

C_{Connections}

THE CROWLEY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 2 2010

TITAN Twins **A Tale of Two Barges**



Stay Engaged, Follow Procedures and Speak Up!

There is nothing more important to me or the company than the safety of people, property and the environment. With safety as our first core value, our leadership team has spent considerable time looking at how we can improve safety performance, and we have concluded that focusing on a few vital behaviors will have the most impact on changing our culture and improving our performance.

Those three vital behaviors are stay engaged, follow procedures and speak up.

The risk of an accident greatly diminishes when employees stay fully engaged and attentive to the proper procedures for the job. While these behaviors may seem elementary and make common sense, in today's world of multitasking and sensory overload, they are easier said than done. These behaviors increase our awareness of the situation and keep us aligned with best industry practices for safe operations.

The third behavior – speak up – is critically important to keep everyone safe. To emphasize this, we have given each and every Crowley employee, vendor and visitor, the authority and responsibility to speak up and STOP WORK if they think a situation at Crowley is unsafe for themselves, others, property or the environment. Individuals, who use their stop work authority, will not face repercussions. Work will restart only after an evaluation of the conditions and remediation of identified hazards. This is my commitment to our employees, vendors and guests.

To speak up might also require that we:

- Tell someone that we need additional training or information
- Respectfully disagree with a supervisor when it appears safety is being compromised
- Recognize someone when they have taken safety precautions
- Fully listen and allow others to express a safety concern or need

We believe communication is so important that we've created a new safety logo, which reads: "Safety – It's Not Silent."

Safety is an operational element of every Crowley company facility and vessel. But most importantly, safety is personal. Each of us owns the policies, processes, equipment and attitude that constitute our safety culture. If we embrace these vital safety behaviors, the company will be safer overall and we will be able to go home to our families unharmed at the end of the day. There is nothing more important.

Sincerely,
Tom Crowley
Chairman, President and CEO



Connections

Issue 2 2010



4



17



32

TITAN Twins 4

The tale of two barges, the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*, they take on the salvage and wreck removal jobs that no one else can.

By Mabel Perez

A Guiding Light in the Chaos 10

An inside look at Crowley's leadership as an international incident management and emergency responder.

By Amelia P. Smith

Customer Care From the Inside Out 17

A recent realignment of the company's sales and customer service teams provides new opportunities for Crowley to engage customers more effectively.

By Amelia P. Smith

Cleaner Villages

For a Brighter Tomorrow 21

Crowley helps to remove decades of accumulated junk and toxins from remote Alaskan villages.

By Alex DeMarban

Hoka Hey 26

One employee takes the trip of his life when he participates in an organized cross-country motorcycle challenge from Key West, Fla., to Homer, Alaska.

By Alex DeMarban

A Day in the Life of the Crew of a Seattle Harbor Tug 32

An inside look at the crew, work and life on a West Coast Crowley harbor tug.

By Patrick S. Dixon

On the Cover: TITAN's twin jack-up barges, *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*, positioned above the wreck of the *New Carissa* off the coast of Coos Bay, Ore.

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TITAN Twins

A Tale of Two Barges

By Mabel Perez



Wreck removal of the grounded
New Carissa in Coos Bay, Ore.

Waves crashed alongside the *New Carissa* shipwreck, located just off the rugged Oregon shore. From above, heavy chains pulled a large piece of the wreck at a precarious, sharp angle, and despite all the wind and rough surf, TITAN's jack-up barges, the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*, defiantly looked Mother Nature in the eye.

The demanding 2008 wreck removal of the grounded *New Carissa* in Coos Bay, Ore., proved to be a pivotal turning point in the lives of TITAN's signature twin jack-up barges. The project marked the salvage company's ability and sheer determination to overcome a challenging wreck removal its competitors could not handle. It also highlighted the twin barges' unmatched ability to work in harsh, unforgiving weather, its legs propping up the deck barges above the surf zone, providing a stable platform for salvage professionals.

From the lifting of the *H.L. Hunley*, a U.S. Confederate submarine and its deceased crew off the South Carolina coast, to the jack-up barges' most recent ongoing challenge off the coast of the Netherlands, TITAN, thanks to its specialized equipment and know how, has and will overcome the challenges of working in difficult environments.

The Transformation

The lives of TITAN's jack-up barges aren't quite what naval architects at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers envisioned.

Built in the late 1960s as a single barge measuring just over 111 meters long, it was designed as a mobilization or floating pier, its 10 legs capable of jacking the barge above the water line to handle a variety of projects. In the 1980s, TITAN acquired the barge from the U.S. governmental agency and it became the *Karlissa*.

When TITAN engineers ordered the barge cut into two separate pieces and each was reinforced with an additional pair of legs capable of jacking themselves above the waterline in depths in excess of 50 meters, the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B* were born. A 272-metric ton capacity platform ringer crane was installed on the *Karlissa B* and their new assignments became salvage, wreck removal and everything in between.

Since their transformation, TITAN's twin barges have trekked the globe tackling wreck removal, salvage and even civil construction projects. The barges have worked throughout northern Europe, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Belize, Brazil, Chile and Panama, in addition to many jobs throughout the Americas, including emergency response work for the U.S. Coast Guard. Both barges were important platforms for TITAN's operations during the recovery of vessels following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

With more than 1,880 square meters of combined clear deck space for both barges, the TITAN twins provided a stable, working platform for a variety of other projects, including a directional drilling project in Ensenada, Mexico, which helped remove a portion of the seabed to

The Roll-on/Roll-off vessel *Vinca Gorthon* sank in the North Sea in 1988, approximately 29 kilometers off the Netherlands coast.



deepen a channel.

“Every job the barges have been on has required different applications,” said Andrew Barron, TITAN naval architect and jack-up superintendent. “You can put a wide range of equipment on the deck and our team is able to change and customize barge configurations to meet the special requirements of each job.”

The *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*’s more environmentally friendly technology also makes them a perfect choice for companies that care about the surroundings they work in.

The barges’ DeLong D-6-6 jacks utilize pneumatic grippers and lifting cylinders instead of a hydraulic system, which often makes them the only acceptable jacking system to work in environmentally sensitive areas like the Great Barrier Reef. The pneumatic lifting cylinders also act as shock absorbers, allowing them to jack on seabeds with swells in excess of one meter, which in the industry is unthinkable with a traditional rack and pinion or hydraulic oil system.

Dry delivery or wet delivery also makes them very portable. In early 2010, the jack-ups were dry delivered from California to Rotterdam, Netherlands, for the wreck removal of the *Vinca Gorthon*, a Roll-on/Roll-off vessel laden with 19,000 metric tons of paper and tanker trailers with paper pulp, which sank in the North Sea in 1988 while enroute from the Swedish port of Oskarshamn to Antwerp, Belgium. The vessel lies approximately 29 kilometers off the Netherlands coast at a depth of

“You can put a wide range of equipment on the deck and our team is able to change and customize barge configurations to meet the special requirements of each job.”

– Andrew Barron, TITAN

24.5 meters in a very busy shipping traffic lane, and protrudes 10 meters from the seabed, making it a danger to modern ships with a draft of 15 meters or more.

Due to hazardous weather conditions in the North Sea during the winter months, the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B* have been transported to Newhaven for scheduled maintenance and repair, and will return to the Netherlands in the spring of 2011 to finish the job.





The TITAN team removed part of the engine room's machinery from the stern of the *New Carissa* wreck off the coast of Oregon in 2008.

TITAN is replacing the generator engines on both barges and refurbishing the dryer units on both compressor systems, and completing other routine maintenance and repairs on the jacking systems – including replacement of valves and lift cylinders with better quality components and materials.

Hindsight is 20/20

When the *New Carissa*, a 195-meter wood-chip carrier, ran aground just north of Coos Bay during a February 1999 storm and subsequently broke apart, state officials at Oregon's department of state lands were faced with a unique and unfamiliar challenge.

The department, which is responsible for managing over 1.5 million acres of agricultural, grazing, forest and offshore lands, had to get rid of an eyesore and environmental liability from its lands. TITAN Salvage and other wreck removal companies vied for the project, each offering a different approach to removing the *New Carissa*.

TITAN's approach featured the use of its signature jack-up barges – the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*, which offer a stable platform in the most demanding and dangerous conditions and its pullers, or hydraulic pulling machines.

In the end, underwriters awarded the removal contract to another company in 1999, said Julie Curtis, communications manager for the department of state lands.

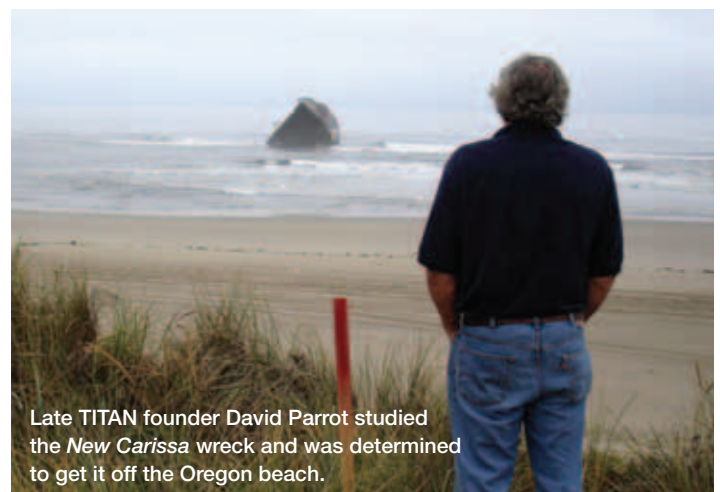
Through the years, TITAN continued monitoring the project while other companies attempted to remove the wreck, which included a variety of techniques, including the launching of a Navy torpedo that was used to sink the forward section of the ship. The “comedy of errors,” as Curtis described it, led back to TITAN and its founder and chief, David Parrot. In 2007, the salvage company was sole-sourced to remove the wreck, which had settled about 137 meters from the beachfront.

“Dave Parrot was very confident that TITAN could remove the *New Carissa* and he never wavered from that,” she said. “And, since we did sole-source (didn't go out for bid) the \$16.4 million contract with TITAN, we obviously thought there was no other company in the world that had the capability and proven methodology to remove the *New Carissa*.”

TITAN's salvage plan involved a combination of the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B* along with a custom-built 304.8-meter téléphérique (cable car), six of Titan's 300-ton hydraulic pullers, two large cranes and an experienced salvage team.

“Dave Parrot was very confident that TITAN could remove the *New Carissa* and he never wavered from that.”

– Julie Curtis, Department of State Lands, Oregon



Late TITAN founder David Parrot studied the *New Carissa* wreck and was determined to get it off the Oregon beach.

“These jack-up barges are a great resource for a variety of projects, including salvage, wreck removal and civil construction work ... The possibilities are virtually endless.”

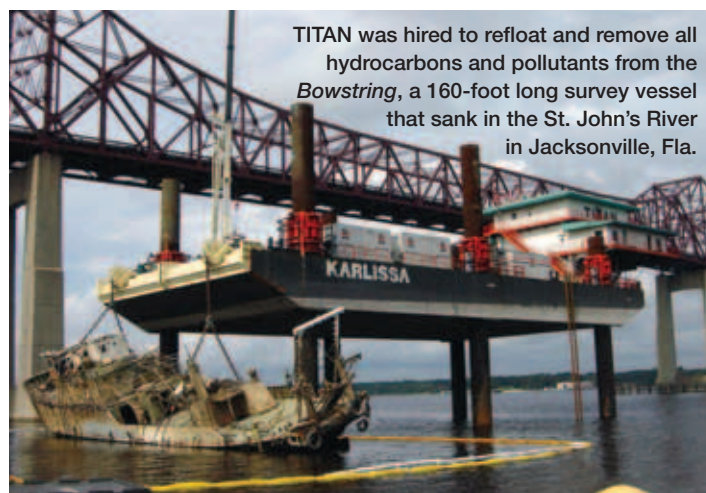
– Dan Schwall, TITAN

In March 2008, the TITAN team mobilized in Coos Bay. The jack-up barges allowed the team to work from a stable platform above a very active surf zone. The téléphérique, designed by TITAN and built specifically for this project, was the salvage team's lifeline to the beach. The cable car transported the crew and equipment from the beach to the platform barges through heavy wind and fog without once being shut down for weather.

