

AllCovered NEWS

The news YOU need to grow your business and stay ahead of your competition

A weekly service for clients and friends of Allcovered.net and the Allen Insurance Group

PO Box 1439 / 304 MLK Jr Dr / Fort Valley, GA 31030 USA
Voice: +1.478.825.5566 / Fax: +1.419.715.4723 / US TOLL FREE: 800.922.5536

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AllCovered-NEWS is sent via email to all who request it in "Plain Text" to limit your download times.

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NOTE: At the end of most stories excerpted within is a link to the full story at its source.

NOTE – British Summer Time Begins

UK offices moved to British Summer Time yesterday (Sunday) moving clocks ahead one-hour. That means the time difference between US East Coast and London is 6 hours this week only. The US moves ahead to Daylight Savings Time next weekend... the first weekend of April.

EASTER WEEK HOURS:

Our offices in the US are OPEN Monday 28 March.
UK businesses are closed for Easter Monday.

SMALL BIZ – YOU CAN BEAT THE BIG GUYS

In retail ten years ago a lot of family-owned companies and locally based businesses were worried about what to do when the big box stores like Wal-Mart came to town.

Today, they're worried about the big world coming to town.

Then, the threats were outfits like Wal-Mart and Home Depot.

Now, the big menaces are Mexico and China.

--- HOW YOU BEAT THE BIG GUYS ---

The advice in 2005 is what it was in 1995:

+++ Don't play by the competition's rules, make the competition play by yours. +++

Put your competitive advantages as a small business right in the center of your strategy.

What are you competing against?

Usually it's something like this: It's big, it's cheaper and it's "almost as good."

WRONG – COUNTER-ATTACK

Use your special place in the marketplace and the community as a family-owned and operated business to demonstrate that "almost" just doesn't cut it.

Make sure your current and prospective customers know they deserve better, and they aren't really saving money when they buy second-best quality, service or after-sale support.

--- COMMON SENSE TACTICS ---

DON'T GROW TOO MUCH: Rational growth is healthy, but growing just to be big is not. Smaller is often better because less complex business structures are more maneuverable than giant multinationals.

BE EASY TO DO BUSINESS WITH: Offer convenience for your customers... personalized service the big boys cannot match.

BE CUSTOMER FRIENDLY: Regardless of the size of your business, have every employee from the stocker to the CEO eager to help and knowledgeable enough to be helpful. Tell customers your names and call them by theirs. Be sure your personnel are trained and supervised to put customers way out ahead of lunch breaks, inventory reports and everything else.

IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY: Invest in and insist on continuous productivity improvement throughout your company as a strategic way of beating big competitors' at the price game.

DEAL FAIRLY: Keep integrity a core component of your mission and your business practices. Don't bait and switch your customers. Don't try to cut your competitors' throats with low-ball pricing. Don't squeeze your suppliers.

REMAIN DISTINCTIVE: Your small business has a leg up on competitors at home and abroad. The marketplace expects you to be different in positive ways. So be different and be proud of it.

STAY HUNGRY: When you think about business, think competitively. Complacency will kill a family business quicker than anything else. Remember that somewhere in the world right this minute someone is working 12-hour days, dreaming of a better life, and waking up nights with innovative ideas that can take business away from your company and a secure future away from your family.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/extraedge/consultants/family_business/2005/03/14/column210.html

CHINESE ECONOMY – 8% GROWTH FORECAST:

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=5&u=/afp/20050321/bs_afp/chinaeconomy_050321063803

US ECONOMY – FED HIKES RATE: The Federal Reserve raised a key US interest rate a quarter percentage point to 2.75%, conceding inflation risks were growing.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=568&ncid=749&e=6&u=/nm/20050322/bs_nm/economy_fed_dc

US ECONOMY – PPI UP: The Labor Department said the producer price index, a measure of prices at the wholesale level, rose 0.4% in February led by energy prices. The Core Producer Price Index, which excludes volatile food and energy costs, rose just 0.1%.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=580&ncid=580&e=4&u=/nm/20050322/bs_nm/economy_dc

TECH BIZ – ADD SPAM BUTTON TO YOUR OUTLOOK FOR JUNK

Outlook 2003 has a junk mail filter but it isn't perfect, and occasionally you have to delete spam messages yourself.

