

AllCovered NEWS

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

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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.

SMALL BIZ – YOUR MIND SELLS

(From an article by Laura Laaman, link at end)

Why do some salespeople consistently sell more than others?

Is there one universal quality all great salespeople have, regardless of the product or service?

ANSWER: YES

They have and maintain a positive and therefore more productive attitude.

Salespeople face a great deal of rejection. While accepting this, top salespeople learn to employ numerous proactive, proven strategies to stay positive.

--VISUALIZATION --

Visualize success. Negative thoughts produce negative attitudes, negative body language and therefore poor sales performance.

Top-ranked salespeople get out of bed believing it will be a great day. Belief influences outcomes.

Taking a moment to imagine a new prospect as a new customer, making a customer folder label for a new prospect or filling out the appropriate parts of a sales order prior to meeting a customer are the equivalents of seeing the golf ball fall into the cup.

-- DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY --

Do your best to associate with positive people. Enthusiasm and optimism are just as contagious as negativity.

-- PROBLEM SOLVING --

Great salespeople are great problem solvers.

People who regularly expand their vocabulary by reading, playing chess and taking part in other problem-solving activities, such as completing crossword puzzles and playing Scrabble, are more effective in problem-solving situations at work.

-- THE BODY --

Top salespeople work as hard on themselves as on their business. They treat their bodies like the multimillion-dollar machines that they are and take care of them with the same reverence that professional athletes have for their bodies.

- + EXERCISE:** It benefits brain chemistry and your emotions, including an improved sense of well being, increased emotional stamina and restful sleep.
- + VITAMINS & MINERALS:** People who take vitamin and mineral supplements regularly, along with eating well-balanced meals, feel better, are not sick as often, can withstand stress more effectively, and are generally in better health than those who do not follow this path.
- + DIET:** Top salespeople typically bring fresh fruits and vegetables to work. Nutrition contributes to their high sales and increased income.
- + WATER:** It plays an important part in keeping your body hydrated and healthy helping remove toxins from your body, thus contributing to increased energy.
- + MASSAGE:** Including an occasional massage into your health habits can help your overall sense of well being.
- + SLEEP:** Most people do not get the quantity or quality of sleep they need. Numerous studies suggest that having a five-minute meeting with yourself prior to retiring each night, writing down any ideas or uncompleted tasks will help you get a more restful night's sleep.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/extraedge/consultants/sell_more/2004/10/04/column137.html

PERSONAL BIZ – ROTH 401(k) BETTER FOR HIGHER INCOMES

Employees who are disappointed when they cannot contribute to a Roth IRA because their income is too high may be able to invest in a similar tax-friendly account next year through their employers.

Starting January 1, 2006 companies can amend their 401(k) plan and add a special Roth feature that can be funded by payroll deduction.

--- HOW IT WORKS ---

- + No personal income limits apply to Roth 401(k)s, unlike the individual Roth IRA.
- + The ability to contribute up to \$15,000 (plus catch-up contributions if age 50 or older). That is nearly four times the normal Roth IRA limit.
- + Similar to a Roth IRA, Roth 401(k) investors will need to open an account and allow a 5-year time frame before making withdrawals to avoid a tax penalty.
- + Under proposed regulations, a Roth 401(k) account will face mandatory withdrawals starting at age 70, unlike with Roth IRA accounts.
- + Roth 401(k) deferrals must be made with after-tax dollars and are not tax-deductible. Qualified withdrawals will typically be free of income tax.
- + Traditional 401(k) contributions, on the other hand, are contributed pre-tax and are tax-deductible.
- + Qualified withdrawals on traditional 401(k) accounts are typically subject to income tax treatment.

--- WHO WOULD BENEFIT? ---

That depends on factors such as tax rates and number of years until retirement.

Workers who are in a low tax bracket but expect to be taxed at a higher rate in retirement are better off in the Roth 401(k).

During retirement, taking a distribution using Roth 401(k) assets would be wise during years when income-tax rates are fairly high, while traditional 401(k) distributions would make sense in years of low marginal tax rates.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/industries/business_services/employee_compensation_benefits/2005/04/18/cincinnati_focus4.html?f=et150

TECH BIZ – MS ANTISPYWARE WINDOW: If you're running Microsoft's new antispyware solution, there is a hidden window running on your system. It is not Microsoft's own version of spyware. Here's where it is, what it does, and why it's there.

