Austin Western Railroad selected as BNSF's Shortline of the Year

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

For Watco Companies, the highlight of October's BNSF Shortline conference was the naming of the Austin Western Railroad (AWRR) as BNSF's 2015 Shortline Railroad of the Year.

AWRR was selected out of 200 other short lines because of its participation in "significant growth in traffic it interchanges with BNSF" since the two railroads began working together in 2007, said BNSF officials.

Watco Vice President of Marketing Ryan Williams, said, "This is a tremendous honor and true testament to our commitment to safety and determination to grow the business with our Customers in Austin. The Austin Western's general manager, Kevin Harris, and the entire team have done an outstanding job in meeting the needs of our Customers."

"Austin Western and BNSF expanded unit train operations to handle the growing aggregate traffic, which originates on the Austin Western line and continues to its destination in Texas on the BNSF network," said Dean Wise, BNSF vice president of network strategies.

During the first seven months of this year, freight interchanged between BNSF and the short line rose 28 percent compared with the same period in 2015. AWRR's compound annual growth rate was 35 percent between 2007 and 2014 for freight interchanged with BNSF.

"In recent years, we've seen a significant increase in aggregate unit trains due to increased highway construction in Texas, and the Austin Western Railroad moved almost all of the aggregate needed to build the Formula One race track in Austin," said Williams.

The AWRR was able to accomplish the growth while at the same time sharing the line with passenger rail. The passenger rail runs during the daytime and the AWRR has a window that they can work in to move the traffic on the line.

Watco’s Customer Appreciation event hits record numbers

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

There were many new pieces to Watco’s Annual Customer Appreciation Event this year; new organizers, new venues, new sponsors, and new Customers were all a part of the event held October 27th through the 29th. The annual event is held to thank many of our Customers for choosing to do business with us and allowing us to grow our businesses together. This year, more than 300 Watco Customers converged in Pittsburg, Kansas, to hunt, golf, shoot clay, sing karaoke, and build new friendships.

Event Coordinator Cassie Bicknell said, "We had a tremendous response this year; almost 80 more guests signed up for our event than last year. We appreciate the hospitality that was shown to our guests by the community and our team members, and we look forward to continue to grow the event in the future."

Attendees were treated to some special entertainment when Wayne Jacob, Entergy, was one of the CA Days "money bird" winners.

Texas Tech locomotive hits the tracks

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Watco Companies loves to show school spirit and support for local communities throughout the nation. This has been made particularly clear with the recent painting of a Texas Tech locomotive.

Emblazoned on the front of the now red and black WAMX 3536 is the Double T and the Masked Rider, with the Texas Tech University logo on the side. It was an unsuspecting Dusty Young, trainmaster and 2007 graduate of Texas Tech, that jokingly made the suggestion for the company to paint the locomotive.

"I never dreamed that the folks at Watco would make this happen," said Young. "When I saw the mock-up drawing, I couldn't wait for it to be finished."

The design process began in July, with the painting process beginning on October 12th. Blake Ferguson, graphic designer, Texas Tech University, Office of Communications and Marketing, worked on the design of the locomotive. He had to submit a couple of different versions due to moving parts that would’ve

- Continued on page 2

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Switching Team begins operations in Arkansas

The new Domtar Switching Team got off to a hot start when they began operations at 5:30 a.m. on October 12th in Ashdown, Arkansas. The team will be providing services at the paper mill for Domtar and will be bringing in empty cars and pulling out the loaded cars.

Location Manager Roidino Trevino said, "Each team member was hired from the area so we provided nine new jobs and all of them are new to the railroad business."

The team will be providing service 24/7, 365 days a year and will be working two 12-hour shifts.

Tony Clark, vice president of operations, said, "We had a group of team members from different locations to help out with the training and start-up. With everyone at Ashdown being new to the rail industry we wanted to ensure that we provided the training they needed to get them off to a safe start."

Watco’s Customer Appreciation event hits record numbers

Continued from page 1 - the local favorite, the Kansas City Royals, made the playoffs and both venues that hosted the dinners made sure there were plenty of televisions so that all could see the games. However, game one on Tuesday night lasted much longer than the dinner did, with the Royals finally winning the game after midnight. There were many guests at the coffee pots the next morning at breakfast.

