

# 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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### **UPCOMING ONLINE REFERENDUM FOR SHIPPING RULE CHANGE**

Members should make sure their dues are current so that they can participate in the first District-wide Referendum that will be conducted online. In addition, Applicants who have fulfilled all application requirements to become Members, should make sure they submit the required documentation to Headquarters so that they can make membership in December and participate in the online vote.

Earlier this year, members approved a By-Laws change that allows online voting for District-wide referendums (not including officer elections or ratification of Deep-Sea contracts).

Headquarters is putting together plans to conduct an online vote on a possible change to the Shipping Rules that would permit a new Group III Applicant to remain on the Port Relief List for one year from the date of their first registration. The Rule change is designed to extend the window for new applicants to seek viable shipping opportunities as they begin their seafaring careers.

The upcoming online referendum stems from a member-driven resolution that was passed at Union hall meetings earlier this year.

### **QUALIFIED APPLICANTS CAN MAKE MEMBERSHIP IN DECEMBER**

Applicants who submit the requisite amount of sea time to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, may be eligible for membership as soon as this December. Applicants should know that membership doesn't happen automatically and they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements.

M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant's record with sailing time 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.

M.E.B.A.'s District Investigating Committee (DIC) meets twice a year to consider Applicants for membership. 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.

The DIC is scheduled to meet in late November and will review candidates for membership at that time. Those Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements by the time the DIC convenes will set themselves up to appear on the December 2018 DIC Report. That report is forwarded to the Union hall and members will vote to admit those qualified Applicants into membership the week of December 3, 2018.

Using the addresses on file with Headquarters, the Membership Department sends a letter **each year** to all Applicants who have at least two years under their belt with the Union. The letter details the remaining steps that particular Applicant needs to complete in order to be accepted into membership by the District Investigating Committee. The DIC meets shortly before the issuance of their reports that are usually issued in June and December.

For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the Membership Department (202-638-5355 or [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org)) at M.E.B.A. Headquarters.

### **FRAN CADDEN SAILS INTO THE SUNSET**

Fran Cadden, part of the M.E.B.A. family since 1975, sailed into the sunset yesterday at the age of 66 after battling cancer.

Following his graduation from the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School when it was on Light Street in Baltimore, Fran suited up with the M.E.B.A. and sailed on the Washington State Ferries as an oiler, as well as a variety of deep sea vessels for many years as an engineer. After a long and distinctive career, he took his well-deserved retirement but stayed active with the M.E.B.A. from his home in Towson Park, MD. He was a familiar face at the Baltimore hall and lent his expertise as a volunteer crewmember of the Liberty ship JOHN W. BROWN in Baltimore. He and his brother Joe took the old girl out for many excursions and he relished the opportunity to showcase the classic World War II vessel to younger generations.

A real union man, solid, classy and fun to be around, Fran was the kind of guy you want in your foxhole. His passing is painful to his many friends and family and his M.E.B.A. brothers and sisters will never forget him. His final arrangements are pending and will be announced at a later date.

### **PASHA NEWBUILDS**

Pasha Hawaii recently reported that construction on the first of two newbuilds was recently kick-started at the Brownsville, TX-based Keppel AmFELS shipyard. Steel plates were cut for the M/V GEORGE III, the first of two Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) fueled containerships being built for the company. The two Ohana Class vessels will join the Pasha Hawaii fleet, which provides service to the Hawaii/Mainland trade lane.

Once built, the new, 774-foot U.S. Jones Act vessels will carry 2,525 TEUs, with a sailing speed of 23.0 knots. The design of the ship's hull has been fully optimized using computational fluid dynamics, and will be one of the most hydrodynamically efficient hulls in the world. The Ohana Class vessels have been named GEORGE III and JANET MARIE, in honor of the parents of Pasha Group President and CEO George Pasha, IV. Delivery of the vessels is expected in 2020.

## **FEWER HIJACKINGS ON THE HIGH-SEAS OVER LAST YEAR'S LEVELS**

A total of 156 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported to the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) Piracy Reporting Center in the first nine months of 2018 compared to 121 for the same period in 2017. The 2018 figure is broken down as 107 vessels boarded, 32 attempted attacks, 13 vessels fired upon and four vessels hijacked—although no vessels were reported as hijacked in the third quarter of 2018. This is first time since 1994 when no vessel hijackings have been reported in two consecutive quarters.

The Gulf of Guinea remains the global piracy hot zone accounting for 57 of the 156 reported incidents. Most of these incidents (41) took place near Nigeria but there was a noticeable increase in the waters near Ghana. In other world regions, incidents of piracy and armed robbery occur seldomly in comparison. No new incidents have been reported off the coast of Somalia in the third quarter of 2018, while two fishermen were reported kidnapped off Semporna, Malaysia in September 2018. Incidents in the remaining regions, including some Latin America countries, border on low-level opportunistic theft. Nevertheless, the IMB encourages all masters and crew members to be aware of the risks and report all incidents to the 24-hour manned Piracy Reporting Center.

## **THOSE IN DUES ARREARS SET TO BE DROPPED IN DECEMBER**

Members or applicants two or more years in arrears on their dues or service charges will be DROPPED from the membership or applicant rolls. The District Investigating Committee (DIC) is making its review and will issue their drop list in early December. If you are in arrears and desire 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 make payments online in a secure manner. Visit the M.E.B.A. homepage at [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org).

