



West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Friday, October 23, 2009

Official jobless rate climbs to 9.8% International shipowners and Unions agree to wage freeze

The recession's toll on American workers rose again in September, with 263,000 lost, moving the official unemployment rate from 9.7% to 9.8% and underlining how the nation's economic crisis is a jobs crisis. The report by the U.S. Department of Labor means some 15.1 million workers have lost their jobs since the recession began in December 2007.

The official 9.8% unemployment rate is bad enough, but a more realistic—and horrible—picture of what's really going on in this nation is the unemployment data that includes those not counted in the official figure, such as those who have given up looking for work: That's a stunning 17% unemployment rate—some 26 million workers

who need jobs or full-time work but cannot find it.

Workers in construction and manufacturing were the hardest hit last month, with 64,000 jobs lost in construction and another 51,000 in manufacturing. Government jobs declined by 53,000 and retail jobs declined by 39,000. Employment in health care is one of the few bright spots, with jobs increasing in September by 19,000.

To return the labor market to pre-recession conditions by September 2011, employment would have to increase by an average of 538,000 jobs every month between now and then, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

There are now six job-seek-

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Seafarer wages have been frozen until some time next year, following an agreement between representatives of many leading shipowners and the main maritime trade Unions at a meeting of the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) in Manila on October 1.

Wage rates were always set to be a sticking point in this year's negotiations, with shipowners opening by pushing for a 10%

reduction in total labor costs, citing the current business climate and several years of wage increases. The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) nevertheless made the case for an unspecified pay increase.

Although the IBF deal is not binding unless operators chose to agree, the negotiations are closely watched by everyone involved in shipping labor supply, in so far as they set a bench-

mark which establishes a norm around which wages tend to gravitate.

However, laws of supply and demand still operate, and despite the slackening in world trade, employers will still find themselves having to shell out whatever it takes to attract officers with specific skill sets, particularly for tanker fleets. Unli-

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APL says no signs of recovery yet

APL President Eng Aik Meng has warned it is premature to talk of significant recovery in the container shipping trades. Speaking at a conference in Shenzhen, China, Eng said that while container volumes handled

by lines were showing some signs of stability, and even small growth on some trades, it was premature to talk of significant recovery. Rates in some trades remained at historic low levels that do not entirely cover the costs of running ships, he said.

Both the Asia-Europe and TransPacific trades have seen huge drops in box freight levels over the last year with long term contracts agreed between lines and shippers that are below operating costs. Eng warned the difference between the current downturn and previous downturns in container shipping was the sharp drop in demand leading to the first contraction in global box volumes in over 20 years.

Global container volumes saw around a 20% decline in the first half of the year as the industry grappled with the fallout from the economic crisis. September

figures from APL's parent Neptune Orient Lines showed a 1% improvement in worldwide volumes for the line compared to the same month a year earlier, however year-to-date volumes handled by APL were down 18% at 1.6 million teu.

Eng said a "sizeable and sustainable" uplift in rates was essential across all trades. The last few months have seen a slew of announcements by lines of freight rate increases across a wide variety of trades. On the Asia-Europe trade, these increases have pushed up spot rates to around \$1,200-\$1,300 per teu, which is still below the \$1,400 per teu level rates were at a year ago. On some intra-Asia segments lines have succeeded in bringing rates back to breakeven levels. On the trans-pacific trade the member lines

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Republican senators obstruct unemployment insurance extension

Because of the actions of two Republican senators, Orrin Hatch (Utah) and Jon Kyl (Arizona), every day this month 7,000 jobless workers have lost their unemployment insurance (UI) coverage. Each day these two Republicans continue to stand in the way of Senate passage of a UI extension, 7,000 more workers will run out of benefits.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nevada) has tried twice to bring the UI measure to a vote on the Senate floor. First Senator Jon Kyl, then Senator Orrin Hatch blocked action.

Christine Owens, executive director for the National Employment Law Project (NELP), says workers are "devastated" by the Republican roadblock. "Unemployed workers across the country are devastated and dismayed by the failure of the U.S. Senate to extend their lifeline. Every day, 7,000 additional workers are facing the total loss of benefits, in many cases after struggling to find work for more than a year and a half."

The official unemployment rate now is 9.8%, while the number of those who have given up looking for work or are underemployed stands at an appalling 26 million workers.

In September, the House overwhelmingly passed a UI extension that called for an additional 13 weeks of (UI) for jobless workers in high unemployment states (more than 8.5%) who have exhausted their benefits without finding new work.

This month, the AFL-CIO urged the Senate to approve legislation that provides 14 weeks of benefits to all jobless workers who can't find new work and an additional six weeks for those in high unemployment states. AFL-CIO Government Affairs Director William Samuel said: "Failure to extend benefits would pull the safety net out from under laid-off workers who are struggling to find jobs that have become increasingly scarce...a record five million workers have been unemployed for six months or more and there are now six unemployed workers for every available job in the United States."

Candidates declare for biennial SUP election

Nineteen Sailors' Union members have declared their candidacy for the upcoming biennial election of Union officers by accepting the nominations made at the September coastwise meetings.

The Committee on Elections/Candidates met at Headquarters on October 15, to verify the eligibility of those accepting the nomination and to select an Impartial Balloting Agent to conduct the election as required by the SUP Constitution.

The Committee's report is on page 4 and is subject to membership approval at the November coastwise meetings.

The secret mail balloting for SUP officers for the 2010-2012 term and Constitutional amendments and a Shipping Rule amendment will begin on December 1, 2009, and continue through January 31, 2010.

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Abraham Acosta	20.00
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West Coast Sailors

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Erik Finneman	50.00
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Obama blasts health insurance industry

Pushing back against his critics, President Barack Obama says overhauling the health care system, while helping millions of people, also will test whether policy makers can "serve the national interest despite the unrelenting efforts of the special interests."

"The history is clear: For decades rising health care costs have unleashed havoc on families, businesses and the economy," the president said on October 17, in his weekly radio and internet address. "And for decades, whenever we have tried to reform the system, the insurance companies have done everything in their considerable power to stop us."

"It's smoke and mirrors," the president added. "It's bogus. And it's all too familiar. Every time we get close to passing reform, the insurance companies produce these phony studies as a prescription and say, 'Take one of these, and call us in a decade.' Well, not this time."

The health insurance industry released a study earlier this month concluding that the Senate Finance Committee bill—one of five competing House and Senate health care measures—would raise premiums significantly for millions of people who already have health coverage.

The report drew intense criticism from the White House, congressional Democrats and other advocates of the bill who deemed the study a last-ditch effort to

sway public opinion against the White House-backed measure.

Obama said he would not abide "those who would bend the truth or break it to score political points and stop our progress as a country." He accused the industry of "filling the airwaves with deceptive and dishonest ads," sending money and lobbyists to Capitol Hill and paying for studies "designed to mislead the American people."

The bills moving through Congress generally would require most Americans to buy insurance, provide federal subsidies to help lower-income people afford coverage and help small businesses defray the cost of extending coverage to their workers.

Obama contended the price of not acting will be a devastated U.S. economy because rising health care costs will mean lower salaries and higher unemployment, lower profits and larger number of people going without insurance.

Obama said overhauling the system will provide the change votes sought when they went to the polls last November.

"But it also now represents something more: whether or not we as a nation are capable of tackling our toughest challenges; if we can serve the national interest despite the unrelenting efforts of the special interests; if we can still do big things in America," he said.

APL says no signs of recovery yet *continued from page 1*

of the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement have already set voluntary proposals for an \$800 per feu increase in rates from Asia to the U.S. West Coast in the May/June 2010 annual contracting season.

For U.S. East Coast ports and inland destinations, a \$1,000 per feu increase has been proposed. According to the TSA, the proposed increases would, in many cases, only return rates to the levels seen at the end of 2008.

While taking steps to ensure their future financial viability, Eng said lines also had to continue to innovate and launch new services. As shippers sought to reduce costs, there was an opportunity to capture cargo from the air freight market, he said. "As shippers seek to reduce costs, we are seeing growth of time-definite services for both full and less than container services," Eng said. "Also, due to improved handling and shipping techniques, certain fresh produce and pharmaceuticals are converting to ocean freight."

Final Departures

Paul Makarczyk, Book No. 18289. Born in Pennsylvania in 1939. Joined SUP in 1996. Died in Walnut Creek, California, October 7, 2009. (Pensioner)

SUP Meetings

These are the dates for the regularly scheduled SUP meetings in 2009:

	<i>Hdqqs.</i>	<i>Branch</i>
November	9	16
December	14	21

West Coast Sailors

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PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)

GOP candidate sues to abolish Jones Act

Hawai'i Republican gubernatorial candidate John Carroll is suing the federal government in an effort to overturn the Jones Act that restricts interstate shipping to U.S.-built, U.S.-flagged and U.S.-crewed ships.

Carroll filed his lawsuit on October 8, in U.S. District Court in Hawai'i.

The lawsuit contends that the Jones Act

violates the State Constitution's Commerce Clause by artificially inflating prices of goods shipped between Hawai'i and the mainland to such an extent that it becomes an unlawful restraint on trade and interstate commerce.

Carroll is seeking the GOP nomination for governor against Lt. Governor James "Duke" Aiona.

Hawai'i recovery probably a year away

There's been a lot of talk among experts in recent weeks about the supposed arrival of the end of the national recession; probably between mid to late 2010 before Hawai'i sees significant economic growth return.

Even then, University of Hawai'i economist Jack Suyderhoud says the recovery next year will be "modest." John Fernald, vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, believes the recovery will be "anemic," with no solid growth until well into the fourth quarter. The University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization says "the local economy will take a number of years to fully recover."

Recapping 2009, it may go on the books as Hawai'i's worst year ever for just about anything—layoffs, business closings, tax revenue, retail sales and tourism. After years of being treated as the rich-but-unmannered uncle of Hawai'i's economy, the past 18 months have revealed just how dependent the state is on the tourism industry. If you wonder why unemployment is at 7% and state government is in the hole, consider one number. By the end of this year, Hawai'i visitors will have spent \$2.8 billion less in the Islands than in 2007. And when 2009 wraps up, 1.2 million fewer people will have visited, down 17% from the record 7.6 million who came in 2007.

Beyond tourism, note that Matson's Hawai'i container traffic was down 13% through the first six months of 2009, compared to the same time in 2008. The value of private building permits is down 20%.

"Seldom does any economy experience such enormous declines in so short a period, and the fallout cannot help but be substantial," said Leroy Laney, an economist who is wrapping up his annual island-by-island forecasts for First Hawaiian Bank.

