



THE DISPATCHER

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Past, present and future leaders: Over 200 delegates and guests attended the fourth ILWU Young Workers Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia.



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Educate, Agitate and Organize: The 4th Young Workers Conference inspires a new generation of leaders

Over 200 registered delegates and guests gathered at the Maritime Labour Centre in Vancouver, B.C., from September 4-6 for the fourth biennial ILWU Young Workers Conference. This was the largest Young Workers Conference yet with the largest delegation of workers from the ILWU International.

In addition to impressive membership turnout from Canada and the U.S., this meeting had the largest number of international delegates with workers from Australia, Indonesia, Poland, Croatia, and the United Kingdom.

Recognizing the First Nations

ILWU Canada's Second Vice President Dan Kask began the conference by acknowledging and thanking the First Nations people's, on whose land the conference was held. A moment of silence followed to honor all union members who passed since the last Young Workers Conference.

In his introductory remarks, Kask said the purpose of the conference was to build worker power by providing young workers with the tools and space to organize.

"This year's theme, 'Educate, Agitate and Organize,' contains three words that you will hear in any discussion about the history and struggle of the ILWU," said Kask in his opening remarks.

"This conference is about providing the next generation an opportunity to write the ongoing history of militant rank-and-file unionism. If we want to strengthen our unions, we must build workers' power."

The conference covered ILWU history, the union's Ten Guiding Principles, political action, and other concerns, such as workplace health and safety, port security, international solidarity and social media. Also featured was a theatrical performance from a musical, *The Battle of Ballantyne Pier*. A wide variety of speakers included international guests, current and former ILWU elected officers, rank-and-file leaders, along with active mem-

bers and pensioners from many of the union's divisions.

Leaders past, present and future

The first speaker was former First Vice President of ILWU Canada, John Cordecado, who spoke about the history of the ILWU Longshore locals in British Columbia.

ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton followed with a short but inspiring speech that touched on the first of the conference's three themes: "educate." He encouraged delegates to learn throughout their careers to keep up with an ever-changing industry.

"This is our future here in this room," he said, "and our future is ever-evolving. As we go through our lives as workers, we have to educate ourselves. Don't be stagnant. Don't expect that today is going to be same as tomorrow. It's going to change whether we like it or not. Learn about the technology that's coming. Learn to use it; learn to fight against it. Learn to protect what you have and expand upon it for the future."

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LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

I learned recently of the sudden death of Lewis Wright. Lewis was a good friend of mine, and was my idea of a progressive longshoreman and union brother.

I met Lewis when ILWU President Dave Arian sent a delegation to Mexico, to develop a relationship with Pacific Coast dockworkers. I went along to help, and we became friends for the rest of our lives. Here's a photo of what Lewis loved doing the most - traveling the world with his wife, making friends with other workers, and weaving a network of longshore solidarity. And of course you had to eat and have a drink or two on the way. The Wrights welcomed me into their home, a ranch in the wine-making valley north of Ensenada. Together we tried to help that city's longshoremen when they were devastated by privatization of the docks. Lewis loved Mexico and Mexicans, and believed that we are all brothers and sisters despite that ugly wall.

Lewis was always in touch with the news of the day. When I had a labor radio show on our community station in Berkeley, KPFA, Lewis called me from the cab of his crane in Long Beach, and we talked on the air about what it was like working on the docks and belonging to the ILWU. He was a proselytizer for the credit union. In his last year he got me to join, and I'm proud to be a member. He helped me get the resources for going to Iraq to meet longshoremen there, to put photographs of Iraqi dockworkers into ILWU



union halls, and to bring over the workers themselves to meet ILWU members up and down the coast. His commitment to getting the voice of workers into the world is carried on by his daughter Pilar, and it guided his work with the Diane Middleton Foundation and the Harry Bridges Institute.

So here we are, eating and drinking and building solidarity with longshoremen in Salina Cruz, on the coast of Oaxaca, with some other ILWU brothers who are no longer with us - Doug Getschell (a fellow photographer), Norm Parks and Robert Osornio. I remember you all, and especially Lewis, who made the world a much better place. I am glad to be his friend.

In solidarity,

David Bacon
CWA Local 39521

Dear Editor,

We recently received some good news to share from Alex's Lemonade Stand, the charity that raises funds for childhood cancer research. Turns out that the ILWU is among the top 20 donors in the country, contributing much more money than many wealthy and powerful corporations. Consider this fact: ILWU members donated more than 10 times what the Bank of America and Wells Fargo Bank contributed! Information about upcoming events in LA and Port Hueneme can be found at www.ILWUWalktheCoast.org

Thanks to the ILWU members and our sponsors for going above and beyond.

In solidarity,

Dan Imbagliazzo, Chairman, ILWU Walk the Coast
Vic Gallardo, Vice Chairman, ILWU Walk the Coast
Robert York, Director, ILWU Walk the Coast
Robert Maynez, Coastwide Event Coordinator, ILWU Walk the Coast

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ILWU engages maritime issues in Washington, D.C

ILWU leaders attended a meeting of the Maritime Labor Alliance (MLA) in Washington, D.C. on September 23-25. The gathering included ILWU affiliates from the Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) and American Radio Association (ARA) – along with officials from the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots and the Marine Engineers Benevolent Association.



"It's important for maritime unions to solve problems by working together as much as possible, and that's what the MLA aims to do," said ILWU International President Willie Adams, adding that a top concern is

the use of federal dollars to subsidize port automation projects.

Reaching out to members of Congress is part of the work, and this year MLA members began by hosting U.S. Representative John Garamendi from Northern California at a Washington Nationals baseball game. The following day, MLA leaders joined House Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee Chairman David Price of North Carolina for lunch. They discussed his transportation spending bill that prohibits federal dollars from being used to subsidize port automation.

