



# THE BEACON

MARITIME EXCHANGE  
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## MACH2 Gets Federal Nod!



No doubt about it. If it's important, it happens here.

President Biden traveled to Philadelphia in October to announce the selection of the nation's seven regional clean hydrogen hubs, and the hometown Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub—MACH2—made the cut.

"We're not surprised," said Exchange President Lisa Himber. "Beyond our historic reputation as the East Coast's premier energy port, this region has the infrastructure, the talented workforce, a wealth of potential clean hydrogen producers and users, and the host of other criteria important to the Department

of Energy as it evaluated proposals."

MACH2's selection is no small achievement. The DOE received nearly 80 concept papers from interested applicants.

With the funding of about \$750 million comes the possibility of creating 20,800 direct jobs—14,400 in construction and 6,400 permanent positions.

Under the DOE model, a regional clean energy hub encompasses a network of hydrogen producers, consumers, and local connective infrastructure that supports the production, storage, delivery, and end-use of clean hydrogen. The total \$7 billion available nationally comes from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

Of all the proposals, MACH2 ranked among the most pro-labor and greenest hubs in the nation.

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## Interview with Kate Higgins-Bloom

Commander, Sector Delaware Bay, U.S. Coast Guard



*CAPT Kate Higgins-Bloom assumed command of U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay on June 16, 2023. Her experience as Deputy Commander gave her a leg up, as she was already aware of the unique characteristics of the Delaware River maritime transportation system and the challenges and opportunities the Delaware River region provides. CAPT Higgins-Bloom brings a vast hands-on background to the post, having served various leadership roles afloat and ashore, including heading up the Coast Guard's Office of Emergency Management and Disaster Response as Chief. In addition, she has a commanding understanding of policy from her time as a member of the Coast Guard's Office of Emerging Policy. Despite her busy schedule, CAPT Higgins-Bloom recently took the time to share some insights with The Beacon.*

**Q: As staffing continues to be an issue for most employers in the region and at the Coast Guard, what strategies will you use to ensure you can fulfill the service's many mission requirements?**

**A:** With limited resources, the most important thing for us is to set clear operational priorities. I've had some great conversations with stakeholders like the Maritime Exchange and the Pilots, as well as with Coast Guard leadership. Based on those conversations and other considerations, we are focusing on three primary things: search and rescue, which is our core mission; keeping the maritime transportation system running as efficiently as possible—such as ensuring aids to navigation are operational and conducting port state control exams; and port security, particularly when it comes to protecting the President when he is here in Philadelphia or down in Delaware.

The Coast Guard has 11 missions, and we're going to prosecute all of them,

*continued on page 13*

## Exchange, members oppose USDA fee increase

The August 2023 USDA office of Agriculture and Plant Health Inspection Service fee increase was expected, but a few years earlier. And no one thought it would be so extreme.

The APHIS proposed rule would increase rates for Agricultural Quarantine Inspections, or AQI, a program that affects every ship, plane, truck, railroad, and passenger arriving at U.S. ports of entry. For vessel inspections, the fee would go up by nearly 300% in the first year, and it would increase again in each of the following four years.

"The Exchange and its members strongly support APHIS and the Agricultural Quarantine Program," said the organization's president, Lisa Himber. "We join APHIS in its commitment to preventing the introduc-

tion of foreign pests into the U.S. ecosystem. And we also recognize the severe financial constraints that have plagued the AQI program for the last several years." Himber noted that Maritime Exchange members have invested significant time and energy working with APHIS personnel to identify solutions to address the issue through the Exchange-USDA Innovations Working Group.

The problem is not with the fact of the fee increase, according to stakeholders. It is with its magnitude. "We understand fee increases are unavoidable given the demands on the department and inflationary pressures. While we agree that APHIS must increase rates over time, an out-of-the-blue vessel fee increase of 290%, from \$825 to \$3,219.29, is not rea-

sonable by any standard," said Luis Andrade, president of Sandpiper International Steamship Agencies.

APHIS maintains that the increases are necessary to meet both current expenses and to grow its staff to accommodate increased demand for services. It last increased AQI fees in December of 2015. That rate schedule raised the commercial cargo vessel fee from \$496 to \$825, nearly 200%. As with the current proposal, the 2015 schedule increased fees each year over a five-year period.

"The Exchange and its members have been expecting a fee increase since December of 2020. Smaller increases more frequently are infinitely more manageable than these periodic explosive jumps," Himber said.

Also on the horizon are increased rates for APHIS monitoring of cold storage and fumigation treatments. Though the new hourly costs reflect a reasonable 7% gain, most critical for the Delaware River area are the overtime charges.

"Fumigations in our region are conducted almost exclusively during overtime hours to accommodate cargo flow, USDA's staffing constraints, and air permitting requirements with state regulatory authorities," said Shannon Sked, director at Western Fumigation. "As a result, facilities here continue to incur a disproportionate burden of the charges."

In other regions of the country, fumigations are often conducted dur-

*continued on page 16*

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## Marking 30 years of Customs modernization

As the person whose primary job was to bring the Maritime Exchange's TRACS computer manifesting system from the drawing board to the community, the effort to modernize Customs' processes is near and dear to my heart.

On December 8, 1993, the Customs Modernization and Informed Compliance Act became the law of the land. Hard to believe we've been working away at this for three decades.

It's equally hard to believe how much paper still moves around the port—the country—the world—and how ill-prepared we are to handle major system outages.

Customs and Border Protection deserves a great deal of credit for its accomplishments to date. At the top of the list must be the approach the agency has taken to ensure its stakeholders are involved in system design. Shortly after the Mod Act passed, the Future Automated Commercial Environment Team,

fondly known as FACET to those of us who were involved, brought industry together with Customs to develop an automation roadmap. That team morphed into the ACE (Automated Commercial Environment) Technical Support Network, still successfully wrestling to overcome obstacles and bottlenecks today. But even before the Mod Act passed in 1993, the Customs Electronic Systems Action Committee, or CESAC—which the Exchange joined in 1988 and continues to support today—was and remains a forum for effective dialogue, planning, testing, and implementation of CBP systems enhancements and development.

The downside of all that system developer/user interaction is that it takes longer to get things done. Much longer. Finding the balance between user engagement and progress has always been a challenge for CBP and its stakeholders.

An unintended consequence of that extended development schedule is that technology has always outpaced the advances CBP has made. Though the agency was once a leader in electronic data interchange, it isn't now and has rarely been positioned to take advantage of the latest tools for data exchange.

All that said, CBP has not let its unwieldiness deter progress altogether. As you'll read on page 18, the most recent addition to CBP's stable of automated services, the Vessel Entrance and Clearance System, was developed outside of the ACE program but is connected


to it. VECS takes advantage of the power and features of the internet to simplify what has always been a very paper-intensive process.

This is a major first for CBP, in our view. Until VECS, and despite numerous calls to change, CBP continued to automate forms rather than processes. VECS did just the opposite—it took a process and designed a system around it rather than simply digitizing the paper form. We sincerely hope VECS development reflects the approach CBP plans to take going forward.

So as we look back at the last 30 years of "modernization," we can be proud of the progress we have collectively made. But so much more work still remains. Many CBP transactions are still conducted by paper, no viable plan exists to continue vessel and cargo flow when systems are down, and numerous other U.S. and international agencies are looking at international commerce automation systems that do not integrate with Customs and Border Protection. Overlaying all that is the global explosion of e-commerce and its implications for U.S. trade processing.

Our collective challenge is to determine how to best help CBP wrap up the process of modernizing legacy operations and look at solving the problems of 2024 and beyond.

*Lisa Humber*




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# It's that time of year again!

*Exchange membership renewals in full swing*

The end of the year brings thoughts of turkey dinners, presents, decorated trees and houses, menorahs, unity cups, and—above all—family and friends. Oh yeah, and shopping. Lots and lots of shopping.

But there's one more ritual that tells us the New Year is just about upon us: Maritime Exchange membership renewals.

That's right, it's that time again.

All year long, the Exchange strives to provide a level of service that far exceeds our members' expectations. Now, as the end of the year draws near, we ask members to renew their commitment to the Exchange and its work to promote and protect commerce at Delaware River ports.

It is gratifying that so many of our members respond within a matter of days to our invitation to renew. That tells us we're a priority for them and that what we do matters. Our team—to a person—is energized by the opportunities our jobs provide to help people every day, and the quick response to the membership renewal lets us all know that we're meeting that goal.

Thank you for showing us your support in such a meaningful way!

If you have not yet completed your renewal, please take care of it as soon as possible to ensure you can continue to receive the benefits Exchange membership offers in the upcoming year.



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### Individual Member:

**Jeffrey Moller, Esq.**

## Getting Ready for 2025!



Exchange staff (l-r) Laura Miller and Taylor Kirk took advantage of Navy/Marine Corps Week in Philadelphia in October to tour the "USS Cooperstown" while she was docked at Penn's Landing. The week-long event featured ship tours, outreach events, and a gala dinner and was considered to be a dry run for the Navy and Marines 250th birthday celebrations to be held on the Delaware River in 2025.

### Have you thought about membership but not taken the plunge?

If your company is a member of the local chamber of commerce or another industry trade association, the first thing you'll realize that membership in the Maritime Exchange is the most cost-effective way to help your business succeed. How?

By offering programs you need and a staff dedicated to making your job easier.

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- Committees that bring you together with customers, colleagues, government officials, and subject-matter experts
- Informational programs such as Maritime Matters and Delaware River 101 & 102 training sessions
- Ability to access the Maritime On-Line vessel scheduling and positioning application
- Daily, monthly, and quarterly information updates and real-time situational alerts
- Advertising discounts in our newsletter and annual directory
- And much, much more!

