

The Newsletter of the  
Port of Pittsburgh Commission

2023 Vol 1 (issue #12)

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Hello! The word “advocacy” is mentioned quite a bit by the Port of Pittsburgh Commission. It’s one of our prime directives and is essential to our overall mission. In early February, the PPC was pleased to join a group of our stakeholders for the Annual Washington DC Fly-in to meet with our new and existing legislators. These meetings are essential for us to engage and educate our legislators in regard to the needs and overall impact of our industry. As for this edition, we are pleased to feature Mike Somaes in our

3 Rivers/3 Questions spotlight; we’re grateful for his perspective on the happenings at ACNR and for his take on our industry. Also, please check out the latest happenings with upcoming grant opportunities, as well as our own Nate Turer’s advice on cybersecurity threats.

Stay warm, stay healthy, and enjoy this latest edition of the Newsflow!

*Mary Ann Bucci* Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

### PortPitt visits DC

Mary Ann Bucci and Scott Harshman from PortPitt attended the Waterways Council, Inc.’s annual meeting in DC this month. This included a visit to Capitol Hill on February 8th by stakeholders from western PA to meet with our federal elected officials and staff from both PA and WV to discuss our key priorities. Joining our group from the region were Rich Kreider, David Podurgiel, Robert McCallister, Shane Checkan, Joshua Konesni, and James Guttman.

Top legislative priorities for the coming year are securing additional funding that is now needed to complete the Lower Mon Project; provide Fiscal Year 2024 Energy & Water Appropriations in the full amount supportable by the diesel fuel tax receipts deposited into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (at least \$125 million); increase FY24 Operation and Maintenance funding above \$5.08 billion for the Corps of Engineers’ Civil Works Program; and oppose any additional taxation, tolling, lockage fees or other charges for commercial transportation.

We had the opportunity to talk about the importance of our three rivers in addition to these priorities in nine meetings on Capitol Hill with both personal and committee staff as well as in-person meetings with Congressman GT Thompson and Congressman Mike Kelly from Pennsylvania.



### 3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with *Mike Somaes*



American Consolidated  
Natural Resources (ACNR)

*Mike Somaes is the President of American Consolidated Natural Resources.*

**1. Mike, tell us how things are going at ACNR, and let us know some things you’re excited about or that our readers might be interested in learning about the company.**

For the last couple years, the energy industry overall has been good and ACNR certainly enjoyed the benefits of a good market along with all forms of energy. I am excited that our company through good strategic planning and capital investment in reserves has us positioned to succeed in the market for several decades.

**2. You have a great story yourself, beginning as a laborer in the industry to ultimately becoming the president of ACNR. Tell us a bit about your career path, and what advice you have for those working their way up in the industry?**

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Mary Ann Bucci at the Capitol in DC for WCI's "Walk The Hill" on February 8.



## Cybersecurity: Protecting Your Data From Hackers by Nate Turer

Today, we're going to talk about computer memory, and specifically, deletion. We will also discuss how to ensure unexpected data doesn't stick around or is permanently deleted.

### Do Computers Dream of Electric Barges?

Computers process memory differently from how we do. An important thing to remember is that often the way we discuss computers essentially "humanizes" them, such as how a computer can't truly "think" but instead process a series of equations. Its memory is much less of an abstract.

### I clicked recycle, why should I care?

Very good question! When you put a file in your recycling bin, its space in the memory is simply freed up. This is good news and bad news! If you have accidentally deleted a photo or document you wanted, it may be able to be saved from the clutches of the digital void known as "gate reset." It however also means that sensitive information you believe to have safely deleted, still lives in the nooks and crannies of your computer. There are limits, however. Drives that have been physically damaged, such as via exposure to water, shock, or concussive force may only be recoverable by

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## 3 Rivers, 3 Questions with Mike Somaes continued

On a personal level, my career started in 1977 working on the boats as a deckhand. To me, working on the boats was like an adventure. Once I started doing it, I never even considered anything else. Being a young man, the schedule appealed to me (seven days on seven days off) and the pay was fair. I knew pretty early I would ultimately work my way up and be a Captain. I worked on the boats for 22 years, 10 on deck and 12 in the wheel house. We all have people in our lives that help us learn and grow. I am grateful and thankful for the people who took the time on a young man and shared their boating skills to help me become a good mariner. The institutional knowledge gained from my time working on the boats has been the foundation of my career in management.

