Annual Seminar - The MCA's Forty-eighth annual seminar is scheduled for St. Pete Beach, Florida, July 10-12, 2006, at the Grande Plaza Hotel, St. Pete Beach. (727/360-1811 or 800/448-0901) The newly renovated hotel is on the area's magnificent white sand beach that stretches for miles along the beautiful Gulf Coast.

In addition to a great social program for our families and guests, we are hard at work on a broad technical program. The proposed training agenda targets presentations on static electricity hazards, the growing importance of FSPOs, the recent BP Texas City explosion, the chemistry of false positives and electrochemical sensors, an update of OSHA and MGHCP activities, recent (and continuing) sewage-related fatality reports, security aspects of CMC inspections: recognizing terrorist-related signs and devices, new and planned OSHA maritime activities, microbial induced corrosion, changes in respirator fit-factors and EWR certificates, and possibly more.

As usual, there will be an MCA EXCOM meeting on July 9, 2006, the Sunday prior to the seminar.

MCA's MCQB Candidate Selection - Since MCA's member (Chris Scott, Chairman) is rotating off MCQB this fall, NFPA asked MCA to submit the names of potential replacement candidates for appointment. Consistent with policy established when NFPA allowed MCA an alternate, MCA is submitting the name of current alternate Ken Mercer to replace Chris, and held an election for recommended alternate. Robbie Walker of Marine Chemist Services, Inc., Newport News, VA, was elected recommended alternate in the recent runoff ballot, and will follow his dad's footsteps, Bob Walker, Jr., to service on MCQB, if confirmed by NFPA. Congratulations!

2006 Sectional Seminars - The Atlantic Section seminar was held Feb 11 at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS) Conference Center at Linthicum, MD, near Baltimore-Washington International Airport. This
The year's seminar covered several technical areas including discussions on who can work of a marine chemist's certificate, a review of some recent CHT accidents, a report from NFPA's Larry Russell on MCQB's CMC certificate audit, and Quality Assurance - ISO issues.

We were also very happy to have Joe Daddura, OSHA's maritime standards chief technical resource, give an excellent presentation concerning issues OSHA is working on, their approximate expected schedule, and stand in to answer questions from the attending chemists. With Joe was Bill Parsons, who works with Joe in the OSHA maritime office in DC.

Importantly, MCA was strongly encouraged by Marine Field Service Committee to stress the use of the electronic certificate-generating program, Chemcert, at this year's seminar programs. Chemcert, the electronic certificate writing program, is up and running. The program is being used successfully by thirteen chemists, the number is growing, and MFSAC wants more chemists to use it. During 2006 all attending chemists had the opportunity to see the program in action. Larry Russell, assisted by Guy Colonna at the MITAGS meeting, provided copies of the tutorial disc upon request. All chemists are encouraged give this new program a try, and expect to see ChemCert as a part of all future MCA Sectional Seminars.

This year's Atlantic seminar was held the day following a presentation by MITAGS' technical staff member, Chief Charles Snyder on LNG Technology, the first they've done for marine chemists since July, 1985. The course was arranged by Jeff Carr, CMC 664, as part of his pursuit of NFPA's special Flammable Cryogenic Liquid Carriers endorsement. The MCA Ex-Com was invited by Jeff to fill most of the empty seats in the course to audit, review and assess the applicability of the course.

The general impression of the ExCom members was that the course was excellent and provided the technical focus and details of FCL carriers in a manner superior to that which might be expected by a random visit to a functioning vessel.

The remaining two 2006 MCA Sectional Seminars were held over a single weekend: Gulf Section - Saturday, March 11 at the Houston Hobby Airport Hilton, and Pacific Section - Sunday, March 12 at the LAX Airport Hilton, Los Angeles

**New Chemists, Locations, & Passings**

The Marine Chemist Association would like to welcome four new marine chemists who were certified during the 2005 to present time frame. We look forward to meeting them at upcoming seminars and please give them a hardy welcome to the profession.

