MM&P, U.S.-Flag Fleet, in Capitol Hill Meetings

Unions, Shipping Companies, Urge Support for U.S. Ships and Jobs

MARAD Predicts More Ships Will Leave U.S. Registry

Atlantic Maritime Group Members at Circle Line Ratify New Contract
Letter From the President
The foundations for improvements in shipboard conditions of employment rest squarely on landmark legislation passed 100 years ago. In 2015 we celebrate the achievements of Andrew Furuseth and Sen. Robert La Follette, authors of the Seamen’s Act of 1915.

News Briefs
Congressional Defense Committee leaders urge full funding for Maritime Security Program; MARAD predicts more losses from U.S.-flag fleet; pending international trade deals could worsen working conditions in maritime; Atlantic Maritime Group members at Circle Line ratify new contract; greetings from APL China; MM&P United Inland Group representatives meet with Washington State legislators to discuss funding for ferry system; members at Grand River Navigation and Kindra Lakes Towing in AB classes; MSC awards program now in effect for JHSV Civil Service mariners.

Washington Observer
Maritime unions, U.S.-flag shipping companies, meet with 100 legislators and Congressional staffers to underline importance to national security of the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program and cargo preference statutes.

MM&P Health & Benefit Plans
MM&P Plan participants can get free counseling for life’s everyday challenges from the Employee Assistance Program; financial planning for retirement.

News From MITAGS
MITAGS “Open House” a big success; Sea Scouts visit, view simulators; Maritime Industry Academy students take Basic Safety Training class.

MM&P Pensioners

MM&P Directory

Cross’d the Final Bar

Thank You Contributors to the PCF!
Labor in 2015

Union Brothers and Sisters:

One hundred years ago, on March 4, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed the “Magna Carta of the American Seaman.” This landmark legislation was the product of a lifetime of dedication, leadership and selfless struggle by the great Norwegian-American labor leader and co-founder of what became the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific, Andrew Furuseth.

The law, commonly known as the “Seamen’s Act of 1915” or the “La Folette Seamen’s Act”: regulated the payment of wages and hours of work; established minimum safety and provisioning standards; established crewing levels of qualified, English-speaking Able Bodied Seamen; and, among other things, prohibited the legalized brutality and the system of involuntary servitude that had prevailed aboard certain (non-MM&P officered) U.S.-flag merchant vessels. This masterpiece of progressive legislation, a remarkable achievement for its time or for any time, should be celebrated by all American mariners.

But while the lasting achievement of Andrew Furuseth and Senator Robert “Fighting Bob” La Follette deserves to be celebrated, one hundred years after the fact it is also of interest to point out two major ironies.

The most striking irony can be seen in the context of “globalization.” The Seamen’s Act of 1915 was one of the factors that led directly, by the early 1920s, to the first experiments in flagging vessels out to the Panamanian registry and developing the “Flag of Convenience” system. Perfected to a fine art and now the model for outsourcing jobs, dodging taxes and avoiding regulatory compliance and legal responsibility in countless industries, the Flag of Convenience system placed the American maritime industry squarely at the “ground zero” of global competition. One hundred years later, the Flag of Convenience system has reduced the number of U.S. flag merchant vessels engaged in foreign trade to some 80 ships carrying less than 2 percent of U.S. seaborne foreign commerce.

The second irony is that the namesake of the La Follette Seamen’s Act, workers’ rights champion Senator Robert La Follette, hailed from the State of Wisconsin: the same state in which the governor on March 9, 2015, signed into law a bill that establishes Wisconsin as the nation’s 25th “Right to Work” state. One hundred years after Wisconsin Senator La Follette led the way in protecting the rights of workers, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker breaks new ground in taking those rights away.

Where that leaves labor today, as it battles within a global corporate plutocracy and engages on a national level with reactionary, anti-labor, opportunistic politicians—is a question that is difficult to answer with optimism. One thing is clear: the social compact between capital and labor that existed for decades in this country and that created the middle class and promised brighter lives for the next generation of Americans is dead and buried.

Today all in labor fight for their piece of what is left. In the maritime industry, this means fighting off attacks from within as well as attacks from the outside. We battle to keep our industry alive in Washington, D.C., and our Union relevant in positively affecting our members’ working conditions, wages and benefits.

One hundred years after the Seamen’s Act of 1915, the progressive era is over and the era of globalization is upon us. While we may lament this turn of events, we can take solace in the fact that the adversity that we face today is child’s play compared to the hardship and life or death struggles that the workers of one hundred years ago faced at sea and ashore.

Labor is not dead, as United Steelworkers Union refinery workers are proving around the country and as the International Longshore and Warehouse Union has demonstrated on the West Coast. The media, and public opinion formed by the owners of the media, may lash out at those who continue to battle. The public at large may be more inclined to be jealous of those who have decent pay, benefits and working conditions than to be prodded into action against the business interests that deny them appropriate conditions of employment, but the concepts of equality and social justice that underlie the labor movement will outlive the greed of those engaged in the current global feeding frenzy.

A salute to the achievements of Andrew Furuseth and Fighting Bob La Follette and a re-dedication to our commitment to keep the torch of trade unionism burning in our time-honored industry are in order.

Fraternally,

Don Marcus
MM&P International President
MARAD Predicts More Losses From U.S.-Flag Fleet

As a consequence of the anticipated drop in government cargo, more vessels are expected to exit the U.S.-flag fleet during the course of this year, Maritime Administrator Chip Jaenichen told members of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation during a Feb. 25 hearing. Jaenichen noted that the fleet of U.S.-flag vessels engaged in international trade has diminished by 25 percent since 2012, with the corresponding loss of about 2,200 U.S. mariner jobs. He made the remarks as part of testimony on the President’s Fiscal Year 2016 Budget for the Department of Transportation, the Maritime Administration’s parent agency.

Jaenichen told members of the subcommittee that since 2009, MSP carriers have moved over 90 percent of the ocean-borne cargo needed to support U.S. military operations and rebuilding programs in Afghanistan and Iraq. He added that MSP provides critical employment for 2,400 U.S. merchant mariners, creating a reliable pool of professionals ready to support the activation of the government’s sealift fleets.

The most significant challenges facing MSP, Jaenichen testified, are the decline in Department of Defense cargo caused by the drawdown of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and an over 80 percent reduction in personnel and military bases overseas since 1990. In his testimony, Jaenichen also touched on Administration-proposed changes to the PL 480 Title II food aid program. He said an additional $25 million in the Administration’s budget “would mitigate the impact that such reforms could have on mariner jobs,” and that the vast majority of food aid would continue to be sourced and shipped from the United States.

USCG Terminal Access Proposal Shows “Good Understanding of the Issues,” MM&P Says

MM&P has submitted final comments on the Coast Guard’s proposed rule requiring terminals to implement a system that provides seafarers with access between vessels and the facility gate in a timely manner and at no cost to the individual.

