

the connecting link

a publication of the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association • Spring 2002



Raymond Butler, Executive Director

GICA Represents Your Interests at Congressional Budget Rally in D.C.

Les Sutton and I spent the week of March 18th in Washington, D.C., visiting legislators from Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida, to promote the value of our waterway transportation system. A total of 20 stops were made throughout the week. With each, the message was simple - "Our waterways are the nation's most efficient, safe and environmentally friendly method of moving freight."

We explained that, with all its benefits, waterway transportation can play a huge part in advancing our nation on several fronts. It can go a long way in solving our country's transit

We explained that with all its benefits, waterway transportation can play a huge part in advancing our nation and solving our transit problems

problems. By moving more freight on the waterways, we force fewer trucks and railcars into our already congested land-based systems. Waterway transportation also means less air and noise pollution.

We also noted how, with its comparatively low costs, waterway transportation makes us more competitive with other countries that have already realized the benefits of and embraced this transportation alternative. Those countries not only make waterway maintenance a priority, but are positioning themselves to move ahead of others by further developing this mode.

Time will ultimately tell the result of our efforts to educate our lawmakers. We are doing everything we can to help them understand the positive impacts of waterway transportation, and how the unnecessary hindrance of our waterways can create a ripple effect across the entire nation - touching every person who uses fuel to heat a home, or buys bread to feed a family. And every time we tell the waterway story, someone says with surprise, "I didn't know waterways did all of that!" While such responses give hope to our cause, the loss of **Mike Parker**, former Assistant Secretary of the Army, illustrates just how much misunderstanding remains among government leaders regarding the critical role waterways play in our nation's economy.

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inside

- 1 GICA Attends Budget Rally in D.C.
Newsletter Sponsors
- 2 Carrying the Torch
Welcome New Board Members
- 3 \$4.29 Billion Budget for Civil Works
King Ranch Says Closure Not Goal
Welcome New Members
- 4 Assistant Secretary Forced to Resign
- 5 Hearing on Dredged Material
Mark Your Calendar
- 6 97th Annual Convention Update
Call for Dale Miller Nominations
Be A Convention Sponsor
- 7 Escambia Threatens Fuel Deliveries
AWO Promotes Safety with Brochure
- 8 From the Wheelhouse
- 11 Newsletter Sponsors
Invoice Reminder
Condolences
- 12 Board of Directors Listing
Membership Listing



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Budget Rally continued on pg. 10



Les Sutton,
GICA President

CARRYING THE TORCH

Not so long ago, we were parked in front of our television sets, ready for the Winter Games. In the weeks leading up to the opening ceremony, we watched the torch pass from one person to the next - some accomplished athletes, others struggling with physical mobility we often take for granted. What they all shared, however, was perseverance.

During my recent trip to Washington, D.C., I was reminded of some very persevering individuals who carried the "GICA torch" before us. I was speaking with **Chase Untermeyer**, a government and federal relations executive, when he asked me about a "well known" waterways lobbyist whose name escaped him. After several tries, the name "**Dale Miller**" finally rang a bell.

Dale served the GICA in a number of capacities until his death in 1997. He took over management of the organization from his father, **Roy Miller**, in 1949 when construction of the Waterway was complete. Dale's father championed the idea of a Gulf Intracoastal Waterway since its inception, spending much of his efforts relentlessly lobbying Congress to fund its construction.

What an act to follow! These two gentlemen are fine examples of what is possible with determination. We owe much of where we are today — as an organization and an industry — to their efforts. It is our responsibility to continue the work they began - "to provide the safest, most efficient and environmentally sound water transportation in the nation." It is, in fact, the mission of our organization.

One of the keys to fulfilling that mission is ensuring an adequate, continuous flow of federal funds for waterway maintenance and construction. The GICA makes a special trip to Washington, D.C. each year for just that purpose. We prepare written testimony for our elected representatives, outlining the funding required to adequately maintain our waterway system. In March, **Raymond** and I personally delivered this testimony to 20 different congressional offices.

**It is our responsibility to
continue the work they
began... it is the mission
of our organization**

In addition to this Washington trip, I recently took advantage of three more opportunities to promote the waterway to our elected officials. I delivered Waterways Work! testimony to the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, regarding the impact of a reduced Corps of Engineers budget. I participated in a Greater Houston Partnership event with our Texas senators, congressional members and administration officials. I also attended a dinner for the staffs of the Texas delegation, hosted by the American Waterway Operators.

Government relations is only one way we "carry the torch" of the GICA. But it is also one of the most important - ensuring adequate funding for continued maintenance and operation of our waterways.

Les Sutton
President, GICA

WELCOME

New Board Members

The GICA recently appointed several new members to its board of directors. Please join us in welcoming them!