All Aboard Foundation President Brad Snow helped organize the event and enjoyed the time spent with Watco guests. "You get to talk to these people throughout the year, and it’s nice when you finally get to meet them in person and spend time relaxing and having fun."

It wasn’t all work and no play as some Customers took advantage of their time in Pittsburg to conduct meetings the day before or the day following the event. There were also business discussions between shots on the golf course and at the hunts.

"Although Customer Appreciation Days is meant to be a fun event, there’s a lot of opportunities created by taking advantage of the time together to discuss different projects," said Snow.

One of the unique sponsors, John Kalka, attended with his son J.R., representing both Kinder Dozer as a sponsor and RockNRail as a Customer.

There are many special relationships that are forged during this time and team members look forward to the event each and every year.

Watco CEO Rick Webb welcomes guests to the 2015 Customer Appreciation Days.

Kansas Operation Lifesaver presents award to KO & SKOL

Representatives from Kansas Operations Lifesaver (KOL) visited two Watco short lines to present them with a framed proclamation from the Governor thanking them for their support of the program.

The Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO) received their award on October 27th, and the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) received theirs the following day. KOL Executive Director Julie La Combe, and KO Board Member Jim McKeel presented the proclamations to the railroads.

"Kansas Operation Lifesaver plays a very important part in the railroad industry," said Todd Trammell, SKOL general manager. "We were very honored to be presented with the proclamation."

Jimmy Patterson, KO general manager, said, "Watco and Operation Lifesaver have always been great partners in rail safety prevention and this award solidifies that association. It’s a pleasure to work with Julie La Combe and her group year in and year out."

BHRR TEAM MEMBER DEPLOYED

The Birmingham Terminal Railway is now one man short as Team Member Norman Jones was recently deployed. He serves in the Air Force/Air National Guard and has been called up for an extended period of time in the Middle East. Norman is in the Civil Engineering Unit.

When not bravely serving our Country, Norman works as an engineer/conductor for the railroad.

BHRR General Manager David Tarwater said, "Norman has been a team member for 4 1/2 years. I just want to thank him for his service and ask that his fellow team members pray for his safety while he is away."

Birmingham Terminal Railway Team Member Norman Jones and his wife Wendy.
SKOL ships massive load  
by Michaela Kinyon  
Communications Intern  

This past month, team members on the South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) celebrated a great success as they shipped one of their largest loads to date. This achievement showcases the importance of teamwork and dedication on the part of the railroad.

Two industrial boilers were moved for Victory Energy, a company out of Collinsville, Oklahoma that manufactures them for other companies. The boilers were measured to 22 feet above the rail, and were loaded onto two separate cars to be shipped to the Tulsa Port of Catoosa in Owasso, Oklahoma to be loaded onto a barge and from there be shipped to Mississippi to go to the Customer.

“It’s always a pleasure working with those guys,” said Jeff VanderMaas, director of transportation at Victory Energy. “We’ve never had any issues, and they’re always receptive to our needs. It’s been a good working relationship all the way through.”

Todd Trammell, assistant general manager on the SKOL, supervised the move.

“It’s a process that’s taken a couple years to plan,” he said. “It took a lot of time and coordination on everyone’s part.”

Trainmaster Michael Cooper, and Mobile Power Repair Supervisor Jerry Waun made sure the entire route the boilers would take was clear and that there were no power lines or obstacles.

“We took the dimensions of the boilers and made sure that the whole load could make it to the port safely,” said Trammell.

“This is kind of a test project for this sort of load,” said Ron Spencer, director of Customer Service and Collections. “It will allow us to do more projects like this in the future, which has a great potential to add more business for the company.”

When asked what the significance of this move was, Trammell stated, “It just goes to show how SKOL and all the team members there work hand-in-hand with our Customers to work out solutions to move whatever kind of freight is sent our way.”

Euclid Team celebrates five year safety anniversary  
by Tracie VanBecelaere  
Managing Editor  

The Euclid, Ohio, Terminal Team recently celebrated going five years injury-free. They celebrated the occasion with a luncheon from Farmer and the Deli on October 1st and the team members each received Watco shirts.

Bryan Trexler, location manager, said, “I’m very proud of the team members and their dedication to providing safe service to our Customers in Euclid. Five years is a great achievement, and the team works hard to maintain their injury-free status. They continue to do the right thing all the time.”

