The 767 crew addressed their concerns to the management. L to R: Marcus Border, Nathan Richards, Centeno Irwin, Union Steward Charles McGrew.

Business Rep Dena Bartman (far right) praised the solidarity of the 767 crew that brought about change in the state of our union.

Strength in numbers brought change in the ‘767 program to correct an issue with a supervisor.

The supervisor had been singling out members simply to harass them. When Union Steward Charles McGrew learned of the situation, he organized the shop to fight back and eliminate this hostile work environment using our best weapon – solidarity. Sticking together, the crew succeeded in getting the manager transferred.

The harassment had been ongoing, but when the manager targeted 751-member Donie Kathlean to keep him from transferring to Renton, which was closer to his home, the crew united into action.

“Since it was not a contractual issue, we had to use other strategies. I told them to pull together with the individual stories of what this manager had done to each of them. When you put those stories together, it is a powerful story,” said McGrew. “Some of the members had grievances involving this manager, but had let him off the hook believing someone else would fight the battle.”

McGrew had documentation on some of the instances. The majority of the crew went individually to Boeing Human Resources and gave statements providing specific examples of how the manager had singled them out with harassment and intimidation.

Credit goes to the HR rep, who took each person’s statement, then turned it over to EEO. After the investigation concluded, the manager was moved out of the area.

“My frustration grew as I watched others getting transferred,” said Donie Kathlean, who had tried for years to move to Renton. “One co-worker and I got all our lights turned green to transfer. The manager then tried to CAM us both for attendance and was basically messing with us over petty things.”

751-member Kyle Dreessen noted, “I was asked to fill in as team leader for a day. My steward advised me to follow up with HR to ensure I was properly compensated. My manager asked why I deserved to get paid team lead pay? I replied I had done the job and it is spelled out in the contract. Why did he think I shouldn’t get team lead pay? He was trying to intimidate me to not put in for the proper pay.”

As soon as the manager was reassigned, the work environment instantly changed for the better so members could focus on their jobs. Donie is finally moving to Renton starting in September. The new manager came from hourly and had done this work before, respects the crew, and productivity has improved.

It was solidarity in action and shows how standing together, you can get results.
Ron Bradley retires after 37 years

By JON HOLDEN District President

I want to thank everyone who came out to our Town Hall meetings last month. In Auburn, Everett and Renton. We had open, honest conversations about what we are as a union, where we’ve been and where we’re going. We started the meetings with a review of what we have accomplished since January 3rd, 2014, the dark day of the divisive contract vote. We still have a very long way to go, but we have made significant progress.

The Town Hall meetings themselves were one accomplishment. We instituted them shortly after I took office as District President in March 2014.

I plan to continue the Town Hall meet-

ings, because I believe it’s important for us to get together for meetings close to where you work and to have open conversations about our union, and so you can learn more about what’s going on.

Education has been another thing we’ve accomplished in the past two years. We’ve worked with educators from the Washington Labor Education and Research Center at South Seattle College, have created a series of eight union education classes.

We’ve had union education classes in the past, but they were only for stewards. That’s why we’ve opened them up to all members, and they’ve drawn a steady stream of students.

These union education classes are good for all of us. Our goal was to use them to return power to our members on the shop floor by teaching the power of solidarity. A better-educated membership is a stronger, more unified membership, and we’ll need that strength and unity as we face the challenges ahead.

One of the big problems with the Janua-

ry 3rd contract vote was simply logisti-
cal. We had mailed out eligibility cards to everyone qualified to vote in that election, but for various reasons, most people didn’t bring them to the polls that day.

Those of you who voted in Everett that day remember what it was like, with a line of hundreds of people – at some points, as many as 1,000 – waiting to get good standing cards. Many people – late for work – simply walked away.

That won’t happen again. With our elections in the future, we’ll use a new system to scan either your company-issued identification badge or your driver’s license to check for eligibility. The new process will take seconds. That will eliminate the long lines, making voting an easier process for more people.

This month, District 751 delegates will be out seeking votes for another one of the important union education classes of the past two years – our proposed amendment to the IAM Constitution to create a Membership Bill of Rights.

The Membership Bill of Rights would return more power to local lodge and district lodge officers and members to negotiate their own contracts and at the times and dates for votes. If a com-
pany wants to enter into talks mid-con tract, members would be notified and get to decide on whether or not to proceed.

John has always been a strong advocate for the members, serving as steward for more than two decades and working his way up through his local lodge serving as auditor, financial secretary and vice president. He has also been an active member of the HSI Site Safety Committee in Auburn, as well as part of the District Safety Committee. As a Grade 9 General Machinist, John brings years of knowledge of the jobs and work performed in Auburn and the issues facing members in those shops.

As a long time steward, he understands that a strong steward network is key to effectively serving the membership.

“I am excited to meet the members and stewards in my assigned area and consider it a privilege and honor to serve our members,” said Lopez. “Since the destructive contract extension, management has felt empowered and stepped up their attacks on our members. I plan to work closely with stewards to challenge every violation so members know our union is still fighting daily on their behalf.”

We will ask our union’s Grand Lodge – the representatives of local lodges from across North America – to adopt these proposals at the Grand Lodge Convention in September. We know it won’t be easy – there will be more than a thousand dele-
gates we’ll have to talk to and convince, and we may need to make compromises so that the process works for everyone.

I’m hopeful we’ll be able to make meaningful change to return more power to the members – with the members them selves in their local and district lodges.

We’ve also been fighting hard the past two years in Olympia, working with SPEEA on aerospace tax incentive ac countability legislation.

You’ve no doubt heard me talk about this before, but I’ll say it again: this is absolutely no sense for our state to hand Boeing $8.7 billion worth of tax breaks without getting some kind of minimum jobs guarantee in return. States like Min souri, Oklahoma and South Carolina got job guarantees from Boeing in exchange for tax breaks, and their employment numbers are growing; Washington did not, and Boeing employment here is down by 7,609 jobs since November 2013, when the tax breaks and job guarantees expired.

I and others in Olympia. More than 7,000 Washington state residents work for aerospace suppliers in jobs that pay them starvation wages of less than $15 an hour. They’re hard workers, skilled workers, just like you and me. The difference is that they don’t earn enough to put food on their table for their families, so they’ve got to rely on charity and taxpayer-funded public assistance to stay alive.

We need to raise the standard of liv ing for those hard-working aerospace employees, either with legislation in Olympia – or by supporting things like Initiative 1000, which would raise our state’s minimum wage.

We’ve also had success helping workers join our union. Workers at Hytek Finishes at Boeing Everett – a 37-year-old company – have been working towards certification for several years. We will continue to do this vitally important work.

Today, we had an opportunity to emerge from our earliest Town Hall meetings Continued on Page 10

Lopez appointed BR; Coty to lead Joint Programs

In August the retirement of IAM-Boeing Joint Program Director Ron Bradley (see story below) triggered movement in the union staff, with John Lopez Jr. being appointed to serve as Business Representative.

