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Florida's Atlantic Coast ports enhancing facilities to accommodate record activity

By Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT

From deeper channels to enhanced terminal infrastructure, ports along the Atlantic Coast of Florida are positioning to handle ever-increasing cargo flows, including from megacontainerships of global carrier alliances.

In a number of cases, recent federal grant announcements are providing a boost, including for channel endeavors at Port Everglades and the Port of Jacksonville, while Port Canaveral has garnered funds for berth modernization and the niche Port of Fernandina looks to benefit from federal short-sea shipping grant money.

Beginning in South Florida and heading northward up the Sunshine State's East Coast to just south of the Florida-Georgia line, here's the 411 on ports in the 305, the 954, the 561, the 321 and the 904:

PORT MIAMI

The latest development at Miami-Dade County's PortMiami is a densification project to make the most of the South Florida Container Terminal yard footprint, facilitating greater cargo flows while cutting environmental impacts. Six new electrified rubber-tired gantries are to be operational in March, with the zero-emissions ERTGs replacing diesel-powered units.

In its latest fiscal year, ended Sept. 30, 2019, PortMiami enjoyed a record containerized cargo volume of 1.12 million 20-foot-equivalent units, up 3.4 percent from the preceding 12-month period and marking the fifth consecutive year the port has topped 1 million TEUs of container throughput. The port also set a world cruise record in fiscal 2019, with 6,824,000 passenger transits.

Port officials attribute the cargo gains to a diverse balance of global trade and completion over the past few years of more than \$1 billion in infrastructure improvements, including a direct tunnel link to the Interstate highway system, upgraded on-dock rail and additional super-post-Panamax container cranes. Completion in 2015 of the Deep Dredge endeavor, delivering 50-foot channel depth, has allowed the port to accommodate hundreds of megacontainerships deployed by global alliances.

PORT OF MIAMI RIVER

Miami River Marine Group leadership points to the successful upriver move last August of a 2,700-ton-

capacity megayacht shiplift as an example of collaborative efforts engaging private industry with the U.S. Coast Guard and local marine law enforcement. Tug and tow services of Hempstead Marine Inc. maneuvered the barge through tidal currents and sharp bends, under three fixed bridges and through seven raised bascule spans, as the project cargo made its way up the 5.5-mile-long federal waterway to the expanding
(*ENHANCING – continued on page 4*)



Arriving at PortMiami, are a half-dozen new electrified rubber-tired gantries, to enter operation in March at the South Florida Container Terminal.

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A barge carrying a 2,700-ton-capacity megayacht shiplift is towed up the Miami River for delivery to the RMK Merrill-Stevens shipyard.

(ENHANCING – continued from page 2)

megayacht shipyard facility of RMK Merrill-Stevens.

Private terminals along the Miami River's 15-foot-deep navigational channel continue to furnish an integral link with shallow-draft ports throughout the Caribbean region, including the Dominican Republic and Haiti. All told, cargo ships head from the Miami River to more than 100 ports throughout the Caribbean Basin, Central America and South America. While also lined with marinas, restaurants and inns, the Miami River clearly maintains active marine transportation operations.

Among several private terminal operators along the working river is century-old Betty K Agencies Ltd., specializing in Bahamian services, which recently expanded its warehouse and terminal facilities.

PORT EVERGLADES

This month's biggest news for Broward County's Port Everglades is the Feb. 10 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announcement of a new start designation related to longstanding efforts to deepen port navigation channels to between 48 feet and 50 feet from the present 42 feet, plus widen certain sections. The designation advances \$29.1 million in federal funds toward reconfiguration of a U.S. Coast Guard station so the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway can be widened by 250 feet at what is now a critical chokepoint. The overall channel project, authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 2016, is in the preconstruction engineering and design phase.

Port Everglades has nearly \$900 million in infrastructure improvements planned for the next five years as part of a larger \$1.6 billion capital investment program, guided by a freshly updated master/vision plan.

A \$471 million berth expansion is to add new Southport cargo berths while lengthening the existing turnaround area and installing crane rail infrastructure for new super-post-Panamax gantries. Also, CenterPoint is building a new international logistics center to replace the port's outdated Foreign-

Trade Zone facility.

PORT OF PALM BEACH

At the Port of Palm Beach, northernmost of South Florida's seaports, located in Riviera Beach, longtime leading tenant Tropical Shipping is growing operations on multiple fronts. The company, which has operated at the port for 56 years, has recently deployed a half-dozen

(ENHANCING – continued on page 6)



Construction moves ahead on a \$471 million Southport berth expansion that is the largest infrastructure project in Port Everglades history.



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The 1,145-TEU-capacity *Tropic Lisette* is one of six new containerships deployed by Tropical Shipping at the Port of Palm Beach.

(ENHANCING – continued from page 4) new container vessels, offering greater capacity in reliably serving the Caribbean/Bahamian region. In addition, Tropical is now leasing a 3-acre yard for positioning of refrigerated containers.

Meanwhile, the port is actively seeking \$1.2 million in federal grant funding to expand its rail infrastructure, in hopes of more-than-doubling the port's annual intermodal rail throughput to 95,000 TEUs a year from 44,000 TEUs while enhancing security and significantly reducing truck traffic.

Recent Port of Palm Beach additions include Sunshine Biofuels, which stores and transloads nonhazardous biofuel feedstocks, ships out blended biofuels by rail

and works with port tenant Bahamas Ferries on export shipments. Another new customer, American Navigation LLC, also known as Calcean, has begun importing aragonite sand from the Bahamas, typically coming in via shipments of 6,500 metric tons, then



Port Canaveral's 270-foot-tall Liebherr LHM 600 mobile harbor crane, which went into service in early 2019, lifts project cargo components.

trucked to Florida destinations and railed to other states.

PORT CANAVERAL

At Central Florida's Port Canaveral, where Gulfstream unit GT USA operates the Canaveral Cargo Terminal, multiple berth projects are moving forward to accommodate increasingly diverse cargo flows.

On target for spring completion is \$18.5 million North Cargo Berth 9, to provide a 35-foot-draft multimodal/intermodal quay for handling heavy shipments, including space components, via vessels as long as 850 feet; a further 120-foot pier extension is to be done by fall. Also, a \$70 million endeavor, buoyed by a *(ENHANCING – continued on page 9)*



CMA CGM's 8,465-TEU-capacity containership *CMA CGM Dalila* berths at Port Tampa Bay's expanding container terminal, operated by Ports America.

Seaports along Florida Gulf Coast enjoying significant diverse growth

By Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT

With expanding containerized and breakbulk cargo service offerings and a wide range of activities extending beyond freight movement, ports along the Gulf Coast of Florida are collectively enjoying dynamic times.

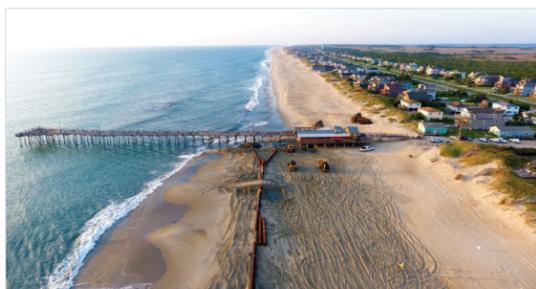
Ongoing infrastructure enhancements augur to bring even greater gains to the diverse Sunshine State ports along the Gulf of Mexico.