MORE: <http://ct.enews.pcmag.com/rd/cts?d=184-1672-1-53-255970-179555-0-0-0-1>

TECH BIZ – SKYPE ADDS SERVICES: John and I use skype. Why? Because it allows free calling from computer to computer anywhere in the world. A paid version allows you to call land line phones... Now the fast-growing Internet telephony company, launches a voice mail and phone access service in eight countries including the United States, stepping up competitive pressure on incumbent operators.

MORE: <http://ct.enews.eweek.com/rd/cts?d=186-1915-22-82-18097-216045-0-0-0-1>

US ECONOMY – FED: BUSINESS EXPANDS: The so-called "Beige Book" from the US Federal Reserve reports business continues to expand.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=568&ncid=749&e=6&u=/nm/20050420/bs_nm/economy_fed_beigebook_dc

US ECONOMY – CPI UP 0.6%: The US Consumer Price Index, a measure of inflation at the retail level, rose 0.6% in March, led by soaring energy prices. The so-called "core rate" of inflation, minus the volatile food and energy sectors, rose 0.4%.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=580&ncid=580&e=2&u=/nm/20050420/bs_nm/economy_dc

TRUCKING – FMCSA SEEKS H-O-S LAW

Instead of a Regulation, let's make it a law.

Include Hours of Service regulations in the multiyear highway funding bill so that the uncertainty surrounding the issue will go away.

That is one solution that has officially been announced to deal with the rules which went into effect in January 2004, and are currently in effect until September.

Annette Sandberg, administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, made the request to the Senate Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

"The administration seeks the inclusion of language in the Senate reauthorization bill that will make the 2003 rule permanent and allow FMCSA the opportunity to revise the rule, if necessary," says Sandberg.

"I'm concerned that the revised rule will open up the agency and the department to the same kinds of legal challenges we have experienced already. These challenges keep the industry and others in a constant state of uncertainty.

"The old rule on HOS contained statutory exemptions for various industries. These exemptions have been retained in the new rule. New blanket statutory exemptions for various industries increase the likelihood that tired drivers will be on the roads endangering the driving public. Overall, these exemptions compromise safety. They create enforcement problems, hamper accurate recordkeeping, encourage other industries to seek exemptions, and dilute the objective of providing drivers a more regular schedule to coincide with circadian rhythms. As administrator of the agency, I am charged with fulfilling its mandate of improving the safety of these drivers and the traveling public with whom they interact."

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/04_05/0418_HOS%20Sandberg.html

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20868>

TRUCKING – US SENATE NIXES FUEL SURCHARGE: The mandatory fuel surcharge OK'd by the US House in its highway bill is not part of the Senate version approved by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. The surcharge could reappear later when the House and Senate work out differences in their respective bills. The surcharge is opposed by 22 business, shipping and transportation groups, including the American Trucking Associations, the American Moving and Storage Association and the Motor Freight Carriers Association.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=47114>

TRUCKING – DIESEL FALLS: The US national average retail price of a gallon of diesel dropped more than a nickel, to \$2.259, for the week ending April 18. The new average price was more than 53 cents higher than the average price a year ago.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=47121>

TRUCKING: HIGHWAY BILL DELAYS FRUSTRATING: Bush administration officials, shippers and carriers attending the National Industrial Transportation League's Spring Policy Forum said they are anxious for Congress to pass the long-delayed surface transportation authorization bill soon as possible. The plan addresses intermodal freight projects, with funds targeted towards high priority gateways and corridors such as Chicago's rail network, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the Port of Seattle, where congestion relief is needed.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20869>

TRUCKING – MIAMI PORT DROPS TRUCKER SUIT: Miami-Dade County and Universal Terminal have withdrawn lawsuits against Miami port owner-operators whose protest shut down Miami's port this past summer. The suits were withdrawn after a blue-ribbon commission investigated port complaints and sided with the truckers.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=47124>

TRUCKING – FMCSA CUTS DATA REQUIREMENTS: Motor carriers are no longer required to report financial and operating data says the FMCSA. "This program has been terminated and FMCSA has ceased the collection and dissemination of motor carrier financial and operating statistics," FMCSA stated as the full text of the announcement.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/04_05/0419_fin_report.html

TRUCKING – FUEL NOT HURTING TRUCK SALES: Despite ever-increasing prices for at-the-pump diesel fuel, sales of new Class 8 trucks continue to outrun those of last year. Ward's Automotive reported that sales among the eight major manufacturers rose 19.4% in March compared to February.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/04_05/0422_truck_sales.html

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

SECURITY – ZARQAWI NUCLEAR THREAT

Intelligence reports say al Qaeda terrorist Abu Musab Zarqawi has obtained a nuclear device or is preparing a radiological explosive -- or dirty bomb -- for an attack.

