

Connections

THE CROWLEY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 2 2008



Safety - Crowley's Number One Core Value

People who know Crowley know our employees are our most important asset. They also know that the work many of our people do is inherently dangerous, which is why we have made safety – of people, property and the environment – Crowley's number one core value. We have adopted a relentless pursuit of perfection when it comes to safety and are on a mission to build and maintain a world class safety culture.

A safety culture is based on a belief that all injuries can be prevented. We know that safety has a positive impact for all of the stakeholders of our business – our employees, customers, vendors and the communities where we operate. We must challenge the belief that some work injuries are inevitable. Crowley companies have determined that zero injuries are the only acceptable goal.

As a case in point – when I meet with our senior leadership team every week, the first thing we talk about is our safety metrics. We discuss any lost-time-incidents that may have occurred, the root causes and what steps have been taken to make sure they don't happen again.

We have implemented many safety initiatives – far more in fact than I could ever cover in this column – but I'd like to point out a few.

Every meeting at Crowley, no matter the location or number of employees involved, is started with a safety moment, which includes a discussion of safety measures that can be taken on the job, at home, or when traveling. The advice is practical and the importance we place on safety is conveyed daily.

We have formed a safety leadership team consisting of management from across all of our business lines to build upon our strong safety culture, improve safety thinking and build an incident-free safety culture. This group facilitates safety culture development for all employees, promotes peer support across business units and provides guidance to the Crowley senior leadership team. They have also helped develop safety metrics and training programs, conducted safety audits, and improved communications about safety throughout the entire company.

We have placed great emphasis on job safety analyses where employees meet and discuss how to do a job correctly and safely before beginning work. This allows potential hazards to be identified and avoided.

If, while working, a potentially dangerous situation is observed, employees are empowered to avoid and fix it before continuing. In addition, they are encouraged and respected for filing a “near-miss” report that can be shared with other employees who might find themselves in a similar circumstance.

Another important element of our safety culture is individual responsibility for the safety of oneself plus that of others. We value employees who look out for others by pointing out potential safety concerns even if it's something as simple as informing someone that their shoe is untied.

A good safety culture should be instinctive and seen as the right thing to do. Everyone in the organization must be committed to continuing safety education. Training and practice with job safety analysis is an example. The highest level of a good safety culture is working together. This involves helping others to correct unsafe acts or behaviors and taking pride in performing a job with zero injuries.

I am pleased that we have made significant progress in becoming a world-class safety organization, but realize there is still much to accomplish as we remain committed to continuous improvement.

Have a safe holiday season, and enjoy this issue of Connections.

Sincerely,
Tom Crowley
Chairman, President and CEO



Connections

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Publisher
Susan Rodgers

Managing Editor
Jenifer Kimble
jenifer.kimble@crowley.com

Art Director
Daniel Mock
daniel.mock@crowley.com

Executive Editor
Mark Miller
mark.miller@crowley.com

Staff Writer
Mabel Perez
mabel.perez@crowley.com

Contributing Writer
Alex Demarban
Alaska Newspapers, Inc.

CROWLEY
9487 Regency Square Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida 32225
1-800-CROWLEY
(904) 727-2200
www.crowley.com



A Yukon Lifeline

By Alex DeMarban



Nunam Iqua.

It means “end of the tundra” in Yup’ik, the native language on the lower Yukon River.

The village near the Bering Sea also means the beginning of the end for a Crowley tug crew that has spent the summer in a round-the-clock rush delivering fuel and freight to villages.

It’s where the rumbling *Tanana* and its twin barges will turn around and head for home 970 river miles away.

Being September, signs of autumn are everywhere. Swaying grass around the village has begun to yellow. Everyone wears jackets and gloves. Chilly winds indicate the river will soon freeze for seven months.

The eight-man crew is eager to get back to families and what most people would call civilization in cities like Fairbanks and Anchorage. But first, there’s work to be done.

And that can be a challenge in Western Alaska.

The region is pristine, but undeveloped, with few facilities to support barges, said Howard Satterfield, the boat’s chief mate.

Residents call their home a rugged frontier with limited infrastructure. No highways connect villages in Western Alaska with the state’s road system. The only access to the rest of the world comes on planes or boats.

The 2,300-mile-long Yukon cuts through the region. When the river ends, it fans out across an area where people live close to nature in part because there isn’t much of a cash economy.

Many live off the land. They spend summers putting away salmon and berries. They hunt seal, whales and ducks. Conversations center on moose and where to find them.

Satterfield said there are no piers, just muddy banks filled with fishing skiffs. Instead of cleats to tie the 120-foot *Tanana* to, a patch of trees or a bulldozer will do. Metal ramps are deployed to build a makeshift bridge between the barge and the river banks.

Cranes and conveyor belts to move equipment don’t exist, nor do longshoremen. The tug’s crew has small forklifts, front-end loaders and brute strength.

“Out here, we’re it,” says Satterfield. “We are the support.”

One of Alaska’s biggest fuel distributors, Crowley delivers petroleum and freight across much of the state, including to some 200 rural communities along coasts and rivers.

In 10 of those communities, Crowley has tank farms and sells fuel locally. Three of those tank farms – in the larger rural communities of Kotzebue, Nome and Bethel – also help meet regional fuel needs. There, Crowley line-haul barges deliver large quantities of fuel during the ice-free season. Smaller, shallow draft tugs and barges take the fuel from these large tank farms plus seasonal freight up river during the summer for delivery to numerous smaller villages.



It's little wonder that many call Crowley a lifeline, especially in rural Alaska.

Rural residents need the unleaded gas brought by the barges to power boats, snow machines and four-wheelers, necessary tools in the constant struggle to fill the freezer, said Edward Adams Sr., the mayor in Nunam Iqua.

"Gas is very important," he said.

Upriver in Emmonak village, a friendly man in a blue jumpsuit filled a tanker truck with aviation gas. Mark "Woody" Richardson is one owner of Grant Aviation, a company built in rural Alaska that boasts more than 20 planes.

Life in the Bush, as rural Alaska is called, would unravel without aviation gas, he said. Grounded planes would mean empty store shelves, clinics without medicine, and sick people who couldn't get emergency flights to distant hospitals.

"Avgas is the life blood of Western Alaska," he said.

School maintenance man John Westlake Sr.,

Rural residents need the unleaded gas brought by the barges to power boats, snow machines and four-wheelers, necessary tools in the constant struggle to fill the freezer.

- Edward Adams Sr., Mayor, Nunam Iqua

who shares a two-bedroom house in Emmonak with 16 others, said diesel fuel is critical in temperatures that drop to 30 below. Also known as stove oil or heating fuel, diesel fuel heats homes and generates electricity in villages.

"It's a matter of life and death," he said.

Fuel in villages, like everything else, is pricey. At pumps this summer, it often topped \$6 a gallon.

Some rural residents question the high cost, especially when the fuel starts at Prudhoe Bay in their own state.

A host of factors contribute to the cost, starting with the global price of crude oil – pushed higher in recent years by increased demand and world events, said Mark Smith, Crowley's vice president of sales and marketing in Anchorage.

The state sells its royalty fuel to refineries at that price – more than \$100 a barrel this summer.

In addition, economies of scale aren't on Alaska's side. With only 700,000 residents, refineries here produce thousands of barrels of fuel



Nunam Iqua, Alaska

daily, not millions like they might in California.

The problem is magnified in rural Alaska. A busy gas station on a highway near Anchorage will use more gas in a day than many villages use in a year.

“The economies of scale in rural Alaska are just horrible,” Smith said. “Everyone wants the best service, but it comes at high prices when you’re spreading the costs across a tiny amount of fuel.”

A third big reason is the holding cost – the interest on the loan needed to buy the fuel. It’s an expense for Crowley, as well as many cash-poor villages, which often borrow money at high interest rates.

A village that purchases \$1 million in fuel might owe \$50,000 in interest in a matter of months. That’s one reason some villages mark up prices.

Other expenses for Crowley include capital costs, personnel, maintenance, insurance and dock leasing fees, such as at *Tanana’s* home port in Nenana near Fairbanks. Repairs are common. Shipping is expensive.

After the crude oil travels down the pipeline and is refined, Crowley pays a company to truck it to Nenana, where it’s stored in Crowley tank farms.

There, the fuel is pumped onto barges on the Tanana River, and transportation costs rise quickly. A typical tug pushing a single barge can cost \$15,000 a day to operate, Smith said.

The *Tanana* isn’t typical. It’s large by today’s tug standards, but that lets it maintain a shallow draft and push multiple barges.

But it’s nimble. Flanking rudders allow it to steer in reverse and circle easily. Watchful Captain



A Grant Aviation tanker truck is filled in Emmonak, while Yan Van Uliet assists Captain Kevin Weiss with unloading pallets of school supplies.

Kevin Weiss might let it slide on the current perpendicular to a river bank, engine in reverse to keep it from running aground.

Already a veteran Yukon captain at 38, Weiss calls such maneuvers “barge ballet.”

Good thing it handles so well, because the Tanana River, like the Yukon it feeds, isn’t charted. Maps of the river don’t show water depths or underwater hazards like sandbars.

The *Tanana* is shallow – averaging less than eight feet deep – with banks that crumble easily and an ever-shifting bottom of glacial silt. Weiss compares the silt to snow, with drifts that grow and shrink depending on the wind.

“It’s a living, breathing thing,” said Weiss,

who fills in maps with pencils and knows much of the river by heart.

Parts of the Tanana are vicious. Big mush-room boils swell to the surface. Deckhands watch for sweepers – overhanging limbs known for smashing windows.

In the 170 river miles from Nenana to the Yukon confluence, there are scores of crossings – shallow, narrow parts that wend across the river.

Finding them is painstaking work.

At times, Satterfield or Second Mate Matt Krenzke board the tug’s tiny sounding boat. They’ll lead the way, searching for an opening deeper than 4-feet, 6-inches so the tug can slip past.

The river can be so shallow that the depth





sounder isn't useful. That's when the men repeatedly stab a numbered dowel rod into the river bottom, calling the depth to Weiss over the radio as they go along.

"They're basically a hound dog, out there sniffing out the hole," Weiss said.

To guide the tug, Satterfield sets out orange buoys or designs boxes on the water with the sounding boat's wake.

When the channel is too narrow, the *Tanana* pushes one barge at a time – each carries 150,000 gallons of fuel – leading to a laborious ferrying process. Sometimes, traveling a mile or two takes a full day.

The tug might thump the river bottom frequently.

"Sometimes you just tickle your way across," Weiss said.

In late July this year, a flood gouged long stretches of river bank, felling spruce trees 60-feet and longer that crowded the river. The

trees repeatedly banged the boat as the tug returned to Nenana.

