



SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

Seafarers Step Up for Santa's Castle

Annual Outreach Benefits American Military Families



SIU members upheld their tradition of robustly supporting Santa's Caste, a yearly philanthropic effort that benefits U.S. military personnel and their families in the Pacific Northwest. Seafarers donated thousands of dollars' worth of toys and other gifts for the project, which the union has supported for 17 straight years. In photo above, from left, SIU Asst. VP Warren Asp meets with Santa's Castle VP of Purchasing Anita Vargo and Executive Director Donna Handoe at the donation site. In the inset photo, Oiler William Cassel helps load the gifts into nearby trucks. *Page 20 (back page).*

New Bisso Contract Includes Major Gains

3-Year Pact Described as 'Win-Win' for Union and Company



SIU boatmen employed by E.N. Bisso & Son have unanimously ratified a new contract featuring significant wage increases and other gains. SIU officials VP Dean Corgey and Asst. VP Chris Westbrook credited both the union and the company for difficult-but-earnest negotiations that resulted in a pact benefiting both parties. Pictured from left are members of both bargaining committees: SIU members Kevin Wells, Jacob Toler and George Cannady, Westbrook, Bisso President Matthew Holzhalb, Corgey, Bisso CFO Casey Willis, HR Director Ashley Sorrells, Director of Operations Michael Killelea, and Seafarer Todd Rabalais. *Page 3.*

SIU Accomplishments Accumulate



David Heindel

There's some question about the quote's origin, but former Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren famously said (more than once) that when he'd read a newspaper, he began with the sports section. That's because he wanted to read about accomplishments and uplifting stories.

While we do not have a sports page in the LOG or on our website, I had a similar feeling when looking at this month's edition. A handful of articles reflect the outstanding work of SIU members and the effectiveness of our union.

In no particular order: The excellent new contracts we secured at (respectively) E.N. Bisso & Son, and Inland Lakes Management,

show the power of collective bargaining and the time-tested wisdom of the SIU's approach to negotiations. Our officials, rank-and-file members, and company personnel once again demonstrated that even though we sometimes may clash at the bargaining table, we are ultimately invested in each other's success.

You don't need a degree in economics to understand that long-term success comes from everyone pulling in the same direction. A strong, skilled, and respected workforce is essential, and employers must also remain successful in order to continue providing good, steady employment. When those pieces align, the entire industry moves forward, and I appreciate that most, if not all, of our contracted companies recognize the importance of investing in and maintaining a top-notch workforce. Both the SIU specifically and unions in general are essential to doing so. Union representation gives workers a voice on the job and the security of a written contract. Historically, union workers take a back seat to no one in terms of productivity, and there is less turnover at union shops. Year after year, government data shows that union members also usually earn higher wages and enjoy better benefits than their unrepresented counterparts.

When you put all of that together, you have opportunities to secure solid contracts like the ones we're publicizing this month.

Credit also goes to our inland members who quickly came to the rescue of a recreational boater who'd fallen into the Sabine-Neches Waterway (without a life jacket). Their training, quick thinking, and sharp response led to a quick and safe outcome. This is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Brotherhood of the Sea, which spans not only oceans but America's inland waterways, too.

Another happening that shouldn't be taken for granted is the union's support of Santa's Castle, a yearly philanthropic project that brightens the holidays for U.S. military personnel and their families. Year after year, SIU members, officials and staff in and around Tacoma – and, quite often, folks from SIU-contracted companies, too – team up for this most-worthwhile mission. They make us all proud. (Seafarers often are involved in similar outreach efforts in other parts of the nation, too, including in New Jersey, Florida, Puerto Rico and elsewhere, and we should also remember our annual Seafarers Waterfront Classic, which benefits military veterans and first responders.)

Less common but also of note, an event late last year credited the service of union mariners from the *SS Meredith Victory* who helped saved more than 14,000 lives during a single mission back in 1950. The one-day conference marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of a wider evacuation of around 100,000 Korean refugees who otherwise may have perished at the hands of Chinese and North Korean military forces during the Korean War.

The *Meredith Victory*, sometimes called the "ship of miracles" because of that particular voyage, symbolizes the U.S. Merchant Marine's role as America's fourth arm of defense. We have supported our troops and mobilized for humanitarian missions since our nation's first days, and we will always answer the call.

Again, I got a boost from reading these articles, and I hope they give you a lift, too. No organization is perfect, but we've got a lot to be proud of.

We also have much to look forward to this year, including an eventual revamp of the engine-department training at our affiliated school in southern Maryland (details to come), ongoing grassroots action to promote and protect your jobs, upgrades at some hiring halls, and more.

I'm excited about our opportunities and I'm confident we will meet every challenge, together.

Maritime Unions Call for American-Flag Requirement on Venezuelan Oil Imports



Prominent U.S. maritime unions, including the SIU, recently called on the Trump administration and Congress to require that any crude oil imported from Venezuela must be transported exclusively on U.S.-flag vessels crewed by American mariners, asserting such policy is essential to U.S. economic and national security interests.

"A cornerstone of an effective national maritime policy is gaining access to private, commercial cargoes that create steady demand for U.S.-flag vessels, American mariners, and the shipbuilding industrial base," the unions wrote in a letter to senior administration officials. The SIU, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA), American Maritime Officers (AMO), and the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P), which represent the majority of U.S. Merchant Mariners sailing in the U.S.-flag fleet, said that aligning American foreign policy and energy needs with "Ship American" principles would strengthen the U.S. maritime workforce, reduce reliance on foreign-controlled shipping, and counter the growth of opaque "shadow fleet" tanker operations used to move sanctioned oil outside U.S. oversight.

The letter was submitted in early January; it's available on the SIU website.

The unions warned that current restrictions on Venezuelan oil have shifted global trade toward foreign-controlled shipping networks, including tankers operating outside U.S. labor and safety standards. As a result, U.S. maritime workers and carriers are excluded from energy cargoes that could otherwise support American shipping capacity and enforcement objectives.

Requiring U.S.-flag transportation for Venezuelan crude entering the United States, the unions said, would provide reliable commercial cargo for U.S. carriers, enhance sanctions compliance, and reduce reliance on foreign vessels tied to adversarial interests. The policy could also benefit U.S. refiners designed to process heavy crude by increasing supply options and helping stabilize domestic energy markets.

Maritime labor leaders emphasized that American mariners are prepared to support lawful, transparent energy trade that advances U.S. strategic interests.

SIU Secures New Agreement With Inland Lakes Management

After several months of bargaining, the SIU in mid-December finalized a new contract with Inland Lakes Management, covering the company's licensed officers and other shipboard supervisory employees.

SIU Great Lakes Vice President Bryan Powell said that the nine-year pact (effective through October 2034) features "a robust increase to wages and overtime rates in the first year, along with significant annual increases thereafter, tied to the Consumer Price Index to keep pace with inflation."

Additionally, effective Feb. 1 of this year, all bargaining unit employees are enrolled in the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan at the Core-Plus level, the top one available. This marks a substantial improvement from past coverage.

Other highlights include vacation benefits (which are new for this group), premium pay for work in confined spaces, and reimbursement for uniforms, required personal protective equipment, and other necessary gear, among other improvements.

Heralding the contract as a win for the membership, Powell remarked, "This long-term agreement provides stability and predictability for the members sailing aboard these vessels. It is a landmark agreement delivering very substantial gains in wages, health coverage, paid time off, and overall working conditions."

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Communications Director: Jordan Biscardo

Assistant Communications Director: Nick Merrill

Assistant Editor: Aja Neal

Administrative Support: Jenny Stokes



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The SIU engaged an environmentally friendly printer for the production of this newspaper.

'Historic' Contract Unanimously Ratified by Bisso Crews

Following a difficult but productive series of negotiations, SIU members late last year unanimously approved a new three-year contract at E.N. Bisso & Son featuring substantial wage increases and other gains.

The union represents approximately 70 boatmen at Bisso, which is headquartered in New Orleans. They work as wheelmen, deckhands and engineers aboard a fleet of 14 tugs, providing ship docking and offshore towing services.

Negotiating on behalf of the union were Vice President Gulf Coast Dean Corgey, Assistant Vice President Chris Westbrook, Engineer Delegate **Kevin Wells**, Wheelman Delegate **George Cannady**, Deckhand Delegate **Jacob Toler**, and alternate Delegate **Todd Rabalais**.

Representing the company were President Matthew Holzhalt, Chief Financial Officer Casey Willis, Director of Operations Michael Killelea, Human Resources Director Ashley Sorrells, and Consultant Michael Vitt.

Corgey stated, "I commend Chris and the rank-and-file delegates for their solidarity, tenacity and leadership in making sure this got done. The company bargained in good faith; we had some tough issues to address, but we got through them."

"We now have wage parity among all the companies from the Rio Grande to the Mississippi," Corgey continued. "Our members at Bisso have job security, good wages and good benefits. I thank them for sticking with the union and I thank the company for bargaining in good faith."

Westbrook, who has been involved in every negotiation between the SIU and Bisso (he sailed with the company in the 1990s), called the new pact "historic. We fought for wage parity with the other SIU-contracted harbor tug companies, and this contract brings them up to where they should be."

He added, "We also secured improved retirement benefits, new hurricane-related protections for

mariners, a higher maintenance-and-cure rate, and enhanced reimbursement for personal protective equipment while adding four hours of travel pay to each payroll period. We maintained Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan benefits at the Core-Plus level, which is the top one available. The agreement also affirms union access provisions and commits the parties to continue discussions regarding participation in training programs offered at (the union-affiliated school in) Piney Point, Maryland."

