



# THE DISPATCHER

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Cleophas Williams, first African-American President of Local 10 [page 6](#)



The Local 10 Drill Team served as the Color Guard at the Bloody Thursday event in San Francisco. The event was sponsored by BALMA, Locals 10, 34, 75, 91 and the Pensioners.

# ILWU members celebrate 82nd anniversary of Bloody Thursday

**T**housands of ILWU members, their families, community supporters and elected officials gathered at parks, cemeteries and union halls up and down the West Coast to mark the 82nd anniversary of Bloody Thursday. The ceremonies and picnics paid their respects for the struggle and sacrifices that gave birth to the ILWU and celebrated the solidarity that keeps the union strong.

### Southern California

Southern California's Bloody Thursday tradition in the Harbor Area involved up to 2,000 ILWU members, friends and family. The day was marked by a memorial ceremony followed by a picnic at Harry Bridges Park in Long Beach.

### Morning for martyrs

The day began with a morning assembly of 100 people at Gardena's Roosevelt Memorial Park where ILWU members gathered to honor the first two martyrs killed in the bloody 1934 struggles that gave birth to the union.

### First Blood of 1934

First Blood martyrs, Dickie Parker and John Knudsen, were both buried at Roosevelt Park after being shot, along with five other union members. They were killed by company-employed security guards shortly after midnight on May 15, 1934 at Berth 145 in Wilmington. Dickie Parker died on the way to the hospital while John Knudsen clung to life for weeks before dying of his wounds. Public response to the killing of both men was impressive, with an estimated 8,000 lining the streets from San Pedro to Gardena to witness the procession of cars that stretched

six miles. Law enforcement warned of a riot following the funeral, but because both events were peaceful, public support increased for the union cause.

### Reflections

Local 13's Angel Blanco called together 50 participants – most of whom arrived in dozens of classic cars and scores of motorcycles from the Longshoremen's Motorcycle Club. They gathered quietly at the graveside of Dickie Parker, offering prayers and reflections. Local 13 member Javier Nevieritte led to group in a short prayer to start the service.

Blanco said that that the morning memorial was the most meaningful part of the Bloody Thursday because it allowed time for everyone to reflect on the struggles necessary to build the ILWU.

Pensioner Jerry Brady recited a poem he wrote to commemorate the

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## LETTERS TO THE *DISPATCHER*

Dear Editor,

At Redmond Middle School (Redmond, Washington), National History Day is a project presented in the history and language arts classes to eighth graders. Upon forming our group, Ashley, Eileen, and I discovered that we had a common interest: the Great Depression era. We wanted to find an impactful and fascinating topic that we could have a personal connection to. The 1930s were filled with change; President Roosevelt created the New Deal, outlining a plan to pull America out of the Depression, and there was a growing awareness of inequality throughout the classes. During this era, the labor movement gained massive momentum and the number of strikes and protests increased drastically. Through further research, we noticed that one particular name was always popping up: The 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike.

On May 9th, 1934, over 12,000 longshoremen from Bellingham, Washington to San Pedro, California went on strike for 83 days, showing incredible strength and ultimately receiving nearly all of their demands, regarding higher pay, safer conditions, union recognition, and control over hiring halls. What was most surprising to us about this topic was that a single exploration of the rights of the entire working class had such a substantial effect on the movement as a whole. The Waterfront Strike inspired a wave of future strikes and protests and helped gain public support for labor. Moreover, since we live in the Seattle area, we felt an even greater attraction for the topic, for Seattle is a major port and many significant events during the strike took place in our city.

Once we chose our topic, we researched for months and wrote a paper before deciding to create a documentary. Throughout this process, we received support and guidance from our teachers, Ms. Elizabeth Dunsire and Mrs. Leah Smith. By January, we had the first version of our documentary, which we presented in class. From there, we continued on to the Regional, State, and National competitions.

We were not familiar with the ILWU prior to researching the 1934 Waterfront Strike, for none of us have relatives or friends with connections to the union.

In addition to the sole impact of this strike, something we found surprising was the amount of opposition the police and politicians showed the dockworkers. Even though the workers' actions were legal by the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, the government opposed the strike and believed it was an unnecessary act meant to cause disruption. The police and National Guard troops initiated brutal violence, using tear gas, clubs, and eventually guns to try to break the strike and force the ports open. The public realized that the police were wrong in their actions when they fatally shot two strikers in San Francisco, Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise. Additionally, in the documentary on the strike, Bloody Thursday,



we learned of how the maritime workers placed flowers by the area where their fellow strikers had died, and when the police came, they kicked the flowers away, refusing to accept their mistake. The longshoremen returned, piling new flowers several feet in the air; the police then had no choice but to leave them alone. This incidence of the longshoremen's solidarity against police oppression demonstrated the strength of the workers. That same strength allowed them to continue fighting and eventually reach victory.

After the 1934 Strike, Harry Bridges and the new ILWU decided not to lay off African Americans who were originally hired as strikebreakers. They also began hiring new African Americans, and in the next couple of decades, women would be invited to work as well. We found the ILWU's effort to extinguish discrimination, long before most of the country would try to, as one of its most unique aspects. In speaking with many experts on the Waterfront Strike and ILWU, including President Sean Farley of ILWU Local 34, labor historian Dr. Ronald E. Magden, and Mr. Conor M. Casey, head of the Labor Archives at the University of Washington, we discovered that the ILWU has always been known for its democratic views. We find it surprising how decades later, the same groups of people that the ILWU treated as equals are still facing injustice and discrimination in American society.

We have been working on this project since September, and finished this month. We invested many hours each week, spent time on either researching, writing the script, narrating, or putting together the documentary. It was a long and difficult process, and we encountered many struggles along the way. For instance, one content-related problem we faced was finding actual evidence that the longshoremen's intention was not to spread communism through the strike. In the end, I think we created a product that was unique because people aren't very aware of labor unionism anymore and it's important to take a look back at history and acknowledge the role that unionism has played in helping the working class achieve equality.

