



NEWS

JUNE/JULY
2007

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

Members OK new national contract

Five year agreement ratified by a 2-to-1 majority

By a majority of 2-1, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen members nationwide voted in favor of the new freight rail contract negotiated by the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition. The BLET members' votes were the first in the coalition to be counted. Later in June the votes from the other unions: Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division; Firemen and Oilers; Sheetmetal Workers; Train Dispatchers; Railroad Signalmen; and Boilermakers will be counted.

"These results show that this is a strong national

contract that will benefit our members," said Don Hahs, National President of the BLET. "Our members will see increases in wages and a cap on health and welfare contributions. We worked hard to negotiate the terms of this new five-year contract. Together with the other members of the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition we were able to keep the carriers at bay."

The national five-year contract covers more than 17,000 freight rail workers on part of CSX, Union Pacific, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and Kansas City Southern.

"When the carriers served their section six notices in 2004 they had staffing and consolidation in their sites," said Hahs. "But we stood together and won a good contract with worthwhile improvements."

Along with the national contract, votes were counted for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe on property agreement. The results were 10-1 in favor.

"I want to congratulate our general chairmen for helping communicate with our members about the many benefits this new contract will provide," said Hahs. "I believe this contract is further evidence of the increased power rail labor has now that we have merged with the Teamsters Union and are a part of the Teamsters Rail Conference." •

Why you should support BLET-PAC

The last two decades have been an historic gilded age for corporations and big business, and few industries have been rewarded as handsomely by this culture as much as the railroad industry. As the U.S. economy has continued to grow, so has the gap between the richest Americans and the working man and woman. As companies continue to reap record profits – often while becoming embroiled in one scandal after another – everyday workers, like locomotive engineers and trainmen, who literally make the country move, have rarely shared in this record breaking prosperity.

It comes as little surprise that, during this time, many have become disillusioned, disenchanted, disengaged, or otherwise alienated from a political process that often serves to divide people rather than bring them together. Many participants often turn a blind eye

or a deaf ear towards the concerns of workers. Sometimes, for those in organized labor, even the choice between Democrats and Republicans has seemed like a choice between the lesser of two evils. It makes sense to wonder if, at the end of the day, politicians will really address our issues. Will they be there when it really matters? Does what they are doing in Washington or the State Capitol affect me? Is political participation really worth it?

For the BLET to continue to be successful, the answer must be a resounding yes — that political participation is not only worth it, but is critical to that success. Our efforts at protecting workers and negotiating contracts do not exist in a vacuum. Government regulations, or the lack thereof, affect almost every aspect of a railroad worker's job — from work hours, health care and retirement, to safety and security. Politicians and the environment that they

shape set the government's agenda. Locomotive engineers and trainmen need to be on that agenda, so that whatever the work of our union, we are heard loudly and clearly.

After years of being taken for granted and left out in the cold, the whole of organized labor has finally begun to turn the corner with a renewed sense of purpose, aimed towards taking back this country and restoring some sense of the American Dream. The BLET, present at the birth of organized labor, and comprised of workers who today transport millions of people and tons of goods daily, must step forward to play its part in this restoration. Having joined "the fight" we must once again rise to help to lead it.

For better or for worse, it is a truism that "money is the mother's milk of poli-

See BLET-PAC, Page 6

BLET members ratify CSX single system agreement

In mid-April, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen have ratified a single system agreement with CSX Transportation, according to National Secretary-Treasurer William Walpert, whose office was responsible for the vote count.

The new single system agreement unifies work rules and pay across three of the four BLET general committees at CSX and covers approxi-

mately 5,500 members. NST Walpert said the contract was ratified by a vote of 1,580 for and 1,113 against.

Vice President Paul Sorrow, who headed negotiations, thanked everyone for voting on the agreement. He also thanked General Chairmen Tony Smith (CSX Eastern Lines), Don Moates (CSX Western Lines), and Rick Finamore

See CSX Agreement, Page 9

Metra engineers OK 7-year deal

Metra commuter engineers (former IC-Electric, MILW and Rock Island) represented by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen ratified a new seven year contract by a two-thirds majority.

The agreement provides wage increases of 16.5 percent over the life of the contract, which runs through July 1, 2010. Members will also receive a 2.5 percent lump sum

bonus (a minimum of \$1,200) and retroactive wage increases dating to July 1, 2006.

"I was involved in negotiations from day one," said Mike Taylor, a general chairman on Metra for the past two years. "It was a long and grueling process, but the final result was worth it. In terms of overall quality, we're right up there with other agreements around

See Metra Agreement, Page 9

BLET maintains 100% employer-paid health and welfare in new 6-year PATH contract

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen ratified a six-year contract with the Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation (PATH) in late May.

The agreement covers 166 members and provides six years of wage increases at 3 percent per year, which

includes retroactive payments to 2005. The contract also provides increases in pension contributions each year and continues health and welfare coverage that is 100 percent employer-paid.

According to BLET Vice President Marcus J. Ruef, who helped negotiate the contract, the BLET sought the ser-

vices of the National Mediation Board (NMB) when negotiations stalled regarding the issue of health care cost sharing.

"BLET General Chairman Ralph Nunziato and his committee deserve high praise for involving the service of the NMB and producing a real wage in-

crease while maintaining important fringe benefits," Vice President Ruef said.

In particular, he thanked NMB Staff Mediator Zachery Jones for his efforts in bringing the parties together.

See PATH Agreement, Page 9

LAST RUNS & HONOR ROLLS

Frankovic steams through retirement

Brother Andrew J. Frankovic of BLET Division 521 (Hawthorne, N.J.) made his last run on September 3, 2004, working the Little Ferry yard job for the New York, Susquehanna & Western (NYS&W) in Little Ferry, N.J. He served as the division's legislative representative from 1995 until his retirement.

Brother Frankovic began his railroad career in 1974 as a trackman on the NYS&W. He went firing for the NYS&W in 1980 and earned promotion to locomotive engineer on June 17, 1981. He also spent time as a machinist for the NYS&W. He joined the BLE on January 1, 1981. In addition to serving his division as legislative representative, he was also a member of the auditing committee.

Brother Frankovic and his wife, Darlene, were married on February 25, 1968. They have one child, Michele.

Brother Frankovic is a member of the NYS&W Technical and Historical Society, where he enjoys running steam locomotives. He also enjoys taking long walks, traveling and refinishing wood furniture.

"Not only was the railroad a great career, it was a great



Brother Frankovic takes a breather during a steam trip in Butler, N.J.

learning experience," Brother Frankovic said. "I came to meet a lot of great people."

The Frankovics live at 13 Caroline Ave., Clifton, N.J. 07011. •

Honor Roll

Wilkins reaches 51-year milestone; Is a fourth generation railroader

Brother Barney F. Wilkins of BLET Division 219 (Shreveport, La.) celebrated 51 years of membership on December 1, 2006.

Brother Wilkins began his railroad career as a machinist helper in 1946 on the T&P Railroad in Shreveport. He went firing in 1952 and earned promotion to locomotive engineer in 1962. He made his last run for the Union Pacific on March 26, 1989.

A fourth generation railroader, Brother Wilkins has many relatives who worked on the railroad, including his great grandfather, both grandfathers, his mother and father, and several uncles and cousins. His great grandfather, J.C. McGinnis, was a contractor whose company built the first rail depot in Fort Worth, Texas — a red brick depot for the T&P Railroad. His grandfather, Benjamin Franklin Wilkins Sr., was a conductor out of Fort Worth,

and his father, Ernest Mills Wilkins, was chief clerk out of Shreveport.

Brother Wilkins served his country for 17 years in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps. During his time of service, he received citations that are too numerous to list, and served during both World War II and the Korean War.

Brother Wilkins and his wife Winona Ann were married on December 26, 1968. They have one daughter, Sally. Brother Wilkins is a member of many organizations, including: the Disabled American Veterans (life member), VFW Post 4588 (life member), 1st Marine Division Association (life member), American Legion Post 14, and the International Alliance of Theater and Stage Employees (life member).

Friends may contact Brother Wilkins at: 206 Mildred Street, Benton, La. 71006. •

'Chopper' Chaney rides off into the sunset after 43 years

After more the 43 years in engine service, Brother Donald D. "Chopper" Chaney of BLET Division 47 (Denver) made his last run on May 29, 2005, on a trip from Grand Junction, Colo., to Denver.

Brother Chaney began his railroad career on October 24, 1961, for the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad in Denver. Brother Chaney subsequently accepted a position as a "Prior Right" Passenger Engineer with Amtrak on the "takeover" of train & engine service employees in the off-corridor service for zone 11 on August 17, 1987. He joined BLE Division 451 on July 1, 1966.

Brother Chaney plans to enjoy retirement by spending time with his family. He is an avid motorcycle and will be making numerous road trips on his Harley Davidson.

Brother Chaney lives at: 1745 Simms St., Denver, Colo. 80215. •



D.D. "Chopper" Chaney waves goodbye to Amtrak after a career that spanned 43-plus years.

Div. 192's Abinante a former SP engineer

Brother Charles N. Abinante of BLET Division 192 (El Paso, Texas) made his last run on August 2, 2005, for Union Pacific Railroad on a trip between Vaughn and El Paso.

