

Illinois Labor History Society Reporter



Summer 2023
WWW.illinoislaborhistory.org

430 S. Michigan Avenue, Room 540AUD
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Labor Day! March proudly with your union!

Labor Day Events:

- Chicago Parade in Pullman
- Events Around Illinois

Reports:

- Haymarket Monument Defacing
- Joe Hill Performance
- Cook County Resolution
- May Day at Haymarket
- Coal Mining History
- Memorial Day Massacre Commemoration
- Pullman Railroad Days

Book Reviews:

- Memorial Day Massacre: Workers Die, Film Buried
- Girls Who Build
- Gilded Mountain

In Memoriam

At the ILHS Online Bookstore

Do You Know Your Labor History?

SAVE THE DATE! Union Hall of Honor — December 8, 2023



Bloomington, Illinois 2022 Labor Day Parade

All photo credits: Mike Matejka

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



The ILHS Annual Meeting was held July 13, electing Bleue Benton to the Board of Trustees and Jocelyn Woodards as our Recording Secretary. Benton is a retired Oak Park librarian and long-time ILHS volunteer. Woodards has been a member of the Board. Thanks to Ed Green, who has stepped down as Recording Secretary but continues as a board member. Many thanks to departing board members Elijah Edwards and Sarah Joy Liles for their service to the ILHS. Sarah contributed as our link to Pullman and the Debs Foundation.

An annual meeting highlight was when board member Tom Surhbur gave a presentation on historic Illinois educational organizing. Tom is currently completing a book on public education in Illinois and the Illinois Education Association's (IEA) history. Tom was an IEA organizer for 26 years. Tom's presentation included both the IEA and Illinois Federation of Teachers (AFT) and their deep roots in this state. Tom previously co-authored *Union Brotherhood, Union Town* about the United Brotherhood of Carpenters in Chicago, with labor historian, Richard Schneirov.

Tom reiterated how vital public education is to democracy. And democracy only flourishes where there are free trade unions. When fascism rears its ugly head,

unions and schools are the first targets. The hypocrites in our current society who wrap themselves in the flag and speak of liberty while attacking schools, libraries, and unions, are truly an anti-democratic force. Those who attempt to dismantle collective bargaining and emasculate unions are the same forces that promote corporate power, want to subjugate women and people of color, and tear down the wall between church and state. It is no coincidence that this is the majority opinion of the current Supreme Court!

This year, Chicago's Labor Day Parade will take place in Pullman. The ILHS and others have celebrated Labor Day in Pullman for over a decade. The ILHS looks forward to partnering with the Chicago Federation of Labor and the Pullman neighborhood for this event. Pullman is the story of America and an appropriate place to celebrate workers' rights and labor history. I look forward to seeing many of you during Labor Day weekend in Pullman!

In Solidarity,

Larry Spivack

Larry Spivack



1982 Labor Day Parade

Upcoming Events!

Chicago Labor Day Parade & Eddie Fest 2023



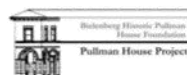
SATURDAY, SEPT. 2, 2023

TIME: Parade kicks off at 12 p.m.

ROUTE: 108th St. & Cottage Grove Ave., marching south to 113th St.

Eddie Fest will be held in Pullman Historic District from 1 - 6 p.m.

PRESENTED BY:



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER, VISIT CHICAGOLABORPARADE.COM

Mark your calendars for the Chicago Labor Day Parade & Eddie Fest on Saturday, September 2!

This year's parade kicks off at noon along Cottage Grove Ave. on Chicago's South Side in the Pullman neighborhood. Eddie Fest will immediately follow and be held on the grounds of the Pullman National Historical Park! We're proud to partner with the Historic Pullman Foundation, Friends of Labor, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Pullman House Project, National A. Phillip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum, and Illinois Labor History Society to make this year's events safe and enjoyable for all!

Visit the Chicago Labor Day Parade's website at <https://www.chicagolaborparade.com/>, which includes more information, as well as links to register your organization to participate and to register as a volunteer.



Upcoming Events!

ILLINOIS LABOR-SPONSORED EVENTS

ILLINOIS STATE FAIR

Aug. 10-20 – Illinois AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion Exhibition

Location: Illinois AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion on the southeast side of the Illinois State Fairgrounds (801 E Sangamon Ave, Springfield, IL). The Illinois AFL-CIO is encouraging local unions, building trades councils, and central labor councils to “**Adopt a Day**” to staff the labor pavilion and showcase your organization to thousands of people. Organizations that Adopt a Day will be provided with a block of entrance tickets and parking passes for its volunteers and will have the opportunity to distribute information while meeting the public and spreading the word about the importance of labor unions. Local unions will provide giveaways to promote union-made products - such as pens, pencils, rulers, color books, fly swatters, cups, stickers, magnets, etc. We expect between 1,000-3,000 people each day.

Time: The pavilion will be open from 10am to 5pm daily

Contact: Amy Rueff, 217-492-2633 or amy.rueff@ilaf-cio.org

ALTON

Aug. 23 & 26 – James Stanley Charity Softball Tournament

Location: Gordon Moore Park, Alton, IL on hwy. 140.

Contact: B. Dean Webb, 618-259-8558

Aug. 26 – Labor Celebration Parade & Picnic - kids games, food, and refreshments

Location: Parade starts at Wood River IL Round House, parade will continue North on Wood River Ave and end at the Wilshire Village Parking Lot in East Alton, IL.

Picnic for Union Members and their family –following parade at Gordon Moore Park, Alton, IL on hwy. 140. (Wrist Bands are required to attend Picnic, see your local union)

Time: Parade lineup begins at 8:00 a.m. & starts at 10 a.m. / Picnic starts after parade completion.

