



The DISPATCHER

Published by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union

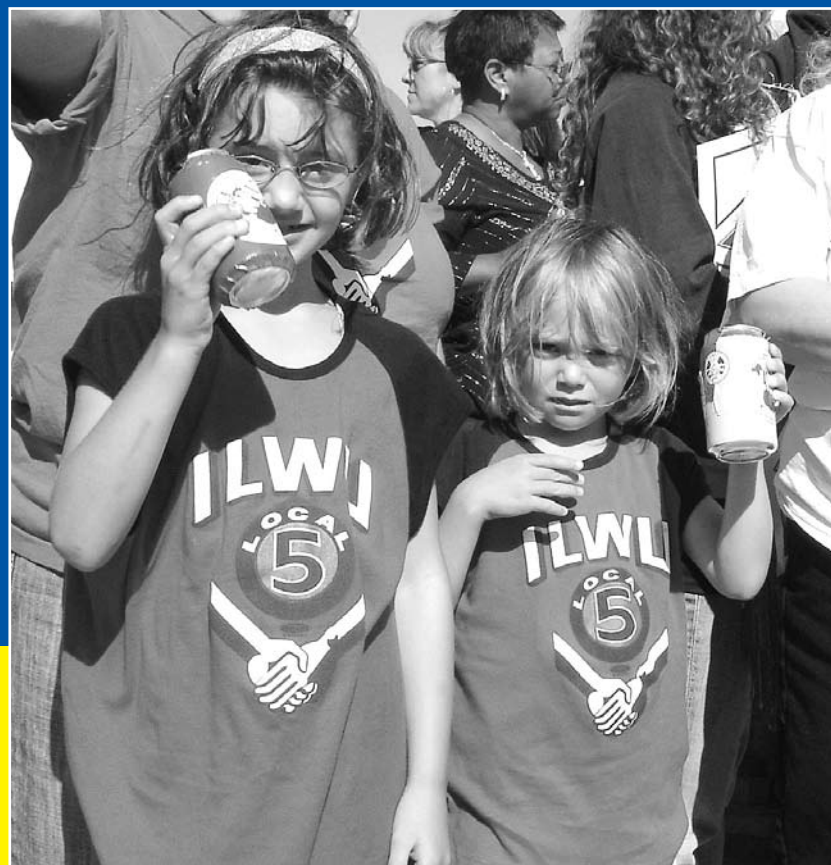
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Sisters Visit Sees Candies page 3

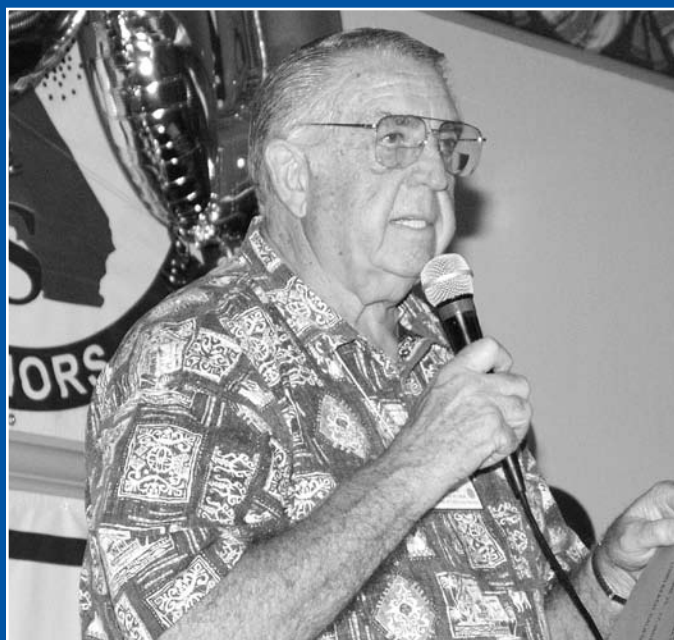


Education for a New Generation pages 4-5



Pensioners Provide Leadership at California Congress of Seniors

page 7



INSIDE

President's Solidarity Message page 2

Local News and Notes. page 3

International Dockers Meet in Long Beach page 5

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Dispatcher, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What We Learned from the Local 6 Workers

By Robert McEllrath,
ILWU International President

I've been thinking about the 300 sisters and brothers from Local 6 who gave up their paychecks in July to honor the Teamster Picket lines at Waste Management. I read the article about their fight in the last *Dispatcher*, and it made me wonder if we really appreciate what those workers accomplished—and what it means for the future of our union.

To begin with, you can't say enough about the courage and strength they showed in dealing with a big, powerful employer. Waste Management is as tough as they come, and you know the company was just itching for a fight. Just remember that they locked out the Teamsters only one day after the contract expired.

In the end, the company got more trouble than they bargained for, because this group of 300 workers who were mostly women, mostly low-paid, and mostly Spanish-speakers, decided to stick together and walk-out in support of their co-workers.

My point is that there were plenty of chances for divisions to break out between the workers. It could have been between the lower-paid and higher-paid workers, between the men and the women, between different racial groups, folks who spoke different languages, or between all the different unions that were involved—the Teamsters, ILWU, and Machinists. But in the end, everyone realized that sticking together was the only way to make progress.

And that's not the whole story. From the beginning, there were workers who were afraid, and they had a right to be. They wondered how long they could go without a paycheck to cover the rent, buy groceries, or make car payments. And you can be sure there were folks who were hesitant to support the drivers; maybe because the drivers were better paid or spoke a different language or belonged to a different union. They probably wondered if the Teamster drivers would ever walk out to support the recyclers or clericals if the shoes were on the other feet.

That's the real world. And in the real world

those fears and concerns have to be addressed head-on. And the only ones who can really do it are the rank and file leaders. Union officials can help, and they did a great job at Local 6. Throughout the union, ILWU locals sent checks—some of them very large checks—to help the Local 6 workers win their fight. Some individuals came forward with their own personal checks, and dozens of community members did the same. But even the \$100,000 that was eventually donated to Local 6 didn't go that far when it was divided between 300 workers and spread out over four weeks of hardship.



In the end, it was the rank and file leaders who did the heavy lifting and gave the members enough hope to believe in themselves and the power of solidarity.

The slogan, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” is something like the gospel in our union.

But as important as slogans and principles are, we have to be honest with ourselves: it's one thing to talk about solidarity when we're relatively comfortable and well-off, but it's different when there isn't enough food on the table, the kids are hungry, there's nothing left in the checking account, and the car is about to be repo'd. That's when our resolve is tested and the word “solidarity” takes on a whole new meaning.

Most of us who work in Longshore haven't had to worry about putting food on the table for a very long time. We drive nice cars and most of us own our own homes. We have to look back almost an entire generation to remember any truly “hard times” when we had to worry about the basics. We know that our lives are better today because of the sacrifice of those who came before us, but we haven't been challenged in the same way as that generation.

But all of us will be tested in the months and years ahead. Longshore workers have a contract fight coming next summer, and we hope it goes smoothly—but we have to be prepared for a fight if it doesn't. And that fight could involve sacrifices.

Outside of Longshore, it's a whole different world where union membership is dropping, wages are falling, benefits are being cut, and working families are generally taking it on the chin.

The challenge for the ILWU is to build on our success where we have power, then use that strength to help

other ILWU workers win better contracts, and help workers without a union to win their fight to have one. All this will take a lot of resources and hard work, but in the end, I think it comes down to two things: whether we learn the lessons that Local 6 members just taught us about solidarity and sacrifice, and whether we can develop the next generation of rank and file leaders who can help us win the battles ahead for the ILWU and for working families in America.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

—Mike Wilcox
Local 21, Longview, WA

Letters to The Dispatcher

We encourage letters from our readers. Please try to keep them short; we reserve the right to edit for clarity and space. E-mail to craig@ilwu.org or mail to Craig Merrilees, Editor, 1188 Franklin St., 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109

DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW ON POLITICS AND IMMIGRATION

Dear Editor,

You folks in the hierarchy of the International Union assume that all of us are left liberals and that is simply not true. I am not a liberal, but I am a zealot when it comes to labor. You guys assume that all of labor and the ILWU are Democrats and that is not true. There are many middle and right of middle-of-the-roaders where I work. You assume everyone agrees with PAC's and that is not true. You can try to dazzle the folks with the high ideals of the ILWU and labor, but the bottom line is that corporate America is trying to crush us with NAFTA and illegal immigration.

