

WELCOME ABOARD

News and Views from your Friends and Colleagues at MTSSO



Welcome to the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario (MTSSO) Newsletter.

I am very pleased to see our message about the work of the MTSSO getting out to more people. Over the past couple of years, while most of the country and the world was in lockdown, the MTSSO continued to meet its mission of caring for the welfare of the seafarers who came into our ports.

Seafarers, the people who are at the heart of our supply chain, continued to move goods around the world, into and out of the Great Lakes, ensuring the products we use or produce reached their destinations. In supporting the seafarers, the MTSSO played a very important part in making the lives of the seafarers who visited our ports a little bit better.

The MTSSO was there for the seafarer, whether it was arranging vaccinations or



providing transportation to a store, SIM cards or Wi-Fi to call or contact home, or, most importantly, an ear to listen. As you read this newsletter, please consider how you can assist the MTSSO in continuing our mission for the seafarers. We are always looking for volunteers, donated items that seafarers can use and, of course, funds (\$ to maintain our stations. Please remember that 90% of the items you use have at one time been on a ship.

I would like to thank our MTSSO Team of chaplains and volunteers who, every day, make the effort to meet the ships and ensure that the seafarers' welfare is looked after.

THANK YOU

Captain Jim Pound

President, Board of Directors

Join us for a
**CELEBRATION
 DINNER**

honouring the
**International
 Day of Seafarers**

and in support of
**Mission to Seafarers
 Southern Ontario**

July 23, 2022

The Lakeview by Carmens
 180 Van Wagner's Beach Rd, Hamilton

Cocktails at 5:30 Live Music
Dinner at 6:55 \$150/ticket

Sponsorships available. Email
seafarersmissionontario@gmail.com
 for further information.



Caring for Seafarers Around the World...

In a Time of War

Wars have their own set of rules. Which rules, and how they are followed, depend entirely on the side one finds oneself on, or chooses to be on. There are wars and conflicts being fought around the world today, but the one that has greatly affected the world's shipping industry, and the people in it, is Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The ripple effect is far and wide. Our task at the Mission to Seafarers is to filter through these "rules" and to serve the men and women of both countries, regardless of politics, culture, gender, religion, or, in this case, war.

Sadly in the case of this particular war, there is an ancillary problem -- of the 76,000 Ukrainian seafarers currently at sea, most live in cities like Mariupol and Kherson, which have suffered devastating attacks. We have heard from numerous Ukrainian seafarers in our ports that only about half of them know the whereabouts of their families.

A Ukrainian seafarer whose ship was in the Panama Canal had been begging his wife to leave Mariupol and go to Romania. Our MtS colleague there reached out to us to ask if we had any contacts in Romania. A few emails later we had a list of contacts for this woman and her family, numbers to call, and names of people who were waiting for her. While we were making arrangements for her to leave, she was lining up for petrol, but her mother was reluctant to leave. "Paul," the



Ukrainian seafarer, was frantic for her to leave; his wife was being persuaded otherwise. It's been three weeks, and I am not aware of her situation any longer, whether she was able to leave, or if she has remained in Ukraine. So many seafarers are in the same position.

With the Russian seafarers there is another layer of problems called "sanctions." To quote the Royal Belgian Shipowners Association: "the growing isolation of Russia makes it increasingly difficult – if not impossible – to pay the wages of the Russian seafarers, due to the severe restrictions to the country's access to Swift, the main international payment system. At the same time, it is becoming harder to get them to where they are needed, due to the closure of many air connections to and from Russia." 15% of all 1.9M seafarers are Russian and Ukrainian, the loss of whom would have a serious effect on international shipping.



The saddest problem we face (on top of all the other issues) is ships with joint Russian/Ukrainian crews. Crew allotments were made long before the invasion; they are forced to work together. One Captain told us “there are absolutely no political discussions allowed on board,” and that’s how he’s been able to keep the peace. When we go on board, most of the Ukrainian seafarers want to talk about their families, and many of them want to return home to fight for their country; most of the Russian seafarers keep to themselves, in small groups, wearing a badge of quiet humiliation.

We’ve been giving out free SIM cards (sponsored by the MtS, the ITF and others) to both Ukrainian and Russian seafarers. One Russian seafarer was moved to tears

when our Mission staff offered him a free SIM card, and they are all very grateful for the kindness we show them. We make no exceptions, no distinctions; for the most part they are as sad, hurt and angry as the rest of us.

