In a lawsuit filed on May 15 in the U.S. District Court of Colorado, the General Committee of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) representing Engineers on the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) filed for injunctive relief to prohibit UP from operating remote controlled locomotives without trained and certified Locomotive Engineers. BLE General Chairman Michael Young said: “The impact of remote control train operations cannot be overstated. Locomotives without trained and certified Engineers will place the general public in harm’s way. Safety considerations are obvious. There are potential train accidents, including those at public road crossings, and further related derailments. However, the elimination of Engineer positions and the potential adverse economic effect it will have on each community served by UP cannot be ignored.”

He also stated that: “This action is necessary because the Union Pacific Railroad has improperly and illegally eliminated Engineers’ work. By law, such drastic, arbitrary change in work assignments requires negotiation between the parties. BLE is the proper ‘holder of the contract’ for the craft of Locomotive Engineers and has traditionally and consistently maintained this Engineer work. UP continues to refuse to discuss or negotiate with the Engineers on our main issues of concern relative to this remote control equipment.”

According to Young, “In many cases job elimination will require Engineers to work hundreds of miles from their home and away from their families.” He noted that in a recent meeting in February with John Marchant, UP’s Vice President of Labor Relations, the issue of Engineers and their families being required to relocate as a result of this remote control equipment was something that the UP was unwilling to discuss at that time.

In response to the continuing disinformation from the UTU’s propaganda machine, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers’ Executive Committee has issued a letter to the union’s Advisory Board and its General Chairman who sets the record straight regarding the recent history of remote control technology. The Executive Committee, made up of President Don Hahs, First Vice-Presiden & Alternate President Ed Rodzewicz and General Secretary/Treasurer William Walpert, issued the letter on May 10.

In the letter, the BLE Executive Committee points out that the UTU’s leaders are “masters of spin.” They use half-truths, misleading statements and catchphrase phrases to justify their actions,” the letter states. “Railroad employees in general, and train and engine service employees, in particular, should not allow themselves to be derailed by the UTU’s distracting public relations efforts.”

Recent UTU propaganda falsely claims that UTU invited BLE to jointly negotiate with the carriers over which remote control technology to implement. As of October 2001. “This is far from true,” the Executive Committee wrote. In reality, the UTU used its remote control letter of intent with the carriers in an attempt to blackmail the BLE’s newly elected Executive Committee to migrate to remote control. The Executive Committee wrote: “This letter became a threat —梅 ore or else,” The Executive Committee wrote. If (President Byron) Boyd and (UTU Assistant President) Thompson truly wanted that merger to go through, grabbing the letter of intent was the most counterproductive thing they could have done.”

The Executive Committee wrote that railroad workers across the country have been — or will be — negatively impacted by this UTU letter of intent. “The railroad put the remote control operations into effect without an agreement,” the Executive Committee wrote. “Train service employees have been performing engineer’s work at lesser rates of pay than they would normally have received. They now have more onerous jobs that they are not properly trained for, and this strategy has accomplished the loss of hundreds of engine and train service jobs with all the reduction in labor costs going toward the railroads’ bottom line.”

The Executive Committee also gave its perspective on the UTU’s “pro company” approach to representing its members. “ULTU’s leadership has adopted an approach different from the rest of Labor,” the Executive Committee wrote. “It is a defeatist approach. It has been described to us by UTU’s leaders as being modern and recognizing that Rail Labor doesn’t win, for the Carriers have the upper hand in government, the federal agencies, the courts, and therefore, we have to stop butting our heads against the brick wall and join the railroads.”

The letter describes this “defeatist approach” as the UTU’s “let’s join ‘em” policy: “The full text of the letter is available on the BLE website.”

At the same meeting, Union Pacific representatives advised BLE that they intend to implement remote control train operations in 21 of their major terminals, and 40 satellite locations, over approximately the next 24 month period. “There is no restriction on what type of commodities the railroad will move with remote control trains in all of these communities, including hazardous materials and nuclear material movements,” Young said.

Several accidents have already occurred on most all the nation’s major railroads involving these remote control trains, which have caused property damage, compromised the safety of communities and impacted the timely movements of rail shipments of all types. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the safety “watchdog” of the industry, has failed to issue any mandatory regulations regarding remote control equipment.

The BLE General Committees are seeking an injunction to prohibit UP from operating remote control trains until the employees and the general public can be assured of its safe operation.

