

Garden State Rescues 27 Cuban Migrants Adrift at Sea

By Captain Chris Menezes
Master, Garden State

On the morning of July 16, *Garden State* responded to a distress call concerning Cuban migrants.

Fishing vessel *Alexis M* out of Key West called in a distressed vessel emergency to the United States Coast Guard regarding a vessel in their vicinity holding a large number of migrants. USCG barely heard them but could not make contact with the *Alexis M*. Third Mate Michael Hodges was on watch initially when the USCG called *Garden State* to relay information. *Garden State* responded to the USCG and assisted initially only to relay information.

Due to the lack of consistent communication with the *Alexis M*, Coast Guard responders asked *Garden State* to remain on station until USCG assets could be dispatched to scene. At around 0742, the *Garden State* was brought to maneuvering speed and maneuvered to safely get closer to vessel in distress. USCG requested *Garden State* get alongside the vessel in distress to assess the nature of distress and to make sure the vessel was not in immediate peril.

The makeshift raft, which appeared to be constructed of wood and Styrofoam, was weighed down by 27 passengers — 23 men and four women — and was falling apart.

With the aid of Steward Nicoll Quinones Rodriguez and AB Carlos Julian Colon, who served as interpreters, the crew was able to ask questions and relay information to the bridge to relay to the USCG. The migrants said it had been three days since their motor stopped working and they were without food or water. They had been propelling themselves through the ocean with six wooden paddles for days.

American Maritime Officers members working aboard the *Garden State* in July included Captain Christopher Menezes, Chief Mate Shamus McDaniel, Second Mate Fintan Moore III, Third mates Michael Hodges and Nicholas Panor, Chief Engineer Brian Kelly, First Assistant Engineer Alexander Calderwood, Second A.E. Harold Borja Vargas, and Third A.E. Caroline Opager. The *Garden State* is operated for APT by Intrepid Personnel and Provisioning.

Additional Photos on Page 3



The migrants also told the crew they were traveling from Cuba and the makeshift vessel had the letters “MOICE” spray painted on the front of the boat.

Garden State relayed that information to USCG Sector Key West and spoke to the duty chief. The USCG responded it would take three or four hours to get assets to the scene, and the USCG asked the *Garden State* to provide assistance.

After a couple of passes, we were able to get close enough to pass the dis-

tressed boat a line and hold them alongside the *Garden State*. Chief Mate Shamus McDaniel led the deck department to bring the boat safely alongside.

We noticed the vessel was slowly falling apart, as it was made of Styrofoam blocks. Due to the vessel starting to fall apart, I ordered the accommodation ladder made ready should the situation get worse.

Luckily, once alongside, and lee made, the makeshift vessel stabilized and stopped falling apart.

At approximately 0906, the migrant vessel was carefully tied alongside by *Garden State*’s crew and lee was made to best protect the migrant craft.

Water, hydration packets, bananas and strawberries were shared with the migrants, as well as some cool rags. They were instructed to drink water slowly. There was one migrant who appeared to pass out from dehydration/heat exhaustion. This was relayed to USCG, but his breathing/airway were good, and it was decided safest to continue to keep them safely alongside until USCG arrived.

USCG arrived on scene around 1024, followed by United States Customs and Border Protection agents about 30 minutes later. The migrants were transferred to USCG small boats and taken from the area. The *Garden State* was dismissed and continued on its voyage at 1112.

The *Garden State* crew did a wonderful job working together to help the 27 migrants, who may have drifted for an unknown amount of time in the open ocean on a deteriorating raft without food or water if not for the assistance of the *Garden State*. All departments had a big hand in getting these people to safety. Well done by all.



Multiple AMO Plans Benefit Enhancements Approved During Board of Trustees Meetings in July

By Willie Barrere
National President

In early February, as soon as the union’s current Executive Board was in place, we began working on productive changes in staffing, enhancing AMO operations to better serve the membership, and starting the process of correcting shortfalls in our internal systems so they can better meet our union’s needs going forward.

AMO Executive Board members are also trustees of the AMO Plans. With our new leadership in place, we also immediately focused on needed improvements to member benefits that centered on our interaction and discussions with AMO members, rather than rhetorical priorities.

We selected Christian Spain as the chief union trustee for the AMO Plans to provide strong and decisive leadership representing our goals and implementing our desired benefit improvements as quickly and effectively as possible. Christian serves with the lead employer trustee, Anthony Naccarato, as alternating secretary/chairman of the AMO Plans Board of Trustees.

Below is a brief summary of what we’ve completed and accomplished since February, with votes of the Board of Trustees taking place during our meetings in July. These are very brief, and if details are lacking here in some places, more information will be provided in the near future.

There are a couple of things to keep in mind when considering changes to AMO benefits.

1. **The AMO Plans are governed by union and employer trustees.**

Changes to AMO benefits require agreement among the union trustees and the company trustees, so it is not just a matter of making a decision and doing it. Everything is a carefully balanced discussion in an effort to reach consensus.

2. **There is a finite amount of money in the AMO Plans.** It is a relatively large amount of money, but it is finite and dedicated to providing existing benefits, so adding benefits is not just matter of deciding what ought to be done for AMO members. Everything has to be done within the limits of the money that is there. All changes and enhancements have to be financially

modeled by the AMO Plans actuaries, and buffers for saving and investment funds have to be maintained so that all of our benefit plans can survive and thrive through market fluctuations, surges in claims, etc.

Pregnancy Leave Policy

Our first Pregnancy Leave Policy was approved. Effective August 1, 2024,

there is a process for leave upon medical determination resulting in a not-fit-for-duty due to pregnancy. Our policy was developed after discussions with female members of AMO, the other unions, and industry leaders. Our policy will provide up to 15 months of medical coverage commencing after a member’s vacation ends, one year of Covered Employment Credit towards retiree medical, and STAR

Center eligibility for training when the member returns to work, so long as the member remains not-fit-for-duty. We will work to negotiate into our CBAs the opportunity for the member to return to their last job.

Enhancements to Retirement Benefits

The trustees of the Defined Benefit Pension Plan approved the following enhancements:

- For the first time since the AMO Pension Plan was frozen in 2009, our retirees will get some type of financial acknowledgment — a stipend in the form of a one-time 13th check in 2024. It will be issued in December. A cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase was our desired goal, but the expense right now is too high, considering the desire and need to simultaneously improve other benefit plans.

