Interfaith Service for 15th Anniversary of 9/11

The Port Authority will mark the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks with an interfaith remembrance service on Sunday, September 11, at 2 p.m. at St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church at the corner of Barclay and Church streets – one block north of the World Trade Center site. All employees and retirees are invited to attend.

RTR Kick-Off Event, Award Presentations

The Remembrance Through Renewal Kick-Off Event will take place today (September 7) at 4 p.m. in the Board Room at 4 World Trade Center.

The event, titled “An Agency United, A Tradition Renewed,” will feature talks by Gwendolyn Archie of TB&T and Peter Bitwinski of Comptroller’s, who will reflect on the agency’s resilience over the last 15 years, and a keynote address from Joe Daniels, President and CEO of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.

In addition, Executive Director Pat Foye and Chief of Human Capital Mary Lee Hannell will present the first-ever recipients of the Pillars of the Port Authority Award.

Use the password “rtr2016” to RVSP on the event registration page. If you’re unable to attend, you can livestream the event on eNet.

Historic Harbor Deepening Project Is Done

You can’t survey the physical work without scuba gear. But the economic impact of the now-completed $2.1 billion Main Navigation Channel Deepening Program will be difficult to miss in the years ahead – when the Port of New York & New Jersey begins welcoming the next generation of container vessels.

After more than a decade of dredging, drilling, blasting, and literally moving the earth under the region’s waterways, the Port Authority and United States Army Corps of Engineers have reached their mark and finished deepening various channels across the region to 50 feet to ensure that the largest neo-Panamax vessels, which can carry upwards of 14,000 containers, can access

PATH’s ‘Weekend Plans’ Expedite Pivotal Signal System Upgrade

To complete its signal system upgrade, including installation of safety-enhancing Positive Train Control by the December 31, 2018 federal deadline, PATH has implemented an unprecedented strategy to complete work on the 33rd Street line – the last section of the project – during scheduled weekend outages from August 6 to December 17.

And so far, PATH is making excellent time, not to mention redefining the concept of a “productive weekend.”

Hundreds of PATH employees are coordinating their schedules to facilitate round-the-clock weekend work to replace

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PATH employees spending their weekends underground to get the job done.
New General Counsel Named

Michael Farbiarz, a former federal prosecutor and Senior Fellow at New York University School of Law, has joined the Port Authority as its new General Counsel. He succeeds the Honorable Richard J. Holwell, who served as interim General Counsel since November 2015.

In his new role, Mr. Farbiarz will oversee the Law Department – approximately 127 employees who handle litigation, contract, employment, finance, leases, public securities, regulatory compliance, and other legal matters.

Mr. Farbiarz served for more than 10 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney before becoming a Senior Fellow at NYU. As a prosecutor, he directed large, complex prosecutions involving terrorism, espionage, and other international crimes. He has personally led some of the nation's most significant cases, including one against 11 deep-cover Russian agents operating for years in the United States.

At NYU School of Law, Mr. Farbiarz taught advanced courses in subjects related to criminal law, security law, and international law. Previous to this and his tenure as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, he was at the New York law firm David Polk & Wardwell, where he participated in federal and state trials, and represented clients in complex civil litigation and government investigations.

Chairman John Degnan said, “We are extremely pleased a person of Michael’s high caliber, record of legal accomplishment, and distinguished public service career is joining the Port Authority as an integral part of the leadership team.”

Executive Director Pat Foye said, “We welcome Michael’s leadership and counsel as he assumes this key position at a transformative time at the Port Authority. We also want to express our deep gratitude to Judge Holwell for his thoughtful leadership and service to this agency over the past 10 months.”

To learn more about the agency’s new General Counsel, read the press release.

Headstrong Staffer Raises Awareness For Vets’ Mental Health Care

Last month, Waylon Munson – a Security Analyst in the Office of the Chief Security Officer and former Staff Sergeant in the United States Air Force – joined other veterans to ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange to promote the Headstrong Project, which provides free mental healthcare for veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Munson, who served with the Air Force from 2002 to 2014 and joined the PA in June 2015, has volunteered with Headstrong for close to two years.

Mr. Munson also recently participated in an interview with the popular Humans of New York blog. His interview is part of a series developed in partnership with Headstrong to reach more veterans suffering from war-related mental illness.

CSO, CTO Cybersecurity Tip #8: Updated Software Equals Protected Software

Software updates (or “patches”) fix software problems, add functionality, and, most importantly, remove security vulnerabilities from your work and personal computers and other devices.

