Two Watco Team Members win a trip Down Under

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Watco’s great Western Australia Customer, CBH Group, has made two Watco team members very happy. CBH will be flying team members Chad Taylor and John Neel to Perth, Australia for the Grand Opening to celebrate CBH’s unprecedented investment in the future of Western Australia rail.

The duo’s names were drawn out of a jar of approximately 300 entrants hoping to be the lucky winners of the trip. All expenses for the trip will be paid for by CBH, the two men only need to worry about what they’ve been requested to bring back home to family and friends.

Taylor never dreamed that when he moved to the Land of Oz from Texas that it would lead to a trip to another place also nicknamed Oz. Taylor moved to Kansas in 2009 to join the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (KO) Team. Taylor said he made the move because he was looking for a place to grow and advance and that’s exactly what he’s done.

Taylor was promoted to assistant trainmaster in May of 2010 and was promoted to trainmaster in August of 2011, primarily covering the Wichita area. In addition, Taylor volunteers to assist with the KO’s Team Safety and Improvement Committee and serves as the Senior Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers for the KO.

Interestingly, Taylor works for a railroad that specializes in the same thing that CBH does - grain. His location was one that the group visited when in the U.S. to understand Watco’s experience in shipping grain and the relationships with their Customers.

Taylor took the place of Thomas Drewenski, who had to withdraw from the contest for medical reasons. When Taylor’s general manager, Brad Hayes, told him he had won he didn’t believe him because he hadn’t heard that Drewenski couldn’t go.

“He made me show him the e-mail that I got saying that he had won,” said Hayes. “Once he saw that his eyes lit up. We were getting ready for a meeting with our Customer, OCI, and they were just as excited for Chad as I was when they heard the news.”

Hayes added, “Chad is the perfect example of hard work and dedication paying off. He had a goal he wanted to achieve when he came to this company and he worked hard and safe to get there. He will be a great representative for us and for all of Watco.”

“He is stickler for rules compliance,” said assistant general manager Jimmy Patterson of Taylor. “He’s firm but fair and always the first to show up in the field with Gatorade or popsicles for the team members on hot Kansas summer days. I really couldn’t be happier that he’s getting this great chance.”

Taylor and his wife Sarah are expecting their first child, a baby girl, in November.

Neel is an engineer for the Louisiana Southern Railroad (LAS). Neel said the trainmaster for the LAS called him to congratulate John Neel, engineer, (center) on his upcoming trip to Australia.

Brad Hayes, K&O general manager, with trip winner Chad Taylor, K&O trainmaster.

Trainmasters Cory Smith and Paul Hattaway congratulate John Neel, engineer, (center) on his upcoming trip to Australia.

BRB WINNS PRESIDENT’S AWARD

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The Baton Rouge Southern Railroad was recently recognized for their safety record at the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association’s annual convention. The team received the President’s Award for the best safety rate in the under 50,000 man-hours category. In addition, the Baton Rouge Southern Team won a Jake with Distinction Award for having zero reportable injuries.

Michael Gibson, vice president of operations, Gulf Region, said, “I’m proud of the team at the Baton Rouge Southern and their commitment to safety. It’s an honor to be recognized by our peers for the safety record that each team member contributed to. They’ve set the standards for everyone in the rail industry to follow.”

Team members pictured with the award are (left to right): Richard Ryder, Johnny Smith, Tracey Jones, David Riley, Roland Gardner, Kevin Kennison, Brit Sonnier, Leslie McCoy Jr., Jeffery Poole, Errol Flint, Kendrick Bates, and Duane Stephenson.
Roadmaster retires and heads for the greens

by Ted Kadau
Marketing Manager, Great Northwest and Palouse River & Coulee City Railroads

After 39 years of railroading, William (Bill) Ward has earned a little time on the golf course, and that’s just what he is going to get.

Ward, who served as roadmaster for The Great Northwest and The Palouse River & Coulee City Railroads since 2004, retired on May 31. In commemoration of the event, his co-workers (both past and present), friends and family attended a party in Ward’s honor on June 15 in Lewiston, Idaho.

Scott Adams, chief track engineer for Watco Companies’ West Region and Ward’s supervisor during his tenure with Watco, noted that he felt it was important to commemorate Ward’s retirement from the railroad industry.

“His guys really looked up to him,” Adams said of Ward. “I think he has just done an outstanding job.”

