Longshore Safety Committee is negotiating for more protection against deadly hazards

While the ILWU’s Longshore Negotiating Committee continues meeting with Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) officials to reach terms on a new Longshore & Clerks Contract that will replace the one expiring at midnight on June 30th, eight members of the ILWU’s Safety Sub-Committee are also trying to negotiate new ways to protect workers from dangerous hazards and deadly injuries.

“We opened our safety negotiations by telling employers that we need a stronger Safety Code to protect everyone on the docks,” said Local 10 member Ed Ferris, Chair of the Safety Sub-Committee. “Our goal is to improve safety on the waterfront.”

The “Safety Code” is a 168-page document formally known as the ILWU-PMA Pacific Coast Marine Safety Code. “It’s our bible,” says Local 98 member Paul Weiser, a veteran dockworker with over five decades of experience who knows the risks involved. “This job can kill you in a second – before you even know what hit you.”

Weiser serves on the Safety Committee with seven co-workers: Ray Benavente of Local 13 representing Maintenance and Repair; Tracy Burchett of Local 53, Ryan Whitman of Local 23, Adam Wetzell of Local 8, and Paul Weiser of Local 98.

Serious about saving lives: ILWU Safety Sub-Committee members are pushing for improvements in the Pacific Coast Marine Safety Code in order to help save lives and prevent serious injuries on the waterfront. (L-R): Ray Benavente of Local 13, Committee Chair Ed Ferris of Local 10, Vice Chair Mike Podue of Local 63, Luke Hollingsworth of Local 13, Tracy Burchett of Local 53, Ryan Whitman of Local 23, Adam Wetzell of Local 8, and Paul Weiser of Local 98.

continued on page 5
Dear Editor,

I was pleased to see that Local 13 members John Espinoza, Jr. and former International President Dave Arian were both honored at the Harry Bridges Institute’s 20th Annual Cesar Chavez Labor Tribute Banquet, with photos that appeared on page 6 in the May, 2014 issue of The Dispatcher. However, I didn’t see former Local 63 President Mike Podue, who was also honored at the event for his many years of leadership and service to our Union. Brother Mike Podue continues to serve our great Union as Local 63’s Labor Relations Committee Representative, Coast Legislative Committee member, Coast Safety Committee member and negotiator for the Coast Safety Code. I would like to correct the record and make sure that we recognize Brother Podue’s important contributions to our Union.

Sincerely,
Joe Mascola, Vice President, Local 63
San Pedro, CA

---

Dear Editor,

In March of 1970, we were members of ILWU Local 35 who worked at Kerr-McGee’s American Potash and Chemical plant in Trona, a small town located in California’s Mojave Desert. That same year, we joined forces with workers from two other unions to organize a four-month strike that involved 600 employees.

During the early days of our bitter and sometimes violent struggle, Clarence Kramer was shot in cold blood by a Wackenhut guard. John Roloff was attacked on the street by San Bernardino County Sheriffs, then taken home and forced to let them search his home. His legally-owned long guns were confiscated, but later returned after legal action was threatened.

Ed Goode was another union member who was shot in cold blood at point blank range. Like Clarence, he was shot by a Wackenhut guard.

Jennifer Stanley is the daughter of our now deceased President of Local 35, Chuck Stanley. She remembers the strike and her father’s heroic leadership. The struggle was not in vain, and some of the organizers and volunteers who covered our strike called it a “Revolution in microcosm,” and compared what happened to us with events in John Steinbeck’s book, The Grapes of Wrath.

“Trona, Bloody Trona” also tells how we received important help from nearly 40 ILWU locals, along with support from Pensioners in California, Oregon, Washington and Canada. Five different Women’s Auxiliaries gave us donations and volunteered to help our families. This and other support was needed because we were under assault from the Kerr McGee Corporation, one of the largest companies in the world at the time.

The book explains what it’s like for a family to strike for basic human rights. We weren’t fighting over wages. The company was trying to take away our vacation time, through a “use it all at once or lose it forever” policy that would have prevented us from using one day of vacation for something like getting a driver’s license – which required a 300 mile, all-day trip because of our remote location. They also wanted to eliminate all skilled craft jobs at the plant, forcing us to work under one classification.

Although we didn’t win the strike, our struggle wasn’t in vain, and some of us lost everything, including our homes. But because of this book, what happened in Trona will be preserved for present and future generations who can learn about unionism and why unions are so essential for protecting democracy in America. We thank Mr. Abram for recognizing our efforts, writing “Trona, Bloody Trona,” and we encourage all union members to read his book. You can order it or read a selection on the author’s website at www.paulhenryabram.com.

