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SACRIFICE IS NICE, REVENGE IS SWEET

‘God said to Abraham, ‘Kill me a son.’ Abraham said, ‘Man, you must be putting me on.’ God said, ‘Abel said, ‘What?’ God said, ‘You can do what you want, Abe, but this time you see me, you better run.’ Abel said, ‘Where do you want this killing done?’’—B. Dylan, 'Highway 61’

The year ahead will demand more patience, sacrifice and resolve.” —George W. Bush, on his plan for the Iraq War, Jan 10, 2007

T

his is not a test. This is not a test of faith or patriotism, nor is it a test of one’s intelligence and integrity. And just because Bush has failed, it doesn’t mean the rest of the country and Congress must flunk.

In his pathetic plea for support for his new and improved plan to win in Iraq, Bush again asked the American people for patience and more sacrifice. As if the sacrifice at the altar of Halliburton and Exxon of more than 3,000 sons and daughters weren’t enough, he wants more offered up to honor those already slaughtered.

Never mind that the November midterm elections are widely viewed as a repudiation of his Iraq policy, never mind that polls show 70 percent of Americans oppose his Iraq policy and that even the timid Democrats in Congress are now railing against it. Bush’s “new course” strategy is to send in more troops and escalate. And will this plan, unlike all his previous ones, “bring us closer to success?” he himself asks. “I believe it will,” he answers himself.

That may be good enough for him, but we all believe a lot of things we don’t believe in the last election. Let’s beat Wal-Mart and raise one million and one dollars. Let’s beat Wal-Mart and raise one million dollars! It costs to represent us in these powerful positions. With Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, we will certainly make progress.

With Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, we will certainly make progress.

By Robert McElrath
ILWU International President

2 33 to 202 and 51 to 49. What do these numbers mean? They stand for the number of Democrats-versus-Republicans in Congress. The number of Democrats-versus-Republicans in Congress was held since 2002 in the Senate and 1994 in the House.

With Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, we will certainly make progress.

The future will be very interesting to watch. What will the war against terrorism? Will issues of port security be resolved and how? Will the federal government recognize the need for improved transportation infrastructure, especially for goods movement, find the will and way to fund it?

These are but a few of the enormous problems that face our government today. It will be too easy to solve these problems. But with the new historical event, electing Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, the first woman ever to be elected to this powerful position in our government, we will certainly make progress on them. Just so you know, Pelosi’s history goes back to the days of her second president, of the ILWU, Jimmy Herman.

She approached the ILWU when she was considering running for Congress, seeking our union’s endorsement. Jimmy Herman said, “Absolutely, yes!” She was elected in 1988 to the late Sala Burton’s seat representing San Francisco. Herman was assigned to the Northern California Regional Director Lefty King to work for Pelosi and he became co-chair of her first Congressional campaign. The ILWU congratulates her on her new position and gives her full support for her in the future.

All of the history-making votes didn’t just happen. It was a lot of work for District Councils and individuals getting wordout people, going door-to-door, phonebanking after work and volunteering during the day. Hard work was put forward along with a lot of money. Yes, money! It costs to elect people to represent in these powerful positions. And we cannot sit back and rest—2008 is just around the corner. The election for a new President will be here before we know it. We must remain active to help elect people who will look out for the working class of America.

Wal-Mart, which represents global corporate interests, bragged that it donated a million dollars in the last election. Let’s beat Wal-Mart and raise one million and one dollars.

An injury to one is an injury to all.
Labor turns out for Alcatraz ferry workers

By Steve Stallone

Defying the Bush administration’s veterans’ housing, anti-union employers and predictions of rain, San Francisco’s labor movement turned out Dec. 9 to demand that the city’s historic waterfront remain union.

More than 50 union ferry workers lost their jobs Sept. 25 when the scab outfit Hornblower Yachts received the contract won by the Bush administration’s National Park Service to operate the popular tourist ferries to Alcatraz Island. The workers, members of the Inlandboatmen’s Union (the Marine Division of the ILWU) and Masters, Mates and Pilots, who had worked the ferries since the NPS began the tours of the former high-security federal prison in 1934, found themselves jobless, their families’ health care cut off and their pension contributions suspended.

