

# 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 22 – June 2, 2022



In this issue//Oppose Egregious Cargo Preference Waivers//Adm. Fagan Takes Command at Coast Guard//WWII Mariner Addresses DC Memorial Day Event//Reminder on Shipping Card Registration & Permanent Jobs//Former TRANSCOM Boss is New Supply Chain Envoy//Celebrating the Life of Perry Seyler//Openings for Damage Control/CBRN Course at CMES//

### **OPPOSE RESOLUTIONS THAT WOULD ELIMINATE CARGO PREFERENCE**

The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) and USA Maritime are keeping up the pressure on Congress to oppose a pair of resolutions that would compromise the use of U.S.-flag ships in favor of foreign vessels. TTD represents 37 transportation labor unions and USA Maritime is a coalition of U.S. ship operators, maritime labor organizations, and maritime trade associations. M.E.B.A is part of both organizations.

In recent weeks, a pair of Senators began drumming up support from fellow lawmakers for Senate Concurrent Resolutions 37 & 38 which would temporarily waive cargo preference rules requiring that at least 50% of international food aid cargoes be carried on U.S.-flag ships. The debate revolved around a package of food and military equipment package for Ukraine. Now, several Members have put forward similar language in the House (House Concurrent Resolution 92).

TTD and USA Maritime penned a letter to lawmakers calling the waivers damaging to the U.S.-flag and American mariner workforce. They stated, "The reduction of cargo would only further endanger the jobs of civilian merchant mariners creating the distinct possibility that there will not be enough mariners to meet military surge and sustainment requirements for future military conflicts. When foreign flag shipping companies are currently making record profits amidst global supply chain disruptions, now is not the time to weaken critical policies that would come at the expense of American businesses and working families."

U.S. shipping interests point out that the cost of shipping American, as cited by lawmakers favoring the resolutions as "dramatically overstated." They said that all ocean shipping under the Food for Peace program—foreign-flag and U.S.-flag combined — accounts for only 8% of program costs and that the premium for using U.S.-flag ships accounts for less than 1% of program costs. USA Maritime has noted that the resolutions wouldn't exclusively apply to Ukrainian relief. "Resolution 37 would waive Ship American rules indefinitely, Resolution 38 would divert cargoes to foreign carriers for an arbitrary three-year period."

The Navy League set up a "Voice to Congress" webpage where you can let lawmakers know they shouldn't bypass U.S. ships and mariners in favor of foreign counterparts. The Navy League is a non-profit civilian organization whose mission is to educate Americans about the enduring importance of sea power and to support the men and women of the U.S. sea services. It advocates for the Navy,

Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S. Merchant Marine. You can visit <https://navyleague.quorum.us/campaign/40368/> where you fill out a few blanks and let Congress know that cargo preference is crucial for our economic and national security!

### **ADM. FAGAN, FIRST FEMALE COAST GUARD COMMANDANT, TAKES COMMAND**

Adm. Linda Fagan succeeded Adm. Karl Schultz as Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard this week in Washington D.C. at a change-of-command ceremony attended by President Joe Biden and Homeland Security Department Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, among others. Representing the M.E.B.A. at the ceremony were President Adam Vokac, Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha, Government Affairs Director Erick Siahaan as well as American Maritime Congress President Fair Kim.

Adm. Fagan, who previously served as Vice Commandant, is the Coast Guard's first woman to hold the rank of four-star admiral. She is a 1985 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy and is the first female of 27 Commandants since 1915 to lead the Service.

Immediately following the change-of-command, Adm. Schultz retired from the Coast Guard after 39 years of service to the nation.

### **WWII MARINER ADDRESSES DC MEMORIAL DAY EVENT**

World War II merchant mariner Dave Yoho gave the keynote address at a Memorial Day gathering in Washington D.C. on Monday. Speaking at the National WWII Memorial, he delivered rousing and heartfelt remarks that brought attention to the sacrifices of seafarers during the war and beyond. Still active at 94, Dave has a consulting and training business and is a very effective motivational speaker who continues to champion merchant mariners past and present.

At the event, he showed off the Congressional Gold Medal, recently presented to World War II mariners by Congress. He was 16 years old when he served his country in World War II. His remarks on merchant mariners were eye-opening for the many uninitiated members of the general public. He talked about the brutal Murmansk Run of WWII where merchant ships which were delivering key cargo to Russian allies were picked apart by prowling German U-Boats. He also discussed the little-known "second Pearl Harbor" when a German air raid sank over 20 allied ships in Bari, Italy in Dec. 1943. In that attack, the Liberty Ship JOHN HARVEY, with a secret cargo full of mustard gas, was among the ships that were bombed. The subsequent cloud of deadly gas helped push the combined number of dead servicemen, civilians and merchant mariners into the thousands.

