



West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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583

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Friday, February 20, 2009

Unemployment surges around the world

Global job losses from the recession that started in the United States in December 2007, could hit a staggering 50 million by the end of 2009, according to the International Labor Organization, a United Nations' agency. The economic crisis has already claimed 3.6 million American jobs.

High unemployment rates, especially among young workers, have led to protests in countries as varied as Latvia, Chile, Greece, Bulgaria and Iceland and contributed to strikes in Britain and France.

The International Monetary Fund expects, by the end of the year, global economic growth will reach its lowest point since the Depression, according to Charles Collyns, Deputy Director of the fund's research department. The fund said growth had come to "a virtual halt" with developed economies expected to shrink by 2% in 2009.

Millions of migrant workers in China are searching for work but finding that factories are shutting down. Though not as large as the demonstrations in Greece or the Baltic states, there have been dozens of protests in China and Indonesia where workers were laid off with little or no notice.

The breath of the problem is

also apparent in Taiwan, where exports were down 42.9% in January, compared with a year ago, the steepest plunge in Asia.

Calls for protectionism have resonated among a fearful public. In Britain, refinery and power plant workers struck last month to protest the use of non-Union workers from Italy and Portugal at a construction project on the coast. Many held up signs highlighting Prime Minister Gordon Brown's earlier pledge of "British jobs for British workers."

Unemployment in Britain is projected to rise to 9.5% by the middle of 2010, from 6.3% now, according to the Commerz Bank in London. Germany's jobless rate could rise to 10.5% from 7.8%.

In France this month, President Nicolas Sarkozy agreed to supply low-interest loans or \$3.86 million each to automakers Peugeot Citroen and Renault in exchange for an agreement not to lay off French workers.

Obama reaffirms support for Employee Free Choice Act

In an Oval Office interview with major newspapers on February 11, President Barack Obama reaffirmed his strong support for the freedom to form Unions and collectively bargain.

The *Detroit Free Press* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* were among the papers that got a chance to talk to Obama about the challenges facing the nation's economy, and Obama once again offered his support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

According to the *Inquirer*, Obama discounted the corporate community's argument that workers' freedom to form Unions and bargain would be bad for the economy. The president said that, indeed, workers' freedom to bargain was good for the long-term health of the economy.

"I don't buy the argument that providing workers with

Executive orders and legislation begin to reverse Bush anti-worker directives

President Obama wasted no time in beginning to fulfill his campaign pledges to assist American workers.

On January 29, he signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act which reversed a 2007 Supreme Court Decision on discriminatory pay practices.

Ms. Ledbetter, employed for 19 years by the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company Plant in Gadsden, Alabama, discovered and subsequently filed suit over the fact she was being paid less than others doing the same job. The case reached the Supreme Court which ruled that a person must file a claim of discrimination within 180 days of a company's initial decision to pay a worker less than it pays another worker doing the same job.

Although the House of Representatives passed legislation to right this wrong, the Bush White House and Senate Republicans blocked its passage last year.

Under the bill passed by the new Congress and signed by the

new President, every new discriminatory paycheck would extend the statute of limitations for another 180 days.

In signing the bill, President Obama said, "...that making our economy work means making sure it works for everybody; that there are no second-class citizens in our workplaces; and that it's not just unfair and illegal, it's bad for business to pay somebody less because of their gender or their age or their race or their ethnicity, religion or disability; and that justice isn't about some abstract legal theory, or footnote in a casebook. It's about how our laws affect the daily lives and the daily realities of people; their ability to make a living and care for their families and achieve their goals."

The following day Obama reversed three Bush-era anti-worker executive orders and created a Cabinet-level task force to rebuild the nation's middle class. In a White House ceremony attended by Union

leaders, Obama signed three executive order that reverse a series of orders by then-President Bush, which govern the way federal contractors deal with Unionized workers.

The three new executive orders: 1) Require federal service contractors to offer jobs to current workers when contracts change. 2) Reverse a Bush order requiring federal contractors to post notice that workers can limit financial support of Unions serving as their exclusive bargaining representatives; 3) Prevent federal contractors from being reimbursed for expenses meant to influence workers deciding whether to form a Union and engage in collective bargaining.

Before signing the orders, Obama said: "We cannot have a strong middle class without strong labor unions. We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests."

Obama also announced creation of the White House Task Force on Middle Class Working Families to develop and coordinate policies to rebuild the nation's middle class and lift the poor out of poverty. Vice President Joe Biden will chair the task force.

The task force has set up a new website, www.strongmiddleclass.gov, where workers can submit stories and ideas about how the economy has affected them and ideas on changing it.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said: "The Task Force on Middle Class Working Families and the executive orders are the first step in a long road to restore balance between workers and corporations. As the weeks and months continue, we thank God that we have a president, vice president, and Congress who are determined to fix our economy so that it works for everyone."

The men and women in the nation's building and construction trades won a major victory, on February 6, when President Obama signed an executive or-

collective bargaining rights somehow weakens the economy or worsens the business environment. If you've got workers who have decent pay and benefits, they're also customers for business," stated President Obama.

The *Inquirer* also reports that Obama does not want to delay passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. This echoes a January 30 statement by Vice President Joe Biden, who heads the White House Task Force on Middle Class Working Families. Biden said the administration hopes Congress passes the Employee Free Choice Act this year. Both Obama and Biden were cosponsors of the legislation in the Senate.

In his announcement of the task force January 30, President Obama made it clear he sees Unions as essential to a

strong economy. "We need to level the playing field for workers and the Unions that represent their interests, because we know that you cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement. When workers are prospering, they buy products that make businesses prosper."

The Employee Free Choice Act is critical to the nation's economic recovery, a point made by numerous analysts including former Labor Secretary Robert Reich. Reich said the bill would open the door for workers to bargain for health care, pensions and fair wages, restoring their economic security and reversing the wage stagnation that has contributed to a weak economy.

Obama and experts agree: Quick passage of the Employee Free Choice Act will improve the economy for working families.

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SUP Quarterly Finance Committee Report

SUP QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008

The Quarterly Finance Committee, duly authorized to act by the regular meeting at Headquarters on January 12, hereby submits the following report:

SUMMARY OF CASH AND INVESTMENTS

| | |
|--|----------------|
| General Fund | \$768,748.51 |
| Political Fund | \$5,035.34 |
| Strike Fund | \$1,293,730.99 |
| Total Cash & Investments 4th Qtr. 2007 | \$2,067,514.84 |

GENERAL FUND

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Income: | |
| Dues, Initiation, Assessments | \$89,923.40 |
| Interest | 22,965.45 |
| Donations - <i>West Coast Sailors</i> | 1,140.00 |
| Tanker & Joint Committee, Hiring Hall | 79,503.08 |
| Advertising & Promotion | 220.00 |
| Miscellaneous Income, Reimbursements, Fines | 1,236.14 |
| Reimbursed Administrative Expenses | 8,000.01 |
| Contributions - General Fund | 1,350.00 |
| Total Income | \$204,338.08 |

Expenses:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Auto & Travel | \$1,091.11 |
| Rent | 17,328.94 |
| Postage, Printing & Office | 3,192.64 |
| Telephone & Telegraph | 4,018.68 |
| <i>West Coast Sailors</i> Publishing Expense | 7,661.21 |
| Per Capita | 11,815.50 |
| Salaries & Payroll Taxes | 190,216.11 |
| Office Workers' Pension | 7,098.00 |
| Insurance | 53,502.76 |
| Field Expense | 4,839.84 |
| Committee & Neg., Conference & Convention | 2,010.34 |
| Investment Expense | 1,298.60 |
| Advertising & Promotion | 1,105.00 |
| Accounting | 4,000.00 |
| Officials Pension | 960.00 |
| Contributions | 1,200.00 |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Legal | 5,672.09 |
| Subscription | 794.05 |
| Total Expense | \$317,804.87 |

BUILDING CORPORATION

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Income: | |
| Assessments | \$2,109.00 |
| Rents | 81,247.20 |
| Building Utilities & Service Reimbursement | 1,315.47 |
| Total Income | \$84,671.67 |

Expense:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Building Services & Utilities | \$27,034.18 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 2,943.17 |
| Salaries & Payroll Taxes | 16,570.19 |
| Pension | 138.00 |
| General Tax | 12,914.47 |
| Insurance | 4,955.74 |
| Total Expense | \$64,555.75 |

POLITICAL FUND

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Income: | |
| Contributions | \$3,066.28 |
| Interest | .59 |
| Total Income | \$3,066.87 |

Expense:

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Contributions | \$3,000.00 |
| Office Expense | 42.39 |
| Total Expense | \$3,042.39 |

Net Income 4th Quarter. **\$(93,326.39)**

/s/Chris Bunheirao

/s/Paul Fuentes

/s/John Perez

/s/Romaine Dudley

/s/Kaj Kristensen

ACTION BY THE MEMBERSHIP February 9, 2009. M/S/C—That we concur in the report of the SUP Quarterly Finance Committee and, as per past practice, publish in the West Coast Sailors. Carried unanimously.

East and Gulf Coast longshore contract negotiations begin

Progress is being made on contract negotiations between East and Gulf Coast dockers and the terminals that employ them.

The International Longshoreman's Association and United States Maritime Alliance have recently concluded three days of talks to hammer out a new master labor contract. A deal has not yet been reached and no details of demands or proposals have been released.

But in a joint statement both parties said: "The ILA and its employers represented by USMX exchanged proposals and studied economic conditions in the shipping industry." The statement continued: "We have a better understanding of the needs and concerns of ILA members and their employers. We are encouraged that the work of the subcommittees will bring us closer to an agreement."

The present contract between terminals along the East and Gulf coasts and the ILA's 65,000 members expires on September 30, 2010.

Washington state ferry workers forgo pay raises

About 1,500 Washington state ferry workers will voluntarily forgo raises they negotiated with Governor Christine Gregoire last year because of the downturn in the economy.

At a news conference on February 2, Gregoire was joined by leaders from the five Unions to announce the agreement, which she said would save the state \$18 million over the next two years. "My goal is not to lay off" workers, she said. "We don't have an overabundance of workers on the ferry system. It's a choice between pay raises or layoffs in my budget, and I chose to not do pay raises and try and maintain a work force to deliver the service." The raises would have ranged from 1.6 percent to 10.7 percent.

The Unions are the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific; Masters, Mates, and Pilots; Puget Sound Metal Trades Council; Marine Engineers Beneficial Association; and Office and Professional Employees International Union. Collectively, they represent about 1,500 workers, Gregoire said.

Jeff Duncan, with the MEBA, said that the decision to forgo the raises was tough, but "we realize what kind of condition the state budget is in. We had to make the tough choice to do the right thing."

Gregoire and the legislature are trying to solve a two-and-a-half year budget deficit of about \$6 billion. The ferry system is under particular pressure, and the governor's office said if the existing level of service continues under the same financial constraints, there will be a \$3.5 billion shortfall over the next 22 years. Gregoire said that while she was able to balance the ferry system budget for the next two years, after that, "we're going to have to take draconian cuts or we're going to have to find another way to do business."

Washington State Ferries chief David Moseley said the ferry system "is not financially sustainable." He said that by renegotiating their contracts, the Unions have "recognized that, they've stepped up to help us take the next step, to make it financially sustainable."

Gregoire is being sued by four other

Unions, including nurses and other state workers, because her proposed budget doesn't include money to pay for new labor contracts. While she knows workers deserve raises, "it was no longer economically feasible for us to say we can maintain a work force and we can get pay raises," Gregoire said. "At this point in time my goal is to make sure we don't put people on unemployment," she said.

West Coast Sailors

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(415) 764-4987

SUP Meetings

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

| | Hdq. | Branch |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| March | 9 | 16 |
| April | 13 | 20 |
| May | 11 | 18 |
| June | 8 | 15 |
| July | 13 | 20 |
| August | 10 | 17 |
| September | 14 | 21 |
| October | 13(Tues) | 19 |
| November | 9 | 16 |
| December | 14 | 21 |

Final Departures

William Smith, Book No. 6541. Born in Missouri in 1923. Joined SUP in 1945. Died in Idaho, January 11, 2009. (Pensioner)

Harry Tsukamoto, Book No. 3277. Born in Hawai'i in 1928. Joined SUP in 1957. Died in Temple, Texas, January 13, 2009. (Pensioner)

John Trussel, Book No. 3106. Born in California in 1928. Joined SUP in 1953. Died in California, January 16, 2009. (Pensioner)

Phillip Elcoate, Book No. 1862. Born in Australia in 1925. Joined SUP in 1946. Died in Gerber, California, January 20, 2009. (Pensioner)

Angelo Loffa, Book No. 3988. Born in New Jersey, in 1929, Joined SUP in 1952. Died in Orange City, Florida, January 23, 2009. (Pensioner)

Mark Jones, Permit No. 18262. Born in California in 1958. Joined SUP in 1996. Died in Chevron's *Mississippi Voyager* at sea, on February 5, 2009.

