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West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Volume LXXX No. 3 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA Friday, March 24, 2017

Our maritime industry is too important to ignore

by Congressman John Garamendi (D-California)

The United States is the world's commercial superpower. We are the largest importer and second-largest exporter of merchandise. In 2015, American exports of merchandise abroad totaled over $1.5 trillion. Seaborne trade represents an enormous share of this activity: In 2016, over $475 billion worth of American exports were transported overseas by ship.

The average person might hear these numbers and assume that the United States and its industrial sector are deeply committed to maintaining fleets of reliable, modern American ships to carry cargo. Unfortunately, the maritime industry is a shadow of its former self. Just after World War II, the United States had 1,200 ocean-going ships. Even in the 1980s, we had several hundred ships flying under a U.S. flag. Today, that number is less than 80. Here's another shock: In 1955, a quarter of American exports traveled on U.S.-flagged ships. Today, it is below 1%.

As the ranking member of the Coast Guard and maritime transportation subcommittee, I am all too familiar with the negative effects of the deterioration of the American maritime industry. Fewer American ships means fewer high-paying jobs for American mariners. It means fewer skilled manufacturing jobs for shipbuilders. And it means a striking loss of the technical know-how required to build the advanced ships that international commerce relies on today: know-how that can often be transferred to other high-value, domestic industries.

A robust maritime industry is also absolutely vital for our national security. The Department of Defense depends on the Merchant Marine for over 95% of our sealift needs in times of war or national emergency. Imagine a hypothetical scenario involving heightened tensions and a military buildup in the South Pacific.

In times of war, our Army and Marine Corps routinely rely on the U.S. Merchant Marine and the Ready Reserve Force fleet of 46 ships for sealift and transport of vital equipment and support. Would our military leaders feel comfortable having to rely on vessels flagged abroad and manned by foreign crews to provide this emergency sea lift capacity to transport our military into hostile regions? It's important to remember that our trade partners are not always our closest allies.

Projection of American soft power is equally dependent on a healthy, privately owned Merchant Marine. When disaster strikes, our Ready Reserve Fleet must stand ready to answer the call at home and abroad. Unfortunately, this fleet is aging, and without action, the time will soon come when our reserve fleet no longer has the capability to provide the relief that both Americans and the international community have come to expect.

It's time for Congress to stop ignoring the problem and make our maritime industry part of a comprehensive "Make It In America" agenda. That's why I'm introducing the Energizing American Maritime Act, which would require 30% of all American exports of crude oil and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to be transported on U.S.-flag vessels by the year 2025. This modest carriage requirement would bolster our national security, put Americans to work and recreate a great American industry that has eroded with time and bad policy.

The domestic energy boom, combined with recent changes to federal law, has led the United States to dramatically increase its energy exports. Congress recently voted to allow unlimited exports of American crude oil. By 2025, this means we could be exporting up to 3.64 million barrels of crude every day, which could require up to 380 tankers and 15,200 mariners. Absent congressional action, almost all of these exports will be transported on foreign-flagged tankers, helping other nations grow their maritime industrial capabilities from the export of a strategic U.S. energy resource.

The LNG export boom is no less striking in its potential. By 2020, the U.S. will be the third-largest exporter of LNG, with an average export of 7.4 billion cubic feet a day. Exporting that much LNG will require about 100 specialized vessels and 5,200 mariners. There are currently no U.S.-flagged LNG carriers, and unless Congress takes specific action, all export capacity will be on foreign-flagged ships using foreign crews.

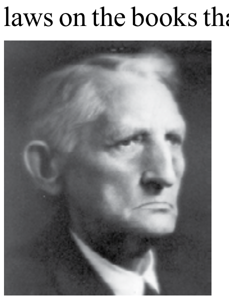
Requiring even a percentage of these exports to be transported on U.S.-flagged ships will have a cascade of positive effects for our economy. The United States is a maritime, seafaring nation. It is past time for Congress to pay more attention to this vital industry as we work on rebuilding American infrastructure and as we contemplate a shifting national security environment in an uncertain world.

Garamendi is the Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

Sailors' Union marks 132nd Anniversary

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific this month observed the 132nd anniversary of its founding, March 6, 1885, on the old Folsom Street Wharf in San Francisco.

In that era, organizing a Union was a bold move as there were no laws on the books that addressed collective bargaining rights for workers. That would not occur until the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935.


Andrew Furuseth

For sailors, there were no rights. Under federal law they were serfs at the beck and call of the shipowner, the crimp, bucko masters and mates. Recognition, respect and improved conditions did not come easy. Men bled and some died for it.

During World War I and particularly World War II, hundreds of SUP members faced enemy attacks and went down with their ships. That legacy continued during the Korea, Vietnam and Middle East conflicts. The SUP today continues to be a vital part of America's "Fourth Arm of Defense".

With a militant membership and the tenacious leadership of Andrew Furuseth and Harry Lundeberg, tremendous obstacles were overcome and the Sailors' Union developed an enduring legacy of strength and integrity.


Harry Lundeberg

In addition to the anniversary of the organization of the Union and the birthdays of former secretaries Furuseth (March 5, 1854) and Lundeberg (March 25, 1901), March is also the 102nd anniversary of the Seamen's Act which was signed into law by President Woodrow Wilson on March 4, 1915, after a 20-year struggle by Furuseth to free seamen from indentured servitude.

Periodicals' postage paid at San Francisco, CA (USPS 675-180)

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SUP Honor Roll

Voluntary contributions from the membership to the following funds:

Organization/ General Fund

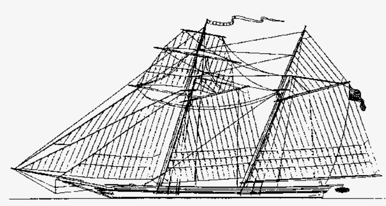
Anonymous	10.00
Abe Acosta	20.00
Donald Cushing	75.00
Ricky Pangan	75.00
JeanPaul Root	100.00
Joel Schor	10.00
Dennis Sumague	25.00

West Coast Sailors

Abe Acosta	20.00
Robin Colonas	20.00
Donald Cushing	25.00
Wilton Gustafson	20.00
Arthur Kardinal	25.00
James Kolm	25.00
John Nannini	25.00
Charles Rafael	25.00
Richard Reed	100.00
Bruce Thompson in memory of Ernie Stimach	25.00
Charles Weber	25.00

Political Fund

Abe Acosta	20.00
Brendan Bohannon	50.00
Marc Calairo	100.00
Rocky Casazza	10.00
Dave Connolly	200.00
Jennifer Corner	25.00
Donald Cushing	100.00
Art Garrett	100.00
David Green	30.00
Scott Hudson	10.00
David Ibarra	50.00
Gunnar Lundeberg	50.00
Mike O'Boyle	100.00
Joe Obsuna	10.00
Ariel Odion	20.00
Ricky Pangan	75.00
Arsenio Purganan	50.00
Richard Reed	100.00
Louie Urbano	50.00



Dues-Paying Pensioners

Donald Cushing	Book #4777	Duane Nash	Book #2437
Romaine Dudley	Book #2593	John Perez	Book #3810
Diane Ferrari	Book #2251	Alex Romo	Book #3093
Gerald Ingemansson	Book #0379	James Savage	Book #7488
Kaj E. Kristensen	Book #3120	David Shands	Book #7483
Hannu Kurppa	Book #3162	Arthur Thanash	Book #3249
Dave Larsen	Book 19078		

MarAd's recycling program validated by watchdog group

The Maritime Administration (MarAd) correctly accounted for $75.9 million made from selling 90 obsolete vessels in 10 years following concerns of mismanagement, federal overseers have found.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO), in a report published on February 23, concluded that MarAd had allocated the proceeds from the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) from FY 2005 to FY 2015 into the Vessel Operations Revolving Fund (VORF) "consistent with applicable law." The oversight agency also found that, during the same period, the $52.6 million disbursed out of the VORF to the country's six state maritime academies and to the National Park Service (NPS) "were properly supported".

The GAO's audit was included as a provision in the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) funding authorization in 2015 amid concerns by Washington, D.C., lawmakers about the revenue generated from ship-recycling sales and MarAd's contract solicitation process.

A separate audit conducted in late 2015 by the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General (OIG) found that America's ship disposal program may have been exposed to unnecessary risk due to weaknesses in management oversight. The audit was conducted as a result of an organizational restructuring at MarAd while the agency was overseeing roughly $700 million in federal funds.

Two programs examined by the OIG, MarAd's Ship Disposal Program and its Vessel Transfer Office (VTO), were criticized by lawmakers for allegedly allowing U.S. shipowners to reflag old vessels so that they could be recycled at less cost at foreign ship-breaking facilities.

According to federal law, MarAd has the authority to scrap or sell certain vessels that no longer warrant preservation. Proceeds from the sales deposited in the VORF are allocated to NDRF for maintaining or repairing ships, paying or reimbursing certain expenses of the maritime academies, and providing funding for the NPS's National Maritime Heritage Grant Program. The timings of the payments made by the VORF are determined by the Maritime Administrator.

Last year Senate lawmakers amended MarAd's most recent funding bill to instruct that proceeds from the fund be distributed more frequently. They directed the Maritime Administrator to prepare a report listing all government-owned vessels currently available for dismantlement, a list of vessels expected to be declared obsolete and dismantled in the next five years, and the government's plan for dismantling those vessels in the United States.

Trading health care for tax cuts

So much for President Trump's pledge of "insurance for everybody."

The Congressional Budget Office (C.B.O.) said on March 13, that next year 14 million fewer Americans will have insurance if the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, is repealed and replaced on the terms the president is seeking. That tally would rise to 21 million in 2020 and 24 million in 2026. By then, the total number of uninsured Americans would reach 52 million.

And for what? To give a gigantic tax cut to wealthy Americans.

According to the C.B.O. the loss of health care coverage under the Republican plan stems largely from gutting Medicaid for low-income Americans, even though Mr. Trump has said he would not cut Medicaid. Coverage would also be lost in part because insurance would become unaffordable for millions as subsidies are withdrawn, despite Mr. Trump's claim that coverage would become "much less expensive and much better."

Older people would be hard hit. The Republican plan repeals the penalty for not buying insurance. One predictable result of this change is that premiums will rise as younger, healthier people refuse to buy insurance. To hold down the cost of average premiums, the proposal would allow insurers to charge five times more for older enrollees than younger ones, rather than three times, as permitted under Obamacare, The outcome would be reduced premiums for young adults, essentially paid for by charging substantially higher premiums for older people - and higher deductibles and other cost-sharing for everyone.

At the same time, the plan provides a $600 billion tax cut over 10 years for wealthy Americans, because they would no longer be subject to the taxes that pay for the health care subsidies. When the tax cuts for the rich and the spending cuts to Medicaid are combined, they would result in deficit reduction of $337 billion by 2026. That's a small fraction of the national debt in exchange for an enormous amount of human misery.

Trump administration officials and congressional Republicans knew the C.B.O. report would be devastating, so last week they launched a pre-emptive attack on the agency, disparaging its professionalism and findings. Their insults were an impressive display of staying on message for an administration and party that has descended into infighting over the elements of the repeal plan. This might have been expected. Yet in the past President Trump himself has tweeted C.B.O. findings to attack President Obama on economic growth, tax cuts, employment and other issues.

"We disagree strenuously with the report that was put out," Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price said. "It's just not believable."

Well, whether Mr. Price wants to believe it or not, the numbers are the numbers. The C.B.O. has called it as it sees it, and the picture is clear: Trumpcare would throw millions of Americans off their health coverage. And no amount of spin or scorn for the C.B.O. can alter that reality.

A nonpartisan analysis reveals that President Trump's promise of "insurance for everybody" is hollow. *New York Times: Editorial, March 14.*

Port of Oakland volume drops 5.1%

The Port of Oakland announced that containerized export volume declined 1.2% during the month of February, compared to the same month a year ago. The Port said it was only the second year-over-year export decrease in the past 14 months. Overall loaded container volume declined 5.1% in February, according to figures released by the port, as import volume was off 9.3%.

The port attributed the decline in export volume to inclement weather in the interior United States that curtailed shipment of Asia-bound exports through Oakland.

The port said that import volume was impacted by the wake of Lunar New Year celebrations. U.S. importers stock up before Asian factories shut down for the holidays. Shipments typically moderate in the post-holiday period.

