

MARINE OFFICER

February—March 2005

Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (AFL-CIO)



VIRTUAL TRAINING FOR REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS



**MEBA SCHOOL TRANSFORMED
INTO FULL-SERVICE FACILITY...PAGE 14**





ON THE COVER:

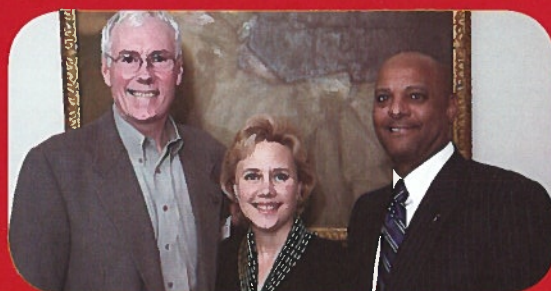
With MEBA's new bridge simulator training suite, the Calhoon School now offers the superior level of training for deck officers that engineers have typically enjoyed. Our engine officers can also take advantage of this exciting new technology. Instructor Scott Conway demonstrates the new equipment "aboard" a containership in New York harbor.



On February 23rd, members in our Houston Union hall issued a toast to our great Union upon the occasion of our 130th Anniversary. Left to right are member Kofi Mensah, applicant Jonathan Willett, Patrolman Donn Reamer, applicant Christian Bethlan, applicant Vasco St. Elmo Worrell, member A. Howard Townsend (obstructed view), member Kenneth Bunn, member Raymond Hall, member James Sutton, and member Michael Hainen raise a toast to the MEBA. Thanks to Branch Agent Lou Marciello and Dispatcher Erin Bertram for setting up the photo.



MEBA President Davis chats with a fine looking group of members at the dedication ceremony/reception for the Calhoon School's new auditorium and bridge simulator. From left to right are Tracy Redding, David Nolan, Pres. Davis, and Steve Olson.



Our new Gulf Coast V.P. John McCurdy networking with maritime friendly Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA). At right is MEBA Organizing Director Robert Martin.

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MARINE OFFICER

The Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA) is the nation's oldest maritime labor union established in 1875. We represent licensed engine and deck officers aboard seagoing vessels, ferries and government-contracted ships. Our members also serve on tugs and barges, cruise ships, Great Lakes vessels and in various capacities in the shoreside industries.

In times of military contingency, our members sail into war zones to deliver critical defense cargo to our fighting forces. MEBA's expertise and proven track record of readiness, safety and loyalty in answering America's call to action is unrivaled in the world.

Visit the MEBA website at www.meba.us

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130 YEARS IN AND STILL BLAZING AHEAD

This past February 23rd, we celebrated our Union's 130th birthday. It was back in 1875 that a collection of determined marine engineers united to form the MEBA. Early on, our founders battled for beneficial legislation to certify and license waterborne engineers for their safety and protection from faulty boilers and unsafe vessels. As members of the MEBA we are honored to recognize our great Union on this momentous 130th anniversary. The longevity of the MEBA stems from the inherent strength and cohesiveness of our members that few other labor unions can claim. We stand upon the shoulders of those who came before us and are privileged to build upon the proud foundation they established. As union members, we know that we must work together from a position of strength and unity so that the members who follow us can prosper from the efforts we put forward today.

We made a fast start in 2005 as details of the new Maritime Security Program were shored up. The Maritime Administration announced the awards for the new 60-ship MSP fleet and MEBA will again be well represented on this vital resource for national security. Our members will ship out on 47 of the 60 vessels in the new program when it picks up from the old MSP on October 1 of this year.

Being able to burst out of the gate quickly in 2005 has been an advantage as we have reached agreements on some significant contracts while holding fast to the principle that our members come first. In January, members ratified new agreements with Marine Transport Lines that govern five vessels including the L-9 Pacific-class ships as well as the MOTIVATOR. The new contract language extends our relationship with the company for another decade while locking in wage increases for our members for each year of the contracts with a boosted Money Purchase Benefit and increased medical contributions.

In February, MEBA members ratified a new 10-year deal that calls for wage and benefit increases with American Ship Management. The new agreement covers the C-10 and C-11 class vessels and includes an extension of the J-10 class vessel agreement until June 2006. In addition, MEBA teamed up with the American Radio Association (ARA) in its negotiations with the company. Evolving technology in commercial shipping has endangered shipboard jobs for the ARA. MEBA will assist our affiliate by an arrangement which allows ARA members to get their training at our excellent facility in Easton, MD as they work towards earning Third Assistant Engineer licenses.

We have made an historic leap at MEBA's training facility. We pushed our Union forward by expanding the capabilities of the MEBA School with the February dedication of the new ship

bridge simulators and the Newberry Auditorium. The physical structure is a milestone in itself, but the significance is even greater than the technology and innovation contained in the simulators and the lecture hall. The message to our members, to our contracted companies, to the government, and to our competition is that MEBA is planning for the future. We are deliberately laying the foundation that allows us to build upon our successes as we use education and training as a cornerstone of that foundation. The maritime industry is evolving and it is critical that maritime labor and the MEBA remain at the leading edge. The simulators installed at our School are designed to train our officers for the skills needed today as well as for the challenges of tomorrow. With the capability to be upgraded, it allows the flexibility needed to fit the many tasks that we may face in the future. With the right software, we can simulate vessel handling training, crisis management scenarios, oil spill response, firefighting, and even land-based exercises such as port security. We're ensuring that as the world changes, so do we. With the introduction of the bridge simulator, we are now able to offer as inclusive and excellent a training program for our deck officers as we have for our engineers.

MEBA's members constantly put their education to work. In addition to providing crewing to the U.S. commercial maritime sector, MEBA merchant mariners continue to prove why we are the nation's "Fourth Arm of Defense." We do this by supplying our war fighters with the equipment and supplies necessary to sustain their mission in Iraq and Afghanistan. To date more than 70 million square feet of combat cargo and equipment has been shipped by Military Sealift Command vessels to Iraq and MEBA members are proud of their part in this effort.

Today MEBA carries on the work that our founders began 130 years ago in Cleveland, Ohio. Until recently MEBA only had offices on the East, Gulf, and West coast but now I can proudly say that MEBA once again has an office in Cleveland on the Great Lakes where it all began in 1875. This is a direct result of our recent contract with Interlake Steamship whose ships sail the Great Lakes. I envision that the MEBA will continue to expand and improve as we move forward towards our next 130 years. If our founders could see us today I am sure they would be amazed and extremely proud that we have tread so far on the trail they blazed so many years ago. ■

FRATERNALLY,

Ron Davis

RON DAVIS



Crackdown: On Oily Water Separators

In recent months, the federal government has stepped up their hardnosed pursuit of vessel owners and operators as well as shipboard personnel who they believe are contributing to the violation of oil pollution laws. American-flag vessels have come under close scrutiny and all indications are that they will continue to be targeted.

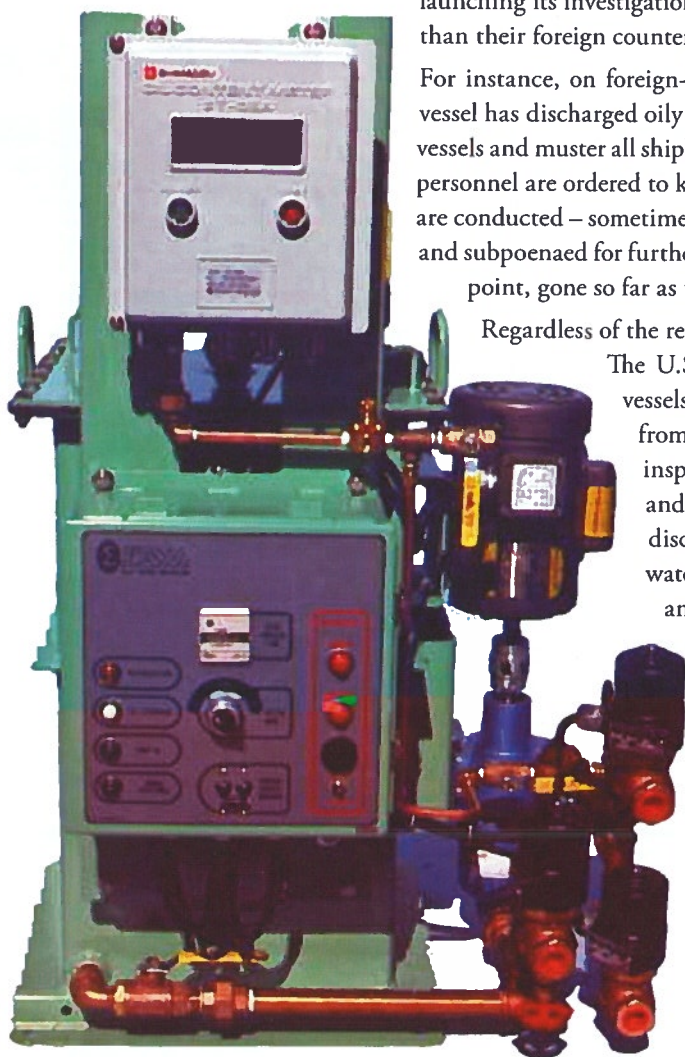
Please be advised that all MEBA members must immediately take extra special care to ensure that the oily water separator (OWS) aboard your vessel is performing properly. If there is even the slightest doubt that an OWS is not, in fact, functioning correctly you must not run that piece of equipment.

To further stress, you must not allow any oily water to be pumped over the side of the vessel. All slops and bilges need to be pumped into holding tanks before being transferred to a shoreside facility. The U.S. Coast Guard is coming down hard on vessel owners, operators and managers – as well as licensed officers. The government is showing little differentiation between U.S.-flag and foreign-flag vessels when launching its investigations. American officers and crew are receiving only slightly better treatment than their foreign counterparts.

For instance, on foreign-flag ships, when the government has reason to believe that a particular vessel has discharged oily water over the side, U.S. investigators have been known to board targeted vessels and muster all shipboard personnel onto the mess deck. Once in the mess deck, the shipboard personnel are ordered to kneel on the deck with their hands behind their heads while interrogations are conducted – sometimes for hours on end. At times, entire crews are arrested, confined to the ship and subpoenaed for further legal proceedings. With U.S.-flag vessels, the government has not, at this point, gone so far as to order shipboard personnel to endure the hours-long kneel down.

Regardless of the registry of the vessel, interrogation methods are following a certain pattern. The U.S. Coast Guard and federal inspectors board ships (including U.S.-flag vessels) and make a beeline for the engine room. The Chief Engineer is separated from the First Assistant Engineer and kept apart, at times for hours. Then, inspectors break the discharge side of the oily water separator three-way-valve and disconnect the overboard discharge line at the skin valve. While they are disconnecting the ends, they hold a container under the pipes looking for oily water to spill out of the line. If no oily water spills out, they will take a rag and wipe the inside of the pipe in search of oily residue. Should oily water or oily residue be discovered, the inspectors launch into an interrogation process which customarily concludes with subpoenas being issued on that day or the next business day. Some of these inspectors are so aggressive that they confiscate every logbook, work book and any scrap of paper they think is relevant.

