

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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In this issue//M.E.B.A. Ships Honored for Environmental Safety//CG Cutter Begins Prep Work for Operation Deep Freeze//Cyber Attack Affecting WSF Appears Minor//Stopgap Bill will Keep Government Running//Reminder: Online Member Payment Portal//Houthi Leader Targets Israeli Ships//Applicants Should Forward Docs//Thanksgiving Closures//

DOZENS OF M.E.B.A. SHIPS HONORED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

A huge list of vessels sailing under the management of M.E.B.A.-contracted companies were honored for excellent environmental records at an event in Washington D.C. on Wednesday. The Chamber of Shipping of America (CSA) doles out annual Environmental Achievement Awards for vessels and crews that put together a string of years with no reportable spills, no MARPOL citations and no violations of pollution regulations. M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac was in attendance at the event and was pleased to congratulate our contracted companies and attending mariners in person.

The awards dinner, presided over by CSA President and CEO Kathy Metcalf, attracts high-level Coast Guard, Maritime Administration, EPA and other government agency personnel as well as officials from the contracted companies and the mariners that sail upon the vessels.

In large part, company officials accepted the awards at the event on behalf of their vessels and crews but Keystone Shipping sent a contingent of mariners to accept their deserved honors in person. The Keystone contingent included M.E.B.A. members Alec Cunningham, Doug Wulff, Keith Garland and Matt Seel as well as pensioner Gary Hill. Each was called up to the front for their moment in the limelight as they collected their certificates. Also representing the company was Keystone Vice President of Operations Dave Carroll.

Other M.E.B.A. contracted companies with vessels receiving awards besides Keystone included Chevron Shipping, Marine Transport Lines, Maersk Line, Ltd., Matson Navigation, OSG Ship Management (including Alaska Tanker Company), Pasha Hawaii, Patriot Contract Services, and Waterman/Seabulk. Many more M.E.B.A. companies and vessels have actually achieved the qualifications demanded to receive these awards. However, the committee sometime are not made aware of other vessels if a nomination form is not filled out for them. The awards are available to all owners and operators, whether or not a CSA member. The Board encourages all vessel owners and operators to nominate their compliant vessels.

CG CUTTER DEPARTS FOR DEEP FREEZE PREP WORK FOR SOUTH POLE RESUPPLY MISSION

The almost 48-year old Coast Guard Cutter POLAR STAR is enroute to the South Pole in support of Operation Deep Freeze 2024, an annual mission to resupply U.S. Antarctic stations in support of

the National Science Foundation. The cutter began its mission yesterday (November 15) when it left Seattle, WA. The vessel will help cut through the ice to allow a clear path for Military Sealift Command-contracted ships to deliver critical supplies to sustain scientists' year-round operations at the Pole's McMurdo Station.

The Waterman-managed heavylift vessel M/V OCEAN GIANT, crewed with M.E.B.A. Engine Officers, annually takes part in this important mission. MSC has supported the operation since 1955, the year the station was established.

Operation Deep Freeze is one of the more challenging U.S. military peacetime missions due to the harsh environment in which it is conducted. Antarctica is the coldest, windiest, most inhospitable continent on the globe, and each trip requires careful planning and coordination.

CYBER-ATTACK ON WA STATE DOT APPEARS MINOR

It appears that all systems are back to normal after a November 7 cyber-attack on the Washington State Department of Transportation caused inconveniences and disruptions.

The cyber security incident affected ferry cameras, as well as vessel watch and online travel information sources for the Washington State Ferries but did not hinder operations. To inform passengers of delays, ferry crews resorted to unconventional methods, such as posting handwritten signs at terminals.

A few days later, all systems were back up and it doesn't appear that any information was compromised. The State DOT announced that, "As of Saturday morning, all our public-facing web applications and services have been restored. We appreciate the public's understanding and flexibility during this disruptive period caused by Tuesday's outage and cybersecurity issue. Our Technology Services Division worked diligently day and night to restore systems promptly and safely. While these outages resulted from a cyber incident affecting travel-related information, there is no indication of any other system compromise or unauthorized access to personal information. The investigation into the incident's cause is ongoing."

