

Eastern Washington Machinists News



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International Solidarity Defines Convention

September's 38th Grand Lodge Convention in Toronto stressed the "international" part of the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers.

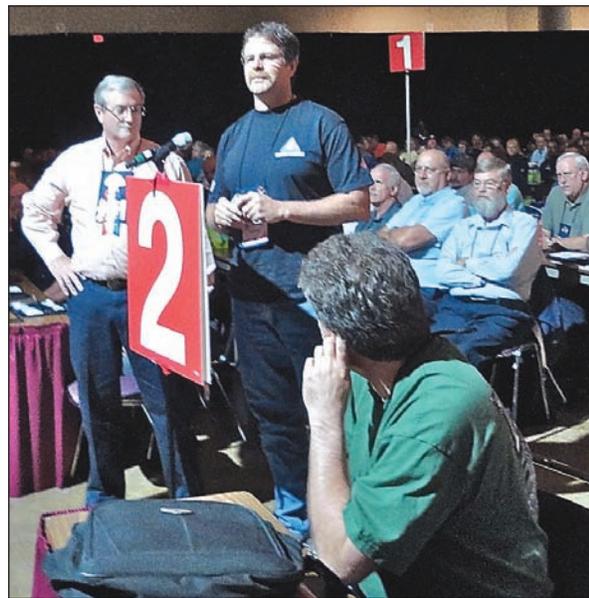
"The convention was very rewarding talking over ideas with people from different parts of the country and the world," said Local 86 President John Kofol, who was one of the district's delegates to the convention. "It is nice to see how the Machinists Union is working to help other countries raise their working standards and see where the Union is going in the future. Workers are all in this together. It was a very informative week, which I really enjoyed – especially meeting the people from other locals and countries."

Kofol was one of 35 District 751 delegates (six of them from Eastern Washington) attending the Grand Lodge Convention, which is the supreme governing body of the IAM, meeting every four years to set policy and guidelines for the union. One of our delegates – Local 751-F member Gabby Rogano – had

the distinction of being the youngest delegate at the convention at 24.

Emil Skorup, 84, was the oldest delegate. He's a member of Local 49 in Chicago.

Eastern Washington's voices at the convention were John Kofol, Gary Swartz, Pete Hedemark, Craig Smoot, Chris Seigfried and Jim O'Brien. Kofol served on the Organizing Committee while Swartz, O'Brien, Smoot and Seigfried were appointed to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.



Local 1123 delegate Jim O'Brien speaks in favor of a resolution.

Delegates met in committees during the week to discuss and debate resolutions and proposed amendments to the IAM constitution.

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Tri-County Contract Merges with Roosevelt for Added Bargaining Clout

Strength in numbers was the theme when 19 members working at Tri-County Disposal in Goldendale entered into negotiations for a



Shad Bruhn and Mike Dove prepare a truck. These members collect garbage and recycling for most of the 19,000 residents and businesses throughout Klickitat County.

new contract. In the past, they had attempted to get a common master agreement with the 170 workers at Roosevelt Landfill (another division of the same employer, Allied Waste), but the employer had been unwilling to explore that option. This round of talks, the Union succeeded in merging the Tri-County contract with the agreement covering members at Roosevelt.

The members at Tri-County overwhelmingly approved the new contract by 82 percent on Aug. 29. With the ratification, members there will have stronger bargaining power in the future through an addendum to the landfill agreement while still maintaining separate job classifications.

"We were finally able to merge with the Roosevelt bargaining unit after four unsuccessful attempts. Thanks to Steve Warren and Ken Howard for their hard work in preparation and relationship building with management that made it possible,"

said Steward Garry Shane who served on the negotiation committee. "We gained pay and benefits in difficult economic conditions and streamlined the process for everyone. Mike Elli and I recommended acceptance and the agreement passed with over 80 percent approval."

These members collect garbage and recycling from most of the 19,000 residents and businesses throughout Klickitat County. Keep in mind Klickitat County is a long narrow county covering a lot of ground, which stretches across miles of south-Central Washington along the northern banks of the Columbia River – often making pickups miles apart.

