



The Future is Now!

Change of Command at Nation's Oldest Maritime Union

The New Year began with renewed promise for the nation's oldest maritime labor union after M.E.B.A. members elected Don Keefe as their president. Part of the forward-thinking "M.E.B.A. Future" slate, Keefe moves into M.E.B.A. Headquarters following a 90-day balloting period in which he prevailed over three other major candidates for the Union's top job.

He takes over the mantle from two-term President Ron Davis. In 2004, Davis staved off an M.E.B.A. members' democratic tradition of limiting their presidents to one term, but the tide of members clamoring for a different direction keelhaunched his chances for a third.

Experience won't be an issue for the 51-year old Keefe who is coming off two consecutive terms as Atlantic Coast Vice President and 12 total years as a Union official, including stints as Representative in Boston and New York. He has earned a reputation as both a straightforward, no-frills advocate for the membership as well as a sturdy negotiator who drives a hard bargain. Following his graduation from Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 1978, Keefe joined the Union and shipped out under the M.E.B.A. blue and gold for 17 years earning his Chief Engineer's License (Steam/Motor/Gas Turbine Unlimited) before becoming an official.

Don Keefe immediately began the task of trying to put the M.E.B.A.'s house in order to create conditions conducive to union prosperity. Such goals include steering the Union back to more responsible fiscal oversight and strengthening the M.E.B.A. benefit plans to ensure future solvency. Keefe will attempt to unify a collection of M.E.B.A. Union officials elected from three different slates as he moves forward to fulfill campaign pledges for accountability, transparency and a step-up in organizing job opportunities for the membership.

Campaign season typically generates its share of infighting and bitterness, But Keefe is confident that the collective desire to improve this Union will be the impetus behind an Administration dedicated to furthering the fortunes of our members and their families. Said the new President, "Unquestionably, [a] combination of unity and democracy will allow us to move forward and advance the interests of our Union, both for the present and into the future.

"We're all going to work together on behalf of the membership," President Keefe pointed out. "We'll be very busy over the next three years."

THE D.E.C.

Don Keefe is joined on the Union's five-person District Executive Committee (D.E.C.) by Executive V.P. Ed MacCormack, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, Atlantic Coast V.P. Bill McHugh, and Gulf Coast V.P. Marc Huber. The D.E.C. is the District's governing body.

25-year member Ed MacCormack has spent the last three years serving as the Patrolman in San Francisco where he has rewarded members with his integrity and hard work. Ed was loosed into the shipping world following his 1979 graduation from Massachusetts Maritime Academy. He tirelessly toiled in ship engine rooms for over 20 years working himself up to Chief Engineer (Steam & Diesel). His concern for the membership and acumen in dealing with issues got him elected as Patrolman in San Francisco running as an independent. He quickly won over members by proving his determination to supply them with the best representation possible. This has manifested itself in his frequent vessel visits, his tenacity in solving member grievances and disputes as well as his diligence and determination at the bargaining table.



Left: The elected rank and file Tallying Committee along with the Impartial Administrator Ken Egger and his team oversaw the ballot count in M.E.B.A.'s 2007 election. The Committee consisted of (l-r) Brian Evjen (Houston), John Ebanks (New Orleans), Recording Secretary Jon Anderson (Seattle), Chairman Jim Langmeyer (NY/NJ), Steve Byerley (L.A./Wilmington), James Howard (S.F./Oakland) and Tom Birago (Baltimore).

District Executive Committee

M.E.B.A.'s District Executive Committee (DEC) is the Union's governing body. The five-person DEC chosen by members in the 2007 election to serve over the next three years include:



Don Keefe
President



Ed MacCormack
Executive Vice
President



Bill Van Loo
Secretary-
Treasurer



Bill McHugh
Atlantic Coast
Vice President



Marc Huber
Gulf Coast
Vice President

Third generation member Bill Van Loo is a 1983 graduate of the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School and a former Branch Agent in Baltimore. He took over the vacant Secretary-Treasurer position in late 2006 and his ability to multi-task, his contract savvy, experience and strong work ethic will prove a potent complement for what Don Keefe is trying to accomplish this term. Bill has been very involved with local labor and maritime associations and his knack for political networking that he cultivated as Baltimore Branch Agent is paying dividends at HQ which is located at the foot of Capitol Hill. He also heads up M.E.B.A.'s Political Action Fund. Bill harbors deep connections with M.E.B.A.'s School in Easton, MD and still maintains his home there. He founded the Calhoun Alumni Association and headed up the project to build the beautiful new Memorial Park on School grounds that honors fallen merchant mariners. He has served as a Delegate at the last four National M.E.B.A. Conventions and will again be one of the

twenty elected N.M.E.B.A. representatives when the National convenes in March. He holds a Chief Engineer's License and, at press time, was busy securing his TWIC card.