Effective Aug. 22, Brett Coty was appointed to serve as IAM-Boeing Joint Programs Executive Director. Brett has served the past eight years as a Business of Representative – first at the Everett plant and the last four years covering buildings in Auburn, Sumner and Training Connections.

Brett has a long history with Joint Programs, serving as a Business Rep focal for the Site Safety Committee and many years on the Auburn Site Safety committee before that. He also served on the OQTTP Advisory Committee in the mid-2000’s, as well as co-developed and co-taught an Enovia class with Joint Programs Career Advisor Greg Campos.

To fill the open Business Representative position in Auburn, District 751 President Jon Holden appointed John Lopez. As a 39-year active member, Lopez has served as a long-time leader in Local C, serving on the District Council for many years and as Local C President for the past two years, as well as having served a four-year term as Local C President previously.

John has always been a strong advocate for the members, serving as steward for many years and has devoted countless hours to our union long before he worked full time for our union – serving as a Union Steward, Local Lodge President and District Council delegate for many years, as well as holding a variety of other leadership positions.

In retirement, he is excused to spend more time with his grandchildren, hopes to do more flying and finally have the time to tackle the projects he put off while working for the union and serving the membership.

We wish him well and thank him for his years of service to our Union.
Lame ducks: Congress could try to pull through TPP

It’s known as the lame-duck session, the time between the November elections and January’s inauguration, when members of Congress feel the least accountable to their constituents. This time around, the two-month period could again wind up to be more about the brawl over the corporate coup known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. Supporters of the job-killling deal are mobilizing now to hold a lame-duck vote on TPP.

They might have the money, but the people power. Tell your members of Congress to stand strong against TPP, which will pit American workers against workers in countries like Vietnam, who make $1 an hour.

Since Congress narrowly passed “Fast Track” authority for the 12-nation deal last summer, the full text of the deal has been released—and it’s worse than we thought.

The International Trade Commission, which usually overestimates the benefits of such deals, put out a report projecting worsening trade balances in 16 of 25 U.S. economic sectors, including manufacturing, automotive and chemicals. The overall U.S. trade deficit would balloon by an estimated $21.7 billion by 2022, the report says.

In 2015, Washington still had the highest state minimum wage in the country, but the effects of three corporate lawyers, putting American taxpayers on the hook for $21.7 billion by 2032, the report says.

The five states with the highest youth unemployment rates in 2015 were West Virginia (17.4 percent; $8 minimum wage), South Carolina (16.2 percent; $7.25), Georgia (14.6 percent; $7.55), Mississippi (14.5 percent; $7.25), and North Carolina (14.5 percent; $7.25).

In 2015, Washington still had the highest state minimum wage in the nation at $9.47, though we no longer hold that distinction. The state’s youth unemployment rate that year was 11.7 percent, ranking us 23rd in the nation.

Cooper would likely argue that other economic factors explain the clear lack of correlation between higher minimum wages and youth unemployment. Exactly! Whatever those factors are — and they seem to be abundant in the low-wage anti-union South — they must have a far greater impact on youth unemployment than the minimum wage.

Perhaps we should also consider the source here. The Manhattan Institute, a conservative think tank, released a report on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

The report suggests doing anything to help working people, and states that Washingtonians are in a better position than workers in states with lower minimum wages.

Youth workers in the states with higher minimum wages are more likely to find work and go on to higher education, according to the report. Young workers who get higher minimum wages are more likely to stop smoking, get better food and get better health care, according to the report.

The report also states that the minimum wage is not the only factor affecting youth employment.

And sure enough, this one defies our expectations. If higher minimum wages price younger workers out of the job market, then states with higher minimum wages would have higher youth unemployment, right? The five states with the highest youth unemployment rates in 2015 were West Virginia (17.4 percent; $8 minimum wage), South Carolina (16.2 percent; $7.25), Georgia (14.6 percent; $7.55), Mississippi (14.5 percent; $7.25), and North Carolina (14.5 percent; $7.25).

In 2015, Washington still had the highest state minimum wage in the nation at $9.47, though we no longer hold that distinction. The state’s youth unemployment rate that year was 11.7 percent, ranking us 23rd in the nation.

Lame ducks: Congress could try to push through TPP

By DAVID GROVES

Washington State Labor Council

A recent edition of The Seattle Times featured an opinion column, “Raising minimum wage would drive out youngest workers,” written by Preston Cooper of the Manhattan Institute, a conservative think tank based in New York. Ironically, it’s exactly these young people who are paying the price for passage of Initiative 1433, which would raise the state minimum wage to $13.50 by 2020 and allow all workers in Washington state to earn paid sick days.

If it passes, and it likely will, many workers would get a raise—Proponents of minimum-wage increases argue that their proposal will help young workers, but there is some evidence to support this—Washingtonians understandably want to see higher wages for their fellow workers.

Selective excerpting aside, Cooper claims that young workers will get priced out of the job market by Initiative 1433 and suggests that the state Department of Labor and Industries should exempt young workers from the benefits of the higher minimum wage. “Federal law permits workers under the age of 20 to earn no less than $4.25 an hour,” he states, “for their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment,” writes Cooper. “But since more restrictive state laws supersede federal laws, young Washingtonians cannot take advantage of this exemption.”

Before Washington state officials rush to help young people take advantage of jobs paying no less than $4.25 an hour perhaps we should consider whether the dire predictions by Cooper and the Manhattan Institute are likely to come true. After all, sky-is-falling claims of job loss get tossed around any time anybody suggests doing anything to help working people.

And sure enough, this one defies our shared experience. If higher minimum wages price younger workers out of the job market, then states with higher minimum wages would have higher youth unemployment, right? Perhaps we should consider the source here. The Manhattan Institute that employs Cooper is part of the State Policy Network that, like the Olympia-based Freedom Foundation, pushes the right-wing conservative agenda of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

The Center for Media and Democracy explains how its funding is traced back to the billionaire Koch brothers.

In fact, young Mr. Cooper got hired at the Manhattan Institute last year on the strength of his stint as their “Koch Summer Fellow.” It’s not clear whether he got to take advantage of earning $4.25 an hour.

Right-wingers try to scare young voters away from I-1433 

By DAVID GROVES

Washington State Labor Council

Hans Dunshee, a long-time supporter of working people, needs the support of Machinists Union members in his fight to maintain his seat on the Snohomish County Council.

“Was there any question from anyone on our Legislative Committee about making Hans Dunshee our endorsed candidate in this election,” said IAM 751 Legislative Director Larry Brown. “He is one politician who has always been in our corner, whether he was serving in the Legislature or on the County Council.”

The 62-year-old Dunshee, who lives in Snohomish, served 21 years in the Legislature, representing the 39th and 44th legislative districts in eastern Snohomish County. He stepped down from his post as House Appropriations Committee chairman earlier this year to accept an appointment to the Snohomish County Council.

