

Wish List for Gift Boxes

Please don't use anything larger than a medium-sized shoebox, and wrap as carefully as possible.

Greetings or a piece of paper with the name and address of your group, or cards made by children or a note such as "with love from Mrs. Smith's 6-year-old class" can be included and are very meaningful to a seafarer far from loved ones. **Each package should weigh less than 3 1/2 lbs.** -- we just don't have enough space (or volunteers!) to carry heavy/oversized packages all the way from our van across a busy terminal, then up long, steep gangways!

Please include the following in each box:

- A lightweight paperback Bible or New Testament, in a modern translation (readable by those whose first language is not English),
- Small-sized toiletries, sealed (no unwrapped soap or toothbrushes etc. -- and please remember that almost all our seafarers are male),
- A warm hat,
- And some of the following: pens and pads, warm socks or gloves, or scarf, playing cards, post cards of Baltimore, etc.

Please call 410-685-1240 to arrange a delivery. When you deliver your packages, be sure to leave complete contact information with the volunteer on duty so that we may properly acknowledge your donation!



The Rev. Tony Hollis (Office Volunteer) holds a box which is **too large** for delivery. The Rev. Linda Hollis (Ship Visitor) holds 5 that are **just right!**

Christmas at Sea 2012 The Baltimore International Seafarer's Center



Every year in December, BISC volunteers and staff bring boxes of gifts to seafarers docked in the Port of Baltimore. Thanks to churches, community groups, and individuals from around the Baltimore area,* BISC has been able to lift the spirits of crews of all nationalities and faiths who are far away from home and family during what can be a lonely, stressful time – **in 2011 alone, they delivered over 1100 boxes to over 46 crews!**

In the middle of a hot summer, it's hard to imagine Christmas, let alone Christmas far from home, but many of our donors begin work on their packages during this time, and we are deeply grateful for the care and attention they put into these tangible expressions of holiday cheer. Christmas at Sea boxes truly brighten the lives and warm the hearts of seafarers from all over the globe.



A post card from New Zealand, thanking BISC for Christmas at Sea gifts.

BISC's Christmas at Sea initiative was given a great boost last year when WJZ-TV ran a piece featuring BISC Director Mary Davison and volunteer Bob Garske. As you can see from the still, they had quite a few steps to climb, and this picture doesn't even show them all! **Please see the Wish List on the left for guidelines; we need to make sure the gift boxes are all approximately the same size and weight,** not just for our volunteers' backs and knees, but for consistency



in presenting them to our seafarer friends.

We deeply appreciate those who have joined us in this important ministry and those who will join us this year. With your help, we are able to represent the spirit and hospitality of Baltimore to seafarers from many lands. Thank you!

*In our previous issue, we omitted Holy Comforter Lutherville (Episcopal) from our list of Christmas 2011 donors. Thank you, Holy Comforter!

