



# THE DISPATCHER

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Thousands gather to celebrate Labor Day in Wilmington, CA  
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Vice President Kamala Harris addressing the ILWU International Executive Board in 2019 when she was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president. Harris spoke about the support she received from the ILWU early in her political career and her commitment to the labor movement and fighting for workers.

# 2024 elections: What's at stake for ILWU members

The outcome of the November presidential and congressional elections will have important consequences for working-class voters, union members, and the ILWU. In July, the ILWU's International Executive Board endorsed Kamala Harris for president because she is the clear choice to protect the interest of the ILWU and working-class voters.

### Why political action matters.

Electing the right people to office has consequences for the ILWU and organized and unorganized workers outside our union. Elected officials at every level of government can be allies or obstacles to our efforts to secure strong contracts, protect our jurisdiction, organize new workers, fund projects that provide increased work opportunities, build worker power, and provide support and protection to vulnerable individuals and communities.

Although it is not a substitute for building a strong, democratic union and militant labor movement, political action is one of the many tools the ILWU uses to protect the interests of the membership, organized labor, and the working class. As the writer Rebecca Solnit stated in a recent article—voting is a “chess move, not a Valentine.”

### Why Kamala Harris is the best candidate for ILWU members

The Harris-Walz ticket is the clear choice to protect the interests of the ILWU and to continue moving forward with the policies started under the Biden-Harris Administration that delivered real benefits to workers, the labor movement, and the membership of the ILWU. The Biden-Harris Administration gave the ILWU a voice and a seat at the table with policymakers as they addressed the COVID-induced supply chain crisis. The Administration also passed billions of dollars in infrastructure funding for ILWU ports, ferries, and marine highway systems.

Kamala Harris and Tim Walz are candidates who have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with workers and the labor movement their entire careers. Walz is a former public-school teacher and a long-time union member. Kamala Harris got her start politically with the support of the ILWU, which she recalled when addressing the ILWU's Executive Board in 2019. “Every election I have run in has been with labor and the ILWU,” Harris said.

### Kamala Harris' record of supporting workers

As Vice President, Kamala Harris:

- Played a critical role in rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, investing in good-paying union jobs, bringing manufacturing back to America, lowering prescription drug costs, and raising wages;
- Cast the tie-breaking vote that saved the pensions of more than 1 million union workers and retirees;

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# 2024 elections: What's at stake for ILWU members

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- Led the administration's efforts to increase access to affordable childcare and expand the child tax credit;
- Chaired the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, where she championed new worker organizing;
- Stood with striking writers when she pulled out of an event in Southern California to honor the strikers' picket line.

As a U.S. Senator, Kamala Harris:

- Fought to expand labor protections and fair wages for agricultural and domestic workers and walked the picket line with UAW workers;
- Advocated for workers' freedom to form or join a union, including supporting the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act to reform broken labor legislation that stacks the deck against workers.

As Attorney General of California Kamala Harris:

- Protected vulnerable workers by tackling wage theft and other corporate crimes.

## Biden-Harris' Investments in ILWU ports and ferries

The Biden-Harris Administration succeeded where previous administrations have failed in passing long-needed funding for America's ailing infrastructure including our ports that play a vital role in keeping the US competitive in an increasingly global economy.

With the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Biden-Harris Administration delivered federal infrastructure dollars to US ports: investing in dockside rail, new US-made cargo handling equipment, job training centers, projects for ferry and marine-highway systems along the West Coast and Alaska, and more.

Since signing BIL into law, the Administration has awarded over \$744 million for projects at ports in Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, and California. This is a massive increase in federal investment at ILWU-serviced ports compared to past administrations.

Infrastructure funding passed by the Biden-Harris Administration includes:

- More than \$385 million investment in the Port of Long Beach's program to expand dockside rail;
- Nearly \$70 million to improve operations at the Port of Tacoma's Husky Terminal and modernize the Port's off-dock container storage operations, and;
- Over \$36 million to improve off-dock storage and truck access at the Port of Oakland.
- This Biden-Harris Administration has funded 29 projects at ILWU ports totaling over \$809 million. In addition, another \$426 million was awarded to build port facilities for offshore wind in California, and a further \$3.4 billion in port infrastructure and cargo handling equipment grants will be awarded before the end of 2024 nationwide.

- The BIL provided \$2.3 billion for ferry services, including funds awarded to the Alaska Marine Highway System to expand service, \$13 million to improve ferry terminals, and over \$49 million for an initiative to convert that Alaska Marine Highway System to hybrid-electric vessels. Ferry funds were awarded to Berkeley, CA, to rebuild the Berkeley Pier and add ferry access to the San Francisco Bay.
- The Biden-Harris invested 5 times more dollars for ILWU ports than Trump, and by the end of 2024 that will grow to 12 to 15 times.
- The Biden-Harris administration led the charge to increase investment at US ports, modernizing facilities, and investing in worker training. At the same time, they supported the ILWU's successful lobbying to bar the use of federal grant dollars to install automated cargo handling systems.