Starting in the Tampa Bay area and moving northward and then west along the Florida Panhandle, here's the

lowdown on the latest at ports of the Florida Gulf Coast:

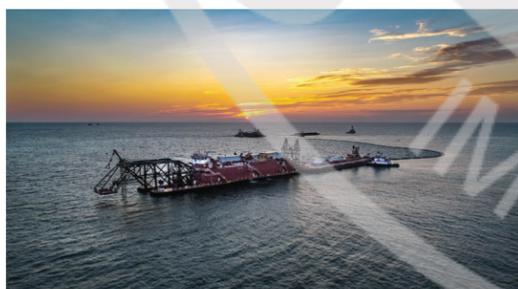
PORT MANATEE

This year celebrating its 50-year anniversary, Port Manatee continues to set records, including a peak of nearly 10.1 million cargo tons in its fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2019, while handling a diverse array of commodities, from petroleum products and juice concentrates, to granite and limestone, to *(DIVERSE – continued on page 7)*



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Diverse vessel activity abounds at Port Manatee, which is celebrating the 50-year anniversary of its dedication near Tampa Bay's entrance.

(DIVERSE – continued from page 6)
forest products and containerized produce.

In January, fast-growing Port Manatee-based World Direct Shipping extended through 2026 its port agreement and added a third vessel to its weekly services from Mexico, which began with a single vessel in late 2014. On the perishables import front, WDS joins Del Monte Fresh Produce Co., now in its fourth decade bringing bananas, pineapples and avocados to its on-port Southeast distribution hub.

Located near Tampa Bay's entrance, Port Manatee is the closest U.S. deepwater seaport to the expanded Panama Canal and serves as a gateway to dynamic markets of Central and Southwest Florida while offering nearly 5,000 acres of surrounding green space for development. The International Trade Hub at Port Manatee is extending its global reach with opening of overseas promotional offices in Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Spain.

PORT TAMPA BAY

Port Tampa Bay, Florida's longtime largest port by total cargo tonnage and land area, is building on an impressive year of bringing in more containerized cargo business to augment a broad mix of bulk and breakbulk activity. Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd., Mediterranean Shipping Co., Maersk Line, CMA CGM, China Ocean Shipping Co., Evergreen Line, APL and OOCL now all offer service via Port Tampa Bay, with three new direct weekly containerized cargo services from Asia having been added over the past year or so.

Port Tampa Bay's container terminal, operated by Ports America under a long-term agreement, is currently undergoing a major expansion to double capacity, with the first phase slated to be completed this summer.

The port's proximity to the red-hot industrial real estate market along Florida's Interstate 4 corridor is driving demand as importers and exporters enjoy savings of time and money moving goods to and from Central Florida. More than 300 distribution centers sit along the I-4 corridor between Tampa and Orlando, with truck-

ers now making multiple roundtrip deliveries per day to and from the port.

PORT OF PORT ST. JOE

As the Florida Panhandle continues its recovery from the October 2018 strike of Hurricane Michael, the Port of Port St. Joe is engaged in a more sustained rebound, as it seeks to bring its surrounding *(DIVERSE – continued on page 8)*



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Tampa AAPA conferees tackle host of port industry challenges

By Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT

When Richard Wainio, then port director of the Port of Tampa, orchestrated the American Association of Port Authorities' inaugural Shifting International Trade Routes Workshop, held in 2008, the big issue on the horizon was preparing for completion of Panama Canal expansion in 2014.

Wainio, a former Panama Canal executive, is now semi-retired, having left the port in 2012, and is doing a little consulting and cruise ship lecturing. He scarce could have imagined the gamut of challenges facing maritime shipping today, including climate-change-related concerns such as a shortage of fresh water to maintain Panama Canal operations and a demand to greatly reduce air emissions from increasingly large vessels that put pressure on still-neglected aging port infrastructure.

Add in a host of geopolitical and economic issues, from uncertainty about impacts of newly inked U.S. trade agreements with China and North American neighbors to anticipated slowing of global fiscal growth, plus the effects of sweeping technological advances and mounting Wuhan coronavirus threats, and participants in the AAPA's 13th annual Shifting Trade Conference (as now renamed), hosted by Port Tampa Bay (as renamed as well), had plenty over which to mull 3 1/2 years after the belated mid-2016 opening of the expanded Big Ditch.

CANAL FACING WATER WOES

Among the A-list speakers addressing the Jan. 29-30 gathering at the Tampa Marriott Water Street was Dr. Ricuarte Vázquez Morales, who took over as Panama Canal Authority administrator last September.

"The interoceanic waterway has improved world trade, transportation and connectivity by reducing times, distances and costs between production and consumption centers," said Vázquez, who holds his doctorate in managerial economics. He noted

that, of the record 252.4 million gross long tons of cargo transiting the canal in the fiscal year ended last September, 67.1 percent originated or ended up in the United States.

But, he said, despite the record traffic, the Panama Canal and maritime shipping as a whole face a myriad of geopolitical, economic, technological and environmental tests.

Most immediately, Vázquez said, global warming is causing rapid evaporation of lakes that feed the canal, making it difficult for there to be sufficient fresh water between locks to reliably support vessel transits.

"We need a solution, or otherwise we're going to lose business permanently," he said, adding that the fresh water surcharge to take effect Feb. 15 is far from a permanent answer. Various options are being explored, including possibly buying another water-source lake to augment Gatun Lake, "if the price is right," said Vázquez, who estimated a cost of \$2 billion over the next four to five years in order to ensure a sufficient water supply.

PACTS SEEN BOOSTING TRADE

In an earlier session, Kim Reed, president and chairman of the newly reauthorized Export-Import Bank of the United States, said she is encouraged by the new American trade deal with China and the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement signed by President Donald Trump the day of her Jan. 29 presentation, adding she believes the pacts will result in more traffic through

(TACKLE – continued on page 11)



The recently completed first phase of Port Panama City's East Terminal infrastructure is adjoined by space for future additional development.

(DIVERSE – continued from page 7)

an economic boost that has been lacking since the closure more than two decades ago of the St. Joe Paper Co. paper mill and box plant.

The Port St. Joe Port Authority is working with IndieDwell Florida, a leader in steel modular housing, and Bright Community Trust, Florida's largest not-for-profit land trust, to build a 82,000-square-foot factory on port property. The project is seen as providing the community with much-needed jobs, as well as a possible housing solution to the area damaged by Hurricane Michael.

In addition, the port continues to seek funding to dredge the Port St. Joe shipping channel to its permitted depth of as many as 37 feet and has been allocated \$10 million in community development block grant money from the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners.

PORT PANAMA CITY

Port Panama City has recently completed the first phase of its new East Terminal, featuring a 900-foot-long bulkhead and berth, a 50-car-capacity rail yard and a 260,000-square-foot forest products warehouse. This spring, the facility's access channel is being deepened to 36 feet. The new terminal

infrastructure is adjoined by land for eventual building of a second berth and more warehousing, with another 30 acres for future development.

G2 Ocean is already calling the East Terminal, furnishing inbound service from North Europe and outbound service to the Mediterranean and North Europe, being joined in late February by a new Far East service – the port's first such direct offering in two decades.

