July was a busy month for Watco team members who were getting new locations up and running. Not only were the locations spread across the country, they were spread across the service divisions as well. On July 1st, a new terminal in Queens, New York came on board. Ten days later two Permian Basin short lines joined the Watco family, and on July 15th, Watco welcomed a new switching operation in Toledo, Oregon.

The team members at the Queens terminal have a wonderful view of the Empire State Building as they provide service at what is called the Waste Management Review Avenue Transfer Station, which actually sounds like a good name for a Broadway show. The show the team members at this location are putting on involves rail switching and container lift and placement services. To put it simply, trash is collected by the sanitation department and taken to the facility where it is dumped onto the tipping floor. There it’s compacted and loaded into specially designed cube containers. Watco team members then load the containers onto railcars and our two-member crew pushes the consist on the load-out tracks for the CSX to deliver to Waste Management landfills.

Waste Management’s Senior District Manager of New York Operations John Sullivan said, "The New York City Department of Sanitation is our largest customer, so there is no room for error when dealing with a city of this size. We work in a demanding environment, working days, nights, and holidays, and the team serving us has met the challenges.

"This is our third long-term contract with the city and the third time that we have partnered with the former Kinder Morgan, now Watco Team. As we attempt to secure future long-term bids we will again look to form the same type of partnership with Watco," said Sullivan.

While the team at Queens was looking at a city skyline, the next two Watco start-ups had a completely different view, the vast Texas and New Mexico prairies. The Lubbock & Western and the Texas & New Mexico railroads hit the ground running on July 11th as the clock struck midnight. Both short lines are located in the heart of the Permian Basin, so named because it has one of the world’s thickest deposits of rock from the Permian geologic period. The basin is known for its large oil and gas deposits as well as potassium salts (potash). The Permian Basin is the most prolific shale play in North America and stacks up at the world level.

"We look forward to many years of growth in the Permian community," said Phil Penner, WTPS Senior Vice President. "One of our top goals will be to provide service that qualifies us to grow the business and diversify."

The Lubbock & Western Railway (LBWR) is made up of 35 team members and handles a variety of commodities such as fertilizer, grain, animal feed, frac sand, and chemicals. It’s located in Texas and is made up of two separate lines, one extending from Plainview to north of Dimmit, with the second branch going from Lubbock west to Whiteface and down to Seagraves. The LBWR interchanges with the BNSF and the Union Pacific railroads.

The Texas and New Mexico Railway (TXN) has 27 team members and stretches from Lovington, New Mexico, to Monahans, Texas. This line handles oil field commodities such as drilling mud, hydrochloric acid, frac sand, pipe, and petroleum products. The TXN interchanges with the Union Pacific. Tim Hammond serves as General Manager for both railroads and said, "I have been in the railroad industry for 25 years and have been extremely impressed with all the support and help that has come our way as we became part of the Watco family. Thank you all very much, especially those who have spent much time away from their own families helping the integration!"

Mark Blazer withstood the sweltering Louisiana heat the very first day Watco Companies began switching operations for Boise Cascade in DeRidder. Now thirty-two years later, he is still making great things happen for Watco. Mark, along with Director of West Region Operations Jerry Carter, combined their efforts while working through a bid process to form a partnership with Georgia Pacific (GP). GP and Watco share many of the same visions in safety and people development, which makes the partnership even stronger.

Watco was awarded the bid in May with operations beginning on July 15th. The Watco Team provides switching, track services, and locomotive repair at GP’s Toledo, Oregon mill.

Georgia Pacific was founded in 1927 and now has over 300 sites worldwide. The Toledo, Oregon, Site will be supported by Casey Irvan as the Site Manager. Six other team members including Curtis Daly, David Strawn, Kristopher Gibson, Riley Ford, Ryan Atwood, and Taylor Young are performing switching duties. Switching will be provided 16 hours a day, 7 days a week. GP leases 2.91 miles of track and owns over three miles of their own track. The switches include loading and unloading paper rolls, waste paper (DLK), and wood chips. Watco will interchange trains to the Portland & Western Railroad at Toledo which will take the GP cars, along with many other customers’ cars, to Albany, Oregon to interchange with the Union Pacific.