So regularly check to ensure the latest updates are installed.

For Port Authority Devices:
1. Most work devices receive updates when connected to the agency’s network, but remember that some devices, like work iPhones, may require connecting to your PC or a trusted Wi-Fi network to install updates.

For Personal Devices:
2. Some devices and software will automatically check for updates. Install updates as soon as they are available so attackers can’t take advantage of vulnerabilities from older software. Also, visit software vendor websites and stay tuned to any e-mails advising of new updates available for download.
3. Only download updates from websites you trust and can verify. Don’t click links in an e-mail requiring a device or software update; some attackers use embedded links to install malware.

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Walk or Donate to Save Lives

Elizabeth Paonessa of Comptrollers’, her husband, Port Newark’s Anthony Paonessa, and their son Anthony Jr. invite you to join them for the ninth annual Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Walk & Family Fun Day on September 25 at 10 a.m. in Darlington Park in Mahwah, NJ. The event, hosted by the CHD Coalition, will raise money for research to improve the quality of life for people born with rare heart defects, including Anthony Jr.

To join the Paonessas’ walking group, named “Team Peanut,” register here. You also can make a tax-deductible donation online. Email Ms. Paonessa at epaonessa@panynj.gov with any questions.

PATH’s Pivotal Signal System Upgrade

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Ella Rodriguez and Al Anton handing out bus vouchers on the first weekend of the outages.

the century-old signal system with Automatic Train Control, which uses wireless communication to monitor and manage trains, signals, and the many other components of the rail network — all in real-time. This involves installing 63,000 feet of system infrastructure, as well as replacing 17,000 tie plates and a number of other rail assets.

“PATH has been able to successfully navigate these unprecedented outages and the scheduled workload thanks to the hard work and dedication of our employees,” said PATH General Manager/Director of Rail Transit Michael Marino.

ATC has two main components: Communications-Based Train Control, which provides continuous calculation and communication of a train’s location, speed, and safe breaking distance; and the aforementioned federally mandated PTC, which automatically activates a trains’ brakes if it detects excessive speed, high potential for collision, or incorrect train movement into a work zone or onto the wrong track. Together, these measures will prevent accidents and enhance service.

Critical to this project has been PATH’s support for thousands of commuters impacted by the service outages. In the months leading up to them, PATH launched a comprehensive public outreach strategy, including its PATH Education Series — open-house information sessions with customers. For the duration of the outages, staff will be on hand at stations to provide commuters with guidance and bus vouchers for shuttle service between 33rd Street and the World Trade Center.

To maximize use of the weekend outages, PATH staffers are also performing major upgrades at stations along the 33rd Street line, including painting, power-washing, and replacing tactile strips on the platform ledges.

“Whether it’s working in 100-degree heat in the tunnels, or handing out bus vouchers on the weekends to our customers, PATH is a true example of what a cohesive team can accomplish,” Mr. Marino said.

More than 60 percent of PATH’s network has been updated, and after five weekends of work, the department remains on schedule to complete the 33rd Street line on or by December 17.
PAPD Honors 70 Officers

The Port Authority Police held its annual medal awards ceremony on August 24 at Saint Peter's University in Jersey City, during which the department honored 70 officers for their exceptional service and dedication to the traveling public.

Fourteen officers received the Medical Medal for outstanding performance in a medical emergency; 35 received the Group Citation Medal for exceptional work in a police action involving coordination by three or more officers; and 21 received the Meritorious Police Duty Medal for exhibiting conduct exceeding normal requirements.

“The Port Authority Police is the exemplar of commitment to public safety,” said Executive Director Pat Foye. “These medal awards recognize many of the highly talented and dedicated men and women whose integrity, talent, and bravery protects our key transportation facilities and the travelling public of our region.”

Superintendent of Police/Director of Public Safety Michael Fedorko said, “Our police officers embody the highest level of professionalism, cooperation, and commitment. Each of these officers do what is necessary every single day to safeguard property and protect the people of New York and New Jersey. We are proud to honor their accomplishments, as they honor the mission of the Port Authority daily.”

To see the full list of award recipients, click here.

PO Evelyn Suarez receives the Meritorious Police Duty Medal from SOP Michael Fedorko and Inspector Christopher Figaro. Also pictured are (from left) Deputy Chiefs Michael Brown, Matthew Wilson, and Louis Klock; and Executive Director Pat Foye.

