



News Release

**For Immediate Release
December 22, 2011**

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American Maritime Industry Gives Back

(Washington, DC) – Waterborne commerce is a 24/7 industry, so American mariners and others engaged in shipping often spend the holidays away from their families. But this doesn't diminish their holiday spirit; instead, they celebrate the season by helping those less fortunate.

Members of the Seafarers International Union (SIU) in Tacoma, Wash., have taken a special interest in helping the children of America's enlisted men and women. In recent years, the size and scale of their toy drive for the Santa's Castle program at Fort Lewis has reached the point that this holiday season they raised about \$4,500 worth of cash and toys, including bicycles, skateboards, remote-control cars, board games, dolls and all kinds of other toys that were given to the military at the annual SIU holiday luncheon.

Over the past 5 years, the SIU in Tacoma has raised more than \$20,000 for the toy drive. "We are very proud of our military and the huge responsibility and personal sacrifice they take on for all of us," said Joe Vincenzo, SIU Port Agent in Tacoma. "This is our chance to thank the troops for their service. And we are equally proud to be their partners as the fourth arm of national defense, whether it's providing vital logistical support from the sea, underway replenishment, or in countless other ways."

Also in Tacoma, the employees of Totem Ocean Trailer Express, Inc. (TOTE) banded together in the spirit of the holidays to help families in need. The Tacoma and Federal Way employee contributions will help a local family have a much brighter holiday. The adopted family includes six children ranging in age from two months to nine years. Employees' generosity allowed TOTE to provide gifts, food, toiletries and firewood to this family. In addition to the fun gifts, each family member received a coat, shoes and socks, pajamas, clothing and a filled stocking. Employees also provided enough food for a wonderful Christmas breakfast and dinner, along with all the staples to last several weeks.

The Alaska TOTE office once again adopted a family of six through the Salvation Army, four boys, mom and dad. Through the generosity of TOTE Alaska employees, they were able to

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fulfill the family's needs and wishes with such items as clothing, gift certificates, toys, and movie passes.

"I could not be more proud of our employees and their generosity," said John Parrott, President of TOTE. "They continue to give back to the community and help those in need, especially during the holiday season."

Crowley Maritime Corporation is one of the largest U.S.-flag operators, so while it is headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida, the company has employees in 11 states, and throughout Central America and the Caribbean. Crowley's Miami Employee Activities Committee organized a toy drive and collected 130 presents for the St. Alban's Child Enrichment Center. The company's Port Everglades Terminal actually had two toy drives that left lots of smiling faces at Kids in Distress and the Advance Learning Center. Up in Alaska, Crowley folks volunteered to wrap presents for children being sheltered from physical and substance abuse.

"All of us at Crowley are committed to supporting the people and communities we serve domestically and internationally through mentoring, volunteerism, fundraising and educational support," said Bryan Lee, Crowley's Vice President of Human Resources. "This is especially important during the holidays, which is a time when unfortunately, some people don't have the means to celebrate with their loved ones as they would like to."

Over on the Great Lakes, the weather announces to sailors and longshoremen that Christmas is coming. Ice starts to form on Lake Superior in early December, but U.S.-flag "lakers" keep sailing well into January. That doesn't stand in the way of the Michigan Maritime Trades Port Council. This year the organization raised nearly \$3,000 for the Carpenters' Christmas for Kids, Care House Christmas for Kids, and the Metro Detroit Community Services' Holiday Basket Give Away.

"The recession has been very hard on Great Lakes shipping," said Tommy Orzechowski, SIU Vice President, Lakes and Inland Waters. "We know what it's like to face a holiday season with worries about the future. That's why we put so much effort into helping those whose ship hasn't come in yet."

"The Michigan Maritime Trades Port Council has historically been very active in assisting our communities, especially during hard times," said Todd Brdak, the organization's Secretary-Treasurer. "It is our belief that is it part of our duty as an organization and we will continue to do so in the future."

The holidays aren't the only time mariners think of those less fortunate. Over the course of 2011, the Greater South Florida Maritime Trades Council donated more than \$4,000 to a number of charities and scholarship funds.

Sometimes sailors swap their maritime skills for the tools of land-based trades. Joe Gremelsbacker, National Vice President, Deep Sea for American Maritime Officers, and Kris

Hopkins, Port Agent for the SIU, donned coveralls with other labor leaders and Dania Beach, Florida, Vice Mayor Bobbie Grace to paint three houses for low-income families.

"It was kind of a natural," said Gremelsbacker. "Chipping and painting is a seemingly endless job on a ship. But seriously, helping others in need is one of the first laws of the sea and we bring it ashore with us."

In Arlington, Va., the staff of American Waterways Operators (AWO), the national trade association for the tugboat, towboat and barge industry, raised a total of nearly \$600 in support of adopting three children from the Bright Beginnings "Wish List" for the holidays. This included providing each with a warm coat, shoes and socks, underwear, pajamas, a complete outfit, and a toy of their choice, in this case a Batman figure, a fire truck and a bike. Also included in with each item was wrapping paper and tape, so the parents could also participate. With all of that purchased, the remaining money collected was used to supply all of the wrapping paper and tape needed for all 99 children in the "Wish List" program."

Bright Beginnings is a nationally accredited child and family development center founded by the Junior League in 1991 that today serves 185 children annually whose families are living in crisis shelters or transitional housing. AWO President & CEO Tom Allegretti said, "Through the generosity of the AWO staff, we are happy we were able to help these three children from the Bright Beginnings program enjoy Christmas morning."

American Steamship Company, the largest U.S-flag operator on the Great Lakes, started a new tradition this December by e-mailing its holiday card and using what it would have spent on cards and postage to make a donation to the Food Bank of Western New York. "We've called the Buffalo area our home for more than 100 years," said Dave Foster, President. "We couldn't think of any better way to celebrate this holiday season than helping those in need in our community."

Maritime employers recognize that spending the holidays away from loved ones is not easy on crews, so on Christmas day the meal is as reminiscent of home as possible. The galley is filled with the aroma of turkey and ham and pumpkin pie. Some vessels are even decorated with holiday lights strung from masts and railings, but cautiously, so as not to conflict with U.S. Coast Guard regulations governing navigation and running lights.

American Maritime Partnership ("AMP") is the voice of the U.S. domestic maritime industry, a pillar of our nation's economic, national, and homeland security. More than 40,000 American vessels built in American shipyards, crewed by American mariners, and owned by American companies, ply our waters 24/7, and this commerce sustains nearly 500,000 jobs, \$29 billion in labor compensation, and more than \$100 billion in annual economic output according to a study by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the Transportation Institute. So efficient are these vessels that they carry a quarter of the nation's cargo for only 2 percent of the national freight bill, and being American owned, built and crewed helps make America more secure.

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