STOPGAP BILL KEEPS GOVERNMENT RUNNING UNTIL JANUARY

The Senate overwhelmingly approved a stopgap spending bill just before the approaching Friday deadline, in a 87-11 vote. The President is expected to sign the House-passed measure averting the immediate shutdown. The unconventional legislation allocates funds for four federal agencies until January 19, 2024, and the remaining agencies until February 2, 2024. The primary objective is to provide Congress with additional time for negotiating comprehensive, long-term spending bills.

In the event that the upcoming negotiations don't transpire successfully, there is a looming threat of a 1 percent across-the-board spending cut for all agencies in April. Reportedly, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) opted for this strategy to appease a faction of House conservatives aiming to leverage the rolling deadlines to secure spending concessions.

REMINDER! ONLINE MEMBER PAYMENT & UPDATE PORTAL

M.E.B.A.'s online Member Payment and Update Portal (PUP) allows the membership the ease of making online monetary transactions and gives them the opportunity to verify their credentials and contact information on file, as well as submitted sea time.

Members and applicants can use the Member PUP to pay their dues or service charges by credit card, debit card or through their checking account. They can also set up a recurring payment schedule to automatically keep them current. The site also allows users to view their transaction history online in a secure manner.

Visit www.mebaunion.org where you can click on the Member PUP banner to get started. In addition, the PUP allows members, applicants and retirees to make contributions to the M.E.B.A.'s Good & Welfare and Political Action Funds that support so many members. Contributions to the Good & Welfare Fund are tax deductible. This fund has provided essential assistance to members and retirees in their time of need. The PAF keeps M.E.B.A. jobs afloat by affording us a crucial lifeline to policymakers who help determine the fate of the U.S. Merchant Marine.

You'll find the online Portal to be the most efficient and advantageous manner to remain in good standing and extend a needed monetary infusion to vital Union programs.

HOUTHIL LEADER TARGETING ISRAELI SHIPS

On Tuesday, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, the leader of Yemen's Houthi militia, declared plans to retaliate against Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip by targeting Israeli ships in the Red Sea and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

Al-Houthi, in a televised speech on *al-Masirah*, the group's satellite TV channel, stated the group's intent to monitor and locate Israeli ships. He affirmed the continuation of missile and drone attacks on Israel, with the militia intending to conduct further operations both within and outside Israel. The Houthi rebel group, controlling significant parts of northern Yemen has claimed responsibility for six cross-border attacks on Israeli cities since the onset of the Israel-Hamas conflict on Oct. 7.

Additionally, the Houthis recently shot down a U.S. drone near Yemen's Red Sea port city of Hodeidah. That prompted the Maritime Administration to issue a Maritime Alert (2023-004A) warning commercial mariners of threats in the region after multiple drone and missile attacks launched from Yemen. MarAd advises that mariners exercise caution when transiting the area.

APPLICANTS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP MUST FORWARD DOCS BY 11/30

Qualified applicants trying to make membership in December must make sure they provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and will issue a report in late November to be voted upon by members during the regular December membership meetings (December 4-8).

To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may

be eligible for membership. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements should forward their information to Headquarters.

Applicants have been mailed letters from HQ referencing the missing requirements needed for that applicant to make membership. Referenced documents must be submitted to HQ no later than 11/30 if you wish to be considered for membership during this review period. If you have questions about your status, you can contact the Membership Department at membership@mebaunion.org. All questions about service charge payments should be directed to the M.E.B.A. Accounting Department at accounting@mebaunion.org. Qualified applicants who fail to make the deadline will have to wait another six months – until the June 2024 report – to make membership.

NOTE ON NEXT WEEK'S THANKSGIVING CLOSINGS

All Union halls and offices will be closed on Thursday, November 23 and Friday, November 24 next week for Thanksgiving. In addition, there may be early closures on Wednesday – check your local hall if needed. The *Telex Times* will still publish on Thursday.

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

Monday, December 4 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, December 5 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

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

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

Friday, December 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.