

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*



## M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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### SOMBER ITF STATEMENT FOR “DAY OF THE SEAFARER”

Today is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Day of the Seafarer,” an annual observance created by the International Maritime Organization in honor of mariner contributions to global commerce.

This year, the observance pays tribute to the unsung heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic: the seafarers who continue to carry essential goods despite facing tremendous challenges, including being stranded onboard ship. This year’s campaign calls on governments to take action and formally recognize seafarers as key workers.

The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) issued a statement saying that, “there is little to celebrate” this year as governments have not done enough to aid seafarers on the crew change issue. As a result, they say, this has become a “humanitarian disaster.”

ITF said, “the world’s seafarers have been forgotten and let down, by the governments across the globe - who failed to keep their borders open to seafarers throughout this pandemic... Some governments are continuing to prevent more than 200,000 seafarers of their right to stop working when their contract has expired, from getting off the ships and returning home and even refused them access to necessary medical treatment and shore leave. Seafarers have rights as every other human does. Seafarers are tired, fatigued and in many instances pushed beyond their physical and mental limits.”

“Today is not a day for celebration,” ITF concluded. “Today is a day for somber reflection on how seafarers continue to be let down when they deserve so much more.”

### POPE HONORS MARINERS IN VIDEO MESSAGE

In a video message issued on Wednesday, Pope Francis had kind words for seafarers and those who work on the water who have endured difficulties and made great sacrifices during this pandemic.

“Long periods spent aboard ships without being able to disembark, separation from families, friends and native countries, and fear of infection,” he said, are a heavy burden to bear.

“Your work as maritime personnel and fishermen has thus become even more important,” he said, “since it is providing our greater human family with food and other primary needs.”

The International Labor Organization (ILO) confirmed that worldwide lockdown measures have prevented healthy maritime personnel from disembarking, stranding as many as 200,000 mariners worldwide. Numerous seafarers completed their tours months ago but were forced to stay aboard.

"Know that you are not alone and that you are not forgotten," Pope Francis said. "Your work at sea often keeps you apart from others, but you are close to me in my thoughts and prayers..."

You can check out the video message delivered in Italian with subtitles at <https://youtu.be/iuTWFXJq3bk>

### **INTERLAKE SHIP UNDER CONSTRUCTION NAMED, KEEL LAID**

The first US-flagged Great Lakes bulk carrier constructed in over 35 years will be named M/V MARK W. BARKER after Interlake Steamship Company President Mark Barker.

The River-class, 639-foot, 28,000 DWT self-unloading bulk carrier is being constructed at the Fincantieri facility in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin scheduled for completion in mid-2022. A keel-laying ceremony was held at the shipyard's graving dock this week following completion of engineering and prefabrication work.

Interlake Chairman James R. Barker said, "This ship is being named for my son, Mark W. Barker, to recognize the many contributions that he has made to the company, the industry and to our community. In addition, this naming reflects the successful management team that he has put together."

The vessel will incorporate a flap rudder as well as bow and stern thrusters for high-level maneuverability. All aspects of the vessel will have a low environmental impact to the Great Lakes and to those who work aboard. It will be designed for 7,800 shaft horsepower produced by two sixteen-cylinder Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) diesel engines that are EPA Tier 4 and IMO Tier III certified. It will be propelled by a single-screw, 18' diameter, Kongsberg controllable pitch propeller. For its electrical power requirements, it will feature 940 kW ship service diesel generators, 2500 kW shaft generators and a 274 kW emergency generator.

### **NEW ORLEANS UNION HALL REOPENS ON MONDAY**

Gulf Coast V.P. Erin Bertram announced that M.E.B.A.'s Union hall in New Orleans, which has been closed since March 18 because of the pandemic, will reopen on Monday (6/29). New Orleans Representative/Dispatcher Dan Gifford and Plans Rep. Mary Starita will be back at their posts and the hall will resume regular hours of operation. As is the practice at M.E.B.A. halls and offices, social distancing is honored, masks are mandatory and local health guidelines are in effect. The New Orleans hall will be outfitted with a digital thermometer to make sure staff and visitors are not running a fever and masks will be available for the membership when they stop by.

Dispatching guidelines during the pandemic, as detailed in an All Ports Bulletin issued on April 1, 2020, continue to be applicable as the New Orleans hall reopens to the membership.

