Teamsters, 20 BLE Divisions participate in UP picketing

Members representing 20 Divisions of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), along with members of Teamsters Local 222, conducted informational picketing on April 19 in Salt Lake City to educate shareholders of the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) about the potential dangers of using non-qualified workers to operate remote control locomotives in the railroad industry.

The informational campaign began at 8:30 a.m. (MST) outside of the Little America Hotel at the annual meeting of UP’s shareholders. The Union Pacific engineers distributed flyers predicting that the use of remote control locomotives might increase productivity by more than 30 percent. The flyers also indicated that Union Pacific could avoid this and other potential problems by using federally-certified locomotive engineers to operate remote control locomotives. The flyers urge UP shareholders to, “Insist that certified locomotive engineers, the most qualified and experienced personnel, continue to operate locomotives. This will guarantee and assure that everyone’s best interests are served.”

In addition to the flyers, the BLE Teamster members held large banners and posters with slogans such as, “Safe, productive and proud since 1863… the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.” Members of Teamsters Local 222 protest the implementation of remote control locomotives at a meeting of Burlington Northern Santa Fe’s shareholders in Fort Worth, Texas.

The informational picketing on April 17 focused on the use of remote control locomotives by train crew members who are not federally licensed or certified as locomotive engineers. Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers protested the implementation of remote control locomotives at a meeting of Burlington Northern Santa Fe’s shareholders in Fort Worth, Texas.

Leaders of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and International Brotherhood of Teamsters continued discussions regarding a merger or affiliation in Las Vegas during the first week of May. The BLE/Teamster talks were held after the Teamster’s one-day special convention for “Building Teamster Power.”

Among the issues discussed during these meetings was a membership cap on a merger or affiliation. The BLE International Division would pay to the Teamsters each month, in the event of a merger or affiliation. The BLE and Teamster members held large banners and posters with slogans such as, “The BLE and Teamster members have operated remote control locomotives at a meeting of Burlington Northern Santa Fe’s shareholders in Fort Worth, Texas.”

The informational picketing continues for May 21-22 in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

Negotiations with NCCC continue

The BLE’s National Wage/Rule Committee held contract negotiations with the National Carriers Conference Committee (NCCC) on April 8-9, with additional meetings scheduled for later this month. BLE negotiators indicated the meetings went well, with discussions focusing mainly on health and welfare issues. The next set of meetings is scheduled for May 21-22 in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

A collision between a standing Union Pacific freight train and a remote controlled locomotive in Hinkle, Ore., is the most recent of seven accidents involving remote control technology in the past month. One accident has occurred on CSX property, five on Union Pacific territories, and one at a power plant in Indiana.

The United Transportation Union has reported that its own members are to blame for these incidents, and not remote control technology. On May 2, UTU reported on its website that, “the accidents on CSX and UP (in Portland, Ore.) were caused by human error.” In other words, the UTU has chosen to defend the integrity of remote control technology over its own dues-paying members. Thus far, only UTU members have operated remote control devices.

UTU is working closely with the nation’s rail carriers to implement “pilot projects” using the new technology. By endorsing carrier reports that place the blame entirely on employees, the UTU is implicating its own members for causing these recent accidents. "If the remote control technology itself is not to blame, then perhaps the carriers are not properly training employees to use the devices," said BLE President Don M. Hahs. "Regardless of what the carriers and the UTU believe, derailments and other incidents involving remote control locomotives have occurred. We believe it is important to document these incidents for the benefit and safety of the general public.”

Hahs commented on the carrier and UTU assertion that “human error” was to blame in these incidents. “Perhaps if an experienced, certified locomotive engineer were operating the remote control de-
BLE General Chairmen respond to statements by BNSF Chairman Rose

In a strongly worded letter to Burlington Northern Santa Fe Chair- man Matthew K. Rose, the BNSF-BLE General Chairmen rebutted statements made by Rose regarding the implementation of remote control pilot projects on that railroad.

In an article published in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Rose was quoted as saying that the use of crew members other than locomotive en- gineers to operate remotes was a “productivity matter.” The general chairmen, Dennis Pierce, John Mullen, Austin Morrison and Rick Gibbons, took exception to that state- ment and provided evidence to the con- trary.

