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SIU Crew Helps Rescue 4 Boaters



The SIU-crewed *El Coqui* (Crowley) rescued four stranded boaters off the coast of the Dominican Republic. Pictured among the *El Coqui* crew, above: Bosun Juan Carlos Negron Miro; ABs Rahsean Lillard, Michael Ross, Jorge Soler Solis, Erick Toledo Colon and Michael Wilt; QMEDs Kirk Chambers, Jose Alicea-Sanchez and Mark Dennison; Oiler Jose Borrero Rodriguez; Recertified Steward Jesus Pacheco; Chief Cook Steven Lopez Ferrer; and SA Pedro Maysonet Gonzalez. *Page 3.*

NY Waterway Christens Ferry

SIU members are sailing aboard the newest addition to the NY Waterway fleet: the *Jackie Robinson* (below). Pictured at the vessel's christening ceremony are (inset, from left) Deckhand Terrence Brown, Deckhand Ziyad Gouda, Capt. Michael Muia, and SIU Port Agent Ray Henderson. *Page 4.* (Vessel photo by Jennifer Voce-Nelson)



Excellent Work by Seafarers



David Heindel

The professionalism, reliability and compassion of SIU members never wanes, but a few recent developments underscore those characteristics.

As reported elsewhere in this edition, SIU members aboard the *Liberty Power* helped handle a tense situation reportedly involving Iran's military. Thankfully, nothing came of it, but the "suspicious approach" incident offered a reminder that the U.S. Merchant Marine does indeed serve as America's fourth arm of defense.

Around that same time, Seafarers aboard the *El Coqui* helped rescue four boaters from a life raft in Atlantic Ocean's Silver Bank waters north of the Dominican Republic. As rescues go, this one was

relatively low-key and routine, thanks in part to very favorable weather. Nevertheless, the preparedness and efficiency of Seafarers is what helped make it all seem normal.

Last but not least, members in Hawaii stepped up to brighten the holidays for those less fortunate – specifically, in this case, area youth. SIU members donated time and much-needed items, all in a spirit of genuine philanthropy.

These are merely some of the most recent examples of what makes SIU members special, and I salute all of you for jobs well done.

Crunching the Numbers

This year's government report on union density showed little change from the previous one. Something that always catches my eye, though, is the fact that union members usually earn significantly more money and enjoy better benefits than their unrepresented counterparts. That held true again in the most recent documentation from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, a longtime friend of the SIU, pointed out in response to the BLS report that significantly more people would choose union representation if given the chance. That view is based on very

credible polling, and what's equally known is that union-busting is a multi-million-dollar industry. Companies get away with violating labor law in organizing drives for more than one reason, but the simplest explanation is that they do so because they can.

If you're not a union member but happened to pick up a copy of the *LOG* or are reading this column online, I'd ask you to consider why any company would spend big money to keep a union out. Is it because they're so worried about protecting their employees, or is it because they want to maintain an outsized upper hand? Without a union contract, the employer calls all the shots.

Similarly, among the anti-worker politicians at every level of government, why do they seem so afraid of worker empowerment through union membership? (Obviously, there are numerous pro-worker, pro-union politicians, too.)

I've long been grateful for the solid working relationships enjoyed by the SIU with our contracted operators. We definitely clash from time to time, but I also know we've had enough sense to realize we're better off adhering to the old maritime metaphor that a rising tide lifts all boats.

If I somehow had a chance to give the so-called elevator pitch to the people who don't understand the labor movement, I'd tell them that no one ever claimed unions are perfect, but they give workers a voice, they promote accountability – and they benefit the employer through greater productivity, less turnover, and a healthier power dynamic.

We've got our work cut out for us in the labor movement, but we've also got a lot to offer, and I know we're up to the task.

Promoting SIU Job Security

I would be remiss by not saying anything about the early stages of the new administration in the nation's capital, relative to the maritime industry. At the same time, I'd also be less than candid if I didn't note that day-to-day business is being conducted in unprecedented ways.

We are, as always, sparing no effort in promoting YOU and the American maritime industry. This includes helping build support for the SHIPS for America Act, educating new legislators and new personnel in the administration about programs and laws like cargo preference and the Jones Act, and reinforcing support from old friends.

Stay tuned, and be assured that your union is on the job every day.

SIU Secures Mid-Contract Gains at E.N. Bisso & Son

Boatmen at a longtime SIU-contracted company in the south are enjoying new benefits, following cooperative negotiations that concluded Jan. 7.

"After many months of discussions and negotiations that began during the 2022 contract bargaining sessions, we have successfully finalized a new paid-time-off (PTO) plan at E.N. Bisso & Son that will significantly benefit everyone," reported SIU Assistant Vice President Chris Westbrook.

The union represents approximately 70 boatmen at Bisso, which is headquartered in New Orleans. They work as wheelmen, deckhands and engineers aboard a fleet of 14 tugs, providing ship docking and offshore towing services.

The enhanced PTO benefit is extensive. Highlights include immediate eligibility for all employees, including new hires; increased annual accrual; flexibility to use PTO for any time away from work not covered by other leave types; and an option to sell back unused time. Additionally, members were compensated for unused vacation days at the end of last year.

Negotiating on behalf of the SIU were Westbrook and delegates **Kevin Wells** and **Todd Rabalais**.

Wells said the vast majority of his fellow boatmen are quite pleased with the gains.



Pictured Jan. 7 in New Orleans as the discussions concluded are (from left) SIU Delegate Kevin Wells, company President/CEO Matt Holzhalb, VP Mike Vitt, SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook, and SIU Delegate Todd Rabalais.

"They appreciate it," he said. "Bisso was willing to work with us, and that's what made it so worthwhile. And Chris did a tremendous job. The guys have a lot of trust in him, because we know Chris has our back."

Rabalais stated, "These are good gains for us. No matter how you look at it, it's money, whether you actually take the days off or cash in (up to 21 days of unused PTO). I've been there 40 years, and in my younger days, I couldn't afford to take the time off. Now I can."

He added, "The past several negotiations have gone really well and had good outcomes. Chris does a great job for us."

Westbrook credited the delegates and the company executives for working hard during a series of bargaining sessions.

"In the end, this improved PTO plan will create a more supportive work environment and allow our members to manage their personal and family obligations effectively," he said. "It reflects the union's commitment to their wellbeing and recognizes the importance of work-life balance."

Notice

Form 1095-B Available Upon Request

In past years, the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan (SHBP) sent all participants a copy of their Form 1095-B at the end February. This is the form the SHBP is required to submit to the IRS every year to report all individuals who are eligible for "minimum essential" healthcare coverage from the Plan.

Due to a recent change in the law, the Plan will no longer be mailing a copy of this form to all participants. However, if you would like to receive a copy, please contact MAP at (800) 252-4674, option 2, and let them know you are requesting a copy of your Form 1095-B. The Plan will either mail you a copy of the form; or send it by email if you have consented to electronic notification.

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The SIU engaged an environmentally friendly printer for the production of this newspaper.

El Coqui Crew Rescues 4

Four recreational sailors are safe, thanks in large part to the efforts of SIU members.

On Jan. 21, the crew of the Crowley-operated *El Coqui* rescued four individuals after their sailboat sank off the coast of the Dominican Republic.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard report, the sailboat *Mariposa* had struck a submerged rock in the shoal area of the Silver Bank waters, north of the Dominican Republic. As the *El Coqui* was diverting and responding to the distress call, a nearby fishing vessel aided in retrieving the stranded men from their life raft in the shallow waters and then transporting them to the containership.

The crew of the *El Coqui* at the time of the rescue included: Bosun **Juan Carlos Negron Miro**; ABs **Rahsean Lillard**, **Michael Ross**, **Jorge Soler Solis**, **Erick Toledo Colon** and **Michael Wilt**; QMEDs **Kirk Chambers**, **Jose Alicea-Sanchez** and **Mark Dennison**; Oiler **Jose Borrero Rodriguez**; Recertified Steward **Jesus Pacheco**; Chief Cook **Steven Lopez Ferrer**; and SA **Pedro Maysonet Gonzalez**.

Miro said, "As the boatswain of the *El Coqui*, and on behalf of my fellow union members who participated in the rescue, we feel happy and pleased with the work that was done during said rescue. It is an honor as SIU sailors to respond to the call for which we were prepared."

The bosun continued: "My lifeboat course was around 20 years ago, but it all came back to me during the rescue, and definitely helped. The weekly drills that the crew performs on the vessel also helped greatly."

The rescued men were David Potts, 63; John Potts, 62; Andrew Cullar, 26; and Russell Case, 67. The men each expressed gratitude to the entire crew for the rescue. Case was later identified as the brother of U.S. Congressman Ed Case (D-Hawaii), who has a history of opposing the Jones Act.

Miro said, "The next time our union representatives go to Congress to defend the Jones Act, they should remind this congressman that his brother was rescued by the crew of a ship called *El Coqui*, and that it is made up of a crew that sails with great pride and honor under the Jones Act. Remind him that a ship that sails under this powerful law saved your brother."



Captain Kurt Breitfeller (left) - an SIU hawsepiper - congratulates Bosun Juan Carlos Negron Miro for the crew's performance during the rescue.

No medical concerns were reported among the rescued men, who were transported to Jacksonville, Florida, as the *El Coqui* resumed the scheduled run.

"This incident underscores the importance of proper emergency equipment for vessels at sea," said Lt. Hannah M. Boyce, Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft commander for the incident. "We are all incredibly thankful those mariners were properly equipped. Helping those four sailors at their worst day at sea is why we fly."



Seafarers help the stranded boaters climb aboard the *El Coqui*.

"This incident highlights the importance of having an emergency position indicating radio beacon that is fully functioning and registered in the NOAA database," said Lt. Cmdr. Nathan Borders, Coast Guard Search and Rescue mission coordinator for the case. "Our deepest gratitude goes out to the crews of the fishing vessel *Bonanza* and of the motor vessel *El Coqui* for selflessly responding in keeping with the honor and tradition of the AMVER merchant vessels that come to the aide of fellow mariners in distress."

All Hands Safe on Liberty Power

Authorities are investigating a "suspicious approach" incident from late January reportedly involving an Iranian "small military craft" and the SIU-crewed *Liberty Power*, as well as several other seemingly related "radio challenges" to other ships in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

The incident reports come from the organization United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, which coordinates and monitors security in the region.

All hands are safe aboard the *Liberty Power* (Liberty Maritime). In a joint communication to the crew and officers from SIU President David Heindel and Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association President Adam Vokac, the officials said they are "greatly relieved to learn that everyone aboard the *Liberty Power* is safe.... Please extend our appreciation to the entire crew. The MEBA and SIU have been in close coordination with Liberty

and government entities to ensure that future transits in the region are afforded enhanced protection."

Heindel and Vokac extended "our sincere gratitude to MSC Commander Adm. (Philip) Sobeck for his pivotal role in swiftly arranging this support."

They concluded, "We are immensely proud of the courage and professionalism demonstrated by every mariner aboard, and deeply grateful for your commitment and service to our nation."

