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No. 2

China unveils first box ship powered by futuristic fuel source

As reported by *Interesting Engineering*, China released its first hydrogen-powered container ship, *Dong Fang Qing Gang*, and it could change the industry. Running on hydrogen fuel cells, it is a cleaner and more sustainable alternative to the ships still using dirty energy.

Shipping is essential for global trade, but it is a major contributor to pollution. It accounts for about 11 percent of the transportation sector's pollution output, which is the second-largest source of emissions worldwide. As trade continues to grow, these numbers are expected to rise significantly by 2050 unless action is taken.

Hydrogen fuel cells, including the ones used on this ship, offer a promising alternative. They create energy through a chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen, with water vapor as the only byproduct and no heat-trapping gases. Compared to regular fuels or electric batteries, hydrogen has a better mix of energy density and weight, which is important for long trips across oceans.

Dong Fang Qing Gang is a 211-foot ship that can carry up to 1,450 tons, or 64 standard containers. It's powered by two hydrogen fuel cells, each with a 240-kilo-Watt rating, and made by China-based Sinosynergy. With these systems, the ship can travel around 236 miles on a single hydrogen charge and is expected to cut about 700 tons of carbon emissions each year.

The ship also has a lithium battery that stores energy from the fuel cells, helping it run smoothly and making it more energy-efficient. Other steps in hydrogen-powered shipping, including Greenpeace's hybrid ship that uses hydrogen, sails, and solar panels, show how the maritime industry is trying different approaches to cut pollution. The U.K. startup GT Wings is also bringing wind power back with its AirWing sails, which could lower fuel use and pollution output by 30 percent.

The International Renewable Energy Agency says hydrogen could play a key role in the switch to cleaner energy, especially in areas such as shipping and aviation, where electrification is harder.

Dong Fang Qing Gang runs an inland route between Jiaxing and Xiasha port in Hangzhou, marking China's first hydrogen-powered water transport route. This milestone could pave the way for expanding hydrogen technology in the global shipping industry.

As hydrogen-powered ships and solar energy systems become more common, they can help big industries lessen their impacts on the environment. Using these kinds of solutions brings us closer to a future wherein our most-used methods and tools can be sustainable in the long term and help both the environment and people.

Potter appointed MTD Secretary-Treasurer

Maritime Trades Department (MTD) Executive Secretary-Treasurer Mark Clements announced earlier this

month that he would be vacating his position at the close of business on January 31, 2025 to pursue another opportunity. By a unanimous vote, the MTD Executive Board confirmed the appointment of MTD Administrator/Chief of Staff Brittanie Potter to fill the remainder of his term.

Sister Brittanie has been involved with the Department since 2011, when she came aboard as an office manager. She later served as an executive assistant to both late MTD President Michael Sacco and current President David Heindel before returning in the Chief of Staff role in 2023. Additionally, she is a card-carrying member of the Iron Workers Union.

"Brittanie is a familiar face to many of our affiliates and will continue the work of previous Executive Secretary-Treasurers Dan Duncan and Mark Clements," said President Heindel. "I have no doubt she will lead the MTD capably and admirably," added departing ES-T Clements.

Potter worked alongside Clements on a number of major initiatives during his tenure, including growing the Department's budget surplus and building its network of Port Maritime Councils.

"I am excited to make even further progress on the groundwork that Brother Mark and I have laid out together," said Potter. "I will ensure the Department is ready to face the challenges ahead."



Fourth U.S. training ship floated at Philly Shipyard

The U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) program to build the first modern training ships for the U.S. merchant marine marked another milestone with the floating of the fourth vessel of the class (NSMV IV). The future *Lone Star State*, which has been assigned to Texas A&M Maritime College, took to the water for the first time on January 24, and was towed to the outfitting berth.

The future *Lone Star State* joins NSMV III, the future *State of Maine*, which is entering the final stages of her outfitting. She is due to be delivered to Maine Maritime earlier in 2025 and the *Lone Star State* is tentatively scheduled for delivery in late 2025. Work has also commenced on the fifth and final vessel of the class, the future *Golden State*, which is assigned to Cal Maritime and scheduled for delivery in 2026.

The U.S. Congress approved \$325 million in funding to construct the ship in December 2020 for Texas A&M. The 524-foot state-of-the-art ship will feature instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and space for up to 600 cadets to train at sea. In addition, each ship of the class will have modern hospital facilities, a helicopter pad, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need. The NSMVs can also provide needed roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity for use during disaster relief missions.

The first of the vessel, *Empire State* was delivered to SUNY Maritime College in New York and has completed its first training cruises. The second vessel, *Patriot State*, was delivered in September 2024 to Mass Maritime.

Texas A&M is currently using a hand-me-down from Mass Maritime as MARAD reassigned the *TS Kennedy* to the Texas college in April 2023 to replace a 1983-vintage ocean surveillance ship for the U.S. Navy that was sailing as the training ship *General Rudder*. *Kennedy* is a 1967-built C-5 *Far East Clipper*-class break bulk cargo ship that sailed till 1985 as the *Velma Lykes*, for Lykes Bros. Steamship Company. She was in the reserve fleet and saw service during Desert Storm in Kuwait in 1991 before becoming a training ship in 2003.

The float-out was the first milestone of the shipyard after South Korea's Hanwha Group completed the acquisition of the shipyard in December 2024.



Pictured are the officers and crew of the *MV President L.B. Johnson*, APL's newest U.S.-flag vessel.

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Port of Vancouver starts offering LNG bunkering

The Port of Vancouver, British Columbia recently authorized LNG bunkering operations to take place within the limits of the port. In November 2024, North Vancouver’s Seaspán Energy received the first-to-be-issued LNG bunkering accreditation from the port authority. This means it is now authorized to conduct ship-to-ship LNG bunkering at the Port of Vancouver. Seaspán Energy’s accreditation was issued following rigorous risk assessments and mitigation processes that considered international best practices around safety. The accreditation makes LNG the first approved alternative fuel for ship bunkering at the Port of Vancouver. By allowing cargo ships powered with LNG to safely and efficiently refuel while in port, Seaspán Energy’s accreditation—along with the port authority’s LNG accreditation program — also contribute to streamlining port calls.

