

Taking power and using it  
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# The DISPATCHER

Published by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union

Vol. 65, No. 1



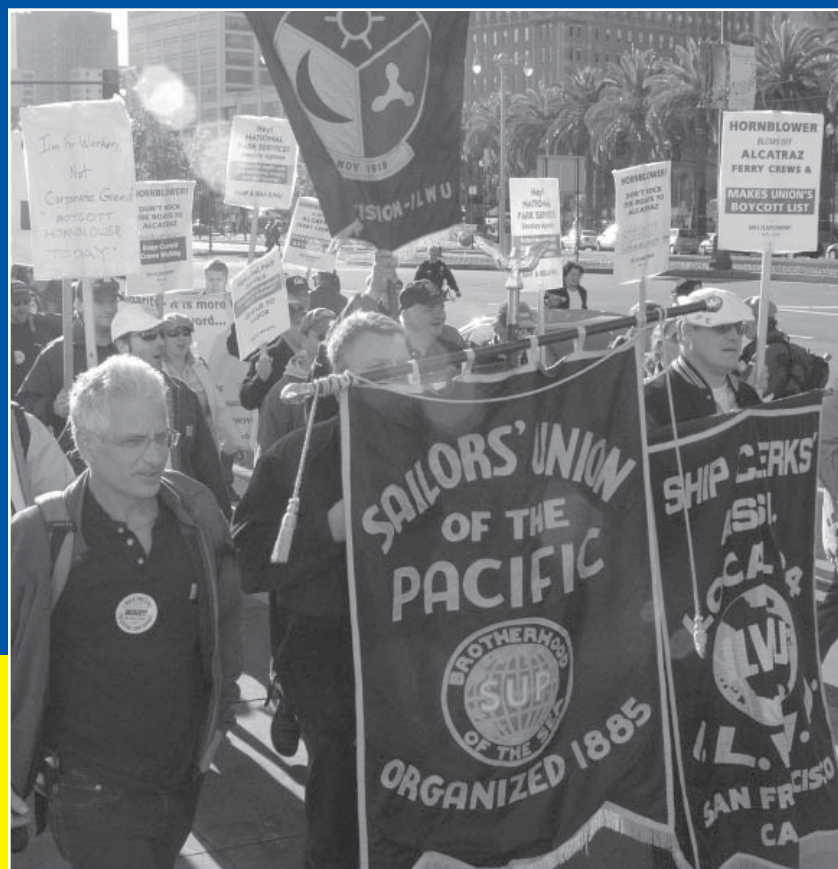
The Dispatcher (ISSN 0012-3765) is published monthly except for a combined July/August issue, for \$5.00 a year and \$10.00 a year for non-members by the ILWU, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109. Periodical postage paid at San Francisco, CA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Dispatcher, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109.

January 2007

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## Inside Line

### 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, "No." Abe said, "What?"

God said, "You can do what you want, Abe, but

The next time you see me, you better run."

Abe 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, but one of 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 mid-term 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 aren't going to risk lives, economies and history for. And Bush's record on these things is not reassuring.

As Bush acknowledged in the televised speech, "We thought the election [in Iraq in 2005] would bring Iraqis together...but the opposite happened." Violence and death increased as civil war broke out. Didn't see that coming.

The only mistake Bush really admitted making was that he didn't wage war hard enough to begin with, he didn't have enough troops and the ones there were under too many restrictions. That's the problem his new course plans to remedy.

And to no one's surprise, in classic Orwellian fashion he declared that war is peace. "If we increase the troops now, it will hasten the day they can come home," he said. Take that, peaceniks.

There are times to give up much and/or risk everything for a just cause—it's just that this isn't one. And that's what seemingly is missing in all this talk of mistakes, tactics and finding a way out of this mess—how the hell we got here. Remember the weapons of mass destruction that threatened the imminent demise of civilization as we know it? The WMDs no one, not even the delusional Pat Robertson, argues any more were ever there?

Perhaps what is called for here is not so much sacrifice as atonement, atonement for the lies, the deaths and the misery Bush consciously caused. Or maybe not so much atonement as revenge.

—Steve Stallone  
Editor

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## Taking power and using it

By Robert McEllrath  
ILWU International President

**2**33 to 202 and 51 to 49. What do these numbers mean? They stand for the number of Democratic versus Republican Congressional representatives and the number of Democratic versus Republican Senators sworn into office Jan. 4, 2007. They stand for a political shift of power from the Republican-dominated Congress that was held since 2002 in the Senate and 1994 in the House.

Working class women and men obviously have had their fill of being run by corporate power, with no help coming to the organized and unorganized workers of America. We must understand that it will still be a tough road for labor, but with this shift we will have the ear of people who can help change laws to make it easier to organize the unorganized, laws such as the Employee Free Choice Act. This bill will allow a majority of workers to simply sign cards saying they want to join a union and get it without having to

go through lengthy and bureaucratic hearings and filings with the labor board. It will also require the employer to negotiate a first contract with a mediation and binding arbitration process when the employer and workers cannot agree on a first contract.

We may also get Congress to give the issue of universal, single-payer health care a real chance, something that has been ILWU policy for several decades.

Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) has a bill (HR 676) that will come before Congress that will extend an improved Medicare-type coverage to all U.S. residents. Conyers has nearly 80 co-sponsors for the bill in the House and it has been endorsed by 17 state AFL-CIO federations, 54 central labor councils and numerous International and local unions, including the ILWU.

We may also get a chance to reverse one of the worse decisions by the Bush administration's National Labor Relations Board. Last year the board re-interpreted language in the National Labor Relations Act, expanding the definition of who is a "supervisor" and eliminating their right to be in a union (the Kentucky River decision). Under this ruling millions of workers could have their union contracts torn up and their union protections eliminated. As we write, House Democrats are preparing a bill that will amend the NLRA's language so it defines "supervisor" more precisely and in the way it was originally meant.

The future will be very interesting to watch. What will happen with the war in Iraq? What will the future hold for the war against terrorism? Will issues of port security be resolved and how? Will the federal government, recognizing 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 tough 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 our 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 even assigned then-Northern California Regional Director LeRoy 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 its

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 word out to people, going door-to-door, phone banking 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 us 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.

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



## The DISPATCHER

Published monthly except for a combined July/August issue, for \$5.00, \$10 non-members, a year by the ILWU, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6898. The Dispatcher welcomes letters, photos and other submissions to the above address. © ILWU, 2007



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# Labor turns out for Alcatraz ferry workers

By Steve Stallone

Defying the Bush administration's union-busting schemes, 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 from 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 prison back in 1973, were left stranded—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 sprinkles, punctuated the seriousness of the issue. Besides the unions whose members lost their jobs, all the ILWU Bay Area locals and maritime unions were accounted for. Almost 1,000 other unionists—Teamsters, teachers, bus drivers, janitors, hotel workers, machinists, pile drivers, 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 pincer move toward the Hornblower pier to join the rally.