A few days later, the ship safely sailed to its next destination, with air and sea escorts.



The vessel's deck gang includes (from left) AB June Margaja, AB Edison Calderon, and Bosun Donald Desir.



GUDEs (from left) Heliodoro Martinez, Christopher Holmes, and Xavion Young-Key pause for a snapshot aboard the Liberty Maritime vessel.



Pictured from left aboard the *Liberty Power* are SA Rolvin Bonilla Aranda, Chief Steward Robert Bostick, and Chief Cook Antwon Norris.

NY Waterway Christens New Ferry

SIU members recently welcomed new jobs aboard a passenger ferry named after an all-time sports and civil rights icon.

Seafarers-contracted NY Waterway on Jan. 29 christened the 500-seat *Jackie Robinson* during a ceremony at its Port Imperial Terminal in Weehawken, New Jersey. The boat is named in honor of the Brooklyn Dodger legend and civil rights icon who is widely considered as one of the most important and admired figures in our nation's history. Service began on what would have been Robinson's 105th birthday, on Jan. 31.

SIU Port Agent Ray Henderson and several rank-and-file Seafarers attended the ceremony.

"This is a great addition to the company's fleet of modern passenger ferries," Henderson said. "I'm confident that SIU members will do great work aboard the boat for many years."

NY Waterway President and CEO Armand Pohan stated, "When a group of us was discussing a name for our newest vessel, we kept landing on the idea of honoring Jackie Robinson, a figure who is an inspiration to all of us, and a true American icon. For those of us who are baseball fans, Jackie Robinson epitomized the very best of the game. He was a player of magnificent skill and grace. He was also one of the great trailblazers in the history of our nation, breaking Major League Baseball's color barrier in 1947.

"It was a seminal moment in the cause of advancing civil rights, and specifically the rights of Black Americans, in this country," Pohan continued. "He, along with Mrs. Robinson, demonstrated remarkable courage, strength and grace in enduring the hate that was directed their way by those who would stand in the way of progress and equality. Jackie Robinson is, in short, one of the most admirable and important figures in our nation's history."

Seafarers and NY Waterway officials were joined by Jackie Robinson Foundation President and CEO Della Britton and Mr. Robinson's granddaughter, Sonya Pankey. The Jackie Robinson Foundation, established in 1973, is a public, nonprofit organization that admin-



Pictured aboard the new addition are (foreground, from left) Deckhand Terrence Brown, Deckhand Ziyad Gouda, Capt. Michael Muia, and SIU Port Agent Ray Henderson.

isters what has been described as one of the nation's premier scholarship and leadership development programs for talented college students. The Jackie Robinson Foundation aims to educate and inspire the

general public around the ideals embodied in the life of its namesake.

The newly built *Jackie Robinson* "will help provide additional ferry service to Midtown for PATH commuters during the planned month-long Hoboken PATH closure," NY Waterway reported. "Once in regular service, the *Jackie Robinson* will provide comfortable and reliable ferry transportation on scheduled transit and excursion routes throughout the year."

Pankey said, "Our family is really honored to have the opportunity to have young people and all ... ride on the *Jackie Robinson* and have an opportunity to reflect on his legacy, not just on the baseball field, but off the baseball field."

Founded by Arthur Imperatore Sr. in 1986, NY Waterway operates the nation's largest privately owned commuter ferry service. Prior to the pandemic shutdown, NY Waterway carried more than 32,000 passengers each weekday on 23 routes across the Hudson River, bringing New Jersey commuters to Manhattan and back. In cooperation with MTA Metro North Railroad, ferries bring commuters from the west side of the Hudson River in Newburgh and Haverstraw to the Hudson Line stations in Beacon and Ossining.

On dozens of occasions, SIU-crewed NY Waterway ferries have provided emergency service when public transit systems are disrupted. On 9/11, NY Waterway ferries evacuated more than 163,000 people from Manhattan, part of the largest maritime evacuation in history. In August 2003, when a massive blackout shut down all Hudson River crossings, NY Waterway carried 160,000 people home to New Jersey. SIU crews also have rescued more than 300 people from New York waters, most notably the 143 individuals rescued from US Airways Flight 1549, the "Miracle on the Hudson" in 2009.



NY Waterway President/CEO Armand Pohan addresses guests at the christening. (Photo by Jennifer Voce-Nelson)



Sonya Pankey (right), granddaughter of the late Jackie Robinson, does the honors as the new boat is formally welcomed. Company President/CEO Armand Pohan is at left. (Photo by Jennifer Voce-Nelson)

BLS Issues Annual Union Density Report

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in late January posted its yearly report concerning union membership rates in the United States.

The union membership rate – the percent of wage and salary workers who were members of unions – was 9.9 percent in 2024, little changed from the prior year. The number of wage and salary workers belonging to unions, at 14.3 million, also showed little movement over the year. In 1983, the first year for which comparable data are available, the union membership rate was 20.1 percent and there were 17.7 million union members.

Among many other findings, the BLS noted that union workers "had median usual weekly earnings of \$1,337 in 2024, while nonunion workers had median usual weekly earnings of \$1,138." For an entire year, that's a difference of more than \$10,000.

Responding to the report, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler issued a statement that read in part, "The percentage of workers in a union remained flat ... despite huge organizing wins across the country and across different sectors of the economy. It's plain as day that more working people want a union now than at

any point in our lifetimes. Across our economy and in every part of the country, workers are standing together to demand fair treatment, better wages, and dignity and respect on the job. Our organizing has resulted in remarkable victories in traditional and emerging sectors like manufacturing, health care, clean energy, infrastructure, retail and restaurants, hospitality, and on college campuses, in technology, in public service and much more."

Shuler continued, "Today's BLS numbers don't begin to tell the real story of the desire workers have to join a union. The number of union elections has doubled since 2021, boosted by efforts from the previous Biden administration to give workers a fair shot at joining a union. In 2024 alone, there were nearly 1,800 union elections, with workers winning the vast majority. Many of these victories are not reflected in the numbers released today because employers are exploiting a broken system to delay bargaining a first contract. But these wins – including an election for the first-ever Whole Foods union in Philadelphia just last night (Jan. 27) – are proof positive of working people's incredible desire to join and form unions."

She also pointed out that public approval for unions "is at a nearly 70-year high because in an economy that continues to heavily tilt to the wealthy few and leaves workers behind, the only way to get ahead is by joining

together. The recent successful organizing campaigns at places like Starbucks, Amazon, Volkswagen, and other massive corporations show workers' momentum and hunger to join unions, no matter how many hurdles bosses and anti-union politicians throw our way. There are 60 million workers who would join a union today if given the opportunity, but between broken labor law and corporate bosses like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos engaging in often illegal union-busting every year with little consequence, far too few get that chance. It's time for change.

"We call on the Trump administration to live up to its campaign promises to support workers by prioritizing fixing America's broken labor law through the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act," she concluded. "These bills would finally update our archaic, broken laws and give workers what we so desperately want: a free and fair shot at joining a union on the job."

The data on union membership is collected as part of the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly sample survey of about 60,000 eligible households that obtains information on employment and unemployment among the nation's civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and over, according to the BLS.

Duffy Confirmed as DOT Secretary

On Jan. 28, the United States Senate confirmed Sean Duffy as the new Secretary of Transportation, a move welcomed and endorsed by stakeholders in the domestic maritime community.

Duffy was confirmed with bipartisan support, as reflected in the vote count: 77-22. He takes the helm at a department that oversees vital maritime components including the Maritime Administration. Before confirmation, Duffy received the endorsement of the American Maritime Partnership (AMP), a major coalition to which the SIU is affiliated.

According to AMP, Duffy has a strong history with maritime from his time as an elected official representing Wisconsin's 7th District between 2011-2019. During Duffy's time in Congress, he was co-chairman of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, a coalition of labor and management from U.S.-flag vessel operators, shipboard and longshore unions, port authorities, cargo shippers, terminal operators, shipyards, and other Great Lakes interests. The SIU is part of that coalition.

"AMP particularly appreciates congressman Duffy's unequivocal support for the Jones Act



U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy (center) is joined by his wife, Rachel Campos-Duffy, as he is ceremonially sworn in by Vice President JD Vance. (Photo courtesy DOT)

as expressed during his Commerce Committee confirmation hearing," AMP president Jennifer Carpenter wrote in a letter to Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-South Dakota) dated January 15.

The confirmation also received praised from elected officials in Congress.

"I want to congratulate Sean Duffy on his confirmation to serve as the next United States Secretary of Transportation," said Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Rep. Sam Graves (R-Missouri). "I am confident that under the secretary's leadership we can improve America's infrastructure by focusing our investments on core projects like roads and bridges, streamlining project delivery, and getting the department back to the fundamental missions of federal transportation programs – moving people and goods safely and efficiently."

The Jones Act has aided U.S. national, economic and homeland security for more than a century. The law requires that cargo moving between domestic ports is carried aboard vessels that are crewed, built, flagged and owned American.

In 2019, a PricewaterhouseCoopers study revealed the law helps maintain 650,000 American jobs found in every state and territory, contributing billions of dollars each year to the nation's economy. In addition, the Jones Act provides for a pool of well-trained, reliable U.S. citizen mariners available to sail aboard U.S.-flag military support vessels in times of crisis.

USTR Report Details China's Targeting of Marine Sectors

A recent study by the United States Trade Representative (USTR) puts into perspective the relative differences between the United States and China when it comes to maritime.

For instance, according to the USTR, China's global shipbuilding capacity represents more than 50% of the world's shipbuilding volume today. They are now the world's largest shipowner, with 19.1% of the global commercial fleet under their control. Less than zero-point-four percent of the world's ships fly the U.S. flag.

China-based companies, many of whom have direct ties to the Chinese government, own stakes in 95 overseas ports, including the Panama Canal, and they dominate a number of other critical maritime infrastructure sectors.

Further according to the USTR, China produces 86% of the world's trailer chassis, 80% of the world's maritime cranes, and 95% of the world's shipping container supply. China has spent the last 30 years dumping hundreds of billions of dollars into its maritime industry. In that same period, the United States has spent a comparable pittance, and the industry scrambles each year to convince Congress to spend the money needed to fund the Maritime Security Program, Tanker Security Program and various other maritime programs at their fully authorized levels.

While the USTR report intentionally did not include recommendations – its purpose was mainly to identify the scope of the problem – there is plenty of hope for progress, specifically in the form of the recently introduced SHIPS for America Act. This legislation, which is expected to be reintroduced in the current Congress, is the most comprehensive maritime bill in more than half a century. It features a broad array of concrete recommendations to revitalize our industry, including steps to increase our own maritime power while scaling back China's.

