



THE DISPATCHER

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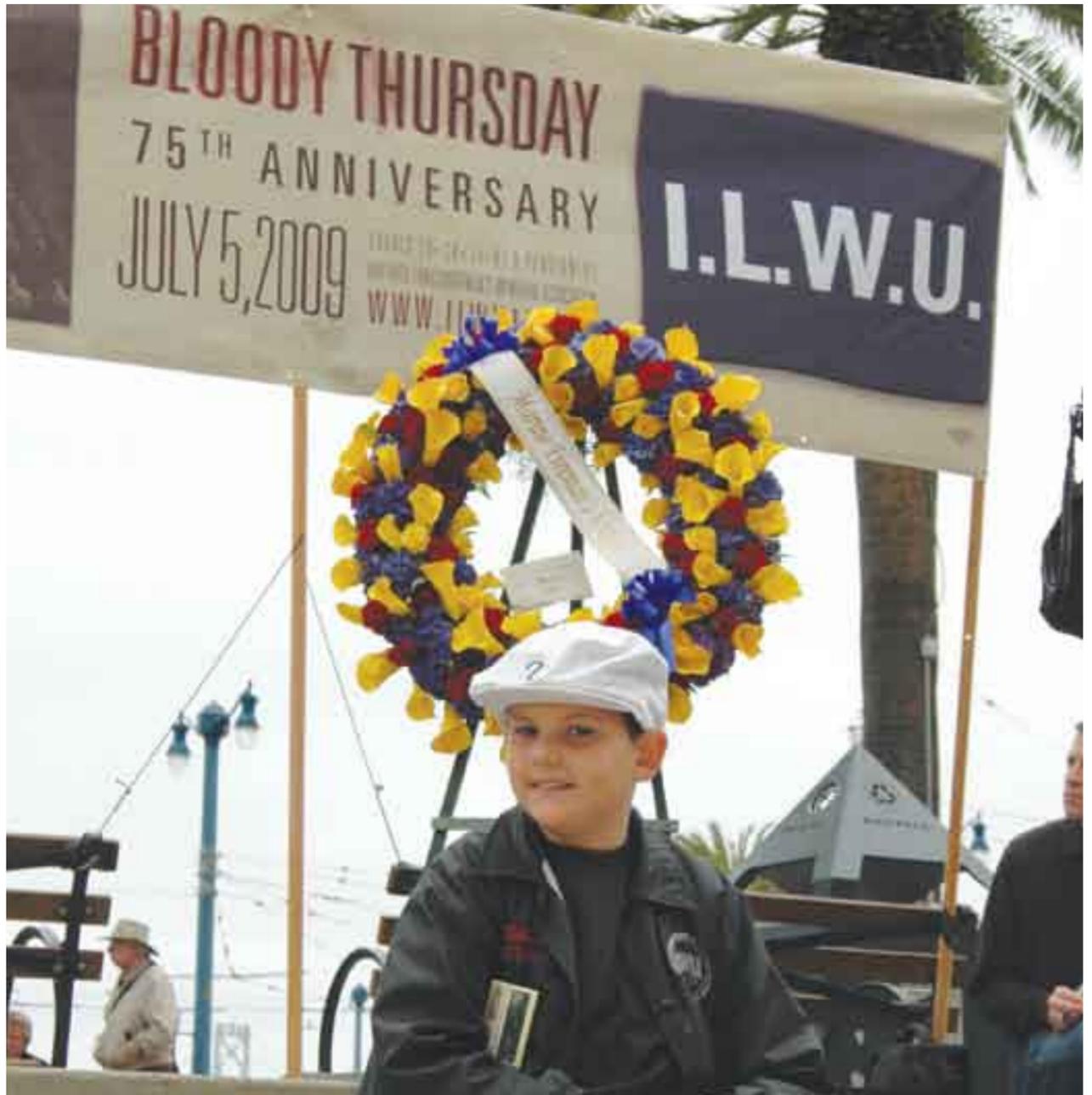
The Labor Day strike of 1948 7

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Page 5: Alcatraz Cruises workers get a helping hand from union supporters.



Past and Present: Ten-year-old Francisco Gaskin joined his father and over 100 other supporters who marched along San Francisco's waterfront on July 5 to honor the martyrs who died fighting to establish our union in 1934.

Remembering Bloody Thursday

On the 75th anniversary of the strike that led to the union's founding, ILWU members honor their history of struggle and sacrifice.

Dockworkers up and down the West Coast held Bloody Thursday celebrations on July 5 that ranged from a silent funeral march in the Bay Area to a festive picnic in Seattle.

In Southern California, Locals 13 and 63 thronged El Dorado Park in Long Beach for a daylong family picnic with all the trimmings. A bar-

becue, live music and dancing, and face-painting for the kids were just a few of the entertainments. Later that evening some ILWU members and families attended a screening of the new documentary, *Bloody Thursday*, written and produced by San Pedro filmmaker Jack Baric with major funding from ILWU locals in Southern California. The audience watched a first cut of the film, which focuses on the events in Los Angeles that led

to the deaths of strikers Dickie Parker and John Knudsen.

In the Bay Area ILWU members chose a somber tone to honor the 1934 confrontation on San Francisco's waterfront between strikers, police, and company goons who attacked with tear gas, rifles, revolvers and shotguns; killing two strikers and injuring over 100. Less than two months before, police and company

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LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

I wish to express my thanks for the ongoing regular copies of *The Dispatcher*. Not only myself but the members of our organization read and digest every article in your great paper. Of course, it creates much discussion and we marvel at the similar issues the ILWU, both working members and retirees, has with us here.

We have had the pleasure of entertaining delegates from the West Coast here in Port Kembla; first Robert McEllrath, then a larger visit from the Pensioners in March 2004. To us "old wharfies" and seafarers it was a great experience, as we've always admired the struggles and battles of the ILWU, and of course our proud connection with Harry.

I remember in the '60s working timber ships from the West Coast of the U.S. and Canada. I admired the great skills in the stowage; they looked like ballrooms as we dug down (pride of labor). Also now and again we found union bulletins in the stow, maybe left there for our reading.

We exchange bulletins between Local 13 and Seattle on a regular basis, so we really are connected. Thanks again for *The Dispatcher*. Warmest and fraternal greetings from Port Kembla NSW veterans, and we share your great slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

**Tony Adcock, President, Maritime Union of Australia Veterans
Kiama, NSW, Australia**

Dear Editor,

I was very disappointed by David Bacon's review of *Solidarity Stories* [*The Dispatcher*, June 2009]. He drew on the vivid accounts of the battles from which the ILWU emerged that Harvey Schwartz had collected to offer his own view of the union's significance. In a way, Bacon did exactly what this book makes one want to do—think about the meaning of the struggles from which the union emerged. But unfortunately, the review said almost nothing about the book that inspired those thoughts.