At the State competition on April 23rd, 2016, our entry, "A Wave of Change: The 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike" placed first in the category Junior Group Documentary. A total of eight students from our school advanced to the National competition in Washington, D.C., accompanied by our teacher Mrs. Smith, and we competed with over 100 entries in our category from across the world. Unfortunately, we did not place at the National competition, but the experience was definitely worth it.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our documentary and experience.

Finally, here is a link to our documentary: <https://youtu.be/7dJjTyDgqhQ>.

Sincerely,

Ananya Jain

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

## Celebration honors Battle of Ballantyne

Each summer, longshore workers and pensioners gather at New Brighton Park along the waterfront in the East End of Vancouver, British Columbia. We come to honor the men who fought a brave battle at Ballantyne Pier during a bitter strike in 1935.

On June 18 of that year, 1000 longshoremen and supporters marched through the streets from Vancouver up along the waterfront to a pier in Ballantyne where strikebreakers were unloading cargo. Police and company goons violently attacked with guns, clubs and other weapons. Although those brave men lost their strike that year, they con-

tinued organizing and established a democratic longshore union two years later in 1937 that eventually became today's ILWU.

This year's Ballantyne Memorial service on June 18th was well attended with the largest turnout in five years. About 70 people braved the lousy weather, most disguised under umbrellas as the rain poured down.

ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton spoke at the event. He explained that labour struggles have changed from the days during the Battle of Ballantyne when workers were violently attacked with billy clubs – to today when workers are under attack from international corporations and finance capital.

Our pensioner brother, Gordie

Westerand, spoke about his family's involvement in the 1935 Strike. I noted that our pensioner brother Max Hurren, elder statesman of our union, was unable to attend this year as he has moved to Vancouver Island. I also shared a story of my family's role in the Ballantyne struggle and explained how my own grandfather had supported the 1935 strike.

I was only able to see a few of the many brothers who attended from our longshore and foreman's locals, because most were hidden under their umbrellas. But I was able to see some of the Local 514 brother retirees, including Brian Jones, Don Coccia, Rolf Grigull, Spike Contini, Tony Brown, Joe Giulani, and Vice President Ron Roberts. Many young members were also in attendance but because I have been retired for 14 years, I do not know their names.

We want to thank brother Barry Campbell for braving the rain and



**Honoring Canadians who sacrificed:** ILWU Canada's past President Gordie Westrand spoke at the Ballantyne memorial on June 18. The event honored strikers from the waterfront struggle of 1935. Turnout was good despite the bad weather.

taking so many good photos on such a dark and challenging day.

We hope to see more Brothers next year!

Brother Gary Green,  
Local 514 Retired  
ILWU Canada

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# West Coast dockers honored fallen co-workers with “hour of silence” on July 7

ILWU dockworkers joined an international day of action that took place across the globe on July 7th by observing an “hour of silence” before 12 noon to honor workers who have died while working on the docks here and abroad.

## Global docker networks

The International Day of Action was organized by the two leading networks that connect dockers around the world: the International Dockworkers Council (IDC) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF). The groups represent hundreds of thousands of workers at ports in almost every country.

## Advance notice provided

The union provided advance notice to the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) employer group, which acknowledged and recognized the ILWU’s action.

## Fatality in Los Angeles

The events had special resonance at ports where workers have recently been killed on the job. On March 30, Anthony Harris, a member of the Local 63 Marine Clerks was killed on the job at the Port of Los Angeles.

## Recent death in Longview

In Longview, Washington, members of Local 21 are still grieving the recent loss of Jimmy Meadows, Jr., who suffered a serious injury on June 21 and died four days later in a Portland hospital. Meadows had been working for S.S.A. Marine aboard a log ship at the Weyerhaeuser dock when he fell. OSHA is investigating the incident but may not have a report for six months.

## Memorial for Meadows

On July 9, ILWU members, friends and families gathered at the Local 21 hall in Longview for a memorial to honor Meadows and his life. Among the many who attended were ILWU International President Bob McEllrath, International Vice-President Ray Familathe and Coast Committeeman Cam Williams.

On July 6, McEllrath issued a statement to the news media explaining the serious issues behind the International Day of Action.

“We will stand in solidarity with dockworkers in America and around the world who are calling attention to dangerous working conditions and the need to respect the rights of all workers.”



ILWU members from Locals 13, 63 and 94 in the Port of Los Angeles join the July International Day of Action on July 7 to honor workers who have died while working on the dock here and abroad.



Local 29 members at the Port of San Diego showed their solidarity on July 7th.

# McEllrath & Adams attend RMT union meeting in stormy England

When ILWU International President Bob McEllrath and Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams arrived as special guests at the Annual General Meeting of Britain’s Rail, Maritime and Transport workers union (RMT) in Cardiff, England, on June 26, they didn’t expect to be witnessing Britain’s most contentious political debate in decades.

“We got there as all hell was breaking loose over the ‘Brexit’ decision because British voters had just decided to leave the European Union,” said McEllrath. “It was impressive to see how the RMT’s rank-and-file and leadership responded to all the challenges and opportunities that suddenly surfaced after the Brexit vote.”

## Militant union with ILWU ties

The RMT is one of Britain’s most militant unions with close ties to the ILWU. In 2012, former RMT General Secretary Bob Crow attended the ILWU International Convention in San Diego where he praised the willingness of both unions to fight for working class concerns. When Crow died unexpectedly in 2014 at the age of 52, Mick Cash was elected to become RMT’s General Secretary.

## Chaos after the EU vote

As Mick Cash called the RMT meeting to order, the Brexit fallout was quickly mounting: stock markets were slipping, the value of Britain’s pound was eroding, and deep divisions emerged within the anti-union Tory party that forced conservative Prime Minister David Cameron to announce his resignation. Tensions were also rising in Britain’s Labour Party, where pro-business politicians tried to remove party leader Jeremy Corbyn, a strong supporter of workers, unions and progressive causes.