The USTR report is the culmination of an investigation began last year after five labor organizations – the Maritime Trades Department, Steelworkers, Machinists, Electrical Workers, and Boilermakers – filed a petition requesting an examination into China's maritime policies. Under the invocation of Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, the USTR compiled data gathered through the scrutiny of China's practices targeting the maritime, logistics, and shipbuilding sectors for dominance, and issued a report on the findings of their investigation in



The 182-page report (cover is shown above) is linked on the SIU website.

mid-January. This law allows the U.S. to impose tariffs or import restrictions on foreign nations that employ an act, policy, or practice considered "unreasonable or discriminatory" or which "burdens or restricts United States commerce." Since 2018, this law has been utilized by both the Trump and Biden administrations to impose tariffs on Chinese imports, according to the USTR.

The new report stated, "The results of this investigation provide a basis for finding that responsive action is appropriate." The report thoroughly details the scope of China's planning to maintain its outsized presence in the maritime industry and emphasizes it as a point of concern.

The USTR asserts that China's maritime practices prevent competition between other maritime businesses and result in lost sales, under-investment in capacity, diminished ability to attract financing, and lost jobs and lower wages.

For nearly three decades, the USTR contends, China has employed "increasingly aggressive and specific targets in pursuing dominance of the maritime, logistics, and shipbuilding sectors." The USTR says that certain policies enacted by China in their maritime planning unfairly depress costs or provide advantages. For example, enterprises within the Chinese shipbuilding supply chain benefit from the country's lack of effective labor rights and the use of forced or compulsory labor.

Another obstructive policy identified in the report has resulted in foreign companies in existing markets being displaced while Chinese companies gain market share and acquire new, developing markets. China's rapidly growing market share of high-technology ships is one such example of the country's strategy in action. According to the USTR's report, China's initial target was 20 percent of global market share by 2011, but now the country aims to achieve 50 percent global market share by the end of 2025. For maritime engineering equipment, China initially targeted 10 percent of global market share by 2011 and currently seeks 40 percent market share by the end of 2025.

The USTR also says that China revealed the capacity and willingness to weaponize dependencies and vulnerabilities through economic coercion to influence policies in their favor, or to punish other countries for policies that offend China.

The USTR's Section 301 Committee has scheduled a hearing for March 11, 2025. According to the USTR's press release, upon finding that an act, policy, or practice is actionable under section 301 of the Trade Act, the U.S. Trade Representative must determine what action, if any, to take to eliminate that act, policy, or practice. The USTR will determine which responsive actions will be considered during the investigation's next stage.



Former U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai launched the probe into China's maritime practices last year. The resultant report was issued days before the new administration was sworn in. (White House photo)

Support for Domestic Maritime Evident in U.S. House Hearing

The year's first hearing of a crucial House subcommittee reinforced support for the Jones Act and for other U.S. maritime industry components.

SIU Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman, who also serves as chairman of the coalition USA Maritime, testified at the Feb. 5 hearing of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, part of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Also testifying were Paul Anderson, president and chief executive officer, Port Tampa Bay; Joe Rella, president, St. Johns Ship Building, Inc., on behalf of the Shipbuilders Council of America; and Tom Reynolds, chief strategy officer, Seasats, on behalf of the Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International.

The hearing was titled "America Builds: Maritime Infrastructure."

In his opening remarks, Subcommittee Chairman U.S. Rep. Mike Ezell (R-Mississippi) pointed out that the hearing is a continuation of the parent committee's "America Builds" series "to discuss the nation's maritime infrastructure."

Ezell also noted, "In order to participate in coast-wise trade between two domestic points, a ship must be Jones Act-qualified, meaning the ship is U.S.-built, U.S.-crewed, and U.S.-owned. The Jones Act is a fundamental statute for the domestic maritime industry. The Jones Act is quite literally the bedrock and foundation of our nation's shipbuilding industrial base because it helps to maintain a pool of qualified American mariners that we rely on to transport goods and our military, in times of peace and war."

He added, "Unfortunately, the rise of the shipbuilding industries of global competitors has led to a decline in our own shipbuilding capacity. Coastal

Mississippi, and the Gulf Coast as a whole, is home to several shipyards employing thousands of Americans. I look forward to discussing ways to reinvigorate this critical industry."

Schoeneman told the legislators, "The goal of this hearing is to discuss the current state of our maritime infrastructure. I would rate our infrastructure a solid C. There's much work to be done if we're going to catch up to the rest of the world, particularly China, who has invested billions, if not trillions, into their maritime sector."

He stated, "In less than 30 years, China has emerged as the dominant commercial maritime power. They are the world's largest shipowner. They are the world's largest shipbuilder and they control most of the world's trailer chassis, maritime cranes and shipping container supply. In that same time period, the United States has invested a pittance and our industry scrambles, each year, to convince Congress to spend the money needed to adequately fund our handful of government programs like the Maritime Security Program."

Schoeneman asked the subcommittee members for support of the laws and programs that keep the industry afloat.

"America needs more mariners, we need more cargo and we need more ships of all types, from icebreakers and fireboats to oceangoing commercial vessels," he said. "We can fix these problems by making maritime a priority again, like it has been in our past. We continue to work hard to solve our current mariner shortage."

He added, "When it comes to ships, we're not living up to our aspirations. Current law says America must have a merchant marine sufficient to carry a substantial portion of our waterborne foreign commerce. We don't do this. Our fleet carries less than two percent of our foreign commerce and represents less than 0.4 percent of the world's shipping fleet. We saw the damage overreliance on foreign shipping creates during the most recent supply chain crisis. More U.S.-flag market share will help to strengthen the resilience of our national supply chain.... For us to compete against China, we must change our priorities and it needs to start today."

Later, during a question-and-answer period, Schoeneman said the Jones Act is "fundamental" to national security. Also during the question-and-answer segment, he explained the massive value of cargo preference laws to numerous Americans from different industries, not just maritime.

Rella (from St. Johns Ship Building) weighed in on America's freight cabotage law: "From our industry's perspective, the Jones Act is absolutely essential to the commercial shipbuilding sector," he said. "The



SIU Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman (right) confers with fellow panelist Tom Reynolds immediately after the hearing.

Jones Act, which comes at no cost to the U.S. government, helps maintain a merchant marine to carry our domestic waterborne commerce. The law also ensures that the U.S. maintains critical shipyard infrastructure and an associated skilled workforce that can build, repair, modernize and maintain the more than 40,000 vessels of the domestic Jones Act fleet. This industrial base also ensures there is a sufficient workforce to support the construction and repair of our critical national security fleets."

At different points in the hearing, various legislators weighed in with their concern for, and support of American maritime. Ranking Member Salud Carbajal (D-California) said, "While we have made great strides in recent years in bolstering our ports, waterways and maritime industry, we cannot take our foot off the pedal. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, alone, invested more than \$17 billion in our ports and waterways. This funding has been used to fund repairs, upgrades and replacements to reduce port and vessel congestion and to strengthen our supply chain. In addition, cutting emissions near ports by boosting electrification and investing in other low-carbon technologies to reduce overall environmental impacts is critically important, as we continue to battle climate change."

U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-Washington), ranking member of the full committee, stated, "I was heartened to hear (Transportation) Secretary (Sean) Duffy's support for the Jones Act during his confirmation hearing. The Jones Act has strong support among members of this committee.

It's critical to the maritime industry."

(Video of the entire hearing, along with copies of prepared remarks, are linked on the SIU website.)



Subcommittee Chairman U.S. Rep. Mike Ezell (R-Mississippi)

SARC - Celebrating 50 Years of Helping Mariners

Since 1975, the SARC (Seafarers Addiction Rehabilitation Center) has been helping mariners find their way back to successful careers in the shipping industry. Under the new direction of Chris Leeman, LCMFT, LAC, SAP, they have modernized the curriculum and added to the staff.

In reopening the facility, particular attention was paid to updating the curriculum. The facility's therapist is certified in updated techniques, and the SARC is unique in its primary mission: providing programming to specifically target the mariners' culture with integrity and respect. The facility offers scenic vistas of the Chesapeake Bay in a home-style atmosphere, including private rooms for those in the program.

According to Leeman, "While you are here, you will be treated with respect as merchant mariners. You will have the opportunity for one-on-one counseling and group counseling designed to address your goals for your future success. The facility is designed for co-ed treatment, and you will be able to complete your U.S. Coast Guard-approved evaluation and completion requirements with people who know and understand the requirements of the USCG."

He added: "Alcohol and drug use is common among zero-tolerance industries, but you don't need to wait until there is a mandatory suspension of your

credentials to ask for help. If you suspect you have a problem, you can act before the consequence. Your union provides 100% evaluation and treatment that is paid for if you have the required sea time."

If a Seafarer thinks he or she may have a problem with drug or alcohol use, they may call the center

directly or contact their port agent. Please call the SARC directly to learn more about intake dates, or for specific questions you may have concerning treatment.

Direct contact:

Administrative Assistant Kerrie Thompson
301-710-9070 | Kthompson@seafarers.org



The Seafarers Addiction Rehabilitation Center (Photo courtesy of Chris Leeman)

Retired Asst. VP Anderson Passes Away

The SIU is mourning the loss of retired Assistant Vice President Don Anderson, who died Jan. 18 in La Belle, Texas, following a short battle with cancer. He was 74 years old.

Anderson worked for the union for 33 years, after sailing on tugboats from 1969-73. He served in a range of shore-side positions including organizer, patrolman, port agent, headquarters representative, and assistant vice president. At various times, he was based in St. Louis; Houston; Philadelphia; Port Arthur, Texas; Tacoma, Washington; and Wilmington, California. He retired in October 2006.

Colleagues remembered Anderson as versatile, generous, dedicated and likeable.

SIU President David Heindel stated, "I am deeply saddened by the passing of our dear friend, brother and colleague, Donnie Anderson. Donnie was a man of immense generosity and kindness, always opening his home to Seafarers in need – whether they required a place to rest or simply a warm meal. His compassion knew no bounds, welcoming everyone, whether he knew them personally or not.

"Those fortunate enough to stay with Donnie may have even been treated to a trip to his favorite fishing spot, where they could experience firsthand his passion for reeling in a prized Texas bass," Heindel continued. "Donnie's presence, friendship, and unwavering dedication to our brotherhood will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones during this difficult time."

SIU Vice President Government Services Joe Vincenzo said, "Donnie was a friend indeed. When I first came ashore in 2003 to help man the Tacoma, Washington, hall where Donnie worked, I was still living in Hood River, Oregon, more than 200 miles to the south. Donnie opened his home to me for the better part of one year, giving me time to list and sell my house and get situated near the hall. He expected nothing in return, except maybe listening to him spin tales over many a late-night beer or watching for Big-foot in the nearby forests of the Gifford Pinchot National Park."

Vincenzo added, "I had the privilege of working alongside Donnie right up until he retired. I can say with clear eyes that I have not seen another union official quite like him. Seafarers will appreciate this: In the days when the registration list hovered around 300, job calls were competitive and sometimes contentious, and monthly dispatches topped 170, Donnie was a machine on the counter, which he often described as a 'buzzsaw.' And he could handle it alone! Donnie was the type of person you responded to whether out of respect or because you liked him. He was both a much-needed hammer at times and a soft landing for Seafarers who were down on their

luck. Donnie had an indomitable spirit, which might be confused with stubbornness, and an uncanny ability to always bounce back. I will always remember his boisterous laugh. He will be missed; he is missed already."

