SAVANNAH CONVENTION
A ROUSING SUCCESS!

The American Pilots’ Association (APA) held its Biennial Convention in Savannah, Georgia from October 1st through 5th. The Savannah Harbor Pilots, led by Master Pilot, Captain Trey Thompson III, hosted this year’s Convention, providing an ideal backdrop for the meetings as some of the largest container vessels calling at U.S. ports were piloted up and down the river throughout the week. The Convention, which was open to all APA-member pilots and invited guests, was attended by nearly 200 of the Nation’s 1,200 State-licensed and U.S.-registered pilots, along with Captain Simon Pelletier, President of the International Maritime Pilots’ Association, and numerous pilot leaders from around the world.

The Convention was presided over by APA President Captain Jorge Viso and began with a tribute to the late Captain Louis Adams (Aransas Corpus Christi Pilots), who was tragically killed in the line of duty on June 16, 2018. During his remarks, Viso stressed, “During the week take advantage of the accumulated knowledge and experience in this room. Ask questions and challenge each other. Share experiences and ideas and bring those experiences and ideas back to your groups.” Viso continued, “This is one way we can continue to keep our profession fresh and always moving forward.”

During the week, the six APA Regional Vice Presidents gave reports on pilotage matters in their respective regions. At the Convention, there was also a change to APA’s senior leadership. Captain Kathleen Flury, President of the Southeast Alaska Pilots Association, was elected Vice President for the Pacific States. She will begin her term in January 2019 upon the retirement of Captain Peter McIsaac.

Two important and timely substantive panel discussions were held during the week. One on navigational issues related to Ultra Large Container Vessels, and another on recent developments in autonomous shipping. Paul Kirchner, APA Executive Director—General Counsel, conducted the Attorneys Meeting, which was attended by dozens of lawyers representing pilots and pilot groups around the country. Clay Diamond, Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel, gave an update on Coast Guard credentialing policies.

The Convention featured a strong lineup of senior government leaders. These speakers included Robert L. Sumwalt (Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board), Rear Admiral John P. Nadeau (U.S. Coast Guard, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy), Rear Admiral Mark H. Buzby (Maritime Administrator), U.S. Congressman Earl L. “Buddy” Carter, and Savannah Mayor, Eddie DeLoach. Captain Kirsten Martin, Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard’s National Maritime Center, also provided updates on merchant mariner credentialing policies.

The APA Navigation and Technology Committee (NAVTECH) also met during the Convention with Chairman, Captain Paul Amos presiding and assisted by Vice Chair Captain Jonathan Samuell and APA Navigation Technology Director Mr. Bill Cairns.

Captain Recee Young of the Virginia Pilots went through a number of real life instances where “ghost targets” appeared on PPU displays and how to mitigate the opportunities for such occurrences. Bill Cairns provided an update on eNavigation efforts at IMO and IALA, focusing on S-Mode and the Maritime Service Portfolio. Captain Hans Antonsen of the Southeast Alaska Pilots gave a primer on track pilot/autopilot use.

NAVTECH was fortunate to have four guest speakers at this meeting. Captain Liz Kretovic, Deputy Hydrographer, NOAA Office of Coast Survey and Mr. Jon Dasler, David Evans & Associates, gave a presentation on high quality hydrographic surveys. Ms. Rachel Medley followed them with an overview of NOAA’s portfolio of digital Navigation Services. Mr. Dave Lewald from the USCG Office of Navigation Systems described the agency’s vision on the Future of Navigation and also the current deployment of AIS aids to navigation.

Captain Amos briefly discussed the results of 2017 portable pilot unit (PPU) survey and the need for full and accurate participation from all pilot groups.

Several groups offered updates on their new PPU equipment purchases and upgrades, as well as software changes. The meeting concluded with short “elevator speeches” being presented by the various navigation technology vendors who had updates aimed at promoting new equipment or features and enticing participants to visit their booths in the Exhibitors areas.

(For pictures of the Convention, see page 4)
KITACK LIM EARNs RE-ELECTION AS IMO SECRETARY GENERAL

As the industry heads towards what many observers consider to be a period of unprecedented regulatory change, Mr. Kitack Lim won re-election - unopposed - to a second four-year term as Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

On November 23rd, during the meeting of IMO’s Council, the South Korean maritime diplomat won the support of the 40 nations which are members of the United Nations agency’s senior steering council.

