



THE DISPATCHER

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**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**
from the
International
Officers
& Staff



IBU Centennial: The Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU), celebrated their 100th anniversary in Seattle on November 11-15. The gathering addressed important issues including on-going organizing efforts, countering threats posed by non-union tug operations and the Janus decision, automation and ferry privatization, apprenticeship programs and protecting the Jones Act.

IBU members celebrate a century of progressive maritime unionism

The Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) – one of the nation's largest inland maritime unions and the ILWU's Marine Division – celebrated their 100th anniversary and 24th Convention in Seattle on November 11-15.

The IBU's history, accomplishments and struggles were highlighted at a Centennial Anniversary evening gala held inside Seattle's spectacular Museum of Flight. Over 250 union members and industry officials mingled among the exhibits of historic and modern aircraft. The IBU's new President, Marina Secchitano, was introduced by the evening's Master of Ceremonies, IBU Secretary/Treasurer Terri Mast.

Secchitano recognized many leaders in the room, including all four of the ILWU's International Officers: President Willie Adams, Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr., Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris. Other union leaders introduced included ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton, former IBU

Presidents Alan Cote and Don Liddle, along with former IBU Secretary-Treasurer Larry Miner. President Don Marcus of the Masters, Mates & Pilots Union was thanked along with Paul Garrett, Assistant Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia's Sydney Branch. Many IBU employer representatives attended, including Washington State Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar, President Tom Escher from San Francisco's Red & White Fleet, Bruce Reed from Tidewater on the Columbia River, Rob Reller of Manson Construction, and Black Ball Ferry CFO David Booth.

The official speeches were brief, including the ILWU's newly-elected International President Willie Adams, who thanked the IBU for their 1980 decision to affiliate with the ILWU, and for the many contributions made by the IBU before and since. The City of Seattle prepared an official proclamation that was presented by Mayor Jenny Durkin's office, honoring the IBU's many accomplishments. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti sent his congratulations via twitter. Video testimonials from union advocates appeared on giant screens inside the museum, including U.S. Senator

Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, a powerful union advocate and potential U.S. Presidential candidate who congratulated Secchitano for being elected President of the IBU. "This is the year of the woman, and your new leadership role is noteworthy and important." Also joining via video was Washington State Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal of Seattle who sent her congratulations and best wishes to officers and members. The evening concluded with a video presentation highlighting the IBU's hundred-year history and century of struggle for workers' rights. The program concluded with a champagne toast – to another hundred years of militant, member-focused unionism.

Launched in dangerous times

The courageous group of Bay Area ferry workers who founded the IBU's predecessor in 1918, the Ferryboatmen's Union of California, did so in difficult and dangerous times. Unions and strikes were illegal. Seventeen states passed "criminal syndicalism" laws that allowed thousands of union members to be imprisoned and brutalized, including California, Oregon and Washington. Conditions

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IBU members celebrate a century of progressive maritime unionism

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got worse for unions when America entered the First World War on a wave of nationalism promoted by big business and politicians who used their warped sense of “patriotism” to attack union organizers as traitors and “enemies of the people.” Leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) who helped workers in West Coast ports, lumber camps, factories and fields, were among those hunted down, jailed, beaten, tortured and murdered. Congress passed the unconstitutional Sedition Act in 1918, making it a crime to criticize or hold opinions against the war. Other earth-shaking events during 1917-1918 included the Russian Revolution and mobilizations by women for the right to vote. These factors caused deep divisions within labor unions, as radicals were purged, jailed and killed – while many establishment unions turned their backs on civil liberties and some joined racist campaigns

against “dangerous alien immigrants.” When the war ended in November of 1918, much of Europe was destroyed, 16 million were dead and another 75 million would soon die in the global flu pandemic. Most militant labor unions were exterminated or weakened – but the IBU managed to survive and grow in these difficult conditions.

Early focus on ferry workers

The IBU’s early growth was possible because so many ferries were being used to transport cargo, railroad cars and people around booming cities and ports on the West Coast.

Surviving by organizing

The union’s initial boom lasted little more than a decade. New bridges built during the mid-1930’s caused many ferries to be idled. The modern bridges were needed to accommodate an explosion of cars and trucks. In an ironic twist, many of the new bridges were funded by President Roosevelt’s New Deal

programs, which created millions of desperately-needed construction jobs across the country, but also caused thousands of ferry workers to lose their work. Roosevelt’s support for workers and unions was also enormously helpful when the union expanded beyond the Bay Area to help workers organize in the Pacific Northwest, where port cities in Washington, Oregon and Alaska had grown quickly from timber and mining. The union also moved to help workers organize in Southern California, especially San Pedro and San Diego.

Breaking with old limitations

The IBU’s dramatic growth was also possible because they expanded beyond their previous “jurisdiction,” that limited them to only help ferry workers. This narrow perspective was soon abandoned in favor of helping workers on tugs, barges and other vessels. Workers at fish can-

neries and processing plants joined in 1985, and most recently, environmental response workers. This new approach to jurisdiction was called “industrial unionism” and it gave the union a new name: the Inlandboatmen’s Union of the Pacific.

Search for a democratic partner

Over the years, the IBU has affiliated with different unions and federations, always searching for a democratic partner. Early on, they affiliated with the International Seaman’s Union (ISU) that was part of the American Federation of Labor. When the industrial union movement rose in the 1930’s, the IBU aligned with the Congress of Industrial Unions (CIO), being the first west coast union to join that rebel group – doing so a few months before the ILWU. During the next decade they tried to avoid bitter conflicts between ILWU President Harry Bridges and Sailors Union of the

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We want you: The Federated Auxiliary held their Executive Board meeting in San Pedro on October 20-21. “Recruiting new members to the Auxiliary is a top priority for upcoming year”, said Federated Auxiliary President Ida Taylor. She said membership is open to family member of all active members in California, Oregon and Washington. The Auxiliary provide support to ILWU locals and members on a range of important issues including political action and community engagement. If you are interested in becoming a member contact FedAuxILWU@gmail.com. Leave your name and contact information and your area representative will contact you.

