

# 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 47 – November 28, 2019



In this issue//Foremast Erected at 4MF Memorial Park//Stopgap Spending Bill Keeps Government Open//ITF Seafarers Section Meeting//AMC's Caponiti to Be Honored as "Friend of Seafarers"//Preparations Intensify for Jan. 1 Sulfur Cap//Reminder for Govt. Fleet Members about LWOP Effect on DCO//Applicants & Members in Dues Arrears to be Dropped Next Week//Upcoming M.E.B.A. Holiday Parties//Apply for Vacation & Port-Relief Benefits//Note on Thanksgiving Closings//

### **FOREMAST FROM C-7 LANCER-CLASS VESSEL INSTALLED AT MEMORIAL PARK**

The Union welcomed a new addition to the Memorial Park at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School last week following the installation of a ship's foremast that further enriches this great tribute to mariners past and present.

The Memorial Park is shaped like a 600-foot merchant vessel complete with 5-ton anchors, a ship's bell, a bow section with plaques memorializing mariners and friends of the M.E.B.A., and a six-bladed, 22-foot diameter bronze propeller that represents the stern section. The foremast, installed near the bow section, further adds to the effect.

The foremast, bell and bosun's whistle were secured from the last of the C-7 Lancer-class vessels, the HORIZON DISCOVERY, before the ship was sent to scrap a few years back. The vessel was built in 1968 at Sun Shipbuilding in Chester, PA as the "AMERICAN LIBERTY" It also sailed as the SEA-LAND LIBERTY, SEA-LAND DISCOVERY and CSX DISCOVERY before assuming its final moniker for the last ten years of her operation. The ship's bell and whistle are being refurbished and will be installed at the Park in the near future.

The Park was christened and launched in 2005 to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of their country. The M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) oversees the Memorial and issues thanks to everyone who has supported the Park throughout the years.

A few photos of the foremast's installation were put on the M.E.B.A. Facebook site this week. Check it out.

### **STOPGAP SPENDING BILL KEEPS GOVERNMENT FUNDED THROUGH DEC. 20**

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, President Trump signed a short-term spending bill approved by the House and Senate that would fund the federal government through December 20<sup>th</sup> of this year. The action buys Congress and the White House four more weeks to avoid another government shutdown. It extends the current funding levels for the Federal government. Negotiations toward a comprehensive funding package continue to be held up by a number of issues including the ongoing conflict to fund

President's Trump demand for a border wall, a proposal strongly opposed by Congressional Democrats.

### **ITF SEAFARERS SECTION MEETING**

On November 19-20, the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) Seafarers Section Committee met to discuss a variety of topics including updates to membership, an academic study on the mental health of seafarers, International Maritime Organization (IMO) developments, seafarer abandonment cases, the future of work, and raising awareness for sanitation standards in the maritime industry, among other business.

The ITF helps battle against substandard shipping and strives to raise the wages and conditions of mariners worldwide. M.E.B.A. is part of the ITF which represents 18.5 million workers around the globe. The M.E.B.A. was represented at the meeting by President Marshall Ainley and Director of Government Affairs Erick Siahaan.

### **CAPONITI HEADS UP LIST OF ANNOUNCED HONOREES FOR FRIEND OF SEAFARERS AWARD**

American Maritime Congress President Jim Caponiti has been announced as one of several recipients of the annual "Outstanding Friend of Seafarers" honor presented annually at an April event in New York City. The AMC is a research and education group comprised of an M.E.B.A. and employer-side Board of Directors.

The Seafarers International House (SIH) oversees the "Setting the Course" event to honor those who have made advances on behalf of the maritime community and are dedicated to the welfare of seafarers. Jim has poured over 45 years of his heart and soul into the industry – 37 with the Maritime Administration and the past 8 with AMC. He was a driving force behind the development and implementation of the Maritime Security Program and was instrumental in MarAd's sealift efforts through the years including the response following September 11, 2001. The award ceremony will take place on April 23, 2020. Two other worthy recipients will join him in the SIH ring of honor. Recently-retired MM&P Secretary-Treasurer Steve Werse will also be honored as well as American Roll-on Roll-off Carrier President and CEO Eric Ebeling, another great choice. SIH will also extend "local special recognition" to Tim Ferrie, President of the Marine Society of the City of NY.

The SIH is a charitable organization that provides seafarers and travelers with pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance and advocacy. M.E.B.A. President Marshall Ainley and M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo are past honorees.

### **PREPARATIONS INTENSIFY FOR JANUARY 1 SULFUR CUT**

In just over a month, new requirements for ships to cut sulfur oxide emissions enter into force. Under the International Maritime Organization's MARPOL convention for the prevention of pollution from ships, beginning on January 1, 2020, the sulfur content of fuel oil used by vessels operating outside designated emission control areas cannot exceed 0.50% - representing an 80% cut from the current 3.50% limit. Within designated emission control areas (ECAs), the limit will remain at 0.10%.

