

SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION • ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS

Seafarers Give Back to Communities

Union's Winter Holiday Tradition Continues in Tacoma, Ft. Lauderdale

During the winter holidays, SIU members from coast to coast donated time, money and effort to brighten the season for children in their respective communities. In Tacoma, Washington, members participated in the yearly Santa's Castle project, which benefits American military families, while Seafarers also stepped up in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, for a toy drive with the community services agency LifeNet4Families. The photos below and at right are from the SIU hall in Tacoma – one showing some of the donations, the other featuring U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Hinzman and Capt. Ganoni helping load some of the goodies. *Pages 6, 24.*



Major Renovations Continue, Remain Ahead of Schedule At Paul Hall Center Campus

The wide-ranging renovation of the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is rolling along at the Piney Point, Maryland, campus. The multi-million-dollar project features new simulators, classroom expansions and modernization, and much more. These photos show a small sampling of the construction along with a few of the new computers being installed in the classrooms. *Story on Page 3, additional photos on Page 23.*



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President's Report

SIU Members Deliver Again

There is only one way to begin this month's message, and that's by saying a huge, heartfelt "thank you" and "well done" to all the SIU members who recently reached out to their United States Senators in a powerful effort to protect the Jones Act. When your union asked you to step up, you did so immediately and with obvious passion. Great work, brothers and sisters!



Michael Sacco

For those who missed it, I'm referring to a sudden but widespread grassroots campaign that started in mid-January. When Senator John McCain proposed a floor amendment to Keystone XL Pipeline legislation that would kill the U.S.-build provision of the Jones Act, the domestic maritime industry responded in a big way.

We definitely did our part in the SIU, reaching out to rank-and-file members at sea and ashore through time-sensitive emails, social media, text messages, web posts and communications to the union halls. And, as mentioned, Seafarers and their families quickly stepped up with phone calls and emails to the Senate urging opposition to the McCain amendment. (There wasn't time to use the U.S. Mail.)

Even though the amendment probably doesn't have much chance of passing (its fate is still unknown at press time), our industry's response was crucial. This was a highly visible test of support for the Jones Act, a 95-year-old law that protects U.S. national and economic security while keeping our domestic maritime industry alive. It's the first time in memory that a Jones Act amendment made it to the Senate floor.

Whether you're familiar with this law or not, I encourage you to read two articles in this issue of the *LOG* about the Jones Act. One is right next to this column, and it reflects a great, bipartisan show of support that happened near the end of last year. The other is on Page 4, and it's about the widespread, vehement opposition to the amendment targeting American shipyards.

It is frustrating when our industry comes under attack, but reading and hearing the pro-maritime responses opposing the amendment was very uplifting. In light of those reactions and other recent statements, it's more than fair to say the Jones Act in particular has solid backing in Congress, the administration and the military. That's a winning hand as far as I'm concerned.

We know from experience, though, that there eventually will be more attempts to weaken or eliminate the Jones Act, and there are ongoing fights involving other pillars including Food for Peace, the Maritime Security Program, and the U.S. Export-Import Bank. I'm not sure there could be a better illustration of why the SIU is so politically active and why we ask for member participation in grassroots campaigns as well as in the union's voluntary political action fund, SPAD. Without political involvement, our whole industry would be dead in the water.

Once again, I thank every Seafarer who stepped up in support of the Jones Act. Your voices made a difference, and you delivered the message just like you always deliver the goods.

SHBP Scholarship

If you or a family member are interested in continuing your education, I encourage you to read the information in this month's *LOG* (Page 14) about the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan scholarship program. This is an incredible benefit that SIU members and their families can apply for, and it's not too late to look into this year's awards.

As mentioned in the article, the entire scholarship application package is posted on our website, and we've also got printed copies at all the union halls. You can request one in the mail, too.

If you're thinking about going back to school or already planning it, give the scholarship program a look. This benefit helps SIU members and dependents every year, and it may help you.

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Communications Director, *Jordan Biscardo*; Managing Editor/Production, *Jim Guthrie*; Assistant Editor, *Nick Merrill*; Photographer, *Harry Gieske*; Administrative Support, *Misty Dobry*; Content Curator, *Mark Clements*.

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Congress Reaffirms Jones Act Support

Calls Industry Vital to 'National Security and Economic Vitality'

The United States Congress in mid-December enacted the strongest statement of support for the Jones Act and the domestic maritime industry in nearly 80 years, according to the powerful coalition American Maritime Partnership (AMP). The measure was included as part of the National Defense Authorization Act, which noted that the national security benefits of the domestic maritime industry and the Jones Act are "unquestioned."

The bill stated that the Jones Act and the American domestic maritime industry are vital to "the national security and economic vitality of the United States and the efficient operation of the United States transportation system." The legislation was signed into law Dec. 19.

One week earlier, when the bill was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, AMP Chairman Tom Allegretti stated, "Today, Congress reaffirmed its support for the American domestic maritime industry, the Jones Act, and the critical role both play in the national security and economic vitality of our nation. It is hard to imagine a more emphatic and unambiguous statement of support for the Jones Act than this legislation. The fact that it originated from both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees is only further evidence of the national security benefits of the Act and the American domestic maritime industry. In fact, this is the strongest Congressional statement of support for the Jones Act since the Merchant Marine Act of 1936."

The SIU is a member of AMP, a coalition of more than 450 organizations from all segments of the U.S. domestic maritime industry. According to AMP, the Congressional statement of support for the Jones Act as part of the National Defense Authorization Act specifically states:

■ The national security benefits of the domestic maritime industry are unquestioned, as the Department of Defense depends in part on United States domestic trades' fleet of containerships, roll-on/roll-off vessels, and product tankers to carry military cargoes;

■ The Department of Defense benefits from a robust commercial shipyard and ship repair industry, and current growth in that sector is particularly important as federal budget cuts may reduce the number of newly constructed military vessels; and

■ The domestic fleet is essential to national security and was a primary source of mariners needed to crew United States government-owned sealift vessels

activated from reserve status during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in the period 2002 through 2010.

In 113th Congress, House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) and Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA) noted the Jones Act contributions to America's national security, saying "without the Jones Act, vessels and crews from foreign nations could move freely on U.S. waters, creating a more porous border, increasing possible security threats and introducing vessels and mariners who do not adhere to U.S. standards into the bloodstream of our nation."

According to a report from the Lexington Institute, "Without the Jones Act, the Department of Homeland Security would be confronted by the difficult and very costly task of monitoring, regulating, and overseeing all foreign-controlled, foreign-crewed vessels in internal U.S. waters."

The National Defense Authorization bill's statement of support for the American domestic maritime industry read in part: "Congress finds that the United States domestic maritime industry carries hundreds of millions of tons of cargo annually, supports nearly 500,000 jobs, and provides nearly 100 billion in annual economic output; the Nation's military sealift capacity will benefit from one of the fastest growing segments of the domestic trades, 14 domestic trade tankers that are on order to be constructed at United States shipyards as of February 1, 2014; the domestic trades' vessel innovations that transformed worldwide maritime commerce include the development of containerships, self-unloading vessels, articulated tug-barges, trailer barges, chemical parcel tankers, railroad-on-barge carfloats, and river flotilla towing systems;... the Department of Defense benefits from a robust commercial shipyard and ship repair industry and current growth in that sector is particularly important as Federal budget cuts may reduce the number of new constructed military vessels."

The segment concluded, "It is the sense of Congress that United States coastwise trade laws promote a strong domestic trade maritime industry, which supports the national security and economic vitality of the United States and the efficient operation of the United States transportation system."

The Jones Act requires that all cargo moving between domestic ports be carried on vessels that are crewed, flagged, built and owned American.

SIU-Crewed Vessels Home for Holidays Following Operation United Assistance

After transporting a combined 1,700 Humvees, trucks, forklifts and other important equipment to West Africa, both the SIU-crewed *M/V Cape Rise* and *M/V Cape Wrath* returned to the U.S. in time for the holidays. The *Cape Rise*, operated by Keystone, and the *Cape Wrath*, operated by Crowley, were among the first vessels tasked with supporting Operation United Assistance, the coalition effort to combat the spread of Ebola in West Africa.

The *Rise* returned to Portsmouth, Virginia, on Dec. 22, while the *Wrath* arrived in Baltimore the week prior. Once the vessels were docked, the crews unloaded the surplus equipment and cargo before returning to their families. The spare equipment never left the ships, and was in no way exposed to any potential contaminants.



The *Cape Wrath*, one of two SIU-crewed ships involved in Operation United Assistance, is pictured in Jacksonville, Florida, late last year before it deployed overseas.

The SIU crew of the *Cape Rise* during the operation included: Bosun **Walter Rityalsky**, ABs **Clay Brown**, **Jonathan Davis**, **Joel Harris** and **Corrie Stockton**, QEE **James Atwell**, OMUs **Michael Jones** and **Stravon Jordan**, Wiper **Olympia Harley**, GVAs **Arthur Bailey** and **Tyree Watkins**, Steward/Baker **Army Leake**, Chief Cook **William Perry**, and SAs **Marsheta Brooks** and **Edward Smigielski**

SIU members serving on the *Wrath* during the operation included: Recertified Bosun **William Dowzicky**, ABs **Aristotle Bone**, **Edsel Renegado**, **John Salarda**, **Felix Somorostro**, **Terry Hester** and **Mariette Wright**, OS **James Porter**, QE4s **Carmus Peet**, **Jerry Semper** and **Thomas Hawk**, QE3s **Archie Eldridge** and **Robert Oppel**, GVA **Ma Marilynda Nance**, Chief Steward **Manuel Daguio**, and SAs **Nicholas Keating** and **Danilo Valencia**.

Both ships, part of the Maritime Administration's Ready Reserve Force, were deployed to U.S. installations in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, the countries most affected by the virus. The equipment they provided was used in the construction of several Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs), and for local road construction and other infrastructure improvements.

The Maritime Administration issued a statement Dec. 23 that read in part, "Like the crew of the *Cape Ray* – the RRF ship that recently performed so well in its mission to destroy Syrian chemical weapons – the U.S. merchant mariners crewing the *Cape Rise* and *Cape Wrath* are trained to perform these critical duties and prepared to leave their families on a moment's notice on behalf of the nation. When they all come home after this extended deployment, they will do so safely and healthily, having accomplished their goal of supporting the international effort to stop the spread of Ebola. With their sacrifice, they have given a gift of hope to the people of West Africa and support for a mission that will keep on giving as we continue working to eliminate the threat of Ebola. We appreciate their service and wish them and their families the happiest of holidays."

Paul Hall Center Upgrades Rolling Along

Major Project Includes New Simulators, Refurbished Classrooms

One of the most comprehensive upgrades in the history of the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is proceeding slightly ahead of schedule, according to officials at the Piney Point, Maryland, school.

As previously reported, the project features new, state-of-the-art simulators, classroom expansions, hotel improvements, and other technological upgrades throughout the campus. Some of the new simulators were ready for use in mid-January; the remainder are expected to be in place by the end of March. The multi-million-dollar renovation also will include (later this year) redoing all roads and walkways at the school along with various improvements at the library and the apprentice dorms.

Among the work that had been finished by mid-January, the Logan Building reopened with new engine simulators, testing (UNITEST) software, liquid cargo simulation, and new heating and air conditioning. All classrooms were modernized to include LED projectors, and all classrooms are now multi-functional.

Additionally, the main bridge (a full mission

bridge simulator) has been built and the 360-degree wall is up and painted; installation of the new bridge simulator was slated to begin around press time.

The progress didn't end there. The workshop has been equipped with new lathes, and the simulator annex now boasts new radar/ARPA and GMDSS equipment. Various rooms in the Williams Annex have been primed for installation of two new tug bridges, three upgraded auxiliary bridges, and a full mission engine room.

Renovations were also continuing in the Drozak Building including classroom improvements and installation of a new crane simulator (Hagglund Ship Pedestal Crane and Liebherr Mobile Harbor Crane).

The Paul Hall Center—which includes, among other components, the Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship and the Joseph Sacco Fire Fighting and Safety School—offers more than 70 U.S. Coast Guard-approved classes, many of which emphasize hands-on training. Students may have opportunities to receive college credits for more than 50 of those courses.



The auditorium at the TRC is getting a facelift as part of the school's renovations. (See Page 23 for more photos of the project.)

Navy Christens USNS Trenton in Mobile, Alabama

Progress continued in the Navy's joint high speed vessel (JHSV) program as the *USNS Trenton* was christened Jan. 10 at Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama. The *Trenton*, a 338-foot catamaran, is the fifth of a planned 10-vessel fleet being crewed by members of the SIU Government Services Division.

More than 300 naval and shipyard guests attended the ceremony, which took place alongside the *USNS Trenton* at the shipyard. The Honorable Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy, served as the event's principal speaker.

"This ship represents the hard-working men and women of New Jersey and the importance of the American cities along the Delaware River," Mabus said. "It represents American shipyard, factory, and assembly line workers who have been the backbone of the arsenal of democracy since President Franklin Roosevelt coined the phrase more than seven decades ago. It represents the American spirit of hard work, patriotism and perseverance.

"The *USNS Trenton* will carry these values and this spirit around the world," he continued. "It is tailor-made for our 21st century operations and maritime security missions, from the wide expanses of the Pacific to the littorals of Africa."

According to the Navy, JHSVs "are ideal for fast, intra-theater transportation of troops, military vehicles, supplies and



Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus (third from right) and others watch as Virginia Kamsky, sponsor of the *USNS Trenton*, christens the ship in Mobile, Alabama. Also pictured are (from left) Michael Kamsky, Virginia Kamsky's son; Craig Perciavalle, president of Austal USA; Capt. Susan Orsini, master of the *USNS Trenton*; and Eric Jackson, mayor of Trenton, New Jersey. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Armando Gonzales)

equipment. These ships are capable of transporting 600 short tons 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots with berthing space for up to 104 personnel and airline-style seating for up to 312. JHSVs have a 20,000 square foot

open mission deck and a flight deck to support day and night launch and recovery operations, providing U.S. forces added mobility and flexibility. They can operate in a variety of roles to include supporting overseas contingency operations, conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, supporting special operations forces and supporting emerging joint sea-basing concepts."

At the christening, Austal USA President Craig Perciavalle stated, "*Trenton* is a true testament to the successful partnership that has developed between Austal USA, the Military Sealift Command, and the Navy. We're very happy with how well this program has matured as we prepare our fifth JHSV for trials and delivery in the coming months.... *Trenton* and her sister ships are innovative ships with incredible amounts of speed, volume and flexibility for their size; capabilities the Navy will be able to leverage for decades to come. The success of the program is the direct result of the hard work and dedication of so many incredible shipbuilding professionals here at Austal – the best I've ever worked with."

Serving as the ship's sponsor was

Virginia A. Kamsky, chairman and chief executive officer of Kamsky Associates, Inc., a strategic advisory firm with offices in Beijing and New York City. A press release from the shipyard pointed out, "Ms. Kamsky is serving under a White House appointment as a member of the U.S. Secretary of the Navy Advisory Panel, an advisory body which provides the Secretary of the Navy with independent advice and recommendations on critical issues facing the Department of the Navy and the Navy Secretariat. Ms. Kamsky is a recipient of the Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Award, which is the highest honorary award the Secretary of the Navy can confer on a Department of the Navy civilian employee."

The Navy pointed out the newest JHSV is the fourth naval vessel to bear the name *Trenton*: "The first ship was built following the Civil War and was named to honor George Washington's Revolutionary War victory on the banks of the Delaware River. Since then, a ship bearing the name *Trenton* has served during every vital Navy mission until 2007 when the last ship was decommissioned."



The joint high speed vessel *USNS Trenton* rolls out in preparation for launch at Austal USA shipyard. (U.S. Navy photo)



A ceremonial steel-cutting marks the start of construction of another Jones Act tanker at NASSCO. (Photo courtesy General Dynamics NASSCO)

Construction Starts on Second APT Tanker at NASSCO Shipyard

Crowley Maritime to Operate Jones Act Vessels

A new-build program calling for five SIU-contracted Jones Act tankers is going strong in San Diego.

