



DAILY NEWS UPDATES  
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# Locomotive

## ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS



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# BLET STRIKES WHEELING & LAKE ERIE

**Federal judge ends strike and temporarily orders railroad to stop using Carrier officials to run trains**

Over 100 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) struck the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway (WLE) at 5:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Friday, September 20 to protest that railroad's repudiation of the Collective Bargaining Agreements that cover the two operating crafts. About 12 hours later, United States District Court Judge John R. Adams issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) in Akron, Ohio, ending the strike. The judge also ordered the Carrier to stop its practice of using management officials to operate single-person trains on the property.

Picket lines were posted at seven primary WLE terminals in Ohio and Pennsylvania. According to court documents filed by the railroad, which normally operates an average of 45-50 trains per day, the walkout stopped virtually all train activity.

The strike was triggered when WLE ignored warnings from the Union that the Collective Bargaining Agreements that cover the two operating crafts expressly forbid it from using supervisors to perform the work of the engineers and the trainmen. The Carrier has been trying to eliminate longstanding crew consist agreements and operate single-person operations so it can eliminate trainmen.

Following the emergency hearing, Judge Adams ordered the strikers to return to work, and to refrain from any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



## Sequestration's negative impact on railroad workers

### TEAMSTERS RAIL CONFERENCE FIGHTING TO RESTORE FULL RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT AND SICKNESS BENEFITS

As of October 1, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will reduce railroad unemployment and sickness insurance benefits by 7.2 percent — instead of 9.2 percent — due to federal budget cuts first implemented in March 2013. Since that time, these benefits had been reduced by 9.2 percent.

However, Rail Labor and the industry say that's not good enough. Both sides are actively petitioning members of Congress to eliminate the unfair benefit reduction entirely. Rail La-

bor unions have contacted all members of the House and Senate, while the Association of American Railroads has reached out to the Ranking Members of both the House and Senate Budget Committees.

Dennis R. Pierce is leading the charge on behalf of the Teamsters Rail Conference and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET). As President of both Organizations, Pierce mailed a letter to all members of Congress highlighting the unfair treatment that rail-

road workers receive under the Budget Control Act of 2011, more commonly known now as sequestration.

"Workers who are not employed in the railroad industry do not have their basic unemployment and sickness benefits reduced, only railroad workers," he wrote. "It is difficult to understand why this unfair and onerous reduction is being applied to only one type of worker in this country."

The sequestration cut impacts more than 70,000 Rail Conference members belonging

to the BLET and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED).

"We believe that railroad workers should not be singled out and penalized by having their unemployment and sickness benefits arbitrarily reduced," President Pierce wrote. "This is not only unfair but it is harmful to the economy as a whole since almost 100 percent of these benefits is immediately put back into the economy as these individuals struggle to buy food and medicine, pay mortgages, etc. Recipients of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



### BLET President's Message

A new line of communication **pg. 2**

### Election results

Palmer reelected to 4th term in Oregon **pg. 4**

### Summary Annual Report

BLET Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund **pg. 4**

### BLET Photo Album

Highlights from the SWCM in New Orleans **pg. 5**

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

# A NEW LINE OF COMMUNICATION

### NATIONAL DIVISION PREPARING TO LAUNCH FACEBOOK PAGE

**W**hen I first had the honor of being elected your National President, I promised to have an open administration with improved lines of communication with the membership. I've followed through on that commitment in part by traveling to many regular Division and Town Hall meetings over the last several years. Additionally, members of the National Division's Advisory Board have done the same. They have also joined me and members of my staff at dozens of Regional, General Committee of Adjustment, and State Legislative Board meetings since 2010. Our heightened presence in the field and improved interaction with the membership has helped unify our Organization toward the common cause of strengthening our Brotherhood.

To that end, I am proud to announce that we will be opening a new line of communication in the very near future. My travels to the field have confirmed that many of today's members — especially our younger members — get their news and information through Facebook. This a handy communications tool, and one that I hope to use on behalf of the National Division as a new way to interact digitally with our membership.

Our Division officers have already found innovative ways to put Facebook to use for the betterment of our Brotherhood. For example, some Division officers have sent notices out on Facebook to remind members of upcoming Division meetings, thereby increasing attendance. Communication through Facebook can also be used to help spread the word about safety



President Pierce at the 86th annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA) convention in Richmond, Va., June 25, 2013.

rules. Compliance with operating and safety rules is another way that makes our Organization more effective and our members safer. These are but two examples of how communicating in the digital age can make our Brotherhood stronger.

You will soon see notices about the BLET National Division's new Facebook page. I hope you will take a few minutes to "Like" us on Facebook when our new page is unveiled. Many of the regular news items that are currently featured on our website ([www.ble-t.org](http://www.ble-t.org)) will also begin appearing on Facebook. You will be able to access our News Flashes as well as our Daily Headlines through your Facebook page. An informed membership is a strong membership, and I believe our increased use of Facebook will make our membership that much more in-

formed and connected.

Another goal is to post timely announcements regarding our Education and Training Department workshops, reminders regarding upcoming BLET regional meetings, and notices about other important meetings. We will also use Facebook for our mobilization efforts, including get out the vote (GOTV) campaigns and voter registration drives. And I'm sure we will find other ways that Facebook will improve our communications with the membership.