Contact: B. Dean Webb, 618-259-8558 or Nick Dodson, 618 363-1384

BELLEVILLE

Aug. 31– Southwestern Illinois CLC 54th Annual Labor Awards Dinner

Location: Panorama Banquet Center (downstairs), Bel-Air Bowl, 200 S. Belt West, Belleville, IL 62220

Time: Doors open 6:00 p.m. with Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$25 per person in advance \$30 at the door for dinner, Sponsor ad book \$75 or \$150.

Contact: Charles Kaemmerer, Jr. at 618-979-4953 or Scot Luchtefeld at 618-340-8300.

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade & Picnic

Location: Parade is in downtown Belleville, lineup starts in 4th block of South 1st St., and will end at Hough Park with the annual Picnic. Parade & Picnic open to union members and their families ONLY and food, beverages, rides and games for kids are available.

Time: Parade - 8:00 a.m. lineup, 10:00 a.m. start / Picnic – 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Scot Luchtefeld, 618-340-8300

Special Notice: NO PETS OF ANY KIND ALLOWED AT PARADE OR PICNIC

BLOOMINGTON - NORMAL

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade followed by a dinner in Miller Park for union members and their families.

Theme: “Prevailing Wage is a Family Wage”

Location: Downtown Bloomington – starting at Front and Center Streets

Time: Parade – 9 a.m. line up, 10 a.m. start / Lunch – 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. \$6 box lunch

Contact: For questions or an application, call 309-208-1120 or contact paradeblono@gmail.com.

CHARLESTON

Aug. 26 – Labor Council Picnic

Location: Fox Ridge State Park, 8 miles south of Charleston on Rt. 130

Time: Lunch – Noon – 4:00 p.m. Music, BBQ dinner – all active or retired union members welcome.

Contact: Contact John Warner at 217-855-2839 .

CHAMPAIGN - URBANA

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade & Picnic

Location: Downtown Champaign – starting at corner of Chestnut St. and Main St to Walnut St to Neil St. to Washington St.

Time: Staging begins at 9:00 a.m. and Parade starts at 10 a.m. A picnic will immediately follow at West Side Park in Champaign.

Contact: Matt Kelly at 217-621-5201 or David Beck at 217-721-5344

DANVILLE

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade

Location: Downtown Danville

Time: 8:00 a.m. lineup, 9 a.m. start

Contact: Vermilion County Federation of Labor President, Oscar Williams - owilliams@afgenvac.org

DECATUR

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade & Picnic

Location: Downtown Decatur, line up on South Franklin Street at Wood Street

Time: 8:30 a.m. lineup, 10 a.m. start; **Theme:** TBD

Parade Contact: John Warner, 217-855-2839

There will be a picnic at Fairview Park immediately following the parade until 2 p.m.

Comment: This is the 10th annual combined picnic of all labor unions in Macon County, expecting about 2,500 participants. Food, refreshments, ice cream, raffles & kid games. Free to union sponsors, \$25 for general public.

Picnic Contact: Lloyd Holman, 217-620-4923

GALESBURG

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade – 130th Annual

Location: Downtown Galesburg, IL – Main Street

Time: 10 a.m. start

Contact: Galesburg Trades & Labor Assembly President Randall Bryan, 309-335-0907

Upcoming Events - Continued From Page 4

ILLINOIS LABOR-SPONSORED EVENTS

GRANITE CITY

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade and Picnic – Live music, food and refreshments

Location: Parade lineup begins at 9:00 a.m. in downtown Granite City on State Street between Niedringhaus & 18th Streets and will go to Wilson Park for picnic for Union Members and their families.

Time: Parade starts at 10:00 a.m.

Contact: B. Dean Webb, 618-259-8558 or Mike Fultz 618-931-7212, cell 618-409-4314

PEORIA

Sep. 4 – Labor Day Parade.

Location: Parade - Downtown Peoria – details coming soon on assembly area.

Labor Day Party – on the Riverfront at parade's end. There will be food, music, and fun for all!

Time: Parade starts at 10 a.m. with parade lineup at 8:30 a.m.

Contact: Lisa Uphoff at 309-672-1967

QUAD CITY

Sep. 4 – Labor Day Parade

Location: East Moline – lineup at John Deere Harvester Works parking lot, 1100 13th Avenue in East Moline

Time: Lineup at 9 a.m.; parade starts at 11 a.m. and proceeds along 15th Avenue.

Contact: Dan Gosa, 309-788-1303

QUINCY

Saturday September 2, 2023– Labor Day Picnic sponsored by Western Trades & Labor Assembly.

Location: Machinists Hall & Grounds, 2929 N. 5th Street, Quincy, IL

Time: Picnic 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. / Chicken Dinner will be served from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. Bingo and lots of door prizes. Open to all area union members including retirees and their immediate families. Live band from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. We are asking each family to bring non-perishable food items for charity.

Contact: Steve Marold, 309-645-4903

ROCKFORD

Sept. 4 – Labor Day Parade, Picnic & Pageant

Location: Parade lineup at Davis Park, 320 S Wyman Street, Rockford, IL

Time: Parade lineup at 8:30 a.m. and begins at 10 a.m. **Theme:** "Workers' Rights Now and Forever"

Contact: Email rockfordunitedlabor@outlook.com

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Aug. 25 through Sept 4 – DuQuoin Illinois State Fair

Labor Pavilion will be open each day of the fair and is sponsored by The Egyptian Building Trades

Twilight Parade will be held at 6 p.m. on Aug. 25 for union members wishing to walk with the Union float(s)

Reports

HAYMARKET MONUMENT DEFACED & RESTORED

On November 11, 1887, four self-identified anarchists were hung by the neck at the Cook County jail, convicted under circumstantial pretenses that they had conspired to throw a bomb into the police ranks on May 4, 1886, in Haymarket Square. In 1893, this beautiful monument was built at their gravesites. The Haymarket monument and the people buried around it are a testament to those holding true to their principles.

