Sea Machines teams with AMO for 1,000 NM autonomous voyage

U.S. Coast Guard licensed merchant mariners represented by American Maritime Officers command voyage around Denmark from control room in Boston

AMO deck officers Bridget Quinn and Adam Szloch remotely command the NELLIE BLY in Denmark from Sea Machines’ Boston control room. The SM300 provides the remote commanders with full shore-to-vessel connectivity and control, and includes an active chart environment with live augmented data overlays, state of vessel, situational awareness and environmental data, as well as real-time, vessel-born audio and video from many streaming cameras.

In a first between a maritime union and an autonomous technology company, American Maritime Officers (AMO) has entered into a labor agreement with Sea Machines Robotics, the leading developer of autonomous command and control systems. The partnership signals the recognition by both entities that a prosperous future for the maritime sector is one built on a firm relationship among workers, technology and business.

In the collaboration, AMO-represented U.S. Coast Guard licensed officers are supporting Sea Machines’ first-of-its-kind 1,000 NM autonomous voyage around Denmark. Aptly named The Machine Odyssey, the voyage marks a pivotal moment for autonomous transportation and is slated to prove that the world’s waterways are primed and ready for long-range autonomy.

AMO officers are commanding the NELLIE BLY on her autonomous voyage remotely from Sea Machines’ Boston-based control center. The officers received training prior to the voyage kick-off and have support from the Sea Machines’ engineering teams in Boston and Hamburg throughout the estimated three-week program. Additionally, the NELLIE BLY will always carry two on-board safety captains, with occasional guest passengers, and will call on ports along the route to display and demonstrate the technology.

Known as the leading source for U.S. Coast Guard licensed merchant marine officers in all shipboard departments and shipping trades, AMO is taking the strategic step to ensure the merchant marine officers it represents can continue to have a secure role in an evolving industry as new technology is developed and applied.

“AMO is working to anticipate and prepare for the future of the maritime industry, understanding the implementation of the technology will happen in the not-so-distant future. Failure to prepare for the future means failure to participate in it. Through this agreement, AMO is working to set careers for future generations of merchant mariners,” said AMO National Executive Vice President William Barrere. “AMO is committed to ensuring the human element — particularly the expertise of U.S. merchant mariners earned through extensive experience and comprehensive training at industry-leading facilities, such as STAR Center — remains a key component of maritime transportation to ensure safe navigation, sustained mariner employment and the reliable operation of onboard equipment and systems.”

Since inception in 2015, Sea Machines has always been on a mission to create technologies that provide new operational methodologies, increase operational productivity and predictability, and increase at-sea safety for mariners. Sea Machines and AMO share the goal of ensuring the safe and effective operation of vessels as increasing levels of automation continue to be applied throughout an active industry.

“Sea Machines is built by a team of mariners — currently employing from five of the seven U.S. maritime academies — and operates with a mission to uplift and expand marine industries with technology,” said Sea Machines’ CEO Michael Johnson. “We envision a future in which autonomous technology can expand the world’s fleets and waterborne transportation systems, make transport over water more versatile and competitive with other modes of transportation, and expand the maritime workforce through growth in the industry, ultimately creating jobs. We’re pleased to be working with AMO on this pioneering voyage toward the expansion of our industry.”
AMO set for return of monthly membership meetings

By Paul Doell
National President

We’re fast approaching November 8 — the 61st Anniversary of the election of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States and National Cappucci- no Day 2021.

At some level of real significance in between, November 8 this year marks the return of live, on-site regularly scheduled monthly membership meetings at Headquarters in Dania Beach, Florida.

As we all know too well, the national health emergency declared at the advent of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 caused the AMO Executive Board to cancel the April 2020 meeting and each meeting since — an aggravating development linked to what federal and state physicians, virologists and epidemiologists referred to routinely as especially disturbing COVID-19 infection rates, hospitalization and death in Florida, despite state, county and municipal safeguards that included bans on gatherings of 10 or more. This summer’s deadly surge in the COVID-19 Delta variant caseload made conditions even worse.

But now the crisis appears to have eased sufficiently to allow the return of our monthly meetings with minimal risk. On October 9, the State of Florida reported the lowest level of new contagion since June, putting the statewide “positivity rate” at 4.8 percent — compared to 20.5 percent in mid-August. This rate on Octo- ber 9 was 4.3 percent in Broward County, 5 percent in Palm Beach County to the North and 2.9 percent in Miami-Dade County to the South. A rate of five percent or below is said to be safe for large gatherings.

A very large gathering is what we anticipate here on November 8, and the agenda will include open, honest and lengthy discussion centered on the politi- cally polarizing and most vexing matter of the day — COVID-19 vaccination mandates imposed through both a White House Executive Order covering all federal government employees and all private sector employer companies to require inoculation of all vessel officers and crew in all government and commercial trades as a condition of continued employment.

But the agenda will also cover important ongoing AMO business and new developments — including a proposed amendment to the AMO Constitution to allow electronic voting by all deep-sea, Great Lakes and inland waters AMO mem- bers on major policy initiatives.

In June 2020, the AMO Executive Board invoked the Savings Clause of the AMO Constitution to set online voting to allow membership ratification of the Trial Committee findings in seven internal im- peachment cases — the only practical way to meet the ratification mandate in Article XXIII of our union’s governing document in the absence of a membership meeting.

On June 30, Federal Court for the Southern District of Florida upheld the online voting procedure without knowing the outcome and the decision to cancel the June 7 membership meeting as both appropriate and fair under the unusual, unprecedented circumstances.