## A seat at the table

Electing Kamala Harris will allow the ILWU to continue the important relationship the ILWU established with the Biden-Harris administration

- Biden is the first US president to tour ILWU ports and meet with ILWU members.
- Biden has regularly met with ILWU leaders and consults the ILWU for input on port policies.
- Biden appointed the first "Port Envoy" to support port investment and to work with ports to resolve the pandemic cargo surge. Among the Port Envoy's first acts was to tour West Coast ports as a guest of the ILWU, meeting on the job with ILWU members. The Port Envoy's trips were followed by visits from three Biden Cabinet members to multiple ILWU union halls – another historic first.
- Biden appointed an ILWU member to the Federal Maritime Commission; the federal agency that regulates port terminals and ocean carriers. Brother Max Vekich is the first ILWU member appointed to a senior position over port policy. This marks the first time a former longshoreman has been appointed to the FMC, bringing a critical perspective to the Agency at just a point in its history that it is significantly expanding its jurisdiction over a range of issues, including chassis management practices, data sharing

standards, demurrage and detention charges, access to empty containers for exporters and much more.

- The Biden-Harris Administration strongly supported the collective bargaining process during longshore contract negotiations and refused pressure from business interests to intervene.

In contrast to Vice President Harris' proven record of support for workers, Donald Trump's main legislative achievement while in office was his 2017 tax cut that only benefited Wall Street and the ultra-wealthy. His tax giveaway benefited the top 20 percent of income earners. It slashed the corporate tax rate by 40 percent, left middle and lower-income wage earners behind, and drove up the budget deficit while the promised trickle-down benefits for the working class never materialized. Those tax cuts are set to expire in 2025 and Trump promised to make those tax cuts permanent that would deliver an average \$225,000 tax cut to the top 0.1 percent.

Trump's faux populism belies his hostility to unions and workers. He wants the votes of the working class while undermining their interests and making it harder for workers to organize and easier for employers to bust unions. During his presidency, Donald Trump weakened the economic rights of federal workers and their voice on the job, stacked the National Labor Relations Board with union-busting corporate lawyers, opposed an increase in the federal minimum wage, undermined worker safety by cutting federal workplace safety inspectors to their lowest level in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) history, weakened the Mine Safety and Health Administration's mine safety enforcement, forcing miners to work in hazardous conditions.

Trump's disdain for workers and their rights was on full display during his recent interview on Twitter/X with billionaire Elon Musk when Trump praised Musk for illegally firing workers who went on strike. Trump wants workers divided, disorganized, and powerless so employers can pay them less and exploit them more.

Donald Trump has been running for president for nearly a decade, sewing chaos and division and the country is worse off for it. Trump's campaign is centered on a message of negative solidarity that promotes divi-

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President Joe Biden (center) with Local 13 members David Ross, Jr. (left) and Jaime Hipsher (right) when he visited the Port of Los Angeles in June of 2022.

## DISPATCHER

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# 2024 elections: What's at stake for ILWU members

## Key congressional races down the ballot

The Presidential ticket is not the only race on the ballot this November. It is also important that we elect legislators in the House and Senate that will support the interests of workers and the membership of the ILWU. There are several key races on the U.S. West Coast and Alaska that could help tip the balance in Congress to give workers a greater voice in Washington.

### U.S House of Representatives

#### Alaska

Mary Peltola (AK-AL)

#### California

Josh Harder (CA-09)

Mike Levin (CA-49)

Derek Tran (CA-45)

Dave Min (CA-47)

Will Rollins (CA-41)

George Whitesides (CA-27)

Adam Gray (CA-13)

Rudy Salas (CA-22)

#### Oregon

Janelle Bynum (OR-05)

Val Hoyle (OR-04)

Andrea Salinas (OR-06)

#### Washington State

Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (WA-03)

Kim Schrier (WA-08)

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sion over unity, discord over cohesion, punches down at vulnerable individuals and communities, stokes racial and anti-immigrant anger and fear, attacks people based on gender identity, mocks people with disabilities, and places self-interest above of collective interest. The ILWU's 10 Guiding Principles, recognize that this tactic is a tool of the employer that weakens worker solidarity, leaves us divided, disorganized, less effective in building power, and less able to protect our interests. The social unionism practiced by ILWU is based on the principle of using your strength to lift others, not using your privilege to push them down.

Workers deserve a president committed to ensuring economic growth benefits the working class, not just the

1%. Donald Trump, J.D. Vance, and their billionaire allies are no friends of labor or the working class. We cannot allow this country to return to Trump's failed anti-worker, anti-union economic agenda, and chaotic and divisive mis-leadership.

"We have a choice this election between a candidate who has walked picket lines with workers and a candidate who crossed them, between a candidate who wants to strengthen unions and a candidate who wants to break them," said ILWU International President Willie Adams. "This is not an election to sit on the sidelines. I will cast my vote this November for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz who are true allies for workers and the ILWU."