I hope you will find ways to correct this and give *Solidarity Stories* the attention it merits. This book is in the deepest sense a product of *The Dispatcher*. It was under its auspices that Harvey Schwartz, over several decades, collected and put on record the recollections of those who had a significant role in bringing the union into being. To my knowledge no other trade union journal has given such attention to its own history. And now, in *Solidarity Stories*, Schwartz has brought those accounts which seemed to him to be the most revealing and important into a single volume—a history of the ILWU told by those who made it; an exciting but also thoughtful and thought-provoking record of the union's growth.

I have been involved with Harvey's work for decades, first as a fellow labor history student and then in ongoing discussions in various workshops. But it is not just friendship that leads me to say that—except for Mike Quin's *The Big Strike*, which is in a class by itself—*Solidarity Stories* is the most vivid description of ILWU thought and energy that has ever been published.

**Oscar Berland
El Cerrito, CA**

Dear Editor,

Enclosed is a 1934 photo showing my father, Tony Prizmich, and other longshoremen doing picket duty from a boat during the 1934 strike.

They were patrolling San Pedro Harbor to see how many ships were working. One unidentified person in the middle is shown looking through binoculars. Tony Prizmich is shown at the helm in the well of the boat.

I thought the photo would be of interest to both retirees who were around during that period and to those currently working who were not around during that memorable strike that created the present ILWU.

**John Prizmich, Local 63, ret.
San Pedro, CA**



Dear Editor,

During the week of June 1-4, 2009 I was the Oregon delegate at the national legislative conference of the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) in Washington, D.C. The ARA is affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Our goal is to help retired union members remain active in the fight for working families.

Our ARA delegation that visited Washington in June included two long-time union activists from Oregon, Val Jack and Bill Holayter. We were able to personally meet with four members of Congress, and we met with the staff for two other members. We asked each legislator to endorse the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) and to support national health care reform. Our first conversation was with Senator Jeff Merkley, who avidly supports the Free Choice Act and is totally aligned with the ARA on how health care reform should be accomplished. He supports universal health care with a strong public option.

Our second conversation was with Senator Ron Wyden who co-sponsored the Employee Free Choice Act back in March, but has since supported a plan to taxing benefits for workers with better-than-average health care benefits. We reminded Senator Wyden that organized labor in Oregon is watching him very closely. We told him that we want a public option in the health plan, and that his plan to tax better-than-average health benefits is wrong. We also told him that interests of everyday citizens must have priority over the demands from the insurance companies when it comes to any health plan.

Leaving the Senate and visiting the House of Representatives, we found that both Congressmen DeFazio and Schraeder were too busy to meet with us, so we met with their staff.

Congressman Blumenauer gave us some time, and said he supports the Employee Free Choice Act and backs our priorities for health care, including home care for people suffering from chronic diseases. Congressman David Woo met with us and said he endorsed the Employee Free Choice Act and supports our priorities for national health care reform.

We felt that our legislative meetings were very productive and encourage others to do the same with representatives from your area.

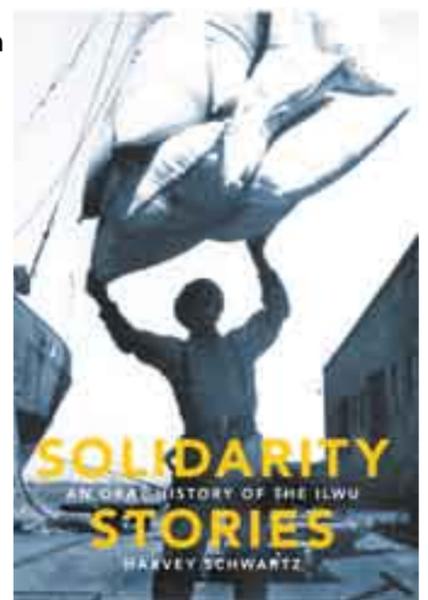
**Verna Porter, Vice President, Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans
Portland, OR**

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

Solidarity Stories On Sale

Harvey Schwartz's new book, *Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU*, is now on sale. This inspiring collection of first-hand accounts from ILWU union leaders and rank-and-file workers paints a vivid portrait of the union's past and present. Available for \$17 each, including shipping and handling.

Make check or money order out to "ILWU" and mail to 1188 Franklin St, San Francisco, CA 94109. Price includes shipping and handling.



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Health Care Reform On the Horizon

The ILWU has been at the forefront of the fight for single-payer health care for decades—and we're not giving up yet.

By Lindsay McLaughlin and Alexa Jurczak

For more than 70 years the ILWU has been fighting for universal, quality health care for all. Yet the United States has still not acted to provide health care for its citizens, and decade after decade the insurance industry continues to get away with denying the American people basic health care coverage. ILWU health care activists have spent their lifetimes fighting for single-payer health care insurance. We owe it to our activists who have come and gone without seeing their work fulfilled to continue fighting for the kind of health care reform we can stand by and be proud of.

The ILWU and union members across the country worked hard to elect Democratic candidates who supported universal, quality health care for all. We had high hopes when Barack Obama became president with the Democratic Party firmly in control of the House and the Senate. While we are far from giving up, health care reform has taken a tumultuous turn for the worse as policymakers struggle to find a way to enact reforms.

In the Senate, the Finance Committee is still struggling to find a way to pay for a health care overhaul, looking first for funding through taxing health care benefits, various "sin" taxes, and revisiting proposals to tax health care benefits and to impose a tax on health care insurance plans. If successful, this proposal would either force our members to pay more for their health care or simply add a huge tax on their plans. Although taxing insurance plans might seem like a viable source of funding, the Finance Committee makes no distinction between taxing insurance plans and taxing non-profit self-funded plans. Therefore, for unions like the ILWU with self-funded plans, our members foot the bill. This is another way to tax your benefits.

The ILWU has been making concerted efforts to meet with key members of the Senate Finance Committee to voice opposition to taxing health care plans. We have also urged the White House to help us put this idea in the graveyard. ILWU members withstood a lockout in 2002 in part to protect our health care benefits. We cannot allow Congress to take these hard-earned benefits away.

In the first week of August the Washington office of the ILWU had a meeting with Finance Committee member Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.) to discuss our concerns with staff regarding the tax proposal. According to staff, the Finance Committee believes this is the only way to gain enough revenue to fund the Committee's health care proposal. Many other unions with multi-employer health care plans have similar concerns regarding the proposed tax on health and welfare plans. The ILWU hopes to build a coalition to fight this proposal.

At the same time, the AFL-CIO remains hesitant to loudly oppose the proposal in the fear that it will stall the Finance Committee further and jeopardize President Obama's agenda. Senator Kerry initially offered this idea without realizing it would adversely affect our plan. Now that the proposal is in the hands of conservative Democratic members of the Finance Committee, the tax burden on union plans appears to be getting worse.

