MM&P Companies Win MARAD RRF Contracts

MM&P Reaches Out to Katrina Victims
Contribute to MM&P’s Disaster Relief Fund
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About the Cover

MV Cape Orlando, shown underway in San Francisco, is one of 13 vessels  
that will be crewed by MM&P licensed deck officers under the Maritime  
Administration’s recent RRF awards. Cape Orlando will be operated by Patriot  
Contract Services. For MM&P members and MM&P-contracted employers, the  
announcement of the new RRF ship management contracts marks a key step in  
regaining a significant presence in the military’s surge sealift fleet.  
(See feature story, pages 8-9.) Photo courtesy of the U.S. Maritime Administration.
MM&P’s Parent Union Charged in RICO Civil Action

This is the first time that I have had a chance to inform the entire membership of recent goings on in our parent organization, the ILA (International Longshoremen’s Association).

On July 6th of this year, the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York brought a government complaint against the ILA under civil provisions of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.

This complaint seeks a court ordered relief to impose a trusteeship responsible for reforming and overseeing the ILA and its benefit plans and, in addition, seeks to bar certain ILA officials from serving the union or serving any of its benefit plans. It also seeks to bar them from holding membership in the ILA.

As a member of the ILA’s Executive Board, I was named, along with 23 other officials, as a nominal defendant. It took a while for me to find out what exactly a nominal defendant is but here it is in a nutshell. A nominal defendant is an individual defendant named in a complaint who has not been charged with any wrongdoing, but, because he occupies a position in the ILA union (in this case, a seat on the Executive Board), his duties as a member of the Board may be impacted if the Government is successful in obtaining a trusteeship over the International Longshoremen’s Association. It is also possible that this lawsuit may change the method for which Executive Board members are elected and there may even be new elections.

The 24 nominal defendants are represented by Counsel and broken into two groups. The group that I am in, which comprises 17 individuals, has been charged merely because they occupy a seat on the Executive Board. A second group of seven individuals who sit on the Executive Board also sit as trustees on various Health and Benefit Plans.

This case is in its very early stages and there is no doubt that an amended complaint will be filed later in the year.

I have not been charged in my capacity as MM&P International President nor has the Masters, Mates & Pilots Union been charged. No other individual or official of the Masters, Mates & Pilots has been charged in this RICO complaint.

I intend to keep the membership informed through The Wheelhouse Weekly and, as needed, through this publication.

The AFL-CIO Convention in Chicago

Captain Banks and I were able to attend three of the four days of the AFL-CIO Convention held from July 25th through 28th in Chicago.

The Convention highlight was the withdrawal of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Teamsters from the Federation. This was followed by the United Food and Commercial Workers withdrawal on the 29th of July.

I have not completely analyzed what this means to the Federation but here are some preliminary thoughts.

The issue that has been talked about since the first of the year in AFL-CIO circles has been the inability to organize and how unions do better in this area. Andy Stern, President of SEIU, believes that we must devote more money to organizing and, therefore, with more people as union members, we would have more sway and influence with the politicians. John Sweeney, President of the AFL-CIO, is not opposed to organizing but believes that the deck is stacked against
unions and that we need friends in Washington, D.C., who are willing to unstack the deck so that organizing can be done and employers cannot delay and delay until the fervor of organizing passes. In short, anti-union employers are able to employ tactics designed to stall organizing drives and thus make first contracts impossible. You can make your own choice of who is right.

As I see it, the SEIU will do well at organizing whether it is in or outside of the AFL-CIO. Stern has proved himself to be very adept at organizing and, since he will not have to pay per capita to the AFL-CIO, the SEIU will have more money to devote to organizing. The SEIU recruits among low paid unskilled workers and the fear of losing one’s job in this type of market is probably not as threatening as with more skilled workers.

As for the Teamsters, I believe that it is another story. United Parcel Service (UPS) recently bought Overnite, a non-union trucking firm which the Teamsters have tried at least two times recently to organize. The Teamsters must be able to use this additional money that they do not pay to the AFL-CIO to conduct a successful campaign against Overnite. If they do not, then UPS, a highly unionized company, will just shift the work that is being done by union labor at UPS, to the non-union workers at Overnite. Result: Less union workers—not more!

The most interesting union to withdraw is the United Food and Commercial Workers. The UFCW’s main organizing target is Wal-Mart. In previous campaigns against Wal-Mart, the AFL-CIO supported the UFCW with money and research. Now UFCW will be on its own. The two major questions are:

1) Will other AFL-CIO unions support a campaign against Wal-Mart with UFCW being the big winner? and
2) Since the UFCW will no longer have Article XX protection, will another union also decide it wants to organize Wal-Mart and just not leave it to UFCW to do.

One thing for sure. Regardless of the above three situations, the true impact of the events in Chicago may not be known for some time but the withdrawal of these three unions is not good for organized labor as a whole.

— Timothy A. Brown
International President
Masters, Mates & Pilots

Contribute to MM&P’s Disaster Relief Fund

To help the MM&P members, applicants and retirees most affected by Hurricane Katrina, the General Executive Board has established The Masters, Mates & Pilots Disaster Relief Fund. MM&P will make an initial donation to launch the fund,* which will accept additional contributions from anyone interested in providing assistance to our MM&P brothers and sisters.

To contribute, please send a check, made payable to “The MM&P Disaster Relief Fund,” to 700 Maritime Blvd., Linthicum Heights, MD 21090. For more information, call (410) 850-8700 extension 11 or 12, or go to the MM&P website, www.bridgedeck.org.

* MM&P has applied for tax-exempt status for the fund and the union has every expectation that the application will be approved.
Memorandum of Understanding With APL for ASM Vessels

APL Marine Services Ltd. (APL) has formally assumed the collective bargaining agreement originally stipulated between MM&P and American Ship Management (ASM), which had operated the vessels on behalf of APL. The MM&P-APL agreement, formalized in the context of a memorandum of understanding, will remain in effect until Sept. 30, 2015, at which time it can be reopened or renewed. MM&P looks forward to renewing its relationship with APL and wishes ASM continued success in pursuing new business in the government sector.

Maersk Completes Purchase of P&O Nedloyd

In the shipping industry’s largest-ever corporate takeover, AP Møller-Maersk has completed its acquisition of Royal P&O Nedlloyd. Maersk Sealand and P&O Nedloyd will operate as separate shipping lines until February 2006, at which point the shipping business will be rebranded under a new name, Maersk Line.

When the merger is final, Maersk will control approximately 550 vessels, including 24 of the 60 subsidized by the U.S. government under the Maritime Security Program (MSP). Farrell Lines, a subsidiary of P&O Nedloyd, participates in the MSP with five ships: the Chesapeake Bay, the Delaware Bay, the Endeavor, the Endurance and the Enterprise.

MM&P International President Timothy Brown, in written comments filed with the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD), expressed the union’s belief that all the participants in MSP recognize the importance of preserving existing collective bargaining relationships when there is a change in the ownership or operation of MSP vessels. “In so doing,” Brown wrote, “the companies and unions have helped ensure that the critically important civilian manpower pool that is a cornerstone of MSP is not diminished or otherwise adversely affected when vessels and companies are sold or acquired and MSP operating agreements are transferred.”

Second Fast Vehicle Ferry Up and Running

MM&P’s United Inland Group (UIG) deck officers will man the MV Chenega, America’s second high-speed craft code rated passenger and vehicle ferry. Earlier this year, the UIG signed the country’s first fast vehicle contract ferry. It covers the Fairweather, sister ship to the Chenega. MEBA is contracted to fill the engineering billets. The vessels, constructed by Derecktor Shipyards of Bridgeport, Conn., are the cornerstone of the state of Alaska’s plan to revamp its water transport system. Each can carry 250 passengers and 35 cars. The vessels can reach speeds of up to 36 knots. The fast vehicle ferry contracts bring with them new job opportunities for MM&P members.