Remember, it is better to be safe than sorry. We present this notice for the benefit of our members and contracted companies. The criminal and civil penalties that could arise out of these investigations are far more expensive than the cost of containing slops aboard the ship for their ultimate transfer to a shoreside facility. ■



An oily water separator. U.S.-flagships are now being subjected to rigorous Coast Guard inspections regarding this particular device.



Navy Taps Skills of Mariners in Special Reserve Unit

Prior to the establishment of a Naval Reserve force, experienced seagoing officers that were needed in time of war for service in the Navy, were drawn from the Merchant Marine. When the conflict ended, those officers returned to the commercial trades as merchant mariners in order to maintain their seagoing skills. While this relationship has evolved over the years, the need for a pool of merchant mariners to assist the U.S. Navy during times of conflict has not.

Today the mission of the Merchant Marine Naval Reserve is one of logistical support. Our officers assist the Maritime Administration and the Military Sealift Command in getting the needed supplies to the war fighters. This may require that we answer our Union's call to serve aboard vessels as ships' officers, work with headquarters units around the country, or be forward-deployed with MSC to various places around the globe. Our skills as vessel operators, both deck and engineering, is what the Navy truly values about us. These skills are of such importance to the Navy, that we are constantly encouraged to do whatever it takes to maintain our licenses, our STCW certificates, and our continued training.

The Union also values your skill sets, both deck and engineering. The current mission of the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School is to expose our membership to the latest training and technology in the marine field. There is an opportunity today for those union members who are also Merchant Marine Naval Reserve officers to fulfill two requirements at the same time. The Naval Reserve requires you to perform two weeks of active duty for training per year -- you can take a course at the School on ADT orders from the Navy. The Navy would prefer that you take an STCW required course, but will allow you to take any course that is professionally enhancing.

There is a way to earn twelve Navy retirement points, and complete a course that is required by either the Horizon Lines or Maersk-SeaLand training requirements. In order to get ADT orders for a course at the School you should apply for that course early on using the normal application process. Once confirmed into the course, apply to the Navy for ADT orders using the NOWS program. You will need to start the application process at least sixty days in advance in order to get confirmed by the School, and have orders cut by the Navy. When on orders to the School from the Navy you are NOT eligible for transportation or stipend from the School, since the Navy is paying for both already.

If you decide that you would rather not do active duty orders at the School, it does not mean that you cannot get points for courses that you take. You can always get up to five professional enhancement points per year (non STCW courses) or two points per day for STCW courses taken at the School. You may also apply for IPA orders to MMROCH 0206 on the Merchant Marine Naval Reserve Web Site, and get two points per day for any course taken at the School, up to a total of thirty five points per year. When applying for IPA orders, check the MMROCH 0206 information on the web site first then fill out the IPA application and send it to New Orleans. You should allow at least two weeks for them to get your IPA orders to you.

Questions concerning the process of getting orders to the School may be directed to YN1 Stovall at the Merchant Marine Naval Reserve Program Office at 1-800-535-0852 or to Barry Van Vechten at the School at 410-822-9600 x315. ■



MEBA Instructor and Merchant Marine Naval Officer Barry Van Vechten (left) provided this article for the Marine Officer. He is seen here with Captain Rodney G. McFadden, USNR (MMR).



The insignia depicted above is the warfare designator of the Merchant Marine Naval Reserve Program. For those of you who are unaware of its history, this particular eagle is the same as the one carved into the tariff rail of the frigate USS CONSTITUTION. It represents a relationship between the U.S. Merchant Marine and the U.S. Navy that goes back even further than that venerable old ship.



2005 Final Lump Sum Factors and Final Section 415 Limits

Update: The GATT Interest rate for December was 4.86%.

As previously reported, the Pension Funding Equity Act of 2004 (PFEA) has changed the way the law limits the size of lump sums under Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code. This provision is effective for lump sums paid in 2005. The Plan's Actuary has advised that the GATT interest rates for August, September, October, November and December were 5.06%, 4.90%, 4.86%, 4.89% and 4.86% respectively. The Pension Plan's 2005 lump sum factors will be based on the rate of 4.86%. Based on this interest rate, for example, the lump sum factor for a 57 year old would be \$171.23 for 2005.

However, the statutory limit on a lump sum payable under Section 415 must be calculated based upon 5 1/2%, the rate mandated by the PFEA. This means that, as required by law, lump sums will be limited to a smaller value than that obtained by multiplying the Section 415 limited annuity by the Pension Plan's 2005 lump sum factor. For example, the Section 415 annuity limit at age 62 is \$170,000 per year, the annuity limit at age 57 is \$116,859 per year, and, therefore, the lump sum benefit would be \$1,667,481. Under PFEA, the annuity limit would still be \$116,859 per year, but the Pension Plan's lump sum would be limited to \$1,562,904, a reduction of \$104,577. This means that those members whose annuities are limited by Section 415 will have their lump sums cut back even further in 2005, and members whose annuities are approaching the limit, may be reduced in 2005.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Plan Office.

LATEST RETIREES

Clinton S. Anderson	Edward F. Davis	Eddie E. Jordan	Daniel S. Robey
Carl M. Croce Jr.	Carl T. Delen	John S. Klumpp	Richard J. Rockwood
Roger L. Aiken	Mark W. Dicke	Martin E. Lane	William N. Rohrer
Kell Aursland	Anthony F. Dilabio	Mark A. Laundrie	Michael C. Romano
Curt Begley	George A. Dupee	Thomas M. Leahy	Richard H. Rosenthal
Robert E. Benson	David C. Forbes Jr.	Barry R. Manning	Charles J. Seebach.
Richard C. Brown	Joseph B. Gates	Robert A. Martin	Robert D. Smallwood
Douglas E. Bull, Jr.	John T. Hall	Davis S. McFarland	William T. Smith III
David L. Carmody	Arthur W. Hemmings	Christian J. Miller	Jack A. Smith
Ronald Carrington	John D. Holland	Gary M. Moeykens	Edward B. Stapp
Louis M. Champa, Sr.	Curtis V.H. Howard	Michael K. Morrissey	Patrick M. Stevens
Jeffrey L. Conley	Kathleen A. Hunt	James A. Myers	Frederic Stoddard
Gilbert A. Conrey	Sterling H. Jackson	Arthur A. Newberry	Franklin D. Tobey
William E. Creel	Thomas A. Jensen	Robert T. Onstot	Brian H. Yelland
Timothy S. Dady	Warren T. Jones	John J. Piazza, Jr.	

The final Lump Sum Factors based on the 2005 GATT interest rate of 4.86% and the final annual limits under IRS Section 415 for calendar year 2005 are:

Age Nearest Retirement	2005 Final Lump Sum Factor per \$1,000 of Monthly Benefit	2005 Annual Annuity 415 Limit	2005 Lump Sum 415 Limit	2005 Annual Annuity Equivalent of 2005 Lump Sum 415 Limit
80	83.50	603,275	4,066,548.62	584,414.17
79	87.51	548,346	3,868,715.82	530,506.11
78	91.60	499,103	3,680,453.10	482,155.43
77	95.74	454,927	3,501,304.15	438,851.58
76	99.92	415,270	3,330,834.61	400,020.17
75	104.08	379,783	3,168,633.35	365,330.52
74	108.23	347,965	3,014,309.12	334,211.49
73	112.33	319,388	2,867,487.68	306,328.25
72	116.40	293,657	2,727,811.04	281,217.63
71	120.42	270,421	2,594,936.57	258,588.60
70	124.37	249,437	2,468,537.77	238,180.05
69	128.25	230,457	2,348,303.69	219,724.32
68	132.06	213,222	2,233,936.84	202,992.90
67	135.81	197,526	2,125,152.66	187,775.80
66	139.53	183,169	2,021,678.93	173,870.47
65	143.22	170,000	1,923,255.65	161,144.17
64	146.89	170,000	1,969,674.25	160,910.14
63	150.52	170,000	2,015,541.72	160,686.29
62	154.13	170,000	2,060,835.10	160,449.11
61	157.67	157,216	1,947,005.25	148,183.31
60	161.17	145,642	1,841,050.76	137,076.44
59	164.59	135,136	1,742,131.98	127,016.12
58	167.95	125,577	1,649,591.62	117,863.05
57	171.23	116,859	1,562,904.44	109,530.18
56	174.43	108,891	1,481,546.05	101,923.71
55	177.54	101,593	1,405,025.89	94,966.26
54	180.56	94,895	1,332,932.00	88,586.53
53	183.48	88,736	1,264,912.10	82,728.06
52	186.30	83,061	1,200,702.94	77,339.96
51	189.04	77,824	1,140,039.77	72,368.16
50	191.67	72,982	1,082,669.81	67,783.37
49	N/A	68,500	N/A	N/A
48	N/A	64,344	N/A	N/A
47	N/A	60,485	N/A	N/A
46	N/A	56,897	N/A	N/A
45	N/A	53,557	N/A	N/A
44	N/A	50,444	N/A	N/A
43	N/A	47,540	N/A	N/A
42	N/A	44,827	N/A	N/A
41	N/A	42,290	N/A	N/A
40	N/A	39,917	N/A	N/A
39	N/A	37,693	N/A	N/A
38	N/A	35,609	N/A	N/A
37	N/A	33,653	N/A	N/A
36	N/A	31,818	N/A	N/A
35	N/A	30,093	N/A	N/A



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AMC PERSPECTIVE

I would like to begin this column by extending sincere congratulations to MEBA on its strikingly impressive auditorium and ships bridge training system at the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School. I was privileged to be in attendance at the dedication ceremony held on February 4th at the School. It was an historic and majestic celebration -- and an event in which President Ron Davis, School Director Joyce Matthews, the school faculty, MEBA officials and members can take great pride.

These new state-of-the-art facilities, the most advanced in the Nation, show MEBA's confidence in the future of the Merchant Marine and its commitment to its members. As we all know, the maritime industry is one of the most globally competitive industries and its technology is constantly changing. Sitting still, without always trying to move forward, simply is not an option. The MEBA leadership and the School's leadership know this and they have been guided by what this demands.

When the MEBA Engineering School opened in 1966 in what was the old Southern Hotel in downtown Baltimore, the focus was on training young people with hopes to become Third Assistant Engineers. That facility at the corner of Light and Redwood Streets was transformed from a hotel into a factory of sorts -- training new members in record numbers to serve on vessels delivering military supplies and equipment for the Vietnam War.

As the school expanded its operations to the Easton, Maryland campus, eventually moving all training activities to Easton, the mission of the school changed as well -- responding to the needs of its members and contracted companies during an era that saw the rapid expansion of containerized cargo, the introduction of slow-speed diesel propulsion, and a myriad of new marine regulations affecting health, safety, and the environment. The Newberry Auditorium and the simulator suite reflect a further evolution of the MEBA School, thanks to the initiative, energy, and vision of President Davis and his team. These additions will help ensure that highly skilled and trained MEBA professionals continue to be the best in the business.

However, the School, the Newberry Auditorium, and the SBT system are more than MEBA assets or industry assets. They are national assets. And together with every MEBA member, they are part of an even bigger national asset -- the U.S. Merchant Marine.

