Evergreen Packaging is the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad’s (BLU) biggest customer, and now they are being served four states away by the Grand Elk Railroad (GDLK).

And it all started with a phone call. The Commercial Team was on a call discussing opportunities and Grand Elk’s commercial manager Kirk Small mentioned that he and GDLK general manager Damien Cantrell were trying to get Evergreen’s business at the facility on their line. Brigid Rich, BLU commercial manager, told him to give her a call because she might be able to help.

The BLU has been providing service to Evergreen Packaging since it began operations in July 2014. They serve Evergreen at two locations; in Canton, North Carolina, right across from the BLU’s office, and about 15 miles down the line in Waynesville, N.C. Both plants are served two times each day, seven days a week. Commodities such as wood chips, chemicals, and coal are shipped in to the plants and empty box cars are brought in to carry the final product to its destination.

BLU general manager Darl Farris said that since Evergreen is open 24/7, the BLU also operates on the same schedule.

“We need to be available to make sure they have the product they need to keep things running, and that means if they’re open, we’re open,” said Farris.

The Evergreen Packaging plant in Kalamazoo, Michigan, has access to two different rail carriers and prefers to keep things simple by using one of them exclusively. In the past, the GDLK wasn’t that carrier.

Part of the problem originally was the product was shipped out of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The routing from Pine Bluff to Kalamazoo was a bit convoluted when using the Grand Elk as the final carrier.

“The price was right but the service plan was wrong,” said Keith Stone, Rail & Inbound Logistics Manager for Evergreen.

When the product was moved to Waynesville, the routing to the Grand Elk made much more sense, financially and operationally. Michael Hawn, operations manager at the Kalamazoo plant, met with Small and went over the details such as interchanges, demurrage, and rates. Cantrell and Small are excited that they will be touching the cars that started out on their sister railroad.

“Evergreen Packaging views Watco Transportation Services’ Blue Ridge Southern as an important and value adding supplier, and a true partner. Evergreen is in the beginning stages of establishing a new relationship with Watco Transportation Services’ Grand Elk Railroad and all indications are it will be a successful partnership,” Stone stated.

Watco Railroads - GDLK and BLU - Make A Connection

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Watco U reels in another award

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

The Watco U Team can now add another award to their list of accomplishments and the one they pulled in this time is a big one. Watco beat out many Fortune 500 companies to receive second place for the Lead 2018 Award for our First Time Manager Program (Watco 101).

BizLibrary, the company that provides Watco's online training library, nominated Watco for the award.

The list of nominees was narrowed down to 100 and Cris Hatcher, director of training and development, was then required to provide a description of the Watco 101 course. The information that Hatcher provided took Watco to the next level, which narrowed the field of nominees to 50. Those 50 were asked to send out a questionnaire link with five questions on it to Team Members who had taken the course, and it had to be sent to at least 10 and no more than 100. Hatcher sent the link to 65 Team Members and 54 of them responded.

“I feel like this is one of the most important awards that we’ve won,” said Hatcher. “We won because of the feedback from our Team, they were the ones that put us up top.”

Watco received a 4.9 out of a 5 based on two components, the first was the ranking and the second component was based on the comments provided in the survey.

“I’m proudest of the comments made by the Team Members and... - Continued on page 3
#WATCO MOVES

Customer: Metro Park Warehouses, Inc.
Location: Kaw River Railroad
Commodity: Wine

by Jay Benedict, Digital Communication & Social Media Specialist

Wine connoisseurs across the Central U.S. should be raising their glasses to the partnership between Watco’s Kaw River Railroad (KAW) and Metro Park Warehouses, Inc. (MPW)

The KAW began serving MPW in 2007 with the lease of the Bedford property from Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF). At the time, the main commodities moved were paper and canned goods. One of MPW’s customers, a large Modesto, California-based wine producer, wanted to increase traffic and the focus shifted to wine.

Prior to 2017, the warehouse, located in Kansas City, Missouri, had a 242,000 square foot footprint and only had four rail car spots. The wine company needed a location with at least ten spots. With both companies looking to expand, they contacted KAW commercial manager Shellee Currier to discuss their options.

“Through our ongoing conversations and dialog to make sure our service was meeting their needs, we learned of their efforts to grow business for one of their customers and went above and beyond trying to help them at a property that we didn’t serve. When that didn’t work, we were able to support them at the property that we do serve. Through our relationship, we were able to structure a deal to allow Metro Park to grow business with their customer, allow their customer to expand their reach in the region, and increase carloads on the KAW,” said Currier.

