



# THE DISPATCHER

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Holiday Committee Chair Jose “Junior” Alvarez gathers “Feed the Community Day” volunteers before distribution of meals begins.

## Feed the Community Day marks 25 years of generous Thanksgiving dinners with an extra treat

The Southern California ILWU’s Feed the Community Day turned 25 this year. This event is sponsored by Locals 13, 63, and 94, So Cal Pensioners, Auxiliary 8, and the ILWU Credit Union. The work to make it happen is done by ILWU volunteers and their families.

For a quarter of a century, the ILWU has donated time and money to help feed families a Thanksgiving meal. This year, more than 100 volunteers provided 1,500 families from the surrounding community with all of the groceries needed to prepare a full turkey dinner for 10 people, with all of the fixings for a traditional family holiday dinner.

“It’s everything they need, from the turkey to the salad,” said Holiday Event Committee Secretary-Treasurer Katy Witowski. “This year, because

it’s our 25th year, they’re getting a pie as well. We wanted to do something a little bit special for them.”

### Community partnerships

Witowski said that she has been working on this year’s event since August. She personally screens everyone who applies for the Thanksgiving meal for need. The Committee works with area schools and organizations to outreach for applicants.

“We go through a lot of the elementary schools here in Wilmington and San Pedro Harbor City, and we work with Catholic Charities.” She said. “We also do some shelters and senior centers. It’s a lot of work.”

Most of the recipients are required to come and pick up their meals at the Longshoremen’s Memorial Hall in Wilmington, but a portion of the meals are delivered, Witowski said. “We recently brought on an organization called Helping Hands that does a lot of work with veterans, and

**ILWU volunteers included a delicious pie for Harbor-area families in need of holiday cheer; say volunteering is ‘heartbeat of this union’**

they will drive a Thanksgiving meal all the way up to Riverside,” which is several hours away.

### Rising costs

Committee president Jose “Junior” Alvarez said rising costs impacted event planning. “This year was a tough year, everything went up in price, but we made it happen,” he said. He also thanked Albertsons for coming through with 1,500 pies at the last minute when the original vendor fell through.

### Giving in tough times

Local 13 President Ramon Ponce De Leon added, “The industry has

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# ILWU pensioner reflects on his 51-year career in Locals 13 and 94

## James Gyerman describes backbreaking work of the 1950's, working first container ship in 1960's

[In November, *The Dispatcher* sat down for an extended interview with ILWU pensioner James Gyerman to discuss his 51-year career in the ILWU. Gyerman spent the first half of his career as a Local 13 longshore worker before transferring to Local 94, where he spent the last 25 years of his career as a foreman. Below is his story in his own words.]

**M**y name is James Gyerman. My work number is 33294. My previous work number was 2200. PMA did some adjustments for some ungodly reason.

I started on the waterfront in 1959. I was 19. I can't remember who my sponsor was. He was an ex-Business Agent my father knew very well. My father started in the mid-1940s. We moved out here from Detroit, Michigan, in 1944. My dad drove a Pontiac out here if you can believe that – with two kids. I can't remember if there was a dog or not. My dad had a union background. He was an organizer for Walter Reuther, who was at that time President of the United Auto Workers union. My mother had family out here in California, and I guess my dad started disliking shoveling snow.

My dad got a job at a restaurant that was owned by my aunt and uncle. It was on 9th Street in San Pedro. Right across the street from where Trani's is now. Anyway, he was a bartender. There was a gentleman who used to come in all the time and drink with my dad, and he took a liking to my dad and asked him if he'd like to be a longshoreman. In those days there was sponsorship. And my dad said yeah, why not. So, he became a longshoreman. It was in the mid-1940s. Right after that, he got involved in the union also. He was on the Executive Board, a Caucus delegate, and a Business Agent.

### Bridges caucus

When Harry came down here to talk or to communicate with Local 13—13 was always the bastard child. Whatever the issue was, we always voted against it. But when Harry came down, my dad and about seven, maybe eight guys were his entourage. My dad was six-foot-ten. His nickname was Long John. Harry had his own little caucus down here.

When Harry walked into the building, there were a lot of boos and just hollering and stuff, but the minute Harry started to talk, you could hear a pin drop. He always had a way to turn that crowd around. When he

walked down the aisle leaving, they were cheering. He was just that type of a man.

### Discharging bananas

The work was tough. We had bananas on Mondays and Tuesdays, whether you liked it or not—you were discharging bananas. The stalks were bigger than you. When you unloaded bananas, there was a line, you were in that line, and you never got out of that line. If you tried to get out of the line, the guy behind you would grab you. If you were trying to leave, it was usually because there was a huge stalk coming up and it was yours. We would put the stalk on a conveyor belt and the conveyor belt would take it out onto the dock and somebody on the dock would take it off the conveyor belt, put it on another conveyor belt, where it would go into a rail car. The *Lane Victory*, which is one of the ships tied up here on the waterfront, was basically the type of ship that we worked.