Final Departures

John Ban, Book No. 5339. Born in California in 1922. Joined SUP in 1944. Died in San Jose, California, February 13, 2017. (Pensioner)

James Heaton, Book No. 5425. Born in Missouri in 1927. Joined SUP in 1944. Died in La Pine, Oregon, February 4, 2017. (Pensioner)

George Wong, Book No. 3582. Born in California in 1932. Joined SUP in 1951. Died February 9, 2017. (Pensioner)

SUP Meetings

These are the dates for the regularly scheduled SUP meetings in 2017:

	Hdqtrs.	*Branch*
April	10	17
May	8	15
June	Tues. 13	19
July	10	17
August	14	21
September	11	18
October	Tues. 10	16
November	Tues. 14	20
December	11	18

West Coast Sailors

Published monthly by the Sailors Union of the Pacific (an affiliate of the Seafarers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO), Headquarters, 450 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94105. Phone: 415-777-3400. FAX: 415-777-5088. Dispatcher: 415-777-3616. Website: www.sailors.org. Periodicals' postage paid at San Francisco. (USPS 675-180). Printed by Dakota Press Co., a Union shop. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to West Coast Sailors, 450 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94105.

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Trump's executive order impacts seafarers

President Donald Trump signed a new Executive Order (E.O.) 13780 entitled "Executive Order Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into The United States" on March 6. This order rescinds E.O. 13769 and introduces new restrictions on travel to the United States from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

E.O. 13780 has a more limited impact on immediate entry to the U.S. than did the revoked E.O. 13769, says legal firm Freehill, Hogan and Mahar's in a client alert. Crew from the six designated countries will not be able to enter the U.S. unless they hold valid visas prior to March 16, and they will not be able to obtain visas until 90 days after March 16. If a crewmember holds a valid visa, he or she will be free to enter the United States.

If a vessel arrives at a U.S. port with crew from any of the six designated countries who do not have valid visas, those crewmembers will not be permitted to leave the vessel, and it can be anticipated that the U.S. authorities may well order that armed guards be placed at the vessel's gangway to prevent any such crew from departing the vessel, states the client alert. In addition, if any crewmember's visa expires after March 16, the crewmember must apply for a new visa.

The E.O. allows for the proper review and establishment of standards to prevent terrorist or criminal infiltration by foreign nationals, says the Department of Homeland Security in a fact sheet. "The United States has the world's most generous immigration system, yet it has been repeatedly exploited by terrorists and other malicious actors who seek to do us harm. In order to ensure that the U.S. Government can conduct a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the national security risks posed from our immigration system, the Executive Order imposes a 90-day suspension of entry to the United States of nationals of certain designated countries—countries that were designated by Congress and the Obama Administration as posing national security risks with respect to visa-free travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program."

The fact sheet states that Congress provided the President of the United States, in section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), with the authority to suspend the entry of any class of aliens the President deems detrimental to the national interest. This authority has been exercised repeatedly for decades, and has been a component of immigration law since the enactment of the original INA in 1952.

Immigration from Iraq is not targeted in this latest E.O. as a result of negotiations that have taken place between the Government of Iraq and the U.S. Department of State in the last month. Iraq has agreed to increase cooperation with the U.S. Government on the vetting of its citizens applying for a visa to travel to the United States.

The new E.O. directs the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a worldwide review to identify what additional information is required from each foreign country to adjudicate an application by a national of that country for a visa "…in order to determine that the individual is not a security or public-safety threat." The Secretary of Homeland Security is to report to the President within 20 days of the effective date of the E.O., providing a list of the countries that do not provide adequate information.

On March 15, a federal judge in Honolulu blocked Trump's order.

Jobs on the line as Canada weighs plan to end cabotage, privatize airports and seaports

Transport workers marched through the streets of Vancouver, Canada, on February 23, to demand that the government reject a plan that would eliminate maritime cabotage laws, reduce the extent of compulsory pilotage areas and privatize airports and seaports.

Cabotage laws, such as the Jones Act in the United States, reserve a portion of a country's maritime trade to ships that fly the national flag and employ domestic workers.

They exist in numerous countries, in part to ensure the availability of citizen mariners and domestic vessels to meet the needs of war or other national emergency.

The plan being considered in Canada calls for opening employment in the coastwise maritime trade to foreign nationals and selling Canadian airports and ports to corporate interests. In essence, it represents the regulatory implementation of the transnational trade pact known as the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union (EU). CETA has been ratified by the EU nations and is pending in Canada's Senate.

The February 23 "Rally to Save Our Coasts" was led by Canadian Unions that represent workers in air, rail, ports, trucking, marine and ferry services.

The Unions say 900,000 Canadian jobs will disappear if the government approves the plan. "At risk is every Canadian who works aboard a ship, tug, ferry, barge or dredge because the government's actions would allow the maritime industry to hire foreign seafarers paid as little as $1.26 per hour, a wage no Canadian worker can live on," said Rob Ashton, President of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada.

"Weak people who won't stand up to multinationals have occupied political office in Canada, the United States and Australia," said another speaker, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) President Paddy Crumlin, who is also National Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA). "And maritime and aviation workers are on the front lines because of our exposure to international trade."

If the measures are approved, Ashton says, "foreign corporations with no stake in Canada could put our economy and environment at risk with no benefit to the nation."

As a case in point, he cited the October 2016 grounding and oil spill by a Kirby Marine tug in protected waters off Bella Bella, British Columbia. Kirby Marine had obtained a waiver allowing the tug to operate in the protected area without a local pilot on board.

The SUP gang aboard the USNS Sisler after the successful completion of back loading USMC equipment in Diego Garcia, in February. From right to left, Bosun Christopher Cupan, AB Jonathan Eitz, OS Eduardo Rojas, AB Devionnce Griffin, OS Jose Rallos, OS Jose Ysern, AB John Pennings and AB Javier Rosales. Should be noted that they referred to this as a "Family Picture" which is the attitude onboard.

CMA CGM returns to profit in Q4

CMA CGM, the world's third-largest container line, swung back to a net profit in the fourth quarter of last year, supported by a recovery in freight rates and efficiency measures taken during a prolonged downturn in shipping, the company said.

The improvement in the shipping market had continued at the start of 2017, but the sector remained fragile and CMA CGM did not plan to order any new vessels in the near term, it said in a financial results statement.

It had also delayed taking delivery of three vessels scheduled for this year until 2018, it said, after already postponing an unspecified number of deliveries from 2016.

The French group reported a net profit, including Singapore-based NOL acquired last year, of $45 million for the fourth quarter, compared with a $46 million net loss in the same period of 2015.

For the full year, it posted a net loss of $452 million including NOL, against a $567 million net profit in 2015.

The shipping industry has been sapped by vessel overcapacity and faltering economic growth, prompting consolidation efforts including CMA CGM's $2.4 billion takeover of NOL.

CMA CGM also launched in the second half of last year a savings plan aimed at reducing costs by $1 billion within 18 months, and the group said the program helped lower unit costs by 5% on a like-for-like basis, excluding fuel, in 2016.

Its full-year operating margin was slightly positive at 0.2%, or 0.5% excluding NOL.

Shipped volumes rose 20.4% last year including NOL, but were down 1.3% excluding the acquisition, with CMA CGM citing as previously a focus on profitable volumes.

Its fleet size decreased to 453 ships from 462 in 2015.

Market leader Maersk Line last month reported a underlying operating loss of $384 million in 2016, but parent company A.P. Moller-Maersk forecast a $1 billion improvement in underlying operating profit this year at its shipping unit, helped by signs of a market recovery.

CMA CGM, which is privately held by the Saade family, is also due to launch next month a vessel-sharing alliance with three Asian lines, and is also seeking to raise $1 billion from asset sales following the NOL takeover.

Australian government agency recovers wages and overtime for exploited Philippine mariners

Australia's Fair Work Ombudsman has recovered A$100,649 ($77,265) for 10 seafarers from the Philippines who were underpaid while working in Australian waters. The under-payments occurred during voyages that the foreign-flagged vessel conducted in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone between January and June 2016, traveling between ports in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

During the voyages, the lowest ranked crew members received as little as A$5 ($3.84) per hour.

The workers were paid base salaries in accordance with international minimum wage rates. However, because the voyages were conducted within Australian waters the employees should have been paid in accordance with their relevant ranks under Australian workplace laws.

Under Australia's Seagoing Industry Award 2010 the lowest ranked workers were entitled to receive at least A$17.29 ($13.27) per hour and A$21.61 ($16.59) for overtime hours.

The Fair Work Ombudsman investigated the matter after receiving a tipoff alleging that the crew of the vessel were not being paid in accordance with the relevant award.

The operator of the vessel, an international company with headquarters outside of Australia, claimed that it was unaware its obligations under Australian workplace laws because it had never operated voyages within the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone before.

The company, whose name has not been released, cooperated with inspectors and rectified the underpayments voluntarily.

A formal letter of caution was issued, placing the employer on notice that future breaches of Australian workplace laws may trigger enforcement action, including litigation.

Last port of call for the U.S. Merchant Marine?

By Charlie Papavizas

The privately owned U.S.-flag foreign trading fleet, which is an essential component of U.S. sealift capability, stands on the edge of a precipice. The fleet – roughly stable in terms of cargo carrying capacity from 2000 to 2012 – has declined from 106 vessels in 2012 to 78 vessels at October 30, 2016, primarily because of a substantial decline in available U.S. Government-reserved cargo. The size of the fleet has reached a point where the viability of the U.S.-flag industry involved in foreign trade – including its trained mariners, maritime academies and schools, and experienced back office personnel – is in danger of disappearing. As the cargo decline is not likely to be reversed any time soon, the fleet will likely only survive into the future if there is a substantial, renewed national commitment to sustain it.

This alarm bell has been rung before. In fact, it has been wrung over and over ever since the foreign trading fleet began to decline at about the time of the Civil War. For example, the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* published an article in 1882 by Lt. Commander F.E. Chadwick, USN, entitled "Our Merchant Marine: The Causes of Its Decline, And the Means to Be Taken For Its Revival." *Scientific American* devoted its entire July 15, 1911 issue to the question "Shall We Have a Merchant Marine?" (answered by all the authors including the U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Labor in the affirmative). Professor Andrew E. Gibson, of the Naval War College and the former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Maritime Affairs in the Nixon Administration, wrung the alarm bell on numerous occasions including "So Long, American Flag – It Was So Nice to Fly You" in the *Naval War College Review* in 1993. These are but a small sample of the pleas for help.

Dire State of the Fleet

What is different today is that the foreign trading U.S.-flag fleet has shrunk to the point that any further substantial decline is likely to make the situation irretrievable. As Vice Admiral William A. Brown, Deputy Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command, testified before Congress on July 30, 2014: "we are concerned that we may be coming closer to a tipping point where our ability to man some of the surge fleet would be at risk ...." At that point in time, the U.S.-flag foreign trading fleet was 83 vessels – it declined another five vessels by the end of October 2016. When Professor Gibson wrote that we were saying goodbye to the U.S.-flag flying on vessels in foreign trade there were 176 such vessels.

Captain Paul N. Jaenichen, Sr., USN (retired), the Maritime Administrator under President Obama, testified before Congress on several occasions to the effect that the fleet decline is endangering the U.S. ability to meet its sealift requirements. For example, he stated in a Congressional hearing on November 17, 2015, that we are already "on the very hairy edge" of lacking the manpower to man reserve defense sealift vessels (which only have partial crews until activation).

What is particularly alarming is that it is not at all clear that the manpower pool can be readily redirected from existing commercial employment to manning reserve vessels. There are a number of historical examples when the pool size appeared more than adequate but it was still difficult to draw on the pool in an emergency sufficient to meet all vessel activation needs. For example, personnel shortages caused delays in about 40% of scheduled sailings during the Korean War when the manpower pool reserve was substantial. In 1990, when the privately owned fleet was much larger than it is today, putting half the reserve fleet in operation exhausted the supply of mariners. The existing pool is also likely to be negatively impacted by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1987 (STCW) which imposes new, stringent marine credentialing requirements effective January 1, 2017.

Private Merchant Marine

The situation may be more dire than at any other time since the end of World War II, but the reasons for having a privately owned U.S.-flag merchant marine are long-established and the alternatives no better than they ever have been.

