Watco pioneers training program

By Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Watco Team Members Joey Bitner and Solomon Watkins recently began a new chapter in their Watco careers. Joey accepted the position of Marketing Manager for the Louisiana Southern, Mississippi Southern, and Vicksburg Southern railroads. Solomon serves as the Terminal Manager for the new Oshkosh Terminal in Wisconsin. What is unique about these team members is that both Joey and Solomon were part of a new training program designed to train current team members to fill positions so that Watco can promote from within and provide team members the skills to be successful in those positions. Interestingly, not only did Joey and Solomon receive Watco training at the same time, they also had several of the same classes together at Pittsburg State University and received similar degrees. But that’s when the similarities end, Joey and Solomon are now filling very different roles essential to the success of the线路 they are at.

Solomon began his training in January of 2015. He had worked as a seasonal worker and showed strong leadership skills as two-year captain on the football team at Pittsburg State. When he was hired full-time as a Terminal Manager Trainee, Adam Hanson, Assistant Vice President - Terminal Operations, Division B, took him under his wing and showed him the ropes. As part of his training program he spent time at the terminals in Oklahoma City, St. Louis, and Pittsburg, Kansas. In addition, he visited many of the other Watco terminals to get a feel for the different commodities they handle and the different modes of transportation that are involved in the process.

“The most beneficial part of the training was going to the different locations with Adam and then visiting with the other managers and picking their brains to see how they would handle different situations,” said Solomon.

Solomon was in the training program for approximately 11 months before accepting the position as the Oshkosh Terminal Manager. As manager he is responsible for all aspects of the terminal such as production, operations, and financial duties. Solomon will also assist the marketing team in growing the business and providing more value for our Customers.

“I think this is a great story to tell,” said Adam. “We had a seasonal worker with leadership abilities and provided the background that he needed to be able to manage his own terminal. It worked out great that by the time his training was complete a position opened up at a new terminal on one of our larger railroads.”

Solomon’s team loads roof- ing granules for shingles from truck to railcar. When loaded, they travel down the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad and are handed over to a Class I railroad with a final destination of Jonesburg, Missouri. While Solomon was busy learning about the terminal division, Joey was visiting railroads and spending time with the marketing team to learn the ins and outs of what the marketing team does to create value for Watco. Joey started out as a Collections Administrator on the Revenue Accounting Team and after working with marketing on a project he told one of the managers how much he would like to be a part of their team.

“I liked how they meshed and worked together to create solutions,” said Joey. “They had an interesting dynamic and I really wanted to be a part of it. I expressed my interest to Becky Fearmonti and she set up a meeting with Pat Cedeno (SVP Marketing & Sales), which turned out to be more of an interview.”

Cedeno said, “I’d really been thinking how we needed a training program because of the variety in what our group does and how it would be better to have some-

Watco featured in Trains magazine

By Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The black and yellow Watco locomotives have traveled all over the country and now they are on the cover of Trains railroading magazine. Writer David Lester began gathering information and photographs for an article last fall, an arduous task considering the various sources he used.

When asked why he selected Watco as his subject David responded, “My primary interest in railroading for one, and what I write about for Trains, is focused on the business, economic and technology aspects of the industry. I found Watco’s drive to succeed in the short line railroad business through relentless focus on freight customers and employees to be impressive. The company is tightly run by serious people who have high levels of accountability, and is a model for the short line industry.”

Stefan Loeb, Watco EVP and chief marketing officer, was interviewed by Lester on the story and said, “It was a great piece on the history and what we’re all about and the pride that our team has had since Watco was started. He did a good job of finding out what we do by talking to people at different levels.”
Relationship brings blade business to SRRR

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contributing Writer

At Vestas’s wind blade manufacturing facility in Colorado, a rail spur could easily provide the global company with an easy, efficient way to ship the 54 meter long blades to locations across the country, from Iowa to Texas.

But Vestas places an importance on relationships, says Watco Marketing Manager Angela Stauffer.