The team at Euclid transloads a variety of commodities such as liquid, dry bulk, food grade and hazardous materials.

CELEBRATING SAFETY CAJUN STYLE  

Like all good Louisianans, the DeRidder Switching Team celebrated their ten year safety anniversary Cajun style. Cecil’s Cajun Café catered in a catfish dinner and each team member received a gift card as a thank you for their commitment to safety.

Ronald Perkins, location manager, said, “Putting safety above all is the key to the team’s success. They make sure that whenever the facility welcomes a new team member they go over all the proper procedures so that they can do their job in a safe manner. They also watch out for each other and make sure that everyone goes home safe at the end of the day.”

“Each team member always wants to do their best and each plays an important role in the facility’s success,” added Perkins.

Congratulations to this great team for safely serving Packaging Corporation of America each and every day!

Listed are the DeRidder Team Members along with their length of service: Mathew Frusha, 2 yrs; Michael Trull, 3 yrs; Doug Jones, 9 months; Randy Blackwell, 3 yrs; Codey O’Neal 9 months; Aaron Davis, 1 yr; Annetra Garcia, 10 yrs; and Eddie Garcia, 15 yrs.

Arkansas Southern Railroad hits 10 year injury-free mark  

The Arkansas Southern Railroad Team celebrated an amazing 10 years injury-free with a catered steak dinner.

Jeff Buck, general manager, said, “This is a great group of guys and gals. I am proud to be part of a team that always looks out for each other. That’s what it takes to be safe and in turn makes us successful.”

The team at the ARS has gone injury-free since the start-up of the short line in 2005. Congratulations on setting the bar high for safety!
**WATCO PARTNER WINS CHAMPION OF CHANGE AWARD**

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

This past month held exciting news for one individual who works a great deal with Watco Companies to ensure that the transportation needs of the country are met. Robert Portiss, Director for Tulsa Port of Catoosa was recognized on October 13th by the US Department of Transportation as one of eleven "Champions of Change".

The Champions of Change Program was created in order for the White House to showcase people within the transportation industry who are working to foresee and assist in the future transportation needs of the nation. The individuals were selected by US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and the White House.

In a recent press release from the White House Office of Communications, Foxx stated of the people awarded the title, "This year’s nominees are a truly gifted group of individuals who have exceptional vision and foresight when it comes to the issues we are dealing with in transportation...Their exemplary leadership is charting the course for our 21st century needs."

In regards to the Port of Catoosa and how his work would impact transportation, Portiss said, "The great thing about our waterways is that they're multipurpose, and there are a multitude of national benefits that they provide to our country. We need to move freight around the country in the most economical way possible, and ports would allow that to happen."

“It’s been a wonderful ride,” laughed Portiss. “I knew and worked with Dick and Rick Webb many years ago when they bought the Sante Fe line, which runs to our port. They’ve helped make our port what it is today, and the commitment of their service in bringing trucks and rail directly to our facility is fabulous. It opens to us markets through Kansas and Oklahoma that weren’t readily accessible to us before.”

One of Portiss’ biggest accomplishments within his over 40 years of work was to form a formal partnership between the United States Army Core of Engineers and the ports in the Arkansas and Oklahoma area. The work done by the partnership between his port and the railroad also allows 2 million tons of cargo to go in and out that is generated out of Kansas, most notably allowing the winter wheat to reach New Orleans.

“To spend an entire lifetime doing this kind of work and then be recognized for it is humbling and overwhelming, and there are so many people I want to bring along with me,” said Portiss. “You can’t do this alone. It takes a team. I don’t deserve this award, but I’m accepting it on behalf of all of those that have allowed me to do what needs to be done and supported me along the way.”

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**Blue Ridge Southern Railroad vs Hurricane Joaquin**

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Hurricane Joaquin didn’t come in like a butterfly, but it did sting like a bee. The hurricane was labeled a Category 4 hurricane, almost reaching a level 5. Although the main impact of the hurricane hit the Bahamas, the heavy rains and high winds hit parts of the East Coast causing substantial damage. One area that was affected by the hurricane was North Carolina, the home of Watco’s Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU).

In the area where the BLU is located, the storm resulted primarily in mud/rock slides, blocked drainages, and downed trees. The BLU Team sprung into action in preparation for the storm which included staging three response teams at Canton, North Carolina, which is centrally located on the BLU. The teams consisted of five team members from a sister railroad in Alabama, the Birmingham Terminal Railway, seven BLU team members, and three Division 2 support staff.

