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Setting the record straight

BLET ASKS FOR APOLOGY FOLLOWING MISLEADING WASHINGTON POST DRUG AND ALCOHOL ARTICLE

BLET President Dennis R. Pierce blasted a careless and inaccurate report published in the Washington Post, calling on the newspaper to issue an apology to the men and women who operate Amtrak's locomotives.

On September 28, the Washington Post carried an article claiming to be based on a recent report by the Amtrak Inspector General. The headline read, "Amtrak watchdog says drug and alcohol use by train operators on the rise, causing safety risks." The article's lead sentence makes the false accusation that locomotive "engineers who operate Amtrak's trains have been testing positive for drugs and alcohol more frequently over the last six years."

President Pierce seethed at the misleading and inaccurate reporting. "Nothing could be further from the truth," the BLET

NEWSPAPER GETS THE FACTS WRONG

WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE:
"...engineers who operate Amtrak's trains have been testing positive for drugs and alcohol more frequently over the last six years."

ACTUAL AMTRAK INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT:
"Locomotive engineers averaged only one positive test per year from 2006 through 2011."

President said. "Zero of Amtrak's more than 1,400 locomotive engineers tested positive for drug and alcohol use in 2011, and zero Amtrak locomotive engineers have tested positive for drugs and alcohol in post-accident testing since 1987."

In a Letter to the Editor of the Post, President Pierce set the record straight. He wrote that the September 28 article is contradicted by facts found in the Report of the Amtrak Inspector General (IG), upon which the article claims to be based.

In direct contrast to the inaccurate headline, the Amtrak Inspector General

report clearly states that "[n]one of Amtrak's locomotive engineers tested positive in 2011." Further, the IG report indicates that "locomotive engineers averaged only one positive test per year from 2006 through 2011."

"While one positive test per year is one too many, that rate simply does not justify the nearly hysterical headline and lead sentence used in the article," President Pierce said.

He also credited Operation RedBlock (ORB), the peer-to-peer drug and alcohol abuse prevention program in use at Am-

trak and several other Class 1 railroads.

"Not a single federally-reportable accident or incident has occurred in which a locomotive engineer tested positive in the post-accident/incident alcohol or drug test since the labor-developed, Amtrak-adopted drug and alcohol identification program called Operation RedBlock was implemented in 1987."

Pierce concluded by calling on editors to apologize to the professional locomotive engineers who operate Amtrak's trains.

"Both Amtrak management and Amtrak labor have worked hard for a substance-free workplace for more than a quarter of a century. My membership has as strong an interest in achieving this goal as the traveling public does, and your article undermines that effort. The Post owes its readers much more stringent attention to detail in its reporting, and equally owes the men and women who operate Amtrak's trains an apology." ©

TEAMSTERS RAIL CONFERENCE BACKS HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT

In a September 27 letter to Ray LaHood, Secretary of Transportation, Teamsters Rail Conference President Dennis R. Pierce voiced strong support for the DesertXpress high-speed rail project between Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

"If properly funded, the DesertXpress/XPress-West project will provide good middle class jobs for tens of thousands of Americans in the Southwestern United States," President Pierce wrote. "Equally important, the project will help our nation turn the corner in developing a 21st Century transportation system that is efficient, cost-effective and environmentally friendly."

DesertXpress/XPressWest would allow passengers to bypass highway traffic, traveling at speeds of up to 150 mph non-stop between southern California and Las Vegas in approximately 80 minutes (compared to an average highway drive time of approximately four hours).

The Teamsters Rail Conference represents more than 70,000 rail workers employed as locomotive engineers, trainmen and maintenance of way workers across the United States as members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division. ©

THE LETTER IS AVAILABLE ON THE BLET WEBSITE:

www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/DesertXpress_Letter.pdf



SANDY'S DEVASTATION In late October, Superstorm Sandy slammed into the mid-Atlantic and Northeast, adversely impacting millions of Americans and severely disrupting the region's rail and transportation infrastructure. Thousands of Teamster families — including many BLET families — have lost their homes. The BLET's National Division swung into action to assist, informing members whose railroads are shut down or slowed by Sandy's impact may be eligible for Railroad Retirement unemployment benefits (see Page 7). Additionally, members living in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York may be eligible for financial assistance from the Teamster Disaster Relief Fund (also see Page 7). Some members were still without power as this issue of the News went to press. In this photo, MTA employees are at work on storm recovery efforts in New York City. (Photo courtesy: MTAPhoto's Flickr Photostream)

See Page 7 for RRB Unemployment Insurance information and Teamsters Disaster Relief fund assistance.



Moving forward
National President
Pierce's message **pg 2**



BLET Photo Album
Highlights from the SWCM
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Open Enrollment
Sign up for BLET Short Term
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BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE

MOVING FORWARD

I am writing this month's President's Message on my return trip from attending the inaugural meeting of the New Mexico State Legislative Board, which was held in Albuquerque on November 13. A few short months ago, BLET Divisions representing 25% of the active membership in the State of New Mexico petitioned the National Division to hold a membership referendum for the purpose of establishing a new State Legislative Board. As required by our Bylaws, my office prepared ballots consistent with the signed petitions, which were then sent to all active New Mexico members by their Division Secretary-Treasurers. By a margin of three to one, the rank and file membership in New Mexico voted "one member one vote" in favor of forming a new State Legislative Board. Once again, the democratic principles of our great Organization gave the membership the right to express their will, and I applaud them for not only participating, but for voting to make our union stronger with the addition of a new State Legislative Board in New Mexico.

