



NEWS

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Release of tentative national contract on hold

As this issue of the Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen News goes to press, release of the BLET's tentative national contract has been delayed pending resolution of two outstanding issues.

The outline of an agreement was reached through the auspices of the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition (RLBC) in late February after an all-night negotiating session with National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC).

However, as lawyers from both sides reviewed the outline agreement to write specific contract language, the parties realized they differed on the interpretation of two issues.

"I know many members have contacted the National Division about the status of the agreement," said Don Hahs, BLET National President. "However, details of the agreement cannot be released until both parties have signed off on the final document."

The RLBC announced that an agreement had been reached on February 28. The BLET released details of the outline agreement on March 5, announcing that the proposed five-year deal would provide wage increases of 17 percent over the life of the agreement. There would also be a cap placed on employee health care contributions and there would be no work rule changes under the proposed agreement.

The RLBC is a coalition of seven rail labor unions that represents more than 85,000 workers. The RLBC's members include the BLET; the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED); the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers; the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; the Sheet Metal Workers; the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers; and the American Train Dispatchers Association.

For the latest information on this situation and other breaking news, members are encouraged to visit the BLET website and to sign up to receive News Flashes in their e-mail at: <http://www.ble-t.org>. •

Spread the 'limbo time' message

BLET members are encouraged to contact their members of Congress and urge them to include provisions to eliminate limbo time in any rail safety legislation that is introduced in the coming term.

The BLET and its allies in Rail Labor have been lobbying behind the scenes on this issue and believe that introduction of rail safety legislation is imminent.

BLET members should convey to their members of Congress that train crews are fatigued and waiting endless hours for transportation after working 12 hours on a train — a situation that contributes to fatigue.

The Hours of Service Act limits the number of hours that train crew employees can remain on duty (12 hours). At times a train cannot reach a crew change point within the allotted time, however, so the railroad must stop the train in order that a new crew can replace the first, or "outlawed," crew. Transportation of the new crew to the train and the outlawed crew back to the terminal is called "deadhead transportation." Under the Hours of Service Act [§21103(b)(4)], "[t]ime spent in deadhead transportation to a duty assignment is time on duty, but time spent in deadhead transportation from a duty assignment to the place of

final release is neither time on duty nor time off duty." The latter time is commonly termed "limbo time." And even though "outlawed" crews are technically no longer on duty, they must still remain vigilant to safeguard their train.

The BLET has data from one Class I railroad showing that nearly 335,000 crews had work tours in excess of 14 hours during the years 2001 through 2006. This is an average of over 150 crews exceeding the Hours of Service by two hours every day for six years. However, during the past three years, the average is over 205 crews per day. During that same period, an average of 94 crews per day had work tours longer than 15 hours.

These excessive work tours contribute to worker fatigue, which compromises safety. The decade since the Supreme Court's decision has seen both the number of crews stranded waiting for transportation and the length of limbo time increase. The problem has become so prevalent in recent years that the 2003 BLE National Agreement included language committing that participating carriers would "make reasonable efforts to relieve and expeditiously transport [outlawed crews] to the tie-up point." Unfortunately, things have only deteriorated.

Due to this deterioration, Congress must act on the issue of limbo time. BLET members are encouraged call, write and/or e-mail their members of

Congress about the "limbo time" issue. While there is currently no specific "limbo time" bill in the House or Senate, BLET members should make their members of Congress aware of the problem and should ask them to include it in any rail safety legislation introduced in the coming term.

BLET members should share the statistical information provided in this article when contacting their members of Congress, but can supplement these statistics with information from the BLET website (see below). More importantly, members should share their first-hand experiences with fatigue and limbo time with their Senators of Representatives. Citing statistics can only go so far — putting a face with a problem will better convey the message.

The BLET has twice given testimony on fatigue and limbo time before a Congressional hearings. Testimony was given on by National Legislative Representative John Tolman before the House Subcommittee on Railroads on July 25, 2006, and by BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs Tom Pontolillo before the same subcommittee, on Feb. 13, 2007.

For a copy of this testimony, go to the National Legislative Office website at: <http://www.bletde.org/legislation/testimony/>. •

House of Representatives passes rail security bill

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Rail and Public Transportation Security Act, H.R. 1401, on March 27. The legislation passed by a vote of 299-124.

The legislation gives the Department of Homeland Security \$7.3 billion over four years to assess risks, train workers and secure tunnels for roads and railways. The Senate earlier this month attached a similar \$4 billion measure to broader legislation aimed at carrying out the recommendations of the Sept. 11 Commission.

"The passage of this much-needed rail security legislation came after months of hard work and lobbying by the BLET's National Legislative office, the Teamsters' Government Affairs Department, and several other like-minded Rail Labor unions," said Don Hahs, BLET National President. "BLET members and their families played an important role as well, particularly with the election of a labor-friendly Congress in November."

President George W. Bush has threatened to veto the bill, specifically objecting to whistle-blower language it said would allow employees with grievances to reveal security-sensitive information.

"I hope that President Bush recognizes the necessity of greater security on our nation's railroads, and does not follow through on his threat to veto this legislation,"

President Hahs said. "To veto this bill for purely political reasons would be detrimental to both railroad workers and the general public."

The bill included many elements that the BLET wanted in a rail security bill, including worker training. Under the legislation, rail and public transportation systems would be directed to train employees on how to prevent, prepare for and respond to a terrorist attack.

"We applaud the inclusion of worker training in this legislation," said John Tolman, BLET Vice President and National Legislative Representative. "This bill includes recurrent training and periodic unannounced exercises for employees. The need for recurrent training for front-line railroad workers has long been a major theme for us, and we fully support conducting periodic unannounced exercises so that the sufficiency of security plans can be tested and in order for our members to better understand the goals and elements of their employers' security plans."

"We are happy that security awareness, preparedness, and response training for front-line railroad employees were included in the bill."

The House bill would require rail and public transit systems to submit vulnerability assessments and security

See Rail Security, Page 8

LAST RUNS & HONOR ROLLS

Roger Pearson retires from Div. 190

Brother Roger Pearson of BLET Division 190 (Huntington, W.Va.) made his last run on July 30, 2005, as a locomotive engineer on a road switcher in the Peach Creek (West Virginia) Coal Fields.

A U.S. Air Force veteran, Brother Pearson began his railroad career as a fireman on the C&O Railroad in Peach Creek on August 12, 1969. He joined the BLE on December 1, 1969, and earned promotion to locomotive engineer on May 19, 1975. During his time as a member of the Brotherhood, he served as Local Chairman of Division 190.

He served four years in the United States Air Force/SAC in the U.S. and Viet Nam.

Brother Pearson and his wife,



Debbie, have two sons, Derrick and Cory; one daughter, Nichol; and one grandchild. During his retirement, Brother Pearson plans to "lay back"

and spend time with his family. He also enjoys horseback riding.

The Pearsons live at: 62 Bills Branch, Logan, WVa. 25601. •

Evans heads south to enjoy retirement

Brother Paul F. Evans of BLET Division 421 (Buffalo, N.Y.) made his last run on CSX engine No. 7928 from Buffalo to Willard, Ohio on January 13, 2006.