In mid-December, the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard signaled the start of construction of a second “ECO” tanker to be built for American Petroleum Tankers at a steel-cutting ceremony. U.S. Rep. Scott Peters (D-California) marked the beginning of construction by pressing a button to cut the first piece of steel. NASSCO (a union yard) began construction on the first tanker in September 2014.

The five ships (each 610 feet long) will be managed by Seafarers-contracted Crowley Maritime.

In a press release about the December ceremony, NASSCO described the new ships as “innovative and increased energy-efficient and fuel-saving products. Each of the five 50,000 deadweight ton product carriers will be LNG-conversion ready and will hold a 330,000 barrel cargo capacity. With a specialized ECO design, the tankers are more energy efficient and incorporate environmental protection features, including a ballast water treatment system.”

The five-tanker contract will also help sustain NASSCO’s workforce of nearly 3,200 and will add approximately 300 more jobs in the near future.

“This second tanker marks another milestone in our fleet expansion adding five state-of-the-art vessels constructed and delivered by NASSCO,” said Rob Kurz, vice president of Kinder Morgan Terminals and president of American Petroleum Tankers, a Kinder Morgan, Inc. subsidiary. “The expansion is a result of the commitment of our customers through their long-term charter support. We look forward to delivery of the vessels in mid-2017.”

The construction and operation of the new vessels are aligned with the Jones Act, requiring ships carrying cargo between U.S. ports to be built, crewed, flagged and owned American. The Jones Act helps sustain around 500,000 American jobs while contributing billions of dollars to the national economy. It also helps sustain a pool of reliable, well-trained, U.S. citizen mariners who are available to crew American military support ships in times of war or emergency.

Anti-Jones Act Proposal Draws Ire from Industry

In one of the strongest pro-maritime movements in recent memory, the SIU helped voice vehement opposition to a Senate floor amendment that would kill the U.S.-build provision of the Jones Act, a vital maritime law that protects America’s national and economic security.

When Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona) offered the unrelated amendment to Keystone XL Pipeline legislation in mid-January, the backlash was immediate from other members of Congress, maritime unions, rank-and-file members, American-flag ship and boat operators, and prominent domestic maritime coalitions. The U.S. Coast Guard and the Navy League of the United States also came out against the amendment.

The SIU called upon members to ask their senators to oppose the amendment, and Seafarers responded passionately and in large numbers. Rank-and-file comments on the union’s social media pages, in the halls and aboard ship all reflected a solid awareness that any weakening of the Jones Act would wipe out American jobs.

The amendment’s fate hadn’t been decided at press time, but all indications were that it had little chance of passing. For that matter, the Keystone bill itself was far from a sure thing, partly because of a veto threat from the White House.

Nevertheless, the domestic maritime industry took the threat quite seriously, both because of the Jones Act’s importance and because the show of strong support for the nation’s freight cabotage law may dissuade other attempts to weaken it.

“This amendment has no place in the Keystone bill or in Congress,” stated SIU President Michael Sacco. “It is just another attack on the Jones Act, one that could cripple the U.S.-flag maritime industry. We need all hands on deck to defeat this amendment.”

Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft was quoted in a newspaper article as having stated, “If we have foreign-flag vessels doing coastalized trade, what are the safety standards, what are the maritime pollution . . . standards, how are they in compliance with the same standards that we apply to our U.S. fleet? I think, at the end of the day, it will put our entire U.S. fleet in jeopardy. And then in a time of crisis, who are we going to charter to carry our logistics?”

The Jones Act requires that cargo moving between domestic ports be carried on ships that are crewed, built, flagged and owned American. It has enjoyed strong bipartisan support since its enactment in 1920, and in modern times it helps sustain more than 400,000 American jobs while contributing billions of dollars annually to the U.S. economy.

As U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-California) put it in a Jan. 15 letter to two Senate committee chairpersons, “The Jones Act keeps jobs, ships and a maritime skill base in the United States – and any effort to diminish this longstanding law is sure to negatively impact America’s maritime industry and its significant contributions to the national economy.”

U.S. Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-California) wrote in *The Hill* that the amendment “would undermine our domestic maritime industry and threaten the more than 400,000 jobs it supports nationwide. After years of stagnation, the American maritime industry is investing a record amount in new ship construction with American shipyards building many modern state-of-the-art vessels.”

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Members Meet with SIU President in Lauderdale



SIU President Michael Sacco (fourth from left in the front) met with Seafarers in late October at the union hall in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He updated them on the latest happenings both within the SIU and in the maritime industry.

Port of Houston Authority: Ex-Im Bank Vital for Economy

White House Report Shows Taxpayer-Friendly Program Supports 164,000 U.S. Jobs

The U.S. Export-Import Bank recently received strong support from the Port of Houston Authority and also got a boost from an annual report that spelled out the enormous benefits directly stemming from the agency.

The SIU and other maritime unions have pointed out the Export-Import Bank (often abbreviated as Ex-Im) is crucial for the U.S. Merchant Marine. It's a steady source of good American jobs in the maritime industry (cargo generated by Ex-Im funding must be transported aboard U.S.-flag vessels) and in other sectors of the U.S. economy.

Following a short-term extension enacted by Congress last fall, the bank's charter once again will be up for reauthorization in June.

In a Dec. 11 letter to U.S. Senators Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) and Harry Reid (D-Nevada) and U.S. Representatives John Boehner (R-Ohio) and Nancy Pelosi (D-California), Port of Houston Authority Chairman Janiece Longoria noted, "Federal policies that increase and sustain trade are beneficial for jobs and the economy. The U.S. Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im Bank) provides important opportunities for domestic manufacturers and employers to compete internationally and ship American

goods into the global economy. With the dynamic and uncertain global marketplace, it is vital for U.S. manufacturers to have reliable and multiple tools to compete effectively.

"According to the United States International Trade Administration, Houston led the nation in exports in 2012, and between 2005 and 2012 Houston exports increased more than 164 percent," the letter continued. "The Ex-Im Bank plays a vital role in keeping the region globally competitive and is responsible for contributing \$4 billion to total export sales in Texas in 2013. The value of foreign trade passing through the Houston region has doubled over the last decade.... More than 76 percent of all the Ex-Im Bank support in Texas for 2013 directly benefited the Houston region. These benefits are clear at the Port of Houston, which is the largest port in the U.S. for foreign tonnage, annually generating nearly \$500 billion in economic activity and sustaining more than 2 million jobs in the United States."

Longoria concluded, "There are significant benefits to trade and exports relating to the Ex-Im Bank, and the Port of Houston Authority respectfully requests your support for its reauthorization."

SIU Vice President Gulf Coast Dean Corgey also serves on the Port of Houston Authority.

Meanwhile, a week after the letter from Longoria was sent, Ex-Im Bank Chairman and President Fred Hochberg announced publication of the agency's annual report. He described the bank as "a small agency that exists to equip U.S. businesses with the financing tools they need to overcome obstacles and open new markets for their goods and services. We know that when entrepreneurs are empowered to win export sales against their foreign competitors, businesses grow, our economy becomes more durable, and layoffs are replaced with 'Now Hiring' signs in communities across our country."

He added that in 2014 (the program's 80th anniversary), the bank supported 164,000 American jobs while approximately 90 percent of its transactions directly supported U.S. small businesses. It also supported \$27.5 billion in exports at no cost to American taxpayers.

The Export-Import Bank was created in 1934 to promote the sale of American-made goods overseas. When it was chartered, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for the bank to "aid in financing and to



Fred Hochberg



Janiece Longoria

facilitate exports and imports and the exchange" of goods between the U.S. and the world during a period of economic distress.

As noted on its website, the bank continues to operate under those goals supporting U.S. manufacturers and exporters in times of economic crisis when limitations on commercial credit arise. It makes and guarantees loans in ad-

dition to offering credit insurance to fund American exports.

The SIU and other supporters have pointed out that the Export-Import Bank does not cost American taxpayers a cent. It covers its activities through the fees and interest charged for its services. In fact, it has returned money to the U.S. Treasury that has been used to reduce the national debt.

Raising Wages Summit Instills Confidence, Determination

The AFL-CIO sponsored a National Summit on Raising Wages at Gallaudet University on Jan. 7, and the event was filled with passionate speakers from all walks of life. From Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts), AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and United States Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, to actress Piper Perabo and small-business owner David Borris, everyone had a unique viewpoint on what raising wages would mean for America's working families.

Representatives from SIU headquarters attended the summit in Washington, D.C., as did officials from the AFL-CIO's Maritime Trades Department.

MaryBe McMillan, secretary-treasurer of the North Carolina AFL-CIO, took the stage first. She spoke about the need to raise the minimum wage, and the larger impact such a move would have on the economy as a whole.

"If working folks got their fair share, our economy would work for everyone," McMillan said, expressing what would be a recurring theme throughout the gathering. "It's about shifting the debate. Instead of asking how much it will cost to pay workers more, we should be asking how much it will cost if we don't."

After McMillan left the podium, two workers shared their personal stories to illustrate how raising wages would affect the average employee. They were followed by Secretary of Labor Perez, who gave a rousing speech to the hundreds assembled.

"We talk data and all that, but this is about real

people and the struggles that you're going through. This is about who we are as Americans," Perez said, energized by the previous speakers.

He continued, acknowledging the AFL-CIO (to which the SIU is affiliated) for the hard work in putting together the summit, as well as the federation's continued efforts to boost working families. "I come here to say thank you. Thank you to Rich, thank you to all of our friends at the AFL-CIO. You have been at the tip of the spear, and the labor movement continues to give a voice [to the worker]."

Perez added, "We're moving in the right direction, but today is about the unfinished business of this recovery, and that is to make sure that this recovery results in shared prosperity. We all succeed when we all succeed, but we all succeed *only* when we all succeed."

After two more worker testimonies, McMillan introduced Sen. Warren, who thanked the AFL-CIO officers in attendance for their leadership and friendship. She talked about the burden of young Americans, shouldering enormous student debts and struggling to make ends meet.

"Today's young adults may be the first generation in American history to do worse than their par-

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Actress and member of SAG-AFTRA Piper Perabo is pictured with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.



Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts)

AFL-CIO Announces Summits In Presidential Primary States

Editor's note: Issued simultaneously with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka's speech from the summit in Washington, D.C., this press release from the federation outlines the future of the Raising Wages campaign.

The first National Summit on Raising Wages definitively set the tone for political and economic action in the New Year. It generated an in-depth, diverse conversation and developed concrete steps for an expanded campaign to raise wages for working people. But above all, the summit proved America is beginning to rise up, come together and reject the idea that nothing can be done about falling wages.

The AFL-CIO's national summit is just the beginning of the 2015 Raising Wages campaign. From today's success, the campaign expands with two initial projects:

1) State federations of labor will hold **Raising Wages summits in the first four presidential primary states**—Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire and South Carolina—beginning in Iowa this spring. These summits will bring together diverse voices to lay out the entire Raising Wages platform and establish state-based standards of accountability.

2) The AFL-CIO will **take the Raising Wages campaign to seven cities** around the country: Atlanta, Columbus, DC (Metro), St. Louis, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and San Diego. In each city, the labor movement will stand together with those already at work and bring important energy, ideas and resources to critical battles. These cities will be the starting points of a long-term effort to concentrate work where it can have the most impact.

In major speeches highlighting the summit, Sen. Elizabeth Warren

(D-Massachusetts) and Secretary of Labor Tom Perez outlined the defining economic fact of the past generation: Productivity has gone way up and wages have stayed flat. Concluding the summit, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka highlighted the enormous progress, remaining challenges and real steps the labor movement plans to undertake in order to create an economy based on raising wages.

The AFL-CIO also released a series of policy prescriptions that take on many of the challenges discussed. These bold policies provide a comprehensive road map to grow our nation's economy in a way that works for everyone.

The core of the summit's success was built on a panel discussion of workers, academics, business owners and progressive and political leaders. Through this conversation, panelists detailed how the raising wages agenda made great strides and confronted great challenges in 2014, including major organizing wins at American Airlines, multiple state legislative victories on the minimum wage and innovative campaigns conducted by carwash workers. The panelists also recognized, however, that right-wing billionaires' extremist politics, a rapacious Wall Street and insufficient advocacy from political leaders thwarted further progress.

The AFL-CIO National Summit on Raising Wages was attended by more than 300 progressive activists and union leaders, and was seen by thousands more through online live-stream video.

This summit is how the work begins. At its end, the challenges—but more importantly, the opportunities—are clear. Allies united behind the idea of a Raising Wages Agenda have come together in a collective voice, and are ready to go to work.



Members load some of the donated toys into a van for transport to LifeNet4Families.



ABs Rigoberto Boggeano and Eugenio Lopez

Lauderdale Seafarers Give Back to Community

Members Continue Tradition of Service

Whether they're voluntarily repairing local homes in the summer or donating toys for kids around the winter holidays, SIU members in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, have a strong tradition of service.

That legacy remained evident late last year as Seafarers showed their generosity by contributing \$1,500 worth of toys to LifeNet4Families of Broward County, a local community services organization. The SIU also teamed up with other affiliates of the Greater South Florida Maritime Trades Council in making a monetary donation to LifeNet4Families.

"The SIU members here really stepped up during the holiday season, as they always do," said Port Agent Kris Hopkins, who organized the union's participation. "Both with the toy drive and the donation, I think all the volunteers simply wanted to do something to help those who aren't as fortunate as we are."

He added, "We have worked with LifeNet for years and know what a good job it does in the community. They provide meals and a pantry for those in need as well as employment support and family counseling, among other services."

Hopkins said approximately 50 Seafarers chipped in for the toy drive, and he noted this was the fourth straight year the union participated.



OMU Alex Capellan



CME Willis Welsh

Mariners' Coast Guard STCW Medical Certificates Must be Valid, on File in SIU Database

In 2014, all Seafarers who sail internationally should have received communications in the mail from the U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC) including a new Coast Guard STCW medical certificate that brings mariners into compliance with the latest international rules.

Any Seafarers who sail internationally but have yet to receive their Coast Guard STCW medical certificate should contact the NMC by phone at 1-888-427-5662 or by email at IAskNMC@uscg.mil. A renewal certificate may be obtained by submitting a valid U.S. Coast Guard physical to a Coast Guard regional

examination center (REC). There are no fees for a renewal.

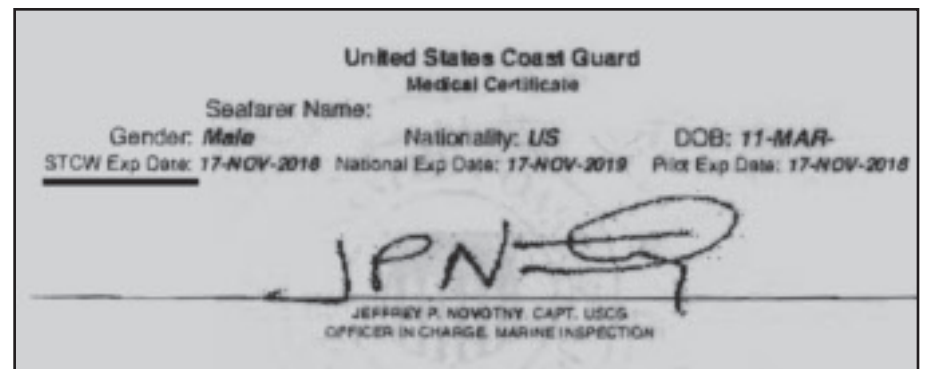
Members who have received their Coast Guard STCW medical certificate but have not had it scanned at an SIU hall are urged to do so as soon as possible. It's important that the certificate is entered into the Seafarers Management Information System (SMIS) database so members don't run into roadblocks when it's time to ship out.

Members also are advised that although the certificate includes three expiration dates, the one on the upper left ("STCW Exp Date") is the relevant date for international voyages. The other two

expiration dates are listed as "National Exp Date" and "Pilot Exp Date." The certificate itself is supposed to be valid for two years, but some of the ones initially issued in 2014 had shorter expiration dates. Therefore, members are urged to check the STCW expiration date on their respective certificates.