Why not make a resolution that 2024 will be the year that you decide to put the Maritime Exchange to work for you? Visit [www.maritimedelriv.com](http://www.maritimedelriv.com), email [exchange@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:exchange@maritimedelriv.com), or call 215/925-2615.

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Delaware River 101/102 general port awareness training  
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 Maritime Matters education series





# VECS Goes live on Delaware River

*Vessel agents convene at the Exchange for training*

The highly anticipated Vessel Entrance and Clearance System, known as VECS, went live for Delaware River ports on September 13, 2023. The U.S. Customs and Border protection pilot program replicates the entrance and clearance processes electronically, allowing vessel masters, operators, and agents to submit data and requests to CBP without presenting paper forms.

Specifically, VECS will allow participants to submit the data required on CBP forms 26, 226, 1300, 1302, 1303, 1304, and 3171 electronically prior to arrival or departure from designated ports.

“The Vessel Entrance and Clearance System is the next step in the evolution of vessel processing. It was developed to automate, digitize, and streamline the antiquated paper process for vessel entrance and clearance procedures,” said Brian Sale, branch chief, Manifest & Conveyance Security Division, Cargo & Conveyance Security, Office of Field Operations. “This is a win-win for both the trade user, as it’s a more efficient process, and for CBP by reducing administrative work burden and freeing up personnel and resources to higher mission priorities.”

The day after VECS went live on the Delaware River, Sale and his team trained the vessel agent community at the Exchange office in Philadelphia. CBP reviewed each screen and outlined the necessary Automated Commercial Environment enrollment process for the newly-created Vessel Agency Account type.

“As agents, we truly appreciate the initiative taken by U.S. Custom and Border Protection to digitize the vessel’s entrance and clearance process with VECS,” said Alfonso Araos, general manager at Moran Shipping Agencies. “The training session with CBP at the Maritime Exchange was very enlightening, and the system is very simple to use.”

To conclude the session, CBP assisted a volunteer from among the participants to enter the first VECS filing for the Delaware River.

“CBP has been very pleased with the early results of the VECS pilot in Philadelphia. We’re particularly



CBP Branch Chief Brian Sale (shown here addressing the group) highlighted the operational benefits of VECS participation to the more than 35 vessel agents who attended the training session at the Exchange on September 14, 2023.

appreciative of the buy-in we’ve received from our local stakeholders,” said (A) Watch Commander, CBP Port of Philadelphia Sean Butler. “VECS will streamline our entrance and clearance process and is proving to be a significant time saver for both CBP and vessel agents alike.”

Since the Delaware River rollout, CBP has been hard at work conducting training at other ports and recently reported that only a handful remain. The list of ports active in the pilot is listed on the VECS webpage along with two training videos and instructions on how to register in ACE for the new account.

### Next Steps

CBP still has some work to do before it can move VECS out of a pilot phase. In addition to bringing the remaining ports on board, it needs to implement vessel diversion request and approval functionality in the system, something that remains on paper today.

Barge arrivals also remains a challenge. VECS relies on U.S. Coast Guard Notice of Arrival/Departure, filings to begin a record. Since some barges may not have associated arrival notices, CBP must identify an alternative method to start VECS processing.

Per regulations, the pilot is currently scheduled to run through December 2024. Given the additional functionality needed, as well as time to move through the rulemaking process, ports will most likely not see a final rule mandating the use of VECS until sometime in 2025 at the earliest.

“The Exchange appreciated being part of the VECS development process,” said Exchange Director of Information Technology Michael Fink. “We’ve supported CBP and other federal agency automation since the 1980s and look forward to continuing down this path on behalf of members and federal partners. We’re especially excited about future possibilities surrounding the adoption of international data standards to further facilitate electronic communication and data sharing.”

“The Exchange appreciated being part of the VECS development process,” said Exchange Director of Information Technology Michael Fink. “We’ve supported CBP and other federal agency automation since the 1980s and look forward to continuing down this path on behalf of members and federal partners. We’re especially excited about future possibilities surrounding the adoption of international data standards to further facilitate electronic communication and data sharing.”

## Exchange enhances AIS—again

Having just completed an upgrade to the back-end code over the summer, the Maritime Exchange development team continued its efforts to improve users’ experiences with its Automatic Identification System.

This fall, the Exchange upgraded the AIS interface to stay current with the latest technology.

Most large software developers release regular product updates that address bugs and introduce minor enhancements annually or biannually. This update included the latest version of ReportViz and did just that.

In addition to minor bug fixes in the base software, the enhancement added the vessel’s draught when available as part of the AIS transmission. Users can

see the new field in the table panel. As with all available fields, users can sort the display on any of the columns and customize the overall display to include their chosen features.

“The Exchange has always strived to update its Maritime On-Line® system when user needs, technological advancements, or government mandates demand it. Though we completed these latest upgrades based on improvements in technology, we always welcome comments and suggestions from system participants,” said Exchange Director of Operations Paul Myhre.

For more information about AIS or Maritime On-Line, contact Paul Myhre at [pmyhre@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:pmyhre@maritimedelriv.com).

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## Philly Shipyard delivers first NSMV training ship

When I first arrived at Fort Schuyler in September of 1961, I learned that construction of the new dorms was stopped for lack of funds and the entire regiment for cadets was berthed aboard the training ship “Empire State IV.” We would live aboard her for two years in cramped quarters.

The ship was the former USNS “Henry Gibbons,” built in 1942 and delivered to the Army Transportation Service in 1943. She saw service in the European theater during WW II and was made famous when she carried 1,000 Jewish refugees from Italy to the United States under an order signed by President Roosevelt. The “Henry Gibbons” continued as a troop transport until 1959 when she was transferred to the Maritime Administration, renamed “Empire State IV,” and assigned as

the newest training ship for New York Maritime at Fort Schuyler.

All the state academies went through this same process to acquire their training ships, and it worked for many years. While the ships were old, the academies made the best of it to train young men and woman as officers in the U.S. Merchant Marine. In the case of Fort Schuyler, this selection process began in 1874, when the thirty-year-old USS “St. Mary’s” was assigned as its first training ship. Six more ships would follow the “St. Mary’s” up until September 2023 when—for the first time in history—Fort Schuyler received a newly constructed training ship, the “Empire State VII,” delivered by Philly Shipyard.

Our new training ship was built for MARAD under the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) program. With a modern diesel-electric power and propulsion system, the new NSMV training ships feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and space for up to 600 cadets to train in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea.

A total of five ships will be built for the five state maritime academies. Each will feature modern hospital facilities, a helicopter pad, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need.

The next ship, NSMV II, destined for the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, is scheduled for delivery in 2024. Meanwhile, the keel laying for NSMV III for Maine Maritime Academy and steel cutting for NSMV IV for Texas Maritime Academy, were recently completed. Construction of NSMV V for California Maritime Academy will commence later this year, with all ships to be delivered by 2026.

The specifications of the new ships are: length 159 meters – breadth 27 meters – draft 7.5 meters – total berthing 760 people – speed 18 kts – and deadweight 8487 tons.

Philly shipyard was awarded the contract to build the NSMVs by Tote Services, hired by MARAD to oversee the construction of the training ships as the vessel construction manager (VCM). The NSMV program is the first government-sponsored shipbuild-

ing program to utilize the VCM model, which places the responsibility for selecting and overseeing the shipyard on a government contractor that utilizes commercial best practices to manage the project. There is a growing interest in the VCM contract model and its potential applicability to government shipbuilding programs to reduce costs, accelerate delivery times, and build more ships.

At the “Empire State VII” launching at Philly Shipyard, its president and CEO, Steinar Nerbovik, said, “We are beyond proud to deliver the ‘Empire State’ today, our first government new-build in the history of Philly Shipyard. We are honored to be trusted with this important project, and on behalf of all our skilled workers, we are confident that the ‘Empire State’ will provide a safe, reliable and state-of-the-art training platform for generations of future mariners.”

Wishing all five new training ships fair winds and following seas.



### Breaking Bread with the COTP



CAPT Kate Higgins-Bloom, Commander of Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay, met with Exchange directors in September and discussed a number of Coast Guard priorities, highlighted the need to prevent and respond to SASH—Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment—in the maritime industry, and outlined potential opportunities for industry to provide input on Coast Guard training. Following the meeting, the group adjourned for lunch to continue the discussion in a more relaxed setting. Even directors and captains have to eat sometime.

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# Meet Our New Staff



## Kenny Johnson

### Maritime On-Line Account Manager

Kenny Johnson recently joined the operations crew as an MOL [Maritime On-Line] Account Manager, coming from a background in information technology.

Having performed work in .Net development, search engine evaluation, and database administration, he has an excel-

lent basis for the more technical side of supporting Exchange members and Maritime On-Line users. “Kenny’s experience gives him the skills necessary to understand how data fields are related, something very useful in troubleshooting the inner workings of Maritime On-Line,” said Exchange Director of Operations Paul Myhre.

As part of the Operations staff, he works closely with Exchange members and others in the maritime community, seeking and recording information on vessel movements and port activity.

Kenny updates and disseminates vessel movement information, interacts with ship crews via VHF radio, and works to facilitate efficient voyages for vessels moving on the Delaware River.

When not at work, Kenny is an avid gamer, having played since he was a child. His passion is PC-based games, where he often plays solo or with others online. He is preparing for a Shadowverse tournament where the top eight players in North America and Europe will battle it out to determine who is the best.

Kenny grew up in Maryland with his mother and grandmother. He moved to Sweden a few years after graduating with an A.S. in Business Administration from the College of Southern Maryland. After 10 years abroad, he returned to the U.S., settling in Willingboro, N.J., where he resides with his father.