Analysts are unable to gauge the reliability of the information's sources.

Skeptics say if Zarqawi had a nuclear device he would have already used it.

Other reports allege Osama bin Laden has ordered Zarqawi to execute attacks on US soil.

-- THREAT TO TRANSPORT --

Even a small amount of low-grade radioactive material detonated with a conventional explosive could have devastating effects... psychologically if not in reality.

If such a device is transported and detonated via ocean, air or land transport, the reaction of governments, and the effects on the international movement of goods would be far-reaching.

MORE: <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20050419-102106-5456r.htm>

MORE: <http://globalpolitician.com/articledes.asp?ID=575&cid=11&sid=0>

MORE: <http://www.armytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-781737.php>

SECURITY – CUSTOMS OFFERS CHECK-FREE CLEARANCE: Ocean containers moving through a validated secure supply chain from a secure loading dock through a port that is part of the Container Security Initiative to a validated Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism shipper will use a "green lane" to clear US Customs without inspection in the near future. That according to US Customs and Border Protection Commission Robert Bonner.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050422/sections/ocean/w92901.asp>

SECURITY – SAT BASED CARGO SECURITY

The businessmen sat anxiously around the table at Belmont Abbey College, their eyes fixated on a small computer monitor.

After nearly a half-hour, a red square flashed on the screen signaling that a sealed truck trailer parked miles away had been broken into. They couldn't have been happier.

Officers of Powers International say their product, which notified them of Tuesday's simulated breach, can help companies protect their products from contamination or theft. They're also marketing it as a homeland security device.

Company President Ed Harrison says the Sea Cure system offers a new way to keep cargo secure by linking identification sensors currently used by many companies to a satellite tracking system. Linking the sensor to a satellite that transmits information via the Internet means a container's contents can be monitored anywhere. Additional sensors can be added to track other data.

Companies also are alerted via e-mail when a breach is noted.

MORE: <http://www.securityinfowatch.com/article/article.jsp?siteSection=306&id=3757>

SECURITY – NEW RFID TOOLS STRESS EASE

Software vendors are rolling out a slew of new offerings designed to help manufacturers and suppliers get up and running quickly with radio-frequency identification programs, while recouping some of their investments.

--- THE SIMPLE ---

Supply chain management and optimization software developer Manhattan Associates announced the next iteration of its EPC Manager RFID integration platform, part of its RFID in a Box program.

Catalyst International unveiled a new "slap-and-ship" suite of products.

OATSystems Inc., which provides RFID framework software, released a return-on-investment program that includes new technology and services.

--- INTEGRATED ---

SeeBeyond Technology and ConneCTerra announced they will jointly develop an RFID composite application framework for building and deploying RFID applications and infrastructure.

Sybase announced an entirely new RFID infrastructure, RFID Enterprise, geared toward helping users collect, track and integrate RFID data and develop RFID-based applications.

Catalyst is taking the quick-implementation route with its RFID-based software by introducing a handful of RFID QuickStart Kits that help users comply with RFID mandates from Wal-Mart, Target and the US Department of Defense.

MORE: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1785964,00.asp>

SECURITY – RFID MAKER SAYS IT HAS THE ANSWER

– *RFID is improving. Integrated ideas are getting closer to becoming a practical real world solution. Mike -*

If you want to get someone's attention, mention their name.

As attendees the RFID Journal LIVE! conference entered a room to hear the event's opening keynote address, they were greeted by two large video screens that welcomed each of them by name.

The electronic greeting was made possible thanks to portal readers that read a UHF RFID tag attached to their name badge and carried an ID number linked to their name. The badge system, used at the conference to track the volume of attendees for each session, was developed and deployed by Avante.

