AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka was presented with a BLET Brass Bell by International President Edward Dubroski on June 6 after Trumka delivered a powerful speech at the BLET’s International Western Convention in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Trumka complimented BLET leaders for their organizing success and highlighted the challenges that lie ahead for organized labor.

During his speech, Trumka thanked the BLET for being part of the organizing drive in which the AFL-CIO has gained 250,000 new members in two years.

“Over the last two years, nobody has done a better job of organizing than the BLET,” Trumka said. “With total BLET membership now at 59,000, you are setting standards for much bigger unions to follow — that’s incredible.”

Trumka also cited key issues the AFL-CIO plans to tackle in the months ahead, such as improving health care benefits and protecting social security.

“The year 2000 can be more than the beginning of a new century — if we do our job in the federal, state and local elections this fall it can be the beginning of a new future for working families and our union movement,” Trumka said.

“We cannot and must not remain slaves to the status quo — American workers deserve better health care and pension benefits, our children deserve better education, retired American workers deserve better Social Security and Medicare benefits.”

“For working families and our unions, the elections this fall aren’t about Democrats or Republicans, or recapitulating governmental bodies or winning political races. They are about recapturing moral authority for the values we share and winning a piece of the prosperity we do not share.”

BLE International President Edward Dubroski, seated left, discusses the proposed BNSF-CN merger with Montana Governor Marc Racicot (right) during a meeting at the state capitol in Helena, Mont. Standing is BLE Montana State Legislative Board Chairman C.A. Gilchrist.

HELENA, Mont. — BLET International President Edward Dubroski journeyed to Montana’s capital city this month to discuss the proposed BNSF-CN merger and renew lines of communication with labor leaders here.

In a morning meeting with Montana Governor Marc Racicot, Dubroski explained the BLET’s position of support for the merger. He told the Governor that the BLET had negotiated a package of worker protections on BNSF and, in particular, for BLET members in Montana.

“The worker protections we have been able to obtain from BNSF management will prevent us from having to take a gamble on what could happen to our members as a result of actions by the STB,” said Dubroski.

He went on to say that the American Train Dispatchers and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees had also signed on as supporters of the proposed merger and were able to secure similar protections as those secured by the BLE earlier this year.

“This group represents about 40 percent of organized labor on the railroad who are supporting the merger,” said Dubroski.

He told the Governor that the BLE had secured 10 years of labor protection for ad

BLE International President Dubroski explained the BLE’s position of support for the merger and renewed lines of communication with labor leaders here.

In addition, insurance companies, such as insurance companies, cannot raise the auto insurance rates of train crew members based on accidents that happen while working in a professional capacity for the railroad.

In recent years, it has become common practice for Kentucky law enforcement officials to force locomotive engineers to show a drivers’ license following highway-rail grade crossing incidents — in spite of the emotional trauma engineers were going through at the time.

But the situation became worse when the engineers’ auto insurance companies got involved.

Information on the engineers’ drivers licenses inevitably appeared in accident reports filed with the Kentucky Department of Transportation (KDOT). Even though the BLE members were functioning in a professional capacity as locomotive engineers at the time of the collision, their personal auto insurance premiums were increased after their insurance companies obtained copies of the KDOT accident reports.

“It was hard to believe that our members’ private auto insurance premiums could be increased based on accidents that happened while they were behind the throttle of a locomotive and not behind the wheel of an automobile,” said Kentucky State Legislative Board Chairman Tommy Mayne.

Under the new BLE-sponsored legislation, locomotive engineers and other train crew members have the legal right not to show their personal drivers licenses to au
The Federal Railroad Administration is currently seeking input regarding its legislative proposal for the use of locomotive horns.

The rule was proposed by the FRA in January 2000 and was adopted by Congress in 1994 requiring locomotive horns to be sounded when a train approaches a public-highway grade crossing. The following is Part II of the FRA’s official submission to the FRA on the use of locomotive horns. Part I appeared in the May 2000 issue of the newsletter.

§222.39 Quiet zone duration
FRA solicits comment on a three-year requirement versus a five-year requirement for quiet zones. Part II contains useful information. It may be of interest to those who today willfully violate warning horns.
Many railroad employees have at some time served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Under certain conditions, their military service may be credited as railroad service under the Railroad Retirement Act. The following questions and answers provide information on how military service may be credited towards railroad retirement benefits.

1. Under what conditions can military service be credited as railroad service?

The intent behind the crediting of military service under the Railroad Retirement Act is to prevent career railroad employees from losing retirement credits while performing active military service during a war or national emergency period. Therefore, to be creditable as railroad service under the Railroad Retirement Act, active service in the U.S. Armed Forces must be preceded by railroad service in the same or preceding calendar year. With the exceptions noted later, the employee must also have earned railroad railroad service credit for each month of military service and railroad service credit for each month of active service period not already credited. However, active service in a State National Guard or State Air National Guard unit may be creditable only if the unit was called to active duty by the Congress or President of the United States. Emergency call-up of the National Guard by a governor for riot or flood control would not be creditable.

