THE INSIDE NEWS

Pet Coke transport workers join ILWU

ILWU officers join Japan dockers’ 70th Anniversary

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TRANSITIONS

Honoring the past and passing the torch: 49th Annual PCPA convention convenes in Tacoma

The 49th annual Pacific Coast Pensioners Association (PCPA) convention met in Tacoma, WA from Sept 12-14. The convention coincided with several events in Tacoma that recognized the important contribution of the longshore labor struggles to the city’s working class history. The convention’s theme emphasized the need to honor the history and sacrifice of previous generations, to protect the benefits won by past generations and to pass along knowledge and traditions to future generations.

Special events

Two events were schedule on Sunday before the Convention to honor the union’s history—an afternoon ceremony dedicated a plaque on the Murray Morgan Bridge to commemorate the 1916 longshore strike. Later that evening a bronze statue of Harry Bridges was unveiled at the Local 23 hall. On the first evening of the Convention, Local 23 members hosted a celebration of the new Philip Martin Lelli Memorial Highway, dedicated in honor of Local 23’s former longtime President.

"Fate and history smiled on Tacoma during the PCPA convention," said Mike Jagielski, President of the Local 23 Pensioners Club and Chair of the convention’s 2016 planning committee, who was pleased that so many special events were held during the Convention week.

Large turnout

A total of 207 registered attendees came to this year’s conventions—making it one of the largest PCPA events in recent years. Fraternal guests included the ILWU International titled officers.

Honoring Tacoma Longshore: Mike Jagielski, President of the Local 23 Pensioners Club at the dedication ceremony for the plaque that was placed on the Murray Morgan Bridge honoring 1916 Tacoma longshore strikers.

Honoring the past and passing the torch: 49th Annual PCPA convention convenes in Tacoma

International President Robert McEllrath, Vice President Ray Familante, and Secretary Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams. Coast Committee members Frank Ponce De Leon and Cam Williams also attended as did the local union President’s from Longshore locals up and down the coast. Like previous Conventions, this one was dedicated to the memory of ILWU pensioners who have passed during the previous year.

Remembering the 1916 Strike

On September 11, several hundred ILWU members and pensioners marched across the Eleventh Street Bridge (now known as the Murray Morgan Bridge) to the spot where striker Alexander Laulaw was fatally shot 100 years before. The bridge was the main conduit between downtown Tacoma and the Port; it became the focus of many confrontations between striking longshoremen.
Pet coke transport workers vote to join ILWU

JBA Transport workers who haul petroleum coke from California oil refineries to storage facilities and docks voted overwhelmingly to join the ILWU on September 1.

Teamster-company deal rejected

In the same vote, workers soundly rejected a representation bid from the Teamsters Union that managed to win only 2 votes from the 23 JBA employees, despite aggressive campaigning that came with obvious management support.

“We wanted a strong, independent union that would give us a voice – not a union that was already in bed with the company,” said longtime JBA driver Humberto Alvarez. Nearly all the drivers work out of JBA’s headquarters in Wilmington, CA. Two two drivers who service Bay Area refineries are based in Pittsburgh, CA.

Performing a vital task

The JBA workers perform a vital task by removing petroleum coke – a by-product of the oil-refining process that constantly accumulates inside refineries when crude oil is “cracked” into a wide range of products, from gasoline and other fuels to “cracked” into a wide range of products. JBA driver Humberto Alvarez.

A different kind of Coke

Petroleum coke is a hard, grey material that contains much more carbon than coal. JBA drivers haul away this “pet coke” using a fleet of 29 tractors and 75 double-trailers that deliver the material to different facilities – including the massive Oxbow terminal on Pier G at the Port of Long Beach which is staffed by ILWU members. The Oxbow workers store and manage millions of tons of coke each year that is eventually loaded by longshore workers onto bulk carrier vessels heading for Asia where most of the carbon-rich material is burned to fuel power plants and cement kilns, or used as a critical additive for making iron and steel.

Supply chain support

A group of 58 Oxbow workers went through their own struggle to join the ILWU back in 2005 when they voted to join Local 13’s Allied Division. Since then they have successfully negotiated contracts with Oxbow – privately owned by billionaire William Koch who controls much of America’s pet coke industry.

Solidarity makes a difference

“We already knew the guys at JBA because they come here all the time,” said Steve Cannon who’s worked at Oxbow for more than a decade. “It was natural for us to help them out because we were once in their shoes, before we organized to join the ILWU.”

JBA workers responded positively to advice from Oxbow workers. “They told us what to expect from management when it was crunch time just before the vote, and their predictions were 100% accurate,” said JBA driver Humberto Alvarez.

Begging for one more chance

One of the predictions was an 11th hour appeal by management for “just one more chance to make things right.” Such pleas are common anti-union tactics that management uses to sway workers in the final days on a union organizing campaign – usually with an emotional appeal, often including “tears” shed by sobbing executives who appears sincere, full of remorse for past “mistakes,” willing to “listen” and offering heartfelt promises to “make things right” – if the union isn’t involved.