## Project 2025: a threat to unions

**P**roject 2025 is a policy planning document for a second Trump administration published by the right-wing think tank, the Heritage Foundation. The 922 pages of policy recommendations were written and edited by numerous Trump allies who intend to make a second Trump presidency more effective in implementing its radical agenda.

The Trump campaign tried to distance itself from Project 2025 once the details of the document's radical proposals began being reported on in the media and talked about on social media because many of the proposals are wildly unpopular. Trump said he had "no idea who is behind it" even though two-thirds of the writers and editors of the document served in his first Trump administration.

### An attack on workers, unions

The recommendations in Project 2025's 37-page labor section are a threat to workers' rights, would make it harder for workers to organize, weaken labor protections, and undermine workers' safety and wages. While a second Trump Administration would be hard-pressed to implement all of these plans, the outline makes it clear how hostile such an administration would be to workers and unions and that Trump intends to use the full power of the federal government to make it harder for workers to organize.

In the box to the right are a few lowlights from the plan for a second Trump presidency and how it could impact workers and unions.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Project 2025 and how it threatens workers.



### Project 2025 could:

- **Allow states to not follow the national minimum wage;**
- **Reduce pay for workers** not protected by union contract by making overtime pay available only to workers who work 80 hours over a two-week period, instead of the current system of paying overtime after more than 40 hours in one week;
- **Eliminate public sector unions;**
- **Ban the use of card check**—making it harder to organize unions by making it illegal for employers to voluntarily recognize unions;
- **Allow employers to create their own phony company** "unions"/employee organizations with fake employee committees picked by management.
- **Weaken worker safety protections** by allowing Congress and the Department of Labor to exempt small business, first-time, non-willful violators from fines issued by OSHA;
- **Rescind child labor protections** and make it easier for 16- and 17-year-old children to work in dangerous jobs like meatpacking and mines;
- **Rescinding the Persuader Rule**, which requires employers to disclose the union-busting law firms or consultants they use and how much they paid for such services;
- **Make it harder for fast-food workers to unionize** by preventing the National Labor Relations Board from declaring that heavily franchised companies like McDonald's and Burger King are joint employers.
- **Empower employers to use union-busting tactics** to decertify a union in the middle of a contract
- **Reduce legal protections for workers** who want to organize by redefining "protected concerted activity" so that workers will be less protected from retaliation when they engage in union organizing
- **Cut retirement benefits for federal workers.**
- **Make it harder for working families to access unemployment benefits;**
- **Gut state and local funding for public transportation** including ferries, commuter rail, and rapid transit.

<https://betterinaunion.org/project-2025>

## Workers at Three Harbors Services in Oakland join Local 6, ratify first contract



**A**pproximately 18 workers at Three Harbors Services in Oakland who perform maintenance and repair work on refrigerated containers outside of the Port of Oakland waged a successful organizing campaign to join Local 6. On June 10, workers voted unanimously to ratify their first contract that won major gains in wages, paid vacation days, and increased contributions to their 401k plans.

The organizing committee worked to build a supermajority of support in the shop before workers took their organizing campaign public on October 30, 2023. Workers marched on the boss joined by Local 6 Business Agent Pedro de Sa, Local 34's Sean Farley, and Local 10 mechanics Beau Logo and Valenliano Langi to demand union recognition. The workers' main issues centered around wages and safety.

The first contract increased the wage range by 200 percent going from \$18-\$22 per hour to \$32- \$44 per hour. Holidays went up from two days to nine including Harry Bridges birthday and Bloody Thursday, and an annual contribution of \$1,500 to the worker's 401k plan.

"What I like about the contract is that everyone is getting paid evenly and fairly now and getting good benefits," said Local 6 member Luis Rodriguez. "We are all out here working in the sun every day and it doesn't feel as bad now that we are all getting paid well for it.

"I've never been part of a union before," added Local 6 member Kevin Morales. "It just feels different. We've got benefits. We got raises. It just feels better being in the union."

# We are the ILWU



## ILWU Local 20 Wilmington, CA

**L**ocal 20 represents approximately 90 members who work at the Rio Tinto borate processing facility in Wilmington, CA. The borates are mined by ILWU Local 30 members in Boron, CA then shipped via rail to Wilmington where Local 20 members process, package, and ship the final product to customers in the U.S. and overseas. The refinery and shipping operation produces and ships more than 36,000 tons of packaged product and more than 300,000 tons of bulk material to customers in Europe, Malaysia, and China.

They manufacture products that are used for agriculture, wood preservation, and flame and smoke retardant applications. The borate processing facility has been in continuous operation in Wilmington since 1924. Local 20 represents a variety of positions throughout the processing plant including production operators, maintenance, mechanics, electricians, warehouse, environmental techs, and lab analysts who test the products for quality control.

