KO trainmaster leads team in safety

April 10th marked the 365th day that the McPherson and Salina Depots on the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO) have gone without a human factor incident. While one full year without an incident in any depot is worthy of praise, how they got to this point needs to be looked at more closely.

You see, three years ago these two depots struggled trying to get safety to be on the forefront of everyone’s mind and they hit an absolute low when they recorded eight human factor incidents between the two depots. While that year marked one of the worst performances, it also marked the year that Travis Schnelle was named trainmaster and assigned to the two depots.

As trainmaster, Travis was charged with three major tasks – bring safe railroading practices back where it was sorely needed, hold team members accountable for unsafe practices and continue to provide our Customers with the best service possible. Travis and his team have succeeded where many thought success was too far gone.

One key to the success was the involvement of the team members, many who were new to the team when Travis was brought on as trainmaster. This dedicated group of team members are committed to working safely, identifying safety issues and making safety suggestions to improve the KO.

A large percentage of the KO’s Team Safety and Improvement Committee (TS&IC) members have come out of these areas the last two years. Jimmy Patterson, KO general manager, said, “The second reason for the positive change in safety practices is the leadership of the trainmaster who has taken control of a bad safety situation and converted his respective areas into a safe and efficient operation that we should all be very, very proud of. This story proves negative cultures can be transformed with the right people and the right leaders in place to teach, coach, mentor and train.”

Schnelle said, “The safety culture wasn’t where it should have been but achieving that ideal safety culture comes from having full ‘buy in’ by the team members. We must give our team members the proper tools, proper training, and the proper environment to succeed. Last but not least, WE must have full ‘buy in’ and lead by example.”

Schnelle started working for Watco in 2004 as a conductor in Hutchinson, Kan. He left for a year in ’06 and came back as a conductor/engineer in Great Bend, Kan., before being promoted to trainmaster in 2012. He and his wife Mandy have three children; Brenna, 10, Travis Jr., 7, and Landon, 3. When not improving the safety records, he enjoys playing disc golf and metal casting in his back-yard foundry.

“Please help me congratulate Travis and his team on one full year without an HFI and for representing what the KO and Watco strive for daily!” said Patterson.

Watco railroads win short line safety awards

The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association’s (ASLRRA) Annual Convention held in late April was a great success. The conference provided railroaders and vendors opportunities to network and pick up valuable information. Safety was a big focus of this year’s event and many of the breakout sessions dealt with safety issues and solutions.

Watco’s Cheryl Correll, Chief Information Officer, lead a session on PTC (positive train control) and Gary Vaughn, Senior Vice President, Transportation Rules and Regulatory Compliance, headed several committees and discussions on safety practices, rules and legislation.

Safety was also a key part of the general session on April 24th. Following a speech on the topic “The Railroad Safety Culture: The Small Railroad Connection”, awards were given out to short lines exhibiting that culture. Eighteen Watco railroads won Jake with Distinction Awards which means they had zero RPI’s for the year. These railroads were: Arkansas Southern Railroad, Austin Western Railroad, Autauga Northern Railroad, Boise Valley Railroad, Eastern Idaho Railroad, Great Northwest Railroad, Kaw River Railroad, Louisiana Southern Railroad, Mission Mountain Railroad, Mississippi Southern Railroad, Pacific Sun Railroad, Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad, Pennsylvania Southwestern Railroad, Pecos Valley Railroad, San Antonio Central Railroad, Stillwater Central Railroad, Swan Ranch Railroad, and the Yellowstone Valley Railroad.

Railroads who were named Jake Award winners beat the ASLRRA Group RPI Ratio with an RPI Ratio below 2.39. Jake Award winners were: Birmingham Terminal Railway, Grand Elk Railroad, Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad, Timber Rock Railroad, and the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad.

