



NEWS

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

Flexible Spending, big savings

FSA helps members save by using pre-tax dollars

Registration for the money-saving Flexible Spending Account (FSA) begins in just over two months, and members are encouraged to take advantage of this valuable new health and welfare benefit.

The benefit has been in place on the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe property for some time, so BLET National Vice President Dennis Pierce is familiar with the FSA program.

"With three children at home, two wearing glasses and two wearing braces, I dedicate money to my FSA every year and have never left any money in the account," Pierce said.

The benefit is new to BLET members working under the National agreement.

"What many members should know is that the Flexible Spending Account allows engineers to use

pretax dollars to pay for covered medical expenses and covered childcare expenses that they would otherwise pay for with after tax dollars," Vice President Pierce said. "The end result is that all money dedicated to the FSA is treated like any other income tax deduction or 401k contribution; it lowers the engineer's taxable income at the end of the year. For every dollar put in the FSA, most engineers will save at least 25 to 30 percent of those dollars in tax liability that can then be spent on covered expenses.

"Covered medical expenses include prescription co-pays, Doctor visit co-pays and deductibles, costs for braces, glasses and contact lenses not covered by insurance, as well as many every day 'over the counter medications' like Tylenol and Maalox," Pierce said.

BLET National President Ed Rodziewicz also stressed the importance of membership participation in the Flexible Spending Account.

"It uses pre-tax dollars and members will realize significant savings," President Rodziewicz said. "It works for you and it saves you money. Please take advantage of this plan — it's a great benefit for our members."

However, the benefit will be lost unless membership participation increases. Side Letter #8 of the 2007 National Contract specifies that at least 5 percent of eligible BLET members must participate in the plan or it will be terminated as of December 31, 2009. Current participation levels are below the 5 percent threshold, and the BLET is encouraging all members to sign up once open enrollment begins.

Open enrollment begins each year in October for

See Flexible Spending Account, Page 2

Senate OKs record Amtrak funding

Appropriations Committee also opposes Mexican truck program

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved legislation on Thursday that makes critical investments in Amtrak and rail safety. The legislation also would effectively kill the Mexican truck pilot program.

The bill appropriates \$1.816 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration, which is \$254 million over FY 2008, and \$725 million over the President's request.

The legislation also approves \$1.55 billion for Amtrak. This amount is \$225 million above FY 2008, and \$750 million above the President's request. Capital investment in Amtrak is increased to \$1 billion — the highest single-year appropriation to address Amtrak's aging capital plant and rail cars.

"In an era of record gas prices and congested highways, the committee rejects the Administration's irresponsible cuts, and funds Amtrak at a level that reflects the vital role it plays in our national transporta-

tion system. Operating assistance is increased to \$550 million which will keep all Amtrak routes operational and ensure the availability of funds for the retroactive wage payments called for under Amtrak's newly-ratified labor contracts. The bill also provides \$100 million for capital assistance to States to help spawn state-supported passenger rails services and eliminate hindrances to improved or expanded passenger rail service, including Amtrak," according to a Committee press release.

"This legislation is all about making smart investments that will pay real dividends for the American people in both the short and long-term," said Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "Unfortunately, even with the skyrocketing price of gas, and with mass transit being used at record levels, the President has proposed to cut Amtrak by \$525 million. This legislation rejects the President's ill-advised cuts and provides badly needed funds to build and repair mass

transit systems and highways and to help Americans find housing. I applaud Chairman Murray and the subcommittee for crafting a bill that reflects the needs of all Americans."

Also included in the legislation was a provision which kills funding for the Mexican truck pilot program, which allows Mexican truck companies to send vehicles more than 25 miles across the United States border. The Teamsters believe the pilot program creates a dangerous precedent on American highways because Mexican trucks and truck drivers are not held to the same safety standards as their U.S. counterparts.

The amendment, sponsored by Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND), removes the Bush administration's pretense that it can lawfully operate a pilot program to allow Mexican trucks to travel freely on U.S. highways. It passed by a vote of 20-9.

A federal law took effect

See Amtrak Funding, Page 2

New BLET contract saves jobs at W&LE

Resists carrier push for single person crews

Engineers and Trainmen belonging to BLET Division 292 (Beach City, Ohio) have overwhelmingly ratified new labor agreements for both train and engine service crafts. The BLET members are employed by the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad (W&LE) and are represented by the BLET's Norfolk Southern - Northern Lines/W&LE General Committee of Adjustment.

The agreement provides substantial wage increases for members and other important quality of live improvements. More significantly, the agreement protects jobs. The BLET successfully fought to maintain two-person train operations in the face of carrier demands for single person operations.

