



Locomotive

ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS

JANUARY
2020
VOLUME 34, ISSUE 1
DAILY NEWS UPDATES
WWW.BLE-T.ORG

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

2020 BLET SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTORY PG 4



BLUEGRASS SNOW

An early November snowfall has hit northern Kentucky as CSX 3251 awaits signal to proceed south.

Photo: by Brother Brandon L. Dean, a CSX locomotive engineer and member of BLET Division 463 in Corbin, Ky.

BLET National Division launches National Negotiations website

WWW.BLE-T.ORG/NEGOTIATIONS2019

The BLET National Division has launched a new webpage — www.ble-t.org/negotiations2019 — to provide important information to affected members regarding the current round of National Negotiations.

The webpage provides members with access to PDF copies of Section 6 notices served by the BLET, as well as those served by the railroad companies represented by the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC). The webpage will also be updated periodically with news, when available.

The current round of bargaining began on November 1, 2019, when the BLET announced that it would participate in coordinated bargaining with nine other unions.

Jointly, the CBC unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by the various organizations' national agreements, and comprise over 80% of the workforce who will be impacted by this round of negotiations. @@

THE 10 UNIONS IN THE COORDINATED BARGAINING COALITION (CBC) ARE:

American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA)	International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB)
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen/Teamsters Rail Conference (BLET)	National Conference of Firemen & Oilers/SEIU (NCFO)
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS)	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
International Association of Machinists (IAM)	Transport Workers Union of America (TWU)
International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division (SMART-TD)	Transportation Communications Union / IAM (TCU), including TCU's Carmen Division

2020 BLET REGIONAL MEETINGS



Photo: Visit Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

JUNE 22-26, 2020 • HILTON MILWAUKEE CITY CENTER



Photo: Jeff Swinger/Cincinnati USA

CINCINNATI, OHIO

AUGUST 17-21, 2020 • HYATT REGENCY CINCINNATI

For more information visit us online at:

BLETREGIONALS.ORG



BLET President's Message

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GC Brown Reelected

BNSF (former C&S, CRIP, FWD) GCA concludes quadrennial meeting **pg. 6**

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BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE

A LOOK BACK AT 2019, GEARING UP FOR 2020

As we begin 2020, the month of January gives us a chance to look back at the year gone by and to set our sights on the year ahead.

In January 2019, members of our current BLET Advisory Board pledged their oath of office and were sworn in. These fine Brothers are all a part of a strong and united Advisory Board, and I am confident that they will represent our membership to the best of their ability.

I am also proud to reflect on a major milestone achieved by our Education and Training Department in 2019. As usual, we hosted numerous training classes for Local Chairmen, Secretary-Treasurers and Legislative Representatives — both at our Training Center at National Headquarters in Cleveland and also on the road in Washington, D.C., and other locations. What made 2019 so special was the launch of our highly-anticipated online officer video training program, which made its debut on February 6, 2019. This was an important step in providing better educational opportunities for our members, especially those willing to become officers. And, while the online classes will not replace the actual classroom training courses that we offer, they will serve as an enhancement by giving our newly elected officers in the field the opportunity to get started on the right foot. In 2019, we were able to continue and expand upon our long-standing tradition of providing the best education and training opportunities anywhere in organized labor, with the goal of having the best trained and educated union membership in the United States.

In 2019, BLET also teamed up again with our Brothers and Sisters in the SMART Transportation Division to lobby for crew size bills at the federal and state levels. These bills would require that two certified crew members operate freight trains in the U.S. In the U.S. House of Representatives, the Safe Freight Act (H.R. 1748) was introduced in late March, while in the U.S. Senate, a companion bill was introduced in June. The BLET has led the fight for railroad safety since 1863, and two-person crews make for safer, more efficient train operations. We



President Pierce addresses the membership during one of the BLET's 2018 regional meetings.

will continue to publicly push for legislation requiring two-person crews in 2020, because we need the general public to know that two-person crews play a key role in safeguarding our nation's communities.

At the state level, we enjoyed success with two-person crew bills passing in Nevada, Colorado and Illinois. I'm proud to offer my thanks to Nevada State Legislative Board Chairman (SLBC) Matt Parker, Colorado SLBC Paul Pearson, and Illinois SLBC Paul Piekarski. We came close in a number of other states, and the work will continue in 2020. We will continue to encourage other state governments to follow the examples set by these three states.

Unfortunately, the news was not all good in 2019. In May, the Federal Railroad Administration reduced the prospects for a safer railroad industry by withdrawing a 2016 notice of proposed rulemaking that would have established a minimum train crew size for most rail freight operations in the United States. This was not surprising, as we all know the Administrator of the FRA is the former CEO of Conrail. But it was shocking that FRA would denigrate the reliability of a vast factual record supporting two-person crews and would give short shrift to the lessons of the 2013 Lac-Mégantic tragedy and the oil train derailment in Casselton, North Dakota (and subsequent explosion and fire) in the crew size debate. As part of its withdrawal of the proposed rule, FRA also declared its intention to neg-

atively preempt all state laws governing crew size. This combined effort by FRA was obviously a key part of the Carriers' effort to prevent any form of regulation or legislation that mandates a minimum crew size.

You can rest assured that BLET did not allow this act by FRA to go unchallenged. In fact, in July, BLET and SMART-TD jointly filed a petition for review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, challenging FRA's authority to preempt State laws when there is no Federal law. The States of California, Washington, and Nevada filed their own petitions, joining in the challenge to the FRA action. Rest assured that BLET and SMART-TD will continue to work together to fight all of the actions by the current administration to undermine the safety of two-person crews.

