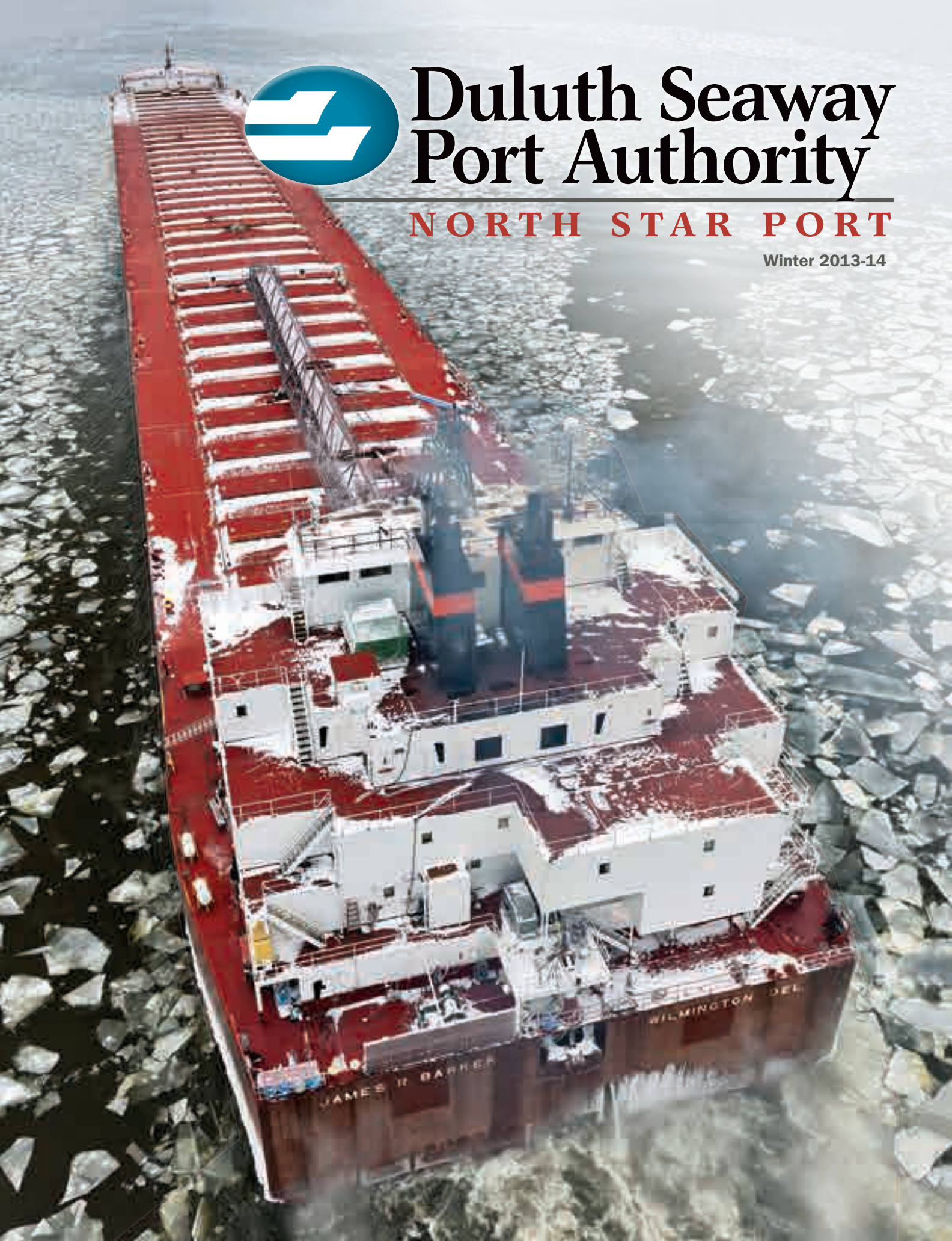




Duluth Seaway Port Authority

NORTH STAR PORT

Winter 2013-14



Winter break?

Winter can be viewed as a time of reflection — a season when the gravity of cold and snow forces the human spirit into mental hibernation.

Well, here in the Twin Ports, we don't have time to hibernate. Winter is actually "push time" for the Great Lakes shipping community — pushing against the clock to move much-needed commodities before

The Harbor Line

Vanta E. Coda II
Port Director



season's close. This year, that rush to the finish was made even more pressing by a blast of arctic air that arrived just after Thanksgiving and hasn't let up. "Polar Vortex" became the new catch phrase, and its effects were widespread across the Lakes, leading to the second-fastest lake freeze in the past two decades.

Mariners, dock workers and operators all felt the "heat" of the frantic season's close. As veteran professionals, they all doubled down and delivered great performances under pressure, working long stretches of overtime in brutal conditions. They closed the 2013 season giving 110 percent. Did they move all the cargo they wanted? No. Should they be proud of their efforts to meet delivery schedules? Absolutely.

So, now what? Many residents wonder what we do with this idle time, when ships aren't sailing in and out of the Port. It's the so-called off-season, but this is when champions are made. Our reputation for world-class service on the Great Lakes/Seaway is earned across four seasons of effort.

This is our most important season. It's when we recoup, repair and plan.

Demand at the start of the 2014 shipping season will be robust by the time locks open and shipping channels are cleared. Operators have thousands of tons to deliver that were delayed by impassable ice conditions.

The shipping done in this part of the world is hard on equipment and infrastructure. We have 10 ships wintering in the Twin Ports, and each has a maintenance schedule that must be completed in just a few short weeks. As I drive around the docks, I marvel at the crews working in these harsh winter conditions — welders, pipefitters, mechanics, electricians, engineers and others. Their work inspires me. It reminds me of the long legacy of work that has taken place in this Port for over a century and the expectation for its continuation.

Spring is coming!

