

THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER NEWSLETTER • DECEMBER 2001

BLE rejects merger

UTU merger defeated by 70% majority; UTU threatens war

By a vote of 17,251 to 7,425, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers rejected a proposed merger with the United Transportation Union.

"The members have spoken and I accept their decision," said BLE International President Don M. Hahs. "They have made it clear that this is not the right time and these are not the right conditions for a merger with the UTU.

"However, the BLE is prepared to continue working to improve working conditions for all operating crafts."

The ballots were counted by the American Arbitration Association (AAA) on December 10 in Southfield, Mich.

Of those BLE members who cast ballots in the referendum, an overwhelming 69.9% voted against a merger.

In spite of these numbers, UTU President Byron Boyd publicly announced his intentions to seek a "shotgun wedding" of BLE and UTU by forcing a series of representation elections.

"We now will pursue... winner-take-all representation elections on each of the major railroads, beginning with the Kansas City Southern," Boyd said in a prepared statement on the UTU website.

The on-again, off-again merger of the nation's two largest rail operating unions began on April 9, 1998, when — at the request of AFL-CIO President John Sweeney — the BLE and UTU began good faith discussions to resolve the matters dividing the two organizations. These original merger discussions broke off on May 8, 1999,

when the BLE Advisory Board, the Brotherhood's top governing body, voted to end the unification bid due to questions regarding the UTU's financial situation.

After a two-year hiatus, however, members of the BLE Advisory Board voted to renew unification talks with the UTU on June 11, 2001.

The 24,676 votes represents 65% of active BLE membership. President Hahs credits the high-level of voter turnout to the importance of the vote and the hard work of the BLE's Department of Internal Organizing, Mobilizing and Strategic Planning.

"I commend the efforts of General Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert, whose department spearheaded the get out the vote drive, and all Special Representatives and National Mobilization Team members who spent countless hours making sure BLE members made their voices heard in this all-important vote," he said. •

Statement by BLE President Don M. Hahs

You have spoken.

On the question of merging our ranks with those of the UTU, by a vote of 17,251 to 7,425, you have clearly, overwhelmingly, stated your preference. By as lopsided a margin as one could imagine, you have said, "no."

All of us who respect democracy — a core value of our Brotherhood and at the heart of our union's traditions — understand that that issue is decided. Conclusively.

Now we must move forward from there.

We have big issues facing us that are very important to every BLE member: Fighting for a contract. Making our work as safe as is humanely possible. Seeing that the Railroad Retirement bill is signed by the President. Much, much more that affects our daily lives.

But we would be naïve to think that the merger vote is the end of the argument. It should be. Unfortunately, if you read what the UTU is putting out on its website, it seems very clear that they intend to continue this war and fire the next shot on the Kansas City Southern property.

So, even as we move forward with our other objectives, we must first prepare to fight back over whether

or not we have the right to continue our existence as the senior rail labor organization in North America. Without hesitation. Without reservation. With every resource we've got.

As I stated at the convention, I will have every international officer, special representative and all others who are willing to join in our defense on that property. We will work day and night for as long as it takes until we successfully stop the attempt to destroy your right to belong to the union that represents and fights for your craft, the BLE.

We will call upon all the friends and allies who've been standing by us during this struggle: The AFL-CIO, the other rail unions, the leaders of every union in the transportation industry, every union member in North America. As you've seen in the past, we are not alone.

This will be an all-out effort — one in which your help, your voice are vital to our ultimate success.

I call upon every member of our proud and honorable organization to put aside all differences and join together in one unified team. We have a mandate to fulfill and I intend to honor it with every ounce of honesty and integrity in my being. •

Congress OKs retirement reform

Railroad Retirement bill now waiting for President's signature

BLE and GIA members received an early Christmas present on December 12 when Congress passed the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001.

The Senate approved the bill on December 9 (by a vote of 90-9), while the House approved its version of the bill on December 12 (by a vote of 369-33).

President George W. Bush had not signed the bill as *The Newsletter* went to press, but it was expected that he would do so on December 20.

BLE President Don M. Hahs offered congratulations and thanks to all active and retired BLE and GIA members who were so diligent in their efforts to lobby Congress to pass this much-needed legisla-

tion. He also congratulated all BLE lobbyists who worked on Capitol Hill to secure passage of the bill, and to the entire Rail Labor Coalition.

The bill will allow workers with 30 years of service to retire at age 60, down from 62, with no reduction in benefits. It will also increase benefits for surviving spouses of railroad retirees by an average of \$300 per month.

Results of the Senate's December 9 vote are available on page 8 of this issue.

Members are encouraged to view the list to see how their member of Congress voted, but to refrain from making negative comments to legislators until the bill has been signed into law by President Bush.

Rail Labor lobbyists spent

long hours on Capitol Hill convincing legislators of the importance of Railroad Retirement reform. Their efforts were successful in derailing last-minute "killer" amendments that were offered by Senators opposed to the legislation, particularly Don Nickels (R-OK), Phil Gramm (R-TX) and Pete Domenici (R-NM).

President Hahs acknowledged the efforts of the GIA in passage of the bill, as GIA lobbyists worked alongside BLE lobbyists in Washington D.C. as never before.

