



West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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Friday, January 25, 2013

Matson expands to the South Pacific with purchase of foreign-flag service

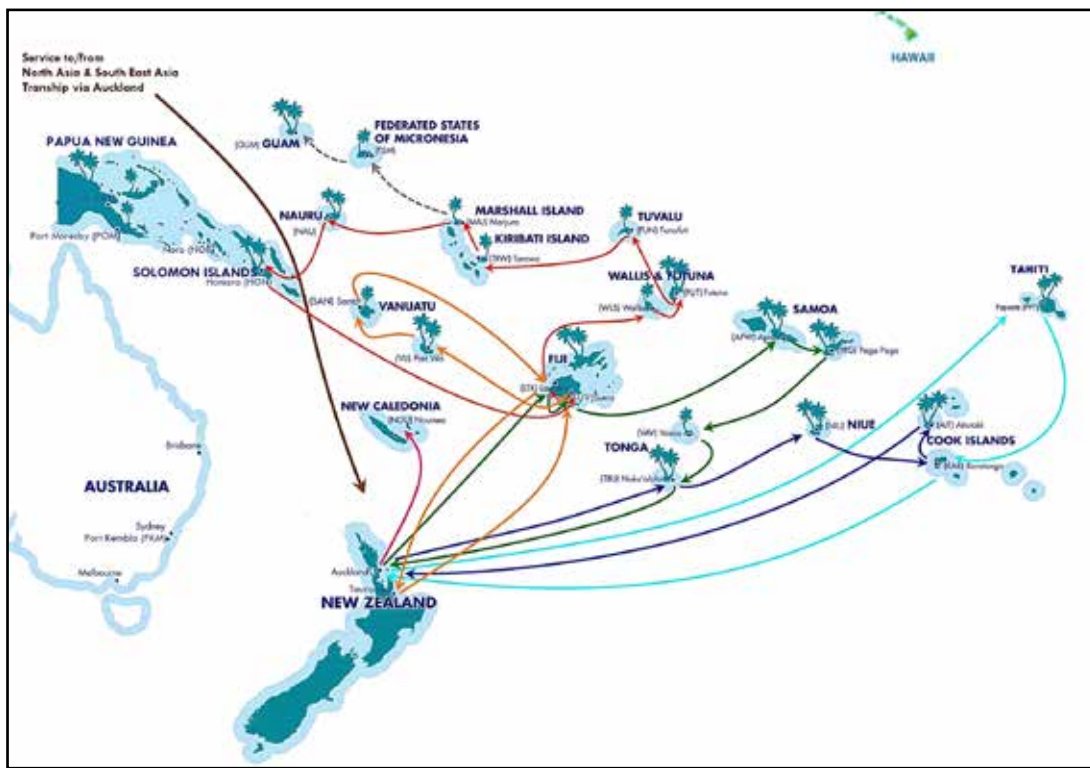
SUP-contracted Matson Navigation Company has expanded its operations to the South Pacific by acquiring four vessels and 1,500 containers from a New Zealand-based shipping company. The acquisition was first announced on December 26, with the new company service beginning on January 7.

The four vessels purchased, for an undisclosed sum, from Reef Shipping are the 4,766 dwt *Nauru II*, built in 1997 and registered in Antigua and Barbuda; the 2,900 dwt *Reef Express*, built in 1985 and registered in Antigua and Barbuda; the 5,650 dwt *Reef Samoa*, built in 2003 and registered in Antigua and Barbuda; and the 5,642 dwt *Southern Reef*, built in 1999 and registered in the Cook Islands. The vessels are all self-sustaining with cargo cranes.

As the *West Coast Sailors* went to press, the number of mariners on each vessel could not be determined, but Matson indicated that the crews are multi-national. It should also be noted that the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has declared Antigua and Barbuda a flag-of-convenience registry which means the Caribbean nation of Antigua and Barbuda does not enforce minimal international working, safety and environmental standards on its vessels.

Matson's South Pacific operation will continue to provide service to Reef's core trade routes from Auckland, New Zealand and Suva, Fiji to Nauru, the Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Samoa, American Samoa, Cooks Islands, Niue, Tonga, Wallis and Futuna, Vanuatu, Tarawa, Tuvalu and Majuro. Matson will also continue former Reef business linked directly to the core shipping business, including a LCL (less than container load) freight depot in the Auckland suburb of Onehunga which primarily serves commercial and personal effects customers in Auckland, and a bulk fuels and gas supply operation that services a wide customer base across the South Pacific.

The new Matson business is registered as Matson South Pacific, Ltd., a New Zealand registered company wholly owned by Matson, Inc. Matson enters the South Pacific trade routes as an independent shipping company with over 130 years of experience serving Pacific islands. "This new service for Matson will expand our geographic



The above graphic is from the Matson/Reef Shipping website showing the trade routes served by Matson South Pacific, Ltd., a New Zealand registered company wholly owned by Matson, Inc.

reach into the South Pacific, and build on our expertise as a Pacific island carrier," said Matt Cox, President and CEO. "Historically, Matson vessels, including both freighters and luxury passenger ships, served

the South Pacific for five decades, beginning in the 1920s. We are proud to return today to provide the same level of superior customer service and on-time delivery that is the hallmark of our other trade lanes."

Editor's Note: What Cox fails to mention is that the freighters and passenger ships Matson and its subsidiary Oceanic Steamship Company operated in the South Pacific were U.S.-crewed, U.S.-built and U.S.-flagged.

Aloha to Senator Daniel K. Inouye

Champion of U.S. Merchant Marine passes

On December 17, the American maritime community lost a champion with the passing of Senator Daniel K. Inouye, a Democrat from Hawai'i. Senator Inouye succumbed to respiratory complications at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He was 88.

Senator Inouye was a powerful voice in Congress, having served as Senate President Pro Tem and chairing the Appropriations Committee since 2009. He was first elected in 1959 as Hawai'i's first House member and then became Senator in 1962, taking office three years after the islands joined the United States. At the time of his death, he was the second-longest serving Senator, and longest serving sitting Senator in U.S. history.

He was a decorated war hero who fought bravely in WWII. Senator Inouye's unit was mostly made up of second-generation

Japanese-Americans who fought in Europe. During fighting in Italy, he lost his arm when he advanced on a machine gunner alone in order to protect his men. In 2000, the Senator was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courage and sacrifice.

The Senator was proud to represent his state and worked hard to ensure the needs of his constituents were heard in Washington. He regularly reached across the aisle to work on legislation for the betterment of the Nation while supporting and encouraging bi-partisan politics.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Inouye was a powerful force behind the Maritime Security Act, which was signed into law in 1996 and reauthorized in 2003. This legislation established the Maritime Security Program which today sustains 60 militarily useful, privately owned

and operated U.S.-flag merchant ships in commercial high seas trade, and which provides jobs for members of the SUP.

Senator Inouye also was the Senate's most prominent and most persistent advocate of the cargo preference laws that hold specific amounts of government-financed imports and exports for U.S. merchant vessels. He was, for example, the author of the 2008 farm bill amendment that gave the Department of Transportation exclusive authority to determine when these laws apply, and to enforce them across the board.

Senator Inouye will be remembered as well as an architect of the 1985 farm bill cargo preference "compromise" amendment that raised the U.S.-flag share of PL 480 food aid exports from 50% to 75%. A last minute, little-noticed provision in this year's surface transportation authorization bill overturned this

compromise, and Senator Inouye was in recent months working quietly and diplomatically to restore the 75% U.S.-flag PL 480 share in a practical way.

As Hawai'i's senior Senator since 1962, Dan Inouye often defied powerful Hawaiian business interests by defending the Jones Act, which holds all waterborne commerce between and among U.S. ports for merchant vessels owned, built, flagged and manned in the United States. He understood the law's value as a no-cost economic and national security asset, and he knew that the Jones Act is all that stands between Hawai'i and predatory exploitation by foreign-owned, flagged and crewed shipping lines.

According to a statement from his office in Washington, Senator Inouye's last word was one U.S. maritime labor and industry representatives in the capital had long been accustomed to from the Senator: "Aloha."

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SUP Honor Roll

Voluntary contributions from the membership to the following funds:

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- John Benson in lieu of
dues increase 50.00
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- Ralph Senter Book #7323
- David Shands Book #7483

SUPPORT YOUR UNION

SUP Meetings

These are the dates for the regularly scheduled SUP meetings in 2013:

	Hdqs.	Branch
February	11	Tues. 19
March	11	18
April	8	15
May	13	20
June	10	17
July	8	15
August	12	19
September	9	16
October	Tues. 15	21
November	Tues. 12	18
December	9	16

Hawai'i's Lt. Governor appointed to fulfill Inouye's Senate term

Lieutenant Governor Brian Schatz of Hawai'i was appointed on December 26, to succeed the late U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye.

Governor Neil Abercrombie announced the appointment after receiving a list of three candidates from the state Democratic Party earlier in the day. The other candidates were Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa and Esther Kiaaina, a deputy director in the state Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Inouye died December 17, of respiratory complications at age 88. He had sent Abercrombie a letter that day, saying he would like Hanabusa, 61, to succeed him.

"Senator Inouye conveyed his final wish to Governor Abercrombie. While we are very disappointed that it was not honored, it was the governor's decision to make," Jennifer Sabas, Inouye's chief of staff, said in a statement. "We wish Brian Schatz the best of luck."

Schatz will serve until an election is held in 2014. Had Hanabusa been appointed, a special election would have been necessary to fill her seat.

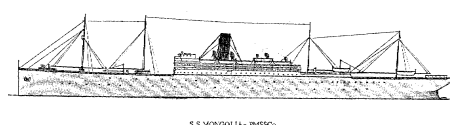
Schatz said he will run for re-election in 2014 to try to keep the Senate seat until 2016, the end of Inouye's original term. He said he would run again in 2016 if given the chance. "To the people of Hawai'i, I can assure you this: I will give every fiber of my being to doing a good job for the state of Hawai'i," Schatz said at a news conference.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid had urged Abercrombie to name Inouye's successor before the end of the year.

Schatz, 40, is a former state representative and a former chairman of the state Democratic Party. He also was a leader of President Obama's campaign in Hawai'i in 2008.



AB and Delegate Michael Bloemhof and Bosun Gus Silva bolt down breakfast while debating the relative importance of the Jones Act versus cargo preference requirements in the maintenance of U.S. maritime cabotage law after tying up the APL Singapore in Oakland on January 5.



FINAL DEPARTURES

George Milosevich, Book No. 5647. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1943. Died in Sparks, Nevada, December 8, 2012. (Pensioner)

Charles Bulmer, Book No. 5742. Born in New York in 1945. Joined SUP in 1991. Died in San Francisco, California, December 10, 2012. (Pensioner)

Fred Hurst, Book No. 5589. Born in California in 1928. Joined SUP in 1948. Died in Portland, Oregon, December 21, 2012. (Pensioner)

Eugene Jones, Book No. 4275. Born in North Ireland in 1929. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in Merced, California, December 16, 2012. (Pensioner)

Melvin Ralph, Book No. 2792. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Twain Harte, California, January 1, 2013. (Pensioner)

West Coast Sailors

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President Obama signs legislation renewing Maritime Security Program

President Obama on January 3, signed legislation that includes renewal of the Maritime Security Program at 60 ships through fiscal year 2025. The measure, H.R. 4310, the 51st National Defense Authorization Act, sponsored by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard P. “Buck” McKean (R-California) and Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-Washington). H.R. 4310 authorizes defense spending in fiscal 2013, which begins next October 1.

