



# Making history

**A**ny history of the air-cargo industry over the past half-century would include multiple references to Guenter Rohrmann, the subject of this week's feature story (Story, Page 6). During his long and illustrious career, Rohrmann led the transformation of Air Express International into the largest U.S. air forwarder and then guided the integration of AEI into DHL. He also played a leading role in numerous industry organizations and mentored many of today's top executives.

At age 67, he's decided that it's time to stop jet-setting and spend more time with his family, including his 6-year-old son. The industry will miss him.

Art Novacek is just mentioned in the final sentence of the top news brief (Story, Page 5), but his retirement as head of Eller & Co., the Miami-based stevedore, is worth noting. Eller, a part owner of the Port of Miami Terminal Operating Co., is best known for its role in triggering the DP World fiasco, but Novacek had little to do with that. Other members of the Eller board with family ties to Washington lobbyist Joseph Muldoon recruited Muldoon to see if he could block the deal. The rest is history, and Muldoon is now Eller's acting president.

Novacek spent most of his 58-year career in the maritime industry working on the carrier side of the business — all for companies that no longer exist — Isbrandtsen, Grace Line, Transamerica Trailer Transport, Seatrain, Navieras de Puerto Rico and Moram Agencies. He recently published a memoir that will probably be required reading for those studying the history of the shipping business during the last half of the 20th century. Perhaps the title — “One Step Ahead” — refers to how he managed to stay ahead of the game as the companies that employed him collapsed.



**(S)ports:** About a month ago, I received a call from Ed Kelly, president of the Maritime Association of the Port of New York and New Jersey, asking if I knew about “the stupendous maritime event” taking place on Aug. 4. He was referring to a softball game with the Maritime Exchange of the Delaware River and Bay that day — the 100th anniversary of a baseball game between what were then the New York and Philadelphia maritime exchanges. Unfortunately, I could not attend, but we do have a short story and photos from the game (Story, Page 90). I chose to use (S)ports as the heading for those pages. That no doubt makes this issue of Shipping Digest the first publication of any kind anywhere to have (S)ports pages. We don't just reflect on history; we make history.

*Bill Armbruster*  
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