



# THE DISPATCHER

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Local 13 holds in-person membership meeting in over a year [page 2](#)



**Unity in the desert:** ILWU Local 30 in Boron, CA held a solidarity BBQ on May Day to unify and inform the membership about the ongoing contract negotiations with Rio Tinto. The ILWU Titled Officers and solidarity delegations from ILWU Locals 13 and 20 and Auxiliary 8 attended the event as a show of support from the ILWU family.

# ILWU May Day 2021: Remembering the past, fighting for the future

**F**rom the desert to the docks, ILWU members marked May Day 2021 with a range of celebrations that honored labor history while also looking to current struggles as workers fight to secure a better future. In San Francisco, Bay Area ILWU/IBU locals joined with other labor union members to recreate the 1934 march up Market Street in San Francisco to honor the cities general strike of that year. (See David Bacon's article on page 3).

In Tacoma, Local 23 members joined a May Day march in support of the PRO ACT which would roll back decades of attacks on workers' rights and make it easier for workers to form a union. And in Boron, CA Local 30 members held a BBQ to build unity around their contract negotiations which are currently underway.

### Solidarity BBQ in Boron

ILWU Local 30 recently began contract negotiations with mining giant, Rio Tinto. On May Day, they held a solidarity barbeque to bring members together for an informational and educational event about their contract fight and to show support and solidarity from the International and Southern California ILWU locals.

Approximately 200 people attended the event including close to 80 members of Local 30 along with their families, members from ILWU Locals 13 and 20, the Southern California District Council, and members from Auxiliary 8. ILWU International President Willie Adams, Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, and Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris also attended the event along with ILWU Organizer Director Ryan Dowling, Southern California Lead Organizer Carlos Cordon, Researcher Bridget Wack, ILWU Education Director Robin Walker,

and ILWU Communications Director Roy San Filippo.

Attendees received an informational packet containing the ILWU pamphlet "How the Union Works," a flash drive loaded with the documentary Locked Out about the 2010 lockout of ILWU Local 30 members by Rio Tinto, a documentary about the ILWU, and historical photos of Local 30 members.

Local 30 Sergeant at Arms and Negotiating Team Member Demetrius Freeman was the pitmaster for the day. He brought his smoker and served hamburgers, hot dogs, and his signature pulled pork.

### Organizing to win a fair contract

"We reached out to the International about doing some internal organizing. It's been a while since we have brought the members together to teach them what being a union member is about," explained

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## Oregon governor appoints Local 8's Strader to Port of Portland commission

**Stuart Strader's seat at the table reflects positive port-union relationship**

**W**hen ILWU Local 8 member Stuart Strader took his virtual seat alongside eight other Port of Portland commissioners at its April 14 virtual meeting online, it was the first time the ILWU had been at the table since Local 8 Secretary-Treasurer Bruce Holte's term ended eight years ago.

Strader, who also serves as the Local's Business Agent, said there's an excellent working relationship between the port and ILWU locals 8,

40 and 92 under its current executive director, Curtis Robinhold.

"Robinhold is receptive the union's message of bettering the community in which we live and work," said Strader. "His mindset is collaborative; it's about what works, what's effective, and what will move the community forward."

Gov. Kate Brown appointed Strader to a 4-year term in early 2021, and the Oregon Senate approved his appointment in March. The Port's news release stated that Strader "has been a union officer for ILWU for

the past eight years, working directly with the Port and its partners to make Terminal 6 productive. Strader was a key partner in working to bring container service and other operations back to the terminal."

"Terminal 6 now has multiple operations," Strader told the *Dispatcher*. "SM Line - formerly Hanjin - has a weekly service; there's intermodal rail that serves as a connection point to the Northwest Seaport Alliance through BNSF four days a week. It's been growing quarter over quarter. We're getting much busier,

and we're still small, but we're now one of the fastest-growing ports on the West Coast."

Strader said that all of the port's terminals, which include containers, bulk operations, grain exports, and auto imports and exports, have been well thanks to the high morale of the Longshore men and women who are doing what they do best.

## Local 13 holds in-person membership meeting as COVID-19 restrictions ease

**L**ocal 13 hosted its first in-person membership meeting in more than one year on Thursday, April 8, 2021.

The stop-work meeting was held at Dignity Health Sports Park in Carson because the venue is large enough to accommodate all Class A members who wanted to attend. With plenty of parking and a capacity of more than 10,000, there was plenty of space to remain socially distant while still enjoying the first union-sanctioned opportunity to gather together since the pandemic hit.

Local 13 President Ramon Ponce de Leon said he was excited to see all the members and handle union business. He added that it was like a celebration to see everyone. "There are usually only 500 members who attend our meetings but this time we had more than 1,000 members show up," said Ponce de Leon. "I hope we can continue to have our monthly meetings."

"It was important for our members to physically attend a membership meeting for everyone's mental health," said Mark Williams, Local 13 Secretary-Treasurer. "Even

though we see each other at dispatch and on the job, there are still feelings of isolation due to the pandemic. An actual meeting moves us closer to some sense of normalcy.

