



THE DISPATCHER

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ILWU shows holiday spirit with generous toy drives [page 2](#)



Chassis and container mechanics employed by P&B Intermodal at the BNSF South Seattle Intermodal Facility in Tukwila won their first collective bargaining agreement in December with solidarity from the ILWU and other unions. The workers voted to join ILWU Local 19A, the allied division of Local 19. In the bottom left, the new members of Local 19A celebrate their election victory with Local 19 Vice-President Matt Ventoza and LRC Committee member Justin Hirsch; In the bottom right, Local 19 President Herald Ugles swears in the Local 19A's new members.

South Seattle intermodal workers win first ILWU contract through strategy, solidarity

Six months to the day after launching a fight to be union, chassis and container mechanics employed by P&B Intermodal at the BNSF South Seattle Intermodal Facility in Tukwila won a first collective bargaining agreement on December 2022. The first contract transformed wages and working conditions as new members of ILWU Local 19A, the Local's allied division.

"We heard about the incredible gains made by fellow P&B mechanics in the Port of Tacoma when they went union through ILWU Local 23," said Rob Orozco, one of the mechanics in Tukwila. "We urgently needed to

change this workplace, and knew we could make it happen here as well."

In 2021, mechanics struck P&B's Port of Tacoma operation in the South Intermodal Yard with solidarity from Local 23. Workers won union recognition six hours after demanding it, and went on to secure a first contract in less than five months, which doubled wages from \$18.50 to \$37.50, locked down fully employer-paid health care, and launched a new pension plan where none had existed before, with starting accrual of \$9.50 per hour.

"The company did everything they could to keep Tukwila and Tacoma employees separated so we wouldn't find out," said Orozco. "But we eventually made contact and started talking union."

Heating up over hazards

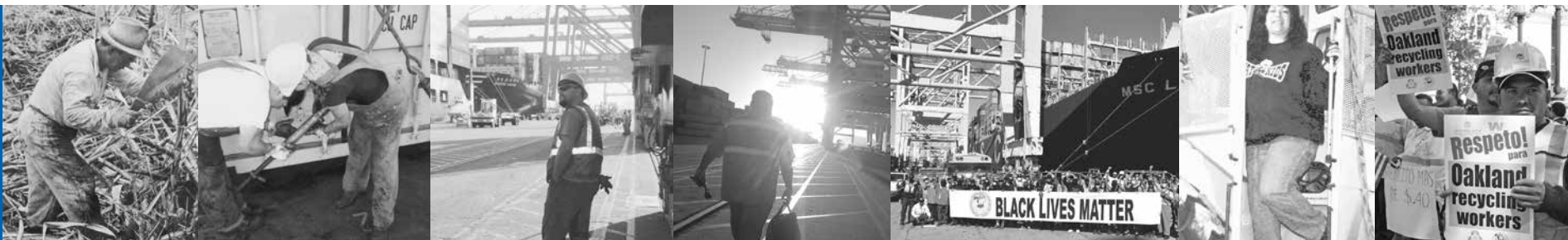
In May, the group of about ten Tukwila mechanics said they had been pushed to a breaking point, dealing with health and safety issues on the job.

"Managers had me working unscheduled overtime day after day after day," said Garrett Spindler. "I ended up getting a hernia on the job and then being told by management there was supposedly no light-duty work available, even though state law requires it."

In June, workers conducted an informational picket at the yard, joined by Local 19 and Local 23 members, including Young Worker Committee members from Seattle

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ILWU shows holiday spirit with generous toy drives

ILWU members, pensioners, and auxiliary clubs continued their annual tradition of giving back to their communities through good times and bad. This year ILWU locals organized toy drives and donated their time and money to local charity groups. Because of the generosity and solidarity of ILWU members, thousands of struggling families along the coast had a happier Christmas.

Southern California

The annual ILWU Children's Christmas Party in Southern California helps approximately 3,000 kids have a happy holiday season. More than 100 volunteers helped to make this year's event possible. The committee reached out to local non-profits to identify families in the area who may need some assistance. Volunteers set out rows of toys and sports equipment at the Longshoremen's Memorial Hall in Wilmington, where children picked out a toy of their choice. Locals 13, 26, 63, 94, the Federated Auxiliary 8, Southern California Pensioners, and Longshoremen's Memorial Association all made this year's holiday party possible. The Holiday Events Committee works year-round to plan and organize annual charity events.

Local 29 members in San Diego held a toy drive to benefit Adrian's Way, a local charity supporting homeless school children in the San Diego area. The generosity of Local 29 members provided gifts for 27 local families. Each family submitted a wish list with gifts for each family member. The local held a gift-wrapping event at the hall. In addition, the Local 29 members raised money for gifts for Local 29 casuals, along with a potluck Christmas party.



Local 12 in Coos Bay partnered with the North Bend Fire Department's Toy Drive this year and donated bikes, toys, and canned goods.

Local 46 members in Port Hueneme also gave back to the community by holding a toy drive that donated toys and bikes to the local Salvation Army.

Bay Area

The Bay Area Longshoremen's Memorial Association, in conjunction with Locals 10, 34, and 91, held a Toy Drive at the Local 10 Hall to benefit the San Francisco Fire Department Toys Program.

Coos Bay, OR

Local 12 members held a toy drive that donated bikes, toys, and canned foods to the North Bend Fire Department's annual Christmas Toy Drive. "We cannot say thank you enough for the support that they give to the community and the North Bend Fire Department. Thank you, ILWU Local 12," the fire department said.

Tacoma Toy Drive

Every year during the holidays, Local 23 in Tacoma donates a \$200 Fred Meyer gift card to two students from each elementary school in Pierce County, totaling \$60,000 in gift cards. The students are chosen to receive the gift cards by their school counselors/principals based on their continuous efforts and positive attitudes throughout the year, despite their struggles outside the classroom.

The Local 23 Toy Drive Committee—Mandy Peterson, Amy James, Kimberly Boespflug, Melissa Burks, and Holly Hulscher—work under the direction of the local's Trustees. The Committee does most of the shopping for the toys at the local Fred Meyer, because it is a union store, and because they offer discounts—even on sale prices—due to the large volume of toys purchased for the toy drive. The store also makes sure the toy drive has a dedicated check-out lane staffed with people to help.