Additionally, six TITAN linear hydraulic chain pullers placed on the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B* allowed the team to overcome the massive weight of the buried stern and any ground suction developed through the years. The wreck was repeatedly heaved out of the water where salvagers flame-cut pieces into manageable sizes, rigged them to the crane, then landed them on the deck of the jack-up barges.

The heaviest piece removed was the 170-ton main engine block, thanks to the barges' upwards of 1,350-metric tons of vertical lift and 130-metric ton of lateral pull utilizing TITAN pullers. In September 2008, the team removed the last visible piece of the stern section from the seabed. All the scrap was cut into smaller, transportable pieces, placed on a deck barge and ultimately taken to a recycling facility.

“We are very pleased with the job carried out by TITAN,” said Steve Purchase, now-retired assistant director for land management for the department of state lands. “The state is very fortunate to have a contractor with TITAN's determination, expertise and passion for completing this project. After nearly a decade of wrangling over the wreck – including a jury trial in 2002 that found the ship's owners guilty of negligent trespass – this eyesore is finally gone from Oregon's shore.”



TITAN was hired to refloat and remove all hydrocarbons and pollutants from the *Bowstring*, a 160-foot long survey vessel that sank in the St. John's River in Jacksonville, Fla.

Moving Forward

Soon after the last winter storm passes through the North Sea in 2011, the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B* will make their way back to the Netherlands to complete the removal of the *Vinca Gorthon*. The challenge is tough but not one that the TITAN team shies away from, since overcoming obstacles has almost been the company's unofficial mantra.

“The *Vinca Gorthon* has proven to be a formidable opponent but we have a very talented group of salvors on-site and expect them to wrap up the project by mid-2011,” said Dan Schwall, TITAN's vice president. “Until then, we are looking for the *Karlissa A* and *Karlissa B*'s next challenge.”

“These jack-up barges are a great resource for a variety of projects, including salvage, wreck removal and civil construction work and can conveniently be customized to meet project requirements. The possibilities are virtually endless,” Schwall said. [Connections](#)

Quick Facts

Jack-Up Barge Advantages

- Worldwide mobility via wet or dry delivery
- 272-metric ton capacity platform ringer crane (*Karlissa B*)
- Upwards of 1,350-metric tons of vertical lift or 130-metric ton of lateral pull utilizing TITAN pullers
- Deck loads of over 900 metric tons
- Can easily be customized to handle a variety of projects, including salvage, wreck removal and civil construction work



Karlissa B performing heavy lift operation.



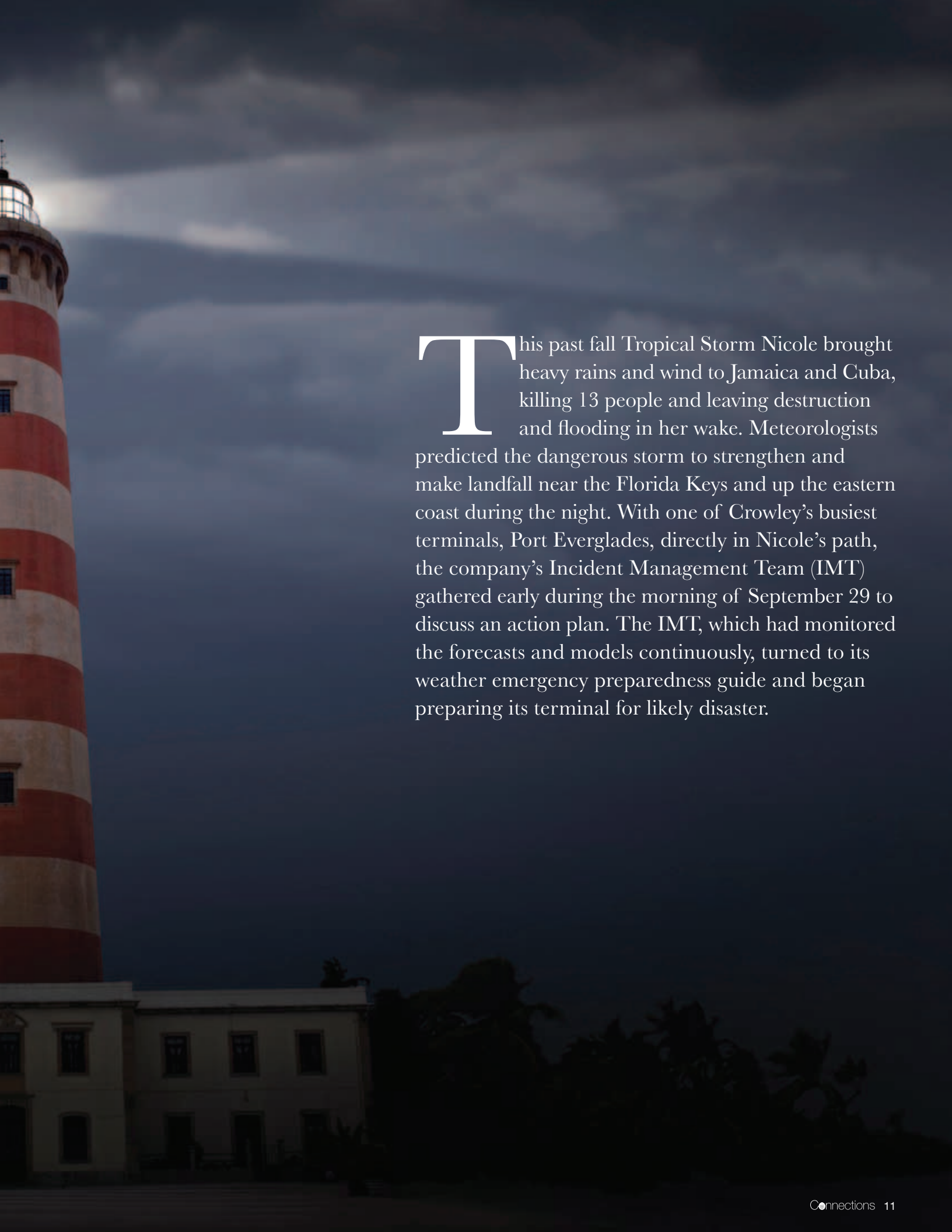
TITAN refloated the *Sergio Zakariadze*, a bulk carrier laden with cement, that grounded while entering the port of San Juan, Puerto Rico, near El Morro National Park.



A Guiding Light in the Chaos

An Inside Look at Crowley's Leadership as a Global
Incident Management and Emergency Responder

By Amelia P. Smith



This past fall Tropical Storm Nicole brought heavy rains and wind to Jamaica and Cuba, killing 13 people and leaving destruction and flooding in her wake. Meteorologists predicted the dangerous storm to strengthen and make landfall near the Florida Keys and up the eastern coast during the night. With one of Crowley's busiest terminals, Port Everglades, directly in Nicole's path, the company's Incident Management Team (IMT) gathered early during the morning of September 29 to discuss an action plan. The IMT, which had monitored the forecasts and models continuously, turned to its weather emergency preparedness guide and began preparing its terminal for likely disaster.



“We work very hard to minimize any adverse impact to customers and get back to normal operations as soon as possible ...”

– Cole Cosgrove, Crowley

In line with Crowley’s priorities of securing people first, then property and the environment, the immediate first step for the IMT was to ensure the safety of the terminal workers. Clear communication was given about a port evacuation by mid-afternoon. Only a small, trained group was to remain in a storm-proof shelter during the storm’s landfall to help protect terminal property from preventable damage, and only then when it could be safely done. Next, the IMT directed port workers to use the remaining morning hours to secure containers and other property – those belonging to both Crowley and its customers – and to clear the terminal of any equipment or tools.

Within an hour the media were calling, and reporters arrived in droves to the city and port to monitor the storm first-hand. They were watching – *recording* – every wave that crashed and every preparation that was made. Fortunately, within hours, before ever making landfall,

Tropical Storm Nicole unexpectedly dissipated in the Atlantic Ocean, and the port reopened quickly. What could have been a destructive, life-threatening situation on our East Coast was over, but Crowley’s IMT was prepared for the worst.

“Our customers should understand that within the context of protecting life, property and the environment through the IMT structure, and the transitioning to a project management role after a situation has been stabilized, that we bring value to them,” said Cole Cosgrove, vice president of safety, security, quality and environmental stewardship. “We work very hard to minimize any adverse impact to customers and get back to normal operations as soon as possible, regardless of whether the incident is caused by man or nature.”

Crowley’s incident management model is designed to work with the nationally recognized Incident Command System (ICS), an on-scene leadership structure suitable for managing any type or sized incident. Originally developed to create a standardized response to the regularly occurring, rampant wildfires in California, the ICS is effective because it unifies responses to emergencies, including the common forms and language used. This allows industry experts to effectively work with federal agencies, and vice versa, in the rush of an emergency. Even better, the program is flexible in that it is scalable – meaning that the ICS could be used for smaller events, such as a trucking accident on a busy thoroughfare, or larger events, such as a natural disaster.

The Crowley IMT is a group made up of key employees with experience in a variety of fields, and who are each excellent project managers – an important distinction. The team is highly trained in virtually every kind of emergency management, including spill clean up, weather disasters, and more, and in the subsequent media response. Representatives from nearly every business unit and department, along with Crowley subsidiary TITAN Salvage, are ever at the ready to drop everything and pool resources when needed. Together they set goals and objectives to manage the event, and remain calm and focused. And at the end of each year, they gather to review any past events and discuss ways to improve in the future. This sharing of ideas and best practices has proven beneficial across all of Crowley’s business lines.

“The team is a well-oiled machine,” said Cosgrove. “Be assured that nothing else is more important in the event of an emergency. Their focus is on managing the situation correctly and properly, with the least negative impact. Effective communications are key with customers, government agencies, the press and other stakeholders in the affected communities.”

And while Crowley has such a team that can be custom assembled for any incident, the roots of this kind of response readiness run deeper in the organization. Truly an example of “One Crowley, One Team,” the company has a seamless start-to-finish response process with so many



Nish Sikes

in-house disciplines – such as naval architecture, marine salvage and emergency response, ocean cargo transportation and logistics – which can be engaged for not only Crowley and its customers' incidents, but larger global events as well. This reality positions the company and its IMT team as an international resource during large-scale disasters and emergencies.

During the Deepwater Horizon oil-well blowout in the Gulf of Mexico this year, Crowley project response teams prepared detailed plans for outfitting and delivering 400' by 100' flat-deck barges to serve the needs for near-shore oil spill response, command and logistics; oiled wildlife rehabilitation, and solid waste management. While neither BP nor government agencies opted to put the vessels to work, the project put to good use the creative thinking and resources Crowley brings to emergency response situations.

One of the best examples of Crowley's global response and disaster management capabilities was in response to the devastating January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, which destroyed Port-au-Prince and killed more than 200,000 people. With complete devastation all around them, the surviving Haitians were in desperate need of medical attention and basic supplies, such as food and water, which were delayed due to the badly damaged port.

Within a day of the quake, the IMT morphed into a project management team and began making preparations for Crowley to ship emergency supplies. The team focused on how to best deploy its wide variety of specialized marine assets to deliver humanitarian cargo and assistance to the disaster relief.

Tucker Gilliam, general manager of Crowley's Dominican Republic/Haiti services, remembers the event well. "Our team closely monitored the situation through our agent in Port-au-Prince, and we maintained

"The IMT provides structure to the chaos for situations that naturally lack it."