Also, entry-level mariners are reminded that they are required to possess the medical certificate when sailing on STCW-compliant vessels.

Questions may be directed to the NMC, SIU halls or the admissions office at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center in Piney Point, Maryland.



The expiration date in the upper left part of the certificate is the relevant one for international voyages.

Maritime Security Program Receives Full Funding

The SIU helped secure a major victory for Seafarers and for the rest of the American maritime industry late last year when President Obama signed a \$1.1 trillion spending bill which, among many other things, includes full funding for the U.S. Maritime Security Program (MSP).

The overall legislation was a combination of a continuing resolution and an

omnibus spending bill, and hence was dubbed the "Cromnibus." Thanks to the efforts of the SIU and other supporters, the final version features the full funding amount of \$186 million for MSP. This was far from a sure thing, as an earlier House version of the Transportation appropriations bill included a \$20 million shortfall for MSP.

The Maritime Security Program, in

addition to bolstering America's national and economic security, is a crucial source of employment for SIU members. The program, which began in 1996, helps keep 60 militarily useful, U.S.-flag merchant ships in operation. Vessels enrolled in the program are available for military support operations as needed, and the operators receive a reimbursement to help offset the costs.

Studies have estimated it would cost the government billions of dollars to replace the vessels and infrastructure it already gets through the MSP and its related Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement for a tiny fraction of that cost, and that's to say nothing of the irreplaceable shipboard manpower pool sustained in part by the program.

Fair Winds to Retiring Captain



The camera captured a quiet but historic moment in December as vessel master Captain Doug Strassner (right) issued his final discharge, to Bosun Carl Pedersen in Baltimore aboard the Crowley-operated *Independence II*. The two sailed together for many years; the captain is heading into retirement.

Proposed Rule by USCG Aims To Improve Mariner Access

A potential new rule from the U.S. Coast Guard could make it easier for mariners to go ashore.

The agency on Dec. 29 published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) that would require each owner or operator of a facility regulated by the Coast Guard to implement a system that provides mariners and other individuals with access between vessels moored at the facility and the gate, in a timely manner and at no cost to seafarers or other individuals. This process would have to be documented in the facility's security plan.

A meeting to receive public comments was scheduled for Jan. 23 in Washington, D.C. Written comments on the proposal are due by Feb. 27.

While many facilities currently comply with this proposal, the SIU believes it is important that mariners be provided with reasonable access to shore during all port calls. The union is encouraging members to submit comments to the docket; related links are provided in a Dec. 30 post in the News section of the SIU website.

The direct link for submitting comments may be opened by typing the following URL into a web browser:

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment;D=USCG-2013-1087-0001>

Alternatively, mariners may visit <http://www.regulations.gov> and then type the docket number: USCG-2013-1087

In a news release about the NPRM, the Coast Guard noted, "Generally, transiting through a facility is the only way that a seafarer or other individual can egress to shore beyond the facility to access basic shoreside businesses and services, and meet with family members and other personnel who do not hold a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). Also, this proposed rule would provide facility owners and operators flexibility to implement a system to provide seafarers' access that is tailored to each facility. Facility owners and operators also would be required to amend and document their access procedures in their Coast Guard-approved facility security plans within one year of the publication of the final rule."

AFL-CIO President Sees Raising Wages as Federation's Mission

Continued from Page 5

ents did," she said.

The senator then spoke about the damage done to middle- and lower-class families over the past 30 years: "The trickle-down experiment that began in the Reagan years failed America's middle class. Sure, the rich are doing great. Giant corporations are doing great. Lobbyists are doing great. But we need an economy where everyone else has a shot to do great."

Warren shared a personal anecdote that reflected her history with the struggles of workers.

"This is personal for me," she stated. "When I was 12, my three big brothers were all off in the military. My mom was 50 years old, a stay-at-home mom, and my daddy had a heart attack. It turned our little family upside down. The bills piled up, we lost the family station wagon. We came about that close to losing our home. And I remember that day that my mother,

scared, crying, pulled her best dress out of the closet. She put it on, put on her high heels, and walked to Sears to get a minimum wage job. That minimum wage job was enough, back then, to support a family of three. And that minimum wage job meant that we saved our home and saved our family."

She concluded, to thunderous applause, "My daddy ended up as a maintenance man, my mom kept working at Sears. I graduated from a commuter college that cost \$50 a semester. And I ended up in the United States Senate."

Warren was followed by a roundtable-type discussion with a diverse makeup of participants including Perabo, a member of the SAG-AFTRA; Borris, owner of Hel's Kitchen Catering; Dorian Warren, associate professor of political science and international public affairs at Columbia University; Neera Tanden, president of the Center for American Progress; Jennifer Epps-Addison, executive director of Wis-

consin Jobs Now; Colby Harris, representing the pro-worker group OUR Walmart; The Honorable Marty Walsh, mayor of Boston; Angie Wei, chief of staff of the California Labor Federation; and Michael Cantrell, president of United Auto Workers Local 42 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. As a group, the panel shared personal triumphs and struggles that they have faced as a result of unionizing or otherwise fighting for worker's rights.

To close out the presentations, Trumka rallied the crowd. After thanking the speakers and panelists, he asked those in attendance and watching the live stream a question.

"For office-holders and candidates, it comes down to a very, very basic question: Are you satisfied? Are you satisfied with an America where the vast majority works harder and harder for less and less? Or do you propose to build an America where we, the people, share in the wealth we create? This is the single standard by which we

will judge leadership in the years to come."

He went on to talk about uniting workers: "We have to organize around a common purpose. And that's what raising wages is all about. This summit is more than raising wages, though. It's about what wages represent."

He also announced the plan that would carry the spirit of the summit forward into action.

"At the end of this marvelous day, our challenges are pretty clear," Trumka stated. "We've come together in a collective voice, and we're ready to go to work. And in that spirit, I am announcing that the AFL-CIO is launching an ambitious Raising Wages Call to Action (see sidebar on Page 5)."

He concluded with a sentiment shared by all in attendance: "As we bring this summit to a close, let's remember that raising wages is not a hobby. It's our mission. This is a beginning, not an ending, so let's make it a beginning that all of America will feel the impact of."

New ISM Code Changes Became Effective Jan. 1

Changes to the International Safety Management (ISM) Code have been newly implemented, going into effect on Jan. 1. While a few changes have been made, one in particular may mean more jobs for mariners. Amended paragraph 6.2 of the ISM Code, concerning the minimum safe manning levels of all vessels, states:

"The Company should ensure that each ship is: manned with qualified,

certificated and medically fit seafarers in accordance with national and international requirements; and appropriately manned in order to encompass all aspects of maintaining safe operations on board"

In other words, operators who only crew a ship to meet the minimum safe manning level will likely have to increase that number in order to account for hours of rest rules and additional requirements, as well as potential emergencies and other situations that could arise while out at sea. In determining the minimum safe manning level of a vessel, companies are asked to refer to the "Principles of Minimum Safe Manning", which was adopted by the ISM by resolution A.1047 (27).

According to an International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) press release, "Until now minimum safe manning was certified in accordance with company proposals which were then rubber-stamped by the flag state, and which took into account only the vessel's ability to navigate and manage basic emergencies. No allowance had been made for other crew duties, taking into account frequency of port calls, cargo operations, maintenance or administrative tasks. This process has been open to abuse by companies seeking to cut costs by cutting crew size.

"Minimally manned vessels have been shown to directly impact crew fatigue and have been cited in numerous high-profile groundings and collisions,

many of which had disastrous consequences for the seafarers and the environment," the ITF statement continued.

According to the Shipowners' Club, "The onus of assessment of safe manning for any vessel is on the company who operate it as it is privy to the actual facts of the prevailing operation. Therefore the company would be liable for not having made a proper assessment or for not re-assessing a change in circumstance of the vessel."

"This is a big win for mariners," said SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel, who also chairs the ITF Seafarers' Section. "Kudos should go out to our representatives at the IMO who worked so diligently over the last several years to see this through."



LENDING A HAND – Many Houston-area Seafarers pitched in to facilitate the union's recent move from the old hall on Pierce Street to temporary quarters in a nearby CWA hall. Among those volunteering their time were (pictured with Safety Director Kevin Sykes, third from right) Robinson Eromosele, Francis Ackon, Daniel Ikegwu, Paul Wade, Adams Mohammed, James Van Dyke, Edyson Chaniago, Ali Muthanna and Robert Gonzalez.



SOLIDARITY WITH STEELWORKERS – SIU members in Houston took part in a rally supporting members of the United Steelworkers. Altogether, more than 150 Sherwin Alumina workers along with allies from across south Texas demonstrated outside the offices of Sherwin's parent company, Glencore, calling on the global conglomerate to end a lockout at Sherwin's Gregory, Texas, facility. The SIU contingent included Safety Director Kevin Sykes, ABs Raphael Dewberry and Mohamed Ghaleb, and Steward Robinson Eromosele.

At Sea and Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD HORIZON NAVIGATOR – The group photo at left from the Horizon Lines ship includes AB Joel Gonzalez, Chief Cook Ingrid Ortiz Rosario, AB Noel Otero, and Chief Steward Antonio Mendez Cruz. Otero recently celebrated his birthday aboard the vessel. The photo above shows AB Jose Crespo Jr.



B-BOOK IN HOUSTON – SA Philomene Lewis (right) picks up her full B-book at the hall in Houston. She is pictured with SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgey.



CELEBRATING IN WILMINGTON – The annual winter holiday feast at the SIU hall in Wilmington, California, was a big hit, as evidenced in part by the two snapshots at left and the one above from the late-December gathering.





AT THE HALL IN SAN JUAN – In photo at left, QEE Linarys Castillo receives her A-book from Port Agent Amancio Crespo. The port agent also is at far right in photo directly above, with OS Sergio Valentin (center) and his spouse. Valentin is holding a receipt for his voluntary contribution to the Maritime Defense League. The remaining photo shows (from left) GUDE Beato Diaz, AB Kemer Rojas and Recertified Bosun Rafael Franco.

At Sea and Ashore With the SIU



ABOARD MONTFORD POINT – The photo at left and the one above are from a mid-December servicing in Alameda, California. The *USNS Montford Point* is operated by Ocean Shipholdings for the U.S. Military Sealift Command. SIU Assistant VP Nick Celona is second from left in the group photo, while Patrolman Nick Marrone II is behind the lens.



ABOARD MAERSK COLUMBUS – Safety Director Osvaldo Ramos (far right in photo at left, far left in photo above) submitted these photos of members from a late-November payoff on the *Maersk Columbus* in New Jersey. Among those pictured with Ramos are Seafarers Joseph Corr, George DiCanio, Edwin Ruiz Jr., David Arroyo, Benny Samosan, Sherwin Jones, Sean Jones, Kevin Williams and Jimmy Niotis.

ABOARD GREEN DALE – AB Juan Carolos Negrón (left) is pictured with Captain Richard Phillips late last year during a trip to northern Europe on the Waterman-operated *Green Dale*.



B-BOOK IN OAKLAND – AB Carlo Gentile (left) picks up his full B-book at the hall in Oakland, California. Administering the oath is SIU Assistant VP Nick Celona.



CHRISTMAS ON APL PEARL – These photos were taken on Christmas Day while the *APL Pearl* was sailing near Al Maghribi, Yemen. Recertified Steward Denis Burke (left) and Chief Cook Radfan Almaklani are shown in the photo above.

Maritime Rejects McCain Revision

Continued from Page 4

The congresswoman further noted, “The Jones Act is an essential pillar of national and homeland security. A strong domestic shipyard base helps support strategic sealift requirement and Navy shipbuilding while ensuring that U.S. ports are free from foreign influence.”

Speaking on the Senate floor on Jan. 16, Sen. Mazie Hirono said, “The Jones Act helps to shore up our national security by providing reliable sealift in times of war. It ensures our ongoing viability as an ocean power by protecting American shipbuilders. As a result, the Jones Act provides solid, well-paying jobs for nearly half a million Americans from Virginia to Hawaii. In short, the Jones Act promotes national security and American job creation. Therefore, I am unclear why some of my colleagues are opposed to this common-sense law.”

Many others also reiterated their support of the Jones Act.

From the pages of *Maritime Executive*, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Tony Munoz stated in an editorial, “McCain’s laissez-faire sentiments would actually destroy U.S. jobs, lower personal income, devastate U.S. vessel-operating companies and obliterate American shipbuilders, never mind the national security impacts.”

“Meanwhile, statistics show that there is a steady loss of blue-collar jobs such as those found in shipyards, contributing to growing income inequality in the U.S. Despite the fact that 63 percent of the jobs lost during the Great Recession have been replaced, middle class incomes have actually declined by 11.6 percent,” added Munoz in his Jan. 18 editorial.

President Thomas Buffenbarger of the International Association of Machinists told senators that “the Jones Act has the strong support of the U.S. Navy and the Department of Defense. Passage of Senator McCain’s amendment would result in the outsourcing of U.S. shipbuilding to foreign nations, which will not only severely damage our defense capabilities, but will also devastate U.S. commercial shipbuilding and lead to a loss of good-paying American jobs.”

Ed Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, challenged the McCain amendment assumption that it would benefit the economy: “This could not be further from the truth. By removing the build provision of the Jones Act, the amendment would eliminate 400,000 U.S. jobs, reduce the GDP by \$36 billion, and erase \$24 billion in American workers’ wages and benefits. In fact, the only parties that stand to benefit from this amendment are heavily subsidized foreign shipping competitors who are not subject to U.S. laws, regulations, environmental standards and taxes.”

The head of the key coalition American

Maritime Partnership (AMP), of which the SIU is a member, also weighed in.

“The McCain amendment would gut the nation’s shipbuilding capacity, outsource our U.S. Naval shipbuilding to foreign builders, and cost hundreds of thousands of family-wage jobs across this country,” said AMP Chairman Tom Allegretti. “The shipbuilding requirement, which Senator McCain seeks to eliminate, is in place to ensure that the United States maintains the industrial capacity to build its own ships, so as to protect and defend the American homeland. It is hard to believe that the Congress would endorse a change to the law that would outsource U.S. jobs and reduce national security by effectively creating dependence on foreign countries to build our ships.”

A primary purpose of the Jones Act is to promote national and homeland security. The Navy’s position is clear – repeal of the Jones Act would “hamper [America’s] ability to meet strategic sealift requirements and Navy shipbuilding.” Similarly, last December, Congress enacted legislation reaffirming the Jones Act and calling a strong commercial shipbuilding industry “particularly important as Federal budget cuts may reduce the number of new constructed military vessels” (see story on page 2). The independent Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, said America’s military power is dependent on a strong “shipyard industrial base to support national defense needs.”

The American domestic maritime industry is investing record amounts in new ship construction in virtually every trade, a “tremendous renaissance,” according to Chip Jaenichen, administrator of the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD). A recent MARAD study cited the “economic importance” of the American shipbuilding and repair industry, with annual employment of more than 400,000, annual labor income of about \$24 billion, and annual gross domestic product of \$36 billion.

Also speaking in support of the Jones Act were representatives from the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force (GLMTF), another SIU-affiliated organization.

In a press release, the GLMTF said it “sees no benefit to allowing foreign-built vessels to carry cargo between U.S. ports, but warns that nearly 60,000 jobs in the Great Lakes states will be sacrificed for no good reason if the amendment to the Keystone pipeline bill offered by Senator John McCain is accepted.”

“There is no reason to even consider this amendment,” said John D. Baker, president of the GLMTF. “The vessels built in Great Lakes shipyards are so efficient that year in, year out they save their customers billions of dollars in freight costs compared to the land-based transportation modes. What shortcoming, what failing can be found there?”

NLRB Issues Final Rule For Resolving Disputes In Representation Cases

A new rule issued by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is good news for workers, according to the head of America’s largest labor federation.