In the flood's strong current, notorious Squaw Crossing switched to the river's other side for the first time in 13 years, slowing the *Tanana* more than usual.

On the trip, trees put new cracks in the propeller and are probably the reason a fluke broke off.

The sounding boat gets deployed several times in the Yukon too, but that river flows wider and easier for the 800 miles to Nunam Iqua.

The Yukon has its own surprises.

One season, a mile-long slough to the village of Holy Cross dried up. The crew loaded building materials, propane tanks and even a Ford Ranger onto the new sandbar. Villagers lined the sandbar, retrieving everything with four-wheelers and heavy equipment.

Of course, there's always the unexpected delay, like the time hunters in a skiff played

chicken with the *Tanana* – and won.

It happened a few years ago near Marshall, as the tug followed a channel along the riverbank.

The skiff headed straight for the tug, so Weiss called on the radio, asking them to move aside. No answer. He boomed orders over the loud-speaker. A deckhand fruitlessly tried waving it away.

Weiss finally made a "huge course correction" to avoid the skiff, forcing the *Tanana* into the cut bank.

As the skiff slid past, the hunters shouted thanks. An old Native couple, they towed a dead moose, the head sticking above water. It acted like a 1,000-pound rudder keeping the boat locked on course.

"There's Bullwinkle and this couple's just smiling and waving," laughed Weiss.

The crew wearies by the end of the season, after several trips up and down the Yukon.

On the approach to Nunam Iqua in mid-

"They're basically a hound dog, out there sniffing out the hole."

- Captain Weiss

Chief Mate Howard Satterfield searching for a path in the river, deep enough for the tug and barges.





Yan Van Uliet drags the barge's fuel hose in Nunam Iqua.



Captain Weiss at the helm.

September, with the river dropping, Krenzke used the sounding boat to find an opening. His voice crackled over the wheelhouse radio as he called out river bottom depths.

The path he found zigzagged across the river and was less than five feet deep in spots.

"I feel like a frickin' pinball machine," said Weiss, standing at the tiller. "Bing, bing, bing. Just don't hit tilt."

Then he moaned. A strong wind blowing against the tall tug wouldn't let it turn.

To escape, he nosed the *Tanana* directly toward

shore and began to spin the boat. When the stern gently bumped the river bottom, Weiss muttered a curse and threw the tug in reverse. Off the stern, propellers forced up muddy fountains of water until the tug broke free and continued its pirouette.

Once headed toward the village's colorful cluster of homes and buildings, Weiss called Nunam Iqua's tribal council on the radio.

"Good morning, we have your fuel."

"Thank you. Quyana."

As the *Tanana* arrived, fuel buyers from the

tribal council and city government waited on four-wheelers along the bank. After deckhands tied the tug to container vans, the buyers filled out paperwork with Krenzke.

Then deckhands begin dragging out the barge's thick fuel hoses.

In the Lower 48, crews connect the hoses to headers right at the docks. But in many villages, Crowley workers lug them hundreds of feet through mud and bushes.

In Nunam Iqua, the header isn't far from the boat, so the hook-up is quick.

But it will be half an hour before the fuel moves.

The tribal council recently entered the heating fuel and gas business. It was the first day for fuel technician Sarah Wasuli. She hadn't been trained and the person who should have helped her never showed up.

The soft-spoken and polite Krenzke gave Wasuli advice and radioed the council's administrator to send some help.

Crowley won't let employees attach hoses to the fuel tanks, because the liability is high. Still, the company lends equipment such as hoses, cam locks and pigs to clear fuel from lines.

It's the least Crowley can do, considering villages buy tens of thousands of gallons of fuel at a time, Weiss said. More importantly, loaning equipment helps ensure the job will be done right, without a fuel spill.

"It's just the way things are done on the Yukon," he said.

Village tank farms are often small, run by tribal governments or village corporations. The organizations may be able to hire only a few workers. But those employees work hard and quickly learn how to handle the fuel and the



Matt Krenzke and Yan Van Uliet of Crowley are shown with Sarah Wasuli, fuel technician, Nunam Iqua.



The Strongheart family with their new skiff in Nunam Iqua.

barges that arrive once or twice a year.

After half an hour, city employee John Canoe arrives and takes over. He'll stay in the tank yard much of the day, pumping more than 50,000 gallons of diesel fuel and gas into the tanks.

Nunam Iqua gets its fuel cheaper than many upriver villages. That's because Crowley has a tank farm in Nome about 250 water miles away from the village. On the lower Yukon, the *Tanana* accepts fuel from Crowley's oceangoing tugs and delivers it to Nunam Iqua.

The tribe paid Crowley about \$4 a gallon for its heating fuel and less for unleaded gas, said Rosalie Raphael, the tribe's acting administrator.

The tribal council will charge more than \$7 a gallon for the heating fuel after marking up the price. She didn't know what the tribal council would charge for gas.

The markup is designed to bring the price closer to what upriver villages pay, said James O'Malley, a tribal board member. Without it, people would flock down river to buy gas and heating fuel in Nunam Iqua. With limited storage space, the village would run out of fuel in winter, putting people at risk.

For Weiss, who's worked on Yukon tugs since age 18, the best thing about the job is heading home to see his wife and kids.

But the work is satisfying. Not everyone can deliver someone's house or snow machine, he said with a smile.

On the Nunam Iqua banks, Krenzke got behind the forklift and dropped off propane tanks for the school and a new skiff.

The owner was school custodian Joseph Gregory Strongheart. He beamed as he sat in the skiff.

Crowley's Bethel, Alaska tank farm.



“I think I like it,” he said, shaking his head in approval. He called his wife on a handheld radio and told her to hurry down to see the new skiff.

The boat will help him catch white fish before freeze-up and king salmon next year.

His uncle, Joseph Peter Strongheart, slowly walked around the boat, as if inspecting it. Like many elders, he doesn’t speak much English.

With his nephew interpreting, Joseph Peter said in Yup’ik that he doesn’t blame Crowley for the high price.

“Good service,” he said, according to his nephew.

Others are grateful for Crowley too, said Adams Sr., the mayor. People know they’re not at fault for the high fuel prices.

“They’re not blaming the distributors,” he said.

The work continues as the *Tanana* heads upriver for the last time this year.

In Alakanuk, a village of 700, crewmen tie the barges to a patch of alders near what looks like a junkyard.

Tribal employees had brought the stuff to the river, hauling scores of old tires, rusty snow-machines, battered trucks and other junk. The rubbish has cluttered the village for decades, because no one will pay to ship it out.

In recent years, Crowley has hauled village junk for free to Nenana. From there, a non-profit group drives it to recycling centers in Fairbanks and elsewhere.

With fuel prices rising, Crowley began charging 10 cents a pound this year to help cover costs.

Removing the trash eases the risk that battery acid, Freon and oil will spill onto the land and pollute the animals people eat, said Flora Phillip, Alakanuk tribe’s environmental officer.

Her face flushed after cramming bike frames into a freezer, she said a dime a pound was a small fee for a healthier village.

“I love what Crowley is doing,” she said. “There’s a lot here that most people collected for so many years because nothing like this has ever happened before.” **Connections**

Quick Facts

- Serving Alaska’s Arctic and coastal area since 1896 and expanding into the Yukon and Tanana Rivers in 1916.
- Selling and delivering: general cargo, heating fuel, diesel fuel, unleaded gasoline, jet fuel, aviation gasoline, propane, packaged petroleum products, lubricants and oil spill cleanup products.
- Over 280 villages and communities served.
- Fuel storage capacity of over 32 million gallons.



Top: The *Tanana* arrives in Alakanuk. Middle: Trash brought to the shoreline by tribal employees in Alakanuk will be loaded on the barges and hauled to Nenana. Bottom: Flora Phillip, Alakanuk tribe’s environmental officer, crams bike frames into a freezer.



Torwing the Line

*By Mabel Perez
With additional reporting by Daniel Mock*



Waves broke along the jetties surrounding El Morro in Puerto Rico creating aqua blue colored foam. But the crew on the *Defender* was too busy to notice the historic military fortress and the swaying palm trees dotting the urban island paradise. Instead, they focused on the barge behind them – measuring more than two football fields in length – carrying over 11,000 tons of cargo – most of it groceries, department store merchandise, furniture and other general cargoes in containers as well as automobiles on specially built car decking.

On board, Capt. Steve Sears shifted the throttles, causing the vessel to begin slowing down. The first leg of the trip was almost over and the 2-1/4-inch-wide steel tow wires connecting the tug to the *Jacksonville*, a 730-foot barge, needed to be shortened before entering the San Juan harbor.

On deck, Chief Mate Raymond Richardson tested the hydraulic backup. Crewmembers Scott Ellis and Hubert Joseph began making preparations to shorten the tow wires. The shorter the wires the better the maneuvering, which is crucial as the tug and barge enter the port.

Down below, Second Mate John O'Neal slept. A bright orange, foam life preserver was jammed at an angle underneath his mattress, so that rolling seas wouldn't knock him out of bed. Luis "Sonny" Perez grabbed a quick bite before heading on deck to join the others. Soon, the crew

began pulling the wire in and the barge slowly made its way closer to the tug.

Past El Morro, two assist tugs waited inside the harbor for the arrival of the *Jacksonville*. A man in a small wooden fishing boat sitting just outside the channel waved over at the crew.

The six-day journey was almost over.

A cruise on a 136-foot-long tugboat

The trip began on a cool spring afternoon in March. Seven Crowley merchant mariners with their captain reported to Crowley's Talleyrand terminal in Jacksonville, more than 12 hours before the barge was scheduled to leave for Puerto Rico.

The crew, just one of Crowley's 13 tug crews based out of Jacksonville and Pennsauken, N.J. dropped their bags in their cabins and got right to work prepping the vessel for a midnight departure.

Chief Engineer Bruce Carter went straight to the engine room. With the humming of the diesel generators in the background, he talked with the port engineer about recent maintenance repairs as he checked engine logs. The 21-year Crowley veteran, who is also responsible for making repairs at sea, checked his machinery spare inventory to make sure he had all the necessary parts to make repairs if something malfunctioned.

Meanwhile, Joseph, Perez and Ellis checked the deck inventory to

Crew Life

make sure the crew had all the goods they needed to make the trip. Around 1:30 p.m., the three able-bodied seamen carried boxes filled with at least a dozen heads of lettuce and a half-dozen bunches of broccoli. Another box contained at least 20 dozen eggs. Two boxes were filled with 18 gallons of milk.