Does spray painting the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument help labor rights?

Sadly, as has happened before during May, the monument was again defaced and spray painted. The Illinois Labor

History Society, the monument's caretaker, spends \$2,000 annually on monument upkeep -- removing this spray paint will cost us another \$1,000. We will raise the funds to do that. The questions to ask are, "How does spray painting this monument aid labor rights?" "Would the energy spent sneaking into a cemetery with spray paint, be better spent actually helping organize people?" Cemeteries are sacred spaces, dear to many hearts. Those who desire self-expression can find multiple other ways to spend their time, energy, and resources. We hope you will join the ILHS in preserving the important memories this monument represents and that we should all approach this spot with awe, not with spray paint.

— ILHS VP Mike Matejka

BEFORE



AFTER



Reports

JOE HILL: ALIVE AS YOU AND ME



On April 1, the ILHS sponsored an evening of entertainment with Tom Kastle—singer, songwriter, actor, and tall ship sailor—who brought to life the great labor leader Joe Hill through stories and song. He performed the one-man show, *Joe Hill: Alive as You and Me* at the Irish American Heritage Center in Chicago.

attended this spirited performance featuring the adventures of Joe Hill. The evening ended with a Question & Answer session where Tom continued to engage the crowd with his wit. We raffled off a biography of Joe Hill, of which more are in our online bookstore.

It was a very successful event!



More than fifty people

Reports

COOK COUNTY HONORS MAY 1ST AS INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY

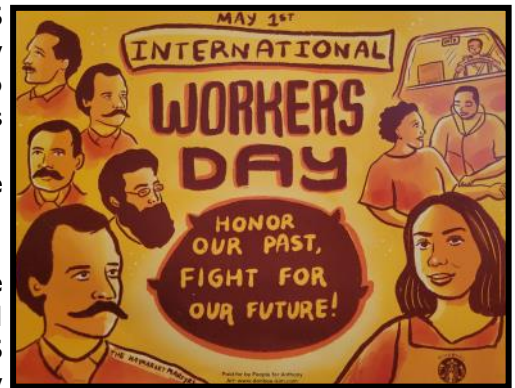


ILHS President Larry Spivack speaking before Cook County Board

On April 27 at the Cook County Building, 8th District Cook County Commissioner, Anthony J. Quezada, and Chicago 35th Ward Alderman, Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, hosted an International Workers' Day Celebration. Commissioner Quezada, with the collaboration of the ILHS, crafted a resolution

recognizing May 1st as International Workers' Day. The celebration took place after the Cook County Board meeting on April 27, where it

passed! ILHS President Larry Spivack spoke to the Commissioners as to the importance of the Resolution. Charles Torpe performed labor songs. ILHS President Larry Spivack spoke, along with Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators (CORE) co-founder Jackson Potter, Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) Secretary-Treasurer and ILHS Board member, Don Villar, and Jose Uribe from ARISE Chicago.



Musician Charles Torpe entertains the crowd with labor songs.

Torpe wrapped up the celebration with a spirited rendition of *Solidarity Forever*.



Commissioner Quezada presents ILHS President Spivack with a copy of the International Workers' Day Resolution

Reports

MAY DAY 2023

Despite the light rain, hundreds came out to join the Illinois Labor History Society (ILHS), the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) at the annual May Day plaque dedication on Monday, May 1 at the Haymarket Memorial, 175 N. Des Plaines Street, Chicago.

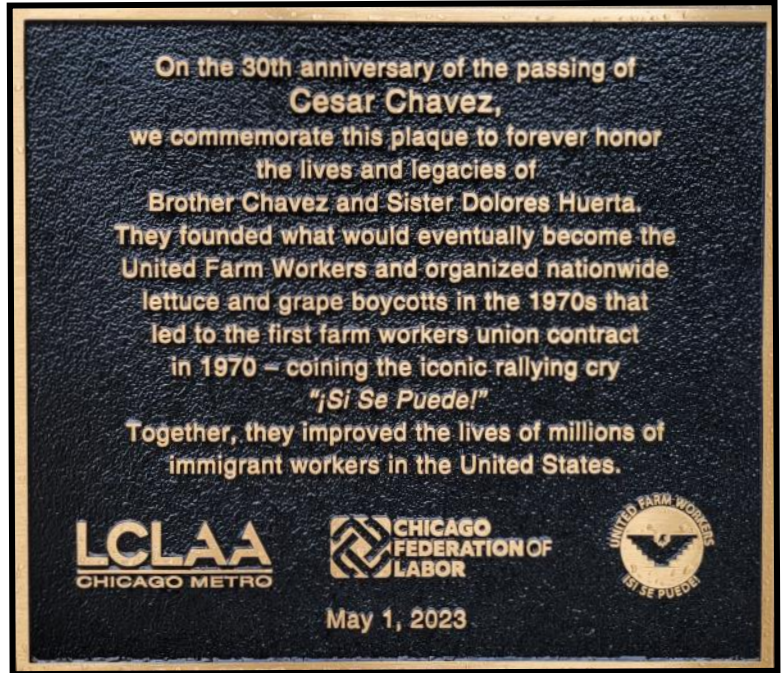
The plaque was sponsored by Chicago Metro LCLAA Chapter, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the United Farm Workers. It reads:



Paul Chavez with plaque at Haymarket Monument Photo Credit: Jose Alcalá

With this year being the 30th anniversary of the death of Cesar Chavez, the plaque honored Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and the United Farm Workers.