– Tucker Gilliam, Crowley

communications with both relief agencies and our customers," he said. "We knew we could help the people of Haiti, but we also remained focused on moving our customers' shipments in the area quickly, too."

No longer than a few days after the earthquake, the newly formed project management team had arranged for Crowley to be under contract with the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) to unload Haiti relief cargo in the Dominican Republic and directly into Port-Au-Prince, a cost-effective and efficient alternative to air transport. Though the Haiti port was devastated, Crowley used its capabilities to lighter cargo from arriving ships onto smaller landing craft that could navigate the shallow water, a move that allowed the supplies to be delivered.

Meanwhile, Crowley's Miami warehouse provided cross-dock services – a logistics tactic of unloading cargo from incoming trucks into outbound vehicles with little or no storage in between – to move the needed supplies more quickly. At Crowley's Jacksonville sites, the port staff worked diligently to move more than 800 containers containing the needed supplies across town and onto the *Marcajama* for shipment within 24 hours.

Crowley's TITAN Salvage was asked to survey the port, including the



The IMT convenes for a variety of events, including tropical storms and hurricanes.

“After our response in Haiti, the U.S. government saw our capabilities and wide range of services. In that case we not only provided the muscle for rebuilding, but we also provided the plan for doing so. That was huge.”

– Bob Weist, Crowley

underwater damage. Also tasked with removing port obstacles, installing pilings and dismantling cranes, the salvage team determined after the survey that it would be possible to establish a temporary docking structure using a flat-deck barge. Within a few weeks, barges and cranes arrived, and the interim dock was in place. Haiti was making slow steps toward recovery, due in large part to Crowley's immediate and comprehensive response.

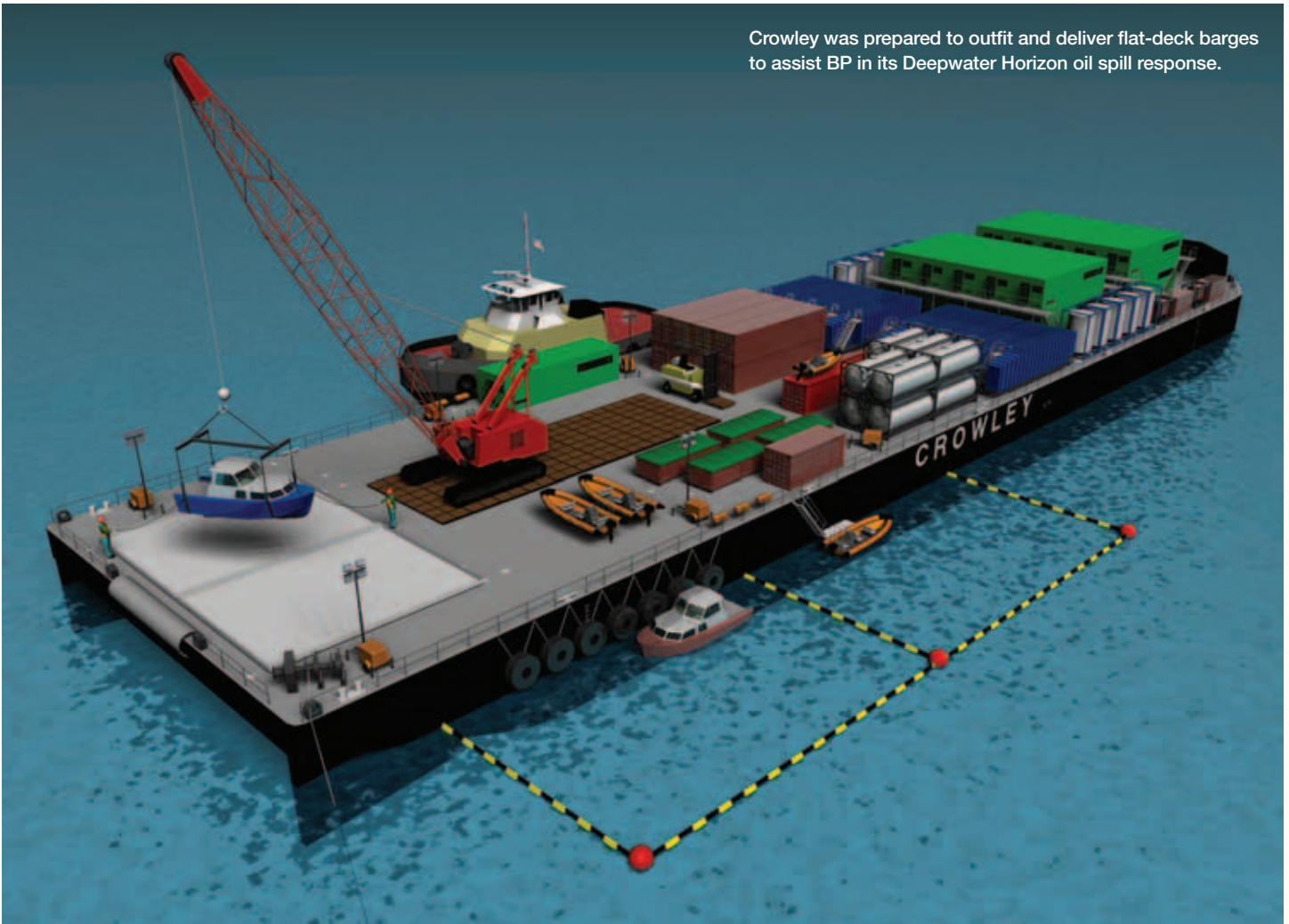
“The IMT provides structure to the chaos for situations that naturally lack it,” Gilliam explained. “When the team is deployed, priorities for the safety of people and our environment, and then minimizing economic impact, are assigned, and all that needs to be done is broken down into accomplishable steps. It's a realistic way to effectively manage any size situation.”

As a result of the IMT's repeated excellent performance, many of the large-scale response companies have begun to take notice. Three, in particular – the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Maritime Administrations (MARAD) – have formally come to rely on Crowley's broad capabilities for their global disasters and response in unique ways.

Crowley chooses to proactively work with such international response agencies and government bodies because such efforts not only build relationships with other responders, they also assure Crowley's customers that the company has the resources to help during an incident of any size, when it might be their time of need.

As of August of 2010, Crowley is the official disaster response and

Crowley was prepared to outfit and deliver flat-deck barges to assist BP in its Deepwater Horizon oil spill response.



recovery efforts agency on behalf of FEMA in the Caribbean. Under this four-year U.S. government contract, Crowley's IMT will provide the shipping and logistics support to help deliver life-sustaining food and water rations, tarps, tents and other supplies to the U.S. Virgin Islands, including St. Thomas and St. Croix, and Puerto Rico, after an emergency.

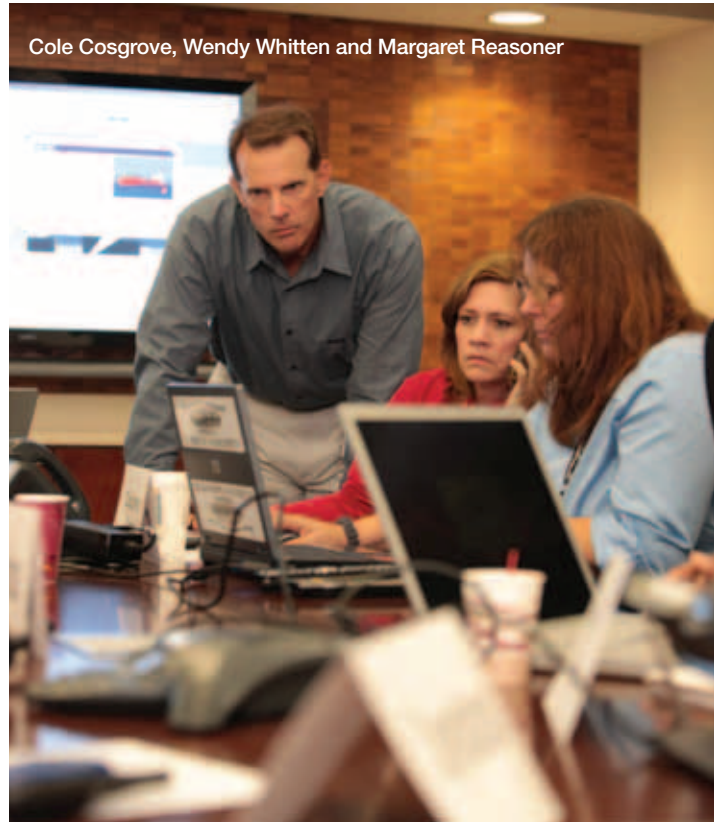
"After our response in Haiti, the U.S. government saw our capabilities and wide range of services," Bob Weist, Crowley vice president, logistics, explained. "In that case we not only provided the muscle for rebuilding, but we also provided the plan for doing so. That was huge."

Similarly, in the Miami warehouse, USAID relies on Crowley to store and ready its disaster-response commodities and supplies. In a visit this fall, USAID selected the warehouse as the location for its "Ring of Fire: Earthquake Preparedness and Recovery," management program. After the session, participants could tour the facility to see first-hand the supplies and storage-and-shipping procedures enacted in a post-earthquake or -emergency situation.

"I was very impressed with your set up and high level of professionalism and safety," wrote visitor Bob Willis, Lt. Col., USMC; chief, J-4 LOG Programs & Services, in a letter to Crowley after the tour. "Now I know why you all did such a great job supporting the Haiti operation. It's always a pleasure to visit a well-run operation."

Additionally, MARAD, which has a mission of promoting the development and maintenance of an adequate, well-balanced, United States merchant marine, relies on Crowley to continually keep their Ready Reserve Force (RRF) fleet primed so they may respond to any military or humanitarian missions immediately. Crowley's RRF assets have been

Cole Cosgrove, Wendy Whitten and Margaret Reasoner



The Crowley Shipper delivered emergency response cargo across a temporary pier structure in an unimproved section of Port-au-Prince after the 2010 earthquake.



Incident Management Team

activated numerous times, including in response to Hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Haiti, and in support of several military operations worldwide.

“In all of these ways we are more than willing to be of service,” continued Weist. “It allows us to use our great resources to serve our country and help those in need.”

To keep the IMT sharp for Crowley and global incidents, all employees are continually trained and coached. A recent instance of such global readiness training is from early fall of this year. Vice President Jay Brickman attended the seminar, “Logistics Cooperation for Stabilization and Reconstruction,” hosted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the University of North Carolina. The event brought together major international players, such as representatives from every branch of the U.S. military, the State Department, USAID, the United Nations, the World Food Program and more, and was designed to improve logistics cooperation among public, private, military, and voluntary sectors during times of crisis.

“The seminar gave Crowley the opportunity to exhibit our enormous capabilities in disaster response,” Brickman reported. “But at the end of the day it allowed us to solidify our relationships with the worldwide organizations that respond to these situations.” As a result, Crowley is better prepared to be a leader in disaster response and to work more effectively with other response agencies during large-scale incidents.

Ultimately, the company’s mission and core values guide the IMT during any situation, but it has proven helpful that the company has relationships with other international responders. The focus and purpose of the IMT is to properly manage these detrimental events quickly, ensure safety and reduce negative impact. With continuous training and the right resources and relationships in place, Crowley is proving this is possible, for the benefit of Crowley, its clients and the greater global community. For these reasons, Crowley has successfully managed incidents of all sizes and scopes in the past, and is apt to continue to do so in the future.