Dunshee was appointed to fill the District 5 council seat vacated by Dave Somers, who was elected as Snohomish County executive last fall. Dunshee is running this fall for the right to serve out the rest of Somers’ term, and if elected, would run again for a new four-year term in 2017.

Mr. Dunshee has a lot of good, commonsense ideas, a long track record of achievement and he listens to working people,” Brown said. “We had one suggestion,” Brown said. “Make sure we’re using incentives to grow jobs.”

As a County Council member, Dunshee also serves as a representative on a number of regional and countywide boards, including the Snohomish County Health District, where he voted in favor of a plan to help fight opioid drug abuse by establishing a program to require pharmaceutical companies to provide options for consumers to drop off unused prescription drugs.

“Hans Dunshee has a lot of good, commonsense ideas, a long track record of achievement and he listens to working people,” Brown said. “We need to make sure he gets to stay on the Snohomish County Council.”

Hans Dunshee (center) had a lifetime 92-percent labor voting record in 21 years as a state legislator, and has long enjoyed support from a number of unions, including District 753. He’s running this fall to retain his Snohomish County Council seat.

Dunshee has put his budgeting skills from Olympia to work on the county level, helping Executive Somers draft a proposal to renovate the County Courthouse—a move that would save at least half of the $162 million that had previously been budgeted for constructing a new building.

Dunshee also drafted a resolution proclaiming the county’s support for using tax incentives to attract businesses, but before introducing it, he called our union to ask for input.

“We had one suggestion,” Brown said. “Make sure we’re using incentives to grow jobs.”

Union backs Dunshee in Snohomish race
Machinists at BAE Systems ratify contract

The two sides have held their first meeting, which marked a very positive step in the Jorgensen Forge bankruptcy process, said Business Rep Joe Crockett. “They made it clear that their intention is to negotiate a brand-new full-up agreement,” he said. “If we can reach an agreement, their intent is to offer everybody a job.”

Our union represents 63 hourly workers at Jorgensen Forge, whose futures have been unsettled since May, when Jorgensen’s parent company, Constellation Enterprises, filed for bankruptcy. The company was put up for auction on Aug. 9. Only one bidder emerged, a group calling itself CE Star Holdings, which is made up of companies that the former owners owed money to.

Under bankruptcy law, the new owners are not obligated to recognize the former owners union contract – unless they intend on hiring more than half of the current workforce. In August, lawyers for the new owners met with Crockett and other union officers to state that they want to do just that. They presented the union side with a preliminary contract proposal.

Crockett presented the buyers with a written counter offer, and has asked them for dates they’re available to meet for bargaining. The two sides aim to have a deal ready for union members to vote on before the end of September.

“My goal is to bring something to our members that’s as good as what they’ve got now, if not better,” Crockett said. District 751 Chief of Staff Richard Jackson, Business Rep Dan Hack and Union Steward Keith Felt will join Crockett on the union negotiating team. Crockett took nominations for members who would serve on a negotiations advisory committee during the talks. “We will do our best to keep our members at Jorgensen informed as this process moves forward,” he said IAM 751 President Jon Holden.

“I strongly believe the Machinists of Jorgensen Forge are the company’s most valuable asset, and they deserve a collective bargaining agreement that reflects that fact,” he said. “Without them, and their skills and dedication, all the new owners would have is an empty factory with some big equipment. It is the people -- our members -- who make it a profitable business.”

Apprenticeships can change lives, AJAC graduates say

Apprenticeships have the power to change lives. That’s the message graduates of the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee gave in June, as they collected their certificates.

“If you had told me in high school that this is where I was going to be, I would have laughed at you,” said Ryan Booth, the class speaker. “What’s a machinist?”

AJAC graduated its largest class ever on June 24: 40 men and women from 28 companies statewide, who had either completed a four-year course to become journeymen machinists or a two-year course to earn a precision metal fabrication certificate.

The apprenticeships trained entry-level workers to be masters of their craft, and “the next leaders, the next mentors and hopefully the next shop stewards in the machining and precision manufacturing industries,” said AJAC Executive Director Lynn Strickland. Their certificates will allow them to work in good-paying manufacturing jobs anywhere in the world, and they graduate without the heavy student-loan debt that many college graduates struggle with, said Jesse Cote, an IAM 751 staff member who is chairman of AJAC’s governing board.

AJAC, which was started in 2009, now has 325 apprentices learning to be master craftsmen in aerospace and related manufacturing fields, Strickland said. She said the program’s goal is to “keep Washington state’s workforce one of the best in the world.”

During the ceremony, Abram Potts was honored as the year’s top apprentice. He said he had spent “half my life running the streets.” In-out-of prison, he found himself in a halfway house where he realized that he “had to have a job.”

District 751 organizer Jesse Cote was among those congratulating this year’s class of AJAC graduates.

An AJAC recruiter found him and got him enrolled in the program’s Manufacturing Academy, a state-certified pre-apprenticeship program that creates a pool of applicants for employers to choose from. From there, he landed an apprenticeship.

“I never knew what CNC was – never heard about it,” Potts said. But now he’s training to be a CNC operator. “AJAC came and found me, and gave me everything.”

Like Potts, Booth said he never considered working in manufacturing. “I grew up thinking ‘I’m going to go into computers.’ I was a computer science major in college.”

But then he got married, and had a family to support. “I had to find the first job I could.”

After years of poorly paying jobs, he took a chance on an AJAC apprenticeship, which taught him skills that are “giving me an opportunity to be someone, in a career that has the opportunity to be something more.”

AJAC is strong supported by District 751. Cote is one of two union reps.

Labor Council celebrates wins at Triumph, Cadence

District 751 reports to the Martin Luther King County Labor Council on our union’s recent successes at Triumph Composites in Spokane and Cadence Aerospace-Giddens in Everett. Holden is flanked by IAM 751 Business Rep Greg Combs, Cadence Aerospace-Peace-Powell and Gary Naple, Chief of Staff Richard Jackson and MLK County Labor Council Executive Secretary Nicole Grant.

District 751 was among the unions recognized at a recent celebration of labor victories organized by the Martin Luther King County Labor Council.

Our union was recognized on Aug. 17 for two recent wins: the 43-day lockout at Triumph Composites in Spokane, which led to a better contract, and last year’s vote by workers at Cadence Aerospace-Giddens to join District 751, which resulted in a first contract for them that raised pay, improved paid time off and restored a 401(k) match. In both cases, union members stood in solidarity to win improvements from their employer, said IAM 751 President Jon Holden, who spoke on behalf of our union at the celebration.

“At Triumph, it would have been really easy for them to have fallen apart after the destructive contract of 2013,” he said. “Instead, they worked together to rebuild their solidarity, and it was rewarded.”