BLE clarifies UTU remote control spin

Teamsters, TTD ask NMB to dismiss UTU application

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) and the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department (TTD) filed a joint submission requesting that the National Mediation Board (NMB) dismiss the case stemming from its ongoing representation of railroad and airline employees throughout the United States, the May 29 BEFED submission says.

The Teamsters and the TTD argue that the UTU’s rejection of a merger with the UTU helps prove that the two groups do not share a community of interest. “Notwithstanding their other interests in the outcome of this matter, the IBT and TTD would still be compelled to object to the UTU’s unabashed attempt to force its representation upon the nation’s locomotive engineers through an improper use of the Board’s procedures, when the engineers themselves have affirmatively rejected the UTU through their own democratic processes.”

“Rather than possessing a community of interest, enginee and trainmen diverge on a myriad of issues,” the IBT-TTD brief states.

The Teamsters and the TTD argue that the BLE’s rejection of a merger with the UTU helps prove that the two groups do not share a community of interest. “Notwithstanding their other interests in the outcome of this matter, the IBT and TTD would still be compelled to object to the UTU’s unabashed attempt to force its representation upon the nation’s locomotive engineers through an improper use of the Board’s procedures, when the engineers themselves have affirmatively rejected the UTU through their own democratic processes.”

The UTU’s “let’s join ‘em” policy: “The full text of the letter is available on the BLE website.”

See Teamsters, Page 2
Representatives of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers participated in a high-energy “Rally for Rail” on Capitol Hill on May 8, joining hundreds of concerned citizens and rail supporters from across the United States in urging Congress to support passenger rail as an integral part of America’s transportation system and to provide full funding for Amtrak in 2003 and beyond.

Participants in the “Rally for Rail” represent many businesses, labor unions, and state and local governments, as well as millions of consumers and citizens across America.

The BLE was represented by Representatives John B. Eaves of N.C. and John J. Jordan of Calif., Vice President of U.S. & National Legislative Representative, as well as several State Legislative Board Chairmen, including Terry Briggs (Texas), Ken Kertesz (Pennsylvania), Mike Muscha (North Dakota), J.T. Norris (Virginia) and Ed Way (Illinois). Also participating was Amtrak General Chairman Mark Kenny and Brian Gallagher of the New York State Legislative Board.

More than 50 groups have endorsed resolutions calling on Congress to fully fund Amtrak in 2003, and to enact a re-authorization bill that ensures a strong, long-term future for the nation’s passenger rail system.

“The need for the service is there, and supports from across the United States want a stronger passenger rail system. In early May, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the National Conference of State Legislatures and three other national organizations representing local governments sent a letter to House and Senate leaders urging them to appropriate $1.2 billion for Amtrak in FY ’03 to prevent the elimination of services.

Among those addressing the 9 a.m. pep rally were Senators Joe Biden (D-DE), Tom Carper (D-DE), and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX); Reps. Jack Quinn (R-NY), James Oberstar (D-MN), and Tom McClintock (R-CA; Mayor Kenneth Barr of Fort Worth, Texas and Patrick Henry Hays of North Little Rock, Ark., representing the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Ibele Huddleston, Wapello County Board of Supervisors, Ottumwa, Iowa, representing the National Association of Counties; George Dorshimer of LITK Engineering Services of Ambler, Pa., representing the business community through the American Passenger Rail Coalition; Marc Fleming, international president of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; and Debbie Sease, legislative director of the Sierra Club.

In addition, rally participants flooded Capitol Hill and met with more than 45 key members of Congress. Congress created Amtrak in 1971 to take over unprofitable passenger rail lines from the private sector. But unlike aviation, highways and other modes of transportation, Congress has given passenger rail no dedicated source of funding. Instead, it must rely on the unpredictable annual appropriations process, which has provided only about 50% of the authorized funding levels in recent years.

To improve its financial position, Amtrak has found ways to boost revenues by nearly 40% over the last five years — leveraging valuable assets, borrowing funds from private banks, and cutting back on operating and capital spending without compromising safety, reliability or service. But these efforts have not been enough to offset the basic problems of conflicting policy mandates and inadequate public funding. Without adequate funds in 2003, Amtrak has told Congress and state leaders it may have to discontinue much of the National network as early as this fall.

“Investing in our national Amtrak passenger rail system has never been more important,” said George Dorshimer, President of LITK Engineering Services of Ambler, Pa. and board member of the American Passenger Rail Coalition. “It’s ironic we’re in this situation because Amtrak is performing so well in the market,” said Alan Forer of Dublin, Georgia, president of the National Association of Railroad Passengers. “The growing demand for Amtrak’s services is a reflection of the fact that rail is an efficient way for many business and leisure travelers, it’s cost-effective for state and local governments, it’s a contributor to job creation and economic development, and it’s good for the environment and energy independence.”

