

LeBeouf Bros. Towing Honors Gonsoulin, Senner



The mvs. Dickie Gonsoulin and Karl Senner were christened on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway September 14.

—photos by Frank McCormack and Maida Verret

BY FRANK MCCORMACK

LeBeouf Bros. Towing christened two new towboats September 14 in a ceremony held along the banks of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway near Houma, La. The two vessels were named for two stalwarts of the industry—Dickie Gonsoulin, chief executive officer of LeBeouf Bros. Towing, and the late Karl Senner, the founder of Karl Senner Inc., who introduced North America to Reintjes gearboxes.

The relationship between Karl Senner Inc. and LeBeouf Bros. Towing goes back to 1967, when LeBeouf outfitted its mv. Marie R. with a Reintjes gearbox from Karl Senner. It was the first Reintjes gearbox sold in the United States.

That original gearbox was on display alongside the two new towboats at the christening ceremony, which was held at the home of LeBeouf Towing's president, Jon Gonsoulin, son of Dickie Gonsoulin.

Dickie Gonsoulin opened the christening ceremony alongside his grandson and two granddaughters, who led the crowd in an invocation and the pledge of allegiance. He then recognized the crew of the mv. Karl Senner and introduced Ralph Senner, son of Karl Senner. Ralph Senner has been at the helm of the company since 2012, when his brother Mike Senner retired.

Ralph Senner focused on the legacy of hard work and determination that his father lived.

"The first thing I'd like to say to everyone is [to express] the gratitude the Senner family has for the Gonsoulin for this dedication of the motor vessel Karl Senner in honor of our father," Ralph Senner said. "I can't express the words we feel inside about having this honor for our father who, as a lot of people know, came over and sacrificed a lot."

SEE *LEBEOUF BROS.* PAGE 8



Ralph Senner helps his mother, Gerda, christen the mv. Karl Senner.



Richard Gonsoulin, son of LeBeouf Bros. president Jon Gonsoulin, crashes a bottle of champagne against the mv. Dickie Gonsoulin, named for his grandfather.

LeBeouf Bros.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

“They came over with nothing,” he added. “They didn’t speak the language, and they had debt. Only in America could someone come over here, start a business and be successful.”

Karl Senner was born in Germany in 1931 and immigrated to the United States in 1952.

“My parents every day prayed and were happy they were living here in the United States,” Ralph Senner said, “They had the right to vote and the right to express themselves that they didn’t have growing up.”

Ralph Senner particularly thanked his mother, Gerda, who was present for the ceremony.

Jon Gonsoulin then took the stage to introduce the mv. Dickie Gonsoulin’s crew and tell the story behind naming the vessel after his father.

“I told Mike [Senner] that I knew Dickie would be opposed to the idea of having a boat named after him. I suggested to Mike that, since LeBeouf had been such a longtime customer of Karl Senner, perhaps they could make a special deal on the gearboxes [on both boats]. If that were the case, there’d be no way dad could say no,” Jon Gonsoulin recalled. “Indeed, Karl Senner Inc. made LeBeouf Towing that special deal.”

Jon Gonsoulin said he had originally wanted to surprise Dickie Gonsoulin with the news of naming a vessel after him, but he knew it would be impossible to keep him in the dark.



—photo courtesy of Chris Senner

This photo, taken at the Reintjes factory in Germany in the 1970s, shows Karl Senner (center, with coat over his arm) and Dickie Gonsoulin (to right of Senner in photo)—namesakes of the two vessels christened by LeBeouf Bros. Towing. The woman to the left of Senner in the photo is his wife Gerda.

“When Dickie was told about naming the vessel after Mr. Karl Senner, he thought it was a great idea. And when he

was told the second vessel was going to be named after him, the response was completely opposite,” Jon Gonsoulin said.

“Dickie did not want a boat named after him, and that was that.”

But then Jon Gonsoulin told his father

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The crew of the Dickie Gonsoulin.

about the deal Karl Senner Inc. had given LeBeouf Towing on the ships' gearboxes.

"He paused and responded, 'Well, I can be bought,'" Jon Gonsoulin said to much applause.

"Mike, Ralph and I are proud to honor our fathers, our mentors, our friends with these two vessels—and what a tribute to these two men, Karl and Dickie," Jon Gonsoulin said.

Both the mvs. Karl Senner and Dickie Gonsoulin were designed by Entech & Associates and built at Bourg Dry Dock, LeBeouf Towing's shipyard. The mv. Dickie Gonsoulin was delivered for service in September, while the mv. Karl Senner has been in service since July.

Many specifications are identical for both vessels. Both measure 95 feet in length with a 34-foot beam and a maximum draft of nine feet. Both vessels offer accommodations for a crew of seven. Electronics and navigation equipment in-

cludes 2260 ATS Koden radars, Icom 504 radios and Furuno GPS. Tankage capacity for both vessels is 37,006 gallons of fuel, 22,472 gallons of potable water, 670 gallons of lube oil and 670 gallons of gear oil.