Not fooled by tears

With workers primed to expect just such a performance, few were fooled when JBA official met with workers to beg for “one more chance” without the ILWU. Instead of fawning for the tearful routine, JBA workers stuck with their plan and voted overwhelmingly to join the ILWU.

No to the company union

A simultaneous bid by the Teamsters Union to win the union election fizzled badly despite a show featuring big Teamster trucks with giant billboards, lots of Teamster jackets and dozens of fliers. The cozy relationship between company managers, who invited the Teamsters to get involved after workers expressed support for the ILWU, doomed that effort in the eyes of most workers.

“It was obvious to everyone that the Teamsters were the company’s union, and we didn’t want that,” said JBA driver John Soto.

Getting a good contract

“Now it’s all about helping these workers get a good first contract,” said ILWU Vice President (Mainland) Ray Familathe, who oversees the ILWU’s organizing campaigns. Familathe complimented the workers for their unity and determination to join the ILWU, despite many obstacles that were thrown into their path.

“It’s always a struggle to get this far, but these guys pulled together and got it done,” he said.

Familathe noted that JBA has provided transportation services to the petroleum industry for over 30 years, and said their parent company, Bragg, is a successful operation with union contracts that cover many employees.

Everyone at our end is prepared and ready to do their part, so we’re looking forward to negotiating a fair contract with JBA,” said Familathe.

Issues of concern

Some of the concerns that led JBA drivers to join the ILWU include a lack of respect, scheduling problems, unfair work distribution, long and sometime unpaid wait times, and the use of independent subcontractors.

“There are problems at JBA that need to be fixed, but all of us feel better now that we have a union,” said Angel Jauregui. “Having support from ILWU union brothers at Oxbow and others around the harbor area is really important to us. We’re glad to be part of the ILWU.”

On August 31st, we will be voting for the ILWU because we want a democratic union that will give us a voice on the job.

Let’s send a clear message that we are united with the ILWU.

It’s time to stand together and start fighting for our own contract!

Their message was unity: This organizing flyer was used by JBA workers to build a united campaign and strong vote to join the ILWU.

Strategic cargo: Trucks at JBA who recently voted to join the ILWU, perform the essential task of removing petroleum coke from oil refineries.
Sakuma workers win union vote with ILWU help

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ver three-hundred work-

ers at the Sakuma Broth-

ers Farm in Northwest Washington State made history on the evening of September 12 by voting overwhelmingly to create their own independent farm workers union.

Organizing in the fields

The 377 workers who pick ber-
ries an hour north of Seattle in the fer-
tile Skagit Valley have been supported by the ILWU and other unions since 2013, but they still had to overcome a bitter anti-union campaign in which many workers were fired and threat-

ed. The Sakuma workers triumphed in their union vote because they built solidarity in the fields – and sought support from unions and consumers who backed a boycott of Driscoll’s Berries – the giant marketing brand that distributes berries from Sakuma and other growers that is no longer being boycotted.

Difficult years

ILWU members were among the first to help when they began organizing in the summer of 2013, under the banner “Familias Unidas por la Justicia” or Families United for Justice (FUJ). Sakuma management quickly retaliated by firing leaders, ridicul-

ing worker concerns by saying there was “nothing to negotiate,” and import-

ing “guest workers” from Mexico to serve as company-paid strike-breakers. They also assailed reporters who interviewed workers and described harsh working conditions at Sakuma. ILWU Pension-

ers and local members visited workers and FUJ leaders in 2013, laying a foun-

dation for further action by the ILWU in a West Seattle community center when a $3500 solidarity donation was authorized in December of 2013. Sev-

eral months later the Puget Sound Dis-

cot efforts in a variety of ways. In June of 2015, the ILWU International Con-

vention in Hawaii unanimously passed a resolution supporting the Sakuma workers and their boycott of Driscoll’s – the world’s largest distributor of fresh berries. In July of the same year, the ILWU provided the FUJ with a detailed corporate strategic research profile compiled by the ILWU Research Depart-

ment that helped boycotters develop a more effective and strategic approach to their campaign. ILWU members con-

tinued supporting Sakuma workers by

Support for Sakuma workers:

ILWU leaders joined with labor and con-

sumer groups at a march and rally last July to support the Sakuma Brothers berry farm union in Washington’s Skagit Valley (LR): IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast, Local 25 Secretary-Treasurer Tyler Ashbach, Local 19 Dispatcher Dan McKisson, Local 20 President Rich Austin, Jr., Coasst Committeeman Cameron Williams, Local 9 Secretary-Treasurer Mike Pavlicel, Local 9 Shop Steward Michael Kube, Pensioners Rich Austin and Matt. (Image 46x53 to 775x71)

Sakuma workers win union vote with ILWU help

Promotions at Sakuma

Sakuma workers continued a longstanding tradition in July, 2016, when they expressed their com-

mitment to show solidarity for the Sakuma workers and concern about Driscoll’s Berries – sending a powerful message to Sakuma management that the stakes were being raised – like the ILWU did decades earlier when the United Farmworkers Union needed help in California.