Westbrook concluded, "These were extremely difficult negotiations; we had to get a 30-day extension of the old contract at one point. Ultimately, through the leadership of the SIU and our area vice president being present, and with the amount of respect commanded by our delegates, that's what led us to success. This is a win-win for the company and the union; the contract will help Bisso retain their qualified personnel and attract qualified personnel. This is an agreement we can all be proud of."

The contract is retroactive to Dec. 1, 2025, and runs through November 2028.

Cannady said, "I feel good about the contract; I love it. Negotiations were tough, and we had to stand up a few times and put our big-boy shoes on, but we got what we wanted. It was a tough road, but as a union and a brotherhood, we all stuck together."

Cannady credited Corgey and Westbrook for their leadership, and added that the major wage increases are "amazing. This is a changing point in our industry."

Wells said the finished product "turned out really great in the end. The Bisso team was willing to work with us. Dean and Chris did an outstanding job. After speaking with some of the crew members, it was clear they were all on board. All in all, everybody was pretty pleased."

He added, "We didn't have to give up anything. I think the (company) president knew it was time to step up, and that was a plus."



SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook (fourth from left) and SIU boatmen show their support for the new contract. Pictured from left are Justin Williams, Wayne White, Todd Rabalais, Westbrook, Matt Palmer, Jacob Toler, George Cannady, James Fink, and Kevin Wells.

SIU Members Rescue Boater

Thanks to SIU boatmen from Bay Towing's tug *Rio Gulf*, a local man in Texas had an opportunity to enjoy the winter holidays.

Four Seafarers aboard the *Rio Gulf* teamed up to rescue a recreational fisherman who had fallen from his boat into the Sabine-Neches Waterway on Nov. 29, near Texas Island. The fisherman wasn't far from shore – but he inarguably was at great risk due to the typically high traffic in the area.

It took the SIU members – Capt. **Donald Nutt**, Mate **Kaleb Bogan**, Chief Engineer **Bernard Youngblood**, and Apprentice Mate **Nicholas Gustafson** – less than 10 minutes to safely bring him aboard their tug, after being contacted by a nearby vessel. Their efforts earned accolades from the union and the company. Bay Towing presented the Seafarers with letters of commendation as well as gift cards.

"Our guys really rose to the occasion," said SIU Assistant Vice President Joe Zavala. "Their professionalism certainly is not surprising, but it also is sincerely appreciated. They were prompt and efficient. Great job!"

In a letter to the crew, Bay Towing President/Chief Executive Officer Philip Kuebler cited the members' "exceptional performance during a recovery of a person in the water.... After visually locating the person in the water, your team expertly positioned the *Rio Gulf* down-river, accounting for the slight ebb current, and disengaged the engines to facilitate the rescue.... Within approximately eight minutes, the person was safely brought on board the *Rio Gulf* through the skilled use of a life buoy and the DACON Rescue Frame" (a type of safety net).

Kuebler added, "Your quick, coordinated and professional actions ensured the rapid and safe recovery of the individual, preventing any harm or further complications. You are commended for your

outstanding performance of duty during the critical incident."

Nutt pointed out that the fisherman wasn't wearing a lifejacket – and his boat's engine was still running.

"My mate was on watch when he received a call from the pilot up on the ship," Nutt recalled. "I came up and took over (navigation), and the other guys all went out and used the rescue net. The guy we rescued was a little shaken up but in good shape overall. He was very thankful, but it went about as textbook as you could want."

Nutt said the incident could have been much worse for the fisherman because of the traffic on the waterway. He also stated that the crew did an admirable job, and their safety drills paid off.

"We drill for this regularly and it absolutely made a difference," Nutt said. "It's not a complicated piece of equipment, but being able to deploy it and use it properly.... I praise my crew for the job they did. They were fantastic, and I couldn't speak more highly of them. Credit to Bay Towing as well, for making sure we have top-of-the-line equipment."



A crew member from another tugboat took this photo of the rescue. The fisherman is visible to the right of the netting, in the water.



Mate Kaleb Bogan (right) receives a letter of commendation from Bay Towing Operations Manager Joshua LeDoux aboard the tug on Dec. 23.



SIU members (from left) Bernard Youngblood, Donald Nutt, and Nicholas Gustafson are congratulated by Bay Towing COO Steve Huttman (right) Dec. 23 aboard the *Rio Gulf*.

Union-Crewed 'Miracle Ship,' Brother Marinus Honored During 75th Anniversary Conference

To commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the historic and renowned Hungnam evacuation, the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOS-USA), in collaboration with other maritime organizations, conducted a full-day event at a maritime conference center in Linthicum Heights, Maryland, on Dec. 15. Several speakers, including some who took part in the evacuation themselves, shared their expertise with conference attendees through a series of interviews and presentations.

More than 100,000 refugees were saved during the evacuation, and the union-crewed *Meredith Victory* transported more than 14,000 of those individuals. The ship included crew members from the old National Maritime Union, which later merged into the SIU.

Sponsors for the December event included the SIU, as well as Mr. Burley Smith (who participated in the actual evacuation), the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P), Pasha, the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV), West Gulf Maritime Association (WGMA), Maritime Expert Group, Inc., Bradley Digital, Liberty Ship John W. Brown Foundation, the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA), and longtime SIU member **Fr. Sinclair Oubre**.

The conference began with a presentation of the colors and an opening prayer by Fr. Oubre. Dr. Joshua Smith, director of the American Merchant Marine Museum and professor at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, offered a presentation titled "Gallant Ship: Strategic History & Christian Memory at Hungnam, 1950". Susan Kee, Korean-American writer and Korean War historian followed with an overview of that war, which included details about the evacuation at Hungnam.

The evacuation took place from Dec. 15-24 of 1950. As skirmishes from the Korean War began encircling seaside cities, a host of refugees, both young and old, crowded the harbor in search of safety. The U.S.-flagged merchant ship *SS Meredith Victory* was one of 150 vessels that enabled the rescue of American and Republic of Korea troops and North Korean refugees. The *Meredith Victory* facilitated safe passage for more than 14,000 refugees in one single voyage without any casualties. In fact, quite the opposite: Five babies were born aboard the crowded ship during the journey, affectionately dubbed the "kimchi babies" by the *Meredith Victory* crew, as it was one of the few Korean terms they knew.

To get all the passengers aboard, the crew spent 26 hours loading the 450-foot-long, 50-foot-wide vessel, which had five cargo holds, each with three decks. Sixteen Koreans stood shoulder to shoulder on wooden pallets which were lowered into the bottom holds of the ship. As each compartment filled with people, the crew placed the hatch boards

and began filling the next level with more people who sought escape from Hungnam. Eventually, after all the holds were full, the remaining refugees occupied the main deck, enduring wintery ocean spray and freezing temperatures.

After Kee's presentation, Jonathan Corrado, Director of Policy for the Korea Society, shared his findings concerning how the Hungnam evacuation story can spur understanding with the North Korean people. After that, Dr. Smith held a Q&A session with Third Mate Burley Smith about his experiences aboard the *Meredith Victory*.

Smith hails from Islip, New York, but spent most of his school years in Atlantic City, New Jersey. His father was an OS, and Smith followed in his footsteps by taking the written exam to become a merchant mariner and attending King's Point, which had a U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Basic School campus in San Mateo, California, at the time. Smith applied for work, hoping to be assigned to a ship travelling to Latin America, but instead he was sent to the *Meredith Victory*, which was docked down in Jamestown, Virginia.

Aboard that ship, he sailed to a U.S. Army base on the West Coast, then sailed to Tokyo. The ship would end up being part of a convoy; but, because the armed forces needed the element of surprise, mariners didn't know exactly where they were going next.

As Smith and his crewmates were unloading fuel in Busan, Korea, they were told to sail to a harbor in Hungnam ASAP and help evacuate refugees. Smith recalls that naval ships swept for mines along the way. The *Meredith Victory* would be the next-to-last ship to leave Hungnam, and there was no time to transport the materials they initially were set to deliver. From midday Dec. 21 until around the same time on Dec. 22 the *Meredith Victory* crew loaded a steady stream of people aboard. They took up anchor on Dec. 23 at noon and sailed to Geoje Port in South Korea, where they released the refugees on Christmas Day in 1950.

Smith had complete confidence in the crew of the *SS Meredith Victory*. The overcrowded ship maneuvered through a narrow channel of cleared mines, no more than 100 yards wide, and continued down the Korean coast



Burley Smith (left), who sailed as third mate on the *Meredith Victory* during the evacuation, receives an award from Fr. Sinclair Oubre.

and reached Geoje Island without casualty, incidents, or unrest. He recalled how he felt after reaching the port and seeing the refugees smile, holding their babies and boarding the landing crafts. "That sight is something I will never forget. After enduring months of fear and hardship, the moment they finally felt freedom was deeply moving. Though we couldn't speak the same language, every crew member shared in the joy of bringing them to safety," he said.

After the Q&A and a rousing speech by World War II mariner Dave Yoho, attendees paused for lunch. When they reconvened, Fr. Oubre and Capt. Brian Hope, the founder of Project Liberty Ship, presented information about other U.S. merchant vessels that were present at the evacuation. Dr. Philip Lacovara, the author of the book "The

Mariner and the Monk," then gave an account of Capt. Leonard La Rue's life (the subject of the book) in the context of the ships he sailed and the battles he survived.

La Rue, also known as Brother Marinus, was an officer in the merchant marine who sailed on 25 ships during his 20 years at sea. When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, La Rue took command of the *SS Meredith Victory* and led her to Japan and then Korea to participate in the historic landing at Inchon. Two months later, La Rue and his crew made history with the evacuation. At the height of his sailing career, he left the merchant marine and became a benedictine monk. Currently, Brother Marinus is a candidate for sainthood, and the AOS-USA is helping to further his cause.



