



# FirstFocus

**FirstFleet** A newsletter for FirstFleet employees

## Culture and Core Values

### A VALUE DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

FirstFleet has always been driven by values, although this is nothing new it's time to actually state, lay a foundation so to speak, of what those values really are. Having our Core Values down in writing will ensure these values are carried on throughout future generations and will allow potential employees and prospective customers to know who we are!

FirstFleet, Inc. is dedicated to exceeding the expectations of those we interact with. This goal is more than a catch phrase – it is a way of life that requires every team member working in the same direction with a unified focus. To support this mission we have a set of COMMON VALUES that are core to our philosophy of life & work. We will not get it right every time, but we will strive every day to support and embrace these values.

The CORE VALUES of FirstFleet are the guidelines by which we seek to conduct ourselves every day. The acronym of SERVE is not by chance, but rather an intentional reflection of our commitment to service in every way.

- S**afely deliver outstanding service
- E**mpower our people to do the right thing
- R**elationships will be built on trust
- V**alue, care for and respect everyone
- E**mbrace change as a reality of progress

We're all very excited and hope all FirstFleet associates will take these Core Values and live them, use them every day, help deliver a consistent message of who we are and always have been.

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Greenville, TN



# Culture and Core Values continued



Southeast Region



Phoenix, AZ



Flowers Group



Midwest



Fountain, Wichita Falls, Denver



Portland, TN



Midwest



Bluffton, IN



Fountain, CO

## Spotlight on Jamestown, NC

FirstFleet, Jamestown, NC opened for business in May of 2000 with 22 drivers and a small staff dedicated to servicing Flowers Baking Company through local warehouse deliveries. Today Jamestown employs 68 full time drivers and is the home domicile for many successful accounts, Flowers Baking, Garth Brooks, Miller / Coors and WestRock to name a few and a very successful OTR group known as the “Firemen”.

Mike Radford, Regional Manager, states “The company culture in Jamestown is demonstrated day in and day out from every driver, administrative staff, supervisor and manager. This location has embraced change by leading the way with enhanced technology, Jamestown was the first location to be totally paperless. This group represents our company with pride as is seen in their “Can Do” attitudes.” Mike along with Operations Manager, Ray Wright have complete confidence in the team and congratulate them on a job well done!

Fleet Manager, Aaron Pennington, began his career with FirstFleet in 2006. Aaron has proved to be an exceptional manager who takes pride in his work, customer and team. Aaron shares how delivering to Flowers warehouses is a very physical job, drivers use a hand truck to offload the trailer and stage the product for Flowers Sales associates, he commends all drivers for their hard work and dedication. Aaron says the Jamestown crew is “a strong knit work family” and this is evident through his pride in the accomplishments of drivers and staff and in the fond memories he often shares of the late Tom Davis, Jamestown Fleet Manager 2000-2012.

The Jamestown crew also includes Transportation Supervisors: Sherri Carter, Ronnie Crow and Joey Taylor who are primarily responsible for coordinating loads and working directly with customers and drivers. Administrative Assistant, Merri Mabe and part-time Administrative Assistant, Gina Hill provide support, reconcile orders and handle various other tasks.

FirstFleet, Jamestown, NC believes that “*teamwork is the dreamwork*” and has always had Core Values as a foundation. Aaron Pennington states “Our operation is fair, honest and professional. These values were displayed by some of the greatest mentors and colleagues including Mike Radford, Ray Wright and the late Tom Davis as well as the exceptional managers throughout our region and FirstFleet who provide much needed support even for the toughest of assignments. With these values an elite team was formed that I’m proud to be a part of and consider it an honor to lead an exceptional driver force and an office staff that exceeds expectations on a daily basis. All things are possible, we are Jamestown!”