Sincerely,
Clarence Kramer, John Roloff, Jennifer Stanley

---

Dear Editor,

We would like to share some solidarity activities proposed by Bay Area Pensioners to support the Coast Longshore Negotiating Committee as they work to secure a good contract.

Earlier this year, at the request of the SF Pensioners Executive Board, officers were invited from Locals 10, 34, and 91 to discuss how they thought pensioners could be of help during negotiations. A central theme throughout this discussion was the hope among the local officers that pensioners would engage the active members in educational conversations about what it took to prepare for a strike in 1971 (and, for those who were there, in 1948), and what are the core principles of the ILWU embodied in the coast contract that may be in jeopardy in 2014 as the employers move to reduce work, bypass the hiring hall and longshore jurisdiction, and reduce or eliminate health and pension benefits.

In response, the Bay Area Pensioners on May 6 formed an Education Committee for 2014 Negotiations, and in June will begin attending local membership meetings to distribute a handout (attached) and initiate conversations with active members about how and why we can pull together in support of the Coast negotiating team. Future activities will be determined by the course of negotiations and the wishes of local ILWU officers. Pensioners on the Education Committee include George Romero (10), Norman McLeod (10), Ralph Rooker (10), John Fisher (34), and myself.

In solidarity,
Gene Vrana
ILWU SF Bay Area Pensioners
Chair, Education Committee for 2014 Negotiations

---

A Solidarity Message from ILWU SF Bay Area Pensioners: Negotiations 2014

Get ready. Unify. Save your money in case of a work stoppage or suspension of benefits. Be informed. Know your contract and follow Negotiating Committee and Coast Committee reports and updates. Ask us. We are standing by to help in any way we can.

80 Years Later—The Struggle Continues—Guiding Principles 1934-2014

• We are an industrial union. All the work in the longshore industry to lend and unload ships. Career is one—excluding the operation and maintenance of the cargo handling equipment and technology. We must defend and shore up our jurisdiction.

• Our founders fought and died to defend our right to work safely and without discrimination through the hiring hall. The hall is where earnings and work opportunities are equalized, and jobs are distributed in a fair and democratic system without prejudice or favoritism. Today the employers continue to seek to automate the dispatch system and do away with the hiring hall— in the name of “controlling hiring.” The hiring hall is the cornerstone of our unwritten laws, benefits, working conditions, and rank and file democracy—we must defend it at all cost.

• The two pillars of the strength of the ILWU’s Longshore Divisions are the hiring hall and the contract: the contract stabilizes work opportunity and employer profits through uniform wages, benefits, and grievance procedures at all ports. It was always this way. Before 1994, employers tried to play off workers in one port against another by competing for work with lower wages and higher productivity through unsafe conditions—and they would shift work around, as they please. Pensioners still do, to reward one port at the expense of another.

• Before the 1970s, retired workers received nothing for their retirement. After the 1980s they only got Social Security. In 1949 the ILWU negotiated the first medical welfare package for longshore workers—and two years later the first longshore pension was negotiated—a package that took care of a retired union worker’s family at a decent standard of living. Today’s active workers and their families need and deserve the same protection.

• Labor unity & worker solidarity on and off the waterfront: Powerful economic interests stand against us and workers everywhere. We need allies in the community, along the Coast, and around the world. That kind of support, and the united commitment of each member, brought us victory in 1934, 1936, 1948, 1971, 2002, and will again in 2014—Let’s talk about it!

“An Injury to one is an Injury to All”

Labor-organized/ILWU SF Bay Area Pensioners Education Committee for 2014 Negotiations

Send your letters to the editor to: The Dispatcher, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6810 or email to editor@ilwu.org
2014 “Walk the Coast” fundraising events

Last year’s 2013 “Walk the Coast” fundraiser in San Pedro attracted hundreds of community volunteers.

SoCal Poker Tournament

This year’s fundraising effort in Los Angeles—The 3rd Annual Texas Hold ‘Em Tournament—will be held on August 14th. It is being sponsored by the ILWU Southern California Pensioners and hosted by ILWU Locals 13, 63, and 94. To pre-register and for more information, please contact Sidro Felix (Local 13) at (310) 972-9772 or sidro13@live.com. 6 p.m. registration; cards in the air at 7 p.m. It will be held at the Normanie Casino, 1045 W. Rosecrans Avenue, Gardena, CA 90247. More info will be added to www.ilwuwalkthecoast.org as it becomes available. The first 100 registrants will receive a free event t-shirt.

