



THE FEDERAL MARINER

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Members Overwhelmingly Reelect Officials

SIU members from around the country recently cast their votes for the officials who will head the union over the next four years. The result was the overwhelming reelection of the union's leadership.

As part of the SIU organization, federal mariners who are SIU members are entitled to vote for their union officials. Seafarers cast their secret ballots at the union's hiring halls from Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, while members serving at sea were able to mail their ballots in. Those ballots were kept in a locked box and taken to the SIU's headquarters in Camp Springs, Md. to be tallied. A committee of rank-and-file SIU members then tallied the votes and released the official report on the results for national officers of the Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District.

The union's tallying committee consisted of 20 Seafarers (two members elected from each of the SIU's 10 constitutional halls). The group certified the reelections of Michael Sacco as president of the SIU; Augie Tellez as the union's executive vice president; David Heindel as secretary-treasurer; and George Tricker as vice president of contracts and contract enforcement, among other results. Government Services Vice President Kermet Mangram and Assistant Vice President of Government Services Chester Wheeler were also reelected.

The tallying committee's report will be submitted for approval by the membership at union meetings in March.

Additionally, the committee reported that the two proposed constitutional amendments were approved by very large majorities. One amendment concerned the official name of the union, while the other modified old language because of changes in U.S. law.

According to the report, the one contested race for office (Southern Region, Great Lakes and inland waters vice president) was also decided by a large margin. The committee disclosed the election of the following officers, who will serve four-year terms:

- Michael Sacco, president;



Rank-and-file members of the SIU's election tallying committee count votes in January following the months-long voting period where members chose who would lead the union over the next four years.

- Augie Tellez, executive vice president;
- David Heindel, secretary-treasurer
- George Tricker, contracts and contract enforcement vice president;
- Joseph Soresi, Atlantic Coast vice president;
- Dean Corgey, Gulf Coast vice president;
- Nick Marrone, West Coast vice president;
- Tom Orzechowski, Southern Region, Great Lakes and inland waters vice president;
- Kermet Mangram, Government Services and fishing industries vice president;
- Archie Ware, assistant vice president in charge of contracts and contract enforcement;

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MSC Restores Health Care Payments for CIVMARS Injured Overseas

As previously reported, the SIU learned in 2011 that the Military Sealift Command (MSC) would no longer advance payment to health care providers for CIVMARS who became ill or injured abroad. Citing legal requirements, MSC changed its 30-year practice of providing advanced financial health care payments for forward-deployed CIVMARS.

The impact of this decision meant that MSC CIVMARS needing medical care abroad found themselves in desperate circumstances when treatment facilities would not take Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) medical insurance and refused care without a cash or credit card payment in advance.

Upon learning about this change, the SIU raised this issue to the highest levels of MSC and exerted every effort to ensure CIVMARS would continue to be protected, despite the change. MSC and SIU representatives also worked on a program to present to the Department of Defense (DOD) to approve advance payments on behalf of CIVMARS who need medical care abroad. The program is similar to the one used by the State Department to cover its civilian employees stationed around the world.

SIU Assistant Vice-President Chet Wheeler – a 32-year deck department CIVMAR and union shipboard delegate prior to coming ashore – was primarily concerned with ensuring no CIVMAR would be refused medical care because insurance coverage was not accepted by the foreign treating facility. Wheeler recalled

his own work-related injury when discussing how important overseas treatment is to federal mariners.

“When I was severely injured abroad, access to adequate medical care was critical,” he said. “My shipmates helped me get to the hospital. Being sick or injured away from home is hard enough. We need to make sure that ill or injured CIVMARS are not denied care as a result of a payment problem.”

Statistics regarding employees sailing outside the continental United States (OCONUS) show just how needed the new policy is. According to MSC, more than 4,600 of the 5,500 CIVMARS are assigned to OCONUS duty stations. The vast majority of those – around 4,500 – serve aboard forward-deploying ships that can be sent anywhere in the world on very short notice.