While not at the forefront of the discussions on health care reform, ILWU-supported single payer health care legislation will get a vote both on the Senate and House floors. In Washington DC, the ILWU participates in the labor caucus for single payer health care. Our most recent efforts include gaining support for single payer in the Senate with Senator Bernie Sanders (D-Vermont) introducing the first piece of single payer health care legislation in the Senate. Senator Sanders was promised an opportunity to offer his single payer bill, the American Health Security Act of 2009 (S 703), during the Senate floor vote on health care.

Picnic Honors Jack Wyatt Sr.



Photo by Daniel Lee Brown

Sunday, Aug. 16 dawned clear and sunny at Sacramento's Discovery Park, a recreational area at the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers. It was a perfect day for a retirement party—at least, that's what upwards of 150 ILWU members and friends from Locals 10, 6, 34, and Local 17 Pensioners figured when they came out to celebrate the retirement of Warehouse Local 17 Secretary-Treasurer Jack Wyatt Sr. Local 17 President Jeff Carter said the guest of honor was in his element. "Jack was running around, bringing people food and beer and talking to everyone. I said, 'You really should be sitting down in the shade somewhere with people coming to you bringing you food and beer,' and he said, 'This is the ILWU. This is the way I came in—working—and this is the way I'm going to go out—working.'"

PROCEEDINGS

FIRST ANNUAL CONVENTION INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S
and WAREHOUSEMEN'S UNION...C.I.O. Affiliate

Aberdeen, Washington

April 4 - 17, 1938

#28 GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF HOSPITALS Page 217

WHEREAS: The present hospital systems in the United States, as dealing with the public, are run primarily for the purpose of profit; and

WHEREAS: Under this system of hospitalization, the majority of the people cannot pay for proper hospital treatment, care and medical consultation; and

WHEREAS: Because of this, thousands of people suffer sickness, lack of care and proper advice, and thousands die every year because of these same reasons; on account of this system of profit first and the people last; and

Be It Resolved: The ILWU called for a national nonprofit health care program at the union's first convention in 1938.

Additionally, Speaker Nancy Pelosi from the House has agreed to let Representative Anthony Weiner of New York offer the United States National Health Care Act (HR 676) during the House vote on health care. The ILWU and other members of the labor caucus are working hard to gain support from our senators and representatives in the House and ask them to vote for the amendment.

In lieu of this vote, the ILWU has sent a letter to key senators from the West Coast delegation as well as other senators who are supportive of the ILWU and working families. The vote

on health care is expected to reach the House and Senate floors in late September or early October. We need your help! Ask your senator and representative to vote for single payer health care. Urge them to oppose any taxation of our benefits, and oppose proposals to tax our plan. Get involved by calling your senator (202-226-3121) and representative (202-225-3121) today.

Lindsay McLaughlin and Alexa Jurczak are, respectively, Legislative Director and Legislative Assistant of the ILWU in Washington, DC.

PACIFIC COAST PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Retired? Getting ready to retire? Join the PCPA club in your area!

Pacific Coast Pensioners Association Clubs are active in every state and province and in every area on the West Coast. (And we hope that one of these days we'll have members in Hawaii too.) If you're retired, or making plans to retire, but are not yet a member of an ILWU PCPA Pensioners Club, please accept this invitation to join. Whether you're from the Longshore Division, or from Warehouse, the IBU, or any other jurisdiction of the ILWU, now's the time to join the PCPA Club in your area.

We may have retired from the job, but we'll never retire from the union. We remain committed to the ILWU, and we do what we can to help our still-working brothers and sisters carry out the programs and policies of our union. And make no mistake about it, the officers and the active workforce look out for us too! Our conventions and club meetings are mixtures of informative discussions, fun, and good, old-fashioned camaraderie. Clubs routinely schedule day trips and other events and good times are had by all.

Our 42nd Convention will be in Vancouver, B.C., Canada from September 14-16, at the Holiday Inn Vancouver Center. Our Canadian hosts have some great activities and entertainment in store for everyone! We have invited retired delegates from Australia and Cuba, and the officers of our union will also be represented.

To find a club in your area visit www.ilwu.org/about/directory/ and click on the Pacific Coast Pensioner's Association link at the bottom of the page.

— Rich Austin, President, Pacific Coast Pensioners

Remembering Bloody Thursday

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goons shot six strikers in Wilmington at the Port of Los Angeles, killing two and seriously injuring many more. Strikers in Seattle lost two among their ranks to similar gunfire, and a sailor supporting the strike in Hong Kong was killed in 1934, bringing the death toll to seven.

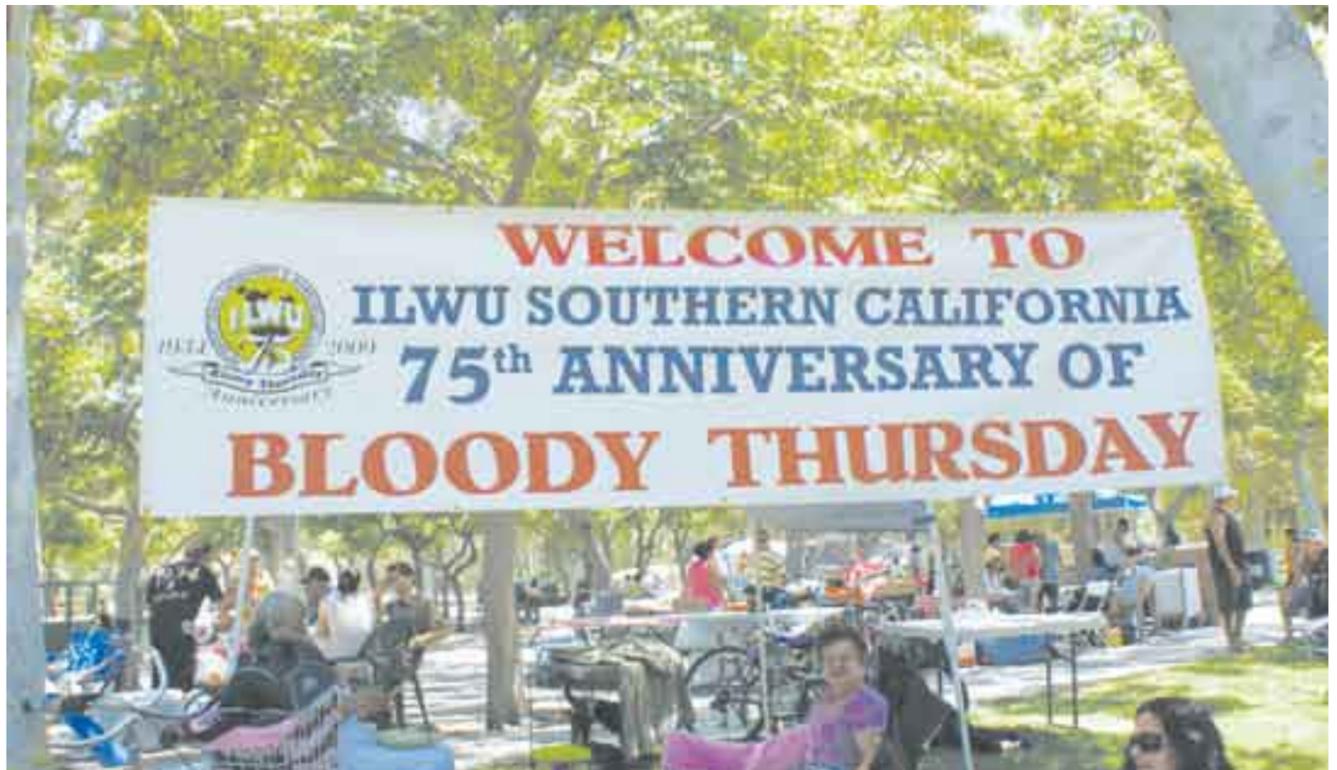
"We wanted to make this 75th anniversary special by organizing a silent march, like the one that took place after the strikers were killed in San Francisco," said Mike Villagante who spoke at the rally and worked with other volunteers at the Bay Area Longshoremen's Association, which organized the event. The silent funeral march up San Francisco's Market Street in 1934 helped galvanize public sympathy for the union and the general strike that followed—all of which put pressure on the companies to eventually settle by recognizing the union, establishing the hiring hall, and raising wages.

