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Third NSMV *T/S State of Maine* Christened



On August 26, the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) celebrated the christening of the *State of Maine*, the third of five cutting-edge National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMVs), at Hanwha Philly Shipyard. Built for Maine Maritime Academy, the *T/S State of Maine* will serve as a next generation training ship, supporting both the academic development of cadets and America’s

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American Maritime Officers officials (from left) National Assistant Vice President for Government Relations Alaina Basciano, National President Willie Barrere and National Deep Sea Vice President Jeff Richards (a Maine Maritime graduate) gather with Maine Maritime cadets at the ceremony in front of their school’s new training ship, *State of Maine*.

AMO-Contracted Ships from Multiple Fleets Support, Sustain U.S. Military Missions, Objectives, Readiness



This edition includes several features that highlight the roles of American contract civilian mariners in supporting and sustaining U.S. military missions, crucial operations, readiness and international military coordination on shared objectives. In the photo above, the U.S.-flagged tanker *Badlands Trader* — operated under Military Sealift Command charter by USMMI and manned in all licensed positions by members of American Maritime Officers — sails alongside forward-deployed Nimitz Class aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) during a replenishment at sea in the Pacific Ocean in May.

A New Season Begins at AMO and Throughout Our Industry

By Willie Barrere
National President

The summer is coming to an end, and football is cranking up across the nation.

The last couple of months have been busy as the AMO contract negotiation team has completed almost all of the tanker contracts, achieving excellent gains across the board.

Recently, the *State of Maine* training and National Security Multi-Mission Vessel was christened in Philadelphia and will soon be sailing north with AMO officers onboard.

The WTIV *Charybdis* recently got underway from Brownsville and is due into port on the East Coast in mid-September.

After a long wait, MARAD reallocated contracts for the Ready Reserve Force fleet among operating companies with numerous changes for operators and members of all unions manning these ships. As noted on page 7, the realloca-

tion is requiring many to shift to different vessels or relocate to new docks or different states. At this time, we are still working through some of the personnel challenges, as well as working with the other unions to keep all positions occupied. While AMO gained one vessel in the allotment, in the near future we will lose a few ships designated for reduced status, such as layup or scrap. At the same time, we will gain vessels through the vessel acquisition management program as the RRF fleet is recapitalized over time. We expect more vessels to shift from MSC to MARAD as well, which should help our job numbers.

The T-AGOS and T-AGS contract numbers are being worked on at this point as the three officer unions have agreed to negotiate with our companies using the same wage packages so as to not undercut one another. We recognize the need to responsibly increase our wages in order to remain competitive with a still-limited

mariner workforce, and to keep up with the commercial contract increases.

Some time ago, we announced a new contract with Osprey, which is operating a ship for CMA CGM. AMO officers are currently sailing onboard the *CMA CGM Phoenix*. MM&P has challenged our jurisdiction through the AFL-CIO and there has been a mediation, a hearing, and we are currently in the appeal process.

Maritime academy recruiting season is just around the corner and our officials will be attending various functions at the academies. We are also getting requests for outreach at the high school level and with civic organizations, along with maritime academy events and dinners for scholarship funding. Our membership is growing as applications continue to arrive.

The SHIPS Act was introduced earlier this year, and at the current time, many of the provisions are still going through the process of review in committees in both the

House and the Senate. AMO Vice President of Government Relations Christian Spain, Legislative Consultant Brenda Otterson, and AMO Assistant Vice President Alaina Basciano continue to work with congressional leaders to support the different aspects of the bill and help solidify the plan for growth in cargo, ships, and personnel.

Additionally, we are hoping Trump nominee Stephen Carmel will soon be confirmed as Maritime Administrator.

Our next Executive Board and AMO Plans Board of Trustees meetings are just around the corner, starting September 22. If you would like to attend future meetings, please contact AMO's Executive Assistant, Jackie Ghorbani, at jghorbani@amo-union.org.

As we head into Fall, our calendar preparations for 2026 are beginning and we are adding to our social media presence. If you have photos onboard vessels or from your vacations, please request a link to our DropBox upload site from the Editorial Department at editorial@amo-union.org. You can use the QR codes below to visit and follow our pages on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook.

I wish everyone the best onboard and on vacation.

Ocean Freedom Serves in Pacer Goose



The service of the *Ocean Freedom* in Operation Pacer Goose 2025 was recognized by Military Sealift Command in July. The ship, operated in the Maritime Security Program by Patriot Shipping and manned in all licensed positions by American Maritime Officers, completed the annual supply mission to Pituffik Space Base in Greenland, resupplying the base for 365 days in the 73rd year of Operation Pacer Goose.

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USNS Williams Offloads in Florida



Photos: U.S. Marine Corps

A Humvee passes an RFID reader while being offloaded from the *USNS PFC Dewayne T. Williams* on August 12 at Marine Corps Support Facility Blount Island. Operated for Military Sealift Command by Crowley Government Services and manned in all licensed positions by AMO, the ship returned from prepositioning warfighting equipment in support of geographic commands and regional exercises, including Native Fury in Saudi Arabia and Balikatan in the Philippines.



