



## SPECIAL REPORT: NATIONAL CONTRACT UPDATE

# COORDINATED BARGAINING GROUP UNIONS REACH TENTATIVE NATIONAL CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Rail Unions making up the Coordinated Bargaining Group (CBG) announced on October 6th that they had reached a Tentative National Agreement with the Nation's Freight Rail Carriers. The CBG is comprised of six unions: the American Train Dispatchers Association; the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (a Division of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters); the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, and Helpers; the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers / SEIU; and the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and



Transportation Workers (SMART TD).

On Wednesday, October 4, the CBG's full Negotiating Team met in Independence, Ohio, for a review of the terms of the proposed voluntary agreement. Following that review, each of the CBG Unions' Negotiating Teams unanimously endorsed the Tentative Agreement. On Thursday, October 5, the involved General Chairpersons of SMART TD, BRS and BLET met as well and those groups also unanimously endorsed the Tentative Agreement for consideration by the re-

spective membership of each Union.

The Tentative Agreement, which will be submitted to the memberships of each involved Union in the coming weeks, includes an immediate wage increase of 4.04%, with an additional 2.5% six months later on July 1, 2018 and an additional 3% one year later on July 1, 2019. In addition, wage increases of 2% effective July 1, 2016 and another 2% effective July 1, 2017 will be fully retroactive through implementation, for a compounded increase of 9.84% over an 18-month period and

13.14% over the 5-year contract term (this includes the First General Wage Increase of 3% implemented on January 1, 2015).

All benefits under the existing Health and Welfare Plan will remain in effect unchanged and there are no disruptions to the existing healthcare networks. While some employee participation costs are increased, the tentative agreement maintains reasonable maximum out-of-pocket protections for our members. The TA also adds several new benefits to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



### TEHACHAPI LOOP

ON APRIL 6, 2017, a BNSF Railway intermodal train bound for Barstow, Calif., meets another freight train headed to Bakersfield, Calif., at the Tehachapi loop during an unusually green and mild spring season. The Tehachapi Loop is a 0.73-mile long spiral, or helix, on the Union Pacific Railroad Mojave Subdivision through Tehachapi Pass, of the Tehachapi Mountains in Kern County, south-central California. The line sees about 40 trains each day, making it one of the busiest single-track mainlines in the world. Photo: courtesy Chase Gunnoe



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

# IT'S TIME FOR STRAIGHT TALK ON CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

**T**his edition of the *Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News* focuses on the Tentative Agreement between the nation's freight carriers, the BLET, and five other Unions making up the Coordinated Bargaining Group. By now, those members eligible to vote on the Tentative Agreement should have received a letter from me explaining how the bargaining round has transpired, and where we now find ourselves when it comes to our options.

As I said in my letter, BLET is at a crossroads in these negotiations. On the one hand, the members will be given the democratic right to vote on a proposed voluntary settlement of our contract. On the other hand, if the membership rejects the Tentative Agreement, we will in all likelihood be saddled with a contract crafted, and potentially imposed, by the Federal Government under the remaining steps of the Railway Labor Act, and Congressional authority under the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution.

In an effort to ensure that all BLET members have the information that they need to make an informed decision, we have added comparisons of the potential outcomes of both paths noted above to the BLET Website at [www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/CBG-NCCC\\_TA\\_BLET\\_Slides.pdf](http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/CBG-NCCC_TA_BLET_Slides.pdf). I would again ask that you review those comparisons to better understand the choice now before us. This edition of the *News* also includes member and officer comments and perspectives about the proposed settlement, and I would encourage you to read them as well.

When I became National President of our proud Union, I promised all members that they would only hear the truth from me. As with any contract ratification, you will hear comments from those in favor of the agreement and those opposed. Some, with their own agenda, will even misrepresent what is in the contract and what will happen if the agreement is not ratified.

In this piece, I intend to stick to the facts; the time has come



President Pierce addresses the Secretary-Treasurer Class at the BLET Training Center on September 26, 2017.

for straight talk on our proposed contract:

1. BLET served Section 6 Notices on the Rail Carriers in December of 2014. Those notices included a long list of improvements to our Collective Bargaining Agreements, many submitted directly by members and officers of BLET Local Divisions and General Committees of Adjustment.

2. All of the items in those Section 6 Notices were also put on the bargaining table and proposals were submitted to the Carriers in an effort to obtain the requested improvements. No stones were left unturned in our efforts to obtain every possible item important to the BLET membership.

3. As with any contract negotiations, both sides bring a long list of demands, and this round was no exception insofar as the demands brought by your employers.

4. After two years and 10 months at the bargaining table, your negotiating team reached a proposed voluntary settlement based upon a full consideration of all of the events that have, and could, impact the final settlement of this contract round. No "crumbs" were left on the bargaining table.

5. Rejecting the proposed agreement will NOT return your negotiating team to the table because the Carriers have made it clear they will not be there. Instead, rejecting the proposed

agreement will in all likelihood place the final disposition of our contract in the hands of the Federal Government under the terms and conditions of the Railway Labor Act.

Here is more straight talk about what is actually in the Tentative Agreement:

1. The January 1, 2015 GWI is part of this deal. The 2011/2012 National Agreements for all Unions accepting that GWI include a Side Letter that makes clear that (1) the January 1, 2015 GWI would be paid during the period covered by the current Tentative Agreement, and (2) that it would become the GWI for the calendar year 2015 if the dispute were to be presented to a PEB or arbitration board.

