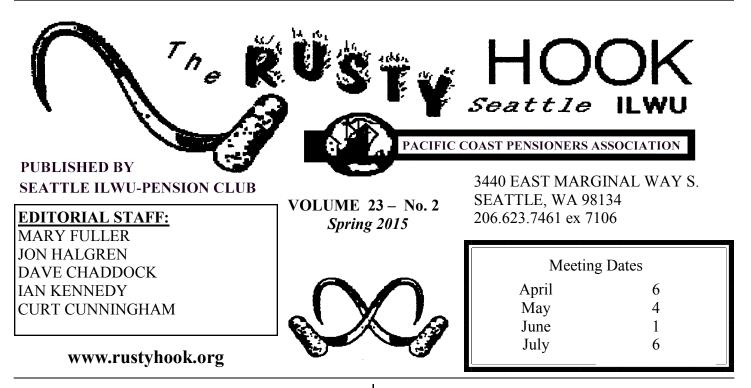
AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL



Our Wobbly Legacy

By Dave Chaddock

Here in Washington State and especially on the waterfront, we owe a lot to our predecessors who were proud members of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) known for short as "Wobblies."

At its founding convention in Chicago in 1905 the IWW made it clear that it was an opponent of the AF of L which, by dividing workers according to trade or craft (like butchers, machinists, etc.) was preventing a unified struggle against the bosses. It was allowing employers to favor one set of workers, and to use them to raise prices and make it more difficult for other workers. Meanwhile machines were replacing men and women, creating unemployment. Workers were forced to work longer hours for less money.

In a speech he gave in New York City on March 16, 1911, IWW leader Big Bill Haywood talked about the general strike "as a weapon of the working class." And he ridiculed the AF of L for its " 20,000 different agreements that expire 20,000 different minutes of the year," pointing out that "they couldn't have a general strike if they wanted to" (Kornbluh, REBEL VOICES, 49). When a woman in the audience declared that she endorsed the notion of a general strike if "It is a first step toward the revolution" Haywood responded that "if I didn't think that the general strike was leading on to the great revolution which will emancipate the working class I wouldn't be here" (IBID., 51). Now Big Bill in his speech declared the United States had never seen a general strike in a city, let alone in the nation as a whole. Perhaps Bill was wrong about this. Philadelphia claims a general strike in 1835 that idled 20,000 workers. But that was ancient history. It was here in Seattle that the first twentieth century U.S. general strike took place in February of 1919. It started with a walkout in the shipyards but longshoremen heartedly endorsed it, and the dockworkers were the last ones to return to work five days later.

Were there Wobblies on the docks in those days? You better believe it. Ron Magden assures me that there were many of them, and they even held the post of President of the Seattle local for a time. In his book *A HISTORY OF SEATTLE WATERFRONT* WORKERS 1884-1934, he points out that in 1913, when the local added 300 new members, a great many were Wobblies, "especially among low-paid truckers" (p.77) and in 1918, when 2,000 more members were added "a majority were hand truckers carrying secreted IWW red cards" (p. 117).

It was consistent with the IWW philosophy that it focused on the unskilled laborer, the one on the bottom. As Haywood put it: "We are going down in the gutter to get at the mass of the workers and bring them up to a decent plane of living" (FOUNDING CONVENTION, 575). The IWW would not exclude foreigners. Unlike certain AFL locals it would not

From page 1

exclude blacks. In Philadelphia the longshore local actually became affiliated with the IWW after a strike in 1913. Even in those days when Jim Crow and the Klan were dominant, Local 8 in Philly had integrated work gangs. A former slave, Charles Carter, member of Local 8 from its inception, recalled that, before the IWW arrived, the only thing you knew about your work schedule was what time you started. What time you finished might be an hour later or it might be the day after tomorrow. And there was no overtime. The Wobblies changed all that. The workday would end at 6pm, regardless of how much work remained. Night work required a new gang and a higher wage (Cole, WOBBLIES ON THE WATERFRONT, 72). And the Philadelphia Wobblies were true to the IWW principle of never signing contracts. They wanted to be free to strike at any moment. Their strength, they liked to say, was "at the point of production." Countless small strikes ("quickies") were called. If the captain wouldn't let the men eat on the ship, they would all go home. If the men were shorthanded, if one of the men had not paid his dues, it was time to strike. One witness recalled: "If you told one of them something, and they didn't like it . . . they'd run the load about halfway up . . . and walk off the ship" (IBID., p. 174).

