



# Tow Bitts




Austen Dwyer

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS** “Preparing for a Winter Tow,” an oil painting by artist Austin Dwyer of Mukilteo, Wash., was selected for the 2012 Foss Maritime holiday card and for the cover of this, the holiday issue of Tow Bitts. It was one of 29 paintings by 20 artists entered in the annual Foss calendar art and holiday card competition. Reproductions of the paintings and an article about Dwyer and the competition appear on pages 10-11.

## TUG CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN AT RAINIER SHIPYARD IN APRIL OF 2013

Foss Rainier Shipyard on the Columbia River in Oregon is set to begin building three Arctic-Class ocean-going tugs in April of 2013, and the company is making adjustments to its management team to oversee that project and what might become a surge in new-vessel construction.

Foss Shipyard Production Manager **Hap Richards**, who laid the groundwork for the company’s highly successful Dolphin-Class tug construction program and oversaw construction of the first vessels, has been promoted to director of new construction. *Continued on page 4*

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**Here Comes the Arctic Class**

Construction will begin next April on the first of three new Arctic-Class ocean-going tugs at Foss Rainier Shipyard. Overseeing the program will be **Hap Richards**, who set up the company's highly successful Dolphin-Class harbor tug construction program

Cover

**New Engines for Piper Inness**

The service vessel *Piper Inness*, which carries crews and supplies to the Pacific Area Lightering Zone off Southern California, has four new Tier 3 engines that meet emission standards that will go into effect in 2013. The engines will push the 126-foot boat to a top speed of 20.5 knots.

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**A Dolphin for the River**

Foss built 10 Dolphin-class tugs on the Columbia River at Foss Rainier Shipyard, but none has ever been in service there, until now. The four-year-old *Patricia Ann* recently was transferred to the Foss Columbia-Snake River Division from sister company AMNAV on San Francisco Bay.

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**Model Racer**

Capt. **Jess Atkinson**, based on San Francisco Bay, took to radio-controlled model sailboat racing a number of years ago and is now a champion in two classes. Why model boats instead of real ones? "It's nice at the end of the day to pick it up and put it in my truck," he said.

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**Crane Fascination**

**John Tarabochia's** fascination with cranes began when he was a youngster in West Seattle. Today, he is the operator of the venerable *Foss 300* derrick, believed to be the last steam-powered crane on the U.S. West Coast.

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**Miniature Horse Champs**

**Brooklyn Ervin 7**, and her sister **Marissa 6**, are relative greenhorns in the world of miniature horses. But both daughters of Rainier Shipyard Administrative Assistant **Jennifer Ervin** have turned out to be champions in their sport.

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Fair Winds and Following Seas To Whit Olson, CSR Commercial Manager

The holiday season has me thinking about all the wonderful people we have here at Foss Maritime. You are the face and the strength of our company, and you are responsible for our business successes, our safety performance and the operational excellence for which we have become known throughout the maritime industry.

It is particularly bittersweet when someone who has been with the company for many years, who has been the cornerstone of the Always Ready slogan and who has represented the company and the industry to the highest mark decides to ring up "Finished With Engines."

**Whit Olson**, our Columbia Snake River Region commercial manager who retired at the end of September is such a person. (See story on Page 12.)

Whit Olson

His family has been in the maritime industry since the late 19th century, when Oliver J. Olson Co. operated a fleet of schooners that carried lumber from the Pacific Northwest to fuel the growth of California. The company converted to a tug-barge operation, and Whit Olson started his career in the family business, working on ocean tugs summers in the mid-1960s.

It is with profound thanks and appreciation that we wish Whit fair winds and following seas in all the years to come. You have left us with a legacy that we will endeavor to honor in all we do.

Happy Holidays,



Gary

President and Chief Operating Officer



Gary Faber



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## Foss International ATB on Trans-Pac Voyage After Extensive Refit at Shipyard in Singapore

One of the Mark V special operations boats rolls toward the clamshell opening on the bow of the ATB.

Foss International's *Thunder and Lightning*, one of two articulated tug-barge (ATB) vessels operated by the company, is back in service after an extensive overhaul at a shipyard in Singapore.

Following the re-fit at the Jurong Shipyard, the *Thunder and Lightning* headed for Subic Bay, Philippines, where it picked up four 82-foot-long Mark V, high-speed special operations boats. Three were being delivered to Norfolk, Va., for the U.S. military, and one to Fort Pierce, Fla.

Each of the Mark V vessels was on a trailer towed by a dedicated tractor. The cargo also included four cradles and a number of small containers. Arrival on the East Coast was expected in early December.

Jay Schram, who oversaw the loading operation in Subic Bay, said the biggest challenge was mooring the *Thunder and Lightning* perpendicular to the pier, which required an assist tug to position the ATB while stern anchors and dock lines were set.

The *Thunder and Lightning* and Foss



The Mark V boats, along with their tractors and trailers, are lashed in the covered area of the ATB.

International's other ATB, the *Strong Mariner*, feature covered barges with unique clamshell style openings that enable cargo to be ramped in from the bow.

The *Thunder and Lightning* had been laid up for more than a year before the drydocking and refit in Singapore. The work included overhauling the generators and main

engines, pulling the shafts and servicing the controllable-pitch propellers, as well as cleaning and painting.