"The surviving spouses' benefit was a key issue to GIA officers and members," President Hahs said, recognizing retired GIA member and railroad widow Julia Carter, who testified in front of a Congress-

sional hearing regarding the necessity of Railroad Retirement reform.

In addition to the Senate voting results on Page 7, an implementation schedule for

the Railroad Retirement legislation appears on Page 7 of this issue. The implementation schedule is based on the assumption that President Bush will sign the bill this year. •

BLE NEWS

IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Mike W. Hoover

A grinding crash on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad took the life of a BLE locomotive engineer near Casper, Wyo., on December 7.

Engineer Mike W. Hoover died at the scene from injuries sustained in the 6:25 p.m. accident which occurred at Arminto, Wyo., a siding about 60 miles west of Casper. Brother Hoover, 48, was a 29-year railroad employee, and a longtime member of Division 207 in Casper, having been initiated into the BLE in 1977.

The conductor on the train survived the crash, and was evacuated by helicopter to the hospital and later released.

Both Brother Hoover and the conductor were based out of Casper, and were traveling west-bound in non-signaled territory when their train approached the siding at Arminto, and unexpectedly encountered a mainline switch, lined for the siding.

Their train, moving at 46 mph traveled into

the siding, where it collided head-on with several locomotives attached to an unoccupied train which had been previously parked in the siding for several days. The rail line was subsequently reopened for traffic on Sunday afternoon. The cause of the crash is still under investigation.

"Losing Mike is very much like losing a close family friend," said Division 207 Local Chairman Eric Krieger, as he tried to express the feelings of those in the terminal where Brother Hoover worked. "Casper is a terminal with a small work force, so everyone is very close. With Mike's many years of service, he was like a patriarch of our Division."

In closing, he spoke for all by saying, "He will be sadly missed."

Reacting to the tragic accident, BLE President Don Hahs said, "We are always saddened to learn of the death of one of our members, particularly in a situation such as this, as a loss of one is a loss to all."

President Hahs then expressed condolences to

Brother Hoover's widow and family, saying, "The loss of a loved one is hard to bear, particularly during the holiday season. Our thoughts and prayers are certainly with the family in this most difficult time."

President Hahs has requested the BLE flag at the Brotherhood's headquarters (Standard Building) in downtown Cleveland will fly at half staff for three days.

A number of state and federal agencies responded to the accident, including the Federal Railroad Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board. The BLE participated in the accident investigation through the auspices of its Safety Task Force.

Brother Hoover is survived by his wife and three adult children, one of whom is employed by BNSF in the Maintenance of Way Department.

He is the 25th BLE member killed in the line of duty since 1996, and the fourth this year.

IN THE LINE OF DUTY

T.O. "Tom" Landris

A head-on collision outside of Detroit on November 15 left two members of one train crew dead and two members of the other crew injured.

BLE Division 650 (Durand, Mich.) member T.O. "Tom" Landris and conductor Gary Chase, a UTU member, were killed in the Springfield Township, Mich. crash. Their train, number 243, was traveling from Flat Rock, Mich. to Flint, Mich.

BLE Division 812 (Detroit) member A.M. Yash and conductor Jesse Enriquez are in critical condition at a Detroit area hospital. They were traveling from Durand to Detroit on train number 533.

Train number 533 was pulling into a siding to allow train number 243 to pass when the collision occurred. The cause is not yet known.

BLE International President Don M. Hahs sent his deepest condolences to the members of the families and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

"These accidents are extremely traumatic for all BLE members," said Hahs. "My condolences go out to the families affected by the tragedy and all the brothers and sisters on the Grand Trunk Western Railroad."

The fiery crash forced a five-hour evacuation of 100 homes in the rural area. Firefighters and hazardous-materials crews doused the blaze.

The BLE has sent a member of its Safety Task Force to the site in order to assist the National Transportation Safety Board with the investigation. The Safety Task Force works under the direction on the

NTSB in circumstances such as these in order to discover the cause of accidents and to prevent future accidents.

Brother Landris, 49, joined the BLE in 1974. Brother Yash has been a BLE member for 30 years and is 52 years old.

Brother Landris is the third BLE member killed in the line of duty this year, and the 24th since 1996.

Shortly after the November 15 tragedy, which took the life of Brother Landris, President Hahs instituted a new policy requiring that the BLE flag atop the ID Headquarters in downtown Cleveland be flown at half staff following the death of a BLE member in the line of duty.

NEWS BRIEFS

Amtrak's Acela to reach one million passenger mark

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Amtrak's high-speed train service between Washington and Boston is expected to pass the million-passenger mark sometime in December after a year of operation.

Acela Express — billed as America's first high-speed train, capable of speeds up to 150 mph — experienced a surge in ridership after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks discouraged many from traveling by airplane.

The service, which is still being phased in along the Washington-New York-Boston corridor, ran below Amtrak's projections for much of the

year but has exceeded them by 9 percent since Oct. 1, according to information released by the railroad.

As of Nov. 30, Acela Express trains had carried nearly 857,000 passengers. Service began Dec. 11, 2000, after more than a year of delays. At the time, one train made a daily roundtrip between Washington and Boston. •

Conrail to pay Amtrak \$3.5 million

Conrail agreed on December 10 to pay \$3.5 million to settle claims it understated the number of miles its trains traveled on Amtrak's rails for reimbursement purposes.