McAllister Negotiations Continue

The three San Juan Harbor contracts for unlicensed, licensed and maintenance employees of McAllister have been been extended until Oct. 31, 2005.
MM&P Launches Relief Effort for Victims of Katrina

MM&P moved quickly in the wake of Hurricane Katrina to help members and other residents of the devastated area. MM&P’s International Officers, General Executive Board and International Counsel set up a fund to aid active and retired members, applicants and their families who suffered losses as a result of the catastrophe. (To contribute, see page 2.)

The USNS Arctic, with MM&P licensed deck officers on board, was the second government vessel to arrive in New Orleans. It was already on the scene two days after the hurricane. The U.S. Navy’s Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort, with MM&P licensed deck officers on board, was activated Aug. 31. Comfort is a unique medical treatment facility with up to 1,000 beds, 12 operating rooms, a medical lab, an optometry lab, radiological services, CAT scan, pharmacy and two oxygen plants.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredge Wheeler, crewed by members of MM&P’s Government Employees’ Membership Group, assisted in recovery efforts, acting as a communications, feeding and berthing station for emergency personnel.

In a message in The Wheelhouse Weekly, MM&P International President Timothy Brown, on behalf of MM&P members and headquarters and Plans staff, gave voice to “an expression of heartfelt sympathy to everyone who has suffered losses as a result of Hurricane Katrina.” Diane Chatham, assistant to MM&P International Secretary-Treasurer Glen Banks, remained on call for the Labor Day weekend following the disaster, fielding offers of help from members with housing to share. Audrey Scharmann, assistant to International President Brown, designed a flyer to solicit housing help that was distributed in the wake of the disaster to all MM&P port offices.

The offices of MM&P-contracted American Heavylift (AHL) were relocated to Port Arthur, Texas, where the company is now operating out of temporary office space. AHL President and CEO Richard Horner reported that he expected to be operating out of the Port Arthur location for several months. Waterman/Central Gulf (WCG) and MM&P had negotiated an extension of the Energy Enterprise contract. When the hurricane hit, MM&P and WCG had not yet started to negotiate the Pure Car Carrier contract, which expires Sept. 30. An extension of that contract is also deemed likely. All MM&P jobs that would have been posted and shipped from New Orleans are being posted and shipped from Houston until further notice.

Over the coming months and years, MM&P members, officers, staff and contracted companies will continue to play an active role in assistance and reconstruction efforts in the Gulf region.

Gen. Handy Moves to Horizon Lines

Gen. John W. Handy, former commander of USTRANSCOM, has accepted a position with MM&P-contracted Horizon Lines LLC. The company said he will work directly with Chuck Raymond, Horizon’s chairman, president and chief executive officer. Handy turned over command of USTRANSCOM, a post he had held for four years, to Gen. Norton A. Schwartz on September 7.
“In carrying out my military responsibilities I have been quite impressed with the customer focus and delivery reliability at Horizon Lines,” Handy was quoted as saying in a Horizon Lines press release. “Chuck Raymond and his team have taken the company to new service levels and I am excited to have the opportunity to contribute to Horizon’s growth.”

Horizon Lines, the largest U.S. domestic container-ship carrier, has diversified its business model in recent years by winning contracts in the government sector. Besides its core business, the company now manages six oceanographic research vessels for MSC and two Ready Reserve Force vessels for the Maritime Administration (MARAD).

During his 39-year Air Force career, Handy commanded the 21st Air Force at McGuire AFB, the Air Mobility Command’s Tanker Airlift Control Center, two airlift wings and a maintenance squadron. At USAF headquarters in Washington, D.C., he served as the Air Force’s director of programs and evaluations and deputy chief of staff, installations and logistics. As an Air Force pilot, he logged more than 5,000 flying hours, mainly in airlift aircraft, including 300 combat hours in the C-130 in Southeast Asia. In testimony before Congress, Handy played a critical role in the effort to renew the Maritime Security Program and expand it from 47 to 60 vessels.

Safety Awards to MM&P Crewed MSC Vessels

Six civilian-manned U.S. Navy vessels crewed by MM&P licensed deck officers have been recognized for exceptional shipboard safety programs. Each year, MSC gives the awards to ships with perfect safety records and exemplary worker protection programs. The vessels recognized this year are: fleet ocean tug USNS Apache; combat stores ship USNS Concord; fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patauxent; combat support ship USNS Supply; fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl; and fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux. The Apache, the highest-rated ship overall, earned the 2005 Department of the Navy Safety Excellence Award for the MSC category. MSC Commander Vice Adm. David Brewer III congratulated the mariners serving on the vessels for their “outstanding effort” in promoting occupational safety and health. Brewer said the professional mariners on board the vessels “set the standard in MSC afloat occupational safety and health for our fleet.”

MARAD’s Title XI “Remedies” Proposal Sparks Controversy

A recent MARAD proposal to modify aspects of the Title XI ship financing program has generated criticism from a number of quarters. Among those who have voiced their opposition are MM&P International President Timothy Brown, C. James Patti, president of the Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development (MIRAID), and representatives of three MM&P-contracted companies: AHL Shipping, Horizon Lines and Matson Navigation. Title XI is intended to promote domestic shipbuilding by making long-term financing available to shipbuilders at attractive rates.

In a joint letter of comment, Brown and Patti called a strong and efficient Title XI program “critical to the maintenance and potential growth of the U.S.-flag merchant marine,” especially with an eye to the development of short sea shipping as a way to alleviate congestion on American roadways. They said, however, that if implemented, the changes to the program could “discourage rather than facilitate the construction of vessels in American shipyards …”
AHL Shipping Company was also critical of the proposed modifications, arguing they would “continue to drive the more creditworthy applicants away and … further increase interest spreads and the cost of the program to potential users and the government.” Horizon Lines, in its comments, urged MARAD to make Title XI “vibrant and useful in promoting the U.S.-flag merchant marine.” The company argued, however, that the “remedies” being proposed would have the opposite effect. Matson Navigation also took issue with the MARAD plan. “While it is our understanding that these changes would not apply to our existing Title XI arrangement, given our financing alternatives, the enactment of these provisions would effectively foreclose Title XI as a future financing vehicle for Matson.”

Nine MM&P Members Recognized for Service in Support of Wars

For contributions as merchant mariners on commercial vessels in support of the war effort, MARAD has awarded medals to nine MM&P members. The members who received medals are: Douglas B. Adriance; Jahn Gerdes; Richard Oprison; Christopher Reiblein; Andrew N. Sole; Peter K. Strez; Jeremiah L. Turner; Stephen Vandale and Nicolas Williams. Sole received two medals, one for service during the Viet Nam War and a second for Operation Desert Storm. MM&P congratulates these members for the well-deserved recognition they have received.

Bright Future for MM&P and NOAA Government Fleet

Civilian mariners represented by MM&P serve in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) fleet of hydrographic survey, oceanographic research and fisheries research vessels. (Above) Members of the NOAA fleet and Rear Adm. Richard Behn with MM&P Government Fleet Representative Randi Ciszewski. (Left to right) Jack McAdams, Ciszewski, Steve Wagner, David Lee, Peter Langlois and Behn. Over the course of the next decade, NOAA plans to add 10 vessels to its fleet. The planned expansion, coupled with NOAA's decision to begin reassigning MM&P mates aboard the ships, is expected to create new career opportunities for offshore and government group members.

GAO Recommends Further Study of Short Sea Shipping

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has issued a report aimed at helping federal decision-makers decide to what measure they should participate in the development of short sea shipping. The GAO report takes its cue from a Department of Transportation (DOT) proposal for possible federal funding of short sea shipping projects. DOT made the proposal in response to an increase in the amount of freight being transported
on the nation’s roadways and the growth in congestion and related problems. GAO has advised DOT and MARAD to evaluate the impact of regulatory, administrative and operational barriers to the development of short sea shipping, and to factor in the potential benefits of short sea shipping in terms of a reduction in pollution, congestion and the number of traffic accidents.