“The need for the service is there, along with strong support from the traveling public, state and local governments, and all of these groups here today,” Sonny Hall, president of the Transport Workers Union of America and president of the Transportation Trades Dept. of the AFL-CIO “What Amtrak needs most now is a steady, strong partner in the federal government in a role it doesn’t have today.”

The BLE is a part of a broader coalition, which includes representatives from the American Passenger Rail Coalition, National Association of Railroad Passengers; Railway Progress Institute; U.S. Conference of Mayors; National Conference of State Legislatures; Sierra Club; the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department; and the National Association of Counties.

From left: George Newman, SLBC-MA, Terry Briggs, SLBC-TX (behind Newman), Ken Kertesz, SLBC-PA; Mark Kenny, GC-Amtrak; Raymond Holmes, VP & NLR Mike Muscha, SLBC-ND (next to Holmes); Brian Gallagher, New York; J. T. Norris, SLBC-VA, Ed Way, SLBC-IL.

**BLE News**

BLE Joins ‘Rally for Rail’ on Capitol Hill

Labor, other groups lobby Congress to provide Amtrak funding, save passenger rail

old division among the operating crafts on Class I rail carriers, a division that has been upheld by the NMB for nearly 70 years and do so...despite no legal or factual basis for the assertion that a consolidated craft or class of Train and Engine Service Employees exists in the properties of Kansas City Southern or, for that matter, any Class I carrier.

The UTU’s request for the Board to make this radical change from the well-established, historic craft division between engine service and train service would not exist if train service employees are without merit and should, therefore, be dismissed.”

The IBT/TTD brief argues that forcing a single craft would be detrimental to the rail industry, creating a labor organization plagued by constant internal conflict and increasing the potential for operational disruptions on the nation’s railroads. The IBT/TTD brief stated that the potential craft issue has already “become disruptive on the KCS property to the point of interfering with operations.”

The railroad attorneys documented in letters dated April 4 and 23, 2002.

As the BLE’s statutory responsibility is to promote stable collective bargaining, it is unclear how a consolidated craft or class of Train and Engine Service Employees would serve the interests of the employees. The BLE petitioned the Board to make a decision in the interests of promoting stable collective bargaining relationships throughout the railroad industry, the Board should dismiss the UTU application.”

A copy of the nine-page IBT/TTD amicus brief is available on the BLE website.

**Teamsters, TTD condemn UTU tactics**

Teamsters, TTD, and the UTU, which represents a range of crafts, are engaged in a legal battle in the federal courts to determine the proper representation of train and engine service employees, and the status of the KCS "Double-Line Crafts" line agreement. The UTU’s appeal in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals is set for oral argument on June 13, 2002. The IBT/TTD brief argues that the UTU’s position is not based in law or fact and is not in the best interest of the employees involved. The UTU’s position has been rejected by the NMB and the courts.

The IBT/TTD submission concludes, “In light of the fact that engineers and trainmen comprise functionally distinct crafts or classes of employees on the KCS, these employees cannot be found to possess a substantial community of interest sufficient to justify a forced departure from the present craft or class alignment on the Carrier.”

The IBT/TTD brief argues that forcing a single craft would be detrimental to the rail industry, creating a labor organization plagued by constant internal conflict and increasing the potential for operational disruptions on the nation’s railroads. The IBT/TTD brief stated that the potential craft issue has already “become disruptive on the KCS property to the point of interfering with operations.”

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Code of Conduct for Officers and Employees of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Concerning Employers and Designated Legal Counsel

Every officer and employee of the International, each General Committee of Adjustment, the State and Provincial Legislative Division, and the County Division shall comply with the following requirements:

• Read and periodically review the Rules of Conduct of the FELA Designated Counsel ("DLC");
• Abide by such rules in so far as they are applicable to officers and employees;
• Refrain from any action that causes or may cause "DLC" to violate the Rules of Conduct.

A gift does not include items of little value such as plaques and greeting cards.

Unless the frequency would appear to be improper, an officer or employee may accept food, refreshments and materials provided at a conference or widely attended gathering or certain other events which an officer or employee attends in his official capacity.
Remote control technology has caused 60 locomotive engineer jobs to disappear nationwide since the beginning of 2002—and now it has caused a billboard to disappear.

