Meet Charlie Everson of the Fitzgerald, Georgia, repair facility. Charlie is a 22 year veteran at the Fitzgerald, Georgia, mechanical shop. Charlie started out as a blaster in November 1992 and through the years he moved into the paint shop, finish shop, heavy wreck repair shop and more. Charlie is now the valve shop supervisor at Fitzgerald and has a history of initiative and innovation, having designed and built his own specialty tools, jigs and attachments that make the process of testing the various types and sizes of valve springs easier, safer and with a cost savings. Whenever Charlie perceives a need or an opportunity to simplify a test or technical measurement, he is often able to visualize a solution and using basic high school drafting skills, draws his designs on graph paper. He then fabricates his special tools himself and often welds them himself. One of Charlie’s design plans was for Midland spring adapters. So far, Charlie has designed and fabricated about 30 different specialty tools, fixtures, jigs and a special protective guard for the pressurized spring test machine. A few years ago, he even fabricated a special custom knife out of an old spring for Watco Founder Dick Webb. He also designed and built an outdoor dome storage bench that prevents damage to valves from laying on the ground or

Watco receives KDHE award

Watco Companies was one of three railroad companies in the state of Kansas that was recently presented an award for the clean-up of railroad ties in Kansas. Watco’s Kansas and Oklahoma (KO) and South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroads (SKOL) were both part of the project to remove old ties from properties adjoining the track. Jimmy Patterson, Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad’s general manager, accepted the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) award on behalf of Watco at the 2014 Kansas Environmental Conference on August 7th in Wichita, Kansas. Neal Jacobs, regional chief engineer, Central Region, orchestrated the clean-up of the ties and brought in contractors to remove more than 35,000 ties from along the KO and SKOL right of ways.

KDHE has worked for nearly 20 years with concerned citizens, local government officials and responsible parties to address large accumulations of waste railroad ties throughout Kansas. This is the first time awards have been given to companies who have cleaned up railroad ties.

The Union Pacific Railroad and the Cimarron Valley Railroad were the two other companies that were recognized for their efforts in the tie project.

WTPS begins first New Jersey operation

Watco Terminal and Port Services now have a footprint in the Garden State. On August 6th the seventeen member team in Linden, New Jersey, celebrated a successful start-up. The team is performing the unloading duties of inbound unit trains of crude oil coming into the Bayway Refinery owned by Phillips 66.

The Bayway Refinery was built in 1908 and is the northernmost refinery on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Team members serving the location are: Erik Lee, terminal manager; David Alvarado, unloader; Dwayne Smith, supervisor; Javier Pertuz, supervisor, and operators, Brent Morrison, Stephen Martin, Luis Graca, Jhaval Randolph, Jan Derevjanik, Marc Dietrich, Jamal Campbell, Rawlf Rawlins, Johannes Hanselmann, William Griffin, Edward Curry, and Joseph Harris.

Team members at New Jersey’s Bayway facility.

Jimmy Patterson, Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad’s general manager (center), accepted the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) award on behalf of Watco from KDHE employees John Mitchell, (right) and Bob Medina.
West Region Team presents photography award

By Susan Lewis
West Region Officer Manager

Ray Sargent

The Ray Sargent family, along with team members in the West Region office who had worked with Ray, established a Ray Sargent Memorial Photography Award in his memory this year at the Twin Falls County Fair in Filer, Idaho. Ray had a passion for outdoor photography which he enjoyed sharing with others. He had donated many of his framed photos to benefit charitable causes during his lifetime.

On behalf of the Sargent family and Watco Companies, a cash award of $200 was presented for outstanding outdoor landscape photography. This year’s recipient was Doug Lincoln, a local CPA and photography enthusiast.

Funds for the award that was presented this year were raised through donations. To fund future awards, one of Ray’s photos will be printed and then framed with a handcrafted frame made by Ray’s dad, Bill Sargent, and raffled off.

Ray Sargent was in his ninth year as a Watco Team Member when he passed away in January of this year. He had been the West Region senior financial analyst before losing his battle to cancer. Ray’s father will also be crafting a handmade black walnut rocking chair that will be raffled off with the help of many community organizations. The proceeds from the sale will be donated in Ray’s name to the Spring 2015 Relay for Life.

Sooner Sub purchase finalized, ODOT to use funds for grade crossing improvements

Fireworks lit up the sky on the fourth of July but for many Watco and Stillwater Central Railroad (SLWC) Team Members the fourth of August was a cause for celebration as well. The $75 million purchase of Oklahoma’s Sooner Subdivision, a piece of track running between Midwest City and Sapulpa, was finalized following a five-month bidding process in which SLWC was awarded the bid.

