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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maritime Impact Awards to be Presented to Four Local Individuals;
Ceremony Commences 3rd Annual National Maritime Days Celebration

HUNTINGTON, W.VA. – For their outstanding and tireless efforts in serving the inland waterways industry, Maritime Impact Awards will be presented to four individuals on National Maritime Recognition Day at Harris River Front Park, Friday, May 16, 2008, at 10 a.m.

The awards ceremony will commence the Port of Huntington Tri-State's second annual National Maritime Days Celebration, which takes place Friday, May 16, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, May 17, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, May 18, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

After welcoming remarks by Dana Robertson, Director of the National Maritime Enhancement Institute at Marshall University, opening comments will be made by Captain David Smith of the Huntington District Waterway Association. The awards will then be presented to Capt. William R. Barr, Donavin R. Salyers, Capt. David K. Smith and Robert L. Gray by Dr. Richard Begley, Rahall Transportation Institute (RTI) Director of Research and Chief Operating Officer.

The National Maritime Days Celebration provides tri-state citizens with an opportunity to join the many hard-working men and women of the local Maritime Industry. Visitors may tour working commercial towboats, learn about the history of the Ohio River, participate in deckhand activities, learn how the United States Coast Guard is promoting homeland security, and discover

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what makes the Port of Huntington, Tri-State the largest Inland River Port in America.

The Port of Huntington Tri-State is the nation's largest inland port and 7th overall in tonnage shipped. The Port is comprised of 199 river miles of the Ohio, Big Sandy and Kanawha Rivers. Bulk cargos totaling nearly 80 million tons annually are loaded and offloaded in the port making a significant contribution to both the local and national economy.

Donavin "Don" Salyers, founder of R&D Associates of Catlettsburg, KY, has worked within the marine construction and repair segment of the industry for many years. He is a charter member of the Huntington District Waterways Association, and his personal involvement was instrumental in the successful efforts to redefine the boundaries of the Port of Huntington. This important step more accurately reflected the true tonnage from within the area now known as the Port of Huntington Tri-State. During his decades of involvement with the river industry he has frequently volunteered his personal time and resources to better communicate the value of commercial river navigation and its associated businesses to the region's elected officials and populace.

Captain David Smith is a 3rd generation riverman with extensive personal experience and influence throughout the nation's river navigation system. He helped establish the emergency navigation traffic centers in response to unscheduled closures of the Greenup, McAlpine, and Belleville locks on the Ohio River earlier this decade. He served as the marine traffic coordinator for Cincinnati's Tall Stacks Regattas in 2003 and 2006 and volunteered with traffic control for several prior events. He was instrumental in the redefinition of the Port of Huntington Tri-State in 2001, to better reflect the port's regional and national significance. He participated in USCG Towing Safety Advisory Committee workgroups on towing vessel inspection, mariner medical standards and licensing.

Robert L. Gray was recruited by Ashland Oil & Refining Company in 1941. He went on to

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spend over 40 years in the Marine Department of that firm, and during his tenure made significant contributions to the Western Rivers Towing Industry. He was instrumental in bringing radar to the rivers, with the first installation aboard the original M/V TRISTATE in 1946. He was also involved in the pioneering use of depth-sounders aboard river towing vessels. He also exhibited a keen sense of civic responsibility in his participation in industry committees on the national as well as local levels. Following retirement he has remained active in the HDWA, has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity for many years and spearheaded the development of the River Exhibit for the Highlands Museum and Discovery Center in Ashland, KY. Your outstanding service reflects great credit upon you and the entire inland waterways industry.

Capt. William (Bill) R. Barr has had a life-long attraction for and dedication to the river in general and the Inland Towing Industry in particular. After attending Marietta College, Barr joined Amherst/Madison Coal in Charleston, WV. He earned a First Class Pilot License serving time aboard the M/V J.S. LEWIS. He has held several positions within management of the firm, currently holding the title of Vice President.

Mr. Barr has been a tireless promoter of River Transportation for decades. He has been vocal advocate for efficient funding of congressionally authorized navigation projects. On the national level he has been an influential member of the American Waterways Operators. He has long been a valued participant with Coast Guard and navigation industry safety and security forums. He served as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Huntington District Waterways Association for eight years. He also works to preserve river history through a long association with the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, presently sitting on its Board of Governors.

For more information about National Maritime Days Activities in Huntington, contact Errin Jewell, Public Affairs Specialist at the Rahall Transportation Institute, at jewell4@njrati.org or 304-696-7165.

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