ILWU members and pensioners in Tacoma showed up big for area families in their annual Christmas toy drive.

"I'm so grateful to Fred Meyer for partnering with us yearly to make every dollar count and go so much further," explained longtime Toy Drive Committee member Melissa Burks.

Since the toy drive has grown over the years, the Committee has streamlined things to make donating easier and the distribution of toys more efficient. Members and pensioners can make donations through a Toy Drive account at the Longshore Credit Union over the phone or in person. The Committee does the shopping for each organization and labels the bags with each name to help with separating the toys. When the toys are distributed to the local organizations that work with the kids in need, they have a 10-minute time slot where they pick up the pre-bagged toys at an outdoor tent at the Local 23 Hall.

This year, longshore members and pensioners combined to bring in more than \$57,047 worth of toys and bikes that were distributed to more than 1,050 children represented by 18 local organizations. Longshore mechanics put together the bikes so they are sturdy and safe.

"I'm always proud of my union rallying to support our community," said Burks, "and the hard work our team does to make this valuable resource from our longshore family a reality for so many underserved kids."

In addition to the chance to help the community, there are bragging rights on the line. The Toy Drive Committee puts on a friendly competition between longshore workers who typically work at different terminals and different longshore groups. This year the pensioners came in first place by donating \$12,740. The longshore workers at Evergreen were not far behind by donating \$9,946. Gate/Rail donated \$1,650, and mechanics donated \$8,296.

Seattle

Seattle's Local 19 Christmas for Kids program had an outstanding year. Together with Locals 52, 98, and the pensioners, they raised just over \$41,000 through local union support, private donations, raffles, and a car wash. The generosity of the Seattle-area ILWU family enabled the support of 13 different agencies throughout the greater Puget Sound area that serve many different needs of our community. This year's donations benefited organizations that assist families in need, foster families, children with incarcerated parents, kids in Harborview's burn center, and families facing homelessness.

2022 also saw the return of the Santa Christmas party. This was the first Christmas party since 2019 due to COVID restrictions. The Committee held a party with cookie decorating, letters to Santa, a bouncy house, gift bags, and pictures with Santa. Even the Grinch made an appearance. Approximately 50 kids attended. More importantly, it was a time for ILWU families to come together to fellowship, for kids to play together, and build comradery and solidarity.

Vancouver, WA

Local 4's Annual Charity Bike Drive partners with the Arthur D. Curtis Children's Justice Center and Firefighters Local 452 of Clark County, Washington. The Children's Justice Center (CJC) protects children in the local community who have been a victim of felony assault. The goal of the bike drive is to provide some joy to these children. Every year, CJC provides Local 4 with a list of kids from the local community who need a bike. This year, following a 2-year hiatus due to COVID, the local once again received a list of 70 kids. They were able to donate a total of 75 bikes, along with brand-new helmets furnished by local firefighters.

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Local 4 member Rick Anderson retires, recalls activism and five generations on Vancouver's waterfront

One of most visible activists during the 2013 grain lockout at UGC in Vancouver, fourth generation Local 4 member Rick Anderson, officially retired in January for medical reasons after a 28-year career on the docks. Anderson spoke with the Dispatcher on his proud family history of nearly 100 years on the Columbia River waterfront, his own union activism, and the diagnosis that led to his retirement.

Five generations

"My great-grandfather and my grandfather were both in the Strike of 1934," said Anderson. "In 1938, my great-grandfather retired after being crushed by corrugated steel inside a boxcar. He stayed alive for a few years, and ultimately died from those injuries." Loa Anderson was the first of the five generations in the ILWU.

The second and third Anderson generations, Richard and Lee, brought fourth-generation Rick to the docks in the early 1970's.

"I remember going to the grain elevator as a kid," said Anderson. "It was great, because Dad and Grampa would fight over who would buy me the most stuff off of the coffee wagon. Grampa worked in the grain elevator for years and years."

Anderson got the job through the employment office, working his way up from casual and getting his A book in 2005. His grown children, Brandon and Brandi, were both drawn as casuals and are working on the docks, making them the fifth generation.

"They love it, oh my god, are you kidding me?" said Anderson. "I've had Brandon and Brandi on picket lines, and coming to union stuff, since they were born. Actually, Brandi saw me get arrested. The guys had to take my daughter and my car to the hall when I was getting packed up and taken to jail."

Jail? More on that to come.

From Woolen Mill to the docks

Anderson worked at the Pendleton Woolen Mill and served as president of the mill's union while casualing on the docks in the 1990's.

"I was the youngest union president at Pendleton Woolen Mills; I was 28," said Anderson. "I took them through

negotiations. We got the biggest raise, and a 401K in addition to pension and vision care. Growing up in a longshore family, I was a little more militant than the average president that they'd had at the mill. When we had our strike vote, I kept holding off on saying, 'yes, we'll accept this contract.' The company threatened to go to Mexico. I convinced our membership to vote to authorize the strike. Even though we never struck, it gave us a lot of leverage in negotiations. We got the best contract they'd ever gotten. ... I attribute that to growing up ILWU."

Anderson worked nights on the docks while working days at the woolen mill, at times with just two hours to sleep.

"When I got my white card, I had to show up at the dispatch hall every day," said Anderson. "I realized I would get fired at the mill because I would show up late to my job. But the docks were the priority for me. Everybody knew, even my bosses at the mill knew, that obviously the docks were going to be a much better career path."

'Always liked being a soldier'

Anderson's ILWU upbringing and experience as a union president at the mill gave him the momentum to get involved in ILWU service right away, over time being elected to several local offices and serving on the Executive Board, Central Labor Council, and the Puget Sound District Council.

ILWU International President Willie Adams, whose home port is Tacoma, considers Anderson a good friend for 30 years, and recalled being impressed when Anderson and his fellow Local 4 member Cager Clabaugh regularly made the trip north to participate in District Council meetings.