The House of Representatives and the Senate approved the legislation by strong margins in mid-December after a House/Senate conference committee reconciled the defense budget bills passed separately in each chamber. The final bill went to the President December 30.

The Maritime Security Program sustains 60 privately-owned and operated U.S.-flagged merchant vessels in international commercial trade markets worldwide. In exchange for limited operating assistance budgeted through the Department of Transportation (DOT), these ships, their officers and crews and all intermodal assets owned or leased by participating companies are available immediately to the Department of Defense (DOD) in national security emergencies.

SUP-contracted American President Lines operates nine vessels enrolled in the program.

“Extension of the proven, cost-effective Maritime Security Program under H.R. 4310 ensures that the Department of Defense (DOD) will have the private sector U.S.-owned merchant ships, the skilled civilian U.S. citizen merchant mariners and the intermodal capabilities the department relies upon traditionally and almost exclusively for long-term strategic sealift service during a crisis anywhere in the world,” SUP President Gunnar Lundeberg noted.

The Maritime Administration in DOT and U.S. Transportation Command in DOD administer the Maritime Security Program. The United States Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) determines which ships are best suited for enrollment in the program.

Under H.R. 4310, the MSP is authorized for a third 10-year period, beginning in fiscal year 2015. Funding is authorized at the current 60-ship level of \$186 million in fiscal years 2012-2018, \$210 million in fiscal years 2019-2021 and \$222 million in fiscal years 2022-2025. Under the Maritime Security Act of 1996, this funding must be approved each year as a direct appropriation.

In a separate but related development, Congress and the President January 1, agreed to postpone “sequestration” – automatic annual across-the-board federal budget cuts, most of which are aimed at DOD– until March 1, in the hope of reaching agreement on less severe spending reductions. The budget sequester would trim the Maritime Security Program account in fiscal 2012 by about \$17 million.

East and Gulf Coast strike averted as ILA and USMX extend contract

The International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) have agreed to a 30-day extension to negotiate a labor agreement, according to a statement by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The current agreement was set to expire December 29, and the ILA had already voted to strike beginning the following day. The new deadline is now January 28.

A strike by the ILA would have closed down ports along the East and Gulf Coasts of the United States that handle around 45% of the country’s commerce.

The two sides did agree on one principal of a new agreement, that being royalty payments. The USMX had wanted to cap container royalty payments at around \$211 million, or around \$10 per man hour, the same amount paid out last year. The ILA called the royalty payments “untouchable” during the negotiations. Details about the agreed upon royalty payments were not publicized.

“The agreement on this important subject represents a major positive step toward achieving an overall collective bargaining agreement,” said George Cohen, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, said in a statement. “While some significant issues remain in contention, I am cautiously optimistic that they can be resolved.”

This is the second extension that the two sides have agreed to. Back in September, the ILA and the USMX agreed to a 90-day extension.

USCG extends unescorted access for persons waiting on TWIC replacements

In a policy letter dated December 19, the United States Coast Guard has provided for, under certain circumstances, a 30-day extension of unescorted access to secure areas for individuals who are awaiting issuance of a replacement Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) for a lost, damaged or stolen card.

Existing regulations allow for seven days of unescorted access under such circumstances, so the policy letter effectively extends this period to 37 calendar days.

According to the policy letter, “this provision ... may also be extended to individuals who have applied for a TWIC renewal prior to its expiration, and through no fault of their own, are not able to take possession of their TWIC due to a significant delay in the application, production, issuance and/or activation process.”

According to the policy letter, in order to qualify for unescorted access, an individual must have reported a TWIC lost, damaged or stolen to the Transportation Security Administration, must meet all requirements under existing regulations and must provide proof that a replacement TWIC has been ordered (a payment receipt or an enrollment email confirmation are acceptable as proof) and provide the vessel or facility security officer, or other designated security personnel, with the individual’s first name and last name, as well as application identification if it is known.



All Seattle deck gang in the coffee room of Matson’s SS Maui at Oakland’s Howard Terminal on January 8. From left to right beginning in left foreground: AB and SUP Delegate Rick Goen, AB Jack Sheldon, Bosun Brian Yost, AB Mike McLavey, AB Danny Ycoy, and AB Nick Hoogendam.

Union-busting was the secret filling inside the demise of Twinkies, Ding Dongs

America lost one of its iconic brands last month when Hostess, maker of Twinkies, Ding Dongs, Wonder Bread and other staples of postwar Middle America, closed up shop.

But there was another curious aspect to the story: Hostess workers were still represented by several Unions, and one of them, the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, had gone on strike. The failure of management and the bakers Union to reach an agreement, it appears, precipitated the closing of the company and the loss of 18,000 jobs.

The Twinkie and the Union, going down together – the story fitted perfectly into a pat journalistic narrative in which Unions have done their work (thanks for the eight-hour day, folks!) but now must exit the historical stage.

Unfortunately, reality is not quite so simple. Recently, we learned –from the *Wall Street Journal*, no less– that the company had diverted payments it was supposed to make to the employee pension fund into other operating accounts. This at a time when finances were tight and management nevertheless decided to give itself more bonuses and salary raises.

This is the new America: Bonuses and stock options for the top brass, pink slips and blame for the working class. Most Hostess employees had taken steep pay cuts over the last few years. One of the major reasons the bakers’ Union went on strike was that the company was not honoring prior pension agreements.

The version we got from the headlines was a little different: Union refuses to negotiate, forces 80-plus-year old company to shut down.

Don’t be mistaken. What happened at Hostess is part of a long, protracted shift in the American workplace. Companies use any means at their disposal, including bankruptcy reorganization, to get rid of Unions. Meanwhile, right-wing think tanks and pundits demonize Union members as freeloaders and thugs. It has been a decades-long project, and it’s been incredibly successful.

Look at Michigan. With a law signed recently by Governor Rick Snyder, it became the 24th state in the nation where a person can accept a job, along with the benefits negotiated by Union contracts, and opt out of paying Union dues. In time, this will undercut the Unions – and their ability to negotiate with employers.

That Michigan could become a “right to work” state is a testament to the power of the anti-Union narrative. This is the very state where the once powerful United Auto Workers was birthed. But notice how this event is covered. Some in the media present this as a sad event – it’s always sad when Middle Americans lose out. Others tout it as a victory for freedom. But nobody in the media is permitted to register this in outrage, to decry this as systematic rigging of the system in favor of employers at the expense of employees.

We also saw this in the coverage of the Chicago teachers strike – indeed, in any discussion of education reform. We are to understand that all blame for the problems of public education in this country can be hung around the necks of the teachers’ Unions. The troubles of public education are legion. Yet other factors that also affect educational quality receive far less reflection. Then there is the issue of public employee compensation, which is said to be bankrupting states. Of course, Union scolds never pause to ask why legislatures love to underfund pension funds – that is, to fail to live up to the contracts the states have negotiated with public employees in the first place. In this way, politicians are a bit like private equity operators stuffing companies with debt, squeezing fees and profits into the right pockets, and shafting patsies like wage employees and the public.

The National Labor Relations Board has determined that Hostess didn’t play fair in the negotiations with the bakers’ Union. This news was no doubt met with smirks by those who regard the board as just another government entity standing in the way of big business.

Yet for all the bluster about makers and takers, job creators and moochers off society, one group is habitually left voiceless. They are the people who actually perform manual work, the blue-collar employees. They operate forklifts, stand on assembly lines, drive trucks and, yes, put sugary cream into yellow cakes.

Editorial: Orlando Sentinel, January 3

In Memoriam

Final Departures of SUP members reported in 2012

Gerald Allen, Book No. 3784. Born in California in 1932. Joined SUP in 1953. Died in San Francisco, California, February 2012. (Pensioner)

Leslie Amaya, Book No. 3685. Born in Arizona in 1928. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 24, 2012. (Pensioner)

Knud Andersen, Book No. 3771. Born in Denmark in 1928. Joined SUP in 1955. Died in Florida, May 12, 2012. (Pensioner)

Takayuki Asai, Book No. 3201. Born in Hawai'i in 1921. Joined SUP in 1939. Died in St. Helena, California, July 11, 2012. (Pensioner)

Frank Betts, Book No. 4722. Born in Washington in 1921. Joined SUP in 1942. Died December 20, 2011. (Pensioner)

Louis Bruno, Book No. 5684. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in San Jose, California, October 31, 2012. (Pensioner)

Wayne Burgess, Book No. 5638. Born in California in 1933. Joined SUP in 1952. Died June 3, 2012. (Pensioner)

George Castege, Book No. 4602. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1952. Died in San Jose, California, May 12, 2012. (Pensioner)

Joseph Cerniglia, Book No. 4773. Born in Louisiana in 1926. Joined SUP in 1971. Died in Slidell, Louisiana, September 24, 2012. (Pensioner)

Richard Chung, Book #4702. Born in Honolulu, Hawai'i in 1920. Joined SUP in 1954. Died in Honolulu, Hawai'i, April 29, 2012. Pensioner.

Leroy Cook, Book No. 453. Born in Oklahoma in 1930. Joined SUP in 1954. Died June 11, 2012. (Pensioner)

George Corral, Book No. 4598. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1952. Died in California, December 23, 2011. (Pensioner)

Simeon Cwihun, Book #3792. Born in New York in 1921. Joined SUP in 1945. Died in Snug Harbor, North Carolina, April 30, 2012. Pensioner.

Rex Daniels, Book No. 2728. Born in Texas in 1942. Joined SUP in 1962. Died in San Francisco, California, October 17, 2012. (Pensioner)

Fletcher Davis, Book No. 2673. Born in North Carolina in 1925. Joined SUP in 1950. Died in North Carolina, September 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Robert F. Desmond, Book No. 2693. Born in Massachusetts in 1921. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in Coupeville, Washington, May 17, 2012. (Pensioner)

Roy Dragoun, Book No. 2153. Born in California in 1917. Joined SUP in 1944. Died September 12, 2012. (Pensioner)

August Francois, Book No. 2146. Born in New Jersey in 1930. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in New Jersey, October 6, 2012. (Pensioner)

Harry French, Book No. 2199. Born in Michigan in 1917. Joined SUP in 1957. Died in East Lansing, Michigan, July 22, 2012. (Pensioner)

Ronald Gill, Book No. 17692. Born in California in 1926. Joined SUP in 1975. Died in Sacramento, California, January 5, 2012. (Pensioner)

Carroll Gundersen, Book No. 2940. Born in Washington in 1925. Joined SUP in 1947. Died in Puyallup, Washington, September 25, 2012. (Pensioner)

Steve Huggins, Book No. 5878. Born in California in 1953. Joined SUP in 2003. Died in Arlington, Washington, August 12, 2012.

