

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

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*In this issue//Pasha Ship GEORGE III Delivered//MLA Unions Meet at M.E.B.A. HQ for Strategy Session//NYC's Failure to Support S.I. Ferry Fleet Leads to Service Disruptions//Cadets Wrap-Up 3-Week Internship Program at CMES//Interlake Steps Up to the Plate for Valued Mariners//Navy, MSC Accepts Delivery of USNS JOHN LEWIS//AOTOS Honorees Announced//UMWA Coal Miner Strike in Alabama Continues// CMES has Space in Small Arms, BST Refresher Classes//*

### **NEWBUILD PASHA SHIP GEORGE III DELIVERED**

Pasha Hawaii took delivery of the MV GEORGE III, a 774-foot LNG-fueled containership with M.E.B.A./MM&P officers onboard. The newbuild was constructed at Brownsville, Texas-based Keppel AmFels and is the first of two Ohana-class containerships that will serve the Hawaii - Mainland trade lane. Operating fully on natural gas from day one, the new Jones Act vessel surpasses International Maritime Organization (IMO) 2030 emission standards for ocean vessels, representing the most technologically advanced and environmentally friendly vessel to serve Hawaii. Energy efficiencies are also achieved with a state-of-the-art engine, an optimized hull form, and an underwater propulsion system with a high-efficiency rudder and propeller. The Ohana Class vessels are named in honor of George Pasha, III and Janet Marie, the late parents of The Pasha Group President and CEO George Pasha, IV, marking three generations of service to Hawaii.

George Pasha, IV said, "As we welcome the new MV GEORGE III to the Pasha Hawaii fleet, we stand incredibly proud of the perseverance and commitment of our partners at Keppel AmFELS, and the skilled men and women at the shipyard on this tremendous accomplishment. We look forward to beginning service to Hawaii in August and taking delivery of the JANET MARIE later this year."

The Jones Act vessels will have a capacity of 2,525 TEUs, with a sailing speed of 23.0 knots. The ships' hulls are fully optimized using computational fluid dynamics and will be among the most hydro-dynamically efficient hulls in the world.

### **MLA UNIONS MEET AT HQ FOR STRATEGY SESSION**

Representatives of the five unions that make up the Maritime Labor Alliance met at M.E.B.A. Headquarters on Friday to deliberate over a series of issues important to the coalition. The MLA is a cooperation between the ARA, IBU, ILWU, M.E.B.A. and the MM&P that fights to protect MLA member jurisdictions, working conditions and labor rights. M.E.B.A. was represented at the meeting by President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha as well as Government Affairs Director Erick Siahaan.

Prior to their internal meeting, MLA representatives held a meeting at M.E.B.A. HQ with Congressman Rick Larsen (D-WA). Rep. Larsen has been a strong and vocal supporter of U.S.-flag shipping and the discussion proved mutually beneficial and productive.

Following Rep. Larsen's departure, each of the MLA affiliates gave a report, and a multitude of important issues were thoroughly reviewed as the Alliance looks to better conditions for working men and women in the maritime industry. ILWU Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, who headed up his union's delegation at the meeting, provided an update on the status of ILWU and PMA negotiations for a new contract. He reported good progress on many of the items remaining on the table and noted that the parties are currently tackling jurisdiction issues. The ILWU remains upbeat about getting a contract finalized without any work interruptions on the docks.

Future opportunities in the emerging offshore wind industry were roundly discussed during the MLA meeting as was the role and challenges of automation at sea and ashore. Legislative issues and the upcoming Congressional elections were other topics. Additional internal MLA organizational issues were also discussed. MM&P's Don Marcus serves as the MLA President and M.E.B.A.'s Roland Rexha is the MLA Secretary-Treasurer. The parties pledged to meet again in the near future.

### **NYC FAILURE TO SUPPORT S.I. FERRY FLEET MARINERS LEADS TO SERVICE DISRUPTIONS**

New York City's neglect for its Staten Island Ferry mariners, who have been toiling for the last 11 years without a contract, came back to bite them on Wednesday when the system suffered service disruptions thanks to the City's failure to attract and retain qualified mariners.