Members had identified pay as their top issue, along with the 401(k) plan and securing advancement opportunities. The negotiating team delivered gains in

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tion. They concluded the convention by approving more than two dozen resolutions, including more than 20 relating to job creation, training and safety.

Delegates also approved resolutions of support for members of the U.S. and Canadian armed services, and the Union Veterans Council, as well as resolutions in support for the rights of indigenous residents of the United States and Canada.

International solidarity was a major theme for those who spoke before the Grand Lodge.

Officers of IndustriALL – a global federation of trade unions – spoke to the delegates on the convention’s second day. IndustriALL was formed earlier this year after a merger of three other union federations. It represents the interests of 50 million workers in 140 countries.

As industries globalize, unions should globalize with them, said IndustriALL General Secretary Jyrki Raina of Finland. He said that the global aerospace supply chain in particular is a ripe target for organizing – to loud applause from the delegates, who represented more than 100,000 North American aerospace workers.

“In this new world, we have to join with



Ambet Yuson spoke on global solidarity and emphasized we are all connected as workers.

workers from all continents to fight back,” he said, pointing to coordinated campaigns in India and Indonesia that produced laws that guarantee pensions and health insurance for hundreds of millions of working people.

Conditions in each country may be different, said Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, the general secretary of the Mexican Mine and Metal Workers Union. Union organizers in his country have been murdered, and the Mexican government froze his union’s bank account and filed criminal charges against him after he spoke out in the wake of a mine accident that left 65 people dead.

But the goal of workers in each country is the same, said Ambet Yuson of the Philippines, the General Secretary of the Building and Wood Workers International: fair pay and benefits; safety on the job and justice in the workplace.

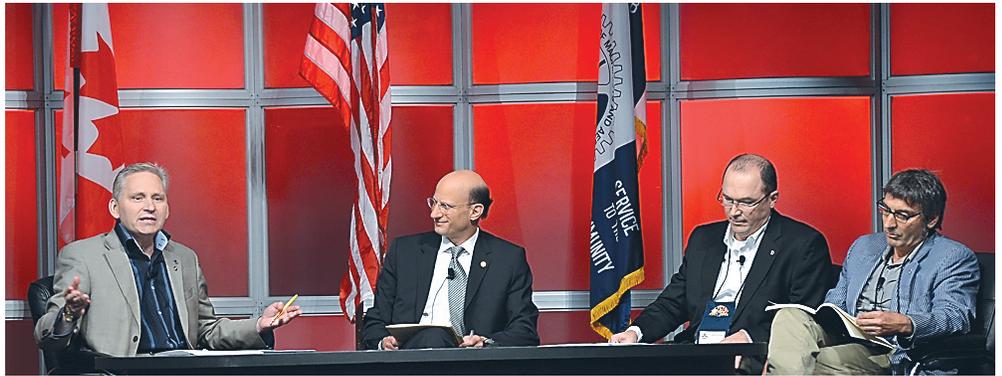
The IAM delegates from all across North America found they had a lot in common with workers around the world and they have a lot of the same issues we do.

The IAM’s successful drive to form a union at IKEA’s Sweedwood plant in Virginia last year was aided by Swedish unions who put pressure on the company’s top

management to treat its U.S. workers the same way it treats workers in Europe, Yuson noted.

“You showed IKEA the power of workers, the strength of workers to unite and the real power of global solidarity,” he said. “We are connected as workers, and as global citizens.”

“The Grand Lodge convention’s spotlight on human and environmental abuses, by big multinational corporations in third world countries was a truly shocking and sober reminder of the importance of raising the standards for all who toil,” said Local 86 delegate Gary Swartz. “Dollar a day wages and unbridled child labor is not only a threat to the exploit-



The panel “Making the Case for Global Solidarity” included prominent labor leaders from Brazil, England and Spain, as well as Owen Herrnstadt from the IAM.



Jyrki Raina, General Secretary of IndustriALL, which represents 50 million workers in 40 countries, addressed the delegates.



Eastern Washington delegates L to R: John Kofol, Craig Smoot, Jim O’Brien, and Pete Hedemark listen intently to the panel on health care.



