



COMPANY
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ABOVE: Wayne Bacon, C&C carman and car builder, uses the information he received on a training trip to DQE. **LEFT:** DQE and LNW employees install the first switch at the Iron Bridge Road Project.

DQE lends expertise

As the Patriot Rail family grows, so do the assets of the collective group. Recently, employees and equipment traveled from one railroad to another to boost the quality of service each railroad provides.

“Now that we have more railroads closer in proximity, there will be some opportunities to share resources and information,” said J.D. Ventreck, vice president of operations and transportation.

Where railroads previously used contractors, they now have the ability to use one another. It will cut costs and boost knowledge across the board.

One of the newest additions to Patriot, DeQueen & Eastern Railroad, shared its

expertise on three separate occasions.

Wheel truck aids LNW with transloading

A DQE wheel truck manned by Marty Smith, lead carman, and Harlan Dowdy, carman, made a two-hour jaunt to help raise an overloaded set of cars at a transloading site in Athens, La.

Normally used for line of road car repairs, employees demonstrated the truck’s versatility by using the hydraulic jacks to raise the hopper cars since the bottom doors were too low for the facility. The duo helped jack three cars to remove excess weight. After unloading enough frac sand, the hopper car’s springs raised the car enough to exceed the clearance.

“It wasn’t too difficult,” Smith said. “We were just glad we could help.”

Iron Bridge Road Project

When Louisiana & North West Railroad Maintenance of Way employees needed to install the first switch for the Iron Bridge Road Project, they looked to their DQE partners. The switch will serve as the entry point from the main line to the facility.

DQE Roadmaster Tony Johnson and Trackmen Shannon Fielding and Ray French lent their expertise as the crews worked together to ensure the project remained on schedule. Though LNW

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TSRR goes extra mile

Meeting customers' needs continues to be a priority for Patriot Rail properties. Need an example? Look no further than Tennessee Southern Railroad employees Justin Cecil and Dennis Grooms.

Cecil, signal maintainer, and Grooms, track laborer, are part of a team of Maintenance of Way employees who help GrafTech unload material at its Columbia, Tenn., facility.

"We've got to be able to do stuff like this for our customers," Cecil said. "Without us they would have to use a contractor or their own forklifts."

For short lines like TSRR, a boom truck isn't limited to lifting ties and rails. Employees use the boom truck to unload 2-ton bags of graphite from a TSRR flatcar into a dump truck.

Likewise, having cross-trained employees proves vital for TSRR on a daily basis.

"We have to know how to do multiple things," Cecil said. "If someone is gone, it doesn't mean the work can't be done."

GrafTech's Columbia facility is one of two specializing in Refractories Systems Manufacturing. They receive graphite to

produce blast furnace hearth linings and custom electrodes. GrafTech boasts that its products result in reduced operating costs, increased efficiency, proven reliability and a safer environment.

Graphite arrives via truck from Mexico at TSRR's Port of Florence warehouse where it is stored. When GrafTech places an order, Port of Florence employees load two flatcars with 22 to 26 bags. Orders are placed two or three times a month.

When Cecil and Grooms arrive at the GrafTech facility, safety remains priority No. 1. They conduct a job briefing with the employee in charge. Once tasks are defined and assigned, they lock down the train and place blue flag protection. During the entire process, they wear hard hats, gloves and any other required PPE.



TSRR employees transload 2-ton bags of graphite from flatcars to a GrafTech dump truck.



LEFT: From left, Harlan Dowdy, carman, and Marty Smith, lead carman, assist LNW at its Athens, La., transloading site. **CENTER:** A DQE jack lifts up an overloaded hopper car.

DQE lends expertise

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employees are versed in FRA requirements concerning maintenance, they learned construction requirements from DQE employees.

AAR billing

In an effort to ensure all employees are up to speed, DQE Mechanical employees hosted Wayne Bacon, Columbia and Cowlitz carman and car builder of 10 years, April 4-11.