The event began with a brief rally held on San Francisco's Embarcadero in the spot where strikers had stood their ground in the 1934 strike. Speakers at the rally included San Francisco Board of Supervisors President David Chiu, International Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams who noted that the spirit of unity and sacrifice remains essential to the union's success. Local 10 President Melvin Mackay connected the events of 1934 with labor struggles that continue to this day by noting that workers at Hornblower/Alcatraz Cruises are organizing right now on San Francisco's waterfront to join the ILWU's Inland-boatmen's Union.

Following a dramatic reading by actors Ian Ruskin and Heidi Helen Davis, the procession began with Local 10's Drill Team proudly holding the colors. In a reenactment of the '34 funeral procession, dozens of longshore workers dressed in their traditional hickory striped shirts, black work pants, and white caps silently walked behind vintage trucks bearing the two coffins of the slain strikers.

Marching along the Embarcadero, passing Pier 33 where Alcatraz Cruises now operates, the procession included more than a dozen families walking with their children and a trolley car bus that carried pensioners, including 94-year-old Nate Thornton, a Spanish Civil War veteran who worked on the waterfront for more than 50 years.

Arriving at the Local 10 hall, pall-



Sunday In the Park: Southern California locals had lots of room at El Dorado Park in Long Beach for picnicking, playing, dancing, and relaxing.

bearers unloaded the symbolic coffins and placed them with flowers and wreaths provided by union members. After Indian Joe Morris played taps on his trumpet, and a few brief remarks, the ceremony ended with a lunch provided inside the hall by the Longshoremen's Memorial Association with help from Auxiliary members.

Local 10 member Evan Young, who attended with his wife Paula and daughter Taliah, summed up the feelings of many participants: "It's important to understand the history of our union, and being part of this march helped make it more real."

In keeping with longtime tradition, **Columbia River** area Locals 5, 8, 40 and 92 held their memorial picnic at historic Oaks Amusement Park. The event began at 11am with the laying of the memorial wreath of flowers in the Willamette River in honor of the lives that were lost 75 years ago. Local 8 retirees Norm Parks and Steve Hanson spoke, noting the passing of Marvin Ricks, one of the last surviving veterans of the 1934 strike who died in June. After the brief ceremony the day turned celebratory, with record numbers of watermelon, corn on the cob, hot dogs, chili, ice cream, and soda pop and beer being consumed. "I can't say there were three thousand people there," said Secretary-Treasurer John Miken, "but we went through close to three thousand

hot dogs. We had a pretty good crowd. We had a band and ice cream and kids running and screaming and having fun all over the place."

Seattle area Locals 19, 52, 98, Local 19 pensioners, and the Waterfront Federal Credit Union remembered Bloody Thursday with their annual picnic at Vasa Park on the shores of beautiful Lake Sammamish. Max Vekich and Jack Block Jr. spoke and picnickers enjoyed live classic rock from the Head Brothers, a band whose members are all longshore workers. Scott Martinez, chairman of the organizing committee, said great weather combined with plenty of assistance made the event a success. "We had a lot of volunteers helping this year so everything went really smoothly," he said.

He said the traditional ringing of the bell, in honor of those who have passed away, was particularly moving this year. "We lost 33 members last year; six active and the rest retirees, the largest group we've had in one year ever. A lot of the old-timers are passing on now, so things are changing, you can see the change happening, you can see the older longshoreman stepping back and the younger ones coming up."

For the past several years, Local 54 in **Stockton** has celebrated July 5 with a baseball game. As enjoyable as the games have been, they decided it was



Tots and Treats: Addie Weiss and her mom, Local 19 member Leondra Weiss, had fun helping out in the kitchen at the Seattle area picnic at Vasa Park.

time for a change this year. "The baseball game wasn't bringing the people together," said Rick Fidely. "It didn't serve the purpose of building community and brotherhood and sharing family time that the picnic seems to do." Upwards of 130 people enjoyed a family picnic at Micke Grove Park in Lodi. Picnickers gorged themselves on barbecued tri-tip and chicken while they listened to a DJ spin records, the kids went wild in a bounce house and families enjoyed games of horseshoes. "It was nice to get people back together," said Fidely. "We're going to schedule another picnic for next year."



Family Affair: L-R: Mallory Rodriguez, Mishael Ellis, Eddie Rodriguez, Eddie Rodriguez, Jr., Local 13 Member Suzette Armijo and Baby Jayden planted themselves under a shady tree at El Dorado Park.



Honor Guard: In a reenactment of the 1934 funeral procession, Local 10's Drill Team led a parade of white-capped longshore workers up San Francisco's Embarcadero.

What does Bloody Thursday mean to you and why is it important that the ILWU observe it every year?



“Bloody Thursday means the history of this whole union. The majority of us who were raised around the water and the union, no matter what differences we might have or arguments we have, or sides we pick, we always stick together when it comes to that one special day. All resentments go away and everybody is together. You’re always going to have differences of opinion on the job, how to run the job and protect the union name because we’ve got to make the company

money, we have to get these ships out of there as fast as possible, but on Bloody Thursday and on Labor Day it all goes away; people shake hands and hug, and it all goes away. When you’re busy working and raising your family and paying your bills, you forget about the union and you forget about what you really belong to and what it means, but on Bloody Thursday you remember—you belong to the strongest labor union in the world, and people died for it. You’ve got to treat it like a gift.”

