

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

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### **REPORT SAYS STRENGTHENED U.S. FLEET WOULD SMOOTH OUT LOGISTICS CHALLENGES; NEW FUNDS TO FORTIFY SUPPLY CHAIN;**

A recently released supply chain assessment report issued by the Department of Transportation details a number of recommendations to ease bottlenecks including exponentially increasing the U.S.-flag fleet, American shipping companies and domestic shipbuilding.

The DOT's "Supply Chain Assessment of the Transportation Industrial Base: Freight and Logistics" notes, "Currently, less than 2 percent of cargo in U.S./international trade moves on U.S.-flagged ships. America's international trade consists of a fleet that is mostly foreign-built, leaving the country vulnerable to international disruptions. Investing in the portion of trade on U.S.-flagged ships would provide more reliability for a critical portion of the supply chain both inside and outside U.S. borders while strengthening economic and national security."

In related news, \$450 million in newly set-aside grant money will be awarded for port-related projects which help strengthen the supply chain, the Maritime Administration announced. The grants will be awarded through the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) as part of the newly passed infrastructure bill which earmarks roughly \$17 billion for ports and waterways. Acting Maritime Administrator Lucinda Lessley said the money will "help remove bottlenecks by enabling ports to expand capacity and improve intermodal connections...The grant funds will also create new jobs across the U.S. maritime industry."

PIDP grants are awarded on a competitive basis to support projects that will improve the movement of goods to, through and around ports. To provide technical assistance, the Department will host a series of webinars explaining the Port Infrastructure Development Program grant application process. Details and registration information regarding these webinars will be made available here.

### **S.I. FERRY GETS PASSENGER FERRY GRANT MONEY**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced the award of \$45.3 million in grants, through its Passenger Ferry Grant Program, to help buy, repair, and modernize ferry boats and terminals around the country. The New York City Department of Transportation will receive \$1,000,000 of that money and will use it to purchase and install electric batteries for the Staten Island Ferry fleet to improve service reliability and air quality.

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said, "...New funding will bring needed improvements to ferry services in America, particularly in rural communities, and help passenger ferries reduce their emissions." The Passenger Ferry Grant Program funds projects that support existing passenger ferry service, establish new service or upgrade ferry boats, terminals, and related facilities, as well as assist transit agencies and ferry companies in transitioning to new climate-friendly technologies.

### **LATEST S.I. FERRY IN SERVICE**

The newest Staten Island Ferry recently made its long-awaited debut and began regular passenger service. The M/V STAFF SGT. MICHAEL H. OLLIS is the first of three newbuilds constructed at Eastern Shipbuilding in Florida

The OLLIS is named after an Army Staff Sergeant who died protecting a fellow soldier in Afghanistan in 2013. Michael's parents, Bob and Linda, were there for the inaugural ride and expressed their gratitude to the City for honoring their hero son. Bob Ollis hopes that future passengers riding the vessel will reflect upon the accomplishments and service of all veterans, not just his son. "So many go unnamed and unnoticed, but they've all done such an important duty," he said.

A second Ollis-class ferry is set to join the fleet by the end of the year with a third vessel soon after. The second vessel, SANDY GROUND, honors one of the nation's first black settlements – located on Staten Island, which also served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. The third, the DOROTHY DAY, honors the social activist and journalist who spent decades on Staten Island's South Shore.

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 with inadequate benefits. They haven't had a pay increase in almost 11 years as the City continues to offer below-market compensation for workers with huge responsibilities in a high-stress job. Rep. Nicole Malliotakis, the Congresswoman who represents the Staten Island Borough, recently told NYC Mayor Eric Adams that, as a result, "operational and passenger safety risks will continue to grow" because the City is not proving the incentive to attract and retain qualified mariners.

### **MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MIKE MORRISSEY**

Mike Morrissey, longtime member and part-time Representative at M.E.B.A.'s Union hall in Boston, abruptly sailed into the sunset on Saturday at the age of 64. He was a terrific Union brother who became part of the M.E.B.A. family in 1981 after his graduation from Maine Maritime Academy. Following an impressive and productive career at sea as an engineer, last sailing with Horizon Lines, he retired but stayed close with the M.E.B.A. In 2014, he began filling in at the Boston Union hall as needed, and remained a reliable and helpful presence at our office on Channel Street when work or vacation kept our permanent Representative away. Mike loved to sign up new applicants, mentor them and regale them with sea stories. He loved fishing and skiing, '70s rock & roll, muscle cars, road-trips and spending time with family and friends. He was a loyal friend who will be missed.