"They were always solid guys, solid figures for the union," said Adams. "Rick wears his feelings on his sleeve; he has always bled ILWU. People might not know about him out there, but if I were in a foxhole, I'd want him there with me."

Indeed, Anderson says, "I always looked at myself as a behind-the-scenes kind of guy; I never needed to be up front. I learned a lot from the officers who were above me, like Cager, Brad Clark, Jared Smith. Jerry Johnston back in the day. I always liked being a soldier. They could call, and I'm on my way. I did pickets and rallies everywhere from Tillamook to The Dalles."

Anderson is indeed a soldier, a decorated Navy veteran whose ship was fired upon by Libya in 1985. Anderson's wife, Carla, is an Air Force veteran, his father was in the Army, and his son served in the Marine Corps.

2013 grain lockout

Anderson served on the union's negotiating committee for a new grainhandlers' contract with Mitsui-owned United Grain Corp (UGC), and he was one of several ILWU members and supporters to be arrested in the months after UGC locked out ILWU workers in 2013. Many of the ILWU workers had ancestors who had worked or even died inside the grain elevator over the previous 80 years, and now they saw a union-busting firm, hired by UGC, sending scab workers through ILWU picket lines and creating a volatile situation.

The UGC lockout stories vary from colorful to painful, and, said Anderson, "I hold the record for number of arrests for Local 4."

During one of his three arrests related to the picket line, Anderson said, "I had a grain dust truck that kept hitting me. The police chief, she said, 'we have you on camera putting your picket sign through that guy's radiator.' I said, 'well then you also have it on camera that he was hitting me with his truck.' But they didn't ever go after him, they came after me, they came after the ILWU."

Ultimately, Anderson and the other workers had most charges reduced, dropped or settled out of court – though Anderson spent several hours in jail and was convicted of jaywalking while in a crosswalk designated by Vancouver police.

The nearly 18-month UGC lockout ended in August of 2014 when the union's grain negotiating committee and the overseas grain employers operating in the Pacific Northwest reached a tentative agreement. The agreement was ratified by members of Locals 4, 8, 19, 21 and 92 the same month.

'Started losing words'

Anderson was working in the grain elevator when he had a stroke 12 years ago, at age 45. More recently, Anderson said, his family noticed that he "started losing words. ... I was having problems with my speech, and it was getting progressively worse. So they kept running me in for MRI's, but they couldn't find anything."

His daughter, who is a Certified Nursing Assistant, convinced his doctors to push further.

"Thank God we have the insurance we have," said Anderson, "because most insurances don't allow you to get a PET scan, where they put radiation particles in your blood and take image of your brain. That's when they realized I have shrinking of the temporal lobes. They called it Frontotemporal Dementia, or FTD."

Anderson shared his diagnosis on Facebook in July of 2022. To help educate others, he posted a 60 Minutes special from 2019. The host called



Rick Anderson's son and daughter, Brandon and Brandi, are carrying on the Anderson name for the fifth generation on Vancouver's waterfront.

FTD "the cruelest disease you've never heard of," and the most common form of dementia for Americans younger than 60. The video is online at www.tinyurl.com/sixtyminutesFTD.

'Get checked out'

Anderson has handled his FTD diagnosis by characteristically thinking of his family and friends, seeking to educate people on the disease and the need to "get checked out as soon as you feel something is off."

"The prognosis is, it's always fatal," said Anderson. "There's nothing that they can do; there's no cure. They can just manage the symptoms and what's going to happen to me. After the diagnosis, you're generally not going to be around after 4-5 years; that's the reality."

"I want my brothers and sisters to know that if anything doesn't seem right, to get all the testing that they can get. It's so important," said Anderson. "My diagnosis wouldn't have changed what's happening to me, or what's going to happen to me. But at least you know. It was very important for me, while I'm still OK, to get everything in order."

'Enjoy life the best you can'

For medical reasons, Anderson stopped working in May of 2022 and officially retired in November.

"I'm not upset," said Anderson. "Are you going to cry about it, or are you going to enjoy life the best you can?"

On January 11, 2023, Brandon posted a photo with his dad under Local 4's sign, and wrote:

"I had the honor of watching my father Rick Anderson retire from the ILWU local 4 this evening! 28 years he spent on the waterfront to provide for his family! One of the hardest working, selfless union man I have ever seen in my life. I'm very proud of you Dad! I hope that I can continue to carry on the family name down on the dock!"

"I feel like I've lived my life how I've wanted to live it," said Anderson. "The dementia that I've got, it's not like Alzheimers where I'll lose my memories, until the end. So I've still got all these memories of the good times, all the pickets, all the times with my brothers and sisters on the docks, that you know I'll still remember. These are all memories that I love."

For more of this interview and additional photos, see ilwulongshore.org/local4anderson.

— Jennifer Sargent Bokaie



Local 4 members Cager Clabaugh and Rick Anderson are enthusiastically welcomed at Northwest picket lines. Anderson said, "I've still got all these memories of the good times, all the pickets, all the times with my brothers and sisters on the docks."

We are the ILWU



Local 1000 Home Healthcare Operators, Hawai'i

The ILWU's newest local, Local 1000 Home Health Care Operators, was chartered in September of 2022 and currently represents approximately 125 members in the State of Hawai'i. These workers operate independent home care facilities that provide housing, meals, care, and supervision for disabled and elderly patients who do not have family to care for them and cannot afford to pay out of pocket for a care facility. Funding for the patients is provided by the government through federal and state funds.

The workers who operate these facilities and performs this important but underpaid care work are largely Filipina immigrants. A group of them decided to unionize with the ILWU so they can more effectively fight for fair compensation for the care they provide. They also want a stronger voice with state legislators to help improve industry regulations to benefit both patients and operators and reduce red tape such as ensuring that licensing of facilities occurs in a timely manner.

Local 1000 members told the Dispatcher that they currently receive approximately \$1442 per month, per patient. That includes room and board, care, and supervision. Compare this to the market rate for this kind of care: Patients who pay out of pocket at care facilities pay between \$5,000 to \$6,000 per month, said Local 1000 member Rosemarie Sebastian.



