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Spring 2026



The Master, Mate & Pilot

Official Voice of the International
Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots

**NLRB Rules That OSG and ATC
Licensed Deck Officers
Can Be Represented By MM&P!**

**AMG Members Back at Work After
Offshore Wind Projects Restart**

**Excessive Workloads Driving US
Mariners to Leave Profession**



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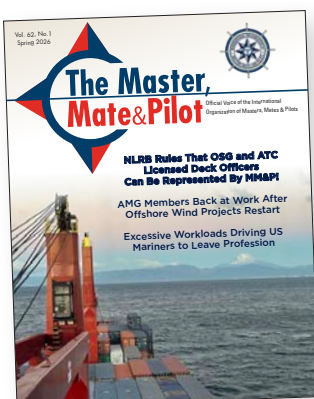
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About the Cover

When Captain Fred Holm took this photo in December 2025, *APL Oceania* was drifting in the Sagami Bay after departing Tokyo. Mt. Fuji can be seen in the distance.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Union Brothers and Sisters,

As this issue of the magazine heads to press, I have excellent news to report: the National Labor Relations Board has just ruled unanimously that licensed deck officers at Overseas Shipholding Group (OSG) and Alaska Tanker Company (ATC) can be represented by Masters, Mates & Pilots in collective bargaining.

This resounding victory at the NLRB vindicates the expressed desire of OSG and ATC licensed deck officers who overwhelmingly voted to be represented by MM&P. It is also the result of two years of hard work by Atlantic Ports Vice President Tom Larkin, the other members of the union's Offshore Advisory Committee, pensioner member Captain Shawn Tucey and MM&P's incomparable legal team.

An article on the union's victory—unquestionably the largest bottom-up organizing effort of licensed deck officers in the US merchant marine in at least fifty years—appears on page 5 of this issue of the magazine.

This successful outcome in the organizing arena comes at a time when the MM&P leadership team is facing significant operational challenges in the administration of MM&P Plans and MITAGS.

On the Plans front, our outstanding longtime Plans Administrator, Patrick McCullough, has taken some necessary leave. We look forward to his swift return.

In his absence, Ken Ryan—who has spent his entire professional life working for the benefit of our members—is now the Acting Director of MM&P Plans. I cannot think of anybody more qualified, or more knowledgeable about all things Plans related, to fill the administrator's role in Patrick's absence.

Now, on to our training institute, MITAGS. The operations of MITAGS are overseen by the MATES Program, a non-profit trusteeship established in the 1960s by MM&P and its contracted companies. As the President of MM&P, I am also the Chairman of the trust.

The trust's initial mission was helping Able Seafarers become Unlimited Tonnage Third Mates, Oceans, to respond to the officer shortage during the Vietnam War.

When the war ended, the focus shifted to continuing education. Employers contributing to the joint labor-management trust recognized the benefit of having well-trained deck officers serving aboard their vessels. The concept proved so successful that training was extended to pilots and non-members as well. By working collaboratively with our employers, we have been able to achieve a level of performance that allows us to fulfill our mission of strengthening the American Merchant Marine and the US-flag fleet.

While MITAGS was established with the mission of serving as a first class training institution, over the years it

took on responsibilities in the hospitality sphere, responsibilities that have been ably carried out by its unionized staff, who besides residence halls and a restaurant also run a successful conference center.

The idea of expanding into complementary services, such as lodging and restoration, was ambitious as well as appropriate for the time and place, since there were few facilities for out-of-town students or guests in the area surrounding the school.

Today, however, the operational administration of such diverse facilities under one roof—and a very large roof at that—has become a stretch for our organization in both financial and managerial terms, in particular because necessary maintenance of the physical plant has been deferred.

Going forward, changes will need to be made to strengthen the institute's ability to carry out its core mission. The union has consistently worked to support MITAGS in its efforts to evolve to meet the needs of the moment. Your Vice Presidents are familiar with the challenges the organization is facing and will update our members as plans advance.

My career in maritime is in large part the result of the resources invested in training by both MM&P and MITAGS. Our License Advancement Program (LAP) was an important stepping-stone for me in moving up through the ranks to become an unlimited tonnage master and then a union official. This program has never been more important than it is today because of the challenges for our junior officers in successfully completing the revised Deck License Exams.

All of us in the maritime industry have worked to make mariner training as efficient and effective as possible. But an often overlooked part of the equation is the government component, since regulations can either contribute to success or create unnecessary obstacles: one example is the long and challenging process required to obtain course approvals.

To resolve the problem, Congress must give government agencies the resources they need to support our maritime schools so that they can move forward in a timely manner on the development of advanced courses on propulsion, alternative fuels and future technologies.

To enhance the opportunities available to today's mariners, MM&P and MITAGS have worked closely with our employer



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From the President (continued)

counterparts, many of whom have themselves attended the maritime schools or sailed as licensed officers. Although we are limited by the nationwide shortage of qualified American mariners, we will continue to provide first class training to every student who walks through the doors in a quest to become part of the American Merchant Marine.

With the support of government—Congress, the administration and the regulatory agencies—our industry can contribute to increasing recruitment and retention by making a career in maritime more attractive to more people.

On a different topic that has positive repercussions for our members, MM&P recently received excellent news regarding the protection of Licensed Deck Officer jurisdiction with contracted employer APL. Arbitrator Randi H. Abramsky concluded in her award of March 4, 2026, that American President Lines LLC and its affiliate APL Marine Services Ltd. violated the collective bargaining agreement when the company did not crew the CMA CGM Phoenix with Licensed Deck Officers represented by MM&P.

APL argued it had “the unfettered right to select the operator” and the “management right to decide ‘how and by whom’ vessels operate.” Arbitrator Abramsky soundly rejected APL’s argument because of “MM&P’s broad jurisdiction over LDOs on ‘all U.S. flag oceangoing vessels,’ including newly added non-MSP vessels.”

After reviewing all the evidence, Arbitrator Abramsky found the CBA’s limited American Automar “carve-out,” negotiated in 2005, “did not mean that the Company may assign new U.S. flag ocean-going vessels engaged in commercial international trade to APL Maritime/Osprey and thereby by-pass the MM&P’s broad jurisdictional rights.”

“On the evidence presented, this cannot have been, and was not, the mutual intent of the parties when the ‘carve-out’ provision was negotiated,” she concluded.

MM&P will enforce Arbitrator Abramsky’s award and will continue to protect our members’ work jurisdiction aboard any new tonnage brought into the APL fleet. To that end, MM&P is in the process of enforcing Arbitrator Abramsky’s Award by seeking to make whole MM&P Licensed Deck Officers for wages and benefits (along with full interest) who were denied employment opportunities on the CMA CGM Phoenix from July 2025 through October 2025.

MM&P had previously defended our members’ employment jurisdiction aboard the ship in a successful AFL-CIO Article XX hearing and appeal that was concluded in September 2025 with MM&P’s victory over American Maritime Officers (AMO)/Seafarers International Union (SIU).

MM&P will provide additional updates as the CBA enforcement progresses. A special thanks to our expert legal team and to the MM&P members who provided many hours of assistance toward this effort.

Our members are once again in harm’s way as MM&P-crewed vessels are directly involved in the conflict in the Middle East. The day after the initial US-Israeli strike on Iran, MM&P sent the following statement to our members in the vicinity of the hostilities:

MM&P will act as a liaison and work closely with your companies, MARAD and DOD to further support our members’ safety during this conflict.

All of the Offshore Advisory Committee will work to facilitate our members’ requests and needs.

MM&P conveys its deep respect and admiration for your service to our Country and our Organization.

MM&P President Emeritus Don Marcus has provided a superb editorial on this subject which I have included in this issue. His knowledge of our union’s history and his ability to express the sentiments that all of us feel at this moment are unparalleled. I am proud that Captain Marcus continues to be actively engaged in our battles.

In closing, I want to reiterate: The challenges we face will not abate. The struggle to protect the jobs and working conditions of our members will continue. Each of us must participate in these efforts by respecting the terms of our negotiated contracts, continuing to demonstrate the professionalism and integrity that MM&P members are known for, and upholding the provisions of the MM&P Constitution.

Fraternally,
Donald F. Josberger
MM&P International President

FROM THE PRESIDENT EMERITUS

“Show Some Guts”

The recent exhortation by the President of the United States to “show some guts” and run the gauntlet of the Strait of Hormuz had to strike a nerve in every merchant seaman, regardless of nationality or location on the globe. As of this writing, there are approximately 100 merchant ships and an international community of some 30,000 civilian seafarers stranded in the Persian Gulf. Depending on the source, up to 19 vessels have been hit by missiles or drones and at least eight seafarers have been killed since the start of the war against Iran on February 28, 2026. One of those vessels was the U.S.-flag *Stena Imperative*, which was struck by two projectiles on March 2 while in port in Bahrain, causing the death of one shipyard worker and wounding two others.

Numerous U.S. citizen merchant mariners, including the crew of the *Stena Imperative* and other U.S.-flag vessels, are among the seafarers stranded in the Persian Gulf. Others are in or near ports outside the Gulf awaiting developments. None of these seafarers could have been assured by the statements made by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in his March 13 press conference when he said that with regards to the oil trade and the attacks on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz: “We have been dealing with it and don’t need to worry about it.”

