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CACC honors Lisa Himer: A legacy of leadership and dedication in maritime commerce

By: Kathryn Bradley, Executive Director
Seamen's Center of Wilmington



As Lisa Himer prepares to retire at the end of 2024 after more than three decades of dedicated service, the maritime community reflects on her profound impact as president of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay. Recognized for her unwavering commitment to promoting and protecting the region's maritime commerce, Lisa's tenure has left an indelible mark on both the local industry and the critical trade relationship between the United States and Chile.

This year, Lisa is being honored with the Albert S. Marulli "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the Chilean and American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia. This accolade underscores her significant contributions to enhancing the Chile-U.S. trade relationship, an endeavor that aligns seamlessly with the Chamber's mission of fostering diplomatic, investment, and commercial ties between Chile and the Greater Philadelphia region. Under her stewardship, the Maritime Exchange has not only championed trade but has also created a robust network of collaboration among all local stakeholders. The Chamber will officially honor Lisa on November 22, 2024, at the Union League in Philadelphia at the "Friend of Chile" awards luncheon.

Since its inception 27 years ago, the "Friend of Chile" awards luncheon is recognized as one of the most anticipated events on the maritime and

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Maritime Exchange board names George McCarthy to succeed Lisa Himer as President

The Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay is pleased to announce that George McCarthy (USN, ret.) will assume the president's position after Lisa Himer retires on December 31, 2024. Himer is stepping down after 36 years with the organization.

McCarthy joined the crew October 1, 2024 to begin a three-month orientation and transition period.

"I am extremely pleased that George McCarthy has been selected to become president of the Maritime Exchange effective January 1, 2025. George brings a vast amount of knowledge to the Exchange from his commercial and military background. I look forward to working with him," said Exchange Board Chairman John Reynolds.

McCarthy is a third-generation merchant mariner and naval officer with extensive ship, tug, and barge operations experience handling petroleum, bulk, containerized cargo, and vehicles. He also has diverse port knowledge from his interactions with the various U.S. Gulf ports as well as



his various organizational interactions with maritime committees, spill response groups, Customs, and USDA. His skillset also includes interactions with numerous national agency committees, such as the Coast Guard National Safety Council and others with a focus on establishing maritime information exchange policies between industry and government. His participation included testimony/presentation to the National Security Council's sub-committee for Maritime Domain Awareness and to the International

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Exchange kicks off project to ease permitting woes

GIS-based interface development already underway

A project that started as a noble concept in 2018 finally moved from the drawing board to implementation this summer. The federally funded Delaware River and Estuary Ecosystem Data Gathering Initiative, or DGI for short, is now officially underway.

Members of the Exchange's Private Berth Dredge Committee, the group responsible for the original concept, celebrated the achievement and the official start of the DGI during a two-day workshop on October 10-11, 2024. The goal is to streamline permitting for wa-

terfront construction and dredging projects

"The permitting process is currently an onerous one that often involves multiple environmental studies, narrow windows for construction and dredging due to environmental restrictions, and federal and state approvals," said Exchange President Lisa Himer. "The Data Gathering Initiative is the brainchild of Exchange members to develop a centralized repository containing vetted scientific, environmental, and industry data that can reduce efforts to apply for and approve development projects on the river."

During the workshop, industry stakeholders, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, facility owners, and contractors had a chance to review progress underway on system architecture that involves developing a library to store the collected data and a geospatial map-based inter-

face to search and access the information. The Exchange is using its existing Automatic Identification System platform, which provides real-time vessel positions in Maritime On-Line, as the foundation for the geospatial interface.

"A large amount of information has been generated on the status of natural resources and is available in multiple locations," said senior project scientist at Mott MacDonald Jane Rowan. Mott MacDonald is the prime contractor developing the system. "In the tristate area this detailed biological, chemical, and physical information about the estuary is mostly organized according to state or agency. The Delaware River estuary will finally be treated like the valuable, multi-use, cohesive ecological system it is by providing one place for geolocated information sources."

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In My Wheelhouse**Wishing you a fond farewell**

Special thanks are also due to the advertisers who have allowed us to produce this quality publication for so many years. Your support has been invaluable—and we are grateful for your consistent commitment to the Exchange and its message.

We also appreciate the contributions of Exchange members who have submitted articles about issues of interest to our community. A shout out to all the attorneys who have kept us apprised of the changing legal landscape. While there have been so many over the years, I have to mention Exchange board members Bob Degen, Gene Mattioni, Lisa Reeves, and John Donohue until his retirement, who have written time and again on key maritime matters of importance as they evolve.

So here is my final reminder and invitation: the Exchange wants to highlight the achievements of its members. Please take us up on the offer to contribute your news so we can share it with the maritime community here and across the country.

But mostly I am grateful to you, our loyal readers. Your comments on individual articles or even entire issues have always been greatly appreciated. Developing each issue of this newsletter requires a lot of time and energy from a lot of people, and your taking time to let us know you enjoy our content makes it all worthwhile.

So here it is. My last column for *The Beacon*. When I first assumed responsibility for contributing to and editing this newsletter in the early 1990s, this moment was nowhere near my consciousness. Not even over the last few years as I contemplated my retirement, or even the last few months after I announced it, was I thinking about how bittersweet signing off would be.

The Beacon has been the signature communication vehicle for the Maritime Exchange for 34 years. It has been a true team effort, with many members of the staff contributing content, graphics, and their design and layout skills to ensure that issue after issue the Exchange provides a superior product for members, elected and appointed officials, the media, and so many other maritime industry recipients. To our team, I send my sincere thanks.

Thank you all for a wonderful 34 years of *The Beacon*! It has been a true pleasure to bring you this newsletter, and I will sorely miss this most rewarding part of my job at the Maritime Exchange.

Fair winds to all

As I prepare for my final departure from the Exchange at the end of the year, it's with more than a little sadness that I think about the thousands of people whose paths have crossed mine since I first started in 1988. I have treasured all those collaborations, working relationships, friendships, and even disagreements. I've often said that even though I work at a small shop, I have hundreds of co-workers. Having the opportunity to celebrate our successes and commiserate over failures together, to build decades-long partnerships, and to plug on every day toward a common goal goes well beyond reporting for work each day and doing a job. It is what has made working at the Exchange so gratifying for so many years. I wouldn't have had it any other way.

Please accept my best wishes for fair winds and following seas.

You know who you are.

Lisa Humber



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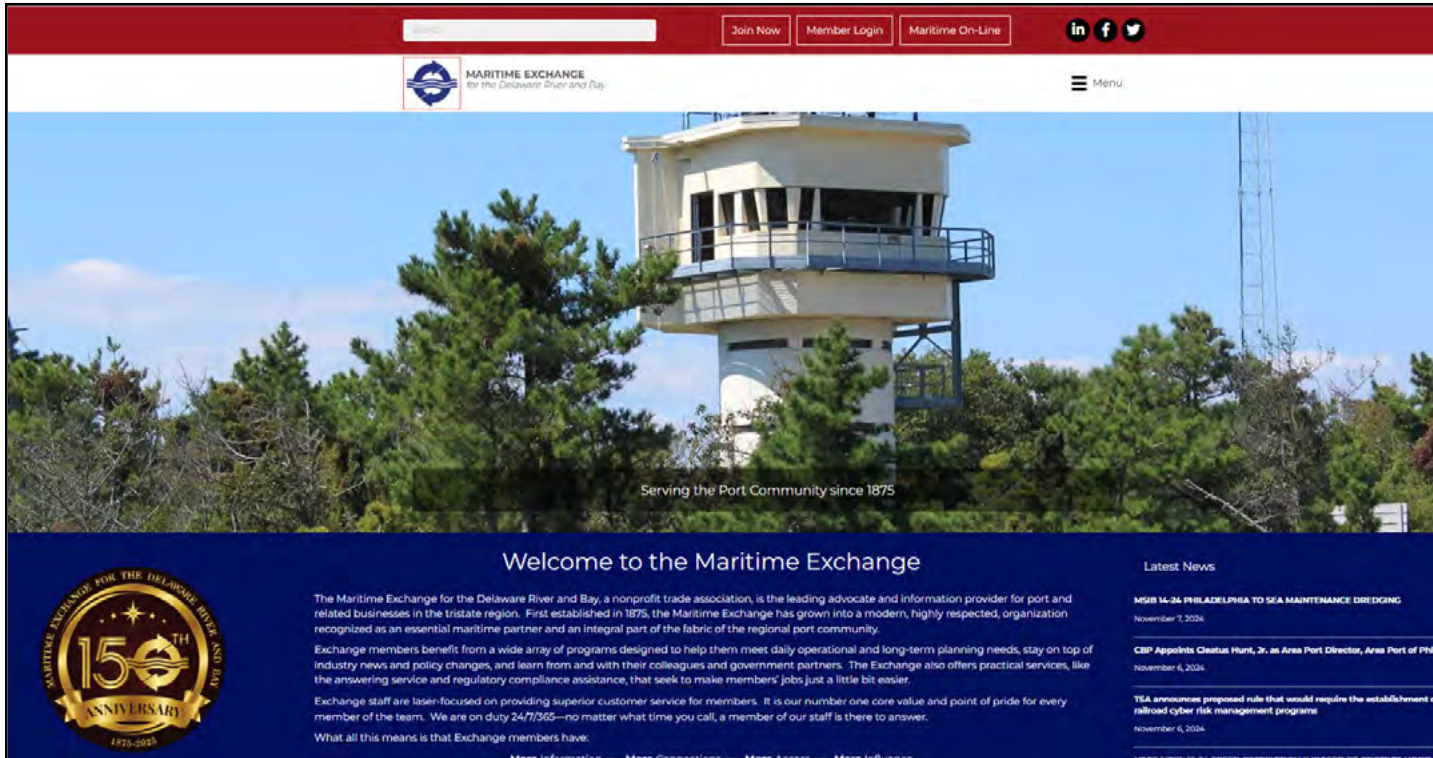
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Exchange website gets a facelift

New tools integrated to enhance the membership experience



Visitors to the Maritime Exchange website, www.maritimedelriv.com, were in for a treat on September 30, 2024, when the organization rolled out the latest iteration of its web portal.

The Exchange public website has undergone several revisions over the years since its first launch in the late 1990s. Back then, websites often contained only static content. Today, sites are developed on platforms designed for access by virtually anyone, do not require programming experience, and are much more dynamic.

As a trade association with a demand to post frequent, industry-specific updates and a need to engage members and provide secure content, the Exchange focused on identifying

a platform that would meet these requirements.

“The new and improved site contains much of the information in the previous version and now allows more Exchange staff to contribute,” said Exchange Chief Administrative Officer Michael Fink. “We paid particular attention to reorganizing the web presence to not only make it more visually appealing but also make information more accessible and incorporate new functionality.”

That new functionality includes a secure portal that provides access to membership renewal and payment options with direct access for individuals to update their own contact details. It also provides tools for members to sub-

mit events for inclusion in the community calendar and to post job openings.

Participants in Exchange committees, such as the Maritime Operations, Chilean Fruit Working Group, Private Berth Dredge, and Government Affairs committees, now have access to meeting minutes, presentations, and other resources in a permanent library. The centralized web repository provides quick access to past documents and an alternative to those participants who cannot or choose not to open email attachments. The interface also makes it easy to join Exchange committees and manage email preferences.

“The secure portal is going to open a lot of possibilities to expand services to members,” said Exchange Administrative Coordinator Yair Farkas, the or-



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Exchange facilitates communication during strike

Since first opening its doors in 1875, the Maritime Exchange has been in the information business.