In their letter to Rose, the general chairmen cited several reasons why re- mote controlled locomotives would be more efficiently operated by certified locomotive engineers than other train crew members. They noted that other programs have used a combination of remote controls and the control stand in the locomotive in order to achieve greater efficiency in train movement.

The general chairmen also cited the lo- comotive engineer’s extensive knowl- edge of operating and safety rules. The general chairmen are con- cerned with the job protection of loco- motive engineers on BNSF. While the carrier has promised that the affected employees will receive pro- tection, they have acted to the con- trary in some circumstances.

The BLE General Chairmen again requested the opportunity to meet with Rose in order to discuss the issue of remote operations. A copy of the General Chairmen’s letter is available on the BLE website.

BLE informational picketing targets BNSF in Fort Worth

“While it’s a safety issue,” BLE General Chairman Dennis Pierce told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, “Our jobs are at stake.”

Also participating in the informa- tional picketing were BLE General Chairmen John Mullen and Rick Gib- bons; Vice Chairmen Matt Wilson, Steve Braikta and Don May (BNSF North Lines); Terry Briggs, Chairman of the Texas State Legislative Board; Mark E. Banton, Local Chairman of Division 500; and George Smith, Secretary-Treasurer of Division 500. Members of the American Train Dispatchers Depart- ment of the BLE also participated in the informational picketing.

BNSF chairman Matt Rose told the newspaper that BNSF plans to take delivery of 30 new remote control units throughout the year, to be used at vari- ous switching and classification yards on its 29-state system.

Rose also told the newspaper that the issue of employees other than members of the Brotherhood of Loco- motive Engineers to operate the remote control was a “productivity matter” (see related article on page 2 of this issue).

General Chairman Pierce advised the Star-Telegram reporter that he “knows BNSF management that the use of federally licensed locomotive en- gineers in the implementation of re- mote control operations would be the safest and most productive method of operation. However, railroad manage- ment has refused to negotiate with BLE on the issue.”

 Photos from UP informational picketing

Left: Union Pacific President & CEO Ike Evans (holding umbrella) meets with BLE members at the UP shareholders’ meeting. As a result of the picketing, the BLE General Chairmen for Mr. Evans to schedule a meeting with all the BLE-UP General Chairmen in the near future.

It was a family affair as Larry E. Stevenson brought his daughter, Hunter, along to participate in the informational picketing. Brother Stevenson is a member of BLE Division 374 (Ogden, Utah).

Telemaster Local 222 member Matt Wagner.

BLE scores another win in Pa.

Legislation protects train crews from showing auto drivers license after rail accidents; Bill moves to Senate

On April 2, the Brother- hood of Locomotive Engineers’ Pennsylvania State Legislative Board won another victory in the Pennsylvania General As- sembly for the rights of all train crew members.

House Bill Number 387, in- troduced by Rep. Lynn Herman (R-77), amended HB 1248 and strengthened by police authorities is turned over to auto insurance compa- nies and this can be miscon- strued as having a motor ve- hicle accident. Clearly, a loco- motive is not a motor vehicle under Pennsylvania code. “This bill, when referred to the Pennsylvania Senate and hopefully enacted, will protect our members and their civil rights.” Chairman Kertesz con- tinued, “We thank Representa- tives Herman, Geist, Veon and the other 183 State Represen- tatives who saw fit to endorse legislation so vitally needed.”

On March 12, the Pennsyl- vania State House passed HB 1247, which will prohibit freight locomotives from oper- ating in reverse or in the backup position on main and secondary lines. The bill, strongly supported by the BLE, passed the House 198-1, and was referred to the Pennsylva- nia Senate Transportation Committee for action. •

Ertman helps members on KCS

For the past 11 years, W.R. “Bill” Ertman has du- tifully served BLE Division 527 (Pittsburg, Kan.) as secre- tary-treasurer and legis- lative representative.

Following in his father’s footsteps, Ertman began his railroad career in Pittsburg, Kan., as a telegrapher for the Kansas City Southern in 1961. He also worked as a brakeman for the KCS in 1977. He went on a new job every Dec. 22, 1977, and was promoted to engineer on May 22, 1980. His father, Raymond, was also a locomotive engineer for the KCS.