At Port Panama City's longstanding West Terminal, Oslo Bulk has initiated high-frequency breakbulk service with Central America and Caribbean, using geared vessels catering to shippers of forest products. Also, the port has been awarded a \$10 million federal grant to be joined by \$2.7 million in state funds to support a \$14 million expansion of wood pellet storage facilities, with that construction scheduled to get

under way in early 2021.

PORT OF PENSACOLA

At the west end of the Florida Panhandle, the city-owned Port of Pensacola is enjoying significant gains, according to multiple metrics. In its fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2019, the port nearly doubled its operating revenue from the prior 12-month period, to \$2.41 million from \$1.26 million, while increasing breakbulk volume by 78 percent, to 64,638 tons, and wind energy component shipments by 126 percent, to 1,632 units.

The port is advancing \$3.1 million in berth restoration work and \$450,000 in upland cargo initiatives and is pursuing development of a new facility for marine repair and overhaul. This year, the Port of Pensacola is implementing a new vision plan, seeking to attract new tenants while providing expansion opportunities to existing users. The port currently houses a wide variety of tenants in industries ranging from cement and building materials to sailing and oyster farming. Tenants include Cemex, Pensacola Bay Oysters, American Magic Sailing, Blue Origin, Pate Stevedore, Martin Marietta and Offshore Inland Marine & Oilfield Services. The port's international trade partners and cargo routes encompass Mexico, the Bahamas, Brazil and Israel.



The Port of Pensacola is enjoying diverse growth, led by gains in moves of breakbulk cargos and wind energy components.

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Panama Canal Authority Administrator Dr. Ricuarte Vázquez Morales discusses concerns, including a shortage of fresh water supply for vessel transits. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)



Zim Integrated Shipping Services 10,070-TEU-capacity containership *Zim Tianjin* berths at the Jacksonville Port Authority Blount Island Marine Terminal.

(ENHANCING – continued from page 6)

\$14.1 million federal grant, is under way to rehabilitate 1,841 feet of obsolete bulkhead plus uplands at North Cargo Pier 3 and North Cargo Pier 4.

Port Canaveral is advancing on the liquefied natural gas front as well, working with cruise partners and government regulators to ensure safe receipt, storage and dispensing of LNG in advance of fall homeporting – at a new \$163 million cruise terminal – of Carnival Cruise Line’s 5,200-passenger-capacity *Carnival Mardi Gras*, to be the first North America-based cruise ship powered by LNG. And the Port Canaveral Maritime Training Academy is offering specialized training for handling LNG as marine fuel.

JAXPORT

The Jacksonville Port Authority, better known as JAXPORT, has gotten good news this month with Feb. 10 announcement of \$93 million in federal funding to help advance the \$484 million project to deepen the Northeast Florida port’s shipping channel to 47 feet. The project is on target to complete deepening as far inland as JAXPORT’s Blount Island Marine Terminal by 2023 – two years ahead of original schedule.

At Blount Island, JAXPORT and SSA Marine are partnering, with a \$20 million federal grant boost, to expand SSA’s current leasehold to include a new \$238.7 million SSA Jacksonville Container Terminal, to offer simultaneous berthing for two post-Panamax vessels

These and other efforts look to build upon JAXPORT’s positions as Florida’s busiest containerport, with record moves of nearly 1.34 million TEUs in the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2019, and as the nation’s second-busiest vehicle-handling port. JAXPORT also is at the LNG forefront, with a growing number of LNG-powered ships taking advantage of Jacksonville’s on-dock LNG fueling capabilities and Eagle LNG Partners breaking ground this year on a \$542 million LNG export facility.

PORT OF FERNANDINA

Just north of Jacksonville,

the Port of Fernandina, now operated by Worldwide Terminals Fernandina LLC under a 35-year agreement with the Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County, also has received early 2020 glad tidings from the federal government. In January, the U.S. Maritime Administration awarded more than \$1.29 million in America’s Marine

Highway Program grant funding for purchase of equipment to support start of container-on-barge service to link the port with South Carolina’s Port of Charleston.

Last year, the port refinanced debt and gained funds for future development through issuance of \$27.6

million in public bonds, and the port inked a five-year pact with Schuyler Line Navigation Co. LLC to serve as Southeast hub for the Annapolis, Maryland-based vessel operator’s governmental and commercial activities.

The port, which recently saw its berths deepened to 40

feet plus 2 feet of overdredge, is enjoying growth in exports of Kraft linerboard and lumber plus return of such traditional imports as Brazilian woodpulp and North European lumber. As tariffs ease, port officials anticipate return of Asian plywood imports and European metals imports.



The Port of Fernandina continues to see growth in handling a broad array of forest product commodities.

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AAPA conference draws 130 port leaders to Tampa

By Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT

As they have for the preceding dozen years, leading port industry officials gathered in Tampa, Florida, in late January for the year's first education and training program of the American Association of Port Authorities.

The opening day of the AAPA's 13th annual Shifting Trade Conference was topped

off by an indoor-outdoor reception in – and just outside – the Tampa Marriott Water Street's Terrace Room.

The Jan. 29 reception, co-sponsored by Port Tampa Bay and Ports America, saw many of the 130 conference participants smiling for the AJOT camera. See page 8 for a report on conference sessions. Opening session coverage appeared in the Feb. 10 edition of AJOT, as well as online at www.ajot.com on Jan. 29. (Photos by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)



(L to R) Michael McLaughlin – Port of Seattle, Aisha Eccleston – Jacksonville Port Authority, Alejandra Lopez – Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor District, Wonza Spann-Nicholas – Maryland Port Administration, Jason Miura – Port Freeport



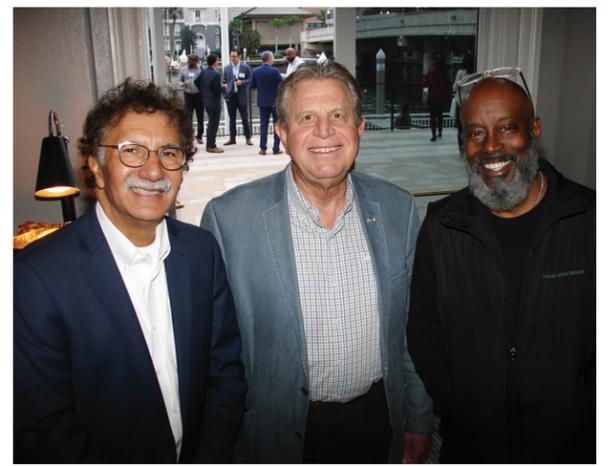
(L to R) Alicia Gates – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Flavio Batista – Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics, Margaret Kaigh Doyle – Eagle LNG Partners, Ramferi Galvan – Weeks Marine Inc., Caitlin Bryant – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sung Lee – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



(L to R) Shawn Meyer – Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport, Doug Wray – Ports America, Matthew Wypyski – Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport



(L to R) Gonzalo Padron – Port Tampa Bay, Lane Ramsfield – Port Tampa Bay, Eric Olafson – Port Miami



(L to R) Mario Cordero – Port of Long Beach, Frank Colonna – Port of Long Beach, Steve Neal – Port of Long Beach



(L to R) Edward Anthes-Washburn – Port of New Bedford, Andrew Sinclair – The Port of Virginia, John Thorington – Port Tampa Bay



(L to R) Clark Merritt – Port of Pensacola, Ricardo Charlton – The Northwest Seaport Alliance, Alex King – Panama City Port Authority, Jacob Crist – Port of New Orleans, Russell Pickering – Port Corpus Christi, Andrew Durant – Samuels International Associates Inc.



