



MARITIME EXCHANGE
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THE BEACON



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Celebrating 150 years of service!!!

May 21, 2025 - Save the date for a once in a generation gala commemoration



The Maritime Exchange staff in 1895 at the Bourse Building in Philadelphia. The vessel schedule blackboard can be seen in the background.

It was still four years until Thomas Edison would invent the incandescent light bulb and one year before Alexander Graham Bell would patent the telephone, when port leaders came together at the Commercial Exchange on February 25, 1875 to form the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange. To mark this historic and monumental achievement, all hands are on deck at the Exchange to plan a gala dinner. The sesquicentennial milestone will be celebrated on May 21, 2025 at the Switch House in Philadelphia, an event that will feature live music, historical displays, plenty of

libations, photo booths, giveaways, and if rumors are true... a group that will sing sea shanties.

“The port and its members should be proud that the organization formed 150 years ago by those visionary leaders still thrives today and carries out the mission bequeathed to us by gaslamp and candlelight,” said Exchange President George McCarthy. “I am honored to be at the helm during this auspicious occasion in the port’s history and look forward to celebrating with our members in the spring. Everyone in our office is proud to be part of an organization with such deep historical roots!”

According to records from the period when the Exchange was formed, over 1,600 foreign trade vessels, comprising 500 American flag vessels and 1,100 foreign flag vessels, called on Philadelphia in 1878 alone. During this same year, there were over 5,800 arrivals in the coastwise trade, 4,000 of which were schooners. This was also an era which saw sail slowly give way to steam.

“Philadelphia has such a rich maritime tradition and was at the forefront of maritime commerce for the burgeoning nation,” said Exchange Chairman John Reynolds. “The Delaware River remains a premier port in the United States and has been fortunate these

continued on page 14

Vessel arrivals higher again

The 2024 vessel count exceeded 2023 significantly

For the first time in almost two decades, vessel arrivals topped the 2,500 mark last year—Maritime Exchange records show that 2,501 ships arrived at Delaware River port facilities in 2024, an increase of 100 vessels over the previous year. Contributing factors included an increase in containerized imports and vehicles and continued growth on the export side.

“This last year’s vessel arrival number had year-over-year growth not seen in the last twenty years,” said Exchange President George McCarthy. “And the total over 2,500 has not occurred since 2006.”

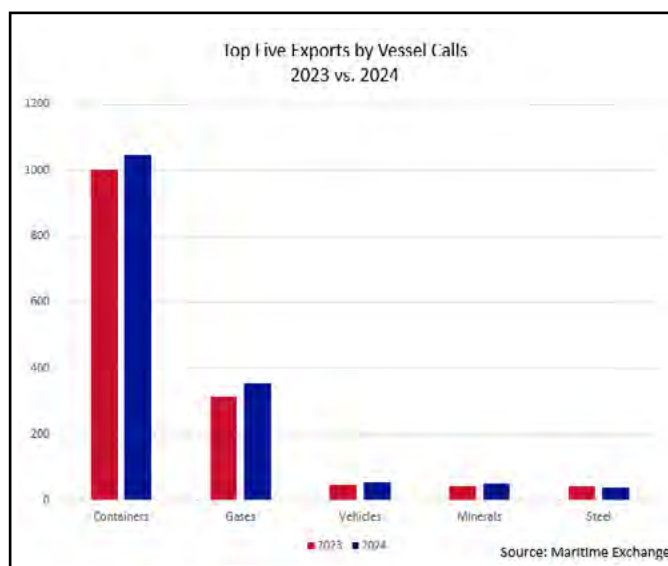
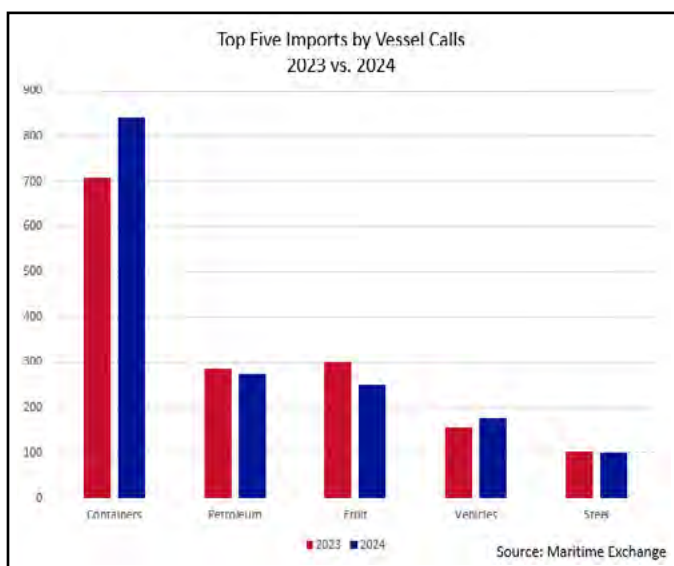
Export cargoes led the year again, with petroleum exports up 16 ships or 89%, wet gas exports up 13%, vehicle exports up 13%, and vessels leaving with min-

eral cargoes growing 21%. Total exports for the region were valued at \$13.5 billion and came in at over 1.2 million metric tons.

On the import side, ships carrying containerized goods continued to increase year over year, finishing 2024 with 842 arrivals, an increase of 19%. Vehicle import vessel arrivals also rose, reaching 176, up 13%, and mineral imports were up 12%. The value of imported cargo in 2024 was \$128.3 billion, including 34.9 million metric tons of goods.

“The number of vessel arrivals is not the only milestone for 2024,” said Exchange Director of Operations,

continued on page 14



Interview with
Area Port Director
Cleatus P. Hunt, Jr.
U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Area Port of Philadelphia



With a long and distinguished career with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Cleatus P. Hunt, Jr. was recently appointed Port Director, Area Port of Philadelphia. With over 30 years of experience in federal law enforcement, he most recently served as U.S. Customs and Border Protection regional attaché in Japan with responsibility for Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. He has also served as the Port Director in Dallas, Texas and the Acting Port Director for the port of Newark/New York area. The Beacon had a chance to catch up with Mr. Hunt and get his take on Delaware River operations.

Q: With your extensive experience, and the opportunity to choose many other positions, what were the driving factors in your decision to come to the Delaware River as Port Director?

A: My number one criterion for requesting the Area Port of Philadelphia was to go to a place that was significantly relevant from a national security perspective, from an economic perspective, a place where my experience and knowledge could make a positive impact, and a location where I would have the opportunity to improve operations and stakeholder relationships. The Delaware River and Bay is the nation’s #1 import region for perishables, so our area seaports and airports are vital to our nation’s economy.

Secondly, Philadelphia’s geographic location uniquely positions CBP’s Area Port Director to have a

continued on page 15



Thanks for the Hearty Welcome

Welcome to the first Beacon of the Maritime Exchange's 150th year in continuous service to the maritime community of the Delaware River and Bay!

As incoming President, the last few months under training have gone by in a flash, with the most enjoyable aspect being the in-person meetings with so many of the Exchange Membership. Many thanks to my predecessor for the introductions, company visits, and meetings, and the excellent transfer of the ins and outs of such a dynamic organization.

From our Maritime On-Line® system, TRACS, our 24/7 U.S. based human response, our committee members, this Beacon, and our daily informational Clips, our already diversified portfolio of service remains ready and we

are excited to find ways to be of even greater help to the maritime community.

As a prior cargo ship manager, keeping 75+ vessels moving across the globe while ensuring their safe, secure, and efficient cargo transfers, one quickly learns to appreciate those global ports and terminals that go the extra length to ensure safe and rapid turn-arounds of visiting ships. Little did this ship manager (despite many oil cargos to/from Delaware River terminals) realize until joining the Maritime Exchange, just how much detailed attention to safety, security, and efficiency had been generated by the professional cooperation between public and private entities very often as initiated by the Maritime Exchange.

The ability to pick up the phone (or participate in a "Teams" meeting) and have an open discussion with known industry counterparts is of incredible value to any business, more so within the trade and logistics world. This human-to-human dialogue is becoming even more crucial as an increasingly large number of the basic business tasks and information exchanges become computer-based.

The maritime business has always been one of open dialogue and agreements between parties that know and trust each other. Already in 2025 we are being reminded daily how open dialogue between local maritime interests remains key to steering through the significant changes coming out of Washington D.C.

The 150-year history of the Maritime Exchange is an incredible walk back through the maritime evolution of not only the Delaware River but equally, our young nation itself. What began on February 25, 1875 with four Philadelphia merchants seeking ways to ensure the Port of Philadelphia's prominence amongst U.S. ports, your Maritime Exchange remains an integral part of the safety, security, and efficiency of the Delaware River and Bay.

