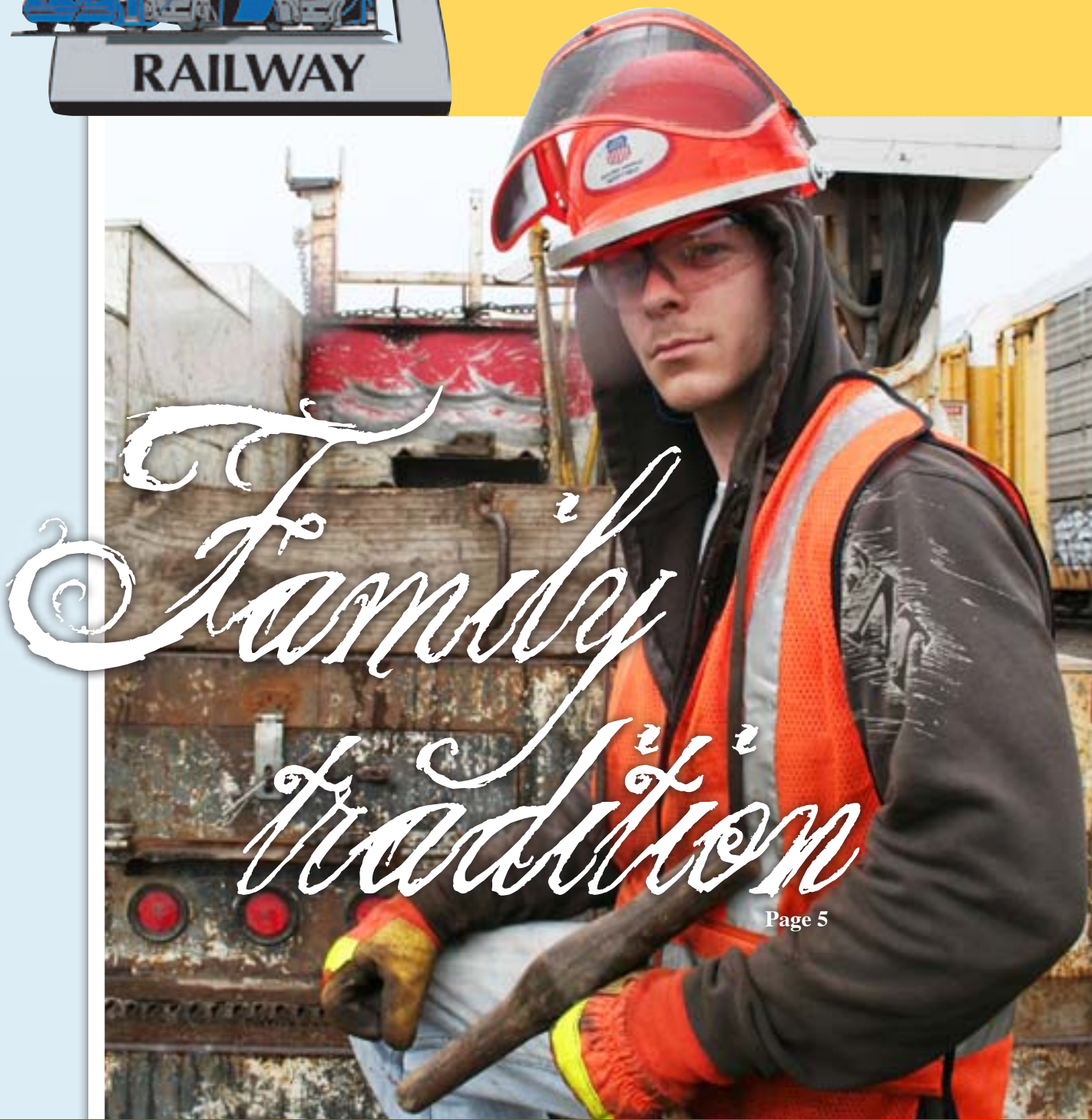




Newsletter for employees of The Alton & Southern Railway

# Chronicle

First Quarter 2011



## *Family Tradition*

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# Congratulations!

## Clerks reach five years injury free

While there are fewer clerks in the industry, the safe performance of their important duties remains crucial to railroad operations.

The clerks of the Alton & Southern Railway understand the profound significance of safety. They have worked more than five years without a reportable injury.