Labor is being undermined by a pool of cheap labor. When the PMA and all the companies join together to try and break us in 2008, they will use that labor pool. I cannot understand this union's super-liberal policy toward illegal immigration. I am from Russian and Polish grandparents that

emigrated from Europe in the early 20th Century. They were sent to Ellis Island, attained their status by legal means and eventually became citizens. I feel that everyone should play by the rules. My wife is a native of Mexico who attained her citizenship a year or so ago. I am a U.S. Navy Veteran and my son is currently a U.S. Marine.

While I am aware of our official International Union policies, I wanted to state my opinion for the record.

—Seymour Weinberg
Local 20, Long Beach

MOTHER'S ILWU QUILT MAKES SON PROUD

Dear editor:

Here are some pictures of the quilt that my mother, Kay, made me for my 50th birthday. The logo in the middle came from a photograph. She cut it

into various pieces and then hand-stitched it all together. The pictures were found by my father, Walter, in the “historical achieves,” part of the attic in our hiring hall. Hours were spent picking just the right pictures. Included in the pictures is my father, when he was a longshoreman for Longview, and my oldest son, Shane, who is a longshoreman for the Port of Tacoma.

Three generations of Longshoremen in pictures were transferred to fabric and stitched into the quilt. Months were spent making this, all done by my mother's hands. Also, to make it even more special, my full name is hand-stitched all the way around the outside border. You must see

it to fully appreciate the time and work put into this beautiful quilt. It is currently on display at the Lower Columbia Longshoreman's Federal Credit Union.



Mike Wilcox and his mother, Kay, with the quilt.

The DISPATCHER

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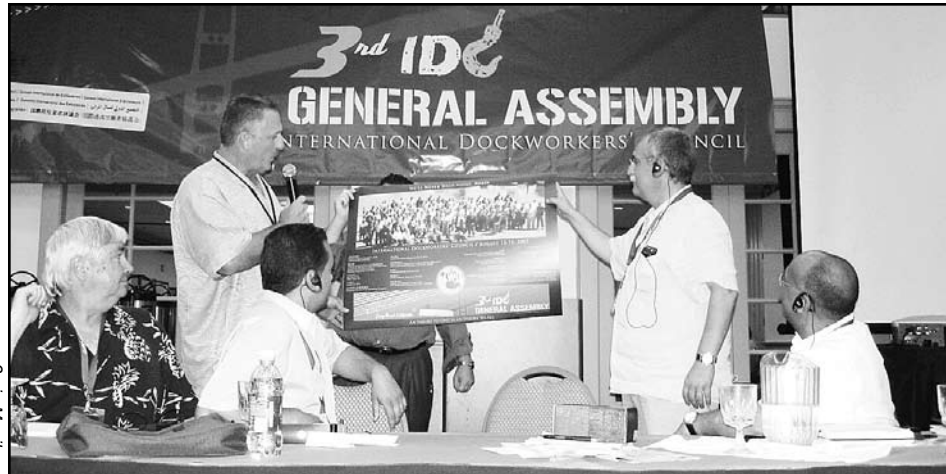
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News & notes from the field...

CALIFORNIA: Local 13's crane operator Jennifer Lakos was featured in a recent news story in the *Torrance Daily Breeze* that included several photos along with compliments from President Mike Mitre and co-workers who praised her skills and determination. The story didn't shy away from the dangers involved in dock work, and it explained the progress that Jennifer and other women are making with jobs that were traditionally done by men...Essay finalists at five high schools won college money from Local 13 by writing about Harry Bridges for the union's sixth annual scholarship contest. "The kids wrote what they most admired about Harry," said Dave Serrato, who served on ILWU Local 13's three-person committee that worked with each school to select the finishers. The union awarded \$12,000 in \$1,000, \$800 and \$600 checks to the top writers at San Pedro High, Mary Star of the Sea, Banning, Carson and Long Beach Poly to help winners pay for books and tuition. Scholarships will also be offered next year to students at Cabrillo High in Long Beach. "These students could relate to Harry fighting against racism and deportation and never giving up," said Serrato. Williners include: San Pedro HS: Mercie Maes (1st), Juan Garcia (2nd) and Austin Willis (3rd); Mary Star of the Sea High: Adriana Garcia (1st), Monserrat Rodriguez (2nd) and Katherine Hargis (3rd); Carson High School: Yazzmin Lizarraga (1st), Cheri Crisostomo (2nd) and Sukey Barba (3rd); Phineas Banning High: Gerardo Iriarte (1st), Raul Hernandez (2nd) and Aurelia Olivas (3rd); Long Beach Polytechnic: Brittni Hamilton (1st), Sarah Elsheikh (2nd) and Genesis Vazquez (3rd)...Local 13's old hall on C Street is thriving thanks to good management by the **Memorial Association** that provides office space for the **Ladies Auxiliary #8** and **Southern California Pensioners Group**, plus meeting rooms for a wide variety of community organizations, prayer groups, and even boxing matches that feature up to seven bouts and are drawing hundreds of fight fans to see pros like Manny Pacquiao, world lightweight champion...**Local 63** leaders invited ILWU members in the

area to meet with Drill Team leader and living legend Josh Williams who explained the history of the famous Drill Team and demonstrated a few moves that would be performed a week later at the Labor Day Parade in Wilmington...Local 63 continues their support for the Dolores Heurta Labor Institute, which brings labor history into classrooms at seven campuses of the LA Community College District. Fall courses sponsored by the Huerta Institute cover sociology, political science, humanities and speech with a special focus on trade in the harbor area and labor history in Los Angeles. Local 63 is one of a dozen organizations that chartered the new Huerta Institute last year...There are changes at the **Southern California District Council (SCDC)** with former SCDC President Cathy Familathe recently stepping down to spend more time with her family. Richard Dines (Local 13, Longshore) has been elected President with Linda Kennedy (63OCU -- Clerical) as Vice President. Both say they will continue the legislative and political work of the District Council, which is made up of Local delegates from San Diego to Fresno. Luisa Gratz (Local 26) remains the SCDC Secretary-Treasurer...Roughly 900 clerical workers with **Local 63 OCU** ended three months of tough talks with shippers when they won a new three-year contract. The agreement concluded several lengthy sessions, including one that lasted 37-hours. Workers won a multi-employer pension that will be jointly administered with the union, protection of benefits, and a boost in wages. Ratification votes were still underway when the *Dispatcher* went to press...**Local 94** members got more disturbing news about their departed brother Matt Petrasich, who was killed at work on the Evergreen dock on January 31, 2005. An administrative law judge dismissed the four OSHA citations that were filed against Marine Terminals Corporation. While Matt's case is debated in the courts, Local 94 leaders remain concerned about safety issues on the docks, including communication problems that may have contributed to Matt's death and

continued on page 4



Bob McEllrath thanks Julian Garcia and presents a portrait of IDC members.

Dockworkers around the world meet in Long Beach

The third meeting of the International Dockworkers Council (IDC) was held in Long Beach, California on August 12-14. The event was hosted by the ILWU and brought together unions representing dockworkers from 18 countries in South America, Central America, North America, Europe, and North Africa.

HISTORY OF ACTION AND SOLIDARITY

The IDC was formed to coordinate solidarity efforts that support workers, their unions, and confront abuses by the global shipping and stevedoring industries. The group coalesced in the mid 1990's when many unions, including the ILWU, supported dockworkers in Liverpool, England who

were fighting a privatization scheme at their port without the full backing of their parent union – making it difficult for the International Transport Federation (ITF) to lend support.

The IDC first met in 2000, when dockworkers in Charleston, South Carolina, (known as the "Charleston Five") were fighting trumped-up conspiracy charges brought against five I.L.A. union activists who challenged a union-busting effort at their port. Those charges were later dismissed after the ILWU and other unions protested and provided legal defense support.

RECENT VICTORIES

In January of this year, the IDC helped lead protests against industry and government efforts to weaken dockworker unions within the



Craig Merrilees

ILWU warehouse Local 5 Secretary-Treasurer Britta Duncan (back) with her daughters Angela (left) and Alyssa (right) and longshore Local 23's Gail Ross pause during the July 20 rally at See's Candies headquarters. Not in the picture, but at the rally: Fran Grove and Debra Pallares from foremen's Local 94, Audrey Corral from warehouse Local 17, Carmen Brannan from Local 5 and Samantha Levins from the IBU.

