

# 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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### TENTATIVE SUCCESSOR AGREEMENT REACHED WITH LIBERTY MARITIME

The M.E.B.A. is pleased to announce that we have tentatively agreed to a new three-year contract with Liberty Maritime.

After eight years without any negotiated increases, the Union has crafted an agreement with Liberty that rewards the dedicated hard work of our Deck and Engine officers with strong wage, benefit, and work rule improvements that finally puts Liberty on par with other deep-sea carriers. The Agreement will provide stability for both parties, and lead to further mutual opportunities in the maritime industry.

The T.A. with the company currently covers the four Pure Car/Truck Carriers (PC/TCs) LIBERTY PASSION, LIBERTY PEACE, LIBERTY PRIDE and LIBERTY PROMISE.

The Tentative Agreement will be put to a ratification vote before the Union membership at the regular November meetings. If ratified, the new contract terms and benefits will be paid retroactively to October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The Union will share more detailed information about the Agreement with the membership in the coming weeks and we look forward to the contract's ratification.

The M.E.B.A. would like to express appreciation to the Permanent and Rotary Deck and Engine Officers who have patiently waited for this moment while keeping Liberty's ships moving and in great shape. It was the solidarity and determination of our members that carried the day and enabled M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac and his negotiating team to secure this industry standard Tentative Agreement.

### M.E.B.A. MARINERS SAILING FOR NOAA VOTING ON NEW CONTRACT

M.E.B.A. negotiators recently hammered out a tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement covering our members sailing in the NOAA fleet. Last week, our NOAA engineers began a 10-day online ratification vote of the new T.A. NOAA mariners have until Monday, Oct. 17 at 1100 (Eastern Time) to participate in the online vote.

Following a protracted negotiating process that began in early 2021, the M.E.B.A. bargaining team, including rank-and-file members, recently came to terms with NOAA on a five-year agreement that

secures major enhancements including upgrades in pay, penalty time and other quality of life issues. During talks, two issues important to NOAA engineers went to mediation and were settled by an impasse panel, both favorably to the M.E.B.A.

The M.E.B.A. negotiating team was headed up by Gulf Coast V.P. Adam Smith and included Government Fleet Representative Jack Menendez, Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway, HQ Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher and rank-and-file members Sean Battles, Eric Hague and Nicolas Lagen.

### **MANNING SHORTAGE, MARITIME SECURITY ADDRESSED AT NY CONFERENCE**

Maritime leaders converged in the Big Apple last week to deliberate over crucial industry issues at the inaugural New York Maritime Security Conference presented by the Navy League. The American Maritime Congress was a sponsor at the event and AMC President Fair Kim moderated an interesting panel at the New York City conference that focused on efforts to mitigate mariner shortages that threaten to impact U.S. national security. The Maritime Administration and U.S. Transportation Command have repeatedly stressed to Congress and others that mariner recruitment and retention efforts continue to have a direct implication to national security. Further expansion of U.S.-flag ships and the requisite workforce to adequately support such operations, are critical aspects of supporting DoD operations following an initial sealift surge. Panelists discussed strategies and ongoing efforts to attract future mariners through diversified channels beyond the traditional avenues and called for more government focus on programs that encourage careers at sea. The M.E.B.A. strongly believes enhanced quality of life initiatives and competitive pay and benefits are the short and long term solutions.

Conference attendees also explored the nascent offshore wind industry's implications for national security, as well as regulatory challenges and how to expand opportunities for U.S. shipping and the mariner force to support an increasingly important component of the nation's goal of energy independence. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan and Federal Maritime Commissioner Carl Bentzel were special guests at the conference and each discussed weighty issues related to global maritime security threats and the maritime industry's role in facilitating assured energy access for the Department of Defense.

### **MAERSK LENDS SUPPORT TO FIGHT SHIP EMISSIONS**

A.P. Moller-Maersk has come out in favor of a recently introduced bill to zero out pollution from all ocean shipping companies that do business with the U.S. Congressman Alan Lowenthal's Clean Shipping Act [H.R. 8336] introduced in July, would set vessel fuel carbon intensity standards and eliminate in-port ship emissions by 2030.

A.P. Møller-Maersk CEO Soren Skou said, "...The U.S. can and should continue to be one of the world's leaders in the fight against climate change. This can be done by combining strong national initiatives with a sustained global push at the International Maritime Organization as well as concrete progress on green corridors. The Clean Shipping Act of 2022 will help spur the development of the zero-emission vessel market and accelerate zero-emission research and demonstration across the maritime supply chain. We are facing a climate emergency, we need bold action, and we urge Congress to pass this bill."

## **NLRB SEES BIG RISE IN UNION REPRESENTATION PETITIONS**

Union representation petitions filed with the National Labor Relations Board increased 53% in FY 2022 (October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022) over the previous fiscal year. Unfair labor practice (ULP) charges filed with NLRB Field Offices also increased 19%, from 15,082 charges in FY2021 to 17,988 charges in FY '22.