Each of the wind blades is 49-57 meters long, and requires special clearances to travel via rail.

SKOL Trainmaster retires after 28 years

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

You wouldn’t think that a trainmaster for the South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) would have to deal with Homeland Security or the Secret Service but that's exactly what Randy Letner did during his tenure as trainmaster on the SKOL. When President Clinton came to speak in Pittsburg this past November Randy received a call from Clinton’s security detail to ensure that there wouldn’t be any trains blocking his route on the bypass. Following 9-11, Homeland Security would contact Randy to make sure the placards were written up according to regulations.

"Things have changed a lot through the years," said Randy at his retirement party on February 26th.

Randy’s wife Mary said, "He should write a book. Every railroad track we go over he has a story for."

Randy began working for Watco on the SKOL as a track laborer in 1988. He was moved to the transportation department about nine years later due to a back injury and served as a conductor for 12 years and then was named location manager, assistant trainmaster, and finally, trainmaster.

"Back when I started it was definitely a family operation. Dick (Watco Founder) hired me and taught me a lot about taking care of the Customer and the people. He was tough but he was very fair," said Randy. "Dick would come find me every Friday, didn’t matter where on the track I was, he’d pull up in his Grand Marquis and check to see how things were going. Dick always said, ‘It’s your railroad too, you take care of your customers and they’ll take care of you.’"

"We didn’t have cell phones back then so at the end of the day, Rick (Webb) or Dick would show up in my driveway to find out how the day went and what all we got done," said Randy. "One thing that hasn’t changed is the customers, we still serve the same ones that we did back then, the grain elevators, Pitt Plastics, and Vinylplex, along with the new ones too."

Randy remembers back when the biggest trains consisted of 15-20 cars and there were 21 intersections that the trains had to go through in town. "It was scary," said Randy. "I think everyone was relieved when that track was shut down."

Randy plans to keep busy during his retirement; he wants to travel and visit some of the country’s National Parks and monuments with the Grand Canyon being at the top of his list. The SKOL Team gifted him with a guided fishing tour at Grand Lake and his wife Mary, who taught Randy to fish, is as excited about it as Randy is. Randy also likes to repurpose furniture and he has many projects that are waiting in the wings for his attention.

"One thing I will say," said Rick, "It didn’t matter when or what we needed, whenever we called Randy, he was there and we appreciate that very much."

"So they truck the wind blades up to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and load them on a Watco rail line," she said. "They choose to do business with Watco."

It’s not a simple task: Each blade truck requires a pilot truck, and they must pass through the Port of Entry. Two mobile cranes are required on site at Cheyenne to hoist the blades off of the trucks, stage them along the track, then load them from the ground onto rail cars.

“They’re doing one unit train per week, with between 60 and 66 cars on a train,” Stauffer said.

This year will be their busiest yet.

“By March they’re anticipating two trains a week,” she said.

Vestas, the only global energy company dedicated exclusively to wind energy, has three manufacturing facilities in Colorado. Founded first as a blacksmith shop in Denmark in 1898, the company began producing wind turbines in 1979 and has since become a leader in the market.

As an outcome of serving Vestas so well, Watco has grown Customer relationships in other directions, Stauffer noted.

"Now we’re doing car repair in Cheyenne, car repair in Colorado, bidding on switching in Colorado, we secured their fleet management contract — it just keeps evolving," Stauffer said. ‘And it’s because Watco gives Customers what they need.’"
BBAY celebrates operating and safety anniversaries

by Molly Henneke
Contributing Writer

Down on the bayou, the Bogalusa Bayou Railroad Team recently celebrated their one year injury-free and operating anniversary. Team members were given team jackets and celebrated with a lunch at the Bogalusa Grill.

General Manager Brit Sonnier attributes the team’s success to a safety first culture, attention to detail and 1005 rules compliance.

Sonnier states, “The BBAY stands out because of its teamwork and willingness to go the extra mile to get the job done safely.”