In the photo from left to right are Federated President, Ida Taylor, Auxiliary 8, Wilmington, CA; Federated Area VP, California Tina Carranza, Wilmington, CA; Federated Secretary, Marie Cortez, Auxiliary 8, Wilmington, CA; Delegate Joan Bell, Auxiliary 8, Wilmington, CA; Delegate LaDonna Chamberlain, Auxiliary 14 Longview, WA; President Auxiliary 5, Denise Miken, Portland, OR; Delegate, Debbie Hopkins, Auxiliary 35 Tacoma, WA; Federated Vice President, Victoria Sowers, Auxiliary 35, Tacoma, WA; Federated Area VP, North West, Nancy Coleman, Auxiliary 35, Tacoma, WA; Delegate Angela Lard, Auxiliary 38 Olympia, WA; Delegate, Kristen Stockwell, Auxiliary 11, Vancouver, WA; Federated Treasurer, Danielle Sandoval-Padilla, Auxiliary 8, Wilmington, CA



Honoring Fred Pecker: Former ILWU Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer was awarded a Certificate of Honor by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on December 4. The proclamation authored by Supervisor Hillary Ronen recognized his “outstanding and profound contributions to the San Francisco labor movement and his love and commitment to social justice and activism that infuse every aspect of his life.” The room was filled to capacity with Fred’s family, friends, and union members who honored his decades of service to the ILWU, the Bay Area labor movement and City of San Francisco.

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Communications Director and Managing Editor
Roy San Filippo
Editor

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2018 Annual Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies Awards Banquet honors ILWU Local 19 and welcomes a new Bridges Chair



Pensioner support: *The Seattle Pensioners Club has been a strong supporter of the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies. Their fundraising efforts over the years have been crucial to the success of the program and established several scholarship funds.*

On Sunday, November 11, 2018, over 250 people gathered at the University of Washington in Seattle to celebrate the contributions of students, faculty and working people to labor research and advocacy. The Labor Studies awards banquet, which has been held annually for over 20 years, is hosted by the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies.

The Bridges Center was established in 1992 following a grassroots fundraising campaign by members of the ILWU to honor late president Harry Bridges by establishing an institution dedicated to the study of work and working-class issues in higher education.

Thanks to the on-going support of the ILWU, the Bridges Center now provides nearly \$100,000 in labor scholarships and research funding each year.

New Bridges Chair in Labor Studies announced

The night's program began with an introduction from Michael McCann, the outgoing director of the Bridges Center. He introduced the audience to Kim England, the newest Harry Bridges Endowed Chair in Labor Studies. A rotating position held by faculty at the University of Washington, the Bridges Chair is tasked with setting the agenda of the Bridges Center and leading labor studies on campus. England is the first geographer to hold the Bridges Chair and also the first Chair whose research and teaching centers on women and caring labor.

Originally from the United Kingdom, Kim England completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Leicester, and subsequently went on to complete her MA and PhD in Geography at the Ohio State University. Since coming to the University of Washington in 1999, she has continued to pursue her interests in feminist, economic, social and political geographies through teaching and research.

Kim's long standing interest in labor, work and employment stems from her own personal history and geography. She was born in Wallsend,

a town on the River Tyne in Northeast England, with a long history of coal-mining and ship-building. She grew up in a time when jobs in those industries were declining, and saw the struggles of family and friends whose livelihoods were disappearing. She remarked, "As a girl, I knew those jobs weren't open to me anyway, but I was mindful of what this meant for the local economy and everyday life, and saw the ways unions fought to keep jobs and protest deteriorating working conditions."

As someone who hails from a proud working class community in the North of England, she will continue to bring this dedication to labor and activism in her research, advocacy, and leadership as Harry Bridges Chair.

Honoring ILWU Local 19

Thanks to the generous contributions from ILWU locals and pensioners, two new scholarships were created at the Bridges Center in 2018, the Frank Jenkins Jr. Fellowship in Labor Studies and the Michelle Drayton and Ian Kennedy Scholarship in Labor Studies.

Frank Jenkins Jr. – grandson of a runaway slave, first son of a Buffalo Soldier and a native Filipina, and a member of the first known Filipino family in the Puget Sound region – was a devoted labor activist and lifelong union member and leader in Seattle's ILWU Local 19. He began working on the waterfront as a young adult in the 1920s and was a contributor to the 1934 strike. His activism during his decades-long commitment to the ILWU and work with other labor activists such as Martin Jugum, an ILWU member who is also honored at the Bridges Center through the Martin and Anne Jugum scholarship for undergraduate students, allowed for the implementation of more equitable policies on the waterfront. One of their greatest contributions was the introduction of a rotation system that allowed everyone to receive an equal amount of work that did not strip fair opportunities from Black workers.

In February of 2018, to honor Jenkins' contribution to the ILWU and labor community, the membership of ILWU Local 19 voted to approve a contribution of \$100,000 to the Harry

Bridges Center for Labor Studies for the creation of the Frank Jenkins Jr. Fellowship in Labor Studies. The Coast Longshore Division followed with a matching donation of an additional \$100,000. (See the September 2018 issue of the *Dispatcher*) At the banquet, Kim England and four of the former Endowed Bridges Chairs, James Gregory, Dan Jacoby, Michael McCann and George Lovell, collectively honored ILWU Local 19 at the Labor Awards Banquet by awarding the union with this year's Robert Duggan Distinguished Supporter Award for its role in the Jenkins Fellowship and its three decades of investment in the foundation and support of the Bridges Center and its students.

In addition to the Jenkins Fellowship, the Bridges Center also received a contribution of \$100,000 from Ian Kennedy and Michelle Drayton, former members of ILWU Local 52 and current officers of the Seattle ILWU Pensioners Club, to establish the Kennedy Drayton Scholarship in Labor Studies. The four-year award will support working-class freshmen pursuing labor studies at the University of Washington.

