



**PORTCORPUSCHRISTI**

**-MEDIA ADVISORY –**

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For more information contact:

**PATRICIA CARDENAS**

Dir. of Communications

361-885-6124 Direct

361-816-3621 Mobile

[Patricia@pocca.com](mailto:Patricia@pocca.com)

## **Dedication of the City of Corpus Christi and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway as a Texas Historical Marker**

**Corpus Christi, Texas** – On Wednesday, March 12, 2014, The Nueces County Historical Commission and Port Corpus Christi will dedicate a historical marker for the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway at 10:00 A.M. at the Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center, 402 Harbor Drive.

The historical marker will be unveiled by Nueces County Judge, The Honorable Loyd Neal; and Port Corpus Christi Chair, Judy Hawley. The monument will read:

The attack on Pearl Harbor brought the U.S. into World War II. New naval technology and the appearance of German U-Boats meant that America was vulnerable to sea-borne attacks. Corpus Christi had oil which would alleviate the east coast shortage and had the ability to ship over one million tons of cargo. With the creation of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, soon to be known as the canal, Corpus Christi became an active and effective participant in WWII by linking its port harbors to the north, south, and east of Texas. In 1905, Clarence S.E. Holland called for a conference in Victoria to establish an intracoastal water lobby. He envisioned a canal linking the Rio Grande and Mississippi

Rivers. The inland waterway league, later renamed the Intercoastal Canal Association of Louisiana and Texas (ICALT), was formed.

It wasn't until 1930 that easements were acquired to secure property for the canal. Engineer George Hoffman's concept for a land route would protect the ships from storm conditions in the bay, and later, from the enemy. By 1944, the canal was carrying over 900 oil-laden vessels from Corpus Christi to the East Coast, and by the end of 1945, Intracoastal Waterway shipments totaled over one million tons. As the nation entered the Cold War years, product was steadily moving out of the canal to processing centers in other states. By the end of 1951, it was carrying over 25% of the Port of Corpus Christi's total tonnage. Population also increased with the creation of the canal. Nueces County grew 80% and neighboring Cameron County grew by half. At the dedication of the canal, Roy Miller Stated, "the canal is the work of man's hands. But it is most of all a creature of destiny."

*"The Intracoastal Waterway had been an economical and weather related waterway concept for many years prior to WWII. The Second World War saw the Allies and American forces needing American oil in Europe and Northern Africa. The Nazi submarines were focusing on tankers in the Gulf of Mexico and were successful. The protection of the Intracoastal Waterway became a priority for the movement of barges carrying materials needed both locally and overseas,"* said Anita Eisenhauer, Nueces County Historical Commission Chair.

#### **About Port Corpus Christi**

*As the primary economic engine of the Coastal Bend, Port Corpus Christi is the 5th largest port in the United States in total tonnage. The Port's mission statement is to "serve as a regional economic development catalyst while protecting and enhancing its existing industrial base and simultaneously working to diversify its international maritime cargo business." Strategically located on the western Gulf of Mexico, with a straight, 45' deep channel, the Port provides quick access to the Gulf and the entire United States inland waterway system. The Port delivers outstanding access to overland transportation with on-site and direct connections to three Class-1 railroads and uncongested interstate and state highways. The Port is protected by a state-of-the-art security department and an award-winning Environmental Management System. With outstanding management and operations staff, Port Corpus Christi is clearly "The Port of the Lone Star State." <http://www.portofcorpuschristi.com/>*

Port Corpus Christi is a member of **START (South Texas Alliance for Regional Trade)**, a collaborative effort that highlights business opportunities in South Texas in the manufacturing, energy, aerospace, international trade, military and other sectors and the related strategic support provided by Port San Antonio, Port Corpus Christi and Port Laredo. <http://www.southtexastrade.com/>

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