The Nation's long-standing objective is to have a privately owned U.S.-flag merchant marine both for economic and national security reasons. This objective is reflected in every major piece of maritime legislation since the Merchant Marine Act, 1920 and is enshrined in more than one place in the U.S. Code. It is also reflected in the National Security Directive on Sealift (No. 28 issued October 5, 1989).

The reasons for this objective have remained constant. As set forth by Admiral R.E. Coontz, Chief of Naval Operations, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce on February 7, 1920: "In my opinion the Navy is vitally interested in the establishment of an American merchant marine for the reasons, first, that it is an indispensable arm of service in time of war; second, it enables the United States to take her proper place in diplomatic and trade relations with the world; and, third, it is the nursery of seamen." Similar words have been spoken by every recent U.S. Transportation Command Commander.

Although the objective is clear and the reasons for the objective border on the axiomatic, the U.S. merchant marine has struggled in times of relative peace. The U.S.-flag fleet was carrying about 60% of U.S. foreign commerce in 1947 which fell to about 40% by 1951 as the world economy recovered and the U.S. Government sold much of its World War II fleet. By 1980, the U.S.-flag fleet was carrying only about five percent of U.S. foreign commerce – about the same amount as it carried before World War I. Today it is less than two percent.

The underlying reason for this reversion to type is that the U.S.-flag fleet cannot compete on a cost basis with open registry or "flag of convenience" vessels. Open registries, such as Panama, Liberia and the Marshall Islands, are open to anyone – not just citizens of those countries – and offer vessel owners a unique form of economic freedom among service providers. Owners need not comply with any U.S. tax, labor or similar economic laws yet can freely sell ocean services to and from the United States. U.S.-flag vessel owners, like owners of other national registries, have to comply with all of those laws because of the very essence of a national registry – which is that the vessel owner must be domiciled in the flag state in a meaningful way. So, by the very nature of these national connections, U.S. costs are higher than open registry costs no matter the level of U.S. owner efficiency.

This cost difference between open registries and national registries can be addressed and reduced, but it cannot be eliminated without eliminating the essence of a national registry. No amount of efficiency is going to reduce the wages of qualified U.S. citizen mariners to a world scale level in the present day economy. U.S. Government support is therefore a necessity for the maintenance of a privately owned U.S.-flag commercial fleet. The only alternatives are reliance on the foreign market or a U.S. Government-owned fleet.

Foreign Market Alternative

Although the context has changed over time, the question about whether to have an intrinsic American commercial capability or to rely on the vessels having no loyalty to the United States has not changed. The question was posed by John Jay in 1785 when he was Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the Confederation federal government: "Whether it would be more wise in the United States to withdraw their Attention from the Sea, and Permit Foreigners to fetch and Carry for them; or to persevere in concerting and pursuing such Measures as may conduce to render them a maritime Power?" The United States learned hard lessons in the late 19th and early 20th centuries about what it meant for the projection of sea power to rely on foreigners to "fetch and carry" for the U.S. Government. Admiral Dewey almost missed his appointment with history because of a late foreign supply vessel, the United States barely scrounged together enough cargo vessels to invade Cuba in the Spanish American War, and Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet depended almost to the point of national embarrassment on foreign colliers to circumnavigate the globe.

Then, in the lead up to U.S. involvement in World War I, the U.S. economy suffered greatly because of a lack of available tonnage to carry U.S. products. This occurred because the Allies chartered every vessel they could, the Germans sank as many Allied vessels as they could and war risk insurance rates skyrocketed even for neutral vessels. Half measures (such as permitting foreign-built vessels to come under the U.S. flag during a time when only U.S.-built vessels could be registered in the U.S.) proved insufficient. This led eventually to the Shipping Act, 1916 and a crash U.S. Government program to build vessels to support the economy and for the war effort.

This may all seem like ancient history, and in many ways it is, but there are plenty of modern examples of situations where an extension of national power was thwarted or delayed because of reliance on vessels without loyalty to the government charterer. There are many instances, for example, that occurred in the Vietnam War during the height of its international unpopularity where foreign ships balked at carrying U.S. military cargo. The sealift operations during Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm succeeded in large measure because of the broad international coalition supporting the effort and even then certain allies were slow to commit vessels.

Future scenarios where the United States might have to go it alone, for example in its support of Israel, can easily be conjured where open registry vessels may refuse to participate regardless of the charter rates. In support of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the U.S. Government was forced to charter "virtually every available vessel in the world capable of moving heavy equipment." The United States was fortunate that the world was united in support of those operations and that the vessels were available for charter.

That might not be the case the next time. For example, more of the world's commercial fleet has come under the control of Chinese interests since the early 1990s. The fleet under Chinese flag (including Hong Kong) comprised approximately 9% of the world's fleet in terms of deadweight tonnage (a measure of carrying capacity) as of December 31, 1991 and about 13% as of January 1, 2015.

U.S.-owned vessels registered under foreign flag consisted of about three percent of the world's fleet by the same measure as of January 1, 2015. These vessels offer some comfort since many, if not most, of these vessels are registered in countries, such as the Marshall Islands, which have agreed not to interfere with the requisitioning of such vessels by the U.S. Government in the event of a national emergency – referred to as the "Effective U.S.-Controlled Shipping Fleet." Although potentially useful in the event of a worldwide embargo or other economic emergency, these vessels are all manned by non-U.S. citizens and therefore their reliability is suspect even with U.S. ownership and, in any event, do not provide employment for U.S. citizen mariners needed to man Government-owned vessels.

Government Ownership

If reliance on the foreign commercial market is risky because of uncertain reliability, then what of U.S. Government ownership of a fleet of vessels? That has also been on the menu since the early 20th century. President Woodrow Wilson proposed in September 1914 that the U.S. Government acquire commercial cargo vessels. Congress disagreed, which delayed enactment of the President's proposal until the Shipping Act, 1916. A compromise was struck to permit U.S. Government ownership as a war time measure – but all vessels so acquired had to be sold to private owners within five years of the end of the war.

The war time experience did not put President Wilson's original idea in a favorable light. The rush to build ships at any cost resulted in enormous economic waste and most of the vessels constructed were not finished until the war was over. Moreover, in the immediate aftermath of the war, the cost to the Government to operate the vessels in the commercial market became a pressing economic burden. This led to the Merchant Marine Act, 1920 which laid down the principle that private ownership was preferred over government ownership as noted above.

Although U.S. Government ownership was rejected in principle, the U.S. Government practice has been schizophrenic.

The heroic World War II cargo vessel building effort resulted in another massive sell off to private owners after the war just as occurred after World War I. Many hundreds of vessels were kept in reserve in a National Defense Reserve Fleet pursuant to the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946. Their purpose was to provide a surge capability under U.S. Government control to meet national emergency shipping requirements.

continued on page 9

Philippines Abu Sayyaf pirates execute German yachtsman

This month, the Philippines-based terrorist organization Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) followed through on a threat to execute German yachtsman Jurgen Kantner, who was abducted from his sailboat late last year. The group beheaded Kantner and posted a video of his death online.

"We grieve as we strongly condemn the barbaric beheading of yet another kidnap victim," said Philippine presidential advisor Jesus Dureza in a statement. "We all tried our best. But to no avail."

Kantner and his partner, Sabine Merz, were attacked in November near the island of Sulu. Merz was shot and killed while attempting to fend off the pirates and Kantner was taken hostage. Last month, Abu Sayyaf posted a video threatening to execute him unless the German government paid for his release by February 26.

It was the couple's second experience with kidnapping: they were captured by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden in 2009 and were held near Berbera for two months. Kantner later returned to the pirate stronghold to recover his yacht. Afterwards, in an interview with French media, he said that "my boat is my life and I don't want to lose her, nothing more."

The German government condemned Kantner's killing and called for joint efforts to root out ASG. "The Federal Chancellor condemns the abominable act, which once again shows how unscrupulous and inhumane these terrorists are. We all must stand together and fight against them," spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

Abu Sayyaf has often made good on its death threats. Last year, the group beheaded three prisoners – John Ridsdel, Robert Hall, and Philippine national Patrick Almodovar – after ransom demands went unmet. It has released 12 hostages since last June, including an eight-year-old boy who was turned over to the authorities on February 27.

Analysts suggest that ransoms are usually paid to secure the prisoners' safety, and that kidnapping is a multi-million dollar business for Abu Sayyaf. Observers in the Philippines report that the group uses ransom payments to buy weapons, recruit new members and pay off local communities, which harbor and support ASG fighters. The Philippine government discourages ransom payments and does not usually comment on any transactions between victims' families and the terrorist organization.

Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana recently said that the nation's maritime security forces have trouble interdicting the pirates' speedboats because the attackers are simply too fast. "The Abu Sayyaf has better boats than us," he said, suggesting that the go-fast craft could hit speeds exceeding 40 knots.

Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte has called for help in the form of joint patrols in the waters around Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan, ASG's island strongholds. His government has invited the Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Malaysian militaries to participate, including foreign military operations within Philippine waters.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines are also pressing a major onshore offensive against ASG on Sulu and Basilan, mirroring repeated attempts to drive the group out of the islands over the past two decades. The U.S. military maintained an advisory presence in Mindanao for 12 years, which helped to suppress ASG attacks; security analysts say that after the departure of American forces in 2014, the terrorist organization began to reconstitute itself into a serious threat.

National right-to-work (for less) bill introduced

At least two noteworthy anti-worker bills already have been introduced in the current session of Congress –one calling for a national so-called right-to-work (RTW) law, and the other aimed at repealing the Davis-Bacon Act.

While the introduction of those bills has become a yearly event on Capitol Hill, the threat of enactment is much higher now. The Republican Party platform endorsed both measures, and President Trump is on record (as recently as early February) as a backer of RTW.

As one pro-worker journalist put it, "The practical impact of RTW is to make every worker a free rider, able to use the Union's services without paying for them – and to smash Unions by financially crippling them so much that they can't defend workers in the first place .... The 66-year-old Davis-Bacon Act prevents cut-rate contractors from low-balling workers' wages on federally funded projects."

AFL-CIO Building Trades Department President Sean McGarvey labeled Davis-Bacon repeal (introduced in the Senate) "the Pay Cut for America's Workers Act."

Reacting to the so-called RTW bill (introduced in the House), AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said, "Right to work is a lie dressed up in a feel-good slogan. It doesn't give workers freedom, instead it weakens our right to join together and bargain for better wages and working conditions. Its end goal is to destroy Unions. Numbers don't lie. Workers in states with right-to-work laws have wages that are 12% lower. That's because Unions raise wages for all workers, not just our members."

Trumka also pointed to a recent Pew survey showing that 60% of Americans support Unions. "Americans clearly see the value of coming together with their co-workers to tackle inequality," Trumka observed. "Right to work isn't the will of the people; it's legislation pushed on working people by out-of-touch corporations that want to ship jobs overseas, cut health and safety protections, and pay lower wages. This is an attempt by corporate CEOs to further tip the scale even more in their favor, at working people's expense."

He concluded, "Working people were loud and clear in this past election. We want an economy that works for all, not just corporations. We know we need to rewrite the rules of the economy so that policies like bad trade deals and right to work aren't the new norm. President Trump has said he supports Unions and the people who are our members. He has stood up to corporate Republicans on trade. We call on him to do the same on right to work, and to stand up for every worker's right to join a Union."

The national RTW bill is co-sponsored by Congressman Steve King (R-Iowa) and Congressman Joe Wilson (R-South Carolina). The Davis-Bacon legislation was introduced by Senator Jeff Flake (R-Arizona).

McGarvey said Flake "is completely oblivious to the political undercurrents relating to blue-collar economic anxiety that propelled Donald Trump into the White House ... and possesses a warped sense of empathy when he believes wages of $17.37 and $15.49 an hour – current Davis-Bacon prevailing highway construction wages for a backhoe operator and a laborer in Arizona – are simply too high for taxpayer-funded construction projects. At those wage rates, these workers would earn, respectively, roughly $35,000 and $31,000 annually. Not exactly a king's ransom."