- The approximately 1000 active sailing members who are due a pension will receive a 10 percent increase in their frozen defined benefit amount. To be eligible for this increase, eligible active participants of the Plan who retire on or after October 1, 2024 must have one day of Covered Employment between October 1, 2023 and September 30, 2024 prior to retirement. The increase will be effective October 1, 2024.

The trustees of the Defined Contribution Plan approved the following enhancements:


- DC Plan participants will get 1 percent increase to each of the 5, 7, 8, and 12 to 30 years-of-service allocations. An increase of 2 percent will be applied for year 9. The adjusted schedule is included here reflecting a January 1, 2025 effective date.

The annual cost to the AMO Plans for these enhancements is projected at nearly \$10 million.

In our first six months working together with the membership, these are the enhancements formulated, discussed and adjusted, financially vetted, and approved through the work of this Executive Board and team of AMO Plans trustees for the union, working with the employer trustees and AMO Plans directors and staff.

I’ll go over some of the benefit enhancements we are still looking at in a separate article. There is more we are working on and always more to consider.

2025 Schedule 3.1 Contribution Rates	
Defined Contribution Plan Rates Effective January 1, 2025	
Defined Contribution Plan Schedule 3.1 Contribution Rates	
Years of Service	DC 3.1 Contribution Rate
0	1.00%
1	1.00%
2	1.00%
3	1.00%
4	2.00%
5	3.00%
6	5.00%
7	6.00%
8	7.00%
9	8.00%
10	10.00%
11	10.00%
12	12.00%
13	12.00%
14	13.00%
15	13.00%
16	14.00%
17	14.00%
18	15.00%
19	15.00%
20	16.00%
21	16.00%
22	17.00%
23	17.00%
24	18.00%
25	18.00%
26	19.00%
27	19.00%
28	20.00%
29	20.00%
30 or More	21.00%




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A More Effective Way of Working Together

The July meetings of the AMO Executive Board and AMO Plans Board of Trustees saw the culmination of months of efforts, studies, financial modeling, and numerous discussions.

These sessions involve the National Executive Board assembling and hearing reports from union officials and staff, and others. The board discusses many developments during the meetings.

Separately, the AMO Plans Board of Trustees meets to review, read into the record, and vote upon many things — some routine business of AMO Plans, some benefit adjustments, and some regular reports that are required to be read and approved. There is more to it than that, and a lot of business is addressed in a short time.

For all of these meetings, AMO member observers are invited with all expenses paid. Three members attended the July meetings. That is a traditional practice that is important to continue into the future.

But, in some other respects, tradition can occasionally become a trap.

These meetings have, for as long as I've been aware of them, occupied the entire week, with some of the staff and consultant reports being repeated in both the union and the AMO Plans meetings.

This AMO Executive Board immediately began in February looking at how to do things better, and one of those things is the agenda for these meetings.

The truth is, the Executive Board is fully briefed on most of the staff reports, as they are recitations of the day-to-day developments of the many things the union does. With the primary goal of spending more time focused on the AMO member observers, we've reduced the general AMO meeting to one full day. This gives the observers much more one-on-one time with the Executive Board and with individual staff members so we can hear what they have to say about the issues we discuss at the meeting and answer their questions.

While shaping the union's Executive



Members of American Maritime Officers attending meetings of the AMO Executive Board and AMO Plans Board of Trustees in July were Chief Engineer Bryan Hoffmann, Captain Glenn Macario and Captain Nicholas St. Jean.

Board meetings is a work in progress, direct interaction with member observers is starting to replace days of lengthy and elaborate presentations, and I think more useful knowledge is being gained by everyone involved.

We are keeping the key presentations that provide information the observers and staff may not be aware of, such as those from our financial managers, the AMO Plans executive director, and the STAR Center training director. Everything else is being condensed so as to provide member observers with enough information that they will know which areas they want to know more about and what questions they want answered, and to provide the opportunity for them to add their input to the discussion.

The AMO Plans Board of Trustees meetings are a little different. There is much done there that is required by regulation or law. However, there are avenues for making the agenda for those meetings more efficient and we made some major adjustments prior to July.

While some might see this effort as potentially limiting the information provided during the meetings of the trustees, it really does not. The required statements, recitations, and votes are

just that, and the meeting moves very quickly through most of this business, as all of the trustees are already aware of what is being presented. A subcommittee of AMO Plans trustees meets on a regular basis and much of the day-to-day business has already been addressed in these regular meetings. All trustees are briefed on the discussions and developments with the specific benefit plans for which they serve as trustees.

Among the things discussed but not completed during the July session include the following initiatives, many of which have taken shape through our extensive interaction with sailing members over the past six months.

1. An effort to place an out-of-pocket cap in the Medical Plan for AMO retirees not yet eligible for Medicare was tabled for further discussion and financial modeling. We are trying to chart a course to achieving a \$30,000 annual cap on a retiree's financial outlay in the event of catastrophic medical events. At the current time, there is no cap.

To refresh, active members are in a 90/10 plan — 90 percent covered by AMO Plans and 10 percent covered by the member, with a \$3000 cap for single members and a \$6000 annual cap for

families. **Retired members not yet eligible for Medicare are in an 80/20 plan with no annual cap.** Retired members who are eligible for Medicare are in an 80/20 plan, with Medicare covering 80 percent and AMO Plans covering 20 percent.

2. Money Purchase Benefit: We are developing a few scenarios for analysis in an effort to restructure the fees charged to members in the MPB, but who have low account balances. As with every retirement saving plan, there are account fees and maintenance costs. We are looking at fee modifications to mitigate fees being assessed for MPB accounts with low balances.

3. Concerns with reimbursement for out-of-network claims under the new dental plan are being addressed and achieving a resolution is at the forefront. Those utilizing in-network providers continue to receive discounted services and providers are submitting their claims for the participants through the CareFirst system automatically. If you are experiencing any issues, please contact the Plan office at 800-348-6515 extension 12.

These are not the only benefit enhancements the union and the employer trustees are discussing and member input is always encouraged.

As noted, our goal is to make the Executive Board meetings and Board of Trustees meetings more informative for member observers and to provide more opportunity for direct interaction and productive discussion.

We would also like to have more AMO member observers at all of these meetings.

The next meetings are the week of November 18 at HQ in Dania. Your engagement in the process is paramount to building a better future. Reach out to myself or any on the Executive Board so we can plan on your participation. You have a chance not only to interact with all of us, but the company trustees, Plans administration, and our advisors. I hope to see you there.

Willie Barrere
National President

Garden State

Continued from Page 1



U.S. Coast Guard vessels embark Cuban migrants from their boat alongside the Garden State.