Sisters visit Sees for Solidarity

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO—More than 100 women union activists from all over the West Coast rallied at See's South San Francisco headquarters July 20. They made a joyful racket, singing and shouting and rattling homemade noisemakers. They carried some wacky signs—"It's so Seesy, Just say 'Nut-trality'" for one.

But they came with a serious purpose. They wanted the candy maker to use its power as a major purchaser of almonds from Blue Diamond Growers to urge BDG to sign a neutrality agreement with the ILWU. A neutrality agreement would help the workers at Blue Diamond make their own decision on unionization, free of threats and coercion.

"I'm third-generation longshore," said Fran Grove of ILWU foremen's local 94. "Everything I know is from the union, and I know how important it is. We're asking See's not to stand aside, but step up to the plate and ask Blue Diamond to do the right thing."

Women make up about half the workforce at BDG's Sacramento plant. Almost all the sorters and packers are women. This is the largest and lowest-paid group at the plant. Normally most of the sorters and packers get laid off for the summer. This summer they've found themselves working overtime instead, as BDG pushes to get ready for this year's bumper crop. No one from the plant was able to join the rally, but Gloria Hessel, a

sorter, called in on her morning break and spoke to a reporter from the *San Mateo County Times*.

Hessel gave the paper an earful about conditions in the plant. During the recent hot spell she had suffered heat exhaustion, she said, and other sorters were getting blisters from handling the heated nuts. Their eyes burn and they get nauseous when the plant is not properly aired out after fumigation.

"I'm ready to retire," she told the paper. "I'd like to finish with good conditions."

After the crowd marched and chanted for awhile, a delegation approached the office with petitions to deliver to See's CEO Brad Kintsler. Hundreds of people had signed in person and on-line, asking See's to talk to Blue Diamond. A pinch-lipped See's security guard stonewalled their efforts. "Put the petition in the mail," he said. "Make an appointment."

In fact, the union had been calling and writing for months, but Kintsler had been unwilling to dialogue.

"So See's doesn't care to hear from the people?" said ILWU Local 94's Debra Pallares.

"You need to hear us louder?" asked Gail Ross from longshore Local 23. "We'll be back," she said, and the delegation and then the whole crowd took up the chant.

—Marcy Rein

they're affiliated with the IDC, the ITF, or any other group," he said. "The most important thing is for dockers to work together," he said.

Paddy Crumlin, National Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia that is affiliated with the ITF, appeared briefly as a special guest speaker but made a dramatic appeal for unity. "I know there have been disappointments and mistakes in the past, but the ITF has been changing and improving," he asserted. Crumlin said the two docker groups should consider joining forces to build a united dockworker movement on a global level.

The financial realities of maintaining the International Dockworker Council raised another set of challenges for the meeting in Long Beach.

continued on page 8

Local news cont'd from p. 3

continue to endanger other workers... The local is moving forward with the hiring process for a new group of foremen who are undergoing a series of evaluations, written tests, and interviews... **Local 26** won an arbitration award totaling just under \$300,000 that helped many security guards, but some weren't covered so the local is waiting to hear from the arbitrator about compensation for another 18 workers....The Local reached a verbal agreement with SSA over security and staffing issues at two facilities that would bring those operations into compliance with the contract, but the local wants to see the terms



"Cager Clabaugh." Courtesy Port of Vancouver USA

in writing and will pursue arbitration if the writing doesn't reflect the verbal agreement...Bargaining is underway with United Paradyne and American Extrusion Products... Negotiations were successful with the Henry Company that produces roofing products, and also with the Metal Center...Negotiations are just beginning for Alpert and Alpert...An organizing effort and August 31 election was set for workers at the recycling center in Fontana...**Local 10** Longshoreman (and Reverend) Ted Frazier is coordinating some public outreach work to build stronger relations and win more community allies in the 2008 Longshore contract fight. Ted recently convened a gathering of church and community leaders and has plans for more meetings in the future....The Local is also trying to improve relations with Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums, reminding him that Oakland is one of the few major cities without a Longshore member on their Port Commission... Local 10 member Terence Martin left his ILWU brothers and sisters on August 23, 2005. He was a Good Samaritan who was killed after stopping a young man that was beating a pregnant woman. Terence was shot in the back as he walked away after saving the woman. Each year, co-workers hold a memorial with family members. "Terence was a union brother who died a hero and deserves to be remembered for his courage and generous spirit," says co-worker Ed Henderson. "Each year we say a prayer, light a candle, and release a bunch of white balloons," added Chauncie Gipson who helped organized this year's event with Ed... For the past 15 years, **Local 34** President Richard Cavalli says their local has welcomed a developmentally disadvantaged gentleman named Bob into their hall. Bob helps with clean up, passes out paychecks, and helps the Dispatcher file records. He is supported by "pass the hat" donations at every membership meeting and has been made an "honorary member." During the 2002 Lockout he helped staff the Oakland hall which became the informal lockout headquarters during the PMA's attack on the ILWU. Bob is now working only 1 day a week due to some health issues, but hopes to help us in our upcoming contract fight...**Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU)** President Alan Coté, Regional Director Marina Secchitano, rank-and-filer Bob Irminger and other ILWU officials met with Congressmembers Raul Grijalva and Neil Abercrombie in August to explain ILWU concerns about the Park Service decision to award the Alcatraz Island contract

concession to a non-union operator...P&M Marine Services had two tugs and a ten-year contract to serve Norwegian Cruise Lines—now the P&M crew has an IBU contract they secured with help from Vice President Wesley Furtado....

OREGON: Local 8 members were busy building community support in August, staffing a booth at the State Fair on opening day, then co-sponsoring the Seaport Celebration which brought hundreds of families to learn more about the Port of Portland and the ILWU. Kids built a giant 6-foot ship out of Lego while parents tried their skill on the crane simulators. Everyone feasted on a BBQ prepared for 2000 visitors...The Local is helping fund a Pacific Northwest Labor History meeting this fall...President Jeff Smith says he "worked his butt off" on a new bill that was recently signed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski that will allow workers to collect unemployment benefits if they are "locked-out" in a multi-employer dispute, such as the 2002 PMA action, when workers in California and Washington were eligible for unemployment – but Oregon workers were not. The governor says he signed the new law to "level the playing field"...**Local 28** has a little over 100 members who work as security officers at the ports of Tacoma and Portland, and also provide security at Kaiser Hospitals in the Portland area. Security officers at the port of Tacoma are currently bargaining and hope to catch-up with better wages earned by their counterparts up and down the coast...**Local 50** in Astoria is a smaller local but they put together a huge Labor Day picnic. This is their 49th annual event – it usually lasts 5 hours and attracts over 500 but sometimes tops 1,000. They welcome the entire community – even a few friendly politicians – but the speeches are short and the beer is free, along with 400 pounds of beef and plenty of fresh Oregon salmon...**Local 12** has been trying for six years to get more cargo into Coos Bay. They had to deal with port commissioners who were too negative and tried to trade away prime waterfront land. The commission even issued a study claiming that the Coos Bay port wasn't viable. After many meetings and several years of getting nowhere with the old commission, the local petitioned the Governor and politicians to make some changes. The Governor appointed a new port commission and asked the ILWU to join a search committee that found a new Director from the Port of Tacoma. Now things are looking more positive for containers coming into Coos Bay, and even better since the Governor signed a \$60 million bill for dredging and environmental work that has some shippers interested, including APM. President Marvin Caldera says things are moving in right direction now, and Secretary-Treasurer Jennifer Gumm says the future looks 100% better than it did 6 years ago...**Local 5** members who work at Powell's Books are mobilizing and negotiating for a new contract. The team has already reached a tentative agreement on their non-economic issues with some substantial gains, and are now moving on to the economics. This time they're attempting to use an "interest-based" approach to bargaining, and will keep the Union informed about how that develops...

WASHINGTON: Local 4 was invited to break ground on August 7 for the USA West Vancouver Freight Access Project at the Port of Vancouver. U.S. Senator Patty Murray was also on hand to support the \$56 million project that will relieve congestion on the main rail lines and improve access to the port. ILWU Local 4 President Cager Clabaugh spoke at the event and thanked Senator Murray for her

continued on page 8

Rank and file education wor



ILWU Counsel Rob Remar (r) set the tone for the week with his keynote remarks on the Duty of Fair Representation, requiring union officers to fully and fairly protect the rights of all represented workers without prejudice. Seated to his right: Education Committee Chair Patricia Aguirre (Local 63), International President Bob McEllrath, International Vice President Joe Radisich, and Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet.

