Watco's Dispatch Center keeps things moving

There is an elite group of team members in Wichita, Kan., who, with just a flick of a finger, can direct train movement. This group isn’t known for their superpowers but for the super job they do keeping traffic running on Watco’s railroads. This team, the Watco Dispatch Team, controls traffic on Watco railroads throughout the United States using the same system that class one railroads BNSF and CSX use.

The system has protection built into the program that won’t allow the operator to input information which would put more than one train on the same track at a time. If a dispatcher were to put the information that could cause that to happen the system would boot them out and will not allow a track warrant (permission) to be sent to use that portion of track. This dispatching system (TMDS) is undergoing a major upgrade that will be a benefit to everyone. Watco’s information technology department and dispatch are working with the system owners, Wabtec, to complete this process. After this is complete the system will be faster and more efficient so that the Dispatch Team can better serve their team members and Customers.

All dispatchers must pass the conductor ground school, Dispatcher Class, and CTC training in order to qualify for employment at the center. The Dispatch Center is staffed with 16 team members who are scheduled at different times around the clock for a 24/7 operation. Managing the operations of the dispatch center is Lisa Berry, director and senior chief; Angel Pridemore, chief dispatcher and Kari Stephens and Tandi Colibert, assistant chiefs. Berry said, “The center has recently undergone some big changes that are very exciting to us. We are now under the umbrella of the safety department because of the scope of our duties. Not only do we keep the rail lines safe but we are also staffed to field calls from the public and first responders regarding malfunctioning crossing warning systems, and are able to dispatch a signal specialist without undue delay to ensure public safety. We are also a critical link in Watco’s combined safety and security rules, regulations and procedures. We accomplish this successfully by being trained and available to direct our team members in the field 24/7, to report injuries, derailments, accidents, incidents, security issues, or any other emergency situation and to summon company officers and emergency responders as appropriate.” The dispatch center is inspected by the Federal Railroad Administration at least four to five times a year to ensure complete compliance. “We welcome this because it keeps us on our toes!” Berry added.

Watco founder awarded KGFA's Sunflower Award

The Kansas Grain and Feed Association posthumously awarded Dick Webb the (l-r) Tom Tunnell, KGFA president; Stan Stark, KGFA chairman; Doug Story, vice president of agricultural marketing; Rick Webb, Watco CEO, Susie Lundy, Fallyne Deao, financial planning analyst, Me...
Opportunities for our improved safety culture lie ahead this summer and the rest of 2013. Teamwork and communication will turn these summer safety opportunities into Watco success stories.

We have made improvements in safety this year and we have had some challenges. We will develop these challenges into safety improvements as a team and stay the course for the same goal. I have no doubt our Watco Team Members are the best group of people in our industry and the finest team assembled in our country.

Working safely is the personal responsibility of every team member and it needs/should be owned as an expectation-from the top to the bottom of our company. Our families expect it, our management team expects it, our owner expects it, and our customers expect it.

Make no mistake, our team in the field is the backbone of our great company and they are our greatest assets - it starts with each one of us and we are in this together!

If we all lead by a safe example, communicate our safety message with our team and teammates, focus safely on the task at hand at all times, and have 100% rule compliance we can reach our goal of 0 injuries and 0 incidents for the rest of 2013.

Upcoming changes in the weather, additional traffic volumes, baseball games, vacations and the distractions and demands of our kids being out of school for the summer compound things.

We empower each team member to hold safety as their #1 value, to feel a sense of responsibility for the safety of oneself and one's co-workers. We must be willing to “go beyond the call of duty” on behalf of the safety of others and our entire team.

Our opportunity lies in moving our Customer's freight safely and expeditiously but that cannot be at the cost of our team's safety.

Committing to safety and teamwork will ensure our company will meet our safety commitments and we must never lose sight of this, regardless of what is perceived as a “light” day or “heavy” day. Staying focused and communicating well will lead to our safe operation and continue safety culture change. Our true goal and commitment to you is we will do everything it takes for you to go home to your families the same way you came to work. Remember, you truly are the only person that can ensure you go home safely and unharmed. Please never forget our entire Watco management team is here for your support.

Thank you again for all that you do safely.

Michael Gibson

Environmental Health & Safety Team holds annual meeting

Not only can Watco’s Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Mechanical Team work to keep our team members safe in the workplace, many of them can also play a mean game of billiards. The team relaxed and re-enforced relationships during an 8-ball pool tournament on Tuesday evening during their four day visit to Pittsburg, Kan. Horace Frazier, EHS manager from the Zwolle, La., facility edged out Aaron Keitz, EHS manager from Omaha/Council Bluffs, for the championship.

