Abandoned flag finds home at Watco location

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communications & Social Media Specialist

Eleven years ago, Brian Warren’s Army Ranger unit found an abandoned American flag while on a United Nations mission in central Africa. Since then, that flag has traveled across six continents with members of his team. It’s suffered some damage and received repairs along the way, but now that flag flies in the yard of Watco’s Palouse River and Coulee City - Condon, Oregon, switching location.

“The only place it hasn’t been is Antarctica,” Warren said. “I love penguins, but not enough to go see them there.”

While telling Condon’s general manager Michael Goss about the flag’s history and significance, Goss suggested they put it up in the facility’s yard. Warren started gathering supplies from around the yard to build a flagpole. The pole is an air line from a railcar’s braking system and the tie-off on the pole is a brake shoe retainer pin. The bricks around the base were painted Watco’s black and yellow, which also happens to be Ranger colors.

“My buddies and I pass the flag around. Whenever one of us gets deployed on a U.N. mission, we ship it out to them and it’s theirs until someone else gets deployed,” said Warren. “So it’ll fly here until I have to pass it along.”

After years of service, Warren returned to his hometown of Boston, but didn’t find what he was looking for there. When a railroading job opened up in Florida, he jumped on it. At first, Florida sounded great, but that was short-lived.

“All my friends were either gone or in trouble. I decided I needed to move on too,” said Warren. “In Florida, I’d wake up and be sweating at 6 a.m. I’d had enough of that and needed some place without the humidity.”

He knew he wanted to stick with railroading. So, when he saw a conductor position at PPC-Condon located on the Washington-Oregon border, he applied and has been a member of the Team since April 2017.

“Railroading is kind of like being in the service because a lot of it is black and white. It’s regimented. You know what you’re doing each day. You’re either being safe or you’re not,” said Warren. “You watch out for the guys next to you to make sure you’re all going home at the end of the day.”

Warren carried another flag with him while he ran the Columbia Gorge Half Marathon on Sunday, October 22. He finished in just over two hours after cramps set in during the last few miles. When he’s not working, running, or enjoying the Pacific Northwest’s booming craft beer scene, Warren volunteers to raise funds and awareness for the Veteran Suicide Prevention Association.

“It’s important that men and women get the help they need,” said Warren. “I needed help in the past, and now I’m in a position to give back.”

Warren says he’s also been trying to help other service members he knows find work when they leave the military. He always makes sure that he mentions Watco.

“Veterans Day originated as “Armistice Day” on Nov. 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and November 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938. Unlike Memorial Day, Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.
Finding your husband lying lifeless on the ground is not something most people are prepared for. Thankfully, Barbara Cody was.

Barbara, a Team member at the Industry Terminal in Pennsylvania, credits her training in CPR for keeping her husband’s blood flowing until first responders arrived.

“He was gone,” said Barbara. “I could just tell by looking at him lying on the garage floor. He wasn’t breathing, his eyes were fixed, and his jaw was clenched – I knew it wasn’t good.”

Although Barbara screamed for help, she knew that her neighbors were far enough away that no one could hear her. She ran into the house, grabbed the phone and called 911. She rushed back out to the garage and began compressions as she was taught in CPR class with the help of the 911 operator who kept her focused.

“I’m the type of person that runs away from that kind of stuff,” Barbara said. “Divine intervention kept me level headed. When it happens and it’s your loved one and there’s no one else around, you find a way to do what needs to be done.”

“It took three minutes for help to arrive and it’s a lot of work to keep up compressions for that long but I knew I couldn’t stop. Thankfully, a neighbor showed up and I asked him for help with the compressions.”

Coincidently, another neighbor arrived on the scene, the first responder to arrive lived just a half-mile down the road from the Codys’. North Beaver Township Fire Department Assistant Chief Chris Snedeker received a text about a cardiac arrest that had been reported and his pager went off as he was pulling out of the driveway.

Snedeker had recently had a rough experience of his own while performing CPR on his own mother, who he was unable to revive. He had distanced himself from performing CPR for fear of triggering something in his head. For some reason, he said the day he got the call about Cody, he just jumped up and went.