Plan for a big march

By early July of 2016, plans for a major mobilization were underway to bring 2500 supporters – including ILWU and IBU members – to march through Sakuma’s berry fields and with a rally in front of the company headquar-

ters. The same tactic had been used successfully the year before to generate positive media stories, as detailed in the June 2015 issue of The Dispatcher.

Mounting legal headaches

In early July a federal judge ordered Sakuma to pay $250,000 in legal costs for attorneys representing a group of Sakuma workers who sued their employer in a class-action law-

suit. The judge ordered Sakuma to pay three times what the company’s attor-

ney wanted. Sakuma avoided a court-

room trial by settling with 408 workers for a total of $500,000 plus another $350,000 in legal fees. Earlier this year the company paid $87,160 to berry pickers after Washington’s Supreme Court ruled that piece-rate workers in 2014 were still entitled to be paid for 10-minute rest breaks, averaging payouts of $231 per worker. That lawsuit filed by Sakuma workers changed conditions at every farm in Washington State.

Final contact with workers

The weeks leading up to the union vote were tense, given the years of anti-

union harassment and propaganda that workers had been forced to endure. At the request of Local 19 President Rich Austin, Jr., ILWU International Vice President Ray Familahate agreed to assign bi-lingual organizer Jon Brier to help “get-out-the-vote” for the work-

ers’ union. Brier joined the FUJ leaders to visit workers at their homes where it was easier to talk and ask questions.

Company agrees to talk

When Sakuma finally agreed to talk and reach terms on a fair election, things moved quickly. A neutral party was chosen to oversee the election, and when the votes were counted, the results were overwhelming, with only 38 of the 377 workers voting against the union, despite threats, firing, ongoing harass-

ment and vilification of the union.

Company officials took a higher

road as the election neared, insisting they would honor the workers’ deci-

sion if a majority voted for the union, adding that they were prepared to “sit down and work out a contract with the workers.” At the vote count, Sakuma CEO Danny Wheeden noted the large number of workers and support-

ers, perhaps signaling another shift in the company’s perspective. More sig-

ificantly, the company has agreed to reach a contract by a date certain – or both sides will submit their position to a neutral arbitrator who will choose one of the proposals – a practice known as “baseball arbitration.”

Solidarity at home and beyond

Local 19 President Rich Austin observed that “the Sakuma workers clearly achieved a major victory in their struggle to improve conditions and raise pay to $15 an hour – and did it by reaching out to members of the ILWU and other unions, with the support of the National Farm Workers Ministry, and by building solidarity with com-

munity groups throughout the region.” Because many of Sakuma’s berry pick-

ers originally came from indigenous communities in Mexico, workers also made an effort to support Driscoll’s workers who are organizing to improve terrible conditions at Driscoll’s berry farms in Baja California, clustered around the wind-blown Pacific Coast town of San Quintin, several hours south of Tijuana.

In the Pacific Northwest, thou-

sands of farmworkers in Washington, Oregon and Canada’s Okanagan Val-

ley are still working in miserable con-

ditions and desperately need a union to help them. “Hopefully we can help the FUJ get a good contract and spread the union movement to so many other workers who need it,” said Austin. “They’re off to a great start.”

ILWU officers join Japan dockers’ 70th Anniversary

T

he All-Japan Dockworkers Union – Zenkowan –

celebrated their 70th Anniversary in early September and invited ILWU International President Robert McEllrath and Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado to join almost 300 par-

ticipants at their Convention.

The event was held in the small coastal city of Katsuura, home of the All-Japan Dockworkers Union – Zenkowan – the world’s largest dockers’ union.

Zenkowan President Kozo Matsutomo attended the ILWU’s 2012 and 2015 ILWU conventions. Both times he came with a “Friendship and Solidarity Statement” that was signed in a public ceremony before hundreds of ILWU delegates. (Image 417x1009 to 774x1190)

Continued on page 8

ILWU leaders join Japan dockers’ 70th Anniversary

Strong union ties

Zenkowan and the ILWU have long-

standing ties and developed a deep solidarity commitment over the years, due partly to efforts by Presidents of both unions to attend each other’s con-

ventions. Zenkowan President Kozo Matsutomo attended the ILWU’s 2012 and 2015 ILWU conventions. Both times he came with a “Friendship and Solidarity Statement” that was signed in a public ceremony before hundreds of ILWU delegates. (Image 417x129 to 775x273)

Ceremony of solidarity: Leaders and special guests of the All-Japan Dockworkers Union, known as Zenkowan, celebrated their 70th Anniversary. ILWU Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado and International President Robert McEllrath (3rd and 4th from right) were among the participants. (Image 76x231 to 775x71)

ILWU Research Department that helped boycotters develop a more effective and strategic approach to their campaign. ILWU members continued supporting Sakuma workers by

organized a dramatic protest at their September 2015 Conven-

tion in San Francisco where dozens of delegates joined International Pres-

tent Bob McEllrath, Vice President Ray Familahate and Local 13 President Bobby Olivera, Jr., who marched defiantly into the produce section of a Whole Foods Market in San Francisco where they held an informal rally and fielded questions from friendly shoppers. The store manager eventually joined the dialog and agreed to pass concerns along to his regional manager.