“This is a new experience for me, as nobody in my family had anything to do with the maritime industry,” said Kenny. “I honestly had no idea just how much went into it, and I can safely say that I am the authority in my family on ship-based information now.”

Kenny added that he is “enjoying the culture at the Exchange and hopes to continue to grow and learn with the team.”

Welcome aboard, Kenny, and good luck in the tournament!



## Candace Stanford

### System Administrator

The newest member of the Exchange team, Candace Stanford, joined the staff in September as system administrator. Among her many duties, she is responsible for maintaining PC and network equipment, installing and patching office software, providing user support, and troubleshooting outages and network issues. Candace will also help identify

new solutions to improve the Maritime On-Line user experience and will assist in redeveloping the Exchange’s public website.

She comes to the Exchange from The Parin Group Inc., where she served as a software programmer/deployment specialist. She brings valuable IT experience to the Exchange in network and PC troubleshooting and managing firewalls and disaster recovery systems.

Candace may be new to this maritime industry, but she is no stranger to the seas. She comes from a proud family tradition of military service in the U.S. Navy and other armed services and is herself a veteran of the U.S. Navy, where she worked as a Gas Turbine Systems Technician Mechanic, GSM3.

“The maritime industry to me remains a beloved and admired industry. I have always been driven to service and using my skills for those in need, and working for the Exchange will give me that opportunity to serve in a nonprofit capacity,” said Candace. “The industry has already been so accepting, and I am eager to continue to meet more members and learn all aspects of the maritime trade.”

Candace has an Associate of Applied Science in Information Technology, a Career Studies Certificate in Computer & Network Support Technologies, and IPV6 Certified-SAGE from Piedmont Virginia Community College. She is currently enrolled with Southern New Hampshire University for her Bachelor of Science in Information Technologies with a concentration in Software Dev ++.

“My previous IT experience and my college education are providing a solid foundation for what I am doing at the Maritime Exchange,” said Candace. “I am looking forward to expanding my industry-specific knowledge and skills to augment my IT background and to help the organization meet its ever-changing technical and digitization challenges.”

When not working on systems or putting out technical fires, Candace enjoys coaching, hiking, camping, wood restoration projects, woodworking, crafts and painting, exploring surrounding national and state forests and parks, and homesteading.

Welcome aboard, Candace!



## Kim Zumbado

### Exchange Director of Finance/Administration

“I didn’t know anything like the Maritime Exchange existed. It’s so exciting, so different.”

This was just one of the many intriguing comments from Kimberley Zumbado during her interview for a position with the Maritime Exchange. On being hired, she came back to the same theme: “The Mari-

time has the WOW factor I was seeking for my long-term career.”

This past September, Kim joined the Exchange and hit the ground running. With responsibility for one of the most important functions in any organization—handling the money and financial reporting—she brings more than 20 years of experience in financial management to her post at the Exchange.

Yet that that wasn’t sufficient to land her the job.

At the Exchange, everyone wears multiple hats, and the director of finance & administration must be able to juggle three sombrero-sized caps.

Beyond managing payroll, payables and receivables, preparing financial statements, budgets, and forecasts, and handling numerous other typical ac-

counting functions, Kim is also responsible for the increasingly complex human resources function. Even though the Exchange staff remains relatively small, keeping up with ever-changing federal and state laws and city ordinances can be a real challenge for a HR professional who has many other responsibilities. Fortunately for the Exchange, Kim also had experience in HR.

Last, but not least, managing the Exchange’s three offices and an additional building leased to tenants falls in Kim’s wheelhouse.

“I was drawn in by the mission of protecting and promoting the maritime industry; being a voice within the industry carries great value and respect. I am excited to be welcomed into a community of great individuals and look forward to working with a supportive team and making a difference.”

Kim most recently worked at the New Jersey office of a global manufacturer and supplier of audio-visual equipment headquartered in Tel Aviv, Israel. She also has experience in health care, coil supply, and in the nonprofit arena.

She received a B.S. in Business Administration from Rowan University and earned a Masters of Accountancy at Rider University.

When she’s not crunching numbers, Kim enjoys relaxing at the beach and cooking, experimenting with new recipes.

Kim lives in Ewing, N.J. with her husband, Nestor, and her daughter, Dakota Rose, age two-and-a-half.

Great to have you with us, Kim!



# Meet Our New Directors



## Edward Fitzgerald

**Senior Director of Trade Services  
GEODIS USA**

The Exchange is excited to welcome Edward Fitzgerald to its board of directors. With over 25 years of operational and compliance experience in the local customs brokerage industry, Ed is a familiar face in and around the port.

He first became licensed as a customs broker in 1996, two years after starting his career at BARTHCO, which was later acquired by OHL, then GEODIS. As a Certified Customs Specialist, Ed has honed his knowledge of the U.S. harmonized tariff system, trade agreements, cargo valuation and classification, informed compliance, assessment of duties, drawback, anti-dumping, and the many other complicated processes involved in importing goods into U.S. commerce. Over the years, he has developed a special expertise in such commodities as fresh produce, food and beverage, forest products, and steel.

Ed is a member of several national industry associations and has long been active in the local port community. He is a past president of the World Trade Association of Philadelphia and past treasurer of Ship Philly First. He sits on the board of directors for the Chilean Chamber of Commerce and is also a member of the National Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association of America RAC Committee, addressing Customs & Border Protection and partner government agency matters.

He has also been one of the Exchange's most engaged members, participating in the Maritime Operations Committee, Chilean Fruit Working Group, USDA Innovations Committee—and most recently the newly launched Government Affairs Committee. Ed has consistently volunteered his time and expertise to assist Exchange staff whenever needed.

“The Exchange encompasses the different business verticals within the local port industry in partnership with the government regulatory agencies, and I am eager to join the board and to learn from fellow board colleagues and members as to their specific businesses,” Ed said. “In turn, I want to provide my knowledge and expertise from the customs brokerage and freight forwarding vantage.”

When not working, Ed enjoys cooking, gardening, reading, and traveling to new places. He loves to play golf and is a lifetime Philly sports fan. “Each year our family vacation includes visiting a new MLB baseball park. Twenty-five ballparks down . . . five to go (KC, STL, MN, MKE & SEA),” he said.

Ed earned a B.A. degree from La Salle University and successfully completed Penn State University's Business Logistics Management Program.

He and his wife, Pamela, reside in Haddon Heights, N.J. with their two children.

Happy to have you on our team, Ed!



## Bayard Hogans

**President  
Enstructure Mid-Atlantic**

Bayard Hogans, an industry veteran with over 25 years of experience in marine terminals, transportation, and supply chain logistics, has joined Enstructure as president of Enstructure Mid-Atlantic. It is a pleasure to report that he has also been named as the newest member of the Maritime Exchange Board of Directors.

At Enstructure, Bayard is responsible for overseeing operations and commercial activities across Enstructure's Mid-Atlantic businesses, which include the Port of Wilmington in Wilmington, Del., Port Contractors in Wilmington, Del. and Fairless Hills, Pa., and Intercontinental Services in Wilmington, Del. Enstructure is a leading logistics infrastructure company that owns and operates an integrated network of marine terminals and logistics assets across the East Coast, Mid-Atlantic, Gulf Coast and Inland River System of the U.S.

“I am excited about the opportunity to join the Maritime Exchange and being a part of an organization that brings so much value to Delaware River port commerce,” Bayard said. “And given my new position with Enstructure, I look forward to becoming a part of this vibrant port community.”

Bayard has a proven track record of fostering partnerships and building strong relationships with public-private stakeholders, supply chain partners, and local communities in promoting economic growth and regional development. Engaging with industry groups has helped him achieve this goal. Bayard has also been a member of the Steamship Trade Association, the National Maritime Safety Association, the World Trade Center Institute, North Atlantic Ports Association, General Stevedoring Council, the Propeller Club of Baltimore and Traffic Club of Baltimore, and the Steamship Trade Association Charitable Legacy.

Before joining Enstructure, Bayard served as vice president for Ports America Chesapeake, where he was responsible for all Ports America's container, auto/RORO, and breakbulk operational and commercial activities in the Port of Baltimore, including Ports America's 50-year public-private partnership lease and concession agreement for Seagirt Marine Terminal. Under Bayard's stewardship, operations were recognized for industry-leading safety and productivity. He delivered over \$500 million in capital projects and successfully partnered on \$100 million in grants. These projects include berth and terminal development, sustainability, electrification, and rail improvements, allowing Seagirt Marine Terminal to attract the largest container vessels on the East Coast to the Port of Baltimore.

Bayard and his family enjoy boating and spending time at the Delaware seashore. He is married with two teenagers.

The Exchange looks forward to working with Bayard in his new position!



## Edward Moriarty

**Owner/Co-Founder  
Pinelands Group, LLC**

A warm welcome to long-time public partner and friend to the port, Edward Moriarty. Many Exchange members know Ed from his long and successful career with U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Ed dedicated over 32 years to serving as an international trade and border security professional within CBP. He most recently

served as Assistant Area Port Director in Philadelphia, where he excelled in forging coalitions, cultivating partnerships, and amassing an extensive background in DHS/CBP policy, port of entry operations, and identification and adjudication of operational vulnerabilities. Before transferring to Philadelphia in 2005, he held various CBP positions in Washington, DC, Nassau, Bahamas, and New York City. During these assignments, Ed traveled extensively in support of CBP's anti-smuggling, anti-terrorism, supply chain security, and private sector initiatives.

Ed has always been a staunch believer in the Maritime Exchange mission. He participated in many Exchange working sessions over the years, including in the Maritime Operations Committee meetings where he met regularly with industry to find common ground on regional import and export challenges, and he was a frequent presenter at the Delaware River 101 educational seminars.

