



MarineNews Yearbook

Tug, Towboat & Barge • by Raina Clark

2010

In the tug, tow and barge market, both Donjon Marine Co. and Mobro Marine seemed to agree that diversification is a powerful asset when dealing with turbulent economic times. Donjon was originally founded to provide marine salvage and wreck removal but has continued to branch out to related marine fields such as marine transportation, dredging, heavy lift stevedoring, demolition, scrap metal recycling and, most recently shipbuilding, when it added Donjon Shipbuilding LLC, in Erie, Pa.

John A Witte, Jr., Donjon's Executive Vice President, said "Donjon's business model has always been based upon providing professional but related services so that if one division is slow, one of the others can pick up the slack. To date, this approach has proven to be successful."

He said that "as a result of our diversity, 2010 has been a good year. While all of our divisions had their slow periods, overall, Donjon met our projections." Witte said the company remains optimistic about 2011 and will continue to rely on its flexibility and range of related marine services. "With the addition of Donjon Shipbuilding, Donjon is hopeful to take advantage of the repair and new construction needs of the Great Lakes marine community. While slow over the last few years, all indications are that the Great Lakes marine needs are beginning to pickup." Mobro Marine, Inc. is a marine equipment company serving mainly U.S. contractors



Donjon dredging operations.

from the Southeast and Gulf Coast regions. These mainly consist of bridge builders, pile drivers and U.S. contractors working abroad and in the Caribbean.

Mobro Marine President John Rowland said "Business has steady-

Mobro Marine's tugs, the American and the El Puma Grande prepare to tow a shadow boat for its trip to the Miami Boat Show (a shadow boat shadows the main yacht).





Photo courtesy Donjon Marine Co.

Donjon heavy lift operations.

ly slowed down in the 2010 market, especially in our crane rental department.” However, he said his tugs and barges have maintained steady work and he foresees an increase in business in all aspects of the company. Rowland pointed to emerging markets in the Caribbean and opportunities in port expansions and construction. He said there is an increasing need for expansions of docks and piers to accommodate larger ships for both the cruise industry and foreign trade.

Regarding legislative issues that will impact the market, Witte said “The implementations of the pending modifications to OPA-90 will have a significant impact not only on our salvage activities but the marine community as a whole. ...We believe that the marine towing industry will also face change as a result of increased manning oversight and equipment inspection requirements.” **MN**