

# Allan Block

## *Always Better* Wall of Fame

August 2017



[allanblock.com](http://allanblock.com)



**Bryon Avila**  
**Air Vol Block**  
*San Luis Obispo, CA*

Bryon encapsulates what we mean when we say Always Better. Bryon has not only been making Allan Block at Air Vol Block in San Luis Obispo, CA since 1989 the story of his career at Air Vol predates that a bit. On August 28<sup>th</sup> of this year Bryon will celebrate his 40<sup>th</sup> year working at Air Vol Block. What is even more unusual in current business standards, Bryon has worked for one owner, Mr. Bob Miller. Recently Bryon shared the story of

his first day at Air Vol. On this particularly hot August day the plant was not running due to a mechanical issue. As is the case with any good plant operation, you make sure the days that the plant is not running are the worst days to be at work. All the really dirty, no fun jobs are saved for those days. Owners learned a long time ago, that if you want to make sure that the guys keep the plant running so you can make money, make sure that the days when the plant are not running are miserable. So, it was on Bryon's first day. As Bryon dragged himself home after this terrible day, he vowed to himself he was never going back. He announced to his father that he was done and going to find something else to do. Well his father said he would be glad to get him a job milking cows in the valley. Well first Bryon did not want his father to get the upper hand and secondly he did not want to milk any cows, so he went back for his second day at Air Vol. The second day was much better. The plant was running and Bryon was given the job of running the cuber.

The rest is history. Bryon has been the head of all plant operations for many years and makes the tasks of running great block and keeping all three of their Columbia Block Machines and bagging operation look easy. He is known for his ability to teach those working with him all aspects of what it takes to do the job right the first time. Russ Kissinger, AB Wall of Fame Inductee 2016 and General Manager of Air Vol Block, has worked side by side with Bryon for over 25 years and has always relied on knowing that the product coming from Bryon's plant operations would always be first class. When Russ's son Alex entered the work force Bryon took him under his wing. Russ refers to Bryon's training program as Avila U. "We all know that if someone goes through Avila U, they will know how to do the job right."

Bryon has provided help to Allan Block producers using Columbia equipment around the world when problems arise. Mike Weston from Oregon Block commented after talking to Bryon as they worked to get their new Model 16 running correctly, "Bryon told me to just keep working on the details. He said, you will get your machine dialed in and you will love the product that you are able to bring to market." Bryon captures all that is great about the way producers in the Allan Block family all work together. Bryon developed the idea of the notch on the lip in the corner unit, which is now a standard around the world with Allan Block producers. By sharing what we learn individually we make things better for all of us.

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Bryon also has a common urge to throw all sales people over board. “Why can’t they just sell what we have in the yard.” Have we heard that comment from every production person from time to time? One of the most memorable production stories is not sales related but rather running something for the owner Bob Miller. Bob had decided that he really wanted a block that was made of clay instead of sand and gravel. Bryon had to have thoughts along the line of what the heck am I doing now, but in the end, he figured out how to run clay through his block machine and Mr. Miller got the product he wanted to build his house. Since Russ knew how much Bryon enjoyed that particular production adventure, he has been known to submit a phony request for more of the same. Needless to say, Bryon’s blood pressure will jump up a bit before he realizes that his good friend is pulling his leg.



From all of us at Allan Block we want to extend a heartfelt thank you for all you have done for making Allan Block “*Always Better*”.