The local Teamsters set up their large flatbed truck in front of the pier to serve as a stage for the rally. As city buses and fire trucks passed by along the Embarcadero, their union drivers blowing horns in support, IBU



Labor activists march on the Alcatraz scab ferry pier to demand the jobs be union.

National President Alan Cote' noted that the demonstrators were standing where the IBU first organized ferry workers in 1918. He vowed that with the help of the labor movement, the ferry workers would get their jobs back.

"They have lawyers and we have lawyers, but I have other resources too—I have you," Cote' said to the cheering crowd.

Cote' went on to read a message of support from AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

"Hornblower was awarded the contract only because its bid disregarded prevailing wage requirements," Sweeney's letter read in part. "The life and safety of millions of people every year rests in the hands of the crew of these ferries. Safety suffers when workers can't speak out for fear of retaliation, when they can't negotiate to ensure reasonable

crew levels and working hours, when laws are trampled and collective bargaining is disregarded."

IBU San Francisco Regional Director Marina Secchitano placed the workers' situation in the current political atmosphere.

"The Bush administration just couldn't resist sticking it to both the City of San Francisco and Speaker-elect Nancy Pelosi," she said. "And the icing on the cake was to use the National Park Service to bring its union-busting agenda to the San Francisco waterfront from an administration that could care less about parks, the environment or honest working folks."

San Francisco hotel workers Local 2 President Mike Casey thanked the ILWU for all the solidarity and support given his people during their long union organizing fights in town.

"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.

Also speaking at the rally and representing their unions were California Labor Federation Executive Secretary-Treasurer Art Pulaski, Teamsters International Vice President Chuck Mack, National MMP President Steve Diderot, MMP California Branch Agent Captain Ray Shipway, Sailors' Union of the Pacific President Gunnar Lundeborg, ILWU longshore Local 10 President David Gonzales, ILWU clerks' Local 34 President Richard Cavalli, ILWU warehouse Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker, San Francisco Building Trades Secretary-Treasurer Mike Theriault, Airline Mechanics Fraternal Assn. Local 9 President Joe Prisco and many more.

## New grain handling contract raises standards

By Steve Stallone

Four ILWU Northwest longshore locals recently ratified by more than 90 percent a new three-year contract for grain operations to be effective retroactively to Oct. 1, 2006.

The Northwest Grain Handlers Agreement—the second largest contract negotiated by the ILWU's Longshore Division—is between Locals 4 (Vancouver, Wash.), 8 (Portland), 19 (Seattle) and 23 (Tacoma) and the Pacific Northwest Grain Elevators Operators, a non-Pacific Maritime Assn. (PMA) member employer group that includes Cargill, Inc., Columbia Grain, Inc., Louis Dreyfus Corporation, CLD Pacific Grain, LLC and United Grain Corporation, some of the biggest corporations in the international grain production and distribution business.

The union negotiators went into bargaining Aug. 29 looking to bring the grain agreement up to parity with the master longshore contract negotiated with the PMA.

"That was our focus and that was what we accomplished," said

Northwest Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet, who co-chaired the union's negotiating team.

At one time the grain agreement had actually been better than the master longshore contract. It had, among other things, provisions for sick leave and a boot and clothing allowance. But in the 1980s the threat of non-union competition from the Gulf region dragged down standards and the grain agreement fell behind.

"It got so bad that at one time workers had to pay part of their own health care premiums," Sundet 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 agreement was bringing the second shift pay up from time and a quarter to time and a third.

"This was a huge issue for us," said Local 19 President Herald Ugles, who co-chaired the negotiating committee with Sundet. "To me that was one of our big victories."

The agreement also brought the base wage up to the master contract levels. And although the skill rates

are not on a par, there is an across-the-board increase in all skill categories. And in accord with the master 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 401(k) 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 there's hardly any work happening, that would take out our bargaining strength," Ugles said.

The employers also proposed capping their contribution to the welfare plan, making workers pay costs above that out of their wages. But the union would have none of that.

"They complained they have no control over the health care costs since they are not members of the PMA," Ugles said. "We offered a simple solution—join the PMA!"

Throughout the talks the employers argued that the grain market is unpredictable and that they have to compete with non-union operations in the Gulf as well as internationally with Australia and China.

"We always have to deal with those ghosts in the closet," 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."



# WASHINGTON REPORT

## The First 100 Hours: The Pelosi agenda

By Lindsay McLaughlin  
ILWU Legislative Director

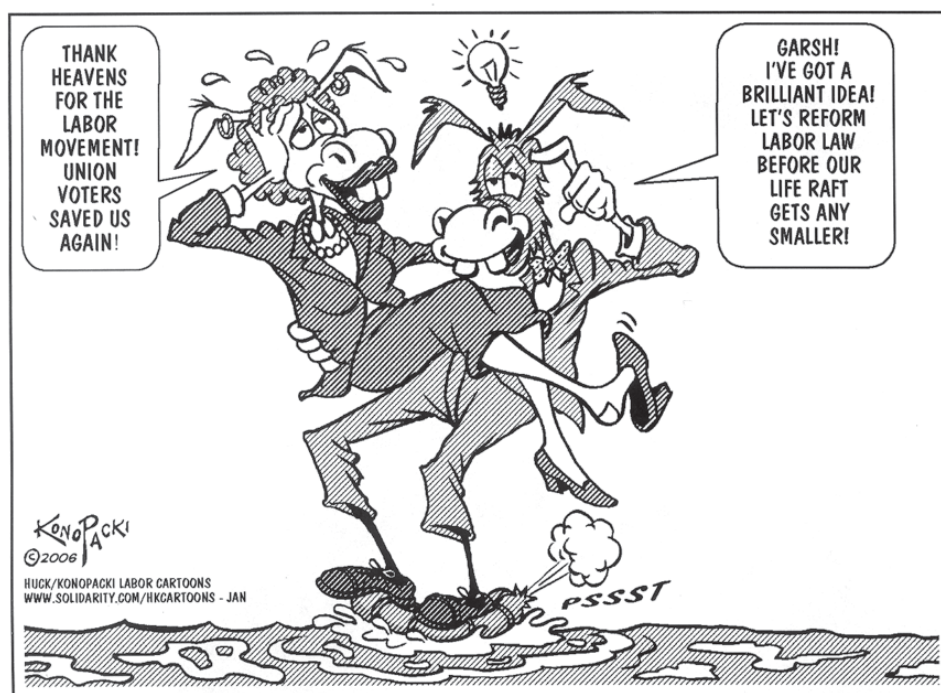
For the last 12 years, Congressional Democrats have been stuck in the political wilderness as the minority party. The Republicans marched in lockstep with George W. Bush and shut out the Democrats from offering an alternative agenda on the floor of the House of Representatives. The 2006 election in which 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 to 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 imperative 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 from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour. A minimum wage increase would raise the wages of millions of workers. An estimated 14.9 million workers (11 percent of the workforce) would receive an increase in their hourly wage rate if the minimum wage were raised, according to the Economic Policy Institute. Since 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.