Accounting for both ULP and representation petitions, total case intake at the Field Offices increased by 23% - from 16,720 cases in FY2021 to 20,498 cases in FY2022. This increase of 3,778 cases is the largest single-year increase since FY1976 and the largest percentage increase since FY 1959. At the same time, the number of cases coming before the NLRB has also increased. The Board had an intake of 308 representation and unfair labor practice cases in FY 2022, up from 272 in FY2021 - an increase of 13%.

The increased case intake at both field offices and the Board occurred as the Agency struggled with funding and staffing shortages. The NLRB has received the same Congressional appropriation of \$274.2 million for nine consecutive years as costs have risen. Adjusting for inflation, the Agency's budget has decreased 25% since FY 2014. Overall Agency staffing levels have dropped 39% since FY 2002 and staffing in Field Offices has shrunk by a full 50%.

## **GLOBAL PIRACY AT LOWEST LEVELS SINCE 1992**

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported that global piracy and armed robbery incidents are at their lowest levels since 1992. Their global quarterly piracy report, released this week, details 90 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the first nine months of 2022, the lowest recorded figure in three decades. Perpetrators were successful in gaining access to the vessels in 95% of the reported incidents which are broken down as 85 vessels boarded, four attempted attacks, and one vessel hijacked. In many of the cases vessels were either at anchor or steaming when boarded, with nearly all the incidents occurring during the hours of darkness.

Though these are amongst the lowest reports in decades, violence to crew continues with 27 crew taken hostage, six assaulted and five threatened. The risk to the crew, however petty or opportunistic the incident, remains real. Of the 90 global piracy and armed robbery incidents, 13 have been reported in the Gulf of Guinea region – compared to 27 over the same period of 2021. This signals a positive and significant decline in the number of reported incidents in the region off west Africa which emerged as the world's biggest piracy hotspot in recent years.

## **SADDLE UP FOR NEXT WEEK'S DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT, 4MF FUNDRAISER**

This is your last chance to make plans for next week's fundraiser at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School to benefit the M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF). The Second Annual MMMMF Invitational Jamie Butler Memorial Disc Golf Tournament will take place on Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup> (at 1300). There will also be a Silent Auction soon after as well as a karaoke challenge at the CMES Lounge. Jamie Butler was a 1983 CMES cadet school graduate who shipped as an M.E.B.A. Chief Engineer for years and served as the Baltimore hall dispatcher before he sailed into the sunset in late 2020 at the age of 59. You can still make last minute donations of auction items. If you have an item of value that you feel could raise money for this great cause, please contact the Foundation. The 4MF is a section 501(c)(3) entity under Internal Revenue Service rules, so all donations are tax deductible. The \$25 entry fee will benefit the 4MF and the Memorial Park. 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 tournament winner will have his or her

name engraved on the MMMMF Maritime Heritage Cup proudly displayed at the CMES Lounge. You can contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo for additional information. He can be reached at [bvanloo@bvlworks.org](mailto:bvanloo@bvlworks.org) or call/text him at (443) 676-6248.

## **WSF VESSELS TEMPORARILY HONOR MARINERS BASEBALL**

Baseball euphoria in Washington State has prompted Governor Jay Inslee to authorize a temporary name change of all 21 vessels in the ferry system to honor the Seattle Mariners. Each of the vessels sailing for the Washington State Ferries have been temporarily renamed in honor of Mariners players and personnel. This is the first time the team has made the playoffs in 21 years and the city had [even more cause to celebrate when the Mariners won a dramatic Wild Card matchup](#) against the Toronto Blue Jays. Some of the more interesting vessel name changes include The M/V Juliooooooooooooo (WALLA WALLA); M/V Mariners "Good Vibes Only" (TACOMA); and the M/V Cal "Big Dumper" Raleigh (WENATCHEE). However, the name changes will last only as long as the team remains in the playoffs and the Mariners have an uphill climb against the powerhouse Houston Astros in the American League Division Series.

## **PERMANENT CMES DIRECTOR SOUGHT**

M.E.B.A. Trustees have begun the search for the next permanent Director of the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School. Longtime School Director Chuck Eser retired from the post in May. Since then, the School's Deputy Director Bryan Jennings has served as Interim Director.

The CMES is seeking a highly qualified, innovative, and motivated leader who can build upon the School's successful track record and strong reputation. The School Director oversees the day-to-day operations of the School and programs in such a way as to ensure that the CMES maintains and builds on its reputation in the industry and the Department of Defense. They are looking for an innovative thinker and action-oriented individual to develop and implement a plan for high-quality educational programs that will enhance CMES's visibility, reputation and meet the needs of an evolving industry. In addition, the School Director serves as an enthusiastic and engaged ambassador, articulating, and communicating CMES' vision and mission to a wide range of maritime industry audiences and stakeholders. The School Director will host meetings and conferences that deal with the future of the maritime industry. Qualifications sought include strong executive leadership; high energy, political astuteness; and outstanding interpersonal and communications skills. Those interested should email a cover letter and resume to [mebaschool@tmg-dc.com](mailto:mebaschool@tmg-dc.com)

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

**Monday, November 7** – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

**Tuesday, November 8** – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

**Wednesday, November 9** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)**

**Thurs. November 10** – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

**Friday, November 11** – **Halls Closed – Veterans Day**

**Monday, November 14** – Honolulu@1100.

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