Since he joined the BLE in 1987, Brother Ertman has been committed to serving this organization and his fellow members. He has helped to shape the future of the BLE by serving as a delegate to the Interna- tional Division Convention in 1996, and helped pre- serve its future by volun- teering to be a member of the Mobilization Team on the KCS. All the while, he made sure his fellow mem- bers were treated fairly by fighting for their back pay.

“Bill deserves an award for the most dedicated union officer,” said General Chairman Sam Parker. “He is what you would call an expert on the pay is- sues that might arise on the property, and would extend a helping hand to any Union Brother.”

Brother Ertman and his wife, Yvonne, have a daugh- ter, Leanne, and four grand- children.

“Bill’s hobby is his union,” said Tim Windsor, Local Chairman of Division 527. “Bill works continu- ously helping the members of the BLE.”
The “city of lakes,” Minneapolis, Minn., was the site of the 2002 AFL-CIO Union Industries Show. Hundreds of union trade exhibitors, including the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, offered the public a glimpse of union workers’ skill and pride in North American industries.

The Union Industries Trade Show serves as a unique job fair opportunity, offering visitors, especially young adults, an opportunity to see a vast array of exhibits which feature live demonstrations, the latest technology and union craftsmanship. An estimated 300,000 visitors passed through the newly expanded Minneapolis Convention Center Exhibit Hall during the four-day show (April 5-8). Busloads of school children were special guests on Friday and Monday mornings.

BLE Education and Training Coordinator Ken Kroeger put together a team of volunteers to staff the BLE display booth, which featured a cutaway from a locomotive cab provided by Baultar of Windsor, Quebec, Canada. Baultar manufactures modular ergonomic sealing systems and cab accessories for railway locomotive and mass transit control cabs.

The cutaway from an old CN unit, originally built as a GP38-2, attracted the attention of show visitors of all ages. Baultar employees Len Woolgar and Charles Olivier Boudrias donned BLE shirts and cheerfully greeted visitors each day, encouraging them to sit in the operator’s seat and become familiar with the immediate surroundings an engineer experiences while operating a locomotive.

Minnesota State Legislative Board Chairman Tom Perkovich and two other local BLE members, Kay Cooper and Tom Halonen, also volunteered their time at the booth. Numerous visitors, especially children, enjoyed being photographed sitting at the throttle and were given a Polaroid copy to keep as a souvenir.

A handout entitled “Becoming a Locomotive Engineer” attracted the attention of a number of visitors. Many who stopped by the booth expressed an interest in working as a locomotive engineer and asked about job openings in the railroad industry.

This year’s show was dedicated to Dennis Kivikko who died last December after a brief hospitalization for treatment of pulmonary fibrosis. Brother Kivikko had served as Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO Union Label and Service Trades Department since 1986. He had also served as the Manager of the annual Union Industries Show since 1990. The show was Dennis’s passion and his absence was felt by those who had known and worked with him on previous shows.

Next year’s show will be held in Philadelphia, Pa. •

Tom Halonen (right), a member of BLE Division 494 (Minneapolis, Minn.), explains what it takes to be hired as a locomotive engineer in the railroad industry. With a cutaway of a locomotive cab, the BLE booth received many interested visitors. More than 300,000 visitors attended the AFL-CIO’s week-long Union Industries Trade Show in Minneapolis.

Space remains for West Coast Local Chairman workshop

Room is still available for BLE members interested in attending the June 3-7 West Coast Local Chairman Workshop offered by the BLE Education & Training Department on the Clark Kerr Campus of U.C. Berkeley in Southern California.

Among other topics, the workshop will cover BLE organizational structure and functions, representing members at disciplinary and decertification hearings, union leadership skills, claim and grievance handling, and writing and editing skills. Participants also will learn how to effectively use the BLE arbitration database. A highlight of the workshops is when attendees participate in a simulated disciplinary hearing.

The BLE encourages all Local Chairmen to attend one of these workshops, including new and more experienced local chairmen. BLE members who are not local chairmen may also attend these classes, provided they receive authorization from their local chairman to attend.

The BLE Education & Training Department presents these workshops in conjunction with the staff of the George Meany Center. Workshops instructors will include BLE General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walsh, BLE Vice-President Richard K. Radek, Special Representative Ken Kroeger; and BLE Arbitration Department Manager Greg Ross. Donald Spatz, an adjunct professor from the George Meany Center, will also instruct at the workshops.