The two unions fought the contract transfer with a variety of tactics. They challenged it in court and in the National Labor Relations Board, organized political and community support and regularly picketed the Hornblower pier once the scab service started, even getting several members and supporters arrested a couple of times in civil disobedience actions.

This time they came in force. The numerous and colorful union banners, shimmering in the intermittent sun and sprinklers, punctuated the seriousness of the issue. Besides the unions whose members lost their jobs, all the ILWU Bay Area locals and maritime unions on the West Coast got involved. Almost 1,000 other unionists—Teamsters, teachers, bus drivers, janitors, hotel workers, construction workers and more—marched and chanted with them from Harry Bridges Plaza in front of the Ferry Building north to Pier 33 where Hornblower runs its ferry to Alcatraz. Several hundred ILWU Local 10 longshore workers—who re-scheduled their membership meeting, stopping all cargo movement at Bay Area ports for the day shift—marched from their hall in the opposite direction in a pinwheel toward the Hornblower pier to join the rally.

The local Teamsters set up their large white tent in front of the pier to serve as a stage for the rally. As city buses and fire trucks passed by along the Embarcadero, the longshore workers blowing horns in support, ILWU National President Alan Cote’ noted that the demonstrators were standing in front of Hornblower Yachts. “This was a huge issue for us,” said Cote’. “That was our focus and that’s what we accomplished, ‘said Cote’. "We're all looking forward to the day when Hornblower sends a one-way trip to Alcatraz for all the corporate criminals who have stolen the jobs and legacy of the women and men who have built this waterfront," Casey said.

But over the last four negotiations the union has brought it up to almost completely mirroring the master Longshore Division contract. Among such gains in the current contract, the negotiating committee won Lincoln’s birthday (Feb. 12) as a non-paid holiday, meaning those who work that day make time and a half.

Health care and pensions remain in parity with the master contract—even into the unknown changes that may occur in the 2008 contract—with the grain employers contributing 100 percent to the PMA-ILWU welfare and pension plans. But the committee was unable to achieve the one dollar per hour employer contribution to the 401k plan.

Still, the committee was able to hold off several changes the employers wanted for their advantage, including shortening the length of the contract so it expired at the same time as the master contract with the PMA. But the union didn’t want to have to negotiate two big contracts at the same time and turned that back.

The employers also wanted to change the contract’s expiration date from its current Oct. 1, when the grain shipping season begins, to June or July when the grain elevators are generally shut down.

“If we went into talks when they’re having their holiday work happening, that would take out our bargaining strength,” Ugles said.

We’re negotiating with some of the biggest companies in the world that are always trying to squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. But our advantage was our solidarity among locals and that in the short term the grain market is very strong. They’re making money and we’re making money.”
January 2007

The First 100 Hours: The Pelosi agenda

By Lindsay McLaughlin
ILWU Legislative Director

12 years ago, Congressional Democrats have been stuck in the political wilderness. After years of inaction, Republicans marched in lockstep with George W. Bush and shut out the Democrats from offering an alternative agenda. The House of Representatives. The 2006 election in which the Democrats took back the House and Senate was a repudiation of Bush’s and the Republican Congress’ agenda.

Now it is time for Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and the Democratic Congress to take the initiative and fundamentally change the direction of the country. Pelosi has vowed to pass six major legislative items in the first 100 hours that Congress is in session. These legislative initiatives include an increase in the minimum wage, ethics reform, Medicare prescription drug reform, energy policy reform, higher education affordability and implementation of the 9-11 Commission Recommendations. It is important to note that Pelosi is successful for two reasons: these reforms are meaningful to the American people and success will provide momentum for other issues including labor law reform and health care reform.

MINIMUM WAGE

Pelosi has vowed to increase the minimum wage which is currently $5.15 an hour to $7.25 an hour. A minimum wage increase would raise the wages of millions of Americans. In 1997 (the last time the minimum wage was increased) the purchasing power of the minimum wage has deteriorated by 20 percent. After adjusting for inflation, the value of the minimum wage is at its lowest level since 1955.