It also allowed us to acknowledge and remember our retired and fallen brothers and sisters by being able to read all their names in person. We were also able to celebrate how hard we have worked moving record-breaking cargo under the very challenging circumstances that the public health crisis presented."

"We chose Dignity Health Sports Park for several reasons," continued Williams. "First, it is an open-air facility with a large seating capacity, which is a must for the LA County Health Department's 'Orange Tier' reopening protocol that was in place at that time. Second, we have a relationship that dates back to their opening in 2003 when the complex was known as the Home Depot Center, and later the Stub Hub Center. They have always treated us very well when we hosted other meetings there."

There are more than 5,000 Class A members in Local 13 and 1,070 were in attendance. In addition to the swearing-in of new officers who were elected during the recent March elections, the names of 165 members who passed and 70 who retired in the past year were also read. The mood was very somber when the 12 names were read of those who



**Moment of silence:** Local 13 members stood while the names of all the members who passed since March 2020 were read aloud.

passed due to COVID-19. However, a distinct highlight of the evening was the swearing-in of 107 members who were elevated to Class A status.

The last time Local 13 had an in-person meeting was on March 5, 2020. Membership meetings held between April of 2020 and March of 2021 were "information only" and all were held on virtual platforms such as Lifesize or Zoom.

The venue has already been rebooked for the May membership meeting.

— Vivian Malaulu



**Elevated:** Swearing-in of new Class A members was done in-person for the first time since March 2020. All others were done virtually on Zoom.

## DISPATCHER

Roy San Filippo  
Communications Director

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

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# ILWU May Day 2021: Remembering the past, fighting for the future

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Local 30 President Thomas Marshall. “The contract is set to expire on May 17. We want the members invigorated and organized and we want them to understand how much we can accomplish by being one unit. We wanted to invite everyone down and get them information on what they can do, how they can help, and for them to realize the difference we can make if we work together.”

He added, “You want to hope for the best but plan in case things go in the other direction. We need to be organized and be on the same page with one another so we can work together and win a fair contract.”

## Solidarity from the harbor

Approximately 20 members from ILWU Local 20 in Wilmington attended as a show of solidarity. Local 20 and Local 30 both share the same employer, Rio Tinto. Local 20 members process the products from Boron in Rio Tinto’s Wilmington plant which then get sent out around the world.

“We came out here today to support Local 30, our sister local. Solidarity is the most important part of a union,” said Local 20 President Mike Gonzalo. “Without it, there is no way you are going to beat a company as big as Rio Tinto. The power of a union comes from its people. There is power in numbers. No one can do this alone and that is why solidarity is so important.”



**Stronger together:** ILWU Local 20 members turned out in force to show solidarity with the members of Local 30. Both locals share the same employer—mining giant Rio Tinto. Local 20 Vice President John Muck said that union solidarity has provided him with the stability to raise a daughter and provide for his family. “That’s why we fight for each other,” he said.



**Many hats:** Local 30 member Demetrius Freeman who serves as Sergeant at Arms for the local and is a member of the Contract Negotiating Team was also the pitmaster for the BBQ. Freeman arrived early to grill hamburgers, hot dogs, and his signature pulled pork.

Local 20 will be in contract negotiations with Rio Tinto in 2022 when their contract expires. Local 20 Vice President John Muck and Local 20 Secretary-Treasurer Brandon Clemison were also a part of the Local 20 delegation.

“I’m here today to show my solidarity with Local 30 and to remind them the locals across the ILWU are concerned about their issues and stand with them,” said Local 13 Executive Board member David Ross Jr. “Our union has always been about protecting workers. If we don’t stand together, no one else will. If a local reaches out and asks for support, we need to be there in a moment’s notice.”

## Strength and unity in the desert

Local 30 President Thomas Marshall and ILWU International President Willie Adams both briefly addressed the membership. Marshall welcomed everyone to the event before updating them on the status of negotiations.

“We wanted to get together and show a little bit of unity and solidarity,” he said. “We are in contract negotiations with the company. We’ve met about four times. So far, things are somewhat smooth but when you do contract negotiations with Rio Tinto, they don’t do anything out of the kindness of their heart.”

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# ILWU, Northern California unions celebrate May Day with San Francisco march and rally

On May Day, Northern California labor unions marched up San Francisco’s Market Street to pay homage to the City’s 1934 general strike. Bay Area ILWU Locals and the Inlandboatmen’s Union led the march which was sponsored by several labor councils from the region.

The march and rally highlighted the importance of passing the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which will empower workers to exercise our freedom to organize and negotiate for better wages and working conditions, and the need for organized to combat racism to ensure that workers everywhere can live and work with the dignity and respect.

May 1st has been celebrated as a working-class holiday around the world for over a century. May Day honors the struggle of the 19th Century labor movement’s fight for the 8-hour day.

The march ended with a rally at San Francisco Hall where Civil Rights icon Angela Davis spoke along with activists and labor leaders.

After Davis spoke, ILWU Local 10 President Trent Willis, went back to

the microphone. “I’m going to ask the union for a resolution,” he announced, “to make our sister Angela Davis an honorary member, as we did with Martin Luther King and Paul Robeson.” The crowd erupted in applause.