Paul Chavez, Cesar's son, shared memories of his father's tireless fight for workers' justice and the impact he had on people's lives. Other speakers included ILHS President Larry Spivack, Jesse Rios, from the CFL, who spoke about meeting with Cesar in the late 1960s-early 1970s, and a member of the Chicago Metro LCLAA spoke on the important role of Dolores Huerta. Also speaking were members of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA), UAW 588, CMRJB Workers United, and an immigrant rights' organization. Charles Trope provided rousing renditions of labor songs.



“On the 30th anniversary of the passing of Cesar Chavez, we commemorate this plaque to forever honor the lives and legacies of Brother Chavez and Sister Dolores Huerta. They founded what would eventually become the United Farm Workers and organized nationwide lettuce, grape, and Gallo wine boycotts in the 1970s that led to the first farm workers union contract in 1970 – coining the iconic rallying cry “iSi Se Puede!” Together, they improved the lives of millions of immigrant workers in the United States.”



CFL Secretary-Treasurer Don Villar, CFL President Bob Reiter, Paul Chavez, LCLAA Chicago Metro President Jose Alcalá, and ILHS President Larry Spivack Photo Credit: Jose Alcalá

Reports

COAL MINING HISTORY IN WEST FRANKFORT

On April 26, 2023, at Frankfort Area Historical Museum, ILHS members and Illinois Humanities Council, "Road Scholars," Bucky Halker and Mike Matejka presented Halker's program, *Down in the Mine: American Coal Miners and*

Their Songs, 1890-1960. Halker provided the music and Matejka added historical background. ILHS Board member Judy Simpson introduced the duo. Former Congressman Glenn Poshard (D) attended the event.



2023 COMMEMORATION OF THE 1937 REPUBLIC STEEL MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE

May 30, 1937... More than a thousand people, including many families with children, gathered for speeches, songs, a picnic and a picket line. Brutally opened fire, killing ten men and wounding many other participants.

The 'Little Steel' strike was in full swing as workers at the smaller steel companies like Republic Steel, fought to achieve a contract like the one workers at the massive U.S. Steel Corporation had recently won.

After the picnic, the workers and their families started crossing a field to get to the gates at Republic Steel and set up their picket lines. They were confronted by hundreds of Chicago Police who



The Massacre is commemorated annually at the site. This year's event was held on May 20th at what is now UAW Local 3212, the former home of Steelworkers Local 1033. There was music, food, and speeches. Volunteers marched to the front, one by one, holding flowers and reciting the names of those murdered by the police. The crowd of close to 200 then proceeded to the commemorative statue and plaque nearby, where flowers were laid in memory.

PULLMAN RAILROAD DAYS

Historic Pullman Foundation had another successful "Railroad Days" on May 20-21. There was access to historic rail cars, and virtual reality and locomotive simulator experiences, tours of the old factory grounds, the Hotel Florence, and the neighborhood! The Illinois

Labor History Society gave guided tours on the rich history of labor in Pullman. Over 3,000 people visited the event over the weekend.

We look forward to next year's "Railroad Days!"



Photo Credit: Mike Matejka and Carole Ramsden

Book Review

MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE 1937: HIDING THE EVIDENCE

Memorial Day Massacre: Workers Die, Film Buried

By Greg Mitchell, Foreword and afterword by Carol Quirke
Sinclair Books, 2023

Can you imagine a news film so provocative that the producer refuses to show it?

Paramount suppressed the movie film they shot on May 30, 1937, on an open field in South Chicago where police attacked protesting workers. The new book, *Memorial Day Massacre: Workers Die, Film Buried* shares this eye-opening labor story.

The newly organized Steel Workers Organizing Committee (CIO) had gathered that Memorial Day weekend in South Chicago. Earlier that year, the mighty United States Steel had signed a first contract with the new union. Now SWOC was determined to organize "Little Steel" – which was anything but little – companies like Republic Steel, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, and Inland Steel. Republic Steel CEO Tom Girdler was thoroughly anti-union and ready to crush the new union.

With a picnic atmosphere, steelworkers, their families, and community supporters began to cross an open field to establish a picket at Republic Steel on Sunday, May 30 where 250 Chicago police and private security guards were waiting. As the march approached, there was discussion with the police at the column's head. Suddenly, a one-sided battle erupted. Revolvers were shot into the crowd and billy clubs swung. As the workers ran from the field, ten were shot in the back, thirty others were also shot, and fallen workers were clubbed. As the police charged the pickets, a Paramount newsreel camera filmed the entire episode.

Greg Mitchell's new book, *Memorial Day Massacre: Workers Die, Film Buried*, succinctly relays this critical story. It is a companion book to a new PBS documentary, *Memorial Day Massacre*.

The next day the *Chicago Tribune* headlined "4 Dead, 90 Hurt in Steel Riot: Police Repulse Mob Attack on S. Chicago Mill." Newspapers across the country echoed this line, portraying the steel workers as attacking the police.

However, the movie film told a different story. It clearly

showed people fleeing, fallen, shot in the back, being clubbed by the police. Paramount decided it was too controversial to show.