Women need the increase in the minimum wage, but they also need access to affordable goods and services. Most women do not make the minimum wage, for example, are not offered or cannot afford health insurance. In the United States, every family, including those with high probability of being uninsured. Most do not have access to paid sick leave when they or their children become ill. Further, many cannot afford market rates for basic quality child care. Minimum wage workers need health insurance for themselves and their families, affordable, quality child care, and access to paid leave, along with a raise in the minimum wage.

ETHICS REFORM

Having campaigned strongly on the issue of Congressional ethics, the Democratic leadership in both the House and Senate promised to pass ethics-related legislation. Both the House and Senate proposals have included stricter controls on members of Congress’ interaction with lobbyists. In the Senate, the minimum wage was increased; the practice of anonymous earmarking. These reforms are necessary given the scandals surrounding high-priced lobbyist Jack Abramoff’s bribes to Republican members of Congress.

9-11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Congressional Democrats want 100 percent of the cargo bound for the U.S. in ships and planes to be screened for radiation or nuclear devices. Additionally, Pelosi argues that police, firefighters and other emergency personnel still don’t have enough equipment to communicate with each other during disasters. The Democratic Congress is likely to systemize additional funding for homeland security as well as more oversight of what exactly the administration is doing to protect the country from terrorist attacks.

HEALTH CARE

In the first 100 hours, the House of Representatives will give authority to the federal government to directly negotiate prescription drug prices with their manufacturers. Under the 2003 Medicare prescription-drug law, such direct negotiation is specifically outlawed—a boon to the drug companies, who feared such negotiations would cut into their huge profit margins. The pharmaceutical companies are one of the largest industries funding the Republican campaigns and these companies have been rewarded handsomely during the Republican Congress’ reign.

STUDENT LOANS

In the first 100 hours, Democrats pledge to “slash interest rates in half for federal student loans, 4.25 percent for students and 4.25 percent for parents, and cap interest rates at 3.4 percent for federal student loans, to 3.4 percent for students and 4.25 percent for federal student loans, to 3.4 percent for students and 4.25 percent for federal student loans.”

UNIONS BLAST SCHWARZENEGGER health care plan

The California Federation of Labor and the California Nurses Association (CNA) are the latest organizations which led the successful drive against GOP Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s anti-union referenda. When state lawmakers passed the health care plan “The Terminator” unveiled Jan. 8.

The governor’s plan is “little more than a fresh coat of paint on a collapsing house,” said CNA President Deborah Burger.

Cal Fed Executive Secretary-Treasurer Art Pulaski was even more caustic, calling the governor’s plan “Treachery.” The governor now routinely reject covering people with pre-existing conditions, forcing them into expensive emergency-room care or no care at all. Instead of trying the fix

Schwarzenegger’s plan creates an incentive for employers who currently provide health care to drop coverage and instead pay only a minimal tax. The proposed employer contribution is so low that even Wal-Mart, a corporation known for its minimal employee healthcare coverage, already exceeds the minimum required by the governor’s plan.

The governor’s plan would require all Californians, including the one-fifth who are uninsured, to buy health care coverage.

Schwarzenegger also would require all businesses to offer health care coverage and mandate that insurers cover people with pre-existing medical conditions. Health insurers now routinely reject covering people with pre-existing conditions, forcing them into expensive emergency-room care or no care at all. Instead of trying the fix

Schwarzenegger proposed, Burger said the state should enact a single-payer plan that would eliminate the private insurers entirely. That would also eliminate their pocketing of premiums and denial of care.

The Democratic-run state legislature approved a single-payer plan last year, but Schwarzenegger vetoed it. Then the insurers poured millions of dollars into their successful campaign against a CA-backed ballot initiative to enact single-payer.

CNA’s Burger said mandating coverage for all—without discussing costs—isn’t enough.

