

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



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BUZBY SWORN IN

Rear Adm. Mark Buzby was on the job this week at the Maritime Administration after being sworn in on Tuesday. The former head of the Military Sealift Command and recent President of the National Defense Transportation Association takes the reins as Administrator filling the post that had remained vacant since Chip Jaenichen stepped down in early January.

Larry Willis, new President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) issued a statement welcoming the new Administrator. "A vibrant U.S. maritime industry is vital to the safety and security of our nation, and the health of our economy," he said. "We can and must do more to support measures that enhance this industry and its frontline workforce, including strengthening the Maritime Security Program, protecting cargo preference laws, and retaining skilled mariners. I look forward to working with Administrator Buzby to push these and other common-sense policies that will secure our nation's port and maritime industries as engines for economic growth and job creation."

FINAL VOYAGE: MIKE BLEVINS

Mike Blevins, longtime member and Chief Engineer sailed into the sunset this week at the age of 61. He was a 1983 graduate of the cadet program at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School after which he began a distinguished 26 year shipping career. In his retirement from the sea, he taught at San Jacinto College and was a Gas Turbine instructor at the M.E.B.A. School. "Bongo" was well-known and respected by members. He served as Chief Engineer aboard the high-profile gas turbine vessel LCPL ROY M. WHEAT and spent over 12 years sailing aboard Military Sealift Command and Maritime Administration vessels. A funeral service is scheduled for this Saturday in League City, TX at Unity Bay Area Houston beginning at 10 a.m. A viewing will take place just previous - at 9 am. In lieu of flowers, consider a donation to the Liver Center at Baylor College of Medicine.

RUSTBUCKETS CLEARED OUT OF SUISUN BAY

The Maritime Administration hailed the completion of an agreement to remove 57 non-retention vessels from the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet (SBRF). The departure of the CAPE BORDA for recycling helped them reach the milestone two months ahead of schedule.

In 2009, MarAd entered an agreement with local officials and environmental groups to expedite disposal of 57 SBRF vessels, which were deemed to be no longer militarily useful.

A seven-year, environmentally safe cleanup plan was designed and implemented. Thanks to a strong scrap steel market, 27 vessels were sold for recycling, with receipts totaling approximately \$30 million. Ship sales revenue, allocated in accordance with the National Maritime Heritage Act, provided approximately \$7.5 million to maritime academies, including the California State Maritime Academy in Vallejo, for facility and training, ship maintenance, repair and modernization, and for the purchase of simulators and fuel; and approximately \$3.75 million was provided to the National Park Service to fund the Maritime Heritage Grant Program, which provides competitive grants to maritime related projects that preserve historic sites and artifacts related to our nation's maritime history.

The Maritime Administration keeps ships at three National Defense Reserve Fleet sites for national defense and national emergency purposes: the James River Reserve Fleet in Virginia, the Beaumont Reserve Fleet in Texas, and the SBRF in California. When ships become obsolete, the Maritime Administration arranges for their environmentally safe disposal at qualified domestic ship recycling facilities.

CG STUDIES 3-D PRINTING FOR MISSION READINESS

The Coast Guard Research and Development Center (RDC) in New London, Connecticut, is currently studying how the use of 3-D printing technology might improve mission readiness through logistical support. Now in the evaluation phase, 3-D printers are available for crew use on five Coast Guard cutters as well as at several operational shore units including Base New Orleans and the Surface Forces Logistics Center Engineering Services Division in Baltimore.

“I think the utility of the 3-D printer is the ability to print parts that are not normally kept onboard,” said Capt. Joseph Dugan, who is program manager for the National Security Cutter Program. “Sometimes those parts have lead times of weeks ... maybe months, depending on the workload of the manufacturer.”

Additive manufacturing may also provide cost savings for the Coast Guard. With some of its legacy cutters, replacement parts can be difficult to find. “Sometimes manufacturers no longer make the parts, and need to retool a production line in order to make us the part we need,” Dugan said. “This can be time-consuming, and very costly to the government.”

Crewmembers on Coast Guard Cutter SPENCER (WMEC 905) were able to design and print a replacement for a hard-to-get switch for an important system on the 270-foot Medium Endurance Cutter for “pennies on the dollar.” Operations in remote areas like the Arctic also provide logistical challenges that could be overcome with 3-D printing. Coast Guard Cutter HEALY (WAGB-20) has additive manufacturing capabilities onboard, and RDC researchers including Story observed their use during the center's just-completed Arctic Technology Evaluation.

The HEALY is a 420-foot medium icebreaker commissioned in 2000 that is homeported in Seattle and operates mostly in the Arctic and Bering seas. One of the earliest 3-D printing uses aboard a Coast Guard cutter was on the HEALY in 2013, when parts were needed to repair a remotely operated vehicle that was crushed in the ice. RDC researchers were able to successfully complete their project after replacement parts were printed.