The first election for "Borax Local 20A" was held May 18, 1967. The local's newly elected Recording Secretary, John Schultz, wrote to *The Dispatcher*: "As this is the first election of officers of our new local, we would appreciate a notice advising all the members of ILWU that we are now in fact affiliated with this great union and ready to aid the cause of labor along with them."



### Mike Kisak Local 20 President Lead Construction Inspector

**I had been out of the Air Force for a few months when I heard about this job.** I was told they were hiring and to show up with my resume. I came down and waited in a big line. I put my resume in; they called me, and I got a job. I've worked here ever since. That was more than 24 years ago.

I've worked in different positions over the years as they have opened up. About six years ago maintenance came up as an apprenticeship. I've been in maintenance ever since. As an apprentice, I learned different things from welding, sheet metal fabrication, gearboxes, motors, anything mechanical, any kind of pumps, motors, and conveyors. We work on and fix everything in this plant—if we can't, if it's a bigger job, they will contract that out.

I like that this is a union job. I've liked that since I got here. I've seen how unions work. You show up to work on time, do your job, and you will never be messed with. It's a family atmosphere because we're small. Everybody knows each other—some more than others. You see people you work with over the years, and you see their kids come in or friends or cousins or whatever. It becomes like a big family.

I've served on the Executive Board. I was a junior trustee on one of our negotiations and that contract didn't go well. After that, I got on the local Executive Board and haven't been off the Board since. I've held the vice president, secretary-treasurer, and now the president position for the last two to three years.

For the first eight years I worked here, I always took for granted that the people running the union had it right. It wasn't until I got older that I saw that these people had been on the Board for a long time were getting ready to retire. Who's going to step up? I felt it was a natural fit. I thought I could make a difference. I thought I could fix the problems and at the same time preserve our union values. I've never shied away from confrontation with authority.

### Rudy Dorame Lab Tech

**I started in October of 2020.** I work as a lab analyst which is quality control. We test all of the day-to-day products that are being made. We also do special testing if it's required from customers to make sure it's in spec of what they want.

We are like a big family here. My dad [Rudy Dorame, Sr.] has worked here for a long time but until I started, I never really understood how much the job provided for my family. I never really understood the value of having a good union job, and how it can make a difference. I grew up with four siblings and we were able to be a comfortable middle-class family and have a good childhood. One job provided for a family of four children with food on the table. I was able to play sports and participate in those kinds of things and we could go on vacations. Working here now I see the true value of having a union job as a foundation and being able to have a good-paying, stable job. It's the American dream to rely on a job for 30-plus years and be able to retire from that place with dignity and with comfortable life.

My first year as a union member I wasn't active. I was just getting comfortable with everything and doing my job. In the second year, my dad mentioned that I should get active in the union. I was elected as a delegate for the Southern California District Council. That was cool—just getting exposure, meeting people, and understanding the broader picture of the ILWU. It was a good learning experience. I'm still on the District Council, but now I'm in my second year as the financial secretary.

I'm still trying to learn and one day I would like to serve as an officer of Local 20. I am preparing myself to take on the role. I know it is a lot more involved and it's a process to get there but I can picture myself doing it and stepping up to that responsibility. It's like passing the torch from one generation to the next. Sometimes you don't see yourself doing it, but you have to take the torch anyway and do your best to fulfill those duties because not everyone is going to be able to step up.

You gain so much from being a part of a union, not just for yourself, but for other workers. It enables you to have a good wage and provide for your family. I don't have a college degree. It can be hard to make ends meet. Being in a union provides better working conditions and enables workers to have better lives in the long run.

The biggest thing is being able to help others and make a difference. I am proud to be carrying on my dad's legacy. I know he's done a lot for this union serving as an officer of the local and being on the Executive Board. I don't even know how many contracts he's been through, but he's been through quite a lot. His mentality is very old school, very militant. I like his approach to things and I try to carry on that legacy.



### Josh Van Velson Operator

**I am coming up on seven years here.** I'm an operator. I make and process the chemicals, package them, and then send them to the warehouse where they get shipped.

Each day is a little different. Even though we know the whole system we rotate in a way so you're not constantly having to deal with the same thing. It's a different problem or a different task and there is always something new to learn.

I've been active in the union most of my time here. I've been a rep for about six years, and then four years of those six years, I was also on the Executive Board as a trustee. Currently, I am a shop steward. People looked to me because I started reading the contract. When I started Rudy [Dormame, Sr.] said: "Take this contract. It's your new Bible." So, I

started reading it right away. Rudy and I hit it off pretty well. We're both Marines. People looked to me for information and being in the Marine Corps built up a leadership mentality. I just wanted to help people out because not a lot of people want to speak up. I'll be your voice. No problem. This is the first union I have ever been in, My grandfather was a union plumber. I remember my dad telling me how unions provide job security. He was the one who told me to get on this opportunity when he heard about it.

I only had regular employment jobs before this. The only thing that I enjoyed was being in the Marine Corps because of the brotherhood, security, and how much they take care of you in the military. It's the same thing here being in the union. It's almost like since I'm not able to be in the military anymore—I've served my time—I can come here and serve other people in the union. It's the closest thing that I can get to being in a brotherhood or sisterhood type of role.

