



November 2008

## HAWAII Newsletter

# A Death in the Neighborhood

A fatal industrial accident occurred at PSC Industrial Outsourcing Co, a subsidiary of Phillips Services Corp on Tuesday afternoon, Oct 7, 2008. The Phillips plant reconditions used fuel oils at their facility across the street from our North Tank Farm. The plant was undergoing a shutdown for repairs when the accident occurred.

At about 1:30 pm, a worker was welding rails onto a 9,500 gallon fuel oil tank when he paused to ask a co-worker to adjust his welding machine. The tank exploded just a few feet away. The tank contained an estimated 8,000 to 9,000 gallons of reconditioned motor oil. It did not catch fire but was launched over a concrete wall and landed about 30 feet away in the yard of Bonded Materials Co.

A 23 yr old welder from Waipahu, Sean Norva was killed, when he was blasted over 100 feet into the side of a pickup truck parked at Bonded Materials Co next door. Paramedics pronounced him dead at the scene of "extensive multisystem trauma". Three others workers were injured and sent to area hospitals.

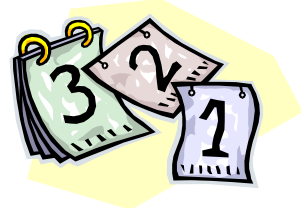
Sean and one of the injured men worked for Panco, a subcontractor for Phillips. Another of the injured worked for American International Industrial Installations, also a Phillips contractor. The third injured man was employed by Bonded Materials Co next door.

Sean had married his wife, Kimberly Anne, just two weeks before. They had recently moved from Las Vegas to Waipahu where Sean had grown up and graduated from high school. The couple were planning a keiki lu'au celebration for their son Khelan James next month.

Separate investigations are being done by Honolulu Fire Dept and the state Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Occupational, Safety & Health division.

Sean had worked in our refinery last summer. Safety Technician Josh Capello remembers Sean when he gave him his refinery Safety Orientation Lance Suehiro worked with Sean on the Sulfur Priller and remembers him as "a good kid, a hard worker".

# Contract Countdown To 02/01/09

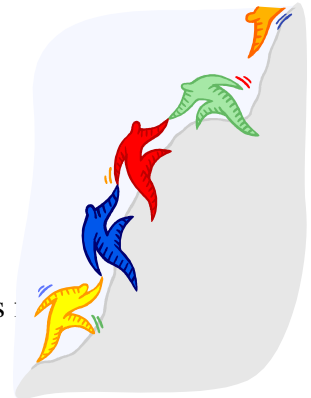


As of Halloween, 10/31/08 there are 93 days (7 paydays) left in our Contract

Our contract ends just 93 days after Halloween. The best way to avoid a strike is to prepare for one. The Union encourages each member to diligently save 3 months wages between now and February 1, 2009. That's 7 paydays away, counting our Halloween payday.

For those Union members carrying the Union Plus credit card, remember there is a skip-payment plan available to members during union sanctioned strikes and lockouts of 30 consecutive days or more. Finance charges continue to accrue, but no penalty fees apply. You can skip up to three consecutive months!

## Mahalo for your Kokua!



The USW 12-591 would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contribution in helping their Union brothers and sisters:

Erick Leong  
Paul Hamada  
Norman Ablao  
Glen Furumizo  
Clay Deaver

Bobby Bell  
Dean Hirata  
Dennis Mosher  
Rodney Shimata  
Dennis Bondocoy

James Reese

# Tesoro Anacortes Employees Win Turnover Pay \$\$\$

by Butch Cleve

Last year, two Anacortes retirees filed a class-action suit against Tesoro for refusing to pay hourly employees for shift turnover, donning and doffing. Tesoro disagreed with the plaintiffs' position (naturally), but agreed to participate in mediation, before the parties argued the case before a judge.

I'm happy to report that the retirees have settled their suit, for just less than \$1 million. After attorneys' fees, each of the 250 hourly employees covered by the suit should receive about \$3000. While that is not a lot of money, the real gain will be from this point forward; Tesoro will have to modify their pay practices to avoid being sued for the same thing in the future.

Also, FYI- OSHA started a National Emphasis Program (N.E.P.) audit of our facility a few weeks ago. Their focus will be on our Catalytic Reformer/Naphtha Hydrotreater, Flare system, atmospheric blowdowns and the Alkylation plant. Again, more as it's available

Butch

# Shell Strike of 1956



## OCAW 1-591 History Series; Segment 1

as researched by Douglas W. Erlandson

On March 17, 1956, 320 members of OCAW 1-591 took a strike vote to enter into a labor dispute against Shell Oil of Anacortes. The Union was seeking its first ever collectively bargained agreement. The major points of contention were, a seniority clause, wages and a grievance procedure.

The strike vote passed by a 93% margin. Voting in favor were 269 with 18 voting no.