The supply chains of the world depend on transport by sea. Observers of recent events, not to mention students of history, are well aware that global choke points such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal, the Panama Canal, the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Gibraltar and half a dozen other key waterways around the world can have a drastic impact on the world economy if closed to commerce.

For the U.S. seafarers standing by aboard their vessels inside the Persian Gulf or diverted away from the Gulf by the current war, uncertainty is a given. Since at least the Spanish-American War of 1898, in virtually every U.S. war, declared or undeclared, supported by Congress or the American people or not, the guns start firing first, followed shortly thereafter by the U.S. government’s realization that seaborne military logistics, U.S. foreign commerce and, finally, the U.S.-flag merchant marine and the seafarers that deliver the cargoes have to be taken into account.

Within the last two years, prior to the attack on Iran, the crews of U.S. and foreign merchant vessels have faced attacks by Houthi missiles and drones in and around another global choke point, the Bab al-Mandeb Strait. At least half a dozen U.S. flag vessels experienced near-miss attacks. This key waterway is located at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Missiles, drone attacks, gunboat

and uncrewed surface vessel attacks in Middle Eastern waters are not a new phenomenon to U.S. or foreign seafarers. The attacks, crew fatalities and vessel seizures in and around the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea have proven to be only a prelude to what is now taking place in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz.

In fact, history is repeating itself in the Persian Gulf. Few will remember the “Tanker War” which took place during the closing years of the Iran-Iraq War in 1987-88. During this time, the U.S. decided to re-flag a number of Kuwaiti tankers to the U.S. flag to inhibit Iranian attacks on these vessels as they transited the Persian Gulf and its outlet at the Strait of Hormuz.

Two of these U.S. flag tankers, the *M/V Bridgeton* and the *M/V Sea Isle City*, were attacked and seriously damaged. The *M/V Bridgeton* was struck by a mine off Farsi Island in the Persian Gulf, and the *M/V Sea Isle City* was struck by a Silkworm missile fired from the Al Faw peninsula in Iraq which at the time was occupied by Iranian forces. Both attacks were launched by Iran.

U.S. Captain John Hunt was permanently blinded during the attack on the *M/V Sea Isle City*, and eleven other members of the crew were hospitalized. Ultimately, some thirty U.S. naval vessels were engaged, U.S. attacks on Iranian facilities were undertaken, including during ground attacks by U.S. Special Forces as part of the vessel escort operations. This effort was dubbed “Operation Earnest Will,” which is in itself a telling distinction in tone from “Operation Epic Fury.” Hostilities ended with the peace between Iran and Iraq in 1988, but it should be noted that some 64 seafarers from many nations were killed through the course of the “Tanker War.” Notably, the entire operation was carried out under sanction of UN Resolution 598 and in conjunction with the French and British navies.

Military technology has advanced exponentially since 1988. Seafarers remain on the front line of war, however. Today they are more lethally exposed than ever. Seafarers do, in fact, have something to “worry about,” as do shipowners. Whatever their



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From the President Emeritus (continued)

concern for their crew, shipowners will protect their investments. The price of oil may be going up, but War Risk insurance for vessels entering the Persian Gulf is priceless—it simply cannot be had. “Nothing to worry about,” indeed.

Therefore, U.S. merchant seamen in and around the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, and Eastern Mediterranean—and thousands of other seamen—have reason for grave concern. Of course, so do millions of innocent civilians throughout the region. The men and women of the U.S. Merchant Marine, 90% of whom are card-carrying union members, require more for assurance than bluster from the current administration in Washington, DC. As the motto of the United States Merchant Marine Academy states: *Acta Non Verba*. “Deeds, not Words,” least of all hollow assurances from government officials.

Those who go to sea for a living must deal with the hazards of their jobs the same way that firemen and mine workers do. In wartime, merchant seamen know they are at risk. They must make their personal decisions accordingly.

When they make their decisions, they need certain basic information and protections from maritime employers. These needs have been cogently expressed by the Nautilus Federation, an international federation of over twenty maritime unions representing seafarers from sixteen different countries including the United States.

Seafarers must be:

- Fully and promptly informed of all known risks before entering war zones or areas of warlike activity;
- Provided unhindered right to repatriation and transit should they decline to enter zones or areas of heightened risk;
- Protected from disciplinary action, loss of pay, impact on insurance, or detriment where safety decisions are taken in good faith;
- Supported with appropriate security measures, welfare provisions, and access to assistance where voyages are disrupted;
- At the very minimum, the protections—including bonus pay and compensation for death or disability agreed to by the participants in the International Bargaining Forum, of which the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) is a party—must be met for service in designated “Warlike Operations Areas” which, among other locations around the world, (such as the Black Sea) include the Persian Gulf, Red

Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and the coast of Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.

What U.S. seafarers need for assurance regarding the performance of their duties in wartime is basically the same that any prudent seafarer would logically require before voluntarily putting herself or himself in danger:

- Naval Escort/Convoy and oversight system in war zones: This has been the most effective protective measure from the days of the Spanish galleons to the Second World War, to the 1987-88 Tanker War, to recent attacks in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandeb Strait. It needs to be implemented in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz.
- Proactive Countermeasures against shore-based air attack and naval facilities. This appears to be ongoing.
- Effective Mine-Sweeping capability. The U.S. naval minesweeping capabilities are notoriously limited and under-resourced.
- Secure Communications equipment aboard ship and, if required, trained communications personnel with direct access to the appropriate military authorities, escort vessels and surveillance personnel. This need was apparent in the Red Sea attacks and remains to be adequately addressed aboard U.S. commercial vessels in war zones.
- International Cooperation and the pooling of naval assets. It has been repeatedly made clear to U.S. merchant mariners that the U.S. Navy does not have sufficient equipment to prioritize escort and close oversight protection of U.S. vessels, let alone the international merchant fleet that transits the Persian Gulf.
- Sufficient War Risk Insurance.

It may be a bridge too far to expect traditional allies who we have maligned and whose forces we have denigrated to pool resources in a war that the U.S. and Israel have started. However, if the world economy is to be stabilized and supply chains are to remain intact, seafarers must feel safe enough to willingly ply their trade.

In the words of British Trades Union Congress President and Nautilus International Director Mark Dickinson:

“Seafarers are not expendable, and they must not be treated as collateral damage in regional or international conflicts. The current situation in and around the Strait of Hormuz represents

NEWS BRIEFS

From the President Emeritus (continued)

a serious escalation in risk for the men and women working at sea, many of whom are simply trying to do their jobs and return home safely. Their safety must come first, and that means clear information, robust protections, and the unequivocal right to refuse to sail into warlike or unsafe zones without fear of penalty."

U.S. merchant mariners are overwhelmingly members of unions. They are covered by collective bargaining agreements. They are civilians. Opinions about the war vary greatly aboard U.S.-flag ships as they do in our communities.

Few civilian workers of any type have risen to the occasion more patriotically or consistently than American merchant seamen, who have done so since the first United States ensign was hoisted aboard a vessel in 1775. During the Second World War, American seafarers, overwhelmingly union members, suffered a higher proportional casualty rate than any branch of the U.S. armed

forces. Close to 10,000 seamen were killed and over 950 ships were sunk.

The tradition of service in the U.S. merchant marine, "In Peace and War," is one that American seafarers are understandably proud of. The fact that they are union members and have the personal agency to make their own decisions about shipping out and putting themselves in harm's way only enhances their pride of profession.

This mindset has not changed. It continued during the Tanker War of 1987-88, the first Persian Gulf War and every war since, up through the attacks in the Red Sea and now the war in Iran. The men and women of the U.S. merchant marine cannot be accused of lacking "guts."

Captain Don Marcus

President Emeritus

International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, AFL-CIO

NLRB Rules in Favor of OSG and ATC Licensed Deck Officers Seeking MM&P Representation

In two separate decisions, the National Labor Relations Board has affirmed the right of licensed deck officers at Overseas Shipholding Group and Alaska Tanker Company to join the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots and bargain collectively with their respective employers.

The Board's unanimous March 18 rulings came more than a year and a half after licensed deck officers at OSG and ATC voted by a wide margin to be represented by MM&P.

An overwhelming majority of the chief mates, floating chief mates, second mates, and third mates employed by the company voted in the representation election.

"We are prepared to move forward promptly and in good faith toward negotiating a first collective bargaining agreement," MM&P told OSG officials in a formal demand to bargain.

The MM&P Offshore Membership Group campaign to

represent the OSG and ATC LDOs was led by MM&P Atlantic Ports Vice President Captain Tom Larkin, with the support and assistance of the other members of the MM&P Offshore Advisory Committee, pensioner member Captain Shawn Tucy, and numerous others.

"Thank you to all for staying the course," Larkin told the OSG and ATC licensed deck officers after the NLRB ruling was issued. "This is a major win for all of us and a testament to your perseverance. You have our unending respect for standing with us. MM&P will not waiver in protecting and promoting your interests."

