



The Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

1430 Wallace Street | Baltimore, MD 21230

410.685.1240 | baltseafarers@aol.com | www.baltseafarers.ang-md.org

Volunteers Welcome



If you are in reasonably good health (able to climb steps), can commit to several hours a week, will respect the dignity of seafarers from every culture, and will follow security rules, we would love to train you as a **Ship Visitor**.

We can also use **Office Volunteers** to provide Center hospitality. **Please call 410-685-1240 or write BaltSeafarers@aol.com.**

We depend on your donations to help seafarers.

Please make out checks to the
Baltimore International Seafarers' Center,
1430 Wallace St., Baltimore MD 21230.

The Center is a 501(c)3, and
contributions are tax-deductible.

Thank You!

The Baltimore International Seafarers' Center gratefully acknowledges very special donations from:

- Rukert Terminals,
- Women of the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- Douglas Stevenson, Esq.,
- The Hollis family, and
- Port Networks for donating internet service.

Our thanks also go to donors from the first half of 2011:

- Ms. Mary Snead (in honor of Lee VanKoten),
- Christ Church Columbia (Episcopal),
- St. Martin's Annapolis (Lutheran),
- Mr. Robert Garske,
- Ms. Brenda Kovacs,
- Ms. Alice Bockman (in memory of Emily Davisson),

Our New Van

Very special thanks go to the International Transport Workers Seafarers Trust Foundation

for a \$30,000 grant toward replacing of one of our larger vans, and also to Board President George "Bud" Nixon for donating the remainder of the purchase price. Since new "TWIC" security regulations were implemented at the end of 2008, seafarers are more dependent than ever on our Center for transportation. Our total annual mileage rose from 32,000 in 2008, to 48,000 in 2010!



Crew members from the **Star Gran** enjoy our new van during its inaugural run.

The new van was put into service immediately: 3 crew members from the **Star Gran** were the first seafarers to ride in our gleaming 2011 van on the afternoon of March 25th. That evening, we transported 9 men from the **Taiko** to 2 different destinations, and escorted an officer from the **Virgo Leader** to meet with family members living locally. All in a day's work for the newest member of the BISC fleet!

- Ms. Fay Willey,
- Mr. Peter Randrup,
- Capt. Christopher Yearwood,
- Ms. Bonnie Volovar,
- Capt. Michael Flanagan,
- The Stierhoff family,
- Ms. Sidney Turner (in honor of Lee VanKoten),
- Ms. Tina Jordan,
- Ms. Martha Yeager, and
- Congregations where Mary has visited (see "Out and About," p.2), who have also supported us, and
- The Rev. Mary Davisson



Summer 2011

St. Nicholas' Bag

The Newsletter of the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

Current Board officers & members

Bud Nixon, President

Allene Taylor, Vice-President
Volunteer Associate Chaplain,
Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

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Leland Van Koten Esq.
Volunteer ship visitor,
Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

The Rev. Canon Angela Shepherd
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

Non-voting officers

The Rev. Mary Davisson, Secretary

John Thompson, Treasurer

Helping Seafarers Help Our Planet

Seafarers spend most of their lives on the ocean, and most take care to keep it as clean as possible. Recently, the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center had the privilege of helping seafarers protect our environment for a second time.



Although the outcome of the *M/V Capitola* case did not become public till late February 2011, it was back in May of 2010 when BISC's Director, the Rev. Mary Davisson, paid a pastoral visit to this vessel while docked in Baltimore. After listening to several crew

members' worries about illegal discharges of oily waste, she helped them contact the Coast Guard regarding their concerns. Official investigations of this nature usually take many months, a stressful time for the crew members required to stay behind in modest nearby hotels and assist with the inquiry as needed. In this case, the shipping company was eventually sentenced to a fine and probation.

Mission to Seafarers ("Flying Angel") centers such as BISC, as well as many other seafarers' centers, both assist particular crews and advocate on a larger scale. For example, BISC is an active member of the North American Maritime Ministry Association (Namma.org). Director Mary Davisson serves on their Board, and Associate Chaplain Allene Taylor is a life member. NAMMA in turn cooperates with the North American Marine Environment Protection Association (Namepa.net) on various projects, including helping to educate crews about appropriate practices.