The NLRB has streamlined the process for resolving representation disputes with the new rule, published on Dec. 15 and taking effect on April 14. This final rule amends the existing representation-case procedures in an effort to simplify the process.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka stated, “The modest but important reforms to the representation election process will help reduce delay in the process and make it easier for workers to vote on forming a union in a timely manner. Strengthening protections for workers seeking to come together and bargain collectively is critical to workers winning much-deserved wage gains and improving their lives.”

The SIU is one of the AFL-CIO’s 56 affiliated unions, which collectively represent more than 12.5 million workers. SIU President Michael Sacco is the longest-serving member of the federation’s executive council.

The NLRB defines its role in resolving representation disputes as the following: “Representation petitions are filed by employees, unions and employers seeking to have the NLRB conduct an election to determine if employees wish to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining with their employer. The board will investigate these petitions to determine if an election should be conducted and will direct an election, if appropriate.”

“In most instances, parties agree on the voting unit and other issues. If parties do not agree, the NLRB’s regional office holds a pre-election hearing to determine whether an election should be conducted. The NLRB’s regional office conducts the election and, if necessary, holds a post-election hearing to resolve challenges to voters’ eligibility and objections to the conduct of the election or conduct affecting the results of the election. Parties can seek board review of regional determinations made

before and after the election.”

The board majority opinion was that the rule would modernize the process of administering the National Labor Relations Act, making its procedures more transparent and consistent, while also cutting down on unnecessary litigation and delay. With the passing of this rule, the board will be better able to protect employees’ rights by answering questions of representation fairly and quickly. The final rule was approved by NLRB Chairman Mark Gaston Pearce and Members Kent Y. Hirozawa and Nancy Schiffer. Board Members Harry I. Johnson III and Philip A. Miscimarra had dissenting views.

Chairman Pearce said, “I am heartened that the board has chosen to enact amendments that will modernize the representation case process and fulfill the promise of the National Labor Relations Act. Simplifying and streamlining the process will result in improvements for all parties. With these changes, the board strives to ensure that its representation process remains a model of fairness and efficiency for all.”

According to the agency, the changes implemented by this rule include:

- Provides for electronic filing and transmission of election petitions and other documents;
- Ensures that employees, employers and unions receive timely information they need to understand and participate in the representation case process;
- Eliminates or reduces unnecessary litigation, duplication and delay;
- Adopts best practices and uniform procedures across regions;
- Requires that additional contact information (personal telephone numbers and email addresses) be included in voter lists, to the extent that information is available to the employer, in order to enhance a fair and free exchange of ideas by permitting other parties to the election to communicate with voters about the election using modern technology; and
- Allows parties to consolidate all election-related appeals to the Board into a single appeals process.

Enjoying the Holidays Ashore and at Sea With Seafarers



The winter holiday season traditionally signals the opportunity – when time permits – for Seafarers to enjoy good food and fellowship at the halls and at sea. As evidenced by the photos above, the recent holidays were no exception. The annual late-December gathering at the SIU hall in Norfolk, Virginia (photo at left), saw another solid turnout. Among those in attendance were (from left) retiree John Cooper, Recertified Bosun Anthony Maben and friends. In the photo at right, Chief Steward Jimmy Williams shows off part of the Thanksgiving feast on the Intrepid Personnel and Provisioning vessel *Empire State*.



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All program plans for new and existing customers may require a new two-year contract. This offer cannot be combined with any other discounts. Qualifying monthly data plan required.

2/15

What's New For 2014

Following are some of the changes that took effect in 2014 and 2015, along with provisions that remain in effect from 2013. Please check www.irs.gov before filing your return.

Due date of return - File Form 1040 by April 15, 2015.

Exemptions - The personal exemption and the dependency exemption increased to \$3,950 for 2014. For tax year 2014, the phase-out is reinstated at the higher threshold of \$254,200 for single individuals, \$279,650 for heads of household, \$305,050 for married filing joint, and \$152,525 for married filing separately.

For tax year 2015, the phase-out has increased to \$258,250 for single individuals, \$284,050 for heads of household, \$309,900 for married filing joint, and \$154,950 for married filing separately.

Standard Deductions - The standard deduction for married couples filing a joint return increased to \$12,400 for 2014. The standard deduction for single individuals and married couples filing separate returns has increased to \$6,200 for 2014. The standard deduction for heads of household increased to \$9,100 for 2014.

You can use the 2014 Standard Deduction Worksheet or see page 142 from Publication 17 which can be found on irs.gov to figure your standard deduction.

Itemized Deductions - For tax year 2014, the phase-out is reinstated at the higher threshold of \$254,200 for single individuals, \$279,650 for heads of household, \$305,050 for married filing joint, and \$152,525 for married filing separately.

For tax year 2015, the phase-out has increased to \$258,250 for single individuals, \$284,050 for heads of household, \$309,900 for married filing joint, and \$154,950 for married filing separately.

High-income taxpayers are also subject to limits on exemptions and deductions in 2014. The income threshold for the Pease and PEP (personal exemption phase-out) limitations is \$305,050 in adjusted gross income (AGI) for joint filers and \$254,200 for singles. The Pease limitation reduces the value of charitable contributions, mortgage interest, state, local, and property taxes; and miscellaneous itemized deductions. For 2014, this limitation is the lesser of 3% of AGI above the threshold up to 80% of the amount of the itemized deductions otherwise allowable. The PEP limitation reduces the total personal exemption by 2% for every \$2,500 of income above the same income thresholds with no upper limitations. That means it's possible for some taxpayers to completely phase-out of their personal exemptions.

Medical Care Itemized Deduction Threshold - For 2014, the threshold for the itemized deduction for unreimbursed medical expenses has increased to 10% of adjusted gross income for regular income tax purposes. In years 2013 - 2016, if either the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse has turned 65 before the end of the 2014 tax year, the threshold remains at 7.5% of adjusted gross income.

Earned Income Credit (EIC) - The EIC is a credit for certain people who work. The credit may give you a refund even if you do not owe any tax. The maximum amount of income you can earn and credit available increased for 2014:

- Credit of \$6,143 if you have three or more qualifying children and you earn less than \$46,997 (\$52,427 if married filing jointly)
- Credit of \$5,460 if you have two qualifying children and you earn less than \$43,756 (\$49,186 if married filing jointly)
- Credit of \$3,305 if you have one qualifying child and you earn less than \$38,511 (\$43,941 if married filing jointly), or
- Credit of \$496 if you do not have a qualifying child and you earn less than \$14,590 (\$20,020 if married filing jointly)

The maximum amount of investment income you can have and still get the credit has increased to \$3,350 in 2014.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes - The maximum amount of wages subject to the Social Security tax for 2014 is \$117,000. There is no limit on the amount of wages subject to the Medicare tax. In 2014, hospital insurance tax in addition to the Medicare tax will be an additional 0.9% tax on wages that exceed the following threshold amounts: \$250,000 for married filing jointly and surviving spouses, \$125,000 for married filing separately and \$200,000 for all others. This additional assessment also applies to self-employed workers. Also for 2014, the old rate of 6.2% has been reinstated.

For 2015, the maximum amount of wages subject to Social Security tax is \$118,500.

Self-Employment Tax Rate and Deduction - The FICA portion of the self-employment tax is 12.4% in 2014. The Medicare portion of the SE tax is 2.9% not including the 0.9% additional tax on the amounts above the applicable thresholds as noted above. As a result, the SE tax rate increased to 15.3%. The deduction is equal to one-half of self-employment tax.

Capital Gains and Losses - Continuing from 2012 you must report your capital gains and losses on Form 8949 and report the totals on Schedule D. If you sold a covered security in 2013, your broker will report the cost basis on your Form 1099-B. Refer to the IRS website at www.irs.gov/form8949 for additional information and other new developments affecting this form and Schedule D.

Qualified Dividend and Capital Gains Tax Rate - In 2014, the tax rate on long-term gains and qualified dividends is 20% for income that exceeds the threshold amount of:

- \$457,600 for married filing jointly and surviving spouses
- \$432,200 for head of household
- \$228,800 for married filing separately
- \$406,750 for single

In 2014, capital gain income will be subject to an additional 3.8% Medicare tax for income that exceeds the threshold amounts listed above.

Medicare Tax on Investment Income - In 2014, a tax equal to 3.8% of the lesser of the individual's net investment income for the year or the amount the individual's modified adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds the threshold amount. The threshold amounts for the additional Medicare tax are as follows:

- \$250,000 for married filing jointly and surviving spouses
 - \$125,000 for marries filing separately
 - \$200,000 for all others
- Investment income reduced by deductions properly allocable to

that income is net investment income. Investment income includes income interest, dividends, annuities, royalties and rents and net gain from disposition of property, other than such income derived in the ordinary course of a trade or business. However, income from a trade or business that is a passive activity and from a trade or business of trading in financial instruments or commodities is included in investment income.

Modified adjusted gross income for the purpose of calculating the additional Medicare tax is a person's adjusted gross income with the foreign earned income exclusion or foreign housing exclusion added back in.

Adoption credit - The maximum adoption credit has increased to \$13,190 per child with adjusted gross income phase out starting at \$197,880. For 2014, the credit is nonrefundable. Any unused credit can be carried forward for five years. In general, the adoption credit is based on the reasonable and necessary expenses related to a legal adoption, including adoption fees, court costs, attorney's fees and travel expenses. Income limits and other special rules apply. In addition to filing out Form 8839, Qualified Adoption Expenses, eligible taxpayers must include with their 2014 tax returns one or more adoption-related documents.

Child Tax Credit - The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extends the enhanced child tax credit of \$1,000 maximum credit per child through the end of 2017.

For 2014 tax year the child tax credit starts to be reduced when income reaches the following levels:

- \$55,000 for married couples filing separately
- \$75,000 for single, head of household, and qualifying widow(er) filers, and
- \$110,000 for married couples filing jointly

In the phase-out range, the child tax credit is reduced by \$50 for each \$1,000 of income above these threshold amounts.

The child tax credit is generally nonrefundable credit that is limited to regular tax liability plus alternative minimum tax liability. However, a portion of the credit is refundable for certain taxpayers (see Form 8812 and IRS Pub. 972).

Child and Dependent Care Credit - For 2014, there is a credit of \$3,000 for cost to care for one child under age of 13 or up to \$6,000 for two or more children so that the parents can either go to work or be in process of looking for work. There must be earned income in order to take the credit (the credit amount has not changed).

The American Opportunity Tax Credit - For tax year 2014, the maximum credit amount can be up to \$2,500 and up to \$1,000 of that credit amount may be refundable. The credit applies to the first 4 years of post-secondary education in a degree or certificate program.

The credit is calculated by taking 100% of the first \$2,000 of qualified tuition and related educational expenses and 25% of the next \$2,000 of such expenses. The credit is gradually reduced if your Modified AGI is:

- \$80,000 to \$90,000 for Single, Head of Household, and Qualifying Widow(er)
- \$160,000 to \$180,000 for Married Filing Joint

The American Opportunity Tax Credit is extended under *The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012* through the end of 2017.

Lifetime Learning Credit - For tax year 2014, the maximum credit amount per tax return can be up to \$2,000. The credit is calculated by taking 20% of the educational expenses on the first \$10,000 of qualified educational expenses. The credit is gradually reduced if your Modified AGI exceeds \$54,000 (\$108,000 if married filing joint return) and is completely eliminated if your Modified AGI exceeds \$64,000 (\$128,000 if married filing joint return). The credit cannot be claimed if your filing status is "married filing separately".

There is no limit on the number of years for which the credit can be claimed for each student.

Tuition and Fees Deductions - Reinstated for 2014. For tax year 2014, you may be able to deduct up to \$4,000 for taxpayers with AGI of \$65,000 or less (\$130,000 for joint filers) and the maximum amount of the deduction will be reduced for taxpayers with AGI above \$65,000 but less than or equal to \$80,000 (\$130,000 and \$160,000, respectively, for joint filers) for qualified educational expenses paid for yourself, spouse or dependent even if you do not itemize deductions on Schedule A.

Taxpayers cannot claim tuition and fees tax deduction in the same year they claim American Opportunity Credit or Lifetime Learning Credit.

Taxpayers who choose to claim the tuition and fees deduction must fill out and attach Form 8917. The resulting deduction is reported on Form 1040 Line 34 or Form 1040A Line 19.

Expanded Definition of Qualified Expenses for Qualified Tuition Programs - Qualified higher education expenses generally include tuition, fees, and related expenses such as books and supplies. The expenses must be for the student pursuing a degree, certificate, or similar program, at an eligible educational institution. An eligible educational institution includes most colleges, universities, and certain vocational schools.

Educator Expenses - The deduction for eligible elementary and secondary school teachers of up to \$250 per year (\$500 if you and your spouse were both eligible educators) for expenses paid or incurred for books, certain supplies, computer and other equipment, and supplementary materials used in the classroom.

State & Local Sales and Use Tax Deduction - In 2014 the taxpayer can elect to deduct state and local general sales and use taxes instead of state and local income taxes as an itemized deduction.

Individual Retirement Accounts:

Education IRAs (Coverdell Education Savings Account) - Taxpayers can contribute up to \$2,000 each year to an Education IRA for a person under age 18. The contribution is not deductible. Earnings on the contribution will be distributed tax-free provided that they are used to pay the beneficiary's postsecondary education expenses.

Traditional IRAs - For 2014, the contribution limit to a traditional IRA is the lesser of \$5,500 (increased to \$6,500 for taxpayers age 50 or older at the end of 2014) or your compensation. For the deduction, the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) phase-out range in 2014 is \$60,000-\$70,000 for single, head of household, \$96,000-\$116,000 for married couples filing jointly or qualifying

Tax Tips For Members

How to Prepare A Tax Return

- Step 1.** Get all records together.
- Income Records. These include any Forms W-2, W-2G and 1099
 - Itemized deductions and tax credits

- Medical and dental payment records
- Charitable contributions
- Real estate and personal property tax receipts

- Interest payment records for items such as a home mortgage or home equity loan
- Records of payments for child care so an individual could work

Step 2. Get any forms, schedules or publications necessary to assist in filing the return. IRS Publication 17 titled "Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals" is the most comprehensive guide the agency has issued this year. Most IRS offices and many local banks, post offices and libraries have publications designed to provide individuals with information on correctly filing tax returns. Also, you may access the IRS website at www.irs.gov for forms, instructions and publications.

Step 3. Fill in the return.

Step 4. Check the return to make sure it is correct.

Step 5. Sign and date the return. Form 1040 is not considered a valid return unless signed. A spouse must also sign if it is a joint return.

Step 6. Attach all required forms and schedules. Attach Copy B of Forms W-2, W-2G and 1099-R to the front of the Form 1040. Attach all other schedules and forms behind Form 1040 in order of the attachment sequence number. If tax is owed, attach the payment to the front of Form 1040 along with Form 1040-V (original only). Write name, address, phone number, Social Security number and form number on your check or money order. Payment also can be made by credit card. You may use American Express, Discover, Visa or MasterCard. To pay by credit card, call the toll-free number 1-888-872-9829 or 1-888-729-1040 or visit www.officialpayments.com/fed or www.pay1040.com. There is a fee charged based on the amount you are paying.

Rounding Off to Whole Dollars: Cents may be rounded off to the nearest whole dollar on the tax return and schedules. To do so, raise amounts from 50 to 99 cents to the next dollar. For example, \$1.39 becomes \$1 and \$1.50 becomes \$2.

Fast Refund: Taxpayers are able to request direct deposit of their tax refunds by filling out lines 74b, 74c and 74d on their Form 1040. Line 74b is for the bank's routing number. Line 74c indicates the type of account, and line 74d is the taxpayer's account number at the bank. When tax returns are filed electronically, a refund will be received in about 3 weeks or in 2 weeks if it is deposited directly into a savings or checking account. For a charge, many professional tax return

preparers offer electronic filing in addition to their return preparation services. Beginning in 2009, individuals that prepare his or her own return can access most commonly used Federal tax forms from the IRS website and directly submit the forms electronically. Free electronic filing is no longer subject to any income limitations. For more information, visit the IRS website at: www.irs.gov.