University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization says employment is expected to stabilize early next year, and even though the jobless rates could hit 8% in 2010, it will still be well below the national average.

LA to reward greener ships

Starting October 1, the port of Los Angeles will further reward ships that cause less atmospheric pollution. There will be a 30% discount on the first day's port fees for vessels steaming at a maximum of 12 knots within 40 miles of the coast. There is already a 15% reduction for vessels slow steaming within 20 miles of the shore.

Long Beach's port is also encouraging clean air. It offers a 15% discount for entire vessel stays in the port for slow steaming within 20 miles of the port and a 20% reduction for slowing down within a 40-mile radius. These ports report that speed reductions have reduced NOx and diesel soot emissions by at least 10%.

Oakland bans dirty trucks

The Port of Oakland has banned "dirty trucks" beginning January 1, 2010, a measure that is said to exceed state requirements.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has mandated that trucks built before 1994, which do not have particulate filters, will become illegal at state ports and rail yards as of the new year.

The Oakland Port Commission this month adopted a truck ban effective January 1, which featured a "turn-away" requirement. The port said: "[Our] truck ban goes well beyond CARB regulations, by establishing a turn-away requirement for non-compliant trucks at the seaport. CARB regulations allow non-compliant trucks to serve the seaport so long as certain information about each truck is recorded and reported to CARB for enforcement." Instead, the Port of Oakland's requiring that the shoreside facility operator deny entry to all trucks that cannot demonstrate full compliance with CARB standards, "with limited exceptions".

Trucks with engine models from 1994 to 2003 would have to undergo engine retrofits and have particulate filters installed to be able to do business in the Port of Oakland. According to a previous port announcement, some \$22 million in port, state, and federal funding has been earmarked for this exercise on a first-come, first-served basis.

Los Angeles and Long Beach have their own comprehensive clean trucks programs, which has implemented CARB's requirements earlier than required. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger visited the Port of Long Beach this month with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson to talk up the \$26.5 million in Clean Air Grants given to Southern California via the federal stimulus package. Schwarzenegger said this money would promote "clean vehicles and green job growth," including the retrofitting and replacement of diesel engines in construction vehicles, cargo handling equipment, school buses, heavy-duty trucks, and locomotives. Schwarzenegger added: "California is once again proving that what is right for the environment is also good for the economy. This funding will further progress in cleaning our air while supporting and creating green jobs, pumping up local economies, and helping protect the health of Californians."

The Chamber of Commerce's jobs deception campaign

by Richard Trumka, President, AFL-CIO

Unions are popularly known as "the folks who brought you the weekend." In contrast, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has the distinction of trying to take away the weekend—along with overtime pay, the minimum wage, Buy America rules, workers' freedom to form unions, child labor standards... The list is long and ugly.

So it's farcical that on October 14, the Chamber launched a campaign estimated to run in the tens of millions of dollars to promote job creation.

The Chamber's campaign originally started out as an attack against financial regulation—until the Chamber found out how strongly U.S. taxpayers support reining in Big Banks and the financial industry's widespread shady practices. So the Chamber conveniently changed the packaging to purportedly focus on jobs, which in fact the American people desperately need.

Yet, while millions of America's workers struggle to find jobs in an economy where there are more than six workers searching for every one job, the Chamber repeatedly opposed extending unemployment insurance. Can't have government interference in the marketplace, after all. Or aid to jobless workers. The same workers the Chamber's smoke-and-mirrors campaign is supposed to be all about.

The Chamber also is joining with Big Banks and financial giants to try and kill a proposed agency that would protect U.S. consumers from being preyed upon by unscrupulous banks, mortgage lenders and many of the same financial institutions that helped create our nation's economic disaster. The Obama administration's proposed Consumer Financial Protection Agency, which this month is being considered in the House Financial Services Committee, would regulate products such as credit cards and home loans, while ensuring the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission oversaw the \$450 trillion "derivatives" market that sunk the world economy.

The Chamber is spending \$2 million in attack ads, claiming that the new agency would hamstring even your local butcher from extending you credit for a week. It's the same sorry effort at de-

ception and outright lies that the health insurance industry now is trying to pull in the debate over health care reform. Tell enough lies and hope someone believes you.

As President Obama said in response to the Chamber's distortion: "We've made clear that only businesses that offer financial services would be affected by this agency. I don't know how many of your butchers are offering financial services," Obama said to laughter.

The Chamber is so twisted up in deception it seems unable to even provide accurate membership numbers. Writing in *Mother Jones* magazine this month, David Corn points to a big discrepancy between the Chamber's public membership numbers and reality. "In testimony before Congress, statements to the press, and on its website, the Chamber claims to represent '3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions.' In reality, the number is probably closer to 200,000."

Not sure if the 200,000 includes Apple Inc., Pacific Gas & Electric and the other giant corporations that recently have pulled their membership from the Chamber because of its draconian stand on climate change.

The Chamber's so-called "free enterprise" campaign has been tried before. After World War II, the National Association of Manufacturers led a similar such effort. That campaign to sell capitalism to U.S. consumers incurred the derision of no less than the editors of *Fortune* magazine, who found similar sentiments among business executives represented on the boards of the business associations that supposedly represented them.

In dismissing the campaign as ludicrous, one such executive described it this way: "The best way we can demonstrate the importance of Free Enterprise is to make it work."

It's clearly not working now. And although the Chamber may try to wrap itself in the shiny trappings of a feel-good campaign, its repeated attacks on consumers and workers demonstrate who the Chamber stands for: Wall Street not Main Street.

Watch changes at MSC

In a change-of-command ceremony conducted October 16, in the hospital ship *USNS Comfort* in Baltimore, Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, a decorated naval veteran with extensive experience in combat and ship operations, became the new Commander of Military Sealift Command (MSC). Besides his combat roles, Buzby had previously served in staff positions that include deputy for surface ships, deputy for surface warfare, deputy for expeditionary warfare and, most recently, commander of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Buzby assumed command of MSC from Rear Admiral Robert Reilly. In his farewell speech, Reilly recognized maritime labor and the U.S.-flag shipping companies, saying "without their support, we wouldn't be here today."

First \$2,400 of unemployment benefits tax free for 2009

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, enacted in February, every person who receives unemployment benefits during 2009, is eligible to exclude the first \$2,400 of these benefits when they file their tax return next year. For a married couple, the exclusion applies to each spouse, separately.

Unemployment benefits received in 2008 and prior years remain fully taxable.

Unemployed workers can choose to have income tax withheld from their unemployment benefit payments. Withholding on these payments is voluntary. Those who choose this option will have a flat 10% withheld from their benefits.

Those unemployed workers who have already chosen to have tax taken out of their benefits should consider the \$2,400 exclusion in determining whether to continue to have taxes withheld.

SAILORS' UNION OF THE PACIFIC

COMMITTEE ON ELECTION 2009-2010

In accordance with the SUP Constitution, Article XII: Nomination, Election and Term of Officers, the Committee on Election convened at 0900 on October 15, 2009, at Headquarters.

The Committee is charged with "...preparing the ballot" and selecting an Impartial Balloting Agent for membership approval.

The Committee recommends the Pacific Election Services, Inc. be used for this election. Pacific Election Services, Inc. will print, mail and count the ballots in accordance with the SUP Constitution. The approximate cost will be \$8,500.00.

Also, the Committee has the duty to verify the eligibility of candidates for office. In accordance with Sections 3, 4, and 5 of Article XII, all candidates duly nominated (as per Section 2 and published in the September 25, 2009 edition of the *West Coast Sailors*), who had returned acceptance letters (as per Section 5) were found eligible.

The following candidates accepted the nomination and will appear on the ballot:

President/Secretary-Treasurer

Gunnar Lundeberg

Vice President/Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

David J. Connolly

San Francisco Business Agent

William Berger

Michael E. Worth

Seattle Branch Agent

Vincent A. O'Halloran

Wilmington Branch Agent

Robert J. Burns

Paul L. Calais

Verness J. Johansen

Honolulu Branch Agent

John D. Benson

Michael L. Dirksen

Arthur L. Garrett

Arthur C. Kardinal

David N. Kaupiko, Jr.

Patrick M. Weisbarth

SUP Building Corp Trustees (Five to be elected)

William Berger

Paul L. Calais

Liam Casement

Norman O. Christianson

David J. Connolly

Michael L. Dirksen

Paul Fuentes

Gunnar Lundeberg

Trevelyan Motlow

Terrance O'Neill

SIUNA Convention Delegate (Three to be elected)

William Berger

Liam Casement

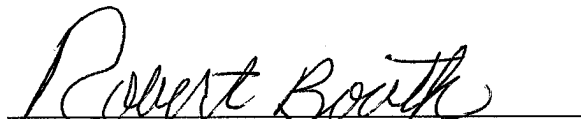
Norman O. Christianson

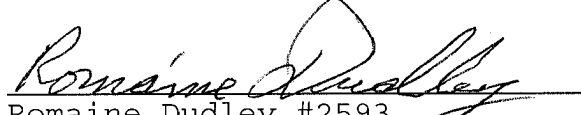
David J. Connolly

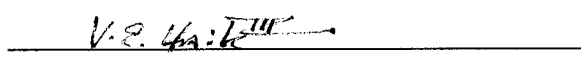
Gunnar Lundeberg

Vince A. O'Halloran

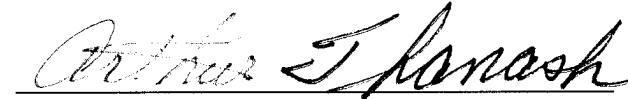
Fraternally


Robert Booth #18908


Romaine Dudley #2593


Vern Haik #5864


Kaj E. Kristensen #3120


Arthur Thanash #3249

The membership will vote on the Committee's report at the November coastwise meetings.

Candidates for office are entitled to submit a photograph and a statement of 100 words or less regarding Union issues for publication in a special election supplement to the *West Coast Sailors* that will be published in November. The statements and photos should be sent to the editor of the *West Coast Sailors* prior to November 16, for inclusion in the election supplement.

Each candidate may also post campaign material on a bulletin board to be set up in each SUP hall for that purpose. The candidate shall be allotted space for one legal-size page (8½" x 14") on a first-come, first-served basis.



East Coast longshore to vote on contract extension

International Longshoremen's Association delegates voted overwhelmingly September 30, for a two-year extension of the Union contract covering 18,500 Atlantic and Gulf dockworkers.