The ATB also underwent its five-year inspection from the American Bureau of Shipping.



## NEW TUG CONSTRUCTION

*(Continued from the cover)*

**Jon Hie**, formerly a division manager for Kirby Corporation in the Hawaiian Islands, has been named director of shipyard operations. He will oversee commercial vessel repair and maintenance while also supporting the Foss tug and barge fleet.

Construction of the three, 132-foot Arctic-Class tugs comes in response to Foss' growing business in the booming oil and gas industry.

"Foss is entering a new construction phase that will emphasize safety, efficiency and the environment," said **Gary Faber**, President and COO of Foss Maritime. "Those are our customers' paramount concerns. They are at the core of Foss' corporate culture. It is why Foss is turning to an industry veteran like **Hap Richards** to focus exclusively on new build projects, while seasoned operations director **Jon Hie** maintains and grows our core repair business."

Richards said construction of the first Arctic-Class tug would begin after a 20-car ferry currently being built for the Washington State Department of Transportation is shipped to eastern Washington for final assembly.

As for the design of the new boats, Richards said, "They're still tweaking and fine tuning the machinery arrangements and that sort of thing, but they've pretty well solidified the package, and we're getting into the build strategy of it right now, so we



**Hap Richards**, left, has been promoted to the position of director of new construction, and **Jon Hie** is the new director of shipyard operations.

will be ready to go."

Foss is working with The Glostren Associates, a Seattle-based naval architecture firm, on the design of the tugs. **Dan Cole** of the Foss Engineering Department is the project manager.

The tugs will be built to ice-class standards, with reinforced bows, and heavy-duty Kort nozzles and propulsion systems. The first is scheduled to be completed in December 2014, with the second coming a year later and the third a year after that.

In preparation for the project, the yard is adding 11,000 square feet of construction space by building a 180-foot bulkhead 62 feet offshore along the west side of the property and filling behind it. The yard currently has a 40-person crew, and Richards anticipates adding five to seven for the ocean-boat construction.

"This is exciting, because there's a need for ocean boats, not just by Foss, so we could be building them for some time," Richards said. "And I think you're going to be seeing fishermen cut loose with new-builds as well."

Richards brings more than three decades of maritime experience to his position. Prior to joining Foss in 2003, he oversaw new construction projects at Whidbey Island-based Nichols Brothers Boat Builders, where he served on the company's board of directors.

Hie is a 1990 graduate of the California Maritime Academy, with a degree in marine engineering. He has been employed both on-shore and shipboard in a variety of positions on the East Coast, the Gulf Coast and the Caribbean.

## HEADED FOR NIKISKI

*Foss successfully barged a 184,000-pound reactor vessel recently from Seattle to Nikiski, Alaska, where it was to be installed in a refinery. The cylindrical vessel, which measured 56 feet long with a maximum diameter of 12 feet, was loaded by transporter onto the deck barge AMS 250 at Terminal 25 in Seattle, with SSA Marine as the stevedoring contractor. Foss' customer on the job was Carlile Transportation. Foss Pacific Northwest Port Captain **Steve Kimmel** was the project loading supervisor and Director of Regional Towing **Tim Beyer** was the Foss representative in Nikiski. It was the maiden voyage for the barge, built at Gunderson Marine in Portland and under charter to Foss from Anderson Marine Services.*





## PAL Service Craft Passes Sea Trials After Installation of Tier 3 Engines

The *Piper Inness* goes back into the water after four new engines were installed at Marine Group Boat Works.

The *Piper Inness*, which carries personnel and supplies to the Pacific Area Lightering Zone (PAL) off the Coast of Southern California, successfully completed sea trials in early October following the installation of four new engines that meet Tier 3 emission standards.

Engine manufacturer Caterpillar used the conversion as a “test bed” to modify its Tier 2 Engines to Tier 3, an Environmental Protection Agency emission standard that will go into effect in 2013.

“The conversion went well,” said **Michael Comfort**, Foss port engineer for PAL and Southern California. “It was on track, on time and on budget.”

The new engines, at 1,450 horsepower each, push the 126-foot boat to a top speed of 20.5 knots and a cruising speed of 18.5 knots, just slightly higher than the engines they replaced. But Comfort said the new engines are more able to run at high RPMs for extended periods, which is important when making the 50-mile run from Long Beach to PAL.

Each engine weighed 1,200 pounds more than the old ones, so new stability and deadweight surveys were



A worker at Marine Group Boat Works in San Diego guides an engine through the deck of the *Piper Inness*.

required and a new ABS certificate was issued for the vessel.

Among the challenges in the project, according to Comfort, was the original design of the engine cooling system, which wasn't drawing in enough sea water.

“We had to build high-speed scoops to help bring in the raw water and force it up into the engines,” he said.



# Foss, Coast Guard, Team Up for Rescue Drill; Four Lifts Executed from Tug on S.F. Bay

The Foss San Francisco Bay Group and U.S. Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco joined forces for a helicopter drill in mid September with simulated rescue lifts from the tug *Keegan Foss*.

