

# 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"*

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### INTERLAKE TALKS CONTINUE

On Wednesday, M.E.B.A. hosted another round of bargaining with Interlake Steamship Co. at our Headquarters in Washington DC. M.E.B.A. mates, engineers and stewards sail on 11 Interlake vessels on the Great Lakes. The meeting focused on work rights and wages. Negotiations are being headed up by M.E.B.A. Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan as the 12-year contract with the company heads toward its June 30th expiration. The M.E.B.A. team also includes Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway, HQ Contracts Rep. Mark Gallagher and rank-and-file members Jared Anderson, Jacob Philbrook and Ryan Carpentier.

### ARGENTINIAN PRESIDENT GUTS MERCHANT MARINE; STRIPS WORKER RIGHTS

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has issued a statement condemning Argentina President Javier Milei's new "Exceptional Regime for the National Merchant Marine" as a reckless act of deregulation that jeopardizes national sovereignty and crushes fundamental labor rights. The decree reclassifies maritime and inland navigation as an "essential service," severely curbing maritime worker's right to strike in blatant breach of Argentina's Constitution and ILO Convention 87.

The decree will also allow shipowners to temporarily strip vessels of the Argentine flag and register them abroad, expand permits for foreign-flagged ships, and scrap nationality requirements for crews. "Together, these measures will trigger a race to the bottom on wages and conditions and potentially wipe out thousands of skilled Argentine maritime workers' jobs," said ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton.

ITF maritime affiliates within the Argentine Confederation of Transport Workers (CATT) have unanimously rejected the decree, warning that it "flings the door wide open to foreign interests, dismantles the national maritime industry, and puts Argentina's sovereignty on the auction block."

### LAST WEEKS TO SIGN UP FOR THE JUNE 27

#### CAA-M.E.B.A. PICNIC/150th CELEBRATION

The entire M.E.B.A. membership, active and retired, and especially Calhoon graduates, are invited to the Calhoon Alumni Association (CAA) Reunion scheduled for June 27-29 at the Calhoon M.E.B.A.

Engineering School. The weekend will also include a celebration of the M.E.B.A.'s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Union is in its 150<sup>th</sup> year as of February 23 and there will be much rejoicing. Information, event fees, and registration forms are on the CMES website located at [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). Look for the CAA page link.

The weekend kicks off with the traditional Golf Tournament on Friday, June 27 at 1000. There will be an evening muster at the Calhoon Saloon later that evening. The party on the Manor House Lawn will take place all day Saturday, June 28. This is a great family event that you should be sure to sign up for. Direct any questions to [caa@mebaschool.org](mailto:caa@mebaschool.org) and check out the School website to get the complete lowdown. Take this opportunity to spread the word throughout the M.E.B.A. world as well as to past Calhoon School cadets, instructors, shipmates, friends, and families.

### **CREW ABANDONS BURNING PCTC IN MID-PACIFIC**

A catastrophic fire forced the crew of a vehicle carrier hauling Chinese cars to abandon their burning ship. Sources said the pure car/truck carrier (PCTC) MORNING MIDAS, sailing under the Liberian flag, was laden with over 3,000 vehicles, including 800 battery electric and hybrid units. The vessel was traversing the mid-Pacific when the blaze erupted.

Managed by London-based Zodiac Maritime and chartered by SAIC Anji Logistics, the vessel was en route from Yantai, China, to Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico. On June 3, smoke was observed originating from a deck where electric vehicles were stowed. Despite immediately deploying the ship's fire suppression systems and initiating emergency firefighting procedures, the 22 crew members were unable to contain the conflagration. They safely abandoned the vessel via a lifeboat and were subsequently rescued by the containership COSCO HELLAS, coordinated by the U.S. Coast Guard. The incident occurred roughly 300 miles south of Adak Island, Alaska.

### **SHIPPING WEBSITE FOR MARITIME INNOVATION PROJECTS**

ABS, as the secretariat operating the U.S. Center for Maritime Innovation (USCMI) under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Maritime Administration, has launched a website that will promote the study, research, development, assessment, and deployment of emerging marine technologies and practices related to the maritime transportation system. It will be critical for engaging industry, academia, government, and other stakeholders in setting and executing multi-year research priorities that drive innovation.

Learn more by visiting [www.uscmi.org](http://www.uscmi.org).

### **MEMBERS ENCOURAGED TO GET ETO ENDORSEMENT**

The M.E.B.A. anticipates Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) endorsements to be important for mariners in the future. Alternative fuels, increasing automation, emission controls, and advanced networking are seen more often on the seas. With the expected increase in U.S.-flag opportunities and potential new vessels, we highly encourage everyone to get the ETO endorsement now while it only requires assessments or similar. Approximately 4 months of classes are required to get an ETO endorsement from scratch.

If you don't yet have the ETO, you are encouraged to do so. Mariners can earn the endorsement easily by completing onboard assessments followed by notification to the Coast Guard. Current options for obtaining the ETO endorsement are described at this link:

[https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/checklists/mcp\\_fm\\_nmc5\\_216\\_web.pdf](https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/checklists/mcp_fm_nmc5_216_web.pdf)

It is recommended that senior officers (possessing 2nd STCW - first engineer national title) utilize Option 4 which is onboard assessment-based (checkoffs) vs. many months of classes. Option 3 can be utilized for more junior officers (without a management level STCW) which also requires a letter of recommendation from a Chief, Master or company representative along with 360 days of sea time.