After two days of negotiations in Orlando, Florida, delegates representing 58 locals voted for the agreement, with nine locals opposed. The contract extension will be submitted to the Union's members for ratification on November 17.

ILA President Richard Hughes said he is confident the extension will win rank-and-file approval. He said the agreement a year ahead of the September 30, 2010, expiration of the current pact will prevent shippers from routing cargo away from ILA ports. "This is a stabilizing force for our industry," he said.

James Capo, chairman of United States Maritime Alliance, said members of the USMX management also want an early agreement that would avoid the need for bargaining against a contract expiration deadline next year. He said container ship lines in USMX expect heavy losses to continue next year. As far as we were concerned, it made a lot of sense not to have to sit down and bargain next year, particularly in these economic times," he said. "We received a lot of cargo after the West Coast port shutdown in 2002. We've retained most of it and we don't want to be in a position to send it back."

Negotiators spent the last two days working out a revised agreement that contained several provisions designed to secure Union approval of the deal:

Under the agreement, management backed off an earlier proposal for a one-year delay in an across-the-board pay raise scheduled to take effect October 1, the start of the final year of the current six-year agreement. Pay for new hires would immediately increase to \$20 an hour from \$16.

Also under the contract plan: Caps on carrier contributions to container royalty funds that fund Union benefits would be removed. To offset the cost of allowing the immediate wage increase, carriers would be exempted from a portion of their royalty payments during the next 12 months; Dockworkers in lower wage tiers would graduate to the top scale of \$31 an hour in 2012 after nine years of experience, instead of 11 under an earlier proposal. Lesser increases would narrow the gap for workers after their third, fifth and seventh years on the job; A Union-management committee would be established to analyze the impact of technology and its effect on ILA jurisdiction and jobs. Management would retain the right to introduce new technology, which had been a flashpoint in the negotiations; and new procedures would speed the implementation of decisions by an exiting labor-management committee on work jurisdiction.

California's low-sulphur fuel switch law sparks fears of major oil spill

California's state-level regulation that requires ships to switch to low-sulphur fuel before entering port could in fact cause a major oil spill from a ship whose propulsion or engine fails while switching fuel, San Francisco's Harbor Safety Committee has warned.

The warning blows the lid off a major issue that marine operators calling California ports have struggled with since the regulation took effect on July 1. The committee this month asked state authorities to suspend fines on offending operators for one year in an effort to prevent a major casualty.

A letter from Committee Chair Joan Lundstrom to Steve Edinger, the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) spill prevention administrator, states that in the three months from July to September, the U.S. Coast Guard's regional district that includes San Francisco and Los Angeles-Long Beach initiated 15 casualty investigations related to fuel switching. The normal rate is one per month, Lundstrom said. "In addition, the San Francisco Bar Pilots reported anecdotally during the same period a marked increase in engine failures, engines not starting, and problems with changes in speed, which affect maneuverability," the

letter adds. There has been at least one near incident, Lundstrom said.

The 1993-built, 68,600 dwt tanker *Overseas Cleliamar* lost electrical and propulsion power while passing under the Golden Gate Bridge in the days leading up to July 1, anchoring 15 feet from the rocky Marin Headlands. The probable cause was low-sulphur fuel switching, Lundstrom said. The U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port has flagged this as a "major concern".

The committee does not want the CARB regulation to be scrapped. Instead, it is requesting that the board go easy on penalties for a year, to allow time to "collect data on these performance issues, identify root causes, and apply corrective measures".

The letter concludes: "San Francisco Bay presents a number of hazards to navigation: strong tides and currents, fog, underwater rocks within the shipping lanes, and 11 bridges adjacent to shipping lanes. "The committee believes there is a demonstrated increased risk of an accident, which requires time for a risk analysis of the variety of problems being encountered with the new fuel and the development of best maritime practices, beyond current procedures."

Mauritius rejects pirate prison

Mauritius has reportedly rejected a request from the British, French and U.S. governments to open a jail for piracy suspects.

The Indian Ocean island chain's foreign minister Arvin Boolell told the Mauritius newspaper *L'Express* that there had been no agreement on a proposal for the jail and set up a court for trying suspects, including foreign judges specializing in maritime law.

A source close to the Mauritian government said that the pirate prison proposal would be "political suicide." The jail would have housed Somalis captured on the open sea and awaiting trial and those found guilty of piracy.

Mauritius attorney general Rama Valayden confirmed on September 30, that the government had received the request but noted that it was only a suggestion, according to the islands' *LeMauricien* newspaper.

Minister Boolell also poured cold water on recent suggestions in the Mauritian press that a base for resupplying U.S. warships had been proposed for Port Louis, the leading port of Mauritius. The resupply of U.S. naval vessels would be decided on a case-by-case basis, the foreign minister stated.

Russian mariner pool surges worldwide

Russian seafarers are now among the top nationalities working on the global fleet and contribute millions of dollars in earnings a year. In the last two decades, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, they, along with crews from Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic states, have become an integral part of the pool of seafarers manning much of the world fleet.

The number of Russians now working for foreign shipowners, led by Norwegian, German and Greek companies, is estimated at around 60,000, a figure that puts them third behind the Philippines and India. In the most recent survey of maritime manpower in 2005, the International Shipping Federation and BIMCO (Baltic and International Maritime Council) recorded 21,700 officers and 38,000 ratings. Around 20,000 are thought to be covered by flag-of-convenience agreements, either imposed unilaterally by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) or negotiated with a group of shipping employers in the International Bargaining Forum (IBF).

Russian Unions joined the ITF in the 1990s and take part in the IBF talks, where a new two-year agreement is due to be finalized this month in Manila. For those covered by IBF agreements, the pay and benefits can be very generous by Russian standards, particularly for experienced officers working on tankers. Pay scales last year, when a global officer shortage was causing huge wage inflation, meant a Russian tanker master could earn \$15,000 a month. **Unlicensed ratings covered by IBF agreements are entitled to around \$2,000 a month, including overtime.**

Those outside such agreements and working on flag-of-convenience ships are more exposed to the brutality of the economic crisis. There have already been

protests by Russian crews, backed by their Unions, at unpaid wages and being left abandoned in ports. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, seafarers have gradually become more aware of their rights.

More than 18,000 Russian seafarers, around half of them officers, are employed by members of the International Maritime Employers Committee (IMEC), the London-based group that takes part in the IBF talks.

The figures include those employed on flag-of-convenience ships by Russian shipowners such as SCF Group, via its Cyprus subsidiary Unicom, and Northern Shipping. These account for 60%-70% of the IMEC total, with SCF employing 5,450, although some of these will be deployed on the group's Russian-flagged fleet. IMEC members who are big employers of Russians include maritime services group V. Ships—itsself founded by a Russian emigre—with more than 7,000, and Columbia Shipmanagement of Cyprus, which sponsors a number of courses at Russian training colleges.

Outside the IBF, Stena of Sweden employs around 100 Russian officers via its own St. Petersburg office and through the GAC ship agency in the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk.

The Swedish group, which has a long history of trading in Russia, rates them highly, with their command of English described as "very good" by Kevin Slade, head of human resources at Stena's Glasgow, Scotland-based shipmanager, Northern Marine. Employing Russians was not straightforward, Slade admitted. "You have to work at it," pointing to the bureaucracy that has to be negotiated. However, liberalization has allowed seafarers greater independence when seeking work with foreign shipowners.

Maersk to replace Danish seafarers with foreigners

Maersk Line is reportedly seeking to replace 170 Danish officers who work on containerships with foreign workers.

Fritz Ganzhorn, Secretary General for the Danish Maritime Officers Association, is reported to have said that the company is seeking to replace about a quarter of the Danish officers who work on Maersk containerships with foreign workers from Asia. The Danish workers are being offered early retirements. He said the program did not include Maersk tankers or oil field supply boats that the company operates, he said. All told, he estimated Maersk employs about 2,000 Danish officers.

Ganzhorn said the layoffs are disappointing and that he expected interest in the layoffs by Danish politicians because there have been efforts in recent years to recruit young Danes into the shipping industry. "They are capsizing that policy," he said.

He said Maersk is targeting junior officers, and keeping Danish masters and senior officers on many of the ships. He said this might make it difficult in the future to replace those senior officers with Danes.

**Support the SUP
Political Fund**

ESU Office Assignments

For the month of November, John Straley will be in the Seabrook office.

ESU NEWS

OCTOBER 2009

Official Publication of the Exxon Seamen's Union

Lump sum pension rate remains at 4.00% SeaRiver Smoking Policy revised

The interest rate for calculating the lump sum payments of ExxonMobil pensions for January–March 2010 will remain unchanged from the current 4.00.

The ESU advises all members that may be considering retirement in the near future to closely evaluate their financial position before deciding on retirement and whether to take the lump sum pension option or the monthly pension payment. Members deciding whether to continue employment or to retire should consider other factors that may affect their financial security in retirement.

To request a package, eligible participants may contact the EMBSC at 1-800-682-2847 or the EMBSC web site (www.exxonmobil.com/benefits). If an individual plans to retire in the first quarter, they should notify their supervisor 60 days before their retirement date to submit a Smart Form.

If you are interested in a quick online estimate of your lump sum or monthly pension amount you can acquire this information at the following website www.benefitsweb.com/exxonmobil.html. At this site you can estimate your future pension benefit based upon specific assumptions you enter. You can see how different assumptions about the future, including your future earnings, termination date, and benefit commencement date might affect your pension benefit. You can also see what your benefit could be like depending on such factors as how much longer you plan on working and when you want to commence your benefit. By using the projection function, you are not requesting or committing yourself to a commencement of your benefits.

This site requires a PIN and when you became eligible to participate in the benefit plans, you were automatically assigned a PIN. The first time that you use this PIN, you should have been asked to change your PIN to protect the privacy of your plan accounts. Remember, you will not be able to access your pension benefit without your PIN. How do you get a PIN if I have forgotten it? You can request a PIN reminder by selecting "Forgot Your PIN?" on the login page and then select the "Mail a PIN Reminder" button. If you have any questions, you can call the ExxonMobil Benefits Service Center at 800-682-2847.

The ESU also recommends that everyone that is eligible or within a few years of his or her retirement to attend the Late Career Pre-Retirement Planning Course offered by the Company.

The ESU Executive Board, along with our attorney Sharon Groth, met with management in Houston, Texas, on October 9, to bargain over changes to the current smoking policy onboard SeaRiver vessels. Since smoking in the workplace is a condition of employment, the ESU requested bargaining in July when management informed the Union that they had decided to modify the current smoking policy by eliminating smoking in an individual's stateroom.

