

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"* Number 7 – February 16, 2023



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SIU'S MIKE SACCO RETIRES; HEINDEL WILL LEAD UNION

Seafarers International Union President Mike Sacco announced his retirement this week after 34 years at the helm of the union. Sacco, who took over as president in 1988, has been a tireless advocate for the US maritime industry, working to promote policies and regulations that support its growth and sustainability. The 86-year old Sacco said, "I am in good health and good spirits. But I have often heard that you simply know when it's time to retire, and this is the time."

At a meeting of the union's executive board, Sacco nominated SIU Secretary-Treasurer Dave Heindel as his successor and a subsequent unanimous vote confirmed the transfer of power. "Dave will do a great job and he has my complete confidence," Sacco said. "He has proven himself throughout his lifetime of service to the SIU. We are also fortunate to have outstanding leadership throughout our executive board, and I know this will be a seamless transition."

The 65-year old Heindel has served as the union's secretary-treasurer since 1997 and has been part of the SIU since the early 1970s when he graduated from union's Piney Point, MD training facility for entry level mariners. After years of shipping out on tankers and container vessels in the engine department, he came ashore in 1980 to begin serving the union as an official, beginning as Patrolman in his hometown of New Orleans.

Heindel has been extremely active with State federations and central labor councils and has been a force on behalf of improving conditions for global seafarers through his work with various international forums. He currently serves as the Chair of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Seafarers' Section.

Heindel called Sacco "an inspiration to members and officials alike. Under Mike's leadership, the SIU has become a respected powerhouse in maritime circles around the globe. We've been together since I was a trainee back in the early 1970s, and I know Mike has dedicated his whole life to the SIU. We all owe him a debt of gratitude."

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said, "Mike Sacco's distinguished career in trade unionism is an inspiration to all of us. Mike's leadership at the Seafarers International Union benefited generations of merchant mariners and all working people. Mike led his union with integrity and a fighting spirit

that he learned as a rank-and-file member. It's been an honor to have him serve on the AFL-CIO Executive Council for more than three decades, always quick to offer sage advice and guidance about the future of our movement. We wish Mike nothing but the best in retirement and know he'll always be ready to take up any fight that boosts working people."

Sacco also has served as President of the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department since 1988. The MTD Executive Board is currently meeting in Florida through tomorrow. M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha are in attendance and are pleased to congratulate and thank Mike Sacco for his tremendous service to the U.S. maritime industry and the labor movement.

M.E.B.A. PART OF MARITIME INDUSTRY ADVISORY PANEL

M.E.B.A. has been tapped to help represent maritime labor on a panel that advises the Department of Transportation on matters related to marine transportation. The Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) helps develop recommendations to increase transportation efficiency, improve the environment and grow the economy. Among many other items, the MTSNAC has worked on establishing new marine highway services and port infrastructure development. M.E.B.A. has a place on the MTSNAC Starboard Subcommittee which is working on Ready Reserve Force fleet recapitalization and the effect of maritime industry innovations among many other issues. It is expected that M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac will represent the Union at the high-level Washington D.C. meetings.

COAST GUARD MSIB ON REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The Coast Guard issued a Marine Safety Information Bulletin late last week (MSIB Number: 1-23) clarifying sexual misconduct reporting requirements for U.S.-flag vessels and offering tips on how to report. The Coast Guard consolidated reporting for all types of sexual misconduct and established multiple reporting options.

Reporting options include a CGIS Tips App, and/or the email address CGISTIPS@uscg.mil which can be used by all reporting sources, including bystanders and survivors, who have access to a smart phone or the internet. The reports, which can be anonymous or for attribution, are received and reviewed by the Coast Guard Investigative Service (CGIS). An investigation will be initiated for all reports received and someone will provide follow-up communications with all reporting sources who provide contact information. The Coast Guard also maintains a 24/7 watch, which can field reports of sexual misconduct via the National Command Center (NCC) phone number at 202-327-2100.

The full text of the MSIB can be examined on the M.E.B.A website (www.mebanion.org) in the "Documents & Member Notices" section where it has been posted.

3rd ANNUAL CALHOON DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT ON APRIL 8

The M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) will host its third annual Jesse Calhoon Memorial Disc (Frisbee) Golf Tournament on Saturday, April 8th at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School. Everyone is invited. The tournament benefits the Memorial Park at the CMES.

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 Foundation supporting the Memorial is a section 501(c)(3) entity under Internal Revenue Service rules, so all donations are tax deductible.

There is a \$25 entry fee to participate in the tournament which will begin at 1300. For further information, contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo at (443) 676-6248 or bvanloo@bvlworks.org

OPENINGS FOR UPCOMING CMES COURSES: SRF, MSC CONMAR, INDUSTRIAL NETWORKING & LNG TANKSHIP

The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School announced that there are still spots available for the following upcoming courses:

1. Ships Reaction Force taking place from March 13–15 & from May 15–17 - (This is a 3-day course (Monday-Wednesday).
2. MSC CONMAR - April 24–May 15
3. Industrial Networking - March 13–17
4. Tankship LNG class – March 20-31.