Following the decision of the membership, steps were taken to convene the State Board for the first time and, during the meeting, Bylaws were adopted and officers were elected. I would like to congratulate all who were in attendance at the inaugural meeting as they, along with all BLET members in New Mexico, forged a new beginning for their State. Brother Pat Lynch, Legislative Representative for Division 446, was elected as Chairman of the New Mexico State Legislative Board and Sister Pam Cipolla, Legislative Representative-Elect for Division 400 was elected to serve as the Board's Secretary-Treasurer. As your Chief Legislative Officer, I was proud to join those attending the meeting, along with the other members of the National Legislative Board's Executive Committee: First Vice President Lee Pruitt and Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman. It was our honor not only to thank these



new officers for serving our New Mexico membership, but also to congratulate them on their election as officers of the new Legislative Board.

This visit to meet with the membership in New Mexico marked the tenth time this year that I personally attended meetings with the officers and delegates of our State Legislative Boards, including: North Dakota, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Kansas, Louisiana, Colorado, Virginia, Arizona, and Washington. As I shared in my remarks with the membership in each of these states, my goal in travelling to these meetings is to ensure that our membership understands how vital a strong BLET legislative presence is to our membership. We can ill afford not to pay attention to what our elected government officials in Washington DC, or in a particular State are doing, because not protecting our interests allows for legislation that often comes at our expense. As proud American trade unionists, we must not only make sure that politicians who will support the working middle class are elected, but we must also be on constant guard to ensure that the middle class is indeed protected.

Our Brotherhood's strong legislative effort has produced legendary results for generations. From legislation protecting and improving our Railroad Retirement system and affording enforceable whistleblower rights protecting injured railroad workers, to regulations providing for crashworthy locomotive cabs, air conditioning and working

cab locks, the BLET's Legislative Department has taken the point again and again to improve conditions for locomotive engineers and trainmen.

But we can't rest on our laurels; we need a continued strong legislative presence today, tomorrow and for years to come. Earlier this year we called out those who would harm Railroad Retirement and Medicare so that the privileged could receive even greater gifts from the federal government. And as President of the Teamsters Rail Conference, I joined with the Mineworkers and other Unions to fight against regulations that could be harmful to the coal industry ... and the tens of thousands of railroad jobs that coal supports.

These issues will not be going away simply because Election Day has passed. In fact, all these issues — and many others of vital importance to BLET members and their families — will resurface in the coming weeks and months. Our Union must remain vigilant in protecting the interests of locomotive engineers and trainmen, and the BLET's strong Legislative Department will stand post in that effort.

I will keep you updated concerning all these struggles and, when the time comes for us to move the ball forward, or to repel attacks against us, I will be counting on you to stand up with me to advance the BLET's agenda.

Fraternally,

DENNIS R. PIERCE
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

OBAMA WINS SECOND TERM AS U.S. PRESIDENT

Thanks BLET members for their support

On November 6, Barack Obama was reelected to his second term as President of the United States. He collected more than 300 electoral votes.

The BLET's Advisory Board, the organization's highest governing body, voted unanimously to endorse President Obama at a meeting on July 31. In congratulatory remarks issued on November 7, BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce wrote: "To President Obama I offer my congratulations on a victory that overcame many odds, not the least of which were a recovery from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, which has been tentative, and an onslaught of obscene amounts of corporate and billionaire campaign contributions that were unprecedented in this nation's history. Mr.

President, you earned your reelection and you deserve a second term."

On October 4, President Obama thanked BLET members for their support.

"I am writing you today to personally thank you for your recent endorsement of my candidacy for re-election as President of the United States," President Obama wrote. "It is an honor and a privilege to accept the endorsement of an organization that represents the hardworking men and women who help build our nation's middle class and keep our nation's railroads running safe and sound."

Obama continued: "Railroads represent the



veins of commerce and tourism in our nation, and BLET/Teamsters members, and workers across the union family, represent the backbone of our country. The service you provide the American people is invaluable, which is why I will continue laying the foundation for economy built to last, where your hard work pays off, your responsibility is rewarded and everyone plays by the same rules."

In Congressional elections, Democrats retained control of the Senate while Republicans retained a majority in the House of Representatives. Key leaders of the House's Transportation & Infrastructure Committee were all reelected, leaving the Committee's make up for the 113's Congress virtually unchanged.

President Pierce also advised President Obama that the Organization will be keeping an eye on his support of key issues over the next four years. "We know, Mr. President, that you agree with us about what needs to be done to fully restore our nation's economic preeminence and we know you want to do it. The BLET will remain involved, and will continue to mobilize on the issues of importance to locomotive engineers, trainmen and all workers, and we will make you do what is necessary to restore the American Dream for working and middle class citizens. We will struggle every day to make sure that Washington does right by BLET members and all workers, Mr. President, because we're proud to be American and proud to be Union." @@

Photo courtesy: White House's Flickr Photostream

BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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

interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

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

the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

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

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

ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 22, 2010. @@



GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JAMES P. HOFFA

TEAMSTERS' GOTV EFFORT HELPS RE-ELECT PRESIDENT OBAMA

Barack Obama's re-election was aided by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters' largest political effort ever. The Teamster Power 2012 program not only helped the president to victory, but was instrumental in ballot initiative victories in several states and the election of pro-worker candidates at the state and federal level.