Why gender diversity matters aboard ships

by Captain George Livingstone

The United Nation's has declared the month of March as International Women's Month so it seemed right to review the subject of women in marine transportation for this column.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) estimates there are about 1.2 million seafarers crewing vessels on the ocean trades. Arguably one of the world's most culturally diverse occupations with people from most nations and walks of life working side by side, a remarkable fact. Equally remarkable is how few women make up that culturally diverse workforce.

According to the likes of the *Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs* consensus seems to be about 24,000 or 2% of the 1.2 million seafarers are women. A large portion (20%) of the 24,000 are sailing on cruise ships to which the cruise industry deserves credit. The American oil majors should also be acknowledged for gender diversity efforts on U.S.-flag tank ships for women.

Although gender diversity has long been championed to some measurable degree, in the maritime education community (Academy's, Nautical Schools, etc.), it has not occurred in significant numbers at the senior officer level in marine transportation. Unfortunately, that is telling and most certainly disheartening to women in the maritime industry.

So what's happening? Cultural and practical barriers are one likely reason. An example? How accepting are we of women rising to command level who also want to be mothers? What mechanisms are structurally in place supporting that? What barriers? How do women themselves feel about this issue? What about real societal barriers regarding women in command at sea? What about support networks for women seafarers?

I would venture to guess that unconscious bias may be so ingrained in marine transportation that many of my male colleagues would wonder, why bother with this discussion?

Let's answer with a story recently published in the American publication *Maritime Executive* (MarEx 2017-02-28) "Women have fought in every U.S. war since the American Revolution, and it was no different during World War II. American women took their place beside men and children in defense plants manufacturing supplies for the war effort. Women also served in the U.S. military and in the U.S. Merchant Marine," one such woman was Sadie Carrie Horton. The article goes on to explain how this ordinary woman went to work on ocean barges towing up and down the East Coast of the USA during WWII. It was very primitive and dangerous work for men or women with no electricity, no running water, and no bathroom conveniences all under threat of sinking by U-boat. Having spent nearly two decades towing on modern ocean-going tugs I can assure the reader it is not for the faint of heart, no matter gender. I consider myself fortunate to be witness to the first generation of women openly accepted into the Maritime Academies but decade's later gender diversity in marine transportation remains problematic.

Nearly three quarters of a century ago, Sadie Horton performed an already difficult job under conditions that anyone would consider extreme. I have worked with and witnessed women colleagues in my career at sea performing the job at exceptional levels regardless of gender. Can we discard our unconscious biases about the capabilities of women in this male dominated industry? Sadie Horton was certainly on her own and still made it but what if she and women of her generation had outside support? Would there be more women in marine transportation?

One such global organization exits for women seafarers today, Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA). WISTA is a grass roots conceived organization founded in 1997 to establish networking, education and mentoring focuses for women in the maritime transportation business. There are active WISTA branches all over the world today doing real work in supporting women. There are more than 40 countries supporting national WISTA branches. Each branch provides in-country and regional networking, business and skill building opportunities and facilitating relationships with the industry. The idea of mentoring permeates throughout WISTA and is one of the key elements of what they do. Mentoring is a powerful tool, one that we should all embrace.

The real matter at hand involves diversity and what to do about it. Gender diversity is important because diversity is important, it is not just about gender. Webster defines diversity as follows "The quality or state of having many different forms, types, ideas, etc." Diversity brings strength to an organization, maritime or otherwise, that's why it matters. It makes the organization more competitive, profitable, and ultimately more successful. Smart maritime organizations should populate themselves with as wide a ranging and diverse group as is possible because it ultimately makes for a better organization.

The maritime industry is global in its outlook and seafarers make up what may be the most culturally diverse workforce on the planet. Why do we not take the next logical step to shed our unconscious biases and embrace gender diversity?

Originally published in the March 17 edition of gcaptain.com. Captain Livingstone is a San Francisco Bar Pilot.

Why is the ocean blue?

by Helen Czerski

Earth's vast oceans often appear remote and inaccessible, places of mystery even though you can stand on the shore and look right at them. I've spent plenty of time working at sea because I'm an ocean physicist, and even when I'm bobbing about on a ship, the shifting mass of water beneath me can still seem alien. Leaning against the ship's rail and gazing out over the Atlantic or the Pacific is a part of the job and a huge privilege.

But some days, it's also my greatest frustration. Though I can look over the ocean, I can't really look into it, much as I would love to. It just looks blue and impenetrable. Yet we know that water is transparent and colorless. Why can't I see the wonders of the watery world that I know are beneath my feet? And why does it look blue?

For me to see something in the ocean, light has to travel from the sun into the water, hit something and travel back out again to my eye. The problem is that seawater doesn't allow light to travel through it unchanged. For every additional meter that sunlight travels through the water, a small fraction of its energy is absorbed by the water molecules.

For each color of the rainbow, the energy levy is different. After 10 meters, about a 10th of the blue light has been taken, along with a third of the green light and almost all of the red light. It's hard to see anything under the water because only a tiny proportion of the incoming light survives the round trip.

That's what happens to what goes in. But I can still see the sea, and the whole thing looks blue, so something must be coming back out. This is the other side of the equation. The water may let the light pass, but it can also redirect it, what we call "scattering." Even when there's nothing for the light to reflect from, the water will sometimes cause a light ray to bounce off in a new direction.

So a fraction of the light that goes in bounces around inside the ocean as though it's in a giant game of molecular pinball, and it may eventually find its way back out to the atmosphere. This light is mostly blue because the other colors have been absorbed on the long random journey that brings it back to the surface. That's what makes the oceans blue.

It's also related to one of life's mundane little oddities: When children draw water, they color it blue. If you turned on a faucet and the water that came out was bright blue, there is no way you'd consider drinking it. No one ever wants to see blue water in their kitchen, although you'd never know that if you looked at the nation's refrigerator doors and school walls.

Water is only blue when you have enough of it for the color filtering and scattering to be noticeable. A bath is too shallow. The round trip to the bottom and back will, only remove a third of the red. But the deep end of a swimming pool is starting to be deep enough to make the loss more noticeable, helped along by the chemicals in the pool.

As I bob about on board a ship, staring out at the ocean surface, I have to be content with not being able to see the innards of this giant watery engine directly. There's just too much of it, and the laws of physics themselves hide it from direct view. I can only imagine what it would be like to see the schools of fish, the huge drifting forests of tiny ocean plants and the powerful currents that carry energy and nutrients around the world.

It's frustrating, because it would be a fabulous sight, but the oceans still hold on to some of their mysteries.

Dr. Czerski is an ocean physicist at University College London and author of "Storm in a Teacup" (Norton). This article was originally published in the March 11 edition of the Wall Street Journal.

Refugee sea crossings cause rise in deaths

Refugee deaths rose sharply last year, particularly in the Mediterranean, as smugglers made even riskier attempts to ferry asylum seekers on increasingly unseaworthy vessels, according to United Nations statistics released this month.

The International Organization for Migration documented 7,763 deaths in 2016 worldwide, 27% more than the 6,107 recorded in 2015.

Two-thirds of the deaths took place in the Mediterranean Sea, where 5,098 people lost their lives trying to make the trip from North Africa, Turkey and the Middle East to Europe, according to information collected by the group's Data Analysis Center in Berlin.

The number of Mediterranean casualties last year was 35% higher than in 2015, despite more organized rescue efforts and fewer people trying to make the perilous journey. Most of the 2016 deaths were in the Central Mediterranean, where 4,581 refugees died attempting the longer trip from North Africa to Italy.

The migration organization cautioned that better monitoring and reporting might account for part of the increase in deaths in the Mediterranean. The area has become a greater focus as more asylum seekers streamed into Europe in recent years.

But evidence shows that along with several large shipwrecks, there also were more small fatal incidents as smugglers pursued strategies such as launching multiple boats simultaneously, making rescue operations more difficult, and taking to rough seas during the winter, the organization said.

"There are huge sums of money to be made for each of those boats that cross the Mediterranean, so the more people you can cram into a boat, the more money you make," said Frank Laczko, Director of the International Organization for Migration's analysis center.

Somali pirates hijack tanker then release her without ranson

Somali officials acknowledged on March 14, that the *Aris 13* had been escorted to the Somali coast by at least eight and perhaps as many as dozens armed men in two small skiffs.

The European Union (EU) naval force identified the tanker as flying the flag of Comoros, a small island nation near Madagascar. Sri Lanka's foreign ministry confirmed that eight of its nationals were on board as crew. The EU naval force said pirates were asking for a ransom but the amount was not disclosed. The ship was enroute from Djibouti to Mogadishu, Somalia's capital.

The attack originated in the Puntland region, which is semi-autonomous. "The vessel's captain reported to the company they were approached by two skiffs and that one of them could see armed personnel on board," an unidentified Middle East-based official told the *Associated Press*. "The ship changed course quite soon after that report and is now anchored." However, after the pirates and naval forces exchanged gunfire over a boat believed to be carrying supplies to the hijackers, the pirates released the *Aris 13* on March 16. A pirate confirmed the release was made without a ransom payment. The pirates said they agreed to free the vessel after learning that Somali businessmen had hired the ship, reports *Reuters*. Pirates have traditionally been wary of tangling with Somalia's powerful businessmen.

The United States Navy's 5th Fleet oversees anti-piracy efforts along Somalia's coast. Concerns about piracy's reemergence in the region have been growing in concurrence with greater exploitation of Somalia's waters by foreigners engaged in illegal fishing. Deprived of a livelihood, some Somali fishermen have turned back to hijacking as a means to survive.

In 2010 and 2011, groups of armed Somali men were hijacking merchant vessels off Somalia's coast at an almost daily pace. Thousands of hostages of myriad nationalities were taken, and billions of dollars were lost in ransom, damage and delayed shipments.

In 2015, there were only 17 pirate attacks near Somalia, down from 151 in 2011. Many of those attacks were on smaller fishing boats from nearby countries, mostly by disgruntled Somali fishermen, but not on commercial ships.

Piracy is also on the rise on the other side of Africa. Armed groups based along Nigeria's coast have made that region the most dangerous for seafarers. That coast is also a major oil shipping route. Now that oil prices have dropped, pirates there have taken to kidnapping crew members for ransom rather than siphoning off oil, as the abductions have proved more lucrative.

Sails get a second wind

By Costas Paris

More than a century after shifting away from wind power, the shipping industry is looking at ways to harness ocean breezes once again this time to reduce reliance on fuel.

The latest effort by Denmark's Maersk Tankers uses rotating cylinders nearly 100 feet tall that can function as high-tech sails. The company, a unit of AP Moeller Maersk A/S, said this month it will begin testing on one of its tankers and could add the technology to as many as four dozen ships.

Industry executives said previous efforts to harness the wind didn't catch on with shipping operators as either the cost of such technologies was too high or tests didn't yield the expected fuel savings. However, the lightweight and relatively cheap rotating sails show more promise, they said.

The cylinders are made with lightweight composite materials by Finland-based Norsepower Oy Ltd., and cost \$1.1 million to \$2.1 million to fit to a ship, depending on its size.

The design takes advantage of the so-called Magnus effect, in which a spinning object drags air faster around one side, creating a difference in pressure that moves it in the direction of the lower-pressure side.

The sails are already in use on a ferry operated by Dutch shipping firm Bore Ltd. and are expected to be installed on a Viking Line cruise ship. Maersk's trial run of the technology is a joint venture with Norsepower, Royal Dutch Shell and the U.K.'s Energy Technologies Institute, an industry group focused on alternative fuel use.

Bore Vice President Jorgen Mansnerus said the company installed the sails in one of its ships in 2014 and the results were better than expected. "If you have good wind, you save 6% on fuel," Mansnerus said. "It's an important cut in costs. The sails are durable. We plan to use them for a long time and are thinking of adding them to more ships."

Maersk Tankers doesn't yet have a cost estimate for the project, but believes the technology could cut its fuel consumption by as much as 10% and help it meet increasingly stringent emissions standards. It currently spends \$2.1 billion a year on fuel costs.

Tommy Thomassen, Maersk Tankers' Chief Technical Officer, said the company is considering using them on its fleet of 45-long and medium-range product tankers, though it won't decide whether to roll them out until mid-2019.

Other shipping operators are also looking for ways to cut fuel costs.

Food and commodities giant Cargill Inc. has equipped one chartered dry bulk carrier with a 320 square meter (3,444 square feet) kite made of artificial fibers by Germany's Sky Sails, although shipping executives say such technology hasn't been widely applied to oceangoing vessels. SkySails didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Maersk has said that the rotor sails it is testing are the most promising technology yet, but it has also been exploring other efficiency measures.