2018 Labor Studies Scholarships Honor the Legacy of ILWU Activists

The new scholarships join a long list of Bridges Center scholarships dedicated to past ILWU members, including the Gundlach Scholarship in Labor Studies, the Martin and Anne Jugum Scholarship in Labor Studies, and the Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes Scholarship in Labor Studies. The Gundlach Scholarship in Labor Studies was created by the estate of Jean Gundlach, a labor activist and former staff secretary of Harry Bridges and the ILWU, to honor her memory and that of her siblings, Wilford, Ralph and Betty, all former UW alumni. Ralph Gundlach was a former UW professor, but was fired in 1948 after being branded a communist by the McCarthyist Canwell Committee. Through Jean's own efforts, former UW President William Gerberding issued an apology for UW's participation in the Canwell hearings. This year's Gundlach scholarship was awarded to Brian Serafini, a PhD student in Sociology whose research challenges assumptions about precarious labor and worker consent in the fast food industry.

Martin "Jug" Jugum was a longtime activist and key member of the ILWU for over fifty years. He was essential in creating the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies and was a co-chair for the Harry Bridges Memorial Committee. The Martin and Anne Jugum Scholarship in Labor Studies was created to honor him and his wife and their dedication to the labor movement. This year the scholarship was awarded to two undergraduates: Jenesis Garcia and Marcos Vieyra. Garcia has a deep commitment to resistance in the forms of community healing and personal



Honoring Local 19: *ILWU Local 19 President Rich Austin, Jr. accepted the Robert Duggan Distinguished Supporter Award on behalf of the Local 19 membership. They were given the award for their role in the Jenkins Fellowship and for supporting the Bridges Center and students for three decades.*

authenticity. Her work is shared with her community and embodied through her work as the University of Washington Q Center's Queer and Trans Student of Color Cultural Worker and Advocate. Vieyra is also dedicated to community resistance through his organizing with Movimiento Estudiantil Chicane de Alto Pacifico (MeChA), and hopes to pursue a career in law to develop an in-depth understanding of the U.S. legal system, to subvert laws that serve the interests of only those in power, and act as an advocate for laborers by providing platforms through which their voices may be heard.

Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes were two critical and inspiring labor leaders who fought hard to dispel brutal conditions and racist management in their workplaces. They jointly formed the Alaska Cannery Workers Association to undertake this feat. In 1977 Domingo and Viernes also formed the Rank and File Committee of ILWU Local 37 to struggle for union democracy and fair working conditions, despite severe opposition from all sides. They were elected to ILWU Local 37 leadership in 1980 and worked to build solidarity with workers in the Philippines. Both were tragically both murdered in 1981 at the order of Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The Domingo Viernes Scholarship was formed in 2011 by the Inlandboatmen's Union, Region 37, to honor their memory and the inspiring legacy of their activism. The award-ees of the scholarship this year were Alejandra Pérez and Polly Woodbury. Pérez, as an undocumented student, has worked tirelessly to develop trainings and resources to serve other undocumented students and young professionals through the creation of Undocu Ally Trainings and her collaboration with the Washington Dream Coalition. Woodbury, currently a graduate student in Social Work and Global Health, has spent several summers working with the AFL-CIO through internships with the Union Summer program and the Solidarity Center in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

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IBU members celebrate a century of progressive maritime unionism



ILWU family: From left to right: ILWU International Vice President (Hawaii), Wesley Furtado, ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast, ILWU International President Willie Adams, ILWU International Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr. and IBU President Marina Secchitano.

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Pacific President Harry Lundeberg. In 1947 the IBU joined the Seafarers' International Union (SIU), but left in 1979 over objections to what were seen as undemocratic and unethical practices. The following year saw a bitter strike by Washington State ferry workers leaders with Don Liddle and Larry Miner jailed for defying a court injunction. That's when ILWU locals shut down the Puget Sound in solidarity. The move that led to a settlement for ferry workers and affiliation with the ILWU.

Membership trends

IBU membership peaked at 40,000 before WWII. As the number of ferries continued to dwindle and anti-union laws took their toll, the membership levelled to 4,000 where it remains today. But the union retains the same democratic, member-focused, progressive spirit from a century ago. And ferry service is now making a comeback, with communities in Alaska, Washington and California recognizing the critical role that public ferries play in regional transportation plans.

24th Convention opens

On Monday morning, November 12, all the history and current challenges came into sharp focus as the IBU's 24th Convention was called to order at the Edgewater Hotel, overlooking Elliott Bay on the Puget Sound. The convention was chaired by Presi-

dent Marina Secchitano. Longtime IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast announced that 45 delegates and 20 special guests were present. The guests included ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton who was accompanied by Local 400 Secretary-Treasurer Jason Woods and Liam Lumsden, a Young Worker and Local 400 Board member. Also attending was Sydney Branch Presiding Officer Paul Garrett, who came with Rob Paterson, Glan Munright, Trent Miller and Liam Burke, all from the Maritime Union of Australia.

Spiritual message for the union

Deacon Jose Deleon from the Seattle Seafarers Ministry offered a prayer and reflection on the IBU's longstanding commitment to promoting justice and equality. Deleon said he was grateful for the opportunity to work so closely with the IBU and the ILWU over many years, helping crew members from the Philippines, China and other nations. These seafarers sometimes arrive to the West Coast on vessels with substandard working conditions. Deleon thanked IBU member Jeff Engels for coordinating work of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) on the West Coast with a talented team that includes Inspectors Peter Lahay in Canada, Stefan Mueller-Dombois in LA and Martin Larson in Oregon. Deleon praised the IFT inspectors for helping seafarers win many struggles for dignity, respect and better pay.