**The minute Harry [Bridges] started to talk, you could hear a pin drop. He always had a way to turn that crowd around.**

### First day on the job

IDs were given out jobs. Take the job; if you don't want the job, go home. They had a commodity that came in from Hawaii, it was called black sand. These were bags of sand about a foot and a half long by maybe 11 inches thick, but they weighed about 200 pounds. And if you can imagine the bottom of the hatch all over the deck was covered with these bags of black sand. They were stacked about three or four high, and all the other cargo was piled on top of it. So, when the regulars got down to the black sand, they would call a replacement. Well, you know who got there? It was the IDs. So yeah, my first job was discharging black sand. And we did that for about four days. You put probably 12 bags on a pallet board and sent it up, but it was a tough job. When you went home you were in shape or a backache. One or the other.

I said my dad's nickname was

Long John -- when they found out that I was a Gyerman and Long John was my dad, it was like clouds opened up and the sun shined down on me. The older guys would take me under their wing and show me what to do.

### First container ship

I worked the first container job over at Matson. The containers were two high on deck all over the deck. The ship was like the *Lane Victory*—the same type of ship. I remember lashing on it was horrendous because you were up on top of two-high containers and then you had to pull this iron lash. It was two inches thick, and you had to pull these things up. They gave us a crank to pull it up, but after but two containers, it broke. So, I had to do that by hand. But I was lucky enough—well don't know if I'm lucky enough, but I was there on the first ship.

This was the early 60's—probably 62. Now three of those Lane Vic-

tories can fit on one container ship; it's amazing. When we started on the waterfront, we were two high. We were fighting just to go one high. We thought eight feet off the deck was dangerous. You can kill yourself. And that was way back then. Now, they're ten high behind the house. The ships are getting bigger and bigger.

### Mechanization & Modernization agreement

Back in those days, we had 250 day and night dock gangs, which was a lot of gangs. And then probably 150 ship gangs, which is a lot of people. So when we went into the M&M gang, I'm jumping way ahead, but when Harry proposed the M&M agreement, which was modernization and mechanization, it was almost like he put a bounty on his head. Because my God, it was giving up a lot of gangs, a lot of men. And the guys were afraid of it. I sort of took sides with my dad. And my dad was for the M&M agreement because



ILWU pensioner James Gyerman

he was part of the group that would sit down and discuss it with Harry. And Harry would tell him what his future was like. And Harry was absolutely right. We only had about 1,200 people in Local 13 at that time. Now I think there are over 5,000, so he was right.

The membership talked about it for years, especially the gang numbers, and because there were a lot of gangs dissolved because of it. And it was a big issue, a tremendously big issue. There were still people that you know, disliked it, or call it a defeat and said that we're gonna go down not fighting. That was one of the biggest issues on the waterfront for years. And like I said, there were 250 dock gangs and went down to something like 60, then down to 40, and then down to 20. It sort of added fuel to their dislike for the M&M, showing that they were right and Harry was wrong. But in the long run, Harry was right.

### Making the A-board

When I made the A-board, jobs got a little easier. Copra was a good job. It's a coconut rind. And it would come in off of these ships from Hawaii and the Philippines. Those were good jobs; they were messy because there were 10,000 gnats that you had to deal with. But when they found out I was Jim Gyerman, because of my dad's reputation, they would show me how to do it. There was a trick to it. You went down and you created a trough that went into this huge vacuum cleaner. It was a huge vacuum hose that you put into the hatch, but the trick was not to sweep it all in and around, but it was to create a trough so that all you have to do is touch it and it falls by itself. The first 15 minutes were probably the hardest part of the whole job. That and swatting those damn gnats; those were 7, 10, and 14-day jobs.

### Running for Business Agent

In the early 70's I was getting involved with the union. Bobby Olvera, Sr., God Rest his Soul, we were pretty good partners. He got me

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## DISPATCHER

Roy San Filippo  
Communications Director

ILWU TITLED OFFICERS  
William E. Adams, President  
Bobby Olvera, Jr., Vice President, Mainland  
Paul K. Kreutz, Vice President, Hawaii  
Edwin Ferris, Secretary-Treasurer

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**Welcome to the union:** Security guards at the Port of Vancouver, WA voted to join ILWU Local 28 on December 14th.

"It's a great day to be a Port of Vancouver Security Officer. This win was a long time coming," said Security Officer Don Bryant. "We keep the Port safe and we deserve better. I am so proud to be a member of the ILWU and of Local 28. Let's go get that contract!"

ILWU Local 28 President Greg Chavez added, "Security Officers keep our communities safe. From the Ports of Portland and Longview, and the Convention Center to the halls of the Kaiser Hospitals, the members of Local 28 are there to help. We welcome the Security Officers at the Port of Vancouver into the Local 28 family and stand in solidarity with their right to fight for better conditions in the workplace An Injury to One is an Injury to All."



**Solidarity down under:** ILWU International President Willie Adams spoke at the Construction Forestry Maritime Mining and Energy Union (CFMMEU) National Conference that took place November 23-24 in Melbourne, Australia. The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) is a division of the CFMMEU. More than 400 delegates participated in the conference. Pres. Adams brought words of solidarity and spoke about the unbreakable bonds that unite dockers around the world. The MUA and West Coast longshore workers have ties that date back to before the formation of the ILWU through ILWU co-founder Harry Bridges.