Larry Higgins, lead carman, and Jimmie Tollett, carman, used their 80-plus years of experience to teach Bacon about

AAR billing, proper inbound and outbound inspections, lockout tagout procedures, reading gauges, air testing, changing bolsters and pocket frames, as well as shoving cars in and out of the shop.

"It was a lot to learn, but Wayne did a great job," Higgins said. "He had the base knowledge and picked things up quickly. I was impressed."

Higgins not only shared his knowledge with Bacon, he also gave him FRA and AAR rules books as a reference to take home.

Bacon appreciated the effort from his

DQE counterparts.

"They couldn't have sent me to a better place," he said.

Bacon's training already has proven useful. He uses his newfound knowledge about properly reading gauges and air testing to perform more thorough car inspections. If problems or questions arise, Bacon knows Higgins is only a phone call or email away.

"My confidence is so much higher than before," he said. "I know so much more, and having resources like Larry and Jimmie is great."

West Yard revitalized

Not known for their length, Montana summers require folks to pack as much activity as possible into a small time frame. With that in mind, Butte, Anaconda & Pacific Railway employees began a project to help renovate the area known as West Yard.

The yard serves as a meeting point for employees of all crafts, as well as a storage area. Consequently, track material and other waste piled up during the years. Now, employees of BAP and Jordan Construction are clearing the area.

“I would say we are close to 60 percent done, and I’ve already been hearing compliments from people in the community,” said Bob Andreoli, general manager.

The project kicked off by removing excess materials, including old ties and rail. Crews decided whether or not material was still suited for use and organized new areas for storage.

Once cleared, employees and contractors removed six inches of soil. BAP personnel operated within 3 feet of the end of ties while contractors handled the rest. Eventually, crews dropped new ballast within 3 feet of ties and filled the rest with a road mixture that was compacted down.

With many people in a concentrated



West Yard — After

area where trains and other heavy equipment operate, Al Taylor, track foreman, communicates all movement in the area.

“Al has done a great job as the lead man out there,” Andreoli said. “He’s not only working with several new people on our side, he is working with Jordan Construction to keep the project moving and ensuring everyone’s safety.”



West Yard — Before



When completed, Andreoli looks forward to having an organized workspace and enhanced walking conditions for employees.

LNW depot gets facelift

Throughout history, railroads changed the landscape of America from coast to coast. Many landmarks have fallen by the wayside, but Keith Killgore and other members of the Haynesville, La., beautification committee made sure that didn’t happen.



From left, LNW General Manager Johnnie Raab, Haynesville Mayor Sherman Brown and Keith Killgore stand in front of the refurbished depot.

The Haynesville train depot, a landmark since 1908, is part of a renovation project to reinvigorate the downtown area.

“The history part is what I like the most,” said Killgore. “The depot was a big part of Haynesville when it was a booming oil town.”

After several landscaping projects and painting murals on five buildings, he approached LNW General Manager Johnnie Raab last year about fixing up the depot. Together, they agreed the exterior of the building would be worked on.

“We don’t have many landmarks left,” Killgore said. “In a town of 2,400 people, it was important for us to keep this part of our history.”

The \$17,000 project started in January with the roof. Volunteers tore off and replaced the old roof. Then, they painted the stucco exterior, which covers the original brick structure. Crews discovered the windows were damaged during a fire. Trying to maintain the original look, they used ingenuity and painted over plywood to save money. The final step, completed in May, was to remove remnants of old additions to the building.



Sandra Wilder

Wilder on the go

For Sandra Wilder, divisional controller, transportation has always been the name of the game.

After several years working with a refrigerated trucking firm, Wilder found her way to Utah Central Railway in 2003.

"I've always been involved in transportation," she said. "It took a little while to get used to trains instead of trucks, but I've really enjoyed it."

Wilder started her rail career handling financials for UCRY. Patriot Rail, which added UCRY to its roster in 2008, asked her to expand her role. She proved instrumental in the additions of Temple and Central Texas Railway, Sacramento Valley Railway and the Weyerhaeuser railroads.