Adams noted that Ward had an outstanding safety record – not only with regard to personal injuries, but also track-caused derailments – during his tenure with the GRNW and PCC, as well as his time with Union Pacific Railroad (UP) and Southern Pacific Railroad (SP).

“Bill was always willing to help out,” he said. “He went to the Mission Mountain Railroad when needed. He went to the Yellowstone Valley Railroad when needed during the floods of 2011 and at times when we were short on manpower. I have known Bill since 1997 and, to the best of my knowledge, he has never had a personal injury of his own. He always got involved in his guys’ work. He had a lot of pride in his work and his guys’ work.”

Adams noted that Ward had a reputation for being fair... and for speaking his mind.

“Bill was Bill. He always said things for the way they were,” he added with a laugh. “I just wanted to recognize another railroader for all their hard work, dedication and a job well done and allow him to go enjoy his retirement.”

Ward got his start in the railroad industry in 1973 with the former SP. He then worked with the UP following the Southern Pacific/Union Pacific merger in March, 1997. He came to work for Watco on Nov. 15, 2004. The June 15 party was attended by not only Ward’s current co-workers from Watco, but also George Altonburg, former Manager of Track Projects with the UP and Ward’s former supervisor at the UP, as well as track and construction contractors who had worked with Ward over the years.

The event included a dinner and the presentation of several cards and gifts, including a large stone marker reading “Ward’s 19th Hole” – a clear acknowledgment of Bill’s love for the game of golf.

In addition to his reputation at the railroad, Ward is also known as a scratch golfer. In fact, when reached for comment for this article, Ward was teeing off on the first hole of another round of his favorite pastime.

“I thought it was great that the company did that,” Ward said of the June 15 party. “I really appreciate it.”

Ward added that he has a lot of good memories from his time with the railroad and plans to spend his retirement traveling, spending time with his wife Cindy – who also retired in June from a property management company - and, of course, spending a lot of time at the golf course.

“Basically, I am going to do whatever I want,” he added with a laugh.

Dan Garrett, GRNW & PCC roadmaster, Bill Ward, retiree, and Scott Lanas, PCC track Inspector, display a stone marker presented to Ward during his retirement reception on June 15 in Lewiston, Idaho.

Eastern Idaho Railroad AGM provides railroad history for tour

by Logan Falletti
Communications Intern

Garrett Bolyard, assistant general manager of the Eastern Idaho Railroad (EIRR), received recognition last week for his tremendous contribution to the tour of the historic district of Twin Falls, Idaho. A plaque was presented to Bolyard during a small ceremony on May 29 at the city chambers.

The tour on May 19 drew over 100 participants, from local citizens to civic officials. Hotdogs were grilled while the tour group learned about the city’s past. Bolyard gave a speech that highlighted the importance of the railroad to the founding, growth, and continued economic success of the city.

The state of Idaho dedicated last May as “Idaho Archeology and Historic Preservation Month”. The tour was part of a series of events offered by the Twin Falls City Historic Preservation Commission showcasing the rich history of Twin Falls. Bolyard was contacted by the chairperson of the Commission, Darrell Buffaloe. They met in person and discussed what they wanted emphasize about Twin Falls.

There are 32 historic buildings in the area protected by city ordinance that are listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places. The tour also included a climb to the top of the historic grain elevators and interiors of some historic buildings. The EIRR provided a locomotive that was parked on the tracks adjacent to the site of the original depot while Bolyard spoke to the crowd. He supplemented his presentation with a photo display of the railroads in the area and its impact on what is known as the Magic Valley as a whole. He gave a history of railroading in Magic Valley, from the original Minidoka and Southwestern Railroad, to the operation by Oregon Short Line, through its ownership by the Union Pacific, and finally to Watco’s Eastern Idaho Railroad operation in 1993. He calls the event a learning experience for himself, too - many lifelong residents told him stories about the railroad that were never written down.

“We were told by the Idaho State Historical Preservation Office representative who attended and assisted with the architectural tour that our event was clearly one of the best in the state,” said Buffalo.

The great success of the railroad’s exhibit on the walking tour has prompted the Commission to reserect “Railroad Day”, a day that was celebrated for many years on Aug. 7, the day the railroad came to town in 1905.

The first Western Australia grain train getting loaded at the Hyden silos in the Albany Zone.
Asbury, and Carthage, you can still catch a ride on an authentic streetcar that rode the Southwest Missouri Electric Railway from 1916 to 1939. Streetcar No. 60 was one of the many cars that transported area residents to their destinations and members of the Watco Mechanical Team recently helped get the beautifully restored car back on track after problems began occurring while running the trolley.

