

# ISC Seafarers' Log

The Official Newsletter of the International Seafarers' Center

**"Meeting Seafarers' Needs Since 1982"**

**IN MEMORY OF PASTOR ADKINS**

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On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a dear friend and former chaplain of the International Seafarers' Center, Pastor Jim Adkins, passed away.

In 2010, after semi-retiring, Pastor Adkins came onboard as a part-time port chaplain for the International Seafarers' Center. As a port chaplain, he offered spiritual help, friendly conversation, and lots of hugs and smiles to the many seafarers who visited the Port of Brunswick during his tenure. It was evident that Pastor Jim loved going on cargo ships and ministering to seafarers from all over the world.

The International Seafarers' Center is grateful for the faithful support Pastor Jim and his wife, Donna, have shown us through the years. He will be greatly missed.



*Seafarer playing a guitar with Jim*



*Pastor Jim Adkins as Santa Claus*



*A ship's crew with Jim*



*Pastor Jim Adkins and his wife, Donna*

**MUMBLINGS OF THE EXECUTED DIRECTOR...***Peter Boyton*

*When you are in the service of your fellow beings,  
you are really in the service of your God.*

A lot has changed at the International Seafarers' Center this year. The Director of Volunteer Services and Programs is no longer with us. In February 2023, I took over as the "Executed" Director, and Vicki West moved on to live a new life elsewhere. Thanks and kudos to her for all the good things she accomplished while serving the organization as executive director for five years.

Just this month, a major change took place when Bill Dawson, who has served on the Board of the ISC since 1982, stepped down as President. THANK YOU to Bill for staying the course; as Joe Willie Sousa said at the board meeting when Bill stepped down, "he lasted longer than most dictators in third-world countries and did it without a fancy uniform!" We welcome Matthew Henderson as the new President of the Board. Bob Kasting, who has served on the board for about two years, has replaced George Yarborough as Vice President, and Robert Miller has taken the place of Rick Haines as Treasurer. The old scallywag, Jack McConnell, continues as Secretary. Welcome to the new Board Officers. Keep them officers in line, Jack, and don't let them out the boat!

Construction at Mayor's Point and Colonel's Island terminals is progressing quickly in anticipation of continued growth and expansion at the Port of Brunswick. The fourth berth at Colonel's Island is now slated for completion by 2026. The Georgia Port Authority is aiming to have the largest RoRo and largest container ports on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Brunswick currently occupies second place for RoRo traffic, but that will change in the next couple of years as the current growth is maintained.

Volunteers continue to step up and meet the needs of the visiting seafarers. *A special welcome to all the new volunteers.* Brunswick's International Seafarers' Center holds a special place in the hearts of many visiting seafarers, as you will read in this newsletter. On a recent Friday afternoon, I volunteered to take Captain Cristiano Deguzman of the MV Star Luster over to Jekyll Island for the afternoon. I gave him, the Chief Engineer and the 3rd Engineer a brief tour of the Island and then left them there for a couple of hours to explore and savor a meal off the ship. I hustled over to Mayor's Point and took the included photograph of the Star Luster before returning later to transport the three seafarers back to their ship.

This is a FANTASTIC organization that does an incredible amount of good in the community. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us, contribute towards the cause and help keep us a viable floating harbor of support for all the crews that visit the Port of Brunswick.

**Peter***MV Star Luster*

**...almost completed new  
warehouse at Mayor's Point**

**Board of Directors**

**Matthew Henderson**  
*President*

**Bob Kasting**  
*Vice President*

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## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SHIP'S CREW?

*by John Samuelson*

**Captain:** ultimately responsible for the ship and crew. This position usually requires a postgraduate degree and extensive knowledge of maritime laws, navigation, mathematics, and good management skills. The master must have 1,000 hours of onboard experience. The pay range for this position is between \$8,000 and \$15,000 per month, and the contracts are generally for three months on and three months off, although some companies offer six weeks on and six weeks off. Ships carrying hazardous materials (oil, propane, and some chemicals) are at the top end of this pay range. Some captains I have spoken to say their job is a glorified paper pusher, as all they do is review and sign documents.