Professor Joshua M. Smith notes the historic reliability of the U.S. Merchant Marine.



Some of the conference attendees are pictured at the event in Maryland.

NMC Notice: Temporary Reduction of Service at Regional Examination Center New Orleans

Editor's note: The U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center issued the following notification on Dec. 30, 2025. It's available on the agency's website and on the SIU website.

Due to staffing shortages at Regional Examination Center (REC) New Orleans, the National Maritime Center (NMC) has implemented the following temporary measures:

Mariner Examinations: REC New Orleans will continue to provide mariner testing via scheduled examination appointments only. Examination appointments are available Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. CT.

Examination appointments are not available on Fridays or federal holidays.

Counter Service: REC New Orleans has temporarily discontinued all counter service including by appointments and is unable to accommodate walk-in visits. Only applicants with scheduled examination appointments will be permitted to enter the REC at this time.

Application Submission: Effective January 5, 2026, REC New Orleans will no longer accept applications in-person. The NMC anticipates transition to an online application submission portal in January (see December 2, 2025, announcement for further details). Until the portal is available, mariners should submit merchant mariner credential applications via e-mail directly to MMCAApplications@uscg.mil and medical

certificate applications via e-mail to MEDAIP@uscg.mil. Only applicants seeking first class pilot routes within the REC New Orleans area of responsibility should mail or e-mail their application to the REC.

We anticipate that the temporary measures at REC New Orleans may last for several months while the NMC seeks to fill current vacancies.

For more information regarding the current status of REC New Orleans or how and where to submit credential applications, visit the NMC website. If you have questions or require assistance, contact the NMC Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST, by using Live Chat, by e-mailing iasknmc@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

Navigating Relationships at Sea: Solutions for Merchant Mariners

Editor's note: This article was written by Seafarers Addiction Rehabilitation Center (SARC) Director Chris Leeman, LCMFT, LAC, SAP. He may be reached at 45705 Locust Grove Drive, Valley Lee, MD 20692; cleeman@seafarers.org; and (301) 710-9070.

Life at sea offers adventure and financial stability, but it often takes a toll on personal relationships. Long periods away from loved ones, unpredictable schedules, and limited communication can lead to feelings of isolation; strain trust; and cause emotional distance. However, with the right strategies, merchant mariners can maintain healthy, fulfilling relationships despite the challenges.

1. Prioritize Communication

Inconsistent communication is one of the biggest hurdles. To address this, establish a communication plan before deployment. Agree on preferred methods – email, messaging apps, satellite calls – and set realistic expectations. Even brief, consistent updates can provide emotional reassurance. Technology such as

WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and specialized maritime communication apps can help bridge the gap.

2. Build Trust and Transparency

Trust is crucial when time apart is the norm. Be open about schedules, social activities, and feelings. Share daily experiences, even mundane ones, to maintain emotional intimacy. By encouraging your partner to do the same, you can foster mutual understanding and reduce the chances of miscommunication or suspicion.

3. Plan Quality Time on Shore

Time together on shore should be intentional. Plan short getaways, enjoy shared hobbies, or simply relax without distractions. These moments create lasting memories and reinforce the bond. Discuss future plans, both professional and personal, to ensure alignment and shared goals.

4. Involve Your Partner in the Maritime Lifestyle

Help your partner understand your work and its challenges. Share stories, photos, or even bring them aboard for visits when possible. When partners feel

included and informed, it reduces emotional distance and builds empathy.

5. Seek Support When Needed

Sometimes, talking to a neutral third party like a counselor familiar with maritime life can be helpful. Many maritime unions and organizations offer mental health and relationship support services. Encouraging open dialogue about emotions and seeking help when needed is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Conclusion

Being a merchant mariner doesn't mean sacrificing personal relationships. With intentional communication, trust, quality time, and support, mariners and their partners can thrive together. The key is treating the relationship like another voyage requiring navigation, patience, and teamwork. Also, workshops may be worth attending on communication and self-care in a relationship. Check out your home area for skills training for relationships, and self-educate. Your relationships are by far your most valuable investments in life.

Notice

Pre-Employment and Periodic Drug Tests are Reported to Coast Guard; Marijuana Still Banned by Department of Transportation

Editor's note: Seafarers are reminded that the U.S. Department of Transportation forbids the use of marijuana by employees subject to drug testing under DOT regulations. Even if marijuana use is legal in your home state, it is still illegal under federal law (federal law regulates the maritime industry). This has not changed, as explained in the following announcement issued by the DOT late last year.

DOT OFFICE OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY AND COMPLIANCE NOTICE

On December 18, 2025, the President of the United States issued an Executive Order directing the Department of Justice to complete the rescheduling process of marijuana from a Schedule I to a Schedule III drug of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA).

We have had inquiries about what impact this Executive Order will have on the Department of Transportation's longstanding regulation about the use of marijuana by safety-sensitive transportation employees – pilots, school bus drivers, truck drivers, train engineers, subway operators, aircraft maintenance personnel, transit fire-armed security personnel, ship captains, and pipeline emergency response personnel, among others.

First – marijuana is still a Schedule I drug under the CSA until any rescheduling is complete. It remains unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under the Department of Transportation's drug testing regulations to use marijuana.

Second – until the rescheduling process is complete, the Department of Transportation's drug testing process and regulations will not change. Transportation employees in safety-sensitive positions will still be subject to testing for marijuana. Furthermore, the Department's guidance on medical and recreational marijuana and CBD are still in effect.

Laboratories, Medical Review Officers and Substance Abuse Professionals must continue to follow 49 CFR Part 40. There are no changes to your roles and responsibilities as they relate to marijuana.

We will continue to monitor the rescheduling process and update the transportation industry as appropriate.

We want to assure the traveling public that our transportation system is the safest it can possibly be.

Senate Confirms Maritime Administrator

The United States Senate on Dec. 18 confirmed the nomination of Stephen Carmel as U.S. Maritime Administrator.

As previously reported, his nomination had been widely supported throughout the U.S. maritime industry, including by the SIU.

A U.S. Merchant Marine Academy graduate, Carmel sailed as a vessel master and then worked as an executive with Maersk Line, Limited, and with U.S. Marine Management. During his Senate hearing Oct. 22, he voiced strong backing for the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program, and cargo preference laws.

Shortly after Carmel's confirmation, SIU President David Heindel congratulated him and noted that the union looks forward to working with him in his new role.

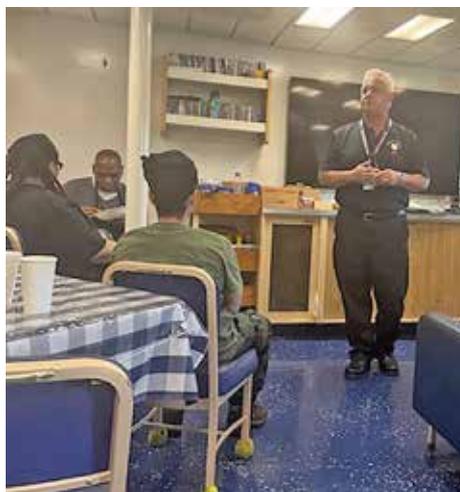


SIU personnel are pictured in early November 2025 with then-USMMI President Steve Carmel (second from left) in Norfolk, Virginia. From left are Patrolman Josh Rawls, Steve Carmel, Manpower Director Mark von Siegel, Asst. VP Michael Russo, and Port Agent Mario Torrey.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD APL ISLANDER – From left, Chief Steward Reynaldo Agapay and Chief Cook Reshawn Solomon keep their shipmates well-fed.



ABOARD USNS BOWDITCH – These snapshots are from a recent servicing of the Ocean Ships vessel in Guam. In the group photo are Chief Cook Larry Bachelor, MDR Leonard Gordon, Bosun Dean Trott, AB Armando Contreras, STOS Charles Jones, and SA Dominique Johnson. The individual photos show Chief Cook Bachelor serving lunch, and SIU Port Agent Duane Akers meeting with the crew.



BOOK SECURED IN JERSEY CITY – GUDE Milton Buelto Fernandez (left) obtains his full book at the hiring hall. He's pictured with SIU Asst. VP Ray Henderson.



ABOARD COASTAL RELIANCE – Longtime Seafarer Fr. Sinclair Oubre (third from left) visits Seafarers aboard the Fairwater vessel in Port Arthur, Texas, to brighten their holidays.



WELCOME ASHORE IN NEW ORLEANS – Capt. Joseph Carson (left) picks up his first pension check at the hall following a 48-year career with Crescent Towing. Congratulating him is SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook.



ELECTED TO SERVE – SIU Asst. VP Michael Russo has been elected to the executive board of the Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO. These photos were taken after the elections, which occurred at the "Live! Casino & Hotel" (formerly Maryland LIVE!) on Dec. 18, 2025. From left in the group photo are SIU Representative Shane Sterry, Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO President Donna Edwards, SIU Asst. VP Michael Russo, and SIU Representative James Bast.



ABOARD GREEN DELTA – These mariners, pictured aboard the Waterman vessel, have nearly 90 years of combined sea time. From left are Recertified Bosun Joe French, Second Mate Robert Smith, and Recertified Bosun Gregory Jackson.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD GLOBAL SENTINEL – These photos were taken at different junctures in late 2025. In the snapshot above, left, Seafarers get into the Christmas spirit on the Subcom vessel in Baltimore, while Recertified Bosun Lee Hardman (individual pic) displays a tuna caught during off time around Thanksgiving, when the ship was at sea. The remaining photos include a working shot and (from left) SIU Representative James Bast, Manpower Director Mark von Siegel, and Asst. VP Michael Russo servicing the ship.