Brother Evans began his railroad career as a mail handler on the New York Central in August 1964. He went into engine service on February 14, 1965 and earned promotion to locomotive engineer in 1976. He served in the U.S. army from 1966-1968 and joined the BLE on December 1, 1978.

Due to mergers and acquisitions over the years, Brother Evans worked for the New York Central, Penn Central, Conrail and finally CSX.

During his retirement, Brother Evans plans to spend his winters fishing in South Padre Island, Texas.



Brother Paul F. Evans, right, of BLET Division 421, with his conductor, Keith Schaefer, during Evans' last run on January 13, 2006.

"I'm glad to be leaving the current dark ages of Tony Ingram and CSX," Brother Evans said.

Brother Evans may be contacted by friends at: 7070 Derby Road., Derby, N.Y. 14047. •

Brother Pitcher retires from Amtrak after 32-year rail career

Brother James G. Pitcher made his last run on July 7, 2006 on Amtrak Train No. Six, operating from Grand Junction, Colo., to Denver.

Brother Pitcher began his railroad career as a laborer in the Water Service Department of Union Pacific Railroad in Salt Lake City, Utah, on April 11, 1974. Brother Pitcher transferred to the Bridge and Buildings department in 1975, and transferred into train service in 1977. He established an engineer promotion date on February 11, 1978. He subsequently accepted a position as a "prior right" passenger fireman with Amtrak on August 17, 1978. Brother Pitcher joined the BLET on March 1, 1978. He relocated to Denver in 1990.

Brother Pitcher lives in Grand Junction and plans to golf, fish and travel during his retirement.

"The entire Amtrak General Committee of Adjustment would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Brother Pitcher on his 32 plus years in the railroad industry," said Craig McDowell, BLET Vice General Chairman-Amtrak. "We wish Brother Pitcher a long and healthy retirement."

Friends may send congratulations to Brother Pitcher at: 2494 Interlochen Court, Grand Junction, Colo. 81505. •



Div. 365's Morton marks 41 years

Brother Joseph H. Morton of BLET Division 365 (Louisville, Ky.) celebrated 41 years of BLE/BLET membership on July 12.

Brother Morton began his railroad career in 1942 on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad as a steam fireman. He earned promotion to locomotive engineer in September 1947 and joined the BLE in 1965. He also served in the U.S. Marine Corps for two years in the Pacific. Brother Morton made his last run in August 1984 on a fast freight between Louisville and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Brother Morton and his wife Ruth were married in January 1940. They have two children, Margaret and Valerie, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brother Morton enjoys golf, cane making and writing. He has written a book, *Fast Freight to DeCoursey*, which was published by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Historical Society and also published several articles. He is a member of the Louisville Arts Club.

"I enjoyed my career immensely," Brother Morton said.

Friends may contact Brother Morton at: 2802 Del Rio Place, Louisville, Ky. 40220. •

Div. 781's Chitwood a member since '65

Brother H.M. Chitwood of BLET Division 781 (Erwin, Tenn.) celebrated 42 years of BLE/BLET membership on March 1, 2007. Brother Chitwood will also celebrate his 92nd birthday on April 26.

Following in the footsteps of his father, Brother Chitwood began his railroad career in 1942 as a fireman on the Clinchfield Railroad. He was promoted to the position of locomotive engineer in 1948 and joined the BLE on March 1, 1965. Both Brother Chitwood's son-in-law, R.L. Edwards, and his grandson, M.S. Edwards, are members of BLET Division 781.

Brother Chitwood made his last run on June 26, 1977 between Elkhorn, Ky., and Erwin, Tenn.

Brother Chitwood and his late wife Margaret had five children, Patsy, Gary, Marsha Kay, Harvey and Mary Elaine; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brother Chitwood enjoys bowling and small engine repair. He is a 32nd degree Mason and a Shriner York Rite and Scottish Rite.

Friends can send their birthday greetings and congratulations to Brother Chitwood at: 416 Union Street, Erwin, Tenn. 37650. •

Retiring? 40-year member?

Tell us about your retirement or your many years of membership. Write:
Editor, BLET Public Relations
1370 Ontario St., Mezzanine
Cleveland, OH 44113-1702

Burlington Northern Santa Fe



Burlington Northern Santa Fe reported record quarterly earnings of \$1.42 per diluted share, a 26-percent increase

over fourth-quarter 2005 earnings of \$1.13 per diluted share. Fourth-quarter 2006 freight revenues increased \$323 million, or 9 percent, to \$3.77 billion compared with \$3.45 billion in the prior year.

Revenue for the fourth quarter of 2006 included fuel surcharges of approximately \$450 million compared with approximately \$400 million for the fourth quarter of 2005. The increase in fuel surcharges was driven primarily by increased participation in BNSF's fuel surcharge program. For 2006, BNSF achieved operating revenues of nearly \$15 billion, a 15-percent increase over 2005, which includes double-digit increases in each of the Company's four business groups. This increase in revenues and the improvement in the Company's operating ratio enabled BNSF to reach \$3.5 billion in operating income, an increase of 20 percent over 2005. As a result, BNSF achieved \$5.10 earnings per diluted share for 2006 compared with \$4.01 for 2005.

BNSF's operating ratio for the fourth quarter was 75.0 percent. •

Canadian National Railway



CN reported net income for the fourth quarter of 2006 was C\$499 million, or C\$0.95 per diluted share, including a deferred income tax recovery of C\$27 million (C\$0.05 per diluted share) attributable to the resolution of matters relating

to prior years' income taxes. Excluding the deferred income tax recovery, adjusted quarterly net income was C\$472 million, or C\$0.90 per diluted share. Net income for the year increased 34 percent to C\$2,087 million, with diluted earnings per share rising 41 percent to C\$3.91.

Included in the 2006 results was a deferred income tax recovery of C\$277 million (C\$0.51 per diluted share), resulting from the enactment of lower federal and provincial corporate tax rates in Canada, and the resolution of matters pertaining to prior years' income taxes.

CN's operating ratio for the quarter was 61.1 percent, an improvement of seven-tenths of a point. For the full year 2006, CN's operating ratio improved by 3.1 points to an industry-leading 60.7 percent. •

Canadian Pacific Railway



**CANADIAN
PACIFIC
RAILWAY**

Canadian Pacific announced its fourth-quarter and full year 2006 results. For the full year, net income for 2006 was \$796 million, which included a tax benefit of \$176 million as a result of a decrease in Canadian

federal and provincial income tax rates. This was an increase in net income of 47 percent over 2005. Diluted earnings per share were \$5.02 for the full year 2006, an increase of 48 percent over 2005. Net income for the fourth-quarter was \$146 million, an increase of 6 percent.

The railway's highlights included the following:

- Diluted earnings per share was \$3.95, an increase of 20 percent;
- Operating income was \$ 1.129 billion, a full year record, and an increase of 13 percent;
- Operating ratio was 75.4 percent, which was an improvement of 180 basis points; and
- Revenue grew 4 percent to \$4.583 billion, with operating expenses increasing by only 2 percent. •

CSX Corporation



CSX Corporation reported fourth quarter 2006 earnings of \$347 million, or 75 cents per share. Earnings in the quarter included an 18 cent per-share benefit from: Hurricane Katrina insurance recoveries, a gain on Conrail property included in other income, and the resolution of certain tax matters.