Port Hueneme Walk

ILWU Local 46 will hold its Walk the Coast event in Port Hueneme on Saturday, August 9, 2014. The event will include an ocean-view walk that begins at 10:00 a.m., starting at the Dorrill B. Wright Cultural Center, Oceanview Pavilion, 575 Surfside Drive, Port Hueneme and ends at the historical lighthouse on the Promenade. At the end of the walk, there will be a BBQ and live entertainment. A hand-constructed wooden lemonade stand will provide lemonade at the beginning and end of the walk. Registration for the walk is a $25 donation to Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation. Registration covers the walk, the BBQ, the entertainment, and event t-shirt. Pre-registration is preferred. Please register by clicking the yellow “donate now” button for Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation at www.ilwuwalkthecoast.org or contact brother Jesse Ramirez for more details at (805) 490-1678.

Tacoma memorial service: ILWU Local 23 held its 29th Annual Memorial Day service to remember members and pensioners who have passed away within the past year and to pay respects to the 23 founding members buried at the Old Tacoma Cemetery.

On March 22, 1886 Tacoma Longshore’s founding members loading the Ivy lumber ship struck and won recognition of the newly formed Tacoma Stevedores Longshoremen and Riggers Union. At that time, they were prohibited from forming a union so they started out as a benevolent association. The association bought plots for the men who worked the Ivy so they could remain together in solidarity for eternity. Over time the original 23 grave markers for the founding members disintegrated. In 2011 for the 125th Anniversary, Local 23 raised $18,000 to replace the markers and erect a large stone depicting the Ivy with names of the longshoremen and pensioners who donated to the cause engraved on the back.

ILWU International Vice President Wesley Furtado appointed to Hawaii Board of Land and Natural Resources

Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie announced the nomination of ILWU International Vice President (Hawaii), Wesley Furtado, to the state’s Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR). This is an interim appointment subject to state Senate approval. Furtado’s at-large BLNR seat is effective immediately.

Governor Abercrombie said that Furtado was a proven leader with extensive knowledge and background to bring to state government. “I am confident that Furtado’s experience and skills will be vital in serving the people of Hawaii,” said Abercrombie. The Department of Land and Natural Resources, headed by an executive Board of Land and Natural Resources, is responsible for managing, administering and exercising control over public lands, water resources, ocean waters, navigable streams, coastal areas (except commercial harbors), minerals and all interests therein within the State of Hawaii, as well as 750 miles of coastline.

80th Annual Bloody Thursday Picnics Saturday July 5th

LA/Long Beach Area

9 am
Memorial & car procession
Roosevelt Memorial Park • 18255 S Vermont Avenue
Gardena
10 am
Picnic
Peck Park
San Pedro

San Francisco

10:00 am
Memorial
Noon
Lunch
ILWU Local 10 Hall • 400 North Point
San Francisco

Seattle Area

10 am
Memorial Service
11am-5pm
Picnic
Vasa Park on Lake Sammamish

Portland

11am-5pm
11:30 Memorial Service
Oaks Amusement Park
The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) is working closely with the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), the ILWU and other allies on a global education campaign to show why Chevron – not workers – is responsible for bloated budgets and growing delays on a massive natural gas project in northwestern Australia.

Blaming workers

Chevron triggered the campaign by blaming members of the Maritime Union of Australia for self-inflicted problems with the company’s ‘Gorgon’ project that intends to develop, produce and ship natural gas in liquefied form (LNG) from offshore locations. The project’s initial price tag of $37 billion has since swollen to $54 billion.

Lawsuit and threats

When the MUA tried to negotiate an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for maritime workers in the offshore and gas sector, Chevron rejected the union’s proposals and dug in its heels. Despite repeated efforts by the union, Chevron stopped talking. Following a legitimate health & safety dispute that briefly delayed the departure of a barge, Chevron declared war on union members by filing a multi-million-dollar lawsuit against the MUA. Chevron then upped the ante with an expensive and deceptive public relations campaign to smear the union by claiming that workers were making unreasonable demands for hundreds of dollars an hour, thus jeopardizing the project and causing cost-overruns.

Exploiting foreign workers

Chevron and other corporate investors in Australia have been testing the waters with a strategy to lower labor costs and destroy unions. The scheme involves importing contract laborers from low-wage countries to work on projects in Australia – paying the immigrants half or less of the Australian union rate – with no worries about unions, safety complaints or other problems. Dave Noonan of Australia’s Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) says his union has filed complaints about foreign worker abuse since 2010, but little has been done by the Australian anti-union government.