The streetcar was being operated on a mile-long track through the King Jack Park in Webb City and was a popular visit for the area schools. The car was also building up a following for its popular Polar Bear Express, a holiday ride featuring Santa and a reading of the book. Problems began with a power conversion, from electric to gas. The car was originally powered by four electric motors but had to be switched to gas since the streetcar system no longer exits. Jim Dawson, a volunteer with the Southwest Missouri Railway Association called Watco's Larry Jensen, senior vice president and chief mechanical officer, to see if he had any ideas on what needed to be done to get the railroad back in service. Once Jensen took a look, he knew the right man for the job: Tex Inman, Watco's director of locomotive support.

Inman has been finding and solving problems in all types of locomotives and railcars since 1972. Special projects like this one aren't unusual for him. For example, he's been keeping the trains rolling at the Galveston Railroad Museum for some time.

“It’s an interesting job,” said Inman. “I never know where I’m going to go or what I’m going to be doing next.”

Inman drove up from Texas with his flatbed trailer to save the day. There were issues with the rear-wheel assembly and Inman took the parts back to Watco's Houston mechanical shop to have the repairs made. “Debbie Moody (locomotive administrative assistant) and all of the guys at the shop did a great job in completing the project. Debbie kept track of all the parts and work that was being done on the assembly and the guys at the shop completed the work to get the streetcar back in working order,” said Inman.

At the shop the ends of the wheel pairs were machined smooth on a giant lathe and four sealed roller bearings were built to replace the original friction bearings.

When Inman's team completed their part of the job they loaded the parts back on to the trailer and he headed back to Missouri. He then stopped at Southern Pacific Railroad in Joplin, Mo., and worked with brothers Brian and Russell Jordan to finish up the project.

USAR provided additional work to the streetcar and put the rear-wheel assembly back on the streetcar so that it would once again be ready for service.

To show their appreciation for the labor donated by Watco, the Southwest Missouri Railway Association (SMRA) had the Watco logo placed on the front of the streetcar and presented Watco with a beautiful framed piece of artwork featuring Streetcar No. 60 with the Watco logo.

“We really appreciate everything that Watco did for us in getting the trolley back in good shape,” said Dawson. “We recently had a ride for a little boy who had been critically injured in the Joplin tornado. It means a lot that we can continue to do things for the community like that thanks to the help we received.”

“History can teach us so much about where we’ve been and where we’re going,” said Inman. “It’s always important to preserve the pieces that we still have and we were in a position to put our knowledge and experience to work in this particular situation. It’s great that kids can ride the same trolley that their grandparents once rode. The artwork is very nice and appreciated and will be on display in our Pittsburg office.”

### Trip Down Under

(Continued from page 1) see what time he would be in to work and said he had some good news - and he told him to wear something nice.

“I knew the drawing was that day so I was thinking that might be what he was talking about but I didn’t want to get my hopes up,” said Neel. “When I got to the office and Paul (Hattaway) told me I won, I was really excited!”

Hattaway said, “John is the type of team member that someone as a manager just dreams about having! He is honest, safe, dependable, and displays these qualities every single day he works. I speak as his immediate supervisor, this team member is a pleasure to work with day in and day out, not to mention that he is always willing to come in and help our team. He is excited and we, on the LAS, are excited for him!”

Neel began working for the LAS in 2006 as a conductor and is now serving as an engineer. Prior to joining the LAS he worked for RailServe in West Monroe, La.

Neel is looking forward to hitting the beaches in Australia. Although it will be winter there, he enjoys mountain biking and jogging so the scenery will be a welcome treat as he gets his daily dose of exercise in. There are also many paths along the river in Perth with beautiful views that are quite popular with the runners. Among the many activities planned for the two winners is a trip to Esperance to tour the CBH facility, tour Esperance and visit CBH board chairman Neil Wandell’s farm, where they plan to catch jilgies. Jilgies are a small freshwater crayfish so Neel should feel right at home.

Neel and his wife Ivana have one son, Evan Joseph, who is 9 years old and just finished up his baseball season. Neel’s last plane trip was when he was about his son’s age and he flew to Disney World with his family. He doesn’t remember much about that flight but it’s guaranteed that the long flight to Perth from Louisiana will be a memorable one.