After the MLA meeting concluded, ILWU leaders talked with the Federal Maritime Administrator Mark Buzby and his leadership team to review problems with recent automation at West Coast ports. A separate meeting was arranged with Federal Maritime Commissioners Rebecca Dye and Dan Maffei, where the focus was also on West Coast

Ports. A final meeting was held with House Democratic Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries of New York who sat down with ILWU President Willie Adams, Vice-President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr., and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris. The ILWU leaders invited Rep. Jeffries to visit West Coast ports.

While other meetings were underway, IBU President Marina Secchitano and Alaska Longshore Division President Dennis Young met with Alaska Congressional staffers from the offices of Senator Lisa Murkowski and Representative Dan Sullivan, plus a personal one-on-one meeting with Senator Don Young. The goal was federal funding for Alaska's vital Marine Highway System (AMHS) that is suffering from deep budget cuts made by Gov. Mike Dunleavy. MLA members agreed on a joint approach to challenges at the AMHS and will hold their next meeting in Alaska.



Friends in Washington: ILWU leaders who travelled to Washington, DC in late September included (L-R) Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, President Willie Adams, Vice-President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr., and Alaska Longshore Division President Dennis Young – shown with Southern California Representative Nanette Barragán of Hermosa Beach.

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ILWU holds regional organizing talks



Challenging discussions: The ILWU's International Subcommittee on Organizing met in Tacoma in early October. Discussions and new ideas were encouraged from over 30 participants who included rank-and-file members, officers and organizing staff.

ILWU's International Officers have launched a series of regional meetings aimed at sharpening the union's approach to organizing. The most recent involved a meeting and workshop for the Puget Sound Region that was held at Local 23 and attracted 30 participants.

"Our goal," says ILWU Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr., "is to involve leaders from every part of the union to come together, share ideas, consider different strategies and find ways to participate in the organizing process." Olvera is coordinating the discussions which are open to local union officers as well as rank-and-file members.

Members of the International Executive Board volunteered to serve

on the Organizing Subcommittee earlier this year. The Committee's first meeting took place in Los Angeles at Local 26 on June 25-26. Future events will be scheduled in other regions, beginning with the Columbia River on January 27-28, 2020.

At the Puget Sound meeting, Lead Organizer Jon Brier gave a presentation that framed discussion around long-term changes in marine cargo logistics – and how those changes are impacting union jobs and ILWU power. Participants then broke into regional groups to identify examples of supply chain solidarity in recent ILWU and IBU campaigns, assess the strengths and challenges in those fights, and explore strategies for new organizing.

Those participating in the Tacoma meeting included leaders and members from Locals 9, 19, 22, 23, 47, 52,

the Inlandboatmen's Union (ILWU Marine Division) National Office and Puget Sound Region, and the Alaska Longshore Division (ALD) and ALD Unit 60.

IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast attended with some newer IBU members. "They told me the meeting made them feel empowered by learning what it means to organize along the supply chain," said Mast. "It was refreshing to see the different divisions of our union coming together to talk honestly about our past mistakes and disagreements – part of the process we need to build real solidarity."

Members of the International Organizing Committee include Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Chris Castaing, Local 5 Union Representative Myka Dubai, Local 63-OCU President John Fageaux, Local 63 President Joe Gasp-

arov, Local 26 President Luisa Gratz, Local 22 President Dax Koho, Local 23 President Dean McGrath, Local 19 member Dan McKisson and IBU President Marina Secchitano. Staff included Organizing Director Ryan Dowling, Puget Sound Lead Organizer Jon Brier, and Columbia River Organizer Ryan Takas.

"Organizing is crucial to our union and this meeting gave me a chance to hear from leaders and organizing staff about what lies ahead," said International Executive Board member Dan McKisson from Local 19, who added that he liked the mix of senior and younger people who attended. "I also appreciate the effort to hold talks in every region, and identify local targets and criteria. The meeting was a great step towards ramping up our organizing to a new level."

ILWU sostiene prácticas regionales para la sindicalización

Los dirigentes del Sindicato Internacional de ILWU han iniciado una serie de reuniones regionales con el fin de refinar sus métodos de sindicalización. La más reciente consistió en una reunión y taller para la región de Puget Sound celebrada en el Local 23 a la que asistieron 30 participantes.

"Nuestra meta," dice Bobby Olvera, Jr., Vice Presidente de ILWU (continental) "es involucrar a los líderes de todas partes del sindicato para que se unan, compartan ideas, consideren diferentes estrategias y busquen la manera de participar en el proceso de sindicalización." Olvera está coordinando las discusiones, que son aptas tanto para dirigentes de los sindicatos locales como para los miembros de base.

Algunos miembros de la Mesa Directiva del Sindicato Internacional se prestaron voluntariamente para formar parte del Subcomité de Sindicalización a principios de este año. La primera reunión de tal comité se realizó el 25 y 26 de junio en Los Ángeles en el Local

26. Los próximos eventos se realizarán en otras regiones, empezando con la zona de Columbia River el 27 y 28 de enero de 2020.

En la reunión de Puget Sound, Jon Brier, Organizador Principal, enmarcó en su presentación la discusión sobre cambios a largo plazo en la logística de cargamento marítimo – y cómo esos cambios están afectando los empleos sindicalizados y la fuerza de ILWU. Los participantes luego se dividieron en grupos por región para identificar ejemplos de solidaridad a lo largo de la cadena de abastecimiento en campañas recientes de ILWU e IBU, evaluar las ventajas y los retos que se tuvieron en esas luchas, y estudiar las estrategias para nuevas campañas de sindicalización.