OCAW District 1 Director Charles Armin was on site to help the newly organized Local with their negotiations. International Representative Courtland Myers was assigned to lead the negotiations. As President, Robert Thurmond chaired the union's negotiating committee. (In 1956, 1-591 was not 'amalgamated', as Shell was the local's only employer.) The remaining committee members were, Vice-President Gene Stender, Secretary Ed Snyder, Harold Yeoman, Tom McCormick and Berlin Carr.



Unlike today's strikes, Shell Oil shutdown the newly built \$75,000,000 refinery. An undisclosed number of salaried workers and executives remained inside, being quartered in Pullman cars. OCAW picketers Bob May and Virgil Avey were Local 1-591's first picketers. They were on site and picketing within 10 minutes after hearing the news that the 'pin had been pulled'. OCAW maintained pickets 24 hours a day outside the refinery. Both sides prepared for a long dispute. Shell Oil was offering a 6% general wage increase with a minimum of 15 cents hourly.

The present scale was \$1.96 to \$2.54. The union was seeking the "Gulf Coast" rate, ranging from \$2.25 to \$2.90.

OCAW received immediate support from other local unions. The Anacortes Central Labor Council agreed not to allow any of their members to cross the OCAW picket line and the strike was unanimously endorsed by the Skagit Valley Building Trades Council.

To help OCAW members affected by the strike, the union set a 'Strike Benefit Committee' that was chaired by Berlin Carr. A food voucher program was set up with Mutt Jackson the manager of 'Tradewell', who's grocery store was conveniently located across the street from the union hall. The Benefit Committee also helped members by paying their electric power bills. Executive Board member Harold Yeoman visited many of the local banks to inform them before hand, that some of the striking members would probably be falling behind on their loans but everything would be made right when the strike ended.



On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Federal Mediator William Hosie contacted Shell Oil and OCAW to schedule a preliminary meeting to discuss the differing issues between the two parties. Both agreed to the mediation offer.

By now the entire community was passionately wrapped up in the dispute and was hoping an early, amicable settlement would be reached. Shell Oil began mailing job offers to the striking OCAW members, offering work to anyone willing to cross the picket line. They also began taking out newspaper ads advertising job vacancies to the community at large as well as out of county solicitations. Twice Shell tried to bring in new employees without telling them that they would have to cross a picket line. Almost all of them immediately quit when they found out there was a labor dispute in progress.

Eventually some OCAW members did scab the picket line. The most vocal was Guy Vaughn Lewis Jr. He had informed the union through the local newspaper of his intention to cross the picket line. Several 'Letters to the Editor' were printed on the subject from both parties. By all accounts, the union had the community's support. Shell continued their position by taking out huge newspaper ads, presenting the facts as they saw them. The union then set up a Public Relations Committee and answered them by 'Letters to the Editor' and newspaper ads of their own

As might be expected Mr. Lewis then became a target of the union members. On one occasion, while driving through the line, Lewis claimed Arthur Beacham struck his car with a metal object, scratching it. He then filed a complaint with authorities which later lead to Mr. Beacham being arrested. The case later went to court, where a crowded court room heard testimony from four witnesses for the defense, and two for the prosecutor. Beacham was found guilty and fined \$35.

Up until now, OCAW had allowed contractors to pass through the picket line, but on April 9th, all but two passes were revoked by the union. President Thurmond stated that, 'Shell was trying to



demoralize the membership by having contractors cross the line as well as trying to provoke picket line violence.'

In early June, the committee took Shell's latest, revised offer to the membership for a vote. Upwards to 225 members were on hand. After a long meeting wherein each page was read, point by point, the members voting by secret ballot, rejected the offer nearly unanimously. The disagreement remained over wages, seniority, scheduling, hospital insurance, vacations, union security, and the grievance procedure. A quick settlement was not in sight.

Support money started to come in from other Labor organizations. OCAW District 1 donated a whopping \$1000! International Rep Myers stated that in all his years in the labor movement he had never seen such strong public support. Every trade union in the area had sanctioned the strike and was giving their full support.

By now the wives of the strikers were very active. They helped show a unified OCAW by serving food and coffee to the picketers around the clock. And they started collecting coffee can rims to get a free 30 cup coffee pot from 'MJB' for the union hall. 75 lids were needed and when it became obvious the women's support group wasn't going to be able to collect enough, 'MJB' was contacted and they were very gracious and gave them one.

In a desperate move to get the plant up and running, Shell went to Oak Harbor to recruit help from a group of soon to be discharged Navy crewmen. Shell was able to hire about 30 sailors offering them a terrific future with the company. But the refinery needed about 300 employees to operate it properly. They then tried to recruit summer help from among some college students. Shell graciously pointed out to them that this would be a great way to raise the tuition money they would need for college. Several tried but soon quit. The passage through the picket line proved to be too traumatic.