What Are Considered Deductions and Credits

Personal Exemption Amount: The deduction for each exemption—for the individual, his or her spouse and dependents is \$3,950 per person. A child cannot claim an exemption on his or her return or qualify for a higher education credit if the child's parents claim a dependency exemption for their child.

Standard Deduction: The standard deduction, or dollar amount that reduces the amount that is taxed, increased for married couples filing jointly in 2014 to \$12,400. The standard deduction for single individuals and married couples filing separate returns is now \$6,200. The standard deduction for heads of household increased to \$9,100 for 2014 (see box on this page).

Personal Interest Deductions: For 2014, personal interest cannot be deducted. Personal interest includes interest on car loans, credit cards, personal loans and tax deficiencies.

Interest on Secured Loans Deductible: In most cases you can deduct all your home mortgage interest depending on the date of your mortgage, the amount of the mortgage and how the proceeds were used. Interest paid on investments is also 100 percent deductible but limited to the amount of investment income earned each year. Any excess can be carried forward to the next year.

Union Dues Deduction: Union dues, including working dues, are deductible only if they exceed 2% of adjusted gross income. If they do, only the portion over the 2% is deductible. The self-employed may deduct union dues as a business expense.

Club Dues Deduction: No deduction is permitted for club dues; however, dues paid to professional or public service organizations are deductible for business reasons.

Deductions Subject to 2% of Adjusted Gross Income: These include investment advisory fees, trustee's administrative fees, legal expenses that are paid to produce taxable income, unreimbursed employee expenses, safe deposit box rental and tax preparation fees.

Deducting Work-Related Expenses: Expenses associated with a seaman's work may be considered tax deductible. However, no expense can be deducted for which a seaman has been reimbursed by the employer. Travel to the union hall to register or travel to the union's designated medical facility to take the required physical and drug tests are examples

of expenses which are work-related but not reimbursed by the company. Members of the galley crew may deduct the costs of knives and other equipment they personally own but use when on a ship performing their work duties. The purchase of work-related clothing and other gear, as long as it is truly for work and not paid for by the employer, are likely to be considered tax-deductible.

Deducting Work-Related Car Expenses: Use of a personally owned automobile in work-related travel can result in deductible expenses.

Two methods can be used to compute automobile expenses—either listing a standard mileage rate or determining actual cost. On the tax return due April 15 of this year, the IRS is accepting a standard mileage rate. The rate for 2014 is 56 cents. Parking fees and tolls can be added when using the standard mileage rate. If using actual expenses, information must be available on all operating-related costs for the vehicle, including insurance, licenses, maintenance, repairs, depreciation, gas, oil, tolls and parking. The IRS recommends keeping a log book or diary listing all expenses related to travel, for both the standard mileage rate and actual cost method, to ensure accurate records. Only work-related expenses not reimbursed by an employer can be claimed.

Deducting Work-Related Meals When Traveling:

You can use a special standard meal allowance if you work in the transportation industry. You are in the transportation industry if your work: ■ Directly involves moving people or goods by airplane, barge, bus, ship, train, or truck, and

■ Regularly requires you to travel away from home and, during any single trip, usually involves travel to areas eligible for different standard meal allowance rates.

If this applies to you, you can claim a standard meal allowance of \$59 a day (66¢ for travel outside the continental United States) from January 1 through December 31, 2014.

Using special rates for transportation workers eliminates the need for you to determine the standard meal allowance for every area where you stop for sleep or rest. If you choose to use the special rate for any trip, you must use the special rate (and not use the regular standard meals allowance rates) for all trips you take that year.

Dependent's Social Security Number: Each dependent must have a Social Security number (SSN). Individuals may get a SSN for their dependent by filing Form SS-5 with their local Social Security Administration office or calling the Administration at 1-800-772-1213. It usually takes about two weeks to receive a SSN.

Additional (Refundable) Child Tax Credit - This credit is for certain individuals who get less than the full amount of the child tax credit. The additional child tax credit may give you a refund even if you do not owe any tax.

Student Loan Interest: Taxpayers may be able to deduct up to \$2,500 of interest paid for qualified education expenses for oneself, spouse or dependents. The deduction is allowed in figuring adjusted gross income.

Other Tax Information

Private Delivery Services: Tax returns and extensions can be mailed through private delivery services such as DHL Worldwide Express, Federal Express and United Parcel Service.

Forms of Payments: One can pay the Internal Revenue Service through credit cards, debit cards, charge cards, bank check or money order. If you file your return electronically you may

be able to make your payment electronically.

Which Records To Keep

Keep records of income (such as receipts), deductions (for example, canceled checks) and credits shown on the tax return, as well as any worksheets used to figure them, until the statute of limitations runs out for that return, usually 3 years from the date the return was due or filed, or 2 years from the date the tax was paid, whichever is later. However, it is recommended that all records be kept for about 6 years. Some records should be kept even longer. For example, keep property records (your home, stocks) as long as they are needed to figure the basis of property.

Change of Address: If an individual has changed his or her address from the one listed on that person's last tax return, IRS Form 8822 should be filled out and filed with the agency.

Death of a Taxpayer: If a taxpayer died before filing a required return for 2014, the taxpayer's personal representative (and spouse, in the case of a joint return) must file and sign the return for that person. A personal representative can be an executor, administrator or anyone who is in charge of the taxpayer's property.

Which Income To Report

In addition to wages, salaries, tips, unemployment compensation, capital gains, dividend payments and other income listed on the federal tax return, the following kinds of income must be reported:

- Jones Act settlements for lost wages

- Amounts received in place of wages from accident and health plans (including sick pay and disability pensions) if employer paid for the policy
- Life insurance proceeds from a policy cashed in if the proceeds are more than the premium paid
- Canceled debts
- State income tax refunds
- Rents
- Repayments
- Royalties
- Unemployment benefits
- Profits from corporations, partnerships, estates and trusts
- Endowments
- Original Issue Discount
- Distributions from self-employed plans

- Bartering income (fair-market value of goods or services received in return for services)

- Tier 2 and supplemental annuities under the Railroad Retirement Act
- Lump-sum distributions
- Gains from the sale or exchange (including barter) of real estate, securities, coins, gold, silver, gems or other property (capital gains)
- Accumulation distributions from trusts

- Prizes and awards (contests, raffles, lottery and gambling winnings).
- Earned income from sources outside the United States
- Director's fees

- Fees received as an executor or administrator of an estate.
- Embezzled or other illegal income.

Which Income Need Not Be Reported

The following kinds of income do not need to be reported on the federal tax return:

- Benefits from government welfare programs
- Jones Act settlements for injuries, pain, suffering, and medical costs
- Maintenance and Cure
- Workers' compensation benefits, insurance, damages, etc. for injury or sickness
- Disability retirement payments (and other benefits) paid by the Veterans' Administration
- Child support
- Gifts, money or other property inherited or willed
- Dividends on veterans' life insurance
- Life insurance proceeds received because of a person's death
- Amounts received from insurance because of loss of the use of a home due to fire or other casualty to the extent the amounts were more than the cost of normal expenses while living in the home
- Certain amounts received as a scholarship

Filing An Extension

Taxpayers can get an automatic 6-month extension if, no later than April 15, 2015, Form 4868 will be filed with the IRS. It is important to remember that a 6-month extension to file does not extend the time to pay the taxes. Form 4868, when sent in, must be accompanied by all tax monies due to the U.S. government.

Where Is My Refund

If taxpayers have not received a refund check within 28 days from the original IRS mailing date, information can be accessed through the website at www.irs.gov. To get the refund status, taxpayers will need to provide the information from their tax returns. You should know your Social Security Number (or IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number), Filing Status (Single, Married Filing Joint Return, Married Filing Separate Return, Head of Household, or Qualifying Widow(er)) and the Refund amount. It is important to enter the refund amount exactly as it is shown on your return.

Why Seafarers Must Pay State Income Tax

Federal law prohibits employers from withholding state and local taxes from the wages of mariners working aboard U.S.-flag ships. Specifically, the law [46 USCA 11108(11)] provides that "no part of the wages due or accruing to a master, officer or any other seaman who is a member of the crew on a vessel engaged in the foreign, coastwise, intercostal, interstate or non-contiguous trade shall be withheld pursuant to the provisions of the tax laws of any state, territory, possession or commonwealth, or a subdivision of any of them, but nothing in this section shall prohibit any such withholding of the wages of any seaman who is employed in the coastwise trade between ports in the same state if such withholding is pursuant to a voluntary agreement between such seaman and his employer."

The law, however, does not exempt seamen from paying state and local taxes. Mariners, just like any other citizens of any given state, must meet their obligations to the government of the area in which they live. Each state has a set of criteria to determine whether an individual is a resident of that state. A seaman should check with a state tax office if he or she is unsure about residency status.

For example, in California during the early 1970s, a case before the California State Board of Equalization stated that a merchant seaman—despite the fact that he was on a ship for 210 days of the year—was a resident of the state for tax purposes. The board took into consideration the fact that the seaman owned a home in California and maintained a bank account in a California-based bank. Additionally, each state has established conditions under which non-residents of that state must pay a portion of state tax if such an individual earned income from a source based in that state. Many states allow a credit in the amount an individual must pay the state if that person has already paid taxes in another state. In 2000, President Clinton signed into law the bipartisan Transportation Worker Tax Fairness Act, a measure aimed at providing "equitable treatment with respect to state and local income taxes for certain individuals who perform duties on vessels."

The law, which took effect Nov. 9, 2000, stipulates that pilots and other mariners "who perform regularly assigned duties while engaged as a master, officer or crewman on a vessel operating on the navigable waters of more than one State" shall be subject to state income tax only in his or her residential state. If any questions arise regarding residency and state tax issues, mariners should telephone the taxpayer assistance office in the state in which they reside.

Away At Tax Time

Should Seafarers find themselves overseas and seeking IRS forms or assistance, U.S. embassies and consulates are equipped to provide some taxpayer-related services. At a minimum, IRS forms are available at all U.S. embassies and consulates located in: Berlin, Germany; Caracas, Venezuela; London, England; Mexico City, Mexico; Nassau, Bahamas; Ottawa, Canada; Paris, France; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Rome, Italy; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Sydney, Australia; Tokyo, Japan.

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Standard Deduction

This is the standard deduction chart for most people. If a taxpayer is 65 or older or blind, there are additional standard deductions (\$1,200 for a married person or "spouse" or \$1,550 for an unmarried person). Note that the personal exemption deduction is \$3,950.

| Filing Status | Standard Deduction |
|---|--------------------|
| Single and Married filing separate | \$ 6,200 |
| Married filing joint return or qualifying widow(er) with dependent children | \$12,400 |
| Head of household | \$ 9,100 |

Continued on Page 14

Various Changes Greet Tax Filers During 2014 Season

Continued from Page 12

widow(er), and less than \$10,000 for married individuals filing separate returns when a taxpayer is covered by an employer's retirement plan at any time during the year.

Roth IRAs - The maximum total yearly contribution that can be made by an individual to a Roth IRA is the lesser of \$5,500 (increased to \$6,500 for taxpayers age 50 or older at the end of 2014) or your compensation. Roth IRAs are subject to income limits. The maximum yearly contribution is phased out for single and head of household taxpayers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) between \$114,000 and \$129,000, for joint filers and qualifying widow(er) with an AGI between \$181,000 and \$191,000, and married filing separate filers with an AGI between \$0 and \$10,000. Although the contributions are not deductible, the distributions may be tax-free depending on when and why they are made.

Special Charitable Contributions for Certain IRA Owners - The *Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014* extends the Qualified Charitable Distributions for 2014 only. It offers older owners of IRAs a different way to give to charity. An IRA owner age 70 and one-half or older can directly transfer, tax-free, up to \$100,000 per year to eligible charities. Known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), this option is available for distributions from IRAs, regardless of whether the owners itemize their deductions. Distributions from employer-sponsored retirement plans, including SIMPLE IRAs and simplified employee pension (SEP) plans, are not eligible to be treated as a qualified charitable distribution.

To qualify, the funds must be contributed directly by the IRA trustee to an eligible charity. Amounts so transferred are not taxable and no deduction is available for the transfer.

Not all charities are eligible. For example, donor-advised funds and supporting organizations are not eligible recipients. Remember to check eligibility of the charity before requesting a QCD.

All QCDs from an IRA to eligible charities are counted in determining whether the owner has met the IRA's required minimum distribution. Where individuals have made nondeductible contributions to their traditional IRAs, a special rule treats QCD amounts as coming first from taxable funds, instead of proportionately from taxable and nontaxable funds, as would be the case with regular distributions.

Foreign Financial Assets - If you had foreign financial assets in 2014, you may have to file Form 8938 with your return. In addition, a separate FBAR document must be e-filed by June 30, 2015 if the aggregate value of the foreign accounts exceed \$10,000.

Divorced or Separated Parents - A custodial parent who revoked their previous release of a claim to a child's exemption must include a copy of the revocation with their return.

Repayment of First-Time Homebuyer Credit - If you have to repay the credit, you may be able to do so without attaching Form 5405.

Mortgage Insurance Premiums - Mortgage insurance premiums for qualified mortgage insurance on debt to acquire, construct, or improve a first or second residence can potentially be treated as deductible qualified residence interest. This provision was extended through December 31, 2014.

Nonbusiness Energy Property Credit - This credit has been extended through 2014. The credit has a lifetime limit of \$500, of

which only \$200 may be used for windows. This credit still consists of qualified energy efficiency improvements and residential energy property costs. Subject to the lifetime limits, only 10% of qualified energy efficiency improvements are allowed. Subject to the lifetime limits, the residential energy property costs are limited to \$300 for energy-efficient building property, \$150 for any qualified natural gas, propane, or oil furnace or hot water boiler, and \$50 for any advanced main air circulating fan.

Residential Energy Efficient Property Credit - This credit remains unchanged from 2013 and equals 30% of what a homeowner spends on qualifying property such as solar electric systems, solar hot water heaters, solar electric equipment, and wind turbines. Generally, labor costs are included when calculating this credit. Also, no cap exists on the amount of credit available. Unused portion of this credit is carry forward to next year's tax return.

Eligible homeowners can claim both Energy Property and Energy Efficient Property Credit when they file their 2014 federal income tax return.

Standard mileage rates - The standard mileage rate for 2014 is 56 cents per mile for business miles driven and was decreased to 23.5 cents per mile for medical or moving expenses. The rate for providing services for a charity is set by statute and equals 14 cents per mile.

Deduction for corrosive drywall - You may be able to claim a casualty loss deduction for amounts you paid to repair damage to your home and household appliances that resulted from corrosive drywall. Under this procedure, you treat the amounts paid for repairs as a casualty loss in the year of payment. The deduction is limited if you have a pending claim for reimbursement (or intend to pursue reimbursement) through property insurance, litigation, or other means.

Personal Casualty & Theft Loss - This loss remains unchanged from 2013. The loss is limited to the excess of the loss over \$100. The 10% of AGI limit still applies.

Foreign Earned Income Exclusion - For tax year 2014, the maximum foreign earned income exclusion amount is \$99,200. This amount is up \$1,600 from tax year 2013.

The Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) Exemption - AMT exemptions have been permanently extended and indexed for inflation. Exemption amounts help prevent some middle income earners from being subject to the AMT, and help keep any AMT adjustments less than they otherwise might have been.

For tax year 2014, the alternative minimum tax exemption increases to the following levels:

- \$82,100 for married couples filing a joint return and qualifying widows and widowers, up from \$80,800 in 2013.
- \$41,050 for married couples filing separately, up from \$40,400.
- \$52,800 for singles and heads of household, up from \$51,900.

Healthcare Coverage - Beginning in 2014, individuals must have health care coverage to qualify for a health care coverage exemption or make shared responsibility payment with their tax return.