Snedeker and another responder were able to revive Cody briefly as they performed compressions and an AED was used when the ambulance arrived to establish a weak but steady blood pressure and pulse before transporting him to the hospital.

“There were no prior indications of cardiac risk — “my numbers were all good … I’d had EKGs recently and everything looked good” — but still his heart seized.

Cody was life-flighted to Pittsburgh where he underwent quadruple bypass surgery.

“I have been an advocate for taking First Aid/ CPR classes since the days of Kinder Morgan. I look at the number of Team members who participate in future training and we have so many Team Members who want to take this course so they can be prepared to help their Team at work should an injury or other unfortunate incident take place. It’s a good example of being your brother’s and sister’s keeper.”

“In addition, we have had a lot of feedback on the impact of this training outside of Watco when our people were able to practice their knowledge to help their loved ones and others in the community. By being able to take the right steps and remaining calm and confident in their skills, we have heard multiple success stories from our Team about how they were able to best assist their loved ones when the unfortunate accidents do happen.”

Team Members can also check the Watco University Course Calendar within Watco U Online in SuccessFactors to see when upcoming training opportunities are, and to register for a session.

“I hope telling my story has an impact on the number of Team members who participate in future classes,” said Barbara.

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

CPR lessons help Industry Team member save spouse

Bob Cody shakes hands with North Beaver Township Fire Department Assistant Chief Chris Snedeker, as Cody’s wife, Barbara, holds back tears. Snedeker and Barbara both performed CPR which helped save Cody’s life.

Three American cemeteries near Normandy, France, hold the bodies of more than 13,700 U.S. servicemen who died in the D-Day invasion and subsequent World War II operations.

Joe Pontoli recently had the opportunity to travel to France to visit the grave of his uncle Joe Redescaldi. Redescaldi was buried in The Brittany American Cemetery and Memorial in the town of St. James (Manche), France. Like many other Americans who were killed during the war, his uncle was only 20 years old when he died. Joe is proud to be named after his uncle.

Joe Redescaldi was in the 359th Infantry Regiment, 90th Infantry Division and received a Purple Heart. The beaches of Normandy were already secured and his battalion was fighting in the interior of France to help secure all of France. The family believes he was killed in The Battle of the Falaise Pocket in the town of Chambous, France on August 20, 1944, which was just one day before the end of the battle ended. The Battle of the Falaise Pocket lasted from August 12, 1944, to August 21, 1944. It was a crucial factor in the Allied Liberation of Paris, which proved to be one of the major turning points of the war, and sealed the fate of the German army in France.

Pontoli had a relationship with Watco dating back many years, starting with the leasing of the Pennsylvania Southwestern Railroad and was instrumental in building the relationship Watco now enjoys with Kinder Morgan. After being retired for a couple of years, Pontoli missed working and was brought on as a consultant for Watco.

Pontoli said, “It was a very emotional day for me to finally have the opportunity to visit his grave site. God Bless America.”

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Namesake visits gravesite in Normandy

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Frac sand is transloaded from rail to truck for Watco Customer Schlumberger at the new Wellston, Oklahoma, terminal.

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communications & Social Media Specialist

As demand for frac sand continues to boom, the addition of the two transload terminals in central Oklahoma helps Watco increase capacity to meet Customers’ needs. The new terminals, in conjunction with the existing Oklahoma City Transload, move more than 100,000 tons of sand each month.

The first terminal, in Wellston, Oklahoma, began operations on August 2, 2017. The second, Oklahoma Transload Services, began its operations on August 19, after it was purchased from Watco Customer Base, Inc. The two new terminals join the Watco Terminal and Port Services (WTPS) terminal in Del City, Oklahoma, which has been in operation for nearly a decade.

The Wellston terminal operates on land leased from longtime Watco partner and Rock N Rail owner John Kalka. Rock N Rail still moves aggregate and pipe, but the facility was expanded to approximately 120 railcar spots so Watco could run the 24/7 sand operation there as well.

The terminal employs 13 team members and transloaded over 18,000 tons of frac sand for Customer Schlumberger in its first month of operation.

“Having a larger footprint in the growing market for frac sand presents many exciting opportunities to WTPS and the SLWC,” said terminal manager Tom Hansen.

