



ON STATION

The Newsletter of the American Pilots' Association

December 20, 2025

IN REMEMBRANCE OF PAST APA PRESIDENT, CAPTAIN PALACE (PAT) NEELY, JR.

Captain Palace (Pat) James Neely, Jr., former President of the American Pilots' Association (APA), passed away on November 15, 2025. He was born on January 10, 1926, in Clinton, Texas, and raised in a close-knit railroad community where his father, Palace James Neely, worked.

Captain Neely often said that his greatest accomplishment in life was his 65-year marriage to the love of his life, Geraldine "Jerry" Wiggins Neely who he met on Halloween at a scavenger hunt. Together, they built a family he treasured deeply – their son Mason, daughter Vicki, three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. His devotion to them was unwavering.

During his high school days in Houston, Captain Neely earned straight A's while working two jobs. A Varsity football letterman who played both defense and offense, he was named the Houston Ironman of the Year for playing every down of every game his senior year in high school. Three days after joining the U.S. Navy, he learned he received a scholarship to Harvard University. His patriotism and selflessness steered him to the Navy.

Captain Neely's determination and character led him to become one of the most respected leaders in the global maritime industry. After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he began his career in the tugboat industry before becoming a Houston Pilot. From 1968 to 1970, he served as Presiding Officer of the Houston Pilots.

In 1978, Captain Neely was elected President of APA, a position he held with distinction until 1992.



Captain Pat Neely

During that time, he also served as Vice President of the International Maritime Pilots' Association.

Captain Neely was happiest fishing in Rockport with best friends. He preferred a pool or a hot tub with a Scotch to fancy events. He was as proud of his garden and cherry trees' production.

After retiring, Captain Neely and Jerry moved to Portland, Texas, to be near family. They quickly became pillars of the Coastal Bend community. As active leaders in the Shriners Temple and Daughters of the Nile, they dedicated themselves to service. Lifelong Methodists, they faithfully served at the United Methodist Church of Portland. They were a constant and loving presence at their youngest granddaughter's school events and extracurricular activities which brought them immense joy.

He is survived by his son Mason Neely (Beverly), daughter Vicki Wilkerson (Fred), grandchildren Laura Ross (Mark), Dale Neely (Kim), Holly Priestner (Kevin), and great-grandchildren Meredith Lesieur (Jonathan), and Haley, Katherine, and Mason Neely, his half brother Paul Neely (Glenda "Jo") and Paul's children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Captain Neely embodied loyalty, resilience, service, and love. His legacy lives on through the family he cherished, the maritime industry he helped shape, and the countless people whose lives were made better by knowing him.

APA offers our sincere condolences to Captain Neely's family.

*The Officers and Staff of the
American Pilots' Association
wish all Members and their families
Happy Holidays and a
Safe, Healthy and Prosperous
New Year!*



APA ATTENDS CAPSTONE IMO MEETINGS; ADAPTS TO NEW U.S. APPROACH TO IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) wrapped up its biennial work at meetings of its executive and governing bodies in November and December. The 135th session of Council was held at IMO Headquarters from November 19-21, followed by the 34th Session of Assembly from November 24 - December 3rd. APA Executive Director-General Counsel, Clay Diamond, represented U.S. pilots at both meetings while serving on the International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) Delegation. IMPA's Delegation was led by its President, Captain Simon Pelletier, while Matthew Williams, IMPA Secretary General, was principle advisor to the Delegation.

IMO's structure consists of Assembly, Council, five Committees: the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC); the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC); the Legal Committee (LEG); the Technical Cooperation Committee (TC); and the Facilitation Committee (FAL), and a number of Sub-Committees support the work of the main technical committees. The bodies with which APA works are MSC and its Subcommittees on Navigation, Communications, and Search &



(l to r) Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Marco Sylvester, and APA Executive Director-General Counsel, Clay Diamond

Rescue (NCSR) and Human Elements, Training, and Watchkeeping (HTW).

Council is IMO's executive body responsible for supervising IMO's work program. There are 40 countries, including the U.S., that have been elected to 2-year terms on Council.

Assembly, IMO's highest Governing Body, consists of all 176 member countries, and it meets once every two years. Assembly is responsible for approving the work program, the budget, and electing the Council.

IMO's work is critical not only to the maritime industry, but to pilots. It is, for example, through IMO subcommittees and committees that IMPA and APA were able to dramatically improve the international pilot transfer safety regulations. APA also stays abreast of ship routing measures and changing standards for electronic navigation and communications equipment at NCSR. Finally, by paying close attention to IMO's work on amendments to the STCW Convention and Code at HTW, APA has been able to ensure pilot training and credentialing in the U.S. is not negatively impacted by unnecessary additional international requirements.