Working people proved something on Election Day: When they fight, they can win against a corporate, anti-middle-class candidate, even after the Citizens' United decision. President Obama stood up for working families during one of our nation's most difficult economic times. That's why he won where ever unions put their resources. I congratulate President Obama and Vice President Biden on their well-deserved victory, and our

Teamster members who worked tirelessly on their behalf.

Tens of thousands of Teamsters volunteered for the union's massive member mobilization efforts. General Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall, and myself, barnstormed key battleground states across the country, motivating Teamsters to volunteer and go to the polls for Obama.

The Teamster Power 2012 program builds on the strengths of previous campaigns and uses new technologies to communicate with even more Teamsters.

Teamsters registered tens of thousands of new voters, conducted precinct walks, canvassed neighborhoods, drove voters to the polls and countless other activities.

Teamsters fought successfully against Prop 32 in California, which would restrict union money in politics but exempted bil-

lionaires. They also defeated the voter suppression amendment in Minnesota. In states such as Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Missouri and Indiana they worked extremely hard to defeat anti-worker extremists.

Now let us all come together and support the President in order to continue to create good-paying jobs in America. The gridlock in Washington must end. I call on the Republican leadership to stop opposing efforts to create jobs. Instead of trying to thwart the President, I hope they will work to find common ground.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL
PRESIDENT



66 Working people proved something on Election Day: When they fight, they can win against a corporate, anti-middle-class candidate, even after the Citizens' United decision. 99

Tim Craver reelected Chairman of Virginia State Legislative Board

Tim R. Craver was reelected by acclamation to his second term as Chairman of the Virginia State Legislative Board at its quadrennial meeting in Richmond, Va., on September 29.

Brother Craver is a member of BLET Division 532 in Richmond. He joined the Brotherhood on December 1, 1998, and was first elected Chairman at the Board's quadrennial meeting on October 21, 2008.

All officers of the State Legislative Board were reelected by acclamation during the session, including: 1st Vice Chairman Michael W. Coleman, Division 561 (Richmond, Va.); 2nd Vice Chairman Gary A. Myers, Division 301 (Roanoke, Va.); Alternate 2nd Vice Chairman Barry L. Fannon, Division 167 (Andover, Va.); and Secretary-Treasurer, Jeffrey E. Wood, Division 26 (Richmond, Va.).

Invited guests included: BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce; First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; District of Columbia Legislative Board Chairman Herbert Harris Jr.; BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs Vincent G. Verna; and Virginia AFL-CIO President Doris Crouse-Mays.

President Pierce addressed the delegates on a number of important topics, including the upcoming November elections, electronic devices, and the BLET membership card program.

"I thank Brother Craver for his continuing dedication to the Brother-

hood," President Pierce said. "He and all members of the Board have done an excellent job of representing our hard-working members in Virginia, as evidenced by their unanimous reelections. I commend them and thank them for the job they've done."

During the session, Chairman Craver announced that the Board has recently established a new website, www.vslb.org. The site contains many important features, including an "Unsafe Condition Form" to help members document dangerous conditions at work. He also updated the delegates on efforts to secure crew van legislation in the state, which would improve safety conditions for members traveling in off duty vehicles, and stressed the importance of supporting and growing the BLET PAC fund.

The Virginia State Legislative Board represents more than 1,200 active and retired members belonging to 11 different Divisions throughout the state. ©



Officers, delegates and guests attending the Virginia State Legislative Board's quadrennial meeting in Richmond, Va., on September 29.



Wilmesher reelected by acclamation in Colorado

Jim Wilmesher was reelected by acclamation to the office of Chairman of the BLET's Colorado State Legislative Board during the Board's Fifth Quadrennial meeting in Denver, Colo., September 20-21, 2012.

Brother Wilmesher was first elected Chairman in 2008. He is a BNSF locomotive engineer and member of BLET Division 256 (Denver). He joined the Brotherhood on February 1, 1998.

Also elected by acclamation during the meeting was: 1st Vice Chairman Kevin Utterback, Division 47 (Denver); 2nd Vice Chairman Steve Wareham, Division 488 (Grand Junction); Secretary-Treasurer Paul Pearson, Division 133 (Denver); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Michael Bevirt, Division 940 (Denver).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: National Pres-

ident Dennis R. Pierce; National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman; National Vice President Mike Twombly; and Special Representative and Coordinator of Education and Training Ken Kroeger.

"All officers of the Colorado State Legislative Board have done an outstanding job representing their members' political and legislative interests in the state," President Pierce said. "I congratulate them for winning election by acclamation and I know they will carry on with their hard work over the next four years."

Additional BLET guests in attendance included: Sereena Hogan, National Vice President of the BLET Auxiliary; Cory Runion, Wyoming State Legislative Board Chairman; Dave Geisler, Union Pacific-Eastern District General Chairman; and former Colorado State Legisla-

tive Board Chairmen George Last, Division 940 (Denver) and Mike Weston, Division 186 (Denver).

For the first time, the Colorado State Legislative Board's quadrennial meeting was a two-day event. The first day was the Board's regular business session while the second day was an "open forum" meeting for all members in Colorado, which featured speakers from across the state as well as the BLET National Division officers addressing the membership.

Special guests on the second day included: Mike Cerbo, President of the Colorado AFL-CIO; Sal Pace, Representative from Colorado House District 46; John Manutes, Chief Inspector for the Federal Railroad Administration in Colorado; representatives from job insurance associations; and representatives from various legal counsel firms.