Brother Abinante began his railroad career as a telegrapher for the Southern Pacific Railroad in San Jose, Calif., on December 16, 1970. He went firing for the SP on November 4, 1984, and earned promotion to locomotive engineer on May 28, 1986. He joined the BLE on December 1, 1986 and served his division as Vice Local Chairman of his division.

Brother Abinante and his wife Judy, have four daughters, Darien, Jacque, Julie and Jeanette, and eight grandchildren. During his retirement, he plans to golf and fish. He also looks forward to "not listening for the phone" now that he no longer has to worry about the railroad calling.

The Abinantes live at: 93 Saldana Way, Hot Springs Village, Ark. 71909. •

Division 192's Lester L. Wells loves retirement, also 'loved running trains'

Brother Lester L. Wells of BLET Division 192 (El Paso, Texas) completed his last run for the Union Pacific Railroad on July 14, 2005, on a run between Vaughn, N.M., to El Paso.

Brother Wells began his railroad career on May 4, 1973, as a fireman on the Southern Pacific Railroad. He earned promotion to locomotive engineer on June 24, 1974, and joined the BLE on September 1, 1974. During his

tenure with the BLE, he served as the President of Division 591 in the early-to mid-1980s. He spent 12 years with the United States Navy — two years of active service in Norfolk, Va., and 10 years in the reserves.

Brother Wells and his wife Karen were married on December 5, 1965. They have two children, Lester and Brian, and four grandchildren. Brother Wells enjoys woodworking and fishing.

In his retirement, he plans to complete some building projects and keep everything in "tip top shape."

"I made a lot of good friends that continue after retirement," he said. "I did my job to the best I could all the way to my last run. I loved running trains."

The Wells live at 5936 West City Rd. 10 N., Del Norte, CO 81132. •

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

BLET NEWS

Burlington Northern Santa Fe



BNSF reported quarterly earnings of \$0.96 per diluted share, which included a \$0.14 charge for additional environmental expenses and a technology system write-off, compared with first-quarter 2006 earnings of \$1.09 per diluted share, which included a \$0.04 per share line sale gain. Highlights included: Freight revenues that were a first-quarter record of \$3.54 billion and were 5 percent higher compared with first quarter of 2006, on flat volumes; Quarterly earnings that were \$0.96 per diluted share, which included a \$0.14 charge for additional environmental expenses and a technology system write-off, which compares to first-quarter 2006 earnings of \$1.09 per diluted share, which included a \$0.04 per share line sale gain; and Operating income was \$694 million, which included the environmental and technology charge of \$81 million as well as fuel headwinds of approximately \$60 million principally resulting from a decline in fuel hedge positions. This compares to first-quarter 2006 operating income of \$793 million, which included \$22 million from a line sale gain. Operating expenses for the first quarter of 2007 were \$2.95 billion compared with first-quarter 2006 operating expenses of \$2.67 billion. •

Canadian National Railway



Severe weather in the West in January, a two-week labor stoppage in February and avalanches and landslides in March hit Canadian National Railway Co.'s earnings in the first quarter, interrupting the "great run" it has achieved since going public in 1995. CN came in with a net profit of \$324 million or 63 cents a share, down 10 percent from \$362 million or 66 cents a share in the 2006 period, but chief executive officer Hunter Harrison told analysts CN will quickly regain speed in 2007 and still counts on a "great future." Harrison said the February work stoppage cost the bottom line \$35 million.

CN expects to spend a total of around \$1.5 billion on share-buybacks this year. This will allow for normal capital spending on the continent-wide network and investment in new products and services.

First-quarter revenue was \$1.91 billion, up \$9 million from \$1.897 billion a year earlier. Operating income dipped 10 percent to \$561 million. The operating ratio — a key measure of efficiency — deteriorated slightly. •

Canadian Pacific Railway



**CANADIAN
PACIFIC
RAILWAY**

Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd. posted an 18 percent rise in first-quarter earnings despite harsh winter weather that disrupted operations in Western Canada. CP plans to buy back up to 15.5 million of its out-

standing common shares for cancellation, representing about 10 percent of the public float. The company said it had net earnings of C\$128.6 million, or 82 Canadian cents per share, in the first three months of 2007. That compares with a profit of C\$108.8 million, or 69 Canadian cents per share, in the same quarter a year earlier.

CP officials had warned earlier they expected earnings would be hit by weather conditions that damaged its mainline in British Columbia, and disruptions caused by a strike at larger rival Canadian National Railway. Excluding foreign exchange gains and losses on long-term debt, diluted earnings per share rose 8 percent to 78 Canadian cents from 72 Canadian cents.

CP said its operating ratio — a transportation industry measure of efficiency — improved to 79.5 percent from 79.6 percent a year ago. •

CSX Corporation



CSX Corp.'s first quarter earnings were down a penny per share from a year ago, as rising expenses cut into record revenues of \$2.4 billion. The bottom line was most affected by a jump of \$81 million in materials, supplies and other expenses, a category that includes \$28 million in charges related to derailments of the company's trains during the quarter.

CSX saw a slew of accidents during the first quarter, prompting harsh comments from politicians in New York — where several of the accidents happened — as well as federal regulators. The charges left the company with net earnings of \$240 million, or 52 cents a share, down 2 percent from the year-ago quarter's \$240 million, or 53 cents a share. That figure includes earnings of \$18 million, or 2 cents per share, in insurance payouts from claims related to Hurricane Katrina. These results missed analyst expectations of 53 cents per share earnings, although they surpassed the expected \$2.38 million in revenue

CSX's operating ratio, a metric used to gauge how efficiently the company is operating, inched upward to 79.9 after a year in which the railroad got it down to 77.8, meeting its long-term goal of getting below 80. •

Kansas City Southern



KCS recorded first quarter 2007 revenues of \$411.3 million, a 5.9% increase over first quarter 2006. The revenue growth was attributed to a strong pricing environment and carload growth in some of the railroad's business segments. First quarter highlights include:

- Revenues of \$411.3 million, a 6% increase over 2006.
- Operating income of \$72.4 million compared with \$61.3 million in 2006.

- Operating ratio of 82.4%, a 1.8 point improvement from last year.
- Diluted EPS of \$0.21 compared with \$0.11 in 2006

For the first quarter, KCS revenues were led by coal, which had revenue growth of 13.3% in the quarter, and chemical and petroleum products, which experienced revenue increases of 12.5% quarter over quarter. In addition, in the first quarter, revenues in agriculture and minerals increased 8.6%, paper and forest products grew 0.9%, and intermodal improved 11.6%. Automotive revenue was down 8.5% in the first quarter.

First quarter operating expenses were \$338.9 million, an increase of only 3.6% over last year. •

Norfolk Southern



For the first quarter of 2007, Norfolk Southern Corporation reported

net income of \$285 million, or \$0.71 per diluted share, compared with \$305 million, or \$0.72 per diluted share, for the first quarter of 2006. The decline in net income reflected lower income from railway operations as well as lower non-operating income.

First-quarter railway operating revenues were \$2.2 billion, down 2 percent compared with the first-quarter of 2006. Continued weakness in the automotive and housing industries contributed to a 4 percent reduction in volumes during the quarter compared with record volumes reported in the year-earlier period.

For the first quarter, general merchandise revenues were \$1.2 billion, down 4 percent compared with the same period last year. Coal revenues reached \$557 million, about even with first-quarter 2006. Intermodal revenues were \$462 million, down 1 percent compared with the same period last year.

For the quarter, the railway operating ratio was 76.5 percent, slightly higher compared with 76.1 percent during first-quarter 2006. •

Union Pacific Corp.



UP reported 2007 first quarter net income of \$386 million or \$1.41 per diluted share, compared to \$311 million, or \$1.15 per diluted share in the same quarter last year.

First Quarter 2007 Highlights

- First quarter operating revenue grew 4 percent to a record \$3.8 billion.
- Operating income increased 19 percent to a first quarter record of \$719 million.

- First quarter best operating ratio of 81.3 percent, year-over-year improvement of 2.4 points.

2007 First Quarter Summary

• Quarterly operating revenue increased 4 percent in the first quarter of 2007 to a record \$3.8 billion. Four of the six business groups posted revenue

increases in the quarter as total average revenue per car (ARC) grew 6 percent. Yield improvements increased ARC, offset somewhat by lower year-over-year fuel surcharge revenue.

- First quarter 2007 carloads declined 2 percent versus the first quarter of 2006 to 2.3 million. Winter storms, a softer housing market and decreased domestic intermodal volume all contributed to the decline.
- First quarter 2007 operating income grew 19 percent versus 2006 to \$719 million, setting a first quarter record.
- UP's average quarterly fuel price, including transportation and taxes, was \$1.90 per gallon in 2007 versus \$1.87 per gallon in the first quarter of 2006.
- Quarterly average train speed was 21.7 mph, up 0.4 mph versus the first quarter of 2006. Quarterly terminal dwell time improved 13 percent to 25.3 hours versus 29 hours reported in the first quarter of 2006.
- The company repurchased more than 2 million common shares at an average share price of \$98.68 in the first quarter of 2007.
- First quarter commodity revenue summary versus 2006: Chemicals up 9 percent; Agricultural up 8 percent; Energy and Intermodal each up 4 percent; Automotive down 2 percent; and Industrial Products down 3 percent. •

BLET NEWS

History of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen

This chronicle is based on the archives of the organization, and was originally published in the Locomotive Engineers Journal on a regular basis beginning in January of 1941. Of primary significance in the compilation of this series are the Proceedings of the Conventions and the monthly Journal, which began publication in January of 1867. Also used as a basis for this series was the Monthly Statements, which were published from 1904 to the time this series was published in 1941. Original authors also relied upon immense files of correspondence, which contained a wealth of data dealing with events as they were poured into the mold of the times. Accordingly, the basis upon which this narrative rests must be accepted as authoritative.