Oklahoma Transload Services, in Oklahoma City, moved almost 5,000 tons of sand in its first month for their Customer, Fairmount Santrol. It almost matched that total in the first 12 days of October, having already transloaded 4,600 tons, and putting the team on track to reach the goal of 10,000 to 15,000 tons monthly.

The terminal employs 13 Team members and while the sand operation runs 24/7, the Team also transloads lumber, shingles, coil wire, and more during normal business hours.

“When we took over, there was a lot of work to be done. We’ve come a long way and there’s still a ways to go, but we’ve come so far,” said terminal manager Derek Mooy. “The Team has really pulled together and taken hold of the Watco vision here.”

WTPS Oklahoma City, also managed by Hansen, averages about 80,000 tons of sand for its five Customers monthly. The 40 Team members work 24/7 and have loaded over 22,000 truckloads so far this year.

All three terminals are served by the Stillwater Central Railroad (SLWC), making Watco a key link in our Customers’ supply chain. Oklahoma Transload Services’ facility sits directly adjacent to the SLWC depot.

“Being next door to the SLWC allows us to work together directly and, most times, more quickly to make sure every Customer is being served,” said Mooy.

Oklahoma has become a hub for gas and oil production in the US. It’s one of the cheapest places in the country to drill. The frac sand that Watco moves is an integral part of the process used to extract these products.

“The thing that amazes me is that we move more sand in one month than we used to in one year. It’s amazing where things are at today,” said Adam Hanson, assistant vice president of Division B operations.

“Oklahoma has one of the best oil and gas markets in the country and these terminals help keep Watco a key player in that market.”

During this month’s Quarterly Business Review, Chief Operating Officer Dan Smith said, “As we see something that needs to be fixed, as soon as you recognize there’s an opportunity to get better, if you don’t seize that moment and dive right in, it will escape you.”

Blue Ridge Southern (BLU) locomotive mechanic Ethen Greene saw one of those opportunities and acted. Greene frequently works with locomotive air filters, which are bulky, take up a lot of storage room, and sometimes delay repairs awaiting arrival from a distant supplier.

Greene took the pricing book they usually order from to a local parts store. He was able to persuade them to keep the air filters on hand, and provide the product at a competitive price. This not only saves the BLU some operating expense, but it also frees up some valuable storage space for the mechanics. The local parts store owner, who has been a partner since the BLU’s startup, certainly appreciates the additional business.

“The biggest positive is that this frees up storage space,” said Jamie Miller, BLU chief mechanical officer. “We have two connex boxes on the property and storing our filters took up half of one. Having that extra space is invaluable.”

Greene joined the BLU as a conductor on its start up in July 2014. When a mechanic’s job opened up a little more than a year ago, he was able to fulfill a long-time desire of becoming a mechanic.

“Nothing really surprises me about Ethen’s recent actions. He’s been a valuable member of the BLU team since day one and maintains a positive attitude no matter what he’s doing,” said Darl Farris, BLU general manager. “We are proud to have him on our team!”
Ann Arbor TS&IC raises funds for trip
by Jay Benedict
Digital Communications & Social Media Specialist

The Ann Arbor Railroad Team Safety & Improvement Committee (TS&IC) raised more than $500 when they heard that the fifth-grade class at Rosa Parks Elementary School in Toledo, Ohio, was struggling to find funding for a class field trip.

Equipment Operator Marks Adams’ wife, Amy, brought it to his attention. Amy is a teacher at the school. Mike brought the idea to the TS&IC, and Equipment Operator Art Perez put together fliers. Perez placed them in various locations in the terminals along with collection boxes.

Their efforts funded the class’s transportation to the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. The museum houses historic planes, train, vehicles, and even the bus where Rosa Parks took her seat. The Team was also able to provide tickets for all the students to take a three-mile train ride around the village.

“It was a very humbling experience to be able to provide the students with an opportunity that they would not normally be afforded,” said Perez, leader of the TS&IC team.

Perez says the school is from a low-income, inner-city area of Toledo, where funding and opportunities can be tight. For many students, this trip was the farthest they’d been from home, the first time they’d been to a museum, and first time on a train.

“Rosa Parks Elementary has a mission to prepare students for their future college and career experiences,” Perez said. “This trip was another added piece to the puzzle, and provided students with an opportunity to explore careers in technology and engineering.”