- James J. Bell CMC 699
- Jeffrey A. Zile CMC 700
- Robert P. Landry CMC 701
- Jack B. Rebstock CMC 702

Robert Landry and Jim Bell are working with John Bell, CMC 585 (no relation as far as anyone is telling) and Jim Bishop, CMC 639 at Marine Inspection Services in Channelview, TX. Jeff Zile continues with Larry Vella, CMC 471 at Galveston Laboratories in Galveston, TX, while Jack Rebstock has joined Lamar Labauve, CMC 576 Evans Rustad, CMC 641 and Jason Babin, CMC 684 at Delta Labs, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Welcome Aboard!**

Other chemists have moved. Paul Webster, CMC 675 has left the Gulf-coast and joined forces with Tom Beck, CMC 594 at Harbor Testing Laboratory, covering the Los Angeles area waterfront. (Tom Beck, incidentally, is recovering from knee surgery and some related complications but is expected to make a complete recovery. We all wish a speedy healing.) Robert Dean, CMC 687
has moved from Mississippi to Beaumont TX and joined forces with Ken Mercer, CMC 577 at Marine Chemists Inc. of Texas. Robert has also recently tied the knot and he and his new bride, Angelina, have settled into a home in Lumberton, TX. Congratulations!

Belated word came from Maryland that MCA life member John Berglund, CMC 330, passed away in October 2003, just eleven months after Don Smith's passing. John and his wife Gladys spent his last few years at the same Heron Point complex in Chestertown MD as Don and Evelyn Smith. Don and Evelyn were surprised to find the Berglunds there when they moved in, and they rekindled an old friendship in their final years.

**OSHA News** - As we all should know by now, 29 CFR 1915 Subpart P, “Fire Protection in Shipyard Employment” has been in effect for some time now, and shipyards must be compliant. OSHA has been working on two projects that will help shipyards adjust to and understand the new requirements. OSHA's E-Tool is an electronic training media that provides guidance and clarification (using illustrations) on each requirement in the standard. It also provides electronic links to other useful media such as sample fire safety plans, samples of fire watch training procedures and more. The Subpart P section is not done yet but is scheduled for completion later this year. It will be available on-line through the OSHA website. Now available is a section on FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for Subpart P that provides answers to what it feels may concern those trying to comply, such as: Is a firewatch always needed when an employee is performing hot work, such as welding or cutting?

The publishing of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for Subpart F, General Working conditions, has been delayed. The industry should see it by year's end. This standard includes all major sections in the current Subpart F and also will include the new marine-industry related lockout/tagout requirements. This will probably significantly affect how we approach our inspections and certifications. Stay tuned.

**NFPA 306** - NFPA has extended the revision cycle of 306 to get it back on track with its typical five-year review period. Now is the time to review 306 again and get your comments and observations to the Technical Committee members! The next revision will be 306-2008, meaning the standard is now in its public proposal period. That means you have until Nov 22, 2006 to submit proposed changes to the 306 committee. John Bell and Les Blaize, our long-time 306 representatives, urge that you, in addition to sending your proposals to NFPA, send to and discuss your proposed changes with them so they can help explain your request at seminars and committee meetings. Please e-mail, snail-mail or fax them a copy of your ideas and submittals. Their e-mail addresses are: lblaize@msn.com and jbellcmc585@aol.com

**MCQB Items** - In the spring of 2004 the MCQB requested that your Executive Committee review the current methods used to gas free and certify sewage tanks and systems. For nearly two years MCA researched and polled our members about the topic and identified - in agreement with what MCQB suspected - that there is a wide array of methods currently in use by chemists. What complicated any clear resolution to this issue is that, unlike atmospheric chemical hazards, there are neither real-time quantitative tests nor published safe limits for biological hazards. The MCA submitted a letter to the MCQB outlining a “proposed approach” to certifying sewage tanks and systems along with an explanation as to why we should not mandate a strict policy.

The guideline is not a requirement, nor is it enforceable. However, it provides a real-
istic approach for most circumstances dealing with sewage.

The Association thanks you all for your input into this project.