After securing a volume commitment from the wine producer and seeing MPW’s plans to invest in a new warehouse, Watco agreed to invest in updating the track infrastructure at the facility. The original warehouse was demolished and a brand new one was built with a footprint of 348,000 square feet.

“This agreement added about 20% more revenue cars to the KAW each year. That addition is a very significant number and is why Watco invested in their track. It’s a big, big deal for us,” said KAW general manager Todd Trammel. “I think a big part of the reason why they did what they did was because of the service we’re providing.”

The increased space was possible because Watco took up and replaced the existing track. Previously, there was a 4-car industry track and runaround that looped around the warehouse, but dead ended at the rear of the building. The industry line was moved over, next to the runaround, which was also straightened and converted into a second industry track, if needed. The new configuration allows for 10 cars on-spot, with space for an additional 10 cars of overflow or storage.

“There’s a lot of work that went into getting this done, especially from Watco to get that dual spur on the east side. It couldn’t have worked any better and you guys did a terrific job in the service and level of support for us and our customers,” said Metro Park COO Jim Sageser.

One of the reasons these investments made sense is because the wine producer made a long term commitment to rail. They have a private fleet of 400 rail cars that they use to ship to regional distribution centers across the U.S. The new facility is uniquely set up to handle these rail cars.

“The service that we get out of Watco is superior to others. You guys just get it; pulling the cars, spotting the cars, and getting them to us in a fluid manner that allows us to manually unload these cars into our building,” Metro Park President and CEO John Malinee said.

The cars leave California and arrive in Kansas City via the BNSF. From there, the KAW provides the last mile service to MPW. They unload the cars for delivery to wholesale liquor distributors from Minneapolis, Minnesota, over to Louisville, Kentucky, and south to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

“We believe there is absolutely value in having Watco do that last mile and manage that yard. Ever since we got this set up, our flow of cars has been much more consistent. That helps our business tremendously,” said Malinee.

The first cars arrived to the new facility in March 2017 and the focus has shifted to continued growth.

“Just knowing that Metro Park was willing to make that kind of investment into that facility gives me great confidence that this is not only the beginning, but it’s going to go even further,” said Trammel.

“They’re a valued Customer of the Kaw River Railroad, we value their business, we’re happy to put this package together, and look forward to growing the business beyond where it is today,” said Currier.

Brad Snow, president of the All Aboard Foundation, Cassie Bicknell, event coordinator for the All Aboard Foundation with a rendering of the future community non-profit center.

All Aboard Foundation repurposes bank building

Renovations will begin in April on the Arvest Bank Building which will be reinvented as the All Aboard Center for Community Development.

by Jay Benedict, Digital Communication & Social Media Specialist

There’s a new resource coming to the Pittsburg, Kansas community this summer. Watco’s All Aboard Foundation unveiled plans to purchase the Arvest Bank building located at 3rd and Broadway in downtown Pittsburg.

Over the coming months, the building will be transformed into the All Aboard Center for Community Development. The center will be a shared space for area non-profit groups to come together, be housed in the same space, and allow for better collaboration and access by the community.

One of the biggest issues that faces the community is accessibility of services. Many of the organizations that are focused on getting people back on their feet are spread out, making it difficult for people with limited transportation to make use of them. This will create a one-stop-shop for community members needing assistance or looking to raise funding.

“We’re looking forward to making this shared space available for non-profits so they can share utilities and expenses in order to put more dollars back into our community,” said All Aboard president Brad Snow.

Renovations to the building will begin in April and are expected to be completed by the end of this summer.
#WHY WATCO

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communication & Social Media Specialist

Joey Bitner has seen a lot of change in the nearly five years he’s been with Watco. He joined the Commercial Team in 2015 and has been based out of Bossier City, Louisiana, since 2016.

“We’ve gained ten railroads, 60-some terminals, a joint venture, and a supply chain service, so it’s not hard to see the growth and opportunity. It’s kind of amazing to see, just in the time that I’ve been here, what this little company in small town Kansas is growing into,” Joey said.

He’s been a part of that growth. Joey started with Watco more than four and one half years ago, with the Credit and Collections Team in the Pittsburg, Kansas, office. He says his time with the Revenue Accounting department was valuable. It allowed him to gain perspective on Watco’s processes and internal communications.