Excluding these items, earnings were 57 cents per share, up 10 percent from the same quarter of 2005. For the full-year, CSX reported earnings per share from continuing operations of \$2.82, including the insurance recoveries, the gain on Conrail property and income tax benefits. On a comparable basis, full-year earnings per share were \$2.22, a 31% improvement over prior year's comparable results.

The Company's Surface Transportation businesses posted record fourth quarter revenues of \$2.4 billion, an 8 percent increase from the fourth quarter of 2005. The increase was driven by strength in pricing, a growing agricultural market, export demand for coal and continued growth in imports that offset softness in the housing and automotive sectors. Yields increased over 8 percent, with improvements across nearly all markets. •

Kansas City Southern



Led by price increases and volume growth of 3.5%, Kansas City Southern recorded fourth quarter 2006 revenues of \$442.4 million, a 14.0 % increase over fourth quarter 2005.

For the year, KCS recorded total revenues of \$1.7 billion, 9% greater than the previous year. Fourth quarter operating expenses were \$354.2 million, an increase of only 4.1% over last year.

Increased depreciation, compensation and benefits, and equipment expenses were partially offset by quarter-over-quarter decreases in purchased services and other. Fuel costs were \$1.5 million higher in fourth quarter of 2006 over last year. For the full-year 2006, operating expenses of \$1.4 billion decreased by 0.8% excluding non-recurring adjustments to expenses in 2005. Operating income for the fourth quarter of 2006 was a record \$88.2 million compared with \$47.7 million last year, an 84.9% improvement.

The fourth quarter 2006 operating ratio was 80.1 %, a 7.6 point reduction from fourth quarter 2005. For full-year 2006, the operating ratio was 81.7 % compared to 88.3 % the preceding year excluding non-recurring adjustments to expenses in 2005. •

Norfolk Southern



Norfolk Southern reported record fourth-quarter 2006 net income of

\$385 million, an increase of 6 percent compared with \$362 million for fourth-quarter 2005. Earnings per diluted share were a record \$0.95, up 9 percent compared with the \$0.87 per diluted share earned in the fourth quarter of 2005.

Net income for 2006 was a record \$1.5 billion, or \$3.57 per diluted share, an increase of 16 percent compared with net income of \$1.3 billion, or \$3.11 per diluted share, for 2005.

Railway operating revenues set a fourth-quarter record, reaching \$2.3 billion, a 3 percent increase over the same period a year earlier. For 2006, railway operating revenues of \$9.4 billion were the highest of any year in Norfolk Southern's history, improving 10 percent compared with 2005 results.

The fourth-quarter operating ratio improved to 73.5 percent, compared with 73.7 percent for the same period of 2005. For the year, the operating ratio improved 2.4 percentage points to 72.8 percent. •

Union Pacific Corp.



Union Pacific Corporation reported 2006 fourth quarter net income of \$485 million, or \$1.78 per diluted share, compared to \$296 million, or \$1.10 per diluted share in the fourth quarter of 2005.

In the fourth quarter of 2006, UP reported operating income of \$810 million compared to \$533 million in fourth quarter 2005, a 52 percent improvement.

The railroad's operating ratio improved to 79.6 percent versus 85.3 percent in 2005.

The Company's commodity revenue grew nine percent to a fourth quarter best \$3.8 billion, with five of the six business groups posting increases for the quarter. The main component of the growth was an eight percent increase in average revenue per car (ARC). Growth in ARC resulted from yield improvements and the Company's fuel surcharge programs.

The Company's fuel consumption rate, as measured by gallons per thousand gross ton-miles, was a fourth quarter best rate of 1.27 versus 1.30 in the fourth quarter 2005.

The Railroad's average quarterly fuel price including transportation and taxes was \$1.94 compared to \$2.08 per gallon in 2005.

Quarterly average train speed, as reported to the Association of American Railroads, was 22 mph, up 1.5 mph from the fourth quarter of 2005. Quarterly terminal dwell time improved 13 percent to 25.9 hours versus 29.8 hours reported in the fourth quarter of 2005.

For the full year 2006, UP' operating ratio improved 5.3 points to 81.5 percent versus 86.8 percent in 2005.

Full year 2006 net income was \$1.6 billion or \$5.91 per diluted share, versus \$1.0 billion, or \$3.85 per diluted share reported in 2005. The 2005 full year results included a non-cash income tax expense reduction of \$118 million after-tax, or \$.44 per diluted share. The comparison of 2006 and 2005 earnings, excluding the tax item, would be \$5.91 per diluted share versus \$3.41 per diluted share, a 73 percent increase. •

Railroad Retirement and age reductions

Railroad retirement benefits are subject to reduction if an employee with less than 30 years of service retires before attaining full retirement age. While employees with less than 30 years of service may still retire at age 62, the age at which full retirement benefits are payable has been gradually increasing since the year 2000, the same as social security.

The following questions and answers explain how these early retirement age reductions are applied to railroad retirement annuities.

1. What is the full retirement age for employees with less than 30 years of service and is it the same for all employees?

Full retirement age, the earliest age at which a person can begin receiving railroad retirement or social security benefits without any reduction for early retirement, ranges from age 65 for those born before 1938 to age 67 for those born in 1960 or later, the same as for social security.

2. How are the changes in the maximum age reduction being phased in?

Since 2000, the age requirements for some unreduced railroad retirement benefits have been rising just like the social security requirements. For employees with less than 30 years of service and their spouses, full retirement age increases from 65 to 66, and from 66 to 67, at the rate of two months per year over two separate six-year periods. This also affects how reduced benefits are computed for early retirement.

The gradual increase in full retirement age from age 65 to age 66 affects those people who were born in the years 1938 through 1942. The full retirement age will remain age 66 for people born in the years 1943 through 1954. The gradual increase in full retirement age from age 66 to age 67 affects those who were born in the years 1955 through 1959. For people who

were born in 1960 or later the full retirement age will be age 67.

3. How does this affect the early retirement age reductions applied to the annuities of those who retire before full retirement age?

The early retirement annuity reductions applied to annuities awarded before full retirement age are increasing. For employees retiring between age 62 and full retirement age with less than 30 years of service, the maximum reduction will be 30 percent by the year 2022. Prior to 2000, the maximum reduction was 20 percent.

Age reductions are applied separately to the tier I and tier II components of an annuity. The tier I reduction is 1/180 for each of the first 36 months the employee is under full retirement age when his or her annuity begins and 1/240 for each additional month. This will result in a gradual increase in the reduction at age 62 to 30 percent for an employee once the age 67 retirement age is in effect.

These same reductions apply to the tier II component of the annuity. However, if an employee had any creditable railroad service before August 12, 1983, the retirement age for tier II purposes will remain 65, and the tier II benefit will not be reduced beyond 20 percent.

