

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 26 – June 29, 2017



In this issue//Office Closings Next Week//MLA Meeting at HQ//Re-Opener Agreement with Interlake//BST Refresher Space//GREEN RIDGE Harassed//P.A.F. Contributions – New Addition to Vacation Claims//Massive Cyberattack Hits APM Terminals, Maersk//Quest for 'Energy Dominance'//Air Traffic Control Privatization//

OFFICES CLOSED ON TUESDAY – WEST COAST PORTS OUT ON WEDNESDAY

M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4. In addition, West Coast halls will be shuttered the next day, Wednesday July 5 in honor of “Bloody Thursday.” Bloody Thursday commemorates the longshoremen labor action led by Harry Bridges that culminated in street fighting and clashes with police. Hundreds were injured and several were killed in the riots that came to a head on July 5, 1934. Following a general strike and federal intervention, the longshoremen won a coast-wide contract, union hiring halls, and various improvements to wages and conditions.

As a result of the holiday observance, some of the membership meetings next week are affected. Monday's meetings take place as planned but the normally scheduled Tuesday meetings will shift to Wednesday – except for Oakland which will hold their membership meeting on Thursday.

M.E.B.A. extends our appreciation and thanks to the men and women in the Armed Forces, past and present, who have preserved this country's freedom. Of course, the men and women in the Fourth Arm of Defense – the Merchant Marine – should be commended for their integral role in keeping this country afloat throughout our history as Uncle Sam turns 241.

MLA UNIONS CONVERGE AT M.E.B.A. HQ

M.E.B.A. played host this week to a meeting of the Maritime Labor Alliance as leaders of the six-unions that make up the MLA converged for the second time this year to discuss items of mutual interest. The MLA is a cooperation between the ARA, IBU, ILA, ILWU, M.E.B.A. and the MM&P that fights to protect MLA member jurisdictions, working conditions and labor rights. M.E.B.A. was represented at the meeting by President Marshall Ainley, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo (who also serves as MLA Secretary-Treasurer) and Legislative Director Matt Dwyer.

Each of the affiliates gave a report at the meeting which led into a discussion of a variety of topics including contract issues and negotiations, jurisdictional issues, organizing, the Panama Canal and legislative issues among other items.

M.E.B.A. REOPENER DEAL WITH INTERLAKE

M.E.B.A. concluded re-opener negotiations with Interlake Steamship this week following a final bargaining session on Tuesday at M.E.B.A. Headquarters. The new deal covers wages and fringe benefits for the next four years (2017-2020) of our contract with Interlake that extends into 2025.

M.E.B.A. applauds Interlake Steamship's willingness to tackle the obstacles in front of our industry the next four years in partnership with M.E.B.A. for the betterment of its workforce, while also positioning the company for the challenges and the opportunities that will undoubtedly present themselves. M.E.B.A. members will see gains in real wages over the term and the company has recognized the fact that the Benefit Plans must be funded accordingly as the cornerstone to everything that M.E.B.A. provides to the employers and the membership from where they select their professional mariners. Salient points of the reopener agreement will be discussed at the forthcoming membership meetings in the Union halls including next Friday's informational meeting that will be held at our Cleveland hall.

BST REFRESHER SPACE AVAILABLE

There is still room available for the July 31 – August 4, 2017 Basic Safety Training (BST) Refresher class held at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. BST Refresher is required by mariners renewing their license that **do not** have 1 year of sea time in the last 5 years.

Applications may be sent via the CMES website, fax (410) 822-7220, or email to applications@mebaschool.org

M.E.B.A.-CREWED SHIP HARASSED BY RUSSIANS

A report this week revealed that the Russian military harassed a U.S.-flag, M.E.B.A.-crewed Pure Car/Truck Carrier in the lead-up to an annual international exercise in Baltic waters. News of the incident, which occurred in late May, had been held close to the vest by the Government until this week when *Defense News* issued the first public report. The M/V GREEN RIDGE was carrying military vehicles and storage containers bound for Pabrade, Lithuania as part of Exercise Saber Strike when Russian helicopters and a naval ship began aggressive behavior against the unarmed U.S.-flag PC/TC. "We are aware of an alleged situation on May 25, involving a contracted, U.S.-flagged vessel and Russian military ship and aircraft," a statement from the U.S. Transportation Command read.

A memo obtained by *Defense News* said the GREEN RIDGE Captain "characterized the harassment as intense and threatening. The vessel was followed to the Lithuanian border."

Saber Strike involves U.S. and NATO troops and facilitates cooperation between the U.S., Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and other Allied and partner nations to improve joint operational capability in a variety of missions.