The first Longshore Division Grievance & Arbitration Procedures Workshop (GAP) was held in San Francisco July 30 – August 3 for local officers, business agents and Labor Relations Committee representatives. President Bob McEllrath opened the intensive program which was planned by the Coast Education Committee under the supervision of the Coast Committee, coordinated by Gene Vrana, ILWU Director of Educational Services, and chaired by Patricia Aguirre, Local 63. Key sessions at the workshop included speakers, panel discussions, and multi-media presentations on:

- The Duty of Fair Representation (Rob Remar, ILWU Counsel)
- Understanding the grievance machinery in the longshore contract (Intl. Vice President Joe Radisich)
- Clerks' technology issues and their importance for the entire Longshore Division (Dane Jones, Local 40 and Glen Anderson, Local 52)
- Conducting research in the Coast database and Ferguson Index (Research Director Russ Bargmann, Rich Austin Jr., Local

19; Brad Clark, Local 4; and Coast Committeeman Sundet)

- How to prepare for an LRC and write a referral (Rich Castaneda, Local 23)
- Special sessions on Health & Safety procedures (Stephen Hanson, Local 8; Fred Gilliam, Local 91; Mark Cuevas, Local 54; Mike Villeggiante, Local 10); Picket Lines (Rich Austin, Sr., Pacific Coast Pensioners); Work Stoppages (David Arian, Local 13).
- How to prepare and present an arbitration. The training featured videotaped remarks by Coast Arbitrator John Kagel on proper arbitration procedures, followed by ILWU Counsel Beth Ross and Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet on the special procedures involved in Section 13.2 discrimination issues.

The spirited preparation and presentation of mock arbitrations was enlivened by the active participation of ILWU attorneys in the role of hearing arbitrators: Beth Ross, Jennifer Marston, Eleanor Morton, Alanna Coopersmith, Jacob Rukeyser and Philip Monrad—who also gave the participants specific

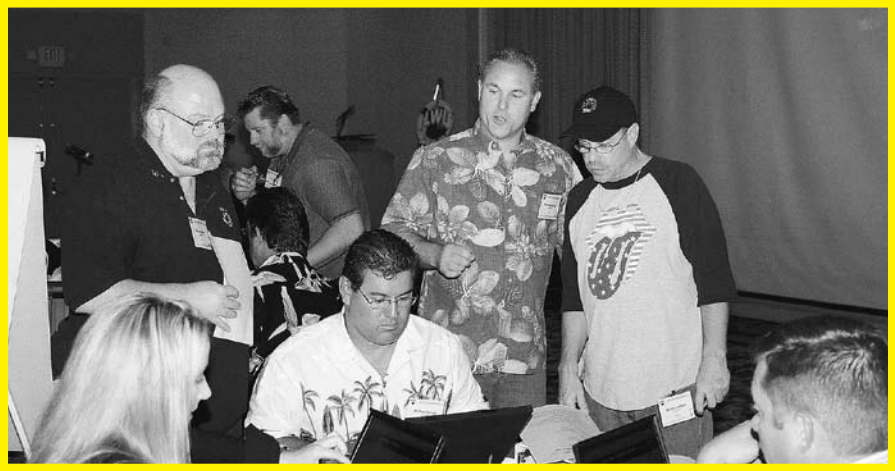


Debbie Stringfellow (Local 8) consults with Local 13's Steve Serafin while Jim Bilderback (Local 14) makes notes.



Clerks' technology issues, including the complex Clerks' Technology Framework procedures were described and made relevant to the entire Longshore Division by Dane Jones (Local 40), above, and Clerks' Tech Committee Chair Glen Anderson (Local 52), not shown.

Workshop held in San Francisco



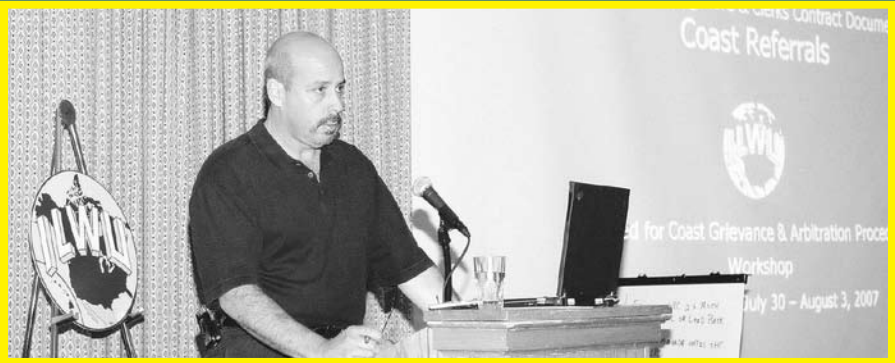
GAP participants received intensive training in how to use the Coast Labor Relations database for research in grievance handling and arbitration preparation. Training included small-group assignments facilitated by Education Committee members. From left to right: Andrea Stuller (Local 52), Bruce Holte (Local 8, Ed. Comm.), Michael Ponce (Local 63), Rich Austin, Jr. (Local 19, Ed. Comm.), and Brian Lambert (Local 19). Meanwhile, Fred Gilliam (Local 91, Ed. Comm.) assists another group in the background.

and constructive feedback about their efforts.

“We didn’t just train people in the right way to do things,” said McEllrath after the concluding session, “we put reference materials in their hands to take home and

share with their bothers and sisters involved in grievance handling and arbitrations. We plan on compiling all the GAP documents and distributing them to the locals for educational and training purposes.”

—Photos by Frank Wilder



Rick Castaneda, Local 23, fields questions about preparing for Labor Relations Committee meetings and writing referrals to the Coast Labor Relations Committee. His presentation was one of several that were provided to the workshop participants as handouts for future reference.



Procedures unique to safety grievances were emphasized in a rousing role-playing scenario by Education Committee members (from left to right) Mike Villeggiante (Local 10), Stephen Hanson (Local 8), Fred Gilliam (Local 91) and Mark Cuevas (Local 54).



The Education Committee and instructors met frequently throughout the week to evaluate the proceedings and keep the schedule on track. From left: Rich Austin, Jr. (Local 19), Rich Austin, Sr. (Pacific Coast pensioners Association), Danajo Montez-Olsen (Local 19), Stephen Hanson (Local 8), Brad Clark (Local 4), Rick Castaneda (Local 23), Fred Gilliam (Local 91), Mike Villeggiante (Local 10), Gene Vrana (ILWU Education Director), Mark Cuevas (standing, Local 54), Patricia Aguirre (Local 63), and David Arian (back to camera, Local 13). Not shown: Bruce Holte, Local 8, and ILWU Research Director Russ Bargmann.



The sign translates approximately to: “United dockers say no to malicious intentions in the construction of the container terminal: The people united will never be defeated.”

ILWU joins delegation to probe murder in Guatemala

When Pedro Zamora, a leader of Guatemala’s dockworker union was murdered on January 15, 2007, ILWU officials joined other labor leaders to demand justice for this cold-blooded killing that occurred during a struggle against privatization at the Pacific Port of Quetzal.

On July 22-26, Vice President Joe Radisich, Local 23 President Conrad Spell, and Northern California Area Director Joe Cabrales, joined a delegation of labor officials who traveled to Guatemala on a fact-finding and solidarity mission. The group met with Guatemala’s Attorney General, the Human Rights Commission, Port Authority, and the U.S. Ambassador.

“We made it clear that Pedro’s murder appeared to be more like a political assassination than the random act of violence that some officials had suggested,” said Radisich. “We told them Zamora’s murder is being discussed at City Councils and in Congress, and that it could impact foreign aid funding for Guatemala.”

To back up those claims, Radisich brought resolutions and letters of support from the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach, Carson, plus the Los Angeles Port Commission. The resolutions and letters condemned the killing and called for Zamora’s assass-

sins to be brought to justice. The documents were formally presented to Zamora’s son during a visit to the Port of Quetzal and the union headquarters where delegates met with a group of 800 dock workers. Guatemalan dockworkers earn about \$150 per week compared to the country’s average of less than \$2 a day.

The bullet-ridden car where Zamora died is still sitting in front of the nearby police station. Guatemalan officials had promised an aggressive and thorough investigation, but have produced no suspects and little information besides speculating that Zamora’s killing may have resulted from a family dispute or random act of violence instead of investigating the obvious connection to his role in fighting privatization at the Port.

