



THE WHEEL

The Transportation Club of Houston Newsletter



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Executive Secretary: Russell Powell

THE REGISTRATION DEADLINES FOR COMING EVENTS ARE FAST APPROACHING.

- **TCH Holiday Dinner and Show** at Great Caruso Dinner Theater on December 5. You must register by 11/14/06 to get the discount.
- **TCH Golf Outing on 11/30** – Registration must be received by 11/15/06.

See details at www.transclubhou.org

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January Luncheon - This TCH luncheon is at Brennan's Restaurant, which is located at 3300 Smith. Our speaker is John Conley, President National Tank Truck Carriers.

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February Luncheon – This luncheon will be at Brady's Landing, 18505 Cypress Street, Houston, Texas 77012. Our Luncheon speaker is George Schaeffer, Pinkerton Security.

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Spring Seminar - Transportation Challenges, Concerns and Opportunities - A Discussion of Key Issues + Questions & Answers. This will be held at Brady's Landing, in Houston on Tuesday, February 6th 2007

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New Life for an Old Ship: Former Training Ship to Become Artificial Reef

A Maritime Administration ship, the *Texas Clipper*, began its journey to becoming an artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico where it will boost the underwater diving economy and benefit marine life, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The ship was towed today from the Beaumont Reserve Fleet and is headed for Brownsville where it will be cleaned and then sunk 17 miles off the Texas coastline in 134 feet of water on the sandy floor of the Gulf of Mexico.

"The *Texas Clipper* has had several useful lives," said Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton, noting that the vessel had been built as a troop transport ship, and used for commercial cruises and for training by Texas A&M University before entering MARAD's Beaumont Reserve Fleet. "Its new life as an artificial reef will help the environment by creating new marine life, and benefit the local economy by enhancing tourism."

The *Texas Clipper* is now part of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission's "Ships to Reefs" program. According to state officials, creation of the new artificial reef will serve to enhance Gulf Coast fishery resources, and eventually the make waters above and around the submerged ship a destination for divers and fishermen.

Texas's "Ships to Reefs" program began in the mid-1970s with a dozen World War II-era "Liberty" ships sunk at six sites along the coast. Large ships have since been generally unavailable for reefing. But recently, the U.S. Navy, the Maritime Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have been working with Texas officials to locate appropriate vessels for the program.

The Maritime Administration operates three National Defense Reserve Fleet sites in the James River in Virginia, at Suisun Bay in California, and in Beaumont. When the ships become obsolete, the Maritime Administration arranges for their responsible disposition.

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Advantages of Biodiesel Fuel for Transportation

Modern diesel engine technology has advanced to the point where the advantages of biofuel usage are becoming much greater than the disadvantages. Modern diesel engines produce less noise, smoke or vibrations and they are more fuel-efficient than older model engines. Diesel engines have the added advantage of greater acceleration when compared to gasoline engines on the same model of vehicle. The use of biodiesel fuel may be the solution to the increasing transportation energy crisis, particularly in the farming and shipping transportation sectors.

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