On May 28th, Al Noyes, a scab Shell employee returning to his home in Burlington was critically injured at 2am when a large rock crashed through his windshield striking him in the head. Noyes was discovered unconscious in his automobile on the Avon cutoff to Burlington. According to the Sheriff's department, the stone was five inches in diameter. Noyes was taken to a Skagit county hospital and then to Swedish Hospital in Seattle, later he lost the sight in his left eye. Sheriff Harold Hinshaw described the incident a case of 'definite foul play.' Shell Oil offered a huge \$5000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the attack. Authorities were never able to connect anyone with the incident.

At a well attended membership meeting, the committee reported that some progress was being made. The company had offered a contract in California that had recently been

accepted there. Although it had numerous items that came up short, it was an improvement over the company's first proposal in Anacortes. Shell continued to mail out 'back to work' offers to the strikers as well as offer jobs to the community. The number of 'takers' was less than ten. Most of them quit within 2 or 3 days.

Financial support for the striking local continued! OCAW locals 1-6, 1-356, 1-589, 1-120, 1-519, 1-128, 2-477 and 4-367 all sent regular monthly contributions. Money was received from the Washington State CIO Council, Spokane Labor Council, United Steel Workers of America and the Pulp & Sulfite Workers Union. Many of the locals raised their dues to 'back' the Anacortes Shell group. In the spirit of solidarity, Canada's OCAW District Council generously donated \$1000 to the strikers as well. Even the Sheep Shearers Union made a financial contribution, even though almost no one knew they even existed.

To help resolve the dispute, a 'Citizens Conciliatory Committee' was put together. This unique committee was made up of 8 local business men who had the respect of both management and labor. The committee members were Jerry Mansfield, Fred Cartwright, Scott Richards, Bill McCracken, Lloyd Foster, Rufus Fox, Dick Wilson, and Ivar Antonius. Above all else, they remained impartial as they explored ways that might help resolve the strike. The committee met with Shell, with the union and with Mediator Hosie. Never jointly, always separately. The committee's efforts were a vital factor in the two parties reaching a tentative agreement.



On July 22nd the strike settlement agreement was signed by International Representative Courtland Meyers, Chairman R.E. Thurmond and Shell Oil.  
The 122 day strike was officially brought to a close.

The gains won the union were: a good seniority clause, grievance procedure, improved contract reopening language, improved vacation plan, a shop steward system, safety language, even rain gear, all of which are still enjoyed by OCAW members today. The wage issue however, remained unchanged from the original company offer.

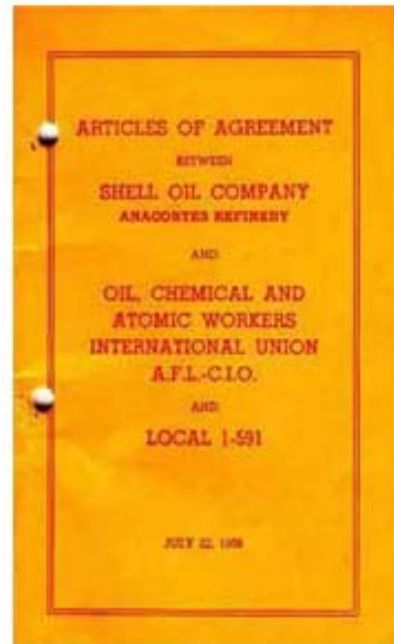
On the morning of July 24th the ex-strikers returned to work in unison. They were met by R.C. Barton, Refinery Manager and A.D. Northcutt, Personnel Manager. There were many smiles and much handshaking. Coffee was served by the company.

At the large gathering President Thurmond thanked the members of local 1-591 and their wives, OCAW International, fellow oil workers from other OCAW locals, trade unions and labor organizations, as well as the community for their faithful support. 'Everyone's support helped bring the strike to an end'.

Upon returning to work, the ex-strikers all received a retroactive pay check that was part of the settlement agreement the union was able to get Shell to agree to.



From Company-imposed work rules... to



Our first negotiated contact.

**Want this prize?**



Answer the question:

***What nation produces 2/3rds  
of the world's vanilla?***

The first 10 people to email the  
correct answer to

[usw.hawaii@gmail.com](mailto:usw.hawaii@gmail.com) will  
have their name entered into a  
drawing for a car magnet.

# *USW Health, Safety and Environment Conference*

Pittsburgh, PA - 2008

By Dennis Bondocoy



I do not think it is workers' responsibility to provide a safe workplace. I believe we have every right to have a very safe work environment; not only for ourselves but for our families and our communities. We do not want to be, at the very least, contaminating our homes and children with harmful chemicals. We do not want them to suffer taking care of a lifeless dad or mom.

The first day of the conference was a union-only meeting. It was a wakeup call for me. It was about safety activism. *We have the responsibility to actively participate to improve our workplace Health, Safety and Environment.* We should knock on management's door to make things better for us. If they don't listen, we don't give up.