A significant Wobbly victory was waged here in Washington state in Spokane in 1909. It was a victory over so-called employment "agents" which were completely unregulated in that city. At the local Wobbly hall it was not unusual for 50 loggers a day to lodge complaints against these local "job sharks" for selling fraudulent jobs. "Not one in 50 who ships out from an employment office ever gets the job he pays for" (Duda, WANTED: MEN TO FILL THE JAILS OF SPOKANE, p. 28). At one company where 50 men were employed, 3,000 jobs were sold! As soon as a man had paid the shark's fee, the poll tax, and other grafts, he would be discharged to make room for another sucker (IBID., p. 82). It was a huge moneymaking racket, and officials in Spokane were in on the take. The Wobblies took to making warning speeches right in the vicinity of the shark offices. And frankly, "it's hard to keep your parasitic job-selling operation running smoothly when a Wobbly on a soapbox is outside your doors telling the workers how they're about to be fleeced" (IBID., p. 5). When police began arresting all the soap-boxers (though leaving the Salvation Army untouched), outraged citizens called for reinforcements. Wobblies from all over

answered the call and soon all available jail space was filled to the bursting point. In spite of brutal treatment in the jails (and <u>because</u> of it!) jail property suffered a lot of damage. Prisoners jumped up and down in unison, tore doors off their hinges. And their constant shouting and singing got on the nerves of their guards. Finally, the city was forced to give in. All prisoners were freed, and the local ordinance curtailing free speech was revoked. And after that, even the threat to "pull another Spokane" kept other cities in line.

Big Bill took a little flak when he was quoted as saying that "a little sabotage in the right place at the proper time won't hurt you" (Johnson, "THEY ARE ALL RED OUT HERE," p. 134). This got him kicked off the National Executive Council of the Socialist Party. Washington socialists, however, and those in nine other states, disagreed with the decision to oust Haywood (IBID.,100).

Wobblies made no secret of their support of sabotage. The symbol of turned-up wooden shoes was prominent in their propaganda. What did it all mean? The Wobblies saw themselves as waging a war against capitalism. After over 100 miners were killed in an explosion, angry miners blew up a couple of unsafe mines. The big bosses saw nothing wrong with blacklisting workers simply because they stood up for their rights. They saw nothing wrong with calling out troops and police to beat and arrest strikers. So long as workers were being abused, they would inevitably fight back.

But the Wobbly struggle was meant to focus the anger of workers in intelligent and productive directions. One of them defined sabotage as "the conscious withdrawal of efficiency" (Bird, SOLIDARI-TY FOREVER, p. 39). A common aim of Wobbly action was to have a shorter work day. Loggers, for example, might simply walk off the job after eight hours. When such an action was successful, it left workers with a feeling of satisfaction and an appreciation of their strength as a united force. Being a Wobbly meant that one did not need to lash out in frustration. Overall, it <u>reduced</u> the need for violence.

Picturing the Wobblies as a violent ungovernable rabble was the aim of the capitalist sharks. Their agents would be planted at meetings advocating foolish and provocative acts of violence, which reasonable Wobbly leaders would reject out of hand. Wobbly leaders like Big Bill would be framed for murder.

Continued from page 2

The Wobbly rationale for slowing down the pace of work was partly for reasons of safety but it was also meant to create more jobs for the unemployed. The capitalists, however, had their own way to deal with the unemployment problem. They stirred up patriotic jingoism, bringing us world war that killed countless millions of "surplus" workers in the trenches of Europe. In 1920 it was illegal to be a Wobbly in Washington. Wobbly halls were raided and Wobbly books and literature were destroyed.