The BLE pays the costs of books, equipment, tuition and a Thursday evening graduation banquet. BLE members who attend are responsible for the cost of room and board.

The next local chairman workshop will be October 13-18 on the campus of the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md.

To register, please contact Ken Kroeger of the BLE Education & Training Dept. at (216) 272-0986 or <kroeger@ble.org>. •
Why I belong to the BLE
By John R. Koonce, General Chairman

BLE Editor’s Note: The following was written by BLE General Chairman John Koonce in response to an editorial published on the UTU website on May 1, and also published in the May 2002 issue of the UTU newsletter.

I received a copy of typical UTU-E rhetoric yesterday from a Vice Local Chairperson trying to justify his existence in the UTU conductors’ local (“Why don’t I join the BLE? I’ll tell you,” by David Currence Vice Local Chairperson, Local 1011, Hamlet, N.C.).

Since I neither have nor want to have any connection with the UTU-E or its International Officers, I thought I would address this misguided soul’s statements through the BLE.

The first thing I noticed was that Brother Currence doesn’t have years behind him to know or even understand the $1.50 that he expounds upon. I have 36 years of service on the Illinois Central and even I didn’t see the $1.50 “so called sell out.”

I do know one thing that I believe Brother Currence has conveniently left out of his story and that is the zero-dollar sell-out of the firemen on October 31, 1985. This UTU sell out shrunk the firemen’s positions forever — assigning the work to the trainmen. This also included forced promotion to fireman's positions forever — assigning the work to the trainmen. And how much are they being paid? Nothing! UTU and technology strike again!

Now the firemen, a thing of the past. Was it technology strike again? Or maybe all they told him was something about $1.50. These are this same leaders that he thinks are working for him and his family when the time comes to make concessions. (I thought leaders were supposed to gain increases in contracts, not concessions.) Does Brother Currence want someone like them — who have historically “protected” jobs — to now “protect” everyone’s jobs? (Hello, wake up and smell the roses again!)

In closing I am asking Brother Currence to go back and look at the facts himself; it might be a wiser choice than relying on all those “wiser, more experienced” leaders.

That is why I belong to the BLE!
John R. Koonce
Division 512
Benefits under Railroad Retirement, Social Security

Employers and employees covered by the Railroad Retirement Act pay higher retirement taxes than those covered by the Social Security Act, so that railroad retirement benefits remain substantially higher than social security benefits.

The following questions and answers in this article describe the differences in benefits available under the two systems.

1. How do the average monthly railroad retirement and social security benefits paid to retired employees and spouses compare?

The Railroad Retirement Board at the end of fiscal year 2001 to career railroad employees who are disabled for work and Social Security Acts provide benefits based on age.

Railroad employees with 30 or more years of creditable service are eligible for regular annuities based on age and service the first full month they are 60, and railroad employees with less than 30 years of creditable service are eligible for regular annuities based on age and service the first full month they are 62.

Railroad retirement reduction applies if a railroad employee retires at age 60 with 30 years of service and his or her retirement is after 2001, or had been born in 1939 and older with 30 years of service.

Under social security, a worker cannot begin receiving retirement benefits based on age until age 62, regardless of how long he or she worked, and social security retirement benefits are reduced for retirement prior to full retirement age regardless of years of coverage.

5. Does social security offer any benefits comparable to railroad retirement?

Social security does pay certain types of benefits that are not available under railroad retirement. For example, social security provides children’s benefits when an employee is disabled, retired or deceased. Under current law, the Railroad Retirement Act only provides children’s benefits if the employee is deceased.

However, the Railroad Retirement Act includes a special minimum guarantee provision which ensures that railroad families will not receive less in monthly benefits than they would have if the railroad worker has children who would otherwise be eligible for a benefit under social security, the employee’s annuity can be increased to reflect what social security would have paid the family.

6. How much are monthly benefits for survivors under railroad retirement?

Survivor benefits are generally higher if payable by the Board rather than social security. At the end of fiscal year 2001, the average monthly benefits payable to an employee’s widow(er)s averaged $950. Also, if an employee had less than 10 years of service, but had at least 5 years of service after 1995, he or she would have had an insured disability under social security (including both railroad retirement and social security credits) in order for the 8255 lump-sum benefit to be payable.