Willis recalled the union’s long history of honoring Black radical leaders, even as they were being hounded by a conservative and racist establishment. Robeson was denied his passport and demonized for refusing to knuckle under to McCarthyism’s witch-hunts at the height of the Cold War. Dr. King spoke to the union in 1967 in the last year of his life, calling for radical social change and an end to the Vietnam War. The New York Times condemned him for it, but King told longshore workers in the Local 10 hall, “We’ve learned from labor the meaning of power.”

As Angela Davis marched up Market Street, flanked by the Local 10 drill team, the union’s officers and a thousand other union and worker activists, she honored the ILWU’s political independence. She called it one of the most radical unions in the country. “Local 10 is a majority African-American union, and it’s been committed to the support of workers in South Africa, Chile and now Palestine,” she explained in an interview with *The Dispatcher*. She recalled the years when then-Governor



Photo by David Bacon

**May Day march:** The ILWU led area-trade unions in a march down San Francisco’s Market Street on International Workers’ Day. The march paid homage to the iconic July 9, 1934 funeral procession for Bloody Thursday martyrs Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise. In the photo (left to right): Local 34 member Chris Christensen, Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Ed Henderson, Angela Davis, and Local 10 President Trent Willis.

nor Ronald Reagan had her fired from her teaching job, and tried to send her to prison. “When I was on trial,” she remembered, “the ILWU came to my support too.”

Part of Local 10’s radicalism has been its celebration of May Day. “Back in 2005,” Willis told marchers, “We decided we had to pay attention to May Day and what it means, and if

you look at the port today, you’ll see that no cranes are moving. Back in Chicago, when May Day began, they were working people to death. People died so that we can have the 8-hour day.” Willis referred to the origin of the holiday that honors the strike in 1886 over that demand, and then the execution of the Haymarket martyrs

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# We are the ILWU



## Local 30, Boron, CA

ILWU Local 30 is located in the Mojave Desert in Boron, California, 80 miles east of Bakersfield. It is home to the Rio Tinto Boron Mine, the largest mine in California and one of the richest deposits of borate ore in the world. Local 30 represents approximately 550 workers at the mine and nearby processing plant. This landlocked local decided to affiliate with the ILWU back in 1964 after meeting longshore workers on the docks in Wilmington, California where the product is shipped around the world.

In 1968, the giant multinational corporation Rio Tinto bought US Borax, which owned Boron's mile-wide, mile-and-a-half long borax open-pit mine and processing plant.

After it is crushed and processed, much of the borates are sent to Wilmington in bulk to be made into various products. ILWU Local 20 members work at the company's port refinery in Wilmington. The minerals are used as a cleaning solvent, water softener, preservative, and fireproofing agent. It goes into glass and was used in tiles on NASA's space shuttles. It can strengthen steel, neutralize acid, and function as a gasoline additive.

### Thomas Marshall, Local 30 President



**I've been here since 1999.** I hired on into the mine then transferred into the maintenance department and became a millwright. I was there until 2008 when I went into the electric shop. When I am not being the Local 30 President, I am a journeyman electrician. My father worked in the mines since 1968 and he retired shortly after the lockout in 2010. My influences from unionism have been from him. He was here during the 1968 strike, the 1974 strike, and then in 2010 when we got locked out by Rio Tinto. I became a steward

in 2017 and shortly after that, I ran for vice president. I severed two terms in that office and then ran for president in 2020.

We have a wide range of jobs and crafts in Local 30. We have two sections here. We have the mine, and we have the refinery. The miners run various pieces of equipment. They run haul trucks, graders, dozers, and electric shovels. They run crushing and conveying equipment. In the refinery we have craftsmen—millwrights, electricians, utility guys who do carpentry, painting, and construction—we also have janitorial staff, as well the people who operate the equipment that refines the product into what gets sold.

I was four years old during the 1974 strike, I don't recall much about that other than my dad talking about it. So, 2010 was something new for me. Being put out of the gate when all we wanted was a fair shot at a contract to make things better. It was kind of off-putting for the company to say, "We don't need you guys."

Overall, the experience on the union side with the support we got from the International and the surrounding ILWU locals—that part was fantastic. We all came together. It didn't take them any time at all to come out and provide the assistance that we needed. On the company side, it was a different story.

### Keith Baird, Local 30 Vice President

**I got hired in 1987 and a year later I became a member of Local 30.** A few years after that I first became a steward. I spent 16 years in the shipping department driving a forklift and then I entered the Instrument Electrician (IE) Training Program and I've done that for the last 17 years. I primarily work in the shipping and fusing departments making repairs.

We are one of the largest borax mines in the world. We process raw material into a granular product, and it gets used in products ranging from fertilizer to pharmaceuticals.



I see the wrongs that the company does regularly. Not following the contract language that we agreed to—they feel like they are above that. There have to be people willing to challenge them when they do that and that is the role that stewards play.

It's always important to have stewards. We always have open steward spots. If we can find the right person who is passionate about protecting Local 30 members, we have plenty of training opportunities through the Local or the International. I would encourage every member to read your contract book and understand what it means. If you don't understand something, talk to your steward, or call the hall. The better informed you are, the less trouble you are going to have.

