

FREIGHT INTERCHANGE

Alabama Railway Association

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Summer is in full swing in Alabama. We are regularly experiencing triple-digit heat indexes and summer rain showers. And, I have been especially busy with that little one up above. Bo Walker is nine months old and already practicing his train engineer skills.

This spring was dominated by the legislative session. It was the last session of the [quadrennium](#), so legislators were very focused on the upcoming elections.

Speaking of elections, the primary and runoff elections have come and gone in Alabama. In 2019, we will have several new legislators and other elected officials. For a full rundown of elections, check out the Secretary of State's [website](#). The general election will be held in November.

I hope you enjoy the latest edition of *The Freight Interchange*.

Maeci Walker | Executive Director
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2018 Annual Meeting Announcement

The Alabama Railway Association will hold its 2018 Annual Meeting at The Grand Hotel in Point Clear December 3 - 4.

Life is grand at The Grand! Mark your calendars for December 3-4 when the Alabama Railway Association will return to The Grand Hotel in Point Clear, Ala. for our annual meeting.

The hotel has been completely renovated since we were there several years ago. The meeting will begin with dinner on Monday night at a local Fairhope restaurant, and the meeting will be Tuesday. We will finish up with lunch at the hotel and host an optional tour that afternoon.

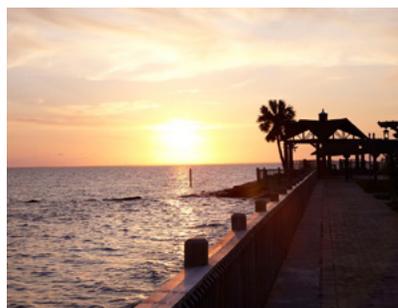
We have gotten great feedback in the past on our annual meetings, and we plan to host another fun, but informative, meeting again this year.

The agenda is still being crafted, so if there is anything specific you would like covered at the meeting, please reach

out to Maeci. We want the meeting to be worthwhile and impactful, and your feedback is always important. You can register for the meeting online by clicking [here](#).

You can make your hotel reservation by calling 251.928.9201.

And, we need sponsorships! Sponsorships help cover the Association's expenses and allow us to be more creative with programming. You can choose your sponsorship level on the registration website.



I hope you will make plans to join us in Point Clear in December. It will be a great time of seeing old friends and making new ones, learning, and fun.

Please reach out to Maeci with any questions regarding the meeting.



Safety First Near Railway Crossings

By Sain Associates

Railway safety is a topic that cannot be emphasized enough for both the public and those working on the railway. According to Federal Railroad Administration statistics, 274 highway-rail grade crossing fatalities occurred in 2017, with 9 being in Alabama.

There are two types of protection at an at-grade rail crossing: passive and active protection. *Passive protection* consists of pavement markings, signs and potentially flashing lights. These methods require motorists and pedestrians to use their own discretion to safely cross a railroad track.

Active Protection consists of measures used to physically prevent the movement of traffic at a railroad at-grade crossing and is triggered by an approaching train. Active Protection is typically used when one or more of the following conditions are present: urban areas, heavy traffic volumes, multi-lane roadways, proximity to traffic signals, nearby schools, a crossing with poor sight distance, or a crossing that has experienced fatal crashes.

Many railroads require a security clearance check and certified safety training in order to be on their right-of-way. When I'm on a rail site, it is important that there are no distractions. Using a cell phone must be done in a "clear zone" completely away from even the slightest danger. The minimum safety re-

quirements to be on a rail site include Class 2 safety vest, steel toe boots, hard hat, safety glasses, and ear protection. If I must be on the railroad, a flagman or additional person is also necessary for safety.

My experience with rail projects includes railroad crossing safety inventories, crossing construction inspection, track inspection, railroad bridge inspection, track design, and drainage design. I've worked on more than 250 rail crossings, which span across ten states: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee, North Carolina, New York, New Hampshire, Oregon and Vermont.

Currently, Sain is doing Railroad Crossing Construction inspection in various locations throughout Alabama. We are also coordinating with a railroad entity to make sight distance and roadway improvements. The goal of all our railway work is to make rail crossings safer for the public.