Many thanks to our great Customer CBH Group for providing this amazing opportunity to two very deserving Watco Team Members.
Amber waves of grain produce good results

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

There have been some unusual happenings with the Central Region’s wheat harvest this year. Not only was the harvest one of the largest for the region, it was also one of the earliest. A mild winter this year led to what’s been called the earliest Kansas wheat harvest on record, beginning three to four weeks ahead of normal. Not only did the harvest start earlier but the yields that the growers are seeing make up for what they missed out on last year.

On Watco’s main grain railroad, the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO), grain shipments passed up the projections for the month of June by more than 1,145 carloads. The KO is on track to exceed the $2 million mark in billed grain revenue for only the third time since the KO has been operating. Another great achievement is the empty car placement goals have been surpassed on a weekly basis.

"The placement of empty cars is critical to both the Customer and the railroad. A faster turn around allows them to empty the elevators and make space to receive more bushels from the growers. This in turn provides the opportunity for the railroads to move more wheat from the facilities,” said Doug Story, Watco’s marketing manager for agricultural products.

Pat Lies, general manager of Farmers Co-op Grain Association in Conway Springs, Kan., agrees with Story. “The biggest difference with the railroad this year was the turn around of the cars. Last year we did about 200-250 and this year we did 600. Our harvest was 50% over our record crop. We actually had one day where we had 700 semi-trucks bring grain into the facility. Because of the turn-around on the cars we were able to fill and empty the elevator to accommodate our growers. We had put a plan in place prior to harvest and then worked with Johnnie (Brown, agricultural products Customer Service representative).”

The South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) is also seeing an upward trend in harvest reports. Carloads were up by 201 cars versus June projections. Beachner Grain led the way on the SKOL with 106 cars in just the first two weeks of harvest. The southeast Kansas harvest was completed by the end of June and has been a tremendous harvest, the bins are full and hopefully the rains will continue to fall to create a very good fall harvest. The SKOL should continue to see very strong car loadings through July and August as the elevators prepare for corn harvest. The majority of the SKOL’s wheat is going to the Port of Catoosa in Oklahoma, Bartlett Mill in Coffeyville, Kan., and some is flowing back to Wichita, Kan. The SKOL operations team has done a great job getting through the crunch of harvest; now the focus will be on the steady and consistent movement of cars from the elevators to the Port and back through the next months.

The SLWC harvest was completed in June as well and the harvest was double last year’s yield. However, considering that last year’s harvest was poor at best because of the inclement weather, double doesn’t mean it was a record harvest. Many elevators will hold on to their wheat and start shipping again in October or November.

Grain rep commended for service

As combines were cutting through the fields harvesting the grain, Watco’s Customer Service Team was working hard to ensure there was a place for that grain to go once it reached the grain elevators. Randal Lewis, Customer Service representative for agricultural products, went from helping harvest the wheat to helping deliver the commodity. His father once farmed and planted his own wheat; so Lewis is somewhat familiar with the process and that knowledge has gained him recognition for his work during the busy harvest season on the Stillwater Central Railroad.

Candace Orr, Union Pacific Railroad, network and industrial development, sent Lewis a set of commemorative coasters as a thank you for his work during the harvest.

Orr said in a note to Lewis, “Your high sense of customer care, intensive market knowledge and active participation in our daily calls were appreciated by every person on the team. Our railroads all performed at an extreme level of...”

(Continued on page 5)

US Ambassador visits WA locomotive commissioning site

by Samantha Francke
CBH Group, Advisor Marketing Communications

United States Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich and United States Consul General Aleisha Woodward visited the locomotive commissioning site on June 11, to view the second of 22 locomotives from the CBH Group’s new rail fleet.

CBH Group General Manager Operations Colin Tutt said he was delighted to show the Ambassador the outcome of a powerful partnership between the CBH Group and Watco WA Rail.

“We are very proud of what we’ve achieved so far in building a partnership with Watco as our new rail operator and manufacturing the most modern efficient locomotives to cart grain in the nation. It’s a pleasure to show them off,” he said.

“The first two of our locomotives have landed in WA with another four on the water sailing towards Fremantle, four travelling across the U.S. ready for shipping and the rest not far behind. They are coming thick and fast now.”

Watco WA Rail Chief Operating Officer Jim Griffiths said there was now a strong bond between the growers of Western Australia and his company’s rail industry roots in the United States.

“We’ve been working with CBH to build the best foundation for a renewal of the rail industry here and how we can better serve grain growers, by moving their produce to port more efficiently than ever before,” he said.

