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# THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

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Sunday, February 8, 2015

WEATHER

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## Guiding ships for generations

**BELOW  
THE FOLD**

**‘Sexting court’  
teaches perils of  
lewd selfies**

**County mulls  
expanding water,  
sewer services**

**Ancestor of family operation at Port  
Tampa Bay ran Civil War blockades**



JIM REED/STAFF

An A.R. Savage & Son tugboat escorts a vessel into Tampa. The ship agent firm was founded in 1945.

## County mulls expanding water, sewer services

But critics say costly plan would encourage sprawl

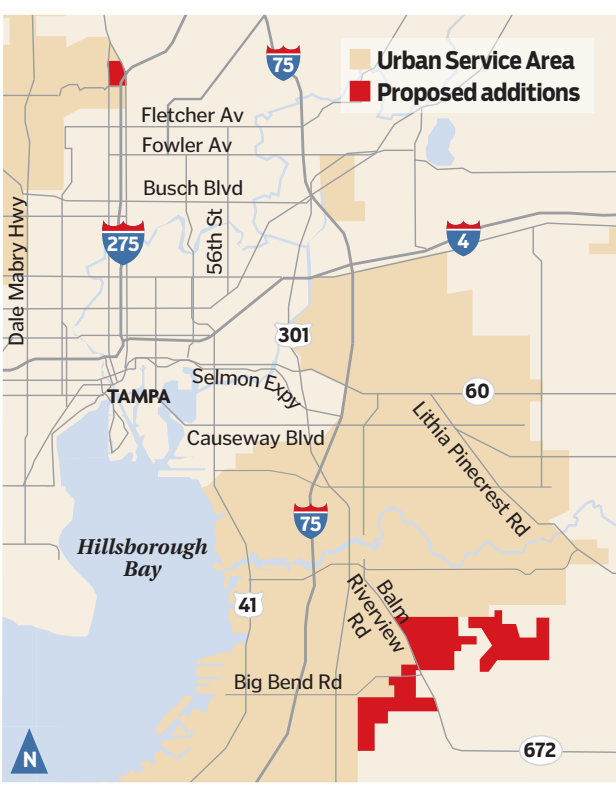
BY MIKE SALINERO  
Tribune staff

provides water and sewer service.

To the planners, the change is necessary to handle future population growth. But opponents argue that extending expensive water and sewer lines farther into the county is a catalyst for road-clogging urban sprawl.

The last time developers and large landowners

EXPANSION, Page 10



Source: Hillsborough County Planning Commission

STAFF



**Tugboat Capt. Mark Barthle guides his vessel  
across Tampa Bay using two joysticks to steer the  
twin propellers.**

BY YVETTE C. HAMMETT  
Tribune staff

TAMPA — His roots in Tampa’s shipping industry date back more than 150 years, when Arthur Savage’s great-great-grandfather, Capt. James McKay Sr., ran blockades during the Civil War and founded commercial shipping on Florida’s west coast.

Shipping is so ingrained in Savage’s DNA that with little effort, he can name just about everything that moves off Tampa’s waters.

And that’s a good thing, because business is on the upswing.

Port Tampa Bay experienced a 17 percent increase in ships com-

ing in during 2014 and is marketing to grow its business domestically and internationally. The importance of ship agents such as A.R. Savage & Son LLC grows right along with the port, said Wade Elliott, vice president of marketing and business development at Port Tampa Bay.

“Every ship coming in needs a contact in the port, in the community that has relationships with all the key players,” Wade said.

A.R. Savage has been handling ship traffic at the port for 70 years, since the time the state established it.

“People these days want to turn a switch and see things hap-

SAVAGE, Page 8



Arthur Savage, president and chief executive officer of A.R. Savage & Son, rides a tugboat bringing a ship loaded with sulfur into Port Tampa Bay.

## ‘Sexting court’ teaches perils of lewd selfies

Special program for teens is found only in Hillsborough

BY ELAINE SILVESTRI  
Tribune staff

TAMPA — An embarrassed girl and her anxious mother sat before Circuit Judge Ralph Stoddard last week, not quite sure what was going to happen.

