

The Newsletter of the  
Port of Pittsburgh Commission

2022 Vol 2 (issue #9)

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Hello, and Happy Spring! This is the time of year when we like to remind pleasure boaters and everyone else to be safe on the water. Although PortPitt's main focus is waterborne freight transportation, we also make boating safety one of our highest priorities. The system of locks and dams that is so highly beneficial to the local economy can present certain hazards that boaters must always be aware of, namely the dams and barges. In addition to practicing the usual aspects of boating safety such as wearing life jackets, for example, boaters need to also be constantly mindful of commercial river traffic as well as the dams that make navigation for all boats possible.

Having said that, we encourage people to get out on the water and enjoy their summer, and also to take part in Safe Boating Week which is May 21 through 27 by taking a boating or water safety course or attending events. And remember, Wear Your Life Jacket To Work Day is Friday, May 20.

Have fun and stay safe!

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

### Region receives \$77M to help modernize Emsworth locks and dam

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will be providing \$77 million to pay for design and construction of the new lock chambers at the Emsworth Locks and Dam. U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and U.S. Rep. Conor Lamb, D-17th District, said the investment will allow larger tows to go through the Upper Ohio River system efficiently.



The additional \$77 million will complete the design and initiate construction for the new lock chamber at the Emsworth navigation facility. The funding is in addition to the \$881.9 million awarded through the IIJA to the district in January for Construction, Continuing Authorities Program, Environmental Infrastructure, and Operations and Maintenance.

During normal operating times, the Emsworth Locks and Dam averages 470 commercial lockages — or passages through the locks — every month, and up to another 400 for pleasure boats during the summer months, according to the US Army Corps' Pittsburgh District office.

Mary Ann Bucci, the PPC's executive director, thanked Casey and Lamb for their work in securing funding for the Emsworth Locks and Dam as well as the Montgomery Locks and Dam. It "allows us to be competitive and ensure we can all enjoy the attributes of these rivers," Bucci said.



### 3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with *Cmdr. Eric Velez*

United States Coast Guard

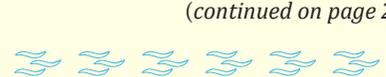


*Eric Velez is the Commanding Officer of the US Coast Guard, MSU Pittsburgh.*

**1. Cmdr. Velez, your first year as commander is almost complete. Let us know what your first year has been like in Pittsburgh, and how are you getting acclimated to the region!**

Truly amazing! It has surpassed all my expectations. The friendliness of the Pittsburgh community and the professionalism of the maritime industry is second to none. One of the items that surprised me the most, after taking over the job, was the outstanding communication between the local maritime industry and the Marine Safety Unit. I believe this open dialog is the key to our record of safe commerce on the waterways. Also, I have been very impressed by the proactive approach all port partners take when it comes to improving our Port. Pittsburgh is truly a gem, not only because of its central geographic location, but for what it has to offer to its visitors and residents. My family and I love this city and now that the summer is upon us we can't wait to explore its beautiful trails.

*(continued on page 2...)*



## Port of Pittsburgh Commission and Campbell Transportation Sponsor Clean Waterways Conference 2022 Held in Pittsburgh



The Port of Pittsburgh Commission and Campbell Transportation Company, Inc. were proud to sponsor the Clean Waterways Conference, held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in downtown Pittsburgh, April 5-7, 2022. The event hosted more than 250 attendees, with PPC staff engaging with individuals from as far as Montana and Alaska, who took part in the three-day event. CTC's President/CEO Peter Stephaich was the event's keynote speaker and delivered a presentation regarding the current State of the Inland Waterways Industry.

Breakout sessions focused upon industry and government and their response to freshwater spills, remediation, and cleanup activities, as well as future environmental considerations.

More than 50 national exhibitors were on hand to display products as well as disaster and remediation techniques. From our region, the Port of Pittsburgh Commission and Three Rivers Pollution Response Council (TRPRC) were among the exhibitors.

For more information on the event, including attendees, sessions, and exhibitors, go to [www.cleanwaterways.org](http://www.cleanwaterways.org)



## 3 Rivers, 3 Questions with Cdr. Velez continued

2. As the MSU Pittsburgh Commanding Officer, what are some goals you are currently working toward, and what is your vision for the future of the District?