So when the world looked on at the possibility of a two-coast longshore labor strike in the days leading up to the expiration of the ILA contract on September 30, 2024, the Delaware River port community turned to the Exchange.

“In keeping with our long tradition of bringing members together—whether it’s to discuss daily operations or deal with a crisis—that’s just what we did,” said Exchange President Lisa Hember. “The last week of September was filled with uncertainty throughout the supply chain, and our goal was to bring all the partners to the table to raise questions and concerns and provide information where possible.”


Starting on September 27, 2024 and through the following week, the Maritime Exchange coordinated a series of virtual meetings with the entire membership and government officials invited.

“Our customers were looking for updates to help inform their arrival decisions, and through the Exchange we were able to communicate with other port stakeholders and gain an understanding of planned port operations,” said Norton Lily Port Manager Michael Cureton. “Our biggest concern was the availability of deep-draft anchorage space for ships waiting while terminals were shuttered. We very much appreciate that the Exchange was able to quickly pull together these meetings.”

Many stakeholders beyond the shipping lines, their agents, and terminal operators would be af-

ected by the strike and were interested in hearing from port partners. Beyond port businesses, the Maritime Administration, Customs & Border Protection, and the Coast Guard, among other government agencies, recognized the importance of regular and open conversations in the days up leading to and during the strike. “The Coast Guard’s priority was to manage the potential impact of a strike, such as crowded anchorages or offshore congestion. Our focus was solely on maintaining safe navigation, protecting the marine environment, and maintaining marine terminal security. It was important to me that it was clear that the Coast Guard was an honest broker—with no official position on the labor negotiations. The Exchange played a valuable role as the conveyer for port partner meetings with the stakeholders across the port. I appreciate their leadership during a time of uncertainty,” said CAPT Kate Higgins-Bloom, Captain of the Port for Sector Delaware Bay.

When the strike was suspended after only three days, the collective global sigh of relief was almost audible, despite the fact that the ILA and U.S. Maritime Alliance left open issues on the table to settle before a January 15, 2025 deadline. “Though maritime transportation stakeholders are optimistic that the ILA and USMX will reach agreement before the deadline, the Maritime Exchange stands ready to step up whenever needed to facilitate communications within the Delaware River port business community,” Hember said.

It’s a bird! It’s a plane! It’s Dave from Accounting! 

Unsung Hero nominations now being accepted

Every industry is made up of people, and when those people work dilligently to make things run as well as possible, it makes them heroes in one way or another. And heroes deserve to have their stories told.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for the hard work put into serving clients, customers, or co-workers, day after day, year after year? Someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty to make some part of the Delaware River port community work in a way it just could not do without them? Someone who even one time went so far and above the call of ordinary duty to solve an unforeseen problem?

Now is the time to put a spotlight on these exemplary employees, these courageous colleagues, by nominating them for recognition as Unsung Heroes.

Each year, the Maritime Exchange opens nominations for members to introduce the people they know are VIPs to the entire port community. Check out some of the profiles from this year on page 9.

Please email your nominees’ first and last names, job titles, and company names (up to three nominees per company) to hero@maritimedelriv.com.

Remember, Unsung Hero nominees must be Maritime Exchange members and be nominated by Exchange members. And past recipients of other industry awards are not eligible. Those are the only rules. Candidates will be featured in *The Beacon* throughout the upcoming year.

All submissions for this cycle are due by December 31, 2024. Don’t miss this chance to honor an extraordinary member of the Maritime Exchange community!

Government Affairs Committee goes on the road



The Exchange firmly believes seeing operations in person is one of the best ways to learn about our port, and members of the Government Affairs Committee agree. Following the committee's September 5, 2024 quarterly meeting, (l-r) Exchange Chief Administrative Officer Michael Fink, PhilaPort Director of Government & Public Affairs Ryan Mulvey, South Jersey Port Corporation Chief of Staff & External Affairs and Chair of the Committee Jonathan Atwood, PSA Penn Terminals Chief Commercial Officer Michell Meyer, Repauno Port and Rail Terminal Government Relations & Public Affairs Specialist Cadie DiGiambattista, GEODIS Vice President Trade Services Ed Fitzgerald, and Exchange Administrative Coordinator Yair Farkas toured the Repauno facility in Gibbstown, N.J. Many thanks to Ms. DiGiambattista for giving the committee members a first-hand look at current Repauno operations and a glimpse into future expansion endeavors.

Exchange continues MOL enhancements

When it comes to updating Maritime On-Line,[®] the Exchange team is always on the march.

The Exchange updates Maritime On-Line to meet three important goals: to introduce new features requested by participants, to remain compliant with new and changing regulations, and to update technology to the latest offering.

In the last issue of *The Beacon*, readers learned about the most recent enhancements, including updating report functionality and system controls. Now, the Exchange is beginning additional upgrades to MOL to improve the user experience.

Currently underway and expected to be completed by the end of 2024 is a re-write of the back-end code responsible for updating data within the TRACS module. While not user facing, the project brings some of the code up to the latest standards and improves reliability for users.

"Yet most MOL enhancements have been user driven since the system's inception," said Maritime Exchange Director of Operations Paul Myhre, "and we continually solicit suggestions from participants for ideas designed to improve the way users interact with the system and execute them as funding becomes available."

Starting in December, Exchange staff will work on a series of enhancements more directly apparent to users through the interface.

The first will update the TRACS bill of lading status screen to modify CBP notification processing and posting—a change that will help users more easily determine the current status of their bills of lading. Other TRACS changes include adding more validation logic to the in-bond screen and implementing safeguards to help prevent duplicate manifest transmissions to CBP.

Overall system changes include implementing site-wide warnings to mitigate data loss as users navigate between screens and updating system announcement functionality to improve readability. Last on the current list are projects to update Ship Reporting with voyage copy functionality and improve multi-cargo record processing within voyage records.


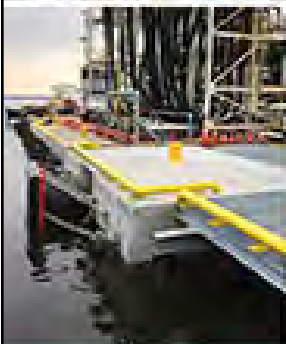
"The Exchange is always working towards a better experience for users," said Luis Andrade, president of Sandpiper International S/S Agencies, Inc., "and the staff and service are second to none."

The Maritime Exchange is proud to continue its long tradition of service, superior customer support, and innovative technology. As always, the Exchange welcomes suggestions from system participants about potential future enhancements.

Contact Paul Myhre at pmyhre@maritimedelriv.com to see what Maritime On-Line can do for you.

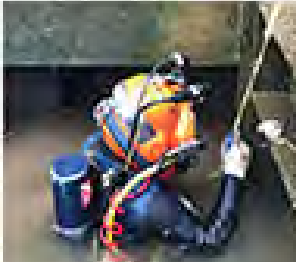
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Maritime Operations Committee: Where industry and government come together

“The Delaware River and Bay.” Five words that are said aloud on a daily basis by so many who devote their careers to it. But why this river? What makes it so special compared to the rest?

In a word, teamwork. Delaware River port partners are known throughout the country for the collaborative approach displayed by each individual who has left a mark here. Multiple generations have helped shape this river into a success for regional international trade. With challenges along the way and a willingness to change, it takes a stalwart group of people to thrive.

The Maritime Exchange, here to promote and protect Delaware River commerce, keeps both to this mission and to the spirit of collaboration that has characterized this port with a committee that has been around for over a quarter of a century: the Maritime Operations Committee.

Like many aspects of life, the port offers numerous challenges, and community members must adapt to remain competitive. “To accomplish committee goals, a dedicated group of professionals is needed, and that’s who make up the Maritime Operations Committee,” said Laura Miller, MOL Account Manager at the Maritime Exchange. Miller recently assumed responsibility as committee coordinator.

The Maritime Operations Committee brings those who operate within the region into the same room to address local, state, and federal issues, to raise concerns, and even to acknowledge others’ accomplishments. It allows ship agents, brokers, terminal operators, and other maritime-related businesses to meet with government agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers, Coast Guard, Customs and Border Protection, and the Department of Agriculture. Members leave their competitive spirit at the door when they walk

into the conference room (or log on to the Teams meeting).

Countless jobs and different roles—all designed to move ships and cargoes quickly, safely, and efficiently—are in evidence from Lewes, Delaware upriver to Trenton, New Jersey. Despite the differences between various industry sectors on the river, Maritime Operations Committee members act as one to meet the region’s goals and leave things a little better for future generations. Working alongside one another, nobody is a stranger on the committee. And all recognize that, like a domino effect, if one falls, the rest are sure to follow. So committee members take pride in communicating with and supporting one another.

In a world where so much is done over a computer or phone, these meetings are a chance for committee members to be seen and heard, which often leads to direct action. The Maritime Operations Committee has been a starting point for much positive change over the years, working to address matters such as federal user fees, dunnage processing, guard requirements, and fumigation. All issues affecting Delaware River ship, cargo, and crew operations are up for discussion. No topic is too big or too small for the committee to address.

“The Exchange’s Maritime Operations Committee has been an invaluable tool throughout the years for our community to come together,” said Kevin Chambliss, vessel agent at Host Agency. “It is a great way to promote change.”

All Maritime Exchange members are welcome to join. The committee meets semi-annually or as needed, depending on urgent matters. For those who have yet to join, it is an effective way to build new relationships, learn about other roles on the river, and stay informed about our port.

Contact Laura Miller at lmiller@maritimedelriv.com to learn more.

New Port Director reporting for duty

The Delaware River maritime business community is excited to welcome Cleatus P. Hunt, Jr. to the region as the new area port director. The port has been operating under a series of rotating acting directors since April 2023.

Hunt most recently served as U.S. Customs and Border Protection regional attaché in Japan, where he had responsibility for Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. He has over 30 years of federal law enforcement experience and has held multiple leadership positions within CBP. Prior to serving as the attaché, Hunt was the acting port director for the port of Newark/New York area. From 2014 to 2019, he was the area port director in Dallas, Texas and oversaw approximately 300 CBP personnel, the importation of \$59 billion worth of cargo, the collection of \$600 million in revenue, and the processing of 4.1 million passengers annually. Hunt also served as the area port director in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and as the acting director for preclearance expansion.

He also spent time at CBP headquarters where he managed numerous programs and initiatives such



as the National Security Entry Exit Registration System and the expansion of the Arrest Authority Program.

Hunt began his federal government career in 1992 with the former U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, is a graduate of the Department of Homeland Security Fellows Program, an alumnus of the Customs and Border Protection Leadership Institute, and the Senior Management Institute for Police.

Please join the Exchange in extending a very warm “welcome aboard” and best wishes to Mr. Hunt as he starts his tour here.



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Export pilot continues: Will you be ready when it ends?

Transition from pilot phase to live operations expected to cause chaos for late adopters

In keeping with its tradition of providing the widest variety of automated services as early as possible, the Maritime Exchange first offered data filers the opportunity to be part of the CBP export manifest pilot in 2021. Since the initial filing, the Exchange's TRACS cargo manifesting system has processed almost 64,000 export bills of lading as part of the pilot program.

"This is a figure to be proud of," said Maritime Exchange Chief Administrative Officer and IT Director Michael Fink, "But at only a small fraction of export activity, it is not nearly enough."