You can just hit delete and remove the message or you can mark the message as spam / junk email. Doing that with Outlook 2003 in its default setup is a nuisance.

You have to choose Actions | Junk E-mail | Add Sender to Blocked Senders list from the menu or the right-click menu.

But there is a quicker - single click - option. Just add a new item to your menu.

- ONE -** Right-click on the Outlook toolbar and choose Custom ize. Leave the Customize dialog open so you can edit the toolbar menu.
- TWO -** Under the Commands tab choose the Actions category
- THREE -** From the Commands list scroll down to 'Add Sender to Blocked Senders List' click on that item and drag it to a position on the Outlook toolbar.
- FOUR -** The item will appear on the toolbar but with the long text name. You'll probably want to shorten that.
- FIVE -** Right-click on the new toolbar item and click on the Name item
- SIX -** Change the text to something shorter - - I just have it as 'Junk'
- SEVEN -** You can add a shortcut key with the & symbol before the shortcut key eg &Junk or Jun&k
- EIGHT –** To have both text and an image on the toolbar button: Just add an image by choosing 'Image and Text' then select 'Change Button Image' and select an icon. The unhappy face icon seems appropriate.
- NINE -** To have just an image you should choose 'Text Only (in menus)' and then the 'Change Button Image' - this option uses the least screen space.
- TEN -** Finally click OK on the Customize dialog to end editing the toolbar.

Now you can highlight an incoming message, click on the new button and it will be moved to the Junk E-mail folder and the sender will be added to the Blocked Senders list in one operation.

MORE: www.woodyswatch.com

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – HSAs WILL DOMINATE SMALL BIZ HEALTH

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) will become the most popular type of health insurance for small businesses in a few years according to insurance experts.

HSAs are tax-free accounts individuals can use to pay for routine medical expenses.

They must be combined with a high-deductible health insurance policy.

Unused money in HSAs can be rolled over from year to year.

Employers can contribute to their employees' HSAs, and many small businesses are replacing conventional insurance with high-deductible plans coupled with HSAs.

Critics fear many individuals won't get the care they need if they have to spend \$1,000 or more on medical bills before their insurance coverage kicks in.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/industries/health_care/health_insurance/2005/03/21/eastbay_focus2.html?f=et162

SMALL BIZ – HSAs WILL GROW: Almost all employers will have some involvement in employee choice health care plans by the end of 2005, and for most of them, the push to implement consumer-driven health plans (CDHPs) has a simple and clear motivation—the reduction of employer-provided health care costs. So finds the 2005 Spencer Survey of Consumer-Driven Health.

MORE: spencereditor@aspublishers.com

SMALL BIZ – EXTENDING HEALTH CARE TO ALL AMERICANS: The "Plan for a Healthy America" proposes supplementing existing employer health insurance programs with a coverage system modeled on the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. According to the authors, the plan would cost an estimated \$100 billion to \$160 billion annually, which would be funded by a 3% to 4% value-added tax on goods or services.

MORE: <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/full/hlthaff.w5.119/DC1>

SMALL BIZ – PROBLEMS WITH CANADIAN SINGLE-PAYER HEALTH PROGRAM: Americans who flock to Canada for cheap flu shots or drugs often come away impressed at the free and first-class medical care available to Canadians, rich or poor. But tell that to the mother whose teenager was advised she would have to wait up to three years for surgery to repair a torn knee ligament. The Ottawa family opted to pay \$3,300 for arthroscopic surgery at a private clinic in Vancouver, with no help from the government. The average Canadian family pays about 48% of its income in taxes each year, partly to fund the health care system.