Union growth in 2008 was largest in 25 years

Union membership in the United States rose last year by the largest amount in a quarter-century, a gain of 428,000 members, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced last month.

The bureau said that most of the new members were government employees and that the percentage of workers in Unions rose to 12.4% of the overall work forces last year, up from 12.1% in 2007.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 26.8% of government employees belong to Unions, compared with just 7.6% of workers in the private sector. Typically, state and city officials do not fight Unionization efforts, while private-sector employees, fearing higher labor costs, often vigorously resist organizing drives.

The bureau noted that the percentage of workers in Unions has dropped from 20.1% in 1963. With the decline especially noteworthy among private-sector workers because of a sharp drop in manufacturing jobs as a result of plant closings and pressures from imports. The bureau said 11.4% of manufacturing workers, once the heart of organized labor, were in Unions.

The bureau said 16.1 million workers belonged to Unions at the end of 2008. The number of Unionized government workers grew by 270,000 last year and the number of Unionized private sector workers grew by slightly more than 150,000.

Neptune Orient/APL cargo took a dive at year's end

Neptune Orient Lines saw its container volumes collapse by almost a quarter in the final weeks of last year. For the period November 15-December 26, NOL said that its liner arm APL carried 218,100 feu globally, equivalent to 24% fewer containers than in the same period in 2007.

The decline confirmed anecdotal reports that container lines experienced a terrible end to last year as cargo demand contracted abruptly, sending freight rates crashing at the start of January. "The decrease in container shipping volumes in period 12 of 2008 is a result of the rapid deterioration in demand on all major trade lanes and proactive capacity management by the company to reduce costs," NOL said.

Latest figures show an accelerating decline in volumes that contracted by 12% to 167,000 feu in the four weeks to November 14. In contrast, volumes were still growing at a brisk year-on-year rate of 18% in the final weeks of 2007.

The slump in demand has forced yet another service rationalization, with Maersk Line and CMA CGM last month announcing a new vessel sharing agreement covering the Mediterranean-U.S. east coast trades that will remove 2,900 teu a week from the route. Two existing service strings are to be combined into one from March, with CMA CGM ending an existing partnership with Evergreen to team up with the Danish line.

In Singapore, NOL started to lay up vessels at the beginning of November as it reduced capacity by 25% in the Asia-Europe trades, and 20% on the Pacific. Unspecified capacity cuts in the intra-Asian and Middle East trades are also planned. The New World Alliance, made up of APL and partners MOL (Mitsui O.S.K. Line) and Hyundai Merchant Marine, has taken off around 40 vessels, of which about half were operated by the APL. Industry sources report that at least

10 APL vessels are lying idle off Singapore.

NOL said it hoped to save \$200 million this year by laying up vessels during the market downturn that president and chief executive Ron Widdows described a few months ago as "unprecedented," and with much worse to come as the industry started to feel the full knock-on effects of the global financial crisis.

The dramatic plunge in container volumes is also evident at key hub ports such as NOL's homebase in Singapore. According to Singapore's Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, a third of terminal operator PSA Singapore's cranes are now idle in the world's largest transshipment hub. Singapore's port volumes fell 14% in December 2008.

Although NOL reported a sharp drop in volumes year-on-year for the 12th period of 2008, average revenues increased 5% to \$2,921 per 40-foot container across all trades, compared to the same period in 2007. The company attributed this to improved bunker cost recovery. However, rates dropped sharply from the previous period of October 18-November 14, when the average rate was \$3,124 per feu.

Despite the steep drop in business at the end of the year, NOL's 2008 container shipping volumes increased 5% to 2.5 million feu while average revenue per feu showed an 11% jump to \$3,033 compared to 2007 levels.

NOL has said it expects to make an operating loss for the fourth quarter of 2008, its first since the end of 2002. The company has axed 1,000 staff, around 9% of its global workforce, in an effort to save cost. The job cuts particularly affect U.S. operations where its North American headquarters are being shifted from Oakland, California, inland to Phoenix, Arizona, from the third quarter of this year.

New container cranes for Guam

Three gantry cranes that were purchased jointly last year, by Matson Navigation and Horizon Lines, arrived at the Port of Guam earlier this month.

Horizon and Matson entered an agreement to purchase the refurbished cranes for about \$15 million in December 2007, from the Port of Los Angeles. They were retrofitted and modified to enhance their productivity and handling capabilities, the two carriers said in a joint statement. The cranes will be installed at the Port of Guam over the next month and are scheduled to enter service by the end of March.

Matson said recently that it will charge customers a "crane surcharge" of \$125 per container starting in March to recover the cost of the gantry cranes. Horizon has not announced a similar rate increase.

The cranes are equipped with state-of-the-art electronic control drives and modern diesel generator power packs. Other upgrades include lifting beams capable of handling 45-foot containers and new disc-style main functions brakes. Fully assembled, the cranes are over 160-feet tall and have a lift height of over 90 feet.

New Transportation Secretary confirmed

The U.S. Senate confirmed Ray LaHood on January 22, as the next Secretary of Transportation replacing Mary Peters.

The 63-year-old LaHood, a Republican, formerly served in Congress representing Illinois since 1995, but did not stand for re-election in 2008. While in Congress, he gained a reputation for getting things done in a bipartisan manner.

Ed Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department (TTD), AFL-CIO, congratulated the new Secretary saying, "Americans should feel confident that the President has placed the nation's vast transportation system and infrastructure in the hands of a highly skilled and capable public servant with a distinguished record of service. Secretary LaHood inherits an enormous responsibility. Our transportation infrastructure is crumbling; the rights and jobs of transportation workers have been neglected and undermined; and the safety and security of the system are severely challenged. Through the economic recovery package and major authorization and spending bills, Secretary LaHood will oversee crucial transportation investments that will help revive the economy, put millions of Americans back to work, and lay to rest eight years of neglect and inaction that have harmed our national interest. We look forward to working with the President and Secretary LaHood to restore our transportation system as an engine of economic growth and job creation."

Although the confirmation hearing for Labor Secretary-designate Hilda Solis took place on January 9, her nomination has not yet been put before the full Senate for a vote. Republicans have delayed the vote because of their concern with the nominee's strong support for labor Unions and the Employee Free Choice Act. Howard Radzely, the Deputy Secretary of Labor, has assumed day-to-day duties at the Department until Elaine Chao's replacement is confirmed.

Russian crew strikes for back pay

The 15 crewmembers aboard the Russian general cargo vessel *Kigilyakh* are seeking \$70,000 in unpaid wages in the Russian Far East.

The seafarers on *Kigilyakh* began a strike on February 17, in Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka, where the ship is docked. They told the public prosecutor at the port that some of them have not been paid in six months by the shipowner Severo-Vostochnaya.

According to an unnamed striking mariner, Severo-Vostochnaya called in the police to check that no disorder had broken out on *Kigilyakh*, where the crewmembers remain but are refusing to unload cargo. The seafarer added: "The owner has also let us know that it has already hired another crew, but we are determined to fight to the bitter end. Until we are paid our wages, we will not be leaving the ship."

Matson awarded military contract

SUP-contracted Matson Navigation Company, along with Horizon Lines, American Roll-On Roll-Off Carriers, and Pasha Hawaii Transport Lines, have been awarded contracts by the U.S. Transportation Command (Transcom) for sea and intermodal freight service between West Coast ports, Hawai'i, Alaska and Guam.

Matson and Horizon were each awarded \$100 million, while American Roll-On Roll-Off got \$40 million and Pasha \$60 million. Work on the contracts is expected to start on March 16, and completed by November.

Most of the cargo is expected to be shipped to Guam where a large military build-up is ongoing to replace bases in Okinawa.

Merchant Marine Veterans bill reintroduced

The Merchant Marine Veterans bill made much more headway than predicted in the last Congress. But because the session expired without final action on the measure in the Senate, the work must start over in the new legislative session. Congressman Bob Filner (D-California) has gotten the ball rolling once again reintroducing the "Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World II Act." The legislation will again be tagged as H.R. 23.

The bill would provide a monthly cash benefit to qualified World War II veteran merchant mariners. In the last session of Congress, the bill passed the House but a companion bill in the Senate died in Committee. Representative Filner will again serve as Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee where H.R. 23 will be referred. Therefore the bill has a good chance of replicating its success in the House. The bill has not yet been reintroduced in the Senate.

Reversing Bush anti-worker directives *continued from page 1*

der overturning the Bush administration's ban on project labor agreements (PLAs) on federal and federally funded construction.

The ban was one of the first orders signed by former President Bush when he took office in 2001. Mark H. Ayers, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, praised Obama's action, saying: "The Bush anti-PLA executive order was exactly the type of special interest-driven politics and policy that American voters rejected overwhelmingly last November. We acknowledge and praise this executive order as being one of the first steps in ushering in a new, more pragmatic and value-conscious approach to governing."

Project labor agreements generally set wages and establish work rules and methods of settling grievances on large multi-contractor construction projects. For more than 70 years before the Bush order, project labor agreements benefited communities, employers and workers by ensuring fair wages and benefits and on-time completion of projects. Ayers said project labor agreements "provide maximum benefit to construction users; union and non-Union workers; union and non-Union contractors; lenders and insurance companies; and taxpayers. They are frequently negotiated to address a wide range of local and social needs, including the assurance of hiring of local residents, and outreach program designed to offer local residents the opportunity for a career in the skilled trades."

SUP Honor Roll

Voluntary contributions from the membership to the following funds:

Organization/ General Fund

| | |
|--|--------|
| Art Garrett | 50.00 |
| Gunnar Lundeberg | 50.00 |
| John McCauliff | 100.00 |
| John McNeil in memory of James Juth | 40.00 |
| Tim Thomas | 100.00 |
| Carl Turner | 30.00 |

West Coast Sailors

| | |
|--|-------|
| P. "Tattoo" Gardiner in memory of Andy Teixeira | 50.00 |
| Eli Lalich | 50.00 |
| Jack Post | 25.00 |
| Rich Reed | 25.00 |
| Lloyd Rust | 40.00 |
| Francis Smith | 30.00 |
| Tim Thomas | 25.00 |

Dues-Paying Pensioners

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Robert Copeland | Book #4763 |
| Romaine Dudley | Book #2593 |
| Duane Hewitt | Book #5748 |
| Knud Jensen | Book #3940 |
| John Jewett | Book #4291 |
| Tony Jones | Book #4305 |
| Kaj E. Kristensen | Book #3120 |
| Eli Lalich | Book #4062 |
| Stanley Lane | Book #4106 |
| James K. Larsen | Book #4055 |
| John McKeon | Book #6456 |
| Keith Miller | Book #6497 |
| Joseph Napier | Book #2299 |
| John Pedersen | Book #3834 |
| John Perez | Book #3810 |
| Alex Romo | Book #3193 |
| Cliff Rouleau | Book #3144 |
| Ralph Senter | Book #7323 |
| Richard Sexton | Book #203 |

Political Fund

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Brandon Bohannon | 50.00 |
| Diane Ferrari | 50.00 |
| Art Garrett | 50.00 |
| DP Green | 40.00 |
| Eli Lalich | 100.00 |
| Gunnar Lundeberg | 50.00 |
| Juan Magana | 10.00 |
| John Palenapa | 25.00 |
| John Perez | 50.00 |
| Rich Reed | 25.00 |
| Javier Riano | 25.00 |
| Ralph Senter | 100.00 |
| Dave Shands | 50.00 |
| Mike Soper | 20.00 |
| Philip Spiniao | 50.00 |
| William Sullivan | 100.00 |
| Louie Urbano | 40.00 |
| Wil Williamson IV | 50.00 |

Banana boat could explode

Officials in the Ukrainian port of Odessa have held urgent talks to end the pollution threat posed by a ship carrying 3,000 tons of rotting bananas, which some say could explode.

Deputy city council leader Vyacheslav Kruk told his fellow representatives: "The ecological commission has received a letter from the port authority warning that if the methane concentration goes anywhere between 5-15 percent, there could be an explosion."

The cargo ship *Amfitrite I's* cargo of rotting bananas has gradually been polluting the atmosphere in the city for five months. The vessel arrived in Odessa on September 14, and was impounded when customs officers found 11 kilograms of cocaine, worth more than \$1 million, in the engine room.

The local council met on February 11, to debate how the consignment of long-decaying bananas can be prevented from polluting Odessa or causing even more damage, due to the methane it is emitting with increasing intensity. But Igor Derboglav, the council's head for ecological safety, said that monitoring by his officials had found that the build up of the gas does not yet exceed the maximum possible amount.

There are 20 crew on board the Greek-owned, Panama-flagged *Amfitrite I*, including Filipino, Ukrainian and Indian nationals. The shipowner has had to provide them with respirators and special clothing to try and protect them for the toxic air they are surrounded by. The only respite they have, according to local reports, is when the wind blows toward the sea.

Somali pirates more violent

Somali pirates are becoming increasingly violent and more sophisticated in their attempts to hijack vessels, according to counter-piracy analysts.