**ACGIH TLV's: Diesel Vapor v. Mist, and Oxygen** - ACGIH's 2006 TLV for diesel fuel remains at 100 mg/m$^3$ as applied to both the fuel mist and vapor. ACGIH has notified the MCA that a request to consider separate TLV's for diesel fuel's vapor and mist has been placed on the "under study" list. This means that they will continue to review submitted data associated with the established TLV. ACGIH has also informed us of a change to their process aimed at helping the public know of a chemical's status by providing a two-tier "prioritization system." First tier chemicals will move to a notice of intended change (NOIC) status while second tier chemicals will either remain on the "under study" list or, after a certain time period, be dropped from the list. Please note that the current TLV for diesel fuel remains in effect until their studies are complete, and since no one is monitoring what has been submitted to ACGIH regarding the support for separate TLVs' for diesel's vapor and mist, there is no knowledge as to whether this concept will move ahead to NOIC status or be dropped.

The 2006 edition of TLV's has included, for the first time, a discussion of "Minimal Oxygen Content as part of its notice of intended changes. (See page 65) Though not mentioned in the index (yet), it is a very informative proposed change and a certainly very useful addition for those of us obsessed with industrial hygiene and confined space work - check it out.

**By Laws Change ?** - The MCA is seeking a by-laws change to the definition of "Life Member". Life member privileges can be voted by the membership to retired marine chemists. This privilege exempts them from paying dues, yet allows them to keep their voting rights. It was intended to honor long-time member chemists, to give some financial relief to retired chemists, to hopefully encourage them to keep involved with MCA issues, and to encourage them to come to seminar social events after retirement.

The proposed by-laws change, which requires a vote of association membership, would require a chemist to be retired to be considered a "Life Member." However, this new arrangement would allow a chemist to be voted, as an honor, to membership as "Life Member/Pending" at any point in the chemist's career, once having met the other requirements of being a life member (i.e., 20 year's continuous membership).

"Life Member/Pending" status would mean the working chemist would have full dues responsibilities while having recognition from the Association for their contributions and long membership. As soon as the chemist officially retired his status would change from "Life Member/ Pending" to "Life Member". By the same token, if a retired Life-member marine chemist decided to come out of retirement, they would resort to Life-member/pending status while working. The proposed change would not affect any current Life Members, retired or not.

**Scholarship Fund** - The Marine Chemist Memorial Scholarship Fund is up and running. With the help of the MFSAC, who made a gracious and generous donation, we are in the position to provide a significant amount of financial help to the chosen candidate(s) as they start their college educations. Three applications were submitted by the April 15, 2006 deadline, and are currently under review for award. The scholarship awards are available to first year college students who are children or grandchildren of MCA member marine chemists who are heading for a career in the sciences.

**FCLC Class at MITAGS** - Thanks to the efforts of San Diego chemist, Jeff Carr, CMC 664, the Executive Committee got the chance to audit a training class on flamma-
ble cryogenic liquid carriers (FCLCs) at the MITAGS facility in Lithicum Heights, Maryland. The class was formatted for marine chemists and designed to meet the requirements for the special endorsement called for in the Rules for Certification and Recertification of Marine Chemists. The class was excellent and it was recommended to MCQB that they accept this class as an alternative to some of the current training requirements for obtaining the endorsement. The MCA recognized that as the number of FCLs increase, more chemists will need this endorsement. However it is extremely difficult to get open time and unfettered access on a FCL vessel due to security concerns. Since the visits that are available may be of limited access to the vessel (i.e., in the case of a USCG TVI-support inspection), the specific FCL course actually can be of a much more useful specific scope and use. A suggestion has been made to use the MITAGS course on a planned basis over the next decade or so to bring this opportunity to all chemists.

Again, a special thanks to Jeff Carr who on his own initiative made this opportunity possible.

Shipboard Asbestos Haunts the French - In a story reminiscent of what happened to the great cruise liner S/S UNITED STATES, The Boston Globe reported that the French government has been unable to scrap a vessel once the pride of their fleet, the aircraft carrier CLEMENCEAU. In 1997, after 40 years service, the 26,000 ton carrier was decommissioned and sent to the bone-yard: first to Spain, then Turkey. She was then to go to Greece, but was diverted to Sicily, and then to Toulon in 2004 to have the source of her problems addressed: asbestos. The French declared "all visible signs of asbestos" were removed from the vessel before leaving Toulon in December 2005, with perhaps 45 tons remaining "in the ship's hull". But Greenpeace an others claimed between 500 and 1000 tons of asbestos remained. After leaving Toulon, court battles kept her at sea, traveling nearly an additional 5,000 miles under tow to Egypt, through the Suez and into the Indian Ocean, with a planned final scrapping in Gujarat, India. On February 15, President Chirac ordered the vessel back to French waters after France's highest court suspended permission for the transfer. Chirac also called for a uniform European initiative for standards for shibbreaking. No final word on the fate of the iron of the "Clem".

