

The Coop Scoop

1st Quarter 2019



the COOPER GROUP of companies



02

03

05

07

Final Days on the River
Cooper/T. Smith Mooring

Reinventing City Docks
Cooper/Ports America

Tadd's Red Beans & Rice
Cooper Restaurants

Employee Rescues Driver
Cooper Consolidated

Cover photo: Blakeley BoatWorks overlooking downtown Mobile, Alabama.

Wisconsin Man Spends Final Days on the Mississippi

You may have heard the story of Kelly Phillips, his dog Sapphire, and his old houseboat “Shameless”.

The 51-year-old Wisconsin native began his journey down the Mississippi River 20 months ago after being diagnosed with cancer. Doctors told him he had only three months to live. Wanting to die on his own terms, Kelly thought the Mississippi River would be a good place to go, so he bought a 1972 houseboat and headed downriver.

Three months went by, then six months... So he decided to head further downriver.

The river became his home and the people he met along the way became family. Kelly dropped anchor in Algiers Point – New Orleans was originally going to be his last stop – but hoped to be in Venice, Louisiana, by January 23 where he planned to meet up with many of his “river friends”.

To aid him in his trip, Crescent River Pilots, a separate entity not affiliated with Crescent Towing, donated an AIS system for his houseboat and Cooper/T. Smith Mooring’s Jeff Guilott assisted with the install. A laptop, power supply and a few other items were among the donations. With the AIS system, anyone could follow Kelly’s voyage down the Mississippi River.

Kelly and Sapphire boarded “Shameless” and set out for Venice at 10 a.m. on January 22. On January 26, more than 100 people gathered at Cypress Cove Marina in Venice to celebrate the completion of Kelly’s 2,000-mile trip. Surrounded by friends and supporters, a Plaquemines Parish Port Authority vessel sounded its sirens and sprayed fire hoses into the air as a salute. In addition to the nautical salute, Kelly was given the key to the city by the Plaquemines Parish President. •



> Crescent Towing

Volunteering at Second Harvest Food Bank



On December 18, employees from Crescent Towing and Cooper/T. Smith Mooring took time out of their busy schedules to volunteer at New Orleans’ Second Harvest Food Bank. Our employees sorted and packed food for distribution to families in need in the community.

Second Harvest leads the fight against hunger in South Louisiana by providing food access, advocacy, education, and disaster response to 700+ community partners and programs across 23 parishes. Staff and volunteers distribute the equivalent of more than 32 million meals to 210,000+ people a year.

To learn more about Second Harvest and how you can lend a hand, visit: www.no-hunger.org. •

Revitalization of Houston's Northside City Docks



Port Houston's Northside City Docks is known as a direct discharge port where receivers coordinate with shipping lines to have cargo unloaded from liner ships and placed directly on trucks for final delivery.

Though City Docks has been discharging cargo in the same manner for more than 30 years, this method has proven inefficient as it ties up trucks for hours or days, creates bottlenecks, delays final delivery, and creates added costs since truck drivers must remain onsite while waiting for their cargo to arrive.

Cooper/Ports America (C/PA)'s Operations Team has implemented a more efficient system of discharging and loading out cargo, which customers and Port Houston stand to benefit from. Advances include: notification of ship arrivals and delays, online scheduling of cargo pickup, express check-in and check-out, real-time cargo tracking, faster delivery, and more.

Currently, when a truck arrives at City Docks the driver must make four separate stops to check-in: First with the port, then the port's truck office, the C/PA truck office, and finally at a holding area where the driver sits and waits for their cargo. C/PA's new system reduces this experience to one stop and no wait.

Upon a ship's arrival, C/PA unloads the cargo and stores it in its facility. Customers then visit the C/PA website to schedule an appointment for a truck to pickup their cargo. Upon arrival at City Docks, the truck driver checks in with the port and is then directed to a staging area where a team is waiting to load their cargo. This process is further expedited by the new technology C/PA's Clerks are equipped with.

Clerks currently carry a clipboard and make handwritten delivery receipts and instructions, which always leaves room for human error. Now, the clipboard has been replaced by a handheld tablet and portable printer that Clerks carry with them at all times. On these tablets Clerks can view cargo details that include which cargo and how much to load, real-time inventory statistics, and bills of lading, among other details. Using the Clerk's tablet, truck drivers sign-in electronically, review and verify their load, and e-sign to acknowledge receipt. Utilizing a portable printer paired with the tablet, the Clerk then prints a signed delivery receipt that also acts as a gate pass for the truck driver, allowing them to immediately exit the port and bypass the check-out process. Tablets allow our team to not only view current pickups, but future pickups as well, letting them plan labor and equipment needs accordingly.