The new contract at Triumph reduced the gap in the company’s two-tier wage system, improved retirement security for workers who don’t have pensions, maintained caps on health care cost increases and allowed workers to develop alternatives to corporate outsourcing efforts. At Cadence-Giddens, as well, workers stood strong in February to reject the company’s first contract offer by a 94-percent “no” vote. That led to further talks with the company and a better offer that was approved with a 72-percent “yes” vote in March.

“Our members at Cadence stood together and won themselves a contract they could be proud of,” Holden said. “That strong show of solidarity was a good starting point, and something we can build on for the future.”

The MLK County Labor Council also recognized Teamsters Local 117, which successfully lobbied the Seattle City Council to pass a law allowing drivers for Uber and other ride-sharing apps to form a union, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 21, which was recognized for its success in negotiating contracts earlier this year for more than 30,000 union grocery workers across Puget Sound.

The MLK County Labor Council is the central body for labor in King County, with more than 150 member organizations representing more than 75,000 working men and women.
When safety issues arise inside the Boeing factory, there is a preferred process in place to deal with these concerns that is spelled out in our union contract, Article 16.5. A recent issue in Renton highlighted why the Safety, Health and Environmental Action Request (SHEAR) form is the proper method to resolve safety issues.

For over a year, crane operators in Renton had been voicing concerns to management when they were unable to make moves safely according to both Boeing procedures and the Washington state law because there were only two members assigned to the crew. Despite repeatedly pointing out the hazards, the crane operators were basically ignored. Our members were worried they would get corrective action if an incident occurred or worse yet that someone would be injured.

Our members contacted the Renton Health & Safety Institute Site Committee for help.

"After hearing the situation and how long they had tried to get action, I wrote the SHEAR to document what was going on," said David Wyatt, a Site Committee member. "As expected, the manager was upset, which is not part of our union contract, Article 16.5. The SHEAR raised awareness and triggered action.

In just a few minutes while observing the situation, over 15 people walked through that area demonstrating why someone should be there when a load is suspended. The SHEAR got the issue resolved quickly for us."

One of the main areas impacted by this was on the second level to -from one floor to another (i.e. from a first floor to a third floor). Only two members were assigned to these moves making it impossible to keep the load secured throughout the process. With one person in the overhead crane, the load would be suspended and then left unattended as the second person literally ran from one level to another to where the part would be moved. This meant the suspended load was often on the move while those passing by had no idea it was "in the air." (before the SHEAR) was to put a flashing light (that no longer blinked) above the exit sign, which was above the normal line of sight so it was easy to overlook.

"The fact that our member on the ground was rushing up and down stairs to get to the other move location was another hazard in and of itself," said Clay Hood, who has been one of our crane operators for 30 years. "The higher production rates mean increased moves, making safety even more important. The SHEAR got the issue resolved quickly for us."

"In just a few minutes while observing the situation, over 15 people walked through that area demonstrating why someone should be there when a load is suspended. "No member should feel intimidated or hesitant to file a SHEAR. This process has been in place since September 2016.

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**Benefits pay schooling for Thomas**

Susanna Thomas used benefits available to her as a union member, she decided to take a chance. Her original plan was to take classes from 8 a.m. to noon, then would be at work from 2:30 to 11 p.m. in Renton. The hard work was worth it, Thomas said. "I've got a great degree that I can go out and use anywhere," she said. "I'm bettering myself and doing it debt-free."

In fact, since she was enrolled in the Learning Together Program, Thomas received 50 shares of Boeing stock when she graduated with her associate's degree – worth more than $6,500 to the time. "That was really nice," she said. Thomas said she still wants to get into the Boeing Apprentice Program, but she also plans to return to Green River to complete a bachelor's degree in aeronautical science.

And while she's at it, she said she's going to use her union benefits to pursue a commercial drivers license. She already used those benefits to pay the cost of getting a motorcycle endorsement on her driver's license.

Altogether Education Assistance and the Learning Together Program are among the most-valuable benefits that Machinists at Boeing have, Thomas said. "People need to get educated," she said. "It's an amazing benefit."

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**EA & LTP offer endless educational opportunities**

District 751 members who work at Boeing have access to two separate programs that can pay for college tuition – or other educational endeavors.

Through Education Assistance, union members can receive up to $3,000 a year to pursue an academic degree or vocational degree, certification or licensing programs at approved schools or institutions. Education Assistance is administered through IAM/Boeing Joint Programs, and more information is available on the Joint Programs website, www.iam-boeing.com.

The Learning Together Program (or LTP) is spelled out in Letter of Understanding 25 in the IAM-Boeing contract; however, details for District 751 members' LTP are difficult to find because they are unique (on the internal Boeing web site http://ltd.web.boeing.com/ LTD_CEA/index.cfm) LTP for 751 members includes:

- IAM members have no annual funding limits, making their LTP benefits virtually unlimited;
- IAM members do not have to discuss their educational plans with their manager prior to starting a course of study using LTP benefits although it is a smart idea to do so if you work a lot of mandatory overtime and need to ensure work and school do not conflict;
- IAM members can use LTP benefits at any accredited school and are not limited to designated "strategic" fields of study;
- IAM members are eligible for LTP benefits from their first day of work, unlike workers on other Boeing payroll sites who are required to have one to three years of service, depending on their degree programs;
- IAM members can receive reimbursements of eligible expenses while on Educational Leave of Absence from Boeing – a benefit that was eliminated for others in 2010;
- IAM members who complete a master's, bachelor's or associate's degree receive restricted stock awards – another benefit that Boeing cut for all other workers in 2010; and
- After graduation, IAM members may accept jobs outside Boeing – other Boeing workers must remain at Boeing for a number of years or else they are required to repay their tuition.

Participants in LTP must maintain at least C-minus grades or they have to repay the tuition benefit. Members getting benefits through either LTP or Education Assistance must pay taxes on benefits exceeding $5,250.

Information on both Education Assistance and LTP is available from Joint Programs career counselors. Union members can schedule appointments with them by calling (800) 235-3453.

Union Steward Susanna Thomas - who used both Education Assistance and LTP to pay for her associate's degree – praised the career counselors. "They were always there to help me. They had everything I needed."

Joint Programs staff members invite all District 751 members to learn more about the benefits by contacting an advisor or visiting the web site.
Whidbey Machinists raise $8,800

Union members who work at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station raised more than $8,800 at their recent charity golf tournament. The tournament at Avalon Golf Links attracted 48 golfers and raised $8,854, which was a fundraising record for the fourth-annual tournament.

The team of Rich Bach, Bill Herrmann, Robb Lindell and Stan Sawhill won the four-man best ball tournament. The money will be split between two food banks: North Whidbey Help House and Helping Hands Food Bank in Sedro-Woolley.

“Our Machinists at NAS Whidbey – and really all of our members, across our whole union – are so generous,” said IAM 751 Chief of Staff Richard Jackson. “We had a lot of support from some great volunteers and sponsors, and, as a result, we had a lot of fun raising money for a great cause.”

