

# 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 23 – June 4, 2026



*In this issue – Portland, Maine Will Host its First Meeting on Tuesday//Reopener Scores Strong Increases for Keystone Veteran-Class Product Tankers//Fight for the Jones Act//Final Voyage: Glenn Buettner & Dean Corgey//Ocean Observing Network Dismantled//Sail Drones Deployed in Great Lakes//M.E.B.A. Family Fun Day in NJ//*

## **PORTLAND, MAINE HALL'S FIRST-EVER MEMBERSHIP MEETING NEXT WEEK**

Stop on by this Tuesday if you're in the Portland, Maine area and participate in the hall's first-ever membership meeting.

At the regular meetings in May 2026, M.E.B.A. members nationwide approved a Resolution authorizing the new Portland, Maine Union hall to be a "voting port" and host monthly membership meetings. The first-ever meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at noon. There's a great agenda for the inaugural Maine meeting. Members will get the opportunity to vote qualified applicants into membership, consider and vote on a Constitutional Committee report on a recently-passed member resolution that seeks a By-Laws change, and review details of a recently-concluded Keystone product tanker reopener that scores exciting improvements for members sailing in that bargaining unit.

The Union is excited to provide Portland area members with the convenience of a local hall while also expanding outreach to graduates of Maine Maritime Academy and future mariners entering the industry. You can contact Maine hall Representative Bill Duffy at [bduffy@mebaunion.org](mailto:bduffy@mebaunion.org). The hall is located at 2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 302 in Portland. The office phone is (207) 813-4091. Regular office hours are Monday through Friday, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## **REOPENER SECURES STRONG INCREASES FOR KEYSTONE SEAKAY TANKERS**

M.E.B.A. Deck and Engine Officers will have an improved shipboard experience after the Union secured strong wage, benefit and training increases and another paid holiday for members sailing on the Keystone Veteran-class MT-46 product tankers. The Reopener for economics and conditions of employment governs the years 2026-2028 and will kick in on July 1<sup>st</sup>. It covers U.S.-built product tankers M/T SEAKAY SKY (ex-OVERSEAS TEXAS CITY) and M/T SEAKAY STAR (ex-OVERSEAS LOS ANGELES) which Keystone is bareboat chartering from Maritime Partners, LLC. A third ship that had been part of the fleet, the M/T SEAKAY VALOR (formerly OVERSEAS NEW YORK), was recalled by her owners in late April. As yet, there is no word on whether Keystone will replace the vessel.

Among other things, the Reopener improves contributions to the Medical & Benefits Plan, Training and JEC and officers onboard will enjoy enhanced MPB, generous wage increases and Jesse Calhoun's birthday (April 4) will now be recognized as a holiday beginning next year. Additional details and the

MOU will be reviewed by members at the regular June membership meetings next week. Reopener discussions were headed up by Gulf Coast V.P. Adam Smith with input from members sailing under the contract. The next reopener for the vessels will take place in 2029.

### **WE NEED TO KEEP UP THE FIGHT FOR THE JONES ACT**

The U.S. shipping industry continues the fight to save the Jones Act, a critical statute for American-flag shipping that is being suppressed by the current administration. The decision to prematurely extend the Jones Act waiver to a total of 150 days that allows foreign interests to steal American shipping jobs while not saving Americans any money at the gas pump flies in the face of the President's announced goal to revitalize U.S.-flag shipping. The overly-broad waiver permits foreign-flagged ships to move oil, liquefied natural gas, fertilizer, coal, and over 600 other products between U.S. ports, a privilege that should be reserved for Americans, not foreign interests who have gleefully swooped in to take over U.S. jobs. Maritime leaders argue that broad waivers discourage investment in American vessels, weaken the business case for maintaining U.S.-flag operations, erode shipyard demand and send the wrong signal to mariners considering careers at sea. Policymakers are urged to return to the longstanding practice of narrowly tailored, case-by-case waivers rather than relying on an overly expansive exemption.

We need you to keep taking action to defend your livelihood, your family and America's maritime future. Please tell your Senators and Representative that you, their constituent, support the Jones Act, and urge them to stand up for the 650,000 men and women of American maritime. Mariners can express their disgust with the waiver by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/freetheja> The link will bring you to a customizable letter that will allow you to let your Member of Congress know that it is not acceptable to give away the U.S.-flag fleet to foreign interests. Make sure you "Enable OneClick Echo" which means your Senators and Representative will get a follow-up email from you after 72-hours.

### **FINAL VOYAGE: FORMER TAMPA DISPATCHER GLENN BUETTNER**

Chief Engineer Glenn Buettner, who spent over 40 years sailing under the M.E.B.A banner at sea and ashore made his final voyage on May 15<sup>th</sup> at the age of 68. Buettner (pronounced BIT-ner) was known to members in recent years through his service as Dispatcher/Representative at M.E.B.A.'s Tampa Union hall, a position he held down for over seven years. Glenn grew up in Baltimore, MD and heard about the opportunities at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School when it was graduating cadets on Light Street in Baltimore. He graduated with a Third Assistant Engineer's license, signed up with the M.E.B.A. blue and gold and embarked on a 36-year career at sea that took him all over the world.

Along the way, he met his future wife Dana and started a family together in the late 1980s. Although Glenn's career often kept him at sea for months at a time, their bond remained steadfast. When he wasn't sailing, Glenn found joy in working outdoors. He was an avid gardener who was rarely happier than when he was planting something new, often with his beloved pet rooster faithfully trailing behind him. He also enjoyed spending time in the kitchen, experimenting with recipes and finding creative ways to incorporate ingredients from his garden.