The biggest problem, she said, is that the governor would criminalize the uninsured by forcing them to buy insurance, a plan that shifts the costs and risk from the insurers to individual workers. Burger said “that won’t work for millions of Californians, and is a huge gift to the insurance industry.

“What we don’t see is any discussion on how these plans are going to be paid for,” Pulaski added. “What we’ll see is a type of plan that middle- income people will buy. There are no limits on skyrocketing health premiums, no requirements that health care be included in the required plans, and a new call to deregulate existing public plans.”

Schwarzenegger’s plan could leave many people in the nation’s largest state without health care, which is already the case for 17 percent of California’s U.S. population—with health coverage that covers little and costs a lot, Burger said.

“Many Californians will end up with cut-rate plans that discourage preventive care and expose them to huge out-of-pocket costs, and expose them to financial ruin in the event of a serious illness or accident,” she concluded.

Press Associates, Inc.
Docker leaders gather for IDC zone coordinators' meeting

by Tom Price

Transportation unionists from Mexico, Japan, Korea and the UK met with their Bay Area counterparts Nov. 16 to compare conditions and strengthen the bonds of workers' solidarity.

Called by the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee, the conference at the longtime hotel attracted hundreds of workers from around the world to discuss the effects of corporate globalization on themselves.

“We have similar problems—everyone involved in transportation in this global economy will take the heat,” Local 10’s Jack Heyman said. “The capitalists understand that they can’t make money off this working class. They are forced to rely on transport workers, and they have to bust us on all sides, including the governments. If they win wages and conditions become more attractive, political strikes, Heyman said, could spark in the US when the PSC award in San Francisco, when the PSC award in San Francisco, when the PSC award in San Francisco...

We’ve done an on-time service for 30 years,” said Marina Secchitano, President of the IBU San Francisco Bay Region, which represents the former ferry workers. “Our former employer paid healthcare and pensions. This new guy wants to avoid that and get a three-dollar per ticket increase. ILWU Director of International Affairs Ray Familathe spoke about the need to internationalize the struggle.

“Some of the biggest victories we have in the labor movement have been the cross-border solidarity,” Familathe said. “Now we will take the Alcatraz campaign to European docks, where the travel agents are unionized.”

ILWU Organizing Director Peter Ollerton discussed efforts to form solidarity in the context of the ILWU’s attempt to organize the 650 workers at the Blue Diamond almond plant in Sacramento. They had not had a raise in 10 years, and many were crippled by cancer. The export almonds are mostly handled by ILWU longshore members who sit on the deck, receiving the California logistics chain.

“Because 70 percent of their product is exported, this really means glo- balization in this dispute,” Ollerton said. “We have gone to leave our users, in order to protect our company, to avoid getting hit by a bigger company, to keep them in their most vulnerable point, their need to constantly expand their market inter- nationally.”

“Don’t let this happen to you,” Ollerton said. “We realized the need to retain the dispatch halls as a place where co-workers meet and a place to train and retrain new dockers to ensure they become good union workers.”

Garcia said, the Latin American Zone Coordinator from Peru reported on his visits with dockworkers in vari- ous industries, including the ALD locals in Canada, which are now working with other Canadian maritime unions, including ILWU Canada on the country’s West Coast, to oppose the government’s draco-...
By William E. Adams
International Secretary-Treasurer

From Nov. 26 to Dec. 4, I took my own time and money to be a part of a labor delegation to Israel. It was very moving, emotional and inspiring. It has been impossible to remain unaffected by the experience. We live in a moment when you can almost hear the wheels of history turning. Change is in the air. International conflicts, natural disasters, and the emergence of new democracies—these are expanding our worldview. Times like these demand that we pay attention. Engaged people are effecting change and affecting our lives every day.

In the wake of the war with Hezbollah, things were somewhat calm. Yet you had the feeling that things could explode at any time. It’s clear to me that the Middle East is a niddle, wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.