We don't give up and we ask help. We ask help from our fellow brothers from other Tesoro locations, from other TOP sites, from OSHA, from our senators, even from members of our family and of the community.

Where do we begin? We recently implemented a safety suggestion program that is continuously being improved. As discussed in August's joint Safety Health Committee meeting, management is looking for better rewards for good suggestions. Our union has the Safety Complaint form to document our complaints and recommendations.

We should understand that management decisions are constrained by budget and governing laws. We hardly influence budget decisions or appointments of a new Maintenance Manager, but we can select our local and national leaders. They can change the way we do things. When you vote, exercise your voice and be sure that whoever you vote for understands our situation and protects not only the businessman, but our industries as well.

Safety activism starts with us: for ourselves, our families and our communities.



# TOPs News

Hello all, I hope all is well. The following is an update of what is going on with the TOP Program:

- ✓ There have been 101 TOP Investigations so far this year
- ✓ 97 out of the 101 investigations are closed out
- ✓ Of the 4 not closed out, 2 are in review and 2 are in progress
- ✓ There have been 3 Lessons Learned published
- ✓ There have been 6 TOP Perspective Near Miss Summary Reports published
- ✓ The 97 investigations closed have led to 109 Recommended Action Items
- ✓ 57 out of the 109 Recommended Action Items are closed out (A handful are due by the end of the year)
- ✓ 0 Investigations and Action Items past due
- ✓ As of October, our year to date TOP Rate is 1.47

## **The following is some highlighted Recommended Action Items:**

### **SOS FAILURE: Design & Engineering**

- **Consider how to improve the quality of work practices to ensure safe execution of work.** Consider implementing a system to facilitate better communication to and between Operations and Maintenance/crafts. Improve planning on preparing equipment for maintenance and consider developing "Operations Work Package" to include preparation instruction, blind list and LOTO for each piece of equipment. Under 1910.147, OSHA requires that each piece of equipment have its own LOTO procedures.

**Status:** Open

**Due Date:** End of November

**Responsible Person(s):** J. Ran/J. Moscatello

- Develop a Refinery Policy that establishes a clear and consistent labeling standard for refinery equipment in accordance with ASME code A13.1-2007, Scheme for the Identification of Piping Systems, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Code 30: Flammable and Combustible Liquids and NFPA Code 704: Standard System for the Identification of the Hazards of Materials for emergency Response. Equipment technical identification numbers of piping, valve's, process equipment, tanks and electrical equipment should be consistent with P & ID's and Operating Procedures.
- Develop a plan to implement the labeling standard policy/program once it is in place.

**Status:** Open

**Due Date:** End of December

**Responsible Person(s):** J. Ran/J. Moscatello/B. Whitfield

- **SOS - Design & Engineering(Work Organization/Codes, Policies and Procedures)**: In correlation with PSM-6: Contractor Safety Management Program, Develop a consistent system between Tesoro Representatives and Contractors that covers the **planning, preparation, communication and documentation** that the job is understood and can be executed safely.

**Status:** Open

**Due Date:** End of December

**Responsible Person(s):** J. Moscatello/M. Turina

- **SOS - Design & Engineering(Work Environment)**: Examine why systems that are in place are not executed to produce safe and quality work. Look at possible solutions to improve the current work culture.

**Status:** Open

**Due Date:** End of December

**Responsible Person(s):** B. Whitfield

## Incident Description

An open flare header flange potentially exposed three contractors and a shift supervisor to H<sub>2</sub>S and/or Flare gas. The exposure caused no injury. The contractor exposure occurred when one of the contractors mistakenly opened the flare header flange to insert a blind. The shift supervisor may have been exposed when responding to the incident.

**(Please refer to D-1315 diagram on pg. 2)**

Operations, maintenance and the contractors were preparing D-1315 for inspection entry. Two contractor companies would prepare the top of the vessel. The PSV contractor would remove the PSV and install blinds on that line. This job required fresh air as the PSV discharges to the flare header. The PSV had isolation valves on its inlet and outlet sides, and the PSV Contractor would insert blinds immediately after removing the PSV.

The second contractor would install a blind on the process outlet, remove the manway valve, attach a special davit blind to that flange, and remove the manway bolts. This work allows swing the manway using the davit out of the way.

The job plan required the PSV contractor to complete its blinding of the live flare header system prior to the second contractor starting insertion of its blinds, and manway removal. The plan did not require the second contractor to use supplied fresh air.

On the morning of August 11, 2008, Operations removed the red tags on all 5 blind tags on the D-1315 upper deck. This signals that the flange upon which it is hung is ready to be safely blinded. It is not clear where the blind tags were hung. This could have been on a stud on each blind, or an adjacent valve.

