

# 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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### **APL C-11s TO BE CHANGED OUT WITH NEWER SHIPS**

American President Lines announced it will be bringing in replacement vessels for the five C-11s which have hit age restrictions under Maritime Security Program requirements. The vessels will be replaced with international fleet CMA CGM vessels beginning as early as May.

Jobs on the new vessels will begin with 90 day rotaries (excluding permanents). Details of the turnovers are still being shored up but tentative dates have been proposed for each of the ships. Tentatively the CC NARMADA will replace the APL SINGAPORE by late June or as early as mid-May. The APL HAWAII will take over for the APL PHILIPPINES in late June or early July, the CC INDUS will take the place of the APL CHINA in late June or mid-July, the PDT TRUMAN (HS ROME) will flag-in sometime in July, and the PDT CLEVELAND (HS PARIS) will replace the APL THAILAND sometime in late July or mid-August. Re-flag locations have not yet been firmed up. The new replacement vessels will be renamed after past U.S. Presidents.

The senior engineers will ride the foreign ships prior to turnover. All other crew will get a 2 day 'onboarding' in LA (or China), to take care of paperwork and other issues, before actually going onboard the vessel. Seven full days are being allotted for each reflag.

### **NEW DATABASE WILL MAKE HALL VISITS MORE EFFICIENT**

Though it has taken longer than we would have liked, the transition to a new membership database and dispatch system took place on Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. The new system incorporates the membership database with both dispatch and accounting systems which should provide for more efficient service to our members as well as more inclusive dispatching and tracking of member payments. The database is still a work in progress, and as with all databases, will require ongoing data entry to remain updated. We would appreciate all members and applicants updating your mailing address, e-mail and other contact information, license and endorsement information as it changes. The form can be found online at [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org).

### **TOTE PULLS OUT OF PLAN FOR HAWAII TRADE NEWBUILDS**

After problems securing appropriate terminal space to accommodate their needs, TOTE Maritime has halted plans to build four new containerships at Philly Shipyard for their entry into the Hawaii trade. After conducting a preliminary technical study, the company announced that they were

relinquishing their current plans to enter the trade “due to the scope and timing of the upgrades and improvements” they would require at Hawaii terminals and facilities.

As a result, TOTE chose not to exercise its Letter of Intent (LOI) with Philly Shipyard.

The LOI, which expired yesterday, contemplated the construction and sale of up to four state-of-the-art vessels with planned deliveries between 2020 and 2021. As for now, TOTE is halting its plans to compete against Matson and Pasha Hawaii but noted that they haven’t completely written off their future expansion into the trade.

Philly Shipyard announced that all construction-related activities on the vessels have been put on hold, including design, planning and procurement work. The yard announced they would resume this project “when there is more clarity regarding the new order situation and related capital requirements.”

“Accordingly,” they said, they are “exploring alternatives in order to secure contracts and financing for these vessels.”

### **MLL, E-SHIPS/M-SHIPS MEMBERS SHOULD LOOK FOR RETRO CHECKS**

The check is in the mail! Members who worked under M.E.B.A. contract for MLL, E-Ships and M-Ships from October 1, 2017 and after will be receiving a retroactive payment following the implementation of the new 8-year contracts that recently went into effect. Those members should look for a check in the mail if they have not received one already.

### **RISE IN UNION MEMBERSHIP**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released its annual report on union membership, finding that the number of union members rose by 260,000 in 2017. The data reflects critical organizing victories across a range of industries, which have reaped higher wages, better benefits, and a more secure future for working people around the country.

“In the face of a challenging year, the power of working people is on the rise,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. “Together, we organized historic new unions, stood up to powerful corporations, and won higher wages. But today’s data is more than numbers on a page, it’s a growing movement of working people that can’t be measured as easily. When more union members fill the halls of power, when wages rise and inequality shrinks, and when a growing number of people see that we can and will change the rules of this economy - that’s when you’ll know unions are on the rise.”

### **ANOTHER MARITIME ALERT – PORT OF ADEN**

Fresh off the release of a series of advisories on several increasingly dangerous sea lanes around the globe, the Maritime Administration has issued another alert for mariners – this one for the vicinity of the Port of Aden in Yemen. They note that there have been recent reports of fighting/insurgent activity in the city of Aden. The region has been a bastion of instability with Iran-allied Houthi rebels sporadically causing mayhem. The Port of Aden reportedly remains open and is operating normally at this time. MarAd recommends that mariners exercise caution when

transiting the area. The alert remains in effect until February 6. Any questions should be directed to [MARADSecurity@dot.gov](mailto:MARADSecurity@dot.gov).

### **PORTS, TRANSPORT UNIONS AWAITING INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE**

Seaports and transportation unions are waiting with bated breath for the administration's forthcoming infrastructure package that was briefly previewed by the President during this week's State of the Union address. President Trump called on Congress to pass an infrastructure bill generating \$1.5 trillion in infrastructure investments. The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), which represents 140 seaports, was heartened by Trump's announcement that his plan would address the nation's crumbling infrastructure. AAPA President and CEO Kurt Nagle noted that member ports have called for a \$66 billion investment in federal port-related infrastructure over the next ten years. AAPA is looking forward to the details of the plan and will be looking to see if the administration proposes sufficient funding to ensure that our nation's ports continue to serve as "economic engines and vital freight gateways to the global marketplace."

Nagle noted that the President's State of the Union speech "reinforces what AAPA is stressing to both the Administration and Congress ... that efficient waterside and landside connections to ports must be a top priority in any broad federal infrastructure package that we're optimistic will be advanced this year."

The Transportation Trades Department (AFL-CIO) and its President Larry Willis also issued a statement about upcoming infrastructure spending. M.E.B.A. is a founding member of the TTD which represents 32 unions in the maritime, aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, and related industries.

Willis called for a plan that goes beyond rhetoric and works for all Americans, "not just the privileged few."

He noted, "Forcing cash-strapped states to cough up the majority of funds needed means too many projects – and jobs – will get left behind. Likewise, relying too heavily on profit-driven private investments will not produce the results this country needs...Furthermore, we cannot fund infrastructure by robbing Peter to pay Paul. It has been suggested that infrastructure programs be paid for by cuts to Amtrak, transit or other domestic needs — a plan we wholeheartedly oppose. Compromising one set of federal transportation priorities in favor of another will not get us anywhere. Nor should we attempt to pay for infrastructure investments by robbing federal employees of their pay or retirement savings. This misguided idea was tried and rejected during past debates over transportation spending and has no place in a federal infrastructure package."

"...The time for infrastructure investment is upon us, but the details of a plan matter...It will then be up to lawmakers to prioritize a bipartisan bill that rebuilds our infrastructure, fuels a new wave of middle-class job creation, and reinvigorates the American economy in a way that will work for everyone. Details matter, and we'll be paying attention."

### **U.S., CANADA RENEW ICEBREAKING MOU**

The U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) partnering on icebreaking services for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway.

The MOU strengthens the mutual commitment for ensuring vital icebreaking operations in the Great Lakes region including the main connecting navigable waterways, Georgian Bay and the St. Lawrence River from Tibbetts Point, New York, to as far east as Cornwall, Ontario.

### **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](http://www.mebaplans.org) (Forms & Documents, Vacation Plan Forms). Complete details are available on the Plans' site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or [vacation@mebaplans.org](mailto:vacation@mebaplans.org) for more info.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monday, February 5 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;  
Tuesday, February 6 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;  
Wednesday, February 7 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;  
Thursday, February 8 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;  
Friday, February 9 – 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)*