“Pre-trip preparations are very important,” said Ed Burdorf, Crowley’s manager of marine operations. “You have to realize that everything this crew needs for two weeks has to be on that tug, including supplies for unexpected circumstances. It’s crucial that everything’s checked and double-checked before they leave port because once they are out at sea, they’re really on their own.”

While part of the crew organized groceries, Richardson and O’Neal inspected the barge, making sure all the tow gear was in good working order. In the background, cargo operations and yard personnel buzzed by in yard hostlers loading cargo containers onto the barge. The vessel was scheduled to depart in less than eight hours.

Up in the wheelhouse, Capt. Sears monitored the radars and inspected the electronics. He also entered the route information in the GPS (Global Positioning System).

Around 5:15 p.m., as the crew finished pre-trip preparations, Capt. Sears sat in the wheelhouse and navigated the *Defender* out of the Crowley terminal and headed north up the St. John’s River to a fueling facility.

It took five hours for the fuel tanks to take on the 83,000 gallons of fuel needed for the trip. In the meantime, the crew made sandwiches for dinner and some retired to their rooms to rest before the trip.

Just after 10 p.m., the *Defender* headed back to the Talleyrand terminal. The next challenge included preparing the winch and tow lines to connect the tug and barge. A fluorescent flood light illuminated the decks and shards of light flickered on the water. The captain guided the tug toward the bow of the barge, maneuvered alongside and made the tug fast. By midnight, the tow wire was connected to the barge. By 1 a.m., the dock was empty and the *Defender* and *Jacksonville* had disappeared into the night, commencing the four-hour outbound river transit.

The tough part was over and for the next several days at sea the crew waited and watched. It was almost as if time was standing still. It was quiet and the sound of the humming engines reverberated throughout the tug. The crew continued to do odd jobs, including minor repairs and maintenance work on the tug. But most days, the crew found ways to entertain themselves and each other to pass the time. It’s not uncommon on the boats for the crew members to watch movies or play cards or video games in the galley. Some talk about family, while others enjoy writing and documenting their unconventional work.

For some, the isolation and quietness is tough, especially when they think about the families they leave behind for weeks at a time.

“I regret being a single dad and having this job. But other than that, I’m proud of being a merchant mariner,” said Richardson, a second generation merchant mariner. “The hardest thing about it is being away from home...but at the same time, a lot of people here at Crowley are like family to me.”

Gary Jones, vice president of information technology for Crowley, took a tug boat trip in 2007 from Jacksonville to Puerto Rico and witnessed the interaction of the crew. Jones, whose main responsibility was cooking for the crew, noted the close quarters, lack of privacy on the boat and the feeling of isolation.

“It really takes a unique individual to do work in that part of the business,” Jones said. “There’s a lot of activity up front and a lot of activity when they get close to Puerto Rico. But during most of the trip, there’s a lot of down time and you spend a lot of time reading, watching



(Left to Right, Top to Bottom) 1. Scott Ellis and Hubert Joseph remove the gear holding the tow wires in place.

2. Hubert Joseph uses hand signals to communicate with Raymond Richardson in the noisy environment.

3. Raymond Richardson mans the winch.



4. Aerial view of Crowley's Jacksonville terminal.

5. Captain Steve Sears in the wheelhouse.

6. The crew of the *Defender* (L to R) Chief Engineer Bruce Carter, Port Superintendant Ricardo Ilarraza, AB Scott Ellis, AB Hubert Joseph, 2nd Mate John O'Neal, AB Luis Perez, Chief Mate Raymond Richardson, Captain Steve Sears

movies and training videos. They all have different jobs they perform during their shifts, but even if you're off duty, you can't go anywhere."

Then there is the ocean, which challenges a sailor's equilibrium.

"I've been seasick my whole life until two years ago," said O'Neal, a West Virginia native who started sailing with Crowley in the mid-1990's. "I always got sick no matter how long I was on the tugs. I always had to take pills, patches, whatever to help me get through the trips. Everybody knows I would get sick. It just finally got better."

Despite all this, as an observer Jones understands how a person could be drawn to the business.

"I can understand how someone could fall in love with the sea. When you look out of the wheelhouse and see the deep blue ocean, it's so beautiful. Early in the morning and later in the evening, you also get to see the most amazing sunrises and sunsets," Jones said.

Burdorf, who worked on the tugs for 20 years, said it's a great career for the right person.

"You are away from everything. You have time to think. The pay is also good, and in the Puerto Rico trade you get a week off for every two weeks at sea," Burdorf said, listing the benefits of a career on a tug.

"And when you get off the vessel you can do whatever you want and not worry about bringing work home. For me, it was nice to get off the tug. I could visit my family in Chicago. I was in port every five to six days and I got to call home to find out what was going on," Burdorf said.

"The entire Crowley team plays an integral part in the trade, but it's our men and women on the water that are literally a lifeline for Puerto Rico."

- Rob Grune, Crowley

A 'lifeline' to Puerto Rico

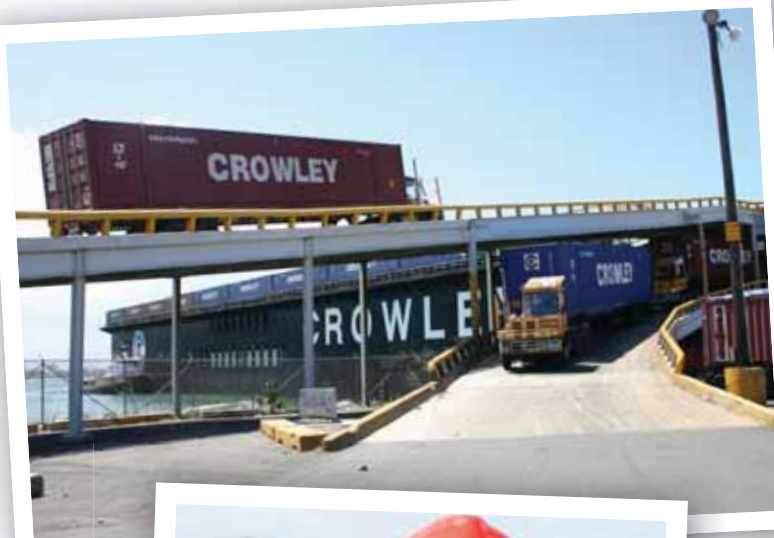
Each of the crewmembers on the *Defender* has a unique, sometimes dramatic, story about how they got into the tugboat business. Their calloused hands and lines on their faces give a glimpse into their lives.

The crew is driven by the pride they feel and a sense of responsibility.

"The entire Crowley team plays an integral part in the trade, but it's our men and women on the water that are literally a lifeline for Puerto Rico," said Rob Grune, senior vice president and general manager of Crowley's Puerto Rico/Caribbean services. "They work around the clock to get our vessels safely to San Juan, ensuring the people of Puerto Rico have the products they need to enrich their lives. Likewise thousands of island residents make their living working for companies that produce products, such as pharmaceuticals, groceries and beverages that are needed on the U.S. mainland, and our boat crews help get those to market."

For the crew, bringing good things to Puerto Rico means working a weird schedule, having limited contact with family and friends and being out in the middle of the ocean for weeks at a time.

Sometimes it means celebrating important days with your work family. Such was the case for Capt. Sears during this particular trip. The Piney Point graduate began with Crowley 28 years ago, starting



(Top to Bottom, Left to Right) 1. The barge in San Juan is unloaded and loaded back in about 12 hours.

2. Scott Ellis watches the barge from the safety of the boat deck during the turn into San Juan harbor.

3. Sonny Perez stands by the winches, ready to make adjustments.

his career as an able-bodied seaman, working his way up to second mate and chief mate.

On March 8, the veteran captain celebrated his birthday. In his e-mail inbox was a message from his family wishing him a happy birthday. Later in the galley, Sears chuckled as Ellis and Joseph sang Happy Birthday. The entire crew, minus Richardson, who was in the wheelhouse monitoring the radars, ate freshly baked lemon cake.

Sears, who maintained an upbeat attitude during the trip, seemed to enjoy being out at sea with his crew. But he also talked about how he looked forward to spending time with his wife Donna, a kindergarten teacher's aide, and his two daughters, Kerri, 11, and Amber, 15. Like any proud parent, he bragged about his daughters. Kerri, who loves acting, had a role in the school's Fiddler on the Roof production and Amber has a black belt in karate.

While Sears enrolled in a maritime school after high school with specific plans for a maritime career, others in Crowley's team of tugboat sailors got started in the business in more unconventional ways.

Perez's path to Crowley involved a love for family and tragedy. The able-bodied seaman began his career at Crowley three years ago after a 20-year stint as a state police officer in Puerto Rico.

During his law enforcement career, Perez was shot twice in the line of duty, once in his hand and once in his back in separate incidents. He and his family didn't want to take any more chances so he decided to try something new.

A native of San Juan, Perez was a deep-sea fisherman for five years before joining Crowley. Like Sears, Perez talked about his six children and their accomplishments, including his son's kickboxing skills. While on land, Perez is a martial arts instructor.

Each of the individual life stories depicts the diversity of the crew.

Joseph used to hang out at the ports on the Eastern Caribbean French island of Guadeloupe when he became fascinated with the cruise ships that came into dock. In 1979, he left his job as a school bus driver and began a career in the maritime business. Joseph and four friends took jobs doing dishes and working in the galley for about a year, later settling in Puerto Rico and working on several freighters. After leaving that business, he did commercial fishing for eight years off the Grand Banks.

It was on the fishing boat in Puerto Rico that he was introduced to Crowley.

"During the wintertime we'd fish down in Puerto Rico and I used to see the barges coming back. I really wanted to get a job on one of those," Joseph said. "So I think it was the guys (on the tug boat) who came by once to get fuel and told me if I wanted to get in the business to get a Z-card (Merchant Mariners Document)."

"When the fishing got bad, about 10 years ago, I got my Z-card and started on the big freighters. Then one day a union officer came by and told me they needed two guys to work on the tugs. That's how I left the shore gang. I've been here almost six years," Joseph said.

Ellis, an able-bodied seaman, was a flight instructor before going on a lobster boat with a flight student. He fell in the love with the sea and left flight instruction to work on a lobster boat about 200 miles off the New England coast. A close call in 2004, led to a career change. The father of three was hauling in a line when it slipped, wrapped around his leg and pulled him off the boat and into the 36-degree water. Ellis almost drowned.

Carter, the chief engineer, had a short stint as a deckhand on an ore carrier in 1967 and later went to work for a furnace manufacturing company.

"I was bored out of my skull and I wasn't getting paid very much," Carter said. In 1980, after reading a story about careers in the maritime industry in the Detroit Free Press, he decided to go to the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. He joined Crowley in 1987. His work schedule was hard to adjust to initially.