Jamestown, NC Staff



Lt to Rt: Mike Radford, Regional Manager;  
Ray Wright, Operations Manager



Flowers / FirstFleet Jamestown, NC



Flowers Dump Trailer





Aaron Pennington, Fleet Manager



Sherri Carter, Transportation Supervisor



Joey Taylor, Transportation Supervisor



Ronnie Crow, Transportation Supervisor



Merri Mabe, Administrative Assistant



Gina Hill, Administrative Assistant / Switcher



Marcus Clark, FirstFleet Flowers Switcher



Ronnie Melton FirstFleet Flowers Driver



Tim Ivey FirstFleet Flowers Driver



Billy Johnson FirstFleet Flowers Driver



Tim Barton FirstFleet Flowers Driver



Lt to Rt: Dennis Keels and Chris Lewis Garth Brooks / Jamestown Drivers





FirstFleet Jamestown, NC



Garth Brooks / Jamestown Drivers



FirstFleet Garth Brooks Trucks



Flowers Jamestown, NC

*"FirstFleet Jamestown, good equipment and the ability to not just be a number"*

- Stephen Hendricks, Driver

*"If you're looking for a fleet that is first, look no further than FirstFleet Jamestown!"*

- Dennis Keels, Driver

*"Our team at Jamestown NC is a reflection of our leadership, our leadership is a reflection of us all!"*

- Chris Lewis, Driver



FirstFleet Drivers pictured with the Garth Brooks tour crew including Garth and Trisha



## Maintenance



David Kuhn, Bluffton, IN Service Technician pictured with his custom built Matco Tool Box. The box is equipped with a hutch, mid box and lower drawers, in all it has 17 drawers and 12 AC plugins, 4 USB ports with an empty weight of 2,000lbs! Tools and tool boxes are quite an investment for Service Technicians. Very impressive David, this is definitely something to be proud of and we thank you for all your hard work!



Jesse Chantea, Fountain, CO Service Technician recently received his Diesel Tech Degree from Pikes Peak Community College. Along the way Jesse had the support of his family and Randy Sams, Fountain, CO Service Manager. Juggling family time, work and school couldn't have been easy but with great dedication Jesse did it! Congratulations Jesse!



Jay Jones, Portland, TN Service Lead and his award winning 1984 Chevy S10 were recently featured in LMC Truck Life. Jay stripped the truck down to the frame then spent over two years fully restoring and customizing this sharp S10. Very impressive work which proves Jay Jones is as highly skilled in restoration / custom paint and body as he is a diesel technician! The LMC article can be found @ [www.lmctrucklife.com](http://www.lmctrucklife.com)

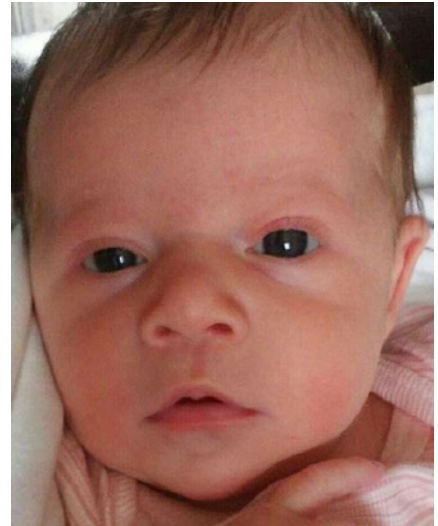
## New Arrivals



Congratulations to proud Dad Matthew Wood, Wichita Falls, TX Driver, on the birth of his daughter Olivia Ryann Wood!



Congratulations to proud Dad Charles Kinney, Knoxville, TN Driver, on the birth of his son, Bryson Luke Kinney!



Congratulations to proud Dad Mike Odom, Wichita Falls, TX Driver on the birth of his daughter Olivia Odom!



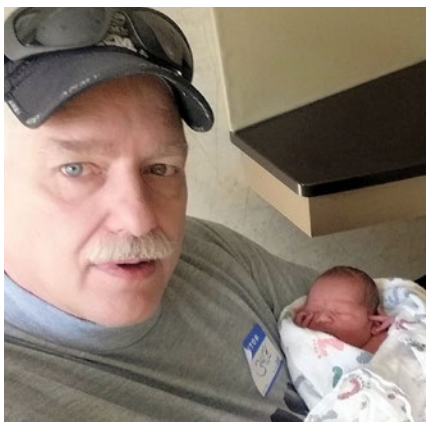
Congratulations to proud Grandpa Bruce Becker, Oxford, PA Fleet Manager, on the birth of his twin great grandbabies Neiko and Kye Funderburk!



Congratulations to proud Mom Katherine Spreng, Knoxville, TN, Driver, on the birth of her daughter Lila Marie!