The US Ambassador and Consul General took a tour of the locomotive and inspected the final commissioning works being completed by Gemco Rail at its facility in Forrestfield. They also got to speak with MotivePower staff who had traveled from the U.S. to assist with the new locomotives’ commissioning.

U.S. based MotivePower won the CBH Group’s tender to manufacture 22 new narrow and standard gauge locomotives.

The first CBH train, comprising of the first new locomotive and a set of its new wagons, took a test run on June 15 and has been hauling grain in the Albany Zone with wagon consists up to 60 wagons.
Three guys and a sign

by Logan Falletti
Communications Intern

What started out as three guys, a sign and 14 miles of track is growing into something much bigger. On June 11 the Hammond, Indiana Switching Team began switching cars for our Customer, Potash Corporation (PotashCorp). PotashCorp celebrated the completion of Phase One of its Hammond Regional Distribution Centre, which consisted of laying the 14 miles of new track to allow for unit trains to be delivered to the facility.

PotashCorp is the largest producer, by capacity, of potash and the third largest producer of nitrogen and phosphate. The location is projected to move between twenty and twenty-five thousand cars a year when completed. The 89-acre facility will also include warehouses for storage and a locomotive shop. The location will handle car inspection and mechanical repairs, and the switching and blocking of cars for the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad.

The facility was designed as part of PotashCorp’s expansion plans to help deliver product more efficiently to their customers. When completed, the center will help reduce delivery times in the U.S. by six to days from the current transit time from the mine. The key in reducing transit time is the ability to forward position product beyond the busy Chicago corridor with quick access to the Class I carriers.

Bob Felgenhauer, PotashCorp’s Vice President, Transportation and Distribution, said, “We’re happy to announce that railcars loaded with potash will now more efficiently reach our customers across the eastern U.S.”

The switching team will be receiving unit trains ranging from 30 to 130 cars. The cars will either be delivered directly to the Class 1 railroads or they will be stored and broken down by type and then delivered to the Class 1’s. There are eight different types of potash and it is used for different purposes by a variety of industries. Potash is used mostly in fertilizer but is also used for oil-well drilling fluid, snow and ice melting, steel heat-treating, and water softening. It’s used to produce animal feed supplements, cement, fire extinguishers, food products, photographic chemicals, and textiles and is also used in brewing beer, pharmaceutical preparations, and as a catalyst for synthetic rubber manufacturing.

There was a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 27 for the Gibson Yard for Phase 1. Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott was a guest speaker at the event along with Bob Felgenhauer, PCS’s vice president of transportation and distribution and Jim Roots from IHB. On July 11 there will be a ceremony held to kick off Phase II of the project.

Once phase two is completed additional team members will be added to perform the transloading and mechanical duties as well as the switching.

Watco’s new Team Members have almost 50 years of combined experience on the rails. Tom Martisek will bring his 15 years of rail experience with Elgin-Joliet and Eastern Railway and Canadian National to the terminal manager position. Marc Kaczorowski worked in at Arcelor-Mittal in the steel industry as a switchman and RCL operator before he joined Watco Companies. Willie Carson is currently in training to become a locomotive engineer after his time at Savage switching as a mobile operator and switchman. He was also with the Elgin-Joliet and Eastern Railway for 10 years before he joined Savage. The three-man team will be switching 5 days a week.

Martisek said, “We have daily conference calls with the Customer to keep communications flowing. Our relationship with both IHB and Potash is strong and I look forward to growing with them.”

Hollidaysburg Team Member retires

After 15 years at the Hollidaysburg, Pa., mechanical shop Tom Wilkie has decided to hang up his wrench. Wilkie has been with the maintenance department as an electrician and mechanic since 1997 and retired on May 31, 2012.

Prior to working at the mechanical shop Wilkie worked at an underground mining company as a mechanic and maintenance supervisor for 25 years.

Wilkie’s retirement party was held in conjunction with the kick-off of Summer Spike. He was presented with a Sears gift card and cards and cash from his teammates as well.

Bud Mingle, plant supervisor, said, “We thought joining the Summer Spike kick-off with a send-off for Tom would be a great way for everyone to get a chance to say good-bye. It was a great opportunity to celebrate his years of service.”

“We thank Tom for his dedication and wish him well in his retirement,” said Hollidaysburg plant manager, Matt Grove.

Wilkie and his wife Evelyn have three grown sons. His plans for retirement include a lot of hunting, fishing, golfing, motorcycle riding, and spending time with his grandchildren.