CBP continues to seek participants to file export manifest data electronically through the pilot. The Exchange encourages users to get on board, as participating during a pilot phase allows them to help shape system development.

CBP has yet to provide a definite date when electronic export manifest data submission will become mandatory. But once the rulemaking clears the Office of Management and Budget, it is coming.

Customs had planned to discontinue export data transmissions through the Document Imaging System, forcing participation in

the electronic pilot; however, the agency reversed that decision and extended the deadline.

"One thing CBP can't stress enough is that when the notice of proposed rulemaking is released, submitting export manifests through the Document Imaging System will come to an end," Fink said. "And it's the same point we are making to Maritime On-Line participants. When it comes, the deadline will hit fast, and those who aren't ready are going to have a real problem."

The Exchange team remembers all too well the scramble that followed the 2004 mandate to automate import cargo manifests, with carriers rushing to find providers, program systems, and alter business processes at the 11th hour.

With TRACS certified for interaction with CBP's Electronic Export Manifest system, users can comply with upcoming mandates using a single portal to file import manifests, export manifests, importer security filings, and stow plans, connecting directly to the CBP Automated Commercial Environment.

The bottom line: filers need to get onboard early. This allows

them to streamline business processes and learn the system without pressure and stress, rather than waiting until the last minute when it is a requirement. "We continue to try to convince the carriers we represent to join the pilot program as well as adding more to our list," said Tom Sullivan, senior vice president at Moran Shipping Agencies, Inc. "Carriers must understand the benefits of joining the pilot and not waiting."

Pilot participants will have a significant leg up compared to those scrambling to comply once electronic submission becomes mandatory. They will avoid the challenges of transitioning from paper to electronic import manifest filing with little notice.

TRACS is just one component available to data filers through the Maritime On-Line suite of applications. Others include ship schedules and reports, a comprehensive vessel database, and real-time vessel tracking. The Exchange stands ready to assist with all manifesting needs.

Contact Paul Myhre at pmyhre@maritimedelriv.com to see what *Maritime On-Line* can do for you.



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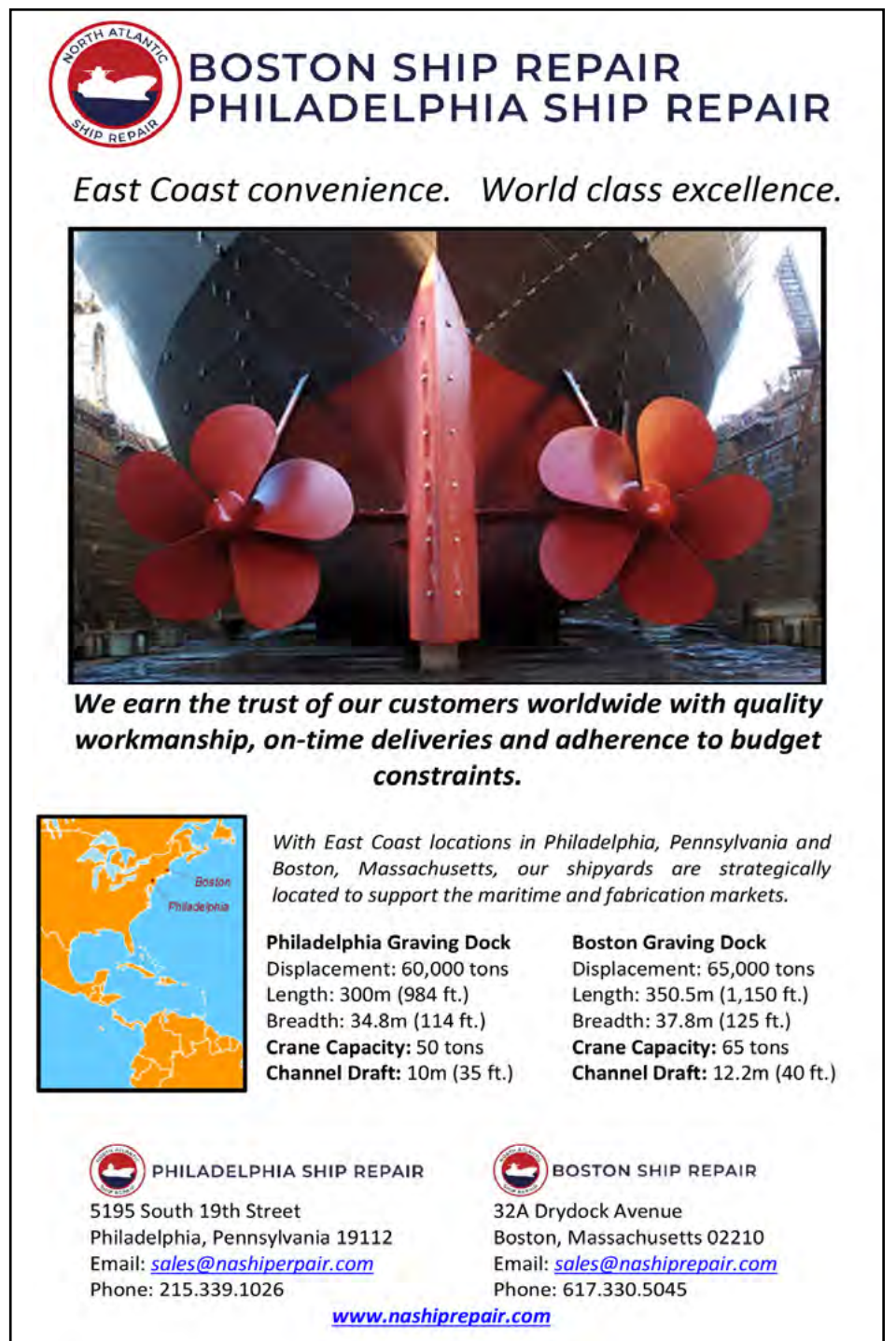


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A deeper dive into the Delaware

Exchange continues commitment to education at fall “Delaware River 102” session

On October 15, 2024, in a sunny atrium overlooking the Delaware River, representatives from across the local maritime community gathered to learn and share expertise on subjects vital to their shared industry. This was the latest installation in the Maritime Exchange’s Delaware River 101/102 series.

Back in April, speakers at the “Delaware River 101” workshop presented an introductory look at the fundamental elements of the Delaware River trade ecosystem: the Exchange and Pilots’ Association operations, cybersecurity, brokers, agents, terminals, seafarer centers, and the government and regulatory agencies involved in everyday port operations.

The 102 portion of the series builds on the information from the first course. Unlike a traditional second-level course, however, the syllabus changes from year to year based on participant suggestions. The Delaware River maritime community boasts a bevy of experts in various fields, and each session presents an opportunity to dive deeply into those areas of expertise.

Cynthia Hudson of HudsonAnalytix provided very conscientious and engaging event moderation. As the CEO of a global maritime consultancy service, Ms. Hudson draws from a

breadth of experience in the industry and helped the audience understand some of the nuances of the speakers’ subjects with incisive questions and commentary.

The speakers made up three themed panels during the event. The first panel was titled “Strategy in Seafaring: Port Operation and Coordination.” It began with Paul Myhre, director of operations at the Maritime Exchange, discussing dispatching and the Exchange’s Maritime On-Line® system. Capt. David Cuff, president of the Pilots’ Association for the Bay and River Delaware, then led the audience through a day in the life of a Delaware River pilot.

Robert Butts, manager of LNG Business and Fuels at Berkshire Hathaway Energy Gas Transmission and Storage, kicked off the second panel—“Fueling the Future: Emerging Energy Technologies”—by explaining the emerging world of liquefied natural gas and its ramifications, present and future, for maritime trade. Participants then heard from Jonathan Atwood, chief of staff and external affairs at South Jersey Port Corporation, as he discussed the terminal’s efforts to convert much of the diesel-powered equipment to electrical. CAPT Ben Cooper (USCG, ret.), director of marine affairs at US Wind, rounded out the panel by illustrating the benefits, processes, and



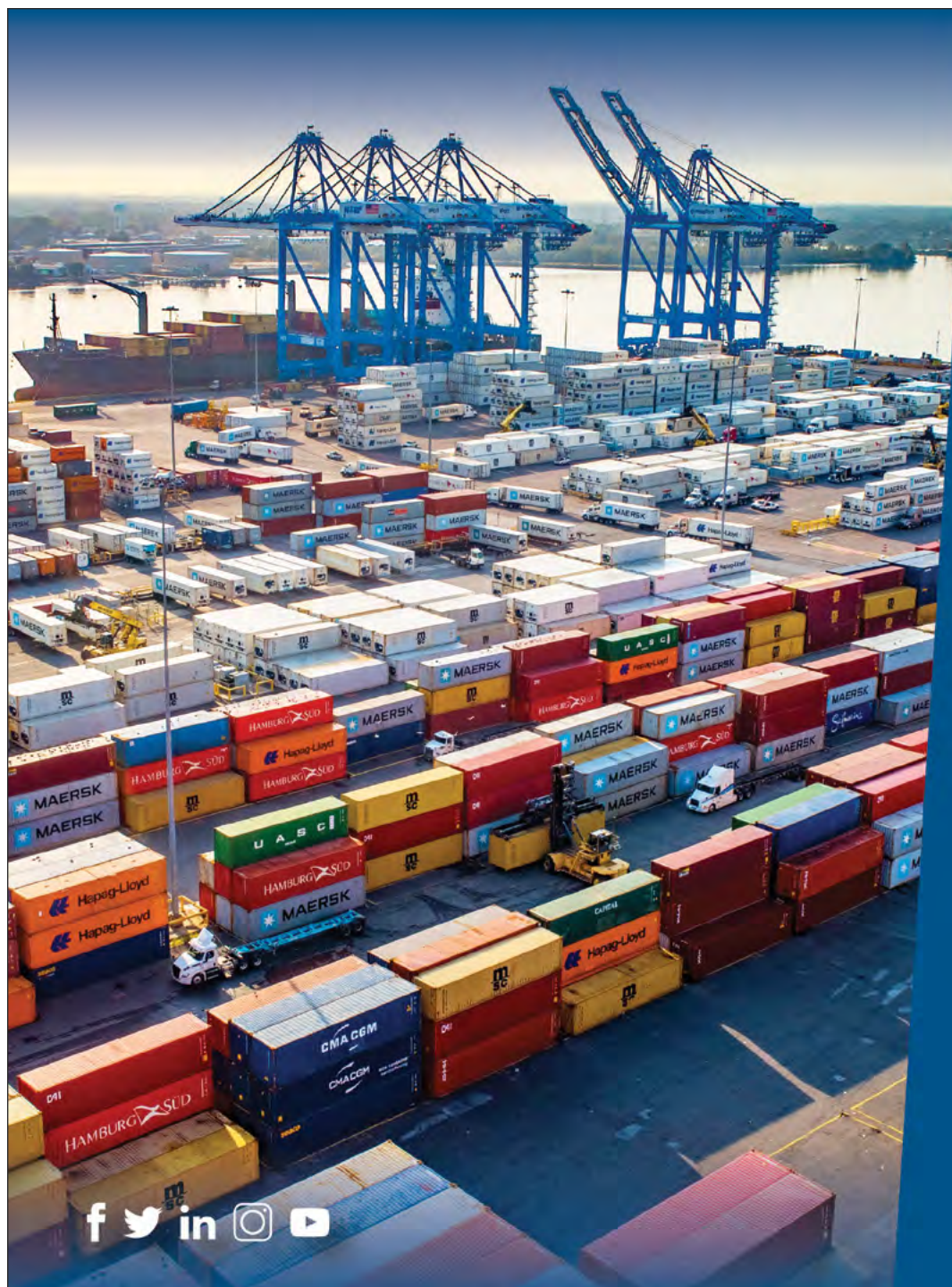
Robert Butts, Manager of LNG Business and Fuels at Berkshire Hathaway Energy Gas Transmission and Storage, discusses the importance of liquefied natural gas and the effects it will have on the Delaware River maritime community.

challenges involved in the construction of offshore wind energy facilities.