**Chief Officer:** primarily responsible for ship navigation and ballast control. They are also partially responsible for the fire and lifesaving equipment aboard the ship. The first mate has similar education requirements to the captain. The pay ranges from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per month and includes similar work and time-off schedules as the captain.

**Second Officer:** primarily responsible for ship navigation, weather, and deck operations. Also, the second officer is the chief medical officer, with training in advanced first aid. Vacation and work times are similar to those of other officers. Their pay ranges from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per month.

**Third Officer:** primary duties include ship navigation, assisting with ballast control, and being a safety officer. Pay ranges and work/leave are about the same as for the second officer. Requirements include twelve to 18 months as a deck cadet, education beyond a bachelor's degree, and approval of the captain to advance.

**Boson:** an Able Body (AB) who, after so many tours of duty, has been promoted to boson. The boson is really the direct supervisor of the work crews and generally works a regular 8-hour shift.

**Able Body (AB):** does the grunt work on the ship. Responsible for painting, repairing, checking hatches, checking lashings, and line handling. Education requirements include maritime schooling in navigation and maritime laws and regulations. Also, two years as an Ordinary Seaman. Pay ranges from \$1,200 to \$4,000 per month. Contracts usually run for nine months, with three months of vacation time. In addition, they are allowed to steer the ship (with officer oversight, of course).

**Ordinary Seaman (OS):** very similar to AB, except they are not allowed to steer the ship. Requirements for this position are similar to those for AB, and with some sea time, can be promoted to AB; how much time depends on the company. Some carriers do not have the position of OS on board. The AB and OS positions are generally four hours on and four hours off.

**Oiler & Wiper:** the positions of OS and AB in the engine room, with the wiper having the least responsible position and eventually being promoted to oiler. Education requirements are similar to those of AB and OS.

**Cook:** feeds the crew and usually has a degree in hotel management and/or food service. He or she is also responsible for the ordering and storage of food aboard the ship. When you think of a 25-plus-day ship crossing to China or South Korea, that can be quite a task. For ships with a single nationality on board, preparing meals is relatively easy. One cook I spoke with dealt with a crew of eight nationalities, and he said he would prepare four different plates for each meal.



## UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

The International Seafarers' Center (ISC) recently said farewell to longtime volunteers and friends of the ISC, Rick and Linda Haines. They moved to the Great Northwest at the beginning of April. Linda and Rick were faithful volunteers for the past 25 years. Yes, 25 years!

Linda is credited with founding the store at our Colonel's Island facility and was closely connected with the store since its inception. Rick was a valued member of the ISC board of directors and also actively supported the volunteer program at the ISC.

On behalf of the Seafarers' Center staff and the many seafarers who have benefited from your many years of service, **THANK YOU!**





## CHERISHED FRIENDSHIPS

by Sharon Hindery



**Torgan Oleksiy**  
Chief Engineer

We first met Torgan Oleksiy on a November Sunday morning, four and a half years ago. He was and is again the Chief Engineer on the MV Victoria Highway. He had an unusual request. He had been trying at each port to purchase "Captain Black Little Cherry Cigars" and had been unsuccessful. He was very specific. This was his one guilty pleasure—to enjoy one at the end of his work day on the deck of the ship. I had fond memories of the smell of cherry tobacco smoke from my childhood, and he was amazed that we were actually familiar with the brand. As Brunswick has a few actual tobacco shops, we promised to make it our mission to try and procure a couple of cartons for him. We did find that although the Tobacco Palace did not have them in stock here, they did have them in stock in Savannah. Since the ship was going to return to Brunswick in a few days, we were able to arrange the purchase for our new friend.

Since that visit, we have again supplied him with his special treat. He would email us when they were scheduled to visit, and we would arrange to pick up what he needed. We would then have a nice little visit. As time went on, we would get occasional emails from Torgan, a Christmas greeting, and pictures of his wife and son at their house back home in Odessa, Ukraine—yes, Ukraine.