Rico Castagnola, Local 13
San Pedro, CA

“Bloody Thursday means a lot to me because there was a lot of sacrifice put forth into our union that gives us strength and an opportunity to be treated equal. To have a strong union is everything to me because without the union I wouldn’t be where I am today. I feel very grateful and blessed to be a part of it—being involved, being there on Bloody Thursday, having my children with me to see that I’m serious about the union and that it’s a part of my life. My children like it, they look forward to coming to the union hall, but when there’s an event I like them to be as involved as I am. I feel a very strong unionism when I’m there. I think it’s so important for all us union members to attend so we can feel strong within ourselves. It kind of gives me just that much more encouragement, to be there and to be involved. It’s a remembrance of those men who shed their blood for us and we should always remember that; Bloody Thursday is a constant reminder to ourselves of what they sacrificed for us and what we need to do to keep the union strong.”

Rene Oliva, Local 10
San Lorenzo, CA



“For me it’s about coming together. Our jobs are becoming increasingly more mechanized. We don’t work as close as we did in the old days when people worked side by side. You had time to get to know each other and people often spent time together with their families off the job. Today, with the mechanization of the waterfront, plus all the new members entering the ILWU, and our busy lifestyles, we don’t get time to meet each other’s families and get to know each other. This one day, Bloody Thursday, is about getting together and getting to know your brothers and sisters. It’s about remembering those who fought and died to get union recognition and taking a moment to recognize the members who have recently passed away. Then to celebrate each other—all the union brothers and sisters from pensioners and A’s to casuals. Even our credit union is involved. The other reason I volunteer my services on this day is my uncle, Rudy Martinez. He has dedicated his life to serving our union. He has always stressed how hard they had to fight to win the working conditions that we have today. Organizing our Bloody Thursday picnic is my way of giving back to the union, passing on our history, and celebrating the day, which I think helps keep our local strong for our future brothers and sisters.”

Scott Martinez, Local 19
Seattle, WA



Ferry Important People: A delegation of elected officials and labor and community leaders has asked Hornblower management not to interfere with workers’ efforts to join the union.

Workers at Alcatraz Cruises Win Community Support

Coalition of supporters champions workers who wish to join the union.

San Francisco’s famed Embarcadero was ground zero for the 1934 waterfront strike that brought the city to a standstill and led to the creation of the ILWU. The sacrifices union members made led to better jobs and more respect for unions and workers. So when the National Park Service awarded Hornblower Yachts—a privately owned non-union operation—a lucrative 10-year contract to run the popular tourist ferry operation to Alcatraz Island in 2006, battle lines were drawn.

Alcatraz ferry service had been a union shop since its beginning in 1973, when it was run first by the Red & White Fleet and then by Blue and Gold. Up to 1.5 million tourists make the trip to Alcatraz every year, leading to annual revenues of about \$18 million. When Hornblower took over, more than 50 union-represented Blue and Gold workers lost their jobs. Many were members of the Inlandboatmen’s Union or the Masters, Mates and Pilots union (MMP). Their health care was suspended and their pension contributions ceased.

The NPS said its decision to award the concession to Hornblower was based on the company’s plan to build a solar-powered craft and construct a visitor center. However, the vessel was never built and Hornblower finally admitted the plan was not technically feasible. Hornblower has also not built the promised visitor center or completed the environmental reviews required for new construction. In addition, the company has been plagued by a string of safety and environmental

problems along with charges of unfair labor practices.

Blue and Gold workers had a union contract that provided living wages, a good retirement plan, health benefits, and an impartial grievance system for solving problems on the job. Workers at Hornblower/Alcatraz Cruises have few rights on the job and inferior health and retirement benefits; they can be fired at any time for no reason, and they have no fair way to resolve problems on the job.

Now the workers are ramping up the fight from within. But not without some conflict; some employees who support the union have reported threats and harassment, illegal surveillance, and denial or withholding of benefits.

On July 3, 2009 a delegation of community, labor and political leaders visited Hornblower’s general headquarters on Pier 3 to meet with Terry MacRae, president and CEO, and request that the company observe a free and fair process to determine union recognition. The delegation asked Hornblower management to agree to give union representatives access to the work site and to waive an election if a majority of workers sign union cards through a process known as card check. Several San Francisco supervisors and Congress member Doris Matsue have sent letters to MacRae urging him to sign the agreement. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom supports the process and has agreed to appoint someone to help mediate.

Hornblower has about 100 employees and many have already signed union cards. At press time Terry MacRae had refused to sign the agreement, but has agreed to meet with community and union leaders.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

Making Progress on Rite Aid



Photo by Britta Duncan

Delegation Visits Rite Aid HQ: Concerned labor and community leaders visited Rite Aid's Western Regional Headquarters in Beaverton, OR on Aug. 12. They brought copies of the new report documenting unlawful behavior by the company's union-busting consultants who were hired to stop 600 workers from forming a union at Rite Aid's distribution center in Lancaster, CA. Standing, L-R: Verna Porter, Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans and Jobs with Justice Workers' Rights Board member; Bob Gross, retired postal worker and Treasurer of Jobs with Justice in Portland; Father Bob Kruger, Priest Moderator of St. Francis Catholic Church and Jobs with Justice Workers' Rights Board member; Mary Winzig, ILWU International Organizer for the Columbia River area; Mike Conradi, member of the Inland-boatmen's Union; and Lila Zucker, Portland Jobs with Justice intern. Front: Margaret Butler, Executive Director of Portland Jobs with Justice and Alyssa Duncan, activist and future union member.



Solidarity In Boston: On Aug. 10 representatives from three other Rite Aid unions—Teamsters, United Food & Commercial Workers and SEIU Local 1199—along with members of the community-labor coalition Jobs With Justice, attended an industry conference in Boston, where they demanded that Rite Aid executives bargain in good faith with workers at the Lancaster, CA distribution center. Afterward they held a press conference to announce the release of the special report exposing the abuses of anti-union firm, Oliver J. Bell & Associates.

Read the report at www.jwj.org/freechoice/riteaid_report.pdf

NEWS & NOTES

Local 6: The future of San Leandro Hospital, which employs 20 imaging techs who are members of Warehouse Local 6, continues to be the subject of heated debate. The Sutter Health Corp., which operates the hospital, wants to close it and convert it into a rehab center, which would eliminate jobs as well as vital medical services from the community. Hospital employees, members of the community and dozens of area health care professionals are rallying to keep the acute care facility and emergency room from closing. Supporters have held rallies at the hospital and meetings of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The supes are now considering a proposal from a Southern California firm to buy the hospital and keep it open. For more information visit www.savesanleandrohospital.com.