Negotiations for both agreements had been under-

way for seven years and for the past several years had been supervised by the National Mediation Board. BLET is certified to represent both train and engine service crafts at W&LE. Out of 64 ballots cast, 47 were

"Our success in resisting W&LE's attempt to dilute the train service crew consist rule demonstrates our commitment to maintaining two crew members."

— BLET Vice Marcus Ruef

in favor of the new engine service agreement. Out of 82 ballots cast, 62 were in favor of the new train service agreement.

The new agreements provide for immediate

hourly wage increases for locomotive engineers and trainmen. The total wage packages provide overall wage increases of 21.4% for locomotive engineers and 21.38% for train service employees, as well as longevity bonuses. The agreement

See Wheeling & Lake Erie, Page 2

BLET NEWS

BLET protects crew consist agreement at W&LE

Wheeling & Lake Erie

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expires at the end of 2011.

Both agreements provide significant improvements to the lifestyles of all W&LE train and engine service employees. The agreements provide that all employees assigned to extra boards will have one regular rest day per week, and also provides for improved electronic line up information. Additionally, all train and engine service employees will be able to take one week of their vacations a day at a time.

Both agreements provide that retiring employees will now be provided with up to \$415.00/month for gap insurance, which will make it easier for W&LE employees to take advantage of early retirement under Railroad Retirement. While the agreement also provides for a modest level of employee cost sharing in line with other W&LE employees, the agreements cap the cost sharing level reached in 2011 pending the negotiation of subsequent agreements.

One reason that the negotiations took such a long time, and the reason

mediation was invoked by General Chairman Cole Davis in 2006, was the carrier's demand that the Organization agree to single person operation. The Organization was successful in having this demand pulled off of the table, and the agreement was reached without any changes made to the train service agreement's crew consist provision. The Organization also resisted a late demand by the carrier that it commit in advance to negotiate over this issue during the next round.

General Chairman Cole Davis, who negotiated the agreement with the help of Division 292 Local Chairmen Steve Fogle and John Lemmert, was assisted throughout by Vice President Marcus Ruef.

"This has been a very long and, at times, tedious process," General Chairman Davis said in expressing his pleasure that this process had finally reached completion. "While Brothers Fogle, Lemmert, Ruef and I were the principal players during the last year, these negotiations span back through the tenure of the two general chairmen that preceded me, Larry Sikes and Bob Linsey, Vice Presidents Paul Sorrow and Dale McPherson, and many other



BLET officers on the property such as Division President Dean Dennis and Vice President Tim Johns."

Brother Davis also thanked John Tolman, BLET Vice President & national Legislative Representative, and Tim Hanely, Ohio State Legislative Board Chairman, for helping to apply key political pressure on the issue of one man trains. Davis said Vice President Tolman was key in opening doors at the National Mediation Board in Washington, D.C., while State Chairman Hanely helped arrange meetings with the staff of Ohio Governor Ted Strickland.

Brother Davis apologized in advance for any names he forgot due to the long history of this process which, in his words, "took on a life of its own."

Vice President Ruef commended the negotiating team for their perseverance and tenacity.

"Our success in resisting W&LE's

attempt to dilute the train service crew consist rule demonstrates our commitment to maintaining two crew members, and vindicates our custody of the train service agreement," he said. "It also belies the claim of some that our negotiation of meaningful engineer scope rules threatens the craft of conductor."

Brothers Davis and Ruef also thanked Federal Mediators Larry Gibbons and Dick Hanusz of NMB, who provided mediation services during the last several years of negotiations.

Finally, Brother Davis thanked National President Ed Rodzicz and First Vice President Paul Sorrow, who attended the final mediation session that culminated in the ratified agreements, noting that their presence served to reinforce the seriousness with which the Organization takes the crew consist issue. •

Teamsters offer Disaster Relief Fund assistance in flood ravaged Missouri

The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund is accepting applications for assistance from members in the state of Missouri after severe storms and flooding caused major damage in the following counties: **Clark, Lewis, Lincoln, Marion, Pike, Ralls and St. Charles.**

If you or someone you know needs help, please call the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund office at: (202) 624-8971. If you were impacted by the storms, please download and complete the "Request for Help" form available below. The completed "Request for Help" forms (including all requested

documentation) must be returned to the Teamsters by Monday, August 18, 2008.