The company is testing drones to deliver ship supplies instead of traditional barges, as well as special paints on its hulls that would cut down on algae and other microorganisms that increase drag.

March 15, 2017 Wall Street Journal

ESU Office Assignments

For the month of April, Leo DeCastro will be in the Seabrook office.

ESU NEWS

MARCH 2017

Official Publication of the Exxon Seamen's Union

ExxonMobil Culture of Health program for 2017

Everyone is reminded of the opportunity to lower their health plan premiums through the Culture of Health (CoH) program that is offered by ExxonMobil. The incentive program for the U.S. Culture of Health (CoH) program changed last year. Instead of earning individual cash incentives as before, participants that qualified in 2016 receive a lower rate on their 2017 monthly medical plan premium contribution. This year, annual savings on participant contributions under the POS II A and B plans, depending on class of coverage are as follows: $360 (Employee), $720 (Employee + 1) and $1080 (Family).

Employees who complete an online Personal Health Assessment (PHA) and submit their Health Numbers (biometric screening) to Healthyroads by August 31, 2017, will be eligible for the CoH Rate savings in 2018. While eligible family members can still take advantage of the CoH tools and resources, including PHA, Health Numbers and the Health Coaching program, their participation is no longer required to receive the CoH incentive.

The Personal Health Assessment (PHA) is an online tool that can be completed at www.healthyroads.com. The next step is to complete Biometric Screening which provides Healthyroads key numbers for cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose, blood pressure and Body Mass Index. These numbers can be obtained in one of three ways:

1) At a worksite-sponsored Biometric Screening, available at most locations;

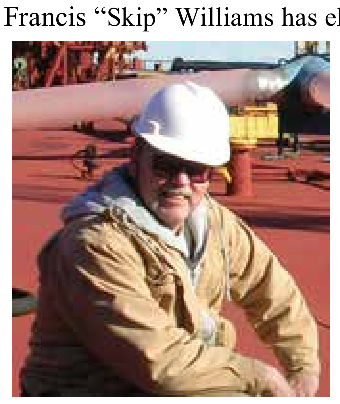
2) At a preventive checkup with your primary care practitioner (PCP). Print the Physician Form and have it completed by your PCP after your screening. The physician's office or member can send the completed form to Healthyroads by secure fax (noted on the Physician form);

3) At a Quest Diagnostics Patient Service Center. Complete the Quest E-voucher and find a participating facility. You don't need to print the appointment confirmation email or bring paperwork to your Quest appointment, as the facility will already have your information.

If you require additional information from Healthyroads, the telephone number is 800-925-2804.

AB Francis "Skip" Williams retires

After more than 26 years of service in the Exxon/SeaRiver fleet Able Seaman Francis "Skip" Williams has elected to retire effective March 31. Skip began his career in 1990 with Exxon Shipping Company and his first seagoing assignment was aboard the *Exxon Jamestown*. Even though he hired in as a Maintenance Seaman, Skip was first assigned as AB and quickly proved his more than capable Deck Department skills and was promoted to the position a few months later.



During his career, Skip sailed on just about every ship in the Ocean fleet and always as a strong supporter of the ESU. Skip was always a welcomed presence aboard ship with a great sense of humor and an enjoyable person to stand watch with. Skip's last vessel assignment was the *Eagle Bay*.

During a recent phone conversation with the ESU office, Skip asked that the ESU pass along to all his former shipmates a heartfelt thank you for all the years of sailing alongside his brothers and sisters at SeaRiver and that he will truly miss everyone.

The Exxon Seamen's Union would like to express its most sincere thanks to Skip for his support to the ESU throughout his career. The ESU Board and the entire membership wish Skip the best of times in his retirement.

Ship reports

S/R American Progress

After loading in the Mississippi River, the vessel was scheduled for a couple of trips to Texas to load in Baytown and Beaumont for delivery to Port Everglades. Tentatively, it looks like the *Progress* will leave Gulf service in early June to clean up for her shipyard period. Pumpman Marvin Marcum continues to fill in with the Ship Rep. duties and reports everything going well.

Eagle Bay

Leo DeCastro visited the vessel at anchor in Long Beach, CA on March 16, while the vessel was waiting for a berth at Tesoro 121. Next trip south at the beginning of April is a split discharge between Long Beach and San Francisco. Board Member at Large Don Picou is filling in with the Ship Rep. duties and in frequent communication with the ESU office.

Liberty Bay

Vessel currently southbound to Long Beach, CA for full discharge at Tesoro 121. Tentatively, the long-term schedule is slated for multiple trips to Long Beach. Ship Rep. Joe Buffington just returned from paid leave and reports everything going well.

The ESU News is written and edited by the Exxon Seamen's Union.

New additions to the SeaRiver fleet

Aboard the Liberty Bay in Long Beach, ESU President/Secretary welcomes two of our newest ESU members to the SeaRiver Fleet. MS Erick Villalobos (left) began his current assignment at the end of December and MS Ricardo Anguiano (right) started his first assignment with SeaRiver on February 20. The ESU appreciates the support of our new members!

SeaRiver continues to hire entry level seamen

Since December 2016, SeaRiver Maritime has been in a frequent hiring process to replace a diminishing workforce due mostly to retirements. Since December, the Company has hired seven Maintenance Seamen all of which have completed or still assigned to their first assignment in the fleet. Additionally, as has been just announced, SeaRiver management just received acceptance to seven additional offers of employment that will begin in early May.

Recently the Maintenance Seamen roles have dwindled significantly as a result of attrition due to retirements and promotions and with several more retirements expected by the end of this year the shortage is a moving target.

The ESU is optimistic that this addition of up to 14 new Maintenance Seamen will help head off the inevitable problems which would result if the pool of Maintenance Seamen were to shrink any further.

ESU Ship Representative Conference

The ESU is in the process of scheduling the 2017 Ship Representative Conference for late September – early October in the Houston, TX area. Initially, the ESU was looking at a May time frame but due to scheduling conflicts the meeting will be slated for a later date. Fleet Manning will schedule all Ship Representatives for five (5) dead days to travel and attend this important training session with the Executive Board. Management personnel will attend one (1) of the days as outlined in the ESU Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The purpose of the Ship Representative Conference is to allow the Union to provide training for Ship Representatives with the expectation of improving the Union's effectiveness in regard to problems that may arise onboard his/her respective vessel. This training includes a wide variety of material and labor issues that includes, but not limited to, grievance handling, work place issues i.e. harassment and Company benefit programs.

Contract Corner

Shipboard Seniority and Changing Watches

Recently a Deck Department question came up aboard ship regarding shipboard seniority for the purposes of changing watches when an individual steps up from Maintenance Seaman or transfers from another department (i.e. Oiler to AB). This issue is covered under Article X of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

First, under definitions, "shipboard seniority is an employee's length of service on his/her current vessel measured from the date he/she last joined." In the event that a Maintenance Seamen steps up to AB, his/her total shipboard seniority counts for the purposes of changing watches. Additional pertinent language regarding changing of watches is outlined under the same article of the CBA that states, "changing of watches will be based on shipboard seniority, however, the Master may adjust watch schedules as operational requirement change."

EXXON SEAMEN'S UNION

Founded March 28, 1941

Affiliated with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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Study finds massive rogue waves aren't as rare as previously thought

University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science scientist Mark Donelan and his Norwegian Meteorological Institute colleague captured new information about extreme waves, as one of the steepest ever recorded passed by the North Sea Ekofisk platforms in the early morning hours of November 9, 2007.

Within the first hour of the day, the Andrea wave passed by a four-point square array of ocean sensors designed by the researchers to measure the wavelength, direction, amplitude and frequency of waves at the ocean surface.

Using the information from the wave set –a total of 13,535 individual waves– collected by the system installed on a bridge between two offshore platforms, the researchers took the wave apart to examine how the components came together to produce such a steep wave.

The data from the 100-meter (329 feet) wide "wall of water" moving at 40 miles per hour showed that Andrea may have reached heights greater than the recorded height of 49 feet above mean sea level. They also found that rogue waves are not rare as previously thought and occur roughly twice daily at any given location in a storm. The findings showed that the steeper the waves are, the less frequent their occurrence, which is about every three weeks at any location for the steepest rogues.

The Andrea crest height was 1.63 times the significant height (average height of the one third highest waves). Optimal focusing of the Andrea wave showed that the crest could have been even higher and limited by breaking at 1.7 times the significant height. This establishes the greatest height rogues can reach for any given (or forecasted) significant height.

"Rogue waves are known to have caused loss of life as well as damage to ships and offshore structures," said Mark Donelan, professor emeritus of ocean sciences at the UM Rosenstiel School. "Our results, while representing the worst-case rogue wave forecast, are new knowledge important for the design and safe operations for ships and platforms at sea."

The study, titled "The Making of the Andrea Wave and other Rogues," was published in the March 8 issue of the journal *Scientific Reports*. The authors include: Donelan and Anne-Karin Magnusson from the Norwegian Meteorological Institute. The work was partly performed within the ExWaMar project (ID 256466/O80) funded by the Norwegian Research Council. ConocoPhillips provided the wave data.

Membership and Ratings Committee

The Committee met on March 2, and found the following members eligible for advancement in seniority and rating stamps in the various departments:

Name and Membership Number		Seatime	Rating	Seniority
Gilbert Bio	19495	1 Year	O.S.	B
James McGuire	19496	1 Year	A.B.	B
Andre Johnson	19497	1 Year	O.S.	B
Abdulgabar Alsinai	19498	1 Year	O.S.	B
Clarence Cumay-ao	19499	1 Year	O.S.	B
Dominic Metz	C2657	30 Days	O.S.	C
Costica Oprisoru	C2658	30 Days	A.B.	C
Matthew Sprague	C2659	30 Days	A.B.	C
Mohamed Mohamed	C2660	30 Days	A.B.	C
David White	C2661	30 Days	A.B.	C
Brett Ruan	C2662	30 Days	O.S.	C

Bosun Stamp - None

Membership and Ratings Committee's Report: M/S to concur in the Committee's report. Carried unanimously. Membership and Ratings Committee: Apolinario Aguirre #3814, Ramon Duran #19243 and Hal Thomas #C2618.

Editor's Note: To receive the *West Coast Sailors* via first-class mail it's $25 per year U.S. mail; $50 per year international.

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Welfare Notes
March 2017

Member Assistance Program

The Member Assistance Program is a confidential, professional resource that is provided by your Trust Fund. It includes a staff of counselors, psychologists and other professionals to help Members and their dependents resolve personal problems. The services are provided by Human Behavior Associates, Inc.

Human Behavior Associates is a private firm that specializes in providing employee counseling and assistance programs. The staff includes psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists and addictions counselors.

All contact between employees and the Member Assistance Program is strictly confidential. Your Trust Fund has contracted with Human Behavior Associates to provide a specific number of no-cost counseling sessions. For continued treatment you will be referred to your medical plan. Be sure to enroll in a medical plan. There may be charges for continued treatment.

To request help call 1-800-937-7770 or collect at 707-747-0117. The help line is available 24 hours per day. The program staff will refer you to the appropriate resource for your issues. You will be referred to local counselors and treatment centers, self-help programs and other sources for immediate assistance.

You can also contact Human Behavior Associates, Inc on line at www.callhba.com.

Michelle Chang, Administrator - mcsupsiupd@sbcglobal.net
Patty Martin - martinpatty59@sbcglobal.net
Virginia Briggs - Claims vbriggs80@sbcglobal.net
Michael Jacyna - Eligibility mjacyna67@sbcglobal.net
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San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone Numbers: 415-778-5490 or 1-800-796-8003 Fax: 415-778-5495
SIU-PD Pension 415-764-4987
SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits 415-764-4991
Seafarers Medical Center 415-392-3611

Coast Guard calls for design studies on icebreakers

The U.S. Coast Guard awarded five firm fixed-price contracts for heavy polar icebreaker design studies and analysis last month. The contracts were awarded to:

- Bollinger Shipyards, LLC, Lockport, Louisiana;
- Fincantieri Marine Group, LLC, Washington, District of Columbia;
- General Dynamics/National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, San Diego, California;
- Huntington Ingalls, Inc., Pascagoula, Mississippi;
- VT Halter Marine, Inc., Pascagoula, Mississippi.