“Throughout my career, the Maritime Exchange has consistently served as the go-to organization for CBP when addressing our most complex challenges,” Ed said. “I have always valued the Exchange's unwavering dedication to its members, its mission, and its remarkable ability to foster effective collaboration across a diverse spectrum of stakeholders.”

Ed retired from CBP in August of 2023, and today he is the co-founder and owner of the Pinelands Group, LLC, a consulting firm that provides international trade and border security solutions to the public and private sectors.

He was born and raised in Southern New Jersey, where he currently resides with his wife and three children. Ed is an avid but awful golfer, a devoted German Shepherd owner and regular rescue foster parent, enjoys creating culinary masterpieces, and serves a mentor for those in recovery. And after 35 years since embarking on his first section hike of the 2,190-mile Appalachian Trail, Ed is now planning the final leg of his journey. As they say, not all those who wander are lost!

With his vast wealth of Customs experience, knowledge, and insight, the Exchange is excited to have Ed join the board and looks forward to his unique perspective.

### Late-breaking news!

*The Beacon* is thrilled to report that the Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey has just announced that Ed will receive the 2024 Spirit of the Port award. The award recognizes an individual who embodies the spirit and humanity of the Delaware River regional port community. Hard earned and well deserved.

Bravo Zulu, Ed!



## “Empire State VII” returns to Delaware River



The Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware welcomed the recently built “Empire State VII” training ship and presented a plaque to her master, Capt. Morgan McManus. The vessel is the first of five National Security Multi-Mission Vessels commissioned by the Maritime Administration for the U.S. maritime academies being built at the Philly Shipyard. State University of New York Maritime College welcomed the ship in September after her christening on June 26, 2023. Shown here are (l-r) Paul Gaffney, Host Agency, Capt. Kevin Barrow, Pilots' Association, Capt. McManus, Capt. David Cuff, President, Pilots' Association, and Capt. J. Stuart Griffin, Pilots Association.

## MACH2 a gamechanger

*continued from page 1*

“We have a history of manufacturing in this region and a history of innovation,” said Collin O’Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation and MACH2 chair. “We are focused on 0% use of fossil fuels for clean hydrogen production. Transportation, such as the I-95 corridor, and heavy industry are the most significant contributors of diesel emissions.”

The MACH2 concept and subsequent proposal were originally developed by a collective of government, nonprofits, and private organizations, and the organization is now formally established as a nonprofit corporation that will handle the influx of federal cash. Included among the consortium are the City of Philadelphia, the AFL-CIO, the University of Pennsylvania, and DuPont. The Maritime Exchange and many of its members, including Energy Transfer, Monroe Energy, Buckeye, and others, are among the potential project partners.

“One of only seven hydrogen hubs awarded nationally, the MACH2 hydrogen hub will have a transformative impact on the region and how we use and view clean energy. PhilaPort is proud that our operator of the Tioga Marine Terminal, Delaware River Stevedores, has joined the MACH2 hydrogen hub,” said PhilaPort Executive Director and CEO Jeff Theobald. “Through electrification of existing diesel-powered terminal equipment and embracing new hydrogen-driven technology, PhilaPort and our terminal operators are committed to doing our part to meet President Biden’s goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.”

The Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub encompasses southeastern Pennsylvania, the State of Delaware, and southern New Jersey. It is designed to help unlock hydrogen-driven decarbonization in the Mid-Atlantic while repurposing historic oil infrastructure and using existing rights-of-way.

MACH2 plans to develop renewable hydrogen production facilities powered by renewables and nuclear electricity using both established and innovative electrolyzer technologies, where it can help reduce costs and drive further technology adoption. It aims to expand hydrogen application to industrial use and heavy transportation—including trucks, buses, and marine terminal yard equipment. Organizers foresee opportunities for fueling ships and aircraft.

The effort also seeks to achieve manufacturing and industrial process improvements, where it can potentially reduce carbon emissions by approximately 1 million metric tons per year, roughly equivalent to the emissions from 220,000 cars annually.

“MACH2 will create a new generation of good-paying jobs for Delawareans, support new industries that can work hand-in-hand with our universities and leading businesses, and ensure that the First State plays a leading role in reducing our nation’s carbon footprint. I am proud to have advocated tirelessly for this proposal and can’t wait to see these projects come to fruition,” said Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE).

Additional benefits include air-pollutant reduction and re-use of brownfields.

Along with hydrogen production, the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub plans to expand hydrogen distribution infrastructure, upgrade bus mechanic depots, and develop fueling stations to facilitate hydrogen distribution to more transportation end users.

All told, the effort seeks to create over 300 tons of clean hydrogen per day once fully operational.

“The Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub is a gamechanger for Southeastern Pennsylvania,” said Sen. Robert Casey (D-PA). “This hub will bring good union jobs, economic growth, and clean energy innovation to the region. The infrastructure law is helping Pennsylvania take control of its future and become the energy powerhouse we know we can be.”

As part of its labor and workforce commitments to the community, the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub

## CFWG ramping up for smooth season

With its first year of operation successfully behind it, the Exchange’s Chilean Fruit Working Group is poised to reconvene for another season of process and communication improvements.

“We formed this group in direct response to members’ requests, and everyone seemed to get a great deal from the opportunity for additional dialogue,” said Exchange President Lisa Himber.

Comprised of carriers, importers, terminal operators, fumigators, and others keenly interested in a vibrant Chile-U.S. East Coast fruit trade, members met bi-weekly from December 2022 to April 2023. The Chilean Exporters Association, ASOEX, also aided the effort. “We believe that the Delaware River ports and all the members of the chain were key to improving the logistical back-to-normal levels we saw in

season 2022-2023. Everyone worked together with periodic meetings, and the flow of information was crucial to benefit business,” said ASOEX President Iván Marambio.

The kick-off meeting for the 2023-24 season will take place on December 4, 2023, and working group members are excited for another successful run. ASOEX is estimating a total growth in table grape exports of about 5%. Nearly 60% of grape exports are destined for the U.S., and over half of that comes to the Delaware River.

“The Chilean Fruit Working Group is a great opportunity to share ideas and keep up to date with all facets of the industry,” said Ecolab’s Eastern Regional Manager John Achzet.”

Contact [exchange@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:exchange@maritimedelriv.com) to get involved or learn more about the working group.

plans to negotiate project labor agreements for all projects and provide close to \$14 million for regional workforce development boards that will serve as partners for community college training and pre-apprenticeships.

“The construction and operation of MACH2 will provide immense benefits and opportunities to our local communities and workforce who are well positioned to lead the clean energy future. Beyond the economic impacts, MACH2 will also decrease pollutants in the air, enhance public health outcomes, and ensure a greener and more sustainable future for South Jersey and our entire region,” said Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ).

To ensure accountability, the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub plans to create a Community Advisory Board and establish third-party verification.

### There’s a catch

The DOE funding is not guaranteed. MACH2 and the six other hub sites are considered “potential” or “demonstration” projects, and the DOE will distribute the funds in installments. While the initial funding of \$20 million for MACH2 will be used primarily for planning and engineering, along with community engagement, the DOE Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, which oversees the projects, has

built go/no go decision points into each phase of the process. OCED can elect to discontinue funding after reviewing the progress of any project phase.

Another consideration is that DOE is only providing between 20-50% of the cost of the various projects. “These funds are meant to unlock private investment to spur additional development,” said Todd Shrader, director of project management at OCED.

The immediate next step is for OCED to negotiate specific project parameters with MACH2. Once concluded, the planning phase is expected to span 12-18 months, followed by 2-3 years for project development and another 3-4 years for installation and construction. Successful completion of the fourth phase is earmarked by a transition from ramp up to operation.

“A significant amount of work will be required by the hub’s nonprofit team to get this massive, multi-year project up and running and keep it moving on a positive forward path,” said George Murphy, president of South River Maritime, a technical consultant to MACH2 leadership. “I know that the yet-to-be-confirmed members of the management team will be up to the task and will be driven by the desire to make this once-in-a-generation opportunity for the greater Delaware Valley a complete success.”

## H2Hub Resources

*Interested in additional information? Check out the offerings below.*

- Visit the MACH2 [website](#).
- Engage with OCED during negotiation at [engage\\_H2Hubs@hq.doe.gov](mailto:engage_H2Hubs@hq.doe.gov).
- Learn more about what H2Hubs are on OCED’s [program page](#).
- Read the [press release](#) on the H2Hubs’ announcement.
- Read an [overview](#) of all seven selected projects.
- See where the [local engagement](#) opportunities are for the project in your region.
- What are [Community Benefit Plans \(CBPs\)](#)?
- Watch a [video](#) about the demand-side support initiative
- Learn more about the [U.S. National Clean Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap](#).
- Learn more about the [Clean Hydrogen Pathways to Commercial Liffort Report](#).
- What is the [Hydrogen Shot](#)?



# Exchange DR 102 a success!

The reviews are in, and the latest Delaware River 102 was a hit.

The most recent installment of the Delaware River informational series hosted by the Maritime Exchange expanded on the port introduction presented in the spring's Delaware River 101 program and offered a more in-depth look at various components of the industry.

The Delaware River educational programs provide a way for new and seasoned employees alike to learn about the Delaware River marine transportation system through a series of presentations and Q&A sessions.

The DR102 included briefings from Ports of the Delaware River Marine Trade Association President Brian Casal, Philadelphia Barge Company President/Owner Scott Cointot, Holt Logistics Business Development Manager Byron Montalvo, Maritime Exchange Director of Operations, Paul Myhre, AutoPort, Inc. President Finn Roden, and Monroe Energy Optimization Lead Jessica Zaccarillo.

