



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

Election 2016

SEE PAGE 4 FOR LIST OF BLET-ENDORSED CANDIDATES

BLET members ratify New Jersey Transit contract

DEAL ENDS 5-YEAR STALEMATE

In late July, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) ratified a new 8-1/2 year contract with New Jersey Transit. The agreement governs rates of pay, and health and welfare benefits for more than 400 locomotive engineers, assistant locomotive engineers and locomotive engineer trainees.

Prior to the ratification, members had been without a new contract for more than five years. The new agreement runs from July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2019. It provides compounded general wage increases of 23.3 percent over the life of the contract. Members will receive full retroactive pay, which will be paid in two installments — one in 2016 and one in 2017.

Out of pocket costs for health and welfare will increase. No work rule changes were included in the agreement.

Two Presidential Emergency Boards (PEBs) were called to help resolve the dispute, and the neutral parties sided with the labor coalition's demands each time. Labor sought wage increases of 2.5 percent per year while NJ Transit offered 0.6 percent.

The BLET was one of 11 unions negotiating as part of the New Jersey Transit Rail Labor Coalition. Nine of the 11 unions ratified an initial agreement earlier in 2016, but the BLET and SMART-Transportation Division rejected it. After returning to the bargaining table, the

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BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE

WHEN VOTING FOR PRESIDENT, CHOOSE WISELY ON NOVEMBER 8

On August 26, 2016, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters issued its endorsement of Hillary Clinton for President of the United States of America. This endorsement was made by the General Executive Board of the International Union, after polling several Locals, Joint Councils and other subordinate units of the Union. The majority of those units polled supported that endorsement, and the International Union moved forward based upon its internal polling.

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen shared the news of the International Union's endorsement when it occurred, but the National Division of the BLET, itself, has not endorsed any candidate in the Presidential race. I only share this information due to the content and tone of many of the responses BLET received after it shared the news of the International Union's endorsement. Our union is a big union, and there is room for all opinions, but you wouldn't know that reading some of the responses BLET received. More concerning is that many of the responses were based upon false information about BLET's actions. It has been said that we are all entitled to our own opinions, but we are not entitled to our own set of facts, especially when they are untrue.

As I have said time and time again, each and every member of the BLET has the right to vote as he or she sees fit. Our right to make personal choices about our elected officials is one of the benefits of living in a democracy, and that right should never be trampled upon. Having said that, it is equally important that we as union members do not al-

low the way that we vote in national elections to divide us. Our opponents would love nothing more than to divide and conquer the labor movement, and much of what has been said in the national elections are proof of exactly that.

Ironically, many who complained about the IBT endorsement also complained about the way that they are treated in the railroad workplace. It is clear that they feel that they are not getting treated fairly by their railroad employers, and I wholeheartedly agree. Here is what is missing so far in this conversation: railroad employees are mistreated, and have been for over a century, in many cases due to the policies and operating plans designed or approved by railroad CEOs and other executive officers. These CEOs enjoy it when the employees their companies mistreat blame their union, but that doesn't change the fact that it is railroad management that is abusing railroad employees. The CEO of your railroad is generally the one responsible for decisions to implement draconian attendance policies, unproven technologies, harsh discipline policies, and the push to reduce train crew size. And your CEO relies upon bought and paid-for politicians in Washington to ensure time and time again that the corporations control the balance of power in the workplace. Don't think that those in power don't affect your union's ability to protect you from abuse your railroad has decided to impose on you. This isn't an opinion, this is a set of facts that opinions won't change.

Knowing all that, many who complained about the International Union's endorsement



President Pierce addresses members during the closed meeting of the Long Beach regional meeting on August 23, 2016.

have decided to support Donald Trump. As I have said, that is their right, but there is one thing that we must all understand before the election happens. CEOs are generally all the same. Whether they run large Class 1 Railroads, or empires like Donald Trump's, their cut of the corporate profits are more when yours is less. If you don't like the policies that your CEO has put upon you in recent years, how can you expect anything but more of that treatment if you put a clone of your CEO in the White House?