A start-up team of members from railroads across the Watco system was gathered to bring a high level of experience and... - Continued on page 2
Kansas engineer celebrates 30 year mark

Thirty years ago, Watco founder Dick Webb interviewed a young 19-year-old Jeff VanBuren for a position at his new mechanical shop in Coffeyville, Kansas. It must have went well because 30 years later Jeff is still going strong with Watco.

Not long after he started working in Coffeyville, Jeff was sent out in many different directions to help get new Watco start-ups going. In his travels he has helped out on properties in Idaho, California, Louisiana, South Dakota, and Washington. Many stories and many Watco friends later, Jeff joined the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) team when it started up and he has been an engineer with the SKOL ever since.

"Jeff was a part of what made us what we are today," said Watco CEO Rick Webb. "All the assets we have wouldn’t mean a thing without people like Jeff."

On July 13th, the SKOL team surprised Jeff with a cake and a commemorative Henry Golden Boy American Railroad Tribute Rifle.

Trammell said, "Obviously after 30 years, Jeff is very knowledgeable about the railroad industry. The great thing about Jeff is that he is willing to pass on this knowledge to other team members."

Jeff’s staying in Cherryvale for so long might be due to his meeting his wife Mindy there. She worked as a fleet manager for the SKOL then. Jeff and Mindy started dating in 2003 and got married in 2008. They live outside of Cherryvale and now are busy keeping up with their two grandbabies. Jeff enjoys trap shooting on his days off and, if he’s not at work you can find his constant companion, a dog named Earl, by his side.

Safety, not stops, is focus of Idaho Officer on a Train event

When Idaho law enforcement officials and Idaho’s Operation Lifesaver planned the Officer on the Train event, the goal was to educate the public about crossing safety.

"This isn’t an exercise in writing citations, this is an exercise on train safety, public safety, people’s safety," said Lt. Chris Weadick of the Idaho State Police. "It seems like a no-brainer that if the train’s there, it can kill you, but sometimes people need to be reminded of that."

Officers boarded an Eastern Idaho Railroad locomotive at Idaho Falls and traveled to Sugar City. They radioed down to their counterparts on the ground when they would see a crossing violation. There were a total of 25 stops with 8 citations and 17 warnings given out to violators.

The following tips are recommendations from the Idaho State Police regarding railroad crossings:

- Always expect a train on any train track at any time.
- Slow down as you approach all railroad crossings and be prepared to stop if necessary.
- Never drive around lowered gates — it’s dangerous and illegal.
- Proceed through a crossing only if you are sure you can completely clear it without stopping.
- Trains can’t stop quickly because of their size and weight.
- Don’t stop on the tracks. It’s illegal.
- If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call the number posted on or near the crossing signal, local law enforcement or Idaho State Police at *ISP (*477).

Continued from page 1 - professionalism to help train and mentor the new team.

"I would like to give a special thanks to everyone that has worked hard to get this opportunity with GP," said Vice President of West Region Operations Rob Thrall.

"We are extremely excited to build a long-term relationship with the Georgia Pacific Team at Toledo. We have a new Team that believes in safety and is very positive with a Customer focus. Our goal day one is to provide a safe service and solutions to increase rail volumes at the GP Toledo mill."

In addition to the four new start-ups, five more of the Kinder Morgan Terminals that were purchased by Watco have transitioned over.

