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Locomotive

ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS

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2010

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

Dennis R. Pierce new BLET National President

Pruitt elevated to First Vice President, Moates to Vice President

Dennis R. Pierce is the new National President of North America's senior rail labor organization. Pierce, 52, became the 23rd President in the 147-year history of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) on July 1 following the retirement of Paul T. Sorrow, whose distinguished railroad career spanned 45 years and included 38 years of dedicated service to the Brotherhood.

Among President Pierce's first official acts was to convene the Advisory Board, after which he announced the following changes in leadership to the Organization's top governing body:

• **VICE PRESIDENT E. L. "LEE" PRUITT** was elected unanimously by the Board to serve as First Vice President and Alternate President, filling the vacancy created by the promotion of Brother Pierce. Prior to his election to the BLET's second-highest office, Brother Pruitt, 59, served as a National Vice President assigned to the Union Pacific territory.

• **DON L. MOATES** was promoted to the office of BLET National Vice President (previously filled by Brother Pruitt). Moates, 63, was elected to the office of fifth alternate National Vice President at the BLET's First Quadrennial National Convention in 2006. He was serving the Brotherhood as General Chairman of the CSX Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment immediately prior to his promotion to National Vice President.

President Pierce congratulated Brothers Pruitt and Moates on their promotions. He also announced that his administration and the Advisory Board are continuing on the track of reform put into place by retired President Sorrow during his tenure as BLET Chief.

"I am proud to assume the leadership of this historic Brotherhood and humbled by the challenges that lie ahead," President Pierce said. "My administration



DENNIS R. PIERCE



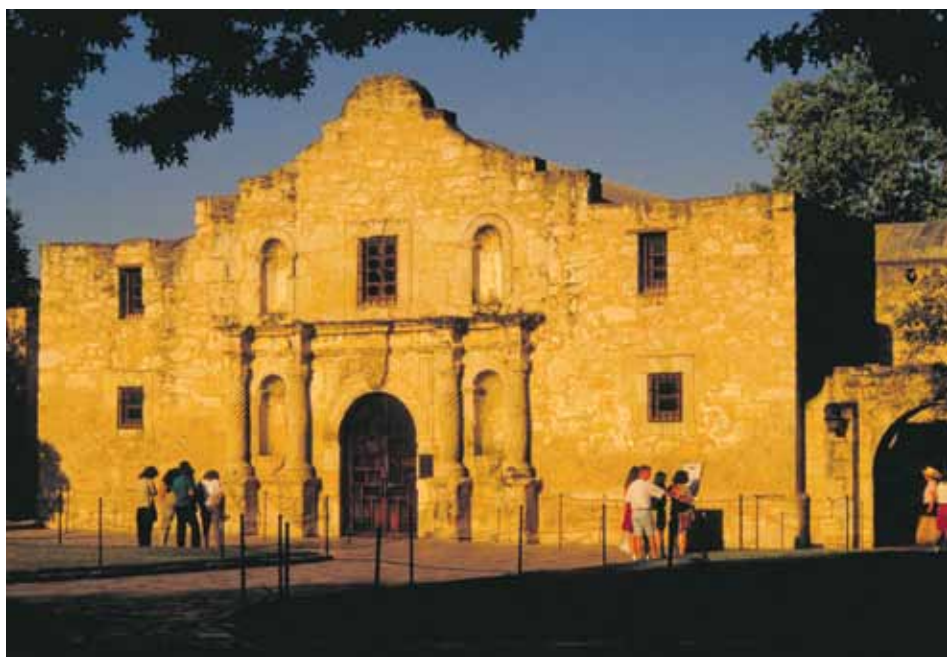
E.L. "LEE" PRUITT



DON L. MOATES

will build upon the important internal reforms instituted by Paul Sorrow and I look forward to a continued spirit of cooperation, unity and Brotherhood by the Advisory Board and in the Organization at all levels."

President Pierce also pledged that the new Brotherhood leaders will focus on re-energizing the BLET from top to bottom. "Armed with the painful lessons of the past few years, it's time for the BLET to turn the corner to a brighter tomorrow; a tomorrow in which tough, experienced union leaders and energized, mobilized members fight together for the benefit of BLET members and their families," Pierce said. ©



75th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting

THE ALAMO (pictured above) is one of many sightseeing destinations members will enjoy at the 2010 Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM) in San Antonio, Texas, September 12-16, 2010. A Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament will raise funds for the SWCM scholarship fund on Sunday, September 12. A mobilization workshop, golf tournament, Mission district tour and shopping trip will take place on September 13. BLET and BLET Auxiliary open and closed meetings will take place on September 14. Workshops will be held throughout the day on September 15, and the convention concludes with a banquet that evening. Guests will stay at the San Antonio Regency Hyatt along the famed River Walk.

FOR DETAILS, CONTACT RUSSELL ELLEY, [R.ELLEY@ATT.NET](mailto:r.elley@att.net) OR (210) 326-6021. ONLINE AT: BLETSWCM.ORG, OR WWW.BLE-T.ORG/INFO/MEETINGS/SWCM

NMB levels the playing field

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce praised the National Mediation Board (NMB) for changing how it conducts representation elections, saying the new procedure will provide greater fairness to unorganized workers.

The Board changed its rules effective July 1, 2010, so that a simple majority of voters will determine the outcome of elections; whereas in the past, workers who did not participate in the election were counted as "no" votes.

Railroad and airline management opposed the rule change, and an airline trade organization challenged it in Federal court.

On June 25, Judge Paul L. Friedman, a U.S. District Court judge for the District of Columbia, rejected the airline industry's lawsuit and upheld the NMB's proposed rule change.

President Pierce hailed the change as a major step in the right direction and believes it will make it easier for non-union workers to join the House of Labor.

The proposed rule change received widespread support. According to published reports, the NMB received letters supporting the change from 39 Senators, 179 Democratic House Members and 13 Republican House Members.