A Coast Guard rescue swimmer was lowered from the helicopter to the deck of the tug and went over the drill plan with the crew before they executed four lifts of a rescue basket, two while the tug was stationary and two while it was underway.

“This turned out to be an excellent training exercise, not only for Foss crews but also for the rescue team as well,” said Foss Bay Area Port Captain **Mike Harbarth**. “The rescue swimmer stated that this was their first opportunity to train with a commercial-type vessel, and they too also learned some valuable lessons.”

Harbarth added that the drill will lead to improved communications

between Foss and the local Coast Guard group and has helped Foss learn the capabilities of the helicopter, and “what needs to be done for a smooth transfer.”

Keegan crewmembers during the exercise were Deckhand **Robin Matsumoto**, Engineer **Lawrence Thomas**, and Captains **Paul Ritter** and **Tim Westman**. The helicopter crew was Lt. **Bradford Peterson**, commander, Lt. **Marshall Burtt**, co-pilot, Aviation Maintenance Technician **Daniel Gomez**, flight mechanic and hoist operator and Aviation Maintenance Technician **Erin Custer**, rescue swimmer.

**ALWAYS SAFE**



Guiding the rescue basket to the tug's deck in the photo are, from left, Engineer **Lawrence Thomas**, Coast Guard rescue swimmer **Erin Custer** and Deckhand **Robin Matsumoto**.



## HEADED NORTH

Jan Anderson

The *Lindsey Foss* headed north toward Bellingham on Oct. 20 after refueling in Seattle. Later that night the tug assisted a tanker out of the BP Cherry Point Refinery. The *Lindsey* and its brother, the *Garth Foss*, are enhanced tractor tugs, 138 feet long and delivering 8,000 horsepower with two Voith Schneider Cycloidal drives. They are mainly used for tanker escorts and assists on northern Puget Sound.



## 185-C3 RENEWAL

A Foss Shipyard welder created a shower of sparks recently while working on the drydocked barge Foss 185 C-3. Ship Repair Superintendent **Bill Fiamengo** said the barge was undergoing its routine ABS certificate renewal and maintenance. Work include shell plate inserts, spot sandblasting of the exterior hull and a full paint job.



## COLUMBIA FERRY TAKES SHAPE

Craftsmen at Foss Rainier Shipyard in mid-October worked on the frames of the midsection of the new Washington state ferry under construction at the Oregon facility. When finished next March, the hull of the 20-car ferry will be cut into three sections longitudinally and trucked to northeastern Washington, where construction will be completed. The ferry will carry cars over a rural route on the Columbia River.

# Award Marks 12 years of Service for Capt. Jim Daley

Capt. **Jim Daley**, director of operations for Foss Global Services, received a service award recently marking his completion of 12 years on the Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC).

The Committee is made up of maritime industry representatives and stakeholders and is charged with advising the secretary of transportation and the U.S. Coast Guard commandant on international, inland and coastal waterway navigation and towing safety. Most recently, the panel provided input for new regulations that call for mandatory inspections of towing vessels.

Daley joined Foss in January 2012 after 34 years at Crowley Maritime, where he sailed as vessel master, and shoreside as director of operations integrity with roles that included company security officer and



Capt. **Jim Daley**, center, with Cmdr. **Robert Smith**, Designated Federal Officer for TSAC, and TSAC Chairman **Tom McWhorter** of Maritime Services Group of Louisiana.

designated person ashore.

He served on various sub-committees during his tenure on TSAC and chaired the committee that dealt with

crew endurance issues. Among other important issues addressed by the TSAC during Daley's service was port security following the 9-11 attacks.



## SPILL DRILL IN PORTLAND

*Foss managers and emergency response contractors gathered in Portland recently for the Columbia Snake River Region's (CSR) annual oil spill drill. In this year's drill scenario, a valve failed while fuel was being pumped aboard the tug Pacific Escort, spilling 550 gallons into the river. Around the table, from left, were Foss Pacific Northwest General Manager **Leiv Lea**, **Bob Hyke** of NRC Environmental Services, Foss Manager of Contingency planning **Ross McDonald**, **Bob Janak** of NRC, Foss Director of Health and Safety **Al Rainsberger**, Foss CSR Port Capt. **Toby Jacobsen** and **Ernie Quesada** of Clean Rivers Cooperative.*

# Dolphin-Class Tug Returns to the Columbia River; Patricia Ann is 'Ideal' for the Tight Channels of the CSR

The Foss Columbia-Snake River (CSR) Region, which has yearned for a Dolphin Class tug since the first was delivered in 2004, is finally seeing its wish come true.

Dolphin No. 8, the four-year-old *Patricia Ann*, was transferred to Portland recently from Foss Sister Company AMNAV, based on San Francisco Bay.

**Mike Walker**, regional operations manager, said his captains and the river pilots tested Dolphin tugs and used them on ship jobs temporarily after they were built at the Foss Rainier Shipyard downriver from Portland.

“Unfortunately, none of them was ever destined for the Columbia River,” he said. “So it was quite a tease to my captains and the river pilots to get a quick taste of the awesome ability of the tugs just to have them depart for other locations...There wasn’t a week that went by where my crews and the river pilots didn’t ask, ‘When is CSR going to get a Dolphin.’”