Strength in management, size and preparedness are assets that Crowley brings with it to each incident. With an experienced past and a readied future, Crowley is capable of handling just about anything unexpected – safely, ethically, and with the best possible outcome for all involved – for another 100 years. [Connections](#)

Francheska Acevedo
and Susie Crawford



Quick Facts

- Crowley’s IMT organizational structure is based upon the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which provides a modular and scalable infrastructure for responding to a wide range of emergencies.
- The priorities of the Crowley IMT are always safety of people, property and the environment.
- An incident management team is mobilized during incidents to manage the operational, logistical, informational, planning, fiscal, community, political, and safety issues associated with complex incidents.
- Crowley’s IMT structure provides a proven method of ensuring employee safety, minimizing interruptions to critical business processes and providing the best possible service to customers during a crisis.

Margaret Reasoner
and Art Mead



Customer Care From the Inside

50

By Amelia P. Smith



Putting the client first has always been the hallmark of customer care at Crowley. But a recent realignment of the company's sales and customer service teams, along with the rollout of a new Crowley website, have provided new opportunities to engage customers more effectively and conveniently.

Those who have partnered in business with Crowley in the past know that the company has built a reputation for being able to transport “Anything, Anywhere, Anytime on Water.” Today, the company is well on its way to building a similar can-do reputation with ground, air and out-of-the-box shipping and logistics solutions. Crowley can literally move goods and cargo to any corner of the globe, efficiently and conveniently.

Becoming a one-stop shipping and logistics solutions provider, primarily in the Caribbean and Latin America markets, has occurred throughout the years from a collaborative effort of several groups working together to assist clients. The traditional teams, Latin America and Puerto Rico/Caribbean liner services, were separate operations, as was the logistics group. This led to clients having as many as three separate account executives and customer service representatives for their varying business needs. With this model, the groups succeeded – customers were pleased and the company grew,

“We have an excellent relationship because Crowley understands our business and works with us to improve efficiency and process.”

– Bob Moore, Southeast Toyota Distributors

but Crowley’s leadership believed the company could still serve customers better by improving the overall customer service package.

“The segmented structure happened organically throughout the years,” Rob Clapp, vice president of customer care, explained. “As we’ve grown as a company, we’ve added services and continued to offer help from separate business units. It became apparent to us that this was less ideal – less efficient – for the customer and we recognized the need for change.”

With the company mantra, “One Crowley, One Team,” providing inspiration, Crowley

began to revolutionize its approach to customer service, starting with a fresh, customer-centric approach to business.

One Team, Uniquely Dedicated

The first step in improving its service was for Crowley to merge its three customer care groups into a new united front, and train them so that together they could help customers with their day-to-day needs, troubleshoot problems and offer their solutions to customers’ shipping and logistics challenges. The new structure inherently allowed more available Crowley representatives



Crowley's Charlie Dominguez and Southeast Toyota's Director of Port Operations Jack Conklin Jr. get down to business.

per customer, which in turn decreased the response times. It also gave the highest volume accounts a dedicated customer care team – charged with thoroughly understanding their unique business needs – at their service full time with the ultimate goal of improving the “customer experience.”

“This arrangement gave the largest clients, like Toyota, a personalized single point of contact, and it gave us the opportunity to provide expertise on a customized basis,” explained Clapp. “Ultimately, though, we like to think we’re working as one unified team for all of our clients, no matter their size.”

Crowley also understood that many of its customers had reduced staff due to the struggling economy, and as a result needed more support than in years past. Crowley’s new customer care structure addressed that need. By assigning a single account executive to each client, the executive can now focus on intimately understanding his or her customer’s business. With that knowledge, the executive can show a customer how he or she can benefit from one or more of Crowley’s service offerings and add value to the supply chain.

“We can serve the customer better only when we know the full panorama of his business, and all of his unique needs,” said Charlie Dominguez, vice president of national accounts. “Only then are we in a position to suggest solutions and provide the greatest value to the customer.”

Partners of Crowley are already seeing the difference: “We have a very high level of confidence that Crowley will do the job, and do the job well,” said Bob Moore, Southeast Toyota Distributors’ vice president and general manager of vehicle processing.

Southeast Toyota and Crowley have worked together intimately since the early ’90s to deliver Toyota-brand vehicles to the Puerto Rico market. The company is a strategic partner of Toyota, which is responsible for processing and distributing vehicles to independent dealers in the Southeastern U.S.

Moore continued, “We have an excellent relationship because Crowley understands our business and works with us to improve efficiency and process.”

This improved one-on-one approach to customer care has given Crowley insight into how it can be of better service to each of its unique customers, all while building stronger, more trusting relationships in the process.

Improved Online Customer Care

Though the personal touch will always remain a Crowley hallmark, the company has also recently made it easier for customers to engage

Crowley Senior Account Executive Ruben Montanez, right, and Bacardi’s William Ruiz, regional materials & supply planning manager



Arulfo Rodriguez, right, of Hidroponicas in Nicaragua, explains to Crowley General Manager Santos Velasquez how peppers are cultivated.

“The diversity of Crowley’s services has always been a strength. Our clients want not only a complete shipping and logistics solution, but also a service provider that is one step ahead in providing answers to their business needs. We’re here to do that, now better than ever.”

– Charlie Dominguez, Crowley

Crowley online, on their own terms and at any time of the day or night.

Included in this added convenience is an overhaul of Crowley’s web services, such as mycrowley.com – a customized shipping portal that allows customers to make bookings, track shipments and access documents in a few easy clicks. Through this portal, customers have 24/7 access to their Crowley business information, and now have the option to automate and standardize a full range of activities and receive real-time information instantly, enhancing the customer experience.

“Customers using our comprehensive suite of services can track and monitor their business through the supply chain online from one place,” explained Pete Noyer, vice president of business development. “This saves the client time, money and, hopefully, helps to simplify their jobs.”

Perhaps the most noticeable change, though, is Crowley’s new, user-friendly and interactive website, which was launched in the fall. The new website, still www.crowley.com, offers full visibility into all that Crowley is able to offer, including easy-to-understand descriptions of the company’s

capabilities, locations frequented, schedules and shipping routes, and ways to help any business move goods and cargo more efficiently. The site even offers a homepage tool, called Find a Solution, which points customers directly to the resources they need in one easy click.

Creating Customer Relationships That Last

Through this concerted effort of highly focused, unified sales and customer care teams, Crowley is proving its worth to clients each and every day.

“The diversity of Crowley’s services has always been a strength,” said Dominguez. “Our clients want not only a complete shipping and logistics solution, but also a service provider that is one step ahead in providing answers to their business needs. We’re here to do that, now better than ever.”

And he’s right. With an integrated team approach that includes increased dedicated customer representatives, a more dynamic website, and an all-encompassing customer-care portal, Crowley strives for relationships that last.

Businesses like Toyota, Southeast Toyota and others – large and small – have come to rely on Crowley to literally move anything, anywhere, anytime. Now, thanks to Crowley’s focus on continuous improvement, customers are engaging the company more efficiently, effectively and profitably. **Connections**

Quick Facts

- In 2010, Crowley merged its liner and logistics sales and customer service teams to better support clients.
- Crowley employs a specialized customer care team dedicated to the company’s top accounts. A larger group of trained customer service representatives provides solutions for smaller accounts.
- The new www.crowley.com provides a simpler and more comprehensive view of all Crowley’s services.
- The online site, mycrowley.com, is a 24/7 portal that allows customers to better manage their business with Crowley.



Charlie Dominguez and Traffic Specialist Jadon McCauley watch a Southeast Toyota employee add leather to a car seat.



Customer Care Representative
Katy Keene

Cleaner Villages for a Brighter Tomorrow

Crowley helps to remove decades of accumulated junk and toxins from remote Alaskan villages

By Alex DeMarban



Backhaul

The men labored through the night along the muddy banks of a Yukon River tributary.

After the day crew had pumped diesel fuel into storage silos – the juice that electrifies Western Alaska villages – workers on the night shift turned their attention to a different project. They fired up a forklift under the blinding watch of the tug’s floodlight. Beside the river, a mountain chain of debris emerged from the darkness: stacks of mangled cars in one area, battered refrigerators in another. Piles of snow machine carcasses here, old four-wheelers and rusting bikes there. Relics of the past in Alakanuk, an Alaska Native village of about 700.

The forklift’s metal arms screeched as they slid beneath a car, the first of several items to be hauled onto the barge. When the workers had taken all the junk they could, the tug sailed on toward its home port in Nenana, a 10-day ride upriver. From there, the rubbish headed to recycling companies to be melted down and stripped apart.

The scene plays out along the Yukon each summer, part of a little-known goodwill effort provided by Crowley. “Backhaul,” it’s simply called, may be one of the world’s most unique recycling programs. Involving several organizations, it’s critical for 21 villages that line the river from Fort Yukon on one side of Alaska to the mouth some 1,200 river miles later. Most importantly, it reduces the risk of toxins oozing into the waters and land that nourish these communities.

The Provider

Alaska’s signature river spills out of Canadian glaciers and arches across the state, crossing Athabascan territory and draining into the Bering Sea beside Yup’ik villages with names such as Nunam Iqua, which means “End of the Tundra.” It’s a source of life for thousands. It’s where each family gathers scores of huge salmon in summer, drying and smoking them so they last for months. When salmon stocks run low, subsistence fishermen drill through the ice and thread nets through holes, creating below-ice snares for whitefish. Men hunt seals and beluga whales on the lower river to supplement costly groceries. Ducks, caribou, moose, beaver and muskrats are taken where they’re found.

No roads lead to the Yukon’s villages, or more than 150 others scattered throughout Alaska. They might as well be islands; boats and planes provide the only access to the outside world. The communities may be remote, but the people are no different than other Americans when it comes to wanting modern conveniences. For years, they’ve ordered in trucks, freezers, computers, televisions, four-wheelers and especially snow machines.

Crowley and other companies, including air carriers, bring in the freight. Once the products come to the village, they’re in for good.

At least they used to be.



Vasily Khromov and Captain Kevin Weiss complete backhaul loading aboard the the *Tanana* and combination freight/fuel barges *OB-3* and *OB-4*.

In the Dumps

It’s an irony that some of the world’s most remote places can be its most polluted. In the 1990s, employees with Yutana Barge Lines (a company acquired by Crowley in 2005) could no longer ignore the growing hills of junk sprouting along the Yukon, or the stories they heard from villagers about the trouble they caused. Landfills in rural Alaska aren’t like those in the U.S. – years ago, they were worse. They lacked fencing to keep trash in, workers to keep kids out, and designated areas to manage the chaos and extend the facility’s life.

“They shouldn’t even be called landfills. They’re just dumps,” said Stephen Price, with the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. The council, a consortium of tribes partners with Crowley, the Alaska Railroad Corp., and other companies on backhaul.

Critically, most rural dumps lack ground lining to prevent poisons from weeping into the tundra. Cracked jugs of antifreeze, old cans of oil, battery acid, everything seeps into the silty ground that’s as fine as flour along parts of the river.

Nick P. Andrew Jr., a tribal administrator, said the landfill in his village of Marshall sits less than a mile from a creek. The creek spills into the Yukon and could carry toxins from the dump. Other villages face similar threats.

“I said, ‘We’ve been bringing it out to you for hundreds of years by boat, it’s about time we started offering something back the other way.’”

– Endil Moore, Crowley



“The Yukon being the lifeline of the residents along it ... that’s detrimental. Whether it’s minimal or whether it’s on a large scale, contamination does have its effects,” he said.

Marshall’s drinking water comes from underground wells that are closely monitored and safe to drink. But it’s close enough to the landfill that it’s threatened too. “Let’s keep hoping and praying the wells stay clean,” he said.

Recipe for Disaster

Many villages sit in flood zones. When rising waters blanket the dump, a “toxic soup” swamps houses and buildings, increasing the risk of disease for everyone, said Price.

The dumps are dangerous for kids who might scramble through the mess or for adults scavenging for old machine parts, said Jerry Isaac, president and chair of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, which provides social services to 40-plus villages. Rusty scrap metal pokes from the piles and shards of glass litter the ground, among other hazards. “A lot of times you have accidents waiting to happen,” he said.