Max Kirkham, Book No. 2789. Born in Australia in 1925. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Laguna Woods, California, February 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Eric Klungreseter, Book No. 3160. Born in California in 1949. Joined SUP in 1967. Died in Las Vegas, Nevada, June 29, 2012. (Pensioner)

Kunio Kondo, Book No. 3092. Born in Hawai'i in 1926. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in San Francisco, California, February 19, 2012. (Pensioner)

Peter Kramer, Book No. 2849. Born in Minnesota in 1927. Joined SUP in 1946. Died September 15, 2011. (Pensioner)

Samuel Lawson, Book No. C2284. Born in Maine in 1977. Joined SUP in 2011. Died in San Francisco, California, November 23, 2011.

James Love, Book No. 4100. Born in Wyoming in 1931. Joined SUP in 1967. Died in Salem, Oregon, May 21, 2012. (Pensioner)

John Madrid, Book No. 6396. Born in California in 1928. Joined SUP in 1950. Died in Morro Bay, California, May 31, 2012. (Pensioner)

John Marshall, Book No. 5586. Born in Kansas in 1922. Joined SUP in 1945. Died on July 15, 2012. (Pensioner)

Gardener McGuire, Book No. 6323. Born in Kentucky in 1922. Joined SUP in 1953. Died December 31, 2011. (Pensioner)

Pasquale Minici, Book No. 6475. Born in New York in 1927. Joined SUP in 1966. Died in Vallejo, California, November 17, 2012. (Pensioner)

Charles Mitchell, Book No. 6419. Born in Mississippi in 1924. Joined SUP in 1951. Died December 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Joseph Muir, Book No. 6265. Born in Iowa in 1928. Joined SUP in 1950. Died in Pt. Orchard, Washington, September 14, 2012. (Pensioner)

Alfred Nelson, Book No. 15474. Born in California in 1926. Joined SUP in 1968. Died in Santa Rosa, California, June 27, 2012. (Pensioner)

Iwao Nishiyama, Book No. 2453. Born in California in 1925. Joined SUP in 1959. Died in Harbor City, California, May 25, 2012. (Pensioner)

Mitchell Novakovich, Book No. 2252. Born in Ohio in 1921. Joined SUP in 1945. Died in Oregon, February 7, 2012. (Pensioner)

James Olds, Book #2443. Born in Massachusetts in 1926. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in San Francisco, California, April 6, 2012. (Pensioner)

Norman Parker, Book No. 3608. Born in Texas in 1928. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Sun City, Arizona, February 23, 2012. (Pensioner)

Edward Perry, Book No. 3734. Born in Hawai'i in 1924. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in Hilo, Hawai'i, September 15, 2012. (Pensioner)

John Petrovich, Book No. 16592. Born in Oregon in 1927. Joined SUP in 1969. Died on July 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Lawrence Portillo, Book No. 3600. Born in Arizona in 1927. Joined SUP in 1945. Died in San Jose, California, March 7, 2012. (Pensioner)

Peter Quade, Book No. 73. Born in Denmark in 1921. Joined SUP in 1943. Died in Olympia, Washington, March 28, 2012. (Pensioner)

James Ramsoff, Book No. 3105. Born in California in 1923. Joined SUP in 1952. Died in San Leandro, California, June 23, 2012. (Pensioner)

Eugene L. Roberts, Book No. 3125. Born in California in 1927. Joined SUP in 1945. Died on July 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Steve Robinson, Book No. 2732. Born in Ashland, Maine in 1917. Joined SUP in 1945. Died in Pensacola, Florida, April 2, 2012. (Pensioner)

Enrique Rodriguez, Book No. 3016. Born in Ecuador in 1918. Joined SUP in 1948. Died in Cupertino, California, April 22, 1912. (Pensioner)

Jon Rushing, Book No. 3176. Born in Oregon in 1938. Joined SUP in 1968. Died in Washington, December 19, 2011. (Pensioner)

Ake Ryden, Book No. 3160. Born in Sweden in 1924. Joined SUP in 1962. Died in New York, December 15, 2011. (Pensioner)

Feliciano Salcido, Book No. 7213. Born in Arizona in 1926. Joined SUP in 1948. Died June 12, 2012. (Pensioner)

Wilbur Sanders, Book No. 7345. Born in Iowa in 1928. Joined SUP in 1951. Died in Wisconsin, January 12, 2012. (Pensioner)

Richard Sexton, Book No. 6986. Born in Nebraska in 1925. Joined SUP in 1943. Died in Houston, Texas, August 25, 2012. (Pensioner)

Dennis Tinsley, Book No. 3273. Born in California in 1950. Joined SUP in 1967. Died in California, November 22, 2012.

Matthew Ursin, C Book No. 2328. Born in California in 1974. Joined SUP in 2011. Died at sea, July 13, 2012.

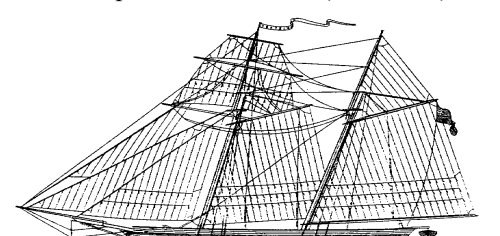
Gene VanKlinken, Book No. 862. Born in Washington in 1934. Joined SUP in 1986. Died in San Francisco, California, March 2012.

Ernest Villarico, Book No. 846. Born in Hawai'i in 1926. Joined SUP in 1952. Died in San Francisco, California, October 25, 2011. (Pensioner)

Frank Wawrowski, Book No. 3537. Born in Oregon in 1926. Joined SUP in 1952. Died in Happy Valley, Oregon, December 17, 2011. (Pensioner)

Fletcher Wingfield, Book No. 3217. Born in New Mexico in 1924. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Camas, Washington, February 8, 2012. (Pensioner)

Samuel Yue, Book No. 215. Born in Hawai'i in 1920. Joined SUP in 1948. Died September 11, 2012. (Pensioner)



Sailors rescued in Somalia after being held hostage for nearly three years

In a siege that lasted nearly two weeks, forces of Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region raided a hijacked ship on December 23, and safely rescued 22 hostages who had been held captive for nearly three years, Puntland authorities said.

The Puntland government said it had captured the Panama-flagged *MV Iceberg 1*, which was docked in the Mudung region near the coastal village of Gara'ad, a notorious pirate den in northeastern Somalia.

"After two years and nine months in captivity, the hostages have suffered signs of physical torture and illness. The hostages are now receiving nutrition and medical care," a statement said.

Hassan Abdi, a pirate commander, who was in touch with the ship's hijackers, said eight pirates on board the vessel were able to escape as Puntland soldiers closed in.

"None of us have been harmed," Abdi said. Puntland authorities said they had sieged the ship on December 10.

The rescued crew members include eight Yemenis, five Indians, two Pakistanis, four Ghanaians, two Sudanese and a Filipino. The ship was hijacked on March 29, 2010. Alan Cole, the coordinator of the United Nations anti-piracy program, said the *MV Iceberg 1* had been one of the longest held ships by Somali pirates. Close to 120 seafarers are still held by Somali pirates, though that number is considerably down from the height of the piracy crisis two years ago, when more than 600 hostages were held at once.

Hijackings by Somali pirates have significantly decreased in the last couple of years because many ships now carry armed guards. In 2010, pirates seized 47 vessels. So far this year, they have taken five.

The overwhelming majority of hostages have been sailors on merchant ships, though European families have also been kidnapped from yachts. Four Americans were killed in February 2011 off the coast of Somalia in one of the most violent episodes since the modern-day piracy epidemic began several years ago, American officials said at the time.

For the pirates, the risks of being arrested, killed or lost at sea are overshadowed by the potential for huge payouts. Ransoms for large ships in recent years have averaged close to \$5 million.

Construction begins on Desmond Bridge replacement at Long Beach

Officials from the Port of Long Beach were on hand January 8, to celebrate the beginning of the \$1 billion project to replace the Gerald Desmond Bridge, the primary bridge at the port. The project, which is scheduled to take around four years to complete, will enhance the port's shipping capability. Once completed, the new bridge will measure 515 feet and will allow the world's largest cargo ships to reach the inner berths at the port. The new bridge will be one of the tallest cable-stayed bridges in the United States and the first of its kind in California.

"This bridge is vital to freight movement and the nation's economy," said Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez. "The project will also relieve congestion on the road network that directly serves one of the nation's busiest ports."

The replacement project will allow the Gerald Desmond Bridge to remain in use while the new bridge is built adjacent to it. The new bridge is among \$4.5 billion worth of current and planned improvements to further modernize the Port of Long Beach and keep it competitive. The new bridge also will improve speed and efficiency for land-based cargo movement and commuters. Commuters account for close to 70,000 daily vehicle trips or about three-quarters of the bridge traffic.

Construction costs on the new bridge are estimated to be about \$650 million, with site preparation, demolition of the existing bridge and other considerations bringing the total project to \$1 billion.

Somali pirate leader hangs the hook

Quitting while you're ahead is a decision little seen in pirate lore, but that's just what one of Somalia's most notorious pirate kings has done.

"After being in piracy for eight years, I have decided to renounce and quit, and from today on, I will not be involved in this gang activity," Mohamed Abdi Hassan, well known to security sources as "Afweyne" or "big mouth", said on January 9, according to the BBC news agency.

He was reported on July 18, 2012, to have been given a diplomatic passport by the head of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, in exchange for agreeing to dismantle his pirate network.

Retiring is a man described in a report by the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia & Eritrea as "one of the most notorious and influential leaders" in Somalia's pirate hub, Hobyo. He was reported to have led attackers involved in the 2009 capture of the 9,019 dwt *Faina*, a Ukrainian ro-ro carrying 33 refurbished Soviet-era T-72 battle tanks. The Russian captain died of a heart attack shortly after the ship was taken; the ship and its crew were released after being held for 134 days for a reported \$3 million ransom.

He was also reported to be involved in the 2008 capture of the 319,427 dwt, Saudi-owned *Sirius Star*, also allegedly released for a ransom of several million dollars; it was the first VLCC ever hijacked.

Afweyne did not tell why he was retiring at a ceremony in the central Somali region of Adado, but he did say he has also been working to persuade other pirates to quit as well. "I have also been encouraging many of my colleagues to renounce piracy too, and they have done it," the French news agency AFP quoted Afweyne as saying.

Piracy off Somalia has plummeted to a three-year low, parallel to intensified naval patrols and increased use of shipboard armed guards and citadels for crews.



The SUP gang in the APL Agate proudly display their marlinspike seamanship after splicing a 12-strand eye. From left: Arsenio Purganan, Jill Holleman, Wilson Abanto, Ramon Duran, Dave Larsen and Raul Guillen, Brother Larsen is a part-time instructor at the Union's Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship in San Francisco. Photo taken at sea enroute to Newark, New Jersey.

Pacific Northwest grain terminal operators implement ILWU-rejected contract

Export grain terminal operators in the Pacific Northwest have notified the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) that they were going to implement the terms of their final offer that was previously rejected by the ILWU.

ILWU spokeswoman Jennifer Sargent said that ILWU members will continue working "despite the substandard provisions of the employers' last offer." Members of the ILWU rejected the grain terminal operators latest offer by a margin of almost 94%.

