

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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NEW CONTRACT RATIFIED FOR CAPE MAY-LEWES FERRY MEMBERS

Members sailing in the Cape May-Lewes Ferry fleet are working under a new contract after they ratified a recently negotiated agreement last week.

Atlantic Coast Vice President Jason Callahan along with Shop Stewards John Burke, Mark Genovese, Don Miller, Travis Worster, and Kevin Loveless negotiated the new agreement through hard-fought negotiations that lasted well over a year, to ensure the best possible deal for the group. Additional thanks go to New Jersey AFL-CIO President Charlie Wowkanech who helped push negotiations across the finish line. M.E.B.A. has further strengthened its working relationship with Charlie and continues to make inroads with national and local labor organizations through our seat on the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

The new Cape May-Lewes Ferry agreement includes steady wage increases, bonuses, additional Juneteenth holiday, and increased job security.

Overseen by the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA), the ferry system is jointly operated by the States of New Jersey and Delaware. Ferries transit between Cape May, NJ and Lewes, Delaware.

M.E.B.A. represents the Pilots, Mates, ABs, Ordinary Seamen, Chie Engineers, 1st A/Es, 3rd A/Es, QMEDs oilers, Wipers, Mechanics, Electricians, Electronic Technicians and Welders.

M.E.B.A. TAKES PART IN WISTA USA CONFERENCE

M.E.B.A. was an active presence at the Women's International Shipping & Trade Association (WISTA) USA annual conference staged last week in Washington DC down at The Wharf. WISTA USA is an organization that promotes and empowers women to thrive in a diverse and inclusive maritime industry.

M.E.B.A.'s Executive V.P. Claudia Cimini and Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway were in attendance for the meetings along with several M.E.B.A. members.

Claudia spoke before conferees as part of a panel discussion entitled “Keeping Women at the Helm - Moving Beyond Firsts.” Other speakers included Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Linda Fagan, Maritime Administrator Ann Phillips, Federal Maritime Commission Chairman Daniel Maffei, Patriot Vice President Boriana Farrar and American Maritime Congress President Fair Kim who spoke about “Legislation on the Waterfront.”

PROGRESS IN ILWU TALKS

Talks continue between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) on a new contract as the parties announced continued progress. An agreement has been reached on manning requirements at non-automated container terminals in the Los Angeles/Long Beach port. The parties were reported to be discussing wage and pension benefit issues next. Indications are that talks could be finalized in the next few months.

ILWU represents 22,000 dockworkers serving at 29 West Coast ports. The PMA represents shipping lines and terminal operators at those 29 ports. The previous agreement expired at 5 pm on July 1, 2022. Talks have been ongoing since May 10 of last year.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFILIATES AT M.E.B.A. HQ DURING POLICE WEEK

Several of our law enforcement affiliates kicked off National Police Week 2023 in the nation’s capital last weekend at M.E.B.A. Headquarters. The Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS) brought a large contingent of officers and members to Washington DC and hosted a reception on the rooftop attended by hundreds of guests including union representatives, Congressional members, Hill staffers and many other power players.

ALADS is the certified bargaining unit for deputy sheriffs and district attorney investigators working in California’s L.A. County. One of the largest and most powerful law enforcement associations in the Western United States, ALADS has been an M.E.B.A. affiliate since April 1983.

The ALADS contingent was headed up by their President Richard Pippin and included Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert G. Luna. Two other law enforcement unions affiliated with the M.E.B.A. also took part in the reception including the Association of Deputy District Attorneys (ADDA), represented at the reception by President Michele Hanisee and Vice President Eric Siddall, as well as the L.A. County Professional Peace Officers Association (PPOA), who were represented by their President Nancy Escobedo.

ADDA represents Deputy District Attorneys in California’s Los Angeles County. PPOA represents Los Angeles County employees of the Sheriff’s Department, Department of the Coroner and the District Attorney’s Office.

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac and our Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha were in attendance and met with each of our affiliates.

National Police Week, which concludes on Saturday, was established in 1962 and pays special recognition to law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

CAA REUNION, ITEM DONATIONS FOR 4MF

Besides the 2023 CAA Reunion (taking place at the CMES from June 16-18), there will be a Silent Auction and three-hole Disc Golf Challenge on Wednesday, June 14 leading up to the Reunion. These Fundraisers benefit the M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation and the upkeep of the Memorial Garden. Donations of items for the Auction (they don't have to be nautical items) or a monetary contribution are greatly appreciated. The 4MF is a 501(c)(3) entity under IRS rules, so all donations are tax deductible. For further info, contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo at (443) 676-6248 or bvanloo@bvlworks.org

APPLICANTS REMINDED OF REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Earlier this month, the M.E.B.A. Headquarters Membership Department sent each M.E.B.A. applicant a letter detailing outstanding requirements needed to be met in order to qualify for – and to be accepted into membership. Such letters are sent two times a year in the weeks preceding the release of the twice-a-year District Investigating Committee Report. DIC Reports contain a list of qualified applicants who have fulfilled the obligations in their application packet (including sea service documentation and initiation fees) and are current on their service charges. The reports are put before members for a vote at the June and December meetings. Once members approve the report, listed applicants become members and the Membership Department informs them of their new status.