"I congratulate and thank each of our clerks for their continued commitment to safety," said Al Reinsch, terminal manager. "Without the focus and attention they have shown in carrying out their duties, this goal wouldn't have been possible."

More than 20 clerks safely and

efficiently complete various duties that facilitate the delivery of freight throughout the United States to various strategic destination points. They process, update and input train information into computer systems. Clerks are instrumental in car management.

They inform customers regarding the location of cars by tracking them. Clerks create lists of cars with pertinent information for industry trains. They safely haul crews to and from trains, a duty that requires great focus. Clerks operate vehicles that cross live tracks.

A&S clerks include Mary Brooks,



Mary Brooks, clerk, prepares to transport a train crew. Her 13-year career is reportable injury free.

Dennis Brown, Daryl Charleston, Richard Clark, Terry Cooley, Steve Gherardini, Keith Gibson, Theresa Gill, Ronnie Harrelson, George Hayes, Eugenia Jones, Kim King, Ann Lane, Sharon McKenzie, Ed Morris, Ed Rodak, Faye Schwartzkopf, David Smith, Randy Smith, Mark Townsend, Sheila Williams and Donna Wilson.

## Spring cleaning



Sure, there has been some inconvenience. But it is worth it.

The biggest renovation of the Alton & Southern Railway terminal building will provide employees with a cleaner and brighter work environment. The project began in January with an anticipated completion of May 1.

When a decision was made to install new flooring, the company took advantage of the project to remodel the first three floors of the building. The lower level and fourth floor already have been upgraded. Built in 1968, the building has undergone various renovations, but none this comprehensive.

New floor tile, lighting and ceiling tiles have been installed. The remodeling includes new work stations and a camera system to inspect outbound trains in the clerical operations center. The new training facility will be at the east end of the third floor previously used by Engineering and the chief clerk. Those offices have been relocated to the west end of the third floor.

The police office remains on the second floor, but was moved across the hall. The vacant office will become a new break room. Everyone on the first and second floors will return to their same offices.

Offices were moved in stages, ensuring no disruption to railroad operations. Everyone cooperated as desks, files, computers, furniture and other office equipment were moved.

Employees will have a brighter work environment thanks in part to Jim Bland, left, and Kevin White, B&B mechanics involved with a major renovation of the terminal building.

Up, up and away

The recent installation of a new overhead crane in the roundhouse facilitates the safe and efficient completion of various duties for both locomotive shop and car shop employees.

Furthermore, the safe completion of tasks for 11 months without the crane demonstrates employees' dedication to safety and productivity. Working without the crane required ingenuity and dedication to the Total Safety Culture process.

When the previous crane became inoperative, an analysis determined its repair was not cost effective. Its lifting capacity was limited to 6 tons, preventing it from certain tasks needed



**ABOVE:** Lee Smith, machinist, watches the smooth and gradual movement of a new crane that greatly facilitates safe and efficient production.

**LEFT:** Jason Buie, machinist apprentice, operates a new crane in the roundhouse with great precision. The new crane has a remote control and greater lifting capacity.

for safe and efficient production. To operate without the overhead crane, employees utilized the carmen's Lorain crane. They used the mobile crane effectively, but it was not designed for comprehensive locomotive shop purposes.

With its 7 1/2-ton lifting capacity, the new crane is vital for the installation of heavy locomotive components such as traction motors, power assemblies and blowers. It also is used for tasks performed on B Track in the car shop. Employees are delighted with the new equipment.

"It works great," said Jason Buie, machinist apprentice. "The crane's remote control enables fine control of the crane. It will move slowly, allowing gradual adjustments to its position. It's a big advantage to have this new piece of equipment."

The old crane's remote was not radio controlled. Instead, the remote control was attached by wires to the crane's motor.

A manufacturer's representative trained employees on its use before the crane was put into service.

"My hat is off to locomotive shop employees and others," said Pete Hoffman Sr., TSC facilitator/safety coordinator. "To be able to safely and efficiently complete various tasks without the crane says a great deal about their competency. It also demonstrates their ingenuity."

Alton & Southern has a strong emphasis on standard work as part of the continuous improvement process. Employees should strive to perform specific tasks the same way and with the same tools. Locomotive shop employees were required to think outside the box and perform work in nonstandard fashions when the crane became inoperable nearly a year ago.