War has its own rules, depending on who started it and how it will finish. These past two-plus months have seen political barriers breaking down on board ships in a way that could bode well for the future of these two nations. In the meantime, we do all we can at our Mission to Seafarers stations here and around the world to care for these remarkable people. And the ripple effect continues.

by Judith Altree

Strategies for Building the Blue Economy | Ports within a Decarbonized Future | Supply Chain Resilience | Better Data, Better Decisions | De-Risking and Financing the Future | Working with First Nations | Innovation



JUNE 20-23, 2022 | 20 - 23 JUIN 2022

PORTS OF TOMORROW:

- Post-covid
- Post-carbon
- Post-comfort

LES PORTS DE DEMAIN:

- Post-Covid
- Post-carbone
- Post-confort

Explore the #ACPA2022 conference program

PROGRAM

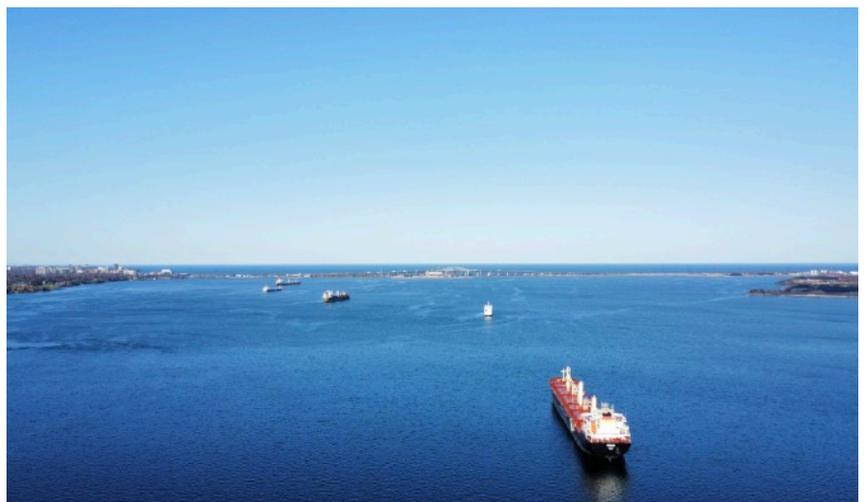
Volunteer Spotlight: Frank Zhu

If you squint at the skies over Hamilton Harbour, you might just glimpse a drone piloted by Frank Zhu, a recently-inducted volunteer with the MTSSO.

Frank distinctly recalls his first trip to the port. Having lived amidst the prairies of Alberta for the better part of his life, the lake imbued him with a profound and fresh impression. “As I watched the giant ships pass through the Burlington Canal, I pondered what the crew on those vessels experience as they sail off into the sunset. Are they thinking of their family? Their next port? Or the unknown waters ahead?”

Over the ensuing months, Frank immersed himself in the stories of seafarers. As a rookie ship visitor, he quickly became attuned to the need for spiritual support. Given the challenges imposed by the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, it has never been more crucial for seafarers to have access to healthcare, communication, and emotional connection. “Being onboard truly opens your eyes to the human experience, the triumphs and

THE VIEW FROM ABOVE: DRONE PHOTOS BY FRANK ZHU





tribulations that crew members face.

The watchkeeper building a better life for his family in the Philippines. The captain whose home in Mariupol was reduced to rubble.” Be it supplying SIM cards, arranging for vaccinations, or making shopping runs, every ounce of effort improves the welfare of those who sail the high seas. “Sometimes the little things count most. I love to show seafarers the aerial photos I’ve taken of their

ship. They are absolutely thrilled to see their home from above.”

Frank is currently pursuing an Arts & Science and Business combined degree at McMaster University. He is looking forward to a long and illustrious journey with the MTSSO. “It’s a phenomenal team where every person’s gifts are recognized. I am beyond honoured to be a part of the Mission.”

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Get Involved!

Download our Brochure to Learn How

www.mtsso.org/brochure

WHO WE ARE

The Mission to Seafarers was founded in 1857 in Bristol Bay, England when Rev. John Ashby rowed a boat out to a sailing vessel to cheer the crew. Now the Seafarers were on board. Over the next 15 years Mission stations grew to rapidly in England. It was officially incorporated in 1859, and then grew around the world. Today there are 200 Mission to Seafarers stations in total in over 120 ports from throughout the world, serving Seafarers from every country, culture, gender, faith - and none.

The Mission to Seafarers' Ontario Centre is a part of that, yet with its location, we are a humanitarian and social justice advocacy organization serving approximately 1000 seafarers and domestic ship, and the over 2000 crew members who visit the Great Lakes between March and December.

MTSSO serves Seafarers as living in the ports of Chicago, Toronto, Hamilton, and the U.S. cities of Montreal, Port Colborne, Ontario. We have two Seafarers Centres: The Ten's Point Seafarers Centre in Chicago is open as demand, the Hamilton Centre is open 7 days a week.