Chart A shows how the gradual increase in full retirement age will affect employees.

4. What are some examples of how this will affect the amounts payable to employees retiring before full retirement age with less than 30 years of service?

Take the example of an employee born on June 2, 1950, who retires in 2012 at the age of 62. In terms of today's dollars and current benefit levels, not counting future increases in creditable earnings, assume this employee is eligible for monthly tier I and tier II benefits, before age reductions, of \$1,200 and \$800, respectively, for a total monthly benefit of \$2,000.

Upon retirement at age 62, the employee's tier I benefit would be reduced by 25 percent, the maximum age reduction applicable in 2012. This would yield a tier I monthly benefit of \$900; the employee's tier II benefit would also be reduced by 25 percent, providing a tier II amount of \$600 and a total monthly rate of \$1,500. However, if the employee had any rail service before August 12, 1983, the tier II benefit would be subject to a maximum reduction of only 20 percent, providing a tier II amount of \$640, and a total monthly rate of \$1,540.

As a second example, take an employee born on June 2, 1960, and also eligible for monthly tier I and tier II benefits, before age reductions, of \$1,200 and \$800, respectively, for a total monthly benefit of \$2,000. This employee retires in 2022 at age 62 with no service before August 12, 1983. Consequently, a 30 percent reduction is applied to both the tier I and tier II benefits and the net total annuity would be \$1,400.

5. How are railroad retirement spouse benefits affected by this change?

If an employee retiring with less than 30 years of service is age 62, the employee's spouse is also eligible for an annuity the first full month the spouse is age 62. Early retirement reductions are applied to the spouse annuity if the spouse retires prior to full retirement age. Beginning in the year 2000, full retirement age for a spouse gradually began to rise to age 67, just as for an employee, depending on the year of birth. While reduced spouse benefits are still payable at age 62, the maximum reduction will be 35 percent by the year 2022. However, if an employee had any creditable rail service prior to August 12, 1983, the increased age reduction is applied only to the spouse's tier I benefit. The maximum reduction in tier II, in this case, would only be 25 percent, as under prior law.

Take for an example the spouse of

a railroader with less than 30 years of service, none of it prior to August 12, 1983, retiring in 2022 at age 62, with a spouse annuity, in terms of today's dollars and current benefit payments and before any reductions for age, of \$1,000 a month. With the maximum reduction of 35 percent applicable in 2022, her net monthly benefit would be \$650, while if a similar spouse were retiring in 2007 at age 62 with the maximum age reduction of 30 percent, her net monthly benefit would be \$700.

Chart B shows how this will affect the spouses of railroad employees if the employee retires with less than 30 years of service.

6. What age reductions are applied to employees who retired with 30 years of service prior to 2002?

Employees with 30 or more years of creditable service are eligible for full age and service annuities the first full month they are age 60, if their annuities begin January 1, 2002, or later. The spouses of such employees are likewise eligible for full annuities, which can also begin with the first full month the spouse is age 60. Also, if a disability annuitant is age 60 and has 30 years of service, his or her spouse can receive an annuity at age 60 without any age reduction if the spouse's annuity beginning date is January 1, 2002, or later.

However, early retirement reductions are applied to the tier I portion of an employee's annuity if the employee first became eligible for a 60/30 annuity July 1, 1984, or later and retired at ages 60 or 61 before 2002. The tier I benefit awarded such an employee's spouse will also be reduced for early retirement regardless of the date the spouse's annuity begins, unless the spouse is already of full retirement age.

7. Are age reductions applied to employee disability annuities?

Employee annuities based on disability are not subject to age reductions

See Retirement Board, Page 5

Chart A: Employee Retires with Less than 30 Years of Service

Year of Birth*	Full Retirement Age**	Annuity Reduction at Age 62
1937 or earlier	65	20.00%
1938	65 and 2 months	20.833%
1939	65 and 4 months	21.667%
1940	65 and 6 months	22.50%
1941	65 and 8 months	23.333%
1942	65 and 10 months	24.167%
1943 through 1954	66	25.00%
1955	66 and 2 months	25.833%
1956	66 and 4 months	26.667%
1957	66 and 6 months	27.50%
1958	66 and 8 months	28.333%
1959	66 and 10 months	29.167%
1960 or later	67	30.00%

* A person attains a given age the day before his or her birthday. Consequently, someone born on January 1 is considered to have attained his or her given age on December 31 of the previous year.

**If an employee has less than 10 years of railroad service and is already entitled to an age-reduced social security benefit, the tier I reduction is based on the reduction applicable on the beginning date of the social security benefit, even if the employee is already of full retirement age on the beginning date of the railroad retirement annuity.

Chart B: Spouse Age Reductions

Year of Birth*	Full Retirement Age**	Annuity Reduction at Age 62
1937 or earlier	65	25.00%
1938	65 and 2 months	25.833%
1939	65 and 4 months	26.667%
1940	65 and 6 months	27.50%
1941	65 and 8 months	28.333%
1942	65 and 10 months	29.167%
1943 through 1954	66	30.00%
1955	66 and 2 months	30.833%
1956	66 and 4 months	31.667%
1957	66 and 6 months	32.50%
1958	66 and 8 months	33.333%
1959	66 and 10 months	34.167%
1960 or later	67	35.00%

* A person attains a given age the day before his or her birthday. Consequently, someone born on January 1 is considered to have attained his or her given age on December 31 of the previous year.

**If the employee has less than 10 years of railroad service and the spouse is already entitled to an age-reduced social security benefit, the age reduction in her or his tier I will be based on the age reduction applicable on the beginning date of the spouse's social security benefit, even if the spouse is already of full retirement age on the beginning date of her or his railroad retirement annuity.

BLET Auxiliary Update

Marriage and working on the railroad

Definitely not a match made in heaven

By Becky Schneider
National President
BLET Auxiliary

On a typical day, you are trying to decide what to make for dinner — that is, if your spouse is lucky enough to be home. He checks the lineup and tells you it doesn't look like he'll go to work until 8 a.m. tomorrow at the earliest. Wow, an evening together, they seem to be so rare these days! You had thawed a roast, his favorite, just in case he was going to be home. Since you didn't have to have it ready early, you chose to wait until it would be ready for a normal dinner, and got busy doing other things.

Five minutes after you put it the oven, the phone rings and it's the railroad with your husband's call. What!?! You have an exchange, and it turns out that the lineup was wrong — again. So you scramble around, help him get ready to go, and find something else for him to eat before he leaves. Such is the life of a railroad wife!

For many of us, we knew what we were getting into

when we married a railroader. We learned while dating that schedules on the railroad were nonexistent because of all the broken dates and holidays we spent without our significant other. For others, railroad employment came after the vows, and life was a whole new world. Some were able to adapt, but unfortunately, some were not—part of the reason for the higher than average divorce rate among railroaders. If you recognize the scenario above, let me assure you, you are not alone.