MORE: www.sptimes.com/2005/03/20/Worldandnation/Health_system_s_ills_.shtml

SEE ALSO: "NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE - WRONG Rx"

MORE: http://www.kaisernet.org/daily_reports/rep_index.cfm?DR_ID=28857

>>>>>>> TRUCKING SECTION <<<<<<<<

TRUCKING – DIESEL RECORD HIGH

Diesel prices followed crude oil into record territory. The US national average retail price of a gallon of diesel now stands at \$2.244, five cents higher than the previous week and more than 3 cents higher than the previous record.

Analysts say petroleum prices are expected to continue rising at least until to Memorial Day, the traditional beginning of the summer driving season.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46761>

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/03_05/0322_diesel_prices.html

TRUCKING – CARGO THEFT TOTALS \$45-BILLION –

-- TRUCK DRIVERS GET \$14,000 TO "WALK AWAY": See "Security" Section

TRUCKING – OOIDA CLAIMS DRIVER INFO WIN

Companies must be more cautious in how they handle and release employment information on drivers.

The Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association says that is the result of a federal judge's ruling in a lawsuit brought by OOIDA against DAC Services.

In his nine-page decision, Judge Robert Blackburn notes that DAC Services "gathers and disseminates to affiliated motor carriers information regarding truck drivers' employment histories. Of particular relevance in this case, defendant (DAC Services) utilizes a Termination Record form that allows employers to transmit information about drivers who have been terminated from employment. This information is then made available for purchase to prospective employers."

The judge found that provisions of the Fair Credit Reporting Act indicate DAC serves not only as a clearinghouse for driver information, but with this service... "Clearly the employer motor carriers are consumer reporting agencies under this expansive definition."

The trial will begin in May.

MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=54277

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46767>

>>>>>>> SECURITY SECTION <<<<<<<<

SECURITY – NEW C-TPAT RULES: US Customs and Border Protection has posted on its Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) Web site instructions for new importers that appear to be a sneak preview of tougher standards for the supply-chain security program. Customs officials did not confirm that the "C-TPAT Partner Application for Importers -- Instructions" are the new criteria, but many of the items in the instructions are requirements and procedures that Customs proposed in draft standards beginning in October 2004.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050323/sections/trade/w29514.asp>

SECURITY – US TRUCK CARGO THEFT COSTS \$45-BILLION --- DRIVERS GET \$14,000 TO WALK AWAY ---

Cargo theft from commercial trucks in the United States may be approaching \$45-Billion annually. That is the total that members of the Truckload Carriers Association estimate... and far above the official estimates of \$12-Billion from the government.

"The National Cargo Security Council (NCSC) and the FBI conservatively estimate annual cargo theft loss in the United States to be tens of billion of dollars," says Charles Robertson, executive vice president and CEO of FFE Transportation Services.

"The last actual statistics available are from 1994 when the loss was between \$12-15 billion. Most security experts believe that number has doubled or even tripled during the past 10 years."

Truck drivers are involved in about half of all thefts. "The going rate is about \$14,000 to either walk away while the cargo is stolen or meet somewhere on the road to unload the trailer and then claim they were robbed," notes Erik Hoffer, president of CGM Security Solutions.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/03_05/0324_theft.html

SECURITY – NJ CARGO THEFT RING BUSTED: Investigators arrested nine people and charged them with trafficking in more than \$1-million worth of stolen goods including guns, cosmetics, clothing, vehicles and medical supplies, including drugs. The suspects were involved in hijacking truck cargo and stealing merchandise from storage warehouses throughout northern New Jersey.

MORE: http://www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/newjersey/ny-bc-nj--stolengoodsarrest0323mar23_0_6203125.story?coll=ny-region-apnewjersey

SECURITY – KENYAN CONTAINER SMUGGLERS CAUGHT: Customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle out eight containers from the Mombasa port, the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) has said. Containers were being smuggled out of the port before duty had been paid.

MORE: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200503250613.html>

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SECURITY – DoD “ACTIVE” CARGO TAGS

Current RFID Tags are can only be scanned by readers in ports or someone's hand from a maximum distance of 100 meters.