The social security lump-sum benefit is generally only payable to the widow or widower living with the employee at the time of death. Under railroad retirement, if the employee had 10 years of service before 1975, and was not survived by a living-with widow or widower, the lump sum may be paid to the employee’s estate or to the payee or the payer of the funeral expenses.

The railroad retirement system also provides, under certain conditions, a residual lump-sum death benefit which ensures that a railroad family receives at least as much in benefits as the employee paid in railroad retirement taxes before 1975. This benefit is, at present, a refund of an employee’s 1975 railroad retirement taxes, after subtraction of any benefits previously paid on the basis of the employee’s service.

However, an employee’s benefits generally exceed taxes within two years; this death benefit is, consequently, seldom payable.

8. How do railroad retirement and social security payroll taxes compare?

Railroad retirement payroll taxes, like social security payroll taxes, are calculated on a two-tier basis. Rail employees and employers pay tier I taxes at the same rate as social security.

Beginning with the taxes payable for calendar year 2004, tier II taxes on employers and employees will be based on an average account benefits ratio. Depending on the average account benefits ratio, the tier II payroll tax for employers will range between 8.20 percent and 22.10 percent, while the tier II tax rate for employees will be between 0 percent and 4.90 percent.

9. How much are regular railroad retirement taxes for an employee earning $84,900 in 2002 compared to social security taxes?

The maximum amount of regular railroad retirement taxes that an employee earning $84,900 can pay in 2002 is $5,851.85, compared to $6,494.85 under social security. For railroad employees, the maximum annual regular railroad retirement taxes that are deductible for employers amount $84,900 are $16,322.85 compared to $6,494.85 under social security.

Employees earning over $84,900, and their employers, will pay more in railroad retirement taxes than the above amounts because the Medicare hospital insurance tax of 1.45 percent is applied to all earnings.

Engineers asked to sound whistle on Memorial Day

The U.S. Department of Transportation is asking union members to sound their locomotive horns at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day — Monday, May 27.

The horn sounding is part of the “National Moment of Remembrance” to recognize the heroic men and women who have died in service of our nation to preserve our freedom.

In addition, conductors are asked to make an announcement on passenger trains at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day.
President’s statement on Workers’ Memorial Day

Editor’s Note: The following statement was issued by BLE International President Don M. Hahs:

On Sunday, April 28, 2002, Amtrak crew members, including the engineer, were killed or injured on the job. None of these injuries or deaths need to happen. Our goal is zero tolerance for workplace injuries. The industry has paid lip service to safety over the years, and they need to put less effort into profits and more effort into safety.

We also need to remember that many of the injuries that occur at work are not of the sudden, catastrophic kind. Over a million workers per year are stricken with repetitive stress and strain injuries, including many in the transportation industry. The government needs to protect workers from these highly preventable injuries by enforcing stricter guidelines for employers.

While we have the technology to make the railroads and other industries safer, the companies have made the decision to favor economics over safety. Safety improvements, such as positive train control and ergonomically designed locomotive cabins, cost money, and it seems the companies of this nation have chosen profits over people.

On this Workers’ Memorial Day, we should redouble our efforts to make work a safe place for everyone. No worker should ever go to work at the beginning of the day and not get to go home. No family should ever lose a loved one in an accident that is preventable.

Workers should never lose their livelihood. A preventable workplace injury: Zero tolerance for workplace injuries should be the way that we remember and commemorate those fallen brothers and sisters.

Tracks probed in Auto Train wreck

The National Transportation Safety Board is focusing on misaligned rails as a probable cause of the April 18 derailment of Amtrak’s Auto Train near Crescent City, Fla.

The derailment occurred near milepost AT222.2 on the CSX Sanford subdivision. After stopping at a signal to allow a coal train to pass, the engineer was in the process of bringing the passenger train back up to track speed when he entered a curve that had a 60 mph permanent speed restriction. The engineer was at 57 mph when he looked up and saw an anomaly in the alignment of the track.

The engineer placed the train into emergency and toggled the HOTD (headend of train device) as required by Amtrak rules. The train’s assistant engineer stated that he placed the train into emergency and saw the train piling up.

Immediately after the accident, the crew decided that one engineer would stay with the locomotives for communications purposes and to protect the head end of the train, while the second engineer would go back and help passengers escape from derailed cars.