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State of Maine

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security and humanitarian relief. Spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Maritime Administration, the NSMV program is revitalizing America's maritime training infrastructure — a cornerstone of President Trump's Executive Order on restoring maritime dominance. The program directly supports nearly 1,500 skilled jobs in Philadelphia and boosts American competitiveness at sea and ashore.

The naming celebration was attended by President Lee Jae Myung of the Republic of Korea, U.S. Senator Todd Young, U.S. Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, Acting Maritime Administrator Sang Yi, and representatives from Hanwha Philly Shipyard and TOTE Services. Also attending was American Maritime Officers National President Willie Barrere, AMO National Vice President, Deep Sea, and Maine Maritime alumnus Jeff Richards and AMO Assistant Vice President, Government Relations, Alaina Basciano.

"State of Maine is more than a ship — it's a strategic investment in the people and infrastructure that keep America's maritime economy strong," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy. "Our cadets deserve cutting-edge tools and training to become the industry leaders who will keep our nation strong and ready when it matters most. Under President Donald Trump's leadership, American shipyards can and will produce more big, beautiful ships again."

The *T/S State of Maine* is the third vessel of five in the NSMV program, following the deliveries of the *T/S Empire State* to SUNY Maritime and the *T/S Patriot State*, which was recently delivered to Massachusetts Maritime Academy. When activated by MARAD for special missions, all three



vessels will be manned in licensed positions by American Maritime Officers.

"Maine Maritime Academy is internationally recognized as a leader in maritime education and this vessel represents a major step forward in our mission to train the world's finest mariners," said Maine Maritime Academy President Craig Johnson. "As our first purpose-built training ship, the *State of Maine* will provide world-class learning experiences for cadets pursuing unlimited tonnage licenses. It's a game-changer for our mission and a powerful reflection of what's possible through strong partnerships and shared vision."

The naming ceremony occurred on the same day South Korea and Hanwha

pledged to spend billions of dollars to reinvigorate shipbuilding in America. President Donald Trump and South Korean President Lee met earlier in the week to discuss South Korea's investment in American shipbuilding. Two more NSMVs are under construction at Hanwha Philly Shipyard, destined for Texas and California maritime academies.

"This vessel marks a new era for American maritime power," said Acting Maritime Administrator Sang Yi. "MARAD's mission to modernize sealift and empower the Merchant Marine hinges on relentless innovation and partnership. Together, we can build the fleet America needs to secure our future and dominate the seas."

Additional Information:

MARAD is replacing aging training vessels from the National Defense Reserve Fleet with new, purpose-built ships designed to meet modern academy needs, and to provide critical capabilities for disaster response and national emergencies.

Stretching 525 feet long, a single NSMV can accommodate 600 cadets and up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need. These vessels boast eight classrooms, cutting-edge labs, a training bridge, auditorium, helicopter pad, advanced medical facilities, and roll-on/roll-off and container capacity, ensuring cadets get unmatched hands-on training.



President of South Korea Lee Jae Myung spoke about his country's ongoing investment in American shipbuilding at the ceremony.



AMO President Barrere thanked U.S. Representative Mary Gay Scanlon for her support of the NSMV program and American shipbuilding.



Officials of American Maritime Officers, the Seafarers International Union and the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association greet *State of Maine* sponsor Elaine Chao, former U.S. Secretary of Labor and former U.S. Secretary of Transportation, during the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel's christening ceremony at Hanwha Philly Shipyard.

New Session of OICEW Program Underway at STAR Center



Participating in the Officer in Charge of an Engineering Watch (OICEW) Program at STAR Center in August were Adam Elgendy, Mackenzie Latta, Ruben Acuna, Daniel Villarruel and Zachary Cartwright. The AMO Safety and Education Plan's STAR Center has streamlined the process for an engineering officer with a national license to earn the STCW endorsement through its one-of-a-kind OICEW program. The program is 17 weeks (rather than the 24 weeks required with traditional training) and includes all courses and assessments needed to obtain the OICEW-III/1 endorsement required for employment on vessels to which STCW applies. Tuition sponsorship (including room and board) is available for those interested in committing to completing the program, obtaining an STCW endorsement and sailing in covered employment with AMO. More information about this STAR Center program is available online at: www.star-center.com/oicew.html.

AMO Members, Applicants Train at STAR Center



AMO members participating in Advanced Dynamic Positioning (simulator) training at STAR Center in August with Instructor Patrick Leahy (left) included Christian Sucher, Shawn Dishop, James O'Connell and Olivia Grabher.



AMO members participating in the Shiphandling at the Management Level course at STAR Center in August with Instructor Frank Brand (center) included Garet Seibt and Lucan Shanahan.