“Australian workers are telling us they are applying for jobs on these projects and don’t even get a call back,” he said.

Mega-profits & dangerous blunders

Chevron, like other oil companies, has enjoyed massive windfall profits in recent years with earnings further enhanced by huge taxpayer subsidies. The Northern California-based corporation reported profits of $21.4 billion in 2013 and $26.2 billion in 2012. Once seen by investors as the hottest growth prospect among major oil companies, Chevron has stumbled recently in the wake of a refinery explosion and fire in Richmond, CA that nearly killed a dozen Chevron workers and sent over 10,000 residents to local hospitals with concerns about respiratory problems.

Support to set the record straight

In early May, 2014, Will Tracey, MUA’s Assistant Secretary for the Western Australia Branch and ITF Australia Campaign Director Shannon O’Keefe arrived in California to conduct research and establish new contacts. They were assisted by the ILWU and the United Steelworkers Union, which represents refinery workers in many Northern and Southern California sites – including Chevron’s refinery in Richmond, CA where the 2012 explosion nearly killed a dozen of their members.

After meeting with the ILWU International Executive Board, who pledged their solidarity and support, Tracey and O’Keefe met with other unions, community and environmental organizations that monitor Chevron’s behavior in Richmond and around the world. The whirlwind tour included interviews on a local radio station, briefings with Richmond City officials who are trying to hold the company more accountable, and discussions with key environmental leaders from Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), Movement Generation, Amazon Watch, and others.

“We learned a lot from our visit, including the fact that Chevron’s disrespectful behavior in Australia is similar to how they seem to operate in Richmond and around the world,” said O’Keefe, who ventured with Will Tracey to Chevron’s headquarters in the pristine suburb of San Ramon, CA to inspect the corporate campus.

Lessons learned from the MUA’s California visit include:

• Chevron has been charged with serious violations by state a federal safety inspectors;
• Chevron had 5 significant accidents at their Richmond refinery in the past 10 years;
• Chevron admitted committing six criminal charges at their Richmond refinery in 2013;
• Chevron received Cal/OSHA’s highest-safety-related fines in history in 2013;
• Chevron has committed 169 air quality violations during the past six years; and,
• Chevron plans to increase cancer causing chemicals and greenhouse gas released in Richmond.

Chevron’s response

Chevron has continued to make demands beyond its shareholder status. The campaign moved the shareholder meeting to Midland, Texas. The MUA team and their allies weren’t subdued by Chevron’s last-minute switch and came prepared with proof of their shareholder status. The campaign delegation included MUA National Secretary and ITF President Paddy Crumlin, Western Australian Branch Assistant Secretary Will Tracey and ITF Australia Campaigns Director Shannon O’Keefe. The trio listened patiently until the floor was opened for questions.

Counterpunching

Then they set the record straight about the real reasons why Chevron’s massive Gorgon project had gone off the rails in Australia. They explained how the company wasted money on expensive public-relations and lobbying consultants who unashamedly blamed the Gorgon’s bloated budget and tardy timelines on the MUA.

“Gorgon is an important project for both Chevron and the Australian national interest in the development of our nationally-owned resources,” said MUA National Secretary and ITF President Paddy Crumlin. “We’ve been trying to reach a reasonable agreement with Chevron for years, but each approach has been firmly rebuffed by the company. Chevron should sit down with the unions to develop a sustainable and functional relationship with its workforce.”

Crumlin noted that the Gorgon is one of the largest LNG (liquefied natural gas) projects in the world – and

MUA’s campaign to counter Chevron labor attacks goes global with help from ILWU & other allies

Chevron’s response continued on page 6
‘Fight for 15’ wins historic wage increase in Seattle

The Seattle City Council voted unanimously on June 2 to raise the city’s minimum wage to $15 hour. The minimum wage ordinance, which more than doubles the current federal minimum wage, was an important victory for labor activists and puts Seattle in the forefront of national efforts to address income inequality by raising the wage floor for the city’s lowest paid workers.

The “Fight for 15” was a major campaign platform for both Seattle Mayor Ed Murray and Council member, Kshama Sawant. Sawant’s election received national attention because she ran her campaign as an openly socialist candidate.

The ordinance was passed with several concessions to businesses that have been criticized by labor activists. The wage increase will be phased in over seven years, with different schedules for small and big businesses (defined as more than 500 employees) and for business that provide health care coverage or where workers receive tips.