"At first it was really hard for my wife but we try to work around my schedule," Carter said. "We celebrate our anniversary when I get back."

This unique clan offered a variety of stories about their experiences on the water as they sat in the galley toward the end of the trip. The group was diverse in life experience but shared other qualities.

They loved their families and admitted how hard it was to leave home. At the same time, they reminisced about the things they're able to do when they have weeks off at a time. Depending on the location and rotation schedules, merchant mariners in Crowley's Puerto Rico service can work four weeks at a time followed by two weeks off, two weeks of work followed by one week off, or equal time.

For Capt. Sears, the schedule allows him to take off weeks of work to spend with family, which is a plus. Being away for weeks at a time is tough, but Sears said he always takes the entire month of August off to spend time with his family at their lake house in Lake Winnepesaukee, N.H.

For others like O'Neal, being home means catching a football game with his 15-year-old son.

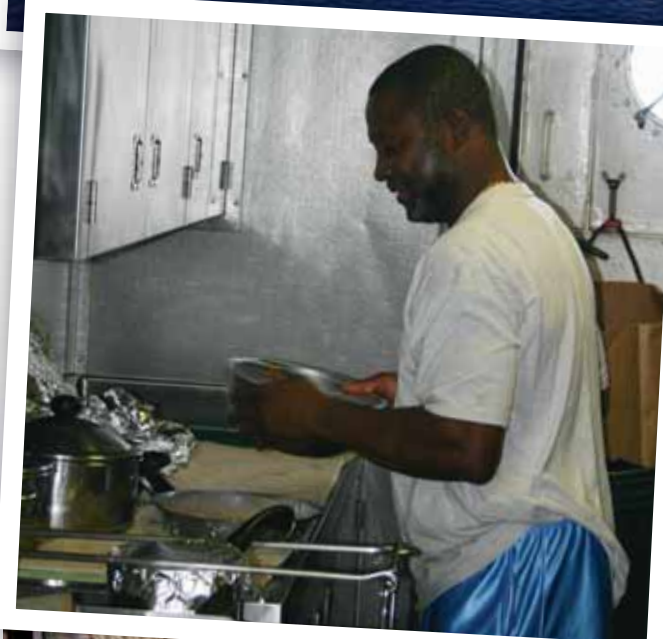
"Being away from home is tough," O'Neal said. "For a single man it isn't so bad but when you're a married man and have kids, you miss a whole lot being out here for eight months out of the year. So when I'm at home, I enjoy watching football and going to the Jags (NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars) games with my son."

Since 1954, crews of Crowley mariners and the company's predecessor company, TMT Trailer Ferry, have made the journey between the mainland and Puerto Rico. Their work is challenging, and because island residents depend on food, merchandise, building materials, automobiles and other cargoes from the U.S., the work is vitally important. To maintain that tradition of service, Crowley signed a 20-year lease extension in 2008 with the Puerto Rico Ports Authority, ensuring that the needs of businesses and residents will continue to be met by Crowley and the men and women who sail the company's vessels. [Connections](#)

Editor's note: In March 2008, Daniel Mock joined the crew of the Defender and took a tug boat ride from Jacksonville to Puerto Rico. His notes, along with other interviews, were used for this story.

Quick Facts

- Crowley has 13 tug crews based of Jacksonville and Pennsauken and up to four weekly sailings from Jacksonville and Pennsauken to San Juan.
- Crowley has served Puerto Rico since 1954.
- In 2008, Crowley signed a 20-year lease extension with the Puerto Rico Ports Authority.
- Two individual 2-1/4-inch-wide steel tow wires connect the tug to the barge during the entire trip.
- The average barge is carrying over 11,000 tons of cargo.



(Top to Bottom, Left to Right) 1. In Jacksonville, Crowley tugs and barges transit 25 miles of the St. Johns River to reach the Atlantic Ocean.
2. Hubert Joseph cooks another great meal in the galley of the tug.
3. John O'Neal looks up from the bow of the *Defender*.



A land of opportunity, optimism and challenges

By Mabel Perez

A hot pink 1957 Ford convertible whizzed by El Malecon district in Old Havana. Its occupants were tourists, their arms flailing as they pointed to historic buildings, along the Havana shoreline. They wore t-shirts and visors. Colored highlights streaked the women's angled bob hair styles.

To their right, locals sat near a concrete, ocean wall fishing. Bright, blue skies and cotton ball clouds made the city appear peaceful and relaxed, until a car horn beeped.

People are in a hurry. On this island, people work, live and play.

This snapshot of Cuba, a contrast of past and present, is common and intertwined with every day life. Even from the balconies perched over her narrow cobblestone streets, Vieja Havana resembles a distant world trying to find its place in modern times.

Her neoclassical architecture, defined by Spanish and Moorish interpretations of Baroque and Roman architecture, is contrasted by the people who walk on the weathered streets.

The city is magical and at first a little intimidating. Over 11.5 million people live on the island and their need to purchase food, consumer products and other supplies is real.

Potential among the masses

During the first week of November 2008 in Havana, hundreds of people strolled through rows and rows of both American and international companies' exhibits at Expo-Cuba, sampling everything from creamy soft-serve ice cream to wine to steamed rice to coconut slushies. Other companies showcased sample wood products and agricultural goods. All were hoping to sell their goods to Cuban governmental agencies.

Among the masses at the tradeshow were Jay Brickman, Crowley's vice president of government services, and Crowley's Cuba agent Alejandro Gonzalez, of Consignataria Maritima Caribeña. As attendees walked the exhibit space at the 26th Annual Havana International Fair and businesses signed sales contracts with Cuban agencies, Brickman looked on.

"Cuba has tremendous potential. Just look around at all the companies who want to offer their products and services to Cuba. This is a unique market and businesses are interested in entering it," Brickman said. "And Crowley has the opportunity to help bridge the U.S. and Cuba closer together by transporting a variety of containerized cargoes. Cuba is an important and meaningful market."

Crowley's involvement in the Cuban market was a gamble that required serious commitment and investment. The thought of sailing to Cuba wasn't a fly-by-night idea, a populist trend or even a possible feat among U.S. carriers during the 1970's, nor is it a popular trend today.

But in the end, that commitment and persistence delivered promise.



"Crowley has the opportunity to help bridge the U.S. and Cuba closer together by transporting a variety of containerized cargoes."

*- Jay Brickman,
Crowley*

Cuba

First to re-enter the Cuba market

Dec. 16, 2008 marks Crowley's seventh year of service to Cuba.

On that date in 2001, the maritime industry learned Crowley was the first U.S. carrier to transport cargo directly from the U.S. to Cuba since the U.S. embargo was established in 1962. But, those intimately involved with the historic voyage at Crowley and others in Washington understood the significance of the milestone in terms of U.S. governmental policy and trade.

The successful voyage was almost 40 years in the making on the U.S. government side, in terms of policy changes. On the Crowley side, trade in Cuba was an idea being explored in the 1970's.

Former Crowley President and CEO Thomas B. Crowley Sr. first acknowledged the potential of Cuba. At the time, it seemed that U.S.

President Jimmy Carter might revisit the Cuba embargo issue and open up communication with Fidel Castro. Given the indication of the possible changing political climate, Crowley began exploring possibilities.

In 1978, Brickman and others at Crowley made their first trip to Cuba. It was an exploratory trip that many other U.S. companies were also making, but was influenced in part by Crowley's acquisition of TMT Trailer Ferry some 14 years earlier. TMT had a rich history of providing transportation between the U.S. and Cuba prior to 1962.

But it wasn't until the passage of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, signed into law by former President Bill Clinton, that limited trade relations were opened.

The act defines how trade business should be conducted in Cuba from the types of products that may move from the U.S. to Cuba to the

Crowley made history on December 16, 2001, when the *Express* sailed into Havana.



method in which payments are made for the goods. The law stipulated that cash in advance or financing from institutions based outside of Cuba be used as payment. The law also limits the types of goods that can be shipped to Cuba. Those items include humanitarian, agricultural and medical supplies. Interestingly, agricultural products range from food products to wood pulp to lumber and a variety of other products that “grow”.

Just as in the pilgrimage to Cuba in the late 1970's, transportation companies flocked to the island in 2000 after the passage of the act to explore the possibility of providing services. The possibility of entering a new market was tempting but many in the industry came back discouraged. Many concluded the challenges of doing business in Cuba were more trouble than they were worth.

“The decision at Crowley could have been – forget it. This is too much trouble,” Brickman said. “There were a lot of challenges that had to be overcome in order to develop a business relationship in Cuba.”

Instead, Crowley applied for a license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Department of the Treasury in Washington, D.C., to provide regularly scheduled common carrier services for licensed cargo from the U.S. to Cuba and a license with the U.S. Department of Commerce. In early 2001, Crowley became the first U.S. carrier to obtain such a license.

In Cuba, Crowley employees noted infrastructure development within the country. According to Brickman, the infrastructure foundation exists with the potential for improvements and future growth. Another eye-opener was the size and population of Cuba.

“Cuba was a fully developed place before the revolution,” Brickman said. “If you look at Old San Juan (in Puerto Rico) and multiply that by 10, you have Old Havana.”

“We explored the island and conducted an extensive study of the market and found a well-developed rail system. We all quickly realized the possibilities,” Brickman said.

The Caribbean country, slightly smaller than the state of Pennsylvania, is in fact the largest Caribbean nation with over 11.5 million people.

Trends also indicate the economy is one of the fastest growing in Latin America, in terms of trade and spending with non-U.S. countries.

“It’s really not a market that is growing (in connection to the U.S.) but it’s a market with the potential to grow when it opens up,” Brickman said.

That vision is exactly what has kept Crowley connected with Cuba, amidst challenges.

Tricia Loveless, Crowley’s Puerto Rico/Caribbean services manager of customer development, recalls some of the challenges she and her team worked through during the initial, crucial months.

“You have to remember that this market was closed for almost 40 years, so there were many people who were concerned about having the right documentation to assure they were transporting licensed goods to Cuba,” Loveless said. “We worked with customers ensuring all the proper paperwork was completed.”

Along with documentation concerns, Crowley customer service personnel worked closely with the traffic department to make sure everything went smoothly, from the time the vessel left the Gulf Coast and Port Everglades to the time it arrived in Havana.

The Cuba service is a team effort. At Crowley, dozens of employees collaborate to make sure the sailings make it to Cuba in a timely fashion and that customers are satisfied. On one end, Jack Hudson, manager of equipment logistics for the Latin America group, makes sure the right equipment is available for the voyages. Further on the spectrum, Kathy

“We’ve always had full support from Crowley. So much so, that Alimport has not sought another company to ship their goods to Cuba.”