SIU Vice President Great Lakes and Inland Waters Bryan Powell also worked closely with Anderson. He stated, "Don was always willing to go the extra mile for members. I appreciated his dedication to the SIU and am grateful to have counted him as a colleague, and a friend, too."

SIU pensioner John Cox, a former port agent and tugboat captain, said, "I was at Crowley Towing and Transportation in Los Angeles/Long Beach when Don was port agent in Wilmington. He was always kind and helpful with everyone, and was liked by all."

A St. Louis native, Anderson was active in the labor movement beyond his specific duties within the SIU. Among other endeavors, he served as a delegate with the Los Angeles County AFL-CIO, and worked with the Maritime Trades Department's local port council in southern California. He also served on the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Committee, and was appointed to a slot with the Los Angeles County Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Anderson was appointed as an SIU assistant vice president in 1989, and subsequently re-elected before his retirement.

In a communication recapping his career, he wrote, "I have always held it to be most noble to be so involved in the labor movement and in particular the SIU. It is amazing to me when I look back on times past and realize how far we have come, as a union and the industry as a whole."



This 2016 snapshot features retiree Don Anderson (middle) and other volunteers pitching in for the annual "Paint Tacoma" project.



As part of his retirement festivities in 2006, Anderson fills a plate during a barbeque at the hiring hall in Tacoma, Washington.



In 1988, SIU Port Agent Don Anderson (center) meets with (from left) ABs Dino Chappas and Kenith Simbler aboard the *Inger* (Sealift) in Crockett, California.



Anderson (right) receives a commemorative ship's wheel in 2006 from then-SIU Port Agent Bryan Powell.

Blake Braye – Able-Bodied Seaman



Rafael Alvarez

Editor's note: Rafael Alvarez recently crossed the North Atlantic on the Maersk Ohio as a correspondent for the Seafarers LOG, and filed this story. The son of a life-time SIU member who sailed as chief engineer, Alvarez has been a working reporter for nearly 50 years. In his younger days he

sailed as a wiper and ordinary seaman. He can be reached via orlo.leini@gmail.com

Before he was an AB in the SIU, before he became Virginia's "Godfather of Italian Ice,"

Blake Braye wasn't sure what work, if any, would be his true calling.

"I don't come from a seafaring family," said the Chesapeake, Virginia, native, 44, echoing a common theme among modern sailors both licensed and unlicensed. Braye spoke from the crew's mess aboard the *Maersk Ohio* in January 2025, a year after a fire destroyed his home in Chesapeake.

A friend had been going to sea as an oiler, making good money. He saw potential in Braye, then in his 30s, and used the example of another guy as motivation. Let's call the other man Fred, a freelance mechanic who fixed cars in the neighborhood, getting by as best he could.

"Life," said Braye, "had passed him by."

The oiler told Braye that his future didn't look much better, noting that at least Fred could fix cars. Braye heard what the man was saying, felt it in his bones.

"I was idling from job to job. He kind of forced me to get out here," he said. Before you could say Harry Lundeberg, Braye was at Piney Point learning the trade and shipping out of Norfolk. He earned his AB ticket in 2017 and holds an A-seniority book. He is married with two sons, ages 5 and 1, and a 25-year-old daughter.

Before the SIU-affiliated school tweaked its guidelines for apprentices, newcomers spent time in each of the three departments before settling on a career. Something of a cook already – his macaroni and cheese won first place one year at a family Thanksgiving – Braye apprenticed in the steward department in 2015.

"My goal was to make money and explore the world," he said. "I was going to be the best chief cook they ever seen."

After his turn through the steward department he decided "the galley ain't for me" and moved to the deck. But the idea to wow the world while rattling pots and pans never left, churning in his mind like so much frozen custard as he chipped paint, stood watch and threw lines. During his first five years as a Seafarer he sailed at least eight months a year, putting money in the bank to make his culinary dreams come true on shore.

While sailing as an OS aboard the Hapag-Lloyd containership *Philadelphia Express* he went ashore in Antwerp in search of waffles.

"I love waffles," he said, excited to try the real thing – a Liege or Brussels style – not the midnight special at a Waffle House along the highway. The Liege tends to be oval, made with pearl sugar and a bit chewy, sold from street carts, often with chocolate sauce. Brussels are crispy, a perfect, golden rectangle made with



AB Blake Braye

pearl sugar, square divots deep enough to hold slices of fruit.

Braye loved them both. He began thinking of ways to bring the treat home to his sleek, silver food trailer – think of an Airstream with a food counter – where in the summer he sells Italian ice and non-dairy ice cream made with his own flavors. Most everyone loves chicken and waffles, so why not mold the Liege into a cone and put crispy tenders inside, perhaps with a little homemade ice cream on top?

Convinced that he'd "make a killing," he launched the business in 2023 and did well. It was a year later – last January – that his house was destroyed by fire. He received aid from the SIU's disaster relief fund but was set back more than a year.

Which means more sailing, more putting money away for a better day and prepping for the upgrade to bosun when the time comes. And working on new flavors for the summer ahead.

Got a good sea story for The LOG? E-mail Alvarez via orlo.leini@gmail.com

ITF Reports 2024 as Worst Year on Record for Mariner Abandonment

New data from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) reveals abandonment of mariners by shipowners "is spiraling out of control, increasing nearly two-fold with 3,133 seafarers abandoned in 2024 compared to 1,676 in 2023."

The federation, to which the SIU is affiliated, released the data earlier this year. According to the ITF, "A total of 312 vessels were abandoned last year compared to 132 vessels in 2023 – a staggering 136% increase. Twenty-eight ships were also responsible for abandoning multiple crews in the same year, with three vessels reported three times and 25 reported twice."

An ITF report, submitted to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), details the skyrocketing increase in the reported abandonment, and highlights the failure of the so-called flags-of-convenience system "that is central to ongoing impunity for abuses of seafarers' rights."

As explained by the ITF, abandoned mariners can experience months of unpaid wages, extremely poor on-board conditions, inadequate food and a lack of clean drinking water, and long periods of work without proper rest. In some cases, they are left completely stranded for months – even years – on end.

"The lack of enforcement and responsiveness from flag and port states, the lack of insurance for vessels, and shipowners refusing to accept that they are mistreating their crew are common factors that contribute to abandonment and complicate the resolution of cases," the federation reported.

ITF Global Inspectorate Coordinator Steve Trowsdale said, "The year 2024 was the worst year on record for seafarer abandonment. Ninety percent of global trade takes place through maritime

transport, and seafarers are the backbone of this industry. It's an absolute disgrace that unscrupulous shipowners are abandoning so many crews with impunity by governments and international regulators. This is nothing less than a betrayal of the key workers of global trade."

Sanjay (not his real name) is one of these workers. Stranded on board a tug without pay for 15 of the 29 months he's been working, he's seen three different crews come and go – each crew has left the vessel unpaid.

"All I've had are false promises that I will be paid and allowed to leave," he said. "I keep working despite everything because I don't want the crew to suffer, and I am the only engineer on board. But I'm losing hope as each day passes."

Sanjay is owed around \$40,000 – money which is vital for his family as the only earning member. He has been forced to sell his family heirlooms to make ends meet back home.

Sanjay is one of the 899 Indian mariners abandoned by shipowners last year. They remain the largest cohort of those stranded at sea, followed by 410 Syrians, 288 Ukrainians, 273 Filipinos and 192 Indonesians. A total of \$20.1 million is owed to mariners in unpaid wages, of which the ITF has recovered \$10.4 million so far.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the port state of choice for vessel abandonments, accounting for 42 in 2024 (the second-highest port state for abandonment was Türkiye with 25 vessels). Dubai has become one of the fastest growing hubs for the maritime industry over the last five years. Lower taxes, cost of living and housing are proving attractive to shipowners, brokers and managers, shipping banks, shipping lawyers, and freight traders alike.

"Free Trade Zones" across the UAE (of which there are 46) are also helping to attract global companies with incentives like tax exemptions and streamlined customs procedures. But the lack of regulation is leaving more and more mariners stranded, with vessels owned or managed by UAE companies also responsible for the largest proportion of all abandonments.

Moreover, 90 percent of abandoned vessels in 2024 sailed under a flag of convenience, also known as a runaway flag. While Panama remains the flag with the most abandonments (43), there are a number of other flag states with a stark increase in cases. Palau (37), Tanzania (30), Comoros (29), Cameroon (20) and Bahrain (16) all recorded double figures in 2024. Alarming, 20 cases were reported on vessels on which there was no flag, or a flag could not be identified, more than doubling the number of cases in this category.

ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton said, "The scandalous rise in reported cases of seafarer abandonment exposes the ugly truth of an industry which has relied on unchecked exploitative practices and lack of global regulation for far too long. But the solution lies in plain sight: better regulation, enforcement and accountability from governments."

"By reporting so many cases, seafarers are sending a clear message," he continued. "They've had enough of being treated like slaves. The industry must wake up and take robust action. Those responsible must be held to account and punished. Anything less gives a green light to these appalling abuses of fundamental labor and human rights."

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



NOT AN EVERYDAY SIGHT – SIU Capt. Nolte Lincks III is pictured in mid-January on a rare snow day in New Orleans, on board and near some Crescent Towing tugs.



ABOARD GEORGE II – Pictured from left aboard the Sunrise Operations vessel in Hawaii are Recertified Steward Carlos Sanchez Morales, SIU Port Agent Hazel Galbiso, and Recertified Bosun Glenn Christianson.



ABOARD ARC DEFENDER – Recertified Bosun Laurentis Colbert (center) and Safety Director Jose Argueta (left) are pictured with Paul Hall Center apprentices on the TOTE ship in Baltimore, in late January.



MILESTONE IN FLORIDA – Chief Cook Norma Baucan (right) receives her A-seniority book. She's pictured earlier this year at the Jacksonville hall with Safety Director Adam Bucalo.



CONGRATS IN ALABAMA – OMU Joshua Irvine (right) receives his full B book. He's pictured at the Mobile hall with SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgoy, following the January membership meeting.



ABOARD MAHIMAH – Keeping their shipmates well-fed aboard the Matson vessel are (from left, photo above) Chief Cook Salah Omar, ACU Taleb Alarqaban, and Recertified Steward Frank Ramones.



BOOKS GALORE IN ALGONAC – Three Seafarers recently picked up their respective books at the hiring hall in Michigan. Left in each photo, starting with photo at far left, are AB Mossa Mohamed (A-seniority book), AB/Wheelsman Tom Martin (A book), and OS Ali Saleh (B book). Safety Director Jason Brown is at right in each photo.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



BIG MOMENT IN TEXAS – AB Andres Martinez (left) obtains his A-seniority book in early January. He's pictured at the Houston hall with SIU Patrolman Kelly Krick.