“Shore leave and access to the ship are a major issue not only for seafarers, but for the entire maritime industry,” the union wrote. “It affects the ability of ships to be maintained, supplied with stores and bunkers, undertake voyage repairs, have equipment serviced, change crews, and carry out tasks that can only be efficiently performed while a ship is moored at a port facility. With a global shortage of seafarers it affects the recruitment and retention of seafarers who are treated like potential criminals and terrorists rather than the professionals that the international maritime transportation system and the global economy are dependent upon.”

In the context of its comments, the union recognized the efforts of the Coast Guard personnel tasked with developing the proposed rulemaking, saying they had demonstrated “a good understanding of the issues” and “given considerable thought to the solution.”

To read the comments in their entirety, go to bridgedeck.org and click on the link under “Latest News.”
Trade Deals Could Worsen Working Conditions in Maritime

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), a massive trade deal involving the United States and Europe, could compromise working standards in the maritime industry, say critics of the pact.

The Maritime Labor Convention and SOLAS could be undercut by a provision of TTIP and similar pending trade deals that allows businesses access to special international courts where they can challenge any barrier to their ability to maximize profits. For multinationals, the main barriers to profitability are of course labor standards and environmental protections. “This should immediately set alarm bells ringing,” says John Hilary, author of an article on TTIP that was published in the February 2015 issue of Nautilus, the publication of the British, Dutch and Swiss maritime officers’ union.

“TTIP sets the basic principle of free trade as being that there can be no terms or conditions attached to the way in which business operates in a global economy,” Hilary says. “This means that safeguards to protect workers’ rights will be further eroded. These safeguards include health and safety, collective bargaining and pay.” Targets, he says, could eventually include the Maritime Labor Convention, the International Labor Organization’s Maritime Labor Convention and even global safety legislation such as SOLAS, since complying with the standards they set has business costs.

Much of the problem with TTIP and similar agreements is that they are negotiated behind closed doors and only published once agreed. The maritime industry was blindsided by the Canada-Europe trade pact (CETA), which calls for an end to Canada’s cabotage law. In the United States, the Jones Act has already been targeted by TTIP negotiators, with Europe calling on the United States to scrap the legislation. In a December statement to the European Parliament, European Union Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrem said the EU sees “no reason” why maritime services should be excluded from TTIP negotiations.

Can Fast Track and the trade deals it is designed to promote be stopped? The answer, says the AFL-CIO, is a resounding “YES.” In 1998, Fast Track was voted down in Congress in a bipartisan vote (171 Democrats and 71 Republicans). This time around, a coalition of 100 groups is working together to stop Fast Track in the United States.

To join the campaign, go to: www.facebook.com/stoptppfasttrack or tweet #nofasttrack #stopfasttrack #nomorenaftas #notanothernafta.

Barbara Mikulski To Retire From Congress

Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), a staunch advocate for the U.S. Merchant Marine and America’s working families, has announced that she will retire after 30 years in Congress. Mikulski is a trailblazer: she is both the longest-serving woman in Congressional history and the first to head the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. An even-handed, outspoken lawmaker, she is widely respected by colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

“Senator Mikulski has been a champion of the merchant marine for many years,” said MM&P President Don Marcus. “Growing up in the Port of Baltimore, she speaks with authority of the ‘heroes in dungarees’ aboard the Liberty ships in World War II and of the contributions made by American mariners to our country’s economy and national security. We are greatly indebted to her for her many interventions in Congress on behalf of our industry. We salute her efforts to preserve the U.S.-flag fleet, along with her impressive record of service on behalf of the American people.”

Sen. Barbara Mikulski has announced she won’t run again. “We salute her efforts to preserve the U.S.-flag fleet,” said MM&P President Don Marcus.
Transportation Unions Set 2015 Policy Agenda

The AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department (TTD) and leaders of the 32 TTD member unions have rolled out their 2015 policy agenda. With most major transportation investment bills pending this year, TTD affiliates—including MM&P—embraced an agenda focused on finding solutions to long-simmering industry problems.

“2015 must be about holding those we elected accountable to the American people who have grown weary of a transportation system that is falling apart and an economic recovery that is still leaving too many behind,” says TTD President Edward Wytkind.

“Our agenda offers prescriptive solutions to a wide range of issues that touch every aspect of our transportation system and workforce—from modernization, safety and worker protections to collective bargaining, trade policy and the role of transportation investment as an engine for middle class job creation.”

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx sent a message to the group. “TTD and its affiliated unions have consistently been on the front lines, working to advance a strong transportation investment and safety agenda that keeps America moving and expands transportation job creation,” Foxx said. “The Department of Transportation will continue to work with our union partners to ensure that the traveling public, businesses and workers have access to strong, modern and safe transportation systems and infrastructure.”

Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) discussed working with TTD affiliates to expand GOP support for transportation labor’s agenda. “I had a critical opportunity to sit down with transportation union leaders today to discuss the importance of job creation, collective bargaining and increased safety for America’s transportation workers,” said King. “I look forward to working together with them and the Republican conference to find bipartisan solutions to our transportation infrastructure crises and to ensure we are supporting transportation workers’ jobs and rights in the proposals we advance.”

The TTD Executive Committee also welcomed U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis (R-Ill.). “Whether it’s by way of ground, water or air, our economy is reliant upon an efficient transportation system,” Davis said. “Investing in transportation and infrastructure means investing in good-paying American jobs. As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I will continue to work with TTD to support policies and investments to help build a 21st century transportation system.”

During the convention, the group addressed all the major transportation policy debates in Washington with a focus on expanding investments, reforming safety policy, protecting workers’ rights and rejecting job-killing trade policies. The Executive Committee approved 11 policy statements, including:

- opposition to a flag-of-convenience airline, NAI, that wants to offer transatlantic air service from the United States using third-party contract pilots and cabin crews employed under the labor laws of developing countries such as Singapore;
- rejection of the Obama administration’s request for “fast track” authority to negotiate secret trade deals;
- increased use of Buy America policies in transportation infrastructure projects;
- more funding for Amtrak passenger rail, with safeguards on the rights, jobs and wages of rail and construction workers.

“I look forward to working with transportation union leaders and the Republican conference to find bipartisan solutions to our transportation infrastructure crisis.”

— Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.)

At its 2015 convention—which marked TTD’s 25th year of advocating for America’s transportation workers—Wytkind and Secretary-Treasurer Larry Willis were reelected to their positions. “MM&P congratulates TTD President Ed Wytkind and Secretary-Treasurer Larry Willis on their reelection,” said MM&P President Don Marcus.

“TTD’s leadership on the array of challenges facing transportation workers is invaluable.”

Unions at the convention met with two Republican lawmakers and with Peter Rogoff, under-secretary for policy at the U.S. Department of Transportation, who reviewed the administration’s continuing push for Congress to stop kicking the can on funding a long-term transportation investment vision.
Compensatory Time Off for Travel for MSC Officers

Compensatory time off for travel is earned by some federal employees for time spent in travel status, away from their official duty stations, when the time is not "compensable" by other means. In limited circumstances, time spent on travel may be considered hours worked.