Several projects come to mind. First and foremost we are excited to complete the process of implementing the towing vessel (46 CFR Subchapter M) safety regulations. This undertaking has been years in the making, and I am proud of everyone's efforts to achieve fleet compliance on schedule. Also, a critical goal is maintaining the readiness of my staff by keeping them trained up and ready to respond to any contingency within our area or anywhere in our Nation. Additionally, maintaining relationships with our stakeholders and partner agencies continues to be a high priority for me and serves as a measuring stick of the Coast Guard's success serving the public. We are aware of the constant changes in the maritime industry, and we will continue to work closely with the public to keep our waterways safe and running for the enjoyment of all.

3. As you know, May is National Water Safety Month, and the busy waterway traffic season is about to begin. What advice do you have for safe boating and navigating our waterways going forward?

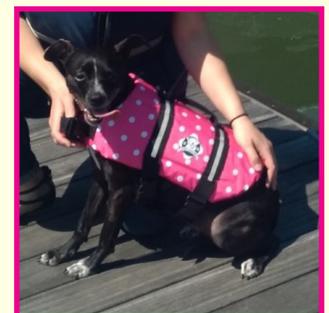
As we near the summer season, we like to remind all boaters to brush up on boating safety skills and prepare for the boating season. The National Safe Boating Week will be held from May 21-27, 2022 and that week marks the annual kick-off of the Safe Boating Campaign, a global awareness effort that encourages boaters to make the most of their boating adventures by being responsible. Many of our residents will take to our river's waters to spend time with family and friends. As we enjoy our activities on the water, we must act responsibly to follow safety procedures. The Coast Guard urges all boater to familiarize themselves with the best practices for a safe boating experience.

It is recommended that you always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved Life Jacket appropriate to your water activity. Take a boating safety course. Have a reliable means of communication for your area.

To obtain more information please visit [www.safeboating-campaign.com](http://www.safeboating-campaign.com).



*Micha the PortPitt Mascot says, "Your four-legged friends need to wear their life jackets, too!"*



## Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council to Celebrate National Safe Boating Week

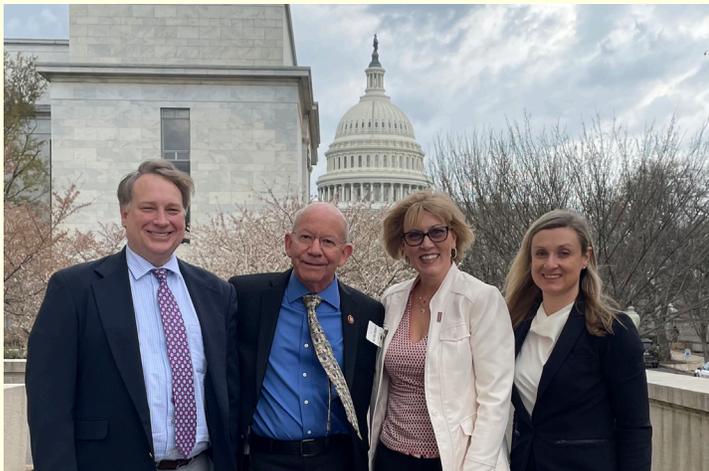
The Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council will hold a National Safe Boating Week event on Thursday, May 26th, from 9:00am to 1:00pm, rain or shine, at the Landing & Marina at Station Square. Members of the PSBC and other safe boating advocates including the Port of Pittsburgh Commission, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Three Rivers Rowing Association, and Friends of the Riverfront will be sharing information and promoting water safety skills and awareness in preparation for the upcoming boating season.



There is no charge for the event, and it is open to the public. For more information on the event, contact Scott Harshman, [scott@portpitt.com](mailto:scott@portpitt.com), and follow the Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council on Facebook.



Scott Harshman represented PortPitt at the American Association of Port Authority's Hill Day on March 31st in Washington, DC.



(Pictured L-R): Scott, Congressman Peter DeFazio (Chair, US House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee), Hilary McCarron (Port Authority of NY & NJ), and Jen Wilk (AAPA).