Ideally you should be able to know where that tag is anytime, anywhere, from anywhere.

The US Defense Department is testing a tag that combines RFID, GPS and satellite communication, so that military personnel can know a tag's location at any time.

The new generation of active (battery-powered) RFID tags with satellite-communication capabilities enable tags to give their precise location even when in the most remote and inhospitable areas.

"The prototype tags function just as the current RFID tags that can be pinged [read] at ports, depots and distribution centers by interrogators, but they can also phone home," says Larry Loiacono, an information technology specialist at the Defense Distribution Center.

The tag, dubbed the Third-Generation Radio Frequency Identification with Satellite Communications (3G RFID w/SATCOM) tag by the project, also successfully communicated data via the Iridium satellite network to several recipients.

Using the Iridium network of global satellites the tags transmit their unique identification number, the date and time, and their current position to within 3.5 feet.

That capability, according to the DLA, will change the DOD's RFID network from providing information on where shipments of equipment have been and closer to a real-time understanding of where that equipment actually is.

Adding satellite tracking to RFID tags promises to extend a shipment's visibility into locations where there is little or no infrastructure, not even electricity... the kinds of places that war fighters are in when they order and require materiel shipments.

Currently, forces can track their shipments by computer by accessing the Global Transportation Network servers, but that visibility is limited to where RFID readers are deployed. By adding GPS and satellite communications to tags, war fighters should be able to check order status from the time of order fulfillment until delivery.

Any full deployment of the new tag would not be for several years.

MORE: <http://www.rfidjournal.com/article/articleview/1458/1/1/>

SECURITY – DUBAI IN CSI: The 35th Container Security Initiative (CSI) port became operational Friday at the port of Dubai, as announced by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner Robert C. Bonner and Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Executive Chairman Dubai Ports, Customs and Free Zones Corporation. CSI is the only multinational program that is protecting global trade lanes from being exploited and disrupted by international terrorists. The agreement will enable all cargo destined for the US through the port of Dubai to be pre-screened.

MORE: http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/business/2005/March/business_March528.xml§ion=business

SECURITY – HOMELAND SECURITY & RFID: Will they or won't they? That's what the curious want to know as the government agency hotly denies that it will use RFID chips in employee ID cards. But the denial has a narrow range, as a competing wireless standard will be used instead. What's the flap about? Here's what the real technology actually does--and how it is actually superior to RFID.

MORE: <http://ct.eletters.whatsnewnow.com/rd/cts?d=181-428-1-278-261855-19641-0-0-0-1>

>>>>> AIR & OCEAN SECTION <<<<<<

TRADE – FMC “OPEN” TO REVIEW OF NVO RULING: A majority of members of the US Federal Maritime Commission are "open to reviewing" its new rules allowing non-vessel-operating common carriers and shippers to enter confidential service arrangements, or NSAs, according to Commissioner Paul Anderson. FMC's regulations prohibit shipper/NVO-based associations or individual NVOs from entering into service arrangements with other NVOs.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20576>

TRADE – US CBP WANTS YOUR “ACE” COMMENTS: Customs and Border Protection is asking for feedback from importers and brokers who have accounts in the new automated trade processing system about any problems experienced so far and additional functionality they desire.

SEND RESPONSES TO: traderelations@dhs.gov

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20524>

TRADE – ACE NEWS SITE: The Trade Support Network, comprising industry representatives tasked with developing industry requirements for the Automated Commercial Environment computer system, has created its own Web site to inform the trade community about program developments.

MORE: <http://www.acetransition.net>

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20523>

TRADE – ASIAN SHIPPERS’ COUNCIL AND CONGESTION SURCHARGES: The Asian Shippers' Council (ASC) believes ocean carriers are abusing shippers with an "ever lengthening list of surcharges" to cover their self-inflicted costs arising from US West Coast congestion. "Many rail and port terminals are operated by shipping lines through their subsidiaries or associate companies. Shouldn't these companies be held accountable for failing to anticipate the demand and contributing to the gridlock?" asks John Lu, ASC chairman.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20552>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050322/sections/ocean/w57223.asp>

MORE: <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/business/detail.asp?ID=59987&GRP=E>

TRADE – CALIFORNIA TRANSPORT PLAN

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is pushing a statewide transportation plan to improve cargo flow at California ports and ease road and rail congestion.