To help increase awareness of this valuable assistance, members who live and work in the affected areas are asked to print and post the following notice at their places of work: <http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/MOdisasterflyer.pdf>

Members who wish to apply for relief should print and complete the following "Request for Help" form: <http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/MOdisasterrelief.pdf>

Amtrak

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on Dec. 26 that bans funding for the Bush administration's pilot program allowing dangerous Mexican trucks into the U.S. interior. In brazen defiance of that and other laws, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) claimed it didn't understand the intent of the law. FMCSA refused to shut down the pilot project that had begun shortly after Labor Day.

"This amendment makes it as clear as day that Congress wants the border closed to dangerous trucks," Hoffa said.

"The Bush administration apparently doesn't give a damn if Americans get killed on the highways," Hoffa said. "We're grateful that Sen. Dorgan and the members of the Appropriations Committee do give a damn." •

**Locomotive Engineers & Conductors
Mutual Protective Association**

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Since 1910*

Enrollment begins in October for Flexible Spending Account, a money-saving plan

Flexible Spending

Continued from Page 1

the following year and a form is available to calculate each member's predicted medical expenses for that year.

Members will be able to choose to participate in one of two programs:

- The first program, Health Flexible Spending Arrangement (Health FSA), allows members to use tax-free dollars to pay for health care benefits such as the following: doctor co-pays; drug co-pays;

dental co-pays or other dental expenses not covered in our dental plan; vision co-pays or additional eye care not covered under the national plan; and over-the-counter medications (cold medicine, decongestant medicine, aspirin, Tylenol or their generic equivalent, etc...). The 2008 program offers savings of \$120 to \$3,600 per year, but the savings are subject to change in the upcoming benefit year.

- The second program, Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP), allows members to use pre-tax dollars for cer-

tain dependent care expenses, such as out-of-pocket dependent care expenses for childcare or care for physically or mentally handicapped dependants. The 2008 program offers savings of \$120 to \$5,000 per year, but the savings are subject to change in the upcoming benefit year.

More details will be provided when open enrollment begins. BLET members are encouraged to monitor the BLET website and newsletter for details regarding this money-saving plan. •

SOFA Working Group reminds rail workers to remain vigilant in summer months

The Switching Operations Fatality Awareness (SOFA) Working Group is urging railroad workers engaged in switching operations to stay vigilant in the coming weeks. Forty-seven switching fatalities have occurred since 1992 in the months of June, July, and August.

The SOFA Working Group makes the following recommendations to rail workers to help them stay safe on the job this summer:

RECOMMENDATION 1

Any crew member intending to foul track or equipment must notify the locomotive engineer before such action can take place. The locomotive engineer must then apply locomotive or train brakes, have the reverser centered, and then confirm this action with the individual on the ground. Additionally, any crew member that intends to adjust knuckles/drawbars, or apply or remove EOT device, must insure that the cut of cars to be coupled into is separated by no less than 50 feet. Also, the person on the ground must physically inspect the cut of cars not attached to the locomotive to insure that they are completely stopped and, if necessary, a sufficient number of hand brakes must be applied to insure the cut of cars will not move.

RECOMMENDATION 2

When two or more train crews are simultaneously performing work in the same yard or industry tracks, extra precautions must be taken:

Same Track

Two or more crews are prohibited from switching into the same track at the same time, without establishing direct communication with all crew members involved.

Adjacent Track

Protection must be afforded when there is the possibility of movement on adjacent track(s). Each crew will arrange positive protection for (an) adjacent track(s) through positive

communications with yardmaster and/or other crew members.

RECOMMENDATION 3

At the beginning of each tour of duty, all crew members will meet and discuss all safety matters and work to be accomplished. Additional briefings will be held any time work changes are made and when necessary to protect their safety during their performance of service.

RECOMMENDATION 4

When using radio communication, locomotive engineers must not begin any shove move without a specified distance from the person controlling the move. Strict compliance with "distance to go" communication must be maintained. When controlling train or engine movements, all crew members must communicate by hand signals or radio signals. A combination of hand and radio signals is prohibited. All crew members must confirm when the mode of communication changes.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Crew members with less than one year of service must have special attention paid to safety awareness, service qualifications, on-the-job training, physical plant familiarity, and overall ability to perform service safely and efficiently. Programs such as peer review, mentoring and supervisory observation must be utilized to insure employees are able to perform service in a safe manner.

• • •

Thus far in 2008, there have been six on-the-job fatalities in switching operations:

• January 8, Waukegan, Ill.

A UP conductor, working a METRA commuter train, was struck by another METRA commuter train while he was stooped over the crossover switch connecting the two main tracks located just south of the passenger station.

KCS General Chairman Sam Parker reelected by acclamation



Kansas City Southern General Chairman Sam W. Parker was reelected by acclamation during the GCofA's quadrennial meetings, which were held June 10-12 in Shreveport, La.

