

# The Seafarers Log

Official Publication of the Seafarers International Union • Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters/NMU, AFL-CIO

## MTD Maps Strategies To Boost Workers' Rights, American-Flag Fleet

During the winter meeting of its executive board, the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, closely looked at pressing issues affecting America's working families. The board adopted a number of statements designed to establish or reinforce its strategies for the weeks and months ahead. Several prominent guest speakers addressed the board Feb. 26-27 in Miami. Among those participating were (clockwise, starting with photo at top left) (left to right) U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie, General Duncan McNabb, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, and SIU President Michael Sacco; ITF Maritime Coordinator Stephen Cotton and SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel; and other board members and guests. Pages 3, 9-14.



## President Obama, Vice President Biden Reiterate Support For Working Families



## Reliable SIU Crew Helps Ensure Success of Operation Deep Freeze



Seafarers will go to the ends of the Earth to deliver their cargo, as recently evidenced by the crew of the USNS Gianella (above) in Operation Deep Freeze. The annual resupply mission to McMurdo Station in Antarctica went well, according to a report from the crew. Page 7.

AFL-CIO leaders recently heard strong words of support from President Barack Obama and VP Joe Biden (above, left, with SIU President Michael Sacco early last month). The encouraging messages were delivered during a meeting of the federation's executive council, on which President Sacco serves. A video address from President Obama kicked off the proceedings. During his remarks, the president reaffirmed his support for labor and voiced his agreement with the union movement's goals, including health care reform, industrial revitalization and passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). Page 5.

# President's Report

## Springing Forward

As we move into spring and the second quarter of 2009, there's no shortage of interesting news for the maritime industry or for the American labor movement.



Michael Sacco

One thing that hasn't changed with the seasons is discussion about the economy, which remains the number one topic all across the country. Everyone knows times are tough. And while it may seem impossible to fully understand the different stimulus packages and recovery programs, it's not hard to grasp the reality of massive layoffs and rising unemployment.

As I said last month, SIU-contracted companies aren't immune from this recession and neither is the union. But, we are taking the steps necessary to help ensure we ride out the storm. We are working cooperatively with our contracted operators, which is the norm anyway. We are working cooperatively with the other maritime unions to help make sure we're all on the same page. Again, that has also been the norm for a number of years.

In the bigger picture, we are remaining very active in the AFL-CIO as the labor federation acts to help improve the economy for America's working families. Part of those efforts are directed through the AFL-CIO's Maritime Trades Department, which plays a vital role promoting not only shipboard jobs but others related to the industry, such as shipyard and longshore work. Check out this month's *LOG* coverage of the most recent MTD meeting and you will quickly get an idea of why our affiliations and the department's work are so important to Seafarers.

### New Era in Credentialing

As Seafarers undoubtedly know by now, the TWIC deadline for mariners is finally here: April 15, 2009. Both the union as a whole and our individual members continue to make the best of it. We will go on with offering feedback and suggestions to the agencies and contractors involved in running the program. Meanwhile, if for some reason you've put off your enrollment, there's simply no time left to wait. The TWIC is part of what we have to deal with in order to do our jobs.

While the TWIC program has experienced a well-documented number of difficulties, the new merchant mariner qualification credential (MMC) seems to offer reason for cautious optimism. The MMC is the new document that will be phased in to replace our old z-cards or merchant mariner documents. The final rule for the MMC was issued last month, and while our industry (including the Coast Guard) is still sorting through and explaining what it all means, it appears that maritime labor's comments and concerns during the rulemaking process were taken seriously. I am knocking on wood as I say this, but if the MMC program is well-implemented, it has the potential to be a significant improvement for mariners (see article, page 4). When and if the TWIC program starts running smoothly – and I know that's a big "if" – it could mean in the long run a lighter burden than what our members currently face in terms of credentialing.

One step at a time, though. Get your TWIC if you haven't already done so, and be ready to make the switch to the new MMC when you're ready to renew or upgrade your z-card.

### Majority Sign-Up Legislation

Now that the Employee Free Choice Act has been reintroduced in both houses of Congress, anti-union factions have ramped up their misleading attacks on this basic legislation. For those who may have missed this point, contrary to what our opposition says, the bill would not eliminate secret-ballot elections in organizing campaigns. Instead, the legislation would leave it up to the workers to decide whether to vote by secret ballot or use the already legal majority sign-up process, which involves pledge cards.

I don't believe for one second that the businesses and other organizations opposing majority sign-up legislation are concerned about workers' rights. What they want is to continue dominating a system that currently gives all the power to the company.

It's time to level the playing field, and the Employee Free Choice Act will be a great step in that direction.



Two Chinese trawlers stop directly in front of the *USNS Impeccable*, forcing the ship to conduct an emergency "all stop" in order to avoid collision. The incident took place March 8 in international waters in the South China Sea. (U.S. Navy photo)

## Chinese Vessels Shadow, Harass Unarmed U.S. Surveillance Ship

A confrontation involving Chinese ships aggressively sailing around the SIU-contracted *USNS Impeccable* in March provided a stark reminder of how U.S. Merchant Mariners at times are on the front lines of global unrest and political maneuvering when working as part of America's fourth arm of defense.

The *Impeccable* is an oceanographic surveillance ship operated by Maersk Line, Limited for the U.S. Military Sealift Command. The ship was 70 miles south of Hainan Island conducting routine operations in international waters when five Chinese vessels shadowed and aggressively approached the *Impeccable* in the South China Sea.

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the incident began as the ships surrounded the *Impeccable* and two craft closed to within 50 feet. The Chinese ships included a Chinese navy intelligence collection ship, a Bureau of Maritime Fisheries patrol vessel, a State Oceanographic Administration patrol vessel and two small Chinese-flagged trawlers.

"We view these as unprofessional maneuvers by the Chinese vessels and violations under international law to operate with due regard for the rights and safety of other lawful users of the ocean," said Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman.

Crew members aboard the *Impeccable* used fire hoses to spray one of the vessels as a protective measure. The Chinese crew members then reportedly disrobed to their underwear and continued closing to within 25 feet.

The Chinese vessels dropped pieces of wood in the water directly in the *Impeccable's* path, and two of the ships stopped directly in the U.S. vessel's path, forcing it to stop.

Whitman said the Chinese used poles in an attempt to snag the *Impeccable's* towed acoustic array sonars. The *Impeccable's* master used bridge-to-bridge radio circuits to inform the Chinese ships in a friendly manner that it was leaving the area and requested a safe path to navigate.

"These are dangerously close maneuvers that these vessels engaged in," Whitman said.

The incident was the culmination of earlier harassment. On March 4, a Chinese patrol vessel shined a high-intensity spotlight on the *USNS Victorious*, operating in the Yellow Sea some 125 miles from China's coast. A day later, Chinese maritime aircraft "buzzed" the ship 12 times.

Additionally, a Chinese frigate crossed the bow of the *Impeccable* at a range of about 100 yards on March 5. Maritime aircraft also buzzed the ship after that incident.

Another Chinese ship challenged the *Impeccable* over bridge-to-bridge radio on March 7, calling its operations illegal and directing the American ship to leave the area or "suffer the consequences," officials said.

The *Impeccable* is one of six surveillance ships that gather underwater acoustical data, Whitman said. U.S. ships routinely operate in the area.

"We expect Chinese ships to act responsibly and refrain from provocative activities that could lead to miscalculation or a collision at sea, endangering vessels and the lives of U.S. and Chinese mariners," a Defense Department official said.

American embassy officials lodged a protest against these actions with the Foreign Ministry in China, and Defense Department officials have protested with the Chinese embassy in the U.S.

## Time's Up: Mariners Need TWIC by April 15

All mariners are reminded that the **15th of this month** (April 15, 2009) is the deadline for securing a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), issued by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

While informal SIU surveys show that most members were very responsive in getting their cards before the deadline, anyone without a TWIC as of April 15 should know that they won't be allowed unescorted access on ships or in ports, in accordance with the federal law mandating the credential.

TWIC applications must be submitted at TSA enrollment centers. Pre-enrollment is recommended and may be done via the agency's TWIC web site: [www.tsa.gov/twic](http://www.tsa.gov/twic). The overall process can take 45 or more days, so Seafarers who haven't secured their cards should get started right away.

Meanwhile, the TSA in February reported some follow-up information related to last year's power outage that took place at the main facility used for processing the cards. According to an agency communication, "The power outage that disrupted TWIC activations on Oct. 21, 2008 only affected our ability to reset PINs on cards activated prior to that date – if a person forgot his or her

PIN and subsequently locked their cards by attempting the PIN unsuccessfully 10 times. If your card was activated prior to October 2008 and you remember your PIN, you are fully able to use your card with a reader or entry-system that may require you to enter your PIN.

"If your card was activated prior to Oct. 21, 2008 and you have forgotten your PIN (and necessitate a PIN), you may request a replacement card, free of charge," the communication continued. "However, we recommend you visit an enrollment center to attempt your PIN before you do so. If your card is locked, you can request a replacement by contacting the TWIC Help Desk at 1-866-DHS-TWIC (1-866-347-8942) or at [TWIC.Helpdesk@gcrm.com](mailto:TWIC.Helpdesk@gcrm.com)."

The TSA asks cardholders who request a replacement to keep the original card until the replacement arrives, then exchange the old one for the replacement. This must be done at an enrollment center. If the old card isn't returned, according to the agency, applicants will be charged a \$60 "lost card" fee.

Individuals who activated their TWIC after October 2008 and who have forgotten their PIN may visit the nearest TWIC enrollment center and reset their PIN.

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MTD and SIU President Michael Sacco (photo left) notes that workers have support from President Obama and VP Biden. In the photo above, members of the executive board listen to remarks by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

# MTD Charts Course for Strengthening Workers' Rights, American-Flag Fleet

Promoting the U.S. maritime industry and pushing for enactment of the Employee Free Choice Act were two of the main topics discussed during the Maritime Trades Department's (MTD) recent executive board meeting in Miami.

Guest speakers from government, the military, business and labor addressed the board Feb. 26-27. Their supportive comments helped the board map out a pro-maritime, pro-worker strategy for the months ahead.

SIU President Michael Sacco also serves as president of the MTD, which is a constitutionally mandated department of the AFL-CIO. The MTD comprises 24 international unions (including the SIU) and 19 port maritime councils in the United States and Canada representing more than five million working men and women.

During his opening remarks, Sacco acknowledged that for America's working families, times are challenging but not hopeless. He said workers have the support of

President Obama and Vice President Biden, and recalled a recent meeting at the White House during which the president signed pro-labor executive orders.

He also repeated a public comment made by President Obama concerning unions and the economy: "We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests. I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem. To me, it's part of the solution."

With that kind of backing, Sacco stated, workers have reason for optimism.

In order of appearance, the following guest speakers addressed the board Feb. 26: AFL-CIO President John Sweeney; Communications Workers of America President Larry Cohen; General Dynamics NASSCO President Fred Harris; Overseas Shipholding Group Senior Vice President Capt. Robert Johnston; and International Transport Workers' Federation Maritime

Coordinator Stephen Cotton.

The next day, the following individuals spoke to the board: National Transportation Safety Board member Deborah Hersman; U.S. Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.); U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.); General Duncan McNabb, commander, U.S. Transportation Command; and U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii). NY Waterway President and CEO Arthur Imperatore and Seafarer **Vincent Lombardi** (a captain at NY Waterway) also informally addressed the board after receiving a commemorative ship's wheel honoring the company's role in the Miracle on the Hudson rescue.

The board approved 16 statements which detail much of the MTD's focus. (Many of those statements are summarized on page 14 of this edition of the *LOG*.)

*See pages 9-14 for full coverage of the MTD meeting*

## Members Approve 3-Year Pact at Great Lakes Dredge & Dock

Seafarers overwhelmingly have ratified a new three-year contract at Great Lakes Dredge & Dock (GLDD), according to SIU Vice President Contracts George Tricker.

Negotiations took place in mid-February and were followed by ratification aboard GLDD vessels later in the month.

The new agreement, which covers more than 100 members, calls for annual wage increases while maintaining "Core Plus" health benefits. The contract also boosts pay for overtime and vacation; secures a yearly stipend for eligible mariners for the U.S. Coast Guard fees associated with renewing and upgrading documents; and increases the clothing and shoe allowances as well as maintenance and cure.

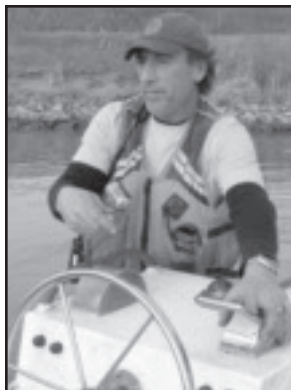
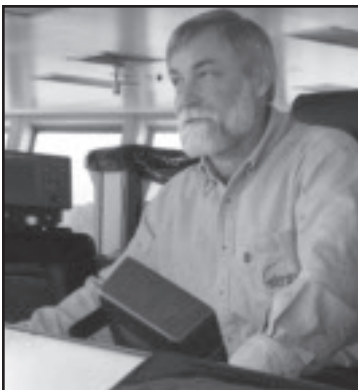
Representing the SIU during negotiations were Tricker, Patrolman Brian Guiry and Seafarers **Randy Beacham, Phil Kleinebreil, Duane Evans and Patrick Dollard**.

"We came out of it pretty good, I thought, and that seems to be the sentiments of everybody," said Beacham. "George did a fantastic job and everyone is happy with what we got. When you look at what we were up against, the way the economy is going, I think everybody was tickled with the contract."

Bosun **Mickey Earhart** described the agreement as "a real blessing. Everybody's happy about it. George did a good job, as always. Everyone involved with the negotiations did a good job, both on the union side and for the company."

Tricker commended the bargaining committee's work. He also noted that prior to the negotiations, "We received lots of input from the membership, which helped. All in all, negotiations resulted in an agreement that met our stated objectives of maintaining benefits, wage increases and job security."

Seafarers operate GLDD vessels primarily on the East and West coasts.



Clockwise from above, Seafarer Robert Ellingson aboard the hopper dredge *Terrapin Island* and Seafarer David Paradelas are two of the more than 100 SIU members covered by the three-year agreement. Tacoma Port Agent Joe Vincenzo (left) and Seafarer Darrel Hulin discuss key points of the new contract. Those taking part in negotiations in Piney Point, Md., in mid-February were (seated, from left) GLDD Project Site Manager Bill Murchison, SIU VP Contracts George Tricker, GLDD VP Bill Pagendam, GLDD Dredge Manager David Allen, (standing, from left) Patrolman Brian Guiry and Seafarers Randy Beacham, Patrick Dollard, Duane Evans and Phil Kleinebreil.



# MSC Accepts Delivery of Ammo Ship USNS Brashear from NASSCO

Additional tonnage on March 4 navigated its way into the SIU fold when the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command accepted delivery of the *USNS Carl Brashear* in California.

Built by San Diego-based General Dynamics NASSCO and designated T-AKE 7, the *Brashear* will be crewed by members of the SIU Government Services Division. The vessel is the seventh in the Lewis and Clark class of underway replenishment ships. Like her six sister ships which are already in the Navy fleet, she will be called upon to deliver ammunition, provisions, stores, spare parts, potable water and petroleum products to the Navy's underway carrier and expeditionary strike groups. Collectively, these missions will allow underway Navy vessels to stay at sea for extended periods.

The ship honors Master Chief Petty Officer Carl Brashear, who joined the U.S. Navy in 1948 and was a Navy pioneer, becoming one of the first African-Americans to graduate from the Navy Diving School and the first to qualify and serve as a master diver on active duty. After being severely injured in a diving accident, Brashear's leg was amputated. Almost two years later, after strenuous rehabilitation and rigorous testing, he became the first person to be certified or recertified to dive as an amputee.

Including the *Carl Brashear*, NASSCO now has delivered the first seven ships of the T-AKE class and has construction contracts for five additional ships. The Navy has also awarded contracts to NASSCO for the long-lead material for two more ships for a total class of 14 T-AKE vessels.

"As we pass the halfway mark for this highly successful, U.S. Navy auxiliary program, the performance of the NASSCO team and the ships have been outstand-

ing," said Frederick J. Harris, president of General Dynamics NASSCO. "As a result of numerous production and process improvements, we are delivering each hull more efficiently and with fewer man-hours than the previous one. And from all reports, the deployed ships have proven their ability to ably serve the fleet in their primary mission and in a variety of other roles."

Construction of the *USNS Carl Brashear* began in May 2007. NASSCO has incorporated international marine technologies and commercial ship-design features into the T-AKE class ships, including an integrated electric-drive propulsion system, to minimize operating costs during their projected 40-year service life.