**Voice Your Support of Benefits for WWII Merchant Mariners**

MM&P continues to push Congress to enact legislation that would give long-overdue benefits to World War II merchant mariners. Please contact your senator or representative to urge support for S 1272 and HR 23, the “Belated Thank You to World War II Merchant Mariners Act of 2005.” If enacted, this legislation would authorize payment of $1,000 per month to merchant seamen who sailed during World War II. If you want additional information on this important legislative initiative, please contact MM&P Headquarters or MIRAID, our Washington, D.C., office.

**MM&P Secures Wage Increase for Civilian Mariners**

MM&P civilian mariners (CIVMARS) sailing aboard MSC auxiliary and special mission ships will receive a 3.66 percent increase to their base pay, overtime, penalty and non-watch rates.* The increase is retroactive to July 1 for MM&P licensed deck officers aboard the ships. The union is required by law to justify annual wage adjustments for the CIVMARS on the basis of its commercial fleet contracts. The increases, which had been advocated by MM&P International President Timothy Brown, Government Fleet Representative Randi Ciszewski and MM&P Executive Assistant to the President Mike Rodriguez, were approved by MSC and the Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service.

*Except as required by Public Law 108-199 of Jan. 23, 2004 and 5 USC 5348.

**MM&P and MEBA Renew Pass-Through Accord for Lykes Vessels**

MM&P has renewed the pass-through agreement with the Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association (MEBA) for the continuing service of MM&P deck officers on the Lykes vessels managed by Marine Transport Lines. The agreement was negotiated over a period of months by the three MM&P Offshore Vice Presidents—Bob Groh, Don Marcus and Rich May—and MM&P International Secretary-Treasurer Glen Banks. The pass-through agreement will run for the duration of the new Maritime Security Program, or until September 2015. A copy of the agreement, which incorporates minor changes to the earlier version, will be provided to the four vessels covered.

**Positions Open for All LDOs on T-AGS Oceanographic Vessels**

Experience on commercially operated, government-contracted vessels is a plus.

If you’re interested, please send a brief resume to MM&P Special Projects Director Richard Plant by e-mail (rplant@bridgedeck.org) or fax (410-850-0973). Specify position desired; date available; highest license held and sailed on, when and the duration; all course training certificates. If you have security clearance and have sailed with it in the past two years, mention the fact: it can be transferred to Horizon Lines. (For more details on the T-AGS vessels, see p. 18 of the March-April issue of *The Master, Mate & Pilot*)
On July 28, the Maritime Administration (MARAD) announced its award of ship manager contracts for the maintenance and operation of 54 vessels in the agency’s Ready Reserve Force (RRF). MM&P is pleased that three contracted companies were successful in maintaining or establishing a presence in this vital program by securing contracts to manage 13 ships in total (see box, facing page). The new contracts are for four base years with two, three-year option periods, for a total of 10 years.

The RRF is the surge component of the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF), which was established by the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946. The program’s strategic objective is to ensure the government has sufficient sealift capability and intermodal infrastructure to support vital homeland and national security interests. Commercial ship managers maintain RRF vessels so that the ships can be ready to get underway in four, five, 10 or 20 days. The success of the RRF program is a result of productive partnerships between MARAD, the Department of Defense (DOD), ship managers and seagoing labor.

MARAD’s Office of Ship Operations manages the NDRF and the RRF under the direction of the Associate Administrator for National Security. The Division of Ship Maintenance and Repair is responsible for reporting vessel readiness to the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). The Associate Administrator’s office, through its Division of Operations Support, is also responsible for coordinating interagency force protection implementation and publishing threat advisories.

Standards for RRF operations are high. The program is now operating at 10 times its intended tempo, logging over 12,400 operating days over the past 30 months. RRF vessels are currently underway in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-06, the relief effort following Hurricane Katrina and routine exercises. The fleet is operating at a 99 percent reliability level and generating tremendous value as it performs its military and relief missions.

MM&P members have served aboard RRF vessels nearly since the program’s inception. On August 11, 1980, MM&P members were aboard the first RRF vessel to be activated on the West Coast when American President Lines (APL) broke out the SS Lincoln for a no-notice activation to participate in Marine Corps amphibious exercises. (APL operated the Lincoln under Division of Ship Maintenance and Repair is responsible for reporting vessel readiness to the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). The Associate Administrator’s office, through its Division of Operations Support, is also responsible for coordinating interagency force protection implementation and publishing threat advisories.

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Proof of the RRF’s concept of operation came in 1993, when 79 ships were activated to carry military cargo in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. During that conflict, MM&P members sailed aboard California, Cape Blanco, Cape Bon, Cape Borda, Cape Bover, Cape Breton, Cape Gibson, Cape Girardieu, Cape Inscription, Cape Intrepid, Cape Island, Comet, Jupiter, Meteor, Northern Light and Shoshone. Cape Blanco held the record for days in support of the war with 628. Cape Breton and Cape Gibson followed closely behind with 519 and 419, respectively.

In the years since Desert Storm and throughout the period of operations in Iraq, the number of vessels in the RRF has declined to 54 ships. Patriot Contract Services (Patriot) had become the only MM&P-contracted company with a stake in the RRF program until the recent ship manager contract awards. Patriot held a contract to manage five RRF vessels: Cape Bover, Cape Breton, Cape Borda (collectively, “the Cape B’s”) and Cape Girardieu and Cape Gibson (“the Cape G’s”). In 2003, the Cape B’s were ordered to the NDRF in Suisun Bay, leaving the Cape G’s as the MM&P’s only presence in the RRF program.

The announcement of the new RRF awards was particularly significant in that Patriot’s recent loss of the MSC LMSR contract had risked depriving the nation’s military sealift effort of the professional skills, knowledge and abilities of MM&P deck officers. For MM&P members and MM&P-contracted employers, the announcement of the new RRF ship management contracts marks a key step in regaining a significant presence in the military’s surge sealift fleet. The process will require the traditional high level of performance from MM&P officers and contracted companies, in close partnership with MARAD, DOD and other stakeholders.

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<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Vessel/Designation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horizon Lines LLC</td>
<td>MV Cape Lambert/TAKR 5077</td>
<td>Ro/Ro</td>
<td>Wilmington, N.C.</td>
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<td>Matson Navigation Company</td>
<td>SS Cape Jacob/TAK 5029</td>
<td>Modular Cargo</td>
<td>Diego Garcia</td>
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<td>Ro/Ro</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SS Meteor/TAK 9</td>
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<td>Patriot Contract Services LLC</td>
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<td>Ro/Ro</td>
<td>Alameda, Calif.</td>
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<td>SS Cape Farewell/TAK 5073</td>
<td>LASH</td>
<td>Beaumont, Texas</td>
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<td>MV Cape Orlando/TAK 2044</td>
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In its desire to streamline its collective bargaining and labor relations procedures and activities, the Department of Defense (DOD) has proposed a new National Security Personnel System (NSPS) that would apply to virtually all the department’s civilian employees. They include a large number of DOD employees represented by the Masters, Mates & Pilots, including Army Corps of Engineers floating plant employees, civil service Navy pilots and civilian mariners, or CIVMARs. CIVMARs crew the government-owned vessels that provide the surge capability needed by DOD at the onset of hostilities or other emergency, as well as the U.S. government vessels that transport the equipment, material, weapons and manpower needed to support and sustain U.S. forces overseas.

The collective bargaining and labor relations systems that govern the employment of CIVMARs have worked—and worked well. The close working relationship established over the years between DOD Military Sealift Command (MSC) and MM&P and other seafaring unions has enabled development of a system of practices and procedures that allow the maritime unions to consistently provide the trained and qualified civilian seafaring personnel needed by MSC to effectively, efficiently and quickly fulfill its national security mission.

The system works largely because it is predicated on the conditions that prevail in the commercial maritime industry, thereby ensuring that CIVMARs receive comparable compensation and meet the same high standards of training met by their union brothers and sisters sailing aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels. This allows MSC to compete as a viable employer with the private sector and ensures that in time of crisis, the maritime unions will be able to recruit loyal United States citizen maritime personnel from their commercial ranks to fill the jobs available aboard the government’s ships.