*– Alejandro Gonzalez,
Consignataria Maritima Caribeña*



Cuba

"... we are fortunate to have positive relationships with Cuban officials and Alimport. We hope to one day be able to transport other goods to the Cuban people."

- John Hourihan, Crowley



Stafford, lead coordinator of freight services, deals with logistics issues involving traffic and documentation essential to the transportation of goods to Cuba. Ed Porro, senior administrator of operations, assures the vessels stay on schedule and operations flow smoothly.

Crowley's logistics group is also part of the team involved in the Cuba market. They receive hundreds of loads each year at their warehouses and are tasked with a variety of responsibilities, including the labeling of product loads. Recently at the Jacksonville logistics warehouse, team members transloaded 31 truckloads of powdered milk and relabeled three loads of butter slated for transport via the Crowley vessel. The logistics group also handles the airfreight of medicines and other sensitive, small quantity products to Cuba.

The team effort also includes others outside of the Crowley circle. On the Cuba side, Gonzalez maintains Crowley representation in all things port and trade-related with the Cuban government - the port authority, Alimport and other public entities.

Among the agent's responsibilities are being involved in making sure billing, port charges and other documentation requirements are met. However, more importantly Gonzalez also maintains a constant working relationship with Alimport. Brickman and other Crowley officials also visit the island regularly.

"If you look at the situation seven years ago and compare it to the situation now - things are very different. There have been a lot of positive changes," said Gonzalez, chuckling. "You have no idea."

"We are fortunate to be very busy in Cuba, but that's great news. We're satisfied and pleased to work with Crowley and the Cuban government to reinforce our commitment in Cuba," said the agent.

Apples, Chicken, Aspirin and Lumber

Henry Chiles, president of Crown Orchard, a Virginia-based apple, peach and nectarine grower, was among the attendees of the 26th Annual Havana International Fair. It wasn't the first time he had been there.



For years, Chiles has traveled to Cuba to sell his apples to Alimport. His business has experienced growth and he hopes to continue to offer his products on the island.

“This year, we sold 30 loads of apples to Alimport and we’re looking at about 60 loads next year,” Chiles said, during the fair. “I like doing business in Cuba and hope to do more in the future. It would be great for our business when trade opens up.”

Chiles, who transports his apples with Crowley, also said Crowley has provided unmatched customer service in the unique market.

“Crowley has also been a great partner through all this. Jay and his team have been there every step of the way, providing solutions to all types of challenges,” Chiles said.

Chiles’ sentiment regarding increased business in Cuba is common among companies represented at the fair. They see Cuba as a win-win situation. American businesses can sell their products to another market and increase sales, while Cubans can have access to more products. This mentality is similar to that of Cuban governmental officials who said they want to purchase more American-made products and goods. Alimport officials also added that Crowley played an important role in the current situation and that the company would continue to play a vital role if the embargo conditions changed.

“Even before 2000, Crowley was known in Cuba as an important company,” said Pedro Alvarez, president of Alimport – the Cuban governmental agency tasked with purchasing food products for the country. “Before Hurricane Michelle, there were two companies vying to handle transportation of goods to Cuba. We leaned toward Crowley and since then we haven’t looked back.”

“People forget how important it is to foster positive relationships and since the beginning, Crowley has had a presence in Cuba,” Alvarez said. “Jay has played an important role in our decision to choose Crowley. I can tell you it’s been like a marriage. There have been disagreements but in the end we work things out and get along well. The relationship is sincere and professional.”

According to numbers provided by Alimport, over 17,200 containers have been transported to Cuba via Crowley. The number of containers transported has been steady through the years. However, Alvarez said his agency would like to purchase more goods in areas not currently permitted by U.S. legislation.

“The factor that limits our business relationship with Crowley is the embargo, it’s not Cuba,” Alvarez said. “American-made products and goods are high-quality and we would like to be able to purchase more. We would like to buy things like home domestic products, medical equipment, consumer products, generators and much more.”

According to Granma, Cuba’s daily newspaper, over 110 American companies attended the fair. During the fair, Alimport signed contracts with businesses worldwide totaling \$300 million.

Crowley’s business in Cuba includes transporting containerized cargoes like poultry, hot dogs, bacon, fresh fruits and vegetables, rice and a variety of other agricultural products such as wood on Crowley’s *Elb Carrier*. Livestock is also transported as are medical and humanitarian goods, all permitted by Crowley’s current license.

While Brickman and other Crowley leadership don’t take their current positive business relationships in Cuba for granted, they do recognize the potential in the “new market.” As such, Brickman and Gonzalez note



how important it is to foster open communication and an open working relationship with the Cubans.

According to Gonzalez, a great testament to Crowley's commitment in Cuba is self-explanatory: while Alimport has other options besides Crowley in ocean transportation – Alimport has continued to do business with Crowley.

"We've always had full support from Crowley. The support has been extraordinary and communication with Crowley employees has been a key in our success in Cuba," Gonzalez said. "So much so, that Alimport has not sought another company to ship their goods to Cuba. The governmental agency has other options but they choose to stay with Crowley."

John Hourihan, senior vice president and general manager of Latin America services, understands the challenges in Cuba but stresses Crowley believes in open, free trade.

"We believe in free trade," Hourihan said. "Cuba is another market and we are fortunate to have positive relationships with Cuban officials and Alimport. We hope to one day be able to transport other goods to the Cuban people."

Brickman added that Crowley has a head start over other companies who may wish to get into the market later.

"We've been committed to Cuba since the very beginning and believe we have our foot in the door," Brickman said.

In 2001, Crowley's first shipment of nearly \$30 million worth of food for Alimport provided relief for Cubans affected by Hurricane Michelle.

Today, Crowley transports over 100 TEU's each week, from the East Coast and boasts between four and six sailings a month to Cuba. It's a small market compared to other countries in the Caribbean and Central America but not insignificant.

Brickman notes that from the Cuban perspective, trade with the U.S. is welcomed. On the U.S. side, there are still reservations.

Nonetheless, times can change. Brickman and others at Crowley envision it.

"There will be change. It will resemble that of Vietnam and China. You have to keep in mind that when this market opens up there will be 11.5 million Cubans who will need everything from washing machines to vehicles," Brickman said.

Alvarez agrees.

"We are aware that, when and if, the embargo conditions change, many companies will flock to Cuba, wanting to expand their businesses. What you also have to understand is that Cubans remember those who reached out, lent us a hand and worked with us during difficult times. Cubans also remember those who weren't there during difficult times," Alvarez said.

Crowley is authorized to ship licensed cargo to Cuba. Currently, Crowley sails to Havana, Cuba from Port Everglades, FL and Jacksonville, FL as an alternate port every week. Eligible commodities for export to Cuba are detailed under Section 902(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000. [Connections](#)

Quick Facts

- The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 created the opportunity for Crowley to begin service to Cuba.
- On Dec. 16, 2001, Crowley was the first U.S. carrier to transport cargo directly from the U.S. to Cuba since the U.S. embargo was established in 1962.
- Crowley transports a variety of containerized cargoes like poultry, meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, rice, milk and other agricultural products such as wood.
- Cuba is the largest Caribbean nation with over 11.5 million people.
- Trends indicate the economy is one of the fastest growing in Latin America, in terms of trade and spending with non-U.S. countries.
- During the 26th Annual Havana International Fair held November 2008, Alimport signed contracts with businesses worldwide totaling \$300 million.



A refrigerated container of frozen poultry is loaded in Gulfport, Miss. for the first shipment to Cuba.



WANTED: Merchant Mariners

By Jenifer Kimble

Across the board, the maritime industry is faced with a challenge — how to recruit and retain talent to operate vessels, which in many cases represent the lifeblood of the business. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD) conducted the Maritime Operator Survey Concerning Mariner Availability. The results echoed the concerns of those in the business, including Crowley. From the 164 respondents, MARAD learned that 89 percent had attempted to hire mariners over the past year, but 71 percent of them encountered problems in recruitment. Additionally, the survey revealed that 45 percent had difficulty

hiring licensed deck officers and 28 percent had problems hiring unlicensed deck personnel.

So why the sudden difficulty obtaining personnel in one of America's oldest professions? "There are several things contributing to the decline in qualified mariners across the globe, not just in the U.S. market," explained Ira Douglas, Crowley manager of marine recruiting and development.

Fewer mariners internationally means that some American mariners are entering the international job market, putting a greater strain on American recruiting and crewing.

"U.S.-flagged vessels were typically better jobs but with international wages increasing, it's

harder to recruit talent," explained Douglas.

"The need has grown for licensed mariners. There are more ships on the water and with the increase in the energy services market, there is more work than there are bodies to do it."

The number of tankers worldwide rose 17 percent between 2001 and 2005 and container ships jumped 30 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

But, Crowley provides many benefits above fair wages to those that do choose to make the maritime and logistics company their career home. For one, safety is of utmost importance and consequently is the number one item listed in the company's core values. Second, the



company provides a history of stability and diversification allowing mariners to feel confident that their job is secure with an established company.

"Crowley's diverse business lines provide a wealth of opportunities for capable, motivated individuals," said Chris Peterson, vice president and general manager. "Starting off in a sea-going position provides a solid foundation from which to grow. From overseeing barge landings and logistics in the Russian Far East to managing a container terminal in the Caribbean, there truly are long-term career paths available at Crowley."

"Crowley has helped me build a career for the long haul," said Frosty Leonard, director of operations. "They recruited me prior to my graduation from Maine Maritime Academy and since then, I've worked for them in Jacksonville, Philadelphia, Seattle, Valdez and Long Beach, finding challenges and advancement opportunities all along the way. The door is wide open with Crowley. You just have to decide whether or not you're going to walk through it."

"Crowley has a good name and a safe reputation," commented Douglas. "And it's an international company that operates ethically and responsibly, but it still faces the same recruiting issues as the rest of the industry."

Janet Williams, crewing administrator in Seattle believes that the major challenges Crowley and the rest of the maritime industry

are facing in obtaining and keeping crewmembers are regular schedules, length of voyages, travel and pay/benefits.

Adding to the issue, there are only seven schools with licensed officer curriculums approved by the Coast Guard within the U.S., six of which are state-run schools: California Maritime Academy; Massachusetts Maritime Academy; Maine Maritime Academy; Texas Maritime Academy; Great Lakes Maritime Academy; and State University of New York Maritime Academy. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) is a federal academy run by MARAD. Furthermore, only Maine currently offers a program, which results in a towing license – something pivotal to Crowley's line haul and energy support services.

