



# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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## Hot Off the Press

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# TELEX TIMES

# #01

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**MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)**  
**"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"**

**M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES**  
**The Official Union Newsletter**  
**NUMBER 1**

**JANUARY 5, 2017**

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**ECONOMIC REOPENER FINALIZED WITH NCL**

The Union has reached terms with Norwegian Cruise Line-America, Inc. on a reopener covering wage, benefits and work rules for the 32 officer positions aboard the PRIDE OF AMERICA.

The cruise ship is the lone U.S.-flag large passenger vessel and also the only cruise ship operating exclusively between the Hawaiian Islands. Our contract with NCL goes through June 2020.

Negotiators agreed upon increases in wages and wage related items for each year, as well as boosts to the medical and other plans in each remaining year. NCL is also covering the Pension contribution and improvements were made in other areas such as vacation days, duty pay and travel language among other items.

The M.E.B.A. negotiating team was led by Executive V.P. Adam Vokac and included Christian Yuhas, HQ Contracts Rep. Mark Gallagher and Legal & Legislative Director Nils Djusberg. A rank and file contingent supplementing the M.E.B.A. team included NCL sailing members Staff Chief Engineer Patrick Calder, 2<sup>nd</sup> A/E Eric White and Chief Mate James Lipset.

**NEW PROCEDURES FOR 'TRAINING AT ALTERNATE LOCATIONS'**

The procedures for requesting training at an alternate location have been revised along with the Request for Alternate Location Training form. Members should now send their completed request form, along with a copy of their current dues receipt and latest discharge, directly to the School instead of going through a Union official first. Approval for alternate location training must be received by the CMES Director **prior** to taking any training.

*Please note:* The policy of members needing to submit a copy of their tuition receipt and course completion certificate to the School's Registrar within six months of successfully completing the class has not changed. That information can be mailed to the Administration office at 27050 St. Michaels Rd., Easton, MD 21601 or emailed to Tracy Pinheiro at [registrar@mebaschool.org](mailto:registrar@mebaschool.org). Additional information may be found on the School's website - [www.mebaschool.org/admissions/meba-students-admissions-procedures/alternate-location-training-information](http://www.mebaschool.org/admissions/meba-students-admissions-procedures/alternate-location-training-information)

**NOTE ON SCHOOL'S BST REFRESHER COURSE**

Members attending the BST Refresher class at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School should plan on a full day of training on the last day of class. Due to the volume of material covered in

this course, students will not be finished on Friday until approximately 5:00 pm. Members driving should not expect to leave campus until Friday evening. Those who are flying should book their flights for Saturday.

Reminder: The BST Refresher course is for those members renewing their license that do **not** have 1 year of sea time in the last 5 years. Members that have the required sea time should be taking the BST Revalidation course.

### **M.E.B.A.-CREWED VESSEL IS ANTARCTIC BOUND AS PART OF OPERATION DEEP FREEZE**

The ice-strengthened OCEAN GIANT, crewed with M.E.B.A. engineers, is headed south as part of Operation Deep Freeze (ODF), the annual Joint Task Force Antarctica mission to resupply a remote scientific outpost. The ship has been chartered to the Military Sealift Command and loaded up in Port Hueneme, CA in preparation for delivery to McMurdo Station.

Working 24 hours a day, 444 pieces of cargo, or nearly 7 million pounds of supplies such as frozen and dry food stores, building materials, vehicles, and electronic equipment and parts were loaded onto the OCEAN GIANT. The cargo makes-up 80 percent of the materials needed by the personnel at McMurdo Station for the winter. Following a stop in Christchurch, New Zealand, where the ship will load additional cargo, OCEAN GIANT will travel to the ice-pier at McMurdo Station, where members of Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One will conduct the offload.