Joyful union noise

Next up was Seattle's Labor Chorus, which came to celebrate the 100th Anniversary and inspire convention delegates to prepare for the hard work ahead. The Chorus performs frequently at picket lines, rallies and community events, with roots that include IBU members Scott Seramur, who was a founding member, and his wife Susan Moser, who performed at the convention. The Chorus started 21 years ago at the Northwest Folklife Festival where legendary union advocate and folksinger Pete Seeger promised to return and sing with the fledgling group if they became established. They did, and Seeger keep his promise.

IBU President Secchitano

IBU President Marina Secchitano was elected last December to become the union's first female President. She joined longtime Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast, making the IBU one of the few unions to be led by women leaders.

Secchitano offered many thoughts about what could be accomplished at the convention and a vision for what lies ahead in the coming years.

Non-union tug threat

One challenge facing the IBU and covered by Secchitano was plainly visible just outside the meeting room's large windows where a growing number of non-union tugs and barges now operate along much of the West Coast and Hawaii.

Big oil hurts union members

Secchitano highlighted the growing non-union environment by citing the recent change at the Port of Valdez, Alaska. Big oil companies in Valdez decided to replace their longtime union contractor, Crowley, with a large anti-union corporation from the Gulf of Mexico, called Edison Chouest. The new contractor has a history of mishaps, but still won a ten-year contract to provide tug assist and emergency response for tankers carrying North Slope crude through Prince William Sound, where a catastrophic spill in 1989 dumped 11 million gallons of oil into pristine waters and fouled 1300 miles of shoreline.

"I recently visited those Crowley workers and families up in Valdez dur-

ing the final days of their contract, and it was heartbreaking," said Secchitano, explaining that the new contractor brought their own non-union workforce from the South instead of re-hiring Crowley workers that included many Native Alaskans. She said the IBU has been trying to help the displaced workers find jobs at other union companies. Secchitano added that many small businesses in Valdez are now suffering because Edison Chouest refuses to "buy local" and support the community like Crowley did for decades.

Ferry workers get organized

Secchitano also commented on the challenges facing thousands of public ferry workers who were recently hit by the anti-union Janus decision, handed-down last year by the US Supreme Court. The Janus attack was financed by corporations who hoped the Supreme Court ruling would destroy unions by encouraging members to quit paying dues. IBU ferry workers in Alaska, Washington and California responded by educating their co-workers about the scheme through thousands of conversations. This approach yielded excellent results, with only a handful refusing to pay their share of union dues. "The member-to-member conversations you had with your co-workers made the difference and helped us stay strong," said Secchitano. "We've still got more work to do in some areas, but we're on the right track with this approach."

Cheap oil hurts ferry workers

Secchitano described a special problem facing ferry workers in Alaska that has implications for all union members. Some Alaska politicians are trying to privatize the state's public ferry system in order to break public unions and convert a valuable public asset into a private, profit-making investment for Wall Street. She said the threat has become more serious because falling crude oil prices are depleting Alaska's state revenue that depends on oil taxes. She explained that declining oil prices and resulting budget shortfalls have many legislators demanding big budget cuts from public employees in Alaska, including ferry workers. Secchitano promised to help IBU members in Alaska fight back. She also praised efforts by Acting (Jan-May, 2018) Regional Director Darryl Tseu, who is sharing the valuable experience and relationships he has with many Alaska legislators.

Non-union on our doorstep

During a break in the session, IBU Puget Sound Business Agent Gail McCormick explained that his region's largest tug companies, Foss and Crowley, "have the largest and most powerful tractor tug fleets with the best-skilled crews, so pilots tend to favor them, but the non-union and sub-standard operators are nipping around the edges and showing up more often," he said, pointing across Elliott Bay where a non-union tug was visible in the distance.

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Symbol of power: IBU Local 400 Executive Board member Liam Lumsden (left) presented the IBU Convention with a Sea Serpent held by Local 400 Secretary-Treasurer Jason Woods. The gift from ILWU Canada is a hand-carved symbol of power that plays an important role in the mythology of Coast Salish people. Lumsden, a member of the Squamish Nation, made the presentation to IBU President Marina Secchitano (L) and Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast (R).



Young voices: IBU delegates responded to an appeal by Aubrey Johnsson, a guest at the convention from the San Francisco Region. She encouraged the IBU to strengthen connections with cadets at the Tongue Point Academy, one of two maritime training and apprenticeship programs on the West Coast. Johnsson is a Tongue Point graduate.

Three of the biggest non-union tug and barge companies are Vane Brothers from Maryland, Edison Chouest from Louisiana and the Kirby Corporation from Texas. All three also have modern fleets, and are scouting for new work, in part, because low oil prices have forced companies to close down expensive wells in the Gulf of Mexico – and cancel support vessel contracts there.

Secchitano explained how she’s seen the growing non-union threat take shape on the West Coast. “When I visited Hawaii recently, I saw a big Kirby tug next to a Foss union vessel. Then back home I saw a Kirby tug in San Francisco Bay, which we hadn’t seen before, and I learned that it was heading up here to the Puget Sound, so we can see these guys are getting more serious about moving out west,” she said.

Secchitano ended with some important updates, the first of which involved the IBU pension which had an unfunded liability for many years but is now on a recovery plan that will restore the fund’s health over the next 11 years.

She also provided the latest good news about expanded ferry services in San Francisco Bay, where state and federal funding has supported a 14-vessel fleet serving four routes that carry 2.7 million passengers annually – with plans to reach 5 times that number in 2035 using 44 vessels. The new passenger ferries are the cleanest 400 passenger vessels in the world and can reach over 30 mph.

Secchitano ended by noting the untimely passing of Veronica Sanchez, a skilled legislative advocate who helped Bay Area maritime workers wage many campaigns for good jobs and better working conditions. She said Sanchez was a valuable ally of the IBU and other unions. “Veronica will be remembered for fighting many good fights with us, and we will miss her deeply.”

