

AllCovered NEWS

HIGHLIGHTS TO HELP YOU THIS WEEK

- Plan For Coming Worker Shortage
- Trucking Outlook Rough Short-Term – Long-Term OK
- 2007 Freight Rate Outlook
- BA Strike Tomorrow?

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DETAILED CONTENTS THIS WEEK

SMALL BUSINESS:

Plan For
Coming Worker
Shortage

Lawmakers Eye
Backdoor for
AHPs

TRUCKING:

Trucking
Outlook Rough
Short-Term But
Long-Term
Better

SECURITY:

\$50-Billion In
New Taxes to
Fund Security

100%
Screening May
Not Survive
Senate

Final TWIC
Rules
Published

OCEAN & AIR FORWARDING:

2007 Freight
Rate Outlook

BA Strike May
Begin
Tomorrow

American
Lowers
Surcharge

New An124
Production?

Maersk
Continues
Adjustments

JUST FOR FUN:

Office
Cannibals

Kids Say
Amazing
Things

AllCovered News

Information to help you to manage and grow your logistics business.

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PDF FORMAT: <http://www.allcovered.net/AC-News-PDF.htm>

NOTE: All links to stories in PDF version work – just click them

>> SMALL BUSINESS SECTION <<

SMALL BIZ – PLAN FOR COMING WORKER SHORTAGE

--- Excerpted from articles by Jennifer Curry – Links at end ---

With 76 million baby boomers nearing retirement in the United States, employers are looking for ways to fill the potential knowledge gap their graying work force could soon create.

About a quarter of the US population is made up of boomers -- those born between 1946 and 1964 -- and the percentage of the nation's labor force age 60 and older is expected to grow from 22.9% today to 28.4% by 2012, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The state of Pennsylvania can serve as an example. In Pennsylvania, nearly 30% of the work force is expected to turn 55 or older within five years, according to the state Department of Labor and Industry.

And with US Census data showing Pittsburgh has the nation's 12th-highest concentration of residents 65 and older, local work force experts expect the impact of the nation's aging labor pool to be seen here even sooner -- and in greater numbers.

They need to look no further for evidence than the challenges a number of the region's largest employers say they're already facing. For instance, half of Pittsburgh-based Duquesne Light Company's 1,466 workers will reach retirement by 2011.

Nationwide, the nursing sector could see up to 35% of its work force retire by 2010, according to a study by the Bernard Hodes Group, a New York human resources firm.

Yet, many companies are doing little to ensure that when a significant portion of the local work force retires, critical knowledge and expertise doesn't go with it. According to the Workforce Investment Board/CMU survey, only 24% of companies surveyed said they had taken the initiative to address a future shortfall of workers.

--- BEING PRO-ACTIVE ---

Pennsylvania's Kennametal recruits potential new employees from local college campuses and has created a scholarship program for students studying material science and machining at local universities. Kennametal, which employs 13,500 worldwide, knows tapping promising new employees is essential, especially in industries such as primary metal manufacturing, where 41% of the work force is between 45 and 54.

"Focusing on upgrading the younger workers with the skills they need is an important issue. It's not just recruiting new bodies," says Barry Maciak, executive director of Duquesne University's Center for Competitive Workforce Development.

MORE: http://pittsburgh.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/stories/2007/01/01/story3.html?l=et152&b=1167627600^1395755&hbxe=e_vert

MORE: http://pittsburgh.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/stories/2007/01/01/story5.html?l=et152&b=1167627600^1395750&hbxe=e_vert

NEXT WEEK**FOCUS:**
Sell Yourself to ShippersWhat to Say
How to Say It
Tools for Sales