Facility EHS managers and David Hirschey, environmental manager, were brought together to identify program priorities for continuous improvement and program excellence.

Compliance calendars for tracking completion of routine EHS requirements were developed for each facility. This will allow existing and new managers to know what EHS activities need to be done and when.

The incident investigation process will expand to include root cause analysis and other investigative techniques to ensure targeted, effective corrective action. Ways to improve standardization of procedures and practices were also identified.

Madison MOW celebrates injury-free anniversary

Working injury-free for a full year is a huge accomplishment that takes dedication and a real commitment to safety in the workplace. The Madison M.O.W. Team reached that injury-free year milestone on Friday, March 8.

“It took 20 dedicated team members working together and promoting safe operating practices each and every day to reach this milestone,” stated Richard Gruber, M.O.W. Peer Trainer. “I thank each and every team member for their valued contributions and their commitment to safety.”

As a thank-you for their part these 20 team members were all were given a sweatshirt specially-embroidered with “Madison M.O.W. 1 Year Injury Free.”
It is this philosophy that keeps leaders leading, great companies growing, and teams performing. Standing at the bottom of your own career ladder can be extremely frustrating. Particularly, if you fail to recognize that growth only comes through change and change can only manifest itself through action.

If we are to grow we must realize that we are the masters of our own destiny. Many times in my career as a manager and a leadership development coach I see people get caught in the "they" syndrome. These are the people constantly waiting for someone else to step in and deliver their dreams and ambitions to them in a gift wrapped box. I am reminded of a tale from Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, about a man on a journey who had come to a village only to find that the road ahead had been blocked by a mountain. The man sat down to wait for the mountain to move. Many years later the man was old and his hair was white and he still sat, waiting for the mountain to move. He, too, was waiting for someone else to move his obstacles.

Getting caught up in the habit of waiting for things to happen in your life and your career is a bad place to be, particularly, when you work for a company that has nothing but growth and opportunity ahead. If we don't put action to our ambition we watch while everyone else gets promoted around us. Advice: Pick up the baton and get in the race! You deserve to be a part of this unbelievable opportunity. Take it!

About Kris Sherry

Kris is a native of North-west Arkansas. She has a grown daughter that lives in Denver, Colorado and a son soon to become an R.N. that lives in North-west Arkansas. In her spare time Kris has found a new passion in sky diving, loves to garden, canoe, listen to live music and spend time with friends and family. Kris loves spaghetti, music of almost any genre, combat movies, Vegas, the beach and dark chocolate.

Watco's Dispatch Center Con't

(Continued from page 1)  "Working for Watco is a wonderful experience for all of us, and I know I am not just speaking for myself in the Dispatch Center. The Dispatch Center is little family within a family-oriented company, so when we say we are our brother's keeper we mean it. Our first priority is Safety, every stroke of the key, every track warrant we write, every bulletin we issue is all in a day's work but in our day's work it is keeping every-one safe and without injury so they can go home to their real families after their shift. We're not here to make their lives rough, we're here to make their lives safe and we love taking care of our team. If we put safety first we automatically improve Customer satisfaction; right service, right time, in the right condition, and at the right price all in one. It's called taking care of business… Customer First Foundation Principles!"

In September of 2012 the Dispatch Center went through extensive remodeling and office expansion to prepare for growth and in November of 2012 the West Region dispatching services were moved to Wichita. This was a welcomed addition to the Watco dispatch family.

"It's our pleasure to assist all of our team members from the West Region," said Berry. "They are truly professionals in the rail industry."

Last, but certainly not least, in 2012 the Dispatch Center began team building with the railroads and team members in the field. The dispatchers traveled three at a time to the Grand Elk Railroad in Michigan. This gave dispatchers the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the territory and see the CTC first hand.

Kendice Talty said, "I thought it was helpful, not only because I could see the territory but it was nice to actually meet the trainmen that I work with. I think it really improved communication with them!"

April Watco U Sessions:
201 – May 14-16
101 – May 21-23

By Kris Sherry
Watco University
Director of Training and Development

RAIL Class of the Month: “Initiating and Planning a Project”

The IMPOSSIBLE Race

The Red Queen from Lewis Carroll’s ‘Through the Looking Glass’ said it best, “It takes all the running you can do to stay in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that.”

