's culture and history in the stories for the Dispatcher. He says he's looking forward to relaxing a bit, but expects to continue writing and has plans to do some blogging, so you'll probably be seeing his work in print and on the internet. We wish Tom the best of luck in his future endeavors and thank him for his many years of service here at the Dispatcher.



Marcy Rein also retired this summer after spending nine years providing communications support for ILWU organizing efforts. She helped workers at Rite Aid, Blue Diamond, and many other campaigns express their feelings in letters, flyers, and websites, and helped workers prepare for news interviews, public hearings, and press conferences. Marcy participated in house call blitzes, rallies and demonstrations - never shirking from all the hard work required to help workers win justice, a voice on the job, and a union contract. She says she hopes to travel now and see a bit of the world, but intends to remain a writer and political activist.

Kyle Weimann, ILWU's Legislative Assistant in Washington, D.C., is leaving after three years to attend graduate school at the University of Minnesota where he'll study how to improve America's infrastructure. ILWU's new Legislative Assistant is **Alexa Jurczak**, who comes from a union family and recently worked for the American Federation of Teachers.

Dispatcher staff photos

ILWU BOOKS & VIDEOS

Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union's library at discounted prices!

BOOKS

A Spark Is Struck: Jack Hall & the ILWU in Hawaii. By Sanford Zalburg: A high quality re-issue of the informative epic account of Jack Hall and the birth and growth of the ILWU in Hawaii **\$13.50** (paperback).

Along the Shore/Por la Costa—ILWU Coloring Book. A bi-lingual English/Spanish coloring book about waterfront workers and their union. Originally developed by the California Federation of Teachers' Labor in the Schools Committee in consultation with member Patricia Aguirre and the ILWU Local 13 Education Committee. Meets K-3 classroom standards for History and Social Studies. Two (2) for **\$5.00**

The Legacy of 1934: An historical exhibit by the ILWU. Produced as a catalogue to accompany the new traveling historical art exhibit about the origins of the ILWU in the 1934 maritime strike, this brief but vivid publication stands on its own as a pictorial history of the coastwise strike and an account of the extraordinary sacrifices and democratic principles of the founding members of the union. **Two (2) for \$5.00**

Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States. By Charles Larrowe. A limited number of copies of this out-of-print and useful biography are now available through the book sale by special arrangement with Bolerium Books in San Francisco, which specializes in rare publications and documents about radical and labor history. **\$10.00**

The ILWU Story. This book unrolls the history of the union from its origins to the present, complete with recollections from the men and women who built the union, in their own words, and dozens of rare photos of the union in action. **\$5.00**

The Big Strike. By Mike Quin. The classic partisan account of the 1934 strike. **\$9.00**

The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront. By David Wellman. The important new study of longshoring in the ILWU. **\$20.00** (paperback)

A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strike in San Francisco. By David Selvin. Perhaps the most comprehensive single narrative about the San Francisco events of 1934. **\$16.50**

The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938. By Harvey Schwartz. A new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union's organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. **\$9.00**

VIDEOS

"Eye of the Storm: Our Fight for Justice and a Better Contract." A 58-minute DVD feature documentary film produced and directed by Amie Williams, Eye of the Storm tells the story of the 2002 longshore lockout on the West Coast. DVD Version **\$5.00**

"We Are the ILWU." A 30-minute color video introducing the principles and traditions of the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. DVD or VHS version **\$5.00**

"Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges." A 17-minute DVD of the original video production by California Working Group, Inc., memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. DVD **\$5.00**

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Portland, OR 97221
(503) 231-4882

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400 North Point
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 776-8363

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