



DAILY NEWS UPDATES  
WWW.BLE-T.ORG

# Locomotive

## ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS



JUNE 2016  
VOLUME 30, ISSUE 6

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

## FEDERAL REGULATORS MUST PROHIBIT ONE-PERSON FREIGHT TRAIN CREWS

**D**ennis Pierce, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and John Previsich, president of SMART Transportation Division, issued the following statement on June 16, 2016, reflecting their joint submission of comments responding to the Federal Railroad Administration's Notice of Proposed Rule-making establishing a minimum size for train crews.

"Operating freight trains with one-person train crews is unsafe and must be prohibited. That is the message we delivered on June 15 in comments filed with federal rail safety regulators.

"Our comments provide a clear ratio-

nale for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to finalize a rule this year and to close loopholes included in the agency's initial proposed rule that could permit the limited use of one-person crew freight operations.

"We have waged an aggressive campaign shining a spotlight on the dangers associated with the use of one-person freight train crews. Regulators must ensure that a certified engineer and a certified conductor are working on every freight train. These two safety professionals — our members — work together to minimize the effects of fatigue, deal with emergency situations including hazardous materials accidents and incidents, operate advanced technologies and comply

with myriad federal rail safety requirements. They also provide critical backup to one another as decisions are made that often save lives. A single crew-member cannot perform these tasks and still maintain the highest safety standards.

"A two-person minimum crew size rule is needed in light of public statements by the freight rail carriers that they want to implement one-person operations and will continue to pursue this dangerous course in collective bargaining. We are also deeply concerned with rail industry claims that implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC) technology will somehow lessen the need for a second crew member. These erroneous claims should be dismissed given the

clear evidence that PTC will actually increase the demands on operating crews and distract them from carrying out their already complex duties. What is obvious to our members is that the railroads want to slash operating crews and use those 'savings' to pay for deployment of PTC. Our government must reject these smoke-screen tactics and never permit the multi-billion dollar rail industry to water down safety standards through negotiations.

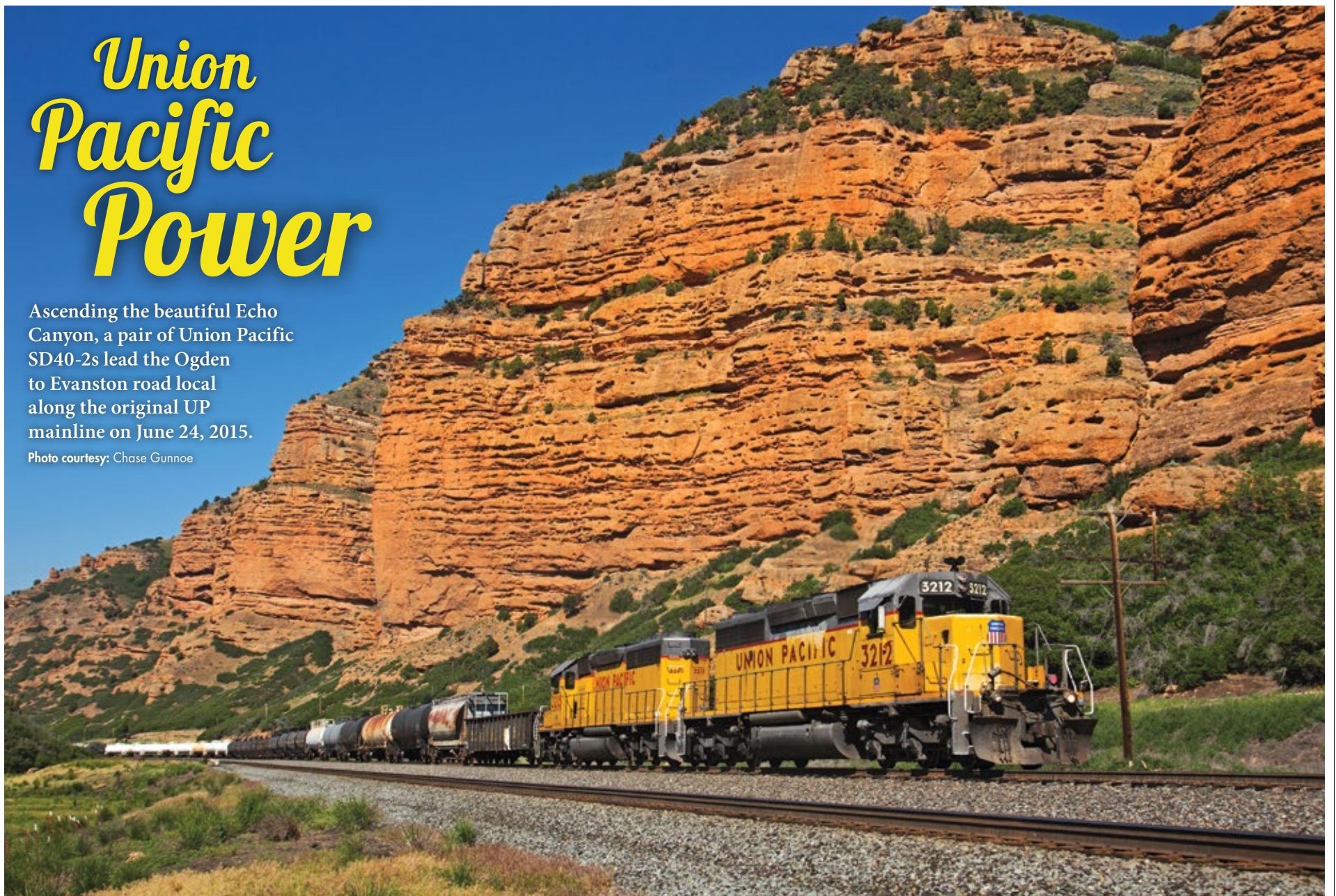
"We thank the Administration for its leadership and urge completion of a final rule this year. The regulations must put to rest the absurd notion that massive freight trains — more often than not filled with hazardous materials — can safely traverse our communities with a

**"WE HAVE WAGED AN AGGRESSIVE CAMPAIGN SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON THE DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF ONE-PERSON FREIGHT TRAIN CREWS. REGULATORS MUST ENSURE THAT A CERTIFIED ENGINEER AND A CERTIFIED CONDUCTOR ARE WORKING ON EVERY FREIGHT TRAIN."**

### Union Pacific Power

Ascending the beautiful Echo Canyon, a pair of Union Pacific SD40-2s lead the Ogden to Evanston road local along the original UP mainline on June 24, 2015.