**ILWU volunteers get out the union vote in Georgia:** Eight ILWU members volunteered to go to Georgia to help get out the union vote in the December runoff election for U.S. Senate. The ILWU delegation consisted of Local 10's Melvin MacKay, Ed Henderson, Soni Johnson, and Twanisha Watkins, Local 13's David Ross, Local 34's Chris Christiansen, Local 23's Brock Graber, and Local 19's Dan McKisson. The ILWU volunteers worked out of the AFL-CIO's Atlanta offices and did door-to-door canvassing to speak with union members about the importance of voting in the runoff election. "The efforts of all to get to out the vote was massive and successfully resulted in Senator Warnock's historic election to a six-year term," McKisson said. "Sending ILWU members here to work on this campaign made a difference and it was noticed."

# ILWU Virtual Book Event

## Meet the Authors!

Join authors Harvey Schwartz and Robert Cherny for a special online event celebrating two new books on the ILWU:

- Labor Under Siege, Bob McEllrath and the ILWU's Fight for Organized Labor in an Anti-Union Era
- Harry Bridges, Labor Radical, Labor Legend

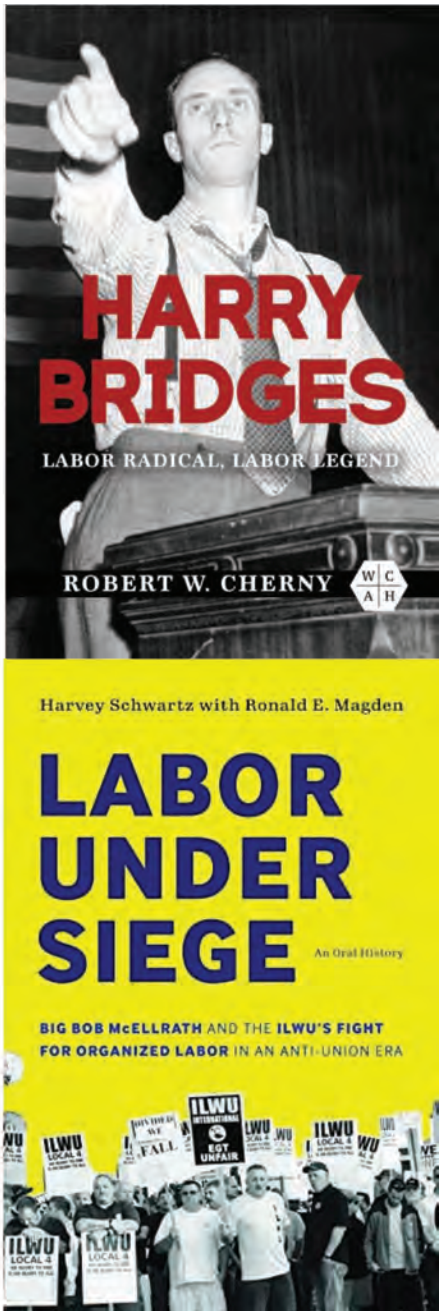
**Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

**6:00PM—7:30PM**

**Register online:**



[www.ilwu.org/book-event](http://www.ilwu.org/book-event)





# Feed the Community Day marks 25 years of generous Thanksgiving dinners with an extra treat

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diverted all its cargo away from the West Coast during our contract talks. We've had fewer jobs, steadies are getting laid off, and there are people in the hall who can't get work. Even though they are struggling, they still have the heart to give back to the community. We are going to continue with this tradition in good times and in bad."

### Team effort

Volunteers began early on the morning of November 22 to get everything set up for distribution. A refrigerated container filled with 1,500 turkeys was set up outside the hall, ready to be unloaded. Tables and tents were also set up, and the food was organized to make it easy for volunteers to assem-

ble bags of groceries so they would be ready to hand out to the community starting at 11 a.m. Reusable canvas grocery bags were donated by the ILWU Credit Union. Volunteer shifts of around 50 people were staggered throughout the day.

Witowski said she was motivated to join the committee because she understands first-hand that families struggle to make ends meet and sometimes need a helping hand.

"It's my 15th year in the program," said Witowski, "and I do it because I grew up dirt poor. I lived in a tent for six months because we didn't have a house. Now I have a fantastic job, and the least I can do is give back to the community."

The effort utilized skills from a range of ILWU workers, from forklift drivers moving pallets of food, to Local 26 Watchmen who took the day off work to volunteer to ensure the day went smoothly. Local 26 member Vincent Slater, a 28-year Watchman, said he has been volunteering at the event since 2003. "I am from Wilmington, and this is just a way for me to give back to the community," he said.

### Origins of a tradition

In an interview with the *Dispatcher* at last year's event, Local 94 member Mike Ponce explained the history of the Feed the Community Day that he helped to found when he was a Local 13 ID.



Mike Vera, So Cal Inlandboatmen's Union



Local 13 member Jacob Connelly bagging groceries for distribution. The reusable bags were donated by the ILWU Credit Union.



From left to right: Vivian Guevara, Zoila Acevedo, Local 13 President Ramon Ponce De Leon, Katy Witowski, and Ruth Alvarez.



Local 94 member Sergio Martinez (left) with his daughter Marie Martinez who has been volunteering at the annual Feed the Community Day since she was eight years old.