ATC operates four U.S.-flag Alaska-class crude oil tankers transporting crude oil from Alaska to refineries along the West Coast. OSG operates another 13 vessels that are part of the successful organizing effort.

Maersk Denver Makes First US-Flag Transit of Bab El-Mandeb Straits In Two Years

The crew of *Maersk Denver* has safely and successfully made the first US-flag transit of the straits of Bab el-Mandeb in over two years. The vessel is crewed by members of MM&P, MEBA and SIU.

The deck officers aboard *Maersk Denver* for the transit were Captain Chris Kalinowski, Chief Officer Josh Leonardi, Second Officer John Matichak, Third Officer Bill Crawford and Deck Cadet Faith Sammons (Kings Point).

The transit was made the evening of Jan. 11-12, 2026, into the early morning hours with clearing BAM about 0600 hours.

"I'm glad your transit was uneventful, and that you and the crew are safe," MM&P Atlantic Ports Vice President Tom Larkin told them.

"I am very proud of our MM&P members," said MM&P President Don Josberger. "This shows once again that the US Merchant Marine will continue to deliver when called upon."



Chief Officer Josh Leonardi shared photos of the crew of *Maersk Denver* after they made the first US-flag transit of the Bab El-Mandeb straits in over two years.



Captain Chris Kalinowski, Chief Officer Josh Leonardi, Second Officer John Matichak, Third Officer Bill Crawford and Deck Cadet Faith Sammons (Kings Point).

Tim Ferrie Elected President of the New York Marine Society



Tim Ferrie, vice president of the MM&P Pilots Membership Group, was sworn in as the 70th president of the Marine Society of the City of New York on Jan. 27 at historic Fraunces Tavern in downtown Manhattan. He was sworn in by Howard Wyche, a partner in the Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware and a founding member of the Organization of Black Maritime graduates. Ferrie, who was first elected in 2006, is the longest serving president in recent history. He is also New Jersey President of the Sandy Hook Pilots Association.



US-Flag Coalition Expresses Gratitude to White House for Maritime Action Plan

USA Maritime, the coalition that represents American merchant mariners and shipping companies, has written to the administration expressing gratitude for the Maritime Action Plan unveiled in February by the White House.

The plan is a roadmap aimed at revitalizing the American merchant marine and US shipbuilding. It follows up on President Trump's April 2025 Executive Order, Restoring America's Maritime Dominance.

"[This plan] represents an unprecedented level of support from the Executive Branch for the United States Merchant Marine and the United States maritime industry as a whole," the coalition wrote in a Feb. 18 letter to two top administration officials, Marco Rubio, assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and Russel Vought, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

"[It] represents the largest and most sweeping maritime policy initiative in the history of the United States and reflects President Trump's continuing historic levels of support and attention to our industry."

"We pledge to assist you and the rest of the Administration to ensure that the final plan achieves the lofty goals you have set with this document." The letter was signed by USA Maritime Chair Brian Schoeneman.

USA Maritime is made up of shipping companies operating US-flag, US citizen-crewed vessels in the foreign trades, labor unions representing the licensed and unlicensed men and women who crew these vessels, and related American maritime associations.

Among the essential points set forth in the Maritime Action Plan are:

- the exemption from federal income tax of the income earned by mariners working aboard US-flag vessels operating in the foreign trades;
- a US maritime preference requirement and expanded cargo preference requirements;
- investments in maritime workforce training;
- the creation of a US Strategic Commercial Fleet;
- support for the maritime academies;
- as a stopgap measure as shipbuilding capacity is increased, bringing foreign-built vessels under the US flag to increase the country's ability to move US trade internationally.

The plan directs the Office of Management and Budget, working with the Department of Transportation, to deliver a legislative proposal for a reliable funding mechanism to sustain these initiatives.

Union Membership in the US Grows to 16-Year High

The number of American workers covered by a union contract increased to a 16-year high in 2025, according to new data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. About 16.5 million workers were union members last year, up from 16 million in 2024 and the highest number since 2009.

Union members took home median weekly earnings that were significantly higher than those of nonunion workers (\$1,404 versus \$1,174).

Nearly half of all union growth came from the Southern states, with younger workers organizing at a rapid pace.

"Years of organizing have delivered gains across industries as workers turn to unions," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said in a

statement. "These numbers confirm what we've seen in the labor movement.

"Workers... are hungry to take back their power. They know that the best check on a bad boss is a strong union contract.

"Labor is one of the last institutions in this country that working people actually trust."

Recent polls show that nearly 70 percent of Americans support unions, an all-time high. Shuler called on Congress to make it easier for workers to join a union by passing the Protecting the Right to Organize Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act.

NEWS BRIEFS (CONTINUED)

MM&P Members Back at Work After Courts Let Offshore Wind Projects Restart

Members of the MM&P Atlantic Maritime Group are back on the job after federal judges lifted the halt placed by the administration on a number of offshore wind projects.

The most recent ruling, by Judge Brian E. Murphy of the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts, allowed developers of Vineyard Wind to restart construction while the case plays out in court.

With Judge Murphy's ruling, four of the five offshore wind projects that were shut down by the administration on Dec. 22 have won court orders allowing them to resume activities. The administration is seeking to permanently halt the projects, arguing that wind farms are a risk to national security because of radar clutter.



AMG members employed by WindServe Marine Services, a subsidiary of Reinauer, operate the crew transfer vessels that service six offshore wind installations.

It's nice to see our members back to work

—AMG Vice President Keith Poissant

AMG members employed by WindServe Marine Services, a subsidiary of Reinauer, operate the crew transfer vessels (CTVs) that service six offshore wind installations: Empire Wind, Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind, Vineyard Wind, Sunrise Wind, South Fork Wind and Revolution Wind.

"It's nice to see our members back to work," said MM&P AMG Vice President Keith Poissant. About 50 AMG members operate WindServe's six CTVs.

"As the legal process proceeds, Vineyard Wind will continue to work with the administration to understand the matters raised in the court order," a spokesperson for Vineyard Wind said.

[We] "will focus on working in coordination with our contractors, the federal government, and other relevant stakeholders and authorities to safely restart activities, as [we] continue to deliver a critical source of new power to the New England region."

91st Convention Call, Aug. 3-5

In accordance with Article IV, Section 2, of the International Constitution, you are hereby notified that the 91st CONVENTION of the MM&P will be convened at 9:00 am on Monday, Aug. 3, 2026. The Convention will be held at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies, 692 Maritime Boulevard, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090.

You are also hereby notified that in accordance with Article IV, Section 6, Subsection c), all proposed resolutions for the 91st Convention must be forwarded to the International Secretary-Treasurer at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening day of the Convention for inclusion on the agenda and determination by the Convention.

In Solidarity,
J. Lars Turner
International Secretary-Treasurer



Texas A&M Maritime Academy Cadets and *TS Kennedy* Crew Honored for Rescue

Texas A&M Maritime Academy cadets and the crew of the *TS Kennedy* were honored earlier this year with the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue award for saving three people who had been stranded at sea for 15 days. MM&P President Don Josberger and Secretary-Treasurer J. Lars Turner attended the awards ceremony in Washington, DC.

While traveling from Texas to Florida, cadet lookouts aboard the ship, which is enrolled in the Coast Guard's AMVER program, spotted a disabled vessel and notified Captain Wade Howell, a member of MM&P, who initiated rescue protocols in coordination with the Coast Guard.

The three people aboard the vessel had been stranded for 15 days. They were brought aboard the ship, where they received medical treatment before being transferred to the Coast Guard and reunited with their families.

"The rescue exemplifies the core values we instill in our cadets: seamanship, courage and a commitment to the maritime tradition of rendering aid to those in distress," said Rear Adm. Michael E. Fossum, superintendent of Texas A&M Maritime Academy.

"We are incredibly proud of the crew and our cadets for their quick thinking and professionalism. The AMVER award is a well-deserved recognition of their exceptional humanitarian effort."



Peter DeFazio, former representative of Oregon's 4th Congressional District, with MM&P President Don Josberger at the awards ceremony.

Congressional Ferry Caucus Meets in Washington

The Congressional Ferry Caucus, a bipartisan group created last fall to advocate for additional long-term federal investment in the nation's public ferry systems, convened its first member roundtable in January 2026.

The roundtable was attended by ferry operators, members of Congress and representatives of maritime labor organizations, including MM&P, the IBU and the ILWU. MM&P was represented by Secretary-Treasurer J. Lars Turner and UIG-PMR Vice President Dan Twohig.

The co-chairs of the Congressional Ferry Caucus are Reps. Emily Randall (D-Wash.) and Nick Begich (R-Alaska). The other members of the caucus are Rep. John Garamendi (D-Calif.) and Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-N.Y.).

The roundtable was convened to discuss ferry-related policies including the need to provide more transportation links for coastal and island communities nationwide.

"Washington State's ferry system isn't just transportation infrastructure—our ferries are a lifeline," Randall says.

"From daily work commutes and medical appointments to connecting with loved ones, my constituents rely on these boats every day."