Most importantly for our nation’s security—and for the well-being of American forces stationed overseas—this close interchange between the commercial manpower pool and the CIVMARs means that when there are changes in the nature and composition of the government fleet; when there are changes in force protection levels; and when there are changes in the national security logistical requirements MSC must meet, MM&P and the other maritime unions, with their experience and expertise and their track record of dealing quickly and cooperatively with MSC, are able to respond to the changes so that MSC’s national security mission can be met.

Unfortunately—and dangerously for our national security—inclusion of CIVMARs in the labor relations portion of the NSPS, as proposed by the Department of Defense, will significantly and adversely affect the mutually beneficial working relationship that exists between MSC and MM&P and other maritime unions. The NSPS, as presently structured, will prevent MSC from continuing to negotiate with the maritime unions, ending a 30-year collective bargaining relationship. Instead, NSPS would require that MSC negotiate with one of eight large unions that have “national consultation rights,” with no regard given to whether...
the union possesses any experience in matters relating specifically to the unique conditions that exist aboard ocean-going vessels.

Significantly, we are not alone in arguing that the existing system should not be tampered with, and that including CIVMARs in the labor relations portion of the NSPS could jeopardize national security. On July 26, Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) told Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld that, “The existing civilian mariners system has served this nation well, and including these individuals in the NSPS may have the unintended consequence of impairing our military sealift capability.”

Sen. Santorum went on to say that, “The existing civilian mariner system has provided DOD with a ready pool of well-trained, highly skilled, experienced U.S. seafarers who are able to achieve cost and operational efficiencies through innovative commercial crewing models . . . if civilian mariners are not exempted, the implementation of the NSPS could upset this valuable partnership.”

A group of eight Republican representatives, led by New Jersey Congressmen Jim Saxton and Frank LoBiondo, reached the same conclusions. They told Secretary Rumsfeld that, “Given the potential consequences to our military sealift and our CIVMARs, particularly at a time when we are relying heavily on sealift to support our troops worldwide, we would strongly encourage DOD to seriously consider excluding CIVMARs from the NSPS.”

MM&P and other seafaring unions are extremely proud of their relationship with the Department of Defense and, in particular, with MSC and the United States Transportation Command. MM&P and the other seafaring unions are equally proud that, throughout our nation’s history, American merchant mariners have responded to America’s call. They know all too well that ensuring that the United States has the number of trained, loyal American maritime personnel needed to crew the government and privately owned vessels that provide the surge and sustainment capability our country needs is a key component in America’s overall seapower strength. The maritime unions have joined together to fight the proposal to include CIVMARs in NSPS. They will continue the fight because the current system—and not NSPS—will serve our national security in the future, as it has in the past.

C. James Patti is president of MIRAID, the Washington, D.C.-based organization that represents U.S.-flag shipping companies engaged in all aspects of our nation’s foreign and domestic shipping trades and which have collective bargaining relationships with the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P). MM&P International President Timothy Brown is chairman of MIRAID’s Executive Committee.
MM&P’s Work With Government Agencies

Joe Stone

For many years, MM&P has provided input to the regulatory agencies that oversee our livelihood and safety. The union assists them as required, often providing critical input into the decision-making process. The following is an overview of the executive branch agencies the union interacts with on a regular basis.

The U.S. Coast Guard, founded in 1790, has served the United States for 215 years through peace and war. The Coast Guard as an organization has changed entirely since September 11. Today, it is larger than ever, encompasses more duties than before and has a more significant impact on our members, both ashore and at sea. At home, we are confronted with new measures that cover how we approach our daily work and how we conduct ourselves afloat and ashore. Our livelihood often is in the hands of personnel at the Coast Guard Regional Examination Centers, where we unfortunately encounter extended wait times for processing even a simple license application. At the port level, mariners must now deal with extra security and extra duties, while being vigilant for possible terrorist activity. MM&P participates in several Coast Guard working groups. The Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) is composed of members active in the maritime community, either sailing or ashore, plus members of the general public. The chairman is appointed by the commandant of the Coast Guard. Members serve two-year terms. MERPAC meets twice a year. The Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) represents the inland river and near-coastal towing and associated waterways industry. It has the same mandate as MERPAC: to provide the Coast Guard with information from the industry.

The Masters, Mates & Pilots represent Military Sealift Command (MSC) deck officers. This mandate has its foundation in 1949, in the post-World War II era, when MSC was known as the Military Sea Transportation Command. MSC is responsible for military sea movements of equipment and petroleum products.

Civilian mariners represented by MM&P serve in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) fleet of hydrographic survey, oceanographic research and fisheries research vessels. Over the course of the next decade, NOAA plans to add 10 vessels to its fleet. The planned expansion, coupled with NOAA’s decision to begin reassigning MM&P mates aboard the ships, is expected to create new career opportunities for both offshore and government members.

Surface Deployment and Distribution Command is the Army counterpart to MSC. The two are both components of the U.S. Transportation Command, which is known as USTRANSCOM.

The National Defense Transportation Association (NDTA) is made up of members of the transportation industry who meet to discuss the best methods to ensure the efficient distribution of material to the nation’s armed forces. MM&P has been a member of NDTA for many years.
The NDTA Sealift Committee, established in 1987, is an important forum for the U.S. Transportation Command. It is involved in direct wartime operations and planning for all defense transportation assets. The group serves as a forum in which representatives of MSC can meet with maritime industry and labor representatives to exchange ideas.

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) had its beginning as the Maritime Commission. Today, MARAD employs about 800 civilians who oversee the maritime industry. MARAD maintains the vessels in the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) fleet, subsidizes Kings Point, oversees some training funds for state schools and provides funding for maritime school training ships.

Joe Stone is MM&P special representative. Contact him at jstone@bridgedeck.org for more information on MM&P’s work with the government bodies described in this article.

All Ports Bulletin

The Master, Mate & Pilot wants to publish your holiday party photos!

The photos taken at MM&P port office holiday parties are among the most popular sections of The Master, Mate & Pilot. Each year we receive many more photos than can be accommodated in the pages of the magazine. To ensure that pictures of everyone who participates in your party can be included in the January-February 2006 issue of the magazine, we ask that you follow the guidelines below.

Cameras

• If you are using a digital camera, you must ensure that your camera is set to the highest possible resolution. Pictures taken with the default setting cannot be reproduced in the magazine because the resolution will be too low.
• If you are using a film camera, please scan in the images at a resolution of 300 dpi or higher.

Taking the photos

Group together all participants, or as many participants as possible, in three or fewer photos of your party. Please do not send photos of one or two people standing alone.

Captions

Please ensure that everyone pictured is identified in a caption in the e-mail attachment. If you are sending a hard copy, please affix your photo to a piece of paper on which the name of each person pictured appears.

Submitting the photos

Please send the photos as attachments to an e-mail message addressed to Communications@bridgedeck.org or by mail to Communications Department, MM&P, 700 Maritime Boulevard, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090-1941.

If you have any questions, please send an e-mail to MM&P Communications Director Lisa Rosenthal: lrosenthal@bridgedeck.org.

Happy Holidays!
Legislators Target Wal-Mart’s Cost to Taxpayers

More and more state and federal legislators are considering measures that would make public the names of large companies whose employees obtain health care through taxpayer-funded programs for the indigent.

**Wal-Mart makes new, full-time employees wait six months before becoming eligible for health insurance. Since the company has an annual turnover rate approaching 50 percent, a significant portion of its workers never qualify for coverage under the company plan.**

The National Conference of State Legislatures reported that, as of August 2005, lawmakers in 24 states had taken up such bills. At the federal level, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Sen. Jon Corzine (D-N.J.), along with Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-N.Y.), have introduced similar bills.

The proposals are dubbed “Wal-Mart bills” because in 12 of the 13 states for which such information has already been made public (see list of states, in box), Wal-Mart, the world’s largest retailer, tops the list of employers whose workers turn for medical care to state or federal assistance programs paid for by taxpayers.