This electronic voting was well received by the AMO membership as a further administrative commitment to democratic principle, and it will be written into the AMO Constitution as a permanent practice.

In addition, the November 8 meeting agenda will include official reports on this year’s important developments in the Pasha Hawaii fleet and others, contract negotiations, AMO’s participation in MARAD’s “Turbo Activation” of 43 stand-by strategic sealift ships, other defense shipping issues, new and disturbing allegations of sexual abuse of U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and state maritime academy cadets at sea and on campus, and the financial states of AMO and AMO Plans.

Our union’s vessel boarding reps will report on their work and on the topics raised most often by AMO members during onboard conversation.

Legislative developments — the Jones Act, cargo preference law enforce- ment, the tanker and cable security fleet initiatives modeled after the demonstrably successful Maritime Security Program, the construction of a second large lock to accommodate thousand-foot Great Lakes bulk carriers — will be covered as well.

Speaking of the Great Lakes, much time will be devoted to the increasingly scandalous situation involving American Steamship Co. — a major Great Lakes employer of AMO engineers and mates for many years — under ownership since May 2020 by Rand Logistics Inc., an outfit known more for bankruptcy, poor manage- ment and failed market analysis, relent- less debt and one-man rule than for safe, efficient service.

November 8 will be a long but ulti- mately informative and mutually reward- ing day, a time to vent and verify, and we on the AMO Executive Board look forward to seeing you and talking with you.
Message from maritime labor

The following letter dated September 29 was sent to the memberships of the six signatory unions.

COVID-19 is here to stay. Our members aboard vessels remain in grave danger with the Delta variant on the loose. Many of our organizations have lost members to ravages of the disease; including some who have lost their lives while aboard ship. Several ships have had serious outbreaks over the last 18+ months, even as recently as this month.

Our advocacy for a consistent, reliable, and rapid testing regimen for mariners proved to be worthwhile and effective. Now, with the supply chain and military security of the country at risk, we ask that all of our members educate themselves on the vaccines and choose to get vaccinated. This is primarily for the safety of our shipmates and family members, but also to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the industry. It is a matter of future industry stability and mariner job security.

As we stated in our July 2020 letter, each shipowner/operator has established their own diverging policies and protocol, and they vary greatly from employer to employer, even from ship to ship, depending on shipboard culture. In the absence of a uniform and government-enforced protocol during vessel in-port time, critical evolutions such as cargo operations, vendor/contractor access and shipyard repairs remain essentially unregulated and haphazard. This is an unacceptable situation that is beyond the control of ship’s personnel and is a reason to be fully vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

We must continue taking every precaution against the Coronavirus as recommended by company protocols and by applicable CDC guidelines, including vaccination. Masks, social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene, cleaning and sanitizing have now become routine, but the best additional precaution for shipmates and families includes becoming vaccinated.

Labor is working together and using every advantage to both protect your health and safeguard your rights. With infection rates spiking due to the Delta variant, we must maintain vigilance and discipline. Employers may intervene with reasonable or ineffective workplace policy; either way we will let them know that our contract rights remain in place. We understand the stress and anxiety of working in persistent and intensified danger and so we support fair and common-sense safety practices ashore and at sea. Your dedication, professionalism and perseverance are recognized, and your efforts are best honored by ensuring your own safety and the safety of others aboard ship by getting vaccinated. Please continue to notify your Union if you have concerns regarding potential or actual COVID-19 exposure or the safety of your vessel.

Wishing all health, safety, and fraternity,
Paul Doell, President
American Maritime Officers
Michael Sacco, President
Seafarers International Union
Adam Vokac, President
Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association
Dave Connolly, President
Sailor’s Union of the Pacific
Anthony Poplawski
President/Secretary-Treasurer
Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association
Don Marcus, President
International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots

AMO aboard USNS Montford Point for last forward deployment

Members of American Maritime Officers working aboard the USNS Montford Point in September included Captain Kurt Kleinschmidt and Chief Engineer Joe Gelhaus.

The USNS Montford Point, here in Gwangyang, Korea in September, was in its final days of its last forward deployment. AMO members working aboard the vessel included Second Mate Tom Kozarski, Chief Mate Joshua Jordan, Third Mate Adam Gray and Third Mate Kevin Reilly.

AMO members working aboard the USNS Montford Point in September included Chief Engineer Joe Gelhaus, Third Assistant Engineer Keith Heimbrock, First A.E. Rob Mussler, Second A.E. Brandon Joest, Second A.E. Bob Johnson, Third A.E. McKinley Anderson and Electronics Officer Alexandra Perl.
Boatlift event honors victims of September 11 terrorist attacks, commemorates evacuation of Lower Manhattan

To remember and honor the many victims on the 20th Anniversary of 9/11, American maritime vessels from the boatlift rescue of September 11, 2001 conducted a boat procession following a brief ceremony on September 10, 2021 in New York City. During the event, dozens of vessels joined the New York Harbor procession, including private ships, ferries and tugboats that participated in the 9/11 boatlift rescue on that tragic day. The boatlift procession was led by New York City Fire Boats, which honored those lost, as well as the contributions of American maritime to the waterborne evacuation of Lower Manhattan on 9/11 with a red, white and blue water cannon salute.

The event was hosted by the American Maritime Partnership (AMP), New York Council of the Navy League, Transportation Institute, Towboat and Harbor Carriers Association, Passenger Vessel Association, Port Authority of NY/NJ, Sandy Hook Pilots, and Seaman’s Church Institute.