Congratulations to proud Dad Steven Christenson, Austin, MN Fleet Manager, on the birth of his son, Daniel Christenson!



Congratulations to proud Grandpa Dan Malmquist, Fountain, CO Supervisor, on the birth of his granddaughter Zaryha!



Congratulations to proud Uncle, Josh Johnson, Rincon, GA Fleet Manager, on the birth of his 1st nephew Asher Hulsey!





2,000,000



Safe Miles

### Jerry Oliver 2,000,000 Safe Miles!



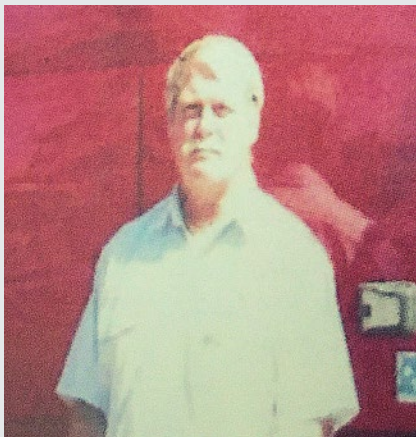
Jerry Oliver has been driving for FirstFleet, Inc. out of our Cleveland, TN terminal for over 20 years. Jerry attributes his safe driving accomplishment to always paying attention, staying alert and never running in packs. **FirstFleet, Inc. is extremely proud of Jerry Oliver, Two Million Mile Safe Driver!**

### Terry Burchfield 2,000,000 Safe Miles!



Terry Burchfield has been driving for FirstFleet, Inc. out of our Cleveland, TN terminal for 16 years. Terry attributes his safe driving accomplishment to continued training, his enjoyment of driving which keeps his stress level low and thinking ahead to anticipate the actions of other drivers. **FirstFleet, Inc. is extremely proud of Terry Burchfield, Two Million Mile Safe Driver!**

FirstFleet, Inc. is very proud of our Two Million Mile Safe Drivers!



## Did You Know?

The March 2017 Edition of National Truckin' Magazine included an excellent article on Eddy Parrish, Portland, TN Driver / "Legend's" nominee. Eddy shared his story of growing up in a farming family and being the son of a truck driver as well as his many successful years of farming and driving. Eddy stated "I was born into it. Trucking and farming is all my family has ever done and it's all I have ever wanted to do. I don't see trucking as a job, it's a lifestyle." Great article Eddy! Anyone who missed it should be able to obtain a copy @ [www.nationaltruckinmagazine.com](http://www.nationaltruckinmagazine.com)



1,000,000



Safe Miles

**Philip Mast 1 Million Safe Miles!**

Philip began his career with FirstFleet in 2007, he drives out of the Newton, NC terminal. Congratulations Philip!

**Richard Weimar 1 Million Safe Miles!**

Richard began his career with FirstFleet in 2005, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Congratulations Richard!

**Ron Uptgraft 1 Million Safe Miles!**

Ron began his career with FirstFleet in 2005, he drives out of the Bluffton, IN terminal. Congratulations Ron!

**Bill Lindsey 1 Million Safe Miles!**

Bill began his career with FirstFleet in 2008, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Congratulations Bill!



FirstFleet, Inc. is very proud of our One Million Mile Safe Drivers!

**Did You Know?**

The Winter 2017 Edition of Tennessee Trucking News featured Wayland Thompson, FirstFleet Vice President and current TTA Chairman. This is a wonderful article of Wayland's plans as Chairman, his position with FirstFleet and a glimpse into who he is a "humble and kind" guy from Oklahoma who loves his family, job and people. The Newsletter is available for download @ [www.tntrucking.org](http://www.tntrucking.org)

500,000



Safe Miles

### Alan Blair 500,000 Safe Miles!

Alan began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Alan!



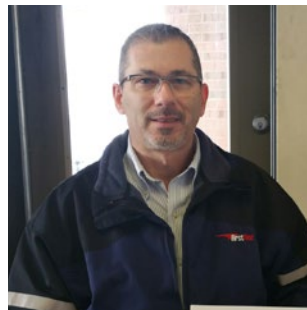
### Ed Spangler 500,000 Safe Miles!

Ed began his career with FirstFleet in 2009, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Ed!



### George Scott 500,000 Safe Miles!

George began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the St. Joseph, MO terminal. Great Job George!