His second term will start in January 2020, subject to the formal ratification of the IMO’s overall Assembly at its December 2019 meeting.

Mr. Lim was considered by many to be the dark horse victor in his first election in 2015, defeating several strong rivals, including a candidate from the U.S. Coast Guard, on a platform of building a pragmatic consensus between governments and industry under the slogan “a voyage together.”

Mr. Lim’s re-election reverts to the common past practice of secretaries-general serving more than one term of office. His predecessor, Japan’s Koji Sekimizu, served for only one four-year term before standing aside for personal reasons.

IMO member nations on the council include the US, China, Norway and the UK among the 10 largest providers of shipping services. A further 10 including Brazil, German, Australia and India have a large interest in seaborne trade. Another 20 represent those to ensure a wide geographic spread including Singapore, Liberia, Denmark, Egypt and Chile.

IALA SETS JULY 1ST AS WORLD MARINE NAVIGATION DAY

IALA’s General Assembly has established World Marine Aids to Navigation Day to be observed annually on July 1st. IALA members were invited to propose a theme for the 2019 event.

In its submission, APA proposed Emphasizing the Human in the Future of Marine Aids to Navigation as a theme. APA noted that some emerging technologies are being rapidly introduced without thoughtful implementation, which should consider the interaction between technology-based shipping and more traditional human-based shipping.

APA’s submission stressed that the APA and IALA objectives continue to be to protect the safety of navigation and the marine environment. With respect to AtoN, it is APA’s view that the human needs to be more fully considered with the implementation of new technologies (e.g., the interaction of autonomous ships with traditionally manned ships and the resultant impact on AtoN and VTS).
COAST GUARD AUTH ACT PASS AS 115TH CONGRESS WINDS DOWN

On November 27th, the House of Representatives voted unanimously to send to the President’s desk a bipartisan bill to reauthorize, support, and strengthen the U.S. Coast Guard, to reauthorize and update the authorities of the Federal Maritime Commission, and to address several other important maritime priorities. The Senate had previously approved the legislation on November 14th by a vote of 94-6.

The Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 (S. 140), which is named after retiring U.S. Representative Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ), includes several provisions that APA supports and has championed during the course of the 115th Congress.

Section 514 of S. 140 requires the Coast Guard, subject to available funding, to establish, operate, and sustain “a land-based, resilient, and reliable” complement to and backup for the timing component of GPS. This section lays out detailed requirements that such a system must meet and makes clear that the purpose of such a system is “to ensure the availability of uncorrupted and non-degraded positioning, navigation, and timing signals for military and civilian users in the event that GPS signals are corrupted, degraded, unreliable, or otherwise unavailable.”

Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) said, “In addition to robust funding for the Coast Guard, this year’s bill will advance the development of a crucially needed backup system for GPS navigation.” Garamendi has been among the most vocal Congressional leaders advocating for a dependable backup to GPS.

Section 829 of the Authorization Act directs the Coast Guard to “prescribe a final rule eliminating the requirement that a mariner actively using the mariner’s credential complete an approved refresher or recertification course to maintain a radar observer endorsement.” On June 11, likely in response to the looming Congressional passage of the Coast Guard Authorization Act, including Section 829, the Coast Guard published a proposed rule that would eliminate the Radar Observer refresher/recertification requirement. APA will advise member pilots’ associations as soon as this proposed rule is made final.

Finally, Section 601 of S. 140 includes changes to the composition of the Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee (MEDMAC). The current composition of MEDMAC is 14 members, with 10 being medical professionals and 4 being mariners. At APA’s urging, Congress has changed the advisory committee’s composition to 9 medical professionals and 5 mariners. In discussions with the Coast Guard, APA has recommended that it would be most fair and representative of the U.S. mariner population to have the 5 mariners consist of an oceans deck officer, an oceans engineering officer, an inland deck officer, an inland engineer officer and a pilot.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) said after the House passed S.140, “Naming this legislation for our retiring colleague, Congressman Frank LoBiondo, is an acknowledgement of his championship of the Coast Guard and maritime sector throughout his congressional career, including during his leadership of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee in five previous congresses.”