Qualified applicants who are trying to make membership must provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next DIC report. The DIC will meet before the June 2023 membership meeting to formalize their report. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership. M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant's record with sailing time/years of service unless that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall. For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

The M.E.B.A. Constitution states that, "in no case may such a member be retained on the membership rolls if he is in arrears for over two years' dues." The DIC report will include a list of members or applicants that have been in dues or service charge arrears for over two years. Once the membership votes on the report, those members and applicants will be DROPPED from the rolls. If you are in arrears and want to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing.

MARITIME DAY NEXT WEEK

National Maritime Day (May 22) will be celebrated on Monday. The Washington DC observation will take place on that day at Department of Transportation Headquarters. The theme this year is

“Mariners Move the Nation: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow” highlighting how critical the Merchant Marine is to the nation’s economy and national security. The Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command Adm. Jacqueline Van Ovost will be among the speakers.

Maritime Day was first designated by Congress in 1933 to commemorate the May 22, 1819 Atlantic crossing of the S.S. SAVANNAH that sailed from Savannah, GA. to Liverpool, England, using steam propulsion. The occasion is set aside as a time to reflect on America's maritime heritage and to honor mariners who have defended our Nation's freedom.

In Vero Beach, FL, the great day will be celebrated by unveiling and dedicating the new WWII Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial. The occasion will also be used to present several Floridian World War II mariners with the prestigious Congressional Gold Medal for their service.

Among other speakers will be Dru DiMattia, who is a retired M.E.B.A. member and current President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV). What Maritime Day event is going on within your nautical enclave? Let us know!

GLOBAL SEAFARER MORALE STILL RECOVERING FROM COVID LOWS

According to a regular survey that monitors the wellbeing of global seafarers, mariners are increasingly challenged by restricted shore leave and delayed sign-off procedures even as we move out of the pandemic. The Mission to Seafarers latest Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) report for the first quarter of 2023 reveals a fall in recorded levels of happiness from 7.69 to 7.1 out of 10, compared to the last quarter of 2022.

Lack of shore leave and a desire to access welfare services ashore resurfaced as key areas for concern. Seafarers also reported growing frustration with owners who attempt to make them sign on for longer periods than desired, and with the delays in sign-off procedures. Concerningly, they say the challenges of coping with extended periods on board have been made harder due to inadequate food provisions, as well as bureaucratic and unnecessary paperwork demands, ineffective shipboard leadership, and a sense of social isolation adding to the stress of life onboard.

Seafarers also report a growing awareness of disparity in access to the internet at sea with differing levels of connectivity reported across different companies, as well as concerns about data allowances, internet speed, and connectivity limitations.

The SHI report also identified several other challenges facing seafarers, including a growing wellness gap between companies that provide health and well-being programs and those that do not; access to dental care in some ports but not others; and limited access to mental health support, medical advisory services, and physical well-being consultations. Seafarers also expressed concerns about salaries, the cost of living, and potential obstacles to career advancement. There is also a need for improved social activities and shared spaces to encourage crew members to interact.

CURBING EXEMPTION FOR FOREIGN CARRIERS COULD HURT U.S. SHIPPING

U.S. shipping interests have expressed concern with legislative efforts to repeal or scale back federal antitrust exemptions for ocean carriers – a proposal they say could have a detrimental effect on cargo available to U.S.-flag ships operating in the foreign trades.

USA Maritime, a coalition of U.S.-flag interests (including the M.E.B.A. and AMC), is taking issue with H.R. 1696, a bill introduced in March to fight back against foreign shipping monopolies that manipulate ocean shipping and utilize unfair trade practices. In a letter written to the leadership of the Transportation and Infrastructure and the Judiciary Committees, USA Maritime points out that the remedy, as outlined in the bill, would have a “chilling” effect on U.S. carriers’ ability to form or operate within vessel sharing agreements (VSAs) that would result in reduced port calls, less service and increased prices for American consumers.

The letter notes that “VSAs allow carriers to maximize unused cargo space to ensure ships are as full as possible on certain routes — this efficiency allows for ships to call at smaller ports that likely wouldn't be serviced — in similar fashion to the airline industry's code-sharing agreements that allow service for under-served passenger markets. Diminishing the opportunity to enter into agreements to share vessel space may force U.S.-flag carriers to offer fewer services and to call on fewer ports. This in turn will mean a reduction in the size of vessels and reduced calls to specific terminals resulting in less service for US-flag customers, increased costs for vessel operators, and reduced opportunities for American maritime labor.”

The letter has been posted on the M.E.B.A. homepage located at www.mebaunion.org

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

Monday, June 5 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, June 6 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

Wednesday, June 7 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, June 8 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, June 9 – **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.***

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. 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 Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.