Brother G.Y. Bailey is second BLET member killed in unsignalled territory this year

Teamster Relief Fund ready to assist members affected by Hurricane

The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund is accepting applications for assistance from members in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. BLET members in the following Alabama counties are eligible for aid: Baldwin, Mobile and Washington. Members in the following Louisiana parishes are eligible: Acadia, Assumption, Calcasieu, Cameron, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberia, Derryville, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafourche, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Pointe Coupee, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John, St. Mary, St. Martin, St. Tammamy, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Vermilion, Washington, West Baton Rouge and West Feliciana.

Hurricane Katrina plowed through Southern states, particularly Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, and leaving billions of dollars of destruction in its wake. Countless families have been left badly in need of shelter, clothing, clean water and other supplies. The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund is specifically designed to assist members who have suffered a loss in natural disasters, and will be working to help members affected by this hurricane.

The fund depends on donations from our local unions and other affiliates. For many years, Teamsters have contributed sizeable donations to this 501(c)(3) IRS charitable fund.

A number of our brothers and sisters in the Southeast really need your help and support," said C. Thomas Keegel, General-Secretary-Treasurer. "This natural disaster has rocked that portion of the country, and we need to step up and help our Teamster family members reestablish their homes and normal lives.

In the past, the outpouring of support from individual Teamsters, Local Unions, and Joint Councils has been inspiring," said Cheryl Johnson, Secretary of the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund. "We are hoping to again inspire you to help.

Donation checks are to be made payable to "Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund" and mailed to the International Auxiliary (GIA) in the Houston area have established a GCofA Relief Fund. "Please, let’s help our brothers and sisters who need all the help they can get right now," said Kathie Bailey, GIA Member-at-Large who lives in the Houston area.

Below is the information to send donations to the relief fund:

Mail to P.O. Box Address: BLET Southern Region GCofA Relief Fund PMB # 152 1218 Jones Road - Suite D Houston, Texas 77070 To make deposits at any Wells Fargo Bank, or to set up wire transfers, please contact Kathie Bailey at (281) 955-5444 or e-mail kfbailley@shegobal.net.

Federal Judge orders rail unions to cross airline union picket lines established at NS, CSX in Ohio

The Federal District Court for the Northern District of Ohio-Easter District, issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) against the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and UTU on September 7, ordering both unions to “notify their general chairpersons, local chairpersons, and employees under their jurisdiction that this Court has ordered that AMP’s picket lines be crossed” at CSX and Norfolk Southern.

On September 6 and 7, members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) established picket lines outside of CSX and Norfolk Southern properties in Toledo, Ohio. AMFA is engaged in a labor dispute with Northwest Airlines. BLET and UTU members honored the picket lines until the TRO forced them back to work. The judge issued one TRO for CSX workers and one for NS workers. A complete copy of each is available on the BLET website:

http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/troexs.pdf

http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/troexs.pdf

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

SEPTMBER 2005

LOBOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN

NEWS
In an attempt to rebut the latest UTU spin-doctoring, here is what really happened concerning the operating crafts at Via Rail.

Halle said. •

By Becky Schneider
First Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative

Get involved, get informed, and get educated

In the August edition of the Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News, Sereena Hogan outlined how she coped with being the spouse of a railroad worker, and the comfort she has found from her extended railroad family. Getting involved is key to understanding not only what our spouses go through on the job, but also the ways in which we can help them.

There are a number of similarities between Sereena’s story and my own.

Like Sereena, I, too, resisted the railroad for taking my husband away at the most inopportune times, like Christmas, Thanksgiving, and other holidays. After we moved to Tuacunemi, N.M., Larry took on the job of Division Secretary-Treasurer. As with many spouses, Larry did his best to help me with his duties. It was at that point that we went to our first convention for the purpose of attending Secretary-Treasurer training classes. I attended the classes along with Larry, and noted I was not the only spouse there.

