

# The Anchor



SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE

*A window into ministry to seafarers who keep commerce flowing and secure*

March 2013

Former Delaware County rector is aboard as new executive director of Seamen's Church Institute -- page 3



Captain James R. Roche, president of the Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware

## Pilots' president saluted with 'Spirit of the Port' award

Captain James R. Roche is being honored at our 25th annual Spirit of the Port award, in recognition for the work the pilots have done to deepen the Delaware River ship channel and their many other efforts to keep commerce moving safely and securely.

The 77-member pilots group he heads has long been at the forefront of training and both developing and using new technology to enhance safety and security.

Long before global positioning satellites became widely used, local river pilots developed their own system, which they carried aboard the ships they guided on the river. Now the pilots are installing a new radar system to better track all vessels, large and small.

To assure safety if equipment fails, all pilots must be able to draw a detailed chart of the river from memory.

The pilots board ships in the Atlantic Ocean and guide them to terminals on the river, then back out to sea. They go through a long apprenticeship, bringing hundreds of ships up and down the river under supervision of an experienced pilot. Then they start on small ships, and work their way up to the biggest vessels.

As a result of all this, Captain Roche and his fellow pilots have achieved an incredible safety record with the big ships they guide to and from terminals on the river.

The *Spirit of the Port* luncheon is March 12 at at Sheet Metal Workers' Union Hall, 1301 S. Columbus Blvd., Philadelphia. Call Ronnie Barlow at 215-940-9900 extension 106, to get tickets and information. Or email her at [barlow@sciphiladelphia.org](mailto:barlow@sciphiladelphia.org)

# Scout 'gained strength' from helping seafarers

Alexander Melso, 17, chose an outreach project for the benefit of Seamen's Church Institute to help him become an Eagle Scout. He coordinated the efforts of eight friends, contacted vendors for the food and containers and packaged 40, yes, *forty* home-made casseroles for seafarers. It took seven of them almost five hours of chopping and prepping the food before assembly.

The next day they packed and cooked for hours. They attached a list of contents and warming instructions on every aluminum container to help make it easy on the ships' cooks. These frozen dinners, were delivered by our chaplains and ship visitors to vessels.

Alex is a member of Christ Church in Ridley Park, PA, a long time friend of SCI. They have participated in our Ditty Bag Program for over ten years besides keeping us in mind for donations and clothing. Alex has been an acolyte with Christ Church since fourth grade.

I had a chance to sit and talk with Alex as I signed off on his project. I asked him what he thought of doing this task. He said he had memorized the Boy Scout Law long ago and repeats it often. However, this project made him dig deeper into the meaning of the words – he said it gave him strength.

-- Ronnie Barlow

## We're adapting to technology, preparing for interesting future

Perhaps you've seen the "available" sign on our Center City building. We're in the final stages of negotiating a sale, a deal which includes leasing back a portion of the building for our long-term ministries.

A few years ago our Seamen's Center was crowded with seafarers playing games, relaxing and waiting in line to use our computers or bank of phones to call home. Now we're mobile. Seafarers have cell phones and laptops. So we minister to them aboard ships and as we take them to places where they want to go, often in a hurry because technology has shortened the time ships spend in port.

Under post-9/11 Homeland Security rules, seafarers need us more than ever. Our chaplains and ship visitors have cleared government background checks to escort them ashore. Taxicabs are not permitted inside marine terminals. We are an important part of helping keep the port's customers happy and willing to come back.

Also seafarers still need us as advocates on a range of issues that exist on the high seas, and as good-will ambassadors for our nation. Without what we do U.S. homeland security rules would treat seafarers harshly, making them ripe for recruiting by terrorists.

The sale would reduce our facilities costs and focus resources for today's ministries. We'll use less space. Our chapel will also be used for meetings, and office and seafarer lounge areas will be more compact.

We're also exploring a longer-term opportunity to share space with a church with a rich waterfront history. Stay tuned. Our work continues to get more interesting!



SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF PHILADELPHIA & SOUTH JERSEY

### 25th annual *Spirit of the Port Award Luncheon* *Tuesday, March 12, 2013*

Cocktail reception 11:30 a.m. / Luncheon 12:30 p.m.

Sheet Metal Workers' Union Hall  
1301 S. Columbus Blvd., Philadelphia, Pa. 19147

*Honoring*  
**CAPTAIN JAMES R. ROCHE**  
President of the Pilots' Association  
for the Bay and River Delaware



**Please make reservations by Wednesday, March 6.**

Individual tickets \$125; tables available.

Call 215-940-9900 extension 106, or email

[barlow@sciphiladelphia.org](mailto:barlow@sciphiladelphia.org)

## *Veteran rector of influential North Carolina Episcopal parish is new executive director of Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey, succeeding Father Von Dreele*

The Rev. Canon Dr. Peter B. Stube, a veteran Episcopal priest whose parents, grandparents and brothers were missionaries overseas, began work Feb. 19 as executive director and port chaplain of the Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey.

For the last decade he has been rector of the Christ Church of New Bern, which has an annual budget of \$1 million and is the second largest parish in the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina. Former North Carolina Gov. Bev Perdue, whose term ended in January, is an active member of the parish.

In Philadelphia he will lead an organization supported by many faith traditions that visits each cargo ship that docks at the more than 30 marine terminals on the Delaware River. It provides a variety of spiritual and social services -- working for world peace one seafarer at a time. He succeeds the Rev. Canon James D. Von Dreele, who retired in November.

For 13 years (1990-2003) Father Stube was rector of the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer of Springfield, Delaware County, in suburban Philadelphia. During that time Father Stube, a trained baritone, was a member of Choral Arts Philadelphia, which performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has been a soloist with other choral ensembles.

Thomas E. Johnston, president of the Seamen's Church board and port manager for Norton Lilly International, the global ship agent firm, describes Father Stube as a man of "humble self-confidence."

Father Stube, 61, was selected after an extensive search by a board committee chaired by Henry J. Holcomb, retired staff writer for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. The committee included Captain Greg Adams, retired commander of the Philadelphia U.S. Coast Guard station, Roy E. Denmark Jr., Dr. Ray Heinzelmann, Rick Sperry, Mary Ruth Talley and Johnston. The Search Committee, like the Seamen's Church ministry, was ecumenical. It included people of Episcopal, Mormon, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Jewish and American Baptist faith traditions.

Father Stube has significant experience at selecting, training and managing a staff and in working with a diverse volunteer board. He works well with people at all levels of an organization. And he has extensive study and experience in working across cultural boundaries. He spent three weeks of a foundation-funded sabbatical in 2011 at Cambridge University in England. While there he worked

with several professors who are doing good work on establishing common ground and mission among Abrahamic faiths -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam."

"While here for his first visit," said Holcomb, the search committee chair, "Father Stube visited ships and met people who could help him understand our ministry and the industry and people it serves. He asked good questions and listened to what was said about the work we do and the challenges we face."

His church in North Carolina has helped settle Karen refugees from Myanmar (formerly Burma) and he has long been comfortable working in cross-cultural situations and ministries. In New Bern, he has been president of an

organization that is attempting to create blended housing in a depressed area of town. For this work he received a citation of merit from the local chapter of the NAACP.

Three generations of the families of Father Stube and his wife, Rachael, have served in the mission fields of the Philippines, India and Indonesia. "We have always had a heart for these people," he told his parish in announcing his departure.

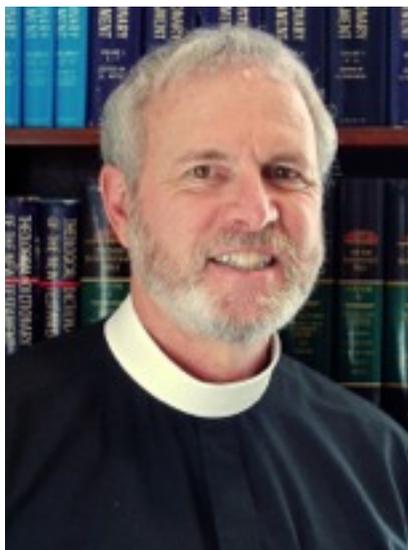
The Right Rev. Clifton Daniel III, bishop of the East Carolina Episcopal Diocese since 1997, said Father Stube does "superb pastoral work," and "he wears well . . . is very attentive and responsive" and has kept his leadership tools sharp by taking advantage of

excellent continuing education opportunities. He leads a diverse congregation and works well with all cultures and faiths. He welcomes and effectively engages in conversations with a great variety of people, including people who disagree with him or the church, Bishop Daniel said.

