



The

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SEAFARERS LOG

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Targeting the Health Care Crisis...

If Not Now, When?

AND IF NOW, HOW?

America's health care crisis grows worse by the day. Already, 45 million Americans have no coverage—and an average of 6,000 more people per day join the ranks of the uninsured. The labor movement feels the effects along with everyone else—health care typically is the top issue these days in contract negotiations across the country. For a closer look at this key issue, along with some proposed solutions from the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department, see pages 10-11.



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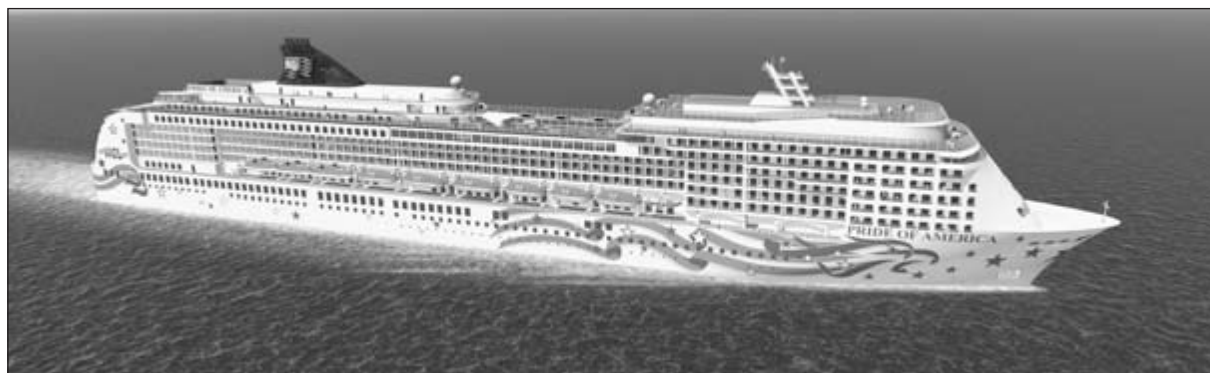
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2nd NCL America Ship Set to Join SIU Fleet



The SIU-contracted *Pride of America*, NCL America's second vessel, is on schedule for its maiden voyage in July. The ship will have a passenger capacity of more than 2,100. Page 3.

Supporting Our Troops

Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom are the latest instances of SIU members sailing in support of U.S. armed forces, yet in many important ways this is nothing new.



Michael Sacco

Our union was still in its infancy when World War II began—but that didn't stop SIU members from answering their nation's call. In fact, we felt the war's impact long before Pearl Harbor: The SIU-crewed *Robin Moor* was sunk by a German submarine back in May 1941.

Throughout the war, SIU members repeatedly sailed into harm's way to deliver the goods for our troops. As the late SIU historian John Bunker once put it, "There wasn't a beachhead from Anzio to the Philippines, from Normandy to Okinawa, where SIU crews were not in the forefront of war."

Many paid the ultimate price. Overall, more than 1,200 SIU members lost their lives in the war.

But no SIU ship was ever delayed for lack of a crew. We were ready then. We are ready now.

In between, our members also answered the call during Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War and many more military and humanitarian missions.

Today, our members are just as committed to their role as part of the nation's fourth arm of defense. As Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom continue, I remain proud of our members' patriotism, reliability and professionalism.

Keep up the great work, brothers and sisters.

Another Battle

This month's *LOG* devotes a lot of space to examining America's health care crisis. I encourage all Seafarers and their families to take a few minutes and read the articles addressing medical coverage because this fight affects all of us.

Nationwide, there's just no way that workers and employers can continue bearing the brunt of soaring premiums along with the indirect costs stemming from tens of millions of uninsured Americans. It simply can't continue at this pace.

Something must be done to fix this problem. As usual, the labor movement is taking a leading role on behalf of America's working families, offering solid ideas and real solutions. The true battle lies in turning those ideas into action by our government.

This is a huge fight, but it's nothing we can't overcome during the long haul. When you look back at our union's history, we've whipped even bigger obstacles that have threatened all of mankind.

SIU's Bright Future

I again thank the membership for the support you've shown to this administration, most recently in our union elections that wrapped up at the end of last year.

My energy remains focused on securing and maintaining good jobs for this membership, so it's not often that I look back. Still, in taking just a few moments to consider what the SIU has accomplished in recent years, I find it extremely encouraging. We have increased our employment opportunities aboard military support ships and commercial ships. We helped spur the rebirth of the deep sea U.S.-flag cruise ship industry, which again boosted our number of jobs. We consistently negotiated good contracts. Whether they're outright additions or replacement vessels, we have worked with our contracted companies to bring new, modern tonnage into our fleet.

We also continued working with our affiliated training center in southern Maryland to ensure that Seafarers can get the courses they require when they need them, and to bring in new students through the apprentice and veterans programs. The Paul Hall Center sets the standard when it comes to maritime training, which naturally benefits students who take advantage of the classes offered there.

We've done well in other areas, too, and it truly starts with your support and the great work you do aboard ship. The confidence you've shown in me and in the other officials is greatly appreciated.

We will continue to earn that confidence. There will be challenges along the way, but I couldn't be more optimistic about the SIU's future.

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SIU Delivers in OIF3

Seafarers since late last year have been delivering goods to U.S. armed forces in the Middle East for Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 (OIF3).

SIU-crewed vessels serving the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) and docked in ports along the country's east, west and Gulf coasts in late November began mobilizing for this phase of the ongoing mission, while other SIU-crewed ships including repositioning vessels simply continued their respective involvement.

As of press time for the *Seafarers LOG*, 47 Seafarers-crewed MSC vessels had been activated for this phase. More than 700 SIU members signed up for duty during the activations. Just as during military support missions before and during the all-out combat phase of the war in Iraq and OIF2 along with missions in Afghanistan, Seafarers again are tasked to deliver materiel to U.S. armed forces in the Middle East.

"SIU members are proud of our legacy as part of the nation's fourth arm of defense. They take it very personally," stated SIU President Michael Sacco. "Our brothers and sisters repeatedly have sailed into harm's way to support out troops during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. They also have sailed side by side with military security teams aboard our U.S.-flag ships. I have every confidence in their resolve and dedication."

The SIU-crewed vessels mobilized in support of OIF3 include: *Cape Jacob*, *USNS Altair*, *USNS Bellatrix*, *USNS Denebola*, *USNS Pollux*, *USNS Stockham*, *Cape Inscription*, *Cape Intrepid*, *Cape Isabel*, *Cape Island*, *Cape Wrath*, *USNS Chesapeake*, *USNS Petersburg*, *Northern Lights*, *Westward Venture*, *Independence*, *Cape Ray*, *Cape Knox*, *Cape Kennedy*, *Cape Orlando*, *Cape Victory*, *Cape Vincent*, *USNS Dahl*, *USNS Pomeroy*, *USNS Red Cloud*, *USNS Sisler*, *USNS Soderman*, *USNS Watkins*, *USNS Watson*, *Cape Decision*, *Cape Diamond*, *Cape Domingo*, *Cape Edmont*, *Cape Ducato*, *Cape Horn*, *Cape Hudson*, *Cape Texas*, *Cape Trinity*, *USNS Brittan*, *USNS Benevidez*, *USNS Bob Hope*, *USNS Gordon*, *USNS Fisher*, *USNS Mendonca*, *USNS Seay*, *USNS Yano* and the *Cape Girardeau*.

More than 2,000 SIU members crewed 100-plus vessels in support of U.S. troops during the first phase of OIF. Dozens of SIU-crewed vessels remained active in the massive OIF2 resupply mission that commenced early last year. MSC reported that U.S.-flag ships carried heavy volumes of combat service support gear for forces working to steady Iraq. Overall, approximately 24 million square feet of cargo belonging to nine units in the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army and National Guard was moved by ship during OIF2.

ITF Secures Back Pay for Crew

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) recently secured \$347,000 in back pay plus repatriation for 43 crew members on a runaway-flag passenger and gaming vessel.

SIU ITF Inspector Scott Brady handled the case on behalf of the multinational mariners from the *St. Tropez*, a Bahamian-flag ship based in Port Everglades, Fla. The back wages were secured in late January and early February from Florida-based shipowner Southern Navigation.

Brady described the fight to obtain the wages as "long and intense," but the company eventually agreed to the ITF's demands.

The SIU is an affiliate of the London-based ITF, a federation of more than 600 transport-worker



Crew members from the *St. Tropez* received back pay and repatriation, thanks to the ITF.

unions in 140 countries. SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel serves as vice chair of the ITF's Seafarers' Section.

The federation utilizes more than 100 ITF inspectors in ports throughout the world. Those inspectors assist crew members on

runaway-flag ships (also known as so-called flag-of-convenience vessels) as well as other ships, monitoring the payment of wages and other social and employment conditions, and taking appropriate action.

During the past 50 years the ITF's maritime affiliates have developed a set of policies which seek to establish minimum acceptable standards applicable to mariners serving on runaway-flag vessels.

Seafarers Still Sail for Tsunami Relief

Although operations in Southeast Asia now are moving from the relief to reconstruction phase in the wake of the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami, many Seafarers still are involved in the activities.

As of Feb. 10, three Seafarers-crew ships from the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command (MSC) continued to participate in the humanitarian operations following the now infamous natural disaster that devastated coastal communities in Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Indonesia and other Indian Ocean nations. Still providing assistance to survivors are Seafarers who crew the hospital ship *USNS Mercy* and a pair of combat stores vessels, the *USNS San Jose* and *USNS Concord*.

As reported earlier in the *Seafarers LOG*, more than 100 SIU members—including some from the SIU's Government Services Division—initially crewed 13 MSC vessels and one ship owned by the U.S. Maritime Administration in support of relief operations.

The SIU in January donated \$10,000 to the International Red Cross for use in the affected areas. In a related development, President Bush on Feb. 9 said he would ask Congress for \$950 million for tsunami relief, nearly tripling U.S. aid pledged for victims of the

monstrous seismic wave. According to a report by *Cox News Service*, the president's latest proposal includes money to cover

emergency relief efforts as well as funding to help rebuild bridges, roads, schools and housing destroyed in the natural disaster.

SIU Elections Complete



As reported last month, the SIU's tallying committee has released its tabulation of the ballots cast by union members in the voting for national officers of the Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District/NMU as well as two constitutional amendments. Voting took place Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, 2004. Above, Recertified Steward Louella Sproul receives her ballot last November from SIU Port Agent Vince Coss in San Francisco. Composed of 20 Seafarers (two members elected from each of the SIU's 10 constitutional halls), the rank-and-file committee certified the reelection of Michael Sacco as president of the SIU; reelection of John Fay as the union's executive vice president; reelection of Augie Tellez as vice president of contracts and contract enforcement; and reelection of David Heindel as secretary-treasurer. The tallying committee's report will be submitted for approval by the membership at union meetings this month (March).

Pride of America to Sail in July

Seafarers Set to Start Crewing 2nd NCL America Ship

When NCL America's SIU-crewed *Pride of Aloha* began its maiden voyage last summer, it marked an historic occasion—the rebirth of the deep sea U.S.-flag cruise ship industry.

Now, more good news is on the way as the company continues preparations for launching its second vessel, the *Pride of America*. Seafarers are expected to begin reporting to the vessel this month in anticipation of a July 2005 maiden voyage.

"It's the continuation of an incredible story and another example of job growth for our union," said SIU President Michael Sacco. "If you look at where the U.S.-flag deep sea cruise ship industry was after 9-11, and compare that to today, it's really unbelievable."

NCL America also plans to launch a third SIU-crewed cruise ship—the *Pride of Hawaii*—in 2006.

Meanwhile, Seafarers will fill the unlicensed positions aboard the *Pride of America*, which is undergoing some finishing touches in a German shipyard. The vessel is 921 feet long with a beam of



The SIU-crewed *Pride of America* is scheduled to enter service this summer.

106 feet. It features 15 decks and will have a passenger capacity of more than 2,100. The vessel's gross tonnage is 72,000.

In promoting the new ship, NCL America described it as "a spectacular salute to the many regions of the United States with vibrant Stars & Stripes artwork on the hull. An Alaskan Gold

Rush Saloon, a New Orleans-style Mardi Gras Cabaret Lounge, a French restaurant inspired by Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, and a Waikiki Bar are just a few of the great choices that include eight restaurants and 10 bars and lounges."

Like the *Pride of Aloha*, the newer ship will offer round-trip Hawaiian itineraries. However, the *Pride of America* also is

scheduled to offer voyages with stops in New York, Miami, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Once NCL America's plans are fully implemented, its U.S.-flag ships are expected to generate more than \$828 million in U.S. economic activity and 20,400 jobs, according to a study by one of the nation's leading economic consultancies.

Both the Paul Hall Center for

Maritime Training and Education (located in Piney Point, Md.) and its affiliated Seafarers Training Center (located in Hawaii) are providing training for NCL America crews. Both facilities offer fire fighting and safety training; the Piney Point campus also provides departmental training for non-marine personnel.

As previously reported, the curriculums are wide-ranging and include (among other topics) communication and diversity training, effective listening, team building, conflict resolution and stress management. Students take STCW Basic Safety Training and courses covering shipboard security, environmental responsibility and medical awareness. They also spend approximately one week in department-specific courses.

The NCL America curriculums blend classroom instruction with hands-on training.

An article in the *Cruise Week* newsletter last month that focused on the Piney Point training described the facilities as "surprisingly extensive," the courses as "rigorous" and the students as "happy about what they were doing" at the school.

CIVMARS See New Jobs

2 More 'Lewis and Clark' Ships Ordered

The SIU's Government Services Division welcomed the recent announcement that the U.S. Navy has exercised options to build two additional ships under the T-AKE program, a new class of combat logistics force ships.

Members of the SIU's Government Services Division will fill the unlicensed positions on the new ships, which form the "Lewis and Clark" class of vessels. Overall, the Navy has awarded contracts for eight new Lewis and Clark dry cargo/ammunition ships—with options for an additional four vessels.

The vessels are being built at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO) shipyard in San Diego.

Construction on the first T-AKE, the *USNS Lewis and Clark*, began in September 2003. Delivery is scheduled for later this year. Construction started last fall on the second T-AKE (to be named the *USNS Sacagawea*), which is slated for delivery in 2006.

The T-AKE is a dry cargo/ammunition ship that will be operated by the U.S. Military Sealift Command, providing logistic lift from sources of supply either in port or at sea. The ships will transfer cargo—ammunition, food, fuel, repair parts, and expendable supplies and other materiel—to ships and other naval forces at sea.

The T-AKE is intended to substantially upgrade the Navy's ability to maintain its forward-deployed forces, replacing aging T-AE ammunition ships and T-AFS combat stores ships that are nearing the end of their service lives.