The ESU initially became aware that SeaRiver management was reviewing the current smoking policy for potential changes at an Ocean Fleet Safety Committee meeting during 2008. Apparently, concern was raised during a ship board monthly safety meeting about SeaRiver's smoking policy. This prompted management to conduct a review that ultimately shaped their interest to prohibit smoking in an individual's room.

During our bargaining session, management's lead spokesperson, Fleet Operations Manager, Bill Sheehy, explained why the Company wanted to revise the current policy. Their position was the smoking policy change would enhance the quality of life of all personnel by minimizing safety and health concerns related to smoking.

During the day the Company submitted four different propos-

als and the Union responded with counter proposals. The ESU's initial counter proposal stipulated no change to the current smoking policy, sanitary inspections of rooms, smokers would keep their doors closed when smoking and a company paid smoking cessation program. Management was inflexible in the area of smoking in the rooms but the ESU bargaining committee did gain some concessions with improvements to the smoking lounges onboard the vessels. By eliminating smoking in the staterooms, the Union believes it is necessary to maximize the size of the smoking lounges and improve the entertainment systems in the smoking lounges by bringing them up to the same standard as the other non-smoking recreation rooms.

The new smoking policy does not take effect until January 1, 2010. After January 1, 2010, everyone needs to be aware that a violation of the revised smoking policy is subject to Contract language as outlined under Article V (Discipline) of the ESU Collective Bargaining Agreement. Furthermore, it would be a violation of the Posted Offenses (Number 5) as listed in the Side Letters of the ESU Agreement. A violation of a Posted Offense can result in discharge from the vessel without further notice as outlined under Article V, Section 1(A) of the ESU Contract.

As under the old smoking policy, additional areas where smoking may be allowed are the tanker's fantail and bridgeworks, when authorized by the vessel's Captain. This part of the policy has not changed.

The following are the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding that the Union and the Company agreed to on October 9, 2009:

Memorandum of Understanding-Smoking Policy (Oct. 9, 2009)

The Union and the Company have agreed to the following changes to the Company's Smoking Policy:

1. There will be no smoking in the individual staterooms, effective January 1, 2010. All other terms in the current policy will remain unchanged.
2. Any violations of the policy are subject to the discipline procedures outlined in Article V.
3. The Company will provide smoking cessation information to employees at their request.
4. Subject to regulatory requirements, the Company agrees to remove the bathrooms in the smoking lounges on the S/R American Progress, Kodiak and Sierra on or before each respective vessel's next shipyard. Satellite box and similar electronic equipment will be added as in the other recreation rooms.

BCBS refunds for 2007 participants

As most everyone remembers, in 2007 the Blue Cross Blue Shield Medical Plan was deemed no longer financially sustainable due to escalating claims and dwindling plan reserves. As a result of the higher claims experience BC/BS had proposed renewing the plan at premium rates that would more than double the participant's contribution. Consequently, the Company proposed and the Union agreed it was in the best interest of our members change from the BC/BS plan to the ExxonMobil Medical and Dental Plans in 2008.

As a requirement of BC/BS the medical plan was required to maintain monetary reserves to pay lagging claims in the event we decided to switch insurance plans. These reserves were jointly funded from Company and participant contributions.

Now that all claims have been settled, BC/BS has refunded SeaRiver the remainder of the run off reserve, which totals \$716,893.51. Additionally, the Company and the ESU have agreed that participants will receive a refund equivalent to their premium contributions that were paid in 2007. Participant payments for a full year of premium contributions

will be made as follows -\$822.60 (employee) \$1481.40 (employee +1) and \$2,244 (employee +2 or more). This refund payment is taxable because those contributions were paid on a non-taxable basis. Participants would be refunded a total of \$331,302, which equals 46% of the total remaining run off reserve. Since 2001 the average participant contribution has average 18% of the total premiums, whereas the Company has paid 82% of the cost of premiums. This refund applies to employees and retirees that were participants in the BCBS medical plan during 2007 plan year.

The details on when and how this refund will be processed are still being finalized but we are hopeful that refunds will be paid without too much delay. It may take a few weeks to work out the details with payroll and ACS on issuing payment but SeaRiver Human Resources informs the ESU that they have set a goal to disburse the refunds by or before November 30. The Union will provide additional details once they are available. Please feel free to give the Seabrook office a call should you have any questions about your refund.

Eye Protection



Able Seamen Edgar Paderes onboard the S/R American Progress demonstrates his meticulous seamanship skills by sewing a chafing gear around the eye of a mooring line. SeaRiver vessels typically use expensive Kevlar mooring lines and by applying a protective covering, the line and eye should have a longer service life. Edgar has been a member of the ESU since his employment in 2001 and makes his home in Houston, Texas.

ESU News

2010 annual open enrollment for ExxonMobil benefit plans

The annual open enrollment for ExxonMobil Medical, Dental, Vision and Pre-Tax Spending Plans begins on October 26, 2009 through November 13, 2009. All employees should receive the 2010 Benefits Open Enrollment booklets and forms from benefits administration around the October 26, 2009 start date. Your booklet, as it was last year, will contain options specific to each employee and the information will be sent to wherever the person is (i.e. home on paid leave or on assignment on the vessel). The Union was also informed that each vessel will receive copies of all the booklets and forms for use if anyone did not receive their own packet. Additionally, should anyone need assistance or has any questions about their benefit plans and availability they can contact Benefits Administration at 713-680-5858 or 800-262-2363.

The good news for 2010 is that it doesn't appear there will be an increase in the monthly premium contributions paid by the employees for the POS "A" or "B" medical plans. As the ESU goes to press, we do not have any information on the HMO plans that are offered by the Company. Everyone should closely review the plans that are available to you for the best option to meet your personal needs. No action is necessary on your part if you are satisfied with the plan that you are currently enrolled.

ExxonMobil Dental & Vision Plans for 2010 – The ExxonMobil Dental Plan performance for 2009 has been favorable; therefore monthly contributions for employees will not change. The ExxonMobil Vision Plan for 2010 also will not see an increase in monthly contributions for the employees.

ExxonMobil Pre-Tax Spending Plan – When you elect coverage under a medical, dental and/or vision plan to which a participating ExxonMobil employer contributes, your required contributions (what you may think of as your premiums) will be on a pre-tax basis, unless you opt out of this feature every year.

The Health Care Flexible Spending Account allows you to set aside pre-tax money for the reimbursement of out-of-pocket medical, dental or vision expenses for both you and your dependents.

The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account allows you to set aside pre-tax money for the reimbursement of day care charges provided for your dependent children under age 13 or for a disabled child or adult who lives with you and depends on you financially. This account does not cover medical or dental expenses.

You may participate in one, two or all three parts of the Plan: You are enrolled to pay your contributions for medical, dental and vision plan coverage on a pre-tax basis. If you do not wish to pay your contributions on a pre-tax basis, you must opt out of this feature each year during Annual Enrollment. If you do not opt out each year, your contributions will be made on a pre-tax basis beginning the following plan year.

Each year, you must elect an annual amount to contribute in order to participate in the Health Care Flexible Spending Account and/or the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account.

Retiree/Survivor Contributions - The ESU is still waiting for information for this group.

Ship reports

S/R American Progress

Vessel boarded by ESU on October 3, at Valero in Corpus Christi, Texas. Regular Ship Representative Rudy Benavides onboard and reports no problems. The crew is making preparations for a change in trade. After discharging in Tampa the vessel departed for the Pacific via the Panama Canal for ANS service. The vessel is scheduled to stop in Port Angeles, Washington, for repairs and bunkers before loading in Valdez. The ship was redeployed to the West Coast to accommodate an increase in ANS production.

S/R Baytown

In last month's edition of the *ESU NEWS*, the plan was to crew up the *Baytown* around October 1, and then have the vessel complete a required shipyard repair period before returning to service. These plans were put on hold for now but the Company continues to access future plans for the vessel.

Kodiak

The *Kodiak* has switched trades with the *Sierra* and is now discharging in the Puget Sound area. Ship Rep. Tim Williams has communicated via e-mail on a few minor issues. The vessel has

an extra Cook assigned to assist with the additional Steward Department demands due to extra people assigned.

S/R Long Beach

The *Long Beach* continues in cold lay-up, in Labuan Malaysia. There are no crewmembers assigned to the vessel at this time. Future plans for the vessel are unknown at the present time.

Sierra

ESU Board officer visited the vessel on October 21, in Richmond, California. Vessel has been trading between Valdez and San Francisco Bay area. Regular Ship Rep. Thor Floreen onboard and stays in touch via e-mail and phone. Question about extra personnel assigned to the vessel but the issue was resolved on the ship.

S/R Wilmington

Board officer visited the vessel in Beaumont, Texas, on October 15. Regular Ship Representative Jeff Harris onboard. The ABS, with USCG observation, recently completed an extensive interim follow-up ISM audit onboard the *Wilmington*. The audit team complimented the vessel's crew regarding their preparation, knowledge and the condition of the vessel, both internally and externally.

Some like it hot!



AB Greg Raredon and MS Reynaldo Palisoc are pictured from left to right at the Advance Fire Fighting class that is held at Texas A&M in College Station. This 4-day class was held the week of September 28. There are three classes still on the schedule for 2009 and are open to all unlicensed that have not attended Fire Fighting within the last 6-8 years. These classes are in the cooler months of November and December (Nov. 3-6, Nov. 10-13 and Dec 8-11). You can check for openings by contacting Fleet Manning (Kharon Delaney or Helen Wright) to submit your training requests. The Training Department can be reached at 877-290-1422 ext. 3.

Amendments to ESU Constitution and By-Laws pass

On Tuesday, October 6, the ESU office received the official voting results for three amendments to the ESU Constitution and By-Laws. The American Arbitration Association (AAA) in New York was contracted with overseeing the integrity of the vote and ballot counting as prescribed under the Constitution and By-Laws. The ESU mailed out a total of 155 ballots and the AAA received a total of 76 ballots for counting. There were no blank or disqualified ballots. The results and summaries of the amendments are listed below:

Amendment 1 For: 65 Against: 11

Simplify the nomination process for candidates to seek Union office. Under old language in the ESU Constitution, candidates were required to obtain signatures from members in good standing in order to stand for election to any Union office (25 for the Executive Board and 15 for Ship Representatives). This amendment eliminates the signature requirement. Candidates that wish to run for Union office will be allowed to submit a "Candidate Intent Form" for the particular office that the individual is seeking directly to the ESU office by the designated deadline. The old way of collecting signatures was logistically difficult and the intent of the new language is to make it easier for eligible members to have his/her name on the ballot.