As any CIVMAR knows, there are no guarantees as to whether there will be a medical facility nearby when an accident happens. Seafaring has always been and continues to be a dangerous occupation. In 2011 alone, some 156 CIVMARS were sent back to the U.S. from OCONUS ships for medical reasons, some requiring treatment before they came home. CIVMARS reported to SIU representatives that delays occurred in receiving treatment when the treating facilities refused to accept patients without a guaranteed source of payment.

Under the new policy, MSC will provide payment to health care providers to ensure CIVMARS immediate access to health care when the need arises, even if they do not have access to facilities that accept FECA, TRICARE or a CIVMAR'S FEHB insurance.

Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, commander of MSC, in a communication with DOD, noted the policy is vital to the safety of federal mariners around the world.

“Immediate access to medical facilities to respond to severe, life-threatening, or potentially disabling conditions that require immediate medical intervention to prevent undue suffering or loss of life or limb is critical to ensuring the welfare of MSC's OCONUS employees,” he said. “It is especially critical for MSC's CIVMARS to know with certainty that they will be admitted to (a) medical facility that is near enough to provide emergency care, even in situation(s) where the medical facility is only willing to accept advanced payment.”

It is important to have medical coverage that will supplement federal workers' employment compensation to which you may be entitled. If you become ill or are injured abroad, it helps to have coverage that can be coordinated to provide you with the most comprehensive health care possible. This can save you money in the case of significant injury.

Remember, MSC's advance payment is only a loan to ensure care will be provided without administrative delay. The CIVMAR will be responsible for re-payment. SIU recommends enrolling in an FEHB healthcare plan which provides coverage for illness and injury that occur overseas.

To learn more about health care plan coverage options, go to www.opm.gov/insure/health.

President's Column

After a Successful 2012, SIU Looks Forward to 2013

The SIU enjoyed another successful year in 2012, thanks in large part to the hard work of both rank-and-file members and the recently reelected union officials who represent them. We did well – despite the economy – thanks to productive, cooperative relationships with key personnel at federal agencies that affect maritime and CIVMARS throughout the country.



Michael Sacco

As you can see in the stories published in this issue, the SIU's efforts have paid off. CIVMARS with the Military Sealift Command (MSC), for one, can now work overseas without worrying about being denied immediate medical care if they are ill or injured. The SIU urged MSC to adopt a policy that helps CIVMARS obtain overseas medical care not

covered by a mariner's health insurance, and MSC listened.

Our NOAA members, meanwhile, have been working hard to ensure NOAA fleet vessels operate safely to assist scientists in exploring our oceans world wide.

These are just a few of the exciting things the SIU and its members have been working on. You can expect to read about more developments in the issues to come. The progress continues and I'm thankful you again put your faith in me for the next four years. It is still an honor to serve as your president.

It was also an honor to see how hard the SIU worked during the 2012 election season. The SIU and the rest of the labor movement demonstrated the very real, ongoing power of grassroots activities. Grassroots mobilization is quite simply our edge when it comes to electing people who will support maritime, collective bargaining and other workers' rights. We'll never be able to outspend anti-worker front groups, but, brothers and sisters, we sure know how to get out the vote.

Union families composed a much higher percentage of actual voters throughout the country as compared to our percentage of the workforce. In the states that decided the race for the White House, we voted for the Obama-Biden ticket by significant majorities. The labor movement definitely had an impact on the election.

But that's not to say we're only interested in one political party. When it comes to our presence in Washington, the SIU has friends on both sides of the aisle. We welcomed the announcement in February by Reps. Cedric Richmond (D-La.) and Michael Grimm (R-N.Y.) of the formation of the Congressional Maritime Caucus. This bipartisan group will shine a much-needed light on issues important to maritime and the SIU is eager to work with them.