POLITICAL ACTION FUND CONTRIBUTIONS – NEW ADDITION TO VACATION CLAIMS

M.E.B.A. Benefit Plans now has a new option for participants to contribute to the Political Action Fund from vacation checks. You can choose any amount as a one-time contribution to be deducted from your vacation check. This can be in addition to your monthly contribution, or alone as a one-time deduction. There will be a space to fill in the amount on the front of the Application for Vacation

Pay. A PAF receipt will be mailed to you with your vacation check. Two new vacation applications are being posted on the M.E.B.A. Benefit Plans' website (www.mebaplans.org) - the first for Cleveland/Interlake. The other is the general Application for Vacation Pay.

If you have any questions, please contact the Vacation Plan in Baltimore or one of the Representatives in the Outport offices.

APM/MAERSK RECOVERING FROM MASSIVE CYBER ATTACK

Shipping giant A.P. Moller-Maersk A/S was hit by an international cyberattack on Tuesday causing network outages that also affected 17 port facilities run by APM Terminals leading to delays. The hack reportedly didn't disrupt sensitive Maersk Line vessel operations but the home office noted that it prevented new bookings and knocked out some communications. In a preventative move, Moller-Maersk shut down many of its systems to limit the damage and allow it to assess the full impact of the attack. Systems were slowly being restored later on Wednesday.

Maersk Line's website was still down today but a notice about the situation was posted and the company was issuing periodic updates on its Twitter feed. The company said that, "All immediate vessel operations will continue as planned, making the majority of planned port calls. Access to most ports is not impacted, however some APM Terminals are affected and gates are closed...We are working hard to resume normal operations as soon as possible."

Maersk and APM terminals blamed it on the Petya Ransomware attack that has now taken a toll on systems in at least 65 countries. Moller-Maersk noted that "IT systems are down across multiple sites and business units...It has affected all branches of our business, at home and abroad." The attack comes just weeks after the "WannaCry" ransomware attacks that disrupted systems around the globe. Tuesday's cyberattack allegedly originated in Ukraine with some experts believing the goal of the attack was economic disruption.

WHITE HOUSE QUEST FOR "ENERGY DOMINANCE"

The Trump administration declared their focus this week was on energy and as such marked it as "Energy Week." This arrived after a handful of events during the weekend where President Trump talked about the quest towards "Energy Dominance," a term coined by the administration as a way of signaling the march towards being the world's leading energy exporting superpower. Though Energy Week has largely been usurped by the Health Care discussion, President Trump staged several events highlighting the country's current quest to step up exports of oil, natural gas, coal and other energy resources. In addition, the President is hoping to rekindle the initiative to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas drilling.

M.E.B.A. supports initiatives to increase energy exports particularly when it involves U.S.-flag shipping. A recently introduced bill by Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) that deserves support would be a boon to U.S.-flag shipping. H.R. 1240, the "Energizing American Maritime Act," would require 30% of U.S. strategic energy exports to be carried on U.S.-flagged ships. The bill has bipartisan support with Republicans Duncan Hunter (CA) and John J. Duncan, Jr. (Tennessee) signed onto the effort. Maritime and transportation groups worked with Rep. Garamendi to develop the bill including the M.E.B.A., Navy League, SIU, MM&P, Transportation Institute and the Transportation Trades Department AFL-CIO.

HOUSE COMMITTEE NAROWLY OKs AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL PRIVATIZATION

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee moved forward Tuesday with legislation that would privatize air traffic control (ATC) while removing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) from its oversight role. The bill passed the Committee in a 35-32 vote. Over 35,000 employees would be directly affected by the privatization. The Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) – an M.E.B.A. affiliate - is vehemently opposed to privatization. PASS, led by President Mike Perrone, represents 11,000 FAA and Defense Department workers throughout the air traffic control system.

“Privatizing the largest and most complex aviation system in the world is a risk not worth taking at this pivotal point in its modernization,” Perrone said. “Breaking apart the safest system in the world to establish a monopoly is fundamentally flawed. After closely reviewing this legislation, it is clear this plan lacks the protections the dedicated professionals at the FAA deserve and the flying public rely upon.”

Though President Trump has issued his support for privatization, the bill still faces challenges in the House and appears to be a non-starter in the Senate where an FAA funding bill has been introduced devoid of the ATC privatization proposal.

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, July 3 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, July 4 – **Independence Day – Halls Closed**

Wednesday, July 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, July 6 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Oakland@1230; Tampa@1300;

Friday, July 7 - Honolulu@1100.

Informational Meeting in Cleveland – Friday, July 7@1230.

-----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