Roy Pontiff, Secretary

Roy Pontiff began his professional career in 1973, with an invitation by the mayor of the city of New Iberia to join his staff as Administrative Assistant. His ability to develop relationships and manage grants soon found Roy involved in the largest economic development project of its time in New Iberia - "Operation Impact." During his tenure with the city, Roy wrote, managed and closed-out over \$9 million in grants.

In 1985, Roy was offered the position of Administrative Assistant by Iberia Parish Government President **Craig F. Romero**. He was responsible for a \$20 million budget, and charged to work with state legislators, public officials and associations to market parish programs and assure the parish's interests were protected. In addition, he continued to apply for and manage more than \$7 million in grants.

Roy is married and has two children.

Wayne Parrish, VP for Mississippi

Wayne Parrish is the Ports and Waterways Director for the Mississippi Department of Transportation. Prior to his appointment as director, Wayne served MDOT for seven years - most recently as Chief of Planning Analysis within the Planning Division. Wayne was responsible for conducting the Comprehensive Assessment of Mississippi





FY 2003 Budget Includes \$4.29 Billion for Civil Works

In February, the Department of the Army released the President's FY 2003 budget for the Civil Works program of the Army Corps of Engineers. The \$4.29 billion allocated to Civil Works represents a 9.4% increase over the FY 2002 request, but is still more than 5% less than last year's congressional appropriation. **Mike Parker**, then Assistant Secretary of the Army, requested \$6.4 billion for FY 2003, and hoped to receive at least \$5 billion.

Parker acknowledged that in recent years, new construction starts were numerous, and exceeded what could be efficiently funded within the bud-

et. This resulted in the delay of many project completions. To alleviate this situation, the FY 2003 budget directs construction funding to ongoing projects, particularly those nearing

The budget is more than 5% less than last year's appropriation

completion. In addition, the budget redirects funding toward completion efforts that would otherwise go to the planning and design of new projects. Funds were also redirected from

projects added by Congress in FY 2002 that are inconsistent with long-established policies. Thirty general construction projects (15% of those in progress) are scheduled for completion in FY 2003.

The budget includes no funds for discretionary new construction starts, and gives priority among waterway segments to those that "provide higher commercial navigation savings per dollar, including segments with high cargo volumes or low costs per ton-mile of cargo."

A copy of the President's Civil Works budget is available on the GICA web site's "tools" page (gicaonline.com).

welcome aboard & welcome back!

In this section of the Link, we welcome new members - or in some cases, returning members - to the association.

*Drummond Co., Inc.
Mobile, AL*

*J & E Welding, Inc.
Beaumont, TX*

*Mustang Power Systems
Houston, TX*

The GICA extends its gratitude to the many members who have already responded to dues notices. We are especially appreciative of the several renewing members who have voluntarily INCREASED their level of financial participation in the organization.

CIVIL WORKS PROGRAM FUNDING: FY 2001, FY 2002 AND FY 2003

	FY 2001 Request	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	FY 2002 Enacted	FY 2003 Request
General Investigations	\$138,000,000	\$160,038,000	\$130,000,000	\$154,350,000	\$108,000,000
Construction, General	\$1,346,000,000	\$1,695,699,000	\$1,324,000,000	\$1,715,951,000	\$1,440,000,000
Operations & Maintenance	\$1,854,000,000	\$1,901,959,000	\$1,745,000,000	\$1,874,803,000	\$1,979,000,000
MR&T Flood Control	\$309,000,000	\$347,731,000	\$280,000,000	\$345,992,000	\$288,000,000
Regulatory Program	\$125,000,000	\$125,000,000	\$128,000,000	\$127,000,000	\$151,000,000
General Expenses	\$152,000,000	\$152,000,000	\$153,000,000	\$153,000,000	\$161,000,000
Formerly Utilized Sites	\$140,000,000	\$140,000,000	\$140,000,000	\$140,000,000	\$141,000,000
TOTAL	\$4,064,000,000	\$4,522,427,000	\$3,900,000,000	\$4,511,096,000	\$4,290,000,000

* FY 2003 total includes \$22,000,000 for flood control and coastal emergencies.
Data: National Waterways Conference, Inc., from OMB and Congressional documents.

King Ranch Says Closure is Not Goal

Representatives of the King Ranch, the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association, and a small group of local leaders met in late January. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues associated with maintenance dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway along the Laguna Madre segment.

This area has been under study by the Corps of Engineers for

more than 7 years, with initial reports alluding to condemnation of a number of sites and several hundred acres of private land along the Laguna Madre for dredged material disposal. For the duration of these studies, King Ranch has provided extensive scientific, economic and environmental data to the Corps reinforcing their argument that "upland" or on-shore



Maintenance dredging of the Laguna Madre is the center of dispute

dumping is an "expensive mistake."