Crowley’s Endil Moore, a former Yukon tug captain, saw the problem firsthand for years. Some dumps sat at the river’s edge, the garbage crumbling into the water if banks eroded too close. “You’d go down this beautiful scenic river and all of a sudden there’s this dump,” he said.

Sometimes, the mess spreads into the village. Old cars lined dirt roads where they died, sprouting weeds. White plastic bags escaped and sailed over the land, snagging on willows and earning the nickname “tundra ptarmigan.”

The pile expands out instead of up in communities lacking heavy equipment to manage it. Even today, the dirty diapers, bursting trash bags and other waste grow within feet of doorsteps in some communities. Villages burn what they can, but that creates its own problems. Everything

**“It makes the village cleaner ...
You can go to any one of those
villages and see the difference.”**

**– Jon Waterhouse, Yukon River
Inter-Tribal Watershed Council**

can get pitched into the blaze – plastic bottles, batteries and electronics – no matter the environmental consequences. Of course, that only reduces some of the waste.

Generous Gesture

Moore is a big man who wears suspenders around his belly and keeps a dachshund, Maggie, in his Crowley office in Nenana. He has a huge heart for rural Alaska, where jobs are scarce and people have little money.

Nenana, about an hour’s drive from Fairbanks, is the homeport for two Crowley tugs that operate on the Yukon roughly 200 river miles away.

Moore and others created a unique boarding school here in 2001, called the Nenana Student Living Center. It gives village children a pre-college education and creates skilled, rural workers. He praises the kids who grew up there and graduated. Some even work for him at Crowley, where he manages Alaska freight distribution. His department sends out bulldozers for contractors, televisions for residents, whatever people need.

But the backhaul program is a passion. He saw a “great need” for it



Village residents, including Flora Phillip, the Alaknuk tribe’s environmental officer (shown middle), rely on the backhaul services that Crowley provides.

“The backhaul is a really good gesture from Crowley. They know they’re in a position to give back to the communities they serve and we really appreciate that.”

– Nick P. Andrew Jr. of Marshall, Alaska

when he began delivering freight and fuel along the river for Yutana in the 1970s. At the time, many villages lacked tank farms, so the tug’s crew hand-hauled drums on dollies, hundreds of them, to power plants and homes.

“You’d have a whole mountain of drums on the barge, and in the fall you’d backhaul all the empty drums,” he said.

The oil companies would buy them back – \$25 a drum – and reuse them. But when fuel-tank farms became more common, oil companies didn’t need the drums anymore. Huge piles of them littered villages. They’d rust in the backwoods where moose wandered, the leftover diesel leaking into the ground.

In his years piloting the tugs, Moore saw some communities create multiple dumps, closing one and opening others. They took up valuable land and sometimes cost the federal government big money. As Yutana’s operations manager in 1998, Moore and others agreed to start backhauling limited amounts of waste for free.

“I said, ‘We’ve been bringing it out to you for hundreds of years by boat, it’s about time we started offering something back the other way,’” Moore said.

Growing Backhaul

Yutana started by clearing jalopies from Fort Yukon and Galena. The communities were bigger than their counterparts, with forklifts to lug the cars to the riverbank. Other villages soon joined in. Chaos sometimes ruled.

Trucks arrived on the barge dripping with oil and antifreeze, because no one had punctured tanks and drained liquids. That created a hazard on deck and threatened to bring fines from environmental regulators. Tires weren’t removed from cars, and they piled up in Nenana – recycling companies didn’t want them. Because the junk wasn’t ready when barges arrived, Moore’s crew did too much processing. The company needed help.

Six years ago, Moore approached the Yukon watershed council. Made up of 70 tribes and first nations along the 2,000-mile-long river, the group means to create a river that’s clean enough to drink from. The council, a nonprofit, joined the effort. It sent workers to villages to prep the junk. And it began training locals to do the work themselves. That created jobs and new grant opportunities for tribal environmental programs.

Things improved. Tug crews now arrive to find items separated and set near the water in manageable piles.

“They’re stacked, they’re uniform, they’re easy to handle going on and off the barge,” Moore said. “That’s great.”

Smaller things, such as snow-machine cowlings and bike frames, were banded together and set on pallets. Cars were partly smashed, pounded with a forklift and easier to fit on deck.

“We said we’d get it all prepared, so Crowley wouldn’t ever take a fine from DEC or EPA for improper packaging,” said Jon Waterhouse, the

Trash and debris are unloaded in a section of Crowley’s port in Nenana, Alaska, for sorting and recycling.



council's executive director. "We took that responsibility and said we'll assure that you'll never take a fine. We've been able to hold up to that commitment."

In the early days, Moore also recommended the council bring other shippers into the Yukon program. Other companies joined, hauling trash by air or barge. Since 2004, more than 10 million pounds of solid waste has moved off the Yukon, said Price. Crowley took the vast majority of that.

Many Moving Parts

Getting the mess out of the village is just the first step. In a section of Crowley's port in Nenana, the company runs what's essentially a junkyard. On a recent October day that threatened snow, a man hoping to make money by selling scrap metal had hauled in a huge car smasher. He plucked battered cars out of the junkyard with a forklift and slid them into the machine's big mouth. It shuddered while flattening cars and trucks into stacks of three. Waterhouse and Price were also there that day preparing to store drums of antifreeze they'd recently pulled out of villages. It will eventually become new antifreeze in the council's recycling center in Nenana.

Crowley crewmembers spent much of their day dragging a tug out of the Tanana for the winter. But they also helped move some of the waste, getting behind the wheel of a huge forklift to drop crushed cars into the railroad's gondolas.

When the railcars are full, the Alaska Railroad voluntarily ships the junk to recycling centers in big cities. Some scrap metal goes to C and R Pipe in Fairbanks to become piping. Batteries go to Battery Specialists of Alaska in Fairbanks, where the old lead eventually gets put into new batteries, and other components are recycled. Finally, refrigerators and electronics, including computers, go to Total Reclaim in Anchorage.

"Those items are completely recycled, down to the smallest bit," said Waterhouse.

The council has installed used oil burners in some villages, using old oil drained from electric plants to heat buildings. The effort leads to huge savings when temperatures drop to 40-below. They're also creating hazardous-waste specialists, with villagers getting a month of training at the University of Washington. That gives them certifications they can take to other jobs, such as spill-response skills.

The council's executive board understands the importance of the program. It's helped expand backhaul beyond the Yukon to include other parts of Alaska, including in the Lower 48 and even Siberia.

"Our leadership has told us that we're here to help anyone who wants to do this," Waterhouse said.

The railroad's been involved with the program since the beginning. It volunteers about 10 to 20 rail cars a year to backhaul efforts around the state, said Wendy Lindscoog, the railroad's vice president of corporate affairs. It's a "terrific opportunity" to promote environmental stewardship and support clean-up programs in rural communities, she said.

Crowley's backhaul efforts are focused on the Yukon. Villagers there talk about the program excitedly because it's creating healthier communities, said Isaac, of the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

"It makes the village cleaner," he said. "You don't have junk all over the place. You can go to any one of those villages and see the difference."

A Vital Role

Moore never dreamed "backhaul" would become so extensive. Crowley's played a critical role. When the company bought Yutana five years ago, it agreed to continue the program, though it's costly.

"They supported it," he said. "The program was in alignment with the Crowley's EcoStewardship activities, so they just let me do my thing out here and keep this going, which is great."



Greg Bringham, left, and Stephen Price of the Yukon River Watershed Council

Crowley provides the critical contribution, said Price. Other partners deserve praise for volunteering. But Crowley offers the most deck space and the largest staging area.

"Without Crowley's support, it would slow down to a crawl," he said.

Crowley didn't charge for backhauling initially. But after oil prices doubled in 2008, it began asking for a minimal 10 cents a pound to help reduce its loss.

That's a fraction of the program's actual costs, Moore said.

Including labor, gas and other expenses, Crowley donated about \$80,000 in 2010 alone. One bill reached \$24,000 to hire a chemical-disposal company to get rid of really dirty waste oil.

Villagers are grateful Crowley's helping, said Andrew, from Marshall. The program's made a big difference in his village. Marshall hasn't had a backhaul in a couple of years because contractors are building new schools and other facilities in the area. The barges must take heavy equipment back to Nenana, leaving no room for junk.

Moore said Crowley would love to move everything, but the program has limits. The junk that remains to be hauled out far outweighs the barge space. But backhaul's made a dent and will continue doing so. As for residents in Marshall, they're eager to see the next load leave, said Andrew.

"The backhaul is a really good gesture from Crowley," he said. "They know they're in a position to give back to the communities they serve and we really appreciate that."

Connections

Quick Facts

- The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, a cooperative effort of 64 First Nations and tribes in Alaska and Canada, has a goal of making the river and its tributaries safe to drink from again.
- Throughout the years, Crowley has helped remove tens of millions of pounds of trash and debris – including junk cars, snow machines, lead-acid batteries and broken electrical appliances – from the Yukon watershed area.
- When a stockpile of rubbish has been collected at a particular village, a Crowley tug and barge will stop by on the way back from delivering fuel and freight and haul away the trash.



HOKA HEY

IT'S A GOOD DAY TO RIDE

By Alex DeMarban

Alex Sweeney wanted to quit. Competing with hundreds of Harley Davidson riders on a long-distance sprint from Florida to Alaska, he was exhausted. It was just Day Two.

In it for the adventure – not to win – he'd let scores of bikers blow past after the June 20 start in Key West. Groups of them smoked by three or four at a time. Organizers billed the event a challenge, not a race, and said speeding tickets would disqualify racers. But with the promise of a \$500,000 prize, plenty of people took their chances.

Sweeney, a stickler for safety and the only rider he saw wearing day-glo gear, knew from the beginning that it would be a tough ride. Back in Key West, during pre-race ceremonies, organizer Jim "Red Cloud" Durham set an ominous tone for the contest he'd created to raise money for his reservation. He warned the long course was designed to break bodies and souls, according to Sweeney.

The 8,400-mile route, roughly traversing the southern U.S. before heading north at Arizona, would be revealed on maps provided at each checkpoint. It would cross more than a dozen states and scores of mountain ranges, forests and national parks.

Durham named the race Hoka Hey, a dramatic Lakota warrior phrase he said meant, "It's a good day to die." But the race's marketing materials softened the term to say, "It's a good day to ride." Alex chose the latter.

Controversy dogged the event. Talking with reporters, riders called maps wrong, communication poor, and the \$1,000 entry fee a rip-off. Many of the race's 700-plus competitors dropped out early on.

Sweeney had no complaints. "It was worth every penny of it," he said. "I think some people thought there were going to be teams of people babysitting everybody along the way. That was not my understanding. I knew from the day I started I was on my own."

A Friend for a Guide

Though he's a churchgoing man who dotes after three young daughters, Sweeney isn't hard to picture in a cutthroat road race, even among "hardcore bikers with tattooed faces," as he called a few of the racers. He's broadly built at 59 with trim white hair, and he's no stranger to demanding schedules and rugged conditions. He's had plenty of experience with both in a career with Crowley that's spanned 30 years and taken him across the globe.