A multitude of tasks in the shop had to be done differently during the time without the crane. It is a testament to the employees' dedication to safety that they continued to maximize productivity without jeopardizing safety during this time.

Employees had worked 1,641 days without a reportable injury as of March 28.

**ABOVE & Beyond**

A&S salutes and thanks the following individuals who worked above and beyond assigned duties.

**MECHANICAL**  
Dave Bollman

**TRANSPORTATION**  
Nick Prange

**A&S congratulates the following employees for reaching their service anniversaries:**

**20 YEARS**  
Mike Taylor

Mike Odum  
Mark Peneston  
Charlie Wasser  
Paul Wilson

**10 YEARS**  
Cameron Badgett  
Lawrence Brandford  
Ronald Chinn  
George Hayes  
Roger Matecki  
Dan Moutria

**5 YEARS**  
Bradley Siedle  
Joe Unger  
Keith Ward



# Great new career for Amberg

Training to be a conductor can seem a little overwhelming at first.

With time and experience, however, Kevin Amberg will master the craft. He joined the railroad Nov. 1.

“It’s great,” Amberg said about his job. “I’ve never done anything like this before. It’s exciting to learn so much.”

His new career also is good for his family. He appreciates the better wages, benefits and retirement the railroad provides. Previously, the conductor fabricated water pipe for sprinkler systems in residential and commercial construction. He knew others with successful careers at the railroad.

When Amberg sought new employment, he applied knowing the railroad was a good place to work.

Amberg has learned the safe and correct method to line a switch, understand RCO, to decipher a train list and take running orders from a yardmaster. His training qualifies him to work independently.

“The rules are the most important thing to keep you safe,” he said. “I also get plenty of sleep to be well rested

when I come to work. That way I can remain alert, focused and aware of my surroundings.”

Amberg describes the railroad as phenomenal. Employees can call managers and others with questions and concerns.

He resides in Ferguson, Mo., with his wife, Meghan, and their daughter, Morgan, 10. Family time is important to him. Amberg attends Morgan’s activities such as dance, volleyball and soccer. She also likes to sing and will play softball this summer.

Aside from family time, Amberg works around the house and on his car.



Kevin Amberg, conductor

## Good communication vital

Employees from various crafts recently honed their communication skills by participating in a course that explained a complex human process often taken for granted.

“Communicating for Results” helped employees expand their communication skills to ultimately achieve better results at work and elsewhere. The course was designed for non-agreement and agreement supervisors in every craft and department.

**“One good tip was to focus on communication of the moment.”**

— Beverly Barnes,  
manager-administration

“It was a good refresher on communication techniques I learned from previous courses,” said Beverly Barnes, manager-administration. “One good tip was to focus on communication of the moment.”

With her various duties, Barnes may be communicating with two or three people at a time. She could be on a phone call and writing an email when someone enters her office to talk to her. It’s best to concentrate on communicating one message at a time, Barnes said.

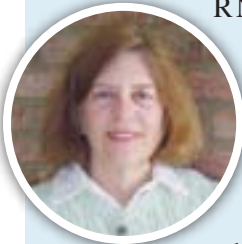
The course was facilitated by a professional who helped participants analyze real-life situations. From the detailed examination, employees recognized how their communication skills can be improved. They also learned the importance of effective communication and its impact on business.

It helped employees understand key elements in successful communication. It stressed the importance of how to deliver a message. The facilitator explained body language cues and how they influence communication. Employees also learned to identify challenges to good listening and ways to improve.

The examples discussed helped employees realize they are responsible for their message being understood by others. The course provided them with techniques to ensure they convey information without a misunderstanding. In an industry that uses 7,200-foot trains with 130 cars that weigh 19,000 tons and travel up to 60 mph, the importance of good communication cannot be overemphasized.

# Wealth of experience

Employees welcome Nancy Fassold, RN, occupational health nurse, to Alton & Southern Railway.



Nancy Fassold, RN, occupational health nurse

Fassold joins Barb Tucker, RN, occupational health nurse, to increase the level of employee accessibility to health and wellness services.

“It’s great to have Nancy on our team,” Tucker said. “She is well qualified. Now, we can offer more frequent health and wellness services.”

The new nurse graduated from Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Ill. She began her nursing career in the intensive care unit at St. Mary’s Hospital in East St. Louis, Ill., where she worked three years. The health professional then became an occupational health nurse at food preservative manufacturer in Carondelet, Mo.