But deep in the psyche of Seattle longshore workers the Wobbly spirit is alive and well. It is not merely in the Wobbly slogan on our hall: "An injury to one is an injury to all." Many of you will recall "Flyboy" Anderson's constant fulminations against "scissor-bills." My friends, this is pure Wobbly talk! Joe Hill, Wobbly song-writer, framed for murder and executed by a Utah firing squad, once wrote his own lyrics for a song called "Scissor Bill" to be sung to the tune of "Steamboat Bill." Scissor was dumb. He was a racist. And he wanted nothing to do with the union. Our firm rejection of Scissor Bill's credo is a re-affirmation of our Wobbly spirit!

P. S. Ron Magden's companion volume to his waterfront history, bringing the story from 1934 to the present, will be available soon. Be sure to get a copy!

P.P.S. In the fall 2009 issue of the <u>Hook</u> (available on line) I also wrote about Wobblies in Seattle. Right now I have about 15 books out of the UW library about the Wobblies, so I am sure that eventually I'll have more to say about them. But maybe not right away, since I have plans to write about Cuba, Israel, Iran, Haiti, Hong Kong and student debt. You can give me feedback at

chatwithchadd@hotmail.com



Caucus Report

By Ian Kennedy

By the time you receive this copy of the Rusty Hook, everyone should have received the Dispatcher that contains the MOU, and all active members should have voted. So anything in this issue for or against the contract will have no effect, because I will be making some comments throughout this publication.

The Caucus reconvened on Monday March 30th and went through the following Friday. After the usual opening business, the delegates got right to work with an opening blast from President McEllrath. It appears that a member of the Local 13 delegation decided to do some negotiating on the internet several weeks prior to the final draft, by broadcasting that we should take the offer the PMA was making. He knew about the offer before it was known outside the negotiating committee. He had been giving out information throughout the negotiating period. Yes, he was getting his information from a PMA stooge.

On the contract; The wages increase more than 18% over the five years of the contract. Though the skill rates are considered to be 10%, 20%, 30% of the basic rate, they are actually less.

Pensions: As it shows in your Dispatcher, those retiring under this contract will get more than twice of those who are in the first two tiers. It does nothing toward reducing the number of tiers. Those who retired in the twelve years following the July, 2002 contract receive no increase. Widows will also get increases, bringing the bottom tier up to 70% and the top tier to 75%.

Welfare: While this part of the package took over two months to complete, in my view, it was the most successful, why? During this period, everyone was sure we would end up with a two or three year contract. So, the tax on the health care "cadillac" plans doesn't come into effect until 2018 and the PMA didn't bring up revisiting it once it was decided on a five year contract. Though the Union wasn't successful in getting rid of Zenith American, they did get requirements put on them such that if Zenith fails, they can be replaced.

PGP: PGP will be based on one week rather then three weeks.

Arbitration: This is the big change. The system will go from the present four areas with an arbitrator and an alternate, to three arbitrators for each area. The employers will put up three names for each area, then the Union will select one of the three. Then the Union will place three from each area, etc. The third arbitrators will come from the outside, and must meet specific requirements.

You will find much of the agreement pertains to either Local 10 or 13. I wont comment on them.

RUSTY HOOK / Spring 2015

Be sure to read the letters of understanding.

Conversations With Harry

By Ian Kennedy

As I was in San Francisco for the Caucus, I took Tuesday evening to see if I could run into Harry. It had been a nice sunny day, and the evening was moderately warm, so I wandered around the city before heading for the Bar. Sue spotted me as I entered, coming over, she told me that Harry had been coming in every evening for the last three nights, looking for me. It seems he was aware of the Caucus taking place. I sat down at our usual table as Sue brought me a glass of beer and sat down with me. "He's usually on time, so he should be coming in about five minutes." she said. "You haven't been in for several months, have you been ill?" She asked. "No, No," I replied, "I've been out of the country for the last couple of months and only got back a few days before coming down."

I'd finished my beer and Sue was getting up to get me a refill when Harry appeared at the door. He was all smiles when he saw me. Coming over to the table, he took off his topcoat and draped it over an extra chair. When the Bar isn't busy, we keep a chair for Sue. Harry sat down, looking at me, "Well?" he asked, What about the contract?"

Sue arrived with a pitcher and the usual three glasses, sat down, then filled our glasses as Harry asked, "Did you bring a copy for me? I looked at him with a shocked look on my face. "You know I can't do that, it hasn't been released yet. Who should know this better then you?" I responded.