These teams were equipped with a boom truck, grapple truck, two dump trucks, two back-hoes, three hy-rail inspection vehicles, plenty of chain saws with extra chains and fuel, various other small tools, and eager team members that could quickly be dispatched to any trouble spot. They patrolled track ahead of all trains and performed periodic inspections between trains around the clock to ensure any debris was quickly cleared from the road and all water drainages were performing properly. Generators and portable fuel were strategically located in case electricity failed, which fortunately did not. All trains were operated at restricted speed for the duration of the storm. In addition, a temporary kitchen was set up at Canton with hot meals prepared by volunteers to help keep energy levels high.

Darl Farris, BLU general manager, said, “I was most impressed with how everyone from the different railroads worked together. Everyone always intuitively knew where they needed to be and what needed to be done. Each person acted like it was their own railroad, their own property, and their own team.”

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**Thank you Veterans for your service**
Team member runs to fund cancer research

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Seeing what Watco team members do in their free time is always wonderful, as is what Jacqueline Chavis, WTPS People Services Manager, has done. In January, Jacqueline’s cousin was diagnosed with breast cancer, and unfortunately passed away in April. Within a few days of her diagnosis, Jacqueline saw an advertisement for the AVON-39: The Walk to End Cancer and signed up, managing to raise $2,225.70 towards finding a cure.

“Seeing the advertisement really hit home for me,” said Jacqueline. “I felt like I wanted to do something to help the cause and others.”

The first AVON-39 was in 2003, and has grown over the past 12 years to what it is now. People who wish to help must raise at least $1,800 in order to participate in the two-day, 39-mile walk through various parts of New York City. This year, about 3,500 participants raised $8.7 million dollars collectively in an effort to fund cancer research and patient care.

In order to raise the money that she contributed, Jacqueline said that she just asked people she knew, posted on Facebook and sent emails to her fellow Watco team members asking them to donate.

“I got a great deal of support through social media,” she stated. “Many people contributed to help raise the money. I really want to thank all of those that helped me be a part of this.”

When asked about the walk, Jacqueline said, “It was amazing. The energy was very high. It was very picturesque, and the people were so friendly along the way. It was really awesome to walk with survivors from all backgrounds, both men and women.”

Jacqueline, an aerobics instructor, certified personal trainer, and very active person, had little trouble preparing for the event.

“I just walked as often as I could at local parks this summer and did some moderate jogging,” she said. However, she was still very sore and a little daunted by the distance.

“Saturday was really tough by the end. I wasn’t sure if I could do it on Sunday, but I rested and felt well enough for it. I’m happy I completed it.”

She continued, “I just count it a blessing, a huge honor, and a privilege to be able to walk 39 miles. I think about others who don’t have that ability or who may have any type of disease, including cancer.”

Walking over the bridges of New York was one of the loveliest parts of the walk according to Jacqueline, but when asked about her favorite part, she said, “Being a part of a community that came together for a singular purpose and with a common goal in mind to raise money to find a cure for breast cancer and help survivors.”

The walk occurs in various cities on different dates throughout the year. If you would also be interested in contributing, visit the website at www.avon39.org.

“T...
GPIP helps Houston Elementary School

by Jennifer Severe
GPIP, Operations Admin. Analyst

Watco’s 3rd Annual Golf Tournament benefitting the local Woodland Acres Elementary School occurred on Friday, September 25th and was sponsored by Greens Port Industrial Park (GPIP) in Houston, Texas. Woodland Acres Elementary School is located in close proximity to GPIP. This event, along with others GPIP participates in throughout the year, allows Watco the opportunity to actively contribute to the local community.

The tournament had 12 teams of foursome, and included a range of players from various companies. Many company representatives golfed, and some of those who were not able to attend the event made sure to participate by making generous donations. Some Watco players who participated were Tim Enayati, marketing manager, Ernie Farrand, vice president, Operations-Houston Division, Tim Haas, SVP business development-WTPS, John Edwards, VP of sales and marketing, and Skip Hastings, marketing manager-WTPS.

When asked what the significance of this event meant to him, John Edwards stated, “This event allows us the opportunity to focus on our future, which is the kids, and help out in their development and progress in some way.”