## Melissa Leon Operator

**I will have been here for five years in October.** I started as an operator, and I still am an operator. I make product. I run it through a system. I troubleshoot and make sure the whole system and every machine are working properly. From there, I package it up in large containments.

My father also works here. I'm the fourth generation in this company. My great-grandpa used to work here and so did my grandpa. I was born when he was still working here alongside my father. My grandpa passed away right after I left high school. I worked a couple of part-time jobs. My dad told me they were hiring here and now I work with my father.

The best thing about being here is the people I work with. It's just like a second home. It isn't like going to work and dealing with strangers all day. My brother-in-law works here, and I have a cousin that works here. We have a unity here where we have each other's back no matter what.

I was very close with my grandpa. My grandpa was my everything. When I was little, he took care of me. My dad worked full-time here, so growing up I hardly saw him. Once my grandpa retired, he watched me 24/7. It is almost like a little piece of him is still here. Over the years I've worked here, I have heard stories about my grandpa and some stories of my great-grandpa. They used to package up the product in burlap sacks. My great-grandpa was the one who would put the product in those burlap sacks and sew them. They have that downstairs as a historical piece. Those were the ones that he used to sew up. In my garage, I have old Borax soap from this company. I have the old pink, almond soap that's not around anymore packed. I even have the burlap sacks in my garage that my grandfather used to collect. I have a little bit of family history at home and here at the plant.



## David Whatley Warehouse

**I got hired in 1996.** WNext year will be 29 years for me. When I got hired it was a very hard job to get. When I came down here, the line was from the guard shack all the way up the street. There were 500 people here and they were only hiring four people. I was extremely lucky to be one of those four. I started just cleaning up the plant and doing labor—anything that needed to be cleaned up, I did that until they had openings in production.

I finally made it to the warehouse. When I first got hired, the warehouse was like the crème de la crème. You've got to have 25 years here to get over there. I've been in the warehouse for about three years.

In the warehouse, we load trucks and containers that go on trucks or ships. We also load about five box cars a week. Most of the box cars are for Louisiana-Pacific. They are a lumber company. They use our product to treat their wood and use it to make drywall. Our product is also used on coatings for electrical wire. It's used everywhere. We also get deliveries of materials we use in production.

When I got hired here this place was the top, numero uno. This was the world's borate supplier. Now they have a huge borate mine in Turkey. They get a lot of borax out of that. We have competition now. They also have another large mine in Argentina. We used to be the main one, so now it's a little harder. Our quality is what sets us apart from everybody else. We have better quality than anybody.

I love the people, the hours, and the freedom that we have. We know what we need to do to get done what needs to be done. We just got

new electrical forklifts. So we don't have to smell the propane all the time. We're going green now too, so that's kind of nice.

I worked at UPS and was a Teamster for several years, but this is the most hardcore union job I've ever had. This is different because of the location on the waterfront and being a part of the ILWU—we have to represent and stay strong, too.

It means a lot to be a part of the ILWU. Being under the ILWU umbrella has enabled us to prosper. We achieved what we have as a local because of the support of the rest of the ILWU. Whenever we've had our contracts we've had rallies out here and the longshore workers always come to support us. I think it's cool that everybody has each other's backs around here. If I ever wear an ILWU shirt or a hat anywhere, people always say something to me. I have to explain that I'm not a longshoreman but that I am part of the ILWU. The ILWU is very powerful here in this area. It has a long history and a great tradition.