Conrail was required under a 1986 contract to report the miles its trains traveled on

Amtrak's Northeast Corridor and pay for the use of the tracks.

Amtrak filed civil claims alleging that Conrail under-reported those car miles by well into the millions. Conrail denied any allegations of wrongdoing or liability to Amtrak.

In return for the \$3.5 million, federal prosecutors agreed to release Conrail from any civil liability.

In addition, Amtrak agreed to drop any claims concerning the reporting of car miles through June 1, 1999, according to the agreement.

Conrail and Amtrak also agreed to arbitrate disputes over payment for use of "articulated," or "spine," cars on Amtrak's rails, which are capable of carrying multiple rail-freight containers, the settlement said. •

CSXT settles 140-year-old dispute

CSXT has settled a 140-year dispute with the North Carolina Railroad, which involved ownership of a portion of track near Raleigh, N.C.

Under the agreement, NCR, which owns a 317-mile rail corridor between Charlotte, N.C., and Morehead City, N.C., will be acknowledged by CSXT as owner of the track. In exchange, NCR granted CSXT the right to continue using the corridor. Both companies agreed to continue to accommodate Amtrak.

Last year, CSXT filed a lawsuit disputing ownership of a 200-foot portion of the corridor, which is used by both CSXT and Amtrak. •

Three teens killed walking on tracks

An Amtrak Acela Express train traveling 100 miles an hour rounded a curve December 9 and killed three teenagers who were walking on the railroad tracks. None of the train's 300 passengers were hurt.

The three victims were among five teenagers trespassing on the tracks in an industrial area in suburban Philadelphia, the police said.

The accident happened in Morrisville, about 25 miles northeast of Philadelphia, said an Amtrak spokeswoman said.

Passengers on the south-bound Acela train en route to Washington were stranded for about two hours. •

SENSE safety coordinator retires

One of the original coordinators who helped put the SENSE safety program into operation on the CSX properties has retired effective December 7.

Brother Don Miller helped draft the original SENSE safety manuals back in 1997 when the program was implemented system-wide on CSX. He retires after 45 years of service on CSX and its predecessor lines.

When the BLE declared a "Safety Strike" against CSX in the summer of 1997 following a rash of fatalities and injuries, the BLE knew something had to be done. Larry James, former Coordinator of the BLE Education & Training Department, along with Miller, Curtis Driggers and Richard Taylor, developed a safety program that emphasized peer intervention over punitive discipline procedures. They called the new safety program SENSE, which is short for "Structured Employee Network for Safety Empowerment."

The program gives frontline locomotive engineers the ability to address

safety concerns and recommend improvements through a network that ultimately reaches CSXT senior management and sometimes the Chief Executive Officer.



Before SENSE came along, Miller said labor-management relations on CSX were so bad

that management wouldn't even talk to the BLE. Now he says there's a 100 percent improvement. "Locomotive engineers are treated like ultimate professionals under SENSE, and the more professional they are the safer they'll be," he said. "Not many people can do our jobs."

Miller was instrumental in the success and implementation of SENSE, and has dedicated many long hours to make sure things get done right.

In 1997, Pete Carpenter tabbed Jim Schultz to be the railroad's top safety officer, bringing him on board from the Federal Railroad Administration. Miller credits this as one of the first steps by



the railroad toward cultural change for the better. But it was the BLE that developed SENSE.

SENSE has been highly successful over the years, reducing injuries by upwards of 50 percent in some regions of the CSX system. The SENSE program has also been instrumental in the training of BLE critical incident coordinators at most locations. Additionally, the SENSE network has handled over 4,200 unsafe conditions reports to a timely, successful conclusion since 1997.

One of the biggest challenges for SENSE came when CSX and Norfolk Southern acquired various parts of Conrail in June of 1999.

In essence, CSX added more than 1,300 locomotive engineers to its roster — engineers who needed to be trained under the SENSE safety program. In spite of these numbers, SENSE still contributed to very positive results. Currently, more than 50 percent of former Conrail engineers have been

trained under SENSE. This is due in part to the efforts of Tom Vassie, Coordinator of the SENSE program on the former Conrail lines.

In recent months, SENSE has targeted locomotive engineers with five years of experience or less. The idea is to provide training and mentoring to younger engineers in the belief that they will develop positive safety habits to use throughout their careers.

For Brother Miller, his retirement is a reason to focus attention on the SENSE program, and not himself.

He joined the railroad industry in 1956 and earned his promotion to locomotive engineer in 1961 for the Pierre Marquette. He held several elected BLE offices during his career, including local chairman and vice-general chairman of the CSX Northern Lines.

He said the single biggest challenge for SENSE lies in convincing engineers to put safety ahead of productivity, because so much rests on their shoulders.

"If locomotive engineers are safe, then everyone else on the crew will be safe," he said. •

Security panel eyes rail infrastructure protection measures

Protection of the rail industry's infrastructure in light of the September 11 terrorist attacks on America was the focus of a "Security Panel" discussion at the Association of Railway Communicator's annual workshop in Tampa, Fla., on November 13.

Representatives from freight railroads, passenger railroads, and rail labor were on hand to discuss potential target areas and what could be done to protect them.

