

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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REMINDER: MARITIME DAY OBSERVANCE ON YOUTUBE - 10:30 A.M. FRIDAY

This year's National Maritime Day observance will take place tomorrow (Friday, May 22, 2020) at 10:30 a.m. You will be able to access the ceremony on MarAd's YouTube site located at www.youtube.com/c/MaritimeAdministration1950 The theme is "Resilient Sealift for a Resilient Nation." For more information, you can visit the DOT Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/DOTMARAD

Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao will speak as well as Maritime Administrator Rear Admiral Mark Buzby and the Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command General Stephen Lyons. In addition, the observance will include a special message from Dave Yoho who sailed in WWII and has been an ardent spokesperson on behalf of the Fourth Arm of Defense.

AFL-CIO SUES OSHA FOR EMERGENCY PROTECTION STANDARDS FOR WORKERS

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka called it a "sad day in America" that the organization in charge of protecting health and safety of workers needs to be persuaded by legal action to safeguard workers. This week, the AFL-CIO filed a petition for a writ of mandamus in the U.S. Court of Appeals to compel the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue an emergency temporary standard (ETS) protecting U.S. workers against the coronavirus. The petition details that thousands of workers have been infected on the job through exposure to infected patients, co-workers and unscreened members of the public. It contests that as the economy reopens and people return to work, person-to-person contact will increase and infections and deaths among workers will likely rise. President Trumka said that "it's beyond urgent that action is taken to protect workers who risk our lives daily to respond to this public health emergency. If the Trump administration refuses to act, we must compel them to."

AFL-CIO said that even with overwhelming evidence that additional protection is needed, Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia has been unwilling to fulfill the duties Congress entrusted him with. In response to a letter from Trumka demanding OSHA action, Scalia stated on April 30 that a mandatory standard specifically addressing the grave risk posed by the virus was not necessary.

"The dozens of OSHA complaints across the country we have filed have been met by silence as the Trump administration refuses to do its job to enforce a safe workplace standard," said American

Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten. “And this has had a huge effect: Our members are getting sick and dying—we have lost more than 160 members including public employees, health care workers and educators to COVID-19, many of which could have been prevented if they had been provided the proper protections. Health care and other essential workers can’t simply rely on their union buying them PPE, as we have done, or the gratitude of strangers. This action is needed to get the Trump administration to do its job.”

TENSION CONTINUES TO SIMMER IN PERSIAN GULF

Iran noted that it will not change its Naval behavior in the Persian Gulf, a day after the U.S. issued a warning that vessels in that hotspot region should beware of U.S. Navy ships conducting operations in the area. Tension between the nations flared up again in April after eleven Iranian fastboats harassed six U.S. Fifth Fleet vessels, including the M.E.B.A.-crewed Military Sealift Command vessel USNS LEWIS PULLER, for over an hour. The fastboats repeatedly crossed the bows and sterns of the U.S. vessels at extremely close range and high speeds. Soon after, President Trump tweeted that he had instructed the Navy to “shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea.”

This week the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, based in Bahrain, issued a notice advising vessels in the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman and Persian Gulf areas to stay at least 100 meters from U.S. Navy ships “to enhance safety, minimize ambiguity, and reduce opportunities for miscalculation.”

The notice further stated that “armed vessels approaching within 100 meters of a U.S. Naval vessel may be interpreted as a threat and subject to lawful defensive measures.”

An Iranian military official issued a statement saying, “The naval units of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman will continue their regular missions in accordance with professional principles as in the past.”

IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION

Important materials related to the M.E.B.A. District election taking place this year have been forwarded to each of our Union halls and offices. “All Ports Bulletins” sent to M.E.B.A. Union halls and offices earlier this week detail useful election information including instructions for submitting nominations along with a nomination form.

The District-wide nomination period for elected officials’ positions and National M.E.B.A. Delegates begins on June 8, 2020 and will end on July 10, 2020. Only nominations received during this period can be accepted and put before an elected rank and file Credentials Committee for qualification review. Nominations must be received at District Headquarters addressed to the Credentials Committee (c/o District President) no later than the close of business on July 10, 2020. Nomination forms can be obtained at M.E.B.A. Union halls and have been made available on our website (www.mebaunion.org) on the “Documents & Member Notices” page (M.E.B.A. HQ & Union Hall Operational Notices). You can also request a nomination form from Headquarters. Use of the form is not required. You may use your own form provided you meet all applicable requirements of the National Constitution and District No. 1-PCD, M.E.B.A. By-Laws.