Walker said the Dolphin’s small footprint (73 feet in length) and high power (5,080 horsepower), are ideal for the river with its narrow channels now dredged to 42 feet and traversed by grain ships that are getting bigger



The *Patricia Ann*, sports its new Foss paint job on the Willamette River in Portland. The St. Johns Bridge is in the background.

and require tugs with more bollard pull.

The *Patricia Ann*’s comfortable crew quarters also are a plus, “because having the crews live aboard allows us to operate the vessel more efficiently and

at the same time service our customers more efficiently.”

Walker added, “All of this equates to happy crews and satisfied customers.”

Tucker Tillman

## SAFETY ON THE AGENDA

The Columbia-Snake River Regional Safety Committee watched a video on confined-space safety at its quarterly meeting in September. Among other topics discussed at the meeting were towing shackles that were too big to handle easily, planned repairs on decks outside the Portland office and on-board life vest requirements. At the table are, from left, Director of Health and Safety **Al Rainsberger** and committee members **Alex Augustus**, **Randy Kotka**, **Tucker Tillman** and Chairman **Fred Snaza**.



# Maritime Artist Professes ‘Great Love’ for the Sea

A one-time merchant mariner, **Austin Dwyer** has what he describes as “a great love for the sea and boats.” Working out of Mukilteo, Wash., Dwyer has been painting maritime scenes for about 30 years, and two of his oils were winners in this year’s Foss Maritime calendar art contest,

including one that was selected for the holiday card.

“Preparing for a Winter Tow,” on the 2012 Foss holiday card, depicts two snow-covered Foss tugs at the dock with a cityscape in the background. “Ready When You Are, Eric,” the January painting, features two tugs

preparing to move a large cargo ship through a foggy waterway.

Dwyer was one of 20 artists who submitted 29 paintings in this year’s contest. All of the artists are from the state of Washington.

Dwyer was born in County Tipperary, Ireland, and after a brief



**January**, Austin Dwyer, *Ready When You Are, Eric*



**February**, Michael Corcoran, *Bering Strait Assist*



**March**, Giorgina Candelaria Wells, *Assistance in San Francisco Bay*



**April**, Eugene Erickson, *Tug O’My Heart*



**May**, J.H. Christensen, *High-Tech Service*



**June**, Michael Grygiel, *Craig Foss*

stint in the British Merchant Marine, his travels took him to the United States and he joined the U.S. Air Force. He went to art school in Seattle before co-founding the Cohen-Dwyer Advertising and Marketing Agency, from which he retired in 2005.

He is a fellow and past president of the Puget Sound Group of Northwest Painters and is a board member and

signature member of the American Society of Marine Artists.

Dwyer likes to paint tugs, and Foss tugs in particular, favoring the older, classic designs as opposed to the newer tractor tugs.

“I like smoke and funnels and a wheel up front instead of a joy stick,” he said. “I’m a bit of a romantic soul.”



Austin Dwyer



July, James Williamson, *Leo Foss Ship Assist – Boston Harbor*



August, Marshall Lysander Johnson, *South From Cherry Point*



September, James Williamson, *Lucy Foss – Tanker Support*



October, Ron Snowden, *Foss Hybrid Tug Carolyn Dorothy Assisting Tanker*



November, David F. King, *Inbound at Dusk*



December, Robert Tandeci, *Beauty and the Tug*

# Over 40 Years in Portland, One thing Hasn't Changed: Whit Olson's Strong Bonds to the Maritime Community

**Whit Olson** has fond memories of his early days in Portland, including “that gal named Joy” who lived at the mouth of the Willamette River and phoned the tugboat companies to alert them when the ships went by on their way to the docks.

“She had a happy voice,” Olson said recently. “She just sat by the window and she knew all the pilots and she loved doing it.”

Today, 40 years later, tug dispatchers have computers to tell them exactly when the ships will arrive. And Olson notes that the ships are much bigger, and much of the maritime activity in the Portland area has migrated down to the lower Willamette and onto the Columbia River, pressed out by residential development.

Change has also been the rule for Olson, who started in Portland with Willamette Tug and Barge (becoming president), which was sold to Knappton Towboat Co., renamed Brix Maritime, which Foss purchased in 1993.

One thing that hasn't changed is the thing that Olson likes the most about the industry, the strong relationships he's developed with agents, ship owners and the grain export and maritime communities.

“Mostly, I enjoy the people,” he said.

“I like getting out with them—you get to know them very well and it's like going out with friends, not customers.”

Olson retired as commercial manager for the Columbia-Snake River region on Sept. 30, a little more than a week after Foss staged a retirement party for him at the Portland home dock. Widely respected in the industry, he received the latest of his many accolades at the party—a distinguished service award from the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. He is a past board member and president of the group.

Olson's family has been in the maritime industry since the late 19th century, when Oliver J. Olson Co. operated a fleet of schooners that carried lumber from the Pacific Northwest to fuel the growth of California. The company converted to a tug-barge operation, and Whit Olson started his career in the family business, working on ocean tugs summers in the mid-1960s.