Chairman Wilmesher said the two day open forum style was well-received by the membership.

"It was the first time we had attempted this style of meeting with various speakers and question and answer sessions," Chairman Wilmesher said. "Many said afterwards that it was well done."

He also said spouses of BLET members were encouraged to attend the open forum, and that an impressive turnout led to discussions of forming a new branch of the Auxiliary in Colorado. Chairman Wilmesher himself is a dues-paying member of the Auxiliary, and encouraged the Legislative Representatives in attendance to explore joining the Auxiliary as a member-at-large.

Chairman Wilmesher expressed his gratitude to those who helped plan the event and thanked everyone who attended. @@



Nick Johnson reelected by acclamation to serve as Arizona SLB Chairman

Brother G.N. "Nick" Johnson was reelected by acclamation to continue serving as Chairman of the Arizona State Legislative Board at the Board's triennial meeting in Tucson, Ariz., on October 23.

Brother Johnson is a Union Pacific locomotive engineer who first joined the Brotherhood on April 1, 1999. He serves Division 28 in Tucson as Secretary-Treasurer and Legislative Representative. Brother Johnson was first elected by acclamation to serve as 1st Vice Chairman of the Board in October of 2009. On August 1, 2011, he was elevated to the Chairman's office when Vince Verna was appointed to serve the Organization in Washington, D.C., as Director of Regulatory Affairs.

Also elected by acclamation during the meeting were: First Vice Chairman Manny Perez III, Division 647 (Phoenix, Ariz); and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Whitman, Division 28 (Tucson).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were: National President Dennis R. Pierce; First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt; National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert; Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman; Special Representative and Coordinator of the Education and Training Department Ken N. Kroeger; Director of Benefits A. Dan Cook III; and Director of Regulatory Affairs Vince Verna. Gen-



eral Chairman Bill Hannah (Union Pacific-Western Lines) also gave a presentation to the delegates. David Bradley, a Candidate for Arizona State Senate, was also on hand to meet the delegates.

"I thank Brother Johnson and all members of the Arizona State Legislative Board for their dedication to the Brotherhood," President Pierce said. "There is an extremely well educated, active and involved membership in Arizona and Brother Johnson and his team represent the best of that

culture. These Board members and our Arizona membership have their work cut out for them in the days ahead, but I have every confidence that they are up to the task."

In addition to the informational presentations from guest speakers, the session consisted of a business meeting and training. The evening was an information program and banquet for the Board and BLET Division 28 members, which was attended by more than 100

members and spouses. BLET Auxiliary National Vice President Sereena Hogan, a member of the Guadalupe Auxiliary No. 28, organized the dinner along with help from Kathy Hurst and other members of the Auxiliary.

"It was a fantastic day and the delegates did an outstanding job accomplishing the work that we had on the agenda," Brother Johnson said. "I would like to thank our invited officers, guests and delegates for an extremely successful meeting."

Brother Johnson helped coordinate events so that the State Legislative Board meeting was held the day before the regular meeting of BLET Division 28 in Tucson. The planning helped to afford maximum opportunity for BLET National Division officers and staff to meet with as many local members and officers as possible.

The BLET's Arizona State Legislative Board represents more than 600 active members. @@

SWCM 2012 PHOTO ALBUM GALVESTON, TEXAS

MEMBERS ATTENDING THE BLET'S 77TH ANNUAL SOUTHWESTERN CONVENTION MEETING (SWCM) in Galveston, Texas, held a moment of silence for victims of 9-11, as the convention's opening ceremony fell on the 11th anniversary of the worst terrorist attack in American history.

SWCM Arrangements Chairman Jack Sweeny (Local Chairman, Division 776) called the meeting to order while Keith Slone, Chaplain of Division 776, presided over the "empty chair" ceremony where the Organization recognized BLET members and all other railroaders who lost their lives in the line of duty in the 12 months since the 2011 SWCM.

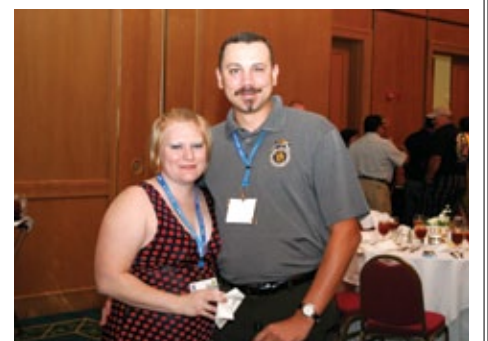
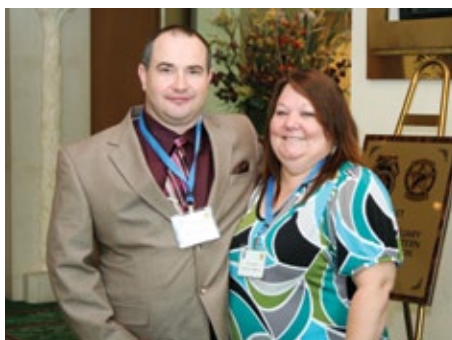
BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce spoke about the importance of the November elections and addressed many other issues of national importance to the Brotherhood and its members. Additional guest speakers during the opening ceremony included: Texas State Representative Craig Eiland (D-23); BLET Auxiliary National President Anita Caruso; and Railroad Retirement Board Labor Member Walt Barrows. One of the highlights of the opening ceremony came when Texas State Legislative Board Chairman Terry Briggs presented a

retirement plaque to Brother James Ussery, the long-serving Secretary-Treasurer of both the Texas State Legislative Board and Division 834 in Mineola, Texas.

