

# CURRICULUM VITAE of ROBERT L GARDNER

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## OVERVIEW



- Currently President/CEO/Chairman of Trans Barge, Inc. (d/b/a Barge America), President/CEO of Barge America Tracing, LLC. Consultant for DeMaetto Monness and Coleman Research Group. Expert witness for numerous maritime law firms.
- Over 55 years' experience, from deck to the boardroom, in virtually every capacity within the inland barge and towing industry.
- Defined as a “change agent”, “innovator”, “transaction specialist” and “leader” at all levels in an organization. Long known as a “troubleshooter”, the result of three significant corporate turnarounds, Alter Barge Line (1970-1979), Flowers Transportation, Inc., (1979-1981) and ContiCarriers and Terminals, Inc. (“CCT”), (1981-1996).

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- As President-General Manager of CCT, in 1996 negotiated and concluded the sale of CCT's assets to American Commercial Lines, LLC, including an unprecedented long-term affreightment contract with Continental Grain valued in excess of \$1.4 billion (1996 dollars).
- With the financial sponsorship of Morgan Stanley Capital Partners, LP, Robert, through his company BOSH America, LLC, was a leading candidate in 2003 for the acquisition of American Commercial Lines LLC, while they were in bankruptcy in the Federal Bankruptcy Court in New Albany Indiana. At the time, American Commercial was the largest integrated marine transportation and related services, barge, towboat and vessel construction business in the United States. They also had operations on the Oronoco River in Venezuela, the Parana River in Argentina and on the Higuamo River in the Dominican Republic. BOSH's efforts were thwarted only by Morgan Stanley's abrupt decision to withdraw from the private equity space.
- Chosen by ConAgra Foods, Inc., in 2003 to manage the orderly liquidation of 424 barges and 2 towboats, the result of American Commercial Lines LLC's rejection of contracts through the Federal Bankruptcy court in New Albany, Indiana.
- The Yellowhammer companies of Mobile, Alabama chose Barge America to liquidate all assets and permanently wind up its seven businesses under a consulting agreement from September 2006 through February 2011.
- In June 2011, partnered with Renewable Biosystems, LLC ([www.rbl.us.com](http://www.rbl.us.com)) to form Fuel-From-Waste, LLC (“FFW”) and installed a waste food oil extraction plant to produce feedstock for the renewable fuels industry.
- In September 2014 formed Barge America Tracing, LLC, a single purpose Delaware company, for the purpose of building out a “National U.S. Inland and Coastal Waterways Digital Barge & Cargo Tracing Communications Network”.

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## EDUCATION

- Attended Vanderbilt University Engineering School, later graduating from Western Kentucky University with multiple degrees in Industrial Technology/Business and Mathematics/Physics.

## ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

- Founder, Owner, President and CEO of Trans Barge, Inc., (d/b/a Barge America), a marine equipment operating, leasing and consulting company for the Americas.
- Founder, Owner, President and CEO of Barge America Tracing, LLC, a national U.S. Trade Secret methodology of modernizing the Inland Ports and Waterways Infrastructure of the United States
- Founder, President – CEO of Barge America LLC, a joint venture with Joseph Transportation Services, Inc., in which Gardner owned 80 pct. It was a marine equipment leasing and operating company on the inland waterways of the United States. Purchased Joseph's interest in Barge America LLC in September 2000 and rolled the assets into Trans Barge, Inc., thereafter doing business as Barge America.
- From 1996 to 1999 Gardner served as V.P. Special Projects-Business Development for American Commercial Barge Lines, LLC. Provided trouble shooting services at the most senior level in both domestic and foreign operations. Was given an "all critters hunting license" at ACBL reporting direct to its President/CEO. Within 60 days of starting, discovered an error in fuel tax reporting that netted \$4 million from the IRS in open tax years and \$1 million savings per year going forward. Left ACL after a CitiGroup led recapitalization to start Barge America LLC.
- Business experience in 17 countries including; China, Japan, Southeast Asia, Europe, South America, Mexico and Canada.
- CCT was a \$70 million dollar Continental Grain Company subsidiary operating 600 barges, 10 towboats, shipyards, fleets and terminals. Gardner reported through Conti's North American Grain Division. Joined CCT, initially as its VP-Operations in 1981. The company was a relatively new with high variable costs. Within four months reduced its work force from 265 to 190, returning one of its subsidiaries to profitability that continued for 15 consecutive years. Led a team that implemented numerous operational and marketing changes that positioned CCT as the sixth largest barge line in the US which was widely viewed within the barge community as an icon of efficiency. Measurement of that success came in the form of benchmarking, the result of due-diligence during acquisition/merger/sale discussions with the following companies: ACBL, Federal Barge Line, Wisconsin Barge Line, Ohio Barge Line, SCNO Barge Line, Valley Barge Line, Alter Barge Line and Ohio River Company. In 100% of the cases, CCT had a lower variable cost and superior marketing record. Combined, those companies represented about 75% of the dry cargo market. Also while at CCT, Gardner orchestrated and negotiated the purchase of Dakota Barge Service, Inc., in South St. Paul, Minnesota, a fleeting, shifting company plus a repair shipyard. The company earned profits in the first year equal to the purchase price and posted 5 consecutive years of superior returns. Served as Dakota's President and Board Director.

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- Was recruited in 1979 by J. Russell Flowers, owner of Flowers Transportation, Inc., in Greenville, Mississippi, to assist in reorganizing his financially troubled company. Because of health problems, Flowers had earlier named a new President and relinquished control of the business during his recovery. Subsequently, Flowers, the CFO and Gardner implemented a reorganization that resulted in the dismissal of the President, Senior Vice President and two Vice Presidents. Led a “clean up” of the organization and 18 months later it sold at a historical peak in the inland barge market.
- Joined Alter Barge Line, Inc., in 1970 as its Vice President – Operations. Alter was plagued by a deficient operations and operating history. At the time in 1980 when Bob left Alter, its marine operations were widely regarded as the “cutting edge” leader and perhaps the most efficient in the industry.
- Out of college in 1964 Gardner was recruited by Cargill, Inc., and completed their Executive Training Program. He was assigned to Cargo Carriers, Inc., a subsidiary in Port Allen, Louisiana and served as its Assistant Gulf Manager for six years. The services offered by CCI Port Allen were: Midstream fueling, shipyard repairs, barge painting, fleetings, switching, ship chandlery, salvage and canal towing.
- Past and present business capacities include: Owner, Director, President, CEO, V.P. Special Projects-Business Development, General Manager, V.P. Operations, Port Captain & Gulf Operations Manager.
- Gardner recently renewed his 10<sup>th</sup> issue USCG First Class pilot license of steam and motor vessels of any gross tons on the Lower Mississippi River and Master of Towing Vessels upon Western Rivers; also, Radar Observer (Rivers).
- Served as an expert witness in high profile cases representing both defendants and plaintiff. One such case for a defendant was the M/V Mauvilla and Amtrak incident near Mobile in which 47 lives were lost.
- Registered Federal lobbyist for over 3 years representing the American Waterways Operators.
- Served on Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the American Waterways Operators and chairman of many of its committees. Forty-Five consecutive years as a member.
- Active in many other organizations advocating the inland waterways industry and served on one Federal Advisory Committee.
- Experienced public speaker and in on-camera situations. For one week each month, over the span of one year in the 70’s, Bob served as AWO’s *Traveling Towboat Captain* making nationwide media appearances promoting the barge and towing industry. Served as AWO’s Public Affairs Committee Chairman, producing multiple media events and films. Featured in a national television advertisement for RC Cola.

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