



# THE DISPATCHER

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## THE INSIDE NEWS

LETTERS TO DISPATCHER 2

Aussie labor unites against corporate greed 3

Anchor Steam workers Vote to join ILWU 6

TRANSITIONS 8

BOOKS & VIDEO 8



IBU members mobilize with communities to save Alaska Marine Highway ferries [page 4](#)



**Marching for good jobs:** Thousands of concerned community leaders and ILWU members signed petitions, marched down San Pedro streets and attended a four-hour Port Commission meeting on March 21 to voice concerns about new automation proposed at Terminal 400.

## Newest automation plan hits a nerve with LA Port communities

**B**eing one of the nation's largest and most efficient ports has long been a source of pride, good jobs and prosperity for working-class communities surrounding the mega-port complex of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Despite hard work that set cargo-handling records for the last three years in a row, corporations continue proposing automation projects to replace dockworkers with robots.

### Automation at APM/Maersk

The latest controversy involves a plan by the world largest shipping company – Maersk – to automate their gigantic APM Terminal 400 at the Port of Los Angeles. The fear is that hundreds of jobs will permanently disappear and hurt surrounding communities where families, businesses, service providers and charities depend on good-paying port jobs.

### Massive community response

The automation plan at Terminal 400 would be the third, though much larger scale, during the past five years to trade jobs for robots. The prospect of more automation pushed thousands of concerned community members to take action on March 21. The day began with an early-morning rally in San Pedro, followed by a march through the streets that led to a massive public hearing with LA's Port Commission. The Port's large headquarters couldn't handle the huge crowd, so arrangements were made ahead to meet in the nearby Cruise Terminal baggage tent, where most of the 1750 chairs were filled during nearly four hours of testimony and debate.

### Port Commission hearing

Automation was on the agenda because Local 13 President Mark Mendoza appealed what Port staff described as the routine approval of an environmental permit at a January 24 Commission meeting. Approv-

ing that permit would have cleared the way for automation work to proceed at Terminal 400. The basis for the union's appeal, and requests for approval by APM/Maersk officials, their attorney and the PMA employer group, quickly developed into a broader discussion about the impact of automation on the community.

### Strong union support

Local 13 Vice President Gary Herrera set the stage by focusing debate on how job losses would impact people and businesses from surrounding communities. He said that the ILWU/PMA contract issues involving automation should be addressed between the union and employers – not Port Commissioners – as the union's focus is community based. Initial testimony from union leaders included strong statements by Local 91 President Danny Miranda, Local 63 President Joe Gasperov, Pensioner President Greg Mitre, along with Local 13 members Mark Jurisich and Ray

*continued on page 7*

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## LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

We wanted to share a few memories with *Dispatcher* readers about Gerald Matthew Kole, Sr., our father and grandfather who passed away on September 23.

He was born in a barn on October 11, 1933, because his mother suddenly went into labor while she and her husband were picking cabbage in a nearby field. The new family soon migrated to California with so many others who were uprooted by the Great Depression. They settled in the Sierra foothills and when Jerry became a young man, he went to San Francisco where he discovered the waterfront and fell in love with my mother, Everal Gray. They married and remained together for almost 64 years.

Jerry held many jobs during his life, including longshoring at the Ports of San Francisco and Oakland, where he worked cranes and was a proud member of ILWU Local 10. He loved the waterfront and sometimes operated a tug on the Bay; later he built his own little boat called the "Rusty Sucker" that was used on Don Pedro Reservoir to tow river-rafters through a log jam that often formed at the mouth of the Tuolumne River. He loved entertaining tourists on Red and White Fleet excursions on San Francisco Bay. He also did heavy construction work, leading a crew of union workers who built massive steel tanks all over California and Nevada, and helped build the large breakwater at Princeton Harbor in Half Moon Bay, California.

When he wasn't working, Jerry kept busy with hobbies. He learned how to fly a small plane until fear and common sense ended his stint as an aviator. After retiring, he and Everal moved to College Grove, Tennessee, where dad enjoyed safer adventures that included riding his lawn mower, sunbathing in the backyard and riding in the car with his chocolate Labrador Retriever, "Muddy."

Mom and dad were proud of their family that included their one daughter (me) and two sons; Gerald and Ronald. Today there are 7 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. All of us miss his jokes, kind spirit, empathy for people and appreciation for what unions have done to make America better. We loved Dad, Grandpa, Goose, Old Bones, and will keep remembering him until we meet again.

Rashelle Baca & Allison Bara  
Pacifica, CA



**Many talents:** Jerry Kole did longshore, tug and ferry work while a member of ILWU Local 10, the Inlandboatmen's Union, and Masters, Mates & Pilots Union. Kole is shown here with the hook-and-line setup that he shared with many west coast linemen to ease the difficult and dangerous work of securing large vessels.