Second shift assistant chief, Kari Stephens at the Wichita Dispatch Center.

Members of the Dispatch Team went to visit the Grand Elk (GDLK) Team to get a better understanding of the operations. Left to right are Pat Kinney, engineer; Dee Winegarner, signal specialist dispatcher; Amanda Pequin; dispatcher, Michelle Fellers, dispatcher, Lisa Berry, senior chief, Jared Kneed, conductor; and Andy Smith conductor. In the middle front is Jim Daly, conductor.
Trainmaster celebrates 25 years at Coffeyville shop

Although trainmaster is Bryan Benson’s title, Jack of All Trades might be a more suitable description. On March 21, 1988 Bryan became a member of the Coffeyville Mechanical Shop Team. Bryan started out as a carman and worked in Chouteau, Okla., on a project doing general maintenance for the Grand River Dam Authority. After working at that location for six months he went to work at the shop in Coffeyville.

Now as part of his day Bryan takes on a variety of jobs such as completing inspections on cars to be worked on, scheduling trains coming in and out of the facility, switching cars in the yard, and communicating with team members on the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad to facilitate the movement of cars coming in and out of the shop.

“I was hard at it one day, buried in my work and I looked up and saw a someone watching me. I asked if I could help him and he said, ‘No, I own this shop.’ That was my first encounter with Dick Webb,” said Bryan.

The shop was just in its infancy when Bryan joined the team and he said it’s been interesting to see all the growth that has occurred since he started.

“Dick told us if we worked hard he would buy us more tools, we did and he bought us tools,” said Bryan.

“We also have about ten or so more people working here since I started. It’s been a good experience.”

Bryan celebrated his 25th year with Watco in March and a month later he celebrated his 26th anniversary with his wife Diane. Bryan and Diane have three children, two boys and a girl and three grandchildren, one boy and two girls. When Bryan isn’t busy at work he keeps busy tending to cattle, both his and his father-in-laws.

Dion Wilkins, Coffeyville shop manager said, “Bryan does an outstanding job. He’s been here practicing the Customer First Principles for a long time.”

Texas’ Timber Rock TS&IC is making a difference

The Team Safety and Improvement Committees (TS&IC) at each location are tasked with doing exactly what the name implies, focusing on safety and improvements. How successful the committee is varies on many factors - but the key factor is the involvement of the team. The team at the Timber Rock Railroad is a very involved team and the changes that they have made at their location are proof of that fact.

Jennifer Johnson, office administrator and committee member, said, “Our top priority is always the safety of all team members and every meeting starts with safety issues varying from potential hazards at Customer’s locations to track issues or sometimes even the simple subject of cleanliness.”

“Also as a team we have our other focus - Improvement and have improved a variety of things through the requests and suggestions of our fellow team members,” added Johnson.

The committee has implemented a boot voucher system, put together company parties, provided safety shirts as an alternative to vests and worked together to address cleanliness at depots. They also made repairs to a damaged building so that it could be used again, made parking lot repairs and repainted the safety lines. The team designed and purchased a sign for the property, placed logos on the locomotives, addressed roof repairs needed, and helped to address yard light repairs, just to name a few. Most recently the idea was given to have an “employee of the quarter”. The committee asked that the team members vote on an official name for the award and the winning name for the new recognition program was the “The Extra Mile Award”. This program was designed with the thought in mind of improving morale, as well recognizing those team members that truly go “the extra mile” to help others, do a little extra, as well as keep our foundation principles as a priority. A program solely created “for the people, by the people”, they requested that anyone that would like to nominate any team member simply turn in nominations as well as a small simple note explaining why they are nominating that fellow team member.

The first quarter ends in March and the winning team member of the first ever Extra Mile Award was David Fontaine. David was nominated multiple times for the Extra Mile award by multiple team members. A few of the nominations were to recognize him for his assistance to his fellow team members, as well as selfless acts to make improvements to the depot.

“David’s a great example of the word team, he has always done what he could to be a part of the team and make us all successful,” said Johnson.

Autauga Northern celebrates two years injury-free

The Autauga Northern Railroad (AUT) Team was seeing double at their recent safety celebration. The team celebrated two events; the two year anniversary of the start-up of their railroad and going two years injury-free. The anniversary was April 9 and the celebration was held two days later on the eleventh.