Local 19 solidarity

Seattle dockworkers continued a longstanding tradition in July, 2016, when they expressed their com-

mitment to show solidarity for the Sakuma workers and concern about Driscoll’s Berries – sending a powerful message to Sakuma management that the stakes were being raised – like the ILWU did decades earlier when the United Farmworkers Union needed help in California.

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The All-Japan Dockworkers Union – Zenkowan – celebrated their 70th Anniversary in early September and invited ILWU International President Robert McEllrath and Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado to join almost 300 particip-

ants at their Convention. The event was held in the small coastal city of Katsuura, home of a historic fishing fleet and one of Japan’s largest fish markets.

"They’re off to a great start."
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**NR - no recommendation**
OREGON AREA DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Oregon State Measure 98 Yes
Oregon Secretary of State Brad Avakian
Oregon State Representative House District 42-Rob Nosse
Chair of Clackamas County Commission Jim Bernard

Multnomah County Commission Eric Zimmerman
Oregon State Senate Senate District 22- Lew Frederick
Oregon State Representative House District 18-Tom Kata
House District 31-Britt Wadd
House District 42-Robb Nosse
House District 45-Barbara Smith

PUGET SOUND DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Washington State Governor Jay Inslee
United States Congress
Suzan DelBene (1st CD)
Rick Larson (2nd CD)
Jim Moeller (3rd CD)***
Derek Kilmer (6th CD)
Pramilla Jayapal (7th CD)
Adam Smith (9th CD)
Danny Heck (10th CD)

Local 19 recommendations:
Washington State Representative Gabrielle Galer (7th District)
United States Congress
Pramilla Jayapal (7th CD)

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Continued

Statewide Propositions
Prop 51 School Bonds Yes
Prop 52 Medi-Cal Hospital Fee Yes
Prop 53 Revenue Bonds, Statewide Voter No
Prop 54 Legislation and Proceedings No
Prop 55 Tax Extension Yes
Prop 56 Cigarette Tax Yes
Prop 57 Criminal Sentences Yes
Prop 58 English Proficiency Yes
Prop 59 Corporations & Political Spending Yes
Prop 62 Death Penalty Yes
Prop 63 Firearms, Ammunition Sales No
Prop 64 Marijuana Legalization No
Prop 65 Campaign Finance Yes
Prop 66 School pancake Fund Yes
Prop 67 Public Advocate No

San Francisco Supervisors
Dist. 1 Sandra Fewer
Dist. 3 Aaron Peskin
Dist. 5 London Breed
Dist. 7 Norman Yee
Dist. 9 Hillary Ronen
Dist. 11 Ahsha Safa

San Francisco Board of Education
Rachel Norton
Steven Cook
Matt Haney
Mark Sanchez

San Francisco City College Trustees
Alicia Randolph
Deborah Malda
Tom Temprano
Shanelle Williams

San Francisco Measures
A School Bonds Yes
B City College Parcel Tax Yes
C Loans to Finance Acquisition Yes
D Vacancy Appointments Yes
E Responsibility for Maintaining Trees Yes
F Youth Voting in Local Elections No
G Police Oversight No recommendation
H Public Advocate Yes
I Funding for Seniors and Adults Yes
J Funding for Homelessness & Trans Yes
K General Sales Tax No recommendation
L MTA Appointments & Budget Yes
M Housing & Development Commission, Yes
N Non-citizen voting in School Board No recommendation
O Office Development in Hunters Point Yes
P Competitive Bidding for Housing Project No
Q Prohibiting Tests on Sidewalks Yes
R Neighborhood Crime Unit No recommendation
S Allocation of Hotel Tax Funds Yes
T Restricting Gifts from Lobbyists Yes
U Affordable Housing Requirements No
V Soda Tax No recommendation
W Real Estate Transfer Tax on $5 mil Yes
X Space for Neighborhood Arts Yes
RR BART Safety Yes
Solidarity: (From left to right): MUA Veteran Jim Donovan, Local 23 Pensioner Jim Norton and PCPA President Greg Mitre officially unveil the signed solidarity agreement between the ILWU PCPA and the MUA Veterans.

