

# 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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*In this issue – New Houston Union Hall//Maritime Unions Pursue National Advertising Campaign//Talks for ILA Contract to Resume//Rep. Dingell Honored by Great Lakes Group//DALI Owners to Pay \$100+ Million//AOTOS Awards//Applicants Responsible for Fulfilling Requirements to Membership//M.E.B.A. Election: Nov. 15 Deadline to Pay Dues; Note on Campaigning; Get a Duplicate Ballot//\$3 Billion for Port Decarbonization//*

### **NEW HOUSTON UNION HALL**

M.E.B.A. is relocating to a new Union hall in Houston, TX as of Monday, November 4. The new space, located at 6604 South Loop East in Houston has easy access and plenty of room for members, a fenced-in parking area and is strategically located minutes away from the Port of Houston as well as the William P. Hobby Airport. Staff and officials will make good use of the ample space and offices the new location offers as well as a professional conference room that will prove useful for negotiations.

Operations at the old hall at 316 Broadway will cease at the end of the workday tomorrow, Friday, November 1. The new hall will be up and ready for business on Monday, November 4. Phone, fax and email addresses remain the same, and all membership meetings – including the one next week – will take place at the new space. An official hall "christening" will be held on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup> timed with the holiday party.

### **MARITIME UNIONS PURSUE NATIONAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN PROMOTING INDUSTRY**

Maritime labor unions along with the Transportation Trades Department and Maritime Trades Department are urging Congress to establish a federally-funded, national advertising campaign to help stem the shortage of skilled mariners that threatens our commercial sealift readiness capability. The campaign would promote the U.S. Merchant Marine and make young people aware of the excellent career opportunities available in the industry.

M.E.B.A., along with AMO, SUP, SIU, MM&P, MFOW, TTD and MTD have penned a letter to the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee leadership asking them to help the Maritime Administration better satisfy its obligation to promote the industry, a challenge that has proven difficult for the agency which is constantly faced with slender budgets and slimmed-down staff.

The unions call for a start-up \$10 million budget for MarAd to initiate an engagement strategy and advertising campaign "to attract workers to the U.S.-flag Merchant Marine, including civilian mariners in the Military Sealift Command."

They suggest the funding be initiated through the Transportation-House and Urban Development (T-HUD) appropriations bill.

### **TALKS FOR NEW ILA CONTRACT SET TO RESUME**

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and employer U.S. Maritime Alliance (USMX) are set to resume negotiations for a new contract following a stand-off that led to a three-day strike earlier this month. The abbreviated strike was called off after the sides agreed on an amenable wage package for dockworkers and extended the agreement to January 15, 2025 to address remaining issues. The ILA is now focused on getting satisfactory terms on jurisdictional issues, healthcare benefits and port automation.

The sides issued a joint statement this week saying that discussions will pick up in November to address remaining issues. Respective negotiating committees will meet in New Jersey, where they will look to agree on terms for a new Master Contract proposal that can be presented to the full ILA Wage Scale Committee for approval, and later, to ILA Longshore workers for ratification. "The ILA and USMX welcome the opportunity to return to the bargaining table and get a new agreement in place as soon as possible," they stated. The sides announced that they will not discuss details of negotiations with the media prior to these meetings.

### **REP. DINGELL HONORED BY GREAT LAKES GROUP**

The Great Lakes Maritime Task Force (GLMTF) recently recognized Michigan Congresswoman Debbie Dingell for her efforts advocating for the Great Lakes Navigation System and the American workers that ensure a resilient maritime supply chain which drives the nation's economic base.

Lake Carriers Association President (and GLMTF V.P.) Jim Weakley said, "It is an honor and privilege to present this award to Representative Dingell. She strengthened navigational infrastructure by supporting funding to finish the critical new large navigational lock in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan and pressing for the acquisition of a desperately needed U.S. Coast Guard heavy icebreaker for the Great Lakes."

### **DALI PRINCIPALS TO COUGH UP \$101.9 MILLION FOR BRIDGE CLEANUP**

The Justice Department announced this week that Grace Ocean Private Limited and Synergy Marine Private Limited, the Singaporean corporations that own and operate the Motor Vessel DALI, have agreed to pay \$101,980,000 to resolve a civil claim brought by the United States for costs borne in responding to the catastrophic collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The settlement resolves U.S. claims for civil damages for \$103,078,056 under the Rivers and Harbors Act, Oil Pollution Act, and general maritime law. The monies will go to the U.S. Treasury and to the budgets of several federal agencies directly affected by the allision or involved in the response.

In the early morning hours of March 26, the Motor Vessel DALI left the Port of Baltimore bound for Sri Lanka. The vessel should not have set sail, as it was illegally configured with safety systems bypassed and known mechanical and electrical issues. While navigating through the Fort McHenry Channel, the vessel lost power, regained power, and then lost power again before striking the bridge. The bridge collapsed and plunged into the water below, tragically killing six people. In addition to this heartbreaking loss of life, the wreck of the DALI and the remains of the bridge were left to obstruct the navigable channel, bringing all shipping into and out of the Port of Baltimore to a

standstill. The loss of the bridge also severed a critical highway in the transportation infrastructure and blocked a key artery for local commuters.

The settlement does not include any damages for the reconstruction of the bridge and does not impact separate lawsuits against the DALI owner and manager from families of the victims, Baltimore city and the state of Maryland.