"In 1998, we were coming up on a contract year. There were about four or five of us—all IDs—and we were talking about how we wanted to do something for our community. We started having meetings and started what we called the 'ILWU, Yes We Can Committee,'" Ponce said. "We started with the goal of 50 turkeys. We got a reefer donated by a company, and then the 50 turkeys grew to 500. Jerry Avila and I went to local grocery stores and asked if they would donate some food. The 500 turkeys grew into 500 baskets in the first year." Ponce said that the committee has been a success because Local 13 members have continued to step up to volunteer for the committee.



Local 26 member Vincent Slater has been volunteering as security at the Feed the Community event since 2003.

Cris Sogliuzzo and Mike Vera from the SoCal Region of the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU), the Marine Division of the ILWU, showed up to lend a hand. "This is my first time volunteering at this event," Vera said. "I just want to do my part as a union activist to support this community."

### Connecting generations

Marie Martinez has been volunteering at the annual Feed the Community Day for the past fifteen years, starting at the age of eight. Her father, Sergio Martinez, now a member of Local 94, would bring her every year. Marie is currently going through the casual process to become a longshore worker. She looks forward to the event every year.

"I just enjoy helping out the community, and my dad always makes it fun," said Martinez. "I always have my little red wagon. That's how I take all the baskets and all the bags to people's cars if they need assistance."

Local 13 member Jacob Connelly said that volunteering and being involved with the community is an important part of being an ILWU member for him. "I've been down here doing this for the last 20 years. I'm just giving back. In my career on the docks," Connelly said. "Volunteering is really what keeps this local going, that's the heartbeat of this union"



From right to left: Local 13's Jesse "Nacho" Enriquez with his granddaughter Inez, grandson Johnny, and son, Local 13 member John Enriquez.



# ILWU Research Director Russ Bargmann to retire after 44 years with the union

ILWU Research Director Russ Bargmann will be retiring early next year after more than four decades of service to the union. Russ's immense contributions to the union were celebrated at the International Executive Board (IEB) meeting on December 8th.

"Today, we'd like to take a moment to thank Russ Bargmann, ILWU Research Director, for his 44 years of service with the ILWU," said the IEB statement. "Russ will be retiring as of the first of the year, and it's only fitting that he be recognized at this IEB meeting, which will be his last as the ILWU Research Director."

Bargmann started with the ILWU in 1978, after graduating from Michigan State University with a Master's Degree in Labor and Industrial Relations. Then-ILWU International President Jimmy Herman and Research Director Barry Silverman hired Bargmann to develop a health and safety program for the union.

Bargmann quickly gained a reputation for his dedication, hard work, and sharp mind. He gathered the latest information about how to protect members from being killed and injured on the job. He wrote dozens of articles for our Dispatcher newspaper. He conducted trainings and worked with local union leaders to improve safety on the job.

In 1989, Bargmann was promoted to ILWU Research Director, when Barry Silverman retired due to illness. Since then, Bargmann has helped the ILWU with a wide range of assignments, going far beyond research to include collective bargaining, budgets, member education, management of the political action fund, and a slew of other administrative responsibilities. Until recently, he even served as the ILWU's Information Technology manager.

Bargmann has spent a considerable amount of time helping with union negotiations. For the Longshore Division, he analyzed contract demands from the Longshore Caucus

and performed cost estimates of both union and employer proposals. He's also provided corporate and economic data about maritime and shipping companies.

Bargmann has helped locals throughout the union – including hospital workers at Bartlett Hospital in Juneau, Alaska, warehouse workers in Northern California, and workers at the Rio Tinto mine in Boron, CA.

Bargmann has also helped locals facing tough times, assisting the Titled Officers develop and implement plans to get distressed locals facing financial difficulties back on their feet.

At the International office in San Francisco, Bargmann performed many behind-the-scenes tasks, such as administering the pension plans for officers and staff, reviewing the international's budget, answering correspondence, and assisting the President with administrative appeals. This work has been critical to the International's successful operation.

"Almost 40 years ago, I walked into this office as a 12-year-old kid with my dad," said ILWU International Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr. "In 2018, I came up here as an officer. Aside from the carpet and some of the furniture, Russ was the last bastion of what I remembered. You're what is left of the old guard, and the institutional knowledge of this building. We can change the carpet; we can paint the building and buy new furniture, but your legacy will remain forever. Thank you for being part of this family."

ILWU International President Willie Adams thanked Bargmann for his decades of friendship and nearly half-century of service to the ILWU



ILWU Research Director Russ Bargmann at the Secretary-Treasurers' Conference in 2019.

membership. "Russ and I've taken a long road together. When I came here in 2003 as a Secretary-Treasurer, Russ took me under his wing. As President, Russ has been a confidant and a friend. Russ goes back in history and he can quote it. He is a walking encyclopedia. He's seen every president and up here since Harry Bridges. He's a part of this family. Leaders come and go, but the rank and file has always been. Russ is the salt of the earth, and I'm going to miss you."

"I have been blessed over the years to work for an organization whose principles and beliefs are almost exactly in line with my own. I've worked with wonderful people that have made going to work a pleasure," Bargmann said. "The union is blessed with wonderful, thoughtful, hardworking, principled people. That is something extremely special, and I urge you all to keep that in mind and keep it going. I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to have served the members of the ILWU."



Russ Bargmann providing health and safety trainings to Local 142 in 1983.