Local 8: Local 8 passed a motion at its July stop-work meeting requesting that the city of Portland replace the plaque on the Francis J. Murnane Memorial Wharf and restore the wharf. Murnane was the former president of Local 8 who died in 1968. The bronze plaque was stolen or lost—for the second time—during the recent relocation of the Saturday Market. Locals 8, 40 and 92 say the wharf is Oregon's only public monument to a union worker and they have asked the city of Portland to name another monument in honor of Murnane if the wharf cannot be restored. The floating wharf on the Willamette River was dedicated in 1979, at a ceremony attended by former International President Harry Bridges and 100 longshore workers.

Local 9: After a protracted legal battle with the Port of Seattle, Local 9 retirees are celebrating victory. In December 2002 the port shut down its entire warehouse operation giving workers just 45 days notice. In the spring of 2003 the port notified retirees that it would no longer pay for their medical coverage. A class-

action lawsuit went all the way to the state Supreme Court, which ruled in retirees' favor. The Port appealed the ruling, but the court upheld the ruling in favor of Local 9 warehouse retirees and vested members. The court has directed King County Superior court to work out the settlement, which could be substantial.

Local 10: Bay Area locals are pleased with the outcome of an Oakland City Council meeting on July 28 that decided the fate of a portion of the former Oakland Army base. Twenty members from Locals 10, 6, and 34 attended the meeting along with Sean Farley of Local 34, Harold Brinkley of Local 10 and Fred Pecker of Local 6, who spoke out on the issue. Council members voted to award an exclusive negotiating agreement to a team headed up by Oakland developer Phil Tagami, who is committed to continued industrial use of the site.

Local 13: Last summer the Long Beach City Council declared July 28 to be Harry Bridges Day in the City of Long Beach. This year they went one better, and at the request of Local 13 members and Southern California District Council President Rich Dines, voted unanimously on Aug. 4 to rename Queen Mary Events Park to Harry Bridges Memorial Park at the Queen Mary. The grassy shoreline park is situated between the city's only two union hotels and across from Pier J at the Port of Long Beach.

Local 19: Local 19 President Matt Ventozza is celebrating his daughter Jessica's University of Washington softball team's victory in the Women's College World Series. The team swept the Florida Gators two games to none in Oklahoma City on June 2. The Huskies have been to the World Series eight times and this is the team's first-ever national championship. Jessica is an infielder. Also, Local 19's summer food drive and fundraiser was a big success, with volunteers from Locals 19, 52 and 98 raising nearly \$3,500 and over 450 lbs of food for Seattle's Northwest Harvest Food Bank during the last two weeks of June.

Local 21: Local 21 has teamed up with

Cowlitz County Deserves Better, a new community coalition of Longview, WA residents who oppose the business practices of Chinook Ventures, a Canadian-owned firm that has been cleaning up hazardous materials at the former Reynolds Aluminum plant on the shores of the Columbia River in preparation for operating a private dock on the site. The non-union company pays its workers substandard wages and coalition members are concerned that the low wages will further depress the local economy. In addition, Chinook Ventures has been repeatedly fined by the state of Washington for environmental violations. Local 21 members picketed the Chinook Ventures site in April, drawing more than 100 union members, environmentalists and supporters. To learn more about the campaign, visit www.cowlitzcountydeservesbetter.com.

Local 47: On June 30, container ship Global Wisdom docked at the Port of Olympia, generating 1,900 hours of work for longshore workers who loaded the ship with 5.7 million board feet of Weyerhaeuser logs bound for Japan. Wood products company Weyerhaeuser initially planned to relocate its log export business to Olympia from the Port of Tacoma in 2006, but the move was delayed by a flurry of legal challenges from environmental groups claiming the move required additional environmental review. Ship traffic at Puget Sound's southernmost port is already triple that of last year.

Local 52: Max Vekich is running for one of two open seats on the Port of Seattle Commission. He won the Aug. 18 primary, and if elected in November says he and the other commissioners aim "to preserve industrial lands and keep terminals moving cargo instead of sprouting condominiums." His campaign has been endorsed by labor unions and local Democratic Party organizations. Vekich previously served as a state legislator for four terms from 1983-1991.

Local 200: Visitors to Alaska's Denali National Park were surprised to see a group of workers picketing the entrance to the park at the start of the Fourth of July weekend. The electrical workers' union Local 1547, which represents bus mechanics, radio technicians and warehouse workers at the national park, had been negotiating wage and pension issues with management from Doyon/ARAMARK. When talks broke down on July 1, the picket line went up. ILWU Unit 16 in Juneau contributed \$2,000 to help the strikers. Contributions were also received from ILWU locals in Seward and Whittier, Alaska and the locals sent a "picket team" to march on the line with the strikers. On July 17 the IBEW workers ratified a new contract and returned to work three days later.

Send us your news and notes! Email to: editor@ilwu.org or call Tai at (415) 775-

75th Anniversary Poster Now On Sale

The new poster commemorating the 75th anniversary of the 1934 longshore and maritime strike is now available for purchase by individuals and affiliates. Designed by the ILWU Titled Officers and staff from archival photographs and produced by Richard Bermack, the color poster is printed on heavyweight glossy paper and measures 30x20 inches. The design blends images from 1934 and 2002 (color photo by Tom Price, former assistant editor of *The Dispatcher*) and is available by mail order from the ILWU library for \$5, including shipping and handling. Affiliates wanting larger quantities can place bulk orders in lots of 200 copies for \$350, including shipping and handling. Please make check or money order out to ILWU and send to: Poster Sale, ILWU Library, 188 Franklin St., 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. For more information, email library@ilwu.org.



The Labor Day Strike That Changed History

How ILWU rank-and-file solidarity trumped anti-labor law in the 1948 strike.

By Richard Bermack

On Labor Day 1948, San Francisco newspaper headlines proclaimed, “60,000 in Labor Parade Here” and “Reds Riot in Berlin!” A few days earlier, nearly 27,000 West Coast maritime workers, including longshoremen, had gone on strike. A post-World War II strike wave was shaking North America and Europe, with millions of workers achieving gains in wages, working conditions, and social equality.

Newspaper headlines warned that union demands for higher wages would create a recession. They called for legislation to “curb labor abuse.” A Republican Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act in July 1947, overriding President Truman’s veto. In 1948, employers turned the full power of Taft-Hartley against the ILWU.

The 1948 strike was one of the most significant in ILWU history, second only to the 1934 strike. But while 1934 was fought in the streets, 1948 was a publicity war, fought with newspaper ads and union leaflets.

The 1948 negotiations began with the Waterfront Employers Association, led by Frank “Fink Hall” Foisie, declaring the ILWU hiring hall out of compliance with the new law and stating that union members would no longer get preference in hiring. Citing another provision of Taft-Hartley, they demanded the union purge Harry Bridges and all “Communists” from union leadership. The employers then used the act to get an injunction against the union striking

and forced an NLRB election requiring union members to vote on the employers’ last offer. The employers believed that if free to vote their consciences, the members would turn against the union leaders.