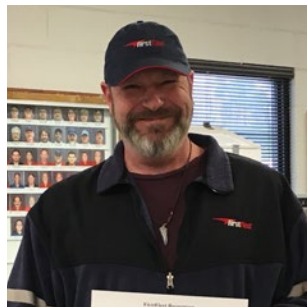
### Chris Gilmore 500,000 Safe Miles!

Chris began his career with FirstFleet in 2011, he drives out of the Jamestown, NC terminal. Great Job Chris!



### Joe King 500,000 Safe Miles!

Joe began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Joe!



### Julius Howard 500,000 Safe Miles!

Julius began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Julius!





### Kevin Rea 500,000 Safe Miles!

Kevin began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Fountain, CO terminal. Great Job Kevin!



### Mark Scott 500,000 Safe Miles!

Mark began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Mark!



### Michael Rexrode 500,000 Safe Miles!

Michael began his career with FirstFleet in 2013, he drives out of the Elkton, VA terminal. Great Job Michael!



### James Neal 500,000 Safe Miles!

James began his career with FirstFleet in 2004, he drives out of the St. Joseph, MO terminal. Great Job James!



### Paul Carreras 500,000 Safe Miles!

Paul began his career with FirstFleet in 2011, he drives out of the Fountain, CO terminal. Great Job Paul!



### Mike Cox 500,000 Safe Miles!

Mike began his career with FirstFleet in 2012, he drives out of the Chesterfield, MI terminal. Great Job Mike!



### Cleaston Conner 500,000 Safe Miles!

Cleaston began his career with FirstFleet in 2015, he drives out of the Cleveland, TN terminal. Great Job Cleaston!



FirstFleet is pleased to share the accomplishments of these 500,000 Mile Safe Drivers!

## 2017 Driver Trainer Meeting

**Back to the Basics** was the theme of the 21st Annual Driver Trainer Meeting held in Murfreesboro, TN this past March 31st & April 1st with approximately 60 Driver Trainers from across the country in attendance. The meeting focused on the basics of training new hires as well as seasoned drivers and as always raising safe driving and safe operation awareness.



Back to Basics



Gary Wilson, President, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and recognizing all first time attendees.



John Cole, Safety Director, lead a very successful & informative meeting.



Special Guest, Steven Garrett of International Paper who shared insight on the safety practices of International Paper. Lt to Rt: Steven Garrett, Lou Miller, Regional Safety Manager.



Kevin Steele, Regional Safety Manager



Marty Newcomb, Delaware, OH Safety



Mark Jordan, Fountain, CO Safety



Bret Steward, Bluffton, IN Safety



Retired Safety Director, Jim Skaare, stopped by as a Special Guest.





2017 Driver Trainer Meeting



Lester Packard, Driver Trainer, Auburn, ME was recognized and congratulated for his outstanding status as the 2016 Maine Motor Transport Association Driver of the Year!



Lt to Rt: Vicky Cothren, Driver Trainer, Amarillo, TX; Debbie Houston, Director of Risk Mgmt; Rod Sharp, Driver Trainer, Fountain, CO.



Lt to Rt: David Graef, Driver Trainer, Oxford, PA; John Waisanen, Regional Operations Manager.



Lt to Rt: Kevin Steele, Regional Safety Manager; Brad Lundquist, Fleet Manager, Fountain, CO.



FirstFleet's Executive Team was in attendance to show their continued support of the Safety Team Lt to Rt: John Hellige, VP of Finance; David Beeny, Executive VP; Wayland Thompson, VP of Sales & Marketing; Gary Wilson, President; Daniel Piper, VP of Operations.



Lt to Rt: Robert Hall, Driver Trainer, Spartanburg, SC; Mike Murphy, Maintenance Director.

## 2017 Shop Appreciation

FirstFleet's 2nd Annual Shop Appreciation was celebrated in April throughout the country with each shop location recognizing the hard work and dedication of all service employees!

Mike Murphy, Director of Maintenance, shares how appreciative he is of the constant effort put forth by the entire Maintenance Crew who works hard each and every day to keep the Fleet safely rolling.

FirstFleet is extremely proud of our Maintenance Department and hope you all enjoyed the festivities this year, many thanks to all!



Thanks to this Phoenix, AZ Crew!