"I've enjoyed not only working with these people, but getting out once in a while to see them," she said. "Patriot has done a great job in understanding the financials and the operations when bringing in new railroads."

As Patriot has grown, Wilder has noticed the teamwork from employees across the nation. The entire team shares information and tips to make each railroad the best it can be.

She enjoys working with Joyce Belfour, corporate controller. The two work together to ensure Patriot stays in the black.

"Even though each railroad is financially separate, we are making sure there is a profit at the end of the day," Wilder said.

Outside of work, she enjoys time with her husband, Jon. She is an avid golfer and poker player and maintains a daily workout routine.

"I work out every day for an hour and a half," she said. "It helps me relax and stay in shape."

Leskoske finds home at UCRY

A move closer to family resulted in Davie Leskoske, accounting clerk, finding a home at Utah Central Railway.

Living on the East Coast in New York and Atlanta, Leskoske wanted to be closer to her family. It became more important to move back to Utah after the birth of her daughter, Sophia, who will turn 4 in September.

"I have a huge family, so it was important for me to raise my daughter here," she said.

Leskoske, who found a part-time job with UCRY in 2008, shares an office with Sandra Wilder. With similar backgrounds in the trucking industry, the two hit the ground running.

"I really enjoy working here," she said. "We're a great team."

The two also teamed up outside of work. Leskoske, a former collegiate bowler at Weber State, recruited Wilder for a Friday night bowling league.

"She's so good at everything; it's the one thing I have over her," Leskoske joked.

She carries a 193 average, but relishes the days of her 215 average in college. She and another teammate finished in ninth place in the Women's National competition.

In addition to the exciting news of the final standings, Leskoske enjoyed July 4 with more than fireworks. Her fiancé, Gary Sorrells, proposed to her.

"He has two daughters and I have Sophia, so we're going to be a regular Brady Bunch," she said. "Now all I have to do is teach him to bowl."

The family enjoys watching movies and recently purchased a 3-D television. They plan to add to their film library.



Davie Leskoske

Glass Mountain Pumice counts on SAV

Jack Westervelt, general manager of Glass Mountain Pumice, is a fan of Sacramento Valley Railroad.

“They are an integral part of our success because of their customer service,” Westervelt said. “Short lines work really hard for their customers, and SAV is no exception.”

Glass Mountain Pumice, in operation since 1977, mines and distributes pumice, a volcanic rock. Pumice is used in lightweight concrete blocks, structural concrete and precast concrete, roof tile, as well as in horticulture and exterior decorating.

The company mines the Medicine Lake Highlands in Tionesta, Calif. Product is loaded and transported by BNSF to McClellan Park where SAV handles the spotting and pulling of cars at Glass Mountain’s facility. Finally, pumice is unloaded at the facility before being trucked to customers.

Communication keeps everyone up to speed about incoming shipments and movements.

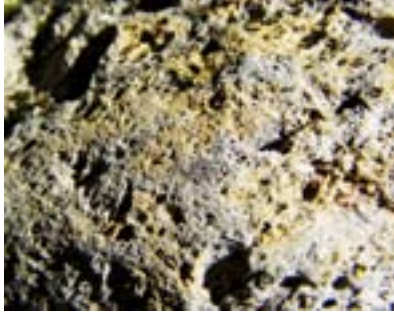
“One of the biggest things is letting us know where incoming shipments are and what time to expect them,” Westervelt said. “Their projections help us line up the manpower and machinery so we can get cars unloaded in a timely manner.”

Both local and corporate employees have lent their expertise to Westervelt when dealing with other transfer points across the country.

“It means a lot that they would give us advice on dealing with other railroads,” he said. “It’s definitely something they don’t have to do.”

Corporate employees even welcomed Westervelt into their offices during a vacation in Boca Raton, Fla.