The 2010 lockout was a different experience. The amount of emotion on display—the passion and the unity that the members had was amazing. Many Local 30 members suffered economically from that—some losing houses or cars—and they are still recovering from that. All of this for what turned out to be no gains for the company in my opinion. They got no movement in the contract whatsoever.

When the call went out to other ILWU locals to come out and support us, I was super impressed with the number of people that came out here to Boron to show their solidarity. It gave me a newfound respect for the International and what they do.

### Raymond Umsted, Local 30 Trustee & Negotiating Team Member



**I've been in the union for 36 years.** I started in the packing department for nine years, then moved my way into the truck shop for nine years and now I'm in the IE/Electrical department. I am a trustee in the union and am on the negotiating team. We are trying to get a better contract than what we have. So far it doesn't look like the company wants to give on much.

My father used to work at the plant. He started in 1957 until he passed away in 2001. My mother started working in the plant in 1974 and she retired in 2002. My grandfather started before 1968.

His brother-in-law helped form the first union here. He was fired and then was brought back after the union came in.

Being a trustee is more than just coming in and counting receipts. When money comes in and is being spent it has to be done legally by our bylaws. The trustees have that oversight role and if things aren't right, we have to bring it to the attention of the officers. We get a lot of questions from the membership at our meetings, and we have to be able to answer those questions. There are three of us and we all look over each other's shoulders.

## Tamra Nielsen, Local 30 Executive Board Member & Negotiating Team Member



*I work in the lab as a senior analyst. We analyze all the products that are made here. Nothing can leave before it goes through the lab. If we aren't there, nothing goes out. We have a whole team of highly qualified scientists in our lab. It's a great job and we like what we do.*

*I started there for the first time in 1999. I left, and then came back in 2004 and have been there since.*

*I was here for the 2010 lockout. It was quite an eye-opener for us. I didn't grow up with a union. When the company tells you that you can't work and then all these*

*policemen in riot gear and helicopters treating us like we are criminals or terrorists when all we were doing was trying to go to work. The company didn't want to pay us well. They wanted to take away our benefits. They didn't care about us as people. It was scary. We'd stand out there at the line and tell the company we wanted to work but we had cops with machine guns standing there. It was hard to see that a company that we worked for all of these years was treating us so poorly and didn't care about us or our families.*

*I'm hoping that we can reach an agreement in these contract negotiations so that we can have fair wages and benefits for the people that work for Rio Tinto and can continue to support our families and continue to make products that people need all over the world.*

## Tom Owens, Local 30 Executive Board Member & Negotiating Team Member

*I've been working here since October 23rd, 1995. I ended up at the boric acid plant in 1996 and that's been my home ever since. I've been on the Executive Board. I began my tenure there in 2000 until about 2008. I am currently an E-board member again and have been the last three years. I am also on the negotiating team for the 2021 contract.*

*One thing I learned during the 2010 lockout was that no matter how good your working relationship is with your boss is, they don't view you as a valuable person. They view you as a commodity like any pump that can be shut down and changed.*

*I became active in the union after working at the plant for about a year and a half. At that time, I had never been to a union meeting other than when I had come to swear-in. I didn't realize at that time how important being active in the union was. I remember being on a graveyard shift and a bunch of guys and I were sitting around complaining. We felt like the union wasn't doing a good job of representing us at our particular plant. I've always been honest with myself and I stopped the room and asked if anyone was at the union meeting last month. They all said no. I said, "Well, I wasn't either, but I can guarantee you I will be there this month. I invite you guys if you have complaints to come and let your voice be heard." That's how it began for me.*

*In my plant, I am always asking people and challenging people to come to meetings. In this day and age, a lot of people say it's inconvenient. And to be honest, the company schedules shifts to make it inconvenient to attend meetings. They hire a lot of people from out of town and they have to spend a lot more time away. But I tell people it's one day a month and it can make a big difference in your working relationship at your plant. When the bosses know that the workers are together that know and understand the contract and make the company adhere to the contract, we are going to have fewer problems. If people aren't willing to do that, then it makes it tougher for those that do.*



### MAY IS MEDICAL, DENTAL PLAN CHOICE MONTH

Active and retired longshore families in the ports where members have a choice can change medical and/or dental plans during the Open Enrollment period May 1 to May 31, 2021. The change will be effective July 1, 2021. In addition to the May Open Enrollment period, members may change their medical plan and/or dental plan once at any time during the Plan Year (July 1-June 30).

The July 1, 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the ILWU and PMA provides that new registrants in the ports where members have a choice of medical plans shall be assigned Kaiser HMO Plan for the first 24 months of registration. After 24 months, those registrants who have qualified for continued eligibility under the Mid-Year/Annual Review hour's requirement will have a choice of medical plans. New registrants in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, Los Angeles, Portland/Vancouver and Washington will have a choice of dental plans on the first of the month following registration, and may change dental plans during the Open Enrollment period and one additional time during the Plan Year.

**MEDICAL CHOICE:** The medical plan choices are Kaiser Health Plan or the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan for Southern California Locals 13, 26, 29, 46, 63 and 94; Northern California Locals 10, 18, 34 (San Francisco), 34 (Stockton), 54, 75 and 91; Oregon-Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40, and 92; and Washington State area Locals 19, 23, 32, 47, 52 and 98.