While the peoples of the Middle East continue their centuries long dispute, one factor remains constant—in each country workers have to fight for their share of the wealth they produce. Whether they live and work under the rule of the Mullahs of Iran, or under Saddam Hussein’s labor laws in Iraq, or in the sweatshops of Saudi Arabia, workers have felt a need to organize and struggle. In Israel it’s no different. Our labor delegation would look at Israel’s working conditions and the state of the class struggle there.

Our tour started in the seaport town of Haifa where they move containers and general cargo. APM Maersk had two gangs working that day. I counted 15 cranes and the ports are very busy.

On Wednesday, Nov. 29 the Histadrut Labor Federation held a general strike that shut down the whole country. The 650,000-member federation represents both Jewish and Arab workers. Our labor delegation was in solidarity with our striking brothers and sisters. The issue was the finance ministry’s failure to pay massive sums of money that the labor federation claims it owed to thousands of municipal workers. The strike was a very strong statement, all government offices, airports and seaports came to a standstill.

To be fair, we also have to remember that for donations to help the kids, and hats for children there were very few people. This is a high-stakes poker game among rich and powerful men to control and shape one of the world’s most volatile regions, a region that tugs at emotions that have gone on for generations, ranging from national pride to hate and destruction. The young people are protecting their country, and when they are 18 years old men and women go into the army. For them it’s a badge of honor. They are children of the struggle.

On Wednesday we headed for Galati and a kibbutz, an Israeli cooperative community. We had lunch with Rachel Jacob, the sister of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. She spoke to our delegation about her life. She spoke with passion and courage. She is a very regal lady in her early 80s. She spent most of her life on a kibbutz, an austere life for a very humble woman. She spoke of her late brother, Yitzhak Rabin, who was an instrument for peace. There was iron in her words of life and death for the whole delegation that day.

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That afternoon we visited the market in Old Jerusalem. I purchased a painting of two men praying at the Wailing Wall, about the culture of the people and the peace process. It now hangs in my office in San Francisco.

As our delegation met with some of the workers, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was just across town meeting with Israel Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. She praised Israel for its statement of restraint concerning the cease-fire, because it is quite fragile, but we would like to see it consolidated and then extended, she said. She said it had been a week of progress.

One worker told me that it was important to be honest about the country, there are many problems there, a lot of challenges. They are threatened, he said. He wanted to know about our country and the elections. It’s pretty clear to me that this administration’s legacy will be one of missed opportunities and failed leadership. Clearly, George Bush has not done enough to support peace. The citizens of America went to the polls Nov. 7 and proved that the vote was mightier than the sword.

While Israel takes good care of senior citizens, with great healthcare and good doctors, up to 3,000 Israelis sleep on the streets each night. They tend to be displaced persons, brought to ruin by a caustic cocktail of abuse, financial ruin and drugs, just like here at home.

Every person we met, regardless of religion or gender, wants to see and have peace. How does that come about? The Middle East seems to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown. People we spoke to believe it would take a superhuman effort to achieve peace in the region.

We live in a culture of violence—some people think violence is a legitimate means of resolving disputes. And yet Fox News, CNN and others focus on just the violence, and yes, there are problems. While we live in an age when every thought and utterance is filtered through the media, we sometimes forget that our world is torn by 25 border disputes involving some 40 nations. But even as technology has facilitated the global exchange of ideas and made the world a smaller place, it has failed to make it a peaceful one. It was Martin Luther King who taught us that a real moral struggle seeks to win partners—not leave victims. It’s not the past or present, the Middle East must gaze toward the future.

We live on a planet deeply divided by borders and recognition of Israel, and polls in March 2006 showed they are still popular with the Palestinians. Every thought and utterance is filtered through the media, we sometimes forget that our world is torn by 25 border disputes involving some 40 nations. But even as technology has facilitated the global exchange of ideas and made the world a smaller place, it has failed to make it a peaceful one. It was Martin Luther King who taught us that a real moral struggle seeks to win partners—not leave victims. It’s not the past or present, the Middle East must gaze toward the future.

Sunday, Dec. 3 was our last day. We spent it in Tel Aviv and the delegation visited the Etzel Museum and Independence Hall, where the Israeli Declaration of Independence was signed May 14, 1948 and Israel became a state.