"All right, all right, so is it any good? Or are they going back to D.C.?" He must have other sources of information, I thought to myself. "Well," I started, "Wages and Pensions for the actives have big increases. There are some troublesome parts in my view, but I could be wrong. I know that Big Bob and the negotiating committee did the best they could and if we don't want the feds to take over. we need to accept this contract." Harry was leaning into the table with a frown on his face. He asks, "What troubles you about it? "Well, I'll start with the Pension, two contracts ago, the Caucus agreed that the tiers needed to be reduced, and they did that. But the contract of 2008, they expanded them again, up to five tiers. Though they did combine two tiers, they then added one. And the widows, why couldn't they bring them up to a more livable income? But don't get me started on that." I continue after draining my beer. "But the thing about the pensions that I'm most concerned about is the funding. As you are aware, now the pensions are funded

by man hours worked. With mechanization, man hours will be reduced, and I expect, we will draw down the funds to the point that there isn't enough money coming in to maintain the levels needed."

Both Harry and Sue were nodding, (in agreement?) When a group comes in and Sue jumps up to serve them. "What else?" asks Harry. "Another area that I find troubling is the change in the arbitration system. We are going from one per area to three per area." "How will that work?" Asks Harry. "Each side will put up three names per area and the other side will select one of the three. The third arbitrator will come from outside the industry. Actually they must be on the FMCS or AAA labor arbitrators rosters, and can not be lawyers, hoping they will be neutral. All the arbitrators will need reappointment at the end of each contract." Sue has returned with a fresh pitcher, and I fill my glass, drain it and refill it. "As I see it, for this to work, our LRC's will need to do a more diligent job preparing for these arbitrations, and the arbitrators will actually use the contract in the rulings thus avoiding being overturned by the Coast Arbitrator."

Harry is sitting back in his chair, contemplating what I've just told him. "It was a great system that we set up with the help of Sam Kagel. It was one that most unions would have liked to duplicate." he said. "Yes," I respond, "but in your time, The PMA was headed by honorable men who knew the industry. Today, the PMA are all lawyers and are controlled by foreign companies."

Sue is looking at me with a quizzical expression, "Why do we let them control us like that?" she asks.

Harry was fidgeting, glancing at the clock. His time is limited, but he wanted to continue the conversation. Harry interrupts, "Lets get back to the funding of pensions. Are they thinking about it? "Oh yes," I respond, "Apparently our people tried to get it into the contract, I'm told Bob kept dropping the dollar value to as low as one dollar per ton. The PMA was adamant that we get nothing in the contract." Harry sighs, glances at the clock, rising and reaching for his top coat, "I've got to go, you've got to keep me updated so come back soon and I'll keep an eye out for you." With those parting words, he was gone.

Sue immediately starts to figure out the bill, then hands it to me. I shrug, open my wallet and give her a big tip as she smiles at me.

Spring 2015 P.C.P.A. Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board met on March 29, 2015 in San Francisco. As President Austin had spent the last ten months as our representative on the contract negotiations, he had very little to report other then it was a struggle to get anything out of the PMA. When negotiations started, both sides had thought we would come out with a two or three year contract. So, when they had rapped up the Welfare portion, the employers hadn't pushed on the affordable Healthcare Act's "Cadillac" Tax, and who would pay for it. When the MOU was completed, and was agreed on a five year contract, it must have been over looked. So the PMA will have to cover it.

Greg Mitre reported on his activities with the International. Because of his skill in the Spanish language, he has been instrumental in working with the Panama Division. He reported that he and Vice-President Familathe have been meeting with the Longshore workers on both the East and West Coasts of Panama, and they are affiliating with the Pilots. Hopefully that brings in another 3000 members. Hopefully. they will be in attendance at our International Convention this June.

All areas reported on the work and conditions of respective areas. As our Alternate, I reported on the lack of work in Seattle, but that will change with the Cruise Ships starting up in May with 192 calls through the season. I also told them about the lease that the Port signed with Shell Oil for 47 acres at Terminal 5 for two years.