--- FOR CARGO – SOMETHING DIFFERENT ---

Avante's booth in the LIVE exhibit hall, the company demonstrated a totally different RFID system... one that can be used to secure and track cargo on ships, as well as track cases and pallets of goods in the retail supply chain.

The system is built around Avante's Zoner tag, an active UHF tag that emits a series of RF signals at several distinct and programmable power levels so that a reader can ascertain the distance between it and the tag from between 10 and 100 meters.

--- SO WHAT? ---

It can triangulate and locate a tag within feet.

If the card readers were within the hold of a ship, and Zoner tags stuck magnetically within each container, the system would know if a container had been opened or moved.

"It doesn't make sense to put the tag on the seal, because anyone with a cheap blowtorch could cut a hole into a shipping container without touching the seal," says a spokesman.

If someone used a blowtorch to cut a hole in a container equipped with a Zoner tag, the hole would enable more of a tag's lower-power signals to reach a reader, thereby causing the Avante system to send out an alert.

MORE: <http://www.rfidjournal.com/article/articleprint/1515/-1/1/>

SECURITY – RYDER RFID LAB

Ryder System is opening of a radio frequency identification (RFID) technology test lab in its 192,000 square-foot, multi-client facility in Dallas/Fort Worth.

Ryder says it will use the lab to test RFID vendor hardware and software, tag placement configuration on products, package design and the integration of RFID to Warehouse Management Systems and Transportation Management Systems to determine gained supply chain efficiencies for customers.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/04_05/0418_ryder.html

SECURITY – DHS FUNDS “SAFE COMMERCE”: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Port of Los Angeles-Long Beach and the Port of Seattle-Tacoma will split \$17.1-million in funds awarded by the Department of Homeland Security to continue testing container tracking and security technologies and processes.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20850>

SECURITY – AUS COASTAL SECURITY GAPS: A report released by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute has highlighted flaws in security measures governing the nation's seaports. The report also outlined the possibility of terrorists using cargo ships to bring in weapons or launch an attack on Australia. Most major commercial ships undergo strict scrutiny, but some recreational vessels can slip through virtually undetected.

MORE: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200504/s1349534.htm>

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

TRADE - UNPREDICTABLE SUPPLY CHAINS WILL NOT STOP OFF-SHORING

Despite the mess late deliveries of cargo cause, more companies will be manufacturing overseas.

A study of 170 companies conducted by Aberdeen Group indicated intent to increase off-shore sourcing despite problems of longer lead times and unpredictability. 9 out of 10 respondents are already doing business in China.

Global sourcing is stretching supply chains and creating problems for those companies, including longer lead times and unpredictability. Those companies are requiring faster, more frequent deliveries. “The profit life cycle around products is shrinking, so the time that they have to make money on a certain product or packaging style is much shorter than it’s ever been.”

91% of respondents said the product cost savings they expected from global sourcing aren’t there. Savings are being eroded by unexpected supply chain costs.

91% of those surveyed said they have problems with at least one out ten shipments.

13% report problems in one out of every five shipments.

MORE: <http://www.logisticstoday.com/displayStory.asp?sNO=7102&OASKEY=BreakingNews>

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TRADE - CHINA LOGISTICS 2010: China’s Vice-Premier Wu Yi says China expects to build a modern logistics industry on an initial stage by 2010. She called for recognizing the importance of logistics for a socialist market economy and making efforts in developing a modern logistics industry. “Over the past decades of reforms, China has witnessed profound changes in the logistics sector as market mechanism has taken shape and played its due role,” says Wu.

MORE: http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200504/16/eng20050416_181351.html

AIR – DUBAI CARGO TRAFFIC UP 18%: Dubai International Airport says first-quarter passenger traffic increased 12.7% to 6.0 million people. Cargo traffic increased 18.3% in the first quarter of 2005 to 303,206 tonnes.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1113816704.html>

AIR – DUBAI MULTIMODAL LOGISTICS CENTER IN 2008: Dubai is creating the world's first integrated logistics and multi-modal transport platform. The logistics 'super-hub' is to be constructed in Dubai in a newly designated area consisting of the Dubai Logistics City (DLC), the Jebel Ali International Airport (JXB), and an expanded Jebel Ali Port, all of which should be up and running within two years. DLC will become the world's largest multi-modal logistics hub for air, sea and road services, covering 25 square kilometers.