Rep. LoBiondo, a long-time friend to the APA and ardent supporter of State pilots and the State Pilot System, retires from Congress in January after serving as the Second District Congressman for 24 years. He served as the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Chairman or Ranking Member during five previous Congresses. LoBiondo chaired the Subcommittee in the 107th, 108th, 109th, and 112th Congresses, and served as Ranking Member in the 111th Congress. During his tenure as the Republican leader of the Subcommittee, LoBiondo oversaw the enactment of multiple Coast Guard authorization laws.

The Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 will now head to President Donald Trump for final approval.

PRESIDENT SIGNS SAVE OUR SEAS ACT OF 2018

On November 17th, President Donald Trump signed into law the Save Our Seas Act of 2018 (S. 3508). Title II of this Act codifies statutory changes to implement recommendations arising from the Coast Guard and NTSB investigations into the tragic loss of the cargo ship EL FARO.

While pilots, of course, have an interest in any legislation aimed at improving the safety of U.S. flag ships moving in our ports and waterways, there are also provisions about which pilots may have a particular interest. Specifically, the Save Our Seas Act mandates that the U.S. Coast Guard shall have "full, concurrent and timely access to and ability to use vessel data recorder (VDR) data and audio held by any other Federal agency in all marine casualty investigations, regardless of which agency is the investigative lead". This VDR provision is likely intended to address the tension that sometimes arises when the Coast Guard and NTSB are both involved in conducting a marine casualty investigation.
ON STATION

SCENES FROM THE SAVANNAH CONVENTION

NTSB Chairman, the Honorable Robert L. Sumwalt (wearing a Bay & River Delaware Pilots’ hat!).

Captain Jorge J. Viso delivers the APA President’s Report to the pilot delegates in attendance.

Sporting Clay winner, Captain Joe “Dead Eye” Brown (right), poses with Captain Trey Thompson (Savannah Pilots), the event organizer.

IMPA and CMPA President, Captain Simon Pelletier, delivers his international report to the APA Convention.

Admiral’s Cup golf event winners (from left to right): Captains Drew Glassing, Scott Ireland, John Oldmixon, and John DeCruz, aka “The New York-New Jersey Gang”.

U.S. Maritime Administrator, Rear Admiral Mark H. Buzby (left) provides an update on MARAD activities as Captain Viso listens.

Captain Bill Cofer, Virginia Pilots (at the podium), makes a point during the ULCV panel discussion.

APA Delegates at the 2018 Convention.

Rear Admiral John P. Nadeau, Assistant USCG Commandant for Prevention Policy, discusses the latest agency’s policies, as well as the vital partnership between pilots and the USCG.

Mayor of Savannah, the Honorable Eddie DeLoach.

Exhibitor area at the Convention.

Autonomous shipping panel discussion (left to right): Paul Kirchner, Captain Jorge Viso, Captain George Quick, and Captain Simon Pelletier.

APA Delegates at the 2018 Convention.
COAST GUARD AMENDS TANKER AUTOPILOT REGS

On July 11, 2018, the Coast Guard sought comments on its proposal to amend federal regulations to permit tankers with autopilot systems that meet international standards to operate using those systems in certain waters and under specified conditions. The APA submitted comments to the Coast Guard regarding this proposal.

The Coast Guard accepted most of our suggestions, which were aimed at clarifying the regulation and enhancing maritime safety. These new final regulations – announced in a November 5, 2018 Federal Register Notice and discussed in detail below – become effective December 5, 2018.

Under current (pre-November 5th) regulations (33 CFR §164.13), a tanker is prohibited from using an autopilot when operating in a traffic separation scheme (TSS), a safety fairway, a federal anchorage ground or an area within one-half mile of any U.S. shore. The Coast Guard has, however, granted – on a case-by-case basis – deviations from that prohibition to permit the use of an autopilot system in a fairway or TSS. Provided that a tanker’s autopilot system is in compliance with listed International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards, the local Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP) routinely granted such “deviations.”