According to the shipyard, the new vessels will be 689 feet long with 105-foot beams and a design draft of slightly less than 30 feet. The ships will carry almost 7,000 metric tons of dry cargo and ammunition and 23,500 barrels of marine diesel fuel. They will have 40-year life expectancies.

In addition to the eight T-AKEs, NASSCO is building three double-hull oil tankers for BP Shipping Company of Alaska. Two others—the *Alaskan Frontier* and *Alaskan Explorer*—already have been built and are crewed by SIU members.

SIU Members Applaud Job Growth in New MSP

As word spread last month about the extended U.S. Maritime Security Program, SIU members said they are excited about the union gaining 13 vessels under the new MSP.

"This means more SIU jobs for the future and it helps the defense of this country," said Recertified Bosun **Michael Presser**. "It's good to see that we're getting more jobs and that Seafarers can and do contribute as part of the nation's fourth arm of defense."

As previously reported, the U.S. Maritime Administration in January announced the names of the vessels and operators for the new MSP, which takes effect Oct. 1 and lasts for 10 years. The updated fleet contains 60 vessels—all of them under SIU contract.

The new fleet consists of the 47 Seafarers-crewed vessels already enrolled in the original MSP (established by the Maritime Security Act of 1996) along with 13 newly contracted SIU-crewed ships.

The operators for the 13 new MSP slots are Pacific-Gulf

Marine (two ships), Interocean Uglund Management (four), OSG Shipholding Group (three), Central Gulf (one), Liberty Global Logistics (one) and Lykes Lines (two).

A complete list of the ships and companies was printed in the February *Seafarers LOG* and is available on the union's web site (www.seafarers.org).

Meanwhile, SIU members understandably welcomed the MSP announcement.

"It's important to me, for sure," said **Carlos Grillasca**, who is upgrading to AB. "It's good for job security."

QMED **Charles Sneed** said the new MSP "is a great, great asset and it'll provide more besides an increase in jobs. This will improve our overall status as part of the maritime community. The new additions allow us to cover more territory, you might say."

Mario Suazo, upgrading to AB, said the expanded MSP fleet "is good, it gives us job security

for years to come."

John Cronan, an instructor at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education who also still sails as an electrician, stated, "It's a great thing that we're acquiring new ships and getting new jobs. I think it's outstanding. Shipping was lean when I started (1983), so it's refreshing to see that we're gaining today."

The Maritime Administration describes the MSP as "a fundamental element of the U.S. maritime transportation system, providing an active, privately owned, U.S.-flag and U.S.-crewed liner fleet in international trade which is available to support Department of Defense sustainment in a contingency.... These vessels are modern, efficient and militarily useful commercial dry cargo vessels which can support national security requirements and maintain a competitive U.S.-flag presence in international commerce. The MSP helps retain a labor base of skilled American seafarers who are available to crew the U.S. government-owned strategic sealift as well as the U.S. commercial fleet, both in peace and war."



The *Industrial Challenger*, crewed by SIU members in all of the unlicensed positions, is part of the new 60-ship Maritime Security Program fleet.

Benefits Conferences Begin in April

Officials from the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan (SHBP) will conduct benefits conferences in April at a number of SIU halls. All active members, pensioners and their spouses are invited to the sessions, which will provide an update on the latest happenings with the various Plans.

The locations and dates are as follows: Piney Point (joint conference including Baltimore), April 4 (Monday); New York, April 5 (Tuesday); Philadelphia, April 6 (Wednesday); Norfolk, April

8 (Friday); Wilmington, April 18 (Monday); San Francisco, April 20 (Wednesday); Tacoma, April 22 (Friday); Houston, April 25 (Monday); New Orleans (joint conference including Mobile), April 26 (Tuesday); Jacksonville, April 28 (Thursday).

Please note that the conferences in Piney Point, New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington and Tacoma will immediately follow the membership meetings at those halls. All other conferences will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Longtime SIU Official Jim Martin Dies at 70

Jim Martin, a vice president of the Seafarers International Union of North America and former SIU port agent, died Feb. 4 at his home in Harvey, La. following a heart attack. He was 70.

Martin also served as president of the Greater New Orleans Port Council of the Maritime Trades Department and as a vice president of the Louisiana State AFL-CIO (an organization which inducted Martin into its hall of fame early last year).

"He was a very dedicated union official who was born into the SIU," said SIU President Michael Sacco. "He was well-respected by the rank-and-file membership, especially as a leader in the towboat industry."

"He was a great individual and a very knowledgeable person," remembered SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel, who knew Martin since childhood. "He organized most of the SIU tugs in the Gulf. He was a class

guy and a strong family man." SIU Vice President Contracts Augie Tellez said Martin "was completely committed to the union and the membership. He was someone you could always count on, and he'll definitely be missed."

SIU Vice President Gulf Coast Dean Corgey described Martin as "a guy you'd want with you if you had to go into a foxhole. We went through some real tough battles together and always came out just fine. Jimmy was a brilliant negotiator, a great strategist and a stand-up union guy."

SIU Assistant Vice President Jim McGee worked with Martin "on some inland beefs in the 1970s, and also later in New Orleans. He was a great man, outstanding. He stood up for union members and their rights."

SIU New Orleans Port Agent Steve Judd said Martin's "experience and the way he conducted himself made the Seafarers name

something that everybody respected. There have been others who've accomplished that for us, but Jim was exceptional. He was a great friend and mentor. Anything we needed, Jim was there."

Recertified Bosun **John Cain** knew Martin for 20 years. "He loved his family and he loved the union," Cain said. "He was a good all-around guy, a good union official. We're really going to miss him."

During his time as a boatman, Martin sailed with Crescent Towing, Dixie Carriers and Capitol Towing. He held all towboat ratings.

He came ashore in 1968 as a patrolman at the SIU hall in New Orleans. Martin also worked as an organizer for the union and later served at various times as a representative based in Norfolk, Va. and as port agent in St. Louis and



SIUNA VP Jim Martin (left) last year was inducted into the Louisiana State AFL-CIO Hall of Fame. Celebrating the honor with Martin were (from left) SIU New Orleans Port Agent Steve Judd, SIU New Orleans Safety Director Chris Westbrook and SIU Representative James Brown.

New Orleans. He was elected a vice president of the SIUNA in 2002.

A native of Algiers, La., Martin's survivors include his

wife, Mary Spencer Martin; two sons including **Stephen Martin**, who sails with the SIU; four daughters; 13 grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

New Luedtke Contract Boosts Wages, Benefits

Seafarers at SIU-contracted Luedtke Engineering Company have unanimously approved a new five-year labor agreement that includes significant gains.

Negotiated and ratified in January, the new contract features improvements in wages as well as benefits. It covers the 21 Seafarers employed at Luedtke and lasts through the year 2009.

Under terms of the pact, mariners will receive wage increases of 3 percent per year during each of the final four years of the agreement. Health benefits will be maintained at Plan Level G (the top level) and pensions will continue at the top level.

For the first time, the company will contribute to the Seafarers Money Purchase Plan for each employee. In addition, Seafarers will receive a 15 percent increase for subsistence.

"It's an excellent agreement with substantial increases," noted SIU Vice President Contracts Augie Tellez. "Credit goes to both parties for negotiating a good, fair contract."

"Negotiations went very smoothly, although it took the better part of three weeks to finalize the particulars of the new agreement," said SIU Vice President Great Lakes Tom Orzechowski. "Health benefits were a big issue, of course, and I know everyone was pleased to maintain their coverage."

In addition to Orzechowski, SIU Algonac Port Agent Todd Brdak and SIU Representative Don Thornton represented the union during the negotiations.

Luedtke is a dredging and marine construction business. Headquartered in Frankfort, Mich., the company has been under contract with the SIU for more than 30 years.

Alaska Tanker Company Reaches Safety Milestone

SIU-contracted Alaska Tanker Company (ATC) recently reached another safety milestone: more than three years without a lost time injury. According to the company, this covers more than 7 million "man hours" without a lost time injury, including all of the years 2002, 2003 and 2004.

In a communication to the fleet earlier this year, ATC President Anil Mathur wrote, "Safety and environmental performance is not some distant philosophical challenge. It is a matter of protecting my own limbs, my body, my mates, and my environment. Our performance enables us to support our loved ones. Our strength does not come from the absence of challenge—it comes from our deep conviction that we have within us the ability and willingness to make ourselves bigger than the challenges we face."

While definitely not taken for granted, safety achievements are nothing new for ATC. Last year,

the Beaverton, Oregon-based company received two of the four Legacy Awards issued by the Western States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force.

Also in 2004, ATC won a prestigious safety award issued by the U.S. Coast Guard—the William M. Benkert Environmental Award. The Coast Guard, in announcing the award, credited the company with maintaining "well-defined environmental policies and objectives with outstanding measurement tools. The company established performance contracts between owners, management, senior officers and the ship's crew. These performance contracts identified clear and specific goals, measured trends and/or areas for improvement that allowed ATC to identify mitigation strategies to produce positive results."

After ATC reached its most recent milestone, SIU Vice President Contracts Augie Tellez noted, "One reason they are so successful is that they truly listen to their crews and to everyone else involved in the process of safe, productive operations. It goes back to one of the basic principles of why unions work—employees are more productive and more reliable when they have a real voice on the job."



ATC President Anil Mathur congratulated the crew, officer and company personnel for their commitment to safety.

"Seven million hours is a great achievement and I believe there's plenty of credit to go around, from the Seafarers and officers who crew the ships to the company personnel."

In his note to the fleet, Mathur also credited all concerned and left them with encouragement for continued safety. "I know our hazards to be real and present," he noted. "Our demonstrated skills and our constant vigilance are just as real and present and we will use these demonstrated skills to overcome the challenges we will encounter."

Top-Notch Training Tools



The Seafarers Training Center in Honolulu recently completed a major safety equipment installation patterned after its affiliated Joseph Sacco Fire Fighting and Safety School, which is based in Piney Point, Md. The Hawaii facility's main fire fighting and safety training tools (including those pictured above) essentially duplicate the ones at the Maryland school. Courses available at the Seafarers Training Center include STCW Basic Safety Training, water survival, basic and advanced fire fighting and more.



Alaska Tanker Company's SIU-contracted fleet includes the *Alaskan Frontier*, pictured last year during sea trials in San Diego.

Budget, Bill Include Port Security Components

The president's proposed \$2.5 trillion fiscal year 2006 budget, submitted to Congress Feb. 7, is intended to continue ensuring the security of the nation's borders, ports and transportation systems with enhanced screening of goods and people through programs such as the new Screening Coordination and Operations Office; an increase for the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) system; additional radiological and nuclear inspection equipment; and expansion of the Container Security Initiative.

According to the Congressional Information Bureau, the president's 2006 financial plan also is aimed at enhancing enforcement, border and port security with increases to the Border Patrol; continued execution of the Arizona Border Control Initiative (ABCI); improvements to the Coast Guard; and new, threat-focused state and local assistance grants.

Some officials from public seaports across the United States, however, have a different assessment of the chief executive's proposed financial package and made their concerns known shortly after its release during the week of Feb. 7.

Officials from the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) said port decision-makers are deeply concerned about the plan's recommended elimination of the Department of Homeland Security's Port Security Grant Program by lumping it into a sweeping new program that combines the security infrastructure needs of seaports with those of trains, trucks, buses and other public transit. In addition, ports

are concerned about the administration's proposed budget, which some charge would significantly under-fund the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Civil Works program and needed deep-draft dredging projects.

"Protecting America's marine facilities from acts of terrorism must be a top administration priority and a shared responsibility between the ports, government and private industry," said Kurt Nagle, president and CEO of the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA).

Port security-related highlights of the FY 2006 Budget include:

- An 8 percent increase in government-wide, non-defense homeland security spending over 2005.

- \$3.6 billion for state and local first-responder grants and other assistance.

Nearly seven billion dollars has been targeted for the Coast Guard, an 11.4 percent increase over the comparable 2005 level. This includes:

- \$1.9 billion for the Coast Guard's Port, Waterways, and Coastal Security mission, to fund a variety of high-priority initiatives like armed, high-speed boats in ports with liquefied natural gas terminals, further implementation of the Automatic Identification System to track sea-going vessels and enhance Maritime Domain Awareness, new weapons systems for the Coast Guard's helicopter fleet, and implementation of the Common Operating Picture to enable Coast Guard assets to work better together.

- \$966 million for the Coast Guard's Deepwater acquisition

project, which will fully recapitalize the agency's fleet of major ships and aircraft while simultaneously implementing a sophisticated new Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) system. This is an increase of 33 percent over 2005 levels.

- \$37 million for additional border patrol agents, \$20 million to continue improving the sensor, communication and video surveillance capabilities along our borders, and \$20 million for the acquisition and replacement of aging border patrol aircraft.

- A \$5.4-million increase for the Container Security Initiative, which pre-screens cargo before it reaches America's shores.

- \$178 million in DHS for improved radiological and nuclear-screening equipment at our borders.

- An \$8.2 million increase for the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) to support partnerships with some of the biggest American importers to improve cargo security.

In the proposed FY 06 federal budget, the Port Security Grant Program, which Congress created after 9/11 to reimburse U.S. maritime facilities for pre-approved projects required by federal regulations to enhance national secu-

urity, would be eliminated. In its place would be the newly created Targeted Infrastructure Protection program that would lump grant proposals from ports together with requests from a host of other transportation-related industries.

Since 2002, the DHS Port Security Grant Program has provided much-needed support to address immediate security needs and assessments. But federal money allocated in the first four rounds of the program—about \$565 million—accounted for only about one-sixth of what seaports identified as needs, while a fifth round of grants totaling \$150 million has yet to be made available to ports.

At the same time, the U.S. Coast Guard has estimated that ports would have to spend \$5.4 billion over 10 years on mandated security enhancements. That's on top of the more than \$3 billion they already spend annually on infrastructure improvements and operations, maintenance and personnel expenses just to keep pace with burgeoning world trade.

While airports receive most of the federal attention and funding for security and terrorism prevention, seaports—which support 4 million jobs and annually handle \$2 trillion worth of cargo and more than 7 million cruise ship passengers—arguably remain

largely under-funded at the federal level, according to the AAPA.

In the legislative arena, U.S. Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-Calif.) in early January reintroduced legislation—H.R. 478—which calls for a multi-year, steady stream funding mechanism for port security mandates.

The measure is identical to H.R. 3712, introduced in January 2004. Basically, the bill (United States Seaport Multiyear Enhancement Act of 2005) provides for a five-year, \$4 billion grant program and will put port funding on par with aviation security.