Children at the Rosa Parks Elementary School in Toledo, Ohio, made a sign for the Team members at the Ann Arbor Railroad to thank them for raising the funds for the children to go on a field trip to the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan

Watco Team Members: Use your Watco e-mail when applying for internal positions for priority status.

Why Watco?
Editor’s note: This year, we began sharing in print the #WhyWatco stories we’ve been also sharing in video via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Team Member: Brenna Prestholt
Title: Manager of Leasing and Storage
Location: Pittsburg, Kansas

Many things have changed for Brenna Prestholt since she started working at Watco five years ago. When Prestholt first started, she worked in Revenue Accounting with Credit and Collections. After a year in the role, she was promoted to a senior position and managed the collections for the biggest roads and Customers. Currently she is the Manager of Leasing and Storage, a position she has held for two years where she and her team manages the storage traffic for over 13,000 railcars spanning across 30 properties.

“What I like about Watco is that it’s a family oriented company and they put people first here,” said Prestholt.

It really is family oriented for Prestholt, whose husband Derek is the Manager of Fleet Logistics. At 11 months, baby Evelyn is too young to join the team but it’s never too early to start training. Another aspect that Brenna likes about Watco is the opportunity for growth and advancement within the company.

"If you’re willing to put the time and the effort into it, there are opportunities to grow here. There are many departments and opportunities to advance your skills and knowledge if you’re willing to take them," said Prestholt.

Prestholt also noted that she likes how involved the company is in the community. Watco Team members participate in community events such as Paint the Town Red, the Corporate Challenge, and is very active with Pittsburg State University events. Watco even has a Team member that serves as Pittsburg’s mayor.

As the Storage Manager, a couple aspects of her job is to help Customers and operations facilitate the traffic on and off our railroads along with assisting Customers who need storage to find the most fitting solution on Watco properties.

Prestholt said the number of cars in storage can fluctuate depending on the market, what commodities are moving, and what the demand is for storage and moving cars. She enjoys working with Customers such as Phillips 66, who has been a long-term Watco Customer and has cars stored on a number of Watco short lines.

"I think it is important to think of your Customers as part of your team," said Prestholt. "We both need each other to be successful.”

The Storage Team recently took over handling the Houston area storage and Prestholt said she is excited about the opportunities that the transition will bring.

“There’s so much going on in the Houston area and our Team is looking forward to helping manage the inventory and help further grow one of our busiest locations,” said Prestholt.

To hear more #WhyWatco stories, follow us on social media! If you have a #WhyWatco story to share, email ivan@watcompanies.com. 
**Watco Wellness:** Wellness Check catches health issues

*by Tracie VanBecelaere*

**Managing Editor**

Admittedly, well checks can be annoying. You've got to take off work, sit around in a waiting room, and then get poked and prodded.

However, those well checks can save lives. Just ask JoAnn Alms. She called Cahokia Terminal Manager Scott Schweitzer and thanked Watco for making her husband Gary, an equipment operator at the terminal, get his well check.

One that may have saved his life.

When Gary went in for his well check in August the doctor did all the routine work and then asked Gary if he was having any problems. Gary mentioned that he was having a lot of cramping in his left leg. The doctor measured Gary's leg and said that there was something way more serious than cramping going on.

Turns out Gary had an 80% blockage in the artery in his leg and a stint was put in. The doctors then did a procedure where they stick a wire through the vein and cleaned out the plaque buildup. Once the left leg is completed the doctors will work on the right leg, which they say isn't as bad.

Gary's piece of advice is to be sure to communicate with your doctor.

"Be honest and if anything is bothering you be sure to let them know. It might seem like something little but it could be a sign of other things."

Gary said if he wasn't required to get his well check the condition might not have been caught.

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**Train engineer connects with third-grader**

*by Jay Benedict*

**Digital Communications & Social Media Specialist**

Nathan George loves trains. He says he wants to drive one when he grows up. So, when his third-grade class at Lakeside Elementary in Pittsburg, Kansas, was given a social studies assignment to write to people who keep the economy moving in his community, he knew exactly who to contact.