Vahram “Gus” Guzelian: 1926-2024

Vahram “Gus” Guzelian, a U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran of World War II, as well as a sailing member and later an official of the union that became American Maritime Officers for a total of nearly 50 years, died on June 28, 2024. He was 98.

He was born in 1926 in Massachusetts. Guzelian’s family endured the Great Depression and he became a merchant mariner at age 16. His sailing career took him around the world in peace and in war. He became a member of this union in November 1957 sailing for Isbrandtsen Co. He continued sailing through the end of 1968 before beginning work as a union official.

For nearly five years, his work for the union was interspersed with seagoing work as an engineering officer with companies including Pan Oceanic Tanker Corp., Isthmian Lines, and Victo-



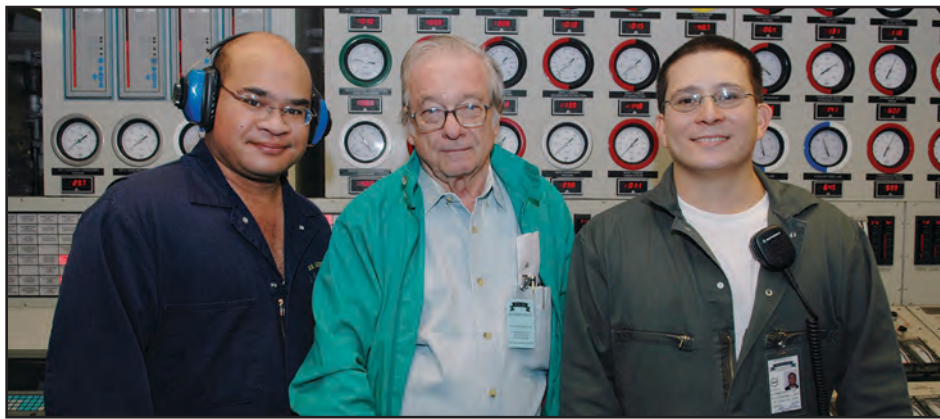
Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA), sponsor of the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020 in the House of Representatives, on May 20, 2022 presented the Congressional Gold Medal to U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans of World War II during a conference hosted by the Nautical Institute in San Francisco, Calif. Among those recognized at the ceremony was U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran of World War II Gus Guzelian. With them is AMO President Willie Barrere.

ry Carriers. His last rotation concluded in January 1973.

Beginning in April 1973, Guzelian worked shoreside full-time for the union. He served the AMO membership as a boarding representative on the West Coast and as a member of the AMO Executive Board. He retired in January 2007.

In May 2022, Guzelian was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal for his service in World War II during a ceremony in California.

“Gus was a West Coast AMO icon, meeting vessels sporting his Members Only jacket, and giving officers a ride in his Oldsmobile Cutlass,” said AMO President Willie Barrere. “Gus always had a good story, a salty demeanor, and will certainly be missed by those of us who are fortunate to have known him.”



Captain Michael E. Burke: 1939-2024

Captain Michael E. Burke — a Navy officer and war veteran, a U.S. merchant marine officer, a shiphandling instructor, an author, a father of two, a husband, and a man who cared for all around him and for the world in which he lived — died May 28, 2024 in hospice following complications from COVID and pneumonia. He was 84.

Born June 13, 1939 in Newark, New Jersey to Harry and Kathleen Burke, his family lived in Belleville and he was educated in Belleville Public Schools through 8th grade. He attended and graduated from St. Benedict’s Preparatory School in Newark, where he made several friends he remained in contact with throughout his life.

He began attending Seton Hall University in South Orange in 1957 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1962. He worked in Newark through college as a member of the International Union of Operating Engineers. He joined the Navy and was commissioned through Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island the same year.

His initial sea tours in the Navy were on the *USS Union* and *USS Prichett*, followed by a student assignment to the U.S. Naval Destroyer School in Newport. From July 1966 through October 1971, he served first as a department head on the *USS James E. Kyes* and then on the staff of Command Destroyer Squadron Nine. After a tour ashore at Naval Postgraduate School and Defense

Language Institute in Monterey, California, he reported to the Second Fleet Flagship *USS Albany* as Chief Engineer.

In all, his duty stations included four deployments to Vietnam onboard destroyers. His tour on the *Albany* was followed by three consecutive tours as Executive Officer, first on the *USS La Moure County*, then at Navy



Recruiting District Denver, Colorado, and finally onboard the *USS Camden*.

He became the Commanding Officer of the *USS Mount Hood* in November 1980 and retired from the Navy as a Commander following the Change of Command onboard the *Mount Hood* in January 1983. His decorations included the Navy Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, and various service medals and unit citations.

After 20 years of service in the Navy, Mike found a guide, studied and tested for his U.S. Coast Guard Unlimited Master’s



License, earning it in 1983. He began sailing on his license as Barge Master of the semi-submersible drilling rig *Ocean Odyssey*. He continued as Master on the *Ocean Odyssey* until the rig was retired from service, at which point he applied for membership in American Maritime Officers.

As a member of AMO, he sailed for nearly 10 years as Captain of the *M/V Ambassador*, and later as Captain of three LMSRs — the *USNS Soderman*, *USNS Red*

Cloud and *USNS Dahl*. He also sailed as Captain and Chief Mate on other AMO-contracted ships, including the *M/V Senator*, *Maersk California* and *Maersk Texas*. He retired from deep sea sailing in January 2002.

In March of 2022, he was inducted as a Marine Member of the Boston Marine Society, which incorporated in 1754.

During and after his active sailing career, he was a deck instructor at STAR Center in Dania Beach, as well as at other schools in Florida and Louisiana. Interspersed with sailing rotations, his career as an instructor spanned nearly 20 years. He taught at STAR Center from 2001 to 2014. Courses he taught included ship handling, advanced ship handling, bridge resource management and watchkeeping.

He and his wife Sherri bought a townhouse in Cocoa Beach, Florida in 2003. While they settled there, they also owned property and spent a lot of time in Glacier, Washington in the earlier years, and more recently in their mobile home in Key Largo, Florida. In the time between, they traveled and toured for years with a fifth-wheel. While at home, Mike spent his spare hours cleaning up the beach across A1A from his house and cooking for and taking care of friends and acquaintances all around.

During his retirement, Mike rekindled his lifelong interest in writing and published two books: *Away in Irma’s Manger* in 2018 and *The Fire in the Admiral’s Head* in 2021.