Entre los que participaron en la reunión en Tacoma estuvieron dirigentes y miembros de los Locales 9, 19, 22, 23, 47, 52 y representantes de la Oficina Nacional y Región de Puget Sound del Sindicato de Barqueros de Aguas Internas -IBU (de la Sección Marítima de ILWU), y la Sección de Trabajadores Portuarios de Alaska (ALD) y la Unidad 60 de ALD.

Discusiones difíciles: El Subcomité de Sindicalización del ILWU Internacional se reunió en Tacoma a principios de octubre. Se fomentó la discusión y presentación de nuevas ideas por los participantes, que sumaron más de 30 e incluyeron miembros de base, dirigentes y personal de sindicalización.

El Secretario Tesorero de IBU, Terri Mast, asistió junto con algunos de los miembros más nuevos de IBU. "Me dijeron que la reunión les hizo sentirse más competentes porque aprendieron lo que significa organizar a los trabajadores a lo largo de la cadena de abastecimiento," dijo Mast. "Es realmente alentador ver cómo las diferentes secciones de nuestro sindicato se unen para hablar sinceramente de nuestros errores y desacuerdos en el pasado – que es parte del proceso que se requiere para crear una solidaridad genuina."

El Comité de Sindicalización del Sindicato Internacional incluye a Chris Castaing, Secretario Tesorero del Local 6, Myka Dubai, Representante del Local 5, John Fageaux, Presidente del Local 63 – OCU, Joe Gasparov, Presidente del Local 63, Luisa Gratz, Presidenta del Local 26, Dax Koho, Presidente del Local 22, Dean McGrath,

Presidente del Local 23, Dan McKisson, miembro del Local 19 y Marina Secchitano, Presidenta de IBU. Entre los miembros del personal estuvieron Ryan Dowling, Director de Sindicalización, Jon Brier Organizador Principal de Puget Sound, y Ryan Takas, Organizador de Columbia River.

"La sindicalización es esencial para nuestro sindicato y esta reunión me dio la oportunidad de escuchar a los líderes y personal de sindicalización sobre lo que nos depara el futuro," dijo Dan McKisson, miembro de la Mesa Directiva del Internacional y del Local 19, quien agregó que le gustaba el hecho de que asistieron tanto miembros mayores como jóvenes. "Yo también estoy agradecido porque se está haciendo el esfuerzo por tener prácticas en todas las regiones, e identificar los objetivos y parámetros locales. La reunión sirvió mucho para impulsar nuestro trabajo de sindicalización hacia adelante."

Pensioners hold their 52nd Annual Convention in Vancouver, Canada



Big turnout in Vancouver: Pensioners from the US and Canada joined with guests from Australia and Panama for a successful convention.

Over 200 delegates and guests attended the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association (PCPA) Convention in Vancouver, Canada, on September 16-18. The event brought together some of the union's oldest and youngest members who joined with local and International officers to explore the union's future.

The convention was formally opened by PCPA Vice-President Lawrence Thibeaux, who provided brief remarks then turned over the gavel to President Greg Mitre.

Honors to Host Committee

Former ILWU Canada President Tom Dufresne, who now presides over the Vancouver Pensioners Organization, welcomed delegates and thanked Host Committee members for their months of hard work to prepare for the Convention.

Grateful for ILWU help

President Mitre also thanked the Host Committee and explained why the Pensioners remain a vital part of the ILWU family.

"We're very different than most unions and lucky to be part of the ILWU because this union respects and supports pensioners," he said, thanking the International officers for their ongoing financial and moral support.

Political action

Mitre stressed the need to stop the Trump administration's attacks on unions, including the appointment of a rabid, anti-union official to head the Labor Department. "This administration is appointing hundreds of anti-union officials and judges who can only be stopped at the ballot box," said Mitre. "So let's all vote – and help young people understand how important these 2020 elections are."

He ended his opening remarks by recognizing the special efforts made by women who helped organize the Convention and other events throughout the year, including assistance from Auxiliary members. "You are the backbone of this union," he said.

Important leaders lost

Mitre noted that the union had lost some "giants" during the past year, including former International Presi-

dent David Arian, longtime activist Lewis Wright, labor historian Ron Magden, former Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker, and others named by delegates who rose to add their dedications. Two ILWU Canada workers killed on the job during the past year received special recognition: Local 502's Everett Cummings and Local 500's Don Jantz. A moment of silence was then observed for the departed. A brief prayer and reflection followed, offered by Deacon Dileep Athraide, Chaplain at Vancouver's Seafarer Mission and former Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress. Last year he boarded 260 vessels and met with 5,500 seafarers.

PCPA in "great financial shape"

Treasurer Chris Gordon presented delegates with a strong financial report, noting that the PCPA is in "great financial shape" with 14 active clubs and 1529 dues-paying members.

Mitre said the Convention was honored to have support from ILWU leaders in attendance, including ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton and Secretary-Treasurer Bob Dhaliwal; ILWU International President Willie Adams, Vice-President Bobby Olvera, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, Coast Committeeman Cam Williams, Local 10 President Melvin Mackay, Local 13 President Ray Familathe and Local 63 President Joe Gasperov. He also thanked Glen Woods of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) Veterans group and Raul Feuillet of the Panama Canal Pilots Association for attending despite the lengthy travel required.

Canadian longshore contract

ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton provided an update on the newly-negotiated Canada Longshore Agreement that involved 18 months of difficult contract talks and a brief lock-out by the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA). The main point of contention, Ashton said, was automation.