Coverage Exemptions: An individual may be exempt from the requirement to maintain minimum essential coverage and thus will not have to make a shared responsibility payment if, for 2014, he:

- Has no affordable coverage options because the minimum amount he must pay for the annual premiums is more than 8% of his household income;
- Has a gap in coverage for less than three consecutive months or
- Qualifies for an exemption for one of several other reasons, including having a hardship that prevents him from obtaining coverage, or belonging to a group explicitly exempt from the requirement.

If the taxpayer, spouse or any of the dependents did not have minimum coverage for any month in 2014, a payment needs to be computed and reported on Form 1040, line 61.

For 2014, the annual payment amount is: The greater of:
 ■ 1 percent of the household income that is above the tax return filing threshold for taxpayer's filing status, or
 ■ Flat dollar amount, which is \$95 per adult and \$47.50 per child, limited to a family maximum of \$285.

Premium Tax Credit - Individuals with low to moderate income who get health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace may be eligible for this refundable credit.

Individuals who are eligible for PTC need to meet the following requirements:

- Purchased coverage in the Marketplace for someone in their tax family (taxpayer, spouse, if married filing jointly and dependents for which a personal exemption is claimed) for a month that person was not eligible for minimum essential coverage (other than coverage in the individual market).
- Have household income at least 100%, but no more than 400% of the federal poverty line for taxpayer's family size. *Exception:* In some cases, taxpayers with household income less than 100% of the federal poverty line can take the credit.
- If married, individuals must file a joint return. **Note:** Exceptions apply to victims of domestic abuse or spousal abandonment and to individuals who are considered unmarried.
- Cannot be claimed as a dependent by another person.

The PTC is based on a sliding scale. Those with lower incomes get a larger credit. The PTC for the year is the sum of the monthly credit amounts. The credit amount for each month is the lesser of:

- The premiums for the month for one or more qualified health plans in which the taxpayer or any individual in his tax family enrolled; or
- The monthly premium for the taxpayer's applicable second lowest cost silver plan less his monthly contribution amount.

Tax Rates for 2014 - President Bush Era tax rates were made permanent in 2013 with a 39.6% bracket (for single individuals at \$406,750, head of household at \$432,200, married filing jointly at \$457,600 and married filing separately at \$228,800). Trust and estates will hit the 39.6% bracket at \$12,150. The rate for capital gains and dividends is 20% if the income is in excess of the threshold amount:

- \$406,750 for single individuals
- \$432,200 for heads of household
- \$457,600 for married filing joint.

Exclusion of Cancellation of Indebtedness on Principal Residence - Cancellation of indebtedness income is generally includable in income. However the *2010 Tax Relief Act* excludes from income cancellation of debt on a principal residence of up to \$2 million. The *American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012* extends the provision through 2014.

Uniform Definition of a Qualifying Child - To be claimed as a qualifying child, the person must meet four criteria:

■ **Relationship** - the person must be your child, step child, adopted child, foster child, brother or sister, or a descendant of one of these (for example, a grandchild or nephew).

■ **Residence** - for more than half the year, the person must have the same residence as you do.

■ **Age** - the person must be under age 19 at the end of the year, or under age 24 and be a full-time student for at least five months out of the year, or any age and totally and permanently disabled.

■ **Support** - the person did not provide more than half of his or her own support during the year.

Consumer Alert - The IRS warns taxpayers to be on the alert for emails and phone calls they may receive which claim to come from the IRS or other federal agencies and which mention their tax refund.

These are almost certainly a scam whose purpose is to obtain personal and financial information — such as name, Social Security number, bank account and credit card or even PIN numbers — from taxpayers which can be used by the scammers to commit identity theft. The emails and calls usually state that the IRS needs the information to process a refund or deposit it into the taxpayer's bank account. The emails often contain links or attachments to what appears to be the IRS Website or an IRS "refund application form." However genuine in appearance, these phonies are designed to elicit the information the scammers are looking for.

The IRS does not send taxpayers emails about their tax accounts. Also, the IRS does not request detailed personal information through email or ask taxpayers for the PIN numbers, passwords, or similar secret access information for their credit card, bank, or other financial accounts. If you receive an unsolicited email claiming to be from the IRS, forward the message to: phishing@irs.gov. You may also report misuse of the IRS name, logo, forms or other IRS property to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration toll-free at 1-800-366-4484 or TTY/TDD 1-800-877-8339. You can forward suspicious emails to the Federal Trade Commission at: spam@uce.gov or contact them at www.ftc.gov/idtheft or 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338). Visit IRS.gov and enter "identity theft" in the search box to learn more about identity theft and how to reduce your risk.

If your tax records are affected by identity theft and you receive a notice from the IRS, respond right away to the name and phone number printed on the IRS notice or letter. If your tax records are not currently affected by identity theft but you think you are at risk due to a lost or stolen purse or wallet, questionable credit card activity or credit report, etc., contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490 or submit Form 14039. For more information, see Publication 4535, Identity Theft Prevention and Victim Assistance. Victims of identity theft who are experiencing economic harm or a systemic problem, or are seeking help in resolving tax problems that have not been resolved through normal channels, may be eligible for Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) assistance. You can reach TAS by calling the National Taxpayer Advocate helpline toll-free case intake line at 1-877-777-4778.

SHBP Makes Scholarships Available to Qualified SIU Members, Their Dependents

Each year the SHBP makes scholarships available to qualified individuals, and this year is no exception.

The 2015 program will offer eight awards totaling \$132,000. Three scholarships will be designated for Seafarers while five will be targeted for spouses and dependents.

One of the endowments reserved for Seafarers totals \$20,000 and is intended to help defray the costs associated with attending a four-year, college-level course of study. The remaining two are in the amount of \$6,000 each and are designed as two-year awards for study at a postsecondary vocational school or

community college. Each of the five scholarships for spouses and dependents is for \$20,000.

To take advantage of this offering, the first step is to obtain a scholarship program booklet. This package contains eligibility information, procedures for applying for the scholarships and an application form. Prospective applicants may request these booklets via mail by clipping, completing and mailing the form provided at right. Secondly, they may obtain the booklets by visiting any SIU hall. Finally, applicants may obtain the booklet online by visiting www.seafarers.org, going to the Member Benefits tab, navigating to the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan menu and selecting Scholarship Booklet 2015 (PDF).

Once the scholarship booklet has been received, applicants should check the eligibility criteria. They should also begin collecting and

assembling the remainder of the paperwork needed to submit with the full application, which must be received by April 15, 2015.

Seafarers and dependents who previously

applied for the scholarship program and were not selected are encouraged to apply again this year, provided they still meet the eligibility requirements.

Please send me the 2015 SHBP Scholarship Program Booklet which contains eligibility information, procedures for applying and a copy of the application form.

Name
 Street Address
 City, State, Zip Code
 Telephone Number ()

This application is for: Self Dependent

Mail this completed form to: Scholarship Program, Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan, 5201 Auth Way, Camp Springs, MD 20746.

February & March 2015 Membership Meetings

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Piney Point..... | Monday: February 2, March 2 |
| Algonac..... | Friday: February 6, March 6 |
| Baltimore..... | Thursday: February 5, March 5 |
| Guam..... | Thursday: February 19, March 19 |
| Honolulu..... | Friday: February 13, March 13 |
| Houston..... | Monday: February 9, March 9 |
| Jacksonville..... | Thursday: February 5, March 5 |
| Joliet..... | Thursday: February 12, March 12 |
| Mobile..... | Wednesday: February 11, March 11 |
| New Orleans..... | Tuesday: February 10, March 10 |
| Jersey City..... | Tuesday: February 3, March 3 |
| Norfolk..... | Thursday: February 5, March 5 |
| Oakland..... | Thursday: February 12, March 12 |
| Philadelphia..... | Wednesday: February 4, March 4 |
| Port Everglades..... | Thursday: February 12, March 12 |
| San Juan..... | Thursday: February 5, March 5 |
| St. Louis..... | Friday: February 13, March 13 |
| Tacoma..... | Friday: February 20, March 20 |
| Wilmington..... | *Tuesday: February 17, Monday: March 16 |

* Wilmington change created by and President's Day holiday.

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



"TGIF? It means thank the labor movement for our weekends."



"We don't have a gym, but your parking space is twelve miles away."

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

December 15, 2014 - January 15, 2015

| Port | Total Registered All Groups | | | Total Shipped All Groups | | | Trip Reliefs | Registered on Beach All Groups | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | A | B | C | A | B | C | | A | B | C |
| Deck Department | | | | | | | | | | |
| Algonac | 19 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 29 | 14 | 2 |
| Anchorage | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| Baltimore | 7 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| Fort Lauderdale | 21 | 11 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 33 | 21 | 7 |
| Guam | 5 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| Harvey | 10 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 2 | 3 |
| Honolulu | 11 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 27 | 8 | 4 |
| Houston | 55 | 11 | 3 | 42 | 4 | 2 | 18 | 106 | 20 | 9 |
| Jacksonville | 52 | 17 | 3 | 26 | 15 | 1 | 12 | 75 | 32 | 4 |
| Jersey City | 36 | 17 | 2 | 24 | 10 | 0 | 17 | 81 | 32 | 3 |
| Joliet | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 3 |
| Mobile | 9 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 18 | 5 | 4 |
| Norfolk | 17 | 18 | 1 | 12 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 36 | 31 | 4 |
| Oakland | 15 | 5 | 0 | 14 | 10 | 0 | 4 | 40 | 11 | 2 |
| Philadelphia | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 1 |
| Piney Point | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Puerto Rico | 11 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 9 | 2 |
| Tacoma | 56 | 9 | 3 | 29 | 10 | 1 | 22 | 70 | 12 | 5 |
| St. Louis | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| Wilmington | 45 | 12 | 2 | 24 | 6 | 2 | 13 | 66 | 23 | 7 |
| TOTALS | 383 | 137 | 36 | 228 | 88 | 20 | 116 | 660 | 246 | 67 |
| Engine Department | | | | | | | | | | |
| Algonac | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Anchorage | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Baltimore | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| Fort Lauderdale | 12 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 8 | 1 |
| Guam | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Harvey | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Honolulu | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 10 | 1 |
| Houston | 14 | 5 | 0 | 16 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 31 | 15 | 1 |
| Jacksonville | 27 | 24 | 2 | 17 | 16 | 3 | 11 | 37 | 33 | 2 |
| Jersey City | 10 | 10 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 30 | 24 | 3 |
| Joliet | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mobile | 6 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Norfolk | 20 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 25 | 16 | 0 |
| Oakland | 14 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 20 | 19 | 1 |
| Philadelphia | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Piney Point | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Puerto Rico | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 0 |
| Tacoma | 21 | 8 | 0 | 20 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 26 | 10 | 2 |
| St. Louis | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Wilmington | 12 | 9 | 0 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 21 | 16 | 3 |
| TOTALS | 161 | 97 | 8 | 101 | 69 | 9 | 49 | 256 | 182 | 15 |
| Steward Department | | | | | | | | | | |
| Algonac | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Anchorage | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Baltimore | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Fort Lauderdale | 6 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 21 | 5 | 2 |
| Guam | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Harvey | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Honolulu | 13 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 21 | 5 | 0 |
| Houston | 19 | 3 | 0 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 35 | 12 | 2 |
| Jacksonville | 18 | 4 | 1 | 14 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 28 | 13 | 0 |
| Jersey City | 18 | 4 | 0 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 27 | 12 | 2 |
| Joliet | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mobile | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 2 |
| Norfolk | 12 | 12 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 22 | 23 | 3 |
| Oakland | 16 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 4 | 5 |
| Philadelphia | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Piney Point | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| Seattle | 18 | 3 | 0 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 27 | 4 | 0 |
| St. Louis | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Wilmington | 18 | 8 | 1 | 14 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 38 | 10 | 2 |
| TOTALS | 165 | 52 | 8 | 113 | 25 | 3 | 49 | 293 | 110 | 21 |
| Entry Department | | | | | | | | | | |
| Algonac | 2 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 16 | 6 |
| Anchorage | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Baltimore | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Fort Lauderdale | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 3 |
| Guam | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| Harvey | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Honolulu | 1 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 21 |
| Houston | 3 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 20 | 4 |
| Jacksonville | 5 | 10 | 18 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 19 | 31 |
| Jersey City | 2 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 33 | 10 |
| Joliet | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Mobile | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Norfolk | 0 | 13 | 16 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 30 | 37 |
| Oakland | 1 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 18 | 12 |
| Philadelphia | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Piney Point | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Tacoma | 3 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 12 | 9 |
| St. Louis | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Wilmington | 5 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 39 | 48 |
| TOTALS | 31 | 121 | 75 | 19 | 73 | 28 | 15 | 53 | 230 | 193 |
| GRAND TOTAL: | 740 | 407 | 127 | 461 | 255 | 60 | 229 | 1,262 | 768 | 296 |

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

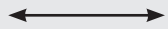
Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

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

1730 Jefferson St., Houston, TX 77003
(713) 659-5152

JACKSONVILLE

5100 Belfort Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32256
(904) 281-2622

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

JERSEY CITY

104 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ 07306
(201) 434-6000

NORFOLK

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

OAKLAND

1121 7th 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

Responding to this month's question were five members in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and one (Charlotte Tuggle) in St. Louis.

Question: What is the most important thing about your job?



Joseph Marino
OMU

The most important thing about my job is it is for the economy of America, for exports and imports so the country's shelves in stores won't be empty and gas stations depleted.



Charlotte Tuggle
Storekeeper

We are a valued support to the military – the fourth arm of defense. We support anything they need to do. We take care of their needs.



Janice Gabbert
Steward/Baker

My son and nephew are merchant mariners thanks to me. One thing people need to realize is how important our job is to national security and trade. Without us, they would have a hard time. I feel like I am giving back to my country and to the veterans when I sail.



Walter Sainvil
AB

Safety is always first. Everything is perfect with safety and with no accidents.



Yuri Oliveros
OMU

I sailed on the *Pride of America* and met a lot of people who have enriched my life. I have made a lot of friends and have met people from different nations.



Hipolita Roches
OMU

Do my job and be safe. Safety comes first.

Pics From The Past

Pensioner Jorge Rodriguez (left in photo at immediate right) submitted these snapshots of car floats from his working days in the mid-1970s. Rodriguez, 94, was a member of the union's Railroad Marine division. He joined in 1959, retired in 1991, and spent his entire SIU career with Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Railway in the Hampton Roads, Virginia, area.



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

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

VIRGILIO BANZON

Brother Virgilio Banzon, 74, started sailing with the Seafarers in 2005 in Wilmington, California. He was initially employed on the *Seabrook*. Brother Banzon shipped in the deck department. His most recent ship was the *Empire State*. Brother Banzon is a resident of Chula Vista, California.



HUSSEIN ELEMARY

Brother Hussein Elemary, 65, began sailing with the SIU in 1994. He was first employed on the *Independence*. The steward department member attended classes frequently at the Paul Hall Center in Piney Point, Maryland. Brother Elemary's last ship was the *Cape Henry*. He was born in Egypt and now lives in Vista, California.



ALFRED FARRELL

Brother Alfred Farrell, 67, donned the SIU colors in 2000. He originally shipped in the inland division on a Moran Towing of Philadelphia vessel. Brother Farrell enhanced his skills in 2001 at the union-affiliated maritime training center in Piney Point, Maryland. He sailed in the deck department. Brother Farrell's most recent trip was aboard the *Freedom*. He calls Philadelphia home.

SALVATORE GILARDI

Brother Salvatore Gilardi, 65, joined the union in 1987. The deck department member's first trip was aboard the *2nd Lt. John Paul Bobo*. Brother Gilardi upgraded on two occasions at the Paul Hall Center. His most recent trip was on the *Capt. Steven L. Bennett*. Brother Gilardi makes his home in Gloucester, Massachusetts.



ALTON HICKMAN

Brother Alton Hickman, 66, became a Seafarer in 1972. The Louisiana native enhanced his skills on two occasions at the Piney Point school. His first ship was the *Mayaguez*; his most recent was the *Comet*. Brother Hickman worked in the engine department. He is a resident of Natchez, Mississippi.