Referred to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the measure is co-sponsored by U.S. Reps. Jane Harman (D-Calif.), Corrine Brown (D-Fla.), Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam) and Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.).

Meanwhile, the United States is pressing for wider global adoption of new shipping rules it enforced after the Sept. 11 attacks and which it believes have deterred potential terrorists, a senior official said Jan. 18.

"Terrorists are not just targeting the United States. They're targeting globalization and the global economy," said Keith Thomson, assistant commissioner in the Office of International Affairs at the Department of

Continued on page 13

House Transportation Committee, Maritime Subcommittee Selected

Seventy-five congressional representatives—41 Republicans and 34 Democrats—recently were selected to serve on the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for the 109th Congressional Session.

Chaired by U.S. Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), a strong backer of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the committee has jurisdiction over the Coast Guard and maritime transportation. It also helps oversee aviation; economic development, public buildings, and emergency management; railroads; highways, transit and pipelines; and water resources and environment.

Subcommittees represent each of the Transportation and Infrastructure committee's areas of authority. The Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation deals with maritime safety, security, law enforcement, and defense. Additionally, the subcommittee exercises jurisdiction over various merchant marine matters. The jurisdiction of this subcommittee does not extend to matters directly related to national defense, which are handled by the Committee on Armed Services.

U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-N.J.) chairs the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee. Also serving on that subcommittee are Republicans Howard Coble (N.C.), Wayne Gilchrest (Md.), Peter Hoekstra (Mich.), Rob Simmons (Conn.), Mario Diaz Balart (Fla.), David Reichert (Wash.), Connie Mack (Fla.), Luis Fortuno (P.R.), Charles Boustany Jr. (La.) and



U.S. Government Photo

Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Frank LoBiondo (R-N.J.) (right) last fall listens to testimony on the maritime environment including security and environmental safety. Also pictured is Subcommittee Staff Director John Rayfield.

Don Young (Alaska).

Democrats serving on the subcommittee are Ranking Member James Oberstar (Minn.), Bob Filner (Calif.), Corrine Brown

(Fla.), Gene Taylor (Miss.), Juanita Millender-McDonald (Calif.), Michael Honda (Calif.), Anthony Weiner (N.Y.), Brian Higgins (N.Y.) and Brian Baird (Wash.).

AMSEA Rated 'Exceptional' By Military Sealift Command

SIU-contracted American Overseas Marine Corporation (AMSEA) last month received an award fee notification from the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) for the fourth year of the fast sealift ship operation and maintenance contract.

AMSEA received a score of "exceptional" from MSC in each of the five rating categories, according to a letter from the company. "This is the fourth evaluation we have received since award of this eight-ship contract to AMSEA and, likewise, it is the fourth consecutive year we have received exceptional ratings with the program," AMSEA President Peter Lawrence noted in a letter to AMSEA employees. "These ratings prove, through our collective hard work and responsiveness to customer and end-user needs, that we have exceeded MSC's contractual expectations in the operation and maintenance of these vital government assets."

Lawrence credited the "dedication and support" of all AMSEA personnel, "both ashore and afloat.... These ratings are the results of hard work, professionalism, and the total-team approach that we should all be proud of."

Union Mourns Trustee Joe Cecire

Joseph Cecire, who for many years chaired the SIU's Board of Trustees, died Jan. 13 at New York University Hospital following complications from surgery. He was 81.

"He was very conscientious and a great advocate for the U.S. Merchant Marine," noted SIU President Michael Sacco.

"He was definitely a sailor's sailor," said SIU Executive Vice President John Fay. "Even though he sailed captain, he knew the needs of the guys in the fo'c'sle. That's why he was such a great trustee. He had a lot of feeling for the seaman."

Carolyn Gentile, counsel to the Seafarers Plans, knew Cecire from her earliest days working with the SIU. "He worked with us (through SIU-contracted companies) for many years. He was one of the nicest human beings and a real gentleman," she recalled.

Tony Naccarato, an official with SIU-contracted Marine Transport C and himself a Seafarers trustee, knew Cecire for 30 years. "People trusted him—both management and the unions," Naccarato stated. "That's saying something. He was a natural at it and his word was good."

"What I remember about him is that he was a gentleman and he cared about the Seafarers," he added. "He loved this busi-



Joe Cecire was a steadfast advocate for the U.S. Merchant Marine.

ness and was a tireless worker for the American Merchant Marine."

Cecire graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and sailed as a captain with the American Maritime Officers, an affiliate of the Seafarers International Union of North America.

At different times, he later worked as a representative for companies including (respectively) Robin Lines, Moore-McCormack Lines, Seahawk Management and Bay Ship Management.

He became an alternate employer trustee in 1956 and a regular trustee in 1967. He was the head of trustees until retiring in mid-2000.

Cecire lived in Westport, Conn. He was buried next to his late wife, Sarah, in Rockland Cemetery in Madison, Conn.

Celebrating the Holidays at Sea . . .

. . . Thanksgiving Aboard the North Star



Crew members aboard the *North Star* were treated to a delicious traditional Thanksgiving Day dinner by members of the steward department (from left) SA George Gerssing, Steward Veronika Cardenas and Chief Cook Khaled Taffi.

Below: Ham, turkey, deviled eggs, cranberry sauce and all the trimmings were on the Thanksgiving Day menu.



Specially prepared holiday meals aboard ship are always a morale booster, and this one was no exception.



. . . Christmas Aboard the 1st Lt. Jack Lummus

The 1st Lt. *Jack Lummus*, a roll-on/roll-off ship in the MSC fleet currently stationed in Guam/Saipan, is now on its way to the island nation of Sri Lanka to assist with relief efforts there following the tsunami disaster of last December.

Chief Steward **David Gibson** notes that an MSC vessel like the *Lummus* must be ready at all times for any type of activation or operation. With its five passenger decks and 64 staterooms, the ship maintains a full complement in the steward department. One of the challenges of working in this department, according to Cook/Baker **Brandon Maeda**, is maintaining a high standard of sanitation, cleanliness and food quality. This can often be made more difficult with a full crew of 40 as well as 140 troops to feed while on special operations, but the *Lummus* crew has done a great job.

Maeda has been on the ship since the beginning of November and has participated in Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays with the crew. (He also provided the photos from the *Lummus* appearing on this page.)

He notes that he was surprised by the variety of menu choices available on board the vessel, including a mixture of old favorites as well as some fusion of eastern and western cuisines. Vietnamese Pho (a hot noodle dish), Falafel (a middle eastern specialty), couscous and curried lamb with fresh pita bread, along with several different types of stir-fried entrees, are all prepared by Chief Cook **Erik Lore**t. Others in the steward department include SAs **Ali Munasar**, **Therese Pinaula**, **Francisco Martinez** and **Reynaldo Baluyot**.

The 1st Lt. *Jack Lummus* is stationed in Guam/Saipan.

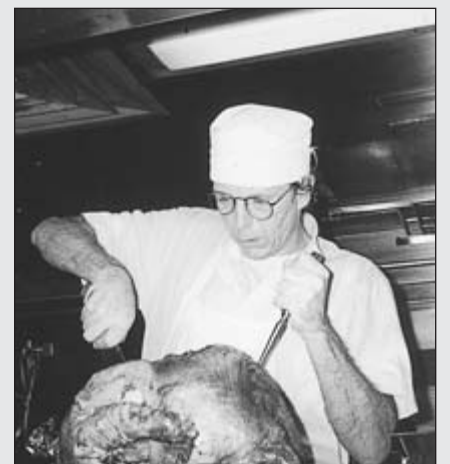


The holiday meals "with all the trimmings and enough sugar and spice to satisfy even the biggest sweet-tooth" were a big hit with the crew.

Maeda noted that "as we looked forward to the New Year and counted our many blessings, we were reminded once again of those in need as news flashes of the tsunami that rocked south Asia were shown on television."

Whether it's military support or humanitarian aid, Maeda said, "whatever the challenge, the SIU steward department of the *Lummus* will get the job done!"

Left: An assortment of appetizers and desserts helps start and end the meal in style.



One of several Christmas turkeys is being carved by Chief Cook Erik Loret for the holiday meal.



Helping make the holidays bright aboard the 1st Lt. *Jack Lummus* are (from left) SAs **Ali Munasar**, **Reynaldo Baluyot** and **Therese Pinaula**.



Chief Steward **David Gibson** puts the finishing touches on the scallop appetizers.



SA **Francisco Martinez** assists in the galley preparations.





Left: While traveling through Bahrain in mid-December on his way back to Diego Garcia, Michael Thomas had this photo taken aboard a camel. Thomas is an SIU hawsepiper.



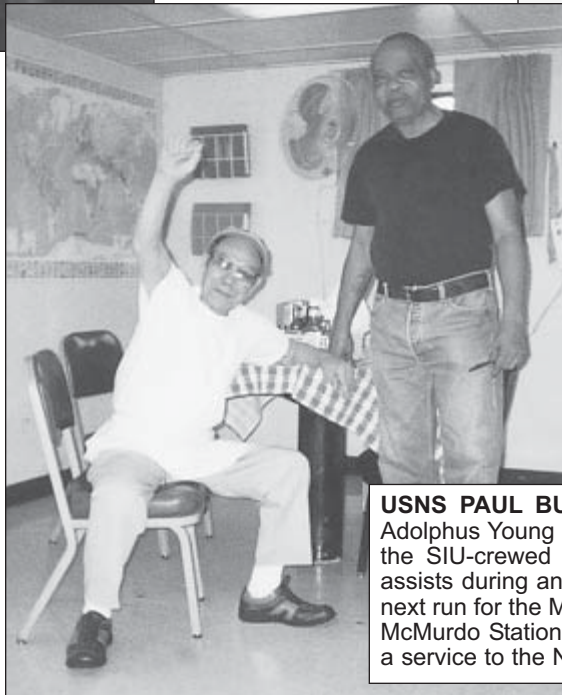
LIBERTY SUN — The SIU-crewed *Liberty Sun* recently delivered the largest single load of food aid to Massawa, Eritrea since that country's independence in 1991. Approximately 61,200 metric tons of U.S.-donated wheat, valued at \$18 million, was on board. The shipment came to Eritrea as that nation suffers through its fourth consecutive year of drought and faces another crop failure. Marking the accomplishment are (from left) Steward Steve Dickson, Bosun Richard Barnes, U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea Mr. Scott H. DeLisi and his wife, Chief Cook Willie Toomer, AB Ben Picar, AB George Lubialuli and unlicensed apprentice Michael Moerbeek.



Around the World With the SIU



USNS CONCORD — Above: Crew members from the *USNS Concord* took a cab from the Navy Base in Guam to the SIU hall there in order to secure ballots for the SIU elections. With Port Agent Jeff Turkus (second from left) are Seafarers (from left) Ricardo Castillero, Robert Tombolini and K.P. "Spyder" Lord.



USNS PAUL BUCK — At left, AB Jesse Natividad and GSU Adolphus Young are some of the more experienced members on the SIU-crewed *USNS Paul Buck*. Above, AB Stephen Gately assists during anchoring operations in Onsan, South Korea. The next run for the MSC-owned oil transporter is to supply fuel to the McMurdo Station in Antarctica during Operation Deep Freeze as a service to the National Science Foundation.



SEALAND CHARGER — AB Eduardo Malabad sails aboard the *Sealand Charger*, one of the newer Maersk Line, Limited vessels that recently was transferred into the U.S. Maritime Security Program.

SBX — These photos are of SIU crew members from the SBX platform in Brownsville, Texas, taken during a barbecue at the shipyard facility there. The crew is working on the semi-submersible craft known as the SBX (an abbreviation for sea-based X-Band radar) during the final phases of construction. They expect to move aboard soon and get ready for sea trials in the Gulf of Mexico.



Left: At the barbecue are (from left) AB Mark Simpson, SA Bekki Szlosek and OS Chester Christensen.



Above: From the left are SA Ashley Leano, SA Larinda Sawyer, Bosun Steve Medina and Asst. Cook Theresa Ballard.



Left: From the left at the barbecue are a security guard for the SBX, OS Chester Christensen, AB Mark Simpson, SA Gene Hoehn and Recertified Steward Brenda Kamiya.



AB John Fain waits at the hotel for his ride to the shipyard.



Chief Cook Eileen Lammers and SA Matthew Jenness get the grill ready.

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

JANUARY 16 — FEBRUARY 15, 2005

Port	*TOTAL REGISTERED			TOTAL SHIPPED			Trip Reliefs	**REGISTERED ON BEACH		
	All Groups			All Groups				All Groups		
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class A	Class B	Class C		Class A	Class B	Class C
DECK DEPARTMENT										
Algonac	1	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	3	1
Anchorage	0	5	2	0	2	0	0	0	8	3
Baltimore	9	3	3	2	1	1	1	13	8	2
Guam	0	7	0	0	4	0	0	0	9	2
Honolulu	10	7	0	3	5	0	2	19	14	3
Houston	29	23	15	24	13	5	13	42	31	28
Jacksonville	44	28	12	33	21	6	16	56	54	27
Joliet	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Mobile	9	7	3	5	5	2	1	19	13	6
New Orleans	24	18	10	7	12	1	6	40	26	17
New York	31	25	19	20	11	6	10	53	40	31
Norfolk	7	8	7	9	13	3	5	15	21	5
Philadelphia	5	4	0	4	1	0	1	7	8	1
Piney Point	0	4	0	1	6	1	2	0	9	1
Puerto Rico	4	13	1	7	5	2	5	16	19	0
San Francisco	14	10	2	10	10	1	4	34	13	5
St. Louis	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	6	2
Tacoma	30	24	21	16	18	8	17	62	48	29
Wilmington	21	28	11	16	14	2	7	36	41	27
Totals	239	219	109	159	142	40	90	415	371	191
ENGINE DEPARTMENT										
Algonac	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	1
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Baltimore	3	3	1	2	3	0	1	5	5	2
Guam	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
Honolulu	6	6	2	7	3	2	2	10	6	2
Houston	7	11	3	10	6	2	4	14	14	9
Jacksonville	28	17	4	9	12	7	4	48	35	10
Joliet	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Mobile	6	3	1	3	1	0	1	11	6	3
New Orleans	8	4	1	5	1	0	0	17	5	4
New York	11	9	4	9	5	1	3	18	12	13
Norfolk	2	9	1	4	6	2	6	6	16	6
Philadelphia	3	3	0	3	1	0	1	3	6	1
Piney Point	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	1
Puerto Rico	5	2	2	5	3	1	3	7	4	1
San Francisco	9	10	2	5	4	2	1	22	11	7
St. Louis	0	2	1	0	3	0	1	0	1	2
Tacoma	14	19	4	12	13	0	11	18	37	7
Wilmington	5	5	4	4	6	3	3	14	11	9
Totals	108	108	32	78	71	22	41	199	176	79
STEWARD DEPARTMENT										
Algonac	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Anchorage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baltimore	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	5	2	1
Guam	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Honolulu	12	7	0	11	2	1	1	14	8	1
Houston	21	3	2	10	1	0	3	27	8	3
Jacksonville	19	14	1	17	10	0	6	29	20	8
Joliet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile	1	3	0	3	1	0	0	10	5	1
New Orleans	10	2	3	4	3	1	0	19	2	2
New York	19	6	3	11	4	1	6	33	7	7
Norfolk	7	12	5	3	7	2	1	14	21	7
Philadelphia	2	0	0	4	0	0	2	2	1	0
Piney Point	0	1	2	1	3	0	1	1	1	2
Puerto Rico	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	2	1
San Francisco	24	7	0	16	2	0	8	44	9	2
St. Louis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Tacoma	26	2	4	18	2	5	7	34	6	4
Wilmington	29	7	5	21	3	1	8	36	15	7
Totals	175	68	27	122	40	11	44	272	111	47
ENTRY DEPARTMENT										
Algonac	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	4
Anchorage	0	3	6	0	0	1	0	0	5	8
Baltimore	0	4	2	0	3	1	0	0	7	2
Guam	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Honolulu	8	10	8	1	3	0	0	13	14	21
Houston	4	9	10	1	15	6	0	7	16	27
Jacksonville	5	20	20	1	11	6	0	8	30	34
Joliet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mobile	0	9	2	0	4	0	0	1	15	3
New Orleans	3	3	4	3	5	1	0	7	11	22
New York	2	39	24	3	19	3	0	9	55	58
Norfolk	0	7	11	1	7	5	0	0	10	21
Philadelphia	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Piney Point	1	2	20	0	3	34	0	1	5	31
Puerto Rico	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	6	0
San Francisco	2	9	11	1	11	1	0	5	17	21
St. Louis	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	1
Tacoma	6	17	20	5	7	6	0	9	34	33
Wilmington	2	6	14	0	4	6	0	3	10	30
Totals	34	146	157	17	96	71	0	65	244	321
Totals All Departments	556	541	325	376	349	144	175	951	902	638