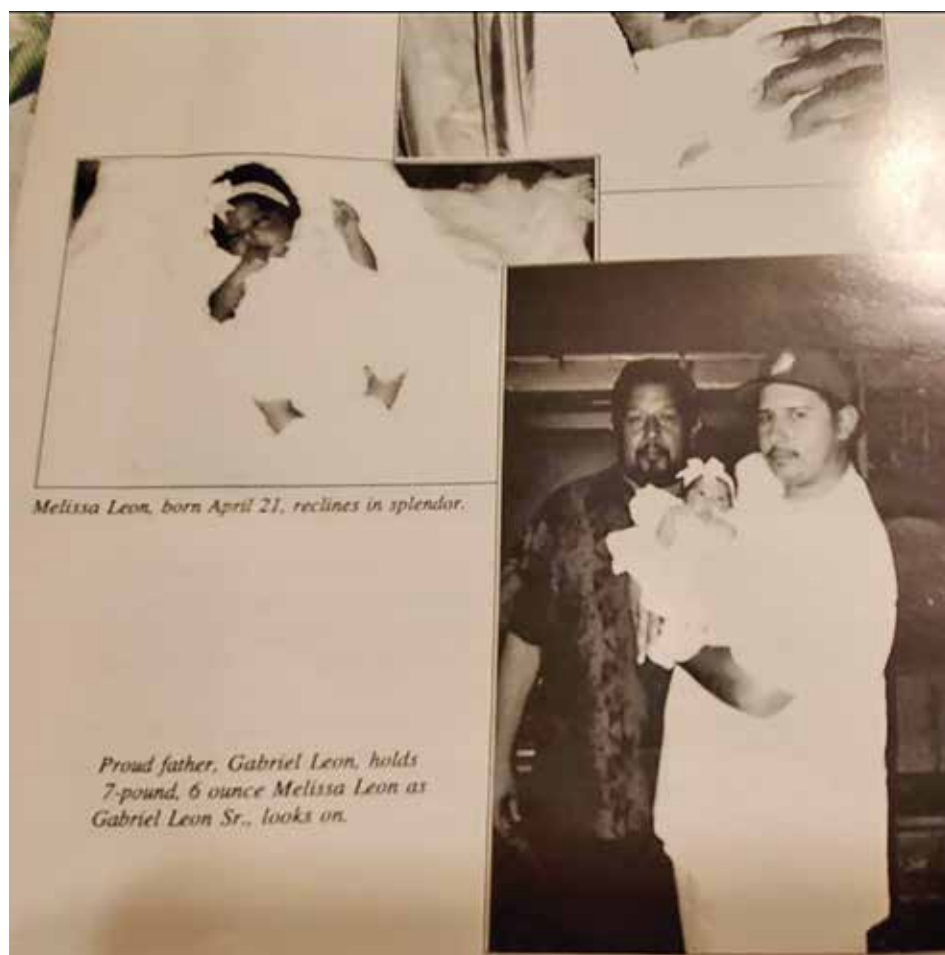
## Gabriel Leon Environmental tech

**I started in October of 1990.** I've worked in several different departments. About 12 or 13 years ago, I went to the warehouse and I got to work with my dad for a little while. He retired from here with 43 years of service. After the warehouse, I went to environmental tech where I am now. I am going on 34 years of service. My daughter has been here for close to five years. My grandfather worked here and retired from here, so it's like four generations of my family working here.

My daughter is a good worker. She has a good reputation here. I'm proud of her. She's one of the few women that work here. Just like when I got hired, I know my dad was excited about me working here and I also had to prove myself.

The environmental tech department handles all the hazardous waste materials. We make sure everything is disposed of properly. We handle all of the trash and recycling.

It's a good group of people to work with. We all grew up with each other here. We also have a lot of new people, a younger generation coming in like my daughter. I back the union 100 percent. If it wasn't for the ILWU, I wouldn't have this great job, earning good money to put a roof over my head, food on the table, and I wouldn't have been able to support my daughter, Melissa for all these years.



Melissa Leon, born April 21, reclines in splendor.

Proud father, Gabriel Leon, holds 7-pound, 6 ounce Melissa Leon as Gabriel Leon Sr., looks on.

**Generations:** Gabriel Leon holds his daughter Melissa standing—both featured in this article—next to Gabriel Leon, Sr. All three have worked at the Rio Tinto borate processing facility in Wilmington.

# Thousands turnout for 45th Annual Labor Day parade in Wilmington

**M**ore than 8,000 union families and community members attended the 45th Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Labor Coalition's Labor Day parade and picnic in Wilmington, CA—the impressive turnout topped last year's estimated 7,000 attendees despite the heatwave. The theme this year was "Fighting for the Future of Labor"

## Modest beginnings

The annual parade and picnic was co-founded by ILWU Local 26 President Luisa Gratz. The Harbor Labor Coalition was formed by Gratz along with then-newly elected Local 13 Executive Board member Dave Arian, Regional Coordinator for the Inland-boatmen's Union David O'Day, and Diane Middleton. Their goal was to fight Crowley Maritime from bringing a substandard contract from their tugboat operation in Florida to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Labor Day parades were once common in cities across the United States. The Harbor Labor Coalition started its parade tradition at a time when many other unions across the United States were abandoning their Labor Day marches for picnics.

In 1979, the Harbor Labor Coalition started the Labor Day Parade and Picnic as a demonstration of solidarity and labor unity. Forty-three years ago, it was a small parade and picnic with a few hundred union members. It has since grown to become the largest Labor Day event west of the Mississippi River. The first parade had 14 unions participate, with about 750 marchers. At its peak in the 1990s, more than 100 unions attended. The highest number of attendees was approximately 10,000 people.

The event was cancelled for two years during the COVID pandemic and replaced with a massive food drive that fed thousands of local families throughout the LA/Long Beach Harbor area and surrounding communities. The march and picnic returned again in 2022.

## Pensioner breakfast

The day began at 8:00 a.m. at the Longshoremen's Memorial with a pancake breakfast available to anyone marching in the parade sponsored by



Local 13 President Gary Herrera was spoke at the picnic in Banning Park. He emphasized that politicians need to do more than talk about standing behind labor; they need to back it up with their actions.

the Southern California Pensioners Club. The breakfast was made possible by scores of volunteers who make this breakfast possible every year. The meal fed more than 1,500 people.