George wrote a letter to a "train driver," and that letter made it to South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) Engineer Mike Yoger. The letter thanked him for taking things where they go and for being a safe driver because if he wasn’t safe "the train cars would fly off the train tracks the train would crash."

"I was honored to get it," said Yoger. "Nathan took the time to thank us so I wanted to show our gratitude back."

Yoger wrote a note back explaining that the SKOL hauls products like grain, sand, rock, and produce, and that there can be more than 100 railcars in a train, making them a mile long.

He told George about interchanges with Class I railroads like the Kansas City Southern and BNSF, and most importantly, safety.

"He mentioned being a safe driver in the letter, so I wanted to make sure the students knew about that," said Yoger. "I told him that they needed to be safe too. That they shouldn’t play around tracks and about the dangers associated with that."

Yoger signed the letter and asked SKOL trainmaster Dustin Coester and conductor Brady Hutchins to sign it as well. George probably would have been happy enough to receive a letter from three members of a train crew, but Yoger wanted to do more.

He and Hutchins boxed up a pair of safety glasses, a safety vest, gloves, lanterns, and even a locomotive reverser. A reverser is like a big key that controls which way the train is moving. They also sent a box of Watco train whistles for the rest of the class.

"We sent him pretty much everything that we carry with us all the time," said Hutchins. "The only other thing he’d need is a radio."

Bridget Walker, George’s teacher, presented him with the package in front of the whole class and read Yoger’s letter to all the students.

"Nathan was truly floored! He was shocked and loved the goodies," said Walker. "His mom said he would be going through it for days, and knowing him, he will look up each detail about each item."

Walker passed out the whistles to the rest of the class and they had a whistle blowing party.

"Thank you, thank you for writing back and sharing the sense of community with our children," said Walker.

Yoger says that sense of community is one of the main reasons why he felt compelled to respond.

"We were able to educate the class about safety around trains, represent Watco in a positive way, and make Nathan’s day," said Yoger. "One of the reasons I love working here is the relationship we have with the community."

Three truck drivers at the Pittsburg warehouse also received letters from Xiden Beatty, Aiden Long, and Kaitlyn Leiker, other students in Walker’s class. The letters said the students appreciated what the drivers did and that they liked the big trucks. The students thanked them for making sure they had things like food and toys.

Gerald Kattner, Jake Jones, and John Nepote all wrote letters back to the students thanking them for thinking of truck drivers.

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Third grade teacher Bridget Walker with student Nathan George who wrote in to South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad Engineers as part of a school project.

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Gary Alms, equipment operator at the Cahokia Terminal in Sauget, Illinois, found out how important well checks can be when a serious condition was discovered at his August check up.

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Teacher Bridget Walker passes out Watco train whistles sent to the students in her third grade class at Lakeside Elementary School.

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"I have a blood pressure check in six months," said Gary, "But I don't know that I would have said anything at that appointment."

Schweitzer said, "We all come to work every day for different reasons and for many of us it is our families, and we owe it to our families to be the best we can. Part of being the best we can is to ensure we are healthy and able enjoy the life outside of work. Small things such as wellness exams can bring to light the big issues and, much like reporting a near miss, it allows us to remain proactive. Being proactive defiantly resulted in a better life for Gary, and as I joke with him it allows for another 25 years of working. Since joining Watco in February, I feel that we are treated more than team mates but as a family. So from Gary, me, and the Cahokia family, thank you for the opportunity to enjoy what we do."
Tex puts Webb City Streetcar back in business

by Tracie VanBecelaere
Managing Editor

Last Christmas, the Webb City Streetcar was rolling down the tracks treating young and old alike to a beautiful Winter Wonderland. The car rode past lighted displays while riders were greeted by Santa and listened to the holiday story of the Polar Express. And then the fun stopped. The little engine that could just couldn’t anymore.

The car had been giving rides in Webb City, Missouri’s King Jack Park since the 80’s but when it stopped last Christmas, it looked like it might be the end of the line for the 101-year-old piece of history.

But Jim Dawson, President of the Southwest Missouri Electric Streetcar Association had a trick up his sleeve. That ‘trick’ goes by the name of Tex Inman and carries the title of Director of Locomotive Support at Watco. However, Mr. Fix-it might be a better title as it appears that there isn’t anything the Texas man can’t rebuild or repair. Inman has been finding and solving problems in all types of locomotives and railcars since 1972.