## IBU rallies at L.A. Harbor Commission to save good jobs

Scores of union members from the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU) and other divisions of the ILWU rallied in front of the Los Angeles Harbor Commission on December 15 to raise awareness about the impact that closing Westoil Marine Services in the L.A. harbor will have on local workers and their families.

Centerline Logistics recently announced that it will be closing operations at its subsidiary, Westoil, at the end of December. The rally at the Harbor Commission was part of the IBU's political and legal efforts to protect its jurisdiction and preserve area wage standards on tugs and barges in the L.A. and Long Beach harbors

### Corporate shell games

The closure of Westoil is a part of a complicated shell game that began in 2020, consisting of asset exchanges by two large national marine transportation corporations, Saltchuk Marine and Centerline Logistic. This corporate maneuver has upended the livelihood

of scores of maritime workers represented by the IBU, Masters, Mates, and Pilots (MM&P), and the Sailors Union of the Pacific (SUP). The asset exchange by Saltchuk and Centerline has allowed the companies to replace longstanding contracts with the IBU and the MM&P with a substandard agreement with the Seafarers International Union (SIU) that undermines the standards for fair wages and benefits previously set by the IBU and MM&P collective bargaining agreements.

In December 2020, Saltchuk Marine announced that it acquired eight ship assist tugs owned by Centerline Logistics and operated in the Pacific Northwest and California. Centerline Logistics, in turn, purchased six bunker barges operated in California from Foss Maritime, a subsidiary of Saltchuk. A bunker barge is like a floating petrol station. The bunker barge pumps fuel oil into the ship's storage (bunker) tanks. That transaction impacted 55 IBU members working for the Centerline-owned Westoil/Millennium when Centerline's Millennium-branded tug operation was sold to Saltchuk operation.



Southern California IBU Regional Director John Skow addresses a rally of IBU/ILWU members and supporters from UAW Local 2865 outside the Los Angeles Harbor Commission on December 15.

Instead of folding the six bunker barges and the contracts it acquired from Foss into its existing marine fueling companies including Westoil, Centerline gave the contract and barges to its newly created subsidiary, Leo Marine Services, leaving many of the IBU mariners who manned both the Millennium tugs and the Westoil barges without work.

The transfer of work from Westoil to Leo Marine by Centerline is currently being challenged by the IBU at the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Southern California IBU Regional Director John Skow told the protesters, "We're going to fight for those jobs because these guys worked during the pandemic, and they worked here for years. There is a lot of experience here, and they just want to throw them out into the street like garbage. We want their jobs back or have the company find jobs for them at their other facilities."

Newly elected L.A. City Councilmember Tim McOsker, who represents San Pedro, voiced his concern

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# Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies celebrates 30 years of building labor movement through scholarships and education

*Graduate says Bridges Center taught her 'what many others from union families learn about at the dinner table' about ILWU history*



The ILWU crew at the Bridges Center for Labor Studies 30th anniversary.

On November 13th, the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies at the University of Washington (UW) held an event to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Harry Bridges Chair in Labor Studies. Members of the ILWU and the Washington state labor community joined students and faculty to celebrate the legacy of Harry Bridges and the work of the Center.

The anniversary event honors the many students receiving the Center's scholarships and awards. This year was the first time the event was held in-person since the Covid-19 pandemic and was well attended—especially from ILWU members and affiliates, over 70 of whom attended. ILWU locals and the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU) sponsored tables at the event, and young workers committees played a huge role in mobilizing so many ILWU members to participate.

Alison Steichen of Local 19 was one of the members in at the event. Chair of the local's Young Workers Committee, Alison took time to speak to the Dispatcher about the importance of the Bridges Center. "The University of Washington is a world class

university," she said. "To have a Center named after us, and to have them respect and honor labor, is special and uncommon. Labor sometimes gets bad press, but this banquet honors the labor movement, and specifically the ILWU. This shows why it is so important that the ILWU helped establish the Center and supports its role in the community."

Steichen is one of a handful of ILWU members in attendance who are UW alumni themselves. Zack Pattin from Local 23 also attended school at UW. As students, Steichen and Pattin were both recipients of Bridges Center Awards: Pattin received the award for Best Undergraduate Paper in Labor Studies, 2016-17, and Steichen received the Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes Scholarship in the same year.

"I was the first person in my family to be a part of the ILWU," Steichen reported to the Dispatcher. "I appreciate the ILWU old-timers who took the time to give me books and talk with me about the union, which was very important to me as a young worker—especially as a person who did not grow up with family members in the union. As a student at the University of Washington, the Bridges Center helped teach me a lot about ILWU history that many others from union families learn about at the dinner table."

The Bridges Center used the event to highlight a much-anticipated new book, *Seattle's Working Waterfront, 1884-Present*. Written by the late historian Ron Magden, an honorary member of the Local 23 Pensioners Club, the book documents the history of the waterfront and highlights the contributions of Local 19 members. "Dr. Ron," as Magden was affectionately known and who passed away in 2019, always took time to educate younger workers in the ILWU on the union's history. The Local 19 and 23 young workers committees honored Magden by volunteering at the book table so participants could sign up for free copies of the volume.