Fassold remained with the company 20 years as it experienced various changes. The past two years she has worked in the occupational health field at a government defense mapping office, a national health care company and the Carondelet factory.

She and her husband, Bob, reside in St. Louis and have three children.

“I’m happy to be working with Barb for the railroad,” Fassold said. “I look forward to meeting employees, helping them assess their health and wellness and providing various other services.”



Nick Grimont, trackman

## Family tradition

Relatives expressed their approval when Nick Grimont, trackman, joined the railroad Feb. 22.

“They wanted someone to continue the tradition,” said Grimont, a third-generation railroader.

Grimont’s father, Eugene, is an A&S conductor. His grandfather, Jerry, is a former A&S carman who retired 12 years ago.

His father felt Grimont would fit right in with the A&S team, and he was right. The two see each other occasionally as the elder performs his RCO duties. They wave, but keep their focus on the task at hand.

Previously, Grimont was an over-the-road truck driver for a year. Before that, he worked as a union carpenter nearly four years. He thought he was best suited for a Maintenance of Way craft since he has worked near heavy machinery, used many hand tools and is not afraid to get dirty.

“I’ve wanted to work for the railroad for years,” Grimont said. “The railroad has good wages, benefits and retirement. It’s a good work environment, and the employees are good people.”

The railroader began his job with classroom work on safety. He then began on-the-job training. He aims to understand the procedures involved with tie installation, how to change rails and replace switches. Most of all, he wants to master how to work safely and ensure the safety of his co-workers.

Grimont resides in Lenzburg, Ill. Off duty, he enjoys music and art. The safety-conscious employee plays lead and rhythm guitar, and studies music theory on his own. He uses an airbrush and spray paint for his art on paper, canvas and vehicles.



Thomas Clark, conductor, attends a job briefing before starting his shift.

## Clark stays safe

Thomas Clark, conductor, likes to stay busy.

“When you have your train list and know what you have to do, it makes the day go by fast,” Clark said. “It’s a good job.”

He works the second shift on YS223, an RCO trimmer job. The third-generation railroader enjoys switching and building trains. He switches cars that have been classified and humped to build outbound trains.

Clark’s career is reportable injury free, and he intends to keep it that way. The conductor stays safe by following the rules. He knows what tracks are in use, when and where movement can be expected. He looks both ways twice before crossing tracks.

Clark joined the railroad Oct. 4, 2004. He followed in the footsteps of his father, Richard, A&S clerk, and grandfather who worked as a hump operator for the Illinois Central Railroad. The conductor worked in retail sales three years before the railroad.

He applied because he sought better wages, benefits, retirement and job security.

“The railroad can’t be shipped overseas,” he said. “It provides a good livelihood and the duties are not unreasonable.”

Clark resides in Maryville, Ill. Off duty, he enjoys surfing the Internet. The railroader also reads the news online.

# Get your motor runnin’

As temperatures increase, so does the amount of motorcycle traffic.

Employees who plan to toss the winter dust cover off their bikes and hit the road may want to keep safety in mind. Although motorcycle fatalities account for 5 percent of all highway fatalities each year, motorcycles represent only 2 percent of all registered vehicles in the United States.

Cyclists need to be more careful and aware in general and especially at intersections where most motorcycle-vehicle collisions occur. Part of that awareness is remaining visible to other motorists at all times. Anticipate that drivers backing their cars out of driveways may not see you, and place greater emphasis on defensive driving.

Studies show that the head, arms and legs are the parts of the body most often injured in a crash. Protective clothing and equipment serve a three-fold purpose for motorcyclists: they comfort and protect riders from the elements, provide some measure of injury protection and help other motorists see the cyclist if the clothing has reflective material.

A helmet is the most important piece of equipment a motorcyclist can have. Safety helmets save lives by reducing the extent of head injuries in the event of a crash. Make sure your helmet fits comfortably and snugly, and is fastened for the ride. In choosing a helmet, look for the DOT label, which indicates the manufacturer’s certification that the helmet conforms to federal safety standards.

Experienced motorcyclists often have this advice for new riders: Assume you are invisible to other motorists, and operate your motorcycle accordingly. When you drive defensively, position yourself to be seen. Ride in the portion of the lane where it is most likely that you will be seen by other motorists.