In listening to spouses from all over the country, life with a railroader is trying at best, and it only appears to be getting worse. In the twenty-odd years I have been with my husband, Larry, it appears that incorrect lineup information, manpower shortages, hours spent waiting to be relieved after the hours of service expired, and harassment and intimidation of the "troops" have increased sharply during the last few years. The Carriers are reverting back to their robber baron ways of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Stock-

holder dividends, outrageous executive salaries, and the bottom line are more important than the lives of their employees. While the pay may be better than it was back then—starvation wages that led up to the Great Labor Uprising of 1877—railroad employees are still treated like property instead of being valued as the very reason that the railroads are able to make their record profits, in spite of themselves.

While we cannot change the fact that railroads are 24/7 operations, we can do something to put the pressure on the carriers to change their evil ways when it comes to factors that contribute to fatigue, and time away from home. One prominent contributor when it comes to fatigue is the issue of "limbo time." In 1996, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the time spent waiting for and transporting to the place of final release is considered neither on duty time, nor off duty time. In the last three years, more often than not, crews are on duty an average of 15 hours or more every time they go to work. The Carriers

abuse limbo time because there is no penalty for leaving crews to languish on the train. The only penalty to them is not getting trains over the road, which would seem to me like a good reason to get those crews relieved and rested. Of course, if the train is not going anywhere anyway, then there is certainly no incentive.

"Limbo time" delays the start of the rest time, thereby increasing the time railroaders are away from their families, for no good reason. As far as fatigue factors go, this should be a pretty easy fix. Since the Supreme Court's precedent is in place, the only way to fix it is to ask Congress to include provisions to do away with limbo time altogether. Rail safety legislation will soon be introduced, again making this the 5th legislative attempt since 1997 to do something about fatigue.

All of our members are encouraged to speak with their Congressional Representatives or the aid who handles transportation issues, asking them to ensure that a provision is included in any and all rail safety legislation introduced to do away with limbo time. If you can add personal "horror" stories, please do so, because the

more personal this issue is, the better idea your elected representative has as to what it means to the constituent railroad worker, their families, and the public at large.

There are so many issues that contribute to fatigue, including the terrible lineup information provided by the railroads, and we will continue to address those. For now, we are being given the chance to address limbo time and should take advantage of this opportunity. The fact that fatigue has been on the National Transportation Safety Board's "most wanted" list since 1990 should give you an idea of how long this fight has been going on. Let us concentrate on "limbo time" and as each factor is handled, we can go after the other ones until we finally see some relief for railroaders. For more information about the various issues and factors contributing to fatigue, or to read the testimony by the BLET representatives before Congress, please visit our website at www.bletauxiliary.net.

Contact your Representatives and Senators and let them know we need to eliminate limbo time and right the wrong by the Supreme Court over a decade ago! •

Reaching 30 years of service is key for full pensions under Railroad Retirement

Retirement Board

Continued from Page 4

except for employees with less than 10 years of service, but who have 5 years of service after 1995. Such employees may qualify for a tier I benefit before retirement age based on total and permanent disability, but only if they have a disability insured status (also called a "disability freeze") under Social Security Act rules, counting both railroad retirement and social security-covered earnings. Unlike with a 10-year employee, a tier II benefit is not payable in these disability cases until the employee attains age 62. And, the employee's tier II benefit will be reduced for early retirement in the same manner as the tier II benefit of an employee who retired at age 62 with less than 30 years of service.

8. Do these changes also affect survivor benefits?

Yes. The eligibility age for a full widow(er)'s annuity is also gradually rising from age 65 for those born before 1940

to age 67 for those born in 1962 or later. A widow(er), surviving divorced spouse or remarried widow(er) whose annuity begins at full retirement age or later will generally receive an annuity unreduced for early retirement. However, if the deceased employee received an annuity that was reduced for early retirement, a reduction would be applied to the tier I amount payable to the widow(er), surviving divorced spouse or remarried widow(er). The maximum age reductions will range from 17.1 percent to 20.36 percent, depending on the widow(er)'s date of birth. For a surviving divorced spouse or remarried widow(er), the maximum age reduction is 28.5 percent. For a disabled widow(er), disabled surviving divorced spouse or disabled remarried widow(er), the maximum reduction is also 28.5 percent, even if the annuity begins at age 50.

9. Do these increases in full retirement age also apply to the earnings limitations and work deductions governing benefit payments

to annuitants who work after retirement?

Like social security benefits, railroad retirement tier I and vested dual benefits paid to employees and spouses, and tier I, tier II, and vested dual benefits paid to survivors are subject to deductions if an annuitant's earnings exceed certain exempt amounts. These earnings limitations and work deductions apply to all age and service annuitants and spouses under full retirement age regardless of the employee's years of service. Although employees retiring after 2001 at age 60 with 30 years of service have no age reduction, these earnings limitations and work deductions still apply until they reach their full retirement age. These earnings limitations also apply to survivor annuitants, with the exception of disabled widow(er)s under age 60 and disabled children.

Likewise, while special earnings restrictions apply to employees entitled to disability annuities, these disability earnings restrictions cease upon a disabled employee

annuitant's attainment of full retirement age. This transition is effective no earlier than full retirement age even if the annuitant had 30 years of railroad service. The additional

deductions applied to the annuities of retired employees and spouses who work for their last pre-retirement non-railroad employer continue to apply after the attainment of full retirement age. •

Locomotive Engineers & Conductors Mutual Protective Association

535 Griswold • Suite 1210 • Detroit, MI 48226-3689

(800) 514-0010 • (313) 962-1512

FAX: (877) 633-1910 • E-MAIL: lecempa1910@lecempa.org •

WEB: www.lecempa.org



Job Protection Headquarters for Transportation Employees
Since 1910

BLET NEWS

Walt Disney World to host 80th annual SMA

Registration is now underway for the 80th annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA) convention at the Coronado Springs Resort at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla., from June 10-15.

Co-hosted by Earl D. Karper Sr. of Division 35 and Michael L. Tanner of Division 769, the 2007 SMA promises to be an exciting, relaxing and fun event for the entire family. The Co-Chairmen and members of the SMA arrangements committee have been hard at work putting together events such as a Polynesian luau, a tour of the Walt Disney Railroad steam trains at the Magic Kingdom, a golf tournament on a PGA graded course, a motorcycle ride and many other exciting possibilities. In addition, families will be able to look for adventure not only at Walt Disney World, but throughout the greater Orlando area as well.

Members can register and pay online through the SMA's all-inclusive website, <http://www.2007sma.com>.

The website also includes many links and information to assist mem-

bers in putting together their SMA convention vacation, including a virtual tour of the resort and an overview of the property.

Also this year, the SMA is offering a "register early for less" option that will not only save members money, but will help the SMA arrangements committee get a better head count in advance.

The SMA's reduced room rates are \$129 per night (for rooms that are normally upwards of \$179 weekdays to \$199 weekends). Please call (407) 939-1020 to make hotel reservations — an when making reservations, it is extremely important to make sure you announce that you are part of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen's SMA group in order to get the discounted room rates.

Convention rates will be available for five days before and five days after the actual convention period (which includes Father's Day weekend) to allow members and their families extra time to enjoy the parks and other Orlando attractions.

Many, many other amenities are available to BLET members who attend the SMA, including discounted tickets to the parks, extra time in the parks, meal discounts, and complimentary transportation and baggage handling from the airport.