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)



**Advocating for good maritime jobs:** ILWU and IBU members joined other union leaders from Washington State who visited legislators in February. The joint effort emphasized the need to properly fund Washington's ferry system, pay for port infrastructure and protect marine pilots from dangerous fatigue that could expose port communities to potentially catastrophic accidents. Among those participating were (R-L): IBU member Eric Ferrell, Local 19 members Dan McKisson, Ali Vekich and Josh Turgeon; Local 52's Victor Cepeda, Local 19's Carlin Smith and International Lead Organizer Jon Brier.

## ILWU Canada leadership course trains new talent

During the last week of January, past, current and future leaders of ILWU Canada gathered together in Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia. The five-day ILWU Canada Leadership course is part of a long-term education strategy to identify and educate leaders in our union. Delegates came from Vancouver – Local 500, New Westminster – Local 502, Prince Rupert – Local 505, Vancouver Island – Local 508, Port Metro Vancouver – Local 517 and Stockton, California – Local 54. The leadership course was held at the Canadian Labour Congress' Winter School along with other trainings and workshops.

The course covered: ILWU history and structure of our union, public speaking, building blocks of a meeting, arbitration, ethics and strategies for building worker power from within our union.

A key piece of the program is learning from current and past leaders. ILWU Canada President, Rob Ashton, President Emeritus, Tom Dufresne and retired ILWU Canada 2nd Vice President, Steve Nasby all made important contributions.

A major highlight for everyone was listening to the speeches from the current ILWU International leadership team: International President Willie Adams, International Vice President (Mainland), Bobby Olvera Jr., and International Secretary-Treasurer, Ed Ferris. The conversations that followed left a lasting impression on the group.

The level of solidarity that formed among the delegates should make your local feel proud. Even those attending other classes gravitated to towards our group, and the Canadian Labour Congress Winter School presented our class with certificates noting our exceptional team spirit at the plenary and choir night. For those who have yet to experience choir night, it's an evening where each class performs a popular hit song with freshly written labour lyrics. It's quite an entertaining evening.

I would like to thank everyone who attended and assisted with the course and I encourage you to stay tuned for our next big education project which is the upcoming 4th Biennial ILWU Canada's Young Workers Conference.

We are all Leaders

Dan Kask

2nd Vice President – ILWU Canada



**Educating the next generation:** ILWU Canada's leadership course held in January is part of a strategy to train the next generation of ILWU leaders.

## DISPATCHER

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# ILWU leaders celebrate Australian unions' new strength and unity

Two of Australia's powerhouse unions with close ties to the ILWU recently joined forces and celebrated their new strength and unity at a conference in late February called, "One Strong Union."

## Successful merger

The two unions formally merged last year, joining 16,500 members from the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) with the 150,000-strong Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU). The new CFMMEU now includes two "MM's" in their abbreviated name to reflect the addition of "Maritime" to the list of key Australian industries that they represent.

## Militant traditions

Both Aussie unions have long traditions of working-class militancy and progressive politics in a country – like America – that's now ruled by anti-union, pro-corporate politicians. The merger required three years of patient discussion, but created a new organization with nearly 500 organizers and staff – many from the rank-and-file – who are helping members execute aggressive campaigns and making the CFMMEU an even bigger player in Australia's rough-n-tumble world of labor and politics.

## Large ILWU delegation

ILWU leaders and other international guests joined the four-day meeting in Perth, a city of 2 million and capitol of Western Australia. The ILWU delegation was led by International President Willie Adams and included Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, President Emeritus Bob McEllrath, ILWU Canada First Vice President Pat Bolen, Local 63-OCU President John Fageaux, Alaska Longshore President Dennis Young, Local 54 member Stefanie Flores and Local 23 member Jed DiMaggio.

## Serious strategies

The conference had two goals: developing strategies and campaigns on the home front, and strengthening international ties with other unions and allies around the world. Conference sessions started early and lasted through the day – and each day focused on a different theme with special speakers, training sessions and educational forums on the daily topic.

## Challenging topics

ILWU International President Willie Adams spoke the first day and outlined the challenges posed by multinational corporations – and the necessity for coordinated global action by unions.

"These companies keep bringing the same fights to each of our doorsteps," he said, noting that international solidarity and coordination is the only real option. While that approach may sound straightforward, Adams said it is often difficult to achieve because of personalities and egos that sometimes get in the way. He called on union leaders to set aside their differences and join together for the benefit of all. "We need to have some tough conversations with each other in order to make progress," he said.

## Automation discussed

Adams says the Conference also explored the topic of automation that's impacting dockers from many nations, including Australians who are coping with projects in Brisbane and Sydney, and the latest account of developments in the Netherlands.

"There could be win-win agreements if companies would believe in partnerships with unions so new technology could be operated by workers instead of just eliminating them," says Adams.