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BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

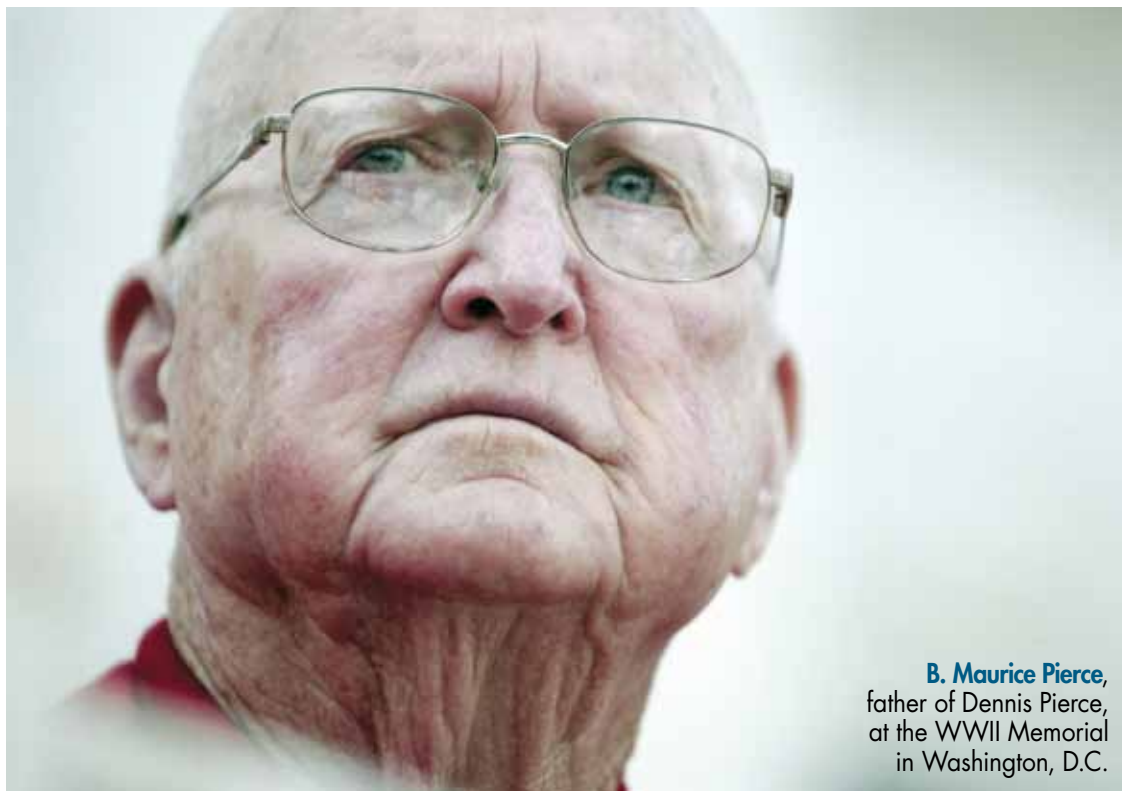
LESSONS FROM THE GREATEST GENERATION

On July 1st of this year, I was honored to become the 23rd President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a proud Division within the Teamsters Rail Conference, with a rich heritage spanning more than 145 years. Although my elevation this summer was not something that I had expected, when the call came to serve our great Union as National President, I did not hesitate in accepting that call. There are many factors that gave me the courage to step up and accept these new responsibilities, but the ones that I would like to discuss with you in this month's message are family and service to others.

When I look back at the biggest influences in my life, I turn to my family and most importantly to my parents. I am fairly certain that like most young men, there were times when my parents wondered if I was learning the life lessons that they spent so many years teaching me. Only as I have matured has the value of those lessons become clearer to me, the most important of which were not taught from printed paper, but were instead taught by example.

My father, who will turn 90 this year, is part of what has often been called the "Greatest Generation." The more that I learn about my father's generation, the more impressed I am with the examples that they set for all of us to learn as guideposts for our own lives.

My father grew up during the Great Depression, but the memories that he has shared with me are not filled with complaints or disappointments; they are filled with fond memories of family working together to overcome adversity. On the heels of



B. Maurice Pierce,
father of Dennis Pierce,
at the WWII Memorial
in Washington, D.C.

"On the heels of the Great Depression came World War II, a struggle in which my father's generation answered what was perhaps the most important call ever issued."

the Great Depression came World War II, a struggle in which my father's generation answered what was perhaps the most important call ever issued.

It must have been tempting to not answer that call. After all, America was a country in which the economy did not function for the common good. It was a land in which so many institutions created to protect the people from deprivation utterly failed in their mission. But what the Great Depression did was to teach the Greatest Generation that the toughest challenges can only be defeated by working and fighting together.

When called to save democracy in the world, members of the Greatest Generation served without hesitation and without dwelling on their recent suffer-

ing. Instead, they again worked together to overcome odds that easily could have proved insurmountable. Few if any families were spared the loss of a family member or loved one in the war. My father's family was no exception, as he lost a brother on the beaches of Normandy.

After the war, my father completed his education and then followed his true calling to be a minister. He has always been the genuine article, serving God, Country and his fellow man his entire life. And, like the vast majority of his peers, my father toiled in relative anonymity, except for those whose lives were shaped by him. From his example, I came to understand that service to others is not an idea unique to the Greatest Generation, it is a life-

style that is the cornerstone of any successful society.

The lesson that we can all learn from the Greatest Generation's teaching is this. We too can overcome what appear to be insurmountable odds if we all contribute and work together toward our common goals. We cannot allow inside or outside forces to divide us in our efforts, because only by each and all pulling together can we succeed.

Members of the Greatest Generation were not alone in making the ultimate sacrifice. Today, BLET families continue to suffer the loss of loved ones serving on the front lines of America's railroads. In June, Brother Gregory G. Kastner was killed while working for New Jersey Transit. In July, Brother

Darrell Amerson was killed working for Norfolk Southern. These good Brothers, as you will read in their obituaries below, died working to provide for their families. Let us honor the memories of these Brothers by standing together and fighting for improved safety and working conditions; our unity is our strength.