Greetings from Canada

ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton was invited to the podium where he congratulated IBU members for their century of progressive unionism. Ashton said he was representing 6000 ILWU Canada members, plus another 7000 affiliated members. He urged the IBU to continue their progressive tradition, warning that employers are

constantly looking for ways to create division and doubt between workers. He cited the importance of welcoming everyone into the union, regardless of their gender orientation. “What matters is that we all bleed just like the next worker, regardless of how we look or how we choose to live.”

Remarks from President Adams

Newly-elected ILWU International President Willie Adams was the next speaker who began by recognizing the team of officers who accompanied him to attend the IBU Convention: Vice President for Mainland Bobby Olvera, Jr.; Vice President for Hawaii Wesley Furtado and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris. “I believe that four heads are better than one,” he said. “All of us have come here to listen to you and offer our support.”

He also praised the ILWU tradition of operating in the open and encouraging members to ask questions – especially the questioning elected union officials. “We can’t be afraid to have members criticize and challenge their elected officers,” he said.

Adams said the same principle applies to welcoming new and younger voices. “I’m excited and energized by what young people are doing in this union. We need to involve them, include them and listen to them.”

Adams said he was humbled by the fact that the IBU was founded in 1918, sixteen years ahead of the ILWU. “The IBU’s been around longer than the ILWU, which means we can learn from your history and experience.”

He also thanked President Secchitano for “having the courage to step up, lean in and stick her neck out to run for President. I look forward to working with you and your team,” said Adams.

He wrapped-up by sharing his concerns about the political challenges facing IBU and ILWU members, emphasizing the need to prepare now for a voice in the 2020 election. Adams noted the positive election results in November, with a record number of more-union-friendly candidates who will control the U.S. House of Representatives. But he also reminded everyone that the U.S. Senate remains controlled by an anti-union majority – and added that Alaska’s new governor favors big business over workers and unions. “Those work-

ers and others like them depend on us to help them organize and speak out,” Adams concluded.

Special guest: MM&P President

Don Marcus, President of the Masters, Mates and Pilots Union, opened by joking about the challenge of following Willie Adams to the podium. Marcus said the IBU, ILWU and the MM&P share a common bond; they are among the larger group of Maritime Unions who formed the Maritime Labor Alliance six years ago. He said the group plays an important role in building unity.

“We squabble today at our own risk. Non-union operators are no longer unchallenged and many are operating in former union strongholds. They provide their workers with half-decent pay and working conditions, but poor benefits and no rights on the job. I’ve followed several of your IBU organizing efforts that were thwarted by bad labor laws. Let’s remember that it took twenty years for union organizing campaigns to prevail on the Columbia River.”

Marcus agreed that the Janus Supreme Court decision has had a surprisingly positive effect so far, with most workers choosing to remain dues-paying union members. “About ten years ago, we had 40 percent of federal employees participating in our union – and today we have 90 percent. In our case, it happened because of one woman who took the effort to talk with her co-workers about supporting the union.”

Marcus said unions need to use a similar approach in the future. “We have to be part of the dialogue on automation, now that autonomous vessels are being designed and tested. We also have to keep challenging the hysteria raised against the Jones Act – misinformation being spread to otherwise progressive legislators, through propaganda efforts at the Cato Institute and Heritage Foundation, where they hate the Jones Act because it provides good wages and working conditions for union maritime workers.”

He concluded on a hopeful note: “the IBU and MM&P have a good record of working together and we need to continue that work, like we’re doing to help folks at the Washington State Ferries, and the new federally-funded ferries in San Francisco Bay, and similar projects up and down the West Coast.”

Convention work begins

After the opening speakers and other formalities were finished on the first morning, convention delegates tackled an ambitious work plan that continued until 9 pm. An equally rigorous schedule was set for the next three days, with delegates divided into two groups: A “Passenger Industry Caucus” and a “Freight, Towing & Environmental Caucus.”

Delegates in the Passenger Industry Caucus began with an in-depth workshop to analyze “lessons learned” from the Janus experience, led by veteran union trainer and economist, Mark Brenner from the University of Oregon’s Labor Education and Research Center. His skillful facilitation encouraged the room to explode with conversations as delegates compiled and shared their “best practices” and “mistakes to avoid.”

In a room next door, the Freight, Towing & Environmental Caucus began their meeting with an update from Coast Guard Lt. Chris Spring, who detailed the latest changes in federal certification and manning requirements for vessels. Delegates responded with many questions about the interpretation and enforcement of these safety-oriented rules administered by the Coast Guard. After finishing, Lt. Spring conducted a similar workshop with the Passenger Industry Caucus.

Automation hits IBU jobs

At separate sessions for the Ferry Caucus and Freight/Towing caucus, ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton and Local 400’s Jason Woods joined with MUA official Paul Garrett to discuss the hot topics of automation and cabotage. Ferry workers already saw automation replace jobs at Washington State and the Golden Gate District when automatic ticket machines replaced staff in kiosks. Now a new and different round of automation has created an immediate crisis for workers at Georgia Pacific’s paper goods warehouse on the Columbia River, where the company (owned by the Koch brothers) has just announced an automation plan that would destroy a majority of warehouse jobs. ILWU Canada’s Secretary-Treasurer Bob Dhaliwal has been tracking news articles about automation for years and provides them to ILWU members in a weekly email. The IBU will draw on information and experi-

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Making a point: Erik Ferrel (L) is a Master Steward for Washington State ferry workers in the Puget Sound and was an IBU Convention delegate. On his right is ferry worker Andrew Mannion, also a Steward and union activist.

IBU members celebrate a century of progressive maritime unionism



Active workshops: The IBU Convention encouraged discussion and different points of view. Alaska Patrolman Krissel Calibo explains her ideas to Frank McMurry, who serves as Vice Chair for the SF Region.

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ence from the ILWU and other unions in an effort to help warehouse workers and dozens of working families being hurt by the automation plan.