Nick Coomes, vice president of Watco bulk terminals and operations, said, "We are excited to continue the successful integration of the bulk terminals from Kinder Morgan. On July 1st, five additional locations and many talented Team Members joined Watco. These locations include Hammond, IN; Triumph, IL; Sarpy Yard (St. Louis, IL); Dravosburg, PA; and Omaha, NE. To date, 25 of the 29 operations targeted with the acquisition have come to Watco."
Rail photographer gets an early start

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Within a few minutes of speaking to 19-year-old Drayton Blackgrove, his enthusiasm and respect for the railroad becomes clear. Friendly, conversational, and engaging, Drayton is more than happy to describe how he turned his unique hobby of filming trains into a thriving business. Drayton now owns Delay in Block Productions, a company that films railroad documentaries as well as YouTube videos.

“My interest in railroads is sort of in the blood,” says Drayton. “I have about six ancestors that worked on two different railroads. The first thing my mom ever bought me from the hospital gift shop had a train on it, and I was introduced to model trains at a young age by my grandfather.”

At twelve or thirteen years old, Drayton bought his first camera, and unable to drive, asked his grandmother if she would take him to watch trains. “She rarely left the house, so it gave her a chance to really get out, and we became best friends. Three or four days a week during the summer, she and I would be out driving and taking pictures of trains, and when I got my driver’s license, I drove her.”

Drayton later bought a better camera and started uploading his videos to YouTube, wanting to provide high quality, educational, and entertaining videos for train enthusiasts. Before long, some of his videos were getting over 300 views a day. This led YouTube to approach Drayton with a business proposition: YouTube places ads on his videos, and Drayton receives a majority of the profits. This system will allow Drayton to pay for college without having to take out any student loans.

When asked about how he ensures safety while he films, Drayton states: “Respect the railroad, respect the property, and don’t get killed.” He further emphasizes the care he takes while he films and the fact that many people don’t realize just how dangerous railroads can be. “I always make sure I’m a good 25-30 feet away from the train. The number one thing is to make sure not to freak out the train crew, make the people running the locomotive nervous, or hurt the railroad’s image.”

Among Drayton’s myriad of photos can be found a wonderful picture of the recent Ann Arbor Railroad’s Heritage locomotive that was repainted in Toledo last month. This picture was posted to the Watco Facebook page, allowing many people in the company to enjoy his work. It is safe to say that Drayton’s interest in trains will continue, and other rail enthusiasts won’t forget him either. People in the “train world” recognize Drayton, and even ask for his autograph, which he finds somewhat disconcerting. “I’m just a guy who likes to film trains,” he insists.

Ann Arbor locomotive gets heritage paint job

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

When acquiring a new short line, Watco not only gets a railroad, but there’s a whole lot of history that comes with them as well. Although the future holds many great innovations that make operating a railroad more efficient, there’s nothing like seeing a heritage locomotive running on the line to bring back memories of days gone by.

With this in mind, and with one of their engines needing repainted, the crew at the Ann Arbor Railroad (AA) requested that it be painted in the original heritage orange with the original logos. “We recently had an engine painted in the Watco black and yellow, and with this one, we wanted to have something that reminded the guys here of our history,” stated General Manager Ron Chadwick.

This request was made last fall, and in June, the idea became a reality. Joe Davis, affectionately known as “Joe the Painter”, had the honor of painting the engine. “It was definitely great to do something in different colors, and we really enjoyed doing the job. I liked being able to go into town and pick out the orange we used,” Davis stated. “Everyone who helped out on the job was just fantastic. It would be really great if we could do more of these.”

The WAXM 3879 was originally the AA 7802, and it was purchased by AA from Conrail sometime in the late 80’s. According to Davis, when it came into the shop it was worn and rusted, but they did everything they could to repair it: sanding, priming, and painting it till it shone like new. The rail world was all a buzz with the news that the WAXM 3879 would be painted in the original colors. It’s a featured story in Trains Magazine, as well as appearing all over the internet in various forums and websites frequented by rail enthusiasts throughout the country.

This has been an exciting development for people at the AA in Toledo.