## **M.E.B.A. DIAGNOSTIC CENTERS, ALTERNATE SITES**

Members, applicants and retirees should be aware, and make use of the M.E.B.A. Diagnostic Centers or alternate clinic sites available on the Pacific, Atlantic and Gulf coasts. These sites can be relied upon for important wellness and ship certifications including annual physicals, completion of required Coast Guard and MSC forms, Benzene and other certifications and required school forms for dependent children. Be aware that transportation reimbursements vary depending on whether an M.E.B.A. Center or alternate site is used. M.E.B.A.'s Travel Coordinator Carly Marafioti can be contacted at (877) 324-6322 or [ectravel@mebaplans.org](mailto:ectravel@mebaplans.org) for further information about your travel plans to an M.E.B.A. clinic or alternate site.

### ***M.E.B.A. Clinics – Pacific & Atlantic***

M.E.B.A. Diagnostic Center  
1005 Eastern Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-547-9111

M.E.B.A. Diagnostic Center  
548 Thomas L. Berkley Way  
Oakland, CA 94611  
510-663-6810

### ***Alternate Gulf Coast Clinic Sites***

American Family Care Urgent Care-Houston  
5568 Wesleyan Street  
Houston, TX 77005  
713-666-7050

American Family Care Urgent Care-Tampa  
6182 Gunn Hwy  
Tampa, FL 33625  
813-960-1100

West Jefferson Industrial Medicine, LLC  
107 Wall Blvd, Suite A  
Gretna, LA 70058  
504-433-5070

### **MARINER HEALTH WELLNESS FOCUS OF ITF STUDY**

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) along with its Seafarers' Trust has commissioned Yale University to study the mental health wellness and overall wellbeing of merchant mariners by understanding the risk factors associated with stress, depression and anxiety. The ITF and the Trust decided the study was needed based on reports from mariners and mariner advocacy groups that the mental health of seafarers is a major concern. The ITF and the Trust also realized research on this subject is substantially limited.

The ITF and the Trust look for the findings from this study will promote greater understanding of the mental health burden in mariners, reduce stigma associated with mental illness, identify and reduce risks for depression and anxiety, and allow for appropriate recommendations to improve the shipping environment in terms of mental health support.

To achieve these goals, the surveyors want to include a large and representative population of global seafarers. The actual survey is anonymous. It does not ask for any identifying information and takes about 10 minutes to complete. The project plans to include a minimum of 2000 mariners. Mariners wishing to take the online survey, which is in English only, should log on to <https://tinyurl.com/yaqpqt6y> All completed surveys must be received by January 15, 2019.

### **VACATION BENEFITS - 2018 YEAR-END CLOSING**

***Apply for Vacation and Port Relief Benefits early to avoid the year-end rush.***

- **FILING DEADLINE:** The deadline for issuing checks dated in 2018 in the Outports and the Plan Office is Monday, December 17, 2018.
- **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** The final Direct Deposit Transfer for 2018 will be made on 12/18/2018 and the funds will be deposited into your bank account on 12/20/2018.
- Any requests for Port Relief and Vacation checks received after 12/17/18 at 5:00 PM will be paid on 1/2/2019.

Any member who requires that his/her check be dated in 2018 must file before this deadline. Remember, Tuesday December 25, 2018 and Tuesday January 1, 2019 are holidays and the Outports and the Plan Office will be closed. It is always wise to plan ahead, so you should verify your specific Outport holiday schedule with the Plan Office Representative.

### ***Split Your Vacation Payments between 2018 and 2019***

You can submit an Application for Vacation Pay prior to the end of the year and request that the payment of your vacation benefits be split. Two checks will be issued to you, one in 2018 and a second in 2019. The 12/17/2018 deadline applies to split claims also. The vacation benefits paid in this manner MUST be a continuous vacation period. Please contact the Vacation Plan staff in Baltimore at 800-811-6322 or 410-547-9111 if you have any questions.

### **UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO WITH HQ**

Be sure to inform Headquarters if you have changed your contact information. There is an address change form on our website to help expedite the process. It can be found at [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org) under the “Members” tab or in the “Documents & Notices” section. Alternatively, you can send your updated information to Doris Fitzgerald at HQ by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail at [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org) Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you must also forward a signed change of address form to the Plans Office if you wish to update your information with them.

### **CHECK OUT THE NEW L.A. HALL**

The M.E.B.A. Los Angeles Union hall is now firmly ensconced at its new location, is up and running and fully functional. After 11 years in Wilmington, the hall returned to San Pedro at 1891 North Gaffey Street, Unit #211. It is only three miles away from the old hall. The Thursday, November 8 membership meeting will be the first one staged at the new digs. Stop by and say “hi!” Phone, fax and email information remain the same.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Monday, November 5 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;**  
Tuesday, November 6 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;**  
Wednesday, November 7 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;**  
Thursday, November 8 – **L.A.@1230** (Meeting in San Pedro at new location). **NY/NJ@1300;**  
**Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;**  
Friday, November 9 – **Honolulu@1100.**

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



*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)*