If you have read my columns in the past, then you know that I have frequently compared union membership to team sports. As I've said before, membership in the BLET cannot be a spectator sport — you need to be involved and active on the field if you want your union to work for you. The same holds

true for Facebook. I'd like to see our new Facebook page bring our Brotherhood closer together. But it's not going to be a one-way street. It's my hope that our members will become active participants in the process and that you will share your thoughts and comments with us. We'd also like to see your photographs, provided they are taken and shared in a manner that does not violate the on-duty electronic device regulations and company rules.

You'll be able to find us on Facebook at: [Facebook.com/BLÉTNational](https://www.facebook.com/BLÉTNational). Implementation will be gradual as we bring things up to speed, but your input is more than welcome. Please be sure to stop by and "Like" our new page.

**DENNIS R. PIERCE**  
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VETERANS

**O**n November 11, I offered thanks to all veterans and active-duty military on behalf of the entire

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen. Even though Veteran's Day may be over, our veterans and their families deserve our thanks each and every day of the year. In the BLET we have a saying: Proud to be American, Proud to be Union. We are just as proud of these men and women in uniform. Their sacrifices and devotion have protected our way of life and our freedoms for generations.

Founded on May 8, 1863, the BLET marked its 150th anniversary earlier this year. From its founding, the BLET has been proud to represent the rights and interests of military veterans who have gone on to work as Locomotive Engineers and as Trainmen. Many of our earliest members were Civil War veterans who fought in such battles as Bull Run, Shiloh, Antietam and Gettysburg. Today, our active membership consists of veterans who have served in Vietnam, Desert Storm, Desert Shield, Iraq and Afghanistan. These members proudly carry on the traditions established by our founding fathers.

We currently represent 85 members who are serving in active military duty. These Brothers and Sisters also have our thanks and admiration. Thanks to BLET contracts and protections, they will have good paying jobs with their seniority intact when they return to civilian life. It is one of the many protections our Organization has gained over the past 150 years.

Behind every soldier who serves is a family who also serves. Please join me in thanking not only our soldiers and veterans, but their families as well. Their sacrifice deserves our praise and is part of the reason our country remains strong and free. On behalf of the BLET Advisory Board and our 51,000 members, we salute our veterans and their families for everything they have done for us and for America. — **DRP**

66 My travels to the field have confirmed that many of today's members — especially our younger members — get their news and information through Facebook. This a handy communications tool, and one that I hope to use on behalf of the National Division as a new way to interact digitally with our membership. 99

## 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 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

# CREATING GOOD JOBS WITH GOOD WAGES SHOULD BE CONGRESS' PRIORITY



**A**s you know, Congress reached a short-term deal that returned federal workers to their jobs and ended the Republican-led threat of allowing the U.S. to default on its debts. That was good news for all of us, but especially for millions of public and private sector workers nationwide who have been affected by this government shutdown.

Any joy tied to this potential budget should be short-lived. Now, as part of fiscal year 2014, an additional \$21 billion in federal spending is

slated to be cut. Most of that is supposed to be a slash in defense-related programs, but House Republicans would like to see that shifted to domestic programs instead.

The billion-dollar question is why should regular Americans have to shoulder this burden alone? Those who work hard for a living trying to put food on the table and keep a roof over their families heads are already struggling due to millions of jobs that have been given away as part of lousy trade agreements like NAFTA and replaced with low-wage service jobs.

Instead, wouldn't it make more sense to go after a plethora of companies like Apple, Microsoft, Cisco, Google, Oracle, IBM, Pfizer, Chevron, Exxon Mobile and Berkshire Hathaway who are hoarding more than \$1.7 trillion in unused cash instead of investing it into the U.S. economy? Why aren't they being asked to pay more at a time when lawmakers are looking for ways to strengthen the nation's economic ledger?

Workers, as usual, are being seen by GOP lawmakers as a convenient target to pay America's bills. The U.S. should be investing in creating good jobs

that will get people back to work earning good wages.

In a Huffington Post piece recently, Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) said it is unconscionable that corporate America is soaring while working Americans are struggling. "It's no accident that real wages have declined while executive pay and corporate profits have climbed rapidly," he wrote. "There is simply no excuse for it."

Faternally,

**JAMES P. HOFFA**  
TEAMSTERS GENERAL  
PRESIDENT

66 The U.S. should be investing in creating good jobs that will get people back to work earning good wages. 99

## Dehart elected General Chairman of NS-Northern Lines/W&LE GCA

**D**ewayne L. Dehart was elected General Chairman of the BLET's Norfolk Southern-Northern Lines/Wheeling & Lake Erie General Committee of Adjustment at the GCA's quadrennial meeting in Cleveland from September 30-October 2, 2013.

Brother Dehart, a Norfolk Southern locomotive engineer, is a member of BLET Division 548 in Peru, Ind. He has held continuous membership in the BLET since February 1, 2001. He was elected 4th Vice General Chairman of the NS-Northern Lines/W&LE GCA in 2009.

