REFLECTING ON THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The end of any year understandably leads to reflection on the past, as well as looking to the future and the opportunities and challenges that may be presented. This is a good and a healthy thing for individuals and organizations, like the APA, to do.

This past year, with the untimely passing of both the sitting and the immediate past APA presidents, has given us much upon which to reflect, reminisce, and be grateful.

Captain Mike Watson’s July passing was a shock to all of us. He was a wonderful leader and friend. The last edition of ON STATION contains a number of wonderful tributes to him.

Sadly, in September, we also lost Captain Jack Sparks, APA President from 1992-2000 and a significant figure in U.S. pilotage history. Captain Sparks was also a tremendous leader and meant a great deal to APA members. Please see page 3 for a personal remembrance of Captain Sparks by Paul Kirchner.

The APA was truly blessed to have had these two men lead our association and represent our great profession. For this, each of us should be grateful.

This past year also saw APA squarely focused on a number of issues that impact pilots and pilotage. APA staff represented pilots at numerous regional, national and international forums. Of particular note is the continuous task of attempting to steer the work being done by the IMO and IALA on various e-navigation initiatives, as well supporting the annual eNavigation Conference in Seattle. APA has also remained fully engaged with IMO’s comprehensive review and updating of seafarer fatigue guidance.

The APA has also contributed significantly to the work of various Coast Guard advisory bodies, including the MERPAC, MEDMAC and NAVSAC, as well as worked directly with federal agencies on issues ranging from “virtual” aids to navigation, preservation of the national DGPS, mariner credentialing, and casualty reporting requirements.

Since being selected to serve as Acting President, I have worked closely with the APA staff, have attended regional pilot meetings and have presided over a meeting of the APA vice presidents and of the Board of Trustees (see page 5). The APA remains strong and active and continues to vigorously represent the interests of the piloting profession.

While it is important for us to look back, considering what is at stake, it is critical that the APA continues to look to the future. We will no doubt face challenges in 2016. I am confident, however, that we will meet these challenges. I am confident because we have dedicated professionals as members, and a professional staff at the APA that is second to none. Paul Kirchner, Executive Director-General Counsel), Clay Diamond (Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel), Bill Cairns (Navigation Technology Advisor) and Lisa Powell Townshend (Operations Director) are committed, forward-thinking and work tirelessly on behalf of member-associations, individual pilots and the piloting profession.

In the coming year, I look forward, as Acting President, to ensuring that the APA continues to be a strong voice for pilots, pilotage and safe navigation.
IMO ASSEMBLY CONFIRMS NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL

The IMO Assembly, which met from November 23 to December 2, unanimously confirmed the appointment of Mr. Kitack Lim (Republic of Korea) as the Secretary-General. Mr. Lim’s four-year term will start on January 1, 2016.

The IMO Council, which is made up of 40 Member States, elected Mr. Lim as Secretary-General in June, subject to the confirmation by the Assembly.

Mr. Lim was president of Busan Port Authority until the end of July 2015. He served as the Republic of Korea’s Deputy Permanent Representative to IMO from 2006 to 2009 and was Chairman of the IMO Subcommittee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) from 2002 to 2004.

ANNUAL PILOT BOARDING SAFETY CAMPAIGN

From October 1-14, IMPA conducted a comprehensive survey of member pilot groups to obtain data on the current safety of ships’ pilot boarding and transfer arrangements. IMPA represents 63 pilots associations from 54 countries. The results of this survey will be made available to IMPA members and will be submitted to the IMO in early 2016.

IALA E-NAVIGATION COMMITTEE MEETS IN BREST, FRANCE

The 17th meeting of the IALA ENAV Committee was held from October 26-30 at Le Quartz convention center, Brest, France. The meeting was held in conjunction with the 4th International Conference on Maritime Safety and Security (also known as Safer Seas). Bill Cairns, Navigation Technology Advisor, participated for the APA and was joined by Captain Jean-Daniel Gilles, a French pilot from Dunkirk, who was attending on behalf of IMPA.