The team’s success is also based on their hard work and having experienced team members such as, Jesse Bryant and Douglas Wayne Smith.

Jesse is one of the most experienced engineers at BBAY and is a mentor to junior team members and is the TSIC leader. Additionally, he coaches team members in the field always putting safety first.

Doug has taken a leadership role in the car control/cleaning department. The car department does AAR light repairs, which Doug has excelled at, as well as other daily duties.

The BBAY began operations on January 6, 2015, and serves International Paper. The paper mill brings in scrap paper to make new paper products such as rolled paper and cardboard. The team brings in about 50-60 carloads each week and has an average of 30-40 outbound cars weekly.

“The mill has it down to a science on what cars they need and when,” said Sonnier. “The volumes on the road have remained steady and things are going well.”

The railroad gets its name from the bayou that sits right behind the mill that the short line serves and like many of the bayous throughout Louisiana, the Bogalusa Bayou Railroad hopes to remain part of the scenery for a very long time.

Aspen Transportation moves "sweet" loads from North Carolina

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contributing Writer

Step into any produce section in any grocery store in the U.S. and you’ll see sweet potatoes. While you might pick a few up, add them to your cart, and begin thinking about how you’ll prepare them at mealtime, you might not give much thought to how they got there.

The answer: Nash Produce, by way of Aspen Transportation.

Watco Supply Chain Services, a Watco Companies subsidiary, acquired Aspen Transportation in October. Founded in 2002, Aspen is based in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and provides a range of domestic transportation management services including multi-mode freight brokerage and project cargo coordination.

“Our office typically does anywhere from 1,300 to 1,500 loads a month, crisscrossing the U.S.,” says Aspen branch manager Stephanie Mize.

Among Aspen’s many Customers is Nash Produce, which Aspen has served since 2011. During that time, Aspen has moved more than 350 shipments of produce for the Nashville, North Carolina-based company, and generated more than $800,000 in gross revenue.

On a recent visit to Nash, Aspen team leaders Johnny Noles and Leandrea Bradley got to see a truck being loaded with sweet potatoes. Seeing the process first-hand reinforced to Aspen the importance of the transportation industry and the fact that each and every person involved plays a key role in getting goods to end users.

It also allowed for relationship building.

“Our visit to Nash gave us a first-time opportunity to meet a Customer face to face, which is a great way for us to build upon the Customer First Foundation Principle of Valuing our Customers,” says Stephanie Mize, Aspen branch manager.

Mize says that from February 2015 to February 2016, Aspen realized a 37 percent increase in business with Nash Produce.

“We’re thrilled with the opportunity to continue service for the Customer to give the best value and the most time-efficient way of moving loads,” Mize says.

Aspen Transportation moves "sweet" loads from North Carolina

Bulk sweet potatoes in palletized super tote sacks ready to be loaded onto the hired truck at the Nash Produce facility in Nashville, North Carolina.

John Noles, Aspen Transportation team leader; Leandrea Bradley, Aspen Transportation team leader; Mike Boone, Nash Produce director of transportation and logistics.

Members of the BBAY Team who celebrated their one year safety anniversary are (l-r): Terrence Snell; Douglass Wayne Smith, car control; Diedre Boudreaux, clerk; Christopher Chiasson; car control; Mike Miley, conductor. Kneeling in front is Michael Smith. Not pictured Timothy Thomas, Andrew Mitchell, Troy Catalino, Edward May, Jesse Bryant, John Stewart, Darren Brinkley, and Brit Sonnier general manager.
Refugio Team celebrates two years injury-free

By Michaela Kinyon
Contributing Writer

The team members at the Refugio, Texas, terminal are excited to celebrate their two-year safety anniversary. They plan on celebrating by having a team dinner in the near future.

