

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 11 – March 17, 2022



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FINAL VOYAGE: FORMER M.E.B.A. ALASKA REP. GREG O'CLARAY

The M.E.B.A. is saddened to learn of the passing of Greg O'Claray, longtime mariner, M.E.B.A. official and Alaska politician. Greg died over the weekend in Astoria, OR at the age of 79. He had been retired for the past few years after an impressive career over 60 years, sailing and fighting for mariners and worker interests. Born in Portland, Oregon, he moved to Juneau, AK in 1950. Early on, he sailed then served as an official for the Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific in Juneau until the early 1980s. He lived in the state except when working on ships, attending school, and lobbying for Alaskan issues in Washington, D.C. He also lobbied for various clients before the Alaska State Legislature, the State of Alaska administration, and the U.S. Congress. Married in 1961, he had five daughters with wife Mary.

He served as M.E.B.A.'s Representative in Juneau for over a decade - from the early 1990s until 2002, after which he was succeeded by current Rep. Ben Goldrich. Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski appointed Greg as the State's Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner in 2003, a post he served with distinction until 2007.

He put in time to a number of civic organizations, including City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Economic Development Council, Citizens for Management of Alaska Lands, Alaska Committee, Juneau Port Development Council, Juneau Chamber of Commerce, Alaska State AFL-CIO, and the Juneau Central Labor Council. He also served as a trustee on two benefit trusts for 6,000 maritime workers in Alaska and the West Coast. He was smart, affable, and a true friend and advocate for working men and women.

JONES ACT HATERS TRY TO MAKE HAY WITH UKRAINIAN CRISIS

Right on-cue, Jones Act haters are coming out of the woodwork to use questionable logic that the U.S. should waive the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Congressman Ed Case (D-HI), a longtime opponent of the Jones Act., is making another attempt to water down the 100-year old statute after the U.S. announced its ban against Russian oil. Rep. Case, as well as Rep. Scott Perry (R-PA), stated their desire for a repeal of the statute and called for waivers to allow foreign-flag ships to carry energy products between U.S. ports.

Although it enjoys large bipartisan support in Congress, almost every global crisis appears to be reason enough for someone to falsely scapegoat the Jones Act and call for the end to the statute that supports American jobs. Rep. Case claims that because of the ban, foreign tankers should be favored to transport oil and other petroleum products from U.S. ports to Hawaii.

The American Maritime Partnership, a coalition representing the domestic maritime industry that counts the M.E.B.A. and AMC as members, released a background paper and penned a letter to President Biden attempting to clear up any general misconceptions that people might have about the Jones Act, in light of the Ukraine crisis.

They point out that there is more than enough U.S.-flag ship capacity to handle any oil transportation needs and that a Jones Act waiver, which can only be granted if “necessary in the interest of national defense,” would solely benefit oil traders – not U.S. consumers. Furthermore, they argue that Jones Act waivers “outsource U.S. jobs and undermine American security.” In any event, they say that “there has been no interruption in the supply of crude oil and refined products into Hawaii” from the U.S. and other countries.

The AMP letter to the President noted that it would be “ironic and insulting” to steal jobs away from Americans “at a time of rising inflation and global uncertainty. It is particularly egregious that some have called for Jones Act waivers as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a situation that underscores the importance of ensuring our nation’s ability to protect our economic and homeland security at home and to support our national security interests around the world.”

DEC SMOOTHS FIRST JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROUP III APPLICANTS

M.E.B.A.’s District Executive Committee has approved a change that will allow new Group III Applicants, who are not yet eligible in the Medical Plan, to take a job off the board without an Annual M.E.B.A. Physical Card, using only a valid USCG Physical (CG-719K/USCG Medical Certificate) obtained in the last year.

However, Group III Applicants getting work without a current Annual M.E.B.A. Physical Card must know that, if contractually required, the company may decline them without recourse of the grievance procedure, which would put the job back on the board.