ILWU International Hawai'i: (Left to right): Wilfred Chang, Lead International Representative; Meleana Awa, Office Manager; Sam Kreutz, International Vice President, (Hawai'i); Mathew Yamamoto, International Representative.

The organizing effort has been spearheaded by the ILWU International, Hawaii staff led by International Vice President (Hawai'i) Sam Kreutz, and organizers Will Chang and Mathew Yamamoto. Vice President Kreutz said that the organizing effort for home healthcare operators is just getting started. "These operators perform important care work for poor and working-class elderly and disabled people in our state. Local 1000 will allow them to have a greater voice in Hawai'i, so legislators can understand their needs so that patients get the best care possible."

Rosemarie Sebastian, Local 1000 Treasurer

I'm a primary caregiver at our

care home. I inherited it from my mother-in-law. I've been in this industry for nearly 30 years. There are many levels of caregiving and different types of care homes. We run a Type I ARCH (Adult Residential Care Home). We can care for up to five patients. I care for ambulatory patients, meaning they are walking, and they're able to do their ADLs (Activities of Daily Living). I get paid by the state. Most of the people that I care for are disabled. I take care of the elderly sometimes, but technically, my patients are disabled individuals. They are not necessarily old. My youngest patient is 56; the oldest is 75.

There are challenges, but it is rewarding. I can understand why my mother-in-law did this business for 48 years before she retired. I saw how compassionate she was in caring for people. These are homeless people. They don't have families that can take care of them. They're sick. They have no one. We have a home that we can share with them. We are motivated by compassion, but it's also a job.

It gives me a lot of flexibility. I was able to care for my children. That's the kind of flexibility I like. My mother-in-law is also getting old, and so is my father-in-law. This will also allow me to care for them at the same time. I would not be able to do that if I worked outside the home. Is it fulfilling for me? Yes. Is it rewarding? Yes, I like helping people. The people become like your family, you know, after a while, and I like that.

I was a substitute for my mother-in-law for a long time. I observed, and I learned the business. There are so many crazy, unnecessary redundancies in our paperwork. I learned that there are so many regulations that don't make any sense. When I asked questions, someone at the Department of Health told me, it was either I comply with the laws, or not do the business at all. I thought that was so wrong. That was so disrespectful to our industry. I understand why they have all these laws, regulations, and oversight. But no one is listening to the concerns of the caregivers.

I used to work for a construction business, and while I was in the construction industry for about 13 years, and so then I realized, oh my golly, this is what we need. Now I have joined the union. Let's do it. It was a no-brainer.

I work so hard to care for patients. I realized that I was only making 23 cents per hour, calculating 24/7, 365 days a year. It's true that I work only to support them during the day, but my patients are to be protected, under my supervision 24 hours a day. So there's a lot of unfairness, I would say. Can the state afford to pay us more? Of course. They just have to figure out what is important.

There are a lot of clients for Type I ARCH. A majority of Type I ARCH caregivers are baby boomers. They are all going to retire soon. What do you think will happen to their patients? They will go back to being homeless; they will go to a boarding house when that's not the right home for them. The government should do something to motivate younger people, especially the people who are the majority in this business—Filipino nurses, and LPNs. CNAs. The state should give them incentives to go get their licenses to run these facilities. The Health Department could do better processing applications faster. I don't know why they are taking forever. They are talking about shortages and lack of capacity, but are they doing something about it?



You know, we can't even go on vacation because we have a hard time hiring people to come and substitute for us. CNAs can go work at the homes of people who are rich and can afford to pay them \$25 per hour or more. With my \$1,400 per person, I can't afford that. So we don't even have vacations. We don't have medical insurance. We just get the \$1,442.90 per client.

We are happy to take care of these patients because that's what we decide to do as our job. But I feel like I am a charity to the government. Do we need a union? Yes, we do. And I'm all for it. I encourage everyone to join this union. And hopefully, a lot of the other Filipinos in our industry will see that now.

Esther Pascual

I am a home care operator. Before we can become an operator, we have to go through training as mandated by the Department of Health and then pass an inspection before we can open our care home. We are licensed by, and under the supervision of, the Hawai'i Department of Health, and we are ruled by many regulations.

I've been in doing this for a little over 50 years. So why a union? Since nobody in the state is advocating for us, we have to advocate for ourselves. We are looking for someone with a heart to help home operators. When we have a resident in our home that are Medicaid patients, they are a ward of the state. They are what we call a Level One patient. They can be on their own independently, but we have to supervise their medications, and doctor's appointments, and transport them to the doctors. We feed them. We have the burden of care even though they are independent. The rate we are paid is \$1,442.90, per month which includes housing, meals, and utilities, So to us right now, in this kind of economy that we have, we believe that we receive the right. compensation. We have 24 hours responsibility for patients. For many years we have been going back and forth to the Capitol to testify and asking for increased pay. We need to have a strong voice. What we're lacking is people who can help us. Now we found this union. I'm just hoping that we can be successful this time with the help of the ILWU.

When it comes to hearing, why haven't we all been able to come together to support what is supposed to be good for our industry? Because the state only notifies us about hearings maybe a day or two in advance. We cannot leave our homes without a substitute who has proper training and who is qualified to handle the patients in our homes. If we cannot get anybody to substitute for us, then we cannot go to the state capitol for the hearings. That's why there are not many of us at the state capitol to testify. How we can all get together on the same day and at the same time? A big problem for operators is finding substitutes and having the money to pay them so we can testify.

Our industry is a really big help to the state. We're saving them millions of dollars every year. If they put these patients in a facility like a hospital or nursing home, it would cost the state \$5,000 or more depending on the level of care



Jesusa "Susan" Quinapu, Local 1000 President

I started in the care home industry 27 years ago. There are problems that we have had for many years. Number one was that care home operators did not have medical insurance for themselves. There was an organization that tried knocking at the doors of the medical insurance providers in Hawai'i, asking if we could receive medical insurance. Somehow nobody opened the doors for us; that was 28 years ago. Secondly, we don't get raises. The last time we had a raise, it was only \$8 a month per patient. Somehow, it's so hard to get a raise. Third, the Department of Health was giving us a hard time on policies. It would take five or six years to license a facility.