The final session delved into just a few of the many lesser-known but all-important port functions. In “A Working Port: Specialized Port Jobs,” Jeff Myers, director of business development for Agate Construction, discussed projects and processes within the field of marine construction, and Shannon Sked, Ph.D., director of Western Fumigation, covered the treatment and regulation of imported perishables—one of the largest categories of commodity by volume to come into the Delaware River port.

The session was fun, educational, and one of a kind. No other program, not even another Delaware River 102 program, has offered or will offer this lineup of speakers and topics; to say nothing of the depth of knowledge each of the speakers generously offered to attendees.

The same can be said of all Delaware River 102 classes—even the one coming in 2025. Members are encouraged to send suggestions for topics on which they have an expertise or would like to learn about at the next session. Contact Yair Farkas at yfarkas@maritimedelriv.com with ideas!



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Independence Seaport Museum: A true partner

Archivist Sarah Augustine goes above and beyond to assist the Exchange

What does a business with a 150-year history do with all its stuff when it runs out of room?

Unfortunately in the Exchange's case, the fact that the organization rented small spaces in various office buildings for 120 of those years meant that every move necessitated extensive housekeeping. Even after the Exchange acquired its large Cherry Street facility, leadership determined that precious documents warranted library-like organization and climate-controlled keeping.

Enter the Independence Seaport Museum. As the repository for all things maritime, the museum has safeguarded the history of the maritime industry since its founding in 1981, and the Philadelphia Maritime Museum undertook that important responsibility before it.

At various times throughout the years, the Exchange has donated records and artifacts to the Independence Seaport Museum for safekeeping and posterity.

This year, ISM returned the favor.

As Exchange staff were working to document the organization's history in preparation for the 150th anniversary in 2025, a small information gap quickly became apparent. Somehow, few if any records from 1950s, 60s, and 70s were available.



Thank you Sarah Augustine!

With speed and enthusiasm, ISM archivist and historian Sarah Augustine worked to scan Exchange board meeting minutes from the missing decades. A herculean task involving countless hours of work, Sarah painstakingly ran each page of 30 years' worth of monthly meeting minutes through the machines.

As she put it herself, she hopes to work with the Exchange to "continue piecing together the Exchange's story."

Though not officially nominated for Delaware River Unsung Hero recognition, Sarah's willingness to jump in and assist when needed epitomizes the definition of an industry hero. She is definitely the Exchange's hero for 2024!

CACC honors Hember

continued from page 1

international business community calendars, with upwards of 250 members and guests from the Greater Philadelphia area attending to celebrate the Chamber honorees' continued work of advancing bilateral commercial trade and investment relations.

As the leader of the Maritime Exchange, Lisa has been instrumental in driving various initiatives aimed at sustaining the organization's mission. She has adeptly navigated the complexities of maritime commerce within the Delaware River and Bay port complex, helping ensure that trade flows smoothly while addressing the diverse needs of member companies. Her proactive approach has involved working directly with key legislative, regulatory,

and enforcement agencies, including Customs and Border Protection, Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

One of Lisa's notable accomplishments has been her advocacy for the Chilean trade sector, particularly agricultural imports. Recognizing Chile as a vital trading partner for the region's ports, she has led efforts to protect and bolster the movement of essential cargo, including fresh fruit. Her initiatives have included opposing restrictions on the marketing order for Chilean grapes, advocating for alternatives to increases in USDA and CBP user fees for agricultural products, and improving processes related to the importation and transportation of Chilean goods. One such initiative—modifying wood packing material inspection protocols—has significantly improved the handling of pallets, thereby enhancing the import process for breakbulk fruit from Chile.

Lisa's commitment to enhancing worker safety and operational efficiency is exemplified through her leadership of the Cold Storage Facility Task Force, which has operated since 2011 with the financial support of Frutas de Chile, the Chilean exporters association. The task force has developed best practices aimed at improving worker safety within the cold storage sector, a crucial element in maintaining the quality of perishable goods. The annual audits conducted by this task force ensure adherence to these practices, further solidifying the Exchange's role as a protector and promoter of maritime trade.

Lisa leads a small staff of 16 working for and with approximately 300 individual and corporate members throughout the Delaware River region. The Exchange not only serves as a platform for problem solving but also fosters deep personal connections among its members.

Her contributions have not gone unnoticed. Lisa has received the U.S. Coast Guard Meritorious Service Award, has been named an Honorary Customs Officer, and served as Chair of the National Maritime Security Advisory Committee during her ten-year tenure, appointed by former Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. In recognition of her tireless efforts, she was inducted into the Delaware Maritime Hall of Fame in 2021, cementing her legacy as a leader in the maritime sector.

As Lisa embarks on her well-deserved retirement, her legacy will undoubtedly endure through the countless relationships she has fostered and the initiatives she has championed. Her unwavering dedication to the maritime industry, particularly in strengthening trade relations with Chile, has set a high standard for future leaders in the field.

The Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River will continue to thrive on the foundation she has built, ensuring that her contributions to maritime commerce and trade will resonate for years to come. The entire maritime community extends heartfelt gratitude to Lisa for her service and leadership, wishing her all the best in her next chapter.

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SS United States to be reefed

As I think back on the things that have influenced my life, ships are definitely at the top of the list. My fascination probably began when I witnessed the arrival of the “SS United States” in New York City on her maiden voyage in July of 1952. This love of ships would continue to the present day, as the greatest passenger ship ever built is about to become an artificial reef off the west coast of Florida.

Sadly this great ship only sailed the North Atlantic for about 17 years when trans-Atlantic air travel made sea travel uneconomical. The ship went into layup around 1968 and remains in layup to this day in Philadelphia. If it were not for her owner, The SS United States Conservancy, which has worked hard to re-purpose the ship with strong financial partners, the ship would not still be with us. Despite the efforts of many dedicated people—including Susan Gibbs, granddaughter of the builder—a deal to re-purpose the ship never materialized.

While most ships are scrapped at the end of their useful lives, the con-

cept of artificial reefing is becoming increasingly popular, especially in Florida. What better way to preserve the legacy of the “SS United States” and prevent her from being lost to history? Her new resting place will be off Okaloosa County, Florida, where more people will be able to visit and learn about her over the course of a year than have had that opportunity since she left seagoing service more than half a -century ago.

In addition to the world’s largest artificial reef, a land-based museum will be built nearby to commemorate and celebrate the history of the storied ocean liner. The new museum is expected to incorporate significant components of the ship, including her stacks and her radar mast, among scores of other artifacts. The Conservancy will be seeking input and advice from the global community as the museum takes shape.

At the present time, the ship is being prepared for her sea tow to Mobile, Alabama, where she will be cleaned and prepared for sinking at the reef site. Concurrently, the U.S. Coast Guard will be inspecting the ship to ensure she is ready for the sea tow to the U.S. Gulf. While this will be her final voyage, the thought that divers and underwater craft will be able to view her for hundreds of years is very comforting.

As one long-standing member of the Conservancy recently said, “I expected to be sad and angry at the latest news but instead there is a sense of dignity and hope. This is not an end but another voyage.” Another board member, Judge Thomas Watkins, said while addressing the ship directly, “We can tell you that you will not be lost, you will not be forgotten . . . You will be rightly honored, cherished and loved in a new home and in a new dimension. You will no longer be sailing the seas, but you will be surrounded and caressed by them.”

While a sailing date has not been issued, I would urge all ship buffs to

head down to Columbus Boulevard across from Ikea and catch one last look at this magnificent ocean liner. I hope to see her undock and possibly see her from another vantage point along the Delaware River. My thoughts will go back to 1968 when I was second mate aboard the “American Resolute” and we met this super ship in the middle of the Atlantic, at a closing speed of about 60 knots.

We wish the “SS United States” fair winds and following seas on her final voyage.

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Holt, USDA launch new treatment cooler in record time

Further cementing the Delaware River port industry's reputation as the "Can-do Port," officials from Holt Logistics and the U.S. Department of Agriculture were able to successfully shrink a process that normally takes six months into a mere two days.

The problem? A breakbulk ship laden with citrus destined for Gloucester Terminal in South Jersey experienced a technical glitch on its voyage from Cape Town, South Africa. As a result, USDA was unable to read the cold treatment charts and verify the cargo had been kept at -0.55 °C for 22 days to ensure it was free of invasive plant pests and diseases. As might be expected, USDA failed the whole ship. At risk were 4,500 pallets of cargo.

"When the ship arrived at the Port of Philadelphia, APHIS Officers Kevin O'Connor and Nivaldo Acevedo boarded the vessel and found that all 15 of the cold treatment compartments had failed to meet the temperature requirements," said APHIS Supervisory Officer John Baker.

Short of destroying the cargo, three options exist to mitigate a cold treatment failure: re-export it back to origin, send it to Canada, or re-treat. In this case, APHIS provided the ship owners with the choice of exporting the cargo or treating it locally.

Needless to say, the preferred option is re-treatment. But re-treating the

entire contents of a ship can present a significant logistics challenge.

"Our USDA-approved cooler at Gloucester was already filled, and we were short about 3,500 pounds of capacity," said Eric Holt, chief commercial officer at Holt Logistics. "Our only option was to try to certify another cooler."

With all parties working at lightning speed, they did it in two days.

Baker noted that before approving a commodity treatment

facility, APHIS staff inspect the facility, test the equipment, and confirm the facility is able to perform effective treatments. "Once APHIS has certified the facility, our personnel then enter into a compliance agreement with the new treatment provider that describes the

David Klink and the folks at Riverdale went above and beyond to help ensure this happened in the short time needed," Holt said.

The new facility is known as Warehouse 1, Pier 5.

The quick action saved a potential claim against the ship totaling between \$8 and \$12 million. It also prevented a huge loss to the growers and allowed importers to maintain their programs with retailers.

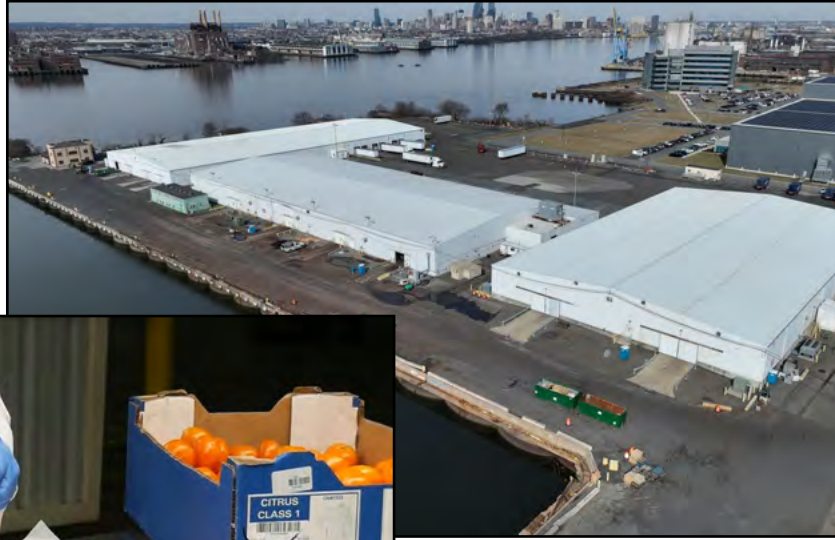
"Holt Logistics really helped save the day and came to the party ASAP! Communication and relationships are such key elements of our trusted partnership, and Holt Logistics are so well connected with all the local authorities and had everything in

place with the USDA with the snap of a finger," said Suhanra Conradie, CEO at Summer Citrus from South Africa, a collective of growers who ship and promote citrus from South Africa into the U.S.