Bishop Daniel is also moving to Philadelphia. He recently was elected provisional bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, effective March 1.

Father Stube has been a priest for 33 years and holds Masters of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Virginia Theological Seminary and a bachelor of science in Biblical Education, Scripture and Theology from Columbia International University.

He also has 30 credit hours in pastoral counseling and theology at Eastern Nazarene College. He was ordained priest in 1980 in Montana and has served parishes in Montana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Atlanta, and Philadelphia. In North Carolina, he served as Canon Theologian.



# The Anchor



SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF PHILADELPHIA & SOUTH JERSEY

475 North 5th Street  
Philadelphia PA 19123  
215-940-9900

**Thomas E. Johnston**  
*President*

**The Rev. Canon Dr. Peter B. Stube**  
*Executive Director*

**Mesfin Ghebrewoldi**  
*Senior Ship Visitor*

**Doug Campanell**  
*Operations Manager*

**Henry J. Holcomb**  
*Volunteer editor*

[www.sciphiladelphia.org](http://www.sciphiladelphia.org)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Philadelphia, PA  
Permit No. 2108

## *Lessons learned while visiting ships, listening to seafarers*

*Adapted from my Facebook posts*

On a recent Thursday I spent an hour or so with a gracious sea captain. I wanted to ask him to get his company to contribute to the Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey, where I'm spending some of my retirement as a volunteer ship visitor, board member and newsletter editor.

Homeland security rules are dramatically increasing our workload at a time when rising fuel prices make our fleet of vans more expensive with each passing year.

Before I could ask, he apologized for the current level of support and told me what he is doing to change that.

Before I could tell about our rising costs, he talked in detail about how tough he knows these times are for us.

Before I could talk about all that we do for seafarers, he started telling stories of the blessing we have been -- to him personally -- going back to when he became a seafarer in the 1970s, and what he's seen us do for his crew since he became a captain two decades ago. He said he sails "to many religious countries" but none cares for seafarers as well as the United States, and no one does better than what our group does in Philadelphia.

He lifted my spirits.

Then he invited me to have lunch with a group of Columbian employees of his ship's customer. He'd asked the ship's cook to prepare a fine meal from in his home country, Ukraine. We enjoyed a wonderful lunch talking about our families and life in our respective countries, all the while gaining empathy for each other. I like having real

conversations with people from many parts of the world. It helps me see the complexities and opportunities of our future . . .

On another day I had a good time talking with the cook on a cargo ship, learning how he keeps seafarers from many parts of the world happy. Most ships have at least three to five nationalities on their crews. Like most seafarers I meet, this cook goes to sea to provide a better life for his family. Jobs at home "pay for shelter, food and a little electricity, that's all," he said.

He has two children in college, and a third will be there soon, which is very expensive because schools are private. One is studying to be a nurse, the other an information technologist. The third hasn't decided. He used to cook on cruise ships, but, I was surprised to learn, the pay is "much better" on cargo ships.

He is away from home 85 percent of the time and keeps in touch with his family via email and Skype video calls, with help from groups like ours. He's luckier than most -- his ship is in a port every four or five days. Many big cargo ships and tankers I visit are coming from Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Korea -- voyages of 40 days or more. Tankers often make round trips from Philadelphia to offshore platforms in Africa and their crews are confined to their vessels for months at a time.

When the cook finished lunch duties I took him to a place where he could shop and wire money home.

-- Henry J. Holcomb  
*volunteer ship visitor*