MORE: http://www.commentwire.com/commwire_story.asp?commentwire_ID=6543

AIR – LH-CARGO UNDER PRESSURE: Lufthansa Cargo managed a turn-around during the last year and now aims to grow further with innovative projects. LH Cargo produced a profit despite mounting expenses (fuel, security, currency depreciation), high investments (EUR 165 million) and a very competitive environment (sinking profit margins on many routes). It transported 1.75 million tonnes of freight and mail. Volumes in freight-ton-kilometres rose by 12.3% to 7,961 million.

MORE: <http://www.transportjournal.com/e/itz/itz/artikel.php?id=8283>

AIR – AIR CANADA TO EXPAND CHINA CARGO: Air Canada intends to take advantage of the recent Canada-China bilateral air services agreement by introducing a number of new passenger and freight services. Air Canada will introduce freight operations between Toronto and Shanghai next month and boost that cargo service to daily routes next year. As well, Canada's flag carrier expects to start Toronto-Guangzhou cargo service in 2007 and plans to eventually add Tianjin to its freight operations.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20890>

MORE: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20050420/RTICKITEM20/TPBusiness/Canadian>

AIR – CARGOLUX PROFIT: Cargolux posted a net profit of \$83.5 million in 2004, up 18% 2003.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/other.html?issueDate=4%2F21%2F2005>

AIR – NWA TO RESTART CHINA NON-STOP: US-based Northwest Airlines will reopen its non-stop Shanghai-Detroit route "in the near future" and hopes to add other direct flights between Chinese cities and the United States. Northwest currently flies from Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou to the United States via Tokyo.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=6&u=afp/20050418/bs_afp/chinaairus_050418080638

AIR – EMIRATES ADDS CAPACITY: Emirates SkyCargo increased cargo capacity between Hong Kong and Dubai now with nine flights per week of a 747F.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/other.html?issueDate=4%2F19%2F2005>

AIR – LOW COST CARRIERS EYE CARGO

Traditional airlines, many of which have experienced a sharp decline in fortunes with the intense competition from low-cost carriers (LCCs) and freight forwarders, now are bracing for another attack from the LCCs, in the cargo business.

Two or three Asian budget carriers, including ValueAir of Singapore, are seriously looking into setting up a cargo operation, according to industry observers.

No-frills US airlines which fly coast-to-coast routes, like JetBlue Airways and Southwest Airlines, are thinking once again of entering air freight services.

An average airline generates 10-15% of its revenue from cargo shipping.

Cargo revenue on medium- and long-haul international routes has often made the difference between route loss and profit.

MORE: http://www.bangkokpost.com/Business/19Apr2005_biz76.php

AIR – HIGH FUEL COSTS MAKE A GLOOMY OUTLOOK: Continued high jet fuel prices and a continued glut of seats in some key markets spell trouble for US airlines. That glut is caused by the fact that the much anticipated shake-out of struggling carriers -- namely US Airways and United Airlines -- has not yet happened.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/industries/travel/airlines_airports/2005/04/18/phoenix_focus2.html?f=et184

AIR – US-AIR BUYS TIME: US Airways says it now has until the end of April to file a plan of reorganization with the US Bankruptcy Court after reaching agreement with two of its largest creditors, GECAS and GE Engine Services. The agreement requires the airline to exit bankruptcy by June 30.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/other.html?issueDate=4%2F18%2F2005>

AIR – DELTA LOSES ANOTHER BILLION: Delta Air Lines, which narrowly avoided bankruptcy last year, reports its quarterly loss widened to USD\$1.1 billion as it struggled with record fuel prices amid tough competition and pension costs.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1114079062.html>

AIR – AIRLINE CONSOLIDATION “INEVITABLE”: America West Holding president and chief executive Douglas Parker says the airline industry is ripe for consolidation after a period of sharp cuts in labor costs and that bankrupt carriers in particular make enticing merger targets. His comments come a day after reports that America West was in talks with US Airways over a possible merger or major equity stake.

MORE: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A6008-2005Apr20.html?nav=headlines>

AIR – A380 FIRST FLIGHT THIS WEEK?: The first flight of the world's biggest airliner is expected this week as Airbus runs final tests on the A380.