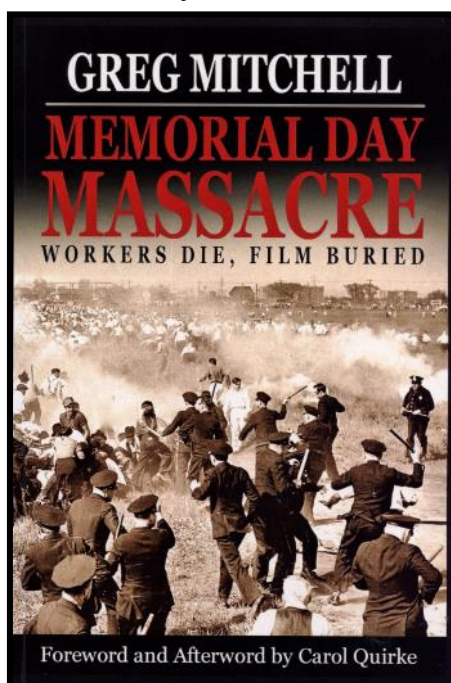
Luckily, a U.S. Senator was not afraid. Wisconsin Senator Robert LaFollette, Jr. called for a Senate hearing, allowing 33 witnesses -- reporters, observers, workers, and the police to testify. Dramatically, the film was shown. It was not a worker riot, but a police riot. The nation was shocked at law enforcement's brutality. The film was now publicly shown, though it was forbidden in Chicago and St. Louis.

Although the 1937 strike was broken, in 1942 during World War II, the War Labor Board pushed the steel companies to the table, where they signed union contracts and paid \$20 million to blacklisted 1937 strikers.

Who controls the media and decides what people are able to see? With iPhones and the internet, there is no single controlling force that censors opinion. Police violence against African Americans and others existed before George Floyd's murder, but it was average people filming that forced the nation to reckon with how African Americans were treated.

Memorial Day Massacre offers a page-turning read on this historic event. Using interview excerpts from 43 sources -- journalists, police, novelists, observers and Tom Girdler's son, the reader gets multiple perspectives on that day's events. These excerpts came from the 1937 Senate investigation and the 1993 PBS *Great Depression* series, particularly the *Mean Things Happen* segment.

— ILHS VP Mike Matejka



WTTW Memorial Day Massacre Film Schedule:

(Check your local channel)

Mon, Sep 4 at 5:30 pm on WTTW
 Mon, Sep 4 at 10:00 pm on WTTW
 Mon, Sep 4 at 11:00 pm on WTTW Prime
 Tue, Sep 5 at 5:30 am on WTTW
 Tue, Sep 5 at 1:00 pm on WTTW Prime
 Sun, Sep 10 at 4:30 am on WTTW

Book Review

START THEM YOUNG – *GIRLS WHO BUILD* NEW CHILDREN’S BOOK

Girls Who Build

By Marisa L. Richards

BookBaby, New Jersey

Gracie is a glazier, Olive an operator, and Adeline an apprentice in a delightful new book aimed at younger readers, *Girls Who Build*, by Painters District Council 30’s Marisa L. Richards.



With two young girls, Marisa had been searching through the bookstore aisles and online sites – where was the book that could introduce her daughters to the trades? Her search was fruitless, so she decided to write her own book.

Girls Who Build is an easily accessible, brightly illustrated volume that shows diverse girls on the job,

in various trades, hard at work with inviting smiles while they practice their crafts.

Marisa serves on multiple committees and notes that often, the discussion centers on how to expand the construction trades’ diversity. She asks, “Why don’t we start the conversation earlier? We can show girls that they have agency and teach girls about construction. The need was so unmet in this space.”

Marisa is a University of Illinois graduate in Creative Writing with a minor in Gender and Women’s Studies. Since 2011, she has served as the Outreach and Engagement Program Manager for Painters District Council 30 in Aurora, Illinois.

In her position, she has worked on improving policies, and also on implementing sexual harassment training to ensure all are welcome and supported at the worksite. Outreach efforts are centered toward high school and middle school students, but Marisa saw value in exposing younger girls. Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) is an organization she has worked with, and they have helped lead the sexual harassment training for the Council. She said that this active group “is an example for the nation.”

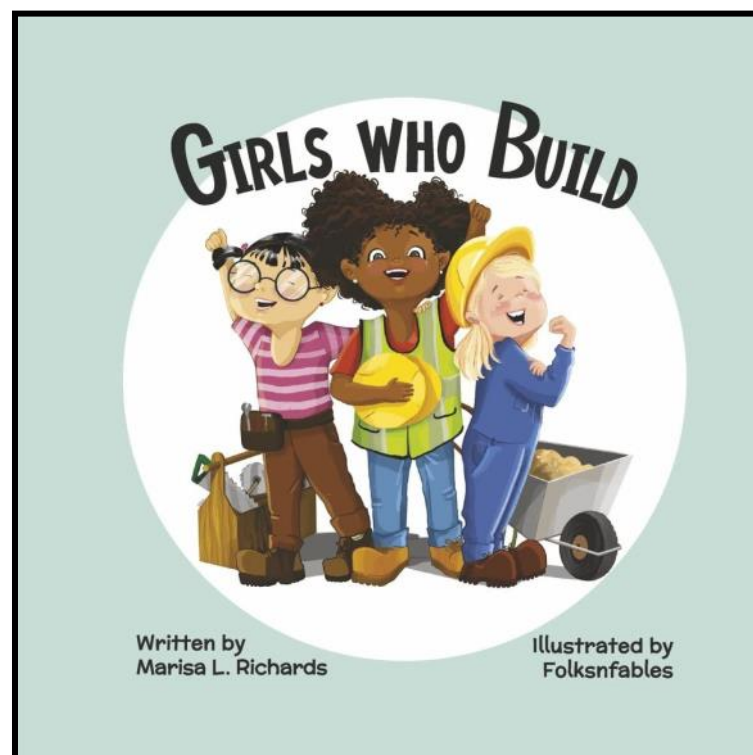
As the book reaches young readers, Marisa hopes that “at the very minimum, this story can inspire one girl just to see the possibilities that she is capable of. I had many strong females in my life and there were many strong females in the stories I was reading when I was young. This book might have the ability to impact one girl, like those books impacted me. I wanted to show young girls what the construction trades were and help them see themselves in those careers.”