## **MASKS AVAILABLE AT HALLS FOR MEMBERS, APPLICANTS**

Categorized as “essential workers” during this ongoing pandemic, M.E.B.A. has been supplied with cloth facial coverings (face masks) from the Federal Government to allow our members and applicants - as well as staff – to continue their important work while utilizing safe practices. Wearing a facial covering at M.E.B.A. halls and offices is mandatory.

The M.E.B.A. applied for and received the masks from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and subsequently dispersed them to our Union halls and offices. Each reusable cloth facial covering will maintain its integrity for up to 15 washes.

At the urging of the Maritime Administration and other industry entities, millions of FEMA facemasks were distributed to essential maritime personnel across the industry including mariners, seaport workers and industry logistics employees.

“I’m proud that the Maritime Administration, FEMA, and U.S. maritime industry organizations are supporting the herculean efforts of those at sea and ashore who are keeping the supply chain moving by providing 2.4 million cloth face coverings to help protect these critical infrastructure workers and their families,” said MarAd Administrator Rear Admiral Mark Buzby. “Our industry’s tradition of service to the Nation - ‘In Peace & War’ - is well-represented by the mariners, port operators, longshoremen, shipyard workers and many others who are keeping essential cargoes moving during this crisis.”

## **CRUISE LINES WON’T RESUME U.S. OPERATION**

### **UNTIL SEPTEMBER AT EARLIEST**

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), a trade association representing the global passenger vessel industry, announced that cruise lines won’t resume operations at U.S. ports until September 15 at the earliest.

The current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) “No Sail Order” for the cruise industry expires on July 24 and cruise lines had previously been gearing up to resume operations soon after that date. But after extended deliberations, CLIA says industry partners have chosen to “err on the side of caution” recognizing that additional time will be needed to fully overcome the many challenges created by the pandemic in order to ensure safe and smooth operations.

The voluntary suspension applies to CLIA-represented cruise lines which encompass all the major passenger vessel companies including Carnival, NCL, Celebrity, Disney, Princess, Royal Caribbean, MSC Cruises, Holland-America, etc.). CLIA noted that the cruise lines will closely monitor the evolving situation to gauge whether additional extensions are necessary.

## **KEEP HQ UPDATED WITH YOUR LATEST CONTACT INFO**

As a reminder, you should keep the Union updated with your current contact information including mailing address. This can be easily achieved using the address change form available on the M.E.B.A. website. It can be found at [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org) under the “Members” tab or in the “Documents & Member Notices” section. Alternatively, you can send your updated information to Renee Bowman at HQ by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail at [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org). Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you must also forward a signed change of address form to the Plans Office if you wish to update your information with them.

## **DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE 4MF RAFFLE!**

The 50/50 raffle to raise money for the M.E.B.A.'s Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) marches on, pandemic be damned. Ticket purchases have slowed down considerably since the COVID-19 rampage, but that means that your chances to take home the jackpot have considerably increased!

The winning raffle ticket (\$2 apiece) will be drawn on October 6, 2020 at the CMES during the monthly membership meeting. You do not need to be present to win. The grand winner will receive 50% of the proceeds from raffle sales. The popular swag giveaway promotion is in effect for this raffle for those who buy at least \$50 worth of tickets.

You can purchase raffle tickets at any M.E.B.A. Union hall as well as Headquarters. If you prefer the impersonal touch, you can make your purchase through the U.S. mail. Just include a check or money order made out to "4MF" and request the number of tickets you desire. An official will fill the tickets out and mail them to you after collecting the stubs for the raffle pile.

Supporting the 4MF is easy and it's a great cause. Members, applicants, retirees and everyone else are strongly encouraged to support the 4MF which provides upkeep and improvements to the Memorial Park located at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES). The Memorial honors fallen mariners who helped blaze the proud tradition our members continue today. A ship's foremast, that was saved from the C-7 Lancer-class HORIZON DISCOVERY before it went to scrap was recently installed at the Memorial Park. The Park is shaped like a 600-foot merchant vessel complete with 5-ton anchors, a ship's bell, a bow section with plaques memorializing mariners and friends of the M.E.B.A., and a six-bladed, 22-foot diameter bronze propeller that represents the stern section. The foremast, installed near the bow section, further adds to the effect.

## **JULY (ONLINE) MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

*(Registration period is June 25<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup> – contact respective meeting Chair to Sign Up)*

Monday, July 6 – Boston@1200;

Tuesday, July 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Wednesday, July 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

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

Friday, July 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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*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). Visit us on Facebook. 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.*