For decades, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) led U.S. delegations to all IMO committees and subcommittees. While the USCG will still play a significant role at IMO, under the Trump Administration, many U.S. Delegations will now be led by political appointees from the U.S. State Department. Presently, this official will be the Honorable Marco M. Sylvester, Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) of State for Transportation Affairs. While attending Assembly, Mr. Diamond had the opportunity to meet with DAS Sylvester where he stressed the important role IMO plays in ensuring safe international shipping, urged that the USCG retain lead on technical matters at IMO, and laid out APA's priorities at IMO. While at IMO, Diamond also met with RADM Wayne Arguin (Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy), who was Alternate Head of the U.S. Delegation.



(l to r) Clay Diamond (APA) and RADM Wayne Arguin (USCG)

AMERICAN PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

499 South Capitol Street, S.W., Suite 409
Washington, D.C. 20003
(202) 484-0700 • www.AmericanPilots.org

Captain Jorge J. Viso President
Captain W. Crayton Walters III Secretary-Treasurer
Captain Eric A. Nielsen Sr. Vice President-North Atlantic States
Captain R. Trey Thompson III Vice President-South Atlantic States
Captain Clint A. Winegar Vice President-Gulf States
Captain E.M. "Michael" Bopp Vice President-Gulf States (Louisiana)
Captain Hans H. Antonsen Vice President-Pacific Coast States
Captain John R. Boyce Vice President-Great Lakes
Clayton L. Diamond Executive Director-General Counsel
Brendan P. O'Shea Dep. Director-Assoc. General Counsel
Lisa Powell Townshend Operations Director
Sinthia Kim Deputy Operations Director

ON STATION is published by the American Pilots' Association, a non-profit professional association composed of groups of state-licensed pilots operating in each of the coastal states, as well as groups of U.S. registered pilots in the Great Lakes region. Each pilot in APA-member groups receives ON STATION, the costs of which are paid from the member's dues. Any comments, suggestions or questions concerning ON STATION should be directed to the attention of the APA office at the above address.

DON'T FORGET THE APA PAC FUND

Send your voluntary contribution to:
APA Political Action Committee
499 South Capitol St., SW—Suite 409
Washington, DC 20003-4023



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEET IN WASHINGTON

The APA Board of Trustees met in Washington, DC from October 20-22. The meeting, presided over by APA

President, Captain Jorge Viso, was attended by the 28 trustees from the 24 coastal States, Puerto Rico, and 3 Great Lakes pilotage districts, as well as the APA Secretary- Treasurer, Captain Crayton Walters, and the following regional Vice Presidents:

Captain Eric Nielsen, North Atlantic
 Captain Trey Thompson, South Atlantic
 Captain Clint Winegar, Gulf States
 Captain Michael Bopp, Gulf States (Louisiana)
 Captain Hans Antonsen, Pacific States
 Captain John Boyce, Great Lakes

Captain Walters led the invocation and APA Operations Director, Lisa Townshend was appointed recording secretary.

The meeting started with an address from the Honorable Jennifer Homendy, Chair, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Chair Homendy shared her experience leading the NTSB investigation into the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge after it was struck by the M/V DALI. Chair Homendy also highlighted the significance of the timely decision by the pilots' on board to immediately notified dispatch to close the bridge when the DALI lost power. This address was very timely given the NTSB Board would meet to finalize NTSB DALI report on November 18, and released of the same report on December 10.

Next, Captain Viso highlighted the on-going efforts to improve pilot safety and training. His President's Report focused on the implementation timeline for the revised SOLAS Regulation V/23 that establishes mandatory performance standards for pilot transfer arrangements, the importance for pilots and pilot associations to conduct realistic emergency medical training, new pilot transfer arrangement training at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS), and pilot boat training offered by the Maritime Pilots Institute (MPI).



APA President, Captain Jorge Viso addresses the Trustees



Captain Ben Borgie (Canaveral Pilots Association) delivers a report

Captain Don Josberger, President, International Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots (MM&P), addressed the Trustees next. In his remarks, Captain Josberger expressed a strong appreciation for the relationship between State-licensed pilots and MM&P, and expressed a continued desire to work together in areas of shared common interests.



