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EVERGREEN LEADER

The Voice of I.A.M. & A.W. District 160 in Western Washington and Alaska

Vol. No. 66 March 2026

Directing Business Representative's Report

Time for Decisive Union Action

By Steve Miller
Directing Business Representative,
IAM District 160

This is the year that will test unions. It is not a year for drifting, indecision, or passive membership.

The pressure on working people is increasing. Employers are more coordinated. Negotiations are more complex. The federal government is openly anti-union. In moments like this, momentum is either built intentionally — or it fades.



Steve Miller

At District 160, we are choosing to build it.

Our Local Summit has already taken place. All of our Local leaders showed up ready to think critically about where their Local stands and where it needs to go.

I was encouraged by what I saw. Honest discussions. Clear assessments of strengths and weaknesses. A willingness to plan instead of react.

Each Local walked away with a developing plan — measurable goals, leadership development priorities, organizing focus, and timelines. By the time you read this, those plans should be finalized and ready for implementation.

Now comes the part that matters most.

Execution.

Strategic planning is not an event. It is discipline. It is choosing direction instead of drifting. It is deciding whether we will be reactive or proactive — whether we play defense or build power.

This is the year we decide whether we are a servicing union or an organizing union.

That decision shows up in how Locals activate members. It shows up in steward development. It shows up in organizing leads, bargaining preparation, and consistent communication. It shows up in whether we hold ourselves accountable to the plans we just created.

Over the past year, we strengthened steward training. We expanded organizing capacity. We increased lead generation. We defended federal workers, negotiated contracts, and won grievances that put real money back into our members' pockets. Those efforts were not isolated wins — they were part of building a stronger foundation.

I have always said that my role here has been simple: build a solid foundation that others can build on if they choose. Foundations are not flashy. They are not always visible. But everything that stands strong rests on them.

The Summit was another layer of that foundation. Now the responsibility shifts to implementation. In a few months, we will reassess progress, measure outcomes, and adjust where necessary. That's how growth happens — not through enthusiasm alone, but through structure and accountability.

The external environment will continue to challenge unions. That isn't new. What determines our future is whether we stay focused internally — building leaders, strengthening Locals, and growing our organizing muscle year after year.

We are not just talking about building power — we are building it.

As we move forward into this year, the question isn't what someone else will do. The question is what we will build together.

This is not the time for passive membership. It's time to step in. Step up. Join a committee. Become a steward. Support organizing efforts. Show up at meetings.

The strength of this District will be determined by the members who choose to engage — not the ones who wait.

Momentum is not automatic. It is built by people who take ownership.