Amendment 2 For: 73 Against: 3

The old language under this amendment called minutes from monthly Union meetings to be posted on the Union's bulletin board on the vessel. Revised language allows for discretion of posting minutes by the membership on that particular ship. Some minutes may contain sensitive information about the meeting and posting may not be prudent. Judgment can be used by the Ship Rep. in posting the minutes. Minutes should still be made available to the members aboard and a copy sent to the ESU office.

Amendment 3 For: 66 Against: 10

This amendment pertained to voting eligibility. Under the old Constitution language, for voting purposes a member had to be in good standing for at least three (3) months before the beginning of any voting period. The new language removes the (3) month requirement with the following language: "To be eligible to vote in an election, a member must have his dues paid up through the month prior to the month in which the election or balloting period begins".

Now that the amendments have been approved by membership vote, the Union will have revised booklets of the ESU Constitution and Bylaws printed for membership distribution. We are hopeful that new booklets will be mailed to the membership within the next few weeks. Thanks to all that took the time to cast a ballot and participant in the amendment process.

EXXON SEAMEN'S UNION

Founded March 28, 1941

Affiliated with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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Board Member at Large Frank O'Malia

Board Member at Large John McCarthy

Deck Trustee Pat Campbell

Engine Trustee William Ackley

Steward Trustee Kurt Kreick

Basic Medicare premium to increase 15% in 2010

The basic Medicare premium will shoot up next year by 15%, to \$110.50 a month, federal officials announced on October 19.

The increase means that monthly premiums would top \$100 for the first time, a stark indication of the rise in medical costs that is driving the debate in Congress about a broad overhaul of the health care system.

About 12 million people, or 27% of Medicare beneficiaries, will have to pay higher premiums or have the additional amounts paid on their behalf. The other 73% will be shielded from the increase because, under federal law, their Medicare premiums cannot go up more than the increase in their Social Security benefits, and Social Security officials announced that there would be no increase in benefits in 2010 because inflation had been extremely low.

SUP retirees are reimbursed for Medicare on their monthly pension checks by the SUP Welfare Plan.

Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, urged the Senate to approve a bill to block the scheduled increase in Medicare premiums. "We are in tremendously difficult economic times, and seniors are being hit particularly hard," Sebelius said.

Among those who face higher premiums next year are new Medicare beneficiaries, high-income people and those whose Medicare premiums are paid by Medicaid. Premiums can be as high as \$353.60 a month, or more than \$4,200 a year, for Medicare beneficiaries who file tax returns with adjusted gross income greater than \$214,000 for an individual or \$428,000 for a couple.

Two maritime resolutions passed by AFL-CIO: seafarers rights & identify documents

Delegates to last month's AFL-CIO convention in Pittsburgh, took action on two important maritime issues: the Seafarers Identity Document (SID) and the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC) during the gathering last month.

Both were submitted by a number of maritime Unions, including the International Longshoremen's Association, International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association. Seafarers International Union of North America (which the SUP is an affiliate) and American Maritime Officers.

The SID resolution focused on requirements for identity documents contained in the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 185. The MLC resolution seeks to combine a myriad of international maritime laws as addressed by the ILO.

As noted in the SID resolution: "The Convention is a well-constructed balance between the security imperatives and the needs of the maritime industry, especially the mariners who serve aboard ships engaged in international voyages."

Moreover, the criteria it (the Convention) employs "uses cost-effective technology, including two fingerprints of the bearer encoded in a two-dimensional barcode, a computer strip and a digital photograph."

Mariners covered under the Convention are not required to hold a visa for the purpose of shore leave. However,

"any member state which is not in a position to fully implement this requirement shall ensure that its laws and regulations or practices provide arrangements that are substantially equivalent."

Authors of the AFL-CIO resolution note that technology such as biometric identity cards and scanners give the international community a way of balancing legitimate security needs with a humane leave policy.

The resolution dealing with the MLC calls for a "bill of rights for seafarers," which calls for the following:

- An employment agreement guaranteeing decent shipboard working and living conditions that would be signed by both the mariners and the shipowners (or its representatives);
- Monthly pay in full and in accordance with the employment agreement and any applicable collective agreement;
- A 14-hour work limit within any 24-hour period and a 72-hour limit within any seven-day period;
- Standards mandating that shipowners must pay to repatriate mariners in cases of illness, injury, shipwreck, insolvency or ship sale;
- Specific requirements for living accommodations and recreational facilities aboard vessels;
- Access to prompt medical care when aboard or in port, and
- Measures for effective enforcement and compliance, including a certification system for labor standards.

Editor's Note: To receive the *West Coast Sailors* via first-class mail it's \$25 per year U.S. mail; \$40 per year international.

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Welfare Notes

October 2009

Eligibility and Enrollment

Please be sure to check with the SUP Welfare Plan Office if you have any questions about your eligibility or enrollment in a Medical or Dental Plan. The plans available to you are dependent upon your residence. Be sure to take the time to enroll in a plan once you become eligible to give you the necessary options to deal with unexpected illnesses, injuries, or dental emergencies. Also keep us informed of address changes and dependent changes.

Chemical Dependency

Reminder: The SUP Welfare Plan has an EAP (Employee Assistance Program) that offers counseling and assistance. The plan is administered through Health Management Center. Their phone line is open 24 hours 7 days per week. Your call is completely confidential and your privacy is protected. HMC's phone number is 1-888-215-8903.

The HMC Employee Assistance Program is a professional evaluation, counseling, and educational program. An EAP counselor will discuss the nature of the problem and outline a plan of action for consideration.

The SUP Welfare Plan also offers a program that will provide alcohol and drug abuse rehabilitation services for eligible members at a designated treatment center. Benefits are limited to one rehabilitation admission per active member not to exceed a period of 28 days of rehabilitation treatment during the member's lifetime. Pre-authorization from the plan office is required.

The 28 day treatment is available through Duffy's of Napa Valley. You can view the facility and treatment program on their website www.duffysrehab.com. Chemical Dependency Services are also available through your medical plans such as Kaiser, Health Net, and Group Health. Contact your plan for information on treatments available to you or covered dependents.

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SIU-PD Pension 415-764-4987

SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits 415-764-4991

Southern California carwash workers win another victory

Carwash workers in California are fighting for justice and an end to the exploitation many workers suffer at the hands of abusive carwash owners. One of the workers' major protections — the Carwash Worker Law — was set to expire this year. But the workers and Unions supporting them mobilized for its renewal.

This month, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law AB 236, a bill to renew the state's "Carwash Worker Law" and extend it to 2014. The California Labor Federation and the Community-Labor-Environmental Action Network (CLEAN) Carwash Campaign worked hard to win the bill's passage.

Sponsored by Assemblymember Sandre Swanson (D), the law requires all carwashes to register with the state, enabling the state to prevent employers who have violated labor laws in the past from continuing to do so. It also requires that carwash employers purchase a surety bond as wage insurance and contribute to the "Carwash Worker Restitution Fund," both of which provide workers with a means to collect owed wages.

Angie Wei, California Labor Federation legislative director, says the renewed Carwash Worker Law will help improve compliance "in an industry that has been plagued with violations of basic employment laws. In addition to providing protections for workers, the law helps law-abiding carwash employers by leveling

the competitive playing field and helps the state by bringing an underground industry into compliance with employment and tax law."

California leads the nation in both the number of carwashes and workers, with more than 1,600 carwashes and 22,000 workers. Many carwash employers routinely violate basic labor laws leading to unsafe and unhealthy workplaces for workers and the communities they serve.

Workers have reported being paid less than half of California's \$8 an hour minimum wage and some are paid only in tips. Many workers also endure dangerous working conditions, including exposure to toxic chemicals without proper protective gear. In March 2008, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that two-thirds of carwashes inspected by the state's labor department since 2003 were out of compliance with one or more labor laws.

Manuel Carino, a carwash worker in Los Angeles, was able to use the Carwash Worker Law's protections to recover \$15,000 of wages. After his employer refused to pay him the money he was owed, Carino, with the help of the community activist Bet Tzedek Legal Services, applied to the owner's wage bond.

Said Swanson, the bill's author: "The extension of this program will ensure that workers are protected. California cannot afford to let carwash owners blatantly violate the law without consequence."

Poll reflects health care “public option” backed by a clear majority

A *Washington Post-ABC News* poll released this month, shows that support for a government-run health-care plan to compete with private insurers has rebounded from its summertime lows and wins clear majority support from the public.

Americans remain sharply divided about the overall packages moving closer to votes in Congress and President Obama’s leadership on the issue, reflecting the partisan battle that has raged for months over the administration’s top legislative priority. But sizable majorities back two key and controversial provisions: both the so-called public option and a new mandate that would require all Americans to carry health insurance.

Independents and senior citizens, two groups crucial to the debate, have warmed to the idea of a public option, and are particularly supportive if it would be administered by the states and limited to those without access to affordable private coverage.

Overall, 45% of Americans favor the broad outlines of the proposals now moving in Congress, while 48% are opposed, about the same division that existed in August, at the height of angry town hall meetings over health-care reform. Seven in 10 Democrats back the plan, while almost nine in 10 Republicans oppose it. Independents divide 52% against, 42% in favor of the legislation.

There are also deep splits in the new poll over whether the proposed changes would go too far or not far enough in expanding coverage and controlling costs. Twice as many see the plan as leaning toward too much government involvement, but since last month there has been a nine-point increase in the number who say government should be more involved.

On the issue that has been perhaps the most pronounced flash point in the national debate, 57% of all Americans now favor a public insurance option, while 40% oppose it. Support has risen since mid-August, when a bare majority, 52%, said they favored it. (In a June *Post-ABC* poll, support was 62%.)

If a public plan were run by the states and available only to those who lack affordable private options, support for it jumps to 76%. Under those circumstances, even a majority of Republicans, 56%, would be in favor of it, about double their level of support without such a limitation.

Fifty-six percent of those polled back a provision mandating that all Americans buy insurance, either through their employers or on their own or through Medicare or Medicaid. That number rises to 71% if the government were to provide subsidies for many lower-income Americans to help them buy coverage. With those qualifiers, a majority of Republicans say they support the mandate.