Mike is survived by his wife, Sherri Burke; his daughter, Rebecca; his son, Matthew; and his granddaughter, Zoe. He was predeceased by his younger brother, Harry.

Accuracy of NOAA's Individual Lake Weather Forecasts for the Great Lakes Region

By **Pete Kinsey**
Great Lakes Representative

Great Lakes Captains have noticed NOAA forecast accuracy this sailing season has been more reliable than in recent previous seasons. Mariners I spoke with believed the high degree of accuracy may be due to the lack of smoke and atmospheric turbulence from the widespread wildfires in Canada, which were abundant last year. Summer is not the season in which accurate forecasts are most imperative to Great Lakes mariners. Still, AMO members are hopeful the precise forecasts will continue into the fall and winter.

The Duluth-based Port Meteorological Officer for the Great Lakes, Ron Williams, said, although large amounts of smoke in the atmosphere could influence local weather, the smoke would not affect the ability to forecast nor the accuracy of forecasts.

When speaking with Ron, he emphasized the importance of ship weather observations. It is especially pertinent to submit them when some higher-than-expected winds or seas necessitate small craft advisories. He said NOAA meteorological officers are available 24/7 and willing to help with any weather needs.

While I had the chance to speak with

Ron, I asked him about the forecast for this winter. Ron said it was too soon to accurately predict winter weather or ice for the Great Lakes 2024/2025 season. However, he did mention we are moving forward with a La Niña model.

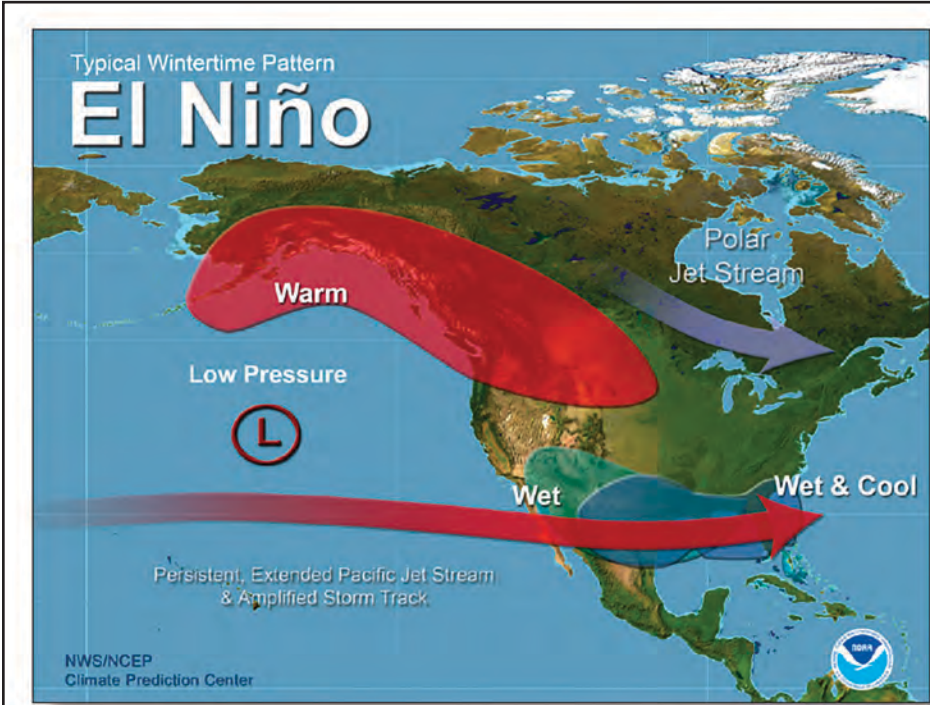
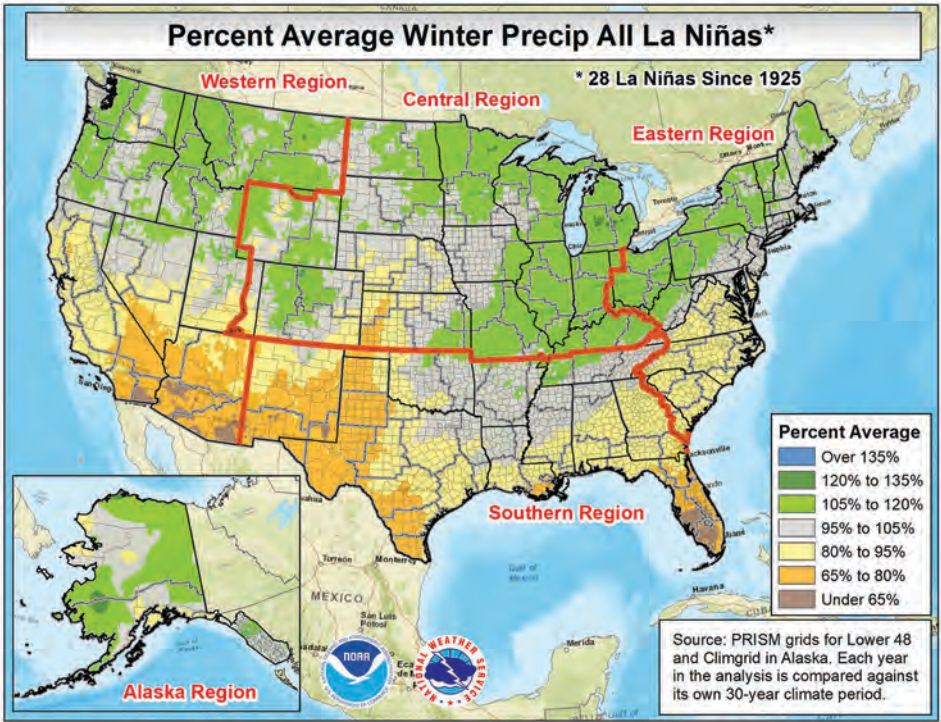
I spoke with Meteorologist Josh Sandstrom at the National Weather Service, who is based out of Duluth. I asked him what exactly the shift to a La Niña model

meant for Great Lakes mariners. He said: "... a La Niña pattern typically brings the jet stream through the central part of the U.S. during the winter months, which leads to a higher probability that we will see colder than normal weather across most of the Great Lakes (especially so to the north). Having the jet stream close by also leads to a generally higher probability for storminess. This often (but not always) means

higher precipitation (including snowfall, especially to the north)." Josh was careful to clarify: "... while we do have averages that favor colder weather and more stormy weather, it is not always the case because ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation – the catch-all term that encompasses El Niño and La Niña) is only one piece of the climate puzzle for forecasting winter weather. There are several other variables at play, most of which are less predictable and only predictable at shorter time scales (like weeks ahead of time)."