At the meeting, **Jack Hunt**, President of King Ranch, stressed that the ranch has not



King Ranch continued on pg. 4



Assistant Secretary of the Army Forced to Resign Over Budget Dispute

Depending on your choice of media, **Mike Parker**, Assistant Secretary of the Army, either quit his 5-month post, or was politely asked to leave. Truth is, Parker did resign — but only after he was told he'd be fired if he refused.

Parker told congressional members that the President's \$4 billion allocation was "not the right number"

Parker's sudden exit is the indisputable result of his testimony before the Senate Budget Committee, where he told congressional members that the President's \$4 billion allocation to the Corps was "not the right number." The Corps had requested \$6.4 billion, and Parker told lawmakers that the cuts (more than 5% from the last year's congressional appropriation) would mean canceling \$190 million in projects already contracted.

Parker's supporters in congress say he was fired for telling the truth, and criticized the administration for ousting him. Budget Committee Chairman **Kent Conrad** (D-North Dakota), said that when Parker testified before the Budget Committee, "He answered questions honestly, which people are expected to do, and for that he gets fired. That is a black mark not on him, but on the administration." Conrad added the firing has a "chilling effect" on other officials who testify.

A senior administration official did not deny Parker was asked to leave, and told CNN, "the

administration expects its staff to support its budget." But even **Trent Lott** (R-Mississippi), a strong supporter of the administration, said that while (they) felt Parker's comments were inappropriate at that point in the process, Parker did tell the truth — "that the Corps of Engineers budget, as proposed, is insufficient."

Environmental and government watchdog groups celebrated the decision to remove Parker, with the opinion that the Corps of Engineers is spending money too freely, and at the expense of environmental initiatives. What they don't understand, however, is that the Corps does not have the power to prioritize projects and spending within its own budget. The administration does that. Thus, much criticism falls on the Corps of Engineers, which should more rightly fall elsewhere. Mike Parker, in fact, supported "earmarking," a policy that would shift priority-setting power within the Civil Works budget from the administration to congress. "Congress has a legitimate right to make decisions about what's best for their states and districts," he said in an interview.

Some media outlets reported Parker's testimony to include implications that the OMB may have purposely low-balled the budget, supporting speculation that the administration intends to "rein in" the Army Corps of Engineers. **Nancy P. Dorn** attempted to do just that when she held Mr. Parker's position in the first Bush Administration. She was confirmed last month as Deputy OMB Director. Parker's termination is likely to exacerbate already strained relations between House appropriators and the OMB.

"This is going to provide impetus to do what we were going to have to do already... increase the budget for the Corps."

Senator Christopher Bond

Senator **Christopher "Kit" Bond** (R-Missouri) said, "This is going to provide impetus for Congress to do what we were going to have to do already, which is to increase the budget for the Corps over what was recommended."

King Ranch *continued from pg. 3*

been seeking closure of the waterway. Instead, he says its primary interest lies in protection of its own wildlife resources, ranchlands and wetlands from condemnation for the purpose of dredged material disposal. Hunt believes there are other appropriate and environmentally acceptable solutions for the problem of dredged material placement. He says the ranch is committed to working with industry, and within the system, to develop dredged material placement practices that will protect both the Laguna Madre and the economic interests that depend upon it.

The Corps of Engineers, through the Interagency Coordination Team, is expected to provide the results of its study on Laguna Madre dredged material placement this fall.

House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Dredged Material

The House Land and Resource Committee's Subcommittee on Dredged Material Placement held a public hearing at the King Ranch Museum in Kingsville on Friday, April 5th. This hearing was preceded by little public notice, other than that disseminated by the GICA and other industry organizations tuned-in to congressional activities.

The hearing was prompted by a directive resulting from House Bill 2684. Passed last year in Austin, the bill states:

- TxDOT will not attempt to secure certain qualifying King Ranch lands (for dredged material placement) until after September 2005.
- A study will be undertaken by the House Land and Resource Committee for determining dredged material placement along the waterway in Texas.
- The committee must report its findings to the Speaker of the House no later than November 1, 2002.

The House Land and Resource Committee formed the Subcommittee on Dredged Material Placement to manage this study and report to the Speaker.

Representatives from all local ports, the Corps of Engineers' Interagency Coordination Team, several Rio Grande Valley business organizations, the General Land Office and the Texas Department of Transportation were present at the hearing. The environmental community was also well represented.

Dr. Ken Dunton spoke to the group on the biology of sea grasses, and **Mr. and Mrs. Tio Kleberg** provided testimony defending the environmental significance of the Laguna

Madre. As a group, environmentalists expressed concern for the alleged damage inflicted by dredging operations on native sea grasses in the Laguna.