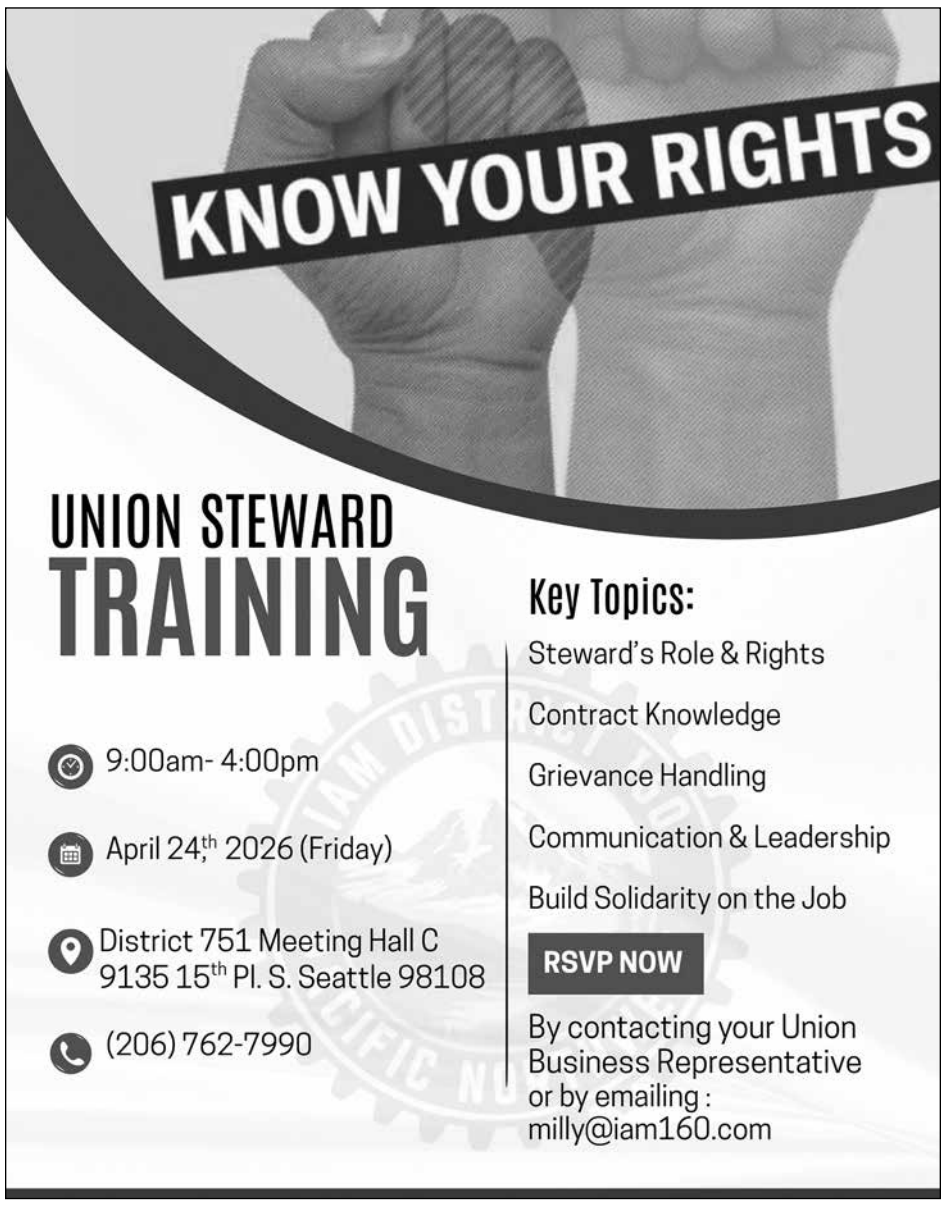
I'm proud of the Local leaders who stepped up at the Summit and committed to building stronger plans. Now it's your turn.

If you've been waiting to get involved, the time isn't someday — it's now.

As I enter the final chapter of my time serving as your Directing Business Representative, my focus remains what it has always been: leave this District stronger, more organized, and built on a foundation that will support growth long after I am gone. My next article will be my last in this role, and I intend to use the time between now and then building momentum. Until then, the focus remains clear: execute the plan, build leadership, and grow our power.

The work continues.

Now we build.



Grievance & Unfair Labor Practice Tracker

As of March 2026 (1st quarter)

Grievances Filed	41
ULP Reported	4
Arbitration Cases	6
Total Awarded	**$10,011.45**

Save the Date

Local 79 is Proposing Bylaws Changes
1st Reading & Discussion: March 18, 2026 | 5:00 PM
2nd Reading, Discussion & Vote: April 15, 2026 | 5:00 PM
Both at the General Membership Meeting.

Holiday Office Closures

Memorial Day
May 25, 2026

Juneteenth
June 19, 2026

Independence Day
July 4, 2026

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Local Meeting Notices

79 - Seattle

Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday, 751 Meeting Hall, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 p.m., the Monday preceding the regular meeting (3rd Wednesday). District 160 Conference Room, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

130 - Everett

Regular Meeting- 5:00 p.m., 2nd Thursday, Labor Temple, 2812 Lombard, Suite 12, Everett.

282 - Bremerton

Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday, 822 Park Avenue, Bremerton.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 3rd Tuesday, 822 Park Avenue, Bremerton.

289 - Seattle

Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 1st Wednesday, 751 Meeting Hall, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Shop Stewards Meeting – 6:00 p.m., 3rd Thursday, District 160 Conference Room.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 1st Wednesday, District 160 Conference Room, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

297 - Tacoma

Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m., 1st Thursday. Meeting location: Tacoma Firefighters Hall, 1109 S. 50th Street, Tacoma 98408.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 p.m., Tuesday preceding the Regular Meeting (1st Thursday), IBEW Hall, 3049 S. 36th St. #101, Tacoma, WA 98409.

Retirees' Club Meeting – All retirees are invited to attend meetings the 3rd Tuesday of month, 9 a.m. at the Lakewood IHOP at 10005 Lakewood Drive SW 98499. Breakfast at 9 am, followed by meeting at 10 am.

695 - Olympia

Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 2nd Wednesday, Labor Temple, 119-1/2 North Capitol Way, Olympia.