District 751 represents more than 175 civilian workers at NAS Whidbey, employed by defense contractors Delaware Resources Group, Doss Aviation and URS Corp.

Shoes for Pups: Horseshoe throwers pitch in for charity

Local E’s 13th annual Shoes for Pups horseshoes tournament drew nearly 20 teams to the Red Dog Saloon in Renton. The tournament is a fundraiser for Guide Dogs of America. (Left) Local E President Ira Carterman makes a throw as Lisa Wilkinson watches. Raffle winners were: Tony Curran (big screen TV); Spencer Burris (2-day trip to Polynesian); Paul Kight (2-day trip to Polynesian); and Cameron Griffin (binoculars). Third place went to Roy and Lisa Wilkinson and “We Tried” went to Ira Carterman and Linda Ramos.

Union MVPs continue to build better communities

It’s been a busy summer for IAM 751 MVPs who (from top) cleaned up Adopt-a-Road sites in Auburn and Everett, and handed out information about unions at Arlington River Days. In addition, volunteers refurbished donated toys at the Toy Rescue Mission and prepared and served breakfast for homeless people in Tacoma and Everett. For more information about how you can get involved in MVP events, call the Seattle Union Hall at (206) 764-0335.

Volunteers shop for a good cause

District 751 union stewards and staff members volunteered to help underprivileged children on Aug. 22 as part of a back-to-school shopping program sponsored by the Salvation Army of White Center, which paid for children in low-income families to buy their own clothes and school supplies at the JCPenney store at Southcenter Mall, with help from adult volunteers. (Above) Steward Amanda Pickard helps a girl sort through shirts. (Below) Steward Earl Gressett helps a boy pick out shirts he wants.

IRC lines up to help union brother

When 751-member Eldon Smith received unexpected triple bypass surgery in June, it put him on a long road to recovery. He is currently living in an assisted living facility. Union brothers and sisters working in the IRC organized a lunchtime barbecue fundraiser on Aug. 17. Members and managers lined the main aisle and donated more than $3,082 to help Eldon in just one hour. Thanks to Wes Heard, Tracy Moore, John Barr, Jennifer Stein, Jeff Olson, Darren Daughenbaugh, Jerome Demoulins, Daria Lake and Brian Hughes who helped coordinate the event.

Thanks Shoes for Pups sponsors!

Ira Carterman
Al Gibson
Chris Olafson
Everett Business Reps
Ron & Colleen Bradley
Mark Clark & Howard Carlson
Jon Holden

Susan Palmer
Donovan McLeod & Christine Fullerton
Polynesian Resort at Ocean Shores
Red Dog Saloon
Local F will hold its fourth annual Guide Dogs Karting Challenge on Saturday, Sept. 10, at PGP Motorsports Park at Pacific Raceways. The event will be from 2 to 6 p.m., and will feature teams of drivers racing for two hours around the PGP track, which is at 31001 144th Ave. SE in Kent. Prizes will go to the teams that complete the most overall laps in the time allowed. Starting posts are determined by who raises the most money for Guide Dogs of America. The cost is $400 per team, and each team can have up to four drivers. Lunch is included in the registration fee. Registration forms are available at all IAM 751 union halls in Puget Sound. Last year’s Karting Challenge raised more than $12,000, said Local F President Robley Evans. “We’ve had lots of success and a lot of fun with this event.” All funds go to Guide Dogs of America.

‘Thank you very much’ -- Elvis tribute benefits Guide Dogs

Local A member Tracy Alan Moore and his band, Rising Sun, played an Elvis tribute show at the Seattle Union Hall Aug. 13. The show was a benefit for Guide Dogs of America.

“Tracy and his band put on a high-energy show for more than two hours,” said Local A President Les Mullen. “We had a lot of fun, and raised some money for a very worthy cause.”

SuperShow: Racing machines highlight annual event

Local A’s annual Bill Baker Memorial Steel & Wheel SuperShow was a roaring success. The annual show for classic cars, hot rods and custom motorcycles drew close to 50 entries to the Everett Union Hall on Aug. 20. The crowd was bolstered this year by the appearance of drag racing legend Jim Green of Monroe, who brought three drag-racing vehicles to the show, which he and his team fired off for fans.

“We had a great turnout and thanks to our volunteers and sponsors, we raised a lot of money for Guide Dogs of America,” Local A President Les Mullen said.

Thanks Bill Baker Memorial Steel & Wheel SuperShow sponsors!

Chevrolet of Everett
Car Toys
Marco Polo Bar & Grill
Local 751-A
Local 751-C
Local 751-E
Local 751-F
Local C Executive Board
Del Fox Custom Meats
Union Home Services
Joint Programs North Site
Lake Connor Park
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Motorcycle Goodies
Scuttlebutt Brewery
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Lasting Impressions Inc.
Atkinson Zornes Financial Planning
Brett & Kelly Coty
Cameron Griffin
Everett Business Reps
Jason & Rose Chan
Lester & Shelley Mullen
Richard Jackson
Jon Holden
Mark & Peggy Clark
Roy Wilkinson
Susan Palmer
Garth Luark
Stosh Tomala
Chris Schorr
Town Halls focus on building a stronger union

Continued from Page 1

A forum for two-way discussion between union members and union leaders. Members have brought ideas forward and issues have come to the forefront that have been addressed," said Holden.

"It is encouraging to see the interest in our union and passion so many members have for our union. Ultimately, it is our members' strength and confidence in each shop that will give us the ability to challenge and confront our employers."

"We have to teach our members confidence so they understand the value they bring to the companies they work for. With this confidence, members will not be intimidated by the fear tactics and threats that companies use each time they want to open a contract," said Holden. "The wages and benefits we receive are a fair exchange. In return Boeing gets quality airplanes on time, which makes them considerable profit. It was not reasonable what Boeing took in the 2014 extension contract – eliminating pensions and other benefits we had worked years to obtain."

At the Auburn 751 n.m. meeting, one member noted, "I'm 30 and made a conscious choice to get involved. Some members are not involved, but that is not the majority. Many are passionate about this union, and they need you. Don't give up on them; instead mentor them and help bring us together."

"Many members are still torn over the previous contract, but all of them need to know we must work to unite," said Business Rep Rich McCabe. "If we wait until 2024 to unite, we might miss our window. This is about this union, and everyone has skin in the game. We have to unite," said Bernie Espinoza. Holden reviewed the final version of our Membership Bill of Rights that was passed by our seven local lodges and will be voted at the Grand Lodge Convention in September. It incorporated input from all locals and collaboration between the locals.