Current Course Schedule Available on the **STAR Center Website**



The current STAR Center course schedule is available on the STAR Center website at the address below. The STAR Center schedule will no longer be printed in the AMO newspaper. The STAR Center course schedule is also sent by email each month to AMO-contracted vessels and to AMO members and applicants at the email address each has on file with the union.

www.star-center.com/schedule.html

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



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.

CS Anthem Reflagged into U.S. Registry to Replace *Stena Immaculate* in Tanker Security Program Fleet

Crowley Stena Marine Solutions, the joint venture between Crowley and Stena Bulk, has received approval from the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) to operate the *CS Anthem* under the Tanker Security Program (TSP).

The *CS Anthem*, a U.S.-flagged, 49,990-metric-ton, medium-range tanker, is crewed and managed by Crowley under a bareboat charter through the joint venture. American Maritime Officers represents all licensed officers on the *CS Anthem*. The vessel joins Crowley-managed tankers *Stena Imperative* and *Stena Impeccable* in the Tanker Security Program, replacing the *Stena Immaculate* — all of which are under contract with AMO.

On March 10, the *Stena Immaculate* was struck while at anchor by the 459-foot Portuguese-flagged containership *M/V Solong* off the east coast of the United Kingdom. No injuries were reported among the 23 crewmembers of the *Stena Immaculate*.



late after all had been brought ashore from the site of the incident, where both ships at the time were burning in the North Sea. The AMO-led *Stena Immaculate* crew also included one engineering officer represented by

the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association working under a pass-through agreement.

One crew member from the *Solong* died in the incident and both vessels involved were eventually towed to ship-

yards in the region.

Through the TSP, *CS Anthem* and its crew will support MARAD's mission to ensure fuel transport readiness for the U.S. Department of Defense, while advancing the nation's strategic sealift capabilities.

"The addition of the *CS Anthem* demonstrates our commitment to strengthening U.S. maritime security and providing reliable, U.S.-crewed tanker capacity in support of national defense," said Tucker Gilliam, vice president of fleet operations for Crowley Shipping. "Together with *Stena Bulk*, we are proud to continue advancing solutions that serve both commercial and government energy transportation needs."

The Crowley Stena Marine Solutions joint venture combines Crowley's leadership in U.S.-flag operations and mariner crewing with *Stena Bulk's* global tanker expertise, delivering agile, reliable and secure solutions for government and commercial customers.

TSP Tanker *Stena Imperative* Conducts Replenishment At Sea, Earns CONSOL Certification

By Captains Jason Ivey and Glenn Macario
Stena Imperative

On August 15, the *Stena Imperative*, which is enrolled in the Tanker Security Program, conducted a Replenishment at Sea (RAS) with Japanese Navy tanker *Oumi*. With the successful operation, the *Stena Imperative* earned her CONSOL certification, and is now one of three TSP tankers to have earned it.

Training started days before on August 11 when the *Stena Imperative* moored to Dock T-4 in Sasebo across from the *Oumi*. Both ships' key personnel held an informal meeting on August 11, followed by a much larger and formal meeting on August 12, to discuss training to prepare for the at-sea evolution. Two instructors from MSC in Port Hueneme came out to witness the evolution and provide guidance.

Three 'dry runs' were made across the pier connecting the *Oumi's* hoses to the *Stena Imperative's* forward CONSOL station. August 13 saw both crews touring the opposite vessel to get familiar with their working areas.

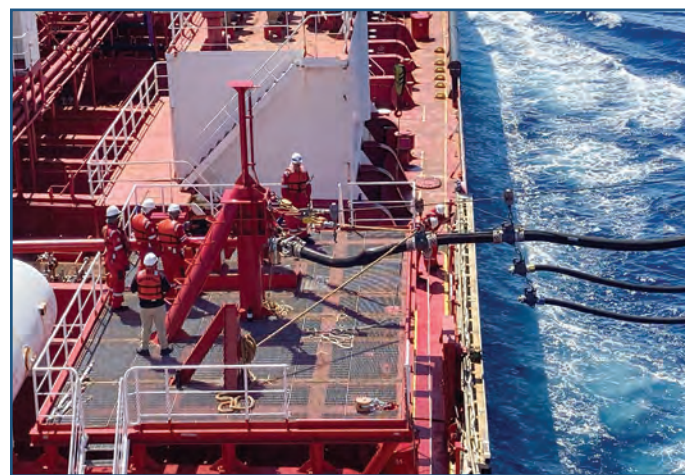
On August 14, a final meeting was held to confirm the sequence of events at sea. Both ships got underway early on August 15 and proceeded south of Sasebo. By 1236, *Oumi* was approaching *Stena Imperative*. Hoses were over and connected to the forward station at 1303 and disconnected at 1311 for a successful 'dry run' at sea.