The refueling of cargo ships with LNG and other marine fuels within port waterways is subject to stringent requirements that align with industry best practices and guidelines, as defined by the Society for Gas as a Marine Fuel (for LNG) and the International Safety Guide for Oil Tankers and Terminals (for conventional fuels). Those requirements also consider the distinctive features of the different areas of the port where bunkering takes place, including English Bay, Burrard Inlet, and the Fraser River, to ensure it is carried out as safely and efficiently as possible, and that is doesn’t interfere with—or pose a risk to—nearby vessels, communities, and infrastructure. Examples of those safety requirements and procedures include:

- Annual review and accreditation of all bunker suppliers operating within the port.
- Detailed logging and record keep-

ing of all bunkering operations within the port

- Advance notice to the port authority of any bunkering operation set to take place.
- Reliable communication channels and protocols maintained throughout bunker transfer.

Because it is stored and transported in cooling tanks to maintain its liquid state, the process of handling and transferring LNG into ships’ fuel tanks differs slightly from the bunkering of fuel oils and is subject to additional safety considerations. These include requirements for suppliers to use LNG-specific safety checklists and to only conduct bunkering operations within designated areas of the port. Any ship using LNG as fuel must also be approved by Transport Canada and comply with all relevant operating practices and procedures specific to their vessel type.

South Korea world’s top shipbuilder, surpassing China

South Korea secured the highest number of global shipbuilding orders in January 2025, surpassing China, according to Clarkson Research, a British firm specializing in shipbuilding and shipping market analysis. The data reveals that South Korean shipyards clinched 900,000 compensated gross tons (CGT) for 13 vessels, accounting for 62 percent of global ship orders. On the other hand, China managed only 270,000 CGT for 21 ships, accounting for only 19 percent of the global orders. Despite China having more ships, its focus on smaller, low-value vessels kept its CGT lower than South Korea, which specializes in large, high-value ships.

The global shipbuilding industry witnessed a sharp 74 percent decline in new orders, with total orders dropping to 1.46 million CGT compared to the same period last year. However, South Korea saw a dramatic rise in its market share because of its focus on LNG-powered and advanced ships.

A key factor behind South Korea’s success was HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering’s contract to build 12 LNG dual-fuel container ships worth 3.716 trillion won for a European shipping company. Additionally, Samsung Heavy Industries won a contract for one LNG carrier valued at 379.6 billion won from an Oceania-based shipping company.

South Korea’s shipbuilding performance in January has greatly improved from December, with just 130,000 CGT in December, marking up only six percent of global orders. At that time, China dominated with 1.93 million CGT or 82 percent of global orders. However, China’s performance dropped sharply in January, with orders.

Although South Korea led in new orders in January, China still holds the largest backlog of shipbuilding orders. As of the end of January, China had

91.51 million CGT, making up 58 percent of the global total of 156.79 million CGT. South Korea ranked second with 37.02 million CGT (24 percent). The Clarkson Newbuilding Price

South Korea considering buying more U.S. oil and gas

South Korea is interested in importing more U.S. oil and gas to diversify energy sources and ensure stable supplies given tensions in the Middle East, the country’s industry minister Ahn said. The government may need to increase support for the purchase of non-Middle East oil, he told reporters in Seoul. His comments came as U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who took office on January 20, vowed to impose tariffs of 10 percent on global imports into the U.S., and said the European Union should step up U.S. oil and gas imports or face tariffs on the bloc’s exports, including on goods such as cars and machinery.

In 2024, South Korea posted a record \$55.7 billion trade surplus with the United States, up 25.4 percent from a year earlier. South Korea was the world’s fourth-largest buyer of crude oil and the third-biggest liquefied nat-

Index, which tracks changes in ship prices, stood at 189.38 points in January, marking a five percent increase from the same period last year and a 49 percent jump compared to 2021.

South Korea has deepened its reliance on crude oil imports from the Middle East, which accounted for 72 percent of total imports in 2023, up from 60 percent in 2021, according to the energy ministry.

For LNG, South Korea imported 47.2 million metric tons of the super-chilled fuel in 2024, of which 5.7 million metric tons were from the U.S., according to data from an analytics firm. Other LNG-importing countries such as Vietnam could also buy from the U.S. to ease its large trade surplus with the world’s top economy.

The U.S. is the world’s top LNG exporter. Sources said that Trump plans to make it easier for some LNG producers to seek export permit renewals, while his pick to head the U.S. Energy Department told senators that his first priority is expanding domestic energy production, including LNG.

Huntington Ingalls reports fourth quarter earnings below estimates

Military Shipbuilder Huntington Ingalls (HII.N) missed estimates for fourth-quarter revenue and profit on February 6, hurt by lower performance at its Newport News shipbuilding facility, sending its shares down 11 percent pre-market trading. The company, which faces issues related to supply chain and higher costs, expects its 2025 shipbuilding revenue to be in the range of \$8.9 billion to \$9.1 billion. It also expects revenue at its mission technolo-

gies segment to be between \$2.9 billion and \$3.1 billion for 2025.

Analysts on average expect the company to post full-year revenue of \$12.1 billion, according to data compiled by LSEG. The company’s fourth-quarter profit more than halved to \$3.15 per share and came in below analysts’ estimates of \$3.49 per share. Sales and service revenue for the quarter was \$3 billion, below estimates of \$3.1 billion.

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DOT nominee Duffy pledges support for Jones Act

Former Congressman Sean Duffy, President Donald Trump’s nominee for U.S. Secretary of Transportation, expressed unequivocal support for the Jones Act and made significant commitments on transportation infrastructure during his Senate confirmation hearing. During questioning by Senate Commerce Committee Ranking Member Maria Cantwell, Duffy provided a clear “yes” when asked about his support for the Jones Act, a cornerstone of U.S. maritime policy.

The American Maritime Partnership (AMP), the nation’s largest maritime industry coalition, quickly endorsed Duffy’s nomination. In a letter to Senator Thune, AMP President Jennifer Carpenter highlighted the alignment between Duffy’s position and the Trump Administration’s “Build American, Hire American” philosophy.

“During his first term, the Trump Administration described the Jones Act as ‘one of five critical dimensions of President Trump’s Made in the USA strategy’ and we are pleased that Mr. Duffy publicly conveyed his support for the law today,” wrote Carpenter.

Trump nominated former Congressman Sean Duffy as the next Secretary of Transportation just weeks after his election win in November 2024. Duffy, who represented Wisconsin’s 7th congressional district from 2011 to 2019, brings a diverse background to the role. His career spans politics, law, and media, including service as District Attorney in Ashland County, Wisconsin, and mem-

bership on the Financial Services Committee in Congress. Outside of politics, Duffy works as a media personality and Fox Business host. However, his nomination has drawn criticism about his lack of direct experience in the transportation sector.