Part 1 of a Series

The story of Organized Labor in the United States could not be written without giving a leading place to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. It was a pioneer organization — and bore all the hardships of the pioneer. History shows that until Organized Labor came to be a force to be reckoned with, the employer imposed his will on workers, and the working of that will left them only a short way removed from serfdom. Our social and economic life is indeed little more than a record of the struggles of men to survive.

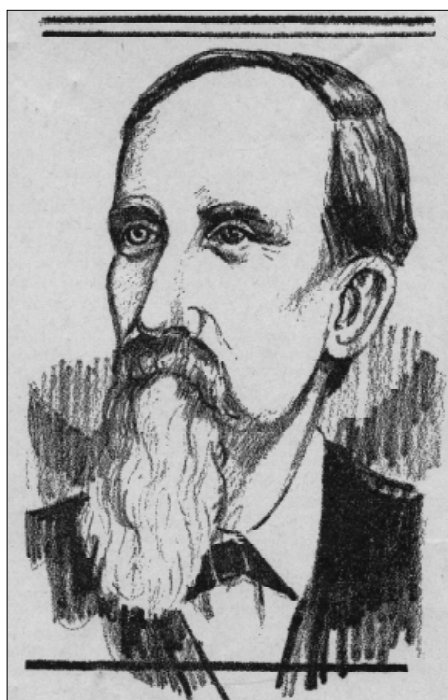
The purpose of these is to set forth the essential facts concerning the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers since its organization, and to show the role it has played in the functioning of our society. The Brotherhood with its thousands of members makes up no inconsiderable element in our population; and it is now, as always, doing its part in promoting the welfare of its members and their families.

At the time of the rise of the Engineers, living conditions, employment, and the general economy of the United States were all disorganized and bordering on chaos. Agriculture, industry, and the railroads were in a terrible plight. This state of things can be attributed for the most part to the confusions rising out of the industrial developments that took place between 1830 and 1860. It was a transition era. Other confusions, too, grew out of changes wrought in our social world — slavery playing no inconsiderable role.

Business adhered strictly to the philosophy of so-called “rugged individualism.” Business was built on that basis, which meant — get all you can regardless of how you get it. Labor was accordingly regarded as a commodity

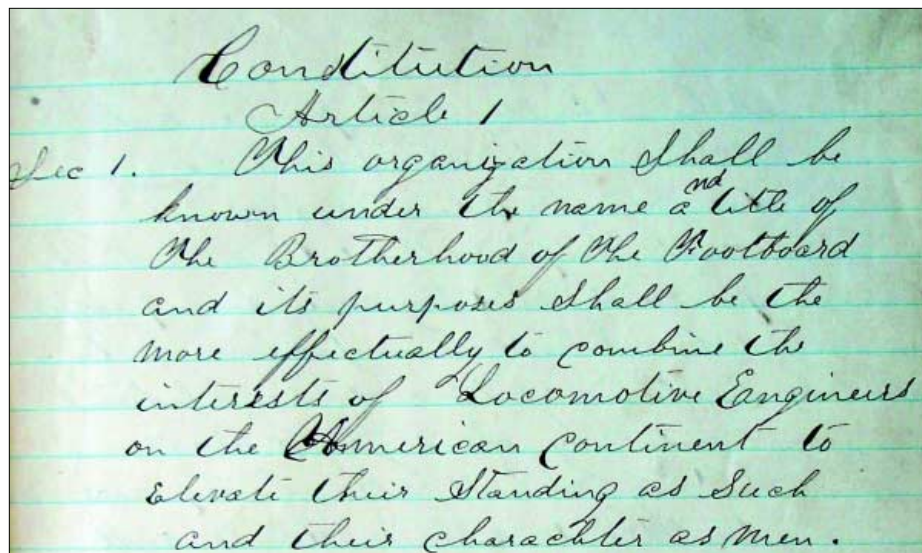
to be bought and sold on the market. A price was fixed on the services of every man.

In the 1830s women were working in industrial plants for as little as \$1.25 per week, and railroad workers were throwing switches for from 50 cents to a dollar a day. And these work days ranged from 10 to 18 hours! Analyses of working conditions and wage scales for the years 1830 to 1860 reveal a frightful state of affairs.



Sketch of William D. Robinson, first Grand Chief Engineer of the BLE. He is often referred to as the “Father of the Brotherhood.”

We, in this day, look upon Organized Labor as part and parcel of the social order; but we should understand that 80 years ago, “organized” workers — even though small and insignificant groups — were regarded with suspi-



Original hand-written Constitution of the Brotherhood of the Footboard from May, 1863.

cion. They were labeled radicals. They had practically no standing before the law; the statutes all ran to the defense of property. Such a thing as a written contractual relation with an employer was almost unheard of. Conditions of employment were always prescribed by the employer. There was no thought of a group meeting with the management for the purpose of discussing working relationships. This was an idea utterly foreign to the thinking of the peoples of the time.

It has required a wide stretch of years to educate the workers as to their rights, and to bring employers to recognize those rights, as is now done in collective bargaining. This footing is a profound one and reaches down to the bottom of present day economic society.

Background of the Brotherhood

The conditions had long been in preparation, which gave rise to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. It appears that during 1854 there arose a controversy between the locomotive engineers on the Baltimore & Ohio and the officials of that road, which resulted in a strike. Sixteen locomotive engineers lost their positions.

A strange tale is told of one of the early efforts of engineers to organize. In the summer of 1855 there appeared a notice in the *Daily Sun* of Baltimore that a convention of locomotive engineers would be held in Newark, N.J. Unhappily, no specific date was given for the meeting, but the mere fact that announcement was made that one would be held aroused great interest among engineers, inasmuch as working conditions and wages were very bad, and there was widespread discontent. In view of the Newark notice, a call was issued for a meeting of engineers to convene in Martinsburg, Va., (now West Virginia), for the purpose of electing delegates. In response to this, a number of engineers reported at Martinsburg. James C. Clark was chosen chairman of the gathering and E. Winters, secretary. The whole problem of organization was canvassed; and then the engineers proceeded to elect Alexander Lepze and Christian Smith as delegates to the Newark convention.

In due course these delegates proceeded towards Newark without definite information. They got as far as Philadelphia and thence by steamer to

New York. From New York they crossed to Paterson, N.J. There they met a number of engineers of the N.Y. & Erie R.R., but no one knew anything about a convention. But Brothers Lepze and Smith were not to be stopped, so they proceeded to Newark where they looked up several engineers. Even there none had been advised of a meeting. So it soon appeared to Lepze and Smith that they were on a wild goose chase. On their return journey, they stopped again in Paterson and discussed with a number of engineers the advisability of holding a convention in the near future, and there was universal approval of the suggestion.

On returning to Martinsburg, a meeting was called and a report made by the delegates of their experience and of the interest everywhere manifest in the proposal to organize. A resolution was then offered and a meeting called to be held in Baltimore on November 6, 1855. It was determined at the Martinsburg gathering that the engineers on each division of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad should appoint four representatives to attend the convention. Notices were also sent to engineers on other roads and when the doors opened, 71 delegates presented themselves.

The meeting was held in a hall of the Maryland Institute, which was tendered the delegates free of cost. This gathering in Baltimore extended over four days. Several resolutions were introduced and approved. The first read: “Resolved, that all Superintendents and Master Mechanics of railroads, or any other persons employing engineers, be respectfully solicited to give preference to those bearing a certificate from this Association, as they pledge themselves to recommend such as are worthy and well qualified.” Another, “Resolved; that all public newspapers who regard with favor this movement of the locomotive engineers of the United States, now assembled in convention, be and are hereby respectfully solicited to extend their countenance and support.” A third, “Resolved, that it is the purpose of this organization to protect ourselves, the traveling public, and our employers, from the injurious effects resulting from persons of inferior qualifications being employed as locomotive engineers.”

It was voted by the delegates to this Baltimore convention that:



The old Firemen's Hall at the southwest corner of E. Jefferson and Randolph in Detroit where the BLET was founded in 1863.

BLET NEWS

"We, the locomotive engineers of the United States, in delegate assembled, do hereby agree that we form a national association for our mutual protection and elevation, and do adopt for our government the constitution and by-laws hereunto annexed."