More than at any time since the Second World War, the world situation has made clear just how important the Merchant Marine is. Today, with global terrorism, the on-going War on Terror itself, uncertain allies, ethnic and religious divisions, and America's unique worldwide responsibilities and challenges, our Nation simply must have vessels and crews it can count on -- flying the Stars and Stripes.

Twenty-five years ago, our Merchant Marine was not fully integrated into military planning. Today it is. Whether it is U.S. Government or commercial sealift, America's ability to project power now depends on the Merchant Marine.

This is not just theoretical. MEBA members are proving every day in the War in Iraq that our national leaders' confidence in the Merchant Marine has not been misplaced. Patriotism may be "old-fashioned" to some -- but not to the U.S. Merchant Marine, be it labor or management. And what MEBA members do, and the patriotism with which they do it, is not lost in Washington. When we work with Members of Congress and officials in the Executive Branch, we do not have to remind them of the mariners' role back in the days of World War II, which ended before most of today's lawmakers were even born. It is right there now, every day before their eyes.

Today, our military leaders are the first to admit that they cannot fight a war without our Merchant Marine and the highly skilled and trained MEBA professionals who stand ready to serve our country in peacetime and in war. Make no mistake about it -- the Calhoon School is an absolutely vital part of it.

Before I close out this column, I want to pay special tribute to Captain William Schubert, who resigned as U.S. Maritime Administrator in mid-February after nearly four years of highly respected service to our Nation. Bill Schubert was committed to bringing more ships under the U.S. flag and increasing the maritime labor force. This commitment paid off results. More than a dozen new ocean-going vessels were put under U.S. registry on his watch and added to the fleet.

Shortly before Captain Schubert departed Washington for his home in Houston, Texas, our industry bid him a fond farewell, and presented him with a Waterford crystal anchor as a parting gift. The crystal anchor was given to him, not just as a nautical symbol because anchors are associated with mariners, navigation, and ships, and Bill Schubert himself was a merchant marine officer. We thought the anchor would be particularly appropriate because Bill Schubert has been MARAD's anchor -- strong, steady, stable, and rock solid. His firm belief in the importance of our industry and all the jobs in it was unwavering. President Ron Davis and I will miss his leadership greatly. ■

Portions of this column were adapted from remarks delivered on February 4, 2005, at the dedication ceremony of the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School's Newberry Auditorium and Ships Bridge Training System.

FOREIGN SEAFARERS OF THE THIRD WORLD

By Tim Akpinar



The NEW CARISSA, a Panamanian-flagged tanker, is one of the more infamous examples of an FOC rustbucket. The ship coughed up 70,000 gallons of oil in Coos Bay, Oregon in 1999.

Seafarers from third world nations live and toil under conditions that are in stark contrast to those of U.S. flag vessels. Too often, these men and women are paid pathetic wages, are given deplorable living quarters and food and have no legal protections such as the Jones Act in the event of an injury. These seafarers are highly susceptible to being stranded without pay in foreign ports if their vessel comes under arrest, or if their vessel's owner becomes insolvent.

Going to sea is inherently hazardous and lonely under the best of conditions. But seafarers that come from the ranks of the third world contend with further adversity in the way of inadequate or poor quality food, abusive supervision, unsanitary living quarters, poorly lit engineering space housing, exposed equipment, rusted and corroded catwalks and ladders, unregulated work schedules, and the absence of systems for bringing grievances. Some crews are encouraged to fish, not as light-hearted recreation to fill the off-watch shifts, but as a necessity of procuring a palatable meal. They have very little access to voice their problems other than the compassionate ears of chaplains that visit their vessels in port.

Many of these seafarers have no basic provisions for "maintenance and cure," as provided by the Jones Act. Maintenance is the safety net that pays a seaman's living expenses during a period of disability until they are able to return to work. Cure pays an injured seaman's hospital expenses until they reach maximum medical improvement.

Because employment contracts may stipulate arbitration in their home country as the sole venue for adjudicating an injury, the scale of compensation for crippling injuries can be unconscionably low. In the event of death, the seaman's family can effectively be left with the loss of their breadwinner, as they do not enjoy the protection of legislation such as the Death on the High Seas Act. The notion of sending a crippled man back to his home country to fend for himself strikes us as a terrible cruelty...but that notion is no stranger to these seafarers.

A factor that escalates such misery to a level of tragedy is that the home countries of these seafarers teem with ranks of replacements that put themselves in line to earn a berth on such vessels knowing that they could endure hardship or abuse. They come from India, Eastern Europe, the Philippines, China, and other parts of the world where the poor desperately need work.

And the problem is not helped by the international nature of maritime commerce. As a ship may have owners in one country, a flag of registry in another nation, and be chartered to interests in yet another country, the circuitous journey of establishing responsibility for an injustice is fraught with frustration, and sadly enough, it is actually designed to be that way.

The multinational aspect is also apparent from the fact that officers will come from one nation and their rates from a continent seven time zones away. So while the suffering of these seafarers can be viewed as a problem in itself, it can also be seen as a symptom of something larger...a symptom of the way it has become acceptable to provide labor for the needs of an ever globalizing world economy. ■

On the following page, MEBA's International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Inspector Tony Sasso discusses how the ITF is combating this rampant abuse aboard FOC vessels.

Tim Akpinar, a SUNY Maritime graduate ('81) in marine engineering, has spent the last decade in his private law practice in Little Neck, New York at the western end of Long Island Sound. He focuses on litigation and arbitration of injury and complex property cases. Tim is a member of the Maritime Law Association of the United States, Association of Trial Lawyers of America and The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers.

CONTINUING THE FIGHT

The maritime industry is often said to be the world's first truly globalized industry. As such, it has had a long time to develop some unscrupulous practices. The Flag of Convenience system is probably the best (or worst) example of this. In spite of over 50 years of trying to eliminate the FOC system, it has the resilience of a nasty parasite.

The MEBA, in unison with our sister maritime unions and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), continues the fight against FOCs. Today the ITF FOC Campaign unites 190 seafarers' unions in 91 countries. The campaign involves officials from both seafarers' and dockers' unions, specially trained inspectors, and a full staff of campaign workers at ITF's London headquarters. Resources for the campaign at the political level are the International Labor Organization, the International Maritime Organization, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, as well as lobbying efforts with national governments, such as the MEBA's efforts on Capitol Hill. On the industrial side, the campaign works with employers who are willing to do the right thing. Conversely, the campaign targets bad companies by politically isolating them or, when necessary, by pursuing them in court. Court cases and other tactics have won millions of dollars in back-wage claims, as well as compensation for death or injury from unsafe working conditions and practices. The ITF has even created a blacklist of ship operators and crewing agents who threaten seafarers bold enough to stand up for their rights.



FOC mariners often endure a life of squalor onboard ship in order to eke out a living.

the world's best shipping companies sometime employ FOCs, but it is the unscrupulous owners of unsafe vessels – and the corrupt owners who refuse to recognize the legitimate rights of working mariners – who are the primary focus of the campaign.

The day-to-day activities of the campaign are carried out by the worldwide inspectorate, such as our own MEBA/ITF inspector, Tony Sasso. He and other inspectors work with vessel crews, local unions, and port-state control authorities to ensure decent conditions on the ships they inspect. To enforce seafarers' rights, inspectors are often called upon to take action, up to and including legal action, to detain a vessel. The inspectorate is also being drawn more and more into the issues of port security.

These activities are funded through the Seafarers' International Assistance Welfare and Protection Fund, otherwise known as the Welfare Fund. The Welfare Fund is financed from contributions made by ship owners who sign ITF-approved agreements. This fund, in turn,

provides income to the Seafarers' Trust, a charitable organization that assists with projects such as seafarers' centers around the world.

FOCs now account for roughly half of the world's shipping. That's approximately 23,000 ships steaming throughout the world. On these

ships, there are 600,000 seafarers in the FOC system, and you can bet that a substantial percentage of them are suffering from unpaid wages or sailing on substandard ships. You know the vulnerability of your workplace. Imagine a third-world version where the conditions are not only less than adequate, but sometimes appalling, and where your rights are non-existent. Through ITF and unions such as the MEBA, this plight continues to become more visible. The plight of these seafarers is receiving attention for humanitarian reasons, but now it is also being addressed because of other unrelated circumstances.



ITF Inspector Tony Sasso (second from left) contributed this article to the Marine Officer. Left to right is MEBA Executive V.P. Bud Jacque who serves as Vice Chair of the North America Seafarers Section of the ITF, MEBA's ITF Inspector Tony Sasso, MEBA President Ron Davis and Stephen Cotton who is Secretary of the ITF Special Seafarers' Department.



Conditions aboard FOC vessels are a world away from those on U.S. flagships.

The events of 9/11 brought a heightened awareness of how the FOC system can conceal ownership of vessels engaged in everything from drug trade to terrorism. Beginning as early as June 2002, ITF and others have testified before the U.S. Congress about the implications of the FOC system on our security. These concerns have dominated meetings from Capitol Hill to Europe and beyond. The ITF has been successful in getting seafarers' rights recognized in the IMO's International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. This is significant because it allows access for welfare and labor representatives to be included in port security plans. The result of these efforts is a safer maritime industry.

In this globalized and dangerous industry, the only realistic possibility for defining and enforcing minimum standards, as well as for assuring the transparency of ownership that is vital for enhanced security, lies in international regulation. To achieve this will take all the stakeholders' active involvement. That means your union, as well as the other ITF unions, must remain vigilant and active at all levels. As long as the FOC system is allowed to grow, true security and decent working conditions remain just out of our reach. ■



IMMINENT DANGER PAY RATE PERMANENTLY INCREASED

The Department of Defense has announced that it has made the Imminent Danger Pay (IDP) rate of \$225 per month permanent.

More information about IDP is available at this website:
www.dod.mil/comptroller/fmr/07a/07A10.pdf.



Girl power! Some influential company got together at the MEBA HQ holiday party. Left to right are MEBA Govt. Fleets Rep. Randi Ciszewski, Calhoon School Director Joyce Matthews, AMC Pres. Gloria Tosi, Sabina Simonson (wife of Instructor

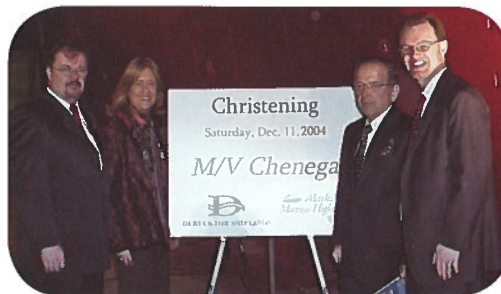
Rick), Sandy Keefe (wife of ACVP Don), Iris Vacca (wife of Balt. Dispatcher Carlo), Lois Davis (wife of Pres. Ron), Labor Secretary Elaine Chao and Amy Doyle (wife of Legal Rep. Bill).