2. What would be considered active duty for a member of a reserve component, such as the Army Reserve?

Annual training duty performed for a period of at least two weeks (usually 15 days or more) as a member of a reserve component of a uniformed service is considered active duty and may be creditable if the employee service requirement is met. The period of active reserve duty for training also includes authorized travel to and from a training duty weekend, end even or evening reserve duty is not creditable.

3. What are the dates of the war or national emergency periods?

The creditable periods that affect current retirement are:
- Sept. 8, 1939, through June 14, 1945.
- Aug. 2, 1990, to date as determined.

If military service began during a war or national emergency period, any active duty service the employee was required to continue in beyond the end of the war or national emergency is creditable, except that voluntary service extending beyond Sept. 14, 1977, is not creditable. Also, an employee who voluntarily entered military service from Jan. 1, 1947, through June 14, 1948, can only receive credit for such military service through June 14, 1949. However, such railroad workers, as well as railroad workers who voluntarily served in the Armed Forces between June 15, 1948, and Dec. 15, 1950, when there was not a national state of emergency in force, may be credited for railroad service credit for their military service until they entered military service, and if they returned to railroad service in the year their military service ended or in the following year, and had no intervening nonrailroad employment.

4. How can military service be used to increase benefits paid by the Railroad Retirement Board?

Railroad retirement annuities are based on length of service and earnings. If military service is creditable as railroad service, a person will receive additional annuity credits for each month of creditable military service and railroad service credit for each month during the active military service period not already credited by actual railroad service. Creditable military service may be used in addition to regular railroad service to meet certain service requirements, such as the basic 10-year service requirement for a regular annuity, the 20-year requirement for an occupational disability annuity before age 60, the 25-year requirement for a supplemental annuity, or the 30-year requirement for early retirement benefits.

5. Can United States Merchant Marine service be creditable for railroad retirement purposes?

No. Service with the Merchant marine or civilian employment with the Department of Defense is not creditable, even if performed in wartime.

6. Are railroad retirement annuities based in part on military service credit reduced if other benefits, such as military service pensions or payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs, are also payable on the basis of the same military service?

While railroad retirement employee annuities are subject to reductions for dual entitlement to social security benefits and, under certain conditions, Federal, State, or local government pensions, as well as certain other payments, railroad retirement employee annuities are exempt from reduction for military service pensions or payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, regardless of whether military service was used in computing the annuity.

7. Are the unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the Railroad Retirement Board affected if an employee is also receiving a military service pension?

Yes. The unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the Board are affected if a claimant is also receiving a military service pension. However, payments made by the Department of Veterans Affairs will not affect railroad unemployment or sickness benefits. When a claimant is receiving a military service pension or benefits under any social security law for days in which he or she is entitled to benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, railroad unemployment or sickness benefits are payable only to the extent to which they exceed the other payments for those days. In many cases, the amount of a military service pension precludes the payment of unemployment or sickness benefits by the Board. Examples of other such social security payments are civil service pensions, firefights and police pensions, and workers’ compensation payments. Claimants should report all such payments promptly to avoid having to refund benefits later.

8. How can an employee get more information about the crediting of military service by the Railroad Retirement Board?

For more information, an employee should contact the nearest office of the Railroad Retirement Board. Most Board offices are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Employees may find the address and phone number of the Board office serving their area by calling the automated toll-free RRB Help Line at (800) 872-6772. They can also get this information from the Board’s Web site at: http://www.rrb.gov/
Un Membre de la FIL est recompensé un acte héroïque

L'ingénieur de locomotive Kerry Osborne, le serre-frêne Joe Moloney et le chef de train Don Collings sont montés à bord du train numéro 935-06, du CP à MacTier, Ontario, et se sont dirigés vers l'ouest peu de temps après minuit le 7 avril 1997. Leur groupe de quatre locomotives tirait deux wagons chargés et 46 wagons vides. Le temps avait été exceptionnellement chaud et on en avait prévenu cent verges devant l'arrivée du train. Tout ce qui s'était passé pendant qu'il se tenait à sa feutre était deux rails argentées suspendues lâchement dans un grand bol. A un seul endroit, aucun bal-

fraction when we noticed the order slow signal down. So I

ble traffic controller,” Osborne said.

No sooner had he placed the radio handset down, when Osborne saw what appeared to be a black wall about one hundred yards in front. All he could make out as he stood up at his window were two silver rails hanging loose in a big bowl. No ties, no ballast... and no earth. The two strings of 115-pound continuous welded rail floated across a 15-metre deep ravine. Eighty-five metres of embankment had collapsed.

According to a Transportation Safety Board of Canada review of the incident, a number of factors contributed to the embankment failure. However, most of the blame rests squarely on the shoulders of an industrialist bea-

ver. The section of elevated roadbed that had collapsed crossed through a swamp spanning two rock cuts. When a drainage tunnel failed to allow water to flow from one side of the swamp to the other was partially blocked by this beaver’s dam, it caused the water level on one side of the embankment to rise much higher than usual. Finally the embankment, saturated by the unusu-

ally high water levels, gave way and the roadbed with it. “I just sat back down in my chair, turned and looked at Joe and Don and said, ‘goodbye boys!’” Osborne re-
called.