Cabotage

The word “cabotage” comes from the French and originally described coastal trading. It’s now become a legal term of art, referring to maritime trade between ports within a country. Almost 100 years ago, in 1920, Congress passed a law known as the “Jones Act,” requiring trade between U.S. ports to use vessels built, owned and operated by U.S. citizens. The Jones Act and other cabotage rules helped the U.S. build a merchant marine industry during the 1920’s. As time passed, the Jones Act protected good-paying maritime union jobs as global capitalism outsourced most vessels and crewmembers to countries with low wages, few regulations, no enforcement and weak unions. Corporations have been trying to kill the Jones Act since the end of the Second World War, and the fight continues.

“Every year, corporations try to attack cabotage laws in Australia, Canada, Europe and the U.S., and every year we have to beat them back,” said the MUA’s Paul Garrett. The battle in Australia became pitched last year, when the country’s anti-union/pro-business government announced plans to destroy cabotage laws. The latest threat is being battled with help from the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), a global network of unions that includes the IBU and ILWU. Paul Garrett attended a recent ITF meeting in Singapore this past October, where Terri Mast was elevated to become the group’s Second Vice Chair of Inland Waterways, a post she’s using to create a new Committee on Tugs and Towing.

“These international networks are important, said Garrett, noting how coordination between unions helped the MUA win their 1998 Patrick’s dispute involving an Australian Stevedoring company that tried to break the union. The ILWU played a critical role

in that fight by refusing to handle Patrick’s cargo.

Apprenticeship programs

Throughout the convention, delegates made positive comments about two seamanship apprentice programs initiated by the IBU. The first was established in 1980 at the Tongue Point Job Corps Center in Astoria, Oregon. That program’s success over 38 years inspired Southern California’s IBU Region to recently launch a similar program. *The Dispatcher* has run previous reports on both programs and is planning future coverage. IBU Convention delegates agreed that the Tongue Point program is vitally important, and the union will be taking new steps to help educate cadets there about the role of maritime unions in their industry. One IBU member attending the Convention from the Bay Area was Aubrey Johnson, who graduated from Tongue Point a few years ago and shared her valuable experiences with delegates, including how much she thought veteran IBU leaders and young cadets could benefit from more interaction.

The Southern California maritime apprentice program recently enrolled their first round of new cadets who are now focused on classroom studies. Efforts are underway to secure them field internships with union maritime employers.

Caucuses debate key issues

The Ferry Workers and Freight Caucuses both discussed state and federal legislation, along with political developments in CA, OR, WA and HI, including:

The Jones Act – This important law protecting union maritime jobs survived an attack last year by anti-union forces in Congress who falsely blamed the law for supply shortages in Puerto Rico following hurricane Maria’s \$43 billion hit in 2017. Special efforts will be needed to reach a small but important number of progressive members in the House of Representatives who were influenced during the debate by anti-union myths and propaganda.

Environmental conflicts – Washington State delegates detailed their experience with a well-intentioned but deeply-flawed carbon tax ballot measure. It was defeated by voters – but re-opened longstanding tensions between the building trades and other unions over whether workers should take action to protect the planet from global warming, focus solely on jobs – or find a way to do both. One possible point of agreement is that workers should be protected from bearing the brunt of urgently needed changes. This particular carbon tax measure was unintentionally drafted in a way that would have deeply cut the State’s Transportation and public ferry budget, making it a “no-deal” for the IBU. This painful experience highlighted the need for unions to be more involved with environmental groups so they can participate when environmental laws are conceived and drafted.

Industrial waterfront protection – Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast opened this topic by noting that coastal cities must take steps now to protect their industrial waterfront lands or risk losing them – along with good-paying jobs. In Seattle, the IBU and ILWU are part of a successful coalition that joined forces with local business groups to protect Seattle’s working waterfront, especially in the South of Downtown (SODO) industrial area. The Mayor has since appointed ILWU member John Persak and Mast to a committee that will suggest solutions to save the City’s industrial waterfront.

Vocational training – In Washington State, the IBU has joined with vocational education advocates to see if they can require all schools in the state to provide a minimum number of vocational classes so working-class families can get training that leads to good-paying union jobs for their children.

Arctic scramble – ILWU Alaska leader Dennis Young shared his efforts to monitor plans to route commercial vessel traffic through previously frozen areas of the arctic. He described the aggressive scramble by countries and companies to enter areas that were unreachable until global warming began melting polar ice at an alarm-

ing rate. Besides opening shorter polar routes between Asia and Europe, he said companies want to drill for oil and gas in the outer continental shelf beneath the arctic.

V.P. Olvera on Organizing

Tuesday began on a solemn note with a brief ceremony recognizing IBU members who passed since the last convention. Everyone stood in silence as names of the departed from every region were read into the official record.

Newly-elected International Vice President Bobby Olvera, Jr., thanked the IBU for inviting him to observe and participate at the convention, then quickly jumped into what he called “new changes that are coming to the ILWU.” He said the changes would include better communications, new education modules and a “return to our roots” when it comes to organizing. He said the officers recently held their first National Organizing Committee meeting and would hold more each quarter, probably scheduled before or after International Executive Board meetings. He said there would be greater coordination with Hawaii, and a willingness to pursue long-term organizing campaigns that make sense from a strategic standpoint. “We talk a lot about solidarity, but don’t always walk the walk,” he said. “There should never be an ILWU campaign that doesn’t involve every ILWU local in a 100-mile radius, so everyone knows what the issues are, who the people are, and what’s at stake for all of us.” He closed by saying the ILWU can help “re-build the house of labor in a progressive way, by working with other progressive unions, including nurses, teachers and others who share our vision of helping the entire working class.”