Pirates are turning to violence to overcome improved self-protection by merchant ships and the huge increase in military patrols from many nations. Pirates have abandoned the "spray and pray" approach to firing AK47s from the hip and have now adopted military-style, precise firing from the shoulder.

They target their small arms fire at the bridge to force officers to stop the ship much more quickly. They also aim rocket-propelled grenades into the house to start fires as this forces the crew to divert manpower from anti-pirate defense into firefighting. On at least one occasion, pirates have boarded then sought first to kill security guards.

Counter-piracy analysts are recommending extensive preparations. These include installing barbed and razor wire; welding 5mm steel plates over accommodation block windows to prevent bullet or rocket penetration; and the general fortification of the accommodation area. Crews are also urged to "lock-out" pirates, which can buy enough time for helicopters from the Combined Maritime Forces to arrive.

Unions slam international shipowners over minimum wage freeze for merchant mariners

Maritime Union leaders have slammed the International Shipping Federation (ISF), a consortium of international shipowners, for what they see as an imposed worldwide freeze on the minimum wage for entry level mariners. The shipowner organization has hit back, however, insisting that keeping down costs is vital if jobs are to be preserved in the current downturn.

The dispute comes after a meeting at the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva, at which Unions led by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) were told that no more money was on the table. As a result, the ILO minimum remains at \$545 a month, although (theoretically) overtime and other payments will boost that sum.

ISF secretary Natalie Shaw said that the last minimum wage talks in February 2006 agreed a series of increases to start in December in 2006, 2007 and 2008, respectively. Thus the last of the pay raises has only just entered effect. "Given the current economic climate, we don't believe we can afford anything more without putting jobs at risk, particularly with the [low] freight rates," she said. "Look at the number of ships that are laid up and the number of companies that are really struggling to survive."

ITF general secretary David Cockroft said: "In the spirit of dialogue and in recognition of the difficult current trading conditions, we proposed a realistically modest increase, and we do not expect any party to immediately shout no and pull up the drawbridge on further talks."

Tougher condemnation came from Bob Crow, leader of main British unlicensed Union RMT. "This is a severe blow to hundreds of thousands of seafarers throughout the world who depend on the ILO minimum pay rate," he said. "The rate is already significantly below the UK minimum wage and needs to be increased substantially. It is outrageous that some of the world's lowest paid workers should be made to pay for a global financial crisis that is none of their making." Brian Orrell, leader of officer Union Nautilus UK, argued that the ISF had acted in bad faith and should not have sought a meeting given that they had decided the outcome in advance.

MarAd advisory for mariners transiting Gulf of Aden

The Maritime Administration has issued an Advisory providing updated guidance for mariners transiting in the Gulf of Aden.

In cooperation with European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Atalanta and the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO). Combined Forces (CMF) is revising the internationally recommended UKMTO transit corridor through the Gulf of Aden in response to feedback from the international maritime community. This revision is intended to reduce the risk of collision between vessels utilizing the corridor, provide a measure of traffic separation, and allow maritime forces to conduct deterrent operations in the Gulf of Aden with a greater degree of flexibility.

Effective February 1, 2009, the revised UKMTO transit corridor came into effect. All vessels planning to transit the Gulf should plan to use the revised corridor. Revisions to the corridor include the creation of separate east bound and west bound transit lanes. Each lane will be 5 nm wide and will be separated by a 2 nm buffer zone. The east bound lane will begin at 045 East between 11 48 North and 11 53 North. The lane will be oriented along a straight line course of 072 degrees and terminate at 053 degrees East between 14 18 North and 14 23 North. The west bound lane will begin at 053 degrees East between 14 25 North and 14 30 North. The lane will be oriented along a course of 252 and terminate at 045 degrees East between 11 55 North and 12 00 North. It is not marked or defined by visual navigational means, nor is it intended to be a dedicated traffic separation scheme but in order for warship patrols to be effective, vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden are strongly recommended to adhere to these guidelines regarding use of the UKMTO transit corridor.

CMF, in cooperation with the efforts of forces from NATO, the European Union (EU), China, India, Malaysia, and Russia, have had success in deterring attacks on merchant shipping. A far greater number of attacks have been thwarted through defensive and protective measures taken by commercial and civilian ships prior to entering and during transit through the area. Despite the increase in presence and effectiveness of naval forces in the region, as well as the effectiveness of defensive and protective measures, pirate activity has continued and a number of commercial and civilian ships have been successfully attacked and seized. There are indications that pirates in the area continue to adapt their techniques and procedures in order to achieve success in capturing vessels, both in the Gulf of Aden as well as in the open ocean of the east coast of Somalia. In light of the pirates increased resolve and adaptability, additional precautions and risk assessments are encouraged. Vessels such as passenger liners, luxury yachts, pleasure craft, sailboats, and ships carrying dangerous cargo or otherwise deemed to be high value assets should conduct a full risk assessment prior to planning transits through high-risk areas, especially in cases where speed and maneuverability limitations and low freeboard make a ship particularly vulnerable. In conducting such an assessment, owners and masters of such vessels should be prepared for possible attack and be prepared to employ measures to ensure the maximum possible defense. All passengers and crew should fully understand the risks associated with transiting these areas and be fully briefed on the procedures required to protect themselves in the event of an attack. Masters should remain in contact with the UKMTO and the United States Maritime Liaison Office (MARLO) to the maximum extent possible. Masters are requested to provide the details of their transit, as well as the type, nature and number/quantity of passengers and cargo at least 96 hours prior to entering high risk areas. The EU, in cooperation with Lloyds Registry, has established a web-based resource for ships to receive the latest alerts, and register their vessels prior to transiting high risk areas in the region. Owners and operators are encouraged to register with the Maritime Security Center Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA), at www.mschoa.org.

Wal-Mart: recession profiteer

Bank and insurance CEOs aren't the only ones getting rewarded for horrendous behavior in this recession. There's Wal-Mart, whom *Newsweek* now has anointed as "Our Corporate Savior."

"Wal-Mart recently announced that its same store sales in January were up 2.1 percent, which was more than forecast. With the company's huge network of stores and ability to strong-arm suppliers, Wal-Mart offers shoppers good merchandise at prices which becomes more and more attractive as the downturn continues."

The brutal truth is that Wal-Mart is profiting in the midst of misery because of policies that, like those of the financial services industry, fueled the nation's economic disaster. While banks rolled up and peddled collateralized debt packages like cheap tuna wraps, Wal-Mart's assault on America's economy came from another angle—everyday low wages. By paying the vast majority of its workers little more than the minimum wage and offering health care plans most can't afford, Wal-Mart shifted its corporate expenses to taxpayers.

So, two things happened: Workers sunk into debt—mortgages, tuition loans, credit cards—unable to support families on such low wages, and states were forced to channel precious resources to full-time workers whose employer should have paid them enough to afford private health care. Now with state budgets collapsing, one million people are expected to lose state-funded health care—many of them, undoubtedly, Wal-Mart workers.

An AFL-CIO study from a few years back found that in 19 of 23 states surveyed, Wal-Mart topped the list of employers pushing workers into state-provided health care programs. In Georgia in 2002, for instance, the Department of Community Health found that 10,261 kids (6.2 percent of all Georgia children who participated in PeachCare, the state's health care program for low-income children) had parents working for Wal-Mart. PeachCare coverage for children of Wal-Mart employees costs state taxpayers an estimated \$6.6 million per year.

But Wal-Mart has had more than one way to soak up taxpayer money. The study found that Wal-Mart also wrung at least \$1 billion in economic development assistance from state and local governments over the past 20 years. A list of wage abuses (never mind gender discrimination, health and safety violations and so on) filed against Wal-Mart is not possible to compile in one place. Here are just a handful provided by Wake Up Wal-Mart:

- In December 2005, a California court ordered Wal-Mart to pay \$172 million in damages for failing to provide meal breaks to nearly 116,000 hourly workers, as required under state law. Wal-Mart appealed the case.

- Wal-Mart's 2006 Annual Report showed that the company faced 57 wage and hour lawsuits. Major lawsuits have either been won or are working their way through the legal process in states such as California, Indiana, Minnesota, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Washington.

- In March 2005, Wal-Mart agreed to pay \$11 million to settle allegations that it had failed to pay overtime to janitors, many of whom worked seven nights a week. Meanwhile, now former Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott in 2008 made a cool \$30 million in total compensation.

Wal-Mart in recent months has bought its way to a better media image with high-profile charitable donations and moves to "green up" its products. But we shouldn't let the smoke and mirrors fog our memory of how the corporation treats its workers—and how their low wages affect us all. After cleverly getting taxpayers to fund its bottom line, and paying workers wages so low many are mired in debt, Wal-Mart now is the only place where many of America's workers can afford to shop. But apparently, they can't afford much. Wal-Mart announced last week it is joining the long list of corporations laying off workers.

Filipino cook stabbed to death aboard Greek tanker

An unidentified cook was stabbed to death in the galley of the Greek tanker *Stresa* on February 1, after a heated argument with a fellow crewmember, according to the Philippines Coast Guard. The attacker has not been found and is believed to have jumped ship.

At the time of the incident the vessel was anchored off Ibayat, Batanes, in the Philippines.

Emergency plea to protect the Arctic

The Arctic region is unprepared for maritime accidents and more needs to be done to boost emergency response capacity, according to a new report, prepared by the University of New Hampshire and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The report made several recommendations including strengthening multinational plans and agreements for all types of response, improving logical support capabilities for responders, updating weather data and navigation charts for the Arctic, studying the behavior of oil in cold water and improving technologies for spill response, and designating ports of refuge in the Arctic where damaged vessels can shelter.

According to University of New Hampshire co-director of the Coastal Response Research Center Nancy Kinner: "The reduction of polar sea ice and the increasing worldwide demand for energy will likely result in a dramatic increase in the number of vessels that travel Arctic waters. As vessel traffic increases, disaster scenarios are going to become more of a reality."

Other recommendations include controlling and tracking vessel movements, introducing mandatory safety regulations, conducting comprehensive environmental risk assessments and impact assessments for the Arctic, improving knowledge of incident response through training programs for local communities, the shipping industry and responders, and devising strategies to improve response.

The report advocates setting up an international Arctic response fund and increasing penalties and insurance requirements for ships operating in the Arctic region. The fund would help Arctic nations offset the costs of search and rescue and pollution response. Arctic nations would assess a user fee for Arctic ship operations, with additional funding from governments, insurers and other donors.

Incidents of piracy up in Asia

With the Gulf of Aden proving to be the red hot spot for piracy during 2008, the spotlight moved away from the traditional Asian danger areas. However, according to a report issued on February 2, by the Information Sharing Center of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, piracy continues to plague certain key areas in the region during 2008, if to a slightly lesser extent than previously.

According to the report the total number of reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia in 2008 decreased compared to 2004-2007. The decrease was most evident in the ports and anchorages of Indonesia, and the port of Chittagong, Bangladesh. Overall, there were 96 incidents reported in 2008, of which 83 were actual and 13 were attempted incidents, a 4% decrease compared to 2007, when 100 incidents were reported, of which 77 were actual and 23 were attempted incidents. The report noted that there had been an increase in the number of actual incidents in 2008 compared to 2007. The greatest increase occurred in the Category 2 (moderately significant) incidents.

There was a slight decrease in the number of Category 1 incidents in 2008 compared to 2007. Of the Category 1 incidents reported in 2008, two were hijacking incidents. In the two hijacking incidents, the culprits were arrested, the crew rescued and the hijacked ships recovered. The number of Category 3 incidents, comprising mainly petty theft incidents at ports and anchorages, has remained fairly consistent between 2006 and 2008, the report said.

The incidents in 2008 were generally less violent compared to 2004-2007. Incidents involving assault of crew and taking hostage of crew occurred less frequently in 2008 compared to 2004-2007.

Tankers were most frequently involved in incidents compared to other types of ships in 2008 and 2007. Of the 96 incidents reported in 2008, 32 incidents involved tankers, 19 involved containerships, 14 involved bulk carriers and 12 involved general cargo ships.

The most notorious areas in the region were said to be ports and anchorages off Indonesia, India and Vietnam. Theft of ship stores and engine spares made up a higher proportion of incidents reported in 2008. "However, there has been a significant increase in the number of incidents which reported losses of cash and properties in 2008 compared to 2005-2007," the report concluded.

Japanese shipping companies forecast dismal profits

Japan's top three operators all reported disappointing results and issued revised profit forecasts for the year-ending March 31, 2009.

Nippon Yusen Keisha, (NYK) Japan's largest shipping company by revenue, revealed a 50% fall in net profit for the October-December quarter. The company's net profit was ¥19bn (\$212 million) for the period, compared with ¥38.2bn during the same period in 2007.

Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL), the country's second largest shipping company, was harder hit, generating a net profit of ¥13.7bn during the last quarter of 2008. This represented a 77% fall from the ¥58.9bn made in net profit during the same period in 2007.