A study conducted in Georgia in September 2002 revealed that over 10,000 of the children in PeachCare for Kids, the state’s taxpayer-subsidized medical insurance program, belonged to families of Wal-Mart workers. A study in Tennessee revealed that about 9,600 Wal-Mart workers—or 25 percent of those employed by Wal-Mart in the state—were enrolled in TennCare, a public assistance program for the unemployed, the disabled and people with poverty-level incomes. In Washington, high numbers of Wal-Mart employees’ children were enrolled in Medicaid. Wal-Mart is lobbying to prevent the release of such information in other states.

The company makes new, full-time employees wait six months before becoming eligible for health insurance. Since Wal-Mart has an annual turnover rate approaching 50 percent, a significant portion of its workers never qualify for coverage under the company plan.

Part-time employees (identified by Wal-Mart as all those who work fewer than 34 hours a week) must wait two years to be eligible for the company’s insurance and are not given the option of buying coverage for their families.

In August, MM&P’s communications director called Wal-Mart twice for comment on its health care policies, as well as on published reports that it intends to establish its own network of container ships and marine terminals. Two spokeswomen for the company said they were unable to answer the questions and then did not call back as promised.

**States Where Wal-Mart Workers Top the List of Recipients of Taxpayer-Funded Health Care**

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* In Massachusetts, Wal-Mart was second in the list.
In related news, Wal-Mart is still battling charges of sex discrimination brought by 1.6 million women in the United States. The company has also recently been cited for violations of child labor law in Connecticut, Arkansas and New Hampshire.

Local communities are increasingly mobilizing to resist the construction of new Wal-Mart stores because of studies that link its arrival to the collapse of small and large businesses and a dramatic drop in wages and benefits for local workers. In April, in the Los Angeles suburb of Inglewood, 60 percent of voters rejected a measure that would have overturned local laws to allow Wal-Mart to build the first of a new network of 40 California supercenters.

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) calculates Wal-Mart’s cost to taxpayers at several billion dollars annually, or about half a million dollars a year for each store.

To find out more, visit www.wakeupwalmart.com or call 1-866-253-1350.

**Shop Union-Made at New Online Mall**

A new online shopping mall features a wide range of products and services made by unionized workers. Visitors to the site can choose from a range of products that stretches from automobile parts and clothing to financial services and web design. “Marketing research shows that American consumers care about buying goods made under decent working conditions,” says Matt Bates, international secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO’s Union Label & Service Trades Department, which launched the new site, www.shopunionmade.org.

Bates says that to become self-sufficient, the site will have to attract 8,000 visitors a day. Initial funding was provided by contributors. One contributor, American Income Life Insurance, donated $50,000 in seed money and signed a long-term advertising contract. Bates says a number of other advertisers have come on board because “union families are a terrific demographic for merchants. They represent 40 million consumers with middle-class incomes and a growing need for quality products and services.”

You can access the new site at www.unionlabel.org.

**Medical Bills Major Cause of Bankruptcy Even Among the Insured**

Medical bills were cited as the cause of almost half the 1,458,000 personal bankruptcies filed in 2001, according to a study published in 2005 on the website of the journal *Health Affairs*.

Although 76 percent of the people who filed for bankruptcy in 2001 because of medical expenses had insurance when they or a family member first became ill, 38 percent had lost coverage, at least temporarily, by the time they filed. Most of those citing medical expenses as the cause of bankruptcy were middle class homeowners who had attended college. In many cases, illness had forced the breadwinner to take time off work, resulting in the loss of job-based health insurance and income.

The number of bankruptcies filed in the United States tripled between 1980 and 2001. During the same period, the number of medical-related bankruptcies increased twenty-three fold.
A law passed by Congress in early 2005 with the backing of credit card companies will make it much more difficult for people to eliminate debt by declaring bankruptcy, no matter what the cause. The law that was previously in effect gave more discretion to judges.

A recent study released by the consumer group Families USA found that one reason for the rapid rise of health insurance premiums nationwide is the added cost of covering the uninsured. One dollar of every $12 spent for employer-provided health insurance goes to pay the costs of caring for uninsured Americans, according to the study, “Paying a Premium: The Added Cost of Care for the Uninsured.”

Republicans and Democrats Would Alter Federal Budget

Voters in both parties would make big changes in the way their federal tax dollars are spent, according to a survey conducted recently by the University of Maryland’s Program on International Policy Attitudes.

Most of the voters who were shown a breakdown of the country’s budget said if they had the chance, they would make big cuts in funding for defense in general, and for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in particular. They chose to divert the money saved into social services, including education, job training, employment, housing, veterans’ benefits and medical research. The Republican and Democratic voters surveyed said that, as compared to the amounts set aside in President Bush’s 2006 budget, they would double the amount of money directed to social programs.

Voters in both parties chose to maintain the budget levels for homeland security and intelligence at the levels envisioned by the Administration, but 82 percent were in favor of increasing the salaries of military personnel.

According to Yes! magazine, which reported the results of the survey, “the most dramatic change in funding went to pursuing renewable energy sources. On average, the program for researching and developing renewables was given $24 billion more than its current budget, an increase of 1,090 percent.”

The results of the poll can be accessed at www.pipa.org.

Did You Know?

Over half a million people have contacted their legislators through a senior citizens’ website and phone bank to voice their opposition to President Bush’s plan to add a private accounts component to Social Security. In its May 2005 Bulletin, the American Association of Retired People (AARP) quoted Yale University economist Robert J. Shiller to the effect that, under the most optimistic scenario, private accounts would yield a median annual return of 3.4 percent. At global rates of return, he found private accounts would lose money 71 percent of the time and yield a median return of only 2.6 percent.

Shiller calculated that 32 percent of retirees who opted for private accounts would be in the red at retirement. To perform better than the Social Security system as it is now configured, retirees would have to receive, on average, 3 percent annually after inflation.

To participate in AARP’s Social Security campaign, call (800) 846-8610 or visit aarp.org/socialsecurity.

Buy Union-Made Halloween Treats!

Hershey: Reese’s, Kisses, Kit Kat, Twizzlers, Jolly Rancher
Russel Stover Chocolates
American Licorice Co.: Red Vines
Annabelle Candy Co.: Rocky Road, Big Hunk, U-NO, Look!, Abba- Zabba
Herman Goelitz Jelly Belly: Jelly Belly, Goelitz Gummi
Just Born: Peanut Chews, Marshmallow Peeps, Hot Tamales
Nestles: Baby Ruth, Butterfinger, BB’s
Pearson’s Candy Co.: Salted Nut Roll, Nut Goodies, Pearson’s Mint Patties
Sconza Candy
See’s Candies
Tootsie Roll Industries: Tootsie Rolls, Charms Blow Pop, Junior Mints
Notice to All Union and Nonunion Members Regarding Their Rights Under NLRB v. General Motors and CWA v. Beck

This notice applies to all current and future members of any unit represented by the Union that is covered by a union-security clause in its collective-bargaining agreement. Under the case of NLRB v. General Motors, members of a collective-bargaining unit subject to a valid union-security clause have the right to renounce full membership in the Union and to become instead “financial core members,” or “FCM.”

FCMs do not have the right to vote, nominate for office, hold office, or be a candidate for office in the Union, nor can they participate in or even attend Union meetings or any functions of the Union that are limited to Union members. In addition, FCMs have no right to vote on dues increases or on contracts submitted to the membership for ratification. These rights and privileges of Union membership are accorded only to full Union members.

Beyond these traditional rights of Union membership, MM&P members and their families also enjoy an array of member-only benefits which, depending on membership group, include one or more of the following: paid health plan; retirement, pension and 401(k) plans; credit union eligibility; low-rate Union Privilege credit card; Coast Guard Legal Aid program; license insurance program; full access to Union Halls and information; access to the AFL-CIO Community Services Network, which includes family counseling, social services and food banks; protection and support from the MM&P’s parent Union, the International Longshoremen’s Association and all AFL-CIO affiliates; support of numerous local and state labor alliances which have aided MM&P members during contract negotiations, demonstrations and job actions.