Tony Kirkland, general manager, Mike Harlan, roadmaster, andRoger Easterling, location manager - switching, took turns cooking steaks and brats on the grill.

Todd Johns, East Region Q&A safety director said, “The team there really takes safety head on and believes in working safe by holding each other accountable and ensuring they watch out for one another. They take pride in their accomplishments and look forward to continuing their current streak.”

Team members at the AUT are Anthony Kirkland, general manager; Barry Beasley, conductor; Byron Marshall, engineer; David Larch, chief mechanical officer; Dennis Burt, laborer; Donald Robert, mechanic, Eddie Lapine, mechanic; Gregory Sherman, conductor; Michael Harlan, roadmaster; Roger Easterling, location manager - switching, and James Richards, foreman.
Southern railroads celebrate safety anniversaries Cajun style

The Mississippi Southern (MSR) and Vicksburg Southern (VSOR) railroads recently celebrated their safety anniversaries in style - Cajun style that is. A crawfish boil was held for the team members to celebrate the MSR going eight years injury-free and the VSOR’s two year injury-free milestone.

The event was catered by T’Beaux’s Crawfish and Catering and was held at the Vicksburg, Miss., depot.

Justin Rhodes, MSR and VSOR general manager, said, "This was a great accomplishment for our guys. They all take pride in the work they do and set a good example with their safety practices."

Team members who enjoyed the crawfish boil were (l-r): Jared Gross, VSOR; Jamie Guynes, VSOR; John Dellinger VSO; Derrick Fields, VSOR; Stacy Swinford, VSOR; Pete Tiejen, quality assurance; Chris Anthony, MSR; Milo Jackson, VSOR; Justin Rhodes, general manager VSOR & MSR; Albert Merritt, VSOR; Danny Sims MSR; Justin Dempsey, VSOR; Randy McIntyre, VSOR, Jay Anthony, trainmaster MSR & VSOR.

Pittsburg analyst receives Major promotion

Many team members in the Pittsburg, Kan., office have been going about their business not knowing that there is a hero amongst them.

In January Watco hired a new treasury analyst, Lonny Nelson. Lonny has served in the Kansas Army National Guard and Active Army for more than 14 years. He was commissioned as an officer in 2002, and has risen through the ranks excellently. Lonny has served in numerous positions from Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Assistant Battalion Operations Officer and now serves as the Engineer Plans Officer for the HHD 35th Infantry Division. Lonny has completed training in the Engineer Officer Basic course, Transportation Officer Advanced course, Combined Logisticians Captains Career Course, and the United States Marine Corps Command and General Staff College. Lonny has numerous awards and decorations, some of which are the Iraq Campaign Medal with two Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Bronze Star Medal to name a few. He served as a Platoon leader during Operation Iraqi Freedom where he led a platoon through an outstanding number of successful missions.

On February 14, 2013, Lonny received a promotion to the rank of Major in the Army. He is now considered a field grade officer, a position few achieve.

Congratulations Major Nelson! Thank you for serving our country.
Congratulations to the following team members and their families!

Sicily Anderes: Daughter of Danny L. Anderes, Regional Quality Director, Neodesha, Kan.; graduating from Neodesha High School, Neodesha, Kan.

Brandon Keith Austin: Son of Ernie Austin, Manager in Mansfield, La.; graduating from North DeSoto High School in Stonewall, La.


Zachary James Chinowith: Son of James Chinowith, Utility Department in Refugio, Texas; graduating from the University of Houston-Victoria with a Bachelor’s of Business Administration in General Business.

Sean Cox, Application Support Manager, Pittsburg, Kan. and son of Tony Vy, VP of Engineering and Lori Cox, IT analyst, Pittsburg; graduating from Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kan., with a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree in Marketing.

Cody Cunningham: Son of Bob Cunningham, general manager, Rockford, Ill., and Lacrosse, Wisc.; graduating from Beloit Turner High School, Beloit, Wisc.

Sydney Currier: Daughter of Shellie Currier, Marketing Manager at KAW River Railroad; graduating from Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kan., with a degree in Criminal Justice

Cassandra Edwards: Daughter of John Edwards, VP Sales - WTPS Phoenix, Ariz.; graduating from Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA with a Bachelor of Arts in Accounting and a minor in Spanish.

Isabella S. Garcia: Daughter of Edward and Annnetra Garcia, Edward is a switchman and Annnetra is the clerk at Boise in Del Rio, La.; graduating from Evans High School Del Rio, La.