Photo courtesy: Chase Gunnoe



#### BLET President's Message

Our Issues in November:

Railroad Retirement **pg. 2**

#### General Committee Elections

Wallace (NS-Southern) and Craddock (CN-IC)

reelected by acclamation **pg. 3-4**

#### New Officers Elected

Spradlin to lead KCS GCA; Hanson is

Iowa Legislative Board Chairman **pg. 5**

Register for News Flash email alerts at: [www.ble-t.org/newsflash](http://www.ble-t.org/newsflash)



Follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BLETNational](http://www.facebook.com/BLETNational)




**BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE**

# OUR ISSUES IN NOVEMBER: RAILROAD RETIREMENT

*Editor's Note: this is the second of three articles on this subject.*

**A**s with so many other things, the railroad industry was a trail-blazer in the field of employee pensions. The first industrial pension in North America was established by a railroad in 1874, and by the mid-1920s more than 80% of all railroad workers were covered by pension plans.

However, these pension plans were unregulated and chronically underfinanced. A combination of a vast reduction in railroad employment during the 1920s and the Great Depression that began with the stock market crash of 1929 led Rail Labor to struggle to establish a national pension plan.

The first Railroad Retirement Act was enacted in 1934, providing for defined benefit annuities based on railroad earnings and length of service. Benefits were awarded to retirees upon reaching age 65, and workers with 30 years of service could retire at age 60 with a reduction in the annuity. In these ways, Railroad Retirement served as a model for the Social Security system that would be adopted in the late-1930s.

The 1934 Act was challenged by 134 Class I railroads, two express companies, and the Pullman Company. In 1935, the Supreme Court found the Act to be unconstitutional on the basis that it deprived the railroads of their property without due process. The second Railroad Retirement Act became law later that year, and another legal challenge to this law by the industry failed. Let that sink in for a moment: Rail management fought all the way to the Supreme Court to prevent rail workers from having the ability to retire with dignity.

Since that time the Railroad Retirement Act has been amended many times. These amendments liberalized benefits, provided annuities for spouses and dependents, and ensured the fi-



President Pierce (center) with a recent BLET Education & Training Department class for Local Chairmen.

financial stability of the system. They also provided "occupational disability" annuities for workers having physical or medical conditions that prevent them from performing their regular railroad occupation. Parallel to these retirement benefits, the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act of 1938 ("RUIA") provides benefits to railroad workers idled due to unemployment, including most strikes, or illness.

All Railroad Retirement benefits — both age and service annuities, and occupational disability annuities — are paid by taxes imposed on both railroad employers, including railroad labor organizations, and railroad employees, including employees of railroad labor organizations. RUIA benefits are funded by a tax paid by railroad employers only.

During the month of March over 265,000 retired and disabled railroad workers received Railroad Retirement annuities. Counting spouses, dependents and supplemental annuities, nearly 531,000 annuities — totaling over \$1 billion — were paid during the month. Another 12,400 railroad workers received RUIA benefits totaling almost \$13½ million in March.

Railroad Retirement benefits are significantly higher than Social Security benefits. The Railroad Retirement age annuity paid to the average worker and his or

her spouse in March was \$3,632, or nearly 80% higher than the corresponding annuity of \$2,019 being paid to the average Social Security recipient and spouse. For new annuities awarded in March, the Railroad Retirement total was \$4,854, almost 85% higher than the \$2,638 awarded by Social Security. Occupational disability annuities — both paid and awarded during the month — were, on average, more than double the disability annuities paid under Social Security.

Over the past 80+ years the struggle waged by the Brotherhood and all of Rail Labor to maintain and improve Railroad Retirement has produced the most generous defined benefit pension system in the nation. For this reason, it is a primary target for Corporate America's War on Workers.

In 1979, defined benefit plans covered 62% of private-sector participants and defined contribution plans like 401(k) plans covered only 16%, according to the Employee Benefit Research Institute. However, by 2011 those figures had been completely reversed, with only 7% of such participants in defined benefit plans, while 69% were in defined contribution plans.

Railroad Retirement annuities make up a significant portion of that 7%, which is why the system has been under attack. You may recall that, in 2012,

Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) — who was the Republican Party's candidate for Vice President of the United States that year, and who today is Speaker of the House of Representatives — proposed a budget that was a direct attack on Railroad Retirement.

The Ryan Budget proposed eliminating the Railroad Retirement Occupational Disability program, as well as the "60/30" provision allowing for early retirement by railroad workers at age 60 if they have 30 years of service. It also proposed to gut the formula for cost-of-living increases in annuities, and to raise the eligibility age for Medicare from 65 to 67, along with turning that defined medical benefit into a defined contribution voucher to be used for purchasing coverage from private insurance companies.

The rationale for these proposed changes was that it would save the taxpayers money. This claim was blatantly false, as I said at the time, because the entire Railroad Retirement system is funded by taxes paid by railroad employers and railroad workers. There was and would be no taxpayer savings from this outrageous proposal.

In this presidential election cycle, Ryan is again rumored to be among those under consideration for the #2 slot on the Republican ticket. He also was approached by those who are

concerned by the Trump candidacy as a possible replacement for the front-runner.

As I noted in the first installment of this series, the current race to the bottom in the War on Workers is being fueled by nothing more sophisticated than the old "divide and conquer" tactic. Workers having good benefits — like Railroad Retirement — are demonized by politicians, who then attempt to turn workers who have lesser benefits on their working class brothers and sisters.

You can expect to hear these corporate owned politicians say: if social security is good enough for the rest of the country, it should be good enough for you. I think that you will all agree with me that railroad workers deserve the Railroad Retirement System that we have all paid into, but we know all too well that if the corporate owned Republican politicians get their way, Railroad Retirement is at risk. I for one am not willing to take that risk when I cast my vote this fall.

Corporate America's ultimate plan is to turn the clock back 100 years or more on wages and benefits. When you consider the issues and the candidates this fall, be sure to remember that the security of your retirement hangs in the balance.