When the war broke out last year, we were concerned about our friend. I sent him an email last spring and did not hear back, so we became more worried as to his family's safety. Just last week, we were telling Rick's sister about our Seafarer's Center volunteer experiences. I know we are not the only ones who have developed a personal relationship with a particular seafarer who shows up at our port regularly. It is rewarding to recognize and be greeted with warmth by a guy who remembers meeting you previously, either a month or even years ago! I was amazed that during the visit with Rick's sister, I got an email from Torgan—from a different email address that he was on the Victoria Highway and scheduled to dock early Thursday evening and leave at 4 AM. As we had an evening commitment, we offered to come by after and asked if we could bring him anything. He said he would be available 24/7, and he just wanted to visit with Ms. Sharon and Mr. Rick. So we checked in at the gate at 9:30 PM—it's been years since we were on the port at night! And once we donned our hardhats and vests, we headed to Berth 2 to find him waiting at the base of the ramp with a small gift of candy and cookies!



**Crew Lounge**



**Engine Room**

We went up to the lounge with him and spent over two hours, talking the whole time, catching up on each other. Between COVID and the war, he spent over 400 days at home in the Ukraine, not going anywhere. His son, who is 11, still attends school remotely. They are in good health and doing as well as can be expected, as the war is not far away and can be heard. He told us that they cannot even go to the beach, as it is mined, and they are always packed for the possibility of evacuation to safer places.

**Continued on page 6...**

***Cherished Friendships continued from page 5...***

But our conversations were not all about the war; we talked about family and the challenges of raising a son in the digital age combined with the restrictions of war and disease. We talked about his love of the job he does—he is very proud of his ship—and his position as Chief Engineer, who is responsible for all the ship's engines and mechanical components, steering, electronics, and power. He shared that last week there was a power failure in the elevator; he had to rescue the seafarer inside and then repair the elevator component that failed. When at sea, all repairs must be handled at sea, so the workshop is well stocked with many impressive tools, and there is a large storage room dedicated to spare parts.

We spent another hour on a personal tour, from the engine room through the crew quarters. As an officer, he has a nice, if sparse, two-room accommodation with an on-suite. He explained that the Japanese-built ships are more about efficiency and less about crew comfort. There was also a crew laundry, a weight room, and an activity room complete with a ping pong table. He shared that he liked to go up on the deck and walk or run its perimeter. We also went up to the bridge, which



**Safety Sign**

was dark and unmanned while in port. As always, even at night, the view is wonderful from the height of 13 stories. The radar, charting, and ship gauges are all in duplicate, with access to paper charts as well. The ship is clean, neat, and well maintained under his watch. A ship's crew generally includes several nationalities, so they use English as the language of communication. This does add a level of complexity to an officer's job.



**Torgan Oleksiy with Rick and Sharon**

Our excursion ended after 12:30 AM—a late night for us, you can be sure! But we were glad that we were able to refresh our friendship with this young man who has a strong work ethic, a positive attitude, and a zest for life! We look forward to seeing him on his next visit!

All our seafaring friends spend months at a time away from their homes and families. They staff the ships that transport the cars, food, appliances, and all the goods that allow us to live the lives we live. May we always offer a welcoming space for them to find relaxation, healing, and a friendly face—a space that they always find at the Port of Brunswick; the stop to look forward to. We wish them light winds and following seas as they travel the world.

**Engine Data**



**Walkways**





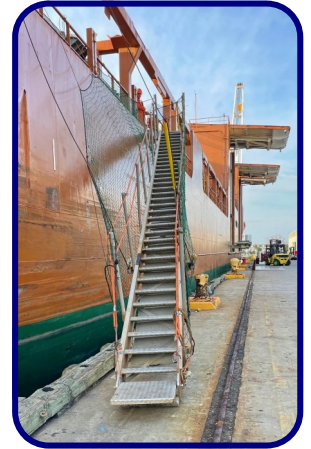
## MV SAMPOGRACHT

by Don Kalen



The MV SampoGracht, a Netherlands-flagged general cargo freighter, of the Dutch Spliethoff Shipping company made a scheduled visit to Mayor's Point recently.