The other problem that we have is liability insurance. Agents give different kinds of rates for premiums. That's why caregivers now are grouped into different organizations based on getting the cheapest professional liability insurance rates.

Now I'm confident we can have medical insurance. I'm confident that we can have professional liability insurance for everyone. I'm confident that with the ILWU name, the State Department of Health, will have more respect for the caregivers. Because right now nobody cares. That's how I feel.

I went to a private high school Catholic high school back in the Philippines. Before class, I would stop at the church, and I would say, "Lord, when I get older, I want to be a nurse. I want to take care of people. I want to take care of the elderly. I want to help out the sick." When I came to America, I became a nurse. First I became a surgical assistant. After I passed my boards, I became a surgical nurse. But my daughter was very ill. Because my daughter was so sick, I had to find a job where I could stay home and take care of my children. That's how I started.

But let me tell you how rewarding it is. My patients are Alzheimers and dementia patients. Even though they are not related to you, you feel the love. It's something that money cannot buy. It's very rewarding somehow. They can stay a long time in my home. Sixteen years was the longest. For most of them, it is around seven to nine years. They stay with me. Some will pass away in my home. We're just like a family. I don't know if that's my calling, but I enjoy what I'm doing. There are times when I miss going to work. I don't have the adrenaline rush like when you're in the O.R. I still miss that. But you know, I love my patients.

What I learned through the years as a caregiver is that you have to take care of your children and you have to give them the emotions and nurturing of how you want them to be, because they are the ones who are going to take care of you, be it financially, be it physically, or be it mentally.

I had a patient with five children. Only one kid visited during the six years that he stayed with me. You know, there are different kinds of love. I want to be the one who nurtures my children, who takes care of my children, so when I get old, they will take care of me too.

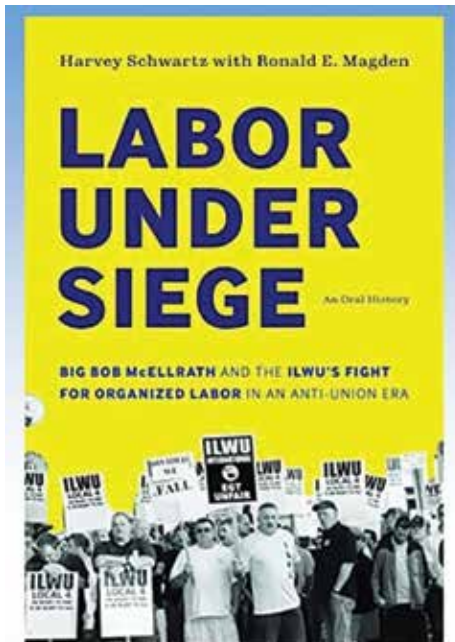


"Patients can stay a long time in my home. Sixteen years was the longest. For most of them, it is around seven to nine years. They stay with me. Some will pass away in my home. We're just like a family. I don't know if that's my calling, but I enjoy what I'm doing."

Labor Under Siege: Big Bob McEllrath and the ILWU's Fight for Organized Labor in an Anti-Union Era, An Oral History

by Harvey Schwartz and Ronald E. Magden, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2022

Reviewed by Eugene Dennis Vrana, Retired ILWU Director of Educational Services, Archivist and Librarian



In *Labor Under Siege*, historians Harvey Schwartz and his colleague, the late Ron Magden, have crafted an extraordinary volume of labor history and biography through skilled and meticulous use of oral history interviews. Their newly released book tells the story of the ILWU as it entered the 21st century under the leadership of “Big Bob” McEllrath and his allies.

Nowhere has the genre of oral history been used in more capable hands to weave the tale of one man’s trajectory from high school athlete to union president, while also grappling with challenges to internal unity and social justice from intransigent employers, automation, and government intimidation.

Schwartz and Magden spent years conducting and assembling interviews from those who knew and worked with former International President McEllrath. They have woven them together with their own clear and informative narrative to do the most difficult thing of all in oral history: have the narrative provide essential context for the interviews, while editing the interviews to bring the narrative to life.

The result is a book that’s rich with local, regional, national and international themes, presented with anecdotes that illuminate the choices

made by McEllrath and the ILWU’s Longshore Division as he wrestled with opponents who presented an existential threat as familiar and sinister as any that stood against the Harry Bridges and the founders of the ILWU in the 1930s and again in the 1950s—and, like others before him, even led to his arrest and imprisonment.

Throughout the decades, ILWU members and their elected leaders have relied on the rank-and-file to decide which course to take and who should stand at the helm. McEllrath followed in that tradition—as attested to by so many of the interviewees, some of whom shared insights and stories from perspectives, as unique as those of his wife, Sally McEllrath, and ILWU attorney Rob Remar. It is refreshing to note that Schwartz and Magden also included commentary from ILWU critics of ILWU leaders over matters as important to the welfare and survival of the Union as technological change and diversity.

By the end of the book and its substantial and informative footnotes, it is clear that while it documents one man’s devotion to his family and his union, it also describes the allies that supported McEllrath and among whom he found strength—which in turn reflected the shifting character and composition of the ILWU from the time of McEllrath’s entry into the longshore workforce in 1969 until his recent retirement.

By the time McEllrath was first elected ILWU International president, the major non-Longshore divisions of the ILWU were significantly weakened by globalization and automation so that the warehouse division on the mainland, and sugar and pineapple plantations in Hawaii, were no longer the powerful economic and political force they had once been while under the umbrella of the ILWU. As McEllrath surveyed this new landscape from the ILWU International headquarters, he concluded, “The only friends we got in this world are other dockers.”

Fortunately, the interviews, events, and information in *Labor Under Siege*, dramatically illuminate how and why

McEllrath and the ILWU made the tactical and strategic choices they did in meeting these challenges of the 21st century—including the focus on securing ILWU jurisdiction over maintenance and repair of new and remaining machines and technology on the waterfront. At the same time, it might help the non-ILWU reader to have a fuller definition of the type of work performed by the longshore work force and how and why the contractual definition of union jurisdiction is so important to the Union’s strength and survival. Yet this is a relatively small point considering the understanding gained from the candid reflections and memories of bargaining, organizing, and policy formation preserved in this book. We do however, get some valuable images from the dramatic photography of ILWU members Frank Silva (Local 34) and Dawn DesBrisay (Local 40).