Links to source stories at end of excerpts

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mike.miller@allcovered.net
john.larrard@allcovered.net**HEALTH BIZ – LAWMAKERS LOOK FOR BACK-DOOR OK FOR AHP'S:** Senators David Vitter and John Thune say they might introduce an amendment to a minimum wage bill expected to pass easily that would allow small businesses to form association health plans across state lines. Association Health Plans would allow similar small businesses to pool together to bargain for lower health insurance costs as large companies do.
MORE: www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/print_report.cfm?DR_ID=42488&dr_cat=3**HEALTH BIZ – BUSH PROMOTES HEALTH INSURANCE TAX BREAK:** In his State of the Union address President Bush promoted his proposal to offer a federal tax deduction of \$7,500 for individuals and \$15,000 for families who obtain health insurance on their own or through an employer.MORE: www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/print_report.cfm?DR_ID=42452&dr_cat=3
MORE: <http://tinyurl.com/2tgscp>**HEALTH BIZ – BUSH PLAN RAISES QUESTIONS:**MORE: <http://www.businessinsurance.com/cgi-bin/news.pl?newsId=9327&print=Y>**HEALTH BIZ – EXPERTS EXAMINE BUSH PLAN:**MORE: <http://tinyurl.com/2czm7j>**HEALTH BIZ – AOL FOUNDER LAUNCHES HEALTH SITE:** Revolution Health Group, launched last year by America Online co-founder Steve Case, unveiled a preview of RevolutionHealth.com, a new Web site that will allow users to search for information on specific medical conditions, find physicians and exchange comments with other users.MORE: www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/print_report.cfm?DR_ID=42417&dr_cat=3
MORE: <http://ct.eneews.eweek.com/rd/cts?d=186-5369-16-87-194617-611088-0-0-0-1>**TECH BIZ – STORM VIRUS SPREADS:** Last week we warned of an email claiming to be about the recent European storm that is actually being used to infect computers. The problem is spreading worldwide.MORE: <http://ct.eletters.whatsnewnow.com/rd/cts?d=181-799-1-407-261855-45510-0-0-0-1>**ALLCOVERED TIP: PROTECT YOURSELF**

- If you do not have anti-virus software on your computer, get it.
- If you have anti-virus software, update it daily.

Links to anti-virus software vendors are on the Allcovered web site including a free scan option:

GO TO: <http://www.allcovered.net>

CLICK: "Internet Links"

YOU DESERVE IT – WE DELIVER IT<http://www.allcovered.net> We have logistics Allcovered**TECH BIZ – ZONE ALARM SECURITY SUITE GETS EVEN BETTER:**MORE: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2087488,00.asp>**TECH BIZ – UPGRADE FROM XP TO VISTA?:** Microsoft officially releases its new operating system "Vista" this week. Here is a step-by-step guide to upgrading your computer.MORE: <http://ct.eletters.whatsnewnow.com/rd/cts?d=181-799-1-407-261855-45522-0-0-0-1>**TECH BIZ – IS VISTA ULTIMATE WORTH IT?:**MORE: http://reviews.cnet.com/Windows_Vista_Ultimate/4505-3672_7-32013603.html?tag=nl.e404**TECH BIZ – ROAD WARRIOR GEAR:** For the techy traveler, here are the latest gadgets.MORE: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2072934,00.asp>**TECH BIZ – DO AWAY WITH ALL THOSE CHARGERS:** Do you have one charger for your mobile phone and one for this and one for that? Here's a pad that charges all your gear.MORE: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2087430,00.asp>**TECH BIZ – YAHOO OFFERS PERSONAL FINANCE WEB SITE:** Yahoo launches a new site to help you manage personal finances with tools for building a budget or retirement plan.MORE: <http://ct.eneews.eweek.com/rd/cts?d=186-5338-17-83-50684-608127-0-0-0-1>

>>>> TRUCKING SECTION <<<<

TRUCKING – SHORT TERM OUTLOOK ROUGH - LONG-TERM OUTLOOK GOOD –

The trucking industry may be facing a slowdown this year, but the longer term outlook is very good, according to Bob Costello, the American Trucking Associations' chief economist and vice president.

The trucking industry got a jolt when ATA's for-hire tonnage index for November fell 8.8% from the same period a year ago, but tonnage isn't the whole story, Costello told participants in "Navigating the Economy and Capital Markets," audio conference.