In another concession to business, upon the approval of the state Department of Labor and Industries, employers will be allowed to pay a wage lower than the city minimum—but higher than the state minimum—for the employment of “learners, of apprentices, and of messengers employed primarily in delivery of letters and messages,” and “individuals whose earning capacity is impaired by age or physical or mental disability or injury.” The ordinance also contains a provision for a sub-minimum wage rate for teenagers. Employers will be allowed to pay 85% of the minimum wage to workers under the age of 18.

Despite these compromises, Seattle’s minimum wage ordinance is a historic victory for activists. At their May membership meeting, ILWU Local 19 members voted in favor of a resolution supporting the minimum wage increase. Even though longshore workers will not be directly affected by the ordinance, Local 19 President Cameron Williams said that it is important to help the City’s lowest paid workers. “The seventh guiding principle of the ILWU reminds us that unless workers organize, wages, like water, will flow to the lowest level,” Williams said. “Wages in the country have been a downward slide for decades for most workers. It’s time to turn the tide on that trend.”

Local 19 Executive Board member Justin Hirsh said the final ordinance was not perfect and he acknowledged the leadership of Councilmember Sawant. “Kshama and her team fought up to the last minute to make this ordinance the best it could be. This is a precedent-setting victory and we move forward from here,” Hirsh said.

ILWU vets honored: The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) honored five first Veterans’ breakfast to honor union members who formerly served in the military, including five ILWU Local 13 members. LULAC was founded in the early 1930s to advocate for Civil Rights and oppose segregation. The event honoring vets took place during LULAC’s 67th Annual California Convention on Friday, May 16, 2014 at the Westin Hotel in Long Beach. Attendees were treated to a special performance of a new award-winning play, “Veteranos: A Legacy of Valor.” The bilingual production included live music, dance, drama and archival military video. The play tells the story of four Latinos who were awarded the Medal of Honor, including California native Eugene Arnold Obregon, a Marine who received his award for using his own body to protect a fellow soldier from enemy machine-gun fire during the Korean Conflict. Pictured: Left: Local 13’s Paul Sanchez (USMC Staff Sergeant, 1978-86), niece of Medal of Honor recipient Eugene Obregon, Local 13’s Bryan “Sarge” Zardeneta (USMC, E5, 1989-93) and Local 19 President Cameron Williams. Not pictured but also attending was Melvin Barber (US ARMY, Spec4, 1966-68).

ILWU women on deck at LULAC: Local 13 women attended the California LULAC Convention including the five “right-siders” pictured here: (L-R) Yvonne Sanchez, Vivian Mala quiu, Yvonne Sanchez, Paz Lizarraga, and Judy Williams. Also participating were Cathy Familathe and Ida Taylor who staffed an ILWU exhibit for the Southern California District Council. Vivian Mala quiu welcomed delegates at the opening session at the request of Local 13 President Bobby Olivera. “She emphasized the need to build bridges between unions and community-based groups like LULAC in order to secure and protect good jobs for working families. The following day, Malauulu was a featured speaker at the Women’s Leadership Luncheon where she delivered a 20-minute address about the importance of encouraging women – especially Latina “working moms and single moms” – to volunteer for leadership roles in their unions and community groups.

Longshore Safety Committee is negotiating for more protection against deadly hazards

continued from page 1

Local 8’s Adam Wetzel says he’s seen what can go wrong when companies cut corners on safety and maintenance. “Our container terminal operator in Portland is ICTSI, and they’ve been cited by OSHA for putting workers at risk. Our jobs are already dangerous enough without employers who make it worse.”

The Safety Committee has been meeting steadily since May 12 and aims to make improvements in the Safety Code. “We’ve got work to do that can save lives, but every bit of progress requires a real struggle with the companies,” said Ray Local 13 member Ray Benavente. “I’ve been through this before and know how hard it is to strengthen the safety rules,” said Tracy Burchett of Local 53. “The employers always have some reason why they resist improving the Safety Code – but it usually comes down to saving money.”

Ryan Whitman of Local 23 says the Safety Committee’s work is important, “but it’s only half the battle, because we need every longshore worker to respect and understand the rules – and feel comfortable pushing back when corners get cut.”

