



Member of the Crew

With all the activity at the Cruise terminal it's important not to forget the industrial ship visiting that goes on year round in Boston, Quincy and Providence. Our ship visitors, including Rev. Ashley Peckham in Narragansett Bay climb aboard these giant cargo ships to spend time with the crew. Oil tankers, bulk carriers, Car carriers and container ships come and go, trying to stay on schedule while battling the North Atlantic waters. The crew on these ships are ever so thankful whenever they reach port. But that is not the end of their challenges. US Coast Guard and Homeland Security are usually the first visitors, requiring id checks, inspections and life/ safety drills taking anywhere from 1 hour to several hours. Only then may our ship visitors, who have had to pass through the landside security procedures, board her and inquire as to the well being of the crew.

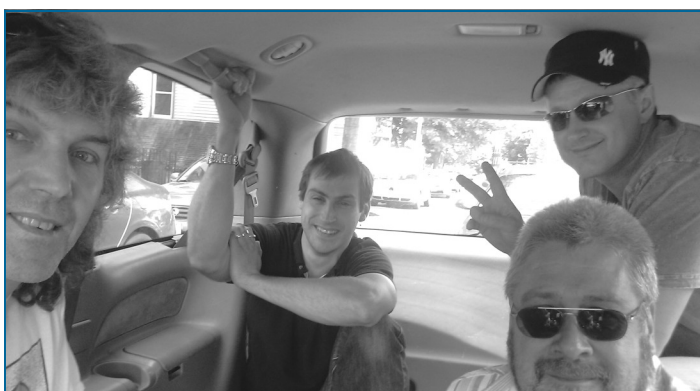
As we are boarding a busy place of business, it is crucial not to interfere with the operations of the ship. However there is usually several

crew who are off duty and happy to greet our visitors. Occasionally a seafarer may ask for a private conversation. Perhaps there is trouble on the ship or back at home. Sometimes crew members who, after months at sea in close quarters, have tensions rise to the point of requiring some kind of intervention. A listening ear and some prayerful words calm the crewman and set in motion some help in their difficult life.

Some of the crew ask for escort off the ship for shore leave. With the new security procedures required by Homeland Security and US Coast Guard, no crew member (US or international) may walk through a marine terminal with out a Transport Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) card. This

federal id card identifies its bearer as having passed a security screening. Since one of the requirements is a US Passport, an international seafarer is practically barred from obtaining one of these id's. Therefore he or she is dependent on the ship chaplain to escort them through the terminal property to the gate and back again.

Finally, with everyone back onboard the crew always have kind words of thanks for our ship visitors. When the cargo has been discharged and with the ship ready to set sail, our chaplains know they have touched at least a few hearts this visit, and they are ready to board the next vessel, sailing into port.

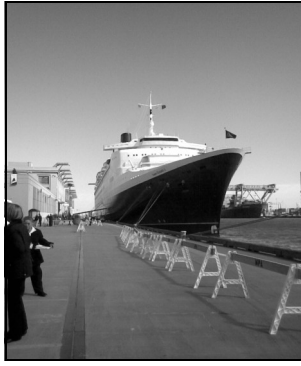


Seafarers on shore leave head out to area stores in NESM Van

Ph: (617) 443-0282
Fax: (617) 443-0435
www.neseafarers.org
nesm@neseafarers.org

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. Romans 1.8

During the past twelve years we have been moved by so many stories from seafarers; these are the lives that have been subjected to separation from loved ones at home and harsh conditions aboard their ship. Crews aboard container vessels must endure oceans storms, injuries, long hours and family strain. The welcome of volunteers at the Seafarers Center do more for these hard workers than could ever be appropriately expressed. A newsletter seems an inadequate attempt to describe some of these stories, but we will try and in so doing also try also to convey *the deep heartfelt gratitude for each and every volunteer who sacrifice time, offering their help and commitment to assist these dear people at the New England Seafarer's Mission. Every one of you is an ambassador for Christ. Thank you.*



He just wanted to take a stroll on the beach. Victor had been on the ship for several months but the last few days had been the toughest. The crossing from Europe earlier this fall brought them through storms and rough weather on the North Atlantic. The constant beating of waves and wind left the crew tired and worn and so Victor chose to go for a walk. Problem was, he was an international seafarer and therefore could not walk through the marine terminal without an escort. But the confinement had been too much, so off he went somehow making it past security. The difficulty arose when Victor tried to return through the main gates. He was stopped by security, and told that he was in violation of security procedures, and would have to be detained. Just then, two of our ship visitors came to the main gate, carrying several of Victor's crewmates

on the return trip from their properly escorted shore leave. The chaplains stood by while Victor was read the riot act from the police guard. Finally, in a moment of frustration and mercy, the guard remanded Victor into the care of our chaplains and he was returned to the ship, only to face the even deeper wrath of the Captain. "It is only because of these chaplains that you are not in a US jail cell right now." the Captain said to Victor "You owe them your life." An extreme, but nonetheless graphic example of the frustration and risk seafarers face due to security restrictions amid life at sea. Time and time again, our chaplains hear these words from seafarers, "Thank God for the seafarers mission. We would be lost without them!"

(The names and places in this story are changed or withheld for reasons of security)

Welcome to the U.S.

By Sharon Cushing

The Cruise Ship season had been well under way this sunny day in early June. Lines this day were long; however, crew members from the Norwegian Spirit came in the doors grateful and relieved to see NESM in full operation. In the midst of the bustle, Steve got a call from the ships agent who relayed urgent information that one of the female seafarers was en route to Tufts Medical Center. She was about to give birth. The baby was arriving prematurely and there was concern about her health. Rev. Michael Audette sped to the ER and introduced himself on behalf of the Seafarer's Mission to the hospital staff.

The somewhat complicated delivery foreshadowed further challenging developments for Rose, who worked as house keeping staff aboard the ship for

seven months. A ship that held to its schedule and departed New England shores before Elizabeth was even born. Rose was left in Boston without knowing a single soul. We came to learn that she was a long way from her real home, a very poor Island nation called Kiribati located in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Australia. In addition to the financial and contractual predicament Rose now faced with the shipping line who was at first reluctant to assist, she also had no place to stay and heal her body, nothing for Elizabeth and did not have anyone to help her.

This is where the hearts and hands of volunteers from churches whom NESM contacted quickly got to work. Michael made frequent visits to see her in the hospital. Chaplain Cushing got the word out to a few area churches and Elizabeth was given baby clothes, formula and diapers far more than she could use. Mike Cicalese at Mariners House in the North End saw that Rose and Elizabeth had a room and meals for the several weeks

needed before they could travel home. NESM's Office Administrator Ida McRae, Board Member Yumi Nakagawa, Chaplain Steve and I took turns visiting Rose and holding Elizabeth. We brought her a stroller and baby monitor (which I'm sure she never figured out). We gave her rattles and a car seat and new clothes for Rose as well.

I know she was blessed by the devotion and love poured out by the people of New England Seafarers Mission. We knew that she would face a tough road ahead raising Elizabeth and going back to the humble Island she left long ago. Beautiful Elizabeth however, is a U.S. citizen now and maybe one day she will return for a visit. Her mother will tell her that she sure has good friends in Boston.

New England Seafarers Mission

**1 Black Falcon Avenue
Boston, MA 02210**

**1 Sea View Drive
Port of Providence, RI 02905**