Reflecting on our 150-year history, we are extremely excited to be putting together the plans and pieces for our 150th Anniversary Gala event! As a fan of all things history, your Exchange President looks forward to serving as your host to what we hope will be a unique maritime event. So please mark your calendars for Wednesday, May 21, 2025 (the middle of National Maritime Week) to join us at Cescaphe's Switch House located on the banks of the Delaware River in North Philadelphia. Details to follow.

Thank you for your trust to serve in this dynamic role and for your help to continue the remarkable history of the Maritime Exchange of the Delaware River and Bay well into the future.

George E. McCarthy

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The Beacon Turns 35!

It is with heartfelt gratitude that we thank our many Beacon readers and contributors who have been with us over the past 35 years. From the port's success stories to the issues that have challenged our industry, the Exchange has strived to keep its readership informed on topics that matter to the Delaware River maritime community.

The Exchange also extends its sincere appreciation to its loyal advertisers who have made the publication of this newsletter possible.

Thank you, everyone!

All Systems Go!

First Chilean systems approach grapes hit the market

Five months after the U.S. Department of Agriculture approved a systems approach for Chilean grape imports entering the United States, the first shipment to undergo the protocol arrived in the U.S. via the Delaware River on December 20, 2024! This historic moment for U.S. and Chilean trade relations, as well as for the economic growth of the Delaware River, follows decades of work to allow growers from Atacama, Coquimbo, Valparaiso, and parts of other regions of Chile to export table grapes to the U.S. without fumigation.

Rather than undergo the standard Methyl Bromide fumigation process, the systems approach involves a series of mitigation measures applied at the origin of the fruit including strict guidelines that must be followed by the grape farms, the use of insect-proof packing houses, and a rigorous inspection process in Chile. The work and preparations seem to have paid off as the first shipment was able to immediately enter the larger U.S. fruit market problem free and stakeholders have reported no issues with subsequent shipments.

“The current and inaugural season for Chilean grapes that have been imported under USDA APHIS’ approved systems approach has been very successful,” said Ed Fitzgerald, Vice President of Trade Services at Geodis. “The entry processing and government release of the systems approach grape shipments have been seamless from the start of the season. This has expedited the movement of the pre-inspected grapes once discharged from the vessel and available at the terminal directly into the domestic distribution chain. The current volume of grapes under the systems approach is only a small percentage of the entire Chilean import grape season. We look forward to the continual growth of Chilean grape importations under the systems approach program for years to come.”

The height of the Chilean fruit season—which is expected to peak later in February through March and April—has not yet arrived. As is true every year, Delaware River ports will process roughly 70% of the fruit bound for the U.S. Of all the grapes entering the U.S. this year from Chile, however,

less than 30% are currently projected to be approved under the systems approach. Given the program’s nascency, the relatively small proportion is not surprising. In future years, as facilities are better established and growers and exporters become more familiar with the process, Chile expects to increase the proportion of its grape exports that undergo pre-approval via the systems approach.

Outside of the systems approach, the Chilean grape season can be a logistically complex undertaking. An influx of a particular import in a relatively short window of time would pose obvious challenges on its own. Adding to that, the fact that grapes in particular need to undergo methyl bromide fumigation adds time and manpower into the equation. The further difficulties posed by two other coinciding fruit seasons, Morocco and Peru, not to mention the cross-disciplinary logistical balancing act that is required to keep any port running on the least busy of days, makes the task of operating a successful fruit season Herculean.



Welcome New Members

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Into its third year, the Exchange’s Chilean Fruit Working Group brings stakeholders together to help identify and address issues as they may arise. At the height of the season, the group meets frequently to review the status of current and projected cargo volumes, anticipated vessel arrivals, fumigation and warehouse capacities, and federal inspection and clearance concerns.

“The Delaware River is fortunate to have such an engaged community that works together to share information on current and expected volumes as well as challenges in order to facilitate a successful fruit season,” said Exchange Chief Administrative Officer Michael Fink. “You often don’t find this level of inter-port cooperation in other areas, and it is a testament to the commitment our stakeholders have in maintaining the Delaware River as the premier destination for fresh fruit cargo in the United States.”

Exchange members re-member

With every new year comes new opportunities, and a membership with the Exchange remains the best way to stay in touch with the Delaware River maritime community and to identify and take advantage of the opportunities available within the industry. With many benefits including an industry calendar of events, job postings, daily briefings, critical shipping data, intra-industry committees, and up-to-the-minute updates that impact maritime trade, a membership with the Exchange is more valuable than it ever has been.

The majority of the Exchange’s existing membership has already renewed for 2025, and that should come as no surprise to those familiar with the organization. In the transforming political landscape, the Exchange keeps its members informed with the latest changes to federal regulations and policies, and through its advocacy efforts, works to affect positive change locally and nationally using the collective strength and voice of the community.

Members have the unique opportunity to work not just with the Ex-

change, but with one another. The organization’s various committees and work groups provide a forum through which colleagues, and even competitors, within the industry can meet and communicate. This level of openness and collaboration allows organizations and individuals to have their voices heard and amplified to policy and decision makers who can affect positive change. Key groups such as the Maritime Operations Committee, the Chilean Fruit Working Group, the Cold Storage Facility Task Force, and the Government Affairs committee identify and actualize real initiatives that benefit our shared community.

To help facilitate vessel and cargo movement, the state-of-the-art Maritime On-Line® system lies at the heart of the Exchange’s operations, providing participants access to advanced vessel schedules, historical reports, statistics, real-time vessel tracking, cargo manifest processing, stow plan filing, and more. Backed by a VHF radio network spanning the river, operators provide ship-to-shore commu-

nication services and live expert phone support every hour of every single day, 24/7/365.

Beyond the legislative actions and online services, the Exchange hosts training sessions that help some members meet required certifications, educational seminars that help orient

professionals of all experience levels to our port, a free notary service, and even an answering service.

Perhaps most important of all are the services on the horizon. The Exchange is a dynamic organization that

continued on page 17



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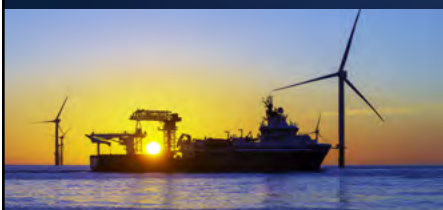
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Enhancing ports with AI: safety, sustainability, and smarter operations

By: Vince Forrestall, Owner
Nicom IT Solutions, Inc.

Ports have long been the backbone of global trade, but modern challenges require new solutions. Integrating artificial intelligence, or AI, into port operations promises to revolutionize how ports function especially in safety, sustainability, and operational efficiency. AI technologies provide practical, data-driven solutions that help ports navigate complex operations and improve their long-term performance.

One of the most critical areas where AI excels is safety. While ports are busy and potentially hazardous environments, AI-powered systems can significantly reduce risks by enhancing real-time monitoring and predictive analytics. AI systems can identify potential equipment failures or risky situations well in advance, allowing for timely intervention and reducing the likelihood of accidents. By leveraging these tools, ports can create a safer working environment for all personnel.

Additionally, AI systems built specifically for port environments can analyze vast amounts of data and dramatically improve operational efficiency.

Imagine a port managing hundreds of vessels daily, each with unique schedules and requirements. AI-based systems with adaptive scheduling and traffic flow analytics enable these ports to handle heavy traffic while minimizing delays. By aligning vessel movements with berth availability, they prevent congestion and support efficient cargo handling.

AI-driven route planning helps optimize the flow of vessels entering and exiting ports ensuring that operations are as smooth and efficient as possible. This also reduces waiting times and increases the port's overall capacity without the need for additional infrastructure investments.

Cybersecurity is a pressing concern that AI can significantly af-

fect. As ports become increasingly digital, the risk of cyberattacks grows. AI-powered cybersecurity solutions offer robust defenses by continuously monitoring network behavior and adapting to evolving threats. These solutions provide real-time protection, securing sensitive information and critical infrastructure while enhancing operational resilience.

The environmental impact of port operations is also a growing concern, and AI can help tackle this issue by promoting sustainability. AI systems can monitor emissions, optimize fuel usage, and reduce idling times, enabling ports to minimize their carbon footprint. These technologies align with global efforts to make shipping and logistics greener and more sustainable.

Effective port AI solutions are highly flexible, designed to integrate seamlessly into existing systems, and modular, allowing for incremental adoption. Ports benefit from systems that start with immediate-impact areas, such as predictive maintenance and traffic flow optimization, and expand gradually,

incorporating additional features over time to suit evolving needs.