In April, the members of BLE Division 532 spent just under $1,000 to lease a billboard overlooking the railyard in Jacksonville, Fl. They used the billboard to post a message protesting CSXT Transportation’s use of remote control locomotives. Even though the Division paid to have their message displayed for a full month, it disappeared after only two weeks.

The billboard’s message read: “Remote control trains? No engineer in the cab? Stop the madness! Call your Congressman today! Stop paying dues to a union that eliminates jobs! Join BLE Division 532 today!”

The billboard was situated outside the control tower window and in plain view of the local trainmaster and yardmaster. It received positive responses from BLE and UTU members alike. “Most UTU guys on the ground around here don’t want remote control,” said M.E. “Ed” Mellott, Local Chairman of Division 532.

However, the BLE message mysteriously disappeared and was replaced with a military recruitment ad.

Brother Mellott contacted the billboard company that his division had paid to lease the advertising space. According to Brother Mellott, a representative from the billboard company told him members of the company asked that the BLE message be removed. She told Brother Mellott that CSXT believed the message was a breach of the billboard company’s contract with CSXT, primarily because the billboard was located on CSXT property. She further told Brother Mellott that CSXT threatened to knock down all the company’s billboards located on CSXT property if the message was not removed.

News of this controversy reached a reporter at Trains Magazine’s website, Trains.com. A reporter from Trains.com contacted CSXT headquarters in Jacksonville, Fl., to inquire about the disappearing billboard. CSXT spokeswoman Kathy Burns said the billboard was not on CSXT property, and that the decision to ask that the billboard be removed did not go through proper approval channels within the company. She also said that CSXT would apologize to Brother Mellott. “We clearly made a mistake,” she told Trains.com.

Notification about the billboard went to CSXT’s real estate subsidiary, Burns said, which contacted the billboard company and asked that it be removed because the message “was offensive.”

Brother Mellott said he was contacted via phone by a high-ranking CSXT director of labor relations on May 25.

The officer apologized for the billboard “misunderstanding” and said the railroad would not object if BLE Division 532 wished to pay to have the same message posted on the same billboard. After taking down the BLE’s message in mid-April, the billboard company offered to transfer the message to another location for two weeks or to refund half of the BLE’s money. The BLE Brothers chose to have half of their $1,000 refunded. “We felt we had made our point, so we opted to get our money back,” Mellott said.

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers’ International Division extends congratulations to seven different Brothers who were elected or re-elected Chairmen of their respective State Legislative Boards over the past month. They are as follows:

• James F. Ong, Ohio;
• Ken Michel, New Jersey;
• Mickey Gage, Missouri;
• Walt Webster, Utah;
• M.F. O’Brien, Louisiana;
• Ken Kertesz, Pennsylvania; and
• Tim Smith, California.

Brother Kertesz reported to the Newsletter that he was returned to office by acclamation, as were the other incumbent members of the Pennsylvania State Legislative Board: Robert Sorg, First Vice-Chairman; James O’Neill, Second Vice-Chairman; and David Caniff, Secretary-Treasurer.

“We are humbled by the confidence expressed by those delegates in attendance,” Brother Kertesz said of the May 2 meeting. “This administration stands ready to assist every BLE member in Pennsylvania in matters pertaining to safety, sanitation, health and legislation that protects our members.”

Brother Kertesz said the Pennsylvania Board plans to make more effective use of its website to better inform members regarding important legislative issues. The website address is: <www.pslb-ble.org>.

Chairman Tim Smith of the California State Legislative Board reported to the Newsletter that the following members of his Board were elected: Darrell Front row, from left: James Barry, Div. 65; D.D. “Dix” Francisco, Div. 739 and CSLB 2nd Vice-Chairman; Darrel N. Azarcon, Div. 692 and CSLB 1st Vice-Chairman; Timothy L. Smith, Chairman Chairman, Art Ray, Div. 283; James Murphy, Div. 398; Eric Johnson, Div. 662; and Raymond Enriquez, Div. 660.

Back row, from left: Mike Rogers, Div. 425; Louie Fernandez, Div. 383 and Editor of the California State Legislative Board newsletter; Kent Richards, Div. 56; Peter Hindley, Div. 144; Mike G. Holt, Div. 800 and CSLB Secretary-Treasurer; Paul Turney, Div. 415; and Ron Lopez, Div. 553; Ron Marney, Div. 126. (Not pictured: Palmer Hewlett, Div. 664.)

