

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZING EFFORT WITH TAL

M.E.B.A. has successfully organized the deck and engine officers sailing with Greenwich, Connecticut-based TransAtlantic Lines LLC (TAL). A stipulation was signed with the NLRB for all officers except the Captains and Chief Engineers. M.E.B.A will continue to fight to include the Chief Engineers but can now move forward with negotiating a contract with TAL.

M.E.B.A won the NLRB certification election on February 22nd marking the first time in recent memory that an American shipping company has been successfully organized with an NLRB certification vote.

The company currently runs two ships which trade worldwide. While organizing any company in this day and age of anti-union bias is extremely difficult, the Union worked hard on this effort to secure additional deck and engine jobs for our members and applicants.

CHEVRON MEMBERS RATIFY NEW CONTRACT

Members sailing in the Chevron fleet ratified a recently negotiated contract with the company that is set to take effect on April 1st.

A tentative agreement had been reached with the company in February providing pay and sizeable training increases as well as a wage reopener in 2020 for the six-year contract that runs until 2023. However, bargaining unit members asked negotiators to go back to the table to seek additional improvements for our officers in the Chevron fleet. The negotiating team did so, and was able to secure additional assurances regarding vacation, bonuses and future discussions for beneficial terms. M.E.B.A. Chevron members ratified the enhanced deal late last week.

The bargaining team included Executive V.P. Adam Vokac, L.A. Patrolman John McElhone, M.E.B.A. retiree Duncan Ballenger and fleet member Jeff Jones.

In the U.S.-flag Chevron fleet, M.E.B.A. represents the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Engineers, Second and Third Mates as well as the Junior First Officers. Vessels represented include the OREGON VOYAGER, CALIFORNIA VOYAGER, MISSISSIPPI VOYAGER and FLORIDA VOYAGER.

PRODUCTIVE CONVENTION FURTHER STABILIZES DISTRICT WITHIN NATIONAL M.E.B.A. STRUCTURE

Elected Delegates gathered at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School on Monday to conduct M.E.B.A.'s 112th National Convention and fulfill the Union's constitutional requirements.

The National M.E.B.A. is an administrative umbrella organization that was restructured in the 1960s to house M.E.B.A. Districts. It has no paid employees and holds no contracts. As members know, there is currently only one District under the National M.E.B.A. which is District No. 1-PCD, M.E.B.A. The District holds and controls all the assets of the M.E.B.A. membership whereas the National holds the charter with the AFL-CIO. At the District No. 1 elections that concluded in December, members voted for 15 Delegates to participate in the Convention. Those 15 Delegates gathered in the Luebbe Conference Room at the School for a productive all-day discussion of both National and District business. Outgoing National Executive Committee Member Phillip Sistrunk joined Delegates for the first half of the Convention.

When the M.E.B.A.'s District system came into force in the 1960s, a "Constitution for Districts" was created as part of the M.E.B.A. Constitution – with directives and guidelines for the multiple Districts within the National M.E.B.A. But since 1999, the National M.E.B.A. governing body and its Conventions are comprised solely of District No. 1 members. The District is governed by its own By-Laws, but is also beholden to the National Constitution and the Constitution for Districts.

National officers were also elected at the Convention and the new National Executive Committee will resemble the District Executive Committee. Marshall Ainley was re-elected as National President and Bill Van Loo will continue to serve as National Secretary-Treasurer. Adam Vokac was re-appointed as National Vice President and Erin Bertram and Jason Callahan round out the five-person National Executive Committee as NEC Members.

Although much of the business of the day focused on the National M.E.B.A. and the "ritualistic" agenda of the National Convention, a segment in the Order of Business laid out in the Constitution is dedicated to District affairs. This afforded Delegates the opportunity to hear reports delivered by the District Executive Committee, discuss day-to-day Union business and also included an address from M.E.B.A. Legislative Director Matt Dwyer who briefed Delegates on the legislative and political landscape in these interesting times. Chuck Eser, Director of the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School, addressed the Convention with a summary of training and ongoing initiatives such as the Cadet Internship Program, STCW certifications and cost savings at the School. Attorney Jim Rosenberg, who has performed occasional work for the M.E.B.A., gave an overview of applicable labor law and briefly talked about the unusual structure of the M.E.B.A. He noted that all unions he has worked for are guided by Constitutions that continue to evolve in response to modern times to provide more functionality. Delegates made several such amendments to the M.E.B.A. Constitution through the Resolution process that is spelled out in the governing documents.

A Resolution was agreed upon making several overdue and much needed changes to the National M.E.B.A. Constitution in the nature of housekeeping. The substance of the Constitution was not

altered but changes to make the document more uniform were made and archaic references (some that dated back to the 1930s) were clarified.

With only one District under the National umbrella, Delegates – through the resolution process – aligned the terms of National M.E.B.A. officers with the four-year terms of District officers. In addition, they put the staging of National M.E.B.A. Conventions on a four-year schedule to better synchronize it with the new four-year election schedule of the District. In addition, Delegates designated the third Tuesday in March of each Convention year as the day of the week for the event (rather than Monday) to take into account costs and travel considerations.

Another important amendment passed by Delegates irons out an anomaly within the Constitution that enabled a person other than the District President to serve as the National President. This provision serves a purpose within a multiple District system but is not as functional in practice and creates a problematic layer of bureaucracy with only a single District within the National structure. Delegates at Monday's Convention stipulated that the election process for the National President will stand as written for a multiple District system, but will be simplified when a lone District exists within the National M.E.B.A. Therefore, District No. 1 members will be electing a District/National President during the District elections. The remaining four National Executive Committee members will be elected by Delegates at subsequent National Conventions including the position of Executive Vice President that was formerly a DEC-appointed position. Again, the system reverts to the old process if a second District joins the National M.E.B.A.