SEAFARER EARNS SAFETY AWARD – Congratulations to Chief Cook Ludi Zamudio on earning Crowley's monthly safety award for January. She's at left in photo above, left (holding the award certificate), with SIU Asst. VP Kris Hopkins, and in the foreground of the other snapshot, with Chief Steward Prasert Mastrototaro. Both photos were taken aboard the *Golden State*.



WELCOME ASHORE IN HAWAII – Longtime engine-department Seafarer Jonas Bocaya (left) receives his first pension check from SIU Port Agent Hazel Galbiso at the Honolulu hall. He sailed with the union for 33 years, including as a QE4.



ABOARD MANDA – Pictured from left aboard the Matson vessel on the West Coast (photo above, left) are Chief Cook Arjay Hermoso and SIU Port Agent Duane Akers.



(ALMOST) ABOARD USNS WHEELER – Pictured next to the TOTE ship in Seattle are (from left) AB Ryan Hills and Recertified Bosun Christopher Janics.



PROMOTING MARITIME IN PUERTO RICO – When the National Security Multi-Mission vessel *Patriot State* docked in the territory on Jan. 25, the ship hosted an open house to promote maritime career opportunities. The joint effort involved the SIU, TOTE, Mass Maritime, the Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico (AMPR), and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA). Among those pictured near the vessel are Safety Director Ricky Rivera (left) along with personnel from TOTE and from a local school.



TAKING THE OATH IN VIRGINIA – OS Trevon McCauley receives his full book at the Norfolk hall, during the January membership meeting. He's pictured taking the oath and then shaking hands with SIU Port Agent Mario Torrey.



At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD USNS SUPPLY – SIU VP Government Services Joe Vincenzo (left in photo above, right) and SIU Asst. VP Sam Spain (left in remaining non-ship photo) meet in late January with CIVMARS aboard the Military Sealift Command ship. Among other topics, they discussed several initiatives that are underway aimed at improving work-life balance.



ABOARD USNS ROBERT SIMANEK – Seafarers appear to be in good spirits as they gather for a union meeting earlier this year aboard the Ocean Shipholdings vessel. Pictured are Bosun Dhindo Faulve, SA Tahj Ligon, SA Ahmad Jones, QMED Rahsaan Alexander, QMED Christopher Emanuel, Oiler William Kilbuck, Storekeeper Felix Rosado, Chief Steward Anthony Jackson, AB Alan Boiser, Chief Cook Leigh Deano, Oiler Torina Brooks, AB Mohamed Saleh, STOS Quasia Clinkscales, and Oiler Anquette Smith.



CATCHING UP IN SAN JUAN – Chatting at the hall in Puerto Rico are AB Victor Cortes Maldonado (right) and Safety Director Ricky Rivera.



HONING SKILLS IN PINEY POINT – Hands-on training remains a staple at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center, located in southern Maryland. Students are pictured (above and below) at the school late last year and earlier in 2025.



David Heindel, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

Nicholas J. Marrone, Vice President West Coast

Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast

Joe Vincenzo, Vice President
Government Services

Bryan Powell,
Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters



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PORT EVERGLADES

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(787) 721-4033

ST. LOUIS/ALTON

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TACOMA

3411 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 272-7774

WILMINGTON

510 N. Broad Ave., Wilmington, CA 90744
(310) 549-4000

Inquiring Seafarer

This month's question was answered by members of the most recent SIU Tallying Committee.

Question: What's something you wish more people knew about the maritime industry?



Ali Alhamyari
Recertified Bosun

I'd want them to know about the sacrifice that we make on a daily basis, leaving our families and loved ones at home. I think that would result in more appreciation.



Kyle Jolivette
Chief Cook

A lot of people don't understand how things get to and from America. They probably just see 18-wheelers and don't know the 18-wheelers go to the shipyard and pick those containers up, and those containers are directly coming off of the ships.



Lamont Faulks
Recertified Steward

Probably that we spend more time at sea than the Navy. You're probably going to miss a lot of holidays and birthdays working in this industry, but it's all worth it.



Patrick Slade
AB

I wish more people knew the reality of it. You make good money, but people sometimes don't take into consideration that you're going to be away from your family. Some people also think they'll make x-amount of dollars as soon as they come out here, but it doesn't work like that.



Samuel Fanjoy
Electrician

I wish people knew how much the industry affected everyone's day-to-day lives, and how much the country and the world in general depend on the maritime industry.



Tom Drummond
AB

Just in general, not that many people even know it's a career option. I think that's the biggest thing, and that's probably why it can be a struggle to recruit people.

Pic from the Past



This 1993 photo from the *LNG Taurus* includes (front to back) Recertified Stewards Shawn Fujiwara and Judi Chester, and Chief Cook Janet Lyson.

Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. THANK YOU for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

DEEP SEA

MARK BILLIOT

Brother Mark Billiot, 58, started sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1988. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the union-affiliated Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Billiot's first vessel was the *Libra*; his last, the *North Star*. He makes his home in New Orleans.



GREGORIO CUDAL

Brother Gregorio Cudal, 67, joined the Seafarers in 1987, initially sailing aboard the *Charles L. Brown*. He upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center and shipped as a deck department member. Brother Cudal most recently sailed aboard the *Badlands Trader*. He calls Ewa Beach, Hawaii, home.



RUBEN DATU

Brother Ruben Datu, 68, became a member of the union in 2000 when he sailed aboard the *Independence*. A deck department member, he upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Datu concluded his career aboard the *Cape Inscription*. He lives in The Philippines.



JONATHAN DELOTTA

Brother Jonathan Delotta, 67, donned the SIU colors in 1990. He worked in the engine department and was employed with GFC Crane Consultants for the duration of his career. Brother Delotta resides in Davie, Florida.

FRANK DOWLING

Brother Frank Dowling, 65, signed on with the Seafarers in 1987. He sailed in the steward department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Dowling first sailed on the *Independence*. He last shipped on the *USNS Watkins* and settled in Kailua, Hawaii.



GEORGE GODICIU

Brother George Godiciu, 69, joined the union in 1995, initially sailing aboard the *USNS Algol*. He sailed in the deck department, most recently aboard the *Overseas Anacortes*. Brother Godiciu makes his home in Bellaire, Texas.



TOYOKAZU GONZALES

Brother Toyokazu Gonzales, 65, signed on with the SIU in 1981 when he shipped on the *Atlantic*. He sailed in the steward department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Gonzales' final vessel was the *USNS Fisher*. He lives in Riverside, California.



WILLIAM KANE

Brother William Kane, 65, started sailing with the Seafarers in 1981. A steward department member, he first sailed on the *Intrepid*. Brother Kane upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. He most recently worked on the *Overseas Nikiski* and resides in Dunedin, Florida.



LARRY MCCANTS

Brother Larry McCants, 67, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1979 when he shipped on the *Overseas Alice*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother McCants last sailed on the *Liberty Wave* and settled in Mobile, Alabama.



KEVIN MILES

Brother Kevin Miles, 64, joined the union in 1979 when he sailed on the *John Penn*. He worked in the engine department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on numerous occasions. Brother Miles concluded his career aboard the *Vision*. He lives in Green Cove Springs, Florida.



ORLANDO PAJARILLO

Brother Orlando Pajarillo, 65, became an SIU member in 2000, initially sailing aboard the *Independence*. He worked in the engine department and upgraded on several occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Pajarillo's final vessel was the *Horizon Spirit*. He calls Ewa Beach, Hawaii, home.



LAURA REED

Sister Laura Reed, 65, became a member of the union in 1995. She first shipped on the *Independence* and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Sister Reed primarily sailed in the deck department and concluded her career aboard the *Horizon Kodiak*. She lives in Graham, Washington.

LIZZIE ROBINSON

Sister Lizzie Robinson, 65, joined the Seafarers in 2003 when she shipped on the *Lykes Explorer*. A steward department member, she upgraded at the Piney Point school on numerous occasions. Sister Robinson most recently sailed aboard the *Washington*. She makes her home in New Orleans.



TONY SIVOLA

Brother Tony Sivola, 61, started sailing with the SIU in 1989. He first shipped on the *Independence* and worked in the deck department. Brother Sivola upgraded on numerous occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He most recently sailed on the *Presque Isle* and resides in Vinton, Iowa.



RICHARD TANKERSLEY

Brother Richard Tankersley, 65, embarked on his career with the SIU in 1981, first sailing aboard the *Santa Mercedes*. He sailed in all three departments, and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Tankersley concluded his career on the *Global Mariner*. He lives in Titusville, Florida.



LEODIANE TORRENUOVA

Brother Leodiane Torrenueva, 65, joined the Seafarers in 1997. He was a deck department member and first sailed aboard the *American Cormorant*. Brother Torrenueva upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He most recently shipped aboard the *Midnight Sun* and resides in Auburn, Washington.



INLAND

JOHN BUNTING

Brother John Bunting, 76, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1996. He worked in the deck department and was employed with Crowley for the duration of his career. Brother Bunting resides in Newfield, New Jersey.

GERARD MCGOVERN

Brother Gerard McGovern, 63, joined the union in 1992. He worked in both the deck and engine departments and was initially employed with Riverbus Inc. Brother McGovern upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He concluded his career working with McGovern Marine Inc. and makes his home in Blountville, Tennessee.

OLEG PANKRATOV

Brother Oleg Pankratov, 62, started sailing with the SIU in 2004, initially working on the *Liberty Island*. He upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions and shipped in the deck department. Brother Pankratov's final vessel was the *Vision*. He resides in Hoquiam, Washington.



FREDDIE PATTERSON

Brother Freddie Patterson, 73, signed on with the union in 2006. He sailed in the engine department and was initially employed by Crowley Towing and Transportation. Brother Patterson concluded his career with Crowley Puerto Rico Services and settled in Atlantic Beach, Florida.



JEFFREY RYDZA

Brother Jeffrey Rydza, 65, began sailing with the SIU in 1995. He worked in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Rydza worked with Penn Maritime for his entire career. He lives in Fort Walton Beach, Florida.



Final Departures

In solemn remembrance, we honor the legacies of these union members who have crossed the final bar. May they rest in peace.

DEEP SEA

BRANDY BAKER

Sister Brandy Baker, 44, died October 20. She began her career with the Seafarers in 2009 when she shipped on the *USNS Sisler*. Sister Baker was a member of the engine department. She most recently sailed aboard the *Cornhusker State* and resided in Orlando, Florida.



GILBERTO BONITTO

Pensioner Gilberto Bonitto, 92, passed away January 1. He donned the SIU colors in 1981 and first worked on the *Cove Trader*. Brother Bonitto sailed in both the steward and deck departments. He concluded his career aboard the *Sam Houston* before becoming a pensioner in 1998. Brother Bonitto called Gonzales, Louisiana, home.



CLARENCE BYNES

Pensioner Clarence Bynes, 69, died December 15. He became a member of the union in 2001 and first sailed aboard the *Cape Henry*. Brother Bynes worked in the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Galena Bay* and retired in 2010. Brother Bynes lived in Quincy, Florida.