1690 - Anchorage

Regular Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 2nd Wednesday at the Union Hall, 701 W. 41st, Suite 102, Anchorage.

2379 - Ferndale

Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 1st Thursday, office, 2064 Vista Dr., Ferndale.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 1st Thursday, office, 2064 Vista Dr., Ferndale.

District 160 Officers & Staff

President
John Gehringer

Vice President
Dan Bassett

Secretary-Treasurer
Ted Taft

Sergeant at Arms
Josephine Ulrich

Trustees
Don Zeth
Scott Cronkrite
Richard Howard

Directing Business Representative
Steve Miller

Assistant Directing Business Representative
Luke Ackerson

Business Representatives
Zach Collins
Tommy Hunt
Beth Bergeon
Larry Stenseth
Sacha Bommarito

Organizers
Alfredo Silva
Emery Woods

Evergreen Leader

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Retirees

Local 79

James Hull.....January
Kenneth Donaldson ..... February

Local 289

Roger Bergman.....October
Romeo Lagrimas ..... February

In Memoriam

Thomas Waterman ..... March 2025 ..... Local 289
William "Bill" Taylor .....November 2025 ..... Local 695
Dennis Dibble ..... December 2025 ..... Local 289
Monty Knutson .....January 2026 ..... Local 79

Union Organizing

Updates From the Organizing Crew

By Alfredo Silva
District 160 Organizer

Dear Members,

As we transition from winter into spring, I would like to share the latest organizing updates from District 160.

We concluded 2025 with significant organizing wins in both Alaska and Washington State. This year, we have already filed for an election for a group of 50 contractors and are currently pursuing several promising leads. As long as companies continue to prioritize profits over the well-being of their employees, workers will continue to seek the justice and representation we provide.



I would also like to take this opportunity to reintroduce myself. I have been a member of District 160 and Local 289 for over 20 years. While I previously served as a Business Representative and Organizer, my current focus is dedicated primarily to organizing. Alongside our new District Organizer, Emery Woods, I am working with all district locals to develop growth strategies and, more importantly, to educate and empower workers regarding their collective rights.

If you have any leads or know of individuals who could benefit from our support, please **contact me at 253-653-5747 or alfredo@iam160.com**.

Additionally, I would like to share an insightful article by Michael Sainato from The Guardian regarding recent organizing trends:

US Union Membership Soared to 16-Year High in 2025 Despite Trump Assault

The number of workers covered under union contracts increased to a 16-year high in 2025, despite ongoing attempts by the Trump administration to wipe out collective bargaining agreements for tens of thousands of federal workers, according to new data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

About 16.5 million workers were covered by a union contract in 2025, up from 16 million in 2024 and the highest level since 2009. The increase stems from workers joining unions as members – 14.7 million US workers were union members in 2025, up from 14.2 million workers in 2024.

The percentage of all workers in the US covered by a union contract ticked up to 11.2% in 2025, compared with 11.1% in 2024. Union membership increased from 9.9% in 2024 to 10% in 2025.

Union density in the US has declined drastically in recent decades from above 30% in the late 1940s and 1950s. Despite the decline, public approval of labor unions has increased in recent years. Approval of unions now ranges between 67% and 71%, according to Gallup, levels last reached in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

"The second Trump administration launched the most vicious attack on public sector union workers since the Reagan era. While the assault's full effect remains to be seen, the numbers from 2025 leave room for cautious optimism," said Hayley Brown, a researcher at the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), in a statement on the union density increase.

The Trump administration is pushing to cancel collective bargaining agreements for about 1 million federal workers, which would offset these slight gains.

Heidi Shierholz, president of the Economic Policy Institute and former chief economist of the US Department of Labor, noted the increase of 463,000 workers represented by a union is the highest number in the US in 16 years.

"This is an extremely welcome departure from prior years' declines," Shierholz posted on Bluesky. "In a time of fear, uncertainty, and hardship, workers are realizing they are better off in a union. Workers are exerting control over their jobs and their lives through unionization. This is especially clear in the federal government, where unionization surged despite unprecedented attacks."

She cited the increases in 2025 to "Years of sustained effort. Organizing and winning union elections is a lengthy process, and the groundwork laid over many years definitely contributed to this year's gains."

By Emery Woods
District 160 Organizer

I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself as one of the new Organizers for District 160. As a member of Local 2379, I am proud to turn a passion into a career and I have great faith that we can turn this District back into a thriving and healthy union hub.