## Women and young leaders

The Conference also embraced an area of potential controversy by encouraging new leaders, especially women and young people, to take



**Solidarity down under:** The ILWU delegation to Australia presented their hosts with a gift of two paintings by aboriginal artist Sonya Edney, titled, "The Seasons." Standing in the front row (L-R) are Local 54's Stefanie Flores, MUA Western Australia Branch Secretary Christy Cain, ILWU International President Willie Adams, CFMMEU State Secretary Mick Buchan, Alaska Longshore President Dennis Young. Back row (L-R): ILWU International Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr., ILWU Canada First Vice President Pat Bolen, Local 23's Jed DiMaggio, International President-Emeritus Bob McEllrath, Local 63-OCU President John Fageaux, and International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris.

more active leadership roles in their union. The second day of the conference included a video produced on-site that showcased talented young leaders in action. Day three of the conference opened with a breakfast session titled: "Women in male-dominated occupations and industries."

"I spent a day with young workers at the conference who invited us to visit their union hall and participate in their actions," said Local 54's Stefanie Flores. "I went with them to the nearby University of Western Australia campus where they approached students, even ones who were apprehensive when they saw all the union shirts and logos." The effort succeeded, Flores believes, because "young workers can

relate to the concerns of students – and we understand that our union can't be strong with low density." Low density in the U.S. means only 6.5% of private sector workers have a union and 93.5% don't. Even on the docks, longshore workers are increasingly surrounded by workers without unions. "We need to build a powerful youth movement to help workers organize and join unions, then educate them when they join," says Flores, who also believes social media is critical for connecting workers between locals, regions and around the globe. This was the second time in recent years that Flores has left her hometown and travelled out of the country. Her first was the Young Workers Conference in 2017 organized by ILWU Canada. "This visit to Australia was my first overseas trip, and I learned so much," she said.

## Taking it to the streets

The second day at the conference was dubbed a "day of action" by Flores and other ILWU delegates who first heard detailed briefings about corporate campaigns underway in Australia, Canada and other countries where "cabotage" laws are under attack. These rules were created up to a century ago to provide decent pay, benefits and rights on the job for mariners working on domestic trade vessels serving a nation's homeports.

## Targeting BHP's abuse

Before noon, the conference adjourned so everyone could attend the solidarity action. The target was BHP – one of the world's largest mining companies with world headquarters in Melbourne and a corporate office in Perth. BHP is trying to bypass CFMMEU/MUA contracts by using low-wage, foreign-based crewmembers to do work traditionally performed by MUA members.

*continued on page 5*



**Protesting BHP:** The conference recessed for a solidarity action to protest outside the Perth office of BHP – one of the world's largest mining companies. The corporation is trying to bypass CFMMEU/MUA contracts by using low-wage, foreign-based crewmembers to do work traditionally performed by MUA members.

# IBU members & communities mobilize to save Alaska's Marine Highway System



**Mobilizing the community:** IBU members are organizing throughout Alaska and in the Puget Sounds to save the state's Marine Highway System from being cut and privatized by Governor Mike Dunleavy. Actions like the one above in Bellingham, WA, are part of the effort.

When the critical public ferries operated by Alaska's Marine Highway System (AMHS) came under attack this year, the Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) – the ILWU's Marine Division – mobilized with community residents to fight back.

The crisis came in mid-February when Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy announced plans to slash ferry funding by 75% – betraying his campaign promise to protect the ferry system.

## Essential service

The Marine Highway System was established in 1964 and now serves 32 communities, including 28 with little or no highway service. Cuts would leave residents stranded when they need to see doctors, attend school, visit family or go shopping for groceries or supplies. Airplane flights are expensive and can't deliver the reliable, affordable service that ferries offer citizens and businesses – including commercial fishermen who depend on the vessels to ship their perishable products.

## Big numbers

The AMHS carries 350,000 passengers each year, plus another 100,000 vehicles. Local residents are the main customers, outnumbering tourists more than 2-to-1. With over 200,000 Alaska residents depending on the 11 vessels operated by the Marine Highway System, the IBU began a grassroots community campaign that they call: "Save Our State" – S.O.S."

## Keeping Alaska connected

"We keep Alaska connected," says IBU Alaska Regional Director Trina Arnold, echoing words that have become a theme for the campaign. "Public ferries are the lifeline for dozens of communities – and the people of those communities are getting involved and speaking out to save the system."

## Broken promises

How did such a vital public service become so threatened? The answer begins with Governor Mike Dunleavy, who promised during his campaign

to protect the Marine Highway System. Now, he has proposed spending \$250,000 on an "economic reshaping consultant" who will consider 10 of the Governor's "ideas," that include giving the public ferries away to a private operator, raising fares, cutting services, and renegotiating union contracts to pay workers less.

## Slippery mix of oil and politics

The Governor's extreme ideas are shaped by a slippery mix of oil and politics that began decades ago. Alaska was blessed with abundant oil and gas deposits that surpassed mining and timber revenues by the late 1960's. When massive oilfields on the North Slope were connected by the trans-Alaska pipeline in the 1970's – production skyrocketed, along with state revenues, because lawmakers in 1959 wisely decided to tax every barrel that came out of the ground. Oil revenues became so high that Alaska was able to substitute oil taxes for state sales or income taxes that most states use.