Terminal Manager John Wiebelhaus says that the success is largely due in part to the “I am my brother’s keeper” attitude held by the team members of the terminal, and he also states that the TSIC team has had an influence, “[They have] played a huge part in the development of our Safety Culture at Refugio. They assist with training and inspections of equipment to help keep our team safe day in and day out. Our TSIC group focuses on helping team members identify potential hazards and how to mitigate them.”

Refugio is a 24 hour, 7 day a week operation, which can load 300-325 trucks, that’s 15 million pounds of sand a day! There has been a recent decline because of the drop in oil prices, but that has allowed the team time to improve their operations and SOP’s (Safety Operational Procedures).

Wiebelhaus stated, “This is truly a milestone for the Refugio team. To reach this two year injury-free mark is like opening a new door, not only towards an accomplishment but to a new goal of further improvement and success. I hear lots of discussion in the lunch room about Trinity and their 22 year injury-free success. How do we get to where they are?”

When asked what values and skills have led to the accomplishment in Refugio, team members said, “Building experience in the key positions with continuous training, proper leadership, and positive attitudes due to the Watco Foundation Principles. We start by setting a good work ethic and keeping standards high in our day to day operations.”

“How do you explain to a child that their father was killed because we took a shortcut,” said Wiebelhaus. “Our team understands that safety is not about an RPI ratio, it’s about each one of us. Each one of us is looking out for ourselves and for our brothers and sisters we work with day in and day out.”

BLU Team Members receive "Blue Backs" for safety awareness

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contributing Writer

Jonathan Thompson, Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU) trainmaster in North Carolina, has awarded two team members the coveted “Blue Backs,” a local safety incentive on the BLU.

On Jan. 26, Bryan Adkins reported a double break joint bar at Giles Runaround track in Waynesville. Adkins immediately reported the break to Track Foreman Brock Parham so that the issue could be addressed.

Adkins, a conductor-engineer, has worked for Watco since 2014.

On Jan. 27, Dennis Cain found a stripped joint in the Asheville yard while interchanging with Norfolk Southern. Cain immediately reported the break to his conductor, who agreed there was a problem and the crew promptly reported it to the NS Trainmaster.

Cain, an engineer, has worked for Watco since 2011 and has been with the BLU since Watco acquired it in 2014.

“Hats off to these team members for their efforts each day to make our operation a safe place to work,” says Thompson, who noted that the actions by Cain and Adkins are a “prime example of Watco’s Customer First Foundation Principles.”

The Blue Backs he awarded the two are a way to reward their efforts. BLU team members who earn the specially-designed bills may turn them in and redeem them for incentives.

“ I am very proud to have a team that will put safety above all else, and wouldn’t want it any other way,” Thompson says.
Watco receives United Way Pacesetter Award

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contribution Writer

The United Way of Southwest Missouri and Southeast Kansas may have announced Watco Companies as the 2015 Pacesetter Company of the Year, but all those involved say the real winners are those served by United Way agencies.

Watco donations for 2015 were up 80 percent, says Brad Snow, who last fall was appointed to head up the newly created All Aboard Foundation at Watco.

The All Aboard Foundation was created to develop partnerships with other nonprofits, schools, government agencies, and churches to make the community a better place to live.

Contributions made by Watco to the United Way are part of $185,536 that was raised in Southeast Kansas in the 2015 campaign; it goes directly to United Way agencies in Southeast Kansas.

The prestigious Pacesetter Award, given during the annual United Way luncheon which for several years Watco has hosted at the Pittsburg headquarters, recognizes companies that lead by example, set the pace of a campaign, and build momentum for it.

“They spark enthusiasm throughout their organization and their company,” says Jeremy Martinous, local United Way director of re-

source development.

Martinous says there are about a dozen Pacesetter companies now in Pittsburg, and that they contribute about 60 percent of what United Way raises in a year.

“If they win the Pacesetter, it’s because they did an outstanding job by having more games, more participation, being involved in other ways,” Martinous says.

Watco was chosen this year, she says, because of the tremendous gains in giving by the 170 team members based in Pittsburg.