Residents near the ports and environmentalists fear air quality and public health will suffer.

The report offers a blueprint of the tough policy questions that California faces amid predictions that the amount of cargo traversing the state could triple in 20 years, driven largely by Asian-made imports.

The report estimates that an investment of \$42.7-Billion is needed to improve roads, bridges and other infrastructure statewide to meet the potential tripling in cargo.

In a draft report the Schwarzenegger administration encouraged the growth of the so-called goods movement industry, hailing it as a powerhouse that contributes more than \$200-Billion annually to California's economy and supports one out of seven state jobs.

The report acknowledges potential problems with accelerating the growth of an industry based on moving goods via ships, rail and trucks. The state's Environmental Protection Agency expresses concerns infrastructure expansion would have by polluting the air and threatening public health.

--- CRITICS ---

"We have communities that are absolutely being destroyed as these industries expand," said Penny Newman, who heads a group seeking curbs on air pollution from the rail yards and warehouses springing up to handle goods from the ports. "We've expanded so fast already that we've created unbearable living conditions for communities."

MORE: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-port23mar23,1.5544053.story?coll=la-headlines-california>

TRADE – CANADA, MEXICO & US TALK TRADE

During a summit meeting in Texas, US President George Bush, Mexican President Vicente Fox and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin agreed to boost border security and forge common approaches on cargo inspection and maritime and aviation safety.

"We've got a lot of trade with each other and we intend to keep it that way. We've got a lot of crossings of the borders and intend to make our borders more secure and facilitate legal traffic," added Bush.

MARTIN STATEMENT: "In terms of security, we understand that securing our borders is a crucial checkpoint on the road to our collective prosperity. Safe borders serve not only to secure our people against threats such as terror. They make possible the speedy flow of goods, services, people and information among our three nations... Under this partnership, we have agreed to develop and to implement a North American cargo security strategy - a strategy that will ensure compatible and effective screening methods, both prior to departure from a foreign port and at the first point of entry. We will bolster our shared commitment to maritime security. And we have agreed to enhance partnerships on intelligence related to North America's safety."

MORE: <http://www.canada.com/news/national/story.html?id=dcb938e1-285a-4f66-8963-b0d32be95197>

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MORE: <http://www.allcovered.net>

OCEAN – HORIZON HIKES RATES: Horizon Lines is increasing its rates for dry equipment in the southbound US/Puerto Rico trade effective 17 April from \$135 for a 20-foot container to as much as \$170 per container.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20534>

OCEAN – W-W STARTS US-MIDEAST SERVICE: Wallenius Wilhelmsen is starting a monthly US Gulf-East Coast/Middle East service in mid-May.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20550>

OCEAN – MOL ADDS INDIA-SE ASIA LINK: MOL is starting a container service connecting Nhava Sheva, India, to Singapore and Port Kelang, saying cargo traffic is expanding on that route.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20590>

OCEAN – USSEC CARRIERS RAISE BUNKER CHARGES: Container shipping lines of the United States South Europe Conference, a carrier group in the US/Mediterranean trade, will raise their bunker charge to \$260 from \$192 per TEU, effective in May.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20588>

OCEAN – NY/NJ PORTS CUT "FREE" TIME: All six marine terminals in the Port of New York and New Jersey are cutting the number of days they allow containers to be stored for free to four days on import and export containers.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050323/sections/ocean/w34979.asp>

OCEAN – SHENZHEN PLANS PORT EXPANSION: The world's fourth-busiest port plans to invest more money to construct additional terminals and berths to alleviate the current shipping backlog. Li Yongming, deputy chief of Shenzhen Port's department of management, planning and construction, says the port has increased investments in three new projects, which are expected to complete by 2010. The extra terminals and berths will increase the port's capacity to more than 18 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) per year. The port handled 13.66 million TEUs last year, up 28% year-on-year.