Workers need an increase in the minimum wage, but they also need access to affordable goods and services. Most workers employed at or near the minimum wage, for example, are not offered or cannot afford health insurance from their employer, leaving them with a 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.

Bush recently expressed support for the minimum wage provided the increase is coupled with a tax cut and regulatory relief for his friends in business. Congress should answer with a big "NO." The most vulnerable workers in America desperately need a raise. It is an insult to pair their well-deserved raise with another giveaway to Bush's business friends.

### 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, a ban on travel, meals or gifts paid for by lobbyists, and the end to 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 dangerous materials. We can expect that the implementing legislation will include a proposal by Rep. Ed Markey (D-MA) to require that all cargo entering the U.S. 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 will likely provide additional funding for homeland security as well as more oversight of what exactly the Bush 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, to 3.4 percent for students and 4.25 percent for parents, saving the average student borrower \$5,600. Students and parents are struggling to pay for college. Tuition costs are rising far faster than inflation, while real wages have been stagnant. The average cost of tuition at a public college has increased 42 percent since Bush took office, but median household income has fallen two percent. As a consequence of the high cost of education, working families are foregoing

dreams of a higher education and the career of their choice.

### ENERGY POLICY

The Democrats first 100 hours plan aims to reduce American dependence on oil. The opening move is to roll back the multi-billion dollar subsidies to Big Oil and reinvest them into the clean, renewable energy technologies that will help America break its addiction to oil and save American families money at the pump.

Tackling the oil companies thirst for higher and higher profits is vitally important to the American people. Half of low income households could not afford last year's heating bills. Gas prices have skyrocketed – the cost of regular gasoline grew by 58 percent from 2000 to 2005.

In talking about the first 100 hours, Pelosi talks of "draining the swamp." Common sense policies such as allowing the government to negotiate lower costs for prescription drugs, raising the minimum wage and rescinding tax cuts for price-gouging oil companies were not accomplished during the Republican Congress' reign. The Republican Congress was so tied into big money lobbyists and rich business interests that they ignored the pleas from the American people for common sense policies. They deserved to lose the election.

The first 100 hours is not the entire agenda of the Democratic Congress. It is just the beginning. We expect the House will overwhelmingly pass the Employee Free Choice Act to give workers a real chance to organize and collectively bargain for their wages and benefits. We expect the debate over health care will shift to universal, quality, affordable coverage for every American worker. And we should expect Congress will debate ways in which the American economy can be revitalized and high paying jobs be created for the American people. We must demand that Congressional Democrats lead the way in ending the war in Iraq and concentrate instead on issues of social justice both here and abroad.

This is not going to be easy. We still have an anti-worker President in office. We have a Senate that is virtually tied and it is difficult to get anything passed in that body with less than 60 votes given their rules allowing filibusters. The margin that Pelosi has in the House is narrow and there are significant numbers of conservative Democrats that do not want change. But still, today we have hope. We can change America.

## Unions blast Schwarzenegger health care plan

The California Federation of Labor and the California Nurses Association—which led the successful drive against GOP Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's anti-union referendum two years ago—blasted 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 one "that Wal-Mart would love and Wal-Mart workers would hate."

"This will be a boon to insurance companies, but a bust for most workers. This plan requires all Californians to buy health insurance with no guarantee that it will be affordable or that coverage will be adequate," Pulaski added.

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 requirements," he added.

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 government-run health care system, eliminating 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 CNA-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 individuals." 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 of what type of health coverage people will buy. There are no limits on skyrocketing health premiums, no requirements on what will be included in the required plans, and a new call to deregulate existing public protections," she warned.

Schwarzenegger's plan could leave many people in the nation's largest state—which has one-eighth of the U.S. population—with health coverage that covers little and costs a lot, Burger added.

"Many Californians will end up with cut-rate plans that discourage people from using their health coverage, have 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

ILWU officers met with their global docker counterparts of the International Dockworkers Council (IDC) for a meeting of the organization's regional leaders in Long Beach on Oct. 24, 2006. These "zone coordinators" discussed each area's activities and issues as well as the organization's expansion and finances.

The IDC was founded as an organization of longshore unions in 2001 after the failed attempt to win back the jobs of the Liverpool Dockers who were fired for refusing to cross a picket line. Dockers around the world felt the need for an industry specific solidarity organization to deal with attacks from their common employers. The new coordinated strength of the international unions played a crucial role in the Charleston 5 victory, in the ILWU's 2002 contract struggle and in the victory over attempts to privatize European ports.

The IDC's international General Coordinator, Julian Garcia of the Spanish dockers union La Coordinadora, reported on his recent organizing travels. He successfully convinced the dockworkers in Brazil—some 12,000 to 15,000 of them—to join the IDC. Their representatives had planned to attend this meeting, but visa delays prevented their trip.

Garcia proposed establishing a zone office in the Brazilian city of Itahai, where the country's second biggest port is, to solidify relations with the Brazilian dockworkers. ILWU International President Bob McEllrath (who also serves as Zone Coordinator for North America's West Coast and the Pacific Rim), in light of the IDC's current budgetary shortfall and to avoid further delays, announced that the ILWU Coast Committee would fund the opening of the IDC office in Brazil with a check of \$5,000.

Bjorn Borg, the European Zone Coordinator and President of the Swedish Dockworkers' Union, reported on the successful demonstration in Strasbourg, France against a second attempt at a European Port Directive, a plan in the European Parliament that would have allowed sailors to do dockers' cargo-handling work—a dangerous precedent—and would have privatized various port



Bill Orton

Consulting at the IDC meeting (left to right) ILWU Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet, ILWU International President Bob McEllrath, IDC General Coordinator Julian Garcia, IDC Staffer Teresa Alert and Swedish Dockworkers' Union President Bjorn Borg.

services throughout the continent. Borg stated that based on their overwhelming success at raising attention to this issue, the consensus is that the European Parliament and the employer stakeholders are not likely to push for another port directive anytime soon.

ILWU President McEllrath reported on his recent trip to the Japanese dockworkers last May and to the Liverpool dockers in October. Highlighting the ILWU's "Saving Lives" anti-air pollution campaign, he introduced Dr. Andrea Hricko of the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine, who presented her research on the risks to dockworkers from diesel exhaust and ship emissions.

ILWU clerks' Local 63 President Joe Gasperov informed the group about the union's problems with the employers' attempts to introduce new information technology. The technology itself still has many bugs, but the employers are still trying to use it to outsource clerks' work.

McEllrath reported that the ILWU's employers are still trying to eliminate or minimize the dispatch hall by assigning more steady work-

ers to terminals. Garcia said the same thing is happening in Spain and reiterated the need to retain the dispatch halls as a place where co-workers meet and a place to train and educate new dockers to ensure they become good union workers.