Gary Swartz and Pete Hedemark applaud AFL-CIO President Trumka’s call for international action to build an economy that creates good jobs and dignity for all workers.

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International Solidarity Defines Convention



Delegates resoundingly voted to endorse Barack Obama for President in the November elections. L to R: Craig Smoot (seated), John Kofol, Pete Hedemark and Gary Swartz (standing).

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ed but a threat to the security of all U.S. workers. We must continue to cast light on these issues with a goal of lifting all ships with a rising tide.”

The convention was also the first to go paperless, which made things much easier on the delegates. Instead of lugging around three-ring binders jammed with reams of paper that needed to be updated daily, delegates all got their convention documents and updates on Amazon Kindles – making it simpler to conduct the business at hand.

The International has made it through the global recession and a series of unprecedented corporate attacks in strong financial shape, General Secretary-Treasurer Robert Roach Jr. told Grand Lodge convention delegates.

The union plans to grow, Roach said, and one of its important new initiatives is the Young Machinists organization. District 751 is a strong supporter, and three Young Machinists from District 751– Gabby Rogano, Nick Condon and Kevin Karnes – took part in the presentation that closed the convention.

“As we develop these programs and we continue to do our work, leave here with one idea,” Roach said. “Recognize that we need one another. Recognize that we can’t do it as aerospace workers, airline workers or railway workers alone. We must do it as Machinists.”



IAM Int'l President Tom Buffenbarger (r) and Gen. Sec. of Mexican Mine & Metal Workers Union received a standing ovation.



Chris Seigfried talks with Dist. 751 President Tom Wroblewski (r) about actions from the Energy & Natural Resources Committee, which Chris served on.



Panel discussion on health care entitled: Health Care – A Universal Right, A Global Blight, an International Fight sparked lively discussion.



Jennine ‘Sam’ Jensen (l) presents Ken Crocker with the money collected in a pass the hat. Local 86 even donated the hat they used to collect funds in.

Members Help After Fire Destroys Member’s Home

Members of Local 1951 took up a collection for a union brother and his family who lost their home in a fire.

The July 15 fire wiped out the home and belongings of Ken and Cindy Crocker.

Ken Crocker is an employee of Pexco in Union Gap who has been a Machinists Union member since workers at the company voted to join District 751 in 2008.

According to Yakima television station KNDO-TV, the Crocker’s home was one of three in a Yakima County mobile home park that burned early on the morning of July 15.

Six fire departments responded to the fast-moving fire, which spread to some nearby trees. “Water supply was an issue, because there are no hydrants in that mobile home park,” West Valley Deputy Fire Chief Nathan Craig told the TV station.

The three mobile homes were almost completely destroyed.

Cindy Crocker told the TV station that neighbors and members of a local church had been collecting cash and clothing for them and the others who lost everything in the fire.

Community support has been strong, but “it’s really hard, when 20 years of your life was in that house and everything’s gone,” she said.

Adding to the pain, the family’s dog, Bella, also perished in the fire, said Local 1951 President Craig Smoot.

The Crocker’s son was staying with friends the night of the fire. The Crockers brought Bella out safely, but she then ran back into the burning home, apparently intent on looking for the missing boy. Firefighters found her burned body laying next to his bed, said District 751 Staff Assistant Ken Howard.

Local 1951 members collected \$214 for the family at their July barbecue at the Pexco plant in Union Gap. Smoot asked other local lodges in District 751 to also pass the hat in August to help the Crockers, which resulted in \$1073.

“We can’t bring back what they lost, but we can show them they’ve got the support of their union family all across the state,” Howard said.

Agreements Ratified at Irrigation District

The skilled members who play a critical role in the state's agriculture business working as part of the Columbia Basin Project at three separate irrigation districts recently ratified new collective bargaining agreements.

On Sept. 20, members working based out of the South Columbia Basin location in Pasco voted to approve their new agreement. The 70 members received wage increases each year of the contract of 3 percent, 2.5 percent and 2.5 percent. The agreement also retained COLA language and in the 4th year of the agreement, COLA has a minimum of 1.5 percent and maximum of 3 percent. In addition, insurance will be 90/10 in the first year, 88/12 in the second year and 85/15 after that.

