

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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NEWBUILD INTERLAKE SHIP M/V MARK BARKER MAKES MAIDEN VOYAGE

The first U.S.-flagged newbuild Great Lakes freighter in almost 40 years made her maiden voyage on Wednesday, departing from Fincantieri's Bay Shipbuilding Co. in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. The 639-foot M/V MARK W. BARKER made the 110-mile journey to Port Inland, Michigan with a crew of 21 mariners onboard, including M.E.B.A. Deck and Engine officers. The ship will load stone for delivery to Muskegon, Michigan.

"This is a monumental day for our company and the U.S.-flag fleet as our much-anticipated freighter departs on her first voyage in what will be a long life of service on the Great Lakes," noted Interlake President Mark W. Barker who is the namesake of the vessel. This is the company's first newbuild since 1981.

The vessel has been under construction since August 2019. The River-class, 639-foot, 28,000 DWT self-unloading bulk carrier incorporates a flap rudder as well as bow and stern thrusters for high-level maneuverability. It has 7,800 shaft horsepower produced by two sixteen-cylinder Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) diesel engines that are EPA Tier 4 and IMO Tier III certified. It is propelled by a single-screw, 18' diameter, Kongsberg controllable pitch propeller. For its electrical power requirements, it features 940 kW ship service diesel generators, 2500 kW shaft generators and a 274 kW emergency generator.

"This new vessel not only brings with it additional cargo carrying capacity and capabilities, it is the most versatile in our fleet and strategically sized to navigate into nearly any port on the Great Lakes," said Interlake V.P. Brendan O'Connor. "The M/V MARK W. BARKER will give us unmatched ability for cargo operations and to carry unique project cargoes because of both her square-shaped cargo hold and larger hatch openings. She truly was designed to be a vessel for the future."

"We couldn't be prouder to add this skillfully constructed vessel to our growing Interlake fleet," said Barker...We are thrilled to add our newest U.S.-crewed, U.S.-built and U.S.-owned vessel to the Great Lakes fleet."

The ship will have its official christening on September 1 in Cleveland, Ohio.

SOME PROGRESS MADE IN ILWU TALKS

Talks continue between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) on a new contract as the parties announced tangible progress on one of the major items. A joint statement announced that negotiators have a tentative agreement on health benefits but noted that they would not go into specifics until other areas have been addressed. The statement said, “Negotiations continue on other issues.”

ILWU represents 22,000 dockworkers serving at 29 West Coast ports. The PMA represents shipping lines and terminal operators at those 29 ports. The previous agreement expired at 5 pm on July 1, 2022. Talks began on May 10.

The main issue seen as a potential stumbling block in these talks is the employer’s demands for more automation on the docks. However, both sides are keeping things close to the vest and are committed to inching toward an agreement without slow-downs or lock-outs.

CDC ENDS CRUISE SHIP COVID PROGRAM

As of Monday, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has ended its COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships but will still issue safety guidance. The CDC will also end issuance of its color-coding chart listing the status of COVID outbreaks aboard various passenger vessels.

The transmissibility of the virus aboard cruise ships prompted the CDC to initiate heavy restrictions on the industry in 2020 following the advent of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Initially, the CDC established a Conditional Sailing Order implementing a series of COVID-related health and safety conditions that had to be met before large passenger vessels were permitted to operate in U.S. waters. Such conditions involved ensuring that a large percentage of passengers and crew were vaccinated and the implementation of protocols involving testing and quarantining, along with many other measures. Those mandatory guidelines eventually became optional but most cruise ship companies continued adhering to the voluntary CDC program.

A CDC spokesperson said that the agency determined that cruise companies possess the necessary tools to combat onboard COVID and their continued efforts have helped mitigate the threat. "Going forward," the spokesperson noted, "CDC will continue to publish cruise-specific guidance so cruise ships can continue to provide a safer and healthier environment for crew, passengers, and communities. Individual cruise lines will determine their own specific COVID-19-related requirements for cruise travel, as well as safety measures and protocols for passengers traveling on board based on CDC recommendations for reducing the risk of COVID-19."