DRBA APPROVES 3-YEAR DEAL FOR CAPE MAY-LEWES FERRY

The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) Commission have made official our new, three-year collective bargaining agreement covering our members aboard the Cape May-Lewes Ferry system. MEBA members had already ratified the agreement but the assent of the DRBA Commissioners was necessary before the agreement could take hold. The new deal, which provides for an 11% increase in wages during the contract term, will expire on June 30, 2007. The contract also contains a significant modification for training and education of bargaining unit employees. MEBA will develop training and coursework relevant to the Cape May-Lewes Ferry operation at the Calhoon MEBA School in Easton, Maryland. Each MEBA employee will be paid to attend at least one week of relevant training in each calendar year.

MEBA MOURNS THE PASSING OF KEVIN BROWNE

MEBA was saddened to learn of the death of Kevin Browne, Vice-President of MEBA affiliate National Federation of Public and Private Employees (NFOPAPE). Kevin, who was also a delegate for the Broward County AFL-CIO as well as a series of committees and task forces, was only 50 years old. He dedicated a great deal of his life to the labor movement and was a committed union member. MEBA President Ron Davis along with our Jacksonville Representative Tom Suneson paid their respects at Kevin Browne's funeral in December. Browne is survived by many friends and family.



MEBA helped welcome the Alaska Marine Highway System's newest fast ferry, the M/V CHENEGA, at its christening in December. At

Connecticut's Derecktor shipyard, are MEBA's Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe, Mrs. Catherine Stevens (christened vessel), Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) and MEBA's Govt. Affairs Director David Tubman.

TERMS REACHED ON NEW CONTRACT WITH MTL

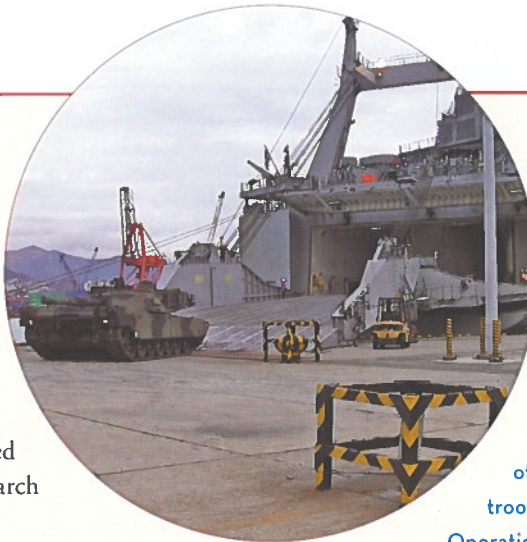
Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe nailed down a pair of new 10-year contracts with Marine Transport Lines covering the four diesel-engine Pacific-class "L-9" vessels as well as the LYKES MOTIVATOR. The four L-9's include the LYKES NAVIGATOR, LYKES EXPLORER, LYKES LIBERATOR and the LYKES DISCOVERER. Vice President Keefe and MTL's Tom Murphy hammered out terms of the new agreements which include wage increases for each year of the two contracts, increased Medical and Money Purchase Benefit as well as more contributions for the American Maritime Congress, Joint Employment Committee and Training funds. Both contracts also benefited from the inclusion of non-watch allowance and more vacation days were added into the MOTIVATOR contract. The L-9 contract would have expired in June of 2005. The old MOTIVATOR deal was good until 2008 before it was reopened and subsequently reworked for our members serving under the agreement. Don Keefe thanks New Orleans Patrolman Moose Mallini as well as members working under the contract for their input.

BROWN, TOP OFFICIALS RE-ELECTED AT MM&P

Capt. Tim Brown has been elected to a fifth term in office as President of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots accompanied by a slew of familiar faces. In a 90-day mail ballot, MM&P members returned all the incumbents to office for renewed four-year terms. Capt. Brown will again be joined by International Secretary-Treasurer Glen Banks who ran unopposed. Pacific Ports Vice President Don Marcus, Atlantic Ports V.P. Rich May and Gulf Coast VP Bob Groh also return for a second term. Pilot Membership Group V.P. George Quick and United Inland Membership Group V.P. Steve Demeroutis were returned to office after running unopposed. Congratulations!!

SACCO, SIU OFFICIALS RE-ELECTED

Congratulations go to President Mike Sacco and his slate of officials at the Seafarers International Union who have been elected to new four-year terms in office. An SIU rank and file committee recently certified the results of the election that will keep Sacco in office as well as Executive V.P. John Fay; Contracts & Contract Enforcement V.P. Augie Tellez; and Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel among others. The SIU membership ratified the rank and file Tally Committee's report at their March meetings.



Member Don Gavin contributed this photo of the Keystone-managed CAPE KNOX as it loaded up cargo at Pusan, Korea on Christmas Eve. The KNOX, an RRF vessel, is one of the ships supporting our troops as part of the continuing Operation Iraqi Freedom.

MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS BILL RE-INTRODUCED

Congressman Bob Filner (D-CA) re-introduced a bill (H.R. 23) that would help recognize World War II merchant mariners as veterans for social security purposes and help compensate them for lost benefits. His bill entitled, "Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act" would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to pay a monthly benefit of \$1,000 to certain honorably-discharged veterans of the U.S. Merchant Marine who served between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946 (or to their survivors). Included are those who served in the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service. Moreover, the benefits paid under this Act would be exempt from taxation. In the last session of Congress the bill received bipartisan support with nearly 150 cosponsors but otherwise never made any headway. MEBA supports this legislation and will continue to recruit backing for the measure on Capitol Hill.



MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR SCHUBERT STEPS DOWN

Maritime Administrator Captain William G. Schubert stepped down from his post on February 12th after three strong years in office. Our Union enjoyed an excellent working relationship with Capt. Schubert ever since he was sworn into the job in December 2001 aboard an MEBA-crewed Ready Reserve Force fleet vessel (the Keystone-contracted CAPE KENNEDY). MEBA President Ron Davis pointed out that Capt. Schubert battled for the industry while helping to coordinate the continual vessel activations of MarAd's Ready Reserve Force (RRF) fleet that has put so many MEBA members to work. "He accomplished a lot in just a few years. He will not be forgotten," Pres. Davis noted. "The MEBA will miss him. He is a good man and a personal friend."



At a veterans meeting, our S.F. Rep. Jim Anderson (l) met with Congressman Bob Filner (middle) and Captain K.C. O'Brien (r). Rep. Filner has introduced H.R. 23 on behalf of WWII merchant mariners. Make sure you stress the importance of this bill to your Congressional representatives.

MEBA REACHES

LONG TERM DEAL WITH ASM

MEBA recently reached a 10 year agreement with American Ship Management on their vessels subject to Maritime Security Agreements -- the C-10 and C-11 class ships. MEBA also extended the J-10 class vessel agreement until June 16, 2006.

MEBA's negotiations were spearheaded by the Union's President Ron Davis with the assistance of Executive Vice President Bud Jacque and Los Angeles Branch Agent Al Camelio. As negotiations progressed, President Davis enlisted input and support from Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe, Gulf Coast V.P. John McCurdy and Secretary-Treasurer Cecil McIntyre.

At a recent Atlantic Coast meeting, officials were brought up to speed on the newest Labor Department regulations. Left to right are Jacksonville Rep. Tom Suneson, Cleveland Rep. Tom Trundy, NY Patrolman Bill McHugh, Boston Rep. Bill Campbell, Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe, NY Rep. Jim LaRiviere, Baltimore Branch Agent Bill Van Loo, Richard Gibson, Esq., Norfolk Rep. Jeff Hauck and Govt. Fleet Rep. Randi Ciszewski.



MEBA member Eric Berndt and his wife Soonae Kim were in Ko Lanta, Thailand by the beach at the time the Tsunami struck. The area absorbed a good deal of damage though the degree of destruction was considerably less than in other afflicted areas. Eric snapped a few photos as the onslaught developed before he was forced to flee. Here, at 11:00 a.m. on Dec. 26, a seismic wave gets ready to smash onto the beach.

MEBA SHIPS SURGE INTO S.E. ASIA ON TSUNAMI RELIEF MISSIONS

Some of the same vessels that had joined the fray in the Persian Gulf in support of our warfighters are pouring into Tsunami devastated areas of Southeast Asia on a mission of mercy. The horrific death toll spurred by the December 26th earthquake and subsequent Tsunami was approaching 300,000 souls at the time of this writing.

In the largest humanitarian relief operation in recent memory – termed Operation Unified Assistance – the U.S. military committed thousands of marines and sailors into the region to help staunch the bleeding.

A dozen Military Sealift Command Auxiliary vessels (with MEBA mariners aboard), that normally support Naval carrier groups, were promptly diverted to help alleviate the suffering in that region. They immediately set out to deliver critical food, medicine, fuel and construction equipment among other supplies that will help the devastated region begin a recovery that will stretch well into the future.

Two MSC fleet replenishment oilers -- USNS TIPPECANOE and USNS JOHN ERICSSON, as well as combat stores ships USNS SAN JOSE and USNS CONCORD initially got the call to provide fuel and other supplies to Navy ships in the area and for relief activities ashore. The MSC fast combat support ship USNS RAINIER is one of the MEBA vessels that support the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN carrier strike group. The LINCOLN and her contingent proved to be a major contributor to the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts.

Another vessel crewed with MEBA officers that was summoned into action was the Maritime Prepositioning ship SS MAJ. STEPHEN W. PLESS. The PLESS helped transport equipment and supplies to support Marines as well as food,

fuel, medical supplies, construction and road building equipment, electrical power generating equipment and airfield matting.

The MEBA crewed MSC hospital ship, the USNS MERCY, was one of the more recognizable vessels sailing onto the scene. The ship, resembling a giant first aid kit, was activated from reduced operating status in San Diego on Jan. 1 and was underway five days later. The 894-foot ship, which has one of the nation's largest trauma centers on board, will serve as an enabling platform for relief efforts for the next several months. MERCY's medical staff was further augmented with a humanitarian assistance crew.

Lastly, two MSC oceanographic ships under MEBA contract were ordered into the affected area. Members aboard the Horizon Lines-managed USNS MARY SEARS and USNS JOHN McDONNELL, sailed from Japan days after the tragedy. The ships are conducting hydrographic surveys of the ocean bottom where the 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred. They are mapping harbors and coastal channels in the area to identify navigational hazards and potential obstacles left by the tsunami. Once collected, survey data will be distributed to relief ships and involved countries to ensure the safe delivery of badly needed supplies and personnel throughout the area.

MEBA is immensely saddened by this tragedy. Our prayers continue to go out to the victims and their families. ■



The hospital ship USNS MERCY departed her West Coast berth in January.



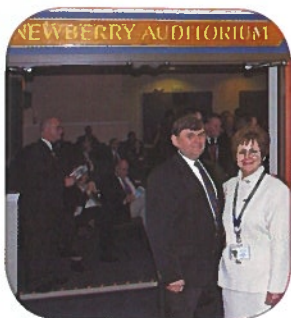
The MERCY carried a full engine room as she sailed for South Asia. The MEBA crew brought the plant up on New Year's Eve and deployed on January 5th. Left to right are 1st A/E Lars Andres, 2nd A/E Dan Zelenka, 3rd A/E Luis Torres and 3rd A/E George Burden. Not pictured are C/E Joseph Watts, 2nd A/E Bruce Johnson, 3rd A/E Fred Smith, 3rd A/E Michael Deramus, 3rd A/E Nick Washington and 3rd A/E Jason Kang. Cadet Dustin Wallace also sailed with the engine crew.