Just as a building trades worker is proud when a project is completed, Marisa is enjoying the whirlwind with her book’s completion and the many positive comments.

If you have young girls of preschool through second grade age, this would be a most appropriate book to share. They will enjoy the bright colors, all the girls’ names that match with their trade, and the upbeat, positive attitude. Even if you don’t have young girls in your life, this would be a wonderful book for a local union or individuals to purchase for area kindergartens, grade schools, and day care centers.

Books can be ordered for \$22 for a hard cover edition, plus shipping at: <https://mrichards.squarespace.com>.

— ILHS VP Mike Matejka



Book Review

FICTION MIRRORS REAL LIFE UNION STRUGGLES IN *GILDED MOUNTAIN*

Gilded Mountain

Kate Manning

Scribner Books, 2022

“The paradise of the rich is built from the hell of the poor,” counsels famed labor organizer Mary “Mother” Jones to aspiring journalist Sylvie Pelletier in the Rocky Mountain mining camp novel, *Gilded Mountain*, by Kate Manning.

Is it fame and fortune for Sylvie with a besotted rich man’s son or the tough row of union organizing? Manning effectively plays out a young woman’s dire choices as luxury tempts her while living the hard scrabble life that a miner’s daughter faced.

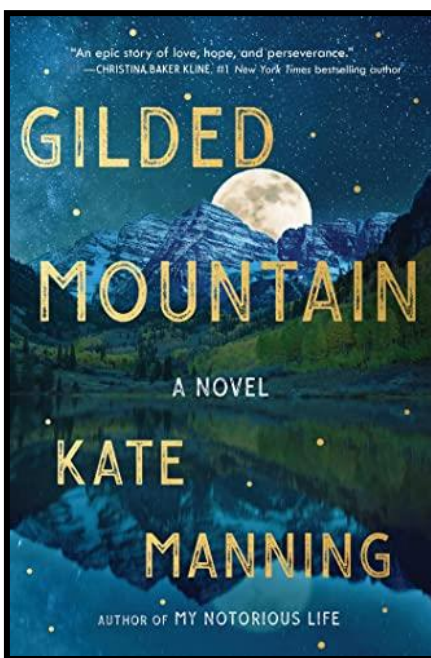
The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw workers barely subsisting, unions crushed, and great wealth ostentatiously celebrated.

Sylvie Pelletier and her family move westward to a fictional Colorado marble mining company town. With her French-Canadian parents, the family fled Vermont after a failed quarry union organizing drive there. Perched in a mountain pass cabin, the family barely survives while her father Jacques cuts marble for the wealthy Padgett family, whose Elkhorne mansion stands in stark contrast to the workers’ ramshackle existence.

Because she speaks French, wealthy matron Inge Padgett hires Sylvie as her summer secretary. While her hard-nosed husband Duke accumulates wealth, Inge elaborates worker upliftment schemes and tours the mine camp, passing chocolates to barely clad and underfed children. Duke’s son, Jasper flirts with young Sylvie, who dreams that wealth’s door might open. In the mansion’s bowels, she befriends the African American Grady family. The Padgett family were Confederate slave holders and deep secrets slowly emerge among the elegant meals Easter Grady prepares.

Contrasting mansion life is Sylvie’s second job, a printer’s apprentice with hard-bitten, sarcastic, whiskey-drinking Katherine Redmond. Redmond’s *Moonstone City Record* constantly pricks at the Padgett family and the marble quarry, reporting worker deaths, injuries, and misery.

So which path does Sylvie choose, or does she even have a choice? Wealthy and alcoholic Jasper Padgett erratically pursues her. Union organizer, George Lonahan catches her eye as she pines for romance. Will it be a gilded luxury cage for Sylvie, or will she stand with her family and principles and join the union struggle?



Author Manning dug into labor and mining history to create a full story. The miners’ dangerous work and union organizing reflects what working people endured alongside the wealth they produced for the Rockefellers, Goulds, Vanderbilts, and fictional Padgetts. She researched the town, Marble, Colorado, founded in 1899, whose stone graces the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetery’s Tomb of the Unknowns. *The Marble City Times* and its female publisher, Sylvia T. Smith, inspired the *Moonstone City Record*. Colorado’s mine wars, the vicious Pinkerton hired guns, and valiant union efforts all form background for the miners’ struggles in fictional Moonstone.

This is an American story; majestic mountains, struggling workers, racial undercurrents, and fabulous wealth extracted from the workers’ hands and the land’s bounty. Author Manning blends history well with enticing fiction. It is well worth a read to see what life paths Sylvie Pelletier follows.

— ILHS VP Mike Matejka



Photo credit: Western Mining History.com

*In Memoriam***JANE LATOUR**

Jane LaTour, longtime labor activist from New York City, lost her battle with cancer this April. Among the many jobs she worked, she served as an associate editor for AFSCME District 37's publication *Public Employee Press* and editor of New York Labor History Association's *Work History News*. Jane was also an author and a

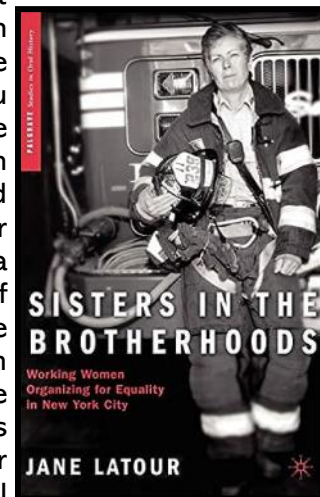
dedicated champion of union reform and equity on the job.