**DENNIS R. PIERCE**  
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

## BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

**O**fficial communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence, bearing a signature, being received by the National President to be considered an "official communication." This is to provide that the actual question(s) are addressed, and ensures that when official

interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

The volume of e-mails received makes it impossible for the National President to answer all unofficial communications. Therefore, it is the policy of the BLET that e-mails addressed to the National President will be reviewed and forwarded to

the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

Moreover, anonymous e-mails and e-mails that do not provide sufficient information concerning the sender to enable National Division staff to confirm the sender's membership status will not receive any reply or acknowledgement. This poli-

cy is intended to allow the National President to be aware of the opinions and suggestions of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member's unofficial communication, if a response is necessary, without needlessly expending limited BLET resources.

**ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 22, 2010. ©©**





## GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JAMES P. HOFFA

# ROLLBACK OF WORKERS RIGHTS AT STAKE IN NOVEMBER

**T**eamster members and other workers are facing a significant political challenge in this election year. Big business and corporate apologists are continuing their push to strip unions of their ability to collectively bargain by pushing so-called right-to-work (RTW) legislation. And if they are successful, more workers could lose their rights on the job.

Such efforts have already been successful in West Virginia, where earlier this year the Legislature overrode the veto of the governor to implement RTW and roll back the state's prevailing wage law. While supporters there promised more jobs will result from the move, history shows us that lower pay for residents will be the likely result. And that's not something West Virginians, or anyone else, needs.

But what happens if this country's voters decide to elect candidates in November who don't represent workers' values? Given the current make-up of Congress and many state leg-

islatures, it is definitely possible that RTW could become a reality in more states or even nationwide.

And that would be devastating for millions of families. Those living in RTW states have a higher poverty rate than those in ones that support collective bargaining.

In fact, nine of the 10 highest poverty states are RTW. That, in part, is attributable to lower salaries and benefits. Those with no rights at work make almost \$1,500 a year less. They are also less likely to receive employer-based health insurance or pensions.

Teamsters must help lead the charge to defeat efforts to spread anti-worker legislation. RTW is a ruse. Now pro-worker forces need to spread that message so everyday Americans understand what is at stake.

Fraternally,

**JAMES P. HOFFA**

TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT



66 Big business and corporate apologists are continuing their push to strip unions of their ability to collectively bargain by pushing so-called right-to-work (RTW) legislation. And if they are successful, more workers could lose their rights on the job. 99

## NS-Southern Lines GCA: Wallace reelected General Chairman

**M**ark L. Wallace was reelected by acclamation to his second term as General Chairman of the Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment (GCA) at its quadrennial meeting in Asheville, N.C., May 23-26, 2016.

Brother Wallace is a member of BLET Division 267 (Asheville, N.C.) and has held continuous membership in the Brotherhood since February 26, 1997. He was first elected General Chairman by acclamation at the GCA's quadrennial meeting in 2012.

Also elected by acclamation were: 1st Vice General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer Jerry G. Sturdivant, Division 110 (Ludlow, Ky.); 2nd Vice General Chairman Fred Cox, Division 52 (Baltimore, Md.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Ty R. Thompson, Division 423 (Tusculum, Ala.); and 4th Vice General Chairman C. R. (Rusty) Jones, Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.). Also elected were: 5th Vice General Chairman G. S. (Scott) Brown, Divi-



Officers, delegates and guests at the Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment quadrennial meeting in Asheville, N.C., May 24, 2016.

sion 259 (Easton, Pa.); and Alternate Vice General Chairman Sean P. Simon, Division 226 (Newark, N.J.).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: National President Dennis

R. Pierce; First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; National Secretary-Treasurer Stephen J. Bruno; Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman; and National Vice President R. C. (Rick) Gibbons.

"Congratulations to General Chairman Wallace and all officers of the Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment, and thank you for your service to our Brotherhood," President Pierce said.

"I have every confidence they will continue providing excellent representation to our proud Brothers and Sisters who work for Norfolk Southern."

Special guests included: NS-Eastern Lines General Chairman L. R. (Randy) Fannon; Paul L. Wingo Jr., retired National Vice President; and R. H. (Bob) Lindsey, retired NS-Northern Lines General Chairman.

Brother Wallace follows in the footsteps of his father, Ray C. Wallace, who served the GCA as General Chairman from 1986-2008. Immediately prior to his election as General Chairman in 2012, Brother Wallace served the General Committee as 2nd Vice Chairman. He has also served as Local Chairman and Vice Local Chairman of Division 267. In 2014, Brother Wallace was elected by acclamation to serve the National Division as Trustee.

Forty-four delegates representing 45 BLET Divisions were in attendance. The Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines GCA represents nearly 3,200 active locomotive engineers and trainmen. ©



# Craddock reelected CN-IC General Chairman

Clay E. Craddock was reelected by acclamation to his second term as Chairman of the Canadian National-Illinois Central (CN-IC) General Committee of Adjustment (GCA) at the GCA's quadrennial meeting in Tunica, Miss., June 6-8, 2016.

A member of BLET Division 762 (Memphis, Tenn.), Brother Craddock has held continuous membership in the BLET since October 1, 1980. He was elected to his first term as General Chairman in 2012, and prior to that was elected Second Vice General Chairman in 2008. He has served his Division in various positions over the past 36 years. Brother Craddock has more than 40 years of engine service, earning promotion to locomotive engineer for the Illinois Central in Jackson, Tenn., on April 22, 1976.

Also elected were: 1st Vice Chairman W. D. (Billy) Evans, Division 203 (Jackson, Miss.); 2nd Vice Chairman Lanie M. Keith, Division 593 (Meridian, Miss.); 3rd Vice Chairman Tom P. Bloom, Division 114 (Waterloo, Iowa); 4th Vice Chairman W. P. (Patrick) Randolph, Division 512 (Belleville, Ill.); and Secretary-Treasurer C. R. (Charlie) Lough Jr., Division 131 (Chicago). Brother Lough was reelected by acclamation.