OSVALDO CASTAGNINO

Pensioner Osvaldo Castagnino, 87, passed away December 26. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1987. Brother Castagnino first shipped on the *USNS Prevail*. Sailing in the steward department, he concluded his career aboard the *Cape Trinity*. Brother Castagnino became a pensioner in 2008 and made his home in Lake Jackson, Texas.



RICHARD GARCIA

Pensioner Richard Garcia, 94, died November 13. He donned the SIU colors in 1957 and first sailed aboard the *Oceanic Independence*. Brother Garcia worked in the deck department and last shipped aboard the *Crusader*. He became a pensioner in 1994 and resided in Tampa, Florida.



GLENN JOHNSON

Pensioner Glenn Johnson, 75, passed away December 21. He signed on with the Seafarers in 1968. Brother Johnson sailed in the deck department and also worked on shore gangs. He concluded his career on the *Edward A. Carter Jr.* and retired in 2014. Brother Johnson was a resident of Evergreen, Alabama.



RONALD MATTHEWS

Brother Ronald Matthews, 28, died October 3. He embarked on his career with the SIU in 2022, initially sailing aboard the *Dirk S. VanEnkevort*. Brother Matthews worked in the deck department and most recently sailed aboard the *Endurance*. He lived in Jacksonville, Florida.



DOCK MCGUIRE

Pensioner Dock McGuire, 79, passed away December 28. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1964. Brother McGuire first sailed with Alcoa Steamship. He worked in the deck department and last sailed with OSG Ship Management. Brother McGuire retired in 2004 and called Mobile, Alabama, home.



JOHN NEAL

Pensioner John Neal, 74, died December 21. A steward department member, he signed on with the SIU in 1986. Brother Neal first worked with Steuart Transportation. He last shipped aboard the *USNS Impeccable* and became a pensioner in 2015. Brother Neal resided in The Philippines.



LOUIS TALARICO

Pensioner Louis Talarico, 92, died November 16. He signed on with the union in 1961. A deck department member, Brother Talarico first sailed aboard the *Seamar*. He last shipped on the *Discovery* before retiring in 1997. Brother Talarico made his home in Boca Raton, Florida.



PRENTISS WALKER

Pensioner Prentiss Walker, 81, passed away December 23. He became a member of the Seafarers Union in 1967 when he worked with CSX Lines. Brother Walker was an engine department member. He concluded his career on the *Santa Ana* and became a pensioner in 2008. Brother Walker resided in Bartlett, Tennessee.



KEVIN WILLIS

Brother Kevin Willis, 40, died October 26. He started his career with the SIU in 2018, initially sailing aboard the *Presque Isle*. Brother Willis worked in the engine department and most recently shipped on the *Cornhusker State*. He lived in Tacoma, Washington.



GREAT LAKES

LONNIE BROOKS

Pensioner Lonnie Brooks, 85, passed away December 12. He joined the Seafarers in 1988 and first sailed aboard the *J.A.W. Iglehart*. Brother Brooks sailed in the engine department. He retired in 2005 after concluding his career on the *St. Clair*. Brother Brooks made his home in Huachuca City, Arizona.



LAWRENCE KNOPP

Pensioner Lawrence Knopp, 83, died December 30. He donned the SIU colors in 1970 and initially worked with H&M Lake Transport. Brother Knopp last sailed with Luedtke Engineering. He went on pension in 2003 and called Marinette, Wisconsin, home.



INLAND

FLOYD FOSTER

Pensioner Floyd Foster, 94, passed away December 20. He signed on with the Seafarers in 1960. Brother Foster was first employed with Pennsylvania Railroad. He last worked with Penn Central Transportation in 1981. Brother Foster became a pensioner in 1995 and settled in Cobbs Creek, Virginia.

ROBERT JACKSON

Pensioner Robert Jackson, 72, died January 2. He embarked on his career with the union in 1974 and shipped in the deck department. Brother Jackson was employed with Dravo Basic Materials for the duration of his career. He went on pension in 2014 and resided in Jackson, Alabama.

ROBERT MAZYCK

Pensioner Robert Mazyck, 82, passed away January 3. He joined the SIU in 1977 and worked in the deck department. Brother Mazyck was employed with Marine Contracting and Towing for his entire career. He started collecting his pension in 2005 and made his home in Charleston, South Carolina.

MARK PENLAND

Pensioner Mark Penland, 72, died December 7. He joined the union in 1996, initially sailing with Moran Towing of Texas. Brother Penland sailed in the deck department and concluded his career with Express Marine. He became a pensioner in 2014 and settled in Cantonment, Florida.



THOMAS SAVAGE

Brother Thomas Savage, 65, died September 13. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1979. Brother Savage was employed with H&M Lake Transport for the duration of his career. He resided in Egg Harbor, Wisconsin.

EMILIO SPINOLA

Pensioner Emilio Spinola, 91, passed away November 3. He joined the SIU in 1980 when he worked with the Gloucester Fishermen. Brother Spinola was a deck department member and last worked for Boat St. Mary's Inc. He went on pension in 1998 and settled in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

2025 HEALTH & BENEFITS PLAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarships totaling \$132,000 are available under the 2025 Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan Scholarship Program. The grants are available to Seafarers and their dependents looking to continue their education. Allocations for each category will be as follows:

SEAFARERS SCHOLARSHIPS

Three scholarships designated for active Seafarers:

- One \$20,000 offering for a four-year course of study at an accredited college or university
- Two scholarships (\$6,000 each) for Seafarers interested in pursuing two-year courses of study at a community college or vocational school

DEPENDENTS SCHOLARSHIPS

Five scholarships designated for dependents:

- A total of five scholarships, each worth \$20,000, are being offered to dependents (spouses included) to attend four-year courses of study at accredited colleges or universities. Dependents and spouses of active as well as retired Seafarers may apply.

To take advantage of these opportunities, visit seafarers.org, go to the Benefits menu, open the "Core Plus and Core Benefits" section, scroll to "Applications and Forms," and select Scholarship Application.

March & April Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: March 3, April 7
Algonac	Thursday: March 13, April 17
Baltimore	Thursday: March 6, April 10
Guam	Thursday: March 20, April 24
Honolulu	Friday: March 14, April 18
Houston	Monday: March 10, April 14
Jacksonville	Thursday: March 6, April 10
Joliet	Thursday: March 13, April 17
Mobile	Wednesday: March 12, April 16
New Orleans	Tuesday: March 11, April 15
Jersey City	Tuesday: March 4, April 8
Norfolk	Friday: March 7, April 11
Oakland	Thursday: March 13, April 17
Philadelphia	Wednesday: March 5, April 9
Port Everglades	Thursday: March 13, April 17
San Juan	Thursday: March 6, April 10
St. Louis	Friday: March 14, April 18
Tacoma	Friday: March 21, April 25
Wilmington	Monday: March 17, April 21

Each port's meeting starts at 10:30 a.m.

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from Jan. 10 - Feb. 10, 2025.
"Registered on the Beach" data is as of Feb. 11, 2025.

Port	Total Registered All Groups			Total Shipped All Groups			Trip Reliefs	Registered on Beach All Groups		
	A	B	C	A	B	C		A	B	C
Deck Department										
Algonac	31	8	2	9	6	0	5	38	9	2
Anchorage	5	3	0	2	1	0	2	4	3	0
Baltimore	5	4	3	4	4	3	3	2	1	2
Fort Lauderdale	17	9	5	21	9	6	11	26	9	7
Guam	2	1	0	5	0	0	2	3	2	2
Harvey	5	4	4	4	2	1	2	11	5	5
Honolulu	3	2	0	10	3	0	3	6	2	0
Houston	32	19	8	25	11	6	16	54	28	14
Jacksonville	28	23	7	25	27	7	11	41	30	9
Jersey City	30	9	3	20	5	1	9	31	14	5
Joliet	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	3	0	2
Mobile	8	4	5	4	1	1	2	9	5	5
Norfolk	16	9	12	18	6	8	6	21	20	11
Oakland	5	1	2	8	2	2	5	9	1	3
Philadelphia	4	0	3	4	2	1	3	1	0	1
Piney Point	0	2	2	0	3	1	1	2	0	0
Puerto Rico	6	4	2	6	2	2	2	8	7	0
St. Louis	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	4	1
Tacoma	16	6	0	9	3	0	0	26	6	1
Wilmington	23	8	3	17	8	2	8	42	11	3
TOTAL	236	118	64	192	97	43	91	337	157	73
Engine Department										
Algonac	4	4	1	0	1	0	0	8	4	1
Anchorage	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Baltimore	5	0	2	5	0	0	0	1	0	2
Fort Lauderdale	7	8	2	8	6	2	4	10	9	1
Guam	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	0	2
Harvey	2	4	0	3	1	0	1	2	4	1
Honolulu	4	1	1	4	5	1	0	10	1	1
Houston	7	5	4	11	6	4	5	13	11	4
Jacksonville	16	19	4	19	10	4	2	22	20	6
Jersey City	10	4	2	6	2	2	3	11	6	0
Joliet	2	2	1	2	1	0	2	2	3	1
Mobile	3	2	0	5	2	0	2	4	3	1
Norfolk	8	13	2	8	14	2	3	15	13	6
Oakland	7	1	0	3	5	0	0	4	1	3
Philadelphia	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Piney Point	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Puerto Rico	2	1	0	5	3	1	2	8	3	1
St. Louis	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tacoma	7	2	1	12	2	3	4	10	6	1
Wilmington	11	9	6	10	8	3	6	17	7	5
TOTAL	100	77	27	103	66	22	37	146	94	37
Steward Department										
Algonac	3	3	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	0
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Baltimore	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Fort Lauderdale	8	2	1	10	2	0	1	10	5	1
Guam	3	1	0	2	2	0	1	2	2	0
Harvey	3	2	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	0
Honolulu	7	3	0	5	0	0	1	10	4	0
Houston	11	13	4	11	13	1	8	17	10	5
Jacksonville	14	18	8	17	20	3	9	29	23	8
Jersey City	9	3	0	4	2	1	4	15	5	1
Joliet	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Mobile	3	2	0	4	0	0	2	4	3	1
Norfolk	12	14	7	6	11	4	2	23	14	8
Oakland	14	1	1	12	2	2	6	15	3	1
Philadelphia	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	0
Piney Point	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	3	0	0
Puerto Rico	4	6	2	2	4	0	3	6	8	3
St. Louis	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Tacoma	11	4	1	12	4	2	4	8	5	0
Wilmington	30	7	4	14	4	2	10	43	11	2
TOTAL	138	83	30	106	71	16	52	196	101	30
Entry Department										
Algonac	1	12	20	0	1	3	1	2	18	27
Anchorage	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Baltimore	0	5	4	0	3	4	3	0	3	1
Fort Lauderdale	0	7	12	0	2	7	2	1	13	12
Guam	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Harvey	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	2	2	5
Honolulu	0	1	5	0	1	2	0	1	1	10
Houston	3	15	14	3	6	8	3	1	31	19
Jacksonville	1	30	57	0	15	32	7	1	59	92
Jersey City	0	15	24	0	9	14	1	1	20	29
Joliet	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
Mobile	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Norfolk	1	11	31	0	4	26	4	1	19	41
Oakland	1	6	16	0	5	6	0	1	7	12
Philadelphia	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Piney Point	0	5	19	0	1	3	6	0	4	1
Puerto Rico	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	2	3	5	1	5	3	0	7	3	7
Wilmington	1	6	18	0	6	13	2	4	12	25
TOTAL	12	117	231	4	62	126	31	23	199	289
GRAND TOTAL	486	395	352	405	296	207	211	702	551	429

Digest of Shipboard Union Meetings

The Seafarers LOG attempts to print as many digests of union shipboard minutes as possible. On occasion, because of space limitations, some will be omitted. Ships' minutes first are reviewed by the union's contract department. Those issues requiring attention or resolution are addressed by the union upon receipt of the ships' minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Seafarers LOG for publication.