Both vessels cruise at six knots.

The Karl Senner gets its 2,600 hp. from twin Mitsubishi S12R-Y2-MPTX engines, which turn five-blade stainless steel Kahlenberg 80- by 65-inch propellers through Reintjes WAF665 gears from Karl Senner Inc. with a 5.950:1 reduction ratio. Ship's service power is provided by 6.8-liter John Deere 6068T FM 76 generators, delivering 99 kw. The steering system is a modified Eaton 25V14A 1A22R.

The mv. Dickie Gonsoulin, on the other hand, is powered by twin Caterpillar 3512C tier 3 engines, which provide a total of 2,800 hp. They turn five-blade Hung Shen propellers, 84 by 65 inches, through Reintjes WAF665 gears at a 5.950:1 ratio.

The steering system is Eaton 25V14A



Crew of the Karl Senner.

1A22R, and the ship's service power comes from Cummins 6BTA 5.9DM generators, delivering 85 kw.

"These two vessels bring the LeBeouf fleet to 41 vessels, with two sister ships currently under construction," Jon Gonsoulin said.

He added that the barge attached to the mv. Karl Senner during the christening, named the Gonsoulin 536, was the 36th tank barge constructed at the company's Bourg Dry Dock shipyard. The barge measures 297 by 54 by 12 feet and has a capacity of 30,000 barrels.

"The Gonsoulin 536 brings the LeBeouf fleet to 76 tank barges," Jon Gonsoulin said.

Following Jon Gonsoulin's presentation, members of the LeBeouf Towing of-

ice staff took to the stage to read a poem and an essay dedicated to Dickie Gonsoulin. The Rev. Josh Rodrigue, rector of St. Francis de Sales Church in Houma, then offered a prayer for the vessels and crew.

To officially christen the two vessels, the crowd—a couple hundred strong—gathered near the mvs. Karl Senner and Dickie Gonsoulin. Gerda Senner broke a bottle of champagne over the hull to officially christen the mv. Karl Senner for service, while Richard Gonsoulin, Jon Gonsoulin's son, crashed a bottle of champagne over the hull of the vessel named for his grandfather.

Note: For more pictures from the christening, see the WJ Photo Page on the inside back cover.

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WJ Photo Page: *LeBeouf Honors Two Industry Leaders*

PHOTOS BY FRANK MCCORMACK
AND MAIDA VERRET



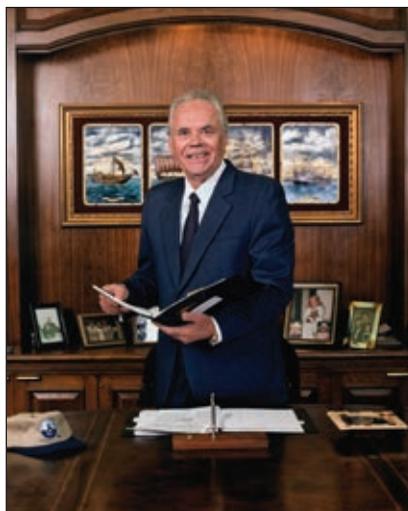
Richard Gonsoulin leads guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.



Chris Senner and Bobby Barthel.



The Senner family looks on as Jon Gonsoulin, president of LeBeouf Bros., speaks about the longtime relationship between the two families.



Above: The late Karl Senner. Right: First Reintjes gearbox sold in the U.S., on display at ceremony.



From left, Jon Gonsoulin, Ralph Senner, Capt. Rodney Robichaux (rear), Dickie Gonsoulin, Gerda Senner and Mike Senner.



Site of christening ceremony.



Mv. Karl Senner Capt. Rodney Robichaux and mv. Dickie Gonsoulin Capt. Thomas Bonner.



PROPELLING

EXCELLENCE

M/V Dickie Gonsoulin:

KARL SENNER, LLC

supplied two (2) WAF 665 Reintjes Gearboxes with a 5.950:1 reduction ratio

Owner:

LeBeouf Bros. Towing, LLC

Builder:

Bourg Dry Dock

M/V Karl Senner:

KARL SENNER, LLC

supplied two (2) WAF 665 Reverse Reduction Gearboxes with a 5.950:1 reduction ratio

Owner:

LeBeouf Bros. Towing, LLC

Builder:

Bourg Dry Dock

“Thank you,
LeBeouf Bros. Towing for
naming this vessel in
honor of Karl Senner.”
- Ralph Senner



Dickie Gonsoulin & Karl Senner
Circa 1970 at Reintjes Factory in Hamelin, Germany

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Pitch
Propellers and
Bowthrusters



Marine
Transmissions



Azimuth
Thrusters



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