

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

*The Official Union Newsletter*

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### **NOTE ON THANKSGIVING CLOSINGS**

All Union halls and offices were closed today and remain shuttered tomorrow, Friday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. We wish our members, applicants and retirees – as well as their families and friends – a very happy and safe Thanksgiving weekend. We remain thankful for your contributions that help make this Union great.

### **MARAD REPORT DETAILS SUCCESS OF BREAKOUT '17; WARNS OF MARINER SHORTAGE FOR EXTENDED ACTION**

The Maritime Administration issued its official report on Breakout 2017 – a nine-day tabletop Government fleet activation involving a virtual breakout of 61 surge sealift vessels. M.E.B.A. and the other maritime unions took part in the annual Command Post Exercise that took place from July 10-19, 2017. M.E.B.A. fulfilled its obligations quickly and efficiently during the exercise as we helped fill engine and deck officer positions on 23 Ready Reserve Force (RRF) and Military Sealift Command Surge Fleet ships managed by Patriot Contract Services, Keystone Shipping and Matson Navigation. The exercise was carried out on paper – mariners were not actually required to report to the vessels.

The exercise allows the Government to test whether the industry's workforce is capable of supporting a full-scale activation of the organic surge sealift vessels. In its report, MarAd noted the exercise went very well as they continue to fine-tune their oversight of the annual exercise and they reported "no major issues." They said "the rapid and engaged responses from the participants validates the MarAd communications process." The report concludes that the exercise demonstrated that the entire surge sealift fleet can be suitably crewed simultaneously if needed. However, the exercise only tests an initial full-scale breakout. The report notes that "sustained operations past 180 days will be a crewing challenge." This echoes concerns that MarAd and U.S. Transportation Command officials have repeatedly stressed to Congress and others – that resupply efforts following the initial surge would be problematic without further expansion in the amount of suitable U.S.-flag ships and the requisite workforce to adequately sustain such operations.

### **AMHS UNIT APPROVES DUES EQUITY REFERENDUM**

With the polls closing this morning following a 30-day online vote, members in the Alaska Marine Highway System have voted in favor of a dues equity referendum. Twice as many voting members

chose to alter their structure from the previous fixed amount per year to a percentage of their base wage. The change will help bolster the Union's ability to provide sustainable future representation for the unit – especially legal – in a climate where the State has chosen to be less cooperative with unions.

Members sailing in the Staten Island Ferry system also recently approved a similar dues equity referendum that will help strengthen the Union's ability to wage future battles on behalf of the bargaining unit.

There is no set date, as yet, for the implementation of the new rate. Specifics are being shored up and bargaining unit members will be kept apprised of the new process.

### **M.E.B.A. COMPANIES & VESSELS RECEIVE CSA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS**

The Chamber of Shipping of America (CSA) has awarded Certificates of Environmental Achievement to 1,810 ships and vessels that achieved environmental excellence for at least a two-year period. The average number of years operating without incident for ships and vessels that received awards is 8.1 years. Two hundred and ninety-nine of the vessels have logged more than ten years each of environmental excellence. Two hundred and eighty-six of the vessels have logged sixteen or more years of environmental excellence. Many M.E.B.A. crewed vessels and contracted companies received awards including Alaska Tanker Company, Chevron Shipping, Foss, Hapag/MTL, Keystone Shipping Co., Matson Navigation, OSG Ship Management, Patriot Contract Services as well as American Ship Management (MOKU PAHU) and Waterman.

Kathy Metcalf, CSA President said, "In today's world, it seems our industry only gets front-page news when spills or other environmental problems occur. It is encouraging to see how many vessels go for years achieving environmental excellence. It should be clear to the American public that we in the maritime industry take our stewardship of the marine environment very seriously. Safe and environmentally responsible operations is a culture fully embraced by the maritime industry as a whole and as evidenced by the performances of the award recipients recognized tonight."

### **MATSON SEEKING CHIEFS & 1<sup>st</sup> A/Es FOR NEW SHIP**

Matson Navigation will crew up the C/V KAMOKUIKI in January, a vessel recently brought into their fleet to be deployed in a new direct U.S.-flag service between Honolulu and the Marshall Islands. The company is accepting resumes for the top four (permanent) positions which will be selected in early December. MM&P represents the deck officers on the vessel. The vessel, purchased from Sealift Inc., is currently named the MARSTAN and will be renamed KAMOKUIKI, which translates to 'small island or vessel' in the Hawaiian language. The KAMOKUIKI is a 8,740 DWT, 8,448 HP, 707-TEU vessel built in 2000. It is being converted into a geared container ship and is presently being fitted with two 45-ton cranes in China. Following its conversion, the ship is scheduled to sail to Honolulu in late January. As part of the new biweekly service, it will call at three ports in the Marshall Islands - Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro.