**DENTAL CHOICE:** For Los Angeles Locals 13, 26, 63 and 94 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Harbor Dental Associates or Dental Health Services. For Southern California Locals 29 and 46 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For San Francisco Locals 10, 34, 75 and 91 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Dental Health Services, or Gentle Dental San Francisco. For Sacramento and Stockton Locals 18, 34 and 54 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For Portland/Vancouver Locals 4, 8, 40 and 92 the dental plan choices are LifeMap-Willamette Dental, Oregon Kaiser Dental Plan or Oregon/Washington Dental Service. For Washington Locals 7, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 47, 51, 52 and 98 the dental plan choices are Washington Dental Service or Dental Health Services.

Information on the medical and dental plans, and forms to change plans, can be obtained at the Locals and the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans Office.

**All Medical and Dental Program Choice Forms and enrollment forms, as applicable, must be completed and received by the Benefit Plans Office by May 31 for the enrollment change to be effective July 1.**

# ILWU, Northern California unions celebrate May Day with San Francisco march and rally

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afterwards - immigrant labor activists framed by the bosses of the era to try to stop the workers' movement. One consequence of McCarthyism was the suppression of May Day, and for decades it was celebrated in every country except this one, where it was called the communist holiday.

Redbaiting May Day was never accepted in the ILWU, however. The union's longshore and warehouse workers have often led marches and demonstrations to celebrate it. In 1950, at the height of McCarthyite hysteria, while the government was trying to deport Harry Bridges, Pacific coast maritime workers, including longshore workers from Locals 10, 13 and 23, sent May Day greetings to union brothers and sisters worldwide. Quoted in *The Dispatcher*, they said fascism could be defeated "only through militant, greater maritime unity and world solidarity." In 1960 the ILWU sent members to East Germany to celebrate May Day, and in 1975 Harry Bridges was a guest of the Sea and River Workers Union at May Day in Moscow. The ILWU in Vancouver has a long tradition of participating in May Day events, and the 1981 international convention stood in silence on May Day to honor the Haymarket martyrs.

In 2008 that tradition of solidarity continued when Local 10 members

marched to oppose the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. "May Day, with its special overtones of struggle and militancy, was intentionally selected," according to ILWU historian Harvey Schwartz. The union had earlier been host to Iraqi unionists asking for support and sent past Local 10 President Clarence Thomas to Baghdad to develop relations with them.

What made the 2021 May Day march exceptional, however, was the commitment of other unions and worker organizations. This year, contingents of union workers marched behind banners, and their numbers stretched for blocks down Market Street. Other contingents came from the Chinese Progressive Association and the California Domestic Workers Alliance. Chapters of the Democratic Socialists of America showed up in red t-shirts.

Marching by union contingent was also a nod to the 1934 waterfront and general strike, when thousands of union members paraded silently up Market Street to honor Nick Bordoise and Howard Sperry, murdered by San Francisco police on July 5th, 1934. Police murders were on the minds of this year's marchers as well, as it took place just days after a Minneapolis jury found policeman Derek Chauvin guilty of murdering George Floyd.

"This is more than just another May Day," Willis said. "This has been

a year filled with racial tension and police shootings. Even after that verdict, police shot another young Black man. Our slogan is An Injury to One is an Injury to All, but we have certainly suffered a lot of injuries."

Willis called on the labor movement to act in response. "Racism has been in the way of the labor movement since it started. Corporate bosses need it to keep me from talking to an Asian man or a Mexican woman, or to you." Marchers carried banners and Davis and Willis both called for freeing Black prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal.

Many ILWU members came to march from locals throughout Northern California. One, Blake Dahlstrom, was a leader of the successful organizing drive by Local 6 at the Anchor Steam Beer brewery. Today she serves as a union steward, and member of the Local 6 executive board, and the Northern California District Council. The fight for the 8-hour day isn't just in the past, she warned. "Many workers have to work a lot more hours at two and more jobs to survive. In San Francisco one job should be enough, but we know it isn't, and that's a big reason we're marching today," she said.

The marchers without exception called on Congress to pass the PRO Act, a labor law reform bill that would penalize corporations for violating the right of workers to organize unions.

AFL-CIO Vice President Tefere Gebre told the rally that current labor law does not protect workers from retaliation, or punish employers who retaliate. "With the PRO Act, there will be consequences," he promised.

Gebre, an Ethiopian immigrant, congratulated marchers for being willing to take action despite the pandemic, while being careful to maintain social distance and wear masks. "COVID-19 has exposed the structural and systemic racism in this country," he charged. Another speaker at the rally, Eddie Zheng, told of his years in state prison, where the prisoners themselves provide the unpaid labor that keeps the institutions going. "The labor movement needs to stop this," he urged.

Along with other speakers, Angela Davis called for passing the PRO Act. "We need to protect the right to organize," she said. Like Dr. King, she and Zheng connected the fight for prison reform with the demands of unions and workers for a more just society. "We have to stand up with our sisters and brothers behind prison walls, and abolish the prison industrial complex," she explained. "I look forward to a world where the police are no longer necessary, and for that world we need housing, schools, jobs and free health care for all."