Companies doing business at the Port of Quetzal include Maersk, the NYK Line, and Maruba. Chiquita bananas are loaded at another facility. Chiquita was recently exposed in U.S. Congressional hearings for funding right-wing paramilitary groups in Colombia that are linked to the assassination of many labor leaders.

“We’ll continue asking questions and demanding answers until there’s justice, and try to protect the remaining union leaders who are carrying on this fight” says Joe Radisich.

Bargaining resumes for ILWU Canada longshore

by Tom Price

ILWU Canada’s negotiating team began an eight-day round of contract talks Aug. 22 with the British Columbia Maritime Employers’ Assn. According to the union, the BCMEA hasn’t moved much. But the ILWU is holding out hopes for a new contract replacing the one that expired March 31. When bargaining recessed in June the employers still had many proposals on deck that the union had rejected. Foremen’s Local 514, ILWU Canada, will also return to negotiations with their employers.

“The worst employer demands include changes to the dispatch system,” ILWU Canada President Tom Dufresne said. “We’re concerned with just how far they want to go. Local 500 has agreed to explore different options to facilitate dispatch, but are not willing to change the whole system.”

The BCMEA wants to use a larger portion of steady employees. That means fewer jobs dispatched out of the hiring hall, bringing up issues of fair access to jobs.

“The employer wants a greater say on who will be in the workforce,” Dufresne said. “And they want to cut the union out of that part of the decision making process. We’ve had this in place for 30 years and it works very well. While there can be improvements, we’re not going to cede control of the dispatch of a regular workforce. All members are equal, we’re not prepared to create a special elite force within the union chosen by the employer.”

The union’s trustees have worked on a number of issues, including the benefit plan. Everyone in Canada has healthcare, but pensions, drugs, and other health services are open for bargaining. The union wants a new benefit plan for casuals, but the BCMEA is reluctant to agree. ILWU Canada’s longshore caucus is determined that anyone working in the industry for any length of time deserves to be covered by a health and benefit plan, Dufresne said.

“If BCMEA wants people to come into our industry and stay, then they should treat people equally,” he said. “It’s important that with the current labor shortage we keep people working. That means good wages, benefits, and the hiring hall.”

The union is interested in protecting the industry against corporate raiders, Dufresne said. Recently, companies with no real connection to the maritime industry have bought out many of the BCMEA employers. Some of these firms are known to slash costs and “flip” the company by selling it for a short-term profit. That might be one thing for real estate, but it could be a disaster for the ports in the long-term.

“We’re getting less and less optimistic that we’ll achieve an agreement without going into conciliation,” Dufresne said. “The BCMEA have hired a new president-CEO who will take over as of Oct. 1, and he has a checkered history in labor relations on the provincial level. We’re cautious about him and the problems he’s caused in other industries.”

SEPTEMBER 2007

NOTICE TO ALL ILWU-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES, ILWU MEMBERS, FINANCIAL CORE NON-MEMBERS AND NEW HIRES

This notice applies to all ILWU-represented employees, ILWU members, nonmembers and new hires working in an ILWU bargaining unit, including members and individuals who happen at any time to become financial core members by any means, including by choice, suspension or expulsion from union membership in any local or division affiliated with the ILWU, for the one year period following the date of this notice or until such time covered by a later notice of similar kind.

The information contained herein applies to ILWU International per capita and, for those working in the Longshore Division, the ILWU Coast Pro Rata fees or payments of any kind under a union security clause. This notice also applies to local dues and fees paid to any affiliated ILWU locals or divisions, except those affiliates who have chosen not to be covered by this notice and have issued their own separate notice under their own separate policies and procedures. (Accordingly, this notice shall be superseded by any other notice issued by any affiliated ILWU local or division with respect to its dues and fees.)

Please be advised that individuals working under a union security clause contained in a collective bargaining agreement, notwithstanding the specific provisions of such clause, are only required as a condition of employment under such clause to pay uniform dues and any required initiation fees and may, by writing to the ILWU Secretary-Treasurer, or to their local ILWU secretary-treasurer, resign or decline union membership and choose to become a “financial core member” at any time. Such “financial core members” are deemed to be in compliance with any union security clause, regardless of any specific wording to the contrary, so long as they timely pay all regular and periodic financial core dues or fees properly charged by their bargaining representative as explained herein.

Please be advised, however, that financial core members deprive themselves of the valuable rights of union membership in the ILWU and their ILWU local or division. A financial core member does not have the right to vote, nominate for office, hold office, or be a candidate for office in the ILWU; nor may he/she participate in or even attend ILWU meetings or any functions of the union that are limited to union members. In addition, a financial core member has no right to vote on dues increases or on contracts submitted to the membership for ratification. These rights and privileges of union membership are accorded only to union members in good standing.

Nevertheless, financial core members are still legally required under a valid union security clause to pay to their union for the costs related to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievance adjustment, and union organizing of establishments within competitive markets of ILWU-unionized employers, and other activities reasonably related to the effectuation of the union’s representational duties (hereinafter called “chargeable activities”). However, union expenditures for non-representational activities such as political activities, lobbying (hereinafter called “nonchargeable activities”)—activities which most workers know help build a better climate for us all in bargaining with employers and in securing fundamental worker rights—may not be charged to financial core members who file timely objections.

For calendar year 2006 (which is the most recent audited year), the financial review has confirmed that no more than 11% of all ILWU International’s expenditures were for nonchargeable activities. While each ILWU local and division may have different percentages of nonchargeable expenditures, financial reviews and practical experience confirm that the nonchargeable percentage for ILWU locals is significantly lower than that for the ILWU International. Nevertheless, those ILWU locals and divisions covered by this notice will not collect or seek to collect financial core fees greater than that based on the nonchargeable percentage of 11% stated above for the ILWU International for the applicable collection period herein or until such time as such local issues a separate notice.

For those individuals employed in the ILWU Longshore Division and work for a PMA-member company under the Pacific Coast Longshore and Clerks Agreement, please also note that with respect to Coast Pro Rata Fees (including “Fighting Fund” fees), for calendar year 2006 (which is the most recent audited year), the financial review has confirmed that no more than 9% of all ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee’s expenditures were for nonchargeable activities.

The ILWU International Executive Board and the ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee have adopted the following Procedures on Financial Core Members Objecting to Nonchargeable Expenditures (hereinafter called the “Procedures”). Under the Procedures, a financial core member of any affiliated ILWU local and division has the right within an applicable 30 day period of time to object to expenditure for nonchargeable activities of his or her local dues paid to the ILWU local and the per capita paid to the ILWU International, as well as any Coast Pro Rata fees paid to the ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee. In the event a financial core member perfects such objection, he or she shall receive either the appropriate monthly reduction or an advance rebate of a portion of local dues and per capita reflecting the ILWU International’s nonchargeable percentage of 11% stated above and, additionally for those working in the ILWU Longshore Division, an appropriate monthly reduction or an advance rebate of a portion of the coast pro rata fees reflecting the ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee’s nonchargeable percentage of 9% stated above.

Under the Procedures, an objection by a financial core member must be made in writing and post-marked within 30 days from the date of this notice or the date of becoming a new hire or a financial core member under an ILWU union security clause and receipt of this notice, whichever is later, and addressed to the ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, 1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. To be valid, the written objection must specify the objector’s name, address, social security number, current wage rate, the name of his or her employer and the name of the local union or division which represents the objector. A written objection must be timely in order to be valid. Without waiving the 30-day filing period with respect to other notices of this type, please be advised that under this notice only, objections filed by current financial core members will be deemed timely if postmarked on or before November 1, 2007. Individuals who after the date of this notice become new hires or financial core members may file an objection within 30 days of the date they become a new hire or financial core member or receive this notice, whichever is later.

Unless changed by a later notice, those financial core members and new hires who file timely objections will not be charged from the date they file a timely objection through October 2008 for expenditures related to nonchargeable activities based on the applicable percentages noted above and also will be provided detailed, independently audited financial information concerning the breakdown between chargeable and nonchargeable expenditures of the ILWU International, the ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee (if the objector works in the Longshore Division) and of their ILWU local (if covered by this notice as explained herein). Objectors will also be given an opportunity to file, within 30 days of receipt of such financial information, a challenge to the amount and calculation of any such nonchargeable expenditures and percentages, as well as an opportunity to have such a challenge resolved, if not voluntarily settled, through expeditious arbitration before a neutral arbitrator selected by the American Arbitration Association (AAA) in proceedings conducted under AAA Rules applicable to objections to agency fees. Please also note that the amount or portion of financial core fees pending the period for filing any objection and challenge as well as the amount reasonably in dispute pursuant to any challenges will be kept in an interest bearing escrow account pending resolution of such challenges. Objectors who file challenges will receive any amount that may be determined to be owed them, plus accrued interest, pursuant to these Procedures.