Alternate officers elected were: 1st Alternate Chairman William J. Clay-



Delegates, officers and guests attending the quadrennial meeting of the BLET's Canadian National-Illinois Central General Committee of Adjustment at Tunica, Miss., June 6-8, 2016.

ton, Division 315 (Clinton, Ill.); 2nd Alternate Vice Chairman T. R. (Tiger) Mobley, Division 914 (Baton Rouge, La.); 3rd Alternate Vice Chairman Roger D. Carlson, Division 508 (Fulton, Ky.); 4th Alternate Vice Chairman Alan I. Douglas, Division 762 (Memphis, Tenn.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Steve E. Lott, Division 326 (Bossier City, La.).

Three Trustees were elected to serve the GCA: W. P. (Patrick) Randolph, Division 512 (Belleville, Ill.); T. D. (Ted) Williams, Division 602 (Champaign, Ill.); and Lanie M. Keith, Division 593 (Meridian, Miss.).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; National Vice President Marcus J. Ruef; and National Vice President Cole W. Davis.

"I congratulate and thank these Brothers for their commitment to serve our Brotherhood," President Pierce said. "Under the veteran leadership of Brother Clay Craddock, I know they will do an excellent job of protecting the rights of our CN-IC Brothers and Sisters."

Special guests included: Arlin S. Todd, Louisiana State Legislative Board Chairman; and James L. McCoy, retired BLE First Vice President and former Illinois Central General Chairman.

Brother Craddock reports that he was a fireman for locomotive engineer and Brother McCoy in the mid- to late-1970s, and that McCoy was a big reason why he joined the Brotherhood.

"I owe a lot to Jim McCoy," Craddock said. "He was a good mentor and he taught me a lot about railroading and about our Organization."

Brother Craddock is a third generation Illinois Central railroader, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, William C. Craddock, and father, Henry L. (Buddy) Craddock. His father hired out in 1944 and for a time served as the Illinois Central General Chairman for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen (BLF&E) in the 1960s-70s. Still sharp as a tack at age 88, Buddy Craddock has been retired for 30 years and still helps his son with union business. "He is a wealth of knowledge," Brother Craddock said.

In addition to the election of officers, the delegates conducted business in a timely and professional manner. The GCA also honored retiring Office Administrator Karen Brasfield, who retired June 1, 2016, after 30 years of dedicated service to the CN-IC GCA.

The General Committee represents about 860 active and retired members from 19 different Divisions. The GCA represents multiple railroads, including CN properties (Illinois Central, Chicago Central & Pacific, Cedar River Railway), Kansas City Southern properties (MidSouth Rail Corp., SouthRail Corp., Gateway & Western), Illinois & Midland Railroad and the IC Electric Division of Metra in Chicago. ©©



From left: First Vice President Lee Pruitt; General Chairman Clay Craddock; and National Vice President Cole Davis

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK



## Losing your income doesn't have to be.

- Claim payments up to your policy limit even if you sign a waiver
- Receive your full daily benefit if you are decertified and decline to exercise your seniority
- Claim payments deposited in your account every week



(800) 514-0010  
www.lecmpa.org



LECMPA

Transportation workers protecting each other since 1910.



## David Spradlin elected KCS General Chairman

**D**avid A. Spradlin was elected by acclamation as General Chairman during the Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment's quadrennial meeting in Bossier City, La., June 13-17, 2016.

Brother Spradlin takes the reins from former General Chairman Sam W. Parker, who has retired with 20 years of service as General Chairman. A member of BLET Division 573 (Greenville, Texas), Brother Spradlin has held continuous membership since he first joined the BLET on April 1, 1998. He hired out in 1994 as a conductor with KCS at Shreveport, La., earning promotion to locomotive engineer in July 1995 out of Greenville, Texas. Brother Spradlin has served Division 573 as Secretary-Treasurer from 2000-2007 and as Local Chairman from 2005-2016. He has served the GCA as Secretary-Treasurer for the past eight years, winning elections at quadrennial meetings in 2008 and 2012.

Also elected by acclamation during the 2016 meeting were: 1st Vice General Chairman James O. Fisher Jr., Division 612 (Nederland, Texas); 2nd Vice General Chairman David M. Grubbs Jr., Division 569 (Heavener, Okla.); Secretary-Treasurer Gregory E. Jones, Division 632 (Minden, La.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Jeffery A. Bullington, Division 527 (Pittsburg, Kan.).

Three Trustees were also elected by acclamation: James O. Fisher Jr., Division 612 (Nederland, Texas); David M.



Officers, delegates and guests at the Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment's quadrennial meeting held June 13-17, 2016, in Bossier City, La.

Grubbs Jr., Division 569 (Heavener, Okla.); and Justin W. Curl, Division 527 (Pittsburg, Kan.).

Officers representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: National President Dennis R. Pierce; First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; and National Vice President Cole W. Davis.

"I congratulate and thank Brother Spradlin and all officers of the Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment for their service to our Brotherhood," President Pierce said. "I also wish to congratulate Brother Sam Parker on a well-deserved retirement and thank him for his many years of

service to our Kansas City Southern membership."

Brother Douglas W. Davidson, Director of the BLET Arbitration Department, and Brother Jason C. Wright, Special Representative and Director of the BLET Education and Training Department, were also in attendance and conducted a training session for delegates. Additional special guests included Texas State Legislative Board Chairman Gary R. Pedigo and Louisiana State Legislative Board Chairman Arlin S. Todd.

Brother Parker retires with 20 years of service as General Chairman of the KCS General Committee of Adjustment.



BLET National President Dennis Pierce (right) presents a brass bell to retiring KCS General Chairman Sam Parker.

He has 37 years of continuous membership in BLET Division 599 (Shreveport, La.), first joining the Brotherhood on July 1, 1979. President Pierce presented Brother Parker with a commemorative brass bell on behalf of the General Committee in recognition of his years of service to the Brotherhood.

The BLET's Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment represents seven BLET Divisions and approximately 550 active and retired members. ©©

## Hansen elected Chairman of Iowa State Legislative Board

**K**enny A. Hansen was elected Chairman of the Iowa State Legislative Board at the Board's quadrennial meeting in Altoona, Iowa, June 13-14, 2016.

A Union Pacific locomotive engineer and member of BLET Division 125 (Clinton, Iowa), Brother Hansen has held continuous membership in the BLET since January 1, 1996. He has served as Legislative Representative of Division 125 since 2009. Hanson was elected 3rd Vice Chairman of the Iowa State Legislative Board in 2012, moving up to 2nd Vice Chairman following the retirement of former Chairman Jeff Kurtz in 2014.