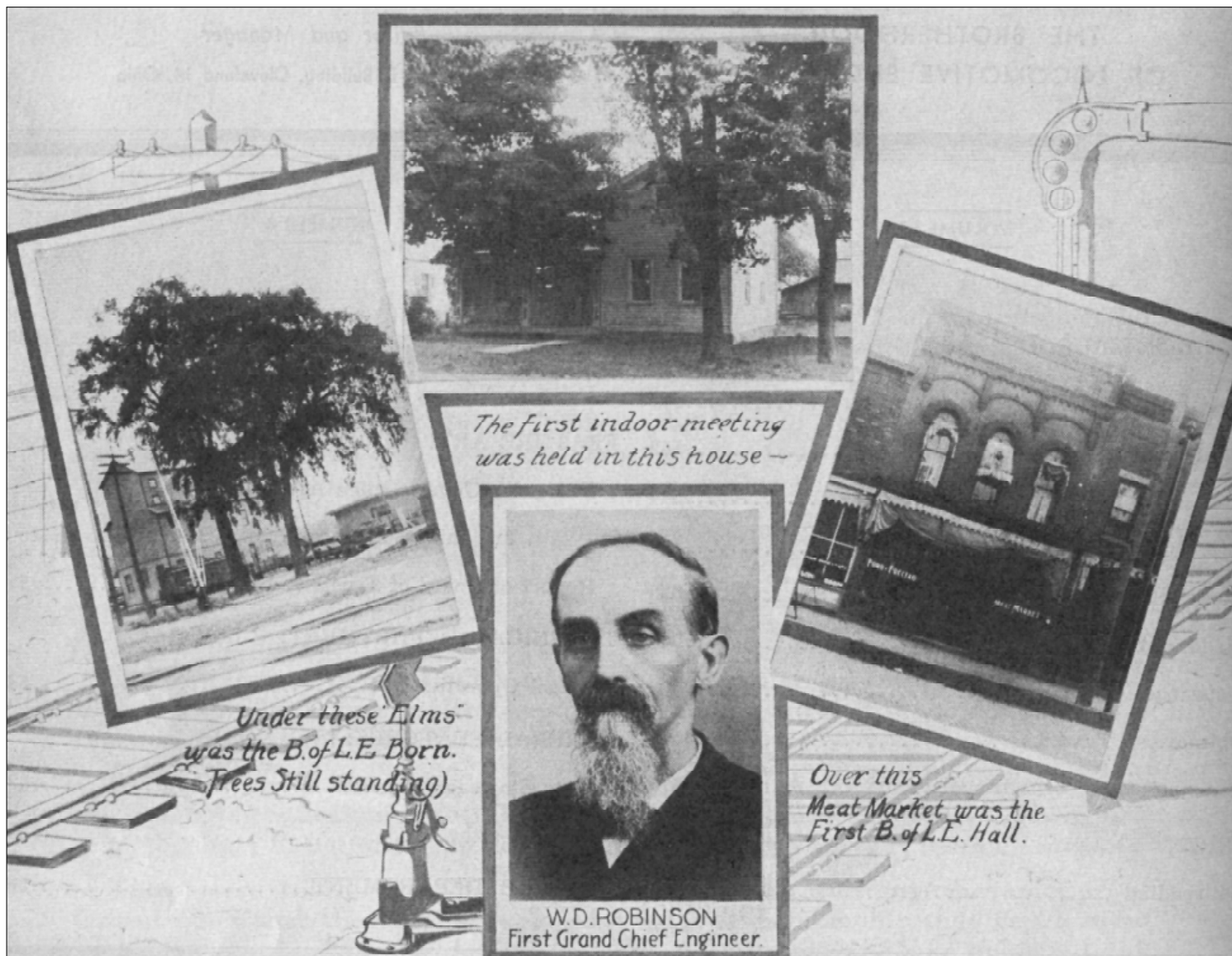
Article 1 of the constitution fixed the name for the organization as the "National Protective Association of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers of the United States." Section 2 named the officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer

Other sections fixed the duties of officers, and outlined the processes to be pursued in the matter of organization — such as in the granting of charters. An article provided that applications for charters should be signed by locomotive engineers, and should be accompanied by \$10. Subordinate associations consisting of 100 or less members might send one representative to national conventions. Fees, a form of traveling card and all the necessary paraphernalia of organization were prepared.

Another article declared that no man shall be considered competent to run an engine unless he can superintend or do the ordinary repairs on his engine. Other qualifications:

"No locomotive engineer shall be a member of this association unless he is a sober man and in good standing in society..." "No candidate for the post of engineer shall hereafter receive a certificate as such from any subordinate association who cannot read and write with facility the English language. This section shall have no reference to those engineers already employed."

Finally it was provided that "this constitution may be altered or amended at any future meeting of the national association by a two-thirds vote."



Among the delegates to this Baltimore meeting was a man who we shall find to have been the founder of the Brotherhood of the Footboard, eight years later. That man was William D. Robinson. Officers elected were: Benjamin Hoxie, President; J.R. Smith, Vice-President; William D. Robinson, Secretary; Christian Smith, Corresponding Secretary; and Henry Brown, Treasurer. Then the convention adjourned to meet in Columbus, Ohio, on the first Tuesday in October, 1856.

This gathering in Baltimore was composed of locomotive engineers and other railroad workers. In the early issues of the JOURNAL there are a number of references to this National Protective Association,

which was dominated by locomotive engineers. In an address made in Dayton, Ohio, in June, 1868, Engineer James C. White pointed out the fact of its existence. A statement about its transactions was rendered by the Corresponding Secretary of the Convention, but it has been lost.

Delegates indeed met in Columbus on the date appointed. There were 30 in attendance and the session lasted three days. Defects in the by-laws were amended and the whole program of the organization was discussed at great length; then the convention proceeded to elect officers for the following year. They were President, T.B. Askew; Vice-President, I.S. Wadleigh; Secretary, J.W. Clark; Corresponding Secretary, Moses Doty; Treasurer, Henry Brown.

A meeting of the National Protective Association was held in New York the following year; the organization continued intact until the outbreak of the Civil War. We are indebted to Christian Smith for this detail of the story. It will be recalled that he had

been elected Corresponding Secretary at the meeting in Baltimore. He had obviously been energetic in the performance of his duties. It is easy to understand why the National Protective Association of Locomotive Engineers of America made no further progress. Railroad management fell upon it hammer and tongs — and the difficult time that

followed up to the civil War put a damper on all thought or organization. Nevertheless, news of the Association of Locomotive Engineers gradually spread over the roads, particularly among the engineers; it became more and more certain that something definite would come out of the movement. It will be recalled that W.D. Robinson had acted as secretary of the Baltimore convention; and indeed he continued as secretary through the Columbus Convention of 1856. Thus he had in his possession the minutes dealing with the deliberations of the delegates; and he never ceased to talk about the necessity for organization. Robinson at this time was employed on the New Albany & Salem Railroad, where the conditions became so bad the workers' pay fell in arrears for six months. Finally, in the fall of 1862, through a friend, J.C. Thompson, Robinson secured a position with the Michigan Central Railroad whereupon, he moved to Detroit. Locomotive engineers were then being paid at the rate of but \$460 per month, conditioned on their running a minimum of 2,500 miles without regard to the number of hours consumed. Machinists were paid 90 cents a day; and in this connection it must be remembered that the purchasing power of the dollar — due to the Civil War — represented only about 60 per cent of its face value.



Alfred "Sam" Keith, a member of the original committee responsible for calling the meeting in Detroit, May 5, 1863, which resulted in the formation of the Brotherhood of the Footboard, which later became the BLET.



Moustaches and beards seemed to go with the ornate engines of yesteryear like No. 634 of the Jamestown, Madison & Indianapolis M.G. Bright was the locomotive builder, according to the plate, but the files disclose little else about the time, place and brothers. Pride in work shows clearly in many such photographs.

To Be Continued...

BLET NEWS

Supporting BLET-PAC is critical for 2008 elections

BLET-PAC

Continued from Page 1

tics,” and beyond voting and active participation in the process, BLET members also need to lead with their wallets by voluntarily contributing to the BLET PAC. The law prohibits the use of union dues for political purposes, so the contributions of individual members to our PAC is what gives our union leverage in the political battles in Washington, D.C. and the states by enabling us to support politicians who are receptive to our widely held concerns.

Upwards of \$2 billion — you read that correctly — will be spent by political candidates and parties leading up to the 2008 elections. And we can count on the railroads to spend millions to try to influence the process as they do every election cycle, even as they pinch every nickel and dime when it comes to giving a fair shake to their workers.

It is both reasonable and fair to wonder how an individual monthly contribution might make a difference. While candidates have come to count on the BLET for limited financial support, the process is already awash in overwhelming amounts of cash, and the bottom line is that we can’t purchase a political outcome – it is illegal, and if it

were not, the railroads would have figured out how do to it a long time ago.

To ease doubts about PAC participation, we need to bear in mind one basic truth in a world where money talks. A strong BLET PAC demonstrates first and foremost that our union is engaged in the process. It demonstrates that our members, by pooling together money within our means, are plugged into the process, and paying attention to what is going on in the political arena. When a politician gets a contribution check for \$5000 from a railroad, she gets it from a guy in a suit who represents a corporate logo and a stock price. When the same politician gets a contribution for \$1000 from the BLET, they know they are getting it from a few hundred brothers and sisters that are kicking in a few bucks a month to a fund. They know that those members speak for not only their own livelihoods, but those of their families and communities as well. They know that people are paying attention, and they know that people who pay attention vote. That \$1000 is worth a hell of a lot more than what the railroad gives.

To date, roughly one third of our membership contributes the BLET PAC. Many members contribute roughly one dollar a month. Others contribute amounts of \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 or

Sign up for the BLET-PAC!