“I’ve been impressed with everyone,” he said. “We look forward to working with SAV and Patriot and building our company and theirs.”



Pumice is a volcanic rock used in concrete, roof tile, horticulture and exterior decorating.

Cylinders repaired

An integral part of the Blue Ridge Chip Reload facility of DeQueen & Eastern Railroad will soon be back and working better than ever.

The chip truck dumper uses hydraulic cylinders to lift trailers filled with wood chips, which are dumped before traveling on a conveyor belt and being loaded into train cars. The cylinders, currently being refurbished, provide 2,000 pounds per square inch during the final stages of dumping.

Randy Dowdy, DQE mechanic, uses the machine on a daily basis and looks forward to the refurbished cylinders installation.

“I can’t even count the amount of dumps these cylinders have performed,” he said. “It’s an astronomical number.”

Just this year, the facility was loading an average of 25 hopper cars a day until a slowdown in traffic during April. Considering it takes between three and four truckloads to fill a hopper car, one can imagine the wear and tear the machine accumulated through the years.

Dowdy was happy to hear the chrome part of the cylinders remained intact.

“That would have taken a long time to repair,” he said. “The sooner it’s back the better.”

TSRR reaches safety goal

Tennessee Southern Railroad employees can check “reach four-digit safety milestone” off their to-do lists. The 28 employees reached 1,000 days without a reportable injury June 27.

“This milestone is a testament to everyone working together to ensure we are working safely and efficiently to serve our customers,” said Walt Robinson, safety and operating practices manager.

Employees focused on eliminating hazards during everyday tasks. Walking conditions, getting on and off equipment, and hydration as temperatures continue to rise, contributed to achieving the safety streak.

“A lot of times it’s the small stuff that gets you,” he said.

Robinson also noted the importance

of teamwork.

“Our whole team works well together,” he said. “Our 28 employees make sure our 120 miles of rail are the safest work environment possible.”

Maintenance of Way employees communicate with Transportation employees to monitor track conditions. They also make sure they are clear of the track during train movements. Port of Florence employees make sure their environment is clear of obstructions and

hazards for incoming Transportation employees.

As employees reflect on the streak, they are looking to the future. A celebratory picnic will serve as an opportunity to discuss extending the streak.

Robinson hopes to include employees’ family members in the celebration.

“The support we receive from our families is invaluable,” he said. “We are out here working safely so we can go home to them at the end of the day.”

“This milestone is a testament to everyone working together to ensure we are working safely and efficiently to serve our customers.”

— Walt Robinson, safety and operating practices manager

Blankenship will be missed

Jimmy Dale Blankenship, a 30-year DeQueen & Eastern and Texas, Oklahoma & Eastern employee and friend to many, died May 15.

“He showed up every day with a smile on his face,” said Phil McRae, superintendent of operations. “We really miss him around here.”

Blankenship stayed busy on and off the job.

He joined May 18, 1981, and was promoted to locomotive engineer three years later. For several years he served as local chairman for the UTU.

Outside of work, Blankenship spent time with wife of 39 years, Dottie, and his two daughters and sons-in-law, Jennifer and Paul Ernest, and Kimberly and Heath Leonard. He also loved his

grandchildren, Jakeb, Ryne, Samuel, and Benjamin Ernest, and Easton and Demi Leonard.

Blankenship served six years with the Arkansas National Guard. He was a member of the Horatio, Ark., school board.

Even with all these activities, he found time to chase his passion of restoring and collecting cars.

“He had so many it would be hard to figure out which one was his favorite,” McRae said. “I think it was probably his ’65 Mustang. It was the first one ever sold in DeQueen. He loved that car.”



Jimmy Dale Blankenship

“It’s taking a team effort from top to bottom to make this happen. Everyone’s energy behind this project is amazing.”

— J.D. Ventrcek, vice president of operations and transportation

Ventrcek still having fun

In 1969, a young J.D. Ventrcek needed a part-time job before returning to school. His decision to join Missouri Pacific Railroad led to a lengthy career and his latest stop with Patriot Rail.