JAMES JACKSON

Brother James Jackson, 67, signed on with the SIU in 1963. The steward department member first sailed on the *Margarett Brown*. Brother Jackson was born in New Orleans. He upgraded in 1986 and 2002 at the maritime training center in Piney Point, Maryland. Brother Jackson's last ship was the *Atlantic Forest*. He now resides in St. Francisville, Louisiana.



ARI JALKIO

Brother Ari Jalkio, 65, was an NMU member prior to the 2001 merger with the Seafarers International Union. He is a resident of Stuart, Florida.



STANLEY KRYSTOSIAK

Brother Stanley Krystosiak, 65, started shipping with the SIU in 1970. He initially sailed aboard the *Summit*. Brother Krystosiak worked in the steward department and concluded his career on the *Philadelphia Express*. He attended classes often at the Piney Point school. Brother Krystosiak settled in Spotswood, New Jersey.



BRUCE LANDOS

Brother Bruce Landos, 65, joined the SIU ranks in 2001 when the NMU merged into the Seafarers International Union. His most recent ship was the *Green Point*. Brother Landos sailed in the deck department. He resides in Seattle.



MICHAEL LANGFORD

Brother Michael Langford, 68, joined the NMU before the SIU/NMU merger of 2001. He makes his home in Reno, Nevada.



MICHAEL MEANY

Brother Michael Meany, 57, donned the SIU colors in 1981. He originally sailed aboard the *President Adams*. Brother Meany shipped in the steward department. He enhanced his skills frequently at the union-affiliated school in Piney



Point, Maryland. Brother Meany's most recent trip was on the *Cape Intrepid*. He is a resident of Auburn, Washington.

EDITA MIGUEL

Sister Edita Miguel, 65, donned the SIU colors in 1993 in Jacksonville, Florida. She originally sailed on the cruise ship *Independence*. Sister Miguel enhanced her skills in 2000 at the union-affiliated maritime training center in Piney Point, Maryland. She sailed in the steward department. Sister Miguel's most recent trip was aboard the *USNS Henson*. She calls Jacksonville home.



BENJAMIN MONZON

Brother Benjamin Monzon, 67, began sailing with the Seafarers in 2004. He first shipped aboard the *Pride of America*. Brother Monzon was born in Imus, Philippines. He was a deck department member. Brother Monzon's most recent voyage was on the *Empire State*. He lives in Norwalk, California.



ABDUL MUFLIHI

Brother Abdul Muflihi, 66, became an SIU member in 1981. His first voyage was aboard the *Massachusetts*. Brother Muflihi sailed in the steward department. In 2002 and 2004, he upgraded at the Piney Point school. Brother Muflihi most recently worked on the *Evergreen State*. He was born in Saudi Arabia and now calls Coldwater, Michigan, home.

MAHAR OMAR

Brother Maher Omar, 68, was an NMU member prior to the 2001 merger with the Seafarers International Union. He sailed in both the deck and engine departments and also attended classes at the Paul Hall Center in 2001 and 2005. Brother Omar's most recent ship was the *Mercury*. He is a resident of Jersey City, New Jersey.



TIMOTHY PETERS

Brother Timothy Peters, 66, first donned the SIU colors in 1989 in Jacksonville, Florida. He was initially employed aboard the *USNS Assertive*. In 2002, Brother Peters upgraded at the Seafarers-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland. He last sailed



as an MDR on the *USNS Impeccable*. Brother Peters was born in Superior, Michigan, and is now a resident of Kingsland, Georgia.

FRANK SANCHEZ

Brother Frank Sanchez, 67, joined the SIU ranks in 2001 when the NMU merged into the Seafarers International Union. His most recent ship was the *Horizon Trader*. Brother Sanchez sailed in the deck department. He resides in Carolina, Puerto Rico.

CHARLES WALLER

Brother Charles Waller, 65, sailed with NMU before 2001 when the SIU and NMU merged. He is a Virginia native and now calls New Orleans home.



INLAND

JOHNNIE EDWARDS

Brother Johnnie Edwards, 56, joined the union in 1982 in Piney Point, Maryland. He first shipped in the deep sea division aboard the *LNG Virgo*. Brother Edwards sailed in the deck department. His final trip was with G&H Towing. Brother Edwards upgraded on two occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He makes his home in Houston.



ROBERT GILLETTE

Brother Robert Gillette, 70, started sailing with the SIU in 1965. He initially worked with New York Central Railroad. Brother Gillette most recently was employed with New York Dock Railway Company. He resides in Hartsdale, New York.

CHRISTOPHER GUTIERREZ

Brother Christopher Gutierrez, 62, began shipping with the union in 1977. He initially sailed on an Albatross Tanker Company vessel. Brother Gutierrez enhanced his skills on numerous occasions at the Paul Hall Center. His final trip was with G&H Towing. Brother Gutierrez lives in Tiki Island, Texas.



GARY HARBINSON

Brother Gary Harbinson, 62, signed on with the SIU in 1975 in Philadelphia. He first sailed aboard a National Marine Services vessel. In 1975 and 1982, Brother Harbinson took advantage of educational opportunities at the SIU-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland. He last shipped with Crowley Towing of Wilmington, as a deck department member. Brother Harbinson calls Key Largo, Florida, home.

THOMAS HUGHES

Brother Thomas Hughes, 61, was born in New Orleans. He became an SIU member in 1972. Brother Hughes primarily worked with Crescent Towing & Salvage of New Orleans. The deck department member lives in Marrero, Louisiana.

ROBERT JACKSON

Brother Robert Jackson, 62, donned the SIU colors in 1974 in Mobile, Alabama. He was primarily employed with Dravo Basic Materials Company. Brother Jackson was a deck department member. He is a resident of Leroy, Louisiana.

RICHARD KIRBY

Brother Richard Kirby, 62, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1976. He first shipped with American Tugs Inc. Brother Kirby sailed in the deck department. He most recently worked with Piney Point Transportation. Brother Kirby calls Virginia Beach, Virginia, home.



DAVY MENZIES

Brother Davy Menzies, 64, became a union member in 1992. He mainly sailed with Port Imperial Ferry. Brother Menzies enhanced his skills in 2001 at the Paul Hall Center. He worked in the deck department and lives in Jersey City, New Jersey.

CLARENCE SMITH

Brother Clarence Smith, 62, joined the union in 1986. He was primarily employed with the Association of Maryland Pilots. Brother Smith worked in the deck and engine departments. He resides in Lusby, Maryland.

DAVID STILLIS

Brother David Stillis, 62, signed on with the SIU in 1999. He mainly sailed with OSG Ship Management. Brother Stillis attended classes in 2001 at the Piney Point school. He makes his home in Chester, Pennsylvania.

GREAT LAKES

MOHAMED SAID

Brother Mohamed Said, 65, was born in Yemen. He signed on with the union in 1989. Brother Said's first ship was the *American Mariner*; his most recent, the *Adam E. Cornelius*. The former engine department member settled in Dearborn, Michigan.



Final Departures



DEEP SEA

FLOYD HARMANSON

Pensioner Floyd Harmanson, 77, passed away July 3. He became an SIU member in 1973 in Houston. Brother Harmanson initially worked aboard the *Overseas Natalie*. He was born in Louisiana and sailed in the steward department. Brother Harmanson's final trip to sea was on the *Cape Mendocino*. He retired in 2002 and made his home in Port Arthur, Texas.

GEORGE NUSS

Pensioner George Nuss, 87, died July 7. He started sailing with the Seafarers in 1949. The deck department member's first voyage was aboard the *Del Sud*. Brother Nuss was a native of Louisiana. His last ship also was a Delta Lines vessel. Brother Nuss became a pensioner in 1985 and lived in Picayune, Mississippi.

ELMER SCHROEDER

Pensioner Elmer Schroeder, 98, passed away June 30. He joined the union in 1943. Brother Schroeder was a member of the deck department. He first worked with Waterman Steamship Corporation. Brother Schroeder concluded his career on the *Del Mundo*. He began receiving his pension in 1982 and called San Diego, California, home.



HERMINIO SERRANO

Pensioner Herminio Serrano, 79, died June 30. Brother Serrano began his seafaring career in 1964. He was originally employed on the *Topa Topa*. Brother Serrano was born in New York and shipped in the engine department. His last ship was the *Mayaguez*. Brother Serrano went on pension in 1995 and was a resident of Puerto Rico.



JAMES STRAIN

Pensioner James Strain, 85, passed away June 3. Brother Strain joined the SIU ranks in 1966. He initially sailed on a vessel operated by Atlantic Carriers Inc. Brother Strain worked in the deck department. His final ship was the *Overseas Alaska*.



Brother Strain started collecting his pension in 1994. He continued to reside in his native state, Texas.

LARRY THOMPSON

Pensioner Larry Thompson, 76, died June 20. Brother Thompson signed on with the SIU in 1966. He initially sailed with Oceanic Ore Carriers Inc.

The deck department member concluded his career aboard the *Endurance*. Brother Thompson became a pensioner in 2002 and lived in Las Vegas.



TERRY TVEIT

Pensioner Terry Tveit, 68, passed away July 25. He began sailing with the union in 1965. Brother Tveit's first ship was operated by Alcoa Steamship Company; his last was the *Great Land*. The deck department member retired in 2011 and called Shore Line, Washington, home.

GERALD VAN EPPS

Pensioner Gerald Van Epps, 71, died July 14. Brother Van Epps donned the SIU colors in 1967. He originally sailed aboard a Seatrain Lines Inc. vessel. Brother Van Epps shipped in the engine department. His final ship was the *Patriot*. Brother Van Epps went on pension in 2008 and made his home in Arizona.



THOMAS WRIGHT

Pensioner Thomas Wright, 83, passed away June 16. Brother Wright joined the union in 1960. The engine department member's first trip was on the *Arizpa*. Brother Wright's most recent vessel was the *Ambassador*. He started receiving compensation for his retirement in 1990. Brother Wright was born in Savannah, Georgia. He lived in Lake Mary, Florida.

INLAND

BETTY ADAMS

Pensioner Betty Adams, 78, died June 21. She signed on with the union in 1985. Sister Adams primarily worked aboard Or-gulf Transportation Company vessels. She worked in the steward department. Sister Adams retired in 1999 and resided in Effingham, Illinois.



JOHN BROOKS

Pensioner John Brooks, 77, passed away July 17. He donned the SIU colors in 1975. Brother Brooks initially shipped with Allied Towing. He was a deck department member. Brother Brooks' final boat was operated by Crowley Towing & Transportation of Wilmington. He became a pensioner in 1999 and made his home in Wellston, Ohio.



FRANKLIN HOLDER

Pensioner Franklin Holder, 71, died

July 17. Brother Holder became an SIU member in 1982. He was primarily employed with CG Willis Inc. Brother Holder worked in the deck department. He went on pension in 2005. Brother Holder was a resident of Jacksonville, Florida.

ORRIN SMITH

Pensioner Orrin Smith, 85, passed away July 23. He started sailing with the union in 1964. The engine department member mainly worked with Erie Lackawanna Railway Company. Brother Smith was born in Brooklyn, New York. He began collecting his pension in 1990 and continued to live in New York.

PHILLIP YEOMANS

Pensioner Phillip Yeomans, 74, died July 26. Born in Carteret County, North Carolina, Brother Yeomans joined the SIU in 1990. He first worked with Mariner Towing. Brother Yeomans sailed in the steward department, and he most recently shipped with Allied Transportation Company. Brother Yeomans retired in 2002 and resided in Harkers Island, North Carolina.



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

HAMOOD AL-GAZZALY

Pensioner Hamood Al-Gazzaly, 80, passed away April 13. Brother Al-Gazzaly was born in Yemen. He became a pensioner in 1993 and continued to live in Yemen.

ARMENIO ALVAS

Pensioner Armenio Alvas, 90, died July 4. Brother Alvas, a native of Providence, Rhode Island, began collecting his pension in 1968. He resided in New York.

CIRIACO BONILLA

Pensioner Ciriaco Bonilla, 73, passed away June 21. He was born in Honduras. Brother Bonilla went on pension in 2009. He lived in Houston.

DONALD BOUTIN

Pensioner Donald Boutin, 86, died June 21. Brother Boutin was born in Waterville, Maine. He retired in 1991 and was a resident of River Ridge, Louisiana.

THOMAS CASEY

Pensioner Thomas Casey, 77, passed away June 11. Born in Illinois, Brother Casey became a pensioner in 1991. He lived in Virginia.

EDWIN COLON

Pensioner Edwin Colon, 81, died July 10. Brother Colon was born in Brooklyn, New York. He retired

in 1972 and continued to reside in New York.

MIGUEL CRUZ

Pensioner Miguel Cruz, 85, passed away July 23. Brother Cruz was a native of Puerto Rico. He started receiving his retirement pay in 1987. Brother Cruz made his home Bronx, New York.

CHARLES CZARNOWSKI

Pensioner Charles Czarnowski, 97, died June 24. Brother Czarnowski was born in Lackawanna, Pennsylvania. He began receiving his pension in 1966. Brother Czarnowski lived in Sea Level, North Carolina.

DANIEL DONATIEN

Pensioner Daniel Donatien, 88, passed away June 18. Brother Donatien, a native of Martinique, started collecting his retirement compensation in 1970. He resided in Guyton, Georgia.

JOSE FERREIRA

Pensioner Jose Ferreira, 87, died June 24. Brother Ferreira went on pension in 1982. He made his home in Portugal.

HUBERT FLEMING

Pensioner Hubert Fleming, 66, passed away June 20. The Jacksonville, Florida, native became a pensioner in 1986. Brother Fleming most recently resided in St. Augustine, Florida.

ANTONIO FUENTES

Pensioner Antonio Fuentes, 87, died July 11. Born in Honduras, Brother Fuentes started receiving his retirement compensation in 1988. He lived in Miami Gardens, Florida.

FELICIANO GOMEZ

Pensioner Feliciano Gomez, 95, passed away June 20. Brother Gomez was born in Honduras. He became a pensioner in 1990 and settled in New Orleans.

FRANK HAMILTON

Pensioner Frank Hamilton, 88, died June 7. Brother Hamilton, a native of Jackson, Mississippi, began collecting his pension in 1991. He resided in New Orleans.

EDWARD JONES

Pensioner Edward Jones, 96, passed away July 7. He was born in Selma, Alabama. Brother Jones went on pension in 1971. He called New Orleans home.

MOHAMED KALAZ

Pensioner Mohamed Kalaz, 83, died July 11. The Yemen native retired in 1979. Brother Kalaz was a resident of Queens, New York.

FREDERICK KILLINGBECK

Pensioner Frederick Killingbeck, 89, passed away June 6. Born in Torrington, Connecticut, Brother

Killingbeck became a pensioner in 1993. He called Stowe, Vermont, home.

RAFAEL LLANOS

Pensioner Rafael Llanos, 90, died June 6. Brother Llanos was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico. He retired in 1978 and resided in New York.

NATHANIEL MOULTRIE

Pensioner Nathaniel Moultrie, 71, passed away June 29. Brother Moultrie was a native of South Carolina. He started receiving his retirement pay in 1998. Brother Moultrie made his home in North Charleston, South Carolina.

CARLOS NUNEZ

Pensioner Carlos Nunez, 91, died June 12. Brother Nunez was born in Honduras. He began receiving his pension in 1983. Brother Nunez lived in Port Arthur, Texas.

CARMELO RICCI

Pensioner Carmelo Ricci, 82, passed away June 9. Brother Ricci, a native of Humacao, Puerto Rico, started collecting his retirement compensation in 1986. He resided in Brooklyn, New York.

INES RODRIGUEZ

Pensioner Ines Rodriguez, 86, died June 11. Brother Rodriguez was born in the Odem, Texas. He went on pension in 1969. Brother Rodriguez made his home in Houston.

JASPER SCHIELD

Pensioner Jasper Schield, 77, passed away June 14. The Sorrell, Louisiana, native became a pensioner in 1997. Brother Schield settled in Port Arthur, Texas.