*"Total Registered" means the number of Seafarers who actually registered for shipping at the port.
 **"Registered on Beach" means the total number of Seafarers registered at the port.

April & May 2005 Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: April 4, May 2
Algonac	Friday: April 8, May 6
Baltimore	Thursday: April 7, May 5
Boston	Friday: April 8, May 6
Duluth	Wednesday: April 13, May 11
Guam	Thursday: April 21, May 19
Honolulu	Friday: April 15, May 13
Houston	Monday: April 11, May 9
Jacksonville	Thursday: April 7, May 5
Joliet	Thursday: April 14, May 12
Mobile	Wednesday: April 13, May 11
New Orleans	Tuesday: April 12, May 10
New York	Tuesday: April 5, May 3
Norfolk	Thursday: April 7, May 5
Philadelphia	Wednesday: April 6, May 4
Port Everglades	Thursday: April 14, May 12
San Francisco	Thursday: April 14, May 12
San Juan	Thursday: April 7, May 5
St. Louis	Friday: April 15, May 13
Tacoma	Friday: April 22, May 20
Wilmington	Monday: April 18, May 16

Each port's meeting starts at 10:30 a.m.

Personals

BILL DOLSON AND SCRAP IRON

Tim Ryan is trying to get in touch with Bill Dolson and/or Scrap Iron. Please call Tim at (401) 596-9638.

Correction

In the February 2005 edition of the *Seafarers LOG*, the page 3 article containing the list of union officials elected for the term from 2005-2008 was incomplete. The complete list is as follows:

- Michael Sacco, president;
- John Fay, executive vice president;
- David Heindel, secretary-treasurer;
- Augie Tellez, contracts and contract enforcement vice president;
- Joseph Soresi, Atlantic Coast vice president;
- Dean Corgey, Gulf Coast vice president;
- Nick Marrone, West Coast vice president;
- Thomas Orzechowski, Southern Region, Great Lakes and inland waters vice president;
- Kermet Mangram, Government Services and fishing industries vice president;
- René Lioeanjie, vice president at large;
- Charles Stewart, vice president at large;
- George Tricker, assistant vice president in charge of contracts and contract enforcement;
- Nick Celona, assistant vice president in charge of the Atlantic Coast;
- Ambrose Cucinotta, assistant vice president in charge of the Gulf Coast;
- Don Anderson, assistant vice president in charge of the West Coast;
- James McGee, assistant vice president in charge of the Southern Region, Great Lakes and inland waters;
- Chester Wheeler, assistant vice president in charge of Government Services and fishing industries;
- Edward "Edd" Morris, Piney Point port agent;
- Robert Selzer, New York port agent;
- Joseph Mieluchowski, Philadelphia port agent;
- Georg Kenny, Baltimore port agent;
- Ed Kelly, Mobile port agent;
- Steve Judd, New Orleans port agent;
- Tony McQuay, Houston port agent;
- Vince Coss, San Francisco port agent;
- Becky Sleeper, St. Louis port agent;
- Don Thornton, Algonac port agent.



U.S. Health Care A Closer Look

SIU, Other Unions Keep Swinging, But It's Often an Uphill Struggle

A little more than one year ago, nearly 80,000 trade unionists—most of them members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)—either were on strike or were locked out in several states. The UFCW action lasted five months and was driven by bitter conflicts with management over proposed changes in the workers' health insurance.

The details varied from contract to contract, but in one representative case (a Kroger store in Charleston, W. Va.), workers struck in part because of a company proposal that either would have cut their health benefits or cost them up to \$100 more per week—per worker—to maintain their current coverage.

Since then, while there have been no other job actions involving similarly large numbers of workers, health care costs consistently have been a top issue in union contract negotiations all over the country. A quick check of last month's headlines turned up the following:

■ In St. Paul, Minn., dozens of United Auto Workers Local 763 members were locked out of their jobs at a parts distribution center, in part because of disputes over health benefits.

■ In northern California, roughly 3,000 UFCW members tentatively reached an agreement with Save Mart Supermarkets, but not before protracted negotiations that often centered on health insurance. Union members said that if it hadn't been for the strike a year ago, they likely still would be without a new contract.

■ In the northeast, approximately 1,000 turnpike workers who are Teamsters were on the verge of their first strike (in the unit's 50-year history) because of stalled negotiations. Health coverage has been cited as the leading issue in the dispute.

■ In New Jersey, 180 members of Teamsters Local 701 are striking against a waste management company because of proposed cuts in medical coverage.

■ In New York City, 800 members of two Amalgamated Transit Union locals tentatively ended a 10-day walkout largely motivated by concerns about health benefits.

■ In Philadelphia, an official from Transport Workers Union Local 234—which represents 5,000 members—has cautioned that contract negotiations which started in late January between the union and the region's transit agency will be more difficult than those of 1998, when a 40-day strike occurred. Not surprisingly, health care coverage is a key subject in the current talks.

Keep in mind, that's just a sampling from January. Similar cases involving other unions took place throughout 2004.

Meanwhile, the SIU and the Seafarers Plans continue to fight for affordable health care for SIU members and for all Americans. The union is involved in grassroots efforts through the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations as well as the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department. The SIU also is active in this fight through state labor federations and central labor councils.

Additionally, as previously reported, officials from the Seafarers Plans have met with other maritime union plans administrators a half-dozen times during the past 18 months. Collectively, the plans administrators are writing a joint report that is expected to

include recommendations to the union presidents for combating the high costs of health care while continuing to provide good benefits. An outside professional will review the report before it is finalized.

"One intent of the meetings was simply to examine what other plans are doing to contain costs," noted Bill Dennis, administrator of the Seafarers Plans. "In our own case, we have fought to maintain good coverage for Seafarers, in part by contracting with (respectively) Prescription Solutions and First Health Network. In the long run, the Plan expects both agreements to benefit participants as well as the Plan itself.

"We are committed to taking the steps needed to ensure that the Plan can continue providing adequate coverage in situations where SIU members and their families need health care," Dennis concluded.

Further, both the SIU and the Seafarers Plans are examining the most efficient methods for collecting and reviewing membership input on medical coverage. This may include individual questionnaires that would be mailed to members' homes as well as printed in the *Seafarers LOG* and posted on the union's web site.



MTD Resolution on

Editor's note: The executive board of the AFL-CIO was scheduled to receive the following resolution.

Health Care

When asked about the future, Americans invariably list health care as one of their main concerns. Little wonder. The United States spends more on it than any other country in the world, yet nearly 45 million of its citizens lack coverage. Absent some kind of meaningful government action, that figure is sure to rise even further over the next several years.

Health care costs have been outpacing the rate of inflation by a factor of five. Even those Americans now covered are not secure. A growing number of employers are seeking to shift more costs onto workers in the form of higher premiums, deductibles and co-payments. Some are even seeking to eliminate that coverage altogether. According to a recent study put out by the Center for Studying Health System Change, premiums for employer-sponsored coverage increased nearly 13 percent in 2002 alone.

Rising health care costs are only part of the problem. The refusal of companies like Wal-Mart to provide adequate coverage in sectors of the economy where coverage had been the norm is exacerbating the situation. As a result, emergency room visits form the sum and substance of whatever medical treatment many of their workers receive. As a practical matter, this means that state and federal governments have been effectively subsidizing companies like Wal-Mart to the tune of several thousand of dollars per worker. Companies that provide health care also must pick up the slack in the form of higher premiums. This must change. Legislation mandating Wal-Mart and companies like it to pay their fair share would help correct this problem.

In a sector of the economy beset by uncertainty, drug costs are a particular concern. The prescription drug benefit plan enacted by the 108th Congress needs to be reformed to allow the states and the federal government to buy supplies from safe Canada and the United Kingdom in order to cut costs. Moreover, the generous tax cuts doled out to HMOs



Sources for these articles on health care included the following: AFL-CIO, Associated Press, *Business Week*, *The Tennessean*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The New York Times*, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *The Sacramento Bee*, and the *New Jersey Home News Tribune*.

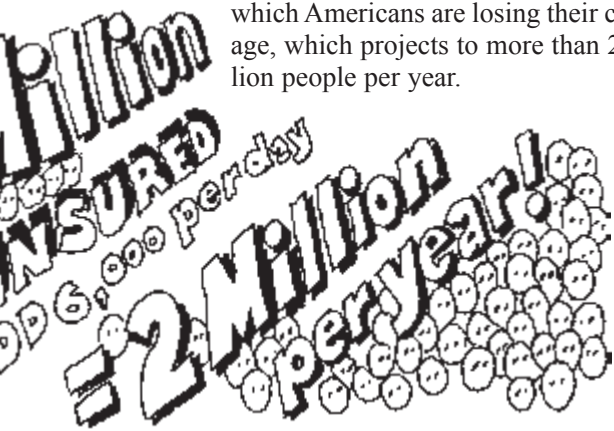
Politically Speaking, the System's a Mess



A HEADLINE in *Business Week* earlier this year captured the state of American health care in just four words: "More Money, Less Care."

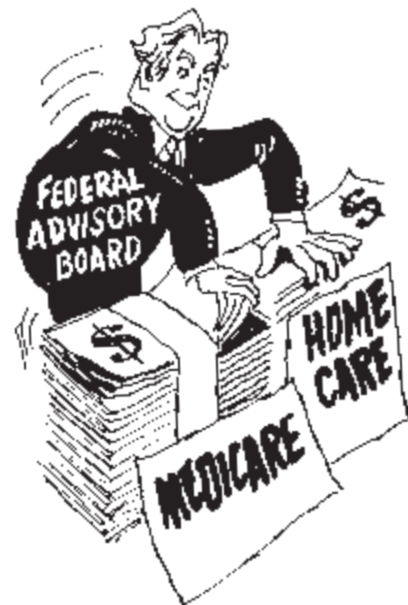
While there arguably is no way to quantify the struggles of the 45 million United States citizens who have no medical insurance, nor those of millions of others who are under-insured, statistics tell a big part of this story.

Start with those 45 million uninsured individuals—and then add 6,000 more every day. That's the current pace at which Americans are losing their coverage, which projects to more than 2 million people per year.



Often, as noted in the headline, it's a case of paying more for less. Credible estimates are forecasting that employees will see an increase of 14 percent in their share of their premiums this year, while their benefits will be reduced.

counselors believe that retiree benefits will be gone within a few decades.



Behind those staggering figures are constantly increasing insurance costs. From the spring of 2003 to the spring of 2004, employer-sponsored health care premiums for a family of four jumped by more than 11 percent, to just under \$10,000. That wasn't an anomaly—it was the fourth straight year of double-digit cost increases.



Since the year 2000, the overall expense of job-based health insurance has increased by nearly 60 percent, while the percentage of covered workers has dropped from 65 percent to 61 percent. Among those who still have coverage, only 24 percent don't have to pay to carry single coverage. Even worse, only eight percent work for employers who pay the full cost of family coverage (meaning there's no out-of-pocket cost to the worker simply to maintain the insurance benefit).

Last month, a federal advisory board recommended a cut in Medicare payments promised to hospitals and a freeze in moneys pledged to home care agencies and nursing homes next year. Medicare covers more than 41 million elderly and disabled individuals. The program's cost jumped by more than eight percent last year (to \$300 billion) and is projected to grow by nearly one third from 2005-2007.



Retirees literally are paying the price, too. For those younger than 65 and still receiving benefits from their former employers, their premiums jumped by 25 percent last year. Roughly one in 10 businesses has stopped offering health care coverage to retirees, with more predicted to follow. That latter figure is much worse when considering only the nation's 1,000 largest employers—less than a third of them offer health coverage to retirees. Some financial

Nationwide, health care expenses account for 15 percent of America's gross domestic product (GDP). By some estimates, if the current rate of increase doesn't change for the better, health care could cripple the U.S. economy by taking up 28 percent of the GDP in 25 years and nearly 50 percent by the middle of the century.

Health Care

AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department discussed the bill at its meetings this month.

should be reworked so that more money goes directly into benefits. The main problem with the bill was not its cost, but that so much money is being diverted into non-productive uses.



As the debate over last year's prescription drug benefits clearly showed, working families and their doctors need to be put on an equal footing with big HMOs and powerful insurance companies. That is why organized labor continues to support the adoption of a Patients' Bill of Rights. It would protect Americans in private health plans, allow health care consumers a voice, protect health care workers from retaliations from their employees and allow doctors to perform a full diagnosis.

Recently, many experts have been pointing out that inadequate staffing is jeopardizing quality patient care. Nothing else, it is driving experienced, committed professionals from the industry. Safe staffing can save lives. The AFL-CIO and many of its affiliates are trying to ensure that our hospitals are safer.