Chris Garrett: Son of Dan Garrett, manager of track GRNW & PCC Railroads, Lewiston, Idaho; graduating from Clarkston High School, Clarkston, Wash.

Nick Garrett: Son of Sherrie Baykowski, Customer Service Representative Watco Terminal and Port Services, St. Louis, Mo.; graduating from Northwest High School, Cedar Hill, Mo., with Certification in the A+ program.

Briona Goldsberry: Daughter of Bill Goldsberry, General Manager, Eastern Idaho Railroad; graduating from Deer Park High School, Deer Park, Wash.


Kelsey Helms: Daughter of Duane Helms, Business Development - Operations, Minot, ND; graduating from Minot High School, Minot, ND.

Chaney Lynn Julich: Daughter of Brent Booth and Melinda VanBuren and step father Jeff VanBure.

Brent is the locomotive mechanic supervisor and Melinda is the admin. asst. and Jeff is an engineer, all working for the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad in Cherryvale, Kan.; graduating from Labette Community College, Parsons, Kan, with a degree in Radiography.

Allen Kellar Jr.: Son of Allen Keller, mechanical inspector in Omaha, Neb.; graduating from Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering.

Brigham Keys: Son of Joe Keys, Plant Manager, Fitzgerald, Ga.; graduating from Fitzgerald High School, Fitzgerald, Ga.

Cassandra Kissell: Daughter of Sally Berkestresser, Senior Analyst, Hollidaysburg IT; graduating from Penn State University; State College, Pa., with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

Jannessa Lee: Daughter of David Gibson, location manager, Kinder Morgan Galena Park; graduating from North Forest High School, Houston, Texas.

Taylor D. Liggett: Daughter of Jeff Liggett, Director of Business Solutions-Operations, graduating from Jupiter High School, Jupiter Fla.

Madison R. Littlefield: Daughter of Chuck Littlefield, Vice President of Operations, Gulf Region, Houston, Texas; graduating from the University of Alaska at Anchorage with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History. She will be starting Law School in the Fall at the University of North Dakota at Fargo, ND.

Ashley McConnell: Daughter of Antenogenes Barajas, yard supervisor and Adelita Barajas, billing clerk and CSR at WTPS Glendale, Ariz.; graduating from Carrington College in Phoenix, Ariz., with a Dental Assistant’s Degree and will reenroll in the Dental Hygienist program. Ashley made the Dean’s List with a GPA of 3.99.

Dylan A Muth: Son of David A Muth, Bridge Inspector/Foreman, Janesville Wisc.; graduating from Parker High School, Janesville Wis.

Chelsea Nash: Daughter of Ros Nash, Production Manager Fitzgerald, Ga., Mechanical Shop; graduating from Alabama State University with a Master’s Degree in Counseling. Chelsea received an award for being the top of her class.

Shane Cavan Thomas Rivera: Son of Gil Rivera, Shift Supervisor in Dore, North Dakota; graduating from Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia., with a Bachelor of Arts in History.

Nicole Rockhold intern in Accounts payable in Pittsburg, Kan.; graduating from Pittsburg State University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in Chemistry. Nicole is from Oskaloosa, Kan.


Ryan Seter: Brother of Jay Seter, Operations Specialist, Burley, Idaho; graduating from Declo High School, Declo, Idaho.


Kyle Stewart: Son of Lisa Berry, director senior chief, Watco Dispatch Center, Wichita, Kan., graduating from Kingman High School, Kingman Kan. In June he will leave for basic training for the US Air Force (TACP National Guard Unit). Following basic training he will attended Tec School in Alabama. After Tec School he will come home and be stationed at the 310th Strategic Bombardment, Strategic Aerospace Wing, Smokey Hill ABF in Salina, Kan.

Casey Stevenson: Brother of Nicole Stevenson, Administrative Assistant, Twin Falls, Idaho; graduating from Mimico High School, Rupert, Idaho.

James Sudduth, Interline Account Specialist, Revenue and Contracts, graduating from Pittsburg State University with a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting.

Craig A. Swinney: Son of Rick Swinney, Track Inspector for Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad, in Colfax, Wash.; graduating from Washington State University in Pullman, Wash., with a Master’s Degree in Business Administration.

Kristen Turpin: Granddaughter of Steve Prokopich, general manager, Wood River, Ill.; graduating from Jerseyville High School, Jerseyville, Ill.