ABOARD MANUKAI – Pictured from left aboard the Matson ship in Long Beach, California, are SIU Patrolman Gordon Godel, Chief Cook Nadzeya Kuptsova, and Steward/Baker Marcelo Param.

ABOARD LIBERTY EAGLE – Working aboard the Liberty Maritime ship are (left to right, front to back) AB Emilio Abreu, AB Hermilo Sawali, AB Vincent Williams, and Bosun Larry Mann.

WELCOME ABOARD IN HOUSTON – AB William Zambula (left) picks up his full B book at the Houston hall. He's pictured with Piney Point Port Agent Kelly Krick, who briefly revisited the area.



SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS – The Seafarers-crewed *Allied Pacific* (Patriot) (left in photo above) maneuvers near the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) for an underway replenishment in the Pacific Ocean late last year. In the remaining photo, an MH-60S Seahawk, attached to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12, lands on the Washington's flight deck. (U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Nicolas Quezada)



ABOARD OCEAN GRAND – These photos from the Patriot ship in Guam include (in the galley) Chief Steward Rene Gil and (on deck) AB Jason Bentz and Bosun Angel Nunez.

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.

BADLANDS TRADER (U.S. Marine Management), September 5 – Chairman **Fernando Haber**, Secretary **Joseph Arigo**, Educational Director **Theodore Gonzales**, Deck Delegate **Roy Enriquez**, Engine Delegate **Arvin Heras**, Steward Delegate **Joseph Huls**. Upcoming drydock period in Singapore and more crew to be added, per chairman. Educational director encouraged members to upgrade at the union-affiliated Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members noted the upcoming tenth anniversary of the *El Faro* tragedy. Crew would like an increased budget and for medical certificate to be required annually. Members expressed interest in paying dues online. (Editor's note: The online option had been in the works and subsequently became available.)

BRENTON REEF (Eco Tankers Crew Management, LLC), September 14 – Chairman **Phillip Nichols**, Educational Director **Eron Hall**, Deck Delegate **Enrique Estipona**, Engine Delegate **Jorge Lawrence**. Crew discussed going ashore procedures for Eagle Point, New Jersey, and for Philadelphia. Seaman's Church Institute assistance is the only way to get to and from front gate. Chairman thanked crew for previous stores event and discussed the upcoming shipyard period. Educational director urged members to upgrade their skills at the Paul Hall Center. New TV and microwave purchased for crew mess. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew

changes happening in near future. Next port: Eagle Point, New Jersey.

TEXAS (Fairwater Crew Management, LLC), October 6 – Chairman **Tomas Calderon Robinson**, Secretary **Ronald Davis**, Educational Director **Furman Watson**. Entire crew doing well, per chairman. Educational director reiterated the importance of keeping paperwork current and upgrading at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Vote of thanks was given to steward department for a job well done.

BRENTON REEF (Eco Tankers Crew Management, LLC), October 19 – Chairman **Phillip Nichols**, Secretary **Nathan Brailsford**, Educational Director **Eron Hall**. Members reviewed boot allowance reimbursements. Chairman estimated upcoming shipyard period to last approximately 30-40 days and noted potential issues with submitting paperwork to NMC due to current government shutdown. Educational director reminded members to continue upgrading their skills at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew read latest communications and discussed new online dues payment option. A round of applause was given to entire steward department for a job well done. Members would like pay procedure to follow standard tanker agreement to include

penalty pay for trash, work boot allowances, and a day in lieu of pay. Next port: Houston.

LIBERTY PASSION (Liberty Maritime Corp.), November 16 – Chairman **Duane Frosburg**, Educational Director **Dereon Ivory**. Members discussed requirements for retirement. Educational director advised crew to upgrade at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. New pillows, new mattresses and new chairs needed in staterooms. New knives, new can openers and new oven mitts also needed per steward delegate. Members expressed dissatisfaction with Anderson-Kelly physicals. Next port: Jacksonville, Florida.

LIBERTY POWER (Liberty Maritime Corp.), November 30 – Chairman **Anwar Martinez Norales**, Secretary **Robert Bostick**, Deck Delegate **Usman Ibrahim**, Engine Delegate **Gilberto Baltazar**. Members reported difficulties getting OT approval after writing in for vessel restriction in Bahrain and in Morocco. Several people reported problems receiving OT pay for hours worked. Captain reportedly denied launch service for crew. Bosun requested transportation for departures at Beaumont, Texas. More refrigerators are needed as not all rooms have one. Fresh produce requested on multiple occasions by former bosun but never received. Multiple supplies need replenishment, including cups, paper

towels, spoons, mops, etc.

ARC COMMITMENT (TOTE Services, LLC), December 8 – Chairman **David Brady Norales**, Secretary **Dustin Haney**, Deck Delegate **Ahmed Haridy**, Engine Delegate **Raymond Barnhart**. Crew requested better internet service and new blankets. Thanksgiving holiday went well and ship is well stocked, per secretary's report. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like payrates to equal those in standard freightship agreement, specifically weekend overtime rates and would like vacation to be modified to 26 for 30. Bosun suggested European watch schedule at sea. Next port: Beaumont, Texas.

MAERSK KINLOSS (Maersk Line, Limited), December 20 – Chairman **Ben Skuban**, Secretary **Bernardo Celi**, Educational Director **Tijani Rashid**, Engine Delegate **Jarvis Carter**, Steward Delegate **Hans Winkler**. Chairman announced next payoff at sea, talked about distribution of overtime and reiterated the importance of reading contracts. Educational director encouraged crew to upgrade and stay on top of documents. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members requested new linens, new mattresses, new PPE, and an increase to food budget. Crew would like 30 for 30 vacation, increases to base wages, improved health care and better Wi-Fi.

Know Your Rights

FINANCIAL REPORTS. The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters 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 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:

George Tricker, Chairman
Seafarers Appeals Board
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
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 David Heindel at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

David Heindel, President
Seafarers International Union
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Seafarers Celebrate Winter Holidays

The photos on these three pages feature SIU personnel partaking in food and fellowship leading up to, and during the recent holiday season.



ABOARD ATB MILLVILLE – The Christmas group photo from the Key Marine vessel includes (from left) Second Mate/SIU Hawsepiper Jimmy Hargrove, Recertified Bosun Billy Yurick, and AB/Cook Cris Arsenio. Hargrove noted that he and Arsenio were Paul Hall Center apprentices in 2012 and subsequently landed in the same upgrading courses a couple of times. Hargrove also had sailed with Yurick in 2013. “Proud to call both of them shipmates and Cris a classmate and to still be connecting all these years later!” he said.



ABOARD ALASKAN NAVIGATOR – From left in the three-person photo, taken aboard the ATC vessel on Christmas, are Recertified Steward Albert Sison, DEU Saleh Saleh, and Chief Cook Nasr Almusab. In the four-person pic, those same three Seafarers are joined by SA Mario Hartford, while Chief Cook Nasr also is in the solo photo.

At the Jacksonville Hall

The yearly festivities in the Sunshine State attracted a typically strong turnout on Dec. 19.



Future Seafarer Kieran Guiry (son of Recertified Bosun Brian Guiry)



Pictured from left are GUDE Shakira Neither, SA Kierra Bradley, SIU Port Agent Ashley Nelson, Chief Cook Keyanna Williams, SIU Patrolman Eddie Pittman, SA Etrenda Badger, Chief Cook Tracey Manuel, and Recertified Bosun Brian Guiry.



QEE Melody Mitchell, Recertified Bosun Junior Augustin



Showing the SIU spirit are (from left) Steward/Baker Manuel Daguio, Chief Cook Carlos Diaz, GUDE Dennis Morallo, ABM Aristotle Bone, GUDE Braulio Ente, ABM Vicente Mansilungan, and ACU Rosalie Long.



Retired Recertified Steward Gregory Melvin (left) gives the invocation. SIU Port Agent Ashley Nelson is directly to his left.



Guests enjoy the feast (two photos directly above).



Recertified Steward Rocky Dupraw (right, holding plates) and his daughter survey the scene.

Holiday Season in Full Swing

Photos on this page were taken at each hall's respective holiday festivities.



AT THE MOBILE HALL – Members, pensioners and their families and friends convene Dec. 11. Retiree Hubert Cain is pictured at the top right, saying thanks for a birthday cake (he turned 91 two days later). Pictured from right to left in photo at the top left are SIU Port Agent Jimmy White, Chief Cook Dorian White (Jimmy's son), SIU Recruiting Media Coordinator Lauren Liles, and her son, Tristan Biggerstaff. Pensioner Brenda Littlefield is second from left in the remaining four-person posed photo.



AT THE NORFOLK HALL – From left are Steward/Baker Darryl Jackson, retired SIU VP Kermet Mangram, Steward/Baker Avis Hawkins, SIU VP Government Services Sam Spain, ACU Marvette Gallop, Chief Cook Faith Gonse, SA Juditha Cuarez, and SIU Port Agent Mario Torrey.



AT THE JERSEY CITY HALL – Attendees at the December holiday bash in the Garden State included (far left) SIU VP Joseph Soresi and (front, fifth from left) retired SIU VP Kate Hunt, among many others.