Pattin commented on the event and the number of young workers who



Local 19 Young Workers tabling to promote *Seattle's Working Waterfront, 1884-Present*, written by the late historian and honorary Local 23 member Dr. Ron Magden.

attended. "The Center is deeply important to me personally, both as a former student and as a worker. The Center's work helps inform our union's young workers and education committees, and it's powerful to be at this event and see students, faculty, and scholars in the same room breaking bread with workers and union organizers, finding ways to connect and celebrate one another's work." He added, "when we've introduced our young workers to the Center, it makes them swell with pride knowing that the ILWU's legacy exists beyond the union and into the community."

The Harry Bridges Chair was established in 1992 through the financial support of ILWU members who wanted a way to honor Harry Bridges' life by creating a place for working people in higher education. Among these people was Robert Duggan, a lawyer for the ILWU who once was a dockworker in Seattle. Duggan envisioned a permanent fund to support a professor who specialized in the study of working people, their organizations, and their experiences.

Establishing a Chair required an initial investment of \$1 million. Generally, university Chairs are established by large donors—not working people—but Duggan and a few others in the ILWU were determined. A small group of ILWU members, including

Phil Lelli of Local 23, Martin Jugum of Local 19, former Bridges secretary Jean Gundlach, and ILWU historian Magden and others formed the Harry Bridges Memorial Committee to launch a grassroots fundraising campaign to raise money to establish the Chair. They raised money from ILWU locals and affiliates, hundreds of individual ILWU members, plus other labor organizations in the Puget Sound.

The first Harry Bridges Chair holder was David Olson. Olson moved to establish the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies to organize activities that would go beyond the personal research and activities of the Harry Bridges Chair. Despite some initial resistance from the university, the Center was established. Among the Center's first activities was a conference in 1994 "Harry Bridges and the Tradition of Dissent Among Waterfront Workers," which brought together scholars from across the country to discuss Bridges' legacy as a union activist.

In the years since its founding, the Center has expanded its programs. This includes working with the university libraries to establish the Labor Archives of Washington, and creating a Labor Studies minor within the university. In recent years, the Center acquired additional funding from the State of Washington, which has allowed them

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Dr. Ligaya Domingo (right) with IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast. Dr. Domingo was recognized as this year's recipient of the the Robert H. Duggan Distinguished Supporter of Labor Studies.



# ILWU pensioner reflects on his 51-year career in Locals 13 and 94

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started in the union—Executive Board-wise and Caucus-wise, different committees, and then he talked me into running for Business Agent. I guess he saw something in me that I didn't. He was a good Business Agent. He knew sections of the contract by heart. I would follow him on days I wasn't working. He talked me into running. I ran, but I didn't get elected until my third try. On my third try I won by about seven votes. The second time I ran, I was unopposed, which I took to mean that guys liked the job I was doing.

## Transferring to Local 94

When I went over to 94, I was on the Executive Board for 10 or 13 years. I ran for president and lost by only five votes. In the old days, there was maybe one superintendent on the job.

There was maybe one superintendent for three or four jobs. Now, you've got three or four superintendents on one ship. I mean, it's like we're no longer running a job anymore, and we're the ones with the experience.

When I was a foreman, they hired a superintendent off the lunch wagon. It's not to demean him. It's the employer that hired him, but I showed up on the job—I knew who he was because I ate off the lunch wagon. Maybe a month later, I caught that job again, I said, "What are you?" And he says, "I'm the superintendent." I asked, "What happened to the lunch wagon?" He said, "I'm a superintendent now." I told him I'm gonna treat you like a superintendent: "Get out of my face. Get on the dock where you belong, and don't do nothing." That's the way it was. Simple.

I can't tell you how many times I threw a superintendent off the ship because he didn't belong on the ship. They go down in the hold to make sure what you do is right. They don't hire another ILWU person to make sure you did what's right. They hire somebody off a lunch wagon. I mean, you've got 30 years of experience!

The ILWU means the world to me. That's been my whole life. I sometimes wish I hadn't backed off when I went foreman. My cause changed. It was trying to put a stop to what the superintendents were doing, as opposed to staying in 13 and running for who knows what and maybe staying more involved in the union than I was.

The union has been great. That's why there are so many people that want to come down here. In time, I



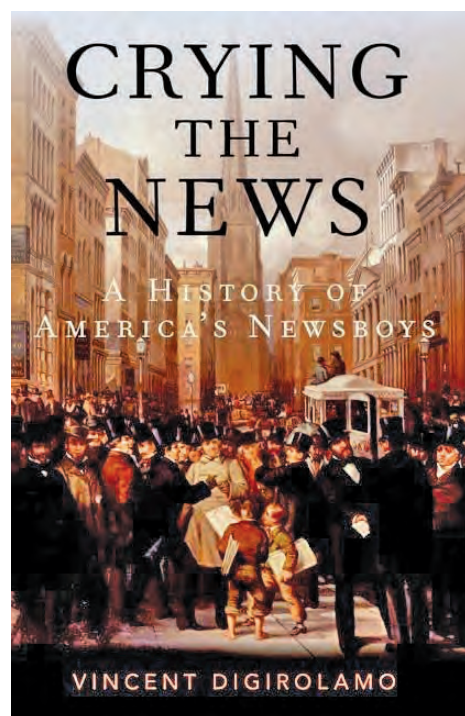
James Gyerman with his wife, Local 63 pensioner Lisa Gyerman.

hope we realize the union's following the waterfront, and the waterfront is growing up. It's been a good run. Greatest job in the world. 51 years on the waterfront. The only bad ones were the first four years and the black sand.

