

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 21 – May 26, 2022



In this issue//National Maritime Day in D.C.//Info for WWII Mariners or Survivors to Obtain Medal Replicas//Maritime Union "Summit"//M.E.B.A. Rep. in Houston is on the Job//NMC Tips to Avoid Processing Delays//Disc Golf Tournament on June 17//NOAA Hurricane Season Predictions//Applicants in Arrears will Be Dropped, Some Can Make Membership//Union-Style Memorial Day//

MARINERS' PERSEVERANCE & IMPORTANCE LAUDED IN NATIONAL MARITIME DAY OBSERVANCE

The Washington D.C. National Maritime Day observance, that took place on Tuesday, may have boasted a limited in-person attendance, but didn't lack enthusiasm and laudatory remarks for mariners past and present. This was the first in-person Maritime Day celebration in several years because of COVID. Attendees were limited but the observance was streamed live in order to reach a bigger audience. M.E.B.A. was represented at the ceremony by President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha. The ceremony that lasted roughly an hour, can be viewed at <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/education/national-maritime-day/national-maritime-day>

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg headlined the observance and expressed gratitude to mariners past and present. World War II mariners, who just last week were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal, were again highlighted as heroes. The Secretary said that today's mariners ably walk in their footsteps. "...The tradition made famous and ennobled by that greatest generation is carried on today by those who meet this moment's missions on the seas," he said. "Facing a once in a century pandemic, you have adapted, you have kept sailing, you've kept America afloat. You delivered freight when supply chains around the world had been disrupted, delivered medical equipment when lives depended on it, have sailed amid climate disasters bringing communities not only supplies, but hope."

Maritime Administrator Rear Adm. Ann Phillips also applauded the valuable contributions of WWII mariners and then detailed MarAd's current focus on core values which are: "Culture" – Promoting fair and dignified treatment of all mariners; 'Climate' – exploring innovations in maritime technology including reducing carbon emissions; and 'Commitment' – Our commitment to support the mariner workforce." Outgoing Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz pointed out that the Marine Transportation System is enabled by the contributions of mariners. He said, "they're the vital workers that drive our economic prosperity, and really, our security."

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. Because the actual Maritime Day took place on Sunday, MarAd moved the D.C. observance to this past Tuesday.

The Commander of the Military Sealift Command, Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, said that, “American mariners remain essential to our economy and defense...We must support today’s mariners and grow the merchant mariner community....It is no surprise that competitive pay, advancement and predictable work-life balance are keys to recruiting a capable and diverse workforce,” he added.

President Joe Biden issued a Maritime Day Proclamation leading into the weekend. Among other things, he noted, “As we continue to build a better America, our Merchant Marine plays a pivotal role in securing our coastal and inland waterways so that they are open to trade. No matter the hardship, mariners provide a smooth passage for America’s critical domestic goods and serve as stewards of our Nation’s trading gateways with the rest of the world. My Administration continues its unwavering support of the United States Merchant Marine, as well as the Jones Act, which protects the integrity of our domestic maritime industry, supports hundreds of thousands of jobs, and contributes over \$150 billion in economic benefits.”

INFO FOR DUPLICATE WWII MARINER CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS

It’s estimated that there are only a little over 1,000 WWII merchant mariners still around. But thankfully, they received some wonderful news last week as Congress finally recognized them with the Congressional Gold Medal, a long overdue honor for their essential service. Ten WWII mariners were on hand last week at the Capitol ceremony in which the Gold Medal was presented. They each received their replicas from Maritime Administration officials shortly after. MarAd now has issued the eligibility criteria for other WWII mariners, or their surviving next of kin, to receive medal duplicates. The original medal will be placed on display in the American Merchant Marine Museum at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, NY.