“As someone who is still relatively new to the port community, I am extremely appreciative of the information the DR101 and 102 offer,” said Christine Lassiter, executive director of the Seamen’s Center of Wilmington. “I was especially appreciative of the presentations and ability to gain a greater insight to the vast and different operations in the port community.”

Emceed by Dominic O’Brien, senior marketing manager at Philaport, the event included a question and answer panel focusing on communications within the port. Panelists included Independent Container Line Senior Director of Operations Sean Clancy, Capt. Colleen Moran



A new approach to information sharing was the Delaware River 102 Q&A-style communication panel. Attendees said this was one of the event highlights.

of the Pilot’s Association for the Bay and River Delaware, Paul Myhre, and Delaware River Stevedores President Andy Sentyz.

The group discussed key factors affecting successful port operations, such as challenges to international communications, communications technology, communications with government entities, and crisis communications.

“I was honored to participate with the panel,” O’Brien said. “I learned a lot as, I’m sure, did the students/audience members. It was a perfect way to begin to learn the complex subject of port communications.”

This program was free to members through the generous support of sponsors Holt Logistics Corp., Western Fumigation, Ports of the Delaware River Marine Trade Association, and the Pilot’s Association for the Bay and River Delaware.

The Exchange DR101 and 102 programs are a great way to gain insight into what the port is and does. “The ability to meet people face to face from the river community is invaluable,” Lassiter said.

Be sure to register for future events and see what you can learn.

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*In Memoriam*

## Michael Caron

The Exchange is saddened to report the passing of Michael William Caron on October 30, 2023.

Mike graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy and distinguished himself by receiving an award for scoring the highest on his Coast Guard exam. At age 29, he became the youngest oil tanker captain at Sun Oil, then served Sunoco ashore as port captain until his retirement.

A good friend to the Exchange, Mike was known for his love of the water and his wry humor.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Anne, his sons Victor and William, his sister Laudia Belmonte Caron, and his grandchildren Anthony Caron and Penelope Caron.

The Maritime Exchange extends sincere condolences to Anne and the entire Caron family.



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# Independent Seaport Museum captures research grants

Independence Seaport Museum is the recipient of two substantial grants to fund new research as it continues its work of preserving and sharing the history of the Delaware River waterfront. Grants from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage (the Center) and the William Penn Foundation will support ISM's forthcoming African-American and history projects.

"We are thrilled to receive this funding from both foundations in support of this incredible project," said Peter S. Seibert, president and CEO of ISM. "Their commitment to this project will ensure that we can document and preserve the stories of our waterfront for future generations."

On Sept. 14, 2023, the Center announced ISM will receive a \$240,500 grant designed to fund public events and programs that celebrate the diverse and creative contributions of local artists and tell personal stories of prominent Philadelphians. Additionally, William Penn awarded a \$100,000 grant in its Creative

Communities category for Arts Presentation and Art Making to ISM in August.

These grants will support a new multi-year project, "Breaking Uncommon Ground on the Delaware River," an initiative that will collect oral histories from African-American Philadelphians who lived and worked along the Delaware River in the mid to the late 20th and 21st centuries.

These stories will guide the reinstallation in 2024 of the museum's flagship exhibition, *Tides of Freedom: The African Presence on the Delaware River*, in its new gallery space and will include an audio/video component, an online presence through the museum's YouTube channel, and an online archive of the stories in the J. Welles Henderson Research Center at ISM.

The exhibit will further ISM's mission as a maritime museum focused on the Delaware River, its people, the environment, and how it connects to the larger world.

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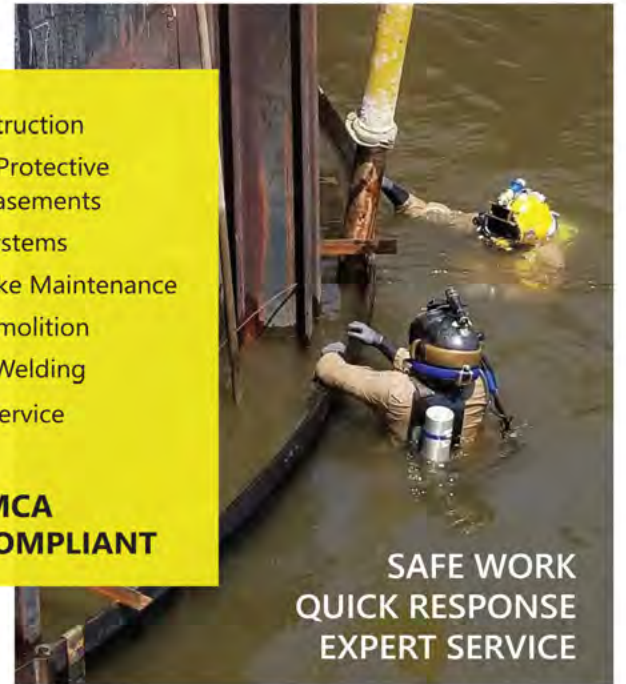


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## Q&A with Kate Higgins-Bloom

*continued from page 1*

but these are the top three. Fortunately, we have a lot of resources to help fill in the gaps, such as our port partners, like the state and local police, firefighters, and even industry. We're also working to supplement the workforce, we bring in reservists when we can, and we have our amazing Coast Guard auxiliary—1,500 volunteers in the Sector who help with everything from inspecting life jackets to staffing the galleys to conducting safety patrols. These are all force multipliers for us.

**Q: With such a varied list of cargoes that flow through the region and the upcoming operation of terminals catering to the wind-power market and possible clean hydrogen exports, what are your objectives to assist the flow of commerce in the area?**

**A:** I think the first issue is engagement. Whether it's the facilities and vessels, the Exchange, or the Pilots—the Coast Guard needs to talk to the people who really understand how these trends are going to impact the operational environment. It's incredibly valuable for us to engage with all the players to understand what kind of risks might be introduced in the coming years. We'll also need to engage with Coast Guard leadership to shape our workforce. Sector Delaware Bay is going to need different kinds of inspectors to accommodate new cargoes and new risks. That means engaging with Headquarters not just to get the right numbers but to get

the right kinds of people here at the unit.

The next thing is to lean on our ability to conduct exercises and tabletops. Going beyond talking points to really go through potential scenarios with port partners to identify what these new forces might mean is vital. For example, how will these new technologies affect the way we do search and rescue or impact the flow of traffic through the ports?

Lastly, we'll take what we learn from those exercises and apply them here as local policy changes. Or if we see something that's a more systemic issue, we'll push it up to Headquarters to inform national or even international standards.

**Q: With the International Maritime Organization's requirement to reduce sulphur oxide emissions from marine traffic in full swing and the push for alternative fuels, do you think the region is ready from safety, security, and commercial standpoints to meet the demands?**

**A:** From a Coast Guard, safety, security, and stewardship perspective, we see this as an area where industry is setting the standard and will be integral to managing whatever risks are generated. We're also able to leverage the experiences and learning moments from our neighboring Sectors and other Coast Guard units that oversee liquefied natural gas operations to help us refine our own policies, mitigate port-specific concerns, and facilitate commerce as new technology and alternative fuels make their way into our area. At the Sector, we will need to ex-

pand the knowledge base of our marine inspectors, adding some industry training or retraining.

The same general concepts apply to a potential LNG export terminal in the region and the recent MACH2 clean hydrogen hub announcement. The Coast Guard is only one of many participating agencies in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-led process for siting, design, construction, and operation of LNG facilities, but once they're in the port, it's our responsibility to work with everyone who is part of the community to ensure safety and security issues are addressed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

One thing we're learning as our port partners approach us about alternative fuels is that with strong and effective communications between industry and the Coast Guard, we can pretty quickly review compliance and set the right safety standard regime to mitigate risks associated with new operations.

One of our biggest goals is to ensure Coast Guard is not an unnecessary barrier to innovation or adaptation.

**Q: Upcoming events, including Homecoming 250 and the World Cup, will surely bring challenges to the maritime landscape. What do you see as your and the region's most pressing challenges? Among all this, where do you see the opportunities?**