"The conversations we had were similar to ones that took place a few generations ago with containerization," Ashton said. "It's up to the working class to keep people working, and automation could wipe-out almost ten thousand good jobs on our docks, depending how it is implemented." That figure and other information came

from a study recently commissioned by ILWU Canada which analyzed how automation would impact local jobs and the economy. The region could lose \$600 million in spending if most jobs disappear, with impacts going far beyond individual union members to harm the region's working class and businesses. A key provision in the new contract calls for consultations about proposed automation, using a new committee made up of union members and employers who will evaluate the impact of different automation strategies. Ashton said he hopes the new joint committee will be effective, but added, "we have to be prepared to take it to the streets if necessary."

President Willie Adams

Adams began his remarks by honoring the late former ILWU President Dave Arian and historian Dr. Ron Magden. He said former President Arian once reminded him that employers always had the right to use labor-saving devices – beginning with the original 1934 contract. "We still have the power of rank-and-file members and pensioners to challenge injustices," as he saluted pensioners for their continuing solidarity and support of union causes.

Registering and voting in 2020

Pivoting to politics, Adams praised efforts by pensioners to help register ILWU members for the U.S. 2020 Presidential election.

"You can make a big difference by encouraging younger members to register and vote." Adams noted that U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell "is now blocking more than 100 bills" in Congress, a problem he said will only change if more people get involved and vote for working-class candidates.

Adams concluded with an overview of efforts by ILWU officers to address challenges facing the union. He praised Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr., for making organizing new members a top priority. Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris was lauded for coordinating the ILWU's education work, especially efforts to reach younger and newer members.

"The rank-and-file is the backbone of this union and you're our moral compass," said Adams. "You tell us when we get it right – and when we're wrong."

Local 13 President Familathe

The ILWU's largest longshore local, 13 in San Pedro, CA, was represented by a group of convention delegates and Local 13 President Ray Familathe, who explained how members in Southern California have been dealing there with port automation. He said many newer members do not realize that Article 15 in the longshore contract has long allowed employers to use new labor-saving technology. Familathe praised efforts by local union members to "put boots on the ground" during the debate over Maersk's plan to automate Terminal 400. He pointed to an impressive pair of 12 to 0 votes in the Los Angeles City Council, while noting they were not able to achieve everything some had hoped for. The union was able to negotiate important training guarantees covering 900 workers – half of whom will come from the hiring hall with the remainder from the ranks of existing mechanics. The trainings will be led by union trainers. He added that the experience members had during the automation fight highlighted the need for more legislative and political training to help members understand how they can be most effective. He said the lessons learned at the Port of Los Angeles are now being applied at the Port of Long Beach, where the union is taking a pro-active stance to cope with future automation projects there. Familathe pointed to a key accomplishment in Long Beach, where the City Council recently voted unanimously to require an analysis of job losses and community economic impacts before any automation project could move forward.

"We'll be in front of the next automation project," said Familathe, who added that the union will be pushing for a "just transition" to help workers impacted by automation projects.

Vancouver's working waterfront

As noontime approached, the Convention adjourned to begin a 4-hour narrated tour of Vancouver's harbor and historic waterfront, emphasizing current and past labor history. Former ILWU Canada President Tom Dufresne narrated much of the tour.

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Host Committee help: *The Pensioner Convention was organized with generous help from many hard working volunteers.*

Protecting health & retirement benefits

Coast Benefits Specialist John Castanho opened a session the next morning on health and pension benefits. He introduced the team of field staff assigned up and down the Coast who help pensioners and active members with questions or problems. Each Area Director made a short presentation with some valuable tips.

Area Welfare Director tips

Puget Sound Area Welfare Director Andrea Stevenson explained that the U.S. Government issued new Medicare cards between April 2018 and April 2019. The new cards now have a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier replacing your social security number. If you have not received your new card, call Social Security to request the updated card. In addition, she noted that the annual letter from Social Security regarding the Medicare Part B premium rate for 2020 should be mailed to those on Medicare Part B around Thanksgiving. You are required to forward this notice to the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans office. She also said Coastwise Indemnity Plan participants in the Oregon and Washington State, received new medical cards in April 2019. These new medical cards give participants the ability to seek an in-network provider in 50 states. She concluded by noting that Medicare now has an “app” for smart phone users that provides some good resources.

Columbia River Area Welfare Director Martha Hendricks encouraged Pensioners to consider using Social Workers and Care Coordinators to help if serious health challenges arise. She also reminded everyone that the dental implant coverage is a “stand-alone” program with a different billing process. The Dental Implant Program goes through the Benefits Plans Office. She concluded with a warning to beware of medical fraud and scams directed at Pensioners.

Northern California Area Welfare Director Joe Cabrales encouraged everyone to read their “Explanation of Benefit” statements that are mailed from the Coastwise Claims Office, in order to “verify you weren’t billed for services that you didn’t receive.”

Southern California Area Welfare Director Sam Alvarado urged Pensioners to be wary of “junk mail” that floods

senior’s mailboxes between September to December, from insurance companies trying to sell “Medicare Advantage” and other supplemental coverage. None of these plans are needed by former longshore workers who already have coverage from their ILWU-PMA Welfare Plan. “Throw out all that junk mail and only save official letters from Social Security, Medicare and the Coast or Warehouse Plans,” he said

Alcohol & Drug Recovery Program

Coast Benefits Specialist John Castanho returned to the podium to introduce Area Representatives for the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Program (ADRP). The Program began in the late 70’s when a worker was fired for working under the influence. When that case reached Coast Arbitrator Sam Kagel, he asked what had been done to help the worker. That question helped lead to the establishment of the ADRP, thanks to encouragement by ILWU President Jimmy Herman, Coast Committeeman Bill Ward, Local 10 member George Cobb and others.