I will be the first to admit that my new assignment will be the toughest job that I have ever had, but I commit to you that I will dedicate myself and all of my energy to representing the BLET and our membership in a way that will make you proud to be a part of our Organization. I will work daily to better the working conditions and wages of our membership, and your interests will be my daily focus.

But one man cannot accomplish these tasks alone. In order for us to succeed I need your help, and I ask you to join me in this effort. If you are not currently active in your Union, consider this *your* call to serve our proud Union and all BLET members. Attend your division meetings, take an interest in what is happening in the BLET locally, on your property and nationally. Strive to understand the issues that affect you and, most importantly, always cast the votes you are given after taking the time to understand those issues. Participation, teamwork and solidarity are the keys, and success is achievable only if we all make this our common fight.

Fraternally,

DENNIS R. PIERCE

Two BLET members killed in the line of duty

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen are in mourning following the tragic deaths of Gregory G. Kastner in June and Darrell Amerson in July.

"These are tragic losses to our Brotherhood family," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "I extend deepest condolences to the family and friends of Brother Kastner and Brother Amerson."

They are the second and third BLET members killed in the line of duty in 2010. Brother Andrew Monheim died on the job on March 16, 2010.

GREGORY G. KASTNER

Tragically, Brother Kastner, 63, was just 20 days from retirement when the fatality occurred. According to preliminary re-

ports, he had just finished fueling his engine and was walking back to another locomotive when he was struck around 3:30 a.m. on May 31 at NJ Transit's Meadows Maintenance Complex in Kearny, N.J.

According to his friend and Brother Fred Mattison of Division 373, Brother Kastner chose not to retire as soon as he was eligible. Instead, the devoted father and husband decided to continue working a few extra years to provide for his family. He and his wife, Grace, were looking forward to retirement and had just purchased a retirement home in Florida.

Brother Kastner was a member of BLET Division 272 in Dover, N.J., and he joined the Brotherhood on April 2, 2004.

He is survived by his wife, Grace (Moran) Kastner, his three children, Cristin Farney and her husband, Steven, Kim-

berly McCloskey and her husband, William, and Ryan Kastner, as well as his granddaughter, Micaela Kastner.

"The family's grief, anger, frustration must be overwhelming," said NJ Transit General Chairman Rich Darcy. "We go to work day in and out. We do our job day in and out. We come home raise our families, cash our check, pay the bills. Now it is all over for Brother Greg Kastner. Our words are weak and not effective enough to express our condolences as coworkers to his loving family, friends and neighbors."

He worked out of the Maintenance Complex in Kearny since 2003. Prior to that, he worked for APA Transport of North Bergen for 19 years. Mr. Kastner served with the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

DARRELL AMERSON

Brother Amerson, 42, a member of BLET Division 230 (Meridian, Miss.) since June 1, 2008, passed away on July 2, 2010, following injuries he sustained in an accident in a Norfolk Southern yard in Meridian, Miss.

Details of exactly what happened were still unclear as this issue went to press. According to Division 230 Local Chairman Brian Glebe, the accident occurred around 10:30 p.m. on July 1 in the Meridian rail yard. Brother Amerson suffered severe trauma to his leg and passed away at Rush Foundation Hospital around 1:30 a.m. on July 2 due to complications from his injury.

Brother Amerson had worked for Norfolk Southern for three and a half years. He is survived by his wife, Angela. ©



Pierce elected President of Teamsters Rail Conference

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce was elected by acclamation to serve as President of the Teamsters Rail Conference. Brother Pierce was serving as BLET First Vice President and Alternate President at the time the election took place on June 24 at the Rail Conference's Quadrennial Convention in Las Vegas.

Also elected by acclamation was BLET First Vice President Lee Pruitt, who will serve as Vice President of the Rail Conference. BMWED National Secretary-Treasurer Perry K. Geller Sr. was reelected by acclamation to the office of Rail Conference Secretary-Treasurer.

"Brother Pruitt and I are both honored to have been given the opportunity to serve the Rail Conference," said Brother Pierce. "We are both dedicated to working with Brother Geller and the other officers of the Rail Conference to make the Teamsters Rail Conference stronger as BLET and BMWED transition into the future together."

The BLET Advisory Board also elected representatives to serve on the Rail Conference Policy Committee, and they are President Pierce, First Vice President



Dennis R. Pierce

Pruitt, National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert and Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman.

The Rail Conference Convention came on the heels of the BMWED National Convention. BMWED delegates reelected incumbent President Freddie Simpson by acclamation, as well as Secretary-Treasurer Geller.

Simpson, who also serves as a Teamsters Vice President, congratulated the new Rail Conference officer. "I am very confident in the newly elected officers and am very excited about working with them to transition both Craft Divisions and the Teamsters Rail Conference into

the future," he said.

Geller said, "I look forward to working with Brothers Pierce and Pruitt to move our two organizations into a Rail Conference united in purpose."

In addition to Simpson and Geller, serving on the Rail Conference Policy Committee for the BMWED will be Dave Tanner and Randy Cook.

As President, Pierce is the principal officer of the Rail Conference and is responsible for conducting its day-to-day affairs. He also presides over quarterly meetings of the Rail Conference Policy Committee and all meetings of the Conference. With Policy Committee approval, Pierce also may hire Rail Conference staff, assign tasks to them and direct their work.

Teamsters Vice President John Murphy serves as Director of the Rail Conference. He presided over the Rail Conference Convention, along with the assistance of David Cameron, Assistant to the Director of the Rail Conference. Brother Pierce offered his thanks to Assistant Director Cameron, Vice President Murphy, General Secretary-Treasurer Tom Keegel and General President Jim Hoffa for their ongoing support of the Teamsters Rail Conference and its membership. ☺☺

Mobilization network activated for National Division officer election initiative

The BLET National Division is activating its mobilization network to launch a "get out the vote" campaign regarding the National Division officer election initiative.

