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“Refinery Upstart Challenges”



Wilmington, Del. – The Port of Wilmington Maritime Society (POWMS) Quarterly Luncheon on October 11, 2012 featured guest speaker Herman Seedorf, Refinery Manager of the Delaware City Refining Company LLC who provided us with an overview of the triumphs and challenges faced when restarting the operation of Delaware’s only refinery. The luncheon was held the same week as the one year anniversary of the refinery restart, which was October 7, 2011.

While educating the port community about the refinery start-up process, Seedorf also illuminated the concerns of not only business owners but the citizens of the state of Delaware. The question lurking in the back of everyone’s mind was: what makes this company different from the others? The Delaware City refinery has been passed through many hands since it was originally opened in 1956 by Getty Oil. The refinery was purchased by Delaware City Refining Company LLC, which was a subsidiary of PBF Energy Partners LP formed prior to the acquisition. Seedorf stressed the many differences between PBF’s plans and the refinery’s previous owners, even noting that the operators have noticed a difference, stating, “This is the first time I’ve seen a company invest in ME.” Seedorf explained the “mantra” surrounding the one year success of the refinery is “relentless on reliability.” The values stressed by Seedorf to be held in highest regard by DE City Refining Company are safety, environmental responsibility and very good partnerships.

The Port of Wilmington Maritime Society was extremely appreciative to have such a knowledgeable and engaging speaker at our quarterly luncheon. The room was held captive as Seedorf accomplished providing the crowd with a very engaging description of a refinery in progress. “Can we operate this place more efficiently?” stated Seedorf. It sounds like they’re off to an excellent start. They have succeeded in “reduced the operating costs by 40%” of the previous owner, Valero Energy Corporation.

The Port of Wilmington Maritime (POWMS) is a non-profit apolitical membership organization dedicated to promoting economic development through the support of businesses in and around the Port. It acts as a liaison between port management and affiliated businesses, as well as local government and federal organizations. Membership is drawn from both the maritime and business communities.

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