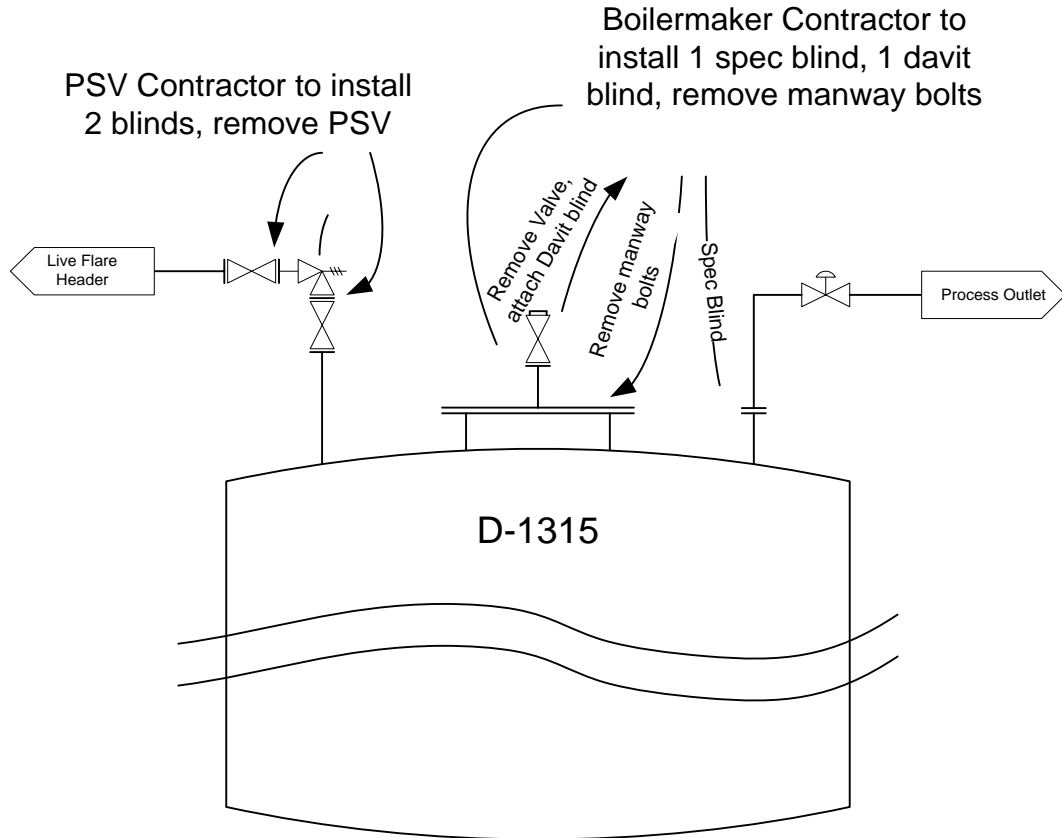
The PSV Contractors climbed D-1315 to remove the PSV. The PSV contractor hot-bolted the PSV's inlet and outlet flanges. Hot-bolting involves replacing old studs and nuts on a flange with new ones, one at a time. Maintenance and contractors commonly practice hot-bolting on fresh-air jobs as a good practice, and does not require work under supplied fresh air.

Upon completion of hot bolting, the fresh air cart was not available to start the PSV removal and blinding. The PSV contractor left the D-1315 deck to work on another job. They did not communicate with the Shift Supervisor on the status of the job.

The Shift Supervisor performed a D-1315 job-walk with the Boilermaker Contractor Foreman. The job included 2 blinds at grade, and 2 blinds and a manway removal on the top deck of D-1315. The S/S pointed out the upper deck portion of the job to the Foreman, but did not climb the vessel during the job walk.

The Foreman later climbed D-1315, and saw 5 blind tags hanging. The Foreman asked the S/S if the job was for 5 blind tags and not 3. The S/S clarified that it was only 3 blinds as described previously in this report.

After the PSV Contractor had left, the S/S directed the Foreman to install the three blinds. The S/S thought that the PSV blinding job was complete. The Foreman then directed three Boilermaker Contractors (Contractors "A", "B", and "C"), who reported to him, to begin the blinding job on the upper deck. The Foreman did not do a job walk on the upper deck with the three contractors reporting to him.



The three Contractors climbed D-1315 to start the blind installation. The Contractors found 4 blind tags hung with the red tag removed. Two hung off the valves on either side of the PSV, one on the manway, and one on the outlet flange. It is not clear what happened to the second one on the manway. It may have blown off.

Contractor A saw the blind tag hung on the PSV outlet valve, and began loosening the flare header flange adjacent to that blind tag. Contractor B began working on the manway bolts just downwind of Contractor A. Contractor C began pulling up tools to the upper deck of D-1315.

When Contractor A opened the flange, the flange hissed, and Contractor B's H2S personal monitor went off. Contractor A realized the flange was live, and directed Contractors B and C to go down to grade level.

