



# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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## Hot Off the Press

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# TELEX TIMES

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**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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**NEW U.S.-FLAG SHIP CELEBRATED AT BEAUMONT CEREMONY**

U.S. Department of Transportation officials including Secretary Elaine Chao welcomed the newest entrant into the Maritime Security Program (MSP) on Friday as the LIBERTY PASSION staged a naming ceremony in Beaumont, TX. M.E.B.A.'s Gulf Coast V.P. Erin Bertram took part and thanked the M.E.B.A. deck and engine officers aboard, including Captain Jim Myers and Chief Engineer Mike Tinkel, for getting the vessel off to a great start.

The newbuild Pure Car/Truck Carrier (PC/TC) has the capacity to transport up to approximately 6,500 cars on 12 decks, as well as military wheeled and containerized equipment such as M-ATVs, HUMVEEs, MRAPs, armored personnel carriers, tanks, helicopters and unit equipment.

Beaumont Mayor Becky Ames served as the ship sponsor for the ceremony. Secretary Chao was a guest of honor and also spoke at the event. She noted, "Today we are celebrating a public-private partnership that is strengthening America's Merchant Marine, as well as America's Armed Forces. U.S.-flagged vessels are a critical component in our domestic commerce, moving \$467 billion worth of goods between ports in the U.S. In addition to these robust economic contributions, a healthy U.S. maritime industry crewed by American merchant mariners is also a vital part of our national security at ready call to support the Armed Forces and carry military equipment and supplies to the frontlines."

Several reliefs came aboard the vessel as the PASSION readied to sail off toward its regular trade route. The latest M.E.B.A. crew of the ship includes Chief Engineer Dzemal "Jimmy" Smirba, 1<sup>st</sup> A/E Alton Swinney, 2<sup>nd</sup> A/E David Bick and 3<sup>rd</sup> A/E Edward Albrecht. On deck are Captain Rick Danahy, Chief Mate Kevin Bennett, Second Mate Tim Harley and Third Mate Dominique Dertien.

While in Beaumont, Secretary Chao also visited the M.E.B.A.-crewed Ready Reserve Force vessel CAPE TRINITY which is managed by Patriot Contract Services. The MarAd vessel is berthed in Beaumont alongside the CAPE TEXAS and CAPE TAYLOR and Secretary Chao met many of the men and women crewing the CAPE T's.

**STRENGTHENING MERCHANT MARINE WILL FOLLOW-THROUGH ON PROMISE TO NATION, AMP NOTES**

After President Trump's remarks last week aboard the USS GERALD FORD in Norfolk, VA, the American Maritime Partnership issued a statement hailing the President's commitment to fortify economic and national security while pointing out the President can follow-through on

that initiative by strengthening the U.S. Merchant Marine. The American Maritime Partnership is a coalition representing the domestic maritime industry that counts the M.E.B.A. and AMC as members along with a host of maritime companies and interests.

Tom Allegretti, AMP Chairman pointed out that DOD, Navy, Joint Chiefs and Coast Guard leaders, among others, have all acknowledged that “the ability of the nation to build and maintain a U.S. flagged fleet is of significant national interest. And as every modern President has noted, the Jones Act is critical to maintaining the U.S. shipyard industrial base. The American maritime industry is here to answer the call to build American vessels that are American-crewed and American-owned to both fuel the economy and protect the nation.”

The domestic maritime industry, supported by the Jones Act, sustains more than 478,000 jobs and has an annual economic impact of \$92.5 billion according to a study conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the Transportation Institute. The industry also accounts for approximately \$29 billion in annual wages and \$10 billion in tax revenue each year.

### **MAERSK SHIP SWAP-OUT WILL LOWER FLEET AGE**

Maersk Line, Ltd. plans to swap out a pair of vessels in its M.E.B.A.-crewed fleet with two newer ships. The move will not affect M.E.B.A. jobs or wages.

The MAERSK WISCONSIN and MAERSK CALIFORNIA are getting closer to their Maritime Security Program age-out dates. Maersk is anticipating that they will bring in two ‘S’ class replacement ships that will be “the largest in the US fleet.” They have penciled in May dates to bring in the MAERSK SENTOSA to replace the WISCONSIN and the MAERSK SELETAR to replace the CALIFORNIA.

The newer ships were both built in 2007 and are 318m x 40m, 87,500 dwt, 7500 TEU powered by an 11RT-Flex96CB two stroke slow-speed diesel engine rated over 84,000 horsepower enabling a top speed of 25 knots. Both ships will be dry-docked before flagging-in.

### **CIVILIAN MARINERS TAKE PART IN LATEST NAVY MISSION**

Pacific Partnership 2017 is underway and the expeditionary fast transport ship USNS FALL RIVER is part of the mission, as it pulled into Hambantota, Sri Lanka this week. M.E.B.A. represents the engineers in MSC’s Civilian Mariner fleet.

The Pacific Partnership mission in Sri Lanka continues through March 18 and will make follow-on mission stops in Malaysia and Vietnam. Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multilateral humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Asia-Pacific and aims to enhance regional coordination in areas such as medical readiness and preparedness for manmade and natural disasters. Participating in this year’s Sri Lanka mission are partner military and non-government personnel from the United States, Australia, and Japan.