The BLET Bylaws are unique in that they include a democratically driven pro-

cess titled "Initiative." The Initiative process allows members, through their BLET Divisions, to suggest changes to the BLET's Bylaws between conventions. All members and their Divisions have the right to utilize this democratic process by first circulating a petition to all BLET Divisions. In the event that Divisions repre-

senting 25% of the membership support that petition, the National Division is required to submit the suggested Bylaws changes to the entire membership.

Four BLET Divisions sponsored the current initiative and their petitions did receive the support of Divisions representing more than 25% of the membership. Accordingly, this matter is in the hands of the membership and BLET's democratic principles allow the membership to determine the course that the Union takes in this matter.

Since there has been relatively low membership participation on referendum votes in the past, the National Division is activating the National Mobilization Team as a means of encouraging as many members as possible to return ballots and participate in the voting process.

Rather than suggesting which way to vote, members of the National Mobilization Team encourage active members to exercise their right to vote and also instruct them on proper voting procedures to ensure that no returned ballots are voided for non-compliance with voting instructions.

The goal is to see that 100 percent of BLET members return their ballots.

Ballots were circulated on July 1, 2010, and must be returned by August 31, 2010.

For most of its 147-year history, officers of the BLET were chosen by member-elected delegates in convention (most recently in 2006). An initiative to change the BLET Bylaws and elect officers by a majority vote of all active members was passed in 2006, but did not take effect until after the BLET's First Quadrennial National Convention. The current initiative would revise the BLET Bylaws so that the process of electing National Division officers would return to a delegate vote in convention. ☺☺

2010

Calendar & Events

September 10, 2010

Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Roanoke, Va.

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will hold free informational conferences for elected officers of all railroad labor unions throughout 2010. Registration for all meetings begins at 8 a.m., with the programs beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. At the Hyatt Place Roanoke Airport, 5040 Valley View Blvd. NW.

September 12-16, 2010

75th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.

Hosted by Russell Elley, Local Chairman of Division 197, the 2010 SWCM will take place at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, on the River Walk at Paseo del Alamo (123 Losoya St., San Antonio, Texas, 78205. Phone: (888) 421-1442. Rate: \$139). For details, contact Brother Elley by email: r.elley@att.net.

September 24, 2010

Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conferences, West Des Moines, Iowa and Albany, N.Y.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., with the programs beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. In Iowa at the Hampton Inn-West Des Moines, 7060 Lake Drive; and in New York at the Clarion Hotel, 3 Watervliet Ave. Ext., Albany.

October 1, 2010

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

Registration for all meetings begins at 8 a.m., with the programs beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. At the Ramada Limited, 3094 16th Street Rd.

October 4-7, 2010

BLET National Division Convention, Reno, Nevada

The BLET's Second Quadrennial National Convention will be held at the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino in Reno. See BLET website for details, www.ble-t.org/convention

October 15, 2010

Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Registration for all meetings begins at 8 a.m., with the programs beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. At the Greater Pa. Regional Council of Carpenters Union Hall, 650 Ridge Rd.

Replacement ballots for initiative to change the BLET Bylaws

Ballots were mailed to approximately 37,000 BLET members on July 1 for voting on the initiative petition to change the BLET Bylaws to allow for delegate elections of National officers. Members who did not receive a ballot can request a replacement by calling (866) 260-6820.

Leave your name, address, and division number; and election personnel monitoring the mailbox will send you a ballot.

Tabulation of ballots will occur on Monday, August 30, 2010. ☺☺

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NASLBC concludes annual meeting in Mobile, Ala.

Political activism and railroad safety were key topics of discussion during the annual meeting of the BLET's National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) in Mobile, Ala., from April 14-17, 2010.

Members of the BLET Executive Committee took the opportunity to address the group and update the Chairmen on the current status of the Brotherhood.

The National Division presented a check to Alabama SLBC Tommy Hudson, who is running for the Alabama State Senate.

National President Dennis Pierce encouraged the group to be politically active. He was joined by National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert who gave a report about the BLET's finances, the reorganization of the BLET's mobilization team, and the upcoming publication of the Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Journal.

Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman reminded the NASLBC members of the importance of achieving the BLET's political and legislative goals.



Officers, delegates and members at the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) annual meeting in Mobile, Ala.

"This is a team effort," Vice President Tolman said. "We need your help on the state and national levels in order to get things done for our members."

Vice President Tolman also gave the group an update on current legislation,

the BLET-PAC and 2010 election races nationwide.

Two candidates for U.S. House of Representatives also addressed the NASLBC. Sheila Smoot and Earl Hilliard are competing for the Democratic nomination

for Alabama's 7th Congressional District, and both embody the ideals set forth by BLET President Sorrow.

In addition to politics, safety was a key topic of discussion at the meeting, with Federal Railroad Administration Associate Administrator for Safety Jo Strang and National Transportation Safety Board Vice Chairman Chris Hart addressing the group. Associate Administrator Strang gave the group an overview of the key provisions of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 and their implementation status. Vice Chairman Hart discussed the role of the NTSB in accident investigations, and specifically discussed the NTSB's findings and recommendations in the fatal Chatsworth collision of September 12, 2008.

BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs Steve Bruno also addressed safety issues in his presentation regarding the Rail Safety Advisory Committee.

The NASLBC also held elections during the meeting. Tim Smith, California SLBC, was re-elected as the group's Chairman. Also re-elected was Ken Kertesz, Pennsylvania SLBC, as Secretary-Treasurer of the group. Terry Todd, Arkansas SLBC, was elected as the First Vice Chairman; and Jeff Kurtz, Iowa SLBC, was elected as the Second Vice Chairman. Tim Hanely, Ohio SLBC; Mike Muscha, North Dakota SLBC; and Dave Lavery, Florida SLBC, were all re-elected as Regional Chairman. Bill Verdeyen, Indiana SLBC, joined them, replacing the retiring Ed Way (Illinois), as Region 3 Chairman. ©©

REVISED

BLET National Division Electronic Communications Policy

Official 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 policy 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. ©©

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BLET PHOTO ALBUM: SMA 2010, Cincinnati, Ohio

BLET members enjoyed a week of training workshops, union solidarity and family fun at the 83rd annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA) convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, from June 13-18, 2010.