FCMs are not afforded these rights and privileges of Union membership.

Please note, however, that under the case of CWA v. Beck, FCMs are still legally required to pay the Union periodic dues and fees for the costs related to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievance adjustment, and other activities reasonably related to the effectuation of the Union’s representational duties (hereinafter called “chargeable activities”). Union expenditures for nonrepresentational activities, such as political activities and lobbying (hereinafter called “nonchargeable activities”), activities which most workers know help build a better climate for us all in bargaining with employers and in securing fundamental workers’ rights, cannot be charged to FCMs who file timely objections.

In calendar year 2004 (the most current year for which audited information is available), we have confirmed that no more than 4.11 percent of all MM&P expenditures were for nonchargeable activities. Please note that much of these nonchargeable expenditures were for activities aimed at maintaining and improving working conditions and benefits for all who work in our industry.

The Union has adopted a Policy and Procedure Concerning “Financial Core Membership” under NLRB v. General Motors and Communication Workers of America v. Beck (hereinafter called the “Policy”), copies of which will be provided upon request or upon filing of objections regarding payment of nonchargeable expenses. Under the Policy, an employee in a bargaining-unit represented by the Union who is subject to a union-security clause may opt-out of full Union membership, and thus become an FCM, by submitting a written statement containing the employee’s name, address, social security number, the name of the employer and a signed/dated declaration asserting that the employee desires to become an FCM. The statement must be addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer at 700 Maritime Boulevard, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090-1941.

Also under the Policy, an FCM has the right to object to the expenditure of his or her dues and fees paid to the Union on nonrepresentational activities. An FCM may file the objection by submitting a written statement containing the FCM’s name, address, social security number, the name of the employer and a signed/dated declaration asserting that the FCM desires his or her dues and fees to be reduced to the representational expenditures proportional amount. The statement must be addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer at 700 Maritime Boulevard, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090-1941. Only FCMs may file objections to paying for nonchargeable expenditures. Under the Policy, Union members whose membership becomes temporarily suspended because of delinquency in their dues payments, or for other reasons, are not considered FCMs and will continue to be charged full dues and fees, absent compliance with the opting-out procedure. Also under the policy, objections will not be presumed from compliance with the opting-out procedure. Thus, FCMs who wish to become objecting FCMs must comply with the objection procedure set forth above. Finally, under the Policy, an FCM who obtains a reduction in dues and fees after filing objections under this policy will be required to pay the difference between full dues and fees and the reduced amount for the period during which the reduction was granted before the FCM is allowed to join/re-join the Union.

We must underscore that bargaining-unit employees who become FCMs lose all rights and benefits of Union membership while they continue to be legally obligated to pay chargeable dues and fees to the Union under existing union-security agreements.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the vast majority of workers believe that the little extra in dues for maintaining full Union membership and enjoying all its valuable benefits is quite a bargain. We trust that everyone who carefully considers the options will become and remain a full Union member. If you are not a Union member or have not yet had the opportunity to join, please contact the MM&P International Headquarters or any MM&P membership group office for a membership application.
Since this is the fall edition of the magazine and most members’ dependents are back in school, I thought it would be a good time to clarify the procedures for assuring that 19-year-old dependents who are still in school maintain their coverage under the Plan.

Important: A member must remain eligible for coverage under the Health & Benefit Plan in order for his or her dependents to be covered.

How long will the Plan cover my dependent child?
The Plan automatically covers enrolled,* unmar- ried, dependent children until their 19th birthday, subject to Plan Rules and Regulations. Once a dependent reaches his or her 19th birthday, in order for coverage to continue, the Plan must have on file a completed Affidavit for Dependent Child, including all required documentation for verification of student status. Without this information, the dependent will be dropped from coverage effective the first day of the month following his or her 19th birthday.

One month prior to a dependent’s 19th birthday, the Plan routinely sends members a letter requesting a completed Affidavit for Dependent Child and back-up documentation. If you fail to return the required information in time, your dependent will be dropped from coverage and a COBRA notice will be sent to your dependent notifying him or her of the right to continuation of coverage under COBRA.

What documents do I have to attach to the affidavit?
When you complete the first Affidavit for Dependent Child after your dependent turns 19, the Plan will require the following:

• the page of your prior year’s 1040 tax return listing your dependent child; and
• student registration for the current semester indicating that the classes have been paid for.

If your 19-year-old dependent started elementary school late or repeated a grade, he or she could still be attending high school. If this is the case, we require only documentation from the high school that states that your dependent is a full-time high school student and lists the anticipated graduation date.

How many classes constitute “full-time” student status?
If your dependent has graduated from high school and is attending college full time, he or she must be registered for at least 12 credit hours per semester.

What is an accredited institution?
An accredited institution is any university or community college or junior college accredited by the state or regional higher education commission. Culinary schools and trade schools can also be accredited. (If in doubt about your school’s accreditation status, please call the Plan Office and talk to a benefit advisor at 410-850-8500 from 8:30 a.m. EST to 4:30 p.m. EST.)

*Children of pensioners are covered only when they were born, adopted or otherwise qualified for benefits prior to the pensioner’s effective date.
How often do I have to submit affidavit information?

When the Plan Office receives documentation that a dependent is registered for the fall semester (September through December), he or she will be covered through April 30th of the following year. When the Plan Office receives documentation of the spring semester, we will cover your dependent through September 30. As soon as we receive documentation for fall registration, we will extend eligibility through April 30 of the following year.

What if my child drops out of college for a semester?

He or she will be dropped from coverage and offered COBRA continuation coverage.

How often do I need to submit my tax returns?

We require that you submit a copy of the relevant page of your federal tax return once a year after your child is enrolled in college. If dependents are full-time students, we assume they must rely on our members for over 50 percent of their support. If, however, we do not receive registration/payment information for each semester, and in the time frames listed above for fall and spring semesters, your dependent may be dropped from coverage.

Are they eligible for coverage if they return to school full time?

Yes, as long as the member remains eligible. However, if the student has withdrawn from school for a semester, we will ask for another copy of tax information in addition to the document attesting to the fact that registration at the school has been paid for.

As long as my dependent is enrolled in an accredited institution full time, how long is he or she eligible for dependent coverage under the Plan?

The Plan will cover unmarried dependents who are full time students until their 23rd birthday.

Remember: Your dependents are only eligible for coverage if they meet the above conditions and as long as you, the member, remain eligible for coverage.

How to Use the Annual Physical Benefit

One of our members kindly suggested that I clarify the procedures for using the Annual Physical Benefit. If you would like to take advantage of the $1,000 per family annual physical benefit, there are steps you can...
take to assure that your claim is paid correctly. Prior to your appointment, you can obtain an annual physical form from one of the Port Offices or the Plan Office in Linthicum Heights. You can also download a form at www.bridgedeck.org. When your doctor bills on this form, the Plan’s claims staff will pay benefits for the physician visit and all tests that are performed within six months of the annual physical (routine blood work, screening colonoscopy, mammograms) up to the $1,000 annual benefit limit. Other bills coded to reflect routine immunizations and well-child visits are automatically paid under the annual physical benefit.

If you forget to get the form prior to the visit and want to assure that the claim is paid under the $1,000 annual benefit, contact one of the benefit advisors and ask him or her to make a note in the system to flag the bill when it comes in.

If you are unaware of the way in which your physician and/or the lab has billed and, after receiving an explanation of benefits (EOB) from the Plan Office you find that an expense has been paid incorrectly under the diagnostic benefit but should have been paid under the annual physical benefit, call the Plan Office and we will adjust the claim.

It is important to remember that if you have exhausted your family’s annual physical benefit and the physician’s office bills the visit as “routine” or “annual physical,” you will be responsible for payment of the entire balance since routine care and screening tests are not covered under the Plan’s Major Medical benefit.