This isn’t the first time that Inman was called in to help bring the streetcar back to life. His first trip to Webb City was five years ago when the car was experiencing troubles with the rear wheel assembly. The majority of that rebuild was completed in Texas and then shipped back to Missouri by truck. This project required Inman to make numerous trips, beginning in March, to work on getting the streetcar moving on the track again.

After inspecting the streetcar, Inman knew that the cost to make the engine on the car last even another year was beyond what the 503C non-profit could afford. However, not being one to give up, Inman put on his thinking cap and came up with another solution.

That solution is 10 feet long, eight feet high and weighs in at 12,000 pounds. The mini locomotive was made by Inman by piecing together parts of found and donated machinery. The unit itself was a little military issued switcher built in 1942. The motor is from a 45-ton General Electric locomotive. It ended up at the International Paper plant in Joplin, Missouri, before finding its way over to King Jack Park.

The fully-functional diesel-electric locomotive has no cab and is ran by a remote control on the trolley car to smoothly push the streetcar around the track. Inman said that the unit should last another 20-25 years.

“I wanted to provide the association with something that was dependable and that they could count on lasting for a while,” said Inman.

Not a bad future for a car that had served as a chicken coop for a number of years before it was rescued and restored.

Dawson said that the streetcar will provide more rides to more than 5,000 guests during the holiday season. Rides will be provided Thursday through Saturday during the month of December. Students at area schools are also given the opportunity to ride on the historic car not only during the holiday season, but throughout the year.

Streetcar No. 60 was one of many streetcars that transported area residents back and forth from the mines they worked in to their homes. Now with the help of Tex Inman, No. 60 will again be transporting people, back in time for an old-fashioned Christmas experience.

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

by Jay Benedict
Digital Communications & Social Media Specialist

Brandon Collier was framing houses and making a few dollars above minimum wage when he decided he needed a career path. He found what he was looking for in the railroad industry.

He’d taken some welding classes in college and hired on as a welder with Union Pacific in 2011, where Collier eventually worked his way up to being a track inspector. That position meant a lot time away from his family, though, and it took a toll on him. So he recently joined the Watco Team as a track inspector on the Austin Western Railroad (AWRR).

“I wanted something that you could work hard at and be rewarded for it; something with benefits and retirement,” said Collier. “It’s been an uphill climb and I’ve been learning the whole way.”

Collier is a fast learner. He started with the AWRR in late-August 2017, and 1½ months in, the AWRR Team was informed that the Watco Safety Audit Team was going to visit while roadmaster Dustin Hiser would be on vacation.

“I was a nervous wreck,” said Collier. “I was thrown to the wolves, but it went great. I’m really proud of the how we did and the job the Team’s been doing since before I got here.”

With Hiser gone, Collier was not only responsible for covering his tracks and keeping the rest of the Team lined out. He also toured AWRR locations with the audit group and provided any paperwork they needed. The auditors found no major maintenance of way violations, and the few minor ones were quickly remedied.

“He earned the respect and adoration of management with his professionalism and ability to lead his team,” said Hiser. “His calm demeanor and easygoing personality make him an easy supervisor to work for and with, but his desire to see the people around him succeed is what makes him a true leader.”

Aside from being an experienced and able track inspector, Collier is a family man and tried-and-true Texan. He and his wife, Jordan, have two daughters, Amanda and Georgia. Amanda is a senior in high school and Georgia is in first-grade.

“That’s been a breath of fresh air coming to the Austin Western. I love that the company and the men and women I work with are so professional and family-oriented,” said Collier. “I used to miss birthdays and sporting events. Watco feels smaller and more personal.”

When the family’s not running to the girls’ sports and other events or remodeling their recently purchased home, he’s cheering on the University of Texas Longhorns and the Dallas Cowboys, hunting, and fishing. Between Longhorns and Cowboys games, Collier is also a children’s pastor at his church. He leads around 50 kids between the ages of four and 11.