Mingle is not only going to miss Tom but all of Evelyn’s baked goods as well.

He said, “Tom always brought in his wife’s baked goods to share with all the maintenance and locomotive crew team members, we’ll miss those along with Tom, of course. All the team members here at Hollidaysburg wish him a happy and long retirement.”

Amber waves of grain

(Continued from page 4) efficiency and cooperation making a resounding success of this project. Your contributions were essential to this success.”

The grain team monitors Watco’s Central Region grain fleet of approximately 2,100 cars daily. They coordinate logistics of the fleet and Class 1 ordered equipment with operations to insure that we are taking care of Customer car needs on a timely basis. The grain and operating teams work together daily to ensure our operating plans are executed on time, safely, and efficiently. All completed and outstanding car orders are tracked on a daily basis and car velocities are monitored to better help with logistical planning. They stay in close communication with our grain Customers to understand their car needs and relay that information to our operating and marketing managers to provide better service and maximize assets.

Ron Spencer, Customer Service manager said, “This award displays Randall’s commitment to our Customers and his application of our Customer First Foundation Principles.”
Watco clay shooters show their skills at competition

by Logan Falletti
Communications Intern

On Friday, June 8, a team of shooters from the Stillwater Central Railroad (SLWC) Team took second place in the sporting clay shoot at the BBQ ‘N Blues Festival in Cushing, Okla.

Cushing, the Pipeline Capital of the World, has been the home of the festival for 17 years and the annual event was originated to pay tribute to the pipeline companies located in and serving Cushing. The energy companies have since gotten involved to show their appreciation to the community in return. This year eleven companies each barbecued 100 pounds of brisket to serve to the festival attendees. Energy companies involved were: Enterprise Products, Plains, Enbridge, Matrix Service, Gavilon, Sunoco Logistics, SemCrude, Centurion, Blue Knight, Magellan, Deeprock/Mercuria, and TransCanada. The barbecue is prepared on the World’s Largest Smoker which has eleven arms that extend from the firebox. Each company who cooks hangs their grill from one of the arms and uses the firebox in the smoker to prepare their meat. Awards are given out in two categories, People’s Choice and Judges Choice. Besides having three judges whose job is to decide who has the best tasting barbecued brisket, the people who purchase Taster’s Kits will also be supplied with a ticket that will allow them to vote for their favorite barbecue. The competition is fierce and the winner gets to brag for an entire year until the next BBQ ‘N Blues Festival.

Festival sponsors added a golf competition to the calendar of events three years ago, and the turnout has risen from 18 to more than 64 teams. On that success, they added the clay shooting competition this year. JP Target Sports of Sand Springs, Okla. provided the course while the Cushing Police Department handled the safety. So many teams applied that the festival extended the team limit to 32 four-man teams.

Chris Spear, human resource manager; Pat Foster, general manager; Brian Cosby, quality assurance inspector; and Shane Stafford, Central Region locomotive director, represented the SLWC in the inaugural shoot. The team took second place in the group shooting with a score of 164/200. Stafford also took first place in his flight as an individual, earning him $100.

“I already told them Stillwater Central will be a sponsor every year as they go forward,” says Foster. “Participating in the festival is one way the SLWC strives to get involved with its Customers in showing support for the community.”

Florida Switching Team isn’t basking in the sun

by Tracie VanBeelaere
Managing Editor

Although the Pensacola, Florida, switching location is only ten miles from the beach, daily life at the site is no picnic. Switching and Maintenance of Way (MOW) Team Members are ever vigilant to ensure that safe practices are followed at all times. Eighteen years ago Watco began performing switching duties in Pensacola and amazingly, since that time, the crews on the MOW Team have not had a single injury. That’s quite a feat considering all the materials and tools they work with in some very stormy conditions as well. Current maintenance of way team members; Roger Kelly and Shane Dykes, recently celebrated the 18-year record with a dinner at a local steakhouse, Mesquite Charlie’s.

While the MOW Team celebrated a phenomenal 18 years, the switching team also celebrated a safety milestone rarely seen in the rail industry as well - eight years injury free.

Pensacola Team Safety & Improvement Committee (TS&IC) Leader Tim Dykes said, “It pays to focus on safety.” He and his fellow team members enjoy the extra cash that safety incentive programs like the Winter Freeze, Summer Spike, and quarterly incentives provide.

