

MEBA and Norwegian Cruise Lines in Historic Pact

MEBA President Ron Davis signed an historic agreement in early April that returns MEBA officers to the rejuvenated U.S.-flag cruise fleet. The agreement comes in cooperation with a large, successful cruise company – Norwegian Cruise Lines – that has a long-term commitment to growth here in the United States.

“This agreement is an enormous step forward for the MEBA. It produces new and exciting opportunities for the MEBA membership and puts our Union more firmly on the path of growth and progress,” Davis said.

The momentous pact will produce immediate benefits for the Union, Davis continued, with the inaugural cruise of NCL’s first American-flag vessel scheduled for this Fourth of July weekend. That ship, the PRIDE OF ALOHA, will depart from Honolulu under the command of MEBA officers for a cruise around the Hawaiian Islands.

And according to NCL’s plans for the future, the PRIDE OF



MEBA President Ron Davis (4th from left) and MEBA’s Legal Rep. William Doyle (3rd from right) visit with the NORWEGIAN SKY’s crew on the bridge of the ship. In late June, when the ship sails under the U.S. flag for the first time, every officer onboard will be MEBA.

ALOHA will be followed by two entirely new vessels also devoted to the Hawaiian trade. NCL’s plans mark a major expansion of the Hawaii cruising sector, which previously had been served only by a smaller fleet of antiquated vessels.

Furthermore, NCL is eyeing a fleet of U.S.-flag cruise ships totaling five vessels, with the fourth and fifth ships tentatively slated for the U.S. East Coast cruise market. Plans are not fully formed for these fourth and fifth vessels, but in any event, the agreement between MEBA and NCL calls for MEBA officers to fill all licensed positions on all NCL American-flag ships.

CONTRACT COVERAGE

One of the outstanding features of the NCL agreement is that it covers all licensed positions -- deck and engine -- on all the company’s American-flag ships, Davis commented. On the PRIDE OF ALOHA, that means about 27 positions on that one vessel alone. Davis pointed out that just one NCL ship carries the equivalent number of jobs as five or more containerships under most MEBA contracts.

Wages, benefits and working conditions on the NCL vessels will be extraordinary by any comparison. Hundreds of MEBA members have already rushed in their resumes for the positions.

Another excellent feature of the contract, Davis said, is that NCL will be participating in all MEBA benefit plans. That includes the Pension plan, the Health plan, the Training plan (which funds the Calhoun School), and the Money Purchase



The NORWEGIAN SKY will wrap up a final makeover in June before a San Francisco ceremony where she will be reflagged to the Stars and Stripes. On July 4, the vessel, to be renamed the PRIDE OF ALOHA, will sail off on her inaugural cruise in Hawaii.



Following the completion of the PRIDE OF AMERICA, the ship is expected to join the PRIDE OF ALOHA in the U.S.-flag Hawaii cruise ship trade. This is a computer mock-up of what the ship will look like.

Benefit plan. The company is also contributing to the Joint Employment Committee (JEC), and the American Maritime Congress (AMC).

“NCL is a full partner with us. This is a company, because of their long experience in operating top-of-the-line cruise ships, that understands the importance of first-rate officers. I am certain we are going to have a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship,” he said.

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINES

For MEBA members who are new to the cruise industry, NCL is one of the best known names in the field – even though it’s not very Norwegian anymore. Most of the company’s operations are actually in the United States, and the ownership is held in a large entertainment conglomerate based in Asia.

With 11 modern luxury vessels (not including the new U.S.-flag ships), NCL maintains its large American operation out of headquarters in Miami. Many of its ships sail out of south Florida ports and the company is also prominent in the Alaska and Hawaii markets.

NCL stands out from the crowd of cruise companies with its “Freestyle Cruising” marketing approach. It offers a cruising style tailored to American tastes, with little of the European formality seen in the operations of other cruise lines. Aboard NCL vessels, the emphasis is on freedom for the passengers to enjoy multiple options in all parts of their cruise vacation, whether it is in dining, ship-based activities or shore-side excursions.

So, its name and ownership notwithstanding, NCL is essentially an American company. And, of course, it will become even more American in the future as it adds U.S.-flag vessels to the fleet and focuses directly on new sectors of the American market.