“In only a matter of two short months he has made his presence known and made it clear he desires success not only for himself but for our entire Team,” said Hiser. “I look forward to the places this AWRR Team is headed with Mr. Collier helping lead the way, and we are all grateful he chose Watco as his new home.”
Births

Danielle Lynn Hoops

Michael and Lindsay Hoops are proud to announce the birth of a baby girl, Danielle Lynn, on October 16, 2017. Danielle weighed 7 lbs., 12 oz., and was 21 inches long.

Michael is the Terminal Manager at the Columbus, Ohio, facility.

Zamy D. Mitchell

Darius and Johnni Mitchell are proud to announce the birth of a baby girl, Zamy, on August 26, 2017. Danielle weighed 6 lbs., 15 oz., and was 20 inches long.

Zamy was welcomed home by her seven-year-old brother.

Johnni is the Customer Service Representative for the Euclid, Ohio, terminal.

Levi Jayce Jaramillo

Manuel and Isabel Jaramillo welcomed baby Levi Jayce into their family on September 13, 2017.

Levi weighed 7 lbs., 1 oz., and was 20 inches long.

Levi was welcomed home by big brother Angel Emmanuel Jaramillo who turned two on October 1.

Manuel is a Track Laborer for the Texas and New Mexico Railway.

Congratulations to the following Team Members celebrating anniversaries this month.

1 Year: Keith Abele, Brian Addis, Katie Bequette, Christy Carter, Tyler Cheesebro, Donald Frazier, Aaron Gerdes, Coy Haralson, Guy Jeffington, Jake Hicks, Tonya Holmes, Brad Hutcherson, Robert Janson, James King, Kevin Lee, Bryan Leonard, Philip Martin, Kamen Mitchell, Melvin Moore, William Navarrete, Kylena Nunnally, Ethan Palmer, Brian Quisenberry, Jesse Thomas, Richard Thomas, Shea Tinnin, Gregory Wagoner, Corey Weintraub

2 Years: Shalae Bastian, Laura Blodgett, Dustin Bratcher, Kathleen Bunting, Donny Campos, Alfonso Castillo, Anthony Childers, Joshua Cochran, NaTasha Cross, Chad Crosswhite, Corey Davis, Renita Edwards, Justin Foshee, Michael Fouts, Erik Gath, Jacob Goodrich, Kathryn Grider, Billy Hams, Ashley Harris, Manuel Jaramillo, Timothy Keegan, Paul Kotzman, Daniel Mavers, Cody Monsue, Andy Nielsen, Curtis Olson, Angel Oquendo, Robert Perry, Timothy Rautenberg, Kaitlyn Redd, Jerry Reeves, Jon Ripley, Micah Somervile, Alfredo Vazquez, Zachary White

3 Years: Andrew Beard, David Boissenin, Brad Bourbina, Nicholas Bowers, Nicholas Bremer, William Burns, Brian Butler, Clayton Causey, Troy Consentino, Daniel Duron, Ryan Esser, Ryan Fayet, Brian Gehlsen, Terry Gosney, Marcus Graham, Tonya Hearrell, Andrew Johnston, Thomas Lundy, Geraldine Mansch, Marty McClendon, James Miller, James Miller, Anthony Oliva, Brady Sansom, Jeremy Spates, Matthew Tillery, Bradley Williams

4 Years: Jayson Banks, John Boehm, Brandon Burdick, Vance Coyle, James DeGraaf, Andrew Driscoll, Nick Golian, Terry Gooch, Parker Helland, Robert Hiller, Kevin Hoffman, Katarina Lawrence, Justin Mead, Brock Oakland, James Roberts, Rory Sampson, Booker Sanders, David Scott, Dylan Skeen, Diane Steffen, Aaron Voss, Hadyn Weeks

5 Years: Matthew Adams, Charles Bella, Dennis Burt, Mickaela Doyle, Amber Gardner, Azarei Guzman, Timothy Humphrey, Aaron Jensen, Scott Schweitzer, Michael Smith, Cody Tracy, Michael Trull

6 Years: Gregory Bartholomew, Everts Batista, Brooke Beasley, Shane Bengson, James Chinowith, Anthony Cozier, Justin Gaulrapp, Brent Henson, Robert Hill, Geoffrey Holder, Cole Holter, Melissa Jasper, Jonathon Key, Hilda Morin, Zachary Parker, Aaron Tombskay, Eric Turner, Jacob Welsch, William White, John Wiebelhaus, Gregory Wooldridge

