International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women, and this year it was celebrated on March 8. Because of the work involved, both the rail and terminal industries as a whole have been made up of a largely male workforce, but as thoughts on roles change, more and more women have been making a big impact in both areas.

Watco Companies is unique in the industry because there was woman involved in the company from day one. Kaye Lynne Webb signed her name on the bank papers to purchase Watco’s first locomotive and has been an inspirational role model for women ever since. In 2018, the Pittsburg (KS) Area Chamber of Commerce created an award called the Kaye Lynne Webb Influential Woman in Business Award. The award is presented each year to a woman who has followed Kaye Lynne’s example and made an impact on the Crawford County workforce.

Kaye Lynne set the bar high, but there are several women at Watco that have done the same in their areas of expertise within the company. Shontá Moore is an excellent example of one of those individuals. Shontá serves as Watco’s Corporate Air Environmental Manager and although she’s held the role for just a couple of years, she’s made a tremendous difference in that time period. Shontá said the environmental field is still largely male dominated and approximately 98 percent of the people that she deals with are men.

“It's crazy how few women are in the field,” said Shontá. "As a woman, you're constantly having to prove yourself to the guys who have been in the industry for years and years. However, once you earn their trust and respect, the barrier disappears and they see you as an equal.”

Shontá wasn’t always interested in the environmental sector. It was when she took a job with the State of Texas that her interest in the environmental field was piqued. The Louisiana native was first interested in becoming a doctor and had many of the prerequisites under her belt when she decided to switch her major. She ultimately graduated from Texas Southern University with a bachelor's degree in biology, a master's in environmental toxicology, and a master's in urban planning and environmental policy.

She said her start in the medical area has helped her in her current role as she has a better understanding of health issues involved with the environmental toxins. She also can relate better to the issues addressed by the different activists and urban organizations.

Some of the many duties that Shontá performs includes reviewing permits and contracts regarding what is required by federal agencies, reacting to any issues that arise, and safely, effectively, and efficiently working to ensure all locations, team members, and communities are not put in harms way.

"It's not just about the PPE that we are required to wear," said Shontá,"It's looking at what's outside of the normal, ensuring that we're not putting anything out in the air that is harmful to our neighbors and our team." Shontá said that there are some advantages to being a woman in the industry, “A lot of the guys will embrace me as sort of a little sister or a daughter and take me under their wings and teach me things that I need to know, whether it's about specific locations and what they do or environmental topics. It helps to build trust and respect. The ability to handle 8,000 roles at once without dropping the ball is also an asset, along with my ability to handle 8,000 roles at once without dropping the ball is also an asset, along with my ability to handle mental topics. It helps to build trust and respect.

Shontá’s advice to other women entering the industry; “Stick to your guns, don't back down or be intimidated. Mean it, own it, and move forward.”

Commercial Manager Laura Schmidt is another example of a woman who is paving the way for other women in her field. She joined the BNSF in 1997 and was the only female in her class at conductor school. When she went to engineering school a year later, she was one of only two females in the class of 40.

"I was one of three women at my location, which was a way higher percentage than most locations had," said Laura. "I think it was tough starting out, but things were different then and regardless whether you were male or female, you had to go through sort of an initiation phase. The heads were just mean to everyone back then, they did stuff they could never get away with now," she said with a laugh.

Laura got her start when she was looking for a way to get her college degree without having to take on a lot of debt. Her brother, brother-in-law, and uncle all encouraged her to get into the field.

"It gets into your - Continued on page 4
by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The Pacific Sun Railroad (PSRR) recently participated in a multi-agency train crash drill. The drill was organized by the North County Transit District (NCTD) and simulated a freight rail accident along the Escondido rail corridor. The “accident” involved an automobile collision and a simulated hazardous material leak.

NCTD Communications Coordinator Eric Sawyer said the exercise was a great opportunity to see first responders and subject matter experts come together and demonstrate their skills and abilities.

"They successfully accomplished the tasks and we look forward to regrouping in the coming weeks to talk about areas of improvement. These invaluable exercises provide everyone involved a chance to not just put their skills to use but to also learn from the experience. We are grateful to all of the participating agencies and personnel—both at the event and behind the scenes—who made this successful testing and training possible," Sawyer said.