Members stayed at the historic Hilton Cincinnati Netherlands Plaza hotel and were hosted by Brother Jerry Sturdivant, his wife Peggy, and the members of BLET Division 110.

The meeting was Paul Sorrow's final one as National President of the BLET. He retired less than two weeks after conclusion of the SMA. Members and their families gave Pres-

ident Sorrow several standing ovations during the opening ceremony, and he was presented with a plaque commemorating his many years of service to the Brotherhood.

Throughout the week, members participated in several training workshops, but also enjoyed entertainment options such as a riverboat dinner cruise, golf outing, formal banquet, Kings Island, and a Cincinnati Reds versus Los Angeles Dodgers baseball game.

Next year's SMA will be held in Asheville, N.C. Dates and other details will be available shortly. @@



Cincinnati skyline: A view from the riverboat dinner cruise.



Paul Sorrow and Warren Hinely, Vice General Chairman, CSX-Eastern Lines.



Dennis Pierce addresses the convention



Tony Smith, CSX-Eastern Lines General Chairman, recognizes Paul Sorrow's retirement.



Bill Walpert, National Secretary-Treasurer



Larry James, Division 284 (Parkersburg, W.Va.), his wife Ava and grandson Jacob.



Jerry Sturdivant, Division 110 (Ludlow, Ky.), and wife Peggy, hosts of the 2010 SMA.



Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of the BLET Education & Training Dept., with wife Sereena and granddaughter Kamiel.



Lee Pruitt, Dennis Pierce, Paul Sorrow and Bill Walpert in a Short Term Disability insurance meeting with Merrill Lynch.



Vice President Willard Knight and Indiana & Ohio General Chairman S.C. Pabst.



Members enjoyed a trip to Planet Snoopy at Kings Island on June 16.



Larry Schneider, Division 192 (El Paso, Texas), and wife Becky Schneider, President of the BLET Auxiliary.



Workshop for Legislative Representatives



John Tolman, Vice President & National Legislative Representative



Presentation of the flags during the Opening Ceremonies by the BLET Auxiliary.



Kent Confer, Division 623, General Chairman Cole Davis (NS-Northern Lines) and Vice President Steve Speagle.



Reds vs. Dodgers at Great American Ballpark, June 17.



Local Chairmen Rusty Jones (Div. 239), Ben Freeman (Div. 190), and Jerry Sturdivant (Div. 110).

VP & NLR John Tolman named to high speed rail panel

In July, BLET Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman was named to the Advisory Board of the American High Speed Rail Alliance (AHSRA). AHSRA is an organization whose mission is to advocate for the development and implementation of a high speed passenger rail network in the United States.

In his capacity as a member of the Advisory Board, Vice President Tolman will provide guidance to the Alliance on its mission to advocate for the development and implementation of an

improved passenger rail network in the United States. The Board will support the Alliance's policy agenda, participate in strategic planning sessions, maintain a dialogue with stakeholders in the high speed rail industry and help to establish the permanent Governing Board of Directors for the Alliance.



John P. Tolman

"I'm very proud to have John Tolman representing the BLET on the AHSRA Board," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "With interest in high speed rail at a peak, I believe that the BLET needs to ensure that the interests of our members are protected. I have every confidence that Brother Tolman will serve as a persuasive advocate for BLET members and all of Rail Labor."

One of the group's goals is to ensure workforce development initiatives that identify, train and support American workers to design, build operate

and maintain America's high speed and regional passenger rail network. The group's mission is similar to that advocated by the BLET in its High Speed Rail position paper and comments regarding the National Rail Plan.

"I am proud and humbled to accept this appointment," Vice President Tolman said. "I look forward to lobbying on behalf of BLET members as well as our fellow Brothers and Sisters in the Teamsters Rail Conference, making sure that high speed rail creates good, safe jobs for all of Rail Labor." @@

Dependent Social Security Numbers Required

Loss of coverage for those who don't comply

In order to comply with new federal regulations, all railroad workers covered under the Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan (GA-23000) and the National Railway Carriers/United Transportation Union Health and Welfare Plan (GA-690100) must provide Social Security Numbers for their dependents.

Failure to comply will result in the dependent(s) disenrollment from healthcare coverage under the Plan.

NOTE: IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A NOTICE REQUESTING MISSING DEPENDENT SSNs AND/OR HICNs, THEN YOU DO NOT NEED TO TAKE ANY ACTION.

Federal Law now requires the reporting of Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for covered dependents to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). In addition, if a covered dependent is eligible for Medicare, then the Medicare Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) is also required.

In order to comply with these reporting requirements, Railroad Enrollment Services has mailed a final notice to those members identified with missing dependent SSNs and/or HICNs. If you have received a notice from Railroad Enrollment Services, please provide the SSN and/or HICN for any dependent who is listed as missing this information. Please be sure to sign, date and return the Social Security Reporting Form by the requested return date to the address provided.

THE FOLLOWING WILL OCCUR IF THE REQUESTED SSNs ARE NOT PROVIDED:

• **FOR ANY DEPENDENT WHO WAS NEWLY ADDED TO THE PLAN BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2009 AND MAY 31, 2010:** If Railroad Enrollment Services does not receive the Social Security Number for any newly added 2009/2010 dependent whose SSN is missing by July 31, 2010, the dependent(s) will be disenrolled from healthcare coverage provided under the Plan effective July 31, 2010.

• **FOR ANY DEPENDENT WHO WAS ADDED TO THE PLAN BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2009:** If Railroad Enrollment Services does not receive the Social Security Number for any dependent whose SSN is missing by January 31, 2011, the dependent(s) will be disenrolled from healthcare coverage provided under the Plan effective January 31, 2011.