For one thing, many of the economic sectors that experienced downturns in 2006 – namely residential housing and automotive – tend to move heavier goods. Thus a drop in their freight can disproportionately affect tonnage. Also, the year-to-year comparison is somewhat skewed by the fact that carriers in November 2005 were busy hauling equipment and materials for clean-up and rebuilding after the Gulf Coast hurricanes.

--- MIXED SIGNALS ---

In addition to tonnage, ATA tracks the number of loads hauled by for-hire carriers.

- Refrigerated loads through October were up 6.9% from the same period in 2005
- Flatbed loads were about the same as a year ago, although Costello said not-yet-released data for November shows a sharp decline
- Dry van loads were down 0.8%
- Bulk tank loads down 4.5%
- Long-haul loads (more than 1,000 miles), down 5.4%
- Small carriers (less than \$30 million in annual revenues), down 5.9%
- The capacity squeeze has eased recently because freight demand has slowed and because new emissions rules for 2007 engines prompted carriers to step up truck buying in 2006
- Some shippers are reportedly bringing carriers back to the bargaining tables and revenue per mile has declined somewhat

The main reason trucking capacity has been tight is that carriers can't find enough drivers. The shortage may have eased slightly but the fundamental problem hasn't gone away. When freight demand starts to accelerate "capacity could quickly go back to the motor carrier side of the field," Costello says.

"I think our biggest challenge isn't the short-term downturn we're seeing now. It's going to be hauling 31% more freight by 2017 despite congestion and the driver shortage."

Bob Costello, ATA Economist

--- 2007 TO BE TOUGH ---

2007 may be the trucking industry's toughest since the last recession in 2001, but it won't be as bad. The economy is expected to grow about 2.3%. Manufacturing will lag behind overall growth... growing at less than 2% this year and a little over 2% in 2008.

Most economists expect things to start improving in the second half of this year. "Nothing stellar," Costello said, "but by 2008 we should be doing much better."

--- LONG-TERM LOOKS BETTER ---

Looking long-term, the picture is much brighter. ATA studies indicate that trucking tonnage will increase 31% over the next 10 years. Rail is expected to grow 79% and air freight 72%, but trucking will still handle nearly 70% of tonnage carried by all modes.

"I think our biggest challenge isn't the short-term downturn we're seeing now," he said. "It's going to be hauling 31% more freight by 2017 despite congestion and the driver shortage."

MORE: <http://www.truckloadacademy.org>

MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=57855

TRUCKING – E-MANIFEST FILINGS JUMP: Truck carriers electronically filed more than 20,000 manifests with U.S Customs and Border Protection in December, a 65% increase from September. In 2007, truckers will be required to file their manifests for security checks by electronic means rather than faxing paper documents two hours prior to arrival at the border. MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47612

TRUCKING – BIG TRUCK FIRMS REPORT BIG SLOW DOWN: Arkansas Best and Celadon each cited significant reductions in freight volume to close out 2006. “This year’s sequential decline in total weight per day from September to October was the largest, by far, in over twenty years,” says Robert Davidson, Arkansas Best president.

MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/24/Bigtruckingfirmsreportbigyear-endslowdownsinfreight.aspx>

TRUCKING – DIESEL AT 13-MONTH LOW: The US national average retail price of a gallon of diesel fell 3 cents in the week ending 22 January to \$2.430; 4-cents cheaper than last year.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57754>

MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/22/Priceofdieselreaches13-monthlowat243.aspx>

TRUCKING – ATA PRESIDENT WANTS RECORDERS: Rather than limit the productivity of the trucking industry as some fear, eventual widespread adoption of Electronic On-Board Recorders (EOBRs) actually could improve the management of trucking companies according to American Trucking Associations President Bill Graves.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57759>

> > > > SECURITY SECTION < < < <

SECURITY – \$50-BILLION IN NEW TAXES TO FUND SECURITY: Legislation proposed by Senator Joseph Biden, a Delaware Democrat and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, would raise taxes by \$50-Billion to fund billions in new Homeland Security spending on more police officers, interoperable communications equipment and 100% screening of cargo entering the United States.

