

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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NEWBUILD RELIEVES WATERMAN-MANAGED GREEN RIDGE

Seacor/Waterman has swapped out the aging Pure Car/Truck Carrier GREEN RIDGE with a new ship ahead of Maritime Security Program age restrictions. MSP age limits require that older vessels be replaced in the current program before reaching 25 years of age.

The GREEN RIDGE, constructed in 1998, has been replaced by the newbuild GREEN OCEAN and the M.E.B.A. crew is joining her in Nagoya, Japan this weekend. The new vessel assumes the MSP chit from the RIDGE which is already sailing in the company's international fleet under a Liberian flag.

M.E.B.A.'s Hiawatha Williams is the Chief Engineer on the GREEN OCEAN with James Micus serving as the permanent 1st A/E.

AFL-CIO CALLS NLRB JOINT-EMPLOYER RULE "WIN FOR WORKING PEOPLE"

The National Labor Relations Board has finalized a new set of guidelines broadening the criteria for determining joint-employer status as defined by the National Labor Relations Act. In adopting the new standard, the final rule effectively supersedes the prior 2020 rule, which was implemented during the previous administration. The 2020 rule made it easier for actual joint employers to avoid a finding of joint-employer status because of the rule's higher threshold.

The implications of joint-employer status are substantial for employers. When an entity is deemed a joint employer, it may become obligated to engage in negotiations with a union representing jointly employed workers. Additionally, it could be held jointly and severally liable for any unfair labor practices committed by the other employer involved, and might be susceptible to labor picketing that would typically be considered unlawful. The expansive definition of joint employment within the updated rule aligns with the NLRB's vigorous pro-labor approach during the Biden administration.

The NLRB has set December 26, 2023, as the effective date for the new rule to come into effect.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler called the new NLRB final rule "an important win for working people across this country."

She said, “when workers negotiate for fair wages and working conditions, companies shouldn’t be able to hide behind a subcontractor or staffing agency to deny us what we’ve rightfully earned...The rule is about basic common sense. The right to collectively bargain is nonexistent if the company that has the power to change workers’ terms and conditions of employment isn’t negotiating with workers.”

PASS MEMBER’S FAMILY BENEFITS FROM UNION PLUS PROGRAM

In a *Daily Brief* last week, the AFL-CIO reported on a member of PASS who, due to his union’s affiliation with the M.E.B.A., was able to take advantage of a Union Plus program that benefited his family. Union Plus programs are available to M.E.B.A. members, applicants, retirees and our affiliates. The M.E.B.A. is enrolled in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to auto services discounts:

Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) member Isaac Acosta, an airway transportation systems specialist with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in Oklahoma, expressed gratitude for the Union Plus bachelor’s degree program. “My wife had just started her first class when we heard about the program. Next month she will graduate with a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration and Management,” he said. “With three kids at home and a full-time job, it’s difficult enough to pursue a degree, let alone have to figure out how to pay for it. She took full advantage of the program, and we are eternally grateful. It has helped her advance with her current employment, and she is being considered for a position with the FAA,” Acosta continued. He told PASS the process for entering the program was smooth and immediate. His wife’s advisers helped along the way and were invaluable throughout the process; the shift from community college to university was seamless. “My wife and I would like to express our gratitude for the free college tuition union program that Union Plus has offered to PASS members and their families.” Acosta has been a PASS member since 2009.

PANAMA CANAL ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL TRANSIT REDUCTIONS IN RESPONSE TO DROUGHT

Since the beginning of the 2023 dry season, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) adopted several water saving and conservation measures for transit operations. The ongoing drought has diminished the amount of available water used to fill the canal locks, which require 101,000 cubic meters of water to fill. The water is drawn from nearby lakes.

The late arrival of this year’s rainy season, and lack of precipitation in the Canal watershed spurred the Canal to reduce the transit capacity to approximately 32 vessels per day beginning on July 30, 2023. In late September, the Canal announced an additional reduction in capacity that kicked in yesterday (November 1, 2023).

Despite all measures taken, the level of Gatun Lake continued to decline to unprecedented levels for this time of year. The recorded precipitation for October was the lowest on record since 1950 (41% below), and so far, 2023 ranks as the second driest year for the same period. Based on the rainfall projections for the following weeks, the ACP found it necessary to further reduce the daily transit capacity to postpone the need for additional draft reductions below the current 13.41m (44 feet) TFW. Therefore, they announce that booking slots will be reduced this weekend to 25, and thereafter be reduced to 24 the rest of the month. For the month of December, it will be further reduced to 22 a day, to 20 in January 2024 and down to 18 a day in February 2024.

FOURTH NEWBUILD MSC FLEET OILER CHRISTENED & LAUNCHED

The fourth ship in the U.S. Navy's John Lewis-class fleet oiler program was welcomed this week as the Military Sealift Command continues to upgrade its aging fleet. NASSCO shipyard christened and launched the USNS ROBERT F. KENNEDY at a ceremony on Saturday in San Diego, CA.

The newbuild 742-foot-long oilers are designed to transfer fuel to U.S. Navy carrier strike group ships operating at sea and have the capacity to carry 157,000 barrels of oil, a significant dry cargo capacity, aviation capability and up to a speed of 20 knots.

The first two ships in the class, the USNS JOHN LEWIS and the USNS HARVEY MILK have already been delivered. The USNS EARL WARREN was christened earlier this year, The future USNS LUCY STONE and the future USNS SOJOURNER TRUTH are in various stages of construction. The Lewis-class of oilers will replace the current Kaiser Class fleet replenishment oilers as they age out of the MSC fleet. Civilian Mariners in the MSC fleet are represented by the M.E.B.A., MM&P and SIU.

The ship honors Robert F. Kennedy, a U.S. Navy veteran who served as U.S. attorney general from 1961 to 1964 and as U.S. senator for New York from 1965 to 1968. As attorney general, Kennedy battled against organized crime and fought for African American civil rights. During his time in the Senate, he continued his advocacy for human rights and the underserved.

VACATION BENEFITS – 2023 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 2023 in the Outports *and* the Plan Office is Monday, December 18, 2023.
- **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** The final Direct Deposit Transfer for 2023 will be made on 12/19/2023 and the funds will be deposited into bank accounts on 12/21/2023.
- Any requests for Port Relief and Vacation checks received after 12/18/23 at 12:00 PM EST will be paid in the order received beginning 1/2/2024.

Any member who requires that his/her check be dated in 2023 must file before this deadline. Remember, Monday, December 25, 2023 and Monday, January 1, 2024 are holidays and the Outports and the Plan Office will be closed. It is always wise to plan ahead, so you should verify the specific holiday schedule with the Plan Office Representative.

Split Your Vacation Payments between 2023 and 2024

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 2023 and a second in 2024. The 12/18/2023 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.

APPLICANTS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP MUST FORWARD DOCS BY 11/30

Qualified applicants trying to make membership in December must make sure they provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and will issue a report in late November to be voted upon by members during the regular December membership meetings (December 4-8).

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. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements should forward their information to Headquarters.

Applicants have been mailed letters from HQ referencing the missing requirements needed for that applicant to make membership. Referenced documents must be submitted to HQ no later than 11/30 if you wish to be considered for membership during this review period. If you have questions about your status, you can contact the Membership Department at membership@mebaunion.org. All questions about service charge payments should be directed to the M.E.B.A. Accounting Department at accounting@mebaunion.org. Qualified applicants who fail to make the deadline will have to wait another six months – until the June 2024 report – to make membership.

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

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

Tuesday, November 7 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

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

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

Monday, November 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.***