### **INDUSTRY HONORS MARITIME CHAMPIONS AT ANNUAL AOTOS AWARDS**

On Friday, the United Seamen's Service welcomed three new "Admirals" as recipients of the maritime industry's most prestigious awards – the Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) honors. The lifetime achievement awards for towering maritime industry figures were doled out to SIU Executive Vice President Augie Tellez, TOTE Group President/CEO Tim Nolan and Fairwater CEO Daniel Thorogood. Fairwater is a cooperation between Crowley and Seacor Holdings. Last year, M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac was honored with the AOTOS statuette along with the presidents of our contracted companies Interlake (Mark Barker) and Pasha (George Pasha IV). At this year's ceremony, a Special AOTOS Recognition Plaque was also presented to ILWU Local 142 and Hawaii Longshore Division for their heroic response when Maui was hit by a catastrophic wildfire that spread throughout the Community of Lahaina in August 2023.

M.E.B.A. officials and staffers attended the event which featured special awards given to selected seafarers for acts of bravery and courage in the line of duty. Former Secretary of Transportation/Labor Elaine Chao presented those honors to mariners of two M.E.B.A.-crewed vessels that were honored for overcoming crises on the job. The crew of the Staten Island Ferry DOROTHY DAY successfully fought a fire that broke out at the boat's slip at the St. George Ferry Terminal in July of this year. The crew of the Military Sealift Command vessel USNS BRUNSWICK were honored for their roles in the mass evacuation of hundreds of people from Sudan following the humanitarian crisis that emanated from a war between Sudanese factions. Congratulations all!

### **APPLICANTS RESPONSIBLE FOR FULFILLING REQUIREMENTS TOWARD MEMBERSHIP**

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership. M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant's record with sailing time/years of service unless that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall.

Qualified applicants trying to make membership should provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next M.E.B.A. District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The report, which will be voted on at the December membership meetings, compiles a list of those who have fulfilled the requirements of their application. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days - or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements that may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

The M.E.B.A. Membership Department can be contacted by applicants who are qualified to make membership and want to ensure their inclusion on the DIC's December Report. For further information, you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org).

### **M.E.B.A. ELECTION: NOVEMBER 15th IS THE DEADLINE TO BE “IN GOOD STANDING” FOR YOUR BALLOT TO COUNT**

Members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2024, with dues paid in accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws (through the end of the Fourth Quarter, as applicable) are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election. Members are strongly urged to ensure their dues status is secured through the end of the year to guarantee their participation in this year's officers' election.

### **M.E.B.A. ELECTION: NOTE ON CAMPAIGNING**

The M.E.B.A. Officers' election will conclude on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 with the tallying of the ballots which will be conducted by the Impartial Administrator with the oversight of an elected M.E.B.A. rank-and-file committee.

As a note, the names of candidates for contested offices will not appear in the *Telex Times* until after the ballots have been tabulated. Candidates for office are permitted to attend membership meetings and make a statement in support of their candidacy during the “Good & Welfare” segment of the meeting. Memos concerning campaign material policies and election conduct were forwarded to each of the Union halls in May and our halls allow for candidates to display campaign materials in a fair and impartial manner. **It has been brought to our attention that a notice is being circulated that supports a slate of candidates for the upcoming election of Officers. The notice also contains logos from various employers as well as M.E.B.A.'s logo. The promotion of candidates is, of course, the legal right of union members. However, the use of logos, particularly those of employers, is not, as they give the impression that said employers endorse the candidates listed thereon. In addition, it is the policy of the M.E.B.A. that no one, including candidates, use the M.E.B.A. logo or any of the bargaining unit logos or emblems in any campaign or election materials. The M.E.B.A. logo is trademarked and cannot be reproduced without prior authorization, which would not be granted to support candidates for union office. Accordingly, we hereby direct whomever produced and circulated this notice to cease and desist and remove it from any social media accounts (or any other means of circulation). Note that this is not meant to prohibit publication of endorsements of candidates by union members who identify themselves as such, so long as they do not give any impression of employer or union support.**

### **M.E.B.A. ELECTION: HOW TO OBTAIN A DUPLICATE BALLOT**

If you are an M.E.B.A. member and did not receive a ballot – or yours has been lost or destroyed – you can request a duplicate ballot in writing. There's not much time. Act quickly. Our By-Laws state that duplicate ballots “shall be counted unless the original and duplicate ballot mailed to a member are both cast, in which event neither ballot shall be counted.”

Please use the following Impartial Administrator contact information to request a duplicate ballot. Any written requests for duplicate ballots made to the M.E.B.A. will be referred to the Impartial Administrator: TrueBallot, Inc., 3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 700, Bethesda, MD 20814, Email: [0212401@trueballot.com](mailto:0212401@trueballot.com) *Please make sure you include your address to send the duplicate*

*ballot. A reply email is not generated when the request is made. Duplicate ballots are typically delivered by mail within a week of request (dependent on the Post Office. You can contact Marco C. at M.E.B.A. Headquarters - marco@mebaunion.org - for any follow-up questions.*

### **\$3 BILLION TO DECARBONIZE SEAPORTS**

The White House announced a \$3 billion investment from the Inflation Reduction Act, to modernize and electrify U.S. seaport infrastructure. The funding is intended to contribute to approximately 40,000 new jobs, decrease pollution, and help combat global climate change. The \$3 billion funding is part of the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Ports grants, which will benefit 55 organizations across 27 states and territories. The effort seeks to enhance port operations by shifting to cleaner equipment, improving both the working environment and air quality for port workers and nearby communities. The funds will support the purchase of zero emission equipment including over 1,500 units of cargo handling equipment, 1,000 drayage trucks, 10 locomotives, and 20 vessels, as well as shore power systems, battery-electric and hydrogen vehicle charging and fueling infrastructure, and solar power generation.

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

Monday, November 4 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, November 5 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

Wednesday, November 6 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, November 7 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300** (Tampa meeting to be held at Coppertail Brewing Company - 2601 E 2nd Ave, Tampa, FL)

Friday, November 8 – **Honolulu@1100**

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



***M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.  
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline  
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.***

*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated 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. 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 Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org)*