Representing the rail labor perspective on the Security Panel was Joseph A. Cassidy Jr., International Vice-President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He was appointed to the position of Security Officer by International President Don M. Hahs in October of 2001.

The freight rail industry was represented by Steve

Hanes, Director of the Norfolk Southern Police Department. Ernest R. "Ron" Frazier, Vice President of System Operations and Police Services for Amtrak, represented passenger railroads on the Security Panel.

A former Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps who studied chemical and biological warfare, Cassidy said that employees are, indeed, in a partnership with rail management when it comes to security. He said that employees, if properly trained, could serve as the industry's first line of defense.

Relaying portions of a recent conference call between rail labor and Amtrak President George Warrington, Cassidy said that a particular concern of the rail industry is the protection of its infrastructure, especially bridges and tunnels. Cassidy noted that it



Members of the "Security Panel" discuss protection of rail industry infrastructure during the annual workshop of the Association of Railway Communicators. From left: Ron Frazier, Vice President, System Operations and Police Services, Amtrak; Joe Cassidy, International Vice-President and Security Officer, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers; and Steve Hanes, Director, Norfolk Southern Police Department.

could potentially bankrupt the rail industry to pay for security at all rail bridges and tunnels in the U.S. As a potential alternative, Cassidy suggested that watchful employees could serve as the industry's "eyes and ears" in safeguarding the infrastructure.

Cassidy said employees must be sensitized to security

and must be made aware — like "mini-detectives" — of things that could be clues in identifying potential terrorist activity, as long as it did not interfere with the safe operation of trains. He suggested such training could come from police officers or government law enforcement officials.

The task of providing secu-

rity in the rail industry is daunting. Cassidy said that in a recent meeting with Congressman Jack Quinn (R-NY), rail labor identified key railroad infrastructure in the United States that, if destroyed in a terrorist attack, could be more damaging to the U.S. economy than the loss of the World Trade Center. •

BLE wins four first-place awards for publication, website excellence

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers received four first-place awards for editorial excellence from the Association of Railway Communicators (ARC) in November at the ARC's annual awards competition in Tampa, Fla.

The ARC is the nation's oldest industrial editors' organization, and is comprised of writers, editors and public relations professionals throughout the railroad industry. U.S. and Canadian Class I and Shortline railroads, rail labor and government agencies participate in the ARC's annual workshops.

The BLE received four first-place awards for publication and website excellence. The Locomotive Engineers Journal was recognized twice with one first place award for "Best Photography" and a second first place award for "Best Feature Article."

The BLE website was honored in the category of "Best Electronic Newsletter" for its daily news section, "Today's Headlines."

The BLE's fourth first-place award was given to the Locomotive Engineer Newsletter in the category of "Best Newsletter."

The awards competition was administered by three neutral judges employed outside the railroad industry, and BLE publications were judged against the work of other unions and various Class I railroads.

The "Best Feature Article" was awarded for the focus section of the Spring 2000 issue of the Locomotive Engineers Journal titled "137 years and 5 issues." The "Best Photography" award was given for photos used in the article, "Furry friends teach kids about railway safety," published in the Spring 2000 issue of the Journal. •

RATE TABLES

TABLE X — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 5 DAY - WITHOUT A FIREMAN - \$6.00
Effective January 1, 2002

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$168.54	\$21.07	\$31.6013
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$168.79	\$21.10	\$31.6481
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$169.01	\$21.13	\$31.6894
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$169.22	\$21.15	\$31.7288
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$169.44	\$21.18	\$31.7700
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$169.66	\$21.21	\$31.8113
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$169.87	\$21.23	\$31.8506
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$170.09	\$21.26	\$31.8919
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$170.30	\$21.29	\$31.9313
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$170.52	\$21.32	\$31.9725
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$170.74	\$21.34	\$32.0138
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.215		

TABLE XI — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY - WITH A FIREMAN
Effective January 1, 2002

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 550,000	\$151.44	\$18.93	\$28.3950
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$151.65	\$18.96	\$28.4344
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$151.83	\$18.98	\$28.4681
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$152.01	\$19.00	\$28.5019
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$152.19	\$19.02	\$28.5356
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$152.37	\$19.05	\$28.5694
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$152.55	\$19.07	\$28.6031
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$152.73	\$19.09	\$28.6369
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$152.91	\$19.11	\$28.6706
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$153.09	\$19.14	\$28.7044
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$153.27	\$19.16	\$28.7381
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.18		

TABLE XII — LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY - WITHOUT A FIREMAN - \$4.00
Effective January 1, 2002

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$155.44	\$19.43	\$29.1450
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$155.65	\$19.46	\$29.1844
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$155.83	\$19.48	\$29.2181
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$156.01	\$19.50	\$29.2519
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$156.19	\$19.52	\$29.2856
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$156.37	\$19.55	\$29.3194
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$156.55	\$19.57	\$29.3531
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$156.73	\$19.59	\$29.3869
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$156.91	\$19.61	\$29.4206
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$157.09	\$19.64	\$29.4544
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$157.27	\$19.66	\$29.4881
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$ 0.18		

TABLE XIII - LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS
YARD SERVICE 6-7 DAY - WITHOUT A FIREMAN - \$6.00
Effective January 1, 2002

