First round of Winter Freeze bonuses given to team members

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Watco's 2019-2020 Winter Freeze Safety program was kicked off on December 1 with a focus on being proactive instead of reactive when it comes to safety. Team members from across the network are encouraged to submit Near Miss and Safety Suggestions and then, each month, winners are selected and they will each receive a $200 safety bonus. During the first month of the program, there were 91 entries submitted by team members using the online link winterfreeze.watcocompanies.com. Additional entries were also inputted directly into the Velocity (KMI) safety reporting system by some of the team members.

Travis Herod, senior vice president of safety and training, said, "The response to the Winter Freeze program has been phenomenal. The number of submissions previously submitted compared to just the first month that the program has been in place has been drastic. This is exciting to see, and exactly the start we were hoping for. Every single entry put into the system is an injury or incident that didn't happen or in the case of the safety suggestions, they can prevent future injuries."

Ten team members each received a $200 reward for their submission and up to $10,000 will be given away during the four month program. Two of the winners submitted safety suggestions and the other eight reported near misses. There were three winners from the mechanical division, three from the terminal division, and four from the railroad division.

Mario Soto was cited for his near miss catch and the unique aspect of his catch is that he is a subcontractor working at the Hockley, Texas, mechanical shop. While Soto was walking by a carjacking operation at the shop, he noticed the railcar wheels were not chocked as required, creating a safety hazard for the team performing the work. The operation was stopped, the wheels were chocked, and a job briefing was held before work resumed. Herod said, "It's exciting when Watco team members are looking out for each other, but even more so when a contractor from outside is focused on safety as well. That says a lot about the values we hold and how the companies we partner with are aligned with our goals."

Cameron Reed, a railcar coordinator at the Mill Creek, Oklahoma, mechanical location also reported a near miss. Reed noticed that when a railcar was being jacked for repairs, the jacks had started to shift on the jack pad. Reed used his Stop Work Authority and the customer was contacted to make repairs to the jacking area, preventing an accident or injury.

Hector Barrientos, a supervisor at the Hockley, Texas, mechanical shop reported a near miss that could've resulted in an injury. He spotted team members working on a track that wasn't secured with derail protection so he stopped work and made sure the team was protected before they continued their work.

Another Near Miss was reported by Decatur, Alabama, terminal Operator Robert Blevins. Robert was completing the loading of a vehicle, and removing the wheel chocks from under the truck, when the driver unexpectedly pulled away, potentially putting our team member at risk. As a result of this near miss review, procedures were changed to prevent team members from being in a position to be struck, should equipment move unexpectedly, possibly preventing a future injury.

Carson Dyke, a pumper operator in Fryburg, North Dakota, sent in a near miss, earning him his $200 bonus. Carson was loading a railcar and he noticed that it wasn't loading as it normally did. Operations were stopped and it was discovered that a vent line was not properly connected, which could have resulted in a serious condition. The line was reconnected and the loading safely resumed.

Joseph Hamm, a grapple operator at the Osceola, Arkansas, terminal submitted a safety suggestion to improve conditions at the facility. Joseph identified a problem with an ongoing maintenance procedure. A service truck is used to grease machinery at the location, but because of the cold temperatures, the lubricating grease was not properly lubricating the equipment. Hamm suggested that the grease bucket and line be placed in a heated box or that they check into purchasing cold weather grease for the equipment. This safety suggestion was a great catch, as it identified a conditional issue that if not addressed, could lead to pre-mature equipment failure and unsafe conditions.

Raul Covarrubio, Lubbock & Western Railway assistant roadmaster, reported a near miss that he was involved in. Raul opened a boom truck to retrieve a sledgehammer and because the equipment had been stored with the head up, it caused the maul to fall, nearly striking him. A stand-
First round of Winter Freeze bonuses given to team members, continued

Continued from page 1 - the team reviewed the proper way to store tools, and a process was put in place to ensure tools are secured correctly.

Anthony Hampton, Blue Ridge Southern Railroad conductor/engineer, reported a near miss to earn his safety award. Anthony was riding on equipment on a customer track and noticed a possible rail issue on the track in front of his movement. He stopped the movement and requested track forces look at the track structure, and it was determined a large piece of equipment had earlier caused the track gauge to be out of alignment. By protecting the shove and observing the track, our team member was able to prevent a derailment and potential injury.