Of course, the transition to AI-driven systems comes with challenges. Implementing new technologies requires investment and a commitment to integrating AI into existing systems. However, this process can be achieved in phases, allowing ports to adopt AI gradually without significant disruptions to current operations. The focus should be areas where AI can offer the most immediate value, such as predictive maintenance, cybersecurity, and route optimization.

So, what's the takeaway? AI-based systems are already transforming the port industry by enhancing safety, improving efficiency, and promoting sustainability. With the right approach, ports can embrace AI technologies without disrupting their workforce, focusing on creating new opportunities for growth and innovation. The future of global trade lies in more intelligent, safer, and greener operations, and AI is one of the critical tools to help ports achieve these goals.

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Meet Our New Board Member

Joseph F. McGinn Energy Transfer

The Exchange is pleased to introduce the newest member of its board of directors, Joe McGinn, Vice President of Public Affairs and Government Relations for Energy Transfer. In his two years away from Energy Transfer, Joe founded McGinn Public Strategies, where he worked to achieve solutions to complicated public affairs matters.

Starting his career with Sunoco in 2004, Joe has been with the company for over a decade in various positions in the fields of community relations, communications, media relations, philanthropy, recruiting, labor relations, human resources, and government affairs. His responsibilities now include public affairs, government relations, external communications, and media relations.

Prior to Sunoco, Joe worked as a district representative for a U.S. Congressman in Pennsylvania. He led outreach engagement with con-



stituents and spoke on behalf of the congressman at public events.

Joe earned a Master's Degree in Government Administration from the University of Pennsylvania, a BA in English from Columbia University in New York City, a Master of Government Administration certificate from Fels Institute of Government, and a certificate in Human Resource Management from Villanova University. Joe resides in Aston, Pennsylvania with his wife and children.

Welcome aboard, Joe.

Seaboard Marine's new LNG powered vessel joins the fleet

Seaboard Marine proudly announced the arrival of a new liquefied natural gas-powered container and refrigerated cargo vessel named the "Seaboard Voyager" to the Delaware River. With a capacity of 3,500 TEU, including over 1,000 onboard refrigerated container plugs, the "Seaboard Voyager" is the first in the company's new V-Class fleet. Seaboard Marine also revealed plans for seven additional dual-fueled LNG ships scheduled for delivery over the next fifteen months.

The "Seaboard Voyager" sets a new standard for environmental responsibility by utilizing LNG, a cleaner fuel that significantly reduces emissions and minimizes the company's carbon footprint. With new cargo and cutting-edge technology, the "Seaboard Voyager" is designed to provide faster transit times and enhance Seaboard Marine's ability to transport more cargo efficiently between ports.

"We are excited to announce that the "Seaboard Voyager" has

joined our fleet," said Seaboard Marine President and CEO, Eddie Gonzalez. "This new fuel-efficient vessel represents the next chapter in Seaboard Marine's history of market leadership and exceptional customer service by providing increased cargo capacity and reliability. The "Seaboard Voyager" is a testament to our dedication to growth and meeting the evolving needs of our customers."

The "Seaboard Voyager" will enter a port rotation including Colon, Panama; Rio Haina, Dominican Republic; Kingston, Jamaica; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Brooklyn, New York. It is the first of eight new LNG-fueled ships to be delivered by the end of 2025, joining Seaboard Marine's network operating between North America, the Caribbean Basin, and Central and South America. This new addition significantly enhances the company's maritime operations, strategically connecting ports and businesses throughout the Caribbean Basin.



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A wealth of talent at the Exchange

As the Exchange approaches its 150th anniversary, I would like to recognize a few of its long-time board members whose guidance to and support of the organization has been invaluable over the years. We have relied on their wealth of knowledge of the organization and of the port time and time again, and the Exchange extends its gratitude at this momentous time in the organization's history.

To thank and recognize all the board members, past and present, who have dedicated themselves to better the port under the Exchange's umbrella would fill volumes. But perhaps by recognizing just a few of our members that represent different facets of the industry, *The Beacon* readers will gain some insight into the talent and strong character of the many people that make up the Exchange and its board.

William F. Anderson, II
President & General Manager,
General Marine Refrigeration
Corporation

Refrigeration is in Bill Anderson's blood. His grandfather, William F. Anderson, started the business in 1925. He instilled honest, hard-working principles into his son, Gustave W. Anderson—whom many in the port community today remember with fondness and respect—as well as his grandson.

Bill joined General Marine Refrigeration as Service Manager in 1976. As President and GM, today he oversees the entire business operation, including purchasing, engineering, sales, and service.

Bill has long been an active leader in the port community. He joined the Maritime Exchange board in

1992, and brought his own brand of common-sense decision-making and humor. He is also a member and past president of the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society board and is President of the Vessel Owners' & Captains' Association. This may be the role for which the port community best knows and appreciates Bill, as he is responsible for what is commonly called the "Vessel Owners' Dinner;" the best—and only—lobster and steak banquet in the maritime industry.

He is also a past president of the Independence Square Club, a member and past chapter program vice president of the Harmony Society, formerly The Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America.

In 2007, Bill received the prestigious Stephen F. Girard Medal.

Eugene Mattioni
Partner, Mattioni Ltd.

Gene Mattioni represents the epitome of what an admiralty lawyer should be. Not only is he well versed in the law, he understands ship operations, knows the maritime industry inside and out, and he has a huge heart.

Having graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 1962, Gene sailed for a variety of ship operators, primarily Farrell Lines, obtaining his Master's license in 1968.

He responded to a new calling when he earned his J.D. from Georgetown University Law School in 1971. After graduating, he clerked for the Hon. John B. Hannum, U.S. District Court Judge, before joining his law firm.

Over his 50-year career, his practice has been amazingly diverse including civil litigation, admiralty and maritime law, workers compensation, civil rights, real estate, medical malpractice, aviation, toxic poisoning, occupational lead and heavy metal poisoning, and ben-

zene poisoning. He is also a well-published author and noted lecturer.

A great love of his life, second only to his wife Marie, is the Maritime Academy Charter School in Philadelphia, which he co-founded. Gene has dedicated countless hours to helping the school thrive and its cadets succeed, and he is its foremost cheerleader.

Gene has been honored for his dedication and generosity many times over, including receiving the SCI Spirit of the Port Award and the Living Faith Award from St. Bridget's Parish Church.

Richard Venuti
General Manager, General Marine & Industrial Services, Inc.

One is hard-pressed to find an individual more dedicated and well-versed in the port than Richie Venuti. He started working in the maritime community over 44 years ago in the ship repair industry, beginning with Atlantic Port Contractors, Inc./Philadelphia Ship Maintenance Company, Inc. where he remained for 33 years. He is currently the General Manager for General Marine & Industrial Services. During his years in the industry he has concentrated his efforts in the sales and marketing areas.

Richie is also known in the port to so many of us for his work with the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society, of which he is a past president and on several committees of which he has served. He has given untold hours of his time to help make it the successful organization it is today.

Along with some of our longer-term board members, Richie is an unofficial historian for the organization and the port. Because of Richie's enthusiastic and unwavering involvement these many years, he is a wealth of historical knowledge of port companies, business relationships, trends, and people; a resource to whom the Exchange staff has turned time and again.

In addition to being an Exchange board member, he also serves on the board of the Vessel Owners' and Captains' Association, and has served as Management Trustee for the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local 329 Welfare and Pension Funds.

I look forward to the next event in the port, as I know I will see Bill, Gene, and Richie in attendance.



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Delaware River Unsung Hero



Juana Reyes

Customer Service Representative, Delaware River Stevedores, Tioga Marine Terminal

try, however, goes back two decades before that. In high school, she took a part-time job with a freight forwarder. She learned the ropes over the course of the next 19 years, taking care of paperwork and making connections in the industry. In 2009, when she was looking for her next opportunity, she found Delaware River Stevedores where she celebrated 15 years of a job she loves in November of 2024.

Today, Juana is the leader of the DRS customer service team. She handles every sort of client request that could possibly be needed from quoting terminals or stevedore rates, to researching customs question, to overseeing marine guards at the terminal, and coordinating with truckers; all sometimes across language barriers as is often the case in a global industry. The job requires a tremendous amount of patience,


but Juana is perfectly suited to it. “Sometimes, you really have to hold the customer’s hand through the entire process,” she explained. “But I love dealing with people. I love to keep a smile on their faces and keep them coming back. We all know it’s a business, but you have to keep it a little personal too. I’m a people person, and I really like the work even when the work gets hard”

In most situations, one might expect customer service to be a fairly static position sitting at a desk and answering calls. For Juana, the job is dynamic. “If there’s something that needs to be done...if CBP Ag finds something on the cargo and it needs to be addressed, I’m setting everything up, making sure everyone is on time, and I’m on the dock from the first thing in the morning until the work is done.”