The general public can purchase duplicate medals from the U.S. Mint. More info is available at <https://www.usmint.gov/coins/coin-medal-programs/medals/merchant-mariners-of-world-war-ii>

For the actual veterans, the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020 authorizes MarAd to award duplicates of the medal for free to individuals who, between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946, were members of the United States Merchant Marine, or other related services. If a qualified individual has passed, MarAd is authorized to issue medals to the next of kin. To request a duplicate medal, veterans or their family members or survivors can submit:

A copy of the Merchant Mariner’s DD Form 214, “Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active duty” with continuation ship if provided (the DD Form 214 is required to verify Merchant Marine service on vessels during World War II); A summary, if available, of World War II sailing history to include the theater(s) of operation and ports of discharge; and Book number or United States Maritime Service (USMS) number if available. Inquiries, along with the required documents, can be emailed to Katrina McRae, Maritime Awards Officer, at katrina.mcrae@dot.gov

MARITIME UNIONS MEET AT M.E.B.A. HQ

Officials from four major maritime unions came together this week at M.E.B.A. Headquarters to touch base on a series of important issues. Top officers from the M.E.B.A., AMO, MM&P and SIU spent a productive work session on Wednesday focusing on issues such as the EMBARC program (Every Mariner Builds a Respectful Culture), offshore wind and the upcoming Tanker Security Program, as well as a series of other issues important to the unions. M.E.B.A. was represented by President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha.

M.E.B.A. HOUSTON REPRESENTATIVE IS ON THE JOB

As of this week, M.E.B.A.'s newly appointed Representative at our Houston hall is on the job and working on behalf of our membership. Jay Wedman has been with the M.E.B.A. since 2003 primarily sailing with Liberty and Keystone. Last week he wrapped up a turbo activation onboard the Keystone-managed Ready Reserve Force vessel CAPE KENNEDY, which he Captained. He is a 2002 graduate of Texas A&M Maritime Academy and lives near the hall in the Houston area.

M.E.B.A. Gulf Coast V.P. Adam Smith welcomed Jay to the hall and expressed his enthusiasm for the hire. "Jay is going to be a big advantage for our membership down here in the Gulf. He'll help hold down the hall when I'm away on business so we don't miss a beat. He'll also provide quality day-to-day shoreside assistance so our members and applicants can continue to operate at full power." Welcome Jay!

NMC TIPS TO AVOID PROCESSING DELAYS AS SUBMISSIONS SURGE

The National Maritime Center (NMC) has experienced a significant surge in application submissions for Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC) over the past several months. NMC staff are taking prompt action to process these applications, along with any previously pending applications, as quickly as possible. They recommend that mariners take the following steps to avoid processing delays:

- Apply at least 90 days in advance. Remember, for renewals you can apply up to 8 months early with no change between your expiration and renewal dates.
- Use the Regional Exam Centers and Monitoring Units to review your application before submission. They are available for appointments in person or over the phone.
- Use the tools and resources on the NMC website. The application acceptance checklist and evaluator checklists are valuable tools.
- For general questions, contact the NMC Customer Service Center by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662), or using the Live Chat feature on the NMC Home Page.

Additionally, mariners can request expedited mailing of their MMC or Medical Certificate, which includes the ability to track the package. Full instructions are provided on the NMC website detailing the expedited mailing process.

2ND ANNUAL LEROY KOEHLER DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT ON JUNE 17

The M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) will host its second annual Leroy Koehler Disc (Frisbee) Golf Tournament on Friday, June 17th at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. Everyone is invited. The tournament benefits the Memorial Park at the CMES.

As you know, the Memorial was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The Foundation supporting the Memorial is a section 501(c)(3) entity under Internal Revenue Service rules, so all donations are tax deductible. Leroy Koehler was a greatest generation mariner and consummate Chief Engineer who deeply cared about the M.E.B.A. heritage and made a generous financial contribution to the Memorial Park.