The combined total value of the awards is approximately $20 million.

The objective of the studies is to identify design and systems approaches to reduce acquisition cost and production timelines. In addition to a requirement to develop heavy polar icebreaker designs with expected cost and schedule figures, the contracts require: the awardees to examine major design cost drivers; approaches to address potential acquisition, technology, and production risks; and benefits associated with different types of production contract types.

The heavy polar icebreaker integrated program office, staffed by Coast Guard and U.S. Navy personnel, will use the results of the studies to refine and validate the draft heavy polar icebreaker system specifications.

The use of design studies is an acquisition best practice influenced by the Navy's acquisition experience with the Landing Craft, Utility amphibious transport ship and fleet oiler, which are being acquired under accelerated acquisition schedules.

"These contracts will provide invaluable data and insight as we seek to meet schedule and affordability objectives," said Rear Admiral Michael Haycock, the Coast Guard's Director of Acquisition Programs and Program Executive Officer. "Our nation has an urgent need for heavy polar icebreaking capability. We formed an integrated program office with the Navy to take advantage of their shipbuilding experience. This puts us in the best possible position to succeed in this important endeavor."

The studies are expected to take 12 months to complete, with study results provided incrementally during that time. The Coast Guard plans to release a draft request for proposals for detail design and construction by the end of fiscal year 2017, followed by release of the final RFP in fiscal year 2018. The Integrated Program Office plans to award a single contract for design and construction of the lead heavy polar icebreaker in fiscal year 2019, subject to appropriations.

Last port of call for the U.S. Merchant Marine?

continued from page 4

This was an easy choice to make in 1945 because the funds had already been expended to build the vessels and it was recognized that there would be a significant surplus of war-built vessels after commercial sales. So, the foundation of the U.S. Government-owned fleet – 1,421 vessels on July 1, 1945 (growing to a peak of 2,277 vessels in 1950) – was World War II-built vessels well into the 1970's. That fleet served extensively during the Korean War (778 vessels over an 18-month period) and again in the Vietnam War (161 vessels over a five-year period).

However, the fleet aged over time and was not replenished at a rate that would have resulted in a modern reserve fleet. Moreover, the size of commercial vessels increased substantially and new vessel types were introduced (most particularly container and roll-on/roll-off vessels) making the fleet increasingly obsolescent. The reserve fleet has struggled to keep up.

To address these issues, the Ready Reserve Force, a subset of the NDRF, was formed in 1976. Maintenance funds would be concentrated on this subset of the most modern and militarily useful vessels. In the deployment for Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, "the largest concentrated sealift activity since World War II," 78 of the 96 RRF vessels were activated.

Today, the fleet of RRF vessels is down to 60 surge vessels, 14 operated by the U.S. Military Sealift Command and 46 operated by the U.S. Maritime Administration. In theory the RRF should be a relatively modern group of vessels and particularly vessels that may not have much every day commercial utility. But the theory is being stressed by a lack of resources. The average age of the RRF vessels is over 40 years. The average age of privately owned U.S.-flag roll-on/roll-off vessels in the Maritime Security Program is about 15 years.

The obvious advantages of a U.S. Government ready reserve of vessels are that it is absolutely under U.S. Government control and it can be populated with vessels which are particularly militarily useful either as to type or modifications or both. This latter advantage has proven to be difficult to sustain because of a lack of funding. For example, the newer U.S.-flag roll-on/roll-off vessels in the Maritime Security Program each have a capacity of over 500,000 square feet whereas the largest RRF roll-on/roll-off vessels managed by MarAd have about 300,000 square feet (and most have substantially less than that).

The disadvantages are that keeping a fleet in standby status is expensive in comparison to subsidizing a fleet of operating commercial vessels and also not as absolutely assured as it might first appear.

On cost, the Administrator Jaenichen testified on November 17, 2015 that it costs approximately $390 million per year to maintain 60 RRF vessels in inactive status. In contrast, the Maritime Security Program, which provides stipends to support 60 militarily useful commercial U.S.-flag vessels, cost $186 million in fiscal year 2015 (which is scheduled to grow to almost $300 million in FY 17 as a result of recently enacted legislation). The main difference is that commercial owners have a profit motive to operate their vessels as efficiently as possible. Moreover, the main source of trained U.S. citizen merchant mariners for the RRF are these very same MSP vessels. Without MSP, the cost of having full complement reserve crews for the RRF vessels would increase the cost of the government-owned vessels substantially.

Also, the RRF only provides vessels and does not provide a transportation or logistics service. The commercial fleet provides end-to-end transportation because that is what commercial customers demand. So, everything from inland transportation to terminal operations must come from someplace else, at a cost, if the only source of reserve sealift capability is the RRF. Administrator Jaenichen estimated in 2014 Congressional testimony that it would cost the U.S. Government at least $2 billion to replace the 60 privately owned vessels in the Maritime Security Program and more than $40 billion to replace the international logistics capability obtained via the ocean carriers in that Program.

On assurance of access, the issues in the past have come in the form of technical vessel break-out problems and lack of available mariners. During Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the first large scale activation of the RRF since it was created, there were significant activation delays for a variety of reasons ranging from inadequate maintenance to a lack of available shipyard capacity to undertake repairs. Similar problems occurred with the NDRF in the Vietnam War – about 70% of the vessels activated in 1965 suffered significant lost time casualties when activated. Although improvements have been made in light of the experience, vessels in reserve status are not likely to ever have the same day one reliability as vessels in ongoing service.

Assurance is also affected by the availability of trained personnel. One of the primary concerns expressed by MarAd and USTRANSCOM about the declining number of U.S.-flag vessels engaged in the foreign trade is how that reduces the pool of available mariners to man RRF vessels – which both agencies have indicated is currently only barely sufficient. Past manning problems during periods when the manpower pool to draw from should have been sufficient, however, should be cause for additional concern.

National Commitment

So, in summary, reliance on the foreign commercial market is risky and uncertain and reliance on U.S. Government ownership is expensive and not necessarily assured – particularly if problems with the commercial fleet are not addressed because it is the source of manpower for the government-owned fleet. That leaves the best choice as the same one the United States has had since at least the early 1900's – and that is to support a privately owned U.S.-flag fleet in foreign commerce for military auxiliary, economic security and mariner training and employment purposes.

The U.S. Congress took a significant step in the right direction when it enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, signed by President Barrack Obama into law on December 18, 2015. That Act increased the stipend paid to the 60 U.S.-flag vessels enrolled in the Maritime Security Program from $3.1 million per year per vessel for FY 2016 (increased to $3.5 million in the same law) to $5 million per year per vessel for FY 2017 through 2020 and even more in FY 2021. The dramatic increase is a recognition that the U.S.-flag fleet trading in foreign commerce needs significant help now.

But that help alone is not enough. As indicated in a MarAd Report to Congress in April 2015 and by Administrator Jaenichen to Congress on November 17, 2015, the U.S.-flag shrank and is shrinking because of a decline in cargoes reserved to such vessels by U.S. cargo preference laws. According to Administrator Jaenichen, the decline in cargoes has had "the most dramatic effect on the U.S.-flag fleet."

Unless that decline is reversed or other substantial measures are taken to reduce the cost disadvantage faced by U.S.-based ship owners or provide compensating support, the fleet will continue to suffer and decline. A fulsome and substantial strategy is needed taking a lesson from the 1930's.

At that time the private merchant marine also faced an existential crisis as the existing support system (mail subsidies) was rife with inefficiency and corruption. President Franklin Roosevelt took the bull by the horns and proposed moving to an entirely new subsidy system. The solution was not universally popular and met with determined opposition in Congress. In the end, however, the Merchant Marine Act, 1936 became law which "proved to be critical to the eventual Allied victory in the Second World War." A similar concerted and sustained effort will be needed to support the privately owned U.S.-flag fleet because without a renewed national commitment, this may very well be the last port of call for the U.S. merchant marine.

The Author

Charlie Papavizas is a partner in the international law firm of Winston & Strawn LLP and the chair of its maritime practice group.

(As published, by permission, in the January 2017 edition of *Maritime Report & Engineering News*.)

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Senator Mazie Hirono on February 23, at the Pacific Beach Hotel in Honolulu. Once a year Mazie gives the AFL-CIO of Hawai'i a state of what's happening in Washington D.C. From left to right: Mario Higa/MFU; Luke Kaili/MEBA; Senator Hirono; Randy Swindell/MMP; Donovan Duncan/IBU; and SUP Honolulu Branch Agent Mike Dirksen.

SUP President's Report

March 13, 2017

APL MARINE SERVICES

APL notified the Union on February 21, that the *APL Coral* will leave U.S.-flag service in April.

The *Coral's* Maritime Security Program (MSP) operating agreement will be transferred to the *APL Gulf Express* and will operate in the Persian Gulf. APL indicates that the *Gulf Express* is a sistership to the *APL Saipan*.

MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY

Matson's abuse of American mariners continues. As reported last month, four company vessels arriving in Long Beach from Shanghai have been restricted to ship because the company has requested an AQUA Lane waiver from U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Under this program, cargo can be worked on arrival without Customs clearing the ship, however, until Customs actually boards the vessel, crew members must remain restricted to the ship – American merchant mariners are prohibited from going ashore in a United States port!

In late February, your secretary contacted Jack Sullivan, Matson's Senior Vice President for Vessel Operations & Engineering, and requested that the company take action to ensure that the crew of the *R.J. Pfeiffer* be allowed to go ashore when she arrived in Long Beach on February 26. Sullivan replied that he was "...looking into the feasibility of getting the ship in early enough to clear the crew for shore leave."

That effort by Jack "The Jailer" failed as it seems to be company policy to hold crew members hostage after arriving from a foreign port. The *Pfeiffer* was all fast at Long Beach on Sunday, February 26, at 1845, however, although cargo was worked, Customs did not clear the ship until 0730 on February 27. Wrote to Sullivan that day and demanded that the sailors aboard be compensated for restriction to ship and further demanded that Matson CEASE requesting AQUA Lane clearance from Customs or in the alternative that Matson piece-off Customs so that American mariners are not held prisoners in a U.S. port.

[On March 14 Sullivan notified the Union that Matson was "suspending " its participation in the AQUA Lane program and that Customs would board company vessels after arrival at Long Beach and that the crew and the cargo would be cleared at the same time. In short, the crew will again be able to go ashore once the gangway is down.]

AMERICAN SHIP MANAGEMENT

Along with the MFOW and SIU-Marine Cooks, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with American Ship Management (ASM) on February 27 –subject to membership approval – regarding the near-term operation of the *Moku Pahu*.

As reported last month, this integrated tug & barge is now owned by Schuyler Line Navigation Company and operated by ASM. The vessel is currently enroute to Yemen with a load of grain.

The MOU covers the current voyage "and finally to a shipyard in the United States, Middle East or Asia, or a scrapping facility, at ASM's direction." In addition, "the parties recognize that during the term of this MOU the vessel could be laid up, removed by Schuyler from ASM's management, or otherwise no longer be managed by ASM, with or without ASM's consent. Given that, the parties agree that in the event ASM is no longer the manager of the vessel for any reason, or ASM's contract with Schuyler terminates or expires, this MOU shall immediately terminate and ASM shall have no liability to the Union, any of its members, or to any third party for severance, subsistence, or any other similar or dissimilar payment relating to the vessel no longer being under ASM management."

It should be noted that the *Moku Pahu* is operating under the 2013-2017 Agreement with Matson Navigation Company after Matson notified the vessel's owner, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company (HCS), in July 2015, that it no longer wanted to operate the vessel. Subsequently, HSC contracted with ASM and ASM continued to operate *Moku Pahu* when she was bought by Schuyler Line in January.

Recommend membership ratification of the *Moku Pahu* Memorandum of Understanding.

PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES

The Union was informed on February 26, by Patriot that the Military Sealift Command that contract awards (see last month's *West Coast Sailors*) for two groups or "lots" of 11 Large, Medium-Speed, Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) vessels would be delayed for at least three months. The vessels are:

Lot 1. – The *Bob Hope*-Class vessels: *USNS Benavidez, USNS Bob Hope, USNS Brittin, USNS Fisher, USNS Mendonca, USNS Pililaau* and *USNS Seay*. Two of these vessels will operate worldwide in Full Operating Status. The others will operate in Reduced Operating Status in U.S. ports.