Juana’s passion for her work and her ability to get the job done—no matter what the job is—pay off. “I’ve lost count of how many compliments have been received praising Juana’s calm and helpful demeanor” says John Rowan, General Manager at Tioga Marine Terminal for Delaware River Stevedores. “She is a big reason why DRS has so many long-standing customers.”

Along with customer service, Juana also assists with security, billing and making sure the common area is always stocked with snacks and goodies for her co-workers. When she’s not at work, Juana spends her time cooking for and doting on her three grandchildren.

Thank you Juana, for everything you do for our industry!



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Saporito honored with SCI Spirit of the Port award

The Seamen’s Church Institute of Philadelphia & South Jersey selected Andrew Saporito, Executive Director/CEO of the South Jersey Port Corporation, to receive the 2025 Spirit of the Port award. The award recognizes an individual who embodies the spirit and humanity of the Delaware River regional port community.

“South Jersey Ports have been such a great partner to SCI for many, many years. They support us in so many ways. In addition to financial support, they collect donations and stuff ditty bags during the holiday season and lease us storage space, which in the days before portable WIFI served as a chapel, and phone bank for seafarers to make calls to loved ones,” said Helene Pierson, SCI Executive Director. “We have not recognized the South Jersey Ports contributions at our annual luncheon in 28 years since Alfred J. Castagnola received the honor in 1997. Joseph Balzano, for whom the former Beckett Terminal has been renamed some years ago, received the honor 33 years ago in 1992. Andy Saporito’s leadership has been outstanding since taking the helm there, and we look forward to bestowing this honor upon him.”

Saporito came to the Delaware River after a successful 38-year career at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey where he served in management positions throughout the organization, most recently serving as Deputy Director and Senior Advisor – Special Projects. Since joining the South Jersey Port Corporation, Saporito has spearheaded the strategic expansion of the corporation’s capacity to meet evol-

ing supply chain demands. With a keen eye for organizational development, he has cultivated a robust management team, fostering a culture of innovation and efficiency. Under his guidance, South Jersey Port Corporation is making significant capital improvements, modernizing infrastructure, and ensuring smooth operations.

“Mr. Saporito has been very supportive of our relationship and the services provided by SCI to the ships docked at SJPC. He fully understands the value of the day to day support of the organization, and SJPC is very active in all our fundraising events,” said Robert Herb, Seamen’s Church Institute President. “Since Andy has been at the helm, I joined him on marketing missions during which he successfully secured and strengthened existing business and captured new opportunities. A well-deserved honor and a wonderful ambassador for the Delaware River!”

Saporito is a member of the board of directors of the Maritime Exchange, the Southern Jersey Development Council, and the American Metals Supply Chain Institute. He is also a member and past president of the Maritime Association of the Port of New York and New Jersey.

“I am deeply honored to receive recognition from the Seamen’s Church Institute and to join the esteemed company of those who have contributed to the success of the ports of our region. This recognition holds special meaning to me, as the work of SCI has always been a cornerstone of support for the maritime community,” said Saporito. “For decades, SCI has served as a vital lifeline for seafarers visiting our ports, offering



not just essential services, but also a reminder of the connection and care that bind us all in the maritime industry. On behalf of the entire South Jersey Ports team, I am proud to be part of that enduring legacy and look forward to continuing our collective work to support and strengthen the maritime sector.”

SCI will present the Spirit of the Port award at a luncheon on Feb. 27, 2025 beginning at 11:30 a.m., at The Sapphire Grand, 1849 Cooper Street, Deptford, New Jersey.

For tickets and sponsorship information, contact Rebecca Pierson at 215-940-9900 or rpierson@scphiladelphia.org.



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SCW – a beacon of hope for seafarers

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

In the bustling port city of Wilmington, the Seamen’s Center stands as a vital resource for seafarers navigating the often lonely and perilous waters of the maritime industry. Over the past few months, the center has seen a revitalization in its efforts to support these brave men and women, thanks in large part to the amazing volunteers that are the backbone of the center.

New executive director Kathryn Bradley, whose leadership has ushered in a renewed focus on community engagement and support for seafarers, noted, “As I’ve been settling into my new role I have been continuously inspired by the incredible strength and depth of engagement from our volunteers. Their unwavering dedication to the well-being of our seafarers not only enriches our programs but also creates a warm and welcoming environment for our visitors and that has made my transition so much easier.

“It is a privilege to work alongside such enthusiastic individuals who truly embody the spirit of community,” Bradley said, reminding all of us that even the smallest acts of kindness can have a profound impact on those who spend months at sea. “Together, we are making a difference in the lives of those who serve our global trade.”

The Christmas Ditty Box program, a cherished tradition at the Seamen’s Center, aims to bring a touch of holiday cheer to seafarers who spend extended periods away from their families. This year, the center received an outpouring of support from local church and charity groups, including the Rotary and Lions Clubs, as well as individual knitting groups that dedicated their time and talents to crafting warm clothing and preparing care packages. Donations of toiletries, hats, scarves, socks, gloves, playing cards, notepads, pens, and candy flooded in, highlighting our collective commitment to supporting those who work tirelessly on the high seas.

During the Christmas at Sea period, the center welcomed over 45 ships, ensuring that every crew member received a package filled with carefully curated items. This monumental effort would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation of local groups who gathered at the center to help pack and wrap the ditty boxes. The spirit of collaboration was palpable as volunteers came together to ensure that seafarers felt remembered and appreciated during the holiday season.

Among the many groups that contributed to this heartwarming initiative was the Brandywine Rotary



Members of St. Georges Church, St. Georges, Delaware, visit the Seamen’s Center of Wilmington to help pack ditty boxes for seafarers.

Club, which brought along Coaty, the beloved mascot of the Delaware Blue Coats basketball team. Although Coaty had some difficulty wrapping gift boxes (after all, horses do have hooves!), he brought a sense of joy and laughter to the occasion. Coaty also distributed basketballs to the seafarers, bridging the gap between the maritime world and the Delaware sports community. The presence of a local sports mascot added an extra layer of excitement to the event, illustrating how interconnected Wilmington’s communities are when it comes to supporting those at sea.

The knitting groups, whose members poured their hearts into crafting beautiful hats and scarves, deserve special recognition. Their dedication ensured that countless seafarers received not just items of warmth, but also tokens of love and care from the community. The response from the seafarers has been overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing their gratitude through notes, emails, and letters. The heartfelt messages have reinforced the significance of the work being done at the Seamen’s Center and the vital role it plays in the lives of those who serve at sea.

Seafarers often find themselves at sea for extended periods, typically around nine months at a time. While

they may be surrounded by 20 to 25 crew mates during each voyage, the isolation of being away from family and loved ones during the holidays can be profound. The dangers of the high seas and the challenges of life aboard a vessel can weigh heavily on their minds. For many, the holiday packages received from the Seamen’s Center serve as a reminder that they are not forgotten, that there are people on land who care deeply about their well-being.

As we reflect on this year’s Christmas Ditty Box program, the Seamen’s Center of Wilmington extends its heartfelt gratitude to all who participated. The collective efforts of the community have made a significant impact on the lives of seafarers, reminding them that they are valued and appreciated. As Kathryn Bradley and her team look ahead, they hope that all who contributed will join them again for Christmas 2025, continuing the tradition of kindness and support for those who brave the waters.

In a world where the sea can often feel isolating, the Seamen’s Center of Wilmington stands as a beacon of hope, a testament to the power of community, and a reminder that even the smallest acts of kindness can make a world of difference.



Coaty, the Delaware Blue Coats mascot and part of their Community Engagement team, was on hand to wrap basketballs.

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Philly Shipyard is now Hanwha Philly Shipyard

In June of 2024, Hanwha Ocean and Hanwha Systems announced their acquisition of Philly Shipyard, the iconic South Philadelphia shipbuilder responsible for about half of the U.S. Jones Act vessels built since 2000.

Hanwha Systems is a pre-eminent defense company in the Republic of Korea, focusing on technological development in the maritime sector. It has innovated in unmanned maritime systems, naval radars, and sensors for Manned and Unmanned Teaming operations. Hanwha Ocean is a major player in worldwide shipbuilding, including ammonia and LNG-powered carriers as well as destroyers, submarines, and frigates.

“The opportunity to collaborate with Philly Shipyard, a significant shipbuilder with a storied history, is an exciting strategic opportunity that will allow Hanwha Systems to deploy its state-of-the-art naval systems and associated technologies in the U.S. market,” said Sung-Chul Eoh, CEO of Hanwha Systems.