Brother Parker is a member of BLET Division 599 in Shreveport, La., and he joined the Brotherhood of July 1, 1979. He was first elected General Chairman in 1996, so this will be his fourth term of office. He was also reelected in 2000 and 2004.

Also elected were: 1st Vice Chairman R.W. "Bud" Pickett, Division 599 (Shreveport, La.); 2nd Vice Chairman Jim Fisher, Division 612 (Nederland, Texas); Secretary-Treasurer David Spradlin, Division 573 (Greenville, Texas); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer David Grubbs

Jr., Division 569 (Heavener, Okla.).

Bill Walpert, BLET National Secretary-Treasurer, and Merle Geiger, National Vice President, attended the meetings and addressed the delegates. Arlen Todd, Louisiana State Legislative Board Chairman, also attended.

Steve Young, of the law firm Tavormina & Young, attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the delegates regarding the Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA). Young's presentation was also on investigation procedure. It was a full day seminar.

The Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment represents 330 members from seven different BLET Divisions in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Kansas. •

• February 3, Chicago, Ill.

A brakeman, working between cars in his train, stepped out from between two cars and into the path of a main track Canadian National train that was passing the stopped NS train.

• March 5, Random Lake, Wisc.

A 50-year-old conductor was riding the side of a car into an industry when the car derailed, struck a car on an adjacent track, and resulted in the death of the employee.

• May 26, Lumberton, N.C.

A 45-year-old conductor was riding the leading end of 97 loaded coal hoppers and directing the move to the unloading spot by radio commands to his engine crew. Once the move was stopped, the conductor could not be contacted and was subsequently found dead, under a pile of coal located near

the unloading area.

• May 29, Amarillo, Texas

A brakeman was riding the leading end of a four car cut of cars that was free rolling into a track. As the brakeman went to position himself to begin controlling the speed of the free rolling cars by using the handbrake, the hand brake support gave way, the hand brake apparatus broke off and the employee fell under the leading end of the free rolling cars.

• June 8, Houston, Texas

A brakeman was lining switches ahead of a shove move during an industrial switching operation. The brakeman was directing the shove move via radio. Radio communication ceased, the conductor went back to check on the brakeman and found him dead within the gage of the rail. •

Job Bank: BLET National Legislative Office seeks Director of Regulatory Affairs

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen is seeking to hire a Director of Regulatory Affairs to work full time out of the BLET's National Legislative Office in Washington, D.C.

The successful candidate will be responsible for a number of varied regulatory, political and legislative duties, including but not limited to:

- Accumulate/disseminate data and research for the BLET's position on all present/future rulemakings on all 49 CFR. This will involve corresponding with the BLET National Division, General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards and other interested parties.

- Assist in representing the BLET at FRA rulemakings, Rail Safety Advisory Committee meetings, and other forums that may result from FRA-

labor-management cooperative efforts.

- Prepare executive summaries and progress reports on correspondence from FRA, and develop educational material on regulations for publication to members.

- Assist in developing and processing legislative issues.

- Assist in lobbying Congress on legislative issues.

- Assist in preparing strategic plans and participating in changing/adding safety regulations and legislative issues.

- Prepare and/or present hearing testimony regarding federal and state legislation, and/or regarding regulatory issues.

- Develop a uniform safety regulation process in

coordination with General Committees and State Legislative Boards.

- Assist in establishing a safety database.

- Develop a strategy for targeting railroads' sub-standard compliance.

- Monitor technology and assessing impact on Locomotive Engineer and Trainmen safety.

The Director of Regulatory Affairs will assume all of the above duties and responsibilities. He or she will work under the direction of the Vice President and National Legislative Representative.

TO APPLY: Send cover letter, along with your resume to John P. Tolman, Vice President & National Legislative Representative, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, 25 Louisiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. •

BLET NEWS

TABLE X — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 5 DAY – WITHOUT A FIREMAN – \$6.00
Effective July 1, 2008

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$206.86	\$25.8575	\$38.7863
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$207.11	\$25.8888	\$38.8331
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$207.33	\$25.9163	\$38.8744
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$207.54	\$25.9425	\$38.9138
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$207.76	\$25.9700	\$38.9550
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$207.98	\$25.9975	\$38.9963
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$208.19	\$26.0238	\$39.0356
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$208.41	\$26.0513	\$39.0769
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$208.62	\$26.0775	\$39.1163
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$208.84	\$26.1050	\$39.1575
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$209.06	\$26.1325	\$39.1988
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.16		

TABLE XI — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY – WITH A FIREMAN
Effective July 1, 2008