He managed the company's Los Angeles operations and later was vice president of its ocean towing business before moving to the Bay Area and working as a vice president for Murphy Pacific, which



**Whit Olson**, right, was introduced by Foss Commercial Director **Jeff Horst** at the Industry Appreciation Barbecue in Portland in September. The gathering also served as a retirement party for Olson.

provided ship assists there. He moved to Portland and joined Willamette Tug and barge in 1972.

His son, also named **Whit**, is a Foss Captain in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In retirement, the elder Olson will be living in Phoenix, where his wife, **Sue**, is an elementary school teacher and where they already have a home. He expects to play plenty of golf, and go on bike rides and walks.

“I've loved being around the water, even though we'll be living in Phoenix,” he said. “We love the sunshine and the heat and the drier weather, too.”

## THIRTEEN-YEAR FOSS VETERAN IS NEW COMMERCIAL MANAGER IN PORTLAND

**Matt Brown**, a California Maritime Academy graduate and a 13-year veteran of Foss, is the new commercial manager for the Columbia-Snake River Region.

Brown, who succeeds the retiring Whit Olson, moves to the Portland office from Seattle, where he was Pacific Northwest account manager for Foss.

“Probably the strongest point in selling Foss to our customers is the broad coverage we offer,” Brown said. “We have service in all major West Coast ports, plus Boston, and we have sister companies

in both Alaska and Hawaii. If a customer doing business in multiple ports wants one invoice and one point of contact, they can have that.”

The Foss safety culture also is a strong selling point, “and we have numbers to back that up,” Brown said, noting that Foss also has the kind of talented and experienced vessel crews and dispatchers that customers expect.

Brown, who spent most of his childhood in Seattle, worked for a shipping agency in Portland briefly after graduation

from Cal Maritime in 1995. He then moved to Seattle and worked for a company moving ocean freight between Puget Sound and the Russian Far East before joining Foss in 1999.

In his spare time, Brown likes to ski, hike and play the guitar, and, he notes, “I'm trying to learn a little golf.”



**Matt Brown**

## APPRECIATING THE INDUSTRY

*Rikki Hughes of Best Catering serves up a hot dog, in the photo above, for Barney Adler, a ship visitor with the Fort Vancouver Seafarers Center, at the Industry Appreciation Barbecue at Foss Portland headquarters on Sept 19. Jan Moreno, who volunteers for the center, is in the background. Customers, vendors and friends of Foss attended the gathering, which also served as a retirement party for Columbia-Snake River Commercial Manager Whit Olson. (See story on page 12.) In the photo below, the guests chow down under cover.*



## BEACH CLEANUP BOOTY

*San Francisco Bay Area employees cleaned up the beach around the Foss Richmond facility on Sept. 14, filling a dumpster with booty including cans, bottles, an old tire, a tire rim, and big pieces of Styrofoam from an old floating dock. Among the beach cleaners were, from left, Laura Rosenberg, Mike Erwin, Bob Gregory, Matt Barrett, Nathan Shellhorn, Harold Presswood, Greg Poettgen, Lee Robles, Dan Eddleston, Paul Ritter, Jess Atkinson, Raymond Macedo, Tim Westman, and Mike Harbarth (kneeling). The Foss effort coincided with California Coastal Cleanup Day, in which thousands of volunteers helped beautify the state's beaches.*



# Bay Captain Enjoys ‘Thrill of Competition’ in Model Racing

When Capt. **Jess Atkinson** isn't running tugs for Foss on San Francisco Bay, you're likely to find him at the helm of another kind of vessel, a radio-controlled model racing sailboat.

Atkinson, who builds his own model boats and makes their sails, is one of the leaders in the sport. At a regatta in San Diego in early August, he repeated a 2009 performance by winning the national championships in two classes and taking third in another.

He also is on the board of North Bay RC Sailing Club, Commodore of the Alameda Model Yacht Club and National class secretary of the Odom Class, whose championship was one of the two he won in San Diego.

"I love the thrill of the competition and the sport, plus I'm a bit of a hobby enthusiast," Atkinson said. "Also, some of it is the low expense,

compared to big boat sailing, and some of it is the challenge of hand-eye coordination."

Atkinson grew up sailing dinghies and crewed on a number of larger keelboats over the years. He went to California Maritime Academy, graduating in 1980 and immediately getting into the towboat industry.

He worked for a number of companies and landed with Foss in 1998, currently serving as captain of the tug *Point Vicente*.

Atkinson got into model racing a number of years ago when an aging uncle gave him and his brother each a couple of boats. Then he started building them, and having worked in sail lofts when he was a kid, began cutting his own sails, "because I wanted better sails than I could buy." He also sells sails and accessories from a website.