Accidents - Hydrogen Sulfide and CHT Systems - Again! - Two recent accidents have reminded us again of how dangerous H2S remains to our industry.

On September 2, 2005 a report came in from Tom Beck, CMC 594 from the port of Los Angeles. Tom had been summoned to the cruise liner M/V MONARCH OF THE SEAS to help investigate a triple fatality. Three crew members and a tank watch in the vessel shaft alley were breaking into a 3.5" line that carried ground garbage from a galley area "machinator" to overboard discharge. The line had been flushed with clean water and isolated at both ends. Once breaking into a spool piece that showed some corrosion in the shaft alley, a few gallons of clean water dropped from the line (as expected) but then the three workers immediately collapsed. The tank watch summoned rescue and in a frantic attempt to get to the dying crew, ten people went to the hospital - including the ship's doctor and his three nurses. All would-be rescuers were revived but the original three maintenance crew were DOA. The evident source of the H2S turned out to be an uninspected adjacent space. The USCG is working on a report.

On December 1, 2005 word came from David Miller, CMC 663 that a subcontracted worker at Detyens Shipyards was killed by H2S under circumstances similar to
the Los Angeles accident above. Again, two workers were tasked to break into a sewage handling line in a space containing a CHT machinery. When, as a spool piece was unbolted and broken into, the space began to flood with sewage. The men fled from the space, but, tragically, once topside, they decided to reenter the space to retrieve their hard hats. The first man in collapsed face-first into the sewage, and his partner ran for help. Again, several would-be rescuers went to the hospital but were revived. An autopsy on the 18 year-old victim revealed that he was paralyzed so quickly, he did not drown - there was no water in his lungs.

On May 7, OSHA issued fines to Knight's Services Inc. ($20,350) and Detyens Shipyards ($4,250) relating to the fatality on board the USNS SUPPLY. The federal agency faulted Knight's for five serious violations and two lesser violations. OSHA citations claimed the employer did not ensure that each person in the sewage room was properly trained to exit the area, and that "pipelines were not disconnected," and measures weren't taken "to prevent discharge of hazardous substances" into the room.

Detyens was cited for two serious and one lesser violation. The serious violations related to not training employees to work in a confined space and for not following proper procedures for working in a confined space. (Thanks to both David Miller and Tom Littlepage for this information. Both these accidents were covered in some detail in the Sectional Seminars.)

Painting Accident - On February 1, 2006, a small Houston area shipyard was nearing completion of construction of a new dry dock. Workers were in the process of painting the ballast/flotation tanks with a MEK-based epoxy paint. The tanks were of a single hatch design and ventilation was evidently poor. The lighting was not intrinsically safe. Solvent vapors were apparently ignited by a worker exiting the compartment as he dropped a non-explosion proof light. The resulting flash-fire burned the exposed 20% of his body.

This tragic accident raises several questions:
- Where was the SCP?
- Did the yard even have a functioning SCP program?
- Where were the explosion proof-lights (required when using highly volatile paints and solvents)?
- Why wasn’t the tank ventilated so as to maintain it at less than 10% LEL?
- What type/level of respiratory protection was used, if any?

Human error determined to cause sinking of M/T BOW MARINER - Report Issued
The final report by the US Coast Guard on the explosion and sinking of the 1982-built, chemical/product tanker BOW MARINER on February 28 last year off Cape Hatteras, is grim reading and bears witness of human error and inadequate operational management.