Networking is an integral part of all our assistance to crews. In this instance, the speedy response of the Coast Guard, telephone advice from Doug Stevenson of the Center for Seafarers' Rights, and the extra volunteer hours put in with other crews -- while Mary focused on the *Capitola* -- were all critical. In the case of the *M/V Iorana* crew (See "We Will Never Forget You," http://baltseafarers.ang-md.org/docs/StNicholasBag_Wtr11.pdf), phone calls from the shipping agent, assistance with a salary issue from Arthur Petitpas (International Transport Workers Federation), and volunteers' extra hours helping the seafarers who were witnesses acclimate to Baltimore were equally essential.

Long-stay Crews...Short-stay Crews

Many of the crews we visit stay in port less than 24 hours, but sometimes we're privileged to enjoy extra time with crews whose cargo requires a longer stay.



The crew of the **Onego Passat** enjoyed foosball at BISC.

The **Onego Passat** was docked in Baltimore the entire first week of January, and we provided the crew with 4 trips to shopping areas as well as 2 visits to our Center.

The crew of the **Fiesta** spent the first week of March at Domino Sugar, and also enjoyed 4 shopping trips as well as time at the Seafarers' Center.



The Captain of the **Fiesta** presented us with this token of their appreciation.



The Radio Officer of the **Tamesis** tries out one of the chairs he purchased for the vessel with BISC's help.

The **Tamesis** was in port over 3 weeks in January (awaiting cargo orders). We transported crew members several times, including 2 excursions to buy office chairs, and also helped a crew member get together twice with his cousin, who lives in this area.

In addition, with the permission of the Maryland Port Administration and Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics, we photographed some of our volunteers at this vessel while docked in nearby North Locust Point.



Romulo Acle, from the crew of the **Tamesis**, enjoys a reunion with his cousin Sam Jamero.

camera, their ship's radio crackled: it was sailing unexpectedly early, so they had to be transported back to the terminal immediately!

On the other hand, container ships may dock for less than 8 hours, and some car ships stay only 4 to 5 hours! Seafarers from the **Hoegh Sydney** requested a quick trip to our Center, and enjoyed photographing each other in the snow at nearby Fort McHenry. But before the ship visitor could ask them to pose for our



Why are there no seafarers in this picture? Read the last paragraph of the story!



Ship visitors Bob Garske, Allene Taylor (Associate Chaplain), Mary Davison (Director/Chaplain), and Suresh Ahluwalia pose by the **Tamesis**. BISC does not take photographs in terminals except by permission. We thank Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics and JB Hanson of the Maryland Port Administration for making this possible.

Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

Director: The Rev. Mary H.T. Davison

Associate Chaplain: Allene Taylor

Office Assistants: Tina Jordan, John Thompson, Jim Johnstone, Jackie Nagel, Tony Hollis

Ship Visitors: Suresh Ahluwalia, Don Bryant, Pam Cady, Tobe Carter, Darrell Dempster, Mike Flanagan, Bob Garske, Linda Hollis, Ed Munro, Dick Nagel, Mike Proveaux, Lee Van Koten

St. Nicholas' Bag Newsletter — Writing & Editing: Mary Davison; Photo Editor: Tina Jordan; Design & Production: Sarah Miranda

Out and About

During the first half of 2011, Director Mary Davisson spoke or preached to the following:

- Women of the Delaware-Maryland Synod (Lutheran),
- St. James Monkton (Episcopal),
- St. Bartholomew's (Episcopal),
- Women in Maritime History Breakfast (where she gave the invocation),
- Church of the Redemption (Episcopal), and
- Church of the Messiah (Episcopal).

Board member and volunteer ship visitor Lee VanKoten spoke at St. John's Ellicott City (Episcopal).

We thank all these congregations and groups for their support.

Mary was also invited to offer extensive comments about shore leave at a recent National Maritime Advisory Committee meeting. As this issue went to press, Mary and Associate Chaplain Allene Taylor were preparing to attend the annual Conference of the North American Maritime Ministry Association, set for late June in Oakland, CA. Mary serves on the Board of NAMMA, and Allene is a Life Member.

Board News



*The Rev. Canon Angela Shepherd.
(Photo: Jason Hoffman)*

On February 16th, 2011, the Board of Directors unanimously elected its newest member, the Rev. Angela Shepherd, who has been Canon for Mission and Outreach in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland since July 2010. Previously, she served as Rector of St. Philip's Church in Annapolis for eleven years.

The Board also accepted with regrets and thanks the resignations of the Rt. Rev. John Rabb and the Rev. Daniel Webster.