Please be assured that when Railroad Enrollment Services transmits the SSNs and/or HICNs to CMS, they will maintain all physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that comply with federal standards to guard your personal information. @@

For additional information regarding the new CMS federal law pertaining to this requirement, visit: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MandatoryInsRep>

A bittersweet farewell for President Sorrow at SMA

BLET members bid a bittersweet farewell to retiring National President Paul Sorrow during opening ceremonies of the 83rd Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA) annual convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The SMA was Brother Sorrow's final meeting as President of the organization. He received multiple standing ovations from the more than 100 members in attendance during the opening ceremony on June 14.

"The most rewarding time of my life has been in service as your National President," Sorrow said. "It all began for me here in the Southeast and it is only fitting that I am here to pass the torch to the next generation of Brotherhood leaders."

During his address to the membership, President Sorrow gave an update on national negotiations, noting that the carriers have performed well financially despite the tough economic times. He said the



Paul Sorrow receives one of many standing ovations

Brotherhood can best achieve its goals at the bargaining table if all members of the Organization are working together as a united Brotherhood.

"I want the carriers to know that this Organization means business," he said. "This Organization will never give up, never give in, and will never back down from a fight."

He also recognized the importance of mobilization as a powerful tool to help unite the Organization.

Regarding his retirement, President Sorrow told the delegates that the decision came

after long discussions with his physician, his wife, and "the man upstairs." Additionally, he said: "I wouldn't leave if I didn't feel I was leaving our Organization in good hands."

In an emotional speech honoring President Sorrow, General Chairman John Karakian (Grand Trunk Western) described the close fraternal bond he developed with President Sorrow over the years and summarized the thoughts of many members when he explained that he was happy for Brother Sorrow, but would miss him and hate to see him go.



A special cake for Paul Sorrow during the formal banquet.

General Chairman Tony Smith (CSX Eastern Lines) expressed similar sentiments. He also presented President Sorrow with a retirement plaque on behalf of his General Committee of Adjustment. The plaque recognized President Sorrow's 45-year railroad career and 38 years of service to the Brotherhood, including his service as Local Chairman of Division 498 in Abbeville, S.C., his years as General Chairman, Vice President and National President.

Jerry Sturdivant, his wife Peggy, and the members of BLET Division 110 hosted the 2010 SMA. @@

Texas Legislative Reps complete training workshop

The BLET Education and Training Department, in conjunction with the Texas State Legislative Board, conducted a training workshop for newly-elected Division Legislative Representatives at the American Airlines Training and Conference Center in Fort Worth, Texas, April 6-9.

There are 42 BLET Divisions in Texas. During the BLET's triennial elections last fall, 23 new Legislative Representatives were elected. And of those 23, 17 completed training during the four-day workshop.

BLET National President Dennis Pierce, First Vice President Lee Pruitt, and Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman were in attendance to represent the National Division. Additionally, Ken Kroeger, Coordinator

of the Education and Training Department, was in attendance and led some of the training during the workshop.

Linda Chavez Thompson, Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor, and State Representative Lon Burnam spoke to the group. Other guest speakers included several representatives from Designated Legal Counsel, who spoke about the Federal Employers Liability Act, OSHA enforcement, and employee whistleblower protection act.

The attendees received information on the history of the Texas State Legislative Board by Terry Briggs, Chairman of the TSLB. James Ussery, TSLB Secretary-Treasurer gave a presentation on the Board's finances, and TSLB 2nd Vice Chairman Tom Keight gave a presentation on Political Action Committees. TSLB

1st Vice Chairman Catarino Garcia gave a presentation on Legislative Representative duties and Chairman Briggs discussed political messaging.

Workshop attendees participated in a hands-on session of the basics of MS Word and proper techniques for writing letters to elected officials, which were both well-received by all the attendees.

On the final day of the workshop, attendees heard from Erick Leslie, Rail Safety Inspector with the Texas Department of Transportation, and Melvin Smith, Region 5 Associate Administrator with the FRA. Mr. Leslie spoke to the group on matters pertaining to Texas participation in the Federal Rail Safety Program, while Mr. Smith's subject was on the FRA's Role in Rail Safety. Both speakers followed up with Q&A from the group. @@



Front row, from left: David Lively, Div. 172; Jeromie Jones, Div. 592; Terry Briggs, Texas State Legislative Board Chairman; Catarino Garcia, TSLB 1st Vice Chairman; Tom Keith, TSLB 2nd Vice Chairman; Jim Grigsby, Div. 197; and James Ussery, TSLB Secretary-Treasurer. **Middle row:** Tommy Johnson, Div. 871; Charles Alter, Div. 264; Edward Espinosa, Div. 775; George McCoy, Div. 834; Steve Gentry, Div. 857; and Luis Martinez, Div. 22. **Back row:** Jimmy Prince, Div. 139; Ben Strot, Div. 206; Allen Allee, Div. 703; Ben Vwright, Div. 189; Mark Peterson, Div. 194; Chuck Breeden 475; and Scott Piekarski, Div. 187. (Present but not pictured: Travis Cowin, Div. 863.)



GC Matt Wilson reelected by acclamation at BNSF/MRL

General Chairman Matt O. Wilson was reelected by acclamation at the BNSF/MRL General Committee's triennial meetings in Las Vegas on July 2. Brother Wilson is a Burlington Northern Santa Fe locomotive engineer and a member of BLET Division 104 (Spokane, Wash.). He has been a BLET member since July 1, 1980.

Also reelected by acclamation were: 1st Vice Chairman Steve J. Bratka (Division 98, Lincoln, Neb.); 2nd Vice Chairman Edward G. Laprath (Division 392, Havre, Mont.); 3rd Vice Chairman Kenton J. Psota (Division 623, McCook, Neb.); and Secretary-Treasurer James H. Nelson (Division 644, Galesburg, Ill.).

The following alternates were also elected by acclamation: 1st Alternate Vice Chairman Matt Brandt (Division 727, Sterling, Colo.); 2nd Alternate Gary Larson (Division 518, Seattle); and 3rd Alternate Tom Podrovitz (Division 644, Galesburg, Ill.). Brother Lynn Fitterer (Division 195, Forsyth, Mont.) was elected to serve as Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

The meeting began on June 28 and concluded following the election of officers, which took place the morning of July 2. The 45 delegates in attendance considered a number of issues during the triennial convention.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce addressed the delegates and discussed the business of the National Division. President Pierce is a former General Chairman of the BNSF/MRL GCA. General Chairman Wilson followed Brother Pierce as General Chairman when Pierce was promoted to the Advisory Board on April 8, 2008.