At 18:05 local time on the 28th of February 2004, the 39,821 DWT BOW MARINER caught fire and exploded while the crew was cleaning out residual methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE). At 19:37 hours, the vessel sank. Of the 27 crew members on-board, six abandoned ship and were rescued by the US Coast Guard from a raft. An unknown number of crew members abandoned ship into the water. Of these, three were recovered, one dead. 18 crew members remain missing and are presumed dead.
The cause of this casualty, as established by the US Coast Guard, was the ignition of a fuel/air mixture, either on deck or in the cargo tanks, which were within flammable limits. What ignited the mixture has not been accurately established. The US Coast Guard Investigating Officer concluded that a contributing factor in the accident was the failure of the ship’s operator, Ceres Hellenic Enterprises Ltd, and the senior officers of the BOW MARINER to properly implement the company’s and vessel’s safety, quality and environmental protection management system (SQEMS).

These are pretty damning conclusions. The tank cleaning procedure for MTBE is quite detailed. On the 28th of February 2004, the BOW MARINER was engaged in a standard procedure for tank cleaning, or gas freeing. The master ordered the crew to open all the cargo tank hatches for empty tanks once the vessel was at sea. He did not explain these instructions, and the crew did not question the order. Since neither he nor the chief officer survived, his intentions could not be determined; however, it appears that he intended to ventilate all cargo tanks at once while cleaning the sumps of residual cargo, and then mechanically ventilate the cargo tanks.

The Greek master of the BOW MARINER, Efstratios S. Kavouras, perished after he had abandoned ship, not as the last person. Prior to the explosion, he gave the order to open the 22 cargo tanks that previously held MTBE. These contained flammable vapors, which accumulated on the deck. According to the US Coast Guard, he may have followed instructions, but the order was a "stunning breach of normal safe practices for a tanker and defies explanation or excuse. Opening tanks exposed the crew to toxic vapors, permitting flammable vapors that were heavier than air to accumulate on the deck". When the explosion took place, there was no proper response from the master. To sum up, the master and the Chief Engineer abandoned ship less than ten minutes after the first explosion. A Filipino third officer took charge and saved many lives.

**Loss of the M/T TRADEWIND SUNRISE and Thoughts on NFPA 306**

On 23 June 2005 four workers were killed following an explosion on a tanker undergoing minor repairs at anchorage off the port of Chaguaramas, Trinidad-Tabago. At approximately 14:45 workers initiating hot-work on the Panamanian-registered vessel caused the explosion that nearly blew the entire deck and side shell off its No. 2 port cargo tank.

The explosion threw those killed overboard. Their bodies were recovered among the debris.

Part of the situation leading to this disaster revolved around assumptions on the part of the agent contacted by the vessel to arrange repairs and the vessel master. The agent (possibly to cut middle-man costs) contacted the welders and mechanical contractors directly, and they were therefore working without their usual supervisory oversight.
Repairs were to concentrate on the machinery space, but due to scheduling problems, began with some repair to the centerline catwalk over the deck in the area of No. 2 cargo tank. It’s been stated that the workers asked for a hot work permit from the agent, who in turn asked the vessel master for one. The master responded that the last cargo was no.2 fuel oil, and the agent evidently thought that precluded the extra work and potential aggravation of getting it checked. (Trinidad-Tobago has a resident non-NFPA port chemist.) The explosion occurred almost immediately after a worker lit a burning torch while standing on the deck and not far from a butterworth opening.

In the reports, no one had determined where the flammable vapors came from, but the ship had been moved in and out of dry-dock in the port over several weeks, and it's assumed that gasoline or similar product residues still present in pipelines had been released between its last cargo offloading and the accident.

In the aftermath of the explosion, one newspaper quoted the owner of the crew placement agency with the following statement:

“It’s quite sobering to see the damage that this explosion caused to the ship’s hull, and it proves that we should all pay the extra cost for chemists to issue gas-free certificates... It's just not worth losing your life over a few extra dollars.” (MCA should have t-shirts made up with this statement silk-screened on it.)

With the open-comment period for NFPA 306 upon us, it's worth reflecting on this accident and controversy that emerged from the last Marine Field Service/MCQB certificate review.