The AMP coalition, of which American Maritime Officers Service is a member and which American Maritime Officers supports, noted U.S. vessel operators answered the call of the U.S. Coast Guard on 9/11 to spontaneously organize the evacuation of more than 500,000 Americans at the southern tip of Manhattan—an effort that took only nine hours and became the largest water evacuation in U.S. history. Within minutes of the call for help, operators of vessels of all shapes and sizes responded selflessly and ensured that the events on that fateful day were not even worse. “The American Maritime Partnership remembers and mourns all Americans lost that day, and expresses its deepest gratitude to the men and women of American maritime for their selfless response and service,” the coalition stated.

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Marine Commander Adm. Karl Schultz, and other officials participated in the ceremony as vessels passed Wagner Park and the Statue of Liberty. The rescue effort involved over 150 American maritime vessels, including passenger ferries, tugsboats, merchant ships, private vessels, and New York City Fire Department and Police Department boats. More than 800 American mariners participated in the Boatlift evacuation on September 11, 2001.

For additional information on the Boatlift of 9/11, please view the video produced and narrated by Tom Hanks, titled “BOATLIFT, An Untold Tale of 9/11 Resilience” [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hl8sxFCDj0]. Separately, a recent episode of the American Maritime Podcast features an interview with Adm. James Loy and a discussion of the 9/11 boatlift. The podcast audio is available on the AMP website at: https://tinyurl.com/1xcms8.

John W. Hewitt: 1954-2021

Throughout our sailing career, John and I knew about each other and only met in passing at Dania Beach while attending training courses. The highlight of my career occurred December 31, 2019 when John relieved me as Chief Engineer on the USNS Benavidez operated by U.S. Marine Management Inc. I assume that it was not the first time that two AMO African American Chief Engineers relieved each other but I know it will not be the last time. We took a picture to record that milestone for each other. Rest in Peace John Hewitt.

Sterling Pearson

Jeffrey T. Hoffman: 1961-2021

Suddenly on August 16, 2021, Jeffrey “Jeff” Thomas Hoffman passed away—the beloved husband of Sandra Marie Hoffman (nee Langelotto); devoted father of Anthony J. and Alycia M. Hoffman; cherished stepfather of Brandi Stocksdale and her husband Dustin and the late Patrick Butler; loving son of the late Marcia Hoffman and devoted stepson of Roland Hoffman; dear brother of Holli Cardon and her husband Mike, and Heath Cardon and her husband Dustin and Brady Stocksdale; cherished uncle of Sydney and Spencer Rhodes and Jack and Justin Cardon; and also survived by other loving relatives and friends.

U.S. Coast Guard: REC New York reopened in new location

The following article was released September 20 by the National Maritime Center. Regional Exam Center (REC) New York has reopened for examination services in the Federal Building at 201 Varick Street in Lower Manhattan. Specific information regarding the REC’s physical address, hours of operation, and entry requirements can be found on the REC New York webpage:

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/nmc/recs/new-york/

The new mailing address for Regional Exam Center New York is 201 Varick St., 9th Floor, Suite 904, New York, NY 10014, and mariner applications may still be sent by e-mail to RECNY@uscg.mil. Mariner examination services will continue to be provided by appointment only. No walk-in appointments are available. Examination appointment requests may be e-mailed to RECNY@uscg.mil and should include the applicant’s name, mariner reference number, requested testing date(s), phone number, and a copy of their Approved to Test letter(s). The NMC Customer Service Center remains open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. Mariners may reach our call center at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5682) and at IASKNMC@uscg.mil.

U.S. Coast Guard: Possible issues with recent Pay.Gov payments

The following article was released September 20 by the National Maritime Center. The National Maritime Center (NMC) recently became aware of a problem with the Merchant Mariner User Fee Payment Form on the Pay.gov website. During the last 90 days, mariners who attempted to pay Examination, and/or Issuance Fees after previously paying their Evaluation Fee may have been required to pay an additional Evaluation Fee to complete the Pay.gov transaction. Mariners who paid all required fees via a single Pay.gov transaction were unaffected. This problem has been resolved and the Merchant Mariner User Fee Payment Form is now functioning properly.

Mariners who believe that they were prevented from providing an Examination and/or Issuance Fee payment without also paying another Evaluation Fee should send their Pay.gov receipts, reflecting the additional fees, to IASKNMC@uscg.mil with a request for a refund. Additional information regarding Merchant Mariner Fee Payments can be found in the User Fee FAQs on the NMC website:


If you have questions, contact the NMC Customer Service Center at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5682). Customer Service Center representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST.
September numbers add up to financial gain for AMO

September’s cash position report showed significant financial gain for American Maritime Officers, which overcame the marginal results of the income-expense balance analysis for the month of August.

By October 1, AMO had secured an operating budget surplus of $15,377 in September, compared to a surplus of $1,269 in August. The year-to-date budget surplus was $519,907 as of October 1.

Our union has seen a streak of operating budget surpluses in all but a few months since mid-May 2015.

“Revenue and expenses were both higher than projected for September,” said AMO Director of Business Administration Thom Heaton. “Investment balances were volatile in September as Congress remained divided on pending legislation to fund infrastructure projects nationwide and the potential impacts of increased debt and inflation.”

Income in September totaled $987,067 — $102,000 more than had been projected. Dues receipts totaled $384,943, surpassing the projected amount by $55,000. Initiation fees paid by applicants for AMO membership totaled $141,933 — $42,000 more than had been projected.

Expenses in September totaled $921,689, up $41,000 from what had been anticipated.

Cash reserve and investment account balances totaled $15,566,566 as of September 30 and the close of an especially difficult month on Wall Street.