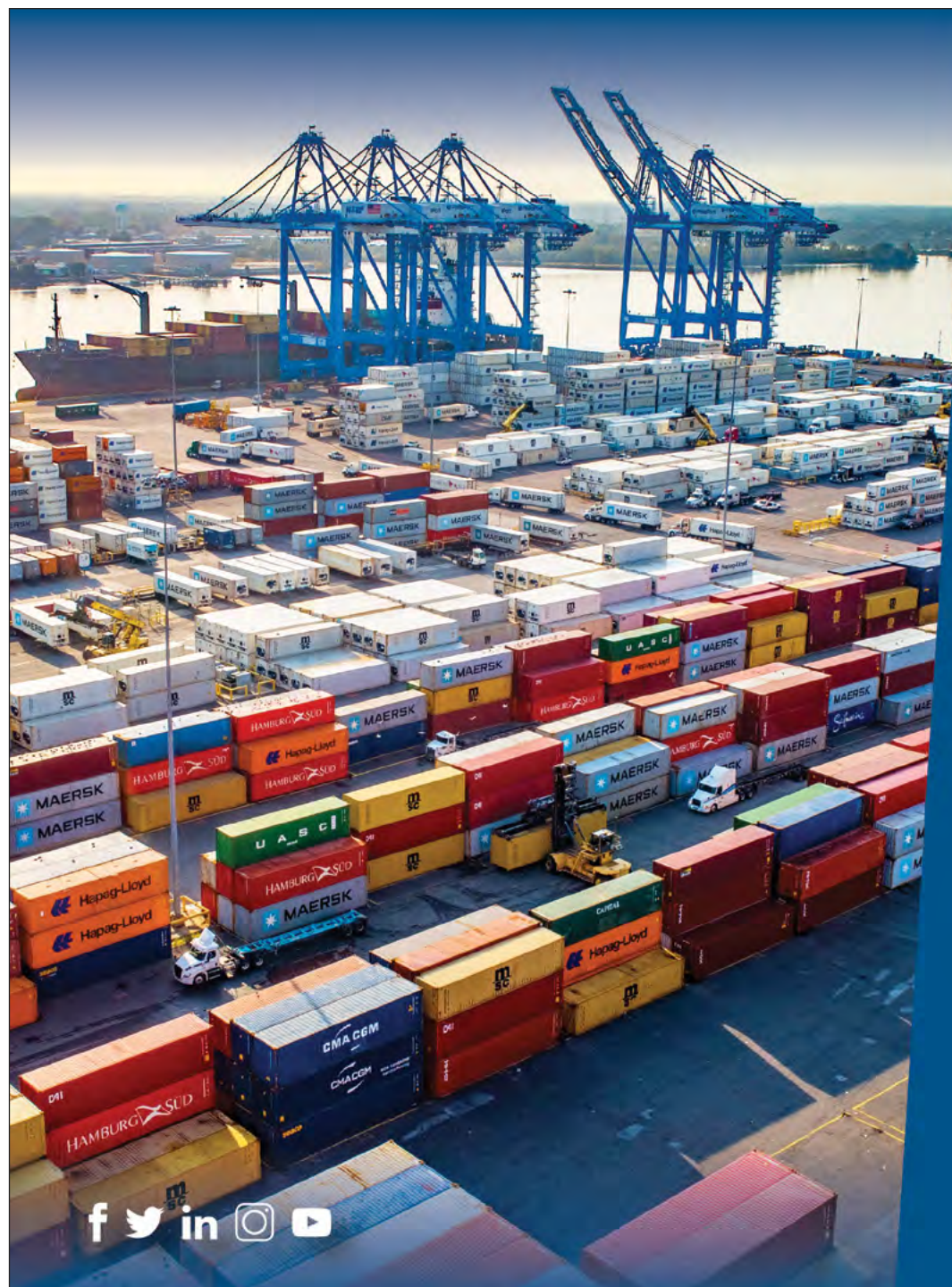
**A:** First off, I'll start by saying I'm incredibly excited about all the things that are going to happen here.

Whether it's the regular presence of the President and Vice President and a lot of other high-profile elected officials

in 2024, followed by the Navy/Marine Corps Birthday in 2025, followed by the FIFA World Cup, America 250, and the all-star baseball game 2026—there is always a lot going on here in Delaware Bay. In some ways, these are a reflection of how dynamic this area is. And it's not just events. It's the other things we talked about as well, like offshore wind, clean hydrogen, LNG, and the shipbuilding at Philly Shipyard. To me, these are all reminders of how vibrant our maritime community is.

The direct benefit of these events is that they give us focus. Preparing for these large-scale events forces us to develop and stress test existing assumptions and plans. As an operational commander, my first and foremost challenge is to ensure we are sharing information in a way that is timely and actionable. It's an enduring problem—no doubt Alexander Hamilton had a memo in his desk that discussed the need to improve comms.

Just as important, having these large-scale pre-planned events and significant projects gives us the vehicle to exercise our partnerships so we're ready when an unplanned event occurs. I would much rather invest the time in getting to know our partners now, rather than waiting to get to know each other for the first time in the command post on the scene of an emergency response. Fortunately, the maritime community along the Delaware River and Bay has a long and rich history of strong partnerships, which I am honored to be a part of.



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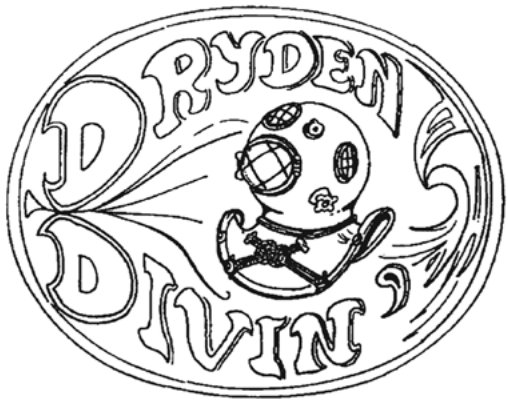
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## WTCDE snags EXIM REPP Member of the Year award

The Export-Import Bank of the United States awarded the Regional Export Promotion Program (REPP) Member of the Year award to World Trade Center Delaware during its 2023 Annual Conference.

Founded in 1987, the WTC Delaware has been the state's premier international business resource for 36 years. Established to help Delaware companies benefit from their unique place and strategic location in the world while expanding the scope of their businesses, WTC Delaware has been an EXIM REPP member since 2017.

WTC Delaware's commitment to collaborating with other government agencies has allowed EXIM to work seamlessly to ensure that Delaware's exporters are receiving

full access to, and awareness of, the financing capabilities available to them.

"We rely on the expertise and knowledge that local resources such as WTC Delaware possess to continue advancing our mission at EXIM," said its President and Chair Reta Jo Lewis. "The partnership we have developed with them is invaluable as we work to advance the global competitiveness of global exporters."

"I would advise small businesses to think about exporting as soon as they think about starting a business, because you can be sure their competition is already here or thinking about exporting and preparing," said Carla Stone, WTC Delaware president.

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# It's Official!

*Del Toro announces Navy/Marine 250th birthday events to take place in Phila. and Camden*

Against the backdrop of Philadelphia's City Hall during an October visit, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro publicly announced that he has directed the Navy and Marine Corps to celebrate their 250th birthdays in Philadelphia and Camden in 2025.

"I, the 78th Secretary of the Navy, am pleased to announce here today, our Navy's 248th birthday, that our sailors and marines will be returning to the city in 2025 to celebrate our Navy and Marine Corps' 250th birthdays," Del Toro said. "There is no place we would rather be to celebrate 250 years of our Navy and Marine Corps than the city where it all began."

The same day, the Exchange and members of the business community joined the secretary and Cmdr. Kirk Lippold, USN (ret.), skipper of the "USS Cole" when it was attacked by Al Qaeda in October 2000, at a Navy birthday celebration at Philadelphia's prestigious Union League.

Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps is a nonprofit charity formed to convince the Navy and Marines that Philadelphia and the banks of the Delaware River are the best place to celebrate their 250th birthdays. Secretary Del Toro's announcement highlighted the success of that effort.

Del Toro noted, "The Delaware riverfront in Philadelphia and Camden is the birthplace of the Navy and Marine Corps, home to countless heroes of both services." The Navy's first ships and Navy and Marine Corps' first officers were commissioned in Philadelphia.

"This is a great day for Homecoming 250," said George Leone, its president and chair. "Dedicated volunteers have worked to bring the Navy and Marines home for their 250th birthday celebration. It will be a grand opening of America's semiquincentennial and likely the

largest event celebrating the military and veterans. The celebration will honor those who serve and will remind us what unites us."

The secretary's remarks came a day after his announcement at Independence Hall that the newest Navy amphibious landing dock ship would be named the "USS Philadelphia."

The 2023 Navy and Marine Corps Week, held Oct. 9-15, 2023, on both sides of the Delaware, was a direct result of Homecoming 250's advocacy and the secretary's decision. It featured the Littoral Combat Ship "USS Cooperstown," hundreds of sailors and marines, Navy and Marine Corps bands, senior officers including Rear Adm. Sean Bailey, and more.

On Oct. 19, 2023, Homecoming 250 held a Navy & Marine Corps Gala with speakers Secretary Del Toro, Rear Adm. Bailey, Marine Col. Jeffrey Pattay, and Delaware Sen. Tom Carper.

"The Navy and Marine Corps 250th celebrations in 2025 will be much bigger," said Leone. "We plan to do something that can only happen here—assembling for touring ships from every major conflict in which the Navy and Marine Corps have defended America. We are planning Navy and Marine aerial demonstrations, veterans' gatherings, and educational and cultural activities. We will hold the 100th Marine Corps Ball where General Lejeune held the first Marine Corps Birthday Ball and will celebrate at the site of the storied birthplace of the Corps, Tun Tavern."

Leone encouraged residents and others to contact Homecoming 250 to get involved in this spectacular national celebration.

See [www.homecoming250.org](http://www.homecoming250.org) to learn how to become part of these exciting activities.

# Happy Birthday, Navy!



At the U.S. Navy birthday celebration held in Philadelphia on Oct. 13, 2023, Commander Kirk Lippold, USN (Ret.) recounted the heroic and selfless actions of his crew to keep the "USS Cole" from sinking when it came under a terrorist attack in the port of Aden, Yemen on October 12, 2000. Rear Admiral Michael Mittleman (left) presented Commander Lippold with the Lincoln Award at the birthday ceremony held at the Union League. Happy Birthday, Navy, and thank you to all those who have served!

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## Fall fundraiser a success but SCW still needs your help!



Perfect weather, outstanding food, and great auction items were on tap for the Seamen’s Center of Wilmington’s 2023 Last Bash of Summer fundraiser on Sept. 12, 2023. Exchange staff (l-r) Lisa Himber, Kenny Johnson, Paul Myhre, Candace Stanford, and Michael Fink joined hundreds of other port community members at SCW’s signature event and helped raise money to provide services and support for the many seafarers who visit the Port of Wilmington.

Missed the event? Don’t worry, the Center is gearing up for Christmas at Sea, when it gives a ditty box filled with gifts to every seafarer arriving in the First State during the month of December. Last year, SCW provided gifts to over 1,000 mariners, essentials such as toothpaste, razors, soap, a few goodies like playing cards and candy, and a hat and scarf. Please visit [scwde.org](http://scwde.org) to see how you can help.