By David Bacon

## Tell us about your TATTOO

"My dad, **Geoff Follin**, is an ILWU Local 34 pensioner. He worked on the waterfront his entire adult life until he was in his early 70's. A few years before he retired, he was speaking of the younger generation at work calling him "Old Guy." After a handful of conversations in which this came up, I asked him about it. I thought it was disrespectful, but he said the nickname was delivered with respect and made him feel included by the younger Marine Clerks and longshore workers.

At some point, he brought it up again. I finally asked, "What exactly do they call you?"

"Old guy," he responded. "Well, they shorten it. They call me O.G."

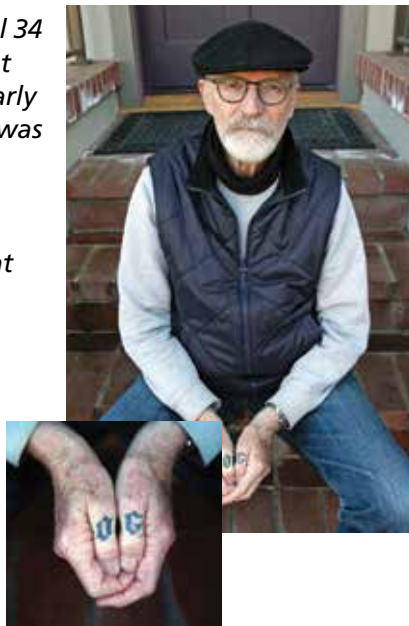
I couldn't stop laughing. I had to explain to him what Original Gangsta was, and then had to dig up some songs with OG references in them. After that, he got a little more swagger in him and wore his Kangol a little tipped to the side and bought big chunky glasses. I dig it.

He then visited Authentic Tattoo and came back with this "OG" tattoo.

- Niles Follin, IBEW Local 6

**Geoff Follin adds:** I was a Local 34 marine clerk in the San Francisco Bay Area for 53 or 54 years (can't remember anymore!) and my father before me also. I finally retired last December 1st and am starting to do things at a different pace on my own terms. I'm so thankful for the ILWU. Do the right thing for the union and it will do the right thing for you! Never forget.

Want to tell us about your tattoo?  
Send us a photo of your tattoo and story to [roy@ilwu.org](mailto:roy@ilwu.org).



## SMOLIN-MELIN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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March 25, 2021

### ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

The Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2021-2022. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2021 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were longtime members of Local 10. They left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their "collegiate" education. Trustees of the Fund interpret "members" to mean **active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds**, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret "collegiate" to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant's record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$350 to \$1,750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

The Trustees are Eleanor Morton, counsel for ILWU Local 10, Eugene Vrana, retired Director of Educational Services and Librarian for ILWU, and Nicole Bridges, Fund Administrator and the granddaughter of Harry Bridges.

If you have a son or daughter who is applying to enter college next fall, or is already a college student who is planning to continue, and the above requirements are met, you might want to apply for one of these scholarships.

To request an application, simply email Nicole Bridges at:

[nbridges@leonardcarter.com](mailto:nbridges@leonardcarter.com)

She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.

# ILWU May Day 2021: Remembering the past, fighting for the future

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Marshall explained that current issues of contention include Rio Tinto's attempt to introduce job consolidation language into the contract that would permit the company to assign employees to work out of their classification and do other workers' work which could lead to further understaffing. He also said that the company wants the ability to unilaterally put all departments on a 12-hour shift without a vote by workers.

Marshall was followed by President Adams who said that the Titled Officers and the membership of the ILWU will be standing solidly behind the members of Local 30.

Adams began with a letter of support and solidarity from the CFMEU which represents miners in Australia. "They are thinking about you and said that they are only 15 hours away by plane," Adams said.

"[Rio Tinto] is making plenty of money off the backs of every union member who works night and day under tough conditions and deserve every dollar they earn. We are prepared to do whatever it takes to support our brothers and sisters of the ILWU and their families in this upcoming battle.

Your fight is our fight. Touch one, touch all," the letter stated.

Adams said that International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris will be available to Local 30 to sit in on negotiations.

"You have to be prepared for anything that Rio Tinto throws at you," Adams said. "You have fought for and stood up for your membership. You see the support that you have—Local 20, Local 30, the Southern California District Council, the Federated Auxiliary—are all here for you today. This is solidarity at its best. Thomas is the general and the International is here to support you, whatever you need."

Adams noted the sacrifice made by working-class communities during the pandemic who bore the brunt of the economic and health crisis.

"Working-class people have always been heroes without capes," Adams said. "We have always been essential. The reason that Rio Tinto makes all the profits that it does is because of the work done by the members of Local 30. We need to make sure you get your fair share so you can take care of your families. As we come out of this pandemic, a lot of businesses failed. We want our communities to come back stronger, more vibrant than ever."



**Generations:** Trinidad Esquivel (right) and his son Angel, both members of Local 30, came out to the Local 30 hall on May Day to enjoy some BBQ and get an update on contact negotiations.