PSRR General Manager James Moore said the drill was a result of a conversation he had during a separate meeting with Sawyer. After the meeting, they were visiting and James mentioned that they ought to hold a drill to ensure everyone knew what to do in case anything ever happened.

"It took three months of meetings to organize, but the participation from all the groups was phenomenal," said Moore. "Eric called the groups he worked with and because nothing like this had ever been done here before, everyone was excited to get involved. It was so beneficial for my team members and the other agencies to experience what they would need to do in a situation like that," he added.

"My guys had the opportunity to use the emergency system and so they could see what they needed to do and what type of questions the dispatchers were going to need answered. They did everything exactly as they were supposed to, I'm proud of how they performed." Emergency agencies that joined in the valuable learning experience included:

- California Public Utilities Commission
- Camp Pendleton Fire Department
- City of Escondido Fire and Police Departments
- City of San Diego Fire Department – Hazardous Materials Team

"Hopefully, this is something that we never have to do in a real life situation," said Moore. "It's nice that we are able to practice and be prepared, but it's one of those skills you never want to use. We definitely will plan to continue holding the drills on a regular basis."

Watco presented Oshkosh Community Partnership Award

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The City of Oshkosh and the Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation recently honored Watco with their Community Partnership Award last week. The collaboration between the community, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and Watco helped make the Oshkosh Terminal a reality.

When presenting the award, Councilman Tom Pech, Jr., said, "The Oshkosh Transload Terminal is one of biggest, most impactful developments that Oshkosh has seen in recent years. The 11-acre, $2 million terminal allows business to move products from rail to truck or from truck to rail. This allows business who utilize it to have access to every single North America Class I railroad and ports. The Terminal is the first of its kind in northeast Wisconsin. Watco invested dollars, expertise, and ongoing support to the transload project. They shared their knowledge of their successful terminal operations while helping the city plan ours."

"What a cool honor and a great city," said Watco Commercial Director Jason Murphree, when accepting the award. "The biggest thank you that I have is to our Customers at the facility. They're why we're here and they're what led us to this point. We're thankful to be here and to be a part of this community."

Deputy Mayor Lori Palmieri said, "It takes so much and so many people to make projects like the transload terminal possible."

Watco was presented the Community Partnership Award at the Oshkosh 2019 State of the City Address in March. Pictured are (l-r) Councilman Tom Pech Jr., Jason Murphree, commercial director, Solomon Watkins, Oshkosh terminal manager, and Adam Hanson, AWP of operations.
Gateway supervisor brings twenty-five years of experience to job

By Jay Benedict
Digital Communication and Social Media Specialist

Watco’s St. Louis-Gateway transload terminal in Missouri is one of just a few food-grade terminals in the Watco network, but it does much more than that. The terminal serves as a warehouse and distribution center for several area manufacturers. Half of the facility is dedicated to ICL, which specializes in food products. The other half currently serves five other Customers, and that’s where Supervior Tona Townzen spends most of her time.

Tona and her team, a customer service representative and two material handlers, handle everything from pharmaceutical goods to sand, pool chemicals, and paint-based materials. That variety of commodities and mixture of truck and rail keeps days interesting.

“Our day-to-day is pretty much coming in every morning and assessing the situation. It’s ever-changing here. You can come in and have railcars waiting or have something unexpected come up,” Tona said. “We try to get all of our orders together and assign the work out. We work through them, check them, check our inventory, dual-verify everything to make sure everything is correct for our Customers.”

Tona brings plenty of experience to handle the daily challenges. She’s been at the site for 25 years now. She started in Customer Service, processing orders, keeping inventory, billing, and administrative duties in the office. Later billing was moved to a different location, and when she became a supervisor, her duties focused more on being on the floor checking orders and managing her team.

“It’s just a little more responsibility now. I like my job here. I like the job I do here and I always have liked it. I enjoy the atmosphere and the work I do,” Tona said.

During that 25 years, she’s seen the terminal change hands multiple times. Originally, Tona spent 17 years with Slay Industries. Then, Kinder Morgan purchased the facility. The warehouse officially became a Watco operation on Feb. 1, 2017.