The 1996 Southwestern Convention (SWCM) was held here in El Paso, and I heard of the GIA. The following year, (SWCM) was the first time I had ever set foot in the convention center. However, the classes were closed to spouses. It was at that point that I understood the need for spouses and families to be involved. Learning about pending legislation that affects railroading, and educating our members on the issues that directly affect our lives.
BLET continues to seek input from members on Human Factors/Circadian Rhythms questionnaire

By Bill Keppen
Former BLET Vice-President

Several weeks ago the BLET published articles on itsweb site and in the July 2005 newsletter that ad- vised BLET members of an FRA funded project to col- lect human factor data from certain locomotive engineers who have experienced cardinal rule violations. The purpose of this project is to test the efficacy of the new Human Factor/Circadian Rhythms (HF/CR) Questionnaire for collecting informa- tion that might result in rule violations and accidents. We know that the vast majority of rail accidents are the result of per- formance lapses, not willful decisions to break the rules. What we don’t know is if certain factors, such as en- gineers being called to work unexpectedly, result in cardinal rule violations. The investigation team members are willing spend 45 minutes to an hour of their time filling out and returning a HF/CR question- naire, we may be able to deter- mine if the questionnaire is an effective tool for collecting such data and may be able to help improve safety by identifying and eliminating the cause of rule violations that more frequently result in rule viola- tions and accidents, and identify other factors and conditions that contribute to these rule violations. We are seeking information that might result in rule violations and accidents.

Important prescription drug notice for retirees

In 2003 President Bush signed the Medicare Prescription Drug Improve- ment and Modernization Act that estab- lished Medicare coverage for prescrip- tion drugs. On January 1, 2006 Medi- care will begin covering prescription drugs under a new “Medicare Part D.” For retirees covered by Medicare, this change offers the opportunity to pur- chase prescription drug coverage for a monthly premium. This change is of particular inter- est to BLET members as UnitedHealthcare’s policy GA-23111 Plan D which currently provides ben- efits for drugs. UnitedHealthcare has announced that as a result of this new Medicare Part D plan, UnitedHealthcare will make this move automatically so retirees will not have to do anything to keep their cur- rent coverage.

UnitedHealthcare will make this change on its own and retirees will not be able to choose another plan or to keep their current coverage. If the retiree wants to choose another plan, call UnitedHealthcare to see which one best fits your needs. By May 15, 2006, you will have a choice of which company provides your prescription drug coverage. UnitedHealthcare will make this move automatically so retirees will not have to do anything to keep their current coverage.

• Each company will have its own prescription drug plan. Each plan will cover a Medicare-approved list of drugs – called a formulary. The formularies may be different between plans but all must have Medicare approval. You will want to compare the drugs you are cur- rently taking to each company’s formu- lary to see which one best fits your needs.

• If you take multiple drugs you may not find all drugs on any single formu- lary. If a drug you take is not on the formulary of a plan you like, speak to your doctor about changing your pre- scription to a drug on its list.

• In addition to different formular- ies, each plan will have a different net- work of pharmacies from which you must purchase your prescription drugs. Make sure the network pharmacies, and other ser- vices like mail order, for the company you like are convenient to you.

• Each company will negotiate lower prices with drug companies and pass those discounts on to you. You will have the advantage of being able to pur- chase your drugs at a discount even if you are paying the full cost of the drug.

• You will be able to change plans once a year during an annual open en- rollement. There are other limited ex- ceptions that may give you a right to switch plans. For example, if you move out of the service area of your current plan, you will have the opportunity to choose another plan that serves your new area.

• If you enroll late, you will pay more. Enrollment for Medicare Part D begins on November 15, 2005 and ends on May 15, 2006. If you are eligible and do not enroll during this period, when you enroll later you will face a late en- rollement penalty of approximately 1 percent of the current premium for each month you delay.

• More detailed information is available on the way. In October, Medicare will send you the 2006 “Medicare & You” hand- book which will include a list of all the plans available in your area. In addi- tion, the companies in your area will be sending you specific information about their plans, including their list of covered drugs and network pharma- cies. Information will also be available through the Medicare web site at www.medicare.gov and from www.MedicareRxInfoSource.com, a web site hosted by UnitedHealthcare.

Important dates

• Oct. 1, 2005 — Companies will be- gin to release information about their plans. Medicare will send you the “2006 Medicare & You” handbook.

• Nov. 15, 2005 — the first day you can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug program.

• Jan. 1, 2006 — The first day you can use your Medicare part D coverage.

If you have any questions about these important changes you can call UnitedHealthcare’s member services at 1-800-809-0453.

Supplemental health care plan for railroads

CLIFTON FORGE, Va. — The C&O Employees’ Hospital Associa- tion (COEHA) is offering Medicare Supplemental Insurance and an En- hanced Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan. The COEHA will also offer a Medicare Supplemental Plan without drug coverage.