LIBERTY (TOTE Services), October 13 – Chairman **Kenney Gaston**, Secretary **Thomas Johnson**, Deck Delegate **Nick Randall**. Chairman discussed several suggestions for future contracts. He said crew is working well together as a team. He advised everyone to familiarize themselves with company policies and to be sure to use proper tools and appropriate personal protection equipment. Chairman also commended steward department for good meals and deck department for doing an outstanding job working safely. Secretary reiterated the importance of maintaining communication with the SIU and the vessel operator. Educational director urged members to keep documents updated and to upgrade at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew discussed missing-man wages and forklift training for ABs. Members requested raises in safety pay, a day off or day in lieu every 30 days and to increase vacation from 15 to 30 days. Next port: Galveston, Texas.

MAJ RICHARD WINTERS (Sealift, Inc.), November 3 – Chairman **James McAtee**, Secretary **Francisco David-Guity Arzu**, Educational Director **Riel Vizcarra**. Chairman reminded members to be patient with reliefs and directed them to SIU hiring halls to obtain full copies of contracts. Seafarers 401K paperwork available on ship. Educational director encouraged crew to take advantage of the upgrading opportunities offered at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported.

MAERSK KINLOSS (Maersk Line, Limited), November 9 – Chairman **Rufino Giray**, Secretary **Caesar Mercado**, Educational Director **Tijani Rashid**, Deck Delegate **Edgardo Martinez Espada**. Chairman discussed upcoming payoff schedule and voting in SIU election. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like 30 for 30 vacation and increased dental and medical coverage. Vacuums needed on each deck. Crew requested an increase in food budget as well as various new items including a grill, smoker, TV wall bracket, towels, pillows and a galley phone.

OVERSEAS SUN COAST (Overseas Ship Management), November 24 – Chairman **James Hall**, Secretary **Dustin Haney**, Educational Director **Chukwudi Alfred**, Engine Delegate **Kelman Cacho Garcia**, Steward Delegate **Erris Jackson**. Chairman thanked steward department for improved meals and encouraged everyone to keep up with ship cleanliness. Secretary thanked crew for being patient with food stores. Contract issues can be resolved/clarified outside of meeting times. Waiting for meetings is not necessary, per secretary. Educational director advised members to upgrade as soon as possible. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members reported issues with scheduling certain classes. Crew requested 26 for 30 vacation, new mattresses, a larger fridge in crew mess and for more Wi-Fi data to be available. Next port: Rotterdam, Netherlands.

MAERSK SENTOSA (Maersk Line, Limited), December 1 – Chairman **Ali Alhamyari**, Secretary **Anthony Jacobson**, Deck Delegate **Carl Pedersen**, Engine Delegate **Sammy Montana**, Steward Delegate **Dio-genes Derecho**. Chairman thanked everyone for working safely and praised galley gang for good holiday meals. Secretary reminded crew to clean staterooms prior to departure. Used linens should be gathered and brought to laundry room. Educational director urged crew to stay up to date on documents and to upgrade at the union-affiliated Piney Point school. Requests to use ship funds should be directed to secretary-treasurer. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew motioned to raise vacation days earned during a tour. Members went over bonus pay procedures for traveling in dangerous areas. Crew requested new mattresses and pillows. Members would like expenses to be covered for seamen who incur any costs related to traveling from home to the vessel. Next port: Newark, New Jersey.

MAERSK DETROIT (Maersk Line, Limited), December 9 – Chairman **Philip McGeoghegan**, Secretary **Reshawn Solomon**, Educational Director **Cale Irons**, Deck Delegate **Yoland Legaspi**, Engine Delegate **Bernard Wade**. Crew still waiting for new mattresses, pillows and linens. All is well and ship is in good shape, per chairman. Educational director advised crew to upgrade often at the Paul Hall Center and to stay on top of documents. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members

would like more vacation days, increased pension for retirees and for companies to match 401K. Crew asked for more funding in order to get better food options. Next port: Newark, New Jersey.

MAERSK IOWA (Maersk Line, Limited), December 9 – Chairman **Egidio Ferreira**, Secretary **Lamont Faulks**, Educational Director **Jim-mie Williams**. Secretary reported a good trip. Educational director encouraged members to upgrade at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Long waits reported for Coast Guard medical certificates. Crew requested new mattresses, new pillows and more Wi-Fi data. Members discussed privacy concerns related to shipboard cameras. Food budget has not increased this year. Crew requested increases to pension and vacation and would like more ship visits from patrolman.

ALASKAN LEGEND (Alaska Tanker Company), December 12 – Chairman **Jovan Williams**, Secretary **Just Self**, Educational Director **Lamonte McKinnon**, Deck Delegate **Manuel Espinoza**. Chairman thanked crew for good housekeeping and working safely. Vote of thanks given to steward department for serving good food daily. Educational director encouraged members to renew their documents six months in advance. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested new mattresses, new blankets, new shelves and for unlimited Wi-Fi.

Know Your Rights

FINANCIAL REPORTS. The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters makes specific provision for safeguarding the membership's money and union finances. The constitution requires a detailed audit by certified public accountants every year, which is to be submitted to the membership by the secretary-treasurer. A yearly finance committee of rank-and-file members, elected by the membership, each year examines the finances of the union and reports fully their findings and recommendations. The annual financial committee will be elected during the April 7 headquarters membership meeting to review the 2024 records. Members of this committee may make dissenting reports, specific recommendations and separate findings.

TRUST FUNDS. All trust funds of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District are administered in accordance with the provisions of various trust fund agreements. All these agreements specify that the trustees in charge of these funds shall equally consist of union and management representatives and their alternates. All expenditures and disbursements of trust funds are made only upon approval by a majority of the trustees. All trust fund financial records are available at the headquarters of the various trust funds.

SHIPPING RIGHTS. A member's shipping rights and seniority are protected exclusively by contracts between the union and the employers. Members should get to know their shipping rights. Copies of these contracts are posted and available in all union halls. If members believe there have been violations of their shipping or seniority rights as contained in the contracts be-

tween the union and the employers, they should notify the Seafarers Appeals Board by certified mail, return receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

George Tricker, Chairman
Seafarers Appeals Board
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Full copies of contracts as referred to are available to members at all times, either by writing directly to the union or to the Seafarers Appeals Board.

CONTRACTS. Copies of all SIU contracts are available in all SIU halls. These contracts specify the wages and conditions under which an SIU member works and lives aboard a ship or boat. Members should know their contract rights, as well as their obligations, such as filing for overtime (OT) on the proper sheets and in the proper manner. If, at any time, a member believes that an SIU patrolman or other union official fails to protect their contractual rights properly, he or she should contact the nearest SIU port agent.

EDITORIAL POLICY — THE SEAFARERS LOG. The *Seafarers LOG* traditionally has refrained from publishing any article serving the political purposes of any individual in the union, officer or member. It also has refrained from publishing articles deemed harmful to the union or its collective membership. This established policy has been reaffirmed by membership action at the September 1960 meetings in all constitutional ports. The responsibility for *Seafarers LOG* policy is vested in an editorial board which consists of the executive board of the union. The executive board may delegate, from among its ranks, one individual to carry out this responsibility.

PAYMENT OF MONIES. No monies are to be paid to anyone in any official capacity in the SIU unless an official union receipt is given for same. Under no circumstances should any member pay any money for any reason unless he is given such receipt. In the event anyone attempts to require any such payment be made without supplying a receipt, or if a member is required to make a payment and is given an official receipt, but feels that he or she should not have been required to make such payment, this should immediately be reported to union headquarters.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. Copies of the SIU Constitution are available in all union halls. All members should obtain copies of this constitution so as to familiarize themselves with its contents. Any time a member feels any other member or officer is attempting to deprive him or her of any constitutional right or obligation by any methods, such as dealing with charges, trials, etc., as well as all other details, the member so affected should immediately notify headquarters.

EQUAL RIGHTS. All members are guaranteed equal rights in employment and as members of the SIU. These rights are clearly set forth in the SIU Constitution and in the contracts which the union has negotiated with the employers. Consequently, no member may be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, national or geographic origin.

If any member feels that he or she is denied the equal rights to which he or she is entitled, the member should notify union headquarters.

SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION (SPAD). SPAD is a separate segregated fund. Its proceeds are used to further its objects and purposes including, but not limited to, furthering the political, social and economic interests of maritime workers, the preservation and furthering of the American merchant marine with improved employment opportunities for seamen and boatmen and the advancement of trade union concepts. In connection with such objects, SPAD supports and contributes to political candidates for elective office. All contributions are voluntary. No contribution may be solicited or received because of force, job discrimination, financial reprisal, or threat of such conduct, or as a condition of membership in the union or of employment. If a contribution is made by reason of the above improper conduct, the member should notify the Seafarers International Union or SPAD by certified mail within 30 days of the contribution for investigation and appropriate action and refund, if involuntary. A member should support SPAD to protect and further his or her economic, political and social interests, and American trade union concepts.