(L to R) Matty Appice – Port Manatee, Joe Greco – Ports America, Capt. John W. Murray – Canaveral Port Authority



(L to R) Charles Klug – Port Tampa Bay, David Delac – Port Tampa Bay, Greg Lovelace – Port Tampa Bay, Tony Vasil – Albany Port District Commission



(L to R) Peter Wolff – TTX Co., Randall Smith – Port of Long Beach, Kate Ferguson – Duluth Seaway Port Authority, Maria Cartier – Port Milwaukee



(L to R) Jeff Theobald – PhilaPort, Mary Beth Long – AAPA, Casey Grigsby – Florida Ports Council, Erik Stromberg – Center for Port Management at Lamar University



John Morris, left, executive managing director and Americas industrial and logistics leader of CBRE Group Inc., cites strong distribution center development demand, as, from left, looking on are Wade Elliott, vice president of business development for Port Tampa Bay; Carl Warren, director of business development for the Southern Region of CSX Transportation; and Jesse Kreinbrink, vice president of supply chain for Rooms To Go. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)

(TACKLE – continued from page 8)
the Panama Canal.

“The Panama Canal is essential to our success in our country and throughout the world,” Reed said, addressing the room full of seaport leaders. “We can’t wait to put more through the Panama Canal and through your ports.”

One significant beneficiary of increased trade through the Panama Canal is Port Tampa Bay, which gains from newly introduced direct calls from Asia services feeding the dynamic Florida market, supported by burgeoning distribution center development along the nearby Interstate 4 corridor.

“The Florida market continues to see explosive growth,” said Wade Elliott, Port Tampa Bay’s vice president of business development, pointing out that Florida has passed New York as the second-most-populous state, behind only California, having more than 21 million residents, as well as hosting 125 million annual visitors.

DISTRIBUTION HUBS FLOURISH

John Morris, executive managing director and Americas industrial and logistics leader of commercial real estate leader CBRE Group Inc., said U.S. distribution center demand continues to rise and now exceeds supply, with e-commerce a major contributor to the hot market.

Every \$1 billion in e-commerce sales translates to a need for an additional 1.25 million square feet of distribution space, Morris said.

While Morris said the industry trend is toward a great number of smaller distribution centers, Jesse Kreinbrink, vice president of supply chain for Seffner, Florida-based furniture chain Rooms To Go, said his company’s DCs are getting bigger. Rooms To Go, with more than 200 stores in 14 states, is now building a seventh regional DC, this one in Nashville.

Demand to efficiently move shipments to inland destinations from megacontainerships that berth at U.S. seaports is spurring facility development for railroads as well, said Carl Warren, director of business development for the Southern Region of CSX Transportation.

CSX is accommodating that flow through its new Northwest Ohio logistics park and an increasing number of inland ports, spanning from Georgia and the Carolinas to New York, Warren said.

BOX TRADE CHALLENGED

Vijay Agrawal, vice president of Americas transportation ports and waterways

market for multinational infrastructure services firm AECOM, said ports of U.S. Southeast and Gulf regions are leading containerized cargo growth, with expanding inland hinterlands and regional population gains driving heightened activity.

“Inland ports are helping ports expand the hinterland and reach new markets,” Agrawal said.

Nonetheless, Agrawal said, container shipping facing numerous challenges, led by bigger ships putting pressure on ports to replace aging infrastructure with facilities better equipped to support high volumes, as well as sea-level rise and other worries associated with climate change.

In another session, William Paape, acting associate administrator of the U.S. Maritime Administration, said the federal government is offering multiple funding opportuni-



Vijay Agrawal, left, AECOM’s vice president of Americas transportation ports and waterways market, cites challenges facing containerized cargo shipping as Jim Pyburn, director of business development for Port Everglades, listens. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)

ties to support advancement of infrastructure projects in and around American ports, adding, “Deferred maintenance, as you know, is common and remains a primary concern to ports.”

Meanwhile, the roll-on/roll-off cargo sector has its

own set of challenges and opportunities, according to Flavio Batista, vice president and head of North American sales for Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics.

(TACKLE – continued on page 17)



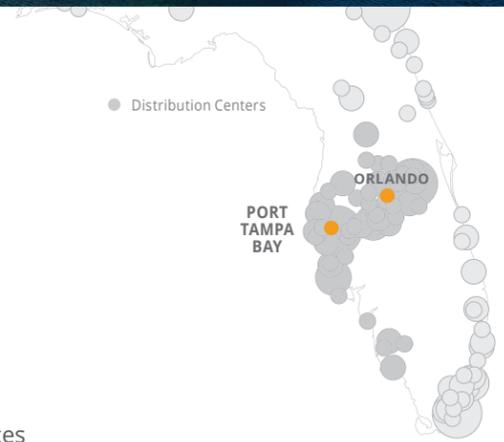
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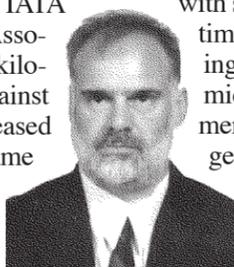
Amazon Prime containers on the tarmac at Chicago-Rockford Airport (RFD) in Illinois

North America's top freight airports hold their own in the downturn

Although globally air freight tonnage is down, North America's airports held their own, and in some cases, prospered.

By George Lauriat, AJOT

Generally, 2020 wasn't a good year for freight movements at North America's airports, a feature of a global downward trend in airfreight. IATA (International Air Transport Association) said freight tonne kilometers (FKTs) fell by 3% against 2018 while capacity increased (AFTK) by 3.3% for the same period. To put the performance (or lack thereof) into perspective, 2019 was the first year of declining freight volumes since 2012 and the worst overall performance since the 2009 "Great Recession" which dropped the airfreight market nearly 10%. In North America FTKs dropped by 3.4% while globally FTKs fell by 2.7% [only Africa with a 10% increase didn't post a negative result].



However, the 2020 chart [2019 data] for North America's top freight handling airports, tells a different story. For the most part members of the million-tonnes club – airports handling over a million tonnes annually, either held their own or even showed a slight improvement in 2019. For example, Memphis, home to FedEx, was slightly off [4,323,479 in 2019 to 4,470,196 in 2018] but it's likely Amazon's shift away from FedEx is responsible for the dip (see below). Anchorage, which is closing in on 3 million tons annually [see chart], handles a remarkable amount of transshipment freight [nearly 2,000 tons] and handled over 2.9 million tonnes of freight. Airfreight volumes at Louisville airport, home to UPS, were flat in 2019 at over 2.6 million tonnes as were figures at the mega-hub airports of Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago and JFK in New York.

AMAZON EFFECT

And it wasn't just the hub airports that held their own. Some airports have done remarkably well. The best example is Chicago-Rockford Airport (RFD) in Illinois – it could easily be dubbed the largest freight airport you've never heard of. According to AJOT's estimates, (based on projected growth figures) Chicago-Rockford is very close to entering the million-tonne club. RFD is no doubt the beneficiary of overflow from Chicago O'Hare but is well on its way to establishing its own identity as the e-commerce air freight hub for the Midwest. It has both UPS and now Amazon Air as customers.