I have said since the election process started that we should make our decisions based upon facts and with a full understanding of what each politi-

cian has done for or to workers up to now. Facts about what Donald Trump has done to hurt working class Americans contributed to the International Union's endorsement of Hillary Clinton. Yet some who have bought into what Trump is saying are not looking at what he has been doing. His actions are no different than those of your CEO; if anything, he has treated his non-union workforce worse than any railroad CEO treats his union-represented employees. Now Trump claims to be the one who will fix all of the working class's problems, when it is he and those of his ilk that created these problems.

Cast your vote as you see fit, but do it without any miscon-

ceptions about what it is that you are buying into. If you feel compelled to vote for Trump, picture your railroad CEO as President of our great nation. Look long and hard at whether or not your railroad CEO would change his spots simply by being given a position of great power in government. It's never happened before, and there is no factual evidence that Donald Trump will do anything different from what he has always done. He will further empower his fellow CEOs to make and take more, all at the expense of the working class. That has been his lifelong business model and it's how he maintains his wealth. This billionaire CEO has said that "having a low minimum wage is not a bad thing for this country," and complained that "wages are too high." This is a man who considers a bankruptcy a success because he comes out ahead personally. Do you really want a billionaire CEO to appoint a Presidential Emergency Board who will recommend your future wages, health care payments and working conditions if our current round of national contract negotiations does not produce a voluntary settlement?

Expecting anything other than CEO business as usual from Donald Trump is not only unrealistic, it stands to empower your actual CEO to continue to mistreat you and your fellow railroad employees even more than they do today. Cast your vote very carefully this fall, as your decision most definitely will significantly impact on how effectively your union will be able to protect your interests in the workplace.

DENNIS R. PIERCE
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

66

I have said since the election process started that we should make our decisions based upon facts and with a full understanding of what each politician has done for or to workers up to now. Facts about what Donald Trump has done to hurt working class Americans contributed to the International Union's endorsement of Hillary Clinton.

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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 poli-

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

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



GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JAMES P. HOFFA

WORKERS HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE FOR A STRONGER AMERICA

With the 2016 election for president, senators and representatives growing closer, working families must focus on finding a viable path forward that empowers them to have a voice in government. By doing so, they can help shape pro-worker and pro-family policies that reward their hard work with fair wages and benefits.

The November election will determine the future for these candidates for office. But more importantly, it will determine the policy direction of this country on issues that affect not only today's workers, but also generations to come.

No two issues are more important to Teamsters today than pension security and fair trade.

We must elect candidates who will stand up for working men and women by protecting their retirement security. Those who earned their pensions and played by the rules must get the secure retirement they invested in for decades. It's just a matter of fairness.

On trade, we must stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed 12-nation Pacific Rim trade deal that could end up shipping hundreds of thousands of jobs overseas while also lowering the salaries of many who continue to work stateside. For years, the Teamsters have taken aim at the TPP because it jeopardizes the future of too many hardworking Americans.

This nation has increasingly lost its way when it comes to taking care of its own. Income inequality is up and the voting rights of minorities and the poor have been challenged. That needs to stop. But it only will if the people themselves stand up in November and demand to be a greater part of the process. Workers will decide if that happens.

Fraternally,

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT



“We must elect candidates who will stand up for working men and women by protecting their retirement security. Those who earned their pensions and played by the rules must get the secure retirement they invested in for decades. It's just a matter of fairness.”

BLET members ratify new SEPTA contract

By a 91 percent majority, approximately 200 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen ratified a new two-year contract agreement with SEPTA in late May.

The two-year agreement runs through March 2, 2018. It governs rates of pay, work rules and health care, and provides important quality of life improvements for BLET members.

Members will see general wage increases of 2 percent in 2016 and 3 percent in 2017, while also receiving increased pay for single day vacations. Health care, pension, FMLA and other employee benefits were extended to same sex spouses under the new agreement without increases in out of pocket costs or copays.

BLET members also approved a comprehensive change to SEPTA's Locomotive Engineer instructor program. The BLET's SEPTA General Committee of Adjustment (GCA) is now contractually involved in the design of the training program. Pay for engineers working as instructors will increase from 50 cents per hour to \$34.11 per day when they provide on-the-job training to engineer trainees. It represents an increase of 850 percent and the \$34.11 rate is subject to future general wage increases. The new contract provides safeguards for instructor engineers' FRA certification while instructing trainees.