MORE: <http://washingtontimes.com/national/20070124-110504-7152r.htm>

SECURITY – 100% SCREENING WILL NOT SURVIVE US SENATE: The Associated Press is reporting that 100% cargo screening provisions of a House-passed security bill will likely not survive the Senate version of the bill. The House measure covers a broad swath of security measures, including two provisions that call for the screening of all air cargo and ocean freight bound for the US.

MORE: <http://www.purchasing.com/article/CA6410204.html>

SECURITY – FINAL TWIC RULES PUBLISHED: We have reported on the rules and regulations for the Transportation Workers Identification Credential many times.

(For details see Allcovered News 8 January edition here: <http://www.allcovered.net/AC-News-PDF.htm>).

Now final rules have been “officially” published so the countdown begins to implementation. The final rule takes effect March 26. Workers who must have unescorted access to secure port areas, and Coast Guard-credentialed merchant mariners will have until September 25, 2008 to obtain the biometric credential. Implementation of the program will be conducted on a port-by-port basis. TSA and the Coast Guard will make future announcements on deployment of the card.

CDL TWIC RULES: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/07-19.htm>

MARITIME TWIC RULES: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/07-18.htm>

MORE: <http://www.ioc.com/20070126/sections/ocean/w85213.asp>

SECURITY – DRIVERS ARRESTED IN KL CHIP HEIST: Two transport company drivers have been arrested in connection with the US\$12.7-million microchips robbery at the Second Air Cargo Complex in Malaysia last year. State CID chief Senior Asst Commissioner II Abdul Samah Mat said the duo, aged 26 and 36, were picked up in Kuala Lumpur. “We hope they will be able to shed some light on the whereabouts of the components. The two have since been remanded by a magistrate’s court pending investigations. “Both are drivers of different transport companies. They are presently being held at the state police contingent headquarters lock-up.” About 20 robbers, four of them in Rela uniforms, had driven two lorry trailers into the cargo complex and escaped with the components. The robbers injured 17 people, comprising freight-forwarding staff and state customs department officers, during the well planned robbery.

MORE: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2007/1/23/nation/16649069&sec=nation>

TRADE – 2007 FREIGHT RATE OUTLOOK

--- Excerpted from an in-depth article by Elizabeth Baatz – Link at end ---

Pricing power is likely to shift a bit in shippers' favor in 2007.

Truckload carriers are negotiating freight rates. It is no longer "take it or leave it." Shippers are even reporting limited price cuts the last few months.

Fuel prices are lower, so air cargo fuel surcharges should drop.

Ocean carriers are "re-positioning" capacity, so negotiations with ocean carriers will be tough. Carriers are determined to make up for last year's relatively weak rates.

It appears that conditions are ripe for some negotiating opportunities in 2007.

Planning for any of several scenarios is critical for Freight Forwarders and Shippers.

THE ECONOMY

Some economists are predicting a US recession. Others think the economy will remain strong. That means you need to be prepared for two very different scenarios: continued tight capacity and high rates, or capacity opening up and rates heading downhill as a result of declining demand.

There's no clear consensus because... "The economy is on a knife's edge," says Randell Moore of Blue Chip Economic Indicators. "Any exogenous shock could tip us into a recession." Despite that uncertainty, an average of the Blue Chip predictions gives a forecast for 2.5% US GDP growth in 2007

TRUCKING – MORE CAPACITY

Oil prices have fallen to the \$50 range and are predicted to hold here for two years.

"I view the truckload market as having excess capacity until May or June 2007," says stock analyst Thomas Albrecht.

Tom Sanderson of Transplace expects TL rates, exclusive of fuel surcharges, will rise by less than 2% if the economy softens, or about 4% otherwise. "Now is a good time... to lock in truckload service, capacity, and pricing for 2007."

Not only are LTLs losing revenue as fuel prices drop forcing surcharge cuts, but they're also facing competition from FedEx and UPS, which are expanding rapidly in that market, not by cutting prices but by raising the bar on service and technology.