“Watco went from $2,000 in contributions last year, to almost $14,000 raised by employees this year,” Martinous says.

She credits the excitement generated by Snow and Cassie Bicknell, All Aboard Foundation fundraising and event coordinator, as well as the encouragement of company leadership, as having a significant impact on the campaign.

She cites community involvement projects such as a dozen Watco team members donating a day of labor to build a learning trail at a local park as another positive.

“We are making an investment in our community, and Watco is very much that kind of company. Their employees depend on a strong, stable community. I see Watco doing so much. They know how important it is. If we can help citizens that are struggling, they can become more productive citizens.”

Snow says that’s part of the foundation’s mission.

“Our focus at Watco has always been to be an industry leader, and now we are also adding a focus to be community leaders,” Snow says.

“Watco teams always come through for you whenever asked.”

Martinous says she hopes Watco will inspire others.

“It’s huge,” she says. “Think of the difference we could make if other companies would follow Watco and encourage and motivate their employees. Think of the impact.”

Triumph Terminal lives up to its name

By Michaela Kinyon
Contribution Writer

Even terminals with few team members need to be concerned about safety, and no one embodies that like the Triumph, Illinois, terminal, which is run by two team members. Although they have only been a part of Watco Companies since July 1st, 2015, they are celebrating 22 years without a reportable injury.

“I actually forgot about the anniversary till I was reminded,” said Terminal Manager Tim Selquist. The Triumph team keeps a board with their safety record that is updated every Monday.

“I knew it was coming up, but I wasn’t sure what day it was till I updated our board. You lose track of the miles when you’re focused on the road ahead.”

When asked what this anniversary means to Selquist and his team member in Triumph (who has been part of the operation since November 2015), Selquist stated, “This is an achievement whether it’s one person or one-hundred people. It’s pretty significant, and that significance goes up every day as we think about the safety practices put into place.”

The team celebrated by going out to a “little lunch”, although they may do something later to include the team members from other companies that haul the products to the terminal on trucks by possibly having a cookout.

“Safety is good for everyone,” said Selquist. “It’s good for the Customer, keeps the costs down, and keeps the team members and equipment safe.”

Selquist places a great deal of importance in this achievement on those that came before him working at the terminal. “We need to reflect on everyone that put something into it that isn’t here anymore. My teammate has only been here a couple months, but I want to pass that history on to him.”

“I hope to see 44 years on that board someday,” Selquist stated matter-of-factly. “Aim for zero. Everyone should follow that.”

The location has provided service to Owens Glass since its start-up and Selquist says that in part is why building a long-term relationship is key. The products the team transports goes into making clear glass bottles for Miller beer.

“I believe a new product in a blueish bottle for some vodka is also being produced,” said Selquist.

The terminal has a 15-car siding which is switched twice a week. Tim and Jon final spot the cars they are working out of over a pit into a stationary conveyor, then into to a bulk truck that is delivered to the Customer. They average about six semi loads per day. Owens is a 24 hour, 7 day a week operation that was founded in 1903. They operate 80 plants which are located in 23 countries.
KO to serve Great Bend transload center

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contributing Writer

A consortium of city and rail interests, including the Watco’s Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO), has been given the go-ahead to begin preliminary engineering for a transload shipping center at Great Bend, Kansas.

Kansas transportation leaders say it will have significant positive impact on the region’s farmers and manufacturers, will allow for reduced transportation costs, and will provide economic development opportunities.

Transloading in this case will be from truck to rail and rail to truck and will provide more flexible, cost-effective solutions for Customers who may not have local access to freight rail service or those who need expanded warehousing.

The Kansas Department of Transportation will contribute $3 million for the $6.8 million project; that investment will be used for rail improvements.

Development plans were crafted as a joint partnership by the city of Great Bend, the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development, Kansas Transload Services, and KO.

KDOT Secretary Mike King said he was pleased with how the group developed its proposal and is eager to get construction started later this year west of Great Bend at the airport.