The Jake with Distinction Award and the Jake Award were named for Lowell S. “Jake” Jacobson, a long-time advocate and leader in railroad safety. Jacobson serves as president and chief operating officer of the Copper Basin Railway in Arizona. He was the recipient of the Railway Age Railroader of the Year in 1994.

The Jake Awards with Distinction were bestowed upon 295 ASLRRA member short lines and twenty-eight received the Jake Awards.
How? This became a question that would drive Kelly Smith from fifth grade forward. Kelly is the daughter of Watco IT analyst Rob Smith and she was recently a guest at the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association’s (ASLRRA) annual conference where she was awarded the Susan C. Murray Memorial Women’s Scholarship.

In late 2003, Commonwealth Business Media created the award to honor Susan C. Murray who had passed away that year. During her tenure at the association, Murray helped grow ASLRRA’s annual convention from 40 tabletop booths in 1987 to the “premier exhibition dedicated to the short line and regional railroad industry,” association officials said. She also served as a mentor to many people in the short line industry, particularly women railroaders. The scholarship is awarded to daughters and granddaughters of ASLRRA Railroad and Associate Members.

In her essay to the committee Kelly wrote how the book *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, had a huge impact on her when she read it at the young age of twelve. How could someone orchestrate such an appalling event? How could a people succumb to such prejudice? How could the world be so blind? These questions tugged at Kelly so much that she decided to set a career goal of becoming a museum curator at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in order to keep the memories of the Holocaust victims alive.

Although this drive alone is impressive, the selection committee was even more impressed with the hours of service that Kelly has devoted to the community, church and family. Anne Frank wrote in her book, “nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world” and Kelly is following that mantra faithfully.

Kelly said, "I am very humbled and honored to have received the Susan C. Murray Scholarship and would like to thank the ASLRRA and Watco.”

Kelly graduates from St. Mary’s Colgan High School in Pittsburg, Kan., in June. She is the president of the Student Council, president of the Drama Club, captain of the volleyball team and active in the Creative Writing Club, National Forensics League, Science Club and Future Business Leaders of America.

One of Kelly’s teachers stated, "Kelly definitely does not fit the stereotypical high school student who is aiming to get done and get out. Her passion for learning and eagerness to soak up all she can in the briefest time possible has made her a stand out here.”

She’s logged in more than 400 hours of community service and spent some of her spring breaks in West Virginia on mission trips as well as helping with the Joplin, Mo., tornado relief efforts.

Kelly’s dad, Rob said, "I am blessed to have Kelly as my daughter and Watco as my employer. The scholarship process has increased my respect for my daughter, Watco and the short line association. I encourage all team members with daughters and granddaughters to take advantage of this opportunity.”

Kelly will be attending the University of Notre Dame in the fall to pursue a degree in history.

**Operation Lifesavers ride the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad**

The South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL), in conjunction with the Heart of the Heartlands, conducted an Operation Lifesaver train ride on April 8, 2014. All local law enforcement in Southeast Kansas were invited to participate on the train ride to share information with Operation Lifesaver and SKOL Railroad Team Members.

The train departed the historic Cherryvale, Kan., Depot at 10:30 am and traveled along the Coffeyville Sub, arriving in Coffeyville at 11:30 am. The passengers were provided a lunch by the Operation Lifesaver Team and they had the opportunity to discuss crossing accidents, trade ideas, and share the importance of crossing safety/enforcement with all those who attended.

A highlight of the trip was cab rides in the locomotive for the officers so they could see the view that the engineer and conductor have while traveling down the tracks.
Congratulations to the following team members and their families!

Kelsey Allen: Daughter of Troy Allen, Corporate Railcar Services, Oxford, OH; graduating from Talawanda High School, Oxford, OH.

David Arnott: Grandson of John Peters, locomotive engineer, Philadelphia, PA - PES Refinery; graduating first in his class from Neshaminy High School, Bucks County, PA.

