

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*



## M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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### **MAERSK TALKS ONGOING IN EASTON**

Another round of talks with Maersk Line Ltd. is underway today and tomorrow at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School following the Trustees meeting there this week. The parties continue to discuss provisions for members working under three MLL contracts (MLL, E-Ships, and M-Ships). The contracts were previously extended to accommodate ongoing talks but are currently due to expire on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Union will keep members up to date as that deadline approaches.

### **REVIEW OF MARAD VALIDATES AGENCY, RECOMMENDATIONS OFFERED**

After a six-month exploration to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of Maritime Administration operations, a congressionally chartered non-partisan panel concluded that MarAd plays a key role in U.S. economic and national security arenas. A different conclusion could have provided fodder for opponents to call for the dissolution of MarAd or to spin-off its functions to other agencies. The study and report were undertaken by a panel of the National Academy of Public Administration.

The 139-page "Maritime Administration: Defining its Mission, Aligning its Programs, and Meeting its Objectives" complete with a photo of the YORKTOWN EXPRESS splashed on the cover of the report, was issued this week. It also offers 27 recommendations for improvements to help MarAd better meet its mission objectives. The Panel confirmed that MarAd's defense-related functions play a key role in the mobility and logistical requirements articulated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). The report says "the U.S. Transportation Command and DoD confirmed the agency's effectiveness in meeting sealift needs and the importance of its Maritime Security Program and Ready Reserve Force fleet as a needed bridge between the military and civilian Merchant Marine force. MarAd's role to provide an adequate number of ships and qualified mariners serves our national defense needs."

It noted that though there are currently shortages in both U.S.-flag vessels and the requisite American mariners to support national security needs, this should not signal that MarAd is a failure. The panel stated that the vast scope of MarAd's mission far outweighs the level of allocated resources and therefore the agency faces "a daunting task".

The report concludes that MarAd “adds substantial value in operating within this complicated tapestry of economic, political, and defense forces. Its value-add far exceeds the Agency’s small budget and staff.” The full report can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/napa-marad-report>

### **CREW OF MSC SHIP NABS ENERGY CONSERVATION HONOR**

The crew onboard the Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS TIPPECANOE was singled out for praise earlier this month after earning special Navy recognition. Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer issues annual awards for energy conservation accomplishments that take place during the preceding fiscal year. For its FY '16 accomplishments, TIPPECANOE, which has been supporting her Naval Task Force in the Gulf of Aden, was honored with the Energy and Water Management Award, at the Platinum Level. The Military Sealift Command civilian mariner fleet is represented by M.E.B.A., MM&P and SIU.

MSC Commander Rear Admiral Dee Mewbourne sent a letter of congratulations to the vessel’s Master Steven Perdue and the TIPPECANOE team noting that they “will receive a Secretary of the Navy Energy award plaque to proudly display on your ship.” In learning about the award, Capt. Perdue was quick to praise the crew along with the ship’s “outstanding Chief Engineer, Mr. Samuel Battles.”

Chief Battles noted, “We were deeply honored to win this award and a bit surprised as we were just following the standard practices and policies set forth by MSC, along with applying basic good engineering.” He said there’s no real secret for the ship’s terrific results beyond the crew’s dedication to energy efficiency, attentiveness and hard work. “We frequently test our injectors on the main engines and the Ship Service Diesel Generators then overhaul and replace them as they fail,” he said. “We also follow the manufacturers’ repair plan as closely as possible ensuring the engines are overhauled in a timely manner but also as operations permit. We also use our Diesel Doctor engine analyzer frequently to evaluate the operation of the engines and balancing the engine firing pressures and temperatures as closely as possible.”

“All of the ships are burning low sulfur fuel now to cut down on the harmful emissions. However in order to operate with this fuel, the ships are now using fuel conditioner. The crew also changes the engine air filters frequently on the Turbo Chargers to help with the Fuel to Air ratio to ensure a proper burn. The crew also reclaims all of the fuel from the contaminated drain tanks and reintroduces it to the inventory that saves on consumption,” Chief Battles noted.

In the congratulatory letter, RADM Mewbourne stated, “Your efforts set the example for our fleet to follow as MSC becomes more vigilant, constantly seeking ways to improve our energy conservation. Thank you for your exemplary stewardship. Keep up the great work.”

