Spread the ‘limbo time’ message

BLET members are encouraged to contact their representatives in Congress to share the statistical information that contributes to fatigue. 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 National Agreement included language committing that participants 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” issue, it would allow employees with 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. I said 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 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


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 comes 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 John Tolman, BLET National Legislative Director, testified in the House Subcommittee on Railroads on July 25, 2006, and by BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs Tom Donohue before the same subcommittee, on Feb. 13, 2007.

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

PUBLISHED BY THE BLET, A DIVISION OF THE RAIL CONFERENCE, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
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 Field.

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, 1968. 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. 7925 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 1970. He served in the U.S. army from 1966-1968 and joined the BLE on December 1, 1969. 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. •

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 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, BLE Vice General Chairman-Amtrak.

“We wish Brother Pitcher a long and healthy retirement.”

Friends may send congratulations to Brother Pitcher at: 2484 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 1953. 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, canoe making and writing. He has written a book, Past 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 1945 and joined the BLE on March 1, 1945. Both Brother Chitwood’s son-in-law, R.L. Edwards, and his grandson, M.S. Edwards, are members of BLET Division 783.

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: 410 Union Street, Erwin, Tenn. 37065. •

Retiring? 40-year member?

Tell us about your retirement or your many years of membership. Write: Editor, BLE Public Relations 1378 Ontario St., Masonic Cleveland, Ohio 44113-1702
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$0.95 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$2,097 million, with diluted earnings per share rising 41 percent to C$3.91.

In the second quarter of 2006, CN’s operating ratio 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 69.7 percent.

Canadian Pacific Railway

Canadian Pacific announced its fourth-quarter and full year results for the period ending December 31, 2006. 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 37 percent compared with $582 million for the full year 2005.

Revenue for the fourth quarter of 2006 included fuel surcharges of approximately $450 million compared to $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’s operating revenues of nearly $15 billion, a 15 percent increase over 2005, 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 29 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.

Union Pacific Corp.

Union Pacific Corporation reported 2006 fourth quarter net income of $485 million, or $1.78 per diluted share, compared to $396 million, or $1.09 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 78.6 percent versus 85.4 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.

Kansas City Southern

Tariffs on Union Pacific’s Kansas City Southern unit rose 13 percent to $385 million, an increase of 6 percent compared with $362 million for fourth quarter 2005. Earnings per diluted share were a record $0.85, up 9 percent compared with the $0.78 per diluted share earned in the fourth quarter of 2005.

Net income for the year was a record $1.5 billion, or $3.15 per diluted share. Earnings per diluted share increased 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 $8.4 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.

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. 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’s operating ratio improved 5.3 points to 81.5 percent versus 86.8 percent in 2005.

Full year 2006 net income was $1.0 billion or $5.91 per diluted share, versus $1.0 billion, or $3.85 per diluted share reported in 2005. The 2006 full year results included a non-cash income tax expense reduction of $115 million after-tax, or $3.84 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.

Norfolk Southern

Norfolk Southern reported record fourth quarter 2006 earnings of $347 million, or 73 cents per share. Earnings in the quarter included an 18 cent per-share benefit from Hurricane Katrina railroad 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 Business 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.
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 67 affects those people who were born in the years 1935 through 1944. The full retirement age will remain 65, and the tier II benefit will not be reduced beyond 20 percent. This also affects how reduced benefits are computed for early retirement.

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

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, 1960, who retires in 2012 at the age of 62. In terms of today’s dollar values and current benefit payments and in terms of today’s dollars and current benefit payments, the employee’s tier I benefit would be $1,400. Upon retirement at age 62, the employee’s tier I benefit would be reduced by 23 percent, the maximum age reduction applicable in 2012. This would yield a tier I monthly benefit of $890; 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 $1,490. However, if the employee had any railroad 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 $1,450.

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’s annuity begins. Early retirement reductions are applied to the spouse’s annuity when the spouse’s annuity begins January 1, 2002, or later. The employee’s tier I benefit would be reduced by 25 percent, as under prior law. The employee’s tier II benefit would also be reduced by 25 percent, as under prior law. The employee’s tier II benefit would be reduced by 25 percent, as under prior law.

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 and age annuities and the full retirement age is 60. Also, 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 begins January 1, 2002, or later. The employee’s tier I benefit is based on the tier I portion of an employee’s annuity if the employee’s annuity begins January 1, 2002, or later. The employee’s tier II benefit is based on the tier II portion of an employee’s annuity if the employee’s annuity begins January 1, 2002, or later. The employee’s tier II benefit is based on the tier II portion of an employee’s annuity if the employee’s annuity begins January 1, 2002, or later.

7. Are age reductions applied to employee disability annuities?

Employee annuities based on disability are not subject to age reductions.
Retirement

Continued from Page 4

except for employees with less than 10 years of service, but who have 5 years of service after 1965. Such employees may qualify to retire at the normal retirement age. •

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 disabilities unless 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.

6. Do these changes also affect survivor benefits?

Yes. The eligibility age for a full widow’s (er)’s annuity is 60 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 disability security benefits, railroad retirement tier I and vested dual benefits paid to employees and spouses, and tier I, 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.

Like social security benefits, these work limitations and deductions applied to the annuitants of retired employees who are eligible for Social Security benefits and to the tier I, tier II, and vested dual benefits paid to survivors under full retirement age.