Seated on Stage: (l) Republican Staff Director John Rayfield and (r) Democrat Staff Director Matt Dwyer discuss the federal legislative process

Trustees also heard from the Republican and Democratic Staff Directors for the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation (CGMT). CGMT is the House subcommittee with jurisdiction over, among other agencies and issues, maritime transportation safety, navigation, port and waterway safety, maritime transportation regulatory activities, marine environmental protection, state boating safety, the Federal Maritime Commission, the Jones Act, merchant mariner, and the Coast Guard. CGMT is responsible for the oversight and legislation for almost all maritime matters that would impact pilotage, state-licensed pilots, and issues about which APA has most concern and interest.



Captain Tony Brandano (Lakes Pilots Association) delivers a report

The Vice Presidents then directed regional reports from Trustees on vessel traffic, demand for pilotage services, issues of navigation safety, and operational issues that could be instructive to other pilot associations, local port and waterway infrastructure improvement projects, and other topics that might be of interest to other regions and associations.

The first day finished up with the Navigation and Technology Committee (NAVTECH) Chairman, Captain Wes Moore (Sabine Pilots), and Safety Committee Chairman, Captain Jonathan Samuel (Houston Pilots), leading robust discussions on navigation and safety best practices, two topics that are critical to pilots on a national level.



Captain Wes Moore (Sabine Pilots) leading the NAVTECH Meeting

(continued on page 4)

APA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING (DAY TWO)

Day 2 started with the Executive Director's Report delivered by Clay Diamond. Mr. Diamond discussed key APA relationships, lessons learned from the withdrawn vessel speed regulations by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Pilot Transfer Arrangements, International Issues, and the



APA Executive Director—General Counsel, Clay Diamond speaking

on-going and growing problem with constant Bridge Alarms. He also gave an overview of various APA items, and recognized the San Juan Bay Pilots for re-joining the APA. Mr. Diamond closed with a discussion of the connected ecosystem of the State Pilot

System, and the reality that what happens in one place can impact pilots throughout the country.

Captain Wes Moore delivered the NAVTECH report with a focus on the evolving data landscape, the need for backup navigation and resilience with the growing instances of GNSS spoofing and jamming, the growing use of emerging technologies, and a goal of up-dating the APA Portable Pilot Unit (PPU) Best Practices.

The Safety Committee Report, delivered by Captain Jonathan Samuelli, provided a detailed overview of some new personal protective equipment, including new personal flotation devices, personal locator beacons, and helmets. Captain Samuelli also shared a recent video of a gangway baseplate giving way as the disembarking pilot was shifting from the gangway to the pilot ladder. This was a reminder to ensure three points of contact and to always ensure to check the baseplate, by stomping or kicking, to make sure it will support the pilot's weight.



Captain Jonathan Samuelli (Houston Pilots) discussing safety issues

The Trustees also heard from Charles "Bud" Darr, President/CEO of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). Mr. Darr emphasized the recent positive relationship between APA and CLIA and the importance of continuing to work together.

Deputy Director Brendan O'Shea reported to the Board on draft federal legislation APA has been tracking, conditions receiving additional medical

scrutiny at the National Maritime Center (NMC), Federal Advisory Committees, and the new APA website. Mr. O'Shea discussed national efforts relating to improving USCG Aids to Navigation, Vessel Traffic Service Centers, and the NMC via federal legislation.

Captain Walters, in his Secretary-Treasurer's report, noted APA is in sound financial condition. The meeting concluded with an update on planning for the 2026 APA Convention in Hawai'i.



Budd Darr (CLIA) and Clay Diamond (APA)



NTSB REPORT: M/V DALI ALLISION WITH FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE AND SUBSEQUENT BRIDGE COLLAPSE

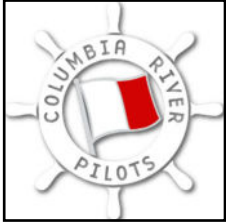
On December 10, 2025, the NTSB issued its final report on the contact of containership Dali with Francis Scott Key Bridge and subsequent bridge collapse. The accident occurred on March 26, 2024, when the containership Dali, which was transiting out of Baltimore Harbor, experienced losses of electrical power, propulsion, and steering and struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge. A substantial portion of the bridge subsequently collapsed into the river, killing six highway workers who were on the bridge when the vessel struck.

The investigation determined that the probable cause of this accident was a loss of electrical power (blackout), due to a loose signal wire connection to a terminal block stemming from the improper installation of wire-label banding, resulting in the vessel's loss of propulsion and steering close to the bridge.

