



MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)
"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

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WEST COAST HALLS TO HONOR 16th PRESIDENT ON MONDAY

West Coast halls will be closed on Monday to honor the "Great Emancipator" Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky on February 12, 1809 and began a dramatic and inspirational Presidency in March 1861.

Still the tallest-ever U.S. President (6'4"), Abraham Lincoln was a licensed bartender, lost eight elections during his 56 years, practiced law without a degree and invented a device to free steamboats stuck on sandbars. Honest Abe also briefly worked as a ferry operator and flatboat pilot, was beaten only once in 300 wrestling matches and frequently allowed his cat to eat on the table at the White House.

The night before his assassination in 1865, Lincoln had a dream about "a fine ship entering harbor under full sail." Walt Whitman used that image and wrote the famous poem "O Captain! My Captain!" about the death of our 16th President.

FINISHED WITH ENGINES: POLITICAL OPERATIVE JOE MILLER

Political operative, journalist and consultant Joe Miller recently died at the age of 95. At one time he was an M.E.B.A. official in Seattle and also worked with Jesse Calhoun to help advance various Union initiatives. He wrote a brilliant account of his life as a political insider in his book "The Wicked Wine of Democracy: A Memoir of a Political Junkie, 1948-1995."

Joe served in the Aleutian Islands during World War II. After the war, he wrote for Pacific Northwest newspapers, including the *Oregon Journal* and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. He was also a regional correspondent for Time, Inc. In 1956, Joe moved his family from Seattle to Washington, D.C., to take a job as executive director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. He worked on successful campaigns for Senators Ed Muskie, Gaylord Nelson, Bill Proxmire, Frank Church, and many others. Senator Dick Neuberger once said of Joe that he "would never base a campaign on personal malice or an appeal to a hate element. His politics are never bitter."

In 1961, Joe opened a small lobbying shop. Over the next 40 years, he represented many clients including the M.E.B.A. A long-time fixture on Capitol Hill, he was known as the dean of Washington lobbyists specializing in Pacific Northwest issues.

FINAL EL FARO HEARINGS UNDERWAY

The U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Board of Investigation is overseeing the last round of hearings into the loss of the EL FARO. The 790-foot, U.S.-flagged cargo ship sank on October 1, 2015 during Hurricane Joaquin while sailing from Jacksonville, Florida, to San Juan, Puerto Rico. All 33 crewmembers aboard perished. Two weeks of testimony began on Monday as the Board continued to examine all the factors contributing to the tragedy.

The Coast Guard's Marine Safety Center released a preliminary report focusing on ship structure saying that the EL FARO met applicable stability and strength requirements, but just barely. The report said that in sinking analyses the vessel was: Highly sensitive to free surface, permeability, pocketing, and wind speed effects; Vulnerable to progressive flooding through cargo hold ventilation openings; and unlikely to survive even single-compartment flooding of Hold 3 with combined 70-90 knot winds and 25-30 foot seas. It was noted that the vessel would not have met the current stability standards of today's newbuilds.

FOSS CONTRACT COMPLETED

M.E.B.A. inked a new five-year contract with Foss Maritime – Southern California Division. The Union secured a deal that contains a guarantee for jobs on every vessel under a new operating structure in addition to a significant pay increase for the operational changes that were made. Additional premiums will also be paid when our members have upgraded endorsements. The unit will also receive COLA increases each year.

The Inlandboatman's Union (IBU), which shares jurisdiction with us on the vessels, continues negotiations for their members.

ECDIS CLASS AVAILABILITY

The March 6–10, 2017 ECDIS class at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School still has plenty of open slots on the roster.

Eligible M.E.B.A. Deck Officers are encouraged to apply. Applications may be sent via the CMES website, faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to applications@mebaschool.org.

MARINERS NEAR YEMEN WATCHING OUT FOR MINES

Mariners are keeping a wary eye out for possible mines in Red Sea waters near Yemen. A maritime threat was issued for the vicinity of Mocha, Yemen. The U.S. Government has reason to believe that Houthi rebels laid mines in Yemeni territorial waters in the Red Sea close to the mouth of the al Mocha harbor. Mariners were advised to exercise extreme caution when transiting this area.