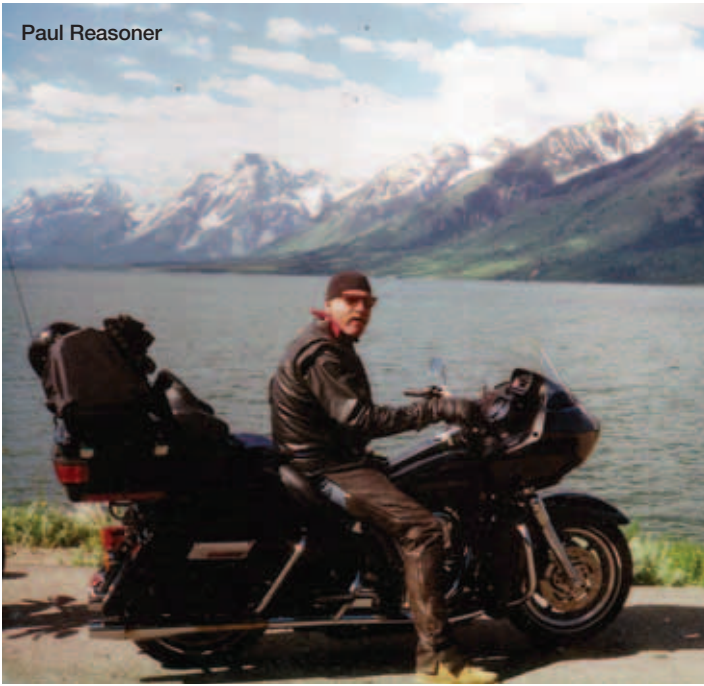
Currently vice president of operations for Crowley in Alaska, he

started as a mate working on a tug in the Alaska Arctic. He moved up quickly to captain and into the office in Alaska. His roles have included vice president of operations for Crowley's marine services in the U.S. and international operations.

He's worked in Russia, China and the Western Hemisphere from Tierra Del Fuego to Prudhoe Bay at the top of Alaska, among other places. Wherever Crowley's had work, he's been there. But in all his years, he'd never traveled across the U.S. on a motorcycle, a dream he's had since his teenage days in the late 1960s, when he met a Vietnam veteran riding horseback from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The stranger spent a night at Sweeney's uncle's farm in Michigan, and spun tales of his trip over dinner with the family. Sweeney was hooked – only he wanted to experience it on two wheels.



Paul Reasoner



A good friend he met through Crowley years later fueled the idea. Sweeney hired Paul Reasoner to captain a Crowley tug during the cleanup of the Exxon Valdez spill in 1989.

The two men got to know each other through work and later, through their love of motorcycles. Reasoner, tall, red-headed and full of life, once hurtled by bike virtually nonstop from Jacksonville to Los Angeles in 36 hours, Sweeney said. The two often talked about making a cross-country trip together, and Reasoner always rang up his friend before he hit the road. But Sweeney was always too busy.

Then the unexpected happened. At age 50, Reasoner was killed in a carjacking in Port Arthur, Texas, in late 2006.

Sweeney never forgot their dream. To honor him during the race, he taped a picture of Reasoner to the windshield.

"I took him along on the ride with me," Sweeney said. "Right behind the compass."

A Lifetime Opportunity

Sweeney's long-distance experience by motorcycle was limited to treks with his wife, Adrienne, an assistant port captain for Crowley when they met in 1993. After they were married and living in Valdez – where Alex was vice president of operations for Alyeska, and Adrienne was chief mate for the Alaska Marine Highway – they enjoyed taking cruises on motorcycles between Valdez and Homer. They often traveled across mountainous Southcentral Alaska, making the 14-hour journey to Homer and returning home to Valdez via Whittier and the Marine Highway ferry, *M/V Tustumena*.

But then they started having children, and had second thoughts about their risky hobby. They had three girls – today, Eleanor is seven, Lillian is six and Lexie Pearl is five – and the penalty for getting hurt seemed too steep. They sold their bikes and agreed not to ride again until their youngest turned 18.

Then Adrienne heard about the Hoka Hey Challenge, when Durham came to Homer to introduce his plans to the city council. The Sweeneys own the 32-room Driftwood Inn and RV park in Homer. Adrienne runs it in the summer, and Alex comes to Homer to help on weekends when he's not working in Anchorage. The race seemed tailor-made for Alex, she said.

His cross-country riding dream started in Florida and ended in Alaska. And the fact that he could finish the race at home, in Homer, seemed like an extra bonus. Adrienne suggested he sign up and not to worry about the dangers; after all, he avoids taking risks on the road and he functions well in adverse conditions.

"I told him, 'It's your dream to do this. Once in a while in our lives we have to follow that dream and say, 'I did it,' because if you don't then you might regret it,'" she said.

Worried about the risks, he hemmed and hawed but finally agreed, knowing he could ride safely. Things fell into place. Seeing a business opportunity, the couple marketed the hotel to racers and their families. And she decided to keep a daily journal of his race on the hotel's website.

Sweeney got a screaming deal on a bike, too. During a trip to Crowley's headquarters in Jacksonville, he learned of an Orlando shop selling a 2009 Electraglide for \$17,000. The store promised to hold it until he could drive there the next day, but didn't. Yet they ultimately honored their commitment, knocking \$7,000 off a spanking new 2010 Road Glide Custom.

Motivation from Alaska

For the race, Sweeney packed light, taking Carhartt overalls, a big road atlas and plenty of underwear. He made sure to bring high-visibility vests. While others sported black leather and removed their helmets, he glowed orange and green – and wore a gleaming-white helmet to boot. Racers leapfrogging him said they recognized him in the dark, even from a distance. For bathing, he brought a box of man-size wet wipes. "I wore one set of clothes and changed my underwear every night," he said.

The Harley performed well, but it was top-heavy, and by the end of Day 2 he was whipped. He'd covered 950 miles in the saddle. At one point that day, he'd wasted five hours in Georgia lost in the 100-degree-plus heat, searching for unmarked roads. When he rolled into a gas station that night, he was tired and weak and felt devastated.

"I was really struggling and said, 'God, I need some help. Paul, where are you? You're a better rider than I am. I need some help on this ride or I'm not going to make it.' This was where I was at mentally. I was just done."

He pulled out his cell phone and called his wife in Alaska. "I just should park this bike and come home," he told her. He was riding with two guys then, all of them lost, and one of whom wanted to keep on.

“It was worth every penny of it. I think some people thought there were going to be teams of people babysitting everybody along the way ... I knew from the day I started I was on my own.”

– Alex Sweeney

“I told him, ‘It’s your dream to do this. Once in a while in our lives we have to follow that dream and say, “I did it,” because if you don’t then you might regret it.’”

– Adrienne Sweeney

“You just gotta stop for the night. Just promise me you’ll stop and get some sleep,” she told him. “You can’t just throw your hands up now; go get some sleep and you’ll feel better in the morning.”

Her support made all the difference. The group found a campsite that night, with help from a police escort. The next morning he shot down some coffee, mounted his Road Glide and kept at it for another 11 days.

Rigors of the Road

Sweeney said he stuck to the rules: no speeding and no hotels, for starters. He usually slept where his bike came to rest, spreading out in grass along the roadside or curling up on the sidewalk under gas station awnings. He showered once, at a campground bathroom in Wyoming. Minus soap and towels, he dried off with a dirty undershirt.

Alex at Key West landmark “Mile 0” before the start of the race.



“It physically beat me and it stretched me mentally. But I loved it, I just absolutely loved it.”

– Alex Sweeney

Mornings usually started before 4:00 a.m., but he'd pull off the road to cat-nap in midday heat, which shot above 110 for one three-day stretch that included Oklahoma and Arizona. He followed every back road and side street on the maps, another rule, covering hundreds of miles each day and averaging more than 12 hours of riding.

Despite the complaints, he called the maps accurate, though the streets weren't always easy to find. Overall, he wasted nearly 1,000 miles searching. Some bikers complained that early support teams had removed street signs. That's possible, Sweeney said. After one search, a local told him a sign had been there the day before. Townsfolk often made things worse, sending him on wild chases. He might get three answers from three people, each wrong.

Visits from a Good Friend

But Sweeney felt watched over. One morning early in the race he tried to say the rosary while riding, as he likes to do each morning at home. One morning heard a little voice in his head say: “You ride the bike and I'll take care of the prayers.”

The next morning, a woman stopped him in a gas station to ask about his journey. “She asked, taking my hand, ‘Can I pray with you?’ For five minutes we're there. She's holding my hands and she says this long prayer.”

Afterward a rider asked him what that woman was doing, and he said, “She was taking care of my daily prayers.” Such encounters became

common. “It was always something like that to let me know that I was covered,” he said.

Starting around Day 3, he began picturing his friend Paul. Thinking of Paul helped him to beat the heat and long days. While cruising down the road, he was comforted by the idea of Paul, riding beside him, wearing a red-checkered shirt and blue jeans, and watching out for him.

After the race, Sweeney visited Paul's wife, Margaret, in Jacksonville, Fla., where she works for Crowley as managing director of marine personnel. Knowing that Sweeney had displayed her late husband's photo, she thought he'd come to share stories about other riders who recognized Paul. But instead, Sweeney cried as he talked about his friend. Margaret said he described her husband perfectly. She wasn't surprised Sweeney imagined Paul riding along.

Paul, who eventually became Crowley's director of International Operations in San Francisco, knew a lot of people but considered just a few friends. Sweeney was one of them.

Paul had made three cross-country tours – Margaret called them “iron-butt” rides – and Paul would have been there with Sweeney on this one.

“I was just thrilled that he would think of Paul on the ride, because if Paul was alive he would have been there, no doubt in my mind. He would have been laughing with Alex all the way across, saying, ‘Get off your butt, keep going, we're not done yet.’ And that he could imagine him like that during the ride, in whatever form Alex saw him, it just seems so Paul to me.”

“Hugs and Kisses” in Homer

After traveling over 9,200 miles in just 13 days, Sweeney neared the finish line in Homer on July 2. It also happened to be his 30-year anniversary with Crowley.

The girls couldn't wait to see him. They'd been following him on the Internet with help from a Spot Satellite Messenger, a portable GPS tracker he'd bought so his family could follow his progress. Each day, his kids ran to the computer, shouting, “Where's Daddy? Where's Daddy?” For the last dozen miles he was greeted by signs the girls had put up along the road.

“Hugs and kisses waiting at finish line.”



“Way to Hoka Hey.”

“Good job, Daddy.”

He signed in as the 136th rider to reach the final checkpoint.

But he thinks he finished in the top 50, based on the small number of signatures at the next-to-last checkpoint in Fairbanks.

Dozens of people apparently skipped that Alaska city to the north and took a shortcut to Homer. As for the winner, that was Will Barclay, of Highland, Fla., who finished in just eight days. Despite critics who said it wouldn’t happen, Durham paid out the prize money after confirming that Barclay did the race correctly, news accounts said.

The race wasn’t easy, but Sweeney’s glad he did it. “It physically beat me and it stretched me mentally. But I loved it, I just absolutely loved it,” he said. It’s probably the last time he’ll ever do something like that.

After returning safely home to Alaska, he’s had his bike professionally cleaned and plans to sell it. Now it’s back to plan A: No more riding until the girls grow up. But as soon as the youngest turns 18, he’ll buy another bike.

And he’ll hit the road for a long, long time. **Connections**

Quick Facts

- The 2010 Hoka Hey Motorcycle Challenge was a 8,400-mile motorcycle event that began in Key West, Florida, on June 20, and ended in Homer, Alaska, on the Fourth of July weekend.
- Alex Sweeney, vice president of operations, has responsibility for managing most vessel and terminal operations throughout Alaska, and recently assumed responsibility for Crowley’s North Slope operations.
- Sweeney was presented with the Thomas Crowley Trophy in 1996, Crowley’s highest honor.

(Left to Right) 1. Alex wore day-glo gear while riding for extra safety. 2. The distance Alex rode from Key West to Homer. 3. The Sweeney family 4. Eleanor, Lillian and Lexie Pearl Sweeney welcome Alex home.