Several chemists were notified that certificates were technically deficient in the area of "Adjacent spaces not documented". There has been stated confusion on just when certain certificates must include statements about adjacent spaces, specifically in relation to §4.3.4 (4), "SAFE FOR HOT WORK":

"All adjacent spaces, containing or having contained flammable or combustible materials, are sufficiently cleaned of residues, scale, or preservative coatings to prevent the spread of fire; or are inerted; or, in the case of the ship’s fuel tanks, lube tanks, or engine room or fire room bilges, or other machinery spaces, are treated in accordance with the Marine Chemist’s requirements."

The above direction, as it relates to "Ship’s fuel tanks, lube tanks, or engine room or fire room bilges, or other machinery spaces, are treated in accordance with the Marine Chemist’s requirements" is also on the face of our certificates.

There has been no stated disagreement about cargo tanks on tank vessels, but what about engineering spaces and vessel fuel tanks? What about kingposts and stanchions? Things suspended over the deck? Must we mention adjacent spaces when writing a certificate to allow heating of anchor chain links suspended above the main deck and the raised forecastle - the nearest adjacent space?

When can a chemist be "certain" that such adjacent - or even nearby - spaces do not contain or have not contained combustible materials, and are "sufficiently cleaned of residues, scale, or preservative coatings to prevent the spread of fire" - without internal inspections? When writing certificates for engineering spaces and deck work, are we required to open all adjacent spaces - including fuel and lube oil tanks? (This has been discussed at length at recent sectional seminars.)

So, as one commenting chemist asked, "when does the adjacent space documentation apply and when does it not apply?" How precisely should we handle these non-cargo tank certificates? With the surprises that adjacent spaces can indeed harbor, perhaps you have recommended language for
the next version of NFPA 306 that will clarify this.

Marine Field Service Newsletters
The Marine Field Service Newsletters for spring/summer and fall/winter have been issued by NFPA. They contain good information that will help you stay current with NFPA activities as they relate to the maritime industry. You can view the newsletter by going to www.nfpa.org, click on the learning tab, the professional development tab, the marine chemist tab and the newsletter icon.

Why Men in Maine Tend Not to Argue With Their Wives - or, "Yes, she showed me up again!"

Janet Grondin showed the guys up again by harvesting this 196 pound 8 point buck last fall. It was scored, and, on April 22, 2006, Janet made it into the State of Maine record books on the basis of this deer’s antler size. The beam is 27 5/8”, which is unusually large for a Maine deer. The story is that Janet, on a break from hunting with Greg along the shores of a Maine lake, was looking for red berries for a Christmas wreath when she spotted this trophy. Thanks and best wishes to Greg and Janet.

Directory Review Request - The 2006 MCA Directory will include, as always, a list of all known chemists by number. Unfortunately the records of 39 chemists were lost by ABS at some point, and we’ve lost the names of these men. Their numbers are simply listed as "(unknown)".

This issue will begin noting those chemists designated as Life Members (LM). Unfortunately, our records also appear incomplete. When reviewing the list, if you discover any missed chemists or known life-members (or other errors), please contact the secretary with your corrections. Many thanks.

MCA Executive Committee Summary
(This is a summary of the meeting held Sunday, February 12, held at MITGAS-Conference Center after the Atlantic Section Sectional Seminar. Recent ExCom meeting reports will be included in the newsletters as applicable.)

John Bell, MCA Chairman, presiding, and all representatives and officers present; Jim Chandler, Dave Bennett (Atlantic Section), Alan Bonds, Scott Godfrey (Gulf-Inland), Brad Holman, and Craig Trettevik (Pacific), and officers Past-chair Greg Grondin, Chairman-elect Don Sly, Secretary-treasurer Ed Willwerth and Assistant Secretary Les Blaize, with NFPA’s Larry Russell, Marine Field Service.

Past-meeting minutes were reviewed (and approved), as were reports from nine committees:

• NFPA - (Larry Russell): NFPA 306-2003 is officially in its “revision cycle”: everyone has until Nov. 22 this year to consider and submit suggestions. Recommendations can be sent online or by snail-mail using the
form on the last page in the standard. The 306 Committee will meet early next year to consider proposals submitted by the Nov 22 deadline. The new NFPA Marine Chemist Directory is being mailed out, and Larry’s survey of our June ’05 certificates indicates improvement over 2004, but also shows continued problems, especially with “Safe for Limited Hot Work” and “Adjacent Spaces” issues.