### **POTENTIAL COAST GUARD CUTS CAUSING FRICTION**

A budget outline indicating that the President will look to cut Coast Guard funding by \$1.3 billion is drawing flak from agency supporters in Congress. Congressman Duncan Hunter (R-CA), who is Chairman of the House Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee and was a Trump ally during the campaign, said the proposed cuts would prove crippling to the agency. He and Rep. John Garamendi, the top Democrat on the Subcommittee, penned a letter to the President noting that the cuts would severely undermine national security.

Last week, it was reported that the forthcoming budget proposal would ask for major cuts to be shouldered by TSA and Coast Guard, among other agencies, to expand the Defense Department budget and to help fund the construction of a southern border wall.

“It’s nonsensical to pursue a policy of rebuilding the Armed Forces while proposing large reductions to the U.S. Coast Guard budget,” the Subcommittee leaders pointed out in the March 2 letter. The cuts would be made to “the detriment of U.S. national security and create exposures that will most certainly be exploited by transnational criminal networks and other dangerous actors...These proposed cuts...will guarantee negative consequences.”

The budget outline, or “skinny budget” is just a draft of the President’s budget request – although it is a good indicator of White House priorities. The official budget request is expected sometime this spring.

### **MEMBERS SOUGHT FOR STATIONARY ENGINEER POSITIONS IN PACIFIC NW**

M.E.B.A.’s new contract with Commercial Transcontinental Services (CTS) will put members to work in shoreside positions as soon as early March. CTS is now accepting resumes for members to serve as temporary facilities engineers in the Seattle, Portland and Spokane areas.

Jobs range from 1–90 days in duration, and generally run from 8-5 each day. This is covered employment for medical, training and pension purposes.

M.E.B.A.’s Executive V.P. Adam Vokac is the point of contact and is accepting resumes. This deal was crafted some months back but the company needed to complete preparations to accommodate this new arrangement. We are now ready to go to the next phase and interested members and applicants in the Pacific Northwest are encouraged to submit a current resume along with copies of their USCG officer’s license and current M.E.B.A. drug test to Adam at [avokac@mebaunion.org](mailto:avokac@mebaunion.org) If this arrangement proves successful, there could be additional opportunities in other West Coast locations including Oakland and Los Angeles.

### **MEMBERS, APPLICANTS, RETIREES CAN GET DEEP DISCOUNTS ON AT&T UNLIMITED PLAN**

Members, applicants and retirees (and their families), as well as M.E.B.A. staff can take advantage of AT&T’s best unlimited plan to date and receive discounts up to 18% on monthly service charges.

You can visit [att.com/newunlimitedplan](http://att.com/newunlimitedplan) on the web for more info. To purchase online, visit [att.com/wireless/att.com/wireless/laborunionemployee](http://att.com/wireless/att.com/wireless/laborunionemployee). To find the AT&T store closest to you, visit: [att.com/find-a-store](http://att.com/find-a-store). If you visit a local AT&T store, please have proof of eligibility and mention discount code FAN4202381.

### **UPDATE YOUR MMC/STCW EXPIRATION DATE(S)**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES) requests that every M.E.B.A. member and applicant submit the expiration date for their Merchant Mariner Credential to them. If your STCW Endorsement expiration date differs from your MMC expiration then please include that information as well. Please send an email with your information to [info@mebaschool.org](mailto:info@mebaschool.org). Make sure you properly identify yourself (last 4 numbers of SSN will help). A webform can be found

on the CMES website ([www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org)) making it very easy for members and applicants to submit this information.

### **ST. PATTY'S DAY – THE UNION WAY**

This March 17<sup>th</sup>, you don't need the luck of the Irish to support a Union family on St. Patrick's Day. Here's a handy guide that'll help you stay away from the blarney and keep those Irish eyes smiling:

**Corned Beef** - Saag's; Thumann's; Winter's Premium Deli. **Potatoes and Cabbage** - Dole Fresh Potatoes; Purchase cabbage at a union grocery store. **Green Food Coloring** - Betty Crocker. **Beer** – (*Note: These are only a fraction of the Union-friendly beers available. Check out "Labor 411" for more*) – Bass; Beck's; Blue Moon; Budweiser; Busch; Butte Creek; Coors; Dundee; Duquesne; Genesee; Goose Island; Hamm's; Henry Weinhard's; Iron City; Jamaica Red Ale; Keystone; Killian's; Land Shark Lager; Lionhead; Mad River; Mendocino Brewing; Michelob; Mickey's; Miller Genuine Draft; Milwaukee's Best; Natural Ice; O'Doul's (non-alcoholic); Pabst Blue Ribbon; Red Stripe; Red Tail Ale; Rolling Rock; Sam Adams; Schlitz; Shock Top; Steelhead; Third Shift.

### **OLD WSF FERRIES HEAD TOWARD NEW INCARNATIONS**

Washington State Ferries announced the sale of its oldest ferry, EVERGREEN STATE. The 63-year-old vessel sold for \$300,000 to Jones Broadcasting, LLC. The new owners plan to use it for active ferry service in the protected waters of the southern Caribbean.

Four Olympic-class vessels, TOKITAE, SAMISH, CHIMACUM and SUQUAMISH are replacing the aging Evergreen State class vessels which also include MV KLAHOWYA and MV TILLIKUM.

In addition, the recently retired 162-foot WSF ferry HIYU, was sold in February. The local business owner who purchased it intends to use the ferry as a floating entertainment venue on Lake Union. The vessel sold for \$150,000.

### **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, Vacation). 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, April 3* – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

*Tuesday, April 4* – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

*Wednesday, April 5* – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

*Thursday, April 6* – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

*Friday, April 7* – Honolulu@1100.

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