NOTIFYING THE UNION — If at any time a member feels that any of the above rights have been violated, or that he or she has been denied the constitutional right of access to union records or information, the member should immediately notify SIU President David Heindel at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

David Heindel, President
Seafarers International Union
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Paul Hall Center Upgrading Course Dates

Printed below are dates for courses scheduled to take place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. The QR code connects to a web page with the latest course dates (they may differ from what's printed here, though in most cases the only changes are additions that haven't yet made it into the LOG). Seafarers are welcome to contact the admissions office with questions about upgrading courses: (301) 899-0657, admissions@seafarers.org

Latest Course Dates



Title of Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
DECK DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Lifeboatman/Water Survival	April 14 June 30 Sept. 29	April 25 July 11 Oct. 10
Able Seafarer - Deck	March 17 May 5 June 9 Sept. 1 Oct. 13 Dec. 1	April 4 May 23 June 27 Sept. 19 Oct. 31 Dec. 19
ENGINE DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
FOWT	March 17 April 21	April 11 May 16
Junior Engineer Program	May 5	June 27
Marine Electrician	March 17	April 18
Machinist	May 26	June 13
Pumpman	May 19	May 23
Welding	April 21 June 2 July 14 Aug. 25 Oct. 6	May 9 June 20 Aug. 1 Sept. 12 Oct. 24
STEWARD DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Galley Operations	March 10 April 7 April 28 May 26	April 4 May 2 May 23 June 20
Certified Chief Cook	April 28 July 7 Sept. 15	July 4 Sept. 12 Nov. 21
ServSafe Management	April 21 June 30 Sept. 8 Nov. 17	April 25 July 4 Sept. 12 Nov. 21

Advanced Galley Operations	March 3 March 31 May 26 July 21 Aug. 18 Sept. 15 Nov. 10	March 28 April 25 June 20 Aug. 15 Sept. 12 Oct. 10 Dec. 5
Chief Steward	April 28 June 23 Oct. 13 Dec. 8	May 23 July 18 Nov. 7 Jan. 2, 2026

OPEN/SAFETY UPGRADING COURSES

Basic Training	April 7 June 23 Sept. 22	April 11 June 27 Sept. 26
Basic Training Revalidation	April 14 April 18 May 5 May 9 June 30 July 25 Aug. 15 Nov. 3 Nov. 7	April 14 April 18 May 5 May 9 June 30 July 25 Aug. 15 Nov. 3 Nov. 7
Basic Training/Adv. FF Revalidation	March 17	March 18
Government Vessels	March 17 April 7 May 5 June 2	March 21 April 11 May 9 June 6
Medical Care Provider	May 19	May 23
Tank Ship - DL (PIC)	July 14	July 18
Tank Ship Fam. - DL	April 14 Aug. 11 Sept. 29 Oct. 20	April 18 Aug. 15 Oct. 3 Oct. 24
Tank Ship Fam./LG	April 7 Aug. 4 Sept. 22 Oct. 27	April 11 Aug. 8 Sept. 26 Oct. 31

UPGRADING APPLICATION

Name _____
 Address _____
 Telephone (Home) _____ (Cell) _____
 Date of Birth _____
 Deep Sea Member Lakes Member Inland Waters Member

If the following information is not filled out completely, your application will not be processed.

Social Security # _____ Book # _____
 Seniority _____ Department _____
 Home Port _____
 E-mail _____
 Endorsement(s) or License(s) now held _____
 Are you a graduate of the SHLSS/PHC trainee program? Yes No
 If yes, class # and dates attended _____
 Have you attended any SHLSS/PHC upgrading courses? Yes No

COURSE	START DATE	DATE OF COMPLETION
LAST VESSEL: _____	Rating: _____	
Date On: _____	Date Off: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____	

NOTE: Transportation will be paid in accordance with the scheduling letter only if you present original receipts and successfully complete the course. If you have any questions, contact your port agent before departing for Piney Point. Not all classes are reimbursable. Return completed application to: Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education Admissions Office, Email: upgrading@seafarers.org Mail: 45353 St. George's Ave., Piney Point, MD 20674 Fax: 301-994-2189.

The Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is a private, non-profit, equal opportunity institution and admits students, who are otherwise qualified, or any race, nationality or sex. The school complies with applicable laws with regard to admission, access or treatment of students in its programs or activities.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education
Lifeboat Class
916

APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #916 – Above: Hunter Abshire, Mark Baillie, Cedricka Banks, Jamequia Cherry, Wilfredo Ali Cosme Ayala, Jacob Wade Dezzutti, Michael Gaffney, Preston Harris, Suzanne Herrera, Alexander Holmes, Joshua Kelly, Ariel Marrero, Anthony Monroe, Metwa Ojoch, Juan Ortiz Reyes, Shawna-Kay Skinner, Carl Trice, Talib Weatherspoon, Justin White, Sean Wilson, Anton Zakoverya.



CERTIFIED CHIEF COOK (MODULE 3) – Graduated Jan. 17: Broderick Brown II, David Cross, Tyvesha Dixon, Jermaine Ross, Louis Lamar Ross, Ahmed Ali Said, Christian Smith.



CHIEF STEWARD – Graduated Jan. 31: Alvinmar Iremedio Aldana, Aaron Helton-Cox, Preeyapha Kaisaard, Randy Madrid, Calvin Wilson.



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG) – Graduated Jan. 17: Redhwon Khaled Abdullah, Micah Marzuwg Acosta, Raheem Fouad Ali, Sean Baldwin, Curt Burgoyne, Shauni Franklin, Emmanuel Grant, William Harrison, David Henneken, Darren Joseph, Jesse Kireyev, Robert Kitchen III, Michael Klingelhoets, Evan Koslofsky, Dennis Krevey Jr., Christopher Leasure, Karen Lira, Stephen Pagan Laureano, Alejandro Rivera Martinez, Hayden Scott, Monique Smith, Jacob Watson.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG) – Graduated Dec. 20: Ninesha Anderson, James Billups III, Edwin Bonefont, Alejandro Cintron Perez, Carlos Colon De Jesus, Raul Colon Matos, Jeffrey Frye, Kevin O’Lone, James Martin Jr., Michael Penkwitz, Pedro Rivera Hernandez, Edwin Velez.



RFPNW – Graduated Jan. 31: Scott Carter Jr., Jeffery Frye, Michael Harris Jr.



WELDING – Graduated Jan. 31: Shawn Alexander, Dale Armstrong III, Justin Johnson, Darryl McCray. Instructor Chris Raley is at right.



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (DL) – Graduated Dec. 13 (not all are pictured): Rahiem Brown, Raheem Clay, Terrell Coleman, Dwayne French, Jose Hernandez Cuevas, Reed Hoffman, Dereon Ivory, Nicholas Livingston, Anthony Marchanti, Nathan Martinez, Jose Melendez Cordero, Michael Murray, Michael Noyd, Tyrone Ousley Jr., De’mon Quarles, Timothy Raddetz, Cagy Senn, Adarius Simpson, Isaiah Smith, Escrovan Tisdale-Anderson, Josiah Tunkey, Evan Valigura, Ronnie Ward Jr.

SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

Honolulu Seafarers Help Children's Center with Holiday Donations

During the recent winter holiday season, Hawaii-based Seafarers donated gifts and care boxes to Ho'omalulu o Na Kamali'i Children's Center, a local entity in the Kalihi district that focuses on providing local care and services to abused and neglected youths.

Members began collecting toys and care package supplies in November and brought additional toys to the December membership meeting conducted at the hiring hall in Honolulu. Immediately after the meeting, Seafarers assembled the care packages and handed them off for later distribution by workers from the children's center.

The SIU members assembled two variations of care packages, which were either tailored to meet the needs of children under 10 or those older than 10/adolescents. The care packages consisted of items such as toothbrushes, toiletries, toys, coloring books, crayons, and other trinkets. Members also donated additional holiday gifts and toys for the children to enjoy.

Working in conjunction with SIU Port Agent Hazel Galbiso, union personnel donating to the cause included Oiler **Calixto Barut**, Chief Cook **Raul Napoles**, QEE **Prentice Conley**, Admin Asst. **Caitlyn Wharton**, Bosun **Yamira Colon**, GUDE **Carlos Madayag**, Safety Director **Amber Akana**, OS **Matthew Domen**, QMED **Mario Santos**, Bosun **Arron Millar**, Chief Cook **Henry Wright**, AB **Desmond Unutoa**, Bosun **Gregorio Cudal**, and QEE **Michael Valdez**.

Galbiso said the children's center's cause was close to her heart, and she is proud that the hall could assist. "It's always nice to be able to do something little that could make a big impact," she said. "I don't know what households they came from or what kind of experiences they've had, but we hope that our donations put a smile on the children's faces and let them know that people are thinking



Pictured above are many of the Honolulu hall volunteers who helped assemble holiday care packages for donation to a local children's center. In the front row (left to right) are Oiler Calixto Barut, Chief Cook Raul Napoles, QEE Prentice Conley, Admin Asst. Caitlyn Wharton, Bosun Yamira Colon, GUDE Carlos Madayag, and Safety Director Amber Akana. In the back row (left to right) are OS Matthew Domen, QMED Mario Santos, Bosun Arron Millar, Chief Cook Henry Wright, AB Desmond Unutoa, Bosun Gregorio Cudal, and QEE Michael Valdez.

of them."

Wharton, who once had aspirations of becoming a foster parent, also was glad that she could lend support to a cause that meant so much to her. "It was nice to give back and to see that the kids [at this center] can grow up and develop knowing that they are hopefully going to a better situation," she said.

The year 2024 marked the debut of the port's outreach efforts in collaboration with the organization. Wharton and Akana discovered the group – a local temporary emergency shelter on the West Coast of Oahu which provides short-term housing for children – in the Honolulu port's quest for a philanthropic organization to support.

Bosun Colon appreciated the enthusiastic participation from her fellow SIU members and the camaraderie created during the event. "It was a really good environment, with all the members present from the union hall for a good cause, to

fill out the boxes for the kids," she said. "It was a really nice experience altogether. I asked if they're going to do the same thing next year, and they said yes, so I think it went very well."

The shelter, whose name translates to "Protection and Safety for Children," provides care for kids and sibling groups awaiting placement with new caregivers or reunification with prior guardians.

Additionally, last year marked Family Programs Hawaii's 26th annual holiday party, which the children's center participates in year after year.

"Ho'omalulu o Na Kamali'i is the only shelter in the United States providing a unique, safe, nurturing, home-like environment rich in island culture and family values," said Ho'omalulu o Na Kamali'i Children Center Program Manager Nadine Dudoit.

Tina Scotty, a representative of the Children's Center, stated, "It is the only receiving home on-island that allows siblings to stay together as we seek reunification with another

family member or start the process for entrance into the foster care system. This has been a tremendous benefit in overcoming the trauma and starting the healing process together with a sibling by their side."

Scotty expressed her appreciation on behalf of the recipients of the care packages from the SIU. "Donations like these help us keep our expenses low for the children coming into the shelter, as well as help us create big smiles on the faces of the youth at the holiday party," she said. "The celebration served almost 1,500 and was so much fun, but we couldn't have done it without the generous support of our community leaders like the Seafarers International Union. We were so grateful for the donation of toys and [dozens of] cute little care packages for our youth."

When asked how she thinks the donations will impact the children from the center, Colon said, "It will be a surprise for them, a good surprise, I hope. I believe they will be very appreciative receiving the gifts that we put together for them."

Wharton said that after the hall's overwhelmingly positive experience collecting and assembling care packages for the organization, that the Honolulu Hall plans to participate in other philanthropic programs and events with the Children's Center throughout the year. Fortunately, representatives from the organization echoed that sentiment.

"Mahalo Nui Loa!" Scotty said, expressing her appreciation for the SIU's efforts with the Hawaiian saying. "We very much look forward to partnering with [the SIU] again in the near future!"



Chief Cooks Henry Wright (left) and Raul Napoles display two care packages.



Gathering some of the donated items are (from left) Tina Scotty, a representative from the children's center; SIU Admin. Asst. Caitlyn Wharton; and Safety Director Amber Akana.



Bosun Yamira Colon prepares care packages for the younger children.