The parties also came to an under-

standing addressing turn times in between assignments to help improve the quality of life for locomotive engineers. Additionally, many SEPTA locomotive engineers are forced to work six days per week due to chronic manpower shortages, and the parties agreed to change some work schedules from six-day to five-day assignments. It is hoped that the improved Locomotive Engineer instructor program will help reduce SEPTA's manpower shortage.

“This agreement is a great accomplishment in addressing the quality of life and scheduling issues that many of our SEPTA members experience,” BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. “This, along with changes in the Locomotive Engineer instructor program that provides the SEPTA GCA contractual rights in the program, will allow BLET members to reap benefits for years to come.”

President Pierce thanked all SEPTA members for their solidarity throughout negotiations and their active involvement in the ratification process. He also thanked the negotiating team of National Vice President Jim Louis; General Chairman Rich Dixon; Vice General Chairman Don Hill; and Vice General Chairman Paul Osciak.

“It was an honor to work alongside such a great team of union brothers,” Vice President Louis said.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is the regional public transportation system for the Philadelphia area, serving approximately 3.9 million people. ☺



BLET Congressional Endorsements 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE:

These endorsements are based on recommendations from the various BLET State Legislative Board Chairmen and/or the BLET National Legislative Office in Washington, D.C. They represent the candidates who your elected BLET officers believe will best represent the interests of railroad workers and middle class Americans.

**DUE TO FEDERAL ELECTION
COMMISSION (FEC)
REGULATIONS, OUR 2016
ENDORSEMENTS ARE
VIEWABLE IN THE
MEMBERS-ONLY AREA
OF THE BLET WEBSITE:
WWW.BLE-T.ORG/MEMBERS.**

SPECIAL NOTICE TO ALL BLET MEMBERS

Pursuant to Internal Revenue Service Notice 88-120, all BLET members are advised as follows: Dues, contributions or gifts to BLET are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. However dues may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses, except for that portion that is allocable to BLET's lobbying and political activities.

2017 FEES OBJECTOR POLICY

1. EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS

A. Any employee covered by a union or agency shop agreement in the United States has the legal right to be or remain a nonmember of the Union. Nonmembers have the legal right (1) to object to paying for Union activities not related to collective bargaining, contract administration and grievance adjustment, and to obtain a reduction in fees for such activities; (2) to be given sufficient information to intelligently decide whether to object; and (3) to be apprised of internal Union procedures for filing objections. Employees who choose to object have the right to be apprised of the percentage of the reduction, the basis for the calculation, and the right to challenge these figures.

B. To the extent permitted by law, nonmembers may not participate in Union elections as a voter or as a candidate; attend Union meetings; serve as delegates to the Convention, or participate in the selection of such delegates; or participate in the process by which collective bargaining agreements are ratified.

2. PUBLICATION OF POLICY

The fees objector policy shall be published annually in the BLET's newsletter in the month preceding the objection notice period and mailed annually to each objector. It shall also be provided to each new employee when s/he first becomes subject to a union shop agreement.

3. MAKING OBJECTION KNOWN

Objecting nonmembers must provide notice of objection by notifying the National Secretary-Treasurer of the objection in writing by first-class mail postmarked during the month of November preceding the calendar year to which s/he objects, or within (30) days after s/he first begins paying fees and receiving notices of these procedures. The objection shall contain the objector's current home address. Each nonmember wishing to continue his/her objection from year to year must renew the objection each year as specified in this paragraph. Objections may only be made by individual employees. No petition objections will be honored.

4. MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CHARGEABLE EXPENSES

All objectors shall pay their fair share of expenses germane to collective bargaining including:

A. All expenses concerning the negotiation of agreements, practices and working conditions;

B. All expenses concerning the administration of agreements, practices and working conditions, including grievance handling, all activities related to arbitration, and discussion with employees in the craft or class (or bargaining unit) or employer representatives regarding working conditions, benefits and contract rights;

C. Convention expenses and other union internal governance and management expenses;

D. Social activities and union business meeting expenses;

E. Publication expenses to the extent coverage relates to chargeable activities;

F. Expenses of litigation related to collective bargaining, contract administration and internal governance;

G. Expenses for legislative and administrative agency activities to effectuate collective bargaining agreements;

H. All expenses for the education and training of officers and staff intended to prepare the participants to better perform chargeable activities;

I. All costs of strikes and other lawful economic actions.

5. DETERMINATION OF CHARGEABLE SHARE

The BLET shall engage an outside auditor to perform an independent audit of the records of the National Division annually. Based on this audit, the BLET shall determine the percentage of expenditures that fall within the categories specified in Section 4. The amount of expenditures that fall within Section 4 shall be the basis for calculating the reduced fees that must be paid by the objector. The auditing firm conducting the annual audit of the BLET National Division shall give an opinion concerning the adequacy of the escrow amounts maintained pursuant to Section 10, and later will verify the existence and the audits of money in any escrow account.

6. REPORT OF CHARGEABLE SHARE AND BASIS OF ITS CALCULATION

The BLET shall report the determination no later than September 30. This report shall include an analysis of the major categories of union expenses that are chargeable and non-chargeable. A copy of the report shall be sent to all nonmembers whose timely objections have not been revoked.

7. CHALLENGE PROCEDURE

Each person entitled to receive the BLET's report may challenge the validity of the calculations by filing an appeal with the National Secretary-Treasurer. Such appeal must be made by sending a letter to the National Secretary-Treasurer postmarked no later than October 31.

8. ARBITRATION OF CHALLENGES

A. After the close of appeals period, the National Secretary-Treasurer shall provide a list of appellants to the American Arbitration Association (AAA). All appeals shall be consolidated. The AAA shall appoint an arbitrator pursuant to its Rules for Impartial Determination of Union Fees. The AAA shall inform the National Secretary-Treasurer and the appellant(s) of the arbitrator selected.

B. The arbitration shall commence by December 1 or as soon thereafter as the AAA can schedule the arbitration. The arbitrator shall have control over all procedural matters affecting the arbitration in order to fulfill the need for an informed and expeditious arbitration.

C. Each party to the arbitration shall bear its own costs. The appellants shall have the option of paying a prorata portion of the arbitrator's

fees and expenses. The balance of such fees and expenses shall be paid by the BLET.

D. A court reporter shall make a transcript of all proceedings before the arbitrator. This transcript shall be prepared within 15 days of the close of the hearing and shall be the official record of the proceedings which may be purchased by the appellants. If appellants do not purchase a copy of the transcript, a copy shall be available for inspection at the National Division during normal business hours.

E. Appellants may, at their expense, be represented by counsel or other representative of choice. Appellants need not appear at the hearing and shall be permitted to file written statements with the arbitrator at the time of the hearing instead of appearing.

F. Fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the first hearing, appellants shall be provided with a list of all exhibits intended to be introduced at the hearing and a list of all witnesses intended to be called, except for exhibits and witnesses that may be introduced for rebuttal. On written request from an appellant, copies of exhibits (or in case of voluminous exhibits, summaries thereof) shall be provided to them. Additionally, copies of exhibits shall be available for inspection and copying at the hearing.

G. The National Division shall have the burden of establishing that the reduced fees set forth in the report are lawful.

H. If the arbitrator shall determine that more than one day of hearing is necessary, hearings shall be scheduled to continue from day to day until completed. The parties to the appeal shall have the right to file a brief within fifteen (15) days after the transcript of the hearing is available, but in no case no more than thirty (30) days after the hearing closes. The arbitrator shall issue a decision within forty-five (45) days after the submission of post-hearing briefs or within such other reasonable period as is consistent with the rules established by the AAA.

I. The arbitrator shall give full consideration to the legal requirements limiting the amounts that objectors may be charged, and shall set forth in the decision the legal and arithmetic bases for such decision.

9. PAYMENT OF REDUCED FEES

Objectors shall pay reduced monthly fees based on the most recent report pending determination of the objection year's chargeable ratio.

10. ESCROW OF DISPUTED FUNDS

All monthly fees paid by objectors shall be placed in an interest bearing escrow account pending final determination of the chargeable share. Escrowed funds shall be disbursed to objectors and the Union upon issuance of the arbitrator's decision or fifteen days after the conclusion of the appeal period if there are no challenges to the determination.