He had just enough time to throw the train into emergency before the lead locomotive fell over the edge, instantly killing the crew and the loco-

The leading locomotive plunged over the edge, fell onto its side and ground to a halt. The locomotive’s event re-
corder, similar to an airplane’s black box, indicated the engine had quickly checked Collings condition and imme-
diately assumed the worst.

With their engine resting at a 90-
der emergency brake had been ap-
plied. Moloney and Osborne were thrown against the front of the cab. Kerry found himself lying on his side in the right half of the cab. Moloney somehow managed to stay upright as they ground to a halt. Miraculously, both came through the disaster with relatively few injuries. “I anticipated the rest of the train would pile up on top of us,” Osborne said. But luck was with them when the three trailing locomotives and 13 cars that followed their engine into the void came to rest all around them. “I felt a drip on my neck and thought that wa-
ter was starting to come in but then I reached back and realized it was die-

fuel,” added Osborne, who initially feared that the locomotives were in water. Fire erupted on another locomo-
tive and the crew members knew they had to get out quickly.

Collings, who had been sitting be-
hind Moloney in the conductor’s seat, hadn’t been as fortunate. “I remember looking at Don just as we dropped over the edge, and he was just launched over the two seats. It was so violent,” Moloney related. Collings ended up be-
side Osborne, unconscious. Moloney, trained as a first aid instructor, quickly checked Collings condition and imme-
diately assumed the worst.

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada (right) speaks with BLE Locomotive Engineer Kerry Osborne. To the left is Conductor Don Collings. Both men received The Medal of Bravery, awarded for acts of heroism in hazardous circumstances.

Vus Mercredi, page 10
Rail union solidarity nets MBTA win

Union jobs saved as MBTA signs three-year maintenance contract with Amtrak

Rail unions won a major victory in Boston last week as the House of Representatives signed a three-year contract with Amtrak to continue all services, including mechanical, transportation and engineering. The three-year deal will save hundreds of jobs and will maintain employees' current rates of pay, which were threatened by Bay State Transit Service’s bid to make the mechanical work away from MBTA and form their own union.

Charles Moneypenny, legislative representative of the Transport Workers Union of America, hailed the contract as a victory for workers, passengers and taxpayers.

"It is a tribute to the courage and commitment shewn by each and every one of you throughout this fight," Moneypenny said.

A coalition of 11 labor unions, working under the name "Commuter Rail Workers United," spearheaded a grassroots campaign to pressure MBTA management to stay with Amtrak.

BLS President Edward Dubrofski specifically recognized BLM-AMTRAK General Chairman Mark Kenny, "representatives on the coalition."

The vote, in effect, gives China a blank check to continue its systematic and widespread abuse of human and workers’ rights. Although disrupted with the permanent NTR vote, the AFC-LIO said the debate has focused heightened world attention on China’s behavior and unions will work even harder to educate and mobilize working families around global fairness—and to hold corporations responsible for their treatment of workers everywhere.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney noted that three-quarters of the House Republicans and one-third of Democrats “handed big money to” and voted to approve an unbalanced trade with “a human rights violator of epic proportions”.

The 237-197 vote came after a months-long battle that pitted U.S. business groups, corporate lobbyists and their expense accounts against a broad grassroots alliance of working families. Along with the flow of corporate money aimed at influencing the vote, President Clinton dangled economic performance plums to wavering lawmakers to win votes.

“In a show of support for transportation labor’s opposition to the Amtrak Reform Council, the U.S. House of Representatives on May 19 passed the Andrews-Ney Amendment, which cuts funding to the ARC by a half. The amendment was sponsored by Reps. Robert Andrews (D-N.J.) and Robert Ney (R-Ohio).”

The final ball will go before the House-Senate conference before being passed on to the President. Andrews has pledged to make sure the funding cuts remain in the final version of the bill.

The ARC was created by the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997 to provide objective assessments of the Council’s operations. To date, rail labor has seen little in the way of objective reports coming out of the ARC. To the contrary, several members of the ARC have clearly made known their interest in dismaniting Amtrak.

For this reason, the Rail Labor Division of the TJT supported the Andrews-Ney amendment. Congressmen Andrews has been a strong supporter of rail labor, this bill goes a long way in helping rail unions accomplish their goals.

The bill by Bay State Transit Service to take work away from MBTA was plagued by controversy and alleged conflicts of interest. For example, Gilbert E. Carmichael was serving as a top executive at Bay State’s parent company when it tried to take the maintenance contract away from MBTA. At the same time, however, he was serving as Chairman of the Amtrak Reform Council (ARC).