“We look forward to leveraging our shipbuilding and manufacturing know-how in continuing the success of Philly Shipyard as it meets the expanding needs of the U.S. for decades to come,” said Hanwha Ocean CEO, Hyek Woong.

Established in 1997, Philly Shipyard supplies and services approximately half of the largest U.S. commercial vessels. Most recently, it has constructed four of five National Security Multi-Mission Vessels commissioned by the U.S. Maritime Administration designed for use as training vessels by maritime academies. The most recent, “NSMV IV Lone Star State,” was launched at the end of January 2025 and is expected to be delivered to the Texas A&M Maritime Academy in Galveston, Texas later this year.

Aker ASA, the former owners of Philly shipyard spoke positively of the acquisition. “After two decades of stewardship, it is with great honor that we transition the ownership from Aker to Hanwha,” said Philly Shipyard ASA Chairman, Kristian Røkke. “Recognized as a global leader, Hanwha brings a wealth of sophisticated shipbuilding experience that will enable Philly Shipyard to realize a grander vision for its employees and customers. Reflecting on the past 17 years, I am personally grateful for the opportunity to have worked side by side the people of Philly Shipyard and eagerly anticipate witnessing the shipyard’s continued growth and success in the future.”

In Memoriam

Dennis J. Colgan, Jr.



The Exchange regrets to inform the community that Dennis J. Colgan, Jr. passed away on December 24, 2024 at 84 years old. Dennis spent his career in the Delaware River maritime industry, serving in both the public sector as part of the U.S. Customs Service and in the private sector with his work at Barthco International. He was also a driving force behind the Exchange’s creation of a region-wide cargo manifesting system which ultimately became TRACS.

A graduate of Northeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia and then Temple University, he started his career with the United States Customs Service, now known as U.S. Customs and Border Protection. His entrepreneurial spirit took over and he left Customs to start a Customs Brokerage business—Barthco International Inc. His leadership, determination, and business acumen grew Barthco from a small local customs broker operating out of a trailer at the Philadelphia Airport to one of the largest privately held global logistics providers in the country, headquartered in the Philadelphia Navy Yard with 700 employees spread out over 12 offices throughout the United States and an overseas office in Hong Kong.

Dennis was a highly respected maritime executive and was recognized as such by his peers and industry associations, receiving Man of the Year awards from Holy Family University, World Trade Association of Philadelphia, and Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society. During and after his years at Barthco, Dennis served on the boards of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay, Holy Family University, Nazareth Hospital, Belt Line Railroad, and Seaman’s Church Institute of Philadelphia. In 2018, Dennis received an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Holy Family University to honor his contributions to the public good.

Dennis was known for his love and devotion to family and friends, for his generosity and advice to those who needed it most, and for his philanthropy and counsel where it could help the most.

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PhilaPort marks historic milestones

PhilaPort is celebrating a year of outstanding achievements and milestones. In 2024, the port welcomed the largest vessel ever to call the Port of Philadelphia. The “CMA CGM Marco Polo,” with a capacity of 16,200 TEUs, arrived at the Packer Avenue Marine Terminal in a celebratory fashion, under a water cannon salute by the Philadelphia Fire Department’s Marine Unit. Accommodating larger vessels was a key objective of the Delaware River Main Channel Deepening Project. With the 45’ channel completed and significant terminal-side infrastructure upgrades, the arrival of the “Marco Polo” showcased PhilaPort’s capacity to handle the world’s largest ships.

In addition to this milestone, PhilaPort broke ground on a new 165,500-square-foot refrigerated warehouse, marking the final phase in the completion of the PhilaPort Distribution Center. Slated for completion in 2026, this state-of-the-art facility will significantly increase cold storage capacity, meeting the region’s growing demand for refrigerated goods.

PhilaPort also released its Strategic Plan, Destination 2040. This comprehensive plan will guide the port’s development over the next 15 years, ensuring it remains a vital hub for global trade and a key driver of economic growth for the region well into the future.

In 2024, PhilaPort also achieved success on the funding front, securing two federal grants totaling nearly \$300 million. The Environmental Protection Agency, through its Clean Ports Program, awarded PhilaPort \$79.7 million to


fund zero-emission cargo handling equipment and emissions reduction planning. This initiative will improve air quality across the port terminals and benefit the surrounding communities.

In September 2024, PhilaPort was also awarded an INFRA grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund the final phase of berth construction at SouthPort. With Berths 1 and 2 representing the first new berths on the Delaware River in over 55 years, the completed SouthPort Marine Terminal will further enhance infrastructure and capacity.

In terms of volume, PhilaPort reported another year of growth, with a notable 8% increase in total tonnage. Record-breaking numbers were achieved in both containers (840,751 TEUs, up 13%) and new vehicle imports (281,819 units, up 9%).


“We are pleased to report record-breaking volumes in both containers and automobiles this year,” said Jeff Theobald, PhilaPort Executive Director. “These accomplishments underscore the effectiveness of our infrastructure investments. By enhancing efficiency and capacity, we are not only strengthening our competitive position but also delivering significant benefits to the port, the Commonwealth, and the regional economy.”

“Looking ahead, PhilaPort remains committed to leveraging strategic investments to drive continued growth and volume increases. We are grateful for the unwavering support of our partners, stakeholders, and the port community, and we look forward to another year of achievement in 2025.”



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South Jersey Ports announces significant growth in 2024

South Jersey Ports moved over 3 million short tons through its four marine terminals in 2024. There is a notable 7.8% increase in total cargo volumes at its Camden Marine Terminals for 2024, compared to the previous year, driven by strong demand across key sectors, particularly wood products and steel.

A standout feature of this growth is the record-breaking rail volume at the Camden terminals, reflecting the critical role of rail connectivity in supporting the port's operations. The surge in cargo volumes has prompted South Jersey Ports to make strategic investments, totaling more than \$8 million, in new infrastructure and equipment aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and ensuring continued growth. These upgrades are part of an ongoing effort to bolster rail services, with additional major capital improvements planned for the near future.

Wood Products and Steel Propel Growth

One of the most striking trends in 2024 has been the surge in wood product cargo, which saw an almost 300% increase in tonnage compared to 2023. This growth is largely attributed to the addition of a new shipping line utilizing Camden Marine Terminals for the importation of wood products into the U.S. market. In 2024, wood product tonnage reached 90,946 tons, up from just 23,266 tons the previous year. This shift reflects the Camden terminal's role as a key entry point for forest products.

Steel cargo volumes also saw a significant jump, with a 29.3% year-over-year increase. Steel tonnage grew from 503,979 tons in 2023 to 651,425 tons in 2024, with the winter months being particularly strong for steel imports. Importers, seeking alternatives to the St. Lawrence Seaway, have found Camden Marine Terminals to be an attractive option, making the steel business a year-round operation at the port. This repeat business illustrates the value of Camden as a reliable hub for steel, which is vital for sustaining growth in the nation's industrial sectors.

Infrastructure Investments to Support Continued Growth

To accommodate the rising demand, South Jersey Ports has com-

mitted over \$8 million in infrastructure enhancements at Camden Marine Terminals. These improvements focus on upgrading rail capabilities, allowing the port to handle higher volumes of cargo while maintaining the level of service that clients expect.

"As we continue to expand, it's essential that we have the right infrastructure in place to support both current and future demand," said Andy Saporito, Executive Director and CEO of South Jersey Ports. "The investments we've made in rail and terminal infrastructure are directly aligned with our commitment to providing the best possible service for our customers."


Looking Ahead: Expansion and Future Opportunities

With growth in both the wood products and steel sectors, South Jersey Ports is already planning for the future. The port is actively exploring ways to expand both indoor and outdoor storage capacity at Camden Marine Terminals, a move that will be critical to managing the increasing demand from current and new customers. This capacity expansion is especially important for handling the growing volumes of steel and forest products—two core commodities that are pivotal to the port's success.

These strategic investments and planned expansions demonstrate South Jersey Ports' proactive approach to securing its place as a leading player in the region's transportation and logistics sectors. By continuously improving its infrastructure, South Jersey Ports is positioning itself to meet the evolving needs of its clients and contribute to economic growth in the South Jersey region.

"Our commitment to continuous improvement and investment in infrastructure is essential to maintaining the high standards of service our customers expect," said Saporito. "The record rail volumes and strong demand we've experienced so far this year are a testament to the hard work of our team and the strategic vision we have for the future. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and remain dedicated to supporting our clients' needs through innovation and expansion."

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continued from page 1

150 years to have an organization like the Exchange to help maintain and facilitate that success.”