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$187.15	\$23.3938	\$35.0906
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$187.36	\$23.4200	\$35.1300
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$187.54	\$23.4425	\$35.1638
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$187.72	\$23.4650	\$35.1975
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$187.90	\$23.4875	\$35.2313
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$188.08	\$23.5100	\$35.2650
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$188.26	\$23.5325	\$35.2988
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$188.44	\$23.5550	\$35.3325
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$188.62	\$23.5775	\$35.3663
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$188.80	\$23.6000	\$35.4000
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$188.98	\$23.6225	\$35.4338
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.16		

TABLE XII — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY – WITHOUT A FIREMAN – \$4.00
Effective July 1, 2008

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$191.15	\$23.8938	\$35.8406
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$191.36	\$23.9200	\$35.8800
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$191.54	\$23.9425	\$35.9138
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$191.72	\$23.9650	\$35.9475
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$191.90	\$23.9875	\$35.9813
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$192.08	\$24.0100	\$36.0150
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$192.26	\$24.0325	\$36.0488
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$192.44	\$24.0550	\$36.0825
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$192.62	\$24.0775	\$36.1163
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$192.80	\$24.1000	\$36.1500
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$192.98	\$24.1225	\$36.1838
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.16		

TABLE XIII — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY – WITHOUT A FIREMAN – \$6.00
Effective July 1, 2008

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$193.15	\$24.1438	\$36.2156
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$193.36	\$24.1700	\$36.2550
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$193.54	\$24.1925	\$36.2888
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$193.72	\$24.2150	\$36.3225
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$193.90	\$24.2375	\$36.3563
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$194.08	\$24.2600	\$36.3900
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$194.26	\$24.2825	\$36.4238
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$194.44	\$24.3050	\$36.4575
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$194.62	\$24.3275	\$36.4913
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$194.80	\$24.3500	\$36.5250
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$194.98	\$24.3725	\$36.5588
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.16		

BLET to co-host in 11th Annual Transportation Summit

National President Ed Rodziewicz announced today that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen will be a National Co-Host Organization for the 11th Annual Transportation Summit, August 12-15, in Irving Texas.

The Summit will feature the most prestigious group of state, national and international dignitaries ever assembled for a transportation conference. This unique and unparalleled opportunity facilitates communication, education and discussion necessary to lead our nation into the future. This year, more than 1,100 federal and state legislators, municipal officials, industry leaders and other influential transportation advocates are anticipated to attend the 11th Annual Transportation Summit.

“Co-hosting this event will increase the BLET’s name recognition and reputation throughout the transportation industry,” said BLET National President Ed Rodziewicz.

This year’s Annual Transportation Summit will feature the best and brightest speakers from around the world presenting on multi-modal transportation and policy topics such as: freight rail, passenger rail, commuter rail, high speed rail, transit, bus rapid transit, passenger aviation, air freight, airport financing, freeways, HOV, managed lanes, hot lanes, shadow tolls, steam-

ships, freight carriers, goods movement, inter-coastal canals and waterways, sea ports, inland ports, homeland security, transportation safety, intelligent transportation systems, smart car technology, GPS, GIS, Comprehensive Development Agreements, Private Sector Toll Roads, Public Sector Toll Roads, Regional Mobility Authorities, Public Private Partnerships (P3’s), and numerous other creative financing options from leading experts around the world.

Prominent transportation leaders from throughout the country and the world who have been invited to participate include U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison; U.S. Congressman James Oberstar, Chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; U.S. Congressman John Mica, Ranking Member of the T&I Committee; Mary Peters, Secretary of Transportation; James Simpson, FTA Administrator; Sean Connaughton, MARAD Administrator (Confirmed); Tom Donahue, President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; John Horsley, Executive Director of AASHTO; Alexander Kummant, President and CEO of Amtrak; and many other experts representing all modes of transportation from both the public and private sectors.

For more information, please go to www.transportationsummit.com. •



Kay Bailey Hutchison, U.S. Senator, Texas

“The Transportation Summit is a great place for people to meet and for transportation officials from all over the State to try to determine how we can all work together to do a better job of creating a right atmosphere for transportation in our great State of Texas.”

John Mica, U.S. Congressman, Florida

“Having personally participated in the Transportation Summit, I can say without hesitation that it is one of the finest Transportation Symposium’s in the United States. Congratulations on your great work and on the occasion of your 10th Anniversary Summit.”