Striking figure

The statue portrays Bridges larger at 6-4” than he actually was, at about 5-6”, but sculptor Paul Michaels said he deliberately took artistic license with Bridges’ height in order to capture the labor leader’s oversized role in America’s working class history. The efforts of artist Paul Michaels were recognized during the ceremony and received a standing ovation. The sculpture is based on film footage of Bridges, captured during a 1986 visit to Tacoma when he commemorated the Local’s 100th anniversary. Finding a permanent home

The sculpture will be displayed temporarily at the Local 23 hall until a permanent home for the statue is secured. Emil Korjan had wanted it displayed at a place of learning where students would see it. Possible permanent locations for the statue include the University of Washington Tacoma campus or Bates Technical College.

Last minute details

Jagelski, who spearheaded the effort to make Korjan’s dream a reality, said he wasn’t sure the statue unveiling could actually happen until just days before the event. He said that spot welding and grinding work on the statue went late in the night before it was transported to the hall on Friday. A whole team of volunteers from Local 23, the Federated Auxiliary, pensioners and family members all chipped-in to make the Sunday night unveiling a success.

Welcome from Tacoma’s Mayor

Tacoma Mayor Marilyn Strickland welcomed the PCPA Convention attendees on the first day. She highlighted the importance of the longshore industry and the ILWU to Tacoma’s economy, history and culture. She also cited the many events during the PCPA Convention that memorialize and celebrate that history.

“Really speaks to who we are as a city,” said Strickland. “The City of Tacoma is an international waterfront city and blue collar work is a part of our DNA. We have to remember where we came from. At the same time we are all about to celebrate the role that you’ve done in the past, understand that what we are talking about is not just about history, it’s about the future. What future opportunities will young people have to make family wage jobs.”

New PCPA charter

The convention welcomed the Alaska Pensioners Club with a new charter from the PCPA. President McEllrath presented the charter to Alaska pensioner Pete Wiet Smith. The PCPA is growing and will continue to grow,” said PCPA President Greg Mitre. He noted that representatives from the Panama Pensioners had planned to attend, but were unable to book a hotel at pressing notice at home that required attention. “I can guarantee you that next year there will be representatives from Panama at our convention in Southern California,” Mitre said.

President’s report

Mitre updated the convention on his activities during the past year, including his attendance at the recent Longshore Caucuses in Panama and San Francisco. He also attended a meeting to discuss proposals for long term care insurance that might cover longshore members and possibly pensioners.

Automation & bankruptcy

Mitre touched on some new challenges that longshore workers are now facing, including automated terminals in Southern California and the recent bankruptcy of South Korean shipping company, Hanjin. He said the bankruptcy is the first fallout caused by dramatic decline in prices carriers can charge for transporting containers, due to the surplus capacity in the world shipping fleet.

“Hanjin is the first domino to fall and experts are saying they may not be last. There is going to be a ripple effect through the entire industry,” Mitre said. “Where this goes is yet to be seen.”

Mitre concluded his report by emphasizing the role of the PCPA in supporting the ILWU’s active membership. “I think the role of the PCPA is to support the officers, to be there for them and ask them what they need. We are fortunate to be included. In most industries, pensioners don’t get to play the role that we do. The PCPA’s role is to do whatever we can to ensure that the ILWU continues to prosper,“ Mitre said.

Phil Lelli Highway

On the evening of September 12, the Local 23 hall was filled to capacity again this time to celebrate the dedication of the Philip Martin Lelli Memorial Highway. The Washington State Transportation Commission adopted Resolution 728 that named a section of State Route 509 in Tacoma after Lelli to honor the man’s contributions to the Port and City of Tacoma.

Lelli was elected President of ILWU Local 23 multiple times for nearly two decades, serving from 1966 and 1985. He is credited with bringing greater efficiency to the Port of Tacoma that significantly increased container volumes. He was also recognized for his community service to help those in need at Tacoma’s Hospitality Kitchen and various food banks in the South Sound.

Honorimg Ron Magden: Dr. Ron Magden (left), honorary member of Local 23, was presented with the Jesse and Lois Stranahan Lifetime Achievement Award by Mike Jagelski (right). The award is given to honor an outstanding labor activist. Magden has written several books on Tacoma longshore history and has spent decades preserving important documents and connecting oral histories of longshoremen.
Young Worker’s Committee

The convention took time to hear from members of Young Workers Committees (YWCs) in Canada and the Pacific Northwest – plus special guests from the Young Workers Committee at the Maritime Union of Australia whose example inspired similar Committees to form in US and Canada.

The presentation began with a short video from the recent Young Workers Conference held in Canada. Attendees from the conference were interviewed about what “solidarity” meant to them. Following the video, young workers from the Maritime Union of Australia, ILWU Canada and ILWU Locals in the Pacific Northwest, talked about their efforts to organize educational forums and communication programs to help inform new workers about the labor movement and their role in developing a strong, democratic labor movement. After their presentation, the young workers received a standing ovation from pensioners. “This is the future of the ILWU right here,” said Mitre.

Youth video artists

Following the Young Workers Committee presentation, the convention screened a video about the 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike made by three high school juniors from Redmond Middle School in Redmond, WA. Their film features newly-discovered archival footage and won first place in their state competition (See their letter to the Editor in the July/August 2016 issue of The Dispatcher).