Begich has called the caucus "an important platform to build bipartisan support and secure the resources necessary to keep our ferries running."



Congresswoman Emily Randall with MM&P Pacific Maritime Region Vice President Dan Twohig, Congressman John Garamendi and MM&P Secretary-Treasurer J. Lars Turner at a meeting of the Congressional Ferry Caucus in Washington, D.C.

More Than Half of US Mariners Intend to Leave the Job in Next Five Years

More than half of American mariners responding to a new survey say they plan to leave their jobs in the next five years.

This is one finding of an international study based on responses from 4,372 mariners, including 500 Americans, sailing in a range of billets aboard different types of commercial vessels. The study was conducted by World Maritime University with support from the Officers' Union of International Seamen (OUIS), of which MM&P and MEBA are members.

The three largest groups were from India (25.1 percent), the Philippines (15.8 percent) and the US (11.5 percent).

US seafarers reported the longest workweeks—79 hours. Additionally, 94.8 percent of American seafarers reported not having a weekly day off, and 87.6 percent of them stated that they had not had a full day off during their entire contract period.

“While US seafarers benefit from shorter contracts, this advantage is hampered by excessive workloads, demanding administrative burdens, extended work hours, high work stress, and severely limited shore leave,” the researchers said.



US seafarers responding to the survey reported the longest workweeks: 79 hours.

“The combined effects of inspection pressure, administrative burden, and challenging communication with companies dangerously elevate unsustainable stress levels among seafarers, particularly US seafarers.

“Without serious, immediate consideration for seafarers' welfare, the shipping industry as a whole, and the US maritime sector in particular, may face a recruitment crisis and the loss of vital operational know-how.”

Based on the survey results, nearly half of seafarers globally report they intend to quit within the next five years. US seafarers had the lowest intention to stay (40.2 percent), followed by Filipino and Indian seafarers.

“From the numerous statements by working seafarers it becomes evident that a major change is required if the industry is to not only retain those experienced seafarers... but also to recruit the next generation,” said OUIS Executive Director Nick Bramley.

“MM&P officers participated in this study to shine a light on the realities of modern shipboard life,” said MM&P Atlantic Ports Vice President Tom Larkin. “These findings make it clear that fatigue, stress, and work-life imbalance are not just quality-of-life issues—they are safety issues.

“Addressing them is essential to protecting mariners, vessels, and the integrity of the US maritime industry.”

The survey was conducted by Captain Bikram S. Bhatia, a WMU professor, Captain Raphael Baumler and WMU Professor Maria Carrera-Arce. The study is posted on the MM&P website, bridgedeck.org, under News and Announcements.

The MM&P Women's Caucus Committee Wants To Hear From You!

Are you interested in exchanging ideas with your peers on how to improve life in our industry? If the answer is yes, you should attend the meetings of the MM&P Women's Caucus Committee, which take place online every two months.

The committee works to promote networking and support women's rights and professional development. The WCC has published a resource guide to further its mission of effecting change to assure equal rights, respect and safety for all maritime

industry workers. The WCC warmline, which can be reached at 410-691-8194, is available to provide support to anyone who has experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination.

If you would like to join the WCC's bimonthly meetings and receive the WCC monthly newsletter, please email CPatterson@BridgeDeck.org. We want to hear from you! Send us an email, attend a meeting and visit our home page on bridgedeck.org!



Warmline: 410-691-8194

Unions Call for US-Flag Shipping Mandate for Venezuelan Oil Imports

The maritime labor unions are calling on the administration and Congress to require that any crude oil imported from Venezuela be transported exclusively on US-flag vessels crewed by American mariners.

"A cornerstone of an effective national maritime policy is gaining access to private, commercial cargoes that create steady demand for US-flag vessels, American mariners, and the shipbuilding industrial base," the unions wrote in a January letter to senior administration officials.

Aligning America's foreign and energy policy with "Ship American" principles would strengthen the US maritime workforce, the unions noted. It would also reduce reliance on foreign-controlled shipping and counter the growth of shadow fleet tanker transport which moves sanctioned oil outside the reach of US oversight.

Requiring US-flag transportation for Venezuelan crude entering the country would provide a reliable source of commercial cargo for US carriers, enhance sanctions compliance, and reduce reliance on foreign vessels tied to the interests of geopolitical adversaries.

The policy could also benefit US refiners with the capacity to process heavy crude by increasing supply options and helping to stabilize domestic energy markets.

The unions underlined the fact that American mariners are always prepared to support lawful, transparent energy trade that advances US strategic interests.

The letter was signed by MM&P, MEBA, AMO and the SIU, which together represent the majority of American merchant mariners sailing in the US-flag fleet.

Seafarer Abandonments Up Sharply in 2025

For the fourth year in a row, the number of abandoned seafarers set a new record in 2025: 6,233 seafarers aboard 410 ships were abandoned, the International Transport Workers' Federation reported, up 32 percent from the previous year.

"Yet again, we are seeing record numbers of seafarers abandoned by unscrupulous shipowners," an ITF spokesperson said in a statement.

The law defines abandonment as leaving a seafarer stranded without wages, food or medical care for more than two months. Cases of abandonment may drag on for months, or even years.

In 2025, the vast majority of abandoned ships—82 percent—were flying a flag-of-convenience. Seafarers from India were the worst-affected, with 1,125 abandoned last year. Filipino seafarers were next, with 539 abandoned.

The ITF is calling for industry-wide cooperation to end—or at least limit—owners' ability to abandon seafarers by making flag states require official evidence of the contact details of a ship's beneficial owner as a precondition for registration.

The International Maritime Organization Legal Committee is set to take action on the problem of abandonment at its meeting in April. "Every case of abandonment is a disgrace," says the ITF's Steven Trowsdale, "and the failure to end abandonment exposes a systemic problem in the maritime industry."

Lack of enforcement by flag and port states and lack of adequate vessel insurance are major contributors to the problem. In the US, the Federal Maritime Commission has announced an investigation into the lax practices of some registries.

The EU has launched a program of insurance checks for FOC vessels sailing in Northern Europe and the Baltic in response to specific incidents of abandonment.

"Much more must be done to crack down on rogue shipowners," Trowsdale says. "They must be shown that there are consequences for their actions."



MM&P Secretary-Treasurer Meets With Federal Maritime Commissioner



MM&P International Secretary-Treasurer J. Lars Turner met with Federal Maritime Commissioner Max Vekich during a recent trip to Washington, DC. The two discussed the FMC's ongoing investigation into flag-of-convenience shipping, as well as a number of other issues that affect MM&P members and other maritime industry workers. Vekich was previously a longshoreman, supercargo, and union officer with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. He also served in the Washington State House of Representatives.

MITAGS Hosts 14th Annual Women on the Water Conference

Union members and officials, educators and representatives of government met at MITAGS this spring for the Women on the Water Conference.

The annual conference includes panel discussions and networking events designed to introduce maritime academy cadets to a variety of career pathways. This year, it included a day in Washington, DC, to showcase the workings of Congress, federal agencies, trade associations, law firms and advocacy groups.

MM&P President Don Josberger welcomed the conference participants to MITAGS.

In his opening remarks, he underlined MM&P's efforts to foster an environment that allows every mariner to develop to his or her full potential. As a case in point, he cited the work being done by the MM&P Women's Caucus Committee and the Mental Health Resources Committee.

The conference also featured sessions on labor unions, mentorship and navigating leadership challenges.

Congresswoman Emily Randall (D-Wash.), a co-founder of the bipartisan Congressional Ferry Caucus, described the importance of making it easier for qualified individuals from different backgrounds to enter the maritime industry.

"The driving force for me is how to make sure that every young person has the information and the support they need to choose the path that's right for them," she said, whether it's working on a ferry, joining the Coast Guard or serving as a licensed officer on a containership.

This year's Women on the Water conference was organized by the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, in partnership with K&L Gates, and the US Maritime Administration.

The speakers also included Vice Adm. Joanna Nunan, former superintendent of the US Merchant Marine Academy, and The Honorable Elaine Chao, who served as a cabinet secretary in the fields of labor and transportation in two administrations.



Congresswoman Emily Randall, MM&P Pacific Maritime Region Vice President Dan Twohig and MM&P International President Don Josberger. In his welcome remarks, Josberger underlined the union's efforts to foster an environment that allows every mariner to develop to his or her full potential.

Make Sure Your Renewed or Upgraded MMC Lists All Your Endorsements

Mariners who are renewing or upgrading their merchant mariner credentials should use the blanket statement "Renew and maintain all licenses and endorsements" in the Description of Endorsements box under Section II of the Coast Guard's 719B form.

It is also very important that upon receiving their renewed or upgraded credential, the mariner takes the time to review it for any missing items or unexpected changes. These types of errors are not uncommon, but the Coast Guard will correct them quickly when they are noted and reported by the mariner.