Ventrcek accepted a job as a brakeman, which eventually led to a management role in Gurdon, Ark. Missouri Pacific merged with Union Pacific, where he worked until 1993 when he left to join the team at RailTex, which was bought out by RailAmerica. In 1996, he joined the Weyerhaeuser team as vice president and general manager of DeQueen & Eastern Railroad and was later promoted to president and chief operating officer. He retired from Weyerhaeuser in 2008 and later joined the Patriot Rail team as vice president of operations and transportation.

“I wasn’t quite done having fun railroading,” he said.

With a lengthy railroad career, Ventrcek acknowledged his latest stop presents a unique highlight every day.

“Working for a short line has brought a brand new perspective,” he said. “We are so much closer to employees and customers. I’ve been fortunate to work with some great people in my career, which has continued into this job.”

The growth of Patriot serves as a source of pride for Ventrcek. Although the addition of Weyerhaeuser enabled him to work with former co-workers, the most exciting part of his stint with Patriot is seeing the Iron Bridge Road Project come to life. What was once an idea manifested itself into one of the most exciting projects in Patriot’s history.

“It’s taking a team effort from top to bottom to make this happen,” he said. “Everyone’s energy behind this project is amazing.”

Morgan’s railroad roots RUN DEEP

Scott Morgan, conductor and locomotive engineer trainee for Golden Triangle Railroad, states his feelings about joining Patriot Rail.

“Glad to be here,” he said.

He started his career with GTRA June 27.

“I came over here because there is more stability, and I like my schedule better,” he said.

The railroad was a natural choice for Morgan.

“My great-grandfather and grandfather both worked for the railroad,” he said. “They were Maintenance of Way employees. My great-grandfather worked for a steel gang on the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad. My grandfather worked for the Alabama Great Southern Railroad.”

Away from work, Morgan enjoys time with his family. He and his wife, Jennifer, have a daughter, Tracy. The family enjoys driving south and spending time at the beach.

He also enjoys hunting and fishing near his Aliceville, Ala., home.

New brush cutter for LNW

Louisiana & North West Railroad Maintenance of Way employees added brush cutting to their list of duties with the arrival of a new flail brush cutter. It will be used to clear main line track.

Casey Heard, signal maintainer and MOW mechanic, fitted the brush cutter to the KGT 3000 track hoe. The track hoe features the ability to extend 25 feet and pivot to the proper angle.

The new brush cutter required Heard to add an additional hydraulic pump and hoses to meet the required amount of hydraulic pressure. He also installed control switches to monitor whether or not the brush cutter is operational. All told, it took a month to ensure the brush cutter would work properly.

“It took a little getting used to, but it should be very easy to operate,” Heard said.

Formerly contracted, brush cutting is done to meet FRA standards with regards to track clearance.

Flail brush cutters, like the one purchased by LNW, differ from rotary brush cutters. Rotary brush cutters are flat with several spinning blades similar to the base of a lawn mower. Flail brush cutters feature a metal or rubber roller in front of a horizontal set of spinning blades.

“We may have to move a little slower with the flail,” Heard said. “But the big difference will be with safety.”

Public safety played a major part in the decision of what type of brush cutter to purchase. Spinning blades of a rotary brush cutter can fly off if they are damaged. They also can spit out debris such as glass bottles.

“We want to get our job done, but we have to keep the public safe while doing it,” Heard said.



Casey Heard, signal maintainer and MOW mechanic, shows the new brush cutter extension of the track hoe.

Presentations impact community safety

John Wishard, DeQueen & Eastern Railroad dispatcher, found an opportunity seven years ago he couldn't pass up.

After listening to an Operation Lifesaver presentation as a volunteer firefighter, Wishard pursued training to become a certified presenter in order to give back to his community.