“With Watco, I feel like I have so much support. If I need a question answered, I feel like I have options,” Tona said.

“I can call another terminal, or I can call Adam (Hanson, AVP of Operations), or wherever I need to. I just feel like there’s a lot of support.”

The job itself is the main reason she’s been at the terminal for 25 years now.

“Over time, I’ve come to know all the aspects of the job; the customer service, the inventory portion, and I’ve made a lot of friendships and relationships with Customers. I enjoy the people,” Tona said. “All the smaller Customers have come onboard during my time here, and it’s interesting to work together and make suggestions to benefit them and Watco.”

When Tona’s not helping Customers at the terminal, she enjoys spending time with her two rescue mutts, being outdoors, and shopping.

“I love animals and I love flea markets and yard saling and shopping in general,” Tona laughed.

“Anything where I can incorporate being outdoors with my shopping I like. I take my dogs on walks a lot too.”

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Continued from page 1 - blood, that's why I keep doing it," said Laura. "I really liked being a conductor because I got to build relationships with my Customers."

Laura worked for the BNSF and then joined the team in Wichita on the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad as a conductor/engineer then was promoted to assistant general manager. She then moved to the commercial side of the business and took a position as commercial manager for Watco Transportation Services (WTS) and Watco Terminal and Port Services (WTPS).

She said the ratio of male to females in the commercial marketing area is more balanced, but there are still more men on the operations side.

"But, I would bet if you look at the number of applicants, that ratio is the same. I'm sure there are a lot more men applying for those positions than there are women."

She said women on the operations side feel like there's more of a need to prove themselves just due to the physical nature of the job. She said a lot of the pressure is internal, more us pushing ourselves vs. what others actually expect.

"As a woman, you don't want anyone to think that you can't do the same work as the guys do, so I think you work harder just to prove you can."

"You also have to check your emotions at the door, you can't wear them on your sleeve, but that's the same for both men and women, it's always been a tougher industry."

What advice would Laura offer other women entering the field?

"Know what you don't know. Ask questions. Again, that's advice for everyone, especially in operations. If I mess up a contract, there's an opportunity to go back and fix that, but on the ops side, an error can kill you, so you need to be sure of what you're doing at all times. Don't ever be afraid to ask questions and keep asking them until you fully understand what you need to do."

The operations side of the business is not the only one that few women frequent. If you look at the board meetings of the American Association of Railroads (AAR), most often the only woman with a board seat is Watco's Laura McNichol, sitting amongst the Chairmen and CEO's of the Class I railroads.

Laura serves as Watco's senior vice president of government and industry relations and spends much of her time in the nation's capital promoting the interests of rail, waterway, and terminal industries.

Laura began her visits to "the Hill" more than 21 years ago advocating for the National Association of Conservation Districts, where she built support for natural resources conservation programs for farmers and ranchers.

I've worked for two our country's oldest industries, agriculture and railroading, both of which tend to be male dominated so I'm used to being the only woman in the room," said Laura.

"That can be an asset, I try to use humor and make people in the room laugh to help build a connection."

Another way she makes a connection is through her golf game.

"It's seriously one of the ways I have made contacts with men who are leaders in the industries I need to connect with. I worked hard to become a decent player and take my game seriously. Golfing is one place where I think women need to be serious and develop a good reputation and that trust can parlay into meeting rooms and business deals."

Laura agrees with Shontá in that men will sometimes take you in as a sister, which Laura says she enjoys.

"I love that I'll get a call from someone on our team and they say 'Sissy, I need some help.' That feeling of family is incredible and makes me feel like part of something special."

Wisconsin & Southern Railroad donates first aid kits to area school

The Crisis Committee at the Waupun Junior/Senior High School in Waupun, Wisconsin, has been meeting to determine what they need in order to help their staff and students deal with emergencies in the classrooms. One item the group had on their wish list was a Crisis Kit for each classroom. These Crisis Kits would be used in emergency situations such as tornadoes, fires, lock downs, and evacuations.

With the help of donations by area businesses, the group was able to present a total of 60 kits to the school. Each kit is equipped with a first aid kit, flashlight, bottles of water, garbage bags, and emergency procedures.