Additional officers of the Iowa State Legislative Board were reelected by acclamation: 1st Vice Chairman Michael G. Walker, Division 642 (Creston, Iowa); 2nd Vice Chairman Daniel L. Christensen, Division 114 (Waterloo, Iowa); 3rd Vice Chairman Kade T. Harl, Division 391 (Fort Madison, Iowa); Secretary-Treasurer Janet L. Schultz, Division 6 (Boone, Iowa); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Brian P. Gruntmeir, Division 391 (Fort Madison, Iowa). This is Sister Schultz's fifth term as SLB Secretary-Treasurer.

Trustees elected during the quadrennial meeting were: Andy M. Barrett, Division 114 (Waterloo, Iowa); Joe M. Japel, Division 687 (Sioux City, Iowa); and Paul T. Shook, Division 200 (Davenport, Iowa).

"Congratulations and thank you to Brother Hansen and all officers of the Iowa State Legislative Board," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "They will have their work cut out for them with the national election just a few months away, but I have every confidence that they are up to the task of educating legislators and candidates about our issues. I also wish to thank Brother Orlando Penrod for his service as Chairman and for his continued dedication to our Brotherhood."

The delegates heard from Iowa's former Lieutenant Governor Patti Judge, who addressed them via conference call. She is currently campaigning to represent the State of Iowa in the U.S. Senate.

Outside of election of officers, the delegates spent the majority of their time conducting a significant re-write of their Bylaws.

Brother Hansen hired out as a welder in 1993 for the Chicago & NorthWestern Railroad at Clinton, Iowa. He transferred to engine service three months later and earned promotion to locomotive engineer in March of 1994. Brother Hansen and his wife Jody have been married the entire time he has worked for the railroad and they have three adult children.

The Iowa State Legislative Board is comprised of 12 BLET Divisions representing more than 1,350 active and retired members. ©©



## COLLIER APPOINTED AS ASSISTANT TO BLET NST, DIRECTOR OF THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

**D**ennis R. Pierce, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), appointed Mike Collier to the position of Assistant to the National Secretary-Treasurer and Director of the Accounting Department effective June 1, 2016.

Collier is a seasoned business executive with over 30 years of diversified, cross-functional experience. In his most recent role he was the Vice President of Marketing & Sales at UnionTrack, where he led a team of marketing professionals in the development and management of UnionTrack's website, sales and promotional materials, public relations, social media channels and all associated advertising campaigns.

Mike has over 20 years of senior management experience as the Senior Director of CRM & Marketing Operations, Territory Vice President of Operations and Director of Field Operations. He has a solid background in accounting and finance as he worked in a variety of roles in pub-

lic accounting, corporate accounting and corporate financial planning. He holds a BS in Accounting from the University of Dayton and is a Certified Public Accountant in the State of Ohio. Mike has been married to his wife, Sharon, for 29 years and resides in Twinsburg. He has two children: Katie, who lives in Cleveland, and Andrew, who lives in Cincinnati.

Collier will be the head of the National Division's Accounting Department and will be responsible for the management of the Record Department, the Compliance Department, and the Online Reporting System under the supervision of National Secretary-Treasurer S.J. Bruno. He also will be responsible for other duties as assigned by the National President.

"Those of us who have worked with Mike on the National Division's UnionTrack project already know the wealth of knowledge he brings to this new position," said President Pierce, "and I am sure he will be an asset to our Organization." ©©



# RRB issues Statements of Service (Form BA-6)

Each year, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) prepares a "Certificate of Service Months and Compensation" (Form BA-6) for every railroad employee who had creditable railroad compensation in the previous calendar year. The RRB typically mails these forms to employees during the first half of June each year. While every effort has been made to maintain current addresses for all active railroad employees, anyone with compensation reported in 2015 who has not received Form BA-6 by July 1, 2016, or needs a replacement, should contact the nearest RRB field office by calling the agency's toll-free number, (877) 772-5772.

Form BA-6 provides employees with a record of their railroad retirement service and compensation, and the information shown is used to determine whether an employee qualifies for benefits and the amount of those benefits. It is important that employees review their Form BA-6 to see whether their own records of service months and creditable compensation agree with the figures shown on the form.


In checking the 2015 compensation total, employees should be aware that only annual earnings up to \$118,500 were creditable for railroad retirement purposes in that year, and that \$118,500 is the maximum amount shown on the form. To assist employees in reviewing their service credits, the form also shows service credited on a month-by-month basis for 2014, 2013, and 2012, when the creditable compensation maximum was \$117,000 for 2014, \$113,700 for 2013 and \$110,100 for 2012. The form also identifies the employer(s) reporting the employee's 2015 service and compensation.

Besides the months of service reported by employers, Form BA-6 shows the number of any additional service months deemed by the RRB. Deemed service months may be credited under certain conditions for an employee who did not work in all 12 months of the year, but had creditable tier II earnings exceeding monthly prorations of the creditable tier II earnings maximum for the year. However, the total of reported and deemed service months may never exceed 12 in a calendar year, and no service months, reported or deemed, can be credited after retirement, severance, resignation, discharge, or death.

Form BA-6 shows the number of months of verified military service creditable as service under the Railroad Retirement Act, if the service was previously reported to the RRB. Employees are encouraged to submit proofs of age and/or military service in advance of their actual retirement.

Filing these proofs with the RRB in ad-

FORM BA-6 (6-16)



**U.S. RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD**  
W. A. BARROWS, S. J. ANTHONY  
MEMBERS

CERTIFIED 06-01-2016  
**2015 CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE MONTHS AND COMPENSATION**  
SERVICE AND COMPENSATION REPORTED FOR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015

BA 9999 8282

PJ JONES  
12 CENTRAL AV  
CENTRAL CITY, IL

BIRTH DATE		SEX	
06-1977		F	

SERVICE AND COMPENSATION ON RECORD FOR REVIEW PERIOD																
YEAR	CREDITABLE COMPENSATION	SEPARATION ALLOWANCE/ SEVERANCE PAYMENT		SERVICE MONTHS PROFILE*												
		TAXABLE AMOUNT	COMPENSATION AMOUNT	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	TOTAL
2015	87,300.00			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
2014	83,700.00			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12
2013	68,600.00			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	10
2012	15,950.00			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	03

\*1 = A reported month; 0 = A month not reported; D = A "deemed" month.

