

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

*The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"*

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### **M.E.B.A. OFFICERS RESPOND TO TURBO ACTIVATION**

M.E.B.A. deck and engine officers were summoned to crew up at least ten Maritime Administration Ready Reserve Force (RRF) vessels this week following a turbo activation ordered by the U.S. Transportation Command to test the readiness of the fleet. The RRF fleet is an average age of 45 years old and demands an inordinate amount of maintenance and repair costs to keep the ships at readiness levels.

M.E.B.A. officials and dispatchers successfully fulfilled the Union's obligations by rounding up the requisite qualified officers to crew the ships for the Government exercise that will last at least 20 days. Crewmembers taking part in the activation are currently aboard their vessels carrying out COVID-19 protocols then will depart for sea trials before returning to the dock for deactivation. M.E.B.A. contracted companies managing vessels involved in the exercise include Keystone Shipping and American Ship Management (Patriot).

M.E.B.A.-crewed vessels taking part in the activation include the CAPE RACE, CAPE RISE, CAPE KENNEDY, CAPE KNOX, CAPE DECISION, and CAPE DOMINGO (Keystone); as well as the CAPE TAYLOR, CAPE TRINITY, CAPE VINCENT and ADM. WILLIAM CALLAGHAN (ASM/Patriot).

Many thanks to all the officers participating in this important exercise.

### **MLL REOPENER TALKS CONTINUE**

An M.E.B.A. negotiating team, including rank-and-file, continued discussions with Maersk Line, Ltd. last week in reopener talks that took place in Norfolk, VA. The parties discussed wages and benefits as well as other economic terms of employment. The reopener covers 19 ships over three contracts (MLL, E-Ships & M-Ships). The overall agreements expire in 2025.

Rank-and-file members on the M.E.B.A. team included M.E.B.A. Chief Engineers Craig Moran, Rob McGuire and Josh Reed. Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan is overseeing negotiations for the Union and is also being assisted by HQ Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher. Talks are expected to continue in September at M.E.B.A. Headquarters.

## **MLL PLANS VESSEL SWAP-OUT**

Maersk Line, Ltd. announced its plans to swap out one of the older vessels in its U.S.-flag Maritime Security Program fleet with a newer ship.

MLL will flag-in the MAERSK KANSAS to the U.S.-flag sometime in December for deployment on the company's Trans-Atlantic Northern European service. The KANSAS, sister ship to the SAFMARINE MAFADI, was constructed in 2007 and is a 958-foot, 4,824 TEU container vessel propelled by a Wartsila Sulzer 8RT-Flex96C engine.

It is scheduled to replace the 21-year old vessel MAERSK IDAHO which will flag out to Maersk's international fleet sometime in January of 2022. M.E.B.A. will crew both the IDAHO and KANSAS during the transition. The company will update the Union with further specifics as they are finalized.

## **ABYSMALLY LOW VACCINATION RATE AMONG GLOBAL SEAFARERS**

The monthly Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator, recently expanded to report the aggregate percentage of vaccinated seafarers from their survey sample, indicates that only 15.3% of international seafarers have been fully vaccinated, as of August 2021. The survey data was sourced from 10 leading international ship managers which collectively have about 90,000 seafarers currently onboard their vessels.

The survey data was provided to the non-profit Global Maritime Forum which focuses on sustainable long-term economic development and human wellbeing. It shows that seafarers are starting to get vaccinated, especially those from developed countries. The general populations in many areas of North America, the European Union and some Asian nations are up around 50% but those in Africa (1.8%), Asia (10.9% not including China), and South America (19.9%) are extremely low.

Ship managers pointed out that many seafarers hail from countries with low vaccination rates and have limited vaccine access. The most severe supply challenges were identified in the Philippines, Myanmar, Indonesia, Venezuela and Latvia. There also continues to be resistance by some seafarers to be vaccinated and few countries are offering vaccinations for mariners while serving onboard vessels.

The monthly report also stated that the crew change crisis continues unabated. The percentage of mariners who have remained onboard their vessels for more than 11 months due to the pandemic rose slightly from 1% to 1.3% and those who served beyond their assignments increased from 8.8% to 9.0%.

Global Maritime Forum Managing Director Kasper Sogaard, said "Seafarers must be recognized as key workers and given priority access to COVID-19 vaccines. This is key to protect seafarers' wellbeing and the functioning of global supply chains."

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MASK ORDER EXTENDED**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is extending the requirement for public transportation travelers to wear masks at ports, on ferries and in other modes. The initial face mask requirement went into effect on February 1, was first extended to May, and then to September 13. The latest extension goes out to Jan. 18, 2022.

The extension was authorized in deference to rising COVID numbers across the nation due to the Delta variant. The mask order was implemented to help protect our frontline transport workers and the public at large. It applies to ferries, planes and trains, in addition to transit facilities corresponding to seaports, airports, bus and rail terminals, marinas, and metro stations.