The primary focus for APA and IMPA was on how IALA might address the IMO e-Navigation implementation strategy’s “Maritime Service Portfolios” (MSP). The MSPs are a listing of shore-based services, that, as envisioned by IMO, should be aimed at the harmonized exchange of information. MSPs were not, as some now advocate, intended to harmonize the services themselves.

At a June meeting of IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), a proposed work project on overseeing the development of harmonization standards for 16 separate MSPs, including one on pilotage services, was ultimately rejected. The sponsors of the paper, primarily some government officials from Northern Europe, however, were invited to resubmit their proposal at the spring 2016 meeting of the MSC.

APA and IMPA will continue to work on this issue at both IMO and IALA.

KIRCHNER ADDRESSES LATIN AMERICAN PILOT FORUM

Paul Kirchner, APA Executive Director-General Counsel (standing at the podium), speaks to the pilots in attendance at the October meeting of the Latin American Pilot Forum. This annual event is a gathering of maritime pilots from throughout Mexico and South America.
CONGRESSNEARS PASSAGE
OF KEY MARITIME BILL

As ON STATION goes to print, legislators appear poised to pass the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 (CGAA). This maritime legislation, in addition to authorizing funding for the USCG and Federal Maritime Commission, also routinely includes new authorities and Congressional mandates that can directly impact all mariners—including pilots.

The House of Representatives, which originally passed its version of the CGAA in May, unanimously approved a new version on December 10 that more closely aligns with Senate priorities. APA is advised that key Senators are attempting to get similar legislation through the Senate before 2015 ends.

While APA has interest in the entire CGAA, there are four sections that are of particular importance for pilots. Specifically, the House-passed version of the CGAA (and the version being actively considered by the Senate) directs the Coast Guard to:

- Establish and publish a detailed process, including a plan for advanced public notification, for the discontinuance of any aid to navigation;
- Establish a program of “trusted agents” (medical professionals trained on maritime physical standards and listed on a registry) who are qualified to conduct mariner physicals and issue Medical Certificates;
- Refrain from “activities related to the dismantling or disposal of” LORAN-C related infrastructure” until the Homeland Security Secretary certifies to Congress that the infrastructure is not needed as backup to GPS; and
- Submit a report to Congress detailing steps it is taking to amend certain of the agency’s marine casualty reporting requirements.

While the Senate is working to pass its version of the CGAA, this is no certainty. APA will continue to monitor this and other maritime legislation, in addition to working hard, achieved a lot, and had fun working as a team and that he would consider us as his partners. That’s exactly what happened. We had a clear agenda, worked hard, achieved a lot, and had fun -- and he set the tone.

These are only a few examples of Jack’s legacy as APA president. From a larger perspective, much of how the APA operates today is the result of changes that Jack brought about. The organization that he reluctantly left in 2000 because of ill health is the foundation that Mike Watson built upon in further expanding the activities and reach of the APA.

A PERSONAL REMEMBRANCE OF CAPTAIN JACK SPARKS
By Paul Kirchner
When Jack Sparks died on September 25, most of us in the APA were still trying to deal with Mike Watson’s sudden passing in July. Our shock and grief over Mike’s death, then and now, however, shouldn’t prevent a fond recollection of Jack and his contributions to the present APA. I believe it would be appropriate for me to offer a few words in that respect – he brought me into the APA in 1992, and I had the full Jack Sparks experience for eight years.

Working with Jack was an adventure. He was energetic, enthusiastic, upbeat, personable, positive, and generous. He loved being a pilot, talking with pilots, hanging with pilots, and telling pilot stories. He thought being a pilot was just about the best thing in the world and being president of the APA carried with it a great responsibility for protecting the piloting profession and improving the lives of pilots and their families.

Most importantly for the APA, Jack had ideas … lots of ideas. Even before Jack was elected president in 1992, he and I had a number of conversations about the changes he wanted to make to the structure and activities of the APA – changes that would build on what his predecessor, Captain Pat Neely, had accomplished. It was an ambitious agenda. But the list of the eventual achievements of Jack’s presidency is perhaps even more impressive than what he envisioned in 1992. Some examples:

Jack wanted to increase outreach to the APA membership, especially the individual pilots: he started the present ON STATION newsletter; established the 800 telephone number for members to use; made a point of regular, periodic calls to each of the pilot group presidents and APA officers; over the first two or three years of his presidency, he and I visited almost all of the 50 pilot groups to meet with as many of the individual pilots as possible; and he encouraged the regional and statewide meetings that have become so important to the information exchange work of the APA.