WEIGHT ON DRIVERS (Pounds)	Daily	Hourly	
		Straight Time	Overtime
less than 500,000	\$157.44	\$19.68	\$29.5200
500,000 and less than 550,000	\$157.65	\$19.71	\$29.5594
550,000 and less than 600,000	\$157.83	\$19.73	\$29.5931
600,000 and less than 650,000	\$158.01	\$19.75	\$29.6269
650,000 and less than 700,000	\$158.19	\$19.77	\$29.6606
700,000 and less than 750,000	\$158.37	\$19.80	\$29.6944
750,000 and less than 800,000	\$158.55	\$19.82	\$29.7281
800,000 and less than 850,000	\$158.73	\$19.84	\$29.7619
850,000 and less than 900,000	\$158.91	\$19.86	\$29.7956
900,000 and less than 950,000	\$159.09	\$19.89	\$29.8294
950,000 and less than 1,000,000	\$159.27	\$19.91	\$29.8631
For each additional 50,000 pounds over 1,000,000 or fraction thereof add:	\$0.18		

NEWS BRIEFS

Canada looks to national standard at rail crossings

Carmanah Technologies Inc. has completed Phase 1 of a project to develop a national standard for LED warning signals at railway crossings all throughout Canada.

This phase completes a review of the standards in use in other jurisdictions, compares the strengths and weaknesses of LED and incandescent technologies, and reviews the scientific and technical findings that lead to a recommended specification.

In 2000, there were 458 fatalities involving railway crossing accidents in North America, including 33 fatalities and 33 serious injuries in Canada. Railway crossing accidents account for the largest percentage of all rail-related fatalities.

In September, Carmanah hosted 12 representatives of Transport Canada, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National. The objective was to review the company's laboratory tests and to participate in a field test of five types of LED-based light assemblies which may be used as part of the new national standard.

In February, Carmanah was awarded a \$112,000 contract by Transport Canada to develop the new national standard for warning signals at road/railway grade crossings. A final recommendation for the national standard will be presented to Transport Canada in early 2002. •

U.S. freight traffic up in November

U.S. freight rail carload traffic rose 1.7 percent (22,546 carloads) in November 2001 compared to November 2000, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) reported.

On the positive side in November 2001, carloads of coal were up 5.0 percent (25,986 carloads), grain was up 10.8 percent (9,005 carloads), and crushed stone and gravel was up 5.0 percent (3,625 carloads). All told, 9 of the 19 commodity categories tracked by the AAR saw an increase in carloads in November 2001 compared with November 2000.

On the negative side, carloads of metallic ores were down 7.7 percent (4,307 carloads), primary metal products was down 7.5 percent (3,675 carloads), and coke was down 11.1 percent (1,821 carloads) all reflecting the distress of the

U.S. steel industry. Carloads of pulp and paper were down 8.2 percent (3,149 carloads) in November 2001, while carloads of primary forest products were down 13.6 percent (2,644 carloads). Carloads of chemicals were down 0.5 percent (507 carloads) in November.

Canadian rail carloads were down just 0.6 percent (1,472 carloads) in November 2001 compared with November 2000. Carloads of grain for Canadian carriers were up 14.8 percent (5,170 carloads) for the month, pulp and paper was up 5.1 percent (888 carloads), and coal was up 2.3 percent (832 carloads). Commodities that showed declines in November include farm products excluding grain (down 33.8 percent, or 4,387 carloads), lumber and wood products (down 15.1 percent, or 1,937 carloads), chemicals (down 3.0 percent, or 1,598 carloads), and motor vehicles and equipment (down 3.4 percent, or 1,083 carloads). •

Maglev hearing raises questions

Residents of Penn Township, Pa., a suburb of Pittsburgh, organized a meeting to learn more about the maglev project planned for their area,

but came away from the meeting with more questions than answers.

During the meeting, held in early December, township residents peppered maglev officials with questions about property acquisition, possible routes through the municipality, benefits the township could gain from hosting a route, noise levels, and more.

Unfortunately, maglev officials couldn't answer many of the questions with detail because an Environmental Impact Study, or EIS, isn't finished. But they added that they care about what the citizens had to say and think.

The train system would connect Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh International Airport. The Pennsylvania project is competing with Baltimore-Washington to receive federal funds to be the first maglev system in the country.

Particularly at issue for Penn residents are two of three routes proposed through Westmoreland County because both would go through the township. Those two alignments already have been opposed by the township's commissioners in comments sent to maglev.

Maglev officials said that they couldn't now say which of the three routes through

Westmoreland County would be selected. They also said that another round of public hearings is scheduled for January or February. •

DM&E wins key STB decision

The Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad won a key regulatory victory in its quest to build a \$1.4 billion rail line into Wyoming.

The final environmental-impact statement, released by the federal Surface Transportation Board on November 19, gave the project a conditional green light. The EIS added 147 separate conditions costing an extra \$140 million. However, none are expected to derail the project.

DM&E wants to extend and rebuild its existing east-west line to create a high-traffic railroad that could move up to 100 million tons of Wyoming coal a year to Midwestern utility markets.

In December 1998, the STB approved the project on its transportation merits, then ordered its environmental staff to write an environmental-impact statement.