Elias Costilla, the Latin American Zone Coordinator from Peru reported on his visits with dockworkers in various ports in Mexico to feel out possibilities for future affiliations with the IDC. He is planning further organizational trips to Venezuela and the Dominican Republic in the near future.

Pat Riley, President of ILA Local 273 in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, and the North American East Coast and Canada Zone Coordinator, reported how his ILA locals in Canada are now working with other Canadian maritime unions, including ILWU Canada on the country's West Coast, to oppose the government's draconian background checks of dockers as part of its port security program. He also noted that the Canadian unions are working on passing legislation that would outlaw scab replacement workers during a union strike.

Victor Morin from Spain's La Coordinadora union reported that

the IDC has been having difficulty collecting dues from its member unions and that the organization is currently in debt. The group agreed they would send one more invoice to the delinquent unions and that zone coordinators would follow up with phone calls.

The meeting ended with consensus that the next meeting of the full General Assembly of the IDC should be on the U.S. West Coast with the ILWU hosting, probably some time in October or November 2007. ILWU officers would review options and finalize a date and place later.

With this Zone Coordinators meeting being held in Long Beach, several other ILWU officials attended and contributed, including International Vice President Joe Radisich, International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams, Coast Committeemen Ray Ortiz Jr. and Leal Sundet, Director of International Affairs Ray Familathe, foremen's Local 94 President Danny Miranda and Vice President Frank North and member Louis Hill. Also attending was ILA Charleston Local 1422 President Ken Riley.

—Dispatcher Staff reports

# Transport workers host international 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' globalization.

Called by the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee, the conference at the longshore Local 10 hall gathered 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 not only have to make money off Third World workers, they also have to rely on transport workers, and they have to beat up on us also."

When governments interfere, strikes over wages and conditions become political strikes, Heyman said. That occurred in San Francisco when the U.S. Park Service awarded the Alcatraz ferry contract to a non-union company, leaving IBU crew on the beach with picket signs in their hands.

"We've done an on-time service for 30 years," said Marina Secchitano, Director 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 on the need to internationalize the struggle.

"Some of the biggest victories we had in the labor movement have come from cross-border solidarity," Familathe said. "Now we will take the Alcatraz campaign to European workers, where the travel agents are unionized."

ILWU Organizing Director Peter Olney discussed international worker 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 repetitive stress injuries. The exported almonds are mostly handled by ILWU longshore members who sit at the beginning of the international logistics chain.

"Because 70 percent of their product is exported, this really means globalization in this dispute," Olney said. "We have gone to U.S. users, but in order to bring this company to heel, we have to go after them in their most vulnerable point, their need to constantly expand their market internationally."

Overseas delegates included Tony Nelson, steward of the Liverpool Dockers. He described how their

being sacked for not crossing a picket line became one of the first internet solidarity actions.

"We decided in the pub—all major decisions in England are made in pubs—to go international," Nelson said.

"The labor laws in the UK are so repressive, workers 100 yards away can't help out striking workers. We were able to get our message out on the internet, and the first place we went to was New York. They refused to cross our line. We were taken to court and we won. We could picket in the U.S., but not in our own country."

Bob Crow, General Secretary of the 73,000 member Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union in the UK, spoke on the sell-off of public assets in Britain, which continues under the Blair government, and on the need for labor's action independent of political parties.

"When you privatize a public utility, you not only hand it over to some corporation to make private profits, you take away the democratic control of society to run it," Crow said.

Mexican workers also face massive privatization, and millions have been thrown off their land as corporate agriculture takes over. Eduard Papino of the Mexican Electrical Workers Union reported on conditions in Mexico.

"With or without work, 50 million

Mexicans find themselves below the poverty limit," Papino said. "With or without employment, these millions of Mexicans face no other future than to beg for charity, go over to crime or launch themselves towards an ever more hostile and dangerous northern border."

Hiroiyuki Yamamoto, Secretary-Treasurer of the Japanese DORO-CHIBA rail union, spoke on privatization of that country's railroads. Since this process began 25 years ago, nearly 200,000 workers have been fired and safety conditions have worsened, Yamamoto said.

"Reagan and Thatcher in the U.S. and the UK launched similar 'neo-liberal' attacks on workers," Yamamoto said.

"Workers' actual status undeniably shows the devastating consequences of these attacks."

Herb Mills, retired former Secretary-Treasurer of Local 10, reminded the conference of the historical benefits solidarity had brought the union. After President Truman busted the railroad strike in 1946, he tried the same thing, without success, on the ILWU in 1948.

"When Truman said he would unload the ships using the Navy, we got wires from all over the world saying those ships would be treated as scab ships," Mills said. "And they would not be unloaded."



# A labor delegat

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 riddle, 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, railways, local authorities and garbage collection workers went out. About 100,000 workers had not received salaries in months, some six months, some eight months, some a year and a half. The head of the finance ministry was supposed to pay the debt by Sept. 20, but he did not keep his promise.

"We had no choice to strike," the

Histadrut said. The courts ordered the workers back to work Nov. 30 and a settlement is in the works.

The workers also struck over not receiving their social benefits, according to Daniel Ben-Sheetrit, chairman of the powerful Histadrut union. Fox news and CNN did not cover this story. Polls showed 71 percent of the people were in favor of the strike. Workers need to be paid and they have families and bills to pay. The strike cost the economy about \$70 million a day. What a great way to start our trip!

Education in Israel is a precious legacy. Following the traditions of past generations, education continues to be a fundamental value and is recognized as the key to the future. The education system aims to prepare children to become responsible members of a democratic, pluralistic society in which people from different ethnic, religious, cultural and political backgrounds coexist. It is based on the principles of liberty and tolerance.

We were honored to be addressed by Joseph Wasserman, General Secretary of the Israel Teachers Union, at our breakfast one morning. There are 120,000 teachers in the union. One of the problems is that the pay is very low and they are having a hard time attracting new teachers into the field. They have a close relationship with AFT here in the U.S.

We were able to visit two schools and mingle with the kids. All the schools have bomb shelters. At the first school, Jewish, Arab and other Muslim kids all went to school together in a multi-cultural program to teach common respect for one another. When the war with Hezbollah took place, a missile hit the school. The children were locked down in the bomb shelter for two weeks away from their families. They are living under the hammer everyday.

We should remember also that many kids here live in fear of street gangs. The kids in Israel use the word "fear" a lot. They're afraid to be alone. You could still smell the smoke of the missiles. When we left the school on the bus, we passed the hat for donations to help the kids, and raised \$500. Union people are very generous.

The delegation proceeded to the Lebanese border, where the war between Israel and Hezbollah took place three months before. A quiet came over the delegation. We were right there, with all the tension, pressure and instability.

We met with a young man, a lieutenant colonel who was in charge of

the army post. He was very nice and polite, and he answered all our questions. Yet he had an edge to him. They are at war and on high alert all the time. He kept his finger on the trigger of his Uzi machine gun the whole time he talked to our delegation. He was clear that even at that moment, when things seemed calm, it could erupt and there will be more fighting and killing. I heard the emotion in his voice and the pain, yet it was very clear that dying is not hard, living together is what is hard. The lieutenant colonel was 22 years old.