“They add up,” said Dykes. “However, nothing can compare to leaving the workplace in the same healthy condition you arrived. That is priceless.”

Pensacola Switching Team Members who helped in reaching this record include: Billy Davis, Anthony Allender, John Clark, Timothy Ragsdale, Jeremy Findley, Timothy Dykes, Shaun Rodriguez, Keith Singleton, and Kenneth Bullard.

Because of unfavorable weather in February, the team celebrated their impressive milestone with steak dinners in April. Team members and their families joined representatives from our Customers who attended the event to recognize the men who serve them in a safe manner every day. Customers included Ascend Materials, ExxonMobil and Huntsman.

Originally, the team at Pensacola began switching railcars for Monsanto who spun off its industrial chemical and fiber divisions into Solutia, Inc., in 1997. On June 1, 2009, a private investment firm purchased Solutia’s Integrated Nylon business and established Ascend Performance Materials. While changes were happening with the company pieces of the plant were closed down and sold, first to ExxonMobil and then to Huntsman’s, so now the team serves all three of the Customers within the same facility.

Tony Clark, Gulf Region regional switching manager, attended the celebration in Pensacola and said the guys there really set the bar for all of Watco Companies. “They’re totally committed to safety as you can see from their record. They go to extremes to ensure that safety comes first. This group even shows up during hurricane warnings and camps out with their families so they can be prepared if the railcars need to be moved - they’re that dedicated and I couldn’t be more proud of them.”

Left: Representing the MOW Team is Shane Dykes and Roger Kelly. Right: the Pensacola day crew (l-r back row) Timothy S. Dykes, track maintenance; John Clark, Kenneth Bullard, and Anthony Allender, conductors. (l-r sitting) Timothy Ragsdale, conductor; and Roger Kelly, track maintenance.
July Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following team members celebrating their anniversaries!


2 Years: Joseph Bristow, Kenneth Christian, Brian Cosby, Jorge Delgado, Joe Fells, James Grissold, Arjok Gugual, Michael Gwin, Marcus Hodges, Jared Hurst, Matthew Hutcheson, Lee Jasmin, Patrick Kinney, Mark Labbe, Stefan Loeb, Willie Lowe, Cooper Miller, Andrew Mitchell, Matthew Morrison, Jason Myers, Anthony Shepherd, Aaron Smith, Robert Smith, Wendy Vrana, John Worthington

3 Years: Joseph Babineaux, Ryan Corder, Joey Gallegos, Darin Hampton, Brandon Pearson, Amanda Pequin, Horacio Silva, Bradrick Stroud, Steven Tucker, Gary Wagenseller

4 Years: Erik Batalia, Garrett Bolyard, John Carson, Donta Davis, Reginald Dunnom, Doyle Ferguson, Danny Lancaster, Larry Lewczyk, James Scott McDuffie, Timothy O’Shell, Carla Rice, Brian Wilson

5 Years: Tandi Colibert, Clint Counterman, David Daniels, Thomas Emerit, Shawn Gatlin, Gary Jones, Keith Lacaze, Bobby McFadden, Michael Milligan, Steven Ogle, Christopher Rawe, Vincent Saylor, Travis Thorpe, Derrick Umbarger, Jeremiah Williams, Jeffery Yon

6 Years: Francis Benally, Chet Clasen, Martin Gutierrez, Larry Higginbotham, Kyle Jeschke, Matt Lewis, Federico Lopez, Wesley Martin, Jennifer Muckala, Cesar Oglesby, Dianna Peak, Willie Rumppe, Kenneth Tober, Jeremy Tyler, Robert Waldheuser, Patricia Walsworth, Charles Young

7 Years: Antenogenes Barajas, Sammy Belmer, Bruce Christie, Phillip Cunningham, Travis Dimond, Carl Fanello, Dylan Guthrie, Cornelius Jones, Colby Jordan, Tracy Long, Brian Steiger, Toby Wampler