In a statement dated December 26, the members of the Northwest Grain Handlers Association said the contract impasse that occurred when the previous one expired at the end of September was never about money. According to the terminal operators, wages for ILWU members will increase to around \$34-36 per hour, with an additional \$30 per hour in benefits.

From the beginning of negotiations, the employers have said their goal was to level the playing field with the EGT and Kalama Export Terminals in Washington state that had previously signed contracts with the ILWU.

"The employers entered bargaining with the goal of leveling the playing field with these competitors. After 34 days of meetings, including 11 days of meetings facilitated by federal mediators, the parties remain millions of dollars apart in terms of the labor cost savings ILWU has provided to EGT and KEC through their agreements," said United Grain, Columbia Grain and Louis Dreyfus, three members of the Northwest Grain Handlers Association. "Throughout negotiations, the employers have communicated to ILWU that they are willing to accept either of the contracts between the ILWU and EGT or Kalama Export. Because the Union has flatly refused to extend to the employers the same benefits it already has agreed to with their competitors, the employers' last, best and final offer is the best attempt to eliminate those competitive disparities."

According to published reports, United Grain, Columbia Grain and Louis Dreyfus claim that the ILWU has agreed to terms with their competition that they believe are more favorable than the terms they have with the Union. Among these include the ability to use fewer employees to load ships; the flexibility to use elevator employees to assist in ship-loading; greater management discretion in hiring and staffing decisions; ability to have non-bargaining unit personnel perform certain work and/or to perform work when bargaining unit employees are unavailable or refuse to work; ability to eliminate the practice of paying employees a half-hour's wages for working as little as six minutes; to hold the Union to its agreement not to engage in work stoppages during the term of the agreement, greater flexibility to work up to 12 hours in a shift if needed; and to have greater flexibility in start/stop times to meet production needs while still providing plenty of notice to employees.

Sargent said the Union is disappointed that the employers association has declined to negotiate on the ILWU's recent contract proposal. That proposed contract was based on an agreement under which the grain terminals have operated profitably with ILWU labor since 1934.

Two grain terminal operators in the area, CHS Inc. and Cargill, have broken away from the Northwest Grain Handlers Association and have reportedly negotiated their own contract with the ILWU.

"Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the nastiest of men, for the nastiest of reasons, will somehow work for the benefit of us all."

John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946),
English economist, author, government official,
editor, businessman



The Hawai'i bridge team of the MV Maunalei AB Alberto Vilacrusis pose with 2/M Jennifer Marie Bono after their watch last November 25, 2012, enroute to Shanghai, China. Vessel is under the command of Captain Jeff Idema. Photo AB Deo Gonzales

Los Angeles breaks ground on new intermodal rail yard

The Port of Los Angeles broke ground on January 16, on a \$137 million intermodal rail yard. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles City Councilman Joe Buscaino and officials from the port were in attendance for the groundbreaking ceremony.

The Berth 200 Rail Yard and Roadway Project will improve a critical link in the nation's freight network. The new storage and queuing yard will clear the way for greater on-dock rail capacity and operational efficiencies at nearby port container terminal facilities.

The project, which is scheduled to be completed by the next summer, will create about 2,000 direct construction and indirect jobs and is projected to generate \$1 billion in annual state revenues by 2030.

Greece to tax foreign-flagged ships

Greece has announced that it will tax merchant ships managed by companies based in the country but sailing under foreign flags for the first time ever as that nation's debt crisis spurs the government to raise revenue.

Amendments to a bill passed by Greek lawmakers this month imposed a tonnage tax on the vessels, according to the Greek Ministry of Finance in Athens. The Greek government is seeking to raise 80 million euros this year and 60 million euros in 2014 from the levy.

Greek shipowners control the largest portion of the world merchant fleet and the Greek government is targeting an estimated 762 owners who pay no tax on international earnings brought into the country under rules incorporated in the Greek constitution back in 1967.

The announcement did not indicate when the tax would take effect. The measure would "impose(s) the levy for the first time," the ministry said. The tax applies only to tonnage of foreign-flagged vessels, rather than their earnings.

Ships controlled by Greek companies and flagged elsewhere numbered 3,848 totaling 153.1 million gross tons as of March 2011, according to figures from the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping. That compared with 2,014 vessels totaling 43.4 million tons sailing under Greece's flag as of the end of 2011, the latest that data was available.

Greek shipowners remitted more than \$175 billion in untaxed earnings in the decade leading up to 2011, according to Bank of Greece figures cited in the Union's annual report.

Hong Kong to introduce low-sulfur fuel mandate

Hong Kong's Chief Executive CY Leung announced during his 2013 policy address that the government will consider introducing new legislation that requires marine vessels use low-sulfur diesel while in the Port of Hong Kong and to increase efforts with the Guangdong Provincial Government to extend the fuel switching requirement ports in the Pearl River Delta ports.

The announcement comes after calls from carriers and shipowner associations to further regulate emissions from vessels and will build on the voluntary action already taken by the shipping industry to reduce emissions in Hong Kong under the Fair Winds Charter.

Survivors mark anniversary of the *Costa Concordia* disaster

Survivors of the *Costa Concordia* shipwreck and relatives of the 32 people who died, marked the first anniversary of the grounding on January 13, with the unveiling of memorials to the victims, a tearful Mass in their honor and a minute of silence to recall the exact moment that the cruise ship rammed into the Italian Island of Giglio.

One of the most moving tributes came first, with the daybreak return to the sea of part of the massive rock that tore a 230-foot gash into the hull of the ocean liner on January 13, 2012. The boulder remained embedded in the mangled steel as the 112,000-ton vessel capsized off Giglio island along with its 4,200 passengers and crew.

As fog horns and sirens wailed, a crane on a tug lowered the boulder back onto the reef off Giglio, returning it to the seabed affixed with a memorial plaque. Relatives of the dead threw flowers into the sea and embraced as they watched the ceremony from a special ferry that bobbed in the waves under a gray sky.

They wept during the Mass and ran their fingers over the names of the 32 dead that were engraved on a bronze plaque unveiled at the end of Giglio's jetty, near where the *Concordia* still lays on its side. And later, under a cold rain, they gathered on the jetty holding candles to observe a moment of silence at 9:45 P.M., the exact moment when the *Concordia* slammed into the reef after Captain Francesco Schettino took it off its pre-programmed course and brought it closer to Giglio as a favor to friends from the island.

Schettino is accused of manslaughter, causing a shipwreck and leaving the ship before all passengers were evacuated. He hasn't been charged but is living under court-ordered restrictions pending a decision on whether to indict him. Schettino maintains he saved lives by bringing the ship closer to shore rather than letting it sink in the open sea, and claims the reef he hit wasn't on his nautical charts.

In an interview broadcast on RAI state television, Schettino again defended his actions and blamed others on the bridge for failing to inform him of the situation in time, and then of botching his orders once he tried to steer clear of the reef.

He said he wanted to "share in the pain of all the victims and the families of the victims."

The *Concordia* remains on its side, grounded off Giglio's port. Officials now say it may take until September to prepare the ship to be rolled upright and towed from the rocks to a port to be dismantled.

Piracy drops to 5-year low

Global piracy incidents fell to a five-year low in 2012, according to the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) annual report released this month. 297 ships were attacked last year, from 439 in 2011, the IMB said. The drop was largely related to a huge reduction in Somali piracy.

West and East African attacks still made up most global incidents, at 150. Somalia saw 75 attacks last year, from 237 the previous year. Hijackings in this region also halved from 28 to 14.

There was also a drop in the number of seafarers taken hostage worldwide, with 585 captured in 2012, from 802 the previous year. Last year was also less violent than 2011, with six crew members killed and 28 injured. This compares with eight killed and 42 injured in the previous year's results.

"IMB's piracy figures show a welcome reduction in hijackings and attacks to ships. But crews must remain vigilant, particularly in the highly dangerous waters off East and West Africa," IMB Director Pottengal Mukundan said in a statement. Piracy figures remained steady in West Africa, with 58 attacks recorded overall last year. Nigeria accounted for most of these, at 27. Nigeria also registered 26 kidnappings.

Indonesia continued to record a steady rise in incidents, with 81 reports of petting theft. Ships were boarded 73 times and 47 crew members were taken hostage.

Los Angeles/Long Beach moved 14.1 million containers last year

The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach announced this month that volume between the two ports increased slightly in 2012, this despite an eight-day strike by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which halted cargo flow at most of the cargo terminals in Los Angeles and half of the cargo terminals in Long Beach.

Overall, Los Angeles and Long Beach moved almost 41% of the volume of container cargo moving through the 10 biggest ports in the United States during the year, down slightly from the 41.9% share recorded in 2011.

Los Angeles and Long Beach together moved 14.1 million containers in 2012, slightly more than the two combined to move the previous year but there were positive signs for both ports.

The Port of Los Angeles handled 8.12 million containers, the best post-recession year to date and its third-busiest ever, despite the fact that its December cargo numbers were down 9.4% compared with the same month in 2011. It was only the third time in the port's 105-year history that dockworkers handled more than eight million containers in a year. "We're pleased with 2012, but as we look forward to the next 12 months we don't see significant growth in global trade," said Geraldine Knatz, Executive Director of the port of Los Angeles.

The port last topped eight million containers back in 2007, when it handled 8.4 million containers. The record is 8.5 million containers, reached in 2006.

The neighboring Port of Long Beach sustained steep declines over much of 2012 but had its strongest showing in the latter stages to surpass six million containers during the year. The Port was helped in part by a shift of some business from the Port of Los Angeles by French shipping company CMA CGM.

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ESU Office Assignments

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

ESU NEWS

JANUARY 2013

Official Publication of the Exxon Seamen's Union

ExxonMobil Seminar dates for 2013 (Late career pre-retirement planning course)

If you are eligible, or soon to be eligible to retire from the Company, you should consider attending a pre-retirement planning seminar that is offered by ExxonMobil. Eligibility normally means within 3 years of the minimum age to retire for the unlicensed group (50) with a minimum 15 years of service at the time you elect to retire. The classes tend to fill up quickly; some may be filled up by the time we go to print. If you are interested in attending and know the session you wish to attend, you should then notify Helen Wright at 713-656-2786 for enrollment. Limited space is available per each class so plan ahead.

Incidentally, the interest rate for calculating the lump sum payments of ExxonMobil pensions for January - March 2013 is now 2.5%. If you are considering retirement and plan to take a lump sum pension, a lower interest rate will generate a larger lump sum pension payment. The current rate of 2.5% is the lowest it's been since then end of 2003.

