

# 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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In this issue//Halls & Offices Closed for Memorial Day//Industry Celebrated at Maritime Day Event//White House Maritime Day Statement//Rep. Garamendi Launches Revamped "Energizing American Shipbuilding Act"//House Bill Would Honor WWII Merchant Mariners//Supreme Court Protects Employers over Workers//BST Refresher Space Available//Forward LIBERTY PEACE Résumés//

### **M.E.B.A. HALLS & OFFICES CLOSED MONDAY FOR MEMORIAL DAY**

All M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup> for Memorial Day. Take a moment to remember and honor those who died for our freedom. The National Moment of Remembrance, established by Congress, asks Americans wherever they are on Memorial Day at 3 p.m. local time to pause for a minute of silence in an act of national unity and reflection. You could also fly the American flag at half-staff until noon, fly the POW/MIA flag (and/or Merchant Marine flag), and perhaps ring a bell eight times to signify the moment.

### **INDUSTRY LAUDED AT D.C. MARITIME DAY EVENT**

Contributions of mariners past and present were honored at the National Maritime Day event on Tuesday in the nation's capital as a slew of federal agency speakers lauded U.S. shipping and talked about efforts to strengthen our maritime future. The theme was "Maritime Voices! Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow." Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao headlined the observance hosted by the Maritime Administration at the DOT building in Washington D.C. She was joined by Maritime Administrator Mark Buzby, the Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command Gen. Darren McDew and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan.

Maritime Day dates back to 1933 when Congress selected May 22<sup>nd</sup> to annually honor mariners who have served our nation in times of peace and in war. The day is also a tribute to the maritime industry as a whole and its critical importance to our economy and national security. May 22<sup>nd</sup> marks the date in 1819 that the American steamship SAVANNAH left Savannah, Georgia, on what was the first transoceanic voyage under steam power.

Secretary Chao talked about the integral role mariners play in our nation's economy and national security. She pointed out that without privately owned U.S.-flag commercial ships, it would cost the nation over \$60 billion to replicate the fleet's national security capabilities.

General McDew is one of U.S. shipping's strongest allies. He understands the military is dependent on the U.S. Merchant Marine to help project U.S. power overseas. In his remarks, he called for the recapitalization of the Ready Reserve Force and bemoaned the fact that, on our current course, by 2020 he will be the "largest owner of steamships" - a title he doesn't want. He said the nation's status as a superpower is dependent on force projection - the domain of the Merchant Marine. "I appreciate - every single day - the ships that sail for USTRANSCOM. They transit dangerous waters, they deliver

critical cargo. Our adversaries really don't want them there, but our mariners go there anyways," he said. "I'm one of your biggest fans," he told the gathering. And that's today AND tomorrow."

At the ceremony, MarAd's "Professional Ship Award" was presented to three maritime academy training ships as well as an RRF vessel that assisted with relief efforts following the three massive hurricanes (Harvey, Irma, Maria) late last year. Those awards were presented by Maritime Administrator Buzby and Gen. Darren McDew and were awarded to Massachusetts Maritime President RADM Francis X. McDonald (TS KENNEDY), the Aviation Logistics Support RO/RO SS WRIGHT, Texas A&M Maritime Academy President RADM Mike Rodriguez (TS GENERAL RUDDER) and SUNY Maritime College President RADM Michael Alfultis (EMPIRE STATE VI).

In addition, several World War II merchant mariners attended the observance and were rightfully greeted with a standing ovation. They were part of an American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) contingent that has been making the rounds on Capitol Hill this week. They included Charles A. Mills, Eugene Barner and Bob Weagant II. Those mariners were among the group honored at last year's Maritime Day event. At this year's observance, WWII Army veteran William E. Tiernan, who began shipping out after the war, was presented with an award and medals for his service in various campaigns that dated from the 1940s up until the Gulf War.

#### **WHITE HOUSE MARITIME DAY STATEMENT**

As is the practice each year, the President of the United States issues a Maritime Day proclamation hailing mariners for the exceptional role they play in keeping the nation's economy moving and for supporting our national defense. President Trump followed suit and issued a statement laudatory of our nation's Fourth Arm of Defense:

"On National Maritime Day, we recognize the critical role the United States Merchant Marine plays in bolstering national security and facilitating economic growth. We honor our merchant mariners for their contributions to connecting the States, supporting our military, and cementing ties among our allies.

"Long known as the "Fourth Arm of Defense," the United States Merchant Marine has served with valor and distinction in every American conflict. The important work of the Merchant Marine was never more evident than during World War II, when merchant mariners sailed dangerous seas and fought enemies as they connected our Armed Forces fighting abroad to vital supplies produced by hardworking Americans at home. In the course of their valiant efforts, they endured the loss of more than 730 large vessels, and more than 6,000 merchant mariners died at sea or as prisoners of war.

"Today, American mariners facilitate the shipment of hundreds of billions of dollars of goods along maritime trade routes for American businesses and consumers. Merchant mariners are ambassadors of good will, projecting a peaceful United States presence along the sea lanes of the world and into regions of core strategic importance to our Nation. Often risking their lives by sailing into war zones, our merchant mariners continue to support our troops overseas by providing them with needed cargo and logistical support. They also advance humanitarian missions worldwide, including last year's effort to ship tens of thousands of containers of lifesaving supplies to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands after they had been devastated by hurricanes.