"Brother Tanner and I look forward to seeing you and your family here in Orlando," Brother Karper said.

Tentative Agenda 2007 SMA

June 10, Sunday
Noon to 9 p.m.: Registration
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.: Hospitality

June 11, Monday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Registration continues
9 a.m. to 10 a.m.: Opening ceremonies
10 a.m. to Noon: BLET-GIA open meeting
12:15 p.m. to 2 p.m.: SMA closed meeting #1
2:00 p.m. to TBD: General Chairmen's meetings (as desired)

June 12, Tuesday
9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.: SMA closed meeting #2
10:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: Morning training opportunities/workshops
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Afternoon training opportunities/workshops

June 13, Wednesday
"Free" Day
Golf tournament
Motorcycle ride (Rentals available — information provided upon request)
Behind-the-scene Steam Train tour

Possible additional special dinner

June 14, Thursday
9 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.: SMA closed meeting #3
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: DLC Displays
5:30 p.m. to ? : Awards, banquet, and entertainment

June 15, Friday
Breakfast & Good-byes
Check-out by 11:00 a.m.

Support the BLET PAC!


Money from the BLET-PAC is used to help in the fight on Capitol Hill for issues that impact your job, your family and your future!

Big Railroads are pushing their agenda harder than ever. That means we have to fight back stronger than ever. Unions cannot just react when important issues arise. We must get in the game early and help set the agenda. BLET-PAC helps elect and retain elected officials who share our concerns.

In the last election, the contributions of BLET members helped to elect legislators on all levels that are sympathetic to the issues that are important to us. We need help again if we are going to make a difference in 2008.

Laws prohibit the use of union dues for political purposes. Your voluntary BLET-PAC contribution fills this gap and enables us to help those who share our interests on the state and national level.


Please join BLET PAC and encourage others to do so. For more information, contact the BLET National Legislative Office at (202) 624-8776.



SMA 2007 Registration Form

80th annual Southeastern Meeting Association

Walt Disney World, Orlando, Fla. • June 10-15, 2007



HOTEL RESERVATIONS
Call the Coronado Springs Resort at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla., at (407) 939-1020. Be sure to announce you are with the BLET's SMA to get discounted room rate of \$129 per night.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION
Regular registration (prior to April 30, 2007) is \$79 per person. There is an additional \$20 charge for SMA dues, which all BLET members must pay in addition to the \$79 registration fee. Members can also register online at the SMA website: <http://www.2007sma.com>

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Division: _____ BLET Officer/Title: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Spouse's Name: _____ BLET Auxiliary Title & Auxiliary No.: _____

If you are interested in any of the following activities, please indicate the number attending so we know how many plan to participate (additional fee may apply):

1. _____ Golf Tournament (June 13)	3. _____ Magic Kingdom Railroad "Behind the scenes" tour (June 13)
2. _____ Motorcycle ride (June 13)	4. _____ Banquet (June 14, no additional fee)

Please indicate which of the following workshops you would like to attend:

1. _____ Local Chairman Workshop (June 12)	4. _____ Division President class (June 12)
2. _____ Secretary-Treasurer Workshop (June 12)	5. _____ Operation Redblock class (June 12)
3. _____ Legislative Representative Workshop (June 12)	

REGISTRATION FEES

- Regular Registration fee (prior April 30, 2007): \$75.00 (All attendees 13 or older must pay the activity fee)
- SMA Dues: \$20.00 (All BLET members must pay SMA dues)
- Golf Tournament: \$60.00 per person • Motorcycle ride: \$20.00
- Magic Kingdom Railroad Tour: \$50.00

Please mail this form, along with check or money order payable to "2007 SMA" to:

2007 SMA
P. O. Box 741
Okahumpka, FL, 34762

For more details: Contact Brother Karper at: (407) 322-3006 (home); or email: <earl.karper@2007sma.com>.

Tacoma, Wash., to host 67th annual IWC

David Beech and the members of BLET Division 238 in Tacoma, Wash., are proud to host the 67th annual International Western Convention from May 20-24, 2007.

"We have many exciting attractions planned for this event," said Brother Beech, who is Local Chairman of Division 238.

Scheduled events for the 2007 IWC include a dinner cruise on Commencement Bay, the Spirit of Washington Dinner Train with a tour of the Columbia Winery in Woodinville, Wash., and a family tour of Tacoma with stops at the Washington State History Museum, Tacoma Art Museum, and the Point Defiance Zoo.

But as everyone knows, education and training represents a large portion of any BLET regional meeting. The 2007 IWC is no exception, offering classes for local chairmen, secretary-treasurers, division presidents, legislative representatives, and more.

Instead of the usual BLET-only golf tournament, the 2007 IWC will offer the Tacoma Union Solidarity Golf Tournament on Sunday, May 20, 2007.

The IWC is inviting members and officers from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), United Transportation Union (UTU), the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), the Transportation Communications Union (TCU), the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS), and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT).

"We have also invited General President James P. Hoffa, UTU President Paul Thompson, and our own President Don Hahs," Beech said.

In a show of union solidarity, this golf tournament is being assembled by members of BLET Local Divisions 238, 892, 518 and UTU Locals 556 and 324.

"We are anticipating a large turn-

out this year and recommend that you register as soon as possible for any activities and classes that you would like to attend," Brother Beech said.

The IWC planners have secured a special group rate for the 2007 convention at the Sheraton Tacoma Hotel. Members can register on-line at: <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=0703090050&key=46889>

For members flying into Tacoma, the closest airport is the Seattle/Tacoma International Airport. The airport code is SEA. The Sheraton Tacoma Hotel uses Capitol Aeroporter for shuttle service to and from the airport. Members can view their schedule and pricing at <http://www.capair.com>.

Brother Beech and his committee have gone to great lengths to make the 2007 IWC an event to remember. Anyone with questions about registration should e-mail Brother Beech at: localchairman@blet238.org.

Tentative Agenda — 2007 IWC

Sunday May 20

- Noon to 5 p.m.: Union Solidarity Golf Tournament, with members of the IBT, BLET, BMWE, UTU, TCU, and ILWU at Allenmore Golf Course in Tacoma, Wash.
- Noon to 6 p.m.: Registration in the Bicentennial Pavilion, Sheraton Tacoma Hotel.
- 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.: DLC sponsored welcome reception, Room A.