Those who are eligible may join now with no health screening. Those eligible for coverage include: current COEHA members eligible for Medi- care, Medicare spouses, Medicare-Eligible Railroad Retirees and other Medicare beneficiaries in October. However, here are some important facts about these important changes you can call

• Each company will have its own prescription drug plan. Each plan will cover a Medicare-approved list of drugs — called a formulary. The formularies may be different between plans but all must have Medicare approval. You will want to compare the drugs you are cur- rently taking to each company’s formu- lary to see which one best fits your needs.

• If you take multiple drugs you may not find all drugs on any single formu- lary. If a drug you take is not on the formulary of a plan you like, speak to your doctor about changing your pre- scription to a drug on its list.

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FRA launches Confidential Close Call Reporting System

The Federal Railroad Ad- ministration (FRA) has launched its Confidential Close Call Reporting System (C3RS) website, which it hopes will improve safety in the railroad industry.

The FRA is launching C3RS in conjunction with rail carriers. The system, spon- sored by the FRA’s Office of Research and Development, is a resource to confidentially report safety risks in railroad operations and develop solu- tions to these threats to reduce risk before an accident hap- pens.

“Program has the po- tential for improving safety in the railroad industry,” said FRA’s President and Chief Operating Officer, Jeff Kallman. “A confidential reporting system for close calls is an idea that the BLET can support.”

Implementation, and how the program is carried out, has the promise of chang- ing the culture in which we operate. Rather than blaming the worker, this program will allow us to dig deeper into the problem of rail safety and even make suggestions for correc- tive action.”

According to the C3RS website, a close call is defined as “an opportunity for improv- ing safety practices in a situa- tion with a potential for more serious consequences.” Ex- amples of close calls that can be reported include: Any safety concern that could lead to an unsafe event or condition for the carrier; any condition or event potentially endangering employees, the public, equipment, or the environ- ment; or any concerns about your own or someone else’s safety.

Railroad employees are encouraged to disclose close call information without fear of blame. Employees are encouraged to disclose close call information without fear of blame. Employees are encouraged to disclose close call information without fear of blame. Employees are encouraged to disclose close call information without fear of blame.
Brother Mike Linkletter served as chairman of the 65th annual International Western Convention, and received a great deal of assistance and support from his wife, Kim Linkletter.

Clockwise, from left: Don Carroll, Local Chairman of Division 660 in Los Angeles; John Eutsler, Vice Local Chairman of Division 158 in Sparks, Nev.; Gary Taylor, Vice Local Chairman of Division 5; Jim Booth, Division 2B in Tucson, Ariz.; Larry Law, Local Chairman of Division 56 in West Colton, Calif.; and Bill Hannah, General Chairman, UP Western Lines.

From left: Wearing red, white and blue to mark the Fourth of July is Pat Lynch, Local Chairman of BLET Division 446 in Belen, N.M.; and BLET First Vice-President Ed Rodzwicz.

From left: Becky Schneider, GIA First Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative; and Larry Schneider, Legislative Representative of BLET Division 192 in El Paso, Texas.

From left: Ken Kroeger, Special Representative and Coordinator of the BLET Education & Training Dept.; and Benoit Brunet, TCRC Vice-Chairman of the National Legislative Board and TCRC Special Rep.

From left: BLET Vice-President Steve Spagle; BLET Vice-President Paul Wingo; Teamsters Canada Rail Conference (TCRC) Vice-President George Hucker; BLET National President Don Hahs; TCRC President Gilles Hallé; BLET National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Wolpert; and BLET First Vice-President Ed Rodzwicz.

From left: Brother Mike Linkletter served as chairman of the 65th annual International Western Convention, and received a great deal of assistance and support from his wife, Kim Linkletter.

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CALGARY, ALBERTA

Pat Lynch, Local Chairman of Division 446 (Belen, N.M.) and Mark Banton, Vice General Chairman for BNSF (former ATSF), haul Sue Speagle, wife of BLET Vice President Steve Speagle, during a chuckwagon race. Brother Banton belongs to BLET Division 500 in Cleburne, Texas.

From left: Kim Linkletter, Grand International Auxiliary (GIA) Canadian Vice-President & Legislative Representative; Brenda Hayes, GIA Canadian Vice-President & Canadian Director; Mary Poile; Jean Miller; Joanne Washbrook; and Sherry McGunigal, GIA Sentinel.