Josh also provided me with a lot of material to decipher for myself. I found that La Niña affects the months of December, January, and February the most in terms of average temperatures. If you combine that information with the fact that the Great Lakes' surface water temperatures are slightly above the 1995 through 2023 average, according to "Average Surface Water Temperature (GLSEA)" (Coastwatch Great Lakes Node), you can assume that, without a couple of weeks of significantly lower than average temperatures in the region, we will go into the winter months with slightly higher than average water temperatures then have a colder than average December, January, and February.

I would wait to make any rental car reservations for winter lay-up. In the meantime, all we can do is keep submitting weather observations and help keep NOAA's weather computers properly informed for the most accurate models and forecasts possible.



El Niño episodes feature an equator-ward-shifted, stronger-than-normal jet stream and wetter-than-average conditions across the southern part of the United States, and less storminess and milder-than-average conditions across the North.

La Niña episodes feature a wave-like jet stream flow over the United States and Canada, with colder and stormier than average conditions across the North, and warmer and less stormy conditions across the South.

Publication of AMO Newspaper Will Be Reduced in Frequency Beginning in September 2024

The frequency of publication of the AMO newspaper, *American Maritime Officer*, will be reduced beginning in September 2024. From that date forward, the newspaper will be published every other month, with annual editions dated January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December. The STAR Center course schedule will be provided each month via email to members and applicants.

MONTHLY AMO MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Regular monthly membership meetings for American Maritime Officers will be held on the first Wednesday of every month except in the months of January, June, July and September, when the membership meeting will be held on the second Wednesday. Meetings will be held at AMO National Headquarters and will begin at 1 p.m. local time. The next meetings are scheduled to take place on the following dates:

August 7, September 11, October 2

By Captain Glenn Macario
Master, *Stena Imperative*

From June 9 to 13, the tanker STENA IMPERATIVE completed a two-part mission at the request of Military Sealift Command and DLA (Defense Logistics Agency) in Okinawa, Japan. The IMPERATIVE had loaded 240,000 Barrels of Jet A and 25,000 Barrels of JP-5 with instructions to offload the Jet A at the Single-Point Mooring in Chimu Wan, Okinawa. This would bring the ship's draft under 34 feet and allow her to complete the second part of the mission: to attempt to enter the Multi-Point Mooring a few hundred yards away and offload the JP-5.

The Multi-Point Mooring (MPM) was initially designed to only support tankers the size of T-1 vessels — approximately 350 to 400 feet and 8000 DWT. A Handymax-sized tanker (600 feet/50,000 DWT) had never successfully moored in the MPM before. It had been attempted twice before, starting in May of 2021 when a non-AMO Handymax entered the mooring but departed in less than two hours due to winch issues. A second attempt was made with another non-AMO ship, but that vessel ended up dragging at least one buoy off station and never fully moored. To make matters more complicated, one of the six buoys in the mooring (Buoy 5), the one dead ahead on the bow, had been damaged in a storm and removed, leaving only five of the six buoys available for use.

MSCO-Okinawa provided the vessel with diagrams of the mooring and much information. Two safety briefings were held, the first two days before entering Chimu Wan and the second the morning of entering the MPM so all hands were aware of the sequence of events and when the ship would abort, if necessary.

The STENA IMPERATIVE departed the Single-Point Mooring at 0906 on June 12 and moved into the MPM. First line was fast at 1012 and all fast at 1154, with two lines on each of the five buoys. At the

AMO-Contracted *Stena Imperative* First Handymax-Sized Tanker to Successfully Moor, Complete Cargo Discharge at Okinawa Multi-Point Mooring



The tanker *Stena Imperative* moors at the Multi-Point Mooring in Chimu Wan, Okinawa with tug assistance.



The *Stena Imperative* is secured in the in Multi-Point Mooring with hose attached and ready to discharge cargo.

beginning of the evolution, winds were 20 to 25 knots on the port beam but subsided after 30 minutes.

The single six-inch hose was connected and the IMPERATIVE was able to pump off all 25,000 barrels of JP-5 by midnight, thus becoming the first Handymax tanker to not only moor successfully at the Chimu Wan MPM, but also to offload her cargo there, thus proving the concept that DLA desired.

STENA IMPERATIVE departed the MPM the next morning and an extensive after-action report was submitted to MSCO-Okinawa for use in the future if DLA wants other Handymax-sized tankers to use the MPM.

American Maritime Officers represents all licensed officers aboard the *Stena Imperative*, which is operated under an agreement with Crowley and Stena Bulk USA.

AMO Aboard the *Midnight Sun* in Jones Act Service

American Maritime Officers members working aboard the *Midnight Sun* in June, here in Alaska, included Third Mate Joshua Estebo, Captain Karl Carr, Third Assistant Engineer Max Barton, Second Mate Tyler Vanderlip (new dad), Second A.E. Brian O'Connell (new dad), Chief Engineer Jon Butcher, First A.E. James Bannister, Second A.E. Mike Marese, Chief Mate Chris Parks (new dad, third child), and Third Mate Tony Milam. The TOTE Maritime vessel operates in regular Jones Act service between Tacoma, Wash. and Anchorage, Alaska.





Final Voyage of the *S/S Algol*

The *S/S Algol* makes a final transit of the Panama Canal en route to Beaumont, Texas. The *Algol* was scheduled to be laid up July 1 after more than 35 years of dependable service with Military Sealift Command and then finally with the U.S. Maritime Administration's Ready Reserve Force. One of the fastest ships in the merchant fleet, the *Algol* served in rapid delivery operations supporting the U.S. military around the globe. The *Algol* was operated by Ocean Duchess Inc. American Maritime Officers represented the licensed officers aboard the fast sealift ship.



The crew of the *Algol* during its final voyage from San Francisco to Beaumont, Texas included American Maritime Officers members Captain Raymond Davis; Chief Mate Wayne Summers; Second Mate Jessica Kanehl; Third Mates Ben Rush and Gavino Octaviano; Chief Engineer Matt Kwiatkowski; First Assistant Engineer Josh Davenport; Second Assistant Engineers John Melcher, Marcelino Cayabyab and Richard Sachar; and Third Assistant Engineers Edward Thompson and Edward Jones.