Bishop Rabb, formerly Suffragan of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, now serves as Bishop in Residence at St. John's, Ellicott City. Canon Webster continues his ministry as Canon for Evangelism and Ministry Development, but has turned over his role on our board to Canon Shepherd.

What do seafarers tell us?

"U.S. security rules are the most onerous in the world. I used to like docking here, but no more. I feel like a criminal ... a prisoner ... the enemy."

"I'm a seventeen-year-old cadet on my first vessel, and I didn't know how hard it would be to get any time ashore."

"Can you bring us crosses? Rosaries? Bibles?" (Answer: Yes!)

"Today is my wedding anniversary, and I don't know when I'll be able to go home."

"We're so grateful for Seafarers' Centers. No one else seems to care."

*Happy to support the
important work of the
Baltimore International
Seafarers' Center*

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Christmas at Sea 2011

Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

—Original Message—

From: Radio.Tarago@xxxxx.com
To: MaryHTDavisson@aol.com
Sent: Thu, 25 Dec 11:03 am
Subject: Season's Greetings!

We wish you all a Merry Christmas!

This year is soon coming to a close and we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the services rendered during our many trips to your port. Thank you for the Christmas gifts and may the Lord bless those involved for their patience and kind thought they packed for us seafarers.

We wish you all a New Year filled with peace, happiness and an abundance of His blessings.

God Bless,

All aboard the **M/V Tarago**

Dear Friends -- You make Christmas in the Port Possible. Please Help Us Make it Portable...Shoeboxes Stack Well, Weigh Less, and are Easier to Carry Up All Those Steps!



The Rev. Tony Hollis (office volunteer) holds a box which is **too large** for delivery. The Rev. Linda Hollis (ship visitor) holds 5 that are **just right!**

With your help, we gave away over 1100 Christmas at Sea boxes last winter.

While many crews don't have regular access to e-mail, the crews of these ships were able to get in touch with us with the thanks you see here.

A cadet on the Wallenius Wilhelmsen vessel **Manon** sent her thanks directly to Old St. Paul's Church, which

supplied over 100 gifts: "Thank you for the nice Christmas gift I received from you!" One seafarer told us, "In the past 18 years, I've been home for Christmas 3 times." Your Christmas at Sea boxes give comfort and joy to seafarers in a foreign port far from home and family.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. All officers and crew are sending their thanks for the Christmas gifts we received. God Bless. Best regards to Sister Allene and Bro. Ed Munro and all.

— The Crew of the **Atlantic Conveyor**

Wish List

Please Include the Following in Each Box:

- A lightweight paperback Bible or New Testament, in a modern translation (readable by those whose first language is not English)
- **Small-sized** toiletries, sealed (no unwrapped soap or toothbrushes etc. -- and please remember that almost all our seafarers are male)
- A warm hat or a warm scarf
- And some of the following: pens and pads, warm socks or gloves, playing cards, post cards of Baltimore, etc.

Please don't use anything larger than a medium-sized shoebox, and wrap as carefully as possible. Each package should weigh less than 3 1/2 lbs. -- we just don't have enough space (or volunteers!) to handle heavy/oversized packages.

PLEASE CALL 410-685-1240 TO ARRANGE DELIVERY -- THANK YOU!

PLEASE POST - THANKS!



Please join the **Baltimore International Seafarers' Center** for a cruise around the Port of Baltimore aboard the

Duchess of Pintail

Thursday, October 6th, 2011

Enjoy a waterside tour of the Port of Baltimore in elegant surroundings and find out how the Seafarers' Center reaches out in ministry to shipworkers.



The Seafarers' Center's Director and volunteers visit nearly 1,000 vessels yearly to provide welcome, a listening ear, telephone access, free reading material, and transportation. Help support the vital work of the Seafarers' Center, meet port workers & volunteer ship visitors, and have a great time on the water!

Evening Schedule & Events

- ~ Starts at 4:45 pm - promptly!
- ~ Finishes around 7:00 pm.
- ~ Boards from Pier 5 (Baltimore's Inner Harbor)
- ~ Cost: \$60.00 per person — includes soft drinks, draft beer, and 'happy hour' snacks.
- ~ Also available: Cash bar for premium spirits, wine, and bottled beer.

RSVP by Friday, September 16th, 2011 (see reverse)

ALL ABOARD!