2. On an increasable base salary of \$100,000 per year, the total value of the five (5) GWIs covered during this contract term is over \$33,000 per employee. The value of the already paid January 1, 2015 GWI is approximately \$15,000 of that value, but the four additional GWIs included in the TA generate an additional \$18,000 per employee in just over 2 years' time.

3. The Tentative Agreement includes back pay going back to July 1, 2016, and will put thousands of dollars of overdue wages into the hands of all BLET members within sixty (60) days of the Agreement date. The industry position should we reject the proposal is that there will be no ret-

roactive application of any wage increase, and no back pay.

4. The employee's monthly cost-sharing contribution is frozen at its current rate of \$228.29. All references to the employees paying 15% of the Carriers' monthly premium payment are eliminated, and in application, the employees will be paying closer to 10% of that payment by the end of the term of the TA due to increased premium costs. Under the TA, all of those increases are the responsibility of the Railroads.

5. While there are no changes to the coverage provided by the insurance benefits, there are adjustments to who pays those costs at the "point of service". Even with these adjustments, the TA requires that the railroads continue to pay 90% of those costs on average, which is considered "Platinum Plan" coverage under the ACA.

6. All Carrier demands for work rules are off of the table in the Tentative Agreement. Those demands are detailed in the synopsis, and the Carriers have been clear that they will be back in play should our dispute go to the Federal Government.

7. Additional examples showing the impact of the TA are included in this edition of the *News*.

BLET has spent well over two years at the bargaining table with five other Unions fighting to provide our members with an agree-

ment worthy of your consideration. Our bargaining group represents railroad employees from one end of the railroad pay scale to the other, and has been the model for Union Solidarity at the bargaining table. In consideration of all that confronts us, the bargaining teams from all six of these Unions unanimously endorsed the proposed agreement, as did the General Chairmen of each Union.

It is also worth noting that for the first time in my 40 years of railroading, all operating employees will vote on the same contract at the same time. BLE/ BLET and UTU/SMART TD have been criticized for years by some for not working together. This time we have and that is why so many things are NOT in the Tentative Agreement — including harmful work rule changes. Despite the Carriers' best efforts to change rules to make you do more work for less money, your bargaining team achieved an agreement that rejects all of their proposed changes—existing rules remain as-is and, unlike what happened after PEB 219, there is nothing forcing either Union to negotiate on crew size.

The Agreement before you provides real wage increases, limits any increase to your health care costs, and protects you from an overreaching contract crafted by the government. Our bargaining group has shown solidarity from the beginning, and I for one am proud to be a part of such a diverse group of railroad employees. Compared to what certain Rail Carriers would still like to gain via a Government Settlement, we've achieved a lot at the bargaining table, and I will not apologize to anyone for giving BLET's membership the democratic right to decide its own future. You will soon have an agreement in your hands worthy of your consideration, and I, along with your Advisory Board, recommend that you vote YES on the proposal before you. Please participate in the vote when your ballot arrives.

**DENNIS R. PIERCE**  
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

## BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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

reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

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

response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

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





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

## NEW DATA DOESN'T DISPEL INCOME INEQUALITY

**R**ecently, the media reported fresh numbers from the Census Bureau — the U.S. median income rose to record levels last year while poverty decreased. Good news for workers, right?

But hidden beneath those top-line numbers was the real truth. Income inequality, an issue that gained traction with the public in the wake of the Great Recession, is still a big problem.

The sunniest of the census data also shielded what's happening to many people of color in this country. While white families take in just north of \$65,000 a year on average, Latino families only earn \$47,675. And African-American families trail even further behind, at \$39,490. That doesn't seem like progress.

Workers are getting a raw deal, plain and simple, and a new survey backs that up. Americans, when informed about the state of economic inequality in this country, are less likely to believe they and others can get a fair shake, the poll finds. They also want government to do something about it.

"Among people who read about inequality, 53 percent indicated some degree of support for government efforts to reduce the income gap, compared to 43 percent who did not read in-

equality. Similarly, the people became more likely to support efforts by major companies to reduce pay gaps," academics Leslie McCall and Jennifer Richeson wrote in *The Washington Post*.

Of course, there is something workers and policymakers could do that would improve incomes nationwide — expand unions. If more workers organized with the support of states that encourage union membership, workers would have higher salaries, better benefits and a retirement nest egg. But that's not happening right now.

Instead, corporations, CEOs and the top one percent are rigging the rules. As a result, corporate profits skyrocket and it's harder for working people to make ends meet. While they might be working harder than ever, the American dream continues to slip away.

The American economy benefits when unions are strong. The more money workers have to spend, the more products they buy, creating more jobs and better wages of all workers. It's time for elected officials to wake up to this reality.

Fraternally,

**JAMES P. HOFFA**  
TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT



66 Workers are getting a raw deal, plain and simple, and a new survey backs that up. Americans, when informed about the state of economic inequality in this country, are less likely to believe they and others can get a fair shake, the poll finds. 99

## Three rail hazmat training classes available

**THE DATES ARE: JANUARY 7-12, 2018; FEBRUARY 11-16, 2018; AND MARCH 18-23, 2018**

**T**he Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is hosting three rail worker training sessions in 2018. The dates are as follows: January 7-12, 2018; February 11-16, 2018; and March 18-23, 2018.

These 40-hour chemical emergency response training courses will run on a Sunday through Friday basis, with an orientation session at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday and departure on Friday. All training will be conducted at the Houston Fire Department's Val Jahnke Training Facility, 8030 Braniff St., Houston, Texas, 77061.

The Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is funded by a federal grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) to provide hazmat training to rail workers. These five-day hazmat training courses will provide rail workers the essential knowledge, skills, and response actions in the case of an unintentional release. These tools will allow rail workers to protect themselves, their co-workers and their communities.

This training addresses OSHA and DOT required training in addition to procedures, different levels of response and worker protection in a hazardous materials emergency or release, weapons of mass destruction awareness, and the incident command system. The training also provides completion of the

OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Outreach requirements. The programs are delivered using interactive classroom instruction, small group activities, hands-on drills and a simulated hazmat response in full safety gear.

The funding provides the following student expenses: travel, lodging and meals. In addition, an incentive of \$175.00 per day is available to all training participants of these programs, except those who are able to secure regular pay through their employer, or are paid union officers.

It is recommended that rail workers complete the 40-hour chemical emergency response training courses once every three years. Please use the following website to register: <http://railworkertrainingprogram.org>

For more information, please call the Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program at (202) 624-6963. ©



Workers will participate in a simulated hazmat response while wearing full safety gear as part of the Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program.

## SIGN UP FOR BLET NEWS FLASHES!

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

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



## SPECIAL REPORT: NATIONAL CONTRACT UPDATE

# An open letter to BLET members regarding the tentative national contract

### GUEST COMMENTARY

BY JOHN P. TOLMAN

**BLET Vice President & National Legislative Representative**

Dear BLET Brothers and Sisters:

As the BLET's Vice President and National Legislative Representative, I don't often speak about collective bargaining issues, but I would be remiss if I didn't discuss the current agreement proposal. This is truly a historical time for the rail labor movement. The Coordinated Bargaining Group (CBG) is a group consisting of six great union leaders and their members. Together, the CBG has managed to negotiate a voluntary agreement with the railroads. This involved a long, concerted and sustained effort.

These six unions all have to be applauded for negotiating a tentative contract in these crazy times in Washington, D.C.: the American Train Dispatchers Association; the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers; the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers-SEIU; the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART TD);

and, of course, the BLET.

When the SMART TD and the BLET decided to negotiate together for the first time since 1964, it was history in the making. After all the years when both unions were at odds over the issues of the day, or just plain old disagreements between the two great unions, we finally got it right.

It takes intelligent people to work together to put the past behind and move forward for the good of the membership. The negotiating teams — led by BLET President Dennis Pierce and the SMART TD President John Previsich — should be commended for their vision and thoughtfulness. The negative battles of the past have been left in the past to provide for our members' futures.

This is not to take anything away from the other great unions of the CBG, but one cannot ignore the significance of our two Unions working together as they have in these negotiations.

Eugene Debs said it best when he said: "What can Labor do for itself? The answer is not difficult. Labor can organize, it can unify; it can consolidate its forces. This done, it can demand and command."

The six labor unions making up the CBG embodied Debs' comment through their actions and solidarity at the bargaining table.



Solidarity has always defined success in the labor movement. Without solidarity of purpose, early organizing drives would have failed. Without solidarity at the bargaining table it would be impossible to negotiate equitable contracts. And without solidarity when it became necessary to strike or engage in other types of job actions, employers would have succeeded in destroying the labor movement.

As a result of the CBG's hard work, and in large part because we remained unified throughout the bargaining process, none of the union leaders in the CBG let their ego get in the way of the unified goal. Because of this, you and 85,000 other railroad workers will have the opportunity to ratify a contract. Is the contract perfect? Of course not. But in an era in which workers' wages are stagnant, health care costs are skyrocketing, and companies are shedding millions of jobs through outsourcing and automation, I believe the Tentative Agreement is a remarkable achievement — and certainly far better than anything that would be imposed on us by a Presidential Emergency Board if we don't reach

an agreement with the railroads. In fact, the carriers' work rule changes (more work for less pay) and health care increases that were taken off the bargaining table will be resurrected if a Presidential Emergency Board is chosen to impose the carriers' terms on the BLET should the agreement proposal fail to ratify.

The negotiations produced one more extremely positive outcome: greater unity between the unions that represent America's railroad workers. In the end, that may be the most important victory we achieved because it will make us stronger in the years ahead as we work together to improve the lives of everyone who works to keep America on the move.

Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." All Rail Labor has to work together in solidarity to make the lives of all our Brothers and Sisters better for tomorrow.

I deeply appreciate all the support you have given throughout the talks, and sincerely hope that you will vote "Yes" for an agreement that puts the our members on track for a better, brighter future. @@

**"In an era in which workers' wages are stagnant, health care costs are skyrocketing, and companies are shedding millions of jobs through outsourcing and automation, I believe the Tentative Agreement is a remarkable achievement — and certainly far better than anything that would be imposed on us by a Presidential Emergency Board if we don't reach an agreement with the railroads."**

**— John Tolman**

### TENTATIVE CONTRACT AGREEMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 <=>

Health and Welfare Plan for the members of the involved unions and, importantly, it requires that the Rail Carriers will, on average, continue to pay 90% of all of our members' point of service costs.

On a matter of critical importance, the employees' monthly premium contribution is frozen at the current rate of \$228.89. The frozen rate can only be increased by mutual agreement at the conclusion of negotiations in the next round of bargaining that begins in 2020.

In addition, the CBG steadfastly refused to accept the carriers' demands for changes to work rules that would have imposed significant negative impacts on every one of our members. As a result of that rejection, the Tentative Agreement

provides for absolutely no changes in work rules for any of the involved unions.

