

# 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 35 – September 5, 2019



In this issue//UK May be Looking to Compromise Jones Act in Trade Talks//Congress Goes Back to Work Next Week//Online WSF Dues Referendum is Underway//More Room at Phillips-Corcoran Golf Tournament//Great Lakes Shipping has had a Good Year//Shoreside Opportunities in the Pacific Northwest//Hall Closures for Dorian//

### **UK MAY BE LOOKING TO COMPROMISE JONES ACT IN UPCOMING TRADE TALKS**

United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson hinted that planned trade talks with the U.S. would not be "plain sailing," and that his negotiators will be looking to infiltrate U.S.-flag cabotage statutes such as the Jones Act.

Among other things, the Jones Act requires that cargo shipped between two U.S. ports or points is reserved for vessels built, owned, and flagged in the United States, and operated by American mariners.

At a recent working breakfast in Biarritz, France, Prime Minister Johnson and President Trump previewed upcoming post-Brexit trade talks between the nations. Trump noted that they would be working on "a very big trade deal" once the UK completes its departure from the European Union and they no longer have "the anchor around their ankle."

That sparked Johnson to pipe out, "Talking of the anchor — talking of the anchor, Donald, what we want is for our ships to be able to take freight, say, from New York to Boston, which at the moment they can't do. So, we want cabotage. How about that?"

For his part, President Trump didn't specifically comment on Johnson's intent to compromise U.S.-flag shipping. "Many things — many things we're talking about," the President replied.

"That would be a good thing," Johnson added.

In the lead-up to the meeting with President Trump, Prime Minister Johnson told reporters that "massive opportunities" exist for UK companies "to pry open the American market. We intend to seize those opportunities but they are going to require our American friends to compromise and to open up their approach because currently there are too many restrictions."

### **CONGRESS EXPECTED TO FINALIZE KEY LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS BEFORE SEPT. 30<sup>th</sup> DEADLINE**

After over a month long Congressional recess that began in August, Congress is expected to pick up where they left off to address a number of important items before September 30<sup>th</sup>, the end of Fiscal Year 2019. The congressional agenda includes reauthorization for our nation's defense programs, U.S. Coast Guard operations, and the full funding of the federal government to avoid a government

shutdown. The M.E.B.A. is monitoring these developments and working closely with our political allies from both parties to ensure the progress of legislative priorities.

*National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020* - The House and Senate must reconcile their legislative differences and fully authorize a number of defense programs including a long-term reauthorization of the Maritime Security Program (MSP) through Fiscal Year 2035. The MSP provisions must also address an upcoming funding shortfall that will begin in FY '22 in the absence of congressional action.

*Pending Coast Guard Bills in the House and Senate* - Earlier this year, the House of Representatives unanimously approved H.R. 3409, which fully reauthorizes the U.S. Coast Guard through Fiscal Year 2021. This legislation requires an audit by the non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) of the federal agencies obligated to comply with cargo preference requirements, provide an analysis of their compliance (or non-compliance), and catalog the percentage of cargo shipped by each agency on U.S. flag vessels. The full Senate is expected to vote on their own version of the Coast Guard bill before it heads to a conference committee, where differences with the House will be negotiated and voted upon prior to signature from the President.

*Congress Must Act to Avoid a Government Shutdown* - On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, President Trump signed a bipartisan budget agreement that raises more than \$320 billion in both domestic and military spending over the next two years. However, congressional leaders must pass and sign into law a number of appropriation bills to fully fund these critical programs in order to avoid a government shutdown before the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

## **ONLINE WSF DUES REFERENDUM UNDERWAY**

Members sailing in the Washington State Ferry fleet began voting on Sunday morning on the 30-day Online Dues Equity Referendum. 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. The vote runs until midnight on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

An email signaling the start of the balloting period was sent to eligible voters seconds before the polls opened on Sunday.

In order to be eligible to participate in the vote, WSF members must be in “good standing” as of September 15, 2019. Most M.E.B.A. members sailing in the WSF are on Dues Check-Off which keeps them current. WSF members who are not on Dues Check-Off must make sure their dues are paid through the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter in order to be eligible to vote. Those whose dues are not current before midnight on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 are not eligible to participate in the vote and will not be granted access to the online ballot until their 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter dues are paid before the cut-off date.