With a cargo capacity of more than 10,000 tons, the primary mission of T-AKE ships is to deliver food, ammunition, fuel and other provisions from shore stations to combat ships at sea.

In a related development which will translate into still more new tonnage for the union-contracted fleet, Aker Philadelphia Shipyard on Feb. 23 cut steel on Hull 014, the tenth product tanker in the series of 12 to be built for SIU-contracted Overseas Shipholding Group (OSG).

Production of this latest vessel commenced a few days after the Feb. 19 delivery of Hull 010, *Overseas Boston*. When completed, the new tanker will be sold to American Shipping Company, and in turn, will be bareboat chartered to OSG America. Like its sister ships, the still unnamed MT-46 Veteran class product tanker will be diesel-powered, boast a length of slightly more than 600 feet and have a beam of approximately 105 feet. It will be able to transport more than 332,000 barrels of petroleum products and feature a "cruising speed" of 14.6 knots. The 46,000 dwt vessel will carry refined petroleum products.



The *USNS Carl Brashear* (T-AKE 7) launches into San Diego harbor during her Sept. 18, 2008 christening ceremony at General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego. (U.S. Navy Photo)

## Transition to New Mariner Credential Begins Mid-April

Beginning April 15, U.S. seamen who renew or upgrade their Coast Guard-issued z-card/merchant mariner document (MMD) will receive the new merchant mariner qualification credential (MMC) as a replacement. The MMC is a passport-style document that has been in the works for some time. It consolidates the Coast Guard credentials issued to merchant mariners into a single document.

The MMC program does not affect the legitimacy of currently valid z-cards/MMDs. As previously reported, the MMC will be phased in over the next five years. The program itself has been structured in conjunction with the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) so that, eventually, U.S. mariners will carry two documents: a TWIC and an MMC. It also has been set up to "reduce the burden on mariners by limiting the number of times they need to appear in person to provide fingerprints and proof of identity," according to the Coast Guard.

Indeed, the program eliminates the need for mariners to appear in person at a Coast Guard regional exam center (REC) provided they have applied for a TWIC (though they still have the option to go to an REC).

The individual cost of the MMC is \$45. The following text is taken directly from the final rule: "Under the current rule, applicants pay a \$45 issuance fee for each credential that they apply for. Under this rulemaking the applicants will only apply for a single credential (the MMC) and as a result will only be required to pay one \$45 issuance fee regardless of the number of endorsements that they carry. This change is not a reduction in any fee that a mariner must pay, but a reduction in the number of fees that the mariner must pay. Any

mariner that would, under the current rules, solicit multiple mariner qualifying documents (such as both an MMD and a license), will benefit from this change in the fee structure." (Besides the issuance fee, there will be an additional evaluation fee and an examination fee if applicable. Those fees vary.) (The cost of a TWIC is \$132.50.)

Since mid-March, when the MMC final rule was published in the Federal Register, the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center has issued several online communications providing details about the new credential, including sample images. Those bulletins along with the final rule itself are available on the SIU web site (in the "Heard at Headquarters" section) and also should be accessible at the union halls. Members are asked to periodically check the web site and/or contact their port agents for timely news about the MMC. Upcoming editions of the *Seafarers LOG* will include detailed updates on the program.

In one of its announcements from last month, the Coast Guard noted, "Under the previous regulations, the Coast Guard issued up to four credentials to a mariner: a merchant mariner's document (MMD), a merchant mariner's license (License), a certificate of registry (COR), and an International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) endorsement. Each credential served a separate purpose, thus creating the possibility that a mariner might need all four. The Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 added a requirement for all mariners to obtain a transportation security card, implemented by the Department of Homeland Security as the TWIC. Without a regulatory change, a mariner could have been

required to obtain up to five credentials, and to appear in person for duplicative applications.

"The Coast Guard is streamlining its mariner regulations and consolidating the four separate Coast Guard-issued credentialing documents into one merchant mariner credential (MMC). In addition to reducing the number of credentials a mariner will need to hold, this rule also eliminates redundant burdens and government processes."

Additionally, the agency offered the following points about the "relationship" between the MMC and the TWIC. Mariners are required to hold a TWIC as of April 15.

- The Coast Guard will use TWIC data received directly from TSA to determine the status of your TWIC. No mariner credentials will be issued without confirmation from TSA that an applicant has been approved to hold a TWIC.

- If you are applying for a merchant mariner credential you must have at least applied for your TWIC before the Coast Guard will accept your application. Your credential will not be issued until your TWIC is approved. There may be a minimal delay between the time you apply for your TWIC and the time that data is received by the Coast Guard. Therefore, you should apply for your TWIC in advance of your application for your merchant credential.

- If you are applying for your TWIC and mariner credential simultaneously, provide a copy of your TWIC application receipt with your credential application.

- A TWIC is not required in order to apply for or receive a document of continuity.

- You will need to ensure that the biographical data that you supply to TSA is

the same as what you provide the Coast Guard on your merchant mariner credential application. If the Coast Guard cannot reconcile the data provided by TSA, you may be asked to work with TSA to update your information.

- You will need to be identified as a Merchant Mariner in the TWIC system. This triggers TSA to provide your TWIC data to the Coast Guard.

- When you enroll/Pre-enroll for a TWIC with TSA you need to select Merchant Mariner as your occupation.

- For those that have already received their TWIC and did not "Self Identify" as a Merchant Mariner, or do not remember whether or not you self-identified, the NMC is working with TSA to automatically change your occupation field. The NMC anticipates that this will cover the vast majority of current mariners. It is, unfortunately, inevitable that there will not be matching data for every mariner due to variances in the data contained in either system (such as using slightly different name spellings to apply for your TWIC and your mariner credential). Therefore, TSA is setting up a help desk number that you will be able to call in order to manually switch your occupation field. This should only impact a small percentage of mariners and only when applying for their next Coast Guard issued credential. At that point, if the NMC does not have matching data from TSA regarding a valid TWIC you will be asked to call the TSA help desk.

- If you carry a valid TWIC while serving on a valid Merchant Mariner Credential you will not be impacted while sailing regardless of whether you hold any of the four previously issued credentials, the MMC or any combination thereof.

### Union Closes Boston Hall Permanently

The SIU's Boston hall permanently closed as of April 1 due to a lack of shipping activities, including a long decline in the fishing industry.

However, the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan will continue to operate the Boston-area clinic for membership use.

Boston registration cards are valid at the SIU hall in

Brooklyn, N.Y., which is located at 635 4th Avenue. Membership records from Boston will be transferred to the Brooklyn hall.

A complete list of SIU halls appears on page 16 of this month's *LOG* and also is available on the union's web site, [www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org).

# AFL-CIO Executive Council Welcomes Pledges of Support from Obama, Biden

A full slate of items highlighted the agenda March 3-5 during the AFL-CIO Executive Council's annual winter meeting, which took place in Miami.

Convening in the union hall of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 349, council members – including SIU President Michael Sacco – during the three-day conference addressed a wide variety of issues relating to reviving the nation's economy for working families, including growing good jobs, reforming health care, strengthening Social Security and revising the nation's trade practices.

According to union leaders, the economic recovery package is a good start to turning around America and putting workers back on the job. During their executive council meetings, they emphasized that rebuilding the nation's major economic engine—manufacturing—will require strong compliance with the Buy American provisions in the package.

A video address from President Obama kicked off the proceedings. During his remarks, the president reaffirmed his support for labor and voiced his agreement with several of the union movement's goals, including health care reform, industrial revitalization and passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA).

President Obama told the executive council that his administration has already started to change America on behalf of working people. "With your help, we passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan—the most sweeping economic recovery in our history," he said.

"I've always said that the gauge of our economic progress is clear: are we creating good jobs? Are we creating the kinds of jobs on which you can raise a family, own a home, afford college, save for retirement?" he continued. "That's why this plan is so important. It will create or save three-and-a-half million jobs over the next two years—and it will do so by putting Americans to work doing the work that America needs done."

The president then reiterated his support of labor by stating, "I want to repeat something that those of you who joined us for the Task Force announcement heard me say: I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem. To me, and to my administration, labor unions are a big part of the solution. We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests – because we cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement."

Making her first public appearance since being confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Labor Secretary Hilda Solis attended the meetings. During her remarks to the council, she vowed to fully enforce the laws that protect workers. The labor secretary, who was one of the first supporters in Congress for the EFCA, also said she would work to pass and then enforce the legislation if it becomes law.

Vice President Joe Biden also made an appearance at the meetings. The vice president told executive council members that returning our economy to health means restoring the basic right to join a union and bargain collectively. And the way to do that, he said, is by passing the EFCA. He quoted President Obama by saying, "I don't buy the argument that providing



SIU President Michael Sacco (right) and International Union of Operating Engineers President Vince Giblin serve on the federation's executive council along with other labor leaders.



Pictured during a break are (from left) AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka, SIU President Michael Sacco, U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and United Steelworkers of America President Leo Gerard.

workers with collective bargaining rights somehow weakens the economy or worsens the business environment.

"If you've got workers who have decent pay and benefits, they also are customers for your business," Biden said. "So let me add to that and say that I have a simple, basic belief, one that we're going to work hard to put into action: If a union is what you want, a union you're entitled to have."

The vice president also quoted AFL-CIO President John Sweeney's recent remarks in his column which addressed basic truths that should guide the AFL-CIO during the upcoming year. "We can't fix the economy by hurting workers. Rescuing the economy will require investments in jobs, infrastructure, health care," Biden said. "When you're in a deep hole, you need a long ladder. Rebuilding our broken economy gives us the opportunity to get it right and reward workers. Progressive, pro-family, pro-worker candidates won. So isn't it time that we have progressive, pro-worker, pro-family priorities that win, too?"

The vice president, who heads the White House Task Force on the Middle Class, told the council the Obama administration is dedicated to rebuilding the nation's middle class.

"You can't have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement," he said. "We will judge the success or failure of our administration at the end of our four years, based on whether or not the standard of living of the middle class has increased or not. That's the bottom-line measure. And guess what? Neither one of us believes it can get better without you getting stronger."

"For too long," Biden said, "we've failed to have a White House that puts families front and center in our economic policies. That's why the Obama economic recovery program focuses on jobs and the administration is pushing for real health care reform."

The vice president concluded by saying that the Obama-Biden team would never have won without the support of working families.

The council adopted a number of action statements during the business portions of the meetings. Included was a statement calling for passage of the EFCA to help boost the economy by restoring workers' freedom to form unions and bargain for better wages and benefits. The full text of that statement read as follows:

"For more than a dozen years, we have worked and struggled to create the environment and the political climate in which we could pass serious labor law reform to restore workers' freedom to form unions and bargain collectively.

"We realized that we could not arrest the decline in living standards, nor save the middle class, nor lift working families from poverty until those freedoms were restored. And now our collective efforts to build support for the Employee Free Choice Act have brought us closer than we have been in a generation to

ensuring the freedom of workers to form unions and bargain collectively for a better life.

"The next few weeks are critical, as we fight to realize our long-held goal and the dreams of a better life for millions of working families. We share with our new president, the congressional majority and America's workers the essential goal of building an economy that works for all.

"We know this is our time to win back these fundamental freedoms. We cannot wait, defer or equivocate. We must act with the urgency created by an historical opportunity for change.

"We also know that those who have always opposed workers' rights, freedoms and advancement—the radical right wing and corrupt, corporate bullies—will fight us with everything they have and every advantage they can employ. They have spent vast sums and will spend even more—up to \$300 million.

"But our determination, will and urgency to act will overcome their wealth. We will:

Raise the necessary funds for the Employee Free Choice Act media fund, so we can effectively counter the misinformation campaign of the corporations. AFL-CIO affiliates already have raised significant resources. We will endeavor to voluntarily contribute \$2.50 per member to counter the corporate onslaught.

Commit to ramp up a nationwide grassroots campaign. In each priority state we commit to release staff to work together to meet our ambitious member mobilization goals, coordinate with allies and reach senators in their home states.

Build off our very successful Million Member Mobilization to move our members. We commit to engage and activate 1 percent of our membership each month in priority states to make calls and write letters to members of Congress to ensure their support for the Employee Free Choice Act. Executive Council members will reach out to our members and leaders in priority states through calls, letters and visits to achieve our goals.

Continue our outreach to our employers to garner their support for the Employee Free Choice Act."

The council also adopted statements on many other issues including financial regulation, senior housing, bank bailouts, job growth, trade with China, health care reform, retirement security and more.

All of those statements are available in their entirety on the AFL-CIO's web site at [www.aflcio.org/aboutus/thisistheaf-cio/ecouncil/](http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/thisistheaf-cio/ecouncil/).

The AFL-CIO Executive Council meets at least twice a year to consider important union-movement business and policies. The council regularly issues statements on legislative measures affecting the interests of working families, ongoing struggles for justice for workers and more.

## U.S. Unemployment Rate Tops 8 Percent

Nationwide employment and the economy continued on their slippery slope during the first two months of 2009, according to the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Employment fell sharply during those months – by 651,000 – raising the unemployment rate from 7.6 percent to 8.1 percent. Those figures reflect a net loss of 2.6 million

jobs nationwide in the past four months.

Overall, according to government data, 12.5 million Americans were out of work.

The scale of many recent layoffs further reflects their severity. The BLS also recently reported that in January, employers took 2,227 mass layoff actions which resulted in the separation of 237,902 workers. Each of those layoffs involved at least 50 workers.

These numbers do not reflect the millions of Americans who have faced furloughs and pay cuts since the beginning of the recession. For those remaining employed, the BLS reports an increase in average hourly earnings of .3 percent. However,

that gain has been offset by a .3 percent increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in January. The CPI measures the prices consumers pay for goods.

Home prices are also taking a hit. The S&P/Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price Index shows that the price of homes fell 18.2 percent during the final quarter of 2008, the biggest decline in the index's 21-year history. (That index measures the change in value of the U.S. residential housing market.)

One concern associated with the loss of value on homes is that most Americans have accumulated little or no wealth, or have lost money due to the lack or loss of equity in their homes.

# Ferry Crews Receive Public Service Awards

## America Recognizes NY Waterway Mariners for Rescue on Hudson River

America recently hailed some of the heroes of the Miracle on the Hudson, as a ceremony took place at a NY Waterway Terminal in New York on Feb. 18. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen were among those who honored more than 100 "Good Samaritan" mariners, many of whom are SIU members employed by NY Waterway.

The mariners received U.S. Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Awards for their key roles in the overall



DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano commends those involved in the rescue.

rescue of 155 passengers and crew from U.S. Airways Flight 1549, which crash-landed in the Hudson River on Jan. 15.

During the ceremony, Secretary Napolitano said the rescue brought forth a strong sense of community. "The rescue reflects so many of the things we want to build on," she stated.

Captain of the Port of New York Robert O'Brien praised the Samaritans' training. "It's their years of getting ready to do what they did to make sure everything happened precisely the way it did," he noted.

He also reflected on the mariner's rescue efforts during 9/11.

"It was not a coincidence that these boat operators were there and knew what to do," O'Brien said.

The Coast Guard awarded the SIU group and NY Waterway its highest civilian honors for rescuing 143 of the survivors. During the presentation, NY Waterway President and Chief Executive Officer Arthur Imperatore said, "It was our people who did the job. They are highly trained and very committed."

Local Representative Michael McMahon (D-Statens Island) added extra emphasis to the importance of the rescuers by saying, "They not only saved lives but reminded us of the goodness in humanity."

Concerning the training and professionalism of the responders, Napolitano said, "The rescue also reminds us of the importance of training and exercising



SIU VP Atlantic Coast Joseph Soresi (far left in photo above) is pictured with NY Waterway crew members (left to right), Deckhand Pepe Carumba, Deckhand Honorio Rabanes, Captain Brittany Catanzaro, Deckhand Nestor Martinez, Deckhand Jose Torres, Captain John Winiarski, Deckhand Gregorio Pages, Deckhand Wilfredo Rivera and Captain Vincent Lombardi. In photo at right, VP Labor Relations for NY Waterway Burton Trebour (left), joins Captain Vincent Lombardi and Soresi



Winiarski and Mohamed Gouda and Deckhands Honorio Rabanes, Wilfredo Rivera, Luis Salerno, Danny Convery, Natale Binetti, Giulio Farnese, Osman Berete, Cosmo Mezzina, Frank Illuzi, Jose Torres, Pepe Carumba and Gregorio Pages.

before the fact. First responders at all levels must know what to do when it comes time to execute a mission – because seconds count. The successful rescue of Flight 1549 is a case in point."