Four passengers were killed, 28 of 418 passengers were injured, and 21 of the 40 cars derailed in the accident.
Remote Control

Continued from Page 1

vices as part of the crew, then maybe these accidents would not have oc-

urred," he said. "The UTU shows its true colors by backing the carrier po-
sition that remote control technology played no role whatsoever in these re-
cent incidents."

The seven remote control incidents are outlined as follows:

• On April 24, a remote control switch engine ran into the side of a UP freight train that was leaving Des Moines, causing three rear cars of the freight train to derail. The collision caused significant damage to the switch engine and minor damage to the tracks. The accident occurred in a switching area where the speed limit is less than 10 mph, and no injuries were reported. However, BLE sources at the scene estimate that damage was seri-

ous enough that the incident would have to be reported to the Federal Rail-

road Administration. Reportable inci-
dents, as defined by FRA, are collisions, derailments or other incidents that cause a minimum of $6,000 in damage. The UTU website reported that its own members are at fault for this inci-
dent and not remote control technology. "The remote control unit worked properly... and the incident was blamed on a failure of the crew to properly line a crossover," according to a May 2 re-
port on the UTU website. "At least one of the two crew members on the ground, as well as a utility employee riding the locomotive, knew the switch was not lined properly. The operator had a view of the switch, and the utility employee assumed that the other crew member would throw the switch, according to a source familiar with the incident. Instead, the train plowed into the side of the departing train."

• On April 16 in Montgomery, Ala., a ground-service employee allegedly lost radio contact with the remote con-

trol switch engine he was operating. BLE sources say the remote control unit, which was in the process of add-

ing 20 cars to a CSX freight, smashed into the rear of the train, derailing sev-
eral cars and causing significant dam-
age to the cars and tracks.

Once again, UTU laid the blame for this incident at the feet of one of its du-

es-paying members. "Sources familiar with the incident say the operator stepped into a van while running the locomotive, and mo-
ementarily lost track of how close the cut of cars was to the train it was being coupled to," the UTU reported on its website.

• On April 20 in Hinkle, Ore., a re-

 mote control UP locomotive with 15-20 cars collided with a standing set of yard engines at approximately 7 mph. The incident occurred over 30 cars ran through a switch point (with blue flag) derail (with blue flag) derail, at the same point as the April 29 derailment. "This one has the record for fur-

thest distance with one locomotive com-
pletely off of the end of the rail," a BLE source said. "It traveled far enough to foul adjacent track."

• On March 10 in Hinkle, Ore., a re-

 mote control locomotive rolled over a switch point blue flag/ derail, at the same point as the April 29 derailment. "The remote control engine was pushing six coal cars when it ap-

proached the coal drop-off area at about 30 mph. Normally, a train in that area would travel at less than 1 mph. Newspaper reports indicate the remotely controlled train did not respond to radio controls and smashed through a switch engine and a coal rotary dumper before hitting the second train.

These accidents reinforce the BLE's assertion that more precaution and enforceable government regula-
tions are necessary to the safe imple-
mentation of remote control technology. "These incidents are part of the reason we felt it necessary to file suit against the Department of Transporta-
tion and the Federal Railroad Admin-
istration," President Hahs said. "The railroads are in such a hurry to imple-
ment remote control operations that safety is being compromised."

He said that instead of adopting mandatory regulations to ensure safety in remote control operations, FRA chose to issue non-mandatory "guide-
lines," which appear to have the effect of de-skilling the engineer's certification re-
quirements.

BLE documents seven remote control incidents since March

UTU, carriers say technology is not to blame; UTU website says its own members caused accidents

IWC 2002 Registration Form
62nd annual International Western Convention
July 21-25, 2002

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

West Coast Tri-Cities Hotel, (509) 783-0611 (Room rates: $85 per night)
1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd., Kennewick, WA 99336

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The following is a list of events that will be available at the upcoming 2002 IWC. Please take the time to indicate which events you and your party will be attending. This will allow us to plan a more organized convention for everyone. The registration cost will be $50 per member due upon arrival. This will cover all events to be held at the Westcoast Kennewick hotel.