Endorsement Category	Transaction Type (Check all that apply: See instructions for definitions and additional requirements for the transaction below)					
	Original	Renewal	Duplicate	Raise of Grade, New Endorsement or Increase in Scope	Certificate of Registry	Document of Continuity
Officer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Qualified Rating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
STCW	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entry Level	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Description of Endorsement(s) Desired: Include all appropriate information - Officer (i.e. Deck, Master/Mate/Propulsion/Tonnage/Route OR Engineer Grade - 3rd AE, D/OE/Propulsion/Horsepower) Ratings (i.e. Able Seaman, Tankerman, QMED, Lifboatman) (Please Print)

☐ FOR RENEWAL TRANSACTIONS ONLY: I request to waive the post-dating feature and to have my merchant mariner credential (MMC) issued immediately. I decline having its issuance coincide with the expiration date of my current credential.

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NEWS BRIEFS (CONTINUED)

VW Workers in Tennessee Celebrate First Union Contract

After two years of organizing and threatening to strike, Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga have won their first contract, making VW the first foreign-owned auto plant in a southern US state to unionize.

Under the terms of the contract, employees at the Chattanooga plant will get a 20 percent pay raise over four years, lower health care costs, job security guarantees and an enforceable grievance procedure. Ninety-six percent of workers at the plant voted in favor of the new contract.

"This isn't just a win for Chattanooga autoworkers," said Tennessee AFL-CIO Labor Council President Billy Dycus. "It's a win for our entire state because these workers have proven that when we band together, Southern workers have the power to win the wages, affordable healthcare, job security and respect we all deserve.

"This victory shows what happens when workers stand up and refuse to be ignored," said Yogi Peoples, a member of the UAW bargaining committee.

"We didn't just win better wages and raise standards at our plant, we forced respect onto the table and got it all in writing.

"Our victory here at Volkswagen should send a message to workers everywhere: don't let management divide you."

PHOTO CREDIT UAW



"This victory shows what happens when workers stand up and refuse to be ignored," a member of the bargaining committee said.

Green Wave Visits Green Delta in Tacoma



A group of MM&P licensed deck officers aboard two vessels operated by US Ocean found time to chat and pose for a photo while the *Green Wave* and the *Green Delta* were docked in Tacoma. (Left to right) Chief

Mate Kyle Bertotti, Chief Mate Ryan Torres, Captain Erick Long, Captain Tom Bagan and Captain Kevin Kuebler.

FEMG Captains Execute Complex Military Ship Evolution

PHOTO CREDIT: ANNE MURPHY



Members of the MM&P Federal Employees Bargaining Unit (left to right) CNIC Tug Captains Joshua Schooler and Peter Fitgibbons, along with CNO Harbor Pilot Jay Anderson, led the successful inbound transit of *USS Theodore Roosevelt* into Port Townsend, Wash., earlier this year. The complex ship evolution was also supported by MM&P bargaining unit members serving aboard Navy YT's 802, 803 and 812. The operation required seamless, expert coordination by all involved.

Sailors' Snug Harbor Is Seeking Retired US Mariners



Captain Robert Richard Randall stipulated in his will that his family's 21-acre Manhattan farm be used to build and operate a retirement home for mariners. Today, the retirement home no longer exists, but SSH continues to provide financial assistance to retired deep sea and inland mariners.

Sailors' Snug Harbor (SSH) is looking for retired US mariners to help. While SSH no longer operates a physical retirement home, the organization now provides assistance directly to mariners in their own communities nationwide.

While most mariners are not facing severe hardship, the assistance allows them to enjoy greater comfort and stability in retirement.

Basic Eligibility:

- ◆ 2,555 days at sea (inland or deep-sea service)*
- ◆ Age 60 or older*
- ◆ Less than \$75,000 in savings*

*Exceptions may be made in special circumstances, especially if a career was cut short due to injury.



For more information:

Call: Jay at 646-465-8585

Email: info@thesailorssnugharbor.org

Or visit the SSH website: thesailorssnugharbor.org.

MM&P Member Talks With Cadets at New Orleans Recruiting Event



Dale Rodriguez, who recently retired from the MM&P Offshore Membership Group, attended a maritime recruiting event at the Military and Maritime Academy in New Orleans. The academy is a public charter school with the mission of providing a high-quality academic program and character education to students in grades 8–12.

MM&P President Addresses ILA Great Lakes Council Meeting



MM&P President Don Josberger was invited to address the Pre-Navigational Conference of the ILA Great Lakes District Council in March. Josberger, who attended the conference in the company of Atlantic Ports Vice President Tom Larkin, underlined the shared interests of MM&P and the ILA, in particular the unions' opposition to the growing push to automate at the cost of workers' jobs. Presiding over the conference were District Council officials President John D. Baker Jr., Secretary-Treasurer Michael J. Baker, Executive Vice-President William E. Yockey and President Emeritus John D. Baker.



MM&P Secretary-Treasurer Meets With Rep. Val Hoyle

MM&P International Secretary-Treasurer J. Lars Turner met with Congresswoman Val Hoyle in Washington, DC, in January to discuss issues of importance to MM&P members and other American merchant mariners. Hoyle has represented Oregon's 4th congressional district since 2023. She previously served as the commissioner of Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries. Turner met with her at her Washington office to advocate for full funding for the Maritime Security Program and to discuss crewing levels on US-flag vessels.

Great Lakes Ship Masters Gather in Duluth for ISMA Convention

MM&P members joined several hundred colleagues who sail on the Great Lakes at the 136th Convention of the International Ship Masters' Association in Duluth.

ISMA is a voluntary organization of licensed professional mariners and others associated with the maritime community of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway. It gives Great Lakes masters a voice in the formulation of safety and navigational rules and regulations, with the goal of creating a safer waterway system.

At the event, Chris Edyvean, an instructor at MITAGS who was formerly a Great Lakes Pilot, was installed as the 2026 ISMA president. The keynote speaker was Rep. Tom Tiffany, who highlighted the importance of the maritime industry in supporting the region's economic infrastructure and national security. MM&P was a sponsor of the convention.



(Left to right) Minnesota State Rep. Pete Stauber (R), ISMA President Chris Edyvean, MM&P Great Lakes & Gulf Vice President Ed Lulko and Rep. Tom Tiffany (R-Wis.).

New Key Lakes Contract Brings Wage and Benefit Improvements



Key Lakes bargaining committee members (left to right) Keene Weekley, Kyle Seegers, Kris Brecht and MM&P Great Lakes & Gulf Vice President Ed Lulko. (Not pictured: Tim Alfson.) Following negotiations, members of the committee was able to enjoy some time in the evening on Pompano Beach for the Key Lakes annual beach party.

The Key Lakes Bargaining Committee successfully secured a long-term contract that delivers meaningful improvements to wages and retirement benefits. Throughout negotiations, the committee remained united and steadfast in its commitment to achieving a fair agreement, and their persistence resulted in a strong outcome for the membership. The members look forward to returning in the spring for fit out following a well-earned break and appreciate Key Lakes management for meeting and bargaining in good faith throughout the process.

NEWS BRIEFS (CONTINUED)

Winter Classes at MITAGS

When the Soo locks close for the season, mariners who sail on the Great Lakes take advantage of the opportunity to hone their professional abilities with training courses at MITAGS. More than 60 members of the MM&P Great Lakes & Gulf Membership Group took classes at MITAGS this winter.



Bridge Resource Management

All the participants in this winter's Bridge Resource Management course were members of the Great Lakes & Gulf Region. (Left to right) Henry Andersson (*instructor*), Andre Willard, Donald Hixon, Ryan Gabriel, John Buzyniski, Andrew Flynn and Jacob Henley.

License Advancement Program



(Left to right) Tyler Giblin (Grand River Navigation Apprentice Program); Sonora "Sunny" Rooney (Grand River Navigation Apprentice Program); Reed Hopper (Grand River Navigation); Konstantin Morris (Grand River Navigation); Rob Cardinal (Grand River Navigation); David Butler (Alaska Marine Highway); Heath Hahr (Interlake Steamship Company); Brad Hursh (Interlake Steamship Company); Owen Franco (Grand River Navigation Apprentice Program); and MITAGS Instructor Chris Edyvean.

Basic Meteorology



MM&P members were among the participants in the Basic Meteorology Course at MITAGS, which ensures that Officers in Charge of a Navigational Watch are competent in understanding their physical environment and able to report their observations. (Left to right) Jayson J. Gilay; Jose A. Pagan-Alvarez; James P. Scott; Ed Paglee; Vito DiMarco; Jaquan Q. Elliott; Nicolas S. Bartlett; David F. Gruber; Jeffrey Ham; Igor Likhterman; Nathan C. Pirhadi; Brian S. Ramirez; and MITAGS instructors Jonathan R. Heesch and Joseph Sienkiewicz.

Great Lakes Group Representatives Visit MM&P Headquarters



Great Lakes & Gulf Vice President Ed Lulko and Grand River Navigation Shop Steward Kerry Cole stopped by MM&P headquarters in Linthicum Heights in January to talk with the numerous Great Lakes members who take courses at MITAGS during winter lay-up. They also spent time talking with the union's executive officers and staffers in the MM&P accounting, legal and communications departments.