Shelby Arnott: Granddaughter of John Peters, locomotive engineer, Philadelphia, PA - PES Refinery; graduating summa cum laude from Carlow University, Pittsburgh, PA., with a Bachelor’s degree in biology.

Emily Baden: Daughter of Rich Baden, President and Chief Operating Officer, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Pittsburg High School, Pittsburg, KS.

Miguel Angel Barajas: Son of Antonengenes Barajas, Yard Supervisor, step-son of Adelita Barajas, Office Manager, Watco Terminal and Port Services, Glendale, AZ; graduating from Alhambra High School, Phoenix, AZ.

Carly Barrington: Daughter of Danny Barrington, Operations Assistant of Gulf/East Regions, Deridder, LA; graduating from University of Louisiana, Lafayette, LA with a major in Health Information Management and a minor in Business.

Katie Elizabeth Black: Daughter of Kelly King, Operations Manager, Watco Alabama Port Services, Port Birmingham, Mulga, AL; graduating from Hueytown High School, Hueytown AL.

Stephan Bohland: Son of Larry Bohland, Dispatcher, Toledo, OH; graduating with honors from the University of Toledo College of Education, Toledo OH.

Gabrielle Bolyard: Daughter of Garrett Bolyard, General Manager of Eastern Idaho Railroad, Twin Falls, ID; graduating from Twin Falls Christian Academy, Twin Falls, ID.

Paige Borovetz: Daughter of Michael Borovetz, WTS Director of Finance; Coffeyville, KS; graduating from Independence High School, Independence, KS.

Caleb Bowser: Grandson of Earl Bowser, Vice President Sales, Watco Mechanical Services; graduating from Pennsylvania State University with a bachelor’s degree in Business Management & Marketing with a minor in Entrepreneurship.

Savannah Buck: Daughter of Jeff Buck, General Manager, Mississippi Southern and Vicksburg Southern Railroads; graduating from Northridge High School, Tuscaloosa, AL.

Megan Joyce Butcher, Business Development Intern, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Frontenac High School, Frontenac, KS.

Christian Cedeno: Son of Pat Cedeno, Vice President WTS Marketing, Central, West and Northeast Regions, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from St. Mary’s Colgan High School, Pittsburg, KS.

Taylor Cedeno: Daughter of Pat Cedeno, Vice President WTS Marketing, Central, West and Northeast Regions, Pittsburg, KS; graduating with a degree in nursing from Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS.

Zachariah Edward Roger Coffing: Son of Clark Coffing, Director of Railcar Repair WTS-Burley, ID; graduating with high honors from Lone Peak High School, Highland, UT.

Santana Fearmonti: Daughter of Jim and Becky Fearmonti, Cornell Mechanical and Vice President of Sales & Marketing Central Region, Pittsburgh, KS; graduating from Frontenac Junior High School, Frontenac, KS.

Joey Sianne Gath: Daughter of Tanya Gath, Grand Elk Railroad/Ann Arbor Railroad Account Revenue Specialist, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Southeast High School, Cherokee, KS.

Sabrina Gragg: Granddaughter of Jeanne House, Central Region Warehouse, Coffeyville, KS; graduating from Shawnee Mission North High School, Shawnee, KS.

Jadey Harville: Daughter of Gary Harville, Lead Track Inspector, Birmingham Terminal Railway, Fairfield, AL; graduating from the University of Alabama at Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

Kate Hayes: Daughter of Tom Hayes, Associate Counsel, Pittsburg, KS; graduating with honors from the University of Kansas School of Journalism, Lawrence, KS.

Karsyn Raynell Hensley, Human Resources Intern: Daughter of Rick Hensley, Engineer, South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Frontenac High School, Frontenac, KS.

Kaylee Ashton Horner: Daughter of Jimmy Horner, Vice President of Operations-Central Region; graduating from Field Kindley Memorial High School, Coffeyville, KS.

Kavanaugh Lee Krueger: Son of Kevin Krueger, Yardmaster, Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, Horicon, WI; graduating from Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, WI.