In many ways, I believe that we have been in a "winter" here in this Port and across the Great Lakes/Seaway system for many years. But now I see signs that we are laying the groundwork for our own "summer." Dollar signs: \$70 million. \$1 billion. \$16 million. These investments are being made, respectively, in annual ship maintenance across the

Lakes; orders for new Seaway-size ships; and the Port Authority's own dock rehabilitation project. Dock owners/operators around this harbor spent close to \$20 million on infrastructure improvements last year alone and have additional projects on the horizon that could more than double that investment over the next three years.

There also is a Great Lakes/Seaway study under way to determine what the infrastructure investment looks like for the system as a whole. My guess is that the number will be big. Why is that important? It tells us that we are preparing for our own "invincible summer," in the words of Albert Camus.

The investments being made by the shipping community are long-term in nature. In my career, capital assets have always been important. Investing in our assets is a commitment to what we do and who we are.

That is the mindset we've adopted at the Port Authority in preparing for the next 50 years. From my vantage point, a half-century equates roughly to a complete four-season cycle. And while winter is a great time to muse about the future, we don't have much idle time. Spring is just around the corner.

'In the depths of winter I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer.'

— Albert Camus, Nobel Prize winning author, journalist and philosopher

1200 Port Terminal Drive
Duluth MN USA 55802-2609
Tel: (218) 727-8525 / (800) 232-0703
Fax: (218) 727-6888
E-mail: admin@duluthport.com

Commissioners

Steve Raukar, Hibbing, president
Ray Klosowski, Duluth, vice president
Cal Larson, Fergus Falls, treasurer
Rick Revoir, Duluth, assistant treasurer
Norm Voorhees, Duluth, secretary
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Administration

Executive director: Vanta E. Coda II
Chief financial officer: John Kubow
Industrial development: Jeff Borling
Trade development: Ron Johnson
Facilities manager: Jim Sharrow
Public relations: Adele Yorde

Clure Public Marine Terminal Operator

Lake Superior Warehousing Co., Inc.
1210 Port Terminal Drive
Duluth MN USA 55802
Tel: (218) 727-6646
Fax: (218) 727-6649
E-mail: admin@lswci.com
www.lswci.com

Travis Chadwick

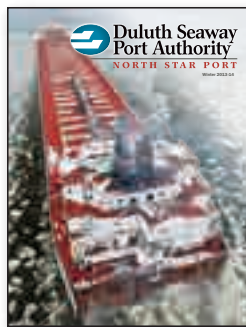


The *Pilica* lights up the night sky on Nov. 28 as she waits to load grain at CHS.

About North Star Port

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Robert Welton



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On the back:

The USCG cutter *Katmai Bay* arrives in Port on Dec. 9 to assist with icebreaking duties.



Diane Hilden

Fraser Shipyards warms to business in the cold

The twin towns of Duluth and Superior dialed down the thermostat to **COLD** early this winter. With thick ice forming *fast*, oceangoing freighters skeedad-dled out of the Twin Ports, some of them barely beating the onset of wintry conditions on the Lower Lakes.

As the shipping season moved from December into January, Great Lakes freighters, too, made their last cargo runs and then headed to winter berths. Eight ships landed in the Twin Ports, adding to the two that were already here after a season-long layup. (See Page 8 for a lineup of this winter's berths.)

Four of those ships are berthed at Fraser Shipyards, the other six at docks around the Port. All will get the attention of shipyard workers. Thus, as with every winter in a history that dates back to 1891, cold times in the Twin Ports mean hot times for Fraser Shipyards.

The venerable yard is taking on new energy and a new look. At the main entrance to the yard's 60-acre layout is a new "Fraser Industries" sign. The sign reflects the integral nature of some of the companies that operate under the Capstan Corporation umbrella and are now part of the yard's campus: along with

Fraser, Northern Engineering Company, Lake Assault Boats (see *North Star Port*, Fall 2013) and, just recently and not yet on the sign, the RJS Construction Group.



Tom Curelli

"We're not so much connected," says Tom Curelli, Fraser director of operations, "as joined at the hip."

On the grounds of Fraser is another sign of change and growth: a new three-story office building made of pre-cast concrete and sitting solidly on steel pilings. (The old office building has given way to a parking lot and a road through the property.)

The top floor is occupied by Fraser administrative and engineering personnel, including Curelli and Mike Peterson, shipyard superintendent. Lake Assault

management and engineering are also on the top floor.

The middle floor hosts RJS.

The ground floor hosts a variety of offices, including space for what Curelli calls his "guests" — company representatives of American Steamship, Interlake Steamship and Great Lakes Fleet/Key Lakes, U.S. Coast Guard inspectors and ABS surveyors. (ABS was formerly known as the American Bureau of Shipping.) The inspectors and surveyors work closely together to improve and certify strict adherence to safety and performance standards.

"Having the carriers, the Coast Guard and ABS all on site," says Curelli, "is very convenient" — not just for the yard but for all parties.

Curelli calls the new office building a "visual commitment" to growth and a signal to the community of Fraser's staying power.

Another new feature at Fraser is less visible but vital to the current and future operation of the yard — 850 feet of new dock wall. A 750 feet-wide embayment separates that new 850 feet from another 450 feet of new dock wall. High-capacity electrical service complements the



From left: the *John J. Boland*, *Kaye E. Barker*, *John G. Munson* and *Great Republic* fill winter berths at Fraser Shipyards.

new dock space. When the embayment is filled in (the permitting process is under way) and all the pieces are connected, Fraser will have a continuous 2,000 feet of new dock — or what Curelli calls “parking spaces.”

All of these improvements, Curelli says, “will give people more opportunity to come up here.” Be sure, though, that he’s talking working vessels, not tourists on holiday.

Even more modernization and expansion might be on the horizon. The Superior City Council recently agreed to apply for a \$2.9 million grant from the state Department of Transportation’s Harbor Assistance Program. The money would cover 80 percent of a \$3.6 million project to extend the existing dock wall and allow ships to more readily access the berthing area.

“We have to update in order to accommodate,” says Curelli.