Jack wanted to expand and organize the APA’s work with Congress: he moved the office from Georgetown to its present location on Capitol Hill; beefed up the PAC Fund; established a system of periodic visits with members of Congress “just to stay in touch”; developed personal friendships with many of the members; and established a more structured approach to legislation monitoring.

Jack wanted to restructure the APA as a modern, professional trade association: he created the position of Executive Director; emphasized constituent services; upgraded the office infrastructure and capabilities, including a 24/7 communication system; set up high-quality pension and health insurance plans; and expanded the physical size of the office and otherwise prepared for later increases in the office staff.

Jack wanted to create a working environment in the APA office that was comfortable, productive, creative, respectful, and enjoyable. When he asked me to come “in house” to help set up the APA that he envisioned, he said that he and Lisa and I would work as a team and that he would consider us as his partners. That’s exactly what happened. We had a clear agenda, worked hard, achieved a lot, and had fun -- and he set the tone.

Former APA President, the late Captain Jack Sparks (center), Executive Director-General Counsel, Paul Kirchner and Operations Director, Lisa Powell Townshend in February 2015.
NTSB VICE CHAIRMAN VISITS VIRGINIA PILOTS

On September 17, the Virginia Pilots Association (VPA) hosted NTSB Vice Chair, T. Bella Dinh-Zarr. She was briefed on VPA operations and on the vital role compulsory pilots play in the safe and efficient transportation of maritime commerce.

Dinh-Zarr joined NTSB in 2015 and will serve a 3-year term.

APA WORKS TO RESOLVE MEDICAL FORM CONCERNS

As discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting, APA identified serious flaws with the recently issued USCG medical form (CG-719K). It is APA’s view that these flaws are so serious that the form is unusable by mariners, physicians and the National Maritime Center (NMC).

After APA brought these concerns to USCG officials, a meeting was held at the APA offices in November. At the meeting – attended by Paul Kirchner (Executive Director-General Counsel), Clay Diamond (Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel), Captain Andrew McGovern (Sandy Hook Pilots/Chairman of the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee), and officials from USCG headquarters and the NMC – APA stressed that if no action is taken, use of this flawed form is mandatory after December 31, 2015. APA strongly recommended that the USCG issue a notice authorizing use of the previous version of the CG-719K until further notice.

Acting APA President, Captain Peter McIsaac, followed up on the meeting with an email to RADM Paul Thomas (Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy) reiterating this recommendation and the need for prompt action. We are pleased to announce that the USCG took our recommendation and will “continue to accept applications for medical certificates submitted via CG-719K (Rev 01-09) with an expiration date of 06/30/12.” See the below link: www.uscg.mil/nmc/announcements/pdfs/med_cert_apps_719k.pdf.

Captain McIsaac said, “I commend the USCG for listening to our concerns and taking the necessary actions to fix this problem.”

APA recommends pilots continue using the previous version of the 719K until further notice.

On 2-3 December 2015, the national eNavigation 2015 conference, hosted by Philips Publishing, was held in Seattle. Of the growing number of eNavigation conferences, this one stands out for its focus on navigation technology and its practical application to mariners on the bridges of ships and vessel operations. This “real world” emphasis is one of the reasons APA is a supporter of this conference.

The two-day conference included numerous sessions on topics of interest to all mariners and ship operators, including an update on regulations, technical developments, and training.

Paul Kirchner, APA Executive Director, served as a moderator for a panel discussion on vessel operations. The panel consisted of a diverse group of representatives from ferries, commercial fishing vessels, military ships, and VTS operations. Captain Jorge Viso, Chairman of the APA Navigation and Technology Committee, moderated a panel on Technical Developments in navigation equipment and Captain Ed Marmol, Puget Sound Pilots, gave a report on new developments in PPU.s. Captain Viso also gave a presentation during the conference on “Obstacles Yet to be Overcome.”