Taylor Lamkin: Son of Herb Lamkin, Roadmaster, Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad, Wichita KS. Graduating from Wellington High School, Wellington, KS.

Andrew Gregory Legg: Son of Carl Legg, Vice President of Sales and Marketing West Region, Twin Falls, ID; graduating from Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO.

Stephanie McCabe: Daughter of Debbie Bishop, General Director of Revenue Accounting, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Pittsburg High School, Pittsburg, KS.

Harper Elizabeth McCrane: Daughter of John Scott McCrane, Cleaning Rack Supervisor, Fitzgerald, GA; graduating from Tift County High School, Tifton, GA.

Caitlin McKenzie: Daughter of Matt McKenzie, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR.

Makayla Nielsen: Daughter of Chris Nielsen, Engineer, Eastern Idaho Railroad, Twin Falls, ID; graduating from Twin Falls High School, Twin Falls, ID.

Nicholas Jade Parady: Son of Amy Parady, Vice President of Sales and Marketing Gulf/Southeast Regions, Houston, TX; graduating Klein Collins High School, Spring, TX.

Brittany Pavloski: Daughter of Paul Pavloski, Plant Manager of WMS Cudahy, Cudahy, WI; graduating from the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI.

Jack Devlin Patterson: Son of Jennifer May, Data Integrity Assistant Manager, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from Pittsburg High School, Pittsburg, KS.

John Peters, Jr.: Grandson of John Peters, locomotive engineer, Philadelphia, PA - PES Refinery; graduating Hunterdon Central High School, Flemington, NJ.

Kristopher Piechoinski: Son of Jennifer Baucom, Office Supervisor, Watco Terminal and Port Services, St. Louis, MO; graduating from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, IL.

Jim Potts: Trainmaster Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad, Moundridge, KS; graduating from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA.

Jonathon Rudder: Son of Don Rudder, Gulf Region Director, Baytown, TX.; graduating from South Texas College of Law, Houston, TX.

Kimberly Rudder: Daughter of Don Rudder, Gulf Region Director, Baytown, TX.; graduating from the University of Houston, Houston, TX.

Andrew Matthew Sackett: Son of Katie Sackett, Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Director of Sales & Marketing, Madison, WI; graduating from Monona Grove High School, Monona, WI.

Taylor Scott (Tate) VanBecelaere: Son of Cindy VanBecelaere, Payroll Coordinator, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from St. Mary’s Colgan Junior High School, Pittsburg, KS.

Hunter Sharratt: Son of Tim Sharratt, Maintenance and Expense Manager, Port Birmingham Terminal, Mulga, AL; graduating from Cordova High School, Cordova, AL.

Riley Sheldon: Son of Steve Sheldon, Business Development Manager Watco Terminal & Port Services, Butte, MT; graduating from Westminster College, Salt Lake City, UT.

Kaleb Smith: Son of Mitch Smith, Car Repair Manager, Silsbee, TX; graduating from Kirbyville High School, Kirbyville, TX.

Kelly Smith: Daughter of Rob Smith, IT Systems Analyst, Pittsburg, KS; graduating from St. Mary’s Colgan High School, Pittsburg, KS.

Kyle Stewart: Son of Lisa Berry, Director & Senior Chief, Watco Dispatch Center, Wichita, KS; graduating from US Air Force Tec School, Kessler Air Force Base Biloxi, MS. Kyle will be certified in RF Transmission Systems, radio frequency wireless, line of sight, beyond line-of-sight, wideband, ground-based satellite to system and network connectivity. After Tec School Kyle will be in the US Air Force TACP National (Continued on page 4)
Team members sometimes think of safety in the workplace as nothing more than legislation, something they have to do - not want to do. However, safety starts at the top and when managers do not pay attention to safety in the workplace, team members too, become complacent and do not pay attention to following injury prevention procedures. Eventually the organization as a whole begins to disregard safety in the workplace.