"I congratulate these Brothers on a job well done," President Pierce said. "The



Delegates and guests attending the BNSF/MRL General Committee triennial meeting, July 2010.

delegates' decision to elect these Brothers by acclamation is a testament to the officers' hard work and dedication. From my time with the Committee, I know that there has always been room for all points of view within the BNSF/MRL GCA. But when it comes down to the big decisions, the Committee continually pulls together and acts with unity and brotherhood as they move forward."

Additional representatives from the National Division included: National

Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman; and Vice President Steve Speagle, who is the Vice President assigned to the BNSF/MRL GCA.

Fellow BNSF General Chairman P.J. Williams (former ATSF) and R.C. Gibbons (Former STL-SF) were also in attendance, along with Montana State Legislative Board Chairman Craig Gilchrist.

The BLET Education and Training Department also conducted a one-day workshop for Local Chairman. Vice President Speagle reported that several newly-elected Local Chairman were delegates to the convention, and that they thoroughly enjoyed workshop while gaining

a great deal of valuable knowledge and experience.

Brother Wilson became a full time Vice General Chairman for the BNSF/MRL GCA in 1999, moving his family from Spokane, Wash., to Fort Worth, Texas, to serve the Brotherhood. He was elected by acclamation as 1st Vice General Chairman in 2001, 2004 and 2007 before elevating to the position of General Chairman following the promotion of Dennis R. Pierce to the Advisory Board on April 8, 2008.

The BNSF/MRL GCofA is the BLET's largest General Committee, representing 3,500 members from 45 separate BLET Divisions on three railroads. @@



From left: National President Dennis Pierce, BNSF/MRL Secretary-Treasurer Jim Nelson and BNSF/MRL General Chairman Matt Wilson

NMB LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 <->

The new rule reads as follows: "In conducting such investigation, the Board is authorized to take a secret ballot of the employees involved, or to utilize any other appropriate method of ascertaining the names of their duly designated

and authorized representatives in such manner as shall insure the choice of representatives by the employees without interference, influence, or coercion exercised by the carrier. Except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances, in a secret ballot the Board shall determine the choice of representative based on the majority of valid ballots cast." @@

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ADVISORY BOARD MEETING — JULY 22-23, 2010

Seated, from left: Vice President Steve Speagle; First Vice President Lee Pruitt; National President Dennis Pierce; National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; and Vice President Merle Geiger. **Standing, from left:** Vice President Willard Knight; Vice President and Arbitration Director Marcus Ruef; Vice President Mike Twombly; Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman; Vice President Don Moates; and Vice President Gil Gore. **Photo:** Jamie Janos

A message from Teamsters General
President James P. Hoffa

Supporting financial reform

Fighting to bring prosperity to American families
Most Americans were dismayed by the bailout for Wall Street, but nearly everyone understands that a healthy financial sector is necessary for economic growth.



Employers depend on credit and capital to create jobs. We get that. They need to borrow or raise money so that they can invest in buildings and machinery, pay their workers, contribute to pension funds and lay the groundwork to expand and create jobs.

But too often, financial services firms actually undermine our society's goal of broad-based economic prosperity.

Irresponsible Practices

In recent years, financial firms have become predators on the wealth created by previous generations of management, labor and capital. They started to make money through irresponsible speculation and lending practices rather than through prudent investment.

Financial institutions siphoned billions of dollars from working families through deceptive products and excessive fees. They plundered middle-class households, leaving them too indebted to stimulate a robust economic recovery. They took trillions from our national treasury through a variety of bailouts and they found ways to drain health companies of cash, either by gaining control of them or by selling products that undermine their stability.

Fighting for What's Right

That's why we strongly supported financial reform. We fought for an agency to protect consumers from banks' unfair practices. And, we repeatedly urged Congress to require stronger oversight of derivatives — complicated financial products that in one instance almost forced YRCW into bankruptcy. It shouldn't take the Teamsters' intervention to stop banks and private investors from trying to drive companies into the ground.

As this publication goes to press, it looks as if we didn't get everything we wanted in the Financial Reform Bill, but we made a good start. And, we'll continue fighting for what's right, and what's fair and what will bring prosperity to every American who works for it.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa

James P. Hoffa

TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT

Advisory Board May/June 2010 Activity

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

NATIONAL PRESIDENT PAUL T. SORROW — National Division office; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Various correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of office administration; General supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; GEB mtg., Las Vegas; 2010 convention site visit, Reno; National bargaining mtgs., Washington, D.C.; Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA), Cincinnati, Ohio; Advisory Board mtg., BMWED convention and IBT Rail Conference convention, Las Vegas.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE — Director, Passenger Dept.; Director, Short Lines Organizing Dept.; Director, Trainmen's Dept.; National Division Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Cmte.; Assigned to Special Projects-BNSF GCoFAs; Missouri State Board mtg.; 2010 convention site visit, Reno; General office duties, Cleveland; LR workshop/ Wage team mtg., Washington, D.C.; NY Dock mtgs., CSX, Jacksonville, Fla.; SMA, Cincinnati; Rail Conf. conv. and BNSF Northlines GCA mtg., Las Vegas.

NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER WILLIAM C. WALPERT — General supervision of accounting dept., records dept., online services dept., IT Dept., tax compliance dept.; public relations dept.; Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Standard Building operations oversight; Ohio State Legislative Board mtg., Columbus; Convention site inspection, Reno, NV; General Chairmen's workshop, St. Louis; Legislative Representative's workshop, Washington, D.C.; Local Chairmen's workshop for New York and Susquehanna Local Chairmen, Albany, NY; Southeastern Meeting Association, Cincinnati; BMWED National Convention, Las Vegas; IBT Rail Conference Convention, Las Vegas; BNSF GCA Local Chairmen's workshop, Las Vegas; BNSF GCA mtg., Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT MERLE W. GEIGER JR. — Assigned to: Kansas City Southern; Texas Mexican Railway; Mid-South Rail; South Rail; Gateway Western; CP Rail System/US (CP/DME/ICE); Indiana Southern RR; Utah RR; Panhandle Northern RR; Great Western RR; Indiana Harbor Belt; and Belt RR of Chicago; PLB No. 7239 (MidSouth), Hendersonville, N.C.; Contract mtgs. w/ GC Priester and DM&E; Mtgs. w/ GC Parker and KCS, Kansas City, Mo.; Holiday; Belt RR remote control arbitration, Chicago; Imp. Agree. mtgs. w/ GC Rodriguez and KCS, Corpus Christie, Texas; Mtg. w/ Panhandle Northern members, re: Section 6 notice, Borger, Texas; Contract mgs. w/ Great Western RR, Denver; Advisory Board mtg. and Teamsters Rail Conf. conv., Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT STEPHEN D. SPEAGLE — Assigned to Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Montana Rail Link, Pacific Harbor Line, Missouri & Northern Arkansas (M&NA); Retirement part, Moberly, Mo., NS; Vacation day; PLB 7382, Buffalo; Advisory Board conf. call; Mtg. w/ BNSF VP of Operations, Fort Worth; Holiday; PLB 7092, Decatur; PHL Section 6 mtgs., Chicago; SMA, Cincinnati; Mtg. on legal case, Dallas; Advisory Board mtg., Rail Conference convention and BNSF Northlines GCA mtgs., Las Vegas.

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; UP-Eastern District; Office duties and paper work, filing, correspondence, etc.; Vacation; Wash. to Sun Valley ID run negotiations, Assisting GC Hannah, UP-WL; On-property negotiations, all UP GCAs, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; EIRR negotiations, assisting GC Dayton, UP-WR; SMA, Cincinnati; Mtg. w/ UP and GC Dent, UP-SR, Omaha, PLB 7332, UP-SR, Omaha; Advisory Board mtg., Rail Conference convention, Las Vegas; PLB7340, P&N W RR, Chicago.

VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN — Assigned to BLET Washington, D.C. office; BLET Security Officer; General Office Duties, telephone, correspondence; Coordinate content of NLO website; Missouri SLB mtg., St. Louis; Ohio SLB mtg., Columbus; Oregon SLB mtg./Legislative Rep training, Portland; Utah SLB mtg., Salt Lake City; Hosted Legislative Rep training, Washington, D.C.; Mtgs. w/ various representatives from House and Senate, re: Changes and technical corrections to RSIA; Div. 57 mtg., Boston; SMA, Cincinnati; Advisory Board mtg., Rail Conf. convention and BNSF/MRL GCA mtgs., Las Vegas; State Legislative Board conf. call; Mtg. w/ American High Speed Rail Alliance; RLSET mtg., Washington, D.C.; Situational Awareness Taskforce conf. call; Mtg. w/ various representatives in the House and Senate to discuss High Speed Rail and other related issues; Several receptions with various U.S. Representatives, Washington, D.C., and state candidates throughout U.S.

VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF — Labor member-NRAB, Vice Chairman, First Division; Director of Arbitration Dept; Assigned to Amtrak; Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA); Long Island Railroad (LIRR); New York & Atlantic (NYAL); New Jersey Transit (NJT); PATH; Metra; SBA 1164 prep and hearing, Chicago; NJ Transit GCA mtg.; Referee hearings (Nash & Goldstein), Chicago; National Academy of Arbitrators annual mtg., Philadelphia; Various NRAB admin. issues; PLB 7377 prep and hearing, Chicago; Assist GC Darcy w/ NMB case, NJ Transit; Assist GC Dixon with "head-end" case submission, Septa; PLB 7346; SMA, Cincinnati; Advisory Board mtg. and Rail Conference conv., Las Vegas; NRAB adoption sessions, Chicago.

VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TWOMBLY — Assigned to Delaware & Hudson; Springfield Terminal; St. Lawrence & Atlantic; Montreal, Maine & Atlantic; Union RR; Birmingham Southern; Huron & Eastern; Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range; DM&IR-Two Harbors; South Buffalo Rwy; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern; Indiana & Ohio; Indiana & Southern; Louisville & Indiana; Meridian Southern; Talleyrand Terminal RR; DMIR negotiations, Duluth, Minn.; CN/IC dispute resolution, Chicago; EJ&E mtg/ w. GC Hobbs, Monee, Ill.; PLB 7154, Schiller Park, Ill.; Vacation; Springfield Terminal negotiations, Billerica, Mass.; MM&A negotiations, Bangor, Maine; Union RR, Monroeville, Pa.; Grand Trunk Western mtg., Cleveland; SMA, Cincinnati; Advisory Board mtg. and Rail Conference convention, Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT WILLARD E. KNIGHT — 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; Advisory Board conference call; Ohio SLB mtg., Columbus; WNYP mediation, Washington, D.C.; Ohio Central negotiations, Coshocton, Ohio; Assist GC Davis with discipline cases, NS-Northern Lines, Moberly, Mo.; Local Chairmen workshop, Albany, N.Y.; SMA, Cincinnati; Advisory Board mtg. and Rail Conference convention, Las Vegas; Division 199 special mtgs. w/ Vice General Chairman Wallace, re: ID notices, Danville, Ky.; General office duties.

VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE — Assigned to all CSX; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; UP on-property negotiations; Dispute Resolution Committee issues, CSXT; KCS Division mtgs., Shreveport, La.; UPRR ebb and flow agreement mtgs. w/ UP-SR GC Dent and UTU, Tyler Texas; Advisory Board conference call; Assisting CSXT general chairmen; Conference call with BLET GCs and CSXT crew management; UPRR on-property negotiations, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; SMA, Cincinnati; PLB, CSXT, Philadelphia; Advisory Board mtg. and Rail Conference convention, Las Vegas; Various office duties, paper work, filing, telephone calls.