## Annual oil checks

In 1976, politicians took another step that linked the state's fate to oil by creating the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD). The Fund was created to heal political wounds from the trans-Alaska pipeline battle – and create a kind of state savings account for future investments that would be there when oil revenues declined. Politicians soon demanded the Fund to write checks for every Alaska resident, sometimes amounting to thousands of dollars per check. The arrangement made politicians look good, the money seemed free, and it solidified public support behind the oil industry. Everything seemed fine until the inevitable happened and oil production declined. Alaska oil peaked in 1988 when 2 million barrels came out of the ground and now it's dropped by two-thirds, which has collapsed tax revenue.

## Governor's solution: deep cuts

The state budget that depends so heavily on oil revenue now faces a fiscal crisis. Despite the new reality, Governor Dunleavy campaigned on increasing the PFD checks. The Gover-

nor also brought on a hired gun, Donna Arduin, to direct his Office of Management and Budget (OMB). She has a history of consulting on other state budgets, including Florida's where she was accused of "cherry picking" facts, creative mathematics and flawed methodologies – tactics that appear designed to further an anti-tax and privatization of government services agenda.

## A convenient crisis

Alaska's "budget crisis" is serving as a convenient excuse to justify giving public services to private, corporate operators who stand to make a profit. It also provides a way to eliminate public transportation to vulnerable communities.

When legislators asked non-partisan economists at the University of Alaska for budget analysis, they were told that the Governor's cuts could destroy 14,000-17,000 full-time jobs.

## Save the System

"Saving the Marine Highway System is crucial, not only to save the livelihoods of our 400 members, but to save the public transportation system for so many Alaskans," says IBU President Marina Secchitano. "We are using all our resources to save our system including the ILWU Organizing Department, and IBU members up and down the coast. This is where being a National Union demonstrates our strength – it's essential for all of us to pitch-in for campaigns like this."

## Organizing the campaign

The IBU's "S-O-S" campaign is being directed by Alaska Regional Director Trina Arnold, with the complete engagement of the Executive Committee and membership.

"It's been non-stop for us, but there's so much at stake for hundreds of IBU members – and hundreds of thousands of Alaska residents in those remote communities," said Arnold during a break while visiting legislators in the State Capitol.

"We're trying to get everyone involved and stay coordinated," noting that they are working with a state grassroots labor/community alliance, and recently attended a meeting with other

unions hosted by the Juneau Labor Council and State AFL-CIO.

## Focus on legislators

The S-O-S campaign effort went public when state legislators held budget hearings in early March to consider the Governor's proposed cuts. "Legislators are eager to hear what we have to say. They are looking for solutions, and we have many ideas for them to consider" says Arnold. "This is not a sprint, but more like a marathon and we are gearing up for it."

## Mobilization time

The S-O-S campaign's first major mobilization happened on Friday, March 8, when coordinated actions took place in Bellingham, Ketchikan and Juneau. Turnout was impressive, with support from elected officials, business owners and other unions who joined with IBU and ILWU members. Bellingham's Port Commission passed a strongly-worded resolution emphasizing how the Alaska Marine Highway's southern terminal has benefitted the local economy – boosting small businesses and creating dozens of good-paying jobs.

## Positive media coverage

The actions in Ketchikan and Juneau were designed to raise awareness about the Governor's threats to destroy the Marine Highway. Clever signs carried by activists on busy street corners helped gain positive media coverage that alerted the broader public.

## Attending budget hearings

Trina Arnold says the S-O-S campaign aims to mobilize community leaders and union members, then connect them with legislators who will decide how to handle the Governor's budget cuts. Legislative committee hearings are now filled with concerned citizens and union members.

## Governor's Response

Because the first round of public budget hearings attracted large numbers of concerned citizens and growing anxiety among legislators – including those in his own party – the Governor sought help from the extremist, Koch-

*continued on page 5*



**Sending an urgent message to legislators:** Ferry customers and community leaders are joining IBU members to talk with legislators at the State Capitol to save Alaska's Marine Highway System.

continued from page 4

funded group, "Americans for Prosperity." They cooked up a "road show" with closed-door meetings featuring the Governor and his hand-picked panel of supporters to justify the controversial budget cuts – including destruction of the Marine Highway. Inside the meetings, only pre-screened and reserved guests can attend, and they aren't allowed to ask questions – only submit comments on hand-picket cards.

Alaska's AFL-CIO and local labor councils are organizing protests out-

side the Governor's "road shows," including events in Anchorage, Wasilla and Fairbanks.

#### Presence at the Capitol

The S-O-S campaign is focusing on the State Capitol where they held a noontime BBQ on March 20th that drew hundreds of activists and got positive media attention. The following day, S-O-S mobilized a record number of people – over 600 – for a Transportation Subcommittee meeting where testimony lasted more than a week.