As the sun was setting, our delegation visited the Etzel Museum and Independence Hall, where the Israeli Declaration of Independence was signed May 14, 1948 and Israel became a state.

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ILWU locals spread holiday cheer along the Coast

LOCAL 10 TOY DRIVE GOES ON THE AIR

Longshore Local 10 launched its annual toy drive this year on the dispatch phone and—for the first time—with radio announcements. The result was an increase in toys collected and a happier holiday for needy kids in the Bay Area.

The members wanted to get the word out about the union’s role in the community, so they voted last summer to fund a series of radio messages introducing the ILWU on Oakland Raiders and San Francisco 49er football broadcasts. As the holiday season approached, members called in to live programs and asked the public to bring a new, unwrapped toy to the Local 10 hall.

“All this work comes from our rank and file,” Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Lisa Tonson said. “The slogans in the radio ads came from us. Coach [member Harold Brinkley] said to me in passing: ‘Moving the world and working in the community’ and we used that in an ad.”

The union bought time during the radio broadcasts of San Francisco 49er football games on KNBR AM and 107.7 The Bone FM. Members had always called in to the morning Lamont and Tomelli morning, and the ad buy gave them a featured spot during the Thursday interview with Joe Roadney, the 49er picker. The DJs began announcing the toy drive on the radio, and further donations poured in.

Oakland Raiders radio covers all the West Coast on KSFO radio, and on other stations covering four Hawaiian Islands, New Mexico and Arizona. Armed Forces Radio also carries Raiders games to 176 countries around the globe. One of the ad spots honored a longshoreman whose son, Kirk, is the starting middle lineman for the Raiders.

“This week the Raiders salute the ILWU member of the week, Dave Morrison, dedicated father and member of the ILWU Local 10,” the spot read. “ILWU Local 10 are people who move the goods off the ship and into your homes. They are also your neighbors, working hard to give back to the community and to make it clean and green by pushing for green ports. For more info contact ILWU.org.”

Local 10 members loaded truckloads of toys to the Mary Ann Wright Foundation, a charity based in West Oakland, which offers shade and clothing to the poor and homeless men, women, children and the elderly in the Bay Area for more than 25 years. The Local 10 crew also brought along a check for $910 from its $4 mechanics at APL.

The full local expects to approve a matching check at its next membership meeting.

“The union receives game tickets as part of the ad package and it raffles them off to fund the PR committee. Union members feel a lot of pride in their community work, and that goes on throughout the year.”

“Local 10 negotiated with the PMA [the employers] the handing out of vouchers for job applications in West Oakland, where people are exposed to diesel emissions from the terminals,” PR Committee member Felipe Riley said. “Ten percent of our hiring was from West Oakland. Many of our members are involved with Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Little League, churches, parks and gardens. As union members, we buy our houses in the community, shop in the community, send our kids to school—and every one of our members is a PR rep.”

— Tom Price

TOYS AND FOOD FOR NORTH PORTLAND COMMUNITY

For the fifth year in a row, ILWU members in the Columbia River area collected gifts for the Caring Community of North Portland’s “Holiday Gift Drive.” This year, the entire ILWU family contributed to this effort. Local 6 and 26 joined Local 8, 40, the Ladies Auxiliary 5 and Local 8 Federal Credit Union in making the gift drive a complete success.

The Caring Community of North Portland (CCNP) is a non-profit whose mission is to serve as a unifying force working to support the well-being of children, families and communities in North Portland. The CCNP has no paid staff and an all-volunteer board. This year the Holiday Gift Drive served 225-250 families from the North Portland area. The families were screened for level of need. Families with the highest need got priority.

The CCNP set up a “Holiday Store” where parents picked out one gift per child in their household and, as donations allow, a gift for themselves. The families also received a substantial holiday food box.

The ILWU Portland area locals and the major contributors to the CCNP’s Holiday Gift Drive. This year the locals raised approximately $58,000 that was used to buy bikes, books, toys and clothing. Besides donating gifts to the Holiday Gift Drive, many of the union’s active and retired members volunteered at the event, wrapping gifts and helping the families pick out the perfect gift for their children.