Stillwater Central will partner with Iowa Pacific Holdings on the pilot passenger service piece of the sale agreement. Iowa Pacific ran passenger trains along the line earlier this year to gauge the level of interest in passenger rail along the line. Iowa Pacific Holdings operates several passenger service lines across the country. Passenger service will be offered at a lower price with more rides scheduled per day than what was offered during the demonstration rides. The line will need to be upgraded from a Class II to a Class III track in anticipation of the 2015 start-up of the six-month trial run of the passenger rail service. This will accommodate the faster passenger speeds with safety as the key factor in the upgrades.

"Safety is the most important thing. It’s a different situation when you’re moving freight and people, you want to ensure that everything is as it should be," said Ed McKechnie, Watco executive vice president and chief commercial officer.

Three weeks after finalizing the Sooner Sub sale Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin and ODOT unveiled a $100 million initiative aimed at improving more than 300 railroad crossings statewide.

Warning devices and other safety features will be installed at the crossings, many of which only have crossing signs or faint pavement markings and no flashing lights or crossing gates. The improvements will be funded by combining proceeds from the sale of the state’s Sooner Sub rail line to SLWC and dedicated rail safety program dollars managed by ODOT and other partners.

Of the more than 3,700 crossings in the state, many have some safety deficiencies and most are located on local roads, state officials said in a press release.

"This initiative will help to save lives by boosting safety at hundreds of railroad crossings," said Fallin. "It’s also another step forward for Oklahoma’s rail industry and infrastructure, which is essential to our state’s commerce and economic growth." ODOT plans to modernize and/or improve crossings by adding high-visibility signage, crossbucks, gates, hazard lighting and pavement markings. Rail funding will be leveraged with other public and private monies to improve as many priority crossings as possible, while ODOT also will partner with the SLWC, other railroads and local entities to cover long-term maintenance requirements, state officials said.

Previously, ODOT was able to spend about $8 million per year, which helped cover the cost of about 25 crossing improvements.

"With this initiative, we believe Oklahoma should serve as a model for the rest of the country when it comes to proactively supporting safe rail crossings and the safe and efficient transport of products along rail corridors," said Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation Gary Ridley.

ODOT officials expect to complete a preliminary multi-year plan of crossing locations and improvements in early 2015.
The Vicksburg Southern Railroad (VSOR) Team is excited to serve a new Customer along the Port of Vicksburg. CAM2 International, LLC acquired a 93,000 sq. ft. building, that now serves as their headquarters and their Southern US blending and packaging operation. The facility sits on 19 acres and has access to the Mississippi River for receiving and shipping via barge, rail or truck. The company was formerly located in Colorado and with the move, CAM2 plans on creating numerous jobs in their first year of operations in Vicksburg.

Justin Rhodes, VSOR marketing manager, said, “Having a Customer with a similar vision to serve their customers and build relationships is powerful. I can see us partnering to do great things in business and for the community.”

The site features a full-line manufacturing plant with an operating capacity of over 100 million gallons annually, a modern and efficient warehouse and distribution facility, and a state of the art testing and packaging operation. They will be shipping carloads of lube oil into the facility.

Jeff Buck, VSOR general manager, said, “We’re very excited to have a new Customer along the Port of Vicksburg and we look forward to serving them and building our relationship.”

The company produces products such as brake fluids, power steering fluids, greases and gear oils, aerosol and liquid pour chemicals, anti-freeze and washer fluid. They also have an extensive and complete line of automotive, commercial and industrial lubricants. The nationally recognized brand, CAM2, was established in 1975 and originally introduced as a premier racing oil that was the first multi-viscosity oil to win the Indy 500.

Balkan’s Train Rides sell out

The novelty of riding on passenger trains is still something people enjoy and the popularity of the train ride during Pittsburg’s (Kansas) Little Balkan Days is a good example. Three rides were offered during the festival, a 9:00 am Saturday ride, an 11:00 am Saturday ride and a ride on Sunday to the Corona Depot for a chicken dinner. There were 250 seats available for each of the Saturday rides and 100 seats for the Sunday trip. Each trip sold out with the dinner ride selling out first.

The rides on Saturday were hour-long round trip rides to Cherokee, Kansas, and back. The Sunday ride was a longer ride and passengers on board not only got to enjoy the chicken dinner but they also toured the Webb Family Museum, the depot, and the collection of railcars and locomotives at the site.