As a result of the company's concern that the market has yet to reach rock bottom, NYK more than halved its forecast of net profit for the full year ending March 2009. Forecast revenue has been reduced to ¥2.5tn from ¥2.8tn. The company said the gathering strength of the yen and declining demand for containerized cargo would create a drag on earnings.

MOL's revenue fell 6.5% to ¥475bn. It said tankers were the only class of vessel to hold their own, with medium-range product tankers showing an increased profit. Containerships and bulk carriers both saw large decreases in profits, with the fall in freight rates for containerships moving so rapidly that the company's efforts to rationalize services could not avoid losses. MOL said it was compelled to revise its full-year forecast because of "significant drops in the dry bulk market, containership freight rate market and cargo trade, and seaborne trade of completed cars".

K Line said net profit plunged to ¥6.6bn, down from ¥30.6bn in the same period in 2007. Of the container sector, it said: "Total cargo movements declined 7% on a year-on-year basis during the third quarter. In the European services and the north-south services, market freight rates dropped due to the worsened supply and demand relationship." In the dry bulk sector, too, K Line was unable to arrest the effects of declining freight rates despite efforts to increase ship operation efficiency and the ratio of medium- and long-term contracts.

All three operators have recently announced cutbacks in their ambitious expansion plans. K Line said it would reduce its expansion plans to 500 ships by March 2010. It will take delivery of 40 ships in 2009. NYK said it would reduce its expansion plans by 100 ships, while MOL has cut back its buying plans to 50 ships.

Sea Star Line honcho sentenced for conspiracy

Former Sea Star Line Senior Vice President Peter Baci was sentenced on January 30, to four years in prison for his role in a Jones Act collusion conspiracy.

It is "the longest jail sentence ever imposed for a single antitrust charge," said the U.S. Department of Justice.

Dramatic new allegations were disclosed in Baci's pre-sentencing filing. He alleged that the U.S.-to-Puerto Rico price-fixing scheme involved four companies: Sea Star, Horizon, Crowley and Trailer Bridge. This is the first time the latter two companies have been named on the record.

Baci also alleged that the conspiracy was conceived by Leonard Shapiro, a "major shareholder" in Saltchuk Resources, which owns 90% of Sea Star as well as Totem Ocean Trailer Express (TOTE). Baci claimed that Shapiro initiated an illegal collusion agreement with ex-Horizon Line Vice President Gabriel Serra.

Baci alleged that he was ordered to implement the price-fixing scheme by Shapiro. "Shapiro was powerful. He threatened and directed the termination of employment of others at Sea Star and he significantly intimidated Baci," Baci's attorney claimed.

Sea Star operates three ships in the East Coast-Puerto Rico Trade, the *El Faro*, *El Yunque* and *El Morro*. The latter two vessels were owned by Matson Navigation Company and operated as the *Kaimoku* and *Kainalu* in the West Coast-Hawai'i trade.

ESU Office Assignments

For the month of March in Seabrook:
John Straley March 1-15
Leo DeCastro March 16-31.

ESU NEWS

FEBRUARY 2009

Official Publication of the Exxon Seamen's Union

Nederland shore leave grievance

In January the ESU accepted management's 4th Step grievance response regarding the issue of shore leave at the Sun terminal in Nederland, Texas. This grievance was filed last year when shore access for the crew of *S/R Wilmington* was denied while the vessel was at the dock.

At this terminal the use of a nearby launch service is the normal means for shore access according to Sun officials and the U.S. Coast Guard. Under the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement under Article IV, Section 7, the crew should have been provided launch service for shore leave.

The Union's position was rejected by management at each step of the grievance procedure. However, in their 4th step response an offer was made to resolve the three separate grievances that were filed on the *Wilmington* last year and even though the Union disagrees with management's 4th step grievance response, the ESU accepted the Company's offer on a non-precedent setting basis. Further, the Union reserves its right to grieve the same or similar violation in the future.

A key factor in the Union's decision to accept this resolution is the fact that the vessel has not returned to Nederland since last summer and there is a strong likelihood that the vessel will enter another trade in the near future that does not include port calls at Sun Nederland.

The settlement is four hours of overtime per for each unlicensed employee for each time the vessel was at Sun Nederland. Payment should have been received through the payroll system on or around February 13.

Lump sum pension rate lowered to 3.75%

The interest rate for calculating the lump sum payments of ExxonMobil pensions for April-June 2009 will be lowered from the current 4.50% to 3.75%. If you are considering retirement and plan to take a lump sum pension, the lower interest rate should generate a larger lump sum pension payment. If the first day of retirement is April 1-June 30, 2009, and commencement of benefit is not deferred, the 3.75% interest rate and the ExxonMobil 2000 mortality table will be used to calculate the lump sum payment. The first day of retirement is the day after the last day on payroll.

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. For example, employees continuing to work will receive additional months of salary, additional months of Savings Plan contributions and additional months of age and service that will normally increase pension benefits.

Beginning in 2008, eligible ExxonMobil Pension Plan participants may request an Intent to Retire/Commence package from the ExxonMobil Benefits Service Center (EMBSC) as early as 120 days prior to the benefit commencement date (BCD). 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 second quarter, they should notify their supervisor 60 days before their retirement date to submit a Smart Form.

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. Please note the seminar article in this edition of the *ESU NEWS* for dates and locations.

ExxonMobil Seminar dates for 2009

(Late Career Pre-Retirement Planning Course)

If you are eligible, or soon to be eligible to retire from the Company, you should consider attending a pre-retirement planning seminar that is offered by ExxonMobil. Scheduling is prioritized by age and/or definite retirement plans. Spouses are invited to participate in this class. You should attend this course a few years prior to retirement in order to better position yourself in your final years as an employee. This course covers the many options that one needs to consider when retiring from the Company. Limited space is available per each class so plan ahead if you are interested.

| Start Date | End Date | Location | Start Date | End Date | Location |
|------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| 02/16/2009 | 02/17/2009 | Joliet, IL | 07/14/2009 | 07/15/2009 | Fairfax, VA |
| 03/10/2009 | 03/11/2009 | Fairfax, VA | 07/21/2009 | 07/22/2009 | Baton Rouge, LA |
| 03/18/2009 | 03/19/2009 | Beaumont, TX | 07/21/2009 | 07/22/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 04/01/2009 | 04/02/2009 | Baytown, TX | 07/22/2009 | 07/23/2009 | Beaumont, TX |
| 04/14/2009 | 04/15/2009 | Baton Rouge, LA | 08/04/2009 | 08/05/2009 | Baytown, TX |
| 04/15/2009 | 04/16/2009 | Beaumont, TX | 08/05/2009 | 08/06/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 04/21/2009 | 04/22/2009 | Fairfax, VA | 08/19/2009 | 08/20/2009 | Beaumont, TX |
| 05/06/2009 | 05/07/2009 | Houston, TX | 08/19/2009 | 08/20/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 05/06/2009 | 05/07/2009 | Baytown, TX | 08/20/2009 | 08/21/2009 | Fairfax, VA |
| 05/13/2009 | 05/14/2009 | Beaumont, TX | 08/26/2009 | 08/27/2009 | Baton Rouge, LA |
| 05/18/2009 | 05/19/2009 | Houston, TX | 09/14/2009 | 09/15/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 05/20/2009 | 05/21/2009 | Houston, TX | 09/16/2009 | 09/17/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 05/27/2009 | 05/28/2009 | Baton, Rouge, LA | 09/16/2009 | 09/17/2009 | Baytown, TX |
| 06/10/2009 | 06/11/2009 | Houston, TX | 09/21/2009 | 09/22/2009 | Joliet, IL |
| 06/16/2009 | 06/17/2009 | Beaumont, TX | 09/23/2009 | 09/24/2009 | Fairfax, VA |
| 06/22/2009 | 06/23/2009 | Joliet, IL | 09/23/2009 | 09/24/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 06/23/2009 | 06/24/2009 | Baton Rouge, LA | 10/06/2009 | 10/07/2009 | Baytown, TX |
| 06/24/2009 | 06/25/2009 | Fairfax, VA | 10/07/2009 | 10/08/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 06/24/2009 | 06/25/2009 | Houston, TX | 10/21/2009 | 10/22/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 07/07/2009 | 07/08/2009 | Houston, TX | 11/04/2009 | 11/05/2009 | Houston, TX |
| 07/09/2009 | 07/10/2009 | Houston, TX | | | |

Note: If you are interested in attending one of the above courses you should contact the SeaRiver Training department at or 877-290-1422 ext. 3 or 713-656-2598. If you would like to receive a retirement estimate, contact Benefits Administration at 800-262-2363. The estimate will be sent to your plan registered address in approximately six to eight weeks.

2009 Ship Representative Conference

The ESU has tentatively scheduled the 2009 Ship Representative Conference for the week of May 11, at the Boardwalk Inn in Kemah, Texas. The Company will schedule all Ship Representatives for five (5) dead days to travel and attend this important training session with the Executive Board. Management personnel will attend one (1) of the days as outlined in the ESU Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The purpose of the Ship Representative Conference is to allow the Union to provide training for Ship Representatives with the expectation of improving the Union's effectiveness in regard to problems that may arise onboard his/her respective vessel. This training

includes a wide variety of material and labor issues that includes, but not limited to, grievance handling, work place issues i.e. harassment and Company benefit programs. This conference has a proven track record and ensures that the very best representation possible is provided to the members of the Exxon Seamen's Union.

The ESU plans to make the most of this opportunity to meet and will have a full agenda each day. The ESU Board requests that all attendees please work with their Fleet Manning coordinator to schedule their attendance. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Seabrook Union office.

Final Departure - James Hollmann



Former ESU member James "Red" Hollmann, 60, passed away peacefully in the comfort of his home and family at his residence in El Cajon, California, on January 21, 2009. Jim was employed with Exxon Shipping/SeaRiver Maritime from March 1987 until July 1, 2006.

Jim was born on March 5, 1948, in Mitchell, South Dakota. In 1970 he joined the U.S. Navy and was stationed in California where he met his wife. Jim is survived by his wife of 39 years, Joy; his two children and their spouses, Jennifer Douthitt (Mike) and Justin Hollmann (Jennifer); five grandchildren, Ashley, Tyler, J.T., Olivia and Liam; Jim's mother, Dorothy Rakes of Syracuse, NE; sister, Bonnie Karkosky of Syracuse, NE; and brothers, Richard Hollmann of Lincoln, NE, and Royce Hollmann of Port Orchard, Washington.

He will be greatly missed by his family and many others who knew and loved him. A memorial celebrating his life was held at the Foothills United Methodist Church, 4031 Avocado Blvd., La Mesa, on February 19, 2009.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a memorial contribution to Kaiser

Hospice, 10992 San Diego Mission Road, 2nd Floor, San Diego, CA 92108.

The ESU and membership extend heartfelt sympathy and prayers to Jim's family and friends during this time of sorrow.

ESU News

Negative dilute drug tests

On January 23, 2009, SeaRiver posted a Bulletin Board Notice on all vessels pertaining to drug testing specimens that are found to be Negative dilute by the Medical Review Officer (MRO). All members should be aware of the following summary of the notice and relevant provision of 49 CFR Part 40:

Negative Dilute Result. Per 40.197 (b-c), as amended 5/28/03 and 11/9/04:

If the MRO reports that a negative test is dilute and requires a recollection under direct observation, the employer must do so immediately.

If the MRO reports only that a negative test is dilute, the employer has the option, but is not required, to retest. If the employer elects to retest, the test must not be done under direct observation. All employees are to be treated the same in regard to elective retesting.

Any retest is to be done as soon as possible and with minimum notice to the employee. If the second test is also nega-

tive and dilute, the employer is not authorized to conduct another test, unless required to do so by the MRO. Unless another direct observation collection is required by the MRO, the second test result becomes the test of record.

SeaRiver Procedure: Immediately retest in both DOT and SeaRiver negative dilute situations. The DOT retest must not be under direct observation, unless specifically directed by the MRO to be a direct observation re-collection.

SeaRiver policy does not establish a rule maximum number of tests that are to be done before a negative dilute result is to be deemed negative. The facts and circumstances of each such situation are to be evaluated in determining whether or not to accept a second negative dilute result as negative or as a disqualifying result.

The ESU encourages our members to contact the Union if they are ordered to undergo additional tests and they have any questions.

Point Thompson development

On January 27, 2009, Alaska Department of Natural Resources Commissioner, Thomas Irwin issued a conditional interim decision pertaining to leases in the North Slope oil and gas field known as Point Thompson.

This interim decision allows ExxonMobil and other field co-owners to keep two of 31 leases following the Company's promise to start drilling a couple of wells right away. The state had previously locked ExxonMobil out of the 31 lease at Point Thompson following complaints that the Company was stalling in its effort to develop the field. ExxonMobil owns a 52.6% stake, BP 29.2%, Chevron 14.3%, Conoco Phillips 2.8% and others 1.1%.

Commissioner Irwin's decision also

directs his staff to grant the necessary permits for an ice road of approximately 50 miles to bring in a drilling rig, equipment, camps and personnel.