As Secretary of Transportation, he will oversee the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD), responsible for supporting the U.S. merchant marine, promoting domestic shipbuilding, and ensuring the readiness of critical maritime infrastructure.

In his opening statement, Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, described Duffy as a “dedicated public servant who is well qualified to lead.” Cruz praised Duffy’s past leadership in Congress on transportation issues and his commitment to “promote a leaner, more efficient DOT, eliminating onerous regulations while responsibly investing in the nation’s infrastructure and ensuring safety.”

Beyond maritime policy, Duffy made several key commitments during the hearing, including support for MEGA and Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) transportation projects. He also pledged to address aviation safety concerns, agreeing to meet with Boeing MAX crash victims’ families and supporting robust FAA oversight of manufacturing processes.

Duffy was confirmed by the Senate as the new Transportation Secretary on January 28.

TTD congratulates Sean Duffy on Senate confirmation to lead DOT

Greg Regan and Shari Semelsberger, president and secretary-treasurer of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), issued the following statement on Sean Duffy’s confirmation to serve as Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT):

“Transportation labor congratulates Sean Duffy on his confirmation as Secretary of the Department of Transportation. As Transportation Secretary, Mr. Duffy will play a critical leadership role in overseeing the modal agencies that keep the traveling public and transportation workers safe, including the Federal Aviation, Railroad, Maritime and Transit Administrations.

“As the nation’s largest transportation labor federation, our priority remains the same across changing political landscapes and evolving technology: the safety and well-being of frontline

workers and passengers. In his confirmation hearing, Mr. Duffy committed to upholding the two-person staffing minimum for freight train crews, acknowledged the importance of investing in our passenger rail network, pledged to increase air traffic controller staffing, and expressed his support for the Jones Act. We are pleased that Mr. Duffy has a shared commitment on these issues, in addition to continuing to oversee the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law’s long-term investments in communities across America.

“We look forward to working with Secretary Duffy to improve America’s transportation systems, including commercial aviation, freight rail networks, Amtrak, and public transit, while ensuring that the workers who build, operate, maintain, and protect those systems remain safe on the job.”

Sola designated chairman of FMC

President Donald J. Trump has designated Louis E. “Lou” Sola to serve as the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC). Sola has served as a Commissioner of the FMC since January 2019, and he succeeds Daniel B. Maffei as Chairman. The Chairman is the chief executive and administrative officer of the Commission.

Sola served in the U.S. Army for 12 years, specializing in counterintelligence. Following his military career, he

worked in consulting before launching a company specializing in yacht and mega-yacht sales. Prior to joining the Federal Maritime Commission, he served as a Commissioner on the Florida Board of Pilot Commissioners.

Sola was first nominated to serve on the Federal Maritime Commission by President Trump on November 15, 2018, and was confirmed by the United States Senate on January 2, 2019.

Port of Oakland records 2.26 million TEU in 2024

The Port of Oakland experienced a solid 2024, processing 2.26 million TEU (twenty-foot containers), representing a 9.5 percent increase over 2023. The 2024 cargo data reflect a long-term growth trend in consumer spending in the San Francisco Bay Area and in the rest of the country.

On the full container side, imports saw a strong 15 percent increase in 2024, while exports grew by 5.4 percent year over year, highlighting balanced growth across key markets. Despite an 8 percent decline in the overall U.S. refrigerated market in 2024, the Port of Oakland demonstrated resilience, limiting reefer

volume declines to just 4 percent, thereby significantly outperforming broader market trends. Leading the reefer category were beef (36,000 TEU) and pork (31,000 TEU), with most of this cargo handled directly at the port.

In the dry cargo market, imports were led by furniture (110,000 TEU), plastic products (60,000 TEU), and batteries (37,000 TEU), with the latter contributing \$6.7 billion in cargo value. On the export side, wastepaper dominated with nearly 130,000 TEU, while the export of nuts reached an impressive 83,000 TEU, valued at over \$4 billion.

POLA, community colleges team up on workforce development

The Port of Los Angeles and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office have signed an agreement to collaborate on initiatives to better prepare community college students for careers in the evolving goods movement industry. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) brings together the resources of America’s busiest container port with a college system that is the largest provider of workforce training in the nation. The MOU focuses on critical issues facing the maritime industry, including zero-emission operations, decarbonization, environmental stewardship and changing technologies. Partnership activities outlined in the MOU include:

- Collaborating on how to create career path opportunities for students.
- Improved job-seeking processes for community college students and alumni.
- More opportunities for students to participate in user experiences and research activities.
- Port informational sessions at community college career centers.
- Providing port experts for career and recruitment fairs on community

college campuses. The agreement builds on the port’s ongoing efforts to promote workforce development and build clear connections between skills learned in today’s colleges with the skills in demand by employers in the goods movement industry. In November 2024, the port and UCLA signed an agreement to foster collaborations with neighborhoods and communities around the port, and create new learning, research and workforce opportunities for UCLA students and faculty.

Other workforce initiatives underway at the port include the opening of a new \$16 million International Longshore and Warehouse Union-Pacific Maritime Association Maintenance and Repair Training Center on Terminal Island, offering programs to reskill and up-skill ILWU workers. The Port of Los Angeles, Port of Long Beach, ILWU, PMA and California Workforce Development Board are also in the process of building a 20-acre training facility. When completed, it will be the only workforce training center in the U.S. dedicated solely to the goods movement sector.

Port Authority of Thailand inks pact with Yokohama

The Port Authority of Thailand (PAT) has signed a letter of intent with the City of Yokohama, Japan to further develop their port business and related infrastructure and strengthen ties on the 10th anniversary of the forging of ties between the two parties. A deputy prime minister said the agreement strengthens collaboration in port development and infrastructure, especially for Bangkok Port. The parties will work together to boost marketing, technology, and sustainable development as Bangkok Port aims to become an environmentally and community-friendly port. Yokohama City will assist experts in studying the Bangkok Port development project and maximizing the use of space there. It is one of the Ministry of Transport’s flagship projects.

The PAT also has a plan to develop communities behind the port to maximize benefits and improve the quality of life of people residing there. The PAT will use technology

to improve lorry parking and traffic management at the port, reducing congestion. There is also a plan to run a passenger cruise ship terminal and facilities to promote tourism at Bangkok Port. It will be located on a plot along the bank of the Chao Phraya River.