CAREER TO DATE RETIREMENT RECORD							
CREDITABLE COMPENSATION	SEPARATION ALLOWANCE/ SEVERANCE PAYMENT		SERVICE MONTHS				EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS
	TAXABLE AMOUNT	COMPENSATION AMOUNT	REPORTED	DEEMED	MILITARY	TOTAL	
899,750.00			202	2	12	216	32,800.00

**YOUR 2015 REPORTING EMPLOYER(S)**

The service and compensation shown on this form for 2015 were gathered from a report(s) received from the following employer(s): **MIDWESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY**

**RRB OFFICE SERVING YOUR AREA**

122 MAIN STREET  
CENTRAL CITY, IL 60000

PHONE (877) 772-5772

*Always notify the Railroad Retirement Board if your address changes during the year.*

vance will streamline the benefit application process and prevent payment delays.

For employees who received separation or severance payments, the section of the form designated "Taxable Amount" shows the amounts reported by employers of any separation allowance or severance payments that were subject to railroad retirement tier II taxes. This information is shown on the form because a lump sum, approximating part or all of the tier II taxes deducted from such payments made after 1984 which did not provide additional tier II credits, may be payable by the RRB upon retirement to qualified employees or to survivors if the employee dies before retirement. The amount of an allowance included in an employee's regular compensation is shown under "Compensation Amount."

Form BA-6 also shows, in the section designated "Employee Contributions," the cumulative amount of tier II railroad retirement payroll taxes paid by the employee over and above tier I social security equivalent payroll taxes. While the RRB does not collect or maintain payroll tax information, the agency computes

this amount from its compensation records in order to advise retired employees of their payroll tax contributions for Federal income tax purposes.

Employees should check their name, address, birth date and sex shown at the top of the form. If the form shows the birth date as 99-9999 and the gender code is "U" (for unknown), it means the RRB is verifying his or her social security number with the Social Security Administration. Otherwise, if the personal identifying information is incorrect or incomplete (generally a case where the employee's surname has more than 10 letters and the form shows only the first 10 letters) or the address is not correct, the employee should contact an RRB field office. The field office can then correct the RRB's records. This is important in order to prevent identity or security-related problems that could arise if the employee wants to use certain Internet services available on the RRB's website at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov).

Employees may view their railroad retirement service and compensation records; get annuity estimates; apply for or claim railroad unemployment bene-

fits; claim sickness benefits; and access their railroad unemployment insurance account statements through the RRB's website. To use these online services, an employee must set up an RRB Internet Services account. Instructions for establishing an online account can be found in the "Benefit Online Services Login" section on the home page. For security purposes, first-time users must enter a Password Request Code (PRC). The agency mails a PRC to any employee who files a paper application for unemployment or sickness benefits. If an individual has not received a PRC, they can request one by clicking the appropriate box on the home page. They will then receive the PRC by mail at their home address in about 10 days.

Employees can also request that printouts of their individual railroad retirement records of service months and compensation be mailed to them. A PIN/Password is not required to use this service. It can be accessed by visiting [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov), moving the cursor over the "Beneficiaries & RR Employees" category and then clicking on "Request Service & Compensation History."

If the employee's name was incomplete on Form BA-6, and he or she has not yet contacted an RRB field office to correct it, the employee should enter his or her first and middle initials and his or her surname just as it appears on the Form BA-6 or a previously furnished printout of service and compensation, along with the other requested information, in order to submit an online request.

Any other discrepancies in Form BA-6 should be reported promptly in writing to:

**Protest Unit - CESC**  
**Railroad Retirement Board**  
 844 North Rush Street  
 Chicago, IL 60611-1275

The employee must include his or her social security number in the letter. Form BA-6 also explains what other documentation and information should be provided. The law limits to four years the period during which corrections to service and compensation amounts can be made.

For most employees, the address of the RRB office serving their area is provided on the form along with the RRB's nationwide toll-free number, (877) 772-5772. RRB field offices are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Wednesday (beginning June 1, 2016), except on Federal holidays. @@

## 2016 REGIONAL MEETING LONG BEACH



AUGUST 22-25, 2016 • [WWW.BLETREGIONALS.ORG](http://WWW.BLETREGIONALS.ORG)

## SIGN UP FOR BLET NEWS FLASHES!

REGISTER AT [WWW.BLE-T.ORG](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG) TO GET  
BROTHERHOOD NEWS EMAILED TO YOU

Stay up-to-date with the latest Brotherhood news by going to the BLET website and signing up to receive BLET News Flash alerts via email.

The News Flash alerts are news articles from the BLET National Division website that are automatically emailed to you.

TO REGISTER ONLINE, JUST GO TO [WWW.BLE-T.ORG/NEWSFLASH](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG/NEWSFLASH). On this page, you will find an area to enter your email address and click *subscribe* to begin receiving the most current news from the BLET National Division.

It is a great way to keep informed on the most recent issues impacting your job, your contract and your Brotherhood.



## RRB ANNOUNCES DATES FOR SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2016 INFORMATIONAL CONFERENCES

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has announced a schedule of dates for the agency's fall and winter 2016 informational conferences. The conferences will be held in 10 locations across the country from September 16 through December 9.

Started approximately 60 years ago by the RRB's Office of the Labor Member, the conferences provide rail union officers with a comprehensive overview of the provisions and financing of the railroad retirement and unemployment insurance systems. These officials, in turn, pass on to their fellow rail labor membership the information acquired at the conferences.

Informational Conferences are open to union officials and their spouses by invitation only. Labor representatives who do not receive an invitation to a conference in their area should contact the RRB toll-free at (877) 772-5772 and request that they be added to the agency's invitation database. Registration for each informational conference begins at 8:00 a.m., with the programs beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:15 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 2016

#### SEPTEMBER 16

Decatur, Ill.  
Decatur Conference Center  
4191 US Hwy. 36

#### SEPTEMBER 16

Roanoke, Va.  
Holiday Inn Roanoke  
3315 Ordway Drive

#### SEPTEMBER 23

Fort Worth, Texas  
Courtyard Fort Worth South University  
3150 Riverfront Drive

#### SEPTEMBER 23

Albany, N.Y.  
Albany Ramada Inn  
3 Watervliet Extension

### OCTOBER 2016

#### OCTOBER 21

Bellevue, Wash.  
Red Lion Hotel  
11211 Main Street

#### OCTOBER 21

Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Greater PA Regional Council  
of Carpenters Union Hall  
650 Ridge Road

#### OCTOBER 28

Philadelphia, Pa.  
Sheet Metal Workers #19 Union Hall  
1301 S. Columbus Blvd.