Our path forward is long and I'm glad to say that each Local has already taken steps towards increasing membership engagement. We came together this past year to discuss our needs as Locals and how we can help one another stand strong.

On December 5, the Locals met for an in-person meeting at the District 160 hall for a full day Local Summit. The Summit brought together local leaders, stewards, and active members to reflect on each Local's achievements, and develop concrete action plans to build upon each Local's unique strengths. The collaborative atmosphere of the event reinforced our shared commitment to strengthening representation, increasing Local engagement, and moving out of supervision.

The day began at 8:30 am with a welcome from our GVP Bobby Martinez and a brief overview of the day by DBR Steve Miller. Each Local was tasked to discuss amongst themselves the six pillars of a healthy Local and where they excelled or fell short.

The singular takeaway of each Local's work was simple. Together we are strong.

For example, 282 has an excellent legislative committee and is currently pushing forward a bill in the house around furloughed federal employees. 2379 and 130 both have flexibility of locals with active executive boards looking to expand meetings past their quorum. Local 79 excels at charity work, specifically with Guide Dogs. Local 297 looks to mentor the next generation of Union leaders. Local 695 is experiencing some membership growth after taking successful action around Kuya Max Londonio as

Continued on page 3

Business Representatives' Reports

Holding the Line at Trulife

By Luke Ackerson
Assistant Directing Business Rep



Between contracts, our strength is measured by what we are willing to defend. Every grievance we file, every steward who steps up, and every member who stays engaged sends a message to management about what they can and cannot get away with. This quarter, nowhere has that been clearer than at Trulife.

Trulife has been an intense campaign from the beginning. We started organizing in September 2022, won certification on March 2, 2023, and then fought through eighteen months of negotiations to ratify a first contract on September 27, 2024. That first agreement was a major step forward. It locked in rights, provided fair structure to wage increases, and gave members a real voice at work. At the same time, there is still unfinished work. Some of the lowest-paid classifications remain under-compensated, and that reality has been a constant source of frustration for members who are carrying the operation every day.

Management and outside voices tried to turn that frustration into a decertification campaign. The arguments were familiar. Wages are too low. Union dues are not worth it. Health insurance costs are too high. The truth is that those issues are exactly why workers form unions in the first place. The only way to raise wages, protect benefits, and hold the company accountable is to keep the union and bargain from a position of unity.

On February 18, 2026, the Trulife unit proved that point decisively. Members voted down decertification by a significant margin. That result did not happen by accident. It happened because stewards, committee members, and rank-and-file leaders had the hard conversations, answered misinformation with facts, and kept showing up for each other when it mattered most.

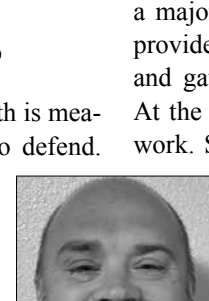
Bargaining Update: Trulife

Prior to the decertification vote, the bargaining committee went to the IAM training center in Maryland to prepare for negotiations. The staff at the training center and IAM headquarters were instrumental in preparing us for negotiations and getting our message to the members regarding the decertification. The committee has stayed focused on what members need most. We are pressing for wage improvements that address the lowest paid classifications and move the group forward together.

At the table, the employer has offered very low wage proposals and has struggled to explain how their numbers would solve retention, recruitment, or affordability problems for the workforce. The pace has been slow, and it appears the company is once again trying to stall rather than reach a fair agreement.

Our committee is prepared, and the unit's decertification victory matters here. When employers see that members will not be divided, it strengthens our leverage. We will continue to push for a contract that reflects the value of the work performed at Trulife and supports a stable standard of living for members and their families.

By Zac Collins



Hello Brothers and Sisters!

I hope you all had a great holiday break.

The Crown Cork & Seal master agreement negotiations are underway. This contract covers three different locations represented by three IAM Locals. Ours is in Olympia, one in Mankato, Minnesota, and the third in La Crosse, Wisconsin. We will all meet in Southern California in March to meet with the company and hammer out negotiations for 10 days straight. Our goal is to enter bargaining united, informed, and ready to secure the strongest possible agreement for our members.

Partway into negotiations with Kitsap Transit, I was assigned to step in and take over a challenging bargaining process already well underway. While meeting some of the bargaining committee for the first time only days before we were at the table together, we stayed focused, worked closely with the bargaining team and membership, and pushed hard for real gains. In the end, we secured a strong contract that delivered meaningful improvements and— most importantly —earned the support and satisfaction of the members it covers.