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT

for

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFIT TRUST FUND

This is a summary of the annual report for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund, 30-0262584/501, for 01/01/2015 through 12/31/2015. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The plan has two contracts with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to pay certain claims incurred under the terms of the plan. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending 12/31/2015 were \$7,218,271.

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$10,371,597 as of 12/31/2015, compared to \$9,602,852 as of 01/01/2015. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of \$768,745. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year or the cost of assets acquired during the year. The plan had total income of \$8,091,101, including employer contributions of \$7,082,960, employee contributions of \$864,694, gains of \$19,655 from the sale of assets, and earnings from investments of \$123,792. Plan expenses were \$7,322,356. These expenses included \$360,546 in administrative expenses and \$6,961,810 to insurance carriers for the provision of benefits.

YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that report:

1. An accountant's report;
2. Financial information and information on payments to service providers;
3. Assets held for investment; and
4. Insurance information, including sales commissions paid by insurance carriers.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, who is Plan Administrator, at 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, OH 44131, (216) 241-2630. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$4.50 for the full annual report, or \$0.25 per page for any part thereof.

You also have the right to receive from the Plan Administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, if any, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, if any, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the Plan Administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes, if any, will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan at 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, OH 44131 and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington DC, or obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: Public Disclosure Room, Room N-1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20210.

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SIGN UP REQUIRED FOR BLET NEWS FLASH EMAIL SERVICE

The BLET National Division encourages all members to sign up for its automated News Flash email alert system. Our previous system has been upgraded and contact information from the old system could not be imported into the new system. As a result, previous subscribers will need to sign up again and confirm their email address in order to receive our emails.

Sign up at www.ble-t.org/newsflash.

If you have not previously subscribed, then this would be an excellent opportunity to sign up and have our News Flashes delivered automatically to your inbox. An informed membership is a strong membership, and our News Flash email alert system helps to keep you informed regarding the business of the Brotherhood. ©©

BLET concludes Long Beach regional meeting

Approximately 300 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and their families convened in Long Beach, Calif., on the morning of August 23 for the opening ceremonies of the BLET's second and final regional meeting of 2016.

This was the first year the BLET National Division hosted a regional meeting. Delegates to the Third National Convention in 2014 changed the BLET's regional meeting structure so that there are two annual regional meetings each year sponsored by the National Division.

After presentation of flags by the U.S. Navy Honor Color Guard and the playing of the National Anthem, Brother Brian Farkas, Chairman of the BLET's Indiana State Legislative Board, delivered the invocation.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce then welcomed all members, families and guests to Long Beach. President Pierce introduced members of the BLET Advisory Board who were in attendance. He thanked National Vice President Jim Louis and Special Representative Matt Kronyak for their work in managing and organizing the regional meeting, and thanked the regional meeting arrangements committee members who provided local support: Jose L. Covarrubias, Local Chairman of Division 214 (Long Beach); Paolo Tortorice, Local Chairman of Division 5 (Los Angeles); Kent A. Richards, Local Chairman of Division 56 (West Colton, Calif.); Don W. Carroll, Local Chairman of Division 660 (Los Angeles); and Kathy and Dino Raptis, a retired member of Division 12 (Fort Wayne, Ind.).

Numerous distinguished guest speakers addressed the body, including: U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal of Cali-



Members of the Missouri State Legislative Board during the Long Beach regional meeting on August 23, 2016.

fornia's 47th District; Ron Herrera, Teamsters Western Region International Vice President; Kathleen Bisbikis, BLET Auxiliary 2nd Vice President & National Legislative Representative; Bob Lauby, FRA Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety and Chief Safety Officer; Doug Bloch, Teamsters Joint Council 7 Political Director; and Walt Barrows, Railroad Retirement Board Labor Member.

In his address, President Pierce spoke about the pride, skill and professionalism of BLET members and the important role they play in the success of the nation's freight and passenger rail industry. Also, he said BLET members must work together to meet the difficult challenges facing the union and America's entire middle class.