The officer apologised for the billboard “misunderstanding” and said the railroad would not object if BLE Division 532 wished to pay to have the same message posted on the same billboard. After taking down the BLE’s message in mid-April, the billboard company offered to transfer the message to another location for two weeks or to refund half of the BLE’s money. The BLE Brothers chose to have half of their $1,000 refunded. “We felt we had made our point, so we opted to get our money back,” Mellott said. •

Anti-remote control billboard disappears

CSXT later issues formal apology to BLE local chairman: ‘We clearly made a mistake’

Members of the California State Legislative Board, at their 4th Quadrennial Session, re-elected Timothy L. Smith as their Chairman during the last week of April

N. Azarcon, First Vice-Chairman; D.D. Fransisco, Second Vice-Chairman, and Mike G. Holt, Secretary-Treasurer.

In Louisiana, representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) attended the Louisiana State Legislative Board’s meeting, where Brother Mike F. O’Brien was re-elected.

In New Jersey, the following members were elected to assist Chairman Michel: Steve Kay, First Vice-Chairman; Bob Danilo, Second Vice-Chairman; and Ed Michael, Secretary-Treasurer.

In related news, the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) will hold their annual meeting in August this year at the Thunderbird Hotel and Convention Center in Bloomington, Minn.

Please see the Calendar & Events section on page 8 of this issue for hotel and registration information.

Questions should be directed to NASLBC Secretary-Treasurer Perry Renfro at: <perryble@alltel.net>.

Legislative Board Chairmen elected in seven different states

Members of the Louisiana State Legislative Board re-elected Brother M.E. “Mike” O’Brien as their Chairman. Pictured here, from left, are: Don Willard, Div. 745; Ken Gieseler, Div. 193; Buster Humphrey, Louisiana State Legislative Board Second Vice-Chairman, Paul Lilly, Div. 533; Chairman O’Brien; Raymond Arceek, Div. 326; Raymond A. Holme, International Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative; Terry Briggs; Texas State Legislative Board Chairman; Joe Rinchuso, Div. 219; Bill Morris, Louisiana State Legislative Board First Vice-Chairman, Darrell Booth, Div. 914; Allen Cason, Div. 599; and Bobby Hardy, Div. 632.
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation reported first-quarter 2002 earnings of $0.45 per diluted share, compared with first-quarter 2001 earnings after extraordinary charge of $0.34 per diluted share.

Freight revenues for the 2002 first quarter were $2.14 billion, down 6 percent compared with the same 2001 period. Coal revenues declined $18 million, or 3 percent, to $508 million, primarily reflecting decreased demand and lower burn rates in a mild winter.

Operating expenses of $1.5 billion were $79 million or 4 percent lower than the same period in 2001. The decrease in first-quarter operating expenses primarily reflects reductions in fuel, compensation and benefits, and equipment rentals. Operating income was $386 million for the 2002 first quarter compared with $418 million a year ago. The operating ratio increased to 82.8 percent for the 2002 first quarter compared with 81.5 percent in the same 2001 period. During the 2002 first quarter, BNSF repurchased 2.5 million shares of its common stock at an average price of $26.62 per share. This brings total repurchases to 105.8 million shares as of March 31, 2002.
Disability annuities for railroad employees

The Railroad Retirement Act provides disability annuities for railroad employees who become totally and permanently disabled.

An employee is considered to be totally disabled if a physical or mental impairment prevents the employee from performing the duties of his or her regular railroad occupation, even though the employee may be able to perform other kinds of work.

Employees filing for disability annuities are required to submit medical evidence supporting their claim. Administration of claims generally begins within 15 months of filing for disability.

Disability annuities are payable to five-year employees with 20 years of service after 1995, not 30 years as previously required to qualify for a railroad disability annuity. The Board adjusts payments for any benefit duplications at the time a disability annuity is awarded.

An employee’s regular occupation is generally that particular work he or she has performed for hire in more than five consecutive monthly periods, for more than half the months in which the work was performed for hire in the last five years, or that work which was performed for hire in at least one-half of the months in which the employee worked for hire during the last 15 years.

Disability annuities are based on disability for the employee’s tier II benefit.

Social security or railroad retirement annuities payable to five-year employees with 20 years of service after 1995 may qualify for an annuity based on total and permanent, or the annuitant’s attainment of full retirement age (age 65 for those born before 1938 to age 67 for those born in 1960 or later), when the annuitant becomes subject to the work and earnings restrictions applicable to employee annuities based on age and service. This transition is effective no earlier than full retirement age, even if the annuitant had 30 years of service.