Once a truck departs the port, the new system provides customers with real-time tracking of their shipment and pertinent cargo details, such as how much was loaded, what time the truck left the premises, and when it will arrive for delivery at its final destination.

C/PA has positioned itself as a one-stop shop for cargo at Northside City Docks. From ship discharge, storage, load out, and final delivery, customers deal with a single party in lieu of multiple, reducing the chance of lost or damaged cargo, and providing greater peace of mind. C/PA is confident that this new process provides increased efficiency and a competitive advantage for its operations, its customers, and City Docks. Technological advancements paired with a new centrally located trucking office, an experienced team of workers, and outstanding customer service, puts C/PA at the forefront of the operational renaissance at Port Houston's Northside City Docks. •



Ken Wear, Terminal Operations Manager

Ken Wear shares his unusual introduction to the stevedoring business -- loading explosives onboard ships for the U.S. Army -- and compares his day-to-day responsibilities to assembling a new jigsaw puzzle each day. •



Byron Borne, Regional Director of Loss Control

As the Regional Director of Loss Control for Cooper Consolidated, Byron is the person responsible for overseeing the safety of our workers and ensuring each team member returns home at the end of the day just as they left that morning. •



Zachary Calvin, Electrician

Zachary Calvin has always nurtured a passion for the arts. At Crescent Towing he melded the best of both worlds -- working as an Electrician while also creating sculptures and centerpieces for company events and trade shows. •



Nathaniel Johnson, Shipyard Supervisor

Working his way from fiberglass labor to Shipyard Supervisor, Nathaniel understands the value of a hard day's work and cherishes the relationships he's developed during his time with the company. •



Kay Sudduth, Administrative Assistant

With Cooper Marine and Timberlands for almost 30 years, Kay Sudduth plays an integral role in keeping our customers happy and ensuring our operations run smoothly. •



Nominate an Employee

If you have a suggestion for a Cooper employee or team that should be featured in a future We Are spotlight, email your recommendations to [Thomas Smith](#). •

Cooper Consolidated Team Rescues Adventurer

At 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 14, Cooper Consolidated received a Coast Guard call that a man in a kayak had turned over on the Mississippi River near Convent, Louisiana. Marquette vessel *Mary Kay* launched its skiff into the water and the team at Mile 164 managed to reach the individual and pull him from the river, uninjured. Back on land, our team learned the man's identity: Richard Brand, an adventurer from Colorado who is kayaking across the United States.

Brand set aside his successful graphic-design business in Denver in 2013 to follow the call of adventure on a solo descent of the Mississippi River from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. Along the way, he realized the value of his journey went beyond his personal experience. Brand established a web presence to share his photos and stories in hopes of inspiring others to embrace their inner explorer.



Brand kayaking on the river. Photo Credit: DBP Magazine

Read the full story at [Waterways Journal](#), and follow this self-proclaimed Water Nomad's journey at [Captured Heartbeats](#). •

> Cooper Restaurants



Tadd's Red Beans and Rice

"Tadd's Red Beans and Rice" is a favorite at Felix's Fish Camp. But did you know the dish is named after a real person? Meet Crescent Towing's Prentiss "Tadd" Willcutt, and let him tell you how his delicious red beans and rice came to be. •

> SRT

LP Rotor Shipment

SRT was recently tasked with transporting an LP rotor shipment from the Eastern United States to a nuclear power plant in the Pacific Northwest. SRT coordinated with three railroads and worked through severe weather conditions, which caused delays in the form of broken rails. Due to the cargo's sensitive nature, it could not be handled like most railcars, so a Rail Expediter was contracted to travel with the shipment and communicate with the crews at each railyard to ensure it was handled safely. Thanks to SRT's expert planning, the shipment was delivered ahead of schedule and on budget.