“Watco was gracious in allowing us to do this,” says Chadwick. “It means a lot to those of us that have been here for a long time, and it’s important to our Customers. It’s important for them to know that, although we are now a part of a larger company, we are still the same people that have been taking care of them for years, and we will continue to take care of them.”

On the acquisition of the AA by Watco, Chadwick has some wonderful things to say: “Being part of Watco has made the AA a stronger, more competitive railroad, and the team is appreciative of what Watco has provided in the way of additional resources to allow us to grow and thrive as the Ann Arbor Railroad. They have made it easy for us to maintain our identity, and we are happy to be part of the Watco family.”

This photograph of the newly painted “Heritage” locomotive was taken by Drayton Blackgrove (see story above).
BLUE RIDGE SOUTHERN RECEIVES CAPITOL VISITOR

On July 1st, Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC) made his first visit to the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU). Although Rep. Meadows has represented the BLU and western North Carolina in Congress for just two and a half years, he has already made a big impact in DC with his support for the short line rail industry and the Customers that Watco serves. Rep. Meadows sits on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and was an early supporter of the 45G short line railroad tax credit.

This tax credit provides for private sector investment in rail infrastructure by offering 50 cents for every dollar spent to improve tracks, allowing businesses to preserve track that would have been otherwise abandoned. This further leads to not only the cheaper transportation of goods, but also to facilities that employ over 1 million Americans.

Meadows’ visit to the BLU began with a short presentation about Watco, our Customer First Foundation Principles, and the BLU operations, followed by a hi-rail trip to see and better understand the short line railroad industry. Upon returning to BLU headquarters in Canton, Rep. Meadows was greeted by officials from Evergreen Packaging and given an update of how BLU’s biggest Customer is faring in today’s market.

When asked about his experience, Rep. Meadows stated, “It is great to witness firsthand how the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad, which operates over 91 miles of track in Western North Carolina, has had such a positive impact on the community. Small railroads continue to provide a vital connection to the national freight rail network, and

Watco's Chief of Marketing is a Rising Star

Dynamic. Creative. Innovative. Tireless. These were the words Progressive Railroading said nominators used when describing this year’s crop of candidates for the Rising Stars Award. These qualities must have been from the nomination of Watco Executive Vice President and Chief of Marketing Stefan Loeb as they fit him to a tee.

The winners of the Rising Stars Award were honored during the American Association of Railroad Superintendents Annual Conference on July 19. The Rising Stars are selected by Progressive Railroading’s editors from a reader-submitted list of almost 200 railroaders under the age of 40. Long before Stefan accepted a position with Watco, railroads have been a big part of his life. One of his first gifts was a train set, and he’s been hooked ever since. Stefan’s published several train photographs in trade magazines, he’s a member of several railroad historical societies, and has coauthored a book on the history of the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad.

Although Stefan worked in banking before joining the Watco Team, he facilitated financing for acquisitions of multiple short lines and suppliers. Stefan was offered a position in 2010 as Watco’s vice president of business development and served in that role before moving up to senior vice president of marketing. In January of 2015, he was appointed executive vice president and chief marketing officer.

Stefan’s managed several large acquisitions including the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, the Ann Arbor Railroad, Birmingham Terminal Railway and more.

These and other acquisitions have resulted in “tremendous growth” for Watco, says Loeb, who earned a finance degree from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University. He estimates the company has added as many as 2,000 employees since he began working there.

“Stefan is helping to shape short line railroading and the railroad industry in the twenty-first century,” wrote Mark Rosner, owner of consulting firm JNK Associates Ltd. and a former client of Loeb’s. “He has accomplished more during [his time] in the railroad industry than many do in a lifetime.”

I’m happy to continue to support BLU, a great rail system with even better workers, making WNC a better place to work and live.”