Jacob Nance received $200 for his safety suggestion on how to prevent a possible incident at the shop where he works. Nance identified a potential fire potential due to the hot bearing. A mechanic team was able to repair the railcar, preventing a potential serious derailment.

South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad’s Cherryvale, Kansas, locomotive shop where he works as a locomotive mechanic. Jacob suggested a better solution be found for storing equipment at the shop. The equipment was being placed on the roof of the office space inside the building and there had been near misses in the past when team members using ladders were putting material up, or retrieving it, from on top of the roof. Jacob suggested they identify whether the structure is properly rated to support stored materials, and if so, establish a safe way to access the area such as installing stairs. If not properly rated, access to the roof area should be prohibited. Nance said the form that the online link took him to was really easy use. “I spent maybe 5-7 minutes tops filling out the information. It was easy to use and it was a nice surprise when I opened up Success Factors and saw I was getting an extra $200. It was definitely worth it.”

The final winner of the safety reward was Jeffery White, Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (KO) conductor/engineer. Jeffery was observing a passing KO train and during his roll-by inspection, he identified a potential hot bearing on a railcar. The train was stopped for inspection and checked for fire potential due to the hot bearing. A mechanical team was able to repair the railcar, preventing a potential serious derailment.

“This is going to be our new normal now,” said Herod. “We’re focusing on reporting instances or suggestions to keep our team members and anyone else from being involved in an incident. We’ve gotten some helpful feedback from the team and will continue to improve the process to improve safety.”

All Aboard Foundation provides scholarship opportunities

The All Aboard Foundation is pleased to announce its Scholarship Program is now open for applications. The scholarship will be available to dependents of Watco Companies team members. The recipient must be in good academic standing and plan to attend a post-secondary institution within one year following high school graduation.

Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of $500 each and will be issued in two $250 disbursements for the first two semesters of college and will be credited to the recipients account at the financial aid office of the college of their choosing. The number of scholarships awarded will be determined by the number of applicants with a minimum of two awarded per year.

Applications are available at http://allaboardfoundation.com/scholarships/. Please submit your application to info@allaboardfoundation.com or mail it to:

All Aboard Foundation
315 West 3rd Street
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Applications need to be submitted no later than March 31, 2020.

A committee will review all applications and the winner(s) will be notified and announced in the June issue of The Dispatch.

The All Aboard Foundation was established to provide funding for a better quality of life in the communities in which Watco serves.

Watco health benefits come with additional cost benefits

If you’re a Watco team member taking advantage of the health insurance plan offered through the company, there are a number of additional benefits that are available to you, including discounts on health care products, weight loss programs and a number of other resources to boost your fitness level.

Following the same thought process as the Winter Freeze Safety program, it’s better to be proactive than reactive, there are many links to resources that can help you do exactly that. It would be much better for your health if you started making choices now that can prevent an injury or illness versus waiting until you are injured or are put on medication for a condition that might have been prevented.

If you go to My Health Toolkit - Blue 365 (myhealthtoolkitks.com) and log in you will find a number of tools that can help you reach your health and fitness goals. There is a health assessment you can take, calculators that will help with figuring out your body mass index (BMI), how many calories different exercises will burn and the length of time you need to do an exercise if you are wanting to reach a particular weight loss goal.

There are also discounts that are available using the My Health Toolkit. Under the resources head- er is a Blue365 Resources link. This link has offers such as discounts on apparel and footwear, fitness, hearing and vision, home and family, nutrition and personal care. It’s a good idea to go in and look at the discounts available because there are a few hidden discounts that aren’t what most of us would deem health related but may contribute to your overall health if the stress were removed from different areas of your life. One example is a link to Quicken Loans which can provide team members with savings on a mortgage or if you have a four-legged friend, you can check out the discounts on pet insurance.

Take a dive into the myhealthtoolkitks.com and see what different discounts you can take advantage of to receive cost savings and to help you make healthy lifestyle changes.
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#WatcoMoves - Wind Energy Components

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communication and Social Media Specialist

Commodity: Wind turbine components
Customer: Wind equipment manufacturers, such as NextEra Energy
Location: Great Bend, Kansas

The individual Watco divisions, Transportation, Terminals & Ports, Mechanical, and Supply Chain, all work hard every day to serve our customers. When they work together to create complex solutions for a customer, though, big things can happen.