"This Tentative Agreement provides real wage increases over and above inflation, health care cost increases far below what the carriers were demanding, freezes our monthly health plan cost contribution at the current level, provides significant retroactive pay and imposes no changes to any of our work rules," said the CBG Union Presidents. "This is a very positive outcome for a very difficult round of negotiations. We look forward to presenting the Tentative Agreement to our respective memberships for their consideration." @@

**A COPY OF THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT IS AT:**

[WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/CBG\\_BLET\\_INITIALS.OCT\\_2017.PDF](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/CBG_BLET_INITIALS.OCT_2017.PDF)

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## SPECIAL REPORT: NATIONAL CONTRACT UPDATE

# Synopsis of Tentative Agreement

**O**n October 5th, the BLET — along with the five (5) other Unions that comprise the Coordinated Bargaining Group — reached a Tentative Agreement with the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC). The term of the Tentative Agreement is for five (5) years, from 2015–2019. The relevant provisions of the Tentative Agreement fall into two categories: Wages and Health & Welfare.

Regarding the proposed Wage settlement, a general wage increase (GWI) of 3% was implemented effective January 1, 2015. This GWI came as a result of the January 5, 2012 National Agreement; however, Side Letter 3 of that Agreement expressly stated that this GWI was to be paid during term covered by the Tentative Agreement, and further that it would be considered the GWI for the calendar year 2015. The proposal also provides for additional GWIs, providing in total:

- 3% effective January 1, 2015
- 2% effective July 1, 2016;
- 2% effective July 1, 2017;
- 2.5% effective July 1, 2018; and
- 3% effective July 1, 2019.

The total of the GWIs payable during the term of the Tentative Agreement is 12.5%, resulting in a total compounded increase to the rates in effect at the close of the last contract period (December 31, 2014) of 13.14%. The GWIs for 2016 and 2017 will be implemented on January 1, 2018 or as soon thereafter as practicable, with back pay due based upon those GWIs' retroactive application within sixty (60) days of the Agreement date. Six (6) months later the July 1, 2018 2.5% GWI will be implemented, and the July 1, 2019 3% GWI will be implemented one year after that. In other words, between January 1, 2018 and July 1, 2019 GWIs totaling 9.5% — and 9.84% compounded — will be made to increasable working rates of pay, with back pay due going back to July 1, 2016.

A locomotive engineer who earned \$75,000 of non-frozen pay elements in 2014 will gain nearly \$25,000 in additional compensation from the GWIs implemented during the 2015–2019 term of the Tentative Agreement (\$11,250 from the January 1, 2015 GWI already paid and nearly \$13,600 from the additional GWIs in the Tentative Agreement). A locomotive engineer who earned \$100,000 of non-frozen pay elements in 2014 will gain over \$33,000 in additional compensation from the GWIs implemented during the term (\$15,000 from the January 1, 2015 GWI already paid and \$18,000 from the additional GWIs in the Tentative Agreement). And a locomotive engineer who earned \$125,000 of non-frozen pay elements in 2014 will gain over \$41,000 in additional compensation from these GWIs (\$18,750 from the January 1, 2015 GWI already paid and over \$22,600 from the additional GWIs in the Tentative Agreement). These values are approximately \$5000, \$6300 and, \$7700, respectively, more than the NCCC's June proposal, which will serve as the industry's position should this dis-

pute be placed before a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB).

These GWIs provide real wage increases because they are measurably higher than past and projected rates of inflation. The accepted inflation index historically used to calculate cost of living applicable to rail contracts is the CPI–Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (1967=100) series published by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. The annual rate of inflation for the past five years has been as follows: 2012 – 2.1%; 2013 – 1.4%; 2014 – 1.5%; 2015 – -0.4%; and 2016 – 1.0%. For 2015 and 2016, inflation was six tenths of one percent (0.6%). For 2017–2020, the Federal Open Market Committee forecasts 1.6% for 2017, and an average of less than 2% each for 2018 and 2019. In total, that is inflation of 6.2% over the five-year term of the Tentative Agreement. With general wage increases that add up to 13.1% when compounded, the Tentative Agreement provides increases that are more than double the rate of inflation.

The Health & Welfare settlement contained in the Tentative Agreement expands some coverages, but does not reduce any existing coverages. The monthly employee premium cost-sharing payment would be frozen at \$228.89 for the life of the Agreement and would not be subject to change until one is negotiated in a future bargaining round; this provision would add over \$800 in value to the above wage increases as compared to the industry's position should our dispute go before the Federal Government. Also, the previous requirement that employees pay 15% of the carriers' monthly payment rate has been eliminated; employees should only be paying approximately 10% of that monthly payment rate by the end of the term of the Tentative Agreement.

The following additional benefits would be added to coverage under the Managed Medical Care Program (MMCP), all without copays or coinsurance unless otherwise noted:

- expert second opinions;
- member advocacy services;
- end-of-life counseling;
- Telemedicine (a \$10 copay would apply); and

• the Centers of Excellence benefit would be expanded to include Cleveland Clinic for specialized cardiac care during the first year, and for orthopedic and spine care beginning in the second year.

Further, benefits under the Vision Plan would be improved by providing for a covered eye exam every calendar year (instead of the current once every 12 months), and lenses/frames once every 2 calendar years (instead of the current once every 24 months). The Flexible Spending Account would be improved as follows:

- NCCC's right to terminate for failure to meet minimum enrollment levels is suspended through at least 2020;
- the grace period is extended from January 31 to March 15 starting 2019; and
- also beginning in 2019, maximum

contribution is raised to the maximum allowable under law, with a \$500 cap on annual adjustments.