Bill Cairns, APA Navigation Technology Advisor, covered the APA views on the eNavigation Regulatory Landscape. In addition to the APA presenters, the conference was well attended by more than 20 APA member pilots, 10 Canadian Marine Pilots Association pilots, and Clay Diamond, APA Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel.

Next year’s national eNavigation Conference will be held in Seattle on December 6-7. APA members are encouraged to participate.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

In accordance with the ByLaws, the Board of Trustees of the American Pilots’ Association met in Washington on October 20-21. The meeting was attended by Trustees from each coastal State and from the Great Lakes, as well as the secretary-treasurer, and the regional vice presidents. The president of IMPA and representatives from several federal agencies also attended. Acting President, Captain Peter McIsaac presided over the meeting. In addition, the APA Navigation and Technology Committee (NAVTECH) held its annual meeting in the afternoon of the first day.
APA NEWS

SF BAR PILOTS ANNOUNCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Since 1993, the San Francisco Bar Pilots (SFBP) have proudly supported the California Maritime Academy (CMA) through a scholarship program. In October 2015 the SFBPs announced an enhanced scholarship plan, called “The San Francisco Bar Pilots Pioneer Scholarship Program.” This program rewards two CMA students who “show an adventurous, ambitious and leading edge approach to their studies” with an annual $5,000 scholarship.

The two Pioneer Scholarships are named after than two local San Francisco “pioneers, both of whom forged their way on uncharted career paths: former San Francisco Mayor Willie L. Brown and Captain Nancy Wagner. Captain Wagner was the first woman ship pilot in the United States. She served as a San Francisco Bar Pilot for twenty-five years, after being appointed in 1993. Captain Nancy Wagner and Mayor Brown were recognized at the October membership meeting of the SFBP, which was also attended by CMA President Tom Cropper.

MOBILE BAR PILOTS CELEBRATE 150 YEARS!

In October, the Mobile Bar Pilots marked their 150th anniversary. A citation presented by the Propeller Club of Mobile read in part:

“Your long record of service to the Port of Mobile has been essential to the port’s resurgence from Civil War devastation to international prominence in today’s global economy. Mobile Bar Pilots have for over 150 years, in all conditions, and with exceptional professionalism, guided mariners, ships and cargo safely across the Bar, and through an often treacherous bay and river. With an impressive record of navigation success and dependability, you have helped make the Port of Mobile known the world over as a reliable and trusted partner in commerce.”

COLUMBIA RIVER PILOT ELECTED PRESIDENT OF WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

On October 1, Captain Paul Amos, past president of the Columbia River Pilots and current APA Trustee for Oregon, became President of the PNWA (Pacific Northwest Waterways Association). He will serve an initial two year term.

Founded in 1934, PNWA advocates for federal funding of regional navigation projects and public policy to improve the economic efficiency and environmental sustainability of the Pacific Northwest. PNWA’s membership consists of over 130 entities including public ports, barge companies, steamship operators, grain elevator operators, agricultural producers, forest products manufacturers, electric utilities, and public agencies in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

Upon entering office, Captain Amos said, “It’s a tremendous honor to be the President of such an effective and highly regarded organization.”

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots’ association announced new officers:

- Port Everglades Pilots: Captain Todd J. Cooper (Co-Managing Director) and Captain Andrew H Edlestein (Co-Managing Director).
- Hawaii Pilots Association: Captain Tom Heberle (President), Captain Sinclair Brown (Vice President), Captain Steve Baker (Secretary) and Captain Tom Collins (Treasurer).
- San Francisco Bar Pilots: Captain Peter McIsaac (Port Agent and President), Captain David McCoy (Vice President), Captain David Merritt (Chief Financial Officer), Captain Einar Nyborg (Member-at-Large), and Captain David Wainwright (Member-at-Large).
- Galveston-Texas City Pilots: Captain Wallace R. Hogan, Jr. (President), Captain Clinton “Butch” Schwessler (Senior Vice President), Captain Chris Henry (Assistant Vice President), Captain David Dion (Boat Keeper) and Captain Wendy Morrison (Secretary).
- Columbia River Pilots: Captain Rick Gill (President), Captain Jon Aschoff (Vice President) and Captain Tim Harris (Treasurer).