Japan is the third-biggest trading partner of Thailand with Yokohama being the second-largest and most populous city after Tokyo. Yokohama Port, which is governed by the city and administered by Yokohama Kawasaki International Port Corporation, handles the second-largest container volume in Japan after Tokyo. In 2023, the port handled 3.02 million TEU, up 1.68 percent from the previous year. Furthermore, Yokohama Port is Japan’s most popular tourist port, with 171 cruise ships and 467,536 passengers in 2023. Yokohama Port generates significant economic value, accounting for 30 percent of Yokohama City’s overall income.

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MFW
PRESIDENT'S
REPORT



Not much to report this month. Headquarters officials and staff have been busy with end-of-year reports and filings, and upcoming Union and trust fund audit preparations.

APL Marine Services

In January, APL Marine Services placed the *MV President LB Johnson* under U.S.-flag at the Port of Los Angeles. This brings the total of U.S.-flag vessels operated by the company to 10. The *President LB Johnson* joins the *APL Eagle*, *APL Islander*, *APL Oceania*, *President JQ Adams*, *President Bush*, *President Carter*, *President Grant*, *President Monroe*, and *President Reagan* to round out its U.S.-flag renewal fleet.

Matson Navigation Company

On January 29, Matson Navigation Company issued COVID-19 Protocols Summary, Update 9. Matson continues to follow the U. S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Respiratory Virus Guidance to mitigate the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak aboard a Matson ship. The following protocols apply:

- COVID-19 Vaccinations** — Vaccinations are no longer required.
- COVID-19 Testing** — Routine testing is no longer required.
- Suspected COVID-19 Positive Cases** — Crew, riding vendors, stock tenders, and spouses or family members shall report symptoms consistent with any respiratory virus to their supervisor or the master immediately. If COVID-19 is suspected, masters shall ensure that the person is immediately tested using the kits aboard.
- Test Kits, Medications, and Face Masks** — All ships are required to carry 25 COVID-19 test kits, one box of Paxlovid, and 100 surgical masks. Ships shall also carry an adequate supply of N-95 masks aboard for use as PPE and for any required COVID-19 response. Ships will be re-supplied with the COVID-19 specific items as needed and on an annual basis until further notice.

Patriot Contract Services

The company is still operating 10 Ready Reserve Force vessels; 10 large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) vessels; and two shallow draft tankers under various contracts with the federal government. There are a few ongoing Maritime Administration and Military Sealift Command vessel bids, along with ongoing vessel contract extensions and bridge contracts, and operational uncertainties. Where this leads to and what the PCS fleet will look like a year from now is anybody's guess. In the meantime, let's keep those billets filled.

New dual-fuel engine has the world on edge

In a world moving towards more sustainable energy solutions, a new type of marine engine is creating a buzz in the maritime industry. Caterpillar Marine is set to debut its revolutionary dual-fuel Cat 3500E engines in 2026, which could change the way tugboats and other vessels operate. With a combination of diesel and methanol as fuel sources, these engines promise high efficiency, reduced emissions, and greater operational flexibility. However, as the industry explores the potential of this new technology, questions abound about its feasibility and impact.

Caterpillar Marine's dual-fuel 3500E engines, which integrate both diesel and low-pressure methanol fuel systems, offer a powerful and sustainable solution for maritime operators. The methanol dual-fuel engine, a part of Caterpillar's 3500E platform, is poised to deliver the same power output as the existing diesel engines which range from 2800 to 3000 kiloWatt while meeting stricter emission standards.

The dual-fuel Cat 3500E engines aim to meet International Maritime Organization (IMO) Tier III emissions standards, which are more stringent than the current IMO Tier II standards met by the diesel version. The engines are designed to operate with high methanol substitution rates, even at low load conditions, a crucial factor for vessels like tugs that often operate at low speeds.

Methanol is gaining attention as an alternative marine fuel. It exists in liquid form at ambient conditions, making it easier to store and handle than gases like hydrogen. Additionally, methanol

has a lower carbon intensity and good energy density. This makes it a promising option for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the maritime sector. Caterpillar expects to deploy the first methanol dual-fuel 3500E engines in tugboats by 2026. This will allow operators to run their vessels on diesel for now, but retrofit them to run on methanol when it becomes more widely available.

The flexibility of the Cat 3500E engine is its key selling point. These engines are optimized for high methanol substitution rates across a wide range of load factors. For instance, a 28-meter tug operating at eight knots and requiring 600 kW of propulsion power could achieve more than 70 percent methanol substitution on an energy basis. This would significantly reduce the tug's greenhouse gas emissions without sacrificing power or performance.

What makes this technology even more attractive is its potential for retrofitting. Tugboats already equipped with the dual-fuel 3500E engines can easily transition to methanol when it becomes available in their regions, without the need for costly and complex modifications.

While competitors like Rolls-Royce and MAN Energy Solutions are also exploring alternative engines in the maritime industry, including methanol-diesel engines for tugboats, Caterpillar's move to offer high methanol substitution rates and the possibility of retrofitting existing vessels gives it an edge in the race to decarbonize the maritime sector.



Passengers on *MV Columbia* can now stay connected to friends and family during their voyage with the successful launch of a Wi-Fi pilot project.

Alaska Marine Highway System launches Wi-Fi pilot program

In December, passengers on a voyage between Bellingham, Washington, and Southeast Alaska became the first to use the new, free Wi-Fi feature on *MV Columbia*. The pilot project will be expanded to vessels across the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) fleet in the future.

During a recent voyage between Bellingham, Washington, and Southeast Alaska, *Columbia* became the first AMHS vessel to provide free, ship-wide Wi-Fi access, including in the solarium, lounges, staterooms, and bar, as well as crew quarters and crew dining areas. More than 450 users connected during the first week in service, demonstrating high demand for onboard connectivity. The pilot project improves the onboard experience for both crew and passengers.

The project also supports AMHS's broader vision to enhance the passenger experience and attract more travelers to the system. Future phases will expand

Wi-Fi access across the fleet, starting with *MV Aurora* and *MV LeConte*, using recently secured federal funding.

Adding Wi-Fi required overcoming significant technical and logistical challenges. AMHS collaborated with a cross-functional team of marine engineers, IT specialists, and project managers, alongside contractors and other state employees. The advent of low-Earth orbit satellite technology, such as Starlink, solved long-standing issues with traditional satellite connectivity in Alaska's mountainous Inside Passage. Unlike older systems, Starlink's direct, vertical satellite positioning avoids signal interference caused by terrain.

However, distributing secure wireless access throughout the steel-constructed *Columbia* posed hurdles. The project required running thousands of feet of cable, strategically placing thirty-seven access points during the vessel's overhaul in the Ketchikan shipyard.