Also elected were: 1st Vice General Chairman Robert W. Peters, Division 537 (Fort Wayne, Ind.); 2nd Vice General Chairman Jason S. Shannon, Division 86 (Moberly, Mo.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Lonnie J. Swigert, Division 292 (Beach City, Ohio); 4th Vice General Chairman W. Doug Pope, Division 444 (East St. Louis, Ill.); and Secretary-Treasurer Brian E. Mills, Division 273 (Conneaut, Ohio). Alternate officers elected were: Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Paul L. Forman, Division 548 (Peru, Ind.); 1st Alternate Vice General Chairman Patrick M. Redmond, Division 607 (Cleveland, Ohio); and 2nd Alternate Vice General Chairman Rodney P. Kanous, Division 348 (Elkhart, Ind.).

Three long-serving officers did not seek reelection due to pending retirements — Robert H. Linsey, Jerry S. Elmore and Rodney K. Cutlip.

Outgoing General Chairman Robert H. Linsey, Division 659 (Buffalo, N.Y.), was elected to the office of 1st Vice General Chairman in 2001, 2005 and 2009, and served as General Chairman from January 1, 2005 through September 13, 2005, and again from January 1, 2011 through October 1, 2013. Brother Jerry



**Seated, from left:** Robert W. Peters, Div. 537; Rick Gibbons, National Vice President; Dewayne Dehart, General Chairman; Brian E. Mills, Div. 273; and Jason S. Shannon, Div. 86. **Standing, from left:** W. Doug Pope, Div. 444; Paul L. Forman, Div. 548; Patrick M. Redmond, Division 607; Rodney P. Kanous, Div. 348; and Lonnie J. Swigert, Div. 292.

S. Elmore, Division 120 (Kansas City, Mo.), served the Board as Secretary-Treasurer for many years, most recently winning reelection by acclamation in 2009. Brother Rodney K. Cutlip, Division 385 (Toledo, Ohio), was elected to serve as 2nd Vice General Chairman in 2005 and in 2009.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce addressed the officers and delegates on September 30. Also giving pre-

sentations were: First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt, National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert, and Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman.

"I offer my sincere thanks and congratulations to Brother Dehart and all officers of the General Committee of Adjustment," President Pierce said. "I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of enforcing contracts and

representing the best interests of their members at Norfolk Southern and the Wheeling & Lake Erie. Also, I'd like to give my congratulations to Bob Linsey, Jerry Elmore and Rodney Cutlip and wish them all the best during their upcoming retirements."

Also representing the National Division were: Vice President Cole W. Davis; Vice President Richard C. (Rick) Gibbons; and Director of Benefits A. Dan Cook III. Vice President Gibbons is assigned to assist all Norfolk Southern GCAs. Additional BLET officers in attendance were: Kevin S. Peek, Norfolk Southern-Eastern Lines General Chairman; Mark L. Wallace, Norfolk Southern-Southern Lines General Chairman; Chip J. Cole, Indiana & Ohio General Chairman; L. Randy Fannon Jr., NS-Eastern Lines Vice General Chairman; Paul S. Piekarski, Illinois State Legislative Board Chairman; and Timothy R. Hanelly, Ohio State Legislative Board Chairman.

Retired National Vice President Stephen D. Speagle also attended the meeting and served as parliamentarian. Brother Speagle served as General Chairman of the NS-Northern Lines GCA for many years.

The Norfolk Southern-Northern Lines/W&LE General Committee of Adjustment represents more than 3,300 active and retired members in 32 different Divisions. ©

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Stay up-to-date with the latest Brotherhood news by going to the BLET website and signing up to receive BLET News Flash alerts via email.

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

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enter your email address to begin receiving the most current news from the BLET National Division.

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



# Palmer reelected to 4th term as Oregon Legislative Board Chairman

Scott G. Palmer was reelected by acclamation to his fourth term as Chairman of the Oregon State Legislative Board at the Board's triennial meeting in Vancouver, Wash., from September 3-4, 2013.

Brother Palmer, a BNSF locomotive engineer, has held continuous membership in the BLET since joining Division 842 (Klamath Falls, Ore.) on June 1, 1994. Brother Palmer also serves the BLET as Assistant Coordinator of the Safety Task Force.

Also reelected by acclamation were: Secretary-Treasurer Rob D. Armstrong, Division 362 (La Grande, Ore.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Michael L. Neale, Division 416 (Salem, Ore.). Brother Gary R. Quick, Division 362 (La Grande, Ore.), was elected by acclamation to serve as First Vice Chairman, filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Brother Don S. Strong, Division 236 (Portland, Ore.).

Representing the BLET National Division at the meeting were National President Dennis R. Pierce, Vice President

& National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman, and Vice President Michael D. Priester.

"I congratulate Brother Scott Palmer and all members of the Oregon State Legislative Board and thank them for their service to our Brotherhood," President Pierce said. "I know they will continue doing an excellent job of representing BLET members in Oregon. Like all of our State Legislative Boards, they have much work ahead of them next year as they prepare for the 2014 midterm elections. Also, I thank Brother Strong for his service to the Organization and extend best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement."

Special guests from the BLET included Vince Verna, BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs; General Chairman Jim Dayton, Union Pacific-Western Region; and General Chairman Matt O. Wilson, Burlington Northern Santa Fe/MRL. Steve Novick, a Portland City Commissioner (city council member), was also in attendance.