Pictured, right: LP Rotor; 30' long x 12' wide x 13' tall; 307,000 lbs. •



SRT Employee Spotlight: Doug Bramlett

Doug Bramlett began his transportation career in 1979 at a specialized carrier outside of Atlanta. That's where he met up-and-coming salesman Bob Felix, as well as his counterpart Larry Pharr. Doug and Larry manage the Siemens TMS and between them have 85 years (or 90 depending on who you ask) of transportation experience. "I'm sad to say I spend more time with Larry every day, than my wife," Doug commented. In his role Doug is faced with new and unique challenges every day – anything from providing a team to ship a 500-pound crate with only 30 minutes notice to shipping a 150,000-pound rotor. When not at work, Doug likes to spend time with his family and at his farm in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains. •



> Cooper Marine & Timberlands

Engine Room Overhaul



The captain and crew of the push boat *Green Wave* successfully overhauled their vessel's 62-year-old engine room. "In my five years of working on this boat," John McCullough, Regional Director of Loss Control, CMT, enthused, "I've never seen the engine room look as good as it does now. They brought it back to life." The crew took the job one step at a time, beginning with a deep clean before sealing oil leaks, and finally applying a fresh coat of paint. "The guys saw the end results in their minds," said Captain Kurt Woehler. "And the final outcome is proof of what sheer grit and determination can achieve."

Captain: Kurt Woehler | **Relief Captain:** Richard Ardeneaux
Deckhands: Andy Irvin, Jason Randall, Charlie Richards, Evan Ricks, Jermaine Sutton •

> Crescent Towing

In Memoriam, Dale Turner

Crescent Towing recently lost a giant and beloved member of our Cooper Group family: Robert Dale Turner, age 59, passed away on December 15, 2018. Dale, a man who never met a stranger and was an integral part of the success of every team he was a part of, first came to work for Cooper-Wilkins Welding and Machine Co. in 1986. In 1997 he transferred to Crescent Towing, where he oversaw a multitude of port engineering responsibilities. The Cooper Group of Companies is far better off for having had Dale on our team for over 30 years, and as individuals, we are better people for having known him. Dale made us a better company and better people—he will be missed by all. •



Employee, Three Others Pull Woman from Burning Car

Four men were credited with rescuing a woman from a burning car on Monday, February 18, in Garyville, Louisiana – among them was Cooper Consolidated’s Jeremy Zeringue.



It all happened when impaired 22-year-old driver Richard Preston slammed into a car driven by a 41-year old woman, according to Louisiana State Police. Jeremy first noticed Preston’s car about a half hour earlier when it almost hit him. He dialed 911 and followed the car.

“I told the 911 operator ‘Hey, he is about to kill someone’ and that’s when the lady was stopped. He hit her at over 100-something miles per hour,” Jeremy said.



Jeremy with rescued driver Haley Ilg.

He then got out and rushed over to the flaming car. State police say John Lejeune, Byron Gilcrease and another unidentified man eventually joined in. It took time but the men were able to bust open the window with a fire extinguisher and pull the woman out.

“People need to see that there are modern day heroes out here and that people still care,” one witness said.

Jeremy doesn’t think he’s a hero. He says he just did what he thought was right and gives the rest of the credit to the other three men.

The rescued woman was identified as Haley Ilg, Environmental Supervisor for Marathon Petroleum’s Garyville Refinery. On March 13, Marathon Petroleum recognized Jeremy and the other rescuers with a special award for their courageous actions.

For complete details and video of the fiery rescue, visit [WWL TV](#).

> Who Works the Rivers

Who Works the Rivers

Cooper/T. Smith Mooring and Crescent Towing were thrilled to participate once again in RiverWorks Discovery’s Who Works the Rivers event in New Orleans on February 20. Nearly 175 high school students from the Greater New Orleans area gathered at the Port of New Orleans and Crescent Towing to explore career opportunities in the maritime industry.



SRT Spotlight: Larry Pharr



Larry Pharr has done pretty much everything there is to do in trucking, except actually drive a truck.

Larry says, “I tried that many years ago, but it’s just not something I can do. That’s why I have a world of respect for professional truck drivers.”

Larry and Doug Bramlett began working together in 1985 and have worked together off and on ever since, doing everything from managing heavy and specialized divisions of the trucking company to being a carrier agent and working in sales. There’s never a dull moment in the office when Larry and Doug get together. They’re notorious for keeping the mood in the office light, but they know how to get the job done, and in a professional manner.

Larry married his wife when he was 17, and they just celebrated their 53rd anniversary. “I’ve just about decided to keep her,” he joked. He enjoys spending time with his family – three children and six grandchildren – and serves as a Deacon at his church. •

Milestones

5 Years

Michael Knight
Joe Perez, Jr.
Kevin Anderson
Seth Reid
Drake Foto
Marvis Mason

10 Years

Orrie Mosley
Monk Williams
Jeffrey Williams, Jr.
Endia Judge

15 Years

Luis Dardon
Kevin Jacobs

20 Years

Ryan James
Mark Schmitt

25 Years

Buddy Greene, Jr.
Terri Doherty
Bertrand Camus, Jr.