7 Years: Courtney Burks, Alan Cheek, Michelle Howard, Karzaer Jackson, Cymantha Ledford, Tim Lewis, Keith Singleton, Kevin St Aubin, James Tyler

8 Years: Dan Atkins, Chad Davis, Kevin Hampton, Brian Kemp, Joseph Knight, Jacob Link, Bradley Scott

9 Years: Earnest Austin, Derek Braun, Darvin Garcia, Andrea Harville, Travis Hodge, Joseph Magrunder, Donald Mixon, Jeffrey Pierce, Kathleen Sackett, Ali Wade

10 Years: Charles Chipman, Shawn Coates, David Dotz, Jesus Sanchez

11 Years: Eddie Blackwell, Robert Hampton, Joshua Jewell, Russell Knight, Gerald Lewis, Ation Lundy, Lawrence Rapp, Ron Spencer

12 Years: Gregg Bergholz, Dale Bright, John Dozier, Terra Eggemeyer, Robert Godfrey, Charles McCall, Leon Norrard

13 Years: Rick Baden, Joshua Braden, Zachary Henwood, Scott Holmes, Michael Marino, Michael Mossor

14 Years: Kim Funderburk, Robert Powell, Eric Slink

15 Years: Benjamin Johnson

16 Years: Steven Ayala, Cyril Bangari, Steven Russellburg, Kelley Scarrow, Brooke Tomey

19 Years: Robert De Luna, Timothy Hoffman, Robert Rush

20 Years: Lloyd Huston

21 Years: Lloyd Henderson

23 Years: Julie Sanchez, John Wingert

24 Years: John Brown, John Ostrander, Terry Showalter

26 Years: James Belsha, Bennie Hill

29 Years: Charlie Estes, Bruce Ferrebee, Howard Green

30 Years: Mary Mauch

32 Years: Victor McClure

33 Years: Raymond Marek

34 Years: Charles Faraone, Rolan Heman

37 Years: Louis Sage

Don't Forget

Wellness and tobacco cessation requirements need to be completed by December 31, 2017.

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The march to permanence for 45G

by Laura McNichol
Vice President, Government and Industry Relations

When the Watco Team has their Quarterly Business Reviews, there is a line item labeled 45G. Where does the 45G come from and what does it mean for Watco and short lines?

The 45G short line tax credit is a federal tax credit authorized by Congress and signed into law by the President. The tax credit provides short line railroads a 50 percent credit capped at $3,500 per mile of track for track maintenance allowing short lines to invest back in their railroads at a higher level. The purpose of the credit was to help short line companies in bringing their railroads out of years of deferred maintenance.

Once they spend $7,000 on track and bridge maintenance projects, they get 50 percent of that investment back which helps them invest at greater levels back into their infrastructure. Ultimately, the credit gives them an opportunity to serve their customers more efficiently and, most importantly, safely.

The 45G short line tax credit was first enacted in 2004. The most current tax credit expired at the end of 2016, which was a two-year credit for 2015 and 2016. At this time, short lines are seeking permanency for the 45G tax credit in Congress. There are 55 (out of 100) US Senate cosponsors and 248 (out of 435) cosponsors in the House of Representatives on 45G. In both chambers, the majority of its members are supporting this critical infrastructure credit! Over the course of this year, Watco and its partners in the short line industry have hosted a number of tours and meetings with important leaders in Congress who are helping pass the 45G tax credit again.

Congress is working on major tax reform now and Watco is working hard to make sure the 45G short line tax credit is included in the final package.

You can look to see who has cosponsored 45G at these two links:


If your House or Senate member(s) are missing from these lists, you are encouraged to contact them and ask them to cosponsor S. 407 in the Senate or H.R. 721 in the House.

Ashdown celebrates two years of injury-free operations

The Ashdown, Arkansas, Switching Team recently had a double celebration - the Team has been providing services to the Domtar Paper mill for two years and has gone “injury free” throughout that time.

The Team celebrated the day with a variety of activities and a catered lunch to commemorate the occasion.