As *The Dispatcher* was going to press, the IBU was gearing-up for a Community Lobby Day on March 28, hoping to draw representatives from many of the 32 communities that depend of the Marine Highway – so they can talk with legislators and staff.

#### Wild card of privatization

Besides stopping the budget cuts, the IBU has to head-off a "public corporation" scheme being encouraged by the Southeast Conference, a body created decades ago to establish the

Marine Highway that has recently lobbied for privatization via a "public corporation" model that would use state funding.

"It comes down to just another way of packaging privatization," says Marina Secchitano. "The best way to protect Alaska's communities is to keep the Marine Highway public and make sure it's fairly-funded – which sounds simple, but requires the fight of our lives to achieve."

## ILWU leaders celebrate Australian unions' new strength and unity

continued from page 3

based crewmembers to do work traditionally performed by MUA members. The action organized by union members closed down the street in front of BHP's offices for over an hour.

A different action targeted Carnival Cruise Lines for a similar problem; ordering ship's crewmembers to perform MUA stevedore work at Australian ports. Both actions featured what Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris described as, "an impressive rapid-response team that included trucks equipped with sound systems and flags, and buses covered by giant union banners."

#### Politics front and center

The conference also explored the challenge of political action. One session focused on "Making the Australian Labor Party more accountable to workers." Speakers offered different views about how unions should engage with political allies to help keep working-class concerns front-and-center. ILWU Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr. addressed the conference during this session, and emphasized the need to fight for laws that don't shortchange the working class.

"The deck has always been stacked against workers in favor the wealthy and big business," said Olvera. "Just making contributions won't cut it – we need constant pressure on politicians to make things more fair." He cited the example of President Trump's tax cut that delivered massive relief to the wealthy but did little or nothing for the working class and middle-income Americans. He also cited the example of Amazon, which reported profit of \$11 billion dollars last year, paid zero federal taxes for the second year in a row, and got a rebate check of \$129 million.

#### Leaving gifts of solidarity

At a banquet held the night before the conference ended, the ILWU delegation presented the CFMMEU's Mick Buchan and MUA's Christy Cain with a solidarity gift of two beautiful Australian Aboriginal artworks, both produced by the noted Aboriginal artist, Sonya Edney. Her work draws on ancient symbols and patterns developed by Aboriginal ancestors dating back 20,000 years, including some that can still be seen on rock art that survives today.

#### Timeless song of struggle

President Emeritus Bob McEllrath helped open the final session on the conference's last day with a solidarity message emphasizing the mutual support and solidarity that has long existed between the ILWU, CFMMEU and MUA. McEllrath ended his remarks by leading everyone in a rousing chorus of the traditional union song, "Solidarity Forever." The tune was written by artist and activist Ralph Chaplin for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1915 – later adopted by the ILWU and other unions around the world. Chaplin supported the epic labor struggles of his time and spent his final years living and working in Tacoma.

The conference ended after debating and adopting resolutions, thanking everyone who helped produce the event and all those who attended. A final video, "One Strong Union," was shown to emphasize the theme that made the four days so productive.

Adams summed up the event, saying: "The working class is under attack around the world and we're in a fight for survival. How we respond and adapt to these challenges is important, and the Conference helped move us forward."



**Militant and methodical:** Australia's CFMMEU and MUA have joined forces to increase their clout by developing new leaders, expanding political education and action, and launching a series of high-profile campaigns to protect union members and defend the working class.

# Anchor Steam workers vote overwhelmingly to join ILWU



**Victory:** Anchor workers celebrated the news that the second bargaining unit at Anchor Public Taps voted to join the ILWU by a 3-1 margin.

**O**n March 13, production workers at San Francisco's Anchor Steam brewery made history by voting to join the ILWU – becoming one of the first craft breweries to go union. The margin was 31-16 but the numbers increased two days later when service workers at the Anchor Public Taps voted 6-2 for the union. The victory capped-off a year of quiet organizing that went public on February 7, when 39 workers signed a letter telling the company they wanted a union.

“We were ecstatic with the outcome,” said Organizing Committee member Brace Belden. “We’ve been working on this for so long that it didn’t seem real to us. We got a clear victory, and we were excited about that.”

## Iconic San Francisco brand

Anchor Steam is a historic San Francisco brand that dates back to the California Gold Rush. The business struggled in the early 20th Century, and hit the skids several times, but but the brewery was saved in 1965 by Fritz Maytag, heir to the Maytag appliance company fortune. Under Maytag’s leadership, the company improved the

beer recipe, improved standards and upgraded the production process.

Anchor Steam’s popularity grew during the 1980’s and is now considered by many to be the birth place of the “Craft Beer Movement.” Maytag sold the company in 2010 to an investment firm who then sold it to Japan’s Sapporo for \$85 million in 2017. Sapporo workers at the company’s breweries in Japan and Canada were already union; now San Francisco has joined the list.