As mentioned earlier we all have people who help us along the way. My mentor into administration and senior management was Deane Orr. In 1999 Deane ask me to consider taking a promotion to Port Captain and working out of our Elizabeth offices. It was a hard transition from 7 days on, 7 days off of boat schedule to a normal 5-day work schedule. Having worked on the boats since I was 18 it was challenging for me to adjust to an administrative job at 40 years old. At one I point considered going back to the boats. 24 years ago, Deane Orr gave took a chance and promoted me to Port Captain. Deane and I worked together to move our then Jones act restricted company to a fully integrated commercial barge company. It was a life experience and baptism by fire into business. During the same period, I took night classes at community college and earned a business degree. I have been blessed with good opportunities, employment, luck, timing, friendship and a group of industry professionals willing to share their knowledge and experience with me. My advice for the young folks in the river industry is stay the course. Learn everything you can. Don't ask for the money, ask for the work, and the money will come.

### 3. With the new year upon us, there are always issues facing our industry. From infrastructure, to workforce, to the everyday movement of freight on our rivers. What are you keeping your eye on in 2023, and into the future?

The river industry, like all employers today is struggling for employees. Vessel employees, primarily deck crew are the muscle & blood, the gristle & bone of our success. Finding people today willing to make the sacrifice of a river career is challenging to say the least. Living away from home in cramped conditions, working in what can be a harsh environment takes a special willingness. This is also the pool of employees where our Pilots emerge from. We struggle to encourage young people to accept positions as deck crew and ultimately it hurts us for qualified wheelmen. We as employers must make sure we compensate our labor fairly with a family level living wage.



## Protecting Your Data continued

specialists in a lab. Please consult your organization's IT professionals or service providers if you need to recover essential data. Data that has never existed in your device's secondary memory, like a document that was not saved before a power outage, will likely be gone for good.

### How can I utilize this?

A free tool that you and your organization can use to affect data recovery should you lose data is Recuva. This tool is a staple for many IT professionals and will find data that has been marked by the computer as available for erasure and allow for the recovery of lost or deleted files. This, working in tandem with regular backups, can save your organization time and money that may have been lost by accidental deletion or loss of data. As well as giving protection against malicious deletion such as by a disgruntled employee. File recovery becomes more difficult the more the computer is used after deletion, and should only be considered a last resort

### How can this be utilized to destroy?

Just as criminals may dumpster dive and tape shredded documents together, data can be pieced back together. Memory devices that are being disposed of should be physically destroyed if being thrown away. Usually via drilling a hole through it or smashing it. "Data shredding" software is available which deletes data that often exists in scraps on your computer as leftovers from software. It will also delete and overwrite empty memory, preventing future recovery. Bleachbit for example, is a free, open-source solution which may help.

Data Shredding on its own, or having a tool overwrite the memory used to hold something you wish to securely delete does have technical limitations. For most of your needs, this will be effective in shredding data you wish to have deleted permanently. There is always a trade-off in security versus convenience. But shredding data for deletion, then overwriting free disk space is very hard to defeat, and will ensure data such as company secrets, personal information, or other data you wish to not be found is destroyed.

Though a word of caution must be used. **The usage of data shredding, disk overwriting, or other forms of more complete deletion will render information in almost all cases unrecoverable, so be sure of your decision before taking this step.**

### In conclusion

Employee SSNs, company secrets, or just an embarrassing photo from the staff Christmas party can all be put to rest for good using these methods. Cyber criminals are not above dumpster diving for your old hard drives or buying used drives.



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## American Commercial Barge Line Signs Contract to Build Innovative, Environmentally Friendly Towboat

[American Commercial Barge Line](#) (ACBL), a U.S.-based leader in marine transportation, announces a contract with [Steiner Construction Company](#) for the design and construction of an innovative, environmentally friendly towboat.