This DEC change would smooth the way for first-job opportunities for Group III Applicants so they’re able to accrue medical time to visit a clinic down the road without out-of-pocket transportation expenses. This option is only for new Group III Applicants who have not secured their first 30 days of covered employment. The M.E.B.A. still strongly encourages all new applicants to obtain the M.E.B.A. physical, if feasible.

LAST OF 5 ACADEMY SHIP NEWBUILDS FUNDED IN OMNIBUS

The massive \$1.5 trillion Omnibus Appropriations bill signed into law last week that funds the Government through the end of the Fiscal Year also will provide funding for the last of five newbuild Academy training ships. The next-generation National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMV) will be capable of supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in times of need. They are being constructed at Philly Shipyard, in Philadelphia, PA.

The first vessel in the series will replace the almost 60-year old SUNY training ship EMPIRE STATE VI by early 2023. The second will relieve the 54-year old TS KENNEDY at Massachusetts Maritime

Academy. The third and fourth newbuilds will replace vessels at Maine Maritime Academy and Texas A&M Maritime Academy. The Omnibus slotted the funds necessary for the fifth NSMV - destined for the California State University Maritime Academy (CMA).

NSMVs will feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and have space for up to 600 cadets to train in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea. Each ship will feature modern hospital facilities, a helicopter pad, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need. They will provide needed roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity for use during disaster relief missions.

FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE ELECTED

A rank and file Financial Review Committee was selected at six Union halls during the March membership meetings last week. The six-person FRC is a democratic safeguard adopted by the M.E.B.A. in the mid-1990s to examine Union finances from the previous calendar year. The FRC will assemble at M.E.B.A. Headquarters on Tuesday, April 5th to spend three days reviewing the Union's finances from the 2021 calendar year. The FRC is comprised of five members as well as one member who will serve as an alternate. The Committee will consist of the following six members: Vinny Quinones (Houston), Erik Barton (NY/NJ), Eugene Smith III (Norfolk), Seth Massey (Oakland), Steve Walker (Seattle) and John C. Schaffer (Tampa). Following their work, their completed report will be presented to the membership at next month's meetings.

The elected Union members will travel to M.E.B.A. Headquarters in Washington D.C. on Monday, April 4, 2022. The actual meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 in the Conference Room at M.E.B.A. Headquarters. It is anticipated that the business of the FRC will be completed by Thursday, April 7 with travel home the following day.

MARITIME ADVISORIES WARN MARINERS ABOUT DANGEROUS WATERS

The Maritime Administration issued three Advisories this week warning mariners about threats to commercial shipping in global hotspots. The first, Advisory 2022-003, warns that regional conflicts, heightened military activity and increased political tension are creating dangerous conditions and are threats to U.S. commercial vessels in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Bab al Mandeb Strait, Red Sea and Western Indian Ocean. Explosive unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attacks, limpet mines, explosive boats, boardings by hostile nations and communication interference all remain threats to U.S. commercial ships. MarAd issued guidance and recommendations to help mitigate the threats..

Another Advisory (2022-004) updates mariners about multiple reports of attacks on commercial shipping in the Black Sea and near Ukraine. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February, there have been reports of multiple commercial vessels struck by projectiles in Ukrainian ports and in the northwestern Black Sea. There have also been reports of naval mines in the water near Odesa. MarAd notes there is a high risk of damage to U.S.-flag commercial vessels in this region. The advisory issues guidance and recommendations to U.S.-flag vessels.

Another Advisory (2022-05) warns U.S. mariners about nefarious parties attempting to disrupt vessel operations with GPS interference. MarAd says that incidents continue to be logged – the latest in the eastern and central Mediterranean Sea, specifically in the vicinity of the Suez Canal, Cyprus, Malta, and Istanbul, in the Persian Gulf near Dammam, KSA, and off the coast of Brazil.