A natural problem-solver, Glenn embraced a do-it-yourself approach to life. He took pride in learning how things worked and preferred repairing them himself whenever possible. Whether maintaining his home or tackling projects at rental properties, he approached each challenge with determination and a strong work ethic, often choosing to do the work himself even when help was readily available.

Glenn was a proud M.E.B.A. member a union he deeply valued throughout his career. Even after retirement, he remained active in the maritime community and filled in at the hall occasionally before becoming the official Dispatcher at the Tampa hall in 2017. Glenn is survived by his wife and partner of 37 years Dana Buettner; his son Eric Buettner, and his stepdaughter Pilar Rodriguez.

### **FINISHED WITH ENGINES: SIU VP DEAN CORGEY**

The M.E.B.A. extends its deepest condolences on the passing of Seafarers International Union (SIU) Vice President Dean Corgey, 73, a respected and steady presence in the U.S. maritime labor community for decades. From his beginnings at the Paul Hall Center in Piney Point to his years sailing as a Chief Engineer on towing vessels, Dean never drifted far from the deck plates. He was a Gulf Coast fixture whose life was bound tightly to its ports, and the working mariners who keep them moving. Even after coming ashore, he carried the perspective of an engineer — practical, steady, and focused on what works for the people turning wrenches, standing watches, and keeping commerce moving. He was a constant presence in Houston and across the Gulf Coast — he was at home equally in contract negotiations, hall meetings, or walking onboard ship to talk with mariners face-to-face. M.E.B.A. Gulf Coast Vice President Adam Smith said, “Dean Corgey didn’t just represent mariners, he understood them because he was one. Dean was one of those leaders who knew the waterfront from every angle — ships, shore, and politics. He never lost sight of the mariners he represented, and never stopped fighting for safer, stronger maritime jobs.”

Services will be held Friday, June 5, at Forest Park Lawndale Funeral Home in Houston, with visitation from 1–2 p.m., funeral service from 2–3 p.m., followed by burial.

### **DISMANTLING OF OCEAN OBSERVING NETWORK**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has begun scaling back the Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI), a major ocean monitoring network that has provided continuous scientific data from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for more than a decade. According to the OOI, NSF has initiated a “descoping” process that will remove in-water infrastructure from four of the program’s five deployed arrays, including stations located off the U.S. Atlantic coast, in the Pacific Ocean, and near Greenland and Iceland. More than 900 deep-sea instruments currently collect real-time physical, chemical, geological and biological data from throughout the water column.

The reductions have drawn concern from researchers who rely on the network’s continuous stream of data. Scientists warn that the loss of long-term ocean observations could hamper efforts to monitor changes in ocean conditions, marine ecosystems and climate-related trends. The OOI was originally established as a 25-year program. NSF’s Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal called for an 80 percent reduction in funding for the initiative.

### **SEASONAL “SAIL DRONES” DEPLOYED IN GREAT LAKES**

Autonomous sail drones are currently operating on Lake Erie as part of a new U.S. Coast Guard initiative aimed at enhancing maritime awareness across the Great Lakes. Equipped with 360-degree cameras and advanced navigation systems, the bright orange drones provide real-time situational awareness to Coast Guard personnel, who monitor the feeds around the clock and can take manual control if necessary. Officials say the sail drones can assist with missions ranging from search-and-rescue cases and pollution response to maritime security and law enforcement support. While the vessels transmit real-time imagery, the video is not stored.

The Coast Guard stresses that the technology is intended to improve awareness on the water rather than conduct surveillance. By serving as a mobile presence in areas that may be difficult or time-consuming for crews to reach, the drones can provide responders with immediate information during unfolding situations. The vessels may also support efforts to detect suspicious activity and strengthen maritime border security. U.S. officials noted that information from the drones could be shared with partner agencies through established channels when appropriate.

Although the Canadian Coast Guard is not participating in the project, maritime security cooperation between the United States and Canada remains extensive throughout the Great Lakes region. Designed for safe operation in busy waterways, the sail drones automatically maneuver to avoid other vessels. Mariners are nevertheless encouraged to give them a wide berth when encountered. The pilot program will continue through the navigation season, with the drones expected to be removed before winter ice returns to the lakes.

### **NY/NJ AREA MEMBERS CAN ATTEND M.E.B.A. FAMILY FUN DAY ON SATURDAY**

Members, applicants and retirees in the NY/NJ area are encouraged to take part in “M.E.B.A family fun day” at the Monmouth Race Park in New Jersey on Saturday, June 6. The Union has a trackside picnic area reserved at the horserace - and we are honoring Kevin “Happy” Fahey, a former Staten Island Ferry & Statue of Liberty crewmember who passed away in 2024. There will be burgers, hot dogs, chicken on the grill, fried chicken, sausage and peppers. It’s BYOB (no hard liquor) and feel free to bring additional items for the grill or appetizers/finger foods and side dishes.

M.E.B.A. is sponsoring the first race at the track (at 12:30 pm) in Kevin’s honor and family members will get to go into the winner’s circle for photos with the winning horse and jockey. All are welcome including children. There will be kids’ raffles for prizes. You can get further details from M.E.B.A.’s Patrolman in the NY/NJ hall Capt. Kenny Smith. Call the hall or email him at [ksmith@mebaunion.org](mailto:ksmith@mebaunion.org)

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

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

Tuesday, June 9 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200.**

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

Friday, June 12 – **Honolulu@1100**

-----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.***