The Oregon State Legislative Board represents nearly 700 active and retired members in five BLET Divisions. @@



**Front row, from left:** Mike Priester, Vice President; John Tolman, Vice President & National Legislative Representative; Don Strong, Division 236 (Portland); Dennis Pierce, National President; and Matt Wilson, BNSF/MRL General Chairman. **Middle row, from left:** Bill Fogle, Division 476 (Eugene); Chairman Scott Palmer, Division 842 (Klamath Falls); and Pete Bigler, Division 236 (Portland). **Back row, from left:** Mike Neale, Division 416 (Salem); Gary Quick, Division 362 (La Grande); Rob Armstrong, Division 362 (La Grande); and Tracy Yates, Division 842 Klamath Falls.

## RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 <--

these temporary benefits do not save or invest these benefits. Rather, they use them to pay for everyday living expenses."

According to the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board, the adjusted reduction amount is based on revised projections of benefit claims and payments under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. It will remain in effect through September 30, 2014, the end of the fiscal year. Reductions in future fiscal years, should they occur, will be calculated based on applicable law. The 7.2 percent reduction in railroad un-

employment and sickness benefits will reduce the maximum daily benefit rate from \$68.00 to \$63.10. As a result, the total maximum amount payable in a 2-week period with 10 days of unemployment will drop from \$680.00 to \$631.04.

"We ... request that you rescind this unfair benefit reduction on our most vulnerable workers, and restore their full unemployment and sickness benefits," President Pierce concluded. @@

**A COPY OF PRESIDENT PIERCE'S LETTER IS ON THE BLET WEBSITE:**

[WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/RAIL\\_CONF\\_LETTER\\_2013.PDF](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/RAIL_CONF_LETTER_2013.PDF)

## SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT for BLET DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFIT TRUST FUND

This is a summary of the annual report for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund, 30-0262584/501, for 01/01/2012 through 12/31/2012. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The plan has two contracts with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to pay certain claims incurred under the terms of the plan. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending 12/31/2012 were \$7,659,041.

### BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$6,985,377 as of 12/31/2012, compared to \$5,590,836 as of 01/01/2012. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of \$1,394,541. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year or the cost of assets acquired during the year. The plan had total income of \$9,324,055, including employer contributions of \$6,960,452, employee contributions of \$2,118,687, gains of \$45,302 from the sale of assets and earnings from investments of \$199,614. Plan expenses were \$7,929,514. These expenses included \$206,272 in administrative expenses and \$7,723,242 to insurance carriers for the provision of benefits.

### YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

1. An accountant's report;
  2. Financial information and information on payments to service providers;
  3. Assets held for investment;
  4. Transactions in excess of 5% of plan assets; and
  5. Insurance information including sales commissions paid by insurance carriers.
- To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, who is Plan Administrator, at 1370 Ontario Street, Standard Building Mezzanine, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702, (216) 241-2630. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$4.25 for the full annual report, or \$0.25 per page for any part thereof.

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

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan at 1370 Ontario Street, Standard Building Mezzanine, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702 and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington DC, or obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: Public Disclosure Room, Room N-1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20210. @@

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## PHOTO ALBUM: 2013 SWCM

**M**ore than 370 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen convened in New Orleans, La., on August 27 for opening ceremonies of the 78th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM).

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce thanked all participants, noting that attendance at the SWCM was the highest of any of the BLET's four regional meetings this year.

After presentation of the flags by members of the New Orleans firefighters union, SWCM Arrangements Chairman Arlin S. Todd called the meeting to order. He introduced several guest speakers throughout the morning, including Nick Felton, President of New Orleans Firefighters Local 632, and John Bel

Edwards, Louisiana State Representative of House District 72. Edwards is a staunch union supporter who is campaigning to be the next Governor of Louisiana.

David Grimes, Local Chairman of Division 42 (St. Louis, Mo.), led a ceremony to remember BLET members killed in the line of duty. An empty chair, as well as various tools of the engineers' craft, was placed at the front of the meeting hall to symbolize the Organization's departed Brothers and Sisters. Brother Grimes also paid respects to Brother Brian D. Wheeler, former President of Division 42, who passed away late last year, and announced plans to establish a scholarship to honor Brother Wheeler's memory.

National President Pierce intro-

duced members of the BLET Advisory Board and National Division staff who were in attendance. President Pierce also spoke about the Organization's 150th anniversary and introduced a special video commemorating the historic event. The BLET celebrated its 150th anniversary on May 8, 2013, and the video highlighted many of the Organization's most important accomplishments since 1863. The video was well received by those in attendance and is available for viewing on the National Division's YouTube page: <http://www.youtube.com/user/BLETUnion>.

Anita Caruso, National President of the BLET Auxiliary, also addressed the group and introduced the National Officers of the Auxiliary who were in attendance.

Brothers David J. Grimes and Orlando R. Penrod, both members of BLET Division 6 in Boone, Iowa, hosted the annual SWCM poker tournament on August 25, which is a fundraiser for the SWCM Scholarship Fund. Brother Penrod reported that the poker tournament enjoyed its highest turnout ever in New Orleans.