From left: Don Anderson, Chairman of the Alberta Provincial Legislative Board; and George Hucker, TCRC Vice President.

From left: Darrell Azarcon, First Vice Chairman of the California State Legislative Board and Legislative Representative of BLET Division 692 in Tracy, Calif.; Tim Smith, Chairman of the California State Legislative Board; Diz Francisco, Secretary Treasurer of the California State Legislative Board and Legislative Representative of BLET Division 739 in Bakersfield, Calif.; Mike Holt, Legislative Representative of Division 800 in Portola, Calif.; Mike Weston, Chairman of the Colorado State Legislative Board; and Robert Wenske, Vice Local Chairman of BLET Division 692 in Tracy, Calif.

Patty and Rod Guthrie, a member of BLET Division 115 in Cheyenne, Wyo.

2006 International Western Convention

Hosted by S.V. Hallbrook and the members of BLET Division 94 at the Holiday Inn Rapid City—Rushmore Plaza

Rapid City, S.D.

July 18-23, 2006
Railroad Retirement and deemed service month credits

Railroad retirement benefits are based on months of service and earnings credits. Earnings are creditable up to certain annual maximums on the amount of compensation subject to railroad retirement taxes.

Credit for a month of railroad service is given for every month in which an employee had some compensated service for an employer covered by the Railroad Retirement Act, even if only one day’s service is performed in the month. (However, local lodge compensation earned after 1974 is disregarded for any calendar month in which it is less than $25.) Also, under certain circumstances, additional service months may be deemed in some cases where an employee does not actually work in every month of the year.

The following questions and answers describe the conditions under which an employee may receive additional railroad retirement service month credits under the deeming provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act.

1. What requirements must be met before additional service months can be deemed?
The employee must be in an "employment relation" with a covered railroad employer, or be an employee representative, during a deemed service month. (An employee representative is a labor official of a noncovered labor organization who represents employees covered under the Acts administered by the Railroad Retirement Board.) For this purpose, an "employment relation" generally exists for an employee on an approved leave of absence (e.g., furlough, sick leave, suspension, etc.). An "employment relation" is severance and the resultant annuity beginning date. In addition, as in the preceding example, other benefits may be involved.

4. Another employee works for eight months in 2005 and earns a total of $52,000. How many additional service months could be credited to this employee?
In this case, the excess amount ($52,000 minus $44,600) is $7,400, which divided by $5,575 equals 1.327. After rounding, this employee could receive credit for two deemed service months and be credited with a total of 10 months of service in 2005.

5. Should an employee preparing to retire take deemed service months into account when designating the date his or her railroad retirement annuity is to begin?
Credit for deemed service months is a factor an employee may wish to consider in selecting an annuity beginning date. For instance, in some cases, a designated annuity beginning date could be used to establish basic eligibility for certain benefits, increase the tier II amount, or establish a current connection.

6. What would be an example of using deemed service months to establish benefit eligibility?
An example would be an employee under age 60 who might be able to use deemed service months to establish the 240 months of service needed to qualify for an occupational disability annuity.

For instance, a 48-year-old employee applying for an occupational disability annuity last performed service on May 15, 2005, and received $38,000 in compensation in 2005. He is credited with 38 months of creditable railroad service through May 2005. The employee designates an annuity beginning date of November 1, 2005, because she needs at least two additional months of service to establish eligibility for an occupational disability annuity and because she is eligible for other benefits before that time through her employer. The employee’s excess amount ($38,000 minus $27,875) is $10,125, which divided by $5,575 yields 1.82. Therefore, two deemed service months could be added to the five months actually worked and the employee would receive credit for seven service months in 2005 for a total of 240 service months.

In any case, a designated annuity beginning date should be considered in disability cases because, except in the case of a traumatic event, it is difficult to predict the onset date of a disability and the resultant annuity beginning date. In addition, as in the preceding example, other benefits may be involved.

3. An employee works eight months in 2005 before being furloughed, but earns compensation of $65,000. How many additional service months could be credited to the employee?
The employee could be credited with four additional service months. One-twelfth of the 2005 tier II maximum ($65,000) times the employee’s actual service months (eight) equals $4,000. The employee’s compensation in excess of $4,000 is thus credited to the employee.