As we looked over the border, we saw Lebanese troops, Syrian troops and U.N. troops. I thought to myself that 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 Giladi 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 to hear. She came from the working class and her family lived a modest life. Her presence was like that of Golda Meir, Israel's first woman prime minister. When she was finished speaking our group gave her a hug and thanked her for spending time with us. It was the first time I had ever spent on a kibbutz.

Bob Ellis, an ILWU Local 23 member and friend told me many years ago that he went to Israel when he got out of high school and worked on a kibbutz. He picked bananas, and remembered the air raids back then and hiding in the bomb shelter.

Later that afternoon we headed up to Jerusalem. It was a beautiful drive. We had dinner that evening at our hotel with M.K. Yuli Tamir, the Minister of Education. We were also privileged to see a performance of "Me'urav Yerushalmi" by the youth choir of Jerusalem. They were great, with so much energy. These young people were so uplifting. After the dinner we had a chance to talk to the young kids. The dialogue was great. They had performed in San Diego last year. They all love the show "American Idol" and hip-hop music. Music is a universal language.

Thursday, Nov. 30 was a sunny day around 30 degrees and our first day in Jerusalem. It would be a day I will never forget. We went to the Yad Vashem Museum, the holocaust museum. I was overwhelmed with grief, sadness, anger and tears. How could something like this happen to human beings? Just like slavery, why, how, can human beings be so cruel? It makes me look at myself every day in the mirror and ask that question. History holds no parallel to those horrors.

From that museum we visited the Menachem Begin Heritage Center Museum, built in honor of the late prime minister and revolutionary who shared 1978 Nobel Peace Prize with Egypt's President Anwar al-Sadat. To be fair, we also have to remember that Begin authorized the invasion of



Adams visits the Western Wall in Jerusalem's



Top photo: Possible 4—Ted Kirsch (President, Penn State), Nat LaCour, Sec. Treas. UFT, Nat LaCour, Sec. Treas. UFT, Nat LaCour, Sec. Treas. UFT

Bottom photo: Possible 6—Dalia Rabin and Barbara



Laying a rose at Rabin Square, where Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated.





# tion visits Israel



Old City.



sylvania AFT), Dalia Rabin, Randi  
urer AFT.

ra Easterling, Sec. Treasurer CWA.



Lebanon in 1982.

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.

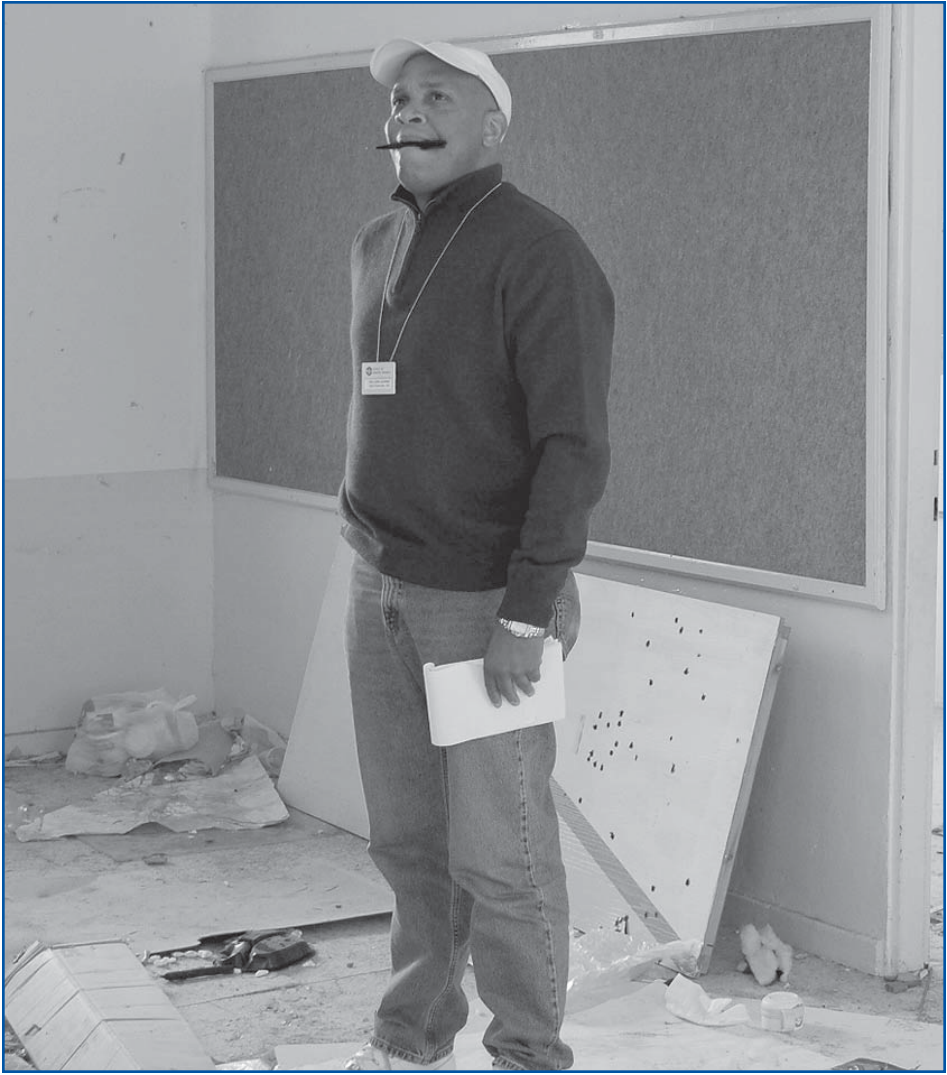
We live in a culture of violence—some people think violence is a legitimate means of resolving disputes. And yet Fox News, CNN and others focus on just the violence, and yes, there are problems.

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.

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 headed to Rabin Square to place a rose on the spot where Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was gunned down Nov. 4, 1995 by a Jewish assassin in the central square of Tel Aviv, at the end of a rally in support of his government and its policies. The assassination took place at the height of a charged political debate over the direction and future of Israel. Rabin was a man of valor and peace.

From Rabin Square we headed to our closing dinner at the Yitzhak Rabin Center, hosted by Dalia Rabin, the daughter of the slain prime minister. The Center was established by law in 1997 to commemorate the life and achievements of Yitzhak Rabin, and to examine the lessons, circumstances and implications of his assass-



Adams surveys the damage to the El-Mahaba kindergarten in Acre, which was destroyed by Hezbollah missiles

sination. The delegation was given a tour of the Center and the new Museum of History, which displays the life and times of Yitzhak Rabin.