“We are delighted to have the opportunity to move forward with this transload project as it will provide a boost to the economy in central Kansas,” says Great Bend Mayor Mike Allison. “The contribution from KDOT is what made this project possible. We are confident that K&O Railroad and Kansas Transload Services will develop a top flight transportation hub for Great Bend.”

Watco is excited to work with KDOT, Great Bend, and Kansas Transload Services to serve the central region through a multimodal facility, says Pat Cedeno, Watco’s senior vice president, marketing and sales.

“Secretary King’s vision created this tremendous opportunity for the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad to provide car supply and rail service to the facility,” Cedeno says. “We look forward to building new relationships with the community and the customers we will be serving at the facility.”

Great Bend is one of two communities that emerged from a group of seven selected to make a formal presentation in August 2015 before the Transload Facility Site Analysis Selection Committee, which includes private sector representatives. The other city selected for development of a transload facility is Garden City, which has yet to receive final approval for preliminary engineering.

Watco pioneers training program

Continued from page 1 - one who would be able to hit the ground running the minute we needed a position filled and provide them, and us, with a better chance of succeeding. When Joey expressed an interest, the timing was perfect to get something going.”

Joey said the most valuable part of his training was the time he spent with Cedeno and Director of Marketing Carla Rice.

“Carla has such an extensive knowledge of her Customers, the volumes they ship, and she has a great relationship with the operations team. I couldn’t have asked for better mentors.”

In addition to spending time at the Arkansas Southern, Stillwater Central, and the Kansas and Oklahoma railroads, Joey also headed to Texas to spend time with the marketing managers on several of the railroads there.

“My advice to anyone would be to step out of their comfort zone. You never know what you’re capable of and you won’t if you look for excuses why not to do something,” said Joey.

It appears that advice has worked out well for everyone in this situation.

(Left to right): Keith Cameron, director of property and real estate, Kirk Hawley, senior vice president, service solutions, and Joey Bitner, marketing manager, discuss the properties that Joey will be working on in his new position.

Adam Hanson, assistant vice president - Terminal Operations, Division B, (left) and Solomon Watkins, Oshkosh terminal manager look at equipment at the Oshkosh location.

Houston Terminal holds blood drive

by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Contributing Writer

As is the case with many Watco team divisions, the team at the Houston terminal in the Greens Port Industrial Park wanted to give back to the community.

A few years ago, the team began assisting the nearby Woodland Acres Elementary School with financial support and sponsorships.

This year, says Office Administrator Karrie Torina, the Houston division decided to broaden what it does for others.

“We are trying to reach out even more,” Torina says.

She coordinated the team’s first blood drive on January 25th to benefit the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center.

“There are many local Houston residents in need of blood transfusions, and with our donations, we were able to provide help to 17,” says Houston Finance Manager Alishia Mitchell. “The event allowed us the opportunity to actively contribute to the community.”

The division is eagerly planning another blood drive for June 9th and likely will have one in September, as well.

“As we continue to grow and get our name out there, we’ll get more participants and be able to help even more people,” Torina says.

The Houston terminal provides dock services, transloading services, and rail, touching all areas of the transportation industry.

Experience Doctor On Demand from the comfort of home, or anywhere. Watco Team Members and family receive access to Board Certified medical doctors and licensed psychologists, through live video visits on your smartphone, tablet or computer.

Look for the dedicated Watco DoctorOnDemand.com/watco website for more information and to waive the cost of your first visit!
Births

Riley Cheyenne Thomas

Timothy and Heather Thomas are proud to announce the birth of a baby girl, Riley Cheyenne. Riley was born on February 16, 2016. She weighed 7 lbs., 1 oz., and was 19 3/4 inches long. Riley was welcomed home by sisters Makenna, 4, and twins Kaydence and Adalynn, 2.

Timothy is a conductor at the Bogalusa Bayou Railroad in Louisiana.