The GICA presented resolutions supporting continued maintenance and commercial use of the Laguna Madre section

The GICA presented resolutions supporting continued maintenance and commercial use of the Laguna Madre section of the waterway on behalf of the following organizations: the Port of Corpus Christi, Tex 21, the Cameron County Commissioners' Court, the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, the Brownsville Economic Development Council, and the Port of Brownsville. Our message contained three key points:

- Waterway transportation provides significant advantages over other transportation modes in areas of fuel efficiency, safety and environmental impact.
- Loss of use of the Laguna Madre segment would double freight costs in the region, adding \$20 million annually. This could result in job losses, higher prices passed on to consumers, or the rendering of many South Texas businesses as unable to compete against companies with full access to waterway transportation. And, as freight originally bound for waterways is shifted to rail and truck modes, more traffic con-

gestion and pollution will result.

- The Interagency Coordination Team, composed of 8 agencies of interest, has been studying the problem of dredged material placement in the Laguna Madre for 7 years. This body of expertise is the most capable of answering how best to handle dredged material placement as it affects the interests of all parties involved. The Dredged Material Subcommittee would be well advised to consult the ICT prior to rendering an opinion. All sides must work with them in a spirit of cooperation to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution.

Dr. Terry Roberts, of the Interagency Coordination Team, and representatives of the Texas Waterway Operators also addressed those in attendance at the hearing. The GICA will keep you informed regarding the progress of the study, as well as the official findings presented by the subcommittee.



Members of the House Subcommittee on Dredged Material Placement:

Chairman
Rep. Charles Geren, Houston

Rep. Gary Walker, Plains

Rep. Fred Brown, Bryan



Mark your Calendar!

Monthly, on Second Tuesday
Texas Waterway Operators Association Meeting
Brady's Landing Restaurant
Houston, TX
713.435.1500
Sherry Martinez

August 21-23
GICA Annual Convention
Hilton Riverside
New Orleans, LA
281.996.6915
Raymond or Nita Butler
wrbutler@hal-pc.org

September 4-6
National Waterways Conference
Hilton Riverside
New Orleans, LA
202.296.4415
Harry Cook
hcook@waterways.org

October 1-3
Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway Conference
Perdido Beach Resort
Orange Beach, AL
662.328.3286
Don Waldon
dwaldon@ebicom.net





This year's convention is dedicated to the memory of Robert Culwell

Robert served as GICA Vice President for Alabama, and Chairman of the Navigation Committee. He had more than 20 years of experience in the marine towing industry, and was employed by Midland Orsouth as Port Captain.

Both the Coast Guard and the Corps regarded Robert as an authority on all navigation issues east of New Orleans. The GICA also benefited greatly from his expertise. His knowledge, enthusiasm, and dedication to the industry played a major role in the success of our organization.

Robert passed away September 2, 2001, of a sudden heart attack. He was survived by his wife, Mary; daughter, Casey; and son, Tyler.

Remember, your convention fee is waived when you sponsor a new member at the \$600 level or above.



97th Annual GICA Convention Returns to New Orleans!

By popular request, our Annual Convention will again call New Orleans home. We will meet at the Riverside Hilton from August 21-23. The hotel is right on the banks of the Mississippi River, and is within walking distance of the French Quarter, Harrah's Casino, the Riverwalk Festival Marketplace, the National D-Day Museum and more! Make your reservations early to take advantage of room-block pricing at \$89 per night. The hotel will extend this rate through the weekend as well. You may book your room by calling the hotel directly at 504.561.0500. Be sure to let them know you are with the GICA.

Convention activities begin Wednesday at 10am, with a friendly round of golf at Lake-wood Country Club. Details and sign-up information will be included in your convention registration packet. The cost is \$100 per person, and includes greens fees, cart and a boxed lunch. Any company wishing to donate promotional giveaways for the ditty bags or sponsor golf prizes is asked to contact **Larry Barbish** or the GICA office.

Convention check-in begins at 3pm Wednesday, and continues until just before dinner. A reception and Annual Awards Banquet are planned for the evening.

Thursday, we will hear from **Admiral Paul Pluta**, who is our featured luncheon speaker. He will brief us on the latest port security measures, as well as what initiatives the Coast Guard is mounting in this regard. General sessions and caucus group meetings fill the remainder of the day's business, with topics ranging from land loss in Louisiana, to the Washington perspective on Civil Works. Thursday evening, the Port of New Orleans will host a reception for us on the riverfront. Convention activities conclude late Friday morning.

This year's convention promises to be the best yet, so make your plans now! Your registration fee of \$285 covers all events associated with the meeting. A spouse's activity will also be offered for an additional fee. Convention registration packets are coming soon, and will provide all of the details.

Be A Convention Sponsor!