Recently, the AFL-CIO has issued a set of principles to ensure improved access to affordable, quality care. The Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO and its affiliates offer the hope for a better future:

All Americans deserve quality health care and meaningful access to insurance.

State-based bulk drug purchasing plans can help lower costs and help the uninsured buy prescriptions.

Quality measures and assurance controls can improve care, save lives and lower costs.

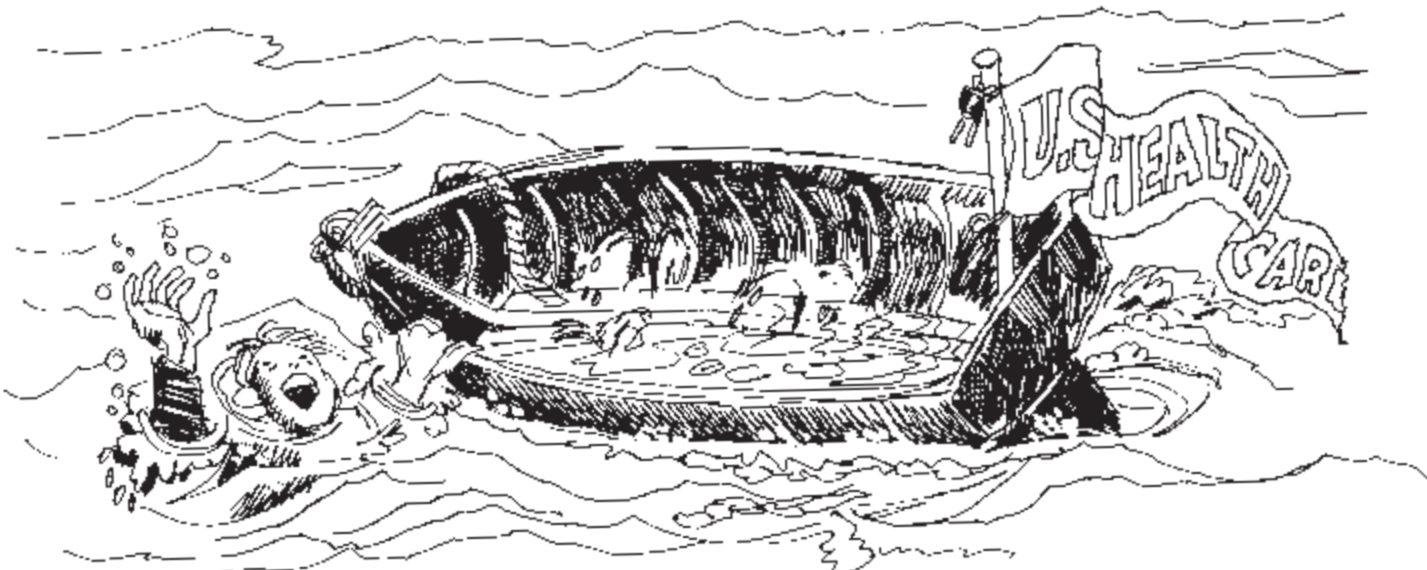
Unions should bargain smarter for health care at work.

The federal government should develop new incentives and rules to require all employers to pay their fair share for health care coverage.

Congress should immediately pass a Patients' Bill of Rights.



Some of the results are predictable, with insurers foisting much of the increase on working families as well as retirees. Workers' premiums have risen at least three times faster than earnings in the past four years. During that same span, Americans whose health-care costs are more than 25 percent of their annual income has jumped to 14 million.



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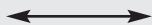
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Government Services Division: (415) 861-3400

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Santurce, PR 00907
(787) 721-4033

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4581 Gravois Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116
(314) 752-6500

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3411 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 272-7774

WILMINGTON

510 N. Broad Ave., Wilmington, CA 90744
(310) 549-4000

NMU Monthly Shipping & Registration Report

JANUARY 16 — FEBRUARY 15, 2005

Port	TOTAL REGISTERED All Groups			TOTAL SHIPPED All Groups			Trip Reliefs	REGISTERED ON BEACH All Groups		
	Group I	Group II	Group III	Group I	Group II	Group III		Group I	Group II	Group III
DECK DEPARTMENT										
Boston	6	2	0	3	2	0	1	7	0	0
Houston	6	1	3	7	3	2	5	28	4	25
Jacksonville	4	3	5	3	1	5	4	14	5	0
New Orleans	8	1	4	2	2	4	3	15	3	21
New York	15	4	1	9	4	1	6	41	5	2
Norfolk	0	0	2	1	0	3	2	5	2	0
Tacoma	0	0	3	1	0	2	1	1	0	5
Wilmington	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	11	5	0
Totals	42	13	18	26	12	17	22	122	24	53
ENGINE DEPARTMENT										
Boston	7	0	0	6	0	0	1	4	1	0
Houston	5	1	6	3	2	2	5	13	1	18
Jacksonville	3	0	3	3	0	3	1	7	4	1
New Orleans	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	8	2	16
New York	8	0	1	5	1	1	1	12	1	0
Norfolk	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1
Tacoma	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	0
Wilmington	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	11	1	2
Totals	30	5	14	19	6	9	10	58	11	38
STEWARD DEPARTMENT										
Boston	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0
Houston	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	5	5	19
Jacksonville	4	0	2	2	0	2	3	7	2	1
New Orleans	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	11	1	14
New York	6	5	0	7	1	0	2	8	15	0
Norfolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tacoma	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Wilmington	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	5	0	1
Totals	22	7	5	16	2	4	6	41	23	36
ENTRY DEPARTMENT										
Boston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Houston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jacksonville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Orleans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New York	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilmington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals All										
Departments	94	25	38	61	20	30	38	221	58	127

PICS-FROM-THE-PAST

These photos were sent to the *Seafarers LOG* by **Horace B. Rains** of Houston, Texas. They were taken aboard a Liberty ship in Korea in 1952. In the top photo, Rains is second from right in the back row; in the other photo, he is in the front row on the right.

Brother Rains joined the union in 1945 in the port of New Orleans, first sailing aboard Bloomfield Steamship Co. vessels, including the *Neva West*. Born in Kentucky, he served in the Army from 1953 to 1954. He completed the bosun recertification program at Piney Point in 1974. The *Cove Liberty* was his last ship before retiring in March 1991, but then, at age 77, he decided to return to active member status in 2004 to "support my union and serve my country." He most recently sailed on the *Seabulk Trader*.



If anyone has a vintage union-related photograph he or she would like to share with the *LOG* readership, please send it to the *Seafarers LOG*, 5201 Auth Way, Camp Springs, MD 20746. Photographs will be returned, if so requested.

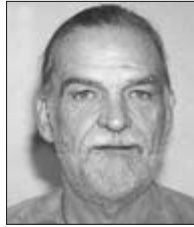


DEEP SEA

HAROLD BOONE, 70, began sailing with the SIU in 1980 in New Orleans. Brother Boone shipped as a member of the deck department in both the deep sea and inland divisions. He first sailed aboard a Dixie Carriers vessel. In 2001, Brother Boone upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md. Prior to retiring, he worked on the *Cape Domingo*. Brother Boone, who was born in

Arkansas, makes his home in Slidell, La.

INLAND



Towing & Transportation of Jacksonville during his seafaring

RAYMOND BRUMBACK, 58, joined the SIU in 1980. Boatman Brumback shipped with Crowley

career. He upgraded his skills at the union-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. in 2000, 2001 and again in 2004. Boatman Brumback was born in Ohio and sailed in the engine department. He is a resident of Sulphur, La.

VIVIAN

GAINES, 64, joined the SIU in 1993. Born in Arkansas, Sister Gaines sailed primarily aboard vessels operated by Orgulf Transportation Co. She worked in the steward department and calls Tiline, Ky. home.



GEORGE WASHINGTON JR., 62, became a Seafarer in 1995 in New Orleans. Boatman Washington



worked primarily aboard Delta Queen Steamship Co. vessels in the steward department. He was born in New Orleans and continues to reside there.

JULIAN WATLER, 65, donned the SIU colors in 1984 in New Orleans. Boatman Watler's first ship was the *Delta Queen* and his most recent was the *Mississippi Queen*. He was born in New Orleans and sailed as a member of the engine department. Boatman Watler enhanced his skills in 1987 at the Seafarers-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. He lives in his native state.

ATLANTIC FISHERMEN

SALVATORE LOIACANO, 61, joined the Atlantic Fishermen's Union in Gloucester, Mass. before it merged with the SIU in 1981. Brother Loiacano last

Welcome Ashore

Each month, the Seafarers LOG pays tribute to the SIU members who have devoted their working lives to sailing aboard U.S.-flag vessels on the deep seas, inland waterways or Great Lakes. Listed below are brief biographical sketches of those members who recently retired from the union. The brothers and sisters of the SIU thank those members for a job well done and wish them happiness and good health in the days ahead.

sailed on the *Gloucesterman*. The deck department member makes his home in Gloucester.



Editor's Note: The following brothers, all former members of the National Maritime Union (NMU) and participants in the NMU Pension and Trust, recently went on pension.

ANTHONY ARACRI, 71, began sailing with the NMU from New York. Brother Aracri most recently went to sea aboard the *Cape Rise*. He was a member of the deck department. Brother Aracri was born in Brooklyn, N.Y.



ELMER EARL, 58, joined the NMU in 1979 in New York. Brother Earl's first ship was the *Pioneer Contractor*.

Born in Mobile, Ala., he was a member of the deck department. Brother Earl last sailed on the *Fredericksburg*.

LYN FREI, 62, was born in Florida. Brother Frei joined the

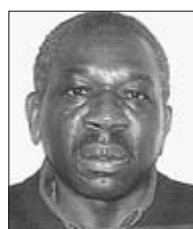
NMU in 1964, initially shipping from the port of Norfolk, Va. The steward department member first sailed aboard the *Pioneer Main*. Prior to retiring, Brother Frei worked on the *Chesapeake Bay*.



ELY LEGASPI, 58, became an NMU member in 1979, first sailing from San Pedro, Calif. Born in the Philip-

pines, Brother Legaspi sailed in the deck department. His last ship was the *Tonsina*.

WARNIE WORTHY, 67, donned the NMU colors in 1963 in New York. Brother Worthy



worked in the steward department, initially aboard the *African Sun*. He was born in North Carolina. His most recent voyage was on the *Lykes Discoverer*.

2006 Budget Aims to Enhance Security of Nation's Ports

Continued from page 5

Homeland Security. "Collectively we must all do more to secure what goes into, and through, all ports of the world, and not just the United States." Thomson made those remarks at a conference on maritime security in Berlin.

Standards enacted by Washington since the attacks in 2001 include a rule requiring shippers to supply U.S. authorities with details of U.S.-bound cargoes a full 24 hours before the goods are loaded at a foreign port. The data are fed to a National Targeting Center in Virginia, which combs them for risk factors like vague cargo descriptions, suspicious-looking transport routes, wrong addresses or dispatchers shipping to the United States for the first time. It can then ask the foreign port to investigate further.

Thomson said Washington is in favor of all nations adopting the 24-hour rule, plus a common approach to risk management, information-sharing, inspections and fast-track processing for companies that meet "best practice" security standards.

He said that an initial draft framework containing these elements had been broadly endorsed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) in December and a revised draft should be ready for submission to the WCO council in June. Countries could begin signing up as soon as it is approved.

Elsewhere, the ranking member of the House Homeland Security Committee recently said that reliable security and smooth commerce must go hand in hand.

U.S. Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) said, "If we become so fail-safe it interferes with the flow of commerce—especially maritime and rail—the bad guys have won."

Young said the maritime and rail industries are ahead of the curve when it comes to security developments and says Congress should not micromanage that.

"I have never seen a railroad or a shipping company that wants to have a terrorist act occur upon it," Young said. "But as congressmen, I can tell you we like to tell you what to do and how to do it, when to do it, and where to do it.

And I don't think we're that expert in that field."

Young said commerce is "what keeps this nation growing. It's what gives us the freedom. It's what allows us to be leaders in the world."

In another development, Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, in late January posed questions regarding port security when confirmation hearings commenced to consider Judge Michael Chertoff as the next head of the Department of Homeland Security.

"This [port security] is an area that I do believe has not received the attention it deserves nor the funding that is needed," Collins said. The senator pointed out that Maine's ports, including New England's largest port by tonnage, still have significant port security needs. She also relayed concerns expressed by the director of the port of Portland that there is not enough flexibility in the allocation of resources.

"The Coast Guard, for example, has estimated that implementing the Maritime Transportation Security Act would cost \$7.3 billion over 10 years," Collins added. "Yet, in the current fiscal year, the Department of Homeland Security will distribute only \$150 million in port security grants. That's a huge gap."

Collins noted that she had recently visited the port of Los Angeles/Long Beach, which handles 43 percent of all the containers coming into the country.

"Just a couple of days after I left, an alert crane operator spotted 32 Chinese nationals in two separate containers who had been smuggled into the country," Collins said. "That really concerns me, because if the smugglers of the illegal aliens know to use the container system, then surely Al Qaida has identified that as a possible means of smuggling an Al Qaida cell into our country. And despite all the high-tech cameras and other surveillance techniques and the department's screening programs, none of those caught these illegal Chinese citizens. It was, in fact, an alert crane operator."

Taking the Message to D.C.



Members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) last month lobbied on Capitol Hill for legislation aimed at providing \$1,000 per month to WWII mariners or their widows in lieu of benefits not received after the war. The bill (H.R. 23) also gives Social Security credit for time served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during WWII. Pictured from left to right are AMMV members Angelo D'Alessio, Jody Watson, K.C. O'Brien, Myron Boluch and Ian Allison.

Reprinted from past issues of the Seafarers LOG.

1944

Despite the continuing menace of German U-boat packs and continued sinking of American merchant vessels on their dangerous trips to supply the allied armies, the Maritime War Emergency Board decided to slash bonuses for merchant seamen. After assurances to the contrary from Capt. E. Macauley, representative of the Maritime Commission and the War Shipping Administration, the Board decided to slash the extra pay for men working ships in dangerous waters.

Seafarers aboard ship had objected to the proposed cuts by letter and telegram, citing the fact that U.S. Navy crews working aboard their vessels were still given extra pay for the voyages, but the MWEB voted on March 14 to reduce the existing rates.

1978

Voting on the proposed merger of the SIU's Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District and the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union

begins next month at all SIU and MC&S union halls. Results of the [vote] will be announced in June....

If the merger takes place, it will represent a giant step forward in the consolidation of some of the SIUNA's seagoing affiliates into one larger, stronger unit. Such a move would provide stronger job security and wider job opportunities for all members.