On behalf of their respective members, MM&P and the Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association (MEBA) worked alongside Military Sealift Command (MSC) through the myriad of rules and regulations governing travel hours of work. Applicable rules and regulations include the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Title 5 overtime laws and CFR regulations. As a result of this collaborative effort, MSC will seek approval from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Department of Defense (DOD) to provide retroactive and posthumous compensatory time off for travel entitlements to MSC Licensed Deck, Engine and Medical Services Officers.

The parties agreed that, based on “reasonable estimates,” compensatory time will be awarded retroactively to Licensed Deck, Engine and Medical Services Officers so as to allow them to complete the retroactive travel compensatory time entitlement. The collectively agreed total hours of compensatory time will be awarded upon OPM/DOD approval. MSC also agreed that if Licensed Deck, Engine and Medical Services Officers have maintained their own records and can provide actuals, the agency will honor compensatory time entitlements that can be demonstrated from the officers’ own travel records.

“This news should provide a real morale boost to MM&P members who often travel on official business during off-duty hours,” says MM&P Government Fleet Representative Randi Ciszewski. “This is the kind of benefit that improves MSC’s ability to recruit MM&P officers and to retain the dedicated and talented MM&P officers already in public service.”

Ciszewski thanked MSC’s Ken Giacolone and Frank Cunningham for the efforts expended in the context of this project and for their advocacy on behalf of the members of the MM&P Federal Employees Membership Group.
Federal Workers’ Unions Endorse Kilmer Bill To Repeal Defense Department Travel Reimbursement Cuts

MM&P has joined other members of the Federal Workers Alliance (FWA) in supporting a bill introduced by Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-Wash.) that would repeal Defense Department (DOD) cuts to long-term travel for workers on temporary duty (TDY), such as the civil service mariners who belong to the MM&P Federal Employees Membership Group (FEMG).

The FWA has calculated that the new cuts translate into $30 million annually in fees and other charges to the department’s civilian workforce. The controversial cuts, which the agency announced in 2013, are 25 percent of lodging and per diem reimbursements for workers on travel for over 30 days and 45 percent for travel in excess of 180 days. Opponents of the cuts say they hurt morale and cause an unfair burden on those who travel for the government.

Under the reductions, for each full day during long-term TDY of 31 to 180 days, the rate is now 75 percent of the locality rate (lodging plus meals and incidentals). For travel lasting more than 180 days, it falls to 55 percent of the locality rate for each full day. Another change, which requires that “incidental travel expenses” cover laundry, baggage tips and ATM fees rather than being treated as separate, reimbursable items, took effect on Oct. 1. The incidental expense per diem is only $5. That new policy also requires certain expenses, including cell phone use, to be treated as “mission-related” rather than “travel-related” and paid for outside the travel system. That means travelers who want to be reimbursed for cell phone use will have to file a separate claim.

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker Signs Another Anti-Union Measure, Compares Union Workers to Terrorists

Gov. Scott Walker, a possible 2016 presidential contender who has made attacks on labor unions the foundation of his political career, signed a measure that makes Wisconsin the 25th state to enact so-called “right-to-work” legislation. Right-to-work laws weaken unions by extending all the benefits of union contracts to “free riders” who do not pay dues. Union members and supporters held multiple demonstrations in the rotunda of the Wisconsin State Capitol to protest the legislation, which was passed by the GOP-dominated legislature in a fast-track process. In 2011, Walker eliminated collective bargaining rights for most public sector workers in the state.

In related news, in a Feb. 26 speech to the Conservative Political Action Conference, Walker drew thunderous applause when he cited attacks on workers’ rights as an experience that qualified him to lead a possible future war against the terrorist group known as ISIS, saying “If I can take on 100,000 protesters, I can do the same in the rest of the world…” Though Walker later tried to re-characterize the comments—claiming he was not making a comparison between Wisconsin workers and militants who have released videos of gruesome murders—union members were not buying it, calling the comments “jaw-dropping” and a “disgrace” for a national political figure.

“To compare the hundreds of thousands of teachers, students, grandmothers, veterans, correctional officers, nurses and all the workers who came out to peacefully protest and stand together for their rights as Americans to ISIS terrorists is disgusting and unacceptable,” said Wisconsin AFL-CIO President Phil Neuenfeldt.

“I call on Governor Walker to personally and immediately retract his statement, and to apologize sincerely to the millions of workers in Wisconsin and throughout America he has so appallingly insulted,” said AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka.
MITAGS-PMI Workboat Academy Receives Lloyd’s List Award For Training

The Workboat Academy, a unit of the MM&P training institute MITAGS-PMI, has been awarded the Lloyd’s List 2015 North American Maritime Award for Training. The award honors a company or institution for distinction in its course offerings and for contributing to improved educational standards across the maritime industry. The director of the Workboat Academy, Marja van Pietersom, accepted the award in February on behalf of her colleagues and staff at the 2015 Lloyd’s List North American Maritime Awards Dinner in Houston.

The two-year workboat program, which is offered in Seattle, Baltimore and New Orleans, is aimed at the entry-level mariner. The academy offers five programs a year and works with over 40 partner companies which provide internships for the cadets. As part of its overall outreach effort, the Workboat Academy, MITAGS-PMI and a number of community colleges are now working toward earning a Department of Labor National Grant for Engineering Apprenticeships.

Union Members Save Big With Consumer Reports

MM&P members can save 30 percent off the price of a subscription to Consumer Reports.Org, the largest independent product-testing organization in the world. Recent consumer reports include:

➤ strategies to save on your grocery bill;
➤ best used cars for under $20,000;
➤ how refrigerator thermometers can save you money; and
➤ how to use frequent-flyer miles wisely.

For $22 a year, you can save hundreds of dollars per year. A mobile platform lets you access product ratings as you shop and view side-by-side product comparisons without any downloads–simply go to ConsumerReports.org on your phone’s browser.

Union members and their families can subscribe with the Union Plus 27 percent discount: $22 instead of the regular $30 price.

Consumer Reports is published by Consumers Union, a non-profit organization which accepts no outside advertising, no free test samples, and has no agenda other than the interests of consumers.

Consumers Union is union organized, with testers and writers represented by the Communications Workers of America (CWA). It’s a perfect partnership with Union Plus. To subscribe, go to UnionPlus.org.

Medical Certificate Expiration Date Notice

All MM&P members are advised to check the STCW expiration date on their U.S. Coast Guard Medical Certificate. Remember: your USCG medical certificate must be renewed every two years. A valid medical certificate is required to ship.
Labor Union Members
“More Satisfied With Life,” Study Shows

Americans who are members of labor unions are generally happier than people who do not belong to a union, according to a multiyear study cited in an article published in the opinion pages of The New York Times. “For those who belong to a union, membership seems to bring a benefit that perhaps surpasses better wages or generous health insurance: higher life satisfaction,” writes John Guida, editor of Op-Talk, in a recent article entitled “Want to Be Happy? Join a Union.”