That’s the case with the Pawnee Rock Laydown Yard, near Pawnee Rock, Kansas, between Great Bend and Larned. It began as a small, 23-care storage yard for wind turbine components at the Great Bend Municipal Airport. With the cooperation of Watco Supply Chain Services (WSCS), the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (KO), and Watco Terminals & Ports (WTPS), the operation quickly grew in size and scope, and its success opened doors to other opportunities.

“The project went from zero to 60 essentially. We prepared as best we could, and all of a sudden, they said, ‘The first train is on the way.’ It was kind of a scramble, but the supply chain team and the K&O team worked closely together to make it happen, and we quickly ran out of space,” said KO Commercial Manager Casey Harbour.

The entire operation now includes the airport storage, 110,000 square feet of indoor storage space, and the most recent addition, the Pawnee Rock yard. The yard offers around 225 acres of laydown space and can hold nearly 5,000 turbine components. A wye was built off the KO’s line to help accommodate increased rail traffic into the facility.

“We didn’t think it was going to be as big as it is, so we put it there at the airport, and in January of 2017, the first truck came rolling in. Initially, it was just Barth (West, WSCS Railroad Logistics VP of Operations) and me, and (WSCS Railroad Logistics Team Lead) Austin Norris. We had a contractor doing our crane work, and when we had trucks coming, we’d drive up from the Springdale (Arkansas) office, meet the trucks, sign the bill of lading, set it down and come back. We did that for about six months. Eventually, trucks were coming every day and we had to hire a full staff. It went from one or two trucks a day to 50 trucks a day and trains, and we quickly outgrew the airport,” said Paul Williams, WSCS Rail Logistics director of operations.

This all started with a phone call our customer made to Harbour inquiring about our capabilities to handle the components. He later mentioned it to Williams and WSCS President Eric Wolfe, because they had a background of working with this customer. They in turn reached out, and the wheels were set in motion.

Our team transports all the main pieces of the wind turbines. This includes the large blades and tower sections, as well as the nacelles, which contain the gears and generator, and the hubs that connect the blades to the nacelle. Components arrive to the KO at interchange in Wichita, Kan., and Hutchinson, Kan., depending on the type of components and their points of origin. Once the KO delivers these parts, that’s where the WTPS team begins its work. They handle the rigging and crane work when components arrive or are set to depart the yards. Many of the components also arrive from overseas at Watco’s Greens Port Industrial Terminals in Houston, Texas, where our team discharges them from vessels onto Class I trains.

“It’s been an awesome move from the rail perspective. We’re able to spot in a large cut of cars and our team doesn’t have to stay with the train to move it through a fixed unloading point,” Harbour said. “We just come every night and spot the new cut of cars in there. When you can add shuttle traffic, it’s much more efficient. It’s been a big boost for the KO and our continued efforts to diversify our commodity mix.”

Watco Supply Chain Services oversees the entire movement of the components, from their origins to final destinations after leaving the Pawnee yard, tracks and performs the required maintenance, and manages the relationship with our customers.

The maintenance is a large part of operations at the yard. The customers used to send their own employees to perform it, but as the yard grew and more regular maintenance was required, it made sense for Watco to offer that service. It’s required by the manufacturers and ranges from simple tasks like power washing bases of the blades, where they connect to the hub, to an array of more complex procedures performed on the nacelles. Our team changes the oil, greases and turns the gears, and uses a generator to give the batteries a charge.

“Every component has a maintenance schedule,” West said. “Some items have to be serviced every month, other items have to be done every quarter, and so on. We’ve got that listed out, and depending how long those components are under our care, we have to follow those schedules.”

Their success in central Kansas has created new opportunities around the country. Last year, WSCS started an 80-acre yard in Minot, North Dakota, to serve as a staging area for a new wind farm consisting of 77 turbines. There’s a small team there for security and maintenance. Team members from the Tioga, N.D., terminal also assist with the unloading of the components.

“It’s just taken off like wildfire out there,” Williams said.

The WSCS team is also finalizing a multi-million dollar project in Oregon, and is working on one of the largest U.S. wind plays of 2020 in Hobbs, New Mexico. Watco plans to lease land at an old U.S. Army airfield and have the components arrive via Watco’s Texas & New Mexico Railway. Other manufacturers are taking advantage of the Pawnee Rock yard as well. One has already begun shipping the fixtures, the equipment used to secure the components to the ground while in storage, to the site. West and Williams say there are five or six other large projects the team is looking at as well.