Alex Sweeney at home in Alaska





A Day in the Life of the Crew of a Seattle Harbor Tug

By Patrick S. Dixon

It is a cloudy day in the Port of Seattle. Elliott Bay is calm, except for the slight chop on the water, and I am photographing the Crowley tug *Chief* as she assists a 572-foot freighter, the *Santiago*, toward a pier in the harbor. The vessels are far enough away from me for this to appear like a silent ballet, but the tension on the towline coming off the *Chief* and up to the starboard stern quarter of the *Santiago* is evidence of powerful forces at work. Black smoke erupts from *Santiago*'s exhaust stack, and the *Chief* swings wide on her tow. I lean forward and frame the scene in the viewfinder as the tug completely reverses her orientation to the freighter – the bow of the tug swings to face the stern of the *Santiago*. The tow is shortened, and together the two make their way toward the Pier 5 berth.

Hours earlier, I drove into the lot on a hot, humid day in late September. At the office, I meet Lead Dispatcher Tim Knebel, who started his career as a deckhand on tugs but has been dispatching now for 20 years. He works in the command center of the west coast Crowley fleet. Two dispatchers are on watch here all the time, on a four-day-on, four-day-off schedule. For each of their twelve-hour shifts, they answer incoming calls from customers, arranging schedules for tug assistance in escorting big ships into the harbors of the west coast. Between the two of them, they schedule tugs for incoming ships 24 to 48 hours in advance for

L.A.-Long Beach, San Diego, San Francisco and El Segundo, California, and in Puget Sound, including the nearby waterways of Anacortes, Seattle and Tacoma.

The tugs and dispatchers are in close communication at all times, and they both monitor the pilots talking on the radios so they can anticipate the unexpected. “You learn what to look for,” Tim adds, referring to the many variables that go into scheduling. “The goal is to never delay a customer and to ensure that each ship makes it to the dock safely and without incident.”

Tim gets on the radio to the captain of the tug I will be aboard, the *Valor*. “Keith, the *Santiago* has firmed up for 1400 today. Going into Pier 5 south, on port side, with one tug.” The *Valor* now knows that only one tug will be on the job, and how and where to orient the freighter *Santiago* at the pier. Afterwards, both boats will pull the 1,100-foot freighter, *Chicago Express*, out of her berth at Terminal 18 and into the harbor.

On a harbor tug the four-person crew rotates every two weeks. Each crew has a captain, a mate, a chief engineer and an able-bodied seaman (A/B) or deckhand. The *Valor* currently has a cadet on board as well. For the two-week period the crew is on the vessel, they are on-call at all times, but work in two-person teams for six-hour watches. They eat, sleep and live for the entire two weeks on this six-hour schedule. The captain and the



Crowley Harbor class tug *Chief* assisting the container vessel *Santiago*.

“The goal is to never delay a customer and to ensure that each ship makes it to the dock safely and without incident.”

– Tim Knebel, Crowley



Lead Dispatcher Tim Knebel, left, and Dispatcher Jay Martin in Crowley's Seattle Pier 17 office.

engineer are on duty from 0600 (6:00 a.m.) until 1200 (noon), then switch with the mate and the A/B for the next six hours until 1800 (6:00 p.m.). This cycle repeats at midnight, and again at 0600. I arrive in the middle of the afternoon watch.

I am escorted to the *Valor* by Mate Matt Petke. He is athletic, with a quiet demeanor and he hands me a lifejacket, hardhat and safety glasses to accompany my steel-toed boots – the standard PPE, or personal protective equipment – as we walk. We cast off and head into Elliott Bay.

The cadet, Nick Parker, and the A/B, Royal (Craig) Dickgieser, also wear PPE as they work on deck. They stow the lines while I talk to Matt as he maneuvers the boat away from the dock. The *Chief* is ahead of us, and she slips into one of the waterways between piers to check on the commercial fishing nets in the water.

The Muckleshoot Indians have legal fishing grounds in Elliott Bay, and when the season is open, often have fishing nets in the way of the ship traffic. For tugboats, a net in the prop could mean blown seals and costly



Crowley Harbor class tug *Chief* escorting the container vessel *Santiago*.

repairs. Before a job, the fishermen are called and asked to move any nets in the way. Fishermen are compensated for their cooperation, so it's usually not a problem. Still, it's routine for the tugs to check to eliminate surprises. The radio talk confirms that the nets are indeed gone, and Nick and Craig join us on the bridge as both boats idle in the harbor waiting on the *Santiago* to arrive.

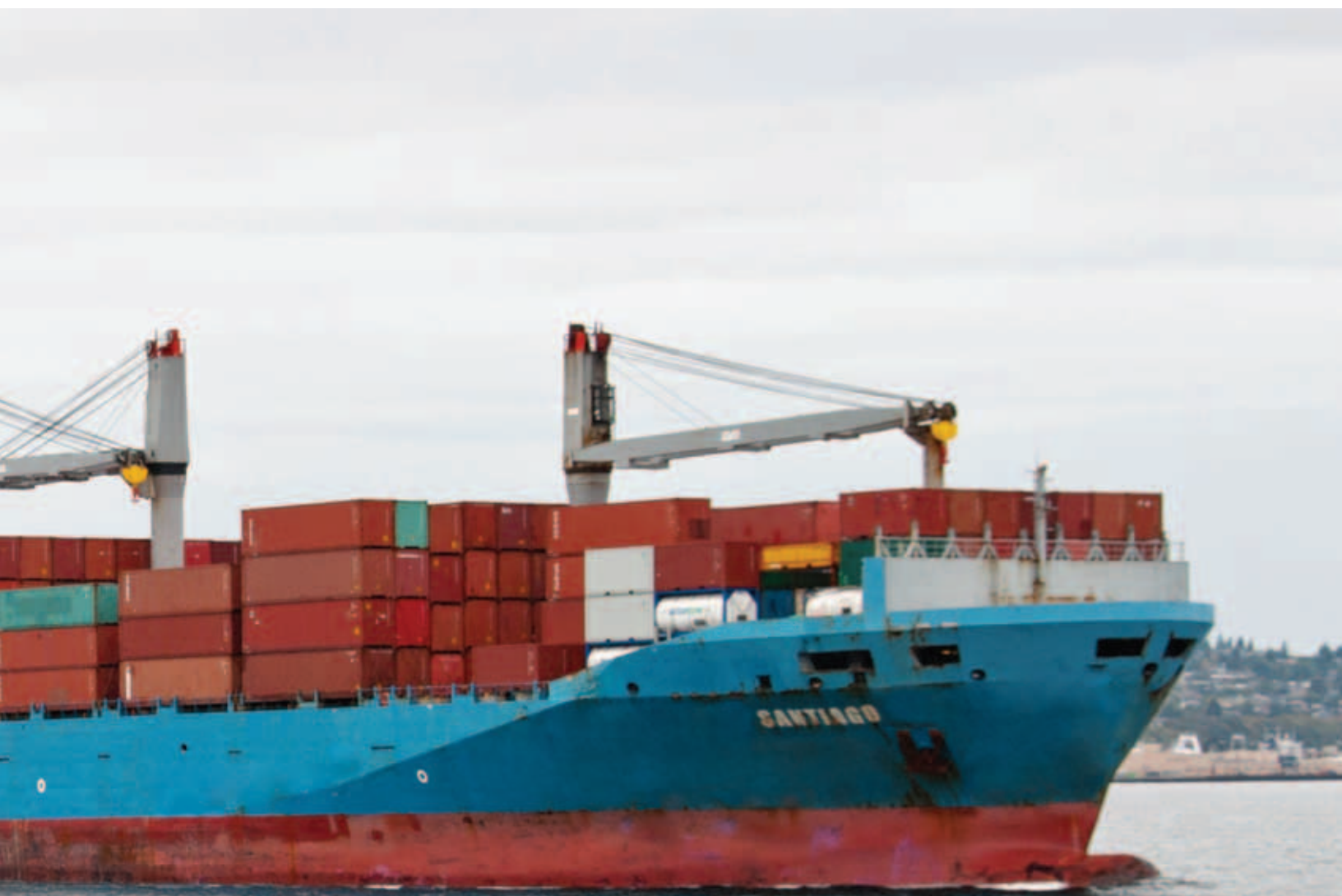
The PPE all crew and visitors are required to wear on deck is a small testimony to the safety record Crowley has built within the industry. During my day aboard, each of the crew spoke proudly of how safe the boats of this company are. Matt explains that many customers choose to work with Crowley for that reason. The big ship owners need confidence in the company that maneuvers their vessels in the tight conditions of a busy port like Seattle. "We give them that," Matt says. "In return, the company is rewarded with their business. It's a win-win, and everyone goes home safe."

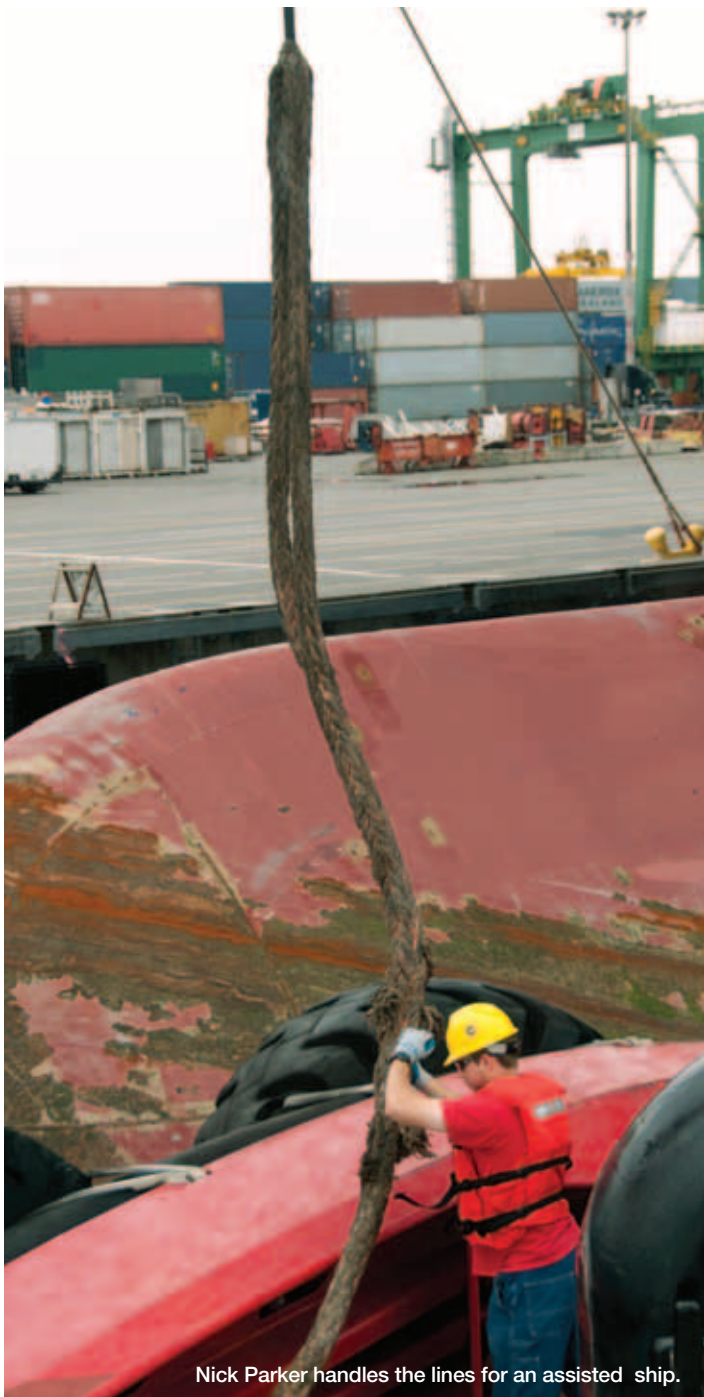
Over dinner later, Craig, who is quick with a smile and a story, agrees. Now 63, he joined the Navy at 17, and has sailed around the world during a life spent at sea, including a stretch in Vietnam as the captain of a patrol boat. His smile drops away though, and he turns sincere with a jab of his finger. "I've never, ever felt unsafe on any of Crowley's boats," he says with conviction. "And those nines?" He gestures towards Crowley's seagoing Invader Class tugs moored across the dock from us. "I'd go anywhere in

"I get to spend half the year with my daughter. Sure, I'm gone for two weeks at a time, but when I'm home, I'm fully engaged with our family."