The judge was gentle and informal in the hearing held after the teenager was cited for “sexting,” sending lewd photographs of herself to her boyfriend, who showed them to friends.

“What do you think about all this?” the judge asked after explaining the process.

“I’m not very happy about it,” the mother said with a nervous laugh.

“Are you angry with her, with us?” Stoddard asked.

“No, obviously I can’t be angry with the county,” the mother said. “I’m angry that it happened.”

Stoddard says the case was fairly typical of what he sees in sexting court, a special court established in Hillsborough County after the Legislature adopted a law in 2011 making the

first violation for juveniles a civil infraction.

The Legislature, however, neglected to include a mechanism for enforcement. So court officials in Tampa designed their own.

The law, which was enacted after reports that children were being prosecuted under criminal child pornography laws, was intended as a sensible approach to what was a new problem. The idea was to create consequences and enable intervention and education, while not sending kids into the juvenile justice system.

The law was also designed to put an end to the possibility that juveniles would be prosecuted as child pornographers, a felony offense.

But a state appeals court last month ruled that the law is unenforceable. The 4th District Court of Appeal also said only the Legislature can set out the enforcement procedure, a conclusion that might invalidate Hillsborough County’s approach.

One of the authors of the law, state Sen. Joseph Abruzzo, D-Wellington, is drafting a fix. Some of the

SEXTING, Page 5

## Amazon Prime boosts sales, stock prices as it celebrates 10th anniversary

BUSINESS Page 1

## Rays’ Balfour to be inducted into Australia Hall of Fame early so his dad can be there

SPORTS Page 1

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# Savage

From Page 1

pen,” Savage said. A.R. Savage & Son is one of those switches.

**Standing on the bridge of** the 93-foot tugboat Patriot, Savage describes each ship docked along the banks of Sparkman Channel offloading cargo on land his family knows intimately.

Ships don’t just cruise into Port Tampa Bay and unload cargo. As part of his job as a ship agent, Savage employs the tugboat to escort his client ships into berths. He and his employees know when ships are coming into the port, what they’re carrying, how many workers to hire for the ship to load or unload and what paperwork they’ll need to fill out for the crew so it can operate legally from a U.S. port.

In addition to tugboats, the ships need line handlers, offloaders, fuel, spare parts and crew supplies. And they need someone to coordinate all of it. Savage & Son is one of several companies providing ship agents to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

**The knowledge Savage** exudes springs from his personal experience as a ship’s captain, his time as a teenager escorting his father’s customers around the port and as a tugboat captain.

He is the fourth captain of the port’s oldest ship agency, started by his grandfather, A.R. Savage Sr., then run by his father, William O. Savage and his mother, Shirley McKay Savage Knight, who stood at the helm for 17 years until 1999.

Savage & Son, a privately held company with 12 employees, dates back to 1945, the same year the state formed the Tampa Port Authority.

Licensed ship agents basically transact and supervise all of a ship’s business while it is in port. Without them, ships coming into port would be dead in the water. There are 22 such businesses operating out of Port Tampa Bay and hundreds throughout the country.

“It’s a lot of moving parts,” Savage said. With today’s fast pace, and with so many vendors and employers to coordinate, a ship’s crew would be hard-pressed to conduct business without an agent. And it must be able to trust that the agent will not only coordinate services but pay for those services on its behalf.

A.R. Savage & Son is certified as a ship agent through the Association of Ship Brokers and Agents (ASBA), based in New Jersey. After a series of high-profile bankruptcies among ship agents a decade ago, the association began its self-certification program, which requires businesses to undergo an annual accounting review and attest to their ability to handle a ship’s monetary affairs, said Jeanne

Cardona, executive director of the association. A.R. Savage & Son is one of 30 agents certified through ASBA.

**Savage carries a checklist** of ships arriving and departing the port. The list dates out through April and tells the company which ships are coming and when, what they’ll be carrying and where they are going when they leave the port. The ships carry everything from ethanol to jet fuel, gasoline, orange juice, even aluminum ingots from Russia.