Members participated in workshops on mobilization, hazardous materials training, conductor certification, and health care benefits. There were also workshops for Secretary-Treasurers, Legislative Representatives and Local Chairmen.

Guest speaker and political activist Jim Hightower was a highlight of the banquet on September 13.

Next year's SWCM will be held in New Orleans, La., August 25-29, 2013. @@



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Open enrollment for BLET Short Term Disability Plan runs through December 14

Open Enrollment for 2013 under the BLET's Short Term Disability insurance plan began on November 1, 2012 and runs through December 14, 2012.

If you are a locomotive engineer working on a railroad that participated in the Wage/Rules portion of the National Agreement dated December 16, 2003 (BNSF, NS and Amtrak did not participate in this Plan and this information does not apply to engineers working on these properties), then your coverage under Part A (described below) of the BLET Short Term Disability Plan will automatically continue.

Last year, if you opted out of Part B Coverage (also described below), you may opt back in during this enrollment period. If you currently participate and wish to opt out of Part B coverage, then you can also do so during this enrollment period.

PART A NON-OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITIES

Effective January 1, 2013, there will be no changes to Part A coverage:

- Your eligibility and \$40 premium is submitted by the railroad on a monthly basis.
- Part A pays \$402 per week for non-occupational disabilities only.
- Occupational disabilities are not covered.
- Each eligible member is insured for \$50,000 of Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage.

PART B OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITIES

Effective January 1, 2013, the cost for Part B coverage will remain \$23 per month, with no additional changes:

- Part B is voluntary. Participation in this additional occupational coverage is not required.
- The weekly benefit for occupational disabilities is \$402 per week.
- Each eligible member is insured for an additional \$50,000 of AD&D coverage.
- The benefit is not subject to repayment upon receipt of a FELA settlement (no repayment after a personal injury settlement).

- The benefit is not considered taxable income.
- The premium will be payroll deducted with your monthly union dues.

NOTE: UTU members working as engineers are eligible for Part A and may purchase Part B coverage by making an annual payment of \$276 to the BLET Trust Fund. (Complete the form at the link below and return to address noted by December 14, 2012.)

FILING A CLAIM FOR BLET SHORT TERM DISABILITY

- Call 1-800-858-6506 – MetLife Claim Center.
- Tell them you would like to file a claim under BLE-T Short Term Disability.
- Provide information requested, including contact information for your attending physician(s).
- A Case Manager will be assigned and you will receive a file number, which you must keep available for future reference.
- Following the call, you will receive an authorization for release of medical information.
- Sign the document and return to MetLife.

IMPORTANT:

Eligibility for Part B is dependent on your eligibility for Part A. In order to be eligible for Part A, you must have seven (7) starts in a month with one (1) start as an engineer in the month prior to filing for disability. If you are furloughed to train service and become ineligible for Part A coverage, you must notify the Secretary-Treasurer of your local division immediately. At that time, you have three options:

1. Continue coverage of Part A and Part B by paying \$40 directly to the BLET Short Term Disability Trust Fund, by the 10th of the month and continuing payroll deduction of \$23 for Part B. Coverage may only be continued for six (6) months under this option. If you choose this option, you will need to contact the Plan Administrator (information below) for additional instructions.
2. Discontinue coverage of Part B temporarily until you return to engineer status and become re-eligible for Part A.



neer status and become re-eligible for Part A. Engineers who lose Part A coverage due to no fault of their own, may resume coverage for Part B, once they return to engineer status and become re-eligible for Part A. You must keep the Secretary-Treasurer of your local division informed of your status.

3. OPT-OUT of Part B by completing an OPT-OUT form (link below). If you choose to opt-out of Part B, you may only resume coverage during a subsequent annual enrollment period.

CHOICES THAT MUST BE MADE BY DECEMBER 14, 2012

If you currently do NOT participate in Part B and choose to do nothing, you will continue to be eligible for Part A coverage only. If you are currently enrolled in Part B and wish to remain enrolled, then you are not required to take any action.

If you currently do NOT participate and would like to sign-up for Part B coverage during this open enrollment period, or if you DO currently participate and would like to opt-out of Part B coverage, you must complete and return the attached form (see below), by December 14, 2012, to the Secretary-Treasurer of your local division. Your election will become effective on January 1, 2013.

Members, who OPT-OUT of Part B coverage effective January 1, 2013,

will not be eligible to enroll for the coverage until the next annual enrollment period.

DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY(IES)

You are able to designate your beneficiary(ies) for the AD&D coverage on-line. If you would prefer to submit a paper beneficiary form, it is available on MetLife's website. A simple registration process is required the first time you access www.metlife.com/my-benefits. Designating your beneficiary(ies) will ensure that your benefit proceeds are paid according to your wishes. If you do not have a designation of beneficiary(ies) on file, proceeds will be paid according to the AD&D plan's facility of payment clause. Beneficiary designation for this coverage will not impact beneficiary designations for any other Life Insurance or AD&D plans that you may have with MetLife.