In its report, **NTSB noted that the actions of the pilots on board DALI to quickly call for the bridge to be closed "saved countless lives."**

The NTSB issued 14 new marine safety recommendations and 4 new highway safety recommendations. recommendation instructs the Harbor Safety Committee National Steering Team (HSC NST) to share with harbor safety committees nationwide the circumstances of the event, "highlighting the importance of having a procedure, including immediately available emergency contact information, for pilots to initiate contact with shoreside support in an emergency requiring shoreside action." APA plans to work with the HSC NST on implementing this recommendation. The NTSB report is available at:

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/MIR2540.pdf>



HELLO FROM: The Columbia River Pilots Association

Hello from the Columbia River Pilots Association! Established in 1846, the Columbia River Pilots (COLRIP) have been protecting the West's greatest river for nearly 160 years. COLRIP's members, about 45 pilots, all possess both Federal and Oregon licenses permitting them to pilot vessels of all types that call in the Columbia River System. Our pilotage grounds consist of over 320 nautical miles of the Columbia River from Astoria to the deep draft ports in both Oregon and Washington, including Longview, Kalama, and Vancouver, Washington, and Astoria, Columbia County and Portland, Oregon. Farther upstream, vessels may be piloted on the Columbia River as far east as Pasco, Washington, or on 13 miles of the Willamette River to the seawall in downtown Portland.



NAVIOS UNITE passing
under Longview Bridge

The Columbia/Willamette river system is a challenging waterway requiring unbroken focus for the entire transit. The navigation channel is just 600' wide from Astoria up to mile 100 at the mouth of the Willamette. The longest straight stretch is just two miles, and around 90 course changes are needed to get a vessel from Astoria to Portland. Seasonal environmental conditions and strong currents add to the challenge. Although river infrastructure was designed for vessels just 600' long and 85' abeam (wide), modern vessels double that size (1200' long and 160' abeam) have transited the 100 miles to Portland. As significant increases in vessel size seem to be outpacing infrastructure investments, precision navigation by our pilots is necessary to keep vessels safely moving.

COLRIP partners locally with the Columbia River Steamship Operators Association to provide leadership and advocacy to maintain and advance infrastructure. Together, we have successfully designed new anchorages, stern anchor buoys (to safely hold ships in the narrow confines of the river) and turning basins. We've led a nearly completed channel realignment to protect a vulnerable bridge spanning the river and have secured funding for air gap sensor installations on bridges. We advocate for funding to maintain the navigation channel, support the many ports and private docks in designing facili-



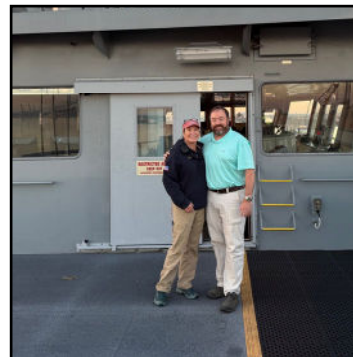
COLRIP Pilots Boarding

ty improvements, invested in a high-speed pilot launch to reach new, but distant, anchorage areas, and engage regularly with legislators. Through these and other advocacy efforts, we intend to build confidence in the reliability of the Columbia River, add capacity for maritime trade, and demonstrate COLRIP as not just pilots, but industry partners in our river system.

MARITIME COUPLE CELEBRATES CAREER MILESTONE IN CHARLESTON HARBOR

Captain Carrie Stewart and Captain Jay Stewart, both graduates of Maine Maritime Academy, recently marked a significant career milestone with the arrival of Captain Carrie Stewart's latest command in to Charleston Harbor on October 18th, 2025—piloted by none other than her husband.

Captain Carrie Stewart has served with Ocean Shipholdings, Inc., for over 23 years operating vessels for the U.S. Military Sealift Command. In her most recent assignment, she took command of a newly built strategic sea lift vessel on its maiden voyage from the shipyard in San Diego around South America to Norfolk, Va. and finally Charleston. Upon arrival, the ship was piloted into port by her husband, Captain Jay Stewart—a moment that symbolized the culmination of two distinguished careers built side by side.



Captain Carrie Stewart and
Captain Jay Stewart

Captain Jay Stewart, a Charleston native, grew up on James Island. After meeting Carrie at Maine Maritime Academy in 1996, he went on to sail deep sea aboard clean product tankers and earned his Unlimited Master's license. In 2007, he began his apprenticeship with the Charleston Pilots Association, becoming a full

branch pilot in 2013.

Captain Jay Stewart has piloted several vessels where Carrie served as Chief Mate. However, this recent arrival marked the first time he brought in a vessel with Carrie as Master—a deeply personal and professional milestone for the couple.