“Simply put, if one goal of labor unions is to boost the quality of life for their members, our study provides empirical evidence that they are succeeding,” say the authors of the study, Patrick Flavin, an assistant professor at Baylor University, and Gregory Shufeldt, an assistant professor at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. The two based their findings on five years of data collected in the United States between the early 1980s and the mid-2000s as part of the World Values Survey, a research project focusing on people’s beliefs.

The researchers found that the increased life satisfaction reported by union members might be attributed to one or more of the following factors: “having greater satisfaction with one’s experiences while working, feeling greater job security, being afforded numerous opportunities for social interaction and integration, and enhancing the participatory benefits associated with more engaged democratic citizenship.”

They found that in statistical terms, the positive impact of union membership was independent of other factors including income, self-reported health, education, gender, age, marital status and employment status. They also found that it had a higher impact on happiness than an increase in income… but a lower impact than getting married.

“Support MSP Funding,” Say Armed Services Committee Leaders

The chairman and ranking Democrat of the House Committee on Armed Services have urged their colleagues to support full funding in Fiscal Year 2016 for the Maritime Security Program (MSP). In a demonstration of the broad bipartisan support that exists for MSP, Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) and Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-Wash.) warned that “the failure to approve the requested funding for the Maritime Security Program will not only put American troops at risk, but will weaken America’s overall security interests and will cost the American taxpayer significantly more than the amount requested ($186 million) for FY 2016.”

The MSP was enacted to ensure that the United States has the U.S.-flag commercial sealift capability and trained U.S.-citizen mariners available to crew the government and privately owned vessels needed by the Department of Defense (DOD) in time of war or other national emergency. MSP and its fleet of 60 U.S.-flag, militarily useful commercial vessels ensure that America will be able to support and supply our troops overseas.

It would cost the government $13 billion to replace just the dry cargo vessel capacity provided by MSP, according to a report prepared for the National Defense Transportation Association. The U.S. Transportation Command has estimated that it would cost $52 billion to replicate the intermodal system made available to DOD by MSP participating companies.

In the letter, Thornberry and Smith called on congressional appropriators to fully fund MSP, calling it “a highly efficient and low-cost public private partnership” that saves U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars each year.

Snapshot From the Port of Qingdao, China

On board the APL China, docking in Qingdao, China. In the foreground is Captain Dennis Carney (retired) with Captain Erik Cutforth and the last Chinese docking pilot.
Unanimous Vote by New Jersey Assembly To Withdraw From Waterfront Commission

New Jersey legislators have voted unanimously to dissolve the bi-state Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor and transfer its New Jersey operations to the state police. The state senate has also voted to dissolve the commission, which many see as an expensive anachronism. The New York Shipping Association (NYSA) and the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) agree it should be disbanded: in 2013, they both sued the commission for interfering in their contract.

“It’s time to dissolve the bi-state Waterfront Commission,” wrote U.S. Sen. Cory Booker and Raymond Lesniak, a state senator for Union County, in an opinion piece that was published in the New Jersey Star Ledger. “It was established in 1953 as a temporary agency at a time when the mob ruled the waterfront and immediate steps were needed to rein in rampant crime and restore order. Decades later, New Jersey’s port industry is still paying millions of dollars in extra taxes each year to fund a redundant agency that was designed for a different era.”

Both the ILA and the NYSA have repeatedly urged that the commission be abolished. Last year, they say, its repeated interventions in personnel issues at the port delayed the hiring of 652 new longshoremen and clerks that all agreed were needed to replace retirees and handle growth in cargo volume. In a speech last fall, ILA President Harold Daggett referred to the Waterfront Commission as “an evil empire.”

Under the bill approved by the state legislature, the New Jersey state police would take over background checks and licensing of longshoremen and companies on the New Jersey side of the harbor.

General Executive Board Meeting in February Is First to Follow Merger

Members of the MM&P General Executive Board (GEB) met Feb. 24–5 at the union’s headquarters in Linthicum Heights, Md. This was the first GEB meeting for Atlantic Maritime Group (AMG) Vice President Ron Tucker, following the merger of MM&P and ILA Local 333. (Left to right) Pacific Ports Vice President Dave Boatner, Gulf Ports Vice President Wayne Farthing, Pilots Group Vice President George Quick, International Secretary-Treasurer Steve Werse, AMG Vice President Ron Tucker, International President Don Marcus, Pensioner Representative Mike McCormick, Atlantic Ports Vice President Don Josberger and United Inland Group Vice President Mike Murray.
Atlantic Maritime Group Members at Circle Line Approve New Contract

Members of the MM&P Atlantic Maritime Group who work at Circle Line overwhelmingly approved a new contract in March. “I’m very proud of all who helped achieve this great result,” said AMG Vice President Ron Tucker. The ballots were counted by AMG members Ken Corcoran and Mark Mileto, and Delegate Mike Riordan.

Greetings From Mariners House!

“The deck watch on the Coast Guard ship looked cold and lonely,” reports MM&P Captain Kevin Coulombe, who traveled to Boston with his wife Mary to attend a maritime meeting during the city’s 2015 record snowfall. The two stayed at Mariners House, which is located in the North End, right next to the Paul Revere house. “The top floor of Mariners House afforded a nice view of the city in the grip of the snow,” Coulombe says.

Seafarers must show proof of active seagoing service or retiree status to stay at Mariners House, which opened 165 years ago and was renovated in 1998 with modern amenities, including air conditioning, private bathrooms and WiFi. Prices range from $65 to $110 per night, including breakfast. Among its many services to the maritime community, Mariners House offers meals to all eligible seamen on Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year’s Day (Brunch), Easter, July 4th (BBQ) and Sea Service Sunday (Brunch).

You can find out more about Mariners House by e-mailing inn@marinershouse.org or visiting http://marinershouse.org/index.html
New Awards Program for JHSV Civil Service Mariners

MM&P and Military Sealift Command (MSC) have partnered to implement an awards program for Civil Service mariners aboard MSC Joint-High-Speed Vessels (JHSV). The program came into effect in January.

For MM&P Licensed Deck Officers, it calls for an initial bonus of $3,000 for the completion of JHSV Spearhead Class Endorsement along with a four-month assignment on a JHSV. It also calls for a $2,000 bonus every two years that the member remains in the program. Recognition of a Time-Off Award of 16 hours for every four-month assignment will be granted to MM&P Medical Services Officers (MSOs).

In announcing the awards program, a spokesperson for MSC said the organization “must maintain a sufficient pool of JHSV-qualified CIVMARS to support readiness, failing to do so will affect mission readiness. Becoming a JHSV Type Rating Certified Officer or a JHSV Trained unlicensed CIVMAR who has completed the required JHSV training must be strongly encouraged. Additionally, retaining these highly qualified CIVMARS in the JHSV program must remain a high priority.”

“With licensed deck officer shortages remaining a significant challenge for MSC, we asked for substantial monetary recognition and retention bonuses for all MM&P bargaining unit members, in particular considering the JHSV training requirements,” said MM&P Government Fleet Representative Randi Ciszewski. She extended thanks to MSC Director of Manpower & Personnel Frank Cunningham “for his genuine partnership efforts in getting this program approved.”