It is important to know that the vast majority of ILWU represented workers believe that the little extra in dues for maintaining union membership and enjoying all the valuable benefits of full participation in the governing of the ILWU, and the negotiation of working conditions is quite a bargain. For a few cents more each week, union members enjoy all the benefits of membership in the ILWU. We sincerely believe that after careful consideration, new hires and financial core members too will agree that becoming and remaining a union member makes the most sense. If you are not a union member already but are eligible for membership under your Local’s constitution and rules, please contact your ILWU local to join the ILWU.

This notice may be superseded or amended by later notices as issued by the ILWU, the Coast Pro Rata Committee or affiliated locals and divisions of the ILWU.

Union stalwart George Kuvakas passes

by Tom Price

George “the Greek” Kuvakas Sr. was in his seventh decade of service to the union when he died July 7. In his day he served longshore Local 13 and walking bosses’ Local 94 in many offices, and then he put in his considerable energy into the pensioners clubs. George was known as Harry Bridges’ right hand man and a real tough business agent on the waterfront.

He was born in Youngstown, Ohio in 1924. His dad was a steelworker and George worked odd jobs around town before hopping a freight to California. He was about 14 or 15 at the time, according his son, Local 94’s George (Dan) Kuvakas Jr.

“He probably finished 8th or 9th grade in school, so everything else he learned he learned on the streets,” his son said. “He kicked around California a while and befriended a couple guys who worked on the waterfront. He lied about his age and got onto the docks at age 16.”

In 1943 he met Carol, a Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps. volunteer, while she was checking cargo at Matson Terminals. They married Sept. 1944 and gave birth to their eldest son George a year later.

The first recorded instance of Kuvakas’ service to the union began in the spring of 1951 when Local 13 members elected him secretary of the Stewards Council. He showed a keen interest in politics, and members elected him to the Southern Calif. District Council in 1954 and Business Agent later that year.

In those days, longshore workers loaded ships with the strength of their backs and the union was engaged in a long battle to enforce safety standards on the employer. Kuvakas attended the union’s first Longshore Safety Conference in San Francisco in 1955 and accepted the Longshore Caucus’ election to attend a national safety conference later that year.

Meanwhile the employers were active. They had decided to bring ships in with the hatch covers off, raising both safety and jurisdictional issues that triggered a union beef. The employers asked the government for help. A congressional committee met in Los Angeles and toured the docks. Kuvakas testified before



ILWU Library

Kuvakas addressing the 1961 Pacific and Asian Dockworkers’ Conference in Tokyo.

the committee in Washington, D.C. The committee denied the employers’ requests and instead recommended a national safety program. Here how George tells the story:

“This safety program held its first meeting with the unions and employers in the USA,” he said in 2002. “It was held in May 1956 with President Eisenhower. I was present representing the ILWU.”

He also represented the ILWU at the President’s Safety Conf. in Washington, D.C. in March 1958. Some years later the Occupational Safety and Health Act would be established, in part because of the efforts of people like Kuvakas.

Local 13 members elected Kuvakas president in 1960. Back in the 1948 strike dockers around the world came to the ILWU’s aid. Kuvakas maintained that internationalist tradition, visiting Mexican longshoremen in 1961. Mexican dockers had paid the ILWU a solidarity visit earlier that year. He described their wages and working conditions in his report in *The Dispatcher*. For their part, the Mexican visitors to Long Beach were impressed with the turnout at Local 13 meetings and the spirit of union democracy.

Kuvakas attended the Pacific and Asian Dockworkers’ Conference in Japan later that year, bringing greetings from the ILWU’s Mexican docker friends who were unable to attend for

continued on page 7

Letters to *The Dispatcher* cont’d from p. 2

DON’T FORGET OUR PENSIONERS!

Last month’s page 12 article about the Pacific Coast Pensioners Assn. members leafleting Rite Aid drug-stores inadvertently omitted mention of Bay Area and Southern Calif. pensioners. They participated along with retired members in Washington and Oregon in the June 14 event.

Retirees make up a large part of Rite Aid’s business, and they are tired of the sweatshop treatment Rite Aid warehouse workers put up with and they support the workers’ rights to organize a union.

We will continue leafleting for as long as it takes to help the Rite Aid workers win their fight for justice. You can count on the Pensioners to continue helping new workers who want to organize and join this great union

—Rich Austin, President, Pacific Coast Pensioners Association

ILWU WIDOW SAYS ‘THANK YOU’ FOR BENEFITS

Dear President McEllrath:

I am writing you to say “thank you” for your hard work for the union. I am a widow 85-years young. My husband Stanley was a long-time member, starting with Local 10 and then on to Local 34. He retired after 30 years of service. His father before him was on the waterfront at the time of the “Big Strike.”

I read the paper from front to

back and I know you are preparing for a new contract. I have had a lot of illness in the last four years, and this is where the big “thank you” comes in. Myself and all the many retirees would never have made it if it weren’t for our wonderful benefits.

I know you all have a fight ahead. Keep strong and God be with you all the way.

— Ruth B. Budesa

ART ON THE DOCKS WITH A PURPOSE

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I work at the A.P.L. Terminal as a Gate Chief at the Port of Los Angeles. I have been in the industry as a Casual since 1972 and received my book in 1982. This union has been very good to me and my family, so when I see what is taking place worldwide with management, corporate greed, outsourcing, and the Bush administration that stands against labor, it is very frustrating and sickening.

I put this placard together in a moment of anger to express my feelings about the corrosive conditions that are eating away at labor and government.

I want to thank you for our newspaper, and hope our members will take a little time to read about some of the issues that confront us and labor worldwide.

—Michael Brandt Local 63, San Pedro



L to R: Phil Vlaic, Lou Loveridge, Ray Patricio at Calif. Congress of Seniors.

When you retire, ask yourself: What would Harry do?

When Harry Bridges retired he didn't quit the struggle. He helped organize the California Congress of Seniors (CCS) into a lobbying force that he said could "hammer on the door of the White House or kick the door in."

That was back in 1977 but the light has not gone out of the struggle. Al Perisho, who retired from Local 63, is President of the Southern California Pensioners Group—and Director at Large of the CCS.

The CCS Convention was held in Long Beach this past June and Longshore was well represented by Lou Loveridge, Herman Moreno, Phil Vlaic, Ray Patricio, Myrt and Al Perisho, and myself. These Southern California ILWU retirees attended and continue the fight for human rights started by Harry Bridges back in 1977.

"When Harry walked into that founding convention at the Fresno Hilton, he could have been President of the CCS or whatever he wanted—that's how much respect we all had for Harry," said Roland Yorke who has been a member of CCS since the inception. "But Harry chose to be Vice President, explaining that he had a lot of baggage being leader of the most progressive union around. He didn't want anything to get in the way of this new organization getting off to a good start".

The CCS was formed out of the efforts of retirees from various unions and elder advocacy group such as the Gray Panthers. CCS is a statewide nonprofit education and advocacy organization. Hundreds of organizations are affiliated, giving CCS a combined membership of over 650,000.

CCS has emerged as a major progressive force for California's seniors and is devoted to legislative and consumer affairs that deal primarily with seniors. The president of CCS is Hank Lacayo of Newbury Park, California. Hank is a retired UAW member and past administrative assistant to UAW international president Walter Reuther.

ILWU Pensioner Al Perisho co-chairs the Resolutions Committee at the convention. The CCS works on legislation around issues of Social Security, universal health care, affordable housing, workers disability compensation and consumer issues that impact seniors on fixed incomes such as the high cost of living, the high cost of utilities and gasoline.

Headquartered across from the state capitol, CCS carries on an aggressive lobbying effort on behalf of seniors, writing and analyzing legislation, mobilizing seniors to testify on their own behalf, and to keep lobbying back home where we need to visit our representatives when they're in their district offices.

"The CCS is a powerful force for retired workers and all seniors," says Al Perisho, "that deserves our strong support if not for ourselves then for Harry".

And so from 1977 until now, the CCS has been carrying on in the tradition of Harry Bridges and continuing the struggle for human dignity and justice for all. For more information about joining CCS, call me at 310-748-7422 or visit our website at www.seniors.org.