Excerpt from New York Labor History Association, Inc.'s newsletter: *Work History News*

IRWIN YELLOWITZ, NYLHA President, *Work History News*

We worked together for over two decades. She was a major leader in the NYLHA. Whether it was program planning, adding new people to our Executive Board, working assiduously to increase our membership, among others, there was Jane at the center of all we did. Jane had that important, but rare, ability to not only propose a

project, often something outside the box, but then carry it through and make it a success. It was such a pleasure to work with her because she could combine conviction and cordiality. You knew what she stood for, but she respected what you stood for. In the end that produced good results. She also was an author with a well-regarded book, and a second in the final stage of revision for publication by the University of Illinois Press. I am pleased that a colleague will be able to conclude the work on this volume so that it will be further testament to Jane's creativity. I mourn her loss.



KEITH DANISH, Editor of *Work History News*

No one could replace Jane as editor of this newsletter, but her support and kindness inspired me to do my best to carry on with the work. I will never forget her.

DONALD "DICK" LADZINSKI

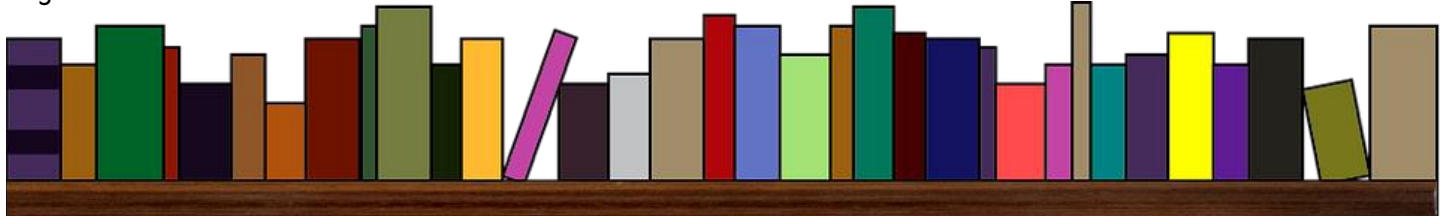
Donald 'Dick' Ladzinski, 66-year member of Carpenters Locals 195 and 174, passed away on December 19, 2022. Dick was a leader in organized labor – lobbying for workers' rights in Springfield and D.C. to create a better Illinois for future generations.

During his career, Dick was Carpenters 195 Business Agent in Peru, secretary-treasurer of the Illinois State Council of Carpenters, and lobbied for labor in Springfield and Washington, DC. He prided himself on honesty and fought for workers' safety laws, living wages, and expanding access to education in the trades.

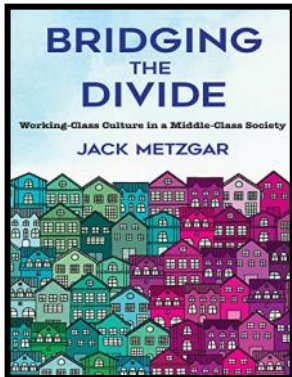
He was also a regular volunteer for ILHS, especially for the book table. He would come into Chicago from Ottawa for the day to help at the book table for conventions and large union gatherings.

In his spare-time, he enjoyed hunting, fishing, birdwatching, traveling, baseball and spending time with his family.

Dick left a lasting footprint in the fight for workers' rights and will be deeply missed.



At the ILHS Online Bookstore!



Bridging the Divide: Working-Class Culture in a Middle-Class Society

By Jack Metzgar

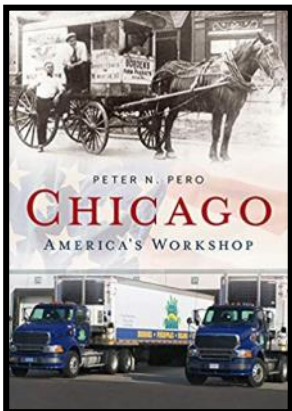
Cornell University Press, New York

\$43.95—Special sale, now for \$30

In *Bridging the Divide*, Jack Metzgar attempts to determine the differences between working-class and middle-class cultures in the United States. Drawing on a wide range of multidisciplinary sources, Metzgar writes as a now middle-class professional with a working-class upbringing, explaining the various ways the two cultures conflict and complement each other, illustrated by his own lived experiences.

Set in a historical framework that reflects on how both class cultures developed, adapted, and survived through decades of historical circumstances, Metzgar challenges professional middle-class views of both the working-class and themselves. In the end, he argues for the creation of a cross-class coalition of what he calls "standard-issue professionals" with both hard-living and settled-living working people and outlines some policies that could help promote such a unification if the two groups had a better understanding of their differences and how to use those differences to their advantage.

Bridging the Divide mixes personal stories and theoretical concepts to give us a compelling look inside the current complex position of the working-class in American culture and a view of what it could be in the future.



Chicago: America's Workshop (America Through Time)

By Peter N. Pero

America Through Time, Fonhill Media, LLC

\$23.99

For more than a century, Chicago has been a workshop to the world. The city nurtured thousands of companies that supplied a hungry market with industrial products. Successful firms that survived nearly 100 years are Mars Candy, Motorola Inc., Abbot Labs, Radio Flyer, Rand McNally, and others. Aged companies that sold off their brands or were bought-out entirely include Schwinn Bikes, Sears Stores, Pullman Rail Cars, Bell & Howell Cameras, and more. The large manufacturers listed in this history book are arranged in a "then-and-now" photo format that is easy to follow across decades.