“Each vessel in there can be up to 15,000 to 20,000 man hours of work, and we use this to sustain us. The yard’s been here for 123 years. We want it to stay another 123 years.”

Fraser also has added a couple of spiffy new push boats, a 26-footer that it bought (the *FSY I*) and a 45-footer that it built (yes, the *FSY II*). The yard has also built a 60-by-110-foot crane barge.

Also new at the yard is a Facebook page, which you’ll find at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fraser-Shipyards-Inc/>. It’s a great place to see pictures of new vessel arrivals in the yard and other works in progress.

Also new, in the fabricating shop, is a high-speed, high-definition plasma cutting table capable of cutting 12-by-40 foot steel plates up to 2½ inches thick.

Curelli, both a marine engineer and naval architect who served 24 years in the Coast Guard, (four of them in Duluth-Superior) came to Fraser as chief naval architect in 2010 and became director



Diane Hilden

A pair of Heritage Marine tugs help maneuver the *Great Republic* into her winter berth.

of operations about 15 months ago. The yard has a permanent staff of 60; that number rises considerably during layup season. The payroll was at 155 on Feb. 1 and would go up another 45-plus within the next couple of weeks.

“Ninety percent of our skilled workers come from the community,” Curelli says. “The others come in temporarily from upper Michigan and Wisconsin. We find that it’s best to hire people who are acclimated to our weather.

“We would like to shift the work flow paradigm a bit,” he says. “Move some of our preparatory work to warmer months. The cost savings of better scheduling and acquiring materials earlier could really add up for us and our customers, and

we could have a more stable workforce throughout the year.”

On the horizon, perhaps, is a new generation of work for Fraser, one that would involve converting lakers from diesel power to liquefied natural gas.

What are Fraser’s chances of landing this attractive work? “As good as anybody’s,” says Curelli. “I’m comfortable that we have the skills to do that work. We have second- and third-generation skilled workers whose heritage it would be wonderful to continue.

“Their work and professionalism is what draws customers to this yard. Basically all I’m doing is promoting their skills.”

— Larry Fortner



Robert Welton

The *Great Republic* rests on dry dock blocks at Fraser Shipyards.

Amazing story of a heroic dockside rescue

Fast thinking and heroic action by workers at Lake Superior Warehousing Co., Inc. (LSWCI), recently saved a man who had attempted suicide in the slip off the Public Marine Terminal.

The incident began on what seemed to be a normal workday for 55-year-old Zoran Pedisic, a Croation immigrant with 17 years of experience at LSWCI. It was Friday, Nov. 1, 2013, and he was operating a forklift at the Clure Public Marine Terminal when he noticed a man walking alone on the dock near an empty slip. That man was 90-year-old Bill Schowalter.

Pedisic called to Schowalter and asked, "Can I help you?" No response. Pedisic left the forklift and repeated the question as he approached the dock. Same reaction. Puzzled, Pedisic saw the man calmly swing his feet over a low wall and tip himself facedown into the icy water eight feet below.

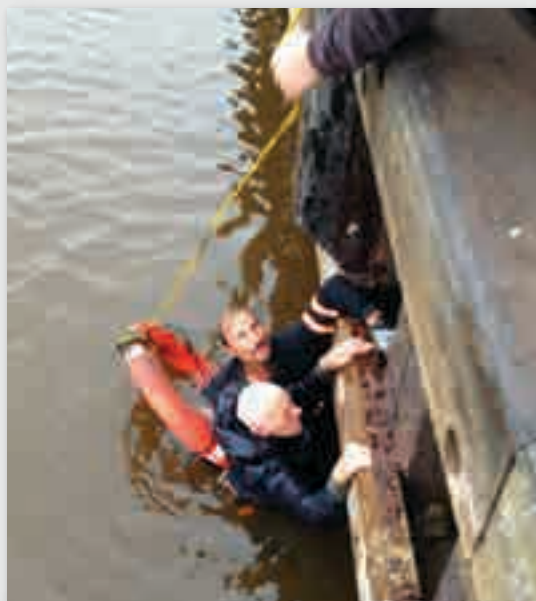
Immediately, Pedisic sprang into action. "Man overboard!" he shouted into his radio. Then, still wearing his heavy work boots and coveralls, he jumped in after Schowalter, yelling for help and struggling to keep the old man's head above water.

Help arrived quickly. The well-trained LSWCI crew appeared with life rings, rope and a stretcher. Steve Tuura, Jarrod Christianson and Tim Rogers were among the first on the scene, assisting in the dramatic rescue and pulling Schowalter out of the water to safety just as police and rescue crews arrived.

Somewhere in the midst of those frantic moments, Schowalter, who had lost his wife a year ago and was struggling with suicidal depression, rediscovered the will to live.

"He changed his mind," Steve Tuura said. "He grabbed my hand and didn't let go."

The Schowalter family spoke candidly about Bill Schowalter's battle with depression, sharing details leading up to and following the waterfront rescue with the *Duluth News Tribune*. This was not Bill's first suicide attempt, and they had struggled to



With a life ring tossed from a co-worker at dockside, Zoran Pedisic plays a key role in saving Bill Schowalter.

Tim Rogers/LSWCI

get him help. He gave his children permission to tell the story, wanting to help others avoid his pain. The family sees a need for better understanding about depression among older adults and more compassion in getting help "before something happens."

Family members delivered thank-you cards to LSWCI and met the rescuers in an emotional face-to-face. "We hugged and talked, it was very touching," Scott Schowalter told the *Duluth News Tribune*, giving Pedisic full credit for saving his father and turning his life around. "That is what saved him."

"I just couldn't let him die like that," Pedisic said. "I would do it again."

Pedisic could understand Schowalter's pain over losing his spouse because he and his wife, Kathy, have an amazing love story of their own. They met in 1982 when he was a sailor on the Yugo Line, visiting the Port of Duluth-Superior. "I left a phone number and said, 'If you're ever in Croatia...'" Two months later, she appeared at his door. Zoran and Kathy eventually returned to Duluth, where he found work (first as a truck driver and later at LSWCI), and they raised three children.