All USMMA graduates leave with three things: a license; a bachelor's degree (Marine Transportation, Marine Engineering, Marine Engineering Systems, Marine Engineering and Shipyard Management, Maritime Operations and Technology or Logistics and Intermodal Transportation); and a commission. This is in contrast to the state schools that graduate only 59 percent in license-track programs.

Douglas explained that licensed deck officers, which on Crowley's tugs, include captain, chief mate and second mate, are the hardest to find. The worldwide shortfall of officers stands at 10,000, or two percent of the total workforce,

according to a 2005 survey from BIMCO/ISF, two international shipping groups. By 2015, however, the survey projects the officer shortage to triple.

Changes to regulations that govern licensing within the industry are also compounding the problem, as is an aging workforce. The days of "coming up the hawsepipe" are over as a more demanding certification process deters the less academically inclined. While mariners of the past were able to start as a deckhand and work their way through the ranks with sweat equity, those days are gone. Stringent licensing requirements have put checks and balances in place to ensure only those who follow academic testing and procedures advance their careers on a licensure track.

In 1995, the Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) was significantly amended from its original writing in 1978. The original rule served to establish and standardize basic requirements on training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers on an international level. It did not deal, however, with manning levels of vessels. The 1995 amendments to the Code (STCW-95) added more "hands-on" demonstration of skill and ability to prove that mariners are qualified to serve aboard seagoing vessels. The biggest change with STCW-95 is that it formalizes the documentation of competencies to perform these tasks.



"Our people are our business. We have built a world class safety culture and by adding career advancement programs, we can make working for Crowley a top choice for any mariner, new or old."

- Cole Cosgrove, Crowley

"The need has grown for licensed mariners. There are more ships on the water and with the increase in the energy services market, there is more work than there are bodies to do it."

- Ira Douglas, Crowley



The new amendments require that seafarers be provided with "familiarization training" and "basic safety training" (firefighting, first aid, survival techniques and social responsibility). They also require, among other things, rest periods for watchkeeping personnel. And every officer is required at intervals to meet the fitness standards of their outlined professional competence.

So in a day when Crowley competes internationally for talent, maritime academies are at maximum enrollment and still unable to meet demands and licensing regulations are tighter than ever, what's a maritime company to do?

Crowley has assembled a marine personnel department dedicated to personnel development that standardizes policy and procedures, prioritizes required training and focuses on retention and promotion of qualified mariners to ensure company durability. The department is headed by Cole Cosgrove, vice president, who has spent more than 20 years with Crowley in various capacities including port captain, senior port captain, director of chartering operations and general manager of ship management.

Cosgrove acknowledges that there is a tightening of the labor pool. He agrees that it is in part due to a maturing maritime population brought on by lack of entry-level employment opportunities. This is in the absence of U.S. flag new builds and the development of new technology that has cut the average crew size 25 to 30 percent from levels 30 years ago.

Vessels are larger but require a smaller operating crew and with fewer crew, there are fewer training billets. Currently, the average cargo vessel capacity is approximately 28,000 deadweight tons (DWT), compared to 12,000 DWT in 1970. While the U.S. fleet size has declined, its productivity has improved substantially. The U.S.-flag foreign trade liner fleet handles 42 percent more cargo than in 1970, but in fewer, larger vessels with less than half of the crewmembers.

Recently, new standards, instituted as part of

the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, requiring double hull tankers, have created a number of U.S. flag new builds. Crowley itself is adding 17 new articulated tug and barge (ATB) units. Cosgrove acknowledges that competition for crews, increased training and new STCW requirements for towing license endorsements are partially to blame for a shortage in mariners but explains that through his new department they will be tackling some of these issues.

"Part of what makes marine personnel such a challenge at Crowley is that we may have qualified mariners, but each type of vessel requires unique operating skills and a fair amount of these skills don't cross over. You can't move a harbor tug operator used to working in close quarters alongside today's mega-ships one day and have him towing 730-foot barges on a half-mile of 2¼" wire the next. There is different training and experience involved," explains Cosgrove.

"Before the new STCW regulations, academy graduates with a year of experience could test for a 1,600-ton master's license and

qualify as a towing master," explained Cosgrove. "But now you must have practical experience onboard towing vessels if you are interested in holding a license for them and Crowley can help."

The company has set up several programs including AB to Mate, Tankerman Person-In-Charge and Port Engineer training, all of which are designed to provide a career path through the Crowley organization for qualified marine personnel. Crowley also offers regulatory, customer and company training and provides for some of the licensing requirements. Crowley works closely in cooperation with union schools and third party vendors as well as with its own in-house regulatory training group on its training programs.

The AB to Mate program can typically take four to seven months and in some cases can leave the enrollee without income during that training period. Crowley has developed its program to help six to twelve ABs per year meet these requirements. This costs the company about \$75-100,000 per trainee, but builds



Crowley's tanker *Blue Ridge* sails under Golden Gate Bridge.

Recruiting

morale and loyalty among those that are able to benefit from it. The company relies on captains, operations managers and others to recommend potential candidates for this program. Crowley in cooperation with the SIU's Harry Lundberg School at Piney Point, will help enrollees prepare for tests, meet licensing requirements, provide meals and living quarters, etc. while paying their salary for the duration of the program. The goal is to prepare for and pass the Coast Guard license exams so mariners continue to have a way to advance within the company.

Cosgrove and his group are working on a similar program that would allow a utility to progress to a tug chief engineer. The technical services team along with the engineering leadership team is home to yet another program that allows crewmembers to work their way onshore into a port engineer position. This development program mentors marine engineers equipping them with the skills they need to move into the port engineer position. Program participants are given real life training and work alongside seasoned port engineers in an effort to help each person reach their goals.

"Crowley works with its employees so they can advance to the next step in their careers," said Ed Burdorf, operations manager.

Cosgrove admits this is all a work in progress, but he has a clear vision for where he would like to see this centrally focused department go. "We are developing this department to essentially take a corporate-wide view of our marine resources." While labor relations will continue to be a separate department, all other crewing functions have been absorbed including the oversight of the company's new NS5 computer system.

NS5 is an enterprise-wide industry-specific software solution that the company has rolled

"The door is wide open with Crowley. You just have to decide whether or not you're going to walk through it."

*- Frosty Leonard,
Crowley*

out and is refining. It will be deployed to and used by all locations, providing a set of common procedures and processes and will use a common platform for shoreside crewing activities and provide visibility to crew onboard the vessels. This centralized repository allows for storing of marine personnel information similar to a PeopleSoft HR-type application, but it also accepts maintenance requests, purchasing requisitions, scheduling, etc.

Currently, Crowley has almost 1,600 seamen on permanent billet throughout the U.S. including 550 based in Seattle and 790 based in Jacksonville. There are also 90 in Anchorage, 60 in San Pedro and 100 in Lake Charles. This number does not include the 2,000 - 3,000 relief mariners bringing the total number to as high as 4,600 and further justifying the need for this centralized crewing department.

"Crowley considers its marine personnel to be an extension of the corporation and view their value as equal to anyone else's within the company," explained Cosgrove. "Our people are our business. We have built a world class safety culture and by adding career advance-



ment programs, we can make working for Crowley a top choice for any mariner, new or old."

Though Cosgrove understands that he will continue to face challenges as his department becomes fully operational on January 1, 2009, he is confident that they are well positioned to move their objectives forward and staff Crowley with the best, most dedicated, most efficient and safest group of crewmembers in the industry. [Connections](#)

Quick Facts

- Crowley has worked closely with all maritime academies over the years developing opportunities for cadets including: scholarships, cadet shipping, internships and employment.
- Career paths at Crowley are as wide-ranging and diverse as our operations. Whether it be unlimited tonnage/horsepower or limited tonnage licenses, a starting point and career path exists within the Crowley fleet.
- To view current openings with Crowley visit: www.crowley.com/careers.



Crowley's ATB Sound Reliance / 550-2 off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii.

Crowley Builds Strength Through Diversity

By Jenifer Kimble



People who know Crowley know Crowley employees are the backbone of the company. There are some 4,300 of them stretching from Russia and Singapore to Alaska and the lower 48 states, from the Caribbean and Central America to the United Kingdom. Crowley employees are as diverse as the company's portfolio of services, and they come from all walks of life. The company employs people from across the Americas, the Caribbean, India, Norway, Africa, Russia and China to name only a few.

Crowley has built a culture that not only supports diversity but also embraces it.

"We believe that inclusion builds productivity and creativity," explained Bryan Lee, vice president, human resources. "And, in the global econ-

omy in which we operate, we are able to harness a full range of perspectives and experience to further our business advantage."

"Our corporate social responsibility is rooted in respect for the people and cultures in the communities where we work. We provide jobs in rural Alaskan communities where there are few other private sector jobs available," explained Craig Tornga, vice president, petroleum distribution in Alaska. "I am proud of our record of 100 percent local hires in our rural communities. There is no better way for us as a company to be involved in our communities, than through our employees."

Cedric Herring, Sociologist and Professor at the University of Illinois, reported that companies that are more diverse have more customers, a larger share of their markets and greater profitability. In fact, when

Herring put his numbers on a graph, he found that a linear relationship existed between diversity and business success, meaning that as diversity increased, those business indicators increased in step. "Those companies that have very low levels of racial and ethnic minorities have the lowest profits, the lowest market share and the lowest number of customers," he said. "Those that have medium levels do better, and those that have the highest levels do the best."

Understanding this to be true and leveraging its international presence, Crowley has filled its ranks with some of the best and brightest. When combined, this diverse group of people lead to one great place to work and one successful, customer-focused, enterprise. The following are but a few examples of Crowley people and their stories of triumph and success.

Chea Uong

Crowley Senior Accountant Chea Uong and his family first arrived in the U.S. more than 20 years ago. Before his move to the states, Chea's family had been living a relatively settled life in the village of Battambang, Cambodia, where Chea was an elementary school teacher, educated at the country's university in the capital city, Phnom Penh.

In April of 1975, Chea's life took a brutal turn as Khmer Rouge (Red Cambodian) soldiers entered his village ordering the 3,000 inhabitants into an open field where they publicly accused two villagers for opposing the newly established Marxist regime before beating them to death and disemboweling them.

This incident was the start of several years of Chea's separation from family and hardships that included living in and escaping from slave labor camps, fleeing through the jungles of Cambodia to seek refuge in Thailand and later moving to the Philippines. In 1981, with \$16 to their

name, Chea's family moved to Jacksonville with the help of Lutheran Social Services who referred Chea to Crowley for a job.

In December 1981, having been in the U.S. for only two months and 17 days, Chea joined the Crowley family as an office services clerk. Chea explains that everything was quite new to him and adapting to the American culture was not easy.