There was a silent auction available at the event with multiple collectible items up for purchase. For a special treat, some of the children of the Woodland Acres Elementary School came and sang three special selections for the golfers before they went out and started to play.

With teamwork from volunteers and the golfers, the tournament generated a donation amount of over $6,750 to the elementary school. This amount will allow for the purchase of needed equipment and supplies for the school. Tim Haas stated, “With the generous contributions made by all participants here, we will be able to help give the students more supplies and equipment that would be beneficial to the learning process.”

Team members also had the opportunity to celebrate the retirement of Ron Bird during the event. Ron Bird, business development consultant-Transportation Services, was with Watco for over three years. Although it was Ron’s last day with Watco, his experience and dedication to the company will be remembered as a treasured asset.

During the dinner and awards ceremony, Ron stated, “It has been a pleasure working alongside such great team members, and these past few years have been filled with many opportunities that I have had the privilege to be a part of with Watco.”

Top photo: Matthew Hunt (Frost Bank), Skip Hastings (Watco), Jeanne Jullien (Gorrondona & Associates), and John Yarbrough (RailPro).
Bottom photo: Children who attend the Woodland Acres Elementary School.

Blue Ridge Southern Railroad joins in Labor Day celebration

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Labor Day was a little different for the team members of the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU), who were privileged enough to participate in the 109th annual Labor Day Parade in Canton, North Carolina, on September 7th. The parade was a great chance for the team members to interact with their local community, as well as celebrate 109 years of continuous operation of the Evergreen Paper Mill, BLU’s biggest Customer and the largest single employer in Haywood county.

“We were thrilled to participate in this historic event and proud to represent the BLU at this venue for the first time,” said Ethan Green, conductor and TS&IC member for the BLU. “We are already planning on participating again next year.”

This parade was an excellent opportunity for the Team Safety & Improvement Committee (TS&IC) to exhibit pride in the BLU. Darl Farris, general manager of BLU, said, “Most of the team members who work here are from this area, and participating in the parade made them feel even more a part of the community. They work here, pay their taxes, and send their kids to school here. This was just another way to be a part of that.”

TS&IC members, Brandon Parham and Joseph Edwards, and CMO, Jamie Miller, drove BLU vehicles in the parade and made sure all the equipment was looking its best. Featured in the parade were a rotary dump truck, the mechanic’s work truck, and the Miller’s truck. Several of the team members’ families supported the event by either riding in the parade or encouraging team members from the viewing areas.

BLU Engineer Nathan Higgins and his wife Giovanna were also in the parade with their three-year-old daughter Josie, who won the Little Miss Labor Day Pageant. According to Farris, they were “grinning from ear to ear”.

“You could tell by the looks on everyone’s faces how proud they were to be a part of this,” Farris stated. “This was our first opportunity to participate in this parade as the BLU, since we were just starting out last year. It was a great opportunity for the team members to show themselves and the new company off.”

After the parade, the team members got together with their families for a picnic, eating hamburgers and hotdogs, discussing the day, the parade, railroading, hunting, fishing, etc. “It was great to relax with everybody,” said Farris. He also said that it was a great opportunity for the team members to meet people they never would have known otherwise.

When asked about the significance of the event, Farris said, “This community is primarily blue collar. We work with our hands, and it’s neat to be able to celebrate that and be a part of it.”

Top photo: Blue Ridge Southern Railroad Engineer, Nathan Higgins and his wife, Giovanna, are pictured in the parade with their three-year-old daughter, Josie, winner of the Little Miss Labor Day Pageant. Bottom photo: Vehicles from the BLU were driven in the parade.
**Births**

**Hank Newton Haggerty**

Zach and Amanda Haggerty are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy, Hank Newton, on July 15, 2015. Hank weighed 7 lbs., 5 oz., and was 20 inches long.

Hank was welcomed home by big brother Austin who is two years old.

Amanda is an administrative assistant at the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad.

**Cara Elizabeth Marsh**

Brent and Lindsey Marsh are proud to announce the birth of a daughter, Cara Elizabeth. Cara was born on September 28, 2015. She weighed 7 lbs., 3 oz., and was 20.5 inches long.

Brent is a Project Engineer at the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad based out of Madison.

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**November Anniversaries**

Congratulations to the following team members celebrating their anniversaries!