## Lessons from the lockout

The experience of the 2010 lockout by Rio Tinto still resonates deeply with Local 30 members. They recalled the impact that being locked out by their employer had on them, and the importance of the solidarity from ILWU members and trade unions around the world had in enabling them to weather the storm.

The lockout of 560 Local 30 members and their families began at 7:00 a.m. on January 31, 2010 and lasted until a settlement was approved by workers on May 17, 2010. Rio Tinto was forced to negotiate because of unity and support in the high desert communities and from the solidarity that came from workers across the ILWU and unions around the world.

"When the contract negotiations didn't go well in 2009, we worked for three-and-a-half months without a contract. We were more than happy to keep working while we negotiated a fair contract, but the company didn't feel that way," recalled Local 30 Executive Board member Tom Owens who is also a member of the 2021 Contract Negotiating Team. "They brought in a union-busting security firm called Gettier. Their goal was to get an injunction against us. For most of the lockout,

Rio Tinto refused to talk with us. They weren't offering us a fair deal. There weren't negotiating. They were trying to impose a contract."

Tom was one of several Local 30 members who hit the road to visit with ILWU locals and other unions around the country to build support for the locked-out miners.

"I went to speak at Local 13 on a few occasions," Owens said. "I traveled to Portland and to Seattle to speak with the locals up there. We had rallies and events here in Boron and ILWU members showed up. They set up a food bank and other support for Local 30 members. Some people were less prepared than perhaps they should have been. That solidarity really helped and got a lot of people through a tough time."

Local 30 Trustee and negotiating team member Raymond Umsted recalled the biggest lesson he learned from the lockout. "When a corporation doesn't want you to have something, they don't care what your feelings are or how good of a job you have done. They don't care if you hurt. They don't care if your family hurts," he said. "It doesn't matter what they do to me now. They've already locked me out once along with half of this union. I'll be prepared."



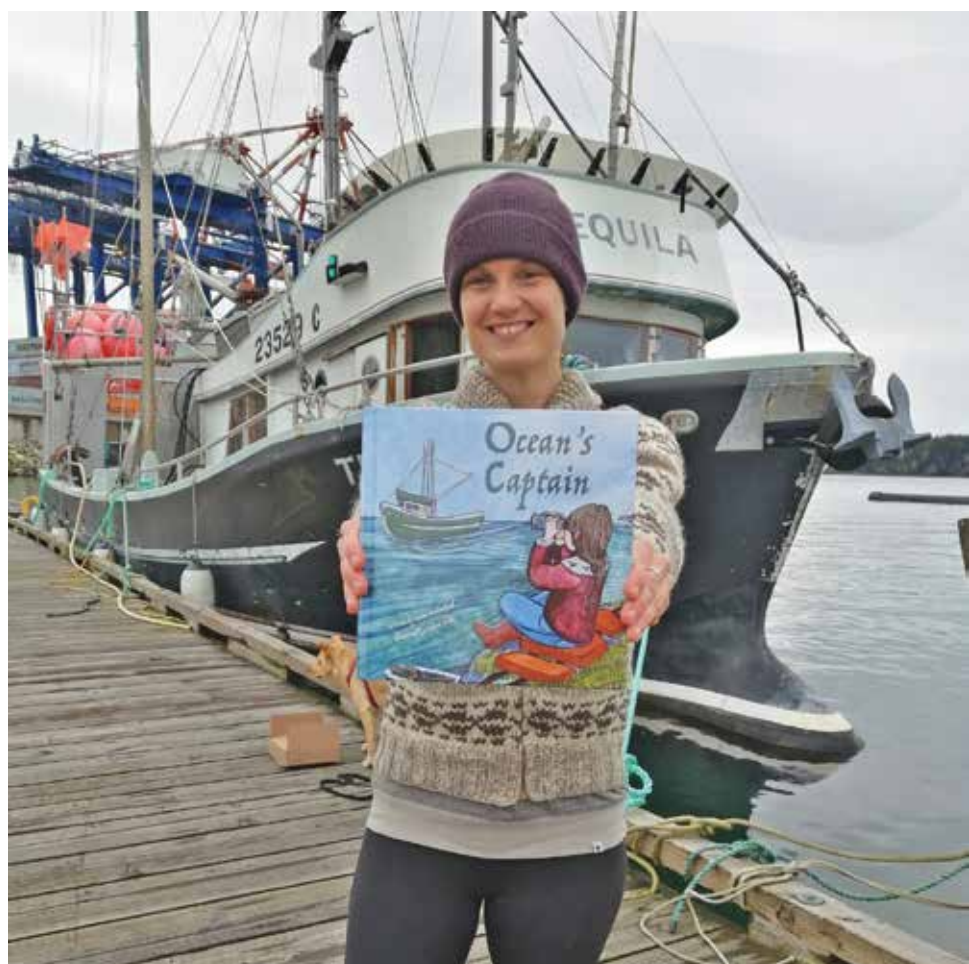
**How the union works:** Local 30 member Maychurie Munday reads up on the ILWU. The pamphlet, along with other educational materials were given out to those who attended the solidarity BBQ.