## RMT concerns with Labour

One RMT leader after another expressed frustration with Labour Party politicians who have been turning their back on workers and unions in favor of big business. Efforts by these “moderate” politicians to depose party leader Jeremy Corbyn was seen as a dangerous move that could cause more workers to abandon the Labour Party.

“They’ve created a situation,” said RMT General Secretary Mick Cash. “If we’re not careful, we’ll have a Tory government — and worse, a Tory government that’s supported by UKIP.”

## Rise of far-right forces

Cash’s comment about “UKIP” refers to the United Kingdom Independence Party, a far-right nationalist

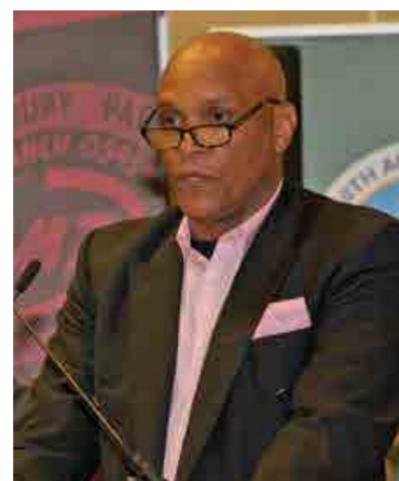
political party that has been gaining strength with a charismatic leader who won votes by blaming job losses and falling incomes on EU bureaucrats, free trade agreements and immigrant workers. The potent combination of bigotry and patriotism — combined with the absence of a Labour Party plan to help workers — allowed the UKIP to win support from angry white working-class voters. UKIP policies favor the rich and big business, similar to Trump’s call for lower business taxes, less regulation, “law and order” and weaker civil rights.

## Failures of the EU

The RMT and other unions have long-opposed the European Union’s neo-liberal policies that have encouraged public transportation systems to be privatized and managed by operators using low-wage or non-union labor. Those policies — along with secretly-negotiated free-trade deals, austerity measures and an influx of immigrant refugees — have made the EU a prime target for right-wing demagogues looking for working class votes.

## Labour’s lost opportunity

The RMT wants Britain’s Labour party to mount an aggressive fight-back campaign to win working class votes by putting people to work and strengthening unions. But that approach has proven as difficult to implement in



Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams spoke at Britain’s RMT meeting in June.

Britain’s Labour Party as it has been in the U.S. Democratic Party. Both parties have strayed from their working class roots in favor of “neo-liberal” policies that require politicians to be business-friendly and hard on unions. These new “moderate” and “pro-business” elements have also turned-off working class voters — and made them open to appeals from politicians like Donald Trump, who use celebrity, nationalism, and bigotry to win votes.

## Solidarity and hardball

“We came to the RMT meeting to watch, learn and deliver a solidarity message from the ILWU — which Willie Adams and I did — but we also came away with quite an education about British politics,” said McEllrath.

# ILWU members celebrate 82nd anniversary of Bloody Thursday

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sacrifice made by Parker and Knudsen. He was followed by Jerry Avilla, Southern California Region Benefits Specialist, Pacific Coast Pensioner President Greg Mitre, Coast Committeeman Frank Ponce De Leon and former ILWU International President Dave Arian.

“Without Parker and Knudsen doing what they did and the sacrifices made by the old-timers you see around you here today, we wouldn’t have what we have,” Mitre said.

Arian encouraged everyone at the memorial to reach out and speak to someone at the picnic who did not know who Parker and Knudsen were. “If they don’t know, tell them. It’s our responsibility to keep their memory and their story alive,” Arian said.

## Procession

After the memorial, a caravan of classic cars, cruisers, hot-rods and Harleys slowly pulled out of the Memorial Park behind a hearse donated by All Soul’s Mortuary in Long Beach. The mock funeral procession made its way to Harry Bridges Park in Long Beach where hundreds of family members were already gathered for the Bloody Thursday picnic.

## Picnic with a purpose

Union members arriving at the park could hear it was happening from the parking lot thanks to the excellent live music provided by three local bands. “Tropic” opened the event, followed by a mid-day performance from the group “Azure,” and ended with “Low Key” who closed out the event. A dance floor was set up in front of the stage for couples, kids and individuals to cut loose.

A wide-range of food and drinks were available at no cost to members and families that included hot dogs, hamburgers, and tacos.

## Kid Zone

Much of the picnic festivities focused on entertainment for kids – which gave grown-ups a chance to relax and socialize while their children played safely on a dizzying assortment of activities that included several bounce houses, slides, basketball, carnival games and face painting.

## Pensioner & Auxiliary presence

The Southern California Pensioners Group had a booth with tables, chairs, food and goodies available for dozens who dropped-by. The always active ILWU Federated Auxiliary Local 8 ladies worked the crowd, selling raffle tickets for a local benefit.

## Just a dash of politics

An impressive roster of politicians attended the picnic to mingle, shake hands and provide short greetings. Following short comments by Local 13 President Bobby Olvera Jr, Local 94 President Danny Miranda and Local 63 President Paul Trani, the elected officials paid their respects to the union’s bloody beginnings and the important

role that longshore workers play in the economy of the Southern California. Attendees included Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez, who is also candidate for US Senate, State Senator and candidate for US Congress in the 44th Congressional District, Isadore Hall, Warren Furutani and Steve Bradford, candidates for CA State Senate in the 35th District, Long Beach City Council members Roberto Uranga and Al Austin, Long Beach Council member-elect Jeannine Pearce, and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

Garcetti addressed the event at length. He talked about his long relationship with the ILWU from the beginnings of his political career to his support for the ILWU during the recent Longshore contract negotiations. Noting the record year of cargo moves in the Port of Los Angeles, Garcetti said, “Don’t tell me you can’t have high productivity and good wages. The two go hand-in-hand.” He praised the ILWU for standing behind Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders but said that it was important to unite to defeat Donald Trump in November. “We’ve got to Dump Trump,” he said. “He stands against everything that we believe in.”