Safety Committee members intend to keep working down to the June 30th wire – and beyond if necessary – to reach agreement on a revised and improved Safety Code. “Almost all injuries are preventable,” said Local 13’s Luke Hollingsworth, “and we shouldn’t have to wait for the next tragedy to make things safer.”
O
n June 10th the Port of San Francisco was presented with a gift agreement for the James R. Herman Tribute Sculpture that will be placed at the Pier 27 cruise ship terminal. The terminal is named in honor of former ILWU International President and former San Francisco Port Commissioner, Jimmy Herman. The gift proposal, valued at $250,000, must now be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

The sculpture will be a wall-mounted, interactive audio-visual installation measuring 10-feet high by 15-feet long. The sculpture will resemble the waves of the bay. Housed within it will be a touch screen that will allow visitors to scroll through biographical information about Herman and will also include a directional sound system that will allow visitors to hear highlights from Herman’s speeches. The installation is expected to be completed by the end of October.

Sean Farley, ILWU Local 34 President and Chair of the James R. Herman Memorial Committee, said that the purpose of the sculpture is to commemorate Jimmy Herman’s contribution to the labor movement and to the San Francisco waterfront. “We wanted to reflect what Jimmy was about—his history, his legacy, his commitment to social justice movements and his contributions as a Port Commissioner—all the facets of who he was in his life. We also had to take into account what Pier 27 is—a world-class cruise terminal facility. We wanted a tribute that is commensurate with that facility and we think we’ve done that.”

Jimmy was a true working class hero. He tried to make everyone around him better,” said ILWU International Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams. Adams also serves as a Port Commissioner and Vice President of the San Francisco Port Commission. “The cruise ship terminal and this sculpture will be a great tribute to his legacy.”

ILWU members along with other members of the local community including former San Francisco Mayor Art Agnos and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi formed the James R. Herman Memorial Committee to raise money for the creation of the sculpture and its maintenance for the next 20 years. The Committee is still $120,000 short of its goal. If you would like to contribute, please contact Sean Farley or Allen Fung at ILWU Local 34: (415) 362-8852. The committee has applied for non-profit status and is awaiting final approval from the IRS.

MUA’s campaign to counter Chevron labor attacks goes global with help from ILWU & other allies

continued from page 9

that those energy resources belong to the Australian people. He said Chevron should develop a good relationship with workers on the project and maintain community support. So far, he said, it has been a dismal failure.

Crumlin concluded with some colorful Australian language that may have baffled Chevron’s top brass: “The company needs to get a grip, cop its stuff on the chin and return to a mature and balanced industrial relations model, more suited to Australian values underpinning economic and commercial success.”

Chevron CEO backtracks

Crumlin’s comments drew a response from Chevron’s top dog, CEO John Watson. Their exchange was covered in a Reuters news report about the shareholder meeting, Unlike Chevron’s strategy in Australia that scapegoated the union, Watson was careful to avoid any suggestion that labor costs had contributed to the Gorgon’s busted budget. Instead, the CEO mentioned bad weather, a rise in the valuation of Australia’s currency, and increasing material prices. He added that Chevron is committed to using union labor in Australia and closed with a clear statement that amounted to a welcome and refreshing flip-flop. “We have no intention of blaming organized labor for cost overruns or delays at Gorgon.”

Business school expose

In addition to verbal sparring with company officials, the MUA team used the shareholder meeting to release a research report about the Gorgon project conducted by the University of Sydney Business School, which offered a thorough analysis of the project’s problems. Authored by Professor Bradon Ellem, the report titled, “What is Happening on Chevron’s Gorgon Project?” concluded that delays and cost problems were due to logistical challenges and poor management decisions—not unions and labor issues which played a negligible role.

The report noted that wages are only a small part of the project’s overall cost, with maritime labor estimated to be only 1%. He also found that most of the financial figures used in public debates were misleading, and suggested that Chevron should engage workers in a more cooperative approach to increase efficiency.

Wealth of untapped worker experience

The report suggested Chevron should utilize workers’ untapped wealth of experience and ideas about how to deliver the project on time and on budget,” and encouraged Chevron to rethink the issues and stop blaming workers. The report also chided management for shifting responsibility from themselves to workers, noting that “neither Chevron nor the partners and contractors appear to see themselves as in any way accountable for the failings on their project. In short, both the evidence presented here and the pattern of blame-shifting raise questions about management practice and management accountability.”

MUA WA Branch Secretary Chrissy Cain welcomed the report as a “wake-up call” and hoped it would influence much of the Australian media that has blamed workers for the Gorgon’s problems.

Western Australian Branch Assistant Secretary Will Tracey praised the report for showing how time and money could be saved through closer engagement with union workers who want the Gorgon project to succeed.

“There’s a lesson in this report—not just for Chevron, but for the media commentators pushing for lower labor standards as some sort of economic panacea. The real key to unlocking Australian workplace productivity is through better engagement and cooperation between management and workers—not screwing down wages and eroding conditions in an adversarial environment.”