“We feel pretty confident we can win another two or three on top of what we’ve got already, so we feel pretty giddy about it. It just started off as a 23-acre deal. We said, ‘Let’s get in here, let’s get it figured out,’ to now we’re running two full time yards in Kansas, a facility in North Dakota, we’ve got around thirty team members, and in 2020 we’re going to grow even more,” said West.

They attribute the success to the team’s willingness to go the extra mile and provide a solution to whatever the customers throw at them.

“One thing that our customer told us they liked about us, but kind of scared them too, was that we never told them no. After the first few loads were successful, they kept sending more, seeing how much we could handle. They tried to drown us. We never said no. We just figured out a way to get it done, and they really liked that. They know that if other service providers get backed up, they can turn to us without even having to ask if we can handle it,” said West.
Decatur trainmaster enjoys railroad "puzzle"

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communication and Social Media Specialist

Nick Guinn was one of the first team members brought on when Watco began preparing for the September 2018 startup of the Decatur & Eastern Illinois Railroad, and for a good reason. Nick's previous job was in the same place. He started with CSX Transportation, who Watco purchased the line from, in 2011, as a conductor and then engineer. When CSX began implementing Precision Scheduled Railroading, Nick transitioned to Decatur, Illinois, yard foreman.

"I had a pretty good job with CSX, but it was either chase the railroad or quality of life. Family is first, and I knew that if I chased the railroad that I wouldn't be home as much and wouldn't have the quality of life or family life I've got now. That's one thing that Watco affords. There are regular assignments and set days off. There are no overnights in hotels or deadheading to trains. It's more of a family-friendly atmosphere. There are a couple of other guys that came over from CSX with me, and we all know, without a doubt, that we made the right decision," said Nick, DREI trainmaster.

Prior to joining the railroad, Nick served in the Army National Guard for eight years and was deployed to Iraq once, where he earned a Purple Heart. He also worked as a police officer. During this time, Nick met a part-time corrections officer who also worked for CSX. He talked highly of working for the railroad. He also met his future wife around this time, and her father worked for CSX Transportation, who Watco purchased the line from. He talked highly of the Decatur & Eastern Illinois Railroad. Things are settling down a little now, though, and Nick plans to take that as an opportunity to continue learning more. He also hopes the team can get a Team Safety & Improvement Committee started.

"From the time we started the railroad, there wasn't a lot of extra time. I ran the first locomotives in on the DREI, and I ran the first manifest train out. Then we went straight into qualifying guys, and now we've expanded. It's been basically 24/7," Nick said. "I've done some of the online courses from Watco U Online. I like those a lot. They're very informative. I am going to start going to some of the in-person training this year and am looking forward to that. I'm very interested in advancement. I've been trying to learn other parts of the railroad. I've always been an operations guy, so I've been trying to spend a little bit of time with the maintenance of way teams to learn the things that they do and how to do them. Kind of broadened my understanding of railroading as a whole, not just one aspect of it."

Outside of work, Nick enjoys spending time with family and being outdoors when he has time. He has two kids, that are two and four years old, with his wife, Amy.

"They take up a lot of my time," Nick laughed. "But when the weather is nice, I do bass fishing tournaments. I love bass fishing, fishing in general. I'm an outdoorsman. I like hunting too. I enjoy doing those things outside of work when I can. One other thing I am proud of, as prior military myself, we had a guy that got deployed to Afghanistan. He recommended me to Employer Support of the Guard Reserve. I was recognized by them and the Department of Defense for being understanding of Sebastian Rivera's deployment and giving him support."
After 128 years, Kalispell, Montana, will no longer have freight trains running through its downtown area. Instead, the trains now follow tracks to the Glacier Rail Park. MMT General Manager Kyle Jeschke said, “This has been super awesome. We save from 30 to 45 minutes each day by not having to run through town to get to the industrial park. Another good thing about not running through downtown is that we don’t have the seven crossings to go through, so that’s a safety concern that has been negated.”

Getting an industrial park established and train traffic moved from the downtown area has been an ongoing project for ten years and the MMT team is excited to reap the benefits.