Team members from the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR) recently competed in a four-person scramble to benefit the Old Mill Foundation. Nate Coda, conductor; Josh Gwillim, trainmaster; Brett Goltz, assistant yardmaster; and Kevin Krueger, yardmaster, played in the charity event. The event raised a record of more than $18,000 which will all go back to the community in the form of donations and scholarships.

The Old Mill Foundation was founded in 2006 to give back to the community of Cambria, Wisconsin. The Foundation offers support of local nonprofit organizations that work to enhance the lives of the Village of Cambria, the Township of Courtland and the Cambria-Friesland School District.

The Cambria Fire Department, Cambria-Friesland School, Cambria-Friesland Youth Football Team and the Cambria Pool Fun Committee are a few of the organizations that have benefited from the Old Mill Foundation’s donations and scholarships.

Fitzgerald’s innovative supervisor

(Continued from page 1) accidental contact with a forklift. His design is under consideration for other GBW repair facilities.

Charlie has received no additional compensation or previous recognition for his efforts. He does this extra effort for the love of his job, his company and the improved safety of his co-workers. Charlie has served as a consultant to other facilities for advice on how to set up a valve test bench and general valve storage ideas.

“Charlie’s inventions have made it easier and safer to process valves through the valve shop,” said Ross Nash, Fitzgerald supervisor. “He is a major asset to the GBW Fitzgerald team.”

Charlie’s willingness to think “outside the box” and take the initiative to develop a new attachment serves as an inspiration to us all.

Charlie Everson with some of his adapter designs.

WSOR Team swings for charity

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Three Watco short lines co-hosted several Ethanol Safety Seminars with the Renewable Fuels Association last month. The Alabama Southern (ABS), Autauga Northern (AUT) and the Kansas & Oklahoma (KO) railroads all participated in the seminar targeted to give attendees full ethanol emergency response training experience. A majority of this training is based on the “Training Guide to Ethanol Emergency Response,” a training package created by the Ethanol Emergency Response Coalition that has been distributed throughout the United States and to several countries worldwide.

Alabama was home to two seminars. The one hosted by the ABS was held August 7th at the Alabama Fire College in Tuscaloosa. The second seminar was held on August 8th in Prattville and was co-hosted by the AUT.

Anthony Kirkland, AUT general manager, said, “It was great being able to sponsor this event and being able to meet and form a relationship with all the first responders. We were able to tell them a lot about the AUT’s operation and let them know we would be glad to help out if needed in any training exercises. This was a good way for the AUT to get involved with the community.”

The seminars then moved up to Kansas where the KO hosted seminars at two different locations, Salina and Pratt.

All of the seminars were funded by a Federal Railroad Administration grant through TRANSCAER (Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response). Attendees received certificates at the completion of the course.

“The rail has proven itself to be one of the safest modes of transportation for hazardous materials over the years,” said Jimmy Patterson, general manager at Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad. “We must be mindful of possible risks, however, and be ready to respond should an incident occur. The Ethanol Safety Seminars provide emergency responders with the training they need to effectively react to a sudden event.”

Attendees received in-depth information on proper training techniques that first responders and hazmat personnel need to effectively respond to an ethanol-related emergency. While primarily targeting first responders, hazmat teams, safety managers, and local emergency planning committees, the general public invited to attend as well.

The seminars focused on numerous important areas of ethanol safety including an introduction to ethanol and ethanol-blended fuels and the chemical and physical characteristics of ethanol and hydrocarbon fuels. Transportation and transfer of ethanol-blended fuels was discussed as well as the area’s storage and dispensing locations. The seminar also covered fire-fighting foam principles and ethanol-blended fuel, health and safety considerations for ethanol-blended fuel emergencies and tank farm and bulk storage fire incidents.

**Bartlett Grain breaks ground on Central Kansas facility**

Bartlett Grain Company has broken ground on a new grain facility in Barton County, Kansas. The facility will be located near Dartmouth and will be served by Watco’s Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (KO).

The new elevator will be designed for efficient and high-speed handling of inbound trucks, Bartlett said, and road access will be off of U.S. Highway 56. The facility will have nearly three million bushels of storage and is designed to load out 110-car shuttle trains.

Doug Story, Watco’s vice president of agricultural marketing, said, “The Barton County Terminal Manager Derek Mooy (left) and Stroud Operator Bobby Wakley practice chest compressions during CPR Training provided by Watco U on August 1st.