## Inexperienced but well prepared

Belden said that union organizing was new to everyone when they started the campaign. “Almost no one in our plant had ever been in a union, with except for maybe one or two people.” Several workers were members of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) San Francisco chapter, and had attended Labor Notes conferences where they attended training workshops on workplace organizing. Belden says workers spent four months laying the foundation for the campaign before approaching the ILWU. “The ILWU was our only choice. We wanted to make sure we were well prepared and could show that we were serious about organizing,” he said. The ILWU joined forces with DSA chapter volunteers to help the Anchor workers win their campaign.

## Deteriorating wages and conditions

Many Anchor workers have been struggling because wages and conditions declined in recent years. Starting wages fell after Fritz Maytag sold the brewery in 2010 from \$17.25 to just \$16.50 currently. Workers were also required to contribute significantly more for healthcare, and the company replaced paid lunch breaks with unpaid breaks. Anchor also stopped company contributions to the 401K retirement plan, reduced sick time by half, and eliminated the complimentary “shift beer” that workers enjoyed after clocking-out.

These cutbacks were on top of San Francisco’s housing costs - among the highest in the nation, where a single person earning less than \$82,220 a year is considered “low-income.” Many Anchor workers have been forced to move farther from the city in search of more affordable housing – raising commute times and costs.

“We deserve to be able to survive in this city,” said Organizing Committee member Garret Kelly, “We deserve to be able to afford diapers for our children and put groceries in the fridge. We think it’s hypocritical for Anchor to claim to be an iconic San Francisco brand but create conditions that make it impossible for their workers to survive here.”

## Dramatic rollout

After workers presented their union letter to management, they kicked-off a public outreach campaign that marshalled over 60 Anchor workers, community members, DSA and ILWU activists for a rally at the 24th Street BART Plaza in San Francisco’s Mission District. Following the rally, volunteers fanned out throughout the neighborhood to visit bars in the area that served Anchor Steam beer. The goal was to generate support for the union campaign from customers, bartenders and owners. Many bars agreed to display posters showing their support for Anchor workers. During the following weekends, workers coordinated more outreach events in several neighborhoods on both sides of the Bay.

## Union busting campaign

Company officials publicly pledged to remain neutral in the union drive, but it soon became obvious that they had retained the services of an anti-union consulting firm. The company forced brewery workers at the plant and service workers at the Public Taps

into separate bargaining units. Despite the company’s effort, workers in both groups have said they intend to bargain in parallel for identical contracts.

The company held “captive-audience” meetings where workers were forced to watch anti-union presentations that were full of lies and misinformation, a tactic consultants use to confuse and scare workers away from voting for the union. Two workers were forced by managers to remove union buttons during their shifts – triggering charges filed against Anchor by the ILWU.

## Initial vote postponed

An electrical fire in the brewery during late February resulted in the NLRB granting the company a postponement of the election. The company used the extra time to intensify their anti-union campaign holding one-on-one and two-on-one meetings where managers told workers that wages and promotions could be frozen for two to three years if the union drive was successful.

## Drink-Ins

Workers also organized union “drink-ins” at the Anchor Public Taps where union members and community supporters gathered to enjoy Anchor Steam beer and express their solidarity with the organizing effort. One Friday event was scheduled in the afternoon to coincide with the quitting time for Building Trades workers. Members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), who were repairing the plant’s electrical fire damage, were among those who attended. The Anchor Public Taproom was filled with a pro-union chants as attendees cheered in solidarity. At one point, the company’s new Chief Operating Officer came to see what was happening and share a beer with union supporters.

## Positive campaign

Belden said the Organizing Committee kept the campaign message positive. They emphasized the pride Anchor workers had for their work, for San Francisco and for the Anchor brand. This connection to the city was captured by the hashtag #AnchoredInSF that workers used to promote their social media campaign.

“This felt like a community campaign,” said Garrett Kelly. “We received positive feedback from everyone,

*continued on page 7*



**Longshore solidarity:** ILWU members from Local 10 have been showing their support for Anchor Steam workers in San Francisco.

# Newest automation plan hits a nerve with LA Port communities

continued from page 1

Familathe. A contingent of Teamsters were on hand to lend their support, as were representatives from the California Nurses' Association (CNA) and several staffers from the community-labor support group, the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE).

## Political leaders weigh-in

Elected officials added their unanimous support for good jobs, including Councilmember Joe Buscaino who said he may bring the issue before LA's City Council. County Supervisor Janice Hahn criticized the company for cloaking their automation plan with claims of environmental concern, because they plan to use electric vehicles. "We don't have to decide between good jobs and clean air," she said, "we can have both."

Long Beach Community College Board member Vivian Malauulu's testimony was followed by statements of support read from two Congressmembers and more than a dozen state legislators, including Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon.