ADRP Reps Hunny Powell for Northern California and Tamiko Love for Southern California were welcomed and each provided brief remarks.

John Barton, Executive Director of the Benefit Plans Office, was next up and began by praising the work of field staff and the entire Benefit Plans Office team. “We’ve been working hard to make sure we get it right,” he said. A key goal this year is a new information system. “We spent three years researching to see what was needed, have been working on it for the past eight months, and expect to finish in about six months from now,” he said. Pension Plan Manager Jacquie Gasparro followed with three helpful suggestions: “make sure you have designated a survivor on your Plan documents, notify the Plan office when you change your address and consider using the direct deposit option, which Plan staff will be happy to arrange with your credit union or bank.”

John Castanho wrapped up the session on benefits with a brief overview of how the pension and health plans were established. Both were negotiated in the aftermath of a difficult but successful 95-day strike in 1948. Negotiations in 1949 yielded the first step with a disability health insurance program, fol-

lowed by comprehensive health coverage provided by the Kaiser Foundation the next year – funded initially with an assessment of 3 cents for every ton of cargo that moved on the docks plus a contribution of 1% of payroll from each member. A life-insurance benefit was soon added and partial health coverage was extended to family members in 1951 – which led to full coverage by 1953. Pensioners began receiving full medical coverage in 1952. Dental care started in 1954 as a pilot program for children but now covers both active and retired family members. Health care coverage today covers approximately 50,000 active and retired longshore workers, along with their respective dependent spouses and children. The pension plan is well-funded with an estimated valuation of \$6.89 billion in assets and a 100% level of funding. The Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) contributes nearly \$450 million to the Pension Plan annually.

Early retirement & employer assessments

Castanho flagged several items for special attention, beginning with the current three-year window for early retirement that opened July, 2019 and runs through June of 2022. This benefit, negotiated in 2017, allows workers to retire early at the age of 59 and 1/2 with no loss of benefits if they have at least 13 years of pension credit. The early retirements will help create more work opportunities for younger workers. Castanho noted that employers will need to change the way companies are assessed to pay for future benefits, because the number of active workers will decline or hold steady while the number of pensioners and dependents will increase. Employers now pay assessments based mostly on “man-hours” whereas assessments based primarily on tonnage will be required in the future.

“Out-of-network” warning

Castanho ended with a warning about some medical providers who fail to inform patients they are “out-of-network” until the services have already been provided, which leaves patients liable for a share of the costs. Some of these “out-of-network” facilities are involved with Wall Street investment firms who expect big returns. Requiring “out-of-network” providers to disclose their terms up-



Raul Feuillet of the Panama Canal Pilots

front could help in the short-run, and a “Medicare-for-all” system could help to eliminate these and other abuses in the long-run, while allowing everyone to still choose their doctor.

Panama Solidarity

Raul Feuillet of the Panama Canal Pilots was a special guest who shared some of his interesting background. A captain who sailed tankers around the world seven times, Feuillet finally came ashore, got married, had six children and now works as a Pilot for the Panama Canal Authority.

Highly-skilled pilots

“The vessels we move through the canal now are much larger with critical dimensions that leave almost no room to spare while transiting the locks,” he said, explaining that the new ships are 1200 feet long and 168 feet wide with a draft of 50 feet. Besides the new “Panamax” container vessels, pilots also escort passenger vessels, private yachts and military vessels - including nuclear submarines – through the canal.

No pensions for pilots or longshoremen

In addition to his work as a pilot, Feuillet plays an active role in the Pilot’s Credit Union, which has grown from modest origins to over \$120 million in assets. Personal savings can be important because neither the 175 pilots or 1500 longshore workers affiliated with the ILWU in Panama have pensions, and the country’s Social Security payments are modest, paying roughly 8-10% of the last salary earned before retirement. “I don’t want to be an 83-year-old pilot who has to keep working to survive,” said Feuillet, who is organizing support for what he called “an agenda of pensions with survivor benefits for pilots.”

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Pensioners hold their 52nd Annual Convention in Vancouver, Canada

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“Full-life” oral histories

Delegates received an update about the growing body of oral histories being compiled by ILWU historian Harvey Schwartz and Connor Casey of the University of Washington’s Harry Bridges Center. A total of 44 histories have been conducted with PCPA members so far that are being housed at the University of Washington. Each oral history requires preparation before the actual interview that generates hours of tape, followed by additional time for transcription and editing. Schwartz said the interviews are detailed, using a “full-life history” approach, which he described as “the gold standard.” The histories include pensioners from Canada and one from the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA).

Connor Casey explained that 26 of the oral histories are now posted on the Harry Bridges Center website, with more being posted as they are transcribed. He noted that it takes roughly six hours to transcribe every hour of raw tape interviews. Casey concluded with a soft appeal for funds, “We would welcome donations to help the Oral History Fund continue doing this important work.”

ILWU Canada’s Bob Dhaliwal

Secretary-Treasurer Bob Dhaliwal re-capped the history of automation projects around the world, concluding with the ILWU Canada longshore settlement, emphasizing new provision in Article 14 of their contract that requires a joint union-employer Technology Committee to review proposed automation projects for a period up to 120 days in order to determine the impact on workers – while empowering a neutral arbitrator to rule if both sides can’t agree how to proceed.

Action on resolutions

After a brief report from the Credentials Committee presented by PCPA Treasurer Chris Gordon, the body began debating and voting on three resolutions.

The first was critical of President Trump’s immigration policy, seeking to end abuse by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and calling for the agency to be defunded with duties transferred to other accountable agencies. The resolution passed unanimously.