We sat down for a full dinner and Dalia Rabin gave a short talk. She's a very strong and powerful woman who carries the flame of her father's legacy forward. Former President Bill Clinton talked about his friend and brother Yitzhak Rabin at last year's museum dedication, where at least 150,000 attended. To the people of Israel, Rabin's death was like the deaths of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King were to the American people. They were good men, humble men who were heroes in their sacrifice, courage and strength.

Rabin's land-for-peace idea was still popular with the Palestinians. Polls in March 2006 showed they would support return to the 1967 borders and recognition of Israel, and many Israelis still support that idea.

Rabin is missed because of his personal qualities of modesty, integrity, truthfulness, devotion and adherence to principle, no matter how difficult or unpopular. He belongs not to the past, but to the present and to posterity. His grave has become a shrine of pilgrimage and inspiration. He was the privileged and chosen instrument to carry peace to the Middle East.

We live on a planet deeply divided and still struggling to overcome political and economic repression. The message is very simple: hope, respect and relief for the oppressed and downtrodden.

Dr. King was very clear when he said: "If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality and strength without sight." We must all rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful struggle for a new world. For me it hits the brain and tugs at the very heartstrings.



Adams looks out into Lebanon during a visit to Israel's northern border.



# 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 Farless Dailey 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 Tonelli morning, and the ad buy gave them a featured spot during the Thursday interview with Joe Nedney, the 49er kicker. 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 ads honored a longshoreman whose son, Kirk, is the starting middle linebacker with 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.”

ILWU members drove truckloads of toys to the Mary Ann Wright Foundation, a charity based in West Oakland that has fed and clothed 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 54 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

## SO CAL ILWU LOCALS DISTRIBUTE GOODIES

A three-month season of charitable giving, in which Southern California ILWU organizations helped raise more than \$200,000, ended with a flourish just days before Christmas.

The ILWU “Yes We Can” committee, which coordinates the local unions’ humanitarian giving in southern California, wrapped up more than \$17,000 in toy giveaways. Overall, the union worked with 22 organizations and handed out more than 3,000 new toys. It started with Yes We Can’s annual holiday party, held at longshore Local 13’s Memorial Hall Dec. 19, where a union volunteer walked each child through rows of toys before families enjoyed holiday cake and cookies. Yes We Can also stepped in for Santa Claus with the children of unionized janitors in Orange County, providing 628 new gifts for SEIU Local 1877 families as well as needy families at the San Pedro Service Center who received 100 new toys courtesy of the ILWU. The Yes We Can crew finished their toy deliveries with a caravan of minivans carrying nearly 700 gifts to the Los Angeles City Firefighters annual “Spark of Love” event held Dec. 22 at Dodger Stadium.

Yes We Can was set up in 1998 by younger dockworkers who saw a need for community action. Each year, the Yes We Can committee collects individual member donations and contributions from the locals, pensioners and Ladies Auxilliary to pay for a Thanksgiving food giveaway and holiday toy drive. Dozens of local

businesses also take part.

“Many of the volunteers helping with the toy drive and at Thanksgiving are ILWU IDs and casuals doing their part and showing their appreciation for what the union provides for them, even though they are not yet members,” said Yes We Can co-chair and clerks’ Local 63 member Michael Ponce, who helped form the group with Local 13 member Lisa Tonson.

The holiday toy drive follows on the heels of a Thanksgiving food giveaway in which ILWU members raised more than \$50,000 and fed 1,550 needy Harbor Area families. In October, ILWU locals—led by Local 13, Local 63 and foremen’s Local 94—helped raised more than \$135,000 for youth programming with the second annual ILWU-PMA fundraising luncheon for the Boys and Girls Club of the Harbor Area.

—Bill Orton

## 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. Locals 5 and 28 joined Locals 8, 40, 92, 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 are the major contributors to the CCNP’s Holiday Gift Drive. This year the locals raised approximately \$9,000 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 parents pick out the perfect gift for their children.

—Dawn DesBrisay, Local 40

## SEATTLE ILWU SPONSORS CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS 2006

The Christmas for Kids Program reached out to 35 families and 124 children in the Seattle area this year. 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 helps homeless families by giving them a place to stay and offering them training programs to help them get back 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 Pensioners club donated \$500 and the Maple Valley Dental Care donated toothbrushes to the children.

Christmas for Kids program Director and Auxiliary 3 President Leona Cunningham has made a personal commitment to make sure the children’s wishes come true. The application asks the child what he or she would like from Santa, and Leona does her best to ensure that every child receives the gift they want. This requires her to custom shop for each child and wrap every gift. In addition to gifts, the program makes sure that every child receives a new jacket and shoes as well as grocery vouchers so the family has a good holiday meal. Also, throughout the year Leona creates hand-made embroidered quilts for the children. These blankets most often become one of the most cherished gifts.

As we were passing out gifts, one of the mothers who had been living on the streets with her children and had absolutely nothing for her kids came up to Leona crying and said that if it wasn’t for the longshoremen her kids would have nothing.

Seeing the smiles and tears of joy coming from the children and their mothers proves Santa does exist. He exists as all of the selfless people who think of the less fortunate and volunteer their time to help complete strangers have a joyful holiday. Donations for next year’s gifts can be sent to: Christmas for Kids / 3440 E Marginal Way S / Seattle, WA 98134

—Curt Cunningham, Local 19

## LOCAL 17 HOSTS HOLIDAY GIFT BASKET DRIVE

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

“The project serves 1,500 families, and the hall was just full of food and toys,” Local 17 Dispatcher and BA Everett Burdan said.

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

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

—Tom Price

Longshore Local 7 in Bellingham, Wash. donated \$1,000 to the Bellingham Food Bank, according to Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Foster. This follows a long-term tradition of giving by the members to those less fortunate in their community.



Left to right: Local 10’s Sergeant-at-Arms Henry “Gloveman” Pellom III, Secretary-Treasurer Farless Dailey and Public Relations Committee Member Felipe Riley organized the Local 10 toy drive.

Tom Price



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



Photo courtesy SSA Pacific

Gene Bilderback, Vice President of Local 14, passes a \$500 check to Chris Mitchell of Eureka Fire Fighter's Local 652 for their Christmas Toy Drive. In addition, a \$500 holiday gift was made to "Food for People," the local food bank. The funds were donated by Longshore and Clerks' Local 14 and SSA Pacific.

"We're a small local with 18 members, but we wanted to share something with the community during the Christmas Season," said Jim Bilderback, Local 14 Secretary/Dispatcher.

Local 14 also gave \$1000 to the Richard "Dick" Peters Memorial Scholarship Fund, named in honor of a supercargo killed on the job in 2002. The employer added a \$500 donation.

"Local 14 gratefully acknowledges the employer's matching gifts to our community," added Bilderback.



Bill Orton

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

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



Curt Cunningham

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



Mark Dreith

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



# GETTING ORGANIZED

## BLUE DIAMOND WORKERS WIN ONE AT HOME

SACRAMENTO, CA—It seemed the Sacramento City Council would never stop droning on at its Dec. 5 meeting. It plodded through parking meter contracts, stadium restoration, inter-modal site acquisition.