DM&E officials said they hope to start construction by 2003 and have trains running by 2006. •

BLE Exclusive Interview

Dukakis 'baffled' at ARC action

Amtrak Reform Council votes 6-5 to liquidate passenger rail system

In an exclusive telephone interview from his office in Massachusetts, Amtrak Board Chairman Michael Dukakis told the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers that he was dismayed at the Amtrak Reform Council's recommendation for liquidation of the national passenger railroad.

The Amtrak Reform Council found on Nov. 9 that Amtrak would not meet its congressional mandate of operating without federal subsidies by the end of next year. Council members voted 6-5 to either restructure the 30-year-old railroad or liquidate it.

The former Massachusetts Governor and 1988 Presidential candidate

was "absolutely baffled" by the council's 6-5 decision.

"This is wrong decision at the wrong time," said Dukakis. "The country is at war. The airline industry is in a massive meltdown. Our passengers are up, our revenues are up. Why anyone would suggest at this point that we seriously consider liquidating or otherwise disposing of Amtrak is beyond me.

"This is the time that we should be investing in Amtrak, building Amtrak, investing in high speed corridors around the country," he continued. "Making Amtrak a national rail passenger system that we can be proud of. This is what the board intends to do."

Dukakis also discussed the continuing needs of Amtrak.

"We need to talk about investing in the system," Dukakis said. "It needs to be similar to the way that we invest in the highways and airports. It will not take a huge investment. Citizens need to persuade Congress of the need for greater investment."

Dukakis believes that the system needs to be expanded. He said that in the past year this need has been justified.

"Amtrak moved 45 percent more people this year than last," said

See Amtrak, Page 8



BLE President Don M. Hahs (right) and Amtrak President George Warrington discuss the future of Amtrak after the decision of the Amtrak Reform Council and the events of September 11.

Railroad Retirement & Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001

Tentative implementation schedule, assuming enactment in December 2001

Provision	Effective Date	Implementation Date
Widow(er)'s Benefits	February 1, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan. 2002 — Letters to all widows advising whether increase payable or not. April 2002 — Rate notices sent to widow(er)'s who will receive increase. April 2002 — Payments issued for increase due for February or March. May 1, 2002 — Regular payment increased.
60/30 Annuities	January 1, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon enactment — Employees and spouses may begin to file applications. Feb. 2002 — Payments will be made at a temporary rate. June 2002 — Final annuity rates computed and payments issued for any accrued amounts due. July 1, 2002 — Monthly payments made at final rate.
Five-Year Vesting Requirement	January 1, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon enactment — Applicants may begin to file applications. Feb. 2002 — Payment will be made at a temporary rate. November — Monthly payments made at final rate.
Repeal of Railroad Retirement Maximum	January 1, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan. 2002 — Letters will be sent to affected annuitants advising that the reduction was repealed. May 2002 — Rate notices released to affected annuitants. May 2002 — Separate payment for the increase due is issued. June 1, 2002 — Monthly payments made at increased rate.

Senate roll call vote on H.R. 10

When the Senate passed Railroad Retirement reform legislation on December 5, it did so by a 90-9 majority. Those who voted against the legislation (or who did not vote) are listed below:

NAYS — 9

Allard (R-CO)
Gramm (R-TX)
Gregg (R-NH)
Helms (R-NC)
Kyl (R-AZ)
Lott (R-MS)
Nickles (R-OK)
Smith (R-NH)
Thomas (R-WY)

NOT VOTING — 1
Lieberman (D-CT) •

Collective Bargaining Update

Carriers cite high cost of health care in negotiations

In a November 13 letter to Rail Labor, the National Railway Labor Conference cited an 87% increase in health care costs as the biggest stumbling blocks to the current round of contract negotiations.

The letter, written by NRLC Chairman Robert T. Allen, further states:

"(I)t was necessary to increase the carriers' payment rate for health and life insurance benefits by 18.5%. The new carrier payment rate is about \$836 per employee per month. Over the last three years, our payment rate has increased by almost 87%. As you know, for the past two years or longer, we have been

discussing the fact that carriers can no longer afford to pay this rapidly escalating cost."

The letter was addressed to Robert A. Scardelletti, Chairman of the Health and Welfare Coalition of Railway Labor Organizations. Brother Scardelletti is also President of the Transportation Communications Union (TCU).

Allen suggested specific concessions Rail Labor could make to offset the rapidly increasing cost of healthcare.

However, in a conference call among the Rail Labor chiefs on November 14, all unanimously agreed against the concessions.

Rail Labor agreed that it would not make sense to agree to concessions without some kind of gains for the employees. Rail Labor also argued that the carriers could not "cherry pick" and ask for agreement on certain concessions without bargaining on the entire package (health and welfare, work rules and compensation).

Earlier this year, the carriers reached contract agreement with the United Transportation Union. However, the agreement has not been ratified because of disputes surrounding a letter of understanding. Also, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees reached agreement with the carriers. BMWWE agreed to various wage concessions to prevent the carriers from contracting out maintenance of way work. •

Roberts, UMWA thank BLE delegates for donations

Delegates at the BLE International Convention in Miami Beach, Fla. contributed more than their votes and voices to the BLE — they also raised money for the families of 13 mine workers killed in an accident on September 23.