1 Year: Steven Ashley, James Avant, Byron Barnes, Andrew Beard, Brad Bourbina, Nicholas Bowers, Nicholas Bremer, Lindsay Brown, Jesse Bucholz, William Burns, Brian Butler, Clayton Causey, Brandon Christopher, Troy Consentino, Gabriel Credo, James Curran, Daniel Duron, Ryan Esser, Ryan Fayet, Brian Gehlsen, Terry Gosney, David Grace, Marcus Graham, Tonya Hearrell, Nicklas Howard, Andrew Johnston, Thomas Lundy, Richard Manes, Geraldine Mansch, Dustin May, Edward May, Marty McClendon, James Miller, James Miller, Anthony Oliva, Antonio Sanders, Brady Sansom, Jeremy Spates, Matthew Tillern, Devin Tucker, Daniel Turberville, Bradley Williams


3 Years: Matthew Adams, Dennis Burt, Kenyou Canada, Kenny Coberley, Amber Gardner, Mickaela Gerler, Azarel Guzman, Timothy Humphrey, Aaron Jensen, Leann Kennedy, Kacey Krueger, Steven Mancillas, Zachary Pumphrey, Robert Shaffer, Michael Smith, Cody Tracy, Michael Trull

4 Years: Gregory Bartholomew, Everts Batista, Brooke Beasley, Shane Bengson, Jessica Cancino, James Chinowith, Justin Gaulrapp, Brent Henson, Robert Hill, Geoffrey Holder, Cole Holter, Melissa Jasper, Jonathan Key, Hilda Morin,

**November Anniversaries**

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<td>4 Years</td>
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**ARS team member retires**

After ten years with the Arkansas Southern Railroad (ARS) Guy Evans, better known as “Dub” is ready to retire. Dub began his career with the Kansas City Southern back in 1975 where he started with the car department doing 500 mile air test and doing inspections in Heavener, Oklahoma.

Jeff Buck, general manager said, “I enjoyed meeting Dub and listening to his railroad stories.”

Dub said he has made a lot of memories over the years, and he has witnessed numerous changes, from the caboose being removed to the advanced computer locomotives of today.

Dub plans to enjoy his retirement working on his cattle ranch and traveling with his wife.
**Service Assurance Team scares up donations**

*by Tracie VanBecelaere*

Managing Editor

Watco’s Service Assurance Team in Pittsburg, Kansas, scared up some Halloween fun this year, and in the process collected donations for charity. There are three different groups (pods) in the building that handle specific groups of railroads. Each pod completed against the others for a chance to win the funds donated to a charity of their choice.

The voting for the best decorations involved a “Coin War.” Team members put coins in a jar to vote for their favorite pod. However, if they wanted to vote against a group, they would put paper money in the jar and that would count against their votes.

“Half the team members in this building recently moved over here and so we’ve all been trying to find ways to work together and introduce ourselves and everything. Having this friendly competition forced us to interact with each other, and we built a lot of really good relationships and improved moral too,” said Jay Benedict, collections administrator.

In just one week, the pods raised a total of $1,238.71. The winning pod has chosen to spend the money on a couple of needy families and will be providing them with Christmas gifts and dinner. The SEK Human Society will be receiving $100 from the event as well.

Fox 14, a local news station, visited the pods and featured the story on their newscast.

Watco Communications Director Tracie VanBecelaere said, “We try to get involved in the communities that we operate in and with Texas Tech having such a great fan base in the area, it made perfect sense to do a Texas Tech locomotive. The response has been amazing and it definitely received a warm welcome.”

The locomotive was unveiled Monday, October 26th, much to the excitement of Texas Tech fans. Young was able to be the pilot engineer for the newly repainted engine.

“I was proud when I earned my degree, and I am equally as proud to have been a part of this event,” he said. “Thanks should be directed towards all of those that worked to make this possible. They did a great job.”

While fans of the railroad and Texas Tech will be able to see the locomotive all along the LBWR line, it is important to note that safety should always be practiced when viewing it. It’s illegal to be on railroad property without permission, so anyone wanting photos that would require being on the line or the engine would need to contact the railroad for assistance.

“The staff at the University was so helpful in making this come together and I’ll have to say, this is one of the best looking locomotives out there. Jimmy Elgin and his team at Cherokee Coatings were the ones who completed the work on the locomotive and they did a fantastic job,” said VanBecelaere.