The GICA depends upon funds generated at the Annual Convention to support its year-round waterways efforts. While your registration fee covers the cost of the meeting, sponsorships are what determine the financial success of the convention. Please consider sponsoring the GICA's Annual Convention at a level you can afford. In exchange, your company will receive recognition throughout the convention, and our most sincere appreciation throughout the year! Sponsorships are available in the following amounts:

- BRONZE: to \$499**
- SILVER: \$500 to \$999**
- GOLD: \$1000 and up**

We are also looking for companies to sponsor golf prizes or provide promotional items for distribution in conjunction with the golf outing (see page 10). Contact **Larry Barbish** for details.



Honoring Heroism on the Waterway: Call for Dale Miller Award Nominations

Each year at its annual convention, the GICA honors an outstanding act of heroism on the waterway with the presentation of its Dale Miller Award. The award is presented to an individual or vessel crew that has distinguished themselves with some unselfish act of courage.

The award's namesake, **Dale Miller**, served as executive director of the GICA for many years. He in fact played an instrumental role in facilitating completion of the Intracoastal Waterway project. His father, **Roy Miller**, was one of GICA's original founders, and championed the idea of a waterway like the one we depend on so greatly today.

Dale Miller award nominations are now being accepted by the GICA office. Please send details of the events and individuals involved via mail or e-mail by June 30, 2002. Events related to the nomination should have occurred since August 2001.



Captain Mike Heaps receives the 2001 Dale Miller Award from Vernon Behrhorst.

Shallow Escambia Threatens Fuel Deliveries to Power Companies

In an article published February 6th, the *Pensacola News Journal* reports conditions on the Escambia River are hampering fuel shipments to power companies, which could potentially result in outages across the southeastern region of the country.

Outages could potentially result

The companies rely on barges for fuel because trucking the fuel is not practical, and rail options are not available. The river is so full of silt, however, that vessel operators often find their tows grounded when north winds and low tides join forces. Barges carrying coal to Gulf Power Company's Crist Power Plant and raw materials to Solutia have cut back load capacities to 80 or 85% in order to lighten their tows.

"If we have a flood or a hurricane (leading to more silt deposits in the river), we're in deep trouble," said **Raymond Butler**, at a meeting with governmental and industry leaders. "There is a sense of urgency in finding a short-term solution and a way to keep the waterway from completely closing down."

Dredging the 6-mile portion of river that meets with Escambia Bay has been discussed for years, but with no result — primarily because a suitable location has not been found for the sediment. Gulf Power and Solutia

Trucking the fuel is not practical, and rail options are not available

have offered sites for dumping some of the river's dredged silt, but more land is needed. Other areas that are environmentally suitable have not been

found, said **Susan Rees**, an oceanographer with the Army Corps of Engineers.

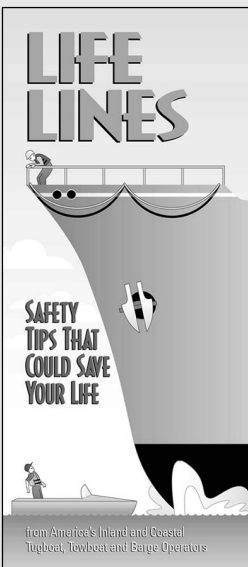
Rees said the sand in the upper part of the dredging area is good quality sand, but the sand near the Escambia Bay is muddier. She said thin layer disposal, a process which would spew dredged material over Escambia Bay, may be the last resort. It is at odds, however, with what the State Department of Environmental Protection will allow. Fragile sea grass and oyster beds are in the area, as well as an endangered sturgeon population.

Escambia County environmental specialist **Taylor Kirschenfeld** suggested creating an island with the silt. Other areas such as Mobile have been successful in creating such islands, which have turned into bird sanctuaries.

A task force of federal, county and environmental officials planned to meet to try to find an immediate solution.

LATE-BREAKING NEWS!

Terry Jangula, of the Mobile District Office of the Corps of Engineers, is arranging for a dredge to begin work within the next 30 to 45 days on the Pensacola Land Cut and upper section of the Escambia River. The dredge will remove shoaling that has restricted navigation and prompted safety concerns over barge groundings. Approved placement areas will be used for disposal of the material that results from this emergency dredging.



American Waterways Operators Promotes Safety with "Lifelines" Brochure

The American Waterways Operators, with a grant from the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund, has produced *Lifelines: Safety Tips that Could Save Your Life*. The brochure provides valuable information about commercial waterway operations, as they pertain to recreational boaters and other non-commercial waterway users.

Boaters will learn, for example, that a tow or ship may require up to 1.5 miles to stop; that a blind spot exists immediately in front of a tow or ship; and that

wheel wash can create turbulence extending hundreds of yards behind a vessel. These are but a few of the tips included in the brochure for safely sharing the waterway with large commercial vessels.