“What you can tell very quickly is that we’ve got a lot of very good people all around, out in the field, in the home office, and support services, that you get to work with in that role and you get to understand a lot about Watco quickly,” Joey said.

He did that for a couple years, but always had an interest in the commercial side. Most of his experience prior to joining Watco was in the retail sales field, so after some conversations with the Commercial Team, he was offered the opportunity to join.

He became part of the pilot group to go through what is now the Watco University Leadership Development Program. He spent time with several members of the Commercial Team, across various profit centers, and learned about his role out in the field. Soon after, Joey started executing his own ideas and opportunities for some of our Gulf region railroads, and recently gained the responsibilities of several terminals as well.

“It’s different and it’s a lot of fun for me. It’s brought a new take on generating new business and expanding the portfolio for the profit center. When you see another side of the business it opens up some different ways to think and changes the way your mindset is on things,” Joey said.

At 30, it’s still early in his career, but he says he’d like to retire with Watco, and he gave plenty of reasons why.

“I think this industry needs fresh ideas and open minds for the long haul because it’s always going to be here. Transportation is always going to be needed. We’re always evolving, we’ve got a lot of experienced leaders all across the network, and they’re there to provide support,” said Joey.

“Most companies say they pride themselves on valuing their people and all that, but not all of them truly do that and walk the walk. Watco does and it shows with our Leadership Team. They make themselves available to anybody. Also, I’m always thankful for the operations guys. Literally, if they weren’t here taking care of our Customers every day, I wouldn’t have anything to sell. Always thankful for them, and can never say it enough.”

Watco U reels in award, continued

Continued from page 1 - how the course made a difference in their lives not only professionally but more importantly, personally," said Hatcher.

One Team Member focused on the personal benefits in his comment, “The courses have given me tools to access to help me grow my abilities as a husband, father, team member, and manager.”

Another Team Member commented, “Excellent background on Watco’s Customer First Foundation Principles and how to apply them to team and life decisions. I learned a lot from the personality analysis, including how to harness different personalities to work toward a common goal. The class was a good balance of lecture, discussion, and activity, which kept me (and the group) engaged. I’m proud to work for a company that puts this much thought into personal, professional, and team development.”

There were many industries represented among the top twenty but Watco was the only finalist from the transportation industry.
WisDOT and WSOR complete major bridge upgrade

by Ken Lucht
AVP, Government and Industry Relations

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) recently completed a major bridge improvement project spanning the Wisconsin River at Spring Green, Wisconsin.

Over the past year, railroad contractors were on site replacing 62 spans equating to nearly 1,000 feet of substructure and deck, due to severe settlement and timber component decay of the railroad bridge, also known as Bridge B-256. With any further delays in completing the work scope, the railroad bridge would have eventually been taken out of service, which would have effected numerous rail-dependent businesses along the line between Madison and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

The 100+ year old, 2,200 foot timber railroad bridge on WSOR’s Prairie Subdivision began showing signs of settling and extreme timber deterioration approximately twenty years ago. At that time, WSOR forces began an advanced maintenance plan essentially keeping 1,100 feet of the timber pile portion of the structure in service until funding could be made available for replacement of major timber components. Advanced maintenance included replacement of pile caps on a regular basis, replacement of deck ties and concrete encasement of several piers. Under this maintenance plan, weight (tons) and train speeds were restricted until major replacement work would be complete. The remaining 1,100 feet of B-256 not part of this project is primarily steel and remains in good condition today. However, WisDOT and WSOR forces will monitor this section for any future deterioration or defects.

The Prairie Subdivision operates through the Wisconsin communities of Middleton, Cross Plains, Black Earth, Mazomanie, Arena, Spring Green, Lone Rock, Blue River, Boscobel, Woodman, Wauzeka, and Prairie du Chien, and directly serves fourteen rail-dependent businesses. This line is also an important connection to an interchange with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Harbor Facilities at Prairie du Chien’s St. Feriole Island. Commodities hauled along the line include grain, lumber, sand, plastic, chemicals, and fertilizer. Today, WSOR provides daily service between Madison and Prairie du Chien.