The 60 members at East Columbia Basin located in Othello voted to approve their new agreement in September, as well. It featured a \$.50 raise in the first year and \$.45 cents per hour raise in both the second and third years. In addition, the agreement included a \$500 ratification bonus and "C" increase from \$1.10 to \$1.25. The agreement also included language on compensatory time as an option instead of overtime.

In August, 75 members at the Quincy Columbia Basin ratified a three-year agree-

ment. Those members received increases of 3 percent, 2 percent and 2 percent, as well as a \$500 ratification bonus. In addition, the CPI language in 2015 will have a new minimum of 1.5 percent and a maximum of 3 percent. Insurance contributions for the unit will be 85/15 throughout the contract.

While each has a separate bargaining agreement, the three districts work together to keep the intricate irrigation systems flowing through the eastern side of the state. Members working at irrigation districts function as a team and operate under the South Columbia Basin Trades Council, which is comprised of the Machinists Union, Operating Engineers, Teamsters and Laborers' Union. The four unions also work as a team under one collective bargaining agreement at each location.

Water delivered by the irrigation districts allows billions of dollars worth of crops to be grown annually. They service more than 670,000 irrigated acres in Eastern Washington and maintain more than 5,000 miles of ditches, drains and canals. Jobs at the irrigation districts range from

ditch riders and canal maintenance to heavy equipment operators, mechanics, electricians, pump mechanics and drainage technicians. Each job is vital to our state's multi-billion dollar agriculture industry.



Bill Filan (center) casts his ballot on the South Columbia Basin irrigation district agreement as tellers Rick Kilponen (l) and Paul Gore (r) observe.

Tri-County Contract Merges with Roosevelt for Added Bargaining Clout

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wages in each year of the contract, as well as a ratification bonus and the option to participate in a 401(k) plan for additional retirement benefits beyond the IAM Pension Plan. Language was also secured for upgrade pay if an employee spends 50 percent or more of their day working in a higher paying classification, and a new utility person job classification was added. Reimbursement was increased for winter gear and boots each year of the contract.

Bereavement leave was expanded to



Member Mike Dove operates a backhoe. The 19 members at Tri-County Disposal approved a new contract on Aug. 29.

cover sister-in-law, brother-in-law, bloodline grandparents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and step-children who are part of the immediate family if raised by the employee. Step-parents are included in the immediate family if they raised the employees.

In addition, the agreement secured internal unit job opportunities. As a result of the vote, Tri-County unit members will receive all additional benefits from the Landfill Agreement such as:

- Disciplinary warnings previously held in your personnel file for 30 months are now reduced to 24 months.
- Upon request, employees are now able to view their personnel file
- Prescription Safety Eyewear: secured progressive lenses, scratch resistant or polycarbonate lenses and photo transition lenses.
- The employer will pay for swampers and transfer station attendants DOT

physicals performed by a designated physician and reimbursement for the difference between a CDL and regular drivers' license.

"The contract was able to pick up the benefits of the contract from Roosevelt that were better than members were enjoying at Tri-County," said Business Rep Steve Warren. "In addition, it secured internal job opportunities when there are openings at Roosevelt while still maintaining separate job classifications."

"We combined with the landfill contract, which will give us better bargaining power in the next round. I believe this offer was fair considering the economy today with increases on the upper end of 3 percent," said Mike Elli, who served on the negotiating team. "Because of the tremendous amount of miles we cover every day, we are all self starters. We rarely see a supervisor and know to just get the job done. Many places on my route don't even have cell service and are pretty remote. I enjoy the independence and have been doing this for 20 years."

Yakima Barbecue Adds to Guide Dogs Total Contributions

District 751 members in the Yakima Valley have added to an already-record year for union fundraising in support of Guide Dogs of America.

Local 1951 members working at Pexco, Edwards Equipment, Brand Trucking and Prompt Printery raised about \$1,400 for Guide Dogs with a hotdog and hamburger feed and raffle.

Adding the \$1,400 from Yakima to the money already raised by the other Eastern Washington locals pushes this year's total for Guide Dogs fundraising east of the Cascades to more than \$8,300.