Ferris urges courage and action

Newly-elected ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris was next, and he began by challenging delegates to “search for opportunities among all the challenges we face, including hostility to unions from many politicians.” Ferris continued, “We’re up against a wealthy and well organized ruling class that doesn’t care about the work-

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Asking hard questions: Robert Estrada, IBU Director for the San Francisco Region, was among many Convention delegates who used the workshops to ask hard questions and hear different points of view.



Exchanging ideas: Listening on the left is Joanne Smitchko, who serves on the IBU Alaska Region Executive Committee. Expressing an opinion is Puget Sound Region Executive Committee member and Convention delegate, Sue Moser.

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ing class. So giving a couple of bucks to politicians during campaign time just isn't going to cut it. We have to be more involved with our local communities. We need to promote social justice and environmental issues. We must reach out and embrace everyone with common concerns, whether its opposing discrimination in the LGBT community or supporting a neighborhood concerned about pollution." Ferris offered his cell number to all the delegates and made a point of attending workshops and sessions throughout the convention.

Hawaii organizing

Veteran International Vice President for Hawaii, Wesley Furtado, greeted delegates with a warm "aloha!" then recalled his close relationships with all four IBU Regional Directors in Hawaii who have served during his 18-year tenure. Furtado explained his latest organizing effort involves securing first contracts for supervisors on the docks who recently joined the ILWU. The effort started in Hawaii, then spread to the mainland where supervisors in Southern California also joined the ILWU, despite management's strong objection.

Furtado also explained how the ILWU's longstanding strength and reputation in Hawaii has made them the "go-to" union when workers want to organize.

"We represent all kinds of workers from all kinds of backgrounds," he said, citing a diverse list, including, "supermarkets, graveyards, hotels, spas, golf courses, agricultural workers, coffee, candy, beer distribution and more. The members include Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and more." Furtado concluded by saying "mahalo," thanking delegates before leaving the podium.

Organizing panel

The convention heard from two ILWU staffers who are responsible for executing the ILWU's organizing strategy: Assistant Organizing Director Ryan Dowling who supervises the overall program, and Senior Organizer Jon Brier who is assigned to the Puget Sound Region. Dowling did a good job describing the ILWU's current campaigns, including the effort to train and mobilize workers against the Janus decision that targeted public employees. Another campaign he explained involves hundreds of vet-

erinary hospital workers – including some located in Seattle, with others around Portland and San Francisco. He also explained efforts underway to help workers organize in the legal marijuana industry.

Jon Brier covered some recent IBU organizing efforts, including one to help fuel dock workers in Dutch Harbor, Alaska. He praised the effort by IBU rank-and-file organizer Adam Dalton who played a key role in the campaign by training workers, involving ILWU members, recruiting civil rights groups, and cultivating community support. Despite the hard work by everyone involved, flaws in the law allowed the company to eventually fire union leaders and decertify the union. Brier has devoted much of his time this year to helping public employees, including ferry workers in Washington State and Alaska, respond in a positive way to the anti-union Janus decision, by organizing member-to-member conversations to keep workers in the union.

Resolutions set policy

Much of the remaining time at the convention was devoted to drafting, amending and debating resolutions on a wide range of issues and concerns. (See the sidebar for a summary of resolutions passed by delegates.)

Next convention in 2021

Before closing the IBU's 24th Convention, President Secchitano thanked the 45 delegates and 20 guests for their hard work and commitment. "Each of you came here because you care about your union and then spent the past four days contributing ideas and suggestions to help us do a better job. Thank you on behalf of all 4,000 IBU members for your time and effort." The gavel then came down and the convention adjourned with a new course for navigating the next three years until the 2021 Convention.

Summary of resolution passed at the 24th IBU Convention:

R-1: Support for IBU workers employed at the Georgia Pacific's Columbia River Warehouse, owned by Koch Industries, which just announced plans to automate a majority of jobs in the warehouse.

R-2A: Calls for job security and a "just transition" for workers impacted by changes needed to protect the earth from climate change.

R-3A: Creates a Historical Committee to research and document IBU history.

R-4: Support for the Jones Act and cabotage laws protecting good union maritime jobs and opposing any waivers; to be conveyed to members of Congress.

R-5A: Support and solidarity for striking HERE members against Marriott Hotels.

R-6: Support for a permanent partial exemption of CA tax on marine fuels consumed beyond state and national boundaries.

R-7A: Improve connections and support for students at the Tongue Point Program.

R-8: Support for the North American Solidarity Project, an effort involving progressive unions in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

R-9A: Honoring ILWU pensioner Howard Keylor's lifetime of progressive union leadership, including support for struggles by IBU members.

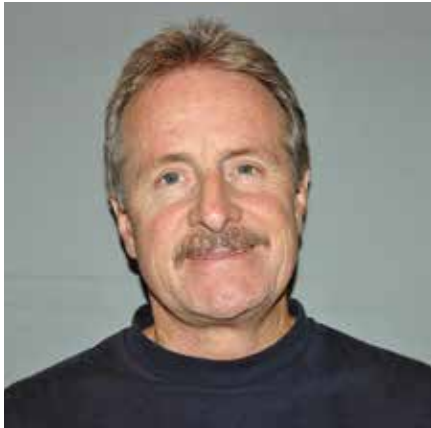
R-10A: Calls for a plan to help Alaska Marine Highway ferry workers re-sign members following the Janus decision in order to keep their union strong.

R-11: Support to help Alcatraz ferry workers in San Francisco to secure union representation.

R-12A: Support for workers at the new Inter-Island Ferry Authority in Alaska to join the IBU.

IN MEMORIAM

Mike Mitre, former ILWU Local 13 President



Former ILWU Local 13 President Mike Mitre passed away on November 24 at the age of 64.

Mike was born in Riverside, CA to Ralph and Margie Mitre. He was a dedicated union member and leader who served the ILWU with distinction. He was an avid surfer and skier who travelled the world to surf and seek adventure. Mike attended White Point Elementary, Dana Jr. High, Fer-

min Lasuen & San Pedro High schools. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Cal State Long Beach. He considered attending law school but was lured by the call of the sea and the port.