The S/S saw the Contractors B and C coming down D-1315 ladder, and that Contractor A was "bobbing and weaving" on the top. Contractor A appeared to the S/S to be removing bolts from the flare header flange. The S/S directed him (from grade) to stop immediately. Contractor A was actually bolting the flange back up, but moved away. The S/S immediately climbed D-1315 to the top deck to investigate. He cannot remember if he talked to Contractors B and C.

The S/S had his ITX multi-gas meter on, and did not detect any H<sub>2</sub>S or LEL on the deck. He observed the wind blowing strongly from the Northeast, and approached the flange from upwind. The S/S could still hear the flange header hissing. As the wind was strong, and the ITX did not detect any gas, the S/S and Contractor A resumed bolting up the flare header flange.

The ITX meter did go off when the S/S braced himself with his leg downwind of the flange leak. The ITX meter was on his side near that leg, but his head was still upwind of the leak. The S/S reached down for an additional stud, and his personal H<sub>2</sub>S meter went off. The S/S and the contractor continued to close the flange, and the hissing stopped. All the flange studs and nuts were tightened. The flange no longer leaked.

## Investigative Findings

- ✓ Operations did not follow the blind tag procedure (Refinery Procedure Manual Procedure PSM 12.4) when the red portion of the manway and vessel outlet blind tags was removed prior to the fresh air job completion.
- ✓ The S/S and the Foreman did not perform a job walk on the D-1315 deck to identify which blind tags were his responsibilities.
- ✓ The Foreman and his direct report contractors did not perform a job walk on the D-1315 deck to identify which blind tags were their responsibilities.
- ✓ The blind tags were hung on valves adjacent to the flanges, not on the flange itself.
- ✓ The Contractor assumed the blind tag hung on the PSV downstream block valve referred to the downstream live flare flange.
- ✓ The live flare flange had no label, or warning label.
- ✓ There was poor coordination between the 2 sets of contractors.

## Recommended Corrective Actions

1. Institute the best practice of developing job-specific equipment isolation drawings for quick reference and use during job walks.
2. Include provisions in the Blind Tag Procedure (or elsewhere if appropriate) to:
  - When applicable, complete Supplied Fresh Air blind installation prior to regular blind installation.
  - Hang the blind tags directly on the flange to which they refer.
  - Include a Job Walk provision for installing blinds
  - Consider other methods of attaching blind tags on the flanges to which they refer, for example:

1. Welding a small tab to the flange to hang the blind tag
  2. Taping/Attaching it to the pipe pointing to the flange (etc.)
3. Create Quality Control provisions for contractor work to:
- Ensure that Contractors (especially Foremen of contract crews) fully understand and comply with Tesoro job specific procedures such as LOTO, Blind Tag and First Break procedures.
  - Document checks (e.g. auditing, testing) for contractors' understanding of job-specific procedures beyond safety orientation.
  - Ensure that all members fully understand the sequence and coordination of steps when multiple crafts or contractors work on the same job/equipment.
4. Reinforce with Operations/Maintenance/Technical/Contractors the importance of Job Walks in the Safe Work and LOTO processes.
5. Review the Blind Tag Procedures with Operations with an emphasis of only pulling red tags immediately prior to work beginning.
6. Consider creating Live Flare Header warning labels and installing them downstream of each flare isolation valve.

What we measure...is what we FIX!

"Keep It Simple,  
Keep It Right!"

# CLEAR CLASS SCHEDULE – Nov 2008

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**LABOR AND PAYCHECK ECONOMICS:** 4 sessions. We will look at who are rich (and how they got there), who are in the middle class (and how they got there) and the poor (and how they got there). This class covers income distribution; how income is determined in theory and practice, taxes, recessions; unemployment and inflation. L. Boyd, Ph.D.

UHWO, CLEAR Room 403  
6:30 to 9:00 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Nov. 13, 18, 20 and 25  
Course Fee: \$35.00

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**ULP's:** 5 sessions. Learn how to recognize, document and write up "Unfair Labor Practices" under the National Labor Relations Act in three core contexts: Organizing, Bargaining, and Representation. Instructor: W. Puette, Ph.D.

UHWO, CLEAR Room 403  
6:30 to 9:00 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays  
Nov. 24 and 26; and Dec. 1, 3 and 8  
Course Fee: \$40.00

To enroll in any of the CLEAR classes, you need to submit an enrollment form with payment to CLEAR as early as possible. Ten dollar (\$10) late registration fee per class will be charged for enrollments received less than seven (7) days prior to first night of class. Fee payment (payable to: University of Hawaii) will be returned only if you withdraw 10 days prior to the first night of class or where the class is canceled.

It is important to register in advance. Classes not sufficiently enrolled one week prior to commencement will be canceled.

Contact CLEAR at:

CLEAR  
University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu  
96-043 Ala 'Ike, Bldg. 400  
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# Hope & Goodwill



Milton Napuunoa was involved car accident, he is back to work good to see he alright.  
Mike Vegas still out due to surgery, get well Mike!

