



Mike Curran

An Eye on Details at Ports America Terminals

BY MERRILL WITTY

Photography by Kathy Bergren Smith

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During a 34-year career on the waterfront, Mike Curran has made the most of each opportunity to gain experience and take on more responsibility.

After getting his start through a relative (Curran is a fourth-generation waterfront worker), he became a trainee superintendent in 1979 in his home state of New York. Years later, he got the opportunity to relocate to the Port of Baltimore with ITO — International Terminal Operating Co., the forerunner of Ports America. Curran said that his only regret about the move, which took place in 1986, is that he didn't make it sooner.

Curran went to work at Dundalk Marine Terminal as Pier Superintendent. He took

up the task of handling and caring for a weekly roll-on/roll-off (ro/ro) service to Puerto Rico. From there, he refined his skills while occupying many different positions. "I have held just about any job you can think of within the company," Curran noted. During his time at Dundalk, he took on the tasks of stevedore and manager. He was then moved to South Locust Point, where he was named Superintendent, Marine Manager and Terminal Manager, giving him even wider exposure to customers, colleagues, shippers, brokers and forwarders inside and outside of Baltimore.

Next came the post of Assistant Vice President of Operations for ITO in Baltimore. In this position, Curran oversaw day-to-day operations at ITO terminals.

This familiarized him with the collective agreements for all of the Baltimore International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Locals.

There is no routine in Curran's days — he is constantly running between meetings, terminals and committee events. "No two days are alike — that is what makes the job interesting," he said. He is especially involved with the STA-ILA Pension, Benefit and Severances and Annuity, Vacation and Holiday Fund, Container Royalty Fund, and STA Board of Directors. He also represents the Ports America/MTCE on all committees with each ILA Local regarding grievances. "I'm fighting fires all day long, always trying to sort out which are the most important ones," he explained.

"Mike's a true professional and a real credit to Ports America," said Maryland Port Administration (MPA) Executive Director James J. White. "He's a veteran of the waterfront and someone who gets the job done and knows how to solve problems. We're glad to have him at the Port of Baltimore."

Because of Ports America Chesapeake's public-private partnership with the MPA, major enhancements have been taking place at the Seagirt Marine Terminal (see the story on page 16).

Watching the progress "has been very exciting for us," Curran said, adding that safety at Seagirt is of particular importance to him. He cites the company's "no-harm policy," which affords absolutely no tolerance for unsafe conditions or behaviors at terminals. Curran explained that Ports America's stance is that all accidents and injuries are preventable, no environmental damage is acceptable and nothing is more valuable than the health and safety of employees. "Our innovative SAFE PORTS program [Safe Actions for Everyone — Practice, Observe, Remember, Think Safety] reinforces our safety priorities," Curran added.

Curran and his wife Donna live in Harford County. They have raised two now-college age children. 🌐