Date	Location	Date	Location
Feb. 19-20	Houston, TX*	July 23-24	Houston, TX*
Feb. 26-27	Baton Rouge, LA**	August 8-9	Beaumont, TX***
March 4-5	Houston, TX*	August 8-9	Baton Rouge, LA**
March 11-12	Beaumont, TX***	August 12-13	Houston, TX*
March 18-19	Baytown Refinery, Baytown, TX	August 15-16	Baytown, TX
March 25-26	Baton Rouge, LA**	August 28-29	Houston, TX*
April 8-9	Clinton, NJ	Sept. 4-5	Houston, TX*
April 11-12	Houston, TX*	Sept. 5-6	Baton Rouge, LA**
April 15-16	Baton Rouge, LA**	Sept. 16-17	Houston, TX*
April 25-26	Houston, TX*	Sept. 19-20	Baton Rouge, LA**
May 7-8	Houston, TX*	Sept. 23-24	Torrance Refinery
May 15-16	Baytown, TX	Sept. 26-27	Clinton, NJ
May 16-17	Baton Rouge, LA**	Oct. 7-8	Beaumont, TX***
June 3-4	Irving, TX	Oct. 10-11	Baytown, TX
June 17-18	Houston, TX*	Oct. 21-22/23-24	Houston, TX*
June 25-26	Torrance Refinery, Torrance, CA	Nov. 4-5	Baton Rouge, LA**
June 26-27	Clinton, NJ	Nov. 4-5/6-7	Houston, TX*
June 27-28	Houston, TX*	Nov. 18-19	Clinton, NJ
July 8-9/10-11	Houston, TX*	Dec. 2-3/4-5	Houston, TX*
July 18-19	Baytown, TX		

*800 Bell Street, Houston TX
**Marriott Hotel, Baton Rouge LA
***Holiday Inn, Beaumont TX

Check your TWIC expiration date

Recently, a member informed the ESU office that he completed the Extended Expiration Date (EED) TWIC process and received his new card but once he took possession of his new card he noticed the expiration date was the same as on his old card. He brought the error to the attention of clerk at the TWIC renewal center and was subsequently issue another card. The clerk mentioned something to the effect that other applicants had received cards with the incorrect date. If you are about to apply for an EED or renewal TWIC card, please remember to check the expiration date to be sure it is correct.

If you hold a TWIC that expires on or before December 31, 2014, you can replace your expiring TWIC with a 3-year (EED) TWIC. Due to high demand, the TSA requests that individuals not begin the process to apply for a (EED) TWIC unless you are within four months of your expiration date. To start the process, it is best to call the TWIC Help Desk at 1-866-DHS-TWIC (1-866-347-8942).

Ship reports

S/R American Progress

The *Progress* continues to trade between Valdez and the Puget Sound. ESU Board officer visited the vessel at BP Cherry Point on December 29. Regular Ship Rep. Mike Harrison aboard. Discussion about launch service aboard ship and the issue was addressed.

Kodiak

ESU Board officer made a visit while the vessel was at anchor in Long Beach, CA on December 18. Regular Ship Rep. Joe Butler aboard and reports everything going well with no problems. The ship recently had an extended stay in the Puget Sound for cargo discharge at Tesoro and repairs at the City Dock in Port Angeles. Looks like the vessel will make another El Segundo trip later this month.

Sierra

ESU Board officer made a visit while the vessel was at anchor in Long Beach, CA on December 27. Deck Trustee Kevin Conroy is aboard and reports everyone is doing well and no problems. Vessel recently completed a split discharge between the Puget Sound and the San Francisco Bay area. The *Sierra* also made a stop in Port Angeles for minor repairs on the way north to Valdez.

Aker starts construction of second Aframax Tanker for SeaRiver

Aker Philadelphia Shipyard, Inc. began production activities on December 19, 2012, on the second of two Aframax tankers (Eagle Bay) that it is building for SeaRiver Maritime, Inc. A small ceremony was held in the shipyard's fabrication shop to commence cutting on the ship's first steel plate. These plates will become part of the double hull of the tanker that protects the cargo tanks. SeaRiver representatives on hand for the ceremony included President Jack Buono and Vice President of Operations Jon Evans.

Progress continues with the construction of the first vessel (Liberty Bay). Recently, the first super block was skidded in the dry dock to its proper position. In keeping with long held shipbuilding tradition, coins were placed on one of the keel blocks before the 230 ton unit was lowered into place in the dry dock. Representatives from SeaRiver and APSI placed the coins as a ceremonial sign of good fortune and safe travels.

When completed in 2014, the Liberty class vessels will be 820 feet long and be capable of carrying 115,000 tons of crude oil. The tankers are intended to be used to transport Alaskan North Slope crude oil from Prince William Sound to the U.S. West Coast.

2013 Unlicensed Training

The 2013 training schedule for the ESU membership is now available. The schedule reflects courses in Advance Firefighting and Confined Space Rescue. The number of courses and dates are dependent on participation and are very much subject to change.

Firefighting courses are held at Texas A&M, College Station, Texas and is offered to those individuals that have not attended in the last five years or more. This class is considered advanced and is a four day course that will run from Tuesday through Friday for the weeks that the course is offered.

There are two Confined Space, Entry and Rescue courses scheduled this year. This course has normally been filled by the Pumpman rating and Able Seamen, but it is expected that other ratings will be allowed to attend if slots are available.

If you are interested in enrolling in the classes below, please make your desire known to Helen Wright. Fleet Manning can try to make sure that you get into the class that you are eligible and wish to attend. As always, the Union encourages all members to participate in the courses that are available to them.

Advanced Firefighting

February 26 – March 1

March 20 - 23

May 8 - 11

September 25 - 28

October 16 – 19

October 30 – November 2

November 13 - 16

December 11 - 14

Confined Space Rescue

March 11 - 15

October 21 - 25

PPE reminder

Personal protective equipment packets with clothing order forms and eye glass cards will be mailed to fleet personnel from the SeaRiver Safety Department during the month of January. Your packet should include forms to order clothing and or coveralls and a safety glasses card to submit with your receipt for reimbursement. The maximum reimbursement for safety glasses is \$150 and will be paid through company payroll. Safety glasses frames and lenses must meet Z87.1 standard and needs to be specified on the receipt.

The Safety Shoe Program was changed during 2011 bargaining and is now a cash subsidy amount of \$200 and will be paid on a non-taxable basis through payroll on or before February 15, 2013. Safety shoes must conform to the standards listed in the ESU Contract language and submission of a receipt for reimbursement is no longer required.

The Winter (Arctic) Clothing allowance was paid in 2012 and will not be due again until 2015. Under this program, employees are allowed purchase arctic clothing from any vendors they choose and receive a tax assisted payment of \$400 dollars in mid February once every three years.

EXXON SEAMEN'S UNION

Founded March 28, 1941

Affiliated with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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Board Member at Large John McCarthy

Deck Trustee Kevin Conroy

Engine Trustee William Ackley

Steward Trustee Kurt Kreick

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

Transocean agrees to pay \$1.4 billion for *Deepwater Horizon* disaster

The Department of Justice announced on January 3, that Transocean Deepwater Inc. has agreed to plead guilty to violating the Clean Water Act (CWA) and to pay a total of \$1.4 billion in civil and criminal fines and penalties for its conduct in relation to the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster. The criminal information and a proposed partial civil consent decree to resolve the U.S. government's civil penalty claims against Transocean Deepwater Inc. and related entities were filed in U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of Louisiana.

In addition, Transocean Deepwater Inc. has signed a cooperation and guilty plea agreement with the government, admitting to its criminal conduct. As part of the plea agreement, Transocean Deepwater Inc. has agreed to pay \$400 million in criminal fines and penalties and to continue its on-going cooperation in the government's criminal investigation. In addition, pursuant to the terms of a proposed partial civil consent decree also lodged with the court today, Transocean Ocean Holdings LLC, Transocean Offshore Deepwater Drilling Inc., Transocean Deepwater Inc. and Triton Asset Leasing GMBH have agreed to pay an additional \$1 billion to resolve federal Clean Water Act civil penalty claims for the massive, three-month-long oil spill at the Macondo Well and the Transocean drilling rig *Deepwater Horizon*. Under the civil settlement, the Transocean defendants also must implement court-enforceable measures to improve the operational safety and emergency response capabilities at all their drilling rigs working in waters of the United States.

"This resolution of criminal allegations and civil claims against Transocean brings us one significant step closer to justice for the human, environmental and economic devastation wrought by the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster," said U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder. "This agreement holds Transocean criminally accountable for its conduct and provides nearly a billion dollars in criminal and civil penalties for the benefit of the Gulf states."

The fines stem from Transocean's role in the April 20, 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* blowout and related explosions and fires while stationed at the Macondo well site in the Gulf of Mexico. A total of 11 rig workers were killed in the incident which became the largest oil spill in U.S. history.

In agreeing to plead guilty, Transocean Deepwater Inc. has admitted that members of its crew onboard the *Deepwater Horizon*, acting at the direction of BP's "Well Site Leaders" or "company men," were negligent in failing fully to investigate clear indications that the Macondo well was not secure and that oil and gas were flowing into the well.

Under the order presented to the court, \$150 million of the \$400 million criminal recovery is dedicated to acquiring, restoring, preserving and conserving the marine and coastal environments, ecosystems and bird and wildlife habitat in the Gulf of Mexico and bordering states harmed by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill.

This portion of the criminal recovery will also be directed to significant barrier island restoration and/or river diversion off the coast of Louisiana to further benefit and improve coastal wetlands affected by the oil spill. An additional \$150 million will be used to fund improved oil spill prevention and response efforts in the Gulf through research, development, education and training.

Under the \$1 billion civil settlement, Transocean must also observe various court-enforceable strictures in its drilling operations, aimed at reducing the chances of another blowout and discharge of oil and at improving emergency response capabilities. Examples of these requirements include certifications of maintenance and repair of equipment designed to prevent blowouts before each new drilling job, consideration of process safety risks, and personnel training related to oil spills and responses to other emergencies. These measures will apply for a period of at least five years to all rigs operated or owned by the Transocean defendants in all U.S. waters.

Editor's Note: To receive the *West Coast Sailors* via first-class mail it's \$25 per year U.S. mail; \$45 per year international.

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Welfare Notes

January 2013

Medicare Part A and Part B

The monthly premium for Medicare Part B has increased to \$104.90 for most participants. Medicare Part B covers outpatient services including doctor visits, lab, and x-rays. The Part B deductible has also been raised to \$147.00.

The Medicare Part A deductible has been raised to \$1,184.00. The Part A deductible is charged for inpatient hospitalization.

Social Security is moving towards phasing out paper social security checks and moving towards electronic direct deposit or a prepaid debit card. You can call 1-800-333-1795 to sign up for direct deposit or get more information.

COBRA Notices

COBRA notices are mailed to active Members when your coverage terminates because of insufficient work time to continue your coverage, retirement, and requesting distribution of your Money Purchase Pension Plan or 401 (k) Plan. Please call the SUP Welfare Plan office if you receive a COBRA notice and have any questions.

If you are Unfit For Duty, documentation of your Unfit For Duty status must be mailed or faxed the SUP Welfare Plan office. If you are injured at work your employer will not automatically forward Unfit For Duty information to the Plan office. Doctors' offices also will not forward the information unless you request them to do so. Because of privacy laws doctors will not release information to the Plan office if we generate the request.

The proper documentation of Unfit for Duty conditions is needed to continue your coverage and prevent breaks in service that may affect your pension.

Current Addresses and Phone numbers

Please also keep the Plan office informed of address changes and your current phone number so we can keep you informed.