"Congratulations are due to the Holt organization and the USDA crew who made this happen," said Exchange President Lisa Hember. "Their commitment to superior service resulted in a huge win for our port, area importers, and the shipping line."

facility operational procedure, regulatory safeguards, and responsibilities," Baker said.

"We were able to quickly obtain the necessary equipment, a key requirement. Equally important was getting USDA certification. Because of our relationship with USDA and the mutual trust we've built over the years, we were able to transfer our existing compliance agreement to the new box.



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Exchange welcomes new president

continued from page 1

Maritime Organization’s sub-committee on the open sharing of commercial vessel automatic identification system information.

McCarthy is also bilingual and multicultural. He was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and then lived in Paris, France for eleven years due to his family’s extensive U.S. diplomatic service. His father was a U.S. maritime attaché to South America and then Europe, and his sister recently retired from a long career with the State Department after serving most recently as U.S. Ambassador to Lithuania.

His education includes an MBA in Finance & International Trade from the University of St. Thomas in Houston,

Texas. He has a Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and a U.S. Coast Guard 3rd Officer Deck License from Texas A&M University. He also has post master’s level diplomas in Joint Operations from Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia and in National Strategy & Policy from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

“I am both honored and humbled by the opportunity to serve as president of the Maritime Exchange. My deep family maritime heritage and own experience working in this dynamic shipping world of ours have me eagerly anticipating the chance to meet and work with all stakeholders of the Delaware River as we together begin the Maritime Exchange’s next 150 years,” McCarthy said.

Please join the Exchange in welcoming George McCarthy as its next president.

Board says goodbye to a true friend of the Exchange



With a heavy heart, the Maritime Exchange board extended best wishes and its sincere gratitude as it said goodbye to long-time fellow director and friend of the port, Richard DeGennaro, who announced he is stepping down from the board after 34 years. A former Conrail executive, Rich provided invaluable financial guidance to the Exchange for the past three decades, including chairing the Finance Committee, overseeing the finances of Marine Day, supervising the Exchange’s acquisition of its current building, developing organizational investment guidelines, and providing invaluable financial investment advice over the years. At the September 11, 2024 board meeting, Exchange Chairman John Reynolds (*left*) and President Lisa Humber presented Rich with a resolution that formally recognized his dedication and service to the organization. Thank you, Rich, for your steadfast service to the Exchange and its members!

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Delaware River Unsung Heroes

Jacqueline Christy

**Breakbulk Customer Service Supervisor
PSA Penn Terminals**



Not everybody gets a chance to climb the corporate ladder. Starting at the lowest rung and proving that you can take on more and more responsibility is frequently an aspiration but not always easily accomplished. Jacqueline Christy did just that at PSA Penn Terminals, not once, but twice.

Jacqueline has worked for PSA Penn Terminals on and off for eight years. “I started as a customer service clerk and made my way up to lead,” she said. “I left for one year in between to explore nursing at Penn Medicine and then came right back after the height of COVID working as a clerk again.” One year after her return, she earned her way back to the lead position. Now, only two years after that, she is the supervisor of Breakbulk Customer Service.

“Her experience as a team lead managing all aspects of the breakbulk business made her promotion a no brainer,” said Kelly Burns, Director of Customer Service at PSA Penn Terminals.

Jacqueline really enjoys her job and especially values the human side of the work. In particular, she identifies interacting with her team and her co-workers to her greatest satisfaction.

“Diana [Containers Customer Service Supervisor] and Kelly are like my family away from home,” she said. “We laugh, we keep each other sane, we are always there for each other, and we always get the job done one way or another!”

And family, away from or at home, is Jacqueline’s foremost focus. “I have three young children in elementary school,” she said. “My nine-year-old daughter, Viray, my eight-year-old son William Jr., and my six-year-old son Augustus. I coach my daughter in basketball and cheerleading, and I’m the director of her cheerleading program. Go Colts!”

This dedication to family does not go unnoticed at work. “She is engaged in her kids’ activities and still brings her A-game to work every day,” Burns said.

In whatever free time she has left, Jacqueline runs a small business creating and selling custom sports apparel.

Jacqueline’s busy schedule outside of work makes it all the more incredible to her coworkers that she is able to consistently go above and beyond the call of duty for customers and colleagues. “Jackie is always available for her team,” Burns said. “She works extra hours (some days open to close) to resolve issues for drivers and to help the Operations team with loading the correct cargo. Her superpower is fixing loading errors before they happen and always doing it with a smile.”

Thank you, Jacqueline, for all you do for your family, friends, and the maritime community!

Patrick Haley

**Warehouse and Logistics Manager
South Jersey Port Corporation**



Pat Haley is one of those people whom no one outside his sphere of operation knows but who truly keeps the port moving. According to one co-worker, “Cargo wouldn’t move without him.”

His job as warehouse and logistics manager for the South Jersey Port Corporation is all important to the smooth running of SJPC-operated facilities. Pat has direct responsibility to oversee all inbound and outbound cargo movements through the Balzano and Broadway Marine Terminals. He manages all processes from loading/unloading ships to transferring cargo to and from rail carriers and trucks as they make their way to destinations across the United States, Canada, and Mexico or overseas via vessel.

“Part of that job is making sure all cargo movements have proper documentation,” Pat said. “It also involves managing seven team members who keep track of inventory, schedule pickup appointments, and check trucks in and out of our terminals.”

Pat graduated from Triton Regional High School in Runnemede, New Jersey in 2004 and immediately started working with ILA Local 1242 as a checker. And he never looked away from the waterfront since. In 2012, he joined the SJPC crew as a clerk and was promoted to his current position in 2018.

“Pat has been an integral member of the South Jersey Port family for over a decade. As the port’s warehouse and logistics manager, he is on the frontline of serving our customers. He ensures that cargo is loaded accurately and on time and does so with an ease and composure that belies the complexity of servicing dozens of customers and hundreds of trucks a day,” said SJPC Executive Director and CEO Andrew Saporito.

Pat is motivated above all by how much and how quickly cargo under his watch gets where it needs to go. He is especially proud of the fact that he has loaded over 250,000 trucks and more than 6,000 rail cars since he became responsible for warehouse and logistics operations. Though he may make the work look like it is easy, it can be very difficult. “The biggest problem we deal with is ensuring the data we receive for upcoming shipments is correct and matches the vessel manifests,” he said. As anyone involved in cargo movement is aware, data mismatches are all too frequent, and deconflicting them can be a challenge.

For Pat, though, the working waterfront is in his blood. He is the third generation in his family to work in maritime transportation at Delaware River ports, with his grandfather starting in 1946 and his uncle in 1973.

When he is not moving cargo, Pat likes to unwind at the pool table, but in a serious way. He plays in multiple leagues, and his teams have qualified for the APA World Championships.

“Pat is a big Bruce Springsteen fan, which is fitting, as he truly is ‘The Boss’ of the port’s logistics operations. He is fiercely loyal and dedicated to his staff, and he has developed a team that works seamlessly together. The warehouse doesn’t always get the attention, but the work that Pat and his team do every day keeps the port’s operations flowing,” Saporito said.

Getting to know Pat provides a sense of where his priorities lie: with the end goal of complete customer satisfaction. “I am so lucky to have the support of the SJPC Warehouse Department team members, past and present,” he said. “They make it easy to come to work each day knowing that they will give me their very best effort to give the best customer service and get the job done.”

Thank you, Pat, for helping make Delaware River port such a remarkable place to do business!



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James B. Walsh

Senior Director of Operations
PhilaPort



“With over twenty years of dedicated service as the director of operations, Jim possesses a depth of expertise that is truly unmatched. Whether it’s navigating complex logistics or understanding industry regulations, there’s scarcely a topic related to the port on which he doesn’t have insight,” said PhilaPort Graphic Design and Social Media Manager Amanda Prinski.

With such an unqualified endorsement, shared by so many others in the port community, seeing why Jim was nominated for Unsung Hero recognition is easy.

Jim was hired by PhilaPort (the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority) in 2004 as Director of Operations. PhilaPort owns ten marine terminals and over 1,000 acres of real estate along the Delaware River. Today as senior director of operations, Jim is responsible for ensuring tenant terminal operator adherence to lease agreements with the authority. He also oversees the engineering and maintenance departments.

In addition to daily operations, Jim helps coordinate many capital improvements with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania team. Just to name a few, he was deeply involved with projects such as renovating the Packer Avenue Marine, constructing a new dry warehouse at the site of the old Philadelphia Produce Market, and building the Southport marine terminal. “Soon we will design and build a new 100,000 square-foot warehouse at the Tioga Marine Terminal,” Jim said. With PhilaPort just announcing its 15-year strategic plan, “Destination 2040,” Jim will have his work cut out for him.

Yet he does so much more. Because of his friendly nature and approachability, he is often seen as a go-to guy to help port community members interact with the port authority. If he is not the person directly responsible to answer a stakeholder question or resolve a problem, he will find the person who is.

“The best part about working for PhilaPort is the people I interact with daily, from my colleagues in the office to the many stakeholders along the river,” Jim said. He especially values the opportunity to help the port develop into an economic engine that helps create and sustain jobs.

He is a long-time member and former chairman of the Area Maritime Security Committee. Each year, he continues to dedicate substantial time reviewing and helping prioritize security grant applications for projects that will most benefit the local port industry.

While Jim is optimistic about the future, he worries about space. PhilaPort is well positioned to continue on its growth trajectory, and Jim is excited about the possibilities. “But our biggest challenge,” he said, “is the availability of land to build business at the port.”

Prior to joining PhilaPort, Jim spent nine years at Packer Avenue Marine Terminal, where he supervised the daily shipboard operations of one of the largest and busiest marine terminals on the Delaware River. During his time at Packer, Jim gained an in-depth knowledge of the Philadelphia waterfront including terminal operations, labor/management issues, and security procedures.

Jim attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, where he studied Marine Transportation and earned a Bachelor of Science degree. During his time at the academy, he sailed aboard three U.S.-flagged container vessels that called ports throughout Europe and the Caribbean. He also spent ten years in the U.S. Naval reserve, attaining the rank of Lieutenant.

Jim likes to take his downtime outdoors—golfing, fishing, and hunting are among the ways he decompresses. But mostly he enjoys spending time with his family. He has been married to his wife, Melissa, for 23 years, and they have three children, James, Colin, and Tatum.

Prinski said Jim’s contributions “have not only shaped the operations of PhilaPort but have also earned him the respect and admiration of colleagues and industry peers alike.”

We could not have said it better ourselves.

Congratulations, Jim, and thank you for your continuous dedication to our port!

