

# 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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### **MP&P (HAPAG) BRINGING IN NEW U.S.-FLAG VESSEL**

M.E.B.A. Deck and Engineering officers are being solicited by Marine Personnel & Provisioning (MP&P) to crew a new container ship being brought under the U.S.-flag for Hapag. The RIO GRANDE EXPRESS is expected to re-flag in Houston later this year in the second week of November. MP&P is looking to put senior officers aboard in late October for observation and familiarization training prior to the reflag. The ship will be operating under the same contract terms, wages, benefits and working conditions, as the M/V YORKTOWN EXPRESS under the Express Class Agreement. The 853-foot, 50,869 dwt RIO GRANDE EXPRESS was built in a Korean yard in 2006 and currently flies the flag of Hong Kong.

The Express Class fleet currently consists of five US-flagged vessels operating under the Maritime Security Program (MSP). This new ship will add a sixth ship to the fleet but it will not be included in the MSP. It is the intent of the owner to try to operate a sixth vessel in their US-flagged operation for the foreseeable future – expanding service capacity, remaining in service and on schedule during winter months, while expanding the Company's ability to bid on other US cargo preference opportunities.

Further details are available at each of the M.E.B.A. Union halls.

### **LAST FEW DAYS TO VOTE IN WSF REFERENDUM**

Members sailing in the Washington State Ferry fleet only have until Monday night to cast their vote in the ongoing Online Dues Equity Referendum. The 30-day referendum began on September 1 and will conclude at midnight on Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>.

WSF members – not applicants – are deciding whether or not to support a fair and progressive dues increase proposal that would reinforce the Union's ability to provide sustainable future representation. The proposal has been structured by the District Executive Committee (DEC) to provide for a more equitable dues structure, similar to comparable inland bargaining units that have voted to implement dues increases in recent years.

Members with additional questions should contact WSF Representative Eric Winge at (206) 310-5900 or [ewinge@mebaunion.org](mailto:ewinge@mebaunion.org) or Marco Cannistraro, who can be reached at (202) 257-2825 or [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org).

## **PASHA REOPENER UPDATE**

The Union met with Pasha earlier today at M.E.B.A. Headquarters in continued discussions on an economic reopener to amend our existing agreements with the company for Deep Sea and Port Engineers. M.E.B.A. was represented by President Marshall Ainley, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, Gulf Coast V.P. Erin Bertram and Contracts Rep. Mark Gallagher. MM&P Contracts Coordinator Jennifer Stair attended the meeting as an observer. Pasha was represented by its Sr. V.P. of Fleet Operations Ed Washburn. The meeting afforded a good opportunity for each side to detail preferred contract provisions that will help cement our working relationship going forward.

Our contract with Pasha/Sunrise runs through June 2022 and covers the HORIZON ENTERPRISE (C-8), HORIZON PACIFIC (C-8), HORIZON RELIANCE (C-9) and HORIZON SPIRIT (C-9), as well as Port Engineers.

## **MLA UNIONS STRATEGIZE AT M.E.B.A. HQ**

The Maritime Labor Alliance met at M.E.B.A. Headquarters in Washington D.C. this week as leaders discussed a full agenda of items important to the five union coalition. MLA is made up of the ARA, IBU, ILWU, M.E.B.A. and the MM&P.

M.E.B.A. was represented at the meeting by President Marshall Ainley, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, Seattle Branch Agent Jeff Duncan and Government Affairs Director Erick Siahaan.

Each of the MLA unions updated attendees on items of importance and issues of mutual interest. Topics included automation on the waterfront, the situation with the Alaska Marine Highway System, social media and ways to strengthen communication and educate lawmakers on our issues. MLA has pledged to better coordinate political activities to ensure that lawmakers understand the importance of our industry and act accordingly.

MLA reps had a very productive meeting with Congressman David Price (D-N.C.) who addressed the group during the lunch hour. Rep. Price is the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD).

Other issues explored by the MLA included the situation in the Bahamas, support for the UAW in their fight for a fair deal with GM as well as ongoing contract negotiations of MLA member unions, such as the current M.E.B.A. contract discussions for Liberty Maritime and Pasha, as well as other internal MLA business.

## **TRUMP ANTI-UNION EXECUTIVE ORDERS SET TO GO BACK IN EFFECT**

After a petition for a rehearing was denied by the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, an injunction preventing the implementation of a series of anti-labor Executive Orders is about to be lifted.

In May of 2018, President Trump issued three Executive Orders that peel back federal employee workplace rights. One Order waters down grievance procedures and eases the way for agencies to fire workers in lieu of disciplinary measures. Another targets collective bargaining agreements to give the Government the upper hand against unions negotiating contracts. A third Order curtails "official time" which allows labor unions to represent union and non-union bargaining unit members in disciplinary actions and other matters.

Following the issuance of the EOs, Federal agencies began enforcing the anti-labor changes with chilling effect. The American Federation of Government Employees, the largest union representing federal government workers, said that the Department of Education, Social Security Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs, among others, relied on the Orders “in an attempt to eradicate unions from the federal workplace and deny workers their legal right to representation.”

In August of last year, a coalition of unions, including the M.E.B.A. were able to win a federal district court ruling that prevented the implementation of the egregious sections of the Orders. However, in July of this year, the U.S. Court of Appeals reversed that opinion limiting the Orders saying the federal district court lacked jurisdiction.