Our group of IAM 751 delegates is prepared to hold discussion and explain the merits of our proposal at the Grand Lodge Convention this month in order to gain support for passage of this important change to our IAM Constitution. What is clear is that no one person should have the power to implement a contract or force a vote over the top of the local leadership. Other changes implemented over the past few years include:

- Recognizing that knowledge will empower our members, union education classes were offered to union stewards and regular members focusing on issues such as workers' rights, recent solidarity success and other topical issues.
- eNews with up-to-date information about important IAM business.
- Updated iam751.org website, now is mobile friendly. Members register to get access to their contract, staff emails, and have the ability to post and purchase items from other members (similar to Craig's list). In exchange for registering, members also receive a Union visibility t-shirt.
- Changed election process to eliminate backroom deals and inside the party to what they address.
- Created a process to report ethics violations/harassment.
- Created a process to document job erosion for instances when Boeing is trying to downgrade work;
- Created a brochure to walk members step-by-step through the retirement process to make the best choices;
- Introduced a second health and benefits rep to better assist members in this area.
- Monthly new members workshops to educate new hires on our history, power of solidarity and contract language. With 45 percent of our members hired after the 2008 negotiations, it is important for our members to understand the power they have and how solidarity makes things happen.
- Pushing Aerospace Tax Incentive Accountability. Since the tax incentives were passed in Nov. 2013 over 7,000 jobs have been moved out of state. It is an intentional decision by Boeing to move their work to other countries that pay taxes incentives here and at the new location. Legislation would protect not just our members, but citizens of the state.
- Recently, in the newspaper, leaders implied we may be headed for a downturn and suggested our Union should back off pushing for tax incentive accountability because it would drive Boeing to leave. What they need to understand is that tax incentive accountability is even more important in a downturn so we protect our infrastructure here. The reality is we don't know what the future holds, but

if we don't put accountability on these incentives Boeing will continue to create infrastructure in other states to collect incentives there and when an upsizing occurs, other areas will experience growth rather than having it in our state.
- Tax Incentive Accountability is also trying to ensure the jobs at aerospace vendors receiving the tax incentives are family-wage jobs with benefits. Many vendors collecting the tax incentives pay less than $15 an hour.
- Unionizing aerospace vendors to raise wages and benefits for those working at suppliers and minimize the downward pressure on our wages at Boeing.
- Our relationship with new International President has changed where he has allowed us to restore our bylaws, which were in place for decades, with minor revisions that members voted to approve in August.
- New International President openly supports our District's efforts to pass the Aerospace Tax Incentive Accountability legislation.
- A new retirement savings plan was implemented for members at Triumph.
- Pushing for tax incentive accountability is important in a downturn so we protect our workforce and implement in other bargaining units.
- New tactics that can be used and introduced to combat employers going forward.

Those attending the Town Hall meetings liked the format and the fact that they were held at locations closer to where they live and work. The two-way communication prompted good discussion and ideas – many of which will be implemented to build up and implement a stronger union going forward.

Retirement planning workshops set

1:30 p.m. and 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Evertt Union Hall, 8729 Airport Road

September, Wed. 21 -- 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Auburn Union Hall, 201 A St. SW.

October, Tues. 10 -- noon to 2 p.m. and 3 to 5 p.m. at the Seattle Union Hall, 9125 15th Place S.

Wednesday, Oct. 19 -- 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Auburn Union Hall, 201 A St. SW.

The workshops are offered by Money Management Educators and sponsored by District 751. To reserve a seat, call (888) 223-8311 or e-mail mmepugetounds@nmeducators.org.

Apprenticeships change lives, AJAC grads say

Continued from Page 4

responsible to sit on AJAC's board of directors, and the union played a key role in the launch of the program. "If we were not for IAM 751 and their efforts to secure our funding, none of us would be here," Strickland said.

Working with AJAC is "rewarding and important," Cote said.

"On an individual level, it's incredible to see these workers develop skills that will work for them and their families in the future," he said. "And on a larger scale, the work AJAC does is essential if our state is to retain high-skilled, high-wage manufacturing jobs. In an era where experts in the world are here, then aerospace companies and other precision manufacturers will want to have here too."
Retirees and guests enjoy annual picnic/potluck event.

The Seattle Union Hall was filled with retirees and their guests on Monday, August 8 for the annual Retirement Club picnic. Union officers and staff provided the fried chicken and drinks while retirees each brought a side dish or dessert to share — ensuring members had a wide variety of food to choose from. District 751 President Jon Holden thanked the retirees for their contributions to our union and for continuing to support our union. The event included live music from a union band, raffle prizes and lots of fun for all attending!

Separately, IAM 751 retirees and their guests had the Argosy boat to themselves for an early dinner cruise on Aug. 22 with a catered dinner and live band. IAM 751 retirees and their guests had the Argosy boat to themselves for an event attended byFred Smith and Joyce Kirby all attending.

Prizes and lots of fun for a union band, raffle event included live music to support our union. The union and for continuing contributions to our Club picnic.

Talking senior issues with Sen. Cantwell’s staff: L to R: Dayna Lurie from the Senator’s staff, 751-retiree Jackie Boschok, Don Bennett-retired Letter Carriers Union, 751 retirees Carl Schwartz and Tom Lux, and Claude Burfect (Retired Public Employees Council)

The potluck offered something for everyone.

On Monday August 22nd some 40 of our retirement club members and friends enjoyed an Argosy cruise across Seattle’s Lake Washington. The weather was great, cruising smooth and company congenial, accompanied by live music. A tasty Italian pasta buffet dinner was served on board courtesy of Renton Technical College culinary school. The 751 Retirement Club chartered the boat after polling retirees on events they would like to attend. Thanks to Retirement Club President Jackie Boschok and to all who helped with the arrangements and the shuttle drive from the union hall.

Left: Mary and T.J. Seibert try the Italian pasta buffet. Below: Retirees enjoyed some sun on the upper deck.

Conveying senior issues to Sen. Cantwell

On Tuesday August 2nd, three of our retirees met with Dayna Lurie, staff assistant to Senator Maria Cantwell, in her office, to re-affirm our concerns about senior issues. We asked that Senator Cantwell continue to support our efforts to gain legislation to permit Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices; amend Social Security’s cost-of-living factor to include more senior expenses; and return Social Security offices and administration to full staffing. We noted TPP, as presently written, would permit international drug companies to challenge American price and safety standards. We thanked the senator for supporting our concerns. The group included Jackie Boschok, President of 751’s Retirement Club, Tom Lux, and Carl Schwartz.


Local 86
Peter Couch, Triumph Edwin Daumer, Kenworth Roger Kelso, Triumph Robert LaShaw, ASC

Local 1951
Larry Hathaway, SCKBD Robert Blackwell, MSA

Retirees catch up with old friends and made new friends at the annual Retirement Club Picnic.

Summer senior cruise

IAM 751 retirees and their guests had the Argosy boat to themselves for an early dinner cruise on Aug. 22 with a catered dinner and live band.