Solidarity agreement with MUA Veterans

Local 23 Pensioner Jim Norton and MUA veteran Jim Donovan made the official presentation of a signed solidarity agreement between the PCPA and the MUA pensioners. The MUA and ILWU pensioners maintain a close relationship, as do the active memberships of both unions.

Reports from Local Union Presidents

The convention heard from several of the Local Union Presidents, including Local 19’s Rich Austin Jr, and Local 13’s President Bobby Olvera. Olvera talked about the important role that pensioners play at Local 19 for active members, where they are a valuable source of experience and information. He then presented Greg Mitre with a check for $5,000 from Local 19’s membership to the PCPA.

So Cal automation impact

Local 13 President Bobby Olvera Jr., talked about the new automated terminal in the Port of Long Beach. “Every piece of equipment they are purchasing for these automated facilities is not to become more efficient but to get rid of workers. This will impact not only the ILWU, but the whole community,” Olvera said. “Robots don’t give back to the community; they don’t buy houses or pay taxes.” Olvera said that Long Beach Container Terminal’s automated terminal will replace 600 jobs in a 24-hour period when the terminal is operating at full capacity. He noted the irony of seeing the company’s robots painted red, white and blue.

Subsidies for robots

“We have to develop an outside game. We are working to make it clear to politicians that you can’t provide tax breaks, grants or other public monies from the federal, state or local government to foreign companies that replace American jobs with robots.” He said that Local 13’s 63, 94 and the Coast Longshore Division recently killed legislation that would have given a tax rebate to companies that buy automated equipment.

Olvera also talked about the new dispatch hall in Southern California, which is sitting empty because of ongoing traffic and access issues. “We’re not going to move 7,000 men and women into a hiring hall that causes discontent because they have difficulty getting in and out.”

The convention also heard from Local 10 President Ed Ferris, Local 5 President Mike Stanton, Local 63 President Paul Trani, Local 91 President Fred Gillam and Local 94 President Danny Miranda.

Coast Committee Report

Coast Committeemen Frank Ponce De Leon and Cam Williams addressed the delegates. Williams delivered the bulk of the report and gave a detailed update on grain negotiations in the Northwest.

Benefits plan

ILWU Coast Benefits Specialist John Casahan joined Benefit Plans Area Directors and coordinators for the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Program who provided information to Convention delegates. Also present were representatives of the Benefit Plans Office (BPO). All of these experts made themselves available to answer questions and provided updates about health and pension plans. They reminded pensioners to update their address with the benefits plan office whenever they move in order to prevent any delays in getting checks — and encouraged everyone to sign up for direct deposit at their ILWU Credit Union or other institution. The new ADRP representative for Southern California, Tamiko Love, was introduced and will replace Jackie Cummings who retired earlier this year.

Victory for farmworkers

Pensioner Rich Austin Sr. announced that workers who organized their independent union called “Familias Unidas por la Justicia” (FUJ) won an overwhelming victory in their recent union election at Salcuma Farms. He noted that the ILWU’s 2015 International Convention passed a resolution supporting FUJ, said the Washington Area Pensioners and Local 19 have been actively supporting the workers’ campaign. At last year’s PCPA convention in San Francisco, he recalled that pensioners and active members held a demonstration to support the farmworkers at a nearby Whole Foods market.

President McEllrath

ILWU International President Robert McEllrath spoke on the second day of the convention. He summarized debate at the recent longshore caucus in San Francisco where delegates voted to explore the concept of discussions with the Pacific Maritime Association about early contract talks. McEllrath also noted the importance of the ILWU hiring halls, and warned that employers are attempting to undermine this important source of strength for longshore workers. He said the PMA had approached him with an idea of using automated dispatch through cell phones to replace the hiring halls. “I told them—don’t ever bring that up to me again.” McEllrath said that working out of the hall is a privilege. “Harry Bridges and 1934 strikers fought for that hiring hall and I’ll be damned if I’m going to give that up!” he said.

Vice President & Sec. Treasurer

ILWU International Vice President (Mainland) Ray Familathe spoke about his early years in the ILWU and being locked-out by rail yard employers when he was a member of the Local 13’s Allied Division. “We had guns pointed at us while scabs were escorted across our picket line,” Familathe recalled, and warned that employers may try similar tactics in the future. He updated Convention delegates about the ILWU’s ongoing contract campaigns and organizing efforts, including a recent organizing victory by JBA truck drivers in California (see article on page 2 in this issue).

ILWU Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams, who also serves as President of the San Francisco Port Commission, attended the first days of the Convention, but was unable to speak because of a Port Commission meeting in San Francisco.