A special election edition of the *Marine Officer* will be published in August 2020. Each candidate for office may submit a passport-style photograph along with a campaign statement of up to 400 words. The statement should be designed to promote, educate and inform M.E.B.A. members about a

candidate's qualifications and background. Statements and/or photographs are not a requirement for nomination.

At the July 2020 regular membership meetings, Credentials Committee members will be elected. No officer or candidate for office is eligible for election to this Committee. The Committee will meet on July 13, 2020 to review and decide on the qualifications of each nomination received and will also review all statements submitted for the special election edition of the *Marine Officer*.

All members interested in running for a position are urged to review the National Constitution and District By-Laws. All M.E.B.A. Halls & Offices have a copy of these documents, and both are available on the “Documents & Member Notices” page of M.E.B.A.’s website.

In order for your ballot to count, you must be in good standing by November 15, 2020, with dues paid in accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws, through the end of the quarter where applicable. All members and potential nominees are urged to pay their dues to the end of 2020 (or beyond) as soon as possible. In accordance with the By-Laws, “Ballots shall be mailed to the membership on September 1st of the election year and must be returned to the depository and received therein at the time ballots are collected as provided in Section 4. If September 1st falls on a holiday, or on a Sunday, ballots shall be mailed on the next succeeding business day. Ballots should be returned to the depository by November 30 and ballots not received in the depository when the ballots are collected, as provided in Section 4 hereof, shall be disqualified and not counted.” Tabulation will take place on December 7, 2020. The Union urges all members to make sure Headquarters, not just Plans, has your correct address so that you receive your ballot. Additional questions relating to the election can be forwarded to mebahq@mebaunion.org

SEAFARERS HOUSE MAKES BEDS AVAILABLE FOR COVID PATIENTS

The Seafarers International House, a charitable organization that provides seafarers and travelers with pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance and advocacy, has joined the fight against coronavirus. The organization has modified its New York City guesthouse facilities to safely bring in recovering COVID-19 patients as part of its recent partnership with “Comunilife” – another not-for-profit agency that provides respite care for displaced hospital patients.

SIH still accommodates seafarers and those seeking asylum at a separate guesthouse location in Manhattan. The Seafarers House continues to be able to help stranded seafarers who aren’t able to join their ships because of travel restrictions and mandatory quarantines. The organization plans to continue the current arrangement until July 20. SIH hopes to resume regular operations on July 30, the date of the rescheduled “Setting the Course” banquet. American Maritime Congress President Jim Caponiti was tapped as one of the “Outstanding Friend of Seafarers” recipients to be honored at the event.

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO

In addition to the weekly *Telex Times* and our website, the Union continues to keep members informed through communications to our Union halls and offices - as well as by mass emails sent to members, applicants and retirees. If you want to ensure that you are part of the contact list receiving future updates, you must have a valid email address on file with M.E.B.A. Headquarters. M.E.B.A. also has contacted members by text message for those who have accurate cell phone information on file with HQ.

You can update all your current info including mailing address using the address change form available on the M.E.B.A. website. It can be found at 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 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.

APPLICANTS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP AND THOSE IN DUES ARREARS SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF APPROACHING DIC REPORT

Qualified applicants trying to make membership should provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next DIC report. The DIC will meet before the June membership meetings to formalize their report. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days - or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

In addition, the DIC Report will list members or applicants to be DROPPED from the membership or applicant rolls because of dues or service charge arrearage. Members at the June meetings (June 8-12) will vote on the DIC Report.

If you are in arrears and want to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters immediately to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing. The Membership Department can also be contacted by applicants who are qualified to make membership and want to ensure their inclusion on the DIC's June Report. For further information, you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

M.E.B.A. HALLS & OFFICES CLOSED MONDAY FOR MEMORIAL DAY

All M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on Monday, May 25th for Memorial Day. Take a moment to remember and honor those who died for our freedom. The National Moment of Remembrance, established by Congress, asks Americans wherever they are on Memorial Day at 3 p.m. local time to pause for a minute of silence in an act of national unity and reflection. You could also fly the American flag at half-staff until noon, fly the POW/MIA flag (and/or Merchant Marine flag), and perhaps ring a bell eight times to signify the moment.

JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

(Yet to be Determined if Meetings will be Held Online or at Union Halls)

Monday, June 8 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, June 9 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, June 10 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, June 11 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Monday, June 12 – Honolulu@1100.

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