1991

As the United Nations Security Council moves closer towards approving a resolution that will officially end the war in the Persian Gulf, American ships and American seamen continue to deliver

the goods—but this time the materiel is about to be brought home.

The amount of equipment shipped to the Middle East has been staggering. Under the auspices of the Military Sealift Command, the Department of Defense agency responsible for coordinating the waterborne carriage of supplies for the American armed forces, more than 3 million short tons of dry cargo has gone by ship to support Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. The MSC reports that some 180 ships are assisting in the sealift effort.

THIS MONTH IN SIU HISTORY

Final Departures

DEEP SEA

LOUIS BRIANT JR.



Pensioner Louis Briant Jr., 86, died Dec. 8. Brother Briant began his SIU profession in 1944 in New Orleans. He first shipped in the engine department aboard the *Del Sud*. Brother Briant, who was born in Louisiana, last sailed on Waterman Steamship's *G. Walton*. He lived in Metairie, La. and went on pension in 1976.

ALBERT COALE JR.



Pensioner Albert Coale Jr., 55, passed away Oct. 30. Born in Alabama, Brother Coale started his seafaring career in 1968, first sailing aboard the *Fairisle*. His last trip was on the *Atlantic Forest*. Brother Coale worked in the steward department and began receiving his pension in 2003. He resided in his native state.

YUNG GUM

Pensioner Yung Gum, 81, died Oct. 13. Brother Gum joined the Marine Cooks & Stewards (MC&S) in San Francisco. He was born in China and resided in San Francisco. Brother Gum started collecting compensation for his retirement in 1977.

ALVINA HAIL

Pensioner Alvina Hail, 97, passed away Sept. 27. Sister Hail began her seafaring career with the MC&S in the port of San Francisco. Born in New York, she shipped as a member of the steward department. Sister Hail, who went on pension in 1968, lived in Sausalito, Calif.

JOAQUIN MILLER



Pensioner Joaquin Miller, 74, died Nov. 10. He joined the SIU in 1957 in the port of San Francisco. The engine department member was born in Massachusetts and called Las Vegas home. Prior to retiring in 1994, Brother Miller worked on the *Innovator*.

RAYMOND SATO



Pensioner Raymond Sato, 80, passed away Oct. 26. Brother Sato launched his seafaring career with the MC&S in 1959. The U.S. Army veteran worked primarily aboard Matson Navigation vessels such as the *Mau* and *Lurline*. Born in Hawaii, Brother Sato was a member of the steward department. He began receiving his pension in 1986 and made his home in Honolulu.

RAY SIMS



Pensioner Ray Sims, 70, died Oct. 19. After serving in the U.S. Navy, Brother Sims joined the SIU in 1969. He shipped in the engine department, last sailing on the *Overseas*

Juneau. Brother Sims was born in Tennessee and lived in San Francisco. He began collecting his retirement pay in 1999.

FRANK SMITH



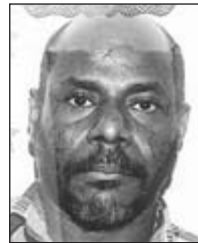
Pensioner Frank Smith, 76, passed away Oct. 10. Brother Smith first donned the SIU colors in 1947 in the port of Norfolk, Va. His first voyage was aboard a vessel operated by Delta Steamship Lines. Brother Smith, who was born in Virginia, worked in the deck department. He last sailed on the *Leader*. Brother Smith lived in his native state and went on pension in 1988.

STANDISH WOODELL



Pensioner Standish Woodell, 83, died Nov. 9. Brother Woodell started his SIU career in 1943 in New York. Born in West Virginia, he first went to sea aboard the *Steel Navigator*. Brother Woodell was a member of the engine department. Prior to retiring in 1985, he worked on the *Santa Mariana*. Brother Woodell called Sacramento, Calif. home.

LAWRENCE WRIGHT



Pensioner Lawrence Wright, 54, passed away Nov. 13. Brother Wright began shipping with the SIU in 1967, initially aboard the *Coeur d'Alene Victory*. The engine department member, who was born in Mobile, Ala., lived in New Orleans. His last ship was the *Seabulk Challenge*. Brother Wright began collecting his pension in 1998.

INLAND

WILLIAM DELESLINE



Pensioner William Delesline, 81, died Nov. 17. Boatman Delesline embarked on his SIU profession in 1951 in the port of Norfolk, Va. He first shipped in the deep sea division on the *Robin Kettering*. Boatman Delesline was born in Florida and shipped as a steward department member. He resided in Williamsburg, Va. and started collecting compensation for his retirement in 1989.

JOHN LINDWALL



Pensioner John Lindwall, 64, passed away Nov. 15. He joined the union in 1973 in the port of Philadelphia after serving in the U.S. Navy. Boatman Lindwall was born in Philadelphia and lived in Maine. He began receiving his retirement stipends in 2002.

GREAT LAKES

ROBERT BERTRAND

Pensioner Robert Bertrand, 75, died Dec. 15. He joined the SIU in 1977



in the port of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Brother Bertrand worked primarily on vessels owned by Inland Lakes Management such as the *Alpena* and *J.B. Ford*. He shipped in the steward department and went on pension in 1994. Brother Bertrand was born in Detroit and lived in Inverness, Fla.

ABDO FOTAIH

Pensioner Abdo Fotaih, 64, passed away Nov. 18. A native of Yemen, he started his seafaring career in 1970 in Detroit. Brother Fotaih initially sailed with Michigan Tankers as a member of the deck department. His last trip was aboard an American Steamship vessel. Brother Fotaih retired in 2001 and made his home in Sanaa, Yemen.

JOSEPH KELLY



Pensioner Joseph Kelly, 58, died Nov. 17. He began his seafaring career in 1964 in Chicago. Brother Kelly shipped on American Steamship's *American Mariner* throughout his career. He was born in Rogers City, Mich. and worked as a member of the deck department. Brother Kelly was a resident of Green Cove Springs, Fla. and started collecting his retirement pay in 1999.

WILLIAM SLEPKO



Pensioner William Slepko, 74, passed away Oct. 28. Born in Poland, Brother Slepko joined the union in Cleveland in 1973. His first voyage was on the *C. Trader*, where he worked in the engine department. Before retiring in 1995, Brother Slepko shipped on the *Indiana Harbor*. He called Tucson, Ariz. home.

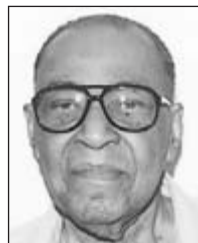
Editor's Note: The following brothers, all former members of the National Maritime Union (NMU) and participants in the NMU Pension Trust, have passed away.

MANUEL DIAZ



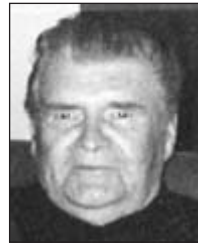
Pensioner Manuel Diaz, 87, passed away Dec. 4. Brother Diaz joined the NMU in 1945 in New York. The Puerto Rico-born mariner worked in the engine department. Brother Diaz's first ship was the *Cape Spencer*; his last was the *Santa Ana*. He went on pension in 1964.

ALVARIS DUFFIS



Pensioner Alvaris Duffis, 87, died Aug. 10. Brother Duffis began sailing with the NMU in New York. His first ship was the *African Grove*. The engine department member was born in Colombia. Prior to retiring in 1984, he worked on the *Export Aide*.

THOMAS HODGES



Pensioner Thomas Hodges, 77, passed away Nov. 7. Born in Virginia, Brother Hodges embarked on his seafaring career in 1946 in the port of Norfolk, Va. He first went to sea on the *Frederic Remington*. Brother Hodges last worked aboard the *Delaware*. He began receiving his retirement pay in 1968.

DOMINGO MALDONADO



Pensioner Domingo Maldonado, 89, died Nov. 14. Brother Maldonado became an NMU member in 1937. Shipping out of the port of Baltimore, Md., his initial voyage was on the *Dixiano*. Brother Maldonado was born in Ponce, P.R. He worked as a member of the steward department. A pensioner since 1979, he last sailed aboard the *Gulf Banker*.

JORGE PIRES



Pensioner Jorge Pires, 90, passed away July 30. Brother Pires was born in Portugal and began his career with the NMU in 1945 in the port of Norfolk, Va. His first vessel was the *David G. Farragut*, where he worked as a member of the deck department. Brother Pires last sailed aboard the *Brazil*. He started collecting his pension in 1966.

ALBERT SABIO



Pensioner Albert Sabio, 88, died Nov. 15. Brother Sabio first sailed for the NMU in 1943 from the port of New Orleans. Born in Honduras, his initial voyage was on the *Caloria*. A member of the deck department, Brother Sabio last shipped aboard the *Pioneer Minx*. He began receiving compensation for his retirement in 1970.

Editor's Note: In addition to the individuals listed above, the following NMU brothers, all of whom were pensioners, passed away on the dates indicated.

Name	Age	D.O.D.
Biega, Manuel	93	Oct. 17
Clayton, Carver	76	Dec. 9
Cruz, Estanislo	92	Dec. 1
Cruze, John	79	July 5
Frank, Richard	67	Dec. 2
Gatling, Robert	76	Dec. 5
Jeffords, Orvel	77	Nov. 25
Jones, Truly	86	May 21
Krane, Arthur	80	July 17
Layne, Clyde	76	Sept. 22
Loy, George	88	Aug. 7
McCurdy, Robert	72	Dec. 6
Mixon, Howard	77	Oct. 30
Nunez Cacho, Cornelius	86	Dec. 18
Odell, Edward	76	Nov. 15
Petro, Joseph	77	Nov. 27
Pettersson, Everet	86	Nov. 30
Reyes, Rafael	83	Nov. 15
Reyes, Ramon	83	Oct. 6
Salvage, Thomas	68	Nov. 27
Short, Carl	77	Nov. 6
Stone, Knealand	88	Aug. 26
Storts, John	95	July 1
Taylor, Jimmie	77	Oct. 4
Teeple, Arnold	83	Aug. 4
Tims, Bob	78	Nov. 3
Toth, John	80	Oct. 8
Wilson, Edward	81	Nov. 22

*"I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."*

—Alfred Lord Tennyson
Crossing the Bar

Digest of Shipboard Union Meetings

The Seafarers LOG attempts to print as many digests of union shipboard minutes as possible. On occasion, because of space limitations, some will be omitted.

Ships minutes first are reviewed by the union's contract department. Those issues requiring attention or resolution are addressed by the union upon receipt of the ships' minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Seafarers LOG for publication.

COMET (Maersk Line Limited), Dec. 26—Chairman **Paul S. Wills**, Secretary **Christopher B. Amigable**, Educational Director **Dimarko L. Shoulders**, Deck Delegate **Feliciano M. Gimutao**, Steward Delegate **Jimmy L. Williams**. Chairman announced vessel's arrival Dec. 28 in Long Beach, Calif. Educational director encouraged crew to take advantage of upgrading courses offered at Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Communications from headquarters read and discussed. Request made for new mattresses and fans in crew cabins as well as number of items for galley. Vote of thanks to chief cook for excellent meals and steward department for great job.

CONSTELLATION (Maersk Line Limited), Dec. 12—Chairman **Boyce E. Wilson**, Educational Director **Roger D. Phillips**, Deck Delegate **Edward E. Jaynes**. Chairman notified crew of request from boarding patrolman to have passports, discharge papers and z-cards ready at time of relief. Educational director spoke about opportunities available for mariners to enhance their skills at Seafarers-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. Treasurer stated \$200 available in ship's fund; he will use funds to purchase DVD player when vessel arrives in Lake Charles, La. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Bosun read and discussed president's report from *Seafarers LOG*. Requests made for new carpet and draperies in crew quarters. Crew also asked for new mattresses in staterooms and new grill for galley.

ENDURANCE (USSM), Dec. 12—Chairman **Mathew J. Bevak**, Secretary **Rolando M. Lopez**, Educational Director **Donnell C. Tagant**, Deck Delegate **Dennis A. Hurley**, Engine Delegate **Teddie H. Carter**, Steward Delegate **Carlito S. Navano**. Chairman thanked all departments for smooth sailing and enjoyable voyage. Secretary expressed gratitude to crew for helping keep food areas clean. Educational director advised everyone to be sure shipping documents are kept current and suggested everyone take advantage of opportunities available at Piney Point school. He also encouraged them to contribute to SPAD. No beefs reported; disputed OT noted in deck department. Crew members sent their condolences to family of Ken Conklin. Next port: Long Beach, Calif.

INNOVATOR (USSM), Dec. 19—Chairman **Mark S. Lance**, Secretary **Jose M. Bayani**, Educational Director **Richard G. Williams**, Deck Delegate **James D. Morgan**, Steward Delegate **Tammy M. Bingisser**. Chairman reported no news on USSM transfer to Maersk Line Ltd. He wished Jose Bayani good luck on new job after many years aboard the *Innovator*. Secretary thanked crew for outstanding job this trip. Educational director reminded crew members that Paul Hall Center is always open for upgrading and training. He also recom-

mended they keep all necessary shipping documents current. Treasurer reported \$315.53 in entertainment fund. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Communication from headquarters regarding recent SAB action read and discussed. Suggestion made to raise salaries of patrolmen, port agents and secretaries. Everyone asked to notify bosun if shower leaks. Vote of thanks given to steward department for delicious food and clean ship. Next port: Los Angeles.

LIBERTY SEA (Liberty Maritime), Dec. 5—Chairman **Daniel Laitinen Jr.**, Secretary **Fausto D. Aranda**, Educational Director **Steven A. Lombardi**, Deck Delegate **William D. Leachman**, Steward Delegate **Joel P. Crow**. Chairman announced payoff Dec. 11 upon arrival in New Orleans. He thanked crew for safe trip and for keeping rooms neat. Secretary expressed gratitude to mariners for helping keep ship clean and stated it was a pleasure working with them. Educational director stressed importance of making sure all necessary shipping documents are up to date and advised everyone to allow plenty of time—at least six months—for renewal process. He urged crew members to upgrade at Paul Hall Center. No beefs reported; some disputed OT noted in engine department. Crew gave thanks for new washing machine.

LIBERTY SUN (Liberty Maritime), Dec. 12. Chairman **Richard E. Barnes**, Secretary **Steven M. Dickson**, Engine Delegate **Hector A. Guity**, Steward Delegate **Willie Toomer**. Chairman reported company to send checks to crew members for travel. Educational director reminded everyone about educational opportunities available at Piney Point facility and about need to keep all paperwork and documents up to date. Treasurer stated \$600 in ship's fund. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Thanks given to unlicensed apprentices for job well done and to steward department for great meals and service. Suggestion made to increase orders of stores. Next port: San Lorenzo, Argentina.