If you are interested in being considered as Chief Engineer or 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Engineer on the C/V KAMOKUIKI, please submit your resume, Letters of Recommendations and evaluations to Dale MacGillivray, [dmacgillivray@matson.com](mailto:dmacgillivray@matson.com) and cc Darel K. Jenkins at [DJenkins@matson.com](mailto:DJenkins@matson.com)

## VACATION BENEFITS – 2017 YEAR-END CLOSING

*Apply for Vacation and Port Relief Benefits early to avoid the year-end rush.* **FILING DEADLINE:** The deadline for issuing checks dated in 2017 in the outports *and* the Plan Office is Tuesday, December 19, 2017. **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** The final Direct Deposit Transfer for 2017 will be made on 12/20/2017 and the funds will be deposited into your bank account on 12/22/2017. Any requests for Port Relief and Vacation checks received after 12/19/17 at 5:00 PM will be paid on 1/2/2018. Any member who requires that his/her check be dated in 2017 must file before this deadline. Remember, Monday December 25, 2017 and Monday January 1, 2018 are holidays and the outports and the Plan Office will be closed. It is always wise to plan ahead, so you should verify your specific outport holiday schedule with the Plan Office Representative. ***Split Your Vacation Payments between 2017 and 2018*** -- You can submit an Application for Vacation Pay prior to the end of the year and request that the payment of your vacation benefits be split. Two checks will be issued to you, one in 2017 and a second in 2018. The 12/19/2017 deadline applies to split claims also. The vacation benefits paid in this manner MUST be a **continuous vacation period**. Please contact the Vacation Plan staff in Baltimore at 800-811-6322 or 410-547-9111 if you have any questions.

## USMMA WINS FULL ACCREDITATION

The US Merchant Marine Academy has been granted full reaccreditation after several tumultuous years where that status appeared to be in jeopardy. The Academy satisfied the accreditation commission after fully addressing a laundry list of concerns including governance, planning, accounting and a strategy to mitigate sexual assault/harassment, among other issues. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education determined the Academy met their “rigorous and comprehensive standards in displaying characteristics of excellence in higher education.” The Academy’s next full reaccreditation review will be in 2024. Issuing his congratulations, Maritime Administrator Mark Buzby noted, “As I’ve stated since my confirmation hearing, the success of the Academy at every level is one of my highest priorities, and this announcement is confirmation that the US Merchant Marine Academy is getting back on course for providing a world-class educational experience to our future leaders. My thanks to Rear Admiral Helis and his team for working to resolve the issues that were identified by the commission,” Buzby stated.

## THE LOWDOWN ON THE THROWDOWNS: M.E.B.A. HOLIDAY PARTIES

*“Live for today, plan for tomorrow, party tonight”* – The holidays are here. Work be damned, it’s time to bust loose and make merry – M.E.B.A.-style. Here’s your key to enjoying the M.E.B.A.-sanctioned festivities:

Members at the Boston hall get funky first immediately after the membership meeting on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. It promises to be a scintillating soiree. In Charleston, members will rush through their membership meeting on Tuesday December 5<sup>th</sup> so they can let the good times roll and begin shoveling food into their faces. In the Aloha State, the “Big Kahuna” of parties will take place on Wednesday, December 6 at the Honolulu hall. The muumuu-sized revelry begins at 10 a.m. on Hawaiian time. The New York/New Jersey hall will go full force on a free-form fiesta on December 7<sup>th</sup> right after the Union meeting. Note: Baltimore Dispatcher Jamie Butler and Tom Leahy are still shoring up plans for the Charm City party which will likely take place at the hall this year.

The party pace gets frenetic and members raise the roof in Norfolk on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> right after the Union hall meeting. High-falutin’ holiday hullabaloo will happen in Houston at high noon where there’ll be heaps of hootin’ and hollerin’ on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Jacksonville-area members

are going off-location to paint the town red on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Meet up at Pat's Lounge (4870 Highway Avenue) at 1 p.m. for three hours of high-charged merriment.

Members will be whooping it up at the hall in Oakland on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> right after job call. Best estimates are that the holiday hubbub will light off at 12:30 p.m. M.E.B.A. Tampa gets into the act on Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup> with instant gratification beginning promptly at 5 p.m. for a four-hour fling at a local member-owned establishment – the “81 Bay Brewing Company.” Expect exuberant revelry with abandon. Officers and staff at M.E.B.A. Headquarters will hold off on being such dour killjoys for a few hours on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> beginning at 2 p.m. The L.A./Wilmington Union hall will “ring in a wingding” on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. There's no great shakes on the Lakes though. The Cleveland hall won't have an official party. But the cookie tray will be loaded with goodies so stop by anytime during the holiday season to get your paws on some sweet treats. The Cajuns will be ragin' in New Orleans on Friday December 15 at the hall beginning at 1. Seattle members cut loose and tear down the roof the same day (Friday, December 15) at the hall in Fife (1 pm). Don't be tardy for the party! Stop on by. Catch up with old shipmates, meet new friends and raise a glass to those who can't attend. Make it a safe and joyful holiday season!

### **TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO SUPPORT THE JONES ACT**

Close to 20,000 letters have been sent to Members of Congress to help counteract the wave of anti-Jones Act B.S. that flooded social media following Hurricane Maria and its devastation of Puerto Rico. We need to send more letters! Don't let the Average Joe (or Jane) be influenced by the lies. Take five minutes and tell your Congressional delegation how critical the Jones Act is for U.S.-flag shipping. Click on this link for a ready-made (modifiable) pro-Jones Act letter - <https://tinyurl.com/JonesActLetter> Fill in your info and a few clicks later, your entire Congressional representation will take note their constituent is urging them to support the Jones Act. With all the lies and misinformed anti-Jones Act nonsense that has fouled the waters in the wake of Hurricane Maria, five minutes of your time can really make a difference.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monday, December 4 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;  
Tuesday, December 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;  
Wednesday, December 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;  
Thursday, December 7 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;  
Friday, December 8 – 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 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](mailto: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](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org)*