TRAINING DATABASE NEEDS YOUR MMC/STCW EXPIRATION DATE(S)

Member and applicant information is being sought to allow the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES) to better assist membership training needs.

Due to the regulatory training required for Basic Safety Training (BST) Refresher and BST Revalidation courses, the CMES is requesting that every M.E.B.A. member and applicant submit the expiration date for their Merchant Mariner Credential to the M.E.B.A. School. If your STCW Endorsement expiration date differs from your MMC expiration then please include that information as well.

This info will allow the Training Plan to more accurately determine how many BST Refresher and/or BST Revalidation courses need to be added to the schedule by better understanding how many members need to renew their credentials in a given year.

Please send an email with your information to info@mebaschool.org. Make sure you properly identify yourself (last 4 numbers of SSN will help).

A form has been added to the CMES website (www.mebaschool.org) making it very easy for members and applicants to submit this information.

HAVE A UNION-MADE VALENTINE'S DAY!

Ok, so you have no idea what to do for your significant other with Valentine's Day coming up fast. Let's start with the basics – and while you're at it, let's do it up – Union-style. Here are some ideas to get you started so you won't have to sleep on the couch:

Chocolate and Candy - See's Candies; Ghirardelli; Hershey's; Russell Stover; Sweethearts; Conversation Hearts.

Bubbly – Andre; JFJ; Tott's; Wycliff.

Flowers – Albertsons; Vons; Pavillions; Gelson's; Costco; Ralph's; Safeway.

Wine – Almaden; C.K. Mondavi; Charles Krug; Chateau Ste. Michelle; Franzia; Gallo of Sonoma; Livingston Cellars; Turning Leaf; Weibel

WSF RIDERSHIP SURGES

Ridership topped 24.2 million commuters, tourists and travelers aboard Washington State Ferries in 2016. State ferries completed 162,327 trips, and travelled 910,610 miles in 2016 – enough to circumnavigate the earth 36 times.

“Ridership is definitely on the rise,” said Chief of Staff Elizabeth Kosa. “We are adding two new vessels to the system, however, maintaining aging ferries and providing enough service to meet demand continues to be a challenge.”

WSF will address some of these challenges by assigning the newest Olympic Class ferry, CHIMACUM, to the busy Bremerton run in spring 2017. The ferry SUQUAMISH, will replace a smaller, Issaquah Class vessel to increase capacity on the Mukilteo/Clinton route next year. Additionally, WSF is assembling a volunteer citizen advisory group to make recommendations to help improve service on the busy Fauntleroy/ Vashon/Southworth route, also known as “the Triangle.”

In other WSF news, Ferries Division Assistant Secretary Lynne Griffith, who headed up the System since September 2014, has retired. Amy Scarton, who served as Washington State Assistant Secretary for Community and Economic Development since Nov. 2013, took over the Ferries Division at the beginning of February.

SHIP SAFETY/DEVLIN AWARD NOMINATION PERIOD

The Chamber of Shipping of America is accepting entries for the Safety Achievement Awards which will be presented June 7th at a luncheon in New Orleans. The Safety Achievement Awards are awarded to vessels that have performed outstanding feats of safety during the course of a calendar year. Entries for the calendar year ending December 31, 2016 are now being accepted. The deadline for entries is Friday, March 31, 2017.

In addition, CSA is accepting entries for the Jones F. Devlin Awards that will be presented at the same function. Devlin Awards are presented to any ship or vessel that has operated for two full years or more without a crewmember losing a full turn at watch because of an occupational injury. A vessel is recognized for the number of qualifying years beyond the basic two year award; e.g., many vessels receive awards for operating five years or more.

Entries for the calendar year ending December 31, 2016 will be accepted through Friday, March 31, 2017.

To make a nomination for either award, visit www.knowships.org and click on the “News & Events” section to find all relevant forms. For additional information, e-mail info@knowships.org or call (202) 775-4399.

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, March 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, March 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, March 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, March 9 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, March 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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