The second resolution expressed opposition to a plan by billionaire heir and Oakland A’s owner John Fisher to build a new baseball stadium, luxury condominiums, a hotel and business complex at the Port of Oakland’s Howard Terminal. The resolution called on pensioners to “join the movement” and “raise community awareness about the existential threat” posed by the project to the ILWU in Northern California. The measure was adopted unanimously.

A third resolution, asking pensioners to take a position on the protest filed by an ILWU member concerning the ILWU International 2018 election, was defeated.

Committee Reports

Pensioner Gene Vrana reported on his experience with the Coast Longshore Education Committee that met in San Francisco on August 14-16. He said plans were discussed there for a series of regional 2-day trainings that will explore ways to improve member participation and diversity – including ways to involve more pensioners in union activities.

Pensioner Rich Austin reported the Longshore Benefits Committee. His comments included some frustration with an ongoing problem facing pensioners who marry after retirement and are unable to assign their new spouse as a pension beneficiary. Austin says he tried to tackle this problem himself decades ago when he was a Coast Committeeman, but was unsuccessful. “It’s a tough one,” he admits, “but one I think we should keep working-on.”

President Greg Mitre reported on a meeting of the Longshore Committee on 401(k) Savings Plans, which recently met for the first time in three years. Benefits in these plans are managed by



Young energy: Pensioners welcomed a new crop of young leaders, including (L-R) Local 502’s Stephanie Dobbler and Ashley Bordignon who both served previously on the Young Workers Committee, along with Local 500’s Tereza Tacic who was just elected to the Committee for 2019 – 2021.

individual “owners” without any guaranteed results. Wall Street investors love 401(k)’s because they profit from fees earned on each account, which is why ILWU Longshore Division leaders have always emphasized defined-benefit pension plans because they provide guaranteed payouts, while reducing risks and expenses for individual members. Mitre reported that pensioners can make the most of their 401(k) plans by designating a beneficiary in case of disability or death. He noted that the majority of 17,000 ILWU 401(k) owners have not yet designated a beneficiary for the accounts – meaning their funds could revert to the state if they die without naming a beneficiary.

Long Term Care

The Long-Term Care Committee prepared a detailed written report by pensioners Nick Buckles, Bruce Krieger, Steve Hansen, George Romero and Dan Imbagliazzo. The team thanked President Greg Mitre and Coast Benefits Specialist John Castanho for providing valuable assistance with the Committee’s effort to explore a “Hybrid Life Insurance Plan with Living Long-Term-Care Benefits.” This approach would raise life insurance benefits for active longshore workers and pensioners to

\$75,000 – along with long-term care benefit of \$3,000 a month for up to 50 months if needed. It would supplement funds from pension benefits, Social Security and savings to make long-term care more affordable but not entirely covered. The cost of this insurance plan will be known after details are finalized and insurance companies provide bids. A different approach to the same problem is being tested in Washington State, where a first-in-the-nation benefit for long-term care is being launched that could offer significant cost savings and cover all citizens. The Committee will continue monitoring new laws and regulations being adopted in Washington, Oregon and California.

Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris

As the Convention entered the remaining hours of the third and final day, ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris took the podium to thank Pensioners for their dedication and hard work. Following the nominations and election of PCPA officers, which were all uncontested and elected through acclamation, the meeting was adjourned by President Greg Mitre who invited everyone to attend next year’s convention in Sacramento in September of 2020.

Gabriel Prawl, first African American President of ILWU Local 52

In January of this year, Gabriel Prawl was elected the first African-American President of the ILWU Clerks Local 52. Prawl was born in Panama. He immigrated to New York when he was 15 to join his parents who had moved there in the late 60s and early 70s. The Prawl family has been migrating to America since the early 1900s from Jamaica and Europe, he said.

At the age of 16, Prawl moved to the Pacific Northwest, but after graduating high school, he returned to New York where he lived for 11 years before finally returning to Seattle in his early 30s.

He started working as a causal at

Local 19 in 1994. He was introduced to the work through his uncle and some friends who were casuals at the time.

“I became active in the ILWU after getting my A-book,” Prawl said. “I requested to be a part of the Local 19 Education Committee, and eventually became the chair in 2004. When I started learning about the real history of the ILWU—that is what inspired me.” He was also elected to the Local 19 Executive Board for five years and also attended the Leadership, Education and Development program put on by the Coast Longshore Division.

Prawl said that he was influenced by many of the rank-and-file activists from Local 10. “Leo Robinson was a mentor to me,” he said.

Prawl transferred to Local 52 in 2010 after suffering a rotator cuff injury. He was elected to several leadership positions at Local 52, serving on the Labor Relations Committee for four years and as Vice President for two years. He ran for President of Local 52 with the encouragement of outgoing President Max Vekich.

In addition to his leadership position in the union, Prawl also serves as the Seattle chapter President of the A Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), an organization of Black Trade Unionists who fight for racial equality and economic justice. Through his position at the APRI, Prawl sits on the Board of the Washington State Labor Council.



“I want to be in a leadership position so I can make a difference,” Prawl said. My goal is to make sure we educate our members, build solidarity within our membership, and make connections with organizations outside our union.”

Educate, Agitate and Organize: The 4th Young Workers Conference inspires a new generation of leaders



Young Workers Committee: The newly elected committee members (L-R): Tyrel Ratich, Local 500; Bryan Delwo, Local 502; Alexander Fernandez, Local 29; Brittni Hodson, Local 508; Tereza Tacic, Local 500; Lateesha Myers, Local 502; Paul Gill, Local 502.

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Next up were members of the Young Workers Committee who were elected two-years ago at the previous Conference. Ashley Bordignon, Tyler Gerard, Danielle Phelan, Isaac Baidoo, Viri Gomez and Stef Flores each offered their reflections on the ILWU's Ten Guiding Principles. Conference participants then held small group discussions where they proposed a "new" guiding principle.