Norway advances nuclear-powered ship propulsion study

Norway's NuProShip (Nuclear Propulsion in Shipping) has embarked on its second stage after completing initial studies into Generation IV reactors. The project, which was launched in 2023, aims to develop a commercially viable zero-emission technology for deep-sea ships. The Research Council of Norway awarded nearly \$1 million to support the project which has also drawn support from some of the leading companies in the shipping industry.

Norwegian Shipbuilder VARD is joining the second stage of the project, which is scheduled to run until the end of 2025. VARD's primary contribution involves integrating these reactor systems into various vessel types, assessing the technical challenges to enable the future commercial use of nuclear-powered ships. Other partners include DNV, Knutsen Tankers, the Norwegian Maritime Administration, and Spanish nuclear consultancy IDOM.

The initial focus of the project was approved designs with a power of 25-55 MW. Stage one studies the feasibility of different Generation IV nuclear reactor concepts. Concepts from 99 companies were studied before three reactor types were selected for future study. These were:

- Kairos Power (USA) — Fluoride high-temperature molten salt reactor using tri-structural isotropic (TRISO) fuel particles, designed for robust and efficient operation.
- Ultrasafe (USA) — Helium-cooled gas reactor, also employing TRISO fuel particles, known for their resilience and safety in extreme conditions.
- Blykalla (Sweden) - Lead-cooled fast reactor concept utilizing uranium oxide as fuel, offering high

efficiency with advanced cooling mechanisms.

The shipping industry has shown increasing interest in the concept of nuclear-powered propulsion. The *NS Savannah* was the first nuclear-powered merchant ship built in the late 1950s at a cost of \$46.9 million was funded by United States government agencies. This was a demonstration project and was in service between 1962 and 1972 as one of only four nuclear-powered cargo ships ever built the Soviet ice-breaker *Lenin*, launched on December 5, 1957, was the first nuclear-powered civilian ship. Russia is the primary user of nuclear propulsion for its icebreakers.

The next phase of the NuProShip project will be expanded to include insurance companies to further explore the viability of nuclear technology in the shipping industry. The concepts defined in the first phase will be further analyzed during the second phase with respect to feasibility, safety, costs, waste, and other factors. The third phase of the project calls for developing and testing a prototype to estimate the economic and environmental effects. It will outline the risks and future development needs to proceed with the concept of nuclear-powered merchant ships.

The work is split into work packages each with major R&D challenges. The first is the nuclear island and everything that goes with it including land-based matters such as harbor and nuclear waste treatment. The second investigates all the technical implications for ships while the third studies the operational issues at sea. A fourth work package assembles all the insights from the previous three.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There were 34 registrants dispatched in the month of January: 16 in Class A, five in Class B, three in Class C and 10 Non-Seniority.

There are 41 members registered: 22 in Class A, seven in Class B, eleven in Class C and one Non-Seniority.

There were nine rotary, 16 Standby Electrician/Reefer and nine Standby Wiper jobs.

I have received e-mails, phone calls and text messages from crew members asking if their job was posted and a replacement dispatched to the job. Crew members should advise the MFOW delegate aboard the vessel with the request-

ed departure date given to the ship's management team and also inform the Union Hall.

In the event that a crew member changes the departure date for any reason the hall will be informed of the change requested. Winter has arrived to the Port of Oakland and along with it the rain. It makes most reefer mechanic's and Electrician's a little nervous when plugging in reefer boxes in the pouring rain, work safe and use the proper PPE also look out for each other thanks and take care.

Faternally,
Robert Baca, Vice President

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

'Hello Brothers'

I wish to take time to discuss this greeting with you. The greeting is based on the idea we are a brotherhood; an **association**, society, or community of **people linked by a common interest**, religion, or **trade**'. Being linked by this common interest bears the question; what is it that this brotherhood is to accomplish?' A statement in our preamble brings perspective for me; '... to strive by all means to obtain fair and proper remuneration for all labor members; to endeavor to improve the ability and workmanship of its members ...' Renumeration is accomplished by contractual negotiations with the company but is upheld by our union brothers striving to give a fair days work for a fair days wage. Ability and workmanship can be accomplished in three ways; book/classroom on-the-job and simply being an example. Classroom training provides foundations upon which we build our knowledge of how equipment works. On-the-job training is a hands-on task that we take the principles learned and apply them to build routines and habits

to work efficiently and safely. The third process is the established and senior technicians in our union doing their job is an example to the junior members on how to perform the work safely and efficiently. Our linked common interest in accomplishing these two basic concepts of why we formed this union forges the bond of our brotherhood and is a privilege of mine and I hope all members to refer to each other as 'BROTHERS'.

To the mundane: the MV Mokiha laid up for repairs in San Francisco and called up a Standby Electrician and four Standby Wipers for cleanup and prep for repairs. The President Bush called a second Reefer for 10 to 15 days. MV Maunalani rotated a new Electrician and an APW. Two applicant wipers from SF have made the rise to a rotary position as wiper on the Charlton and Watkins. Matson continues to call Standby Reefers with occasional bunker rover positions.

Faternally,
Patrick Gillette
San Francisco Business Agent

ILA sends contract to rank-and-file for approval

Rank-and-file members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) will vote February 25 on what union leadership called "the hardest and most complicated contract to bargain ... in the history of the ILA" with East and Gulf coast port employers. The announcement posted by the ILA on social media followed unanimous approval of the new six-year master contract by the union's Wage Scale Committee.

Approval by 25,000 union members in container handling would end a contentious period of bargaining with terminal operators and ocean carriers that began in early 2023 and bottomed out during a three-day strike this past October that brought container traffic to a halt at 14 ports from Massachusetts to Texas. In a video posted to YouTube, ILA President Harold Daggett called the pact an incredible contract package that would cost employers a conservative estimate of \$35 billion, up from \$18 billion for the previous contract negotiated in 2018. He offered some details:

- A 62 percent pay raise over six years.

- Job guarantees linked to the introduction of semi-automated equipment.
- Accelerated pay raises for new workers, to help build the workforce.
- Full payment, or royalty, for each container handled returned to the ILA.
- Raises in contributions to retirement plans.
- Strengthening of the union health-care plan.
- Resolved issues concerning vacations and holidays.

Daggett in the video said the union would address and resolve the issue of absenteeism, warning members who accept job orders and then not show up for work could jeopardize the value of the new contract, and compromise the ILA's aim to outperform automation.