The employers could not have been more wrong. The union called for a boycott of the election, and not a single union member cast a ballot. The boycotted election was a defining moment, demonstrating the power of rank and file solidarity. The injunction expired on September 2, and the 1948 strike began.

The employers portrayed the strike as their stand against the Soviet Union and Communism. One ad featured a photo of Harry Bridges drinking with Soviet foreign minister Molotov, accusing Bridges of being in league with Russia.

The union countered with its own ad campaign, run by The Dispatcher editor, Morris Watson, one of the nation’s leading journalists, who had been blacklisted by the major media for union activity. In response to the employers’ ad, the union took out ads in all the local papers with a photo of an employer drinking with Molotov, taken at the same event, a United Nations reception. The ad listed all the other dignitaries present, not only exposing the employers’ hoax, but also making Bridges sound more like a member of high society than a dangerous radical.

Employer representative Dwight Steele was particularly embarrassed by the incident and by Foisie’s anti-communist antics. Steele, along with Randolph Sevier and several other employers, began organizing a coup. After the



Labor Archives and Research Center, SF State University

upset presidential victory of Truman over Republican candidate Thomas Dewey, the employers took over the negotiations and formed the Pacific Maritime Association. Truman had an ambiguous relationship to labor, especially the ILWU, but he had run as a labor candidate, and his victory was seen a defeat for conservative business interests. The employers informed the union that the main issue of the strike, leadership, was being resolved on the employer’s side.

Steele and Sevier had negotiated against the ILWU in Hawaii, and the union had won their respect. Based on that experience, the employers proposed “the New Look.” From then on, the relationship between the union and management would be based on mutual respect.

The employers not only granted the union’s demands, but they negotiated a comprehensive grievance and arbitration system. Sam Kagel was appointed West Coast arbitrator. Under the new system, disputes on the waterfront could be settled without the constant job actions and walkouts that had characterized the previous decade.

The ILWU was born out of the 1934 strike, but it was the 1948 strike that transformed the union into what it is today.

Richard Bermack is a writer and documentary photographer. He has produced and designed two historical exhibits for the ILWU: The Men Along the Shore and the Legacy of 1934 and Securing the Union’s Future: The 1948 Strike.

The ILWU on Television!

“From Wharf Rats to Lords of the Docks,” a 90-minute special performance about the life and times of Harry Bridges will be broadcast on public television stations coast to coast over Labor Day weekend. Directed by Haskell Wexler, the film depicts Ian Ruskin performing his one-man show to an audience of 1,000 longshore workers and features appearances by Elliott Gould, Edward Asner and members of ILWU Local 13, with music by Jackson Browne, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and more.

“Bloody Thursday,” a 1-hour documentary written and produced by filmmaker Jack Baric, provides a fascinating insight into the tumultuous events of the 1934 West Coast strike, focusing on Los Angeles. The film was funded in part by ILWU locals in Southern California and features appearances by several ILWU members. Locals are encouraged to host a screening in their community. For more info call (310) 766-4884.

Both films will air on public television over Labor Day weekend. Check your local PBS station for times.

New Exhibit on 1948 Strike Now Available

The ILWU Coast Committee is pleased to announce the availability of its newest exhibit, “Securing the Union’s Future: the 1948 Strike.” This panel display chronicles the 1948 strike and employers’ attempts to crush the ILWU through use of Taft-Hartley legislation, red-baiting, and attacking the hiring hall and union leaders. “Securing the Union’s Future” may be reserved for display at your local. When installed, the two-sided exhibit measures 20 feet long by seven feet high.

In addition, we have mini versions of both “Securing the Union’s Future,” and an earlier exhibit, “The Legacy of 1934.” These smaller versions of the exhibits are suitable for mounting on the walls of your hiring hall and are portable for outreach and public events. Copies of the mini exhibits can be borrowed or purchased by ILWU members or ILWU locals. They are available in various sizes and formats ranging from about \$350 to \$1,000 for the 1948 exhibit, and \$700 to \$2,000 for the 1934 exhibit. Please contact Robin Walker, Library and Archives Assistant, at (415) 775-0533 or email library@ilwu.org to reserve “Securing the Union’s Future: The 1948 Strike,” or to purchase a mini version of either exhibit. With your order, please indicate the anticipated use, such as education program, new member orientation, or office display.

Douglas Laird Getchell, 1942-2009



Douglas Laird Getchell, retired Local 12 member, died July 3, 2009, at Oregon Health Sciences University Hospital in Portland of complications resulting from a liver transplant.

Doug was born in Oakland, Calif. His first connection with the ILWU came during the 1960s, when he was a college student earning money for travel by working as a warehouseman in Oakland. He returned to work with

the ILWU in the port of San Francisco in 1969 as a B man. In 1970 he got his A book and transferred to Local 12 in Coos Bay, Oregon, where he was a member until his retirement in 2004.

In 1987, he was asked to serve on the LRC and from that time forward was a committed officer in his local and at the international. Doug participated in local and Coast contract negotiations, serving first as caucus delegate and then as a member of the Longshore Division's Safety Committee. He negotiated Federal OSHA regulations to protect longshoreman and fostered alliances with other unions in the U.S. and abroad, traveling to Washington D.C., Mexico and Europe.

While devoted to the union, he maintained his extraordinarily broad range of interests in reading, music, photography and travel. His photographs depicting his work as a longshoreman and the Coos Bay waterfront were included in several shows and can still be seen on the walls of the Local 12 union hall.

A memorial gathering will be held for Douglas on Sept. 12, 2009 at 2pm in the Meeting Room of the North Bend Public Library at 1800 Sherman Ave., North Bend, OR.

Peter Kon Hendrickson, 1950-2009



Pete Hendrickson, former president of Alaska Longshore Division Unit 223 in Dutch Harbor and International Executive Board member, died in early August in Walnut Creek, California at the age of 59 after a lengthy illness. He was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, but moved to Dutch Harbor on the island of Unalaska, Alaska in the Aleutian Islands in 1978. He moved back to California earlier in 2009 after retiring from the ILWU as a crane operator.

Pete went to Petropavlovsk, Russia in the mid-1980s as a representative for the union as part of a Sister City Exchange between Unalaska and Petropavlovsk. He advocated for crewmembers on foreign-flagged cargo vessels through the International Trans-

port Workers' Federation. He was on the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, serving on the board of directors from 1996-2005, where he was a leader in advocating for community-based fishing and conservation of the marine environment.

"When I was a first-year steward in Unit 223," remembers Chuck Wendt, president of the Alaska Longshore Division, "Pete was the Unit president and business agent. When I came to Pete with an issue, he always had the time to talk it through objectively without passing judgment. He was always concerned about the best interests of the union. I could always call him or send an email and he would respond as soon as he could regardless of the issue, what else he was doing at the time, or what part of the world he was traveling in."