Enjoying lunch in Phoenix, AZ



Bluffton, IN



Ready for lunch in Bluffton, IN



Taking a break in Cleveland, TN



Lunch in Fountain, CO



Mike Murphy thanks the Cleveland, TN crew



Thanks to this Phoenix, AZ Crew!





Enjoying the day in Phoenix, AZ



Perry Glancy, Regional Manager, appreciates the Bluffton Crew



Fountain, CO



Portland, TN



Portland, TN



Fun in Cleveland, TN!



A good day in Portland, TN



Thank you Cedar Rapids Crew!



Congratulations Allen Schmidt, Portland, TN Grand Prize Winner! Lt to Rt: Allen Schmidt, Service Technician; Johnny Russell, Service Manager



Thanks Fountain, CO Crew!



Congratulations Jacob Gibson, Cleveland, TN Grand Prize Winner!

## 2017 Shop Appreciation continued



Congratulations Doug Martin, Bluffton, IN Grand Prize Winner!



Service Strong in Portland, TN!

# Retirement

### Happy Retirement Vern Strange!

After driving for FirstFleet out of our Bluffton, IN location for over 27 years Laverne “Vern” Strange decided it was time to retire. Vern was a fixture in Bluffton and well respected by his coworkers, he was given a plaque which reads “In appreciation of your 27 years of service. You have exemplified outstanding service, loyalty and dedication to FirstFleet, Peyton’s and Kroger. You have made a positive difference with FirstFleet and its customers. Because of your loyalty you have helped FirstFleet prosper and grow. Thank you Vern for everything you have done.” Vern is an avid mechanic who enjoys working on and repairing cars, he has a small repair shop at his home. For as much as Vern will be missed we’re all very excited for him and wish him many happy years enjoying time with his wife Diana, his children and grandchildren.

Thank you again Vern for everything, happy retirement!

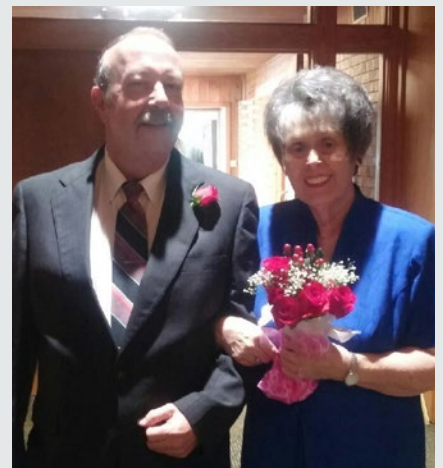
– Your FirstFleet Family



Vern Strange

# In Memoriam

In Memory of Frank Fulp, FirstFleet Jamestown, NC Driver, 2000-2016. Frank will be greatly missed by all who knew him, he will be remembered by his co-workers as a caring and happy man who was also a dedicated professional driver. Frank was a driver for 35 years, he enjoyed model aircraft and playing his bass guitar. Frank passed away on November 28, 2016, we at FirstFleet extend our sympathies to his wife Jean, children and family.





## Did You Know?

The devastating 2016 fires in the East Tennessee Mountain communities tragically claimed lives and caused wide spread destruction. Sorrow spread throughout Tennessee and the country but as always the Volunteer State stood strong. Fire Crews, First Responders, Police Departments, the National Guard, the Red Cross, Volunteers and many more worked tirelessly while others gathered and sent much needed donations. We'd like to say a special thanks to FirstFleet Knoxville, TN and Flowers Baking Co. who worked together to send thousands of bread products to the families and support crews. We'd also like to say a special thanks to FirstFleet Cleveland, TN and Kroger who also worked together sending much needed supplies and groceries. Many thanks to all who donated to the relief effort and our sympathies to the families who lost loved ones.



We're thankful this beautiful place is still here for all to enjoy.



## Did You Know?



Master Sergeant Shanon J. Merriman is the son of Bluffton, IN Driver Randy Merriman and his wife, Beth. This past February MSgt Merriman retired from the U.S. Airforce after 20+ years of service including deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. During his career he received many major awards and decorations including the Air Force Achievement Medal. MSgt Merriman, we thank you for your service and wish you, your wife Heather, children and family the very best!



Safety is always Job One at FirstFleet Bluffton, IN, they even have their very own Safety Tree!