### **WWII MARINER CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL BILL RE-INTRODUCED**

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) has reintroduced a bill that would award the Congressional Gold Medal in honor of Merchant Mariners serving during World War II. S. 2127 points out that the Merchant Marine played a heroic and vital role in World War II and the feats and accomplishments of the “Fourth Arm of Defense” are deserving of broader public recognition. If passed, a single gold medal of appropriate design would 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.

## **LAST CHANCE FOR CHIEF & 1<sup>st</sup> A/E JOBS ON NEW MATSON SHIP; MOU IN HALL**

Matson Navigation will crew up the C/V KAMOKUIKI in January, a vessel recently brought into their fleet to be deployed in a new direct U.S.-flag service between Honolulu and the Marshall Islands. The company is accepting resumes for the top four (permanent) positions which will be selected in early December. MM&P represents the deck officers on the vessel. The vessel, purchased from Sealift Inc., is currently named the MARSTAN and will be renamed KAMOKUIKI, which translates to 'small island or vessel' in the Hawaiian language. The KAMOKUIKI is a 8,740 DWT, 8,448 HP, 707-TEU vessel built in 2000. It is being converted into a geared container ship and is presently being fitted with two 45-ton cranes in China. Following its conversion, the ship is scheduled to sail to Honolulu in late January. As part of the new biweekly service, it will call at three ports in the Marshall Islands - Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro.

M.E.B.A. and the company agreed upon a Memorandum of Understanding for the economic terms and conditions of employment onboard this newest addition to the Matson Fleet. The MOU has been sent to each of the M.E.B.A. Union halls and is available for review by members and applicants.

The deadline to submit resumes for the permanent positions is Wednesday, December 6. If you are interested in being considered as Chief Engineer or 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Engineer on the C/V KAMOKUIKI, submit your resume, Letters of Recommendations and evaluations to Dale MacGillivray, [dmacgillivray@matson.com](mailto:dmacgillivray@matson.com) and cc Darel K. Jenkins at [DJenkins@matson.com](mailto:DJenkins@matson.com)

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

*M.E.B.A. Holiday parties – to take place at the hall or office unless otherwise noted:*

**Boston** Union Hall - Monday, Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> - (after the meeting)

**Charleston** – Tuesday, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> - (after the meeting at Madra Rua, 1034 East Montague, Park Circle)

**Honolulu** - Wednesday, Dec. 6 – (10 a.m.-2 p.m)

**New York/New Jersey** – Thursday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> - (after the meeting around 1:30 p.m.)

**Norfolk** - Thursday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> - (after the meeting)

**Baltimore** - Friday, Dec. 8 – (1 p.m.)

**Houston** - Friday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> – (12 p.m.)

**Jacksonville** - Friday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> – (Pat's Lounge - 4870 Highway Avenue – 1-4 p.m.)

**Oakland** - Friday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> (after job call around 12:30 p.m.)

**Tampa** - Monday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> - (5-9 p.m. at the “81 Bay Brewing Company”)

**M.E.B.A. Headquarters** - Thursday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> (3 p.m.)

**L.A./Wilmington** - Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> – (1 p.m.)

**Cleveland** – Cookie tray!

**New Orleans** - Friday Dec. 15 – (1 p.m.)

**POID** – Friday, Dec. 15 - TBD

**Seattle** - Friday, Dec. 15 – (1 pm)

## **NEVER ENDING PROCESS TO BITE BACK AGAINST JONES ACT LIES MARCHES ON**

A recent D.C. rally that spotlighted the needs of Puerto Ricans laid low by the island's debt crisis and hard hit by Hurricane Maria – served to scapegoat the Jones Act and called for the end to the almost 100-year old law that supports American jobs. Literature forwarded by event organizers enticed rally-

goers to attend by using misleading information regarding the Act and repeating the fiction that foreign ships cannot trade with the island without penalty.

Such lies about the Jones Act have become commonplace in the wake of Hurricane Maria which has reared the ugly heads of Jones Act opponents doing the bidding of foreign interests. Many well-placed Jones Act lies have been foisted upon the public through poorly-researched news articles and parroted by well-meaning but gullible citizens outraged by the lies they believe. The erroneous claims have also been happily mimicked by interests that would benefit if U.S. maritime jobs were handed to their foreign counterparts.