Union members will receive details of the agreement at local meetings in the next two weeks and then participate in the ratification vote on February 25. The new agreement is retroactive to October 1, 2024, and, if ratified by ILA members, will be in effect until September 30, 2030.

Admiral Phillips Recaps MARAD Service

On January 12, 2025, Maritime Administrator Ann C. Phillips, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.), departed the Maritime Administration (MARAD). Phillips, who was sworn in as MARAD's 20th Administrator on May 16, 2022, guided a team of nearly 900 professionals, orchestrating 33 wide-ranging responsibilities that provide critical infrastructure and support for the nation's commercial and military maritime sectors.

In addition to prioritizing safety at sea for mariner cadets and addressing quality of life and recruitment and retention challenges for all mariners, she worked to expand facilities and capital improvement funding and capacity at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA), grew the U.S.-flag fleet and upheld the Jones Act, acquired vessels to modernize the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) in support of National Security, and oversaw historic grants to ports and small shipyards made possible by the Biden Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

One of the highlights of Administrator Phillips' tenure includes creation and implementation of Every Mariner Builds A Respectful Culture (EMBARC) Program, codified into law in 2023. This program sets standards to help prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment on U.S.-flag vessels that are required by law to carry USMMA cadets. Since the program's introduction, 22 U.S.-flag commercial carriers have adopted these standards—including 16 carriers and operators required to do so by law as well as six additional carriers that have voluntarily enrolled. EMBARC is driving a culture of safety, dignity, and respect across the industry.

During her tenure, Administrator Phillips also worked to address long-standing challenges at the USMMA, including those enumerated by the National Academy of Public Administration's (NAPA) Organizational Assessment of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy: A Path Forward. As recommended by NAPA, she stood up the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Advisory Council, created and staffed a new facilities directorate, and worked to build capacity across the Academy's campus. In recent years, Congress has appropriated more than \$200 million in funding to address decades of deferred maintenance and infrastructure improvement needs at the USMMA. This funding will enable enhancement of USMMA's facilities to ensure it continues to provide world-class training to prepare the next generations of licensed merchant mariners who will serve our Nation.

Administrator Phillips also oversaw the release of the Mariner Workforce Strategic Plan for the Years 2023-2027, a first-of-its-kind strategy focused on strengthening the recruitment, training, and retention of merchant mariners, including by eliminating long-standing barriers to recruitment. Phillips also expanded the designation of community and technical colleges and non-profit training centers under the Centers

of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education Program, recognizing institutions that collectively matriculate more than 21,000 students annually with the certifications and credentials they need to enter and progress in the maritime industry.

Administrator Phillips was also responsible for MARAD's new ship construction program building the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV). During her tenure, she took delivery of *Empire State* in 2023 for service with the State University of New York Maritime College and *Patriot State* in 2024 for service with the Massachusetts Maritime College. Accommodating up to 600 cadets plus crew, these are the first-ever purpose-built mariner training vessels in the nation's history and will also provide a substantial maritime platform to support federal humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

In addition to overseeing activations of RRF ships for multiple national missions involving the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative and other strategic priorities, she oversaw MARAD's work sustaining and growing the U.S.-flag fleet and providing critical sealift capabilities through the Maritime Security Program, new Tanker Security Program, and the Cable Security Fleet. Together, these programs reduced the overall age of the commercial fleet, brought new tanker capacity into the U.S.-flag fleet, and provided a unique cable repair capability to the nation—all while sustaining good-paying, union mariner jobs.

Working closely with leaders in Department of Defense, ocean carriers, and maritime labor, she also helped navigate the urgent challenges of contested environments in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and the Mediterranean Sea—ensuring prioritization of U.S.-flag fleet capabilities and U.S. mariner safety.

Administrator Phillips also oversaw the award of more than \$2 billion in grants through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and appropriated funding, including grants awarded through the Port Infrastructure Development Program, the United States Marine Highway Program, and the Small Shipyard Grant Program, during her tenure. In addition, MARAD administered \$1.8 billion in port infrastructure investments through the Department of Transportation's discretionary grant programs.

Administrator Phillips' time at MARAD also focused heavily on supporting development of the forthcoming National Maritime Strategy, and under her direction, MARAD joined the National Academies of Sciences' Transportation Research Board and stood up the U.S. Center for Maritime Innovation. She also advanced development and pilot testing of a first-ever near miss reporting system for the maritime industry, the Safe Maritime Transportation System.

Mr. Charles Makings, Deputy Maritime Administrator, assumed duties as Acting Maritime Administrator.

Active MFOW members
Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility.
MAIL or TURN IN all your Unfit for Duty slips to:
MFOW Welfare Fund, 240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

MARINE FIREMEN’S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2025

Interested members who meet the Training Program eligibility requirements and prerequisites outlined for each course may obtain an application online at mfoww.org or at Headquarters and branch offices. All applications must be accompanied by a copy of the member’s Merchant Mariner Credential.

(a) Eligible participants are MFOW members who:

- (1) Have maintained A, B or C seniority classification.
- (2) Are current with their dues.
- (3) Are eligible for medical coverage through covered employment.
- (4) Have a current Q-card (annual physical) issued by the Seafarers’ Medical Center and are fit for duty.

(b) Non-seniority applicants:

- (1) Applicants may be selected for required government vessels training as required to fulfill manning obligations under the various MFOW government vessel contracts.
- (2) Selectees under this provision must meet all other requirements for seagoing employment and shall have demonstrated satisfactory work habits through casual employment.

Maritime Institute

Courses are conducted at Maritime Institute in San Diego, California, contingent on enrollment levels. Tuition, lodging and transportation are pre-arranged by the MFU Training Plan.

Military Sealift Command (MSC) Government Vessels Course

This four-day course is required for employment aboard various MSC contract-operated ships and includes the following segments: Shipboard Damage Control; Environmental Protection; Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense; Helo Firefighting.

February 10-13 March 10-13 April 14-17

Military Sealift Command (MSC) Readiness Refresher

This two-day course renews the following government vessel segments: Helo Firefighting; Environmental Protection; Damage Control; and Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense. The full versions of these segments must have been completed within 5 years of taking the Readiness Refresher course.

January 30-31 February 27-28 April 3-4

Basic IGF Code

Any applicant who has successfully completed your Basic IGF Code Operations (MARINS-805) course will satisfy: The training and standards of competence required by STCW Code Section A-V/3 and Table A-V/3-1, as amended 2010, for original or renewal of STCW endorsement for Basic IGF Code Operations. A course certificate may be used for one application which results in the issuance of an endorsement and may not be used for any application transactions thereafter.