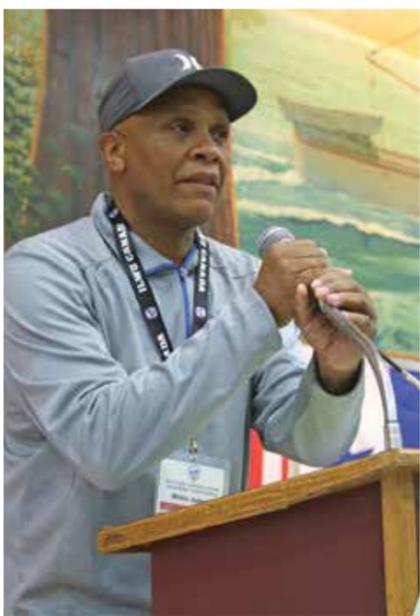
Pensioner experience

A panel of ILWU Canada pensioners provided an important perspective on ILWU history. The group included former ILWU Canada President Tom Dufresne, Herb Howe, Ted Grewcut and Gord Westrand. Each reflected on their most memorable experience of rank-and-file power in the workplace, their thoughts about leadership and automation, and sharing what they miss most about working on the waterfront.

Musical interlude

Following the lunch break, conference attendees were treated to a performance from the Battle of Ballantyne Musical. The musical was written by award-winning playwright Sherry MacDonald and tells the story of the 1935 strike by longshore workers in Vancouver.

The remainder of the afternoon featured sessions on Canadian Transport Security Clearances and social media.



Call to Action: ILWU International President Willie Adams challenged the delegates to apply what they learned at the conference when they return to their locals.

Internationalism and activism

The second day emphasized international solidarity with a panel of workers from the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA). Delegates watched a short documentary on the Patrick's dispute that took place in 1998 when the Patrick Corporation fired MUA members in four Australian ports and replaced them with non-union workers. The ILWU responded by refusing to unload cargo from Australian ships loaded by non-union workers. The firing of MUA members was later ruled illegal by Australian courts. The film was followed by a panel of MUA speakers who discussed the current issues and struggles facing Australian maritime workers.

A second panel featuring International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) delegates included workers from Australia, Indonesia, Poland, Croatia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris spoke on this panel and reported about efforts by the ITF Dockers' Section Occupational Safety and Health Working Group.

Afternoon Activism

The conference took time out during the afternoon for some hands-on agitation. Delegates rode by bus to Vancouver's Jack Poole square where they participated in some street theater by staging a mass "die-in" – part of ILWU's Canada's "Kill a Worker, go to Jail" campaign. The effort dramatized on-the-job fatalities and serious accidents caused by poor enforcement and weak health and safety laws. Afterward, delegates held a short rally that included a speech from Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris.

"I'm tired of losing family and friends every year for corporate profit," said Ferris. "You have the right to go home to your family at the end of the day. We need to start valuing our lives a little bit more."

The rally also heard from Local 502 President Tom Doran: "We have not stopped industrial manslaughter because we haven't even begun to enforce the law."

History lesson

During the Friday morning session, Mark Leier, a history professor at Simon Fraser University, explained how movements can build solidar-

Morall Griffin, Local 10

"I never really understood how deep this union goes until I came here. I used to think the union was just about going to the hall, getting your job, protecting your job, do it right and go home. Coming here makes me realize there is so much more to it, and it makes me understand why the people who came before us fought so hard for this union.

If we become complacent and apathetic, our union will grind to halt, and that's what the bosses want. Everything we have, we fought for. Nothing was ever given to us."



Andy Anderson, Local 5

"Being a leader in your union is being an advocate for your fellow workers and letting them know that we don't have to let the boss make decisions without us. If you don't speak up, we don't know what your ideas are. There are so many ways that we could be more diverse."

Dalvir Vandher Local 500

"I had some idea about what was going on with labor struggles with the ILWU and around the world, but the conference showed me so much more than I knew it terms of what we are fighting against and the extent of the problems we are facing.

Helping our union grow and get stronger makes life better for everyone. All of us can take a leadership role. We can lead at work. It doesn't have to mean leading a big rally. You can help in small ways and still make a big difference."



Lateesha Myers, Local 502

"Things are always changing. What happened 20 years ago is not the same as what happens now or what will happen in the future. Without education or being active and participating, things will change and you won't have a say. And it's not always going to change for the better. But being active in your union, learning about the struggles we've been through, and being open to change will make it possible to help ourselves and future generations."

ity. His session included small-group brainstorming and a sing-along to a song written by the famous Wobblie organizer Joe Hill.

Community activism

ILWU Local 23 young workers Zack Pattin and Brian Skiffington delivered a presentation about their effort to connect the union with community activism. The example they used was a tenant organizing campaign assisted by Local 23 members who helped working-class tenants in Tacoma's Tiki Apartments resist evictions by greedy landlords. ILWU members helped the tenants organize and provided assistance to displaced tenants. They also worked with tenants and community groups who forced the City Council to delay evictions and pass stronger tenant-protection laws.

Internal organizing

Puget Sound IBU Business Agent Ryan Brazeau and Columbia River IBU Business Agent Adam Smith discussed the recent effort by Inlandboatmen's Union activists to strengthen their public-sector membership by enlist-

ing employees to recommit their union affiliation in light of the Janus decision. In 2018, the Supreme Court ruled that non-union members represented by a union contract are no longer required to pay representation fees that cover the costs of contract administration and enforcement. Anti-union forces funded the Janus court fight and they continue funding nationwide campaigns aimed to weaken labor unions.