Finally, in true Convention form, a non-binding resolution was passed noting the conclusion of the District and National elections and calling on all M.E.B.A. members “to forego acrimony within our ranks and stand shoulder-to-shoulder to work for a common cause – making progress for our Union and seeking a prosperous future for the members of the M.E.B.A.”

Thanks to all 15 Delegates elected by the District membership to serve in the 112th National M.E.B.A. Convention: Marshall Ainley; Adam Vokac; Bill Van Loo; Erin Bertram; Jason Callahan; Tracy Burke; Rich Doherty; Jeff Duncan; Adam Smith; John McElhone; Mark Collins; Nils Djusberg; Mark S. Gallagher; Craig LaChance and George Poor. The next National M.E.B.A. Convention will take place on March 16, 2021 – a Tuesday.

M.E.B.A. INLAND GROUPS TO MEET AT CMES IN JUNE

M.E.B.A. inland sector bargaining units will be represented at a mid-June meeting scheduled at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. This will be the third such summit, following a hiatus from the first two conferences that were staged in 2012 and 2013. Those meetings brought together M.E.B.A. members working at various ferry operations, tug and barge outfits, Great Lakes and other inland bargaining units. The group dubbed themselves the “Inland Transportation Coalition (ITC) and this third meeting will seek to solidify itself to be a positive tool for stimulating smooth inland working operations with better cohesiveness and communication.

The goal of the ITC is to discuss matters of mutual concern and provide education for rank & file M.E.B.A. members involved in contract negotiations, grievance resolution, union administration and maritime education. Conference organizers are reaching out to officials around the country to

identify inland members who want to get involved and can represent their bargaining unit at the meeting which will take place on June 14, 2017.

ITC bargaining units include the Alaska Marine Highway System; Black Ball Transport; Boston Marine Transport; City & Borough of Juneau; Connolly-Pacific; Delaware Pilots' Association; DMC Marine (DonJon), DRBA (Cape May-Lewes Ferry); Foss Maritime (SoCal); Golden Gate Ferry; Governors Island Ferry; King County Ferry; Lamont-Doherty; Samson Tug & Barge; Staten Island Ferry; Washington State Ferry; and the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket Steamship Authority. The groups within the ITC represent one third of the M.E.B.A. membership.

If you feel you would be a good representative for your bargaining unit please contact your local M.E.B.A. representation. They will coordinate with ITC organizers Isaac Seidman (M.E.B.A. WSF Rep.) and Mike O'Toole (NY/NJ Ferry Rep.).

DRUG TESTING OPTIONS FOR MARINER CREDENTIAL APPLICATIONS

All applicants for original issuance or renewal of a Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) and applicants seeking certain raises in grade or new endorsements must provide evidence of having passed a chemical test for dangerous drugs or meet federal requirements for an exemption from testing. If an applicant fails to meet this requirement, the Coast Guard will not issue the MMC. The full notice is available on the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org). You can contact the NMC by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-I-ASK-NMC (427-5662).

MARCH MADNESS MUNCHIES – UNION STYLE

If you're throwing a March Madness party, take a look at the Union fun list of basketball-inspired supplies below. All support ethical companies that boost the American middle class. ***Things you can dunk*** - Oreos (check for Made in USA); Keebler Cookies; Chips Ahoy!; Mission Chips; Nilla Wafers; Andy Boy vegetables; and Tostitos. ***Things that dribble*** - Coca-Cola; Pepsi; Dr. Pepper; Gatorade; Sprite; And a long list of beers...; ***Don't pass on these*** - Act II Popcorn; Doritos; Fig Newtons; Rice Krispies Treats; Rold Gold Pretzels; ***Things to shoot*** - Jack Daniel's whiskey; Wild Turkey bourbon; Herradura tequila; Rain vodka; and Southern Comfort.

INCIDENTS HIGHLIGHT IRANIAN THREATS TO NAVIGATION

Another incident this week has upped the ante for navigation in the waters near Iran. The U.S. Navy says that up to 20 small armed Iranian vessels harassed a U.S. aircraft carrier in the Strait of Hormuz adding to a growing list of confrontations in the region. The aggressive actions of the Iranian Fast Inshore Attack Craft put the crew of the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH on high alert as the speedboats came within 950 yards, but with no further provocation the encounter ended with no shots exchanged. The carrier was enroute to the Gulf as part of a counter-offensive against Islamic militants.

Carrier Strike Group Commander Rear Admiral Kenneth Whitesell called the actions of the Revolutionary Guard vessels "unprofessional behavior" and said "it's something you wouldn't expect when you've got a hundred giant vessels per day going through the Strait of Hormuz, and – at least from the flow of oil – the most critical strait in the world." He noted, "This is their routine behavior, which in any other area of the world, any other maritime environment, this would be seen as a violation of international law."

SMALL FISH COULD CAUSE BIG TROUBLE IN HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL

Record-sized schools of menhaden, krill and other finger fish are teeming in the Houston Ship Channel and could cause a serious accident, authorities warn. Dozens of vessels have been sidelined over the last few years as numerous fish get sucked into ship cooling water strainers or other systems threatening engine operations. In peak season, small fish have caused “almost daily incidents.” The Houston Pilots issued guidance on this annual phenomenon and noted that a series of engine room precautions should be considered before transiting the Houston Ship Channel. The notice is posted on the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) “With proper planning and preparedness from engineering personnel, this issue can be resolved in only a few minutes, versus what could be several hours if the crew is not ready for this,” the Pilots noted.

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

Tuesday, April 4 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, April 5 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

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

Friday, April 7 – 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.

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