QUESTIONS

Anyone with questions regarding BLET Short Term Disability should contact Jim Bradford, BLE-T Short Term Disability Administrator, at 216-241-2630 (ext. 205) or email Bradford@ble-t.org. ©

A COPY OF THE OPT-IN/OPT-OUT FORM IS AVAILABLE BELOW OR AT:
WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/2013_STD_OPT_IN_OUT.PDF



BLET ENGINEERS ENROLLMENT 2013 OPT-IN/OPT-OUT FORM

PART B – BLET SHORT TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE PLAN

If you desire to OPT-IN or OPT-OUT of Part B coverage under the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, complete the remainder of this form. Be sure to include your signature and the date, and deliver to your Division Secretary-Treasurer by DECEMBER 14, 2012.

"I _____ (Print your name here and sign below), hereby choose to: (Mark with an "X")
☐ OPT-IN
☐ OPT-OUT

of the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, Part B. I understand that if I OPT-OUT, I may only seek enrollment in Part B during a future open enrollment period."

Signature: _____

Date: _____ BLET Div. #: _____

Phone Number: _____

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 14, 2012



UTU-E ENGINEERS ENROLLMENT 2013 OPT-IN FORM

PART B – BLET SHORT TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE PLAN

If you desire to OPT-IN to Part B coverage for 2013 under the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, you must be eligible for Part A. If you purchased coverage for 2012, your coverage will end on December 31, 2012. Complete the remainder of this form. Be sure to include your signature and the date. A check made out to the "BLET Trust Fund" for \$276 should be sent by DECEMBER 14, 2012 to:

Jim Bradford
 BLET STD Administrator
 222 Lake Ridge Rd.
 Kerrville, Texas 78028

"I _____ (Print your name here and sign below), hereby choose to OPT-IN to the BLET Short Term Disability Insurance Plan, Part B."

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City/State: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Railroad: _____ UTU Local #: _____

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 14, 2012

HURRICANE SANDY

Teamsters offer disaster relief assistance in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey

The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund is accepting applications for assistance from members who live in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey after Superstorm Sandy caused major damage to homes and property on October 29, 2012.

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 fill out the forms. For questions, contact the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund office at (202) 624-8971.

NEW YORK

Members living in one of the following New York counties are eligible to apply: Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Queens, Richmond or Suffolk.

DOWNLOAD "REQUEST FOR HELP" FORM:

WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/NY_DISASTER_RELIEF_110212.PDF

The deadline for application is January 31, 2013.

NEW JERSEY

Members living in one of the following New Jersey counties are eligible to apply: Atlantic City, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean or Union.

DOWNLOAD "REQUEST FOR HELP" FORM HERE:

WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/NJ_DISASTER_RELIEF_110112.PDF

The deadline for application is January 31, 2013.

CONNECTICUT

Members living in one of the following Connecticut counties are eligible to apply: Fairfield, Mashantucket, Pequot Indian Reservation, Middlesex, New Haven or New London.

DOWNLOAD "REQUEST FOR HELP" FORM HERE:

WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/CT_DISASTER_RELIEF_110212.PDF

The deadline is January 31, 2013.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD

To help increase awareness of this valuable benefit, members who live and work in the affected areas are asked to print and post these Disaster Relief Notices at their places of work.

Previous notices are archived on the National Division's website, www.ble-t.org/disaster.

Also, members are advised that the BLET National Division does not administer this program. Questions regarding the application process, pending applications or other inquiries should be directed to the Teamsters Human Rights Commission at the telephone number provided above.

Railroad unemployment benefits available for qualified Sandy's victims

Superstorm Sandy impacted a huge portion of the nation in late October, and it is likely that work for many BLET members will continue to be unpredictable for some time. As a result, some will be eligible for unemployment benefits pursuant to the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA), which is administered by the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB).

In order to qualify for benefits, an employee must have creditable railroad earnings in calendar year 2011 of at least \$3,325.00, counting only the first \$1,330.00 in earnings in each month. Additionally, a new employee must have railroad service in at least five months in 2011 in order to be eligible for RUIA benefits at this time.

National President Dennis R. Pierce urged BLET members to pull together in this time of urgent need. "Thousands and thousands of BLET

members, their families, and the communities in which they live are facing the challenge of a lifetime right now," Pierce said. "Let us keep our Brothers and Sisters in our thoughts and prayers, and help them out in big ways and small. One concrete way we can do that is to put information in their hands that helps them claim benefits to which they may be entitled."

The RRB's website is www.rrb.gov. Members should use Railroad Retirement Board Form UB 10, which includes an Application for Unemployment Benefits and Employment Service: [http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/Form_UB-10_\[2012-03\].pdf](http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/Form_UB-10_[2012-03].pdf)

Application and claims can be filed at: https://secure.rrb.gov/mep/ben_services.asp.

To use online services the member must have a PIN and Password (PPW) account. The website explains how to open a PPW account. @@

BLET, Teamsters seek donations for members impacted by Sandy

The BLET New Jersey State Legislative Board, in conjunction with Teamsters Joint Council No. 73, is soliciting donations to help the victims of Hurricane Sandy.