"Investing in our future is a key part of ACBL's strategy. We are proud to introduce the first Tier 4 Mitsubishi engines to the marine industry," said ACBL's CEO Mike Ellis. "The addition of this new Tier 4 retractable towboat represents our commitment to providing our customers with innovative marine transportation solutions while minimizing our impact on the environment."

Upon delivery in Quarter 4 2023, ACBL's new towboat will support barge operations in one of the busiest ship channels in the world, the Port of Houston. The vessel will be 82 feet long and 34 feet wide, with a 10-foot operational draft. The boat is equipped with twin engines producing 2,600 horsepower.

"Laborde Products and Mitsubishi are proud to join forces and partner with ACBL, a leader in the inland marine sector," said Laborde Products' CEO Brian Laborde. "Tier 4 Mitsubishi engine standards represent the strictest of EPA emission requirements for marine diesel engines today and will significantly reduce emissions. Engines that meet these stringent standards promote cleaner air, improved fuel efficiency and better performance."

"We are thrilled to partner with ACBL on building this innovative towboat," said Steiner Construction's CEO Bubba Steiner. "Equally important is the fact that this vessel will be equipped with many of the latest advancements in ship building and design. We are eager to bring it to life."



**PortPitt announces 2023  
Senator James Ferlo  
Memorial Small Grants Program**

The Port of Pittsburgh Commission will reopen its Small Grants Award Program with a new title. The 2023 Senator James Ferlo Memorial Small Grants Program will open in Spring 2023, which has been named in honor of the late senator who instituted the program, and served as its chairperson.

For 2023, the total grant budget for the program will be increased to \$75,000, from the previous year's \$50,000. Individual applicants can apply for a maximum grant amount of \$10,000. With the success of last year's projects, the feeling is that the additional funding will assist more applicants in the Port of Pittsburgh region.

Eligible projects will seek to enhance the utilization of our waterways for the betterment of our communities. This will include: water stewardship, advocacy, outreach and education, safety and/or environmental measures, and increase awareness of our rivers and their impacts, and the use of new concepts and ideas.

Private and non-profit entities are eligible, which includes municipalities and counties, community or volunteer-based organizations, as well as educational and academic entities which will use this grant to augment their existing resources to help further the Port of Pittsburgh's mission of assistance to our waterways and communities. Additionally, projects which demonstrate additional resources, such as match funding from other sources will receive additional consideration.

The PPC will make the formal announcement for the opening of the grant application period via broadcast email and our website in the coming weeks.



**Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission  
presents:**

**Boating Safety Education  
Certificate Course**

**Saturday, March 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2023**

**8:30AM - 4:30PM  
Carnegie Science Center  
1 Allegheny Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212**

The PA Fish and Boat Commission and its partners provide opportunities to earn your boating safety education certification and learn more about boating safely in Pennsylvania by taking a boating safety course.

This classroom-based certification course is a great way for the first-time boater or seasoned boater to learn all the basic boating regulations and requirements.  
\*This certification course is free to the public.\*

Participants 11 years of age and older with an interest in learning the basics of boating and earning a boating safety education certificate are welcome to attend.

Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

- ❖ PA Fish and Boat Officer(s) will serve as your course instructor.
- ❖ The classroom course ends the day with a certification exam.
- ❖ Successful completion of the course will grant PA boater certification.



**pennsylvania**  
FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

**PORTPITT**  
Port of Pittsburgh  
Commission  
Good things flow from here.



WANT TO RECEIVE YOUR  
PA BOATING SAFETY  
EDUCATION CERTIFICATE?

LEARN FROM PA  
WATERWAYS  
CONSERVATION OFFICERS!

ALL SKILL LEVELS  
WELCOME!

**THIS COURSE IS  
FREE  
TO THE PUBLIC!**

**TO REGISTER/INFO:**  
CONTACT:

Officer Mike Johnson  
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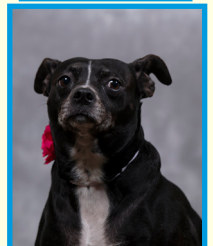
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Mascot



**GOOD THINGS FLOW FROM HERE**