Ciszewski says she believes management recognizes the immediate need to implement a recruitment and retention bonus program for all MM&P members working aboard MSC vessels. “All the additional training and certification requirements, ongoing liberty and alcohol restrictions, lack of shore leave accrual, back-to-back long tours in the Gulf and other arduous and dangerous ports are not recognized in our members’ base wage,” she said. But while the response from MSC was supportive for members aboard JHSV’s, Ciszewski said, “we have been unable to finalize recruitment and retention bonuses for all members.” She says she remains hopeful that management will soon collaborate with MM&P and implement significant recruitment and retention bonuses that will be applicable to all unit members. In the meantime, she added, “It will undoubtedly remain a challenge for MSC to find qualified licensed deck officers to man its vessels.”
MM&P Advocates for Members at Washington State Function

The opening lines of the MM&P Constitution speak to ensuring "better regulation of matters pertaining to our industry," the improvement of our members' economic status and the protection of life and property. With this in mind, representatives of MM&P met with Washington State and federal legislators to advocate for the MM&P membership at a recent Washington State Democrats function in Olympia, Wash. Participating in the event were MM&P United Inland Group (UIG) Vice President Mike Murray, UIG Regional Representative Tim Saffle and MM&P National Director of Collective Bargaining J. Lars Turner.

On the federal level, MM&P representatives were able to speak with U.S. Reps. Suzan DelBene, Denny Heck and Derek Kilmer to urge support of issues important to the membership of MM&P. All three legislators are strong supporters of the American Merchant Marine and the Jones Act. Kilmer is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and an eloquent voice in support of full funding for the Maritime Security Program.

MM&P representatives were also able to spend time with Washington State Speaker of the House Frank Chopp discussing important issues for our members in Washington State, such as funding for the Washington State Ferry System.

MM&P's efforts on a local, regional and national level in support of U.S. maritime jobs are led by the union's Washington, D.C.-based advocacy arm, MIRAID. The MM&P Political Contribution Fund (PCF) helps support the election campaigns of legislators who support our industry.

King County Executive Dow Constantine and Congressman Derek Kilmer with MM&P National Director of Collective Bargaining J. Lars Turner, United Inland Group Regional Representative Tim Saffle and UIG Vice President Mike Murray.

Alex Hill of Thorndyke Resources, Mike Murray, Rep. Suzan DelBene, J. Lars Turner and Tim Saffle.

Maritime Unions Meet With Rep. Mark Takai

Members of the maritime unions met recently with their member of Congress, Mark Takai, at a breakfast event sponsored by the Hawaii State AFL-CIO. Takai, a Democrat who represents Hawaii’s 1st Congressional District, is a member of the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Natural Resources. He is a 15-year member of the Hawaii Army National Guard who holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and was deployed to the Middle East during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Kindra Lakes Towing Crew at AB Class

Members of the MM&P Great Lakes & Rivers Region who work at Kindra Lakes Towing participated this past winter in the AB class. (Left) David Votteler and (right) Gilbert Salazar met during the class with MM&P Regional Representative Tom Bell, who heads up the Great Lakes & Rivers Region, part of the United Inland Group.
MM&P, MEBA and IBU Talk Ferry Funding With Washington State Legislator

Legislator Cherri Appleton, who represents District 23 in the Washington State Assembly, met recently with MM&P officials and members of the other maritime unions that crew the Washington State ferries. The group discussed funding for the transportation revenue package as well as for the Washington State Ferry System (WSF). The ferries in the Washington state system are crewed by MM&P licensed deck officers, engineers who belong to the Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association (MEBA) and unlicensed personnel who belong to the Inland Boatmen’s Union (IBU). Pictured with Appleton are MM&P National Director of Collective Bargaining J. Lars Turner, United Inland Group Vice President Mike Murray and, in the back row, rank-and-file members of the IBU and MEBA.

Congratulations Participants in the Offshore Familiarization Course!

The union congratulates the applicants who completed the Offshore Familiarization Course in Oakland on Feb. 4-5. Pictured are participants (left to right) Coleman Rosenberg (back row), MM&P Pacific Ports Vice President Dave Boatner, Tamara Burback, Nicholas Anderson, Dan Baldi, Marisa Sutro, David Stathatos, Corey Hur, Melany Tarantino and MM&P Coast Agent Jeremy Hope.

Rough Ride Aboard the Whatcom Ferry

The Whatcom Chief provides year-round ferry service between Lummi Island and Gooseberry Point in Washington State. The ferry serves Lummi Island vehicle and pedestrian traffic made up of residents, visitors and businesses. Captain Ernie Petersen says these images do not represent weather conditions typical for the run, but are instead a sampling of “special conditions encountered over the years.” The images were captured by Linda Hayes, wife of retired MM&P skipper Donald Hayes.
ILA Baltimore Local 333 Officials Are MM&P Guests at MITAGS Open House

Members of the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) Baltimore Local 333 spent time with MM&P President Don Marcus during the MITAGS Open House in February. (Left to right) Lawrence Johnson, ILA Local 333 in Baltimore, Elizabeth Alexander, attorney with Marrinan & Mazzola Mardon, P.C., Jennifer Stair, partner in Terrasa & Stair, P.A., ILA Vice President Wilbert Rowell, MM&P President Don Marcus and (front) Helenda Rowell.

ILA Vice President Wilbert Rowell and his wife Helenda in the crane simulator during the MITAGS Open House. MITAGS is home to the ILA Crane Training Center. The state-of-the-art training platform, one of six crane simulators in the world, provides realistic training for ship gantry, ship pedestal, dock gantry, twin lift and mobile cranes.

MM&P Veteran Recognized for Heroic Service Aboard the Badger State

During a visit to his Congressional representative’s district office in Phoenix, MM&P Captain Charles T. Wilson was surprised when Rep. Matt Salmon and his entire staff stepped forward to commend him for his heroic service during the War in Vietnam.

The group presented him with an American flag and a certificate that states: “This is to certify that the accompanying flag was flown over the United States Capitol on July 11, 2014. At the request of the Honorable Matt Salmon, Member of Congress, this flag was flown in honor of Charles T. Wilson, for life-saving heroic and courageous action as Master of the Merchant Marine Ship SS Badger State.”

“I was very moved by the recognition from Rep. Salmon and his staff,” Wilson said.

When the Badger State and its load of 8,900 bombs, rockets, shells and mines bound for Da Nang encountered heavy weather, the captain and crew battled for nine days to secure the lethal cargo. The incident ultimately claimed the lives of 29 men.

“The tragic and heroic story of the Badger State is one that every mariner can appreciate,” says MM&P President Don Marcus. “MM&P joins Congressman Salmon and his staff in commending Captain Wilson and the crew of the Badger State for their seamanship and their bravery.”
Congressional “Sail-In” Brings Maritime Issues to the Fore

MM&P members, officials and representatives of MM&P-contracted companies were part of a 100-person team that visited the offices of 101 members of the House and Senate on March 24 to underline the important role played by the American maritime industry in our country’s security, economy and national defense. The meetings were part of the sixth annual Maritime Industry Congressional Sail-In.