The brochure is available for download in PDF format from the "tools" page of the GICA web site (gicainline.com). If you are interested in obtaining the brochure in quantity, an order form is also posted in the same location.



PORT O'CONNOR BUOYS TO BE RELOCATED FOR SAFETY

While the Port O'Connor mooring buoys serve a valuable function during inclement weather, they have posed a safety hazard since their placement more than 10 years ago. Tows transiting this very windy section of the waterway are forced to hold to the north of the mooring buoys, placing them very near a restaurant adjacent to the channel. This area is often congested with recreational craft, oil field service vessels and other tows, making the passage susceptible to accidents.

A user poll revealed the majority prefers removing the eastern-most set of 5 mooring buoys in Port O'Connor, and relocating them to the west. Removal will take place as part of a maintenance contract that commenced in April of this year.

Deadmen will be placed on the bank for interim use until the buoys can be reinstalled west of Port O'Connor. Reinstallation cannot take place, however, until completion of the Galveston District's 216 Study. Buoy relocation will be a recommended project under the study, and will likely involve dredging a mooring slip alongside the existing channel.

The remaining set of 4 mooring buoys show the presence of adequate water depth for a single-wide tow to moor on the south side of the buoys. These buoys will be left in place.

PROPER LIFE VESTS

A FEDERAL REQUIREMENT

Please remember federal requirements stipulate all deckhands to wear proper life vests while working in or around locks and floodgates. The Corps has recently received a number of reports of mariners not wearing personal floatation devices when locking their tows or passing through floodgates.

UPDATED HOGANSAC FACILITY INFORMATION GUIDE IS HERE

The Houston / Galveston Navigational Safety Advisory Council (HOGANSAC) recently announced availability of its second edition Facility Information Guide. In addition to updated information on facilities in the ports of Galveston, Houston and Texas City, this year's guide includes entries for Chocolate Bayou and Freeport.

Based on feedback from those who purchased the first edition, several new facilities information fields have been added to the guide. Users can now reference expanded point-of-contact information, lay berth arrangements, fire-fighting equipment information and bow-to-center-of-manifold data for liquid cargo facilities.

Though the cover of the guide

is dated November 2001, it contains data updated through February of this year. Guides are available in bound book or CD-ROM format for \$15 plus applicable shipping and handling.

To order, write:
 Publications Department
 Marine Exchange of the West Gulf, Inc.
 111 East Loop North
 Houston, TX 77029

Questions? Call:
 Alton Landry, Manager
 Marine Exchange of the West Gulf, Inc.
 713.678.7711

HSC DREDGE CONTRACTORS ASK FOR COMMUNICATION

As dredging work continues in the Houston Ship Channel, the US Coast Guard, towing industry representatives, Houston Pilots and dredge contractors are meeting regularly to ensure maintenance of a safe environment for all channel users.

NEW MOORING BUOY DESIGN TESTS SUCCESSFULLY

Bill Jakeway, of the Galveston District Corps of Engineers, has worked with the towing industry for the past 2 years to come up with a better mooring buoy design. His prototype was delivered for testing to the Galveston District in March, and initial findings deem it a success!

Jakeway's new buoy is completely self-righting, even without the weight of an



The t-head design prevents lines from "rolling free" of the buoy

anchor chain. The t-head design should prevent lines from "rolling free" of the buoy. And there is no extension beneath the buoy to puncture barges, in the event the buoy is capsized.

The new buoy design will be implemented as damaged buoys are replaced along the Texas portion of the waterway this summer. Our thanks to Bill Jakeway for the many hours he spent developing this new design, and his diligence in coming up with "a better light bulb."



There is no extension beneath the buoy to puncture barges if the buoy capsizes

At a recent meeting, one of the contractors stated that several tows were passing his bucket dredge near Beacon 61/62 without making radio contact with the dredge tender *Break of Dawn*. He noted his dredge is frequently working near the center of the channel, making tow passage on the deepwater side potentially hazardous.

In the interest of safety for all concerned, please ask your vessel operators to establish contact with dredge tenders on approach. Communication can go a long way in preventing accidents on the channel!

Dredge company contact information, including cellular numbers for dredge vessels, can be found on the GICA website's "tools" page (gicasonline.com).

MOORING BUOYS PLANNED FOR MOBILE BAY

The Mobile District of the Corps of Engineers received approval to locate two mooring buoys in Mobile Bay, adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway near Dauphin Island. They will be similar to those used in the Galveston District, and will provide tows a safe mooring location during inclement weather.

Wynne Fuller and others at the Mobile Corps District overcame obstacles with the State Lands Office and Alabama Marine Police to win approval for this project. We appreciate their perseverance in making sure this need was addressed!