8 Years: Jeffery Ambrose, Robert Bailey, Laura Bolt, Carroll Davis, Doug Story, Stu Towner

9 Years: Beau Embrey, Jerry Johnson

10 Years: William Mays, Don Rudd, Douglas Tank

11 Years: Brian Arnold, Donn Duling, Teresa Gray, Jeffrey Schroeder, Michael Yon, Lois Ziesenis

12 Years: Charlie Chism, Audencio Cocteco, David Franks, Martin White

13 Years: John Dolan, Robert Hasheider, Steven Landis, Matthew Wahl, Jerry Waun

14 Years: John Chambers, Todd Iverson, Brian Stott

15 Years: Joe Bennett, Gregory Johnson, Patrick Ottwell, James Peck, Daniel Swenson

16 Years: John Gaines, Frederick Owens, Brian Rose

17 Years: Carlton Echols

18 Years: Gisele Brown, Raymond Gray

20 Years: Chad Stalford

21 Years: Richard Mansfield

22 Years: Donald Schwanke, Danny Simmons, John Wise

23 Years: Timothy Sanchez

24 Years: Edward Hockenberry, Eugene Holobinko

CALENDAR CONTEST
Introducing Watco’s 2013 Calendar Contest
Photographers get ready, Watco is announcing its first ever Calendar Contest. Winners will be selected by the Executive Team and awards are as follows:

- First place (cover): $500, Second place: $250, Ten additional prizes to include photo for each month - $100 each. Submissions must be received no later than September 30, 2012.
- For digital photography, 4-color high quality printing requires 300dpi images at 100%. This works out to 12.75 megapixel (10.5” x 13.5” @300dpi), far beyond the native capabilities of standard point-and-shoot cameras.
- Digital SLR cameras can save photos in the RAW format. This is the format we prefer for the calendar. Send submissions and questions to ivan@watco.com.
Watco teams enjoy time out at the ballpark

by Logan Falletti
Communications Intern

Members of the Kaw River Railroad (KAW) Team got to watch another team at work when they attended a Kansas City T-Bones baseball game on June 2. The T-Bones are a professional baseball team and is a member of the American Association of Independent Professional Baseball. The T-Bones played the Amarillo Sox while the KAW Team enjoyed a night out of team building and stress relief.

The Team Safety and Improvement Committee (TSIC) had been thinking about a team building night for a few months. They finally decided last May to attend a baseball game in the Kansas City area. Team Members signed up a month in advance to get tickets for themselves and any family members that wanted to attend. The eventual turnout was around 55 people including the children and spouses of the KAW Team. The Kansas City Terminal Team was also invited, but only one member was able to attend.

“It’s nice to get all our kids together and to be outside of work and see a different side of people,” said Laura Bolt, head of the TSIC.

The night began with tailgating outside the Kansas City Community America Ballpark, home field of the T-Bones. The team members brought their own dishes and grilled burgers and brats on a grill borrowed from the corporate offices. After tailgating, they took their seats in the stadium and the commentators announced to the entire park that the KAW Team was in the stands. Unfortunately, the T-Bones gave up the night to the Sox with a score of 2–4.

“Although the T-Bones did not win, our outing was a win for us,” said Shellee Currier, marketing manager. “Everyone had a great time and had the chance to get together outside of the work environment and have some fun.”

The night ended with fireworks over the field. Sizzle the Bull took a break from his mascot duties to visit the kids and take pictures. Many team members voiced their support to make the game an annual event.

Team members at the Stillwater Central Railroad (SLWC) also had a chance to hang out at the local ballpark. However, they were cheering on the Oklahoma City RedHawks. The RedHawks are a Triple-A affiliate of the Houston Astros. Approximately 140 team members and their families attended the pregame picnic and game against the Tucson Padres on May 12, which the RedHawks won 6 – 5.

Not only did everyone get to enjoy an exciting game but they happened to be there on RedHawk Baseball Hat Day and were all given a coupon for a free RedHawks cap.

A highlight of the day was when one of our own team members was singled out for special recognition during the game. The United States Air Force was honored during the game and Evan Nantkes, from the SLWC car department, took his oath on the field. Nantkes will be joining the Air Force at the end of the summer and the team was thrilled to have the chance to witness him taking his oath at the stadium.

Evan Nantkes, (far right), SLWC car department, will be joining the United States Air Force at the end of the summer and took his oath at the RedHawks game on May 12 in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Some KAW Team Members with the T-Bones mascot (l-r): Bubba Lundy; Robert Bailey; Dustin Rhodes; Doug Fleming and his son, Kelly Gray; Sizzle the Bull; Keith Schlotman; Mark McClellan; and Laura Bolt. Bottom row (l-r) Tyler Adkison and Bruce Masters. Photo by Wayne Ghan.

Kaw Team members tailgate before the T-Bones game (left to right): Jacqueline Walker, Mark McClellan, John Bolt (spouse of Laura Bolt), Esther McClellan, Sharon Sexson, Shellee Currier, Brad Walker.