Snowballs Fly Off Sandy Hook

MM&P deck officers aboard *Maersk Denver* anchored off Sandy Hook, N.J., during the blizzard of 2026. (Left to right) Captain Craig Rumrill, Chief Mate Colin Wright, Second Mate Jonathan Lotz, and Third Mate Javier Rodriguez.



A Visit to CMA CGM Phoenix



MM&P President Don Josberger and President Emeritus Don Marcus were on hand when the *CMA CGM Phoenix* docked in the Port of Baltimore. Besides snapping this photo for the union magazine, they spent time talking with the MM&P licensed deck officers who were on board during crew change. (Right to left) Captain Fred Holm, Captain Nick Killinger, Chief Mate Jim McManus, Chief Mate Mark Harper and Second Mate Nate Gass.

Masters, Mates & Pilots Plans

Administrator's Column

by KEN RYAN
ACTING ADMINISTRATOR

Schedule of Board of Trustees Meetings

The first Board of Trustees meeting for 2026 is scheduled to take place on March 10-11, 2026. In the next edition of The Master, Mate & Pilot, I will summarize some of the actions taken by the Trustees at their meeting.

Important Reminders

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

- your address has changed;
- 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:

- report any accidents aboard ship to the Plan Office;
- once you retire and are eligible for Medicare you must take Medicare Part A and Part B;
- you must submit a copy of your Medicare card to the Plan Office;
- dependent children over the age of 19 must have their Adult Dependent Form on file with the Plan Office to be covered under the Health & Benefit Plan.

For participants who submit health claims for reimbursement of what they have paid

If you submit a claim for reimbursement for what you have paid, please remember that the information you give us has to include the following: member's name, a receipt proving payment, itemized bill from the provider with the provider's name, diagnosis code, CPT code, amount for each code, and the person who was seen on that bill.

When you provide this information, we can process your claim in an efficient manner. Please remember to keep a copy for your file.

Health and Benefit Accident Form

When claims come into the Plan Office, sometimes they have accident codes. If this is the case, the Plan must provide you with an Accident Description Form. In order for your claim to be processed, this form needs to be completed in a timely manner;

otherwise, we will not be able to process this claim and your provider might start to bill you directly. We cannot accept a telephone call explaining what happened.

Member Portal

You can download your Explanation of Benefits statements on your own through the MM&P Plans Member Portal.

The Plan Office recently announced the launch of the new **MM&P Plans Member Portal**, designed with your needs in mind. The portal gives you quick and easy access to essential tools and information—all in one place.

With the new portal, you can:

- view your Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statements and your Eligibility status;
- access your Vacation Computation Sheets;
- find and download important documents, whenever you need them;
- access your Plan's issued tax forms.

And this is just the beginning: More features and enhancements are on the way to make your experience even better.

To explore the portal, visit members.mmpplans.com and click the Sign-Up button.

If you encounter any issues, send an email to HELP@mmpplans.com, or call 410-850-8638.

New Medicare Changes in 2026: Prior Approval Required for These 17 Services

Beginning **Jan. 1, 2026**, certain medical procedures under **Traditional Medicare (Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B)** will require **prior authorization** in six US states. This means your healthcare provider must obtain approval from Medicare **before** performing specific services; otherwise, coverage may be denied. This update also affects individuals with **Medigap plans** such as **Plan G or Plan N**, if they're using Traditional Medicare coverage. The change is part of a pilot initiative called WISer (Wasteful and Inappropriate Services Reduction), which is designed to curb

medical overuse and detect potential fraud.

Which States Will See These Medicare Changes in 2026?

Residents in the following six states will be included in the initial rollout:

Arizona	New Jersey	Ohio
Oklahoma	Texas	Washington

Which Medical Services Are Affected?

A total of 17 types of procedures will now need prior approval. These services are often flagged for being overused or not always medically necessary. Here's what's on the list:

- Electrical Nerve Stimulators (NCD 160.7)
- Sacral Nerve Stimulation for Urinary Incontinence (NCD 230.18)
- Phrenic Nerve Stimulator (NCD 160.19)
- Deep Brain Stimulation for Essential Tremor and Parkinson's Disease (NCD 160.24)
- Vagus Nerve Stimulation (NCD 160.18)
- Induced Lesions of Nerve Tracts (NCD 160.1)
- Hypoglossal Nerve Stimulation for Obstructive Sleep Apnea (LCDs L38307, L38312, L38385)
- Epidural Steroid Injections for Pain Management (excluding facet-joint injections) (LCDs L39015, L39242, L36920)
- Percutaneous Vertebral Augmentation (PVA) for Vertebral Compression Fracture (VCF) (LCDs L34106, L38201, L35130)
- Cervical Fusion (LCDs L3974, L39762, L39793)
- Arthroscopic Lavage and Arthroscopic Debridement for the Osteoarthritic Knee (NCD 150.9)
- Incontinence Control Devices (NCD 230.10)
- Diagnosis and Treatment of Impotence (NCD 230.4)
- Percutaneous Image-Guided Lumbar Decompression for Spinal Stenosis (NCD 150.13)
- Skin and Tissue Substitutes (general category)
- Application of Bioengineered Skin Substitutes to Lower Extremity Chronic Non-Healing Wounds (LCD L35041)
- Wound Application of Cellular and/or Tissue-Based Products (CTPs), Lower Extremities (LCD L36690)

For these treatments, physicians will be required to submit documentation **before** the service is performed. If approval isn't granted, coverage could be denied, leaving patients to pay out of pocket.

Pension Plan-Adjustable Pension Plan

Annual Verification of Pensioner Benefits

To safeguard pension benefits for all participants and their qualified spouses, as they have over the past few years, the Trustees require all pensioners to verify on an annual basis that they have received their pension benefits for the previous year. The annual verification of pensioner benefits form does not have to be notarized this year so please sign the form and return your form to the Plan Office as soon as possible.

Please be advised that the Plan needs to receive this form, properly completed, by the time you are scheduled to receive your **May** pension benefit payment. We will have to withhold that benefit payment, and all future payments, until the properly completed form is received. If you have any questions, please contact the Plan Office benefit advisor at 410-850-8647 or 410-850-8625.

Pension Plan

Pension Plan Missing Participants

The Plan has been trying to get in touch with the following participants, and they have not responded to the Plan.

2020 Annual Pension Confirmation Forms Needed for Plan Year 2019

Dolores Hoffman

2022 Annual Pension Confirmation Forms Needed for Plan Year 2021

Ray Friis*	Julius Perkins
Joanne Gray*	Susan Vanhorne*
Richard Mercer*	Ruby Weimer

2023 Annual Pension Confirmation Forms Needed for Plan Year 2022

Jerry Androes*	Steven Morgan*
Marlinda Atkinson	Rosalind Utterback*
Barbara Curtiss*	Constantinos Vafiades

2024 Annual Pension Confirmation Forms Needed for Plan Year 2023

Joseph Bourell*	Donald Jacoby*
Carole Carbonella	Maria Valentin
Aaron Hairston*	

Masters, Mates & Pilots Plans

2025 Annual Pension Confirmation Forms Needed for Plan Year 2024

David Drinkwater*	Virginia Dudley
Carol Herndon*	Effie Koukeas
Anthony Lafayette	Diane Lindberg
Sheila Lindholm	Cesar Montes
Michelle Olin*	Elida Parks*
Elisabeth Pedersen	William Thompson III*
Kathleen Shebley*	William Walls

*These individuals were merged into the Pension Plan from the Northwest Marine Retirement Trust Plan.

Earnings Limitations for Pensioners and Spouses Under 65 for the 2026 Calendar Year

I would like to remind pensioners and spouses under age 65 about the MM&P Health Plan Earnings Limitations for calendar year 2026. In December 2025, the Plan mailed an earnings letter to all affected participants and dependents with an affidavit that must be returned to the Plan Office. If you have not yet returned the affidavit, it is advised that you complete and return it as soon as possible.

Increase in Pensioners Earnings Limitation Jan. 1, 2026

The Trustees last year agreed to change the Plan rules to increase the Plan's pensioner annual earnings limitation, effective Jan. 1, 2026, to \$49,000. Effective Jan. 1, 2026, pensioners who are under 65 and who have retired under the MM&P Pension Plan with 20 or more years of pension credit, along with their dependents under 65 who are employed, will be able to receive annual earnings of up to \$49,000 without losing their health coverage under the Plan. The Plan's Annual Earnings Limitation for pensioners and dependents with less than 20 years of pension credit effective Jan. 1, 2026, increased to \$24,480 without losing their health coverage with the Plan.

Individual Retirement Account Plan, Pension Plan and Adjustable Pension Plan

Annual IRS Limitations for 2026

For your reference, we have listed below the Internal Revenue Service limitations for 2026. 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.

IRS Limitations for 2026

	2026	2025
Maximum Annual 415 Payout at Age 62 From a Defined Benefit Plan	\$290,000	\$280,000
Maximum Annual Contribution to an Individual's Defined Contribution Account Under 415(c)	\$ 72,000	\$ 70,000
Maximum Effective 401(k) Deferral	\$ 24,500	\$ 23,500
401(k) Catch-Up Limit-Age 50 and Older	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,500
New Super Catch-up for Age 60-63	\$ 11,250	\$ 11,250
Maximum Amount of Annual Compensation That Can Be Taken Into Account for Determining Benefits or Contributions Under a Qualified Plan	\$360,000	\$350,000
Wage Base:		
a) for Social Security Tax	\$184,500	\$176,000
b) for Medicare	No Limit	No Limit

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.