To sign up online to support the BLET-PAC, go to:

www.bletdc.org/action/PAC

Login:

Password:

SIGNUP

BLETDC

You can also contact your Division Legislative Representative, your State Legislative Board Chairman, or the National Legislative Office at (202) 624-8776.

more. Although 100% participation would be ideal, a robust PAC would consist of half of our membership contributing \$5 each per month. It would demonstrate that when it comes to politics and government, we mean business, and it won’t just be the politicians who take notice. It would demonstrate to our Brothers and Sisters in other unions and crafts that we stand with them and are determined to show leadership and muscle, and it is a very safe bet that the railroads will take notice as well. It is an ambitious but worthy goal.

The bottom line is that the BLET needs **your** support, along with the support of each and every member of your Division. If you already contribute, the Brotherhood needs you to spread the word. Depending on the amount of your

monthly contribution, you might consider contributing a bit more. If you don’t already contribute, it is the hope of your leadership, and that of many of your Brothers and Sisters, that you will consider doing so and sign up!

We have come a long way in the past few years towards starting to get this country turned around in the face of overwhelming odds, which have stacked the deck in favor of corporations, including the railroads, for far too long. We are all working together to reshuffle that deck, and if the results from the last election were any sign, we are well on our way. We are being heard in the halls of Congress and in state capitols, but we still have a long way to go. Please, contribute today, and help spread the word to sign up. •

BROTHERHOOD OBITUARIES

As of January 31, 2007	As of March 31, 2007	As of April 30, 2007
14 — M. C. Womble	6 — R. A. Droste	11 — D. E. Clayton
23 — E. D. Collins	6 — J. D. Sparks	14 — J. L. Miller Jr.
23 — M. D. Ferguson	6 — J. L. Wheelchel	48 — M. J. Morrow
48 — L. H. Heuerman	20 — C. E. Goodall	77 — L. R. Huff
134 — J. R. Coffey	59 — L. F. Dampier	103 — R. A. West
139 — J. T. Peacock	62 — E. M. Campbell Jr.	122 — T. A. Hering
156 — H. E. Pattillo	190 — J. A. Lee	122 — H. C. Wollen
190 — R. R. Armstrong	202 — B. D. Carlisle	197 — G. T. Guzman
190 — B. Price	219 — J. F. Moxley Jr.	206 — L. V. Hedgecoth
269 — S. DiMartino	236 — L. C. Hanel	206 — R. P. Johnson
269 — W. H. Shepherd Jr.	239 — B. G. Housholder	206 — L. O. McGregor
348 — A. B. Selent	271 — F. Ashworth	206 — J. E. Moseley
385 — P. A. Delvaux	271 — J. E. Carter	206 — W. H. Traylor
456 — W. R. McCarty Jr.	271 — R. A. Draper	448 — R. C. Sykes
459 — M. F. Brouillette	271 — C. R. Epperly	567 — R. L. Dennen
671 — R. H. Myhre	271 — G. Gaffey	582 — M. L. Harris
682 — N. Guglielmucci	271 — H. B. Harris	692 — J. T. Rhodes
698 — J. J. Krantz	271 — T. L. Harshbarger	717 — J. E. James Sr.
803 — T. C. Strickland	271 — P. D. LaBare Sr.	766 — C. S. Marino
	271 — C. Mathews	
	271 — C. P. McGuire	As of May 31, 2007
As of February 28, 2007	271 — W. F. Menshouse	
48 — H. F. Westphaelinger	271 — L. B. Thompson	42 — L. D. Hisaw
103 — J. L. Dunivent	271 — F. H. Wagner Jr.	83 — H. C. Bridges Jr.
214 — W. L. Johnson	299 — K. L. McNeill	106 — R. L. Reinking
287 — H. F. Dively	391 — C. L. Hardin	158 — J. W. Cudworth
365 — A. A. Marx	476 — W. R. Addington	158 — R. S. Norris
405 — J. A. Regner	582 — E. J. Lewis	158 — L. K. Vaughn
457 — A. E. Leggett	695 — J. N. Holter	230 — D. Hurst
518 — J. C. Collins	752 — R. M. Berben	370 — R. P. Garvan
547 — J. A. Caughron	757 — E. B. Wilcox	385 — M. A. Voss
665 — L. L. Phelps	858 — T. O. Johnston	404 — R. E. Staggs
937 — V. C. Sipple	871 — A. L. Brunson	404 — E. D. Sheahana
		435 — T. G. Bryant
		435 — W. M. Watson
		532 — R. E. Gwaltney
		537 — J. T. Smith
		851 — V. Baga •

This information is based on reports filed by the Secretary-Treasurers of the various BLET Divisions.

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tional coverage for family members.

Members can receive more information by returning their yellow cards they received or by contacting American Income Life at 800-686-0042. American Income Life also provides supplemental life insurance packages that members can purchase on a voluntary and individual basis. •

Former BLE President John F. Sytsma, 1921-2007

John Frederick Sytsma, former International President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, passed away on May 29, 2007 of natural causes.

A beloved husband, father and grandfather, Sytsma was known as a witty and generous man who was well loved by family and friends.

"John was one of the great Brotherhood leaders who helped shape the organization that we know today," said Don Hahs, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET). "His wisdom, experience and knowledge will be sorely missed. I extend deepest sympathies to his family and friends on behalf of the 55,000 men and women of the BLET."

Born in Paterson, N.J., on July 22, 1921, to Frederick John and Alice Hutchinson Sytsma, he married his high school sweetheart, Phyllis June Stingle, in 1942. They were married for over 60 years until her death in 2004.

As a member of "The Greatest Generation" John served his country during World War II, in the U.S. Army, in the Philippines. During World War II, he ran engines in the Philippines and Korea as a member of an Army Railway Operating Battalion.

During the Depression, John secured his first railroad job at age 19 as a fireman for the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railroad. Working his way up to engineer in 1946, he became a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Division 521 (Hawthorne, N.J.) in 1954. He ran an engine in every class of service on the Susquehanna and in 1955 was elected General Chairman for the engineers on that property.

He was also employed for a time by the American Surety Co. of New York and attended the New York Insurance Institute. In addition, he took courses in business administration and business law at the State College of Paterson, N.J. The training enhanced his qualification for elected office with the Brotherhood.

In 1956, he and his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he became office administrator and chief clerk at the BLE headquarters. He was elected to the post of General Secretary-Treasurer at the BLE's 14th Triennial Convention in 1962. He held the office of General Secretary-Treasurer from 1962 to 1974 and First Vice President from 1974 to 1976. He was elected Presi-

dent by acclamation in 1976, a post he held for 10 years. He retired in 1986.

During his 10-year tenure as President, he was concerned not only with improving the wages and working conditions of engine service employees in the U.S. and Canada. He was also a leader in developing and promoting workable programs to combat drug and alcohol abuse among rail employees; in opposing random breathalyzer tests and "sniffer dog" searches of employees, and in efforts before Congress and federal agencies to improve safety standards for rail operations.

After retirement, John and Phyllis moved to Salt Lake City,

in order to be near family. John formed a close relationship with his grandson Mark Lubbers. The two of them enjoyed many adventures together and were always best "pals." During this time, John was able to indulge a long time interest in firefighters and fire engines.

An excellent photographer, he became official volunteer photographer for the Salt Lake County Fire Department. Over the course of his service with

the department, he took over 20,000 pictures of fires and apparatus. He continued in this

role until macular degeneration robbed him of his sight.

He is survived by his sister Carol Beun and two daughters, Jacqueline (Floyd) Pruitt of Dunwoody, Georgia; and Ruth (Bruce) Lubbers of Salt Lake City. His four grandchil-

dren are Mark Lubbers of Salt Lake City; Sarah (Phillip) Torrence of Kalamazoo, Michi-

gan; Jonathan (Jenny) Pruitt of Silver Creek, Georgia; and Joshua Pruitt of Atlanta, Georgia. John also has three great-grandchildren: John Mark, Gracie Claire and Benjamin Bruce Torrence of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Funeral services were held at the First Presbyterian Church, 12 North C Street, Salt Lake City, on June 2. President Sytsma was interred in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, 1342 E. 500 S.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Camp Kostopulos, an organization serving children and adults with disabilities. The camp is located at 2500 Emigration Canyon Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84108. •



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BLET NEWS

BLET contracts protect engineer work

BLET National President Don Hahs dismissed allegations from the United Transportation Union that a recently ratified BLET contract with CSX infringes on UTU work.

“In the first place you can assert anything in a court filing,” President Hahs said. “It’s up to the court to determine if your filing has merit. The BLET CSX agreement does not violate any UTU agreement and is not a threat to any UTU job.”

President Hahs noted that the Vernon award, one of the first major arbitration decisions regarding remote control, is clearly limited to specific types of operations in controlled areas. The new CSX agreement covers all assignments outside of yard/terminal limits, either remote or conventional, as well as all conventional yard assignments.

BLET Vice President Paul T. Sorrow, who spoke on behalf of BLET General Chairmen Tony Smith, Rick Finamore and Don Moates., agreed with President Hahs. He said the new CSX Scope Rules states in part:

“CSXT locomotive engineers whose name appears on the appropriate active engineer’s seniority roster will operate conventional (manual control) and non-conventional (remote control) locomotives used outside existing (established) terminal limits. Non-conventional operation will include remote control technology used in CSXT’s fleet (either CSXT owned, leased, or used in CSXT operations) when engaged in all road operations, including switching movements in road territory, and where not in conflict with any existing agreement.”