As in previous years, the Sail-In provided an excellent opportunity for our industry to speak with one voice in support of: full funding for the Maritime Security Program; maintaining the PL 480 food aid program; preserving the Jones Act to ensure that the waterborne carriage of domestic commerce is under the control of American vessels and crews; and reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank so it can continue to encourage the export of American-produced products, a percentage of which are carried on U.S.-flag ships.
Participating in the Sail-In on behalf of MM&P were President Don Marcus, Secretary-Treasurer Steve Werse, Vice Presidents Dave Boatner, Don Josberger, Mike Murray and Ron Tucker, Representatives Tom Bell, Jeremy Hope, Tim Saffle and Ray Shipway, Chief of Staff Klaus Luhta, MIRAID President Jim Patti, MIRAID Counsel Steve Wines and MITAGS Director Glen Paine.

Participants in the Sail-In spoke with members of Congress and their staffs about how the American Merchant Marine ensures our country has the sealift capability needed to realize its military, humanitarian, and commercial objectives overseas.

U.S.-flag ships have been crucial partners to the Department of Defense in supplying our troops in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. They routinely brave attacks in pirate-infested waters to deliver U.S. food aid to starving people in East Africa, thus helping to achieve America's humanitarian objectives. American ships and crews have been instrumental to relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina and the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan.

Outreach to members of Congress is vital to protecting the jobs of American merchant mariners, says MM&P President Don Marcus. He thanked MIRAID President Jim Patti “for his usual outstanding job in putting together this year’s Sail-In” and expressed the union's appreciation to all the participants “who made the trek to Washington, D.C., to make our members’ voices heard.”

(Left to right) John Abrams (APL), Jonathan Kaskin (U.S. Navy League), Jim Caponiti (American Maritime Congress), Congressman John Garamendi (D-Calif.), MM&P Communications Director Lisa Rosenthal and MM&P Coast Agent Jeremy Hope.

continued on page 18
At the Sail-In, MM&P Secretary-Treasurer Steve Werse, Atlantic Ports Vice President Don Josberger and Chief of Staff Klaus Luhta.

MM&P President Don Marcus with Congressman Mark Takai (D-Hawaii).

MM&P Atlantic Maritime Group Vice President Ron Tucker.

Steve Fisher of the American Great Lakes Ports Association with MM&P United Inland Group Regional Representative Tom Bell.
Administrator’s Column
Patrick McCullough

Board of Trustees Meetings
As you might have read in the last issue of The Master, Mate & Pilot, the first meetings of the Board of Trustees for this year were held Jan. 27–9. In the last issue, I did not provide the schedule of meetings for 2015 or the tentative schedule of meetings for 2016. At their January meetings, the Trustees agreed to the following schedule of meetings for 2015:

- June 2–4, 2015

The Trustees also tentatively agreed on the following 2016 meeting dates:

- Jan. 26–28, 2016
- June 7–9, 2016

Plan Office Reminders
Over the past few months, the Plans have been required to send participants important information regarding the MM&P Pension, Adjustable Pension, Individual Retirement Account and Health & Benefit plans.

Some participants’ information has been returned to the Plan Office marked “bad address.”

If you have moved, please make sure that you notify the Plan Office so that we may provide you with required and necessary information.

Thank you in advance for your help with this important reminder.

Health & Benefit Plan
Employee Assistance Program
Sometimes life’s problems can seem overwhelming. In these cases, the Plan’s Employee Assistance Program may be of help. All eligible participants and their covered dependents can take advantage of the program, which is administered by LifeWorks. The Employee Assistance Program is a free, confidential service that provides professional consultant and referral services to help people deal with personal or work-related problems.

Among the problems the program can help with: family and relationship issues; alcohol and drug abuse; stress management; mental health; planning for retirement; and financial challenges. Whether you have a simple question or a complex problem, LifeWorks can help. For confidential assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, call 1-877-234-5151.

Other Important Reminders
Please contact an MM&P Health & Benefit Plan advisor if:

- you have been legally separated or divorced; or
- your spouse is working and is now covered by that employer’s health benefit program.

And please remember:

- Once you retire and become eligible for Medicare Part B, you must submit a copy of your Medicare card to the Plan Office.
- You must report any accidents aboard ship to the Plan Office.
- Also remember to update your beneficiaries (e.g., the Plan has paid death benefits to ex-spouses when participants have not updated their beneficiaries).

Vacation Plan
Electronic Funds Transfer/Direct Deposit
The Plan would like to remind Vacation Plan participants that they have the option of receiving their vacation benefits and Port Relief Officer (PRO) payments as a paper check or as an electronic funds transfer (EFT)/direct deposit into their designated bank account. An authorization to perform the transaction electronically must be on file. For any change to your bank and/or account information, the Plan is required to process a verification (called a pre-note process) through the banking system.

Once this process has been completed, each time you apply for a vacation or PRO benefit, you have the option of receiving a check or having your benefit processed by EFT/direct deposit. The Plan Office processes the EFTs on a daily
basis, which allows members to have their benefits credited to their account in a shorter time frame. If you have any questions, please contact the Vacation Plan benefit staff at the Plan Office at 410-850-8625.

**Pension Plan, Adjustable Pension Plan, Individual Retirement Account Plan**

**Have You Planned for Your Retirement?**

As I write this column, the April 15 deadline for filing your 2014 Federal Income Tax return is quickly approaching. Some of you may not have filed a return, but instead decided to apply for an extension. In either case, you were required to pay your federal tax bill by April 15.

If you have not thought much yet about retirement, now may be a good time to consider how you are going to save for it.

The Masters, Mates & Pilots Individual Retirement Account Plan/401(k) arrangement provides a simple, easy mechanism to save for your retirement. You can make pre-tax contributions directly from your payroll check. The pre-tax contributions are then transferred by your employer to the Plan, which will forward your contribution to your 401(k) account at Fidelity Investments.

You may also be allowed to contribute to the Plan under a Roth 401(k). The Roth 401(k) contribution option is subject to agreement by your individual employer to keep separate payroll records for your pre-tax 401(k) and your after-tax Roth 401(k) contributions. Please check with your employer to confirm availability. If your employer allows Roth 401(k) contributions and you are eligible to make traditional pre-tax contributions to the 401(k) plan, you are eligible to make Roth 401(k) contributions. In addition, unlike an individual Roth IRA, the Roth 401(k) contributions to the MM&P IRAP/401(k) Plan are not subject to restrictions based on your adjusted gross income.

Some members may think that a small amount will not help them much in saving for retirement, but remember that over time, a small amount of money can grow. That's the magic of compounding. The contributions that you make to your 401(k) account and any earnings on those contributions are not taxed until you withdraw the money at retirement. And remember that the earlier you start saving, the more money you will have in your 401(k) account at retirement.