The October operating budget surplus thwarted a projected deficit of $48,250, a figure reflecting a $680,000 shortfall in initiation fee receipts as of September 1.

This delinquency total declined to $430,753 on October 1.

AMO Secretary-Treasurer Bob Rice is in contact with AMO applicants who had fallen behind in their financial obligations to our union, explaining in a clear but civil way that continued delinquency would result in dismissal from the AMO rolls.

“Our efforts are bearing fruit,” Rice said. “Rest assured — there is more to do, but progress is being made.”

The AMO Executive Board is expect ed to determine that AMO membership dues and initiation fees will not increase in 2022, marking the eighth consecutive year without rising cost to deep-sea, Great Lakes and inland waters AMO members and applicants for AMO membership.

Under Article V (Finances) of the AMO Constitution, the AMO Executive Board “on or before November 1 of each year, shall determine dues and initiation fee increase, if any, for each rating in each group to be effective on the following January 1.”

Paul Doell
President
October 7, 2021

AMO aboard the M/V Indiana Harbor on the Great Lakes

Members of American Maritime Officers working aboard the M/V Indiana Harbor in September, here loading iron ore in Superior, Wis., included First Assistant Engineer Adam Salle, Chief Engineer Ralph Biggs, Captain Todd Tittel, Third Mate Greyson Spiegel and Third A.E. Alexander Wade. AMO represents all licensed officers aboard the vessel.

AMO members working aboard the Indiana Harbor in September included Second A.E. Oleg Maslak and Chief Engineer Ralph Biggs.

Great Lakes icebreaker on agenda as Congress debates funding proposal

On September 15, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), the co-chair of the bipartisan House of Representatives Great Lakes Task Force, reported the $60 billion reconciliation bill approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee included her request for $350 million in funding for a state-of-the-art Great Lakes heavy icebreaker for the U.S. Coast Guard.

As a result, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s bill was then included as part of the overall $3.5 trillion reconciliation proposal. The proposal at that amount stalled in Congress and its configuration and funding levels were reopened to debate.

If passed as part of the reconciliation bill, or separately as an element of the bipartisan Great Lakes Winter Commerce Act of 2021, the addition of a new heavy icebreaker would double the Coast Guard’s capacity to clear Great Lakes shipping lanes of ice. Currently, the Coast Guard’s Great Lakes District commands only one heavy icebreaker, the USCGC Mackinaw, for its service area encompassing all the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The acquisition of a “new and needed” heavy icebreaker for the U.S. Coast Guard’s mission on the Great Lakes has bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. In July, the bipartisan leadership of the House Great Lakes Task Force wrote to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and

Icebreaker — Continued on Page 12.
AMO ‘first responder’ pension bid back on the table

Our union’s long-sought proposal to allow AMO members with 20 years or more of service to collect earned monthly benefits from the defined benefit AMO Pension Plan while remaining at work and available for defense shipping service is back in view on Capitol Hill.

Under this proposal, AMO members would collect these vested benefits for direct rollover to qualified retirement savings accounts, where the money would grow through self-directed investment.

Our proposal is intended to ease a growing shortage of civilian American merchant mariners capable of serving on Military Sealift Command and Maritime Administration sealift ships and other military support vessels as “first responders” in national security emergencies and to enhance retirement security for AMO members.

We learned September 23 that the Internal Revenue Service had advised the Administration to allow AMO members working aboard the Ready Reserve Force ship S/S Capella, during the pandemic, to continue working and to collect earned monthly benefits from the defined benefit AMO Pension Plan.

The plan now is to approach reliable contacts for bipartisan co-sponsorship in the Senate and to resume discussions I had with supportive members of the House of Representatives and their staffs — talks that were put on hold as the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, causing Congressional offices to close and many staffers to work remotely for more than a year.

Meanwhile, I extend my lasting gratitude to Chad Morin for his active interest in and pursuit of the AMO proposal and for his persistence as a Collins constituent. I also note for the record that Sen. Collins has a career record in support of the U.S. merchant fleet, civilian American merchant mariners, and Maritime Academy.

In a related recent development, an AMO member and Massachusetts resident who asked to remain anonymous found through direct contact what he described as “real interest” from his state’s Democratic Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey.

Success here would follow major reforms of the AMO Defined Contribution Plan in 2016 and this year, each marking substantial increases in employer contributions to individual DC Plan retirement savings accounts held by AMO members, who also benefit from the AMO 401(k) Plan and the AMO Pension Plan Money Purchase Benefit, or MPB.

As always, I welcome comments, questions and personal perspective from deep-sea, Great Lakes and inland waters AMO members.

Paul Doell
President
September 24, 2021

AMO onboard for turbo activation of S/S Capella

The United Seamen’s Service 52nd annual Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) Award will be presented to David Heindel, Secretary-Treasurer of the Seafarers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO, and Chairman of the International Transport Workers’ Federation’s Seafarers’ Section, representing 1.2 million seafarers worldwide.

The traditional silver statuette of Christopher Columbus — the first Admiral of the Ocean Sea — will be accepted by the three honorees at a gala dinner to be conducted December 3, 2021 at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel.

A special AOTOS Award will also be presented to Anthony Naccarato, President and Chairman of the American Maritime Officers Service, a Washington-based association comprised of some of the largest American-flag maritime companies, which promotes the American-flag maritime industry.

The recipients will share the evening with a group of American seafarers who will be honored for acts of bravery at sea.

LTG Kenneth R. Wykle, USA, (Ret.), Chairman, USS AOTOS Committee, noted, “With such deserving recipients, we are pleased to continue the rich 52-year history of this prestigious event.”