In addition, Mental Health Substance Abuse services would no longer be subject to separate deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums. Also, the NCCC has agreed to drop its demand for mandatory Plan Design changes to keep Plan value below the Cadillac tax threshold.

There also are a number of Plan Design changes that would set and maintain a threshold for the railroads to pay 90% of plan costs. This 90% level is classified as "Platinum" coverage under the Affordable Care Act, and is far above the 70% level currently provided by most plans in the U.S.

Copayments for MMCP services would be as follows: Convenient Care Clinic frozen at \$10; Primary Care Physician increases from \$20 to \$25; Specialist care increases from \$35 to \$40; Urgent Care Center increases from \$20 to \$25; and Emergency Room increases from \$75 to \$100 (waived if the patient is admitted).

Prescription copays at the retail level (21-day supply) would increase by \$5 for generic and brand formulary drugs, and by \$15 for brand non-formulary drugs.

Mail order prescription copays (90-day supply) would increase by \$5 for generic drugs, by \$10 for brand formulary drugs, and by \$30 for brand non-formulary drugs.

For services not covered by the above copays, the following schedule would apply:

- MMCP In-Network coinsurance would be 10% and deductibles would go from current \$200 (individual) / \$400 (family) to \$325/\$650 in 2018 and \$350/\$700 in 2019.

- MMCP In-Network out-of-pocket maximums would go from current \$1000/\$2000 to \$1800/\$3600 in 2018 and \$2000/\$4000 in 2019.

- MMCP Out-of-Network coinsurance would be 30% and deductibles would go from current \$300/\$900 to \$650/\$1300 in 2018 and \$700/\$1400 in 2019.

- MMCP Out-of-Network out-of-pocket maximums would go from current \$2000/\$4000 to \$3600/\$7200 in 2018 and \$4000/\$8000 in 2019.

- CHCB coinsurance would be 20% and deductibles would go from current \$200/\$400 to \$325/\$650 in 2018 and \$350/\$700 in 2019.

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### Brotherhood's Relief and Compensation Fund

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<b>*LE&amp;CMPA #16 Monthly Premium</b>	<b>\$59.50</b>	<b>\$87.50</b>	<b>\$117.25</b>	<b>\$147.00</b>
<b>SMART - TD (UTU) Monthly Assessment</b>	<b>\$81.00</b>	<b>\$121.50</b>	<b>\$162.00</b>	<b>Not Offered</b>

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## SPECIAL REPORT: NATIONAL CONTRACT UPDATE

# An open letter to UP-Central Region BLET members

### GUEST COMMENTARY

BY RONNIE E. RHODES

General Chairman,  
Union Pacific-Central Region GCA

Brothers and Sisters of the  
BLET Central Region:

On October 6, I attended a meeting in Cleveland where the current Tentative National Agreement was reviewed by all the BLET General Chairmen. I supported the National President's decision to put this agreement before the membership for a ratification vote. I want you to be informed when your ballots arrive so I will lay out the facts in an attempt to help you make an informed decision.

If we vote against the proposed agreement, please understand that all previous offers, including, but not limited to, the tentative agreement are off the negotiating table. We will be assigned a Presidential Emergency Board by the President of the United States. The parties will start with their original positions.

I have a link to PEB 219 so you can see how the Carriers told the board that their employees are overpaid and how they needed changes in work rules to compete with the trucking industry. Please take the time to read this PEB so you can read for yourself how the Carriers tried to justify freezing our wages and gaining work rule concessions: <http://bletupcr.org/PEB219.pdf>.

You will also find where "cost sharing" became part of your healthcare package



among other changes.

Changes could also be made that standardize some of our local agreements that bring all Engineers under the same National Agreement.

Currently, our General Committee has one of the best vacation allocation agreements in the rail industry.

We are one of two General Committees that do not have to qualify for Personal Leave Days (just be marked up and in OK status).

We are the only General Committee that can bank 200 Personal Leave Days for retirement or emergencies.

Our General Committee has also obtained lodging for engineers forced over 100 miles from their home terminal.

Our General Committee has in place arbitration awards backed by a court de-

cision that prohibit the Union Pacific from using Article IX to modify the runs that were agreed to in the Hub negotiations.

We have fought hard for these agreements, awards and court decisions.

Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation out in the field right now.

Below is the definition of a PEB. I made the last paragraph bold for a reason. I do not want the Congress to write our agreement; they know nothing about railroading.

### WHAT IS A PEB? Presidential Emergency Board

If either labor or management decline voluntary arbitration, or if in the opinion of the NMB the continuance of the controversy threatens substantially to interrupt interstate commerce in any section of the nation, the NMB is required to notify the President of the United States, who may, at his discretion, create a fact-finding Presidential Emergency Board.

The parties must maintain the status quo (no strikes or lockouts) for 30 days. If the president chooses not to appoint an emergency board, strikes or lockouts may occur after the 30-day cooling-off period.

Emergency boards are comprised of neutral members whose job is to make an investigation and submit to the president, within 30 days of its creation, a fact-finding report with non-binding recommendations for procedures or terms on which a dispute might be settled. During this period, the parties must maintain the status quo (a second 30-day cooling-off period).

Upon submission of the PEB report, the parties are required to maintain the status quo for an additional, or third 30-day cooling-off period (they may mutually agree to extend the period of status quo). The non-binding recommendations of the PEB are expected to carry the weight of public opinion and induce a voluntary agreement among the parties.