Now, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals is about to issue a mandate that will clear the way for the injunction to be lifted which will allow the EOs to go into full effect. Labor unions continue to pursue avenues to block the Administration’s incursion against worker right through its Executive Order overreach.

### **JAX HALL TO EXTEND HOURS ON TRIAL BASIS**

Following through on a request by the membership in the Jacksonville, FL area, M.E.B.A.’s District Executive Committee has agreed to extend the Jacksonville hall’s operating hours by two hours. Beginning on Tuesday, October 1, 2019 and continuing until Friday, November 29, 2019, the hall’s operating hours will be 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - on a trial basis.

Following the trial period, the DEC will decide, based on member utilization of the hall and jobs shipped during the additional hours, if the Union should return to the current 4-hour day (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) or extend the hall’s daily hours by either one or two hours per day on a permanent basis.

### **NVIC REVISIONS ON MMC STCW ENDORSEMENTS**

The Coast Guard’s Office of Merchant Mariner Credentialing has published changes to three Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circulars (NVICs) regarding qualification for certain Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) STCW endorsements.

NVICs 04-14, 08-14, and 09-14 have been revised to provide guidance on renewal of STCW endorsements for Proficiency in Survival Craft, Proficiency in Survival Craft-Limited, Basic Training, and Advanced Firefighting for mariners serving on vessels in reduced operating status and on other vessels that that are in operation that do not get underway.

The revised NVICs are available online at <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/NVIC/>

### **MARAD ADVISORY ON GPS INTERFERENCE IN EASTERN & CENTRAL MED**

The Maritime Administration issued an Advisory about continued vessel GPS interference occurring in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean Sea. Maritime Advisory 2019-013 warns mariners about interference that may result in lost GPS signals affecting bridge navigation, GPS-based timing and communications equipment. They say satellite communications equipment may also be impacted.

In the Central Med, reports have been concentrated between Libya and Malta, specifically in areas offshore of Libya and to the east and the northwest of Malta. In the Eastern Med, reports have been concentrated near Port Said, Egypt, the Suez Canal, and in the vicinity of the Republic of Cyprus. Instances of similar interference were also reported between Hadera, Israel and Beirut, Lebanon.

## **MINE COUNTERMEASURES ONBOARD M.E.B.A.-CREWED MSC VESSEL**

Civilian Mariners sailing in the Military Sealift Command fleet are perennially involved in high-profile exercises and operations around the globe. Recently, an MSC Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) wrapped up an immersive test of Mine Countermeasure (MCM) equipment while underway.

The USNS HERSHEL “WOODY” WILLIAMS and her crew took part in a three-day exercise/demonstration to help confirm the feasibility of MCM integration on ESBs, as well as other vessels of opportunity.

“Considering the contested environments which our ships sail in, counter-mine capabilities are very important because we have to be able to keep the enemy at bay,” said USNS WOODY WILLIAMS Capt. David Gray. “Mines of today are very inexpensive to make. Our adversaries can produce mines for a few hundred dollars and inflict a tremendous loss of life while causing millions of dollars of damage. So we need the assets out there to detect and destroy these threats ahead of time, and keep the world’s shipping lanes open.”

MSC said the demonstration represents the potential to provide increased agility to operational forces as they respond to the growing complexity of sea-mines while shifting to a broad-spectrum cross-domain, expeditionary approach.

## **NCL FLEET PHASING OUT SINGLE USE PLASTIC**

Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd., which includes Norwegian Cruise Line, is taking another step toward environmental sustainability and protecting the world’s oceans by phasing out single-use plastic bottles within its fleet by the end of the year.

In 2018, NCL eliminated single-use plastic straws across its fleet which the company believes will save the disposal of 50 million plastic straws a year. Americans use over 500 million unrecyclable straws a day, many of which end up in our waterways. 8 million metric tons of plastic makes its way to our oceans every year, which the Ocean Conservancy says equates to dumping a “garbage truck full of plastic into the ocean every minute of every day.”

Now, the company says it will replace over six million single-use plastic bottles every year by using environmentally-sensitive alternatives through its partnership with JUST® Goods, Inc., a company founded by actor Jaden Smith. NCL says the move is part of its commitment to reduce its footprint and encourage others to protect our natural resources.

## **LAST CALL TO GET IN ON G&W RAFFLE**

Not much time remains to participate in the raffle benefiting the Good & Welfare Fund that draws to its conclusion in early October. The drawing for the 50/50 raffle will be held on October 8<sup>th</sup> at the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School during the regular membership meeting.

Tickets are \$2 apiece and those purchasing \$50 worth of tickets will be mailed an M.E.B.A. T-shirt. \$100 purchasers will get a shirt and an M.E.B.A. hat. \$50 and \$100 purchasers will also receive M.E.B.A. pins.

The raffle winner takes home 50% of the proceeds (as much as \$5,000!!) with the other half going to the Fund. Ticketholders do not need to be present at the drawing to win. Every ticket that you buy

puts another dollar into the Good & Welfare Fund. Halls should make sure to sell their tickets and get the stubs into HQ as soon as possible.

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Monday, October 7 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;  
Tuesday, October 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;  
Wednesday, October 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;  
Thursday, October 10 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;  
Friday, October 11 – 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) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*