Michelle Chang, Administrator mcsupsiupd@sbcglobal.net

Patty Martin martinpatty59@sbcglobal.net

Virginia Briggs Claims vbriggs80@sbcglobal.net

Michael Jacyna Eligibility mjacyna67@sbcglobal.net

Training Representative Berit Eriksson 415-957-1816

berittrainrep@sbcglobal.net

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

Full-time, year-round workers increased in 2011 but still down 7 million from 2007

The number of workers employed full time, year round increased in 2011 for the first time since 2007, prior to the recession, according to figures released December 18 by the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

About 100.9 million people ages 16 and older worked full time, year-round last year, 2.4 million more than in 2010, but still about 7.0 million fewer than the nearly 107.9 million who did so in 2007. Men gained more full-time, year-round jobs in 2011 than women (1,550,000 versus 875,000).

As a share of all those who worked at least one week during the year, the number of full-time, year-round workers rose to 65.8% from 64.7% in 2010. By the same token, the number of workers who were employed part time for at least one week during the year declined by 280,000 to 32.9 million, or 21.4% of total employment. The remaining 12.8% of workers were employed full time but less than year-round, or between one week and 49 weeks.

The data, which provide detailed information on the labor market experiences of workers over the entire year, are derived from an annual supplement to BLS's current population survey of households that makes up part of the agency's monthly employment report.

Overall, BLS's annual work experience report portrayed an improved labor market in 2011, in which more workers were employed and fewer were unemployed, while the time spent out of work by the typical unemployed worker held roughly steady.

About 23.7 million workers experienced at least one spell of unemployment in 2011, 1.5 million fewer than the previous year.

Among workers who were jobless at some point in 2011, the median period of time spent looking for work was little changed at 19.8 weeks. The median is the halfway point, at which half spent more time and half spent less.

The number of unemployed workers who looked for a job but did not work at all in 2011 declined by 348,000 to 6.2 million.

As a share of all those who worked or were unemployed and looked for work, unemployment fell to 14.9% from 15.9% in 2010. That was down from the 2009 work-experience unemployment rate of 16.4%, which was the highest since 1985, BLS said.

In 2011, men continued to be more likely than women to be unemployed for at least one week (15.8% versus 13.8%). Men's unemployment has fallen from a recession high of 18.8% in 2009, while that of women has shown little change since that year, when it was 13.6%. Among men, Hispanics continued to have the highest overall employment rate (71.8%), followed by whites (70.3%) and Asians (70.1%), while employment was lowest among blacks (59.0%).

Unemployment declined in 2011 for all racial and ethnic groups, led by Hispanics (2.2 percentage points to 18.3%) and whites (by 1.5 points to 13.7%). Unemployment continued to be highest among blacks (22.2%) and lowest among Asians (12.2%).

The total number of people who worked at least one week during the year, either full time or part time, rose by 1.2 million in 2011 to 153.5 million, BLS said.

Tanker hijacked in Gulf of Guinea

A tanker with 16 crewmembers and loaded with 5,000 tons of jet fuel has been hijacked in the Gulf of Guinea, Ivory Coast port officials said on January 21. According to a statement by officials at the Port of Abidjan, the Panamanian-flagged *ITRI* was seized on January 16, by gunmen as the vessel was preparing to offload its cargo at the Ivory Coast port. The *ITRI*, which was last seen off the coast of Ghana, is now missing. The 6,330dwt *ITRI* is owned by Lagos-based Brila Energy.

“The vessel is still missing and the hijackers whose sole objective is to steal the cargo of Jet A1 on board the vessel are yet to make any demands,” Brila Chairman, Rowaye Jubril, told The Associated Press in an e-mail. He added that all 16 crew members were Nigerian.

The incident is the latest in a surge of increasingly sophisticated attacks off the oil-rich coast of Nigeria in the Gulf of Guinea. According to figures by the International Maritime Bureau, 10 vessels with a total of 207 crew were seized in the Gulf of Guinea in 2012.

Unlike their Somali pirate counterparts, Nigerian pirates typically attack vessels with the goal of stealing cargo rather than holding vessels for ransom.

Iranian ship flees Sri Lanka

An Iranian-flagged cargo ship has fled Sri Lanka’s waters after weeks of detention by its navy, acting on a court order obtained by Germany’s DVB Bank, officials and a lawyer acting for the bank said on January 17.

The Sri Lankan navy fired warning shots to prevent the *MV Amina* from leaving but said that the vessel made its departure in rough seas.

“If the ship is beyond 12 nautical miles from our shores, then we can’t do anything according to U.N. laws, unless the ship has committed crimes in our country,” Sri Lankan Navy spokesman Kosala Warnakulasuriya said. “We tried to communicate and asked her to stop, but without responding to anything, she had gone.”

The German bank’s attempt to seize ships to settle claims of millions of dollars in unpaid debts shows the growing difficulties facing Iran’s fleet, which the Islamic Republic relies on for trade. “The Iranians are having an increasingly hard time, especially with their oil revenues hit by sanctions,” a ship industry source said. “Their fleet will face more heat, with the U.S. increasingly watching their every move.”

Western sanctions have cut Iran’s oil revenues by half in the last year and battered the economy as the rial has crashed in value. They aim to starve Tehran of funds that might be channeled into expensive nuclear weapons programs, but Iran says its atomic work is for peaceful purposes.

The *Amina* is managed by Tehran-based Rahbaran Omid Darya Ship Management, which the European Union and United States have said is a front for Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), Iran’s biggest cargo carrier. IRISL has faced Western sanctions for years based on accusations of transporting weapons, a charge it denies.

A DVB bank spokeswoman said the bank was seeking to seize two more Iranian ships after obtaining an order from a Singapore court. “The bank is trying to recoup as much as they can. I would imagine the repayment process will be complex,” a second ship industry source said.

The *Amina* was seized in December after DVB Bank obtained an order on Dec. 12 from the Colombo High Court to hold the vessel. Court documents showed that DVB Bank sought to recover millions of dollars. “It has broken arrest and now it’s a rogue ship and it has gone to Indian waters,” said a lawyer for Neelakandan & Neelakandan, a Colombo-based legal firm acting for DVB Bank, who declined to be named. The second shipping source said, “The *Amina*’s escape just shows the pressure the Iranians are under at the moment. It’s also desperation given the risks to the crew.”

Foreign companies have cut ties with Iran’s shipping sector for fear of losing lucrative U.S. business. A ban on EU ship insurance provision and the exit of certifiers from Iran – vital for access to ports – have added to woes for Iranian ship firms.

It was not possible to immediately confirm the exact location of the ship. Tracking data last showed it sailing away from Sri Lanka into the Laccadive Sea, a waterway bordering India. “We have alerted the nearest coast guard vessel. Efforts to track it are on,” Jacob Thomas, director of ports in the Indian state of Kerala, told *Reuters*.

IRISL has tried to dodge sanctions by changing its flags and setting up front companies, the U.S. Treasury and the EU have said. Last year IRISL Managing Director Mohammad Hussein Dajmar said that if pressure from Western sanctions continued, the group would face increasingly grave financial problems.

Sri Lankan officials said there were 24 crew members on the ship, including eight Indians who were returned to their home country after the arrest. Iranian crew members were left aboard and a shipping agent provided them with food and other supplies.



Bosun Bob Burns with OS John Kaisa on the foredeck of the *Mokihana* in Oakland in December.

Chevron Shipping Company

Wages and Overtime Rates

Effective February 1, 2013

Rating	Monthly Wages	Overtime Rates
Boatswain	\$4,389.41	\$23.67
Able Seaman	3,165.46	23.67
Machinist	4,005.94	23.67
Pumpman	4,005.94	23.67
Machinist Trainee	3,165.46	23.67
Oiler/QMED	3,165.46	23.67
Wiper	2,654.87	18.42
Ordinary Seaman	2,654.87	18.42
Steward Cook	4,372.60	23.67
Cook	3,165.46	23.67
Messperson	2,654.87	18.42

Wages based on a 40-hour week

Patriot Contract Services

LMSR wage and benefit rates

USNS Gordon, USNS Gilliland, USNS Shughart, USNS Yano

Effective January 25, 2013

Full Operating Status (FOS)

	Monthly Base Wage	Daily Base Wage	Hourly Overtime Rate	Vacation Days Per Month	Monthly Benefit Base	Monthly Supple. Benefit	Daily Supple. Benefit	Daily Money Purchase Plan
Bosun	7,172.70	239.09	25.33	16.00	5,248.11	2,798.99	93.30	10.61
AB	5,076.94	169.23	17.70	16.00	3,731.89	1,990.35	66.34	10.61
OS	4,102.51	136.75	16.33	16.00	2,861.45	1,526.10	50.87	10.61

Reduced Operating Status (ROS)

	Weekly Base Wage	Daily Base Wage	Hourly Overtime Rate	Vacation Days Per Month	Monthly Benefit Base	Monthly Supple. Benefit	Daily Supple. Benefit	Daily Money Purchase Plan
Bosun	1,261.15	180.16	25.33	6.00	5,248.11	1,049.62	34.99	10.61
AB	892.96	127.56	17.70	6.00	3,731.89	746.37	24.88	10.61
OS	683.33	97.61	16.33	6.00	2,861.45	572.29	19.07	10.61



SUP President's Report

January 14, 2013

SUP ELECTION

The two-month secret mail balloting for the 2013-2016 term for officers of the Sailors' Union and referenda on two proposed amendments to the Union's Constitution and a Shipping Rule change concludes on Thursday, January 31.

On Friday, February 1, the Balloting Committee elected at the September 2012 Headquarters meeting will turn-to at 8:00 A.M. and accompany representatives of Pacific Election Services—the Impartial Balloting Agent selected by the membership to conduct the election—to retrieve the ballots from a San Francisco post office box used by the balloting agent. Once back at Headquarters, the Committee will then verify the eligibility and standing of those members voting, in accordance with Article XII, Section 10, of the SUP Constitution.

After Union standing and eligibility are determined, Pacific Election Services employees will count the ballots in the presence of the Committee and those interested in observing the process in the Headquarters Library. Once the tally is completed, the election results will be posted and transmitted to all SUP halls.

Members elected will assume office on March 1. If any of the two proposed Constitutional amendments receive the required two-thirds majority and/or the one proposed Shipping Rule change receives a simple majority, they will become effective February 1.

If eligible members have not received a ballot, contact:

1) By letter to:

Robbin A. Johnson, Manager,
Pacific Election Services, Inc.,
1650 Stanmore Drive,
Pleasant Hill, CA 95423

2) By telephone: 925-685-4935 or 800-571-8049

3) By fax: 925-685-4937

4) By email: rjohnson7128@sbcglobal.net

When requesting a ballot, members must include their name, mailing address and membership number. It must be noted that no ballots will be mailed to any SUP hiring hall. For the election to be a true reflection of the membership, all hands eligible should vote.

AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES

On December 12, the Union was notified by Bob Stephens, APL Vice President for Labor Relations, that the company intends to cease operations at Middle Harbor Terminal in Oakland effective July 1. According to Stephens, APL still plans to call Oakland but at a terminal—as yet unknown—that is operated by a stevedoring company other than Eagle Marine Services, an APL subsidiary.