The boredom ground hard on the 40 Blue Diamond Organizing Committee members in the room. Day shift had started at 6:30 a.m. and they knew they had to start at 4:30 the next morning. But in the last two years they have taken their fight to join ILWU warehouse Local 17 all over the state and all over the world, and they were determined to see their hometown City Council vote on the resolution supporting their efforts.

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 postpone their vote so Mayor Heather Fargo could meet 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.

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-radio talk show host Tom Sullivan made nice with Blue Diamond's head of PR while he fumed about "'The Union' marketing its services and trying to bypass the pro-employee policy of secret ballot elections." (He never dignified the ILWU with a name and spoke in scathing generalities about "The Union.")

Blue Diamond got the spin going in the plant as well, circulating an anti-union petition and mobilizing workers to attend the Council meeting. Rows of people in company blue alternated with rows of folks in sunny union yellow. The numbers seemed almost equal—though many of the blue shirts were leads and supervisors. Blue Diamond also brought out the heads of the local and state chambers of commerce, and its own CEO Doug Youngdahl.

It seemed at first the meeting wouldn't go well for the union supporters. Council member Robbie Waters tried to scuttle the resolution, claiming the city had no jurisdiction. His motion failed.

The head of the Metro Chamber got up and ran the usual warnings about Sacramento being tarred as "unfriendly to business," and Youngdahl got up and waved the flag.

"The bottom line is that we will not give up our workers' right to a secret ballot election. It's a fundamental American right," he said.

Council member Kevin McCarty didn't fall for that. He reminded listeners of the recent history.

"You can't deny that Blue Diamond violated the National Labor Relations Act. We're talking about

## BDG WORKER TELLS D.C. RALLY, 'WE NEED THE FREE CHOICE ACT!'



Page One photo

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Blue Diamond Organizing Committee member Larry Newsome (at mic) joined U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), several national union heads and around 2,000 people rallying at the steps of the Capitol at noontime on Dec. 8. They came together to kick-start a new round of organizing to pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). Shouting into the winter wind, Newsome gave the crowd a taste of life in the cross-hairs of an anti-union campaign.

"Blue Diamond likes to say we are a family," Newsome said. "But if we are a family, why don't they care for us? Why don't they protect us? Why don't they respect us? If we are a family, we are a dysfunctional family. Normally in these situations, people are told to go to counseling—but counseling doesn't help if you don't listen, and Blue Diamond doesn't listen to us. That's why we need the Free Choice Act."

The rally highlighted a two-day organizing summit convened by the AFL-CIO to seize the momentum of the Democrats' November sweep. The Dec. 8-9 meeting brought together some 600 organizers and organizing directors to plot strategies to push EFCA through Congress.

EFCA, which had 44 sponsors in the Senate last session and more than 200 in the House, would overhaul labor law to make organizing faster and fairer. It would:

- set stiff penalties for employers who violate workers' rights;
- make card-check the normal way to see if workers want union representation;
- and require employers and unions to go to binding arbitration if they don't reach agreement on a first contract within 90 days.

—MER

a card-check neutrality agreement, and the third word is the important one here. You can't have a fair vote without it."

Mayor Fargo offered a watered-down compromise resolution. That failed. And on the final roll-call vote, the Council voted 6-3 in favor of the original proposal. The council chamber erupted in clapping and cheers of "Si se puede!"

Cheers broke out again at 4:30 the next morning, when the workers in their yellow shirts gathered in the cafeteria before their shift started and celebrated some more.

"It was awesome," committee member Gloria Hessel said. "I didn't think we'd get this far with all that's gone on. We've tried so many times to talk to them across the street and we never hear back. We need a voice."

—Marcy Rein

## LOCAL 13-A WINS FAT DEAL FROM NEW BOSS

Discouragement hung heavy on the new ILWU Local 13-A members at

petroleum and diesel. The leftovers become coke. The workers operate the cooling drums and high-pressure water valves for cutting the coke out of the drums.

"You have water shooting out of a T-pipe that goes round and round with 2,500 pounds of pressure," said Cano. Once the coke is cooled and cut, crane operators load it on trucks and send it to the barn. There they separate the lumps from the fine coke before sending it to the harbor. The work takes skill and experience. The least senior operator has 10 years at the facility. Cano has 20.

In 1996, the Oxbow workers joined the International Union of Public and Industrial Workers (IUPIW), a non-AFL-CIO outfit known for making sweetheart deals. They got no help with grievances and earned far below the area standard. In February 2005, they booted out the IUPIW and joined Local 13-A.

Then in November, while their contract talks plodded on, Oxbow announced it was giving up the Shell and Mobil contracts. The nine men at Mobil went over to Pier G. Toronto-based Marsulex took over at Shell, and the workers could only watch as their brothers at the harbor tied down a first contract in May 2006.

"They lost heart when the sale happened," new Local 13-A Business Agent Alex Galvan said. "They thought they were going nowhere. But the harbor guys came and gave them a lot of testimonials about what is possible."

Over the next several months, the harbor crew would be there with the Marsulex workers as they rallied and barbequed at the refinery gates, met regularly to go over contract proposals, and attended the negotiations in force. Some 15-20 people would come each time to back up the bargaining team of Javier Chavez, Juan Villegas, Rob Vega, Cano, Galvan and ILWU Organizing Director Peter Olney.

Because the Marsulex reps would only come down from Toronto two or three days a month, almost every session turned into an 18-20 hour marathon.

"We had to make those two days worth it," Galvan said. To prod the slow-moving talks, the workers took a strike vote Oct. 25.

"Two days later it was a done deal," Chavez said.

The agreement they reached Oct. 27 included 50 percent raises for some workers, 100 percent employer-paid health insurance, an extra week of vacation and the first sick days the workers ever had.

"By the end of the contract, we'll be in the middle of the scale for this type of work in this area," Cano said. "Before, the people cleaning up in the refinery [working under the PACE contract] made almost the same as we did."

They also won minimum staffing levels and the right to refuse unsafe work.

"The contract gives us a lot of power to work safe," Chavez said. "We even have the right to strike if we have to if the boss tries to make us do unsafe work."

The last negotiating session ran round the clock, just as it had for the Oxbow workers at the harbor.

"The first thing we did when we finished at 6 a.m. was to call Carlos [ILWU International Organizer Carlos Cordon]," Galvan said. "The seeds he and Rudy [Organizer Rudy Gutierrez] planted on us kept us going all this time."

"It's amazing to see what came together," Cano said. "We've come a long way."

—Marcy Rein



# Topping Off

By Rich Austin, President  
Pacific Coast Pensioners Association

## Pensioners don't retire from the union

Where do we go in 2007? Back to the basics, that's where!

The programs and policies of the ILWU provide a beacon for other workers. No one must ever take that for granted. Militant, democratic rank-and-file unionism is at the foundation of our successes.