The ARC was formed in 1997 for the purpose of evaluating Amtrak’s performance and making recommendations for achieving cost containment, productivity improvements and financial reforms. In addition, Bay State went to court and obtained a temporary injunction prohibiting Amtrak and MBTA from continuing their relationship. On May 24, fortunately, the injunction was overturned in a Massachusetts court, clearing the way for MBTA and Amtrak to finalize their contract for maintenance of commuter rail equipment.

"From this day forward, when someone wants to cite an example of what true solidarity means, they need only point to Boston," Moneypenny said. •

Despite labor’s opposition, House OKs permanent normal trade relations with China

A $12 million advertising and lobbying blitz by big business groups convinced enough members of the U.S. House of Representatives to give up an attempt to review China’s human and workers’ rights record and grant China permanent Normal Trade Relations on May 24, the AFC-LIO said.

The vote, in effect, gives China a blank check to continue its systematic and widespread abuse of human and workers’ rights. Although disrupted with the permanent NTR vote, the AFC-LIO said the debate has focused heightened world attention on China’s behavior and unions will work even harder to educate and mobilize working families around global fairness—and to hold corporations responsible for their treatment of workers everywhere.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney noted that three-quarters of the House Republicans and one-third of Democrats “handed big money to” and voted to approve an unbalanced trade with “a human rights violator of epic proportions”.

In February, rail labor representatives on the ARC issued a blistering dissent to the final version of the bill.

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The final bill will go before the House-Senate conference before being passed on to the President. Andrews has pledged to make sure the funding cuts remain in the final version of the bill.

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“From this day forward, when someone wants to cite an example of what true solidarity means, they need only point to Boston.” — Charles Moneypenny

In terms of fiscal irresponsibility, General Chairman Mark Kenny said, “From this day forward, when someone wants to cite an example of what true solidarity means, they need only point to Boston.” Moneypenny said. •

Rail labor questioned the report’s biased view, fiscal irresponsibility and misleading statements.

“The law that created the ARC is the Amtrak Reform Act, not the Amtrak Termination Act,” stated Rail Labor’s report. “Yet, instead of making positive recommendations to improve Amtrak, the ARC and report demonstrate a definite bias in favor of the elimination of Amtrak.”

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House votes to slash funding for Amtrak Reform Council

Union jobs saved as MBTA signs three-year maintenance contract with Amtrak

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INTERNATIONAL WESTERN CONVENTION

From left: GIA International President Ruth E. Pillman-Windham; BLE International President Edward Dubroski, FRA Administrator Jolene Molitoris, and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka.

In his speech to members, Brother Trumka complimented BLE leaders for their success in organizing and highlighted the challenges that lie ahead for organized labor. Trumka thanked the BLE for being part of the organizing drive in which the AFL-CIO has gained 250,000 new members in two years (see page 1 for details).

FRA Administrator Molitoris addressed the need for air conditioning in locomotive cabs (see page 7 for details).

“There is no other transportation industry subjecting its employees to such conditions. It is time, and way overdue, for such practices to stop in the railroad industry,” she said.

From left: Burlington Northern-Santa Fe General Chairman Tim Murphy, Texas State Legislative Board Chairman Raymond Holmes, and Union Pacific (Eastern District) General Chairman Mike Young.

Several BLE State Legislative Board Chairmen and division Legislative Representatives participated in the convention’s Legislative Workshop. Clockwise, from top left: Keith Luebke, Wisconsin State Legislative Board Chairman (Doug Horstman, Oregon State Legislative Board Chairman, is partially visible behind Brother Luebke); Jeff Ramage, Idaho State Legislative Board Chairman; George Lest, Colorado State Legislative Board Chairman; Tim Smith, California State Legislative Board Chairman; Rob Svob, legislative representative of BLE Division 28 (Tucson, Ariz.); Dana Smith, legislative representative of BLE Division 228 (Pocatello, Idaho); Bruce Yates, New Mexico State Legislative Board Chairman; and Lawrence Kemper, legislative representative of BLE Division 94 (Gillette, Wyo.).

From left: BLE First Vice-President & Alternate President Jim McCoy; New Mexico State Legislative Board Chairman Bruce Yates; California State Legislative Board Chairman Tim Smith; FRA Administrator Jolene Molitoris; Trudy Yates, wife of Bruce Yates; and Darrell Azarcon, First Vice-Chairman of the California State Legislative Board.

IWC Chairman Jim Lance meets with Administrator Molitoris following her speech.
Improving locomotive cab working conditions is a top priority of the Federal Railroad Administration, said FRA Administrator Jolene Molitoris in a speech to BLE members attending the union’s International Western Convention in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Administrator Molitoris said the FRA is committed to issuing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on locomotive cab working conditions before the end of this year.

While Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) working groups have done a good job of handling sanitation and noise issues, she said, the oppressive heat of locomotive cabs in the summertime remains an unresolved issue.

“(BLE International) President John R. Dubroski and I will be going on a ride very soon to raise public awareness and to pique the conscience of all in our industry, including those in the corporate offices, about what it’s like to spend hours in a locomotive without air conditioning when the temperature is 110 degrees or more,” Administrator Molitoris said. “There is no other transportation industry subjecting its employees to such conditions. It is time, portentous office, that we can realize — but only if we passionately seek it together.”

