



# Cape Fear Firebird

*The Light of Save the Cape*

February 1, 2012

*What will follow will totally destroy the quality of life in Southport. Racketeering, loansharking, buying and selling of stolen property, extortion, drug selling, as well as prostitution.*

-Joe Blik, retired Detective, New York City Police Department.

## **Wise Guys**

The fables of organized crime in *The Godfather*, *Goodfellas*, and *The Sopranos* are entertaining when seen on the screen. But how will they look up close? In real life? Here?

The *2011 US Cargo Theft Report* issued on January 19 by FreightWatch International recorded 974 cargo theft incidents throughout the United States in 2011 — an 8.3% increase over 2010 and the highest number of theft incidents per year on record. Of those, 88% were thefts of full containers or trailers. Most occurred in or near ports, where access to cargo manifests permits targeting the most valuable loads.

*Global Security* explains: “Containerized cargo theft is carried out primarily as an organized criminal conspiracy. Substantial evidence supports the hypothesis that most theft of containerized cargo is systematic in method. Often, criminals act with apparent information about cargo manifests, suggesting that collusion is occurring with transportation employees. Cargo terminals are particularly vulnerable to employee penetration at intermodal transfer points, warehouses, rail yards and docks.”

It gets worse: “Further, since concealment of illegal narcotics in commercial shipping is the primary method for transporting drugs and money into and out of the United States, organized crime has intensified involvement in the transportation sector. Corporations financed by drug profits may purchase, own, and operate apparently legitimate trucking companies and transportation operations to transport products and to obtain crucial shipping information. Organized criminal groups are also successfully infiltrating the transportation industry by compromising employees into acts of commission using bribery or extortion to induce collusion. In addition to transportation employees, police, customs and other government officials have been targeted for corruption.”

And from the UN Container Control Program: “The sheer volume of international maritime container traffic with approximately 420 million containers shipped yearly in the trade supply chain, the sophisticated and often ingenious concealment methods, along with the diverse routings adopted by illicit drug traffickers and other smugglers, invariably makes successful interdiction difficult. Seaports are notoriously difficult and at times dangerous places to work and law enforcement structures are often hampered by a lack of resources, inter-agency mistrust, complex port processes and systems, and other factors which are purposefully exploited by criminal organizations.”

And more. Customs relies on inspection at the source and the integrity, if any, of the system. They look in less than 4% of containers. Containers are checked for radiation only when they leave the port. Nasty stuff gets in—for nasty people. That’s what the megaport would bring to Southport.

**Save the Cape, Inc**

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