His maritime career started at Ports O' Call working on the top deck of the vessel *Sierra Nevada*. Moving on to the tugs and barges at United towing, he attained his U.S. Coast Guard license and went to work at Catalina Cruises as a captain. He then joined the ILWU Local 13 in 1985 and remained a longshoreman until his passing.

He was elected twice by the membership to serve as President of ILWU Local 13. Mitre also served on the International Executive Board, the Local 13 Executive Board, was a Caucus and Convention delegate, and served on the Longshore Legislative Committee. While serving as the Director of Port



Former ILWU Local 13 President Mike Mitre (right) with his brother, Greg Mitre at a Longshore Caucus in 2006.

Security for the ILWU, Mitre represented the union before the Senate and House Committees on Port Security.

He was preceded in death by his father Ralph. He is survived by his mother Margie, his loving ex-wife Martha, son Sean, daughter Lauren, brothers Greg, and Jeff, sister Laurie, and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Services were held Saturday December 1st, at McNerneys Mortuary, in San Pedro. A memorial paddle out, a traditional surfing ritual that honors the life of a fallen surfer, was held at Royal Palms State Beach in San Pedro on Sunday December 2nd.

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Carl A. Flintoff;
Local 10: Leon W. Hill; Maurice V. Hendricks; **Local 13:** David N. Whitford; Dane P. Valdez; Kenneth H. Smallwood; Samuel F. Tauaefa; Stanley E. Eaton; Palmer T. Feland; Gary W. Butterbaugh; Richard A. Duncan; Joseph L. Sandoval;
Local 19: Steven J. Richards; Kennis A. Ghee; Harry Muirhead III;
Local 23: Ronald W. Bredeson; Donald J. Pierce; Chris A. Brindle;
Local 32: Steve E. Ritchie;
Local 46: Ruben C. Perez;
Local 47: Robert K. Rose;
Local 54: Salvador S. Rodriguez;
Local 63: Sylvia K. Sigala; Debra D. Reposky; Earl T. Bryan; Cathy A. Brown; Debora Taylor; Dario W. Leonardo;
Local 94: Gary L. Gonzales;
Local 98: Steven J. Oania;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Leo C. Ross; William H. Grisso; **Local 10:** Carlos M. Huaman;
Local 12: Willis A. Sutton;
Local 13: Kenneth M. Sutton;
Local 19: Terrell B. Rushing; Charles L. Reinsmith; Lawrence T. Biggs (Mary); **Local 23:** Darrell Booth; **Local 29:** Apolonio R. Samson; Umberto Colmenero;
Local 34: Daniel Andazola;
Local 52: Parker N. Johnston (Judith); **Local 63:** Han C. Lee; George R. Morgan;
Local 91: Vernon W. Roberts;
Local 94: Marcelino Martinez;

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 4: Virginia J. Underwood; Enid D. Rand; **Local 10:** Doris Boyd; Queen E. Brown; Vita B. Mackin; Shirley B. Smith; **Local 13:** Nadine G. Lung; Patricia Wedderburn; Shirley A. Van Andel;
Local 21: Marilyn B. Raappana;
Local 23: Kathlene E. Smith;
Local 34: Annie Gentry;
Local 52: Rosegene Mathews;
Local 98: Audrey Kover;

2018 Annual Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies Awards Banquet

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Labor History and the Labor Archives of Washington

In addition to awards honoring the ILWU, the banquet featured announcements of the latest research projects funded by the Bridges Center, a report on the activities of the Labor Archives of Washington, and a host of other awards. Of particular note, this year the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association (PNLHA) collaborated with the Bridges Center on the creation of a \$500 Paper Prize to promote and reward engaging labor history research by students. One of the two award-winning papers this year, *The Longshoremen During the Seattle General Strike* by Juan Ortiz, focused on longshore history by illustrating the complex economic and social changes that occurred after World War I and the intricacies behind the Seattle longshore workers’ decision to join the 1919 General Strike.

In researching his paper, Ortiz drew upon collections held by the Labor Archives of Washington, established in 2010 thanks to generous support from the ILWU. The Labor Archives is currently organizing for the 100th anniversary of the Seattle General Strike with a commemorative event titled *Solidarity City: The Seattle General Strike and 100 Years of Worker Power*. This event will take place at the Labor Temple on February 9th from 1pm-4pm. It will be part of the Solidarity Centennial, a series of events hosted by various organizations in Seattle to commemorate the 1919 Seattle General Strike, a five-day

worker strike that began on February 6th in light of post WWI economic and social conditions. Sixty-thousand union and nonunion workers stopped working in an act of solidarity, halting the city’s daily functioning before a military intervention incited by Seattle Mayor, Ole Hanson. “Solidarity City” will feature experts and panelists from the labor community to speak about the 1919 events and how the labor movement has evolved since, honoring the legacy of labor rights activism and where it must continue to go.

UW Laundry Workers Speak Out

The banquet concluded with an appeal for support from several members of the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) 1488. The University of Washington recently made the decision to close the Mount Baker laundry facility that cleans linens for UW hospitals, despite appeals and protests from the laundry workers, WFSE, UW United Students Against Sweatshops and 44 state legislators. This decision will result in job losses for about 100 union workers in late March. At the banquet, several people who have worked for Mount Baker laundry for decades spoke about how the closure will impact them and their families. The majority are immigrants and refugees.

More information about the year-round activities of the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies, including scholarships, research projects, events, and the Labor Archives of Washington, can be found by visiting the Bridges Center’s website at labor.uw.edu.

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5201 SW Westgate Dr. #207
Portland, OR 97221
(503) 231-4882

ADRP—Northern California
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HPowell@benefitplans.org
400 North Point
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 776-8363

ADRP—Washington
Donnie Schwendeman
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Tacoma, WA 98424
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