David Heindel, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

Joe Vincenzo, Vice President West Coast

Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast

Sam Spain, Vice President Government Services

Bryan Powell,
Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters

Pat Vandegrift, Vice President

Hazel Galbiso, Vice President



HEADQUARTERS

5201 Capital Gateway Drive
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

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

625 N. York St., Houston, TX 77003
(713) 659-5152

JACKSONVILLE

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

JERSEY CITY

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

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

NORFOLK

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

OAKLAND

1121 7th St., Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 444-2360

PHILADELPHIA

2800 S. 20th Street, Building 12B, Suite A
Philadelphia, PA 19145
(215) 336-3818

PINEY POINT

45353 St. George's Avenue, Piney Point, MD
20674
(301) 994-0010

PORT EVERGLADES

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

SAN JUAN

659 Hill Side St., Summit Hills
San Juan, PR 00920
(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

This month's question was answered by SIU members at the Philadelphia hall.

Question: What are some of your goals for 2026?



David Mendez
Reefer Mechanic

"I'm part of an inland gang, so my goals are to be as productive as I can be, improve myself and learn all I can about the new Starcool modules. Personally, I'm looking to invest in some real estate."



Theophilus Essien
AB

"I'm looking to become a Recertified Bosun, I just put my application in, so that would be amazing. My uncle got me into the union, so I want to do it for him. Personally, I'm looking for a house to settle down in. I love the SIU!"



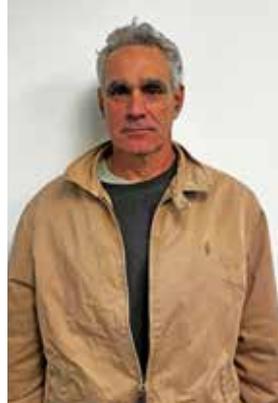
Lawrence Girard
AB

"I'm aiming to study for and attain my AB unlimited rating next year. I'd like to try and get on a cargo ship or a RO/RO next year, since I've really only worked on tankers so far."



Phuoc Nguyen
Chief Steward

"I'd like to get into the Recertified Steward program in 2026, then get on a nice ship and stay for a while. Personally, I'd like to get healthy and stay that way all year."



Berard Fedele
AB Unlimited

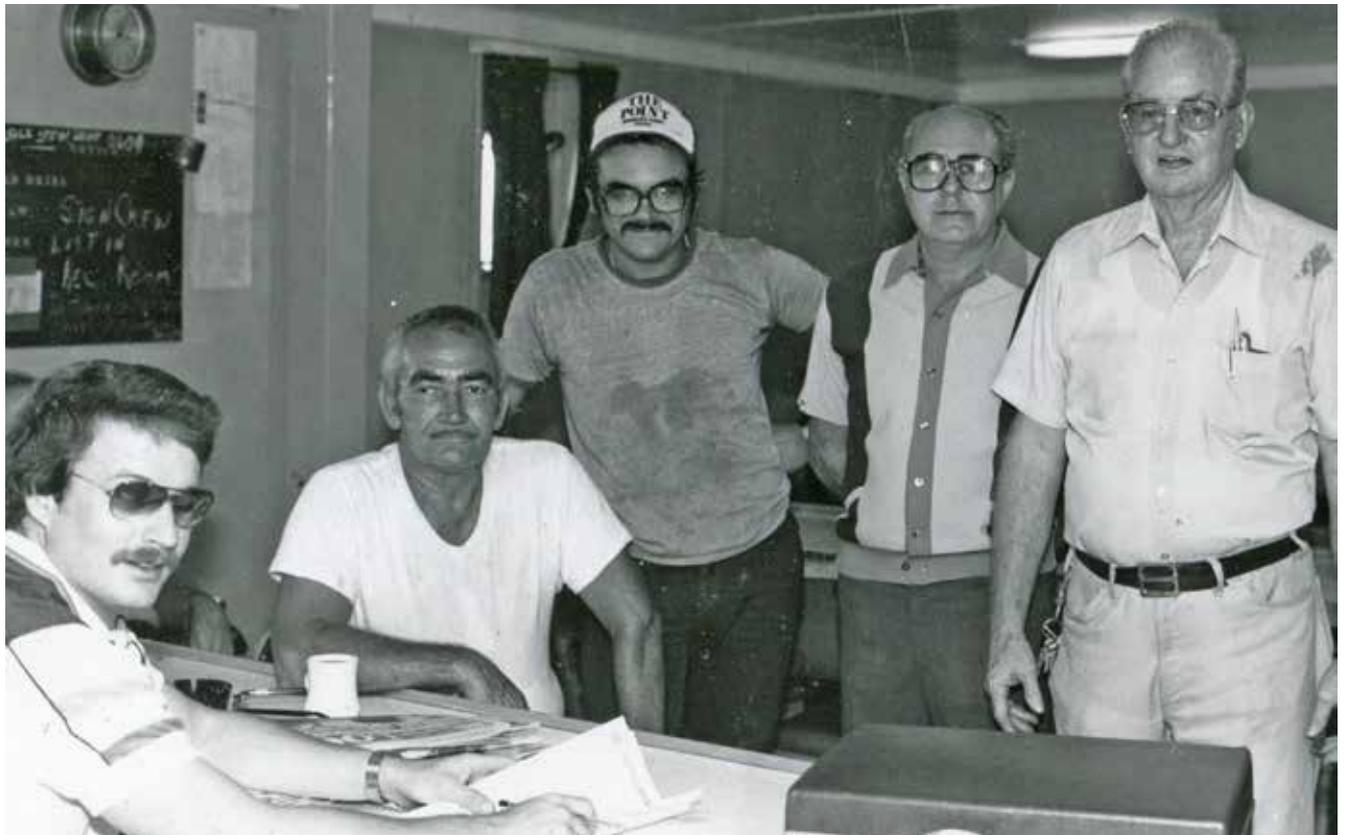
"I'm sort of at the end of my career, so I'm always looking to stay safe and put in another productive year. I'm getting close to retirement, so staying active and busy is always a plus. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with the union, it's been a great experience."



Julius Thomas
AB

"Want to work hard to support my son. I've had a good long career, I'm approaching 70, so I'm always looking to extend my career as safely as possible. Looking to stay happy, healthy and working."

Pic from the Past



This 1981 snapshot, taken aboard the *Monticello Victory*, includes (from left) SIU Port Agent Don Anderson and Seafarers Frank Smith, Luiz Perez, George Arpin, and Duke Hall. (Anderson, who passed away in 2025, later became an assistant vice president.)

2026 HEALTH & BENEFITS PLAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarships totaling \$132,000 are available under the 2026 Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan Scholarship Program. The grants are available to Seafarers and their dependents looking to continue their education. Allocations for each category will be as follows:

SEAFARERS SCHOLARSHIPS

Three scholarships designated for active Seafarers:

- One \$20,000 offering for a four-year course of study at an accredited college or university
- Two scholarships (\$6,000 each) for Seafarers interested in pursuing two-year courses of study at a community college or vocational school

DEPENDENTS SCHOLARSHIPS

Five scholarships designated for dependents:

- A total of five scholarships, each worth \$20,000, are being offered to dependents (spouses included) to attend four-year courses of study at accredited colleges or universities. Dependents and spouses of active as well as retired Seafarers may apply.

To take advantage of these opportunities, visit seafarers.org, go to the Benefits menu, open the "Core Plus and Core Benefits" section, scroll to "Applications and Forms," and select Scholarship Application.

February & March Membership Meetings

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

Meeting date changes due to holidays

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

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from December 15, 2025 - January 16, 2026.
 "Registered on the Beach" data is as of January 16, 2026.

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	18	4	1	5	4	0	1	27	6	2
Anchorage	1	1	0	3	1	0	0	3	1	0
Baltimore	3	3	1	3	4	0	4	4	3	1
Fort Lauderdale	14	10	4	11	4	1	4	22	19	10
Guam	2	2	0	3	1	0	1	3	1	1
Harvey	14	3	1	7	1	4	5	18	6	6
Honolulu	5	3	0	6	1	0	1	13	3	1
Houston	36	24	11	32	17	5	15	60	45	17
Jacksonville	32	28	12	28	22	7	24	65	41	13
Jersey City	26	10	4	16	10	2	13	35	11	5
Joliet	1	1	2	2	0	1	1	3	3	1
Mobile	3	1	5	6	1	3	4	10	3	6
Norfolk	26	19	5	7	6	2	7	35	22	10
Oakland	13	3	3	8	1	1	4	17	5	4
Philadelphia	4	2	1	4	2	1	3	3	2	1
Piney Point	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Puerto Rico	6	5	1	1	1	0	0	9	4	2
St. Louis	3	4	0	0	4	0	2	4	1	0
Tacoma	15	10	2	6	7	0	8	24	8	2
Wilmington	19	19	3	16	5	1	8	50	24	4
TOTAL	241	152	56	164	93	28	105	406	209	87
Engine Department										
Algonac	5	4	0	3	2	0	1	4	4	0
Anchorage	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0
Baltimore	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	3	3
Fort Lauderdale	9	11	2	7	3	2	3	11	16	2
Guam	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Harvey	2	0	2	1	1	0	1	2	2	2
Honolulu	5	3	2	4	1	0	2	7	4	2
Houston	12	8	5	8	9	3	7	14	10	6
Jacksonville	18	13	7	21	14	0	14	26	26	6
Jersey City	9	9	1	3	3	0	2	14	10	3
Joliet	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	3	1	0
Mobile	4	3	0	1	2	0	0	5	1	0
Norfolk	15	11	3	12	10	2	8	17	14	4
Oakland	1	1	0	3	3	1	3	3	0	2
Philadelphia	3	1	0	0	2	1	3	3	1	0
Piney Point	3	5	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	0
Puerto Rico	6	2	0	5	1	0	1	6	7	0
St. Louis	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	0	1
Tacoma	7	3	2	3	1	1	1	13	5	0
Wilmington	13	11	5	5	5	2	7	21	10	8
TOTAL	119	89	31	83	67	14	58	158	116	40
Steward Department										
Algonac	4	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	2	0
Anchorage	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Baltimore	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	0	0
Fort Lauderdale	5	4	2	5	2	2	3	12	6	1
Guam	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Harvey	2	4	0	2	2	0	1	5	2	0
Honolulu	9	0	1	2	1	0	0	10	1	1
Houston	15	12	1	9	5	0	1	26	13	2
Jacksonville	18	17	4	17	12	5	14	39	24	3
Jersey City	13	8	1	10	5	1	3	10	9	0
Joliet	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	3	0
Norfolk	18	14	6	11	10	3	8	26	15	6
Oakland	13	5	1	4	4	1	2	17	3	2
Philadelphia	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	0
Piney Point	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	0
Puerto Rico	3	3	1	4	1	0	1	8	9	2
St. Louis	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Tacoma	10	1	0	9	1	0	0	7	2	1
Wilmington	23	7	0	17	6	1	10	32	11	0
TOTAL	137	85	20	96	54	16	51	204	107	18
Entry Department										
Algonac	0	7	7	0	2	1	0	0	9	22
Anchorage	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
Baltimore	0	4	1	0	1	1	3	0	3	1
Fort Lauderdale	0	7	8	0	4	2	2	0	11	13
Guam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harvey	1	3	6	1	0	0	1	0	3	9
Honolulu	0	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	3	5
Houston	8	20	7	1	15	2	5	8	37	19
Jacksonville	0	31	41	1	22	21	4	0	52	75
Jersey City	0	17	14	1	11	3	2	0	21	24
Joliet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mobile	0	2	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	2
Norfolk	0	19	36	0	14	9	5	0	19	55
Oakland	0	6	7	0	2	5	0	0	7	10
Philadelphia	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Piney Point	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	1
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	0	5	3	1	6	3	4	1	8	6
Wilmington	1	13	22	1	10	8	4	4	19	36
TOTAL	10	137	157	6	93	56	34	13	198	279
GRAND TOTAL	507	463	264	349	307	114	248	781	630	424

Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. THANK YOU for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

DEEP SEA

SALEH ALSINAI

Brother Saleh Alsinai, 66, joined the union in 1991, initially sailing aboard the *Independence*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. Brother Alsinai most recently shipped on the *Midnight Sun* and lives in Tacoma, Washington.



BOBBY BELCHES

Brother Bobby Belches, 66, started sailing with the SIU in 1995 and first worked on the *Independence*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on numerous occasions. Brother Belches concluded his career aboard the *George III*. He resides in Pittsburg, California.



FRANK BERNER

Brother Frank Berner, 65, became a member of the union in 1978 when he sailed aboard the *Manhattan*. He sailed primarily in the engine department and also worked on shore gangs. Brother Berner upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He concluded his career working with Universal Maritime and makes his home in Humble, Texas.



FERNANDO CASTILLO

Brother Fernando Castillo, 65, signed on with the SIU in 2016. He first sailed aboard the *Global Sentinel* and worked in the steward department. Brother Castillo most recently shipped on the *Maersk Hartford*. He is a resident of Selma, North Carolina.



THOMAS CATANIA

Brother Thomas Catania, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 1979 and first sailed aboard the *Galloway*. He sailed in the deck department and also worked on shore gangs. Brother Catania upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He last sailed with Sealand and settled in Homosassa, Florida.



CHARLOTTE CHASTAIN

Sister Charlotte Chastain, 72, embarked on her career with the SIU in 2008 when she sailed on the *Horizon Trader*. She shipped in the steward department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on several occasions. Sister Chastain concluded her career aboard the *USNS Watkins*. She lives in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.



JULITO CRODUA

Brother Julito Crodua, 60, signed on with the union in 1988. He initially sailed aboard the *Independence* and worked in the steward department. Brother Crodua upgraded often at the Piney Point school. He most recently shipped on the *Pacific Tracker* and is a resident of Olympia, Washington.



STANLEY DARANDA

Brother Stanley Daranda, 65, started sailing with the SIU in 1981 when he shipped on the *HMI Petrochem*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on several occasions. Brother Daranda's final vessel was the *USNS Bellatrix*. He makes his home in New Orleans.



PAUL DIESNER

Brother Paul Diesner, 63, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1990. A steward department member, he first sailed aboard the *Libra*. Brother Diesner upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He most recently shipped on the *Horizon Anchorage* and is a Seattle resident.



LAWRENCE FRENCH

Brother Lawrence French, 65, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1990 and first worked aboard the *USNS Denebola*. He shipped in the engine department and concluded his career on the *Cape Jacob*. Brother French makes his home in Fort Myers, Florida.



JOSE GARCIA

Brother Jose Garcia, 66, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1994. He was a deck department member and first shipped on the *Independence*. Brother Garcia upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on several occasions. He last sailed on the *Overseas Cascade* and lives in Houston.



DONALD LAMB

Brother Donald Lamb, 65, joined the union in 1998 and first sailed aboard the *USNS Kane*. He was a member of the deck department and last shipped on the *Liberty Spirit*. Brother Lamb resides in Pensacola, Florida.



LARRY LEWIS

Brother Larry Lewis, 65, donned the SIU colors in 1979 when he sailed with Delta Queen Steamboat Company. He upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center and worked in both the deck and engine departments. Brother Lewis concluded his career aboard the *Robert E. Lee*. He resides in New Orleans.

MAXIMO LOTO

Brother Maximo Loto, 65, became an SIU member in 1993. He was an engine department member and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Loto's first vessel was the *Independence*; his last, the *USNS Bowditch*. He makes his home in San Leandro, California.

DEMETRIO MARCHIONE

Brother Demetrio Marchione, 65, started sailing with the union in 1980, initially working aboard the *Cove Engineer*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Marchione concluded his career aboard the *Maersk Chicago*. He lives in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



GEORGE MCANERN

Brother George McAnern, 67, joined the union in 2001. He first shipped on the *Cape Orlando* and sailed in the engine department. Brother McAnern upgraded at the union-affiliated Piney Point school on multiple occasions and last sailed aboard the *Sagamore*. He resides in San Francisco.

CONSTANCE MULLINGS

Sister Constance Mullings, 65, embarked on her career with the Seafarers in 2008. She first sailed aboard the *Pride of Aloha* and worked in the steward department. Sister Mullings upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. She last sailed aboard the *Brenton Reef* and makes her home in Leighton, Alabama.



JULIE ORTIZ

Brother Julie Ortiz, 65, signed on with the SIU in 1990 when he sailed on the *Independence*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Ortiz's final vessel was the *Horizon Reliance*. He resides in Honolulu.



GUSTAVO OSORIO

Brother Gustavo Osorio, 71, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1990. An engine department member, he first sailed aboard the *Independence*. Brother Osorio upgraded often at the Piney Point school. He most recently sailed aboard the *George II* and settled in Jacksonville, Florida.



GLENN QUITORIO

Brother Glenn Quitariorio, 65, donned the SIU colors in 1999. He worked as an engine department member, initially aboard the *Independence*. Brother Quitariorio upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He last shipped aboard the *Horizon Pacific* and settled in Spanaway, Washington.



RENE RAFER

Brother Rene Rafer, 65, started sailing with the union in 1989, initially working aboard the *Independence*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Rafer last shipped on the *George III* and makes his home in Mililani, Hawaii.



JUAN ROCHEZ

Brother Juan Rochez, 80, joined the SIU in 1991 and first shipped on the *USNS Pollux*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Rochez last shipped on the *Florida*. He resides in Crosby, Texas.



MIGUEL RUIZ

Brother Miguel Ruiz, 65, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1990. He first sailed aboard the *Independence* and worked in both the deck and engine departments. Brother Ruiz upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and concluded his career aboard the *Potomac Express*. He lives in the Bronx, New York.



EUGENE SCANDURRA

Brother Eugene Scandurra, 65, became a member of the union in 1990. He worked in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Scandurra's first vessel was the *Cape Ann*; his last, the *Sulphur Enterprise*. He resides in Las Vegas.



MARK SIMPSON

Brother Mark Simpson, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 2002 and first sailed aboard the *USNS Dahl*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and worked in the steward department. Brother Simpson concluded his career aboard the *Maersk Detroit*. He makes his home in The Villages, Florida.



NEIL SULLIVAN

Brother Neil Sullivan, 55, donned the SIU colors in 1992. He first sailed aboard the *USNS Audacious* and was a deck department member. Brother Sullivan upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on several occasions and last shipped aboard the *Dewayne T. Williams*. He lives in Panama City, Florida.



EDNA TORRES

Sister Edna Torres, 69, signed on with the union in 2001 and initially sailed aboard the *Maersk Maine*. She worked in the steward department and upgraded on numerous occasions at the union-affiliated Piney Point school. Sister Torres most recently shipped on the *APL Eagle* and is a resident of Brooklyn, New York.



VIRGIL TUDORACHE

Brother Virgil Tudorache, 76, started sailing with the SIU in 2001 when he shipped on the *Seabulk Mariner*. He sailed in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Tudorache concluded his career aboard the *Marjorie C*. He makes his home in Tacoma, Washington.



DION TURVY

Brother Dion Turvy, 65, joined the SIU in 1981 and first shipped on the *Zapata Patriot*. He worked in both the deck and engine departments. Brother Turvy last shipped on the *Perla Del Caribe* and settled in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



GREAT LAKES

WAYNE MOON

Brother Wayne Moon, 70, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1977. He worked in the deck department and was employed with Great Lakes Dredge & Dock for almost his entire career. Brother Moon resides in Cleveland, Ohio.