There was a surprise visit from Kathy Bridges, Harry’s third daughter. She briefly addressed the celebration and thanked everyone for coming out to celebrate Bloody Thursday. “We have to remember the past, to move forward in the future,” she said.

## Bay Area

Members, pensioners and supporters from throughout the Bay Area came to the Longshoremen’s Memorial Hall on July 5th for a day-long event marking the 82nd anniversary of Bloody Thursday, presented by the Bay Area Longshoremen’s Memorial Association (BALMA).

The morning began with a solemn ceremony to honor Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise, two strikers killed by police on July 5, 1934, who were among seven workers killed that summer. After Scott Barton played “taps,” the Local 10 Drill Team honor guard marched into their traditional position behind the outlined bodies of the

fallen martyrs that were surrounded by flowers. The absence of Drill Team founder and leader, Captain Josh Williams, was felt by many who noted his recent passing on June 2. His memory and legacy were graciously honored by Drill team member Trevyn McCoy who spoke eloquently about the Captain, following a stirring acapella rendition of the national anthem by Aaliyah Washington-Purry.

Bay Area Pensioner President George Cobbs gracefully performed his longtime role as Master of Ceremonies, introducing a host of special guests and speakers, including Local 10 President Ed Ferris, Secretary-Treasurer Derrick Muhammad, BALMA President Chris Christensen, BALMA Treasurer Mike Villeggiante, Coast Benefits Specialist John Castanho, former Local 10 President Melvin Mackay, Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker, Pensioners Joe Lucas and George Romero, Local 34 President Dave Gonzales and Vice President Jeanette Walker-Peoples.

State Assemblymember David Chiu, longtime union supporter and friend of the ILWU, was a special guest who presented a resolution honoring the union’s legacy of struggle and sacrifice.

Cobbs and other speakers commented with great respect on the June 24 passing of Cleophas Williams who was Local’s 10’s former and first African-American President. His departure, along with Josh Williams and Ralph Rooker who passed on December 19, 2015, was cited as a legacy worthy of further reflection.

President Ed Ferris noted that the trio of recently-deceased pensioners remained active until their passing. “They never forgot where we came from, and how so many sacrificed so much to create this wonderful Union. That is why these Brothers were always present at our Bloody Thursday events each year. Their leadership, wisdom, and guidance will be forever missed by all of us at Local 10.”

When the ceremony ended, dozens of children were ready to begin a full day of entertainment provided by the ILWU Credit Union that included magic shows by John Gardinier, face painting by Buki the Clown, Yogita

Sheth and Oliver Twist. Two other clowns, Ravioli and Squeegie, provided balloon art creations.

A hearty lunch buffet was provided by BALMA and volunteers, with entertainment by musician Tami Lyn and her band.

The afternoon concluded with a San Francisco Bay cruise on a Blue & Gold ferry staffed by members of the Inlandboatmen’s Union and Masters, Mates & Pilots Union.

BALMA President Chris Christensen said, “This event requires a small army of volunteers who deserve all the credit for making it such a successful, family-friendly experience.” He specifically thanked the Credit Union, Locals 10, 34, 75, 91 and 6; the Drill Team, Pensioners Club, Auxiliary #17, OPEIU Local 29 staff and all volunteers including Carlos Villanueva and Kelley Kane.

## Seattle

Seattle area members began their Bloody Thursday observance with an early morning ceremony at the Pier 91 cruise ship terminal located at Smith Cove – site of a labor battle on July 19, 1934 where maritime strikers clashed with police and company goons. Striking seafarer Olaf Helland was struck in the head and killed by a police tear gas projectile while many others were wounded. This year, Local 19 members placed a wreath of flowers into the bay to honor all seven of the martyrs who died in 1934. One of them was Shely Daffron, a local strike leader who was shot in the back and killed by an assassin at Wells Point, about 10 miles north of Seattle, on the evening of July 30, 1934. Daffron and a group of strikers had gone there to the Standard Oil (now Chevron) tank farm after hearing that non-union strikebreakers were trying to move products.

Local 19 Pensioner President Carl Woeck organized a ceremony at Shely Daffron’s gravesite at the Lakeside Cemetery to honor him and the six other 1934 martyrs who gave their lives for the union.



**Searching for silver dollars:** Games, contests and prizes kept kids busy at Local 21’s picnic. Besides digging through hay bales for hidden silver dollars, there were piñatas filled with candy, and gunny-sack races, an inflatable bounce house plus cotton candy and sno-cones.



**Off to the races:** The Bloody Thursday Picnic in Tacoma, had gunny-sack races and other games for kids.



**Auxiliary 17:** (LtoR) Auxiliary 17 members Kim Austin, Clydenia Austin, Alice Bozeman, Linsley Bock and Kathy Robinson were on hand to honor Bloody Thursday.



**Celebrating with family:** Bryan Adams with his wife Alicia and children Malachi, age 5 and Noel, age 8, celebrated Bloody Thursday together at Local 10.

After the morning ceremonies concluded, ILWU members from throughout the Seattle area gathered at the annual picnic in honor of Bloody Thursday at Vasa Park on Lake Sammamish. Donations from Locals 52, 98 and the Pensioners supplemented a generous contribution from Local 19 members who made it possible for an estimated 500 participants to enjoy a special day together.

A BBQ meal with all the fixins' was served along with plenty of drinks and snacks. Children took advantage of a bouncy castle, water slide, balloon animals, and airbrush tattoos – plus endless access to the lake for swimming and boating – which meant many parents were able to enjoy some time with themselves and friends while their kids were busy having fun.

A performance by the Seattle Labor Chorus provided entertainment.

Local 19's Sarah Esch coordinated the event with a team of volunteers

including Charlie Wilbert, Randy Wilbur, Cosette Hill, Max Proctor, Danny & Sam Philio, Warren Fairbanks & family, Justin Hirsch, Mark Williams, Mike Callanan and Nick Budinich. Local 19 member Andrew Szarka volunteered to take over 200 photographs at the event.