The advantage that RFD has over rivals is space both inside the fence

and out. With e-commerce propelling rising freight loads, the need to be able to handle more trucks – albeit with smaller loads – with faster turn times is paramount. This is driving the trend towards developing mid-size airports into e-commerce hubs – avoiding the congestion of the mega-hubs largely located in urban areas.

But RFD isn't alone – there's almost a new class of airport that specializes in e-commerce that include up and comers like Fort Worth Alliance Airport [153,000 tonnes] in Fort Worth, Texas, Huntsville International Airport [88,700 tonnes] in Huntsville, Alabama, Rickenbacker International Airport [130,000 tonnes] in Columbus, Ohio and Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in Kentucky. Similar to Chicago-Rockford Airport one of the keys to the airport's attraction for air freight carriers like FedEx, UPS AirBridgeCargo, Cargolux, Cathay Pacific Cargo, China Airlines, Emirates SkyCargo and Etihad Cargo is Rickenbacker's location between the highly congested mega-hubs of O'Hare and JFK.

Undoubtedly this new e-commerce class of airport will reshape the airfreight industry for North America's airport business. It's already happening. To have some idea what the future might be for e-commerce based airports, a quick look at what's happening in Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) might provide an intriguing glimpse.

Last year, Amazon broke ground at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport on a planned "Amazon Prime Air" cargo hub. The \$1.4 billion Amazon development is designed to provide parking spaces for an astounding 100 freighters. The 3 million-square-foot cargo hub and 250,000-square-foot loading dock are scheduled to open in 2021 on more than 900 acres of land off Aero Parkway leased from the airport for 50 years. Last year the airport handled 1.1 million tonnes of freight – with Amazon Prime's development capable of parking one hundred freighters, how long will it take before the airport surpasses 3 million tonnes?

But while Amazon certainly is priming the e-commerce pump for mid-sized air ports, it also has had the opposite effect. FedEx Express' U.S. contract with Amazon ended June 30th 2019 without a renewal, which

(DOWNTURN – continued on page 15)

Top North American Airfreight Airports

		2019	2018
Memphis TN	MEM	4,323,479	4,470,196
Anchorage AK	ANC	2,904,919	2,806,743
Louisville KY	SDF	2,621,764	2,623,019
Los Angeles CA	LAX	2,098,542	2,221,093
Miami FL	MIA	2,092,898	2,130,092
Chicago IL	ORD	*1,644,850	1,807,091
JFK-New York NY	JFK	*1,174,366	1,391,043
Cincinnati OH	CVG	1,132,873	1,126,107
Chicago-Rockford IL	RFD	*997,903	879,483
Dallas/Fort Worth TX	DFW	893,441	832,881
Indianapolis IN	IND	*742,539	956,868
Newark NJ	EWR	*723,708	825,740
Ontario CA	ONT	709,412	681,772
Atlanta GA	ATL	639,276	693,790
San Francisco CA	SFO	546,437	571,355
Philadelphia PA	PHL	544,000	503,766
Oakland CA	OAK	*522,601	607,995
Toronto ON	YYZ	NA	557,388
Honolulu HI	HNL	NA	531,050
Houston TX	IAH	513,377	524,715
Seattle WA	SEA	453,549	432,315
Phoenix AZ	PHX	356,627	355,674
Boston MA	BOS	312,498	333,642
Vancouver BC	YVR	304,078	338,180
Portland OR	PDX	276,919	234,271
Denver CO	DEN	*273,980	278,272
Washington DC	IAD	*250,549	300,936
Minneapolis MN	MSP	228,683	239,546
Orlando FL	MCO	228,530	255,905
Baltimore MD	BWI	*221,672	198,074
Tampa FL	TPA	212,178	192,485
Detroit MI	DTW	*195,647	230,438
Salt Lake City UT	SLC	194,994	196,485
Hartford [Bradley Intern'l.] CT	BDL	*168,736	133,820
Charlotte NC	CLT	*168,355	*178,837
Fort Worth TX	AFW	153,442	147,647
San Diego CA	SAN	*141,318	174,463
Calgary AB (1)	YYC	NA	est.146,000
Columbus [Rickenbacker] OH	LCK	130,056	136,493
San Antonio TX	SAT	125,908	123,478
Montreal QC	YUL	NA	122,779
Las Vegas [McCarraan Int.] NV	LAS	119,866	118,273
Sacramento CA	SMF	112,567	115,286
Fort Lauderdale FL	FLL	104,407	108,340
Kansas City MO	MCI	96,175	96,353
Montreal QC	YMX	NA	107,660
Huntsville AL	HSV	88,657	93,905
El Paso TX	ELP	83,788	86,307
Austin-Bergstrom Intern'l. TX	AUS	*67,471	82,798
Raleigh-Durham NC	RDU	61,673	59,986
Reno-Tahoe International	RNO	*59,706	67,523

Notes:
 *O'Hare through Nov.'19
 *JFK through Nov.'19
 *Chicago-Rockford Estimate
 *Indianapolis through Oct. '19
 *Newark through Nov.'19
 *Oakland through Nov.'19
 *Denver International through Nov.'19
 *Washington Dulles through Nov.'19
 *Baltimore 12-months Nov.-Nov.
 *Detroit through Nov.'19
 *Bradley BTS Oct-Oct 2019
 *Charlotte through Nov.'19
 *San Diego through Nov.'19
 *Austin through Oct '19
 *Reno through Nov.'19
 1. Calgary no longer reports weight "because of e-commerce"
 Sources: Airports, BTS, ACI,

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For many Asians, the phase one deal is just a “ceasefire” in US-China trade war

Heimtextil trade fair illustrates complexities of phase one deal on global trade...and then there's the coronavirus epidemic.

By Manik Mehta, AJOT

At the Heimtextil trade show held in January in Frankfurt – this is the world's biggest trade fair for the home-textile industry – Asians were saying that the phase one deal signed by the U.S. and China in Washington on January 15, was not a “settlement” of the trade war but a mere “ceasefire”.

Contingents of Asian exhibitors descended upon Frankfurt; the biggest contingents came from China (561), followed by India (404), Turkey (304), Germany (287), Pakistan (230), Italy (178), Spain (112), France (87), the U.K. (78), etc.

“The first phase deal provides some respite in the ‘firing’ between them (U.S. and China), but I can't predict where this will eventually lead to,” observed a Taiwan-based home-textile manufacturer who insisted on remaining anonymous because of “business sensitivities”.

Olaf Schmidt, the vice president (textiles/textile technology) of Messe Frankfurt which organizes prestigious trade shows, including the Heimtextil, Texworld, etc., is a highly-respected expert on global textile trade; he said that the business community needed certainty to plan its future business.

“Long-term planning is essential for good business ... be it in the U.S., Europe or Asia,” Schmidt said.

Schmidt's views were also echoed by Chinese businesspeople in New York. In a recent interview with the *American Journal of Transportation* at New York's Texworld trade show, Zhang Tao, the secretary general of the Beijing-based China's Sub-Council of Textile Industry (CCPIT), acknowledged that 2019 had been a very challenging year for the industry because of the trade war and its impact on textile (fabrics, apparel, etc.) exports to the U.S.