He added: “Dave Heindel is an esteemed labor leader and a true friend to USS; Kathy Metcalf has brought a solid background in maritime affairs to her role at the Chamber; and Bill Woodhour now leads the important American-flag division of Maersk.”

The AOTOS Award has been presented for 52 consecutive years, including 2020 when the pandemic dictated a virtual event. COVID-19 also did not stop the industry from fulfilling its collective role as part of the nation’s essential workforce.

USS 52nd annual AOTOS Award ceremony scheduled for December 3

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Paul Doell
President
September 24, 2021

AMO onboard for turbo activation of S/S Capella

After the Ready Reserve Force ship S/S Capella was crewed-up, the boilers fired-off, and the U.S. Coast Guard inspection completed, the 120,000 bhp SL-7 vessel steamed out of San Francisco to complete testing/trials for the Maritime Administration, and was then turned over to Military Sealift Command to run drills and training, wrote Joshua Chrosniak.

Members of American Maritime Officers working aboard the Capella for the turbo activation (above left), here on the ship’s port bridge wing, included Third Mate Nick Hanby, Radio Officer William Staton, Third Mate Dylan Magnusen, Captain Andrew Diamond, Chief Mate Joshua Chrosniak and Second Mate Jason Davis.

AMO members working aboard the Capella during the turbo activation (at left), here in the engine room, included Third Assistant Engineer Zachary Weaver, Third A.E. Timothy Glynn, Second A.E. John Melcher, Chief Engineer Matthew Kwiatkowski, Third A.E. Jay Giblin, Port Engineer Steve Converse, First A.E. Gregory Corna and Second A.E. Richard Cherry. Not in the picture is Second A.E. Trang Nguyen.

America’s longest-serving warship — USS Capella — was reactivated for the first time since 2019 after a 16-month deployment, wrote Joshua Chrosniak.

Capella’s crew conducted the six-month-long turn around on September 16-22, 2021.

The ship’s crew ran drills and training, wrote Joshua Chrosniak.
TOTE containership *Isla Bella* becomes first vessel to be refueled with renewable liquefied natural gas in the U.S.

The following article was posted by NorthStar Midstream. American Maritime Officers represents all licensed officers aboard the *Isla Bella*, operated by TOTE Services, Inc.

JAX LNG, a small-scale LNG facility located along the St. John’s River in Jacksonville, recently completed the first fueling of a marine vessel in the United States with a blend of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and renewable liquefied natural gas (RLNG).

JAX LNG loaded the RLNG/LNG blend into the Clean Jacksonville bunker barge to fuel the *Isla Bella*. The *Isla Bella* is the world’s first LNG-powered container ship and was put into service by TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico in 2015. Element Markets supplied the renewable natural gas (RNG) used to produce the RLNG via renewable thermal certificates (RTCs). Using RLNG to fuel marine vessels is a readily available pathway to net-zero emissions by 2050. RLNG’s emissions profile as a maritime fuel is superior even to that of LNG, which already reduces greenhouse gas emissions by more than 25% over ultra-low sulfur diesel.

Decarbonization of the transport sector has greatly accelerated through the use of regulatory incentives such as the alternative fuel tax credit, which encourages companies to adjust operations and make investments in assets that reduce carbon intensity. Produced from the decomposition of organic waste, RNG is compatible with existing natural gas infrastructure, providing a practical and replicable source of energy that mitigates and repurposes carbon emissions. For this bunkering event, RTCs were matched to the physical LNG loaded into the Clean Jacksonville to create the RLNG/LNG blended product.

JAX LNG is the long-term supplier to the two LNG-fueled container vessels — the *Isla Bella* and the *Perla del Caribe* — that TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico utilizes to reliably transport goods between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico.

“We’re proud to partner with JAX LNG, which has continued to solidify its position as the industry leader in the clean fuel revolution,” said Mike Noone, President of TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico. “RNG is a clean, drop-in fuel source that can be readily deployed for use today, since it needs no new equipment to capture or transport it.”

“We are always looking for ways to meet the energy needs of our customers and help them reduce their environmental footprint,” said Roger Williams, VP Commercial LNG and Gas Development at BHE GT&S, the parent company of Pivotal LNG, which holds 50% ownership of JAX LNG. “TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico has always been at the forefront of the shipping industry in that regard. We are proud that this RLNG bunkering event can serve as an example of what is possible in the realm of renewable natural gas and look to further expand on this success.”

“Providing our customers an environmentally beneficial fuel source is JAX LNG’s goal,” said Tim Casey, SVP of NorthStar Midstream, which shares 50% ownership of JAX LNG. “Supplying LNG sourced from RNG further supports our commitment to aid the shipping industry’s transition to a net-zero emissions future.”

“RNG offers highly flexible pathways to reducing transportation emissions. We are glad to be part of these forward-thinking initiatives to decarbonize large-scale logistics operations,” said Angela Schwarz, Co-President and CEO of Element Markets.
AMO Safety and Education Plan — Simulation, Training, Assessment & Research Center
(954) 920-3222 / (800) 942-3220 — 2 West Dixie Highway, Dania Beach, FL 33004

General Courses

Combined Basic & Advanced Low Flash Point Fuel Operations (OIF Code LMG) Fuel Course 5 Days 15 November 31 January 4 April

Confined Space Entry 3 Days 12 November 4 May

Advanced Fire Fighting 5 Days 8 December 4 April

Advanced Fire Fighting Refresher 2 Days 1 November 31 January 21 March

Basic Safety — Training for Masters without 360 days of sea service 3 Days 3 November 2 February 23 March