Initial estimates for replacing 1,000 feet of structure were at $13,000,000. However, through the competitive bid process and favorable labor and material prices, the final budget was less than half the initial estimate saving the project nearly $7,000,000. The $5,798,000 project was awarded a state grant of $4,800,000 from the Freight Railroad Preservation Program (FRPP), which required a 20% local match provided by the WSOR. With completion of major replacement work of Bridge B-256 at Spring Green, the bridge can now handle today’s modern railroad loads of 286,000 lbs. gross weight on rail, safely and efficiently.

Bridge B-256 is owned by the Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission (WRRTC) and operated by the WSOR. WisDOT administers the FRPP which provides grants up to 80% of the cost to: 1). purchase abandoned rail lines in an effort to continue freight service, or for the preservation of the opportunity for future rail service, and 2). to rehabilitate facilities, such as tracks or bridges, on publicly-owned rail lines.

“This project demonstrates our commitment to rebuilding infrastructure that connects our state and local economies”, stated Preston Nelson, general manager of WSOR. “Our partnership with WisDOT exemplifies how public-private partnerships can rebuild our railroad systems into the next century,” he added.

The All Aboard Foundation Scholarship Program is now open for applications. The scholarship will be available to dependents of Watco Team Members. The recipient must be in good academic standing and plan to attend a post-secondary institution within one year following high school graduation.

Applications are available at http://allaboardfoundation.com/scholarships/. Please submit your application to info@allaboardfoundation.com or mail it to:
All Aboard Foundation
315 West 3rd Street
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Applications need to be submitted on or before April 15th. A committee will review all applications and the winner(s) will be notified and announced in the June issue of The Dispatch.
Spring is a beautiful time of year to enjoy getting back outdoors. But for some of us that suffer from seasonal allergies, it can be tough! Luckily, there are plenty of at-home remedies you can try to help minimize and prevent the symptoms from affecting your enjoyment of the spring season.

**Anti-Inflammatory Diet:** First off, a person with allergies has an immune system that treats certain proteins like plant pollen, dust mites, or mold as if it was a dangerous invader. This creates a lot of inflammation in the body as it tries to counteract the allergen. If you are also eating a lot of inflammatory foods like dairy, animal meat, fried or processed foods, and alcohol, your immune system will be on overload! Stick with an anti-inflammatory diet which includes a lot of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, beans and legumes, nuts, and omega-3’s like fish. Checkout more anti-inflammatory foods at: [https://www.drweil.com/diet-nutrition/anti-inflammatory-diet-pyramid/dr-weils-anti-inflammatory-diet/](https://www.drweil.com/diet-nutrition/anti-inflammatory-diet-pyramid/dr-weils-anti-inflammatory-diet/)

**Try a Neti Pot:** A Neti Pot is used to help alleviate sinus congestion, facial pain and pressure caused by allergies and environmental irritants. The small ceramic pot is filled with a saline solution that is flushed through the nostrils, helping to increase the effectiveness of removing allergens from the nasal passage by the hair-like structures called the cilia.

**Take a Probiotic:** Around 70% of our immune system resides in our gut. If you don’t have enough “friendly bacteria” in your intestines, it’s unable to fight off the “bad bacteria” as easily, which can lead to sickness and allergies. By taking a probiotic, you are increasing the amount of live microbes in your gut (aka “friendly bacteria”) to help boost your inner ecosystem and immunity.

**Maintain a Healthy Weight:** There have been numerous studies linking obesity and excess pounds with an increased risk for both allergies and asthma in children and adults alike. Make sure to exercise regularly, eat plenty of fresh/real foods, drink filtered water, and get 6-8 hours of sleep every night to help maintain a healthy weight.

**Wash Bedding & Vacuum Regularly:** Aim to launder your sheets at least once a week to help keep allergens off your bed. Same goes with regular cleaning of all household surfaces that can accumulate dust and allergens. Try using a vacuum cleaner with an HEPA filter and a damp microfiber cloth to catch excess dust more efficiently.

**Use Natural, Fragrance-Free Cleaning Products:** Chemical-laden cleaning products and air fresheners that are not all-natural are not only harmful to your overall health and the environment, they can actually exacerbate allergy and asthma symptoms as well. Some good brands to try include: Dr. Bonner’s, Method, J.R. Watkins, Seventh Generation, Better Life, Eco Breeze, Babyganics, Honest, and Puracy.