A restaurant close to the beach in Ko Lanta, Thailand begins to succumb to the forces of nature following seismic wave #3. Thanks to Eric Berndt and Soonae Kim for the photo.



SIU & Maritime Trades Dept. President Mike Sacco gave a brief but rousing speech at the dedication ceremony.



Calhoon School Director Joyce Matthews with the former Academic Director of the School Art Newberry. The beautiful new 235-seat auditorium and lecture hall will carry his name.



MEBA President Ron Davis with MM&P President Tim Brown. Both men were recently returned to office by their unions' respective memberships.



MEBA's Government Affairs Director David Tubman (r) chats with the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission Steven Blust at the School ceremony.

BRIDGE SIMULATOR

Transforms MEBA School into Full Service Facility

MEBA's Calhoon School in Easton, MD has completed its evolution into a first-class facility for both engineers AND deck officers as its world-class bridge simulator was introduced to the world in February. The Union's training facility played host to a slew of dignitaries, union leaders, government and company officials as the School showcased its new bridge simulator suite and 235-seat auditorium at a dedication ceremony.

The multi-purpose simulation bridge trainer suite allows the School to offer 'one-stop shopping' for MEBA mates to obtain licensing credentials while minimizing the School's reliance on outside training organizations. It allows our deck officers to receive advanced training on some of the most sophisticated modeling and imaging equipment in the world. Students can simultaneously control simulated vessels at ten bridge stations, playing out high fidelity ship scenarios utilizing any of 56 different vessel types in over 20 different ports. In addition to the ten ships that can be controlled within one scenario, instructors can further intensify the simulation by implanting multiple computer-controlled ships into the scenario.

Joined by MEBA President Ron Davis, Calhoon School Director Joyce Matthews helped christen the new bridge simulator at the February 4 ceremony. She pointed out that the project came together in an amazingly short time telling attendees, "This time last year you would actually be sitting on the floor of the gymnasium!" MEBA's Training Plan Board of Trustees checked off on the simulator/auditorium construction one year and five days before its dedication ceremony. Director Matthews pointed out that the simulator "is the crown jewel in a major infrastructure upgrade that balances out an already intense curriculum for ship's officers."

President Davis, who also serves as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, announced that with the introduction of the bridge simulator, "we are now able to offer as inclusive and excellent a training program for our deck officers as we have been offering to our engineers." He also remarked that the simulator was designed not only to offer the highly specialized training maritime officers

require today, "it's designed to be upgraded, and to be flexible to fit the many tasks that we may face in the future." Davis correctly noted that deck officers won't be the only beneficiaries of this amazing new tool at the School. The simulator is being utilized to augment the Maritime Security Officer course and there are also applications for the Damage Control class. As the need arises, future software upgrades will only broaden its reach for both engineers and deck officers. "With the right software, we can simulate crisis management scenarios, new concept ship training, oil spill response, port security, firefighting, damage control and even land-based exercises," President Davis asserted. "We're ensuring that as the world changes, so can we."



The Coast Guard's Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara and MEBA President Ron Davis shared the ribbon-cutting duties at the ceremony for the simulator/auditorium. Also included in the ribbon cutting bunch are Art Newberry, FMC's Steven Blust, AMC Pres. Gloria Tosi, Director Joyce Matthews Adm. Jim Perkins (AMC), and Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe.

Also attending the ceremony was Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara of the U.S. Coast Guard who noted that the new simulator places the MEBA School "on the cutting edge" with this momentous technological leap. SIU/MTD President Mike Sacco and MM&P President Tim Brown and several of their officials were also in attendance. Other guests included Federal Maritime Commission Chairman Steven Blust, AMC President Gloria Tosi and numerous MEBA-contracted company representatives, MEBA members and officials including Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe, Secretary-Treasurer Cecil McIntyre, Baltimore Branch Agent Bill Van Loo and Government Fleets Rep. Randi Ciszewski. Taking copious notes and frequent photographs were several members of the media. The *Star Democrat* later ran a front page story on the affair.

Students can simultaneously control simulated vessels at ten bridge stations, playing out high fidelity ship scenarios utilizing any of 56 different vessel types in over 20 different ports. In addition to the ten ships that can be controlled by members within one scenario, instructors can further intensify the simulation by implanting multiple computer-controlled ships that can present further challenges for students. Unlike some existing bridge simulator systems, each station operating a different type vessel, can interact with every other station simultaneously. Such simulator interaction is indicative of the system's contemporary technology. A few user friendly software commands can transform the simulation and place a MEBA student at the helm of a tanker, cruise ship or almost any type of vessel including tugs, fast ferries and LNG ships.

Mastered by electronic and charting navigation systems pioneer TRANSAS USA, the versatility of the simulator accommodates upgrades to adapt to ever-evolving Coast Guard and International Maritime Organization training & testing requirements. Another unrivaled aspect of TRANSAS systems is their innovative approach in their creation of simulator visualizations. As Director Matthews noted, "This allows the highest levels of detail and realism in their visuals, as well as the fastest refresh rates with the highest numbers of polygons and image effects."

The stunning new auditorium was dedicated to Art Newberry, the longtime Academics Director at the School, who recently retired. Matthews called Art "the beacon that led the way for us as well as the glue that held it all together. He provided the continuity needed after the departure of the School's founding Director, Mr. Roy Luebbe." The auditorium, called by an auditory science expert, "the best



Some of the players who get into the nuts and bolts of the simulator system are gathered together in this photo. Left to right are Instructor Scott Conway (CMES), Neil Bennett (TRANSAS), Tony Kunecki (NAVSIM), Bob Majewski (NAVSIM), George Toma (TRANSAS) and Instructor Lee Brown (CMES).

acoustically designed space for its size in Maryland," is actually networked so that instructors can operate the simulation exercise on the big screen.

President Davis noted that the membership rolls of the Union are finally expanding after a sluggish decade with the addition of new work with Interlake Steamship and Norwegian Cruise Lines among others. "As the MEBA family continues to grow," he told attendees, "we must lay the proper foundation to build upon that growth. Education is a cornerstone of that foundation."

"A well trained mariner is the first and best way to ensure the safety and reliability of a ship," he continued. "...And this is one of the areas where MEBA excels – and that gives us a significant advantage that we must put to good use." He attested that more improvements and enhancements have been made to the School during the last three years than at any time since the facility moved from Light Street in Baltimore to its current location in Easton.

Of late, the School has welcomed a new Propulsion Systems building, dining hall and conference facilities, a damage control lab and a refurbished lounge and kids playroom as well as wide-scale dorm renovations. Another project currently in the works is a massive new memorial honoring merchant mariners that helped distinguish the Union during our 130 year history.

"This is great news for MEBA contracted companies," MEBA President Ron Davis affirmed. "Our companies will be getting more bang for the buck while their MEBA officers receive the best, most state-of-the-art training available in the world today. This allows our already-excellent training facility to turn it up a notch." ■



The School has continued its amazing path to training excellence that was begun during the tenure of longtime Director Roy Luebbe (on the right). The venerable Luebbe appears here with MEBA member and Calhoun School graduate Joseph Gilbert.



The new simulator suite allows MEBA deck officers (and engineers) to receive top of the line training that can evolve as regulations and requirements change well into the future.

MEBA COMPANIES WIN

As MarAd Unveils MSP Chit Awards

MEBA-contracted companies will operate the lion's share of a 60-ship commercial fleet that offers another lifeline to our fighting forces during military contingencies. In January, the Maritime Administration announced contract awards for the new 10-year Maritime Security Program that comes into effect this fall.

MSP underwrites a partnership between the federal government and ship operators in which privately-owned, militarily-useful U.S.-flagships and American crews are made available to the Defense Department during national emergencies. Vessels enrolled in the program are afforded annual payments that help offset the higher cost of operating under the U.S.-flag.

The successor program to the initial MSP will pick up immediately after the expiration of the old program on September 30, 2005. Notably, vessel payments will rise under the new scheme from \$2.1 million per vessel to \$2.6 million in each of the first three fiscal years (FY 06-'08). In FY '09-11, the payments kick up a notch to \$2.9 million per ship and expand to \$3.1 million per ship for the final four fiscal years of the 10-year program. As always, those payments are subject to

annual appropriation. However, MSP has traditionally been met with enthusiastic support from a bipartisan collection of lawmakers. The recently-released President's budget called for full funding of the new MSP (\$156 million) in the approaching fiscal year (FY '06).

The new program, which is administered by the Maritime Administration, ups the ante from the 47 vessels covered in the first MSP to 60. All 47 vessels under the previous program were grandfathered into the new maritime security fleet.

MEBA was delighted that three of our contracted companies, OSG Ship Management, Central Gulf and Marine Transport Lines (under the umbrella of Lykes Lines) increased their number of chits from the previous MSP and that another of our companies, Liberty Maritime, gained entry into the program for the first time. The citizenship requirements which marked the old program have undergone a modification. As a result, Maersk Line, Ltd. will operate the vessels that were formerly managed by the "Section 2 Citizen" company USSM under the initial MSP.

Under the prior program, MEBA contracted companies operated 40 of the 47 covered vessels. Under the new program, MEBA contracted companies will control 47 of the 60 MSP ships.

MEBA President Ron Davis was gratified by the announcement of the awards. He reflected on the great deal of exertion put forward by MEBA and the rest of the industry which worked tirelessly with government officials to help snap the program into place well before the old MSP expired. "It was a monumental effort put forward by all of maritime," Davis noted. ■

The LYKES MOTIVATOR will be operating under a Maritime Security Program agreement for Lykes Lines. MEBA officers will continue to serve aboard the vessel through our contract with Marine Transport Lines.

MEBA Officers Will be Represented Aboard MSP Vessels Owned and/or Operated By the Following Companies

American President Lines (9 container vessels)

Central Gulf (4 Roll-On/Roll-Off vessels)

Liberty Maritime (1 Pure Car/Truck Carrier)

Farrell Lines (5 container vessels)

Lykes Lines (3 container vessels and 2 geared container vessels)

Maersk Line, Ltd. (15 container vessels)

OSG (1 RO/RO vessel and 3 tankers)

Waterman Steamship Corporation (2 geared container vessels, 1 LASH vessel and 1 PCTC)



Finished with Engines

EDWARD L. BLACK

Edward Black reached his journey's end on March 19, 2004 at the age of 79. After a MEBA career lasting almost 40 years, Brother Black put over 27 years of pension credit to good use upon his retirement that became effective on the first day of 1990. He was a resident of Chincoteague, VA and joins his wife Patricia who died in 1998.

MARCUS J. BOMMERSBACH

Marcus Bommersbach sailed into the sunset on April 25, 2005 at the age of 79. Marcus sailed the seven seas as a MEBA brother for almost 40 years having joined the Union in the waning days of World War II. His lengthy career wound down in 1943 soon after a final stint with American President Lines. His 37 years of pension credit served him well as he settled into retirement in Oak Harbor, WA. Brother Bommersbach is survived by his children Mimi and Amy.