WHAT WE DO

Through the generous support of individual and corporate donors, our Mission staff and volunteers are able to:

- visit Seafarers on board their ships where we deliver our Welcome Gift of Santa Christmas
- host Seafarers at our Mission Centres, offering light refreshments, as well as the most important message that drives Seafarers to connect up with their families and loved ones back home
- give practical support especially during COVID
- provide interventions in critical incidents, stress management and trauma
- offer counselling for our trained chaplains
- assist Seafarers families in times of distress
- Christmas Dirty Bag program: we donate sponsored dirty bags, Christmas gift bags to the Seafarers in our ports between December 6 and 24.
- work with industry and government to ensure Seafarers are not forgotten

CHANGING COURSE

Under COVID restrictions we continue to visit the ships arriving in our ports, meeting Seafarers at the base of the gangway. As most ships did not allow Seafarers to come ashore, they provided us with extensive shipping lists, requesting everything from groceries and toiletries to Christmas gifts for their families.

Most recently we have been actively involved with assisting foreign Seafarers to receive their visas, which will enable Seafarers to be safe responsibly in travelling to their home countries.

As COVID restrictions lift our Centres are welcoming Seafarers back offering them a place to pause and comfort away from the continual noise and motion of the ship. Our staff meets with the joy on their faces at being off the ship can't be hidden!

CALLING ALL KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS!
Throughout the year, but especially at Christmas Time, we provide hundreds of handmade hats and scarves and we couldn't do it without you! Give a gift that will travel the world!
Contact Rev. Judith Allwine at jallwin@mtsso.org for details.

Caring for seafarers around the world

SOUTHERN ONTARIO
www.mtsso.org

Socks, Clothes and Toiletries and Their Significance in Seafarer Ministry

“The mission? Why they are the only ones who ever cared for us!” So said a Greek captain of a slightly dilapidated and rather

rusty bulk carrier ship under the Liberian flag that called on Hamilton with a load of fertilizer several years ago. I figured that that particular ship was about two years away from being scrapped at the latest, and I never did see it on the Great Lakes again after that year.

While the ship was here, however, the captain had made an arrangement with me. Every day on my way into the mission, I



was to pick him and a couple of his officers up from their ship at 4 p.m. and take them to the Tim Horton's at the Centre Mall, where they would spend the late afternoon and early evening relaxing at Tim's or some other local establishment, or maybe doing some shopping, before I would pick them up again at 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. and return them to their ship on Eastport Drive on my way home.

Every time that I turned around, it seemed, or made some small effort on their behalf, this captain would be quick with a donation for the mission. At first I considered his generosity, which went beyond the usual generosity of most seafarers whom I encounter, to be a feature of his Greek identity. My father does some landscaping work for a Greek restaurant owner in my hometown, and in addition to being paid according to the terms of their contract, my dad also has a lifetime supply of the best pizza in Canada along with a twenty-piece box of delicious fried chicken thrown in on the side. I had assumed that this captain's generosity was just the "Greek way" until one day he told me his story.

Back in 1974, when he was a cadet, the ship upon which he was sailing got caught in a late season tropical storm off the coast of

North Carolina's Outer Banks, and sank. Fortunately, all of the crew members managed to board the lifeboat, and no lives were lost. Before long the United States Coast Guard rescued the crew from the lifeboat and brought them to the Coast Guard station in New York City. And here is where this experience began to get interesting and stressful for them.

After processing, they were released to fend for themselves in New York until a flight home for them could be arranged. The company, which seemed more concerned with the loss of the cargo on the ship, paid them the obligatory 100 British pounds for their survival. (In those days all seafarers were paid in British Pounds.) Arranging flights home for them took time, and to

compound the problem, everything that they possessed, including their money and personal belongings, was lying at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. The only things they had were the clothes on their backs, the dirty and stained work clothes that many had been wearing when the ship sank. One hundred pounds, even back then, was not going to get them too far in New York.

Upon hearing of their plight the Lutheran Seafarer Center in New York gathered them

“When people or congregations ask how they can help the mission in its ministry with seafarers, I usually start with clothing, socks, and toiletries. They are easy, simple, and seemingly small gestures, but they can have enormous impact on the lives of seafarers.”

- PASTOR DAN PHANNENHOUR



generosity that he had received from the mission in his time of need. Clothes and toiletries transformed him from just another helpless victim into a dignified worker who was coping with a terrible tragedy that had befallen him and his crew. Such a small kindness allowed him to return home, not as a beggar, but

in, gave them accommodations, and provided them with fresh changes of clothes and the toiletries necessary for them to freshen up and to maintain their sense of dignity. This captain never forgot the hospitality and

as a resourceful and resilient crew member who would go on to progress in his career at sea for another forty years.