During the breakfast, federal, state, and local elected officials and candidates for office were given an opportunity to briefly speak to the crowd before heading over to the assembly point for the Labor Day parade on Broad and E Streets, which started promptly 10 a.m.

The parade was led by the ILWU Southern California Pensioners who followed behind the Color Guard. The pensioners rode on a flatbed truck and tossed candy to the hundreds of children and families who lined Avalon Blvd. to watch the parade. Thousands of union members marched with motorcycle clubs, marching bands, classic cars, and low-riders. The Carpenters Union had a large turnout with approximately 1,000 union carpenters travelling from all over Southern California to attend. The march ended in Wilmington's Banning Park, where marchers were treated to hot dogs, cold sodas, water, and popsicles as they streamed into the park.

Besides the free beverages and hot dogs there was music, dancing, and 40 vendor booths representing unions and labor organizations—including the Southern California District Council and the Federated Auxiliaries—that provided information on various topics, such as how to get a union job, how to support labor groups and how to start a union. A special children-area featured face painting, popcorn, cotton candy, a puppet show, and a book giveaway.

Scores of national, state, and local elected officials were on hand and were introduced briefly at the start of the picnic by Los Angeles City Council member Tim McCosker, who represents the Council's 15th District including the harbor area. Politicians were recognized but were not allowed to do any electioneering at the event, such as making campaign speeches or passing out literature.

## Labor's time

ILWU speakers included Local 13 President Gary Herrera and Southern California Pensioner President Greg Mitre.

Herrera spoke about the important role ILWU locals working in ports of LA and Long Beach play in moving cargo that impacts the entire U.S. economy. He also expressed support for Commissioner Diane Middleton who was reappointed to the Los Angeles Harbor Commission. Middleton is an honorary member of Local 13, long-time ally of the ILWU, and has resided in San Pedro for 50 years.

"This is where our community lives and where our workers live," Herrera said. "When politicians come here, you better have our backs. Labor's voice should be removed from commission seats. If you say you are for labor, then be about labor. Give us our voice because we know our jobs bet-



The Local 13 banner followed close behind the Southern California's Pensioners' float on the march through Wilmington to Banning Park.

ter than anybody. When you remove our voice, I promise this workforce will vote against you."

L.A. County Federation of Labor President Yvonne Wheeler also spoke at the event on the importance of passing Los Angeles County's Measure A. The initiative known as "The Affordable Housing, Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Now Measure," would repeal the county's quarter-cent sales tax for homelessness prevention measures which is set to expire in 2027 and replace it with a permanent half-cent sales tax to be used for the same purpose.

## From Hollywood to the harbor

Hollywood unions had a large turnout this year. Representatives from the Writers Guild of America, SAG-AFTRA, IATSE, and Games Workes United who are organizing workers in the video

game industry were in attendance. The Hollywood branch of Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 724 announced at the event that they are partnering with the grassroots group Production Assistants United to organize one of the last non-union crew positions on entertainment sets. Production assistants do a variety of unglamorous but essential work on film and television sets, including guarding locations, fetching food and drinks, and quieting the set.

The writers' union, who reached a new labor contract with Hollywood studios about a year ago, after a five-month strike, were among several unions including the ILWU who raised concerns about the destructive effects of AI and automation on workers and communities.



The pancake breakfast sponsored by the Southern California Pensioners provided more than 1,500 meals to marchers at the Longshoremen's Memorial Hall in Wilmington just a few blocks from where the Labor Day parade starts.

## Approval of labor unions near record high

According to a new Gallup poll released on Labor Day, 70 percent of Americans approve of labor unions, while 23 percent disapprove, and 7 percent have no opinion. This is 1 point short of 'the 71 percent approval in Gallup's 2022 poll, which was the highest approval rating since 1965.

Approval of labor unions varies across party lines according to Gallup. About 94 percent of Democrats approve of labor unions, up 6 points from last year while 49 percent of Republicans and 67 percent of independents said the same.

- ✓ Americans are much more likely to say the Democratic Party best serves the interests of union members (62%) than to say the Republican Party does (27%).
- ✓ Most Democrats (88%) and a majority of independents (59%) believe the Democratic Party best serves union members, while 51% of Republicans think their own party does.
- ✓ Americans view the Republican Party as better than the Democratic Party when it comes to the interests of wealthy people (70%), business and professional people (67%), and military veterans.

# Celebrating our Successful Year!



## NEVER LEAVE A CHILD TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES

Children give us great joy. When a baby who is learning to walk loses balance and falls, loved ones pick them up, dust them off and offer loving comfort from their pain. Parents defend cold winter days with layers of blankets, hats and warm booties. A child's first school day is planned and celebrated. Children are mankind's constant beginning, the foundation of our families and the fulfillment of our lives. When cancer, which strikes without regard to race, gender or wealth, grips a child's life and tries to rob their future, the community rallies to find cures. One person does not have the power to reverse cancer's scourge. People uniting and contributing multiply the ability to find cures. ILWU Locals and their affiliates, industry companies and friends have decided that they refuse to leave a child to fend for themselves. ILWU Walk the Coast thanks the generous donors who made the 12th Annual 2023 fundraiser to benefit Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's fight to fund research and provide family assistance a \$130,000 success. This brings our total donations over the \$1.3 million mark. Thanks to all.