Getting the word out:Will Tracey from the Maritime Union of Australia’s Western Branch participated in an hour-long radio show on May 1. He told listeners about Chevron’s massive offshore natural gas project in northwestern Australia that is harming workers. During his Bay Area visit, Tracey gathered evidence from Bay Area activists who provided many details about Chevron’s bad behavior toward workers and communities around the globe.
Loss of a talented young leader: Alberto Bonilla

The ILWU lost a kind and energetic young leader on May 17 when Alberto Bonilla passed with his family by his side, following a cardiac arrest that left him in a coma for almost a week. Bonilla was 43 years old.

“Berto,” as he was affectionately known, was very active within the union as both a rank-and-file member and officer. He held numerous leadership positions at Local 13 including Dispatcher, Business Agent, Caucus Delegate, Executive Board member, and Coast Education Committee member. He became known to many beyond Local 13 because he served as Sergeant-At-Arms at many sessions of the Coast Longshore Caucus and was often involved in solidarity efforts to help others. He shared his love for the union with his twin brother Alonzo, and other brothers Nickolas and Jose Luis Rigo.

“Alberto Bonilla was truly a member who embodied everything we aspire to be in this union,” said Local 13 President Bobby Olvera, Jr. “His spirit was bound in brotherhood and his contribution of countless hours towards the benefits of the union and his community is unparalleled. As a member he was exemplary, and as an individual he was a humanitarian. He will be missed by all of us at Local 13.”

Berto was extremely well-liked and respected, qualities that drew hundreds to his funeral. Among those attending were International President Bob McElrath, International Vice Presidents Ray Familiar and Wesley Furtado, and International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams.

ILWU members attended from locals in Canada, the Pacific Northwest, and Hawaii.

“Alberto was a great friend of mine and he was always willing to volunteer and step-up for his union,” said President Furtado. “He embodied so much of what the ILWU is about. He fought to keep this union strong and was always there to lend a hand to those in need.”

“I think my husband always had a premonition that something was going to happen to him,” said Marla Piceno Bonilla, Berto’s widow and high-school sweetheart. “He would always tell our son that ‘someday this will be yours’ and he often took Junior with him to union activities.”

“My father named me after him for a reason,” said Alberto Bonilla, Jr., “I will keep his name going and his legacy continuing down on the docks. When I work there someday, I hope to be as good as my dad because I have big shoes to fill.”

Written by Local 13 member Vivian J. Malauulu

IN MEMORIUM

Yuti Tuvalu: quiet leader of “Gang Uso”

Less than one month before Bonilla’s passing, another union brother, Yuti Tuvalu, passed on April 21 due to natural causes. Yuti was a member of the unofficial “Gang Uso” which is comprised of longshoremen of Polynesian descent working on the docks. “Uso” is the Samoan word for brother.

While he never held union office, Tuvalu often helped the leadership with security or chauffeuring for union events. Tuvalu was also one of the Gang Uso brothers who most often provided the volunteer “muscle” behind operations such as HelpSamoan.com, which provided containers filled with relief goods for the tsunami-stricken islands in 2009, as well as other events like “Bloody Thursday” that honor our union’s fallen martyrs from the 1934 strike.

“Yuti paved the way for many of us Uso to get involved serving the local,” said Tony Lualemana, fellow Gang Uso member. “He wouldn’t think twice about calling a ‘trap’ (replacement worker) if one of the officers asked him for any kind of help. Lualemana added that many of the gains won by lashers on the southern California waterfront are due to the solid reputation Tuvalu helped to establish for workers.

“This is really hard for us because we lost two good union brothers back to back,” said Sam Moega, Executive Board member and former Chief Dispatcher of Local 13. “Berto was my best friend and Yuti was my uso. I consider both of them my brothers and we could always count on them to do anything for our union. Berto was on the frontline and Yuti was the quiet guy in the back. We are really going to miss them.”

Written by Local 13 member Vivian J. Malauulu

Fond farewell to a friend of working families: ILWU International Vice President Hawaii Wesley Furtado (left) and International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams (right) and Lindsay McLaughlin, ILWU Legislative Director, (second from right) visited California Congress member George Miller on May 29 in Washington, D.C. to thank him for helping workers during his 40 years in the House of Representatives.

“Too many members of Congress don’t stand up for workers but George Miller was always strong and willing to help the labor movement fight,” said Vice President Furtado.