ILWU President Willie Adams

ILWU International President Willie Adams delivered a keynote address on Friday that shared details about his forty-year evolution from a young worker on Tacoma's waterfront in 1978 to being elected ILWU International President in 2018. Adams challenged workers to encourage greater participation and combat apathy when they return to their local unions. "What are you going to do when you get home?" he asked. "We are going to kill this working-class, labor movement if we don't have participation from our brothers and sisters," he concluded.

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Educate, Agitate and Organize: The 4th Young Workers Conference inspires a new generation of leaders



Get out the vote: On the final day of the conference delegates elected their Young Workers Committee members.

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The afternoon session also featured a training to “build power on-the-job” that was led by Barbara Madeloni and Joe DeManuell-Hall from Labor Notes. A final inspired and heartfelt address was provided by Steve Nasby, former ILWU Canada Second Vice President who helped establish the Young Workers’ Conference.

The final order of business was the election of a new Young Worker’s Committee that now includes Local 500 members Tyrel Ratic and Tereza Tacic, Local 502’s Paul Gill, Lateesha Myers and Bryan Delwo, Local 508’s Brittini Hodson and Local 29’s Alexander Fernandez.

Local 5’s Andy Anderson said they

left the conference with a sense of urgency and a renewed commitment to activism in their union.

“It’s important to show up and be a part of things,” they said. “There was a challenge issued at the conference for every member to attend at least one union event every year. If you can’t make it to your membership meeting, show up to another event.”

Local 10’s Morall Griffin said he intends to take the challenge issued by President Adams and put it into practice when he returns.

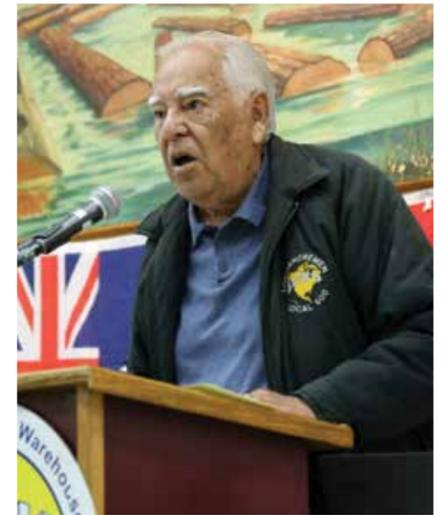
“This experience made me realize there is a lot of work that needs to be done when I get back home. I’m going to share what I learned here with my peers back home,” he said.



Interactive learning: The conference used a combination of presentations and small group interactive exercises during the three-day meeting.



Educate: ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton encouraged delegates to learn throughout their careers to keep up with an ever-changing industry.



History matters: Former First Vice President of ILWU Canada, John Cordecado, who spoke about the history of the ILWU Longshore locals in British Columbia.

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Jerry L. Gagliardi; Steven C. Mote; Andrea A. Mcwhorter;
Local 8: David L. Trachsel; Donald L. Stykel; Suzanne M. Savas; **Local 10:** Robert E. Dawson; Clifford D. Murray; Marie A. Mcneel; **Local 13:** Joe H. Avalos; Andrew M. Subingsubing; Robert H. Lemmons, Jr.; William T. Louie; Dewayne P. Forster; Ronald P. Saldamando; Michael J. Noble; Michael R. Foster; Terry E. Sanders; Gary W. Cantrell; Theresa M. Nelson; Joseph A. Iberri; James C. Brady;
Local 14: Perry L. Bressman;
Local 19: Anthony L. Sorentino;
Local 23: Mark E. Lennox; Robert A. Weiser; Kirt A. Napoleon; Larry D. Guinn; Kenneth M. Williams;
Local 26: Andre E. Williams;
Local 29: Karen P. Castillo-Leyba;
Local 46: Jerry L. Miller; Harry Cabral; Joe G. Zavala; **Local 50:** Steven G. Kraske; **Local 54:** Johnny D. Hill;
Local 63: Dorothy L. Sykes; Steven B. Pope; Ronald P. Ash Sr.; Michael Atenza; Victor V. Osuna; Wylene Davis; Larry B. Ellis; Gerrilynn Soto; Diane Young; **Local 92:** Gary W. Veitenheimer; **Local 94:** Petar Barhanovic; Andres Merida;

Local 98: Scott W. Enquist; Albert D. Jarvis; Donald E. Rogers;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Edward C. Quick (Katherine);
Local 8: Fredrick C. Blatch;
Local 12: Walter L. Harrel;
Local 13: Adolph M. Montano (Geraldine); Martin G. Morisette (Rizalee); John T. Mingo; Emilio V. Chavez; Carmen T. Griswold; Charles E. Jones; **Local 27:** Floyd D. Kautz;
Local 32: Glenn M. Burpee;
Local 34: Leo J. Kieny; **Local 63:** Richard H. Nervik; Carlos C. Duenas (Cynthia); Michael P. Halapoff;
Local 92: William D. Fisher;
Local 98: Dale R. Crabtree;

DECEASED SURVIVOR:

Local 8: Darla C. Gordon; Lois J. Kennedy; **Local 13:** Mary S. Arbuckle; Esther G. Gutierrez; Beatrice C. Talamantes; **Local 21:** Elizabeth R. Vilhauer; **Local 24:** Aleta Mix;
Local 51: Sharon L. Reitan;
Local 52: Karen A. Barnak;
Local 63: Julie E. Bebich; Gloria B. Flores; Virginia E. Oakes;
Local 75: Elynor A. Mc Kinnon;
Local 91: Gioioa S. Villa;
Local 94: Jewel C. Kennedy;

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