When you enroll in the 401(k) Plan, you can decide what investment style makes you most comfortable. The Plan offers a wide range of investment options with different risks and potential returns.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) is an organization that seeks to provide information and insights on employee benefits to participants in public and private employee benefit programs. EBRI sponsors an educational program that provides "tools to help all Americans understand the need to plan in order to have a future—particularly at retirement." The program is called "Choose to Save." Its website, www.choosetosave.org, is a very good source on how to plan for your retirement. The website also provides links to on-line calculators for loans, budgets, college, credit cards and savings. If you have time, you might like to visit this website.

If you have questions about your Masters, Mates & Pilots Individual Retirement Account Plan/401(k) arrangement, you can call the Plan's benefit advisors at (410) 850-8625 or visit Fidelity's website at www.fidelity.com.

In 2015, the combined IRS contribution limit for both Roth and traditional pre-tax contributions if you are under age 50 is $18,000. If you are over age 50 and make catch-up contributions, the combined IRS contribution limit for both Roth and traditional pre-tax contribution is $24,000.
Annual IRS Limitations for 2015

For your reference, we have listed below the Internal Revenue Service limitations for 2015. The defined benefit plan limits listed below apply only to participants in the Offshore Pension Plan and/or Adjustable Pension Plan. The 401(k) limits apply only to members whose collective bargaining agreements provide for IRAP/401(k) participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRS Limitations for 2015</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Annual 415 Payout at Age 62 from a Defined Benefit Plan</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Annual Contribution to an Individual's Defined Contribution Account Under 415(c)</td>
<td>$53,000</td>
<td>$52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Effective 401(k) Deferral</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401(k) Catch-Up Limit-Age 50 and Older</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Amount of Annual Compensation That Can Be Taken Into Account for Determining Benefits or Contributions Under a Qualified Plan</td>
<td>$265,000</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Base:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) for Social Security Tax</td>
<td>$118,500</td>
<td>$117,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) for Medicare</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: As of January 2013, individuals with wages/earned income of more than $200,000 ($250,000 for married couples filing jointly) pay an additional 0.9 percent in Medicare taxes. This Medicare surcharge is paid along with annual income taxes.
MITAGS Community Outreach Programs

In addition to providing specialized mariner training, the MATES Program supports a number of activities aimed at raising awareness of the industry among members of the public and encouraging young people to consider maritime careers. Recent examples have included opportunities for:

- students of the Baltimore-based Maritime Industries Academy (MIA) to take Basic Safety Training (BST)
- young “Sea Scouts” to use the simulators to learn about navigation
- members of the public to view the simulators and explore MITAGS at a community open house.

This summer, the Conference Center at MITAGS will also host the World Maritime Conference. Among the speakers will be the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Members of Sea Scout Ship 228 (Sea Dart II) from Rahway, N.J.; Sea Scout Ship 5 (Navesink) from Red Bank, N.J.; Boy Scout Troop 104 from Scotch Plains, N.J.; and Boy Scout Troop 564 from Bel Air, Md.

Leaders (back row, left to right): Russ Hamilton (Ship 228), Doug Cawman (Troop 564), Roger Ruggieri (Troop 104), Steve Lynch (Troop 104), MM&P member Skipper James Zatwarnicki (Ship 228), Art Wright (Ship 228) and Gerry D’Angelo (Troop 564).

After helping deploy the life raft, MIA student Ian Hemsley and teacher Gina Breitmeyer (center of photo) joined other participants in the Basic Training Module—Personal Survival Techniques Course, led by MITAGS instructor Catherine Horn. Ian and other MIA students were able to take the course under a special program that offers a pathway to a maritime career.

MITAGS instructor Larry Bergin with a group of guests visiting a simulator during the MITAGS Open House Feb. 26. 
Julie C. Duchi, shipping out of West Coast ports. She last sailed for Matson Navigation as second mate aboard the Manoa.

Douglas T. Fifield, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for Maersk Lines Ltd. as master of the Maersk Intrepid.

Bertil Haney, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for Waterman SS Company as chief mate aboard the Maersk California.

John Kelly, shipping out of Boston. He last sailed for Maersk Lines Limited as chief mate aboard the Maersk Hartford.

Paul F. McQuarrie, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for Maersk Lines Limited as master of the Maersk Wisconsin.

Daniel M. Parr, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for American President Lines as master of the APL Thailand.

Bernard Scott, shipping out of Gulf ports. He last sailed for Horizon Lines as third mate aboard the Horizon Navigator.

Thomas D. Serrago, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for U.S. Lines, Inc. as second mate aboard the American Astronaut in 1986.

Michael Shanley, shipping out of Boston. He last sailed for Maersk Lines Limited as master of the Maersk Wisconsin.

Robert P. Strobel, Jr., shipping out of Gulf ports. He last sailed for Maritime Personnel & Provisioning as master of the St. Louis Express.

Peter Tupas, shipping out of Jacksonville. He last sailed for Horizon Lines as third mate aboard the Horizon Producer.

James Warmack, shipping out of Charleston. He last sailed for Maritime Charleston Personnel as third mate aboard the Express.
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John W. Behnken, 101, Dec. 28, 2014. A pensioner since 1969, and resident of Franklin, Va., he last sailed for Valentine as chief mate aboard the Petrochem. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., he graduated from the New York State Merchant Marine Academy in 1933 and began a seagoing career that lasted for 38 years. He joined Masters, Mates and Pilots in 1937. He was a veteran of World War II, sailing as chief mate and master of several Liberty ships to north Russia, the Persian Gulf, Europe and the Pacific to the far-East. Son Kenneth, daughters Eloise Kaeck and Connie Rokicki, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive him.

Walter H. Butler, 89, Jan. 11. A pensioner since 1989 and a resident of Yucca Valley, Calif., he last sailed with Chesapeake Shipping Co., Inc. as master of the Sea Isle City. He joined the Coast Guard in 1943 and participated in five invasions in the Pacific Islands. In 1945 he joined the merchant marine as an Able Seaman. In retirement, he planned his days around time with friends and his favorite coffee shop, and two ever-faithful dogs. He is survived by companion Diane Brown and sons Greg Smith, Marc Butler and Ed Edge.


George P. Eckenrode, 89, Jan. 29. A pensioner since 1986 and a resident of Cape Coral, Fla., he last sailed for Pelican Marine, Inc. as master of the SS Louisiana Brimstone. Before his career at sea he was recruited by the Philadelphia Phillies and briefly attended training camp where he was so fast around the bases he gained the nickname “Rabbit”. While remaining a lifelong baseball fan, he changed career paths and entered the Merchant Marine in 1944, sailing on the hospital ship USAHS St. Mihiel, with D-Day occurring during the voyage. He also served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. His time at home between voyages was filled with teaching his nephews everything about the nautical world. He met his future wife in the steamship office in Yokohama, Japan in the early 1960s. He is survived by his wife Fusako, his sister Doris, and eight nieces and nephews.