Bill McHugh is well-prepared to take over as Atlantic Coast V.P. He impressed members with his effectiveness as New York Patrolman for over five years and did a top-notch job following his appointment as Baltimore Branch Agent in late 2006. He makes himself available to the membership and has an excellent track record of resolving beefs, working toward solid contracts and protecting our members by firmly enforcing those agreements. Bill has good instincts in dealing with city and state politicians refined by his five years serving in our New York hall. A 1987 graduate of Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Bill might just be the very first Deck Officer elected to the D.E.C. That distinction is emblematic of the M.E.B.A.'s transition from what was purely an Engineers' union to one that is providing employers with the opportunity to crew

vessels from the top down with highly skilled M.E.B.A. officers.

Marc Huber has made his return as Gulf Coast V.P. after a three-year hiatus. He served one-term in that capacity and a previous term as the New Orleans Patrolman. In bringing him back to office, members remembered Marc's hands-on approach and attentiveness to their issues. In his three-year break from office prior to 2008, he put his Chief Engineer's license back to use shipping out under some of the same contracts he negotiated in his first term as Gulf Coast Vice President. A Kings Point graduate, Marc is a hard worker who goes to bat for the membership and is committed to creating job opportunities for members and remaining fiscally responsible. Shipping is down on the Gulf Coast in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, but Marc intends on leading our members in the region through tough times and working towards getting things going in a groove.

Other Elected Positions



Tom Suneson
Baltimore Branch Agent



Dana Woodruff
Houston Branch Agent



Mike Nizetich
L.A. Branch Agent



Karol Kingery
Seattle Branch Agent



Chris Guerra
New York Patrolman



Wil Jones
New Orleans Patrolman



Jim Staats
San Francisco Patrolman



Mike Dunklin
Houston Patrolman



Larry Young
L.A. Patrolman



Jim McCrary
Seattle Patrolman

ELECTION CHALLENGE

As members have been made aware, a losing candidate in the 2007 election has filed a challenge. The same candidate had lodged a protest in the 2004 election alleging a whole host of violations. The DEC found no merit in those 2004 allegations, and after a lengthy investigation, the Department of Labor discovered that the charges were baseless and that no election misconduct occurred. They subsequently discarded the challenge. The latest filing will be fully investigated by the D.E.C. and its findings will be delivered to the membership soon after.

THE REST OF THE TEAM

Including Bill Van Loo, only three officials continue in the same capacity which they served in the last administration. Members again tapped Mike Nizetich as the L.A. Branch Agent and Karol Kingery returns to head up the Seattle hall. Five candidates that had been showcasing their skills as Representatives won elected office.

Longtime Jacksonville Rep. Tom “Sunny” Suneson, has taken over as Branch Agent in Baltimore. New Orleans Rep. Wil Jones and San Francisco Rep. Jim Staats now serve as Patrolmen in their respective ports. L.A. Rep. Larry Young and Seattle Rep. Jim McCrary each ran unopposed and both continue to serve in their ports as Patrolmen.

There are only three members of Don Keefe’s administration that will gain their first experience as union officials. However all three have had extensive sailing careers with the Union as well as years of activism on behalf of the M.E.B.A. Dana Woodruff is the new Branch Agent in Houston. Dana is a “Dualie” holding both deck and engineer’s licenses. She is joined by Mike Dunklin, the new Houston Patrolman. Mike is a native Texan who graduated from the Calhoun School in 1977. Chris Guerra is the new Patrolman in New York. He has shipped out with the Union for 19 years and, like our other newly elected M.E.B.A. officials, is ready to get to work. Congratulations all!!!



Above: Member Paul McCarthy (far left), a former Atlantic Coast V.P., lent his support and expertise to help smooth the transition for the incoming President. He spent four days at HQ on his own time assisting President Keefe. Similarly, former President Larry O’Toole spent a few hours at HQ offering his congratulations to the new boss and generously offering his advice and assistance. Left to right are Brother McCarthy, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, former President O’Toole, President Don Keefe and Legal Counsel Nils Djusberg.

National M.E.B.A. Convention Delegates

Twenty M.E.B.A. members were elected to serve as Delegates at the National M.E.B.A. Convention, an affair that will take place on March 17, 2008. Nine Union officials – the five members of the District Executive Committee as well as the four Branch Agents – are automatically tapped as Delegates by virtue of their office (ex-officio). M.E.B.A. members selected eleven more Delegates out of a pool of seventeen vying for the position. The twenty Delegates include:



Don Keefe



Tom Suneson



Erik Barton



Ed MacCormack



Dana Woodruff



Mark S. Gallagher



Bill Van Loo



Mike Dunklin



Tom Monahan



Bill McHugh



Chris Guerra



Alana Newman



Marc Huber



Jim McCrary



Ray Twitty



Karol Kingery



Jim Staats



Patrick Wright



Mike Nizetich



Patrick Anderson