—Lewis Wright,, Local 63 retired
Board of Directors, S. Cal. Pensioners Group

Longshore retired, deceased and survivors

RETIRED:

Local 8—Roger Bispham; **Local 10**—Robert Antonelli, David J. Brown Jr., Lenoral Lamb; **Local 13**—Fred B. Ponce, Anthony S. Orlando, Edgar Andrews, Dennis Gesualdi, Joy Collins, George Macias, Luis A. Torres, Daniel Toscano, Manuel Navarrete, Robert Lara, Juana Medina, Edward Acuna; **Local 14**—Michael Hauger; **Local 21**—John Parvi, Darold Dietz; **Local 23**—Ronald Brieger, Arless Hunter, Terrence Mason, John Charboneau; **Local 34**—Edmond Scola; **Local 52**—John Herrin, Michele Drayton, Dennis McCormick; **Local 63**—Jerry M. Smith, Tado Fumiaki, Thomas Beecher, Victor Hietala, Richard Beck, Marshal Herrera Jr.; **Local 91**—John Dentoni; **Local 92**—Eugene Manning Jr.

DECEASED:

Local 4—Keith Will (Elanor); **Local 8**—Gary Still (Patricia), Rudolph Swendsen (Katherine), Odie Halbrook (Joann); **Local 10**—Gilbert Mugary Jr. (Luz), Estes Cutrer (Dorothy), Earl Jackson (Martha), Pierre Casabonne (Rosario), George Fields (Maxine), Gerald Johnson (Aubanie, Gerald Jr.), Jack Giusto Jr. (Carol), Lonnie Barnett (Katheryn), Ronald Rampone (Ethel), Walter Rothschild (Elmira), James Neal; **Local 12**—Dale Phillips (Jones), James Scavera; **Local 13**—Larry Livingston (Joan), George Taylor (Nancy), Albert Denler (Hattie), Chuck Brady (Sylvia), Daniel Cheak (Sammie), William Mount Joy (Juanita), Sosipeni Kalekale (Tangi), Willie Deed Jr., Arnold Gurule, Ernest Hagen; **Local 19**—William Neill (Tomalene), Chester Bowman Jr. (Teresa), William Miller (Darlene), Robert Hein; **Local 21**—Benny Larson (Dorothy), Paul

Ojalehto (Thelma), James Hill (Shelly); **Local 27**—Emory Keys; **Local 24**—John Munoz (Norma); **Local 34**—Robert Whelan (Catherine), Eddie Williams, Charles Yoda; **Local 40**—Joseph Vrlcak (Anne), Olan Jarrell , Walter Shrock; **Local 47**—Gerald Moon (Diana), Willis Whittaker; **Local 52**—Charles Black (Wilma); **Local 53**—Michael Kasper (Debra); **Local 54**—Santiago Gardea (Molly), Edwin Hogan (Donna), Hubert Laplante; **Local 63**—Frederick Von Nagel (Alyssa and Christina), Judith Montoya (Arthur), Robert Cherry, John Felando, Dale Elizabeth Purdy; **Local 91**—Edward Lewandowski (Marjorie); **Local 92**—Charles Bryant (Charlot); **Local 94**—Dale Atkeson (Wanda), Sherman Clark Jr. (Deatrice), Tony Iacono, Lujo Moretti. (Survivors in parenthesis.)

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 7—Ruth Schuberger; **Local 8**—Dolores Millard; **Local 10**—Maria DaCosta, Cornelia Sciutti, Anna James, Ernestine Jones, Leona Barnacle, Adeline Franceschi, Dollie Marshall, Frances Boyle; **Local 13**—Esther Reed, Lucile Derrick, Mary Soto; **Local 19**—Catherine Glass, Nabiha Annan, Nancy Toliver, Bessie Fox, Lorraine Costa; **Local 23**—Jeanette Webster; **Local 34**—Karen Pillsbury; **Local 40**—Anne Vrlcak; **Local 46**—Grace Scott; **Local 50**—Jonnie Rova; **Local 54**—Effie Foreman, Nettie Simonaro; **Local 63**—Phyllis Bisher, Nora Tuck; **Local 91**—Audrey McDonnell, Mercedes Colon; **Local 94**—Mariane Huckabey, Marguerite Davis, Maxine Keenan.

ILWU TELLS AG DEPT. TO QUIT FUNDING LAWBREAKERS

Blue Diamond Growers, along with the California Almond Board, has gotten more than \$6.75 million in marketing subsidies from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) in the last four years. This funding could increase sharply if parts of the proposed farm bill become law. But the ILWU wants Congress and the USDA to be sure labor law violators like Blue Diamond don't share such gifts of public funds.

"Our political action electing a more worker-friendly Congress gave us the ability to influence policy," said Longshore Legislative Committee Chair Max Vekich. "It doesn't make sense to have public funds subsidize bad employers."

Workers at Blue Diamond's Sacramento plant have been organizing since September 2004 to join ILWU warehouse Local 17. The company responded with a nasty anti-union campaign that landed it in trouble with the law. A National Labor Relations Board judge found the company guilty of more than 20 labor law violations in March 2006 and ordered Blue Diamond to re-hire two union supporters it wrongfully fired.

Blue Diamond has been getting subsidies under USDA's Market Access Program (MAP), which helps promote U.S. farm products overseas. California almond growers, like Blue Diamond, export some 70 percent of their crop. Almonds rank as the top specialty crop export from the U.S., by value, and California's top agricultural export. The Almond Board reports that worldwide shipments of California nuts have grown 11 percent in the last five years. With a record crop of 1.3 billion projected for this year, marketing is more critical than ever for the industry's future.

"We must effectively sell the benefits that almonds provide to consumers and to global food companies who are encouraged to develop additional new products," Blue Diamond CEO Doug Youngdahl said at the cooperative's last annual meeting.

Questions over Blue Diamond's right to subsidies came up in Congress during the debate over appropriations for agriculture, thanks to two pro-labor members. Rep. Phil Hare (D-Illinois) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), the chair of the subcommittee on USDA appropriations, had a formal conversation on the House floor.

continued on page 8

LOCAL 6 MEMBERS RATIFY MASTER CONTRACT

After three months of bargaining, warehouse Local 6 workers finally got a contract. The three-year deal provides \$2 worth of wage increases: 70 cents the first year, 60 cents the second, and 70 cents the third. The agreement covers ten Bay Area ILWU houses and 650 members. Workers ratified it July 14 and got retroactive pay increases back to May 31.

The ILWU and Teamsters bargain the master agreement jointly with the Industrial Employers and Distributors Association.

"Our negotiations usually begin in April and are wrapped up by the time the contract expires at the end of May," Local 6 President Efren Alarcon said. "The sticking point this time was medical benefits. The employers were only willing to pay a certain amount, and insisted that members pay anything beyond that."

Workers were able to maintain their level of medical benefits, but with a co-payment that maxes out at \$50 per month. The bargaining team negotiated a pension increase of five dollars a month per year of service. When they retire, members will receive \$55 per month for each year they worked, starting next year.

The union was able to maintain a medical trust fund that will cover retirees for several more years medicals, but the employers refused to provide any long-term medical coverage for retirees, effectively ending retiree health care when the fund runs out.

—Tom Price

Kuvakas passes *cont'd from p. 6*

financial reasons and because their government had objected.

The conference praised the ILWU's fight for union jobs in the face of mechanization and modernization. The conference also advocated formal registration lists for dockers, as supported by the International Labor Organization's conventions. Closer to home, he would serve as a troubleshooter for Harry Bridges during ILWU Canada's 1963 contract talks.

He left Local 13 in 1963 for Local 94. He retired in 1980, but kept up the fight.

"I noticed the education George was doing through the pensioners and now that he was retired," Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz Jr. said. "He was a tough old bird, loved debate, but he had a heart of gold."

Kuvakas held up his end during the 2002 contract struggle, speaking

to thousands in at a rally in August:

"Just remember who we are fighting," he said, "a warlord named George W. Bush."

Just before Christmas in 1961, an area newspaper ran a full-page story on Local 13 and its contributions to the community. The article quoted Kuvakas paying homage to the old timers in words that could easily describe himself and his generation.

"They built up the organization through the years with two hard-fought strikes before the war and two after it," he said. "If it hadn't been for those old timers battling for better conditions our younger generation would not only have no jobs—it couldn't even exist."