It is crucial for all of us to remember that crossing a railroad can be dangerous. Always slow down and proceed across a railroad track with caution; assume a train is coming until you know for certain the tracks are clear. Take your safety into your own hands and do not depend on signs, gates, flashing lights, or bells. Use your eyes and ears, and exercise caution near any railroad.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rail Safety Week: Sept. 23 - 29

ASLRRRA Southern Region Meeting: Sept. 24 - 26

SRPC Conference: Sept. 26 - 28

OAR Safety Training: Oct. 23 - 25

ARA Annual Meeting: Dec. 3 - 4

RAILROADERS ON THE MOVE

Giles Perry with Genesee & Wyoming has been named Vice President of Safety and Compliance for the Southern Region.

Bill Keough joined G & W as Vice President of Transportation for the Southern Region.

Norfolk Southern Corporation **announced** that **Vanessa L. Allen Sutherland** has been named vice president law.

Freight Rail a Key Part of Alabama's Economic Future

With Alabama producing a quarter of all autos manufactured in the South and the Port of Mobile preparing to handle more traffic flowing through an expanded Panama Canal, railroads are more vital than ever to the state's economic future. Freight rail reaches every corner of Alabama and is playing a key role in the development of a growing manufacturing sector while also supporting agriculture and forestry in the state.

Alabama's 26 freight railroads operate over 3,200 miles of track and employ 3,711 people in the Heart of Dixie.* Pulp and paper and motor vehicles/equipment comprise the majority of freight rail shipments beginning in Alabama. Coal is the largest rail import to the state.

*2015 data



Several legislators and others gathered at the OAR training in Birmingham

Norfolk continues Southern OAR safety train training

Last year, the Norfolk Southern Operation Awareness and Response (OAR) safety train visited Birmingham, Huntsville, and Tuscaloosa. Several legislators, police officers, firefighters, and other emergency responders received training on site.

Launched in June 2015, the goal of OAR is to educate the public about the economic importance of the safe movement of hazardous materials by rail and to connect emergency first responders in Norfolk Southern communities with information and training resources.

This year, training will take place in McIntosh, Ala. October 23 - 25.

Who should attend: Emergency responders, including: fire departments, law enforcement, emergency medical services, hazmat response teams, emergency management personnel, military, homeland security personnel, shippers, and customers

Free training topics include: Safety On Railroad Property, Rail Shipping Documents, Rail Equipment Identification, Rail Tank Cars, Locomotive Fires, Flammable Liquid Unit Trains, Incident Response Procedures, Working with Railroad Officials, and the AskRail Mobile App

For more information, click [here](#).



Alabama Representatives and Senators at the Huntsville OAR training

WATCO unveils UAB locomotive

On July 27, WATCO unveiled its brand new UAB locomotive. The locomotive is painted Blazer green and features the UAB Blazer mascot, Blaze.

The Birmingham Terminal Railroad locomotive was designed by KREAT Graphics and will travel the railways throughout Birmingham to showcase WATCO's commitment to the community and economic development.



Dual service facility to open in late 2018

A 300,000-square-foot Georgia Pacific lumber production facility is set to open in Talladega later in 2018. The facility will be dual-served by CSX and Norfolk Southern.

It will employ more than 100 full-time employees and generate an annual payroll estimated at \$5 million, according to the Alabama Department of Commerce. It will be located at a former Georgia-Pacific plywood mill that closed in 2008 after more than 30 years of operation.

Once up and running, GP's new facility will receive about 150 log trucks a day and produce around 230 million board-feet of lumber each year. The company has plans to expand production to 300 million board-feet per year in the future. The renewed demand for lumber in construction means Georgia-Pacific is also looking at other expansions in three states.

For more information, check out [al.com's](#) story.

Alabama Railway Association Executive Committee

President: [Cliff Melton](#), Terminal Railway

Vice President: [Joe Arbona](#), Genesee & Wyoming

Secretary/Treasurer: [Elizabeth Lawlor](#), Norfolk Southern

At-Large Member: [Jeremy Cole](#), Southern Electric Railroad

At-Large Member: [Jane Covington](#), CSX Transportation

Associate Voting Members: [Steve Faulkner](#), Birmingham Rail & Locomotive; [Eddie Horton](#), Stella-Jones

did you know?

The average wages and benefits for freight railroad workers in Alabama total \$101,980.*

*2015 statistics via [aar.org](#)