Crisis committee member Nick Clarenbach, thanked Wisconsin & Southern Railroad for donating all 60 first aid kits to be added to the Crisis Kits, "A huge thank you from the Crisis Team and from Waupun Junior/Senior High!"

An avid hunter, Watco’s Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Industry Relations Laura McNichol, has some fun posing with one of her birds.

Laura said that she's only had positive experiences as a woman in the industries that she’s been involved in and that she has never felt that her gender has held her back. If anything, it helps develop an "edge" that helps in all types of situations, regardless if it’s a room full of men or women.

These are just three of the many women who are making a difference every day in the Watco world. One common thread among the many stories of the women at Watco is that success is something that they've worked hard at to achieve. Whether it’s in a classroom, a boardroom, on a track, or a dock, success goes hand in hand with challenges, and the ability to learn and grow from those experiences is what has put them where they are today.
Watco Wellness: Growing family motivates team member's Wisconsin weight loss

By Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

With four kids aged four and under, Watco Team Member Jamaar Benton had a good reason, or four of them, to start thinking about his health.

"I was feeling rundown and tired all the time," said Jamaar, when asked what made him decide to change his lifestyle. "I want to be there for my kids, I want to be able to go out and play with them and have fun."

A former center for the University of Mary (Bismarck, North Dakota) football team, Jamaar was used to the calories going in being balanced by the amount of calories being burned. After 12 years in the railroad industry, the amount being burned decreased, leaving Jamaar with some extra weight he wanted to get rid of.

Once Jamaar joined the Commercial Team and he and his family settled into their new home in Madison, Wisconsin, he went about finding a gym that would work with his fitness needs.

"I was looking for a place that emphasized endurance and strength training," Jamaar said. "The one I found had a bonus in that the owner was a nutritionist as well. About 80-90 percent of my loss has had to do with my eating habits and what I put into my body."

Jamaar learned what to eat, what not to eat, and how to plan meals to assist with his weight loss. And that loss has definitely been a noticeable one.

Jamaar is just five pounds short of reaching his 100 pound weight-loss goal. He said he has noticed that his back and knees don't bother him as much as they used to.

"I do have a lot more energy now," he said. "I used to get off work and go home, eat, and then go to bed. Now, I have the energy to play with the kids and chase them around." Jamaar said when he travels for work he really doesn't find staying on a meal plan hard at all, sometimes he finds it easier because there are so many healthy options and he doesn't have to do any meal prep. He also makes sure that the hotels he stays in have an exercise room where he can get some cardio in to balance out the calories.

"I encourage everyone to take a good hard look at their health because if you're not healthy then you are not living life to the fullest. Try and set small obtainable goals for yourself, whether it is with diet or exercise or even both."

Jamaar said, "I look and my success not so much as dieting or exercise, but I look at it as changing your life habits. Make your health change fun. Find others that have the same goals in mind that will encourage you along the way, but also hold you accountable. Always stay positive. When making a change, you will have stumbling blocks and hurdles to overcome along the way, so don't be discouraged if you are not seeing the results, just keep on pushing and improving every day!"

Commercial Manager Jamaar Benton was featured on his gym's Instagram transformation page. He's getting close to his 100 pound Insta-gram transformation page. It's getting close to his 100 pound weight-loss goal and says he enjoys the extra energy he now has.

By Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Twenty-five years ago while Steven Morgan was attending college he realized that he was running out of funds and needed to make some money. His uncle was working for the Central Kansas Railway at the time and he helped Steven get on board as a laborer. Watco purchased the line in 2001 and Steven then became a member of the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO) Team.

Steven has held the positions of laborer, foreman, track inspector, and now roadmaster. His territory covers the stretch of rail from Hutchinson, Kansas, to Towner, Colorado.

Jimmy Patterson, vice president of operations, said, "Steven is a guy everyone can rely on. From the team he supports to his Customers, he never stops until the job is done and the track is safe for movement. His experience and work ethic bring a tremendous value to the KO and Watco that people should strive to emulate."

The team met at the Pizza Ranch in Hutchinson to celebrate Steven’s long tenure with the railroad.

Steven was given a custom-made handcar with a plate commemorating the event.

Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad Team Member Celebrates 25 Years

The team met at the Pizza Ranch in Hutchinson to celebrate Steven’s long tenure with the railroad.

Steven was given a custom-made handcar with a plate commemorating the event.
Commodity: Scrap Steel
Customers: Big River Steel
Location: Osceola, Arkansas

Big River Steel (BRS) is a fairly new entrant into the steel production industry. Its processing lines turned out its first steel in 2016, but since then, continued investment in innovation and the mill have led to continued growth. With that growth comes an increased need for a main component in its production; scrap steel. Watco’s Osceola, Arkansas, Terminal helps make sure BRS has plenty of it available.

BRS produces several varieties of steel coils, as well as Advanced High Strength Steel for the auto industry and electrical steel. Scrap steel of varying types and qualities are combined in the melting process to create their products. Whether it arrives by truck, rail or barge, the Osceola Terminal handles nearly 100% of the raw steel that goes into the furnace.

“We unload barges that are shipped in from various parts of the country, and we unload railcars as well,” said Director of Steel and Scrap Services Len Crescenzo. “We handle every type of scrap from plate and structural to shredded material, pig iron and hot briquette iron, and others that they mix to use in the furnace.”

Located on the Mississippi River, loaded barges from scrap distributors regularly arrive. Once opened, large material handlers on the dock load massive dump trucks for a short trip up the road. When the trucks leave the dock, most weight around 125 tons. For reference, tractor trailers weigh around 40 tons.

With that kind of weight, the trucks cannot go on public roads, so they travel on a private access road from the terminal dock to a storage area near the mill’s electric arc furnace. Once there, the trucks deposit the scrap near massive piles organized by the type of scrap steel it is. More material handlers keep the piles organized and stacked, some around 40 feet tall.

The team also runs the internal rail system in the facility, after BNSF delivers railcars loaded with scrap. They operate rail spurs that service the scrap yard and hot and cold mills. It has 200 railcar spots and handles in excess of 600 cars per month. Handlers load trucks and the scrap is added to the piles in the storage area.

“Everything goes into the storage area until they need it,” Crescenzo said. “The mixture of steel BRS needs varies for different products they make. They know where everything is, so that can pull this many tons of one type and that many tons of a different type depending on their need.”

Since taking over scrap yard operations in August 2018 and dock operations in December 2018, the team in Osceola unloads anywhere between 100,000 to 150,000 tons by barge and up to 40,000 from rail in a given month.

“The relationship with Big River Steel is getting better every month. As we get more familiar with the process and we get more experience, we keep improving,” said Crescenzo. “We’ve got a great team that works hard to provide Big River Steel with the service they expect.”

In addition to delivering scrap steel, the team also loads outbound finished coils onto barges for BRS. All the heavy haul trucks, material handlers, and crane are part of the terminal, so there’s also an on-site mechanical team that services and maintains them.

The team also loads outbound finished coils onto barges for BRS. All the heavy haul trucks, material handlers, and crane are part of the terminal, so there’s also an on-site mechanical team that services and maintains them.
Congratulations to the following Team Members celebrating anniversaries this month.

1 Year: Alan Andrade, Tijuananna Barrow, Anthony Bartalini, David Bayles, Christina Bell, Terry Beloney, Nick Bone, Taylor Brewer, Zackery Brock, Justin Browssard, Danielle Bushore, Esmeralda Carrizales, Timothy Clark, Chad Combs, Justin Combs, Devin Coon, Jessie Cunningham, Anthony Dellasega, Jonathan Dochniai, Abram Dudley, Fred Eger, Christopher Fox, Justin Gallegos, Marcellus Garrett, Drew Grogan, Lawrence Gunter, Nathan Hatton, Dale Heisler, Ronald Henderson, Gary Henry, Stephanie Hickey, James Hubbard, Joe Ibarra, Gilbert Jasso, Napolian Jenkins, Joel Johnson, Joshua King, Brandon Landelius, Dominique Lewis, Pedro Lira, Coty Luckett, Terry Madison, Bradley Mcdowell, Nathan Mellow, William Messick, Jacey Minkler, Michael Moore, Rodney Moore, Ricardo Morales, Derek Morris, Alex Myers, Melissa Nickelmus, Richard Norman, Christopher Odom, Abbiobe Okoiron, Miguel Omelas, Brian Orr, Julie Ortiz, Jesus Pacheco, Enrique Palacios, Brian Payne, Nathaniel Pelcurtin, Curtis Phlegem, Travis Pinkerton, Delbert Reece, Benjamin Rodriguez, Anibal Rodriguez Santiago, Carlos Romano, Ruben Ross, Roberto Salamanaca, Jason Shaw, Timothy Simpson, Jacob Spruill, Channing Stockhouse, Timothy Stark, Jeffrey Steele, Sean Stone, Jessica Sutton, Misty Sweeney, Brent Spurling, Talmaz Torres, Dlexer Tramrell, Craig Turner, John Vann, Chad VanSickle, Justin Vazquez, Harry Victor, Brad Wahl, Donald Waltride, Christopher Wilson, Robert Woodard