Our brother from Southern California reported on the congestion and trouble moving containers on and off the docks. He also reported that the half of the Tra Pac terminal that has been automated is riddled with problems. The Company will work the ships for one or two shifts at the automated side, then shift them over to the manned side to complete the discharge and load.

Both Rich. Austin and George Cobbs announced that they will not run for reelection in September. It is rumored that Greg Mitre will run for President, and Mike Jagielski will run for Greg's position, (Treasurer.) I had suggested to George that he might consider staying on as Vice-President for another year to help with the change in leadership.

Respectfully yours,

Ian Kennedy

Fínal Díspatch

Pensioners & Actives

Survivors

Kenneth Wooding 19 Ron Roughton 19 Arni Scheving 19 Gary Strong 19 Roger G. Ulrich, Sr. 19 William J. Arthur Sr. 19 Jimmy Picinich 19 Georgia Henslee 19 Pauline Harrison 19 Catherine Ryan 19 Annette Hanke 98 Violette Gradias 52 Ruth Alexander 98

CONVENTION CALL

The PCPA convention will be held in San Francisco at the Holiday Inn, Golden Gateway, this coming September 7th, 8th, and 9th, 2015. Contact the Seattle Pensioners' office for registration forms and more information. (206) 623-7461 Ex. 7106.

Correspondence

From the **EDITORIAL BOARD**, Due to the lack of space, we could not print all the correspondence that we received for this issue. The correspondence that we couldn't print will be in the next issue. We thank you for your continued support!

From **DON BURFITT**, \$10.00 for 2015 assessment. Thank you **DON**.

From **GEORGE and TERI STARKE III**, \$56.00 for 2014 and 2015 dues and a donation of \$200.00 to the Rusty Hook in memory of her father, **BROTH-ER TED LEONARD**. Thank you so much **GEORGE AND TERI**. **TED** will always be remembered.

From JACK and DIANNE FAIRBANKS, \$100.00 donation to the Rusty Hook in memory of BILLY FAIRBANKS. Thank you, thank you JACK and DIANNE. BILL is still with us in our hearts.

From **DON BRADY**, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$22.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you **DON**.

From **NORM HANSEN**, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$22.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thanks so much **NORM**.

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Correspondence

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From GARY EPPERSON, \$28.00 for 2015 dues

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From **MARY FULLER**, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$72.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thanks **MARY**.

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Correspondence

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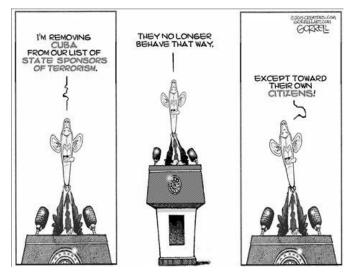
From **MIKE CASO**, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$72.00 for donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you **MIKE**.

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From **GEORGE ANDERSON**, \$10.00 for 2015 assessment and \$90.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you **GEORGE**.



Correspondence

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From ALEX BAROUMES, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$72.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thanks ALEX.

From JOHN LEWICKI, \$10.00 for 2015 assessment and \$40.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thanks JOHN.

From CHARLIE McBRIDE, \$10.00 for 2015 assessment and \$90.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you CHARLIE.

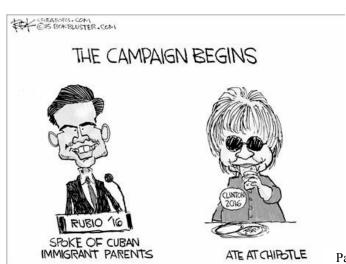
From DICK GUNDERSON, \$100.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you so much DICK & JOAN.

From STEVE NOE, \$56.00 for 2015 and 2016 dues and \$100.00 donation to the Rusty Hook in memory of BROTHER RON ROUGHTON. Thank you STE-VE. IAN doesn't drink all of the beer, HARRY does.

From HERB LENZ, \$56.00 for 2015 & 2016 dues and \$44.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you HERB.

From WAYNE ERICKSON, \$28.00 for 2015 dues and \$22.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you WAYNE & ANN.

From AL BARNES, \$112.00 for 2014, 2015, 2016, & 2017 dues and \$100.00 donation to the Rusty Hook. Thank you so much AL.