February 10-11 March 24-25, April 28-29

QMED Fireman/ Oiler/Watertender

A member who successfully completes the 160-hour Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) Fireman/Watertender/Oiler course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender and QMED Oiler, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. *Prerequisites: 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time as Wiper; PLUS, Coast Guard approval letter for endorsement upgrading, which certifies minimum of 180 days’ sea time as Wiper.*

February 17-March 14 April 14-May 9 July 7 – August 1

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch (RFPEW) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as RFPEW. *Prerequisites: See QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler course. It is recommended that eligible candidates schedule the QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler and RFPEW courses back-to-back for a five-week combined training session.*

February 3-4 March 17-21 May 12-16

QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer

A member who successfully completes the 240-hour QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. *Prerequisites: Endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler, and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.*

February 24-April 4 April 21-May 30 July 14 – August 22

STCW Able Seafarer-Engine

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Able Seafarer-Engine (AS-E) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as AS-E. *Prerequisites: Endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.*

February 17-21 April 7-11 June 2-6

QMED Pumpman/Machinist

A member who successfully completes the five-week QMED Pumpman/Machinist course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Pumpman/Machinist. *Prerequisites: 360 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while holding the endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Oiler/Watertender, RFPEW and AS-E.*

May 19-June 20 September 29-October 31

High Voltage Safety

This five-day course is comprised of classroom lectures, simulator-based training, and assessments on our state-of-the-art TRANSAS TechSim 5000 High-Voltage (HV) Circuit Breaker Simulator. Students will be exposed to the principles behind shock hazards, and arc flash/arc blast phenomena. Practical exercises will help students understand how shock and arc flash boundaries are calculated, and most important, Incident Energy calculations to determine selection of required arc flash PPE. The assessment will incorporate all aspects of training including the proper use of PPE, live line tools, multimeters, other test equipment, and an implementation of a sample checklist for a Job Safety Analysis plan dealing with HV. *Prerequisites: QMED Electrician-Refrigerating Engineer/Junior Engineer/RFPEW and Able Seafarer-Engine endorsements.*

February 10-14 March 24-28 April 14-18

New in 2025

Maritime Institute: 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA
QMED Oiler: February 24-March 14, June 2-20, August 18-September 5
STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch: March 17-21, April 7-11, June 23-27
STCW BASIC TRAINING
All Basic Training Certificates Hold A One-Year Validation When Used For Mariner Document Renewal.
STCW Basic Training Revalidation
The BT Revalidation course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have at least one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.
Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: January 31, February 14, March 7, March 21
Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI: January 31, April 11, June 6, August 1
Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: April 25, May 27, June 66
Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: January 21-22, February 18-19
MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: February 19-20, March 3-4, April 7-8

STCW Basic Training Refresher (three days)
The BT Refresher course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have NOT completed one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.
Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: February 19-20, March 12-14, April 9-11
Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: February 12-14, March 26-28, April 16-18
Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: March 17-19
MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: April 7-9, July 14-16

U.S. shipping invests \$150 million in Great Lakes region

With winter in full swing, the U.S.-flag fleet of lakers have tied up in ports across the Great Lakes region to perform critical maintenance before the navigational locks in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan reopen on March 25. Hundreds of skilled shipyard workers will flock to the area to support the nearly \$150 million maintenance investment being made on these massive ships.

The state receiving the largest amount of work is Ohio with \$51.5 million, followed closely by Wisconsin at \$51 million, Pennsylvania at \$25 million, Minnesota and Michigan both getting \$9 million, and another \$3 million will go to facilities in New York and Illinois. Domestically produced steel will be installed on many ships by U.S. welders and electronic equipment will be upgraded by American electricians.

After nine and a half months of continuous operations loading and unloading various bulk cargo, the ships get a short rest period. Most of the crew that sailed will get a prolonged vacation while engineers and other support staff work over the winter to make sure the vessels are in top shape when the season begins again in March. Propulsion equipment will be tuned and, in some cases, replaced, steel hull plating and welds will get refreshed, and crew comforts will be added or upgraded.

Since most of the U.S.-flag fleet of lakers are too large to exit the Great Lakes due to the limiting size of the Seaway locks, they will remain comfortably accommodated at some of the world’s best ship repair facilities in Great Lakes states. Investment in the current Great Lakes ships is an investment in the future of the North American economy and the continued strength of our nation.

Like us on facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Marine-Firemens-Union-121622254577986/>



Busy January in Honolulu

There was plenty of MFOW activity during the month of January in the Hawaiian Islands.



Port Engineer Mike Shea's celebration of life on the waterfront of Maunalua Bay.



Hawaii State AFL-CIO affiliate unions at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade in Waikiki.



MFOW Honolulu Port Agent Mario Higa (second from right) at Kea'au High School.



Job fair at Kea'au High School on the Big Island.

Your Right to Union Representation

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at the meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to answer questions."

This is your right under the 1975 U.S. Supreme Court Weingarten Decision.



Job fair at Damien Memorial High School in Honolulu.

SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of January Seattle shipped four Electricians, three REJs, one Junior Engineer, one Oiler, two Wipers, four Standby Reefers, and nine Standby Wipers. Seattle currently has seven A-, four B-, and two C-seniority members registered for shipping.

As of the beginning of February, the Seattle Branch has referred 20 deck, engine, and steward department entry level prospects to the Seattle Jobs Initiative for training and document issuance financial assistance. A little under half the money that was secured from the Washington State Legislature remains in the fund and is available for any can-

didates you know that wish to begin a career at sea but need some help to get started. Please send them my way.

Currently, the Seattle Branch is working in this legislative session on a \$60,000 transportation proviso to be given to SUP affiliate Deep Sea Fishermen's Union (DFSU) and their training school - Crawford Nautical - to assist them in building out a new Basic Training program. I know we all agree that we need more available dates for training options in the Northwest and this will go a long way to achieve that.