“The U.S. is the world's second biggest market, after the combined European Union market, for our textile exports,” Tao said. “The interesting thing is the shift in the apparel and fabric volumes exported to the U.S. Apparel and finished product exports were higher than fabrics, despite the fact that tariffs on apparel and finished product shipments to the U.S. were higher,” he noted.



Zhang Tao, secretary general of the CCPIT

China's total global textile exports in 2019 amounted to \$ 268 billion; of this, the U.S. imported some \$ 40 billion.

Speaking on the phase one deal

between the U.S. and China, Tao said that each side would thus gain time to grapple with the situation. However, he emphasized that the business community wants certainty to make long-term planning for the business. The U.S. Fashion Association has also emphasized the importance of providing certainty to businesses. The Chinese have been talking to several U.S. trade associations to represent their case to the U.S. authorities.

US INVESTMENT OUTFLOW FROM CHINA

Tao also touched on the question of U.S. investment outflow from *(DEAL – continued on page 15)*



Olaf Schmidt, the vice president (textiles/textile technology) of Messe Frankfurt

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(DEAL – continued from page 14)
 China. He said that wages in China had been rising for years. “However, U.S. investments in China will stabilize once the U.S.-China agreement is finalized and on track. The U.S.-China economies will not decouple even though there may be disagreements between the two sides,” Tao predicted.

Uncertainty has also been plaguing Chinese suppliers, with many looking at possibilities to set up operations in a number of African countries, particularly Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Mauritius, etc. which enjoy duty-free exports to the U.S., thanks to the African Growth and Opportunity Act, (AGOA), a piece of legislation approved by the U.S. Congress in May 2000 with the purpose of helping sub-Saharan economies improve their economic relations with the U.S. After completing its initial 15-year period of validity, the AGOA legislation was extended on June 29, 2015 by a further 10 years, to 2025.

Tao said that Africa itself was becoming an attractive market and its potential could be tapped as further development gets under way in that continent. “But many Chinese companies are also looking inwards. China itself is an attractive market with a high-spending middle-class. Chinese companies are also building their own brands ... perhaps, in 15 or 20 years, Chinese brands will be as renowned as, for example, Italian brands,” he said.

China also buys large quantities of cotton from the U.S. for textile manufacturing. “The quality of U.S. cotton is superior ... China has pledged to purchase more cotton from the U.S. as part of the phase one deal,” Tao observed.

Meanwhile, China announced it was halving effective February 14 additional tariffs levied against 1,717 products imported from the U.S. last year. Though China’s finance ministry did not specify which imported products would have reduced tariffs, some U.S. analysts expect these could likely apply to U.S. shipments of soybeans, crude oil, etc.; China has pledged to increase imports from the U.S. by some \$200 billion in the next two years in return for the U.S. withdrawing some tariffs on Chinese shipments.

CORONAVIRUS

Adding to China’s woes is the outbreak of the dreaded coronavirus which has spooked international businesses. As of writing this piece, over 1,000 people had died and over 40,000 infected in China; the death-toll keeps rising.

Many foreign nationals having

(DOWNTURN – continued from page 12)

FedEx called a “strategic decision” as it looks to serve the burgeoning e-commerce market by advancing its own air division and hubs. While FedEx says the Amazon revenue is less than 1.5% [2018] of the total, nonetheless the loss of Amazon has had an impact on the integrator’s air freight tonnes.

Fedex enplaned 330.8 million pounds in June 2019 at Memphis, an over 8% drop from June 2018. Similarly, the integrator deplaned 309.9 million pounds in June 2018 amounting to another 8% drop in pounds. FedEx is investing \$1.5 billion in the Memphis hub as part of a multiyear modernization of the facilities.

business dealings with China have been avoiding or curbing their direct contacts with Chinese out of fear of getting infected. The delay in restarting production and distribution of goods could create a cash-flow problem for the smaller companies which have limited survival capability. Freight costs on shipments to and from China have risen sharply due to lack of flights.

Visiting Chinese businesspeople in New York, preferring to remain anonymous, said that some international retailers had closed their outlets in China, including big names such as Ikea, Starbucks, etc.

The coronavirus has hit China far more severely than the 2003 SARS crisis. Given China’s crucial role in international supply chains, this could cause disruptions ahead. Foreign automobile manufacturers have either closed or reduced their production because of distribution problems of China-made parts. Industries such as mobile phones and computers, may also be affected.

China may also possibly redefine its development priorities, weighing between its domestic and international commitments.

China’s cogs in the global supply chain are struggling to restart

Global supply chains look to be suffering longer-than-expected disruptions tied to coronavirus as China’s government tries to nudge idled factories back to work to limit the damage to the world’s second-largest economy.

To contain the crisis, Chinese authorities have ordered city lockdowns and extended holidays but the human impact is unrelenting, with deaths topping 1,000. The economic fallout could extend well into March with rising numbers of bankruptcies, increasing layoffs and worsening demand, according to economists at Nomura in Hong Kong.

Bloomberg is reporting that thousands of businesses are in limbo, waiting to hear from local authorities on when they can resume operations. Even when they get the all-clear, it might take days to get back to full staff because many workers who went home for the Lunar New Year holidays are stuck there because of travel restrictions.

Government data showed that 160 million people had returned to

work by February 18th, the transport ministry said.

The impact to China’s economy will be short term and won’t derail its longer-term improvement, CCTV reported, citing President Xi Jinping. China will strengthen controls on economic operations and monitor employment to avoid large-scale layoffs, it said. Chinese policy makers will likely roll out more measures to support the economy.

Regions less hit by the outbreak should accelerate the resumption of production, according to a national televised conference held by Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. Bigger enterprises should make up for lost production and ensure provincial targets are met. It is “very urgent” to resume industrial production and stabilize expectations, the government said.

Goldman Sachs, UBS and Macquarie are among those cutting their growth forecasts for both the first quarter and the full year.

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Top US Ports for Exports to China in TEUs

US Ports	2019	2018	TEU Change	Change %
Los Angeles,CA	364,278	421,473	(57,195)	-0.14
Long Beach,CA	264,375	367,212	(102,838)	-0.28
Savannah,GA	231,599	266,056	(34,456)	-0.13
Oakland,CA	152,209	158,840	(6,632)	-0.04
Norfolk,VA	95,247	125,506	(30,259)	-0.24
Charleston,SC	90,174	84,811	5,363	0.06
New York/Newark	84,354	108,860	(24,506)	-0.23
Houston,TX	72,451	73,494	(1,043)	-0.01
Tacoma,WA	65,453	75,047	(9,595)	-0.13
Seattle,WA	54,967	82,398	(27,431)	-0.33
Mobile,AL	41,405	45,269	(3,864)	-0.09
Wilmington,NC	40,093	46,529	(6,435)	-0.14
Total TEUs	1,748,420	2,077,633	(329,214)	-0.16