At this point, the RLA has run its course. If no agreement has been reached, either side becomes free to act in its own economic interests — a work stoppage (or strike) by labor, a lockout by management, or unilateral implementation of management proposals (that generally would force a work stoppage).

**However, Congress frequently imposes its own settlement. Such congressional action is not part of the RLA. The constitutional authority for Congress to impose its own settlements is found in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution's commerce clause.**

Below is a quote from Referee Robert Harris.

Arbitrator Robert O. Harris told the United Transportation Union (UTU) and railroads in 1991, then unable to agree at the bargaining table, "Welcome to the oldest established craps game in Washington. Like the suckers in 'Guys and Dolls,' you are risking your futures on the roll of the dice [when you fail to make a voluntary agreement]." This was from a copy of Railway Age.

I hope you find this informative and useful. @@

**"Our General Committee has in place arbitration awards backed by a court decision that prohibit the Union Pacific from using Article IX to modify the runs that were agreed to in the Hub negotiations. We have fought hard for these agreements, awards and court decisions. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation out in the field right now."**

**— Ronnie Rhodes**

### TENTATIVE AGREEMENT SYNOPSIS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5 ➡

• CHCB out-of-pocket maximums would go from current \$2000/\$4000 to \$2800/\$5600 in 2018 and \$3000/\$6000 in 2019.

Two examples can demonstrate the impact of these changes on an individual member, and in both cases we will use in-network numbers because nearly all members utilize in-network services. In both cases it also is assumed that the services described are the first medical services obtained in the year.

Example #1: A member visits their Primary Care Physician, who orders an x-ray that is covered for \$500. Presently, the member pays \$20.00 for the office visit, a \$200 deductible, and \$15.00 co-insurance (5% of the \$300.00 not covered by the deductible); the total out-of-pocket cost is \$235.00. In 2018, the member

would pay \$25.00 for the office visit, a \$325 deductible, and \$17.50 co-insurance (10% of the \$175.00 not covered by the deductible); the total out-of-pocket cost is \$367.50.

Example #2: A member suffers a catastrophic event, which includes hospitalization and incurs \$150,000 in covered expenses. Presently, the member pays a \$200 deductible, and the out-of-pocket maximum of \$1,000.00 (the 5% co-insurance on the \$149,800.00 not covered by the deductible is \$7,490.00); the total out-of-pocket cost is \$1,200.00. In 2018, the member would pay a \$325 deductible, and the out-of-pocket maximum of \$1,800.00 (the 10% co-insurance on the \$149,675.00 not covered by the deductible is \$14,967.50); the total out-of-pocket cost is \$2,125.00.

The examples above reveal some interesting facts. The member in Example #1 will pay \$132.50 more in 2018 than he or she would have been paid in 2017, and

will have satisfied the individual deductible for the year. Example #2 shows that for a hospital stay costing \$150,000, the member will see increased costs of \$925 for the calendar year when compared to 2017, and is protected by the out-of-pocket maximum that caps an employee's annual expenditures at a fixed amount. The Tentative Agreement includes slight additional increases for 2019, but for the above examples the figures for 2018 were used because that is where the most significant change lies.

It is important to note that members will be affected by any increased health care cost they may incur only after January 1, 2018, by which time they will have received thousands of dollars in back pay and a 4.04% pay increase from the current rates. It is also important to note that the member's monthly contribution is frozen at \$228.89 and cannot be changed until the conclusion of

the next round of bargaining, which starts in 2020.

Lastly, and significantly, there are no work rules changes proposed in the Tentative Agreement. We successfully rejected NCCC's demands for: the right to impose automated job selection and placement; the right to impose self-supporting pools, eliminating guaranteed extra boards; the right to impose regulation of pools based on starts rather than miles; the right to broaden current "Enhanced Customer Service" rules; and the right to eliminate all distinctions between road service and yard service.

However, the carriers have stated that rejection of the Tentative Agreement will lead them to place before a PEB much smaller GWIs, far more onerous Health & Welfare changes, and all of the above work rules. All members should balance the risks and the rewards in deciding how to vote in the ratification. @@

## BLET OFFICERS ELECTION RULES AND FORMS NOW AVAILABLE

Pursuant to Section 48 of the National Division Bylaws, the National Secretary-Treasurer is charged with supervising the election of National Division officers. The duties of the National Secretary-Treasurer shall include the supervision of all phases of the National Division officer election in accordance with the BLET Bylaws, the IBT Constitution, and applicable federal law.

To that end, a web page is being provided to the membership under the authority of the National Secretary-Treasurer. The intent is to provide necessary petitions, forms, and other documents to candidates who are planning to participate in the 2018 BLET National Division officer elections.

Additionally, the Rules for the 2018 BLET National Division Officers Election are also provided on this web page, along with Election

Rules Advisories, which provide interpretations of the Rules, Election Protest Committee Decisions, Advisory Board Decisions, and forms.

The program Adobe Acrobat is required to download and view the documents, which are available here: <http://www.ble-t.org/2018election>.

Interested parties are advised to monitor this page for periodic updates. @@



## BLET still accepting donations to help victims of Hurricane Harvey

**T**he BLET National Division is continuing to accept donations and applications for its Perrien Fund to help members victimized by Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana.

As previously reported, the BLET's National Division Advisory Board approved a recommendation from BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce on August 30 to re-activate and expand its Gary Perrien Fund to provide financial assistance to members living in Texas and Louisiana who have been the hardest hit by Hurricane Harvey.