A host of important speakers

Other speakers at the convention included Northwest Seaport Alliance CEO John Wolle, Tacoma Mayor Emettus Bill Baarsma who now serves as President of the Tacoma Historical Society, Washington State Labor Council President Jeff Johnson, Washington State Senator and candidate for the 7th District, Pramila Jayapal. PCPA Poet Laureate Jerry Brady read his poem, “The First Tacoma Longshore,” and received a warm welcome for his work. Also speaking at the event was Calenger Case from the University of Washington’s Labor Archives. Case gave an update about the Archives’ effort to preserve the history of working people in the Pacific Northwest.

Resolutions

The PCPA Convention delegates passed several resolutions

• Supporting the ILWU Longshore Division;

• Asking the International Union to clarify rights of pensioners as fraternal delegates to submit resolutions and/or make motions at ILWU conventions;

• Allowing the Local 23 Pensioners Club major ports status;

• Creating a Long Term Care committee;

• Reverting back to previous language stating that the PCPA convention will be held “the first Monday after the second Wednesday in September.”

• Adding one Executive Board seat for Alaska and Tacoma

• Supporting the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and all nations opposing the Dakota Access Pipeline;

• Supporting efforts by the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee, an organization of incarcerated workers, to end the system of unpaid and underpaid prison labor.

PCPA elections & next Convention

PCPA President Greg Mitre, Vice President Lawrence Thibeaux, Record- ing Secretary Kenzie Mullin and Treasurer Chris Gordon were elected by acclamation.

The next PCPA convention will be held in Long Beach, CA from September 18-20, 2017, at the Mayo Hotel.

Statue for Bridges: (From Left to Right: Coast Committeemen Cam Williams, Frank Ponce De Leon, ILWU International Vice President Ray Familathe, Interna- tional President Robert McEllrath, and International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams at the unveiling ceremony of the Bridges statue at the Local 23 Hall in Fife, WA.

Reminiscing Cleophas: Sadie Williams, widow of beloved pensioner Cleophas Williams, thanked the PCPA and the ILWU. The casket was dedicated to the memory of all the pensioners who have passed since last year’s convention.

Remembering Cleophas: Sadie Williams, widow of beloved pensioner Cleophas Williams, thanked the PCPA and the ILWU. The casket was dedicated to the memory of all the pensioners who have passed since last year’s convention.
ILWU officers join Japan dockers’ 70th Anniversary

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History of solidarity

President McEllrath addressed the Zenkowan delegates in Katsura, explaining that he and Vice President Furtado were honored to be guests and humbled by the deep expressions of solidarity that have bound both unions together for decades.

“We deeply appreciate what Zenkowan has done for ILWU members, and we have tried to be helpful as well,” said McEllrath.

The ILWU sent contributions to help Zenkowan members in 2011, some of whom were hit hard by the devastating tsunami that tore apart Fukushima and other coastal cities along Japan’s Northeast coast. Zenkowan has supported ILWU members in key labor struggles, including the 2012-2014 lockout involving two Japanese-owned grain companies in the Pacific Northwest.

“Both our unions were built on the principle of solidarity and home and around the world,” said McEllrath. “Zenkowan and the ILWU have built a strong foundation, and we intend to keep it that way.”

Transportistas deciden unirse a ILWU

Los trabajadores de JBA, transportistas de crudo de petróleo de refinerías en California a instalaciones de almacenamiento y muelles votaron abrumadoramente para unirse al ILWU el 1 de septiembre. Se rechazó el trato entre los Teamsters y la Compañía.

En la misma votación, los trabajadores rechazaron contundentemente la petición de representación del Sindicato de los Teamsters, el cual obtuvo solo 2 votos de los 23 empleados de JBA, a pesar de que hicieron una campaña agresiva con el apoyo obvio de la gerencia.

“Queríamos un fuerte sindicato independiente, que no diera una voz – no un sindicato que ya estaba comparando la cana con la Compañía,” dijo Humberto Álvarez, conductor veterinario de JBA.

Casi todos los conductores trabajan fuera de la sede de JBA en Wilming- ton, CA, aunque dos conductores que hacen recorridos a las refinerías de la Bahía tienen su base en Pittsburgh, PA. Realizan una tarea vital.

Los trabajadores de JBA realizan una tarea vital al acarrear el coque, un subproducto del proceso de refinado que constantemente se acumula dentro de las refinerías donde el petróleo se transforma en productos como la gasolina y otros combustibles hasta brea para pavimentar los caminos.

Un tipo diferente de coque

El coque proveniente del petróleo es un material duro y gris que contiene mucho más grafito que el carbón. Los conductores de JBA acarrean este “coque de petróleo” usando una flota de 29 tractores y 75 doble remolques para entregar el material a diferentes instalaciones: el terminal massivo de Oxbow en el Muelle G en el puerto de Long Beach, que es atendido por miembros de ILWU. Los trabajadores de Oxbow almacenan y manejan millones de toneladas de coque cada año que finalmente es cargado por los trabajadores portuarios en buques granele- ros que parten para Asia, donde la mayor parte de este material rico en carbono se quema como combustible para centrales eléctricas y hornos de cemento o como aditivo esencial para hacer el hierro acero.