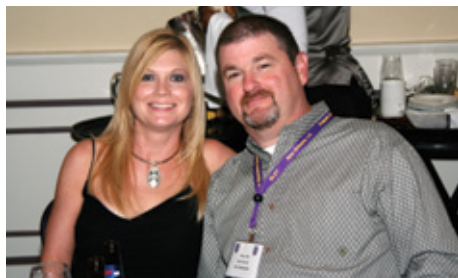
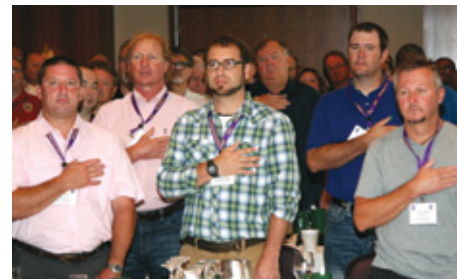
Members enjoyed a welcome reception the evening on August 26 and a jazz/dinner riverboat cruise aboard the Creole Queen on August 27. One of the most memorable moments from the convention came when members and their families marched to the boat from the Loews hotel in a traditional New Orleans second line parade. Led by a brass band, they marched down the middle of Poydras Street to the boat dock with the help of a police es-

cort, which closed the roads to traffic for the BLET parade.

Workshops began on August 26 for the BLET Safety Task Force and hazardous materials training. There was also a workshop on conductors' certification. Later in the week, members participated in specialized training for BLET Legislative Representatives, Secretary-Treasurers and Local Chairmen. There was also an informational presentation on the BLET health & welfare plan as well as a workshop on the BLET's national mobilization network.

The 78th annual SWCM concluded with a dinner banquet and dance the evening of August 28.

Next year, the 79th annual SWCM will be held in St. Louis, Mo., from September 7-11, 2014. ©©





# 2014 BLET National Convention



The BLET's Third Quadrennial National Convention is slated for September 29 through October 2, 2014, at the Rio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. More details will be published as the convention date approaches.