The Gary Perrien Fund was originally established by action of the delegates at BLET's Second National Convention in 2010. Brother Gary Perrien, then an active member serving on the Convention's Arrangements Committee, fell ill and the delegates passed the hat to assist in his recovery. In a televised report back to the convention from his hospital bed, Brother Perrien asked that the funds be used to help those more needy than him, leading the delegates and the Advisory Board to later create the Gary Perrien Fund. Brother Perrien recovered and retired in the years following the 2010 Convention.

As part of the expansion of the Fund, the BLET Advisory



Board also authorized President Pierce's request that \$20,000.00 be transferred from the Union's General Fund to the Perrien Fund as part of the associated fund raising effort on behalf of the Union's members harmed by the storm. In addition, the Advisory Board also approved President Pierce's recommendation that BLET make a matching \$20,000.00

donation to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund.

To date, more than 75 BLET General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Local Divisions, and individual members have made donations to supplement the National Division's initial \$20,000 gift. However, more donations would be appreciated and would go to as-

sist fellow BLET members and their families in need.

"We know that there are members who want to assist their Brothers and Sisters who have been harmed by the storm," President Pierce said. "One hundred percent of the money raised through this effort will go directly to as many members as possible."

To make an online donation,

please visit: <http://www.ble-t.org/perrien>.

Also, checks can be made payable to the "Gary Perrien Medical Relief Fund" and mailed to: **Perrien Fund-Harvey Relief BLET National Division 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road Independence, OH 44131**

Donations are not tax deductible. ©©

### FOLLOWING IRMA, TEAMSTERS OFFER DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE IN FLORIDA

**T**he International Brotherhood of Teamsters is offering Disaster Relief assistance to members living in Florida after Hurricane Irma damaged homes and property beginning on September 10, 2017.

Available from the BLET website are Teamster "Disaster Relief Alert Notices" and "Request for Help" forms. If you live in the affected area and experienced a loss due to this FEMA-declared major disaster, please download and submit the forms. For questions, contact the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund office at (202) 624-8971.

Members living in the following Florida counties are eligible to apply:

Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Nassau, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. John's, St. Lucie, Sumter, Suwannee, Union and Volusia.

Download the DR-4337 Request for Help form here: [www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/FL\\_DR\\_4337.pdf](http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/FL_DR_4337.pdf)

Please be sure to include all requested documentation. The deadline to apply is December 15, 2017. ©©

### DEADLINE IS NOV. 15 FOR HURRICANE HARVEY DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE

**A**s a reminder, BLET members have until November 15, 2017, to apply for Disaster Relief assistance from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters if they have suffered a loss due to Hurricane Harvey.

On September 4, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) amended the list of counties in Texas where it has declared a major disaster due to Hurricane Harvey, which has opened the way for the Teamsters to provide Disaster Relief assistance in additional areas.

The following counties were added on September 4: Austin, Bastrop, DeWitt, Gonzalez, Karnes, Lavaca, Lee, Polk, Tyler, and Walker. FEMA has previously declared a major disaster in the following Texas coun-

ties: Aransas, Bee, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Colorado, Fayette, Fort Bend, Galveston, Goliad, Hardin, Harris, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Kleberg, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Newton, Nueces, Orange, Refugio, Sabine, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Victoria, Waller and Wharton.

BLET members living in one of the counties listed here are eligible to apply for IBT Disaster Relief assistance. Updated Disaster Relief forms are now on the BLET National Division website at the link below.

The amended Disaster Relief Request For Help form is now available here: [www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/TX\\_DR\\_4332.pdf](http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/TX_DR_4332.pdf)

Please be sure to include all requested documentation. The deadline to apply is November 15, 2017. ©©

## RRB advises rail workers impacted by Harvey, Irma

(FROM A RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD PRESS RELEASE.)

**T**he U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is reminding rail employees out of work due to the aftermath to Hurricane Harvey or Hurricane Irma that they may qualify for unemployment benefits. To determine eligibility or file claims for benefits, affected railroaders should call the RRB's toll-free telephone number (1-877-772-5772) or visit its website at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov).

In order to file an application for benefits online via the website, an individual must have an Internet Services Account with the agency. For security purposes, first-time users must obtain a unique password, which they can do by clicking on the link for requesting a Password Request Code (PRC) in the Benefit Online Services login section of the [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov) home page.

Individuals who have already established an Internet Services Account and password can go online to file applications and claims for biweekly unemployment benefits, as well as conduct other business with the RRB over the Internet. For rail workers without power or Internet access, the RRB encourages them to call the agency toll-free at 1-877-772-5772.

Claimants can also find the address of the RRB office servicing their area and get information about their claims and benefit payments by calling this toll-free number. Most RRB offices are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, except on Federal

holidays. Field office locations can also be found online at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov).

Railroad unemployment benefits are normally paid for the number of days of unemployment over four in 14-day registration periods. The maximum daily benefit rate is currently \$72. However, as a result of sequestration under the Budget Control Act of 2011, unemployment benefits are reduced by 6.9 percent through September 30, 2017, so the maximum benefit in a 2-week period is \$670.32. Also, during the first 14-day claim period in a benefit year, benefits are payable for each day of unemployment in excess of seven, rather than four, which basically creates a one-week waiting period.

To qualify for normal railroad unemployment benefits in the benefit year that began July 1, 2017, an employee must have had railroad earnings of at least \$3,673.50 in calendar year 2016, counting no more than \$1,455 for any month. Those who were first employed in the rail industry in 2016 must also have at least five months of creditable railroad service in that year.