**Keep Your Air Clean:** HEPA filters throughout your home can help purify the air by trapping allergens and air-borne irritants. Make sure to change them regularly. Dehumidifiers, as well as HVAC’s can also help curb the growth of mold and mildew that can worsen allergy symptoms. You can also keep air-purifying plants around your house like aloe, bamboo palm, or English ivy, to help improve indoor air quality.

### Fitzgerald shop earns incentive payment

**by Tracie VanBecelaere**

Managing Editor

The Team at the Fitzgerald, Georgia, GBW mechanical shop received some exciting news in January. For the first time since 2015, the shop earned a Customer driven incentive payment.

The shop is given an incentive commitment for a given time period and if the shop is able to fulfill that commitment, they receive an incentive payment based on a variety of criteria set by the Customer.

The plant manager, Jane Harden, felt that a shift in culture at the shop led to the positive results.

“We worked together to constantly remind the Team of the goals and the rules and measurements that we needed to follow and reach while upholding our guiding principles and what we stand for. As cars came in, the Team identified the cars that they needed to focus on as far as meeting the expectations set by the Customer. Customer service manager Jeff Nugent spent many hours communicating with our Customer and keeping the goals for them in front of the Team, who followed through while also continuing to serve our other 30 or so Customers in an efficient and timely manner,” Harden said.

The work performed on the cars, primarily tank cars, consists of valve repairs, linings and coatings, and heavy repairs. The Team of approximately 100 at Fitzgerald work two shifts with the second shift designated for blast and switching only. This shop has a larger Customer base than many of the other shops, making it more of a challenge to manage and balance each Customers’ work.

Harden is excited to celebrate the milestone with her fellow Team Members.

“This is all about them, they are the ones who achieved this,” said Harden. “When we receive the incentive it goes straight to our bottom line and through our discretionary bonus program, the Team will be rewarded for their hard work.”

Harden said they will also be firing up the grill soon and cooking up some steaks to celebrate the achievement.

“We need to take a moment to just focus on what we’ve done, put each other on the back, and then dive right in and do it all over again,” she said.
Montana Team Member provides lifesaving care

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Samantha Pederson has been a Watco Team Member for less than a year but in that time she has proven to be a valuable asset and she very likely saved a life.

Samantha started her job as a carman apprentice on the Mission Mountain Railroad in the first part of September 2017. As part of her job she travels between the Stryker and Columbia Falls branch-es on a regular basis, which is about a 40-mile route.

On January 26, Samantha had finished up a job in Stryker and was heading back to Columbia Falls when she came upon an accident.

A truck had attempted to pass another truck on the highway but icy conditions caused the truck to fishtail and the two vehicles ended upside down in the ditch. Both vehicles were totaled. The area has no cell phone reception so Samantha was unable to call for help.

To complicate matters, a blizzard was just blowing in as she arrived at the scene.

“Between the icy roads and the blowing snow, I was a little nervous that someone else driving up would end up sliding into my vehicle and making things much worse,” said Samantha.

Samantha went to the first truck and helped the driver in the truck get out and put the dog that was with him in her vehicle so that he wouldn’t run off. She then rushed to the second vehicle which had both a man and woman inside. She helped the man out and discovered the woman was badly cut in several places. Samantha had taken first aid and CPR training in high school and was able to assess the wounds and wrap the cuts in bandages to stop the bleeding.

Luckily, a snow plow came along and was able to radio for an ambulance and the highway patrol. Samantha and the men stood outside in the blizzard waiting for help to arrive while the woman and dog were kept warm in the truck.

“I was glad that everyone was okay,” said Samantha. “From the looks of the trucks it could have been so much worse.”

Josh Kingery, MMT carshop leadman, said, “I’m really proud of what she did. She went above and beyond to make sure that everyone was safe while she waited in the cold over an hour for help to arrive.”

Boise Valley Railroad hosts Officer on a Train

by Jay Benedict,
Digital Communication & Social Media Specialist

For the 8th year running, the Boise Valley Railroad (BVRR) partnered with Idaho Operations Lifesaver and state and local police for Officer on a Train.

“We’ll take an area where we have crossings without gates and lights, passive crossings, areas where motorists are more likely to commit offenses, and areas with a history of high incidents. We’ll do these enforcement focuses in these areas,” said Idaho Operation Lifesaver (OLI) state coordinator Travis Campbell.

The event, held on February 1, placed an officer from the Idaho State Police in the cab of a BVRR locomotive. As it moved along its route, the officer watched for drivers who went around the crossing gates or tried to beat the train at crossings while BVRR recorded video evidence.