BLET General Chairman Moates

said: “We have not infringed on any UTU agreement. The UTU remote control agreement does not give the UTU the exclusive right to eliminate and replace locomotive engineers. Locomotive engineers have the right to operate remote control in the performance of their duties as locomotive engineers. The locomotive engineer has always been the individual in immediate, direct control of train motion and of the locomotive itself, regardless of the method used. Our sole objective is to totally secure work that historically, contractually, and futuristically belongs to the craft of locomotive engineer.

“We have always fought to protect the right of both UTU and BLET crafts,” Moates continued. “We do not encroach on the work of other crafts and stand ready to assist other crafts in preserving their work — but not at the cost of

giving them our work and eliminating the jobs of our own members.”

In fact, Vice President Sorrow said the BLET agreement should strengthen BLET’s and UTU’s crusade against one-person crews.

“In reality we are fighting to maintain maximum crew members on all trains,” Sorrow said. “There is no language in the CSX agreement that is detrimental to train service employees and they have crew consist agreements to protect them.”

President Hahs said the organization will do all it can to defend itself, its members, and its agreements from frivolous UTU lawsuits. He said the UTU lawsuit “lacks any merit and will most likely be dismissed by any court that understands the railroad industry.”

Briggs reelected Texas Legislative Board Chairman

Terry Briggs was reelected to another term as Chairman of the Texas State Legislative Board at Quadrennial meetings in Austin on April 24-25.

It is the second full term as Chairman for Brother Briggs, who is a member of BLET Division 530 in Commerce, Texas. He became chairman in 2001 after Raymond Holmes won election to the office of International Vice President & U.S. National Legislative Representative. Briggs won his first full-term election in 2003.

Also elected were: 1st Vice Chairman Catarino “Cat” Garcia of BLET Division 566 (Del Rio, Texas); 2nd Vice Chairman Tom G. Keith of BLET Division 187 (Fort Worth, Texas); Alternate 2nd Vice Chairman Tony Brown of BLET Division 857 (Tyler, Texas); and Secretary-Treasurer James Ussery of BLET Division 834 (Mineola, Texas).

The 38 delegates in attendance heard presentations from National President Don M. Hahs, First Vice President Ed Rodziewicz, and Vice President & National Legislative Rep. John Tolman. President Hahs discussed the tentative national contract; First Vice President Rodziewicz discussed the BLET’s recent testimony before the House Subcommittee on Railroads regarding fatigue and human factors accidents; and Vice President Tolman discussed the pending Rail Safety Improvement Act.

The delegates also lobbied in favor of House Bill 1083 at the state capital in Austin. A BLET-backed safety measure, H.B. 1083 would require drug and alcohol testing for limo



Kneeling, from left: Dan Stanfield, Division 197; Texas State Legislative Board Secretary-Treasurer James Ussery, Division 834; Mike Davis, Division 918; Bruce Blalock, Division 475; Bill Baker, Division 530; Mike Bobo, Division 620; Jerry Bullard, Division 212; and Eddie Pahl, Division 530.

Standing, from left: Richard Bermudez, Division 249; Texas State Legislative Board 1st Vice Chairman Catarino “Cat” Garcia, Division 566; E. L. Schneider, Division 192; Terry George, Division 62; Richard Myers, Division 264; R. C. “Buck” Montes, Division 910; Carl Dowell, Division 242; Marty Phillips, Division 496; Terry Briggs, Chairman TSLB; Tom Lovett, Division 592; Israel Compton, Division 244; Gary Pedigo, Division 177; Jerry Clark, Division 573; J.R. Dubois, Division 242; Tom Keith, Division 187; Lawrence Kridler, Division 206; Rick Howell, Division 574; Jeremy Stark, Division 776; John Lester, Division 703; Larry Lopez, Division 775; Steve Carter, Division 299; Mark Burgard, Division 350; James Dodd, Division 863; Mike Sharber, Division 500; Ted Usher, Division 172; and Tim Reed, Division 736

Present but not pictured: Tony Brown, Division 857; Ron Sikorski, Division 139; Chris Woods, Division 22; and Herb Yambra, Division 197.

drivers who transport train crews to and from off duty locations. The bill would require pre-employment drug screenings, as well as random and post-accident testing.

The Texas State Legislative Board began working on

this measure after a fatal accident in August of 2005. Two train crew members were riding in a company-provided limo to an off duty location when the accident happened near Coleman, Texas. Both crew members were severely

injured, including the engineer, who sustained career ending injuries. The driver’s cousin, who was riding in the van, was killed. Post accident testing revealed that the driver tested positive for methamphetamines. The driver survived

the crash, but is now in prison.

“These carry-all drivers are unregulated by any railroad safety regulations,” Briggs said. “Our delegates are lobbying to make sure this type of tragic accident never happens again.” •

New PATH contract secures employer-paid health care

PATH Agreement

Continued from Page 1

“Mediator Zachery Jones really brought the Parties together and got them to see middle ground,” Ruef said. “When both sides listen to the mediator with an open mind, fair agreements can be reached that serve both parties’ interests.”

General Chairman Nunziato thanked Vice President Ruef for his assistance, and praised the members of his negotiating team for their extreme diligence, including Vice General Chairman John Kochenash and Gerald Orrico of BLET Division 497.

PATH was formed in 1908 as the

Hudson & Manhattan Railroad connecting Manhattan with New Jersey through the famous “Hudson Tubes,” which were the first Hudson tunnels. It is a publicly owned rapid transit/com-muter railroad connecting Manhattan with Hoboken, Jersey City and Newark, N.J. It is a third rail, 600 volt DC system using MU passenger cars that are very similar to the equipment used by the New York City subway system.

The heavy rail transit system serves as the primary transit link between Manhattan and neighboring New Jersey urban communities and suburban railroads. PATH carries 227,000 passengers each weekday.

This volume is expected to continue to increase with the anticipated growth



Seated, from left: Cynthia Bacon, Chief Labor Negotiator, PATH; and Ralph Nunziato, General Chairman, BLET. **Standing, from left:** Sanjo Ortiz, Asst. Labor Negotiator, PATH; Steve Powell, Senior Labor Attorney, Port Authority; Kevin Lejda, Asst. Supt., PATH; John Kocenash, BLET GCA; Marcus Ruef, BLET Vice President; and Gerald Orrico, BLET GCA.

in regional residential, commercial and business development. PATH provided



NMB Staff Mediator Zachery Jones, center, congratulates BLET General Chairman Ralph Nunziato and PATH Chief Labor Negotiator Cynthia Bacon upon reaching a tentative contract settlement.

66.9 million annual passenger trips in 2006. •

BLET member ratify seven-year contract agreement with Metra

Metra Agreement

Continued from Page 1

the country.”

Other wage increases will come in the form of an increased certification allowance. This allowance, paid to locomotive engineers who are federally certified to operate locomotives, will increase several times over the life of the agreement: to \$10 per tour of duty on April 19, 2007; to \$12 on July 1, 2009; and to \$13 on July 1, 2011.

“I commend the members of the Metra negotiating team, who had the difficult job of negotiating wage increases at a railroad that receives half of its funding from public funding,” said BLET National President Don Hahs. “The negotiating team did a tremendous job.”

BLET Vice President Richard K. Radek assisted three General Chairmen on the negotiating team — John Koonce (former IC Electric); Mike

Priester (MILW North and West Lines); and Mike Taylor (former Rock Island).

“One of the most problematic things was the fact that Metra is about 50 percent publicly tax supported, and that funding source is shrinking due to lower tax revenues and highly increased demand for the funds, both from other agencies and because of public employee pension underfunding in the State of Illinois,” Vice President Radek said. “Another problematic issue was the ever-increasing cost of the benefit package, including health care coverage. I think we did well in obtaining the core economic portion of this agreement.”

Metra engineers will enjoy cost-free health care until Jan. 1, 2009. After that, members will contribute \$50 per month until Jan. 1, 2010, when the cost will increase to \$75 per month. The contribution will be capped at \$80 per month starting Jan. 1, 2011.

“We were able to increase our certification allowance to \$13 per tour and

obtain a higher general wage increase, which more than offsets the health care contribution,” Vice President Radek said.

Other contract provisions include:

- An increase in company-paid deferred compensation to the employees 401k plan, bringing the company’s payment to \$8.40 per tour of duty on Jan. 1, 2012;
- The right to use personal leave days as days worked for the calculation of overtime on yard assignments;
- The personal leave day rate of compensation will be the full pay of the last regular assignment;
- Personal leave days banked will be increased from 90 to 150 days;
- Engineers that exhaust all of the year’s personal leave days will be able to use banked personal leave days in the same year;
- Payment of bereavement leave will be at the same compensation earned if the engineer would have remained on his assignment. Regular

days off will not disqualify Engineers from the three days pay, thereby allowing the three consecutive days to be split with regular assigned days off; and

- Lost earnings paid for jury duty minus court payments for all time held.

“We would like to thank Vice President Radek for all his help in reaching this settlement,” the three General Chairmen said in a statement.

The 495-mile Metra system serves more than 100 communities at 251 rail stations in the Chicago area. The Metra system is comprised of 11 separate lines radiating from Chicago’s Loop via four downtown stations: Chicago Union Station, Ogilvie Transportation Center, Millennium Station and LaSalle Street Station.