The Point Thompson field is located on coast of the Beaufort Sea west of the Artic National Wildlife Refuge. ExxonMobil and its partners plans to invest \$1.3 billion to start producing a light form of oil called condensate. It is believed the field holds trillions of cubic feet of natural gas and hundreds of millions of barrels of oil.

Alaskan Governors have been pushing full development of Point Thompson ever since the field was discovered in 1977. The state has long wanted to develop the field, which would generate tax revenues and create jobs.

S/R Long Beach



The S/R Long Beach pictured just before passing under the Golden Gate Bridge. The vessel has been idle in Portland, Oregon since the first part of February. The vessel has been kept in a condition to quickly respond new orders. The vessel is in what appears to be its final year of service since she is scheduled to be retired at the end of the year due to phase out legislation (OPA 90).

2009 training schedule

The training schedule for the ESU group was recently sent to all members. The schedule reflects courses in Basic Firefighting, Advance Firefighting, Advance Engine Operations, Advance Deck Operations, Dangerous Liquids Cargo, Confined Space Rescue and Food Safety, Nutrition and Sanitation Training. The number of courses and dates are dependent on participation and are very much subject to change. Additional courses may be added if needed.

Firefighting courses are held at Texas A&M, College Station, Texas. These courses are offered to all unlicensed employees with priority given to those employees that have not attended this training within the last five years. Members will be able to choose the two-day Basic Firefighting course, or in some cases, the Advance Firefighting course that is held from Tuesday through Friday for the week that the course is offered.

There are three Confined Space, Entry and Rescue courses scheduled this year. This class is a 5-day course that is also taught at Texas A&M at College Station. The target audience from the unlicensed group for now continues to be Pumpmen and Able Seamen. The ESU anticipates that other ratings will be allowed to attend once those in the target group have completed the course.

There will be one Steward Department course on the schedule this year held at the Star Center in Dania, Florida. Previously, the course was held in Toledo, OH, but the facility there is now closed. This five-day class focuses on food safety, nutrition and sanitation and is tailored to fit the needs of the class make-

up. It is intended for Fleet Chefs, Cooks, and those on the Cook's promotion list.

There is one Advanced Engine/Deck Skills course scheduled for later this year. The two-day departmental skills courses are held at California Maritime in conjunction with the five-day DLC course in Vallejo, California. The class is for Pumpmen, QMED-Oilers, Able Seamen, and MS rating who have not attended previously.

There is one New Hire Orientation on the schedule in August. Whether the Company goes forward with this class will depend on unlicensed manning needs as the year progresses. Obviously, the service status of the S/R Long Beach will play a role in this decision.

As always, the Union encourages all members to participate in the courses that are available to them. For questions or to request to be included in an upcoming course, contact Kharon Delaney at 713 656-2203.

Basic Firefighting:

April 27-28; June 8-9; Oct. 13-14;
Dec. 1-2

Advanced Engine Ops.: Nov. 14-15

Advanced Deck Ops.: Nov. 7-8

Dangerous Liquids: Nov. 9-13

Confined Space Rescue:

March 30-April 3; April 20-24;
Aug. 31-Sept. 4

Advance Firefighting:

March 24-27; April 14-17;
May 19-22; June 9-12; June 23-26;
Sept. 29-Oct. 1-2; Nov. 3-6;
Nov 10-13; Dec. 8-11

Food Safety, Nutrition: March 2-6

Ship reports

S/R American Progress

An ESU Board officer visited the vessel on February 18 at the ExxonMobil Refinery in Beaumont, Texas. Vessel was delayed several days at anchor before docking. Regular Ship Rep. Rudy Benavides is back on board following an extended FMLA leave due to the birth of a new baby girl. Congratulations to Benavides family.

S/R Baytown

Board officer visited the vessel at Valero in Benicia, CA on February 6. Regular Ship Rep. Joe Bernavich on board and reports no problems. Vessel discharge ports are rotating between Anacortes and San Francisco. Vessel scheduled for the shipyard in mid-2009.

Kodiak

The Kodiak continues in her Valdez to Puget Sound trade. Regular Ship Rep. Tim Williams is on board. Tim has been very busy communicating with the ESU office concerning a couple of Steward's department issues. The ESU office is currently investigating.

S/R Long Beach

The Long Beach arrived at Portland's Swan Island on January 31, and has been idle since then. Part of the crew was sent home to paid leave but this

past week Fleet Manning has been crewing up again in case the vessel receives new orders. David Franklin is filling in as Temporary Ship Rep.

Sierra

ESU Board officer visited the Sierra at Chevron in Richmond, CA, on February 3. Deck Trustee Pat Campbell on board and filling in as the Temporary Rep. The Sierra is slated to call on Anacortes and San Francisco for a split discharge next time south. The ESU office recently found out that a member on board the Sierra was issued an unprecedented Warning Slip for a minor injury. The ESU believes this totally unnecessary and a grievance will most likely be filed once we have all the facts. The Company is going in the wrong direction with this unnecessary and counterproductive action.

S/R Wilmington

A Board officer visited the Wilmington on February 12, at the ExxonMobil Refinery in Baytown, Texas. Ship Rep. Jeff Harris is on board. The Wilmington just completed a multi-stop in Puerto Rico (San Juan and Guayanilla) before returning to Baytown. Vessel now slated for the shipyard in April. Location has not been determined yet.

EXXON SEAMEN'S UNION

Founded March 28, 1941

Affiliated with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

913-A Hardesty Avenue

Seabrook, TX 77586

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President/Secretary John Straley

Vice President/Treasurer Leo DeCastro

Board Member at Large Frank O'Malia

Deck Trustee Pat Campbell

Engine Trustee William Ackley

Steward Trustee Kurt Kreick

Former MarAd Administrator Connaughton signs on with ABS

Sean Connaughton, who departed his post as Maritime Administrator at the end of the Bush administration, has signed on as chief lobbyist for the American Bureau of Shipping.

The announcement of Connaughton's appointment as Corporate Vice President of Government Affairs, effective February 17, was made by ABS Chairman & CEO Robert D. Somerville, who said in a statement that "having someone with Sean's intimate knowledge of government operations, diplomatic and legislative skills and experience, and close contacts with the maritime administrations of other nations from his time as the U.S. Maritime Administrator, will greatly strengthen our ability to work with gov-

ernments as partners and clients."

Following the announcement, Connaughton said that ABS is a leader in maritime safety and environmental protection and commented, "I am excited to have the opportunity to work with this great organization and its talented team."

Connaughton, a maritime lawyer and graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy as well as a former U.S. Coast Guard officer, served as Maritime Administrator for just two-and-a-half years, but launched numerous aggressive programs (including a shortsea project and a jobs program for U.S. mariners in LNG vessels) during his tenure. No replacement has yet been named by the Obama administration.

Senate Labor Committee moves confirmation of Hilda Solis

Secretary of Labor nominee Representative Hilda Solis (D-California) is one step closer to confirmation in mid February after a Senate committee pushed her nomination through to the Senate Floor. The Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy, quickly approved the nomination after the committee had gathered.

Senator Kennedy issued a statement saying, "Hilda Solis comes from a working family herself so she understands how the troubled economy is hurting average Americans. American workers deserve to have her voice and her leadership as their Secretary of Labor, and I'm pleased that our committee approved her."

The vote came 61 days after Solis was nominated and over a month after her initial confirmation hearing. Reportedly, some Republicans were uneasy with her support of labor Unions and the Employee Free Choice Act. A hearing was postponed when it was learned there had been tax liens placed on her husband's business. In addition, Republicans expressed concerns with Solis' work with the labor group American Rights at Work.

With most of the concerns apparently eased, only Senators Pat Roberts (R-Kansas) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) dissented on her nomination. A vote by the full Senate is imminent. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney called for the Senate to put Solis to work as soon as possible. "We have already lost valuable time getting the leading advocate for working people in our government in place. Solis is eminently qualified for this post, and she will be a vigorous champion for rebuilding a strong middle class and restoring balance to our economy. We urge the full Senate to confirm Solis swiftly so she can dig into the work that working families in our nation so desperately need her to do. The AFL-CIO looks forward to working with her to build an economy that works for everyone."

"We need to level the playing field for workers and Unions that represent their interests, because we know that you cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement."

President Barack Obama
January 30, 2009

Editor's Note: To receive the *West Coast Sailors* via first-class mail it's \$25 per year U.S. mail; \$30 per year international.

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Welfare Notes

February 2009

Keep Us Informed

Please be sure to keep the Plan office informed of changes such as a new address and dependent changes (marriage, divorce, or children to be added, death of a spouse). Timely notification is needed and very much appreciated.

Copayments for Active Participants

Medical and dental copayments for active participants are reimbursable by the SUP Welfare Plan. Copayments for dependents are not reimbursable. Reimbursable copayments must be submitted to the SUP Welfare Plan within 90 days of treatment with proper documentation: name of the provider of services, patient's name, date of services, amount of the charge, and description of service such as office visit.

Services not covered by the HMO or PPO Plan are not reimbursable.

Active Members are also eligible for a vision exam and one pair of eyeglasses (lenses and frames) once in a 24 month period. The maximum payable is \$200.00.

Unfit For Duty & Eligibility

If you are Unfit for Duty, your eligibility for coverage may be extended; however, you must inform the Plan office of your Unfit for Duty status with documentation from your attending physician. Periodic updates of your status should be submitted if your disability continues. If you become Unfit for Duty due to injury or illness while on a ship, your employer will not automatically send the documentation of your Unfit for Duty status to the Plan office. Please be sure we receive the information needed.

Check with the Plan office if you have any concerns about your eligibility and make sure you are properly enrolled for all the benefits available to you.

Michelle Chang, Administrator mcsupsiupd@sbcglobal.net

Patty Martin martinpatty59@sbcglobal.net

Virginia Briggs Claims vbriggs80@sbcglobal.net

Michael Jacyna Eligibility mjacyna67@sbcglobal.net

Training Representative Berit Eriksson 415-957-1816

SUP Welfare Plan

730 Harrison Street, #415

San Francisco, CA 94107

Phone Numbers: 415-778-5490 or 1-800-796-8003

Fax: 415-778-5495

SIU-PD Pension 415-764-4987

SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits 415-764-4991

Measure to promote short sea shipping introduced in House of Representatives

As he did in the last session of Congress, Representative Elijah Cummings (D-Maryland) has introduced a measure to exempt cargo moving within the United States or between the U.S. and Canada on the St. Lawrence Seaway from the Harbor Maintenance Tax—a bill that proponents believe will clear the way for the expansion of short sea shipping in this country. The SUP and other maritime Unions are strongly in favor of the legislation, and sent a letter of support for last year's session's identical bill calling for relief from the current system which penalizes U.S. flagships that move between domestic ports. It stated, "This application of the HMT which results in the dual or multiple taxation of waterborne cargo does not apply to cargo moving domestically by truck or rail. Consequently, this application of the HMT discourages the transportation of domestic cargo by water and impedes the development of a U.S. short sea shipping and marine highway system and should be eliminated." The new bill is called The Short Sea Shipping Promotion Act of 2009 and tagged as H.R. 638.

Congressman John McHugh (R-New York) introduced similar legislation to exempt the HMT from certain vessels though his bill is less encompassing focusing more on the Great Lakes System. Both bills were referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

AFL-CIO says new NLRB chair is welcome change

The Union movement is praising President Obama's nomination of Wilma Liebman as the next chairwoman of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). A Democrat, she had been an NLRB member over the past eight years, in a Board that boasted a Republican majority. Critics say that in recent years, the board has made it harder to form Unions through majority sign-up, limited the ability of illegally fired workers to recover back pay and allowed employers to discriminate against Union supporters in the hiring process.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said, "America's working men and women will finally have the fair and committed leader they deserve with Wilma Liebman as chair of the National Labor Relations Board. What a refreshing change it will be to have a labor board that aims to safeguard rather than blockade workers' rights. Liebman will work to help the NLRB serve one of its key missions: to undergird all workers' right to collective bargaining as a cornerstone of our economy and democracy."

Liebman was first appointed to the NLRB by President Clinton in 1997. Her current term expires in 2011. She began her legal career as an NLRB staff attorney in 1974 then served on the legal staff of two Unions: the Bricklayers and the Teamsters.

Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Enrollment Centers as of February 2009

You can pre-enroll online at www.tsa.gov/twic or call 1-866-347-8942. The enrollment process requires applicants to visit an enrollment center to provide biographic information, sign a disclosure form, provide the neces-

sary identity verification documents, provide a complete set of fingerprints, sit for a digital photograph and pay the enrollment fee. For a complete list of disqualifying crimes and offenses, visit www.tsa.gov/twic.

