

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War Since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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M.E.B.A. HALLS AND OFFICES CLOSED FOR VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day will be observed tomorrow – Friday, Nov. 10 – and all M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed. The Honolulu Union hall will host its regular membership meeting on Monday.

Saturday (the official Veterans Day) will mark the anniversary of the agreement that ended World War I in 1918. Originally known as Armistice Day, it is now celebrated as a day to commemorate all veterans in the U.S. including Merchant Marine veterans

MAERSK TALKS AT HQ

Talks with Maersk Line Ltd. were ongoing at M.E.B.A. Headquarters today as the *Telex Times* went to press. The parties continued discussing provisions covering members working under three MLL contracts (MLL, E-Ships, and M-Ships). As noted in last week's newsletter, the contracts were extended to December 15 as negotiations proceed. The talks are being led by Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan who has received substantial input from rank and file. The parties have another multi-day bargaining session scheduled to start on November 27.

MAERSK GROWS REVENUE DESPITE CYBER ATTACK

The release of their third quarter report reveals that the revenue of A.P. Møller-Mærsk A/S increased by 14% driven by higher Maersk Line freight rates. Underlying profit was \$248 million. The release said that, "Transport & Logistics now expects an underlying profit of around USD 1bn and an improvement in Maersk Line of around USD 1bn compared to 2016 (loss of USD 384m)."

The report said performance was challenged from the June cyber-attack of which the financial impact is in the range of \$250-300 million. "The cyber-attack primarily impacted July and August and the vast majority of the impact is related to Maersk Line that reported an underlying profit of \$211 million and a positive return on invested capital of 4.3%."

UPCOMING UNITY MARCH WILL SCAPEGOAT THE JONES ACT

Veiled as a solidarity march to bring attention to Puerto Ricans recovering from Hurricane Maria, an upcoming Washington D.C. march will be teeming with thousands of well-meaning protesters erroneously convinced that their disdain for the Jones Act is well-rooted in fact. The November 19

Unity March for Puerto Rico has noble intentions – but is based on a faulty premise many Puerto Ricans have reflexively embraced – that the Jones Act is the source of the island’s economic woes and Puerto Rico must be exempted. The march’s mission statement calls for the revocation of “unjust laws that have been systematically oppressive and crippling to the people of Puerto Rico and the socio-economic growth” and singles out the Jones Act as the perpetrator. Organizers say the Jones Act has fomented “an economic imbalance that has created the island’s debt crisis. Unless the Jones Act is permanently eliminated, Puerto Rico’s recovery will be anemic.” Puerto Rico is reeling under \$73 billion in debt. Marchers will also call for the cancellation of the debt and rebuilding of infrastructure. The Virgin Islands, another U.S. territory, is exempt from the Jones Act yet faces much higher consumer prices than Puerto Rico. In addition, an analysis showed that it is “40% more expensive to ship goods from the U.S. mainland on foreign vessels to the U.S. Virgin Islands than on Jones Act vessels to Puerto Rico.”

Anti-Jones Act forces are quick to cite the biased 2012 Puerto Rico-sponsored report that claimed prices are double for the island because of the Jones Act. Yet they’re just as quick to dismiss the nonpartisan U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) 2013 report that effectively refuted those claims. TTD President Larry Willis recently noted that “pricing information submitted to Congress shows Jones Act rates to Puerto Rico are comparable, and sometimes lower, than foreign shipping rates to nearby Caribbean islands. Furthermore, the Jones Act ensures delivery of perishable goods by providing reliable, dedicated service between the mainland and Puerto Rico while foreign ships navigate multi-stop trade routes. According to the GAO, this crucial service is not likely to be replicated by foreign ships if the Jones Act were repealed.”

Cheered on by foreign interests, the march will begin at 10 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 19 in front of the U.S. Capitol building.

PATRIOT CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN SHIP MANAGEMENT

Patriot Contract Services, LLC announced it has reached the 20th anniversary of its operations as a completely U.S.-owned ship management company. During the past 20 years, PCS and its affiliate American Ship Management, LLC have provided ship management and other maritime services to valued customers such as the Military Sealift Command (MSC), the U.S. Maritime Administration (MarAd), American President Lines (APL) and Schuyler Lines Navigation Company, while Patriot Maritime Compliance, LLC has provided expert regulatory guidance to both U.S. flag and international clients.

Both management and mariners in the Patriot family pride themselves on having an excellent track record in safety and operational reliability, as well as on meeting unique and challenging requirements posed by their customers’ business and the maritime environment. The company issued thanks to affiliated unions, customers, advisors, suppliers, and both shoreside and seagoing employees, for the key roles they have all played in their success, and they look forward to continuing to provide exceptional service in the years to come.

TTD LEADERS LAUD JONES ACT, FOCUS ON CREATION OF TRANSPORT JOBS

At today’s fall Executive Committee meeting, the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), and its 32 affiliated unions, including the M.E.B.A., zeroed in on policies that both create and protect good, middle-class transportation jobs and ensure those jobs are safe for the workers who perform them. Transportation labor leaders discussed their priorities with Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA),

Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI), a member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

“We have a real opportunity to work together, invest in and support a 21st-century transportation system and infrastructure, and create good jobs that are critical to America’s economy,” Chairman Shuster said. “I appreciated today’s opportunity to talk with TTD members and I look forward to working together to develop real, long-term solutions for our nation’s transportation challenges.”