The painting of Miller will hang in the Education and Workforce Committee hearing room where he once served as Chairman. In 1997 and again in 2007, Republicans removed the word “Labor” from the Committee title because they found it offensive; re-naming it the Education and “Workforce” Committee.

Miller was never shy about supporting workers and sponsored many bills, including ones to raise the minimum wage and make it easier for workers to join unions. He also served on the Resources Committee where he battled powerful agribusiness corporations who demanded lavish taxpayer-subsidies for their public water projects but perpetuated brutal working conditions for farm laborers.

Miller broke ranks with corporate-backed political leaders in both parties when he strongly opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993. He opposed similar corporate-sponsored trade deals including the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and now-pending Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

George Miller and Henry Waxman are the last pro-union House members to retire after coming to Washington in 1975 as reformers following the Watergate scandal.

“George Miller was an exceptional politician because he wasn’t afraid to fight with workers,” said Secretary-Treasurer Adams. “We desperately need more people in Congress like him, and contributing to our ILWU Political Action Fund can help make it possible.”

ILWU members can contribute by visiting the website at www.ilwu.org and choosing the Political Action Fund button on the top of the screen.
ILWU BOOKS & VIDEOS

Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union’s library at discounted prices!

**BOOKS**

**Solidarity Stories:** An Oral History of the ILWU. By Harvey Schwartz. An inspiring collection specializes in rare publications and documents about radical and labor history. $10.00

**The Legacy of 1934:** An historical exhibit by the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. DVD or VHS version $5.00

**The Big Strike:** By Mike Quin. The classic partisan account of the 1934 strike. $9.00

**The March Inland:** Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938. By Harvey Schwartz. A new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union’s organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. $8.00

**VIDEOS**

**“Eye of the Storm: Our Fight for Justice and a Better Contract.”** A 58-minute DVD feature documentary film produced and directed by Annie Williams. Eye of the Storm tells the story of the 2002 longshore lockout on the West Coast. DVD Version $5.00

**“We Are the ILWU.”** A 30-minute color video introducing the principles and traditions of the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. DVD or VHS version $5.00

ILWU BOOK & VIDEO ORDER FORM

**ORDER BY MAIL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity Stories @ $10 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Spark Is Struck @ $13.50 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Legacy of 1934 @ two for $5 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Bridges @ $10 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILWU Story @ $5 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Strike @ $9 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The March Inland @ $9 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye of the Storm DVD @ $5 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are the ILWU VHS @ $5 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Life on the Beam DVD @ $5 ea.</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Enclosed** $_____

Please allow at least four weeks for delivery. Shipment to U.S. addresses only. We regret that U.S. Customs and postal regulations create too great a burden for our staff to maintain book sale service to our members and friends outside the United States.

Make check or money order (U.S. Funds) payable to “IlWU” and send to
ILWU Library, 1168 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

Prices include shipping and handling.

**NEW PENSIONERS:**

**Local 4:** Ward J. Hust; Local 10: Noble L. Harris; Martin H. Carrillo; Local 12: Douglas M. Matson; Local 13: Elijah N. Hall; Kurt Ellis; Isabel G. Saenz; Roosevelt L. Johnson; Wayne L. Jensen; Charles L. Boulde; Bronson B. Johns; Local 18: William W. Thorpe; James D. Mc Kinnon; M. Jose Obra; Local 21: Richard G. Fisher; Local 40: Robert L. Carson; Local S2: Jim F Mallou; Charles D. Tom; Local S4: Tony L. Ferreira; Local 63: Constance L. Chaney; Charlie Phineas; Libby C. Esparza; Lee R. Mc Innis; Thurston J. Schultz; Robin K. Bryce;

**DECEASED PENSIONERS:**

Local 8: Fred N. Emry; Local 10: John Unini; Local 12: Leo O. Kiander; Raymond Hopper; Ronald G. Johnson; Local 13: Juan F. Herrera; Albert Lopez Jr.; Joseph F. Donato; Stephen M. Bush; Alvin O. Campos; Richard C. Powell Jr; Terry L. Taylor (Maria); David L. Mitchell; Local 21: Bill L. Brister; Local 23: Ronald D. Darrell; Gary V. Dein; Local 24: Martin D. Moir; Edward C. Norman; Local 32: Darrell M. Sampson; Local 34: James F. Donohue; Gary F. Colacico (Kathleen); Local 54: Albert M. Nunes; Local 63: Richard Suarez; Jack R. Harris, Jr.; Ronald C. Tobin; Local 91: Clarence Carr;