Jonathan Lamb, president of Lake Superior Warehousing, is proud of the dockside crew and the heroism they displayed.

"It was a tremendous effort and says a lot about our team," Lamb said, praising the men's situational awareness and knowledge of equipment and safety gear. "They have each other's backs. With all of the bad things happening in the world, there is some hope for humanity yet."

In mid-November, Pedisic, Tuura and Christianson sat down and told their story to Master Chief Robert Pump, Officer in Charge of CG Station Duluth, who has recommended Pedisic for the USCG Silver Life Saving Medal — the second highest life saving award that can be received.



Zoran Pedisic reflects on the rescue.

Steve Kuchera/Duluth News Tribune

Time of transition at Guthrie-Hubner

Vessel agent Charles Hilleren, known for decades on the waterfront as “Chuck,” isn’t the operations guy at Guthrie-Hubner, Inc., anymore. That honor, he says, falls to his son, Scott, who in turn acknowledges with a somewhat wry and weary nod that he indeed is the “24/7 guy” these days.

Clearly Guthrie-Hubner is a family affair. But the familial ties are not limited to just Chuck and Scott.

Please meet two more Hillerens — David (Chuck’s younger son) and David’s wife, Jenna. They work for Guthrie-Hubner’s in-house freight forwarder, Lakeshead Forwarding, and are responsible for the amazingly complex job of keeping all of the documentation in order for the ships, cargoes and crew members in the agency’s care.

We would also introduce you to Jeanne, Chuck’s wife and the boys’ mom, but she has phased herself out of day-to-day operations.

Chuck started with Guthrie-Hubner in 1973 under the tutelage of waterfront legend Sven Hubner. Sven had bought the business from Alastair Guthrie, who had founded the company in 1934.

Hilleren’s joining the company came in the midst of brisk international trade, including the brief but glorious era of huge grain deals with the former Soviet Union.

Hilleren, a Benson, Minn., native, had landed in Duluth in 1972 in the final months of his Air Force hitch. Next thing he knew, at the invitation of Sven Hubner, he was a waterfront newbie and found himself working dizzying, non-stop 20-hour days to keep up with trade with the USSR and other countries from the arrival of the first ocean-going vessel in spring to the departure of the last saltie in late fall.

Chuck must have liked the work. He prospered along with the company and purchased Guthrie-Hubner in 1991.

A ship’s agent must be many things. Above all else, Chuck honors the agent’s traditional role, which is, in his words: “You are always a servant of the vessel and also the trade.”

With that service comes tremendous responsibility. “The ship owner puts you in

Both were working demanding jobs in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and driving long, miserable daily commutes. Eventually they they found themselves desperately wanting to live and work in a more wholesome environment. With Lakeshead Forwarding’s longtime



The Hillerens of Guthrie-Hubner, from left: David, Jenna, Chuck and Scott.

Larry Fortner

trust,” Chuck says. “It’s the agent’s job to get the ship in and out with no undue circumstances. In all cases, the right thing is going to get done. The fundamental basis for this business is trust.”

The ship agent’s job is to facilitate the timely and cost effective transportation of cargoes. Simply stated, perhaps, but not so simply accomplished. The agent, in fact, arranges for every detail of a ship’s arrival, loading and departure.

“You’re at the beck and call of the ship owner or charterer,” says Chuck. “And they want everything done faster and cheaper. It can cost \$30,000 a day to operate one of these ships, so the meter is always ticking.”

Scott himself is now a veteran of the agency, with over 15 years of experience. David and Jenna are much newer to the company. They joined in the summer of 2011.

employee Carol Carrasca on the doorstep of retirement (see *North Star Port* Summer 2012) and Jeanne wanting to retire, too, Chuck and Scott saw work within Guthrie-Hubner for both Jenna and David. The couple happily chose to leave the metro rat race and come home — to the pressure-cooker world of international shipping.

Their jobs sync with the other roles within Guthrie-Hubner. “You’re either real busy, or not at all,” says Chuck. “No one here punches a time clock. You go from nothing to do to busy as hell, and that changes in a second. No other job in Duluth can keep your mind so active. You’re either committed to this work, or you’re out.”

Count the Hillerens in.



The oceangoing *Orsula* was the season's last saltie out of Port. With a Great Lakes Towing tug leading the way, she departed on Dec. 19.

Layups

Ten lakers are tied up in the Twin Ports for layup

VESSEL	ARRIVAL	CARRIER	BERTH
<i>American Spirit</i>	1/2/14	American Steamship Co.	Port Terminal Berth 6
<i>St. Clair</i>	1/2/14	American Steamship Co.	Dock C
<i>Great Republic</i>	1/4/14	GLF/Key Lakes	Fraser Shipyards
<i>Walter J. McCarthy Jr.</i>	1/5/14	American Steamship Co.	Enbridge Dock
<i>Presque Isle</i>	1/14/14	GLF/Key Lakes	Port Terminal Berth 1
<i>Cason J. Callaway</i>	1/15/14	GLF/Key Lakes	Port Terminal Berth 4
<i>Mesabi Miner*</i>	1/16/14	Interlake Steamship Co.	Midwest Energy
<i>Kaye E. Barker</i>	1/16/14	Interlake Steamship Co.	Fraser Shipyards
<i>John J. Boland**</i>	1/12/13	American Steamship Co.	Fraser Shipyards
<i>John G. Munson**</i>	1/25/13	GLF/Key Lakes	Fraser Shipyards

* Arrived at Calumet Marine Terminal for crane-assisted repairs before shifting to Midwest Energy.

** Did not sail during the 2013 shipping season.

Not included are the *American Victory* and *Edward L. Ryerson*, which did not sail in 2012 or 2013 and remain in layup.