As previously reported, Seafarers involved in the rescue included the following: Captains Vincent Lombardi, Manny Liba, Brittany Catanzaro, John

## CIVMAR-Manned USNS Bridge Wins Environmental Award

A vessel crewed by SIU CIVMARS recently earned recognition for its environmental efficiency.

In late February, the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) reported that the *USNS Bridge* (manned in the unlicensed positions by members of the SIU Government Services Division) is a winner of the fiscal year 2008 Chief of Naval Operations Environmental Quality Small Ship Award.

The *Bridge* is one of MSC's four fast combat support ships that replenish Navy vessels at sea with fuel, ammunition, food and other cargo.

According to the agency, the 754-foot ship, which currently operates out of San Diego and has a total crew of 170, including a small contingent of active-duty Navy sailors along with civil service mariners, was cited for "the crew's work in preventing pollution, ensuring readiness in responding to environmental issues, conserving resources and complying with environmental regulations."

In announcing the award, MSC noted, "While the ship voluntarily met standards stricter than required by the Navy, each mariner received special training in environmental management, used

environmentally friendly chemicals and conducted monthly spill drills. In two years, *Bridge*, under the command of civil service master Capt. Jeffrey Siepert, transferred 182.7 million gallons of fuel without a significant mishap."

Other accomplishments by mariners aboard the *Bridge* have included optimizing boiler operations to reduce fuel consumption by 1,000 gallons per day, and managing the ship's successful programs for solid waste disposal and recycling.

According to MSC, "The chief of naval operations environmental awards recognize ships, installations, and individuals or teams for their environmental stewardship. As a result of this selection, *Bridge* will compete in the secretary of the Navy environmental awards."

John P. Quinn, acting director of the CNO Environmental Readiness Division, extended his congratulations and noted that the winners' and nominees' "sustained commitment to environmental excellence is an integral party of Navy operations and is essential to overall Navy mission accomplishment."

The award is slated to be presented at a ceremony in June in Washington, D.C.



The *USNS Bridge*, pictured late last year in the Pacific Ocean with a Sea Hawk helicopter, performs an ammo off-load with the aircraft carrier *USS Ronald Reagan*. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Chelsea Kennedy)

## Maersk Ships Achieve Safety Milestones in Late 2008



The prepositioning ship *SSG Edward A. Carter Jr.* has operated for six years without a lost time accident.

Earlier this year, SIU-contracted Maersk Line, Limited (MLL) reported that the prepositioning ship *LTC John U.D. Page* had "marked an extraordinary safety milestone" in the final days of 2008.

Specifically, the company noted, "The ship's crew celebrated seven years of operations without suffering a lost time accident (LTA). An LTA is defined as an accident that results in a crew member sustaining an injury requiring him or her to miss at least one shift of work. The number of LTAs occurring aboard a ship are a maritime industry standard for measuring safety performance."

The *Page* is named for LTC John U.D. Page, a U.S. Army officer who earned the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War in 1950.

In announcing the achievement, Maersk further reported, "Extended time periods operating LTA-free are a key safety goal among the ships in the MLL fleet. *Page's* sister ship, *SSG Edward A. Carter Jr.*, the other MLL-operated ammunition preposi-

tioning ship in the U.S. Military Sealift Command's prepositioning program, has been operating for six years without an LTA."

In fact, the *Carter* and *Page* are among seven MLL owned or operated ships (all with SIU crews) that have been operating for at least six years without an LTA. That group also includes the *USNS Effective* at seven years and the *USNS Impeccable*, *CPL Louis J. Hauge*, *Maersk Rhode Island* and *Maersk Tennessee* each at six years.

In a news release, the company noted, "Preventing LTAs through constant care, awareness, and safety education is a key component of MLL's company-wide safety program, 'Drive to Zero.' The program's name is derived from its stated goal of ensuring shipboard safety by striving to eliminate all accidents."

One component of the program is a series of safety "boot camps" conducted at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, for Maersk crews and shore-side personnel.



Research on behalf of the National Science Foundation is conducted at McMurdo Station (above). The USNS *Gianella* (right) delivers critical supplies to the station.



## Steward Recalls Antarctic Journey

### USNS *Gianella* Delivers Vital Supplies to McMurdo Station

*Editor's note: Chief Steward Karl Meyer, assisted by fellow crew members, submitted this article and the accompanying photos.*

Once again, the USNS *Lawrence H. Gianella*, operated by Ocean Ships Inc. for the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC), participated in Operation Deep Freeze 2009. This is an annual resupply mission to the National Science Foundation's facility at McMurdo Station Antarctica.

The SIU-crewed *Gianella* delivered more than 9 million gallons of fuel needed for the coming year to operate the base's aircraft, vehicles and power plant. Departing the West Coast in early October, stops included Pearl Harbor; Ulsan, Korea; Guam; Singapore; Diego Garcia; Souda Bay, Crete, Greece. The vessel arrived in the Ross Sea from Fremantle, Australia, on Jan. 22 and was assisted by the Swedish icebreaker *Oden* through the shelf ice and ice channel into McMurdo.

Prior to Fremantle, the ship also had on board a 12-person U.S. Navy "embarked security team" (EST). They provided 24-hour armed security for the vessel during its transit through the pirate-infested waters of the Gulf of Aden and also during its two transits of the Suez Canal. The vessel returned to Diego Garcia and the EST disembarked just after Christmas for their next assignment.

The steward department showed their can-do spirit and attitude, feeding the expanded crew of 38 including the EST plus an SIU apprentice and two cadets. They also had the privilege of preparing a meal for U.S. TRANSCOM Commander Gen. Duncan McNabb and his staff, who were hosted by the ship's master, Capt. William Taylor, for a tour and dinner while pier side in McMurdo.

The members of the engine department used some down time to perform scheduled maintenance on the main engine and while monitoring the offload also had the opportunity to transfer some much-needed

fuel to the icebreaker *Oden* as it was tied up alongside.

Crew members also took advantage of the sub-freezing weather to empty and clean out the ship's freezer. All departments pitched in for this endeavor.

On a lighter note, AB **Jeff Pearce** literally took the plunge when he braved the frigid waters and joined the annual "Polar Plunge" hosted by the New Zealand-operated Scott Base (located nearby). Also, there was ample time to buy some souvenirs, hike up to Observation Hill, and visit the Discovery Hut, also known as Scott's Hut, which was built in 1901 and is as preserved today as it was then.

After departing the ice on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January, the *Gianella* stopped in Gladstone, Australia, for bunkers and provisions before heading back to the Gulf Coast to complete its five-month journey to the Antarctic.

SIU members sailing aboard the *Gianella* during the voyage to McMurdo Station included the following: ABs **Jay Aki, Clifford Cronan, Jason Devine, Bernard Essiful, Mark Mahoney** and Pearce; QMEDs **Austin Parker** and **James Summer**; Pumpman **Darrell McDonald**; DEUs **Rodolfo Caldo** and **Vicente Ordonez**; GSUs **Budiman Chandra** and **Luis Valerio**; Chief Steward Meyer; Chief Cook **Mario Fernandez** and UA **Jesus Sifuentes**.



The deck department (photo above, left) included ABs Cliff Cronan, Jason Devine, Bernard Essiful and Jeff Pearce. Chief Steward Karl Meyer (left in photo above right) and AB Jeff Pearce check on stores.



The Swedish icebreaker *Oden* (photo at immediate left) leads the way to McMurdo Station. As evidenced by the photo above, the *Gianella* sails through some rough weather after leaving the base.



Clockwise, from photo at immediate left, members of the engine gang team up for a task while Pumpman Darrell McDonald makes the best of his icy surroundings. Connected to a safety line, AB Jeff Pearce does his part to foster international relations by taking the "Polar Plunge," hosted by the New Zealand-operated Scott Base, which is located near McMurdo Station. In photo above, Members of a U.S. Navy security team, pictured with a few crew members, help ensure safe transit.



Electrician Apprentice Carmelo Collazo (standing) gets hands-on instruction by USNS Wright Electrician QEE Gary Torres.

# Union-Affiliated School Tests Electrician Apprenticeship Program

Seafarers who want to become marine electricians have an opportunity to “fast track” their careers through a program being tested by the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, based in Piney Point, Md. The school has begun testing an electrician apprentice program to move qualified mariners into electrician careers faster while maintaining a quality training regimen after the U.S. Maritime Administration (MarAd) identified a shortage of marine electricians in the industry.

Paul Hall Center Director of Training J.C. Wiegman noted, “The electrician program allows someone from our junior engineer program to accelerate by going aboard ship and – upon successful completion of a package of electrician skills while working with electricians – he or she is evaluated. After 90 days and completion of

the skills, the student returns to the school for the electrician program. Finally, upon completion of the marine electrician program, the candidate will be able to sail in an electrician capacity.”

He added, “Another phase of training is being considered to gain electrician specialties in one of three areas: container electrician, crane maintenance electrician or electronics maintainer.”

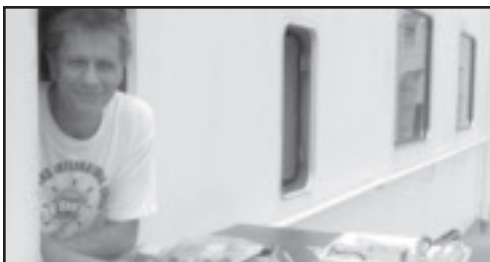
Paul Hall Center Technical Instructor Jay Henderson explained the selection process to have an opportunity for the program is vigorous. “It’s performance-based and a student must have outstanding course grades and superior performance in the hands-on portion of the course work for consideration,” he said.

**Carmelo Collazo** is the first electrician student so far to go through the new program. He is from Norfolk and spent two

years in construction before he answered the sea’s call.

While serving recently on board the USNS Wright, Collazo said, “This has been the greatest experience of my life. The apprentice program gave me the opportunity to go right to work with experienced electricians in actual working conditions. I feel like as soon as I shipped out I made a real difference because you don’t just follow behind electricians to watch what they do – you’re expected to roll your sleeves up and work on the ship. I’ve met some great people who would bend over backwards to help and teach if you’re willing to listen and give the job your all.”

Collazo gained experience on three separate ships before completing the program’s requirements. He’s now back at the school, well-prepared to complete the marine electrician course.



Recertified Steward Charles Curley (above) gets a breath of fresh air through a galley portal of the *Green Ridge*. The Seafarers-crewed vessel (photo at right) recently delivered commercial and military cargoes in the Middle East.



## Paul Hall Center Course Spotlight

The SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, based in Piney Point, Md., offers a wide variety of vocational and academic courses. Classes are available to upgraders and entry-level students. The following is a brief description of an upgrading course offered at the school, which opened in 1967.

Turn to page 21 for a list of upcoming course dates. Additional course descriptions were published in the January 2009 edition of the *Seafarers LOG*; they also are available on the web at [www.seafarers.org/phc](http://www.seafarers.org/phc)

### Conveyorman

The course of instruction leading to certification as a conveyorman includes a detailed look at the types of self-unloaders and their development; conveyor belt construction and types; belt adjustments; belt splicing procedures and practical application; reduction gear units; related electrical AC and DC systems; practical troubleshooting; electrical test equipment; power failure testing; hydraulic theory; practical hydraulic troubleshooting; pipefitting and threading; gate construction, maintenance and operation; and oxy-acetylene cutting and electric arc welding practical training.



## AB Aboard Green Ridge Recalls Poignant Moment

*Editor’s note: The following article and accompanying photos were submitted in late February by Second Mate Miri Skoriak.*

The SIU-contracted PCTC *Green Ridge* has just completed a 68-day round trip from the U.S. East Coast to various ports in the Middle East, delivering commercial and military vehicles.

The return passage took us around Cape of Good Hope and featured the great summer weather the Southern Hemisphere had to offer. Sunday dinners were served outdoors, bringing all crew members together for a relaxed evening on steel beach.

One of our crew members is AB Sheldon “Shel” Privin, who started sailing years ago after serving four years’ active duty in the U.S. Air Force. His first ship was the *General Haan*, a converted C-4 cargo ship.

Since his first days on ships, AB Privin has seen many changes in the industry, but the most welcome and significant ones are the upgrades in living conditions (single rooms) and the improvement of the attitude of shipboard personnel relating to friendliness, courtesy and respect.

AB Privin is full of great sea stories but the following is the one he considers the best:

“Aboard the *General Haan*, we sailed from New York to Bremerhaven to pick up Hungarians who had escaped and received political asylum in Austria in the failed revolt against Communist oppression. The United States and other nations had agreed to a resettlement program.

“On the return trip, we sailed into a major winter storm requiring the ship to divert south to the Canary Islands. It was a 14-day hellish crossing for the Hungarians, who had never even seen an ocean. The ship rolled heavily; people were sick and fearful. Finally reaching New York harbor, the passengers arose early at 0400 on a clear, cold winter morning to see the Statue of Liberty. In silence and awe they viewed Miss Liberty with tears streaming down their faces. Remembering that my parents, having emigrated from Europe many years before and having sailed into New York had seen the same sight was a poignant moment, and a reminder how lucky I am to be an American.”

AB Privin would like to make a note of the mariners, union officials and company marine office personnel who personally extended themselves and gave him a fair shake. “My thanks and deep appreciation to you all,” he says.

On behalf of the crew of the *Green Ridge*, I’d like to thank AB Privin for the inspiration and his good fellowship and wish him many more years on the oceans.



Crew members (photo above) take advantage of good weather by enjoying an outdoor meal. In photo at right, AB Sheldon Privin takes the wheel.







U.S. Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb, commander, U.S. Transportation Command (standing at left), tells MTD board members and guests about the agency's operations.

## **Commander Cites Crucial Labor 'Partnership'** *Sees Relationship Between Transportation Command, Maritime as Valuable to Nation*

The commander of the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) told the Maritime Trades Department executive board that the effective working relationship shared by TRANSCOM and American maritime labor remains extremely valuable to the nation.

U.S. Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb cited the longstanding, positive relationship between the MTD and TRANSCOM. He said that today, as both entities work to ensure the continued viability of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the relationship "couldn't be better, and I couldn't depend on it more as the TRANSCOM commander. When I first took over, I said, of all the things I need to protect, it is that U.S.-flag fleet."

TRANSCOM is the division of the military which oversees the global

movement of goods and materiel to our troops. Its components include the U.S. Military Sealift Command as well as the Air Mobility Command, and the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. On its web site, the agency reports that its "total wartime capability consists of a diverse force: 51,853 active duty; 88,089 reserve and Guard, and 16,606 civilian personnel.

Similarly, USTRANSCOM relies on its commercial partners to meet 88 percent of continental U.S. land transport, 50 percent of global air movement, and 64 percent of global sealift."

McNabb gave a detailed presentation in which he described TRANSCOM's numerous operations. He also repeatedly praised the performance and reliability of the nation's mariners, and thanked MTD and SIU President Michael Sacco for his support.

The general also offered high praise for the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, which he has visited. Speaking about the Piney Point, Md.-based facility and its people, he said the "professionalism is amazing. This is a world-class education to get the folks up to a certain level, and then you continue that train-

the supply chain."

Looking at the big picture where TRANSCOM and the nation are concerned, McNabb said, "The stakes couldn't be higher." He recalled being in the Pentagon on 9/11, not far from where the airplane hit.

"If they could have killed 30,000 that day or 300,000 or 3 million, they

***"The ability to immediately surge is based on having trained merchant mariners ready, and you have done that. What a difference that has made..." - - - U.S. Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb, commander, U.S. Transportation Command***

ing, and I know (it) not only takes care of individuals but also their families."

Addressing Sacco, he said it was an honor to attend the MTD meetings "and not only say thanks to you, but to our great merchant mariners."

McNabb discussed some of the agency's sealift assets, which include prepositioning ships, Ready Reserve Force vessels and other features available through the voluntary intermodal sealift agreement, abbreviated as VISA. Describing the overall maritime capabilities, he stated, "I can't tell you how much we as a nation depend on that. You all do superbly, and I just want to say thanks (for) what you do every day."

Illustrating the historic importance of, and sacrifices made by, the merchant marine, the general recalled the Battle of Atlantic, when German U-boats initially had a field day against unarmed American-flag merchant ships. His point: "If you can stop the supplies, you basically can stop the operation. As we think about Iraq and Afghanistan, we have to bring everything to bear to make sure that doesn't happen...."

"We will make sure that we get the forces in. What you all do is the absolute key to all of this. In many cases it is the commercial side in which we can get stuff through in ways that we couldn't do militarily. You do it day in and day out, and it is awesome. You do it despite attacks on

would have done it, and they would still do that, if they could," he said. "We've got to stop them.... It is a battle about the future of mankind."

He also said he definitely counts civilian mariners among those who answered the call following the attacks.