NEWS

HAWAII PILOTS ASSOCIATION BLESSES NEW VESSEL

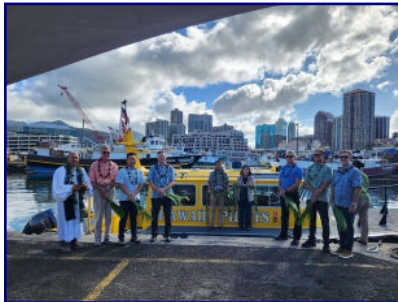


The Hawai'i Pilots Association held a blessing ceremony on October 28, 2025 for its newest vessel, the Mamala Bay, marking a significant addition to their pilot boat fleet.

Built by North River Boats, the Mamala Bay measures 39 feet in length and is powered by triple Yamaha 300-horsepower outboard motors, offering enhanced capability and performance for pilotage operations across O'ahu's busy commercial waterways.

Lt. Governor Sylvia Luke delivered remarks on behalf of the State of Hawai'i, acknowledging the essential role of maritime pilots in maintaining safe and efficient pilotage operations. She commended the association's continued investment in modernizing its fleet to support Hawai'i's economic and maritime infrastructure.

The vessel was formally blessed by Kahu Kekoa Kordell, who offered traditional Hawaiian prayers to ensure safety and guidance for the crew and all who will work aboard the Mamala Bay. The ceremony drew several members of the maritime community, including industry partners and supporters of Hawai'i's commercial port operations.



Hawai'i Pilots Association pilot boat, Mamala Bay, at the Blessing Ceremony

PILOT WORD SEARCH

Twenty (20) words are hidden in the word search puzzle on the following column. The words, all related to the sea and maritime topics, are: anchor, lighthouse, sailboat, seagull, ocean, compass, captain, harbor, seashell, tide, cruise, island, rope, nautical, deck, buoy, coral, wave, dolphin, and sunset.

The first member pilot or pilot association to provide the correct list of words to the APA Office will win a valuable prize (or at least an APA hat)! As soon as you find all words, send your answer to: sinthia.kim@americanpilots.org.

B A Q O I A V T L C A T P P S H
U G A U N J B A A Q A N D E H A
O K I C J E D I T O A P A Z C R
Y Q H Q F T N W Z E B S T O F B
C O M P A S S N C E H L R A O O
R D O T K O I O I E E A I F I R
W N S E G K Q X L H L S L A H N
C A E S Q P R L L Z P E I H S M
Y L M N O C Q T U A D L V U D O
V S V U P X G D G T A Y O X R X
E I E S F B Y M A L T Y Y D G C
Q Z G F K A Y F E U B T U M Z O
N V X Z Q Q X P S J S D U K Z W
Y W O A X A A X S F A Z K L H G
E S U O H T H G I L T M R F S N
I Z H Q Q R G P V P K E I W R H
D R G C Z L F O N J K W X X I G
B E G G U L F Y S E U M L Y N F
C S C E U K H E C Q G V Q O Q S
V R P K N A U T I C A L E V A W
Y O M U J A G N Y B N E K Y B F
R F J L V N W P D Y M T P E I Y

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots associations announced new officers:

♦ Aransas-Corpus Christi Pilots: **Captain Ben Watson** (Presiding Officer) and **Captain Matt Lynch** (Vice-President).

♦ Crescent River Port Pilots' Association: **Captain E. Michael Bopp** (President); **Captain Paul J. Hendrick**, **Captain Jason C. Andrews**, **Captain William P. Loga, Jr.**, and **Captain Steven B. Vogt** (Board of Directors); and **Captain Shannon C. Marks**, **Captain Blaine P. Donner**, and **Captain Jace M. Eschete** (Board of Commissioners).

♦ Houston Pilots: **Captain Clint A. Winegar** (Presiding Officer) and **Captain Matthew H. Glass** and **Captain William M. Kern** (Members of the Executive Committee).

♦ New Orleans-Baton Rouge Steamship Pilots Association: **Captain Steve Wall** (President).

♦ Puget Sound Pilots: **Captain Ivan Carlson** (President), **Captain Matthew Hannuksela** (Vice-President), and **Captain Ken Grieser** (Secretary),

♦ San Francisco Bar Pilots: **Captain John Carlier** (President), **Captain Kris Laakso** (Vice-President), **Captain Zack Kellerman** (Chief Financial Officer), **Captain Dylan Epperson**, **Captain Cevan LeSieur**, and **Captain Dan Murney** (Board Members).