There is a \$25 entry fee for the tournament which will begin at 1300. For further information, contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo at (443) 676-6248 or bvanloo@bvlworks.org

NOAA SAYS ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON MAY GET BUSY

Forecasters at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, a division of the National Weather Service, are predicting above-average hurricane activity this year — which would make it the seventh consecutive above-average hurricane season. NOAA's outlook for the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season, which extends from June 1 to November 30, predicts a 65% chance of an above-normal season, a 25% chance of a near-normal season and a 10% chance of a below-normal season. For the 2022 hurricane season, NOAA is forecasting a likely range of 14 to 21 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 6 to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 3 to 6 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). NOAA provides these ranges with a 70% confidence.

However, in the Central Pacific, NOAA forecasters predict a 60% chance of below-normal tropical cyclone activity in the region. The outlook also indicates a 30% chance for near-normal activity, and only a 10% chance of an above-normal season. For the season as a whole, 2 to 4 tropical cyclones are predicted for the Central Pacific hurricane region, which is located north of the equator between 140°W and the International Date Line. This number includes tropical depressions, named storms and hurricanes. A near-normal season has 4 or 5 tropical cyclones.

APPLICANTS/MEMBERS IN DUES ARREARS TO BE DROPPED NEXT WEEK

Members or applicants a year or more in arrears on their dues or service charges are in danger of being DROPPED from the membership or applicant rolls unless they take immediate action. The drop list issued by the District Investigating Committee (DIC) will be voted on by members during the June 6th meeting week. Members/applicants on the DIC Drop List can rescue their membership and return to good standing if they address their arrearage before the DIC finalizes their report at the end of next week. If you are in arrears and want to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters immediately to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing. Members and applicants can also make payments online, the quickest way to catch up. Visit the M.E.B.A. homepage at www.mebaunion.org.

APPLICANTS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP MUST FORWARD DOCUMENTATION IMMEDIATELY – OR WAIT SIX MONTHS

Qualified applicants trying to make membership in June must make sure they provide Headquarters with required documentation immediately to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and are finalizing their report that will be voted upon by members during the regular membership meetings that begin the week of June 6th. 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. There's not much time for qualified applicants to forward the necessary documentation to Headquarters to ensure their inclusion on the upcoming report. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements should forward their information to Headquarters IMMEDIATELY. Without quick action, qualified applicants would likely need to wait another six months – until the December report – to make membership. For further information you

can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

UNION-STYLE MEMORIAL DAY

On Memorial Day, we remember those in the services, including the Merchant Marine, who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our great nation. The upcoming holiday weekend can be seen as the pre-season for summertime, so it's time to sharpen up our skills with barbecues, picnics, and fun in the sun – and here are some union-style suggestions to help get the party started: **Sunscreen** - Bain de Soleil (AFGE); Coppertone (IBT). **Coolers** - Rubbermaid (IBEW). **Hot Dogs** - Ball Park (UFCW, IBT); Butterball (UFCW, IBT); Farmer John (IBT); Hebrew National (UFCW, IBT); Hormel (IBT); Oscar Mayer (UFCW, IBT). **Ice Cream** - Alta Dena (BCTGM); Breyers (BCTGM, IBT); Good Humor (IBT). **Snacks** - Cheez-It (BCTGM); Doritos (BCTGM, IBT); Fig Newtons (BCTGM); Frito Lay (BCTGM, IBT); Rold Gold Pretzels (BCTGM, IBT); Sun Chips (BCTGM, IBT); Wheat Thins (BCTGM, IBT). **Soft Drinks** - 7 UP (BCTGM); A&W (BCTGM); Coke (IBT); Dr. Pepper (UFCW, UAW); Mountain Dew (IBT); Orange Crush (BCTGM); Pepsi (IBT, UAW); Sprite (IBT, UAW); **Beer** - More than 250 varieties of union made beer. Check out the list at www.Labor411.org

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 30th 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.

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

Monday, June 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Tuesday, June 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, June 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, June 9 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, June 10 – Honolulu Hall Closed (King Kamehameha Day)

Monday, June 13 – 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.