Name of Attendee: ____________________________ Division: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________
City: ____________________________ State: __________ Zip: __________
E-mail: ____________________________ Daytime Phone: ____________________________
If a Division Officer, which office do you currently hold? ____________________________
Evening Phone: ____________________________ How many guests? __________
Will anyone be attending with you? YES/NO How many guests?

THESE EVENTS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE IWC WITH THE INDICATED COST:

Monday, July 22
Golf Tournament: $50.00/golfer X No. of Golfers _________
Columbia River Journeys: $43.74/adult X No. of Adults _________
Children ages 4-11: $34.02/child X No. of Children _________

Tuesday, July 23
Casino Night at Celebrity Bowl and Casino (Transportation to and from casino will be provided) Cost is completely up to you! __________
Number of Planned Participants _________

Wednesday, July 24
Closing ceremonies and banquet at Tri-Cities Coliseum $20.00/guest X Number of Planned Participants _________

Please fax to: (509) 628-3300
Thank You!
Chairman William Amaya
Chairman IWC 2002
E-mail: HotThrottle.Will@verizon.net

CONTENTS
BLE members encouraged to register for TTD newsletter

The AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department is urging all transportation unionists, including BLE members, to log on to its website and register for its electronic newsletter.

The Transportation Worker is the TTD’s electronic activist newsletter and currently has about 2,300 union members registered. This newsletter is an important grassroots legislative and political tool the TTD, along with the BLE and other unions, is urging all members to register.

To register for the Transportation Worker, go to www.ttd.org.

Pierce circuitulates remote control response on BNSF

BNSF Northlines/MRL General Chairman Dennis Pierce is circulating information that clarifies his committee’s position on the issue of remote control technology and electronic mislabeling statements by the UTU.

The packet of information that General Chairman Pierce sent to his local chairmen contains several items which provide an overview of recent events on BNSF and Montana Rail Link regarding the implementation of remote control technology.

In a letter, General Chairman Pierce rebuts misleading statements made by UTU International First Vice-President Paul Thompson. In correspondence, Thompson attempted to draw parallels between the BLS’s remote control agreement on the MRL and the UTU’s actions on all the major railroads whenever such issues arise.

“UTU would have you believe BLS First Vice-President Paul Thompson is in the dark when it comes to BNSF. Periodically, UTU asserts that BLS management is attempting to replace locomotive engineers with remote control systems. Yet, that is not similar at all, according to Pierce.

“UTU would have you believe that BLS has not received a single complaint from the employee. In fact, the组成的 chairman is the carrier in the wholesale sloughing of the locomotive engineer’s position in yard service on BNSF, but the aforementioned MRL agreement hardly compares to the process in place on the BNSF properties,” writes Pierce.

Pierce goes on to describe the process by which jobs were actually gained through the BLS’s agreement with MRL. He contrasts this with the prospective job losses on BNSF in Gainesburg, Ill., where 19 locomotive engineers’ positions will be lost, while locomotive engineer and conductor training classes will be discontinued. Some of the jobs lost will be those of trainmen who the UTU represents.

“UTU has publicly stated that all will be protected, but there is no signed agreement stating that. In fact, the carrier has denied our requests for New York Dock protection for our affected engineer members at Mandan (N.D.) where these are now underway. In addition, several trainmen were furloughed when remote service was implemented and none of these employees were given protective benefits,” Pierce writes.

UTU has not secured an agreement protecting either the earnings potential or jobs of the existing employees through attrition as we did on MRL. To the contrary, they have proudly agreed to a product that eliminates the locomotive engineer’s position, plugging headlong into what can only be described as a true race to the bottom. All of this just to secure the jurisdictional rights, and dues receipts, for the surviving operating employees in yard service.

Pierce also confronts Thompson’s assertion that a merger between the BLS and UTU would solve all of these problems.

“I do not believe that we should have to merge with the UTU for them to be willing to work together with us for the betterment of all operating employees.”

The employees that BLS and UTU represent deserve much better than that. Unfortunately, the UTU International would rather work against BLS than work together even when it is in the best interest of all.”

Advisory Board April Activity

By action of the delegates at the Fifth Quincennial Convention, summaries of TTD and AFL-CIO members’ activities are published in the BLE Newsletter.

The AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department is urging all members to register.

This news article is published by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, 215 East 55th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60657. Copyright 2002, all rights reserved. Contact us: www.ble.org • (216) 241-2630

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