"Your union has fought in the halls of Congress for things such as the Railway Labor Act, the Railroad Retirement Act, the Hours of Service Act, the Boiler Inspection Act, the Power Brake Law, the Safety Appliance Act, the Federal Railroad Safety Act and the Federal Employers' Liability Act, all to protect our members from an industry that has literally made its profits on the backs of its employees," President Pierce said. "I don't share this to toot the BLET's horn; in fact, it's obvious from the description of today's workplace that there remains much more work to do on behalf of our members. But I do share this capsule of our history to impress upon you the importance of supporting your union's efforts. The very strength of our union is

based upon our collective and coordinated efforts, and not upon the efforts of any one individual. As General President Jim Hoffa says, the corporations may have the money, but we have the boots on the ground. The challenge is harnessing that strength when important issues confront us, and that time is on us now.

"Now, there are things that we can do to try and stem this tide, and to try and turn this country back into a country where the working class is recognized and respected, both in the workplace and on payday. The biggest step in that change is to go back to electing politicians who will work for the working class instead of the corporations. We will all have such an opportunity this fall, and BLET will be working now — and will continue to work — to educate our members on exactly what the risks are to railroad workers when it comes to electing politicians owned by corporations."

The opening ceremony also included a memorial ceremony in which the names of all BLET members killed in the line of duty since 1989 were shown in a solemn video presentation. They were honored with a moment of silence.

Members took advantage of educational opportunities throughout the remainder of the week. Workshops featured specialized training for BLET Legislative Representatives, Secretary-Treasurers and Local Chairmen. These workshops also included an overview of the BLET's Mobilization network.

The 2016 Long Beach regional meeting concluded with a banquet on the evening of August 25.

The BLET's 2017 regional meetings will be held in Myrtle Beach, S.C., and San Antonio, Texas. More specific information will be made available soon. ☻





lessons...

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Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen News Brotherhood Of Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen

7061 East Pleasant Valley Road
Independence, Ohio 44131

BLET Publications Committee:

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E. "Lee" Pruitt, First Vice President & Alternate President
Stephen J. Bruno, National Secretary-Treasurer
John P. Tolman, Vice President & National Legislative Rep.
John V. Bentley Jr., Director of Public Relations & Editor
Bill Joyce, Art Director & Associate Editor
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8/16

Photo of the Month: August 2016

MERIDIAN SPEEDWAY: Spanning an old wooden trestle, the DPU of an eastbound Kansas City Southern (KCS) manifest crosses the Louisiana backwaters of Sibley, La., eastbound on KCS' Vicksburg Subdivision along what is known as the Meridian Speedway. **Photo:** Chase Gunnoe



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

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

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

Advisory Board June 2016 Activity

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

NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE: National Division Office, Independence, Ohio; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of Office Administration; General Supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; Policy Committee, Teamsters Rail Conference; Vacation; National bargaining mtg., Las Vegas; Local Chairman class, Independence, Ohio; Kansas City Southern GCA mtg., Bossier City, La.; IBT convention, Las Vegas; IBT General Executive Board (GEB) mtg., Las Vegas; BNSF-MRL GCA mtg., Las Vegas.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT: National Duties include but not limited to: Director, Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; National duties, Independence, Ohio; National bargaining mtg., Las Vegas; CN-IC GCA mtg., Robinsonville, Miss.; KCS GCA mtg., Bossier City, La.; IBT convention, Las Vegas.

NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO: General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Publications Committee; Passenger Dept.; National Bargaining Committee; IBT Human Rights Commission; ND office work, Independence, Ohio; Union Track implementation and training; IBT convention, Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN: Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Weekly PAC committee and legislative mtgs.; Maryland State Legislative Board inaugural convention, Frederick Md.; Food Research Action Committee annual benefit dinner, Washington, D.C.; BNSF/MRL GCA mtg., Las Vegas; IBT convention, Las Vegas; Various functions for Representatives and Senators, Washington, D.C.

VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF: Vice Chairman, National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); National Mediation Board (NMB) Arb. Adv. Forum; Department Head, BLET Arbitration Department; Assigned to Illinois Central, Wisconsin Central, Indiana Harbor Belt, Belt Railway of Chicago, Metra, GRR and Illinois RR; Assist GC Reynolds w/ discipline cases, WC, Green Bay, Wisc.; Conference call with GCs Semenek, Craddock and Balonek, Metra, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ discipline submissions, WC, Chicago; CN-IC GCA mtg., Tunica, Miss.; Study dockets for NRAB; 1st Division NRAB arb. Utilization project, NRAB hearings, Omaha; Assist w/ discipline cases and claims screening w/ GC Short, IHB, Chicago; Mtgs. w/ NRAB Labor Member Caucus, Chicago; Assist GC Craddock w/ equity dispute and trackage rights issue, IC, Chicago.

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

eral office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Utah Railway Section 6 negotiations, Draper, Utah; Tacoma Belt Railway Section 6 negotiations, Tacoma, Wash.; UP-Southern Region PLB 7158, Estero, Fla.; UP-Western Region GCA mtg., Boise, Idaho; IBT convention, Las Vegas.

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

VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER: Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CRI&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Great Western; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Division 458 mtg. w/ GC Holdcraft, BNSF, Chicago; Division 736 mtg. w/ GC Brown, BNSF, Wichita Falls; BNSF/MRL GCA mtg., Las Vegas; IBT convention, Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT COLE W. DAVIS: Assigned to: Kansas City Southern (MidSouth Rail, South-Rail, Gateway Western, Illinois & Midland), Texas Mexican Rwy.; CP Rail System/US (Indiana Southern, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern); Springfield Terminal (St. Lawrence & Atlantic, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; DM&E issues, GC Semenek; Huron & Eastern issues, GC Ladrig; Illinois Midland and Mid South issues, GC Craddock; CN-IC GCA mtg., GC Craddock, Robinsonville, Miss.; Springfield Terminal and D&H issues, GC Moore; Louisville & Indiana issues, GC Hogan; Tex-Mex issues, GC Silmon; KCS GCA mtg., GC Parker, Bossier City, La.; Soo contract issues, GC Semenek; KCS issues, GC Spradlin.

VICE PRESIDENT R.C. (RICK) GIBBONS: Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut Southern; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; RSAC/RSIA Fatigue Management Group; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; Vice President duties; On duty at home office; W&LE mediation, assist GC Dehart, Independence, Ohio; WNYF investigation, Olean, NY; BNSF/MRL GCA mtg., Las Vegas; IBT convention, Las Vegas.

VICE PRESIDENT JAMES P. LOUIS: Assigned Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; National Division Department Head, Education & Training Dept.; National Division Department Head, Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Union Track mtgs.; Chicago and Long Beach regional meeting planning, Independence, Ohio; Site visits for possible future regional mtgs.; Local Chairman class, Independence, Ohio; NJ Transit contract discussions & mtgs., assist GC Decker, Newark; LIRR Section 6 assistance, GC Sexton.

NJ TRANSIT

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BLET and SMART-TD members ratified the agreement.

The unions were pushed to the brink of a strike several times. A strike would have crippled transportation in the areas served by NJ Transit, leaving approximately 105,000 people without a way to work each day. However, the unions were able to reach a contract settlement without having to go out on strike.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce thanked the negotiating team, including: National Vice President Jim Louie; NJ Transit General Chairman Dave Decker; NJ Transit Secretary-Treasurer George Petrie; Division 373 Local Chairman Jim Brown; Division 171 Local Chairman Tom Haahs; Division 272 Local Chairman Robert Davia; and Division 53 Local Chairman Dave Ziegler.

"I thank and congratulate our NJ Transit negotiating team, led by Vice President Louis and General Chairman Decker," President Pierce said. "I also thank our NJ



Transit membership for their solidarity and patience throughout this five year-plus negotiating session."

General Chairman Decker thanked President Pierce for the National Division's support throughout negotiations, and also thanked members of the New Jersey Transit Rail Labor Coalition for their solidarity and Brotherhood.

New Jersey Transit Rail Operations provide commuter rail service in New

Jersey, with most service centered on transportation to and from New York City, Hoboken, and Newark. NJ Transit also operates rail service in Orange and Rockland counties in New York under contract to Metro-North Railroad. NJ Transit's commuter rail network consists of 11 lines and 164 stations, primarily concentrated in northern New Jersey, with one line running between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. ©