Bartlett Shuttle Loader at Dartmouth, Kansas. Bartlett Grain breaks ground in July on their new grain facility near Dartmouth, Kansas.

Watco offers courses on leadership and management but a new course is being offered that may be even more valuable - CPR Training. Watco’s Oklahoma Terminals in Stroud and Oklahoma City were the first to take advantage of this new course offering. A morning and afternoon class was held on August 1st and there were seven team members completing the early course and eight in the afternoon. In between the courses, a special steak lunch was catered in by the Customer on site with approximately 35-40 team members from the Stroud Terminal, the Stillwater Central Railroad, and members from the local law enforcement attending the lunch.

Five members from the OKC Terminal completed the course the previous morning.

If you are interested in learning more about providing the training at your location contact Nick Weber, Watco U training and development specialist, by e-mail at nweber@watcocompanies.com.
**September Anniversaries**

Congratulations to the following team members celebrating their anniversaries!

1 Year: Shane Alexander, John Baumann, Dennis Beckham, Ronald Beiffuss, Michael Boda, Jason Booth, Christopher Burney, Christopher Butler, Jacob Cahill, David Callan, Allen Chamberlin, Jordan Christiansen, Michael Church, Brian Davis, Michael De Hoyos, Christopher Esom, Timothy Gade, Joseph Gardner, Susan Giertych, Andrew Griggs, David Harrass, Nathan Harris, Donald Held, Adam Hosford, Richard Juarez, James Kapp, Joy Lavoie, Mario Leal, Russell Mallory, Douglas Manuel, Claude Martin, Arden Martinin, William Mayberry, Andrew McEwen, Jason Meng, Michael Moore, Rosa Mosby, Gloria Mount, Donald Nichols, Robert Payne, Dan Perry, Mackenzie Peterson, Marcus Philips, Wiley Phillips, Juan Picazo, Christopher Porter, Rhonda Roberts, Paul Schneider, Leasa Stephens, Samantha Tapley, Erin Thorne, Brett Travis, Michael Urness, Dustin Walker, Randy Wheeler, Russell Wix, Lakevisas Woodard, Horace Young

2 Years: Neil Arredondo, Matt Austin, Randy Blackwell, Jason Calhoun, Jacob Demond, Kim DePratt, Leslie Dodd, Billy Edwards, Ishmael Elkahmil, Jeffrey Ellison, Matthew Fellers, Leah Fischer, Charles Foster, Matthew Foster, Laramie Gahman, David Giertych, Daniel Gorseth, Kevin Harris, Jenna Harvey, Stetson Haverkamp, Benjamin Hoover, Joe Irving, Ashlee Kobylnski, Donald Kopse, Don Latimer, Christopher McVey, Leonidas Mejia Escobar, James Mobley, Kory Phillips, Craig Rasmussen, Samuel Renteria, Gilberto Rivera, Lori Sharp, Amber Shouse, Eric Stagner, Kris Winkels, Clint Woods, Rito Zurcethe

3 Years: Robbie Aucoin, Aron Auto, Harold Brown, Aaron Doyle, Ernie Farrand, Jason Hatcher, Jaron Haynam, Byron Herron, Fred Hinson, Justin Hogg, Ashley Jarvis, Willis Maruna, Albert Merritt, Donald Myrick, Matthew Nelson, Frederick Parsons, Brittanay Peery, Kenneth Rasmussen, Steve Sheldon, Garrett Vratil, Nathan Weber, Adam Weddle, Christopher Wiworski

4 Years: Benjamin Beers, Damien Cantrell, Bobby Garmon, Cedric Graham, Andrew Johnson, Steven Johnson, Matthew Kerns, Michael Kerns, David Mathews, David Miller, Kandace Miller, Andrew Moots, JareCorey Murray, Jeffery Nadeau, Clinton North, Bradley Shows, Michael Smith, George Stautz, Benjamin Tarran, Dusty Tenney, Pete Tietjen

5 Years: Lewis Barlow, Marcus Curran, Gary Doherty, Craig Dutenhäfer, Duane Helms, Troy Johnson, Curtis Joyce, Mark Miller, Ray Pericola, Michael Reeves, Chadd Thimesch, Cody Winkelman, Efren Zuniga

6 Years: Daniel Archer, Robin Combs, Jeffrey Dick, Michael Hankins, Milo Jackson, Kevin Kennison, Joseph Lapierre, Zach Luckie, Todd Poland, Lori Vaden