## Port of Pittsburgh Commission Announces 2022 Small Grants Program Awards



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



The Port of Pittsburgh Commission (PPC) is pleased to announce seven applicants will receive a total of \$50,000 in grants to promote our region's three rivers, safety on the water, improve safety, and provide for the future of our waterways in terms of education and jobs.

“Our goal was to find projects that promote 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.” said Mary Ann Bucci, Executive Director of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission. “Obviously, \$50,000 isn't a huge sum of money, but we hope that our efforts to find new funding, as well as the success of these projects, will help us to acquire additional funds for the coming years.”

Seven local applicants were awarded funding ranging from \$4,000 - \$10,000, including:

- Natrona Connector/Friends of the Riverfront - \$10,000
- East Vandergrift Boat Launch - \$10,000
- 3 Rivers Rowing Assoc. Safety Upgrades - \$7,680
- First Waves Urban Youth Program - \$7,500
- Port of BeeMac, Freight Barge Lid Lifter - \$6,620
- Waterways Pgh: Who Works The Rivers - \$4,200
- Sharpsburg Waterway Outreach - \$4,000

Bucci added, “The Port of Pittsburgh Commission plays an important role as an advocate for our region's waterways. While our primary focus is on the commercial users, as they primarily fund the operation and infrastructure of our rivers, we recognize the growing impact of the recreational use of our waterways. We all share the same waterways, and our goals remain to promote water safety, in terms education, navigation, and general stewardship to protect and sustain our waterways.”

Projects are slated to begin in early May 2022 and will be for a one-year term. The PPC will monitor project activities with reporting and site visits during the contract term.





## THREE RIVERS POLLUTION RESPONSE COUNCIL



### Advantages of Membership:

- Mutual aid response assistance.
- Pool Coordinator notifications of issues.
- One Call Now Notifications.
- TRPRC Website access– [www.trprc.com](http://www.trprc.com)
- Bulletin Board and Chat Room with real-time communications.
- Reference materials, River Maps, Equipment Resources list.
- Response Planning/Exercise templates.
- Quarterly Membership Meetings.
- Leadership opportunities.
- Bi-Monthly Board of Directors/Pool Coordinator Meetings.
- Representation at local, regional and/or national levels:
- Regional Response Team Meeting (RRT); within RRT Region III (composed of WV, PA, MD, DE, VA, and DC in the sharing of resources in the event of a spill of national significance).
- USCG Pittsburgh Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC).
- Representation for Legislative matters affecting the Waterways.
- Training/Community Outreach:
- Annual 8- hour HazWoper certification.
- Incident Command/Unified Command Structure.
- Crisis Communications and Media relations.

## JOIN TODAY!!!

TRPRC  
P. O. BOX 349  
WESTMORELAND CITY, PA 15692  
PHONE/FAX: 724.744.4459  
E-MAIL: [THREERPRC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:THREERPRC@GMAIL.COM)



The **Three Rivers Pollution Response Council (TRPRC)** is a voluntary, non-profit, public/private partnership dedicated to mutual aid, professional development, and collaborative actions before and during spill emergencies on or around the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers.

***While industry strives to prevent and eliminate risks, incidents do occur!***

Oil and/or chemicals can enter our waterways by incident or accident. Tanker trucks roll over, tank car valves leak, piping or storage tanks rupture, barges run aground, etc. Factor in difficult weather, flooding or possible suspicious activities...ask yourself:

***Does YOUR company have the capability of mobilizing responders, resources, and equipment to manage a worst-case scenario alone?***

**JOIN TRPRC TODAY!**





**NATIONAL  
SAFE  
BOATING  
WEEK**



**MAY 21-27, 2022**

[SAFEBOATINGCAMPAIGN.COM](http://SAFEBOATINGCAMPAIGN.COM)

 @boatingcampaign  
 @boatingcampaign







Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Reference to any specific commercial product, process, or service, or the use of any trade, firm or corporation name is for the information and convenience of the public, and does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the U.S. Coast Guard.



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You Enjoy Them.**

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SAFE BOATING COUNCIL!**

To inquire about joining, contact  
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