Watco refuses to be that organization, regardless if it is a law, a rule or just a wise decision - safety always comes first. Here are some tips for managers to help you ensure that you are leading your team with the right safety practices.

When team members see that managers are not concerned about safety in the workplace, they automatically stop paying attention to their own safety. To avoid this situation, managers must be involved with the safety process and always lead by example. Actions speak louder than words so managers should show team members that they are committed to working in a safe manner.

Another way managers can demonstrate their concern for safety is by interacting with team members and discussing safety issues. If a team member raises a safety concern, their manager should personally get involved to resolve the issue and let the team member know of the result.

When managers pay special attention to reports of mishaps and near misses, it sends out a message that safety in the workplace is important. The follow-up to the report should be positive and not retaliatory in nature. Safety goals should always be included in organizational plans and a part of the budget should be set aside for improving the existing safety culture. Managers need to inform team members about the safety goals of the organization. Measurements are put in place to track safety performance and milestones should be recognized and celebrated to encourage safety practices.

Team members should also be involved in the safety planning for an organization so that they feel more of a part of the entire safety process. Joining the TSCC and attending the meetings is a good way to get involved. Managers should encourage team members to report any safety concerns, attend safety meetings, participate in facility walkthroughs, and share their ideas for improvement in safety measures with their supervisors. Being actively involved in the process will have a far greater impact than just asking team members to follow the safety rules. Team members will realize why safety in the workplace is important for their job, careers and ultimately, their families.

RAIL Course of the Month:

‘Personal Protective Equipment’

By Ashley Jarvis
Training Coordinator

Transformers are not just the cool robots that can change into a number of different things like a car, a boat, or a spaceship, they are also the very thing that electric companies use to help power our homes and businesses. One of the latter types of transformers recently rode the rails of the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO).

The load was bigger and wider than normal so special plans had to be made in advance for the movement. The Customer, Westar Energy, started planning a year ahead of the arrival date to ensure that all went smoothly. Because of the size and weight of the load it had to be moved at a slower speed on a special train. Westar also had to have special equipment at the destination to unload the equipment and it was important to know the time it would arrive so they didn’t have equipment sitting around wasting resources or not be ready to go at all.

The majority of the trip was taken via BNSF from Wauksha, Wisc., and then the train was handed over to the KO once it arrived in Wichita, Kan. The massive transformer weighed 647,800 lbs., and was loaded on a twelve axle depressed center flat car. The load was 19 ft. above the rail and was 11 feet and 10 inches long. Josh Briggs was the KO engineer and Blake Alexander served as the conductor responsible for getting the bulky load to its destination. The two team members took the special train on its 12 mile - 2 1/2 hour journey from Wichita to Colwich, Kan.

The Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad brings in a ‘high and wide’ delivery to Customer Westar Energy.

Watco Team Member makes record catch

What’s the worst thing about catching a fish that qualifies the fisherman for the Kansas Master Angler Award? It looks like it just might be not having a long enough arm to take a selfie with the entire fish. Derek Prestholdt, fleet management specialist, caught this 9 lb. whopper on April 6th while out fishing in one of the many Crawford County, Kan., pits. The pits were created when the land was being mined for coal but have since filled with water and created great spots for fishing and other water activities.

Derek caught this 24 inch largemouth bass using a spinning rod and reel. There won’t be a fish fry though, he threw it back in the pit to grow bigger.

Watco Team Member

Watco from Wauksha, Wisc., and then the
Births

Noah Thomas Jameson Riley

Randy and Allyson Riley are proud to announce the birth of their first son, Noah Thomas Jameson. Noah was born on March 28, 2014, and weighed 6 lbs., 11 oz and was 19 3/4 inches long.

Noah Thomas Jameson Riley

Randy Riley is a conductor for Timber Rock Railroad in Silsbee, TX.