VICTOR STRICKLAND

Pensioner Victor Strickland, 93, died June 12. Born in Waynesboro, Mississippi, Brother Strickland started receiving his retirement compensation in 1986. He lived in Bryan, Texas.

ARLINGTON THOMAS

Pensioner Arlington Thomas, 84, passed away June 27. Brother Thomas was born in Virginia. He began collecting his pension in 1993 and made his home in Hampton, Virginia.

LEANDER WILSON

Pensioner Leander Wilson, 92, died June 28. Born in Jamaica, Brother Wilson started receiving his pension in 1969. He lived in Grand Bay, Alabama.

| Name | Age | DOD |
|------------------|-----|---------|
| Aguirre, George | 92 | June 11 |
| Claybourne, Iris | 88 | May 14 |
| Hanna, Isiah | 90 | July 16 |
| Jackson, Fue | 91 | July 15 |
| Sloan, Patrick | 67 | July 1 |
| Tanner, Raymond | 66 | July 1 |
| Tiernan, William | 92 | May 27 |
| Troy, Perry | 92 | July 9 |

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.

ADAME CORNELIUS (American Steamship Co.), October 5 – Chairman **Saad Al-Aqel**, Secretary **Bernard Lawes**, Educational Director **Mohsin Nasser**. Chairman reported SIU forms have been organized and placed in new folder. Crew was asked to keep it organized and notify if additional copies are needed. He commended crew for working safely and pointing out any potential hazards or repairs that may be needed. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Next port: Ashtabula, Ohio.

MAERSK IOWA (Maersk Line, Limited), October 6 – Chairman **Egidio Ferreira**, Secretary **Paul Isherwood**, Educational Director **Eufemiano Gomes**. Crew asked for direct deposit of vacation checks. Educational director mentioned members should account for all their sea time. He suggested taking Maersk safety course at SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center as well as taking upgrading courses. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew touched on STCW requirements. Ship needs new mattresses. Crew said they take time to have a meeting every voyage but are not getting responses to their questions. They asked about standby reliefs and OT in lieu of time off. Also would like increases in health and dental benefits.

MAERSK ATLANTA (Maersk Line, Limited), October 10 – Chairman **Thomas Flanagan**, Secretary **Glenn Williams**, Educational Director **Paul Titus**, Deck Delegate **Michael Sherman**. Shipboard crane still needs repairs. Chairman reported safe voyage and thanked all hands for good work. He reminded everyone to keep up on all credentials and paperwork, especially Coast Guard physical. Educational director advised fellow mariners to take advantage of union-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew discussed safety considerations and inquired about policies covering working in heat, especially in cargo holds. Vote of thanks given to galley gang for job well done. AB **Abdullah Oun** announced retirement plans after this voyage. Crew saluted him as a good shipmate and wished him well. AB **Videlio Roman** has earned enough sea time for his A-book; crew congratulated him. Next port: Charleston, South Carolina.

PRESQUE ISLE (Key Lakes), October 12 – Chairman **Tony Sivola**, Educational Director **Jamal Taleb**, Deck Delegate **Nestor Agcaoli**, Engine Delegate **Benito Castro**. Under old business, crew expressed concern about time it takes for travel reimbursement. Chairman reviewed eligibility rules for Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan. He suggested checking with local hall for additional details. Educational director recommended upgrading at SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew talked about Election Day and the fact that every vote counts. Crew talked about importance of keeping up with union dues and contributing to SPAD, the SIU's voluntary political action fund. "It does make a difference!"

AMERICAN SPIRIT (American Steamship Co.), October 27 – Chairman **Paul Gohs**, Secretary **Joyce Sufak**, Educational Director **Michael Kruse**. Report from union was read to crew and posted. Copies of *Seafarers LOG* were distributed. List of upgrading class dates also posted. Educational director encouraged all members to use winter layup to upgrade in Piney Point, Maryland, or renew credentials. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew discussed various requirements for shipping and also talked about STCW regulations. They talked about constant need for safety, but especially with winter approaching – use extra caution when walking on deck, especially at night.

HORIZON ANCHORAGE (Horizon Lines), November 2 – Chairman **Daniel Seagle**, Secretary **Amanda Suncin**, Educational Director **Gary Dahl**, Deck Delegate **James Grubbs**, Steward Delegate **Gary Loftin**. Chairman reported vessel should be at the dock November 5 at 08:30. New recliner chairs have been purchased for all rooms. Crew expressed concern for member who left vessel due to death in family. Secretary reminded everyone to check all shipping documents and keep them current. Also recommended allowing plenty of time for renewals and for scheduling physical exams. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew suggested increasing dental coverage. They expressed concern about medical staff in Florida. Next port: Tacoma, Washington.

SAM LAUD (American Steamship Co.), October 27 – Chairman **Abdullah Algalham**, Secretary **James Cameron**, Educational Director **Michael Lau**, Deck Delegate **Waleed Mohsin**, Steward Delegate **Mohamed Noman**. Chairman talked about upcoming elections and urged fellow members to vote for pro-maritime candidates. He reviewed shipboard safety tips and also touched on eligibility requirements for health benefits. Secretary encouraged members to read *Seafarers LOG*, the union's official publication. Educational director recommended upgrading at SIU-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland. Deck delegate stressed good communication on deck. Engine delegate reminded everyone to help keep laundry room clean, and to clean lint trap after using dryer. Steward delegate reminded everyone to help keep crew mess organized and clean.

HORIZON RELIANCE (Horizon Lines), November 9 – Chairman **Kissinfor Taylor**, Secretary **Tommy Belvin**, Educational Director **James Donohue**, Steward Delegate **Walter Harris**. Chairman reminded everyone to keep shipping documents current. Secretary said it has been a very good trip. He said crew will receive new TVs for each room and thanked the company. Educational director stressed value of upgrading in Piney Point. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Printer is needed for crew mess computer. Crew discussed sea-time requirements for medical benefits eligibility. Next port: Long Beach, California.

HORIZON KODIAK (Horizon

Endurance in Panama



Self-described "ship nut" George Bonawit snapped these photos of the SIU-crewed car carrier *Endurance* late last year as the 860-foot-long vessel passed through the Panama Canal. Operated by TOTE Services for American Roll-On/Roll-Off Carrier, the *Endurance* reflagged under the Stars and Stripes in 2010.



Lines), November 16 – Chairman **Garry Walker**, Secretary **Lovie Perez**, Educational Director **Christopher Earhart**, Deck Delegate **Peter Bean**, Steward Delegate **Obadi Kassem**. Chairman announced payoff at sea. He said USCG drills would take place in three days, and all hands are required to be on board. He reminded everyone to pay dues on time and recommended always contributing to SPAD. Educational director reminded fellow mariners to check documents for expiration dates, especially the Coast Guard medical certificate. No beefs or disputed OT reported.

Crew proposed substantial base pay increase. They discussed penalty time for deck watchstanders in lieu of rest period on day of arrival when docking between midnight and 0800. They recommended a substantial pension increase for retirees and also suggested various transactions related to shipping and registration that could be done online. Next ports: Tacoma, Washington; and Anchorage, Alaska.

SEALAND LIGHTNING (Maersk Line, Limited), November 16 – Chairman **Manolo Delos Santos**, Secretary Er-

nest Polk, Educational Director **George Rose**, Deck Delegate **Kevin Holston**, Engine Delegate **Hassan Mohamed**, Steward Delegate **Jimmy Williams**. Chairman reminded everyone to keep documents up-to-date, and he also thanked crew for safe voyage. Secretary thanked crew for assisting in keeping vessel clean. Educational director encouraged everyone to go to Piney Point "and enjoy upgrading your skills as soon as possible." No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew thanked steward department for great meals. Next port: Los Angeles.



EU Lazaro Rivera, GUDE Rafael Leon and two of the engineers



AB Luis Ramos, AB Benny Perez, Bosun Isaac Vega, AB Pat Ray, QEE Thomas Flynn

With Seafarers Aboard Horizon Trader

SIU Assistant VP Archie Ware submitted these photos from the *Horizon Trader* in early January, during what was expected to be the vessel's last stop in Jacksonville, Florida. As previously reported, Horizon Lines is ending its service to Puerto Rico.



Chief Cook Anthony Harrell



Steward/Baker Kevin Dougherty



The vessel docks in Jacksonville, Florida, early last month.

Know Your Rights

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

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

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

by certified mail, return receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION — SPAD. SPAD is a separate

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

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

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

Paul Hall Center Classes



Apprentice Water Survival Class #793 – The following Phase I apprentices (above, in alphabetical order) graduated from this course Dec. 19: Jarion Andrews, Hollis Burton III, Ryan Cameron, Kayla Doiron, Tanisha Edwards, Krystal Glenn, Henry Green, Brandon Hamilton, Brandon Harvel, Jack Hufford, Rayshaun Hughes, David Kessler, Ian McDonough, Tasha Pauley, Dymond Roberts, Christopher Savage, Zachary Savasuk, Daqwan Wallace and Brett Wheatley. Class instructor Ben Cusic is standing at the far left. (Note: Not all are pictured.)



Welding – Three upgraders finished their requirements in this course Dec. 19. Graduating (above, in alphabetical order) were: Dwight Cherry Jr., Cirico Geonanga Jr., and Antonio Perez. Their instructor, Chris Raley, is at the far left.



ECDIS – Five Seafarers completed this course Dec. 5. Those graduating (above, in alphabetical order) were: Gregory Dodds, Nathaniel Leachman, Jose Lebron, Robert Venable Jr. and Kipling Wise II. Patrick Schoenberger, their instructor, is at the far left.



GMDSS – The following upgraders (above, in alphabetical order) finished their requirements in this course Dec. 12: Jason Brown, Oleg Derun, Ryan McElroy, Jose Mendez and Emmanuel Wilson. Class instructor Dan Landgrebe is at the far left.



Apprentice to Able Seafarer (Deck) – The following individuals (above, in alphabetical order) graduated from this course Dec. 5: Brandon Aguigui, Joseph Bowen, Edwin Bunda, Sean Cavanaugh, Alexander Franklin, Andrew Graham, Sterling McCosh, Craig Nebbia, Michael Pinnisi, John Reyes, Benjamin Rodrigues III, Ryan Snow, Nicholas Turano, Curtis Walker and James Wilder. (Note: Not all are pictured.)



BST (5-Day) – Nine upgraders graduated from this course Dec. 12. Completing their requirements (above, in alphabetical order) were: Jason Billingsley, Steven Bowmer, Mark Brownell, Vanessa Fickel, Corey Leonard, Jamie Maddox, Hussain Nagi Ali, Clayton Walker and Duane Whitter. Patrick Schoenberger, their instructor, is at the far left.

Government Vessels – The following Seafarers (photo at right, in alphabetical order) graduated from this course Dec. 5: Brandy Baker, Mark Brownell, Martin Buck, Jorge Corrales Barrantes, Tyree Delk, Fidel Dipasupil, Kelly Doyle, Thyron Dy, Vanessa Fickel, Dale Harrison, Lonnie Jones Jr., Corey Leonard, Brian Lusk, Eduardo Meregillano, Hussain Nagi Ali, Harry Phillip, Omar Rodgers and Lamont Stewart II. Mark Cates, their instructor, is at the far left. (Note: Not all are pictured.)



Paul Hall Center Classes



Chief Cook - A pair of steward department Seafarers completed this course recently. Graduating were Edwin Sebastian (above, left) and William Grow.



Chief Steward - Four upgraders, each of whom works in the steward department, finished their requirements in this course recently. Graduating (above, from left) were: Timothy Laird, Frank Ramones, JonDa Tanner and Charles Rumble.



Chief Cook - Two members of the steward department recently graduated from this course. Completing the enhancement of their skills in this class (above, from left) were Keyon Gregory and Matthew Conyac.

Renovations Move at Speedy Pace at Paul Hall Center

As reported on Page 3 of this edition of the *Seafarers LOG*, the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education currently is undergoing one of the most comprehensive upgrades in its storied history. The following photos provide an overview of some of the work being done at the Piney Point, Maryland-based school.



One of four new simulators takes shape.



Classroom improvements include new computer hardware (photos above and below) at all work stations.



Major internal renovations are underway in the Drozak Building (above) and the Logan Building (below left).



The new Claims Building is nearing completion.

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For 2014 Filing Season
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Seafarers Joyously Donate to Military Families

Annual Santa's Castle Project a Hit in Pacific Northwest

For SIU members in the Pacific Northwest, giving back to the community is a way of life – and that's never more evident than during the winter holiday season, when they take part in an annual toy drive benefiting U.S. military families.

The all-volunteer project is called Santa's Castle, and SIU participation has steadily grown for the last several years. Through Santa's Castle, Christmas gifts are donated to families of enlisted military personnel (primarily E-4 and below) who are experiencing financial hardship.

During the most recent holidays, Tacoma Seafarers donated more than \$7,000 worth of toys for military kids ranging in age from newborn to late teens. The SIU also hosted military personnel from nearby Fort Lewis and Santa's Castle officials for a hearty luncheon at the union hall that was attended by more than 120 people.

"The Seafarers are one of the most generous groups we deal with," said Lisa Bennett, president of Santa's Castle. "We really appreciate how they come out every year and show us so much love and support. They are a wonderful group of people."

She added that when she first met Port Agent Joe Vincenzo and the other local SIU officials, employees and members five years ago, she wasn't sure what to expect. "But then you get there and it's so moving," Bennett said. "They're good people and their hearts are really in it. I could give the Seafarers love all day long."

Anita Vargo, who's in charge of purchasing for Santa's Castle (they receive cash donations in addition to toys), also commended the SIU's efforts. "I thought they did an amazing job, as always," she stated. "Every year they do a great job supporting the troops and their families. The parents are very appreciative and the people at the luncheon are really nice – I like talking with them."

Vincenzo, who spearheads the SIU's participation, said the most recent effort went especially well. "Having volunteered at various points throughout my adult life, heading up our toy drive and hosting our annual holiday party is an honor and a privilege, especially because it benefits lower ranking enlisted military personnel," he said. "It is our chance here in Tacoma to say thank you to the men and women in uniform and to tell them how proud we are of their service."

The port agent said this year's donations included 20 bicycles, dozens of remote-controlled cars and helicopters, a dozen more musical instruments including guitars



Port Agent Joe Vincenzo presents the 2014 donations to Santa's Castle volunteer Michelle Frey.

and keyboards, dolls, board games, books, snow shoes and trekking poles, and much more.

After the luncheon (which featured a wide range of goodies including ham, turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes and cranberries), Vincenzo introduced the guests and briefly spoke about the U.S. Merchant Marine's support of U.S. military efforts around the world.

He also credited the many SIU participants including Administrative Assistant Brenda Flesner, Safety Director Ben Anderson, Patrolman Warren Asp, SA **Rupert Henry**, Chief Cook **Sal Deguzman**, and DEU **Hamid Shahbain**.

"I'm happy to be a part of it and glad we do it every year," said Deguzman. "It's a great thing that we're able to give something to the kids, especially during Christmas. We make them happy also."

Chief Cook **Gary Loftin** said he noticed

an outstanding amount of participation this year. "Everybody really chipped in," he said. "I'm really impressed with how well it went, and I'm already looking forward to next year's Santa's Castle. I live in a military community, and they appreciate all this stuff. The gratitude is evident."

AB **Dana Cella**, another regular participant, said, "I think it went fabulously, as it has every year. It's great for the kids, and what better cause can you have?"

He added, "Joe puts forth a big effort for this project. He's a stand-up guy and he's behind it all."



Electrician Shawn Clark, Chief Cook Crista Ali



Chief Cook Gary Loftin, OMU Amber Fisher



Safety Director Ben Anderson, Santa's Castle Volunteer Anita Vargo, Port Agent Joe Vincenzo, Sgt. Maj. Frey, Santa's Castle Volunteer Michelle Frey, Capt. Ganoni, Santa's Castle Volunteer Shelly Hinzman



SA Hamid Shahbain (left) serves lunch to Sgt. 1st Class Hinzman and his wife, Shelly.