Minutes from that pivotal meeting in 1875 note that an Exchange “would bring us more intimately together, would facilitate many of our transactions and increase our individual business. It would afford us an opportunity of consulting together and of adopting many measures that would lessen the expenses of Philadelphia as a port of entry, and enable us as a body to send abroad information to the whole world showing that Philadelphia possesses advantages second to no other sea port on this continent...”

The records show that the group’s goals were to increase the city’s direct trade with foreign countries and to ensure that Delaware River ports would offer quick turnaround and better ship handling by assisting vessel operations, promoting harbor development and enhancing local maritime practices.

On March 31, 1882, the organization was incorporated under a Pennsylvania statute. The Commonwealth granted a perpetual charter which states, in part, that

the Maritime Exchange would “acquire, preserve, and disseminate all maritime and other business information, and do such other and lawful acts as will tend to promote and encourage trade and commerce of the Port of Philadelphia.”

The Exchange has undergone name changes over the years, and as additional ports grew along the river so did the organization’s role expand. But the core mission has stayed the same: to protect and promote the Delaware River commercial maritime industry.

“The board of directors and staff are looking forward to celebrating with its members in May,” said McCarthy. “We thank everyone in the port, past and present, for the unwavering support that has allowed the Exchange to continue the mission set forth by our founders a century and a half ago. As the next generation of mariners, port leaders, and young professionals prepare to take over the helm, I hope that at the Exchange’s bicentennial celebration 50 years from now they will look back as fondly upon us as we do for our predecessors.”

The Exchange will announce details on the gala dinner in the coming months so please save the date for May 21, 2025!



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Another successful year

continued from page 1

Paul Myhre. “The ‘CMA CGM Marco Polo’ docked at Packer Avenue in March, grabbing the record for the largest container ship to the region with a TEU count of 16,020.”

The region’s terminals have continued to invest in the Delaware River port complex. In 2024, South Jersey Port Corporation reported \$10 million in infrastructure investments at its terminals. PhilaPort broke ground on a new 165,500-square-foot

refrigerated warehouse and released its strategic plan to guide deployment over the next 15 years, and Enstructure partnered with the State of Delaware to improve the state’s infrastructure with a new terminal at its Edgemoor site.

“The increase in arrivals is a testament to the dedication and support of the terminals to the overall Delaware River port community,” McCarthy said. “Infrastructure improvements throughout the region and the end of the drought in the Panama Canal should continue to drive steady vessel arrival numbers throughout the coming year.”

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Q&A with the CBP Area Port Director

continued from page 1

significant influence over both enforcement and facilitation of international trade and travel throughout the upper East Coast. The Area Port of Philadelphia is not just the City of Brotherly Love. Our Area Port also includes seaport facilities in South Jersey, Southeastern Pennsylvania, and Delaware, in addition to airports in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Atlantic City, and New Castle, Delaware. CBP also has a presence at Dover Air Force Base and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

Personally, I've come to realize that Philly is an amazing city. It has tremendous historical and cultural relevance, multiple major sport teams, art, theater, and all forms of entertainment. I used to walk to work when I first arrived here and each day I realized how awesome it was to be able to walk past the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. And to top it all off, I get to enjoy the world-famous cheesesteaks.

Q: Now that you have had the chance to meet with Delaware River stakeholders, what are the regional challenges, or opportunities, you foresee for CBP?

A: The trade and travel stakeholders I've met with so far have been tremendous in welcoming me to the Delaware Valley. I intend to continue encouraging our team to partner with our trade and travel stakeholders to identify efficiency improvements in our inspections process and implementing emerging technologies and mobile applications to help in that endeavor. We must also work with our stakeholders to ensure that CBP has sufficient and necessary infrastructure to integrate emerging technology and implement efficiency improvements into our operations. We have very specific equipment and space requirements to meet our inspectional responsibilities, and we realize that we need to keep pace with the region's growth and new business opportunities.

Additionally, we have tremendous opportunities here to work with our overseas components, regulatory partners, and trade stakeholders to help identify potential risks and threats as early as possible. For example, our agriculture protection team has had the pleasure of meeting with government officials and produce exporters in several coun-

tries to see firsthand their processes to ensure that their export commodities are pest-free and risk-free.

Q: What priorities will you have your staff focus on in the coming year?

A: We are operating under a new administration and so we will adjust our mission focus to comply with the new administration's priorities. We will also continue to focus on our more traditional mission priorities of facilitating international trade and travel while enforcing our nation's laws and protecting our nation's security. Our enforcement priorities include counternarcotics efforts, intellectual property rights enforcement, and the detection and seizure of other dangerous or illicit cargo.

We want to support the region's growth ambitions, but we must be mindful of our staffing and budget complement, and ensure we are utilizing both efficiently. So, we will continue to seek opportunities to make staffing adjustments where we can, and to use reimbursable services programs to help our stakeholders to meet their requests for after-hours inspections. We will continue to collaborate with our colleagues across the nation to implement best practices and emerging technologies that have helped them to enhance operational efficiencies. We will improve our risk assessment efforts which will permit us to facilitate the release of low-risk or no-risk cargo at a much quicker rate. I am excited and look forward to working with our international trade and travel stakeholders to implement new ideas.

Q: With your extensive background, is there a success story or principal you can bring or apply to the region to help CBP and your staff succeed?

A: In 2003, I took a position at Customs and Border Protection headquarters to help with the transition that saw the inspections elements of the U.S. Customs Service, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture merge to create CBP. The program that I worked on only existed at one of those three agencies, so I was tasked with modifying that program so we could implement it across all three legacy agencies. The documentation for the program was primarily physical files with very few electronic records, and I was in the beginning stages of combing through the files and organizing the information.

One morning, my director stopped by my desk and told me that one of our senior executives needed some specific information about the program for a meeting he was attending, and he needed that information in 10 minutes. Remember that the documentation was not recorded electronically. I tried to explain how difficult it would be for me to provide the required information in 10 minutes due to the large volume of physical files that I only recently inherited and started to organize.

Unfazed, my director looked at me and said: "Well, you now have eight minutes to provide me with the requested information." What I learned from that experience was

that there was not a tremendous amount of value in spending time on why something cannot be done. It is much more productive to focus on how to achieve the goal despite the challenges we face.

Ever since then, my guiding principle has been that everything is possible, even the impossible; it just takes a few minutes longer to figure out. At the Area Port of Philadelphia, my guiding principle is to always focus on how to make something work instead of focusing on the impediments. With enough effort and willingness, and collaborative partnerships, we can overcome obstacles together.



THE BEACON

The BEACON is the Exchange's free newsletter exclusively dedicated to covering port issues and activities in the Delaware River region and beyond. Each issue is distributed to maritime and trade professionals in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware and throughout the country.

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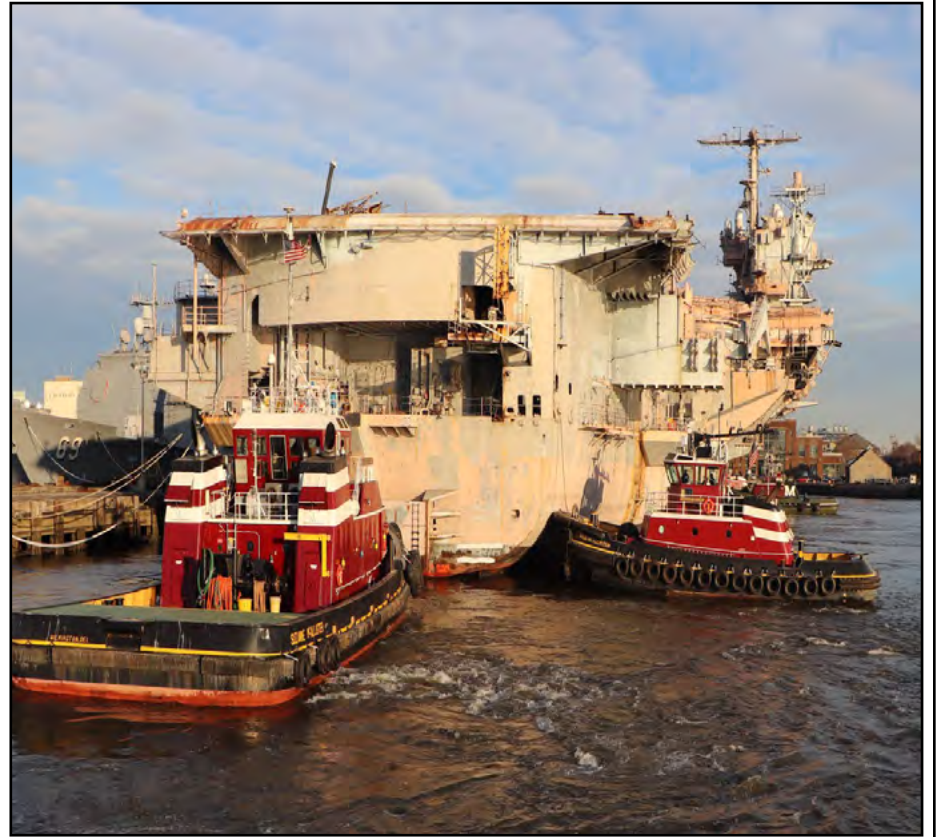


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Aircraft Carrier Leaves Navy Yard



The Delaware River said good-bye to the “John F. Kennedy (CV-67),” the last conventionally-powered aircraft carrier, on January 16, 2025 as it was towed from Philadelphia, bound for Brownsville, Texas where it will be dismantled. McAllister Towing maneuvered the vessel out of the U.S. Navy’s Philadelphia Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility before beginning the journey down the Delaware River under the tow of Edison Chouest’s tug, “MV Laney Chouest.” Named for the former President, the “John F. Kennedy” was christened on September 7, 1968 and was decommissioned in 2007.