30 Years

Britton Cooper, II
Michael Hurst
David Watford, Jr.
Walt Schaaf

35 Years

Zack Crouchet

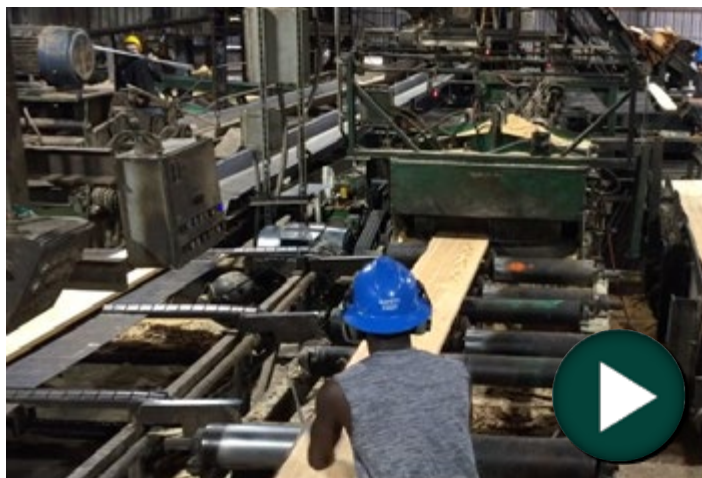
40 Years

Philip Siess
Anthony Labella, Jr.
David Henson



Crescent Towing’s Tadd Willcutt is proud to share that his granddaughter Summerlyn Camille Middleton was selected as a member of Baldwin County’s Dogwood Trail Court. Members of the Dogwood Trail serve as goodwill ambassadors and hostesses, participating in local and regional events and parades.

CMT Celebrates 20 Years



Cooper Marine and Timberlands (CMT) will proudly celebrate its 20th anniversary this June! Originally part of Kimberly Clark's Southeast Timberland marine operation and export chip and pole business, Cooper/T. Smith acquired the operation in 1999. Under Cooper/T. Smith's ownership, CMT has flourished to become a leading provider of marine transportation along the Tennessee-Tombigbee River and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, stevedoring services in the Port of Mobile, and quality timber products to numerous wood-consuming industries in the Southeastern United States.

In 1999 CMT's operations were comprised of three chip mills producing one-million tons of hardwood chips that could be transported by 9 push boats and 50 barges, or be unloaded, stored and later reloaded to vessel by a land-based gantry crane on the Mobile River. As markets fluctuated, CMT found new growth opportunities to secure its future in the industry. Marine operations have grown to 18 push boats and more than 250 barges, which are projected to handle approximately 6.5-million tons of bulk cargo in 2019. This year also marks a milestone for CMT's Marine Operations – it will receive its first ever new build: a 3,400 HP, 110 ft. x 33 ft. push boat being constructed by Blakeley BoatWorks.

Timber Operations consist of an experienced timber procurement staff in Creola, Alabama, and Dennis, Mississippi. CMT acquires standing timber from landowners, then harvests and sells these products to paper mills and sawmills. Operating five portable in-woods chippers and one permanent chip mill site in Dennis, CMT annually produces 1.1 million tons of hardwood and pine chips for sale to domestic paper companies. CMT also manages wood yard operations for several pulp and paper companies in Southwest Alabama. In total, Timber Operations produce 2.7 million tons from chip productions, handling at wood yards, and other products harvested and sold by the timber procurement team. The company recently entered the lumber industry by acquiring the Carrollton Sawmill in Carrollton, Alabama, a pine mill specializing in producing one-inch rough-cut lumber for domestic and export markets.

CMT's Stevedoring Operation, often referred to as ChipCo, has grown from a single crane to five cranes, including four barge-mounted derrick cranes. Port terminals include 35 acres of storage area for reload to ship or barge, and a Reclaim and Conveyor System at the port provides loading of wood pellets from bottom-dump truck vans into covered barges for storage while awaiting loading to ocean-going vessels for export.

The company has developed drastically over the span of 20 years, staking a claim and becoming a leader in multiple industries. Mindful of its past and focused on its present, CMT keeps an eye on the future as it strives to continually adapt and remain a leader in an ever-changing industry. •