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’s going to work until 8 a.m. tomorrow at the earliest. Wow, an evening together; they seem to be so rare these days! You had thawsed a roast, his favorite, just in case he was going to be home. Since you didn’t have to have it ready early, you choose to wait until it would be ready for a normal dinner, and got busy doing other things.

Five minutes after you put it in the oven, the phone rings and it’s the railroad with your husband’s call. What?! You got busy doing other things.

In listening to spousers from all over the country, life on the railroad is a reality. 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 Robert baron ways of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Stockholder 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—stagnation 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 were able to make record profits, in spite of themselves.

While we cannot change the fact that railroads are 24/7 operations that require 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 of the 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 it.

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 representatives has as to what it means to the constituent rail road 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 1980 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 others 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!

BLET Auxiliary Update

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

Like social security benefits, these work limitations and deductions applied to the annuitants of retired employees who are eligible for Social Security benefits and to the tier I, tier II, and vested dual benefits paid to survivors under full retirement age. •

Locomotive Engineers & Conductors Mutual Protective Association

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(800) 514-0010 • (313) 962-1512

WEB: www.lecmpa.org

Job Protection Headquarters for Transportation Employees
Since 1918

Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News · April 2007 Page 5
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 forward to 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 members 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) 869-1020 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-GLA open meeting
12:15 p.m. to 2 p.m.: SMA closed meeting
1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. to TBD: General Chairman’s meetings (as desired)
June 12, Tuesday
9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.: SMA closed meeting
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
12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: DLC Displays
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Awards, banquet, and entertainment
June 15, Friday
Breakfast & Good-byes
Check-out by 11:00 a.m.

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.

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

I plan to attend the following workshops:

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<tr>
<th>Local Chairman/Arbitration President/Bylaws/Change To Win</th>
<th>Secretary-Treasurer</th>
<th>Legislative Rep./Political Action</th>
<th>Homeland Security/Haz-Mat (Also open to families)</th>
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Calculation of fees:

- Early registration fee (U.S. Funds): $75.00/person X No. of People = $
- Early registration fee (Canadian Funds): $85.00/person X No. of People = $
- Golf Tournament (Canadian Funds): $75.00/person X No. of People = $
- Spouses Tour of Tacoma (Canadian Funds): $55.00/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

Tentative Agenda — 2007 IWC

Sunday, May 20
- Noon to 5:30 p.m.: Union Solidarity Golf Tournament, with members of the IWC BLET, BUMW, UTC, TC, and ILWU at Aluminore Golf Club in Tacoma. Welcome bag sponsored welcome reception, Room A.

Monday, May 21
- 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: Opening ceremonies, Rooms A, B and C.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch in Rooms A, B, and C of the Bicentennial Pavilion.
- 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: BLET closed meeting, Room C.
- 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.: GLA 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.waterwaycruises.com

Tuesday, May 22
- 9 a.m. to noon: Roundtable discussions, Breakfast, Room C.
- Noon to 1:30 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 4:30 p.m.: Radiation Safety and Haz-Mat workshop, Room F.
- 9 a.m. to noon: Division LE/Political Activism/Union Solidarity workshop, Room E.
- 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.: Railroad Retirement Benefits, Room E.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m.: Lunch, Room D.
- 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.: BLET closed Business/PC 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. Helens Observatory — Trip consists of scenic transportation to Mt. St. 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.
- A trip to Mount Rainier 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 6 p.m.
- Papet Sound Salmon Charters can take you 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. (Unfortu- nately, salmon season is closed, but cod, sole and flounder fishing is available.)
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 200,000 members affected by a new agreement, this decision is an important one. And I have every confidence that Don Hahs, Bill Walpert, Ed Rodzwicz 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. The carriers, certainly used to holding the employers’ feet to the fire and winning.

As we continue to organize rail employees 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 to support 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, over four years for rail security and 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.

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General President

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 liaison for Rock Island; Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority — General office duties; CSX — General office duties; BNSF — General office duties; Union Pacific — General office duties; Norfolk Southern — General office duties; AT&SF — General office duties; KCS — General office duties; B&O — General office duties; Illinois Central — General office duties; New Jersey Transit; Port Authority Trans Hudson; Norfolk Southern (Northern Lines/W&LE); Norfolk Southern (Eastern Lines); Norfolk Southern (Southern Lines/Elkhorn); NSWRR; W&LE RR; Utah Railroad; UP Eastern Dist.; UP former CNW; DM&IR RR; Portland & Western RR; Great Western RR; Appalachian & Eastern RR; New York, New Haven & Hartford; Pennsylvania; New Haven; New Haven Northern; New York, New Haven & Hartford; Delaware & Hudson; General office duties; Baltimore & Ohio; C&O; Chicago, St. Louis East; Chicago & Eastern; Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; NTLX; Bay Bridge of Chicago; Chicago Central & Pacific; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern; Philadelphia & Reading; Baltimore & Ohio; Central Vermont; Delaware & Hudson; Delaware, Lackawanna & Western; New York, Lackawanna & Western; Erie; Central Vermont; Long Island Railroad; New York, New Haven & Hartford; Chicago & Western; New York, Susquehanna & Western; C&O; Baltimore & Ohio; Boston & Maine; Lackawanna; NYSWRR; Pennsylvania; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; Southern Pacific; New York, New Haven & Hartford; Reading; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartford; New York, New Haven & Hartf...