Small business owners testified that automation and the loss of good jobs will hurt local businesses and the customers they serve. John Bagakis of Big Nick's Pizza told Commissioners about the donations and support he now provides to families and workers in need, something he said would be hard to continue if he loses business from dockworkers. Sandra Marchioli of *Godmother's Saloon*, made a similar point.

## Mayor could play a role

Perhaps the most important statement read at the meeting came from LA Mayor Eric Garcetti, who asked

Port Commissioners to consider delaying any action until mid-April. He also offered to mediate discussions in the meantime and encouraged both sides to look for compromises. Commissioners seemed receptive to the Mayor's offer.

## Commissioners weigh-in

Response and comments from Port Commissioners ranged from cool diplomacy to expressions of support and solidarity for the plight facing workers and the community. Commissioner Diane Middleton, recently appointed by Mayor Garcetti to fill the seat held by former ILWU President David Arian until his untimely passing in early January, posed some of the sharpest and most effective questions. She was joined by Commissioner Anthony Pirozzi, Jr., who asked if automation might encourage a "race to the bottom" and said a "transition plan" might be needed to help workers. He also asked a question that was on the minds of many: "why can't we clean the air by having people drive electric vehicles on the docks?"

## Surprising study finding

One of the most important facts to emerge at the hearing came from an unexpected source: a 2018 report by McKinsey & Company – a premier global management consulting firm. Their report titled, "The Future of Automated Ports," concluded that companies shouldn't expect to recover automation costs that were unlikely to pay for themselves. The report indicated that companies may lose money in the short run. Even more important were the opinions of port executives who were interviewed by the study's authors, concluding that fully auto-



**Shoulder to shoulder:** The ILWU International Officers and Coast Committeemen stood firmly behind Local 13's Vice President Gary Herrea and Local 13 President Mark Medoza as Herrera addressed the LA Port Commission.

ated ports are generally not as productive as ones operated by humans. This could be disappointing news for the Ports of LA and Long Beach who invested heavily and provided generous subsidies for two previous terminal automation projects – based on claims that productivity and through-put would exceed human operations. This means present investments may not be justifiable from a market standpoint, in addition to humanitarian concerns.

## Concluding arguments

The final appeal for Commissioners to reject the company's permit application and automation effort was presented by Local 13 Vice President Gary Herrera – who approached the podium surrounded by ILWU officers, including International President Willie Adams, Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, Coast Committeemen Frank Ponce De Leon and Cam Williams, ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton, Local

13 President Mark Mendoza, Local 63 President Joe Gasperov, Local 94 President Danny Miranda and Local 13 LRC Rep Mike Dimon.

"The issue of automation is bigger than the ILWU-PMA contract," said Herrera, "it's about the community, the economy and ultimately the future of the middle class." He continued with a line that hit a chord with most in the room: "Robots do not pay taxes, robots do not shop in our communities, robots do not pay rent, they don't buy homes, they don't lease office space, they don't deposit money, robots do not vote."

## Voting for more time

The meeting concluded with Commissioners embracing Mayor Garcetti's offer to mediate and search for different approaches. What those might be wasn't clear as *The Dispatcher* went to press in late March, but future issues will update this important story.

# Anchor Steam workers vote overwhelmingly to join ILWU

continued from page 6

whether we were out putting up posters, or wearing our union button and getting positive comments from people on public transportation. I feel like the campaign resonated with people."

## Building relationships

Belden said the key to their success was strong relationships in the workplace. "Build good relationships with your co-workers. That would be my advice," Belden said. "We never made any promises to anyone. All we told people is that we are just trying to get a voice. People trusted us because we weren't selling them the sky."

## Political allies

The Anchor campaign also attracted support from San Francisco political leaders. Workers received their first letter of support from newly-elected county Supervisor Shamann Walton, who represents the Potrero Hill area where Anchor operates. Following the union vote, Walton visited the Anchor Public Taps to meet and congratulate workers. He followed up with a letter to management that urged the company to respect the union and negotiate a fair contract. Additional support came from Supervisors Hillary

Ronen, Rafael Mandelman and Gordon Mar, who sent letters to Anchor COO Greg Newbrough, criticizing the company for breaking their promise to remain neutral during the union election process. Sapporo workers at the company's flagship plant in Tokyo also sent a letter of solidarity. Other critical help came from leaders and members of the San Francisco Labor Council.

## Contract campaign ahead

Anchor workers are now preparing for contract negotiations. Soon they will elect a Bargaining Committee along with teams to help with internal organizing and community outreach. They also plan to conduct one-on-one conversations with co-workers, to gather surveys about priorities for the first contract.

"We want to get as many people involved in the contract campaign as possible," Belden said. "We want people to have a voice here at Anchor."

Kelly adds, "We're in a strong position. I think we have a resounding mandate from the workers that this is what we want. We don't want to tell people what they need. We want everyone to come together and decide what is important."

### ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

The Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2019-2020. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2019 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were long time members of Local 10. They left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their "collegiate" education. Trustees of the Fund interpret "members" to mean **active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds**, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret "collegiate" to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant's record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$350 to \$1,750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

Trustees are Beth Ross, retired counsel for ILWU Local 10, David Erkkila, a retired member of Local 10 and a friend of Victor Smolin, Eugene Vrana, retired Director of Educational Services and Librarian for ILWU, and Nicole Bridges, Fund Administrator and the granddaughter of Harry Bridges.

If you have a son or daughter who is applying to enter college next fall, or is already a college student who is planning to continue, and the above requirements are met, you might want to apply for one of these scholarships.

To request an application, simply call Nicole Bridges at (415) 771-6400 or email her at [nbridges@leonardcarter.com](mailto:nbridges@leonardcarter.com). She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.



**Local 6 Convention:** ILWU Local 6 held its 72nd Annual Constitutional Convention on March 2nd at their hall in Oakland. Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Chris Castaing updated delegates and guests about several contract ratifications and ongoing organizing efforts at Anchor Brewing, Pasha Automotive Services at Pier 80 in San Francisco and several Bay Area hospitals. He gave an update on ongoing contract negotiations with Veterinary Technicians and support staff at SFVS. Castaing also reported on the local's work with the Revive Oakland Coalition and the West Oakland Job Resource Center to lay the foundation for future warehouse positions at the former West Oakland Army Base.



**Recognition for Local 10 activist Howard Keylor:** A large room was filled with Local 10 members and community activists who gathered in San Francisco on December 9th to celebrate longshoreman Howard Keylor's 93rd birthday and recognize his decades of union activism that included some history-making events. The celebration was organized by longtime Local 10 activist, now pensioner Jack Heyman, who emceed throughout the afternoon event.

Formal recognition was provided by Local 10 President Melvin Mackay who praised Keylor and presented him with a plaque recognizing that his decades of activism were "in the best tradition of the ILWU." Further details about Keylor's life were shared by friends of the unabashed, self-described socialist. He was born and raised in Ohio, survived the bloody battle of Okinawa in WWII and started working on the docks in 1953. One of Keylor's successful efforts was organized with fellow Local 10 members Leo Robinson, Herb Mills and others who played a key role in boycotting a ship carrying South African cargo that arrived to the Port of San Francisco in 1984, but was never unloaded. Union members stood firm and picketed the Apartheid-regime cargo for 11 days, despite threats and sanctions from employers. Keylor explained his motivation that led to his helping organize the South African ship boycott in a feature article appearing in the San Francisco Chronicle. "There are just certain things you do because you have to do them," he said. "You do them without thinking. When something needs to be resisted, you resist."

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 10:** John Krasilnikoff; Marsha Whiten; **Local 13:** Miguel D. Herrera; Mario A. Fierro; Phil J. Graves; Dawn M. Taepke; Mark R. Van Patten; Anthony Di Leva; **Local 18:** Donald F. Van Dorien; **Local 23:** Michael C. Wilper; **Local 26:** Clarence H. Britt; Avon Newborn; **Local 29:** Jerry T. Shipman; John A. Ryan; **Local 63:** Louis T. Garcia; Theodore F. Sadlowski; **Local 92:** Daniel L. Lessard; **Local 94:** Joseph P. Danelo; **Local 98:** Marland G. Guinn, Jr.;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 4:** John W. Vaughan; **Local 8:** Leo E. Moore; Ronald D. Alexander; Merlyn W. Bradbury **Local 10:** Lawrence B. Malliett; Eugene A. Telegin; Salvatore Cresci; George Macon; Willie E. Greer;

Allen Richardson; Carlos R. Jones;

**Local 13:** Ernest Ortiz; **Local 23:** Marlene Peterson; **Local 34:** Robert C. Whitright; **Local 52:** John A. Stavros; **Local 92:** Robert H. Brandt; **Local 94:** Luis M. Rubio;

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 10:** Patsy R. Ambers; Kathleen M. Drury; **Local 13:** Aurora Saldamando; Beverly J. Mikkelsen; Virginia R. Black; **Local 19:** Mary Ann Huniu; Fran Hight-Frazier; Helena Kirkwood; Ann E. Harriage; **Local 21:** Barbara Telles; Shirley J. Reynolds; **Local 23:** Mary K. Still; **Local 34:** Patricia M. Duran; Ruth Passen; **Local 46:** Angie Maria; **Local 47:** Claudia G. Knittle; **Local 75:** Dianne Hunter; **Local 98:** Laverne N. Ventoza;



**Public presence for quality pet care:** SFVS workers marched in SF's St. Patrick's Day Parade, part of their effort to connect with customers and pet lovers.

## A Helping Hand...

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Portland, OR 97221  
(503) 231-4882

**ADRP—Northern California**  
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**ADRP—Washington**  
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