The core reduced operating status (ROS) crewmembers who maintained the *S/S Algol* before its final activation in June included Second Assistant Engineer Marcelino Cayabyab, Third Mate Gavino Octaviano, Captain Raymond Davis, ROS Chief Engineer Joshua Davenport, Bosun Ritche Acuman and GUDE Rodolfo Ludovice.



Captain Raymond Davis bid goodbye to the *Algol* as the ship arrived in Beaumont, Texas.

AMO Safety and Education Plan – Simulation, Training, Assessment & Research (STAR) Center

(954) 920-3222 / (800) 942-3220 – 2 West Dixie Highway, Dania Beach, FL 33004

General Courses									
Advanced Fire Fighting	5 Days	28 October							
Advanced Fire Fighting Refresher	2 Days	7 October	9 December						
Basic Safety Training – All 4 modules must be completed within 12 months: Personal Safety Techniques (Monday/Tuesday – 1.5 days), Personal Safety & Social Responsibility (Tuesday PM – half-day), Elementary First Aid (Wednesday – 1 day), Fire Fighting & Fire Prevention (Thursday/Friday – 2 days) – not required if Combined Basic and Advanced Fire Fighting completed within 12 months.				5 Days	7 October	9 December	31 March		
Basic Safety Training – Refresher – required for STCW renewal for those without 360 days of sea service in 5 years	3 Days	9 October	11 December	2 April					
Basic Training and Advanced Fire Fighting Revalidation (Required for STCW renewal) – required for those with 360 days sea service in five years	2 Days	23, 30 September	17 October	4, 18 November	2, 16 December	6, 27 January	10, 24 February	10, 24 March	
Chemical Safety – Advanced	5 Days	30 Sept.	10 February						
Combined Basic & Advanced Low Flash Point Fuel Operations (IGF Code/LNG Fuel) Course	5 Days	28 October	2 December	3 February	10 March				
Confined Space Entry	3 Days	6 November	26 March						
Environmental Awareness (includes Oily Water Separator)	3 Days	11 Nov.	10 February						
Fast Rescue Boat	4 Days	15 October	21 January	18 March					
GMDSS – Requires after-hour homework	10 Days	7 October	24 February						
Leadership & Management (required by ALL management level Deck and Engine officers by 1 January 2017)	5 Days	21 October	20 January	10 February	17 March				
LNG Tankerman PIC – available online	8 Days	Please Call							
LNG 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	Please Call				
Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat)	4 Days	30 Sept.	16 December						
Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat) REFRESHER	1 Day	12 October	14 December	5 April					
Safety Officer Course (also see online schedule)	2 Days	15 October	4 November						
Tankerman PIC DL – Classroom (also see online schedule)	5 Days	7 October	16 December	17 February					
Tankerman PIC DL – Simulator	10 Days	21 October	11 November	20 January	17 March				
Train the Trainer – requires after hours homework	5 Days	21 October	2 December	13 January	10 March				
Vessel/Company Security Officer – Includes Anti-Piracy (also see online schedule)	3 Days	29 January							
Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties (VPDSD)	2 Days	5 December							
Deck Courses									
Advanced Bridge Resource Management	5 Days	28 October	17 February						
Advanced Shiphandling for Masters/Senior Deck Officers – (no equivalency) must have sailed as Chief Mate Unlimited	5 Days	14 October	2 December	24 February					
Advanced Shiphandling for 3rd Mates – 60 days seetime equivalency for 3rd Mates	10 Days	7 October	4 November	20 January	3 March				
Basic Meteorology	5 Days	28 October	3 February						
Dynamic Positioning – Induction (Basic)	5 Days	11 November	6 January	10 March					
Dynamic Positioning – Simulator (Advanced)	5 Days	2 December	27 January						
Dynamic Positioning - REVALIDATION / REFRESHER and Competency Assessment (Please specify Revalidation or Refresher on course application)	5 Days	14 October	9 December	10 February					
ECDIS	5 Days	9 December	17 March						
Electronic Navigation and Watchkeeping (ECDIS) Refresher	3 Days	25 Sept.	20 Nov.	8 January					
High Risk and Emergency Shiphandling for Masters (Must have completed Advanced Shiphandling for Masters and sailed as Master)	5 Days	23 Sept.	18 November	16 December	20 January	24 March			
Navigational Watchkeeping Standardization & Assessment Program	5 Days	4 November	27 January	24 March					
TOAR (Towing Officer Assessment Record) – Third Mate (Unlimited or Great Lakes) or 1600T Master License required AND OICNW required	5 Days	3 February							
Tug Training – ASD Assist	5 Days	16 Dec.							

AMO Members and Applicants Are Asked to Register for Courses As Far in Advance As Possible, and To Submit a Course Application Even if the Preferred Course/Start Date Has a Wait List

AMO members and applicants are asked to submit an application for course registration as far in advance of the course’s start date as possible for all courses. Applications received less than 60 days in advance of a course’s start date are more difficult to accommodate. AMO members and applicants are also asked to submit an application for their preferred course and start date even if there is a wait list. STAR Center is sometimes able to accommodate those who are on a course wait list.