• Marine Chemist Qualification Board - Larry reported a chemist’s certificate was revoked after discovery that he had falsified his application documentation. He may re-apply in a year’s time. MCQB changes: after two terms, Terry Guidry has cycled off to be replaced by Alan Rainsberger of Todd Shipyard, and USN’s Stanley Joffell, CIH, will replace USN’s CRD Jonathan Nelson. Both voting chemists (Chris Scott and Kimble Lehman) rotate off the MCQB this year. The NFPA will appoint replacements, with the MCA submitting a recommended choice for the seated member (current alternate, Ken Mercer), and voting for a new alternate. In three 2005 meetings, MQCB reviewed 21 incidents, of which 17 were fires. Chemists were not directly involved. MQCB suggested that NFPA revoke the certification of any Chemist more than half-year late on his sur-charge fees. No action decided yet...

• Marine Gas Hazards Program and Marine Field Service Advisory Committee - (Larry Russell, Don Sly and John Bell) MFSAC and MGHCP approved MCA’s 2006 at NYC meeting, January 5. MFSAC chairman Lamar Labauve expressed disappointed and concern that few Chemists use ChemCert for generating certificates, and strongly encouraged MCA to emphasize ChemCert at spring seminars; MFSAC seems in favor of making it mandatory for all Chemists, beginning with trainees.

• NFPA 306 Committee - MCA will continue its support of our participating members in upcoming 306 Committee meetings: John Bell, Les Blaize, (members), Ed Willwerth and Frank Monaghan (alternates).

• Education Committee - (Don Sly & John Bell) The Atlantic Sectional Seminar, held the day previous, seemed a success. Some adjustments and additions were discussed for the remaining two seminars (Gulf-Inland, Saturday, March 11, Houston-Hobby, and Pacific, Sunday, March 12, Los Angeles/LAX.)

• Insurance MC Fund Report - (Ed) The MC Fund (not associated with MCA) has continually improved its financial condition since the MCF transferred carriers from Lloyds to experienced European maritime insurer, ITIC. The Fund has almost re-attained its $250,000 target reserves. (Contact Fund representatives with questions: Chairman Gerry Bernardo, Ken Mercer (Gulf-Inland) Ed Willwerth, Tony Matthews, (Atlantic), Don Sly, and George Blair, (Pacific) or Secretary Tagay Kang.)

• MCA Bylaws and ExCom Policies & Procedures - (All) Resolution of the question surrounding the honor of Life Membership and the financial support responsibilities of the Association and profession were discussed. Life Membership is awarded to long-time MCA members in accord with MCA Bylaws and Executive Committee Policies & Procedures. The basis of the honor is not really defined, with past MCA chairmen recalling differing models of the basis for its award. Some held that, in addition to 20 years or more continuous membership, it was reserved for members of proven significant contribution to MCA. Others felt it should be granted only on the basis of the continuous long-membership and an expressed desire to remain in contact with the profession and friends after retirement and at a period where they were likely to be on fixed or limited income. The later/more-inclusive guidelines were favored by the Executive Committee during the debate. The issue rose when retired Life-members decided, happily, to go back to work, and others deserving Life-member election were found to have retained their MC Certificates. These members could, in effect, attend all seminars (needed to retain certification and employment) without cost, and be excused from dues as well. In addition, since nearly 50% of chemists currently have twenty years or more continuous membership, they could, while working, move for life membership as a valuable (and unintended) benefit - shifting the burden of maintaining the MCA’s
cost structure exclusively to its younger members.

It was resolved that, should a chemist of long service be considered for Life membership before being retired, upon being voted as Life Member, they would be considered "Life Member /Pending" until submitting their Certificate to NFPA. With this designation, a nearly-retired chemist submitted for Life Membership could be so honored, and become a Life Member upon full retirement. Also, should a retired Life member move to reactivate their NFPA Certificate, their status as Life Member shall be changed to, "Life Member /Pending" for the period they remain working. In choosing to emerge from retirement, their honorific status would remain as they re-assumed the financial responsibilities to their profession and Association. In accord with MCA By-laws, this proposed change will be submitted to the membership by ballot for adoption or rejection.