Lot 2. – The LMSR vessels Patriot currently operates for MSC in Reduced Operating Status: *USNS Gilliland, USNS Gordon, USNS Shughart* and *USNS Yano*.

The current contract between Patriot and MSC for the *Gilliland, Gordon, Shughart* and *Yano* expires on April 5, but Patriot plans to negotiate a contract extension with MSC until the award for these vessels and those in Lot 1 are announced.

MARITIME INDUSTRY CONGRESSIONAL "SAIL-IN"

Representatives from our Nation's seafaring Unions, U.S.-flag companies, State Maritime Academies, the Navy League of the United States, the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO gathered in Washington, D.C. on March 1, to increase Congressional awareness of the importance of the maritime industry to the economic and national security of the United States, and to generate support for those programs and policies that are key to the survival and growth of the U.S. Merchant Marine and the jobs of American merchant mariners.

Representing the SUP at the Sail-In were Berit Eriksson, Director of Workforce Development of the Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship, and your secretary.

The primary focus this year was the necessity of fully funding the Maritime Security Program (MSP) and the imperative for government agencies to support U.S.-flag cargo preference requirements.

Maritime Security Program

The Maritime Security Program subsidy for each of the vessels enrolled – including the nine operated by SUP-contacted APL – remains at $3.5 million per ship, per year, but Congress last year increased that amount to approximate $5 million per vessel in Fiscal Year 2017 (October 1, 2016-September 30, 2017) and Fiscal Year 2018 (October 1, 2017-September 30, 2018). However, the funds have not be appropriated. It is important to note that a company can opt out of MSP if it isn't properly funded and flag-out its vessels without penalty.

Cargo Preference

All too often in the past, federal shipper agencies and departments have failed to comply with U.S.-flag shipping requirements, denying American vessels their rightful share of these cargoes, denying American maritime workers important job opportunities aboard these vessels, and instead spending American taxpayer dollars exclusively on foreign-flag shipping services.

• Sail-In participants urged Congress and the Administration to express its support for the full implementation of existing U.S.-flag cargo preference shipping requirements;

• Urged the Administration to make clear to all Federal agencies and departments that they must use privately-owned U.S.-flag commercial vessels for the carriage of U.S. government generated and financed cargoes as required by law;

• Urged Congress and the Administration to make clear that the Maritime Administration has responsibility to determine if a Federal program is subject to U.S.-flag cargo preference shipping requirements and that the Maritime Administration should exercise its authority to enforce U.S.-flag shipping requirements;

• Urged Congress to restore the longstanding requirement that U.S.-flag vessels carry no less than 75% of U.S. government financed food aid cargoes and that Congress and the Administration support the existing PL 480 Program (Food for Peace) so that American taxpayer dollars continue to benefit American farmers, American shipping and American jobs.

All Sail-In participants were divided into groups for a total of 23. Sister Eriksson's group included Rich Berkowitz, Director of Operations for the Transportation Institute and Tim Saffle, Vice President of the United Inland Group, MM&P. This group met with Congressman Derek Kilmer (D-Washington), Congressman Luis Correa (D-California), Congressman Rich Larsen (D-Washington) and Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D-Washington).

Your secretary's group included MFOW President Anthony Poplawski, Jeff Pavlak from the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trade Department, and R.J. Klein, President of the Council of American Master Mariners. This group met with Congressman John Garamendi (D-California), Alan Lowenthal (D-California), Congressman Jared Huffman (D-California), Congresswoman Lisa Rochester (D-Delaware), Congresswoman Nanette Barragan (D-California) and Congressman Denny Heck (D-Washington).

In addition to discussing the Maritime Security Program and cargo preference, Poplawski and your secretary raised the issue of American mariners being restricted to ship due to Matson participating in Customs & Border Protection's AQUA Lane program with Congressman Garamendi, Congressman Lowenthal and Congresswoman Barragan. All three were stunned and vowed to take action to rectify the situation, particularly Congressman Lowenthal who represents Long Beach and Congresswoman Barragan who represents San Pedro.

SAILORS' POLITICAL FUND

As the Sail-In demonstrated, interaction with politicians that make the laws that affect our work is essential. While the Unions headquartered in the Washington, D.C. area do this on a regular basis, as do the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, the SUP remains involved.

The other way the Union is involved is though the Sailors' Political Fund, which relies on voluntary support from the membership. This fund is the method where the SUP can financially support candidates for election that support our pro-maritime, pro-labor agenda. Financial support for current Members of Congress that stand up for our industry is essential to gain access to those members. Educating Members of Congress on the need for a strong and viable U.S. Merchant Marine and the purpose it serves in both peace and war is a task that will never end.

Your secretary encourages all SUP members to support the Sailors' Political Fund in order to provide your Union the resources to carry on this fight along with the other maritime Unions and industry.

SEATTLE BRANCH

Last month, Seattle Branch Agent Vince O'Halloran requested a six-month leave of absence for medical reasons beginning March 1 through August 31.

Agent O'Halloran's recommendation for his relief is Brother Brendan Bohannon, Book #5755. Brother Bohannon joined the SUP in 1999 and is a good sailor and Union man.

Recommend that O'Halloran's leave of absence be granted by the membership and that Bohannon relieve him as Acting Seattle Branch Agent.

continued on next page

President's Report continued

HOLIDAYS

Harry Bridges Memorial Day

The Honolulu Branch will be closed on Thursday, March 30, in observance of an ILWU Local 142 holiday. Under the SUP agreement with Matson, this is a holiday for company vessels in Hawai'i ports on that day, the Paint & Rigging Gang and those employed under the Extra Maintenance Agreement.

This is not a holiday in West Coast ports. Harry Bridges Birthday is a holiday in West Coast ports on July 28.

Cesar Chavez' Birthday

All SUP halls on the West Coast will be closed on Friday, March 31, in observance of Cesar Chavez' birthday. As an ILWU holiday, it is therefore a recognized holiday for SUP members working under the APL and Matson Maintenance Agreements and for those in APL and Matson vessels in West Coast ports on that day. The holiday is also observed under the Agreements with the San Francisco Bar Pilots.

Cesar Chavez' birthday is not a holiday in Hawai'i.

Good Friday

All SUP halls on the West Coast will be closed at Noon on April 14, in observance of Good Friday. Under the Agreements with APL and Matson, unlicensed personnel shall be granted a three-hour holiday between Noon and 3:00 P.M. Overtime shall be paid when required to work during those hours.

The Honolulu Branch will be closed all day on April 14, as it is an ILWU Local 142 holiday. Therefore, it is a holiday for Matson ships in port and for those working under the SUP/Matson Maintenance and Extra Maintenance Agreements.

ACTION TAKEN

M/S to ratify the *Moku Pahu* Agreement. Carried unanimously.

M/S (to accept leave of absence for Vince O'Halloran and to concur in the appointment of Brendan Bohannon as Acting Seattle Branch Agent. Carried unanimously.

M/S to concur with the balance of the President's report. Carried unanimously.

Gunnar Lundeberg

World's largest container ship named

Samsung Heavy Industries held a naming ceremony for the world's largest container ship at its Geoje yard this month.

The 20,150 TEUs *MOL Triumph* is the first of four ultra-large container ships being built for MOL (Mitsui O.S.K. Line) of Japan. The vessels were ordered in February 2015, and steel was cut for *MOL Triumph* in January 2016.

MOL Triumph has a length of 1312 feet, breadth of 193 feet and depth of 108 feet. The ship boasts an array of energy-saving equipment designed by Samsung Heavy Industries including propeller, rudder valve and stator.

MOL Triumph will be delivered on March 27 after preparation for her maiden voyage are complete.

Previous record holders based on TEUs are the *MSC Oscar, MSC Oliver, MSC Zoe* and *MSC Maya* at 19,244 TEUs and 1,297 feet long and built by Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering.

Samsung Heavy Industries expects to deliver 10 container ships of around 20,000 TEU capacity this year. The shipyard received an order for six 21,100 TEU-class ultra-large container ships from OOCL (Hong Kong) shortly after the MOL order in 2015.

South African completes Trans-Atlantic paddle-board crossing

On March 9, South African surfer and motivational speaker Chris Bertish became the first person to paddleboard across the Atlantic without assistance.

Bertish is no stranger to challenging feats on the water: he holds the 12-hour and 24-hour distance record for open ocean stand-up paddleboard; the 12-hour downwind distance record; and the biggest wave in recorded surfing competition. His arrival in Antigua marked the end of a three month, 4,000 nautical miles, two million-paddlestroke journey, the culmination of years of planning and training.

He departed Agadir, Morocco on December 6, on a route that would take him around the Canary Islands and across the Atlantic to Florida. However, due to an unfavorable weather forecast, he changed his destination to Antigua's Leeward Islands. He described the emotional moment of his arrival in a final logbook post: "As I approach the outer limit of the bay at English Harbour and turn the corner . . . still surging with inspired energy and adrenalin surges, the pain in my shoulder, hands and body disappear and is replaced by pure sense of renewed energy, upliftment and joy," he wrote.

"The last few days were super intense," he told the *Times*. "It's just so nice to be on dry land and not to have to worry about all the billions of things that could [go] wrong."

Bertish's "board" for the crossing was a custom 20-foot boat designed by Phil Morrison, a noted naval architect and sailboat racer. It has a watertight compartment forward for shelter and navigational equipment, and it was designed to be self-righting in the event of a capsize. He told the *Times* that it suffered multiple leaks and equipment failures, but he was able to keep it moving forward despite storms, high winds, exhaustion and injury (a torn rotator cuff).

Vice President's Report

March 2017

In addition to the routine duties of the front office, I checked the following ships.

APL Coral: Ali Hussein, delegate. Clarification on shift ship minimums. Restriction in Indian ports where a government official provided the captain with notice and term in compliance with Section 18 (b) of the General Rules. Received notification that this ship will flag out in April and the Maritime Security Program (MSP) operating agreement will be transferred to the flagged in APL Gulf Express which is tentatively scheduled to shuttle in the Persian Gulf.

APL Singapore: Dale Gibson, Bosun. Clarification on washdown.

APL Belgium: Nick Hoogendam returned from trip off relieving sister Kim Sloggett as Bosun. Question on watchstanding at anchor. No beefs.

USNS Dahl: Matt Henning, Delegate. Questions on SUP 401(k) answered: should be forms for participation available on all ships. Headed to a U.S. shipyard later this year.

USNS Pomeroy: Brian McCarthy relieved Adam Tassin as delegate. Various food beefs investigated with continuous improvement expected over time. Storing improvements made after meetings with management.

USNS Waters: Bruce McNeil, Delegate. Delegate held Union meeting and forwarded minutes to SUP HQ for action on ice machine, bottled water while operating in the tropics. Midway through a multi-sequenced and timed deployment of Department of Transportation survey gear the starboard crane malfunctioned. Under the able direction of Bosun Michael Jean crew quickly activated the port crane, resumed the lift and executed overboard deployment within seconds of the required timing specifications. Mission accomplished SUP-style.

Foss Maritime Company: JD Rymel, Delegate. Investigation of potential exposure to chemical hazard still ongoing. Of particular interest to the Union is the protection policy and safety process going forward which according to management is still under development.

San Francisco Bar Pilots: Mike Koller, Delegate. Run boat watch change and station boat rotation hitch will be put to a vote.

Dave Connolly

Coast Guard warning on illegal water taxis

The U.S. Coast Guard has issued a public warning following reports of illegal commercial vessel services including water taxis, excursion vessels and transportation services reserved from smartphone applications.

Unlawful operations include:

- Charter services that carry a "Passenger for hire" without a valid Coast Guard issued Merchant Mariner's Credential suitable for the vessel's service. "Passenger for hire" is defined as an operator that takes or accepts compensation, including donations, in exchange for services aboard a vessel.
- Bareboat charter services that provide a vessel with a crew/master or carry more than 12 passengers onboard. A "bareboat charter" is defined as paying only for the use of a vessel.
- Charter services that carry more than six passengers, at least one of which are for hire, and are not certificated by the Coast Guard.