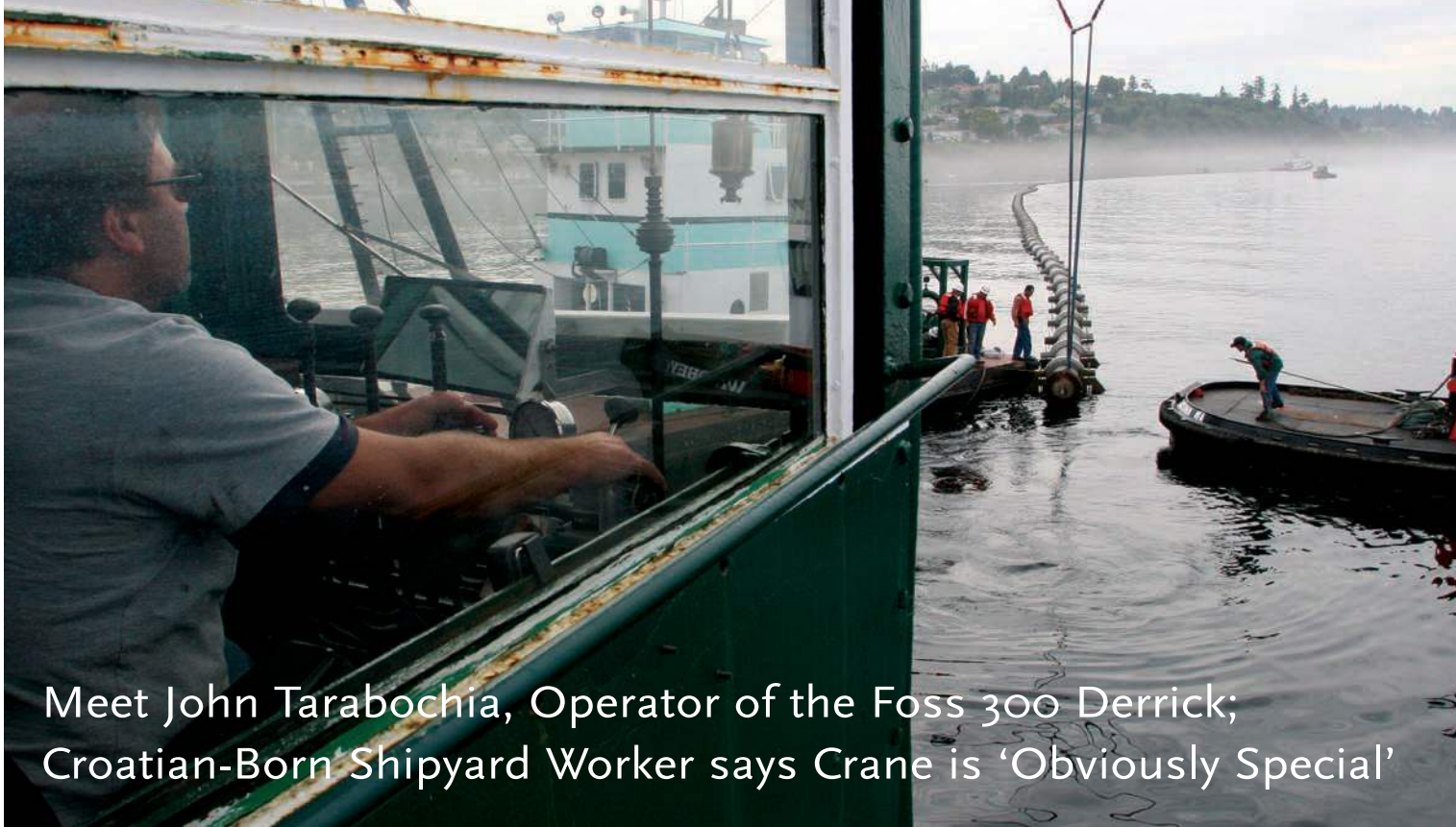
Model racers use *The Racing Rules of Sailing*, the same ones that big boats go by, with a few exceptions. The starting sequences and races are much shorter than bigger boats sail, with an entire race lasting just 15 to 20 minutes. Sailors generally compete in eight to 16 races a day

The on-course action is very fast, and the mark roundings tend to be dicey, with often-big fleets of model boats converging very quickly. In San Diego, 38 boats competed in the Odom Fleet, 15 in the Wheeler Class (which Atkinson also won), and 20 in the Soling Class (in which he placed third.)

"The mental skills, the sailing skills that are involved in big boat sailing are all there," Atkinson said. "I do like sailing the real things, too, but it's nice at the end of the day to pick it up and put it in my truck."

Capt. **Jess Atkinson** with an International One Meter model sloop. He is a former national champion in the class and is currently national champion in two other classes.





## Meet John Tarabochia, Operator of the Foss 300 Derrick; Croatian-Born Shipyard Worker says Crane is ‘Obviously Special’

John Tarabochia at the controls of the Foss 300 derrick.

John Tarabochia has always been fascinated with cranes.

When he was a teenager, he and a friend built one—complete with a three-foot boom, a cab and a hand crank—to raise and lower the grill on the Tarabochia family’s backyard barbecue in West Seattle.

As the son of a Lockheed Shipyard carpenter, Tarabochia was taken by the power of the cranes, the size and bulk of the loads they hoisted, and by the way the rest of the world seemed to stop and watch when a whistle signaled the start of a big lift.

“It was all pretty amazing to me,” he said.

Today and for the last 10 years, Tarabochia has been the operator of the venerable Foss 300 steam derrick, which at 70 years old is believed to be the last steam-powered floating crane on the West Coast. He recently observed his 25th anniversary with Foss, having joined the company in 1986.

The Tarabochia family immigrated to the United States from Croatia in 1962, when John Tarabochia was just 2 years old. After a short time in the

New York-New Jersey area, they followed family members to the Seattle area, where many worked as fishermen or longshoremen.