Chea's first few days working at Crowley were in his words "an incredible explorative experience". In addition to being in a big and foreign city, working in the mailroom posed another issue – he would have to struggle through the English language and learn American culture at the same time.

With so many things to learn, Chea's weekends were filled with typing practice, reading English books and assisting his children with homework. In addition to the Uong family, there were eight other Cambodian families living in the same apartment complex all coming to America at about the same time. "Often, the other Cambodian immigrants came to me for help," explained Chea. "They brought

letters for me to translate from government agencies. Some needed help filling out applications for employment or other services. Each weekend went by very fast."

On top of those needs, Chea's pressing resolution was to own a car. Chea felt that he had to pass the examination and he did, on the very first try. With the money that Chea's wife Youan had saved, along with several paychecks from Crowley, the family bought a 1977 Toyota station wagon.

Now that he had transportation, it was time for Chea to go back to school. During the Khmer Rouge regime, education was a real enemy to communism. Revealing any diploma or degree would endanger one's life, he recalled. "I destroyed all of my documents, hoping it would save

"Our corporate social responsibility is rooted in respect for the people and cultures in the communities where we work."
- Craig Tornga, Crowley



Chea Uong with wife and son.



Uong receives GED.



Uong and his family in Jacksonville.



Chea Uong and his family.

my life. So, here in America, I did not have any proof of my education. I had to start all over.” First, he registered and attended a night class at a Jacksonville high school for the GED preparation. With full time work, a night class, and homework assistance to his three kids, Chea’s day ran solid from 5:00 AM 11:00 PM every day. At the end of the GED course, he took and passed the test, receiving his GED diploma in 1982. “From then on, I became a degree-seeking student at a community college.”

“Once in a while I have paused and looked back over my years in the states and I have felt very grateful to Crowley and my fellow colleagues. I admired Crowley’s adherence to their policy on equal job opportunity with no discrimination based on race or religion. Everyone welcomed me on my first day of work. I was treated as a family member, not as a stranger. In all the years working with this company, through the good and bad times, I developed an attachment to it. I was not just an employee working for the paycheck, but a member of the Crowley family.”

Chea is the proud father of five children: four were born in Cambodia, and one in Kao I Dang, a refugee camp in Thailand. Once in Jacksonville, the children were enrolled in school full time. All succeeded in school and have gone on to be successful adults.

“With all of the success in my family, I feel blessed and grateful to America: its people, its institutions and its environment. America is truly a land of freedom and opportunities, especially for those with clear visions and strong commitments to pursue goals and ambitions.”

Momodou Sallah

Crowley Assistant Treasurer Momodou Sallah was born and raised in Banjul, the capital city of Gambia, located on the western coast of Africa. He is the second child of six in a sequence that was evenly split girl then boy (he also has four half brothers and three half sisters). His dad was the manager of a small store in Banjul until his aspirations led him to England in search of better work. He originally intended to go alone and set up a home, then bring his wife and youngest child about a year later. However, Momodou’s antics convinced them otherwise. He laughingly recalls that as a young child, “I would run out to the telephone pole and pretend to call my father. Everyone began to think I was a little crazy”. After observing this behavior, his mom decided that Momodou would be better off moving to England with her and his father, and that his two sisters would be temporarily left behind in Banjul.

They set off for Exeter, a city in Devon, England. A few years later, his brother was born and after six more years, his grandfather pressured the

family to return to Banjul fearing that the boys would lose their culture and their native language of Wollof.

In school, Momodou could only speak English well, so he was nicknamed ‘English’ – a nickname that follows him today. Momodou was first exposed to basketball in primary school – later it would become a sport he grew to love.

“I wasn’t really good at it [basketball] at first but I tried it,” remarked the six-foot, four-inch tall Sallah. “And, as a kid I wasn’t tall, it wasn’t until I started eating long grain rice and jumping that I shot up,” he jests.

In the meantime, Momodou’s dad took a different job as a trader in a village 370 miles up river from Banjul where he bought locally harvested peanuts, which were stored in a warehouse until a tug and barge picked them up and carried them to the city of Banjul for processing and exporting.

Every holiday, Momodou and his brother would board a riverboat to go up river to visit their father. They would sleep on the open deck or near the engine room for warmth. While not transiting the river to see his father, Momodou was introduced to the first Peace Corps office in Banjul. It opened right next door to his house. And, its one officer (Patty) gave Momodou his first basketball and a book by Bill Sharman – Basketball Shooting Guide. At that point, Momodou realized that he wanted to be more a part of basketball and wanted to get a better education than was offered at Gambia’s one college.

In pursuit of that aspiration, he and his friends began to save part of their lunch money every day. They would then buy postage stamps and airmail and would go to the U.S. Embassy and Peace Corps offices to check out U.S. college handbooks. They would go through the books and use their purchased stamps to apply to all of them alphabetically from Alabama to Wyoming. And, while they found there was interest in them from the U.S. schools, they couldn’t meet the financial obligations proposed by the foreign institutions. In the meantime, Momodou had begun to focus more on basketball, captaining his high school team and later playing for the national team, which took him via Land Rover to far away places like Mauritania.



Momodou Sallah

Momodou's father decided to once again explore another region, this time in Sierra Leone, West Africa – well known for its stake in the diamond trade. After his dad had been gone a couple years, Momodou was again sent off to touch base.

The then high school student had only a post office box and a description of his dad and hoped for help from locals finding him. He took a taxi to the police station where the duty officer directed him to “Red China” explaining that was where most Gambians lived in Sefadu. After arriving, he immediately heard his native language and hoped he was getting closer. He approached the nearest home, gave greetings then proceeded with the description of his father. The men inside the house asked, “You mean the light-skinned one, the one who writes letters?” They invited him in, fed him then took him to a store where they had gone many times before to enlist his father's help in writing letters to those back home or in translating government paperwork.

Momodou spent the rest of the summer there with his father who was buying diamonds from miners then reselling them to larger distributors. In the following days, his father took him into the mines.

“At night, the ‘sand sand’ boys and locals would sneak to the lots and take scoops of the gravel in buckets or in their shirts. The armed guards would come and chase them. As they ran, gravel spilled from their stash. So when it would rain, people came out to search through the gravel in the streets hoping that the water would reveal diamonds.”

In fact, that's how Momodou found his first diamond, an orange one worth six whole shillings or about eight cents. But, he was proud, so much so that he hid it in the back of his Timex watch where it remained until he got to the airport and was directed towards the diamond detectors that scanned each departing passenger for contraband. While the detectors didn't find diamonds, the customs inspectors did find Momodou's stash of cash that his father was sending home for his mother. It was at that moment that Momodou was faced with the corruption that had so polluted the government at the time. Though his paperwork was in order, he was told he could not get on the plane until he handed over a bribe to an officer. When his father said he was going to report him to the supervisor, he discovered that the supervisor would also want a bribe – a larger one. Understanding this was the only way to get home, the bribes were paid and Momodou boarded the plane.

Back home, Momodou graduated from high school and began working for Gambia Commercial and Development Bank as a ledger keeper and at the foreign exchange counter. He was accepted to Tuskegee University in Alabama, but unable to get a scholarship, he packed his bags and entered Claremore Junior College in Oklahoma. There, he was offered a spot on the soccer team as a reserve player and his coach helped him to get a position in the work-study program.

He spent his days attending classes, practicing soccer with the team, studying, then performing the duties of his work-study program, which employed him as a janitor. A far cry from his suit and tie days at the bank in Banjul, Momodou knew that cleaning dorms and other campus buildings would lead him to better things in the end. His work-study program did not satisfy his entire tuition responsibility so, following graduation he worked two jobs to pay off his balance. He also applied to several universities during this time. Though he was accepted to and offered scholarships to Oklahoma State University and Southwest Missouri State, he chose to continue his education at the University of California at Berkeley, which has consistently ranked as the nation's top undergraduate public university.

To put himself through school, he sold insulation door-to-door until he was eligible for a work-study program again. This time he was assigned to the International Student House (ISH) as a dishwasher but was soon promoted to “omelet man”. “To this day I make a mean omelet,” remarked Momodou.

For the next few years, he added basketball to his list of activities. He made the club team but had to drop out because of work. He became friends with Kevin Johnson (a point guard for the Cleveland Cavaliers and Phoenix Suns) who also spent time at the ISH.

Momodou earned his bachelor's degree in political economy and was hired by an engineering company to handle some of their accounts receivable functions. After about 14 years with this company and earning an MBA in Finance from Golden Gate University, he found himself looking for another job. He joined Crowley as a temporary employee in 1999 and several months later was hired permanently into the treasury department as senior analyst. He was promoted to assistant treasurer in 2006 after relocating from Oakland, Calif., to Jacksonville, Fla. As assistant treasurer, he is managing tens of millions of dollars for the cor-

Momodou Sallah, right, with brother.



Sallah, left, with co-workers from Gambia Commercial and Development Bank.



Sallah in work-study program at Claremore Junior College





poration including the cash management functions, assists the senior vice president and treasurer with various vessel and equipment financings and is a valued member of the corporate team.

Claudia Kattan

Crowley General Manager for Honduras and Nicaragua Claudia Kattan de Jordan was born in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Her mother's side of the family is of Spanish/Honduran decent while her father's side is Arabian from Palestine. Claudia's mother died when she was only two, leaving her father to raise her, her two older sisters and her two younger brothers. Claudia considers herself to have been blessed with a wonderful father who shaped her into the successful woman she is today. She is also very grateful to her husband who has supported her throughout the years and stood beside her as she advanced her career.

"My father raised his daughters to be strong ladies in case anything ever happened to him," she explained. "He wanted to make sure we could survive. I remember asking my father to help me buy a car. Instead he taught me to change a tire so I could take care of myself first."

As a youngster, she was dedicated to her studies, but was also very involved in activities. She played volleyball, basketball and performed folklore dance and music. "I have always kept myself very busy," she said. At one point she was on five different teams, but eventually chose one so she could concentrate her energy.

Claudia is a classic overachiever in all the best respects. One time, she was named best student and as a reward handled the flag for the day – a memory she holds dear. She was always on the best sports teams, was the best in band, art, etc. She even danced competitively in folklore, which is the traditional dance in Honduras. Claudia is also a

belly dancer. Though it's reserved for family occasions such as weddings, Claudia considers it a part of her culture.

Claudia's family owned a store, putting sales in her blood from childhood. She started with Crowley at a young age after graduating from Universidad Tecnológica de Honduras with a degree in marketing and international commerce and an advanced degree (master's) in administration and finance. She studied English in college and is now fluent in both English and Spanish and can speak a little Arabic though she admits her mastery of the latter is rough.