Plan rules and regulations state that, in order for an expense to be considered allowable, it “must be necessary for the care and treatment of an injury or illness that is not job related.” You will, however, be entitled to the Plan’s discounted PPO fees through First Health and MultiPlan and get more “bang for your buck,” if you use a participating provider.

Updated Permanent Data Form

By now, all members who are eligible for health benefits under the MM&P Health & Benefit Plan should have received a mailing that included the revised permanent data form. Please complete and return the form to the Plan Office as soon as possible. We realize that with foreign voyages, vacations and other issues, there may be some delay in receiving the completed forms. This is an ongoing process and we expect that forms will be returned over a period of months.

I would like to mention that if you need another form for any reason, you can request one from any of the Port Offices, the Plan Office or you can download and print a form from www.bridgedeck.org. These forms cannot be filed electronically since we don’t have the capability to accept them on line. I apologize for the inconvenience. A pre-paid return envelope was included in the mailing for our members’ convenience.

We have also gotten a number of questions regarding the request for Social Security numbers for beneficiaries. The reason that we request this information is to expedite the payment process in the event that the Plan should have to pay death benefits to one of our members’ beneficiaries. If you are unable or unwilling to provide this number, please return the form to the Plan Office without the information.

A number of members of the Pilot Group have called asking why the Plan requires a beneficiary designation when members of this group are not entitled to a death benefit. The reason is because the form has been standardized for use by all participants under the Plan. Further, a number of Pilots may be enrolled in the Voluntary and the Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit through the Plan. These members must list a beneficiary on the form.

In the next issue, I’ll cover highlights of the Board of Trustees meetings (September 27-29) and provide an update on the Medicare Part D benefit and how it relates to our retirees on Medicare.
David Harcos, shipping out of San Francisco. He last sailed for American Ship Management as second mate of the President Adams.

Daniel Ray Hobbs, shipping out of the Great Lakes. He last sailed for Cleveland Tankers as master of the Gemini.

Michael Kidd, shipping out of Port Everglades. He last sailed for Patriot Contract Services as master of the USNS Fisher.

Donald Marshall, shipping out of Seattle. He last sailed for Matson Navigation Company as master of the Maui.

Scott R. Martin, shipping out of San Francisco. He last sailed for Matson Navigation Company as chief mate of the Lurline.

Alton R. McAlister, shipping out of Houston. He last sailed for AHL Shipping Company as chief engineer of the Captain Downing.

Riley E. Messer II, shipping out of the Great Lakes. He last sailed for Cleveland Tankers as second mate of the Gemini.

Klaus D. Niem, shipping out of San Francisco. He last sailed for Horizon Lines Inc. as chief mate of the Horizon Reliance.

John P. Redfearn, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Matson Navigation Company as second mate of the Lurline.

Robert D. Ricker sailed in the New England area in the early 1980s. He last sailed for Boston Fuel Transportation aboard one of the company’s tugboats.

Stuart Hoxton Smith Jr. last shipped out of New Orleans for Waterman Steamship Company as third mate of the Stonewall Jackson.

Stephen Noel Thompson, shipping out of New Orleans. He last sailed for American Ship Management as master of the Philippines.

Steven Mitchell Wilson, shipping out of Seattle. He last sailed for American Ship Management as master of the President Truman.
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Website: www.mates.org
Miles G. Cook, 81, died Feb. 4. A pensioner since 1986 and a resident of Sun City, Ariz., he last sailed for West Coast Shipping Co. as second mate on the SS Cornucopia.

W.S. Dee, 82, died Aug. 7, 2003. He last sailed in the 1980s as a member of MM&P’s Pacific Maritime Region.

Jorges A. Domingues, 86, died Jan. 27. A resident of Slidell, La., and a pensioner since 1984, he last sailed for Delta SS Lines as second mate on the Delta Caribe. A talented artist, he enjoyed oil painting on canvas and Delft blue painting on tiles. He leaves: his wife, Jacqueline; a daughter, Frances Yvonne; a granddaughter, Lucia Navaré; and a sister, Natercia.

Capt. Roger W. Fairfield, 90, died Feb. 19. He grew up during the Great Depression and went to sea at the age of 17. At 29, he earned an unlimited master’s license. During World War II, he sailed Liberty ships and T2 tankers. He last sailed as second mate on the SS Mill Spring for Charles Kurz Co. An avid reader, he loved the classics and enjoyed memorizing the poems of Robert Louis Stevenson. He was a baseball fan who read the sports news every day. He is survived by: his wife, Carolyn; two daughters, Jackie Nordling and Mary Gustafson; grandchildren and great-grandchildren; step-children; and many other relatives.

Capt. Abbott L. Gertsen, 86, died Feb. 11. A resident of Center Ossippee, N.H., he had become a pensioner in 1984. He sailed for Marine Transport Lines Inc., as permanent master of the SS Alaskan, after earlier sailing on the vessel in the same capacity for Handy International. He also served as master on the SS Texan and the SS Louisiana Brimstone. During World War II, he served aboard merchant transports in the North Atlantic convoys on the Murmansk Run and in the Pacific. He served later in the Korean War. As a retiree, he traveled throughout the United States, and pursued his interest in football, fishing, swimming, reading and music. He is survived by: his wife, Arlene; daughter, Elaine Marlow and her husband Michael; son, Gary Gertsen and his wife, Terry; grandchildren, nieces and nephews.


Charles M. Cain, 78, died March 1. A pensioner since 1988 and a resident of Punta Gorda, Fla., he last sailed with US Lines Inc. as second mate of the American Trojan. He enjoyed boating, woodworking and travel. He is survived by his wife, Ann, and their five daughters.

Bernard L. Haat, 85, died March 15. A resident of Mira Loma, Calif., he had become a pensioner in 1992. He last sailed with Sealand Service on the Sealand Independence as third mate.

Ebbe Friis Hansen, 85, died Jan. 1. A resident of Skagen, Denmark, he had become a pensioner in 1987. He last sailed with Farrell Lines Inc. as master of the Argonaut.

Joseph R. Judge, 91, died April 5. A resident of Medford, Ore., he had become a pensioner in 1976. He last sailed on the Long Beach as second mate. He loved classical music, as well as playing the violin and golf. He is survived by: his daughter, Tanga Tarnower; three grandchildren; and a great-grandson.
Winston R. Johnson, 77, died March 11. A pensioner since 1992 and a resident of Los Angeles, he last sailed with Puerto Rico Marine Management Inc. as third mate on the SS Humacao. He loved the sea, foreign travel and all sports, especially football. He is survived by a sister, Marie Thomas.

William J. Kelley, 74, died March 10. A pensioner since 1990 and a resident of Ormond Beach, Fla., he last sailed with Waterman Steamship Co. as third mate on the Stonewall Jackson.

Jorgen V. Kofoed, 83, died Feb. 18. A resident of Baltimore, Md., he had become a pensioner in 1976. He last sailed with Sealand Service Inc. on the Baltimore.

Capt. Albro P. Michell Sr., 93, April 25. An Associated Branch Bar Pilot for 51 years, he was born and lived his entire life in New Orleans and Pilottown, La. He was a member of the American Pilot Association as well as of MM&P. He retired as a commander in the U.S. Coast Guard after serving in World War II. His father and brother had also been bar pilots. He is survived by: his sister, Marian Michell Evans; his daughter, Mida Michell Tuohy; his sons, Capt. Albro P. Michell Jr. (a retired bar pilot), Capt. Jacques B. Michell (MM&P member and active bar pilot) and Peter Scott Michell.

Milan T. Pazin, 90, died March 3. A pensioner since 1982 and a resident of Burlingame, Calif., he last sailed with West Coast Shipping Co. as master of the SS Lompoc.

Matthew J. Reynolds, 85, died March 13. A resident of Metairie, Calif., he had become a pensioner in 1977. He last sailed with Overseas Maritime Corp. as third mate on the Overseas Arctic.