Oumi shifted about 70 meters aft and sent her hose over to the aft CONSOL station, with hose connected at 1356. From 1400 to 1436, 1,250 barrels of F-76 was pumped to *Oumi* for a successful 'wet run.' *Oumi's* hose was disconnected and she cleared the side of *Stena Imperative* at 1502. Both instructors from Port Hueneme acknowledged a successful evolution and that the ship would now be CONSOL certified.



Above: The *Oumi's* hoses are connected to the *Stena Imperative's* forward CONSOL station for a 'dry run' at sea.

At Right: The *Oumi's* hoses are over and connected to the aft CONSOL station on the *Stena Imperative*.



At Left: The ROBB coupling is connected to the *Stena Imperative's* aft CONSOL station — ready to pump.

Below: *Stena Imperative* crewmembers at the ship's aft CONSOL station heaving in the span wire messenger.





Gunner's Mate Seaman Emily Nutt fires a shot line on the flight deck of *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) before a fueling-at-sea with the *Badlands Trader* while underway in the Pacific Ocean.



The USMMI tanker *Badlands Trader*, operated under charter to Military Sealift Command, takes position alongside the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) before a replenishment at sea in the Pacific Ocean on May 28. The *USS George Washington* is the U.S. Navy's premier forward-deployed aircraft carrier, a long-standing symbol of the commitment of the United States to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region, while operating alongside allies and partners across the U.S. Navy's largest numbered fleet.

Badlands Trader in Action at Sea



Above: *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) crewmembers took a tour and checked the CONSOL station onboard the *M/T Badlands Trader* before beginning underway fueling operations.

At left: On July 16, the *Badlands Trader* operating under MSC charter conducted a replenishment-at-sea with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary *RFA Tidespring* in the 7th Fleet area of operations under the direction of COMLOG WESTPAC/CTF-73. This successful operation highlights the close coordination between the U.S. Navy and our allies and partners, ensuring our combined forces remain supplied, ready, and committed to promoting peace and stability throughout the Indo-Pacific. American Maritime Officers represents all licensed officers aboard the *Badlands Trader*.



MARAD Announces Ready Reserve Force Allocations

On July 28, the Maritime Administration issued the Ready Reserve Force ship allocation for the next 10 years. The RRF ship manager awards are as follows.

AMO-contracted company awards

- **Crowley:** *Mendonca, Benavidez, Cape Arundel, Cape Cortez*
- **Ocean Duchess:** *Cape Inscription, Cape Intrepid, Cape Isabel, Cape Island, Curtiss, Wright*
- **Pacific-Gulf Marine:** *Cornhusker State, Gopher*

State, Cape Kennedy, Cape Knox, Keystone State, Gem State

- **TOTE Services:** *Cape Taylor, Cape Texas, Cape Trinity, Pollux, Regulus, Altair, Bellatrix, Pacific Tracker, Pacific Collector, Gordon, Gilliland, Cape Sabel, Cape San Juan, Cape Starr*

Non-AMO company awards

- **Keystone:** *Cape Decision, Cape Diamond, Cape Domingo, Cape Douglas, Cape Ducato, Cape Edmont, Cape Race, Cape Ray, Cape Rise, Bob Hope, Brittin, Fisher*

- **Patriot Contract Services:** *Cape Victory, Cape Vincent, Admiral Callahan, Cape Orlando, Cape Henry, Cape Horn, Cape Hudson*

- **Sunrise Vessel Operations:** *Cape Washington, Cape Wrath*

American Maritime Officers is working with all members affected to ensure officers will be able to continue working within the Ready Reserve Force fleet should the new vessel allocation require a transition in job assignments.



American Maritime Officers members working aboard the *Cape Inscription* and *Cape Isabel* in July, here in Long Beach, Calif., included Second Assistant Engineer Edward Thompson (*Inscription*), Third A.E. Aaron Ellis (*Isabel*), Chief Mate Eric Winn (*Inscription*), Third A.E. Kristopher Bechtel (*Inscription*), Chief Engineer Nate Fountain (*Inscription*), Third Mate Luke Johnson (*Isabel*), Chief Engineer Tony Estes (*Isabel*), Third A.E. Finn Kristiansen (*Isabel*). With them is East Coast Representative Marissa Cap.

AMO Members Complete a Historic First Conducting at-Sea Vertical Launch System Rearm in Exercise with *USS Farragut*

The following article was published by Defense Visual Information Distribution Service on July 18. The S/S *Gopher State* is operated by Pacific-Gulf Marine for the U.S. Maritime Administration as part of the Ready Reserve Force and is manned in all licensed positions by American Maritime Officers.

Cargo handlers from Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) and Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One (NCHB-1) executed a critical vertical launch system (VLS) rearm, including a missile reload evolution between S/S *Gopher State* (T-ACS 4) and USS *Farragut* (DDG 99), as part of Large Scale Exercise 2025 (LSE 25). The operation demonstrated the vital role of expeditionary logistics in supporting distributed maritime operations and sustaining combat power at sea.