Watco and BLU are thankful for Rep. Meadows’ support in western North Carolina and look forward to working with him on rail issues in Congress. If you would like to learn more about Rep. Meadows please visit his Congressional website at https://meadows.house.gov/.
This month, the Austin Western Railroad (AWRR) and Watco teams celebrated a huge victory after winning a twenty-year contract with Capital Metro. This celebration comes after a six-month process of preparing and pitching a bid to operate the freight side of the railroad. Because of the hard work and dedication of all involved, the team members of the AWRR will continue the work that they began in Austin nearly ten years ago.

It all started in 2007, when AWRR began operating as a subcontractor for the 112 miles of track surrounding Austin, Texas, their main role being moving rail cars. As well as moving freight, the track had been operated by Viola as a passenger line. In 2010, Capital Metro and Viola, part ways, and Hertzog took over the passenger side.

This October, the contract is set to expire, and as the track is operated by a government agency, it was required that the new contract be put out for a bidding process. The team at AWRR began working to renew the contract. Tim Enayati, South Region Marketing Manager, said of the preparations for the bid: “The process for the bids in Austin started on December 20th and went into June. Through that time period, it consumed several hours daily of both Ryan [Williams] and my time as well as pulling in other team members from different departments to help as needed. It was a very long, and detailed process that was very unique.”

After preparing their proposal for the bid, the team at AWRR had to prove that they were the ones for the job. Initially, more than ten companies were attempting to win the bid to operate this particular railroad; however, only three submitted a proposal in the end. Two finalists were then selected to make an oral presentation and submit their best and final offer.

However, Watco did more than just submit a proposal. “With our bid we had to not only submit our pricing proposals, but additionally an eighty-page technical document that explained our qualifications as well as how we would manage and operate the property,” Enayati said.

Having the best offer on the table, AWRR was rewarded a twenty-year contract that has thirty years of extension options. Previously, AWRR was operating on the entire line, including the east, central, and west corridors. However, maintenance was being cared for by another company. One of the changes to this contract is that the AWRR team will be taking care of maintenance on the east and west corridors.

Ryan Williams, Regional VP of Marketing - South Region, was an important part of this achievement. He expounded on the importance of the changes to the contract: “Having the opportunity to take on track maintenance as part of the new contract will present tremendous value add for the AWRR, CapMetro and our Customers. It’s a new challenge for the AWRR team and will allow us to operate the railroad more efficiently than ever before. Rather than scheduling maintenance activities around a 3rd party’s schedule, we now control our own destiny.”

Many factors led to AWRR being awarded this contract. “We are always striving to take care of Customers and finding solutions that add value to all parties. Having a strong relationship with CapMetro was instrumental to our success in Austin. If it weren’t for Allan Roach opening the door for us in 2007 with CapMetro, we wouldn’t have been in the position we are today,” said Williams.

Kevin Harris, AWRR General Manager, said matter-of-factly, “If we were doing things the wrong way, we wouldn’t be here. The level of professionalism, the way we deal with Customers and Capital Metro, and the way the team conducts itself have all led to this. Our safety record was also a huge factor in us getting this contract.”

Safety is always an important aspect to any project undertaken, and is a priority at Watco Companies. Because this line is also used as a passenger line for people in the Austin area, it was doubly important to ensure an environment in which those passengers feel they can use that transportation safely.

When asked what it was about the AWRR that allowed them to secure these contracts over other companies, Enayati said: “The level of customer service as well as aggressively growing the business and having good relationships with both our customers, as well as a proven track record with Capital Metro, were all keys to us securing this bid.”

So what does this mean for the future of AWRR and Watco? “For the company, this is another example of us always doing the right thing for the Customer, the community, and the company,” stated Williams. “We are always taking care of everyone, and it gives us an opportunity to learn to be more efficient, as well as giving us a solid presence within a government organization, which we’ve never had before. It’s going to be a great opportunity to learn how those groups work from an internal perspective.”

Enayati said of the future of the company: “This secures a long term position in the Austin area that will give us the opportunity to continue to grow the AWRR and add value to the Watco network for many years to come.”