The BLE has been pushing for improved locomotive cab air conditioning standards for more than two years. Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative Leroy Jones, Indiana State Legislative Board Chairman Bill Verduyne, and BLE Regulatory Research Coordinator Bob Harvey are members of the RSAC Cab Working Conditions Task Force.

Administrator Molitoris also addressed the FRA’s “zero tolerance” goal for deaths in the railroad industry.

“When we first set zero tolerance as a goal, there was a lot of loud skepticism,” she said. “But just look at the statistics: Between 1993 and 1999, employee fatalities from train incidents have been reduced a phenomenal 87%! And for the same period, employee injuries have been reduced by 43%.

“In 1988, for the first time in railroad history, employee fatalities were under 30. In fact, 27. And in 2000, if we continue the safety effort we are now waging, we could reduce the number to under 20. So far in the year 2000, there have been eight employee fatalities, of which none were locomotive engineers. And so those skeptics who scoffed at zero tolerance — let them take note — we know zero injuries and zero deaths in the railroad industry is a real goal that we can realize — but only if we passionately seek it together.”

Administrator Molitoris also complimented President Dubroski for the vast amount of work his administration has accomplished in such a short period of time.

“I have had the chance to see your President in action,” Molitoris said. “I have watched President Dubroski exert powerful leadership — whether it is at the Conference table with the Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater, in the White House with President Clinton and Vice-President Gore, on the hill outside the Capitol championing the cause of miners on national television, or aggressively seeking and getting the most extraordinary agreement for 10 years of New York Doek protection for BLE members in the event that the BNSF-CN merger is considered and approved.

“This is a President who along with his fine and dedicated team is proving that leadership matters at the BLE.”

Administrator Molitoris promised to address the issue of air conditioning in locomotive cabs before the end of the year. BLE President Dubroski takes notes during her speech at the BLE’s International Western Convention in Jackson Hole, Wyo.
The National Transportation Safety Board has recognized the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers for its nationwide program to educate operating employees about the dangers of working while fatigued.

In the wake of a fatal collision between two Union Pacific freight trains near Delia, Kan., on July 2, 1997, an NTSB investigation revealed that train crew fatigue was a contributing factor in the disaster. In fact, it was determined that one of the locomotive engineers had been awake for 18 continuous hours at the time of the collision.

In its official accident summary, the NTSB issued Safety Recommendation R-98-60 directly to the BLE, which required the BLE to educate its members about fatigue in the workplace, including how to avoid it.

In response, the BLE established a three-part fatigue countermeasures program, which it has presented to its membership throughout the United States and Canada over the past three years. The Safety Board was pleased to learn that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers actively supports the intent of this recommendation through a national program to educate its members about the effects of fatigue. BLE Chair Jim JimPOINTS to the NTSB letter to BLE President Edward Dubroski in May. The BLE’s fatigue counter-measures program was developed by Don Bergman, Chairman of the BLE Arizona State Legislative Board. Bergman, who also authored the program, said it has been presented to more than 400 locomotive engineers and their spouses all across the U.S. and Canada.

“Approaching the fatigue problem in our industry with a program that would be accepted by the locomotive engineers was our secondary goal,” Bergman said, “with our first goal defined as the elimination of fatigue related accidents.” The presentation is broken down into three parts. Part I covers fatigue related physiological aspects of human beings (circadian rhythms, sleep disorders, effects of fatigue, etc.). Part II blends the above scientific aspects of fatigue with the practical application of each craft (what to expect and how to counter fatigue). Part III discusses the home life of operating crew members, and explains how to adapt the fatigue countermeasures program to their everyday lives.

Bergman said the program has been so successful that he records that locomotive engineers and their spouses have attended it more than once. With the acceptance of the program and information has been extraordinary,” Bergman said. “Why? We relate to them, not as a scientist to a class, but as an engineer to an engineer. To relate to an individual, in his or her own setting, with information about fatigue and how it effects that individual will have an enormous effect on whether or not that individual walks away with a ‘bunch of scientific junk’ or thought provoking, usable information.

“We warn them that they may experience the effects of fatigue in various ways, such as memory loss, wrecked decision making, poor reaction time, deteriorating physical coordination, incorrect information processing, irritability, short temper and tunnel vision. All these things are related to an activity on the locomotive. For example: Discussion on memory loss will talk about an engineer realizing he has a ‘slow order’ ahead that he will soon be approaching. Fatigue will affect his memory to the extent that he will pull his orders from behind his brake valve and read them, only to go through the same process several minutes later because he can’t remember what he just read.

“We reassure our members that they are not losing it — they are merely suffering the effects of fatigue. How to control this memory loss… we suggest that the engineer write on the windshield (with a washable marker) the restriction he is approaching the first time he reads it, and to communicate with another member of the crew that a slow order is approaching.