Disability annuities are payable to five-year employees with 20 years of service after 1995.

Disability annuities are payable to five-year employees with 20 years of service after 1995.
When BLE General Chairman Bob Vallochi negotiated to form an ergonomics committee at New Jersey Transit, management didn’t take it seriously. But no one is laughing now after BLE members helped design a more user-friendly and ergonomically sound locomotive cab that will soon be in use at New Jersey Transit. “The real originator of the ergo committee was my Vice Chairman, Richard Darcy,” Brother Vallochi said. “He insisted we organize a committee of our best people. So we did after the contract. In fact he held up the signing of the contract until the Carrier in- serted ergonomics as a part of it. He then put the committee together and after it was up and running stepped back and delegated it to Bob Daniels.”

Brother Bob Daniels of BLE Divi- sion 573 chaired the ergonomics committee, with assistance from committee members Paul Tedder (General Chairman), Charles Donnarumma, Sandra Sheldon, Steve Kay (Div. 372), John Sngogos (Div. 272), and William Guiles (Div. 171), worked jointly with management and a locomotive manufacturer to design New Jer- siey Transit’s new ALP-46 locomotives. The BLE had significant input into the final design, at first. But, after the Daniels said there was a great deal of hostility and opposition from the railroad’s mechanical department, which operated under the impression that BLE members had no business in its affairs. But after receiving support from locomotive manufacturer Ad Tranz, and new ideas provided significa- nt cost-saving to the carrier, the op- position waned.

“The GCA had to step in from time to time to move various initiatives for- ward,” Vallochi said. “Once the Carrier realized the benefits of our input they came on board and helped move the process. Stephen Kleijst and James Samuelson, both high ranking transpor- tation officers, helped remove some of the road blocks and should be credited for their help.”

From the start, the BLE ergo com- mittee worked to improve the working conditions of all railroad workers. “It was our goal to make the cab environment more user-friendly,” Brother Daniels said. “We don’t want it to have claws for hands because of arthritis and we don’t want them to have back prob- lems.”

The original plans for the ALP- 46 locomotive called for heavy equipment to be placed in the cen- ter section behind the cab, with two narrow aisles on ei- ther side. The BLE proposed the oppo- site — placing the heavy equipment on the sides and making one, larger aisle down the center. This idea proved beneficial. The center aisle was wider, and provided brightness light inside the cab. Also, plac- ing the heavy equipment on the sides of the locomotive made it more readily accessible from the outside and easier to make repairs. In the old design, equip- ment was only accessible from a crane above the locomotive. The new design allowed repairs to be made using a less expensive and safer motor.

But more importantly, the BLE fought to standardize the control panel.

“The BLE had input into the final design, at first. But after receiving support from locomotive manufacturer Ad Tranz, and new ideas provided significant cost-saving to the carrier, the opposition waned.”

**NEWS BRIEFS**

FRA drug, alcohol testing information on BLE website

In May, the Federal Rail- road Administration issued in- formation clarifying its post- accident alcohol and drug test- ing regulations for locomotive engineers and other train crew personnel. Additionally, the ad- ministration also published a list of frequently asked ques- tions in order to help railroad workers understand the regu- lations.

**Signalmen decline SMWIA merger**

A majority of members of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) voted against a merger with the Sheet Metal Workers’ International Asso- ciation, according to a June 7 report on the BRS website. With just under 60 percent of BRS members returning bal- lots, the initial count of the bal- lots returned was 41 percent for, and 59 percent against the merger.

The ballots were mailed to all BRS members on May 1. The cutoff date for receiving ballots was June 6, and no more ballots are being ac- cepted. The official and final count will be forthcoming after the BRS staff rechecks the count. The BRS news release, how- ever, stated that the margin was wide enough that any variation between the prelimi- nary and the final count will not reverse the outcome.

**Residents sue CN after derailment forces evacuation**

Ten people forced out of their homes last month by the derailment of a train carrying explosive liquid propane and toxic sulfuric acid are suing the Canadian National Railway Corp. The lawsuit, filed on June 7 in Eaton County, Mich., ac- ceses the railroad of negli- gence in the Memorial Day de- rrailment in Potterville, Mich., about 12 miles southwest of Lansing.

The 2,200-resident town was evacuated for about four days. The cause of the derail- ment has not been determined.

Also named in the lawsuit, which seeks unspecified dam- ages and class-action status, are Grand Trunk Western Rail- way, a track engineer and an engineering superintendent.