EmployeeNet at Home

Employees who have Port Authority Outlook accounts can access EmployeeNet from home or any other outside location with Internet access. Just type paenet.panynj.gov and enter your Windows ID and password. The site is for use only by authorized individuals and will not work from your office computer.

 Procurement Jeopardy! Turns The Tables

Procurement on August 18 held its third annual Jeopardy! game for its Summer Interns, who, in a reversal from previous years, served as the hosts while staffers competed to test their Port Authority knowhow.

Ten employees – all with two years or less of PA/Procurement experience – competed in teams of two, each representing a country in the spirit of the Olympics: China, Kenya, the United States, France, and Brazil. The interns created the game categories, including JAM’ing, which was about the department’s Jersey Avenue Maintenance Shoppe; 1,2,3 PA; Procurement 101; Think You Know the PA?; Throwback Thursday; and Fun on Floor 21.

Team Kenya’s Alex Siegal and Donald Thompson won gold, Team Brazil’s Megan Lancelot Zielinski and Virginia Cash took silver, and Team USA’s Caterina Vazquez and Courtney Eddington nabbed the bronze.

From left: Elza Renazile, Thomas Lal, Alex Siegal, Donald Thompson, Jason Wald (Intern), Muhammad Rehman (Intern), Jeevan Theikkattu Kesavan (Intern), Stephanie Lokker, Nicole Kuruszko, Megan Lancelot Zielinski, Virginia Cash, Chief Procurement Officer Lillian Valenti, Elise Chalek (Intern), Gabrielle LePore (Intern), Caterina Vazquez, and Courtney Eddington.
**Historic Harbor Deepening**

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the East Coast’s premier port.

“Completion of the harbor deepening project is a major milestone in our efforts to meet the needs of the region’s 23 million consumers now and in the future,” said Port Director Molly Campbell.

This project, started in 2004, has primed the waterways for when the aerial barrier to megaships – the deck of the Bayonne Bridge – is fully raised by the end of 2017.

This milestone also concludes the Army Corps’ longer-term dredging effort in the region, which started in the 1980s. Overall, the PA and Army Corps have deepened 38 miles of channels and removed 52 million cubic yards of material, all of which has been committed to beneficial reuse to restore wetlands, create fishing reefs, remediate landfills, and accomplish other environmental sustainability efforts.

Ms. Campbell said that the milestone “culminates more than 25 years of work and $6 billion in public and private sector investment to ready the port for the new generation of vessels, and will continue to support the 336,000 jobs and billions in economic activity the port generates."

Ms. Campbell and two of her predecessors, retired former Port Commerce Directors Richard Larrabee and Lillian Borrone, joined Colonel David Colwell, the Army Corps’ New York District Commander, and various local, state, and federal officials at a ceremony on September 1 at Cape Liberty Cruise Terminal to celebrate the project’s completion.

Many of these officials spoke at the event, praising the Port Authority and Army Corps of Engineers and highlighting some of the major positives the project has produced, including the creation and preservation of jobs, environmental benefits, economic development, and enhancement of the region’s marine gateway.

To read some of their remarks, see the press release.

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**ARFF Chief Named**

Thomas Wieczerzak has been named Chief of Airport Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF).

Chief Wieczerzak, who has more than 16 years of firefighting and emergency services experience, joined the Port Authority as a Fire Captain in May 2014. He was quickly elevated to Deputy Fire Chief in July 2015 and then Acting ARFF Chief in February 2016.

Chief Wieczerzak is a former Fire Captain with the Department of Defense Fire and Emergency Services, and Fire Commissioner for the Borough of Tinton Falls, NJ.

**Discount Program**

Port Authority employees and retirees can take advantage of hundreds of discounts at stores, theaters, theme parks, and more through Working Advantage, the PA’s Employee Discount Program partner. Visit www.workingadvantage.com and use the PA Member ID number – 405042634.

**JFK Perfect Attendance Totals More Than Half-Millennium**

More than 150 operations, maintenance, and management staff of John F. Kennedy International Airport were recently recognized for achieving perfect attendance in 2015 and 2014. Many in the group also were honored for having had perfect attendance consecutively over multiple years… and decades.

This included JFK Airport Maintenance Manager Stephen Olmo with 28 years, Project Manager Kenrick Lorde with 25, Maintenance Unit Supervisor Darrell Alston with 21, and Airport Security & Certification Manager Steve Brocchina with 20.

Combined, the group has 598 years of perfect attendance.