“Our scientific colleagues may talk to them on a VCR tape. We don’t believe so.”

Hundreds of BLE members will be attending Burgerman’s NTSB-approved fatigue countermeasures presentation this month at regional meetings in Jacksonville, Fla., Louisville, Ky., and Niagara Falls. There is still time to register and attend the presentation at the SWCM in September.

NTSB recognizes BLE fatigue countermeasures program

In its official accident summary, the NTSB issued Safety Recommendation R-98-60 directly to the BLE, which required the BLE to educate its members about fatigue in the workplace, including how to avoid it. In response, the BLE established a three-part fatigue countermeasures program, which it has presented to its membership throughout the United States and Canada over the past three years. The Safety Board was pleased to learn that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers actively supports the intent of this recommendation through a national program to educate its members about the effects of fatigue. Bergman said, “with our first goal defined as the elimination of fatigue related accidents.” The presentation is broken down into three parts. Part I covers fatigue related physiological aspects of human beings (circadian rhythms, sleep disorders, effects of fatigue, etc.). Part II blends the above scientific aspects of fatigue with the practical application of each craft (what to expect and how to counter fatigue). Part III discusses the home life of operating crew members, and explains how to adapt the fatigue countermeasures program to their everyday lives.

Bergman said the program has been so successful that he records that locomotive engineers and their spouses have attended it more than once. With the acceptance of the program and information has been extraordinary,” Bergman said. “Why? We relate to them, not as a scientist to a class, but as an engineer to an engineer. To relate to an individual, in his or her own setting, with information about fatigue and how it effects that individual will have an enormous effect on whether or not that individual walks away with a ‘bunch of scientific junk’ or thought provoking, usable information.

“We warn them that they may experience the effects of fatigue in various ways, such as memory loss, wrecked decision making, poor reaction time, deteriorating physical coordination, incorrect information processing, irritability, short temper and tunnel vision. All these things are related to an activity on the locomotive. For example: Discussion on memory loss will talk about an engineer realizing he has a ‘slow order’ ahead that he will soon be approaching. Fatigue will affect his memory to the extent that he will pull his orders from behind his brake valve and read them, only to go through the same process several minutes later because he can’t remember what he just read.

“We reassure our members that they are not losing it — they are merely suffering the effects of fatigue. How to control this memory loss… we suggest that the engineer write on the windshield (with a washable marker) the restriction he is approaching the first time he reads it, and to communicate with another member of the crew that a slow order is approaching.

“Our scientific colleagues may talk to them on a VCR tape. We don’t believe so.”

Hundreds of BLE members will be attending Burgerman’s NTSB-approved fatigue countermeasures presentation this month at regional meetings in Jacksonville, Fla., Louisville, Ky., and Niagara Falls. There is still time to register and attend the presentation at the SWCM in September.
This year the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) will hold its annual meeting in Niagara Falls, Canada, reports NASLBC Secretary-Treasurer Perry Renfro.

FFRA Administrator Jolene Mollitor headlines the list of guest speakers. BLE President Edward Dubrowski will address the State Legislative Chairmen, as will Vice-President Leroy Jones, the BLE’s U.S. National Legislative Board Chairman. Names of other guest speakers were not available as this issue of the Newsletter went to press.

The meeting will be July 22-26 at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel and Conference Center.

Cleveland — The BLE has made available the first in a series of online training videos on its website. The videos are available to anyone, regardless of craft or union affiliation. The BLE website address is: http://www.ble.org.

Washington — The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the May 27 derailment of a Union Pacific freight train and subsequent release of hazardous materials northwest of Eunice, La.

State authorities evacuated approximately 25 percent of the population of Eunice (about 2,500-3,000 residents). Most residents were allowed to return to their homes within a week of the derailment.

There were no injuries or deaths at the time of the accident. However, there have been three minor injuries related to the hazmat release.

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KENT, Wash. — Ten years ago, terms such as “counseling,” “psychiatric” and “peer support” had no place in the stoic world of train engineers and macho men; that they don’t need counseling, “it’s a horrible feeling, a strange feeling — something I’ll never forget,” said BLE Vice-President Leroy Jones.

Railroad experts said almost all engineers will operate a train that hits a person or a car full of people at some point in their career.

In the past two months, trains struck and killed two young girls on a trestle in Kent; a 45-year-old man in Auburn; a 33-year-old man on a trestle in Pacific; and a 34-year-old woman near Sumner.

“It’s a horrible feeling, a strange feeling — something I’ll never forget,” said Jack Bokay, the engineer of a train that killed a 15-year-old boy who was traveling at 40 mph and there was no braking prior to the train line-induced emergency brake application.

Washington — Senate Republicans are collecting money from special interest groups awaiting action on legislation, a wire service reported. In May, the railroad industry contributed $185,000 to the National Republican Senatorial Campaign. Lawmakers are considering legislation to renew the Surface Transportation Board, which regulates railroads.