In Memorial

In the Late 1800's, when a cargo ship entered the Salish Sea, (Puget Sound is a part of the Salish Sea,) it would take on Longshoremen at it's first port of call to work all the ports in this area.

In late May or early June, of 1886, the "Queen of the Pacific" put into Seattle and took on six Stevedores, Charter members of the newly established "Seattle Stevedores, Longshoremen and Riggers Union, (The predecessor of ILWU Local 19.) Through out June and July, the vessel discharged and loaded cargo in Puget Sound, working it's way into British Columbia.

On the morning of July 29th, the ship was at the coal dock in Nanaimo, British Columbia. The six Seattle longshoremen were winging coal into the corners of the lower hold. At five minutes before noon, as a load of coal hit the deck of the lower hold, a explosion shook the ship for and aft as a sheet of flames flashed up from the hold that our six were working. Our brothers, Hanson, Johnson, Kade, McDonald, Priestly and Robee were engulfed in flames. Besides the six longshoremen, eight seamen were also severely burnt. The injured were taken by Horse drawn wagons to Nanaimo Hospital where doctors worked around the clock to try to save them. In the end, only three seamen survived the coal dust explosion.

The six members of the Seattle Stevedores, Longshoremen and Riggers Union were buried in a cemetery in Nanaimo, and the Union, wanting to express it's gratitude to the people of Nanaimo, installed a plaque at the gravesite.

129 years later, the plaque has disintegrated, with the help of the Vancouver Island Pensioners and Dr. Ron Magden, the Seattle Pensioners Club has located the grave sites and with the help of local 19, Southern California Pensioners, and the PCPA, as well as some individuals, have commissioned and had installed, a monument with a duplicate bronze plaque made by Ron Gustin.

We will be dedicating the site on the 129th anniversary of the accident, July 29, 2015. We wish to invite you to join us at the dedication in Nanaimo. Anyone interested may call the Pensioners office and let us know of your interest and we will keep you informed of our completed plans. (206) 923-7481 Ex 7106.

Seattle ILWU Pensioner's Club Annual Luncheon Thursday, May 21, 2015 White Center Eagles 10452 – 15th Ave. S.W. White Center, WA 98146 Social Hour 11:00-11:45a.m. No Host Bar Guest Speakers 11:45-12:30 Lunch @ 12:30 \$20.00 per person

All Active members, pensioners, and family are invited to attend our annual luncheon. If you have never been to our Luncheon, this is a great opportunity to have lunch and visit with our pensioners, old friends, and buddies you have worked with for many years.

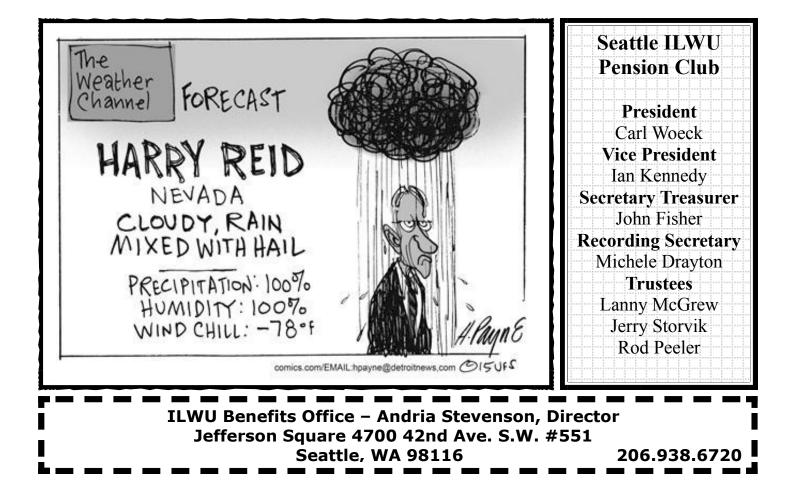
Tickets can be purchased at the Pensioner's Club @ Local 19 on Monday, Wednesday, & Friday between 9:00 am & 12:30 pm. You may also order by phone, 206-623-7461.

SEE YOU THERE !!!! Please respond by May 15, 2015

> Seattle Pensioner's Club 3440 E. Marginal Way S. Seattle, WA 98134

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