Metra oversees all commuter rail operations in the 3,700 square mile northeastern Illinois region, with responsibility for day-to-day operations, fare and service levels, capital improvements and planning.

New single-system agreement at CSX ratified; Covers 5,500 members

CSX Agreement

Continued from Page 1

(CSX Northern Lines) for finally bringing the negotiations to a conclusion. (The Conrail SAA/CSXT Northern District GCA is not a party to the agreement.)

In approving the agreement, BLET members opted for a Performance Bonus Program instead of traditional general wage increases. While engineers will receive a 3 percent wage increase

and a \$2,500 signing bonus, future pay increases are tied to company performance. If CSX Corp. reaches its financial goals, then engineers will receive a 6 percent bonus of their 2007 earnings, an 8 percent bonus of their 2008 earnings, and a 10 percent bonus of their 2009 earnings.

“We believe our members will make more money under the Performance Bonus Program than general wage increases, and this agreement with present more opportunities for our membership in the future,” said BLET

Vice President Paul Sorrow.

BLET National President Don Hahs congratulated all officers involved in negotiations and thanked all the members who voted.

“The Performance Bonus Program is very similar to the program the BLET negotiated on Norfolk Southern a few years ago,” President Hahs said. “It has been well received by the majority of our members there and we believe the case will be the same for our CSX Brothers and Sisters.”

President Hahs said that if engineers are unhappy with the Performance Bonus Program, then there is a snap back provision that allows them to convert to general wage increases that are part of the tentative BLET National Agreement.

Vice President Sorrow again thanked everyone for voting. “More than 51 percent of eligible voters cast ballots on the contract,” Sorrow said. “I am pleased with that high level of voter turnout.” •

Members advised to check Retirement Board Form BA-6 for accuracy

Each June, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) issues a Form BA-6 to your home mailing address, which lists your total earnings reported to the RRB.

Dr. Elaine Reese, the BLET’s Director of Tax Compliance, advised that it is extremely important that this form is checked to make sure all your

union earnings and railroad earnings are combined.

How does this affect you? If any of the earnings are not properly reported to the RRB, then your annuity will be affected or you will not receive the proper amount. Therefore, it is your responsibility to check this form each year — do not wait until you retire to discover a mistake! The RRB has a four-year win-

dow in which corrections can be made.

By law organizations must retain records for only seven years then the old records can be destroyed. Please report any discrepancies to the National Division’s Tax Compliance Department, who will follow through with the Railroad Retirement Board. •

DESIGNATED LEGAL COUNSEL

Our union has designated attorneys who are qualified to serve as counsel for BLET members in accordance with the Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) governing workplace accidents.

In the event of an injury or death and before reaching any settlement with a railroad, members or surviving families should contact an attorney listed to get competent advice concerning their legal rights under the FELA.

In addition, if you or any members of your family have questions concerning medical malpractice, product liability or other types of injury cases, please don’t hesitate to contact one of these law firms for a consultation concerning your rights and remedies.

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BLET Auxiliary Update

Sometimes, you just can't please a railroad wife

By Mabel Grotzinger
Vice President
BLET Auxiliary

I grew up in a railroad town; as a matter of fact the railroad founded the town. The Pennsylvania Railroad was the only employer within 28 miles. My father was a car inspector and most of my mother's family worked in the shops repairing steam locomotives. My husband grew up in the same small town and his family worked for the railroad. They were conductors. Both of our fathers and grandfathers worked in the yard all of their working lives.

When Mike went to work for Penn Central as an engineer trainee I expected the same sort of life that I was used to from my life as I was growing up. I was in for a rude awaking. His first job was okay — he worked as a hostler moving engines in the engine house and he worked third shift so he was home every day.

My image of what railroad life was changed. I thought it was just the same as any 9 to 5 job. He went to engineer school and things changed rapidly all of the sudden he was on call, gone all the time at all hours of the night and for days at a time. This wasn't what I expected, what happened to being

home every day. It was a real reality check for me, but I made the best of it and tried to be supportive.

Railroad life is like no other when you live by the phone on call 24 / 7 holidays or not. It got to the point where we didn't really know when there was a holiday because everything revolved around him and how many times out he was. These things were hard on him, but what about the family? I know in my home I became very independent. I raised the children pretty much on my own. When he was home it was difficult to share the discipline of the children. You handled all the emergencies because he was always on the other side of the state somewhere. I now I had to learn to handle household matters as well. I learned how to fix the plumbing, to get that pipe from leaking long enough untill he would get home. Mike got to the point where the first thing he would say when he got home was "what did you break now?" Instead of "hello," this saying became a joke in the family. When the kids knew that dad was on his way home they would ask "what did you break now mom."

Twenty-seven years latter he finally had a yard job. Those years of being on the road were hard on him and his family. The long hours on the road,

staying in less than the greatest hotels, all these things were a part of railroad life. My husband spent 30 years of his life working for the railroad. This month he could have retired. But, he isn't here to enjoy it. He passed away a year ago.

My GIA — now the BLET Auxiliary — friends have helped me cope with these things. When we get together we have this common bond, we understand all of the day to day issues in our railroad life. I don't know what I would have done all those years without them and I thank them from the bottom of my heart

Some of my friends however, are experiencing this unexpected joy / rude awaking, in their lives. As wives we have spent 30 years dealing with the hours and not knowing when he would be home. All of the sudden there he is every day. Now what? I heard a wife say to her husband, "I am used to you being gone so many days a week now you are here. I have to cook every day, I don't normally do this. If I want to eat maybe it would just be a salad. Now I must think of a meal because you are here." Also when the husband is home we are used to being there we don't go anywhere when he is home. Now that he is retired he never goes anywhere.

What about me? Don't I get the chance to be with my friends? They feel because he is home they must stay home with him.

I remember when Mike first took the yard job. We sat around the house for three months before we realized we had two regular days off. It took us that long just to get used to the idea we weren't attached to the crew desk for two whole days. Once that set in we were gone every week somewhere.

The point is when you live the life of a railroad family there are certain things that seems normal. My father-in-law told me that when he retired he couldn't sleep for the first few months worrying about the phone ringing and missing a call. Mom complained she didn't know what to do with him. He was always in her way. All of the sudden he wanted to do the dishes. This was so out of character for him that the entire family thought he was crazy.

When our spouses decide to take the leap and retire we have to make all new changes. Our lifestyle is now what the rest of the world has been living like all along. We complain a lot about the railroad, we just didn't realize what the lifestyle did to the wife as well. I just guess you can't make a railroad wife happy. •

GC Reynolds reelected by acclamation at Wisconsin Central

Wisconsin Central General Chairman John W. Reynolds was elected by acclamation at the General Committee's Triennial meeting in Green Bay, Wisc., from April 22-25.

It is the second time that Brother Reynolds has won reelection by acclamation. He is a member of BLET Division 209 in Green Bay, Wisc., and has been a BLET member since Sept. 1, 1997.

Also elected were: 1st Vice General Chairman John A. Woyak Jr. of BLET Division 174 (Stevens Point, Wisc.); 2nd Vice General Chairman Eric Hau of BLET Division 173 (Fon du Lac, Wisc.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Scott Reinke of BLET Division 188 (Superior, Wisc.); Secretary-Treasurer Jon Fenlaeiki of BLET Division 184 (Schiller Park, Ill.); and Alternate S-T Billy Joe Worth of BLET Division 173 (Fon du Lac, Wisc.).

BLET National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert was in attendance and addressed the delegates on April 24. He spoke about the proposed national agreement, the CSX single system agreement, seniority maintenance, IBT per capita, CPA audits of General Committees, membership, finances, and Education and Training workshops.

Other representatives from the National Division were Vice President Rick Radek; National Legislative Representative John Tolman; Special Representative Ken Kroeger; and Doug Davidson of the BLET Arbitration Department. Brother Tolman addressed the delegates on April 23.



Seated, from left: Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of Education and Training/Special Representative; Doug Davidson, Assistant Director of Arbitration; Bill Walpert, National Secretary Treasurer; Rick Radek, Vice President & Director of Arbitration; Scott Reinke, LC Div 188.

Standing, from left: Eric Hau, LC Div 173; Jon Fenlaeiki, GCA ST; James White, LC Div 175; John Woyak, 1st Vice General Chairman; John Reynolds, General Chairman; Billy Joe Worth, Alternate GCA ST; Jason Alexander, LC Div 184; Richard Stefan, LC Div 209; Ron Spencer, LC Div 185; Mike Corrigan, LC Div 174

Wisconsin State Senator David Hansen gave a presentation to the delegates on April 23. Other special guests included General Chairman Mike Priester; General Chairman John Koonce; Vice General Chairman Mark Whitchurch; Wisconsin State Legislative Board Chairman Tony Dimond; Wisconsin State Legislative Board Vice Chairman Paul Aird; and retired Wisconsin State Legislative Board Chairman Keith Luebke.

Officials from various BLET-designated law firms that specialize in the Federal Employers' Liability Act

(FELA) were also in attendance, representing the firms: Rathmann & O'Brien, L.L.C.; Hoey & Farina; Schlichter, Bogard & Denton; Hunegs, LeNeave & Kvas, P.A.; Sands & Associates; Daniel J. Downes, P.C.; and Yaeger, Jungbauer & Barczak, PLC.