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|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Alabama Tennessee Valley Training Center 115 Woodall Rd., Ste. 105</p> <p>Decatur 250 North Water St.</p> <p>Mobile</p> <p>Alaska 619 E Ship Creek Ave.</p> <p>Anchorage 3200 Hospital Dr. #202</p> <p>Juneau 50097 Kenai Spur</p> <p>Nikiski 501 E. Bremner St.</p> <p>Valdez</p> <p>American Samoa Clarion Tradewinds Hotel Main Road, Ottoville</p> <p>Pago Pago</p> <p>Arkansas 2005 E 17th St.</p> <p>Little Rock</p> <p>California 2050 Park Road</p> <p>Benicia 301 E. Ocean Blvd. Ste. 500</p> <p>Long Beach 1830 Embarcadero Ave. #104</p> <p>Oakland Oakland Maritime Support Svcs. 11 Burma Rd.</p> <p>Oakland 1251 N. Rice Ave</p> <p>Oxnard 13201 San Pablo Ave. #300</p> <p>Richmond 1025 W. Laurel St. Ste. 103</p> <p>San Diego 1900 Bendixsen St. Bldg 12</p> <p>Samoa 500 Sansome St. Ste. 202</p> <p>San Francisco 1001 New Dock St.</p> <p>San Pedro 17 Fyffe St.</p> <p>Stockton 3633 Seaport Blvd. Ste. A</p> <p>West Sacramento</p> <p>Connecticut 175 N. Main St.</p> <p>Branford 75 Crystal Ave.</p> <p>New London</p> <p>Delaware 603 Christiana Ave.</p> <p>Wilmington</p> <p>Florida Port Everglades Badging Ofc. 1030 Taylor Rd.</p> <p>Dania Beach 955 Tallyrand Ave.</p> <p>Jacksonville Habana Plaza (rear) 3125 Riviera Dr.</p> <p>Key West</p> | <p>975 North America Way</p> <p>Miami Manatee County, Port Auth. 13604 Reeder Rd.</p> <p>Palmetto 707 Mullet Road, Stes. 117/118</p> <p>Port Canaveral 5323 W. Hwy 98 Suites 119,120</p> <p>Panama City 2051 Dr. Martin King, Jr. Blvd. Ste. 303</p> <p>Riviera Beach 2604 E. 7th Ave.</p> <p>Tampa</p> <p>Georgia 777 Gloucester St.</p> <p>Brunswick 5214 Augusta Rd.</p> <p>Garden City</p> <p>Guam Jose D. Leon Guerrero Commercial Port 1026 Cabras Hwy. Boardroom</p> <p>Piti</p> <p>Hawai'i 2970 Kele St., Ste. 102</p> <p>Lihue, Kauai 630 Kilauea Ave. Ste. 104</p> <p>Hilo 1347 Kapiolani Blvd. Ste. 204</p> <p>Honolulu 291 Hookahi St.</p> <p>Wailuku</p> <p>Illinois 8741 South Greenwood Dixon Building Ste. 153</p> <p>Chicago 2914 W. Willow Knolls Dr.</p> <p>Peoria 1635 W. First St., Ste. 153</p> <p>Granite City Three Rivers Safety Council 1615 W. Jefferson St. Ste. TWIC</p> <p>Joliet</p> <p>Indiana 4849 University Dr.</p> <p>Evansville 200 Russell St. Ste. 110</p> <p>Hammond 3602 Northgate Ct. Ste. 37C</p> <p>New Albany</p> <p>Kansas Commerce Plaza 1, 7th Flr. 7300 West 110th St.</p> <p>Overland Park</p> <p>Kentucky 322 Harrison Ave.</p> <p>Paducah</p> <p>Louisiana Safety Council Building 7645 South Hwy 1</p> <p>Addis Safety Council for Louisiana Capital Area, 8180 Siegen Ln.</p> <p>Baton Rouge</p> | <p>408 Jeanne St.</p> <p>Lafayette 1340 W. Tunnel Blvd. Ste. 550</p> <p>Houma 3204A Gerstner Memorial Dr.</p> <p>Lake Charles LaPlace Shopping Center 1933 West Airline Hwy.</p> <p>LaPlace 800 Youngs Road</p> <p>Morgan City Port Fourchon Harbor Police 108 A.O. Rappelet Road</p> <p>Port Fourchon 170 James Dr. E. Ste. 104</p> <p>St. Rose</p> <p>Maine 163 Hildreth St. North</p> <p>Bangor 236 Oxford St. Ste. 12</p> <p>Portland</p> <p>Maryland 2200 Broening Hwy., Ste. 220</p> <p>Baltimore 212 W. Main St. Ste. 204C</p> <p>Salisbury 3225 Old Washington Rd. Ste. 2106</p> <p>Waldorf</p> <p>Massachusetts 300 Tremont St., Unit #5</p> <p>Carver Boston Autoport 100 Terminal St.</p> <p>Charlestown Best Western Providence Seekonk Inn 45 Mink Street</p> <p>Seekonk</p> <p>Michigan Days Inn 1496 M 32 West</p> <p>Alpena 906 Ludington St., Ste. 1</p> <p>Escanaba 863 North Pine Rd.</p> <p>Essexville 430 S. Water St.</p> <p>Marine City Holiday Inn 1851 US 41 West</p> <p>Marquette 800 E. Ellis Rd., Ste. 122</p> <p>Norton Shores 200 W. Erie St., Ste. 1</p> <p>Rogers City Best Western Inn 4335 I-75 Business Spur</p> <p>Sault Ste. Marie 396 N. State St.</p> <p>St. Ignace 1020 Hastings St. Ste. 105</p> <p>Traverse City Best Western 21700 West Road</p> <p>Woodhaven</p> | <p>Minnesota 1310 Port Terminal Rd.</p> <p>Duluth-Superior 34 13th Ave., NE</p> <p>Minneapolis</p> <p>Mississippi 800 Highway 1 So. #B19</p> <p>Greenville 1223 30th Ave.</p> <p>Gulfport Ergon Refining 227 Industrial Dr.</p> <p>Vicksburg</p> <p>New Hampshire 30 Mirona Rd. Extension Ste. 2</p> <p>Portsmouth</p> <p>New Jersey 2500 S. Broadway, Ste P-6</p> <p>Camden 580 Division Street</p> <p>Elizabeth 33 Wood Ave. S, Ste. 665</p> <p>Iselin 89 Beuning Street, Ste. G</p> <p>South Hackensack 400 Grove Road</p> <p>West Deptford</p> <p>New York 102 Smith Boulevard</p> <p>Albany 2680 Grand Island Blvd. Ste. 5</p> <p>Grand Island 2752 Middle Country Rd.</p> <p>Lake Grove 178 W. Hoffman Ave.</p> <p>Lindenhurst Whitehall Ferry Terminal 4 South St., Room 210</p> <p>New York One East 2nd St.</p> <p>Oswego 800 West Ave., Ste. 310</p> <p>Rochester 700 Hummel Ave.</p> <p>Southold</p> <p>North Carolina 311 Atlantic Beach Causeway</p> <p>Atlantic Beach 5704 Oleander Dr. Ste. 107</p> <p>Wilmington</p> <p>Ohio 4830 State Rd.</p> <p>Ashtabula 8044 Montgomery Rd. Stes. 754</p> <p>Cincinnati Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport Main Terminal Room 179 1501 N Marginal Road</p> <p>Cleveland 444 W. Perkins Ave. Ste. 102</p> <p>Sandusky Star Center One Maritime Pl. 720 Water St.</p> <p>Toledo</p> | <p>Oklahoma 5350 Cimarron Rd.</p> <p>Catoosa</p> <p>Oregon 400 Virginia Ave. Ste. 112</p> <p>Coos Bay 7025 North Lombard Ste. 100</p> <p>Portland</p> <p>Pennsylvania 102 Broadway St. Ste. 400</p> <p>Carnegie 50 West Powhattan Ave.</p> <p>Chester 1723 Woodbourne Rd.</p> <p>Levittown 601 Upland Ave. Ste. 120B</p> <p>Brookhaven Philadelphia Regional Port 3460 N Delaware Ave.</p> <p>Philadelphia 701 North Point Dr. Ste. 104</p> <p>Pittsburgh</p> <p>Puerto Rico Prima Piso, Salon de Conf. Ave., Santiago de los Caballeros final, Edificio Turismo</p> <p>Playa Ponce Navy Frontier Base Ste. 1 408 Ave. Fernandez Juncos</p> <p>San Juan</p> <p>Saipan TSL Plaza. Suite 2C Beach Road</p> <p>Garapan</p> <p>South Carolina Residence Inn 5035 International Blvd.</p> <p>North Charleston</p> <p>Tennessee 3720 Amnicola Hwy. Ste. 101</p> <p>Chattanooga Tennessee Valley Training Center 324 W. Mallory Ave.</p> <p>Memphis 60 Old Hickory Blvd.</p> <p>Old Hickory</p> <p>Texas Ford Conv. Ctr Tyler Room 5155 Interstate 10 S</p> <p>Beaumont 1000 Foust Rd.</p> <p>Brownsville 7433 Leopard St. Rm. 203</p> <p>Corpus Christi 6000 Broadway Ste. 103</p> <p>Galveston West Gulf Maritime Assoc. 1717 Turning Basin Ste. 100</p> <p>Houston Gulf Gate, Ste. 314 2900 Woodridge Dr.</p> <p>Houston</p> | <p>621 W. Main St.</p> <p>LaPorte Brazos Mall Ste. 1039</p> <p>100 Hwy 332 West</p> <p>Lake Jackson 3820 Highway 365 Ste. 500</p> <p>Port Arthur 411 West Main St.</p> <p>Port LaVaca Mall of the Mainland 10000 Emmett F. Ste. 1272</p> <p>Lowery Expy</p> <p>Texas City Best Western 8106 NE Zac Lentz Parkway</p> <p>Victoria</p> <p>Vermont 145 Pine Haven Shores Rd. Room 1132</p> <p>Shelburne</p> <p>Virginia 814 Greenbrier Cir. Ste. F</p> <p>Chesapeake 11815 Fountain Way Ste. 300 Rm 359</p> <p>Newport News</p> <p>Washington 8327 Summit Park Rd., Ste. D</p> <p>Anacortes 127 E. Intercity Ave. Bldg. G, Ste. C</p> <p>Everett Red Lion Hotel 501 S. First Ave. Ste. 201</p> <p>Kelso 2815 St. Andrews Loop</p> <p>Pasco 4634 East Marginal Way S Ste. C150</p> <p>Seattle 5009 Pacific Hwy. E Ste. 17</p> <p>Fife Business Park</p> <p>Tacoma 33rd Place Bldg. Ste. 107 3305 Main St.</p> <p>Vancouver</p> <p>West Virginia Tri-State Fire Academy 4200 Ohio River Rd.</p> <p>Huntington</p> <p>Wisconsin 425 South Military Ave.</p> <p>Green Bay 3073 South Chase Ave. Ste. 620</p> <p>Bldg. 28 Fl. 1</p> <p>Milwaukee</p> <p>Virgin Islands 8000 Niksy Ctr., #217</p> <p>Charlotte Amalie Renaissance Park Estate Anguilla</p> <p>Kings Hill</p> |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|



SUP President's Report

February 9, 2009

TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION CREDENTIAL

All hands are again reminded that April 15, 2009, is the deadline for U.S. merchant mariners to obtain a valid Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). Members will not be dispatched to a seagoing job or standby job on or after April 15, unless they possess this federally-required document.

SUP members dispatched as casual standbys, MUST HAVE A TWIC by April 15. However, on the following dates in the following ports, casual standbys must have in their possession a Merchant Mariner's Document to be admitted to a terminal or aboard ship to work:

February 12, 2009: Honolulu and all Hawai'i ports

February 28, 2009: Oakland, Richmond, Seattle, Crockett

March 23, 2009: New York

April 14, 2009: Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Pedro will require a TWIC

SUP members dispatched as steady standby, sailors MUST HAVE A TWIC on the following dates in the following ports:

February 12, 2009: Honolulu and all Hawai'i ports

February 28, 2009: Oakland, Richmond, Seattle, San Francisco

April 14, 2009: Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Pedro

APL this month reminded its contracted seagoing Unions that TWIC enforcement began in Norfolk, Virginia, on January 13, 2009. Norfolk Port Security has instituted a strict policy of not allowing crewmembers without a TWIC to return to a vessel after going ashore. Enforcement in Savannah and Charleston began on December 1, 2008.

Enrollment Advice: TWIC enrollment centers are seeing a surge of activity as more Captain of the Port (COTP) zones get closer to compliance dates for TWIC implementation. Staff, equipment and hours of operation have been increased at a majority of the enrollment centers to meet the increased demand for services. The improvements also allow for additional appointment availability. On January 22, the TWIC Outreach Team sent the following advice to the SUP and stakeholders nationwide who wish to expedite the TWIC application process:

- The online address for TWIC information is <http://www.tsa.gov/twic> and the TWIC Help Desk telephone number is 1-866-DHS-TWIC.

- Applicants should check online or call the TWIC Help Desk to obtain an appointment. Walk-in customers are always welcome at enrollment centers; but walk-in customers are served on a first-come, first-served basis. For those who choose to walk-in to enroll or activate a card, there are a number of steps that can help expedite the process.