Bad weather is another risk for cyclists. In the rain, riders find they get better traction by driving in the tracks of vehicles in front of them. If employees must ride in the rain, remember that conditions are most dangerous during the first few minutes of rainfall because of oil and other automobile drippings on the roadway. If possible, sit out the beginning of a rain shower.

Always, but especially in wet conditions, use brakes wisely. Brake firmly and progressively and bring the motorcycle upright before stopping. After passing through water, look for following traffic, and when it is safe to do so, check your brakes by applying light pressure.

Be sure to get certified, or brush up on your motorcycle safety, with a class at your local department of motor vehicles.

For more information log on to <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>.



# Employees assigned to Extra Board

A group of switchmen/brakemen who joined the railroad Nov. 1 have successfully completed training.

They were recently RCO certified and have been assigned to the Extra Board. The employees were trained and tested by various experienced

railroaders with extensive knowledge, skill and expertise in their crafts.

“We are very pleased with the feedback on these employees received from the trainers,” said Bill Penberthy, senior manager-operating practices. “We greatly appreciate

the trainers’ efforts in bringing them aboard.”

The new employees include: Kevin Amberg, Matt Clark, Ryan Gnaegy, Ryan Lewis, Chad McBride, Fontez McNeal Terry Montgomery, Nick Prange and Dan Rekosh.

## Reaching his goals

His qualifications are impeccable.

Darrin Root, Alton & Southern Police sergeant, has the education, experience and ability desired to be a railroad special agent.

Root joined the railroad in 1997 as a trackman on a section gang. Previously, he worked as a police officer in Marissa, Ill., and Freeburg, Ill. The sergeant also worked in the military police for the Army from 1989 to 1993.

He was deployed to Panama during Operation Just Cause and to Iraq in Operation Desert Storm.

The former trackman’s goal was to become an A&S patrolman. He worked 10 years in Maintenance of Way while remaining in law enforcement part time. During that time, Root worked as a machine operator and truck driver. There were no openings in the police department until 2007 when his application was accepted.

Root was promoted to sergeant in 2008.

“Working in the Engineering Department gave me an extensive knowledge of the yard and how the railroad is run,” he said. “It was a huge benefit for me to already know the names, nicknames and location of various tracks and other facilities.”

When advised to report “at the ol’ water tank switch,” for example, Root understood the location.

The sergeant is a shift supervisor available to the other five patrolmen and the chief. His duties include yard patrol, updates of the Rail Security-Sensitive Material shipment database and coordination of patrol car computers. He may provide crew protection, check refrigerated cars or Autoracks and respond to requests for assistance from neighboring agencies. The railroader investigates trespassing and



Darrin Root, Alton & Southern Police sergeant

enforces state highway-rail grade crossing laws.

The railroad’s employees can be the eyes and ears of the police. They are excellent at reporting circumstances when police should be notified. When they call and report an incident, it’s not a wild goose chase.

Root is a member of the Metal Theft Task Force and other joint law enforcement ventures. He also belongs to the Missouri and Illinois Railroad Police associations.

The dedicated employee most enjoys the camaraderie in the department. His co-workers form a great team.

Root resides on an acreage near Marissa with his wife, Pam, and children, Elizabeth, 9, and Rebecca, 5. Pam is a registered nurse who works at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis in the dialysis department. Time with her and the children is important. They enjoy fishing in a lake on their property.

# Timeless treasures

The efforts of Alton & Southern employees, retirees and others recently put laughter in the voices and smiles on the faces of patients at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Organizers of the "Trains and Teddy Bears" program in December also enjoyed the activity.

The railroad gave 77 "Eddy Engineer" teddy bears to patients. The patients and others also operated a model train. It was displayed on the second floor garage/hospital bridge.

Dennis Korando, retired A&S employee, provided the model train. Various volunteers prepared the train for operation, including Korando and his wife, Wanda; A&S retiree Joe Obernuefemann; Donna Wilson, clerk; and Richard Wulff, Mechanical superintendent.

Korando, his wife and Obernuefemann are members of the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. The society featured a story and photos about the event in its newsletter, "The

Gateway Railletter."

Those involved thanked Michael McCarthy, general manager, for funds to purchase the bears.

Founded in 1879, St. Louis Children's Hospital is one of the premier children's hospitals in the United States. It serves not just the children of St. Louis, but children across the world. The hospital provides a range of pediatric services to the St. Louis metropolitan area and a primary service region covering six states. As the pediatric teaching hospital for Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis Children's Hospital offers nationally rec-



From left, Donna Wilson, Richard Wulff, Joe Obernuefemann, Wanda Korando and Dennis Korando. Photos by Joe Obernuefemann.

ognized programs for physician training and research.