Today, he continued, U.S. capability to deploy and sustain troops is unsurpassed. "I would say that it is one of the crown jewels that we have in the nation's defense." The same holds true for humanitarian missions including disaster relief, he added.

The commercial sector "makes up a large amount of our capability," McNabb explained. "We depend on it, and it also saves us a lot of money because then we don't have to own it.... Because we have such great industry partners, we learn from you. We take the best from industry."

He concluded by noting that TRANSCOM's emphasis is on serving the war fighter, who only cares that the materiel arrives on time and as needed.

"The ability to immediately surge is based on having trained merchant mariners ready, and you have done that. What a difference that has made, because when the time is to go, you can't say, 'Yeah, I'm going to have that for us in about six months.' When the president says, 'I need to go now,' we've got to be ready to go, and the (maritime supply) bridge is the first thing."



Gen. Duncan McNabb, U.S. TRANSCOM commander, thanks U.S. mariners for their reliability and dedication.

# 'A Time of Great Opportunity'

## Congressmen Pledge Continuing Support For Maritime, other Pro-Worker Issues

The three congressional representatives who spoke at the MTD meeting covered numerous topics, but each one emphasized opportunities for progress under the new administration.

U.S. Reps. Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii), James Clyburn (D-S.C.) and Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) said they will continue supporting America's working families, including the nation's mariners. They also said that the elections last November of a pro-labor administration and Congress signal a beginning rather than an ending.

Abercrombie, chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Air and Land Forces, went so far as to say it isn't too soon to look ahead to the next election year. He and other speakers said the reality of today's Senate is that it takes 60 votes, not 51, to ensure passage of legislation. With that in mind, and pointing to the Employee Free Choice Act, Abercrombie told the board, "I want everybody in here dedicating themselves to 2010 and the elections so that we have an overwhelming majority of pro-labor members of the House and Senate so we can pass this legislation.

"This is a time of great opportunity. What we need to do is what labor has always done. What we need to do is what labor does best: cool eye, cool head, organize. Zero in on these next elections so we can get 60-plus votes in there and we don't have to worry about that in the Senate. Zero in on those states – those elections in those states."

Abercrombie said he believes the government can and should do more to support the U.S. Merchant Marine. Overall, he wants the U.S. to increase its emphasis on creating and sustaining good jobs in all sectors.

For example, he asked, "How can you export anything if you don't have a manufacturing base? How can you export anything if you don't have an industrial base that you're going to support? They call it subsidies; I call it investment. I want to see people working."

A sound domestic energy policy is another way out of tough economic times, he stated.

"We're sending \$700 billion a year out of the country, to nations around the world, to get our energy – our natural gas

and our oil – instead of developing ourselves," Abercrombie said. "We've got to have a comprehensive program that labor has to back, and vote for members of Congress who are going to (support) energy independence in this country."

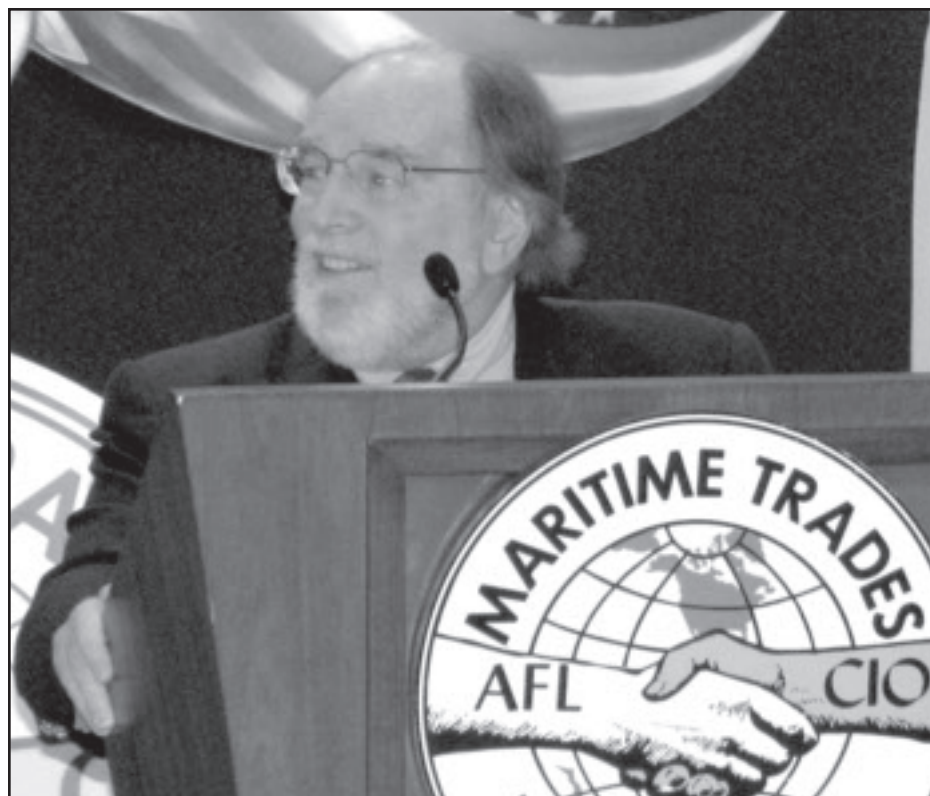
Clyburn, the House Majority Whip, also focused some of his remarks on energy.

"We've got to create jobs," Clyburn stated. "I like one of your mottos: your favorite four-letter word is J-O-B-S. For those of us who are supporters of the labor movement, we've got to look at ways to make our economy work by creating new, lasting jobs. And I believe the biggest job creator going forward is to have a comprehensive energy plan.

"That energy plan cannot be limited to wind and solar and bio-diesel," he continued. "I get a lot of flack for this, but I'm a big proponent of nuclear energy. That's where the jobs are, that's where the security is, that's where the safety for our environment is. Working together, we will have a sustainable job creation energy program for the future."

Turning his attention to health care, Clyburn noted, "We want to make sure that nobody falls through the cracks. If you have a plan that says that 2 million people may still fall through the cracks, we have to have a safety net for that. The most expensive health care that you can get is in the emergency room and too many people are going to the emergency rooms for their health care. Let's broaden, let's expand, let's fund these community health centers. The (economic) recovery package makes a big down payment on making sure that happens."

Thompson is chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee. He noted the numerous difficulties associated with implementing the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program and said, "We're going to make sure that the readers actually read. We will make sure that whatever problems have come up in the process of getting your TWIC card, we will correct it. We have committed ourselves to doing case work and we've been making people open their offices. We've heard about your members getting there and the offices are closed, your members sitting there six to eight hours unable to



U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii) believes the nation should boost its emphasis on creating and maintaining good jobs.

get the card and then being told to come back the next day. We're correcting all of that. I encourage you to let us know at the committee because we're here to help."

Speaking about port security in general, Thompson said the most valuable component is people.

"Port security continues to be a priority but we need your help," he stated. "Don't let anybody tell you that technology is really the answer. You know it's the eyes and ears of your memberships that work in the ports that's better security than any technology, because your members know what's going on. We take the position that port security is a

combination of technology and eyes and ears at the ports.

"In addition to that, the Jones Act – we're going to protect it but we're going to take it one step further," he added.

"We're going to make sure when times of national emergency happen we won't let the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA waive the Jones Act so foreign-flag vessels can come in."

He concluded, "My office doors are always open, and every opportunity I get to raise the flag of labor, I do. I want to make sure that management understands that labor is the key to whatever success they have on their side and that partnership should exist."



U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) vows to continue backing the Jones Act.



MTD President Michael Sacco (right) welcomes U.S. Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.).

# AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department 2009 Executive Board Meeting



MTD and SIU President Michael Sacco (right in photo at left) looks on with pride as Captain Vincent Lombardi recalls parts of the "Miracle on the Hudson." In photo above, guests and delegates listen attentively to the proceedings.

## MTD At a Glance

The Maritime Trades Department is a constitutionally mandated department of the AFL-CIO. It consists of 24 international unions (including the SIU) and 19 port maritime councils in the United States and Canada representing more than five million working men and women.

The MTD executive board met Feb. 26-27 in Miami, where

board members and guests examined key issues facing not only the maritime industry but all working families. The articles on pages 9-14 are based on remarks and policy statements given at the meeting. The photos accompanying this text show some of the board members and guests, including rank-and-file SIU members.



David Durkee  
BCTGM Sec.-Treasurer



Warren Fairley  
Boilermakers International VP



Bernard Hostein  
Steelworkers Asst. to President



Lynn Tucker  
Machinists General VP



Richard Hughes  
ILA President



John Ryan  
GMP President



Dan Kane  
Mine Workers Sec.-Treasurer



Don Keefe  
MEBA President



Bill Lucy  
AFSCME Sec.-Treasurer



Michel Desjardins  
SIU of Canada Executive VP



Roman Gralewicz  
SIU of Canada President



Robert Scardelletti  
TCU President



Rank-and-file Seafarers took in the meeting and posed for this photo with SIU officials. Members in the photo include Irma Palma, Gazapata Nicholls, Fernando Domenicale, Gerard Rogers, David Marquez, Lester Barclay, Benjamin Wilson, Cesar Collantes, Wilson Peniston, Vasil Cholakovski, Cecil Scipio, Nicholas Vieira, Errol Mullings, Basic McMillan, Dan Brown and Bob Egri. SIU officials in the photo are President Mike Sacco, Executive VP Augie Tellez, Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel, VP Contracts George Tricker and Asst. VP Ambrose Cucinotta.



Gunnar Lundberg  
SUP President



Anthony Poplawski  
MFOW President

# Tough Times, but New Tonnage Still Coming

Despite rough economic times, there's still positive news about the U.S.-flag fleet's future, including new tankers being built in Pennsylvania and California.

That message was part of separate but similarly heartening addresses given to the MTD on Feb. 26 by Fred Harris, president of General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard, and Capt. Robert Johnston, senior vice president of SIU-contracted Overseas Shipholding Group.

Both speakers stressed that cooperation from all segments of the maritime industry remains vital to the American-flag fleet's success.

Johnston said that positive labor relations and a focus on long-term goals are "cornerstones that OSG has had for many, many years.... Working together, we can build mountains and we can solve any problem put before us. Labor can't do it alone; management can't do it alone. We have to work together."

He said that OSG's strategic business unit is a testament to such cooperation. The company operates vessels in Alaska and on all three U.S. coasts with "good, quality crews – highly competent individuals."

Johnston noted that assistance from maritime labor in tackling a tax question was critical in allowing the company to commit to its current tanker build program. "As a result of hard work by both the union and management together, we solved the tax issue," he said. "As a result of that, guess what? We made a commitment to Aker in Philadelphia and we put an order in for 10 product carriers" (which has since grown to 12).

The vessels are being built by union members, he added, and are state-of-the-art ships. "They are great ships manned by great union crews, and for that I want to thank the union leaders that are manning those ships," Johnston said. "You guys are doing a fantastic job."

Focusing on the Jones Act, Johnston



General Dynamics NASSCO President Fred Harris believes support for the Title XI shipbuilding loan guarantee program could lead to a major economic boost across the country.

reported that because of strong support for that law from Congress and the administration, OSG "is going to be committed to continue its construction program, continue building its U.S.-flag fleet. We're going to continue to build tankers and continue to build ATBs, and we may even start going into the tug business. We're going to continue to increase and expand our U.S.-flag fleet, which means more jobs for the sailors."

Another important component of OSG's success is training, he said. The mariners sailing aboard OSG ships "are some of the highest trained individuals I've ever had the pleasure of working with. These seafarers are good. When you talk to them, you recognize how well-qualified and well-trained they are. And that's only because the unions recognized it. They have fantastic training



Capt. Robert Johnston, senior VP at Overseas Shipholding Group, says the world-class training received by American mariners is a big plus for his company's operations.

facilities – some of the most modern facilities in the world, which are turning out some of the most well-trained seafarers in the world."

Of course, Johnston recognizes the difficult economic times, but he said OSG is forging ahead. "We are still looking at new projects," he stated. "The company is very much committed to the U.S. flag.... We're going to continue to grow and expand."

Harris, like Johnston a former mariner, heads the shipyard in San Diego. He said NASSCO currently employs 4,600 people and has "a strong backlog of ships to be built and crewed by skilled union craftsmen and skilled seafarers, and I am very happy about that."

NASSCO is in the midst of building and delivering 14 dry cargo/ammunition ships to the Navy, he said. Those are the

Lewis-and-Clark class of vessels, abbreviated as T-AKE.

The yard also performs repair work and commercial construction, including tankers now being built for SIU-contracted U.S. Shipping Partners.

Harris said credit for the yard's excellent progress in recent years goes to "the people who every day build these ships, and they build them well. They understand that if we're going to be a shipbuilding nation, we have to be productive.... We have the most skilled craftsmen in the world. What we need to do is continue to give them the tools to be as efficient as anybody else in the world."

To that end, NASSCO officials have thoroughly examined the systems and practices of other yards, including foreign shipyards. The San Diego facility also has heavily invested in training its workforce.

Turning his attention to the aging domestic fleet, Harris noted that it's difficult for shipowners to find money for new construction. In part, that's why he believes the industry must aggressively get behind the Title XI shipbuilding loan guarantee program, which "provides the U.S. government full credit guarantee for shipowners constructing ships in American yards."

He gave an example of how a \$60 million yearly investment through the Title XI program for 10 years quite feasibly could lead to billions of dollars being poured back into the economy. For starters, the \$60 million yearly figure would equate to approximately "97,000 man years worth of work over 10 years. That's unbelievable, and it all gets paid back with interest. It's one of the few programs that self-generates the funding to pay for itself."

In conclusion, he said NASSCO remains "committed to the modernization of the U.S. Merchant Marine fleet, and I mean committed."

## NY Waterway Recognized for Rescue on Hudson

With the "Miracle on the Hudson" still relatively fresh in the audience's mind, the MTD meeting on Feb. 27 featured a particularly uplifting moment as NY Waterway's founder and one of its ferry captains were honored by the executive board.

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) member Deborah Hersman also joined in commending the SIU-contracted company, whose personnel helped save the passengers and flight crew from the downed U.S. Airways jet that crashed into the Hudson River in January (see related coverage, page 6).

MTD and SIU President Michael Sacco presented a ship's wheel (dedicated to all of the captains and deckhands at the company) to NY Waterway founder Arthur Imperatore and to Captain Vincent Lombardi. The inscription reads, "With admiration and thanks for your outstanding actions which were an enormous part of the Miracle on the Hudson. Your lifesaving efforts helped lift the spirits of the entire nation."

The rescue of all 155 personnel from the downed aircraft (including 143 saved by SIU-crewed ferries) is "a great tribute to the union members who saved those people," Sacco stated. "Virtually every person who rescued the passengers and crew from U.S. Airways Flight 1549 was a union member – and most

of them belong to MTD unions."

Lombardi was the captain of the first vessel that arrived at the rescue scene. Recalling that moment, he said he urged everyone on board the *Thomas Jefferson* to maintain their composure, because they didn't know what they were about to see.

He also thanked the MTD and SIU for their support and for the recognition on behalf of all the crews.

Imperatore emphasized the commitment of NY Waterway employees, including their focus on safety training – some of which takes place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center, located in Piney Point, Md. He also saluted the productive working relationship his company shares with the union, citing "the professionalism that we absorbed and we understood from our association."

"I'm proud of our people," added Imperatore, 83, who founded the company in 1986. "They are highly trained and very, very committed to the work we do."

Hersman discussed various key aspects of shipboard safety and shared some of the NTSB's most significant findings. She noted that the agency investigates accidents in all modes of transportation, determines probable cause and makes recommendations.

She pointed to fatigue as "one of the most insidious" of all transportation

issues and said that "long-duty days are associated with fatigue and degraded performance."

Concerning the NY Waterway rescue, she concluded, "When we see accidents and we go to accident scenes, they bring out the best and the worst of equipment, of training, of procedures. But I think that we can all say, on the

river that day, we saw the best of humanity. Those who were on that water that day showed us what many of us already know – especially those who are involved in the transportation industry. We are our brothers' keepers and we have to take care of each other, and those crews did that that day. My hat's off to you all."



The MTD honored NY Waterway personnel including company founder Arthur Imperatore (left) and Capt. Vincent Lombardi (second from left). MTD President Michael Sacco (right) and Deborah Hersman of the NTSB credited the ferry crews for their fast action.



ITF Maritime Coordinator Steve Cotton notes there is international support for the Employee Free Choice Act



AFL-CIO President John Sweeney says the labor federation is "100 percent behind" the MTD's pro-maritime agenda.