The brothers and sisters in Miami contributed \$6,355 to assist families whose loved ones died in an explosion at the Jim Walter Resources Number 5 mine in Brookwood, Ala.

These miners were honored by Cecil Roberts, the President of the United Mine Workers of America, during his speech to the delegates. Roberts sent a thank you letter to the BLE International Division

on November 13.

BLE Alabama State Legislative Board Chairman Tommy E. Hudson (Division 156) also thanked BLE delegates for the generous contributions.

BLE members load and haul coal at the mine where the fatal accident took place.

"My Division loads coal down there at those mines and I know a lot of those guys down there and a lot of their families," Brother Hudson said to the delegates at the convention in Miami Beach. "It was a terrible tragedy. We really thank you."

A copy of President Roberts' letter is available on the BLE website. •

BLE NEWS



Happy Holidays

from the

BLE
International
Division



Reform Council recommends liquidation of Amtrak

Amtrak

Continued from Page 1

Dukakis. "This shows that if you give people modern, first class, high speed rail, they will use it by the thousands."

The railroad must draw up plans for its own liquidation. Congress will review Amtrak's liquidation plan and a proposal to be drawn up by the Council for a restructured national passenger rail system, which are both due within 90 days. Congress will make a final decision about the future of Amtrak and rail service. Until then, the service will keep running.

Congress already is considering Amtrak's future and what role, if any, the railway will play in developing high-speed trains around the country. The Bush administration also is working on a plan for passenger rail.

Nevertheless, Dukakis said Amtrak has proved its mettle in recent months.

"Our folks at Amtrak have been carrying the country on their backs since the 11th of September," said Dukakis. "They have performed magnificently."

On November 19, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators pledged to block any attempt to liquidate Amtrak, calling on the White House to assure the passenger rail service's creditors that dissolution was not an option.

Twenty-one lawmakers, mainly from the Northeast where Amtrak has its most successful route, wrote to President Bush that the railroad's credit has been badly damaged since the ARC's November 9 report.

While liquidation has been played down as an option, the Bush administration has yet to throw its support behind Amtrak, saying it will unveil a high-speed rail plan in its budget proposal early next year.

The Senators reminded the White House, however, that liquidation would not happen without their support and they were not about to give it. •

DECEMBER 2001 CALENDAR & EVENTS

JUNE 16-20, 2002... 75th Southeastern Meeting Association, Virginia Beach, Va.
Chairman T.C. Emory is hosting the 2002 SMA at the Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center from June 16-20, 2002. Discount room rates of \$99 per night have been secured and the reservation deadline is May 24, 2002. Reservations can be made by calling (800) 468-2722 (in Virginia please call (800) 422-4747). A dinner cruise is being planned as part of the festivities. Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so you must register as soon as possible if you are interested. For pre-registration form, please contact Brother T.C. Emory at 4912 Euclid Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462. E-mail requests can be sent to: <ble456@mindspring.com>.

JULY 21-25, 2002... 62nd Annual International Western Convention, Kennewick, Wash.
Hosted by Chairman William Amaya in the Tri-Cities area of Washington State, the 2002 IWC is a convention you will not want to miss. Guests will stay at the Westcoast Tri-Cities Hotel at 1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd., Kennewick, WA 99336, and reservations can be made by calling (509) 783-0611. Mention the BLE convention to receive discounted room rates of \$85 per night (U.S. and Canadian currency). For more details, contact Chairman Amaya by calling (509) 628-8844. IWC 2002, the "Unlimited Convention," will coincide with the "Unlimited Hydroplane" race series. Guests can extend their stays a few days to enjoy the Columbia Cup hydroplane race, one of the fastest sports on the planet.

AUGUST 18-23, 2002... Eastern Union Meeting Association, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Arrangements Chairman Ken Kertesz and members of BLE Division 263 host the 2002 EUMA in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., at the Woodlands Inn & Resort. Nestled in the Northeastern Poconos, members will enjoy a discounted room rate of \$95 per night (plus tax) for a single or double. Room rates include a fully cooked breakfast each morning and a shuttle service to and from the Wilkes Barre-Scranton International Airport. Reservations can be made by calling (570) 824-9831. Be sure to mention the EUMA in order to receive the discounted room rate. Tentative activities include golf tournament, formal banquet, visit to Steamtown National Historic Site, and a minor league baseball game. For details, contact Brother Kertesz by phone at (570) 675-2417 or by e-mail at: <kkertesz@dallas.gotm.net>.

SEPTEMBER 23-26, 2002... 67th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Ft. Worth, TX
Chairman Mark Banton and members of BLE Division 500 host the 2002 SWCM, to be held at the Radisson Hotel, 815 Main Street Fort Worth, TX 76102. Reservations can be made by calling (817) 870-2100. The tentative agenda is as follows: Monday, September 23: convention registration and golf tournament (8 a.m.); September 24: opening ceremony and barbecue dinner; September 25: workshops and formal banquet; and September 26: closed meeting and SWCM business meeting. For more details, contact Chairman Banton at (817) 641-4606.