As the membership knows, APL currently employs four sailors to steam clean containers at Middle Harbor in accordance with Appendix VI of SUP/APL Marine Services agreement. The basis of this agreement—often referred to as the “Magna Carta”—resolved conflicting jurisdictional disputes between the SUP, MFOW and ILWU Local 10, when the company moved from San Francisco to Oakland in 1978.

The agreement references maintenance and repair work specifically at Middle Harbor Terminal “or at any other facility in the San Francisco Bay Area to which APL relocates its M&R work on containers, chassis, and/or refrigerator container units.” It is not known at this time whether APL will relocate the work to another facility or contract it out.

In conjunction with MFOW President Anthony Poplawski, have met with legal counsel to consider options necessary to prevent any job loss.

CHEVRON SHIPPING COMPANY

In accordance with the 2012-2017 collective bargaining agreement with Chevron Shipping Company, a 2% wage

increase is due effective February 1. Recommend that the wage increase be allocated to wages and overtime.

In addition, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday will be observed as a holiday, as a result of bargaining in 2012.

New wage scales will be published in this month's *West Coast Sailors*.

MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY

Matson announced on December 26, that it signed a definitive agreement to acquire the primary assets formerly owned by Reef Shipping Company of Auckland, New Zealand. The assets include four vessels and approximately 1,500 containers. Matson will take over Reef's service from Auckland and Suva, Fiji, to the South Pacific island nations of Nauru, the Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Wallis and Fortuna, Tarawa and Majuro—all of which will be new markets for Matson.

Upon receiving the news, contacted Jack Sullivan, Matson's Vice President for Labor Relations, for more information. The vessels fly the flags of the Cook Islands or Antigua & Barbuda and have multi-national crews. Sullivan stated that Matson had no plans to reflag the vessels to U.S. registry.

More information on this issue will be in this month's *West Coast Sailors*.

PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES

Surge Sealift LMSR vessels

In accordance with the agreement between Patriot and the SUP, MFOW and SIU-Marine Cooks, effective January 25, there will be a 2% increase in Total Labor Cost (wages, overtime, supplemental benefits, SUP Money Purchase Pension Plan, SUP Welfare Plan, etc.) in the surge sealift Large Medium Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off (LMSR) vessels *USNS Gilliland*, *USNS Gordon*, *USNS Shughart* and *USNS Yano* operated and maintained by the company for the Military Sealift Command (MSC).

The increase marks the fourth year of the contract between Patriot and MSC. There are two more one-year option periods and five six-month award term periods. If all option periods are exercised by the government, Patriot will be operating the ships until 2017.

In order to be eligible to work in these vessels, SUP members must take the following required courses: Damage Control, Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense Warfare, Small Arms Training, Shipboard Security Training and Tactics and MSC Environmental Program. Contact SUP Welfare Plan Workforce Development Director Berit Eriksson for more information.

New wage scales will be published in this month's *West Coast Sailors*.

Maritime Support Vessel

The Union was notified on December 10, that Patriot was preparing a bid in response to MSC's solicitation for a U.S.-flag vessel to function as a Maritime Support Vessel.

According to MSC, the vessel will host 50 sponsor personnel with the ability to add an additional 159 personnel for a total of 209. The vessel will be required to maintain sufficient stores onboard to support the crew and 50 sponsor personnel for a minimum of 45 days without resupply, plus have sufficient storage capacity to support at-sea operation of all 209 personnel for a minimum of 45 days without resupply. In addition, the vessel needs to be capable of conducting underway replenishment operations. It shall also support small craft launch, recovery, refueling and resupply, provide force protection and refueling of manned and unmanned rotary wing aircraft.

The solicitation requires the prospective operator to provide the vessel. Patriot is currently looking for a vessel that meets the requirements of the solicitation.

The due date for this bid is February 19. If Patriot can secure a vessel, the Union will work with the company to formulate a Memorandum of Understanding.

Watson-class LMSR vessels

On December 22, the Union was notified by Patriot that the company was preparing a bid to respond to an

MSC solicitation to operate and maintain eight LMSR vessels: *USNS Charlton*, *USNS Dahl*, *USNS Pomeroy*, *USNS Red Cloud*, *USNS Sisler*, *USNS Soderman*, *USNS Watkins* and *USNS Watson*.

The vessels are employed in world-wide propositioning of government cargo, including but not limited to, hazardous cargo, explosives and ammunition.

The initial due date for bids is January 25. The SUP along with the MFOW and SIU-Marine Cooks, will assist, the company in preparing a competitive bid.

QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Article XVII, Section 2 of the SUP Constitution, a Quarterly Finance Committee shall be elected at today's meeting to review finances of the Union for the fourth quarter of 2012, and report back to the membership at the February coastwise meetings. In the event the Committee cannot be filled today, or is short-handed when it convenes, recommend that necessary committee members be shipped off the hiring hall deck as per past practice.

The Quarterly Finance Committee will meet at Headquarters at 8:00 A.M. on Monday, February 11.

THE YEAR AHEAD

The year ahead will bring the usual challenges to the SUP, some anticipated and some not.

The fight to maintain the Jones Act remains ongoing. Legislators in Hawai'i, Guam and Puerto Rico continue to press for so-called “exemptions” that would gut this critical statute that mandates that vessels in the domestic trades be U.S.-crewed, U.S.-flagged and U.S.-built. Fortunately, there is no organized support for either “exemptions” or outright repeal in Congress. However, the SUP must remain vigilant on this issue to protect our work.

Cargo preference legislation is another issue which came to the forefront last year (see the July 2012 *West Coast Sailors*) when a provision was added to the highway bill (H.R. 4348) that slashed the statutory U.S.-flag share of international food aid cargo (P.L. 480/Food for Peace) from 75% to 50%. Congressmen Elijah Cummings (D-Maryland) and Jeff Landry (R-Louisiana) responded quickly by introducing the Savings Essential American Sailors (SEAS) Act (H.R. 6170). Despite having bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, the bill died in the last Congress. Congressman Cummings intends to reintroduce the bill in the current (113th) Congress and is rounding up support. The SUP, in conjunction with others in maritime labor, will work diligently to restore cargo preference which is necessary to keep U.S. mariners at sea and employed.

The Maritime Security Program, which maintains 60 U.S.-flag ships in the international trades is also critical for the membership as nine of those vessels are operated by SUP-contracted APL. While the legislation is authorized until 2025, it still needs to be funded annually. The SUP will once again work with others to ensure full funding.

In the coming weeks Congress will debate the Budget Control Act of 2011, which calls for caps on discretionary spending and requires the Defense Department to reduce spending by \$487 billion over 10 years. If the projected budget cuts go into effect as is currently required, it could have a profound effect on ships operated by the Maritime Administration and the Military Sealift Command and as a consequence on our work. Again, the SUP will be involved.

On the bargaining front, the collective bargaining agreements with Matson Navigation Company and the San Francisco Bar Pilots both expire on June 30. The SUP Negotiating Committee for Matson will be elected at the May Headquarters meeting while the SUP Negotiating Committee for the Pilots will be comprised of those members employed by the Pilots and who want to participate. Members are urged to submit bargaining proposals in writing for both companies.

continued on next page

President's Report continued

HOLIDAYS

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday: All SUP halls will be closed Monday, January 21. This is a holiday under all SUP contracts except Foss Maritime Company. Due to the holiday, the Branch meetings will be held on Tuesday, January 22.

Lincoln's Birthday: All SUP halls will be closed Tuesday, February 12, in accordance with the agreements with APL, Chevron, Matson and the San Francisco Bar Pilots.

Presidents' Day (Washington's Birthday): All SUP halls will be closed Monday, February 18, in accordance to the agreements with APL, Foss, Matson and Patriot Contract Services. Due to the holiday, Branch meetings will be held Tuesday, February 19.

Washington's Birthday: This holiday is observed under the Chevron and Bar Pilots agreements on Friday, February 22.

ACTION TAKEN

M/S to approve the election of two new members to the Balloting Committee. Nominated and elected: Dave Larsen and Romaine Dudley. Carried unanimously.

M/S to concur with the Chevron wage increase.

Quarterly Finance Committee: Nominated and elected: Kaj Kristensen, Arthur Thanash, Dave Larsen, Romaine Dudley and Mike Worth.

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

Panama Canal looks to handle up to 14,100-TEU ships

The Panama Canal Authority has advertised that the massive project underway to expand the man-made shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans will enable transits by 12,500-TEU vessels, but a top official now says the facility's operating capacity could bump up to accommodate even larger ships.

Rodolfo Sabonge, the Authority's Executive Vice President for Planning and Business Development, said that larger ships will fit in the new lock chambers and the agency may allow passage by vessels up to 14,100 TEUs once operational issues are ironed out.

"The lock chamber already has the width to accommodate bigger ships, but we're not starting operations with a wider beam," he said.

The expansion of the waterway is officially half complete. Work is still scheduled to end by October 2014, with operations commencing in 2015. Alberto Alernan Zubieta, who stepped down as Administrator of the Panama Canal Authority in September, last month said ships will begin using the wider locks by the middle of 2015. The original timetable was to open in late 2014, but it was pushed back to early 2015 and then to mid-year, although the slippage is not unusual for a project of such magnitude.

In addition to design and construction of the third set of locks, the \$5.25 billion job includes excavation of new access channels, dredging of canal entrances and dredging of key sections of the waterway.

The 12,500-TEU vessels that will be able to use the wider locks are three-times the size of today's Panamax vessels.

Operating rules for the new locks have been developed for ships with beams of 49 meters (160.8 feet), which can support up to 20 rows of containers. The liner industry has asked the Panama Canal Authority if it can adjust the protocols to accept ships with beams of 51.2 meters (168 feet) which can hold an extra row of containers, Sabonge said.

The marketing chief said canal officials are willing to grant the carriers' request after the new infrastructure goes through a break-in period and workers become familiar with the new operating practices, he said.

The transition to the next range of container ships depends on the learning curve for pilots, tugboat operations, lock engineers and others who have to understand the behavior of the water, how to maneuver bigger ships in the new locks and other factors, Sabonge said.

Somali pirates release Syrian hostages after two years

Somali pirates have released three Syrian hostages held in captivity since 2010 without payment of any ransom, government officials said this month. The three were part of the 19-strong crew of a Panama-flagged, United Arab Emirates-owned bulk cargo vessel *MV Oma* captured in December 2010 some 400 miles northeast of the Seychelles. The ship was released in October 2012 after pirates said they received \$400,000, but detained six of the crew to get more money for them.

The pirates who had held the three were pardoned, Mohamed Aden Ticey, president of the government of Adado region, told *Reuters* by phone. "No ransom was paid. We had agreed with pirates to surrender, hand over weapons and release the hostages without ransom," Ticey said.

Ticey and a former pirate, Abdiqadir, accompanied the three released hostages to Mogadishu. "We have taken these three Syrian hostages from the pirates, the other crew had been previously released," Abdiqadir told *Reuters*. Abdiqadir is the son of a former pirate kingpin known as Mohamed Abdi Hassan "Afweyne". He and his father now both work with the Addado region.

A UN Monitoring Group report on Somalia in 2010 said that "Afweyne" commanded bandits in the Arabian Sea and off the Indian Ocean coast of East Africa for almost a decade, raking in millions of dollars in ransom payments.