MAERSK MISSOURI (Maersk Line Limited), Dec. 19—Chairman **Eddy E. Stwaeard**, Secretary **Billy Gigante**, Educational Director **Brian Sengelaub**, Deck Delegate **Terry N. Arbuah**, Engine Delegate **Terry J. Mouton**. Chairman announced payoff upon arrival Dec. 24 in Newark, N.J. and thanked all departments for pleasant voyage. Secretary thanked crew for helping maintain clean ship. Educational director reminded mariners to pay attention to task at hand and make safety a number-one priority. He thanked crew for outstanding professionalism and performance. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Clarification requested on changing watch hours. Vote of thanks given to steward department for great food, especially on Thanksgiving Day. Next ports: Charleston, S.C.; Norfolk, Va.; Newark.

MAJ. BERNARD F. FISHER (Sealift), Dec. 26—Chairman **Reuben M. Brown**, Secretary **Walter R. Seals**, Educational Director **Troy L. Fleming**, Deck Delegate **Lorenzo Riddick**, Engine Delegate **Michael C. McNally**, Steward Delegate **Velonder L. Alford**. Chairman announced payoff Dec. 31 in Diego Garcia, where the ship will remain. He reminded crew that safety policies and ship's company policies are to be followed at all times. Educational director asked crew to check out upgrading opportunities available at Paul Hall Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Steward department given vote of thanks for outstanding holiday meal. Request made for new furniture in crew lounge and new galley equipment, including coffee machine, cooking utensils and pots and pans.

NORTH STAR (Interocean Uglund Management), Dec. 12—Chairman **John O. Glenn**, Secretary **Veronika K. Cardenas**, Educational Director **Daniel P. Mitchell**. Chairman announced payoff Dec. 15 in Tacoma, Wash. Crew members will get the day off. He reminded Seafarers of importance of contributing to SPAD. Secretary urged everyone to make sure all MMDs are current. Educational director spoke about the educational facilities available at Piney Point and encouraged everyone to use and enjoy them. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Suggestions made regarding length of contract and increasing pension benefits. Crew requested access to computer and e-mail. Vote of thanks given to steward department for delicious Thanksgiving feast.

USNS HENSON (Horizon Lines), Dec. 17—Chairman **Arthur W. Cross**, Secretary **Henry E. Manning**, Educational Director **Sharon Sylvia**, Deck Delegate **Brian Robison**, Steward Delegate **Melvin Thomas**. Chairman warned crew members that relief might be slow to arrive due to war. He also informed them someone from Horizon would visit vessel to talk to them Jan. 3 or 4. Educational director advised mariners to check out what upgrading classes Piney Point has to offer. Treasurer stated \$356.68 in ship's fund. DVD player has been purchased. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Engine delegate praised deck department for fine job painting ship's doors.

CHEMICAL EXPLORER (Intrepid Ship Management), Jan. 2—Chairman **Richard Wilson**, Secretary **Christina A. Mateer**, Deck Delegate **Timothy J. Jackson**, Engine Delegate **Anjwar D. Brooks**, Steward Delegate **Santiago Amaya**. Chairman read and discussed recent SAB action. Educational director encouraged mariners to upgrade skills at Paul Hall Center. Treasurer stated ship's fund contained enough to pay monthly satellite bill. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Suggestion made regarding increasing vacation benefit. Special thanks given to steward department for wonderful Christmas meal. Next ports: Texas City, Houston and Galveston, Texas.

HORIZON CONSUMER (Horizon Lines), Jan. 2—Chairman **Lawrence Kunc**, Secretary **Paul Sullivan**, Educational Director **Thomas M. Flynn**, Deck Delegate **Evan J. Bradley**, Engine Delegate **Gregory L. Howard**, Steward Delegate **Abdulla M. Baabbad**. Secretary reported new crew washing machine to be installed following arrival in Oakland, Calif.; new juice machine on order.

Educational director discussed courses offered at Paul Hall Center and advised crew members to enhance skills whenever possible, including small arms course. Treasurer said holiday spread was "most amazing spread ever on ship," thanks to steward department. No beefs reported; disputed OT noted in engine department. Recommendation made to reduce time required for pension benefits.

HORIZON SPRIT (Horizon Lines), Jan. 6—Chairman **Howard W. Gibbs**, Secretary **Edgardo C. Ombec**, Educational Director **Paul D. Hanley**, Deck

elected union officials. Captain promised new recliner chairs in crew staterooms. Next ports: Newark, N.J.; Houston.

MAERSK VIRGINIA (Maersk Line Limited), Jan. 9—Chairman **Mohamed S. Ahmed**, Secretary **Hugh E. Wildermuth**, Educational Director **Randy D. Clark**, Deck Delegate **Timothy D. Girard**, Engine Delegate **James R. Oling**. Chairman reported smooth trip and announced payoff Jan. 17 in Newark, N.J. He asked departing crew to clean rooms and leave keys for next person. Secretary thanked mariners for cooperation in help-

Crewing up the SBX



Seafarers continue working aboard the semi-submersible SBX (an acronym for sea-based X-Band radar), one of the newest additions to the SIU-crewed fleet. Above, crew members recently load provisions in Brownsville, Texas. Among those pictured are OS Chris Christensen, AB John Fain, OS Marc Simpson, Bosun Greg Anderson and OS Amber Michel. Below, the vessel's construction is nearly complete.



Delegate **Michael Penkwitz**. Chairman reported good crew and thanked everyone for following safety procedures. Educational director urged seafarers to upgrade at Paul Hall Center, check expiration dates on documents and donate to SPAD. He also recommended crew members bring family to Piney Point school for summer vacation. Bosun stated \$243 in video fund; he'll buy new movies next trip. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Everyone expressed gratitude to steward department for excellent Christmas and New Year's dinners, including everything from roast pig and Beef Wellington to stuffed crabs and freshly baked cakes and cookies. Next ports: Oakland, Calif.; Honolulu; Guam; Hong Kong; Tacoma, Wash.

LIBERATOR (USSM), Jan. 6—Chairman **Daniel J. Teichman**, Secretary **Robert S. Davis**, Educational Director **Elwyn L. Ford**, Deck Delegate **Edwin D. Fuller**, Engine Delegate **Theodore Wallace**. Chairman thanked steward department for fine meals, especially over holidays. Educational director reminded crew members to keep documents current and allow time for renewal process. He also advised them to check out class schedule for upgrading classes at Piney Point. Memo regarding SAB action read to crew. Congratulations offered to newly

ing keep vessel clean. Educational director stressed need to allow plenty of time when renewing z-cards. Treasurer stated \$1,998 in ship's fund. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew expressed gratitude for receipt of new dryer and refrigerators. Suggestion made reduce time needed to receive pension benefits. Vote of thanks given to steward department for great food and service.

PETERSBURG (Interocean Uglund Management), Jan. 5—Chairman **James T. Martin**, Secretary **Wendy G. Fearing**, Educational Director **James D. Murphy**, Deck Delegate **Noel R. Camacho**, Engine Delegate **Roderick T. Frazier**, Steward Delegate **Marcus J. Nicholas**. Chairman expressed gratitude to steward department for job well done. Secretary thanked crew members for help in maintaining house and messhall. Educational director encouraged Seafarers to take advantage of classes available at Paul Hall Center and keep all documents current. Treasurer stated \$384 in ship's fund. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Guam Port Agent Jeff Turkus updated crew on new SIU-contracted ships and that contract extensions are temporarily allowed due to high volume of F.O.S. ships. He also informed them that, under certain conditions, merchant mariners do not have to pay fees when renewing passports.

Letter to the Editor

(Editor's note: The Seafarers LOG reserves the right to edit letters for grammar as well as space provisions without changing the writer's intent. The LOG welcomes letters from members, pensioners, their families and shipmates and will publish them on a timely basis.)

To Mariners Considering Retirement

To all mariners, young and old, who may be considering retirement, allow me, as a mariner, to recommend Snug Harbor on Nelson Bay at Sea Level, N.C.

I am a retired chief engineer who worked my way up through the ranks beginning as a wiper with the Moore-McCormack lines. I not only sailed on several of their ships, but was a member of their new construction program. We built six constellation class cargo ships and four roll-on/roll-off jobs at Pascagoula, Miss.

My wife, Millie, sailed as a gift shop operator on the *SS United States*, the *SS Santa Paula* and the *SS President Wilson*. While on the *SS Brasil*, she

served as a waitress, which is where we met in 1959.

My wife and I moved into a three-room suite at Snug Harbor in June 2002. Our suite consists of a bedroom with a full bath, living room, kitchenette and private patio. We have ample storage in the three closets located inside our suite. The Harbor provides residents with an extra storage unit for spare items such as luggage, off season clothing, etc.

Three excellent meals are served daily in one of the most elegant dining rooms in the area. A full-scale activities calendar is designed to keep the residents young at heart. Some of the activities offered include bingo, musical entertainment, lounge parties, a book club, horse races, card games, etc. The gaming room contains two full-size pool tables and room for additional activities. We look forward to "happy hour" each week, when they serve hors d'oeuvres and light refreshments and provide musical entertainment.

Holidays are recognized, with special decorations for everyone to enjoy.

Snug Harbor allows mariners

who are married to bring their spouses. Some of the spouses are seafaring folks; however, a majority of them are not. Snug Harbor maintains a fully staffed health care center for those needing special care. An out-patient clinic, staffed by a nurse, provides care for the residents in the independent living wing. The assisted living wing provides its residents with around-the-clock nursing staff and certified nursing assistants to help all residents with their individual needs.

Millie and I have been at the Harbor for more than two years and find living here safe, relaxing, comfortable and pleasant.

We both recommend Snug Harbor as a great retirement facility, free from the worries of home maintenance, personal safety, private home living and home ownership. Family and friends are always free to visit and are grandly welcomed.

Robert Durham
Snug Harbor

For additional information about Snug Harbor, contact:

Alice Powell
Snug Harbor
P.O. Box 150

Sea Level, NC 28577

or call (252) 225-4411. Their website is located at:

www.snugharborhome.com

Know Your Rights

FINANCIAL REPORTS. The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District/NMU makes specific provision for safeguarding the membership's money and union finances. The constitution requires a detailed audit by certified public accountants every year, which is to be submitted to the membership by the secretary-treasurer. A yearly finance committee of rank-and-file members, elected by the membership, each year examines the finances of the union and reports fully their findings and recommendations. Members of this committee may make dissenting reports, specific recommendations and separate findings.

TRUST FUNDS. All trust funds of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District/NMU are administered in accordance with the provisions of various trust fund agreements. All these agreements specify that the trustees in charge of these funds shall equally consist of union and management representatives and their alternates. All expenditures and disbursements of trust funds are made only upon approval by a majority of the trustees. All trust fund financial records are available at the headquarters of the various trust funds.

SHIPPING RIGHTS. A member's shipping rights and seniority are protected exclusively by contracts between the union and the employers. Members should get to know their shipping rights. Copies of these contracts are posted and available in all union halls. If members believe there have been violations of their shipping or seniority rights as contained in the contracts between the union and the employers, they should notify the Seafarers Appeals Board by certified mail, return receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

Augustin Tellez, Chairman
Seafarers Appeals Board
5201 Auth Way
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Full copies of contracts as referred to are available to members at all times, either by writing directly to the union or to the Seafarers Appeals Board.

CONTRACTS. Copies of all SIU contracts are available in all SIU halls. These contracts specify the wages and conditions under which an SIU member works and lives aboard a ship or boat. Members should know their contract rights, as well as their obligations, such as filing for overtime (OT) on the proper sheets and in the proper manner. If, at any time, a member believes that an SIU patrolman or other union official fails to protect their contractual rights properly, he or she should contact the nearest SIU port agent.

EDITORIAL POLICY — THE SEAFARERS LOG. The *Seafarers LOG* traditionally has refrained from publishing any article serving the political purposes of any individual in the union, officer or member. It also has refrained from publishing articles deemed harmful to the union or its collective membership. This established policy has been reaffirmed by membership action at the September 1960 meetings in all constitutional ports. The responsibility for *Seafarers LOG* policy is vested in an editorial board which consists of the executive board of the union. The executive board may delegate, from among its ranks, one individual to carry out this responsibility.

PAYMENT OF MONIES. No monies are to be paid to anyone in

any official capacity in the SIU unless an official union receipt is given for same. Under no circumstances should any member pay any money for any reason unless he is given such receipt. In the event anyone attempts to require any such payment be made without supplying a receipt, or if a member is required to make a payment and is given an official receipt, but feels that he or she should not have been required to make such payment, this should immediately be reported to union headquarters.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. Copies of the SIU Constitution are available in all union halls. All members should obtain copies of this constitution so as to familiarize themselves with its contents. Any time a member feels any other member or officer is attempting to deprive him or her of any constitutional right or obligation by any methods, such as dealing with charges, trials, etc., as well as all other details, the member so affected should immediately notify headquarters.

EQUAL RIGHTS. All members are guaranteed equal rights in employment and as members of the SIU. These rights are clearly set forth in the SIU Constitution and in the contracts which the union has negotiated with the employers. Consequently, no member may be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, national or geographic origin.

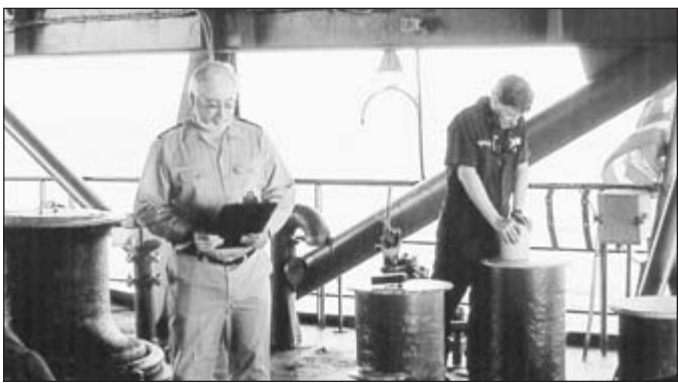
If any member feels that he or she is denied the equal rights to which he or she is entitled, the member should notify union headquarters.

SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION — SPAD. SPAD is a separate segregated fund. Its proceeds are used to further its objects and purposes including, but not limited to, furthering the political, social and economic interests of maritime workers, the preservation and furthering of the American merchant marine with improved employment opportunities for seamen and boatmen and the advancement of trade union concepts. In connection with such objects, SPAD supports and contributes to political candidates for elective office. All contributions are voluntary. No contribution may be solicited or received because of force, job discrimination, financial reprisal, or threat of such conduct, or as a condition of membership in the union or of employment. If a contribution is made by reason of the above improper conduct, the member should notify the Seafarers International Union or SPAD by certified mail within 30 days of the contribution for investigation and appropriate action and refund, if involuntary. A member should support SPAD to protect and further his or her economic, political and social interests, and American trade union concepts.