James Simpson, Administrator, Federal Transit Administrator, U.S. Department of Transportation

“I am the Federal Transit Administrator for the U.S. Department of Transportation. It’s an honor to be here on behalf of Secretary Peters and President Bush. We all want to wish you a great summit. When you look around the Irving/Dallas Metropolitan area you folks really have it right. You bring all your folks together, all your modes and look to have transportation solutions. Not highways necessarily, not transit or not aviation. You look at integrating everything and that’s the way it should be. You are a model for the rest of the country. This organization, which started as a half-day summit, four hours, has blossomed into something that’s known internationally and with great speakers. For me, this is my first time and I hope you will invite me back, I would love to be back.”

Tom Donohue, President and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

“I am here today to talk about the fundamental reality that America needs to rebuild its infrastructure or will find its economy in recession in a short period of time. We have to press Congress and the private sector to invest heavily in infrastructure to sustain our economy. This conference is absolutely the right thing at the right time to push that objective.”

BLET among those seeking clarification on new DOT drug testing requirements

Over the past two weeks, the National Division and the National Legislative Office have received numerous inquiries concerning a Final Rule published by the Office of the Secretary of Transportation on June 25, and scheduled to become effective on August 25. The new Final Rule amends certain portions of DOT's Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs published at 49 CFR Part 40.

Of particular concern is new Section 40.67(b), which would require that railroads — among others — “must direct a [urine] collection under direct observation of an employee if the drug test is a return-to-duty test or a follow-up test.” The new direct observation standard set forth at Section 40.67(i) requires railroads to “request the employee to raise his or her shirt, blouse, or dress/skirt, as appropriate, above the waist; and lower clothing and under-

pants to show ..., by turning around, that they do not have a prosthetic device [that could be used to deliver a substituted urine specimen].” After the railroad has “determined that the employee does not have such a device, [it] may permit the employee to return clothing to its proper position for observed urination.”

It is the position of the BLET that the “return-to-duty” and “follow-up” tests referenced in the Final Rule are limited to those that are required subsequent to either a positive or an invalid drug test. However, the Final Rule is less than clear in identifying that these are the only tests to which the new requirements apply.

“The possibility that a BLET member who has a clean drug testing record could potentially be exposed to an outrageous violation of his or her privacy is intolerable,” BLET National President Ed Rodzwicz

“The possibility that a BLET member who has a clean drug testing record could potentially be exposed to an outrageous violation of his or her privacy is intolerable.”

— BLET National President Ed Rodzwicz

said. “We have been in consultation with other affected Labor Organizations, federal officials, and other interested parties, and we intend to have this question clarified long before the Final Rule takes effect. We also are reviewing the Final Rule in its entirety and considering what other options may be available to us.”

Additional information concerning this critical issue will be provided as it becomes available.

BLET Job Bank Amtrak

Amtrak is recruiting Locomotive Engineers to fill job vacancies in the following areas: Jacksonville, Fla.; Raleigh, N.C.; Florence, S.C.; Miami, Fla.; Charlotte, N.C.; Lorton, Va. (Auto Train); and Richmond, Va.

Duties include: safe operation of locomotives; complying with train orders, wayside signals, railroad operating rules, and special instructions; complying with federal, state and local regulations to transport passengers and equipment safely and efficiently; and performing air brake tests as required. Locomotive engineers must make timely and critical decisions under stressful conditions frequently.

Interested parties have a high school diploma or GED. Candidates must have a current Class I Locomotive Engineer Certificate and much have operated an engine within one year. Candidates must pass the Hogan Personality Inventory. Candidates must be able to report to their crew base within a two-hour call period.

Salary: Start rate is between \$25.76 – \$34.35 full rate per hour. Rate depends on how much service you have as an engineer. Five years is the maximum rate.

Start date will be September 8, 2008.

Please fax your resume to: (312) 294-9405, Attn: Janet Ruhl ENG – (Location desired); or mail resume to:

**Amtrak Human Resources
900 Second St. N.E.
Washington, DC 20002**

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BLET NEWS

A message from Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa

Why is John McCain afraid to talk to U.S. workers about trade?

John McCain talked about trade this summer, just not in the United States, and not to U.S. workers. For some reason, McCain thought Colombia was the best place to discuss this issue.

If McCain wanted to know how the trade programs he has championed for the past twenty years in the Senate have affected workers, he didn't need to go any further than Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh or Milwaukee. Maybe by listening to people who have lost their jobs he would finally understand that our current globalization and trade policies are at the heart of our current economic meltdown.

But the bigger question is: Why is John McCain afraid to talk to U.S. workers? Is it just one more example of his turning a blind eye or deaf ear on those who don't follow lock-step with his positions? Is he just too afraid to see and hear the results of his votes in Congress?