"The ability to conduct safe and efficient vertical missile rearm at sea is a critical warfighting enabler," said Lt. Cmdr. John Sefcik, weapons officer aboard *Farragut*. "What NAVELSG brings to the fight is a highly trained team capable of executing these complex operations in dynamic maritime environments — and that directly increases the fleet's lethality and operational reach."

Anchored alongside the guided-missile destroyer, *Gopher State* utilized its heavy-lift cranes to transfer missile



The S/S *Gopher State* operates alongside the Arleigh Burke Class guided-missile destroyer USS *Farragut* (DDG 99) during a vertical launch system (VLS) rearmament evolution as part of Large Scale Exercise 2025.

canisters simultaneously to *Farragut's* fore and aft VLS cells, conducting a first-of-its-kind rearm at sea. The demonstration, executed by crane operators and cargo handlers from NCHB-1's Surface Cargo and Expeditionary Reload Companies,

highlighted the command's unique capability to deliver high-end logistics in a contested environment.

"This keystone event was enabled by integrating units of action within NAVELSG's dynamic rearm-refuel-resupply portfolio,"

said Command Master Chief Chad Elliott, NAVELSG. "The evolution was accomplished by units comprised of active duty, Training and Administration of Reserve (TAR), and Selected Reserve Sailors working side by side to accomplish a critical task — a total Navy team effort."

The two-ship operation was one of many events contributing to LSE 25, a Department of Defense-led global exercise designed to enhance joint force agility, strengthen allied interoperability, and demonstrate multinational readiness across all domains. NAVELSG's participation underscores the importance of integrated logistics in the execution of modern naval warfare and showcases the diverse talents of the operators performing the mission.

"Today marks a significant milestone in the Navy's ability to evolve and maintain our warfighting advantage," said Rear Adm. Charles Kirol, commander, NAVELSG. "Rearming warships at sea is a capability that adds significant complexity for those who choose to challenge us in conflict. NAVELSG has been at the center of developing our Navy's rearming options — from routine pierside operations to expeditionary, non-permissive environments, and now at sea, globally. NAVELSG's commitment to the evolution of the Navy's rearming capabilities, flexibility, and proficiency is unwavering, and I look forward to where we go from here."

NAVELSG remains committed to evolving its capabilities in support of dynamic force employment — delivering logistics at the speed of war and keeping the hook moving wherever the mission requires.

USNS Bowditch Strengthens Maritime Ties with First Special Mission Vessel Visit to India in Two Decades

The following is excerpted from a U.S. Navy press release issued July 28.

The Pathfinder Class oceanographic survey ship *USNS Bowditch* (T-AGS 62) visited Sri Vijaya Puram (formerly known as Port Blair) on July 25, 2025, marking the first port visit to India by a U.S. Navy Special Mission vessel in two decades. This port visit demonstrates U.S. and India's shared democratic values and mutual commitment to advancing security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region through strengthened maritime partnership.

During the visit, *Bowditch* leadership conducted office calls with the leadership of the Andaman and Nicobar Command. The ship also hosted tours for Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard counterparts, fostering deeper cooperation between the two maritime forces.

"The officers and crew of the *USNS*



Bowditch have been proud to participate in many activities during our visit that not only boost morale but also strengthen our relationship with our partners, the Indian Navy," said Captain Dave Mitchell, master on the *USNS Bowditch*.

Bowditch is an oceanographic survey ship attached to Military Sealift Command and is currently underway in the Indo-Pacific supporting 7th fleet, the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, alongside allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific. The *Bowditch* is one of six oceanographic survey ships operated by personnel from the Naval Oceanographic Office located at the John C. Stennis Space Center located in Bay St. Louis, Miss.

The *USNS Bowditch* is operated by Ocean Ships Inc. for Military Sealift Command and is manned in all licensed positions by American Maritime Officers.

U.S. Navy Cmdr. Daniel Foose (fourth from right) and AMO member Captain David Mitchell (center) meet with Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard personnel on the bridge of the *USNS Bowditch* during a scheduled port visit to Sri Vijaya Puram, India.



Chief Mate Daniel Vich is welcomed to Sri Vijaya Puram (formerly known as Port Blair) as the *USNS Bowditch* conducts the first port visit by a U.S. Navy Special Mission vessel in two decades.

AMO Aboard Jones Act Tanker *Evergreen State* Under MSC Charter



Members of American Maritime Officers working aboard the Jones Act tanker *Evergreen State* in June, here in Tampa, Fla., included Chief Engineer Matthew Colwell, Third Assistant Engineer Emma Clarkson, Second Mate Kyle Nelson, Captain Erik Matthews and Third Mate Connor Urbancic. AMO represents all licensed officers onboard the *Evergreen State*, which is operated under Military Sealift Command charter by Intrepid Personnel and Provisioning.