Both IMO and the shipping sector - as well as refineries and bunker fuel suppliers - have been rigorously preparing for the new limit. For most ships this will mean a switch to new types of compliant fuel oils, so-called very low sulfur fuel oil (VLSFO), or marine gas/diesel oil. The VLSFO blends are new to the market.

At a recent IMO roundtable, attendees discussed the approaching change and stressed that consistent enforcement by port state control will be essential to ensure a level playing field and guarantee that that ships won't be disproportionately impacted. MARPOL Annex VI, which contains the sulfur limit regulation, has 95 Parties, which between them register almost 97% of world merchant shipping by tonnage. More information and guidance is available at [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org)

### **GOVERNMENT FLEET MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW THAT LWOP DISRUPTS FLUID DCO PAYMENTS**

Members on Dues Check-Off (DCO) sailing in the Government Fleet should know that their dues will not be paid for any period they are taking Leave without Pay (LWOP). If the balance is not addressed for the LWOP period, those mariners will not be considered as members in good standing. M.E.B.A.'s Government Fleet Representatives Tracy Burke and Ola Lassley can be contacted at the Norfolk Union hall for specifics and they can tell you if you have an unpaid balance. The phone number at the hall is (757) 440-1820. Tracy can be emailed at [tburke@mebaunion.org](mailto:tburke@mebaunion.org). Ola is at [asstgovtfleetrep@mebanion.org](mailto:asstgovtfleetrep@mebanion.org)

Questions about dues status can also be forwarded to the Accounts Receivable Department at Headquarters (202-638-5355) to either Darlene Knott ([dknott@mebaunion.org](mailto:dknott@mebaunion.org)) or Keera Batiste ([kbatiste@mebaunion.org](mailto:kbatiste@mebaunion.org)). You can also use the M.E.B.A. Payment Portal to make online monetary transactions. Check out the site accessed from M.E.B.A.'s webpage at [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org).

### **APPLICANTS/MEMBERS IN DUES ARREARS TO BE DROPPED NEXT WEEK**

Members or applicants two or more years in arrears on their dues or service charges are being be DROPPED from the membership or applicant rolls next week. The drop list issued by the District Investigating Committee (DIC) will be voted on by members at the meetings next week. Members/applicants on the DIC Drop List can rescue their membership and return to good standing before the end of the week (Dec. 6, 2019) if they address their arrearage in time. However, after Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, it will be too late.

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](http://www.mebaunion.org).

### **UPCOMING M.E.B.A. HOLIDAY PARTIES**

Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> - **Boston** – At the hall, after the membership meeting.

Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> - **Charleston** – At the hall after the membership meeting.

Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> - **Honolulu** – At the hall beginning at 10 a.m.

Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> - **Jacksonville** – At the hall after the membership meeting.

Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup> - **New York/New Jersey** – At the hall after the membership meeting.

Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup> - **Norfolk** – At the hall after the membership meeting (around 12:30).

Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup> - **Tampa** – At the hall after the membership meeting.

Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> - **Oakland** – At the hall after job call (around 1 pm).

Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> - **Baltimore** – At the hall at 1 p.m.

Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> - **Headquarters** – 3 p.m. at M.E.B.A. HQ in D.C.

Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> - **L.A.** – 1110 North Gaffey Street at Big Nick's Pizza at 1 p.m.

Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> - **POID** – 12 noon at the Sodexo Dining Hall (26 Century Blvd. in Nashville).

Friday, December 13th - **Seattle** – At the hall at noon.  
Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> - **Houston** – At the hall at 1 pm.  
Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup> – **New Orleans** – At the hall beginning at 1 pm.

### **AVOID THE YEAR-END RUSH – APPLY FOR VACATION & PORT RELIEF BENEFITS**

The deadline for issuing checks dated in 2019 in the Outports *and* the Plan Office is Tuesday, December 17, 2019. The final Direct Deposit Transfer for 2019 will be made on 12/18/2019 and the funds will be deposited into your bank account on 12/20/2019. Any requests for Port Relief and Vacation checks received after 12/17/19 at 12:00 PM EST will be paid on 1/21/2020.

Any member who requires that his/her check be dated in 2019 must file before this deadline. Remember, Wednesday December 25, 2019 and Wednesday January 1, 2020 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 2019 and 2020*

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 2019 and a second in 2020. The 12/17/2019 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.

### **THANK YOU TO THE M.E.B.A. FAMILY**

All Union halls and offices were closed today and remain shuttered tomorrow, Friday, November 28. We wish our members, applicants and retirees – at sea and ashore - as well as their families and friends – a very safe and happy Thanksgiving weekend. We are thankful for your hard work and involvement with the Union that helps make the M.E.B.A. great.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Monday, December 2 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;  
Tuesday, December 3 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;  
Wednesday, December 4 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;  
Thursday, December 5 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;  
Friday, December 6 – 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 (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*