7 Years: Bryan Bernath, Dale Cross, Sergio Delgado, Timothy Dykes, Claude Lamb, Patrick Lewis, John Nepote, Brian Robinson, Jamie Wilson

8 Years: Cal Burton, Nancy Dickey, James Hagans, Thomas Laugavitz, Megan McDaniel, Bill Miller, Michael Pyeatt, John Weitzel

9 Years: Christopher Boatman, Jonas Colley, Matthew Davis, David Gallien, Annetra Garcia, Matthew Hare, Mark Harrington, Allan Roach, Kari Stephens, Reynaldo Vargas, Steve Westfall, Thomas Williams, Steve Yates

10 Years: William Balzen, Charles Clay, Brandon Craddock, Stacy Grant, Artis McGinnis, David Perry, Thomas Ritchie

11 Years: Matthew Bachtel, Randal Lewis, Timothy Parker, Gary Vaughn

12 Years: David Showalter

13 Years: Chuck King, William Patterson, Gary Rosenow

14 Years: Ramon Castro, Theron Pope, James Yon

15 Years: Donald Browder, Eric Davison, Lawrence Swenson, Bradley Vaughan

17 Years: Jackie Brady, Paul Conner, Richard Gruber, Alforenza Ray

18 Years: Robert Brooks, Anthony Johnson, Larry Smith

19 Years: Brad Hayes

21 Years: Danny Sepulvado

23 Years: David Tarwater

24 Years: Manuel Marceleno, Pete Wilczewski

25 Years: Joseph Wagner

26 Years: Gary McKern

27 Years: Timmie Benson, Eric Davis, Cathy Shaffer

28 Years: Steven Fox, Timothy Goeden

31 Years: Rodney Campbell

34 Years: Alfred Anderson, Fred Porter

35 Years: Robbie Meshell

36 Years: John Chipala, Ray Lee, Cas Love

38 Years: Daniel Duval

45 Years: William Weichel

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**Births**

Jordan Alexis Langford

Jordan and Bobbie Langford are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Jordan Alexis.

Jordan was born on August 15th. She weighed 7 lbs., 6 oz., and was 21.5” long.

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**Deaths**

Christopher Elton Potter


Chris was a native and lifelong resident of Haywood County. He played the drums in the band Spear Finger and enjoyed fishing, hunting, and NASCAR racing. He loved animals and collected guns.

He is survived by his wife of 18 years, Page Henderson Potter; his mother, Hiawatha Williams Mixon and stepfather, David of Clyde; maternal grandmother, Edith Maribell Williams; half-sister, JoAnna Parham of Canton; many nieces and nephews, cousins and many friends.

Chris was proceeded in death by his father Hollie Monroe Potter, Jr.
The newsletter for Watco Companies, LLC and Watco Transportation Services, LLC
September 2014, Volume 15, Issue 9

Members of the Pittsburg (Kansas) Team recently took third place in the Corporate Challenge sponsored by the City of Pittsburg Parks and Recreation Department. The events were held over a period of four days and consisted of events such as bowling, golf, dodgeball, a walk/run and a few other not so common activities. No Noodles in My Backyard and the Sideways Scene were just two of the more unique events.

Amanda Brisbin, recruiter said, "For the past several years we have competed in the Corporate Challenge. We enjoy the interaction with the other companies in Pittsburg. Normally there are about 10-12 companies that compete. In 2012 we placed 7th. Last year we placed 5th. This year we finally placed in the top three and we had a blast getting there."

This year Watco had the biggest turn out yet. There were about 35 team members participating in the challenge not counting the additional members who entered the walk/run. Organizers Bobbie Langford and Joey Bitner thought the t-shirt that was given to participants may have helped boost participation. The shirt this year was designed by our own Fleet Management Specialist Derek Prestholt.

Brisbin added, "We had people signed up for every event and we are all very competitive. Here’s a story to show just how competitive we are. On the last night we knew we were close to placing and we had just enough girls and guys to compete in each event. But then mom-to-be Bobbie Langford started having contractions. However, since we didn’t have anyone else to replace her she stayed and finished with us. Now that is dedication. Things went well and she had her baby a few days later.

"That same night Jeff Linville, who just joined the team, had signed up for only one event and ended up being late to his poker night because we needed an extra guy. He ended up participating in four events.

"It feels good to know that our team members take pride in their work place and community," said Brisbin. "Without them we couldn’t compete. Our team works all day and some still gave up to four nights of their time with family and friends to represent Watco in this community event."

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