Shenandoah Trader Completes Four-Month CONSOL Mission in Red Sea with U.S. Navy

By Chief Mate Thomas Knizewski
M/T Shenandoah Trader

The M/T *Shenandoah Trader* successfully completed a four-month tour earlier this year as the CONSOL tanker in support of the Truman Carrier Strike Group during Operations Rough Rider and Prosperity Guardian in the Red Sea.

Throughout this engagement, the vessel delivered over 432,000 barrels of DFM and JP-5 to the USNS *Arctic* during CONSOL operations. These critical fuel de-

liveries enabled the strike group to remain fully mission-capable and continuously engaged in sustained operations against Houthi forces in Yemen.

Operating under the Tanker Security Program (TSP), the *Shenandoah Trader* bolsters the U.S. Navy's ability to project power globally through assured and reliable tanker support.

Notably, the vessel was the first TSP tanker to achieve full CONSOL qualification as well as the first to conduct CONSOLs on an operational level.

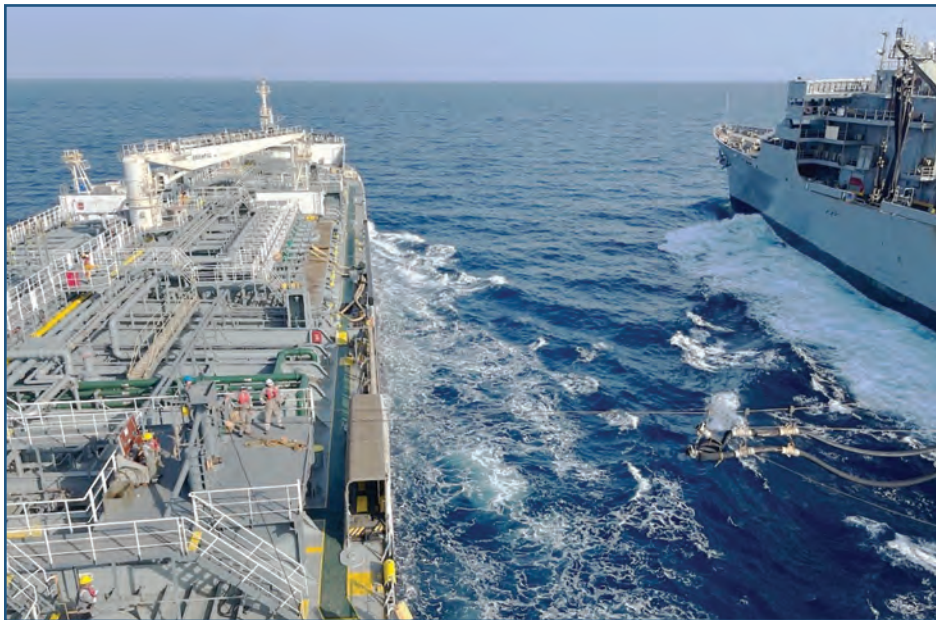


Photo by Captain Al Warmbier



Officers and crewmembers of the *Shenandoah Trader* during operations in the Red Sea included AB J. Scofield, Captain Al Warmbier, AB A. Reza, and Third Mate (PIC observer) W. Fruehauf.



Working aboard the *Shenandoah Trader* during operations in the Red Sea were Chief Mate Thomas Knizewski, Second Mate Keegan Flynn and Bosun Christian Haber.



The crew of the *Shenandoah Trader* during Red Sea operations included (left to right) SA D. Batiz, AB J. Aquino, Pumpman E. Elkori, AB M. Mosed, Wiper E. Bertke, Bosun Christian Haber, Chief Mate Thomas Knizewski, QMED M. Joel and Second Mate Keegan Flynn.

U.S. Coast Guard: Mariner Medical Certificates May Contain Errors

The following bulletin was issued by the National Maritime Center on September 8.

A system error affected the limitations and restrictions section shown on medical certificates issued between July 25, 2025, and September 3, 2025. In some cases, a limitation of "YES" may be listed in error. In other cases, a valid limitation or restriction may be listed as a "NO" on the certificate.

All issued medical certificates remain valid. Corrected medical certificates for those mariners affected will be issued during the next month to ensure clarity of limitations and restrictions.

Mariners are advised to review their medical certificates for accuracy. The National Maritime Center is actively addressing this matter to ensure all issued medical certificates

reflect clear and accurate information.

If you have questions or require assistance, contact the NMC Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST, by email (iasknmc@uscg.mil), by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662), or by live chat (www.dco.uscg.mil/national_maritime_center).

Sincerely,

Patrick A. Drayer
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection

U.S. Representative Lisa McClain Recognized as a Great Lakes Champion

The following is excerpted from an article released by the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force (GLMTF), a coalition of which American Maritime Officers and American Maritime Officers Service are members.

On Monday, August 18, 2025, the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force recognized Michigan Congresswoman Lisa McClain for her efforts advocating for the Great Lakes Navigation System and those who live and work on or near the Fourth Sea Coast.