To donate or for more information about ILWU Walk the Coast and Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, please visit [www.ilwuwalkthecoast.org](http://www.ilwuwalkthecoast.org)

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Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation was founded by Alexandra Scott. In the hospital at age four, Alex announced to her mother that she would hold a lemonade stand to raise money for other children. Before her 2004 passing at age 8, Alex had raised over \$1,000,000. The Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement. Today, ALSF is one of the leading funders of pediatric cancer research in the U.S. and Canada raising over \$250 million, funding nearly 1,000 research projects at 150 institutions and providing family support programs.

## Attention InlandBoatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU) retirees:

Good news for all IBU Pensioners. There is a movement by several IBU Pensioners to create our own IBU pensioners clubs in accordance with the IBU Constitution. The purpose of the pensioner clubs will be to:

- Assist pensioners in receiving all benefits they are entitled;
- Educate newer IBU members on IBU history;
- Assist the IBU where practical, and ;
- Keep in touch with our union brothers and sisters through regular meetings and possibly conferences starting with the upcoming IBU Convention in November.

If you are interested in helping build these IBU pensioners clubs, contact the following:

### San Francisco Region:

Robert Irminger bobirm@sbcglobal.net

### Puget Sound Region:

Jeff Engels g-landauer@msn.com

### Columbia River Region:

Matt Davey mattdavey@gmail.com

### Alaska Region:

Tony Tengs ttengs@ak.net

### Hawaii Region:

Donovan Duncan donovanduncan64@gmail.com

### Region 37 or Members at Large:

Rich Gurtiza rich@ibu.org

*Hope to see you soon!*



## Catalina Island Company mariners win contract after three-day strike

**S**outhern California Region members of the Inland-boatmen's Union working at the Catalina Island Company won a new contract after a three-day strike over Memorial Day weekend.

The unit consists of 8 mariners who work as deckhands and captains on Catalina Island Company's glass bottom boat tours. The workers have been bargaining since November 2023. In February, workers proposed a "last best and final" offer that was rejected by

the employer and countered with their own last best and final which workers rejected.

At the beginning of April, workers terminated the temporary contract extension and began a public campaign to draw attention to their efforts to secure a fair agreement.

Southern California IBU Regional Director Cris Sogliuzzo said workers won a strong agreement that won nearly all of their demands. "We stood for ourselves, demanded better and it paid off," Sogliuzzo said. "When we fight, we win."

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Todd A. Larkin; Clark J. Morris;  
**Local 13:** Terry B. Bullock; Fernando Corral; Timmothy M. Frederickson; Arthur R. Gonzales; Frank A. Grgas; Renaud D. Hall; Richard L. Johnson; Roger D. Kimura; John D. Kirby; Raymond J. Kuhn; Ruben Noriega; Mike G. Pentecost; Daniel A. Pusateri; Denis V. Stame; Joseph N. Stern; Deanna L. Wigle; **Local 19:** Ricky A. Bussanich; Robert L. Bussanich; Rafael M. Gonzalez; Christopher A. Picinich; **Local 21:** Scott M. Rogers; **Local 23:** Michael B. Conn; Clifford W. Moore; **Local 40:** James P. Melo; Jeffrey L. Smith; **Local 52:** Craig R. Martinez; Allen L. Miron; **Local 54:** Daniel J. Garcia; **Local 63:** Valerie Contreras; Paul Jalomo; Richard F. Kelley; **Local 94:** William H. Miller;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Steve J. Bell; **Local 10:** Eddie C. Hill; Louis A. Kerr; Donald Routt; **Local 13:** Jerry Allingham; Alexander Iacono; Alexander Jones; Richard H. Nigh; Wayne E. Palmer; Robert H. Smith; **Local 14:** Michael G. Mullen; **Local 19:** Richard A. Ackerman; **Local 21:** Jeffrey W. Setters; **Local 34:** Benjamin S. Grech; John A. Kucin; **Local 50:** Roy D. Niemi; **Local 63:** Robert J. O'Connor;

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 8:** Elizabeth G. Burnham; Darlene A. Keele; Nestoria Manos; **Local 10:** Maria P. Barboza; Celestine Bennett; Mary Davis; Evelyn Lavin; **Local 13:** Vera Temblador; Jennifer Thornton; Barbara Vargas-Kotroubas; **Local 19:** JoAnn M. Moshier; Iona White; **Local 40:** Sylvia M. Ridout; **Local 54:** Tillie Rallios; **Local 63:** Carol A. Herrera; Charlee A. Lewis;

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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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