Firsts & Lasts

First laker out	3/20/13	<i>Mesabi Miner</i>
First laker in	3/26/13	<i>Paul R. Tregurtha</i>
First saltie in	3/30/13	<i>Federal Hunter</i>
Last saltie out	12/19/13	<i>Orsula</i>
Last traffic	1/16/14	<i>Mesabi Miner</i>

2013 at a Glance

	Short Tons	% change
Overall tonnage	36.7M	+ 0.1%
Coal	14.9M	+ 3.5%
Iron Ore	16.3M	- 7.1%
Grain	1.3M	+ 23.9%
Other [†] (stone, cement, salt, etc.)	4.2M	+ 14.1%
Vessel visits	879	- 3.9%



The *Indiana Harbor* (left) and *Arthur M. Anderson* battle ice as the season nears its end. Photo by Bob Hom, pilot on the *Nels J.*, one of two tugs breaking ice.

Snow, ice, deep freeze bookend 2013 season

Ice and snow choked shipping traffic and plagued operations up and down the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway system on both ends of the 2013 season.

“The Great Lakes Shipping industry has not grappled with such extreme cold and inhospitable conditions since 2004,” according to Glen Nekvasil, vice president of Lake Carriers’ Association. The harsh conditions contributed to a 2013 decline in iron ore shipments, which were down 5.3 percent from the year before.

Unusual amounts of ice and snow plagued the season from day one. Frigid spring weather and thick ice backed up traffic at the Soo Locks in March, causing a slow start to the season. U.S. Coast Guard cutters *Mackinaw* and *Alder* and the Canadian cutter *Samuel Risley* helped vessels navigate the ice near Sault Ste. Marie.

In early April, powerful winds pushed lake ice toward Duluth-Superior, clogging entrance channels and leaving nine ships anchored outside the harbor. Tenacious local tugs helped the *Alder* clear the way for shipping to resume.

Then record-breaking April snowfalls dumped 51 inches of late-season snow on the Twin Ports, complicating commerce even more.

A collective sigh of relief could be heard as spring gave way to summer.

The gales of November arrived with a vengeance with heavy snow and brutal cold that stretched into December and January. Conditions caused the Coast Guard to launch its two major domestic icebreaking operations, Operation Taconite and Operation Coal Shovel, earlier than usual to keep commercial navigation flowing.

“Probably the earliest we’ve had this much ice in 15 years,” said Mark Gill, director of vessel traffic services, Soo Control, U.S. Coast Guard.

Icebreaking assets on the Great Lakes were stretched thin — even as forecasters predicted more snow and subzero temperatures.

Working in brutal winter conditions takes a toll on people and equipment. Undaunted crews on ships and shoreside kept cargo moving through the Port of Duluth-Superior’s docks and terminals. Personnel worked long hours, battling weather-

related equipment failures, frozen cargo hold hatches and a backlog of ice-encased ships racing to beat the scheduled closings of the St. Lawrence Seaway (Dec. 31) and the Soo Locks (Jan. 15). Simply keeping the bollards and walkways free of ice and snow for line handlers was a constant struggle.

“It’s the ‘heat and beat season,’” said one seasoned

veteran in mid-December. Crews used heated fire hoses, sledgehammers and blowtorches to remove snow and ice from

Deep freeze Continues on next page



The *Indiana Harbor* bears witness to the icy conditions.

Photo by Paul Scinocca



These bikes, frozen in place aboard the *Stewart J. Cort* while she locks through at the Soo, won't be going anywhere for a while.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Deep freeze Continues from previous page

deck and cargo holds. This was “not their first rodeo” with winter weather, and they would see the season through to the end.

A weather phenomenon recently dubbed the “polar vortex” pushed arctic air through the Great Lakes in late December and early January. Temperatures plunged to -40° F, causing ice conditions to worsen. Brash ice at the Duluth Aerial Lift Bridge was 8 to 12 inches thick the first week of January; snow-covered plate and brash ice outside the channel was 10 to 16 inches thick — a challenge for any vessel.

Those fighting to keep the Great Lakes shipping season open could find no rest. Icebreakers from the U.S. and Canada were operating at capacity, but virtually every ship on the upper Great Lakes was trapped in ice or required assistance. The 1,004-foot *Mesabi Miner* rear-ended the USCG cutter *Hollyhock* as it escorted a convoy of ships through an ice ridge in northern Lake Michigan. Both vessels sustained damage. The 730-foot bulk freighter *American Mariner* was ice-locked in St. Marys River for two days before the *Mackinaw* freed it — only to get stuck again the same day.

“I’m 68, and I’ve never seen a winter like this,” Mike Ojard, owner of Heritage Marine, told the *Duluth News Tribune*. His tugboats labored daily, plowing through the unforgiving ice to assist and escort ships into and out of Port.

The National Weather Service called the ice buildup the second fastest and thickest since it began tracking freezes in 1978. Experts began predicting a Great Lakes freeze-over, an event that occurs about once in 20 years.

“It’s probably been the toughest winter we’ve had in about 24 years,” Robert Lewis-Manning, president of the Canadian Shipowners’ Association, told Global News. “Ships are accustomed to sailing in ice,” he said. “But it got to the point where ships had to be escorted in convoys by both the U.S. Coast Guard and Canadian Coast Guard, so that’s really when the whole system slows down considerably because you have to get in lineups to go anywhere. We’ve lost literally hundreds of days of sailing time.”

As the Soo Locks prepared to close on January 15, vessels backed up in the ice-choked St. Marys River trying to beat the deadline. Officials at the Port of Duluth-Superior kept a close eye as the last few vessels pushed through, some heading for winter layup.

Ten Great Lakes freighters are wintering in Duluth-Superior this year, undergoing maintenance and providing jobs for hundreds of shipyard workers. If weather and work schedules permit, they will be ready to roll when the Soo Locks reopen March 25. Ice or no ice. Snow or no snow.





Paul Scinocca

Above: The *Presque Isle*, clad in ice, sails through the Duluth ship canal on Dec. 7.
Below: CSL's *Baie Comeau* and *Whitefish Bay* are assisted to the CN dock by tugs from Great Lakes Towing (foreground) and Heritage Marine.