Faced with a basic choice that soon may confront the administration and Democratic congressional leaders, a slim majority of Americans, 51%, would prefer a plan that included some form of government insurance for people who cannot get affordable private coverage even if it had no GOP support in Congress. Thirty-seven percent would rather have a bipartisan plan that did not feature a public option. Republicans and Democrats are on opposite sides of this question, while independents prefer a bill that includes a public option but does not have Republican support, by 52% to 35%.

But if there is clear majority support for the public option and the mandate, there is broad opposition to one of the major mechanisms proposed to pay for the bill. The Senate Finance Committee suggested taxing the most costly private insurance plans to help offset the costs of extending coverage to millions more people. Sixty-one percent oppose the idea, while 35% favor it.

Nearly seven in 10 say they think that any health-care measure would increase the federal budget deficit, a possible concern for Obama. But nearly half of those who see the legislation as growing the deficit also say the increase would be “worth it.”

Coast Guard issues new info on mariner credentials

Many mariners, especially those that are at sea or away from home for extended periods of time, have authorized third parties, such as a spouse or an employer, to handle the details of their credential application while they are gone. If you would like to authorize the National Maritime Center (NMC) to work directly with others, and to protect your privacy, there are some simple instructions. To start, you need to send the NMC a Third Party Release. The release will provide instruction to the NMC on what information and with whom the details of your application can be discussed. You may send the release in any format, provided it contains the information in the list below. You may also use the sample release format, found on the NMC website at www.uscg.mil/nmc/applications_forms.asp.

To authorize a third party to act on your behalf, your release will need to: Be in writing; Include your full name and signature; Include the date you wish the release to expire; Include your unique Mariner Reference Number (MRN) if you have one or your Social Security Number if you are a first time applicant for a credential; Include the full name, address, phone number and other contact information of the authorized third party; Provide specific instructions on what information can be discussed on your behalf.

For example: You are sailing and you would like your spouse to be able to discuss all of the information in your application with the National Maritime Center. You may specify limited authorization, if you choose: “discuss all of the information in my application except information about my medical conditions. You may send the release to the NMC by these four methods: Include it with your credential application packet; Scan the signed release and email it to IASKNMC@uscg.mil; Fax the signed release to 304-433-3416; Mail the signed release to the NMC at the address above.

International shipowners and Unions agree to wage freeze *continued from page 1*

censed personnel on the international mark, however, remain widely available in sufficient number to find their wages under pressure.

News of the agreement comes in a carefully worded joint statement, which specifies: “Under the terms of the agreement, a working group has been established to review the system adopted by the IBF to allocate wage increases between cash and social issues and between officer and ratings grades. “It is expected that the working group will prepare a report during 2010 concerning any possible changes that might be made to the current system and it has been agreed that changes to the current wages rates and other wage related issues covered by the claims of the ITF and the JNG will be put on hold until this work is concluded.”

Meanwhile, the IBF also agreed to release funds to enhance recruitment, training, skills enhancement, employment promotion and career development for seafarers with effect from the start of next year.

Takao Manji, who chaired the employers’ side of the talks, said: “This outcome represents a pragmatic reaction to a very difficult economic situation affecting the shipping industry. None of the various problems facing us were easy to deal with and the discussions with ITF were difficult and at times frustrating. But overall we are satisfied with the result.”

ITF spokesman Paddy Crumlin of the Maritime Union of Australia, added: “The negotiations have been particularly difficult this time given the economic situation faced by the industry and the serious problems this has caused for many of our members. But the IBF system has been able to cope with these strains and the outcome provides further positive developments on which we can build our relationships that are essential to the industry.”

International Maritime Employers’ Committee Ian Sherwood said: “Looking at the positive points about this outcome, IMEC members will be particularly satisfied at the renewed commitment to training and employment promotion that has emerged from the settlement. With very tight economic conditions affecting us, the new funding for training and recruitment will be very welcome.”

IMEC represents 130 companies based all over the world, collectively operating 6,500 ships and employing 157,000 seafarers of all nationalities. However, Japanese and Korean shipowner associations participate separately in IBF talks, joining IMEC under the umbrella of the Joint Negotiating Group.

Somali pirates murder another seafarer

Somali pirates have killed a merchant mariner for the second time this year, with reports of the murder of a master who refused to divert from his planned course after they boarded the ship close to Mogadishu. Three crew members and a policeman were injured in a subsequent shoot-out.

The known seafarer death toll in the current Gulf of Aden piracy crisis totals at least 11, with no deaths in 2005, one in each of the years 2006 and 2007, four in 2008 and five so far this year.

In April 2009, Somali pirates shot dead an Indian seafarer on board *Sea Princess II* and then threw his body in the water. The crime was committed even after the handover of a ransom.

In 2007, one of the crew of a Taiwanese-flag fishing vessel was also murdered, apparently in retaliation for the reluctance of the owner to pay the ransom demanded.

The victim of the latest outrage, which took place last September 24, had not been identified by name but is understood to have been a Syrian national.

The ship involved has been identified as *Barwaqo*, a Panamanian-flagged, 7,849 dwt, 1972-built general cargoship associated with Hamadeh Shipping. No contact details are given for the company, which is based in Tartous in Syria.

Reuters quotes Abdiasis Hassan, Minister for Port in Somalia’s transitional federal government, as stating: “The pirates killed the captain after he refused to turn the ship. Usually, we send police when commercial ships draw near the port but the pirates were already on board and opened fire, injuring one policeman.”

Troops from the African Union peacekeeping mission Amisom and Somali police then intervened and took control of the vessel. Amisom spokesman Barigye Bahoku said: “Our soldiers opened fire on two boats that were trying to hijack the ship. We got messages asking for our help and we helped to rescue the ship.”

Bangladesh deaths spark renewed calls to end beach shipbreaking

European lobby groups have renewed calls for shipbreaking to be moved off the beaches of the Indian subcontinent, after seven fatal accidents were reported in Bangladesh in four weeks. “The last few weeks have been terrible in Chittagong,” said Ingvild Jenssen of the Brussels-based Platform on Shipbreak, a coalition of lobby groups. “In our view, unless the operations are moved off the beach there is no way to stop deadly accidents and pollution of sensitive coastal zones.”

An iron plate fell on three workers at Pakija Enterprise, killing them instantly, the Bangladeshi newspaper *Daily Star* reported. Another three were asphyxiated by poisonous gas while working in the bowers of a ship, the newspaper said. A seventh worker was reported killed in unknown circumstances.

The beaching of ships at low tide for scrapping has been targeted by environmental campaigners because it is more dangerous and more polluting than breaking a ship in a dock, where lifting gear can be used. The International Maritime Organization has, however, not condemned the practice.



SUP President's Report

October 13, 2009

SUP ELECTION

As per Article XII of the SUP Constitution, all members nominated for elective office at the September coastwise meetings and who desire to become candidates for the 2010-2012 term of office shall have their acceptance in the office of the Committee on Candidates at Headquarters (450 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94105) prior to midnight, Wednesday, October 14, 2009.

The acceptance shall be by letter which shall be dated and shall contain the following: (a) The name of the candidate; (b) His/her home address and mailing address; (c) His/her membership number; and (d) The title of the office or other position sought, including the name of the Port in the event the position sought is that of Branch Agent or Business Agent.

No one may be a candidate for more than one office with the exception of the positions of Trustee of the SUP Building Corporation and Delegate to the SIUNA Convention.

Nominees who shall fail to comply herein with shall be regarded as having declined the nomination.

The Committee on Candidates/Election Committee will turn-to at Headquarters at 9:00 A.M., Thursday, October 15, to verify the eligibility of the candidates, select and recommend for membership approval an Impartial Balloting Agent and otherwise prepare the ballot. The Committee's report will be acted upon at the November coastwise meetings.

Candidates for office may request and require the Union to distribute campaign literature at the candidate's request, provided that the candidate makes such request at least five working days prior to the intended date of mailing and/or distribution and provided that the candidate pay the actual cost of mailing and/or distribution at the time of each request. The cost of mailing and/or distribution shall be at the hourly rate of Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 3. Campaign literature that the candidate requests to be mailed must be ready for mailing: stamped; envelopes stuffed and sealed; or flyers stamped, folded, and sealed.

Candidates for office are entitled to submit a photograph and a statement of 100 words or less regarding Union issues for publication in a special election supplement to the *West Coast Sailors* that will be published in November. The statements and photos should be sent to the editor of the *West Coast Sailors* prior to November 13, for inclusion in the election supplement.

Each candidate may also post campaign material on a bulletin board to be set up in each SUP hall for that purpose. The candidate shall be allotted space for one legal-size page (8½" x 14") on a first-come, first-served basis.

The secret mail ballot election of officers for the 2010-2012 term and referenda on proposed amendments to the SUP Constitution and a Shipping Rule amendment will begin on December 1, 2009 and end on January 31, 2010.

APL MARINE SERVICES

Under the 2005-2015 collective bargaining agreement with APL Marine Services, Ltd., the rates of the company's (Offshore, Maintenance and Extra Maintenance) contribution per manday to the SUP Welfare Plan shall be increased by the medical care services component of the Consumer Price Index (United States City Average for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers), or its agreed upon successor, during the most recent 12-month period for which such index was calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.

The 3.3% increase in the index from August 2008 to August 2009, was released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on September 16. Therefore, APL's Welfare

Plan contributions were increased by that amount effective October 1.

MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY

On October 5, the Union was notified by Matson that the *Kauai* will be drydocked in Hong Kong around October 14, after completing her Military Sealift Command charter to India. After the drydocking period, the vessel will remain in layup in Hong Kong then relieve the *Manukai*, *Maunalei* and *Manulani* when they are drydocked next year.

At the September coastwise meetings, the membership approved a verbal agreement between the Union and company covering wage and benefit rates for *Kauai* while she was under temporary government charter. That agreement called for the wage and benefit structure applicable in Matson's *ITB Moku Pahu*.

On October 12, a formal Memorandum of Understanding was received from the company and was the same as that agreed to last month. The Memorandum also stipulates that wages and benefits shall revert the standard (2008-2013) offshore agreement rates "...at 0001 on the day following the ship's arrival at the drydocking layup berth or it is in place on the drydock, whichever is earliest."

The MOU further states "the wage rates shall be changed from the standard agreement rates to the temporary government charter rates at 0001 on the day following the ship's departure from the drydocking layup berth or the drydock, whichever is latest, if the ship continues or completes the temporary government charter and/or returns to a U.S. port without company cargo aboard; or, the standard wage rates and benefit rates shall continue if, or when, the ship goes into company [commercial] service." The company also agreed to pay the explosives bonus (Section 22 of the Pacific District General Rules) if it was reimbursable under the government charter.