MORE: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-03/24/content_427680.htm

OCEAN – CONGESTION EASES AT MUMBAI: Shipping lines of the India Pakistan Bangladesh Ceylon conferences, which operate in the Indian Subcontinent/Europe trade, say they will suspend their congestion charge for the port of Mumbai, India, due to a general improvement in port conditions.
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20573>
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050324/sections/ocean/w37883.asp>

OCEAN – FASTER CLEARANCE IN MOMBASSA: Clearing of cargo at Mombasa port will now take just one day. This follows the installation of a new computer system at the port by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) designed to allow electronic submission of declarations, electronic cargo tracking and upgrading of all information technology (IT) facilities at the port.
MORE: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200503250606.html>

OCEAN – BROKERS & CARRIERS TALK: Representatives from the National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America describe a meeting in Houston with Maersk Sealand and APL as a good first step towards repairing damaged relations between brokers and ocean carriers. Brokers had quietly expressed frustration with mishandled cargo, delays, poor communication and call center service, incomplete or inaccurate electronic transmissions of shipping data, and unfair late fees for container pick up, and finally went public with their complaints last year.
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20539>

OCEAN – BOX SHIP ORDER BOOM: Container vessels continue to dominate shipyard orders, exceeding contracts for oil tankers and bulk carriers combined, as owners and carriers bet liner shipping's bull run will continue for at least another three years when the new tonnage enters service.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050322/sections/ocean/w49282.asp>

OCEAN – PANAMA CANAL RECORD: The Panama Canal Authority says the waterway in February posted records for tonnage and booked reservations. A total of 786,400 Panama Canal/Universal Measurement System (PC/UMS) tonnage transited the waterway each day in February.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050321/sections/ocean/w18434.asp>

OCEAN – TSA HIKES CANAL SURCHARGE: Ocean carriers of the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement will raise their Panama Canal surcharge from \$115 to \$165 a box, effective 1 May.
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20566>

OCEAN – 12 BIDDERS FOR NEW MUMBAI PORT: Twelve bidders have expressed interest in India's offshore container terminal project at the Port of Mumbai. The first of two phases plans for construction of two berths with a capacity to handle 800,000 TEUs annually.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050323/sections/ocean/w74920.asp>

OCEAN – ALABAMA BACKS TERMINAL: The Alabama State Port Authority has pledged to abide by a negotiated "60-20 split" that could pave the way for \$80 million in state money to help build Mobile's proposed Choctaw Point container terminal. South of Mobile's main terminal complex, Choctaw Point would boost the port's container capacity fourteen-fold, and could take as long as five to six years to complete.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050323/sections/ocean/w55028.asp>

AIR – LUFTHANSA SEALS SWISS TAKEOVER: Lufthansa has agreed to take over Swiss International Air Lines in a deal worth up to 310 million euros (\$409 million), ending three years of independence for the loss-making Swiss carrier. The long-rumored agreement marks the start of Europe's biggest airline merger since Air France took over KLM last year to form the world's largest airline group by revenues.
MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=580&ncid=580&e=10&u=/nm/20050322/bs_nm/airlines_swiss_lufthansa_dc

AIR – LH-CARGO SURCHARGE HIKE NEXT WEEK: The cargo division of Lufthansa plans to raise its fuel surcharge for customers again next month as the price of crude oil remains at record levels. Lufthansa Cargo will increase the surcharge to 0.40 euros per kilogram as of April 4.
MORE: http://www.reuters.com/locales/c_newsArticle.jsp?type=businessNews&localeKey=en_IN&storyID=7961538
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20547>

AIR – LH-CARGO PROFITS: Lufthansa Cargo reports a profit of USD 44.2-million in 2004, following a loss of USD 20.8-million in 2003. LH-Cargo carried 11% more freight in 2004 and boosted capacity by 9.9%.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050323/sections/air/w35515.asp>