The excess amount is then divided by 1/12 of the tier II maximum, the result, rounded up to the next whole number, yields the number of deemed service months.

8. Can deemed service months help an employee establish a current connection?
Yes. For example, an employee left the railroad industry in 1993 and engaged in employment covered by the Social Security Act. In August 2004 she returned to railroad employment and worked through June 28, 2005. She received compensation of $34,000 in 2005. She does not relinquish her rights until July 2, 2005, and she applies for an annuity on July 1, 2005.
In this case, the excess amount ($34,000 minus $33,450) is $550, which yields one deemed service month. Consequently, the employee is given credit for seven service months in 2005. With her five months of service in 2004 and seven months in 2005, the employee establishes a current connection. Had she designated the earliest annuity beginning date permitted by law, she would not have met the 12-in-30-month requirement for a current connection. (An employee who worked for a railroad in at least 12 months in the 30 months immediately preceding the month his or her retirement annuity begins will meet the current connection requirement for a supplemental annuity, occupational disability annuity or survivor benefits.)

9. Can an employee ever receive credit for more than 12 service months in any calendar year?
No. The 12 service months are the maximum that can be credited for any calendar year.

10. Where can an employee get additional or more specific information on how deemed service months could affect his or her own annuity?
An employee can contact the nearest field office of the Railroad Retirement Board for more information.

The address and phone number of the Board office serving a particular area can be found by calling the automated toll-free RRB Help Line at 1-800-908-0772 or by checking the Board’s Web site at www.rrb.gov. Most Board field offices are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

2005 Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conferences

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will offer free informational conferences for elected officers of all rail labor unions throughout 2005. Registration for all informational conferences begins at 8 a.m. The programs begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m. This list contains the current information and should replace information published in previous lists.

October 21 • Pittsburgh, Pa.
Greater Pennsylvania Regional Council of Carpenters Union Hall Green Tree
416 Mansfield Ave.

November 4 • Pinerville, N.C.
Hilton Garden Inn, Pinerville
225 Towne Centre Blvd.

November 18 • Metairie, La.
Union Hall
3513 North I-10, Service Rd. West
(Corner of Severn and I-10 Service Rd.)

December 9 • Jacksonville, Fla.
Holiday Inn — Baymeadows
9150 Baymeadows Rd.
Brother G.Y. Bailey, Local Chairman of BLET Division 62 in Houston, was killed on September 15 when his train collided head-on with a southbound chemical train in dark territory, about 60 miles northeast of Houston. Both Union Pacific trains derailed, causing a hazmat spill.

Brother Bailey, 51, began working for Union Pacific in 1978 and joined the BLE in 1992. Along with serving as his Division’s local chairman, he was actively involved in the organization as a primary member of the BLET Safety Task Force and the National Mobilization Team. He also served as Chairman of the Southwestern Convention Meeting in 2004.

“This is a tremendous loss for both BLET and Union Pacific Railroad,” said BLET-Union Pacific Southern Regional General Chairman Gil Gore. “Brother Bailey was an excellent Local Chairman and an exemplary employee who assisted hundreds of members on a wide variety of issues. He will be sorely missed both professionally and personally by me and many others for years to come.”

A member of Division 62, Ronnie Gilmore, echoed this sentiment. “He was a gentleman,” Brother Gilmore said. “He was a dedicated, conscientious man, and he will be hard to replace.”

Brother Bailey is survived by his wife Kathie, an active member of the International Association of Machinists and four children, Casey, Caylin, Benjamin and Ashley.

“This is an extraordinary tragedy. It is a sad day for those of us at the BLET and for all those Brother effects (touching through his work, over the years),” BLET National President Don M. Hahn said. “Brother Bailey was one of the good guys. He loved this organization and worked hard to make it better. He will be missed.

“This horrific accident has echoes of the one that occurred earlier this year in Graniteville, South Carolina — both occurred in dark territory and resulted in hazmat spills and evacuations. It is incumbent upon all of us to learn from the mistakes that either of these accidents could happen. It is time that the railroads learn from their mistakes and take steps to make the industry safer.

“It is with a heavy heart that I ordered the BLET flag to fly at half-mast over the Standard Building in Los Angeles, attended by Brother Bailey’s undying memory, and I extend my deepest sympathy to his family, friends and co-workers.”

The BLET has been granted party status to the investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board and members of the Safety Task Force are helping the NTSB analyze the accident scene.