The initial project was funded with a $10 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for investment in roads, rail, traffic signals, and a pedestrian trail. Watco and BNSF also contributed funding for the development.

There are two customers served by the MMT at the industrial park; grain customer CHS Inc., and Northwest Drywall. A new customer is expected to come on board in March and will be receiving inbound shipments of plastic pellets.

In addition to delivering and switching railcars, the MMT team is also responsible for maintaining the track and signals within the park.

The next step in the project is to rip up the track in town and make way for a new pedestrian trail.
Elliott Blake Inman

Matt and Misty Inman welcomed baby boy Elliott Blake to the family on April 27, 2019. Elliott weighed 8 lbs., 8 oz., and was 21 inches long. He was welcomed home by his big brother and sister, Matthew and Emma. Matt is a locomotive mechanic providing services at Bayway, New Jersey; Linden, N.J. and Ithaca, New York.

Loston Declan Carter

Loston and Casey Carter are proud to announce the birth of their son, Loston Declan Carter. Loston Declan was born on November 28, 2019. He weighed 6 lbs., 2 oz., and was 19 inches long. Loston is a conductor at the Ferndale, Washington, location.

Christopher Allen Lee Vanhoozer

Kevin Vanhoozer and Celeste Weigt are proud to announce the birth of their son, Christopher Allen Lee Vanhoozer. Christopher was born on November 30, 2019. He weighed 6 lbs., 3 oz., and was 20 inches long. Kevin is a conductor at the Eastern Idaho Railroad’s Twin Falls, Idaho, location.

Brynlee Mia Blackwelder

Zackery Blackwelder and Ana-Leya Loehr are proud to announce the birth of a daughter, Brynlee Mia Blackwelder. Brynlee was born January 11, 2020. She weighed 7 lbs., 15.6 oz., and was 20 3/4 inches long.

Colt Christopher John Musso

Griggin Musso and Sarina Ellis are proud to announce the birth of a son, Colt Christopher John Musso. Colt was born December 23, 2019. He weighed 5 lbs., 10 oz., and was 18 inches long. Griggin is an unloader at the Ferndale, Washington, location.

Lucas Taylor Humeston

Josh and Crystal Humeston welcomed a baby boy, Lucas Taylor, on January 5, 2020. Lucas weighed 8 lbs., and was 20.1 inches long. Josh is a conductor at the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad in North Carolina.

Nova Zahra Williams

Andrew and Charlisia Williams are proud to announce the birth of a baby girl, Nova Zahra. Nova weighed 6 lbs., 15 oz., and was 20 1/2 inches long. Nova was welcomed home by her big brother Andrew Jr., 4. Andrew is a yardmaster for the Greens Port Industrial Terminal’s Dock and Rail division in Houston, Texas.

Texas properties select 2019 Team Member of the Year

Dexter Gonzales, Texas & New Mexico Railway track foreman, recently received the 2019 Team Member of the Year Award from the TXN and Pecos Valley Southern Railroad Team Safety & Improvement Committee.

Two Permian Basin railroads, the Pecos Valley Southern Railway and the Texas & New Mexico Railway (TXN), recently selected their 2019 Team Member of the Year. Dexter Gonzales was selected by the Team Safety & Improvement Committee for the roads as the winner of the award.

Benito Nickles, TXN locomotive mechanic and TS&IC chairman, said, “In the past year, he has mentored new hires at the Texas facility. He was also recently promoted to track foreman on the MOW team.”

Gonzales joined the team in October of 2018 as a track laborer. His team is primarily responsible for maintaining a 105-mile stretch of track along the TXN.

Todd Trammell, TXN and Lubbock & Western Railway general manager, said, “Dexter definitely deserves the award. He has had a positive impact on the railroad, his dedication and attention to safety sets a good example for other members of the team. He’s always looking out for others and doing what he can to help anyone out.”

Gonzales was excited to find out that the team had selected him as the winner of the award. “I was really surprised, it made my day when I heard that they thought enough of me to select me.”

Nickles said the committee held a food and coat drive and is planning on getting more involved with the communities they work in.