We may be only a few months into 2013, but the year already looks exciting. I believe it'll be a year of growth and prosperity. When you combine our political outreach, excellent working relationships and the outstanding work done by our rank-and-file members, we've got all the pieces in place to continue succeeding. Now we've just got to keep our sleeves rolled up and our course true and steady, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Seafarers International Union Directory

Michael Sacco, *President*

Augustin Tellez, *Executive Vice President*

David Heindel, *Secretary-Treasurer*

George Tricker, *Vice President Contracts*

Kermett Mangram,
Vice President Government Services

Chester Wheeler,
Asst. Vice President Government Services

Brian Ahern, editor <bahern@seafarers.org>

Union, MSC Establish Simplified Rules Regarding CIVMAR Vessel Signoffs

The SIU and Military Sealift Command (MSC) have reached an agreement on a new set of relief procedures that are expected to make it easier for CIVMARS to sign off their ships and return to work when they're ready.

Negotiated in December by SIU and MSC officials, with assistance by Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Mediator James Sherwood, the new procedures streamline and clarify the relief process while giving CIVMARS a clearer picture of what they need to do to return to work. The new process is set for a 2013 implementation.

In addition to timely and efficient relief procedures for CIVMARS, it is hoped that this new process will result in less downtime for mariners awaiting return to shipboard assignment.

The goals of the negotiations were to:

- Minimize the number of CIVMARS overdue for relief and the time a CIVMAR waits for his/her next assignment.

- Ensure standardization of the relief process.

- Emphasize the importance of fulfilling medical and training requirements and the renewal of credentials to increase the efficiency of the relief process.

Based on these goals, MSC, and SIU Government Services Division representatives and union attorneys negotiated a standard operation procedure (SOP) which serves as a guideline for processing CIVMAR requests for relief.

The procedure for requesting relief involves the CIVMAR, the purser, a marine placement specialist (MPS) and MSC's training and medical departments.

When a CIVMAR requests relief, they must complete a Relief and/or Ship to Ship Transfer Request form. This form is obtained from the purser. Requests for relief must be made at least 60 days in advance of the desired relief date. Once the CIVMAR completes this form it is returned to the purser or the supervisor performing purser duties in the event there is no purser aboard. The request form is then sent to the Marine Placement Division.

An MPS then reviews the CIVMAR's training record and professional credentials to determine whether the CIVMAR meets the requirements and whether the CIVMAR's credentials are expired or are due to expire within the next six months. The MPS will prepare and send to the CIVMAR a CIVMAR Relief and Training Notice which provides the estimated arrival date of the relief. This form also provides information about the

training the CIVMAR will need (if any) prior to their next ship assignment. In addition, the form provides information about the status of the CIVMAR's professional credentials (such as TWIC and passport).

Once the CIVMAR has completed and returned the CIVMAR Relief and Training Notice, they receive a CIVMAR Leave and Training agreement. This agreement indicates which type of leave the CIVMAR is eligible to take. The agreement also informs the CIVMAR of their assignment to any required training course based on their responses in the CIVMAR Relief and Training Notice. The CIVMAR is required to sign this agreement.

As always, the union recommends that every CIVMAR reads documents you are required to sign very carefully. You should understand each element of the notice and agreement before you sign them. You can call your MPS with questions. If you do not have a full understanding of the requirements, you can also contact your union official.

In order to further increase the efficiency of the relief and assignment process, CIVMARS are encouraged to fulfill all medical requirements prior to reporting to the CSU. There may be opportunities for CIVMARS to accomplish these requirements while at home and/or on leave. These medical requirements may include the need to fill orders for prescription drugs, obtain an annual physical or treat chronic medical conditions which require periodic follow-up examinations. CIVMARS are encouraged to contact their detailers in advance to see if they will get paid for work-related exams while on leave.

Ultimately, it is hoped that by front-loading the training and medical requirements CIVMARS may spend less time in the CSU awaiting assignment.

In addition to the standard operating procedure, the parties executed a memorandum of understanding which states the purpose of the negotiations and sets forth how the policy will be implemented. The policy is expected go into effect in February of 2013, and the parties have agreed to meet to review and discuss the procedure within one year to determine if any changes or adjustments need to be made.