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).

## **STILL MORE SPOTS AVAILABLE AT CORCORAN/PHILLIPS GOLF TOURNAMENT**

There's more room for golfers and sponsorship opportunities at the upcoming relaunch of a popular Massachusetts Golf Tournament honoring a fallen M.E.B.A. mariner.

The Captain Richard Phillips Lane Kirkland Maritime Trust recently revived the annual Corcoran tournament that had supported Norwell, MA youth scholarships before ending its 15-year run in 2016.

Jay Corcoran was a popular 22-year M.E.B.A. member who was flying from his Massachusetts home on September 11, 2001 to rejoin his vessel (the APL THAILAND) on the West Coast. His airplane was hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center.

The upcoming tournament will take place at the Easton Country Club in South Easton, Massachusetts on Friday, September 27. M.E.B.A. members came out in force during the tournament's 15 year run and are poised to continue their strong support at the new incarnation of the event. Proceeds will benefit the Trust's Scholarship Fund which supports those pursuing careers in the maritime industry or related fields. Golfing begins at 1 p.m., cocktails at 5:30 and dinner from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

As a bonus, Captain Phillips has promised to address attendees at the dinner and discuss the 2009 MAERSK ALABAMA incident when he was kidnapped by Somali pirates before his ultimate liberation at the hands of sharpshooting Navy Seals.

To find out more about the tournament and the dinner and to register, go to <https://captainphillipstrust.org/> under the Events page or email [eventregistration@captainphillipstrust.org](mailto:eventregistration@captainphillipstrust.org)

## **GREAT LAKES SHIPPING IS STEAMING ALONG**

The Lake Carriers' Association issued its latest cargo figures for the last completed month (July), while noting that shipping has improved by almost 14% over last year's levels. LCA, represents 13 companies that operate vessels on the Great Lakes including M.E.B.A.-contracted Interlake Steamship Company. They state:

U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (lakers) moved 11.4 million tons of cargo in July, an increase of 16.4 percent from a year ago. The July float was also 10.2 percent above the month's 5-year average. Iron ore cargos for steel production totaled 6.2 million tons, an increase of 18.2 percent. The July ore float was 24.6 percent above the 5-year average for July. Coal loads totaled 1.2 million tons, a decrease of nearly 6.1 percent. Shipments of aggregate, fluxstone, chemical stone and scrubber stone totaled 3.4 million tons, an increase of 23.9 percent compared to a year ago.

Year-to-date U.S.-flag cargo movement stands at 43.69 million tons, an increase of 13.9 percent compared to the same point in 2018. Iron ore cargos total 24.5 million tons, an increase of 14.1 percent. Coal loadings total 5.5 million tons, an increase of 11.8 percent. Limestone tops 11.1 million tons, an increase of 12.4 percent.

## **SHORESIDE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

M.E.B.A. members and applicants are continuing to answer the call for one of our newest contracted companies, Commercial Transcontinental Services. CTS is a supply management company based in Hawaii that provides opportunities for short term facilities engineering work. The Founder of CTS, Allen Clark, is a graduate of California Maritime Academy.

The initial rollout was in the Seattle/Portland area, with plans to expand to Oakland and Los Angeles. Since the first dispatch in August of 2018, there have been close to 500 days of covered employment. The Master Service Agreement provides an hourly rate for an 8-hour day Monday thru Friday with Fringe Benefits that provide Pension Credit, Medical and Training contributions as well as Federal Drug Testing and JEC (Hall) funds.

CTS is impressed with the quality and consistency of M.E.B.A. Engineers and these positions are available on the shipping board for any member or applicant.

This is an opportunity to explore shoreside employment while earning Group Time and Pension credit with the M.E.B.A. Contact the Seattle hall for additional information.

### **HURRICANE DORIAN - HALL CLOSURES**

Several of the M.E.B.A. Union halls were affected by Hurricane Dorian this week. Our Jacksonville hall was closed earlier in the week but reopened on Thursday after the “all clear” was given. The Charleston Union hall was shuttered in anticipation of the big blow and is expected to remain closed through the end of the week. Our Norfolk Union hall anticipates being closed tomorrow (Friday, Sept. 6).

### **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.*