"Sarah and the other volunteers showed a willingness from the beginning to do the hard work that made this event such a success, said Local 19 President Rich Austin, Jr. "All of us owe these volunteers a tremendous debt of gratitude."

#### Portland

Portland's 82nd Annual July 5th Memorial Picnic attracted an estimated 1500 members, pensioners, families and friends for an all-day event at the Oaks Amusement Park.

The picnic was made possible thanks to generous donations from ILWU Locals 8, 40, 92, the Inland-



**First Blood:** ILWU Pensioner Jerry Brady reads one of his poems about the 1934 West Coast Strike at the gravesite of Dickie Parker in Gardena, CA.

boatmen's Union (IBU), Auxiliary 5, the Columbia River Pensioners and the Local 8 Federal Credit Union.

As in past years, the day began with a ceremony honoring those who gave their lives in 1934 to establish the union that eventually became the ILWU. A wreath of flowers was placed in the Willamette River as Local 8 member Paul Grainnard played taps.

A team of volunteers from Local 5, Local 8, Local 40, Local 92, IBU and the Columbia River Pensioners helped serve over 1500 hot dogs, 36 gallons of chili and 1800 ice cream bars at the picnic. Local 8 Vice President Jeff Smith helped coordinate the event and thanked Ashley Hill for running the kitchen, Stacey Alford for cooking the hot dogs, Tom Wehage for selling raffle tickets, Steffen Hill for selling the amusement ride bands, Matt McMahon for donating the use of his boat. Local 8 Secretary Troy Mosteller and President Mike Stanton also pitched-in to volunteer with their family members.

The Amusement Park offered a wide range of entertainment that included carnival rides and games, roller skating, go-karts and mini-golf. Bingo games were provided by Auxiliary #5 members throughout the day. Musical entertainment was provided by DJ Jaron Jacobsen of 3J Mobile Music.

#### Tacoma celebrates lakeside

Local 23 members in Tacoma returned to beautiful Spanaway Lake Park again this year where they honored Bloody Thursday with a traditional picnic on July 5th.

An estimated 350 family members participated this year. A barbeque lunch featured hundreds of burgers and dogs that quickly disappeared. Children were able to play in an inflatable bounce house. Pony rides were available for younger kids, and a local artist provided face-painting for children and adults. The bingo game sponsored by the Auxiliary was as popular as before. Sno-cones were included this year for the first time and proved to be a big hit.

The event was planned and executed by a hard-working team headed by Eric Sowers and Art Jackson with

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**Carnival games:** The Kids Zone at Harry Bridges Park in Long Beach had plenty of carnival games for kids and adults to enjoy. Kids tested their strength with a sledge hammer, shot hoops, and enjoyed bounce houses, slides and face paintings.



Local, state and federal elected officials came out to show their support for the ILWU and honor the history of Bloody Thursday in Southern California.



**Surprise guest:** Kathy Bridges, daughter of Harry Bridges, was a surprise guest at the Bloody Thursday Picnic in Long Beach.

# Cleophas Williams: Local 10's first African American President



**C**leophas Williams, the first African-American President of Local 10, passed away on June 24th. He served four-terms as President of Local 10, including service during the 1971 strike.

Williams was born in Camden, Arkansas in 1923. His father, John Henry Williams, was Principal of a school for black children. His mother, Bertha, was also a school teacher. She died when Cleophas was 3 years old and his father later remarried. Williams described his step-mother as a “very caring, meticulous and loving mother” in the oral history he conducted with historian Harvey Schwartz that was published in the book, *Solidarity Stories*.

After the stock market crash of 1929, Cleophas's father saw his wages drop dramatically, so he decided to try his hand at farming. He bought a 15-acre farm and when the corn was ready for harvest, the Ku Klux Klan rode-in and destroyed the crop. The Klan often targeted black-owned farms in this manner to keep black workers from gaining independence and to ensure that there were plenty of black laborers available to work for white landowners at low wages.

Despite the attacks by white racists, the Williams family was generous to poor white migrants who came to their door for food during the Great Depression. Although the Williams family struggled themselves, they always shared what little they had with others in need.

Cleophas recalled having to pick cotton in order to try and make enough money to buy school clothes, but he barely earned enough for a pair of shoes, so his parents decided to home-school him and his sisters.

## Escaping Jim Crow

During the Second World War, Williams made his way West along with hundreds of thousands of other African Americans who joined the Great Migration in search of employment in the booming defense plants up North and out West – and to escape brutal racism in the Jim Crow South.

Williams was first hired out West as an electrician's helper at Moore's Shipyard in Oakland where he worked on Liberty Ships. He eventually joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 595. Though the workplace and union were

integrated, and it was a clear improvement from the racism he experienced in the South, Williams said that he still experienced discrimination. Although he paid dues to the IBEW, Williams recalled that it was clear he was not welcome at the union meetings, so he never attended any.

Williams was drafted and served in the Army during 1942-43, but was discharged because of a knee injury. He returned to work at Moore's Shipyard until 1944 when he heard there was plenty of longshore work available. He began work on the docks in February of 1944.

## Learning from leaders

Williams said he learned a lot about longshoring from experienced black longshoremen who had migrated from the Gulf Coast in search of the readily available work. He said that he didn't feel any hostility from the white longshoremen, but some were indifferent. “You were kind of a non-person to them. They'd walk by and wouldn't speak to you,” Williams said in his oral history.

In addition to his on-the-job training, Williams got help from veteran black longshoremen Johnny Walker and Albert James, who guided Williams through the ins-and-outs of union politics. He said their leadership and experience helped other African-Americans in Local 10 more effectively articulate their views and fight for their vision in the local.

“I was still very young; I listened. I didn't even understand how you made a motion on the union floor. I had to learn totally from scratch. But I learned from them and others,” Williams said.