The American Maritime Partnership – the self-described “voice of the domestic maritime industry” has continued its never-ending battle to refute such misinformation and has issued yet another fact sheet in its perennial mission to set the record straight. The truth is rarely as “sexy” as a lie – but one can only hope that the truth will prevail. Here is the latest sampling of false claims and the facts behind the fib as pointed out by AMP:

***Claim:*** The Jones Act prevents cargo from foreign vessels to reach Puerto Rico.

***False.*** Any foreign vessel can call on Puerto Rico. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted in a 2013 report that two-thirds of the ships serving Puerto Rico were foreign ships. 55 different foreign carriers provided imported cargo to Puerto Rico in a single month, as cited as an example by GAO. Foreign shipping companies compete directly with the American shipping companies in an intensely competitive transportation market.

***Claim:*** Import costs are at least twice as high in Puerto Rico as in neighboring islands on account of the Jones Act.

There is no study that supports this statement in any way. In fact, anecdotal evidence about rates indicates that the opposite is true. For example, one analysis shows it is 40% more expensive to ship goods from the U.S. mainland on foreign vessels to the U.S. Virgin Islands (not subject to the Jones Act) than on Jones Act vessels to Puerto Rico. Moreover, the cost of shipping accounts for a tiny fraction of retail prices on the island. Waiving the Jones Act would have no effect on retail prices in Puerto Rico.

***Claim:*** Jones Act vessels lack sufficient capacity to reach communities impacted by Hurricane Maria.

In the immediate aftermath of the hurricane, one hundred percent of the island was without power, and roads were blocked by downed trees and debris. Goods are arriving to the island on vessels but bottlenecks on the roads are limiting arrival to the communities. The largest bottleneck is not getting goods to the island, but delivering goods once they arrive.

***Claim:*** The Jones Act adds significantly to the cost of goods in Puerto Rico.

Over the last decade, a parade of politicians and “experts” have attempted to estimate the so-called “cost” of the Jones Act in Puerto Rico. Because the estimates have been wildly contradictory, in 2012, Puerto Rico Delegate Pierluisi asked the GAO to determine the true “cost.” The GAO studied the issue for more than a year and debunked the previous estimates. First, the GAO said there are far too many factors that impact the price of a consumer good to determine the supposed cost related to

shipping, much less the Jones Act. Second, the GAO said, one could not truly estimate the cost unless one knew which American laws would be applied to foreign ships if they were allowed to enter the domestic trades, which would certainly increase the cost of foreign shipping.

**Claim:** Changing the Jones Act in Puerto Rico will help the island, especially considering its current economic crisis.

A GAO study on Puerto Rico listed a number of potential harms to the territory itself if the Jones Act were changed, including the possible loss of the stable service the island currently enjoys under the Jones Act and the loss of jobs on the island. Moreover, American domestic carriers are making some of the largest private sector investments currently underway in Puerto Rico by investing nearly \$1 billion in new vessels, equipment, and infrastructure. They employ hundreds of Puerto Rican American citizens on the island and on vessels serving the market, providing highly reliable, low-cost maritime and logistics services. These private sector jobs and reliable services are important to the long-term recovery of the Puerto Rican economy and would be jeopardized by changes to the Jones Act.

### **TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO SUPPORT THE JONES ACT**

Close to 20,000 letters have been sent to Members of Congress to help counteract the wave of anti-Jones Act B.S. that flooded social media following Hurricane Maria and its devastation of Puerto Rico. We need to send more letters! Don't let the Average Joe (or Jane) be influenced by the lies. Take five minutes and tell your Congressional delegation how critical the Jones Act is for U.S.-flag shipping. Click on this link for a ready-made (modifiable) pro-Jones Act letter - <https://tinyurl.com/JonesActLetter> Fill in your info and a few clicks later, your entire Congressional representation will take note their constituent is urging them to support the Jones Act. With all the lies and misinformed anti-Jones Act nonsense that has fouled the waters in the wake of Hurricane Maria, five minutes of your time can really make a difference.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monday, December 4 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, December 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, December 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, December 7 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, December 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)*