PULL-OVER SPOTS MARKED ON SABINE NECHES CANAL

Day beacons along the Sabine-Neches Canal have been relocated to take advantage of navigable waters extending outside the channel's project dimensions. Cross-section studies performed by the Corps of Engineers revealed this opportunity.

By moving several of the day beacons further south, channel

LOUISA BRIDGE VISITED BY TOW OPERATORS IN SECOND PHASE OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Members of the barge industry visited the Louisa Bridge on March 25th, in the second part of an information exchange effort begun by the Eighth District USCG / Industry Bridge Task Force. After spending some time in the bridge control room, tow boaters gained a new perspective on the entire bridge transit process. Many suggestions for safer transit procedures came from both vessel and bridge operators.



Participants outside the control room at the Louisa Bridge

This information exchange was initiated with the ultimate hope of reducing the number of accidents occurring at the Louisa and other moveable bridge locations. Accomplishing this goal requires improving communication between vessel and bridge operators, as well as bettering the understanding of each other's limitations during a transit situation. The end product of the exchange will include some type of written bridge transit procedure for vessel and bridge operators to follow. To date, no such document

width was increased enough to provide "pull-over" areas along the waterway. When opposing vessels meet in the channel, one can use the pull-over space to allow the other to pass. These spaces make two-way traffic a possibility in an area previously too narrow to accommodate it.



View of passing traffic from the Louisa Bridge Control Room

exists, leaving each side to its own devices in negotiating safe transits.

The first part of the exchange happened this fall, with bridge operators riding tows as they transited the Louisa Bridge. Transits were made from each direction, during both daylight and evening hours.

Suggestions and ideas collected from each part of the exchange will be discussed at the upcoming Bridge Task Force Meeting at the Eighth District Headquarters in New Orleans.

Representatives from the Louisiana Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard, and barge industry attended the exchange at the bridge. Participants include:

Ray Sick, Cenac Towing
Mike Moss, Louisiana DOT
John Navy, Louisiana DOT
Tim, Bridge Operator
Captain Wade White, Kirby Corp
Captain Roland LeBlanc, Kirby Corp
Captain David Nolfo, Kirby Corp
Captain Daniel Bourg, Kirby Corp
Port Captain Phil Haas, Kirby Corp
Captain Peter Maler, Eckstein Marine
John McManus, Eckstein Marine
Will Rudolf, Eckstein Marine
Commander Hawes, USCG Morgan City
Officer Hal Landry, USCG Morgan City
Raymond Butler, GICA

Many thanks go to the people who made this project possible: **Keith Bills** and **Tony Marinelli** of the Coast Guard's Eighth District Aids to Navigation Branch; **Captain Eric Nicolaus** and the crew at **MSO Port Arthur**; and the **Sabine Pilots**.



GICA Seeks Golf Sponsors

The GICA is seeking prize donations and ditty-bag items for its golf outing, held in conjunction with the Annual Convention. The event is slated for August 21, 2002 at Lakewood Country Club.

Prize categories are as follows:

- 1st Net
4 man team at \$75 per man \$300
- 2nd Net
4 man team at \$50 per man \$200
- 3rd Net
4 man team at \$50 per man \$200
- Closest to the pin
1 man @ \$75 \$75
- Longest Drive
1 man @ \$75 \$75

The GICA will present suitable sponsor-donated prizes in lieu of awarding pro-shop certificates if anyone wishes to contribute. All sponsors will be prominently acknowledged throughout the event.

In addition, any members with golf-related promotional items (golf towels, golf balls, tee-shirts, koozies, hats, etc.) are encouraged to contact **Larry Barbish** with these contributions. We anticipate approximately 35-40 golfers to participate.



New GICA Board Members (left to right) Roy Pontiff, Secretary; Wayne Parrish, Vice President for Mississippi; Lorenzo Alexander, Vice President for Florida; and Howard Hawthorne, Member at Large

Board *continued from pg. 2*

Ports, and worked with the Intermodal Connector Improvement Program.

Wayne's MDOT experience also includes statewide long- and mid-range transportation planning, capacity analysis, benefit-cost and economic analysis, feasibility studies, prioritization and other special studies for ports, airports, rail facilities and highways. Before joining MDOT in 1994, Wayne's career was with the United States Army. Assignments ranged from combat duty in Vietnam to Assistant Professor of Mathematics at the United States Military Academy.

Wayne is married and has one son.

Lorenzo Alexander, VP for Florida

Lorenzo Alexander is the manager of the State Seaport Office for the Florida Department of Transportation. He is responsible for the development of the Seaport and Intermodal programs. Lorenzo also serves as designee for the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council, which works to finance port projects that will improve the movement and intermodal transportation of cargo and passengers.