Williams also received an education at the California Labor School (CLS). The CLS was supported by dozens of labor unions and provided courses on economics, politics, and sociology in addition to practical skills for union members and officers, such as how to produce a leaflet or newspaper. The school was closed in the 1950s during McCarthy-era Red Scare because the school was associated with leftists and the Communist Party.

## Fighting for Civil Rights

Williams was dedicated to the Civil Rights struggle inside and outside the union. He was active with the NAACP. In 1959, he joined the “Longshore 56 Club,” an organization with 12 members that acted as a black caucus within the union. The club fought against racial discrimination within the ILWU and organized to get African Americans hired as ships clerks and walking bosses on the waterfront. In 1968, Williams was chosen to represent Local 10 at the funeral for Dr. Martin Luther King.

In 1972, Williams represented Local 10 at the founding meeting of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. The meeting was held in Chicago and was attended by over 1,200 black trade unionists across the country who met to discuss the role of African-Americans

in the labor movement. It was organized after the AFL-CIO took a “neutral” position on Presidential candidates Richard Nixon and George McGovern. Many black labor leaders believed this decision ignored the voice of African-American union members who were concerned that the Nixon campaign was using coded language about crime and poverty to exploit racial tension and roll back progress on Civil Rights. At the time, the CBTU meeting was the single largest gathering of black trade unionists in US history.

Professor and activist Angela Davis sent a letter to of condolences to Local 10 and Williams' widow, Sadie. “Personally, I am indebted to Cleophas for presenting the resolution at the ILWU Convention in 1972 to “Free Angela Davis” that helped turn the tide of the government-orchestrated frame-up against me,” Davis wrote. The letter thanked Local 10 for its long history of support for Civil Rights including recent demonstrations of solidarity with victims of police violence.

## Local 10 leader

Over the course of his career Williams was elected by the membership to serve in many leadership capacities, including a delegate to the Northern California District Council, Local 10 Board of Trustees, Longshore Caucus delegate and chair of the Longshore Caucus.

In 1964 Williams was elected as a dispatcher at Local 10, and in 1965 he narrowly lost an election for Secretary-Treasurer in a runoff. In 1967 he became the Local's first African-American President. He served as President for four terms.

“Although he was the first African-American President of Local 10, Cleophas always saw himself as a leader for everyone in the union, not just one group,” said historian Harvey Schwartz, who interviewed Williams extensively about his life and career in the ILWU. “He shared Harry Bridges's belief that a democratic, multi-racial union was the best way for all workers to move forward.”

Williams provided crucial leadership for the union during the 1971 strike and his strong connection to the community helped provide local support for the ILWU. While serving as Local 10 President during the mid-1970s, Williams made the tough—and controversial—choice of instituting a temporary monthly assessment of every member of the local to solve a budget deficit.

## Retired from the job, not the fight

Williams remained involved in the ILWU after his retirement. He was an active member of the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association and served on that PCPA Executive Board. He also represented the Bay Area Pensioners as a Board member of the Copra Crane Landmark Association. In 2015 Williams was honored by the PCPA with the Jesse and Lois Stranahan Award

which is bestowed on an outstanding labor activist.

“As the first African-American President of ILWU Local 10, brother Cleophas Williams was certainly a groundbreaker,” said Local 10 President Ed Ferris. “Our entire membership benefited greatly from his dedicated service to the ILWU and he will be deeply missed by all of us. I will personally miss listening to him share stories about our rich history at Local 10 membership meetings and Bloody Thursday events. He was a wonderful example of what a true Union man should strive to be.”

“The ILWU lost an icon with the passing of Cleophas Williams,” said ILWU International President Robert McEllrath. “Cleophas's leadership influenced several generations of ILWU members. He will be remembered not only for his lifelong dedication to Civil Rights but for his role in making the ILWU the strong, democratic union that it is today.”

A celebration of life on July 16 attracted hundreds of family, friends and rank-and-file union members who came to honor Williams. Union officials attending included ILWU International President Bob McEllrath, Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams, Vice President Ray Familathe, Coast Committeemen Frank Ponce De Leon and Cam Williams, Pacific Coast Pensioners President Greg Mitre, Bay Area Pensioners President George Cobbs, and Local 6 Secretary Treasurer Fred Pecker.

Cobbs and Adams joined a host of family members and religious leaders who praised Williams' leadership, courage and determination.

“Cleophas decided early in life to devote his intellectual and political gifts and his extraordinary capacity for hard work to the service of the ILWU membership. He was a champion of workers' rights, civil rights, human rights, a champion of the weak, poor and the voiceless,” said Adams. “In the words of the late Muhammad Ali, ‘Service to others is the rent you pay for your room on earth.’”



Cleophas Williams (right) with Harry Bridges

Photo courtesy of the ILWU Library and Archives

# Oakland Council kills controversial coal terminal

Oakland City Council members voted unanimously to kill a controversial coal export terminal on June 27. The terminal was opposed by a broad coalition of community and environmental groups, including Bay Area ILWU locals and unions affiliated with the Alameda Central Labor Council.

## The right decision

“The Council’s ‘no’ vote was the right decision for residents, workers and the environment,” said Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Derrick Muhammad who testified at the lengthy City Council hearing. He was joined by other ILWU leaders including Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker who serves on the ILWU’s Northern California District Council.

## The law & scientific evidence

The Council based their decision on scientific evidence that coal could not be transported or exported safely, citing risks to workers, residents and the environment from hazardous coal dust. The Council also had the law on their side, including new legislation by State Senator Loni Hancock that recently passed in the State Senate and is awaiting action in the Assembly. Coal lobbyists threatened to sue the City and individual Council members for restricting coal exports, which they implied was prohibited by free trade agreements like the NAFTA and TPP, but no claims have been filed in court.