Representatives from the Brotherhood's Relief and Compensation Fund (BRCF) and the Locomotive Engineers & Conductors Mutual Protective Association (LE&CMPA) were also in attendance.

Vice President Radek and Brothers Davidson and Kroeger conducted an

educational program concerning a disciplinary investigation on April 24.

Debbie Rine put on a presentation regarding Railroad Retirement. Delegates also went over new and old business and reviewed their by-laws.

The Wisconsin Central operates over approximately 2,850 miles of track and trackage rights in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan's Upper Peninsula and Ontario. The BLET organized the Wisconsin Central property in 1997, and the railroad was purchased by CN in 2001 for \$1.2 billion. •

BLET NEWS

A message from Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa

A railroad security bill for railroad workers

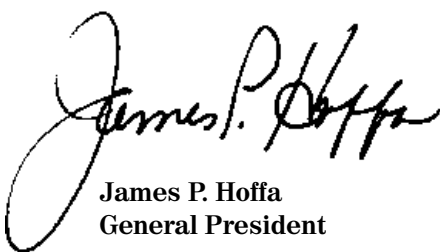
Congress is once again beginning to work on behalf of working men and women in the United States. An example is the recent introduction of House Bill 2095, the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2007 by Representatives Corrine Brown (D-FL) and James Oberstar (D-MN). Most important are the provisions that strengthen hours of service; require railroads to submit fatigue management plans to the Secretary of Transportation; create the position of Chief Safety Officer; strengthen whistleblower protections for rail workers; and require rail corporations to train rail workers on safety procedures.

When we published our “High Alert” report in 2005 we began the long road of educating members of Congress on the sorry state of rail security in our nation. Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE), Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-MS), Rep. Oberstar, Rep. Brown and many others were shocked to learn, via our own members’ accounts, how truly vulnerable our rail system is. More than 70 percent of those surveyed reported seeing trespassers in their rail yards while, at the same time, hazardous materials were in a majority of the yards. With the introduction of House Bill 2095, there is hope of corrective measures that will create a more secure rail system.

Both Rep. Brown and Rep. Oberstar have been tireless advocates for rail worker safety over the years and now, with the introduction of this bill, they can put their advocacy to constructive use. I urge all of our members to contact their senators and let them know that you are a rail worker in favor of this important bill.



In addition to contacting your senators, you need to give the Teamsters Union the biggest clout you can by contributing to the BLET-PAC fund. The Teamsters Government Affairs Department works strenuously to lobby for issues affecting the rail industry, and the hundreds of other industries we represent. But, corporate America is intent on pushing their anti-worker agenda and influencing members of Congress with cash—they outspend working families by more than 17-1. The BLET-PAC fund is your shield against anti-worker forces, electing the right people to office and ensuring that big business doesn’t trample our rights.


James P. Hoffa
General President

BLET asked to help with PBS documentary

Bill Moyers and Public Affairs Television is asking for help from BLET members in producing a four-part series on the Gilded Age and Progressive Era that will be broadcast nationally in the spring of 2008 as part of the public television (PBS) series Bill Moyers’ Journal.

The series will examine the era between 1877 and 1919 and will show how the “Gilded Age” was transformed into the “Progressive Era” through heroic struggles for democracy and economic justice. Railroad history, and the stories of railroad workers, is an integral part of this film. Producers, who have already visited BLET National Division headquarters in Cleveland, are in need of photographs of railroad workers on the job and with their families to help us tell the stories of the 1877 Strike and the 1894 Pullman Strike.

Producers are hoping BLET members can loan them photos of rail workers from the 1870s-1890s depicting men working on the trains, standing near or on the trains, at home with their fami-

lies, at labor gatherings and on strike.

If you are interested in sharing your photos with our production, please contact Kristina Cafarella at 212-560-8507, or via the Internet by e-mailing: cafarellak@thirteen.org. All photos will be returned. •

JUNE/JULY 2007 CALENDAR & EVENTS

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.

SEPTEMBER 7... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Albany, N.Y.

At the Clarion Hotel, AV Center, 3 Watervliet Ave. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

SEPTEMBER 14... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Fort Worth, TX

At the Radisson Inn South, 101 East Alta Mesa Blvd. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

SEPTEMBER 14... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Renton, Wash.

At the Holiday Inn Select, One Grady Way. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

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!

OCTOBER 12... Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Huntington, W.Va.

At the Radisson Hotel, 1001 Third Ave. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and conference starts at 8:30 a.m. Elected BLET officers only, please.

Advisory Board May 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; JRH Memorial Scholarship golf tournament, Las Vegas; Western General Chairmen Assoc. mtg., Las Vegas; BNSF contract negotiation mtg., Fort Worth; International Western Convention, Tacoma, Wash.; Memorial Day; Services for M.J. “Mo” Morrow, BLET Director of Communications.

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., Western General Chairmen Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; South Buffalo Railway; International Western Convention mtgs., Tacoma; National Association of Arbitrators; Mo Morrow memorial service.

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., Western General Chairmen’s mtg., Las Vegas; International Western Convention mtgs., Tacoma, Wash.; Arbitrators’ conference, San Francisco, Calif.; Services for Executive Staff Member Mo Morrow, Avon Lake, Ohio; IBT Unity Conference, Las Vegas.

Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—Assigned to CSX, NS and GTW general committees of adjustment; Attended Conrail/CSX Shared Assets General Committee of Adjustment Triennial Session; Public Law Board, CSX Western Lines; Mtg. w/ GC Karakian and Sr. Vice President, CN; Mtg. w/ CSX General Chairmen in connection with System Agreement; Signed CSX System Agreement; Attended services for dear friend and Brother M.J. “Mo” Morrow, Avon Lake, Ohio; Mtg. w/ President Hahs; 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; Western General Chairmen’s Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; Mtg., Chicago area General Chairmen, Chicago; PLB No. 6936 hearing, CSX-NL; Case No. 28 hearing & executive session, Chicago; NRAB arbitration, Chicago; CN/IC labor-management mtg., Homewood, Ill.; Metra photo session, Chicago; International Western Convention & Local Chairman’s Class, Tacoma, Wash.; National Academy of Arbitrators mtg., San Francisco; Advanced Advocacy Training Classes.

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&IR 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 cmt.; National wage/rules; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; Montana State Legislative Board mtg., Billings, Mont.; PLB hearings w/ GC/UP UP-ED; Mtgs. w/ UP GCs MacArthur, Rightnowar, re: New York Dock negotiations, Edelstein ID proposal, Kansas City.

Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.—Assigned to: BLET Trainmen’s Department; Kansas City Southern; Gateway Western; Midsouth Rail; Southrail; 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; Western General Chairmen Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; Joint mtgs. w/ BLET Divisions 219, 326, 599 and 632, Shreveport, La.; Mtg. w/ GC Twombly and St. Lawrence & Atlantic RR, Chicago; IWC mtgs., Tacoma, Wash.; Research, correspondence and general office duties.

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; Western General Chairmen’s Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; Wabash Hospital Assoc. mtgs., Decatur; Mtg. w/ all Local Chairmen on BNSF, Decatur; Mtgs. w/ BLET Divisions 391, 644, Fort Madison and Galesburg; Div. 595 mtg., Cape Girardo, contract proposal; Div. 672 & Div. 10 mtgs., Memphis; Div. 119 mtg., Amory, Miss.; Div. 386 mtg., Birmingham, Ala.; Div. 285 mtg., Thayer, Mo.; Divs. 83, 237 and 567 mtgs., Springfield; International Western Convention mtgs., Tacoma, Wash.; Div. 200 mtg., Delworth, N.D.; Div. 69 mtg., Grand Forks; Div. 695 mtg., Minot, N.D.; Div. 746 mtg., Mandan.

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—Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General Office Duties, telephone, correspondence; Coordinated content of NLFO website and May Newsletter; Coordinated PAC Contributions; Testified before Transportation and Infrastructure Railroad Subcommittee on H.R. 2095; Attended Alabama State Legislative Board Meeting; Attended International Western Convention Meeting; Spearheaded Washington lobbying effort in which the BLET members visited over 50 Congressional offices to address Amtrak contract and H.R. 2095; Coordinated participation and attended rally for Amtrak contract; Consulted extensively with congressional committee staff with regards to content of H.R. 2095; Continued coordination with IBT Government Affairs Department.

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 BLET Division 10, NS-N, Cincinnati, Ohio; Prepare for PLB 7057, SBA 1063, NS-S&N; PLB 7057, SBA 1063 arbitration, Norfolk, Va.; Lobbying for H.R. 2095, Washington, D.C.; Amtrak rally, Washington, D.C.; Division 77 mtg., New Haven, Conn.; Signing ceremony, new contract, PATH, Newark, N.J.; General assistance, correspondence, paperwork.



LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN NEWS
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen
A Division of the Rail Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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VOLUME 21 • NUMBER 6 & 7 • June/July 2007

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS (ISSN 0898-8625)
is published monthly by the
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen,
1370 Ontario Street, Cleveland, OH 44113-1702.
Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, OH.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News — BLET
Records Department, 1370 Ontario Street, Mezzanine
Cleveland, OH 44113-1702.

PERIODICALS
POSTAGE
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CLEVELAND, OH