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The many benefits of an Exchange membership

continued from page 3

adapts to current needs of its constituents, the services and programs the members need that they just have not quite discovered yet, or will need as a result of upcoming legislation or policies. All of the programs and benefits that the Exchange offers—in fact, the Exchange itself—only exist because the maritime community needs them. As new needs arise, the Exchange has and will continue to identify and implement solutions with the help of its members.

If you are among the majority who have already renewed your membership with the Maritime Exchange for 2025, thank you! The organization's work would not be possible without the support of the many businesses and people that have been the backbone of the organization. If you have not yet renewed your membership for the year, there is still time! Access your profile through the new membership portal and pay online or via mail with a check. Please reach out to Yair Farkas at yfarkas@maritimedelriv.com or 267-670-7946 for more information and other renewal options.

The Exchange looks forward to working with everyone for a prosperous and successful 2025!



MARITIME EXCHANGE MEMBERSHIP

A membership in the Maritime Exchange is not about just joining another association. It is about partnering with a respected and successful regional business that makes a significant difference.

Contact the Maritime Exchange at exchange@maritimedelriv.com to take full advantage of the available benefits and services.

In Memoriam

Klaus Rohr



The Exchange regrets to announce that Klaus Christian Rohr died peacefully on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at the age of 85.

Klaus immigrated to the U.S. in 1950 with his parents, brother, and sister, settling in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He studied Naval Science at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York. Upon graduation, he went to sea for three years earning his Second Mates License after traversing the globe twice. In 1965, he left

the sea for a career in law enforcement with the FBI. For the next thirty years, Klaus served the people of the U.S. through a relentless pursuit of justice as a G-Man.

In a career filled with exploits, his capstone moment came when he led the Philadelphia FBI Organized Crime Squad. His squad worked in conjunction with state and local law enforcement from Pennsylvania and New Jersey as a federal organized crime task force, and it pursued and ultimately dismantled the Philadelphia mob known as the Scarfo crime family.

In 1995, Klaus retired from the FBI and in a twist of fate returned to the sea, albeit via the Delaware River, becoming the CEO of the tugboat company River Associates. Klaus ran River Associates until 2007 when it was sold to K-Sea Transportation. He then settled into full retirement, learning to play golf, and enjoying time with his growing number of grandchildren.

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Editorial

Not all change is good

With every new administration, change is inevitable. Priorities shift, relationships transform, new faces fill cabinet positions, and people are re-assigned, resign, or are let go.

But as the current administration takes steps to start with a clean slate, it may be throwing out the baby with the bathwater. . . at least within the Department of Homeland Security. On January 20, 2025, the Acting Secretary terminated membership in all advisory committees in alignment with the department's commitment to eliminate misuse of resources and to focus on priorities.

The Exchange is certainly a proponent of streamlining operations, eliminating waste, and realigning priorities when necessary. And not all decisions have to be popular when it makes sound fiscal, operational, and business sense.

However, the blanket decision to disband all advisory committees on day one without review is certainly extreme and detrimental in the short and long term. The people who fill these positions do so voluntarily to offer insight from industry's and academia's perspectives, providing valuable guidance to federal administrators and their staff who are making regulatory, logistical, and financial decisions which can have profound impacts on business and trade.

The Exchange itself has participated and continues to participate in several federal advisory committees and workgroups. From the National Maritime Security Advisory Committee, the Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee, the Trade Support Network, to the Customs Electronic Systems Action Committee, and as a Technical Advisory to CBP, we have found our relationship with our federal partners a rewarding experience and are proud to have contributed. We and our colleagues share our expertise, at no cost to the federal government, on many topics such as automation, cargo clearance, navigation, safety, logistics, and cybersecurity.

It is certainly possible, and hopefully likely, that DHS will reinstate some of the advisory committees after careful consideration and review.

But at least in the short term, DHS is doing itself a disservice by not taking advantage of the free raw talent and experience available to it from the private sector. Even if does decide to reconstitute some or all of these groups, reforming and repopulating a committee takes time. The *Federal Register* postings and the application and review process alone may take several months.

Can DHS gain insight from the private industry without formal committees? Sure. But DHS runs the risk of missing objective participation by a larger segment of the industry, and it would certainly not streamline operations with the extra effort required to solicit advice and guidance under this model.

At this point, there is no indication that DHS will reform or reconfigure any or all of the disbanded committees. Was there room for improvement, consolidation, or reduction? Perhaps. And if DHS does restore these relationships, will it attract or reacquire the talent and institutional knowledgebase that have helped make many of these public/private partnerships successful? Hopefully.

The Exchange has worked with federal agencies on many endeavors and ideas over the years, enough to know it should not move forward in a vacuum. Committees foster dialogue, cooperation, and innovation. Without consulting with the private sector, DHS runs the risk of implementing policies, regulations, and automation initiatives that are doomed to fail... or at the very least fall short of the success that could be realized when based on well-informed and objective consultations.

When an Elder Lady Takes Her Leave

By: George E. McCarthy, President
Maritime Exchange

When an elder lady departs so goes with her a time, an age, and a way of life.

I can remember my parents being their happiest onboard the "Steam Ship United States." Kids away in their cabin beds under the watchful eyes of onboard staff while the parents became kids themselves, treated like royalty by U.S. Lines and dancing the night away on a ship that was comfort itself, inside and out.

Atlantic crossings were just that, comfortable. A time to relax, breathe in the fresh ocean air, read a book between meals (and naps), and make new friendships. While there is no denying the timing convenience of an overseas flight, they will never be the pause that refreshes regardless of what angle or direction you can set your seat.

So, as this particular elder lady takes her final leave, this sailor's short editorial asks only a moment's pause in remembrance of a graceful age, and offers in return a simple thought about our nation's future.

This nation became great on the dreams of dreamers who boldly turned their crazy visions into realities despite all. William Francis Gibbs was just such a person, and the "S.S. United States" remains a testament to what can be accomplished when we are continuously pushing the boundaries of the possible. When our nation's namesake sails down the Delaware River on her final voyage, she takes with her yet another small portion of our boldness and know-how. As a nation, we have stopped thinking boldly about what will best serve future generations.

Yes, in the short term things can often be made cheaper overseas to the benefit of today's profits, but this immediate gratification too often generates long term losses not understood until too late. Family farms turn into subdivisions, factories are closed, towns are left empty, and most costly of all, artisan skills and the hard lessons learned are lost.

While there is no denying the power of the microchip or the benefit of globally instant information, steam and steel are very handy when the people of our nation are called, once again, to its defense. The engineering, skill, and industry it took to create the "S.S. United States"—to this day still the fastest passenger liner ever built—are now sailing away from us, unnoticed by most. Much like our highway system and space program, the "S.S. United States" was built less for profit than for a greater purpose: the need for a nation to take the lead and remain ahead into the next generation.

The "Big U" never left anyone stranded at sea, never failed to meet her dates, and being a lady, she never revealed her all. To those of us who sailed on her she was comfort, security, beauty, and grace in an amazingly fast package. To all those foreign flagged ships she left dazed in her wake, her appearance must have been bittersweet.

Today, her age is showing and her makeup is clearly faded, but even now the boldness of her posture and lines still reveal her desire to race across the open ocean. She has the savoir faire of an older woman, still attractive to all who encounter her.

Goodbye, my great lady. My awe for you will never fade. In memory of you, may we someday build something as amazing. Not as a microchip-generated, graphic image for a Hollywood movie, but the real deal. Perhaps by simply pausing to remember the legacy that was entrusted to us by your generation.