## **EFCA Remains Priority for Organized Labor**

### *ITF Official Pledges Support for Legislation, Reports on 'Flag-of-Convenience' Campaign*

Three labor officials who addressed the MTD executive board said the Obama administration indeed has brought hope for working families, but many tough fights lie ahead – including a big one to enact the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which the president has vowed to sign if given the chance.

One of those speakers, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Maritime Coordinator Stephen Cotton, said he believes the new administration and Congress seem more likely to improve working conditions not only in America but abroad.

Cotton also pledged "100 percent support" from the ITF to the U.S. labor movement, especially when it comes to the EFCA, which also is known as the majority sign-up bill.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and Communications Workers of America President Larry Cohen devoted much of their respective comments to the EFCA, which was reintroduced in the House and Senate in early March. The legislation aims to restore fairness to organizing campaigns by truly giving workers the freedom to choose union representation, without the looming fear of management intimidation. Contrary to lies spread by the bill's opponents, the EFCA would not eliminate the option for a secret-ballot election. It simply would let workers choose whether to utilize secret ballots or instead opt for the already legal card-check system (through which a union is recognized as the employees' collective bargaining representative once a majority of workers has signed pledge cards).

This has been organized labor's top legislative priority in recent years and it remains so in 2009.

Sweeney thanked the MTD for its "continued presence in the struggle to restore the rights of all workers to join unions by passing the Employee Free Choice Act. This is a moment when the question is, unions yes, or no? And that affects all of us.... It has turned into a nasty fight, with the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into their campaign to defeat it."

He continued, "The EFCA means so much to the future of our movement. The giant corporations and the financial institutions and their overpaid CEOs need to be brought under control, and the only way we can do that is to get bigger and stronger. Labor overall picked up approximately 400,000 new members last year, but that's barely enough to hold us even as a percentage of the workforce. Let's keep on working together and sticking together. If we do that, we will be winning together."

The labor federation president also said the AFL-CIO is "100 percent behind" the MTD's pro-maritime agenda – "especially more American shipbuilding, funding for short-sea shipping, and continued protection of the cabotage laws, all of which create and keep good jobs."

He noted that with the new administration, "We've been included in most of the decision-making and, I'm happy to say, the president has been very open and

available to hearing our views."

Cohen asked the audience, "Why are we the only democracy in the world that doesn't have majority sign-up? The important point here is, Europe, South America, Asia, parts of Africa, Latin America like never before – they already have what we're fighting for.... Why should this be the only country in the world where to have union recognition and bargaining, you have to fight the boss to get it?"

He cited the cooperation between labor and management in the maritime trades as a great example of how a unionized work force can benefit all concerned. In fact, he noted that through letters supporting the EFCA, "Thousands of employers have signed on to say to Congress, 'We work with unions. We know what partnership means. We know what happens when there's a seat at the table.'"

He concluded by saying the trampling of workers' rights has contributed to today's economic hard times and reiterated President Obama's belief that significant recovery isn't possible unless working families "are rising up in terms of

their buying power. And the single best way to raise buying power is to give workers in this country bargaining power."

Immediately following Cohen's remarks, he received a donation from five MTD affiliates – the SIU, AMO, ILA, MM&P and MEBA – for use in the EFCA campaign he is helping to lead.

Cotton spoke on behalf of the ITF, a global federation of nearly 700 transport trade unions (including the SIU and many other MTD affiliates) which collectively represent 4.5 million workers in 148 countries. (SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel is first vice chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section.)

He said the international maritime industry is dealing with threats posed by piracy and a severe global economic downturn. He also reported that the ITF has fared well in its long-running campaign against so-called flag-of-convenience (FOC) shipping, also known as runaway-flag shipping.

Stressing that none of these issues can be resolved without the active participation of the American and Canadian governments, Cotton said that those nations have an important role to play in "leading us out of these difficult times."

"We need you," he told the MTD board. What American and Canadian labor unions have achieved in recent years gives all maritime workers "great hope."

Cotton said the ITF continues to have success in negotiating new contracts and securing back pay with FOC fleets. Last year alone, the organization obtained \$20 million in unpaid wages and overtime.

He praised the efforts of the North American labor unions, noting that they have substantially increased the number of ITF inspectors.

Less encouraging is the news about piracy, Cotton pointed out. Incidents are on the rise, and 10 vessels reportedly were being detained "at this very moment," he said. "Imagine if 10 airplanes were being held hostage. How would the world community react?"

He said that labor unions worldwide have stepped up to try to help solve the problem. For example, European, American, Russian and Indian unions have been urging employers to define high-risk regions and to get more government support.



CWA President Larry Cohen asserts that the "trampling of workers' rights" helped lead to the current economic woes.

# Statements Adopted by MTD Executive Board

Printed on this page are excerpts from some of the statements approved Feb. 26-27 by members of the Maritime Trades Department executive board. Altogether, the board adopted 16 statements aimed at mapping out strategies and reinforcing positions on issues of importance to the MTD, its affiliates and the rank-and-file members of those unions.

## ■ Support The Troops

The men and women who wear the uniform of the United States do whatever is necessary to protect freedom and fight tyranny wherever that call to arms occurs. We know these people are brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, uncles and aunts. We also know many of them are union members....

The men and women who load and crew the U.S.-flag vessels that supply these soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines continue to answer the call to duty as well. They realize their on-time delivery of materiel could mean the difference between life and death.

That is why the MTD along with our affiliates and Port Maritime Councils again affirm our unqualified support for the brave members of America's armed forces. May they perform their jobs well and come home safely to those who love and miss them.

## ■ Commercial Shipbuilding Industry

The economic importance of a vibrant shipbuilding industry cannot be overstated. As a bipartisan coalition of 57 Senators and Representatives noted earlier this year, the industry, directly and indirectly, employs an estimated 400,000 people nationwide. Facilities include six major shipbuilding yards, several smaller ship construction and repair yards, and more than 4,000 major manufacturers of ship components and systems.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils call upon Congress and the new administration to fund the Title XI shipbuilding loan guarantee program. This is a sure way to stimulate the economy with good jobs and need vessels for the U.S.-flag fleet.

## ■ America's Marine Highway System

Promoted by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Maritime Administration, "America's Marine Highway" seeks to ease congestion on America's highway and rail systems by making better use of the nation's waterborne resources.

Recent economic studies show the wisdom of this approach. By relieving congestion in other modes of transportation, ocean-borne commerce can improve U.S. productivity rates, ease pollution and create new jobs, including many in the maritime sector.

Also known as "short sea shipping," the approach has won widespread support in the maritime industry, including from many affiliates of the MTD. The Department has long believed that "short sea shipping" has the potential for advancing many important national goals, as long as the integrity of U.S. cabotage laws like the Jones Act is respected.

## ■ Salute To First Responders

Last month, the world witnessed what happens when well-trained workers go from handling their daily tasks to immediate first responders. The lives of all 155 people aboard a crippled U.S. Airways jet forced to ditch in New York's Hudson River were saved.

Did we happen to mention that all those who reacted so quickly without question were union members?!

Yes, we have to mention that because you wouldn't find that fact in any of the major media outlets. From the pilots and flight attendants aboard the jet to the air traffic controllers clearing the skies, from the mariners racing to the scene to the police officers and fire fighters who jumped aboard those vessels as they left port, all involved in the safety of the passengers were union members who had received safety training in case the totally unexpected were to happen.

## ■ Support For The New Administration

Over the past year, President Obama was very clear about the need to preserve



Maritime Trades Department VP Ernest D. Whelan reads one of the statements during the most recent MTD meeting.

America's maritime industry and the important role that it plays in the defense and economic development of the nation. He has promised to support such vitally important programs as cargo preference, the Jones Act and the Maritime Security Program. Moreover, important members of Congress are urging him to include monies in his stimulus package that would promote port modernization, humanitarian food aid, naval and commercial shipbuilding and America's Marine Highway....

Above all else, we applaud President Obama's commitment to sign the Employee Free Choice Act into law.

## ■ Maritime Security Program

The need for rapid response of equipment for the U.S. military remains constant. That is why successful efforts like the Maritime Security Program (MSP) need to be in place and fully funded.

The MTD and its affiliated unions have been at the forefront in support of the MSP since its inception immediately after the first Persian Gulf War in the early 1990s. America's military planners discovered they could not count on foreign-flag crews aboard foreign-flag ships to deliver needed materiel to troops positioned around the globe the way U.S.-flag vessels with well trained and patriotic U.S.-civilian crews did....

The MSP proved to be an unqualified success. Praise has come from both Capitol Hill and the Pentagon.... Now, the MSP runs through 2016 and covers up to 60 ships. However, several times during the life of the MSP efforts have been made to cut its funding. Although the legislation creating, then extending, the MSP is 10 years in length, the program must have its funding authorized each year.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils call upon the Congress and the new Barack Obama administration to make sure a program as thriving as the MSP remains in place with full funding. American troops know they can count on their Brothers and Sisters aboard U.S.-flag vessels to deliver their goods whenever and wherever duty calls.

## ■ Fixing The U.S. Health Care System

Americans need reforms that will control rising and irrational costs; provide comprehensive, high-quality health care to all; give every family the opportunity and responsibility for preventive care; preserve the right to choose one's own doctor; require the government to play a strong role in restoring balance to the current system; ensure more fairness and efficiency; lower employer costs and, in return, ask them to pay their fair

share, along with government and individuals; and build on what is best about American health care while drawing from what works in other countries.

Failure to act will only exacerbate the problem. In 2006, 47 million Americans had no health insurance. Nearly 8.7 million of those were children. Moreover, millions more are underinsured.

Union members particularly have been hurt by these developments. Unions have negotiated a national standard of comprehensive health care benefits. As the cost of health care continues to spin out of control, businesses that offer the benefit are hobbled in a global marketplace and are at a competitive disadvantage here at home.

## ■ Pass The Employee Free Choice Act

The hokum being stirred by the massive multi-million dollar campaign funded by Big Business and the Chambers of Commerce that federal labor law will be tossed on its head should the Employee Free Choice Act pass is pure garbage. The act is an effort swing the pendulum toward balancing the power structure currently controlled by business....

As for the argument that America cannot afford allowing workers a chance to improve themselves in these harsh economic times, one only needs to study history. The Wagner Act passed during the Great Depression. Unions began massive organizing campaigns that led to the creation of Social Security, health benefits, overtime regulations, workplace safety, secured pensions – the basic foundations for the great middle class.

## ■ Stimulate The Economy

In the union movement, one four-letter word is all we need to plainly state how to stimulate the economy: JOBS! Americans want to go back to work and Americans need jobs. That is our central focus as it should be for the nation's elected officials who are

implementing the stimulus package....

The American economy depends on the American worker. The vaunted American middle class existed because of good jobs with decent benefits that included health care and retirement provisions – all the things unions have fought for through the years....

We must push to save America's manufacturing base, then expand it into the new jobs that will be created for the energy and environmental needs of this century. We must fight to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. We must overturn laws and regulations aimed at shipping jobs overseas, while leading the charge to improve working conditions around the world....

And unlike the banking bailouts of last year which were supposed to ease the credit crunch of workers and homeowners but instead supplied cover for bonus payments to executives while profits tanked, we must make sure the government's stimulus dollars are used to help those who need them the most – the working men and women of America.

## ■ Port Dredging

Almost all goods that enter or exit the United States do so through a harbor. Waterborne commerce is the umbilical cord to the nation's international trade. Yet, many of the channels needed by commercial vessels to transit America's ports are covered with sediment and other debris....

What this means is vessels laden with American-made goods cannot carry all they are capable of holding because they would be too heavy to keep from running aground, nor can ships with imports for the U.S.-market enter due to the same concerns....

The International Union of Operating Engineers calls upon its fellow affiliates within the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO to urge Congress to pass legislation that would compel Harbor Maintenance Tax appropriations to more closely mirror the tax's annual revenues. Similar language has been passed in previous Congresses concerning the proper use of Highway Trust Fund and Aviation Trust Fund revenues for their designated forms of transportation....

Thousands of good-paying American jobs would be created by expending Harbor Maintenance Taxes for their intended purpose: dredging America's harbors and waterways.

## ■ Cargo Preference

In letters sent to the presidents of the maritime unions of the MTD last year, President Obama put it best when he wrote: "A strong U.S.-flag commercial fleet needs our nation's cargo preference laws. Whether it is carrying needed goods to those overseas in distress or moving government-generated cargo, American mariners aboard American ships make sure the job is done. People around the world look to the U.S. flag as a symbol of hope and determination. Ships flying Old Glory with American crews are important icons of our resolve."

The new Commander-in-Chief has it exactly right. Preserving the viability of the nation's cargo preference laws is critically important. In addition to creating good-paying jobs for middle-class workers and taxes at all levels of government, a strong U.S.-flag Merchant Marine promotes many defense interests – most notably, strategic sealift.



The SIUNA-affiliated AMO had a strong turnout. Some of the union's members and officials are pictured with MTD President Michael Sacco (fourth from right).



## Seafarers 'Motor' in Rolling Thunder For U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans

Some SIU headquarters officials and employees are trying to determine whether there is enough interest for the union to participate in this year's Memorial Day weekend "Rolling Thunder" event in Washington, D.C. "We would like to raise awareness concerning those who served our country on merchant vessels during times of war, supplying our troops," one official noted. "Many of those mariners gave their lives in defense of our country."

Rank-and-file Seafarers, SIU retirees, union employees and family members who may be interested in riding at the May 24 event as part of an SIU contingent are asked to email their contact information to the following address as soon as possible: [rollingthunder2009@gmail.com](mailto:rollingthunder2009@gmail.com)

The Washington-based Rolling Thunder event is a yearly demonstration, largely by motorcycle riders, for POW/MIAs and veterans' issues. According to a communication from Rolling Thunder, Inc., participants will assemble in the north Pentagon parking lot beginning at 8 a.m. They will leave at noon for the ride through D.C. to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial "to pay our respect to our brothers and sisters who gave their lives for freedom we enjoy every day and for the full accounting of all POW/MIAs and veterans' rights. This is a demonstration - not a parade."

More information is available on the web at [www.rollingthunder1.com](http://www.rollingthunder1.com) (that's a number "1" rather than a letter L in the address).

According to the web site, Rolling Thunder, Inc. is a non-profit organization "with over 88 chartered chapters throughout the United States and members abroad. While many members of Rolling Thunder are veterans, and many ride motorcycles, neither qualification is a prerequisite."