3 Years: David Ault, Brian Baugher, David Dust, Matthew Gibson, Jeremy Lee, Ramiro Mansilla-Quintana, Phillip Miller, Richard Morgan, Elvin Rivera, Christopher Salazar, Marvin Serrano Chavez, Marshall Spero, Ronald Tucker, William Welch, Joseph White


5 Years: Austin Becker, Marcus Blumer, Brooke Brown, Eric Cummins, John Farrow, Uriel Figueroa, Frank Greenough, Crystal Henigan, Alfie Hutchinson, Juden Jacobs, Kerys Johnson, Tracie Kent, David Mcintosh, Donna Moore, Paul Muzik, William Newport, Theodore Nicholson, Michael Porter, William Rinninger, Dustin Schilling, Lawrence Sperriger, Chad Stacy, Aaron Tanner, Travis Weddle, Gary Yeubanks, Adam York

6 Years: Michael Crosslin, Justin Denton, Michael Ebarb, Nathan Henderson, John Honaker, Devan Lynch, Quinchez Marshall, Jacob Nance, Mark Perry, Kyle Ratliff, Bill Rollins, Steven Schadel, Jennifer Severo, John Sheasley, Noey Sistos, Robert Sotner, Donna Stinson, Terri Turiano, Chase Upchurch, Nicholas Wayman

7 Years: Jose Acosta, Scott Ayers, Willie Carson, David Garcia, Aaron Greene, Charles Hall, Justin Hayes, Stefan Holcomb, Joseph Hubbard, William King, James Latham, Joseph Mays, Jeff Mitchell, Michael Multix, Patrick Stout, Andrew Thompson, Mark Wells, Tyrus White, Jeremy Williams, Tracy Wright, Carlton Young

8 Years: Mark Adams, Joshua Alits, David Bader, Kraig Blackwelder, Christa Coates, Henry Dannely, Douglas Delehoy, Allen Hasty, Alex Herrera, Brian Hickerson, Matthew Parker, Zachery Pittman, Dustin Rhodes, Donald Robert, Hugo Silva, Michael Stofko, Gerald Tjepkena, Megan Wilson

9 Years: Hayley Becker, Randall Bennett, William Casey, Jennifer Coursey, Kevin Crespo, Anthony Hoyte, Jordan Merritt, Jackie Ogden, Rachael Peterson, David Riley, Kevin Roth, Owen Schulz, Andrew Smith, Roidino Trevino

10 Years: Angela Bunker, Joseph Grupczynski, Mark Moorelag, Michael Murphy

11 Years: Kimmie Daniel, Carl Elrod, Steven Everett, Chris Haddow, Russell Ham, Robert Hurd, Jose Martinez, Arnoldo Sandoval

12 Years: Joel Aguilar, Rebekah Garner, Aaron Parrotte, Danny Rodriguez

13 Years: Jeffrey Allred, Marshall Blakley, Shellee Currier, Timothy Dunn, Codey Gilliland, Gerardo Horta, Christopher Preuc

14 Years: John Bell, Jared Brunskill, Gary Clark, Edward Deering, Brandon Edleman, Travis Fellers, Brian Fox, Richard Moser, Jesus Rodriguez, Travis Tholen, Tracie VanBeccelaer, Patrick White, David Wilczewski, David Witzack