Apoyo para la cadena de suministro

Un grupo de 58 trabajadores de Oxbow emprendieron su propia lucha para unirse al ILWU en 2005 cuando votaron para unirse a la División de Ocupaciones Conexas del Local 13. Desde entonces, han negociado con éxito contratos con Oxbow – una empresa de la multimillonaria William Koch que controla una buena parte de este material rico en carbono.

La solidaridad hace la diferencia

“Nosotros ya conocíamos a los compañeros de JBA porque venimos aquí todo el tiempo,” dijo Steve Cannon, conductor de JBA. “Nosotros nos hicieron entender que nosotros también pasamos por los mismos problemas, pero nuestros sindicatos no las permiten a nuestros miembros.”

Los trabajadores de JBA expresaron positivamente a los consejeros de los trabajadores de Oxbow: “Ellos nos dijeron que iba a hacer la administración a la hora de la verdad justo antes de la votación, y sus predicciones fueron 100% exactas,” dijo Humberto Álvarez, conductor de JBA.

Rogaron para que se les diera una oportunidad

“Era obvio para todos que el Sindicato de los Teamsters era un sindicato controlado por la compañía, y no queríamos eso,” dijo John Soto, conductor de JBA.

Para conseguir un buen contrato

“Ahora se trata de ayudar a estos trabajadores a conseguir un buen primer contrato,” dijo el Vicepresidente de ILWU (Continental) Ray Familathe, que supervisa las campañas de organización del ILWU. Familathe felicitó a los trabajadores por su unidad y decisión de unirse al ILWU, a pesar de los muchos obstáculos que les pusieron en su camino.

“Siempre es una lucha para llegar hasta aquí, pero estos compañeros supieron unirse y lograrlo,” dijo.

Familathe señaló que JBA ha presentado servicios de transporte a la industria del petróleo durante más de 30 años, y dijo que su empresa matriz, Bragg, es una empresa exitosa con contratos sindicales que amenazan a muchos trabajadores.

“Estamos preparados y dispuestos a hacer nuestra parte, así que esperamos negociar un contrato justo con JBA,” dijo Familathe.

Cuestiones de interés

Algunas de las preocupaciones que motivaron que los conductores de JBA unieran al ILWU incluyen la falta de respeto, los problemas de programación, la distribución injusta del trabajo, periodos de espera largos y a veces sin pago, y el uso de compañías contrataristas.

“Hay problemas en JBA que necesitan ser corregidos, pero todos nosotros nos sentimos mejor ahora que tenemos un sindicato,” dijo Angel Jauregui. “El tener el apoyo de compañeros del sindicato ILWU en Oxbow y de otros en la zona del puerto es muy importante para nosotros. Estamos contentos de formar parte del ILWU.”

New Pensions:

Local 10: John J. Lee; Joseph N. Austin; Local 13: James W. Osborne; Rudy N. Winstead; Ángel G. González; Fernando M. Munoz; Valentín M. Rincón; Salvador Trujillo; John M. Hernandez; Mary Eileen Mcatee; David M. Liao; Bobby L. Barber; Local 19: Rick D. Johnson; Local 23: Tony V. Goretti; Local 30: Gaylord Port; Tony Jorge; Miranda S. Villa; Danny Haynes; Local 40: Daniel Shalduha; Local 46: Alfonso A. Ortiz; Local 52: Thomas A. Thompson; Local 54: Rene Gama; Local 63: Tommie L. Williams; Nelma L. Hernandez; Christine E. Nichols; Local 94: Joaquín G. Hernandez; Cecilia L. Richardson; Local 98: Steve J. Furtado

Deceased Pensions:

Local 7: Guy F. Williams; Local 8: Albert H. Schmitt (Loretta); Glen R. Embury; Richard A. Gilstrap; Julius C. Moore; Lawrence S. Meier

Local 10: Conrad Ramponi; Bernard Carrasco; Local 13: Patrick J. Barrios (Antonia); P. F. Turriagno (Gloria); Paul S. Porta (Guadalupe); Joseph E. Darby; Gabriel H. Padron (Hortencia); Local 19: Vladimir Dzustooff; Kenneth Foster; Local 30: Richard Dowdy; Local 40: Charles E. Ciarlella; Lewis E. Gibbons; Lee P. Trezos (Irma); Local 50: Lewis N. Kelley; Local 52: Harold W. Thomas; Local 63: Bryan F. Jones (Shirley); Richard C. Denier; Local 94: Jack K. Mathlin (Maria);

Deceased Survivors:

Local 8: Esther L. Crane; Linda Lunderveld; Local 10: Mary E. Souza; Frances Garrica; Erma L. Stitt; Lenora Riley; Local 12: Sharon E. Cottell; Local 13: Evelyn O. Lively; Local 23: Lois J. Yelovich; Local 40: Joan K. Franzen; Local 63: Margaret Bozanich; Helen L. Conway; Local 92: Helen G. Gardner; Local 98: Georgia L. Olson;