Monday, May 21

- 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: Opening ceremonies in Rooms A,G, and D of the Bicentennial Pavilion.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch in Rooms A,G, and D of the Bicentennial Pavilion
- 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: BLET closed meeting, Room C.
- 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: GIA open meeting, 2nd Floor Boardroom.
- 6 p.m. to Midnight: Commencement Bay Dinner Cruise, limited to the first 150 who register. Formal attire. More details at: <http://www.waterwayscruises.com>

Tuesday, May 22

- 9 a.m. to noon, 1:30 to 4 p.m.: Local Chairmen workshop, Room C.
- 9 a.m. to noon, 1:30 to 4 p.m.: Secretary-Treasurer workshop, Room E.
- 9 a.m. to noon: Division Legislative Representative workshop, Room F.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch, Room D
- 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.: Presidents - Bylaws, Constitution and Change to Win workshop, Room F.
- There will be a tour of Tacoma open to all family members during today's classroom schedule with stops at the Washington State History Museum, the Tacoma Art Museum, Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium and lunch will be served at Anthony's Homeport at Point Defiance.
- 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.: Spirit of Washington Dinner Train with a tour of the Columbia Winery. Train leaves depot at 6:30 p.m. and entire train excursion is approximately three hours and 15 minutes. For details and menu, visit the dinner train's website: <http://www.spiritofwashingtondinnertrain.com>

Wednesday, May 23

- 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.: Breakfast
- 9 a.m. to noon: Arbitration Data Base Access, Room C.
- 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Advanced Local Chairman workshop, Room C.
- 9 a.m. to noon: Homeland Security and Radiation Safety workshop, Room F.
- 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.: Radiation Safety and Haz-Mat workshop, Room F.
- 9 a.m. to noon: Division LR/Political Activism/Union Solidarity workshop, Room E.
- 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.: Railroad Retirement Board, Room E.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch, Room D.
- 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.: BLET closed finance/IWC meeting, 2nd Floor Boardroom.
- 6 p.m. to Midnight: Closing ceremonies and banquet/dinner, Rooms A&B.

Thursday, May 24

The IWC has a few extra day trips planned that can be taken if there are enough participants. Please contact David Beech at 253-471-2969 to make reservations at your earliest convenience.

- Mt. St. Helens Observatory — Trip consists of scenic transportation to Mt. Saint Helens with a light hike to the observation point and a picnic style lunch. Cost will be approximately \$80 to \$100 based on participation. From 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Pike Place Market in Seattle — This trip could be arranged with stops at Seattle Center and possibly an underground tour if there is enough interest. Cost will be approximately \$70 to \$90 based on participation. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Puget Sound Salmon Charters can take from 4 to 6 people per boat on a seven hour fishing trip for about \$100 per person. Fishing licenses are available on the boat for an additional \$7.00 per person. (Unfortunately, salmon season is closed, but cod, sole and flounder fishing is available.)



IWC 2007 Registration Form

67th Annual International Western Convention

Tacoma, Wash. • May 20-24, 2007

Hosted by BLET Division 238 with support from Divisions 518, 892 and 104



HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Reservations for the Sheraton Tacoma (1320 Broadway Plaza, Tacoma, Wash. 98402) can be made by calling (888) 627-7044. The discounted room rate is \$119 per night if registered by May 4. Regular room rates will apply if registering after May 4. Register online at: <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=0703090050&key=46889>

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Early registration postmarked by May 4 or before will be \$75 and should be sent to the address listed at the bottom of this page. Late registration will be \$100 and late registries should determine availability of classes and any excursion by calling (253) 471-2969 prior to signing up.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Division: _____ BLET/TCRC Title: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

I plan to attend the following workshops:

_____ Local Chairman/Arbitration _____ Secretary-Treasurer _____ Legislative Rep./Political Action
 _____ President/Bylaws/Change To Win _____ Homeland Security/Haz-Mat (Also open to families)

Calculation of fees:

					Total
Early registration (U.S. Funds):	.....\$75.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Early registration fee (Canadian Funds):	.....\$85.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Golf Tournament (U.S. Funds):	.....\$75.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Golf Tournament (Canadian Funds):	.....\$85.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Spouses Tour of Tacoma (U.S. Funds):	.....\$15.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Spouses Tour of Tacoma (Canadian Funds):	.....\$20.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Commencement Bay Dinner Cruise (U.S. Funds):	.....\$45.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Commencement Bay Dinner Cruise (Canadian Funds):	.....\$55.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Spirit of Washington Dinner Train (U.S. Funds):	.....\$45.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Spirit of Washington Dinner Train: (Canadian Funds):	.....\$55.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Banquet dinner/closing ceremony (U.S. Funds):	.....\$25.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____
Banquet dinner/closing ceremony: (Canadian Funds)	.....\$35.00/person	X	No. of People	= \$	_____

Total Amount Enclosed (specify U.S. or Canadian Funds): _____ \$

Please mail this form, along with check or money order payable to "Marc J. Robertson," to:
 Marc J. Robertson, IWC 2007 Secretary-Treasurer, P.O. Box 8385, Tacoma, WA 98419-8385

For additional information: Contact IWC Chairman David Beech at: localchairman@blet238.org
 or call (253) 471-2969

BLET NEWS

A message from Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa

Securing a better contract

RLBC negotiates improved agreement between BLET and freight rail carriers

In the upcoming weeks many BLET members will have the opportunity to vote on the tentative agreement recently reached between the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition and the carriers. With over 20,000 members affected by a new agreement, this decision is an important one. And I have every confidence that Don Hahs, Bill Walpert, Ed Rodziewicz and all other officers who were part of the negotiations did a thorough job of negotiating a worthwhile agreement.

It is my understanding that the proposed agreement, which covers many employees of Burlington Northern Santa Fe, CSX, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, is largely improved over the old contract. Of central importance was winning out over the carriers' demands and having the withdrawal of all work rules as part of this new agreement. The carriers, certainly used to having the backing of a Republican Congress, initially proposed more consolidation of staffing along with other anti-union work rules. I am proud to say that your negotiators did a fine job of holding the employers' feet to the fire and winning.

Having much of rail labor united in the bargaining under the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition (RLBC) gave us some power that had been lacking in previous years. And, I believe that having your inclusion in the Teamsters Rail Conference also made a positive difference.

As we continue to organize rail em-



ployees currently in non-union properties, we will be able to proudly show them the benefits attained in this new contract. I encourage all of you who are eligible to vote on the RLBC/NCCC agreement to vote in favor of it.

This tentative agreement is the work of many months, weeks and hours by dedicated union officers, negotiators and staff. We were proud to support your negotiating team and we will continue to support all of you in the years to come.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
General President

House OKs railroad security bill

Rail Security

Continued from Page 1

plans to the Homeland Security Department, which would assign each carrier to a risk-based tier.

It approves grants of \$2.5 billion over four years for rail security and \$3.6 billion for public transportation, with the grants to be given out based

on priorities established by the department.

The department is also told to issue an information-sharing plan to strengthen intelligence updates provided to federal, state and local agencies and other stakeholders.

The legislation has been sent to the Senate and was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. •

APRIL 2007 CALENDAR & EVENTS

MAY 11... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Little Rock, Ark.

At the Hilton Little Rock Metro Center, Banquet Room Hilton AD, 3rd floor, 925 S. University Ave. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

MAY 11... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Independence, Ohio

At the Holiday Inn-Independence, 6001 Rockside Road (I-77 and Rockside). Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

MAY 20-24... 67th International Western Convention, Tacoma, Wash.

Hosted by David Beech and the members of Division 238. Details and convention registration information inside this issue on Page 7, or register online at www.ble-t.org today.

JUNE 10-15... 80th Annual Southeastern Meeting Association, Orlando, Fla.