Codia A. Vaughn: Son of Gary Vaughn, SVP, Regulatory Relations and Compliance, Pittsburg, Kan.; graduating in the Honors College from Missouri State University in Springfield, Mo., with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication and a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology.

Heather Amber Villarreal: Daughter of Hilda Morin, Assistant Terminal Manager, Refugio, Texas; graduating seventh in her class from Goliad High School, Goliad, Texas.

Jessica Wakeman: Daughter of Dena Patterson, Accounting and William Patterson, QA Manager at Pittsburg, Kan., Mechanical; graduating from LaBette Community College with her accreditations for a Physical Therapy Assistant. Previously graduated from Pittsburg State University with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology in May 2012.


Sarah Williams: Daughter of Douglas Williams, Material Handler/Switchman/Engineer at the Mechanical Shop in Omaha, Neb.; graduating from West Harrison High School in Mondamin, Iowa.

Remember to get your wellness exam and complete your biometric screening requirement before July 1, 2013
Births
Tuf William Shanholtzer
Amanada Jameson and Chanc Shanholtzer are proud to announce the birth of a son, Tuf William.
Tuf was born on February 25, 2013 and weighed 7 lbs., 4 oz., and was 20 inches long.
Tuf was welcomed home by big brother Landon Layne, 18 months.
Amanda is the administrative assistant for Transportation Services and works out of the Pittsburg, Kan., office.

Harper Lyn Seefeld
Josh and Brie Seefeld are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Harper Lyn.
Harper was born on April 29, 2013 and weighed 7 lbs., 7 oz., and was 20 1/2 inches long.
Josh, Brie, Brynlee and Harper Seefeld was welcomed home by big sister Brynlee, 2.

Briley Faye Hanson
Adam and Sara Hanson are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Briley Faye.
Briley was born on April 1, 2013 and weighed 6 lbs., 14 oz., and was 20 inches long.
Adam is the warehouse terminal manager and Sara is a corporate accountant, both out of the Pittsburg, Kan., location.
Great uncles are Rick Webb, CEO and Brad Snow, director of real estate, both in Pittsburg.

Weddings
Neal-Percival
Elizabeth Ann Neal and Joe Leon Percival were united in marriage on March 24, 2013 at the Anacoco First Baptist Church in Anacoco, La.
The couple honeymooned at Toledo Bend Lake they will make their home in Lake Charles, La.
The bride is the daughter of Norman and Melissa Neal, Norman works at the Deridder/Boise Paper Mill as a switchman.

Riese, Joseph Robinson, William Rowell, Micah Telischak, Jerri Titus, Terry Wall, Kyle Whitman
4 Years: Kevin Anselmi, Miguel Garcia, Dale Heisler, Trevor Penner
5 Years: Jovani Aguilar, Mark Bohr, Nakia Jenkins, Joe Kauffman, Shaun Rodriguez
6 Years: Juan Aguilar, Elva Cook, Ryan Everhart, Willie Glee, Michael Hubbs, Chris Labrie, Ricardo Leija, Kenneth McGarrey, Danyelle Norman, Miguel Osorio, Fredy Ramos, Travis Schnelle, Matthew Smith, Chris Spear, Richard Thomas, LaJohn Wilson, George Yanas
7 Years: Randy Bole, Jason Danz, Charles Davidvson, Matthew Kose, Gregory Lewis, Joshua McKinn, Hugh Peo, Dan Sanger, Keith Schlotman, Leonard Smith, Alfred Wetklow, Nancy White
8 Years: Aaron Coester, Steven Conrad, John Gaither, Teresa Gentry, Evan Groth, Timothy Groth, Edward Ripp, Charles Rogers, James Saegeer, Jerrel Whiteside
9 Years: Debra Bishop, Wendy Hicks, Bruce Masters, Larry Mette, Amy Parady, Bradley Walker, Lance Williams
10 Years: Matthew Fetzter
11 Years: Joshua Frame, John Johnson, James Lilly, Kevin Redman
12 Years: Garth Coleman, Christopher Hamill, Allen Kellar
13 Years: Donald Cesar, John Johnson, Ed McKchnie, Tony Montabana
14 Years: Robert Nelson, David Peraule, Casey Thrall
15 Years: Douglas Marshall, Catherine Mueller, David Muth, John Watson
16 Years: Irineo Basurto, Scott Davis, Douglas Falkner, Tarkettick Holden, Jimmie Pelton
17 Years: Terry Andis, Randall Morehead, John Snow, Jose Vidal
18 Years: Tony DeLeece, Thomas Thompson
20 Years: Tom Karp
21 Years: David Hackbarth, James Hill, Daniel Rico, Walter Tisler
23 Years: Bryan Hodge
24 Years: Michael Brown
25 Years: Todd Mulrooney, Wendy Wooden
26 Years: James Smith
27 Years: Mark McClellan
28 Years: Danny Barrington, David Stott
34 Years: Michael Roberts
35 Years: Jose Acosta, Frank Jones
38 Years: Homer Brown
39 Years: Lott Oesch
42 Years: Bill Rainey
44 Years: Larry Snyder