Chemical Safety — Advanced 5 Days 7 February

ECOSS 5 Days 6 December 28 March 2 May

Environmental Awareness (Includes Oily Water Separator) 3 Days Please Call

Fast Rescue Boat 4 Days 6 December 4 January 7 March 11 April

GMDSS — Requires after-hour homework 10 Days 7 February

LNG Tankerman PIC 8 Days 16 March (ONLINE)

LNS Simulator Training — Enrollment priority in the LNG simulator course is given to qualified member candidates for employment and/or observation opportunities with AMO contracted LNG companies. In all cases successful completion of the LNG PNC classroom course is prerequisite. 5 Days 1 November 29 March

Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat) 4 Days 9 November

Safety Officer Course 2 Days 10 February 28 May

Tankerman PIC DL — Classroom 5 Days 9 November 31 January

Tankerman PIC DL — Simulator 10 Days 8 December 10 January 14 March 18 April

Tankerman PIC DL — Accelerated Program 10 Days Please Call

Train the Trainer — requires after-hours homework 5 Days 25 October 15 November 13 December 10 January 14 March

Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties — VPSD 2 Days Please Call

Vessel/Company Security Officer — Includes Anti-Piracy 3 Days 7 February

Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat) REFRESHER 1 Day 6 November 5 February 29 March

Electronic Navigation and Watchkeeping Refresher 3 Days 5 January 4 April 23 May

Basic Training & Advanced Fire Fighting Revalidation (Required by first credential renewal AFTER 1 January 2017) — required by those with 360 days sea service 2 Days 25 October 16, 18, 29 November 13, 16 Dec. 10, 24 Jan. 7, 24 Feb. 14, 17, 28, 31 March 18, 21 April

Leadership & Management (required by ALL management level Deck and Engine officers by 1 Jan 2017) 5 Days 3 November (ONLINE) 6 December 17 January 14 March 16 May

Medical Courses

Heat Stress Afflat / Hearing Conservation Afflat 1 Day Please Call

Elementary First Aid — Prerequisite for MCP within preceding 6 months 1 Day 26 October 30 November 18 January 22 February 29 March 3 May

Medical Care Provider — Prerequisite for MCP within preceding 6 months. Please fax ETA certificate when registering 3 Days 27 October 1 December 18 January 23 February 30 March 4 May

Medical PIC – Please fax MCP certificate when registering 5 Days 1 November 6 December 24 January 4 April 9 May

Urinalysis Collector Training 1 Day 9 November 13 December 31 January 7 March 11 April 10 May

Screening Test Technician — 805a a.m./Alco Mate 7000 p.m. 1 Day 9 November 14 December 1 February 8 March 12 April 17 May

Radar Courses

Radar Recertification 1 Day 24 January

Electronic Navigation and Watchkeeping Refresher 3 Days 1 December 5 January 6 April

ARPA 4 Days 25 January

Radar Recertification & ARPA 5 Days 24 January

Original Radar Observer Unlimited 5 Days 17 January

Deck Courses

Advanced Bridge Resource Management 5 Days 25 October 29 November 3 January 20 March 2 May

Advanced Shiphandling for Masters/Senior Deck Officers — (No equivalency) Must have sailed as Chief Mate Unlimited 5 Days 15 November 7 March 2 May

Advanced Shiphandling for 3rd Mates — 90 days sea time, equiv. for 3rd Mates 10 Days 29 November 3 January 20 February 20 March 3 May

Advanced and Emergency Shiphandling — First Class Pilots, Great Lakes 5 Days 31 January

Basic Meteorology 5 Days 14 February

Tug Training — ASD Assist 5 Days 29 November 25 April

Dynamic Positioning — Induction (Basic) 5 Days 25 October 24 January 7 March 9 May

Dynamic Positioning — Simulator (Advanced) 5 Days 10 January 18 April

Dynamic Positioning — Revalidation 5 Days 28 November 3 February 23 May

Navigational Watchkeeping Standardization & Assessment Program Prevention (I нарарр — 2 days) — not required if Combined Basic & Adv. Fire Prevention (I нарарр — 2 days) 5 Days 8 November 13 December 24 January 28 February 30 March

TOAP (Towing Officer Assessment Record) — Third Mate (Unlimited or Great Lakes) or 150GT Master License required AND OICNW required 5 Days 8 November 13 December 24 January 28 February 30 March

High Risk and Emergency Shiphandling for Masters (Must have completed Advanced Shiphandling for Masters and sailed as Master) 5 Days 29 November 3 January 20 March 2 May

www.amo-union.org
Deck Upgrade — STCW 2010 — Management Level (NVIC 10-14) — If sea service or training towards management level (Chief Mate/Master) upgrade started ON OR AFTER 24 March 2014 you must adhere to this new program of training. Completion of both required and optional courses listed below will include all Task Assessments required by NVIC 10-14, providing ECDIS, GMDSS and ARPA have been previously completed.