Under certain conditions, employees with at least 10 years of service who do not qualify on the basis of their 2016 earnings may still be able to receive benefits. For example, employees who received normal benefits in the benefit year that ended June 30, 2017, might still be eligible for extended benefits. In addition, 10-year employees may be eligible for accelerated benefits if they had rail earnings of at least \$3,637.50 in 2017, not counting earnings of more than \$1,455 a month. ©©





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

7061 East Pleasant Valley Road  
Independence, Ohio 44131

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### Photo of the Month: September/October 2017

**NORFOLK SOUTHERN ON THE MOVE:** Norfolk Southern train 179 moves west through downtown Columbus, Ohio, on September 16, 2017. Photo: by Locomotive Engineer David Crossley, a member of BLET Division 34 (Columbus, Ohio).



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

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

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

## Advisory Board August 2017 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; Co-ordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, Washington, D.C.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Vacation.

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT:** National Duties include but not limited to: Short-line Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; National duties, Independence, Ohio; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Coordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, Washington, D.C.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.

**NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO:** General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database/Union Track; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Coordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, Washington, D.C.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.

**VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN:** Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; 2017 OneRail mtg., Washington, D.C.; BLET Legislative Representative training class, Washington, D.C.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Trustee mtg., Cleveland; NCSL mtg., Moston; OneRail mtg., Washington, D.C.; Various receptions and office visits with members of Congress and the leadership of both the GOP and Democratic parties, 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/ draft Section 6 notice and discipline appeals, WC, Chicago; Adopt awards for PLB 7154, IC, Chicago; Conference call w/ GAO, re: NMB & Section 3, NRAB, Chicago; Referee Benn DL 393 hearing, NRAB, Chicago; NRAB annual mtg. planning and electronic filing project, NRAB admin, Chicago; Assist GC Balonek w/ discipline appeal, Metra, Chicago; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Assist GC Craddock w/ rules issue, IC, Chicago; Vacation; Mtg. w/ NMB COS Rainey and Dir. Arb. Watkins, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Craddock, med Arb case GM-103, hearings, Chicago; Assist VGC Evans w/ discipline submission, 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; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; UP-Eastern District Local Division 88 mtg., North Platte, Neb.; UP-Western Region Article IX negotiations, 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.; WGCA mtg., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas; Harrison letter w/ CSX GCs; CSX-NL GCA mtg., Pittsburgh, Pa.; Trip rate dispute conference call; UP-SR GCA retirement dinner for GC Warren Dent; CSX medical quarterly update, New Orleans; GTW negotiations, Atlanta.

**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.; PLB 7477, assist GC Holdcraft, Chicago; Mtg. w/ GC Brown and GC Holdcraft w/ BNSF labor relations, Fort Worth; Interest-based mediation w/ GC LaPrath and GC Holdcraft and BNSF labor relations, Fort Worth; M&NA contract negotiations, assisting GC Thurman, Fort Worth; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Panhandle Northern contract negotiations, assisting GC Holdcraft, Chicago; M&NA Division 178 mtg. w/ GC Thurman, Carthage, Mo.; M&NA Division 116 mtgs. w/ GC Thurman, Batesville, Ark. and Mountain Home, Ark.

**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, assist GC Semenak; Huron & Eastern issues, assist GC Ladrig; Illinois Midland issues and Mid South issues, assist GC Craddock; Tex Mex issues, assist GC Heise; KCS issues, assist GC Spradlin; Division 273 mtg. w/ GC Heise, re: international crews at border, Laredo, Texas; D&H Springfield Terminal issues, assist GC Moore; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Louisville & Indiana issues, assist GC Hogan; Mtg. w/ KCS and GC Heise, re: international crews, Kansas City, Mo.; Prep for PLB 7627, assist GC Semenak; St. Lawrence & Atlantic contract, assist GC Moore; Indiana Southern issues, assist GC Semenak; PLB 7627, assist GC Semenak, Chicago.

**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; CSOR negotiations, assist GC Martin, Clifton Park, N.Y.; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.

**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. and training; Education & Training issues; BLET Regional Meeting planning; Convention planning mtg., Independence, Ohio; Online Trustee reporting, Independence, Ohio; LIRR contract talks, assist GC Sexton; WNYP investigation, Olean, N.Y.; PATH contract talks, assist GC Basile; BLET regional mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Myrtle Beach, S.C.; SEPTA contract talks and assistance, assist GC Dixon; Amtrak GCA issues, assist GC Kenny; Union RR contract issues, assist GC Bangham.

# GOFUNDME ACCOUNT TO HELP INJURED BLET MEMBER

On September 14, BLET member Shane T. McDonald of Division 46 (Albany, N.Y.) was severely injured in a CSX yard accident near Syracuse, N.Y., and a GoFundMe account has been established to help him and his family with medical and living expenses.

Mark Krajewski, Local Chairman of Division 46, reports that Brother McDonald, 45, lost his right leg in the accident. Brother McDonald joined the BLET on March 1, 2014, and was working as a conductor at the time of the accident.

Brother McDonald and his wife Michelle have four children: Natalie, Aden, Colin and Brynn. The GoFundMe page was established by Brother McDonald's sister Helen.

**To assist the family during this difficult time, please visit:  
www.gofundme.com/4g1mbog**



Brother Shane T. McDonald, a CSX locomotive engineer and member of BLET Division 46.