MARVIN E. BOND, JR.

Marvin Bond eased into eternity on March 7, 2004 at the age of 86. His long and prosperous career with the Union netted him over 20 years of pension credit and Marvin began reaping the rewards of his seafaring life in mid-1976 with his retirement. His last shipping job was for MEBA-contracted Sea Tankers, Inc. a few months before his retirement became official. Brother Bond was a resident of Summerdale, AL and is survived by his wife Lillian.

ANDREW M. CHAPMAN

Andrew Chapman reached the end of the line on April 30, 2004 at the age of 91. Andrew suited up with the Union on the first day of 1942 and sailed infrequently over the next 50 years before calling it a career. He last went to sea in 1992 for Waterman Steamship. Brother Chapman was a resident of Mobile, AL.

JAMES L. CONNOR

James Connor made his final call on February 2, 2004 at the age of 66. A member of the Radio Officers' Union (ROU), James piled up almost 16 years of pension credit in a career that commenced in early 1981. He last operated out of the radio shack aboard ship for Waterman in 1997 before filing for retirement soon after. Brother Connor lived in Duns Muir, CA and is survived by wife U Kum and son Sean.

WILLIAM A. COOPER

William Cooper steamed into the sunset on March 15, 2004 at the age of 82. Brother Cooper had enjoyed a long retirement from the Union after he hung up his boiler suit in mid-1967. He last went to sea for Louisiana Sulphur Carriers several years before his retirement became official. William was a resident of cocoa Beach, FL and is survived by his children Carey & Alan Cooper.

HILBERT G. DESPLAS

Hilbert Desplas sailed toward safe haven on January 21, 2004 at the age of 79. Hilbert put almost 40 years into the Union after signing up with the MEBA shortly after the end of World War II. He pursued a colorful career with the Union that helped him amass over 37 years of pension credit. Brother Desplas last went to sea with Delta Steamship before shifting into pensioner status on the first day of 1984. He was a resident of Metairie, LA and is survived by his wife Corrine.

ULRIC D. DUNCAN

Ulric Duncan set course for calmer waters on January 6, 2004 at the age of 80. He went to sea for the Union I parts of five decades first wielding a set of calipers under the MEBA banner in 1943 during the raging days of World War II. Close to 40 years later, he was sailing his last job for Marine transport Lines in 1981. Brother Duncan retired soon after and settled down to Port Arthur, TX. He joins his wife Esther who died in 1997.



*“They no longer hear
the calling of the
watches, or the falling
of the storm rain in
the night. Seas shall
weary them no more,
for they have reached
their final haven—
their further shore.”*

SIMON F. ELARDO

The keys went silent for Simon Elardo on February 26, 2004 at the age of 92. Simon settled down to Metairie, LA in 1973 after a fruitful seagoing career that earned him 25 years of pension credit. Brother Elardo is survived by his wife Shirley.

ROLAND J. ELIASON

Roland Eliason stood his final watch on February 4, 2004 at the age of 82. Roland joined the MEBA during World War II and made numerous shuttles into war zones for his Union and country. 40 years later his career wound down with a final shipping job for Lykes Bros. before his well-deserved retirement began. He put together almost 35 years of pension credit which served him well in his golden years. A resident of Danbury, WI Brother Eliason is survived by his wife Phyllis.

LOUIS E. FLOWER

Louis Flower made his final call on May 19, 2004 at the age of 86. Louis was a member of District No. 3, the Radio Officers Union (ROU). He racked up nearly 27 years of pension credit before hanging up his headset in 1974. Brother Flower was a resident of New Hope, MN.

MARTIN W. FRANK

Martin Frank sailed into the sweet hereafter on March 29, 2004 at the age of 94. Martin enjoyed a 32 year retirement from the Union, living off the fruits of his labor during a productive career. He last plied the waves in 1972 for American Mail Line. Brother Frank was a resident of Newport, OR.

REIDY F. FRENETT

Reidy Frenett made sail for the great unknown on March 3, 2004 at the age of 67. Reidy spent 30 productive years in the Union making them count en route to almost 30 years of pension credit. His career in the MEBA made for a comfortable retirement in Venice, FL that began in 1987 after a final shipping job with U.S. Lines. Brother Frenett joins his wife Eleanor who died three months later and is survived by his daughter Linda Nelson.

LESLIE C. GEORGE, JR.

Leslie George reached his final shore on April 13, 2004 at the age of 89. Another member of the "Greatest Generation," Leslie sailed as a member of the "Fourth Arm of Defense" under the MEBA banner during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. His well-deserved retirement began on the first day of 1983 as he put his 30 years of pension credit to good use. A resident of New Orleans, LA, Brother George is survived by his wife Grace.

TOMMY W. GIBBS

Tommy Gibbs set course for calmer waters on May 3, 2003 at the age of 49. An active member, he'd just begun his career with the Union in 1997. Brother Gibbs had been working various night relief jobs before his untimely demise. He was a resident of Huachuca City, AZ and is survived by his wife Anita.

JAMES T. GOLDEN

James Golden reached his journey's end on March 12, 2003 at the age of 80. Brother Golden spent almost 40 years in the Union ranks earning a whopping 37 1/2 years of pension credit during a colorful shipping career. He filed for retirement in 1984 shortly after his last shipping job with Lykes Brothers Steamship Company. He was a resident of Willis, TX and is survived by his wife, Hazel.

ROBERT F. GOODEARL

Robert Goodearl crossed the final bar on April 17, 2004 at the age of 97. During World War II, Robert was an ensign in the U.S. Naval Reserve serving in the Atlantic, Mediterranean Middle East and Pacific war zones. His career with the Union began as the war still raged and his shipping life continued until he finally hung up his boiler suit in 1969 to enjoy his retirement. Based in Franklin, NH, he was active in his community with local politics and as a volunteer to cancer patients. He joins his wife Alice who dies in 1994. Brother Goodearl is survived by three sons Arthur, Donald and David; daughter Muriel, 15 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

GEORGE G. GRIFFIN

George Griffin crossed the great divide on February 6, 2003 at the age of 81. George sailed frequently in a career with the Union that began in 1960 earning him over 25 years of pension credit. Brother Griffin last went to sea for Sea-Land Service in 1987, the year before his retirement became official. He was a resident of Walnut Creek, CA and is survived by his wife, Lee and his daughter, Judy.

ARTHUR R. GROGG

Arthur Grogg set course for calmer waters on February 17, 2003 at the age of 75. His 25 years of pension credit helped enrich a well-deserved retirement that began in 1973. Brother Grogg spent his days in Fishersville, VA and is mourned by his wife, Maxine.

STANLEY J. HALKA

Stanley Halka eased into the firmament on April 30, 2004 at the age of 86. Brother Halka led a dynamic career that commenced in 1943 and kept going strong for the next 40 years. His 35 years of pension credit served him well in his golden years that were spent in Eugene, OR. He joins his wife Maxine who died in 1993 and is survived by daughters Heather and Tina.

WILLIAM C. HALLEY

William Halley stood his final watch on October 27, 2003 at the age of 96. William spent almost 15 years of his long and colorful life sailing under the MEBA banner. He earned over 9 years of pension credit before settling down to Sea Bright, NJ in 1980 following a final stint with U.S. Lines. Brother Halley joins his wife Enid who died in 1991.

BENJAMIN M. HANKINS

Benjamin Hankins made his final crossing on December 29, 2003 at the age of 86. During a well spent career he built up 25 years of pension credit that were put to good use upon his retirement in 1970. Brother Hankins was a resident of Mobile, AL and is survived by his wife Mary.

JOSEPH H. HARBERT

Joseph Harbert sailed into the wild blue yonder on March 20, 2004 at the age of 80. Joseph picked up 25 years of pension credit en route to a 1970 retirement. A resident of Riverbank, CA, Brother Harbert is survived by his wife Carol.

CHARLES H. HELLER

Charles Heller crossed the final bar on January 7, 2004 at the age of 68. He first slipped on a boiler suit as a Union brother in late 1960. Before his retirement in 2000 he accrued over 21 years of pension credit. Brother Heller was a resident of Moorestown, NJ and is survived by his wife Carol and sons Jeffrey and James.

RALEIGH D. HUEBNER

Raleigh Huebner eased into eternity on October 22, 2003 at the age of 90. He first shipped out as a full MEBA member in the 1940s. From there he racked up 25 years of pension credit that became quite useful when he retired in 1972. Brother Huebner was a resident of Bay City, TX.

RALPH W. HUFFSTETLER

Ralph Huffstetler reached the end of the line on November 28, 2003 at the age of 79. Ralph began his career with the Union in 1961 and kept his ships running smoothly for over two decades, collecting 21 years of pension credit. He last shipped out under MEBA contract for Farrell Lines in 1987. Brother Huffstetler was a resident of Gastonia, NC and is survived by his son Robert and daughter Mary Ann Massey.

JOSEPH KALEIWOHI

Joseph Kaleiwohi sailed into the sweet hereafter on July 28, 2003 at the age of 86. This octogenarian spent a decade within Union confines and took away 9 years of pension credit for his efforts. He last went to sea with Pacific Shipping in 1984 before filing for retirement. Brother Kaleiwohi was a resident of Manchester, NJ.

JOHN A. KATSOS

John Katsos reached his final shore on September 15, 2003 at the age of 88. Brother Katsos racked up an impressive 42 years of pension credit after a gargantuan seafaring career with the Union that began in the late 1930s. Five decades after he first made membership, he shipped out for the last time with Marine Transport Lines in 1980. A resident of Litchfield, NH, he is survived by his wife Sayoko.

JAMES C. KINSLEY, JR.

James Kinsley, Jr. sailed into safe harbor on March 5, 2004 at the age of 78. James began an almost 44-year career with the Union in 1946 and amassed 30 years of pension credit during that span. He last went to sea for Lykes Bros. in 1989 before filing for a retirement that began the following year. Brother Kinsley lived in Dallas, TX and is survived by his wife Yvette and son Phillippe.

PAUL M. LESASSIER, III

Paul Lessassier eased into the firmament many years too soon on September 26, 2003 at the age of 30. Brother Lessassier was just beginning a promising career with the Union when fate intervened for this popular MEBA member. He was working for MEBA- contracted American Heavy Lift Shipping at the time of his demise. A resident of Dallas, TX, he is survived by many family and friends.

RALPH LEUNG

Ralph Leung eased into the firmament on February 24, 2004 at the age of 71. His membership began in 1955 winding up in the early '80s after he had secured 22 years of pension credit during a colorful career. Brother Leung resided in Oakland, CA and is survived by his wife Loretta and children Valerie, Pam and Harold.

CARL H. LINDERHOLM

Carl Linderholm made his last muster on March 3, 2004 at the age of 95. He was entered into the MEBA brotherhood while World War II was still raging and merchant mariners were suffering the highest casualty rate by percentage of all the services in support of their country. He continued shipping with the Union for the next 35 years and following a final stint with MEBA-contracted Moore & McCormack in 1979, Brother Linderholm put away his calipers for good. A resident of Worcester, MA, he joins his wife Toini who died in 1992. Carl is survived by his sons Lars and Eric.