Deck Upgrade – STCW 2010 – Management Level (NVIC 10-14) – 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. See STAR Center’s website for full details: http://www.STAR-Center.com/STCW2010-deck.upgrade.html .									
Upgrade: Shiphandling at the Management Level (includes SAR)	10 Days	30 Sept.	21 October	4 November	2 December	6 January	10 February	3, 31 March	
Upgrade: Advanced Meteorology – Requires after-hours homework	5 Days	30 Sept.	4 November	2 December	6 January	10 February	31 March		
Advanced Stability (also see online schedule on page 10)	5 Days	28 October	9 December	13 January	24 February	10 March			
Management of Medical Care (also see online schedule on page 10)	Half-Day	20 Nov.	26 February						
Leadership & Management (also see online schedule on page 10)	5 Days	21 October	16 December	20 January	10 February	17 March			
Advanced Cargo – Optional for task sign-off (also see online schedule on page 10)	5 Days	23 Sept.	21 October	6 January	17 February	31 March			
Marine Propulsion Plants – Optional for task sign-off	5 Days	23 Sept.	28 October	2 December	27 January	17 February	24 March		
Advanced Celestial – Optional for task sign-off	5 Days	2 December	3 February						
Advanced Navigation – Optional for task sign-off	5 Days	14 October	9 December	10 February					
Engineering Courses									
Electrical and Instrumentation Troubleshooting (Professional Development)	5 Days	2 December	13 January						
Control Systems Troubleshooting (Professional Development)	5 Days	9 December	20 January						
Diesel Endorsement (Crossover)	4 Weeks	7 October	3 February						
Engine Room Resource Management (Simulator)	5 Days	4 November	6 January						
Engine Operations Training and Assessment Program	5 Days	2 December	20 January						
Gas Turbine Endorsement	2 Weeks	11 November							
Marine High Voltage Safety Course (Simulator)	5 Days	4 November	10 February						
Hydraulics / Pneumatics (Professional Development)	5 Days	16 December	17 March						
Machine Shop 1 (Professional Development)	5 Days	23 Sept.	24 February						
Machine Shop 2 (must complete Machine Shop 1)	5 Days	30 Sept.	3 March						
Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs) (Does not include EPA Universal)	5 Days	7 October	11 November	27 January					
Refrigeration & Air Conditioning	5 Days	9 December	6 January						
Steam Endorsement	4 Weeks	13 January							
Welding 1 – Professional Development	5 Days	11 November	20 January						
Welding 2 (must complete Welding 1 prior to enrolling)	5 Days	18 November	27 January						
Engine Upgrade – STCW 2010 – Management Level (NVIC 15-14) – Completion of both required and optional courses listed below will include all Task Assessments required by NVIC 15-14. See STAR Center’s website for full details: https://www.star-center.com/stcw2010-engine.upgrade.html									
Leadership & Managerial Skills (G500 as amended) – REQUIRED	5 Days	21 October	16 December	20 January	10 February	17 March			
ERM (E050 as amended) – REQUIRED (unless previously taken for gap closing or original license) Note: if your current OICEW endorsement does not have a limitation, you should not require this for upgrade.	5 Days	4 November	6 January						
Upgrade: Electrical, Electronics & Control Engineering (Management Level) (E133 as amended) (UPGRADE with tasks) Required unless previously taken for gap closing or original license	5 Days	14 October	2 December	13 January	10 March				
STCW Upgrade Task Assessment – General: This class is required by all propulsion types (Motor, Gas and Steam) Licensed engineers – OPTIONAL: Tasks can be signed off onboard	5 Days	28 October	9 December	27 January	3 March				
Medical Courses									
Elementary First Aid – Prerequisite for MCP within preceding 6 months	1 Day	29 October	3 December	7 January	25 February	18 March			
Medical Care Provider – Prerequisite for MPIC within preceding 6 months. Please fax EFA certificate when registering	3 Days	30 October	4 December	8 January	26 February	19 March			
Medical PIC – Please FAX MCP certificate when registering	5 Days	23 Sept.	4 November	9 December	13 January	3, 24 March			
Urinalysis Collector Training	1 Day	30 Sept.	16 December	14 January	10 March				
Screening Test Technician – QEDs a.m./Alco Mate 7000 p.m.	Half-Day	1 October	17 December	15 January	11 March				
Self-Study, CDs and Online Courses									
Anti-Terrorism Level 1 – Online				Qualified Assessor – Online					
DOT Hazardous Materials Transportation Training – Online				Vessel General Permit EPA – On campus in conjunction with other classes					

AMO Members and Applicants Can Register Online for STAR Center Courses

STAR Center is no longer accepting paper course registration applications by FAX, nor scanned paper applications by email. AMO members and applicants will need to register for courses on the STAR Center website. With a phone, scan the QR code to open a link to the online course registration form, or in the address bar of a Web browser, enter the following URL: www.star-center.com/forms/reg.mbr.live.html



Military Sealift Command Training Program – The core MSC courses noted below are required for initial MSC employment. Other MSC courses listed are only required as assigned duties require.

CORE Basic CBR Defense – Refresher required every 5 years	1 Day	27 Sept.	24 October	15 Nov.	6 Dec.	16 January	14 Feb.	6 March	
CORE Damage Control – Refresher required every 5 years	1 Day	25 Sept.	23 Oct.	14 Nov.	5 Dec.	15 January	13 Feb.	5 March	
CORE Helicopter Fire Fighting – Refresher required every 5 years	1 Day	26 Sept.	22 Oct.	13 Nov.	4, 16 Dec.	14 January	12 Feb.	4 March	
CORE Marine Environmental Program (with CBRD) – Refresher required every 5 years	Half-Day	27 Sept.	24 October	15 Nov.	6 Dec.	16 January	14 Feb.	6 March	
MSC Readiness Refresher – Must have completed full CBRD & DC once in career	2 Days	3, 21 October	12 November	15 December	13 January	3 March			
MSC ATO Level II – Required every 3 years by Master once during career (unless designated ATO)	5 Days	16 December	20 January	31 March					
MSC CBRD Officer – Required every five years and successful completion of the annual refresher/indoctrination training is a prerequisite	5 Days	18 November	3 February	17 March					
MSC Watchstander – BASIC – once in career, SST graduates are grandfathered		1 Day	21 October	9 December	27 January	3 March			
MSC Watchstander – ADVANCED – annual requirement for all SRF members	1 Day	27 September	11, 18, 22 October	8, 22 November	6, 10 December	10, 24, 28 January	7, 14, 28 February	4, 14, 28 March	
MSC Ship Reaction Force – Required every three years for SRF members and must have Basic and a valid Advanced Watchkeeping and a valid Small Arms	3 Days	23 October	11 Dec.	29 January	5 March				
Small Arms – Initial & Sustainment (Refresher) Training – Open to members & applicants eligible for employment through AMO (w/in 1 year) or MSC on MARAD contracted vessels.	4 Days	23, 30 September	7, 14, 28 October	4, 18 November	2 December	6, 20 January	3, 10, 24 February	10, 24 March	

Radar Courses

Radar Recertification	1 Day	7 October	9 December	17 February	31 March				
Electronic Navigation and Watchkeeping (ECDIS) Refresher	3 Days	25 Sept.	20 November	8 January					
ARPA	4 Days	18 February							
Radar Recertification & ARPA	5 Days	17 February							
Original Radar Observer Unlimited	5 Days	10 February							

ONLINE Blended Management Level Upgrade Classes (Deck and Engine) – STAR Center is offering the following courses ONLINE. WHERE SHOWN, FULLY ONLINE CLASSES INCLUDE ALL ASSESSMENTS AND TRAVEL TO STAR CENTER IS NOT REQUIRED. By USCG approval requirements, Practical Exercises and Competency Assessments for blended courses will have to be taken at STAR Center. This will be scheduled in a comprehensive 5-day session.