CIVMARS with questions regarding this Request for Relief process are encouraged to contact their SIU government services representative or email siufedmariner@seafarers.org.

Thorough Knowledge of Weingarten Rights Essential to Federal Mariners

One day you are working. You are called into a supervisor's office. You are told that you will be participating in an investigatory interview. You know nothing about what is happening or why the investigation is taking place, but you are afraid. That would be a normal reaction. What can you do to protect yourself in this situation? Keep reading.

Federal employees, like their private sector counterparts, are afforded rights to protect them in this situation. The United States Supreme Court established these rights – known as Weingarten Rights – with its 1975 decision in *NLRB v. J. Weingarten Inc.* While the Weingarten decision concerned private sector employees, Congress grants similar rights to federal workers.

Weingarten Rights ensure the agency is able to obtain all the necessary facts related to the matter under investigation, while allowing the union to protect the interests of bargaining unit employees.

The Supreme Court and federal law provide these rights to unionized employees. Employees who are part of a bargaining unit represented by the SIU are entitled to have a union representative or a shipboard union delegate present at any investigatory interview under certain circumstances.

So when do you ask for union representation? You ask for the union representative or union delegate to be present when you are directed or asked to participate in an investigatory discussion or interview and if you reasonably believe the examination may result in disciplinary action against you.

The key to getting union representation is requesting representation. Your supervisor may not tell at the start of the interview that you may request assistance from the union representative or shipboard delegate.

When an employee requests union representation, the agency must either grant the request or cease the questioning. If you request representation and there is no one available to assist you, your employer has to

reschedule the interview. You are not required to participate once you have asked for someone to represent you at the meeting.

If a union representative is not available at sea, you may request a shipboard delegate to attend the meeting. If there is no shipboard delegate available, you may request the attendance of another mariner experienced in these types of meetings or request a union representative attend the meeting by phone.

Most federal employers provide a notice of Weingarten Rights once a year. You must remember that in an investigation where you believe that discipline may result, the responsibility is on you to ask for assistance.

Normally, an agency representative who participates in an investigatory meeting will be your first- or second-line supervisor. There are times when investigators from outside your agency will be interviewing employees. This person may be an inspector general or a person from a security agency.

You are not required to have representation at an investigatory meeting. You can decline representation and go it alone. If you decline representation, the supervisor may continue with the investigatory meeting. But be aware – under such circumstances, you may not have the right to change your mind once the meeting starts.

The SIU recommends that you take a representative into an investigatory meeting to help you fully understand what is happening.

A routine meeting in which an employee's performance is discussed is generally not considered an investigatory meeting. The meeting could become an investigation if the management representative starts asking questions that are part of an investigation. In addition, general staff meetings, absent any investiga-

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NOAA Mariners Take Part in Deepwater Discoveries

Vessel *Okeanos Explorer* Delves into Unknown Parts of the Ocean

The NOAA mariners crewing the vessel *Okeanos Explorer* have done their part in helping to make some important discoveries recently, as the *Okeanos Explorer* embarked in its mission as the only federal ship dedicated to systematically exploring poorly known parts of the ocean.

These recent discoveries are just the latest in a string of important finds for the federal mariner-crewed *Okeanos Explorer*. Home-ported in Davisville, RI, the 224-foot ship has previously mapped gas plumes in the Gulf of Mexico, conducted the longest plankton sampling on record and discovered a historic wooden-hulled vessel which is believed to have sunk more than 200 years ago.

Demonstrating excellent seamanship, the crew supported the unusual mission of this vessel where scientists, using advanced multi-beam sonar mapping systems, discovered a cluster of previously unknown natural gas seeps off the U.S. Atlantic Coast that could help scientists better understand how such seeps affect ocean chemistry and climate change. The seeps were found at water depths greater than 3,300 feet and are believed to be emitting methane gas.