## Fighting APHIS fees increases

*continued from page 1*

ing traditional business hours, and the importing community is not required to directly fund USDA salaries and overhead during those times. “The proposed rule does nothing to help alleviate stakeholders in the northeast from bearing an inequitable burden of the AQI costs,” said Sked.

At a joint meeting of the Maritime Exchange Maritime Operations Committee and its AQI Fee Working Group, members raised additional concerns and suggestions. The group questioned the plan to charge a single rate for all vessels regardless of size or cargo volume rather than aligning cost recovery with the workload burden, a goal stated in the notice. Instead members suggest replacing the proposed model with a base vessel rate coupled with additional fees for extended service or a tiered rate schedule tied to workload hours.

“Our principal operates a single vessel in a trade lane that is export oriented with less than 3% of the containers returning with import cargo,” said Greg Henry, president of Voigt Maritime. “The vessel is less than 3000 gross tons and can carry an empty maximum of 340 TEU. This very small vessel is currently paying the same fee as an ultra large container vessel of 233,000 gross tons and +24,000 TEU

capacity. The argument that vessel sizes have grown exponentially and APHIS demands greater revenues for larger vessel inspections isn’t true in our situation.”

Another concern is a lack of visibility into cost-containment initiatives. “The AQI program should be accountable to demonstrate that it has taken all possible steps to reduce costs before implementing such an oppressive fee increase,” Himber said. The Exchange–USDA AQI Fee and Innovations Working Groups have focused on helping APHIS identify opportunities to cut costs while maintaining the necessary level of service.

At the end of the day, in this as in so many other federal programs, industry questions why it is bearing the burden of underwriting the operations of the U.S. government. The Exchange believes the USDA and the Congress should recognize that AQI services benefit U.S. consumers and the U.S. ecosystem as a whole and not simply the ships that carry those goods or the importers who purchase them.

“We have the same argument with the Customs Reimbursable Service program, where the government now expects industry to pay for services that were historically funded through federal budgeting,” Himber said. “The federal government should seek to pay for increased staffing through the appropriations process rather than immediately turning to user fees.”

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# Clipper names ship for Camden

Port celebrates city's role in international supply chain

When International shipping company Clipper Bulk Shipping Ltd wanted to honor the City of Camden, N.J., it came up with a fitting approach. Clipper named one of its state-of-the-art vessels the "Norse Camden," to recognize Camden's vital role in the global supply chain.

Port leaders, legislators, and representatives from Clipper Bulk Shipping celebrated at Balzano Terminal on Oct. 25, 2023 to mark the ship's maiden voyage to the terminal and to underscore the significance of Camden as the company's largest U.S. port of call.

For more than three decades, Clipper has been a steadfast partner in Camden, importing steel from Northern Europe with a focus on tinplate in coils, steel coils, and structural steel. This enduring relationship has not only benefitted trade but has also contributed to Camden's reputation as a pivotal gateway in the international maritime industry.

Andy Saporito, executive director & CEO of South Jersey Port Corporation, highlighted the significance of the vessel naming and arrival. "The Norse vessels are a remarkable addition to the international supply chain and symbolize a more modern and eco-friendly approach to shipping which aligns with our sustainability

and port modernization goals," he said. "We are proud to host the 'Norse Camden' and excited to continue our partnership with Clipper Bulk Shipping as we embark on a new chapter in our shared maritime history."

State Sen. Nilsa Cruz Perez emphasized the significance of this occasion saying, "Clipper Bulk Shipping's decision to name a ship after Camden showcases Camden's integral role in international trade. It reflects the commitment of our local, state, and international partners to the prosperity and economic growth of our community and state."

Clipper Bulk Shipping is a privately held company founded by Torben G. Jensen in 1972. The company is headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark and has operational offices in Houston, Hong Kong, and Cape Town and operates a fleet of approximately 90 vessels.

"It was a great day to celebrate the arrival of our ship named for SJPC—the port and the City of Camden," said Robert A. Herb, director of Terminal Shipping, a division of John S. Connor. "Our customer, Clipper Americas and parent company Clipper Bulk, has been calling Camden on a monthly basis for over 30 years, and Terminal Shipping/John S. Connor has been proud to be acting



Exchange Directors joined the South Jersey Port Corporation and representatives from Clipper Americas to celebrate the maiden voyage of the "Norse Camden" to Balzano Terminal. Among the participants were (l-r) Rob Herb, Terminal Shipping, a Division of John S. Connor, Inc., Andy Saporito, Executive Director & CEO of South Jersey Port Corporation, Thomas Nilsen, Senior Operations Director, Clipper Americas, Robert Palaima, Peter Svensson, Senior Vice President, Clipper Americas, and Capt. Tiburcio C. Cornel Jr., captain of the "Norse Camden."

as its agent for that same time period. The port has enjoyed millions of tons and millions of man hours over that span, so it was quite appropriate for this ship named after this great working port."

The "Norse Camden," the fifth vessel in a series of eco-friendly ships, berthed at Balzano Terminal in Camden on Oct. 22, 2023, with the official welcoming celebration following two days later.

"South Jersey Port Corporation has been a great business partner for

us for many, many years," said Peter Svensson, senior vice president and head of Clipper Americas. Emphasizing the incredible milestones achieved through this enduring partnership, he said, "The millions of tons of steel that our ships have moved over three decades through Balzano Marine Terminal in Camden are a testament to the trust and reliability that defines our relationship. This is a great way to celebrate the 'Norse Camden' and the tremendous growth and success we've made together."

"Global maritime transportation systems are evolving rapidly as technology & advanced analytics drive innovation & challenge existing approaches to risk management. The art of the possible is changing. We must change with it."  
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# Editorial

## VECS: When automation goes right

Not all Customs and Border Protection automation initiatives are created equal, nor have most gone smoothly.

Those of us who have been around a while have seen the highs and lows of moving from paper to digital processing.

Like when Customs and Border Protection finally converted the Automated Commercial System to ACE, the Automated Commercial Environment—both systems the Exchange adopted early—after multiple and lengthy delays. CBP mandated security filing and stow plan transmissions through 10+2, which in many cases required a major shift in business practices for many industry partners. On the other hand, sending electronic copies of required forms through CBP's Digital Imaging System, or DIS, reduced the burden on industry by eliminating the need to hand deliver these documents—although a temporary measure at best.

More recently, CBP launched the Electronic Export Manifest pilot, which remains just that, a pilot, long after CBP predicted adoption. And still on hold pending a complete re-evaluation after years of discussion, debate, and delay is the house bill release initiative. This came when industry warned the agency that implementation in its current state could have severe negative consequences to the movement of trade.

We are used to unexpected setbacks, which, really, might be considered standard operating procedure.

So what happened with the Vessel Entrance and Clearance pilot, known as VECS, though which vessel agents and masters are now submitting vessel entry and clearance data and requests to CBP electronically? Why has it worked? And so successfully?

First and foremost, CBP talked with industry *early* in the process.

Federal automation initiatives benefit from industry participation on the front end. CBP brought representatives from the trade community in on the ground floor before finishing the design and writing any code. Perhaps CBP learned from our experience in 2009 when the Exchange helped spearhead efforts to automate the transmission of form I-418, the crew and passenger manifest, an effort which finally saw fruition in 2022. With that project in the backdrop, the Exchange worked with CBP on the initial VECS design, and we see some of the ideas we proposed during those early meetings in the program today.

Second, CBP digitized the process and not the existing paper forms.

The importance of this cannot be overstated. Simply re-creating paper forms in an electronic environment has not only hampered progress but it has also led to inefficient, time-consuming, and resource-straining workarounds.

That CBP automated the vessel entrance and clearance “process” and did not simply move form 3171 to the Document Imaging System or recreate the form in ACE was a very welcome improvement. DIS certainly has its place as a stop-gap measure to eliminate paper in the short term while processes are converted or when a digital copy of a signed, stamped, or notarized form is required. But simply migrating existing documents to an electronic format without an analysis of the process as a whole limits the benefits that can be realized—such as eliminating duplicative and outdated data elements.

CBP succeeded with VECS because it took a holistic approach. Program staff reviewed the basic goals and requirements of vessel entrance and clearance transactions and created a portal that reduces the filing burden while streamlining data access for inspectors and decision makers.