The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), which represents 95% of the industry including M.E.B.A.-contracted NCL-America, welcomed the CDC announcement and called it “a testament to the effectiveness of the industry’s comprehensive and robust protocols.”

NAVY AUTHORIZES CONSTRUCTION OF TWO MORE MSC SALVAGE SHIPS

The Navy awarded Austal USA a contract to build two more Navajo-class Towing, Salvage, and Rescue Ships (T-ATS). The shipyard recently began work on the 6th such newbuild, vessels that will replace the aging Military Sealift Command Powhatan-class ocean tugs and Safeguard-class rescue and salvage ships.

Austal is now under contract for four of the vessels. They recently began work on their first. Gulf Island Fabrication is currently constructing the first vessels in the series, the USNS NAVAJO, USNS CHEROKEE NATION and the USNS SAGINAW OJIBWE ANISHINABEK. Bollinger Shipyard is working on the LENNI LENAPE and MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION. Work on the latest two Austal vessels will commence in the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024, with delivery planned for fall 2025 and spring 2026, respectively.

The Navajo-class vessels will provide a wide range of missions including open ocean towing, oil spill response, humanitarian assistance and wide area search and surveillance.

NLRB, DOJ PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO PROTECT WORKERS

A new Justice Department/National Labor Relations Board alliance announced this week would help protect workers from collusive or anticompetitive employer practices as well as unlawful interference with their right to organize.

The NLRB and DOJ signed a new memorandum of understanding to achieve that end through better information sharing, enforcement activity and training. The agencies look to maximize enforcement of federal laws, including the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and DOJ antitrust laws.

“Under the NLRA, workers have the right to organize to improve their pay and working conditions,” said NLRB General Counsel Abruzzo. “When businesses interfere with worker organizing, either through creating structures designed to evade labor law or through anticompetitive practices, it hinders our economy and our democracy. This MOU will strengthen the federal government’s ability to effectively stop this kind of unlawful activity, and therefore to better protect workers’ right to freely associate with one another to improve their wages and working conditions and to collectively bargain through freely chosen representatives.”

WISCONSIN REP. RECOGNIZED FOR LAKES ADVOCACY

The Great Lakes Maritime Task Force (GLMTF) recognized Wisconsin Congressman Mike Gallagher (R-WI) on Friday for his dedication to protecting and advancing the Lakes and its supply chain. GLMTF is a labor/management coalition that includes the M.E.B.A.

The Task Force noted that Congressman Gallagher spearheaded legislation that invests in shipbuilding on the Great Lakes, improves the maritime supply chain during the winter, and ensures that the Great Lakes Navigation System remains viable for years to come.

Mark Ruge, President of the Wisconsin Domestic Maritime Coalition, said “Congressman Gallagher’s support for U.S. merchant mariners, Wisconsin ports, and Wisconsin shipbuilding drives economic stability in the Great Lakes region and in the nation. Simply put, he helps to create family sustaining jobs for thousands.”

CHOOSE UNION FOR SUMMER FUN

Hey, it’s hot out there! Roll out the grill, spark up the coals and cool your buns during another sweltering summer. Give yourself a break with some liquid refreshment, but do it union-style! Here’s a guide:

Coolers - Rubbermaid. **Flags** – Artflag. **Games** – Battleship; Candy Land; Clue; Connect Four; Monopoly; Twister; Yahtzee. **Grills** - Weber (Genesis, Summit, Q Series). **Hot Dogs** - Ball Park; Butterball; Hebrew National; Hormel; Oscar Mayer. **Ice Cream** - Breyers; Good Humor; Prairie Farms; Tillamook. **Snacks** - Flipz pretzels; Frito-Lay chips. **Sunscreen** - Bain de Soleil; Coppertone.

Every time you buy union, you help support good jobs. In addition, here's a list of beers and the union that crafts them. Visit the Labor 411 directory at <https://labor411.org> for more union-made products.

