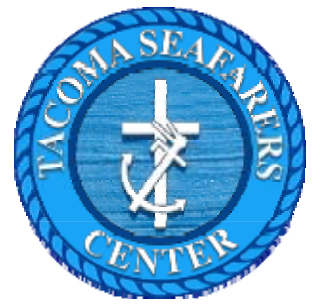




MOORING LINES



A TIE WITH PEOPLE OF THE SEA

ASCENSION

MAY 2009

Phone: 253-272-0716
E-Mail: center@tacomaseafarers.org
Web: http://www.tacomaseafarers.org



Printed Monthly by The Tacoma Seafarers' Center

WATERFRONT STATISTICS

SHIPS IN PORT: 78
NO. OF VISITS: 77
SEAFARERS RECEIVING MINISTRY: 674



Edited By: Deacon Gene Lawrence
Managing Editor: Lorraine Stargel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
John Thurber, President
Roger Lawrence, Treasurer
Donna Eckhoff
Doug Wolford
Herb Bauer
Ed Egan

Mission Statement

The Tacoma Seafarers' Center is organized to minister holistically (spiritually, emotionally and physically) to seafarers who come to the Port of Tacoma. Our ministry emphasis is spreading the saving gospel of Jesus Christ world-wide to and through Seafarers.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

I would like to thank all of our donors for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers during the many years, and especially during these economic trying times. The continued financial support you have committed to this awesome ministry of our Lord is spiritually uplifting to me. I know times are pretty tough for many, yet you, our loyal supporters have not forgotten just how vital your financial giving is to keep us going forward in spreading the Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the many seafarers who visit our ports. The ability to keep our ministry viable and able to share God's Word with those who have not known Jesus, or are in need of spiritual enrichment from our staff and volunteers, thru sharing the Love of Jesus to these men and women, is essential in building and maintaining the body of Christ here on Earth and especially in the Port of Tacoma. The warm response from the seafarers and their verbal "thank yous" to our staff and volunteers validates the many hours of hard work that is done here.

I wish that you all could experience the genuine love that we receive from the seafarers. Their comments, cards, letters and e-mails tell us how the impact of coming to know Jesus in a close and personal way has filled them with the Holy Spirit and, therefore, has given them the strength and courage to share Jesus with friends and family from their many homelands in our world. This sharing is taking the Word of God into all of the world, just as Jesus instructed us to do in the last two verses of Matthew. We are truly a Global ministry and we still have much work to be done before the return of Jesus. Thank you for allowing us to do this through your financial and prayer support. I love you all and God loves you too!

Deacon H. Gene Lawrence
Executive Director

SOME GOOD NEWS!!?

The Port of Tacoma officials have recently told me that at this time, the plans for having us tear down our main building has been put on hold for awhile. I have been told that we will not have to move for at least a year or two. Apparently, the economy has impacted some of the projects here in the Port of Tacoma. When I told them that if we are going to have to move eventually, I would prefer that we do it sooner rather than later so that we could make the move at a time when the weather would be nicer. The response was that the monies that were going to be used to help us move were contingent upon the monies received as a result of the expansion project where we are presently located. I quickly reassessed the situation and told them that of course we would willing to be patient and wait for their assistance. Please keep us in your prayers.

In service to Christ,
H. Gene Lawrence

WHO WE SERVE

It is right and helpful in whatever we do, to do it as unto the Lord, "even to the least of these." Last night, my husband, Herb, and I were reminded that, many times, God also shows us the nobility of those we serve at the Seafarers' Center.

The **Chatham Island** was in Port. We were able to talk with Romeo from the Philippines. He has been a seafarer for eighteen years. His ship had been delayed yesterday morning from leaving for the 17-day trip to China because of fog and he said he was hoping they could leave this morning. I imagined some parts of the trip to be pleasant enough to look forward to. Knowing that the winter months bring rough weather on the seas, I casually asked if they expected calmer seas now that spring has arrived. He said winter lasts awhile longer yet and they knew they were in for more of what they'd had on the way here from China. I supposed veteran seafarers get used to conditions and asked him about that. In his friendly and calm way, he told us that even captains never get used to seasickness, or the banging and extreme and frightening motion of the ship with waves that can be nearly 30 feet high (higher than the deck

"We must show them we care, before they care what we know."

Rev. Ray Eckhoff

is above water). When asked further, he told us they'd only had three nights of good sleep out of the 17 and they had to work everyday, no matter how they felt. He told us those sorts of conditions make men learn to pray, if they don't know to already. He, himself, is a Christian and we had a wonderful time of sharing Ps. 107:23-32 which describes a seafarer on high seas, trusting God alone. We were also able to pray with him for his crew and his family, putting them into God's hands and to give him a whole Bible, which he didn't have on the ship. Romeo told us their experiences crossing the oceans are why seafarers are very eager to come into ports and our Center.

The **Marchan Maersk** was also in Port. One man, also from the Philippines, had lost his wife to breast cancer three years ago. He has two daughters, now about 18 and 12 years old. I asked if he was able to be with his wife when she was sick and dying. He said he was with another shipping line then and his ship was in the middle of a 20-day trip across the ocean when he was told she was in the hospital. She died before they arrived to their destination and then, through some problems, were anchored off land for another month, before he could leave to go home and join his grieving daughters and other family. (He said the shipping line he is with now does its best to not let that sort of thing happen.)

Herb and I were impressed with the trust in God and the courage these seafarers and their families have. Their cheerfulness and pleasantness can hide what they sacrifice to bring cargo to our land. We feel very honored to be able to serve these and the other men who come to our Center.

PAUL'S ASIA TRIP

I had the privilege to meet with not one but two discipleship ministries in the Philippines; one in Manila and one in Olongapo.



In Manila, the staff holds a nightly Bible Study with singing from 6 pm to 7 pm. Then on Sundays they have a worship service. When I was there on Tuesday night, about 25 came for worship, fellowship and afterwards food.

They also train seafarers on how to hold Bible Study Fellowships on board ships. They have training four times per year.

In Olongapo, the Sailors' Lifeline has an established network of churches throughout the Philippines. These churches will organize a special group within the church to minister to the needs of seafarers and their families as well as help them grow in the Lord while on vacation. We can send names of seafarers to them for follow-up.



A ship of a different kind was also in Manila for the month of March. The **M/V Doulos** is a Christian book exhibition ship with well over 200 Christians living on board from 51 nations. The current Captain is from Puyallup. When the ship is in a port, teams will venture out into the villages to share God's Word. One of the teams will go around and visit the other ships in port and tell the crew about Jesus.



The leadership of the **Doulos** ministry has been helpful to promote the involvement of local Christians around the world to reach out to the world coming to their doorsteps on ships.

Next month's issue: The Women Seafarers of Taiwan.

Submitted by Paul Peterson



NEXT TSC BOARD MEETING – June 8, 2009

NEXT LADIES AUXILIARY MEETING – May 26, 2009

Devotions: **Jeannette Burton**

Hostess: **Potluck**

Cookies/Snacks: **Good Shepherd Lutheran – everyone bring a cookie package**



TACOMA SEAMENS' CENTER
1225 EAST ALEXANDER AVE.
TACOMA, WA 98421

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
TACOMA, WA
PERMIT NO. 229