### NOVEMBER 2016

#### NOVEMBER 18

Charlotte, N.C.  
Fairfield Inn and Suites  
8540 East Independence Blvd.

### DECEMBER 2016

#### DECEMBER 9

Metairie, La.  
Wyndham Garden New Orleans Airport  
6401 Veterans Memorial Blvd.

#### DECEMBER 9

Jacksonville, Fla.  
Embassy Suites by Hilton,  
Jacksonville-Baymeadows  
9300 Baymeadows Road

## Educational loans from the BLET's Greene Fund available to children of members in good standing

All BLET members with adolescent children going on to higher education, whether it be for trade school, associate, bachelor or graduate degrees, please take notice. The Franklin P. Greene Fund, established in 1956, is an educational loan fund set up to assist the children of living or deceased BLET members by providing educational assistance with low-interest loans.

The necessary requirements are: the BLET member/parent living is in good standing, or if deceased was in good standing at the time of his/her death;

that an application be filled out, signed, and returned along with at least one letter of recommendation; an official copy of the student's high school or college transcript; and an acceptance letter from the educational institution the applicant will be attending. These documents must be sent to Ms. Nicole Schonhut, Staff Accountant, BLET Accounting Department, 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, Ohio 44131.

Brother Franklin P. Greene was a member of BLET Division 266 (Gladstone, Mich.) and a locomotive engineer on the Soo Line from 1895 to 1940. Before his

death at the age of 86, Brother Greene wrote to then-Grand Chief Engineer Guy L. Brown stating, "... everything I have I owe to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers." In appreciation for what the Organization did for him, Brother Greene established the loan fund in his Will.

The National Division understands school begins this August and September. We ask that interested persons submit applications as soon as time permits. Should you have any questions regarding the loan, please direct them to Ms. Schonhut at: 216-241-2630, ext. 211 or you may email her at: [schonhut@ble-t.org](mailto:schonhut@ble-t.org). @@

**"... everything I have I owe to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers."**

— Franklin P. Greene, 1956

## FOCUS ON VALUE

E	1
F P	2
T O P	3
B R C F	4
V A L U E	5
E D F C Z P	6
F E L O P Z D	7
D E F P O T E C	8
L E F O D P C T	9
F D P L T C E O	10
P E Z O L C F T D	11



Daily Benefit Level	\$100 (\$102*)	\$150	\$200 (\$201*)	\$220	\$250
BR&CF	\$38.00	\$57.00	\$76.00	\$83.60	\$95.00
LECMPA (*)	\$59.50	\$87.50	\$117.25	Not available... you will pay less per month with BR&CF for more daily benefits	
SMART - UTU	\$81.00	\$121.50	\$162.00		

The BR&CF is the least expensive protection when disciplined for eligible occurrences. We are affordable. You could save up to \$1,032 each year on a \$200 benefit level. A BR&CF membership offers you the best price, value and service. To apply for membership... act today... ask a BR&CF member where you work for an application or visit our web site at [www.brcf.org](http://www.brcf.org) or call us toll free at 800 233-7080.

12







## Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen News Brotherhood Of Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen

7061 East Pleasant Valley Road  
Independence, Ohio 44131

### BLET Publications Committee:

Dennis R. Pierce, National President  
E. "Lee" Pruitt, First Vice President & Alternate President  
Stephen J. Bruno, National Secretary-Treasurer  
John P. Tolman, Vice President & National Legislative Rep.  
John V. Bentley Jr., Director of Public Relations & Editor  
Bill Joyce, Art Director & Associate Editor  
www.ble-t.org • (216) 241-2630

COPYRIGHT 2016, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
VOLUME 30 • NUMBER 6 • June 2016

### LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS (ISSN 0898-8625)

is published monthly by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen,  
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, Ohio 44131  
Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, OH.

USPS: 0002-244 ISSN: 0898-8625

### POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News — BLET Record Department,  
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, Ohio 44131.

Periodicals Postage  
PAID  
at Cleveland, OH.

6/16

### Photo of the Month: June 2016

**SOUTHERN HERITAGE LOCOMOTIVE:** With about 7,000 feet of coal cars behind it, Norfolk Southern heritage locomotive 8099 (Southern paint scheme) slowly pulls train 75M over Tenbridge near Chattanooga, Tenn., on its way north towards Burnside, Ky. **Photo courtesy:** S.C. (Casey) Bell, BLET Division 316 (Atlanta, Ga.).



**Are you a photographer?** The National Division's Public Relations Department, which produces the Newsletter each month, has received numerous inquiries lately from BLET members volunteering to contribute their

images to the "Photo of the Month" section of the Newsletter. If you'd like to submit a photo for consideration, you may call Editor John Bentley at (216) 241-2630, ext. 248, or you can email: Bentley@ble-t.org.

Please note only high resolution images can be used. Members are also encouraged to review their employer's policies regarding the use of cameras and other electronic devices while on duty.

## Advisory Board April 2016 Activity

In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE:** National Division Office, Independence, Ohio; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of Office Administration; General Supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; Policy Committee, Teamsters Rail Conference; CN-WC GCA meeting, Green Bay, Wisc.; Nebraska State Legislative Board mtg., Lincoln, Neb.; National Association of State Legislative Board (NASLBC) mtg., Little Rock, Ark.; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters bldg., Independence, Ohio; National bargaining, Chicago; CSXT-E GCA mtg., Abbeville, S.C.

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT:** National Duties include but not limited to: Director, Passenger Dept.; Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; National duties, Independence, Ohio; Nebraska SLB mtg., Lincoln, Neb.; NASLBC mtg., Little Rock, Ark.; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; National bargaining, Chicago; CSXT-E GCA mtg., Abbeville, S.C.

**NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO:** General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Publications Committee; Passenger Dept.; National Bargaining Committee; IBT Human Rights Commission; ND office work, Independence, Ohio; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; NASLBC mtg., Little Rock, Ark.; National bargaining, Chicago; CSXT-E GCA mtg., Abbeville, S.C.

**VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN:** Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Weekly PAC committee and legislative mtgs.; Nebraska State Legislative Board triennial mtg., Lincoln, Neb.; National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen's annual mtg., Little Rock, Ark.; Mtg. w/ Rep. Titus, Washington, D.C.; Mtg. w/ Senator Cassidy and several others, Washington, D.C.; Various mtgs. and functions with Representatives and Senators.

**VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF:** Vice Chairman, National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); National Mediation Board (NMB) Arb. Adv. Forum; Department Head, BLET Arbitration Department; Assigned to Illinois Central, Wisconsin Central, Indiana Harbor Belt, Belt Railway of Chicago, Metra, GRR and Illinois RR; Electronic filing cmte., NRAB, Chicago; Division 682 mtg., IHB, Chicago; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; Assist GC Short w/ claims conference and discipline submission, IHB, Chicago; Assist GC Balonek w/ investigation, Metra, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ arbitration prep., Green Bay, Wisc.; First Division adoption session, NRAB, Chicago.

**VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TWOMBLY:** Assigned to all Union Pacific GCAs (Eastern District, Northern Region (former C&NW), Western Lines (Pacific Harbor Lines), Western Region (Portland & Western), Central Region, Southern Region; Tacoma Belt RR, Utah RR, Longview Portland & Northern NO & Longview Switch, Portland Terminal; On duty at home office; General office du-

ties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; UP-Southern Region New York Dock Section 4 negotiations, Hurst, Texas; Vacation; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio.

**VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE:** Assigned to all CSX; Grand Trunk Western; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) issues, CSXT; General office duties, paperwork, correspondence, emails, telephone calls, etc.; Holiday; Vacation; CAPS conference call; Inward-facing camera conference call, all CSX GCs; Meal allows and WLC roster, safety, conference call; CSX codification and wrap-up mtgs.; Jacksonville; Operation Red Block mtg., Detroit.

**VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER:** Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CRI&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Great Western; Texas Pacific; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Conference call regarding M&NA contract negotiations, w/ GC Thurman, BLET Local Chairmen and Carrier; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; Article IX mtg. w/ GC Holdcraft, GC Brown and BNSF labor relations, Fort Worth, Texas; Article IX mtg. w/ Local Chairmen, BNSF, Fort Worth, Texas; PLB 7165 conference call w/ Arbitrator and BNSF; Article IX mtg. w/ GC LaPrath and BNSF labor relations, Portland, Ore.

**VICE PRESIDENT COLE W. DAVIS:** Assigned to: Kansas City Southern (MidSouth Rail, South Rail, Gateway Western, Illinois & Midland), Texas Mexican Rwy.; CP Rail System/US (Indiana Southern, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern); Springfield Terminal (St. Lawrence & Atlantic, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; DM&E and Soo Line issues, GC Semenek; Huron & Eastern issues, GC Ladrig; Funeral for Soo Line BLET member, Milwaukee, Wisc.; Mtg. w/ GC Semenek and CPRR, Chicago; Mtg. w/ CPRR and TCRC, re: Inter-Border run, Milwaukee, Wisc.; Springfield Terminal mediation, GC Moore; MidSouth issues, GC Craddock; Louisville & Indiana issues, GC Hogan; D&H issues, GC Moore; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; Soo Line contract issues, GC Semenek; Tex Mex issues, GC Silmon; KCS issues, GC Parker.

**VICE PRESIDENT R.C. (RICK) GIBBONS:** Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut Southern; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; RSAC/RSIA Fatigue Management Group; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; Vice President duties; On duty at home office; Vacation; W&LE mediation, GC Dehart, Brewster, Ohio; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; SBA 1063, assisting GC Dehart, Norfolk, Va.

**VICE PRESIDENT JAMES P. LOUIS:** Assigned Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; National Division Department Head, Education & Training Dept.; National Division Department Head, Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Union Track mtgs.; Regional meeting planning; SEPTA NMB A13798, assist GC Dixon, Washington, D.C.; Secretary-Treasurer training class, Independence, Ohio; Dedication ceremony, new BLET headquarters, Independence, Ohio; Local Chairman class, Independence, Ohio; NJT mobilization planning.

# BLET to conduct LR class in September

The BLET Education & Training Department, in conjunction with the National Legislative Office, will conduct a class for BLET Division Legislative Representatives in Washington, D.C., from September 25-29, 2016.

The class will take place at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters headquarters. Classroom training begins at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 25, with an orientation and discussion of what to expect during the week ahead. All-day classroom training will start Monday, September 26 and run through Wednesday, September 28, 2016.

During this class Congress will be in session for the last time prior to their recess and the national elections. This would be a good time to come to Washington and assist the BLET in relaying the issues

and concerns affecting our organization.

The curriculum will cover:

- Computer skills (principles of letter writing and database management);
- Regulatory affairs (reporting and documenting important issues);
- Political affairs (the anatomy of elections, how a bill becomes law, communications skills and correspondence with politicians);
- Understanding individual State Legislative Board bylaws; and
- Trustee responsibilities.

Upon completion of the classroom training, attendees will participate in a full day of lobbying on Capitol Hill on Thursday, September 29, with a travel day scheduled for Friday, September 30.

Participation in this class is limited to the first 20 who register. Curriculum will be geared toward Division Legislative Rep-

resentatives and new State Legislative Board Chairmen.

Those who successfully complete the September 25-28 classroom portion will be eligible for a \$140 per diem, for classroom days only, from the North American Railway Foundation ([www.narfoundation.org](http://www.narfoundation.org)). NARF does not pay stipends for the day of lobbying.

Attendees must register for the LR Class through the BLET website at: [www.ble-t.org/lr](http://www.ble-t.org/lr).

After registering through the BLET website, class attendees will receive an email containing hotel reservation information. For more information, please contact Jason Wright, Special Representative and Director of the BLET Education and Training Department: office, (216) 241-2630, ext. 247; cell, (216) 296-4447; or email [wright@ble-t.org](mailto:wright@ble-t.org). @@