Recommend membership approval of the temporary government charter agreement for the *Kauai*.

SAN FRANCISCO BAR PILOTS

The current collective bargaining agreements between the SUP and the San Francisco Bar Pilots covering marine personnel and dispatchers expires on December 31. On October 7, notified Captain Peter McIsaac, Port Agent for the Pilots, of the Union's desire to negotiate new agreements.

MARITIME TRADES DEPARTMENT

As a delegate, attended the Maritime Trades Department (MTD), AFL-CIO Quadrennial Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on September 10 and 11.

The convention discussed and passed several resolutions that have a direct impact on the livelihoods of the membership. Among them were some of particular significance.

The MTD reaffirmed its strong support for the nation's cabotage laws (the Jones Act and Passenger Vessel Services Act) and to do everything necessary to promote these laws and to educate legislators and the public on the importance cabotage has on the nation's economy and security. On the Maritime Security Program (MSP) which 60 U.S.-flag ships in the foreign trades, including nine for SUP-contracted APL, the convention thanked the Obama Administration and the Congress for strongly supporting the program and urged continued full funding.

As cargo preference is a mainstay of the U.S. merchant marine, the delegates urged by resolution that Congress maintains and strengthens cargo preference.

The three main components of American cargo preference are: The Cargo Preference Act of 1904, requires all cargo procured or owned by the U.S. military be carried exclusively aboard U.S.-flag vessels; Public Resolution 17, enacted in 1934, states that all cargo generated by the Export-Import Bank be shipped in

U.S.-flag vessels; and The Cargo Preference Act of 1954, mandates that a percentage of certain kinds of government-generated cargo be carried aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels at fair and reasonable rates.

The 1954 act, which the Sailors' Union played a leading role in passing, is the one better known to most people for its "Food for Peace" section. This is the measure that covers humanitarian aid to people needing help around the world. Under the Food for Peace provision (Title II of the 1954 act) more than 100 million tons of food aid have benefited billions of poor and hungry people around the world. Title I of the law has generated more than \$30 billion in sales of agricultural commodities to developing nations.

Despite its success, the Food for Peace program faces continual attack. Some members of Congress have tried to divert monies from the purchase of commodities grown in the United States and give those funds directly to nations in need to buy their own goods. The MTD, its maritime Unions and the maritime industry—as well as U.S. farmers—have fought back against these proposals because they would take jobs away from Americans both in the maritime and the agricultural sectors. The transfer of cash also has raised alarms for the possibility of corruption and theft.

In fact, the importance of the cargo preference programs was underscored last year by President Obama: "A strong U.S.-flag commercial fleet needs our nation's cargo preference laws. Whether it is carrying needed goods to those overseas in distress or moving government-generated cargo, American mariners aboard American ships make sure the job is done. People around the world look to the U.S. flag as a symbol of hope and determination. Ships flying Old Glory with American crews are important icons of our resolve."

Convention delegates urged the Senate to finally pass the "Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II" as a final tribute to the brave and selfless deeds of those who supplied the goods overseas during that war.

In addition resolutions were passed in support of America's Maritime Highway (short sea shipping) initiative, dredging, health care reform and the Employee Free Choice Act.

Convention speakers included then AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and his successor Richard Trumka; Admiral Thad Allan, Commandant of the Coast Guard; David Matsuda, Acting Maritime Administrator; Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood; Admiral Mark Harmitichek, Deputy Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command; and Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell. Further information on the MTD can be found on the organization's website: www.maritimetrades.org.

AFL-CIO CONVENTION

As a delegate from the SIUNA (Seafarers International Union of North America), attended the Twenty-Sixth Constitutional Convention of the AFL-CIO from September 13, through September 17, in Pittsburgh.

Highlights of the convention were covered in the September issue of the *West Coast Sailors*.

Further information on the AFL-CIO and the convention can be found at www.aflcio.org.

TRANSPORTATION TRADES DEPARTMENT

As a Vice President of the Transportation Trades Department (TTD), AFL-CIO attended an Executive Committee meeting on October 8, in Washington, D.C.

The TTD continues to aggressively lobby the Obama Administration and Congress on transportation issues, including those of importance to maritime workers.

The Executive Committee held a wide-ranging discussion on two current issues on labor's agenda: health care reform and the effort to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. The group was adamant in its opposition to a proposal being floated on Capitol Hill to tax work-

continued on next page

President's Report continued

ers' health care benefits. This is dangerous proposal, that if passed, could affect members of the SUP as well as other workers. Even the U.S. Chamber of Commerce doesn't like it and has teamed up with the AFL-CIO to fight it.

The TTD was also addressed by Senator Patty Murray (D-Washington), chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Transportation; John Porcari, Deputy Secretary of Transportation; and Liz Schuler, the newly elected Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO. All their remarks were pro-worker.

QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Article XVII, Section 2 of the SUP Constitution, a Quarterly Finance Committee shall be elected at today's Headquarters meeting to review the finances of the Union for the third quarter of 2009, and report back to the membership at the November coastwise meetings. In the event the committee cannot be filled today, recommend that when the quarterly audit of the Unions funds is completed, which will be in about three weeks, necessary committee members be shipped off the hiring hall deck as per past practice.

The Quarterly Finance Committee will turn to on Monday, November 9, at 8:00 A.M.

HOLIDAYS

All SUP halls will be closed on Wednesday, November 11, in observance of Veterans' Day and on Thursday, November 26, for Thanksgiving Day.

ACTION TAKEN

M/S to approve Matson's temporary government charter agreement for the *Kauai*. Carried unanimously.

Quarterly Finance Committee: Nominated and elected were: Romaine Dudley, Louis Frazier, Vern Haik, Arthur Thanash and Mike Worth.

M/S to concur with the balance of the President's Report. Carried unanimously.
Gunnar Lundeberg

Steelworkers president praises Obama's decision on Chinese tires

President Obama's decision to implement U.S. trade laws against Chinese companies that have dumped subsidized products onto the American tire market will have beneficial effects for all U.S. workers, the president of the Steelworkers' union (USW) said last month.

"President Obama rightly rejected groundless retaliation threats and imposed relief based on the merits of this case," said Leo Gerard. "Enforcing trade agreements is part and parcel of maintaining an open and free trading system."

While the case involves a relatively small market (\$16 billion), it involves important matters of principles.

As usual, many "free trade" advocates wound up criticizing the deal. But even some conservative economists like Robert Samuelson of *Newsweek* noted that the administration was accomplishing two things at once.

By insisting that the Chinese live up to

their international trade obligations, the administration was preserving U.S. jobs while making the free market more secure. Ultimately, both Gerard and the handful of conservative economists backing his position believe that free trade is undermined if countries do not follow "the rules of the road."

According to Gerard, "This decision means a better deal for hardworking American men and women and the millions of manufacturers, farmers and ranchers, and service providers who ask only for a chance to compete on fair terms..." "It also means China and other countries can no longer assume they can engage in predatory trade practices with impunity. The President understands that providing effective relief from import surges for the U.S. tire industry in this case is fully consistent with our World Trade Organization obligations. And it is the right thing to do."

Piracy attacks continue to increase

Over half the worldwide attacks are attributed to Somali pirates according to recently released International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Center figures. They say the number of incidents reported so far in 2009 has surpassed the total number reported in 2008. The total number of attacks reported to date this year, is 294. Of these, 34 resulted in successful hijackings of vessels. A total of 559 hostages have been taken in these hijackings.

As with the figures of 2008, the vast majority of hijackings have taken place off the coast of Somalia, either in the Gulf of Aden or off the country's east coast in the Indian Ocean. Ninety-seven of the 294 attacks have taken place in the Gulf of Aden, while a further 47 have taken place off the rest of the coast of Somalia. In addition, four attacks have taken place off the coast of Oman, although they can also be attributed to suspected Somali pirates.

Somali pirates accounted for 32 hijackings with 532 crewmembers taken hostage and four killed. Somali pirates are currently holding four ships and 82 crewmembers off the east coast of Somalia. The South China Sea and Malaysian waters remain a cause for concern, with nine reported attacks in the former and 14 in the latter. Elsewhere in this region, the number of reported attacks off Indonesia currently totals seven, compared to 28 in 2008. This reduction can partly be attributed to increased patrols of the country's coastline.

Vice President's Report

October 2009

Ships checked

Manulani: Delegate Clinton Gregg. Clarification of trip off rule. If you have not yet taken the mandatory trip off before your 170th day, you must get off the ship.

Kauai: Delegate Aaron Wiebe. Headed for cold lay-up in Hong Kong. Standard commercial rates begin midnight on day of arrival.

APL Korea: Delegate Manny Roxas. In at Oakland with no problems. Handling soiled linen is payable at the overtime rate under Section 33b.

APL Agate: Delegate Cameron Diaz put in his time, relieved by Joe Moniz. Bosun Steve Huggins doing a fine job squaring away this ship. Clarifications on gangway watchstanding and sanitary duties. This ship has a larger interior space than all other ships in the fleet which means more sanitary.

APL Japan: Delegate Marty Machado. Question on return rights in case of layup. This ship will be the first of the C-11's to undergo a yard period, probably in December.

California Voyager: Delegate David Ibarra. In at Richmond Long Wharf after a run to the Islands. Filled in for the *Washington* before sailing with high-value cargo to Texas. Several new members joined partly as the result of the excellent work of the delegate.

Washington Voyager: Delegate Jenn Corner. Boarded in SFO shipyard. Discussion on fleet deployment and manning. In good shape and back in service.

Foss Maritime Company: Delegates Sean Gaddis, Mel Jackson, Tom Tynan. Problems related to de-crewing half of the 26 barges, safety issues, under investigation.

San Francisco Bar Pilots: Delegates Steve Ross and Louie Urbano. Investigation of Chief Operator appointment found to be unworthy of a grievance.

Cape Jacob: Delegate Scott Wiedeman. Back in Gwangyang, Korea. Bosun is Mike Henderson.

USNS Waters: Delegate Les Jeziorski. Bosun Dennis Belmonte has things well in hand. Morale is much improved and the ship is performing her mission with distinction.

Dave Connolly

New APL Phoenix headquarters opens

APL opened its new U.S. headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona on September 28, where it is relocating its America's staff from its longtime base in Oakland as part of a corporate retrenchment.

Neptune Orient Lines, APL's Singapore-based parent, announced the retrenchment last May as a way of cutting overhead costs by co-locating business units from around the country that need to work closely together.