“We want to show them that they are important to us and that we want to be involved and help the cities we serve.”
Congratulations to the following Team Members celebrating anniversaries this month


2 Years: Robert Birch, Paige Bryant, Lisa Cardenas, Shannon Colon, Jason Currence, Joseph Daniels, Audley Elder, Rodney Foster, Eric Franco-Velez, Rhett Frydenlund, Yimin Garcia Hernandez, Tony Garner, Tyler Gilbert, Derek Good, Adam Gray, Michael Holmes, Ashley Hood, Quinten Hoyle, Steve Janak Jr., Jaycee Johnston, Brian Kelley, Peyton King, Matthew Machell, Mary McDuffie, Nathanael Riddle, Daniel Roberson, Jacob Roll, Joseph Sarwinski, Jeremy Schwarzhuber, David Thurmam, Jenile Tolley, Brandon Tyler, Mariano Uribe, Jennifer Vasquez, Kristiana Walker, Stanley Whitaker, Douglas Williams, Dexter Wilson, Jose Zarazua

3 Years: Rockwell Aiken, William Bailey, David Blanchard, Tina Dowty, Andrew Ermiller, Curtis Holbrook, Jerry Jones, Luis Leonard, Shawn Lindquist, Reynaldo Lobo Guardado, Kenneth McKenzie, Gunnar Miesner, John Moser, Rose Oljace, John Raccasi, Steven Roland, Michael Samples, Frederick Sanchez, Brent Shields, Kolby Stokes, Sean Strong, Jennifer Thayn, Draper Thomas, Brady Trappe, Terrisa Villarreal, Joseph Wendt, Dustin Wybrant

4 Years: Christopher Bollin, Phillip Borresen, Tyler Burke, Kevin Byrd, John Cuevas, Daniel Czar, Juan DeLaCerda, Jarmain Drake, Andrew Floyd, Michael Gomez, Daniel Lemon, Perry Lunsford, Bernardo Marinillas III, Shane Morris, Joshua Sheets, Caroline Spurrin, Mike Sullivan, John Weber

5 Years: Kevin Abbott, Derek Anderson, Bradley Bridges, Joshua Hawkins, Trevor Jones, Steven Kimball, Christopher King, Christopher Klevenberg, Shawn MacWilliams, Eliel Morales, Jason Prain, Edwin Rial, Sneha Shah, Jonathon Trusler, Sandra Williamson, Gary Wilson

6 Years: Michael Chew, Patrick Flower, John Foster, Jesse Hatch, Sean Hayden, Jayson Keith, Chris King, Evan Kleavemann, Jeffery Lien, Gregory Lockhart, Jeanette Middelton, Dee Mitchell, Cory Montoya, Odea Nowden, Zachary Overstreet, Charles Trapp, Mark Wottowa

7 Years: Steven Coltrin, Steve Coomes, Seth Creason, Michael DeLaaney, Travis Gathagan, Dylan Hoggle, Reed Kunnanz, Michael McMillan, Jeffrey Nugent, Michael O’Connell, Derek Prestholt, Laura Schmidt, Gregory Sherman, Mike Shoemaker, Misael Vazquez, Melissa Winebrenner

8 Years: David Abbey, Michael Brinkerhoff, Erin Flocchini, Antonio Green, Martin Mandujano, Jacinto Mendez, Matthew Morrison, Sabrina Mounts, Drew Otto, Stephanie Rich, April Rose, Chad Shaffer, Timothy Sharrt, Matt Spade, Tyler Stapleton, Jeffery Summers, Chris Wright

9 Years: Kevin Dean, Charley Dohle, Josh Gwillim, Sean Jamerson, Scott Reeves, Michael Schaffer, Joshua Smiley, Joseph Smith, Danny Spangler, William Watts, Willis Whitaker

10 Years: Freeman Harrison, Robert Johnson, Jose Reyes

11 Years: Lawrence Fix, Mark Leicht, Johnny Lima, Veronica Martinez, Roy Morris, Ronald Whitewater

12 Years: Ben Coward, Brian Ezell, Ty Furgason, David Riggs, Francisco Rivera, Frederico Romero, Robert Smith, Danny Thomas