“At an early age, I got to know diesel engines, fishing, splicing, net mending and running small deck cranes,” said Tarabochia. While at Lockheed, he became a journeyman rigger, and he worked briefly at Lake Union Drydock before joining Foss Shipyard.

He regularly worked with the Foss 300 in his early days with the company and became its fireman/deck engineer in 2000, replacing Steve Imhoff. In 2002, he took over as operator from the retiring Tom Skogs.

“I had run other, hydraulic, cranes; I enjoyed that and I had it in me,” he said. “But the Foss 300 is a different animal.”

Foss Terminal Manager Spencer O’Grady, Tarabochia’s boss, calls the crane operator’s work “habitually impeccable.”

“He’s a self driven motivator for the company, giving his all every hour worked,” O’Grady said. “What all could be said in terms of dedication

would fill pages.”

The derrick was built in 1943 in Stockton, Calif., for the U.S. Army. Foss purchased it after World War II and has used it ever since on Puget Sound and in Alaska.

With a capacity of 75 tons it is nowhere near the heftiest crane in the region, but it’s just the right size for launching boats along the Lake Washington Ship canal, helping to decommission ships at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and loading cargo ships.

Unlike today’s modern hydraulic cranes, Tarabochia says everything is live on the Foss 300, which means the boom and both hooks can free fall if the dogs (safety locks) are out or the friction clutches disengaged.

Tarabochia and Engineer Jim Mossman maintain the crane meticulously, and take great pride in its condition.

“It’s obviously special—it’s a classic; it’s fast, it’s powerful and it works well, but it requires a lot of upkeep,” Tarabochia said. “If you treat it right, it will treat you right.”

# Ervin Girls Gallop to Top of Miniature Horse World; Jennifer's Two Daughters 'Just Think it's Fun'

After less than a year in their saddles, the Ervin girls are making quite the names for themselves in the world of miniature horses.

**Brooklyn**, 7, is ranked number-one in the world in the showmanship category for girls her age and younger, and **Marissa**, 6, placed in the top five overall for her age group in the regional finals this summer.

"They just think it's fun," says their mother, **Jennifer Ervin**, administrative assistant at Foss Rainier Shipyard in Oregon. "And as for me, I love everything about it."

While the girls are relative greenhorns when it comes to miniatures, owning and training horses is nothing new for the Ervins. They live on a 21-acre farm in Rainier, and Jennifer, who has three mounts of her own, has been into horses for her whole life.

Their interest in miniatures, which cannot exceed 34 inches in height at the withers, started when Jennifer's mother, **Margaret**, bought one because she thought it would be easier to handle than a full-size horse. Her enthusiasm spread to Jennifer's daughters and two other granddaughters as well.

The American Miniature Horse Association, which coordinates the shows, claims 11,000 members with nearly 185,000 horses in 38 countries.

Brooklyn and Marissa got their miniatures late in 2011, just four months before the competitive season began, and started learning to train and groom them. Beginning in April, they competed in five shows in Oregon and one in Washington.

To be successful, participants



**Brooklyn Ervin**, right, and her sister **Marissa**, with their miniature horses.

have to jump their horses, take them through obstacle courses, drive them with a cart, and compete in showmanship, which is Brooklyn's specialty.

"Basically, in showmanship they walk the horse out of line to the judge, set them up and make their front and back feet square, show that they can handle the horse and that it's properly groomed, and then trot back into line with the others," Jennifer said.

Both girls "did really great" in the shows, according to Jennifer, pulling numerous first- and second-

place ribbons. Brooklyn's world ranking is based on her cumulative points in all six shows.

At the year-end meeting of the Northwest Miniature Horse association, each girl will receive two Grand Champion age-group awards and Brooklyn also will receive a Reserve Champion award.

"It's so exciting for me to teach my girls something that I've been doing all my life and take them to these shows, I am so very proud of both of them" Jennifer said. "I just love it."



**Jennifer Ervin**



# Foss Meets Annual Red Dog Goals In Spite of Late Start, Horrible Weather

The Sandra Foss tows the barge Noatak after lightening ore to the bulk carrier Federal Spey.

Marlin Schoonmaker

In spite of the worst weather in 23 years at the Red Dog Mine in the Alaskan arctic, the 2012 Foss team exceeded its lightening goals and set a record for productivity on days when the wind and seas were calm enough to enable safe operations.

“The saving grace up north was the tug and barge crews who, when the weather permitted, drove hard,” said **Keith Spearman**, Red Dog Manager. “It was truly an impressive thing to see these guys come through with a grueling resolve to succeed no matter what was thrown in their way.”

Conditions were tough from the beginning. Heavy ice delayed the start of lightening until July 5. Bad weather continued to dog the

operation, forcing suspension of work for 44 days out of a 101-day shipping season, more lost time than in any previous year.

“A season that started bad never really improved,” Spearman said.

The team, however, moved 1.23 million tons of ore from the mine to 23 ships, which exceeded the scheduled tonnage. Operations concluded on Oct. 19, after which the four Foss tugs and two specialized lightening barges headed back to Seattle.