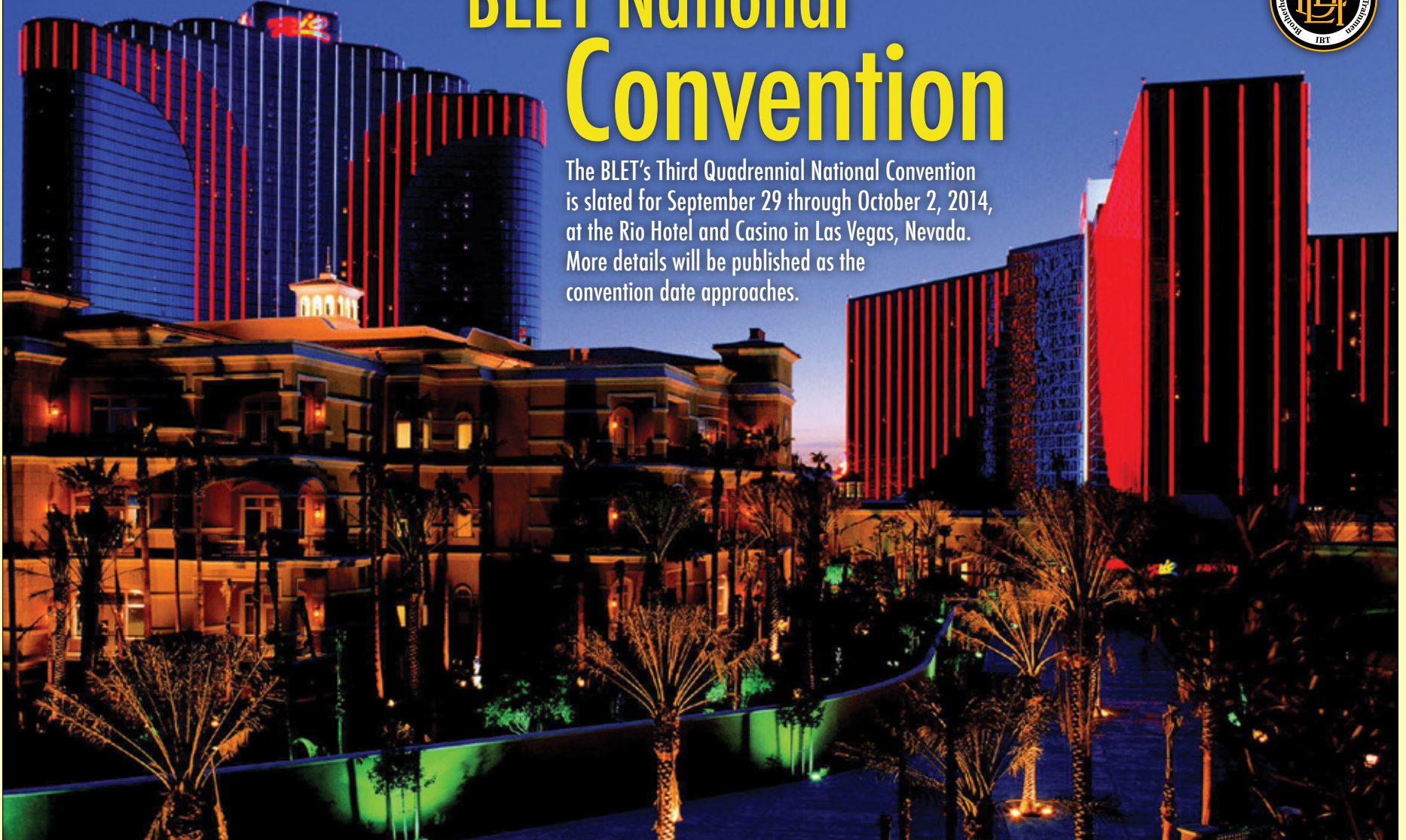


Photo: courtesy Caesars Entertainment



Photo: courtesy Caesars Entertainment



Photo: courtesy Las Vegas News Bureau



Photo: courtesy Caesars Entertainment

## 2014 FEES OBJECTOR POLICY

### 1. EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS

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

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

### 2. PUBLICATION OF POLICY

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

### 3. MAKING OBJECTION KNOWN

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

### 4. MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CHARGEABLE EXPENSES

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

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

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

C. Convention expenses and other

union internal governance and management expenses;

D. Social activities and union business meeting expenses;

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

F. Expenses of litigation related to collective bargaining agreements;

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

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

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

### 5. DETERMINATION OF CHARGEABLE SHARE

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

to Section 10, and later will verify the existence and the audits of money in any escrow account.

### 6. REPORT OF CHARGEABLE SHARE AND BASIS OF ITS CALCULATION

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

### 7. CHALLENGE PROCEDURE

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

### 8. ARBITRATION OF CHALLENGES

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

B. The arbitration shall commence by December 1 or as soon thereafter as the AAA can schedule the arbitration. The arbitrator shall have control over all procedural mat-

ters affecting the arbitration in order to fulfill the need for an informed and expeditious arbitration.

C. Each party to the arbitration shall bear its own costs. The appellants shall have the option of paying a pro rata portion of the arbitrator's fees and expenses. The balance of such fees and expenses shall be paid by the BLET.

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

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

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

G. The National Division shall

have the burden of establishing that the reduced fees set forth in the report are lawful.

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

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

### 9. PAYMENT OF REDUCED FEES

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

### 10. ESCROW OF DISPUTED FUNDS

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



WHEELING & LAKE ERIE STRIKE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

form of economic self-help or job action against the railroad, including delaying anyone from performing his or her work for the railroad. However, the judge conditioned the TRO “on WLE’s agreement not to use supervisors or other management employees in place of engineers or conductors in the operation of its trains.”

That condition remained in effect until October 22, when the TRO was superseded by a Preliminary Injunction, which lifted the ban on the Carrier’s use of supervisors or other management employees in place of engineers or conductors when no engineers or conductors are available.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said, “I hope that the condition imposed by the Judge will lead W&LE to recognize the importance of this issue to our members, who have returned to work with the assurance that while the matter is under consideration by the Court, no further provocative actions may be taken by the Carrier.”

President Pierce also blasted WLE for its actions that led to the strike. “The WLE bankrolled Ed Burkhardt’s failed



BLET members, retirees, and family members stood on picket lines at seven different W&LE locations in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

one-person operation on the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic to the tune of a \$25 million loan, so this doesn’t come as much of a surprise. It is clear that WLE’s actions are in outright defiance of its obligations, a major dispute in and of itself. BLET could not idly stand by and allow this totally unsafe abrogation of its collectively bargained agreements.”

Specifically, the Carrier had used management officials to perform the work of bargaining unit employees even though there were locomotive engineers

and conductors available. In defiance of the union’s warnings, the Carrier took these actions after serving bargaining proposals to eliminate the restrictions, an outright admission that it had no right to operate that way.

Pierce thanked all officers and members of BLET Division 292 (Beach City, Ohio), including Local Chairmen Kevin Nahrebecki and Lonnie Swigert. He also thanked former General Chairman Bob Linsey and General Counsel Mike Wolly and his team.

President Pierce concluded by calling attention to the Brotherhood’s ongoing efforts to oppose the use of single-person train operations throughout the United States.

“A bipartisan group of members of the U.S. House of Representatives has sponsored federal legislation — H.R. 3040, the Safe Freight Act — requiring at least two crew members on all freight trains in the nation,” Pierce added, “and I again call on the House leadership to move forward with this legislation.” ©

2013  
**Calendar & Events**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!  
**2014 BLET REGIONAL MEETINGS**

**June 15-19, 2014**  
**87th Annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)**  
**SAVANNAH, GA.**  
Arrangements Chairman D.C. Dickey, Local Chairman of Division 646, welcomes all BLET members to beautiful Savannah, Ga., for the 2014 SMA. At the Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa. More details to come!

**June 29-July 3, 2014**  
**74th Annual International Western Convention (IWC)**  
**MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.**  
Arrangements Chairman David K. Brown, Chairman of the Minnesota State Legislative Board and LR of Division 517, will host the 2014 IWC at the Hilton Minneapolis. More details to come!