The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School has made online guidance available to assist the membership in applying for the endorsement. A CMES link provides information and documents needed for application:

[www.mebaschool.org/curriculum/stcw-electro-technical-officer-endorsement](http://www.mebaschool.org/curriculum/stcw-electro-technical-officer-endorsement)

### **RESTORATION OF EPA GRANTS WOULD CREATE JOBS, HELP PORTS UPGRADE EQUIPMENT**

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) and Committee on Environment and Public Works Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) urging them to double down on President Trump's push to restore America's maritime strength and defend two critical Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant programs.

Presently, the Clean Ports Program and the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grant programs would be cut from EPA's budget if the House of Representatives version of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act were to pass the Senate without much-needed changes. AAPA says these programs, if allowed to proceed, can be key pieces in President Trump's strategy to counter Chinese dominance in the maritime sector. They will both support American ports in acquiring the newest models of equipment and American manufacturers in taking back market share at a critical time. In the letter, AAPA President and CEO Cary Davis stressed the manufacturing benefits of the Clean Ports Program, which already "is creating jobs in America and giving American manufacturers new life in a sector long dominated by China: port cargo-handling equipment."

The effective, popular, long-standing, and bipartisan DERA grant program provides funding for ports to acquire more fuel-efficient diesel engines. Like Clean Ports, DERA is also subject to strict Build America, Buy America standards. This means that should Congress cut the program's \$60 million funding, they would not only be hurting the port industry's ability to save on fuel costs and better mitigate their local emissions but thin the order books of American truck and cargo-handling equipment manufacturers.

### **COAST GUARD ALTERS UNDERWATER SURVEY REGS FOR U.S.-FLAG SHIPS**

For the first time since 1989, the U.S. Coast Guard has overhauled its guidance on underwater surveys for U.S.-flagged vessels. The updated policy, issued on May 30, 2025, introduces several substantial reforms designed to simplify compliance without sacrificing safety.

Among the most notable changes is the formal approval of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) for conducting underwater inspections — a move that reflects the industry's growing reliance on advanced technology. A key part of the revision is the introduction of age-based guidelines: vessels less than 15 years old and carrying the appropriate class notation will be permitted to perform underwater surveys without needing additional Coast Guard approval. Vessels over 15 years of age will continue to be reviewed by the Coast Guard, but under a streamlined protocol that will generally allow for continued

enrollment in Underwater Inspection in Lieu of Drydocking (UWILD) as long as the class notation remains valid.

Additionally, the Coast Guard has done away with redundant drydock date tracking requirements. From now on, for vessels under class, tracking responsibilities will rest solely with Authorized Classification Societies and will no longer appear on the vessel's Certificate of Inspection. The new guidance is published as NVIC 01-89, Change 1.

### **NY/NJ AREA MEMBERS SHOULD ATTEND JUNE FAMILY FUN DAY**

Members and applicants in the NY/NJ area are invited to take part in M.E.B.A family fun day at the Monmouth Race Park in New Jersey on June 7. The Union has a trackside picnic area reserved - and we are honoring Tony Galante, a former Staten Island Ferry Captain who died of 9/11-related cancer in December of 2022. Tony was one of the many M.E.B.A. members who worked tirelessly after the fall of the World Trade Center to help survivors escape the devastation and to bring first responders to the scene.

M.E.B.A. is sponsoring the first race at the track (at 12:30 pm) in Tony'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. 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)

### **GOVT. FLEET MARINERS URGED TO AVOID LOSING UNION PROTECTION**

MSC and Army Corps mariners will LOSE all future union protections and benefits if their dues lapse. The Union will continue to provide critical safeguards and exclusive pathways to essential benefits that our Government Fleet mariners expect. Continued membership is a lifeline to maintain the collective strength needed to preserve fair treatment and help protect your sailing career during uncertain times.

MSC and Army Corps members are urged to check in with our Norfolk Union hall to verify contact information and speak with our Government Fleet Representatives who are keeping the fleet apprised of the latest developments. Affected members should check in with M.E.B.A. Government Fleet Representative Craig Moran at the Norfolk Union hall at (757) 440-1820 or [govtfleet@mebaunion.org](mailto:govtfleet@mebaunion.org). Assistant Representative Ola Lassley can be reached at the same number or via email at [Norfolkdispatcher@mebaunion.org](mailto:Norfolkdispatcher@mebaunion.org). M.E.B.A. Government Fleet Reps. continue to contact mariners as well, and will be visiting ships to help them understand their options.

Members in those fleets should maintain their good standing by using M.E.B.A.'s online payment portal at <https://meba.workingsystems.com>. The Membership Department at Headquarters can provide assistance with any technical issues by phone at (202) 638-5355 or via email at [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org). Those enrolling in the M.E.B.A. Payment Portal must have an email address on file with Headquarters that correlates to their payment portal i.d., so make sure the HQ records match. Payments can also be made in person at any M.E.B.A. Union hall or office. To ensure continuity, members are advised to complete payments through the fourth quarter.

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

Friday, June 6 – **Honolulu@1100**

Monday, July 7 – **Boston@1200**. *Bloody Thursday observed – West Coast Halls Closed*

Tuesday, July 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

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

Thursday, July 10 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, July 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). Website: [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.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. The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org)*