



Albany Maritime Ministry

Welcoming seafarers along the Hudson River in New York's Capital District

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Winter-Spring Newsletter

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Christmas at Sea Success

We thank our many supporters for the amazing turnout at our St. Nicholas Day open house and the wonderful Christmas boxes that you donated to our 2015 Christmas at Sea program.

Recent Port Activity

It may seem quiet around port these days, but looks can be deceiving. On one hand, we had four less vessels (27% decrease) visit at port in January and February; but on the other hand, the sum of tonnage that passed through the Port of Albany rose by 84%, compared with the same period last year.

The slowdown in ship visits is occurring worldwide as the industry continues to struggle with international crises, a strong United States dollar, and other global issues. Yet despite these issues, the Port of Albany expects a continued growth in tonnage.

Two building projects are underway to support the growth at Albany ports. General Electric (GE) is building a storage facility in the port terminal and the port has begun work on a Roll-On-Roll-Off (RO-RO) dock in the southern dock region. The RO-RO dock will accommodate larger and heavier GE equipment that is shipped through the New York State barge canal system.

Albany Maritime Ministry stands ready to welcome all seafarers and transportation workers who visit our ports.

Highlights:

- × *Christmas at Sea success*
- × *Recent port activity*
- × *New board members*
- × *Fr. Lescovar retirement*
- × *Albany Rotary Club donation*
- × *Delaware Senior Luncheon donation*



(L-R) Chairman Rev. Victor Victorson and board member Fr. Richard Lescovar talk with volunteer Richard Guthrie at our open house on St. Nicholas Day, 2015.

New Board Members

We are pleased to announce two new board members:

David Truland brings a legal and ecclesiastical background to our ministry. David is a member of the Attorneys for Children and Assigned Counsel panels of Rensselaer County Family Court. He was born in Troy, New York (NY), and is a graduate of Lansingburgh High School (1973), Hartwick College (1977), and Albany Law School (1983). David served on the Synod Council of the Upstate New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) between 1998 and 2006. Between 2005 and 2011, he was Synod Vice President and a member of the ELCA Church Council. David is a member and past president of Faith Lutheran Church in Troy, NY.

We are grateful for the wealth of knowledge and goodwill that David brings to our board, including his talented and advanced photographic skills.

Megan Daly is Director of Economic Development and Procurement for the Albany Port District Commission. She brings a fresh approach to every concern and has a propensity for dreaming big. Megan will bring new life to our board, especially if she brings her two-year-old son to our meetings!

When invited to join our team, both Megan and David had a quick and simple answer: "Sure."

Welcome aboard, new members!

Fr. Lescovar Retirement

After many years of invaluable service to Albany Maritime Ministry, Fr. Richard Lescovar has announced his retirement. He will be greatly missed.



Fr. Lescovar at our
2015 St. Nicholas Day
open house

Our executive director, Rev. Hempel, wrote:

Fr. Lescovar has served by visiting aboard ships and has also been a very active member of the board—he simply makes things happen! While he was supposed to be in “retirement” from hospital ministry in Schenectady, he still carried quite a load at the Church of St. Thomas the Apostle in Delmar. Yet, he always found the time to say mass aboard ship whenever asked.

I was genuinely surprised when he told me after Christmas that he had reached 82 and needed to cut back. I can understand it, but I don’t necessarily have to like it! His strong, quiet demeanor and sense of humor will be sorely missed.

Fr. Lescovar offered us one consolation by saying, “If you really need someone to say mass, call on me.” He smiled and then added, “Retirement—what retirement?”

May God richly bless you, Fr. Lescovar!

Albany Rotary Club Donation

We are grateful to the Rotary Club of Albany for providing us with new “uniforms” through a grant by the Rotary Club Foundation. Our new shirts, hats and high-visibility jackets will identify us at port. Each item carries our logo, and the shirts (colored blue) are personalized with our first names.



“I was informed that we look classy,” said Rev. Hempel, “Of course—we’re a classy group!”

The Rotary Club of Albany has a membership of about sixty business and professional members. They adopt four projects annually in fulfillment of their exemplary motto, *Service above Self*. Their projects support the local community and international good will.

Delaware Senior Luncheoner Donation

The Seaman’s Church Institute (SCI) has recognized the contribution of the Delaware Senior Luncheoners, who heard about the El Faro Relief Fund from Albany Maritime Ministry. All of their \$60 donation will go directly into the SCI relief fund that provides financial assistance to the families and dependents of seafarers lost at sea.

We applaud the Delaware Senior Luncheoners, who stand together with us and our fellow maritime ministries in prayer and support for seafarers, their families, and all people imperiled at sea.

*As we celebrate Eastertide and the coming of spring,
May we not forget those who remain chilled
by hunger, violence, illness, loss, isolation,
and cold, lonely winds.
May spring bloom in their hearts
because we have taken the time to remember them.*