This amendment to 33 CFR §164.13 permits a tanker to use its autopilot system in a fairway or TSS so long as it meets the conditions described below, thus eliminating the need for tanker owners and operators to apply to the Coast Guard for a “deviation.” Under this new regulation, a tanker may navigate using an autopilot heading and track control system only if:

1) The tanker is at least one-half nautical mile beyond the territorial sea baseline and is not within a specified anchorage or precautionary area; and
2) There is a person, competent to steer the vessel, present to assume manual control of the steering station at all times; and
3) The system meets the heading or track control specifications of either IEC standard 62065 (2002-03) or 62065 (2014-02)

The complete text of this new regulation is contained in the November 5, 2018 Federal Register Notice, which can be found at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-11-05/pdf/2018-24127.pdf

It is important to note that the new regulation at 33 CFR §164.13(d) begins with the following statement: "This paragraph (d) has preemptive effect over State or local regulation within the same field."

NTSB PUBLISHES ANNUAL SAFER SEAS DIGEST

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) published its Safer Seas Digest 2017 summarizing lessons learned from marine accident investigations in the past year. The Digest summarizes 41 maritime accident investigations and the associated “lessons learned” covering collisions, explosions, capsizings and allisions.

The lessons learned are highlighted in 11 categories including fatigue, bridge resource management, distraction, and monitoring helmsman rudder order response. “I hope that Safer Seas Digest 2017 provides the marine industry with essential and actionable information to address the safety issues confronting it,” said NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt.

The complete Safer Seas Digest is available at: www.ntsb.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/SPC1802.pdf
APA NEWS

BRUNSWICK BAR PILOTS’ RESCUE EFFORTS SAVE A LIFE

Training, experience and the long-standing mariner tradition of assisting those in peril saved a dis- traught Georgia man’s life on November 19, 2018.

In an apparent suicide attempt, a man grabbed a fisherman’s filet knife, cut his wrist and plunged off the St. Simons Island Pier. A pilot boat carrying a Brunswick Bar Pilot, Captain John Beimler and an apprentice pilot, Gordon Strother, approached the pier just as the near tragedy unfolded. The pilot boat was operated by Boat Captain Danny Jones.

“We were returning from an assignment and were on our way to the pier when a lot of people started waving us down,” Captain Biemler said. The three quickly spotted a man floating face up 100 yards off the pier. “As professional mariners, we try to help anyone in need,” Biemler said.

Biemler tossed him a life ring, but the man made no attempt to grab it. “Captain Danny Jones skillfully pulled the boat up to the gentleman,” Biemler said. They could see blood pooling in the water around him as they pulled the man onto the boat.

They applied pressure to the laceration and kept his arms raised above his head as they navigated to the pier. A law enforcement official happened to be on station and didn’t react as quickly as they did, the man wouldn’t be alive today.”

APA SUPPORTS “CAPTAIN PHILLIPS” MARITIME SCHOLARSHIP

On October 22nd, APA staff attended the inaugural event for the Captain Phillips and Lane Kirkland Maritime Trust Foundation. Funds from this Trust will be used to establish maritime scholarships for students of all ages and backgrounds.

BAY & RIVER DELAWARE PILOTS ACCEPT LEGO PILOT BOAT

FLEET TEACH, an organization focused on educating young people about the environment, ports, waterways, maritime industries, and maritime careers, has presented the Pilots’ Association for the Bay & River Delaware with a 1:20 scale LEGO® replica of the pilot boat J.P. Virden.

The replica was modeled after the 53’ foot long Ray Hunt Designed Chesapeake Class pilot boat built by Glad- ding-Hearn and named for John Penrose Virden, the first president of The Pilots’ Association for the Bay and River Delaware.

SANDY HOOK PILOTS GUIDE HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH INTO NEW YORK HARBOR

On October 19, the Sandy Hook Pilots directed the British aircraft carrier HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH into New York Harbor. This was the carrier’s first ever visit to the United States.

Prior to calling at New York, the HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH had first visited Florida and Virginia.

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots’ associations announced new officers:

- Southeast Alaska Pilots’ Association: Captain Kathleen Flury (President), Captain Frank Didier (Vice President), Captain John Herring (Secretary), Captain Levi Benedict (Director), Captain Dale Collins (Director), Captain Norbert Chaudhary (Director) and Captain Ed Sinclair (Director).
- San Francisco Bar Pilots: Captain Joe Long (President / Port Agent), Captain John Carlier (Director), Captain Andy Murray (Director), Captain Kris Laakso (Director) and Captain David Cvitanovic (commissioner).