

The Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

Bud Nixon & Don Carroll Discuss the Center's Role in Easing the Lives of Thousands of Seafarers Visiting the Port of Baltimore



Two leaders in the Port of Baltimore talk about the importance of the Seafarers' Center. George (Bud) Nixon was the president (now retired) of Rukert Terminals, and Don Carroll was the president (now retired) of T. Parker Host of Maryland and Delaware. Bud and Don, now president and member, respectively, of the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center, discuss the role the Center plays in the lives of seafarers visiting the Port of Baltimore.

Each year approximately 2,200 ships enter the Port, bringing us the goods

that we need and use every day. These vessels are manned by small crews who may have been at sea for many months, living together in close quarters.

In many cases the seafarers are away from home for a year or more. To provide for their families, the seafarers often sign long term contracts with steamship lines to serve on these cargo ships.

Unfortunately, because some of these contracts are so long, seafarers are hardly around to see their families grow. They work hard, often in bad weather in the North Atlantic and other oceans. The ship owner only has an obligation to feed them. When they arrive at the Port of Baltimore, some of the crew may need to purchase specific items, buy gifts for their family, or obtain Internet access. The Center tries to meet their needs, whatever they may be, including transportation, church services, books, or clothing, or sometimes just someone with whom they can talk.

Volunteers use the Center's fleet of vans to provide transportation to doctors, shopping, and points of interest. The Center also has computers and telephones and makes it possible for seafarers to communicate with their families. Supported in part by businesses, churches, the Port of Baltimore, individual donations, and small fees paid by the shipping companies, the Center provides comfort and assistance to the men and women who bring their cargo to the Port to make our lives more comfortable.

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