“When I heard them talk about so many things I deal with at work or as a firefighter — rail grade crossing safety, trespassers, responding to incidents — it was important for me to get involved,” he said. “At the time, I had only heard about it from J.D. Ventrcek. He was our manager and on the Operation Lifesaver national board of directors at the time.”

After receiving his certification, Wishard started presenting to high school students, driver education participants, rural fire department employees, log truck drivers, Cub Scouts and church groups. He also tags along with fellow Firefighter Waco Jackson, who serves as an emergency medical technician trainer, to educate emergency personnel. Wishard estimates he averages one presentation a month.

“I follow the basic structure for each presentation, but each one is unique depending on who you are presenting to,” he said. “Lately, our focus changed from rail grade crossings to trespassers because that is where we've seen

the most problems.”

Tony Johnson, roadmaster and fellow presenter, sometimes accompanies Wishard for presentations. The duo often split time manning booths at the county fair or other community events. They run a continuous video and distribute information to anyone stopping by.

Wishard expressed desire to continue his Operation Lifesaver training. In addition to being a presenter, he would like to take classes to receive certification to present to police, firemen and emergency responders about first response to grade rail crossing collisions. Information would focus on ensuring train movement has ceased and any HazMat material has been identified.

A personal tie to a former co-worker and his community keeps Wishard active in Operation Lifesaver.

“We lost an engineer years back when his train collided with a log truck,” he said. “We grew up together, so that was difficult. In a small town like this everyone knows each other, so any impact I can have is worth it.”

Wishard appreciates the support he receives from Patriot and DQE management.

“I work at night, so getting time to travel and do presentations hasn't always been easy, but Patriot has been behind us,” he said.

Patriot Rail welcomed Scott Davis June 27.

Davis accepted a role as regional marketing director for the DeQueen & Eastern Railroad, Golden Triangle Railroad, Piedmont & Northern Railway and Tennessee Southern Railroad. Paul McCarthy and J.D. Ventrcek will help ease Davis into the new role.

He will work from his Marshfield, Mo., home in addition to traveling.

"I am very excited to join the Patriot Rail team," Davis said. "It's a great opportunity."

His experience includes time with railroads of all sizes. Most recently, he served as marketing manager with Watco Transportation in Pittsburg, Kan. He also worked for Missouri & Northern Arkansas Railroad, Southern Pacific/Rio Grande Railroad and Frisco Railroad.

A graduate of Missouri State University with a degree in industrial management, Davis found a natural fit with the railroad after growing up near Springfield, Mo., a railroad hub for BNSF Railway.

A career in railroading has kept Davis on his toes. He enjoys developing new relationships and keeping in touch with old acquaintances.

One such relationship brought Davis to Patriot. In 1993, he and Ventrcek met at a RailAmerica property in Missouri. Ventrcek eventually recruited Davis to join Patriot. After a little research, he decided he liked what he saw.

"From what I have seen, Patriot has added some great short lines," he said. "Whether it is the condition of the tracks and facilities or the quality of people I have met, it is pretty clear they have a good thing started. I just hope I can help add to the team."

Ready to hit the ground running, Davis already developed some ideas about growing the business. Some properties are still owned by Weyerhaeuser, but are open for development. He would like to see customers enter those facilities and use the railroad to move their products.

"I'm really excited to see what we can accomplish," he said.

Away from work, Davis enjoys spending time with family and working on cars and boats. Between he and his

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Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue of the newsletter. If you have a story idea, contact Nate at nathan@newslink.com.

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Davis excited for new assignment

wife, Chris, they have three children. The couple spends time at Table Rock Lake water skiing and tubing behind their boat. In his spare time, he expresses his inner gear head by working on his hot rod, a 1936 Chevy pickup.

"The hot rod is my first priority right now, but there are three others waiting to be worked on," he said.

A recent high school reunion offered Davis a chance to relive fun times of the past. He and three classmates reunited to



Scott Davis, regional marketing director, with wife, Chris

play music and entertain their class. He played the guitar and sang.

"It was a blast," he said.