Leadership and Management (Deck and Engine) – FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	17 March							
Advanced Navigation (Deck) – FULLY ONLINE	3 Days	14 October	10 February						
Marine Propulsion Plant (Deck) – FULLY ONLINE	3 Days	28 October							
Advanced Stability (Deck) FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	24 February	24 February						
Advanced Cargo (Deck) FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	17 February	17 February						
Advanced Celestial (Deck) Blended at STAR Center	4 Days	18 February							
Upgrade: Electrical, Electronics, & Control Engineering (Engine) – FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	10 March							
Combined Basic and Advanced Low Flash Point Fuel Operations – FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	28 October	3 February						
Vessel Security Officer – FULLY ONLINE	3 Days	Please Call							
Tankerman PIC DL – Classroom – FULLY ONLINE	5 Days	Please Call							
Safety Officer Seminar – FULLY ONLINE	2 Days	15 October							
Management of Medical Care – FULLY ONLINE	Half-Day	20 November	26 February						

Assessments (at STAR Center) DECK and ENGINE

Advanced Celestial (Deck)	2 Days	4 November	16 January						
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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, admit 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 policies and other programs administered by the Center.

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STAR CENTER

STUDENT SERVICES/LODGING AND COURSE INFORMATION
2 West Dixie Highway
Dania Beach, FL 33004-4312
(954) 920-3222 Extension 201
(800) 942-3220 Extension 201
register@star-center.com
Course Attendance Confirmation: (800) 942-3220 Extension 200
24 Hours: (954) 920-3222 Extension 7999

SERVICES

AMO MEMBERS & APPLICANTS: UPDATE CREDENTIALS, DOCUMENTS, TRAINING RECORDS
Secure File Upload:
https://www.amo-union.org
Select LOGIN/MEMBER LOGIN to access Member Portal
Questions: (800) 362-0513 Extension 1050
E-mail: memberservices@amo-union.org

AMO Coast Guard Legal Aid Program
Michael Reny
Mobile: (419) 346-1485
(419) 243-1105
(888) 853-4662
MikeReny@BEX.NET
FAX: (419) 243-8953

AMO PLANS
2 West Dixie Highway
Dania Beach, FL 33004
(800) 348-6515
FAX: (954) 922-7539

MEDICAL CLINIC
2 West Dixie Highway
Dania Beach, FL 33004
(954) 927-5213

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), MPB, and Defined Contribution: extension 14
Vacation: extension 15

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
FAX — Retirement Services: (954) 922-7539
FAX — Medical Plan: (954) 920-9482
FAX — Vacation Plan: (954) 926-7274

AMO Membership Assistance Program Relief Benefits Available to Aid Members Hit by Natural Disasters

The American Maritime Officers Membership Assistance Program is a voluntary disaster relief fund established to aid current AMO members and applicants for membership who suffer damage to their property as the result of severe storms and natural disasters, such as Hurricane Beryl.

Benefits from the AMO Membership Assistance Program are paid in varying amounts determined exclusively by need.

The online application for relief benefits under the Membership Assistance Program is available on the AMO website (www.amo-union.org/membership-assistance). AMO members will need to log into the member portal to complete the online application for benefits.

The Membership Assistance Program is a permanent, independent, tax-exempt and

voluntary disaster relief fund established by the AMO National Executive Board. AMO made an initial contribution to the fund at its inception, and the fund is now sustained by individual voluntary tax-deductible contributions.

AMO members can make tax-deductible voluntary contributions to the AMO Membership Assistance Program via authorized vacation deductions. The form is available online (www.amoplans.com/Forms/Vacation/mapdeduction.pdf).

Contributions can also be made by sending checks or money orders to:

AMO Membership Assistance Program
601 S. Federal Highway
Dania Beach, FL 33004-4109

U.S. Coast Guard Cautions Medical Certificate Renewal May Take 90 Days; AMO Members Advised to Apply for Medical Certification Renewal Six Months in Advance

Based on recent feedback from the U.S. Coast Guard, all members and applicants of American Maritime Officers who need to renew a Medical Certificate are urged to apply 180 days in advance of the expiration of a current certificate.

In direct correspondence, the Coast Guard has stated it may take up to 90 days for an application to be reviewed and for a Medical Certificate to be issued after Form 719K or Form 719K/E has been sent by e-mail to MEDAIP@uscg.mil or by FAX to 304-433-3407. Applications are processed by the Coast Guard on a first-in, first-out basis.

To help improve processing times and prevent delay, make sure an application sent by email does NOT exceed 25 MB. Additionally, please ensure applications sent by email include your name and Mariner Reference Number in the subject line and all required files and forms are complete and in PDF format. Otherwise, the Coast Guard will consider the application incomplete and return it to be resubmitted.

Please ensure all file attachments are in PDF format. Other file formats will not be accepted.

Once an application is submitted, you should receive an auto-reply email within 12 to 24 hours to notify you whether or not your application email cleared the Coast Guard system firewall. Please check your spam or junk email folder for the auto-reply email.

Once your application has been accepted as complete, you will receive an automatic notification from the National Maritime Center and you will then be able to check the status of your application online.

If you reply to messages or have ongoing email correspondence with the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center, please include your Mariner Reference Number in all correspondence.

AMO aboard the *Burns Harbor* on the Great Lakes



Members of American Maritime Officers working aboard the thousand-footer *Burns Harbor* in June, here in Superior, Wis., included Captain Robert Medley and Second Mate Charles Meehan.



AMO members working aboard the *Burns Harbor* in June, here in Superior, Wis., included Third Mate James Seals and First Mate Andrew Pudelek. AMO represents all licensed officers aboard the American Steamship Company vessel.

USCENTCOM Concludes Temporary JLOTS Pier Operations in Gaza

The following article was released July 18 by U.S. Central Command.

U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) personnel have concluded operations for the USAID-led mission to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza from the sea using the Joint Logistics Over the Shore (JLOTS) capability.

With collaboration from multi-national organizations and our regional partners, the JLOTS capability enabled the delivery of the highest-ever volume of U.S. military-supported aid in the Middle East. Since May, nearly 20 million pounds of humanitarian aid have been delivered to Gaza.

The U.S. military's temporary

mission in support of USAID achieved the goal of providing an additional means to deliver high volumes of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza during a period of intense need.

The U.S. government's efforts to increase the volume of aid delivered to affected populations in Gaza will continue beyond the end of the JLOTS mission. USCENTCOM will work with USAID to deliver the remaining aid commodities currently afloat to the Port of Ashdod in Israel for onward distribution to Gaza and will provide coordination and liaison support for HA deliveries at the request of USAID when appropriate.