Advisory Board November Activity

By action of the delegates at the Fifth Quinquennial Convention, summaries of BLE Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

International President Don M. Hahs—International Office: General supervision of BLE activities; Mtg. w/ Sonny Hall, TWU President, Washington, D.C.; Mtg. w/ Ed Wyking, TTD; AFL-CIO Executive Counsel mtg.; BLE Special Rep mtg.; NCCC mtg.; Mtg. w/ Allen Rutter, FRA Administrator; NS General Chairman mtg.; CSX mtg.
First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodzwick—Mtg. w/ David Bonior (D-MI); AFL-CIO Executive Council mtg. (guest); Mtg. w/ Gerald McEntee, AFSCME President; Mtg. w/ VP & NLR R. Holmes; Publication mtg.; Mtg. w/ NS GC Wallace, Sykes & Knight; Conference call w/ GTW GC Karakian, WC GC Bouchman & VP Radek; Mtg. w/ J. Hoffa Jr., Teamsters President.
General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert—General supervision of BLE financial and record depts.; ID office; BLE Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; BLE Safety Task Force; Special rep mtg., Houston, Texas; Mobilization mtg., Cleveland.
Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—ID convention; Advisory Board mtg.; Southwestern Convention Meeting; SBA 1063; PLB 6199; I&O negotiations; GTW mtg. w/ all Local Chairmen; Assisted NS, GTW, CSX properties.
Vice-President Joseph A. Cassidy Jr.—Study & paperwork; General office duties; Mtg. w/ NYS&W GC Baldwin; Participate in NYS&W disciplinary hearing; Mtg. w/ EJ&E GC Hall; Mtg. w/ EJ&E management, re: switching limits dispute; Conference of Association of Railway Communicators, panel discussion on railroad security; Mtg. w/ Amtrak GC Mark Kenny; Hearing of SBA 928; Holiday; Office work.
Vice-President & U.S. Nat'l Legislative Representative Raymond A. Holmes—Washington D.C. office; Annual rail labor/DLC barbecue, Rockdale, TX; Hunt County, TX democratic dinner; Railroad Retirement coalition mtg.; Various congressional receptions; FRA hearing on Webtech's waiver petition; AFL-CIO admin. mtg.; TTD legislative mtg.; Mtg. w/ AFL-CIO President Sweeney & S-T Trumka; Mtg. w/ Shortline and Regional Railroad Assoc.; TTD executive cmte. mtg.; Mtg. w/ Bob Allen, Chairman, NRLC; Mtg. w/ railroad division of NTSB; Mtg. w/ Ed Hamberger, AAR President.
Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.—Assigned to following properties: Kansas City Southern; Midsouth; South Rail; Gateway Western; Delaware Hudson/ Springfield Terminal; Assigned to SBA 1062, PLB 5527, PLB 6145; Annual rail labor barbecue; Springfield Terminal contract mtgs.
Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—Office work; Chairman of Board of Managers, Wabash Hospital Assoc. mtgs., NS-Northern Lines; BNSF Safety mtgs.; BNSF General Committee mtgs., on-property negotiations; BNSF GCofA mtg. w/ BNSF VP of Labor Relations; Div. 155 mtg., NS; Mtg. w/ all NS General Chairmen, Cleveland.
Vice-President E.L. "Lee" Pruitt—Assigned to following properties: UP-Western Lines; UP-Western Region; UP-Central Region; UP-Southern Region, Tacoma Belt.
Vice-President Richard K. Radek—International Office; BLE Decertification Helpline services; Director of Arbitration Dept; National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; METRA; Belt Rwy. of Chicago; Paduca & Louisville; Chicago Central & Pacific; METRA, BRC general assistance; WC/CN merger implementing agreement, negotiations; Various NRAB arbitration, W. Palm Beach, Fla., and Chicago; CN/WC contract negotiations; Guest lecturer to combined Economics-AP sections, "labor movement and contemporary union activities," Strongsville, OH; METRA, IHB general assistance, New Lenox, IL; CN/WC contract negotiations, Rosemont, IL; FRA Part 240.409 dockets: EQAL 98-84, 00-51, 00-67.
Vice-President Dale McPherson—UP Eastern Lines; CP/U.S. (Soo); I&MRL; M&NA; LP&N; Longview Sw. Co.; UP special work/rest project; Indiana RR; Pacific Harbor Line; Utah RR Co.; General office duties; BNSF Safety Operations Task Force mtgs.; Mtg. w/ GC Priestler, prep. for Bd. Screening, CP Rail.
Vice-President & Canadian Director Gilles Hallé—Ottawa Office; UTU-BLE merger mtg.; Mtgs. w/ CN Rail; Mtgs. w/ VIA Rail; Mtg. w/ UTU; CN Pension Board mtg.; C.A.T.A.Q. community fund mtg.; CIRB hearings, re: CN contract; CN Pension Board mtg.—LTD plan; Town Hall mtg.; EFAP Senior Advisory Board mtg.; CP RCTC mtg.; Training Centre mtgs.; RCTC GCofA mtgs.
Vice-President & National Legislative Representative-Canada T. George Hucker—Ottawa Office; National Legislative Board-Canada; Computer training; Canadian Pension and Benefits conference; Algoma Central negotiations; Maple Leaf dinner w/ Minister of Labour; LTD mtg.; RCTC GCofA mtgs.



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