This book is a survey of economic growth. Trace a large city firm that was once a mom-and-pop store like Brach's Candy or follow the growth of an industrial giant like Western Electric as it morphed into AT&T. Through world wars, economic recessions, and boom times, the companies in this book offer lessons on perseverance, abundant energy, and innovative labor.

Today, Chicago has lost its lead in the meat packing, farm equipment, and clothing industries, but significant gains have been made in computerization, medical services, social media, and finance. This book traces Chicago's economic legacy.





DO YOU KNOW YOUR LABOR HISTORY?

[HTTPS://LABORHISTORYIN2.PODBEAN.COM/](https://laborhistoryin2.podbean.com/)

Today in Labor History, July 5, the year was 1852. The great orator and abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, was invited to speak at the Corinthian Hall in Rochester, New York. The speech he gave that day would go down as one of his most powerful. He asked the crowd, "Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here today? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?" Douglass himself had been enslaved. He was crying out against the great irony of celebrating a holiday devoted for freedom in a nation that still included more than three million enslaved people. Toward the end of his speech Douglass asked his audience a powerful and resounding question. He said, "What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham." Douglass went on to say, "notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented, of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery...I, therefore, leave off where I began, with hope." Let's take time to reflect on those whose current working conditions and wages do not allow them to fully participate in the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness. And ask ourselves, are we part of the "forces in operation" fighting for these workers?

Today in Labor History, July 14, the year was 1877. That was the day that would come to be known as the "Great Upheaval" or "Great Uprising," which began in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Railroad workers were angry. They had seen their wages cut twice in six months by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The workers went on strike refusing to let the trains move. Six hundred trains jammed the rail yard. Soon the strike spread to Baltimore. When the Maryland Governor called out the National Guard, workers in the city rose up and attacked them. The guardsmen fired on the crowd, killing ten people. The strike continued to spread to Pittsburgh, Chicago, and East St. Louis. 100,000 workers stopped working. This was not an organized strike by a central labor union, but rather a popular revolt by workers fed up with their wages and work conditions. Everywhere the workers went on strike they were met with armed troops. Workers, police and guardsmen were at battle. Workers tore up railroad tracks and burnt railroad buildings. The Chairman of the Pennsylvania Rail Road, voiced his opinion that those on strike should be given "a rifle diet for a few days and see how they like that kind of bread." In Chicago, thousands of workers clashed with the police, in what came to be known as the "Battle of the Viaduct." In all more than 100 workers lost their lives across the country. The events of the summer of 1877 were a turning point in US labor history. Industrialists became convinced that they needed an armed response to labor uprisings. The violence of 1877 forewarned the bloody conflict of labor versus capital that would continue over the next decades across the United States.

Today in Labor History, August 4, the year was 1997. That was the day that 185,000 UPS workers and members of the Teamsters Union went out on strike. It was the biggest strike in the United States for more than a decade. At issue was the use of part-time workers. The union estimated that as many as two out of three employees at "Big Brown" were part-time. The package delivery giant had also cut part time wages to \$8 an hour. These workers also were not eligible for the same benefits as full time employees. At the time, UPS handled nearly 80 percent of the packages delivered in the United States each day. The strike ground those deliveries to a halt. The strike lasted for sixteen days, and cost the company \$650 million in business. The Teamsters paid out \$10 million from its strike fund to support those on the picket line. The work stoppage succeeded in improving wages and securing the workers' pensions. UPS also agreed to move 5,000 part-time employees to full-time over the life of the signed five-year contract. Teamster President Ron Carey declared, "People will be celebrating our victory over corporate greed. This fight with UPS shows what working people can accomplish when they all stick together. The UPS workers stood up to the 'throw away worker approach' and the nation's working people stood behind us." Today many companies rely on this "throw away worker approach" as their business model. They keep workers at a part-time status to avoid paying health benefits and a living wage. Does today's labor movement have the solidarity with these workers to make a demand for full-time work?



UNION HALL OF HONOR

December 8, 2023

6 PM

Operating Engineers 399
2260 S Grove St, Chicago, IL

Honoring:

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond
United Steelworkers Norma Gaines
Founding Co-chair USWA District 31 Women's Caucus Roberta Wood
Former United Steelworkers President George Becker

Thank you for your past support!

There is still time to renew your membership!

The Illinois Labor History Society's mission is reaching the next generation with labor's rich and vibrant history. You are vital as we work together to keep labor history alive, reaching students, workers, apprentices, academics, and the general public.

We're reaching out to you for support for the continuation of our 50-plus year history of activities, outreach, and programs. Your membership helps the Illinois Labor History Society protect important sites of labor history throughout our state and to provide quality labor education programs and outreach.

Your membership can help support the Illinois Labor History Society in many ways:

- General Operations
- Preserving the Haymarket Monument and other sites of labor history
- Labor History Education for K-12 Students
- Labor History Education for Union Members



If you have not yet renewed your membership, you can go online to:
<http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org/become-a-member>

Thank you – we depend on volunteers and your support to keep labor history alive!

Since 1969



Illinois Labor History Society

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www.ILaborHistoryS@gmail.com

Our Mission Statement

It shall be the Purpose of the Illinois Labor History Society to encourage the preservation and study of labor history materials of the Illinois Region, and to arouse public interest in the profound significance of the past to the present.

#ILHLives

Upcoming Events

Chicago Labor Day Parade — 12 p.m. 108th & Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago

Eddie Fest — 1-6 p.m. Pullman Historic District, Chicago

Labor Day Events Around Illinois — Please see pages 4 and 5 inside



Illinois Labor History Society
430 S Michigan Ave, AUD 540
Chicago IL 60605

Or Current Resident

*"The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today."
August Spies — 1855-1887*