## BOOK REVIEW

## Former *Dispatcher* staff member publishes new history of America's news criers

DiGirolamo, Vincent. *Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 698 pp. \$36.95. (Hardcover)



Vincent DiGirolamo, former *Dispatcher* staff writer turned labor historian, published his first book, *Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys*. DiGirolamo wrote for the *Dispatcher* in the 1980s and went on to get his Ph.D. in History from Princeton University.

He is currently a member of the History Department at Baruch College of the City University of New York. His book received almost every scholarly book award in American history including the Frederick Jackson Turner Award and the Philip Taft Labor History Award. *Crying the News* tells the American story from the perspective of newsies—newsboys and (on rare occasion) girls. The book is a cultural and labor history that brings to life the lives of these child workers, most of whom were the children of immigrants and were between

the ages of six and sixteen, who sold and delivered newspapers in cities and towns across the United States. Drawing on his experience as a labor journalist, DiGirolamo skillfully uses stories about individuals to illustrate topics, including racism, sexism, crime and the daily living and working conditions of newsies.

The book explores their role in the economy and as cultural symbols. It argues that the newspaper industry had a formative influence on working-class youth that is important to our understanding of American childhood, labor, journalism, and capitalism.

Newsies were framed as "little entrepreneurs" and independent contractors by the newspaper industry in order to deny them rights as workers and obscure their exploitation by employers—a situation familiar to today's ride share and food delivery drivers in the so-called new "gig economy." Despite being the foundation

upon which America's modern newspaper industry was built, their earnings remained marginal even as the newspaper industry grew and thrived with technological advances in production.

Newsies were not just passive victims of an exploitative industry. They frequently organized for their own benefit through unions such as Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and, in the mid-1930s, the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). DiGirolamo argues that laws regulating child street labor, however limited in their impact, were products of children's collective action as much as the efforts of Progressive-era reformers.

This book will be of great interest to anyone who appreciates labor studies, child labor, social and cultural history, and labor history, and the history of mass media and journalism.

## Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies celebrates 30 years of building labor movement through scholarships and education

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to further expand to include a labor internship program and to hire a labor research coordinator to develop research programs in the center.

Student scholarships remain at the heart of the Center's programs. Each year, the Center offers more than 20 scholarships and research grants to students—several of which were established by members of the ILWU community. This year, the Center awarded more than \$150,000 in funding to students and researchers to support the study of labor-related issues.

Among this year's recipients was Dr. Ligaya Domingo, who was given two awards: the Robert H. Duggan Dis-

tinguished Supporter of Labor Studies, which honors individuals who have been exceptional supporters of the Center; and the inaugural Labor Studies Distinguished Alumni Award. The daughter of Inlandboatmen's Union activists and a graduate of the UW, Ligaya has deep ties to the local labor community and the university. She helped establish the Center's current "Building a Movement" labor internship program and the Domingo and Viernes Labor scholarship.

The evening's keynote speaker was Cherika Carter, Political and Strategic Campaigns Director of the Washington State Labor Council. Carter is also the Council's newly-elected Secretary-

Treasurer. Former Secretary-Treasurer April Sims is now the first African American person to head the Council. Carter gave a rousing speech on the role of the labor movement to build up communities.

Also speaking at the event was the new Harry Bridges Chair, Professor Moon-Ho Jung, who was featured in last month's issue of the *Dispatcher*. A historian of race, labor and politics, Moon has been a part of the Bridges Center since he joined the university in 2001. His talk focused on "racial capitalism" and how the Bridges Center's work highlights where the diverse needs of working people intersect.

Moon said of the current labor movement: "We are living through a seemingly endless wave of crises, with an immense toll, especially on the most vulnerable among us. That is why Labor Studies matters now more than ever. To me, Labor Studies is ultimately about framing, understanding, and highlighting the struggles of those who confront the horrors of racial capitalism, state violence, and gendered exploitation every single day. I believe it is in studying those struggles that we can find hope and creativity in our own strivings for collective justice."

— Robin Walker



# IBU rallies at L.A. Harbor Commission to save good jobs

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at the commission hearing and told the demonstrators outside, “We need the Port Commission to enforce all the rules and to hang onto these great jobs and stick with working families and the contracts that you have signed.”

IBU member and Westoil employee, Cris Sogliuzzo, made his third appearance speaking before the L.A. Harbor Commission. The commission administrates the lease agreements for tenants like Centerline Logistics in the port of LA.

“One of the main charges at the NLRB is that the transfer of our work from Westoil to Leo Marine is what I believe to be an effort to eliminate the Westoil IBU unit,” Sogliuzzo said during the public comment period. “I am asking the Harbor Commission to conduct an investigation into the labor law charges pending at the NLRB and to investigate the intent to close Westoil operations as it relates to the lease permit 882. If the Commission finds that wrongdoing has occurred, I would like to see the Harbor Commission and City Attorney take affirmative action on our behalf. I would also like to see injunctive relief, so that Westoil is not

allowed to close its doors on us while the other affiliates are allowed to continue to operate at this location performing our historical work, despite being challenged before the NLRB.”