Faternally,
Brendon Bohannon, Representative

Reefer container market to reach \$15.79 billion by 2031

The global reefer container market is witnessing robust expansion fueled by increasing international trade of temperature-sensitive goods, growing demand for frozen food products, and technological advancements in cold chain logistics. The market is projected to achieve a valuation of \$15.79 billion by 2031, demonstrating a compound annual growth rate of 8.5

Reefer containers are specialized equipment designed to transport temperature-sensitive cargo while maintaining precise temperature and humidity controls. These containers are crucial for shipping perishable goods such as pharmaceuticals, fresh produce, frozen foods, and other temperature-critical products across global supply chains. The market's growth is particularly driven by the expanding pharmaceutical industry and increasing consumer demand for fresh and

The Asia Pacific region leads the market with a 45-50 percent share, driven by China's massive export market and growing cold chain infrastructure. Rapid urbanization and increasing demand for frozen foods in emerging economies continue to fuel market growth. North America holds the second-largest market share, characterized by advanced cold chain technology adoption and strict regulatory standards. A strong pharmaceutical sector and growing demand for fresh produce contribute to market expansion.

Hockey players join AFL-CIO

Two of professional hockey's North American players' associations—the National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) and the Professional Hockey Players' Association (PHPA)—announced they are formally affiliating with the AFL-CIO and joining its Sports Council. The NHLPA represents approximately 750 professional hockey players across 32 teams in the NHL, while the PHPA represents approximately 1,800 professional hockey players across 61 teams in the American Hockey League and the ECHL. Their membership brings the total number of unions under the nation's largest labor federation to 63, representing more than 15 million workers.

The AFL-CIO Sports Council was formed in 2022 to build power across unions in the sports industry, amplify the voices of athletes and shine a light on the challenges they face as workers. It includes the NFL Players Association (NFLPA), the NWSL Players Association (NWSLPA), the USL Players Association-CWA (USLPA-CWA), the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA), the Major League Soccer Players Association (MLSPA) and the Women's National Basketball Players Association (WNBPA).

HONOLULU NOTES

The Honolulu Hall dispatched a total of 63 jobs for the month of January. It was slower than usual for dispatches but packed with members returning to the hall looking for work. Presently the Honolulu registration list numbers 18 A-, four B-, 12 C-seniority members.

I attended Port Engineer Mike Shea's celebration of life. It was held near his home in Hawaii Kai on the waterfront of Maunaloa Bay. Mike was a very good man that left this life way too early. He just got promoted to head Matson Honolulu Port Engineer; he was well-equipped to do this job. Very hard-working man and a good father. He leaves behind his only child, a son of 19 years old. It was like his whole neighborhood came to the celebration of life. Many of them spoke about how he would help fix their cars or their appliances or just being a very generous person. Of course, many coworkers came to pay their respect. Fair winds and following seas.

In January, I had my usual meetings with the Honolulu Sailors' Home, Hawaii Port Maritime Council, and the

Hawaii State AFL-CIO Executive Board. I also attended two career fairs, one at Damien High School and the other at Kea'au High School. I also kept busy with marching in the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade along with the Hawaii State AFL-CIO affiliate unions. As always, SUP union Brother Patrick Weisbarth attended along with me. I need to give Brother Patrick a shout out for winning his reelection. A well-deserved win for a very hard-working union man.

It's been a very busy couple of months and I could not have done my job without the help of relievers. Brother Don Ngo and Brother Russell Felicilda have been there for me many times and again filled in for me during the last couple of months. I also have called on Brother Stuart Melendy, Brother Dominic Matthews, Brother Kris Mahalath, and recently Brother Colby Sims. I really appreciate all of them and their professional work ethics in the office. Thank you very much.

Aloha,
Mario Higa, Port Agent

French maritime center reports maritime piracy increased worldwide last year

Maritime piracy increased globally in 2024, with renewed tensions in the Red Sea and off the Horn of Africa among the contributing factors, the MICA Centre, a French maritime security organization reports. There were 60 acts of piracy worldwide last year, a 110 percent rise compared to 2023, the MICA Centre, based at the French Navy headquarters in Brest, states in its latest annual report.

More than two-thirds (42) of the piracy cases occurred off the coast of Somalia, whereas the Gulf of Guinea, once the hotspot for maritime insecurity, recorded just six such incidents in 2024. The pi-

rates mainly target vessels involved in illegal fishing off the Somali coast.

Commander Thomas Scalabre of the MICA Centre described these actions as "retaliatory measures by local fishermen or Somali pirates."

Sea traffic at the entrance to the Red Sea was also heavily disrupted by attacks from Yemen Houthi rebels in the Bab-El-Mandeb strait. The Houthis targeted merchant ships with Israeli, British, or American interests.

"The Houthis claim to have hit more than 200 ships, but we recorded 124 attacks," Scalabre noted. In these 124 attacks, 27 ships were slightly damaged and continued their journeys, while six suffered more severe damage.

Four sailors were killed, and a crew of 25 was held hostage for over 430 days.

POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Voluntary donations for January 2025:

Joe Rubio, P-2757.....\$100.00
Blaine Kamaura, JM-545\$20.00
Shadow Moyer, #3822\$50.00
Francisco Lazzara, #3725\$20.00
David Hooper, P-2818.....\$200.00

HONOR ROLL

Voluntary donation to General Treasury — January 2025:

Eeric White, #3925\$100.00

MFOW member pensioned

Name	Book Number	Pension Type	Sea Time	Effective
Benito Cay-an	3973	SIU PD Only Basic L/T	1.000	12/1/2024

MARINE FIREMAN SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND VOLUNTARY PAF DONATIONS

Please use the following form.

NAME (Print) _____ PENSION or BOOK NO. _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Check box: ☐ U.S. & POSSESSIONS ☐ OVERSEAS

Yearly Subscriptions: ☐ First Class \$20.00 ☐ Air (AO) Mail \$25.00

Voluntary Political Action Fund Donation ☐ \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:

MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

Halls to close

Presidents' Day — The MFOW hiring halls will be closed on **Monday, February 17, 2024**, in observance of Presidents' Day which is a contract holiday under the APL and Matson Master Offshore Agreements.

HOWZ SHIPPING?

January 2025

San Francisco

Electrician.....	1
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	1
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Oiler.....	1
Wiper.....	4
Standby Electrician/Reefer	16
Standby Wiper.....	9
TOTAL	34

Seattle

Electrician.....	4
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	3
Oiler.....	1
Wiper.....	2
Standby Electrician/Reefer	4
Standby Wiper.....	9
TOTAL	23

Honolulu

Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	1
Junior Engineer	3
Oiler.....	2
Shore Mechanic.....	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer	26
Standby Wiper.....	28
TOTAL	63

Wilmington

No Report Submitted

FINISHED
WITH
ENGINES



Ralph L. Welburn, #3370/P2688. Born May 2, 1943, Oregon. Joined MFOW September 1, 1966. Died October 31, 2024, Houston, Texas.