—— DesBray, Local 40

LOCAL 17 HOSTS HOLIDAY GIFT BASKET DRIVE

Warehouse Local 17 once again donated its union money to the West Sacramento Christmas Basket Project of the Broderick Christian Center as a stuffing area for its holiday gift drive. Each year the project collects food and gifts for needy families, and Local 17 members volunteer to stuff the baskets.

“The project serves 1,500 families, and the hall was just full of food and toys,” Local 17 Dispatcher and Vice President of the ILWU Tom Price said. “There was a lot of activity.”

Local 17 members also participate in the Sacramento Central Labor Council and the Christmas basket distribution program for needy union members.

Union members made up baskets and, on Dec. 21, delivered them to needy people.

—— Tom Price

LOCAL 10 TOY DRIVE

January 2007

SEATTLE ILWU SPONSORS CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS 2006

The Christmas for Kids Program reached out to 35 families and 124 children in the greater Seattle area. Volunteers from longshore Local 19 and Federated Auxiliary 3 have continued their relationship with Martin Court, which is part of the King County Low Income Housing Institute. The Institute assists homeless families by giving them a place to stay and offering them training programs to help them get on their feet.

Diane Lee, manager of Martin Court, has been pivotal in helping reach these children and she organized a Christmas party at Martin Court for the families where the presents were passed out.

Each year the members of Local 19 vote to donate $24 per member to the drive. Local 98 donated $1,000, the Seattle Pensions club donated $500 and the Maple Valley Dental Care donated toothbrushes to the children.

The Seattle ILWU locals and volunteers from the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) celebrated Kids’ Day with a “Holiday in the Park” event held Dec. 22 at Dodger Stadium.

Love” event held Dec. 22 at Dodger Stadium.

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Longshore Local 12 in North Bend, Ore. donates $12 per member every month to Community Action. "This has added up to almost $100,000 over the years," Local 12 President Marvin Caldera said. Community Action, a local helping-hand group, uses some of the money to sponsor a Christmas Toys for Tots program. It also contributes food and utility bill help, and sponsors Head Start programs.

Longshore Local 32 in Everett sent out turkeys to many needy people. The local also made a Christmas donation of $1,400 to local churches, a battered women shelter and housing charities. But giving is not just for Christmas. "All through the year the local donates to Little League, churches and high school teams," Local 32 Secretary-Treasurer/BA Ken Hudson said. "We are proud to have donated to the Snohomish County Search and Rescue since 1971. One of our members, Ron Miller, used to be part of that, he passed away and we donate $100 twice a year in his honor." Longshore Local 54 in Stockton, Calif. collected bicycles, toys and even origami boxes for local kids. Members took the presents to the Stockton Shelter for the Homeless. The local collected money at the hall to buy bicycles and toys and organized collection points at the Commercial Exchange Club on the port grounds and at Four Seasons Travel.

"It was a pretty good turnout," Dispatcher Dave Gutierrez said. "To give a kid a smile, it really warms you up and makes us appreciate what we have. There's a lot of kids whose parents are struggling. If we can make the kid forget about that for a while, I'm all for it and so are our members."

Longshore Local 4 in Vancouver, Wash., like many others in the ILWU family, supports needy people in their community all year long, with some special efforts during the holidays. The local contributed $250 to the Chronis Restaurant's homeless holiday dinner. It also supports Longshoremen's Local 4 Federal Credit Union's toy drive and adds to the credit union's donation to Dornbeckers Children's Hospital. The local gives a lot through its credit union, which usually donates throughout the year, usually between $3,000 and $5,000 a year.

"Our July 5 picnic donation comes out to about $4,000 over the year," Local 4 President Cager Clabaugh said. "We also give $8,550 to the Seafarers' Center and $1,500 to Jobs with Justice. We gave $1,000 to the Clark County Skills Center, a vocational school. The local's total donations come out to about $18,000 a year."