PENSIONERS

Joseph R. Bridges, shipping out of Gulf ports. He last sailed for Lykes Steamship Company as master of the *Lyra Lykes*.

Lyle G. Donovan, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Matson Navigation as chief mate aboard the *Chief Gadao*.

William J. Esselstrom, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for American President Lines as third mate aboard the *President Cleveland*.

Bradley D. Goodwin, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Matson Navigation as master of the *Matson Anchorage*.

Brandon L. Hatfield, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Waterman Steamship Company as third mate aboard the *Major Stephen W. Pless*.

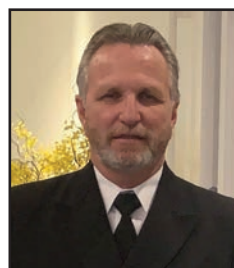
Thomas L. Heberle, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Matson Navigation as master of the *Moku Pahu*.

Douglas M. Lord, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for Patriot Contract Services as chief mate aboard the *Pax*.



Donald J. Marcus, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Sea-Land Services as master of the *Sea-Land Pacer*. He completed his time ashore serving three terms as International President of Masters, Mates & Pilots, from 2013-2024.

Carlos Pena-Medrano, a member of the A&G Membership Group



Armando Dale Rodriguez, shipping out of all ports. He last sailed for American President Lines as master of the *President Grant*.

Thomas M. Ryan, shipping out of West Coast ports. He last sailed for Matson Navigation as chief mate aboard the *Matson Anchorage*.

Alejandro Sanfeliu, a member of the A&G Membership Group.

Richard B. Stover Jr., shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for Central Gulf Lines as master of the *Energy Enterprise*.

Richard Vanderlaan, shipping out of East Coast ports. He last sailed for American President Lines as master of the *President Reagan*.

Directory of MM&P Offices

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Holiday Celebrations in the Halls

MM&P members, their families and friends celebrated the holidays in union halls across the country in December. Many thanks to those who submitted photos of the festivities for publication in The Master, Mate & Pilot. Best wishes to all in 2026!



MM&P-ILA Solidarity on Display at the Holiday Party in the Boston Hall: ILA Officials Dennis McLaughlin, George McAvoy, Rob Carter and Bernie O'Donnell with MM&P President Don Josberger and Atlantic Ports Vice President Tom Larkin at the holiday party in the MM&P Boston Hall. MM&P has pledged its support for the Global Alliance to Protect Port Workers' Jobs that was announced at the Lisbon summit focused on fending off job threats from port automation.



Pompano: Paul Coan, Maike Coan, Zybo Marchetti, Garrett Delmarco, John Dolan and wife Julie, James Sanders and wife Gladys, Robert Groh, Ethan Galac, Andrea Fortin, George Insana, Ian Allen and wife Marta and Tom Larkin.



New York/New Jersey: Don Josberger, Rich May, John Moustakas, Steve Werse, Tim Ferrie and James McAfee.



Norfolk: Larry Aasheim, Chuck Hendricks, Kimberlie Petrusis, Dave Ryan, James McGee, Tom Larkin and Mark Nemergut.



Charleston: Dustin Boren and Erik Stark.



Honolulu: (Seated) Diane Ventimiglia, Roya Dennis, Lee Townsend and (standing) Serena Webber-Bey (MEBA).



New York/New Jersey: Robert Anderson, Steve Werse, James McAfee, Richard Feinson, John Moustakas, Doug Vines and John Johnson.



Boston: Bob Damrell, Jack Boak, Mrs. Damrell and George Jancaterino.



Honolulu: MEBA Honolulu Representative Luke Kaili.



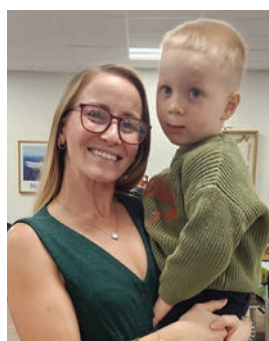
Houston: Lars Turner, Jeremy Hope, Gary Tober and wife Ann-Margaret.



New York/New Jersey: Oleksandr Makedonskyy, Mohamed Guernah, Ishmael Ocampo, Nicholas Racioppi and Christopher Aiello.



Norfolk: Dennis Houghton, Don Josberger and Connor Donnelly.



New York/New Jersey: Chelsea Patterson and her son Keegan.



Norfolk: Larry McCabe, James Dolan and Brice Behringer.



Houston: Lars Turner, Jason Bailey and JoAnn Wilson.



New York/New Jersey: Anthony Turzio, Keith Poissant and Paulina Trzepacz.



Houston: Jeremy Hope, Gary Tober, Ann-Margret Tober, Inez McDonnell and John McDonnell.



New York/New Jersey: Paulina Trzepacz, Randi Ciszewski, Chelsea Patterson, Ana Victoria Victorio.



New York/New Jersey: Dave Narby, Randi Ciszewski, Amanda Clifford, Michael Clifford, John Johnson and Tom Larkin.



Charleston: Don Josberger and Joe Ward.



Boston: Ed Roach, Tim VanAhnen, Paul Camirand and Katherine Bloomquist.



Honolulu: Christian Yuhos (MEBA), Freedom Dennis, Roya Dennis and Diane Ventimiglia.



Houston: Nell Wilkerson, Morgan Alejo, Elaine Edwards and Mary Beth Baker.



Charleston: Travis Shirley, Jeremy Hope and Jason Teal.



Norfolk: Jess Osgood, Karen Parmar, Kartik Parmar and Sam Osgood.



Charleston: Hunter Sechrist, Brent McClaine, Travis Shirley, Brendan Smith, Dustin Boren, Katherine Rastallis (front), Michael Buckley, Clayton Saverioni-Walls and Tom Larkin.



New York/New Jersey: Kate Hunt, Jake O'Boyle, Timothy Forsyth, Robert Anderson, Richard Feinson and Doug Vines.



New York/New Jersey: Cole Ridgway, Ana Victoria Victorio and Tom Larkin.



Houston: Mike and Mary Beth Baker.



Boston: Marty Collins, Sam Carey and Parker Moulton.



Honolulu: Freedom Dennis, Sal Alvarado, Scott McGeough, Jeff Macatiag (MEBA), Dean Ventimiglia, JA Hobson, Jim Hill and Eric Fortin.



Charleston: David Warnekros, Ryan Guthrie, Brent McClaine (middle back), Brendan Smith (far back), Hunter Sechrist, Mitch Chisholm and Brittany Bergmann.



Honolulu: Chris Schlarb, Eric Fortin and Jeff Macatiag (MEBA).



MV Manoa: Oncoming Chief Mate Maddiee Kuehner, Captain Angel Irlanda and offgoing Chief Mate Liz Marconi send holiday greetings!



CNO Harbor Pilot

Jay Anderson sports his MM&P hoodie for a meeting with Santa Claus who is traveling on his "Deercraft Carrier."



Charleston: Jeremy Cunningham and Katherine Rastallis.



New York/New Jersey: Don Josberger and John Johnson.



New York/New Jersey: Brian Bermudez and Christopher Aiello.



Houston: Mary Beth Baker, Lars Turner, Jeremy Hope and KC Marks.



Houston: Katie Farland, Joseph Farland, Yusef Eldin, Nicholas Bensabat and wife Lydia.



Charleston: Ryan Guthrie, David Warnekros, Brittany Bergmann (front), Hunter Sechrist, Brent McClaine, Mitch Chisholm (front), Joe Ward, Lexi McClaine, Terry Williams (front), Jason Teal, John Livingston, Travis Shirley (front), Jeremy Hope, General Williams (front), Dustin Boren, Tom Larkin (front), Jeremy Cunningham, Don Josberger (front), Michael Buckley, Erik Stark, Clayton Saverioni-Walls, Tara Shirley, Ashley Smith (front), Brendan Smith (front) and Katherine Rastallis.



CROSS'D THE FINAL BAR

Francis N. Altman, 95, Sept. 16, 2025. A resident of St. Ignace, Mich., and a pensioner since 1995, he last sailed for Transtar Incorporated as master of the *MV Edgar B. Speer*.



Daniel Andrews, 65, April 2025. A member of the United Inland Group, Great Lakes and Gulf, he was a longtime member of the *MV Manitowoc* crew. He is remembered by his shipmates as a trusted, steady presence aboard the vessel. "Reliable, dependable and possessing a wide range of skills, he was a friend to everyone on the ship. His craftsmanship and fabrication work

can be seen throughout the vessel and will be lasting reminders of his dedication and pride in his work. He will be deeply missed and remembered with gratitude for many years to come."



Phillip A. Brady III, 46, Jan. 12. A resident of Panama City, Fla., he was a licensed state harbor pilot for Saint Andrews Bay and the Port of Panama City, Fla. He attended the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, graduating Cum Laude and earning a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Operations and Technology in 2001.

Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an ensign in the US Navy Reserve. In 2006, he earned a Master of Science in Maritime Economics and Logistics from Erasmus University in Rotterdam, Netherlands. "He dedicated his professional life to the art and skill of ship handling and was known for his professionalism and calm command of some of the most demanding aspects of maritime navigation. He proudly followed in the footsteps of his uncle, Captain Henry Miller ("Hank") Brady, and his grandfather, Captain Henry L. Miller, both of whom served as bar pilots in Alabama. He was a devoted father to his children, Phillip Agnew Brady IV and Lucretia Whitney Brady, of whom he was immensely proud and whom he loved more than words can tell." Survivors include his children Phillip and Lucretia; his fiancée Kristin Medlin; his sisters Caroline and Kate; extended family, friends and colleagues.

Franklin L. Buck, 84, Sept. 25, 2025. A resident of South Bend, Ind., and a pensioner since 1993, he last sailed for Cleveland Tankers Ship Management as master of the *MV Saturn*. He is survived by his wife, Marguerite.



Thomas Catalanotto, 87, Dec. 17, 2025. A resident of Abbeville, S.C., and a pensioner since 1995, he last sailed for American Foreign Shipping as master of the *SS Potomac*. He was a master carpenter and an exceptional woodworker. He was known for his love of animals, gardening and fishponds. "As an avid traveler, he embraced the world with open arms, collecting

memories and experiences to share with family and friends. He touched many lives through his work, hobbies and friendships, and he will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him." He is survived by his wife Judith; children Toni Marie, Tammy Marie, Thomas Jr., Terri Marie, and Troy Joseph; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and the mother of his children, Diana Savoie.

Anthony M. DaSilva, 95, Dec. 13, 2025. A resident of Boynton Beach, Fla., and a pensioner since 1985, he last sailed for Keystone Shipping Company as master of the *SS Tonsina*.

Robert S. Gray, 83, Sept. 20, 2025. A resident of Freeland, Wash., and a pensioner since 2007, he last sailed for Ogden Traveler Transport Inc. aboard the *Traveler*.

Robert G. Hannah, 83, Oct. 13, 2025. A resident of Reno, Nev., and a pensioner since 1997, he last sailed for American President Lines aboard the *SS Comet*.



Michael A. Heyman, 79, Sept. 3, 2025. A resident of Newark, Del., and a pensioner since 2006, he last sailed for E-Ships Incorporated aboard the *Endurance*. Inspired by naval stories from his father's decorated service in World War II, he began his career on the water in the early 1970s. A member of MM&P since 1980, he earned his second mate license. He

was profoundly influenced by his time living on the islands of Bali and Kho Phangan, Thailand, and built lifelong friendships in the community. As a playwright, he drew on the events that he witnessed on a ship in Vietnam when Saigon fell and crafted two plays including "Smooth," which enjoyed a stage reading at the Circle in the Square Theatre in New York City. "Mike was a sensitive soul who navigated his way with a strong moral compass. His love for the people of distant places and cultures was evident in

everything he read, supported, and wrote with his inimitable sense of humor and original voice.” He was also an avid reader on the American Civil War. His compassion for animals of all kinds led to his support of organizations that cared for and protected them. He and his wife enjoyed summers in Vermont, with Mike fishing on Lake Salem accompanied by Kafka, one of the nine dogs he had over the years. Survivors include Karen, his wife of 42 years; his brother Jack and wife Carol; his sister Annette; nephews Darian and Paulo, nieces Jessica and Nicole; three great-nieces and four great-nephews.

Charles M. Hines, 87, Dec. 20, 2025. A resident of Frisco, Texas, and a pensioner since 1995, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Company aboard the *SS Marjorie Lykes*.



Robert E. Jordan, 77, Aug. 30, 2025.

A resident of Rio Rancho, N.M., and a pensioner since 1994, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Company as master of the *SS Louise Lykes*. He served in the US Navy Reserve. During his retirement, he loved playing golf with friends and cheering for his favorite sports teams. He is remembered for his

wit and wisdom and his positive attitude. People loved him, and his sense of humor brought joy to everyone. He always took the time to count his blessings and acknowledge his good fortune. Consequently, he enjoyed a deep contentment in his life. Robert treasured his family and is survived by his wife Cynthia; daughters Olivia and Christina; son Rey; stepson Nicholas; nine grandsons, and his sister Julie.

Douglas A. MacPherson, 78, Oct. 31, 2025. A resident of Sonoma, Calif., and a pensioner since 2012, he last sailed for Matson Navigation aboard the *Matson Manukai*.

Richard A. Maxwell, 71, Sept. 15, 2025. A resident of Newton, Kan., and a pensioner since 2008, he last sailed for Maersk Lines Limited aboard the *MV Sealand Pride*. He is survived by Alicia, his wife of 45 years; children James and Siobahn; grandchildren Lily, Colin, Dublin and Elizabeth.

James J. “Joseph” McConnell, 82, Nov. 10, 2025. A resident of Indian Harbour Beach, Fla., and pensioner since 2008, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Company aboard the *SS Mallory Lykes*. A graduate of the US Naval Academy, he served

several tours in Vietnam. After more than 45 years enjoying his career on the ocean, he and his wife Gail spent their retirement years actively involved with their grandchildren. He was immersed in his church, volunteered as an usher, and participated with the Knights of Columbus. Survivors include his daughter Kathleen McConnell and Stephen Costello; daughter Christine and Justin Damm; grandchildren Erin, Seamus, Cara and Patrick.

Mark S. Patterson, 80, Oct. 23, 2025. A resident of Juneau, Alaska, and a pensioner since 1987, he last sailed for Sealand Services aboard the *Sealand Trader*.

Ross E. Pollock, 86, Dec. 7, 2025. A resident of Guttenberg, Ind., and a pensioner since 1983, he last sailed for Moore-McCormack Lines as master of the *Mormacsea*.

Margaret “Elise” Silvers, 83, Dec. 21, 2025. A resident of Charleston, S.C., and a pensioner since 2013, Elise was the MM&P Port Representative in Charleston.



Erik Stark, 63, Dec. 28, 2025. A resident of Jacksonville, Fla., he last sailed with Maersk on the *Alliance Fairfax*. He also filled in as a dispatcher in the MM&P Charleston Hall. “I believed him when he said that he was only planning to ship out one more time after his trip ended in May, and although I had heard that sentiment plenty of times before, I believe he really

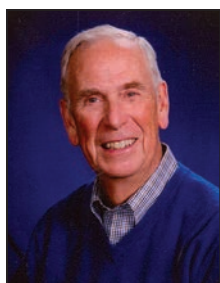
meant it on this occasion. He was always happy to speak with anyone around and was a friend to everyone. Erik will be missed greatly by those who knew and sailed with him.” His son shared that, “He was a great man, always lending a helping hand to anyone he knew. He was an outstanding DIY fixer, a great Patriot of our country, and an incredible father to myself and my sister.” Survivors include his son Fletcher and his daughter Monika.

Thomas J. Tuppein, 96, Nov. 26, 2025. A resident of Kihei, Hawaii, and a pensioner since 1987, he last sailed for Transoceanic aboard the *Charles Brown*.

James L. Turman, 87, Nov. 6, 2025. A resident of Oklahoma City, Okla., and a pensioner since 1998, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Company aboard the *Lykes Liberator*. He enjoyed his 1977 Oldsmobile Cutlass, sports, history, and living as a Christian.



CROSS'D THE FINAL BAR



David J. Wade, 81, Aug. 25, 2025.

A resident of Wolfeboro, N.H., and a pensioner since 1988, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship as master of the *SS Louise Lykes*. After retiring from maritime, he co-founded and ran a small distribution company, employing family and friends. In 1992, he became president and CEO of Parm-Eco Laboratories, moving it to Lexington, Mass., and developing drugs for HIV, Alzheimer's and more for NIH and various drug companies. His retirement was spent enjoying the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee, where he enjoyed visits from family, friends and MMA graduates. Survivors include Clara, his wife of 57 years; sons Glenn and wife Donna, and David Jr.; grandsons Evan and Cameron; sisters Roberta and Deborah, nephews, nieces and cousins.



Edward F. White Jr., 83, Nov. 28, 2025. A resident of Freeport, Maine, and a pensioner since 2007, he last sailed for Lykes Brothers Steamship Company aboard the *SS Almeria Lykes*. A veteran of the US Navy, he retired as a captain in the US Navy Reserve in 2002. He enjoyed a vast and varied career in maritime and military operations including navigation and ship handling instruction,

commercial diving, and sailing on seagoing tugs and tankers. He received the National Defense Medal, the Naval Reserve Meritorious Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the Merchant Marine Vietnam Service Ribbon, and Rifle and Pistol medals. During his time ashore he enjoyed working with his hands, improving his rental properties and his own home, and was an enthusiastic genealogist. Survivors include his daughters Lucinda Jane and husband John, and Tara Marie; grandchildren Madeline and John, sister Lucinda and husband Thomas; nephew Brendan and niece Hannah.

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)