Our tour started on the back deck, enjoying coffee as Captain Harry—our tour guide—enjoyed his cigarette (no smoking allowed anywhere in the ship's interior). We chatted and learned about the ship's unique features: opening side hatches and external elevators to lift paper rolls to storage decks; exhaust cleaning equipment; and a small on-deck swimming pool for crew. I noticed the ships' painted surfaces were in good condition and grime-free. The ship is a 1A ice-classed multi-purpose vessel.



In the galley, the ship's cook had the evening meal in the warming oven and had just finished getting the galley spotless. The crew and officers' mess tables all had bright tablecloths. We stepped into the walk-in cooler and got a look at the space required to store food for a crew of 17.

The engine room and engine were spotless. Captain Harry explained that the engine drive shaft went forward to a Z-Drive that allows the prop to be rotated like a rudder, performing both steering and propulsion functions. We headed up the stairs to get a look at the crew living quarters, lounge, and recreation areas. Everything was neat and orderly, with interesting items added by the crew. Each crew member has their own nicely sized room and bathroom. Officers and the captain have larger quarters.

Captain Harry commented about his weekly inspection of every compartment on the ship. He also has a regular crew party for the entire crew, and he provides the beer.

From what I'd seen, I thought the ship was relatively new and asked its age. Captain Harry replied that the ship was 17 years old, and he'd been the captain for 13 years and planned on being its captain until he retires in three years. It was at that point that I realized that this was a man very proud of his ship and crew and eager to show visitors what he'd accomplished.

Our last stop was the bridge, six levels above the deck. At the dual steering stations, thin-screen radar monitors and a large navigation monitor reflected current technology.



The view forward from SampoGracht's bridge revealed unexpected deck cargo. A number of yachts and boats, 5-12 meters long, bows pointing forward, were strapped to the deck. Off the starboard side, large forklifts delivered massive rolls of paper to exposed ship elevators that lifted them to interior decks, where other forklifts moved the rolls to storage. The view held my attention for a bit as the scene demonstrated the capabilities of a unique general cargo ship.

As we exited, we passed the crew mess. Dinner was in progress, and we were invited to dine. We sat down and tried Filipino spaghetti—short spaghetti pieces thinner than angel hair pasta mixed with cooked onions and other vegetables and two separate sauces. I tried it, liked it, and now I'm on the lookout for Filipino spaghetti.



## IN MEMORY OF GAIL COWAN

September 17, 1937 - July 1, 2023

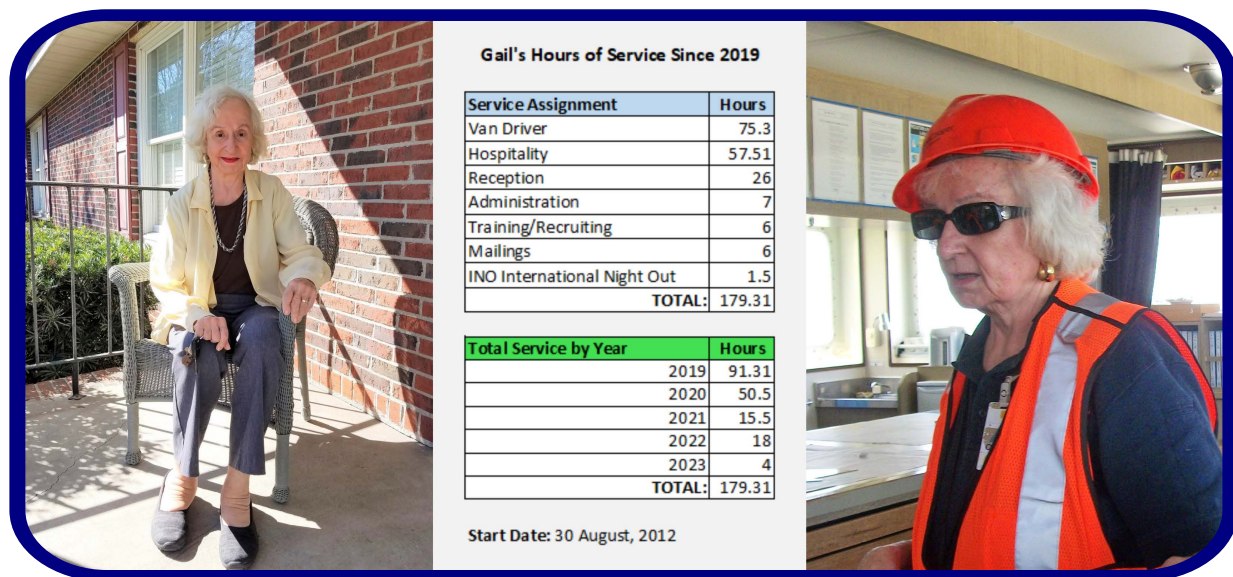
Gail Cowan, a longtime volunteer and friend of the International Seafarers' Center, passed away suddenly on July 1, 2023. Since becoming a volunteer in August of 2012, she faithfully served thousands of seafarers who visited the Port of Brunswick during her eleven years of service.