The accident occurred at 12:15 a.m. on September 15. One Union Pacific train with two locomotives and 10 cars struck another UP train with two locomotives and three cars, about 60 miles northeast of Houston.

The first train was traveling from Pine Bluff, Ark., to Houston when its locomotive struck the second train. The second train was stopped on the north end of a side track.

The accident involved a hazmat release and forced the evacuation of nearby residents.

RRB update: 9,000 rail workers impacted by Katrina

E-mails: steva@ble-t.org • kroeger@ble-t.org

The BLET is seeking the addresses and phone number of that officer to file applications for unemployment benefits — or their biweekly claims for those benefits — online. To do so, claimants should go to the RRB’s Web site at www.rrb.gov and click on “MainLine Services” for directions on establishing an RRB Internet Services account. Once they establish their online accounts, they will be able to file their applications and claims for unemployment benefits, as well as conduct other business with the RRB, over the Internet.

Regarding claimants in the affected areas who have been receiving railroad unemployment benefits but those on Direct Deposit should be able to access their funds. However, checks for unemployment and sickness benefits cannot presently be delivered by the Postal Service to the affected areas. In order to expedite receipt of payments, the RRB will, upon contact by an individual due payment, request the Treasury Department to reissue these payments to a new address provided by the affected party.

The RRB also has information about some temporary locations where checks can be picked up.

The RRB is providing information on its Web site, through its toll-free Help Line number (1-800-808-6772), and through public service announcements regarding actions that can be taken to obtain needed services. In addition, persons can go to the U.S. Postal Service’s Web site (www.usps.com) and click on the Hurricane Katrina Service Updates button to see the latest information on delivery to affected areas.

There are about 9,000 active railroad workers residing in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

The Education & Training Department of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen is seeking participants for an advanced Local Chairman Workshop scheduled for November 6-12, 2005.

The workshop will take place at the National Labor College on the campus of the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md.

The advanced workshop will start the evening of Sunday, November 6, and will run all day Monday through Friday, concluding with a banquet on Friday night, November 11.

The workshop is one day longer than the regular Local Chairman’s workshop and will go into greater detail on writing, claims handling, and investigations. Among other assignments, the students will be given a topic to research and report back to the class; there will be a session on Duty of Fair Representation (DFR), the Railroad Act (RLA); and several appeal letters will have to be written on cases passed out in class. Again, a highlight of the workshop is when attendees participate in a simulated disciplinary hearing.

You do not have to be a current Local Chairman to attend the November 6-11 workshop. It is open to all past participants of the five-day class and attendance at a regional meeting workshop does not apply. BLET members who are interested in registering for the workshop can do so online at http://www.blet.org/education.

Upon completion of the course, everyone will qualify for a $91 per day stipend from the North American Railway Foundation. The stipends will be paid directly to the Secretary-Treasurer of the respective divisions.

The BLET Education & Training Department presents these workshops in conjunction with the staff of the George Meany Center. Workshop instructors will include: BLET National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert, BLET Vice-President Richard K. Rudek; Assistant Director of the BLET Arbitration Department Marcus Rief, and Special Representative and Coordinator of Education & Training Ken Kroeger.

The BLET pays the costs of books, equipment, tuition, and a Friday evening graduation banquet. BLET members who attend are responsible for their transportation costs as well as the cost of room and board.

Registration is due September 15. The advanced Local Chairman workshop is on a first-come, first-served basis with class size limited to the first 10 who register through the BLET website. For more information, please contact Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of the BLET Education & Training Dept., at (216) 272-0986 or kroeger@ble-t.org.
The Teamsters Union and our partners in the Change to Win Coalition are working to give workers a stronger voice in the workplace. This group of seven growing unions was created to be an agent of change that will work to strengthen the power of working Americans. We can no longer afford to conduct business as usual while union forces grow more powerful. We are planning new, coordinated organizing campaigns to empower working men and women and grow the labor movement.

The members of the Teamsters Rail Conference are an important part of our organizing plans. You are on the front lines working alongside men and women who would benefit from being Teamsters. This is especially true of the many unorganized workers short lines. With hundreds of nonunion short lines crisscrossing the United States, we have a huge opportunity to bring better wages, safer working conditions and stronger representation to our brothers and sisters in the rail industry.