AIR – CONTINENTAL HIKES SURCHARGE: Continental Airlines cargo division is increasing its fuel surcharge in all trades effective today, 28 March. The fuel surcharge for cargo from the United States to destinations in Europe, Israel, Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America, Asia and Pacific/Micronesia Islands is 35 cents per kilo.
FULL LIST: http://www.cocargo.com/cocargo/information/CO_Fuel_Surcharge_March_28_2005.pdf
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20562>

AIR – MARTINAIR HIKES SURCHARGE: Martinair Cargo will increase its fuel surcharge from Euro 0.35 to 0.40 per kilo effective 5 April.
MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050323/sections/air/w62832.asp>

AIR – “CRESCENT” – NEW INDIAN CARGO CARRIER: Crescent Air Cargo Services will begin operations in late April. Captain Deepak Parasuraman, managing director, says the company will operate non-scheduled air cargo services in key domestic sectors. The first phase the cargo proposes to operate key domestic sectors including Chennai-Bangalore-Mumbai-Bangalore-Chennai, Chennai-Hyderabad-Chennai, and Mumbai-Delhi-Mumbai sectors.
MORE: <http://newstodaynet.com/23mar/bu1.htm>

AIR – DELTA NEEDS MORE CUTS TO AVOID BANKRUPTCY: Delta Air Lines CEO Gerald Grinstein says the company is prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to avoid a Chapter 11 filing, but cautioned that it will "constantly bump up against" liquidity issues in 2005 and 2006 and must find more ways to cut costs. Delta avoided a bankruptcy filing last year after securing \$2-Billion in concessions from its employees and finding \$1.1 billion in new financing.
MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=367>

AIR – UPS PILOTS APPROVE STRIKE MOVE: Independent Pilots Association members that fly for United Parcel Service, has approved holding a strike authorization vote after lengthy contract discussions between the two sides broke down.
MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20591>

AIR – PITTSBURGH EYES AIR CARGO: The Pittsburgh International Airport is moving closer to getting a major international cargo carrier to fly into and out of Pittsburgh. Efforts have been made to get all of the necessary infrastructure in place for such a carrier to come to Pittsburgh. "We have all the major freight forwarders here," says Cece Poister, cargo manager for the Air Cargo Task Force. "We are trying to attract more cargo planes to land here as a base of operation ... the goal is to develop Pittsburgh as a mini-gateway for cargo operations."
MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/industries/travel/airlines_airports/2005/03/21/pittsburgh_story2.html?f=et184

(These are shared by readers – Please share yours. Thanks. Mike)

TRUE NEWS: A large portion of the materials on plagiarism on the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Writing Center Web site was revealed in February to have been taken verbatim from Purdue University's Web page on plagiarism.

THE WISDOM OF WILL ROGERS

Will Rogers was a cowboy from Oklahoma who became an actor, comedian, newspaper columnist and spoke for the "common man" during the Great Depression of the 1930's in America.

He was probably the greatest political sage the US has ever known.

Many of the below have become well known around the world. Many you may never have heard/seen. We hope you enjoy the following:

1. Never slap a man who's chewing tobacco.
2. Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.
3. There are 2 theories to arguing with a woman...neither works.
4. Never miss a good chance to shut up.
5. Always drink upstream from the herd.
6. If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.
7. The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back in your pocket.
8. There are three kinds of men: The ones that learn by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence and find out for themselves.
9. Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.
10. If you're riding' ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still there.
11. Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier'n puttin' it back.
12. After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him. The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.
13. Diplomacy is the art of saying "Nice Doggie," until you can find a rock.

WILL ROGERS ABOUT GROWING OLDER...

First ~ Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Second ~ The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

Third ~ Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

Fourth ~ When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra.

Fifth ~ You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

Sixth ~ I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

Seventh ~ One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

Eighth ~ One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

Ninth ~ Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

Tenth ~ Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

And finally ~ If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

If you have curious or interesting or funny or thoughtful items that might be good in "Just For Fun", Email them to mike.miller@allcovered.net . Thanks.

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