Andrew P. Garber, 91, Jan. 3. A pensioner since 1971 and a resident of Humble, Texas, he last sailed for States Marine, Inc. as third mate aboard the SS Gopher State.


Rudolph A. Hendersen, 87, Dec. 13, 2014. A pensioner since 1986 and a resident of Miramar, Fla., he last sailed for United States Lines, Inc. as second mate aboard the American Trojan. He loved math, traveling the world, experiencing food from many countries, and he especially enjoyed Italy and Spain. He is survived by his cousin Eleanore Reichenbach.

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Alexander D. Holman, 93, Nov. 24, 2014. A pensioner since 1989 and a resident of Falmouth, Maine, he last sailed for American Heavylift, Inc. as chief engineer aboard the SS Knight. During World War II, he joined the Merchant Marine, serving in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters in supply convoys. He trained at the Kings Point Merchant Marine Academy and was proud to have founded the Color Guard, which is still in existence today. Raising six children, he taught them to waterski on Pocasset Lake. Winter weekends were spent skiing with his family on Saturdays and ice-skating every Sunday after church. Many winters were spent cruising the Caribbean with his wife and friends aboard his motor sailboat Pegasus 2. At age 80, Alex sailed with his wife to Cuba, and beyond, then exchanged their remaining winters on the sea for winters in Cape Coral, Florida. He is survived by his wife Elaine and children Lee, Claire, Sarah, Daniel and Andrew, ten grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Allison V. L. Jones, 77, Dec. 23, 2014. A pensioner since 1987 and a resident of Sarasota, Fla., he last sailed with Waterman Steamship Corp., Inc. as chief mate of the SS Stonewall Jackson. He was a competitive tennis player. His wife Rosetta Waag and sons Daniel, Michael and Jonathan survive him.
James W. Kendrick, 85, Jan. 10. A pensioner since 1992 and a resident of Lucedale, Miss., he last sailed for Lykes Brothers S.S. Co., Inc. as third mate aboard the MV Sheldon Lykes. He enjoyed visiting the Great Smokey Mountains and attending his church. His wife Voncile, two daughters and a son survive him.

John H. Lang, 90, Dec. 18, 2014. A pensioner since 1984 and a resident of Pass Christian, Miss., he last sailed for Delta Steamship Lines, Inc. as master of the SS Delta Norte. He was a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York and a veteran of World War II. He enjoyed playing tennis, was very active in his community organizations, and enjoyed the honorable position as the oldest member of the Pass Christian Yacht Club. His children Jay, Ann, Susan and Cary, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren survive him.

David G. Leonard, 81, Nov. 17, 2014. A pensioner since 1993 and a resident of Columbia, S.C., he last sailed for Hudson Waterways as master aboard the S/T Transhatteras. He was known for his love of bluegrass music and comedy movies. He is survived by Paul Leonard, Jill Leonard, Lisa K. Leonard, and five grandchildren.


John Paul Morris, 89, Jan. 8. A pensioner since 1991 and a resident of Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., he last sailed for Waterman Steamship Corp., Inc. as master of the SS Sam Houston.

Kenneth R. Niepert, 94, Jan. 2. A pensioner since 1987 and a resident of Spanish Springs, Nevada, he last sailed with Lykes Brothers S.S. Co., Inc. as second mate aboard the SS Almeria Lykes.

James E. Phifer, 87, Dec. 20, 2014. A pensioner since 1987 and a resident of Port Angeles, Wash., he last sailed for American Ship Management Co., Inc. as second mate aboard the SS Spray. His love of traveling to visit family and friends included plotting his itinerary in great detail. He enjoyed photography, his cat, reading, cars, and gun collecting. He is survived by daughters Brenda Astrin and Susan Moorehead, and sons John Astrin and James Phifer, Jr.

Joseph L. Perreault, 91, Nov. 23, 2014. A pensioner since 1982 and resident of North Hampton and formerly Amesbury, Mass., he last sailed for Puerto Rico Marine Management Co., Inc. as second mate aboard the SS San Juan. After enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he spent 30 years in the U.S. Merchant Marine. Upon retirement he enjoyed daily car rides with his brother, as well as going out to eat, reading and listening to Bing Crosby. He took special delight in making others laugh. He is survived by his brother, William J. Perreault, niece and caretaker Linda J. Mottram, many cousins, and generations of nieces and nephews.

Joseph B. Petcosky, 69, Dec. 5, 2014. A pensioner since 2009 and a resident of Houston, Texas, he last sailed with Afram Carriers, Inc. as master of the SS Tampa Bay. He enjoyed relaxing moments with reading and cooking. He loved spending time at his beach house in Port Mansfield and fishing from his boat. Wife Sherry, son Nicholas and mother Elizabeth survive him.

Horace Sims, 88, Jan. 21. A pensioner since 1985 and a resident of Oro Valley, Arizona as well as Napa, Calif., he last sailed for Keystone Shipping Co., Inc. as a master aboard the SS Kenai. He was a man of the sea and took great pride in his profession. While at sea, his crew was his family and he continued many of those friendships after retiring. An intelligent man who enjoyed classical music, a good book and an interesting conversation, he could tell a story like no other. He started his career at sea after joining the Navy in 1944 and continued his adventures at sea as a merchant mariner until 1985 when he retired as Master Captain. He traveled by sea to places most of us only dreamed of, and con-
sidered himself a citizen of the world. Not one to be far from
the water, he and his wife Nettie enjoyed time together on their
Bayliner. Always a gentleman, a bit of us went with him when
he passed but his legacy lives on. He was preceded in death by
Michael Drake, his stepson and dear friend who passed five days
prior to his own passing. He is survived by his wife Nettie and
his children, Mitch Sims, Denise Sims, Carol Sims and Dacia
Smith as well as his children by marriage, Deanna Copelan,
Cynthia MacIntosh and Ken Drake.

Thomas H. Smith, 68, Jan. 18. A
pensioner since 1995 and a resident
of Kittery Point, Maine, he last
sailed for Lykes Brothers S.S. Co.,
Inc. as master of the SS Stella
Lykes. Skiing and snowmobiling
were favorite sports of his younger
years. After his retirement at age
50, he began November trips to the
Canary Islands and February trips
to St. Martin, with summers spent
on his 32’ Bayliner off the coast of Maine at the Isle of Shoals.
He greatly enjoyed his “best buddy”, grandson Evan. Wife Mary
Ann, daughter Katherine McLaughlin and grandson Evan Bush
survive him.

Roy T. Sturdivant, 92, Nov. 28, 2014. A pensioner since 1973 and
a resident of Bluffton, S.C., he last sailed for United States Lines,
Inc. as master of M/V American Ohio.

Joseph A. Tate, Jr., 64, Dec. 28, 2014. A pensioner since 2009
and a resident of Houston, Texas, he last sailed for Maersk Lines,
Ltd. as third mate aboard the Sealand Mercury. He is survived by
his sister Ruth Ellen Tate Penney and his daughter Anya Tate.

Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!

And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!

And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho’ from out our bourne Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

— Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)
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