

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*

## M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

*The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"*  
Number 33 – August 17, 2023



*In this issue//M.E.B.A. Companies, Labor Aiding Maui//Duplicate Credentials for Mariners in Hawaii//Food for Peace Event//CMES Online Tankerman Course//Caution for Shipping Near Iran//MSC EPF Aids Mariners in Distress//*

### **MATSON, PASHA, MLA, AFL-CIO AIDING MAUI IN TIME OF NEED**

M.E.B.A.-contracted shipping companies Matson and Pasha-Hawaii are heading up efforts to bring needed relief to the people of Maui following devastating wildfires. The death toll continues to soar – 110 at last count - and reported casualties are expected to rise.

Matson announced it is supporting relief efforts in multiple ways. The company sailed an extra barge to Kahului to transport emergency response equipment and supplies chartered to support the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) and the Hawaii Food Industry Association (HFIA). The barge brought in 32 large generators, including two 30,000-pound units and one 84,000-pound trailer generator set, as well as four 40-foot containers of bottled water to Maui for FEMA. It also carried four generators provisioned by the Lieutenant Governor's Office and three 40-foot refrigerated containers - two containing perishable food and one filled with ice – sent by the Hawaii Food Industry Association (HFIA).

Matson also transported a diesel generator barge to provide extra support for refrigerated containers in its Kahului Terminal, and 30 chassis trailers to support anticipated additional cargo volumes on Maui. Matson's barge Haleakala delivered 191 containers of goods. Cargo operations at Maui's Kahului Harbor continue uninterrupted and unaffected by the wildfires in other areas of the island and Matson's twice-weekly service to Maui continues as normal.

Matson is working closely with Federal, State, and County emergency response agencies to speed delivery of emergency equipment and supplies to Maui as part of the ongoing crisis response. In addition to working with government agencies, the company is working with a number of its customers to send shipments of relief supplies to Maui and is in communication with nonprofit organizations about shipments to Maui.

Nonprofit organizations needing assistance in getting relief goods to Maui are asked by Matson to apply for such assistance on the company's website at <https://www.matson.com/community/index.html>

Pasha Hawaii supply chain routes are also fully operational and they are supporting relief efforts for Maui. Their Emergency Response Plan includes prioritizing emergency rations, foodstuffs and medical supplies via available barge capacity to Maui through its direct vessel roll-on/roll-off service.

Pasha Hawaii operates two fixed-day direct vessel calls per week from the US West Coast into Honolulu, with twice weekly connections into Maui for the container business. The carrier also provides extensive roll-on/roll-off cargo service with direct mainline vessel calls into the port of Kahului ready to meet the demands of large equipment and emergency and support vehicles.

Pasha headed up a donation drive that collected non-perishable food items, toiletries, and new blankets/towels to support affected Maui communities. The company is working with government agencies, customers and partners for the shipment of relief supplies in addition to coordinating shipments with nonprofit organizations to Maui. In support of Maui wildfire relief efforts, Pasha Hawaii presented the non-profit Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF) Maui Strong Fund with a \$25,000 donation. The company is encouraging those interested in supporting the Maui communities to consider a monetary donation to the HCF, which has set up a fund specifically to support the Maui communities affected by the wildfires. HCF will be applying 100% of the donations received to assist those in need. You can make an online donation by going to [Maui Strong - Hawaii Community Foundation](#).

In addition, the unions that make up the Maritime Labor Alliance activated in support of the 50<sup>th</sup> state soon after the crisis erupted. MLA is a cooperation between the M.E.B.A., ARA, IBU, ILWU and the MM&P. Each of the MLA unions have integral ties with Hawaii, and as a whole - along with individual members - have donated their time, labor and monetary contributions to support Maui in its time of need. In addition, the MLA forwarded a generous donation to help alleviate the suffering and cushion the blow for those enduring this ongoing tragedy.

The AFL-CIO has also been integral to Maui relief efforts. They asked those who can – to donate to the Hawaii State AFL-CIO Labor Community Services Program/Hawaii Employees Lifeline Program. The suggested donation amount is \$2,500 and must be made payable by check to: Hawaii Employees Lifeline Program, attention Cathy Lederer at 888 Mililani Street, Suite 501, Honolulu, HI 96813. Alternatively, they noted that you can donate to the Union Community Fund. Credit card contributions can be made at: [go.aflcio.org/relief](http://go.aflcio.org/relief). For checks made payable to the Union Community Fund, note in the memo line: “Disaster Relief Efforts.” Send by mail to: 815 Black Lives Matter Plaza NW, Washington, DC 20006. They ask that you take a moment to toss a lifeline to our union brothers, sisters and siblings in Hawaii during this tragic time.

### **NMC HELPING OUT HARD-HIT MAUI MARINERS**

The National Maritime Center announced that duplicate merchant mariner credentials (MMCs) may be issued free of charge to mariners whose credentials were lost or destroyed in the Hawaii wildfires. Affected mariners should follow the steps below to obtain an expedited replacement credential: Mariners need to provide a statement of loss to the National Maritime Center (NMC) containing detailed information to receive an expedited credential. The full NMC notice has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)) under “U.S. Coast Guard Notices.”