The M.E.B.A., which represents Captains, Assistant Captains, Engineers and Mates on the ferries, has pointed out that officers in the fleet are working for much less than industry wages. They haven't had a pay increase in 12 years as management continues to offer below-market compensation for fleet mariners who are expected to work high-stress positions with huge responsibilities without adequate support from the City.

Yesterday, the New York City Department of Transportation cut back rush hour ferry sailings from every 15 minutes to once-an-hour on its Manhattan to St. George run, once again inconveniencing New Yorkers who rely on the fleet for daily transportation. After the announced delays, the City then arranged for a non-union ferry operator to transport some of the stranded passengers. Two weeks ago, the City wrongfully blamed a COVID uptick among the already decimated staff for their decision to cut back service.

M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Roland "Rex" Rexha, a former Shop Steward at the ferry system, pointed out that the City's failure to adequately compensate their mariners has destroyed morale and led to an exodus of mariners who can find better paying jobs with fewer headaches elsewhere. "Nobody sticks around, they leave," he said. "Why would they stay at the Staten Island Ferry when it's not even close to industry wages?"

Rep. Nicole Malliotakis, the Congresswoman who represents the Staten Island Borough, recently told NYC Mayor Eric Adams that, "operational and passenger safety risks will continue to grow" because the City is not providing the incentive to attract and retain qualified mariners. She noted that the city's failure to offer a fair contract to the M.E.B.A. officers comes "at the expense of our mariners and commuters alike."

NYC Mayor Eric Adams issued a statement yesterday saying that, “As with other employers nationwide, we have faced staffing challenges and have already been making regular adjustments to Staten Island Ferry service....We will continue to engage with these ferry workers’ union to reach a voluntary, pattern-conforming agreement in the same way that we have done with virtually all other city unions for these rounds of bargaining.”

NYC Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez said that “it’s inexcusable that New York City commuters are having to pay the price for the NYC Department of Transportation’s failure to resolve a contract for more than 11 years. To make matters worse, the DOT is now outsourcing operations to a non-union operator to do the jobs they’ve refused to adequately staff. The DOT could ensure reliable service, fix this chronic understaffing and restore our ability to recruit and retain mariners today by resolving this long overdue contract, for both the dedicated ferry workers and the commuters whose lives and livelihoods are being disrupted.”

Transportation Trades Department (AFL-CIO) President Greg Regan told the City that “for years” the M.E.B.A. “has sounded the alarm about the NYCDOT’s inability to attract and retain workers given the irrefutable but sad fact that the workforce has been without a contract for [almost] 12 years and is still earning paltry 2010 wages and benefits. Meanwhile, safety and service reliability have steadily degraded due to the NYCDOT’s astounding managerial incompetence. The NYCDOT must come to the table to offer a new contract; it is the only immediate path forward to address the safety concerns and steady service erosion. These workers have waited for years. They should not have to wait one more day.”

### **NEXT-GENERATION MARINERS WRAP UP THREE-WEEK CADET INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

30 cadets from five maritime academies across the country got a head start on their shipping careers after taking advantage of M.E.B.A.’s three-week Licensed Cadet Internship summer program that concluded on Friday. The annual program helps mold the next generation of M.E.B.A. mariners and will help ease their way toward a shipping career with the Union, if they so choose.

The program ran from July 11 to July 29 at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School in Easton, MD and was made up of recent graduates, with many attendees already making application with the Union. This was a welcome restart of the program which was forced to take a hiatus during the pandemic.

Cadets were loaded up with a full itinerary as they learned more about the excellent career opportunities the M.E.B.A. presents. Many took advantage of valuable training courses during their time at the School including Damage Control/CBRN, Small Arms, High Voltage Safety, Welding, Diesels & Electrical Systems.

### **INTERLAKE STEPS UP TO THE PLATE FOR VALUED M.E.B.A. MARINER FORCE**

Interlake Steamship Company has again demonstrated its appreciation for mariners in its Great Lakes fleet by voluntarily increasing the daily base wage and overtime rates going into effect this month. M.E.B.A. represents licensed deck and engine officers aboard the vessels as well as the Chief Steward position.

The Memorandum of Understanding had called for a 2.5% bump on August 1 for M.E.B.A. mariners in the fleet. However, the company recognized that cost-of-living increases in these inflationary times have proved difficult for many, and they took action to provide additional relief for their valued mariner force. As such, the company will increase wages and overtime rates by 4%, effective August 1, 2022. Interlake and M.E.B.A. Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan finalized the increase this week and the MOU is available for review at M.E.B.A. Union halls and offices.