Robert Welton

Slow start for 2014?

Duluth set an all-time record on Feb. 11, marking its 23rd consecutive day of below-zero temperatures. (The previous record of 22 days was set in 1936 and tied in 1963).

Little wonder, that ice was covering 80 percent of the Great Lakes by then, and Lake Superior was well on its way to freezing over completely, which hasn't happened in nearly two decades – all of which has the maritime community concerned about a rough break-out in March and a slow start to the 2014 shipping season.

“We’re going to have some icebreaking work just to move ships around before we get the winds and weather to move the ice and get it away from the system,” said Mark Gill, director of vessel traffic services with the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Sault Ste. Marie. “We’ll have to go from port to port and form convoy lines to get everyone from these satellite locations into the main shipping lanes,” Gill said. “That takes time, and time is money.”

“It’s going to be a slow, deliberate, move,” he said about the start of the season. “We still have eight weeks of cold weather ... if we continue on the track we are, we’re going to continue to make ice, and we’re going to have more ice than we have icebreakers to deal with it.”

Two good things about ice

The ice does have hidden benefits. Ice can have a profound effect on lake levels. A robust ice cover keeps water temperatures low by reflecting solar energy. That reduces evaporation, a major factor in lowering water levels on the Great Lakes.

Ice and snow also increase demand for road salt. That’s been good news for the Port of Duluth-Superior, which saw 443,648 inbound short tons of salt in 2013 – well above the five-year average of just over 300,000 tons. Prices have gone up, too, roughly tripling so far. North American Salt Company, Hallett Docks 5 and 8, and C Reiss Terminal handle salt shipments in the Twin Ports.



The *Edgar B. Speer* leaves Port on Dec. 7 in a light mist of sea smoke.



Wagenborg's *Volgaborg* arrives on Dec. 8 to load grain at CHS in Superior.



The *Radcliffe R. Latimer* discharges salt at North American Salt – just in time for the snow and ice to arrive.



Diane Hilden

The *Algoma Equinox* first called on the Twin Ports on Dec. 11 to load iron ore pellets at the BNSF dock in Superior.

Algoma Equinox heralds new generation of ships

Shipping on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway is sailing toward the future with a new generation of vessels significantly more fuel efficient and environmentally friendly.

Algoma Central Corporation's brand new *Algoma Equinox* was the first of the company's Equinox Class vessels to be delivered. She made her maiden voyage to the Port of Duluth-Superior on Dec. 11, 2013, and loaded iron ore pellets for Cliffs Natural Resources at the BNSF Railway Dock in Superior.

Algoma Equinox is a gearless bulk carrier and the first in a series of eight Equinox

Class vessels being built at the Nantong Mingde Shipyard in Nantong, China, for service on the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence waterway. Algoma Central will own six of the ships, including two gearless bulkers and four self-unloaders. CWB Inc., formerly the Canadian Wheat Board, will own the two

other gearless bulkers, which will be operated and managed by Algoma.

"The Equinox Class will carry more cargo at higher speeds using 45 percent less fuel per ton-kilometer of cargo carried,

resulting in a corresponding reduction in greenhouse gases," said Greg Wight, president and CEO of Algoma Central Corporation. "Algoma also will be installing exhaust gas scrubbing systems on all eight new Equinox Class vessels that will virtually eliminate sulfur oxide emissions."

At 740 feet, the *Algoma Equinox* and her sister ships are "Seawaymax" vessels, the largest that can navigate the canal locks of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Deliveries of the remaining seven Equinox Class vessels are expected in approximately three-month intervals through the 2014 and 2015 navigation seasons.



Robert Welton

The propulsion engine in the *Algoma Equinox* is sparkling clean and energy efficient.

Minnesota Power honored for Bison Wind project

Minnesota Power's Bison Wind Energy Center near New Salem, N.D., has been named best wind project of 2013 by *Power Engineering* magazine and *RenewableEnergyWorld.com*. The award is considered the industry's top honor for a new wind project.

The \$500 million installation was dedicated last summer and includes 101 turbines that produce 292 megawatts of electricity for customers in northern Minnesota. In August, the power company announced it was moving forward with a 200-megawatt, phase four expansion of Bison which would make it the largest single wind farm in North Dakota.



Dennis O'Hara / Northern Images Photography

The Bison Wind Energy Center produces 292 megawatts of electricity for customers in northern Minnesota.

The Port of Duluth plays a critical role in wind-energy development in the nation's heartland as a significant share of components, including the Siemens

direct-drive nacelles that power the Bison Center turbines, arrive on ships at the Port Authority's breakbulk terminal.

Amy Klobuchar honored

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) was named the 2013 Great Lakes Legislator of the Year by the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force. The award is presented annually to a legislator who has helped advance maritime commerce on the Lakes. Senator Klobuchar is the second Minnesotan to be so honored; the first was former Congressman James L. Oberstar in 1999.



Klobuchar

Capitol conversations

Port Authority Executive Director Vanta Coda hosted U.S. Senator Al Franken for a Port visit on Jan. 21. The meeting provided an opportunity to update the senator and his staff on new developments here in the harbor, to discuss issues of concern to the maritime industry and to personally thank him for his help in moving forward



Sen. Al Franken and Port Director Vanta Coda.

WRDA legislation to provide dedicated funding for Great Lakes dredging as well as for his long-standing support of the Port Authority's Dock C&D intermodal project, which was recently awarded a \$10 million federal TIGER grant.

Later that day, Coda also met with and thanked Minnesota Congressman Rick Nolan for his support on those same initiatives as both Congressional leaders were featured speakers at a Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon entitled "A Capitol Conversation," an event co-sponsored by CN and the Port Authority.



Guests at South Pier Inn have a front-row seat to ship traffic at the Aerial Lift Bridge.