RAIL – RATE HIKES LIKELY

A recent survey of shippers by the investment firm Morgan Stanley suggests that rail rates will be up 6.4% in 2007. Imports from Asia pushed intermodal traffic up more than 30% over the past four years, due in large part to the surge in imports from China. None of the analysts interviewed for this article sees this trend turning around in 2007.

AIR – JET FUEL PRICES RULE

The two most important factors in air cargo pricing will continue to be fuel costs and capacity/demand. On average, jet fuel represents more than 30% of airlines' operating costs. In 2006, fuel surcharges hit 60 cents per kilo, higher than base rates in some cases. As oil prices have dropped, carriers are lowering surcharges.

Carriers are bringing their fuel surcharges down but they're raising their accessorial charges. "More and more is moving off the books and isn't quoted in the rate," says Ted Scherck, of The Colography Group. "The number of accessories has nearly doubled over the past six years; in some cases, the increase in accessorial fees has dwarfed base-rate increases. "Exclusive of surcharges, rates should remain fairly steady.

OCEAN – RATES COULD RISE

Over-capacity led to lower rates in 2006. Neil Dekker with Drewry Shipping Consultants says he saw a 6.7% drop in 2006 and forecasts a 1.5% drop for 2007.

Ocean carriers say that they will raise their rates to compensate for sharply rising costs they pay to railroads for intermodal service. Some large ship lines have said they will remove capacity. Shippers can expect a lot of pricing pressure.

Underpinning all of this is the continuing trade imbalance, as full containerships dock in LA/Long Beach but sail empty back to China.

The prospect of a repeat of 2004, when port and rail systems were practically paralyzed by an influx of containers from Asia, continues to be a threat. "International trade is increasing faster than the capacity of ports, rails, and highways can handle," says economist Paul Bingham of Global Insight.

MORE: <http://www.logisticsmgmt.com/index.asp?layout=articlePrint&articleID=CA6405807>

AIR – BA STRIKE MAY BEGIN TOMORROW: Talks continued Saturday but as Allcovered News was written no agreement had been announced. British Airways and its largest union last week said the first 24 hours of a pending three day walkout had been called off. "If the dispute is not resolved, the strike will go ahead on Tuesday and Wednesday," said T&G General Secretary Tony Woodley. The airline's sick-leave policy and its two pay scales for cabin crew are among the issues being discussed with the T&G, which represents about 10,500 of BA's approximately 14,000 cabin crew. The union earlier gave warning of further stoppages on February 5, 6 and 7 and February 12, 13 and 14 unless there is a deal.
MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1169685116.html>

AIR – BA CANCELS 1,300 FLIGHTS: British Airways cancelled around 1,300 flights for this week after a breakdown in talks with its largest union pointed to a threatened 48 hour strike by cabin crew going ahead. Cancellations would affect more than 140,000 passengers and involve most flights to and from London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports.
MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1169730086.html>

AIR – AMERICAN LOWERS SURCHARGE: American Airlines Cargo will drop its fuel surcharges to 45 cents/kg from 50 cents/kg for most US-origin international shipments, and to 18 cents per pound from 20 cents/pound for US domestic shipments, effective 8 February.
MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47739

AIR – DELTA SAYS NOT TALKING NWA MERGER: Delta Air Lines chief executive Gerald Grinstein says Delta is not in merger talks with rival Northwest Airlines.
MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1169642608.html>

AIR – CATHAY ADDS 11 EU FREIGHTER FLIGHTS: Cathay Pacific Airways will add 11 weekly freighter flights to Europe beginning Thursday, 1 February, pending government approval. Five flights will go to Frankfurt via Dubai. Six new flights will route from Hong Kong to Dubai, Manchester and Amsterdam.
MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47460

AIR – UNITED CARGO DOWN: Revenue for cargo fell to \$193-million for United Air Cargo in 2006, down \$10-million from 2005.
MORE: <http://www.ioc.com/lede/20070124/sections/air/w461.asp>