GAETANO LIPANE

Gaetano Lipane reached his final shore on March 12, 2004 at the age of 88. His career with the MEBA began during World War II and he continued his service to Union and country as part of the Fourth Arm of Defense during Korea and Vietnam. Brother Lipane yielded 25 years of pension credit en route to a 1972 retirement. A resident of Plymouth, MI, he is survived by his sister Mary Baldanza and son Gaetano.

CLIFFORD J. LONSON

Clifford Lonson steamed into the sweet hereafter on February 18, 2004 at the age of 96. Clifford spent a long and interesting career with the union and took away 25 years of pension credit that were put to good use following his 1974 retirement. He last went to sea for MEBA-contracted American President Lines in 1973. Brother Lonson lived in Miami, FL.

ROBERT P. MCCALLUM

Robert McCallum booked his final passage on January 12, 2004 at the age of 79. Robert was one of the brave merchant mariners who kept the supply lines going through World War II. His service to the Union continued for another 40 years and he collected over 27 years of pension credit in the process. Brother McCallum last went to sail for MTL Sealift under MEBA contract in 1985. He was a resident of Henderson, NV and is survived by his wife Norma.

CRECENCIO MORAN

Crecencio Moran cast off toward his eternal reward on March 18, 2004 at the age of 84. He began sailing for the MEBA during World War II and continued a series of productive years for the next several decades amassing over 31 years of pension credit. His final shipping job was for MEBA-contracted States Steamship in 1977 before his retirement became official later that year. Brother Moran was a resident of Wilmington, CA and is survived by his wife Mary.

WILLIAM E. MOREHOUSE

William Morehouse sailed into the wild blue yonder on January 10, 2004 at the age of 75. He was made a full blooded member in 1950 and he earned almost 24 year of pension credit over the next 33 years in the Union. Brother Morehouse last shipped out for Matson Navigation in 1982 before retiring to Carlsbad, NM. He is survived by his wife Natalia and children Timothy and Kelly.

WALTER R. NOBLE

Walter Noble reached the end of the line on March 22, 2004 at the age of 87. Walter joined up with the Union in 1964 and worked for various shipping companies including Lykes Brothers. His retirement became official in 1982 after having earned almost 8 years of pension credit. Brother Noble was a resident of Weslaco, TX and joins his wife Stella who died in 1986.

JAMES K. PARNELL

James Parnell sailed into the wild blue yonder on December 15, 2003 at the age of 74. James enjoyed more than a quarter century of retirement from our Union after a career that netted him 14 years of pension credit. He last shipped for Sea-Land Service in 1974 before retiring to Brunswick, GA. Brother Parnell is survived by his wife Margaret.

ELLIOTT L. PERKINS

Elliott Perkins sailed toward distant lands on March 14, 2004 at the age of 84. He suited up as a MEBA brother for a decade earning almost 5 years of pension credit before his 1988 retirement. Brother Perkins was a resident of San Clemente, CA.

CHRISTOPHER L. QUIGLEY

Christopher Quigley set course for calmer waters on February 1, 2004 at the age of 81. After his World War II service came to a close, he made full membership and spent 40 years with the Union. In 1986, he shipped out on his final job – with American President Lines. Brother Quigley was a resident of Hickory, NC and joins his wife Faye who died in 1994.

CHARLES J. RAMOS

Charles Ramos sailed into the sunset on January 16, 2004 at the age of 80. He first set sail for adventure with the MEBA in 1956 and put in almost 30 years with the Union. Following a career in which he earned almost 21 years of pension credit, he worked his last job in 1985 performing various night relief duties and retired to Scottsdale, AZ. Brother Ramos is survived by his wife Imelda and son Carlos.

MICHAEL J. ROCK

Michael Rock reached his journey's end on April 22, 2004 at the age of 67. His MEBA career began in 1954 and over the next 33 years he served as a shipping member as well as a Union Official. A resident of Islip, NY, brother Rock is survived by his wife Joan and son Michael.

THOMAS ROGERS

Thomas Rogers set course for calmer waters on August 5, 2003 at the age of 72. After becoming a full-blooded member of the Union in 1963, Brother Rogers registered a productive career in which he accrued over 20 years of pension credit. As late as 1988 he was still working various night relief jobs before filing his paperwork and settling down in Tamarac, FL.

ERICH L. SCHNABEL

Erich Schnabel sailed into the sunset on November 22, 2003 at the age of 87. Following the World War II years, he suited up as a MEBA member and began a lengthy and distinctive seafaring career. After accruing a remarkable 34 1/2 years of pension credit, Brother Schnabel called it a career in 1984. He last went to sea for Mathiasen Tanker a few months before his formal retirement. A resident of Shelby, OH, he is survived by his wife Takako.

MARTIN A. SCHWEMMER

Martin Schwemmer crossed the great divide on April 27, 2004 at the age of 81. Martin spent close to 40 years with the Union racking up over 38 years of pension credit in a productive a colorful career. He last went to sea in 1984 for Energy Transportation. Brother Schwemmer was a resident of Towson, MD and joins his wife Betty who died in 1995. He is survived by his son Michael and daughter Carol Purvis.

DALE E. SMITH

Dale Smith embarked on his final passage on December 12, 2003 at the age of 73. Dale notched almost 25 years of pension credit following his 1966 induction into the Union ranks. Before settling down to Orting, WA, he shipped out one last time for MEBA-contracted Sea-Land Services in 1992. Brother Smith is survived by his wife Judith and son Timothy.

HUGH O. SMITH

Hugh Smith reached his journey's end on February 26, 2004 at the age of 87. Hugh had an extraordinary long career with the Union accruing over 32 years of pension credit while supporting his country in three wars as part of the Fourth arm of Defense. He last went to sea in 1978 for MEBA-contracted Margate Shipping a few months before his retirement. Brother Smith lived in Post Falls, ID and is survived by his wife Myrtle and son Bob.

THOMAS NOEL SPARKS

The creator rang down “finished with engines” on Thomas Noel Sparks on December 23, 2004 at the age of 67. Tom started sailing in the U.S. Coast Guard and went to Chevron Shipping Co. in 1969. He primarily sailed tankers during his lengthy seagoing career. Brother Sparks retired from Alaska Tanker Co. in 1999, last shipping out aboard the SS PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND. His wife June, two daughters and many grandchildren survive him.

RICHARD G. STEVENSON

Richard Stevenson shipped off toward his final destination on February 17, 2004 at the age of 77. Richard first shipped out as a full blooded MEBA member in 1949 – the start of a productive and lengthy seafaring career. He sailed in parts of five decades and following one final job with American President Lines in 1994, he filed for retirement. Brother Stevenson was a resident of Capitola, CA.

JOHN P. TEIGE

John Teige sailed into the next life on March 9, 2004 at the age of 78. His career with the Union began in 1962 and he proved to be a workhorse over the next 27 years earning almost 27 years of pension credit. He last worked in 1989 with MEBA-contracted Mobil Oil shortly before his retirement became effective. Brother Teige was a resident of Burbank, CA and is survived by his son Michael and daughter Anna.

ALLEN R. VEIT

Allen Veit set course for calmer waters on May 9, 2004 at the age of 79. Allen spent 41 years with the Union and shouldered a huge workload as demonstrated by his almost 37 years of pension credit. He had a hard time getting the sea out of his veins but he finally eased into retirement as the 1990's approached after a final stint with Lykes Brothers Steamship Company. A resident of Roseville, CA, Brother Veit is survived by his wife Marilyn, daughter Sandra and son Matthew.

JAMES G. WAITS

The keys went silent for James Waits on June 26, 2004 at the age of 75. His career with MEBA District No. 3 – the Radio Officer's Union – began in 1962. He sailed in radio shacks for various shipping companies over the next quarter century and racked up 25 years of pension credit before hanging up his headset in 1988. He last shipped out for Marine Transport Lines in the year of his retirement before settling down to Bruce, FL. Brother Waits is survived by his son James, Jr.

ISAIAH R. WILLIAMS

Isaiah Williams steamed into the sunset on May 2, 2004 at the age of 71. He first suited up with the Union as a full member on the first day of 1967 beginning a 22 year seafaring career. Brother Williams put away his sea bag in early 1999 and retired to Carson, CA.

STANLEY E. WILLIAMS

Stanley Williams made his final crossing on March 19, 2004 at the age of 88. He put a lot into his Union and his Union gave back enough to make him comfortable in his golden years. Brother Williams last worked for Boston Towboat before wrapping up 25 years of pension credit that he took to his retirement in 1978. A resident of Billerica, MA, he is survived by his son Joel and joins his wife Jean who died a month before he did.

JOHN J. WILLITS

John Willits sailed into safe harbor on July 19, 2004 at the age of 82. John began his MEBA career as one of the courageous merchant mariners to brave enemy waters in order to keep the lifeline to our troops open during World War II. He continued his shipping career with the Union for another 40 years amassing over 32 years of pension credit. He last shipped out for Sea-Land Service in 1983 before retiring to Lynnwood, WA. Brother Willits is survived by his wife Margie.

RYAN A. WINDHAM

Ryan Windham crossed the great divide on January 13, 2004 at the age of 63. He spent 24 years in the Union after saddling up with the MEBA in 1972. Ryan made those years count as he racked up 22 years of pension credit that served him well upon his retirement in 1996. He last went to sea in 1994 for Sea-Land Service. Brother Windham was a resident of St. Francis, KY.

ROBERT V. WINTER

Robert Winter set sail for uncharted waters on January 4, 2004 at the age of 77. His career with the Union began in 1956 and he sailed infrequently over the next three and a half decades putting together almost eight years of pension credit. In 1992, his formalized the end of his seafaring life by filing his retirement papers. A resident of Longwood, FL, Brother Winter is survived by his sister Dolores Crider.

GEORGE ZIDIK

George Zidik sailed into the next life on December 27, 2003 at the age of 74. George had a colorful career with the Union that made for many a sea story in his subsequent 27 years of retirement that began in 1976. He last shipped out for Calmar Steamship a few months before the Union processed his retirement papers. Brother Zidik was a resident of Cockeysville, MD and is survived by his wife Letitia.

GEORGE ZITO

George Zito shipped off toward his final destination on December 30, 2003 at the age of 80. After serving his country in World War II, he joined the Union and the Fourth Arm of Defense in 1946 for a seafaring career that would endure for another 40 years. During that span he picked up over 30 years of pension credit until his ultimate retirement in 1986. A resident of Reno, NV, Brother Zito is survived by his wife Kathleen and son Christopher.

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The new 10 year agreement covers the current American President Lines/American Ship Management vessels subject to Maritime Security Program operating agreements and their replacements. There were wage and benefit increases built into the contract and MEBA was able to obtain the ACCU duty penalty rate in foreign ports. This means that all the C-10s, C-11s and J-10 mariners who were not receiving the duty rate in foreign ports will begin receiving that rate effective June 15, 2005. The contract was ratified by members at the regular February Union hall meetings.