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Alternative Fuels Usage on the Delaware Bay



**By: LT Amanda Anastasia
U.S. Coast Guard**

fied natural gas-powered ships in the coming years, as global orders for new vessels with LNG/diesel dual-fuel propulsion systems have dramatically increased since the passage of the International Code of Safety for Ships Using Gases or Other Low-Flashpoint Fuels Code, known as the IGF Code, in 2016. Three such ships are currently under construction at the Philly Shipyard. Since LNG is cleaner than traditional fuel oils—due to its high energy content, relatively low carbon emissions, and low sulfur content—a significant increase in the percentage of ships utilizing this fuel could lead to improved air quality in the region.

Another alternative fuel worth monitoring is methanol, which is also a low-flashpoint fuel that will eventually be governed by the IGF Code. Methanol offers numerous environmental benefits over other fuels, and the region should anticipate seeing vessels using this fuel within the next few years. Currently, methanol-powered ships are governed by the “Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Methyl/Ethyl Alcohol as Fuel” (MSC.1-Circ. 1641), released by the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee in late 2020, as prescriptive re-

quirements for methanol are not yet included in the IGF Code.

The greater Philadelphia region is well-positioned to lead the east coast in hydrogen propulsion due to the recent announcement of federal funding awarded to the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub, known as MACH2, late last year. As Exchange members who attended the June 26, 2024 discussion with Exchange Director and MACH2 Ambassador George Murphy know, the goal of MACH2 is to produce and distribute hydrogen primarily from green (solar, hydro, or wind power) and pink (nuclear power) sources. Many details about the MACH2 project are still being finalized, and it will likely focus initially on land-based systems. Therefore, it is difficult to predict the immediate impact of the hub on shipping and the maritime community. However, with hydrogen-powered vessels already operating on the west coast, it is conceivable that the hub could inspire an innovative company to pioneer hydrogen-powered vessel operations on the Delaware River and Bay.

In a more unique development, the Delaware River maritime community can also expect the launch of

the “Firefly” in the near future. This vessel’s claim to fame is its solar-powered design, which utilizes solar energy to charge lithium-ion batteries. The “Firefly” will provide local students with educational excursions connecting them to the river.

From a regulatory perspective, any company looking to construct a new vessel using hydrogen, methanol, or lithium-ion batteries must submit a Design Basis Agreement to the Coast Guard, as prescriptive regulations around these fuel types are not yet in place. Each new design is reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis, so it is advisable to engage early and frequently with both regulators and any third-party organizations involved in the design process.

For more information on novel design review, approval, and safety considerations, please visit the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Design and Engineering Standards website or contact their office at CGENG@uscg.mil. For more information about submitting a Design Basis Agreement, please refer to the CG-ENG Policy Letter 01-23, Design Basis Agreement Submission Guidance, or contact your local Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection.

With these new fuel options, this is an exciting time for the maritime community on and around the Delaware River and Bay!


As air quality becomes an increasing concern for the International Maritime Organization, or IMO, the shipping industry is turning to alternative fuels to reduce carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and other emissions resulting from ocean shipping. This initiative is not new; the initial adoption of MARPOL Annex VI, which addresses air pollution from ships, dates back to 2005.

The most challenging aspect of any novel technology or industry is often the initial phase, and this has proven true for the adoption of alternative fuels. However, the shipping industry is witnessing a relatively rapid phase-in of several types of alternative fuels both globally and nationally.

The Delaware Bay region can expect an increase in visits from lique-

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DSI wins outstanding security performance award



DSI President Eddie Sorrells (center) accepted the OSPA award at a celebration reception at Global Security Exchange in Orlando. Joining him were award ceremony hosts Kasia Hanson (right) and Dave Tyson.

DSI Security Services is proud to announce it has received the prestigious ASIS International Outstanding Security Performance Award (OSPA) for Outstanding Contract Security Company (Guarding). This distinguished award recognizes excellence within the security industry and acknowledges companies that demonstrate exceptional service and dedication to quality.

“We are incredibly honored to receive this year’s Outstanding Security Performance Award,” said Eddie Sorrells, president of DSI Security Services.

“This recognition is a testament to the entire DSI team’s hard work, dedication, and excellence. It reinforces our commitment to delivering top-tier security solutions and maintaining the highest industry standards.”

The OSPAs are awarded in 16 countries and collaborate with leading security associations and groups worldwide. The U.S. OSPAs were developed with support from ASIS International, the world’s largest association for security management professionals.

Exchange project to assist the permitting process

continued from page 1

The initial geospatial and database frameworks are complete, and Mott MacDonald has begun to collect data on Delaware River environmental specifics and endangered species and their habitats. The researchers will focus much attention on the Atlantic sturgeon, whose migration and spawning activities lead to various dredging and construction time restrictions. The team will survey port stakeholders to identify the availability of industry-specific data and then pursue collection activities. Although the project is in its infancy, the committee and contractors expect to move quickly to bring the project to completion in the second quarter of 2025.

“Developing DGI in a map-based system makes sense. Distinct areas on the river may be represented by several overlapping information resources that can help permit ap-

plicants and reviewers expedite the process,” said Exchange Chief Administrative Officer Michael Fink. “The geospatial interface allows participants to more quickly identify all the data available pertaining to a given facility or region.”

The Exchange and the committee are now working to refine the security model developed during the October workshop. The group wants to ensure that participants with a need and right to DGI data have ready access but is also cognizant of the sensitive nature of some of the information that may be collected.

“The Exchange has a long tradition of and a strong commitment to building its community-based systems with the cooperation of the people who will use them,” Fink said. “Designing a system in a vacuum is nothing but a recipe for failure. We have always subscribed to the idea that a maritime application should be built by maritime professionals with skin in the game, and this will be no different.”

Kicking off shoes and enjoying some crabs



Exchange staff members took some time away from their busy schedules to join colleagues at the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society Annual Crab Feast on September 13, 2024 at Ft. Mifflin in Philadelphia. The eagerly anticipated summer event draws members from all facets of the maritime community to enjoy a day of food and libations under the sun with friends from around the port. Incoming Exchange president-elect George McCarthy, who would start less than three weeks later, had his first chance to meet many of the Exchange staff, including (l-r) Laura Miller, Michael Fink, Lisa Himber, Taylor Kirk, Yair Farkas, McCarthy, Candace Stafford, and Grace Lee.

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Delaware River ports expect growth in Chilean grape imports

Effects of systems approach protocols to be tested this season

As Exchange members know all too well, when it comes to maritime commerce, a state of uncertainty often feels like the normal state. So the arrival of positive news is always cause for celebration.

Some of that good news came in late October when the Frutas de Chile Table Grape Committee announced a projected rise in export volumes of 2.4% in 2024-25 compared to the previous season.

Since the late 1970s, Delaware River ports have benefited from strong trade relations with Chilean grape exporters. What has become known here as simply “fruit season” is one of the busiest times on the river, bringing an average of 45 ship calls per year.

Anticipated volume growth is not the only factor that could point to an extraordinarily successful

season. Also on the horizon is the start of the systems approach protocol, which allows the grapes to enter U.S. commerce without first undergoing methyl bromide fumigation. Eliminating this process will allow the grapes to move more quickly from port to table.

The systems approach protocol is not an absolute guarantee of pest-free imports, though it has been highly successful with other commodities. With the protocol in its inaugural year, all parties—exporters, importers, and Chilean and U.S. agriculture agencies—will be scrutinizing activity closely.

The U.S. receives almost 60% of all Chilean table grape exports, and about half that amount is destined for the Delaware River. Those numbers make trade with Chile an important piece of regional port activity.



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PhilaPort unveils ambitious strategic plan: “Destination 2040”

In October 2024, PhilaPort presented the PhilaPort Strategic Plan: Destination 2040 (PSP), a comprehensive roadmap that charts the course for the port’s future over the next 15 years. The plan is a testament to the shared vision and commitment to continue making PhilaPort a world-class port and reaffirms the port’s commitment to growth, sustainability, and prosperity for the region.

Both ambitious and achievable, the PSP is the culmination of a phased process conducted over two years with the ultimate goal to develop an actionable, holistic framework to guide future port infrastructure development. The PSP will support PhilaPort’s capital planning process.

Demand at PhilaPort has been steadily rising over the past decade, with a compound annual growth rate of eight percent, and this trend is expected to continue. As cargo volumes continue to increase, the port must build the necessary capacity to accommodate the next several decades of growth.

Meanwhile, recent developments in the region, including proposed expansion projects at other major East Coast ports, have intensified competition.

“The global trade and logistics arena is ever-changing, demanding that we be visionary in our approach to planning for the future,” said Jeff Theobald, executive director and CEO of PhilaPort. “The strategic plan features the key projects and initiatives that we must undertake to ensure that PhilaPort remains a competitive, vibrant, and resilient port in the years to come.”

Theobald said the port is an economic engine, and the PSP is the authority’s commitment to generating positive impacts for Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. “Implementing the plan allows us to continue supporting the countless businesses that rely on the port for timely and cost-effective deliv-

ery of their cargo while simultaneously maintaining and growing critical living wage jobs in the region,” he said.

PhilaPort identified, prioritized, and sequenced over \$2 billion in initiatives over the plan’s 15-year planning horizon, emphasizing expanded infrastructure and capacity, a diversified commodity portfolio, and partnership and collaboration.

“The development of the PhilaPort Strategic Plan brought together PhilaPort’s leadership, our board, our tenants, elected officials, and other port stakeholders in a collaborative process to brainstorm, evaluate, and select the projects and initiatives that make up the PSP, our 15-year roadmap for the future,” said Edward G. Henderson senior director, Business Development & Planning.

By 2040, the PSP is set to deliver significant benefits, including the addition of substantial warehouse space and the capacity to handle an extra two million TEUs. If implemented as written, the plan will also create nearly 9,000 new direct jobs and more than 10,000 additional induced and indirect jobs. PhilaPort projects the plan will generate over \$2.84 billion in new business revenue and nearly \$170 million in new state and local taxes.

“As we embark on this journey towards 2040, I am filled with optimism and anticipation,” said Michael Pearson, chairman of the PhilaPort board. “The importance of this plan to the future of the port cannot be overstated. It will guide our decisions, shape our actions, and determine our priorities. It will help us navigate the challenges ahead and seize the opportunities that come our way.”

For more information about PhilaPort and the “PhilaPort Strategic Plan: Destination 2040” please visit phila-port.com/destination2040 or follow us on social media.

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South Jersey Ports: strengthening community ties through outreach

South Jersey Ports is committed to driving economic growth in the region and fostering strong community connections through a robust outreach program. This effort is designed to engage host communities and includes various initiatives aimed at educating, supporting, and collaborating with residents across South Jersey.

One of the cornerstones of South Jersey Ports' outreach efforts is active engagement with local schools. By organizing port visits and career days, they offer students a unique opportuni-

ty to learn about the maritime industry and the array of careers it offers. Additionally, internships provide hands-on experience, helping students and young adults gain valuable skills and insights into potential career paths. Job fairs further reinforce this commitment by connecting residents with employment opportunities within the port and its partner organizations.

Beyond educational initiatives, South Jersey Ports also focuses on environmental stewardship and community beautification. Neighborhood tree

plantings contribute to greener, more sustainable communities and help foster a sense of pride and ownership among residents. Participation in community events, whether through sponsorships or active involvement, underscores the port's dedication to being a positive presence in the area.

Most recently, South Jersey Ports actively participated in the Camden Strong Community Cleanups, a citywide initiative led by Mayor Vic Carstarphen. These cleanups, which involve partnerships with neighbor-

hood leaders, are part of a broader effort to "clean and green" Camden. Through its participation, South Jersey Ports demonstrates its commitment to improving the quality of life in Camden, contributing resources and labor to ensure the success of these community-driven efforts.