**August 4-8, 2014**  
**76th Annual Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA)**  
**CLEVELAND, OHIO**  
Arrangements Chairman Patrick Redmond, Local Chairman of Division 607, and Co-Chair James R. Blum, Legislative Rep. of Division 526, welcome all BLET members to Cleveland for the 2014 EUMA. Guests will stay at the newly-renovated Westin Downtown Cleveland, within easy walking distance of BLET National Division headquarters. More details to come!

**September 7-11, 2014**  
**79th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM)**  
**ST. LOUIS, MO.**  
Arrangements Chairman Dave W. Grimes, Local Chairman of Division 42, will host the 2014 SWCM at the Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark Hotel. For more information, visit the SWCM website: bletswcm.org.

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# Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen News Brotherhood Of Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen A Division Of The Rail Conference, International Brotherhood Of Teamsters

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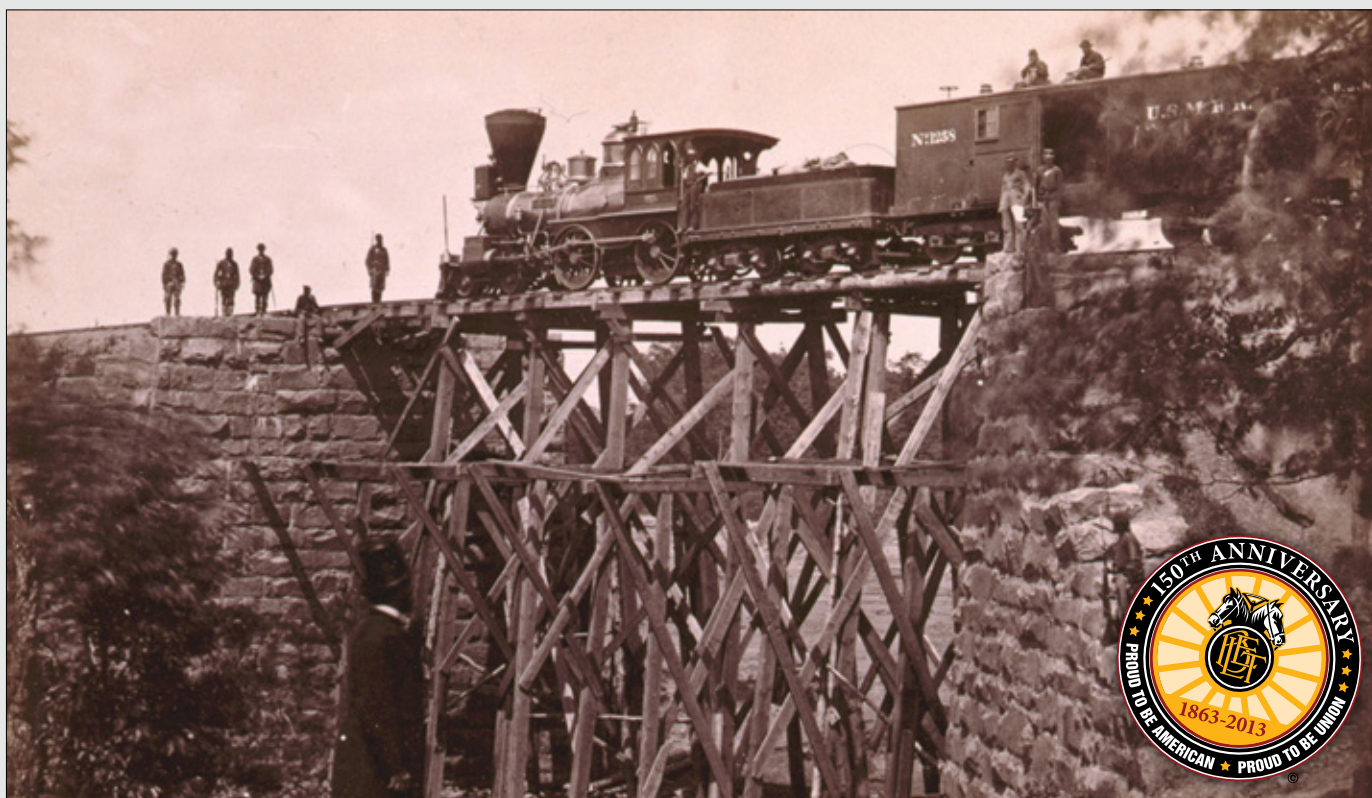
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## Photo of the Month: October 2013



**ORANGE & ALEXANDRIA RAILROAD:** Under the command of Colonel Herman Haupt, lower left, U.S. army engineers repair a bridge on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad in Virginia some time between 1861 and 1865. **Photo:** Andrew J. Russell, Library of Congress **This is the seventh in a series of photos from the BLET archives that will be published this year in recognition of the Organization's 150th anniversary.**