Serena Elsa Christy

Pete and Sara Christy are proud to announce the birth of a daughter, Serena Elsa Christy. Serena was born on April 3, 2014, and weighed 9 lbs., 2 oz, and was 22 inches long.

Serena Elsa Christy

Serena was welcomed home by siblings Logan, 5, Jackson, 3, and Autumn, 23 months.

Pete is a conductor for Wisconsin & Southern Railroad in Milwaukee, WI.

Kinlee Claire Denton

Justin and Holly Denton are proud to announce the birth of a daughter, Kinlee Claire.

Kinlee was born on March 25, 2014, and weighed 6 lbs., 1 oz, and was 19 inches long.

Kinlee is a welder at the Coffeyville Mechanical Shop in Coffeyville, Kan.

Honors

Keri Thompson

Keri Thompson, daughter of Carla Ewing, Stillwater Central Railroad marketing manager, was selected as a Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society 2014 Distinguished Chapter Officer. Thompson was nominated by her chapter and then selected by a panel of judges from more than 450 nominees internationally. Officers are chosen based on a student's demonstration of leadership, promotion of Honors in Action, other engagement in the Society, and enthusiasm for the Hallmarks of the Society (Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Fellowship). She is enrolled in the nursing program at Labette Community College in Parsons, Kan., and will be serving as the 2015 Nursing Class President. Thompson also serves as the Kansas Region President and Chapter Officer of Tau Theta Phi.
terminal & port services team supports memorial foundation

Members of the WTPS Gulf Region Team were recently aiming to help out a worthy cause while at the same time enjoying some time together shooting clays. Watco sponsored a team and a shooting station in the 2014 Carl McCain Memorial Foundation Clay Shoot.

The Carl McCain Memorial Foundation was established on May 1, 1979, and named in memory of Carl McCain of Shreveport, La. Carl was part of the domestic crude oil trading business for many years and was admired and respected by those who were privileged to know him. He died in 1979 after an extended bout with cancer. Carl McCain’s illness and his concern for the welfare of his granddaughter, who was born severely handicapped during his last days, were the inspiration of the establishment of the Foundation.

The Foundation is a tax exempt, publicly supported organization in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service code Section 501 (c)(3) and makes financial grants to, or on behalf of, individuals and families who work (or have worked) in the energy industry and who are financially overburdened due to medically related reasons.

Funding for the Foundation comes from corporate and individual donations, through participation in industry golf tournaments as well as an annual Chili/Fajita Cook-Off and the annual Sporting Clay Competition. Each year numerous companies in the energy industry gather to sustain this worthy purpose. From May 1, 1979, through present, the Foundation has made grants in excess of $6.3 million.

The newsletter for Watco Companies, LLC and Watco Transportation Services, LLC
May 2014, Volume 15, Issue 5

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service takes a ride into the past

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service celebrated 100 years of Extension in Oklahoma with a fun day featuring train rides and demonstrations complete with period reenactments near Wellston, Okla., on Saturday, April 12th. The train rides were provided by the Stillwater Central Railroad and carried passengers to the site where there were several events to partake in. There were also booths set up providing the attendees with a variety of information. The Stillwater Central Railroad (SLWC) and the Terminal and Port Services Team’s worked with Oklahoma’s Operation Lifesaver to pass out information on rail safety. SLWC’s trainmaster James Sullins let them “borrow” his two daughters to help out as well.

Sullins said, “My daughters helped give handouts with railroad safety tips and Operation Lifesaver material to surrounding communities, families and children. It was a very successful turnout and my daughters just love Watco and what they represent. They can’t wait until they’re old enough to work for them!”

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service takes a ride into the past

The Wisconsin & Southern locomotive on the SLWC taking passengers to the Whistle Stop event.

Taylor Graham, WTPS OKC, Carla Rice, SLWC marketing manager, and Kayley and Cheyenne Sullins, daughters of SLWC trainmaster, James Sullins, worked the booth.

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