MORE: http://yahoo.reuters.com/financeQuoteCompanyNewsArticle.jhtml?duid=mtfh59945_2005-04-22_13-20-23_l2193442_newsml

AIR – FIRST 747ADV COULD BE FREIGHTER: ATWOnline reports Boeing may launch the 747ADV without a passenger version at this stage.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=773>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050420/sections/air/w98339.asp>

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OCEAN – TSA: “SHARPLY HIGHER” DEMURRAGE: Pick up your container from the terminal fast or you will face "sharply higher" storage charges, says the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement (TSA). Marine terminals and railroads are imposing "tough new penalties to keep equipment moving and boost throughput." For example, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) will reduce its free-time allowance to the day of notification plus 24-48 hours for its major intermodal yards, with storage charges of \$100-150 per day, effective 1 May 1. Union Pacific Railroad will raise its existing storage charges \$50 per day and introduce a third tier charge of \$300 per day for shipments stored more than 11 days. CSX will increase its charge for shipments left more than 11 days to \$200 per day.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20858>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050418/sections/ocean/w62403.asp>

OCEAN – CARRIERS TO GET NEW C-TPAT: US Customs and Border Protection, fresh from issuing tougher criteria for importers wishing to participate in the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, will probably turn its attention to carriers next says Christopher Koch, president of the World Shipping Council. C-TPAT is a voluntary supply chain security program that includes brokers, carriers, logistics providers, foreign manufacturers, port terminals and port authorities.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20895>

OCEAN – FMC CLARIFIES CARRIER REGS: The US Federal Maritime Commission has clarified the market share thresholds used to determine if a carrier agreement benefits from an exemption from the statutory 45-day waiting period.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20879>

OCEAN – TACA TOUGH DOCUMENTATION: The Trans-Atlantic Conference Agreement is setting new rules for shippers of US export cargoes because its member lines have increasingly experienced chronic delays in receiving documentation required by US law. The rules take effect June 1. Under the new rules, the shipper or its agent must submit the following information to the carrier at least 24 hours before the vessel's scheduled departure:

- Names and addresses of the shipper and consignee;
- The cargo's destination;
- The port of discharge;
- A description of the cargo, including quantity and weight;
- The Automated Export System's export citation (external transaction number of exemption statement).

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050420/sections/ocean/w33827.asp>

OCEAN – MARSEILLES SEAFARERS CLASH WITH POLICE: Hundreds of striking seafarers set cars afire and pelted police with pieces of metal and distress flares last Monday as they tried to close down the Port of Marseilles in a dispute over reform of the French shipping registry. Strikers turned water-cannon on the police before an agreement to end the violence was reached early Monday afternoon.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050418/sections/ocean/w15196.asp>

OCEAN – PACIFIC PORTS SEE SLOWING TRAFFIC: Box traffic dropped at the ports of Los Angeles and Hong Kong during March, while the port of Long Beach recently reported a slowdown in its container activity. Los Angeles was down 14%. Hong Kong was down 7%. Long Beach was up only 4%.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20861>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050422/sections/ocean/w71771.asp>

OCEAN – MAERSK SEALAND MOVES MORE TO PNW PORTS: Maersk Sealand will deploy more capacity on the Asia/Pacific Northwest route and skip calls at Californian ports under a major adjustment of its transpacific services to be implemented at the start of the peak season. Changes begin from early July "in response to market demand for expanded use of alternative gateways, as well as more stable options through Los Angeles."

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20913>

OCEAN – VANCOUVER RESTRICTIONS COMING?: Ocean container have just this month been cleared to resume normal operations at the Port of Vancouver's Deltaport terminal after severe congestion forced a month-long restriction on inbound container traffic. The question now is whether the restrictions will return when the Asia trade heats up again.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050418/sections/ocean/w66434.asp>

OCEAN – BOXSHIP ORDERS CLIMB: Shipowners are still ordering record numbers of containerships despite rising prices, stalling charter rates and softening freight rates as they bet cargo volumes will continue to outstrip the supply of new tonnage in the coming years.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050421/sections/ocean/w74977.asp>

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

\$2 BILL

I am STILL laughing!! Many of today's youth are terribly challenged without a computer to tell them what to do!! The story is funny. Lack of education is not funny!! Yes, there are \$2 bills with Thomas Jefferson on them. They are real and are legal, but not often seen.