"Trains and Teddy Bears" is one of many ways Alton & Southern Railway participates in activities that benefit the communities it serves.

## Decisions, decisions

Each day, a railroader makes hundreds of decisions.

Most of them are so minor in nature they are done without much thought. Taking a step. Looking up. Looking down. Looking left to right. Reaching, bending, standing, holding. All of these are decisions.

Decision making is an outcome of mental processes in which a person reviews alternatives and selects among them a course of action. On the railroad, employees constantly make decisions on the safest courses of action for themselves and for their co-workers. But, sometimes it is not so simple. What might be a small decision could lead to a hazardous situation.

Just what is complacency?

It can be a feeling of security that often occurs while unaware of potential hazards that may cause injury. It happens when employees become comfortable. They want to stay on the same road, but after repeated actions, they can essentially fall asleep at the wheel. That can put them in the line of fire, potentially causing injury.

How can you avoid it?

- 1) Complacency can spread quickly. If an employee spots another employee taking a shortcut, that person may do the same, then repeat that unsafe action and form a habit. By alerting the employee taking a shortcut of his/her unsafe act, you can create awareness and prevent a trend towards complacency.
- 2) Conduct effective job briefings that keep safety at the forefront of your mind. Make sure to consider:
  - What you are working with.
  - What you are doing.
  - Where you are going.
  - What could go wrong.
  - Who is working with or near you and where they are.
- 3) Eradicate the "it won't happen to me" attitude. Build a culture of safety and encourage your co-workers to avoid taking risks. Assess your work environment, task or situation before making a decision.



# Stewart wants to learn

The railroad provided a good livelihood for his father and a great career for his brother. Leo Stewart Jr., trackman, believes the railroad will do the same for him.

“I love it,” said Stewart, who joined the railroad Feb. 18. “I enjoy working outside, I enjoy the employees I work with and I’m learning more and more every day. I thank the company for giving me the opportunity to work for it.”

His father is Leo Sr., retired A&S carman. His brother

is Michael, switchman/brakeman. The brothers occasionally see each other starting or completing a shift.

Previously, the trackman worked more than four years for a sanitation company. He has wanted to work for the railroad the past two years. The railroad is closer to his home, which is another big benefit. The sanitation company is in Earth City, Mo., so he commuted 39 miles to work.

His co-workers are friendly and have helped him a great deal. They know their jobs and they know them well. They also are willing to teach everything they know to a new employee.

“I want to learn as much about A&S as I possibly can,” Stewart said. “Safety is the first thing I have to understand. Then, I need to master the use of hand tools to maintain and repair tracks.”

He resides in Alorton, Ill., with his wife, Zayykia, and children, Leo III, 12; Alandira, 11; and Dionta, 7. The two boys play football. Leo is a running back and Dionta is a quarterback in a full-contact little league. Alandira enjoys reading, writing, drawing and shopping.

Capone, their German shepherd, is an important part of the family.

Aside from his family, the railroader’s pride and joy is a Candy Gold 1975 Buick Electra 225 with 100-spoke Dayton wheels with Gangster whitewall tires.



Leo Stewart Jr., trackman

## Housekeeping, safety go hand-in-hand

Keeping a clean walkway leads to more than a good way to get employees from Point A to Point B — it also helps employees work safely.

Slips, trips and falls — which constitute the majority of general industry accidents, second only to motor vehicle accidents — occur from an unintended or unexpected change in contact between one’s feet and the walking surface.

While selecting footwear, adjusting one’s walking according to the type of surface and staying focused are essential to prevent walking ac-

cidents, without good housekeeping practices, these efforts to be safe cannot be effective.

Practice good housekeeping:

- Clean all spills immediately.
- Mark spills and wet areas.
- Mop or sweep debris from floors.
- Do not store materials on stairs.
- Remove obstacles from walkways and keep them free of clutter. If there are items in the way that cannot be moved immediately, walk around them — avoid climbing over them.