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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:

exchange@maritimedelriv.com

Maritime Exchange, Attn: Beacon Editor
240 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Where do our dredge spoils go?

**By: Mike Landis, Chief of Operations
USACE Philadelphia District**

Many members of the Delaware River and Bay maritime community are familiar with the presence of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along the River and Bay. Whether one sees our survey vessels running lines in the federal channel, a contracted dredge, or our beloved “McFarland” conducting operations, we have a visible and enduring place on the Delaware.

However, not all may recognize the significance of our land-based operations along the river and how this work plays an important role in keeping the channel open and maritime commerce flowing.

First, some context is needed. In the 1940s, our predecessors had the tremendous foresight to acquire and maintain Dredged Material Placement Facilities (formerly known as Confined Disposal Facilities) along the river.

Today, we own about 7000 acres of land at 49 sites, mostly located along the Delaware River and Chesapeake & Dela-

ware Canal. As some know, these sites have played an integral role in our ability to maintain and deepen the Delaware River and Bay. We have placed many millions of cubic yards of sediment at these sites over the years. And, like most infrastructure, these Dredged Material Placement Facilities require maintenance and long-term planning to ensure they continue to function as intended.

Each site is unique, but they all include a system of dikes and sluices/weirs. The dikes function to keep the sediment within the site while the sluices/weirs enable clean water to flow back to the river. During operations, the dredged slurry (mix of sediment and water) is placed in a ‘cell,’ de-waters over time, and essentially consolidates as we place additional material. Over time, sites can reach capacity unless dikes are widened and raised. In some cases, there are limits in the ability to expand the dikes, vertically and horizontally, from a geotechnical standpoint.

Ultimately, there are many variables and technical considerations in terms of the best ways to manage the sites. Fortunately, we have a great team of engineers and construction crews who have been working hard to ensure we have adequate capacity for the future.

I would like to share a few updates on some of this ongoing work.

Killcohook

Our Dredged Material Placement Facility at Killcohook is our largest site and is divided into three cells. It typically receives dredged material from the Deepwater and New Castle ranges of the channel. We’re in the process of wrapping up a large contract to raise dikes and create additional six million cubic yards of capacity in what we refer to as ‘Cell 1 North.’ We anticipate this work will be completed by this summer, six months ahead of schedule.

Pedricktown North

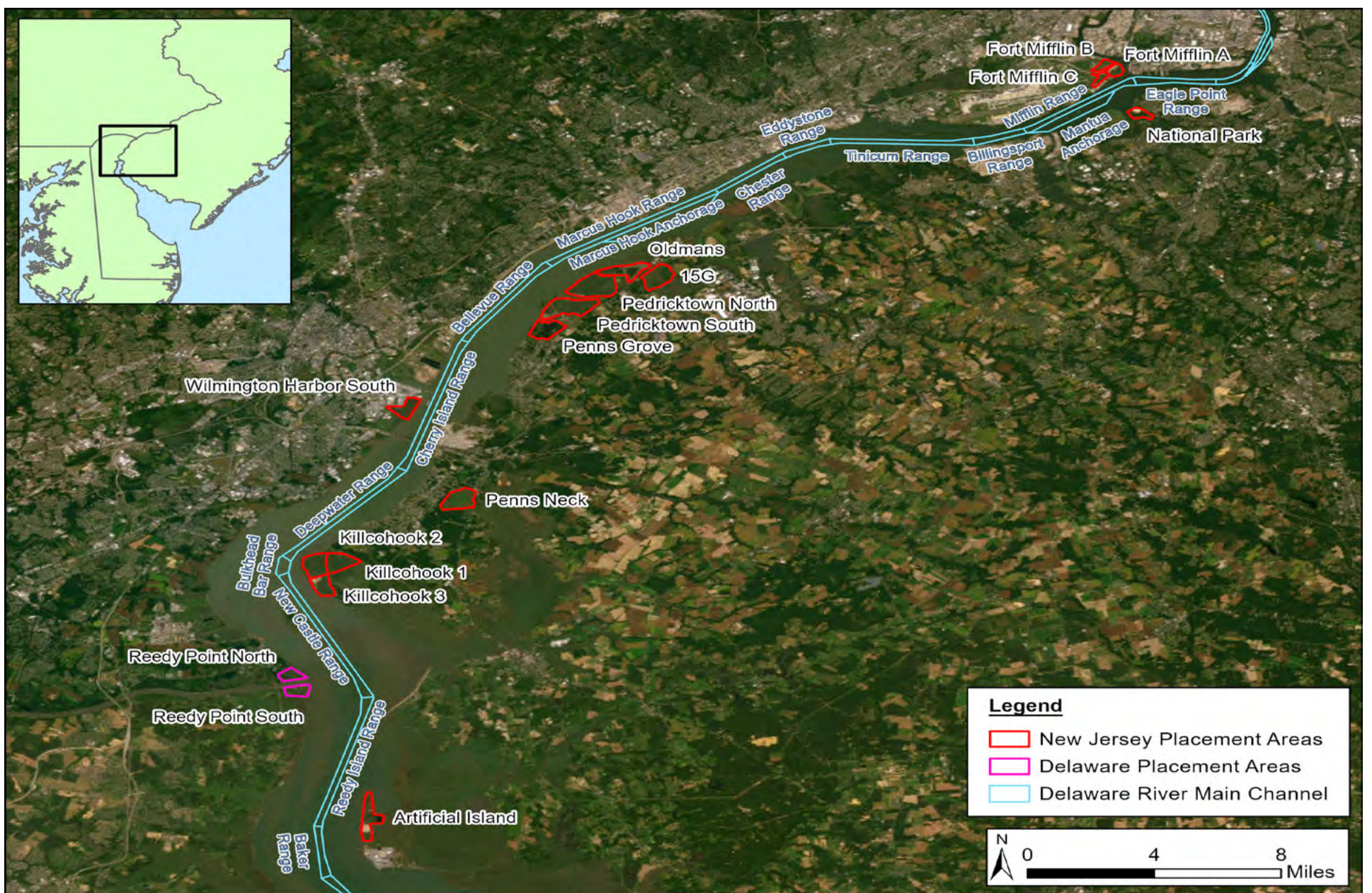
Our Pedricktown North Dredged Material Placement Facility typically receives dredged material from the Mar-

cus Hook and Cherry Island ranges, as well as some Wilmington Harbor material. There, we awarded a contract to construct approximately 20,000 linear feet of dikes, which will create nine million cubic yards of capacity. We anticipate this work will be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Site 15G

This site is located close to Pedricktown North and received dredged material in the 1950s. We are in the process of re-activating the site, which will include substantial construction. In the next two years, we anticipate constructing 14,000 linear feet of dikes to create six million cubic yards of capacity for future dredging operations.

We’ll continue to carefully manage the limited resource of our Dredged Material Placement Facilities to the best of our ability. Our approach is based in stewardship, as we strive to keep the long-term function of the Delaware River and Bay in mind. Lastly, we’re fortunate to have the sites as well as the equipment and experienced crews to manage them!




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Calendar of Events

02/19 PhilaPort Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

World Trade Center Delaware Annual Taste of Chocolate & Beer from Around the World
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 Midnight Oil Brewing, Company, 674 Pencader Drive, Newark, DE 19702
 Register [here](#)

02/25 South Jersey Port Corp Board Meeting, 12:30 p.m.

02/26 Seamen's Center of Wilmington Board Meeting, noon

02/27 Area Maritime Security Committee General Meeting, 9:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
 USCG Sector Delaware Bay, 1 Washington Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19147
 Contact: [Glena Tredinnick](#)

Seamen's Church Institute Spirit of the Port Luncheon, 11:30 a.m.
 The Sapphire Grand, 1849 Cooper Street, Deptford, NJ 08096
 Contact Rebecca Pierson or call 215-940-9900

03/05 Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society Board Meeting, noon
 Corinthian Yacht Club

03/7 Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia Congressional Staff Reception 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 Citizens Bank Park, 1 Citizens Bank Way, Philadelphia, PA 19148
 Register [here](#)

03/11 Maritime Exchange Government Affairs Workgroup Meeting, 10:00 a.m.
 Contact [Yair Farkas](#)

03/12 Maritime Exchange Board/Annual Meeting, 11:00 a.m.

Maritime Exchange Annual Election, noon – 2:00 p.m.

Delaware River Basin Commission Business Meeting, 1:30 p.m.
 Read More: [Federal Register](#)

03/19 PhilaPort Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

SAVE THE DATE ♦ May 21, 2025
 Maritime Exchange 150th Anniversary Gala Dinner

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



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