MEBA COMPETES – AND WINS

Davis commented that one of the most satisfying aspects of negotiating an agreement with NCL was the competition that surrounded the decision on which labor union would fill the positions on the new NCL ships.

“It was known in the industry that NCL was looking at different options. They looked at the three main officer unions and they also looked closely at a non-union option. With no history of working with any individual American officers’ union, it wasn’t clear to them which option was preferable,” Davis recalled.

“They looked closely at the different unions from the viewpoint that they would choose the organization that provided the best fit for their operation. I felt good about that right from the start because I know that in a fair competition the MEBA always has the advantage.”

“Well, after sizing up the competition, and especially after working with us at MEBA Headquarters, NCL could see that we had the best officers and best organization out there,” Davis said. “After that, it was just a matter of working out the details.”



The timeline for the completion of the PRIDE OF AMERICA was set back after a freak storm at the shipyard that flooded the partially constructed vessel. Since that time, MEBA officers overseeing the newbuild have ensured that the schedule is proceeding on an even keel.

MEBA CRUISES INTO A NEW ERA

MEBA REPRESENTS EVERY OFFICER BILLET ABOARD NCL'S U.S.-FLAG CRUISESHIPS. THEY ARE:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Master | Chief Engineer |
| Staff Captain | Staff Chief Engineer |
| Chief Officer | First Engineer |
| First Navigation Officer | Chief Electrical Engineer |
| Second Officer | Second Engineer |
| Safety Manager | Environmental Engineer |
| Environmental Officer | Communications Officer |
| Chief Fire Fighter | Reefer Engineer |
| Security Officer | Automation Engineer |
| Third Officer Assistant | Electrical Engineer |
| | Third Engineer |

* Some of these positions will include multiple billets.

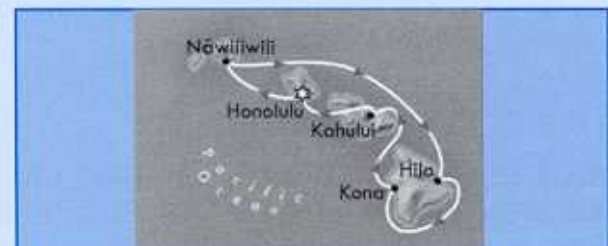


MEBA's Paul Musotto has been serving as Chief Engineer for the PRIDE OF AMERICA for several months demonstrating firsthand to the company the proficiency of MEBA mariners. In anticipation of hiring American crews for its U.S. flag service, the Company instituted a "training program" to help potential crews familiarize themselves with cruise ship operations. It was also an excellent platform for the MEBA members who were selected to showcase their expertise.

"Needless to say, I am extremely proud of the MEBA members who have worked with NCL on the different issues surrounding this agreement. Together, we have achieved a tremendous success for our Union," he concluded.



Ron Davis got a firsthand look at the NORWEGIAN SKY recently in Puerto Rico. The MEBA President is delighted to put MEBA members to work aboard a luxury U.S. flag cruise ship for the first time in 20 years.



PRIDE OF ALOHA

DAY	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART
SUN	Honolulu, O'ahu, Hawai'i		8:00PM
MON	Nawiliwili, Kaua'i, Hawai'i	7:00AM	OVERNIGHT
TUE	Nawiliwili, Kaua'i, Hawai'i Scenic Cruising	-	1:00PM
WED	Hilo, Hawai'i	9:00AM	6:00PM
THU	Kona, Hawai'i	7:00AM	5:00PM
FRI	Kahului, Maui, Hawai'i Optional tours to Moloka'i & Lana'i Available	8:00AM	OVERNIGHT
SAT	Kahului, Maui, Hawai'i	-	6:00PM
SUN	Honolulu, O'ahu, Hawai'i	7:00AM	

2004 SAILING DATES

JULY 4, 11, 18, 25
 AUGUST 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
 SEPTEMBER 5, 12, 19, 26
 OCTOBER 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
 NOVEMBER 7, 14, 21, 28
 DECEMBER 5, 12, 19, 26

2005 SAILING DATES

JANUARY 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
 FEBRUARY 6, 13, 20, 27
 MARCH 6, 13, 20, 27
 APRIL 3, 10, 17, 24