INFO SHARING INITIATIVE AIMS TO HELP EASE SUPPLY CHAIN WOES

A new data sharing initiative announced this week by the Department of Transportation will establish a data exchange platform between supply chain participants with the goal of expediting delivery times and decreasing costs. Known as Freight Logistics Optimization Works (FLOW), 18 initial participants, including ports, private businesses, trucking, warehousing, and logistics companies will work together with the administration on the information exchange effort. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said, “It will be a digital tool. You can think of it like a website...There's some real gaps in how data is shared. FLOW is a partnership with these private sector players that own or operate the bulk of our supply chains to make sure more of that data is shared.”

The initiative is seen as a pilot project that will expand as participants join the effort. DOT plans to launch a web page to gauge industry interest in participation and data sharing for a potential long-term FLOW effort. Georgia Ports Authority Executive Director Griff Lynch said, “Greater transparency - knowing where a vessel or a container is at every stage of transit -- would provide the predictability cargo owners and logistics providers need to optimize the use of resources. Through better communication, aspects of the supply chain such as timing on production, staffing, trucks and chassis, and warehouse space can be fine-tuned for greater efficiency and velocity.”

LABOR HAILS DOL RULEMAKING PROTECTING CONSTRUCTION WORKER WAGES

Labor unions cheered the issuance of proposed Labor Department rules strengthening existing regulations protecting the payment of local prevailing wages to workers on federal construction projects. The DOL said that the proposed rulemaking, which updates regulations that implement the Davis-Bacon Act and related acts, speeds up prevailing wage updates, creates efficiencies in the current system and ensures prevailing wage rates keep up with actual wages. Over time, that would translate to higher wages for workers.

“Federal dollars should be used to create good jobs in local communities all across our country,” said Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh. “These proposed regulations are good for workers, good for building high-quality infrastructure and for ensuring we have a strong construction industry, as we rebuild America.”

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler noted that, “It has been 40 years since the DOL last updated these regulations and wage theft continues to cheat thousands of construction workers every year on projects funded by American taxpayer dollars. With more than \$1 trillion of construction activity anticipated across the country in the next five years, effective enforcement is required to ensure fairness in the prevailing wage determination process.”

CMES ADDS “LNG AS A FUEL” COURSE

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES) has added an “LNG as a Fuel (Combined Basic & Advanced IGF Code Operations)” course to its 2022 schedule. The newly added course will run from May 24-26 (Tuesday-Thursday). The course meets new mandatory minimum requirements in the STCW Convention and Code for the training and qualifications of relevant personnel on ships. Successful completion of the course will help prepare the licensed mariner to apply for the IGF Code Operations Endorsement issued by the NMC. Interactive classroom lectures and computer-based simulations will include a review of the properties of LNG and basic laws of thermodynamics. Additionally, students will focus on LNG bunkering operational considerations, LNG system design, safety requirements, pollution prevention and hazard controls. Classroom learning objectives will be

supplemented by simulation demonstrations and assessments. The CMES is working on dates for additional courses and will distribute them when available.

Please note that this course has been added to the online application form. Members using a paper application form should just write in the course name LNG as a Fuel and the date. Applications may be sent via the CMES website (mebaschool.org), faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to applications@mebaschool.org

“SPRING OPEN” 4MF DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT LATER THIS MONTH AT CMES

All are welcome to attend and participate in the upcoming Disc Golf tournament scheduled to take place on March 26th at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School. All proceeds will benefit a great cause – the M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) which provides upkeep and makes improvements to the Memorial Park at the School. As you know, the Memorial was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The Foundation supporting the Memorial is a section 501(c)(3) entity under Internal Revenue Service rules, so all donations are tax deductible.

The 4MF’s Spring Open “Frisbee Golf” tournament on March 26 starts at 1 pm - open to everyone - with a \$25 entry fee. This is a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon. Come on by! For more info, contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo. He can be reached at (443) 676-6248 or bvanloo@bvlworks.org

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

Monday, April 4 – All Halls Closed (*Jesse Calhoon Day*)

Tuesday, April 5 – **Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle-Fife@1300.**

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

Thursday, April 7 – **L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, April 8 – **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.