## 2008 USW 12-591 PICNIC

by Jon-Michael Kalima

I am here relaxing at the Seattle International Airport waiting for my return flight home. Reflecting on a picnic celebration that I have not seen for many years, where families and friends gathered. New friendships were forged and old ones renewed, and worker pride and solidarity came together for one special day. I must be honest, prior to Jason's request I was both hesitant and reluctant to travel to Seattle. With negotiations coming up, second step grievances pending, and family issues it was hard to commit to travel during this busy period, but as reservations were confirmed and the departure date approached I grew excited to venture to a new state and meet with my new Union Brothers and Sisters.

My departure on Hawaiian Airlines' direct flight to Seattle went smooth and without a hitch. The flight was short and uneventful due to the ease at which the flight crew made everyone feel. On arrival I was a bit disoriented (which is not anything new if you know me) and after a short discussion with the rental car agent I got my crap together and was headed off towards Anacortes in the pitch black Washington night. The drive seemed to take forever, and with the anticipation of things to come (and just wanting to take a shower!) I finally arrived at Cap Santee Inn in Anacortes at one o'clock in the morning.

Bright and early the next day I took advantage of the clear blue sky and crisp morning ocean air to take a short walk to our Union Hall. Anacortes is a small island town accessible from the mainland via a half mile long bridge. Walking through the neighborhood there was no mistaking our Local headquarters proudly bearing a USW placard on the front. I was greeted with a warm “Hey Kalima”, from an open window on the ground floor of the two story building. This was my first face to face meeting with Erin, all of my past communication with Erin had been by telephone and it was really nice to finally put a face to the voice on the other end of phone line. Erin is currently our Local Office Manager and in my opinion with all the time and effort spent on union business she is the very heart and soul of our Local Union office. Erin made me feel very welcome and I would just like to say “Mahalo” for all of your help. After a brief tour of the hall I presented Erin with some items that were contributed by our Local Committee to be used as prizes for the picnic’s games and drawings. We talked for a short while before heading off to lunch and I got a long and detailed history of Erin’s favorite Band, “The Love Hammers”. Returning from lunch Joe Solomon and Brian Ricks came by to say “hi”, we spoke for a short while on many subjects including the upcoming Executive Board meeting.

Before leaving Hawaii, Jason and I had a small discussion on what my role was to be while being present during the Executive Board meeting. I had no idea who was going to be there or what was going to be discussed, only that I was there to be an observer, not an active participant. On Thursday I walked into the hall at 4:40 pm giving me enough time to meet the other Board Members. Present was Tom Lind, Joe Solomon, Brian Ricks, George Welch, Jim Caddell, Butch Cleve and Steven Garey. Jason soon called in and we quickly started the meeting. I was quickly impressed by the professionalism and ease at which the meeting was taking place and in a short while it was over. Several matters were discussed, issues were resolved, and uncertainties were shelved for a later period. Tom Lind guided me through the whole meeting and I was very appreciative.

Tom’s leadership and experience was very evident during the meeting. Calm and collected throughout the meeting, Tom is well respected by all those who attended the meeting. I on the other hand I was feeling a little uncomfortable with the unfamiliar surroundings, but I was listening and learning. I soon met an iconic figure in our Local, George Welch (Unit Chair for Shell Oil Puget Sound Refinery) he invited Tom and me to dinner at the local bowling alley. How could I refuse? Walking into the restaurant with Tom and George is like being in the presence of rock stars. Everyone from business owners and retirees, to past union representatives and everyday people came to greet and say “Hi”. Watching Tom and George interact with everyone showed me how important it is not only to this small island community, but possibly here in Hawaii that the Oil Refineries, the Unions, and the Politicians must all work together no matter the differences in our philosophies or agendas.

Friday I was given an invitation to attend a TOP Awareness class for new Shell Oil PSR employees. I was there as a Union Brother from across the Pacific here to spend the day observing. I was very impressed with the presentation that Joe Solomon, George Welch, Jim Caddell and Pat Mullen presented to the class. The interaction between the instructors and the class kept the attention of the class focused on the importance of TOP being an employee based safety program. After a few hours Joe broke away from the class to give me a tour of Shell Oil PSR’s firehouse and equipment. What a class act, you would not believe the equipment Shell

Oil PSR, but it all came at the cost of six Operator lives. Is this what it takes to get the proper training and equipment for the Kapolei VFB? For Shell Oil PSR it was. During my tour I met SOPSR Fire Chief Mike Knott, what a great guy, in the five years since he has taken over he has increased the ERB membership from 50 in 2004 to 197 present day members and he states the Team morale is probably at an all time high. I asked him what is his secret, Chief Mike stated that “a financial commitment from the Company with a Can and Will do philosophy by the Team members”. This is a man I think many would follow into a fire (to bad he’s salary).