In addition to MEBA's agreement, our Union assisted the American Radio Association (ARA) in their negotiations by agreeing to aid ARA members in earning Third Assistant Engineer licenses. The ARA has been under extreme pressure for over a decade due to technological advancements, in particular GMDSS. As a result, they have found it difficult to remain aboard vessels in the private shipboard maritime sector. In exchange for ARA exiting the APL/ASM ships over a period of time, the MEBA has agreed to assist ARA members who choose to become engineers by allowing them to take related courses at the MEBA School. The company has agreed to allow the use of their eleven commercial vessels as a training platform, whereby ARA members would be allowed to sail as "third assistant engineer trainees" while receiving compensation during the shipboard training period. MEBA would also make nine Group I slots available for members of the ARA who successfully complete their training and secure their Coast Guard Third Assistant Engineer's license. This program is subject to approval by the Coast Guard. We ask that MEBA engineers aboard ASM vessels assist the re-trainees in every way possible.

PROP MOVED INTO PLACE AT MEBA MEMORIAL

The massive propeller that had been stationed on the entrance lawn at the Calhoun School has gone to its final resting place. It took a pair of cranes to hoist the 47,168 pound prop and vertically snap



On a chilly day in January, the massive propeller at the School was moved into place at the site of the MEBA Merchant Marine Memorial. Left to right are Ernie Clements, Bill Cadden, Director Joyce Matthews, Baltimore Branch Agent Bill Van Loo and Rick Simonson.

it into place a few hundred feet away where it will serve as the centerpiece of the upcoming Merchant Marine Memorial. The memorial will be a tribute to fallen mariners who helped blaze the proud tradition we carry on today. Work continues on the memorial as weather permits. While the structure begins to shape up, we still need your contributions to help finalize this important project. Please consider purchasing a memorial brick

inscribed with the name of a deceased merchant mariner important to you. It is only \$100 apiece. The principals at the MEBA Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) are about to place the order for the bricks that have been purchased so far. If you wait too long, the price for bricks are due to rise. The IRS has confirmed that contributions made to the 4MF are tax deductible. Checks can be forwarded to the MEBA Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation at MMMMF, P.O. Box 2443, Easton, MD 21601. Please contact Rick Simonson (rsimonson@mebaschool.org or phone (410) 822-9600, ext. 327); or Bill Van Loo (bvanloo@d1meba.org, ph. (410) 685-5353) for further info.

MEMBERS IN ARREARS WILL BE MEMBERS NO MORE

Any member or applicant two or more years in arrears on dues and/or service charges are likely to be dropped from membership or applicant rolls. If you are in arrears and desire to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters immediately to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing.

LOUISIANA LABOR TORCH IN SAFE HANDS

It's become evident that the death of labor giant John "Red" Bourg in late October won't silence the labor movement in Louisiana. A worthy successor, strong and determined like Bourg, has seized the reigns of the state's AFL-CIO presidency. Sibal Holt, who just happens to be the first African American woman to run a state level AFL-CIO organization, has put in 40 years of work for the union and was elected to the top job from her previous post as Secretary-Treasurer under Bourg. Sibal also worked closely with Victor Bussie, who was top dog in the Union for 41 years before his 1997 retirement. She's more than ready to stare down the challenges in her way and has eased into her new job seamlessly. "I'm excited about it," she pointed out noting that she's ready to tackle some serious concerns facing organized labor in her state -- manufacturing jobs being shipped offshore, the illegal alien influx, the decline of union membership -- issues all on Sibal's frontburner.

Holt was recently honored as an "exceptional woman leader" by Governor Kathleen Blanco and the Louisiana Women's Foundation Board of Directors at a Governor's Mansion reception. She had kind words for Governor Blanco who, as Holt noted, has declared that 'Louisiana is open for business' -- as long as state workers come out ahead. Regarding the perception that the AFL-CIO is primarily tied into the Democratic Party, Holt asserted that the criteria a politician possesses that matters most is whether they support workers. "We don't confine ourselves to one party," she noted. "We look at those who vote for the best interests of working families." She has pointed out in the past that "you can work with anybody for common goals."

MEBA has an excellent track record of working together with AFL-CIO on the state level. Our new Gulf Coast V.P. John McCurdy, who was very active at his former post in Seattle, will continue that tradition and work with Sibal Holt and the AFL-CIO to advance our mutual interests in the great state of Louisiana.

MEBA's Organizing Director
Robert Martin with the
leader of organized labor in
Louisiana, Sibal Holt.



CALHOON SCHOOL ICON SCOOODY-POOHS OUT OF TOWN

Hearts were broken and many a tear was shed when much-loved Calhoon School instructor Frank Walsh shocked the MEBA nation with the announcement of his retirement. Adored by the ladies, respected by the men, this avuncular MEBA icon has hung up his boiler suit after 40 years in the Union.

A perennial presence in Easton, Frank has been a key cog behind the scenes in helping School functions flow smoothly while making it fun in the process. Frank's job description at the School goes far beyond that of simply "Instructor" for Welding and Machine Shop. On the organizing end of almost every function at the facility, Frank has been described as the "heart and soul" of the School.

A good chunk of his well-deserved retirement will surely be spent organizing his colossal photo collection. This persistent shutterbug has catalogued his decade at the School in photos and given away thousands of his pictures as keepsakes to students.

Incredibly, every member seemed to recognize that Frank was the "go-to" guy if a problem arose in the dorm. Lost keys, someone hurt or something broken, were all reasons to summon Frank out of his slumber at three in the morning. If he hadn't been so willing to help out and so efficient in getting another key, bringing someone to the hospital or fixing the broken item maybe he would have gotten a little more sleep. Frank was the main beneficiary when the School finally got a security office to handle such problems. That slowed down, but didn't stop, the late night visits – Frank was too entrenched as a midnight problem solver.

Children delighted in the stuffed talking animals, outlandish toys and seasonal decorations splayed outside Frank's dorm room at the School that left no doubt where he lived. Two massive photo boards outside his room were chock full of photos of members' children who flocked to "Mr. Frank," a big kid himself.

Members and their families will long remember his warmth, his sense of humor and his caring spirit as Frank retires to his long-neglected home in Naples, Florida. Fair Winds and following seas to our MEBA Brother!



"Trash Master" Frank Walsh heading up MEBA's "Adopt-a-Highway" cleanup "chain gang" with his typical flair.

Meeting Schedule

Port	March	April	May
Baltimore	Tues. 8	Tues. 8	Tues. 3
Boston	Mon. 7	Mon. 4	Mon. 2
Calhoon School	Wed. 9	Wed. 6	Wed. 4
Charleston	Tues. 8	Tues. 5	Tues. 3
Honolulu	Fri. 11	Fri. 8	Fri. 6
Houston	Tues. 8	Tues. 5	Tues. 3
Jacksonville	Wed. 9	Wed. 6	Wed. 4
Los Angeles	Thurs. 10	Thurs. 7	Thurs. 5
New Orleans	Wed. 9	Wed. 6	Wed. 4
New York	Thurs. 10	Thurs. 7	Thurs. 5
Norfolk	Thurs. 10	Thurs. 7	Thurs. 5
Portland	Wed. 9	Wed. 6	Wed. 4
San Francisco	Tues. 8	Tues. 5	Tues. 3
Seattle	Mon. 7	Mon. 4	Mon. 2
Tampa	Thurs. 10	Thurs. 7	Thurs. 5

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FACES AROUND THE FLEET



MEBA member J. Chris Wallis, taking a well deserved break from work inside the economizer of the Maersk vessel SEA-LAND DEFENDER during the very necessary cleaning process. Chris was recently assigned permanent first engineer.



Brian Schoeneman, MEBA's Asst. Political Director (left), welcomes Colorado's newest Congressman John Salazar (D-CO-3) at a D.C. function. As a State Representative from Southern Colorado's House District 62, Rep. Salazar had a 100% AFL-CIO voting record and garnered MEBA's notice. Our Union supported his successful bid to the U.S. Congress.



MEBA members like Arthur Omdahl (center) know the value a strong P.A.F. brings to our Union. Left to right are NY Patrolman Bill McHugh, Atlantic Coast V.P. Don Keefe, Arthur O., Govt. Fleets Rep. Randi Ciszewski and NY Rep. Jim LaRiviere. The NY officials are presenting Brother Omdahl with a gold MEBA watch in gratitude for his \$1,000 P.A.F. contribution.



Member Dominic Walsh serving as an engineer aboard the Ready Reserve Force fleet vessel CAPE DUCATO poses with some precious cargo. The ship is one of the vessels hauling military gear to and from the Persian Gulf in support of our troops.

MEBA's Organizing Director Robert Martin (r) hands over a check, drawn from MEBA's Political Action Fund (P.A.F.) to Melvin "Kip" Holden. MEBA's support helped Holden win his bid as the next Mayor-President of East Baton Rouge Parish in Louisiana. Cultivating our political ties on the local level can bloom into lifetime friendships with maritime-friendly politicians as they move up the ladder.



FACES AROUND THE FLEET



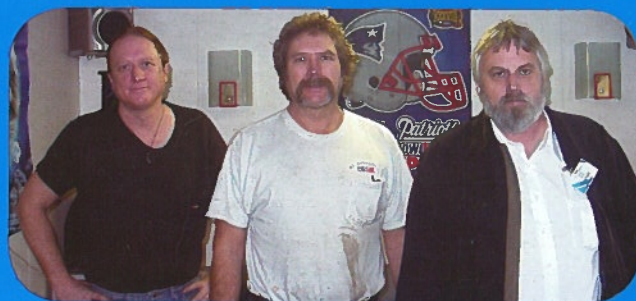
Aboard the ALASKAN FRONTIER that MEBA members sail on under our contract with Alaska Tanker Company are 2nd A/E Jeff Pillard with the San Francisco Patrolman Ed MacCormack.



Our Cleveland Rep. Tom Trundy (left) standing on the deck of the HERBERT C. JACKSON with the vessel's Chief Engineer Tracy Burke. The CHARLES BEEGHLY is backing into its berth. Both boats, teeming with MEBA members, sail in the Interlake Steamship fleet.



Members aboard the HORIZON CONSUMER take time out for a photo around Christmas time. Left to right are 3rd A/E Matt Teurkile, 3rd A/E Pat Duffy, C/E Nim Golightly, 1st A/E Mike Clancy and 2nd A/E Brenden Johnson.



Aboard the MAERSK INTREPID are (l-r) 1st A/E T. Carruba, C/E Jim Langmeyer and newly appointed San Francisco Representative Jim Anderson.



Clark Dodge, Staff Chief on the M/V WENATCHEE, has retired after 38 years with Washington State Ferries. Clark, who held a Chief's license for 25 years, is settling down in Hawaii. In the photo, Chief Engineer Bruce Cooper shakes hands with Clark (on the right) with Spiros Sourelos in the background.



The Norwegian Cruise Lines-America newbuild PRIDE OF AMERICA is set for her delivery in June of this year. Chief Engineer and MEBA member Paul Musotto snapped this photo in mid-February. MEBA members will crew the vessel in all licensed positions as they do on the PRIDE OF ALOHA, currently in service. The PRIDE OF HAWAII, expected in summer 2006, will be the third cruise ship in the NCL-America fleet.