As South Jersey Ports continues to grow, its community outreach program remains a vital part of its mission, reflecting its belief that a thriving port goes hand-in-hand with a thriving community.

Bradley takes the helm at SCW

The Seamen's Center of Wilmington is pleased to announce the appointment of Kathryn Bradley as its new executive director. This nonprofit organization, dedicated to enhancing the welfare of seafarers calling at ports in the State of Delaware, is poised for a new chapter under Bradley's leadership.

"Kathryn brings a renewed energy and a fresh perspective to the SCW," said John Deemer, president of the SCW board. "Her extensive experience, including 14 years at GulfTainer—five of which were spent as director of corporate communications and government relations at the Port of Wilmington—provides the strategic insight that SCW needs to further our mission. We are excited to welcome her aboard."

Bradley's career includes nine years as group manager of PR and Communications at GulfTainer, where she crafted and implemented a global communications strategy that supported operations in eight countries. Her expertise extends beyond public relations; she also has considerable experience in organizational management as a managing director and partner at Wavelength, a UK-based media company specializing in media training and development.

Since joining SCW in September, just days before the organization's marquee event, the Last Bash of Summer, Bradley has already made a significant impact. "Kathryn didn't miss a beat," said Lisa Himber, past president of the SCW board. "She seamlessly integrated into the event planning and

execution, contributing to an evening that was an unqualified success. Kathryn will no doubt be a very positive force for the Seamen's Center."

Bradley earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Huddersfield and holds a CAM Foundation Marketing and Communications diploma.

"I have a strong passion for the port industry and its vital role in fostering trade and economic growth," Bradley said. "The Seamen's Center is fundamentally a service organization that relies on effective communication, organization, and collaboration. Building strong relationships with the port community and our volunteers is essential, as is our outreach to attract new donors and supporters. I am excited about leveraging my skills to build on the Cen-



ter's past successes and develop new initiatives that will benefit seafarers in our region."



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CBP takes another step toward paperless processing

MCR pilot now live at Delaware River seaports

“The mobile collections and receipt program is finally bringing Customs and Border Protection into the 21st century,” said Maritime Exchange President Lisa Hember. “Though CBP was among the first federal agencies—if not the very first—to embrace automating data exchange with the private sector, the fact that ship operators and their agents are still cutting paper checks and sometimes even physically driving them to the Customhouse is completely inconsistent with CBP’s early and enthusiastic commitment to modernization.”

The MCR pilot program, which goes hand in hand with VECS, the Vessel Entrance & Clearance System, has been operating for several years. Though MCR has been in use at the Philadelphia airport, it was not available here for seaport operations. “The COVID pandemic highlighted the pressing need for CBP to accept electronic payments. When CBP ceased boarding vessels on arrival, agents and operators had to travel to the Customhouse to conduct all transactions,” Hember said.

That is finally changing as MCR is being significantly expanded in the maritime environment. “CBP officers in our port now have ‘cell phones on a sled,’ mobile devices that operate via cell signal,” said Philadelphia Chief of Trade Sean Butler. “These allow our officers to collect payments on site. Anything we do during the vessel entrance process, from arriving the ships, to visa waivers or parole, paying vessel tonnage tax, processing offsigning crew, and filing informal entries can now be done electronically.”

While systems for federal funds collection are not new—pay-

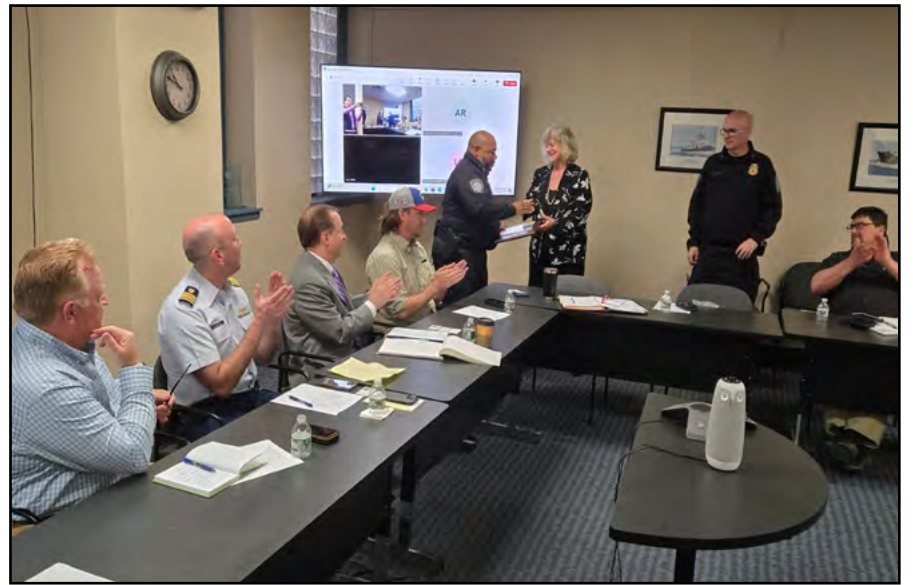
gov started in 2000, and the IRS launched e-filing in 2011—MCR provides an advantage unique to maritime operations. “The whole purpose is to offer a physically mobile service,” Butler said. “If a crew member arrives in port with an expired visa and a waiver is approved, there is no longer a need to travel to the Customhouse. We can process the waiver on the ship.”

The other side of that coin is that cellular connectivity is sometimes spotty in the marine environment. CBP is at the mercy of available Wi-Fi, and sometimes processing is delayed as connections are dropped and re-established. CBP has had limited success with using its own mobile hotspots.

While agents in the Delaware River area report high satisfaction with the VECS system, the MCR component is not yet where it needs to be. “Currently, offices using VECS are required to make mobile payments via a credit card. Otherwise, they still need to hand deliver paper checks to CBP. Having only the ability to pay via credit card is very restrictive to an agency due to the high amount of charges that can quickly add up,” said James Gura Jr., VP northeast operations/quality manager at Moran Shipping Agencies. Ship agents are eagerly awaiting the ability to pay via ACH.

“Even with the challenges, which will hopefully decrease over time, MCR is a win-win program. It’s a plus for CBP as we’re handling far fewer paper checks, and it’s a plus for the agents who will no longer have to physically go to the Customhouse,” Butler said.

CBP recognizes Hember for exemplary service

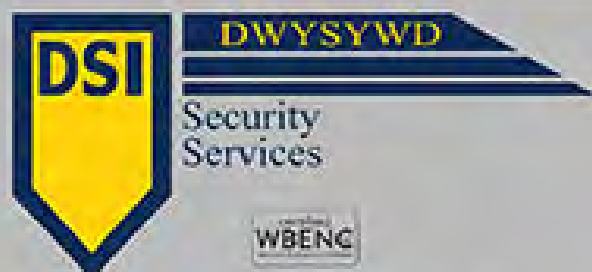


Following the October Maritime Operations Committee meeting, Donald Josey, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Assistant Area Port Director, Port of Philadelphia, honored Exchange President Lisa Hember with a Certificate of Appreciation for her efforts to champion cooperation and open dialogue between industry and local federal agencies. The Exchange-led committee brings industry and government together to address legislative, regulatory, and policy matters affecting Delaware River ship, cargo, and crew processing. Through the Maritime Operations Committee, Hember has spearheaded efforts to address and facilitate communication regarding CBP and USDA staffing shortages, cargo and wood packaging inspection concerns, crew detentions and escorting issues, dredging operations, and much more.



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Editorial

Is it time for 50 feet? You betcha

Since well before the fat lady even began her song in the last act of the 45-foot channel deepening project, port industry leaders here were talking about the need to dig yet another five feet.

As the saying goes, if we knew then what we know now . . .

Had we known the short distance from 40 to 45 feet would take over 30 years to travel, we surely would have aimed for 50 right out of the gate. And for those who do not remember—or more likely never knew because it was so far before their time—that gate first opened in 1988. That was when the governors of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania held a summit and agreed, among other initiatives, that deepening the Delaware River main channel was a good idea.

Over the next few years, that goal translated to action. Port business and political leaders worked aggressively to gain support, and by 1992 Congress appropriated federal funds to begin the deepening.

The path from then to now was characterized by more twists and turns than the river itself. The first of the 10 construction contracts was awarded in 2009—17 years after funds became available. Those years involved multiple economic benefit analyses, multiple lawsuits from environmental organizations—which, *The Beacon* is pleased to note, alleged dire hazardous outcomes that simply never came to be—conflicts between the states, and a host of other delays. Once the work started, a full 10 contracts were needed to complete the construction, including extra unexpected work for rock blasting and hammering in a challenging operation near two utility pipelines. Concurrent with that activity, the port business community, the tristate Congressional delegation, and the Corps had to annually convince an increasingly reluctant Congress to continue to allocate the necessary funding.

A huge number of people invested a great deal of time and energy, not to mention political capital, to make the project happen.

So are we ready to start all over again?

Short answer: of course we are.

On the one hand, just thinking about the idea of beginning what will surely be another uphill climb is exhausting. Yet the other hand is eager, fist in the air, pumped and ready to go.

The longer answer is that we must move down this road. Even at a 45-foot draft, Delaware River ports remain the shallowest general cargo facilities on the East Coast. Another five feet will buy the Delaware River a much firmer place in the global maritime arena. Conversely, failing to deepen to 50 feet will ensure the tristate port system begins a slow decline to also-ran status.

We cannot and will not allow the difficulties of the past to influence our future. This port has already demonstrated that it can safely and efficiently handle ultra-large container vessels with the infrastructure in place today. But we cannot rest on these laurels. At the Exchange office is a sign that reads: even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.

Growth is painful, it is difficult, and it takes time. It can also take the force of a whole community working in concert.

So this time, all three states must join equally in supporting the initiative. PhilaPort, which, with Harrisburg's support, ultimately shouldered the entire local-match burden for the 45-foot deepening project, has already come out strongly in favor of digging to 50 feet; the South Jersey Port Corp. and Diamond State Port Corp. must be equally aggressive if the project is to get off the ground.

Our community has learned some hard-won lessons from the 45-foot deepening project. Let us put them to good use in the march to 50 feet.

The NSMV program brings many benefits

On September 26, 2024 the Philly Shipyard delivered the U.S. National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) "Patriot State," the second of five new purpose-built, state-of-the-art training vessels for America's state maritime academies.

While much of the industry tends to refer to these vessels as the new academy training ships, the NSMV program is delivering the nation much more than just new ships.

All ships tend to have multiple lives over their long existence and often go on to serve in many unforeseen capacities.

On October 31, 1999, while the "T/V Kings Pointer" (formerly a U.S. Navy T-AGOS vessel called "USNS Contender") was on a routine annual fall liberty run to Boston, 17 cadets and 9 instructors and crew found themselves first on the scene of the EgyptAir Flight 990 crash off the coast of Nantucket. As has always been the case with U.S. maritime cadets serving on good ships, both answered the call admirably despite the initial shock.

History has shown time and again that during a national emergency, maritime capability matters. Every additional U.S.-flagged vessel, Naval or commercial, ship, tug, barge, or otherwise, regardless of original design, provides a significantly broader benefit to the nation through its ability to support in times of emergency. On September 11, 2001, more than 150 different vessels and their sailors helped evacuate over 500,000 civilians from lower Manhattan while also delivering supplies in the days following the attacks.