Mike was a resident of Beverly, MA just outside of Boston. He is survived by his wife Karelle, brother Danny, sister-in-law Sandra, niece Molly Morrissey and stepson Joseph Edelstein. He was a favorite uncle to Paul Acciavatti, Patrick and Benjamin Condon, Jack and Sam Falloni and Joseph Ingemi. Mike also leaves behind a loving family and many lifelong friends, in particular Kevin Duffy, Steve Comeau, Dave Ryan and Joe Falloni.

A funeral service will be held for Mike at the Campbell Funeral Home, 525 Cabot Street, Beverly, on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 12 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited to attend. Visiting hours will be held prior from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations in Mike's memory can be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105. You can find information, directions and express your condolences at [www.campbellfuneral.com](http://www.campbellfuneral.com)

### **PHOTO MONTAGE HONORS M.E.B.A. IN ITS 147<sup>th</sup> YEAR**

This week, the M.E.B.A. celebrated its 147<sup>th</sup> anniversary dating back to February 23, 1875 when the Union's ten founding fathers met in Cleveland, Ohio to form a united front against the dangerous working conditions of the day. They represented Great Lakes associations, a river association and an ocean port, and over the course of a few days, they hammered out a cohesive Constitution for a national organization that protected and enhanced their interests. They battled for favorable legislation to certify and license waterborne engineers, secured U.S. officers – both deck and engine – aboard U.S.-flagships, helped repeal controversial seafarer fees, and raised the standard of living for all mariners. Those early struggles and many others paved the way for the worker protections and benefits we often take for granted today.

The Union posted a two minute photo montage on YouTube set to the rousing and melodious strains of the Merchant Marine song (Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!) which you can also view from the M.E.B.A. homepage [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org) or our Facebook site. Check it out directly at <https://youtu.be/0PfRU3Ed4w>

### **SHIPPING GETS COMPLICATED IN SEA OF AZOV**

As its invasion of Ukraine got underway this week, Russia announced that it has closed shipping in the Azov Sea at the Kerch Strait, one of Ukraine's two shipping access points. Ukraine is a top exporter of grain, coal, steel and petroleum products and heavily relies on shipping. Ukraine shut down all its commercial seaports once the attack began.

Ukraine is appealing to Turkey, which controls the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits to close those waterways to Russian ships. Turkey has condemned the attack on Ukraine but is leery of enflaming Russia, a crucial trade partner, and is trying to maintain a balancing act. Meanwhile, Russia made claims that two of its commercial vessels had been attacked and damaged by Ukrainian Armed Forces. At press time, those reports were not yet substantiated.

Maersk announced it has suspended Ukrainian port calls in Ukraine for at least another week and its office in Odessa (southern Ukraine) was closed. A few weeks back, the Maritime Administration issued an advisory reminding mariners transiting in the Black Sea/Sea of Azov to be ever present of suspicious activities in those vicinities stemming from heightened tensions and increased naval activity.

### **M.E.B.A. SCHOOL ADDS WARTSILA TRAINING COURSES TO SCHEDULE**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School has added the first of several Wartsila training classes to its 2022 course schedule.

The first three-day Wartsila Level 0 2-Stroke “ABC” training class will take place from March 2–4, 2022. Notice of dates for the other classes will be released shortly. Topics covered will include: Introduction to the Sulzer, Wartsila, WinGD (2-Stroke) Engine families sailing in US-flag fleet; RD, RND, RLA, RLB, RTA, RT-flex and future engine types X- and X-DF; Engine components; Basic principles of Engine control systems (SBC, DENIS, WECS, UNIC); and fuel systems.

Future classes are being planned to cover Level 1 RT-flex (3-days) and Level 2 (5-days). Information will be distributed through the *Telex Times*, All Ports Bulletins and the School's website. Applications may be sent via the CMES website, fax (410) 822-7220, or by email to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

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

**Monday, March 7** – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300.

**Tuesday, March 8** – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

**Wednesday, March 9** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register now at [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)**

**Thursday, March 10** – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

**Friday, March 11** – 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.*