On Monday August 22nd some 40 of our retirement club members and friends enjoyed an Argosy cruise across Seattle’s Lake Union and into and around Lake Washington. The weather was great, cruising smooth and company congenial, accompanied by live music. A tasty Italian pasta buffet dinner was served on board courtesy of Renton Technical College culinary school. The 751 Retirement Club chartered the boat after polling retirees on events they would like to attend. Thanks to Retirement Club President Jackie Boschok and to all who helped with the arrangements and the shuttle drive from the union hall.

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Local 1951
Larry Hathaway, SCKBD Robert Blackwell, MSA
FREE

AUTO PARTS & ACCESSORIES
BLACK FIBERGLASS HOOD with winged spoiler for 2000 Honda Civic. $300 OBO 253-638-8112

SET OF 4 – HANKOOK WINTER TIRES – 195/65R15 $47 each. $100 OBO Like new traction for your car. 360-707-2966

1965 FORD F27 FE BLOCK, old block. Service 1970 NOS BOSS 302 block, old block, pan, windage tray & oil pick-up tube, all in original boxes. Lots of 65 comet parts, small block scatter reached. 360-563-2422

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8’ PONTOON BOAT with fold up wheel $150. Bushnell Voyager tele- scope 60mm $35. 253-838-2108

JOIN SEABACKS (Boeing employee’s boat club) for fun cruises and get togethers. Over 60 recrups! Call Craig Wulfat 253-631-5020.

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HOME & RV MATTRESS CENTER – home, RV, side size mattresses. Aero Mechanic’s discount. Call 425-646-7901 or evieh@outlook.com

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Call Barbara at Beefussy House Keeping in the late afternoon. Works mornings and early morning. 425-413-5334

You want the best NATURAL NUTRITION - AL SUPPLEMENTATION you can get. No competition. Contact the same in the industry that Shahlee. Call Joe at 206-819-7924

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DEAL: DELL PHOTO 926 PRINT - NO USA PRTY. $50. Call 253-838-6050

FURNITURE & APPLIANCES
CURIO CABINET 6’ tall, 22” wide, 14” deep. Has 3 glass shelves, 2 wood shelves, 2 side by side, garden area. Excellent condition. $65. Call 360-829-5230.

Housing
10 BEAUTIFUL VIEW ACRES with new 2,908 sq. ft. home and shop. 5 miles NE of Colville, WA 20 GPM well. Possible OWCC $165,000. Call 425-327-2514

Everett Massacre tour event
Join in Solidarity to Commemorate the Everett Massacre’s 100th Anniversary by sailing from Seattle to Everett on the Virginia V on Saturday November 13, with the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association and the Snohomish County Labor Council, AFL-CIO $100 Boarding Fee • Entertainment • Program and Refreshments at the Everett Yacht Club “Verona” at the Everett City Dock.
For more info contact Tom Lux, PNLA President email pnhla2@gmail.com or 206-551-1371 or contact Ron McGauh, PNLA Committee, email about@comcast.net or call 206-409-8217

LABOR HISTORY HAPPENINGS
Sept. 5 - First US Labor Day Parade, First Labor Day, 1882
Sept. 8 - UW begins grape boycott, 1965
Sept. 9 - Police Strike, Boston, MA, 1919
Sept. 19 - Chinese coal miners driven out of Black Diamond, WA, 1885
Sept. 23 - IATF Local 751, Chartered 1935
Information taken from the PNLA Labor History Calendar

Making changes for a stronger future for all of us
Continued from Page 2 was a desire for more and better communication with members. The AeroMechanic has always been a reliable tool, but members told us they wanted more.
Today, we do have more. We’re active in social media with IAM 751 accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We launched in 2014 our new Machinists eNews – periodic e- mail updates with timely and important information.
And this summer, we launched a revamped website at www.im751.org, which brings us more into the 21st cen-
tury, with a layout that is easier to read on smart phones and tablets.
We have created a second position for a Health and Benefits Rep at the Seattle Union Hall, to help more people prepare for retirement. We’ve also created a pre-retirement checklist, and we’ve continued with our free retirement planning seminars presented by Money Management Educators.
We are undergoing a significant demographic change in our union. More than 45 percent of our current union members have been hired since the end of the strike in 2008.
But the fact that we’ve had so many people join us since 2008 presents a unique challenge for Members. People joining after the strike of 2008 have not been through a traditional contract cycle with us. We, as a union, need to make sure everyone understands the solidarity that grows as we come closer to the end of a contract.
Our job as a union, then, is to unite new members and existing members to negotiate for a contract that will keep the union strong.

FOUR SPACEs at Cypress Lane Memorial Park (Everett) in the Rhodo-
dendron Garden valued at $8,200 each. Will take $22,000. 360-435-8745

SPORTING GOODS
TWO 3 SPEED BICYCLES – one for man and one for woman. $45 253-836-8732

“CURT” DELUX BIKE RACK for 2 bikes (fits 2004 to 2009 Toyota Prius flickr new) Paid $324 make offer 206-523-9526

TOOLS
CRAFTSMAN TOOLS – 1/2 HP Craftsman Bench Commercial Grinder. Totally enclosed but should be everyone’s – or 8 inch with a light. Model 397.1951. $495. Craftsmen table saw 10-1/2” HP motor with parts and on table saw dust box large 34” long – good condition. $225. 5 hp Craftsman electric motor mod. 1/253 1175534 $475. Call 253-852-8089

Vehicles
1994 GRAND MARQUISS in mint shape, one owner, always in gar-
rage. $5,000 firm. 253-836-8732

2000 HONDA PASSPORT LX, V6, 32L, 15 miles. White color. Transmission and timing belt have been changed. Well main-
tained and taken good care of by its own-
er. Asking $3090.00 OBO 206-398-9380

2007 HD ELECTRAGLIDE FLHTC 96 cu.
.6, speed. 10 K miles, one owner, perfect. All H.D. parts and labor. $10 K 206-886-5873

2012 CIVIC LX HONDA 4 door – leather in-
terior, heated seats, new tires, excellent con-
dition. 69,000 miles – all freeway miles. 38 mpg, silver color. $12,500 call 345-657-3690

Mail Coupon to AERO MECHANIC NEWSPAPER, 9125 15th Pl. S., Seattle, 98108 Deadline is Sep. 16th!
Custom Choices enrollment for IAM members thru Sept. 16

If suddenly you weren’t around, how would your family handle mortgage, daycare, and bills? No one likes to think about an unexpected death in the family. Custom Choices life insurance can help you and your loved ones be more prepared for the ongoing expenses.