Harris expressed the excitement of the team in Austin, saying that they are very happy to have received the contract and are looking forward to having a continued presence in Austin. Given the increase in responsibilities in this area, it is expected that another seven or eight team members will be added, as well as additional resources.

Rick Webb, Watco’s CEO, said of this success: “This is the story of Watco in one contract. We learn from our Customers what they need, put a first rate Watco Team in place to satisfy those needs, give them the freedom to do what is necessary to change and evolve, and finally, watch them succeed.”

Customer Service Representative retires after 11 years

Back when Sherry Bulot joined the Watco Team on March 1, 2004, there were only four short lines in the entire company to take care of. As she retires 11 years later, her CSR group alone has thirteen railroads. Sherry has always worked in the Pittsburg, Kansas, office and first joined the team as a data entry clerk. She then made stops in car hire and at the grain desk where she helped Johnnie Brown keep the wheat and beans rolling through Kansas. Sherry then joined the Customer Service Team and has primarily been working with the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (KO), mainly serving industrial products Customers.

Jimmy Patterson, KO general manager, said, “It’s always great to call for assistance and get such a friendly voice on the other end. Sherry was always eager to help and went out of her way to make sure she took care of her Customers.”

Ron Spencer, manager of Customer service, agreed, “Sherry was always a friendly voice that truly cared for her Customers. She never seemed to have a bad day.”

Sherry’s going to be plenty busy in her retirement years, she and her husband Mike have a seven year-old grandson Grant, that lives with them and keeps them busy.

Sherry said, “I enjoyed working at Watco. All of the people I worked with in the office were great, and I enjoyed visiting with the crews and the Customers.”
New sand terminal is a reality in Wisconsin

When people think sand, it’s usually the state of Florida with towns like Destin and Panama City that come to mind. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad’s (WSOR) newest terminal in Prairie Du Chien now has many people looking north when they think of sand. This sand however, isn’t used as a vacation spot but instead, the energy industry uses it in the drilling process.

The project of building the terminal entailed the construction of a 105-car industry yard, a switching lead, and a sand loading building. The 96-foot-high building holds the technology to unload sand from a truck in under four minutes and can easily load 100 tons of sand into a railcar in under seven minutes. Our Customer, Pattison Sand Company, leases and operates the facility. They expect to ship more than 5,000 carloads of sand annually, most of which will be in 100-car unit trains destined to the oil and gas industry. The terminal has already shipped out three unit trains since becoming operational on July 1.

As impressive as the new, efficient, and higher capacity terminal may be, the equally impressive and creative teamwork demonstrated by many WSOR, Watco, and Pattison Sand Company team members should be celebrated as well. The team faced and overcame numerous obstacles during the 2½ years the project took to complete. Fourteen different sites were considered along WSOR’s main line, which runs between high bluffs and the Wisconsin River, thru the backwaters of the Mississippi River and terminates in the City of Prairie Du Chien on St. Feriole Island.

The bluffs and water, height restrictions created by an airport, and WSOR access posed problems for Project Management Team engineers. Even the best site challenged the team’s creativity because it’s sandwiched between another railroad’s track, a bridge to the island, the Mississippi River, and a state highway. To complicate matters, WSOR’s narrow right of way had adjacent land owners that initially opposed the project.

Selecting the site location was just the beginning of many challenges the team would face. The WSOR team and our Customer listened and found solutions to address various community and governmental concerns. The design enclosed the unloading and loading within facility, installed a larger dust collection equipment, and located the ladder track away from neighboring homes to address neighbors’ concerns about air quality and noise from loading and train operations. In response to City leaders’ concerns, the ladder track capacity was maximized to assemble the unit trains in order to reduce switching on St. Feriole Island, (which is the center of the City’s tourism economy due to its recreational use and historical significance). The team also acquired land and purchased wetland mitigation credits to address State and Federal agencies concern over the project’s environmental impact resulting from its location in a Mississippi River flood plain and to reduce the wetland area impacted by the construction of the ladder track. This also enabled the facility to be placed on the only area of the site that was not in the flood plain.