Lorenzo has nearly 30 years of experience with Florida's Department of Transportation, and has extensive background in several areas of transportation planning and management. He is degreed in civil engineering and technology, and undertook

graduate studies in urban and regional planning.

Lorenzo is married and has two sons.

Howard Hawthorne, Member at Large

Howard Hawthorne has over 25 years of experience in the marine industry, beginning his career as a night superintendent on the container docks in New Orleans, LA. Over the next 14 years, he rose to the position of vice president in the Cooper / T. Smith Stevedoring organization. During this time, he was involved in the development of some of the most innovative terminal facilities and handling equipment in the world.

Howard then started his own company, consulting clients on cargo facility development and handling services. He was also a founder and original board member of the South East New England Shipbuilding Company.

Later, Howard accepted the Executive Director post with the newly-formed Port of Victoria, in Victoria, TX. The Port encompasses two navigation districts and moves more than 6 million tons of cargo annually.

Howard holds a management degree, and undertook graduate studies. He is a board member of the Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals Association, a member of the Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization, and a member of the Transportation Committee of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce.



Budget Rally *continued from pg. 1*

We discussed specific project funding priorities with our legislators as well, and provided them a copy of the GICA's congressional testimony on the Civil Works Budget for FY 2003. You can read my and Les's testimony from the "tools" page of our website (gicainline.com).

In general, the senators and representatives we visited had some knowledge of priorities within the Civil Works budget, and realized the need to continue funding at near-capability levels. There is a finite number of dollars to go around, however, and after September 11th, there are additional (and valid) issues competing for our nation's attention and funding.

As we find ourselves in the midst of budget reductions and shifting priorities, we have an additional responsibility to support the right projects, and to be careful with the money that is allocated to us. We need to evaluate projects on a case-by-case basis, and determine which of them have potential to generate real returns, and which continue to receive funding while producing little or no tangible benefits. Many times, the Corps of Engineers is criticized harshly for supporting such "pork barrel" projects. In reality, the Corps has little discretionary power in determining which projects to fund. It is mandated to spend its budget as the Administration and Congress direct. This makes it all the more important for us to communicate with our lawmakers in Washington, and make sure the projects receiving funding are the ones generating real returns for the people who pay for them - US!

Newsletter Sponsors Keep Presses Rolling

For over a year now, we have diligently focused our efforts on providing increased value for your membership dollar. This effort includes traveling for meetings and speaking opportunities, funding defense initiatives like the Laguna Madre Verification Study, educating legislators on the economic and environmental benefits of our waterways, and keeping you informed on all of our initiatives as they pertain directly to you and your business.

**Our members
are informed regarding
what the GICA
is doing for them**

In the last year, we've published 4 issues of our 12-page quarterly publication, *the Connecting Link*. This award-winning newsletter represents a tremendous improvement over our previous communications efforts, and has been complimented by members, prospects and industry peers from our Gulf Coast states to Washington, D.C.

As you can imagine, there are significant costs associated with

**Our image as a
professional, credible
organization
is reinforced to industry,
the government
and the public**

producing the kind of newsletter we distribute. At the same time, those costs buy some very important things. Our members are informed regarding what the GICA is doing for them. Further, our image as a professional, credible organization is reinforced to the industry, the government, and the public.

We are attempting to defray our newsletter costs with sponsorships, and are very excited to report both this edition AND the next have already been generously underwritten by member companies. **Canal Barge Company, Inc., Eckstein Marine Service, and American Commercial Barge Line** have stepped up to the plate to sponsor this issue, **Custom Fuel Services** is sponsoring the entire summer edition, and **DOW Chemical** has agreed to sponsor a portion of the fall issue.

Invoice Reminder...

To simplify recordkeeping, the GICA mails dues invoices once per year, regardless of your anniversary date. Our most recent invoice mailing was in November of 2001, and includes dues for 2002 membership.

If you have joined within the last year, please do not feel obligated to submit payment on the invoice until your anniversary date. Quarterly reminders are automatically generated and mailed to ALL unpaid members until dues payment is received.



We extend our most sincere thanks to these companies for their additional support. Because of them, we will be able to continue producing a quality publication for our members and industry associates. We are currently seeking sponsors for our fall and winter editions. With several levels of sponsorship available, please consider what your company may be able to contribute.

Newsletter sponsorships are offered in the following increments:

Bronze: \$500
Silver: \$1000
Gold: \$2000
Exclusive: \$4000

**This award-winning
newsletter has been
complimented by
members, prospects
and industry peers
from the Gulf Coast States
to Washington, D.C.**



OUR CONDOLENCES

Our prayers are with **Gary LaGrange**, Director of the Port of New Orleans and GICA Past President, as he mourns the loss of his mother.



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