It is astonishing that McCain is turning a blind eye to the human rights violations occurring on a daily basis in Colombia. He has been waffling on the torture issue when it comes to Iraq, but by traveling to Colombia he made it clear that he will ignore the crimes of the Uribe regime — a regime that condones the torture and murder of trade unionists — and stand, smiling, while workers are killed.

John McCain, more than anyone who has ever run for our nation's highest office, should be appalled by the Uribe government. He should stand with Colombian workers and urge Uribe to end the violence. But no, he promoted a trade program that will continue the race to the bottom — a race he has been leading his entire Congressional career.

The Teamsters are not against trade—we are for fair trade. The Bush/McCain trade model rewards multinational corporations at the expense of workers in the U.S. and Colombia. And



it rewards the Colombian government for turning a blind eye to the 2,500 trade unionists who have been murdered since 1985.

This is what we want on trade. We want trade policies that mean gains in U.S. jobs and exports. We want to see increased living standards for middle-class families here and in the countries we trade with. We want a strong domestic manufacturing base, and stringent safety standards to ensure that imports are safe and not tainted.

Americans must demand better from our presidential candidates. John McCain should be ashamed of himself for traveling to Colombia and the American public and media should hold him accountable for his flawed agenda.

James P. Hoffa
James P. Hoffa
 General President

JULY 2008 CALENDAR & EVENTS

AUGUST 17-21... 68th International Western Convention, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Chairman Mike Galvani hosts the 2008 IWC at the Embassy Suites Hotel-San Luis Obispo. For hotel reservations, please call: (805) 549-0800. Activities include a wine tasting and dinner; tour of the famous Hearst Castle; the annual golf tournament; a trip to the farmers' market in downtown San Luis Obispo; a charter fishing trip; and much, much more! For more details, visit the IWC website, www.iwc2008slo.com.

SEPTEMBER 14-18... 73rd Southwestern Convention Meeting, St. Louis, Mo.

Chairman David Grimes and the members of Division 42 host the 2008 SWCM at the St. Louis Hilton at the Ballpark (One South Broadway, St. Louis, Mo.). For room reservations, call: (314) 421-1776. For details, visit: <http://www.swcblet.org>.

OCTOBER 3... U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Iowa & W.Va.

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will two free informational conferences on October 3: one in West Des Moines, Iowa (Hampton Inn, 7060 Lake Drive) and one in Huntington, W.Va. (Ramada Limited, 3094 16th Street Rd.). Registration for each program begins promptly at 8 a.m. The conferences run from 8:30 a.m. and to 12:30 p.m. Per Railroad Retirement Board request, elected BLET officials only!

OCTOBER 17... U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will a free informational conference at the Greater Pennsylvania Regional Council of Carpenters Union Hall, 650 Ride Rd., in Pittsburgh, Pa. Time of the meeting is the same as above.

OCTOBER 24... U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Wichita, Kan.

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will a free informational conference at the Holiday Inn Select, 549 S. Rock Road. Time of the meeting is the same as above.