### Solidarity from UAW

IBU members were joined by dozens of United Autoworkers Local 2865 members working at UCLA. IBU members have walked the picket lines at UCLA and UC San Diego as an act of solidarity supporting the 48,000 academic workers striking throughout the University of California system. IBU members have also been out to Moreno Valley to support the organizing drive by the Amazon Labor Union (ALU) at the giant warehouses there.

“We wanted thank the IBU for sending their members to teach us what real picket lines are all about,” said UAW 2865 member Jared Brewster. “They helped us picket construction sites at UCLA and gave inspiring speeches. This is how we can mutually support each other’s actions. As long as we are isolated, it is a boon to the bosses.”

— Mark Friedman, veteran trade unionist, International Association of Machinists

## A Helping Hand...

...when you need it most. That’s what we’re all about. We are the representatives of the ILWU- sponsored recovery programs. We provide professional and confidential assistance to you and your family for alcoholism, drug abuse and other problems—and we’re just a phone call away.

### ILWU LONGSHORE DIVISION

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**Tamiko Love**  
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**ADRP—Oregon**  
**Brian Harvey**  
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**ADRP—Washington**  
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Tacoma, WA 98424  
(253) 922-8913

### ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

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**Teamsters Assistance Program**  
300 Pendleton Way  
Oakland, CA 94621  
(510) 562-3600

### ILWU CANADA

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**John Felicella**  
3665 Kingsway, Ste 300  
Vancouver, BC V5R 5WR  
(604) 254-7911

The ILWU Titled Officers would like to wish our entire ILWU family a very Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year!

Willie Adams, President; Bobby Olvera, Jr., Vice President (Mainland);  
Sam Kreutz, Vice President (Hawaii); Ed Ferris, Secretary-Treasurer

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 4:** John R. Anderson;  
**Local 10:** Daniel A. Bonilla; August P. Marino; Richard C. Strong;  
**Local 13:** Eli R. Armstrong; Roland R. Custodio; Benjamin T. Dominguez; Justo Duenez; Miguel R. Gonzalez; Mario A. Hower; Steve R. Jansen; Henry J. Linares; Richard Lopez; Rosemary Trujillo; Michael Vanderploeg;  
**Local 19:** Danny A. Cram; Randell L. Hedington; Revlon K. McKinnon; Todd Weeks;  
**Local 21:** Randy B. Souther; **Local 23:** Joseph E. Fote;  
**Local 26:** Dyvette K. Collins;  
**Local 29:** Anthony J. Spinali;  
**Local 63:** Sheila Burke; Anna R. Chavez; Kathleen G. McEleney;  
**Local 63 OCU:** Linda Schoniger; Carolina Martinez; **Local 91:** William B. Bowden; Leo Williams;  
**Local 92:** John K. Peak;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 10:** Yee Sun Ang; Gerald R. Apodaca; Donald Francis; Reina Tigueros; **Local 13:** Charles L. Boulden; Joseph Bozulich; Mike Calderon; Gordon Forbes; Moises A. Garcia; Frederick Huerta; Clemmie James; Bronson B. Johns; Lewis Ohle; Marion S. Rafkin; Franklin R. Seals;

Clifford Ward; **Local 19:** Lawrence D Bolson; **Local 21:** Frederick Rees;  
**Local 23:** George E. Ringus;  
**Local 34:** Edward L. Guitierrez;  
**Local 47:** Theodore L. Haider;  
**Local 52:** John G. Cvitkovic; Joseph E. Wilson; **Local 63:** Louise McDuffie;  
**Local 63 OCU:** Peter Tan; Dorothy Camacho-Gogue; **Local 75:** Arthur J. Swain; **Local 94:** Eugene L. Banday; Robert Perez; **Local 98:** Ernest R. Shipman;

### DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:

**Local 13:** ARobert A Dorado; Albert Dossman Jr; **Local 19:** Ted Kollmar; **Local 24:** Richard L. Sharp; **Local 26:** Robert Oakes;

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 8:** Darleen M. Davison;  
**Local 10:** Betty Ross; Jannette F. Ross; **Local 12:** Nancy Messman;  
**Local 13:** Jena L. Clifton; Shirley Despal; Margaret D. Pepper; Flossie Pierson; **Local 19:** Vera Freitag; Naomi Spang; **Local 34:** Veigh Powers; **Local 47:** Marjorie L. Jackson; Darlene Johnson; **Local 50:** Mary Lou Tolson; **Local 52:** Martha I Cluphf; **Local 63:** Antonia Silvas; Muriel Ungaro; **Local 92:** Soledad Burt;

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___ copies of <b>Harry Bridges</b> @ \$10 ea.=	\$ ____
___ copies of <b>The Big Strike</b> @ \$9.00 ea. =	\$ ____
___ copies of <b>The Union Makes Us Strong</b> @ \$20 ea. =	\$ ____
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___ copies of <b>We Are the ILWU</b> DVD @ \$5 ea. =	\$ ____
___ copies of <b>A Life on the Beam</b> DVD @ \$5 ea. =	\$ ____
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### CORRECTION:

Last month Local 26 Watchman Emmett Hall Jr. was listed as a new pensioner. Emmett has reached the age where he begins receiving his pension but is still working.