**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 2013 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; Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA) regional mtg., Baltimore; KCS/BLET mtgs., Washington, D.C.; FRA/BLET mtgs., Washington, D.C.; BLET Division 607 golf tournament and picnic, Cleveland; Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM) regional mtg., New Orleans, La.; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**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; EUMA regional mtg., Baltimore; New York Dock negotiations, Houston; Article IX negotiations, Las Vegas; Vacation; National duties; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**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); EUMA regional mtg., Baltimore; NRRIT mtg., Washington, D.C.; IBT Joint Council 42; Executive Committee mtg., Cleveland; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN:** Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Weekly PAC committee and legislative mtgs.; Attended IBT Political Coordinators Monthly mtg.; Retirement event for Dan Lauzon, Boston, Mass.; Event for Congressman Bill Keating, Mass.; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Emergency Order 28 RSAC mtg., Washington, D.C.; Various hearings, receptions and mtgs. with members of U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, 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; Elgin, Joliet & Eastern; Indiana Harbor Belt; and Belt Railway of Chicago; Grievance mediation, UP-WL, Chicago; SBA 1063 executive session, NS-N, Chicago; Assist GC Craddock w/ Section 6 notices, CN-IC, Chicago; Referee Benn deadlock list, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ discipline issues, WC, Chicago; SWCM regional mtg. & Local Chairman workshop, New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**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; On duty at home office; EUMA regional mtg., Baltimore; UP-Southern Region New York Dock Section 4 negotiations, Spring, Texas; UP-Western Region PLB 7329, Chicago, Ill.; UP-Northern District work stabilization negotiations, Denver, Colo.; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**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.; Mtg. w/ GC Tony Smith, re: Dropped turns, Jacksonville, Fla.; Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Public Law Board w/ GC Matt Thornton, CSX, Cleveland; MARC negotiations, conference call, CSX; Advisory Board conference call.

**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, Austin Western RR, Great Western; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Vacation; PLB 7542, assisting GC Thurman (BNSF), Ft. Myers, Fla.; PLB 7493, assisting GC Wilson (BNSF), Boston; Conference call w/ GC Wilson and BNSF LR; Division 402 mtg. w/ GC Wilson, Pasco, Wash.; Division 104 mtg. w/ GC Wilson, Spokane, Wash.; Retirement event for Bill Verdeyen, Terre Haute, Ind.; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**VICE PRESIDENT COLE W. DAVIS:** Assigned to: Kansas City Southern (MidSouth Rail, SouthRail, 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, email, correspondence communications, etc.; KCS issues, assisting GC Parker; Tex Mex issues, assisting GC Rodriguez; Huron & Eastern issues, assisting GC Barriger; CP Rail and DM&E issues, assisting GC Semenek; Louisville & Indiana RR issues, assisting GC Hatrill; Mid South, assisting GC Craddock; Democratic National Committee, Baltimore; Huron & Eastern issues, assisting GC Barriger; Springfield Terminal, MMA and D&H issues, assisting GC Moore; Tex Mex issues, assisting GC Rodriguez; IWC regional mtg., San Francisco; NS Northern Lines and W&LE issues, assisting GC Linsey; EUMA regional mtg., Baltimore.

**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, email, general office duties, etc.; MidSouth and Illinois Midland issues, assisting GC Craddock; KCS issues, assisting GC Parker; CP Rail issues, Assisting GC Semenek; Louisville & Indiana issues, assisting GC Hartill; Tex Mex issues, assisting GC Rodriguez; Mtg. w/ KCS on cameras, Washington, D.C.; Huron & Eastern issues, assisting GC Barriger; W&LE contract issues, assisting GC Linsey; NS-Eastern Lines, assisting GC Peek; Assisting GC Moore with issues on St. Lawrence & Atlantic (contract issues), Montreal, Maine & Atlantic and Springfield Terminal; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

**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; Ohio Central; RSAC/RSIA Fatigue Management Group; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; EUMA regional mtg., Baltimore; PLB 7592, NS-Northern Lines, Chicago; PLB 7542, BNSF (STLF), Ft. Myers, Fla.; Ohio Central mtg., Coshocton, Ohio; VP office transition mtgs. w/ retired VP Knight, Wheelersburg, OH; PLB 7574, NS-Southern Lines, Asheville, N.C.; SWCM regional mtg., New Orleans; Advisory Board mtg., New Orleans.

## NEW LOGO DESIGN FOR BLET SAFETY TASK FORCE

The National Division in October released a newly redesigned logo for the BLET Safety Task Force. The new design features the full BLET logo as well as the STF hotline number: (800) 306-5414.

Members are advised to call the hotline number in case of five possible situations: Hazardous materials release; passenger train derailment; fatality; evacuation; or major derailment.

The new logo will appear on specialized clothing, hats and hard hats that Safety Task Force responders wear when representing the BLET at the scene of accident investigations. It will also be used on stickers and other licensed merchandise.

In related news, the STF was dispatched to the scene of a collision involving three BNSF Railway trains near Amarillo, Texas, on September 25. According to media reports, four crew members suffered non life-threatening injuries.

The National Transportation Safety Board launched a team to the scene of the crash, and granted Party Sta-

tus to the BLET Safety Task Force to assist with the investigation. BLET Primary Investigator Russell W. Elley, Division 197 (San Antonio, Texas), and Erich M. Jeske, Division 256 (Denver, Colo.), were on site to represent the Safety Task Force.

The BLET Safety Task Force assists federal agencies in the investigation of rail accidents, helping to determine probable causes and making safety recommendations. The STF will study the accident from the viewpoint of locomotive engineers and trainmen to help determine how the accident occurred and how to prevent similar accidents from happening in the future. ©©