Upgrade: Shiphandling at the Management Level
10 days 1 November 17 January 7 February 14 March 18 April 2 May

Upgrade: Advanced Meteorology — Requires after-hours homework
5 days 29 November 6 December 21 March 21 March 25 April 23 May

Advanced Stability
5 days 8 November (ONLINE) 6 December 10 January 21 February 14 March 2 May

Search & Rescue
2 days 6 January

Management of Medical Care
1/2 day 3 November 1 December 5 January 30 March 27 April 4 May

Leadership & Management
5 days 8 November 6 December 17 January 14 March 18 May

Advanced Cargo — Optional for task sign-off
5 days 1 ONLINE, 15 November 13 December 24 January 14 February 4 April

Marine Propulsion Plants — Optional for task sign-off
5 days 8, 15 November 13 December 24 January 14 February 18 May

Advanced Celestial — Optional for task sign-off
5 days 8, 28 Nov. 7 March 25 April

Advanced Navigation — Optional for task sign-off
5 days 8 November 31 January 4 April

Engineering Courses

Basic Electricity
10 days 1 November 10 January 7 March 16 May

Diesel Crossover
4 weeks Please Call

Engine Room Resource Management (Simulator)
5 days 1 November 31 January 2 May

Gas Turbine Endorsement
10 days 8 November

Marine High Voltage Safety Course (Simulator)
5 days 29 November 7 February 9 May

Hydraulics / Pneumatics
5 days 25 October 6 December 21 March

Machine Shop
10 days 14 February

Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)
5 days 15 November 24 January 21 March 2 May

Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
5 days 8, 29 Nov. 17 January 14 March 25 April

Steam Environment
4 weeks 24 January

Marine Control & Instrumentation
10 days 28 March 31 May

Welding & Metalurgy Skills & Practices — Open to eligible Chief Mates and Masters on a space-available basis. Interested participants should apply online and will be confirmed 2 weeks prior to start date. 2 weeks 6 December 31 January 28 March 2 May

Engine Upgrade — STCW 2010 — Management Level (NVIC 15-14) — If sea service or training towards management level (1A/E-Chief Eng.) upgrade started ON OR AFTER 24 March 2014, you must adhere to this new program of training. Completion of both required and optional courses listed below will include all Task Assessments required by NVIC 15-14. By completing the series, no expiration limitation will be placed on your STCW credential. See STAR Center’s website for full details: https://www.star-center.com/stcw2010-engine.upgrade.html

MSC Training Program — The core MSC courses noted below are required for initial MSC employment. The other MSC courses are only required as assigned duties require.

Leadership & Managerial Skills (USD as required) — REQUIRED
5 days 8 November (ONLINE) 6 December 17 January 14 March 18 May

ERM (USD as amended) — REQUIRED (unless previously taken for gap closing or original license)
5 days 1 November 31 January 2 May

Upgrade: Electrical, Electronics & Control Engineering (Management Level) (USD as amended) (UPGRADE with tasks) Required unless previously taken for gap closing or original license
5 days 15 November (ONLINE) 31 December 10 January 7 March 9 May

STCW Upgrade Task Assessment — General: This class is required by all propulsion types (Motion, Gas and Steam) licensed engineers — OPTIONAL: Tasks can be signed off onboard
5 days 25 October 29 November 24 January 21 March 23 May

STCW Upgrade Task Assessment — Steam (E121 as amended) — OPTIONAL: Tasks can be signed off onboard
5 days Please Call

STCW Upgrade Task Assessment — Gas Turbine (E122 as amended) — OPTIONAL: Tasks can be signed off onboard
5 days 3 days Please Call

MSC Watchstander — Basic: Once in career, SST grads grandfathered
7 days 1, 29 Nov. 22, 29 Nov. 1, 10 January 7 March 9 May

MSC Watchstander — Advanced: Annual required for all SBF members
7 days 28 October 1, 28 Nov. 10 March 27 April 10 May

MSC Ship Reaction Force — Required every three years for SBF members and must have Basic and a valid Advanced Watchkeeping and a valid Small Arms Training
3 days 3 November 1 December 2 February 18 March 18 May

Small Arms — Initial & Sustenance (Refresher) Training — Open to members & applicants eligible for employment through AMO (Afrs) 1 year or MSC on NAVED contracted vessels.
4 days 25 October 16 November 6, 13 Dec. 21 February 27 March 18, 26 April 9, 23 May

Self-Study, CDs and Online Courses

Anti-Terrorism Level I
On Campus in conjunction with other courses

DOT Hazardous Materials Transportation Training
On Campus

EPA Universal Refrigerant Certification Examination
Self Study

Qualified Assessor
On Campus

Vessel General Permit — EPA
On Campus with conjunction with other classes

NOTICE: AMO members planning to attend STAR Center in Dania Beach, Florida — either to prepare for license upgrading or to undergo specialty training—are asked to call the school to confirm course schedule and space availability in advance.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AS TO STUDENTS: The Simulation, Training, Assessment and Research Center (STAR), established under the auspices of the American Maritime Officers’ Safety and Education Plan, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or sex to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or sex in administration of its educational policies, admission, programs and other programs administered by the Center.

AMERICAN MARITIME OFFICER
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**Lodging / Accompanying Guest Information**

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Students must be “fit for duty” and guests must be capable of performing “activities of daily living” without assistance. All Minors under 18 must be accompanied by an adult at all times while at STAR Center. Include ages of all Minors under 18 on list above.

[ ] Check if baby crib required

Lodging / Requests: __________________________

STAR Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or gender.

STAR Center “No Show” Policy for Registered and Confirmed Students: STAR Center students who are enrolled and who have been confirmed are REQUIRED to notify STAR Center at least 48 hours prior to the start date of a course when a short notice change arises such that they will no longer be able to attend by contacting Student Services by phone at (800) 342-3220 Ext. 201, (954) 920-3222 Ext. 201, or by e-mail: register@star-center.com. STAR Center values all our AMO Plans Participants’ time and efforts and understands issues may arise that will impact schedules and travel. However, “No Show” students impact other AMO Plans Participants who may be on a wait list and could fill the unused seat. We therefore ask that our enrolled and confirmed students respect the needs of their fellow AMO students and contact STAR Center as noted above so their seat may be filled. The circumstances of “No Show” students will be reviewed as necessary. Those who are repeat “No Show” students may have all future STAR Center enrollment applications wait-listed for the requested course(s) until all other AMO participants are accommodated.