## April & May 2009 Membership Meetings

Piney Point.....	Monday: May 4, June 8
Algonac.....	Friday: May 8, June 12
Baltimore.....	Thursday: May 7, June 11
Guam.....	Thursday: May 21, June 25
Honolulu.....	Friday: May 15, June 19
Houston.....	Monday: May 11, June 15
Jacksonville.....	Thursday: May 7, June 11
Joliet.....	Thursday: May 14, June 18
Mobile.....	Wednesday: May 13, June 17
New Orleans.....	Tuesday: May 12, June 16
New York.....	Tuesday: May 5, June 9
Norfolk.....	Thursday: May 7, June 11
Oakland.....	Thursday: May 14, June 18
Philadelphia.....	Wednesday: May 6, June 10
Port Everglades.....	Thursday: May 14, June 18
San Juan.....	Thursday: May 7, June 11
St. Louis.....	Friday: May 15, June 19
Tacoma.....	Friday: May 22, June 26
Wilmington.....	Monday: May 18, June 22

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

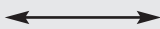
# Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

February 16, 2009 — March 15, 2009

Port	*TOTAL REGISTERED All Groups			TOTAL SHIPPED All Groups			Trip Reliefs	**REGISTERED ON BEACH All Groups		
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class A	Class B	Class C		Class A	Class B	Class C
<b>DECK DEPARTMENT</b>										
Algonac	8	7	10	3	2	5	1	12	18	25
Anchorage	1	3	0	1	4	0	0	1	4	1
Baltimore	6	5	0	2	2	0	2	6	6	2
Fort Lauderdale	7	10	2	13	8	0	11	18	26	6
Guam	2	5	0	1	5	1	0	2	12	2
Honolulu	7	3	1	6	2	0	2	16	13	1
Houston	54	36	5	29	23	0	17	66	43	13
Jacksonville	27	24	2	18	10	2	7	57	46	6
Joliet	1	5	2	1	2	0	0	1	11	10
Mobile	9	5	0	5	4	0	1	21	11	2
New Orleans	15	4	2	8	4	0	4	27	10	6
New York	45	16	4	23	6	0	10	92	35	13
Norfolk	21	15	4	11	17	7	4	25	29	5
Oakland	28	6	2	21	8	1	3	44	14	2
Philadelphia	3	5	3	4	6	0	2	7	7	3
Piney Point	0	5	0	0	4	1	6	1	3	1
Puerto Rico	5	8	1	4	4	0	2	13	17	1
St. Louis	2	5	0	0	1	0	0	3	12	0
Tacoma	21	26	2	21	14	2	9	62	50	8
Wilmington	27	23	2	19	18	0	8	54	32	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>ENGINE DEPARTMENT</b>										
Algonac	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	7	7
Anchorage	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0
Baltimore	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	8	3	0
Fort Lauderdale	9	5	0	4	3	1	3	17	9	0
Guam	0	3	0	1	2	0	0	2	5	0
Honolulu	6	7	1	7	4	0	1	12	7	2
Houston	13	9	0	13	7	0	9	26	27	2
Jacksonville	16	15	3	13	6	0	2	37	30	6
Joliet	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
Mobile	7	5	0	3	6	0	1	17	8	0
New Orleans	5	0	0	4	1	0	1	11	3	0
New York	12	14	1	7	8	0	3	30	23	5
Norfolk	11	15	1	5	10	0	3	19	29	2
Oakland	10	6	0	3	4	1	4	17	10	3
Philadelphia	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	2	0
Piney Point	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Puerto Rico	2	5	0	2	1	0	1	4	10	1
St. Louis	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	1
Tacoma	15	12	1	9	10	0	7	22	20	2
Wilmington	12	10	3	6	4	0	3	20	21	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>STEWARD DEPARTMENT</b>										
Algonac	0	2	2	1	0	2	0	2	8	7
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Baltimore	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	0
Fort Lauderdale	8	6	1	4	2	0	2	12	15	2
Guam	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	5	6	0
Honolulu	7	3	0	6	5	0	3	14	5	2
Houston	26	7	1	21	4	1	12	39	11	0
Jacksonville	20	11	0	0	12	0	4	27	9	2
Joliet	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
Mobile	5	3	0	6	1	0	2	9	4	0
New Orleans	5	2	0	4	2	0	1	13	2	1
New York	29	9	0	18	5	1	4	44	13	0
Norfolk	6	10	0	9	10	1	3	14	13	2
Oakland	19	3	0	15	3	0	5	31	10	0
Philadelphia	3	0	1	1	0	0	1	4	1	1
Piney Point	2	2	0	4	2	1	0	3	2	0
Puerto Rico	3	0	0	2	1	0	2	4	1	0
St. Louis	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	1
Tacoma	13	4	0	12	1	0	7	29	11	0
Wilmington	19	5	4	12	4	0	5	37	7	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ENTRY DEPARTMENT</b>										
Algonac	1	6	7	1	2	2	0	2	20	19
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1
Baltimore	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	7	0
Fort Lauderdale	0	3	5	0	4	0	0	0	9	15
Guam	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
Honolulu	1	6	7	1	3	1	0	3	14	15
Houston	4	21	8	1	9	3	0	14	36	12
Jacksonville	2	21	8	2	8	7	0	3	43	20
Joliet	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5
Mobile	0	6	2	0	1	1	0	1	13	6
New Orleans	0	1	0	1	3	1	0	1	6	3
New York	5	16	9	1	7	1	0	19	39	19
Norfolk	0	15	12	0	12	6	0	0	36	22
Oakland	4	17	8	4	8	2	0	7	22	14
Philadelphia	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Piney Point	0	16	24	0	14	17	0	0	6	19
Puerto Rico	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	3
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Tacoma	3	14	1	5	9	2	0	8	14	5
Wilmington	1	10	3	1	8	1	0	5	20	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>Totals All Departments</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1087</b>	<b>368</b>

## Seafarers International Union Directory

**Michael Sacco, President**  
**Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President**  
**David Heindel, Secretary-Treasurer**  
**George Tricker, Vice President Contracts**  
**Tom Orzechowski,**  
*Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters*  
**Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast**  
**Nicholas J. Marrone, Vice President West Coast**  
**Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast**  
**Kermett Mangram,**  
*Vice President Government Services*



### HEADQUARTERS

5201 Auth Way, Camp Springs, MD 20746  
(301) 899-0675

### ALGONAC

520 St. Clair River Dr., Algonac, MI 48001  
(810) 794-4988

### ANCHORAGE

721 Sesame St., #1C, Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 561-4988

### BALTIMORE

2315 Essex St., Baltimore, MD 21224  
(410) 327-4900

### GUAM

P.O. Box 3328, Hagatna, Guam 96932  
 Cliffline Office Ctr. Bldg., Suite 103B  
 422 West O'Brien Dr., Hagatna, Guam 96910  
 (671) 477-1350

### HONOLULU

606 Kalihi St., Honolulu, HI 96819  
(808) 845-5222

### HOUSTON

1221 Pierce St., Houston, TX 77002  
(713) 659-5152

### JACKSONVILLE

3315 Liberty St., Jacksonville, FL 32206  
(904) 353-0987

### JOLIET

10 East Clinton St., Joliet, IL 60432  
(815) 723-8002

### MOBILE

1640 Dauphin Island Pkwy, Mobile, AL 36605  
(251) 478-0916

### NEW ORLEANS

3911 Lapalco Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058  
(504) 328-7545

### NEW YORK

635 Fourth Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11232  
(718) 499-6600

Government Services Division: (718) 499-6600

### NORFOLK

115 Third St., Norfolk, VA 23510  
(757) 622-1892

### OAKLAND

1121 7<sup>th</sup> St., Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 444-2360

### PHILADELPHIA

2604 S. 4 St., Philadelphia, PA 19148  
(215) 336-3818

### PINEY POINT

P.O. Box 75, Piney Point, MD 20674  
(301) 994-0010

### PORT EVERGLADES

1221 S. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316  
(954) 522-7984

### SANTURCE

1057 Fernandez Juncos Ave., Stop 16  
 Santurce, PR 00907  
 (787) 721-4033

### ST. LOUIS/ALTON

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

### TACOMA

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

### WILMINGTON

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

## Inquiring Seafarer

*Editor's note: This month's Inquiring Seafarer questions were posed to members at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md.*

**Caroline Thomas, OS**  
 Home port: New York



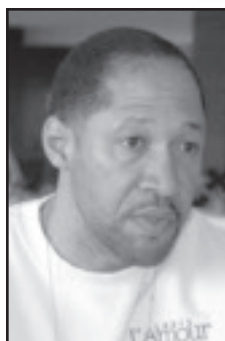
**Question:** What does being a merchant mariner mean to you?

"It totally changed my life. I've been blessed to meet and make friends of different cultures and colors from around the world.

I've been given a chance to see the world, and make a good income, all without ever having to drive to work. I'm so proud to be a part of something that means so much to our nation and the world. For me, being a merchant mariner is priceless. I don't think I could have had these opportunities elsewhere."

**Francis S. Brown, OMU**  
 Home port: New Orleans

**Question:** Why are the Jones Act and U.S. Merchant Marine important?



"It's about quality. American mariners have to be qualified to do certain jobs and nowhere will you find better-qualified mariners. It's also about keeping jobs in America. During this recession,

none of us can afford to have our jobs outsourced to nations that don't offer the industry the quality and service we do. This is a great industry. I've had the chance to travel on the lakes, inland waterways and on salt waters and see a lot of things and meet a lot of people."

**Abraham Goldberg, GVA**  
 Home port: Pascagoula, Miss.

**Question:** Why are the Jones Act and U.S. Merchant Marine important?



"They're both vital to the U.S. economy. The U.S. economy and international transportation wouldn't be as strong. I

think without the Jones Act, U.S. competition would fall to the point where companies would turn to foreign labor. Many foreign mariners are willing to accept lower standards of life and lower shipboard living standards. This would turn back the clock in how mariner's quality of life has improved over the years."

**Mark Simpson, Chief Cook**  
 Home port: Norfolk, Va.

**Question:** How important is the merchant marine to you?



"I was in the Navy for 23 years so I saw firsthand the importance of deliveries by merchant mariners. I missed the sea when I left the Navy and started in the SIU on LMSRs. We carried a lot of tanks, humvees, MRAPs and other equipment and it made me remember how important these deliveries were. When we picked up some of the equipment to take it home, I saw the damage to it such as bullet and mortar holes, remembered how many lives this equipment saved and remembered in the Navy saying thank God for the people who delivered it."

## Pic-From-The-Past



Engine Utility James Balmy (left) and Stewart Gary Walter in 1971 tested their wits during a friendly game of pinochle in the recreation area aboard the Seafarers-crewed SL181. The newest vessel in Sea-Land's fleet at the time, the vessel at the time this photo was taken was docked in New York Harbor. Ultra-modern in all respects, SL181 was 720 feet long, 95 feet wide and boasted a dead-weight tonnage of 25,515 long tons. Her draft was 34 feet and she had a service speed of more than 23 knots.

*If anyone has a vintage union-related photograph he or she would like to share with other Seafarers LOG readers, please send it to the Seafarers LOG, 5201 Auth Way, Camp Springs, MD 20746. Photographs will be returned, if so requested. High-resolution digital images may be sent to [webmaster@seafarers.org](mailto:webmaster@seafarers.org)*



# 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.

## DEEP SEA

### ALBERT AUSTIN

Brother Albert Austin, 65, became an SIU member in 1986 while in the port of Norfolk, Va. His first ship was the *USNS Stalwart*; his last the *Cape Johnson*.

Brother Austin attended classes on numerous occasions at the Seafarers-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. The deck department member continues to live in his native state of North Carolina.



### VIRGILIO DONGHIT

Brother Virgilio Donghit, 66, joined the union in 1994 in the port of New Orleans. He initially sailed on the *USNS Antares*. Brother Donghit was born in the Philippines and shipped in the steward department. He frequently visited the Paul Hall Center in Piney Point, Md., to upgrade his skills. Brother Donghit's final ship was the *ITB Mobile*. He resides in Jacksonville, Fla.

### RICHARD GIBBONS

Brother Richard Gibbons, 65, started sailing with the Seafarers in 1964 while in the port of New York. His first voyage was aboard the *City of Alma*.



Brother Gibbons, who sailed in the deck department, was born in New York. In 1964 and 1979,

he enhanced his seafaring abilities at the Piney Point school. Brother Gibbons was last employed on the *Golden Endeavor*. He makes his home in Brooklyn, N.Y.

### FREDERICK GROSBEIER

Brother Frederick Grosbeier, 66, donned the SIU colors in 1968. He originally shipped aboard the *McKee Sons*.

Brother Grosbeier frequently took advantage of educational opportunities available at the maritime training center in Piney Point, Md. The deck department member was born in Wisconsin. Brother Grosbeier most recently worked on the *PFC. James Anderson Jr.* He is a resident of Paris, Tenn.



### HENRY HAYES

Brother Henry Hayes, 65, joined the SIU ranks in 1990. His first vessel was the *USNS Pollux*. Brother Hayes upgraded on three occasions at the union-affiliated school. He was a member of the steward department.



ment. Brother Hayes' final voyage was aboard the *USNS Loyal*. He calls Jackson, Miss., home.

### SANFORD KLAVANO

Brother Sanford Klavano, 64, was born in Portland, Ore. He began sailing with the SIU in 1969 from the port of Seattle. Brother Klavano initially worked on the *Columbia Beaver* as a member of the deck department. He attended classes in 2000 at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Klavano last shipped aboard the *Maersk Tennessee*. He resides in Auburn, Wash.



### RUDOLPH LOPEZ

Brother Rudolph Lopez, 60, became a Seafarer in 1970. His first ship was the *Peary*; his last the



*Motivator*. Brother Lopez visited the Piney Point school often during his SIU career. He was born in Texas and sailed in the engine department.

Brother Lopez continues to live in his native state.

### JOSE RABULAN

Brother Jose Rabulan, 65, started his SIU career in 1996 while in the port of Norfolk, Va. His earliest trip to sea was on the *USNS Kane*. Brother Rabulan worked in the deck department and frequently enhanced his skills at the maritime training center in Piney Point, Md. His most recent voyage was aboard the *USNS Gilliland*. Brother Rabulan was born in Sorsogon, Fla., and settled in Virginia Beach, Va.



### PAUL SHIH

Brother Paul Shih, 65, signed on with the SIU in 1989. He was originally employed on the



*Independence*. Brother Shih was born in China. He upgraded his skills in 2000 and 2001 at the Seafarers-affiliated school. Brother Shih's last ship was the *Patriot*. He sailed in both the deck and engine departments and now makes his home in Honolulu.

### RICHARD SMALLWOOD

Brother Richard Smallwood, 65, joined the union in 1970 while in the port of New York. He first shipped aboard the *Kyska*. Brother Smallwood was born in New Jersey.

The engine department member attended classes on two occasions at the Paul Hall Center to upgrade his seafaring abilities. Brother Smallwood's final voyage was on the *USNS Wilkes*. He is a resident of Neptune, N.J.



## CLAUDIO UDAN

Brother Claudio Udan, 65, was born in the Philippines. He donned the SIU colors in 1989, initially sailing aboard the *Independence*. Brother Udan worked in the deck department and most recently sailed aboard the *Horizon Trader*. In 1989 and 2001, he visited



the Piney Point school to upgrade. Brother Udan continues to reside in the Philippines.

## INLAND

### ANTHONY ENNA

Brother Anthony Enna, 55, became a union member in 1981. He sailed primarily with Crescent Towing of New Orleans for the duration of his career. Brother Enna is a New Orleans native. He sailed in the deck department. Brother Enna now lives in Metairie, La.



## LONNIE JOHNSON

Brother Lonnie Johnson, 62, began shipping with the SIU in 1981. He was mainly employed with Alabama Pilots Inc. as a member of the deck department. Brother Johnson calls Coden, Ala., home.



## GREAT LAKES

### ALBERT HAMIEL

Brother Albert Hamiel, 58, joined the Seafarers in 1969. His first ship was the *Reiss Brothers*; his last the



*Sam Laud*. Brother Hamiel was born in Michigan and worked in the deck department. He often took advantage of educational opportunities available at the

union-affiliated school. Brother Hamiel makes his home in Manistique, Mich.

## NATIONAL MARITIME UNION

### CLEVE HENDERSON

Brother Cleve Henderson, 55, started sailing with the NMU in 1978 from the port of Norfolk, Va. He originally sailed aboard the *African Sun* as a member of the steward



department. Brother Henderson was born in Phenix City, Ala. His final trip to sea was on the *Cape Avinof*.

### GREGORY HOPKINS

Brother Gregory Hopkins, 55, became an NMU member in 1977 while in the port of Houston. His earliest voyage was aboard the *Gulf Crest*. Brother Hopkins was born in Oakland, Calif. He most recently shipped on the *Corpus Christi* in the steward department.



### JAMES WILBY

Brother James Wilby, 64, was born in Long Branch, N.J. He joined the union in 1966, initially sailing aboard the *Oceanic* as a member of the steward department. Brother Wilby's last ship was the *Integrity*.



Editor's note: The following items are reprinted from past issues of the Seafarers LOG.

### 1939

After a strike of less than one week's duration, the SIU reached agreement with the Peninsula and Occidental Steamship Company. The agreement provided for a complete closed shop and all hiring to be done through the union hall. In addition to wage increases the agreement established the payment of overtime for all work performed on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays, both at sea and in port, including the standing of regular watches.

### 1963

The SIU-manned *Floridian* became the first American merchant ship fired on by Cuban MIG jet airplanes when she was attacked by two of the Russian-built aircraft about 50 miles north of Cuba. The jets first circled the ship for 20 minutes before opening up with machine guns. The attack came in the same waters between Florida and Cuba where Cuban MIGs attacked the American shrimp boat *Ala* with rockets and machine guns on Feb. 20. Seafarer Jack Nelson, an AB, took pictures of the attack from the deck. He handed the pictures over to U.S. intelligence sources in Miami when the ship docked.

### 1967

The U.S. Coast Guard granted approval of the

lifeboat training at the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship in Piney Point, Md. In the future, examinations for lifeboat certification will be given to seamen who attend the school after their lifeboat training without a wait to allow them to build up 90 days of sea time. Under the arrangement with the Coast Guard, seafarers who pass the examination at the end of their lifeboat training will be automatically given their lifeboat tickets after they have sailed for the required 90 days to gain certification.

### 1994

Seafarers aboard the *Sugar Islander* helped support humanitarian efforts led by the World Food Program of Rome, Italy, when the Pacific Gulf Marine vessel delivered 20,000 metric tons of corn to the desti-

tute country of Angola, on Africa's west coast. "It was a very long and hard trip, but we got the job done. The entire trip took a total of 70 days, and 34 of those days were spent off-loading," AB Arthur Machado said.