NOTIFYING THE UNION—If at any time a member feels that any of the above rights have been violated, or that he or she has been denied the constitutional right of access to union records or information, the member should immediately notify SIU President Michael Sacco at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

Michael Sacco, President
Seafarers International Union
5201 Auth Way
Camp Springs, MD 20746.

Burial at Sea for Brother Parsley



While the flag flew at half-mast at 1300 hours on Dec. 12, 2004, the crew of the *Sea-Land Liberty* gathered to remember **Edwin Parsley** and pay tribute to his final voyage. Brother Parsley, who sailed deep sea in the steward department, died Oct. 4, 2004 at the age of 79. Before retiring, he last sailed in 1983 aboard the same vessel. Prior to casting his ashes into the sea (above right), Capt. Donald Laverdure, the ship's master (above left), delivered the eulogy, which included the reading of Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "Crossing the Bar" and Capt. John H. Maxwell's "Psalm of a Mariner."



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

SEAFARERS HEALTH AND BENEFITS PLAN — COBRA NOTICE

HEALTH CARE CONTINUATION

Under federal law, a participant and his or her dependents have the right to elect to continue their Plan coverage in the event that they lose their eligibility. This right is granted by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, better known as "COBRA." The COBRA law allows a participant and his or her dependents to temporarily extend their benefits at group rates in certain circumstances where coverage under the Plan would otherwise end.

A participant and his or her dependents have a right to choose this continuation coverage if they lose their Plan coverage because the participant failed to meet the Plan's seafaring requirements. In addition, a participant and his or her dependents may have the right to choose continuation coverage if the participant becomes a pensioner ineligible for medical benefits.

The participant's dependents may also elect continuation coverage if they lose coverage under the Plan as the result of the participant's (1) death; (2) divorce; or (3) Medicare eligibility. A child can also elect COBRA if as the result of his or her age, he or she is no longer a dependent under the Plan rules.

If a member and his or her dependents feel that they may qualify, or if they would like more information concerning these rights, they should contact the Plan office at 5201 Auth Way, Camp Springs, MD 20746. Since there are important deadlines that apply to COBRA, please contact the Plan as soon as possible to receive a full explanation of the participant's rights and his or her dependents' rights.

SEAFARERS BENEFIT PLANS NOTICE TO PARTICIPANTS

Keep the Plan Informed of Your Address Changes

It is important that all participants remember to keep the Plan informed of any change of address.

Update Your Beneficiary Designations

Keep your beneficiary designations up to date. In the event that your beneficiary predeceases you, you must submit a substitute designation.

Inform the Plan of Your Divorce

In order for your spouse to be eligible to receive continuation coverage (under COBRA) from the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan, you or your spouse must inform the Plan at the time of your divorce. Please submit a copy of the divorce decree to the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan.

Full-time College Students

If your dependent child is a full-time college student, you must submit a letter of attendance every semester in order for your child to be covered by the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan.

Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan
P.O. Box 380
Piney Point, MD 20674

SEAFARERS PAUL HALL CENTER UPGRADING COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is the schedule of courses at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md. through September 2005. All programs are geared to improve the job skills of Seafarers and to promote the American maritime industry.

Please note that this schedule may change to reflect the needs of the membership, the maritime industry and—in times of conflict—the nation's security.

Students attending any of these classes should check in the *Saturday before* their course's start date. The courses listed here will begin promptly on the morning of the start dates. *For classes ending on a Friday, departure reservations should be made for Saturday.*

Seafarers who have any questions regarding the upgrading courses offered at the Paul Hall Center may call the admissions office at (301) 994-0010.

Deck Upgrading Courses

Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
Able Seaman	April 18	May 13
	May 30	June 24
	July 11	August 5
	August 22	September 16
Automatic Radar Plotting Aids* (ARPA) (*must have radar unlimited)	April 18	April 22
	June 20	June 24
	August 22	August 26
Bridge Resource Management (Unlimited)	May 9	May 13
	July 11	July 15
	September 12	September 16
Celestial Navigation	May 16	June 10
	July 18	August 11
	September 19	October 14
GMDSS (Simulator)	April 25	May 6
	June 27	July 8
	August 29	September 9
Lifeboatman/Water Survival	April 4	April 15
	May 16	May 27
	June 27	July 8
	August 8	August 19
	September 19	September 30
Radar	April 4	April 13
	June 6	June 15
	August 8	August 17
Radar Renewal (1 day):	April 25, June 27, August 29	

Steward Upgrading Courses

Galley Operations/Advanced Galley Operations modules start every week. Certified Chief Cook/Chief Steward classes start every other week beginning March 7, 2005.

Engine Upgrading Courses

Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
FOWT	June 20 September 19	August 11 November 11
Marine Electrician	April 18	June 13
QMED - Jr. Engineer	June 20	September 8
Welding	April 11	April 29
	May 9	May 27
	August 22	September 9
	September 19	October 7

Safety Specialty Courses

Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
Advanced Fire Fighting* (*must have basic fire fighting)	May 16	May 27
	July 18	July 29
	September 19	September 30
Fast Boat Rescue	May 2	May 6
	June 6	June 10
Government Vessels	April 11	April 15
	May 23	May 27
	July 4	July 8
	August 8	August 12
	August 22	August 26
Medical Care Provider	May 30	June 3
	August 1	August 5
Tankerman Familiarization/ Assistant Cargo (DL)* (*must have basic fire fighting)	April 4	April 15
	June 6	June 17
	August 1	August 11
	September 26	October 7
Tankerman (PIC) Barge* (*must have basic fire fighting)	June 27	July 1
	October 17	October 21

Academic Department Courses

General education and college courses are available as needed. In addition, basic vocational support program courses are offered throughout the year, one week prior to the AB, QMED Junior Engineer, FOWT, Third Mate, Tanker Assistant and Water Survival courses. An introduction to computers course will be self-study.

UPGRADING APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Date of Birth _____

Deep Sea Member Lakes Member Inland Waters Member

If the following information is not filled out completely, your application will not be processed.

Social Security # _____ Book # _____

Seniority _____ Department _____

U.S. Citizen: Yes No Home Port _____

Endorsement(s) or License(s) now held _____

Are you a graduate of the SHLSS/PHC trainee program? Yes No

If yes, class # _____

Have you attended any SHLSS/PHC upgrading courses? Yes No

If yes, course(s) taken _____

Do you hold the U.S. Coast Guard Lifeboatman Endorsement?

Yes No Firefighting: Yes No CPR: Yes No

Primary language spoken _____

With this application, COPIES of the following must be sent: One hundred and twenty (120) days seetime for the previous year, one day in the last six months prior to the date your class starts, USMMD (z-card) front and back, front page of your union book indicating your department and seniority, and qualifying seetime for the course if it is Coast Guard tested. All OL, AB, JE and Tanker Assistant (DL) applicants must submit a U.S. Coast Guard fee of \$140 with their application. The payment should be made with a money order only, payable to LMSS.

COURSE	BEGIN DATE	END DATE
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

LAST VESSEL: _____ Rating: _____

Date On: _____ Date Off: _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

NOTE: Transportation will be paid in accordance with the scheduling letter only if you present original receipts and successfully complete the course. If you have any questions, contact your port agent before departing for Piney Point.

RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, Admissions Office, P.O. Box 75, Piney Point, MD 20674-0075; or fax to (301) 994-2189.

The Seafarers Harry Lundeborg School of Seamanship at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is a private, non-profit, equal opportunity institution and admits students, who are otherwise qualified, of any race, nationality or sex. The school complies with applicable laws with regard to admission, access or treatment of students in its programs or activities.

3/05

Paul Hall Center Classes



Unlicensed Apprentice Water Survival Class 658 — Graduating from the water survival class are unlicensed apprentices from class 658 (in alphabetical order) Calvin Andrews Jr., Hannah Cain, Christopher Cox, Timothy Eide, Michael Esterheld, Brandon Granger, Terry Hester, Steven Hurden, Timothy Johnson Jr., Brian Joyner, Perry King, William Markeson, Timothy Rieman, Anthony Roca, Patrick Ryan, Luis Segui Gonzalez, Jon Silveira and William Simms.



Able Seaman— Receiving certificates for completion of the AB class ending Feb. 18 are (in no specific order) Rick Worthington, Saul Suarez, David Derosiers, Richard Otto, Carlos Grillasca Gay, Jonas Robinson, Kevin Johnson, Kyle Bloom, Dana Fischer, Joshua Robinson, Brett Younginger, Richard Wiltison, Christopher Czarske, Damian Spedale, Patrice Williams, Mario Suazo, Donald Moss, Larry Tribby, Damar Shaw, Tyrone Brown and Steven Kuithe.



Basic Auxiliary Plant Operations — Completing this course Feb. 25 are (in alphabetical order) Seafarers Donald Bishop, Leocadio Colon, Robert Crosby and Cynthia Harris and unlicensed apprentices Saif Ali, Anthony Bartley, Timothy Bauer Jr., Benjamin Clark, Timothy Cullen, Troy Davis, Frank Lewis, Stephen Morris III, Frank Muellersman, Scott Spilman, Evan Werner, Ronald Westerfield and William Wilson.



Government Vessels — Upgrading students in the government vessels class ending Feb. 11 include (in no specific order) Teresa Ward, Joshua Smith, Thia Banks, Tony Fury, Hector Ortiz, Samantha Murphy, Jerome Prince, Kenneth Williams, Paul Brown, Perry Schroff, James Ruffin, Tim Watson, Jonathan Ives, Robert Morrison, Felsher Beasley, Mark Kebbis, Huey Napier, Stephen Cooper, Ron Whitlow, Brian Saba and Ariel Lopez. Their instructor, Greg Thompson, is at far right.

Any student who has registered for a class and finds—for whatever reason—that he or she cannot attend, please inform the admissions department so that another student may take that place.



Radar — The five Seafarers completing the radar course Feb. 9 are (in alphabetical order) Randy Diaz, Basil D'Souze, Eric Kjellberg, DeGutenberg Poitevien and Shelby Rankin. Their instructor, Mike Smith, is at far right.



Welding — Under the instruction of Buzzy Andrews (far right) are Seafarers who completed the welding course Feb. 4. They are (in alphabetical order) Charles Davis, Dennis Martin, Bruce Park, Michael Presser, Edward Thompson, Mike Voda and Jacob Walling.

Upgrade at the Paul Hall Center



Deck, Engine and Steward Departments



Chief Cook — Working their way up in the galley department are Jose Clotter (left) and Connie Tarplin (right). In the center is John Dobson, one of the school's chef instructors.

Paul Hall Center Classes



Water Survival — Feb. 4 graduates of the water survival class include NCL crew members (in alphabetical order) Timothy Baker, Danielle Banks, David Ceballos, Rebecca Crook, Leea Crosgrove, Steele Devela, Dana Distefano, Greg Draper, Joseph Duffy and Tiare Onekea. Their instructor, Tony Sevilla, is at far right.

Basic Safety Training



STCW — Alaska fishermen who recently completed Basic Safety Training are (in alphabetical order) Wlozimierz Arendt, Luke Bradley, Allan Coloyan, Sean Dameron, Matthew Flickinger, Robert Hall, Ryan Johnson, Melvin Mitchell, Matthew Musslewhite, Steven Reiber, Martin Rogers, Russell Sawyer, Jeremy Williams and James Williamson.

Training in Hawaii



Basic Safety Training and Crowd Management — Class 2: Marc Siciliani, Trevyn Hiemann, Antonio Branco, Jodi Deprey, Nathan Morrow, Vanessa Culver, Jose Abreu, Jamison McIntyre, Elvis Ruiz, Catalina Carmona, Andrew Taylor, Stephen Lundquist, Gary Sutton and Grant Yates.



STCW — NCL: Lambert DeJesa, Jose Dossantos, Dale Gaddy, Roy Garretson, Maria Ghamarian, Cornelius Hall, Trevyn Hiemann, Stacey Ivey and Teri Johnson. (Note: Not all are pictured.)



Lifeboat — Class 1: Damon Woods, Emory Costanios, Scott Long, Lindsay Rudell, Mark de la Rosa, Allison Perlmutter, Ernest Nunes, Matthew Olsen, Matthew Kole, Cody Espaniola and their instructor, Joe Curtis.



STCW — NCL: Thomas Johnston, Anna Junkins, Edward Karkenny, Stille Keohokapu, Brian Landon, Luis Marez Jr., Christopher McCord Jr., Elias Melendez, Blake Moore, Jeffrey Reel, Stephanie Ross, Noah Rothfeder, Leilua Salima, James Sopel, James Spear, Robert Stanberry, Sterling Townes, Lawrence Ward and James Youmans II.



Basic Safety Training and Crowd Management — Class 3: Erwin Haumea, Trevor Maigret, Debra Wigham, Scott Hadell, Paula Braxton, Isagani Zabala, Grace Simon, Michael Wigham, Patricia Mathews-Malczon and Kari Jo Stilwell.



STCW — NCL, Jan. 28: Hector Perez, Nicholas Profeta, Leonardo Ramirez, Brad Redford, St. Elmo Riley, Scott Salazar, Cara Schachtel, Graydon Southard, Connie Sudo, Edward Tello, Adam Templeton, Ryan Tong, Bernie Villegas, Erwin Villegas, Michael Villegas, Kathleen Watson, Pamela Wood, Terron Wood and Margaret Young.



The

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Seafarers Log

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Attention Seafarers:
*Boost Your Industry.
Contribute to SPAD.*



Left: DEU Jesse Parente (left) and DEU Seddick Ali work aboard the *John J. Boland*.



The Great Lakes Towing tug *Wyoming* is docked at the SIU union hall in Algonac, Mich.



SA Ahmed Kaid
John J. Boland



In the pilothouse of the passenger ferry *Mackinac Express* is Capt. Keith Dufon. The *Mackinac Express* was at the Arnold Transit Co. dock in Mackinaw, Mich.



Second Cook Kathryn Hansen frosts a chocolate cake aboard American Steamship Co.'s *John J. Boland*.

At Work on the Great Lakes



AB Lucian Gravelle
John J. Boland



The *Buffalo* docks in Marysville, Mich.



OS Abdul Ghaleb
John J. Boland



Deckhand Ron Halberg
Corsair



James Sorenson is the captain aboard the Arnold Transit Co. freight ferry *Corsair*, which was docked at Mackinac Island, Mich.



The Great Lakes Towing tug *Virginia* assists in the port of Milwaukee, Wis.