The NSMV program has produced a very innovative and flexible ship design through the involvement of commercial owners, operators, and shipbuilders, resulting in the most current commercial best practices in ship design and construction.

In addition to state-of-the-art maritime cadet training facilities, the size and capability of these new ships allow them to support a multitude of missions through their dual bridges, convertible large multi-purpose spaces, laboratory spaces, and accommodations for up to 700 personnel while underway and up to 1,000 when in port.

When mobilized in support of humanitarian assistance or disaster relief, an NSMV provides a helicopter landing area, container storage capacity of up to 60 TEU, roll-on/roll-off loading ramp, and vehicle stowage capabilities. They also provide modern medical facilities and berthing for emergency responders, recovery workers, and crews.

With a range of 10,000 miles at 18 knots from 4 diesel electric main engines divided into 2 engine rooms, and both stern and bow thrusters to facilitate docking without tug assist, the NSMV has greatly increased the nation's ability to provide the right ship at the right time.

Over the course of their long lives, these new academy training ships will provide many other often-overlooked national benefits

- Flexibility: the ability to meet a diversity of requirements, many unforeseeable.
- Diplomacy: the pursuit of foreign policy through the peaceful employment of a nation's other resources, such as a new maritime training ship calling a foreign port for a peaceful purpose.
- Support of allies: the capacity to host foreign maritime cadets and answer an ally's call for disaster assistance.
- Envoys: the ships, women, and men who crew them are our nation's direct representatives when overseas. The NSM ships and cadets are a clear message that we intend to remain a strong maritime nation.

While supporting the creation of new U.S. shipbuilding, sailing jobs, and well-trained cadets, the NSMV program has also positioned the United States to improve its global security interests and provide a much-needed boost to a very critical sector of the nation's economy.

Many thanks to the Maritime Administration, Tote Services, LLC., Philly Shipyard's work force, and everyone else who pushed these ships from concept to reality, not just for the cadets but in the broader sense.

Our nation who will benefit from them in many ways, for many years to come.



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The Beacon is the official newsletter of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay. The Exchange encourages its readers to submit letters to the editor at any time in response to articles that appear in *The Beacon* or to address other topics of interest to the port community.

Please direct any correspondence, comments, or inquiries regarding the contents of this newsletter to:

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The outlook for regulated industry post-Chevron



Legal Ease

By: **Lisa Reeves, Esq.**
Brian McEwing, Esq.
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Lawsuits brought by employees are never welcome. In addition to the time and expense of defending such claims, possible negative publicity reflects poorly on your business. For these and other reasons, employers should consider adding an arbitration clause to their employment contracts.

This is particularly true if your employees are Jones Act seamen. Unlike shoreside workers, state or federal workers' compensation statutes do not cover seamen. In the event of a work-related injury, his or her employer must pay "maintenance" (living expenses) and "cure" (bills for medical treatment) until maximum medical improvement and can be sued for negligence or unseaworthiness. Under the Jones Act, the seaman has a right to a jury trial, and if successful can recover past wage loss, future lost wages/earning capacity, as well as pain and suffering and loss of life's pleasures. Whether the suit is brought in state or federal court, the shipowner faces significant exposure to a large verdict—juries are unpredictable, and sympathy for injured workers can sway them.

By contrast, an arbitrator (usually a lawyer or retired judge) will understand the law and generally be more objective when considering the liability issues, and any damage award is likely to be more reasonable than one rendered by a jury. In addition, the legal costs associated with defending an arbitration claim are far less than litigating the same claim before a jury.

Contrary to popular belief, arbitration agreements in a seaman's employment contract are enforceable if carefully drafted and properly presented to the employee before she begins working on the vessel. Although the Jones Act is a federal statute, and federal law governs unseaworthiness and other seaman's employment claims, the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA) does not apply to contracts of employment involving seamen, railroad, and other workers engaged in foreign or interstate commerce. This does not mean that an arbitration agreement with a seaman or other transportation worker is not valid; just that state rather than federal law governs such agreements. A valid arbitration clause will specifically identify which state law will interpret and govern the clause, and the chosen state should have a strong connection to the worker's employment and/or the employer's base of operations.

To be enforceable, the employer must provide sufficient notice of the arbitration clause—thus it should stand out: the use of large font, capitalization, and bold typeface is encouraged. The wording should be simple and understood by employees and not written in legalese that may be incomprehensible to an employee with no advanced education. We also recommend that the arbitration clause specifically state that the employee understands he is giving up his right to pursue his claims in a court of law and waiving his right to a trial by a jury of



his peers. Finally, the clause should state that the employer will pay the arbitrator's fees but make clear that each party is responsible for its own attorney's fees.

For other transportation workers, workplace injury claims will not be subject to arbitration, as the applicable workers' compensation statutes govern these. However, consideration should still be given to adding an arbitration clause to your company's written employment contract for other types of employment claims, such as disputes over compensation, benefits, promotions, termination of employment, and non-compete agreements. In some states, it may also be possible to enforce agreements to arbitrate employment discrimination claims; in others this may be prohibited by statute.

In summary, companies and employers should speak to their maritime, transportation, or employment attorneys to determine whether to incorporate arbitration agreements in their current employment contracts.

Lisa Reeves, a member of the Maritime Exchange board, and Brian McEwing are partners with the firm of Reeves McEwing, LLP. You can reach Lisa Reeves at 267-324-3773 or reeves@lawofsea.com and Brian McEwing at (609) 846-4717 or mcewing@lawofsea.com. This article should not be construed as legal advice. Readers should consult their maritime and/or employment lawyers for specific advice.

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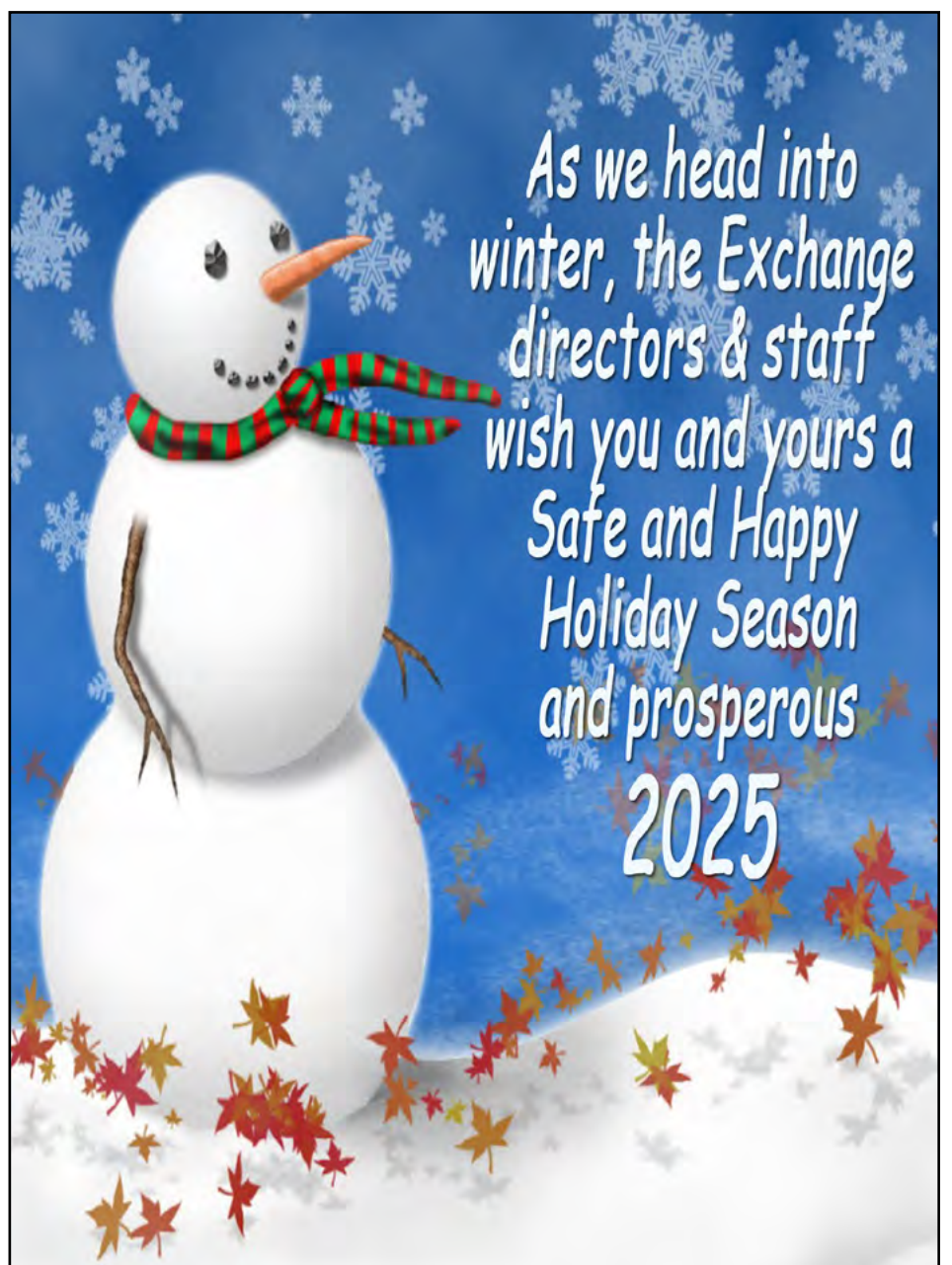
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Notes & News

The Board of Trustees of the **Maritime Academy Charter School** appointed **Tummona Fisher** to the position of Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. "We are extremely honored to have her take this position. She has been a dedicated board member and supporter of our cadet students, teachers, and administration," said Eugene Mattioni, CEO of the Maritime Academy Charter School. Congratulations and good luck, Tummona!

Gawthrop Greenwood was founded in 1904, making this its 120th anniversary year. Congratulations on achieving this spectacular milestone!

Enstructure LLC, recently joined the Maritime Exchange as a member of **Green Marine**, the leading global voluntary environmental certification program. To obtain Green Marine certification, Enstructure will benchmark its environmental performance for issues such as greenhouse gases, spill prevention and storm water management, waste management, and community relations. The certification process is rigorous and transparent, with results independently verified every two years, and each participant's individual performance made public annually.



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Calendar of Events

11/19 Maritime Exchange Cold Storage Facility Task Force Meeting
 11:00 a.m. – noon
 240 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
 Contact [Yair Farkas](#)

Maritime Exchange Chilean Fruit Working Group Meeting
 Noon – 1:30 p.m.
 240 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
 Contact [Yair Farkas](#)

11/20 Seamen's Center of Wilmington Board Meeting
 Noon

11/22 Chilean and American Chamber of Commerce Annual Friend of Chile Luncheon
 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
 Union League of Philadelphia
 140 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102
[Register](#)

12/05 Maritime Exchange Government Affairs Committee Meeting
 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 Contact [Yair Farkas](#)

Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society and World Trade Association of Philadelphia Joint Holiday Dinner
 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
 Ballroom at the Ben
 834 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107
 Contact [Linda Greene](#)

12/06 Area Maritime Security Committee General Meeting
 9:30 a.m. – noon
 USCG Sector Delaware Bay
 1 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19147
 Contact: [Glena Tredinnick](#)

CBP Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting – Introduction of Area Port Director, Cleatus P. Hunt, Jr.
 200 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
 Contact: Sean Butler

For a complete schedule and event details, visit www.maritimedelriv.com.



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