AIR – VOLGA-DNEPR WANTS TO BUILD NEW AN-124: Volga-Dnepr, the Russian heavy-lift cargo airline, plans to restart production of the Antonov An-124, the world's biggest commercial freighter, to keep pace with rising global demand for the transport of super-heavy and outsized cargo. Production of the An-124 was halted in the early 90's. The new version will have an extended flight range and increased payload of up to 165 tons.
MORE: <http://www.ioc.com/20070124/sections/air/w14046.asp>

AIR – CHINA SOUTHERN EYES 12 NEW FREIGHTERS: China Southern Airlines may order as many as 12 Boeing 777 freighters to tap the country's growing air cargo demand, says Deputy General Manager Liu Xiaoxiao.
MORE: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=aWbG4.av5JHg&refer=asia>

AIR – AIRBUS HAS ONE A380'S WIRING FIXED:
MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1169812254.html>

OCEAN – MAERSK TO CUT TRANS-PAC SERVICE: Maersk Line is eliminating another trans-Pacific service saying it will phase out the Transpacific 2 service at the end of February.
MORE: <http://www.ioc.com/20070122/sections/ocean/w51778.asp>

OCEAN – MAERSK & HOEGH TO MERGE CAR CARRIER OPS: Hoegh Autoliners and Maersk will jointly operate a combined fleet of 67 car carriers under a new cooperation agreement to take effect 1 February.
MORE: <http://www.ioc.com/20070124/sections/ocean/w40803.asp>

OCEAN – MAERSK ENDS HALIFAX CALLS:
MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47748

OCEAN – COSCO AND CMA-CGM LAUNCH ASIA FEEDER: COSCO Container Lines and CMA CGM will start a joint weekly service connecting China and South East Asia with ports in the West Mediterranean region in March.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47746

OCEAN – NEW SERVICE FOR CHARLESTON: The newly reorganized North Europe Express service started by Zim and Italia Marittima made its first call at Charleston Thursday.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070126/sections/ocean/w81824.asp>

OCEAN – MOL TO START SNG-DURBAN SHUTTLE: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines will start a shuttle service between Singapore and Durban to replace discontinued calls at the South African port on the outward voyage of its weekly Asia/South Africa/East Coast South America CSW service starting in April.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47744

OCEAN – MATSON CUTS FUEL SURCHARGE: Matson Navigation is lowering its fuel surcharge in its Hawaii, Guam/CNMI and Micronesia services to 17.5%, effective Sunday.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47321

OCEAN – BACKLOG AT VANCOUVER'S DELTAPORT: Competing container terminals at Canada's Port of Vancouver are coming together to divert boxes from badly congested Deltaport, the hub's largest terminal. The backlog of about 7,000 containers could remain until as late as mid-February.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070125/sections/ocean/w10248.asp>

OCEAN – PORTLAND BOXES UP 33%:

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20070122/sections/ocean/w31296.asp>

OCEAN – SHIPPERS & PORTS ATTACK STATE BOX FEE: Shippers and port officials have told Washington state lawmakers they oppose a planned container tax designed to fund freight mobility projects. A state lawmaker introduced a bill to add \$50 per container to fund improved freight systems and freight corridors.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070125/sections/ocean/w89098.asp>

OCEAN – CREWS TO OFFLOAD MSC NAPOLI CARGO: The grounded MSC Napoli is in stable condition off the coast of southern England, and preparations are being made to offload its remaining cargo of containers. 103 containers have been lost overboard, of which 76 have been located. A barge has been chartered in Rotterdam and is currently being fitted with 500- and 400-ton cranes for offloading of about 2,400 containers still aboard.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070122/sections/ocean/w29470.asp>

OCEAN – OIL LEAKS FROM MSC NAPOLI: Nearly 200 tons of oil has leaked from the 4,427-TEU container ship "MSC Napoli," which is beached off England's Devon coast. The ship suffered structural damage and lost power when its engine room flooded amid fierce weather conditions in the English Channel Thursday, 18 January.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=47236

OCEAN – PUBLIC GRABS MSC NAPOLI CARGO: Police are patrolling beaches in Devon in the UK where members of the public have been taking goods washed ashore from stricken container ship MSC Napoli. Hundreds of people have made off with goods worth thousands of pounds from about 40 containers at Branscombe. "Around 50 BMW motorbikes were carried off the beach," said Branscombe Police's Steve Speariett.