**New Amtrak chief proposes reorganization**

Three weeks into the job, Amtrak’s new president is propos- ing steps to reorganize management. David Gunn, the new president, wants to con- solidate Amtrak’s three rail- road operating divisions — In- tercity, Northeast Corridor and Amtrak West, which now are distinct business units — within company headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Under the plan, the exist- ing division offices in Chicago, Philadelphia and Oakland, Ca- lif., will remain open, but only to handle local operations, not to make policy decisions.

The intent, Gunn said, is to move Amtrak “back to a tradi- tional railroad structure.” He also wants to reduce the number of “vice president” titles from 84 to about 20. The move is not immediately de- signed to slice jobs or save money, but to focus the com- pany on its basic role as a rail- road operator.
A BLE member was killed and three other train crew members were injured in a fiery head-on collision between two Burlington Northern Santa Fe trains near Clarendon, Texas, on May 28.

Brother G.D. Shelby, 61, was killed when the westbound freight train on which he was the engineer collided with an eastbound coal train about two miles west of Clarendon. Brother Shelby was a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, joining BLE Division 871 in Slaton, Texas, on Sept. 1, 1988.

Brother Shelby is survived by his wife, Ann; a daughter who lives in Lubbock, Texas, and a son who lives in Finland.

The accident happened about 9 a.m. on a single-track stretch of railway. The coal train was headed from Wyoming to Texas, while the freight train was headed to California from Kansas.

Witnesses said the impact was so forceful it could be felt from almost a mile away. The resulting fireball generated enough heat that bystanders and rescuers could be seen jumping into the flames.

In the line of duty

G.D. Shelby

The June 4th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association will be held at the Woodlands Inn & Resort in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., from August 18-22.

Convention registration and golf tournament registration forms are provided here for your convenience. Please make note of the following deadlines; hotel registration deadline is July 18; EUMA registration deadline is July 30; and golf tournament registration forms are due August 12.

A tentative agenda (subject to change) is as follows:

**Sunday, August 18**
- 9 a.m.-6 p.m. — Registration
- 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. — Norfolk Southern Locomotive Engineer Newsletter workshop w/luncheon

**Monday, August 19**
- 7 a.m.-noon — Registration
- 6:30 a.m.-9 a.m. — Breakfast
- 9 a.m. — Opening ceremony
- 9 a.m. — ID officers, GIA officers
- Noon — Luncheon
- 1 p.m. — Closed BLE meeting
- Dinner on your own
- 5:30 p.m.-11 p.m. — Hospitality room

**Tuesday, August 20**
- 6:30 a.m.-9 a.m. — Breakfast
- 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. — Meetings
- 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. — Local Chairman workshop
- 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. — Secretary/Treasurer workshop w/luncheon
- 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. — FRA certification class

**Wednesday, August 21**
- 6:30 a.m.-9 a.m. — Breakfast
- 8 a.m. — Busses depart for golf tournament w/luncheon at club
- 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. — FRA certification class
- Family day — relax-shopping (no specific activities)
- 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. — Cocktail hour
- 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. — Formal Banquet (proper dress required); Raffles, door prizes, awards, entertainment, scholar-ship awards

**Thursday, August 22**
- 6:30 a.m.-9 a.m. — Breakfast
- Good-byes and checkout

GCA meeting w/luncheon
- 12:30 p.m. — Depart for Steamtown tour and trainride
- 3 p.m.-6:30 p.m. — Hospitality room
- 7 p.m. — Outdoor BBQ
- 9 p.m.-11 p.m. — Hospitality room

**General Information**

Make checks payable to: EUMA 2002

Mail this form to:
Ken Kertesz
30 Harford Ave.
Shavertown, PA 18708-1243

Make checks or money orders payable to “EUMA 2002” and mail to:
Sonny Kertesz
EUMA 2002 Golf Tournament Chairman
2 Debbie Dr.
Brick, NJ 08724

Please list names of golfers in your party:

EUMA plans include train ride at Steamtown, ‘Night at the Races’

The 64th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association will be held at the Woodlands Inn & Resort in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., from August 18-22.

**REGISTRATION FEE**

$75.00 per person attending 2002 EUMA; Includes meals and activities

For additional information, contact Arrangements Chairman Ken Kertesz
at: (570) 675-2417 or <kkertesz@adelphia.net>

Mail this form to: Ken Kertesz 30 Harford Ave. Shavertown, PA 18708-1243

Make checks payable to: EUMA 2002

Please list names of golfers in your party:

EUMA 2002 Golf Outing

Wednesday, August 21

Buses will depart for the annual EUMA golf outing at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, August 21. The cost is $65 per person, which includes green fees, lunch, transportation, commemorative hat, and various per-hole prizes.