On the day of the picnic, I arrived and was greeted with “hellos” and handshakes from my Union brothers and sisters along with their family and friends. The aromas from the BBQ pit area was setting my taste buds on overload, what a spread, oysters by the dozens, salmon by the case, beef by the pounds, refreshments by the gallons, need I say more. This picnic reminded me of family reunions that was being held at the park, where everyone is happy to see one another. I was very impressed with the hard work and commitment by the unsung volunteers that put their love and pride into a well organized Union picnic. After hours of handshakes and hellos, I was quickly whisked away by Tom Lind and his wife for a sunset experience at their mountain hideaway. Thirty minutes later I arrived at a brick house sitting on an 18 acre parcel of land, surrounded by beautiful trees and wide open spaces, with a breathtaking view. This is a dream house for a man and his wife to enjoy and the pride came from years of hard work. I was much honored to be given a chance to share in someone else’s dream if only for a little while. What a great day!

At 30,000 feet I am relaxed at the knowledge that the flight crew is in complete control and after my short stay, I believe that the Union Leadership is steering our best intentions on a clear path towards a common goal. Yes I was hesitant on coming on this trip, but I am coming away with some certainties. First, I have a better idea of the people who have started this Union and what kind of direction our leadership is taking us. Second, that I, your elected Committee Member, can relay to you that we are in capable hands doing what is necessary for the greater good of us all. Third, our Union is strong and vigilant. And finally fourth, I hope all of you get an opportunity to visit and attend an Executive Board Meeting at our Union Hall, the experience really enlightened me.

# Chairman's Column

by Jason Sakamoto



**“There will be no contract extension; we need to bargain.”**  
*Our International is in high gear getting ready for NOBP.*

Our International President, Brother Leo Gerard, told us on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> during the 2008 November Oil Bargaining conference that this will be the toughest negotiations we will have seen in over 20 years. He stated that if a member does not need a new car, don't buy one. If you don't need to buy a house or move, don't. Save your money was the cautionary warning he was expressing to everyone. During the oil bargaining conference in Nov '07, Brother Gary Beavers, International Vice-president in charge of Oil Bargaining, said “The oil companies are ready for us; we have to be ready for them.” “There will be no contract extension; we need to bargain.”

With that said I am taken aback when I hear of members who say they don't care what happens, obviously this is not true of you because you are reading this, I ask that you take a look around you at your peers to see if you recognize an individual who doesn't care. This will be one of the most important times in over 20 years for those represented people in this industry to maintain solidarity, for people to care and get involved. Would you let others decide if you strike or not? In the event of a strike, will this person who you work beside be one of those walking the picket line or will they be one of the few that will crossing the picket line? Just talking about the union with your fellow co-workers is being involved it prompts more questions and it lets people know what the issues are. We are expecting strategic strikes during this bargaining session will it be us? Only time will tell. We do know that Tesoro has in the past made their salaried people come around and try to learn our jobs; I have asked Al Anderson what Tesoro plans to do in the event of a strike he mentioned to me that the tank farms will be staying operational as a terminal and that the units will be brought down. Hopefully they have taken the stance that BP has taken, in that if negotiations should go badly they will take the plant to a safe place and after the bargaining has been completed the workers will return to restart the refinery. The reality is that if this turn of events is advantageous, Tesoro may decide not to restart the units. I have heard that if there is a strike Chevron may do the same.

In the coming months we will be having more special meetings to address issues confronting our future, if you are one of those who have said they needed to take care of family related things at the time of meetings, think about this, you are **taking care of your family** when you go to union meetings. We make arrangements for our family when we work, why not when we have to go to union meetings?

I have, for those interested a DVD of the former OCAW President Bob Wages explaining the National oil bargaining process. There are many other things that members are not aware of that can help during a strike like signing up for the Union Plus credit card with its advantages should we strike and as well as Mortgage plus. If you are about to take a trip (try to hold it off until next year) you might be surprised what we can get discounts on, be sure to go to this website: <http://legacy.usw.org/usw/program/content/3951.php> click on union plus. There is a new USW newsletter called The Oilworker, If you would like to receive it send your home email address to Julie Lidstone, tell her you work for Tesoro and what you do here, at [jlidstone@usw.org](mailto:jlidstone@usw.org).

Check out [www.oilbargaining.org](http://www.oilbargaining.org) for more information about the upcoming negotiations.

### **Updates**

The medical surveillance is still an ongoing issue related information has been relayed to higher levels within the union.

After our last union/management we have permission to use the USW patches, at our next meeting we will discuss the location.

In Solidarity,  
1-31-09,  
Jason

Don't forget to read our Local newsletter online at [www.usw12-591.org/newsletters.htm](http://www.usw12-591.org/newsletters.htm)  
You can also read past issues of this newsletter.

Read the AFL- CIO's LabelLetter at [www.unionlabel.org](http://www.unionlabel.org) and find Union-made goods and services.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter, send your email address to [leowitas@hotmail.com](mailto:leowitas@hotmail.com) .