- Walk-in customers should avoid traveling to the enrollment center with a large group. As walk-in customers are served on a first-come, first-served basis, members of large groups will inevitably have to wait while other members of the party are being served.

- Applicants should have the proper original documentation on hand. Check online or call the TWIC Help Desk for a list of approved documentation.

- Eligibility requirements for those who are not U.S. citizens can be found online or by calling the TWIC Help Desk.

- Information about the appeal and waiver process, for those who have committed an offense that may require additional background check information, can be found online or by calling the TWIC Help Desk. When additional information is required, it takes a minimum of 60 days to obtain a decision regarding TWIC applications.

- Application status can be checked online or by calling the TWIC Help desk. Applicants will be notified

via telephone or email based on contact information provided at enrollment. Applicants should ensure contact information is correct.

THE ECONOMY AND SHIPPING

Since last month's Union meetings the economy remains far off course. In a bleak report issued by the Department of Labor on February 6, American workers are feeling the full brunt of the collapse of unfettered capitalism—almost 600,000 jobs were lost in January and a total of 3.6 million jobs had been lost since the beginning of the recession in December 2007. The unemployment rate, meanwhile, rose to 7.6% from 7.2% a month earlier.

Losing more than a half million jobs in each of the last three months, the United States is trapped in a vortex of plunging consumer demand, rising joblessness and a deepening crisis in the banking system.

The contraction in jobs is already steeper than any recession since at least the early 1980s. Economists warn that the country has not yet hit bottom.

President Obama and House Democrats in Congress have struggled to pass legislation to put Americans back to work, but as of today's meeting, reactionary Republicans in the Senate—with few exceptions—have stymied that effort.

The severity of the recession, which is global in scope, has already started to choke off exports from the United States. Cargo volume at the nation's ports fell dramatically by 7.9% at the end of 2008, and is projected to fall by almost 12% by June. This downturn has affected SUP-contracted companies in the offshore (container) trades.

APL MARINE SERVICES

In a bulletin distributed to vessel masters and chief engineers, APL noted "the rapid decline in container freight during the later part of 2008 and the bleak outlook for both 2009 and 2010."

The bulletin states "we must contain costs while not affecting operational efficiency, reliability and safety. We request you look for every opportunity to reduce all costs. There should be very strict management of all operational overtime. All man hours, including straight time, should be fully productive and well planned to ensure "best value" for the dollars spent. We request you to revisit how the vessels operate and see if by changing operating procedures cost savings can be achieved in all areas."

Additionally, the bulletin noted that APL had proposed to company management in Singapore that the C-10 Class vessels be exchanged for newer tonnage or that the C-10's be transferred into the C-11 Class Pacific Service since "the C-11 Class are better designed to meet the challenges of the Suez service." Both proposals were rejected. APL was told that they should plan on operating the C-10s through their mandatory Maritime Security Program (MSP) phaseout dates in 2013 and to drydock the vessels in 2011.

MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY

Matson this month reported operating profit in the fourth quarter of 2008 plummeted 30%. The company transported 13% fewer containers and 54% fewer cars to Hawai'i in the fourth quarter, while container volumes in the China Service were down 16%.

On the release of its earnings, Matson's parent company, Alexander & Baldwin, stated: "We recognize that our 2009 earnings prospects have been diminished. As a result, we will continue to take all necessary measures—cost containment and expense reduction, deferral of nonessential capital projects, preservation of cash, shoring up our liquidity sources—to preserve our financial strength."

In addition to the dry cargo operators, the global recession could affect other SUP-contracted companies, including Chevron Shipping Company.

The Union has experienced this economic cycle before. The membership is advised to live within your means and to expect that discretionary overtime hours will likely be reduced substantially.

SIU-PACIFIC DISTRICT PENSION PLAN

Last month reported on the status of the Pension Plan given the collapse of financial markets and institutions.

On January 27, the Trustees of the Plan received a proposal from Wright Investors to restructure certain assets in the Plan held in bonds.

Past strategy has produced an investment gain in the value of long duration securities held in the portfolio. The investment manager's proposal is to capture gains made on the long duration securities with the intention of eventually redeploying the assets in higher return asset classes, mainly equities, should the opportunity present itself. In the interim, assets would be managed in a short duration bond portfolio to preserve capital and maintain liquidity.

To capture gains on long duration issues the investment manager would sell off three long duration positions, which represent 53.5% of the assets of the cash-matched portfolio. Proceeds of sale would be used to fund the 10-year, cash-matched portfolio with the remainder invested in a short duration bond portfolio. Total assets required for the 10 year cash match would be approximately \$32.5 million. With a total market value of the portfolio at \$50.5 million, that leaves about \$18 million for the short duration actively managed portfolio.

Based on market conditions the assets managed in the short duration portfolio could be deployed in several ways:

1. If the stock market were to decline significantly below current levels, a position would be built in equities.

2. If the stock market were not to go to new lows and it was evident that a recovery was beginning, an allocation would be made to equities.

3. If interest rates were to materially rise, one could invest in longer duration bonds at significantly higher rates. The duration of this pool could be set to the duration of the liabilities to immunize the portfolio against interest rate risk.

4. Any combination of the above.

The assets in the short duration portfolio will have an average duration of one to three years. Investments could be made in treasury, corporate, agency and mortgage-backed securities. Corporate securities must be investment grade.

On January 30, the Trustees unanimously approved the investment strategy.

Total assets of the Plan are currently \$113,794,009 with \$18,436,125 invested in the Dodge & Cox stock portfolio and the remainder in bonds with Wright Investors.

PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES

The SUP, MFOW and SIU-Marine Cooks were notified by Patriot on January 26, that the Maritime Administration has awarded the company a three-year extension to operate the Ready Reserve Force vessels *m/v Cape Orlando*, *GTS W.M. Callaghan*, *s/s Cape Farewell* and *s/s Cape Flattery*. The extension period runs from July 28, to July 27, 2012. Another three-year extension is possible following 2012, based on performance factors but most importantly what government policy is, regarding the RRF.

While the contract extension is good news, the future of these vessels could change at any time due to federal budgetary constraints, the whims of the Defense Department (which selects ships for the RRF) or a combination of both. As the membership will recall, the government put millions of dollars into retrofitting the *Cape Girardeau* (ex-President Adams, ex-Alaska Mail) and *Cape Gibson* (ex-President Jackson, ex-India Mail) which were operated by Patriot. Both vessels carried out the missions assigned to them without a hitch, but the brass at the Pentagon decided that these breakbulk ships were no longer needed. The contract with Patriot was canceled and the ships were stripped

continued on next page

President's Report continued

and towed to the bone-yard at Suisun Bay.

The *Orlando* and *Callaghan* are in Reduced Operating Status in Alameda, while the LASH ships *Farewell* and *Flattery* are moored at Beaumont, Texas, in Reduced Operating Status —10, without crews.

UNION FINANCES

Despite the dues increase that went into effect on March 1, 2008, the Union experienced increased deficit spending over 2007, particularly in the General Fund.

The General Fund expenses included a significant increase in health care premiums for office staff represented by the Office & Professional Employees Union, legal fees of \$40,000 for the Bane & Tulenken lawsuit, approximately \$25,000 to relieve the Honolulu Branch Agent, increased postage rates, committee expenses (Matson negotiations), increased insurance premiums, increased transportation costs associated with paying off the C-10s on the East Coast, plus a general increase in vendor costs.

The Building Corporation, which in recent years has offset General Fund deficits, again was in the black—but just slightly. A major expense for the Building Corporation was the payment of \$58,000 in legal fees to settle the lawsuit against Terra Nova Insurance Company for damages to the Headquarters building by a former tenant plus increases in taxes and insurance. These expenses were ex-

acerbated by a loss of rental income, as tenants who were working on nearby construction projects finished their work and then left when funds for additional projects dried-up due to the financial crisis.

The bottom line is that last year the Union spent over \$331,000 in expenses over income. This situation calls for austerity measures to be implemented to cut expenses as well as finding ways to increase income.

HOLIDAY

On Monday, February 16, all SUP halls will be closed for Washington's Birthday (President's Day) which is a holiday under the collective bargaining agreements with American President Lines (offshore and shoreside), Foss Maritime Company, Matson Navigation Company (offshore, shoreside and RRF vessels), and Patriot Contract Services.

Due to the holiday, the Branch meetings will be on Tuesday, February 17.

Under the agreements with Chevron Shipping Company and the San Francisco Bar Pilots, Washington's Birthday (February 22) is observed on Monday, February 23.

ACTION TAKEN

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

Gunnar Lundeberg

Wreck of British man-of-war found

Deep-sea explorers who found \$500 million in sunken treasure two years ago say they have discovered another prized shipwreck: a legendary British man-of-war that sank in the English Channel 264 years ago.

The wreckage of the *Victory*, found below about 330 feet of water, may carry an even bigger jackpot. Research indicates the ship was carrying four tons of gold coins when it sank in a storm, said Greg Stemm, co-founder of Odyssey Marine Exploration, ahead of a news conference on February 2, in London.

So far, two brass cannons have been recovered from the wreck, Stemm said. The Florida company said it is negotiating with the British government over collaborating on the project.

"This is a big one, just because of the history," Stemm said. "Very rarely do you solve an age-old mystery like this."

Thirty-one brass cannons and other evidence on the wreck allowed definite identification of the *Victory*, a 175-foot sailing ship that was separated from its fleet and sank in the English Channel on October 4, 1744, with at least 900 men aboard, the company said. The ship was the largest and, with 110 brass cannons, the most heavily armed vessel of its day. It was the inspiration for the *Victory* famously commanded by Admiral Horatio Nelson decades later.

Odyssey was searching for other valuable shipwrecks in the English Channel when it came across the *Victory*. Stemm wouldn't say exactly where the ship was found for fear of attracting plunderers, though he said it wasn't close to where it was expected.

"We found this more than 50 miles from where anybody would have thought it went down," Stemm said. Federal court records filed by Odyssey in Tampa, Florida, seeking the exclusive salvage

rights said the site is 25 to 40 miles from the English coast outside of its territorial waters.

A Ministry of Defense spokesman said the government was aware of Odyssey's claim to have found the *Victory*. "Assuming the wreck is indeed that of the British warship, her remains are sovereign immune," he said on condition of anonymity in keeping with government policy. "This means that no intrusive action may be taken without the express consent of the United Kingdom." He would not say whether the government had begun talks with Odyssey over the future of the find.

Newspapers of the day and other historical records analyzed by the company indicated that the *Victory* sank off the Channel Island of Alderney near Cherbourg, France. A 1991 British postage stamp depicts the *Victory* crashing on the rocks there. Pieces of the ship had washed up in various places, but its final resting place remained a mystery.

The *Victory* was returning from Lisbon, Portugal, and was probably transporting 100,000 gold Portuguese coins for merchants, according to Odyssey's research. The ship had sailed there to help rescue a Mediterranean convoy blockaded by the French in the River Tagus at Lisbon.

Odyssey, a publicly traded corporation, announced in May 2007, that it had raised 17 tons of silver coins from an Atlantic Ocean shipwreck. The company later said it believed the wreck to be the Spanish galleon *Nuestra Senora de las Mercedes y las Animas*, which sank off Portugal in 1804.

Shortly afterward, the Spanish government sued Odyssey in federal court in Tampa to claim the treasure, arguing that the shipwreck was never abandoned by Spain. The case is pending.

Vice President's Report

February 2008

STW 40

As part of the delegation of the United States, I attended this 40th session of the sub-Committee on Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization in London, from February 2 through February 6. The main item on the agenda, massive in scope and voluminous in technical detail, was the so-called Comprehensive Review of the Code. It was to this meeting and that item that all of the problems and inconsistencies in the Code have been referred since the dawn of the STCW era. Of course, given such a workload, future meetings will still be dealing with the Comprehensive Review. But there were some significant developments. First of all, from the point of view of unlicensed seamen, the revisions to Chapter II and III (regarding "rating forming part of a navigational/engine watch") that were developed at STW 39 were this time adopted without changes. Since there are always initiatives to undo past regulation, usually by shipowners or their proxies, ensuring that the STW 39 language remained untouched was a priority. This time, for example, there was an effort to eliminate the term and the requirements of the "able seafarer deck" and "able seafarer engine" from the Code provided there were enough officers or general vessel utilities aboard ship who were "qualified" to do the work. That proposal was killed. Another proposal would have made all electronic work the jurisdiction of the Electro-Technical Officer. That was defeated, but eventually the STCW Code will probably contain language on the electrical and electronic competencies required for both officers and ratings. There was another attempt to convert the guidance on medical fitness requirements in the non-mandatory Part B of the Code to the mandatory Part A of the Code. In particular, a health organization pressed for mandatory requirements on eyesight—both aided and unaided—that could have had an enormous negative effect on the future employment of thousands of mariners. That too was deferred, but eventually there will be some kind of prescriptive medical requirements, including eyesight, in Part A. There were many other issues which deserve attention. A full report will appear in next month's *West Coast Sailors*.