John & Ivana Neel
John and Ivana Neel will celebrate their 10 year anniversary with a renewal of their vows on May 11, 2013.
The couple was married on Valentine’s Day in 2003.
The renewal will take place at St. Paschal’s Catholic Church in West Monroe, La., and will be followed up with the honeymoon they never got to take. They will be going to Destin, Fla.
John and Ivana have a son Evan.
John is an engineer for the Louisiana Southern Railroad.

This section is dedicated to the Watco Team members to give you a chance to share what’s happening in your corner of the Watco World.
Memorial motorcar ride held in Southeast Kansas

Each spring a group of motorcar enthusiasts gathers in Cherryvale, Kan., and heads out on the South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad line to enjoy the weather, the company, and reviving a part of history. This year something was missing, John Spahn, one of the most devoted members of the group passed away last August and his presence was greatly missed.

The ride, held on Saturday, April 6, was held in memory of John and a small ceremony was held to dedicate the Carona Depot Restoration to the memory of John.

When John turned 17 he served as president of the Heart of the Heartland, a rail preservation club, and was instrumental in obtaining the Carona Depot building and relocating it to its current location.

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When John turned 17 he served as president of the Heart of the Heartland, a rail preservation club, and was instrumental in obtaining the Carona Depot building and relocating it to its current location.

A total of eight motorcars and two hyrails participated in the ride with people coming from Texas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas and Alaska. There were a total of approximately 75 people present at the depot for the ceremony. The group raised $1,700 to donate to John’s family.

Larry Spahn, John’s father, said, “As John’s father and for his family, I would like to thank everyone for their kindness and generosity. Your kind words and prayers during this difficult time have helped immensely. To John’s Watco Family, we know that you all meant a lot to John. Through you, John was doing what he truly loved to do and was happy to be part of the Watco family. I am continually amazed at the vast number of friends and acquaintances that John has made. It appears that John touched a number of person’s lives in a very positive manner. Thank You all so very much.”

Houston Ethanol Terminal sees its first tank cars

April Fool’s Days is usually a day filled with tricks but there were no tricks being played at the Houston Ethanol Terminal when their first cars showed up. The cars on the unit train are hooked up to pumps and the ethanol is pumped into storage tanks. The tanks then feed into an automated truck rack nearby. Watco manages the rail terminal while Musket manages the truck rack. The terminal was built by Musket and is located within Watco’s Greens Port Industrial Park.

Gary Doherty, Daniel Rico, Arvie Jones and Jarrett Finn, who are all Watco Mechanical Shop Team Members in Greens Port manned the pumps.

A sunny April Fool’s Day saw the arrival of ethanol cars in the Houston Ethanol Terminal in Greens Port. Pictured are team members: Back row Arvie Jones, Jarrett Finn, and Gary Doherty. In front is Daniel Rico.

KO promotes bike safety

The Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO) participated in a Cycling Skills Clinic held on April 24 in Clearwater, Kan. They purchased 50 bike helmets to hand out to kids attending the event. Sgt. Bolan and Officer Davidson with the Wichita Police Dept. and Captain Lamb and Parametric Atwater with the Sedgwick County EMS instructed the kids on helmet use and bike safety.

Jimmy Patterson, KO assistant general manager said, “This is really a great way to get out into the communities we operate in and build solid relationships with them. It was really fun to see the smiles on the kids’ faces when they received their helmets.”

Clearwater Police Officer Rebekah Schaaf said, “It means a lot to the kids and to the community to see a large company like the K&O show up for an event and give what they did. This really lays a good foundation for the future between the City of Clearwater and the railroad.”

Jimmy Patterson, assistant general manager of the KO, hands out a helmet to a young rider.