Pittsburgh — A proposed high-speed magnetic-levitation train system could make Pittsburgh a hub for the transit system of the future, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported.

Pittsburgh is one of several areas in the nation seeking federal maglev money. A decision on what city gets it could come as early as September from the Federal Railroad Administration. It is the city’s hope to make Pittsburg the hub of a maglev system that would link large cities from Washing-ton to Boston on the East Coast to Mid-west points like Toledo and Chicago.

The estimated cost of the project is $1.5 billion. Two-thirds of the money would come from the federal government and the rest from other sources.

The private sector already has committed about $3 million to the project.

The first segment of the maglev system in Pittsburgh could be operating about 4 and a half years after financing is in place.

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noire d’un avion, a indiqué que la locomotive avait rapidement réduit de vitesse et que ce mouvement a cessé quatre secondes après son départ. Plus tard, un incendie avait commencé sur le frein de secours ait été appliqué. Moloney et Osborne ont été jetés avant l'arrivée de la première trémie. "J'avais prévu que le reste du train s’empilerait sur nous," a dit Osborne. Mais la chance était avec eux quand les trois locomotives auxiliaires et 13 wagons qui suivaient leur locomotive dans le vide desserte étaient sortis d’eux. Le feu a éclaté sur une autre locomotive et les membres de l'équipe savaient qu'ils devaient sortir rapidement.

Collings, qui était assis derrière Moloney dans le siège du chef train, n'avait pas été aussi chanceux. "Je me rappelle avoir regardé Don juste comme nous sommes tombés par-dessus bord, et il s'était juste lancé sur les deux sièges. C’était si violent," a mentionné Osborne. "Moloney s’est retrouvé à côté d’ Osborne, inconscient. Moloney, qualifié d'ingénieur en première soirée, a rapidement vérifié la condition de Collings et immédiatement assumé le poste. "

Avec leur locomotive reposant à un angle de 90 degrés, Moloney et Osborne ont grimpé jusqu'au-dessus de la cabine et sont sortis par la seule ouverture restante. Sachant qu’il ferait très froid, ils sont saisis des manteaux et une radio portative en sortant. Avec le feu faisant rage autour d’eux, Moloney s’est tourné vers Osborne et dit qu'il voulait sortir Collings. "Pas d'importance, je savais que des secouristes allaient arriver. Don. Je ne voulais pas qu’il brûle," il s’est rappelé plus tard. "J’ai saisi son bras mais je ne pouvais pas le soulever, que c’était un carburant diesel," a ajouté Osborne, qui, au com- mencement, a cru que les lo- comotives soient dans l’eau. Le feu a éclaté sur une autre loco- motive et les membres de l’équipe savaient qu’ils devaient sortir rapidement.

Collings, qui avait été atteint derrière Moloney dans le siège du chef train, n’avait pas été aussi chanceux. "Je me rappelle avoir regardé Don qui s’est jeté au-dessus de la cabine et s’est retrouvé sur le côté dans la moitié droite de la cabine. Joe est parvenu d’une façon ou d’une autre à rester debout pendant qu'ils s’arrêtèrent. Merveilleusement, tous les deux sont sortis du désastre avec relativement peu de blessures."


Jim Beaudry, CPR signal
End. •

"We made it," Moloney shouted, as the two men gave each other high-lives in tri- umph. "We were all alive!" he said later with amazement. "We had made up our minds. We were going to beat it. In fact, I walked over to the engine and kicked it."

"It was quite a feeling," Osborne agreed. Collings was still getting colders, so Moloney once again risked re-entering the locomotive to find the first aid kit and the man who was bleeding was Mervie Blan- ket. Covering Collings, Osborne stood watch over him. They waited for the first re- sponders to arrive. A very ex- plosion sent a shower of metal debris and a cloud of black smoke towards them, as Moloney adapted a metal door ripped from a locomotive as a shield. Collings, now more alert, cried out in pain.

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Nearly three years later, in Ottawa, both Moloney and Osborne stood in front of Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada. Along with 44 other Canadians, they received The Medal of Bravery, awarded for acts of heroism in hazardous circumstances. A report on each incident was read aloud before the laureates were pinned on the recipients.

"We had no idea it was going to come to this," Moloney said when asked about receiving the award. "It’s a tremendous feeling to be chosen."

"It’s an unbelievable honour," Osborne said. "I’ve often taken a second look for those naysayers who have not yet been convinced that I am a great driver."

"But hopefully the cerméni- nescents for everything they did."

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Pacific, Amtrak and CSX, run a freight train.”

News Briefs

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fallen asleep on railroad
tracks near Pacific last
year. There was not much
Boak could do about it.
Traveling at 45 mph, the
6,000-ton freight train
would have taken about
one mile of pneumatic
engineers to
start finishing to fin-
ish a route after an acci-
dent. But no uniform mea-
sures exist to ensure that
engineers can get the help
they need. “The rail-
road policies are not uni-
versal,” Jones said. “It’s
a hodge-podge of things.
Some railways have poli-
cies, others don’t. There’s
no federal regu-
lation or federal law that
requires anything to be
done.”