The company recently accepted delivery of the first US-flagged Great Lakes bulk carrier constructed in almost 40 years. The M/V MARK W. BARKER is a 639-foot, 28,000 DWT self-unloading bulk carrier that was constructed at the Fincantieri facility in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. It is set for its official christening on September 1 in Cleveland, Ohio.

### **NAVY ACCEPTS DELIVERY OF USNS JOHN LEWIS (T-AO 205)**

Over the weekend, the Navy accepted delivery of the lead ship of the new class of Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oilers, the USNS JOHN LEWIS. The new John Lewis-class T-AOs, being built at San Diego's NASSCO shipyard, will provide diesel fuel and lubricating oil, and small quantities of fresh and frozen provisions, stores, and potable water to Navy ships at sea, and jet fuel for aircraft.

NASSCO is currently in production on USNS HARVEY MILK, USNS EARL WARREN, and USNS ROBERT F. KENNEDY. The future USNS LUCY STONE and USNS SOJOURNER TRUTH are under contract.

### **ALDRIDGE, DAGGETT & EBELING TAPPED FOR AOTOS HONORS**

Three new recipients of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) statuette were announced this week by the United Seamen's Service. The AOTOS awards are essentially lifetime achievement honors for towering maritime industry figures. The United Seamen's Service (USS) sponsors the event which will take place in New York City on October 28, 2022. The honors will be presented to CMA-CGM North America/American President Lines President Edward Aldridge, ILA President Harold Daggett and American Roll-On Roll-Off Carrier Group President Eric Ebeling.

This will be the 53<sup>rd</sup> presentation of the prestigious AOTOS Awards. The three men will be presented with the traditional silver statuette of Christopher Columbus – the first Admiral of the Ocean Sea. The recipients will share the evening with a group of American seafarers who will be honored for acts of bravery at sea.

### **UMWA COAL MINER STRIKE IN ALABAMA ENTERS 16<sup>th</sup> MONTH**

Almost 1,000 miners, represented by four United Mine Workers Association (UMWA) local unions have been on strike against Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama since April 2021. The workers are fighting against company attempts to make unsafe conditions and lower pay a permanent fixture for hardworking union members. Workers were there for the company in 2016 when Warrior Met faced bankruptcy. They accepted drastic pay cuts and dispensed with health benefits on the promise that they would be restored when the company was back in the black. When Warrior Met returned to financial solvency, the company decided to keep its draconian policies in place at the expense of the mineworkers. Their hardline contract offer to workers retained its harsh discipline and firing policy, a negligible pay increase and no improvement to working conditions. When the workers rejected the contract and went on strike for a fair deal, the company hired scabs to take over. Over the months that followed, there were several incidents captured on video of

striking workers facing intimidation including instances of small trucks disrupting picket lines and driving into workers on at least two occasions. However, the NLRB refused to act on those incidents and sided with the company on allegations that striking workers were responsible for damage to the company. NLRB called for the union to reimburse the company for damages that included reimbursement for lost production, building a new parking lot and bussing scabs across the picket line. UMWA members are keeping up the fight 16 months after the start of the strike.

UMWA President Cecil Roberts said, “The entire labor movement is engaged and taking financial and logistical action to win this strike. We have received \$2.5 million in donations from other unions and individuals to the UMWA Strike Aid Fund which goes directly to our striking members. Other donations are coming. Make no mistake, we will continue to have the resources to win this struggle.”

### **CMES HAS SPACE AVAILABLE FOR SMALL ARMS, BST REFRESHER COURSES**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School announced that it still has more room available for those seeking Small Arms and BST Refresher certification. Students can register now for both the August 15–19 as well as the September 26–30 editions of the Small Arms course. The September 12–16 BST Refresher course also has openings and those interested should take advantage now.

Applications can be sent via the CMES website ([www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org)), faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

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

**Monday, August 8** – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

**Tuesday, August 9** – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

**Wednesday, August 10** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)**

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

**Friday, August 12** – Honolulu@1100.

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*M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.  
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline  
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.*

*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; [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org). 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.*