Beer! - Anchor Steam (ILWU); Bass (IAM); Beck's (IAM); Blue Moon (IUOE, IBT); Budweiser (IBT, IAM); Busch (IAM, IBT); Butte Creek (IBT); Coors (IBT); Dundee (IBT); Duquesne (IUE-CWA); Genesee (IBT); Goose Island (IBT); Hamm's Draft (UAW); Henry Weinhard's (IUOE, IBT); Iron City (IUE-CWA); Jamaica Red Ale (IAM); Keystone (IAM, IUOE); Killians (IUOE, IBT); Landshark Lager (IAM, IUOE, IBT); Lionshead (IUOE); Mad River (IAM); Mendocino Brewing (IBT); Michelob (IAM, IBT, IUOE); Mickey's (IUOE, IBT); Miller Genuine Draft (UAW, IAM, IUOE, IBT); Milwaukee's Best (UAW, IUOE, IAM, IBT); Natural Ice (IAM, IUOE, IBT); O'Doul's (non-alcoholic) (IUOE, IAM, IBT); Pabst Blue Ribbon (UAW); Red Stripe (IUE-CWA); Red Tail Ale (IBT); Rolling Rock (IAM); Sam Adams (IBT, IUOE, SEIU); Schlitz (UAW); Shock Top (IAM, IUOE, IBT); Steelhead (IAM); Third Shift (IBT).

WEST COAST HALLS CLOSED TO HONOR THE LEGACY OF HARRY BRIDGES

M.E.B.A. halls and offices on the West Coast were closed today to honor labor giant Harry Bridges on the 121st anniversary of his birthday. Alfred ("Harry") Bridges was born on July 28, 1901 in Kensington, Australia and died March 30, 1990 in San Francisco. He went to sea as a teenager, eventually settling in San Francisco in the early 1920s. By 1930 he was working on the San Francisco waterfront and soon became a leader and voice for Bay area longshoremen. In addition to the hazard of moving heavy loads and scant Depression-era safety standards, shifts could last in excess of 24 hours, compounding the danger. Hiring took place on the docks each morning where a Hiring Boss chose workers at a "shape-up." It was an opaque system vulnerable to corruption and abuse.

In 1933, the National Industrial Recovery Act passed, strengthening American workers' right to organize, bargain collectively, and protecting them from discrimination of union membership. Empowered by this important New Deal act, Americans were organizing and joining unions – including members of minority groups previously excluded. In May 1934, West Coast longshoremen launched a strike in protest of the shape-up and other issues involving safety, working conditions, and a minimum wage. Adopting the motto "an injury to one is an injury to all" and taking it to heart, Bridges understood that the only way his union brothers and sisters could make progress was through combining efforts with maritime and related unions in the same way that companies often combined efforts to oppose unions. He also realized that when union membership became more inclusive, it would be harder for employers to recruit minorities as strikebreakers as they had in the past. The culmination of the strike would take place in Bridges' home port.

Along the West Coast, strikers (and bystanders) were arrested, beaten, gassed, and killed. On July 5, 1934 (Bloody Thursday), two picketers were shot and killed in San Francisco. Four days later, 40,000 people filled Market Street for the two men's funeral procession.

San Franciscans, angered by the violence against their working-class neighbors, joined longshore and maritime unions in a “General Strike.” On July 16, bustling San Francisco became eerily silent as over 100,000 Bay Area workers walked out. Business and government leaders took notice.

The San Francisco General Strike ended on July 19, 1934 and the West Coast waterfront strike finished on July 31, when both sides agreed to go to arbitration. The longshoremen’s victory featured a contract establishing shorter hours, better wages – and hiring halls. Hiring would be through halls maintained jointly by the union and companies, with a dispatcher selected by the union. A surge in union organizing and membership soon followed the unionization of all the West Coast ports.

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

Monday, August 8 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Tuesday, August 9 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

Wednesday, August 10 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org

Thursday, August 11 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, August 12 – Honolulu@1100.

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



*M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.*

The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.