Hosted by Brothers Mike Tanner and Earl Karper Sr., the 80th annual SMA will be held at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Details and convention registration information inside this issue on Page 6, or register online today. www.2007sma.com.

AUGUST 20-23... 69th Annual Eastern Union Meeting Association, Traverse City, Mich.

Hosted by Don Zatteau and the members of Division 286, the 69th annual EUMA will be held at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme, Mich. More details to come!

OCTOBER 7-11... 72nd Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Shreveport, La.

Hosted by Bud Pickett and the members of BLET Division 599, the 72nd annual SWCM will be held at Sam's Town in Shreveport, La. More details to come!

Advisory Board March Activity

In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

National President Don M. Hahs—National Division office: General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Designated legal counsel annual mtg., Phoenix, Ariz.; Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition (RLBC) conference call, Cleveland; National handling mtgs.; Outstanding issues relating to tentative national contract; Kansas City; LM-30 mtgs., Cleveland.
First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodziewicz—Assisted President in general operation of National Division Office; Vice President assignments; Organizing department; Shortline department; Passenger department; Various correspondence & phone calls; President-IBT Rail Conference; DLC mtg., Testimony-full committee on Rail and Public Transportation Security Act of 2007; IBT General Executive Board mtgs.; National handling mtgs.
National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert—General supervision of BLET financial, record depts.; ND office; BLET Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Standard Building operations mtg.; Designated legal counsel mtg., Phoenix, Ariz.; Secretary-Treasurers Workshop, Kansas City, Mo.; General Chairmen, State Legislative Board mtg., re: National agreement proposal, Kansas City, Mo.; Local Chairman's Workshop, University of Illinois, Champaign.
Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—Assigned to CSX, NS and GTW general committees of adjustment; Attended Single Agreement Ratification meetings with Divisions 804, 485, 271, 39, 95, 30, 503, 271, 457, 537, 8894, 34, 495, 435, 26, 309, 332, 26, 532, 561, 830, 78, 165, 365, 829, and 714.; Participated by teleconference with various Divisions, including Division 284; Worked on PLB cases; General office duties.
Vice-President Richard K. Radek—ND Office; BLET Decertification Helpline services; Director of Arbitration Dept; National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; METRA; Belt Rwy. of Chicago; Chicago Central & Pacific; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern; Mtg. w/ General Counsel, re: BRC & Section 3 matters; LC Retirement dinner, Division 404, UP; Metra negotiations, tentative agreement, Chicago; Divs. 294 & 575 mtg., Metra; Pre-procedural Board mtg., agreement negotiations, BRC, CN-WC; NRAB arbitration; Div. 131 & 815 mtg., Metra; Section 3 subcommittee prep.; TSE guarantee dispute work, CN-WC (labor) bargaining cmte., Chicago; Div. 184 mtg.; Section 3 committee mtg. and Working Groups; Local Chairman's training class, Champaign, Ill.; Railroad Arbitration Review Cmte., Chicago; Routine office duties, Cleveland; EQAL 01-06, 02-67, 00-41, 03-47.
Vice-President Dale McPherson—CP Rail; Port. Term. RR; Longview Portland & Northern; Longview Switching Co.; Indiana RR; W&LE RR; Utah Railroad; UP Eastern Dist.; UP former CNW; DM&R RR; Portland & Western RR; Great Western RR; Appalachian & Ohio RR; Public Law Boards 5604, 5681, 5721, 6040, 6281, 6449, 6558, 6589; SBA 585; UP work/rest projects; RSAC positive train control cmte.; National wage/rules; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; Utah RR health & welfare issues, Salt Lake City; Mtg. w/ former C&NW GCofA; DMIR-CN contract negotiations, Duluth; Advisory Board mtg., Miami; Mtg. w/ UP, re: Eastern District and former C&NW, Bonita Springs, Fla.
Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.—Assigned to: BLET Trainmen's Department; Kansas City Southern; Gateway Western; Midwest Rail; Southern; Texas-Mexican Rwy.; Springfield Terminal, Delaware & Hudson; Indiana & Ohio RR; Louisville & Indiana RR; St. Lawrence & Atlantic RR; Indiana Southern RR; Montreal, Maine and Atlantic RR; Mtg. w/ GC Parker and Div. 426 (KCS), Baton Rouge, La.; Contract mtgs. w/ GC Twombly and St. Lawrence & Atlantic Rwy., Auburn, Me.; National contract mtg., Kansas City; Preparation for session of PLB No. 6884; PLB No. 6884 (KCS), Chicago.
Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—Assigned to Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Montana Rail Link, Pacific Harbor Line, Missouri & Northern Arkansas (M&NA), National Wage/Rule Committee; Mtgs. w/ BNSF and GCS on local issues, Fort Worth; Mtg. on Confidential Close Call reporting system, Fort Worth; Interdivisional mtg., BNSF, Fort Worth; Mtg. w/ President Hahs, Kansas City; Public Law Board 6983, Decatur; Public Law Board 6491, Reno; Wabash Hospital mtg.
Vice-President E.L. "Lee" Pruitt—Assisted general chairmen & members of: UP-Western Lines; UP-Western Region; UP-Central Region; UP-Southern Region; UP-Tacoma Belt; General office duties, telephone paperwork.
Vice-President & National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman—BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; Coordinated PAC Contributions; Coordinated content for NLO website; Coordinated content for NLO newsletter; Met with Representatives of Citizens for Rail Safety; Coordinated testimony of IBT Rail Conference officials on Capitol Hill; Testified before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on Rail Safety and Security; RSAC mtg., Orlando; Mtg. on national handling, Kansas City; Met with IA State Legislative Board and made visits to legislators in Des Moines; House Hearing on Amtrak and FRA FY 2008 appropriations; Change to Win briefing w/ Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY); Met numerous times with House Transportation and Homeland Security Committee staff; GOP Labor meet & greet w/ Reps. Lobiando (R-NJ) and Roskam (R-IL); Events held in concert w/ IBT General Executive Board mtgs., including briefings w/ Senator Obama (D-IL), Senator Clinton (D-NY) and John Edwards; Numerous events for members of congress; Continued coordination w/ IBT Gov't Affairs Dept.
Vice-President Marcus J. Ruef—Assigned to Amtrak Long Island Railroad; Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority; New Jersey Transit; Port Authority Trans Hudson; Norfolk Southern (Northern Lines/W&LE); Norfolk Southern (Eastern Lines); Norfolk Southern (Southern Lines); Union Railroad (URR); Allegheny Ludlum Steel Co.; and Birmingham Southern; Assist GC Linn w/ arbitration submissions, PLB 7006 (URR); NS(E) availability issue, research; Division 301 mtg., Roanoke, Va.; LIRR discipline assistance; NYSW negotiations, Rochelle Park, NJ; WLE contract negotiation/mediation, Washington, D.C.; PATH contract negotiation/mediation, Washington, D.C.; Assist Education & Training Dept. with Local Chairman Workshop, University of Illinois, Champaign; SBA 1063, NS(N), Tampa; NYSW negotiations, Binghamton, NY.

SAFETY TASK FORCE HOTLINE

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Report major accidents when they happen



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