Make checks or money orders payable to “EUMA 2002” and mail to:
Sonny Kertesz
EUMA 2002 Golf Tournament Chairman
2 Debbie Dr.
Brick, NJ 08724
Amtrak needs emergency funds to continue operation

While a movement is underway in Congress to save Amtrak, BLE members are asked to contact their Representatives to make sure the railroad receives the necessary funding to stay in business.

Amtrak President David Gunn warned that the railroad will have to shut down if it does not receive $280 million in the next three weeks. In addition, Gunn said the railroad needs $55 million to repair damaged and out-of-service equipment.

Already, 162 members of the U.S. House of Representatives have signed a "Dear Colleague" letter in favor of Amtrak funding. The Dear Colleague letter asks members of the House to support H.R. 4545, which would provide a $1.975 billion reauthorization of Amtrak.

The legislation authorizes for Fiscal Year 2003 $1.2 billion in federal funding for capital and operating expenditures, as well as $673 million for much needed rail security projects across the system and $400 million for life-safety improvements in Amtrak tunnels along the northeast corridor. "This $1.975 billion appropriation request will prevent the elimination of services and hold the current network together while Congress determines the future of Amtrak," the Dear Colleague letter states. "As such, we urge you to provide the necessary funding for Amtrak in Fiscal Year 2003 to ensure that we maintain a national passenger rail system."

The letter was written by Congressman Jack Quinn, Bob Celement, Earl Blumenauer and Sherwood Boehlert. BLE members should review the list below. If any of their members of Congress is supporting the Dear Colleague letter, then they should be thanked. If their member of Congress is not on this list, then they should be contacted immediately and urged to support funding for Amtrak.


JUNE 2002 CALENDAR & EVENTS

JULY 21-25... 62nd Annual International Western Convention, Kennewick, Wash. Hosted by Chairman William Amey in the Tri-Cities area of Washington. Special event: the 1999 OCC is a convention you will not want to miss. Guests will stay at the Westcoast Tri-Cities Hotel at 1301 N. Columbia Blvd, Kennewick, WA 99330, and reservations can be made by calling (509) 793-6611. Mention the BLE convention to receive discounted room rates of $59 per night (U.S. and Canadian copy rate). For more details, contact Chairman Amey at phone (509) 626-4484. BLE 2002, the "Unlimited Convention," will coincide with the "Unlimited Hydroplane" race series. Guests can extend their stay a few days to enjoy the Columbia Cup hydroplane race, one of the fastest spots on the planet.

AUGUST 4-7... National Association of State Legislative Board Chairman Annual Meeting to be held at the Thunderbird Hotel and Convention Center, 2101 East 78th St, Bloomington, Minn. A room rate of $85 per night has been secured, and reservations can be made by calling (800) 328-1931. The hotel provides a 24-hour shuttle service from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport. For more details, please contact NASLB/Secretary-Treasurer Perry Renfro at (952) 926-3678.

AUGUST 18-22... 64th Annual Eastern United States Convention, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Arrangements Chairman Ken Hertzog and members of BLE Division 263 will host the 2002 EUWA in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., at the Woodlands Inn & Resort. Needed in the Northeastern Panes, members will enjoy a discounted room rate of $95 per night (plus tax) for a single or double room. Rates include a full cooked breakfast each morning and a shuttle service to and from the Wilkes-Barre Scranton International Airport. Reservations can be made by calling (570) 724-9381 or (800) 625-2223. Be sure to mention the EUWA in order to receive the discounted room rate. Tentative agenda includes golf tournament, formal banquet and a tour of the Pirates. For details, contact Brother Barkey by phone at (570) 675-2476 or by e-mail at: <kbertez@edelph.net>. (Registration forms provided on Page 7 of this issue.)

SEPTEMBER 23-26... 67th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Ft. Worth, TX Chairman Mark Benton and members of BLE Division B50 host the 2002 SWCMA, to be held at the Radisson Hotel, 815 Main Street Fort Worth, TX 76102. Reservations can be made by calling (817) 870-2100. The tentative agenda is as follows: Monday, September 23: conventions registration and opening business meeting; Tuesday, September 24: opening ceremony and barbecue dinner, September 25: workshops and formal banquet, and September 26: closing meeting and SWCMA business meeting. For more details, contact Brother Benton at (817) 461-6406.