

Southern Towing Company

Newsletter

March 2007

Fingerprints

When renewing your license or MMD you can provide your fingerprints at USCG Sector Ohio Valley (Louisville) & Marine Safety Units Paducah, Huntington, Nashville, Cincinnati & Pittsburgh, or any REC. Application forms still must go to an REC.

Crossing the Bar

Cook, Shirley Coleman passed away 12/1/2006. She rode the Laura Elizabeth and the Laura Tamble. Cook, Ola Mae Chaffee passed away 12/20/2006. She rode the Bill Stegbauer and the Frank Stegbauer. Engineer, John Strickland passed away 1/14/07. He rode the James L. Williams. Harry Roe, pilot on the Mary Elizabeth and Danny Scott, former engineer and brother of Larry Scott also passed away. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of those who have passed.

New No Smoking Policy

No smoking is permitted in any interior boat spaces. No smoking is permitted while working with or handling any flammable or combustible material such as gasoline, diesel fuel, solvents, paint thinner, hydraulic oil, lubricating oil, mineral spirits, etc. **No smoking is permitted on any docks.** Smoking is prohibited on all Anhydrous Ammonia and UAN barges at all times. It is the responsibility of the wheelhouse personnel to enforce the no smoking policy. The boat captain may designate additional non-smoking areas.

401K Plan

Future pay statements will contain an entry indicating the amount of matching funds that Southern Towing Company is adding to your 401K Plan. You can also see both your contribution and the

matching funds from STC at www.principal.com. If you are not enrolled in the 401K Plan, you are not planning for your future. You're eligible to join the plan if you are 21 and have 90 days of service with Southern Towing Company. Southern Towing Company will make a 100% matching contribution up to 5% of your pay for the payroll period each month. You will be 100% vested in the plan from the day you enter into it. We will be having open meetings to explain the changes to the 401(k) plan. The dates are March 12, and April 9, 2007. You and your spouse are invited to attend one of these meetings while you are off the boat. There will be a representative from Principal Insurance Co., who administers our 401(K) plan. You will be able to ask any questions concerning the new changes to the plan, how to participate and your investment options.

Lucky, Lucky, Lucky

You've heard it time and again; "Watch where you're going." In November we reminded you in the newsletter to *Watch Where You're Going*. We have annual training on fall overboard prevention (the most recent was December). Yet we still occasionally have someone who isn't paying attention and falls overboard. In this case it was someone on the M/V Bobby Jones who was rescued by the quick and professional actions of Jake Phelps, Henry Jones and Jerry Guillory. This was one deckhand who was truly lucky. Luckily, he was wearing a work vest.

If You Use Direct Deposit

If you receive your pay through direct deposit and your bank has been purchased by another bank, please notify the office. Routing numbers can change and you may encounter delays in receiving pay.

TWIC

Every crewmember will eventually be required to obtain a Transportation Worker Identification Credential. All crewmembers holding a license or MMD issued by the Coast Guard must obtain a TWIC, no matter what boat they are working on. All crewmembers working on tows to which the security regulations apply will have to obtain a TWIC. Enrollment and issuance of the TWIC will be carried out by TSA. You will be notified when and where to obtain a TWIC. Once issued a TWIC will be valid for 5 years. It will be your responsibility to renew it before it expires.



STOP Manual

Change 7 to the STOP Manual has been sent out. If you did not receive a copy contact Mike Slack. You are reminded that all new employees must read the STOP Manual and all other employees must review the STOP Manual semi-annually and sign the sheet in the front of the manual.

Nautical Trivia

Chew the fat: In the days when brine was added to barrels of meat, it had a hardening effect on the fat. It was still edible but it took considerable chewing. So, to “chew the fat” has come to mean to talk endlessly.

Good Housekeeping

It's an important safety issue and it's everyone's responsibility! Considering the type of work done on a tow, changing weather conditions, working with wires, lines, ratchets, and hazards of falling overboard, it should be obvious that good housekeeping is a safety issue. Good housekeeping has other virtues. When your work area is neat it is easier to find what you need to do your job. Also it makes the tow look good to our customers and to anyone boarding the tow, like the Coast Guard. Look for and eliminate hazards and be safe.

Coast Guard Ties Up Boat

During a recent boarding the Coast Guard found a few things wrong with a

boat. As they continued inspecting they found more problems. Finally a list of 33 deficiencies was written, some serious and some minor. The boat was issued a Captain of the Port Order forbidding it to continue in commercial service until these items were corrected. The Coast Guard will normally do a superficial exam. If they find no problems they will stop looking. When they find problems they continue with the exam in great detail until they have examined everything. Keep you boat clean, equipment operating properly, and know where things are located. Statements like “It's been that way since I came on board” or “I don't know where it is” are not acceptable answers.

Electronic Charts

The Coast Guard will soon require electronic charts on all boats. We are currently evaluating available systems. If you have an opinion about electronic charts (pros/cons) contact Bill Stegbauer.

Ammonia Tankerman Class

Congratulations to William Gilchrist, Rodney Porter, Scott Bendall, Billy

Ridgell, Creed Simpkins, Tony Pixley and Adam Wilson for recently completing the Ammonia Tankerman Training class.

Vessel Security

All vessel personnel are required to participate in annual “Vessel Security Awareness” training. This is especially true of all personnel on ammonia tows, **including trip personnel**. It is the VSO's responsibility to make certain this training is completed and logged. Everyone is reminded to continue to be vigilant and follow the guidelines set forth in the STOP manual regarding security of our boats and barges. Remember that no one is allowed on our vessels without permission. The Coast Guard has asked us to be aware of and report unusual or suspicious circumstances or events. Report anything out of the ordinary to the office. The office will contact the Coast Guard if necessary. Contact Mike Slack with any questions.