Unless otherwise requested, any duplicate MMCs issued per the request process will include a corresponding duplicate medical certificate, if previously issued. NMC will make every effort to have duplicate credentials mailed out the next business day. Alternatively, mariners may submit form [CG-719B, Application for Merchant Mariner Credential](#), along with the required information to one of the [Regional Exam Centers](#). If your credential is unserviceable due to damage or your lost credential is subsequently found, that credential should be mailed to the NMC.

If you have questions or feedback regarding duplicate credentials, please contact the NMC via NMC's [Online Chat or Ticketing System](#) by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling (888) IASKNMC (427-5662).

## **FOOD FOR PEACE EVENT DRUMS UP SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED U.S. MARINER/FARMER INVOLVEMENT**

On Tuesday at Washington State's Port of Longview, U.S. shipping and agricultural interests drummed up support for a strengthened Food Aid program that supports U.S. workers while feeding hungry nations. The M.E.B.A. and American Maritime Congress, along with the AMO, MM&P, SIU, ILWU and Liberty Maritime, among others, helped sponsor the event that took place in the backdrop of the LIBERTY GLORY, a ship that is loaded up with Food for Peace wheat bound for the Arabian Peninsula. Food for Peace has proven to be the most successful international food aid program in the world providing transparency and reliability while lending crucial support to vital U.S. agriculture and maritime jobs. However, a few opponents on Capitol Hill have called for elimination of the U.S.-flag cargo preference component of the program and turning it into more of a cash-based system.

Speakers at the Longview Port event talked about a newly introduced bill - the "American Farmers Feed the World Act of 2023," – that reinstates the original intent of the Food for Peace program and ensures that U.S. taxpayer dollars will be directed towards purchasing food from domestic sources rather than from international competitors. The drastic reduction of cargoes for U.S.-flag shipping and the lowering of the food aid cargo preference level from 75% to 50% in 2012 helped facilitate a precipitous reduction in the internationally-trading U.S.-flag fleet as ships flagged out from the Stars and Stripes. The subsequent erosion of the mariner pool will continue to complicate the nation's ability to fulfill DOD sealift requirements and it is important that the Food Aid program continues to include U.S. mariner provisions.

## **CMES WILL RUN LIVE VIRTUAL TANKERMAN DL COURSE**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School has received Coast Guard approval to teach their Tankerman DL (Dangerous Liquids) course online. The first such class has been put on the schedule and will run from October 16–20, 2023 (6 students max).

Students will attend class by Zoom from the comfort of their own homes. Since this course is taught live, students are expected to be in attendance during the hours of 0830–1530 [ET] Monday through Friday. Those who live in a different time zone should consider if they are able and willing to attend during these times before they sign up for the class. Attendance is mandatory during class hours and anyone missing time will be considered absent and dropped from the class as the School has strict procedures to follow as per the USCG approval.

Final exams will be taken online during the last day of class. Technical requirements and additional information for this course are provided on the School's website ([www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org)). Please review these to determine if you have everything necessary before registering. Applications can be sent via the CMES website ([www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org)), faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

## **CAUTION FOR COMMERCIAL SHIPPING NEAR IRAN**

Naval forces operating in the Persian Gulf region have issued stern warnings to commercial ships navigating the Strait of Hormuz, cautioning them against approaching Iranian waters to prevent potential attacks. The advisories come shortly after the U.S. bulked up its military presence in the area. But a recent U.S.-Iran agreement that could lead to the release of captive Americans in Tehran gave rise to optimism that tension between the nations might ease a little.

Commander Tim Hawkins, spokesperson for the US Fifth Fleet, emphasized that vessels are strongly encouraged to maintain a considerable distance from Iranian territorial waters to mitigate the risk of seizure. He said that the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC), under the U.S. leadership, is actively notifying regional mariners about necessary precautions aimed at minimizing seizure risks.

In recent days, over 3,000 American sailors arrived in the Middle East as part of an initiative to reinforce the US military presence in the region. The US said the action was undertaken to deter Iran from seizing ships and oil tankers. Over the past years, the U.S. and Iran have engaged in a war of rhetoric after a series of incidents in the Gulf, including unexplained ship attacks, the downing of a drone, and the seizure of oil tankers.

## **M.E.B.A.-CREWED VESSEL AIDS DISTRESSED MARINERS**

The Military Sealift Command expeditionary fast transport (EPF) vessel USNS MILLINOCKET rendered assistance to a distressed small leisure boat last week near Darwin, Australia. Vessel engineers are represented by the M.E.B.A. The EPF was supporting the multinational military exercise “Talisman Sabre 2023” when the distress call was received. Only four nautical miles away, MILLINOCKET raced to the scene of the craft which was happily afloat but dead in the water. Civilian mariners packed the EPF’s fast rescue boat, helped stabilize the situation aboard the craft and remained on scene until Australian authorities arrived.

The MILLINOCKET is a 338-foot-long aluminum catamaran designed for rapid inter-theater troop transport and sea basing. The ship can transport about 600 tons of military troops, supplies and equipment for 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots on jet propulsion.

## **NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** *(All times are local)*

Monday, September 4 – Labor Day – *All Halls Closed.*

Tuesday, September 5 – **Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle (Fife)@1300**

Wednesday, September 6 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, September 7 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, September 8 – **Honolulu@1100.**

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----