Braxton Tyler Miori

Amy and Jason Miori are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy, Braxton Tyler. Braxton was born on December 3, 2015. He weighed 7 lbs., 11 oz., and was 20.5 inches long.

Amy is the Director of Payroll and Recruiting and works out of the Pittsburg, Kansas, office.

Andrew Dylan Langford

Jake and Bobby-Sue Langford are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy, Andrew Dylan. Andrew was born on January 12, 2106. He weighed 7 lbs., 5 oz., and was 21 inches long.

Bobby-Sue is the Storage Coordinator and works out of the Pittsburg, Kansas, office. Grandma Vicki Langford also works in the Pittsburg office as a Customer Service Representative.

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to the following team members celebrating their anniversaries!

1 Year: William Akers, Wesley Archer, Joel Armenta-Delgado, Zachery Barajas, Eric Black, Christopher Blackman, Tiffany Brown, Gavin Burrell, Corey Corrill, Michael Dally, Walter Dettmann, John Distefano, Christopher Foxhuber, Jeremiah Hoy, Joely Gath, Ramiro Gomez, Natalie Hammond, Timothy Henderson, Lindsay Johnson, William King, Benjamin Langan, Andrew Mann, Zachary McKinnon, Alishia Mitchell, Austin Norris, Chris Pagel, Devin Reilly, Gerald Robinson, Shannon Rodgers, Charles Sanders, William Schwalm, Steven Seidl, Ron Shriver, Jason Smith

2 Years: Brandon Ahmann, Jared Baier, Desmond Cartwright, Levi Clause, Rasheda Combs, Dillon Erickson, Christian Gomez, Phylariss Hopkins, Justin Hulsey, Raymond Kammer, Francisco Montalvan, James Moore, Jared Oliver, Kyle Poss, Victor Proslow, Jose Rivera, Jared Rowland, Brindi Schoon, Jason Selzler, Brandon Shaver, Ronald Sherman, Jarrod Steadham, Jared Vandal


4 Years: Humza Abdul-Haq, Anwar Aiken, Jacob Bagby, Andrew Boe, Jesse Crouse, Lawrence DesRoches, Kevin Fetzer, Christopher Gamblin, Tammiie Hambek, Brent Killian, Jeremy Madsen, Marc Massoglia, Timothy McLachlan, David Ontiveros, Brad Payne, Christopher Rith, Bradley Seiderman, Donald Smith, Delores Sneed, Duane Stephenson, Jeffrey White

5 Years: Cassie Bicknell, Taylor Carter, Evaristo Corona, Lori Cox, Richard Grant, Norman Jones, Daniel Paul, Nickolas Saunders, Franklin Waun, Scott Wolff, Kathleen Woods, Malcolm Young

6 Years: James Blevins, Dustin Coester, James Daly, Brett Goltz, Kyle Hittesdorf, Anthony Jones, Jesse Kolosik, Vicki Langford, Andrew McBride, Louis Pena, Dean Schenaznyder, Jason Stout, Angela Sylvia, Kennneth Thomas, Cesar Valentin, John Woods

7 Years: Kenneth Cathell, Richard Chadwell, Skip Hastings, Jimmie Huggins, Gerald Kerns, Timothy Largent, Gerardo Martinez, Bernardino Osorio Vargas, Johnny Rankin, John Rood, John Rowland, Dan Smith, Cecil Traway, Steven Williams

8 Years: Tina Castro, Sean Corr, Gwen Foster, Robert Gable, Jennifer Johnson, James Maddux, Justin Moody, Brett Norris, Judson Rogers, Eva Rozezewski

9 Years: Kelvin Banks, Bruce Brewer, Lyman Brown, Mandi Favalora, Patrick Holden, Larry Jensen, Esteban Lechuga, Paul Minnis, Danny Sems

10 Years: Frederick Blondiau, Stephen Brath, Marlin Garcia, John Neel, Michael Rogers, Joe Sandoval, Mark Tarr, Gary Westphal