## Slippery deals

Developer and coal promoter Phil Tagami won the right to redevelop Oakland’s former waterfront Army base in 2013 by using political connections and optimistic job forecasts, but he made no mention of any coal terminal then and later denied he had



Photo by David Bacon

Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Derrick Muhammad hits the mic to address a crowd of community members who attended a June 25th rally to support the proposed coal ban in Oakland.

any plans for one. But documents obtained by the East Bay Express show that Tagami and his partners had been working with coal companies for far longer than they let on. Coal lobbyists in Utah were working to get Tagami’s team a \$53 million subsidy for the coal export terminal in Oakland, a plan they tried to keep secret until emails between Utah coal promoters were obtained and published in the newspaper. The exposé upset coal proponents who wanted a “controlled message” response to the “unfortunate article.”

“If anything needs to be said, the script was to downplay coal, and discuss bulk products and a bulk terminal,” said one of the coal promoters, who wrote that “Phil Tagami had been pleased with the low profile that was bumping along to date on the terminal and it looked for days like it would just roll into production with no serious discussion. At this point, there is nothing

to do but weather the storm and see what additional fallout occurs.”

By the time that the June 27 Council meeting rolled around, the Utah subsidy scheme was out in the open and City staff had issued a report recommending against the coal terminal. Oakland’s Mayor, Libby Schaff and Councilmember Dan Kalb introduced a resolution opposing the terminal. Proponents made one final desperate move by mailing a flyer to Oakland residents that suggested they could get jobs if the terminal was built, and implying that critics of the project were racist. The mailer also listed the names of union groups who hadn’t approved the flyer.

In the end, the Council voted unanimously against the coal terminal, while making it clear that the City remained supportive of the developer’s original plan for a dock that could handle bulk cargo and non-coal commodities.



**ILWU turnout:** Members from ILWU Locals 10, 34, 6 and 75 and the IBU were a part of a large showing by union members who were concerned about the health effects that the proposed coal export terminal would have on workers and the community of West Oakland.



## ILWU LOCAL 13, 63, 94, PENSIONERS & ILWU CREDIT UNION HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) provided its 15th annual Scholarship Program to local High Schools. This program awards up to three students from each participating high school with \$500 scholarships to help with school tuition costs. Each scholarship recipient wrote an essay on Harry Bridges, the founder of the ILWU, in which they recognized his integrity and the value of his struggle to help the working class.

These students are real heroes who have shown they can persevere and continue with their studies. The Scholarship Committee would like to thank all the educators, ILWU members and staff whose efforts make this program a success.

**We congratulate all the recipients of the 2016 ILWU Scholarship Program**

<p><b>Bishop Montgomery High School</b> Diana Hernandez - Lorenza Mitchell - Krystina Brown</p> <p><b>Carson High School</b> Cristelle Roman - Brandon Peralta - Nancy Biala</p> <p><b>Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo High School</b> Yamara Carreras - Isabel Lopez - Angel Lopez</p> <p><b>Lakewood High School</b> Javier Yeh - Larry Coleman - Josephine Blue</p> <p><b>Long Beach Polytechnic High School</b> Hiloberto Arceola - Arielle Hughes - Arlene Williams</p> <p><b>Mary Star of the Sea High School</b> Kaitlyn Lynn - Jacob Jensen - Jefferson Perez</p> <p><b>Mayfair High School</b> Danielle Perez - Mariah Clouston - Jesus Chavez</p> <p><b>Nathaniel Narbonne High School</b> Agnieszka Alkwas - Adrien Ochoa - Jeffrey Ortiz</p> <p><b>Palos Verdes High School</b> Alexander Amador - Joseph Blah - Mercedes DeMarino</p>	<p><b>Palos Verdes Peninsula High School</b> Yela Puentes - Amanda Bishop - Dario Cotto</p> <p><b>Phineas Banning High School</b> Monique Garcia - Letrauna Horro - Julianne Ortega</p> <p><b>Port of Los Angeles High School</b> Gerielle Parr - Katherine Kowalen - Mika Vercos</p> <p><b>Robert A. Millikan High School</b> William Acapulco - LaShae Morris - Steve Johnson</p> <p><b>San Pedro High School</b> Ariana Rodriguez - Brianna Corrao - Kaitlyn Stegano</p> <p><b>St. Anthony High School</b> Amelia Ochoa - Ivette Lopez - Mitchell Villanov</p> <p><b>Torrance High School</b> Mason Trivette - Kaitlyn Kabanian - Cameron Chaffey</p> <p><b>Woodrow Wilson High School</b> Cristian Garcia - Wiley Diaz - Kameron Francisco</p>
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There will always be a place for us somewhere, somehow, as long as we see it that working people fight for everything they have, everything they hope to get, for dignity, equality, democracy, to oppose war and to bring to the world a better life.

*Harry Bridges*

• Local 13 President, Bobby Olivera, Jr.      • Local 94 President, Danny Mrazada      • ILWU Credit Union President, Ralph Bula  
 • Local 63 President, Paul Tami      • ILWU Pensioner President, Greg Mitro      • ILWU Scholarship Committee Members



**12TH ANNUAL ILWU TRI-PARTY GOLF CHALLENGE**  
BENEFITTING MILLER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

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NAMES OF GOLFERS	HOME ADDRESS/EMAIL	TELEPHONE NUMBER	SHIRT SIZE	HAND-CAP	GUEST
\$275 PER GOLFER	TOTAL COSTS INCLUDED	\$			

## NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 10:** Clarence C. Thomas; Edward L. Clay Jr; Arturo F. Estropia; Larry J. Degelman; **Local 13:** Charles E. Kelley; Alexander A. Aguilar; James R. Brickner; Kellee A. Durbin; Joe S. Contreras; Benjamin D. Martin; William Jegier; Robert H. Wrenn Jr.; Derwood H. Hollar; Art Lomas; **Local 19:** Dennis R. Crull; **Local 21:** David J. Scott; **Local 23:** Ernest F. Lay; Dennis R. Robinson; **Local 26:** Deborah A. Ortega; **Local 34:** Rosevelt Taylor; Brian T. Mc Williams; Frank Borg; **Local 40:** Russell D. Fry; **Local 46:** William Ruelas; **Local 51:** Michael S. Forbes; **Local 54:** Jesse M. Orona; **Local 63:** Rene R. Herrera; William G. Gonzales; Billy R. Mcgee; Ana C. Chavez; Roy H. Richardson; **Local 75:** Joseph Golnoghli; **Local 91:** Brian R. Mc Donald; **Local 92:** Douglas R. Carey; Lloyd H. Pellham; **Local 94:** Jack K. Mathlin; James W. Richey; John A. Dadich; **Local 98:** Steven M. Bussanich;

## DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 4:** Ronald D. Mullane; **Local 8:** Richard E. Mullen; **Local 10:** Cleophas Williams (Sadie); Alphonso Hurtado (Selma); Donald Jones; **Local 13:** Edward Falkenburg; Claude L. Steele; Antonio Gentile; John Rivera; **Local 23:** Michael R. Mc Millin; Ronald S. Roller; **Local 24:** Richard L. Gates; **Local 34:** Stanley R. Gow; **Local 50:** Clarence W. Ashbaugh; **Local 52:** Dennis J. Santos; **Local 54:** Joseph Marchettoni; **Local 63:** Robert Osornio; Robert N. Collins; Terry A. Edwards; **Local 92:** Eugene Manning; **Local 94:** James Muldoon; Nick Angelich;

## DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 4:** Geraldine J. Hertz; **Local 8:** Alberta Moody; **Local 10:** Lorene Harris; Lorraine Ross; Stella T. Perkins; Lois J. Adams; **Local 13:** Sharron Jones; Marjorie Van Delinder; **Local 14:** Mary A. Davey; **Local 19:** Elva L. Martinez; Beulah V. Walker; Lorraine A. Stensen; **Local 21:** Alice L. Yokel; **Local 51:** Taimi M. Uusitalo; **Local 52:** Ethel S. King; **Local 53:** Patricia M. Noel-Johnson; **Local 63:** Lucille Alford;

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\* Meet & Greet \* Labor History Tour \* Casino Visit  
\* Washington State History and LeMay Car Museum Tour

## ILWU members celebrate 82nd anniversary of Bloody Thursday

continued from page 5

Kyle Copeland, Jeff Clowers, Dave Windsor, Dragan Butorac, Warren VanWettering, Dave Barker and a host of other volunteers who helped serve food, set-up and clean-up. As in the past, Local 23 Pensioners and Auxiliary #35 members were generous about volunteering their time. Local 23's administrative staffer Tawni Bailey handled coordination of the event like a pro.

"Continuing the Bloody Thursday picnic tradition doesn't happen by accident, so the volunteers who dedicate their time and effort to keep it alive are doing a great service for our union," said Local 23 President Dean McGrath. "They deserve everyone's credit and recognition."

### Longview revives a tradition

Local 21 hadn't done their own Bloody Thursday event in Longview since 2009, but the tradition was revived this year thanks to a committee led by members Daniel Rundell and Jackie Williamson-Honrud.

"For several years, our members went to the event in Portland, which was great, but when I raised the idea of doing our own picnic, my local president challenged me to help organize it – so I agreed to take it on," said Rundell.

The next step was for Rundell to recruit more help, which came from Trevor Burnell, Mikey Doss, Robert Roden, Lon Ford, Dustin Hummel, Ellie Halladay, Jackie Williamson-Honrud and President Laurie Higgins of Ladies Auxiliary #14. Together they built a committee that held weekly meetings to brainstorm, make plans and assign tasks.

"There's an awful lot of work and planning that goes into holding a successful event like this, but we had such a good team of volunteers," said Honrud. "I remember how much fun I had as a kid at picnics like these, so I wanted to pass along that experience to a new generation of children."

The event was held at the Toutle River RV Resort, north of Longview toward Mount St. Helens. Local fisherman know the area because it's where the Toutle and Cowlitz Rivers create some excellent fishing holes, but the ILWU families who came up on July 5th were more interested in the landside facilities that included a swimming pool, Frisbee golf plus acres of space to play and relax.

Good food was abundant, including dogs, burgers, polish sausages, corn-on-the-cob and a variety of salads. For dessert, there was an endless supply of cookies, cake and ice cream,

plus cotton candy and snow-cone machines that ran all day long.

Games included a "hay bale dig" for hidden silver dollars, three piñatas filled with candy and gunny sack races. A scavenger hunt attracted children who searched for eggs filled with candy, money and tickets good for toys including bikes donated by Local 92. A pair of inflatable bounce-houses allowed kids to burn-off hundreds of calories. Face-painting was popular all day long thanks to Randi Williamson. Bingo games run by Dustin Hummel attracted a good crowd who enjoyed generous prizes donated by local sponsors.

Contributions to underwrite the successful event included generous cash donations from Local 21 and Local 40. The Ladies Auxiliary #14 made an impressive donation of \$1000 and Local 92 contributed 3 bicycles. The Longview Pensioner Group gave a donation along with a generous personal pledge from pensioner Jim "Red" Coffman.

Community contributions were also significant factor, with dozens of local businesses providing donations for a successful raffle.

As the afternoon turned to evening, the mood mellowed at a large fire pit where families came together to roast marshmallows.

While Daniel Rundell was finishing up the next day after the picnic, his wife became ill and died suddenly on July 8. Many didn't realize that Rundell had just suffered a devastating personal loss when he attended the July 9 memorial service to honor Local 21 member Jimmie Meadows, Jr, who died following a workplace accident in late June. Fellow union member Jackie Williamson-Honrud is working with Local 21 to establish a fund that will help Rundell (who is recovering from a disability) support his 9 year-old son and 10 year-old daughter. Donations can be sent to Account 11624 for the Rundell family at the Lower Columbia Longshoremen's Federal Credit Union, 629 14th Avenue, Longview, WA 98623.

"It was great to see how this picnic continued to build on the good work that's been done by Local 21's Community Action Committee," said Local 21 President Jason Lundquist. "It's important for us to maintain positive relations with small business leaders here who understand how good union jobs help everyone in our community."