When a motorist broke the law, he radioed to other law enforcement that were standing by to pull the vehicle over. Officers then issued a citation for up to $95 or gave the driver a warning.

BVRR general manager Gary Wagenseller is also the short line representative for OLI in Idaho. He helps Campbell plan the route and makes sure the BVRR has a locomotive available for the event.

“The main thing is safety, not only for our trains and Team Members, it’s also for the public. Sometimes, they don’t realize there are trains out there or understand the proper safety procedures when they see a train coming. This is to help make everyone aware and keep them safe,” Wagenseller said.

He and Campbell have been putting on two Officer on a Train events each year, and each event usually sees around 100 drivers cited. The focus isn’t giving out tickets, though, it’s spreading awareness.

“What we accomplished was to raise awareness to eliminate the number of people who are injured or killed at grade crossing incidents. Raising that awareness and having those stories run on the news will affect 15,000 to 20,000 people for each one that they show,” said Campbell.
Deaths

Thomas P. Thompson


Tom was born April 20, 1949, to Alfred Wayne Thompson and Mary S. (Murphy) Thompson in Sioux City, Iowa. He married Elaine (Ellie) on April 1, 1977.

Tom graduated from Central High School in Sioux City, in 1967. He then joined the Marine Corps and served for six years, including a tour in Vietnam. After an eight-year hiatus, he returned to the military to serve 10 years in the Army.

Tom and Ellie moved to Burley, Idaho, in 1992 where he received an Associates Degree in Diesel Mechanics at the College of Southern Idaho in 1993. After college he worked at the Minidoka bus garage, and in May 1995 he began a new career working at Eastern Idaho Railroad. He was proud and loved his job as a locomotive engineer. Tom retired in May of 2015. He proudly belonged to the VFW post 3043, helping in any capacity, even military honors, will be held in Palm Coast, FL at a future date to be announced. Cremation was under the direction of Serenity Funeral Chapel Life Celebration Center & Cremation Services of Idaho, Twin Falls.

Births

Bonnie Ruth Burks

Mike and Courtney Burks are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Bonnie Ruth. Bonnie was born on November 30, 2017. She weighed 9 lbs., 10 oz., and was 20 1/2 inches long.

Bonnie was welcomed home by her big brothers and sister, Blaze, Bronson, and Bella. Courtney is the Customer Service Manager and works out of the Pittsburg, Kansas, office.
When Watco's Burley, Idaho, location manager Brian Addis isn't busy managing the movement of perishables, he's busy putting out fires.

Addis serves as a volunteer firefighter but that's not all he volunteers for. He's signed up to participate in a special climb to help raise funds to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Addis and many of his fire fighting brethren will be competing in the world's largest on-air stairclimb competition in Seattle, Washington, on March 11. The competition is open only to firemen and they will travel up 69 flights of stairs in full structural turnout gear while on-air. As they are racing to the top, they are reminded of the journey the cancer patients must take and that every step they take is a step towards finding a cure.

The annual fundraiser is always a sold out event and last year 2,000 firefighters participated in the event from more than 330 fire departments and 9 different countries. Last year's group brought in a record $2.4 million for blood cancer research.

Brian has set a goal of raising $5,000 for the cause this year and anyone interested in supporting Brian can go to http://www.llswa.org/site/TR/Events/FirefighterStairclimb?pg=pfnd&fr_id=1560 and type in Addis.

Birmingham Terminal Railway's Brandon Dunn spoke to a pre-K class at Woodstock Elementary School south of Birmingham, Alabama.

They say you're never too old to go back to school and Birmingham Terminal Railway (BHRR) conductor/engineer Brandon Dunn is proof that it's true.

However, the engineer wasn't there to learn anything, he was there to teach.

Brandon had the opportunity to speak with Mrs. Green's Pre-K students at Woodstock Elementary School, just south of Birmingham, Alabama, in early February.

He taught approximately 25 kids about how to be safe around railroad tracks and how important it is to always stop, look, and listen. He also spoke to them about what he did and what it is like working on the railroad.

The question and answer portion was a highlight, and Brandon said the kids came up with some very interesting questions that brought a smile to his face.

The STAT Center donated a variety of items for Brandon to hand out to the class.

Brandon has been with BHRR since startup in 2012, and he's been a railroader for 11 years.