"Finding and mapping deep ocean seeps is vitally important but has been limited by technology," said Stephen Hammond, acting chief scientist in NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research. Such a discovery is of global implications, added Carolyn Ruppel, chief of the U.S. Geological Survey's Gas Hydrates Project. Studying the seeps help scientists better understand climate change by comparing how much gas is naturally emitted to how much is emitted by humans.

"It's important to find and understand such seeps because they have global significance for the transfer of methane carbon from long-term storage in ocean-floor sediments into the ocean and atmosphere," Ruppel said. "Methane released



Federal mariners aboard the NOAA vessel *Okeanos Explorer* have taken part in a mission that has mapped deepwater gas seeps and discovered historic sunken vessels. Image courtesy of NOAA.

into the water column is often oxidized to carbon dioxide, leading to changes in ocean chemistry, such as ocean acidification." Robert Detrick, assistant administrator of NOAA Research noted that "this technology and the information it delivers is extremely valuable to researchers and ocean resource managers in NOAA, in other agencies, and across the nation."

Kate Hunt, SIU Government Services East Coast representative, said the union

certainly recognizes the significance of the work.

"The SIU is very proud of the work of the NOAA mariners perform each day," she said. "These crews support work which often leads to findings of huge importance for the worldwide environment."

The *Okeanos Explorer* is operated, managed and maintained by NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, which includes commissioned officers of

the NOAA Corps and civilian wage mariners, represented by the SIU. NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, operates, manages and maintains the cutting-edge ocean exploration systems on the vessel and ashore. Future issues of the *Federal Mariner* will include features on this important SIU bargaining unit and the role NOAA mariners play sailing these unusual scientific vessels.

How to Become An SIU Member

Joining the SIU is easy. The union's website – www.seafarers.org – includes printable PDF versions of forms that mariners may use to request and authorize payroll deductions for labor organization dues. The forms are posted at: <http://www.seafarers.org/memberbenefits/civmar.asp>

Contact Information

Asst. Vice President Government Services Chet Wheeler:
Phone: (510) 444-2360, ext. 17
Email: cwheeler@seafarers.org
Government Fleet Representative Kate Hunt:
Phone: (718) 499-6600, ext. 223
Email: khunt@seafarers.org
Government Fleet Representative Maurice Cokes:
Phone: (757) 622-1892
Email: rcokes@seafarers.org
For contact with SIU:
siufedmariner@seafarers.org
For CMPI 610-related questions:
msscmpi610@gmail.com
Find us on Facebook:
www.seafarers.org
Find us on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/seafarersunion

Protect Yourself Online: A Resource to Help

For federal mariners, identity protection means job protection. A federal worker facing credit problems due to identity theft could lose their security clearance. If your agency requires you to have a security clearance to stay employed, the agency may take the position that without security clearance, you cannot work.

Fortunately, the government has established a website to keep employees better protected from online fraud.

That website is OnGuardOnline.gov (www.onguardonline.gov). Created by a 16-agency partnership, the site contains excellent information on protecting federal workers from identity thieves. Those steps include tips on securing wireless connections, avoiding computer scams, using good online practices and protecting children online.

The site is an invaluable tool for federal mariners who spend time away from home, family members and friends, military members, techies, parents and kids.

Should you experience identity theft, be sure to notify the three credit bureaus, put a security fraud alert on your credit files, contact the police near your home and file a police report. Keep records of the notifications you have made and continue to monitor your credit on a regular basis.

For additional help with security clearance problems resulting from identity theft, contact your local union representative or email siufedmariner@seafarers.org

Preparation is Key When Facing a Meeting with a Supervisor

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tory purpose, will not be considered a Weingarten meeting.

During the investigatory examination, your representative has a right to actively participate in the meeting. If the supervisor says your representative cannot speak or help, this is a violation of the law. The union representative or shipboard delegate's role is to assist the employee in providing all relevant information known to the employee. To do this, your representative can ask questions for clarification and can consult with the employee before and during the interview. Your representative cannot unduly interrupt or try to stop the investigation.

When faced with a request to meet with a supervisor, what should you do?