The Coastal, coming in from New Orleans, brings in coal, then carries out phosphate, heading back to Louisiana. The Gunila, a Swedish school ship carrying students around the world, spends several weeks here, and A.R. Savage & Son helps coordinate the stay. The Coastal 101/Louisiana brings coal in for Tampa Electric Co.’s Big Bend Power Station, and the Tiger Anhui comes from Mexico, loads up Mosaic Co. fertilizer and hits the high seas for Australia.

The Balsa 87 arrived in port Thursday to load 5,500 tons of monocalcium phosphate, an animal feed supplement the Cuban government purchases through Port Tampa Bay several times a year, then ships to Havana.

**Savage has seen a lot** growing up at Port Tampa Bay. “As a youth, my grandfather and father would take me down to the office on the weekends where I would see the blackboard with all the ships that were either in port, at anchor or inbound. It always fascinated me, with the different names, where they were coming from, where they were going and what cargoes they were carrying.”

On weekends, he’d carry customers in the family boat to tour the port or take them fishing. “I would be baiting the hook of a Japanese one weekend, a German the next and someone from South America the following.”

By the age of 16, Savage started working on the company tugboat in his free time.

During his youth, Savage’s parents often entertained ship owners and other dignitaries at their home. “I was very fortunate to be exposed to different nationalities, cultures and religions from around the world.”

**When William Savage** died in 1982, his son already had his tugboat captain’s license, then went to sea to get his master’s license, returning to the office in 1984. His mother took over the business at a time when most in the shipping industry weren’t so used to working with a woman.

“The principals preferred to talk to me because they weren’t used to speaking to a woman in the business,” Savage recalled. “She soon proved



A.R. SAVAGE & SON  
**Shirley McKay Savage Knight took the helm of A.R. Savage & Son in 1982. She ran the firm for 17 years.**

that she was more than capable and gained their trust.”

Tampa native Shirley McKay Savage Knight, whose great-grandfather was Capt. James McKay, for whom McKay Bay is named, became a decorated CEO. During her tenure at the helm of Savage & Son, she was named Maritime Person of the Year, served as consul to Denmark and Norway and in 2002, she received the Captain James Mc-

Kay Lifetime Achievement Award for the Port of Tampa. She and her son together received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Propeller Club of the United States honoring three generations of the Savage family for its efforts to bring business to the port.

“She had a lasting impact on the port,” said John Thorington, port vice president of government affairs and board coordination. “She did that job

magnificently and superbly. She always treated people with respect and grace. She set a very high standard.”

It is a standard Savage said he works to maintain. Among his employees are two maritime academy graduates, one a boarding agent and one who does accounting for all client ships. Some of the other Savage & Son employees started at the bottom, learned the business and worked their way up the ladder, Savage said.

“Ships rely on us in deciding who are the best companies and vendors to handle their needs, and that’s what we do.”

Because the company is privately held, Savage opted not to share what it charges clients for its services.

**A lot has changed** through the years, Savage said. “When I was growing up and well before, the majority of the people in the city were natives and many were connected with the port. Everyone knew the city was built as a result of the port, so everybody appreciated its importance.”

Since then, cargo has changed from a lot of phosphate rock, coal, newsprint and cement to some newer products like

citrus pulp pellets for animal feed, containers and liquified petroleum gas. There is new foreign port competition and the average ship size has increased dramatically, Savage said. With the Great Recession, too, there were years when fewer ships and cargo came in, he said.

But that appears to be turning around with the economy on the rebound, according to port President and CEO Paul Anderson, who in his State of the Port address last month noted growth in both the number of ships and cargo tonnage.

Savage credits the recent upswing to the efforts of the Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corp., which has been working to bring new business here. He also credits the collaboration among Tampa International Airport, the Tampa Port Authority and the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce working in concert to drive both imports and exports for this area.

“It is our hope,” Savage said, “that the new port authority will continue its positive efforts and work even closer with the industries it serves to bring a positive future for the port.”

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