Duluth's South Pier Inn wins Lodging Association award

The South Pier Inn, with its up close and personal views of ships passing through the Duluth ship canal, has been awarded the Minnesota Lodging Association's 2013 property of the year award for hotels with 50 or fewer rooms. The award is one of just five given out by the association each year and the only one given to a Duluth hotel.

The award recognized the unique nature of the property, said an association spokesperson, "Being on the pier and such a small property, it has all the amenities you could possibly want."

The inn was built in 2002 by the Sola family — Dale and his wife, Betty; sons Steven and Rand and Rand's wife, Carrie. The property has had but one general manager in that time, Branden Robinson.

The inn is a favorite of boatnerds. Two-thirds of its 29 rooms are waterfront suites. Ship arrivals and departures are posted daily for guests, and late-night ship calls are offered for those who don't want to miss a single passage.

The inn will host an open house on March 8, from 10 a. m. to 5 p.m.



The 740-foot *CSL Assiniboine* made an unusual voyage from Thunder Bay to Duluth on Dec. 13. She was towed all the way by the ice-clad tug *Leonard M.* Here the pair pass beneath Duluth's Aerial Lift Bridge on the way to Fraser Shipyards for repairs to a damaged propeller.

Lake Superior Magazine takes top prize

Lake Superior Magazine became the first publication with a circulation under 30,000 to be named Magazine of the Year by the Minnesota Magazine & Publishing Association.

That was one of 10 awards presented to *Lake Superior Magazine* at the MMPA awards banquet on Nov. 7, including gold for overall excellence in its category (general interest, circulation under 60,000).

Accepting the awards were Cindy and Paul Hayden, owners/publishers; Konnie LeMay, editor; and Bob Berg, managing editor.

Blessing of the Port set for March 20

The Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers has scheduled its annual Blessing of the Port ceremony for 5 p.m. on March 20 at the Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center in Duluth's Canal Park. Doors open at 4:30.

The event will include a musical tribute to mariners followed by a forecast for the 2014 shipping season and a brief ceremony of blessing for all involved in the maritime industry.

Refreshments will be provided. The service is open to the public.

For information:
Seafarers' Center (218) 727-5897

Trillium (and daisies) adorn Port calendar

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority conducts a low-key, yet spirited competition every year to find the one photograph that will grace its wall calendar. Most recent honors went to Duluth amateur photographer Paul Scinocca, who captured this lovely image for the 2014 printing. Scinocca works as a project manager at Hunt Electric in Duluth and has been shooting pictures since his junior-high days. He framed this scene from a vantage point at 8th Street and Minnesota Avenue on Park Point. The gorgeous flower garden in the foreground is planted and tended by neighbors Pattie Peters and Betty Sola (also an owner of the South Pier Inn, story on Page 15). The pairing of the freighter with the flowers may have been coincidence, but the ship passing happens to be one of CSL's new Trillium class vessels.



No more Christmas cruises

Diane Hilden



The *Algoma Quebecois* enters Port on one of her last visits to Duluth-Superior.

Once a frequent visitor to the Twin Ports, most often delivering cement to the Holcim terminal, the retired Canadian laker *Algoma Quebecois* was purchased by International Marine Salvage and is being dismantled for recycling at Port Colborne, Ont. The original *Quebecois* was built in two stages by Canadian Vickers Ltd. in Montreal in 1962 and joined Upper Lakes Shipping in 1972. When that fleet was sold in 2011, the ship joined Algoma Central and was renamed for its final 2012 season. For many years, she was known as the Santa Claus Ship because a crew member enjoyed dressing up to deliver Christmas cheer to young and old across the Lakes during December.

Grimy fun for a good cause

Wanted: Preservation- and restoration-minded volunteers to join like-minded souls for the annual Spring Work Weekend — April 26-27 — aboard the *SS Meteor*. Workers will team up for a couple of days of supervised cleanup/fix-up work. The *Meteor*, the last remaining whaleback freighter built by Alexander McDougall in the Twin Ports, is now on museum duty for the Superior Public Museums. The work detail is sponsored by the Superior group along with the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society and the Lake Superior Marine Museum Association.

For information: **(715) 394-5712**.



Volunteers are needed for the Spring Work Weekend aboard the *SS Meteor*.

Propeller Club celebrates its 80th



Diane Hilden

The Duluth-Superior Chapter of the International Propeller Club of the United States celebrated its 80th anniversary in fine style, with a festive luncheon on Dec. 13 in Duluth. During the luncheon, a host of past presidents were recognized. Among those present were, from left: Mike McCoshen, Tom Caine, Fran Steele, Al Klein, Ralph Bertz, Davis Helberg, Dick Bibby, Jim Skinner, Jim Sharrow and the current president, Jason Serck.

Borling joins AMFA board

Jeff Borling, Port Authority director of industrial/economic development, has been named to the board of directors of the Arrowhead Manufacturers & Fabricators Association. The majority of his career has been spent in the development arena, including seven years with APEX (Area Partnership for Economic Expansion), helping to drive regional investment activity and job growth in northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin.



Borling



Dennis O'Hara

The *Federal Hunter* arrived on March 30, 2013.

First saltie of 2014?

Each year, the Port Authority and Visit Duluth co-sponsor a First Ship Contest. If you have an inkling of the exact date and time the very first oceangoing vessel of 2014 will sail into Port beneath the Aerial Bridge, then send in an entry. The person who guesses closest will win a fabulous Duluth Getaway grand prize package! Second- through fifth-place winners will also receive prizes. Rules and deadlines at visitduluth.com.

Here's a hint: The first saltie of 2013, the *Federal Hunter*, arrived at 12:53:18 a.m. on March 30, the earliest on record.

If you'd like to compare arrival times, check out photos and stories about the Port's first salties dating back to 1998:

duluthshippingnews.com/category/first-salty-of-year/.



Waste Management is completing plans to move into this building on the Port Terminal.