During COVID, when finding volunteers to serve at the port became difficult, Gail was a stalwart. She continued to volunteer when times were toughest because she genuinely cared about the welfare of our visiting mariners. In 2019, Gail volunteered more than 91 hours.

Gail also supported the Seafarers' Center with her talents and resources. For our major fundraiser, INO, she would often donate a tour and picnic at Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, for which she dressed as Mary Musgrove and regaled her guests with stories of Mary Musgrove's life.

Often, when there was a call for volunteers to help with activities related to the Seafarers' Center, whether it was labeling newsletters or answering the phone at the Newcastle Center, Gail was willing to help whenever she could.

Though no longer with us, Gail's legacy of service to seafarers will continue through the lives of those she served. She will be greatly missed!



**Gail's Hours of Service Since 2019**

Service Assignment	Hours
Van Driver	75.3
Hospitality	57.51
Reception	26
Administration	7
Training/Recruiting	6
Mailings	6
INO International Night Out	1.5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>179.31</b>

Total Service by Year	Hours
2019	91.31
2020	50.5
2021	15.5
2022	18
2023	4
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>179.31</b>

Start Date: 30 August, 2012

*"What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal."*

*Albert Pine*



**St. William Catholic Church**  
 2300 Frederica Road, St. Simons Island  
 is proud to sponsor  
 our local Seafarers' Center!


I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,  
 And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,  
 And the wheel's kick and the wind's song  
 and the white sail's shaking,  
 And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide  
 Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;  
 And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,  
 And the flung spray and the blown spume,  
 and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,  
 To the gull's way and the whale's way,  
 where the wind's like a whetted knife;  
 And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,  
 And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

- John Mansfield

**Look  
 What's  
 Been  
 Happening  
 at the ISC**



Month / Year	Volunteers		Ship Information		
	Total # Working	# Hours Worked	# Ships Berthed	# Ships visited	Total # Seafarers
January 2023	40	457.50	54	51	1,088
February 2023	37	423.00	47	46	1,010
March 2023	48	469.50	49	51	1,123
April 2023	35	403.50	47	44	981
May 2023	39	532.00	55	51	1,130
June 2023	39	419.00	49	43	932
July 2023					
August 2023					
September 2023					
October 2023					
November 2023					
December 2023					
<b>2023 Totals</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>2,705</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>6,264</b>

**Christ Church, Frederica  
 is proud to sponsor the  
 International Seafarers' Center!**

*Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the mighty waters; they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep. For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out from their distress; he made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad because they had quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven.*