Source: Descartes Datamyne

Top US Exports to China in TEUs

HS (2)	2019	2018	TEU Change	Change %
47 - Wood Pulp; Waste	526,230	584,315	(58,085)	-0.10
44 - Articles of Wood	248,192	393,779	(145,587)	-0.37
39 - Plastics & Articles	132,890	146,367	(13,477)	-0.09
12 - Oil Seeds Etc.	85,961	100,009	(14,048)	-0.14
48 - Paper & Paperboard	71,398	78,691	(7,294)	-0.09
02 - Meat & Meat Offal	45,470	16,766	28,705	1.71
25 - Salt; Sulfur; Earth	41,155	46,595	(5,440)	-0.12
84 - Boilers, Machinery	38,589	42,306	(3,716)	-0.09
87 - Vehicles & Parts	37,672	43,030	(5,357)	-0.12
28 - Inorganic Chem	35,094	34,081	1,014	0.03
52 - Cotton, Incl Yarns	33,146	41,850	(8,703)	-0.21
76 - Aluminum & Articles	31,668	42,401	(10,733)	-0.25
23 - Food Ind. Residues	28,710	27,382	1,327	0.05

Source: Descartes Datamyne

Top US Ports for Imports to China in TEUs

US Ports	2019	2018	TEU Change	Change %
Los Angeles,CA	2,829,496	2,955,582	(126,086)	-0.04
Long Beach,CA	2,209,536	2,745,379	(535,843)	-0.20
New York/Newark	1,111,634	1,196,356	(84,721)	-0.07
Savannah,GA	977,923	1,015,051	(37,128)	-0.04
Tacoma,WA	447,713	475,743	(28,030)	-0.06
Oakland,CA	432,467	464,019	(31,552)	-0.07
Norfolk,VA	426,211	461,557	(35,346)	-0.08
Houston,TX	364,160	391,477	(27,317)	-0.07
Seattle,WA	360,012	484,143	(124,130)	-0.26
Charleston,SC	280,072	303,667	(23,595)	-0.08
Baltimore,MD	155,879	162,049	(6,170)	-0.04
Miami,FL	118,759	144,993	(26,234)	-0.18
Total TEUs	10,132,810	11,221,971	(1,089,161)	-0.10

Source: Descartes Datamyne

Top US Imports from China in TEUs

HS (2)	2019	2018	Change TEUs	Change %
94 - Furniture; Bedding	1,899,636	2,261,518	(361,882)	-0.16
84 - Boilers, Machinery	1,046,119	1,167,847	(121,728)	-0.10
85 - Electric Machinery	872,917	932,771	(59,855)	-0.06
39 - Plastics & Articles	780,542	781,787	(1,245)	-0.00
95 - Toys & Games	776,230	719,015	57,215	0.08
73 - Iron or Steel	555,535	630,910	(75,375)	-0.12
87 - Vehicles	404,240	491,883	(87,643)	-0.18
63 - Textile Art Nesoi	341,718	315,332	26,386	0.08
61 - Knitted Apparel	313,919	319,891	(5,972)	-0.02
64 - Footwear & Gaiters	310,491	316,046	(5,555)	-0.02
62 - Apparel Articles	209,151	218,536	(9,385)	-0.04
70 - Glass And Glassware	194,019	218,540	(24,521)	-0.11
42 - Leather Art; Saddlery	190,631	236,199	(45,569)	-0.19

Source: Descartes Datamyne

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PMA and ILWU pledge joint effort to win back lost market share from East and Gulf Coast ports

By *Stas Margaritis, AJOT*

In an unusual display of unity, Willie Adams, president of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and Jim McKenna, president of the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) pledged to work together to help U.S. West Coast ports regain lost market share from rival ports on the East and Gulf Coasts.

Both leaders agreed that it was vital to lobby the two West Coast rail providers, the Union Pacific and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe, to reduce the rates they charge for transporting containers to and from the West Coast ports.

Speaking before the Propeller Club of Northern California at Oakland, Willie Adams said the West Coast ports “need to make sure our voices are heard in Washington, DC... our competitors on the East and Gulf Coasts are being heard and it is costing us.”

Jim McKenna agreed with Adams, but blamed West Coast ports for being complacent about the higher costs of doing business, especially in California citing: high land costs, high costs of environmental regulations and charges to reduce truck congestion and institute a clean truck program: “These charges are driving away discretionary cargoes and they’re killing us.”

McKenna also noted the expansion of the Panama Canal, the trade dispute with China and negative reactions to the 2014-2015 ILWU work

slow-down had resulted in cargo losses for West Coast ports

However, both McKenna and Adams agreed that high rail costs charged by the Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) should be reduced so as to close the cost gap with East and Gulf Coast ports.

Adams said “the railroads are holding us hostage and.... we need to bring them to the party.”

McKenna agreed that a reduction in rail rates charged by the BNSF and UP could make a major contribution to West Coast competitiveness. Right now, he estimates West Coast costs are \$200 per container higher than East and Gulf Coast ports. Reduced rail rates can close the gap: “The railroads are losing rail business as the West Coast ports lose discretionary cargo and so they know they can contribute to make up the difference and win back some of this cargo.”

Both leaders also pledged to oppose the Oakland A’s ballpark and condominium complex proposed at the Port of Oakland’s Howard Terminal agreeing that the move by localities to transfer maritime properties into real estate developments threatens maritime jobs and the investments necessary to keep container ports such as Oakland competitive. Adams said “our maritime industry is something we need to protect.”

• (TACKLE – continued from page 11)

• The three most significant challenges impacting the ro/ro world, Batista said, are international mandates for low-sulphur ship fuels, with a goal of zero emissions by 2050; need for more ro/ro space at ports; and fragmentation of ports. Opportunities, he said, are presented by short-sea shipping between Mexico and the United States, the growing presence of start-up vehicle manufacturers; and digitalization of cars, terminals and ships.

• Looking at shipping of temperature-controlled cargoes, Howard Posner, president of Tampa-headquartered NAGA Logistics, said the cold supply chain is benefiting from enhanced remote monitoring and tracking capabilities but is challenged by a preference trend toward more plant-based foods, climate change, and trade wars and political instability.

• Posner said the IMO 2020 low-sulphur mandate, which took effect at the start of this year, is resulting in as much as \$20,000 more per day in vessel

fuel costs.

FLORIDA LEADING IN LNG

Casey Grigsby, vice president of programs and planning for the Florida Ports Council, and Margaret Kaigh Doyle, senior manager of marine business development for The Woodland, Texas-based Eagle LNG Partners, with liquefaction and marine terminal facilities near Jacksonville, Florida, cited Florida’s leadership in advancing use of cleaner ship fuels.

Christopher “Kit” Chope, vice president of sustainability for The Port of Virginia, said Florida’s progress sets an example for other states, commenting, “You have to start somewhere. The Florida model is absolutely compelling.”

Barry Worthington, executive director of the U.S. Energy Association, said LNG offers abundant opportunities. But he added that the world will continue to rely predominantly upon petroleum as its fuel source until at least 2050. Despite the fact that renewable sources are the

(TACKLE – continued on page 18)

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Barry Worthington, left, executive director of the U.S. Energy Association, says Goofy has run amok at Disneyland on the Potomac as Jim Quinn, president and CEO of Port Saint John, watches. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)

(TACKLE – continued from page 17)

fastest-growing sector of U.S. energy consumption, Worthington said, they still combine to make up only 11 percent of the nation's present primary energy consumption.