The crew began loading the yellow corn on March 7 in the vessel's home port of New Orleans. On March 8, the crew finished loading and set sail for the African nation. The *Sugar Islander* arrived in the Angolan port of Lobito on March 29 and remained docked until April 21 when the last of the cargo was off-loaded.

## This Month In SIU History

# Final Departures



## DEEP SEA

### WILLIAM ANDERSON

Pensioner William Anderson, 85, passed away Dec. 7. Brother Anderson was born in Platte City, Mo. He joined the Marine Cooks & Stewards (MC&S) while in the port of San Francisco. Brother Anderson worked in the steward department. He retired in 1968 and made Kent, Wash., his home.



### KENNETH BLAIR

Pensioner Kenneth Blair, 81, died Dec. 20. Brother Blair became a Seafarer in 1947 while in the port of New York. He was born in Tennessee. Brother Blair initially sailed in the deck department of a Calmar Steamship Corporation vessel. Prior to his retirement in 1992, he shipped aboard the *Mariner*. Brother Blair settled in McMinnville, Tenn.



### LEROY EDMONDSON

Pensioner Leroy Edmondson, 76, passed away Dec. 30. Brother Edmondson started sailing with the union in 1969 from the port of San Francisco. The engine department member was born in Texas. Brother Edmondson's first ship was the *Belgium Victory*; his last was the *Sealift Antarctic*. He went on pension in 1995 and called Manteca, Calif., home.



### ENRIQUE GARRIDO

Brother Enrique Garrido, 54, died Jan. 30. He first donned the SIU colors in 1991. Brother Garrido's earliest trip to sea was on the



*USNS H.H. Hess*. His final voyage took place aboard the *Intrepid*. Brother Garrido, a member of the steward department, was born in the Philippines. He lived in San Diego.

### TRAWN GOOCH

Brother Trawn Gooch, 57, passed away Feb. 9. He joined the SIU ranks in 1969. Brother Gooch primarily sailed on vessels operated by Interocean American Shipping Corporation to include the *Ft. Hoskins* and the *El Morro*. He was born in Baltimore and worked in both the engine and deck departments during his seafaring career. Brother Gooch was a resident of Jacksonville, Fla.



### RAYMOND HODGES

Pensioner Raymond Hodges, 88, died Dec. 28. Brother Hodges began sailing with the union in 1944 while in the port of Baltimore. He initially worked on a Waterman Steamship Corporation vessel as a member of the deck department. Brother Hodges was born in Surry, N.C. Before retiring in 1979, he was employed aboard Sea-Land's *SS Mayaguez*. Brother Hodges made his home in State Road, N.C.



### CLAUDE HOLLINGS

Pensioner Claude Hollings, 88, passed away Dec. 27. Brother Hollings was born in Alabama. He signed on with the SIU in 1941 while in the port of Mobile, Ala. Brother Hollings' first ship was the *Iberville*. The steward department member last shipped on the *Overseas Valdez*. Brother Hollings became a pensioner



in 1982 and continued to reside in his native state.

### SAMUEL JAMES

Pensioner Samuel James, 88, died Oct. 4. Brother James, a member of the steward department, began sailing with the MC&S in 1956 in the port of San Francisco. His first voyage was aboard the *Santa Magdalena*. Brother James was born in Pledger, Texas. His final trip to sea was on the *Santa Maria*. Brother James started collecting his retirement compensation in 1985. He settled in Wharton, Texas.



### BILLY LOCKHART

Pensioner Billy Lockhart, 69, passed away Feb. 2. Brother Lockhart became a Seafarer in 1981. He originally shipped aboard a Bay Tankers Inc. vessel as a member of the deck department. Brother Lockhart was born in Prattsville, Ark. His most recent ship was the *Sam Houston*. Brother Lockhart went on pension in 2004 and called Little Rock, Ark., home.



### WALLACE MASON

Pensioner Wallace Mason, 85, died Feb. 1. Brother Mason started his seafaring profession in 1952. His earliest trip was on the *Chiwawa*. Brother Mason sailed in the deck department. His last voyage was aboard the *SLMP 853 Tacoma*. Brother Mason was born in Hanson, Mass., but made his home in Adamsville, Tenn. He began receiving his pension in 1982.



### ROBERT SPENCER

Pensioner Robert Spencer, 83, passed away Jan. 11. Brother Spencer first donned the SIU

colors in 1948 while in the port of Mobile, Ala. He was initially employed on the *Hastings* as a member of the steward department. Prior to his retirement in 1994, Brother Spencer worked aboard the *Overseas Philadelphia*. He continued to live in his native state of Alabama.



### RUDOLF SPINGAT

Pensioner Rudolf Spingat, 79, died Nov. 29. Brother Spingat joined the MC&S in 1966 while in the port of San Francisco. His first voyage was on the *Santa Magdalena*. Brother Spingat's final trip to sea was aboard the *Chief Gadao*. The German-born mariner shipped in the steward department. Brother Spingat retired in 1998. He was a resident of Spain.



## INLAND

### WILLIAM BURRISS

Pensioner William Burriss, 69, passed away Feb. 21. Brother Burriss was born in Cumberland, N.C. He signed on with the union in 1963. Brother Burriss primarily sailed on vessels operated by Cape Fear Towing Company. He became a pensioner in 1994 and settled in Wilmington, N.C.



### JENETA KUPPE

Pensioner Jenetta Kuppe, 77, died Jan. 12. Sister Kuppe began shipping with the SIU in 1987 while in St. Louis. She worked aboard *Orgulf* Transportation Company vessels for the duration of her



career. Sister Kuppe sailed in the steward department. She started collecting retirement stipends in 1997. Sister Kuppe was born in Union City, Tenn., but called Hickman, Ky., home.

### JIMMY MCNUTT

Pensioner Jimmy McNutt, 73, passed away Jan. 10. Brother McNutt joined the union ranks in 1980. The deck department member was mainly employed on vessels operated by Crowley Towing & Transportation of Wilmington. Brother McNutt was born in Alabama. He went on pension in 2004 and called Gulfport, Miss., home.



### WILLIAM MILLER

Pensioner William Miller, 81, died Feb. 4. Brother Miller started sailing with the SIU in 1957 from the port of Baltimore. He was born in Maryland and worked in the deck department. Brother Miller mostly shipped with McAllister Towing of Baltimore. He retired in 1984 and lived in Edgemere, Md.



*Editor's note: The following brothers, all former members of the National Maritime Union (NMU), have passed away.*

Name	Age	DOD
Baptiste, Audley	94	Jan. 6
Centeno, Roberto	83	Jan. 25
Cisneros, Jorge	81	Feb. 5
Cruel, Julius	95	Jan. 21
Dufresne, Alfred	80	Jan. 23
Gaspard, Lawrence	84	Jan. 18
Henley, Samuel	92	Jan. 8
La Forgia, Nicholas	82	Feb. 13
La Rocque, Alvan	82	Jan. 8
Lewis, William	87	Feb. 13
Logston, Von	83	Dec. 26
Lopez, Pablo	85	Dec. 31
Lopez, Phillip	93	Jan. 13
Marrero, George	77	Feb. 7
Morgan, Joe	71	Jan. 18
O'Connell, Arthur	75	Feb. 5
Padilla, Wilfredo	81	Jan. 23
Polk, Washington	85	Feb. 11
Pope, William	91	Nov. 13
Reese, John	73	Feb. 9
Richardson, Fred	83	Feb. 8
Rolling, Leo	79	Jan. 17
Taylor, Thurston	89	Jan. 27
Thurman, Willmon	85	Jan. 15
Youngblood, Duane	61	Feb. 8

# 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.

**ALASKAN FRONTIER** (Alaska Tanker Company), Jan. 4 – Chairman **Christopher J. Kicey**, Secretary **Jeffery L. Smith**, Educational Director **Odilio G. Evora**. Chairman praised crew for their hard work and positive attitude in the cold and icy conditions while in Valdez, Alaska. He informed Seafarers that 60-day stores would be purchased in Long Beach, Calif. Secretary talked about the coming flu season and the impact it could have on them. He went over ways to reduce exposure and curb the spread of the virus. Crew members were thanked for their positive response to the elimination of paper cups. Educational director advised mariners to take advantage of Piney Point school to enhance their skills. He also reminded them to stay abreast of deadline for document renewals. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew decided on new lounge furniture arrangement and discussed getting satellite internet.

**CHARLESTON** (USCS Transport), Jan. 30 – Chairman **Nathaniel Leary**, Secretary **Abraham M. Martinez**, Educational Director **David Spaulding**, Deck Delegate **Eddie L. Major**, Steward Delegate **George A. Burgos**. Chairman urged Seafarers to visit the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md., and reminded them to apply for TWIC cards ASAP. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Motion was made to increase pension, medical and dental benefits. Seafarers requested the union look into getting cable boxes for each crew member's room and they could pay a monthly fee.

**FLORIDA** (Maersk Line, Limited), Jan. 20 – Chairman **Brian P. Corbett**, Secretary **Christina Nuttier**, Educational Director **Jeffery D. Levie**, Deck Delegate

**Jon P. Dillon**. Chairman thanked crew for their help, cooperation and understanding during the transition to the new ship. Secretary read and discussed letter from Maersk Line, Limited concerning vessel orientation. Educational director encouraged mariners to upgrade skills often at the maritime training center in Piney Point, Md. No beefs or disputed OT reported. It was noted that some equipment has been stored for transfer onto the new vessel. Next ports: Charleston, S.C., and Houston.

**LIBERTY STAR** (Liberty Maritime), Jan. 26 – Chairman **Scott A. Heginbotham**, Secretary **Pablo C. Alvarez**, Deck Delegate **Floyd Patterson**, Steward Delegate **Consulalia M. Oatis**. Bosun announced payoff in Corpus Christi, Texas, on Feb. 1. He asked the mariners to leave rooms clean for next crew members joining vessel. Secretary discussed the importance of enhancing seafaring abilities at the union-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. He requested crew fill in their completion of rotation form. Educational director advised members to keep up with the latest union news. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Recommendation was made to increase pension benefits. Crew noted the trip went smoothly.

**MAERSK OHIO** (Maersk Line, Limited), Jan. 30 – Chairman **Thomas P. Flanagan**, Secretary **Edvaldo C. Viana**, Educational Director **Mohamed Y. Abdullah**, Deck Delegate **Donald Wallerson**, Engine Delegate **Mike Andrucovici**, Steward Delegate **Jerry E. Stuart**. Chairman stated payoff would take place in Port Elizabeth, N.J., on Feb. 2. He thanked Seafarers for a smooth, safe trip. Members were asked to

## Golden State Ties up in Wilmington



The Seafarers-crewed *Golden State* in February tied up in the Port of Wilmington, Calif. Port Agent Jeff Turkus, while servicing the vessel, had an opportunity to meet and chat with members of the crew. The photo above captures some of that interaction. Pictured in the back row (from left to right) are: AB Sergey Sitnikov, Pumpman Oscar Garcia, Bosun Burkley Cooper, ACU Cesar Santos and Apprentice Timoth Hess. In the front row are AB Dennis Bracamonte, Oiler Arlyn Fernandez, Recertified Steward Reynaldo Magpale, Port Agent Jeff Turkus and Apprentice Monserrate Blass.

leave rooms clean and supplied with fresh linen for relief. Educational director urged all mariners to upgrade their skills at the Paul Hall Center. He also reiterated the need to keep all necessary shipping documents current and noted TWIC deadline coming soon. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Requests were made for new blankets, quilts, pillows and an extra dryer. Vote of thanks given to the steward department for a job well done. Next port: Newark, N.J.

**MAERSK VIRGINIA** (Maersk Line,

Limited), Jan. 25 – Chairman **Mohamed S. Ahmed**, Secretary **Hugh E. Wildermuth**, Educational Director **Donald M. Christian**, Steward Delegate **Natividad A. Zapata**. Chairman announced payoff on Jan. 28 in Newark, N.J. He thanked crew for doing their jobs well and safely; no lost time injuries in over 2,000 days. Departing mariners were asked to leave cabins neat for arriving crew and put keys on the desk. Educational director suggested crew check out what the Piney Point school has to offer. Treasurer reported \$2,300 in ship's fund. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Motion was made to reduce age required to retire. Next ports: Newark, N.J., and Norfolk, Va.

**PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS** (Marine Personnel & Provisioning), Jan. 12 – Chairman **Jesse Natividad**, Secretary **Exxi C. Ronquillo**, Educational Director **Christopher Eason**, Deck Delegate **Joseph B. Thielman**, Steward Delegate **Malcolm Holmes**. Bosun noted payoff would take place at sea on Jan. 20 and expressed his gratitude to the steward department for excellent meals. Secretary thanked everyone for their help keeping ship clean, especially stripping and waxing rooms. He urged all Seafarers to contribute to SPAD (Seafarers Political Activity Donation) fund. Educational director advised members to take advantage of educational opportunities available at the SIU-affiliated school in Piney Point, Md. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew discussed contract provisions pertaining to hazardous cargo, and method by which they should be informed when vessel is transporting such cargo.

**MAERSK CAROLINA** (Maersk Line, Limited), Feb. 15 – Chairman **Brian K. Fountain**, Secretary **Gerard L. Hyman**, Educational Director **Alan A. Rogers II**, Deck Delegate **Abdul Q. Gharama**, Engine Delegate **Alcido Lopes**.

Chairman expressed appreciation for everyone being safety conscious and looking out for shipmates. Secretary reported stores would be purchased in Virginia. He thanked crew members for pitching in and keeping house clean. No disputed OT reported; beef reported in the engine department which will be taken care of in Newark, N.J., at payoff. Next ports: Newark, N.J., and Charleston, S.C.

**MAERSK MICHIGAN** (Maersk Line, Limited), Feb. 1 – Chairman **David N. Martz**, Secretary **Robert J. Bostick**, Educational Director **Sheldon S. Greenberg**, Deck Delegate **Cornelio M. Bartolome**, Steward Delegate **Charles R. Rumble**. Chairman reported new dryers were being installed. He asked everyone to keep noise down and be careful closing doors so they don't slam. Educational director encouraged mariners to be mindful of their responsibilities and contractual duties. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Motion was made to raise pension benefit amounts and lower sea time requirements. Next port: Greece.

**OVERSEAS NEW ORLEANS** (OSG Ship Management), Feb. 8 – Chairman **Samuel Duah**, Secretary **Hernegildo Batiz**, Educational Director **Larry F. Phillips**, Engine Delegate **James A. McRevy Jr.**, Steward Delegate **Breon A. Lucas**. Chairman recommended mariners review contracts and the *Seafarers LOG* to stay informed on matters that affect them and the maritime industry. Secretary discussed the need for crew members to keep all paperwork up-to-date. Educational director advised crew to attend classes at the union-affiliated school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Suggestion was made concerning medical benefits. Members requested satellite TV in everybody's room and new mattresses.

## ITB Jacksonville at Sea



The union-contracted *ITB Jacksonville* recently completed a humanitarian voyage to East Africa. During a segment of the return trip, Chief Steward Peter Crum snapped the photo which appears above. Pictured are the vessel's officers and crew as they celebrate following an on-board cook-out.

# New Law Contains Tax Breaks For Working Families

*Editor's note: This article was prepared by the accounting firm Buchbinder Tunick & Company LLP.*

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 into law. While many people associate this tax act with bailouts and business stimulus packages, there are numerous deductions and tax credits that affect individual taxpayers as well. This summary will list some of the more common provisions of the act that may affect working families, including mariners.

## Making Work Pay Credit

More than 95 percent of working families in the United States will be eligible to receive this refundable tax credit, which can be up to \$400 for individuals and up to \$800 for working families. The credit is for tax years 2009 and 2010. This benefit can either be claimed on a tax return, or an employer may reduce the amount of Federal Income Tax Withholding that is deducted from each paycheck an individual receives. This tax credit begins to phase out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married couples that file joint returns).

## Increased Refundable Child Tax Credit

For 2009 and 2010, the refundable portion of the child tax credit will be calculated as 15 percent of earned income over \$3,000. Previously, the credit was calculated as 15 percent of earned income over \$8,500. The total child tax credit remains unchanged at up to \$1,000 per qualifying child.

## Increased Transit Benefits

Starting in March 2009, the amount of transit benefits an employee may receive from his or her employer that is free from payroll, federal, and state and local income taxes, has been increased to \$230 per month, and will be indexed annually beginning in 2010. This increase brings the amount of tax-free transit benefits up to the amount already allowable for parking benefits issued by an employer.

## AMT Relief

For taxpayers that are subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), the act will provide some relief from the AMT by extending nonrefundable personal credits, and increasing the AMT exemption amount to

\$46,700 for individual taxpayers, and \$70,950 for married couples filing joint returns.