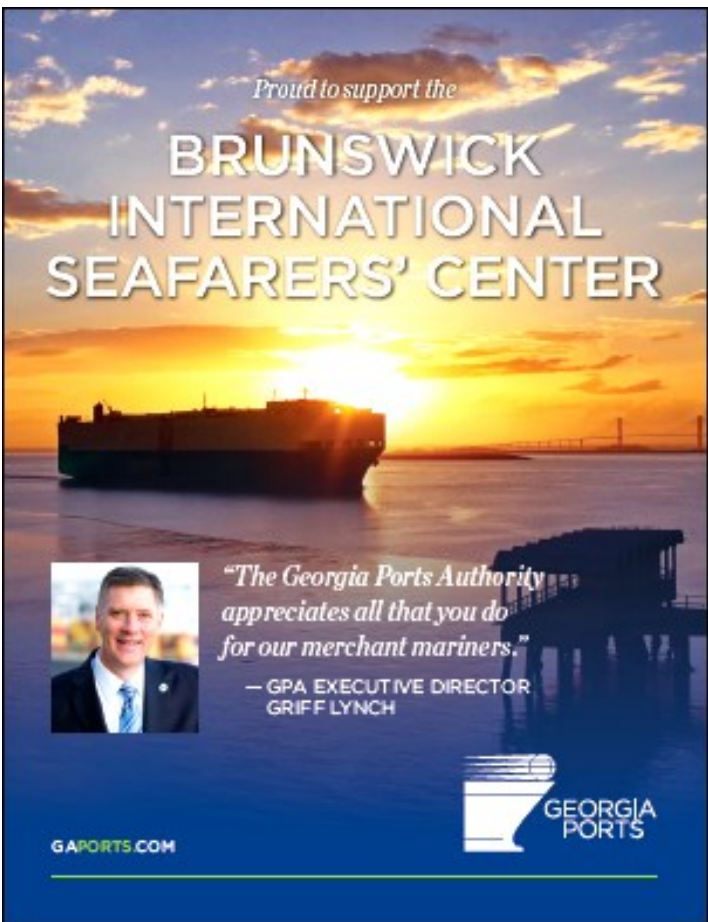
*Psalm 107:23-25, 28-30*




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*"The Georgia Ports Authority appreciates all that you do for our merchant mariners."*

— GPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
 GRIFF LYNCH



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## STORM RIDER

by John Samuelson



*MV Storm Rider*

I had the pleasure of visiting the Storm Rider, which had a crew of twenty-two Filipinos.

Upon chatting with the captain and crew, I found the crew had not been able to get off the ship for nine months. This raised a concern for the crew's welfare, but they all seemed happy, well fed, and got along well with each other. The next major concern was their request for potable drinking water, which indicated a possible problem with the ship's water supply.

Since the crew had not been off-ship in nine months, I agreed to do some shopping for them

and promised to return the next day to obtain a shopping list and investigate some of the issues brought up on my initial visit. I sensed a need for some REAL Filipino treats and genuine "munchies".

The following day, I followed up on my promise and went to the ISC Colonel's Island store, where I planned to purchase several Filipino food items. To my dismay, I had left my wallet at home. Paul Salter, a fellow ISC volunteer, stepped up and said, "Fill up a box." And he gracefully agreed to pay for the treats, calling it a donation to the Seafarers' Center. **What a guy!!**

The next step was to return to the Storm Rider, do more of an investigation into the issues they had raised during my initial visit, and then hit the shopping center and pick up some items for them.

The water problem turned out to be that they wanted bottled water at their work stations as opposed to re-filling from the ship's water system, which was fine, just inconvenient. The next issue was the length of time some of these crewmen had been on board. However, the captain and crew explained that they wanted to stay on board because they didn't want to lose benefits upon returning home for a 3-plus month leave.

A \$600 grocery trip and the sale of several SIM cards seemed to be all that was needed to get the crew back to enjoying ship life.

All in all, a great crew, delightful visits, and much thanks to **Paul Salter**.



*MV Storm Rider crew getting lots of treats thanks to Paul Salter...*





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Month / Year	38 Countries represented by visiting Seafarers year to date, <i>top numbers below</i> :								
	Phillipines	USA	India	S Korea	Ukraine	Bulgaria	Russia	Myanmar	Bangladesh
January 2023	642	76	29	95	33	23	37	4	1
February 2023	552	69	49	44	36	31	49	25	1
March 2023	613	90	77	99	54	19	26	55	0
April 2023	515	101	40	75	61	35	8	17	1
May 2023	639	46	129	19	43	39	16	1	23
June 2023	472	106	42	33	47	43	22	22	22
July 2023									
August 2023									
September 2023									
October 2023									
November 2023									
December 2023									
<b>2023 Totals</b>	<b>3433</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>48</b>

**ISC MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the International Seafarers' Center is to offer support through refuge, resources, renewal and respect through multi-faith service to the maritime community visiting the Port of Brunswick.