“Transportation workers play a key role in keeping America’s economy moving,” Sen. Schatz said. “Congress should return the favor by focusing our transportation policy on creating good jobs and protecting workers’ rights.”

TTD’s Executive Committee took positions on a number of key transportation issues, including a unanimously-passed resolution backing the Jones Act. In addition, both Sen. Schatz and Rep. Schuster expressed their Jones Act support. Transportation labor unions also renewed their commitment to shaping a national transportation infrastructure package that prioritizes middle-class job creation and economic growth. M.E.B.A. President Marshall Ainley and Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo attended the meeting on behalf of the M.E.B.A.

COAST GUARD, LAKES GROUP SIGN TRAINING AGREEMENT

The Coast Guard and the Lake Carriers’ Association signed a memorandum of agreement Oct. 31, 2017 for maritime rescue training. The Lake Carriers represent 13 companies that operate vessels on the Great Lakes including M.E.B.A.-contracted Interlake Steamship Company. The agreement set forth terms for maritime industry rescue training between Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, Michigan, Coast Guard Air Station Detroit and LCA enrolled vessels. The joint training is intended to simulate real-life medical evacuations. “The experience gained by both Coast Guard and Lake Carriers’ crews will greatly enhance both organizations’ capabilities,” said Coast Guard Rear Admiral Joanna Nunan. “Having the ability to safely and effectively execute rescues during an emergency will shorten the amount of time from notification to medical treatment.”

USNS COMFORT RESTOCKS TO CONTINUE POST-HURRICANE CARE

The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS COMFORT replenished its medical supplies, food and other necessities, by connecting with the fleet replenishment oiler USNS BIG HORN while underway off the coast of San Juan, Puerto Rico this last Monday, Nov. 6. The COMFORT received 193 pallets of food and medical supplies from the BIG HORN during the underway replenishment. M.E.B.A. represents the engineers in MSC’s Civilian Mariner fleet which includes both the COMFORT and BIG HORN. Since it departed from Norfolk, VA on Sept. 29 to provide humanitarian relief in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, the crew of the COMFORT has treated 1,476 patients, performed 147 surgeries and admitted 293 patients. Patients continued to be treated on the ship during the short underway period. During COMFORT’s time in Puerto Rico, two babies were delivered onboard, a boy and a girl, the first children born aboard the ship since 2010 in Haiti.

NEW EXPEDITIONARY SEA BASE IS NAMED

Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer announced the Navy’s newest Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) ship, T-ESB 5, will be named in honor of Marine Corps Vietnam veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Miguel Keith. Keith was born in San Antonio, Texas and joined the Marine Corps on May 1, 1969. In 1969, Keith served as a machine gunner with Combined Action Platoon 132, III Marine Amphibious Force in Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam. He was promoted to the rank of

Lance Corporal on April 1, 1970. He was severely wounded on the morning of May 8, 1970 when his platoon came under a heavy-ground attack. Despite being injured in the attack and open to hostile fire, he continued to engage the enemy with heavy machine gun fire. Keith's efforts resulted in him killing three attackers and dispersing two remaining adversaries. Despite receiving further serious injuries caused by an enemy grenade, he continued to advance upon an estimated 25 enemy soldiers, killing four and dispersing the rest. Keith was mortally wounded, but his performance in the face of overwhelming odds contributed, in no small measure, to the success of his platoon defeating a numerically superior enemy force.

USNS MIGUEL KEITH will be constructed by General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO) in San Diego. The ship is expected to be delivered in 2019. Able to accommodate up to 250 personnel, the new ship will support multiple missions, such as air mine countermeasures (AMCM), counter-piracy operations, maritime security operations, humanitarian aid and disaster-relief missions, and crisis response operations. The new 784-foot-long vessel will feature a 52,000 square foot flight deck, fuel and equipment storage, repair spaces, magazines, and mission-planning spaces.

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.

COAST GUARD MARINE SAFETY CENTER WEBSITE UPGRADED

The Coast Guard's Marine Safety Center has transitioned its website to an enhanced platform with a new web address accessed at www.dco.uscg.mil/msc. All Center plan review guides, tonnage guides, and ballast water type approvals are now available on the improved site. They will continue to add additional references and functionality in the coming weeks.

M.E.B.A. PAF EDUCATES LAWMAKERS

Members, applicants and retirees can help ensure the integrity of the Jones Act by supporting the M.E.B.A.'s Political Action Fund. The PAF is a key tool to educate lawmakers about the importance of U.S. shipping. It fortifies the M.E.B.A.'s political relationships in Congress, the White House and in State Capitols. The Fund helps our Union succeed in Washington and is crucial in helping to uphold the maritime policies and programs that are frequently under attack by uneducated lawmakers and

interest groups. See your local Union hall for more details or make a contribution online via the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) (select “M.E.B.A. Payment Portal”).

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, November 13 - Honolulu@1100.

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.

-----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