Vice President

January 2013

Maui: Rick Goen, delegate. Discussion on stores and STCW including suggestions for improvements via negotiations with Matson this summer. Members are urged to submit written proposals for referral to the Negotiating Committee.

Manoa: Jesper Pfiel, delegate. No problems with Don Bohle running the gang. Pension increase raised as important topic for Negotiating Committee.

Mahimahi: Noel Itsumaru, delegate. Crew lounge improvements underway. Clarification on STCW rest hours and suggestion of standby gangs as a partial fix.

Mokihana: Dave Eriksen, delegate. Replacement mattresses delayed due to strike in LA. In at Oakland with clarifications on penalty meal, early call-out, and sideport (requires two sailors as per Section 19(j).) Ramp blocks and cold-ironing reel cover usually part of tie-up and let go operations and contained in the minimum. Investigating harness safety improvements for rigging cover.

Matsonia: Bill Wood, delegate. Called back crew for a short two-week breakout.

Oregon Voyager: Anton Seravasieyar, delegate. Briefly short-handed due to medical issue with relief. Still running flat out from Socal to Richmond with refinery feedstock.

Florida Voyager: Bill Fisher, delegate. Investigation of hiring practice revealed no violation. Ongoing training to support the professional development of members.

Mississippi Voyager: Bryan Short, delegate. No beefs at Richmond Long Wharf. Questions on training, membership, shipping and STCW. Upgrades in seniority.

APL Korea: Angelito Lopez, delegate along with Sam Scott, bosun, brought in a clean ship to Oakland on another Saturday arrival. Jon Rose is back as serang.

APL Philippines: Gary Thompson, delegate. Out of respect for the Union, sailors carried and covered for an incompetent member of the gang who miraculously got off unhurt.

APL Agate: Raul Guillen, delegate. Clarifications before arrival in New York on security watchstanding. Bill O'Brien made the ship in New York.

APL Singapore: Charlie Kovacs turned the sheets over to Michael Bloemhof. In at Oakland Middle Harbor Terminal on Saturday morning, January 5, with no problems. Gus Silva is the bosun. Dave Mercer brought my attention to APL payroll description of supplemental benefits as "union paid vacation." Alerted Supplemental Benefits Plan and demanded APL payroll rectify the matter.

APL Coral: Roger Berioso, delegate. In at New Jersey.

APL China: Gary McDeavitt, delegate. David Reinking, bosun. In at Oakland with some disputed time (on watch weekend work) later collected by the Wilmington Branch Agent.

APL Thailand: Julian Torre, delegate. In at Oakland with no beefs.

President Truman: Mark Brower, delegate. Investigating at-sea rating switch.

President Polk: Gerry Marshall, bosun. Call from the bosun at sea indicates things running smooth. Ballots requested and to be sent by Impartial Balloting Agent. Filed grievance on failure to account for stowaway search separate from the let-go minimum.

Admiral Callaghan: Haz Idris, bosun. Investigation of mysterious annual increase deferment and other payroll problems continues for this ship and the others in the RRF.

California Voyager: Chris Thornssen, delegate. Call from the delegate indicates things running smooth on the Gulf Coast to South Florida run. Planning a visit again soon.

San Francisco Bar Pilots: Mike Koller and Colin Dewey, delegates. License upgrades nearly complete. New designation of relief operators as "mates" may assist in qualifying sea service for upgrades.

Foss Maritime Company: JD Rymel, delegate. Temporary ban of one tankerman due to baseless causes at a Richmond facility lifted after investigation.



SUP AB's Michael Haslam, Dave Frizzi, and Ricky Pangan by the bunker barge call out board on the sailor's deck in the Mahimahi in Oakland on January 10.

SUP Branch Reports

Seattle

December 17, 2012

Shipped during the period: 1 Boatswain to USNS bottom shipped to a B member; two A members to steady jobs and 1 C member to a Navy ship; 5 Able Seaman dispatched and filled with 3 A's and 2 B members; 1 Ordinary Seaman filled by a C member and 2 standby jobs.

Registered: 6 A cards for a total of 22; 9 B cards for a total of 27; 4 C cards for a total of 6

Ships Checked

Matson vessels *MV Manoa* and *SS Maui* called in Seattle well off their schedule due to rough weather. The *President Polk*, *President Truman USNS Yano* and *USNS Gilliland* called Seattle for SUP/MFU crew members.

On Saturday January 5, the following gang turned-to and moved the major components of the SUP/MFU hiring hall to our new location: Norm Christianson, Robert Jones, Duke Maringer, Greg Schauf, David Purganan, David Ibarra, Jennifer Corner, Christopher Go, Fred Christianson, Bodie Christianson and his friend George. To say that we would not have been able to accomplish this task at great cost and time to the Union would be a vast understatement without these Union members. The placement of the shipping board, cabinets, and dispatch desk in the new hall was done as professionally as any carpenter could have performed.

The SUP/MFU Holiday Party was a great success and we would like to thank Norm Christianson, Robin Colonas, David and Prissy Purganan amongst the many others that helped with the set-up and break-down. This was our last party in this location and it was very well attended. We had well over 75 pensioners, members and their families; and a great time was had by all!

Seattle Branch Agent

Wilmington

December 17, 2012

Shipping: Bosun: 2; AB: 12; AB Maint.: 7; STOS: 1; Standby: 37 Total jobs shipped: 59

Registration: A: 34; B: 22; C: 8; D: 7

Ships Checked

Maunawili, Mahimahi, Maunalei, APL Korea, Mokihana, R.J. Pfeiffer, APL Thailand, Mahimahi, Manukai

On November 30, our LA Federation of Labor Delegate, Eli Wegger, represented the SUP at a strike sanction meeting for ILWU 63, OCU —Office and Clerical Unit. It was unanimous to support their ongoing strike. After an eight-day strike, an acceptable agreement was reached.

On December 7, attended the MTD Christmas lunch meeting. On December 15, we had our MFOW/SUP Christmas Party. Good food by the same catering service as last year. A good time was had by all. MFOW Mario Barahona emceed and supplied the music. Shout outs to Frank Spencer, Saturnino Duenas, Eli Wegger, and Benito Cay-An, for helping set up and securing.

God bless our Union. We had a good year. Happy New Year to all.

Wilmington Branch Agent

SUP members join pension ranks

The following SUP members joined the rank of pensioner, bringing the total number of SUP members to 419:

Cezar Mendoza, 66, Book No. 6511, joined SUP in 1978, 25 years seetime.

John Savage, 68, Book No. 7493, joined SUP in 1993, 18 years seetime.

Theodore Soderberg, 65, Book No. 7499, joined SUP in 1991, 18 years seetime.

Honolulu

December 17, 2012

Shipped the following jobs in December: 1 Bosun steady, 1 AB Day steady, 3 AB Watch steady, 2 AB Watch relief, and 1 AB Maintenance. The shipping jobs were filled by 3 A cards 4 B cards, and 1 C card.

Also shipped 18 standby jobs for the month of December. The standby jobs were filled by 4 B cards, 3 C cards, 8 D cards, and 3 MFOW members.

Registered in December: 10 A cards, 5 B cards, 2 C card, 1 D card. To date totaled registered: 15 A cards, 8 B cards, 6 C cards and 3 D cards.

Ships checked

The *Manukai, Maunawili, Maunalei, Manulani, RJ Pfeiffer, Manoa, Maui, Mokihana, Mahimahi*, and the Paint and Rigging gang. All running with few or no problems.

I represented the SUP at the Hawai'i AFL-CIO Executive Board meeting, and the Hawai'i Port Maritime Council meeting.

Kaiser has changed the date of the Health Awareness Clinic at the SUP Honolulu Union Hall. The Kaiser Health Awareness Clinic will be held in conjunction with the February 19 monthly SUP meeting. All members that can make this meeting should make sure that they do. Mahalo,

Honolulu Branch Agent

Dispatcher's Report

Headquarters—Dec. 2012

Deck	
Bosun.....	2
Carpenter.....	0
MM.....	5
AB.....	7
OS.....	0
Standby.....	7
Total Deck Jobs Shipped.....	21
Total Deck B, C, D Shipped.....	6
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.....	21
Total B, C, D Shipped-All Depts.....	6
Total Registered "A".....	31
Total Registered "B".....	26
Total Registered "C".....	20
Total Registered "D".....	51

ATTEND YOUR UNION BRANCH MEETINGS

Single bluefin tuna fetches \$1.76 million at Japanese auction

Kiyomura KK, a Tokyo-based sushi chain, paid a record \$1.76 million to outbid an affiliate of a Hong Kong-based rival for a tuna it said would be enjoyed by Chinese and Japanese customers alike. The fresh whole tuna weighed 489 pounds at the market's first auction of 2013, on January 6.

Kiyomura could lose as much as 154 million yen on the purchase, based on the estimated 15,540 yen it paid for each piece of sushi and the minimum 128 yen it charges per serving. The chain's president said last year it made the record bid to ensure the fish was won by a Japanese following the March 11, 2011, earthquake.

"There are some political difficulties, but Japanese customers and Chinese customers come to our restaurant, and what we want is for everyone to enjoy our sushi," company president Kiyoshi Kimura said in an interview at his Tsukiji restaurant after the 5:30 A.M. auction. He said that while his bid was "expensive," the company would serve the auspicious fish at regular prices.

By 3:30 A.M., bidders had begun arriving at the warehouse-like tuna auction building to inspect the fish. Two hours later, at the ring of a hand-bell, traders started thrusting arms up, hands signaling the amounts of their bids. Seconds later, the deal was done for the year's first tuna.

Auctions at Tsukiji, the world's largest fish market that stretches over an area the size of 43 football fields, influence prices all over the world, according to Sasha Issenberg, author of "The Sushi Economy."

"It's like a combination of Wall Street and Sotheby's in the art market and a commodities trading floor," he said.

The bluefin, caught off the coast of Japan's northeastern Aomori prefecture, will be carved into about 10,000 pieces of sushi, Kimura of Kiyomura said.

Japanese eat more fish per capita than any other developed country, consuming about 56.7 kilograms (128 pounds) annually, compared with a global average of 17.1 kilograms, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

The winning bid for tuna at the first auction of the year at Tsukiji averaged about 14.5 million yen over the past 10 years, according to the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Wholesale Market website. Daily trading volume at Tsukiji averaged about 1.55 billion yen in 2011, according to Hiroshi Mochizuki, a spokesman for the market.

Tsukiji, where visitors gather as early as 4:00 A.M. Tokyo time to observe competing buyers using hand signals to bid at tuna auctions, is listed among Japan's most popular attractions by the Japan National Tourism Organization.

"We do not believe that in this country, freedom is reserved for the lucky, or happiness for the few. We recognize that no matter how responsibly we live our lives, any one of us, at any time, may face a job loss, or a sudden illness, or a home swept away in a terrible storm. The commitments we make to each other through Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, these things do not sap our initiative, they strengthen us. They do not make us a nation of takers; they free us to take the risks that make this country great."

From President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address: January 21.



A snapshot from the SUP/MFOW holiday party in Wilmington, December 15. SUP member "Eli" Wegger is on the right in the blue T-shirt.