ILWU policy over time, as the interviewees make clear, has arisen from the cardinal principle of rank-and-file democracy—which, organizationally, is embodied throughout the ILWU as “local autonomy.” Which often

led to protracted debate—and even inaction—over issues where conclusions and solutions could not, and would not, be dictated by leaders. Topics explored in the book, though sometimes only with revealing brushstrokes, include relationships with the Internal Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and the Charleston 5, disaffiliation from the AFL-CIO, resistance to raids by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), and numerous actions of international maritime labor solidarity. Fortunately, this book lets us hear and see how McEllrath’s personal style of building strength and unity through personal relationships (cultivated as much in bars and other after-hours conversations) has served him and the ILWU well for over 60 years—the kind of team building so essential to his early success as an athlete.

While *Labor Under Siege* is clearly about “Big Bob” McEllrath and why he matters in the constellation of the Union, it also serves as a useful guide to the contours of the history of the ILWU since the 1990’s and how its legacy has endured.



Bob McEllrath being detained on September 7, 2011. This photo by Dawn DesBrisay from Local 40 has become an iconic image of the union’s struggle with EGT.



Living Pono: Members from Local 142 Hawai'i Longshore Division invited ILWU International President Emeritus Robert “Big Bob” McEllrath to Honolulu to discuss the importance of effective communication, service to the rank and file and “Doing the Right thing”—or as the Hawaiians say “Living Pono” (living righteously).

Top row (left to right): Brandon Wolff, Matt Coleman, Dave Maewa, Ryan Souza, “Big Lyle” Nicely, Sam Falipo, Ilaika Decker, Ken Cho, Keoni Bee, Mike Sir, Collin Mansanas, Kale Ornellas; Bottom row (left to right): Vic Papapa, Dale Beesly, Big Bob McEllrath, Curt Kalama, Kaipo Bee.

South Seattle intermodal workers win first ILWU contract through strategy, solidarity

continued from page 1

and Tacoma, along with support from Teamsters Local 174 drivers who bring in chassis for repair and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way rail workers. At the end of the picket, mechanics marched on the boss to demand immediate action from P&B to protect employees' health and safety.

Management called the Tukwila Police, who showed up just as the picket and march on the boss were ending. As managers scrambled all morning to carry out damage control and avert an actual walkout, workers realized the simple picket had landed even more of an impact than planned. The next morning, mechanics demanded union recognition—and within two hours, managers formally recognized workers as ILWU Local 19A.

The new members joined Local 19 President Herald Ugles, Vice-President Matt Ventoza, and Labor Relations Committee members Justin Hirsch,

Ron Manwell and Terry Jeffries in pushing P&B managers to reach a fair contract.

"They changed the schedule in discriminatory ways that would have forced several of us to leave," said Ray Caldwell. "When I got hired on, I was told I would be working day shifts Monday through Friday—and then some of us were switched from day to graveyard shift and onto the swing, all because managers said they were short-staffed." The bargaining committee pushed back right away, demanding P&B immediately rescind the schedule changes and hire additional mechanics instead. Managers soon complied and hired on two more employees.

Bringing it down

As bargaining continued over the next few months, so did management's pressure tactics as they dug in their heels against raising economic standards in Tukwila.

"It was going from bad to worse on the job site, as they tried to test our resolve with delayed negotiations and obstructions at the table," said President Herald Ugles. "Members said, 'enough is enough—it's time for action.'" After filing federal charges over multiple Unfair Labor Practices, mechanics went on a lightning strike at P&B before dawn on a Friday in October.

With dozens of Local 19 and Local 23 members joining the picket line, along with solidarity from Teamsters Local 174 truck drivers, Transportation Communications International Union lift operators, and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employee rail workers, operations at the Tukwila yard were shut down.

After a massive round of cheers and chants of "we'll be back!", members ended the strike and returned to work. "We saw just how much power we could muster through union solidarity," said Orozco. The bargaining committee forced managers over the finish line, winning a first collective bargaining agreement that members unanimously ratified in December.

'Dream is now a reality'

Meeting base wage rates for Tacoma at \$38.00 an hour, mechanics in Tukwila won an average wage increase of 29 percent and secured a new highest wage classification for OTR drivers at \$43.50 an hour, elevating the top pay rate by 13 percent. For the first time, on-call workers are compensated at \$100.00 for any 24-hour period. Members locked down a newly-affordable, top-tier medical plan with an 80/20 split with vision and dental care. While not 100 percent employer-paid,

members chose to prioritize maximum wage increases this first contract. And for the first time, mechanics now have a fully employer-funded pension plan, with starting accrual of \$10.00/hour. Jurisdiction over critical new work has been locked down, along with basic contract protections that hand workers tools to beat back employer violations and enforce member rights on the job—all within six months of launching the fight.

"When we started this, we had a dream, and now it's a reality," said Garrett Spindler. "Thank you to all our fellow members for being a part of us building something better for our families."

"Staying together and united while striving for a better tomorrow works," said Jawaad Reaves. "We learned we have strength in numbers."

"I felt empowered by how quickly a mass of fellow members turned out to back us up on our picket lines," said Orozco. "ILWU folks genuinely cared and welcomed us as brothers, and I proudly rock the hook pin on my sweater now."

"This victory shows what can happen when workers are ready to put it all on the line to be ILWU," said Herald Ugles. "When we use our strategic power to fight hard and smart, we win."

"P&B workers' actions and solidarity from ILWU members and other unions shows how we can work to uplift workers throughout the supply chain," said ILWU International Vice-President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr. "An injury to one is an injury to all, along the shore and down the chain."

— Jon Brier



ILWU members from ILWU Locals 19 and 23 and Young Workers Committee members came out to an informational picket to support P&B Intermodal workers.

ILWU shows holiday spirit with generous toy drives

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"CJC is grateful for the ongoing support and kindness from ILWU Local 4 for the children and families in our community," said Deedee Pegler, a forensic interviewer at the CJC.