"I had the good fortune to spend a lot of time with Pete at the Convention and Caucus in June. Pete knew then that his health was taking a turn for the worse. We tried to convince him to go to the doctor and he refused. He was afraid that if he went to the doctor they would keep him in the hospital and he would miss the Convention. That was the way Pete was. He always put the ILWU ahead of everything else."

The ILWU is planning a memorial service on Labor Day, Sept. 7, 2009 in Unalaska.

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 4: George W. Whitmore, Larry R. Webb; **Local 8:** Arthur J. Wagner, Fred E. Trachsel, Dennis A. Driggs, George J. Mosher, Stephen J. Merrill, John A. Jones, Danny J. Niehuser, Terry J. Miles, Arthur J. Gardner; **Local 10:** Walter E. Brown, Charles Gerace, Joseph M. Silva, Fred H. Blanchard; **Local 12:** David B. Olson, Wayne E. Morgan, Ernest R. Holladay; **Local 13:** Robert H. Dreyer, Jason Sommers, Aaron Pryor Jr., Donald P. Sanders, James J. Fox, Michael W. Borchardt, Oscar Ruelas, Guillermo F. Magana, Hennessy R. Campbell, Robert H. Cleary, Michael Kustich, Alan Feinberg; **Local 19:** Joseph R. Peters, Laurence W. Fowler, Larry C. Samples, Larry V. Dees, Gary A. Strong, Victor K. Von Scheele; **Local 21:** Thomas D. Nelson, James B. Riley, Charlie D. Wines;

Local 23: Robert C. Hammermeister, Dennis W. Snell, David R. Anderson, George F. Pratt, Malcolm N. Thompson, Thomas B. Hamlik; **Local 25:** Barry R. Verrall; **Local 27:** George H. Schoenfeldt, Thomas E. Gagnon; **Local 34:** Dennis L. Valenzano, Sheila D. Burgess, Joseph B. Jacobson; **Local 40:** Tom A. Christy, Virgle E. McVey, Wilbur L. Adams; **Local 46:** David M. Zarate; **Local 47:** Sherman R. Will, Michael R. Sharp; **Local 50:** Michael E. Bandeen, Stephen T. Lauritsen, Dan A. Stetner, John E. Kilcup; **Local 63:** C. Blane Mortimer, Daniel P. Webster, Frederick W. Taylor, Anthony De Martino, Mark L. Hoy, Steven W. Rivera, Fred A. Oro, Mark D. Sundstedt, Jeffrey B. Perich, Michael S. Howit, Henry L. Taylor, Anthony F. Vitalich, Thomas A. Samz Sr., Frank Green, Anthony M. Zuvich, Toni I.

Martinez, Denise M. Klassy, Billy D. Ross, Charlotte M. Peters, Paul G. Peterson, Phil A. Guerrero, John C. Taylor, Dennis A. Kordich, Lizabeth A. Trani, Rebecca N. Saenz; **Local 92:** Keith A. Simonson, Robert D. Johnson, Robert L. Rooney, Michael A. Hellem; **Local 94:** Ronald M. Meyer, Reynaldo R. Avila, Stuart Anderson, Richard Ponce, William F. Talamantes, Raymond P. Aguirre, Girard R. Garibay, Eugene G. Hebert, Federico Dupay Jr.; **Local 98:** Gary Kaldestad, Jesse J. Toro, Kristi A. Hagen.

DECEASED & NEW SURVIVORS:

Local 8: Bryan I. Melton, Eino H. Niiranen; **Local 10:** James D. Winston, Bobby L. Hodges (Marilyne); **Local 12:** Douglas L. Getchell (Nancy); George R. Kryla, Paul W. McDonald (Oma); **Local 13:** Thomas Williams, John E. Trachsel (Stella), Ray

U. Ortiz (Elodia), Alfred S. Padilla, Julio G. Maes, Melvin Cooper; **Local 23:** Grant B. Myers Jr., Kenneth D. Riley, Theodore B. Ellis; **Local 34:** Squire Scott; **Local 50:** Eli C. Riutta; **Local 54:** Albert P. Santini; **Local 63:** Stephen P. Johnson; **Local 94:** Don C. Lanier; **Local 98:** Blaine Woodard (Jannyce)

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 10: Helma B. Ergut, Lorraine D. Cardoza, Nellie Struberg, Hazel Cleaver, Daisy D. Boyd, Vivian Anderson, Wilhelmina Heide, Yvonne M. Young, Durdica Rubcic; **Local 19:** Malinda A. Zerhire, Beulah Budnick; **Local 34:** Beverly J. O'malley, Leona A. Joy; **Local 52:** Marguerite Matheson, Ethel I. Lui; **Local 63:** Margaret Jackson; **Local 94:** Iona E. Rislser

TWIC Report From the Coast Longshore Division

Recently, the Coast Arbitrator for the Longshore Division was presented with several important questions regarding the Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC) and the Employers' obligation to escort registered longshore workers and marine clerks who currently do not possess a TWIC.

In Arbitration Award C-08-2009, the Coast Arbitrator confirmed that possession of a TWIC is not a condition of employment. This means that the Employers cannot take any adverse employment action, such as deregistration, against our members for failure to possess a TWIC.

The Coast Arbitrator also determined that workers who do not possess a TWIC but have made a good-faith application to obtain a TWIC and are dispatched to a job must be turned to and escorted while at work unless the Employers can show that it is not practicable to provide an escort under the operational circumstances. This ruling paves the way for workers who are denied worksite access and not paid a lost work opportunity claim to file a grievance through the grievance procedure in an expedited manner at the area level.

This is an important ruling for the Longshore Division though there is still much work ahead. As Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet explains it, "C-08-2009 confirms the Union's position that TWIC is not a condition of employment and provides members with a measure of protection against the Employers' use of the TWIC requirement to arbitrarily and capriciously refuse worksite access to our members who are jointly dispatched to work at a particular PMA member controlled site. This, however, is just a small step toward the Division's goal of eliminating a failed government program."

Secretary-Treasurers Conference Coming in January 2010

The Secretary-Treasurers Conference, the training program for local union financial officers, will be held Jan. 24-28, 2010 in Portland, OR. The conference will cover financial administration, election rules, and record keeping and is designed to help the ILWU comply with new federal regulations, including changes by the Obama Administration. Instructors include ILWU legal and fiscal consultants, union staff, and International and local officers. Each U.S. local and affiliate may send two participants: its secretary-treasurer (or other officer in charge of finances and record keeping) and the office manager or clerical employee who maintains the union's financial and administrative records. Space may be available for a limited number of trustees selected by their local union. Complete information will be mailed to the locals and posted on the ILWU website. For more information, please contact International Secretary-Treasurer William Adams or Education Director Gene Vrana at (415) 775-0533.