- Member - up to $150,000 benefit, guarantee issue this enrollment only, subject to plan limits
- Spouse - from $10,000 to $50,000 benefit
- Child or grandchild - up to $25,000 universal life benefit
- Living Benefit Rider allows you to take an advance against the death benefit to help pay for chronic condition expenses (severe memory or reasoning problems, if you cannot perform at least two activities of daily living for yourself like dressing, bathing, eating, toileting, continence or moving from one activity to another)
- Pays in addition to the $32,000 basic term life you receive, which ends when you leave employment at Boeing
- Policies are individually owned and portable if you change jobs or retire
- TransElite® Universal Life Policy Series: CPFUG-300, CPFUG-301, CPFUG-305, CRLL100, CRLLT100, and CRELLX100
- DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE -benefits for disability from an off-the-job illness
- Available to all actively at work members on a guarantee issue basis during your first year of eligibility (pre-existing condition limitations & exclusions apply)
- Pays a variety of benefits including first diagnosis benefit, second and third surgical options, surgery benefits, donor benefits, drugs and medicines, radiation, chemotherapy benefits, and more
- Provides up to a $50 wellness benefit each calendar year for cancer screening tests including mammograms, pap smears, prostate screen and more
- Also provides benefits for over 30 other covered specified diseases like Cystic Fibrosis, Lupus, Lyme Disease, Meningitis, Tetanus, etc.
- Policy Form HIC-GP-CN-SB-TX
- Critical Illness Plan
- Members receive $100,000 in cash to help with expenses not covered by health insurance
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Lawsuit seeks more safety for union workers at Hanford

A legal fight is brewing over worker protection at Hanford as a coalition that includes a labor union, a watchdog group and the Washington Attorney General’s Office seeks a federal court order that would require enhanced safety measures at the nuclear clean-up site.

“Our Eastern Washington staff is monitoring this very closely,” said District 751 President Jon Holden. “As a union, worker health and safety is one of our core values.”

District 751 represents about 80 workers at the Hanford site – all of them members of Local 1951. They include staff members at the HAMMER Center, which provides hazardous waste response training for Hanford workers and for fire departments and military personnel nationwide, and millwrights who maintain equipment across the site.

In August, a federal district court judge ordered the U.S. Department of Energy and the contractor managing nuclear waste clean-up at Hanford to take interim measures to better protect workers from poisonous gases.

The ruling came after Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson filed an emergency motion with the court, asking the judge to intervene directly and order the Energy Department and its contractor to better-protect Hanford workers over the long term.

Lawyers will start arguing whether to make the interim steps permanent on Oct. 12. Ferguson filed the motion – with support of Pipefitters and Steamfitters Local Union 598 and a Hanford watchdog group – after nearly 60 Hanford workers were taken to the hospital for possible chemical exposure after a series of incidents this spring and summer.

Almost all of the workers who have reported chemical exposure are members of one of the 15 unions who represent workers at the site, said Brian Hudson, a Local 1951 union steward.

He said he thinks that’s because workers who have the backing of a union aren’t afraid to speak out or seek help. “The people who aren’t in unions are afraid,” he said. “They don’t want to say anything.”

The list of exposed workers includes at least one Machinists Union member, who has been diagnosed with chemical scarring of the lungs, Hudson said.

56 million-gallon cocktail

Workers at Hanford are attempting to clean up some 56 million gallons of toxic waste left over from days when the site was a center for extracting plutonium used to make nuclear bombs. The waste was stored on a “temporary” basis in a tank farm – a series of underground tanks.

After several decades underground, some of the temporary tanks now are deteriorating and starting to leak.

There are extremely toxic chemicals in the tanks, said Hudson. One of them – nitrosomethane – is a carcinogen that has actually formed in the tanks from the chemicals stored there. “It’s a by-product of the reactions in the tank.”

Scientists have identified some 1,800 chemicals within the tanks, Hudson said, but really “what’s in these tanks is unknown.”

Each tank has a different mix of chemicals, and each has received different levels of ventilation over the decades, causing different chemical reactions. The radioactive material in each tank varies, and that has affected the chemicals in different ways. In addition, the tanks have mixed waste from other projects, solid waste and sludge – and the mix of that varies from tank-to-tank.

Scientists may say that they know what’s in the tanks, so they can determine what safe exposure levels are, Hudson said. “But what is the safe level of this cocktail that we have nowhere else on Earth?”

Given that, any time the vapors vent into the atmosphere, it can be a risk. “There’s been more venting recently.”

In March, Hanford managers ordered the pumping of one of the leaking tanks. That stirred up the waste stored inside, and the tanks began venting vapors.

The workers who are directly involved with the pumping operation wear protective gear, Hudson said – radiation suits and self-contained breathing apparatus. Anyone working within a designated area was required to wear the gear.

But the problem is that “so many people are housed in offices close to the tank farms,” Hudson said. “These exposures are happening outside the fence where there’s no recommendation to wear suits.”

As a result, Hudson said, “we’ve got people coming up sick.”

According to court documents cited by KING-TV, on April 13, the CEO of the lead contractor – Washington River Protection Solutions – announced that air tanks were no longer mandatory and he was shrinking the size of the zone where workers had to wear protective suits.

Members of the Pipefitters union found documents that showed managers had been complaining that the protective gear slowed workers down, radio station KFLD-AM reported. Managers may have seen that as a problem, the station reported, because Hanford’s subcontractors get bonuses for getting work done ahead of schedule.

Whatever the reason, once the requirements for protective gear were scaled back, it only took about two weeks for serious problems to occur, according to documents filed by the state’s Attorney General. More than 40 tank farm workers required medical treatment for chemical exposure over a five-day period starting April 28, KING-TV said, quoting the documents.

Unions step in for workers

Unions for Hanford workers demanded more safety equipment, and on July 18, the Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council – the umbrella group for all unionized Hanford workers, including Machinists and members of 14 other unions – issued a stop-work order. Union members would not do any work until their employers resumed providing it.

Contractors began supplying the equipment and work resumed, although there were delays in getting enough of the right size oxygen tanks, which meant some workers were sent home temporarily.

In July, Hudson was picked to take part in a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health investigation into the chemical exposures. The institute – commonly called NIOSH – is part of the federal Centers for Diseases Control.

The investigation started off well, Hudson said. “They asked some good questions.”

But in the end, it seemed to him like little was going to be done. “I felt they were there on DOE’s behalf, to see where the workplace stood on these safety issues,” Hudson said. “There was a lot of talk about technical monitoring. There’s a want of wanting to monitor the situation, but people keep getting sick. There’s not a lot of talk about protection for tomorrow.”

“They talked about the need for more fact-finding,” he continued. “That’s what’s been going on here for decades – fact-finding.”

He’s right. Attorney General Ferguson told KING-TV that there have been a series of studies since 1992 showing that there is a serious problem with vapor releases at Hanford.

“I don’t say it lightly when I say there’s a culture of indifference toward worker safety there,” he told the TV station. “But what other conclusion can one reach? Their own experts tell them what to do, they refuse to do it and workers still get sick.”

On the other hand, the Machinists and other unions at Hanford are committed to doing all they can to make Hanford as safe a workplace as possible, Holden said.

“We’ve got to clean up Hanford to protect the health of our region for the future,” he said. “But we’ve got to do it in a way that protects the clean-up workers themselves.”