For each class, applications should be submitted as normal and should be sent via the CMES website (mebaschool.org), faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to applications@mebaschool.org

HALLS CLOSED ON MONDAY FOR PRESIDENTS DAY + FIRST LADY FUN FACTS

Union halls and offices are closed on Friday (2/12) in observance of Lincoln's birthday and will remain shuttered on Monday (2/20) for Presidents Day. There have been four U.S. Presidents born in February. George Washington (born Feb. 22, 1732), Abraham Lincoln (born Feb. 12, 1809), William Henry Harrison (born Feb. 9, 1773) and Ronald Reagan (born Feb. 6, 1911). Incidentally, October and November are the months with the most Presidential birthdays – 6 each. Last year, we listed some quirky Presidential facts in this space. This year, we list a few fun facts about the ladies behind the Presidents!

Soon after future President Andrew Jackson married Rachel Donelson (who smoked a corn-cob pipe on the advice of her doctor), it was discovered she never actually divorced her first husband. Jackson's marriage to her was declared invalid on the grounds of bigamy. Once the status of her earlier marriage was officially resolved, Jackson and Donelson got married again. Rachel died shortly before Jackson's inauguration and her 21-year old niece Emily took over the duties of First Lady. James Polk's wife Sarah banned hard liquor in the White House and was sometimes referred to as "Sahara Sarah." Mamie Eisenhower loved the color pink and is credited with popularizing the color in the 1950s while earning the nickname of "[First Lady Pink](#)." Andrew Johnson's wife Eliza loved cows and let a couple of them them graze on the White House lawn. Mary Todd Lincoln frequently held seances in the Red Room of the White House. She referred to them as "calls to the [dead](#)." Mrs. Lincoln was a renowned shopaholic and Abe was frequently exasperated with her spending habits. To placate him and save some money, she once sold a large pile of manure (that was being kept for fertilizer) to help pay for an official White House dinner. Happy Presidents Day!

NEW ORLEANS HALLS CLOSED TUESDAY

The New Orleans Union hall will be closed on Tuesday (2/21) as the city celebrates [Mardi Gras](#). The hall is strategically located near several of the parade routes of the various Fat Tuesday "krewes."

MAKE SURE YOUR DOCUMENTS ARE IN ORDER FOR JOB CALL!

It is the responsibility of members and applicants to have all their necessary documentation in-hand ahead of time for job call. Those who have recently upgraded their license should make sure their STCW reflects the upgrade. Your license, passport and other important documents should be valid for at least six months from the time you begin working aboard ship. Your drug-free certificates have to be valid at least until the day you join your ship. Check your expiration dates! If flying with your documents on the way to a hall, double-check that you haven't left any essential documents at home and make sure to keep your docs with you in your carry-on luggage. The primary documents you'll need include your Merchant Mariner Credential with current STCW, VSO or VPDSD endorsement, TWIC, Passport, USCG Medical Certificate, Annual M.E.B.A. physical card, Drug-free Certificate or Drug-Free Letter, Group Card, Fit-for-Duty, Dues Receipt and proof of vaccination(s). Permanent or relief employees should get their company clearance to the hall ahead of time. Work with the Military Sealift Command will require security clearances. As you should know, no one can be dispatched to a job while on vacation or while receiving a paid vacation benefit without a waiver. The Union requires a return-to-work date when clearing for a vessel so make sure you have your vacation pay and vacation carry over statements, shipping discharge and port relief pay voucher for verification of return to work. It should also be noted that failure to obtain prior Union permission to return to work early, before the return-to-work date as listed on your carry-over or vacation statement, will subject you to a penalty. Remember, a member or applicant cannot be dispatched for a job requiring STCW credentials if the Coast Guard Medical Certificate is due to expire prior to the completion of the job called. Members are encouraged to have their paperwork for the USCG Medical Certificate completed and to submit it for renewal at every annual physical in order to avoid an issue at job call. Certain jobs require proof of benzene or shot records, MSC Physical and MSC courses, GMDSS, High Voltage/Marine Propulsion, Crowd Control, Welding, or other courses to satisfy company requirements. Mariners are reminded to keep their vaccination records with them when sailing – especially when shipping onboard MSC-contracted vessels. Keep your documents with you at all times when travelling and NEVER leave them in your car. If unsure what is required, it is a good idea to check with an M.E.B.A. clinic. If you have questions about your documents, direct them to your local hall.

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

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; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org

Thurs. March 9 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, March 10 – Honolulu@1100.

M.E.B.A.’s 148th Anniversary is on February 23!

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



*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.*