JAMES NIEHUS

Brother James Niehus, 62, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1991. A deck department member, he upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Niehus worked with Luedtke Engineering for the duration of his career. He lives in Highland, Indiana.

NICHOLAS VELKOFF

Brother Nicholas Velkoff, 65, became a member of the union in 1987. He worked in the deck department, initially aboard the *Richard J. Reiss*. Brother Velkoff concluded his career aboard the *American Mariner* and resides in Traverse City, Michigan.



INLAND

RICHARD BARNETT

Brother Richard Barnett, 63, signed on with the union in 1992. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded his skills on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Barnett was employed with Port Imperial Ferry for the duration of his career. He resides in Hopatcong, New Jersey.

KENNETH BLACK

Brother Kenneth Black, 64, donned the SIU colors in 2018. He was a deck department member and first worked with Crowley Towing and Transportation. Brother Black upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center in 2022. He concluded his career with Crowley Puerto Rico Services and settled in Bella Vista, California.

JOLLY COX

Brother Jolly Cox, 62, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1989, initially working aboard the *USNS Indomitable*. Brother Cox was a deck department member. He was last employed with Allied Transportation and makes his home in Kokomo, Mississippi.

SCOTTIE DUNCAN

Brother Scottie Duncan, 53, joined the SIU in 2009. A deck department member, he upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Duncan worked for Express Marine for his entire career. He resides in Leland, North Carolina.



GEOFFREY GAVIGAN

Brother Geoffrey Gavigan, 65, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 2007. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Gavigan worked with Allied Transportation for the duration of his career. He lives in Cape May, New Jersey.



MICHAEL HALLIBURTON

Brother Michael Halliburton, 69, signed on with the union in 1979. He initially worked with G&H Towing and sailed in the deck department. Brother Halliburton upgraded his skills on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. He was last employed by Sheridan Transportation and makes his home in La Porte, Texas.

JAMES MORGAN

Brother James Morgan, 63, became a member of the union in 1987, initially shipping with Delta Queen Steamboat Company. Brother Morgan worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He was last employed by OLS Transport and settled in St. Petersburg, Florida.

ROLAND NOBLE

Brother Roland Noble, 68, signed on with the union in 1976. He sailed in the deck department, first working with Allied Transportation. Brother Noble upgraded at the Paul Hall Center in 1979. He concluded his career with Zoella Shipholding and makes his home in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

CHARLES O'BRIEN

Brother Charles O'Brien, 69, donned the SIU colors in 1978 when he worked for Higman Barge Lines. He was a deck department member and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother O'Brien last shipped with McAllister Towing of Philadelphia. He calls Naples, Florida, home.

DANIEL PETRIE

Brother Daniel Petrie, 62, joined the SIU in 1989. He was employed with Port Imperial Ferry for the duration of his career. Brother Petrie lives in Weehawken, New Jersey.

DAVID PRICE

Brother David Price, 66, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1978, first working with Interstate Oil. Brother Price was a deck department member, and upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school in 1978. He last sailed with OSG Ship Management and resides in Haddon Heights, New Jersey.

RYAN RIGGINS

Brother Ryan Riggins, 62, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1983. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Riggins worked with Moran Towing of Texas for his entire career. He calls Lufkin, Texas, home.



GAWAIN SCHOUEST

Brother Gawain Schouest, 55, signed on with the SIU in 1991. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and shipped in the deck department. Brother Schouest worked with Crescent Towing and Salvage for almost his entire career. He makes his home in Harvey, Louisiana.

Final Departures

In solemn remembrance, we honor the legacies of these union members who have crossed the final bar. May they rest in peace.

DEEP SEA

OHENEBA FRANCIS ACKON

Pensioner Oheneba Francis Ackon, 67, died June 22. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 2005, initially sailing aboard the *Pride of America*. Brother Ackon worked in both the deck and engine departments. He concluded his career aboard the *Seabulk Challenge* and went on pension in 2022. Brother Ackon called Fairfield, Ohio, home.



RASHID ALI

Pensioner Rashid Ali, 79, passed away November 11. He became a member of the SIU in 1977 when he shipped on the *Cove Navigator*. Brother Ali sailed in the engine department. He last shipped aboard the *USNS Fisher* and became a pensioner in 2015. Brother Ali made his home in Floral Park, New York.



JANET BAIRD

Sister Janet Baird, 54, died November 13. She began her career with the Seafarers in 1991, initially sailing aboard the *Cape Clear*. Sister Baird was a deck department member and last sailed on the *Global Sentinel*. She lived in Summerfield, Florida.



RODERICK BRIGHT

Pensioner Roderick Bright, 67, passed away November 13. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 1978 when he sailed aboard the *Overseas Alaska*. Brother Bright worked in the steward department and concluded his career aboard the *Padre Island*. He went on pension in 2013 and resided in Chesapeake, Virginia.



GERARD COSTELLO

Brother Gerard Costello, 64, died November 3. He joined the SIU in 1998 and first shipped on the *USNS Gilliland*. Brother Costello sailed in the deck department and most recently shipped on the *ARC Independence*. He was a Baltimore resident.



DANNY DAVIS

Pensioner Danny Davis, 75, passed away November 14. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1972, initially working on the *Overseas Progress*. Brother Davis was a deck department member and concluded his career aboard the *Pride*. He began collecting his pension in 2009 and resided in Ringgold, Georgia.



ALEJO FABIA

Pensioner Alejo Fabia, 78, died October 1. He donned the SIU colors in 1989. A steward department member, Brother Fabia first shipped on the *Independence*. He last sailed aboard the *Horizon Enterprise* and became a pensioner in 2012. Brother Fabia lived in Hilo, Hawaii.



BRENT JOHNSON

Pensioner Brent Johnson, 85, passed away September 28. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1991 when he sailed aboard the *USNS Titan*. Brother Johnson was a deck department member. He most recently shipped on the *Horizon Kodiak* and became a pensioner in 2017. Brother Johnson resided in Bothell, Washington.



ROBERT LERMA

Pensioner Robert Lerma, 73, died September 25. He became a member of the SIU in 2005. Brother Lerma initially sailed aboard the *Maersk Alaska*. He worked in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Intrepid*. Brother Lerma went on pension in 2017 and settled in East Glacier Park, Montana.



MARK PATTERSON

Pensioner Mark Patterson, 80, passed away October 23. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 1969 when he sailed on the *Raymond Reiss*. Brother Patterson sailed in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Portland*. He became a pensioner in 2010 and made his home in Juneau, Alaska.



ABDULLA SALEH

Pensioner Abdulla Saleh, 86, has passed away. He joined the union in 1991 and initially sailed on the *Franklin J. Phillips*. Brother Saleh shipped in the steward department. He last sailed aboard the *Louis J. Hauge Jr.* and retired in 2003. Brother Saleh was a resident of Staten Island, New York.

LEWIS FARROW

Pensioner Lewis Farrow, 86, passed away October 21. He became a member of the Seafarers International Union in 1972. An engine department member, Brother Farrow was employed with Cape Fear Towing for the duration of his career. He became a pensioner in 2002 and lived in Wilmington, North Carolina.



WILLIAM HOLCOMB

Pensioner William Holcomb, 80, died October 22. He began his career with the SIU in 1967 when he shipped with Higman Barge Lines. Brother Holcomb worked in both the deck and engine departments. He last sailed with Seabulk Tankers before retiring in 2010. Brother Holcomb resided in West Monroe, Louisiana.



NMU

ARNALDO ARZU

Pensioner Arnaldo Arzu, 93, passed away November 9. A deck department member, Brother Arzu last shipped on the *Keystone Texas*. He retired in 2008 and lived in Marrero, Louisiana.

JEFFREY DAVID

Pensioner Jeffrey David, 86, died September 26. Brother David shipped in the deck department. He concluded his career aboard the *Cape Horn* and went on pension in 1999. Brother David resided in Ruther Glen, Virginia.

PRESCO NEW

Pensioner Presco New, 99, passed away November 8. Brother New began sailing in 1954 and worked in the steward department. He concluded his career aboard the *Cape Ducato* and retired in 1998. Brother New lived in Jacksonville, Florida.

JAMES POPE

Pensioner James Pope, 87, passed away November 8. Brother Pope last shipped aboard the *Thompson Lykes*. He went on pension in 2003 and settled in Grand Bay, Alabama.

ANDREW POTASH

Brother Andrew Potash, 66, died October 30. Brother Potash shipped in the engine department and last sailed aboard the *Cape Edmont*. He was a Denver resident.



INLAND

FREDERICK DUNMORE

Brother Frederick Dunmore, 47, died October 17. He donned the SIU colors in 2021, initially working aboard the *Pride of America*. Brother Dunmore was an engine department member. He most recently sailed on the *Dodge Island* and made his home in Houston.