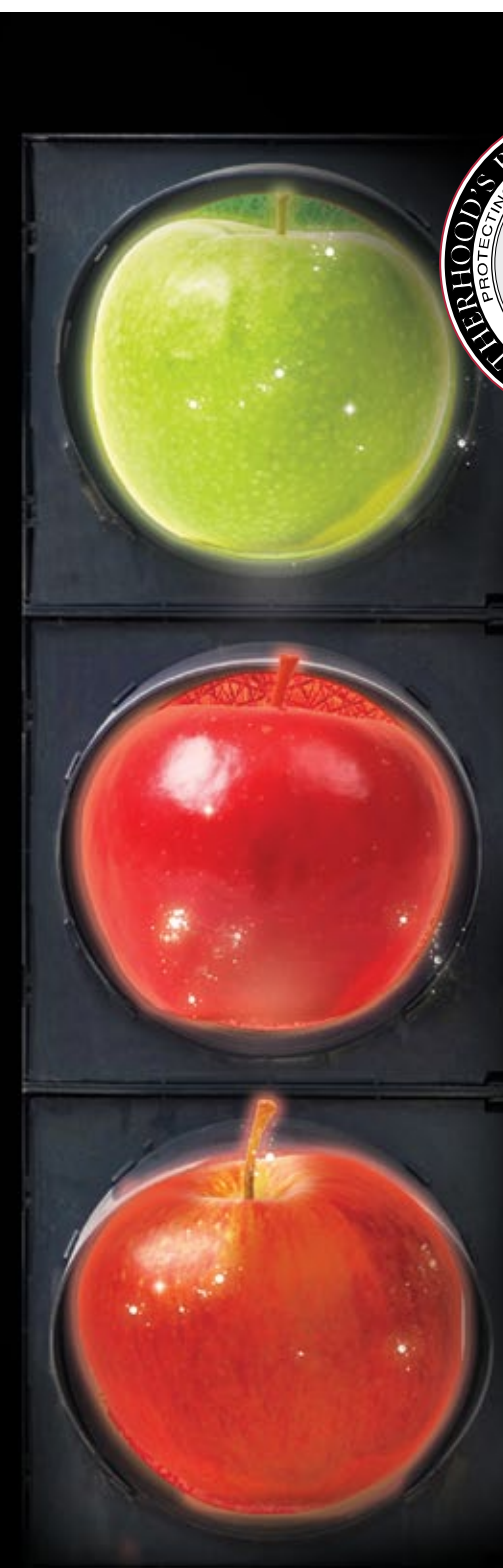
"As you are aware, thousands of families in New Jersey within the jurisdiction of Joint Council No. 73 have suffered physically and economically from Hurricane Sandy," wrote Alphonse Rispoli, President of Joint Council No. 73. "One of our members lost his life and Teamsters' homes have been lost or severely damaged; personal property has been destroyed; and many are homeless, without food and shelter. All need our help."


Brother Matt Kronyak, Chairman of the BLET New Jersey State Legislative Board, is asking BLET members who wish to help to consider making a donation to the Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank/Sandy Relief Effort.

Kronyak helped to coordinate a food drive the weekend before Thanksgiving. He and the Joint Council leaders are also putting together a list of impacted members who have children so that the donations can be used to help give the kids a Merry Christmas this year.

The Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank is a charitable 501(c)3 corporation, which has been authorized to provide economic as well as physical assistance to all Teamster and BLET members and their families in their recovery from losses suffered by Sandy.

Donations should be made payable to "Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank / Sandy Relief Effort" and mailed to the Joint Council office at: 150 Morris Ave., Suite 204, Springfield, NJ 07081. Questions should be directed to Joint Council President Rispoli at (973) 467-9100, or to Brother Kronyak via email, mcmkronyak@aol.com. @@





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800 233-7080

LECMFA and UTU rates are accurate and effective on date of print.





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Photo of the Month: September 2012

NARROW GAUGE STEAM: Brother Keith Strobel of BLET Division 11 (New York, N.Y.) captured this Cumbres & Toltec K-36 steam locomotive while visiting Chama, N.M., on vacation in July of 2012. Brother Strobel reports that he completed the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad's engineer/fireman training school in 2009 and has visited there many times since. He continues his charitable support of the scenic narrow gauge railroad as a "very worthwhile cause." Brother Strobel is an Amtrak engineer working between New York and Washington, D.C. He ran freight for the New York, Susquehanna & Western prior to hiring out with Amtrak. **Photo courtesy:** Keith Strobel, BLET Division 11



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.



Pierce appoints John Fink to President's Staff

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce announced that Division 3 Local Chairman John F. Fink has been appointed to a position on the President's Staff, effective Monday, October 22.

A Cleveland native, the 31-year old Fink hired out as a Trainman with CSXT on March 27, 2000, and served as President of United Transportation Union Local 378 for two terms. He earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer on October 8, 2004. Fink joined the BLET in 2007, and has served as Vice Local Chairman and as Local Chairman of Division 3 in Cleveland.

Brother Fink is a fourth generation railroader. His great grandfather, Fred Fink, worked as a Trainman and Yardmaster for the New York Central Railroad, starting at Collinwood Yard in 1930. Grandfather Jim Fink also worked at Collinwood as a Trainman for the New York Central, the Penn Central and Conrail from 1955 until 1989, and was an active member of the UTU.

Brother Fink's father, Fred, hired on the Penn Central in the Car Department in 1974 and later worked for the Penn Central, Conrail and CSXT. He has been President of Transport Workers' Union

(TWU) Local 2019 for over 20 years, and for the past eight years has been an International Representative for the TWU, where he represents that Union on the Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, and AAR Safety Appliance Task Force.

Brother Fink has two children — 5-year old daughter Addison and 3-year old son Colten — and enjoys fishing and watching Ohio State football. He also is a fan of the Cleveland Browns, the Indians and the Cavaliers.