"It is an incredible honor to be recognized as Legislator of the Year by the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force. The Great Lakes are not only a vital economic engine for our region, but a national treasure that demands strong, informed policy," Chairwoman McClain said. "I am proud to advance legislation in Congress that strengthens maritime commerce, modernizes our water infrastructure, and protects the long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes. I will always fight to ensure our Michigan ports, waterways, and maritime workers have the support they need to thrive."

"Representative McClain has been a relentless advocate for the Great Lakes Navigation System. Whether she is supporting the new heavy U.S. Coast Guard Great Lakes icebreaker, funding for arguably the most important infrastructure project ever at the Soo Locks, or ensuring our lakes are



President of the GLMTF and AMO National Vice President, Great Lakes, John Clemons and AMO Great Lakes Representative Pete Kinsey congratulate U.S. Representative Lisa McClain on her receipt of the Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award for 2025.

mapped to the highest modern standards, Representative McClain leads the way for Michigan and the entire Great Lakes," stated American Maritime Officers National Vice President, Great Lakes, and GLMTF President John Clemons.

Representative McClain's district falls squarely in the crosshairs of annual ice jam flooding that occurs on the St. Clair River and causes hundreds of thousands of dollars to impacted residents. The new heavy Great Lakes icebreaker is a critical tool

needed to alleviate those jams to prevent flooding and Congresswoman McClain has aggressively sought construction funding for the vital asset.

The construction of the new large navigational lock in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan remains on track for completion in 2030, thanks in large part to Representative McClain's tenacious pursuit of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding, which has kept costs under control and workers on the job. The progress at the Soo Locks has been

phenomenal and serves as an ideal example for how a major infrastructure project can be completed when Congress provides bipartisan support.

In addition, Congresswoman McClain has taken a leadership role with the reintroduction of the Great Lakes Mapping Act, which would ensure future economic development, resource management, and environmental sustainability in the Great Lakes Region. With only 13 percent of the Great Lakes mapped to modern hydrographic standards, the legislation directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to conduct high resolution mapping of the Great Lakes to further understand the underwater environment.

"It is a privilege to be here today to award Representative McClain a well-deserved 'thank you' on behalf of the entire U.S. Great Lakes maritime industry. Legislators like Congresswoman McClain get things done and the Great Lakes are fortunate to have such a powerful voice on Capitol Hill moving our region forward," stated President of the Lake Carriers' Association and GLMTF Vice President Jim Weakley.

The ceremony was hosted at the Lakes Pilots Association facility on the banks of the St. Clair River in Port Huron, Michigan. Established in 1960 following the opening of the Saint Lawrence Seaway, Lakes Pilots has provided pilotage services for Lake Erie and the St. Clair and Detroit river systems. Their jurisdiction covers almost 270 nautical miles of waterways, spanning four U.S. states and one Canadian province, containing a combined 12 ports.

USNS Lopez Decommissioned After Four Decades of Sealift Service

For four decades, the *USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez* provided logistical support for the U.S. Armed Forces, predominantly assigned to operations in the Far East.

After years of distinguished service, the Military Sealift Command prepositioning vessel, named in honor of Korean War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient 1st Lt. Baldomero Lopez, U.S. Marine Corps, was decommissioned in Norfolk, with members of American Maritime Officers shepherding her to her final berth.

For her last mission, the *USNS Lopez* supported the delivery of critical humanitarian aid to the Gaza region in contested waters, again with AMO members bravely at the helm.

AMO Aboard Tug *Angus R. Cooper*



Onboard the Crescent Towing and Salvage tug *Angus R. Cooper* in August, here in Savannah, Ga., were SIU Wheelman Reed Buck and American Maritime Officers members Chief Engineer Jeff Parker and Captain Brenton Edenfield.



American Maritime Officers members on the final voyage of the *USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez* in August included First Assistant Engineer Jacob Do, Third Mate Hunter Jacques, First A.E. Aristeo Aquino, Chief Mate Felix Somorostro, Captain John Waters and Second A.E. Steve Gustafson. With them is Bosun Chris Dionio. Not in the picture is Chief Engineer David Powers. As stated by Military Sealift Command: "To the *USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez* and all the mariners who served onboard, Commander Military Sealift Command wishes you a hearty Bravo Zulu for a job well done! Fair winds and following seas, shipmates. We have the watch."

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Captain Gregory G. Smith: 1988-2025

Captain Gregory Granville Smith, 36, of Portland, Maine, passed away on August 24, 2025.

He was born in Portland on December 5, 1988, the son of Mark Smith and Joan Abbott, a brother to Meaghan Catherine Smith, and the loving partner of Sydney Richard. He is also survived by his stepmother, Amy Clements; step-siblings James MacKinnon, Katherine Rehnert and her husband Scott Rehnert; as well as his three nieces, Ellie MacKinnon, Reese and Blair Rehnert. Greg is predeceased by his paternal grandparents Mary Louise Smith and Capt. Granville Isaac Smith. On his maternal side, he is predeceased by his grandmother Marjorie Joyce Abbott.