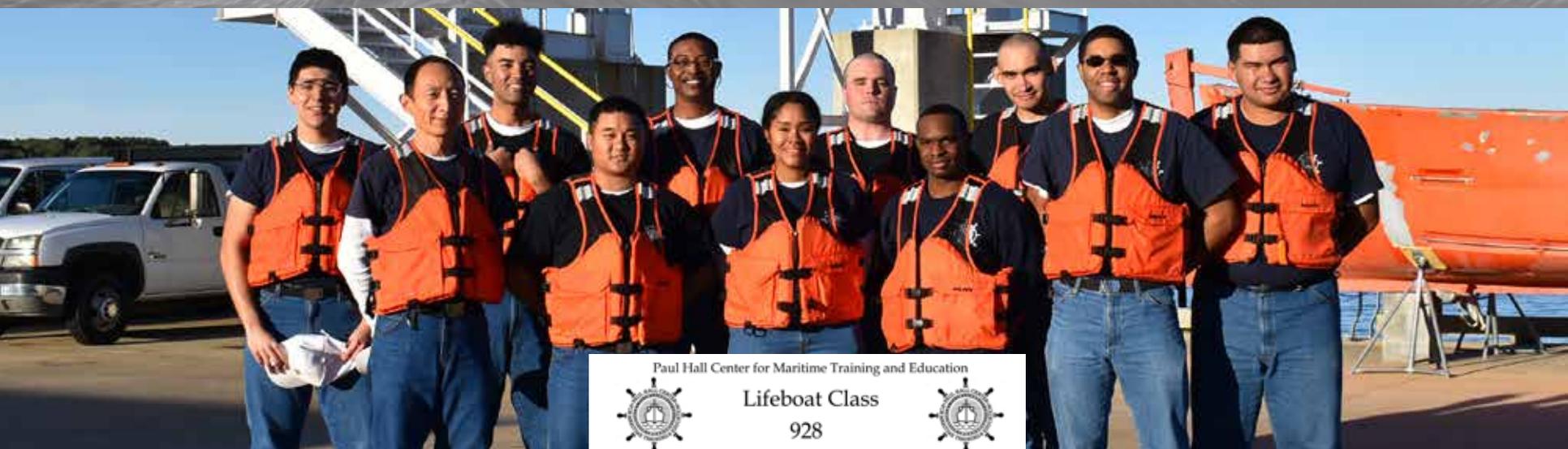


THEODORE SMITH

Pensioner Theodore Smith, 78, passed away October 27. Brother Smith sailed in the steward department. He last shipped aboard the *Wilson* before becoming a pensioner in 2006. Brother Smith lived in Houston.



Paul Hall Center Class Photos



APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #928 – Recently graduated (not all are pictured): Monique Banks, Adriel Cotto, Wesley Cueto, Mark Estigoy, Alexis Fultz, Leroyal Hester III, Naija Hoy, Sean Lavelle, Tong Lu, Alexie Pankratov, Desmond Percy, Alex Sanchez, Dakota Snow, Austin Sumner and Mikhaela Wilcox.



RFPNW – Graduated January 16 (among those pictured): Nicholas Amore, Joseph Breece II, Roland Evans II, Brandon Foreman, Erica Fu, Gustavo Garayua Lanza, Lawrence Gonzales II, Ivan Hassan, Kainoa MacKenzie, Monica Marquez-Realivazquez, Sean Mullen, Taiyo Nakata and Paul Schad.



JUNIOR ENGINEER (PLANT MAINTENANCE) – Graduated January 16 (not all are pictured): John Bayonne III, Jovita Carino, Nikita Featherston, Curtis Gilliard II, Admiral Haynes, Sierjohn Jove, Kamaria LaPread, Alexis Martinez, Chelan Peterson, Emmanuel Santos Capulong and Tavon Spence.



GOVERNMENT VESSELS (AND HELO FIREFIGHTING) – Graduated January 9 (not all are pictured): Mohsen Almohseni, Victoria Butler, Shemekia Donald, Joaquim Ganeto, Tiburcio Garcia, Mynisha George, Juan Guity Garcia, Talicia Jones, Norman Lucas II, Joseph Marino, Ishmael McNeal, Haider Mohamed, Haidara Mosa, Christian Oding, Michael Papaioannou, Connor Reason, Tracey Ward, Brandon Webb, David Williams, Gary Doggett and Ronald Evans.



WATER SURVIVAL (UPGRADERS) – Graduated January 9 (from left to right): Henry Brown and Daniel Gilbert.



VESSEL OPS – Graduated January 16 (among those pictured): Elias Carrier, Tariq Graham, James Giese, Sanita Hayes, Elijah Haynes, Darin Holmes, Christopher Johnston, Tyler Murray, Yoelyvn Rodriguez, Michal Spryszynski, Matthew Swift, Noel Vindua, Jordan Vonchampion, Michaelangelo Vonchampion, Christian Wailehua, Tereton Washington Jr., Joseph Wilde and Zkl Williams.

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SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

SIU Continues Philanthropic Tradition with Santa's Castle



Seafarers stepped up for the most recent Santa's Castle outreach, as evidenced by this collection of gifts initially staged at the hiring hall in Tacoma, Washington.

Once again, military families in the Tacoma, Washington region could breathe more easily this past holiday season knowing that SIU volunteers always come through to provide Christmas gifts and donations for service members in need.

For 17 years now, Seafarers in the Pacific Northwest have remained unwavering in their support of Santa's Castle, a year-long program run by local volunteers who collect monetary donations, toys, clothes and bikes to help active-duty military families provide gifts for their children.

Although the SIU did not host their annual luncheon this past December due to renovations taking place at the hiring hall, the drive was still a great success. "Even with the renovations, it did not stop members from contributing in the form of toys or making cash donations," said SIU Assistant Vice President Warren Asp. "I know I say this every year, but even through some years when we have challenges, like a pandemic, Tacoma members still show up and support our efforts. It really is amazing and I truly am thankful."

Retired Recertified Steward **Dennis Skretta**, who could not volunteer in person this time, is one of those who still makes it a point to donate every year. "I was in the (military) service myself, and I know that sometimes the pay isn't always that great, so any help you get is greatly appreciated," he said.

The 2025 drive lasted more than three-and-a-half months, and more than 100 SIU members made contributions. According to Asp's calculations, the SIU raised around \$7,500 in toys. "When we dropped the toys off at the site, the volunteers who were there were amazed at how much one organization raised for the program. Santa's Castle every year is so thankful for the SIU and our efforts," he stated. There are no plans to slow down in 2026, either, Asp added.

Santa's Castle serves children from birth to 17 years of age for all active-duty service members in Washington: Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and active National Guard and Reserves.

According to the Santa's Castle website, this past holiday season the organization helped 1,913 families, including 4,040 children, and gave a total of \$791,928 dollars' worth of toys, books, games, bikes and stocking stuffers to service members in the area.

The organization was born in 1994 when military spouses Diane Gravatt and Janet Gibson noticed that young service members in their Army community were quietly struggling to afford Christmas gifts for their children. They took it upon themselves to fix the problem. Armed with a small room filled with previously loved, secondhand treasures, they began working diligently to rehabilitate the items and give them new life. They scrubbed and reassembled bikes, erased the pencil marks in books, and washed and styled dolls' hair (and washed and ironed their clothes too!). Gravatt and Gibson donated the toys they restored to the other military families in need, thereby boosting holiday cheer and saving Christmas for many. News of their efforts spread to other volunteers who wanted to join in their mission, and the cause grew to become the Santa's Castle we know today.

Recertified Steward **Amanda Suncin** finds it particularly meaningful to continue this legacy of service and volunteer in support of people who might have trouble making ends meet during the holidays. "[Santa's Castle] focuses on helping soldiers and their families, not so much higher ups or admin. I'm thankful to be a part of a union that consistently volunteers to help an organization that prioritizes the 'little people' and I consider it an honor and a privilege to help each year," said Suncin.



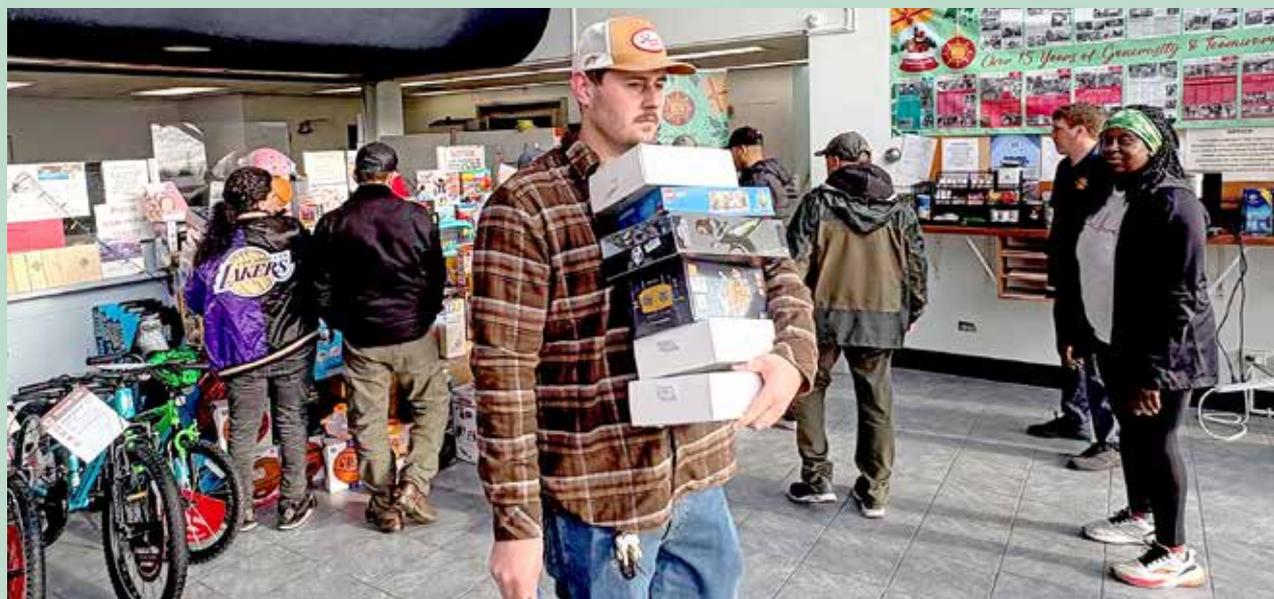
Safety Director Dennis Forsman



AB Patrick Wheat does his part to help with the project.



SIU Asst. VP Warren Asp



Oiler Quinton Palmer helps transport some of the donations.