"The Vancouver Firefighters Local 452 are grateful to continue supporting the ILWU's Annual Bike toy drive by providing brand new bike helmets. We know the work and donations by all will bring great joy to those receiving these new bikes and helmets," said Local 452 Treasurer Dave Strubelle.

"When I attended the ILWU LEAD conference in 2022, I learned that people come together for charity work," said Local 4 Vice President Josh Goodwin. "Seeing a need for people to come together at my local, I organized some brainstorming sessions on ways to build solidarity. During one of those sessions, Tony O'Neil, a B-man, said, 'How about we do the bike drive again?' Troy Olson, now in Local 40, put me on the right path to making it happen. The

Local 4 dispatchers were instrumental in gathering donations, getting the word out, and keeping the bikes organized."

"It's easy for us to get caught up in our own lives with our great union job and take for granted that there are children in our community experiencing violence, who probably have nothing to look forward to, who might feel like no one cares. The bike drive is a way to bring a little joy to them and show them Local 4 cares, the ILWU cares," said Local 4 member Dustin Goodwin, who shopped for more than 40 bikes with the money that was donated.

"A lot of people came together to make the bike drive a success this year," said Josh Goodwin. "A, B, and casuals all stepped up to contribute. Michelle Bryant made an awesome flier that got things moving, and Spencer Kadow donated \$1,300 from the mechanic shop to complete the list. It was an honor to witness the giving spirit of Local 4."

ILWU to Hold Secretary-Treasurers Conference

The ILWU will be holding a conference for local union financial officers May 21-25 in San Diego, California.

Called the Secretary-Treasurers conference, the 5-day event will cover various aspects of union and financial administration, election rules, and recordkeeping, and is designed to ensure compliance with federal regulation and internal union procedures. Instructors include ILWU attorneys, union staff, and International and local officers.

Each U.S. local and affiliate is invited to send two participants: its secretary-treasurer (or other officer in charge of finances and recordkeeping) and the office manager or other staff person who maintains the union's financial and administrative records. Depending on the number of official participants, space may be available for a limited number of trustees selected by their local union. Only individuals nominated by their local affiliate will be permitted to attend.

An official announcement has been sent to each local.

Participants may register online at <https://www.ilwu.org/2023-ilwu-secretary-treasurers-conference/>.

THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS APRIL 7TH.

The Benefits of Staying In-Network

Medical Plan Network

The Coastwise Indemnity Plan has contracts with Preferred Provider Networks in Washington, Oregon, and California. Why use a Preferred Provider? Here are two good reasons:

- 1. **Quality assurance.** These networks (First Choice in Washington and Oregon, Blue Shield in California) screen the qualifications of their contracted network providers.
- 2. **Your costs.** Medically necessary treatment with network providers is covered at 100%.

Please note the difference between a provider accepting your PPO insurance and being in-network. Out-of-network providers can accept your insurance, but the charges for your medically necessary treatment may not be covered in full. Out-of-network coverage is 80% of the Plan's Maximum Allowable Charge* up to your annual out-of-network maximum, currently \$1200 per year. You may be obligated to pay the charges not covered by the Plan.

For Chiropractic care the following rules apply:

If you live in a Choice Port and are covered by the Coastwise Indemnity Plan in Oregon or Washington, you must use a First Choice Health Network preferred provider. If you live in a Choice Port and are covered by the Coastwise Indemnity Plan in California, you must use a Chiropractic Health Plan of California preferred provider. If you use a PPO provider, the Plan will pay 100% for all covered, medically necessary charges. Non-PPO providers are not covered.

If you are covered by Kaiser, medically necessary treatment with a PPO Provider (First Choice Health Network provider in Oregon or Washington; Chiropractic Health Plan of California in California) is covered at 100%. Non-PPO providers are covered at 80% of the Maximum Allowable Charge*.

Additional information about preferred providers, including links to locate these providers, is available on the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans website, located at www.benefitplans.org.

*The Maximum Allowable Charge (MAC) is an amount determined by the Trustees of the ILWU-PMA Welfare Plan based on a national database of charges of healthcare providers. For more information about the MAC in your Coastwise Indemnity Plan benefits, please refer to the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan Supplemental Summary Plan Description. For more information about the MAC with regards to your chiropractic benefits, please refer to the Chiropractic Benefit Summary Plan Description. You can access a copy of either document through your Local, from the Benefit Plans Office by phone, or through the Benefit Plans Office website at www.benefitplans.org.

Please keep in touch!

Life events like changing your address, marriage, birth of a child, death, or divorce, can affect your benefits. There can be financial or coverage consequences if you do not notify us of a change! Please, keep in touch with the Benefit Plans to make sure you are up to date with us whenever you experience a life event like changing your address, marriage, birth of a child, death, or divorce.

We also routinely send notices required by law via the US Postal Service. Please read the mail we send you, it contains important information.

If you need to contact us, you can do so by phone at 1-415-673-8500 or 1-888-372-4598. You can also contact your Area Welfare Director with questions about your benefits. All Benefit Plans and Area Welfare Director contact information is available through our website, located at www.benefitplans.org.

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Rickie Lee Manning; Steve A Patnode; William J. Schaeffner;
Local 10: Ronnie L. Fuller; Jose M. Guerrero; Richard Patterson; Dale G. Shaw; Gonzalo S. Torres; Guillermina Vazquez; **Local 13:** Gary J. Avila; Jimmy G. Biehle; Rodolfo A. Bojorquez; John W. Brickner; Gabriel L Kamel; Gregory F. LaGro; Mario P. Manfredonia; David Neria; Nestor T. Pigao; Gary M. Placko; Raoul R. Ponce de Leon; Juan G. Salazar; Jose J. Salinas; Eric J. Traut; Stephanie Gutierrez; John P. Ramirez; Mark S. Witzerman; **Local 14:** Steven A. Kioukis; **Local 19:** Christopher Jones; Richard D. Woods; Local 21: Robert W. Merly; **Local 23:** Steven M. Anthony; Gordon K. Fraatz; Daniel L. Gregory; **Local 26:** Ruben M. Alvarez; **Local 34:** Chauncey Harris; Fred R. Mizzi; Joel Neecke; **Local 40:** Ricky J. Rupp; **Local 53:** Yale S. Fogerty; **Local 63:** Marlene Bellhouse; Terrie Ann Jackson; Allan S. Luhrsen; Salvatore A. Morreale; Larry J. Tujillo; **Local 94:** Oscar A. Gutierrez; George Albert; David J. Viducic;
DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:
Local 10: Franswah D. Tatum;
Local 13: Omar Augustine; Anthony L. Tolliver; Richard A. Torres; Roman Valdez; Stephen W Voigt; Fidel Machado; **Local 30:** Randy Spears;
DECEASED PENSIONERS:
Local 8: Joseph G. Gale; David J. Gullickson (Margaret); Michael J. Meier; **Local 10:** Clarence Baptiste; William Cooper; Eusebio Perez; Abraham