~ RESERVATIONS for the 2-hour Harbor Cruise ~

must be made directly with Baltimore International Seafarers' Center.
We will place your name on our passenger list upon receipt of your check,
which must be received by **September 16th, 2011**.

Cost: **\$60.00/person**. Checks should be made payable to
"The Baltimore International Seafarers' Center" and mailed to:
1430 Wallace Street
Baltimore MD 21230.

Please write **"Cruise"** on the memo line.

Optional but helpful: include **names of your guests**.

To receive a written confirmation of your reservation,
please include an e-mail address or stamped self-addressed envelope with your remittance.

Questions? Please e-mail **MaryHTDavisson@aol.com** or phone **410-685-1240**.

About the 124' Yacht Duchess of Pintail ~

Elegant and stately, the *Duchess of Pintail* is Baltimore's newest luxury yacht and is U.S. Coast Guard certified to carry up to 149 passengers. Amenities on board include a 1,500 sq. ft. main dining salon, granite topped bar, atrium dance floor, grand staircase, richly appointed lounge, galley, and four open air decks.

CRUISE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Parties who purchase ten tickets will be honored as a *Patron* aboard the cruise.

Patron – \$600

Also for those who wish to support the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center via sponsorship,
we offer the following levels which will receive recognition aboard the cruise.

Admiral – \$500 + 3 tickets

Captain – \$250 + 2 tickets

Commander – \$100 + 1 ticket

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

For information please phone Mary Davisson at **410-685-1240** or Email at **MaryHTDavisson@aol.com**

Smiles and Sighs

In addition to helping seafarers enjoy much-needed recreation (see p. 2), we also are privileged to share candid conversation. Some of the comments we hear are happy:

“For my first time ever, I was home instead of at sea when our baby was born, and I got to be present at the birth!” -- from the father of several children.

“Thank you for helping me contact ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) when my contract was up, so I could fly home in time to see my children graduate!”

“Thank you for the Bible. I lead a Bible study group on our vessel, and we needed more Old Testaments.”

Other comments are less happy:

“I won’t be home when our baby boy is born, probably next week. But thank you for praying with me.”

“I missed all our children’s graduations. But this is our life.”



The crew member from the **MSC Ilona**, his mother, and crewmates.



Lelel Selauso, reunited with her brother, Michael Selauso from the **CSAV Rio Italica**, for the first time in 5 years.

Many comments center around “TWIC” security rules, in place since the end of 2008. In order to leave their ships, seafarers without a federal Transportation Worker Identity Credential must have an escort to get from the vessel to the terminal gate.

Some Baltimore terminals provide TWIC escort for seafarers seeking shore leave, but others require seafarers to be escorted by BISC ship visitors or -- when our Center is fully booked -- by commercial services beyond the reach of some seafarers’ budgets.

U.S. security rules dominate conversations during our ship visits. One officer commented, “If you take your pet on a long trip, you let him get out of the car and exercise. Americans treat their pets better than they treat seafarers!”

Since TWIC’s inception, we have been instrumental in facilitating many shoreside reunions -- a source of both smiles when people are reunited and sighs for the increased burdens put upon the seafarers who work to provide our goods. The photos you see here are from 2 of of these joyous occasions.

A crew member from the **MSC Ilona** called the Center first thing on a Monday morning this May. He hadn’t seen his mother in 9 years, and she was driving up from Northern Virginia. A ship visitor escorted him from his vessel to the Center so his mother could spend several hours with him. And volunteer ship visitor Pam Cady provided assistance so that Lelel Selauso, now living in North Carolina, could meet with her brother, Michael Selauso, when the **CSAV Rio Italica** was docked in Baltimore. They had not seen one another for 5 years.

“Thank you for providing escort so I could see my father/mother/brother/sister/cousin/friend!” is something we hear from many foreign seafarers seeking reunions with relatives living locally, and it always makes us break out in broad smiles.

Old Friends, New Adventures

Baltimore International Seafarers’ Center ship visitors, especially Director Emeritus Bro. Ed Munro and Associate Chaplain Allene Taylor, have been serving the crews of Atlantic Container Line vessels for over 15 years.

On February 26th, when wind speeds in Baltimore reached nearly 70 miles per hour, the **Atlantic Companion** broke away from its mooring. Thanks to quick action by the Coast Guard and McAllister Towing tugboats, the vessel was safely returned to the pier.



Capt. Michael Reagoso of McAllister Towing, a member of our Center’s Board, supplied this photo.