**Locked out in Fresno:** As *The Dispatcher* was going to press, ILWU Local 6 members in Fresno, CA were locked out by Stratas Foods after workers unanimously rejected the 2 meager percent increase in wages over 5 years offered by the company. These workers have been working four, 12-hour shifts per week throughout the pandemic, packing and shipping cooking oil for fast food chains and Costco. After being lowballed on wages for years, these workers have decided to take a stand for a fair wage increase. Stratas Foods generates approximately \$700M in annual revenue. *The Dispatcher* will report on this fight in more detail in a future issue. In the photo: ILWU International President Willie Adams joined the picket line of locked-out Local 6 members and pledged the support of the International as these workers fight for a fair contract.



From left to right) Danielle Sandoval-Padilla, Auxiliary 8 President and Federated Auxiliaries Treasurer, ILWU Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Local 30 E-Board member Tamra Nielsen, ILWU President Willie Adams, ILWU Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, Federated Auxiliaries California Vice President Tina Carranza, Local 30 President Thomas Marshall, Local 30 Secretary-Treasurer Tim Hargett, and Local 30 Vice President Keith Baird.



**A high seas tale:** ILWU Local 400 Shop Steward at SAAM Towage, Ocean Rutherford, has created a children's book, *Ocean's Captain*, full of adventure and empowerment. Rutherford was walking along this Prince Rupert dock when the captain of the Tequila asked if she knew any deckhands for the upcoming tuna season. Ocean volunteered herself for the job and after a few seasons now works on SAAM Towage tugboats. *Ocean's Captain* is part autobiography, part fairytale, as well lessons discovered along the way. A fisherman and artist named Oceana Wills from Homer, Alaska brought the story to life with illustrations. Find out more or a copy for yourself at [www.oceanrutherford.com](http://www.oceanrutherford.com).

## 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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### ILWU CANADA

### ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

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**EAP—British Columbia**  
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 Vancouver, BC V5R 5WR  
 (604) 254-7911



# ILWU Stronger Together

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 4:** Alexandra Nelson;  
**Local 8:** Otis Thornton;  
**Local 13:** Daniel P Avila; Isadore Califano; Joe P Flakes; Ester Gonzalez; Guillermo Hernandez; Roberto Moran; Bradley Osborne; Charles D Paiz; Antoinette Perez; Gloria Ramirez; Pedro Ramos-Betancourt; Woodella E Reese; **Local 19:** Danny D Coleman; Jan L Fedderson; Robert L Hawran; Timothy Kesler; Michael J Kulp; Anthony T Williams;  
**Local 23:** Victoria Vaver;  
**Local 29:** Michael A Montoya;  
**Local 52:** Mark F Durbin;  
**Local 63:** Gary A Jacobelly;  
 Burtin A Lucich; Edward J Monge; Suzanne T Morris; Nenad Viducic;  
**Local 63 OCU:** Rex McDonald; Shelly Cooper; **Local 94:** John P Moreno;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Hugh E. Magnuson;  
**Local 10:** Willie W. Crowder Jr.;  
**Local 13:** Bennie Jackson (Flora) Estevan Moncado (Loretta); Joe L. Uranga; Michael R. Wilson (Carolyn);  
**Local 21:** James E Marks;  
**Local 23:** Milton L. Harrington; William R. Staab (Carol); Linda M. Vaver; **Local 24:** William A. Caron;  
**Local 29:** Enrique Z. Dominguez (Raquel) **Local 32:** Steve E. Ritche;

**Local 34:** Peter F Heiser (Anita); Lawrence T. Yamamoto (Judith);  
**Local 46:** Daniel L. Macias;  
**Local 52:** Dan A. Stetner (Leila);  
**Local 63:** Richard Jacobelly (Gina Desanto); John F. Lavarini; John D. Seals; **Local 92:** Billy Rhymes;  
**Local 94:** James P. Beecher; Charles Best; Phillip R. Meliota; Tony Meraz (Rachel);

### DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:

**Local 13:** Joe E. Ponce; Gerard F. Emano; Colin A. Durber; Phil A. Brown; Kevin A. Goff;  
**Local 19:** Samuel M Black; Gregory S. Ratigan; **Local 63 OCU:** Bill Orr;  
**Local 91:** Henry C Graham;

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 4:** Sharon R Unger;  
**Local 8:** Maxine B. Case;  
**Local 10:** Maria Mejia; Katie Pennington; Janice Pierce; Johnnie Wright; **Local 12:** Sharon Luscombe; Myrtle I Wilmot; **Local 13:** Beatrice F Bean; Vergil L Pollard; **Local 21:** Betty F Coulombe; **Local 23:** Emma Einhaus; Janet G. Holland; Linda M. Vaver; **Local 63:** Georgeen Booher;  
**Local 92:** Ruth E Burk; Betty D Trachsel; **Local 94:** Sandra M Ball; Irene L Benedetti; Tereza Stipicevich;

## ILWU BOOK & VIDEO ORDER FORM

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 \_\_\_ copies of **The Big Strike** @ \$9.00 ea. = \$\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ copies of **The Union Makes Us Strong** @ \$20 ea. = \$\_\_\_\_  
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