NOL employs about 300 people in Phoenix. Approximately half of those were hired locally. The remainder transferred from Oakland and other U.S. lo-

cations. More than 2,000 people work for NOL throughout the Americas.

The new America's headquarters is in a new building at 16220 N. Scottsdale Road in Phoenix. NOL's primary business is 160-year-old APL, the world's fifth-largest container shipping line. It also owns APL Logistics, the global supply chain management business, and a terminals division that manages four U.S. West Coast terminals and two others in Asia.

Staff in the new Phoenix headquarters will oversee all of those activities for NOL in North, Central and South America.

Official jobless rate climbs to 9.8%

continued from page 1

ers for every job available and more than one-third of the 15 million unemployed workers have now been without a job for more than 27 weeks.

Not good news. Worse, unless Congress and the Obama administration take action, the jobs situation will not get better for many years-maybe not until 2017, according to a new report released on September 30.

"America's New Post-Recession Employment Arithmetic," calls the lack of job growth over the past 10 years, "The Lost Employment Decade." From *The New York Times*: "Noting that there are 1.256 million fewer private-sector jobs than in December 1999, it said the nation was "destined to exit the decade with fewer jobs than when it began."

To return to the labor market conditions of 2007, the report said the nation would not only need to offset the 1.3 million annual increase in the labor force, but would also need to compensate for the job losses suffered during the recession. Given conservative estimates of further declines in employment, the Rutgers professors see an overall employment deficit of 9.4 million private-sector jobs by December 2009. And right now that "employment deficit" means six jobless workers for every one job opening.

Economists say that while the economic recovery act prevented total economic disaster, with job losses far less each month now than they were six months ago, the hole in the labor market is now so huge that it will require enormous, sustained levels of growth to fill it any time soon. The administration should continue to extend unemployment benefits for unemployed workers and bolster aid to budget-constrained states and cities. Further, the administration must speed public investment in education and training, repairing our nation's deteriorating infrastructure, and building a greener economy.

Pollster Geoff Garin, who released survey results taken by Peter D. Hart Research during the first week of October showing voters see unemployment and the lack of jobs as the economy's biggest problem, said he encounters a disconnect between his travels beyond the Beltway and his work inside it. "When you get out of Washington, the economic hardship and misery is hard to resist. For many people in Washington, people here feel comfortable talking about jobs as a 'lagging economic indicator.' But for many people out in the U.S., it's not a lagging indicator but a reality."

SUP Branch Reports

Seattle

September 21, 2009

Shipped during the period: 3 Boatwain jobs shipped and filled with three A-cards; 14 Able Seamen berths went to 9 A-cards, 2 B-cards, 1 C-card and 2 D-registrants; 1 Ordinary Seaman shipped to a C-member. And 4 standbys filled with 2 A-cards, 1 B-card and 1 D-registrant.

Registered during the period: 8 A cards for a total of 18; 7 B cards for a total of 23; 3 C cards for a total of 7.

Ships Checked

Matson vessels *Maui* and *Manoa* called twice in Seattle with little or no problems. After a year lying alongside the Seattle docks the *Kauai* fired up boilers for a run to India carrying cargo for the U.S. military. All hands that shipped in her did a bang up job readying this vessel for sea. Kelley Eggers took the snapper's job and John Rawlings grabbed the delegates sheets. Special thanks to Ray Ramirez, Mike Orosz and Jerry Reinhardt for "turning to" SUP style to change both lifeboat falls with very little notice. The wire vendor told Matson that this was the best wire changing gang he has ever seen. The American President Lines ships *President Jackson* and *President Truman* called in New York with Seattle gangs. Both ships report lots of overtime made standing "pirate watches" while transiting the Red Sea.

I represented the SUP at the following meetings: King County Labor Council Executive Board meetings; King County Labor Council Political Action Committee meetings; and Puget Sound Area Maritime Security Committee meeting.

The SUP was asked to participate in the "North Seattle Industrial Association" political interviews. This organization represents businesses in Seattle's Ship Canal, Ballard and Lake Union areas and includes the SUP-contracted company Foss Maritime's Headquarters and Foss Shipyard and the SUP affiliated Deep Sea Fisherman's Union halibut boat fleet.

I met with Senator Maria Cantwell's Chief of Staff Chris Endressen to discuss the Senator's Maritime Education Loan and Grants program included in the Coast Guard Authorization Act. It is important to note the Senator is a major supporter for training in the maritime

industry and recently played a key roll in securing the Small Shipyards Grants financing for many of our Northwest shipyards.

Vince O'Halloran, Branch Agent

Wilmington

September 21, 2009

Registration: Class A 32; Class B 21; Class C 11. Shipping: Bos'n 2 AB 11 AB-D 5 STOS-2 STBY 48 TOTAL: 68.

Ships Checked

Maunawili, China, Thailand, Pfeiffer, Korea, Singapore, Mahimahi, Manukai, Philippines, Manulani, Mississippi, Mokihana.

We had our 30th annual Labor Day Parade picnic and barbecue. With west coast barbecue champion Eli Grant Wegger at the pit. There were many speakers calling for a day when we will all take time from work to show the controlling minority of bankers scam artists and other thieving industrialists that we the working class are the economy. We are the people that spend our hard earned money in our country. Yes we are the economy. What are general strike issues? Price control on pharmaceuticals. Brothers why should it be cheaper to buy a pill made in the U.S.A. In Canada or even to import U.S.A. manufacture drugs back from Canada to where they were made for a lower price than we can get them at home? Someone say "scam artists out of control". Or what about economic stimulus given to bail out the predatorial lone sharks. Brothers we need men like Lincoln, Kennedy and Huey Long. They were champions of the working man. Lets ask Obama are you going to be a champion for the largest voting block the working class. Or just another late night comedians act with a liberal creep agenda.

Brothers maintenance and care for the ships gear and tools is part of your responsibility. See page two of your Preamble. The quality of your work and your work ethic is one of your most valued tools in contract negotiations. Brothers read your PREAMBLE and live and work as it would describe. Brothers the struggle to keep you working is also your struggle. As always yours in struggle,

Paul Calais, Branch Agent

Honolulu

September 21, 2009

Shipped during the month of August, 2 ABDs, 1 ABD relief, 1 ABD return, 1 ABW return, and 3 AB maints. These jobs were filled by: 6 A members and 2 B members. Also shipped 9 standby jobs filled by 2 A members, 6 B members and 1 C members for a total of 17 jobs shipped.

Registered during the month of August, 10 A members, 5 B members and 1 C member. To date registered are: 14 A members, 8 B members and 5 C members, for a total of 27 registered.

Ships Checked

Manulani, Manukai, Manoa, Maunalei, Maunawili, Mokihana, Mahimahi, R.J. Pfeiffer and Maui. Also *Kauai* in for six hours enroute to Mumbai. All with few or no beefs.

On September 16, resumed the Hawai'i Port Maritime Council meetings after a summer recess. All state worker Unions have been negotiating all summer, fighting layoffs and furloughs proposed by the Republican governor. The waterfront isn't doing much better. There have been layoffs in the tug industry. Hawai'i's economy is still in the doldrums.

On September 28, along with John Savage, attended a fundraiser for U.S. Congressman Neil Abercrombie's bid to run for governor of Hawai'i. Have mixed feelings on this move from federal to state representation mainly due to the sure reappearance of that anti-Jones Act crusader Ed Case running for his congressional seat.

Mike Duvall, Branch Agent

San Francisco Business Agent

October 13, 2009

Visited and paid off the following ships:

Mahimahi— Phil Howell, delegate: Island run —San Francisco, Wilmington, Honolulu— In good shape. Question on emergency trip off.

Maui— Allen Gonzalez, delegate: Acts like he's the bosun. This ship has one bosun —John Hamann— and a good one. He doesn't need help.

Mokihana— George Simpeir, delegate: Car and van carrier. Bosun Frank Portanier returning from relief trip off. Having trouble getting a sailor through the doctor.

Moku Pahu— Shane Lono, delegate; Teo Rojas, bosun: Sugar run in from Hawai'i. Lodging dispute not payable. Good bosun. A few questions for the captain were discussed, nothing major. No cargo and a possible for lay up.

APL China— Charles Kovacs, delegate; Paul Farillas, new bosun: Voyage pay off. No disputes. Good gang.

Worked in the front office.

Bill Berger

SUP members join pension ranks

The following SUP member joined the rank of pensioner, bringing the total number of SUP members to 564:

James Savage, 65, Book No. 7488, joined SUP in 1988, 16 years seetime.

Navy plans pirate eye in the sky

The U.S.Navy plans to deploy unmanned drones in the Seychelles to monitor piracy. Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles known as UAVs, will be stationed at the main airport in the Seychelles by late October or early November, the Navy said. The aircraft, which will be unarmed, have a range of 3,000 nautical miles and will carry out reconnaissance missions around the western Indian Ocean, where piracy alerts have increased in recent months.

The Navy has used ship-based UAVs in the past to conduct counter-piracy mission. The Seychelles, an island nation with a major port, depends heavily on goods imported by ship. "That's one of the reasons they made the offer for us to sponsor this program," Vince Crawley, spokesman for the U.S. Africa Command said. "They have a concern for world trade, but in particular their own commerce is being affected as pirates begin following the logical shipping routes to and from their country," he added.

British teenager sets solo sailing world record

Mike Perham, a 17-year-old Briton, became the youngest person to sail solo around the world, surpassing a 17-year-old Californian who had recently set the record. Perham grabbed the record August 27, after sailing 28,000 miles to cross the finish line off the coast of Cornwall, in southern England, after nine months. He is a few months younger than Zac Sunderland, of Thousand Oaks, California, who claimed the record in July when he completed a similar trip in 13 months.

Dispatcher's Report

Headquarters—Sep. 2009

Deck	
Bosun	4
Carpenter	0
MM	2
AB	13
OS	4
Standby	12
Total Deck Jobs Shipped	35
Total Deck B, C, D Shipped	11
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. ...	35
Total B, C, D Shipped-All Depts. .	11
Total Registered "A"	41
Total Registered "B"	22
Total Registered "C"	7
Total Registered "D"	22

Training in the O'Brien



Helmsman and practical tie-up and let-go seamanship class with volunteer instructor SUP pensioner Romaine Dudley in the Liberty Ship *Jeremiah O'Brien*, October 10. From left: Edgar Juluat, Rainier Noble, Romaine Dudley, Sam Worth and Giovanni Villalon. The vessel went on a Fleet Week cruise on San Francisco Bay and "The Ranger" ran the trainees through their paces.