Port Authority welcomes Waste Management to Port Terminal

Plans call for nearly \$500,000 to be invested by Waste Management of Minnesota as it takes over property newly leased from the Port Authority at 1105 Port Terminal Drive. Once the 10,000-square foot space is refurbished, the building will be used as its regional Materials Recovery Facility, within which recyclable glass, paper and plastic will be presorted and compacted to be loaded onto semi-trailers for delivery to a larger MRF in Minneapolis for further processing. The company is completing architectural and engineering plans and permits and hopes to be operating at the site this spring.



Even though our landscape in late November wasn't yet covered with snow and ice, the *Presque Isle* served as a harbinger of winter with her touches of white.

Port Passings

Daniel M. Overlie, 61 of Proctor, Minn., died on Dec. 27, 2013, at home. Dan closed out his working days as an equipment operator with Hallett Dock Company, a job he enjoyed very much until his health forced him into early retirement in 2011. He is survived by his wife, Mary, two sons, three grandsons, a brother and many nieces and nephews and cousins.

Capt. **Dean Hobbs**, 59, senior captain of the carferry SS *Badger*, died on Nov. 21, 2013, after suffering a heart attack during a senior men's hockey game. He was a graduate of, and instructor, at the Great Lakes Maritime Academy and had earned a bachelor's degree from the

Maine Maritime Academy. In 1976 he became the youngest licensed captain on the Great Lakes. He was an officer and past president of the International Shipmasters Lodge 23 in Traverse City. He was a senior trial master for the Marinette Marine Corp. and assisted in the sea trials and delivery of many vessels, including nearly 24 U.S. Coast Guard cutters and several U.S. Navy littoral combat ships. He owned the sea trial and delivery company ABCD Marine LLC. Earlier, he had sailed for the Inland Steel and American Oil fleets. He is survived by his wife, Brenda, two daughters and three grandchildren.

John H. Wilterding Jr., 83, of Algoma, Wis., died on Nov. 21, 2013, in DePere. He was a member and contributor to

many maritime-history publications and was the author of *McDougall's Dream: The American Whaleback*, in 1969.

He also fancied pocket watches and Midwest railroads and the stories of World War II.

Robert D. Wiinamaki, 78, died on Dec. 11, 2013, at his home in Bayfield, Wis. Starting in 1952 he worked summers on Great Lakes ore carriers. Later he was a captain with the Apostle Island Cruise Service and was a longtime member of the Harbor Club. He was also a teacher and coach in several schools in Wisconsin. He is survived by his wife, Margaret, two sons, two daughters, a sister, four granddaughters and four great-grandchildren along with several nieces and nephews.

Great Lakes pilots ride a *Bear* to work

By Jerry Bielicki

Sea Bear left her dock at 4:30 p.m. and headed out the Duluth ship canal to rendezvous with the foreign ship *Zealand Juliana*, anchored two miles off Duluth's beaches. It was a calm, sunny day for what would be a routine shuttle of a Great Lakes pilot aboard Capt. Ed Montgomery's rugged, 60-foot, steel-hulled pilot boat.

On the way, Montgomery tells me that the *Sea Bear*, originally the *Narrows*, was built in 1966 and transported pilots in New York and New Jersey harbors before she was secured by Sea Service, LLC, in 2002 for the exclusive use of the Western Great Lakes Pilots Association.

"She's built like a tank," Montgomery says of the *Sea Bear*. He says his boat is on call 24 hours, seven days a week in all kinds of weather. "It would almost have to be a hurricane for us not to make a pilot run to a waiting or ship underway."

In Duluth-Superior, the *Sea Bear* is the boat that conveys pilots to salties at anchor off the

piers. A little rough weather — or a lot of rough weather — isn't going to keep the *Bear* from her appointed rounds. Montgomery says, "If the boat doesn't go out to deliver the pilot, a very important part of the Port's business stops — along with a sizable amount of money, because with ships, delays are expensive. A ship's time can be valued at anywhere from \$20,000 to \$60,000 per day on a shipping contract. Because we provide an exclusive service, we are expected to perform on time, every time."

Wheelsman Dann Edholm drove the *Sea Bear* and District 3 pilot Mark LaValley on this run. Ever since the St. Lawrence Seaway opened in 1959, all

in the Great Lakes, a pilot is aboard every oceangoing vessel during its entire transit of the Lakes. Often he is one of only a few English-speaking persons on board. Pilots are expert ship handlers who possess detailed knowledge of local or regional waterways and guide ships through dangerous or congested waters, harbors or rivers. Often, they are considered to be sort of a captain's captain. When on the bridge, the pilot directs the navigation of the ship in conjunction with the master of the vessel. It is the pilot's responsibility to safely maneuver a ship to its berth without incident.

As we approach the *Zealand Juliana*, Montgomery gets ready to assist by holding the rope ladder secure so LaValley can safely board the *Juliana* for his assignment to guide her into the CHS 1 loading berth



Above: Capt. Mark LaValley makes his way up the ladder to board the *Zealand Juliana*.

Right: The *Sea Bear* hustles out of Port to greet an oceangoing ship at anchor off the Duluth piers.

Jerry Bielicki



Diane Hilden

foreign ships have been required to have an experienced pilot on board. The Western Great Lakes Pilots Association of District 3 has jurisdiction in Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Superior and the St. Marys River.

As many as 23 pilots sail in these waterways throughout the shipping season. These pilots have three years of rigorous training and many more years of invaluable experience. They are charged with protecting the public's interest.

in Superior. The cargo will be 15,000 tons of wheat destined for England.

If you ever get a chance to meet a Great Lakes pilot or the captain and crew of the *Sea Bear*, don't hesitate to thank them for the important jobs they perform.

Duluth maritime photographer Jerry Bielicki often has photos in *North Star Port*, *Seaway Review*, *Inland Seas* and the *Duluth News Tribune*.



Duluth Seaway Port Authority

1200 Port Terminal Drive
Duluth, Minnesota
USA 55802-2609
www.duluthport.com

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