MORE: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/devon/6287457.stm

OCEAN – IRAQI PORT IMPROVEMENTS: The Port of Umm Qasr directly influences the economy of Iraq. The US Army Corps of Engineers is working to expand the capacity of the port located south of the city of Basrah near the Kuwait border. It is Iraq's only port.

MORE: <http://newsblaze.com/story/20070125062933tsop.nb/newsblaze/IRAQ0001/Iraq.html>

>>>>> **JUST FOR FUN** <<<<<

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

OFFICE CANNIBALS

Recently, a large company hired several cannibals to increase their diversity.

"You are all part of our team now," said the Human Resources rep during the welcoming briefing. "You'll get all the usual benefits and you can go to the cafeteria for something to eat, but please don't eat any employees."

The cannibals promised they would not. Four weeks later their boss remarked, "You're all working very hard and I'm satisfied with your work. We have noticed a marked increase in the whole company's performance. However, one of our secretaries has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to her?"

The cannibals all shook their heads, "No."

After the boss had left, the leader of the cannibals said to the others, "Which one of you idiots ate the secretary?" A hand rose hesitantly.

"You fool!" the leader continued. "For four weeks we've been eating managers and no one noticed anything. But NOOOOooooo, you had to go and eat someone who actually does something."

MORE 'KIDS SAY AMAZING THINGS'

SUBJECT - NUDITY: It was evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat, "Mom! That lady isn't wearing a seat belt!"

SUBJECT – OPINIONS: On the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

SUBJECT – KETCHUP: A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone. "Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle."

SUBJECT – MORE NUDITY: A little boy got lost at the YMCA and found himself in the women's locker room. When he was spotted, the room burst into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover. The little boy watched in amazement and then asked, "What's the matter, haven't you ever seen a little boy before?"

SUBJECT – POLICE #1: While taking a routine vandalism report at an elementary school, I was interrupted by a little girl about 6 years old. Looking up and down at my uniform, she asked, "Are you a cop?" "Yes," I answered and continued writing the report. "My mother said if I ever needed help I should ask the police. Is that right?" "Yes, that's right," I told her. "Well, then," she said as she extended her foot toward me, "would you please tie my shoe?"

SUBJECT – POLICE #2: It was the end of the day when I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my K-9 partner, Jake, was barking, and I saw a little boy staring in at me "Is that a dog you got back there?" he asked. "It sure is," I replied. Puzzled, the boy looked at me and then towards the back of the van. Finally he said, "What'd he do?"

SUBJECT – ELDERLY: While working for an organization that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins, I used to take my 4-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, "The tooth fairy will never believe this!"

SUBJECT – DRESS-UP: A little girl was watching her parents dress for a party. When she saw her dad donning his tuxedo, she warned, "Daddy, you shouldn't wear that suit." "And why not, darling?" "You know that it always gives you a headache the next morning."

SUBJECT – DEATH: While walking along the sidewalk in front of his church, our minister heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt. Apparently, his 5-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead robin. Feeling that proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton batting, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased. The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with sonorous dignity intoned his version of what he thought his father always said: "Glory be unto the Faaather, and unto the Sonnn, and into the hole he goooses."

SUBJECT – SCHOOL: A little girl had just finished her first week of school. "I'm just wasting

my time," she said to her mother. "I can't read, I can't write and they won't let me talk!"
SUBJECT – BIBLE: A little boy opened the big family bible. He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages. "Mama, look what I found," the boy called out. "What have you got there, dear?" With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered, "I think it's Adam's underwear."

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