“RDC’s research and development efforts provide us with a window into future applications that hopefully will help us drive down costs in day-to-day maintenance and support operations as well as in distributive and deployed environments,” said Coast Guard Logistics office deputy Dennis Crmiel.

NOAA ENVISIONS ABOVE-NORMAL HURRICANE SEASON

Updating their outlook just prior to the peak of the season, forecasters at NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center foresee a higher likelihood of an above-normal Hurricane season, with more named storms and major hurricanes than earlier predicted.

The season has the potential to be extremely active, and could be the most active since 2010, they say. Forecasters now say there is a 60-percent chance of an above-normal season (compared to the May prediction of 45 percent chance), with 14-19 named storms (increased from the May predicted range of 11-17) and 2-5 major hurricanes (increased from the May predicted range of 2-4). A prediction for 5-9 hurricanes remains unchanged from the initial May outlook. In just the first nine weeks of this season there have been six named storms, which is half the number of storms during an average six-month season and double the number of storms that would typically form by early August. An average Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1-November 30, produces 12 named storms, of which six become hurricanes, including three major hurricanes.

“Today’s updated outlook underscores the need for everyone to know their true vulnerabilities to storms and storm surge,” said FEMA Administrator Brock Long. “As we enter the height of hurricane season, it’s important for everyone to know who issues evacuation orders in their community, heed the warnings, update their insurance and have a preparedness plan.”

ILWU CONTRACT OFFICIALLY RATIFIED

After last week’s announcement that early returns indicated successful ratification, the ILWU made it official this week announcing that their new extension with the Pacific Maritime Association has been approved by members. The ILWU Balloting Committee carefully reviewed balloting results from all longshore local unions and confirmed a tally showing that 67% of members voted in favor of the extension. The current agreement was set to expire on July 1, 2019; the newly approved three-year pact will extend the expiration to July 1, 2022. The contract extension raises wages, maintains health benefits and increases pensions from 2019-2022.

“The rank-and-file membership has made their decision and expressed a clear choice,” said ILWU International President Robert McEllrath. “During the past year we saw a healthy debate and heard different points of view, with concerns raised by all sides. The democratic process allowed us to make a difficult decision and arrive at the best choice under the circumstances.”

PATRIOT-MANAGED LMSRs PART OF TWO-DAY TRAINING EXERCISE

A pair of M.E.B.A.-crewed Patriot-managed LMSRs were players in a grueling two-day multi-ship “Group Sail” exercise off the coast of Saipan. The Patriot-managed USNS RED CLOUD and USNS SODERMAN, part of Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron 3, participated in the Aug. 2-3 exercise used to fine-tune interoperability with other ships and to work with other U.S. Navy assets and escorts. MPSRON 3 is part of the Military Sealift Command.

The squadron is fresh off recently-concluded 17-day maneuvering and positioning drills which included “skin-to-skin” operations near Saipan.

During the exercise, the ships executed close quarter turns, torpedo evasions tactics and formation steaming; they also used time to practice night time signal communications as well as working with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 for night time deck landing qualifications. While the purpose of this exercise was to prepare the squadron in tactical movement, it was also used as valuable training time for military staff of the squadron, who took the opportunity to improve their skills in command and control of multiple ships.

LONG BEACH HAZMAT LEAK INJURES 13

12 port workers and a responding firefighter were injured at the Port of Long Beach following a leak from a container onboard the Panamanian-flag HARBOUR BRIDGE. The substance, identified as propyl acetate, spilled into the water and overcame dock workers with its fumes causing shortness of breath. A safety zone was set up, the container was removed by a crane operator and paramedics and hazardous materials units were dispatched. Fire and rescue boats helped contain the spill and assisted in the cleanup. Those injured were treated at a local hospital and later released.

SIGN UP FOR M.E.B.A. VACATION PLAN DIRECT DEPOSIT

Designed for convenience, M.E.B.A. members can help themselves by taking advantage of the Vacation Plan Direct Deposit that will help save them time and ease Plans processing costs. Authorization forms are available from the Plans Office, Plans Outport Offices and at the Plans' website – www.mebaplans.org (Forms, Vacation). Complete details are available on the Plans' site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or vacation@mebaplans.org for more info.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, September 4 – LABOR DAY

Tuesday, September 5 – Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315;
Oakland@1230; [Seattle \(Fife\)@1300](mailto:Seattle(Fife)@1300);

Wednesday, September 6 – Jacksonville@1300; [New Orleans@1315](mailto:NewOrleans@1315);

Thursday, September 7 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, September 8 - Honolulu@1100.

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



The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and proven 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. Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries contact: Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org