Advisory Board June Activity

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

- National President Edward W. Rodzwick**— National Division office: General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Various correspondence & phone calls; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; BLET Division 3 mtg., Cleveland; Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA), Montgomery, Ala.; BMWED mtg. w/ Executive Board, Vice Presidents and System Federation officers.
- First Vice-President and Alternate President Paul T. Sorrow**—Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtg., Reno; NASLBC mtg., Reno; PLB 7093, Grand Trunk Western, Chicago; Assisted GTW arbitration, re: Health & Welfare payments; Teamsters Unity Conference, Las Vegas; Wheeling & Lake Erie mediation mtg. w/ National President Rodzwick & General Chairman Davis; Performed various duties as First Vice President; Performed various duties in Office Administrator capacity.
- National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert**—General supervision of BLET financial, record depts.; ND office; BLET Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Standard Building operations oversight; Joint meeting of the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen and General Chairmen, Reno, Nevada; Meeting with representatives for Canadian Pacific, Las Vegas; Teamsters Unity Conference, Las Vegas.
- Vice-President Richard K. Radek**— ND Office; BLET Decertification Helpline services; Director of Arbitration Dept; National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; METRA; Belt Rwy. of Chicago; Chicago Central & Pacific; Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range; Routine office duties, Chicago; PLB 7152 prep., EJ&E, Chicago; Contract mediation assistance, CN/WC, Rosemont, Ill.; Contract mediation, EJ&E, Chicago; NRAB arbitration prep, UP-W, Chicago & Cleveland; PLB 7152, Arlington Hts., Ill.; FRA Part 240.409 dockets.
- Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.**— Assigned to: BLET Trainmen's Department; Kansas City Southern; Texas-Mexican Rwy.; Midsouth Rail; Southrail; Gateway Western; CP Rail System/U.S.; Portland & Western RR; Great Western RR; Kansas City Southern GCoFA mtg., Shreveport, La.; PLB No. 7084 executive session, Tex Mex; Mtg. w/ LC Underhill, Portland & Western RR, Portland, Ore.
- Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle**—Assigned to Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Montana Rail Link, Pacific Harbor Line, Missouri & Northern Arkansas (M&NA), National Wage/Rule Committee; Conference call, re: Unity Committee, BNSF, Decatur; Civil War Museum, Harrisburg, Pa., re: Railroads during the Civil War; Public Law Board 7151, Decatur, Ill.; Office work, travel.
- Vice-President E.L. "Lee" Pruitt**— Assisted general chairmen & members of: UP-Western Lines; UP-Western Region; UP-Central Region; UP-Southern Region; UP-Tacoma Belt; Peer trainer negotiations, all UP GCoFAs, Omaha, Neb.; Advisory Board expenses audit, Cleveland; Southeastern Meeting Association, Montgomery, Ala.; UP-Western Region GCoFA mtg., Sun Valley, Idaho; Ft. Madison NYD negotiations, UPCR and UPNR, Omaha, assisting GC Rightnowar and GC MacArthur; UPRR-Tacoma Belt assistance, office work, paper work, filing and calls.
- Vice-President & National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman**— Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General Office Duties, telephone, correspondence; Coordinate content of NLO website; Continued coordination w/ IBT Government Affairs Dept.; Coordinated PAC contributions; NTSB reauthorization mtg., Washington, D.C.; Mtgs. for Financing & Infrastructure and IBT Legislative mtg; Freight movement hearing; Full RSAC mtg.; Conference calls for Amtrak reauthorization and climate change & transportation; BLET Division 3 mtg., Cleveland; Southeastern Meeting Association, Montgomery, Ala.; Mtg. w/ Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA) and staff of Senator Kerry (D-MA); Attended various fundraising and lobbying efforts.
- Vice-President Marcus J. Ruef**— Assigned to Amtrak Long Island Railroad; Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority; New Jersey Transit; Port Authority Trans Hudson; Norfolk Southern (Northern Lines/W&LE); Norfolk Southern (Eastern Lines); Norfolk Southern (Southern Lines); Allegheny Ludlum Steel Co.; and Birmingham Southern; NS-N, assisting GC Davis, Moberly, Mo.; Global claims conference w/ NS, Moberly, Mo.; LIRR/NYAR, assisting GC Quinn with arbitration briefs; Paper work, correspondence, reports, phone calls, etc; Advisory Board conference call, re: FMLA dispute status report; Southeastern Meeting Association, mock arbitration hearing/workshop; Montgomery, Ala.; W&LE contract certification ballot count, Moberly, Mo.; Study SBA 1063 cases; Brief VP Twombly on properties being transferred to him; SBA 1063, NS-N, Ft. Meyers, Fla.; Sign W&LE agreements, discuss safety program alternatives, Brewster, Ohio.
- Vice-President Dennis R. Pierce**— Assigned to all CSX General Committees — Eastern Lines, Western Lines, Northern Lines, Conrail (SAA/CSX-Northern District) — and Indiana Rail Road, Alabama State Docks; Special projects, BNSF GCAs; Administrative office duties, Cleveland; CSX/BLE SSA disputes committee mtg., Jacksonville, Fla.; Texas State Democratic Convention, Austin, Texas; General office duties; Southeastern Meeting Association, Montgomery, Ala.; UP Western Region GCoFA mtg., Sun Valley, Idaho; Public Law Board 7142 hearing, Jacksonville, Fla.
- Vice-President Mike Twombly**— Assigned to Delaware & Hudson; Springfield Terminal; St. Lawrence & Atlantic; Montreal, Maine & Atlantic; Union Railroad; Birmingham Southern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; South Buffalo Rwy.; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern; Indiana & Ohio; Indiana Southern; Louisville & Indiana; Meridian Southern; Talleyrand Terminal Railroad; Talleyrand Terminal Railroad mtgs., Jacksonville, Fla.; IBT Unity Conference, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference mtgs., Las Vegas; Expense accounts auditing, Cleveland; South Buffalo Rwy. mtg., Buffalo, N.Y.; Mtgs. w/ VP Ruef, re: Union Railroad arbitration cases, Charles Town, Va.; Assist D&H/STR GCoFA with discipline cases.

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