"I loved Crowley immediately and all the challenges I was faced with,"

she said. At that time, typically women in Honduras and throughout Central America were working only in secretarial roles. "With Crowley being an American company, there was so much more opportunity. And, they promoted from within."

Claudia started with the company in an administrative support position then moved into customer service. From there she became a sales coordinator, then a sales executive, sales manager and is now the general manager for both Honduras and Nicaragua.

In the beginning, being a woman in a general manager position wasn't easy. She was working with unions, trucking companies, stevedores, etc., but when they started experiencing her professionalism, she earned their respect.

"Many years ago being a woman was an issue, but when they saw what I was made of, their minds changed," she said.

Claudia has involved herself throughout the industry as an additional way to gain the confidence of her vendors, coworkers, customers and the like. She is involved with the U.S. Embassy and is the director of the Shipping Association, giving her a lot of influence in the country. She is also a member of the American Chamber of Commerce and the Asociación Hondureña de Compañías y Representantes Navieros (shipping

"I loved Crowley immediately and all the challenges I was faced with."

*- Claudia Kattan,
Crowley*

lines association) allowing her to interact with different people.

“When you start working for Crowley you start liking it. When you grow with the company you become committed to it and when you’re in upper management, you’re dedicated,” explains Claudia to her team in Honduras. She considers herself fortunate to be a part of a company that allows her to make a difference in other people’s lives and develop future leaders by stimulating her staff to tap their talents.

Claudia was rewarded for her hard work and dedication with the 2005 Thomas Crowley trophy, Crowley Maritime Corporation’s highest honor. Of her award, Tom Crowley remarked, “Claudia is an inspiration to all Crowley employees. She began her career with us as an administrative assistant and later as a sales manager helped us grow our services and account base in the country. And now, as the first female general manager in one of our countries, she’s making the necessary organizational and process changes to make sure we are ready to grow as a result of the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). You can see that her staff is very motivated and encouraged by her creativity, team-building mentality, loyalty and integrity.”

So what does this self-proclaimed workaholic do in her spare time? She loves reading, traveling, and horseback riding on her husband’s farm. “These activities give a better balance to my life,” she commented.

“My dad told me, whatever you do, do it with a lot of effort. If something happens, don’t give up – continue.”

Claudia admits that her father, who passed away six years ago, was very proud of her. She recalls him telling her that she had such a blessing to share with those around her.

She now has two daughters of her own - Pily and Stephanie. “I try to raise them the same way that I was raised, but I have to be a little bit flexible,” admits Claudia. “My husband agrees that we should make them strong women but wants to make sure there is fun in the mix.”

“The girls love to see mom as a career woman,” said Claudia. “They say they want to be like me one day. I will let them choose what they want to do.”

John Azzo, Fadi Azzo

John and Fadi Azzo, Crowley director of procurement and industrial engineer, respectively, are first cousins, both originally from Iraq. Though John has been in the United States since 1969, Fadi’s flight from Iraq did not occur until a year ago. After the latest war, security has become nearly non-existent in the city of Baghdad where Fadi and his family made their home.

Living in a war-torn country presented a dangerous situation for Fadi’s family, as did his father’s profession as a successful ear, nose and throat surgeon. The family became a target for militants. Fadi’s father was kidnapped in 2006 outside the pharmacy where Fadi’s mother worked.

No one heard from him for three days. On the fourth day, the family got a phone call demanding a hefty ransom. The initial ransom was too large for the family to pay, leaving the fate of his father in limbo.

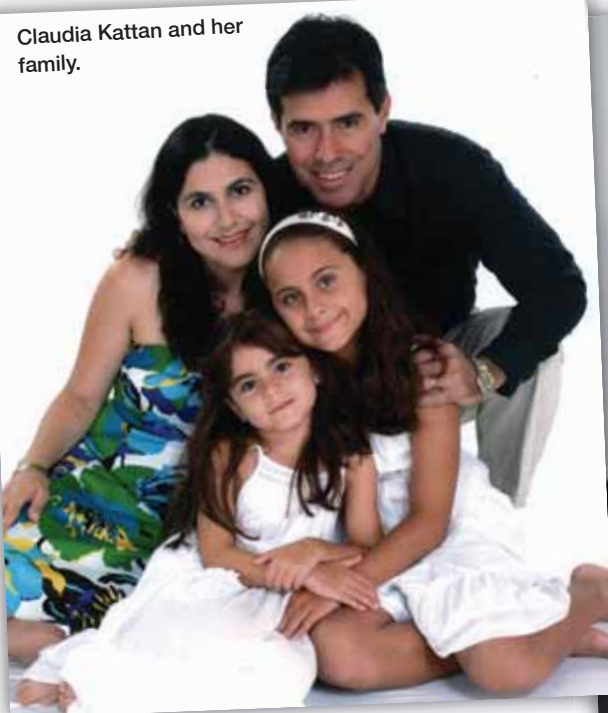
John recalled getting the terrifying phone call as he sat in the company’s Jacksonville lunchroom. Shortly thereafter, the family was given a revised ransom amount and agreed to pay it, still not knowing if it would secure his release; thankfully, it did. The family speculates that because he paid the ransom, was a doctor and treated one of the kidnapper’s children while in captivity, they perhaps showed him mercy.

On the tenth day, he was blindfolded, put in a trunk and released. Fadi’s father was told by his kidnappers that he should immediately leave the country so he set his exit very quickly into motion. “In Iraq, once you pay a ransom and are released, you risk being targeted by other kidnappers again so you have to get out quickly,” explained John. “They also download all the information from the cell phone you are carrying, putting the rest of your extended family at risk.”

Once his father was released, he called family members in the U.S. including John and asked him for assistance. John had discovered years ago that his grandfather had immigrated to Jacksonville and stayed from 1911 until 1933 making him an American citizen before returning abroad to marry. The grandfather had not informed his children about his U.S. citizenship until years later.

The family had decided even before the kidnapping that it was time

Claudia Kattan and her family.



Fadi Azzo, left, with cousin.



to leave, but admits that the experience was pivotal. John explained that the daily challenge for everyone was to make it to work or school and return home safely. At times car bombs missed them by a few minutes. Fadi recalls sitting in his classroom at the university as bombs exploded on campus. "One of my friends had his inner ear damaged from a car bomb," Fadi explained. "Car bombs went off all the time, everywhere."

Because of the grandfather's citizenship, bringing Fadi's family over was possible, but Fadi's age (21) made his migration difficult. Fadi's father arrived in the U.S. as a visitor and was sworn in three days later as a U.S. citizen. He then petitioned for his wife, daughter and Fadi to come.

John said he did much research on immigration forms and processes. In the end, he received the help of a local Congressman. His office was able to get John information that he didn't have access to.

John learned that the Mormon Church was a keeper of a large amount of older records. Through them, library research, etc., he was able to locate his grandfather's documents proving citizenship and could therefore establish that Fadi's family had a legal right to come.

Before leaving, Fadi completed his last month of college at the University of Baghdad earning a degree in industrial engineering. He studied from his home, only venturing out to take his final exam. The family had to keep his father's U.S. citizenship a secret. Once he was finished, he, along with his mother and sister, headed for Jordan by car where they would stay until they were able to travel to the U.S. Fadi recalls that the border situation was chaotic, their trip took 29 hours instead of the normal nine to ten. Once in Jordan, the family was safer, but it wasn't a permanent situation. The family was only in the country as visitors and had no legal means to stay; they could be returned back to Iraq once their visitor status expired.

Fadi could only come to the U.S. with a work visa, otherwise it would take six to seven years for his citizenship to be approved and that was time he didn't have. After hearing Fadi's qualifications, Crowley interviewed him by phone for an open position in which Fadi could utilize his analytical skills while contributing to the company's liner services group.

"It was fortunate that Crowley had a position matching Fadi's skill set,"

said John. "We are so thankful to have Fadi here with us. It was such a stressful time for our family. In the year Fadi was issued his visa, about 150,000 people applied for work visas and only 60,000 or so were issued."

When asked about his last 12 months in the U.S. the shy Fadi simply said, "I like it. Jacksonville is green and safe. Baghdad isn't green and it isn't safe."

He hopes to go back to school for his MBA now that he has earned Florida residency. He isn't yet aware of all the different opportunities that exist so he isn't completely sure what he wants to do with the rest of his life.

John remembers the first time he introduced Fadi to Tom Crowley. "We walked into the lobby and there was Tom so I introduced the two," said John. "After we walked away, Fadi asked where was Tom's entourage? Where are his security guards? Does Tom drive his own car?"

"The culture is completely different to him," laughed John.

"What is amazing about this young man to me is his attitude," remarked John. "He survived some horrific conditions but always wears a smile. He is very thankful."

"I miss some of my friends from back there," said Fadi. "But most left. I would never go back. People are very nice here at Crowley. I am very thankful. They probably saved my life."

"This year is going to be a big Thanksgiving and Christmas," said John. "Eight more relatives arrived this year." There are 35 extended family members total. Fifteen are here and there are 20 more in the pipeline.

The fight for Fadi isn't over yet. His work visa is only valid until 2010. After that time, his visa would have to be extended. Though his U.S. citizenship petition is in process, there is a backlog. Fadi has also filed for asylum so that he will never have to return to Iraq. During this process, he can't be sent back until there is a ruling.

John is certain that Fadi understands how lucky he is and jokingly tells him, "You better not mess this up, your name is my name and it's the most important thing we have."

Connections



Crowley is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Crowley Maritime Corporation and its subsidiaries adhere to an Equal Employment Opportunity policy, which states:

Crowley Maritime Corporation does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, medical condition, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other factor not related to job performance or job requirement. In addition, the company has affirmative action programs. This policy applies to all conditions of employment, including recruitment, compensation, promotion, transfer, training, disciplinary action, layoff and termination, and company-sponsored recreational activities.

Each line manager has primary responsibility for equal employment opportunity and affirmative action results in his or her area of authority. Supervisors are evaluated on their equal opportunity efforts and results. Overall responsibility for implementation of the affirmative action programs has been assigned to the Human Resources department. Any employee who feels that he or she has not been treated in accordance with this policy should contact the appropriate supervisor or appropriate Human Resources staff in order to discuss the matter confidentially.

Historical Perspective

1973



In November 1973, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act was made into law and the largest commercial construction project ever undertaken anywhere in the world to that point resumed full speed ahead. Also in that year, Crowley acquired Mukluk Freight Lines, an established Alaskan trucking firm, and in the following two years Mukluk hauled more of the 48-inch pipe required for the 800-mile pipeline than any other carrier. By the late 1970s, Mukluk's expanded fleet included large vacuum trucks and water trucks to service rigs drilling in the Prudhoe Bay field.

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