### **SEAFARER RELIEF FUND HAS COLLECTED ALMOST \$1.2 MILLION**

The Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF), established by seafarer welfare charities and the wider shipping industry to support mariners and their families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, has collected almost \$1.2 million in pledges after its first three months.

Initially, funds will go to help mariners in the hardest hit areas of India – such as the port of Cochin where the purchase of 10 oxygenators is believed to possibly save an estimated 60 lives a month from the ravages of COVID-19, amid a drastic shortage of hospital oxygen tanks. In addition, over a thousand food parcels - each sufficient to feed a family of five for one month – as well as thousands of COVID care kits will be purchased and distributed to needy seafarer families at 10 Indian ports.

SIRF was delighted with the generosity of donors and will look to next devote funds to seafarer relief in Indonesia and the Philippines. The relief fund continues to welcome individual and corporate donations, and maintains that 100% of funds support seafarers and their families.

### **SUBMIT A COOL PHOTO - YOU COULD WIN \$15K IN THE “UNIONS POWER AMERICA” CONTEST**

Ahead of Labor Day (September 6), Union Plus is honoring hardworking union members who are putting our country back on its feet. To thank you for making a difference, they're giving away \$130,000 in prizes, including a Grand Prize of \$15,000.

Union Plus programs provide a vast range of money-saving benefits and services and are available to M.E.B.A. members, applicants, retirees and our affiliates. M.E.B.A. members, retirees and their families - as well as members of affiliated M.E.B.A. unions - are eligible courtesy of the Union's enrollment in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to financing children's educations.

The “Unions Power America Contest” honors the hardworking union members who are rebuilding America's infrastructure and economy. Entering is easy – just submit a photo of you working hard at your union job or in your community along with a detailed caption describing how you're powering America. Entries will be judged based on content and creativity, so have fun and wow them with your story! In early September, they'll award one hundred \$1,000 prizes, a \$5,000 Second Prize, a \$10,000 First Prize and a \$15,000 Grand Prize!!

Go to [www.unionplus.org/laborday](http://www.unionplus.org/laborday) to fill out the entry form and upload your photo. The contest ends August 22.

### **JAMIE BUTLER FRISBEE GOLF TOURNAMENT IS SUNDAY, SEPT. 19**

The M.E.B.A. family is invited to take part in a Disc Golf Tournament at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School to benefit the M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF). The M.M.M.M.F. Invitational Jamie Butler Memorial Disc Golf Tournament will take place on Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup> (at 1300). Jamie was a 1983 CMES cadet school graduate who shipped as an M.E.B.A.

Chief Engineer for years and served as the Baltimore hall dispatcher before he sailed into the sunset late last year at the age of 59.

The Disc Golf Invitational will be open only to Members, Applicants, Retirees, staff and employers. The \$25 entry fee will benefit the 4MF and the Memorial Park. As you know, the Memorial was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The tournament winner will have his or her name engraved on the M MMMMF Maritime Heritage Cup proudly displayed at the CMES Lounge. You can contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo for additional information. He can be reached at [bvanloo@bvlworks.org](mailto:bvanloo@bvlworks.org)

### **UNION-MADE BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING GUIDE**

Your kids have spent too long loafing around your house, and it's time to send them back to school. Finally! Labor 411 wants to make sure your kid is saddled up with union/ethically-made school supplies. The products listed below are made by companies that treat their workers fairly and give them a voice on the job.

**Folders** - ACCO brands (CWA); Five Star Reinforced Filler Paper (CWA); At-A-Glance Academic Daily Planner (CWA); Mead Spiral Notebook (CWA-USW); Trapper Keeper Folders (CWA); Wilson Jones Binders (CWA); Roaring Spring Pocket Folders (USW); Industries for the Blind Inc. Composition Books (IAMAW); Swingline Stapler (CWA). **Clothing** - All America Clothing (IBEW); Carhartt (IBT); Union Jeans (IBT); Wigman (IBT). **Tissues** - Kleenex Tissues (USW); Puffs Tissues (UFCW). **Thirst Quenchers** - Aquafina (IBT); Gatorade (UAW); Minute Maid Juice (IBT, UAW); Mott's Juice (IBT, UAW, UFCW); Snapple (UAW, IBT, UFCW); Tropicana (UAW); V8 (UAW); Welch's Juice (IBT, UAW).

To view more union-made products, visit the online directory at <http://labor411.org/listing-region/consumer-products/>

### **MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** *(All times are local)*

**Monday, September 6** – Labor Day – *All Halls Closed*

**Tuesday, September 7** – Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle-Fife@1300;

**Wednesday, September 8** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1200 (No Voting)

**Thursday, September 9** – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

**Friday, September 10** – 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 demonstrated 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; [mehq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mehq@mebaunion.org). Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*