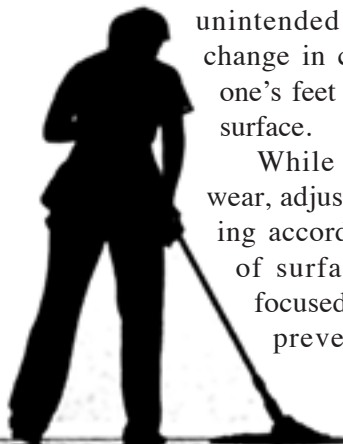
Sometimes, there are things that need to be on the floors such as rugs or cords, but without proper placement, they could be potential tripping hazards.

To eliminate this risk:

- Secure mats, rugs and carpets that do not lay flat by tacking or taping them.
- Cover cables that cross walkways.
- Avoid extension cords if possible. If use is necessary, do not place them in a walking area.

Good housekeeping does not just mean clean floors. It also includes keeping work benches and cabinets clean. Tools go in a certain place — not on benches or on top of lockers. As soon as someone is done using a tool, he needs to put it back where it belongs.

Stacking things on top of lockers, rather than putting them away where they belong, is dangerous. Stacking things can cause the items to fall.





# Chronicle

This newsletter appears under direction of the superintendent. For news coverage, contact Randy at the newsletter office by phone at 402-475-6397, fax 402-475-6398, mail information to 1845 S. 11th St., Lincoln, NE 68502-2211, or e-mail [randy@newslink.com](mailto:randy@newslink.com). This material is intended to be an overview of A&S Railway news. If there are any discrepancies between this newsletter and any collective bargaining process, insurance contracts or other official documents, those documents will govern. A&S continues to maintain and reserves the right, at any time, to alter, suspend, discontinue or terminate all plans and programs described in this newsletter. This newsletter is not an employment contract or any type of employment guarantee. Any photo submitted may be used. Anyone who submits a photo retains all rights to the image. However, by submission you give the newsletter permission to use your photo(s) in all related media. Thanks to everyone at Alton & Southern for contributing to the newsletter.



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## McNeal thriving in new environment

Fontez McNeal, conductor, was looking for a change. McNeal learned from Steven Montgomery, brakeman/switchman, that the A&S was a great place to work. He joined the railroad Nov. 1.

Previously, the conductor worked six years for a sheriff's department as a correctional officer.

"I'm most definitely glad I joined the railroad," McNeal said. "There's something different about the job each day. Each time I come to work there is something new to learn."

Safety is definitely the most important aspect of his job. He must be on his toes and keep his head in the game. The railroad has scores of tracks with locomotives and cars constantly moving different directions. He must always be mindful of the safety of others.

The conductor has most enjoyed RCO training. He was trained by skilled and knowledgeable railroaders who enabled him to get the hands-on experience he needed while ensuring his safety, preventing damage to locomotives or cars and avoiding derailment. His experience included training at the hump, in the bowl and as a utility worker.

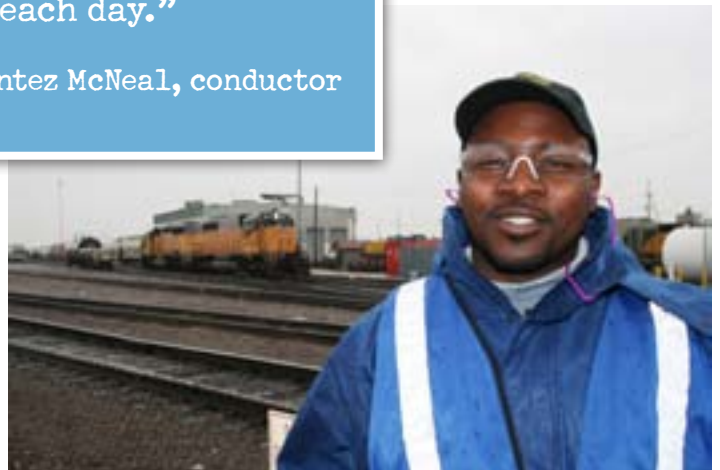
The O'Fallon, Ill., resident has three sons, Isaiah, 12;

Fontez Jr., 11; and Kiontez, 5. He spends as much time with them as possible and encourages their interest in music. Isaiah plays saxophone and Fontez plays drums.

McNeal exercises four days each week. He lifts weights and does cardiovascular training. The health-conscious employee also runs three to four miles three times a week.

"I'm most definitely glad I joined the railroad. There's something different about the job each day."

— Fontez McNeal, conductor



Fontez McNeal, conductor