What other outfit cares for actives, retirees, surviving spouses and dependents the way the ILWU does? We are all a family, and that is reflected in our union's guiding principles.

Union education, increasing the membership of the PCPA, assisting the International as it works for a more militant labor movement and getting friends of labor elected to public office are all areas where we, the pensioners of the ILWU, can be of help.

Our International and Coast Committee have created educational programs. The PCPA member on the Education Committee is Al Perisho. His work is invaluable. Educating members means letting everyone know there is no middle ground. Either they're with the union or they're with enemies of labor. It cannot be both ways. No one can love the union one day, then abandon it on Election Day. No one can love the union all month, then abandon it on membership meeting night. No one can preach unionism while shopping at anti-union places like Wal-Mart, or Target or the Home Depot. There is no middle ground.

You are all teachers! Offer to make yourselves available at membership meetings. You can share your knowledge and experience, and participate in educational programs that dovetail with those of the International.

You can do more. You can contact other retirees who do not belong to your pensioners' club and ask them to join. Urge them to come to meetings too. The more members we have, the more influential we become.

We all know that some labor chiefs in this country are reluctant to challenge the status quo. They raise hell on paper, but shy away from truly leading their ranks in the struggle for social and economic justice and peace.

That, however, is not the history of the ILWU. We have never played it cozy or checked to see which way the wind was blowing before we

took a position. We have always been a militant union dedicated to helping working class people everywhere. Whenever our Officers or other workers have called for action, we've responded. That is and will forever be our heritage.

No doubt many of you helped get friends of labor elected on Nov. 7. Good job! It is amazing what a united group of people can achieve!

National elections put the Democrats back in control of Congress. Some Democrats with over 95 percent lifetime pro-labor voting records will assume leadership positions on key committees. That is what we need—more friends of labor in leadership positions. By working with others you helped bring that about.

But we cannot rest. The policies of the ILWU that began in membership meetings, were then honed in committees, and finally adopted by rank-and-file delegates to our conventions are our marching orders. They are what we want Congress to support. We must commit ourselves to helping friends of labor get elected, and then make sure they do the right thing once they are in office.

At the last ILWU Convention in Vancouver, B.C., every resolution presented by the PCPA was adopted. With the PCPA's help, we became one of the first International unions to endorse the United States National Health Insurance Act!

There are many good reasons for pensioners to be involved, and I want to mention two of them: 2002 negotiations and 2008 negotiations. No doubt you've already heard about the struggle we had in 2002. We may be in for a battle in 2008 as well. Actives and all the rest of us had better be prepared to do battle. If we are, it is unlikely that the employers will take us on.

In closing, I want to remind you that you are the engines. You are the power. You are the ones who have made this grand institution called the ILWU work, and you are still needed. I know you'll respond just like you always have. And I know you'll support the policies and programs of the ILWU just like you always have. Our slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all" means just what it says. Help keep it alive!

## Local 52's first woman BA

Andrea Finne Struller, a third-generation docker, will be clerk Local 52's business agent this year. She came over to the clerks in 2000 from longshore Local 19, where she had been a member since 1992.



Andrea Finne Struller

She had spent most of the last year as dispatcher and relief BA for her local.

"I felt pretty confident running for the position because I had worked on it and I felt like I knew what I was getting into," Finne said. "I loved sitting on the LRC [Labor Relations Committee]. That's where my heart is—jurisdiction—that means the world to me."

Her 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 three stepchildren 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 spare time it's mostly doing that. And there are always jurisdic-

## Dock accident takes life of Local 23 man



Ivy Love

Kenneth Eddo's family: Kneeling; former son-in-law Chris Wright with daughter Shemeriah Eddo. Back row; daughter-in-law Brandi Eddo and son David with grandson Dawson, Kenneth with Nancy, daughter-in-law Jocelyn and son Josh Eddo. Not pictured: daughter Ivy Love, who took the photo.

by Tom Price

Longshoreman Kenneth Eddo was doing the job he loved in the early morning hours of Nov. 11 when he had an accident with his hustler that took his life. The container and chassis he was pulling rolled over, standing up his hustler, or tractor, on its rear wheels and slamming his body onto the cab'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 in April after working as a casual for about a year. Before getting into longshore Local 23, he had worked two jobs 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 where daughter Shemeriah remembers him putting the kids in a raft when it flooded and pushing them down the street.

"We then moved to Tacoma because dad used to log here in the early 1980s and he loved the place. It was green and lush," Shemeriah said. "I remember him telling me which stars were which, explaining about the Milky Way and teaching me about tools. He was always in his garage, so if you wanted to spend time with him, you went out there."

She remembers her father always helping people, taking down their trees for fun or hunting mushrooms with her mother.

"He loved longshoring, it was a job he always wanted," Shemeriah said. "He liked the brotherhood and how they stand for each other. He didn't get that in his other jobs."

"His wife told me the job was still exciting to him," Local 23 Safety Officer Keith Kossman said. "He'd come home tired at 3 a.m. and say what a wonderful thing it is to work with people who care about him. He had worked in all the crappy places, in the mills, in the sweatshops. He'd finally reached a point where he was happy and could slow down a bit."

Local 23's safety committee got to the accident scene soon after it

tional 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 past membership meeting 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

happened

"When we opened the container, we could see the load was terribly unstable," Kossman said.

In the old days before containerization longshoremen took great pride in the ingenious ways they could pack a ship's hold, using dunnage of scrap wood, nets, ropes and other items to shore up the load and keep the ship stable in heavy weather. The container on Eddo's chassis that day had probably been stuffed in a country where there are lax safety rules and no unions to enforce the rules that do exist, Local 23 President Conrad Spell said.

"We just can't do enough to make a safer workplace," Spell said. "We already work under the best safety code in the country. That's great, but we're always trying to make it better at every bargaining."

APM Terminals President Anthony Scioscia called ILWU International President Bob McEllrath and said he wanted to shut down all APM terminals in the U.S. for a safety meeting on Nov. 13. McEllrath quickly agreed. In Oakland, APM managers stood with longshore Local 10, bosses' Local 91 and clerks Local 34 clerks and office clericals for a moment of silence. Local 34 Vice President Frank Riley helped organize that meeting.

"It's a tragedy when accidents happen, but that's why it's very important for members to read our safety code and exercise our rights under Sect. 11 of the contract," Riley told the members.

Local 23 will get a permissive registration for Eddo's eldest son David so he can work on the docks. The youngest son Josh was picked in the longshore Local 19 casual lottery.

Local 23 set up an account for the family with the Tacoma Longshoremen's Credit Union. To contribute contact them at: 3602 Alexander Ave. Tacoma, WA 98424.

Eddo and Nancy, his partner in a 30-year marriage, were renovating their 1913-vintage house when he died, and it's all torn up, Spell said.

"We have a bunch of guys who were contractors. They're getting supplies together, and they're going over to finish it up," Spell said.

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.

"I'm not daunted 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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