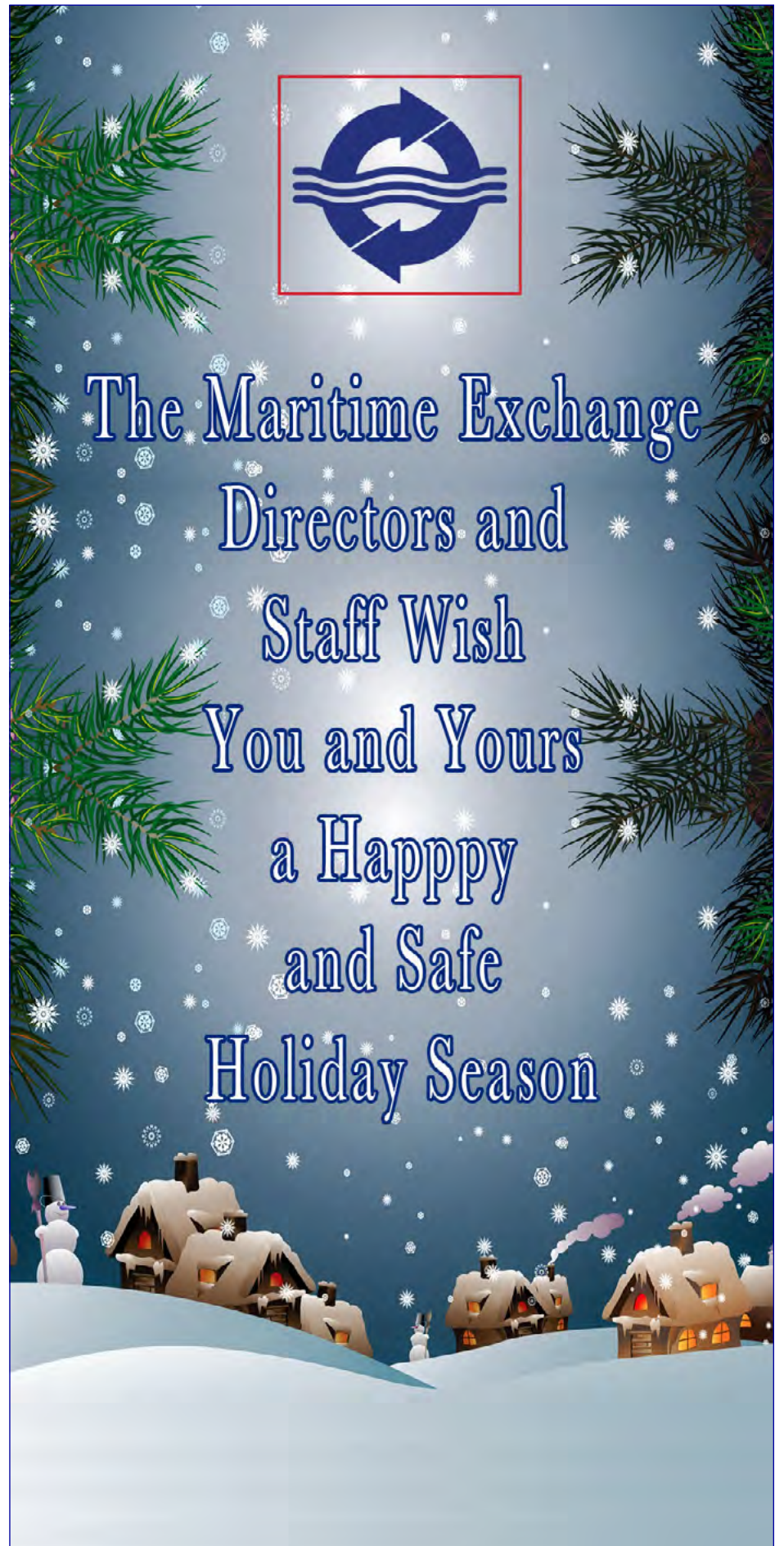
Is VECS perfect? Certainly not, no system is.

Yet from what we've seen so far, CBP hit this one out of the park. It built a strong foundation that has been well received by industry and can be expanded to incorporate other filing requirements.

VECS was so successful in the first few port deployments that it became highly sought after by other regions. The Exchange successfully campaigned on behalf of the local community to bring VECS to the Delaware River earlier than planned. From what we're hearing, we're glad we did.

As a staunch supporter of automating processes, the Exchange looks forward to see what CBP does with VECS—and other paper-intensive processes—next. We urge other federal partners with digitization plans to take a page from this playbook.

Well done, CBP.



*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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# Be sure to accurately disclose all material facts in a marine insurance application

*Failure to do so may invalidate coverage even if unrelated to the loss*



## Legal Ease

By: **Stephen J. Galati, Esq.**  
**Mattioni, Ltd.**

A case currently being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Great Lakes Insurance v. Raiders Retreat Realty*, highlights the maritime doctrine of *uberrimae fidei* (utmost good faith), a doctrine by which an insurance company may deny coverage if a party seeking insurance does not accurately disclose all material facts to the insurance company when applying for insurance.

The case involves interpretation of a maritime insurance contract between a foreign insurance company that insured a yacht and its owner, Raiders, a Pennsylvania company.

In 2019, when the yacht ran aground near Fort Lauderdale, Great Lakes denied Raiders' claim on the basis that even though the loss was not connected to a fire, the insurance policy should be voided because Raiders' application included a misrepresentation. It said that the fire equipment on board had been inspected or recertified while it had not. This, Great Lakes argued was a violation of Raiders' duty of *uberrimae fidei*, which results in the voiding of the policy. The question in the case is quite technical, whether a coverage

dispute should be resolved under New York law (which would accept the insurer's denial of coverage) or Pennsylvania law (which probably would not). Nonetheless, the doctrine of *uberrimae fidei* is one that all parties who apply for marine insurance should be aware of and with which they should comply.

The doctrine of *uberrimae fidei*, first recognized by the Supreme Court nearly two centuries ago, demands that the parties to a marine insurance policy must accord each other the highest degree of good faith. This duty of utmost good faith requires a party applying for insurance to disclose any information that materially affects the risk being insured, because the applying party is more likely than the insurer to be aware of such information. Insurers are not obliged to ask questions; rather, the insureds are bound to communicate every material fact within their knowledge not known or presumed to be known to the underwriter, whether inquired for or not.

If the insured fails to make the required disclosure of any and all information material to the insurer's underwriting decision, the policy can

be voided by the insurance company, regardless of whether the misrepresentation or omission was intentional or was the result of accident or mistake, and regardless of whether the insured believed the fact to be material or not.

A fact is material if it is found likely to influence a prudent underwriter in accepting the risk or setting the premium. Where the insurance company specifically asks about a fact, such as in an insurance application, the party applying for the insurance is thereby placed on notice that the insurance company considers it material to the risk being insured. Materiality is determined with reference to what the insurer considers important, not the insured. Because the insurer should be afforded the opportunity to investigate prior to its acceptance of the risk, the insured is required to communicate the information to the insurer before the policy is issued. Ultimately, the standard for disclosure is an objective one, that is, whether a reasonable person in the insured's position would know that the particular fact is material.

The sanction for failing to disclose or misrepresenting a material fact is cancellation of the insurance policy *ab initio* (or back to the inception, or commencement, of the policy) along with a corresponding return of the premium.

Importantly, and as is apparent from *Great Lakes Insurance*, under the



general maritime law, coverage can be voided even where there is no causal connection between the misrepresentation or non-disclosure and the loss being claimed. As such, parties seeking marine insurance must be extra diligent when applying for insurance to make sure that all material facts are accurately disclosed to the insurance company. Otherwise, it may not actually have insurance coverage.

*Steve Galati is a shareholder with the law firm of Mattioni, Ltd., with offices in Philadelphia, Pa. and Swedesboro, N.J. He can be reached at [sgalati@mattioni.com](mailto:sgalati@mattioni.com) or 609-670-1192. This article is for general information only and should not be construed as legal advice.*

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## Notes & News

In August, **PhilaPort** announced the promotion of **Michael Day, P.E.** as its new director of engineering. Since joining PhilaPort in 2013, Mike has been instrumental in guiding PhilaPort through its historic expansion. Planning, implementing, and overseeing construction projects that have contributed to the Port of Philadelphia becoming one of the fastest growing ports in the country. As the new director of engineering, Mike's leadership and understanding of the PhilaPort mission will be integral in guiding the next phase of port expansion.

**Water Resources Association for the Delaware River Basin** awarded **Gary Snyder of Mott MacDonald** its Lifetime Achievement Award for a career dedicated to improving water resources in the Greater Philadelphia area through technical expertise, leadership, mentoring, and an unflagging commitment to finding solutions through collaboration across sectors, municipalities, and technical disciplines. WRA's annual recognition awards honor organizations, projects, and individuals who lead, inspire, and innovate in water and water dependent sectors.

**Independence Seaport Museum (ISM)** has been awarded its first-ever **Maintenance Excellence Pennant** from the Naval History and Heritage Command for hull-stabilization work conducted this past spring on cruiser "Olympia." Since 2015, the museum has made great efforts to restore and maintain the watertight integrity of the vessel's hull, particularly along its wind-water line where tidal change causes rust and metal deterioration. ISM completes the work by the use of a floating cofferdam. Once placed against the side of ship's hull and the interior is pumped out, the cofferdam allows for preservation work on sections normally prohibited by the water line.

## Calendar of Events

- 11/18 Chapel of Four Chaplains Coat Drop  
11:00 a.m.  
1201 Constitution Ave., Philadelphia, PA  
Contact Michelle: 215-218-1943
- 11/29 Chilean & American Chamber of Commerce 24th Annual Friend of Chile Awards Luncheon  
11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Union League of Philadelphia  
140 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102  
[Register](#)
- 12/01 Delaware Bay AMSC General Members Meeting  
9:30 a.m. – noon  
Sector Delaware Bay  
1 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19147  
Contact: [Glena Tredinnick](#)
- 12/04 Maritime Exchange Virtual Chilean Fruit Workgroup Meeting  
11:00 a.m.  
Contact: [Lynn Cointot](#)
- 12/06 Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society Board Meeting  
Noon – 2:00 p.m.  
Contact: [Nathan Hauser](#)
- 12/07 Joint Holiday Dinner  
6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.  
Ballroom at the Ben  
834 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107  
Contact: [Linda Greene](#)
- 12/12 World Trade Center Delaware U.S. Foreign-Trade Zones & How They Work  
5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Wilmington University School of Law  
10 Beaver Valley Road, Wilmington, DE  
[Register](#)
- 12/13 Maritime Exchange Executive Committee Meeting  
11:00 a.m.
- 12/19 PhilaPort Board Meeting
- 01/10 **Maritime Exchange MACH2 Briefing**  
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
240 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA  
Contact: [exchange@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:exchange@maritimedelriv.com)  
  
Maritime Exchange Board of Directors Meeting

For a complete schedule and event details, visit [www.maritimedelriv.com](http://www.maritimedelriv.com).



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