- Ethics Committee - (Greg Grondin & Ed Willwerth) Concerning MCA election (candidates: Walker, Willwerth, and Grondin) for recommended alternate replacement for Ken Mercer (who will hopefully be moved up to full voting membership on MCQB by NFPA), two controversies arose during this election: First, the NFPA council opined that one candidate, Willwerth, had a potential for a perceived conflict of interest since he is paid for secretarial services by the Association. This position was considered, debated, and rejected by the candidate and the Executive Committee. The second problem was that two candidates tied, requiring a run-off election. The NFPA can, however, ignore the MCA's stated preference, but the position on MCQB will nevertheless be as "Representing Marine Chemist Association".

- Secretary's Report - (Ed) ExCom reviewed and accepted our CPA's Audit for 2004, the MCA budget and finances, and a profit-loss statement. The association continues in sound financial condition. Several applications are expected for our freshman scholarship program. This year the MCA should award a very generous benefit - there were no applicants last year.

Old Business

- Flammable Cryogenic Liquids Carrier Endorsement - Member Jeff Carr (San Diego) arranged a course designed to, hopefully, qualify a Marine Chemist for an endorsement to inspect tanks ships hauling LNG and similar products. It has been many years since such a course was offered, and Jeff foresaw the need for a new one, as industry is gearing up to increase the import of LNG, LPG and other cryogenic fuels. Larry Russell from NFPA audited the course to see if it fulfilled the requirements for the cryogenic endorsement. Larry’s opinion was that it did, and details will be published if/when the course can be repeated. The EXCOM voted (7-2) to reimburse Jeff for that portion of his expenses benefiting the ExCom’s audit.

- MCA’s 2006 Annual Seminar, St. Pete Beach, FL: 10-12 July, 2006, Grande Plaza Hotel: Details of planned presentations and social activities will be on website as they are firmed-up. Presentation possibilities: Static & Stray Electricity: Hydrogen & Carbon Monoxide False Positives, Changes to NFPA-306; Mobile Chemical Processing Vessels; Texas City Explosion Report, Cruise Ship Safety Issues, M/V MONARCH OF THE SEAS

New Business

First Sectional Seminar - presentation and topics were reviewed and discussed

ChemCert status - Larry reviewed that computer-generated system developed with significant MGHCP investment remains a concern by MFSAC & MGHCP as underutilized.

OSHA’s Marine Alliance Maritime Committee - Ed Willwerth has been appointed by American Industrial Hygiene Association as their representative to OSHA’s Marine Alliance Maritime Committee. Committee is considering Safety Alert for H2S/CHT system work for the OSHA website.

Complaints were expressed that officers and secretaries were not ensuring communication and education among members and keeping up our public contacts, i.e., that newsletters and the website had been neglected. Those present generally agreed and resolved to do a better job of delegating to pursue assigned
duties with more focus. A representative also noted that women and minorities are less represented in the MC profession than their numbers in the industry indicate. They requested that the membership be made aware of the issue.

Thanks were given to Brad Holman and Alan Bonds (terms expiring). At Brad's suggestion, ExCom moved to more formally orient new members with duties and responsibilities at the outset of their term.

Next meeting: Sunday, July 9, 2006, St. Pete Beach, Florida, Grande Plaza/Holiday Inn.

Meeting adjourned, 15:00

Retired People - Working people frequently ask those retired what they do to make their days interesting. I recently asked my father-in-law, now 80.

"Well, for example, the other day I went into town to a small shop down on Elm St. I was only in there for about 10 minutes.

"When I came out, there was a cop writing out a parking ticket. I went up to him and said, "Come on buddy, how about giving a senior citizen a break?"

"He looked up, then ignored me and continued writing the ticket. I called him a heartless Nazi bastard. He glared at me and then started writing another ticket for worn tires.

"So I called him a piece of stinking dog crap. He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. I called him a jerk and a pig. Then he started writing a third ticket. Then I insulted his mother.

"This went on for about 20 minutes. The more I verbally abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

"Personally, I didn't give a damn. I got there by bus - can't afford gas or a car. But I try to have a little fun each day now that I'm retired. It's important at my age."