In order to minimize truck traffic on the roadways, the team coordinated with the City and State to vacate a street and place the entrance to the facility at the only break in the adjacent divided state highway. All of these challenges took time to resolve and required patience from both Watco and Pattison Sand. Watco’s Project Management Team worked with the vendors to lessen the effect of these delays on their businesses including creating a storage area for large pieces of equipment at the vendor’s fabrication facility.

Pattison Sand Managing Partner Kyle Pattison said, “The new facility has taken a lot of effort by all and with that will help provide better service to all of our internal and external customers. I appreciate everyone’s efforts to help accomplish this task.”

Ken Lucht, WSOR director of business development, said, “As each train leaves the terminal, our team can smile knowing the train stands as a testament to what we can accomplish when we place our Customers first, work hard, and act as team. When we have a commitment to persevere we can overcome challenges to do the right thing for our Customers and the communities we serve.”

The new Golden Spike Award will be rewarded on a bi-monthly basis.

Since this was the first time the award was given out, the Finance and Accounting Leadership Team wanted it to be a surprise to the team members, so they voted on the winner. From here on out, team members are asked to submit names of co-workers who have gone above and beyond their normal work requirements to achieve great results relating to great Customer Service, quality improvements, profitability improvements and value for the long term. For future awards, team members submitting the nomination must prepare a thorough explanation through the Team Member Recognition Portal outlining the success of the individual nominated, how they achieved the results, and what were the specific outcomes. The top three names are then given to the Finance and Accounting Leadership Team who selects the winner.

In light of its historical significance, this award is a great honor which represents the ingenuity and dedication of hundreds of people who have done something extraordinary. Nancy Dickey has continued to live up to that legacy every day here at Watco.
Congratulations to the following team members celebrating their anniversaries!


2 Years: Christopher Droody, Matthew Frusha, Adrian Gutierrez, Adan Hernandez-Flores, Jared Humphrey, Joseph Mayer, Clinton Meadows, Dudley Meadows, Tyler Ray, Alberto Rodriguez, Jeff Van Schaick, Adam Wolfe, Kevin Woods, Brett Woollard

3 Years: Nicholas Bennett, Kevin Cook, Cindy Davied, Tanya Gath, Donald Janda, Eric LaBrec, James Lambert, Benjamin Lowin, Reggio Lozano, Chase Manley, Dayton Smith, Michael Wastchak, Mikayla Widick

4 Years: Tyler Adkison, Jeff Ecret, Erik Finnerty, Ryan Griffin, Keith Johnson, Paul Leonards, Christopher McCready, Carl Petersen, Jastin Rainwater, Roman Salazar, Teresa Short, Brit Sonnier, Cindy Van Becelaere, Ryan Williams

5 Years: Travis Combs, Ryan Dziedzic, William Jones, Nathan Keizer, Alvin Maney, Seth Peterson, Terry Smallwood, Dyllan Vincent, Damien Williams, Justin Yakes