Raymundo; Richard C. Strong; Clinton Sweet Sr. (Sylvia); Alfred Thibodeaux; Local 13: Carlos Brewster; Raul Castro; Robert D. Davis; Manuel Falcon Sr.; Arthur T. Galindo; Robert B La Bre; Donald E. Olsen; Robert H. Wren; **Local 19:** Gary W. Oakes; Lawrence L. Spafford (Kathleen); **Local 21:** Garris L. Nordquist; Gary A. Styve; **Local 23:** Alan H. Allen; Bud Brown; **Local 24:** Dennis A. Ackley; Robert D. Mott; **Local 29:** Jose R. Colmenero; **Local 32:** Ernest E. Brooks; **Local 34:** Robert B Wallace; **Local 40:** Darrell R. Hedlund; James C. Hollingsworth; David Morris; **Local 46:** John G. Oliva; **Local 52:** Gary M. Hagness (Roselma); **Local 63:** Martin K. Demott; Michael A. Zamperini; **Local 92:** Mervin D. Bledsoe; **Local 94:** Charles L. Alberg; James L. Mascola; Bruce A. Williams Jr.;
DECEASED SURVIVORS:
Local 8: Joan R. Oviatt; Ingrid Strandholm; **Local 10:** Patricia D. Doiron; Jeanette Grier; Ann L. Morris; Hazel Williams; **Local 12:** Sarah J. Claiborne; Bonnie McCready; **Local 13:** Beverly L. Heston; Betty E. Iacono; Marie R. Marino; Rachel T. Nuno; Lucy Omectin; Gudrun Thangen; Lorna A. Torplund; **Local 21:** Donna M. Dubke; Patricia Hendrickson; **Local 27:** Thelma Conner; **Local 52:** Ruth E Gross; **Local 91:** Mary Sullivan; **Local 94:** Gerene A. Beavert; Margaret M. Hansen; Bobbie Trujillo;

ILWU activists help bring Labor Notes’ Troublemakers School to Los Angeles in March

Southern California ILWU members Jamie Bulaich (Local 63 OCU) Sylvia “LuLu” Bocox, (Local 63 OCU), Cris Sogliuzzo, (IBU), and Marty Cerda (Local 13) have been working with Labor Notes to bring the media and organizing project’s one-day Troublemakers School to Los Angeles and to encourage ILWU members to attend. The event will take place on March 11, 2023.

The full day of workshops and discussions will bring together union members, labor activists, and local officers to network, build solidarity, and share successes, strategies, and inspiration that will benefit both new and seasoned labor activists.

Labor Notes was founded in 1979 on the principle that democracy, member participation, and militancy makes unions stronger and more effective. They publish a monthly newspaper and a website that tells stories about workers’ struggles. They publish practical guides and books to educate workers who are trying to build power in their workplaces. The regional Troublemaker Schools are part of their education and organizing work where they bring workers together to develop organizing skills and learn from each other how to build worker

power and win. They also organize a large international conference in Chicago every two years. The next international conference will be in March 2024.

Other Troublemaker Schools this year will be held in the Bay Area, Seattle, Portland, Iowa, Austin, and Indianapolis.

“My first experience was with the Labor Notes Chicago Conference in 2022,” Bulaich said. “It was a complete immersion in union culture. I learned so much, made so many connections, and took away a rejuvenated sense of what I stand for and how we can help each other succeed.”

“The grassroots connections I made with like-minded labor activists from all over the country at Labor Notes in 2012 and 2033 continue to inspire me to this day,” added Bocox. This is why I volunteered to be a part of the LA planning committee. We have assembled a dedicated team that plans to inspire and educate the next generation of labor activists that will continue to hold the line and fight for change.”

“I am looking forward to learning about organizing, how to take action, and bargaining tactics,” said Sogliuzzo. “This is a valuable opportunity for labor activists to deepen their knowledge of unions, the importance of organizing, and the strength of labor has to move mountains with and through their union.”

Labor Notes Troublemakers School Saturday, March 11, 2023; 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Los Angeles Trade Technical College
400 West Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015

Members who attend will get inspired. Hear speakers from the front lines of recent struggles. They’ll also get trained. The one-day conference features interactive workshops, panels, and meetings, ranging from crucial basic skills like helping your colleagues beat apathy to advanced topics like winning first contracts and running for union office.

Workshops will include:

- **Beating Apathy**
- **Turning an Issue into a Campaign**
- **What Makes a Democratic Rank-and-File Union**
- **Building a Contract Campaign**
- **Strikes!**
- **New Organizing**
- **Race and Labor**

Workshops and schedule are subject to change! Detailed program to come.

Register at Labor Notes:

<https://labornotes.org/events/2022/los-angeles-troublemakers-school>

Registration fee (covers event registration and lunch):

\$40 - Regular registration

\$15 - Hardship rate registration (choose if you need)

Questions: Email Barbara at barbara@labornotes.org, or Courtney at courtney@labornotes.org

To register, select your registration option from the dropdown box and click “Add to Cart.” Then, click the shopping cart at the top of the page and follow the checkout instructions.

To register multiple people: Follow the instructions above, and then change the “Quantity” in the shopping cart. You will be sent a group registration form to fill out.