First, make sure you know the true purpose of the meeting and who will be present. If the purpose of the meeting is to investigate a workplace-related matter, then that should signal to you that it is a possible disciplinary meeting allowing you to request your Weingarten Rights.

Second, at the start of the meeting make sure you know the allegations being investigated. The supervisor must tell you what the allegations are and what they expect from the interview.

Third, if you have a reasonable belief that possible discipline could result from the meeting, you should ask to have a union representative or shipboard delegate present. You have a right to decline to participate until a representative can participate in the interview.

Fourth, make sure to bring paper and something to write with. During the meeting, it is important to take notes and try to document in writing as much information about the subjects and questions discussed during the meeting.

Fifth, get copies of any documents that pertain to you for your records.

If you have any questions regarding Weingarten rights, please do not hesitate to ask your SIU Government Services representative or email siufedmariner@seafarers.org. In an upcoming issue of the *Federal Mariner* you will learn how over a dozen MARAD mariners working at SIUSAN Bay dealt with their investigatory interviews, how they reached out to the union and how the SIU helped them every step of the way.

Understanding Your Benefits And How to Secure Them

What You Need to Know About the CSRS VCP Program

Federal Mariners know all about acronyms - NOAA, MARAD, ACOE, MSC - all agencies use them. But in addition to understanding the complex acronyms needed to work on vessels sailing worldwide, federal mariners also need to be aware of the acronyms and complexities of their pension and health benefit programs.

Federal Mariners pay lots of money each year to maintain their pension and health benefits. Knowing how to access them and make them grow is of great importance to every mariner - no matter which agency you work for.

Remember - the most powerful tool to prepare for retirement is information and detailed knowledge of the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension systems. While much information is available, each mariner must make the choice that best suits their personal situation. You can never start planning for retirement too early in your career. Learning your options protects your future as well as your family.

Read on to learn about an option available to you if you are a mariner under the CSRS retirement system.

Federal employees who participate in the long operating CSRS can supplement their pension with a benefit called the Voluntary Contributions Program (VCP). This benefit allows employees to contribute 10 percent of their base pay into an after-tax account that earns interest.

Once their money is in the VCP account, employees have two choices on how to use that money during their retirement. This column looks at the impact of the choices and what the choice may mean to you.

Choice 1 - Leave the money in the VCP account until retirement where it is traded in for a VCP annuity.

This option guarantees employees will receive a certain amount from their VCP account each month for the duration of their retirement. The entire account balance is traded in to ensure those monthly checks come.

The amount of money received from a CSRS VCP annuity is based on how much money is in the VCP account, age at retirement and the start date of the annuity. The more money an employee has in their account

and the older they are when they retire, the more money they'll receive each month from the annuity.

Unlike the regular CSRS pension, the VCP does not get increases for changes in the cost of living. This means the payments won't go up, even if the cost of everyday items do.

The annuity will also be partly taxable. While the original contributions into the VCP were after-tax, the interest that money earned is tax-deferred; meaning a mix of after-tax and tax-deferred money would be in the VCP account when it was traded in for the annuity. This can make tax planning more difficult.

Choice 2 - Transfer the money out of the VCP account prior to retirement into a separate account (most commonly a Roth IRA).

Transferring the VCP account to a Roth IRA opens a wider array of investment options. A Roth IRA is an individual retirement account which allows a person to set aside after-tax income up to a specified amount each year. Roth IRAs have specific rules which apply to this type of retirement account and it is important to know how your participation in the federal retirement system impacts your ability to contribute to this type of retirement account.

Since Roth IRAs allow people to put after-tax money in them, the money can eventually be taken out tax free if it's been sitting in the account for a long enough time. Since most forms of retirement income - CSRS pensions, Social Security, or a traditional IRA - are usually taxed at ordinary income rates, this allows for a stable, predictable source of income if tax rates increase. If rates go up, there's the option of pulling income from the Roth IRA while money in other accounts grows.