15 Years: Jeffery Greenwood, Gina Lambert, Jason Nix

16 Years: Shane Engle, Keith Kitson

17 Years: Lisa Butts, Pat Cedeno, Jason Ebarb, John Galloway, Darren McComic, Mark Richter, Kenneth Sauter, Gary Yogols, Joe Watts

18 Years: Ralph Fielder, Jeanne Housel, William Kyzer, Byron Marshall, Ernest Palmer

19 Years: Marvin Ellis

21 Years: Timothy Bass, Stacey Hurd

22 Years: Anthony Ange, Brady Cathey, Jeremy Fidley, Alonzo Orta

23 Years: Kenneth Barber

24 Years: Aaron Byle

26 Years: Neal Jacobs

27 Years: Condras Warhurst

28 Years: Gary Cooley

29 Years: Dennis Phelps

30 Years: Dwight Browning

35 Years: Charles Trimer

36 Years: Michael Murphy, James Srawn

37 Years: Larry Vail, Dion Wilkens

40 Years: Larry Bohlman, Michael Nosko

41 Years: Robert Neal

AWARDS

Hospitalman Third Class Petty Officer Levi Winebrenner named Junior Sailor of the Quarter

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Levi Winebrenner, son of Melissa Winebrenner, Customer Service Clerk at the Neodesha, Kansas, Mechanical shop, was recently named Junior Sailor of the Quarter.

Winebrenner is a dental technician, at the Naval Branch Health Clinic (NBHC) in Meridan, Mississippi.

He was nominated for the award because of his efforts that lead to his clinic being ranked at 100 percent dental readiness for the month of November.

"It is a great accomplishment," said Lt. Cmdr. Wesley Weibel, a dental officer at NBHC Meridian.

"Fortunately for us, the stars aligned and we were able to get this accomplished. We recognize that maintaining a 100 percent [readiness] may not always be possible, but we are glad that we achieved it this month."

"He (Winebrenner) has been instrumental and his attitude has been wonderful," said Weibel.

"We were slowly inching our way forward every month up to the last few months, and he decided to take it upon himself to take it to the next level. His perseverance has been critical."

Winebrenner developed a system to address the individual dental needs by catagory and then took it upon himself to ensure all service members needs were met.

"It made me feel good and made me feel like I was doing my command proud to reach a 100 percent dental readiness," said Winebrenner. "I like to work on things that I see the potential for improvement; I saw the dental readiness percentage and felt I could do something to improve that for the command and the Navy."

Winebrenner attended a review board in the clinic and won there and then his Junior Sailor of the Quarter was submitted to the DBC (Director of Branch Clinics). It was a paper board, and he won at that level as well. He was then sent to Naval Hospital Pensacola to compete at that level, but didn't win that one.

Melissa stated, "It was kind of a big deal for them because he was the first sailor in many years from Meridian to win this. They were excited about how far he went."

Congratulations Petty Officer Winebrenner, we're proud of your accomplishments and thank you for your service in the military.
Nothing lasts forever, but the little Plymouth 10-ton engine at the Zwolle car repair shop (a former saw mill) gave it a good shot. The little locomotive was built 1929 and originally had a 4-cylinder Buda gasoline engine that was later replaced with a 3-cylinder Detroit diesel engine. The locomotive operated countless hours and pulled thousands of rail cars during its tenure at the location.

A replacement needed to be found for the aging unit because the layout of the tracks in the back of this location makes it impossible to switch with a normal locomotive or a track mobile. The track cannot handle anything with axle centers over 6 ft. and a track mobile cannot stay coupled in the severe curves.

With time expiring on the Plymouth locomotive, Tex Inman, director of locomotive support, was called in to provide his expertise in finding a way to replace the pint-sized engine. By piecing together GE parts from locomotive parts at various Watco locations, Tex was able to build the new WAMX 133 locomotive. The little loco is the perfect size for moving the cars at the facility, it’s small enough to navigate the tight curves at the facility but has enough horse power to get the job done.

The diesel-electric engine went into service at the Zwolle shop on January 31 and Tex hopes that the little engine will be able to rival the service of its predecessor.