Further, Worthington pessimistically commented, "In Washington, we refer to ourselves as Disneyland on the Potomac – and Goofy has run amok. You can choose for yourself which one is Goofy. There are plenty of characters to choose from."

When asked by AJOT who their choice as Goofy is, both Worthington and session moderator Jim Quinn, president and chief executive officer of Canada's Port

Saint John, took the Fifth.

LABOR MUST BE 'RESKILLED'

In a session focused on ensuring a sufficient supply chain workforce, panelists said collaborative approaches are imperative in this era of technological revolution.

Dr. Noel Hacegaba, deputy executive director of administration and operations at the Port of Long Beach, said systems upgrades and other enhancements to technology compel ports and related entities to be sure they have workforces skilled to operate in the new environment.

"We need to think outside the box – or outside the docks, if you will," said Hacegaba, whose doctoral degree is in public

FROM NEW YORK	A SERVICE Cutoff Friday		AL1 SERVICE Cutoff Thursday		AL2 SERVICE Cutoff Monday	
	LOLO	RORO	LOLO	LOLO	LOLO	LOLO
TO	Transit Time	Transit Time	Transit Time	Transit Time	Transit Time	Transit Time
ANTWERP	16	20	18	-	-	-
DUBLIN	12	-	-	-	-	-
BELFAST	13	-	-	-	-	-
GÖTEBORG	21	-	-	-	-	-
HAMBURG	13	17	15	22	-	-
LE HAVRE	-	-	-	17	-	-
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administration.

Lauren Brand, president of the National Association of Waterfront Employers and executive director of the National Maritime Safety Association, said one challenge comes in getting the most out of millennials, commenting, "I manage them not by action but by outcome."

Brand said terminal operators in the United States this year will directly employ more than 68 million manhours on the waterfront.

Roderick Pickens, general manager of the Wallenius Wilhelmsen Solutions vehicle processing center which employs 200 International Longshoremen's Association workers at the Port of Baltimore, said he believes it is necessary to "reskill" port workforces in these times of greater autonomous technology.

Today's port workers, Pickens said, must be technically skilled, be leaders and decision-makers, have good interpersonal



Erik Autor, left, president of the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones, pays close attention as Andy Wang, manager of operations and training for Hit Promotional Products Inc., says increased import capabilities from Asia into Port Tampa Bay have offered opportunities. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)

skills, be adept problem-solvers and be effective communicators.

'LOSERS' MAKE FOR 'WINNERS'

In yet another panel discussion, Erik Autor, president of the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones, said trade and tariff issues top the list of concerns being juggled by U.S.

FTZs, which annually receive some \$800 billion in goods. He urged closer partnerships to leverage the FTZ program to provide greater benefits.

Andy Wang, manager of operations and training for Largo, Florida-based Hit Promotional Products Inc., said trying to mitigate new U.S. foreign trade and tariff policies "has been a scramble for us," as the firm gets most of its goods from the Asia-Pacific region, including China, India and Bangladesh.

On a positive note, Wang said the influx over the past year of direct containership calls from Asia at Port Tampa Bay has "opened up a wide range of opportunities for us."

Another sign of hope posited by Wang is a humanitarian program, in collaboration with World Vision International, delivering "scrap" products with no U.S. retail value to needy recipients in Africa and Asia. Such products include misprinted items, as well as those imprinted with information that does not jibe with athletic contest results.

Asked by AJOT if that means kids in Africa may today be wearing "loser" Clemson 2020 College Football National Champions shirts, Wang responded, "To them, they're 'winner' shirts." (See page 10 for reception photos. Opening session coverage appeared in the Feb. 10 edition of AJOT, as well as online at www.ajot.com on Jan. 29.)



Lauren Brand, left, president of the National Association of Waterfront Employers and executive director of the National Maritime Safety Association, addresses workforce issues as, from left, Dr. Noel Hacegaba, deputy executive director of administration and operations at the Port of Long Beach, and Roderick Pickens, general manager of the Wallenius Wilhelmsen Solutions vehicle processing center at the Port of Baltimore, listen attentively. (Photo by Paul Scott Abbott, AJOT)

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Annual Tampa Steel Conference held at Marriot Water Street

The Tampa Steel Conference welcomed over 220 attendees for its annual event February 5-7th, 2020 at the Marriott Water Street. The three day event featured industry experts who provided steel industry forecasts and what's on the horizon for the year ahead.



(L to R) Jeffrey Stewart – Cincinnati Barge & Rail Terminal, Ben Goldberg – JIT Warehousing & Logistics, Anna Lockwood – JIT Warehousing & Logistics



(L to R) Jonathan Grubb – MID-SHIP, Barry Whelan – Gateway Terminal, Jeremy Flores – MID-SHIP Group



(L to R) Scott Gramling – Millennium Metals, Taylor Cowieson – Metal Processors



(L to R) Lane Ramsfield - Port Tampa Bay, Matt Rossi – Majestic Steel USA, Doug Wray – Ports America



(L to R) Wade Elliott – Port Tampa Bay, Larry Shipp – Port Tampa Bay



(L to R) Lazaro Noa – Prestige Transport & Warehouse, David Nelson – Ports America



(L to R) Donnie Holder – Webco Industries, Steve Spicer – QSL



Paul Anderson, President/CEO, Port Tampa Bay



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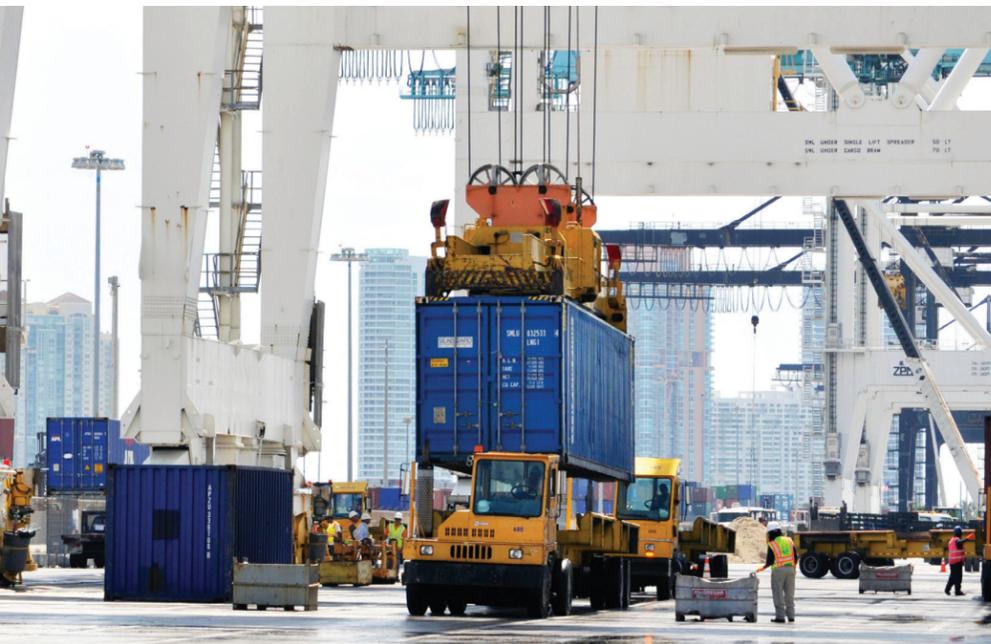
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