Glen D. Savelle, 75, died March 19. A pensioner since 1995, he was a resident of San Andreas, Calif. He enjoyed woodworking and had built his own home. He is survived by his wife, Julia Ann Savelle.

Bob Taylor, 79, died March 4. A resident of Mobile, Ala., he had become a pensioner in 1974. He last sailed with Sealand Service Inc. as chief mate on the Newark. He spent his free time golfing, woodworking and telling stories to his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Robert A. Vassar, 92, died March 8. A resident of Seattle, he had become a pensioner in 1971. He last sailed as second mate of the Fortuna. He enjoyed duck and pheasant hunting with the Springer Spaniels that he and his wife, Rita, raised. He is survived by: his son, Gary; daughter, Stacey; three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Louis E. Wasilewski, 87, died April 13. A pensioner since 1981 and a resident of Hewitt, Texas, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Co. on the SS Marjorie Lykes as third mate. He is survived by: his wife, Mable Stanford Wasilewski; one sister; one step-daughter; three step-grandchildren and five step-great-grandchildren.

William R. Weinberg, 90, died Feb. 27. A resident of East Norwich, N.Y., he had become a pensioner in 1976. He last sailed for Grace Lines as first mate of the Santa Mariana. After retiring, he enjoyed tennis, swimming, stamp collecting, playing musical instruments and gardening. One day while turning soil in the garden he found 3,000 antique bottles dating from the 1800s. These he catalogued for exhibition in libraries and halls. He is survived by: three children; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren and a sister, Florence.
Capt. H. James (Jim) Titus, 80, died April 6 in Dickinson, Texas. Jim was born Sept. 3, 1924, in Elmira, N.Y. In 1942, he graduated from Southside High School in Elmira. After graduating from New York State Maritime Academy in the class of 1944, he served in the Merchant Marine during World War II. In the Pacific, he served as second mate on the SS Chapultepec and participated in the Leyte and Mediterranean aboard the Liberty Ship SS Benjamin Bourne, which had been converted to a troop ship to bring home the Third Army from Europe.

After the war, Jim sailed as a licensed deck officer for 33 years, 26 as master on various sized vessels, foreign, intercoastal and coastwise. In March 1964, off the Virginia coast, his tanker, the SS San Jacinto, exploded midship. Forty-five crewmen survived with only one fatality. When the Alaskan pipeline opened, Jim’s ship, the SS Sohio Intrepid, was in the first group of tankers to load fuel in Valdez.

After coming ashore, he became MM&P port agent in Houston, a position in which he served for eight years. He retired in 1985.

He had an unlimited master’s license, 11-14 Issue, which includes radar observer and first class pilotage, unlimited tonnage in Alaskan waters. Jim completed graduate studies at MITAGS, where he trained on the simulator and ship automated systems. He also attended a course on ship handling at the Marine Research and Training Center, in Port Revel, France.

Jim was an Eagle Scout; past-president of the Council of American Master Mariners, Houston; first vice-president of CAMMI National, Gulf; past-president of the Marine Square Club of Houston; a member of the Alumni Association, New York State Maritime Academy; member, Pilot Review Board, Galveston; founder and first president of the Lone Star Chapter of the American Merchant Marine Veterans; president of the Church Council, Faith Lutheran Church in Dickinson; and a Master Mason.

Jim was preceded in death by his son, Patrick; his nephew, Robert Masia Jr.; and his sister, Nancy Stage. He is survived by: his wife of 60 years, Jane Howell Titus; his son, Michael James Titus and wife, Debra Jean; by his grandson, Christopher Allen Titus; by his brother-in-law, Robert P. Masia; and by his nieces, Patty Bruner, Linda Smith, Kelly Brault, Norma Lopez and Jane Trudeau.
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The names below represent a partial listing of active and retired MM&P members who have voluntarily contributed $100 or more to the PCF.

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The names below represent a partial listing of active and retired MM&P members.

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* These active and retired members have contributed $1,000 or more.
I Support the MM&P Political Contribution Fund: You Should, Too

“MM&P needs a strong presence in Washington, D.C., to preserve and pass legislation like the Jones Act and the Maritime Security Program, which are crucial for our jobs. The PCF gives us this presence. I want to do my part to keep MM&P strong. Donating to the PCF is one way I do it.”

— Lloyd Rath, San Francisco, an MM&P member for 36 years. His last command was for Matson Navigation Company as master of the Mahimahi.
Dramatic, colorful prints of the steamboat Seawanhaka are being offered for sale to benefit MM&P’s Political Contribution Fund. (Above) The artist, Capt. Brian Hope, signs a limited number of prints as MM&P President Timothy Brown looks on. The $40 cost of each print includes shipping, handling, and a brief history, on parchment, of the union’s dramatic origins in the fire aboard the Seawanhaka. Capt. Hope sailed in the Vietnam Sealift and with U.S. Lines before joining the Association of Maryland Pilots. His paintings hang in museums, businesses and private homes. To obtain a colorful print and further the interests of our nation’s merchant mariners, contact MM&P Asst. Comptroller Beverly Gutmann by phone (410-850-8700, ext. 11), fax (410-850-8384) or e-mail (bgutmann@bridgedeck.org).
MITAGS Executive Assistant Brandi Smith

Brandi Smith is the anchor in a tide of activities in the fast-paced administrative offices of the executive director, who oversees not only the training institute but also the hotel and dining room operations, the conference center, and the Pacific Maritime Institute in Seattle.

Brandi has worked at MITAGS for nine years. Before becoming Glen Paine’s executive assistant, she was registrar, a role in which she completed course certificates, and an administrative assistant in charge of all invoicing for the Conference Center at the Maritime Institute.

Brandi’s duties encompass the full range of administrative and reporting functions necessary to keep the multifaceted training institute in motion. From her command center in the executive office, she greets visitors from around the globe, arranges lodging and tours for guests, transcribes meeting notes, coordinates reports for the trustees, and prepares letters, memos, faxes and manuals. Although her days are busy, Brandi is always quick to smile and eager to help anyone who enters the office.

Brandi’s home life is equally animated. Besides husband, Victor, she shares her life with a very active teenager and a pre-teen: Amanda, 13, is a voracious reader, and Gary, 10, is a soccer player and avid fan of the Baltimore Orioles.

Hotel, Game Room and Pool Renovations

The project to upgrade the guest rooms in the South Residence Tower is about to get underway again. The rooms will be fully equipped with new furniture, including a desk with executive chair and cable television. All rooms will have a refrigerator, coffee maker and high speed Internet access. It is expected that the renovations will be completed by March 2006.

The indoor swimming pool on the lower level of the North Tower has been overhauled. The 50-foot pool was totally resurfaced with the addition of racing lanes and targets. A new heat exchanger, a three-horsepower pump and a filtration system were also installed. The pool is used primarily for the Basic Safety Training course but is also open to recreational swimmers. Please check with the front desk staff for hours of availability. The renovation of the game room has been completed. Along with new carpeting, heating and air conditioning, there is also new equipment: two pool tables, a ping pong table, a foosball table, dart boards, air hockey and shuffleboard.

Expanded Trust Student Benefits

MITAGS has announced an important policy change for students who are taking Chief Mate/Master courses or the AB to Mate Program. Under the policy, an MM&P trust student who works for companies that contribute to the Maritime Advancement Training, Education & Safety (MATES) Program may be eligible to attend up to four weeks of training at MITAGS and or PMI if he or she meets the eligibility requirements. MM&P trust students who meet the requirements can enroll in Chief Mate/Master courses or the AB to Mate Program for up to eight weeks. For additional information, please visit www.mitags.org.

Malaysian Fire Fighters Train at MITAGS

Twenty land-based fire fighters from Malaysia trained at MITAGS from July 11 to Aug. 5. Edward Conaway, president of All American Environmental Services in Columbia, Md., was responsible for organizing the training at the institute. Don Merkle was lead instructor for the four-week program, which covered land-based marine fire fighting, fast rescue boat, confined space, land-based fire fighting and maritime security training.
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