Dear Student:

We recognize that due to the necessary planning involved to offer courses to a national audience, all future STAR Center enrollment applications will be wait-listed for the requested course(s). In the event of a conflict or conflict of schedule, “No Show” students will be reviewed as necessary. Those who are repeat “No Show” students may have all future STAR Center enrollment applications wait-listed for the requested course(s) until all other AMO participants are accommodated.

Please call (800) 942-3220 Ext. 201 to confirm your class at least two (2) weeks prior to the start date. In the event of a Waiting List, your place will be released two (2) weeks before the scheduled start date if we have not heard from you.

Please call or e-mail to confirm your class at least two (2) weeks prior to course start date. In the event of a Waiting List, your place will be released two (2) weeks before the scheduled start date if we have not heard from you.

Please Call (800) 942-3220 Ext. 201 for course attendance confirmation.
AMO PLANS CONTACT INFORMATION

AMO Plans normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern.

Phone: (800) 348-6515
To request a connection with a specific person, dial “0” for the operator.

Medical Customer Service: extension 12
Retirement Services (Pension: 401(k), MFB, and DC): extension 14
Vacation: extension 15

FAX — Retirement Services: (954) 922-7539
FAX — Medical Plan: (954) 920-9482
FAX — Vacation Plan: (954) 926-7274
E-mail — Medical Plan: amomedical@amoplans.com
E-mail — Vacation Plan: amovacation@amoplans.com
E-mail — 401(k) Plan: amo401k@amoplans.com
E-mail — Retirement Services: amopension@amoplans.com
Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy urging them to support full funding for a new heavy icebreaker on the Great Lakes.

"Over the past several decades, the United States Coast Guard’s (USCG) Great Lakes icebreaking fleet has declined in size and high-end capability. At the same time, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that heavy ice years will remain an inevitability in the region, which means that the Great Lakes will see regular recurring heavy ice years moving forward. With only one heavy Great Lakes icebreaker, only waterways on one side of the Soo Locks can be broken."

"Providing for an additional Great Lakes heavy icebreaker will ensure robust economic opportunity in the region, which generates a combined $5 trillion of economic activity. The U.S. steel manufacturing industry, a sector critical to national security, is centered in the Great Lakes, and depends on maritime transportation to move iron ore from ports in western Lake Superior to steel mills across the basin. Great Lakes waterborne commerce annually supports more than 147,000 jobs in eight Great Lakes states and generates $20.3 billion in business revenue."

Following the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s approval of the funding for a new Great Lakes heavy icebreaker, Rep. Kaptur stated: "Our nation’s defensive capabilities, manufacturing industries, and economic vitality depend on the ability of vessels to reliably, safely, and efficiently navigate the more than 2,000 miles of shipping lanes of the Great Lakes region. This substantial new federal investment will support the hundreds of thousands of jobs that rely upon these waterways, and ensure our communities are able to continue serving as America’s industrial workhorses. We thank Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio for his leadership to address the needs of the Great Lakes, and look forward to working with our House and Senate colleagues to urge passage of this critical priority."

The support for funding a Great Lakes heavy icebreaker in the initial reconciliation proposal was welcomed by all aspects of Great Lakes maritime labor and industry, which have long advocated for the necessary bolstering of the U.S. Coast Guard’s domestic icebreaking mission and capabilities.

"A new and needed heavy icebreaker is crucial to maintaining navigable commercial shipping lanes on the Lakes for a greater part of each year to serve U.S. commerce and extend the ability of U.S.-flagged vessels to deliver the materials that fuel American manufacturing. AMO and American Maritime Officers Service will continue working together with members of Congress and our labor and industry partners on the task force to see this through to completion," said American Maritime Officers National Vice President, Great Lakes, John Clemmons, who serves as president of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force — the largest coalition speaking for the Great Lakes shipping community, drawing its membership from both labor and management representing U.S.-flagged vessel operators, shipboard and longshore unions, port authorities, cargo shippers, terminal operators, shipyards, and other Great Lakes interests.

In March of this year, Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) with a bipartisan group of Great Lakes House members — including U.S. Representatives Kaptur, Bob Gibbs (R-OH), Dingell, Joyce, Gwen Moore (D-WI), Jack Bergman (R-MI), Huizenga, Pete Stauber (R-MN) and Lisa McClain (R-MI) — introduced the Great Lakes Winter Commerce Act of 2021, which would among other things provide $350 million for a new heavy icebreaker on the Great Lakes.

The construction of a new heavy icebreaker has solid support in the U.S. Senate, as well — a priority emphasized by senators representing Great Lakes states. In a letter authored in January 2020, Michigan Democratic Senators Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow were joined by Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Rob Portman (R-OH), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tina Smith (D-MN), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Todd Young (R-IN) in urging the previous administration to include funding for the acquisition of a new Great Lakes icebreaker in its 2021 budget proposal.

"The Coast Guard is required by law to maintain a heavy icebreaking capability on the Great Lakes to keep our region’s ports and harbors open and facilitate our nation’s free flow of commerce," the senators wrote. "However, the current maintenance condition of the existing icebreaking fleet has resulted in 182 lost operating days last winter primarily due to engine failures. To this end, Congress has authorized the Coast Guard to acquire a new Great Lakes icebreaker at least as capable as the heavy icebreaker the MACKINAW (WLB-30), and has directed and provided funding for the Coast Guard to establish a major program acquisition office to support the design and procurement of a vessel."