## Got News?

Got News? Want to Share It?

Please email your submission  
along with photos to:  
[MaggieEngle@firstfleetinc.com](mailto:MaggieEngle@firstfleetinc.com)  
or call 1-800-819-0905 x1108  
with any questions.



This past December Don Wilhelmi, Cedar Rapids, IA Service Technician and his lovely wife Nancy celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. Congratulations on your Ruby Anniversary and 40 years of memories!

Guido Miller, Cedar Rapids, IA Driver always takes the time to educate others on truck safety and sharing the road. Guido is pictured here giving a demonstration to a Driver's Education class in his hometown. Thank you Guido for sharing your time and knowledge!







Dale Moore, Cleveland, TN 3 Million Mile Safe Driver and TN Road Team Captain recently participated in an event at Prescott Elementary School in Cookeville, TN. Dale helped with the "No Zone" truck demonstration as well as a Power Point presentation and read the TN Trucking Associations children's book Papa Doug Hauls Strawberries and Smiles to the students. Dale, we're all very proud and excited for you, congratulations on becoming a TTA Road Team Captain!



Christopher Griego, Phoenix, AZ Driver, encountered a challenging situation the day before Christmas Eve while delivering a Smith's load of eggs to Feeding Santa Fe, Inc. The eggs were needed for food bags that were to be distributed to hungry families but a neighboring organization had unknowingly blocked reasonable access to the dock area before departing for the holiday weekend. Christopher was recognized by the President of Feeding Santa Fe, Inc. for his willingness to persevere and complete the delivery enabling the organization to carry out their mission to alleviate hunger in the community. Thank you Christopher for going the extra mile and getting the job done!



Tom Winters, Cleveland, TN Safety, celebrated his 77th birthday and 28th year as a FirstFleet employee this past December!



Azriel Barzley, Middletown, NY Driver, has taken professionalism to the next level in Middletown, NY by adding a tie to his uniform. Bill Pray, Fleet Manager, states "Azriel has been with us for one year, he's an excellent hardworking driver who is a welcome asset to the team!" Great job Azriel!

# Anniversaries

## 5 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Beavers, Lonnie, Bardstown, KY  
Whitlock, Tracy, Bardstown, KY  
Anstead, Gerald, Bluffton, IN  
Chambers, William, Bluffton, IN  
Rekeweg, Stanley, Bluffton, IN  
Conner, Cleaston, Cleveland, TN  
Cox, William, Cleveland, TN  
Eubanks, Joshua, Cleveland, TN  
Hensley, Rickey, Cleveland, TN  
Smith, Shawn, Cleveland, TN

Bailey, John, Delaware, OH  
Coleman, Sean, Delaware, OH  
Farner, Shaun, Delaware, OH  
Marriott, Robert, Delaware, OH  
Gainer, Cindy, Elkton, VA  
O'Brien, Albertus, Elkton, VA  
Edmondson, Charles, Fountain, CO  
Gouker, Thomas, Fountain, CO  
Stacey, Ray, Fountain, CO  
Snider, Ronnie, Hermitage, TN

Davis, Roy, Huntsville, AL  
Samuels, VAda, Huntsville, AL  
Finnegan, Jennifer, Middletown, NY  
Rodriguez, Rodrigo, Phoenix, AZ  
Flock, John, Phoenix, AZ  
Brown, Melvin, Portland, TN  
Messenger, Michael, Portland, TN  
Drago, John, Springdale, AR

## 10 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Darst, Steven, Delaware, OH  
Moehring, Stephen, Delaware, OH  
Smith, Jeffrey, Delaware, OH  
Denson, James, Fountain, CO

Cate, Amanda, Murfreesboro, TN  
Williams, Grant, Murfreesboro, TN  
Doud, Donald, Phoenix, AZ  
Pflaster, Terry, Phoenix, AZ

Russell, Johnny, Portland, TN  
Zarr, Robert, Portland, TN

## 15 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Hill, Charles, Cleveland, TN

Rivers, Gerald, Goldsboro, NC

Nicols, Johnnie, Portland, TN

## 20 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Moran, John, Ames, IA

Getts, Robb, Murfreesboro, TN

Tuck, Benny, Portland, TN

## 25 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Vanatta, Tonya, Portland, TN