I am extremely excited to announce that District 160 will hold its annual Swing for a Cause fundraiser at Topgolf Renton on August 23rd from 11 am to 2 pm, benefiting Guide Dogs of America and Tender Loving Canines. This year's event builds on last year's fundraiser, which saw a fantastic turnout and strong support from members across the district. We were able to donate more to GDA/TLC last year than I have ever seen. With great activities planned — including golf, food, bingo, raffle prizes, and a silent auction — with your help, we're aiming to make this year bigger and better than ever. Every ticket and donation directly supports service dogs for the visually impaired, veterans, and children with autism. Come out, have fun, and be part of something truly impactful. Tickets are $100 (same as last year), with children 12 and under free, and include 3 hours of golf, food, and free bingo! Please see your Business Representative, Local officers, IAM160.com, or any flyer for tickets.



Emery Woods

Continued from page 2

well as taking members back to DC for the Young Workers March. Local 289 stands as a strong and stable Local that many of us can learn from, with robust meetings and strong dialogue. Their consistency, organization, and commitment to member engagement serve as an example of what a healthy Local can look like.

Each Local can borrow ideas from each other. We create our own environments, but we face the same problems when it comes to member engagement. What works for one Local will work for another, with some minor tweaking.

One area unanimously identified across all Locals as needing focused attention is membership growth. Some Locals are already seeing progress in membership engagement, and that's something to feel proud about. We still need to see overall numbers go up. Please reach out to Alfredo or myself with any information.

Another Business Representative's Report on Page 4

Business Representative's Report

By Sacha Bommarito

Hello! Spring is upon us and what a wild winter it has been!



I'm Sacha, District 160's newest Business Representative. I come to the District office from the City of Seattle, where I was a Fleet Mechanic for sixteen years, the last six of which I served the Seattle Fire Department as an Emergency Vehicle Technician.

I was born and raised in the Puget Sound area in a multi-generational household where my father worked as an IAM machinist.

During my time at the City, I was a Shop Steward, eventually becoming Chief Steward for the mechanics in the City of Seattle Fleet Management Division. I found passion and purpose in the work. I learned that I had experience and skills that made me distinctly qualified to protect and support workers and women in trades, and I was excited by the opportunity to learn and do more.

I came on board with District 160 in January of 2025 in the new position of Field Representative, where my work focused on member engagement. I got to visit shops and meet Union members all over the region and become exposed to new elements of Union work, like organizing and administration. I also made my first trip to the Winpinsinger Center in Maryland, where I realized that I was truly a part of something great.

In the Fall of 2025, I began my work as a Business Representative. My work has largely been focused in the Federal Sector, which has been more overwhelming, more rewarding, and more personal than I could have imagined.

In a time that has been so challenging for Unions and for workers, I believe I have been given the rare opportunity to help lay the groundwork for the future of the Labor Movement.

I am both proud and humbled to be able to venture forward with the Fighting Machinists here in the Pacific Northwest.

District 160 Communicator's Report

Young Workers Are Not Up Next. We Are NOW!

Richelle Loken
District 160 Communicator

On February 7th, 2026, five members representing IAM District 160's Next Generation Workers Alliance—myself included—joined fellow IAM and other labor organizations for the first-ever Young Worker March on Washington. IAM members young and old showed up with a significant presence to show young workers one thing: we believe in them.

The idea of the march was born from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) young leadership who were fed up with the economic conditions of young workers in the United States. AFGE's young leadership began reaching out to other young worker groups in labor unions across the country.

They quickly discovered those feelings weren't unique to government workers. Young people across the nation were feeling the same strain of working harder and harder to achieve an American dream that seemed more and more unachievable.

The temperature outside may have been a balmy negative-one degrees during the march, but there was warmth all around. The spirit these young leaders carried—a drive to make life better for themselves and the generations to come—was electrifying. I saw new fires lighting as well in the eyes of people whose first action this was. We wish we had more time in DC to take in the sights, but something tells me this won't be our last march.



The first-ever Young Worker March proved one thing, this generation is organized, energized, and ready to lead.



More than 1,000 people marched down Constitution Avenue in freezing weather in Washington, D.C., to demand better working and living conditions for young workers.



District 160 members step forward in Washington, D.C., sending a clear message: Young workers aren't up next, we are NOW.



District 160 members step forward in Washington, D.C., sending a clear message: Young workers aren't up next, we are NOW.

More Business Representatives' Reports on page 3