The Teamsters are helping Teamsters

Our brothers and sisters in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi are in need of our help and financial assistance. The hurricane took not only their homes and possessions but also ruined many places of employment. Countless local unions, divisions and lodges have offered up support for the displaced families, and I am proud of their efforts. The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund, established in 1991, is collecting all donations on behalf of our union and the oupouring of support has been tremendous.

Our offices in Washington, D.C., have been coordinating the distribution of Teamster-donated supplies. It is heartening to see the union movement come together and support those in need. It will be a long road ahead for the evacuees and their families and we are doing everything in our power to help and support them in their hour of need.

James P. Hoffa
General President

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMAN NEWS
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen
A Division of the Rail Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

SAFETY TASK FORCE HOTLINE
(800) 306-5414

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT CLEVELAND, OH. 

SEPTEMBER 2005
CALENDAR & EVENTS

NOVEMBER 4, 2005... 79th Annual BLET-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)
Hosted by SAMA Chairman T.L. Reed and the members of BLET Division 205, the 79th annual SMA will be held at the Holiday Inn South Carrie Marriott at the Convention Center in Chattanooga, Tenn. More information to come when available.

JUNE 4-9, 2006... 77th Annual BLET-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)
Hosted by SAMA Chairman T.L. Reed and the members of BLET Division 205, the 77th annual SMA will be held at the Holiday Inn South Carrie Marriott at the Convention Center in Chattanooga, Tenn. More information to come when available.

JUNE 12-16, 2006... 68th Annual BLET-GIA Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUAMA)
Hosted by EUAMA Arrangements Chairman R.J. Chamber and the members of BLET Division 157, the 68th annual EUAMA will be held at the Tropicalia Casino & Resort on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, N.J. More details to come when available.

JUNE 19-22, 2006... BLET National Division Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada
The First Quadrennial Convention of the BLET National Division will be held at Bally’s in Las Vegas. More details to come when available.

JULY 18-23, 2006... 66th Annual BLET-GIA International Western Convention (IWCl)
Hosted by S.W.vakaloff and the members of BLET Division 94, the 66th annual IWCl will be held at the Holiday Inn Rapid City-Jamestown Plaza in Rapid City, S.D. More details to come when available.

AUGUST 20-24, 2006... 71st Annual BLET-GIA Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM)
Hosted by A.L. Williams and the members of the BLET Division 182, the 71st annual SWCM will be held at The Pooboy Little Rock in Little Rock, Ark. More details to come when available.

Advisory Board July Activity
In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members’ activities are published monthly.

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMAN NEWS
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen
A Division of the Rail Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

BLET News
A message from Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa

Working together

The Teamsters Union and our partners in the Change to Win Coalition are working to give workers a stronger voice in the workplace. This group of seven growing unions was created to be an agent of change that will work to strengthen the power of working Americans. We can no longer afford to conduct business as usual while union forces grow more powerful. We are planning new, coordinated organizing campaigns to empower working men and women and grow the labor movement.

The members of the Teamsters Rail Conference are an important part of our organizing plans. You are on the front lines working alongside men and women who would benefit from being Teamsters. This is especially true of the many unorganized workers short lines. With hundreds of nonunion short lines crisscrossing the United States, we have a huge opportunity to bring better wages, safer working conditions and stronger representation to our brothers and sister rail workers.

Since the establishment of the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition, the rail carriers are taking notice of rail labor’s new strength. Since January, the Coalition has been meeting regularly with rail carriers for negotiations with the Class 1 rail lines. Teamsters Rail Conference members (BMWED and BLET) along with the Signalmen, Firemen and Oilers, Sheet Metal Workers, Train Dispatchers and Boilermakers have stood as a united front in the Coalition. This shows the rail carriers that there is renewed strength in rail labor representation.

Teamsters Helping Teamsters

Our brothers and sisters in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi are in need of our help and financial assistance. The hurricane took not only their homes and possessions but also ruined many places of employment. Countless local unions, divisions and lodges have offered up support for the displaced families, and I am proud of their efforts. The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund, established in 1991, is collecting all donations on behalf of our union and the outpouring of support has been tremendous.

Our offices in Washington, D.C., have been coordinating the distribution of Teamster-donated supplies. It is heartening to see the union movement come together and support those in need. It will be a long road ahead for the evacuees and their families and we are doing everything in our power to help and support them in their hour of need.

James P. Hoffa
General President