There are other issues to be careful about and understand. If a withdrawal is made from the VCP account, then everything in the account must be withdrawn. Also, once a withdrawal has been made from the VCP account there can be no other VCP accounts in that person's name.

There are also many complicated rules tied to the Roth IRA option. Getting things wrong could result in costly tax issues.

Whether a federal mariner decides to take the VCP annuity or transfer the money into a Roth IRA depends on their individual situation and circumstances. As with all money-related issues, thorough research should be conducted and questions answered by knowledgeable advisors before any decisions are made.

How to Credit Military Service Toward Civilian Retirement

Federal mariners with prior active duty military service may be surprised to learn that service is also creditable toward their civilian retirement. It takes some time and money to set up, but that initial investment is nearly always worth it. That's because the deposit amount you need to pay to get the credit is based on your low military pay, but the added pension benefit is based on your high 3-year average salary.

Federal mariners can credit their service toward retirement as long as they have received an honorable discharge, are not receiving retired military pay and have made a deposit to the appropriate civilian retirement system. There are, however, several things you need to know when trying to ensure the maximum amount of pension credit will be earned.

One of those things is the date of military service, since that determines how much action is required. For employees whose active service was performed before Jan. 1 1957, no special action or deposit is necessary.

Those employees whose service occurred after that date must make a deposit to their Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) account. This is even required for active duty service performed while on leave from a federal civilian position.

Military reservists and National Guard members who were called to active duty need to make a deposit to cover the period in which they did not receive civilian pay. Retired military members, on the other hand, are usually not able to credit their service, unless their retired pay is based on combat-incurred disability or on reserve service.

The amount of the required deposit you will pay depends on which retirement system coverage is used. For those with FERS, it is 3 percent of military earnings. For those with CSRS, it is 7 percent of military earnings.

To ensure the deposit counts, it must be made in full - including interest - before you retire. The payment can be made in one lump sum, biweekly in payroll deduction or by other methods offered by the pay office. Federal mariners in MSC, NOAA, ACOE and MARAD may call their benefits office for assistance with the deposits. Further information is available at the Office of Personnel Management's VetGuide at opm.gov.

NOAA CIVMARS in Norfolk



NOAA CIVMARS Aceton Burke, Allison Stone and Jeremy Howard greet visitors aboard the vessel *Thomas Jefferson*.

Election Results Talled

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- Nick Celona, assistant vice president in charge of the Atlantic Coast;
- Ambrose Cucinotta, assistant vice president in charge of the Gulf Coast;
- Bryan Powell, assistant vice president in charge of the West Coast;
- Jim McGee, assistant vice president in charge of the Southern Region, Great Lakes and inland waters;
- Chester Wheeler, assistant vice president in charge of Government Services and fishing industries;

The committee arrived on Jan. 5 as required under the union's constitution and met during the week of Jan. 7 at the union's headquarters in Camp Springs, Md. **John Cain** and **Louella Sproul** served as co-chairs, and they both credited fellow Seafarers for working hard and doing a good job.

The full committee consisted of **Glenn Williams** and **Thomas Cyrus** from Piney Point; **Michael Keogh** and **Jeffery Eckhart** from Algonac; **Susanne Cake** and **George Mazzola** from Baltimore; **Cain** and **Rafael Pereira** from Houston; **Michael Congress** and **Kennard Campbell** from Mobile; **Jack McElveen** and **Johney August** from New Orleans; **Carlos Sanchez** and **Cleofe Castro** from New York; **Sproul** and **Roger Reinke** from Oakland; **Rodger Taylor** and **Robert Weinhardt** from Philadelphia; and **Charlotte Tuggle** and **Darryl Alexander** from St. Louis.

Those Seafarers noted that they unanimously signed off on the report, adding, "All of the members of the committee wish to express their deep appreciation for the cooperation and assistance given to us by the union's legal department and technical and clerical staff. Finally, the members of the union tallying committee wish to congratulate the elected officers and jobholders. We extend our best wishes for the next four years. We hope that you will carry on the tradition of our union and advance the strength of the maritime industry."