On my way home from work, I stopped at Taco Bell for a quick bite to eat. In my billfold are a \$50 bill and a \$2 bill. I figure that with a \$2 bill, I can get something to eat and not have to worry about anyone getting irritated at me for trying to break a \$50 bill.

I said: "Hi, I'd like one seven-layer burrito please, to go."

Server: "That'll be \$1.04. Eat in?"

I said: "No, it's to go." At this point, I open my billfold and hand him the \$2 bill. He looks at it kind of funny.

Server: "Uh, hang on a sec, I'll be right back."

He goes to talk to his manager, who is still within my earshot. The following conversation occurs between the two of them:

Server: "Hey, you ever see a \$2 bill?"

Manager: "No. A what?"

Server: "A \$2 bill. This guy just gave it to me."

Manager: "Ask for something else. There's no such thing as a \$2 bill."

Server: "Yeah, thought so."

He comes back to me and says, "We don't take these. Do you have anything else?"

Myself: "Just this fifty. You don't take \$2 bills? Why?"

Server: "I don't know."

Myself: "See here where it says legal tender?"

Server: "Yeah."

Myself: "So, why won't you take it?"

Server: "Well, hang on a sec."

He goes back to his manager, who's been watching me like I'm a shoplifter, and says, "He says I have to take it."

Manager: "Doesn't he have anything else?"

Server: "Yeah, a fifty. I'll get it and you can open the safe and get change."

Manager: "I'm not opening the safe with him in here."

Server: "What should I do?"

Manager: "Tell him to come back later when he has real money."

Server: "I can't tell him that! You tell him."

Manager: "Just tell him."

Server: "No way! This is weird. I'm going in back."

The manager approaches me and says, "I'm sorry, but we don't take big bills this time of night."

Myself: "It's only seven o'clock! Well then, here's a two dollar bill."

Manager: "We don't take those, either."

Myself: "Why not?"

Manager: "I think you know why."

Myself: "No really... tell me why."

Manager: "Please leave before I call mall security."

Myself: "Excuse me?"

Manager: "Please leave before I call mall security."

Myself: "What on earth for?"

Manager: "Please, sir."

Myself: "Uh, go ahead, call them."

Manager: "Would you please just leave?"

Myself: "No."

Manager: "Fine -- have it your way then."

Myself: "Hey, that's Burger King, isn't it?"

At this point, he backs away from me and calls mall security on the phone around the corner. I have two people staring at me from the dining area, and I begin laughing out loud, just for effect. A few minutes later this 45-year-oldish guy comes in.

Guard: "Yeah, Mike, what's up?"

Manager (whispering): "This guy is trying to give me some (pause) funny money."

Guard: "No kidding! What?"

Manager: "Get this... a two dollar bill."

Guard (incredulous): "Why would a guy fake a two dollar bill?"

Manager: "I don't know. He's kinda weird. He says the only other thing he has is a fifty."

Guard: "Oh, so the fifty's fake!"

Manager: "No, the two dollar bill is."

Guard: "Why would he fake a two dollar bill?"

Manager: "I don't know! Can you talk to him, and get him out of here?"

Guard: "Yeah."

Security Guard walks over to me and...

Guard: "Mike here tells me you have some fake bills you're trying to use."

Myself: "Uh, no."

Guard: "Lemme see 'em."

Myself: "Why?"

Guard: "Do you want me to get the cops in here?"

At this point I am ready to say, "Sure!" but I want to eat, so I say, "I'm just trying to buy a burrito and pay for it with this two dollar bill."

I put the bill up near his face, and he flinches like I'm taking a swing at him. He takes the bill, turns it over a few times in his hands, and says, "Hey, Mike, what's wrong with this bill?"

Manager: "It's fake."

Guard: "It doesn't look fake to me."

Manager: "But it's a two dollar bill."

Guard: "Yeah... ?"

Manager: "Well, there's no such thing, is there?"

The security guard and I both look at him like he's an idiot, and it dawns on the guy that he has no clue.

So, it turns out that my burrito was free, and he threw in a small drink and some of those cinnamon things, too.

Made me want to get a whole stack of two dollar bills just to see what happens when I try to buy stuff. If I got the right group of people, I could probably end up in jail. You get free food there, too!

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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