6 Years: Christopher Hayes

7 Years: Angelo Barrera, Raymond Barrera, Justin Dempsey, Raymond Howard, Robert McMullan, Dennis Sawyer

8 Years: Phyllis Angermeier, Andrew Brown, Ronald Jackson, Dwight Sayles, Joshua Seefeld, Robert Sua, Nathan Tuzicka

9 Years: Robin Conerby, Maurice Davis, Jeff Mayfield, Kyle Moody, Matthew Sodergren, Alicia Stimpson, Terrell Westbrook

10 Years: Adam Hanson

11 Years: Kyle Finn, Sofrona Howard, Ted Kadau, Jimmy Patterson, Delta Wood

12 Years: Bob Devillier, Johnny Gary, Jason Hislop, Kendice Talty

13 Years: Dave Gromer, Jason Jeane, Joshua Mitchell, Albert Olivera, Tricia Underwood

14 Years: Mark Bray, Timothy Dyer

15 Years: Mark Lynn

18 Years: Brian Collier, Chad Davis, Timothy Wiseman

19 Years: Doug Kerley, Kevin Krueger

20 Years: Joseph Brown, Susan Lewis

23 Years: Kenneth Dozier, Juan Ramirez

24 Years: Maurice McGinnis

27 Years: Rodger Isbell, Darryl Marshall

29 Years: Sam Ricci

34 Years: Guy Zabel

37 Years: Randy Glaze

38 Years: Steve Prokopich

Marriages

Ashley-Adams

Mark Alan Adams and Amy Kaye Ashley were united in marriage on June 27, 2015, at Oak Openings Metropark in Whitehouse, Ohio.

The couple honeymooned in the Caribbean. The groom is an operator for the Ann Arbor Railroad and son of Jeffrey Adams, locomotive foreman for the Ann Arbor Railroad.

Anselmi-Kichler

Devin Kichler and Miranda Anselmi were united in marriage on July 18, 2015, at St. Michael’s Catholic Church in Girard, Kansas. The couple honeymooned in Jamaica.

Devin is a farmer and Miranda is a human resource coordinator in the Pittsburg, Kansas, office. She is the daughter of Kevin Anselmi, director of facilities in Pittsburg.

Births

Yvaine Norway Corrick

Corey and Heather Corrick are proud to announce the birth of a daughter, Yvaine Norway Corrick. Yvaine was born on July 21, 2015. She weighed 5 lbs., 15 oz., and was 18.5 inches long.

Yvaine was welcomed home by her siblings, Liam, 13; Micah, 11; Elizabeth, 9; Aiden, 8; Amelia, 6; Victoria, 5; Isaac, 3; and Tirian, 1.

Corey works in the IT department as vice president of applications. He offices out of the Pittsburg, Kansas, and the Springdale, Arkansas, locations.
Perhaps a railroad conference is not somewhere one would expect to hear a comedic take on the song “Cups”, but at this year’s Railroad Safety and Liability Seminar, that is exactly what happened. Elizabeth Hayes, daughter of Tom Hayes of Watco’s legal team, performed an entertaining parody for the guests at the Oklahoma City conference.

Attending the seminar hosted by Watco Companies were over 120 different people from multiple railroads, law firms, and others that provide legal and insurance perspectives for short line railroads. For most, this would have proved a daunting experience, but Elizabeth said: “I’ve been performing all my life, mainly in dance, but also in musical theatre. Singing for people isn’t that out of the ordinary for me, and I’ve also done similar songs for school projects and homework assignments.”

Elizabeth, who had already agreed to assist with the seminar, was asked by her father to perform. “She’s always had a knack for doing parody songs, and she’s always been a performer. She’s the type that doesn’t hesitate when asked to do this sort of thing,” said Tom.

“Dad told me he wanted me to make up a song to sing at the conference a few days before it started, but I thought he was joking,” said Elizabeth. “After we got in the car, he asked me if I had actually written anything. When he realized I hadn’t, he told me that I better start writing it now!”

For Tom, this was a wonderful chance to connect his work at Watco with his family life. “It’s great as a dad to spend some quality time with your daughter and let her know what you do. It’s also very rewarding to see how your children interact with older business people.”

The parody went over very well at the conference, drawing a lot of applause from the audience, as well as many accolades. “I think a lot of people enjoyed the performance because it wasn’t what someone would normally see at a railroad seminar,” said Elizabeth.

When asked about railroad safety and how it relates to her life, Elizabeth stated: “It definitely affects me because my dad is always out of town working on cases when there is an accident. It’s always sad when people get hurt when they didn’t have to. Rail safety is definitely something that can’t be overlooked.”