FORT WORTH and
MONTREAL —
Burlington Northern
Santa Fe, Canadian Na-
tional Railway and the
Western Coal Traffic
League said in a joint
court reply brief that the
Surface Transportation
Board has advanced a
fundamentally flawed le-
gal defense of its rail
merger moratorium.
BNSF, CN and WCTL
stated the STB was wrong in
telling the U.S. Court of
Appeals for the District of
Columbia Circuit that
it has the statutory right
to impose the morato-
rion. The three parties
said the STB has an ex-
plicit statutory mandate
established by the U.S.
Congress — requiring it
to process rail merger
applications expedi-
tiously under strict dead-
lines, and to approve
mergers that are consis-
tent with the public inter-
est. The parties have
asked the court to over-
turn the 15-month mora-
torium because it contra-
venes the STB’s govern-
ment statute.

DENVER — Union
Pacific Railroad will pay
an $800,000 fine and make
excessive safety improve-
ments to settle a federal
lawsuit over toxic
chemical spills resulting
from crashes, the Denver
Rocky Mountain News
reported.

Amtrak's Acela Express,
which has been running
since March 17, 2000, has
two Acela Express
trains go into service this
summer, travel from Bos-
ston to New York — on
average, a 3-hour 30-
minute ride. Travel time will
“be whittled” to three
hours, Remington said, “de-
fectly within the
next year or two, and
hopefully sooner than
that.”

Troubles for the
Acela project have in-
cluded a tendency for the
train’s wheels to wear
out quickly and a prob-
lem with the locomotives’
electric power system,
both of which have largely been fixed, Remington said. Amtrak
engineers are still work-
ing on some computer
software problems.

“Our commitment is
to do this right,” Remington said. “We
do want to rush it into
service.”

Norfolk Souther
has gone to federal court
to challenge a city’s right
to prevent trains from
blocking crossings for
extended periods, ac-
cording to the Chicago
Sun-Times.

The rail giant is su-
ing the city of Hammond,
Ind., which has written
tickets totaling $2.7 mil-
lion in fines against the
railroad since last year.

Norfolk Souther
says the northwest Indi-
ana city’s ordinances
limiting how long a train
can block traffic at a
crossing interfere with
interstate commerce.

Also, the company
argues, its trains some-
times block crossings for
more than 10 minutes so
they can comply with fed-
eral laws governing
speed, signals and brake
testing.

“We tried to work with
this community, but we
felt compelled to pro-
tect the company’s inter-
ests,” said Susan Bland,
spokeswoman for the
railroad.

Like many communi-
ties around Chicago,
Hammond’s law lets po-
lice ticket trains that
block intersections for
long periods.

But when the trip will
actually reach that much-
touted three-hour mark
is less clear. When the first
Acela Express trains go into
service this summer, travel from Bos-

ton to New York will take
about three hours and
15 minutes, Amtrak spokes-
man Rick Remington said.
Travel time will “be
whittled down” to three
hours, Remington said, “de-
fectly within the
President Dubroski meets with Montana AFL-CIO Executive Secretary Don Judge (right) at the offices of the Montana State AFL-CIO. Dubroski discussed the proposed BNSF-CN merger and other matters of interest and concern to BLE members.

Montana

Continued from Page 1

versely affected employees, and that there would be no major downsizing of locomotive engineer and rail traffic controller work forces.

Dubroski also stressed that he would work with INSIS management to insure that the new operation would not result in loss of traffic for other roads operating in Montana, which include Montana Rail Link.

In a similar meeting, Dubroski briefed Montana Public Service Commission Chair David Fisher regarding the BLE’s position on the merger, and discussed rail topics in general in the Pacific Northwest and Montana in particular. The Montana PSC fields two railroad inspectors.

Terri Duggins of the Montana AFL-CIO. Dubroski met with Executive Secretary Don Judge. At that meeting he explained the INSIS-CN merger and had a lengthy discussion about legisla-

tion on Railroad Retirement and the status of the UTU matter before the NMB. Dubroski also inquired about the status of various legislative races in the region and the prospects for electing candidates sensitive to organized labor.

He later attending a reception for Democratic candidates and was intro-

duced to those in attendance by the Chairman of the Montana Democratic Party. •

Kentucky

Continued from Page 1

thorities following car-train collisions or derailments. In addition, the new law forbids insurance companies from rais-

ing the premiums of train crew mem-

bers involved in accidents while work-

ing in a professional capacity for the railroad.

Brother Mayne was instrumental in lobbying for the new law, saying he hoped it would set a prece-

dent in other states. He worked closely with Representative Perry Clark from Louisville, Ky., who introduced the legislation.

Mayne also thanked Terry Beadles for his efforts in lobbying members of the Kentucky General Assembly for passage of the bill. Brother Beadles is Secretary-Treasurer of the Board. Ken-

tucky Governor Paul E. Patton signed it into law on April 21, 2000.

Brother Mayne credited his coun-

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