13 Years: Robert Balzer, Jeffery Denton, Albert Glenn, Andres Lachino, AJ Mee, Derek Nyman

14 Years: Michael Lewis, Daniel Reeves, Joseph Reid, John Scheelee, Carla Wilson

15 Years: Douglas Fleming, Matthew Hinojosa, Gregory Lovelace, Howard Verner

16 Years: Terry Gilbert, Michael Janke, Brandon Otter, George Villa

17 Years: Scott Adams, Edgar Espitia, James George, Gary Goodwin

18 Years: Sara Hanson, Monica Kellin

19 Years: Serafin Contreras, Robert Cunningham, Kevin Schoenhofer, Robert Stewart

20 Years: James Andrews, Steven Bringer, David Terry

21 Years: Thomas Shirey

23 Years: Robert Williams

24 Years: Carl Clausen, John Henderson, Michael Manion, Troy Tracy

25 Years: Michael Sebecic

26 Years: Rodney Hamilton

27 Years: Filiberto Barrientos, Mark Hoskinson

32 Years: Steven Caudle

33 Years: John Everson, Theodis McClain, Bonita Perkins

34 Years: Cecil Copeland, Kenneth Joyce

39 Years: Nathan Cooper, Rickie Eaton

40 Years: Geron Crotwell

LIBERTY BOWL
Watco team member Pamela Prescott, administrative assistant for the Pawnee Rock/Great Bend Laydown Yard, attended the Liberty Bowl to cheer on the Kansas State Wildcats last month. While there, she stopped by the Navy tent to wish them good luck and let them know she was wishing them a safe game without any injuries. The Navy camera crew saw her shaking an officers hand and asked if he could take a picture and the photo was posted on the Navy’s site.

Despite her team losing by a field goal in overtime, Pam said she still enjoyed her trip and her visit to the Navy tent was a memorable one.
The newsletter for Watco Companies

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Getting off to a green start

by Tracie VanBecealere
Managing Editor

With the first month of 2020 under our belts, it’s time to take a look at our resolutions and see how we’re doing. Many people have decided to de-clutter their lives and reduce waste. One way of accomplishing this noble goal is to eliminate the massive amounts of catalogs that are mailed to our houses and places of work. Many times when ordering products online, we unknowingly sign up to receive catalogs and other printed materials from the companies where we purchase items.

Now’s a good time to take a look at the items you are being mailed and see if they are pieces that you are using, or if they are going straight from the mailbox to the trash.

When you receive a catalog you don’t use, take a minute to visit the company’s web site. Generally, there will be a place to opt-out of receiving materials you don’t want, or most have a Contact Us link that will at least allow you to send an email requesting they stop sending items.

Out in the field, railroads and barges are known to be fuel-efficient and more green than other modes of transportation. There are also things we can do at work in the offices to reduce waste and be greener. This would include setting your printer or copy machine so it prints on both sides of the sheet, use a ceramic coffee mug or cup instead of paper or styrofoam cups, and turn off the lights when you leave a room. You can also ask to receive this newsletter, The Dispatch, electronically if you are receiving a printed version as well. Just email your name and address to chuskey@watcocompanies.com and let her know to take your name off of the mailing list.

It’s a small step, but everything we do to be more environmentally aware will have a positive impact on our planet.

Pictured above are just a few of the many different catalogs that end up at the front desk of the Pittsburg, Kansas, office.

Watco teams celebrate Chiefs Super Bowl win

by Tracie VanBecealere
Managing Editor

There are some very excited team members celebrating the Kansas City Chief’s Super Bowl win on February 2. In the KC area, Watco has several different services including a mechanical shop, the Kaw River Railroad and the Overland Park office.

Many of the team members at the locations, and all across the metro area, celebrated “Red Friday” two days prior to the Championship win. The Chiefs have credited their successful season in part to their fans for the tremendous amount of support they have shown the team throughout the years.

Although it’s natural for the Kansas City area to be backing the team, there are also team members from across the country who are excited about the 31-20 win over the San Francisco 49ers.

Todd Trammell, general manager of the Lubbock & Western and Texas & New Mexico railroads, lived in Kansas for many years before moving south to Texas, which is why he supports the Chiefs. But he says that he has many team members who are as excited as he is about the team’s win. Quarterback Patrick Mahomes played for Texas Tech prior to being drafted into the NFL by the Kansas City Chiefs. Texas Tech is located in Lubbock, home of Watco’s Lubbock & Western Railway.

Congratulations to the Chiefs and their fans on an amazing year and Championship win.

Watco team members at the Overland Park office in Kansas showed their support for the Chiefs with a Red Friday two days prior to the Chiefs championship win.