## American Opportunity Education Credit

This credit replaces the old HOPE education credit, increases the number of taxpayers eligible to claim the credit, and increases the maximum amount of the credit. Taxpayers may claim this credit for themselves and their dependents for all four years (up from the first two years) they are enrolled in college. The credit is calculated at 100 percent of the first \$2,000 paid during the year for tuition and related expenses (including books), and 25 percent of the next \$2,000 paid for these qualifying expenses, for a total maximum credit of \$2,500. This credit can be claimed per student. Additionally, 40 percent of the amount of this credit is deemed to be refundable. This tax credit begins to phase out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$80,000 (\$160,000 for married couples that file joint returns).

## Expanded 529 Plan Qualifying Education Expenses

Distributions from 529 education plans may now be expended on computers and computer technology in addition to tuition, room and board, mandatory fees, and books.

## Refundable First-time Home Buyer Credit

Taxpayers who are first-time home buyers (taxpayers who had no present ownership interest in a principal residence for the three-year period ending on the closing date of the new home purchase), may claim this credit, valued at the lesser of 10 percent of the purchase price of the home or \$8,000, if their new home is purchased after December 31, 2008 and before December 1, 2009. Unlike the previously existing \$7,500 first-time home buyer's credit, the new \$8,000 credit does not have to be repaid unless the taxpayer sells the home within three years. This tax credit begins to phase out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married couples that file joint returns). Please note that an individual can make a special election to claim this credit on his or her 2008 tax return. If a person has already filed his or her 2008 tax return, an amended return may be filed rather than waiting to receive the credit by filing the 2009 tax return.

## Above-the-line Deduction for Vehicle Sales Taxes

For new vehicles purchased after February 17, 2009 and before January 1, 2010, a taxpayer may deduct any state and local sales or excise taxes paid that are attributed to the first \$49,500 of a new car, light truck, recreational vehicle, or motorcycle. This deduction begins to phase out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$125,000 (\$250,000 for married couples that file joint returns).

## Tax Break on Unemployment Benefits

For 2009, the first \$2,400 of unemployment benefits received will not be subject to federal income tax. Additionally, through December 31, 2009, the act continues the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program which provides up to 33 weeks of extended unemployment benefits to workers exhausting their regular benefits, and increases the amount of weekly benefits by \$25.

## Residential Energy Efficiency Improvements Credit

For 2009 and 2010, the new act has tripled the tax credit for residential energy efficiency. Taxpayers may now claim a tax credit equal to 30 percent of the amount expended for qualified energy efficient improvements made to existing homes, up to a lifetime maximum of \$1,500. Qualified energy efficient improvements include electric heat pumps, central air conditioners, water heaters, wood stoves, natural gas, propane, and oil furnaces and hot water heaters, exterior windows, doors, skylights, and insulation. It is important to note that the efficiency standards used to qualify for the credit have been increased to a higher standard. Please check with the IRS web site ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)) for more details.

## Plug-In Electric Drive Vehicle Credit

Taxpayers who purchase a qualified plug-in electric vehicle after February 17, 2009 and before 2012 may claim a credit ranging from \$2,500 up to over \$7,000 for the first 200,000 units the manufacturer sells. Once the manufacturer records its 200,000th sale, the credit is reduced in subsequent quarters. This credit is allowed against the alternative minimum tax. Additionally, there is a separate credit valued at 10 percent, up to \$4,000, for the cost of converting a motor vehicle to a plug-in electric drive motor vehicle.

## 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. The annual financial committee will be elected during the May 4 headquarters membership meeting to review the 2008 records. 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.

# 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., for the next few months of 2009. All programs are geared to improving the job skills of Seafarers and to promoting 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 27 June 22	May 22 July 17
Automated Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA)	April 13	April 17
Fast Rescue Boat	June 29	July 3
Government Vessels	June 1 July 27	June 5 July 31
Lifeboatman	June 8	June 19
Radar Renewal	April 20	April 20
Specially Trained Ordinary Seaman	May 4	May 15
Tank Ship Familiarization/Assistant Cargo DL	May 18	May 29
Tank PIC Barge DL	May 11	May 15

## Engine Upgrading Courses

Advanced Refrigerated Container	June 22	July 17
Basic Auxiliary Plant Operations (BAPO)	May 25	June 19
FOWT	April 27 June 22	May 22 July 17
Marine Electrician	May 11	July 3
Marine Refrigeration Technician	May 4	June 12
Machinist	June 1	June 19
Pumpman	June 22	July 3
Welding	May 4 June 1	May 22 June 19

## Safety Specialty Courses

Basic Firefighting/STCW	May 4	May 9
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Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
Basic Firefighting/STCW	May 11 May 25 July 20	May 15 May 29 July 24
MSC Small Arms (Company designees)	April 20 May 18	April 24 May 22

## Steward Upgrading Courses

Galley Operations/Advanced Galley Operations  
These modules start every Monday.  
Certified Chief Cook/Chief Steward  
These classes start every other Monday. The most recent class began March 23.

## Academic Department Courses

General education and college courses are available as needed at the Paul Hall Center. In addition, basic vocational support program courses are offered throughout the year, two weeks prior to the beginning of a vocational course.

The following opportunities are currently available: Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), a College Program and a Preparatory Course. When applying for preparatory courses, students should list the name of the course desired on upgrading application. An introduction to computers course, a self-study module, is also available.

## Online Distance Learning Courses

Five new online "distance learning" (DL) courses now are available to students who plan to enroll in classes at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education.

The online courses are not mandatory, but they are structured to benefit students who eventually attend other classes at the Paul Hall Center, which is located in Piney Point, Md.

The new online courses are: Communications, First Aid Preparation, Bloodborne Pathogens, Basic Culinary Skills, and Basic Math Refresher. Also available in the DL program are Hazardous Material Control and Management, Hearing Conservation, Respiratory Protection, Heat Stress Management, Environmental Awareness, Shipboard Pest Management, and Shipboard Water Sanitation (for a total of 12 courses).

Students **MUST** have access to the internet with an e-mail address in order to take the foregoing classes. Each must be taken online, not at the Paul Hall Center. E-mail addresses should be provided on applications (printed neatly) when applying. Applicants should include the letters DL when listing any online course on the form below.

## Important Notice



**Students who have registered for classes at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, but later discover—for whatever reason—that they cannot attend should inform the admissions department immediately so arrangements can be made to have other students take their places**

## UPGRADING APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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 \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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-five (125) 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, qualifying seetime for the course if it is Coast Guard tested, 1995 STCW Certificate, valid SHBP Clinic Card and TWIC.**

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 Lundeberg 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.

# Paul Hall Center Classes



**Unlicensed Apprentice Water Survival Class** – Unlicensed apprentices from Class 714 recently graduated from the water survival course. Those graduating (above, in alphabetical order) were: Nofaalii Aiaga, Brandon Braam, Joseph Brewer, John Cooper, Carlos Davila, Julian Davila, Devarian Durant, Alejandro Esparza, Kelly Forbis, Lamont Green, Kevin Jenkins, Adam McLaughlin, Anthony Pena, Gary Richards, Jose Rivas Escudero, Ricky Rivers Martinez, Curtis Royal, Cedric Short and Shatina Wright. Their instructor, Stan Beck, is at far right.



**Unlicensed Apprentice Water Survival Class** – Unlicensed apprentices from Class 715 recently completed training in the water survival course. Graduating from the course (above, in alphabetical order) were: Brandy Baker-Days, Paul Cooper, Will Dalton, Todd Favaza, Amber Fisher, Jon Garland, Thomas Garland, Charles Harris Jr., Joshua Harris, Antoine Hoggard, James Honaker, Thomas Huminski, Johnny Hunter, Russell Macomber, Sean Mannix, Juan Negron-Miro, Valentine Okei, Luis Ramos-Rose and Jonathan Wilson. (Note: Not all are pictured.)



**Marine Electrician** – Five upgraders on Feb. 27 completed training in this 280-hour course. Pictured with the members of his class (above, left) is Instructor Jay Henderson. Class members (from left to right) were: Carmelo Collazo, Michael Lais, Charles Sneed, Jerome Culbreth and Christopher Earhart.



**OSG Cooks (Tugboat)** – Five individuals, all employees of SIU-contracted Overseas Shipholding Group, on Feb. 13 graduated from this steward department course. Those graduating (above, from left to right) were Richard Dean, Noah Metzger, Bob Simpson, John Mackey and Richard Edward. John Dobson, their instructor, is at far right.

*Students who have registered for classes at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, but later discover—for whatever reason—that they cannot attend should inform the admissions department immediately so arrangements can be made to have other students take their places.*



**Advanced Container Maintenance** – One upgrader on Jan 30 completed training requirements for this course. Graduating from the course (above, right) was Samuel Addo. His instructor, Calvin Beal, is at left.



**FOWT** – Eighteen mariners on Feb. 27 completed their requirements for graduation from this course. Those graduating (above, in no particular order) were: Chris Shiralieu, Patrick Milton, Joangel Sierra, George Santiago, Tonya Gist, Mark Merenda, Joshua Johnson, Larry Locke, Spencer Hiruko, Algernon Ramseur, DeMorris Duggins, Marlon Green, Kareem Walters, James Fells, Robert Orloff, Fred Nyarro, Jose Orenge and Ashley Carmichael. Tim Achorn, their instructor, is at far left.

# Paul Hall Center Classes



**Tank Ship Familiarization (Phase III)** — Two classes of Phase III apprentices on Jan. 23 completed their training requirements in this 63-hour class. Graduating from the course (above, in alphabetical order) were: Bryan Afflen, James Baldwin, Sarah Billingsley, Rashid Body, Ernest Bullock Jr., Larry Byrd, Charlotte Chastain, Erik Clausen, Prentice Conley, Jack Corn, Scott Daly, Andrew Delutis, Van Dixon, Jarrell Dorsey, Christopher Funderbuck Jr., James Grant, Ian Harding, Byran Howell, Aretta Jones, Byran Howell, Aretta Jones, Ryan Klinewski, Joshua Luna, Celso Maldonado-Rivera, Marqualis Matthews, Devin McCoy, Douglas McLaughlin, Nekesha Miller, Mitchell Newingham, Jeremy Paschke, Thomas Reed II, Maurice Reine, Jonathan Rivera-Rodriguez, Andre Robinson Sr., Chenequa Rodriguez, Yatriel Sanchez-Padilla, Michael Spirit, Jesse Sunga, Richard Vega, Charles Wescott, Devin Wood and Lee Wright.

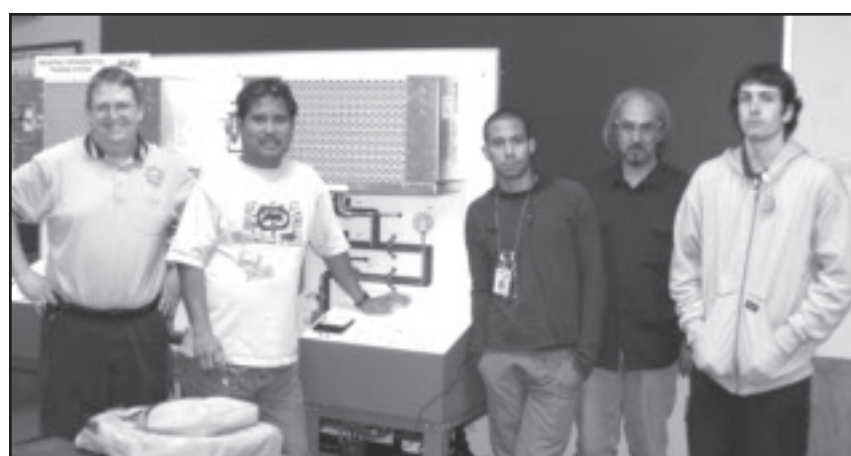


**Tank Ship Familiarization DL** - The following upgraders (above, in no particular order) on Feb. 20 completed their training in this 63-hour course: Steven Hoskins, Alfred Martin, Oleg Derun, Jethro Powers, Ahmed Ali, Parris Mancuso, Alex Busby, Michael Presser, Donovan McCants, Mauricio Elope, Bobby Darku, Anita Santos, Charles Horton, John Williamson and Haeven Bautista. Jim Shaffer, their instructor, is at far right.



**Able Seaman** — Ten mariners on Feb. 13 completed their training requirements for this course. In photo above, Instructor Bernabe Pelington (left) joins class graduates (in no particular order) Richardo Grushkin, Winston Franks, Deniel Thompson, Roy Logan, Robert Brackbill, Steven Sidler, Enchantress Johnson, Robert Day, Johnathan McNeil and Matthew Martinson.

**Marine Electrician** — Eight upgraders on Dec. 19 completed their training requirements for this 280-hour course. Graduating and receiving certificates (photo at right, in alphabetical order) were: Ray Avie Jr., Rigoberto Beata, Martin Hamilton, Benny Orosco, Hashiem Pittman, David Spaulding, Daryl Thomas and Philander Walton. Their instructor, Jay Henderson, is at far right.

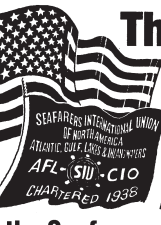


**Marine Refrigeration Technician** — Four upgraders completed this course on March 20. Graduating (above, beginning second from left) were Jessie Vlibus, Jomar Rodriguez, Mark Ponzatuwsky and Roger Dillinger Jr. Their instructor, Calvin Beal, is at far left.



**Crowd Management (Hawaii)** — The following eight individuals (above, in no particular order) graduated from this course at the Seafarers Training Center at Barbers Point, Hawaii: Mamadou Diallo, John Minutillo, Vincent Attilo, Efen Pahinag, Kelly Stier, Timothy Griffin, Andrew Christensen and Ahmed Omer.





**T-AKE Ship  
Brashear Delivered  
- Page 4**



The 2008 Toys for Tots campaign in the Port of Tacoma was a huge success. Clockwise from left, bikes and a variety other toys are staged for collection in the hiring hall. GUDE Alfredo Genio, AB Morgan Piper and Patrolman Kris Hopkins make their donations for the effort while Sgt. Mansoo Masga, Staff Sgt. Patrick Salmon and Lance Cpl. Ben Abraham pose in front of a vehicle which has been loaded to capacity with toys donated to the Toys for Tots campaign by Tacoma-area Seafarers.

### At Port of Tacoma

## Toys for Tots Huge Success

A number of children in the Tacoma Wash., area had a more enjoyable Christmas thanks to the generosity of Seafarers.

SIU members in and around the port of Tacoma, while participating in the U.S. Marine Corps'- sponsored Toys for Tots campaign donated six new bicycles and more than 100 toys to some 30 families (50 children) during the 2008 Christmas holiday season. The effort represented the single largest donation in the Tacoma area for the second consecutive year, according to Tacoma Port Agent Joe Vincenzo. The items were donated from Oct. 1 through Dec. 14 in the hiring hall. Union members collected the items following the hall's annual holiday luncheon. With the assistance of Staff Sgt. Patrick Salmon and fellow Marines from the U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Command, 12th Marine

Corps District in Tacoma, members following the luncheon collected and loaded the toys into two large vehicles for distribution.

"The year 2008 was tough for families in the Tacoma area as well as throughout the nation," Vincenzo said. "With unemployment soaring, many men and women were unable to provide even the basic necessities such as putting food on the table for their children, let alone Christmas gifts.

"Many have been victimized because of huge layoffs," he continued. "Unlike them however, we still have good union paying jobs and because of that we are in position to help.

"I am personally honored and privileged to have been a part of this worthy goodwill effort," he concluded, "and I am extremely proud of how our membership responded to those needing assistance in our community."



The 2008 Toys for Tots campaign in the Port of Tacoma was an overwhelming success. Besides rank-and-file members, others responsible (above, left to right) included Tacoma Port Agent Joe Vincenzo, Safety Director Ryan Palmer, Tacoma Administrative Assistant Brenda Flesner, Staff Sgt. Patrick Salmon, Lance Cpl. Ben Abraham, Patrolman Kris Hopkins and Sallie Shawl, director, Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful. In photo below, GUDE Alfredo Genio (foreground, center), other Seafarers and guests partake in the hiring hall's annual Christmas luncheon. At the conclusion of the luncheon, members loaded items donated for the Toys for Tots campaign into vehicles for distribution.



Tacoma Port Agent Joe Vincenzo (right in photo above, wearing white shirt) thanks Tacoma-area Seafarers for their generosity during the port's 2008 Toys for Tots campaign. In photo below, Vincenzo (left) chats with Recertified Bosun Tony Gurney, Staff Sergeant Salmon and Lance Corporal Abraham during the hiring hall's Christmas luncheon.