He is survived by Alice, his wife of 26 years, his two sons George and Randall, his stepchildren Judy, Kenny and Ginny, and 12 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

“LABOR AND POLITICAL ACTION”

A CLASS OFFERED BY L.A. TRADE TECH COLLEGE LABOR CENTER WITH THE ILWU.

Politics is more than elections! ○ Learn campaign strategies and techniques and develop your union's political program by organizing members around issues that matter to them. ○ Learn first-hand about the ILWU's Rite Aid campaign and gain valuable experience on how ILWU members can take on large employers such as Rite Aid.

**WEDNESDAYS 6 P.M. TO 9:10 P.M. * SEPT. 5 – DEC. 9, 2007
AT ILWU LOCAL 63, 350 WEST 5TH ST., SAN PEDRO**

LS 7 Section 3254 (3 units). You can enroll in class or by mail. Fees \$20 per unit, \$60 for three units. For a brochure or more info, please call (213) 763-7129 or leave a message for Patricia Aguirre at (310) 210-6774.

LATTC Labor Center 400 W. Washington Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90015

Local news *cont'd from p. 4*

continued support. He noted that she serves on the Transportation Committee and it's important to have friends like her in those places. The project should be completed by 2010 and could double the number of Longshore jobs at the port...**Local 19** is pleased with port expansion plans that will convert Pier 30 from handling cruise ships into a container operation, while work is underway to open a new cruise facility at pier 91. With bids arriving "on budget" for the construction work, pier 30 should be handling containers in the 2nd quarter of 2009 along with the new cruise ship terminal. President Harald Ugles expects a "3rd call" on Fridays in the 2008 cruise season that begins late April and goes to October...Safety concern has increased since the state agency (DOSH) conducted compliance audits and issued fines against TTI for failing to promote the use of safety belts in top-picks and semi's. The enforcement action may be related to a death earlier this year in another port where seat belts may have been a factor ...At their latest "stop work" meeting in August, Local 19 members awarded \$575 scholarships to Megann Karch, Niklas Enquist, Jeniffer Ventoza, Jessica Ventoza, and Chelsea Purcella. The Local's *Melvin Stenberg Scholarship* was awarded to Kawika Emsley-Pai...**Local 23** members are watching plans by the Port of Tacoma to purchase additional waterfront land that will expand the port's capacity by another 10 million TEU's over the next 15 years...The Tacoma longshore local also endorsed strong contenders in August 20 primary election for Port Commissioner.

ALASKA: The Dutch Harbor City

Council election will have at least two pro-labor candidates this year and both are from the ILWU: Valerie Lemas who recently helped her fellow security guards win recognition through **Unit 223** (see their story in the July 2007 *Dispatcher*), and Randall Baker, President of Unit 223. Valerie ran last time and lost by only 70 votes in a 3-way race that generated record turnout. She decided to run again after getting lots of support and encouragement from other workers in town. Randall says all the unions in town are coming together to support their candidacy...There's growing concern about all the trampers operating around Dutch Harbor with foreign flags and crews that are taking-on frozen fish from the large processing boats. Federal law says these trampers are supposed to hire U.S. labor to do their stevedoring work when available, but the law is being ignored. Unit 223 filed charges with the Department of Labor this past July, but the agency moved so slowly that the whole season went by before any investigation took place. Baker says the problem can be resolved and could generate more jobs at many ports but better statewide coordination and political support is required...**Unit 16** in Juneau is struggling with Southeast Stevedoring over jurisdictional issues. The company and cruise ship operators racked-up over 80 customs and contractual violations in just a few weeks this summer that Unit 16 is hoping to arbitrate in September...APL is moving cargo containers at ports throughout the state that should be covered by the Alaska Longshore Agreement, but the company is refusing to work with ILWU members out-

side of Kodiak and Dutch Harbor. The company refused to appear at a Joint Port Labor Relations Committee meeting in July. Unit 16 is filing charges; rank-and-filer Dennis Young thinks the prospect for victory are good, but may take awhile. Local 16 President Allan Hayes says "it's still the tourist season up here and we're all working like hell on cruise ships for the next 5 weeks, then it's deer season!" **Unit 62** members in

Ketchikan are now working on a new berth that was finished in July and has some nice new features including cat-walks (so ladders aren't needed), power winches to haul the lines, and hooks that release easily with a lever. Secretary-Treasurer Gary Leask says it's a lot safer and more accessible than the old system. **Call or e-mail your local news to the *Dispatcher*: (415) 775-0533, ext 113, or Craig@ilwu.org**

Worksafe! to hold safety policy conferences

The non-profit safety advocacy group *Worksafe!* collaborated closely with the ILWU to promote indoor heat regulations through CAL/OSHA, California's workplace safety agency. The plight of Rite Aid workers in the sweltering high desert in Lancaster, Calif. spurred these efforts.

Worksafe! will hold a two-day occupational health and safety (OHS) conference entitled "Learning from the Past, Building for the Future: Worker Health and Safety Policy, Research, Advocacy and Organizing."

The Worksafe! OSH Policy Conference will be held Sunday, December 2, 12:30 pm - 9 pm and Monday December 3, 2007, 9:00 am-6 pm at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1800 Powell Street, Emeryville, CA 94608.

Worker safety advocates are invited to contact (510) 302-1071 or e-mail fsc@worksafe.org if they want to attend. The web site is www.worksafe.org.

Conference organizers say the statewide gathering will identify priorities for future legislation, promote new OSHA regulations, and take other actions. The group will release a major policy paper on occupational safety and health problems and solutions, and will bring together worker safety advocates from all over the country. Representatives from unions, labor councils and worker centers will work with safety and health specialists and attorneys.

Worksafe!'s goal is to build a network of concerned groups and individuals to promote and monitor California's occupational safety and health. It promotes education on the need for worker protection, the control of workplace hazards, and the protection of community health and the environment. It also advocates for effective worker injury and illness prevention programs and a comprehensive government program to protect all workers.

With no paid staff, *Worksafe!* volunteers provide technical assistance to unions and other worker organizations, to community groups, responsible employers, and government.

ILWU warns Ag Dept. *cont'd from p. 7*

"Would the gentlewoman [DeLauro] agree with me that the Secretary of Agriculture has the authority to deny serious labor lawbreakers taxpayer funds which are distributed under the Market Access Program?" asked Hare, a former president of UNITE-HERE Local 617.

"I too am concerned about the treatment of workers at Blue Diamond Growers," DeLauro responded, noting that MAP rules require companies to respect the laws of other countries when they hire workers overseas to market their products.

The exchange between the two, something known on Capitol Hill as a "colloquy," became part of the Congressional Record. Such colloquies affect the way laws get put into practice.

"After laws are passed, agencies have to write the rules to implement them," Vekich said. "The agencies look to colloquies for information on the intent of the legislation.

"This was a shot across the bow, saying there is a problem here to be fixed," he said.

The ILWU also gave direct input when the USDA held a hearing July 25 on changes to the rules governing MAP. The hearing drew a raft of agency staff but only a handful of groups wanting to make public comments. ILWU Legislative Director Lindsay McLaughlin got in line with the representatives of the poultry industry, the Wisconsin Ginseng Assn. and the Craft Brewer's Assn. to present the union's testimony.

"Companies that get public assistance should be required to act like good public citizens," McLaughlin said. "This issue is not just about Blue Diamond Growers, but an effort to ensure that the United States government is not putting its imprimatur on any company that violates the rights of workers."

—Marcy Rein

Dockworkers meet *cont'd from p. 3*

Many groups had failed to make their minimum contributions to support the IDC, despite earlier pledges to do so, leaving a degree of uncertainty about how the group can continue to operate.

Despite the political and financial challenges, the IDC meeting inspired delegates to continue building solidarity across borders and between different unions. The body thanked Julian Garcia of the Spanish dockworker union "La Coordinadora" with a standing ovation for his leadership as General Coordinator of the IDC, and elected a dynamic young activist from the same union, Antolin Goya, to replace Garcia.

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The ILWU Organizing team delivered a brief presentation to the IDC, offering special thanks to the Spanish dockworkers who scored an important victory last year in the campaign to support the ILWU organizing support for Blue Diamond Almond workers. *La Coordinadora* led a successful effort to disrupt a global industry conference in Spain that featured the CEO of Blue Diamond who was upstaged by Spanish activists who challenged his union-busting practices in Sacramento.

"Your solidarity action showed Blue Diamond officials that workers in Sacramento are part of a network with global reach," said ILWU Organizing Director Peter Olney.

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