"John Fink brings a rare combination to the National Division, which will serve the BLET membership very well," said President Pierce. "He brings the energy of youth to all his endeavors, which is focused by a lifetime of understanding, first-hand, the importance of railroad unions and service to the membership. In the year that I've known him, I have come to appreciate the blend of talents John applies to his work of representing BLET members."

In accepting the appointment, Brother Fink said, "It is an honor to join your staff. Thank you for this opportunity. I will work hard every day to serve you and my fellow Brothers and Sisters." @

Advisory Board August 2012 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, Cleveland; 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; International Western Convention (IWC), Billings, Mont.; Union Pacific-Eastern District General Committee of Adjustment mtg., Las Vegas, Nevada; Louisiana State Legislative Board mtg., New Orleans, La.; CSX meeting, Cleveland; Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA), Atlantic City, N.J.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. "LEE" PRUITT: National Duties include but not limited to: Director, Passenger Dept.; Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; IWC, Billings, Mont.; UP-Eastern District GCA mtg., Las Vegas; Louisiana State Legislative Board mtg., New Orleans; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.

NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER WILLIAM C. WALPERT: General supervision of accounting dept., records dept., online services dept., tax compliance dept.; Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Publications Committee; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; Trustee, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust (NRRIT); IWC, Billings, Mont.; UP-Eastern District GCA mtg., Las Vegas; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.

VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN: Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Weekly Drive Committee and Legislative meetings; State Legislative Board Chairmen's workshop, Washington, D.C.; IWC, Billings, Mont.; IBT political meeting, Chicago; Advisory Board information mtg.; Louisiana State Legislative Board mtg., New Orleans; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.; IBT political coordinators information mtg.; Hearings, receptions and various meetings with U.S. Representatives, Washington, D.C.

VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF: Vice Chairman, full NRAB; Labor Member, 1st Division; Labor Member, National Mediation Board Arbitration Advisory Forum; Director of Arbitration Dept; Assigned to Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Grand Trunk Western; Duluth Missabe & Iron Range; Elgin, Joliet & Eastern; Indiana Harbor Belt; and Belt Railway of Chicago; WC/EJ&E conference call, re: Seniority issues; Assist GC Reynolds w/ NYD issues and prep for negotiations, WC, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds and Hobbs w/ NYD negotiations, WC/EJ&E, Chicago; Advisory Board conference call; Assist GC Craddock w/ IC negotiations, Memphis; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.; Eastern General Chairmen Association mtg., Atlantic City; UP First Division grievance mediation, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ PLB briefs, WC, Chicago. Assist GC Reynolds w/ WC negotiations, Green Bay, Wisc.

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, Eastern Idaho), Central Region, Southern Region (New Orleans & Gulf Coast); Tacoma Belt RR; Utah RR; and Longview Portland & Northern and Longview Switching; IWC, Billings, Mont.; UP-Eastern District GCA mtg., Las Vegas; On duty at home office; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.

VICE PRESIDENT WILLARD E. KNIGHT: Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut Southern; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; Ohio Central; Grand Trunk Western; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, prepare for PLBs, etc.; Vacation; Grand Trunk Western agreement signing, Cleveland; Mtgs. w/ GC Karakian and GTW, Cleveland; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.

VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE: Assigned to all CSX; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) issues, CSXT; General office duties, paperwork, correspondence, telephone calls, etc.; IRR negotiations prep; Indiana Railroad negotiations, Indianapolis, Ind.; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.; Prepare for DRC meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER: Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CR&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Austin Western RR, Great Western; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, etc.; Ongoing prep work regarding PLBs 7493, 7383, 5939, 7503, 7092, 7477 and 7530; PLB 7477 w/ GC Holdcraft, BNSF, Chicago; PLB 7543 w/ GC Gibbons, BNSF, Ft. Myers, Fla.; Vacation; Mtg. w/ BNSF and GCs, re: mark up issue, Dallas/ Fort Worth; Contract negotiations w/ M&NA and GC Gibbons, Kansas City; EUMA and Advisory Board mtgs., Atlantic City, N.J.

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, Montreal, Maine & Atlantic, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, etc.; Assist GC Craddock, GC issues; Assist GC Lorenz w/ contract negotiations and other Huron & Eastern issues, Detroit; Assist GC Parker, KCS issues; Assist GC Semenak, CP issues; Assist GC Moore, Springfield Terminal issues; Assist GC Rodriguez w/ Tex-Mex issues and arbitration prep.; Division 327 mtg. w/ GC Lorenz, Frankenmuth, Mich.; SMA mtg., Orlando, Fla.; Assist GC Craddock w/ KCS issues; Kansas State Legislative Board mtg., Kansas City; Tex-Mex arbitration w/ GC Rodriguez, Chicago; IWC mtg., Billings, Mont.

VICE PRESIDENT STEPHEN J. BRUNO: Assigned to various Rail Safety Advisory Committees (RSAC); Regulatory duties as assigned by the President; Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; Birmingham Southern; Telephone calls, correspondence, general office duties, etc.; IWC, Billings, Mont.; Assist GC Ciarella, Union RR, STB research, Pittsburgh; Div. 700 mtg., Pittsburgh; PLB 7490, LIRR, Executive Session; Conference call, re: PRC; EUMA, Atlantic City, N.J.; Mtg. w/ NMB and SEPTA, re: RSAC FMP, Washington, D.C.