11 Years: Patti Audeit, Adelita Barajas, Tyler Batley, Robert Boyd, Michael Galla, Eric Sabatucci

12 Years:Kent Ainsworth, Brenda Caruthers, Charlene Huskey, Bartolome Marrero, Robert Martinez, Charles Mier, Kevin Watkins

13 Years: David Bullion, Frank Davis, Roger Easterling, David Gibson, Kenneth Lucht, George Spencer

14 Years:Bernardo Cuevas, Walter Stroomborg

15 Years:Joshua Kramer, Brad Snow

16 Years:Edward Garcia

17 Years:Sunil Bangari, Mark Krause, Ron Martin, John Smith, Robert Triesch

18 Years:Michael Davis

19 Years:Ronald Tapley

20 Years:William Carroll

21 Years:Fernando Almanza, Dick Fogliasso

22 Years:Mark Green, Steven Morgan

23 Years:Mike Broussard, Herb Lamkin

26 Years:Sherri Leport

27 Years:James Crawford, Michael Howarth

28 Years:Bryan Benson

30 Years:Paul Oppel

32 Years:James Herman

35 Years:Steven Lang

Do you participate in conference calls?

In an effort to reduce the cost of conference calls to Watco, we are asking everyone who currently has a conference number to begin using freeconferencecall.com.

Our goal is to stop using other providers by the end of March.

To register with freeconferencecall.com, please contact Eva Rokezewski, Watco Accounts Payable Coordinator, at rokezewski@watcocompanies.com to receive a link.

Registering is simple and takes just a few moments.

Need help? Have questions?

Call Eva at 620-231-2230.
ABWR CELEBRATES SAFETY

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The Alabama Warrior Railway (ABWR) Team had a plus one at their recent safety luncheon. Watco CEO Rick Webb was in Birmingham so the team invited him to join the meeting and a catered barbecue lunch from Saw’s Juke Joint so they could visit about a variety of topics important to the team.

Anthony Hoyte, ABWR trainmaster, said, “The meeting was very successful, we talked about safety, how things were going on the ABWR, and how things overall with Watco are looking.” Not only did the team members get an opportunity to grill Rick on any subject but Rick turned the tables to get some feedback from the team about things such as the benefits package they receive and if they need any additional assistance from support services.

“Rick knows how to draw the team out and we had a good discussion,” said Anthony. “I think everyone was really happy with the information that was received and how the meeting went.”

To continue building a strong safety culture at the location, the team’s goal is to celebrate every 30 days they go injury free with a luncheon. With Saw’s as an incentive, it can only help.

Team members from the Alabama Warrior Railway shared their safety lunch with a visitor from Kansas, Rick Webb.

Pittsburg Terminal Team celebrates safety anniversary

by Michaela Kinyon
Contributing Writer

Along with all the other safety anniversaries this month, the Pittsburg location is proud to celebrate seven years with no reportable injuries, although rumor has it that there has never been an injury since start up in the 90’s.

Pittsburg is a unique location, given that it is not only where Watco began, but it is also a warehousing and trucking terminal in addition to the railroad siding that they transload from.

According to Terminal Manager Shane Smith, this makes the safety aspect of their work unique. “The guys are on the road every day. We’re in a lot of bigger towns, and that adds to the amount of things that could go wrong. You have to worry about the people around you and the surroundings.”

Smith continued, “We also never know how seriously safety is taken at the job sites we go into that aren’t part of Watco Companies.”

In order to do the job safely, Smith says that everyone is responsible for their fellow teammates.

The team plans to celebrate by going out for dinner, but they are patiently waiting for the new Colton’s Steak House to open up on March 21st so they can try it out.

When asked why safety is such an important aspect of their work at the Pittsburg terminal, Smith stated, “It has to be. We’re dealing with eighteen wheelers, traffic, cranes, and a lot of other things. We have to have safety as our top priority. There is always a certain amount of danger and a certain amount of respect you have to give everything you’re working with. You can’t let your guard down or an accident happens.”