"Passengers on board any charter service are reminded to be alert for deceptive practices and should not hesitate to require the vessel operator to produce a valid Coast Guard issued Merchant Mariner's Credential suitable for the vessel's service," explained Captain Martin Malloy, Coast Guard Captain of the Port of New York.

"Credentialed mariners have met rigorous training requirements and inspected vessels have met high safety standards. Passengers are taking an unnecessary safety risk by riding on a vessel without a credentialed mariner in charge or an uninspected vessel that needs to be inspected."

Hanjin's last ship sold for scrap

The bankrupt container line Hanjin Shipping's last remaining ship, the *Hanjin Rome*, has been sold for scrap by a Singaporean court. All Hanjin-operated vessels have now been auctioned off, seized by creditors or repossessed by shipowners. The *Rome* is now underway for a Bangladeshi shipbreaking yard, the final sailing for what was once the world's seventh-largest container fleet.

The 1998-built *Rome's* demolition reflects her age, but also the persistent oversupply in the container market, especially in the Panamax segment. Vessels of 4-5,000 TEU, like the *Rome*, have been selling for little more than scrap value – even hulls as young as seven years old. VesselsValue put her demolition value at about $8 million.

"Hanjin's sudden departure has left a vacuum in the market and most of its ships were unable to find any gainful employment during the six months period that followed the cessation of regular liner operations," said container market analysts Alphaliner. The firm estimates that 48 out of Hanjin's 97 vessels remain idle.

The *Rome* made headlines when she was arrested in Singapore August 30, just one day before Hanjin filed for receivership. Her 24 crewmembers were stuck on the anchored vessel for months, uncertain of when they might be able to disembark and fly home. The *Rome's* master gave regular interviews to the Singapore's *Straits Times*, the BBC and other outlets, giving a voice to the many Hanjin seafarers who were left stranded around the world when the line collapsed.

The last of Hanjin's Singapore offices are due to close by April, according to Asia One. Some of the firm's former employees have migrated to the newly formed SM Line, which purchased some of Hanjin's business operations and vessels in order to found a new intra-Asia/TransPacific service network. SM intends to launch its first route from South Korea to the U.S. West Coast in April.

SUP Branch Reports

Seattle

February 21, 2017

Shipped: 5 Boatswains filled with 1 A returning from trip off and 4 B's to Navy bottoms; 15 Able Seaman jobs filled with 2 A-card return to *Manoa*, 1 A and 1 C return to *Maui*, 1 A, 7 B, 1 C and 2 D's to Navy bottoms; 2 Ordinary Seaman jobs taken by 1 C and 1 D registrant; and 2 General Vessel Utility positions shipped to D registrants. Also shipped 11 standbys to 5 A-cards and 3 B, 1 C and 2 D's.

Registration: 9 A cards for a total of 22; 11 B cards for a total of 24; 7 C cards for a total of 12.

Ships Checked

Matson vessels *MV Manoa; MV Mahimahi;* and the *SS Maui* called in Seattle with little or no problems. The vessels *APL Coral, USNS Soderman, USNS Pomoroy, USNS Gilliland, USNS Yano: USNS Shugart,* and the Ready Reserve Fleet ships *Cape Taylor* and *Cape Trinity* all called Seattle for SUP crew replacements.

Represented the SUP at the following meetings: the King County Labor Council Executive Board and Delegates meeting, the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee meeting, the King County Labor Council Port Coalition meeting, and the American Waterways Operators conference.

Along with the MM&P, IBU, MEBA, and the ILWU, the SUP participated in the Washington Maritime Federation's Lobby Day in Olympia. We provided testimony to individual members of the Washington State's Legislature on the economic impact of the maritime industry and that 40% of all jobs in Washington are trade dependent.

I will be taking an unpaid leave of absence for six months beginning March 1, to address medical concerns in hip repair that may result in an extended recuperation period. I have recommended to Headquarters that Brendan Bohannon relieve me during this time. Brother Bohannon has shipped out of Wilmington, Honolulu and Seattle, with his last job dispatched as Boatswain in the *APL Agate* out of the San Francisco Hall. He is well respected by both SUP and MFOW members.

Vince O'Halloran
Branch Agent

Timely Reminder 2nd quarter 2017 dues are due and payable *now*!

SUP Constitution
ARTICLE VI
DUES AND INITIATION FEE

Section 1. The initiation fee shall be Sixteen Hundred Dollars ($1600.00) payable in installments with the sum of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) being due and owing upon the member's admission into the Union and the balance of Fifty Dollars ($50.00) per month for each month or part thereof in SUP-contracted vessels.

The initial installment of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) shall accompany the application of membership and the dues shall be One Hundred Fifty Dollars ($150.00) per quarter, payable in advance.

Wilmington

February 21, 2017

Shipping: Bosun: 2, AB: 9, AB Maint: 5, STOS 2, standby: 60. Total jobs shipped: 85.

Registrations: A: 23, B: 38, C: 11, D: 16.

Ships Checked

R.J. Pfeiffer; Matsonia; Manukai; Manulani; Maunawili; Mokihana; APL China; APL Belgium; APL Korea; APL Singapore.

Matson ships running smoothly with little or no problems among the crew. The ships retuning from the Far East are not being cleared upon arrival, keeping the crew aboard until Customs and Immigration show up the next day.

APL Philippines – problem with food stores, running out of basics like bread, crackers, apples, oranges, jelly, jam, etc. Bob Burns, Bosun and Gary McDevitt , Delegate.

Patriot sailors: jobs are shipped off the board out of the hall. Come on in, you're welcome. When you take MSC training you can take an MSC job.

The crew of the *Mokihana* would like to thank the Steward Dept. for all their hard work and well prepared meals and adequate supply of food stores. Much Mahalos! John Benson, Bosun and Chris Bujnowski, Delegate.

Leighton Gandy
Branch Agent

Honolulu

February 21, 2017

Shipped the following jobs in the month of February: 1 Bosun, 2 AB Day steady, 5 AB Watch steady, and 2 AB Maintenance steady. The shipping jobs were filled by 4 A cards, and 6 B cards. Shipped 26 standby jobs. The standby jobs were filled by 5 A cards, 10 B cards, 10 C cards, and 1 D card.

Registered in February: 6 A cards, 8 B cards, 3 C cards, and 3 D cards.

To date totaled registered: 11 A cards, 15 B cards, 9 C cards and 4 D cards.

Ships Checked

I visited the *R.J. Pfeiffer, Manukai, Maunawili, Manulani, Maunalei, Manoa, Mokihana, Kauai, Maui, Mahimahi, Matsonia,* and the Paint and Rigging gang. All are running with few or minor beefs.

I represented the SUP at the Hawai'i Maritime Port Council meeting, and a breakfast with U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono who gave us her report on the what's going on in Washington D.C. Needless to say, with Trump as president and a majority Republican senate her report was glum, to say the least. Photo on page 9.

Mike Dirksen
Branch Agent

SUP member joins pension ranks

The following SUP members joined the rank of pensioner, bringing the total number of SUP members to 194:

Robert L. Strabbing, 66, Book No. 7502, joined SUP in 1988, 20 years seatime.

Business Agent's Report

March 13, 2017

Chevron Mississippi- In at Richmond back on the West Coast running between Long Beach, El Segundo and the Long Wharf with Captain Amanda Wallace who is pleased with her hard working deck department. The deck gang had question concerning the new Agreement with Chevron and explained the highlights were published in the February's *West Coast Sailors* and that the full Agreement should be available in the next couple of months. Ship sailed with no beefs Ed Windler, Delegate running smoothly with Kenneth Dooley, Bosun.

Florida Voyager; Oregon Voyager; California Voyager- These ships are running on the East Coast shuttling between Houston, Mississippi, and Florida.

Oregon Voyager is due back sometime at the end of the March.

Maui- In at Oakland #62. Called back the crew after a short nine-day lay-up in Seattle. All hands returned ships back on the Northwest run. Sailed with no beefs. Sam Worth, Delegate, Robin Colonas, Bosun.

Mahimahi- In at Oakland #62. Last two trips, weather being a factor, causing delays in arriving in Oakland. Now back on schedule with no beefs. Mike Soper, Delegate; Horhaslan Idris, Bosun.

Matsonia- In at Oakland #62. Bosun didn't return. With no qualified member in the Hall, promoted Mick McHenry to Bosun and shipped a steady AB in his place. Back on steady Honolulu, Oakland run. Sailed with no beefs Joe Eckert, Delegate.

Kauai- In from Seattle, carrying cattle this trip from Honolulu with a couple of stock tenders. Weather worked in our favor this trip. All is well top to bottom. In and out with no beefs Sahri Ali, Delegate, Robert Reed, Bosun.

Manoa- Lay-up in the China shipyard over the weekend. Mate worked the gang for two days then flew them home. Scuttlebutt has this ship in the yard for 70 days subject to change. Clean pay-off with no beefs Duke Maringer, Delegate, and Marc Calairo, Bosun.

To our members taking Matson standbys or steady jobs: Matson has taken a tough stand on members who fail to turn-to at the dispatched time ordered. Failing to do so without a valid reason (excuse) will cause the member dispatched to be placed on Matson's DO NOT HIRE LIST for a minimum of NINE MONTHS. To prevent this from occurring, turn-to on time and be ready to work.

APL Philippines- In at Oakland #58 for the weekend. Addressed the food and storing issues with the company, followed up when ship arrived in Oakland. Steward department showing improvement. Gary McDevitt, Delegate, Bob Burns, Bosun.

APL Belgium- In at Oakland #58. Had a question from one of the ABs via email; thought he was entitled to an extra trip because of the shipyard period. It was explained to him that his time was up and to make room for the next member. Arthur Brosnan, Delegate. Running smoothly with Relief Bosun Kim Sloggett.

APL Thailand- In and out Oakland #58. Clarification on the two-man watch. In good hands with Bill DeBenedictis, Delegate, Running smoothly with Peter Johnsson, Bosun.

APL China- In and out Oakland #58. Relief Bosun Juan Gonzalez time up in L.A.; David Reinking returning from his trip off. Good gang anticipate a good trip. Clean pay-off with no beefs. Mike Henderson, Delegate.

APL Singapore, APL Korea- Checked in with these ships; little or no beefs.

Cape Orlando- In the past three months, the last two OSs have been terminated for cause, despite both men received warning letters for these same reasons: on the cell phone, not turning-to on time, knocking off early, not being found during working hours. Basically these are valid reasons for termination on any ship. No one's fireproof. Noel Itsumaru, Bosun.

Cape Henry- On a regular routine here in Alameda with hard working Ordinarys. Gabriel Moreno, Sr., Bosun.

Admiral Callaghan- Running smoothly with Bosun Phil Coulter.

Cape Horn- Starting to square this away for sea trial's set for April – that's the latest rumor. Paul Fuentes, Bosun

Cape Hudson- Clarification on the duties concerning the GVU or GUDE when working in the galley. Mike Worth, Bosun.

USNS Dahl- Launching an investigation into deck officers working in SUP's jurisdiction.

Pier #9- Training on the Station Boats continues. Change day for Pilot boat San Francisco out bound for station. Big Mike Koller, Delegate; Leo Moore, Bosun.

Reminder to those members that are applying to upgrade their seniority: Send in only copies of your discharges. If you sailed with Chevron, you must send in copies of those discharges. The Welfare Office has no access to those records. You must provide those records from Chevron yourself. After the Rating and Membership Committee meets and upgrades are completed, all copies of records are shredded.

Dues must be current before you register or dispatch.

Worked the front office and assisted in dispatching.

Roy Tufono

Dispatcher's Report

Headquarters—Feb. 2017

Deck	
Bosun	**2**
Carpenter	**0**
MM	**6**
AB	**10**
OS	**5**
Standby	**14**
Total Deck Jobs Shipped	**37**
Total Deck B, C, D Shipped	**29**
Engine/Steward	
QMED	**0**
Pumpman	**0**
Oiler	**0**
Wiper	**0**
Steward	**0**
Cook	**0**
Messman	**0**
Total E&S Jobs Shipped	**0**
Total E&S B, C, D Shipped	**0**
Total Jobs Shipped - All Depts.	**37**
Total B, C, D Shipped-All Depts.	**29**
Total Registered "A"	**19**
Total Registered "B"	**45**
Total Registered "C"	**18**
Total Registered "D"	**35**