"The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day" to commemorate the first transoceanic voyage by a steamship in 1819 by

the S.S. Savannah. By this resolution, the Congress has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

“NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 2018, as National Maritime Day. I call upon the people of the United States to mark this observance and to display the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.”

### **REVAMPED “ENERGIZING AMERICAN SHIPBUILDING ACT” LAUNCHED WITH FANFARE**

Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) is redoubling efforts to secure tangible progress for the U.S. Merchant Marine by launching a revamped version of his previous bill to jumpstart U.S.-flag energy exports. H.R. 5893, the “Energizing American Shipbuilding Act” is a bill to require a percentage of exported American crude oil and LNG to travel on U.S.-built and U.S.-flag ships. At a press conference on Tuesday, the Congressman said the bipartisan, bi-cameral effort would lead to the creation of 50 new U.S. tankers and create thousands of manufacturing and maritime jobs by 2040. Several Republican and Democratic lawmakers showed support for the bill at the press conference and Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS) mentioned his plans to introduce an identical measure in the Senate. Advocates of U.S. shipping and shipbuilding packed the room during the announcement, and several maritime industry representatives, including M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, addressed attendees while lending boisterous support for the new bill.

The bill is similar to earlier legislation introduced by Rep. Garamendi but supplemented by more defined U.S. shipbuilding provisions along with adjusted percentages of exports required to be carried on U.S.-flag vessels. The bill would require that 2% of LNG exports travel on U.S.-built vessels in 2024 ramping up to 15% in 2040. Crude exports would travel on U.S.-built ships beginning at 1% in 2023 ramping up to 10% in 2032. The bill also provides for training opportunities for U.S. mariners to ensure their readiness for these future job opportunities.

The effort begins to drum up support and co-sponsors for the legislation in both House and Senate.

### **HOUSE BILL WOULD HONOR WWII MERCHANT MARINERS**

Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) introduced a bill this week to collectively honor World War II merchant mariners with the Congressional Gold Medal. If passed, H.R. 5879 would authorize a gold medal of appropriate design to be awarded to WWII U.S. merchant mariners on behalf of Congress. It would be placed in the American Merchant Marine Museum and duplicates could then be struck to be made available to the public.

The bill is the House companion to the Senate bill (S. 2127) forwarded by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). Rep. Garamendi picked up the torch in the House for the identical legislation that was fronted by Congresswoman Susan Brooks (R-IN) in the last session of Congress. Rep. Garamendi informed colleagues of this bipartisan bill in remarks on the House Floor this week. A link to his remarks has been placed on the M.E.B.A. Facebook page or can be accessed directly at <https://tinyurl.com/WWIImarinercoin>

## **SUPREME COURT PROTECTS EMPLOYERS OVER WORKERS**

In a blow to working families, the Supreme Court has ruled that employers can require that workers arbitrate disputes individually instead of through joint arbitration or class action lawsuits. The 5-4 decision in *National Labor Relations Board v. Murphy Oil USA, Inc.*, is a win for companies and could affect as many as 25 million employment contracts.

Justice Neil Gorsuch said that if workers were permitted to join together to pursue claims “the virtues Congress originally saw in arbitration, its speed and simplicity and inexpensiveness, would be shorn away and arbitration would wind up looking like the litigation it was meant to displace.”

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, joined by Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Stephen Breyer and Elena Kagan, called the decision “egregiously wrong” and pointed out that the ruling would likely lead toward “the under-enforcement of federal and state statutes designed to advance the well-being of vulnerable workers,” as individual employees will be less inclined to pursue workplace issues alone.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka was aghast at the decision and said the ruling denies working people their basic legal rights. “Today, five justices on the Supreme Court decided that it is acceptable for working people to have our legal rights taken away by corporations in order to keep our jobs. This decision forcing workers to sign away the right to file class-action suits against such illegal employment practices as wage theft, sexual harassment and discrimination is outrageous—and it is wrong. In this case, the newest justice has joined the dangerous trend of this court to side with corporations over working people. We call upon Congress to immediately enact legislation making clear that no worker can be forced to give up their right to effectively challenge illegal conduct in the workplace in order to keep their job.”

## **BST REFRESHER SPACE AVAILABLE**

There is still room available for the June 11-15, 2018 Basic Safety Training (BST) Refresher class to be held at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. BST Refresher is required by mariners renewing their license that **do not** have 1 year of sea time in the last 5 years. It will also fulfill the USCG requirements for those mariners needing BST Revalidation.

Please remember that you do not need to wait until it is time to renew your credentials before you take this training. The course completion certificate is good for five years.

Applications may be sent via the CMES website, fax (410) 822-7220, or email to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

## **LIBERTY PEACE RÉSUMÉS REQUESTED**

The Union is asking for résumés from members and applicants interested in employment on the LIBERTY PEACE to continue to be forwarded to the NY/NJ Union hall.

Forward all résumés to M.E.B.A. Atlantic Coast VP Jason Callahan ([jcallahan@mebaunion.org](mailto:jcallahan@mebaunion.org)) or NY Patrolman Nico Sermoneta ([nsermoneta@mebaunion.org](mailto:nsermoneta@mebaunion.org)) at the NY/NJ M.E.B.A. Union hall so they can ensure the Company receives them.

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monday, June 4 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;  
Tuesday, June 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;  
Wednesday, June 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;  
Thursday, June 7 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;  
Friday, June 8 – Honolulu@1100.

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*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and proven 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). Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org)*