Local lodge activists "went out and got a bunch of local prizes donated and then they sold tickets," said District 751 Staff Assistant Ken Howard. "It's great to see them get involved."

On June 16, Local 1951 officers – including President Craig Smoot and Pexco Stew-

ards Jennine Jensen and Katie Bronson – held a hot dog giveaway in Yakima in the parking lot of the Rite Aid and Safeway stores.

"We gave away hot dogs and union packets, sold raffle tickets and accepted donations for Guide Dogs," said Howard.

The prizes were drawn on July 17 at a barbecue at the Pexco plant in Union Gap. Gene Newton, who works at Pexco, was the grand-prize winner in the drawing, collecting a \$400 Petsmart gift certificate. Co-worker Joanna Howard won a \$100 Crazy Ink gift certificate in the drawing, and Sandro Ortega won a pair of Oakley sunglasses, donated by Bailey.

This year's Eastern Washington fundraising totals for Guide Dogs jumped by 40 percent over last year's total, which was the previous record.

"That's really outstanding," said District 751 President Tom Wroblewski. "Our members in Eastern Washington have really embraced the cause of Guide Dogs fundraising and they're making a real difference in people's lives."

A Local 1951 member – Dennis Meech of Goldendale – is the only District 751 Machinist ever to receive a service dog through



Pexco made a \$300 contribution to Guide Dogs. L to R: Dave Bailey, Kim Wakeman (HR) Jennine Jensen, and Katie Bronson

Guide Dogs of America. He and his dog, Lefty, were matched together free of charge in 2010.

Meech was blinded in a motorcycle accident on his way home from work at the Roosevelt Landfill in 2007.



Members bought raffle tickets and enjoyed the barbecue in Yakima.



A hotdog and hamburger feed and raffle in Yakima raised an additional \$1,400 for Guide Dogs of America.

New Steward at Triumph

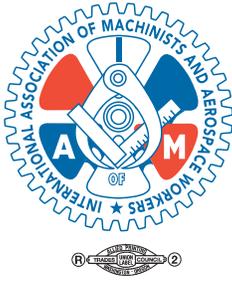


Members at Triumph Composites in Spokane have another place to look for assistance in new swing shift Union Steward Christianna Hanson (2nd from left). Steward Bob Six, former Steward Steve Wyal and Steward Erin Blashill provide advice and training as they go through the introduction to Steward roles and responsibilities with Christianna and review the new member packets and Steward Guide.

Giving for Guide Dogs in Yakima



Machinists Union volunteers staffed a tent at the Yakima PetSmart parking lot on Aug. 11 to raise money for Guide Dogs and hand out Union educational packets. The one-day booth raised more than \$350 for Guide Dogs of America.



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Union Barbecue for Grand Coulee Members and Families Builds Solidarity

Members of Local 1123 who work at Grand Coulee dam, along with their families, enjoyed a Union barbecue on Saturday, Aug. 10. Spring Canyon Campground provided a nice setting for a day the entire family could enjoy courtesy of the Union.

Machinists Union members at Grand Coulee are responsible for maintaining the huge generators, turbines, compressors, gates and other equipment at the dam that provides electrical power to not only Washington State, but residents throughout 10 other western states, as well.



Union members and their families from Grand Coulee enjoyed a nice barbecue lunch, great weather and a day of solidarity at the Union picnic on August 10. The Machinists banner welcomed members and their families to Spring Canyon Campground.



Well Wishes in Retirement

District 751 Staff Assistant Ken Howard and Local 1951 President Craig Smoot brought good wishes to two Local 1951 members who recently retired from contractors at the Hanford Site.

William 'Bud' Higgins joined the union in 1977 and retired from Battelle on June 30 after working over three decades at the Hanford site.

Tim Heidcamp initiated into the Machinists in 1997 and retired on June 30 from CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation.



Local 1951 President Craig Smoot (l) wishes Tim Heidcamp well in his retirement from CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation.



Staff Assistant Ken Howard (l) and Local 1951 President Craig Smoot (r) congratulate William 'Bud' Higgins on his recent retirement.