Before departing McMurdo, OCEAN GIANT will be loaded with ice core samples that will be stored on the ship in sub-zero freezer containers. The samples will be delivered to the U.S. for scientific study. In addition, retrograde cargo will be loaded onto the ship for transportation off the continent. These include trash and recyclable materials for disposal and equipment no longer required on the station.

### **WSF PASSENGER FINED FOR LASER STRIKE; NEW INCIDENT REPORTED**

A Coast Guard hearing officer assessed a \$9,500 civil penalty on a Washington resident for interfering with the safe operation of the Washington State Ferry (WSF) TOKITAE in an incident that occurred in October of 2015. 27-year old Mark Raden, while sailing as a passenger aboard the ferry KITSAP, pointed a blue laser at the pilothouse of the TOKITAE which was carrying 106 passengers. The incident occurred between Mukilteo and Clinton as the vessels were passing by each other and resulted in injuries to the TOKITAE ferry master and chief mate which required medical attention. Raden had earlier been apprehended in another laser incident in which he allegedly targeted a police officer.

Initially he was slapped with a preliminary \$100,000 civil penalty from the Coast Guard but the hearing officer ultimately pursued only the charge of 'interfering with the safe operation of a vessel' and the man was assessed the lower fine. Earlier, he was also criminally charged and sentenced to 15 days in jail with an additional \$3,000 fine.

A new incident reportedly occurred on New Year's Eve as authorities say a green laser was focused into the wheelhouse of the WSF's TACOMA which was transiting from Seattle to Bainbridge. No one was injured in this case and service was not disrupted. The Coast Guard is still investigating.

## **UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIPS**

You only have until the end of the month to apply for college education assistance money through Union Plus. Members, Retirees and their families can submit their applications for scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the fall of 2017. Applications, including essays and a reference letter, must be submitted by Tuesday, January 31 at 12 noon EST. Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded over \$4 million to students of union families. M.E.B.A.'s connection with Union Plus nets our members a range of benefits and discounts. Union Plus programs, which are available to M.E.B.A. members, retirees and our affiliates, provide a vast range of money-saving benefits and services. The Union is enrolled in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to financing children's educations. Our Members have been scholarship recipients quite a few times since the program began. Union Plus Scholarship are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school or a recognized technical or trade school. Recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor. Award recipients will be determined by May 31, 2017. They will be notified by mail by June 2017. Visit [UnionPlus.org/Scholarship](http://UnionPlus.org/Scholarship) to get all the scholarship application details including eligibility criteria and to secure the official application.

## **STILL ACCEPTING RÉSUMÉS FOR REP. POSITIONS IN OAKLAND & NOLA**

Interested candidates still have an opportunity to submit résumés to serve as Representative in our Oakland and New Orleans Union halls. An energetic and supportive individual is being sought to serve the membership as Representative in our Oakland Union hall. This exceptional opportunity is available to a Member in good standing. Those who wish to be considered for this position should send a brief résumé in short form to Executive Vice President Adam Vokac at [avokac@mebaunion.org](mailto:avokac@mebaunion.org) and Secretary Treasurer Bill Van Loo at [bvanloo@mebaunion.org](mailto:bvanloo@mebaunion.org).

In addition, there is a position available in the Port of New Orleans for a Representative. Any Member or Retiree who wishes to be considered for this position should send a brief résumé in short form to Gulf Coast Vice President Erin Bertram at [ebertram@mebaunion.org](mailto:ebertram@mebaunion.org) or Secretary Treasurer Bill Van Loo at [bvanloo@mebaunion.org](mailto:bvanloo@mebaunion.org). There is no relocation reimbursement for this position and the hours and parameters of the job are yet to be determined by the next District Executive Committee.

## **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](http://www.mebaplans.org) (Forms, Vacation). Complete details are available on the Plans' site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or [vacation@mebaplans.org](mailto:vacation@mebaplans.org) for more info.

## **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

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

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

*Wednesday, February 8* – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

*Thursday, February 9* – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

*Friday, February 10* – Honolulu@1100.

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