– Matt Petke, Crowley

the world on one of them." He describes breaking through ice in Cook Inlet, Alaska, and towing a barge in 30-foot seas in the middle of the Pacific. "Even under those conditions you never worry about anything happening to the boat." Everyone at the table nods their heads. After a short pause in the conversation while the crew silently recalls their own experiences riding through rough seas, Captain Keith Kridler says, "You might not be very comfortable, though," and we all laugh.





Nick Parker handles the lines for an assisted ship.



Captain Keith Kridler

As we wait, I learn that Matt has a wife and a daughter at home. I ask him about the two-week-on, two-week-off schedule, and get an unexpected reply. “I like it!” he says with enthusiasm. “I get to spend half the year with my daughter.” Other husbands go to work before their kids wake up, he explains, and get home in time for a few hours with the family before bed. “Sure, I’m gone for two weeks at a time, but when I’m home, I’m fully engaged with our family.”

Keith, who has three daughters, echoes that comment. “It’s a plus,” he says with spirit. “The time spent is better quality.” I wonder about the adjustment of coming back into their family’s lives after two weeks away. Keith raises his eyebrows. “You have to go home and fit in,” he says. “Having a good partner who is independent and strong also makes a difference.” “Being away for half the year, I always appreciate going home,” says Matt. “It’s a really special place for me.”

The *Santiago* slides into view from around West Point. “There she is,” points Matt. On the radio he lets the pilot of the *Santiago* know we’ll be photographing as they work the tow, and eases the *Valor* forward as the *Chief* catches a line at the stern of the bigger vessel. The *Chief*’s A/B ties it off to the larger towline on the stern reel. Three of the crew on the *Santiago* hoist the heavy line aboard and slide it over a bitt – a large, upright cleat – then leave the area. The tow begins in earnest as the *Chief* motors ahead and the line tightens. With the stunning Seattle skyline in the background, the *Chief* slowly spins the *Santiago* into position to slip into the berth. From this distance, the job seems smooth and effortless.

Sensing more to the story, I ask Craig and Matt about the danger of the work involved. They point out that many tugboat crews prefer the outside ocean work instead of working in the harbor. “Here in the harbor we’ll be making and breaking tow a lot more often, and dealing with all the gear all the time,” explains Craig. “Where on the outside, you make tow, you do your trip, break tow and come back.”

“Those guys have the weather to deal with,” Matt adds, “That’s no fun out in the ocean. But where we work, too – out by Cherry Point – it can get pretty snotty in the winter.”

“And in the Straits,” Craig points out, referring to the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The *Valor* is usually berthed in Anacortes and escorts tankers coming through the Strait, meeting and running with them as they enter Puget Sound. The Strait is exposed to the westerly winds coming off the Pacific Ocean, and often has small-craft advisories or storm warnings that accompany bad weather, especially in the winter. The *Valor* will often run for nearly 20 miles before waiting for the tanker to arrive, then will escort it back to a refinery at one of Puget Sound’s inland ports.

“When you encounter bad weather you slow down,” Matt explains. “But you can’t do that when you’re escorting a tanker. You just pound

“Every time they ask me to switch boats, I ask if I can take Craig with me. When you have a good bunch of guys like this, you love coming to work.”

– Captain Keith Kridler, Crowley

“Here in the harbor we’ll be making and breaking tow a lot more often, and dealing with all the gear all the time. Where on the outside, you make tow, you do your trip, break tow and come back.”

– Craig Dickgieser, Crowley

into it. Lots of times when there’s a big westerly and you’re escorting an outbound, you’ll tuck up under their stern and hide back there. There’ll be eight-footers going by on each side, and if you move 10 feet to port or 10 feet to starboard you’ll get walloped. It can be intense.”

A tug operator has a lot to pay attention to when working these smaller boats around the big ships. Many larger vessels have flared hulls, and when a tug is catching a line and hooking up to them, they have to stay cognizant of how close they are so they don’t hit the hull with the mast. Larger ships maneuver while the tugs are trying to get in position to catch a line, and the prop wash from the bigger ship can push the lighter tug away, or in a hazardous direction. This usually happens while underway at 10 or 12 knots, and not in a calm sea. I begin to realize that the job I am witnessing is a small window into a more perilous world. Matt nods toward Craig, who works on deck during heavy weather, and says,

“He’s the one with the dangerous job. I just try to watch out for him.” But it seems to me that they all have each other’s backs.

As the *Chief* and *Santiago* disappear into the slip, we move to where the *Chicago Express* is tied up. A commercial fishing net is stretched out from the pier not 50 feet off the stern of the freighter. Another net is that close to the bow. Soon a fisherman in an open skiff motors to both the nets in turn, coiling the web and corks in the center of the little boat. He waves at us when he’s done and races off. Matt waves back, then cautiously moves us under the bow of the *Chicago Express*.

The steel hull looms above, tall as a six-story building. Nick is on the bow of the *Valor* and catches a line tossed down from tiny figures at the rail above. Craig stays with us in the wheelhouse, watching intently as Nick does his job. Nick hooks the smaller line to the towline wrapped on the winch on the bow. The winch is regulated by computers, and it senses

The *Valor* crew, left to right: Nick Parker, Matt Petke, Craig Dickgieser, Keith Kridler and Steve Randall





Matt Petke and Nick Parker

how much pull is being generated by the tow and either eases off if it is too near the limits placed on it by the tug operator, or if it senses too much slack, pulls the line in automatically.

The towline itself is a recent development in the industry. Made of woven monofilament fibers, it barely stretches, even with tons of pressure pulling on it. As a result, tugs have to be more careful not to pull the bit right off a bigger ship. Often a tug operator will ask a ship's pilot what the limit of the tonnage is for the tow, and will enter that (or on Crowley-manned tugs, a figure slightly less than that) into the computer.

Hooked up together with the *Chief*, we pull sideways, moving the *Chicago Express* away from the pier. I know the engines on the *Valor* are working, because we are definitely making way, but there is little vibration, and minimal noise. The line to the freighter is taut. Once we are away from the pier, the *Chief* moves to the stern to tow the big ship out into the harbor, and we swing into position directly in front of the bow to assist in steering. Once we are clear of the piers, the *Valor* drops its towline and the *Chief* pulls the larger ship around so it is aimed out the harbor. The *Chief* drops her tow, and the work is done. Nick stows the lines on the bow while both boats head to the dock.

Craig is already in the galley making dinner. The shift is about to change, and the other two members of the crew, Steve Randall, the chief engineer, and Keith, who have been sleeping, join us in the wheelhouse. Once we are at the dock again, we all head to the galley. Usually the crew doesn't eat all at once, because they are doing constant jobs, but today the work is done so we can all sit down together. This is their "bonding time," and is one of the best opportunities to discuss upcoming jobs, company business and safety issues.

I learn from the conversation that Steve, the "Chief," is soon to retire.



Crowley Harbor class tug *Chief* assisting the container vessel *Chicago Express*.

“When you encounter bad weather you slow down, but you can’t do that when you’re escorting a tanker. You just pound into it. Lots of times when there’s a big westerly and you’re escorting an outbound, you’ll tuck up under their stern and hide back there. There’ll be eight-footers going by on each side ... It can be intense.”

– Matt Petke, Crowley

He has 23 years with the company. He took a job as an engineer on a fishing tender in Alaska in the summer of 1980, and found his calling while fondly watching a Crowley tug repeatedly towing barges out of the Kenai River.

“I’d look over at it as we came in, tired at the end of the day, and the engine-room door would be open. There would be this guy standing there, with his foot on the rail, his earphones on, and a cup of coffee in his hand, and I said, ‘I gotta get me one of those jobs!’” When he returned home that’s exactly what he did. He has worked all over the world on tugs, much like Craig, and picked harbor-tug duty, also like Craig, when he finally had enough time with the company.

The Z-Drive, or Azimuth-Drive, *Valor* is the most powerful and versatile tug in Crowley’s Seattle fleet, according to the crew. Its unique propulsion system makes it especially suited for harbor work. Built in 2007, she is 100 feet in length and 45 feet wide. From stem to stern she feels roomy and expansive, and she is treated with the greatest respect and care. Every surface is clean and polished; even the personal quarters of the crew are tidy. The engine room is not only oversized, but also immaculate and orderly. Steve obviously knows his work and takes great pride in it. It shows when he poses for a photograph in front of the engines. No diesel fumes or oil leaks here. You could eat off the floor.

The skipper of this operation is Keith, the boat’s captain. He is witty and self-deprecating, but obviously in control. Sitting across from me at the galley table in his t-shirt, he is unassuming. And, like everyone else aboard, he is friendly and casual. As a college student he needed extra money in the summer and got a job working on tugs. After two years, he

took time off from school to build up some money. “And I’m still here!” he says with a comical shake of his head. By the time he was 21, he had logged so much sea time he had his captain’s license. He and Craig have worked together for 10 years.

“Every time they ask me to switch boats,” he remarks, “I ask if I can take Craig with me.” There is an overt sense of teamwork from everyone on board. “When you have a good bunch of guys like this,” says Keith, “you love coming to work.”

Dinner finished, the crew buses the table and cleans the galley. Washing dishes is the 22-year-old cadet, Nick, who spends most of his time listening to the conversation but not saying much. *Valor*’s four crewmembers have a total of nearly 100 years of experience at sea. What cadet wouldn’t love to train under that kind of tutelage? All four of them came to this life through “the hawsepipe,” as Matt put it, meaning they worked their way to where they are now, rather than through attendance at a maritime academy. The hawsepipe is the hole in a ship that the anchor chain runs through, and to get aboard through it would mean climbing, metaphoric for working your way up the ranks. Often the academy-trained seaman comes on board a tug with little or no sea service. Not so for Nick. “I want to start as a deckhand,” he says. “Start low and work my way up, so when I’m a captain I understand and appreciate the jobs everyone has to do.” With that attitude, the rest of the crew on the *Valor* think he’ll do just fine.

In a blink, my time on the boat comes to an end. It is dark, and they are about to leave on a run to Tacoma to escort a freighter back to Seattle. They assure me that I won’t miss much – they’ll rotate on and off the ship, sleeping and eating, and will continue to escort the large vessels safely through the harbor. Keith escorts me off the boat. We shake hands, and he invites me back. I find myself envying Nick and the life that is before him. I’d love to be going along. [Connections](#)



Craig Dickgieser, Steve Randall and Nick Parker

Quick Facts

- State-of-the-art cargo handling facilities helped rank Seattle as the nation’s eighth busiest U.S. seaport in 2009.
- Historically tugboats were the first seagoing vessels to receive steam propulsion, which meant freedom from the restraint of wind and the capability to move in any direction. As such, they were employed in harbors to assist ships in docking and departure.
- Crowley entered the ship-assist business in 1906, by operating steam-powered tugs in San Francisco Bay.
- Today, Crowley owns and operates one of the world’s most advanced ship assist and tanker escort tug fleets.

Historical Perspective

1986



2011 marks the 50th anniversary of ocean cargo transportation service between the U.S. and Central America for Crowley and predecessor company Coordinated Caribbean Transport (CCT). Since 1961, Crowley has helped the region blossom into the shipping hub that it is today, and contributed to the development of Central America's economy, culture and ports. On the eve of this anniversary, Crowley reflects on its history of faithful service to the people of Central America and looks forward to the next 50 years of growth and opportunity. The photo above shows two CCT (Crowley Caribbean Transport) RO/RO vessels in 1986 docked at their Port Everglades, Florida, terminal.