When people or congregations ask how they can help the mission in its

ministry with seafarers, I usually start with clothing, socks, and toiletries. They are easy, simple, and seemingly small gestures, but they can have enormous impact on the lives of seafarers. From cadet to captain, your donation tells seafarers that someone is thinking and caring for them. They are not abandoned or alone in their time of need because they have you, and me, and all of us at the mission, and all of us at all of the missions around the world caring for them. Careers are made and lives are sustained by such seemingly small gestures of care and concern from people just like you.

Pastor Dan Phannenhour

CALLING ALL KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS!

Throughout the year, but especially at Christmas, we provide hundreds of handmade hats and scarves and we couldn't do it without you! Give a gift that will travel the world! Contact Deacon Diane at deacondianeelliot@gmail.com.

Submissions

Our next newsletter is scheduled to come out in December 2022. Submissions can be sent to deacondianeelliot@gmail.com. We welcome articles, photos, poetry, news, and events of note applicable to our mission.



Welcome aboard to our newest volunteer, Kostya



Kumynskyi! What a gift you have become! Thank you for your service! Pastor Dan's email says it all...

Hi Diane:

Before I forget, I wanted to let you know that... it has been very helpful to have Kostya along on visits to Ukrainian crew members because they feel more comfortable opening up to him in their own language. It is healing to have them express their concerns in their own language.

They really open up to him. Plus he is a whiz with the SIM cards.

*Blessings,
Pastor Dan*

Kostya is also responsible for translating our pocket prayer cards into Ukrainian. We have distributed over two dozen of these cards to seafarers in the past couple of months. (See photo attached to the article *In Time of War* above.) Prayer cards are available upon request by contacting the Mission at 647-332-4182.



PORT COLBORNE

Port Colborne's Cruise Ship Initiative Draws Public Interest

MEDIA RELEASE

Port Colborne, ON (Apr. 11, 2022) – Over 50 members of the community attended the public information session on Thurs., Apr. 8 to learn more about the city's plans to make Port Colborne a cruise ship hub.

The public information session, which hosted an audience of 15 people in person and

additional 35 on Zoom, began with a presentation from Greg Higginbotham, the city's tourism coordinator, that included a high-level summary of Port Colborne's cruise destination business case and a recap of what the city's project team has been working on to support their cruise ship initiative.

Bruce O'Hare, President & CEO of Lakeshore Excursions, and Stephen Burnett, Executive Director of The Great Lakes Cruise Association teamed up during the second half of the one-hour session to answer questions from the public about onshore transportation, the involvement of restaurants and accommodation providers, as well as opportunities to offer excursion activities that will have cruisers exploring and enjoying the best parts of Port Colborne.

"It was beneficial having the consultants who wrote the business case in attendance", said Mayor Bill Steele. "From my conversations with them over the last couple of years, I'm always amazed by their knowledge about Great Lakes cruising and how committed they are to seeing ports of call, like Port Colborne, succeed."

Gary Long, manager of strategic initiatives, shared that the city's waterfront centre project comes from a recommendation in the cruise destination business

case and will kick-start the revitalization of Port Colborne's most valuable attraction. "Backed up by their analysis of different cruise ports along the Great Lakes, our consultants have presented us with strategies to create a more people-friendly waterfront that can generate substantial economic benefits," said Long. "I'm looking forward to having an architecture firm start designing the waterfront centre over the next several months and to continued financial support from the federal and





provincial governments on this extraordinary project”.

As city staff wait for a decision on an application to the Tourism Relief Fund, which will provide the city with additional resources to meet their targeted goals, they are gearing up for when the first cruise ships arrive in Port Colborne this May for the 2022 season.

To watch a recording of the public information session, or to subscribe to receive updates on Port Colborne’s cruise ship initiative, visit portcolborne.ca/cruiseships. Attendees and community members who couldn’t attend the session and have questions or comments can email tourism@portcolborne.ca or call 905-835-2900 x505.

About the City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, with a mission to provide an exceptional small town experience in a big way, Niagara’s Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara experience. To learn how you can PORTicipate with us, visit our website.

For more information, contact:

Michelle Idzenga
Corporate Communications Officer



SEAWAY MONTHLY TRAFFIC RESULTS - APRIL 2022

TRAFFIC (in thousands of tonnes)	SLSMC - Combined Traffic			
	Year to Date		Change from 2021	
	2021	2022	Tonnes	%
Total Cargo	4 275	3 490	-785	-18.35%
All Grain	1 176	997	-179	-15.26%
Iron Ore	767	591	-176	-22.95%
Coal	242	123	-119	-49.29%
Dry Bulk	1 206	1 081	-125	-10.33%
Liquid Bulk	471	416	-54	-11.55%
General Cargo	408	282	-126	-30.84%
Vessel Transits	2021	2022	Transits	%
Total Transits	438	380	-58	-13.24%

THE ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY MANAGEMENT CORPORATION