Gregory grew up in North Yarmouth, Maine. He attended Cheverus High School, where he excelled both academically and athletically. Throughout his high school years, Gregory gave his all to the sport of competitive ski racing. He was a champion racer, winning state titles in giant slalom in 2007. While at Cheverus, he developed lifelong friendships that continued into adulthood.

Throughout his high school career, Gregory had one college in mind: Maine Maritime Academy. His goal was to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, Captain Granville Isaac Smith, and become a sea captain. Not only did he fulfill this dream, he succeeded academically while also proving himself a strong leader among his peers. Through hard work and dedication, he rose to the role of Charlie Company Commander, served as captain of the MMA soccer team his senior year, and coached youth soccer in Castine.

During his time at MMA, Gregory also joined the Naval Reserves and served as an officer for six years. Upon graduation, he ranked among the top of his class and received the prestigious Commandant's Award, presented each year to one student for outstanding leadership and performance. He brought honor to the Smith name. The friendships he made at Maine Maritime were not just friendships — they became lifelong brotherhoods. To them, he will always be "Smitty."

Gregory had a deep love for the sea. His career after college began with Hornbeck Offshore Drilling, followed by Exxon and Crowley. He spent many months each year at sea, the place that always called him home. In 2025, his years of dedication came full circle when he became a full-time pilot for the Penobscot Bay Pilots, once again following in the footsteps of his grandfather.

He had deep bonds with the people closest to him. He was the godfather to Beckham Martel, the son of his best friend Aaron Martel and Aaron's wife, Kaylee. Even while at sea, Gregory would FaceTime Beckham every night. He dreamed of having a family and children of his own, and he and his partner Sydney recently welcomed a black lab puppy into their home named Tuna. Tuna quickly became his best friend, and Gregory loved him dearly.



Since being home full-time, he cherished many special moments with his friends and family — from celebrating his sister's wedding, to spending time on the water with his friends and father. He also developed a new love for cooking, which he shared with his mother, Joan, and with Sydney, preparing dinners together at his home on Back Cove.

The loss of Gregory is profound and felt deeply throughout the Maine community. He was a lover of the sea, the mountains, his friends, his family, his partner, and his dog. His absence will be felt for years to come, and his legacy will never be forgotten.

Captain Smith, may you have fair winds and following seas.

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:

October 1, November 5, December 3

Jack G. Branthover: 1945-2025

Jack Gary Branthover, 80, affectionately known as Jack, peacefully passed away on August 5, 2025, in Tavares, Fla., surrounded by his loving family.

Jack was born in New Eagle, Pa., and is survived by his devoted spouse, Linda Branthover. He leaves behind a legacy of love and compassion through his children: (deceased) son James (Sherry) Pritchert, daughter Juliann (Phillip) Caruso, daughter Jennifer (Russell) Lyzak, son Frank Milow, son John (Lisa) Milo, son Joseph Milo, son Jason (Dina) Milo; his grandchildren: Pamela Pritchert, Amanda Pritchert, Steven Caruso, Jason Caruso, Stephanie Caruso, Austin (April) Lyzak, Trevor Lyzak, Laine Lyzak, Kacie Lyzak, Justin Milo, Jordan Milo, John (Heather) Milo, Kyle (Whitney) Milo, Kelsey Milo, Jada Milo; and his great grandchildren: Matthew Pritchert, Parker Burdette, Kali Rae Lyzak, Jordan Junior Milo, Jacob Milo, and Kennedy Milo.



Jack began his career at the Pentagon, where he proudly served as assistant to Chaplain Day. After five years, he followed a new path with the American Maritime Officers, dedicating an incredible 47-plus years to the job he loved before retiring to Florida.

More than his work, Jack treasured the simple joys of life. He found happiness in time spent with family, quiet moments on the lake aboard his Bennington pontoon boat, and sharing meals with friends and neighbors. He had a sweet tooth and was rarely without a big handful of Twizzlers — always enjoyed with a cold glass of peach tea or a cherry Coke.

Jack's life was filled with love, laughter, and lasting friendships — a legacy carried on by all who knew and loved him.

Jacobus "Jack" Maaskant: 1943-2025

Jacobus "Jack" Maaskant, age 81, of Selbyville, Del. died Sunday, July 13, 2025, peacefully at home.

He was born in Holland and was the son of the late Keys Maaskant and Magelanna (Van Der Varrrt) Maaskant.

Jack had most recently sailed with Maritrans/OSG in the articulated tug-barge fleet. He retired from American Maritime Officers in 2006.

He was a member of Palestine Masonic Lodge #189 in Catonsville, Md.

He is survived by a daughter, Elizabeth Smith (and husband Corey) of Selbyville, Del.; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren (awaiting the arrival of a third great-grandchild); former wife, Ruth E. Hauf; one brother, one sister; and a niece.