Tacoma's Local 23's Toy Drive had another successful year. The local collected $17,000 cash for toy purchases and equal amount of toys brought in by the membership. The number of organizations the local helped out increased from nine last year to 13 this year, and they ranged from women's support shelters, Pierce County Labor Council, and foster child organizations to religious community services and military children who attend on-base and off-base schools. Another $12,200 was donated to Tacoma School and Fife School Districts with the "Family Of Need Program." The local hopes to expand this program further out into Pierce County next year.

—Dragan Butorac, Local 23

Bikes and other presents await the children of North Portland at longshore Local 8 Federal Credit Union.

Santa gives kids bikes at longshore Local 13's hall.

Kids enjoy pizza and presents at Seattle's Christmas for Kids 2006 event.

Kids at the Christmas for Kids 2006 event.
The measure calls on Blue Diamond Growers (BDG) to sign a neutrality agreement with the ILWU, and condemns the almond co-operative’s nasty anti-union campaign. The NLRB found Blue Diamond guilty of more than 20 labor law violations last spring. The company never admitted it did anything wrong. The board issued more complaints against BDG in October, and is investigating more charges filed by the ILWU in November.

“It’s simple,” Blue Diamond Organizing Committee member Randy Reyes said. “We have a set of rules to follow at work. Blue Diamond has a set of rules to follow too, called the labor law. They need to be accountable.”

The resolution came up last month, but the Council members agreed to give Blue Diamond management time to come to terms and work on its spin. The Dec. 5 Council session turned into a show-down between business and workers’ interests.

An editorial in Sacramento’s daily paper the day before scolded the City Council for “telling the company how to handle its internal labor relations.” AM-FM Disc Jockey Tom Sullivan made nice with Blue Diamond management. The delay gave the company time to call out its troops and work on its spin. The Dec. 5 Council session turned into a showdown between business and workers’ interests.

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Dock accident takes life of Local 23 man


Longshoreman Kenneth Eddo was doing the job he loved in the early morning hours of Nov. 11 when he had an accident with his husbant that took his life. The container and chassis he was pulling rolled over, standing up his husbant, or tractor, on its rear wheels and slamming him onto the cabin's interior. The immediate cause of his death was trauma, but the exact circumstances of the accident at Tacoma's APM Terminal are under investigation.

Eddo had obtained his B registration. The day after working as a container for about a year. Before getting into longshore Local 23, he had worked two years at a time most of his life, raising two boys and two girls into adulthood with his wife Nancy.

He was born Dec. 6, 1954 and raised in Los Angeles. Eddo moved his family to Arizona for 12 years before returning to Seattle. He remembers putting the kids in a raft when it flooded and pushing them downstream.

“We then moved to Tacoma because dad used to log here in the early '80s and he loved it there. It was green and lush,” Shemeriah said. “I remember him telling me which trees to look for as I was in my 20s. I used to bike down the street.”

“His wife told me the job was his love,” Shemeriah said. “He liked the Brotherhood and how he could stand for each other. He didn’t get that in his other jobs.”

“His father and grandfather’s names are Paul Finne, Jr. and Sr. "My uncle, John Finne, a Local 13 member, encouraged me to take my dad’s book when he died and I can never thank him enough," she said. She has one stepson and two kids of her own.

“A lot of my time is spent being a mom, which I love," she said. “I’m a runner, I run triathlons and marathons. I’m into physical fitness, so if I have any free time it’s mostly doing that. And there are always jurisdictional arbitrations to read. I’m always reading about what’s going on with the Coast and what we’re trying to get done with the local.”

Finne spends a lot of time reading Arbitrator meetings minutes and learning the history of the local. She would like to move ahead in several areas.

“I look forward to updating our constitution, and getting our port working rules and dispatch rules updated, since that hasn’t been done for quite some time," Finne said.

She had a lot of positive feedback while dispatching and serving as relief BA, and many members asked her to run for BA.

“We’re not haunted by the fact that I’m the first female, but I’m really excited that I can be a part of this union in this position," she said. “It’s a great honor." —Tom Price
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