Ships Checked

Mississippi Voyager: Mark Jones, delegate. It sickens me to report that the delegate, having stood his watch, went to his room and died. Mark Jones was a talented sailor, dedicated to the seagoing life (his only occupation) and to the Union that took him in after a full twenty-

year career in the Navy. I think I was his first watch partner at Chevron. I remember being amazed by his continuously amiable nature, and 12 years later, just before the ship sailed from the Richmond Long Wharf, I noticed the same thing. The gang pulled together to carefully send him ashore at anchor in El Segundo.

The Company deserves credit for facilitating grief counseling and sending Capt. Robert Quine to the funeral services in Yuba City. Many crew members and dock workers attended including Kingsley Baidoo, Dennis Sabaquit, Robert Reed, Ismael Ocampo, Ron Gill, and Earl Eastmark. He was a good shipmate. Eastmark is the new delegate.

Colorado Voyager: Dave Mercer, delegate. In at RLW. Clarification on integration between the SIU-PD Pension Plan and the SUP-Chevron Marine Pension Plan and other benefits.

Arizona Voyager: Jenn Corner, delegate. Running smooth. Expecting to visit soon.

Maunawili: email question on callouts for non-mandatory work being investigated.

Manoa: Rolando Mendoza, delegate. In at Oakland with no problems. New Matson agreements are in print and available.

Mahimahi: Tom Larkin, delegate. Sick seaman's gear inventoried, packed up, and transferred ashore SUP-style. New man joined just before sailing.

APL Singapore: Charlie Duke. Visa problems forced crew to remain aboard during first part of layup in China. Return rights under Shipping Rule 21 apply.

APL Thailand: Louis Frazier, delegate. Clean ship. In at Oakland carrying some cargo for a change.

President Truman: Jesper Pfiel, delegate. Bosun Kim Hoogendam. In at Howland Hook, New York. Clean payoff.

USNS Waters: Paul Harsany, bosun. Ship handled several missions off Southern California. Wilmington Agent Paul Calais made the ship twice in San Diego. Most things okay: shore leave continues to be a challenge. Fueling now for Panama Canal and then on to new home near Cocoa Beach in Florida.

San Francisco Bar Pilots: Delegates Louie Urbano and Steve Ross. Evaluation process and training program withstood another test. Training is ongoing and all operators are hereby commended for their dedication to the process.

Foss Maritime Company: Delegates Mel Jackson, Sean Gaddis and Tom Tynan. Clarification on physicals, benefits during disability periods, and other issues.

Dave Connolly

Managers, not workers, overpaid in jobs

Some pundits and lawmakers—Senator Bob Corker (R-Tennessee) comes to mind—falsely claim that Union workers are overpaid and are to blame for the decline of U.S. manufacturing. But a new report, released this month by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), busts that myth and shows the convenient conventional wisdom to be wrong.

EPI economist Josh Bivens lays out the facts in *Squandering the Blue-Collar Advantage*, which show that U.S. manufacturing's blue-collar workforce, far from destroying U.S. competitiveness, is actually one of the key elements making a positive contribution to com-

petitiveness—a contribution being undermined by a variety of other factors.

Says Bivens: "If the story of U.S. manufacturing began and ended with its blue-collar workers, the outcome would be far different from what we're seeing today. In hourly pay and productivity, U.S. manufacturing workers give their companies a significant competitive edge—one that is being drained away by other negative forces."

Bivens identifies three key factors undermining U.S. competitiveness: "1) The overvalued U.S. dollar, which artificially

continued on next page

SUP Branch Reports

Seattle

January 20, 2009

Shipped during the period: 3 Boat-swains shipped; 2 steady's and 1 relief all filled by "A" members; 11 Able Seaman jobs shipped and filled by 2 A, 7 B and 1 C members and 1 D-registrant; and 4 standbys dispatched to 3 B and 1 C member.

Registered during the period: 12 A cards for a total of 19; 11 B cards for a total of 21; 6 C cards for a total of 10.

Ships Checked

Matson vessels *Maui* and *Manoa* called with little or no problems. The *ITB Moku Pahu* returned to Portland for another load of grain after a ninety day trip to Pakistan. Joe Moniz Jr. was the snapper with James Buster holding the sheets. This ship had a good pay-off with some of the crew staying on for the next voyage to Vladivostok, Russia.

I represented the SUP at the following meetings: the Port of Seattle Working Waterfront Advisory Council, and the King County Labor Council meetings. I attended the announcement by the Governor, the King County Executive and the Mayor of Seattle in choosing a "bored tunnel" option for traffic and freight throughput as a replacement for the Alaska Way Viaduct. Most of us in the maritime trades are still waiting to see

the details regarding this option.

The MFOW/SUP holiday party was a resounding success this year even though we had record snowfall in Seattle that week. Marine Fireman's Union Agent Mike Carr handled most of the cooking with Danny Ycoy barbecuing the pig and bringing in the lumpia. Sandy and Jeri Beavers helped with the set-up and tear-down, a hearty thanks to everyone who pitched in and brought food. And "a good time was had by all".

Vince O'Halloran
Branch Agent

Wilmington

January 20, 2009

Shipped: 15 ABs, 6 ABDs, 1 STOS, 2 OS, and 71 standbys for a total of 95.

Registration: 43 Class A, 22 Class B, and 3 Class C.

Ships Checked

Washington Voyager, Mississippi Voyager, Maunawili, China, Maunalei, Korea, Mokihana, Pfeiffer, Matsonia, Thailand, Manukai, Singapore, Manulani, Philippines, and Mahimahi.

As always, shipping is slow the first month of the new year.

I attended L.A. Harbor Coalition meetings to organize our 30th annual Labor Day parade.

Brothers, we have a new president. He stands boldly in front of the TV cameras and declares that Unions are part of the solution to our economic crisis. Now more than ever before in post WWII history we have to mass and be seen and heard as one. There will be a lot of other groups showing their numbers to our president and making their claims. If we do not make a good show of ourself, we will not be seen or heard. We need to show the country and politicians that the working class taxpayers are the biggest voting block and that it crosses all lines. Where will you be on Labor Day 2009? It's your turn to fight. So come on down be part of your Union's parade. It took self sacrificing men and women fighting to make our Unions and it will take the same type of brothers and sisters to maintain it.

As always yours in struggle

Paul Calais, Branch Agent

Honolulu

January 20, 2009

Shipped during the month of December, 2 AB maints., 2 ABWs, 3 ABW reliefs, 1 ABD, 4 ABD reliefs. These jobs were filled by 1 A member, 7 B members, 2 C members and 2 D members. Also shipped 5 standby jobs filled by 1 B member, 1 C member, 1 D registrant and 2 MFOW members, for a total of 17 jobs shipped.

During the month of December, registered the following: 10 A members, 5 B members, 4 C members and 1 D registrant. To date registered are: 12 A members, 8 B members, and 5 C members for a total of 25 members registered.

Ships Checked

Matson domestic and offshore vessels, delegates, and deck gang checked by phone and stopped by Union hall. All with few or no beefs. Paint and Rigging gang busy with Monte Kalama as bosun.

On January 21, attended the Hawai'i Ports Maritime Council meeting. Discussion on national and state legislative issues pertaining to maritime employees and on the economic slowdown here in the state of Hawai'i. Unemployment rolls are way up and shipping is slow in Honolulu.

Pensioner Thomas Vail on the binnacle list and is in Trippler Hospital.

Mike Duvall, Branch Agent

Overpaid managers

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drives up the price of U.S. goods abroad and drives down the cost of foreign-produced goods here. Over the past 10 years, this imbalance alone has created a 10 percent to 16 percent cost disadvantage for U.S. goods, compared with the previous decade. 2) The high cost of U.S. health care is another significant factor. Reducing these costs to the same level as our comparable trading partners could create a 4.6 percent cost advantage. 3) U.S. managers—not workers—are overpaid. Bringing white-collar wages in line with those in comparable countries could result in a 6.4 percent cost advantage for U.S. manufacturers."

Bivens adds: "If we want to restore the strength of U.S. manufacturing in our economy and in the world, we have to address the real anti-competitive factors that are dragging it down. In this effort, the wages and productivity of the unionized blue-collar workforce are an important asset."

San Francisco Business Agent

February 9, 2009

Visited and paid off the following ships:

Mahimahi— Manuel Roxas, delegate: Triangle run. Running smoothly with Joe McDonald as bosun. Question on the meal plan.

Manoa— Pat Tite, delegate: Coastal run; question on delayed sailing.

Maui— Tom Koppel, delegate: Coastwise run. Made twice. Dispute on the tieing up and letting go of the oil barge. This just came up this trip. Will check it out, otherwise no disputes.

Mokihana— John Savage, delegate: Car and van carrier. No disputes. Few questions from the bosun.

APL Korea— Ted Soderberg, delegate: No disputes. Running smoothly.

Colorado Voyager— Bob Turner, Bosun: Will be getting off, old bosun returning. On the milk run; everybody's happy. Made on Saturday.

Washington Voyager— Mike Fox, bosun: Runs a good deck department. No problems.

Bill Berger

SUP members join pension ranks

The following SUP members joined the rank of pensioner, bringing the total number of SUP members to 591:

Sedek B. Idris, 75, Book No. 822, joined SUP in 1968, 38 years seetime.

Jose D. Lopez, 78, Book No. 4030, joined SUP in 1996, 8 years seetime.

Duane A. Nash, 79, Book No. 2437, joined SUP in 1929, 40 years seetime.

Francisco Rosales, 70, Book No. 3198, joined SUP in 1990, 10 years seetime.

Support the
West Coast
Sailors

Dispatcher's Report

Headquarters—Jan. 2009

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Deck | |
| Bosun | 3 |
| Carpenter | 0 |
| MM..... | 3 |
| AB | 7 |
| OS | 1 |
| Standby | 4 |
| Total Deck Jobs Shipped | 18 |
| Total Deck B, C, D Shipped | 15 |
| 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. ... | 18 |
| Total B, C, D Shipped-All Depts. . | 2 |
| Total Registered "A" | 45 |
| Total Registered "B" | 41 |
| Total Registered "C" | 6 |
| Total Registered "D" | 12 |

Piracy watch update

The following is an update on piracy within the past month.

Peter the Great: This Russian navy cruiser captured three suspected pirate boats and 10 armed suspects in the Gulf of Aden on February 12.

Polaris: This Greek-owned 13,000 dwt chemical tanker enroute from Bangkok to Europe evaded capture on February 11. Transiting the Gulf of Aden with a cargo of molasses, the vessel was approached by a twin engine skiff with seven pirates board armed with automatic rifles. The pirates were aggressive and attempted to board the vessel for approximately 20 minutes but did not succeed because of evasive maneuvering. The *USS Vella Gulf* rendered assistance and the pirates were captured.

Premdivya: On February 11, this Indian-flag vessel sent a distress call to all ships in the area that she had been fired upon by a small skiff, and suspected pirates were attempting to board it. A helicopter from guided missile cruiser *USS Vella Gulf* signaled the skiff to stop immediately. When the skiff failed to stop, the helicopter fired one warning shot. A second warning short was fired when the suspects continued to flee.

Once the suspected pirates brought the skiff to a complete stop following the second warning shot, *Vella Gulf*, and the guided missile destroyer *USS Mahan* closed immediately to intercept the skiff. Visit, board, search and seizure teams from both warships conducted a consensual boarding and found weapons.

The suspected pirates were apprehended and brought on board *Vella Gulf*, where they were processed and are being held on board the supply ship *USNS Lewis and Clark*.

Faina: The Ukrainian-operated ro-ro laden with 30 Soviet-era tanks and other weaponry, was released on February 5 on payment of a ransom after being held by Somali pirates since late September. The U.S. Navy confirmed that \$3.2 million in cash was air-dropped onto the ship, making this the highest ransom payment to date in the Somali piracy crisis. The payment is a marked reduction on the \$20 million originally demanded by the hijackers. The crew of 20, including 17 Ukrainians, two Russians and a Latvian, is understood to be safe although the master died soon after the hijacking.

Blue Star: Captured on January 1, this 7,923 dwt Egyptian vessel carrying 6,000 tons of urea was released on February 6, after a ransom of \$3 million was paid.

Bosphorus Prodigy: Released by pirates after a ransom was paid on February 3, after being captured on December 15. The vessel, with a crew of eight Ukrainians and three Turks, was transiting the Gulf of Aden enroute to Mumbai with a cargo of grain when she was seized.

Longchamp: This German-owned 4,316 dwt Liquid Petroleum Gas vessel was captured by pirates in the Gulf of Aden on January 29. The vessel, enroute from Europe to Asia, has a crew of 12 Filipino and one Indonesian national.

Biscag: The 27,350 dwt, Liberian-flagged chemical tanker was released on January 26, by pirates after an undisclosed ransom was paid. The vessel, with a crew of 28 Indian and Bangladeshi mariners, was enroute from Indonesia to Barcelona with a cargo of palm oil when she was seized in the Gulf of Aden last September.