**Mark Smith**, superintendent of the mine and port, said the season was “very challenging,” particularly because of the late start due to the persistent ice pack and the adverse

weather throughout July and August.

But as a result of the efforts of Teck employees, Foss and other contractors, Smith pronounced 2012 “another successful shipping season completed at Red Dog.”

Spearman said, “All told, it was a tough but great year.” He added:

“We had equipment that was well prepared by our shipyard that performed with incredibly minimal downtime, as well as the preparations and efforts giving support by the many individuals who, though not present at Red Dog enable success there. A lot of people doing their jobs well year round made it possible to hit it hard in what proved a much-too-short shipping season for comfort.”

## BAY BRIDGE ‘TRAVELERS’

*Foss towed five mobile maintenance scaffolds for the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge from Long Beach to Oakland in late October. Called “travelers,” the scaffolds are moving maintenance platforms that will be suspended from tracks underneath the bridge. The largest is 63,190 pounds and the smallest (to be under a bike path) is 12,480 pounds. The builder was Westmont Industries of Santa Fe Springs, Calif. Foss Director of Regional Towing **Tim Beyer** was the project manager. **Capt. Mark Groshans** was the Foss barge load superintendent and Long Beach Port **Capt. Paul Hendriks** supported the barge load operations.*





## GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES \$359,000 FOR CHARITY

Two hundred and fifty-six golfers from around the United States and Canada contributed \$359,000 to charity at the 13th Annual Towboat Invitational Tournament at The Golf Club at Newcastle east of Seattle. The tournament is sponsored by Foss Maritime, Seattle-based Harley Marine and Sause Bros., based in Coos Bay, Ore. Proceeds went to pancreatic cancer research at Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle and to the Boys and Girls Club of Southwestern Oregon. In the photo, from left, are: **Dick Lauer** and **Julie Woodman**, Sause Brothers, **Denise Gould**, Boys and Girls Club of Southwestern Oregon, **Colleen Liman**, and **Jeff Horst**, Foss, **Stephanie Gullickson** and **Keith Barnes**, Harley Marine, **Jeanne Jachim**, **Dr. Vincent Picozzi** and **Dr. Roger Lindeman**, Virginia Mason, **Steve Scalzo**, Foss Marine Holdings, and Scalzo's daughters **Alicia Wilmoth** and **Annemarie Scalzo**.



## FLOTILLA ON THE LAKE

These five radio-controlled models of Foss tugs were among 85 from up and down the West Coast that participated in this year's Foss Cup competition Aug. 18 at Downtown Park in Bellevue, Wash. For reference, the model of the Lindsey Foss in the foreground is 46 inches long. The other tugs are, from left, the Betsy L, Morgan Foss, Henry Foss and another model of the Lindsey. The winner of this year's competition, which requires participants to dock model ships and display other operational skills, was **Troy Waters** of Los Angeles.

## ANDREW IN MUKILTEO

The Andrew Foss and barge Port Angeles were caught recently off the shores of Mukilteo, Wash., in this photo supplied by Bob Beegle of Marcon International. The Andrew is 107 feet long and is powered by two Voith Schneider cycloidal drives delivering 4,000 horsepower. The Andrew and its brother, the Arthur Foss, were built in 1982 at Tacoma Boatbuilding.



## PEOPLE NEWS

### Charles Davis was a Deckhand, Eagle Scout and Avid Outdoorsman



Charles Davis

Charles “Chuck” Davis, a former Foss deckhand and avid outdoorsman, died July 25 two months after being diagnosed with cancer. Mr. Davis was 57.

Born in Everett, Mr. Davis went to Cascade High School, where he played in a band while being active in scouting and rising to the rank of Eagle Scout. He joined Foss Environmental Services in the early 1980s and then worked on Puget Sound tugs until 2007.

“With Chuck, it was fly fishing and hunting,” said his widow, **Carol**, noting that he was a member of the Washington State Steelhead Club. “He loved the outdoors and Puget Sound and working for Foss. He liked all the people and he loved going to work.”

The Davis home is in Stanwood, Wash. In addition to his widow, Mr. Davis is survived by three sisters.

#### NEW EMPLOYEES

**Erika Weber**  
Project Manager

**Giles Ogden**  
Estimator, New Construction

**Jon Hie**  
Director of Shipyard Operations

**Matthew Baker**  
Purchase Order Desk

**Melinda Murrill**  
Project Controls Coordinator

**Michael Minnig**  
Senior Naval Architect

**Michael Stone**  
Regional Operations Manager,  
Pacific Northwest

**Myola Martinez**  
Manager, Contingency Planning

#### PROMOTIONS

**Hap Richards**  
Foss Shipyard Production Manager to  
Director of New Construction

**Ron Costin**  
Southern California Tankbarge  
Manager to Senior Tank Barge  
Operations Manager

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Jan Anderson

**THE POWER OF THE PACIFIC STAR** *The Foss tug Pacific Star powered south through Puget Sound recently following a ship assist in Port Angeles. The 98-foot tug was built in 2008 at J.M. Martinac Shipbuilding in Tacoma. It is powered by two azimuthing stern drives with 360-degree rotation and is rated at 6,610 horsepower. In addition to ship assists, the Pacific Star performs both tows and tanker escorts.*