Do yourself a favor and watch the 19-minute address at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXjEUfyr4YE>

### **REMINDER: SHIPPING CARD REGISTRATION & PERMANENT JOBS**

As a reminder, you cannot retain a permanent position once you register for a Shipping Card. Those with a permanent position registering for a Shipping Card, must inform the jurisdictional Union hall so the open position can be filled. In addition, the Company should be given enough notice, as a matter of professional courtesy, to allow them sufficient time to fill the open permanent position.

Shipping Rule 13.a) states: "Anyone terminating his position aboard a vessel, or going on Leave of Absence for any reason or transferring to any position other than temporary promotions aboard a vessel, must immediately notify in writing the Branch having jurisdiction over Port in which such

change of employment occurs. Such notification shall be presented in person. M.E.B.A. will provide forms for recording changes.”

### **FORMER TRANSCOM BOSS IS NEW SUPPLY CHAIN ENVOY**

The White House has appointed Retired General Stephen R. Lyons, former Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command, as the new Port and Supply Chain Envoy serving on the White House Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force. Retired General Lyons will take over the role from John Porcari and work with the Department of Transportation, the White House National Economic Council (NEC), ports, rail, trucking and other private companies across the supply chains. Their goal is to continue to address bottlenecks, speed up the movement of goods, and help lower costs for American families.

General Lyons led TRANSCOM prior to current Commander Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, who took over late last year. He was an extremely strong proponent of U.S.-flag ships and American mariners during his TRANSCOM tenure. At last year’s Maritime Day observation he noted, “I recognize the important role the U.S.-flag maritime industry plays in our nation’s defense...This is why TRANSCOM and DOD remain strong advocates for a healthy U.S.-flag maritime industry.” He continually supported the Maritime Security Program, Jones Act and the new Tanker Security Program and called them “important to ensure access to industry capabilities for defense needs.”

### **CELEBRATING PERRY SEYLER, JUNE 4 IN PETALUMA**

Those in the M.E.B.A. family who are on the West Coast this weekend should know about the memorial celebration of recently departed member Perry Seyler. It takes place this weekend, Saturday June 4, from 4-8, on 110 Skillman Ln. in Petaluma, CA north of San Francisco. It will be a casual outdoor barbecue filled with food, music, good stories and memories.

Captain Perry was 63 when he sailed into the sunset at the end of March. He was a 1981 graduate of the California Maritime Academy when he began a 30+ year maritime career. He made waves and progressed through the ranks, and was highly regarded by clients, senior management and crew. He was well known for his exceptional leadership and mentoring skills. While working as a civilian for Patriot Shipping, Perry served as Chief Mate on the USNS YANO and USNS SHUGHART. Captain Perry was in charge of the USNS WHEAT, and in later years he would serve as Captain on the USNS STOCKHAM where he carried out rescue missions and other strategic U.S. missions.

If you wish to attend the celebration of Perry’s life, text Travis Simmons at (707) 322-9341, and he’ll call you back.

### **OPENINGS FOR UPCOMING DAMAGE CONTROL/CBRN COURSE AT CMES**

There is still space available for the June 20-24 Damage Control/ Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) class at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School.

Applications for the course 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)

## USE M.E.B.A. WEBSITE DUES PAYMENT OPTION TO IRON OUT LWOP/VACATION DUES LAPSES

Some M.E.B.A. bargaining unit members pay dues by automatic Dues Check-Off (DCO). But when DCO members take vacation or (in the case of the Government fleet) Leave without Pay (LWOP), there are lapses in payroll where dues aren't automatically submitted. Those members can iron out the imbalance from a link on the M.E.B.A. homepage ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)). Click the link, select the bargaining unit in the "Check Off, Catch-Up" section and make sure you remain a member in good standing.

A "Vacation Pay" option is also available. This is useful for port engineers and Union officials who can make these vacation dues payments online. Many members and applicants think that paying online is the most efficient and advantageous manner to remain in good standing.

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

**Monday, June 6** – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

**Tuesday, June 7** – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

**Wednesday, June 8** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)**

**Thursday, June 9** – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

**Friday, June 10** – Honolulu Hall Closed (King Kamehameha Day)

**Monday, June 13** – 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](mailto: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](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*