In fact, on the heels of the FRA announcement, the Indiana Rail Road, the Association of American Railroads, and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (the Carriers' own lobbying groups) filed suit in Illinois attempting to overturn that State's crew size law, relying on FRA's attempt at negative preemption. BLET and SMART-TD once again joined forces to defend the Illinois law, and as this message goes to print, the Illinois State AFL-CIO has joined us in this fight.

I share this information to make it clear to BLET's membership that our proud Union stands with our Brothers and Sisters in

SMART's Transportation Division in the fight to preserve two-person crews. Be it on the regulatory front, the legislative front, in court or at the bargaining table, BLET is working with SMART-TD to protect the interests of all operating employees.

This does not mean that there will not be those who will try to divide our two Unions. In fact, in recent weeks, certain Carriers have misrepresented conversations with one of our two Unions in an effort to provoke a dispute between us. All things considered, acts like this by Rail Carriers should not surprise us; they have used divide-and-conquer tactics between us for decades. I must honestly say that now is not the time for the members and officers of either Union to take the so-called bait being thrown out by the Carriers. Their actions, whether it be through FRA, or through their attempts in court to undo Crew Consist moratoriums, should make it clear that they will stop at nothing in their quest to reduce crew size.

The bottom line is this: in order to preserve two-person crews, each Union must protect and preserve its member of those crews. With only a few exceptions, BLET cannot bargain nationally for Conductors. The same is true in reverse; with only a few exceptions, SMART-TD cannot bargain nationally for Engineers. For these reasons, and regardless of the fearmongering going on, BLET cannot "sell" Conductor positions to benefit Engineers in national negotiations, and the same is true in reverse for SMART-TD. Again, each Union must protect its half of our two-person crews for all operating employees to prevail.

The "crack in the armor" of this process that Carriers rely on is the fact that neither Union has agreement language in place that allows its members to refuse to go if a crew member represented by another Union is somehow eliminated. Engineers on BNSF found that out many years ago when UTU lost its single ground position on Helper service; they were required to work alone without a ground crew. UTU Switchmen found that out when Engineers were removed from yard service as part of RCO implementation; they were required to work

without an engine crew. Bringing it full circle to today's dispute, neither of these facts means that any operating crew member wants to work alone in freight service.

Our challenge now is to ensure that all operating employees understand exactly what the ground rules are as we move forward. Once they do, I am certain that they will agree with me that our two Unions are far better off working together than we are being divided.

To that end, the National Division took formal steps to initiate the next round of national contract negotiations late in 2019. The BLET served Section 6 notices in November 2019 and will begin negotiations in early 2020. On November 1, I joined nine other Rail Chiefs in announcing that our unions would be bargaining together as the Coordinated Bargaining Coalition (CBC). Jointly, our 10 unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by our various national agreements, and we comprise over 80 percent of the workforce who will be impacted by this round of negotiations.

Our Coalition is founded on two key values that we all share. One is that we understand the importance of each Union's autonomy to pursue membership-specific goals within a framework of broad solidarity to defend and improve the wages, benefits and working conditions of our members. The other is that we will spare no effort to defeat the attack by the railroads on the very foundation of our members' economic security.

Looking ahead, our Brotherhood will have a full plate in 2020 with much of our collective effort focused on national contract negotiations. Our economic issues and safety issues are common issues to all BLET members — regardless of political affiliation — and our fight to protect those interests form the foundation of our Brotherhood. As Union members, we have much more in common than we often realize, and our goal moving forward is to further unite our Brotherhood to make for an even stronger Union. Please join me as we move ahead together in the New Year.

DENNIS R. PIERCE
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JAMES P. HOFFA

BIG BUSINESS MUST INVEST AT HOME

It's been 20 years since the "Battle in Seattle" when working people and our allies stood up to global corporations and governments to shut down the World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings on November 30, 1999. It was a turning point in the debate over unfair trade deals and the impact on workers in the U.S and across the globe.

On that incredible day, I joined more than 40,000 others in Seattle to protest the failed policies of the WTO and we made history doing so.

Despite the loss of more than one million U.S. manufacturing jobs that began five years earlier with the enactment of NAFTA, the voices of working people were being ignored. Global trade offi-



cials wanted to push forward with the approval of permanent normalization of trade relations with China. Workers were rightfully concerned that even more of their jobs would be shipped overseas.

The Teamsters, joined by others in the labor and environmental movements, have registered victories that have helped hardworking Americans. The first victory came

just two years later when forces joined together to eventually halt the WTO's Doha round of negotiations. More recently, the Teamsters and other activists joined with bipartisan collection of lawmakers to stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The Teamsters realize what is at stake with trade. That's why the union has been an active participant in helping to shape policy as part of the process while at the same time pushing back against language that would hurt hardworking Americans.

History shows these deals are not fair to workers. They let big corporations ship jobs overseas and dump wages and benefits overboard along the way. They lead to lost jobs, shuttered plants and hollowed-out communities.

And in return the vast majority of Americans only gets unsafe goods and foods that make their families sick.

The Teamsters have sounded the clarion call against these broken trade agreements and helped raise public attention to the issue. It's time the productivity of American workers showed up in their paychecks.

Getting mad, however, isn't going to solve the problem or help this nation. Businesses need to invest at home, not abroad, and elected officials need to remember who they serve.

Fraternally,

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL
PRESIDENT

“The Teamsters have sounded the clarion call against these broken trade agreements and helped raise public attention to the issue. It's time the productivity of American workers showed up in their paychecks.”

Nevada AFL-CIO adopts resolution supporting two-person train crews

The Nevada State AFL-CIO adopted a safety resolution in support of Federal legislation mandating two-person train crews at its 63rd Constitution Convention in Las Vegas on August 29, 2019.

The resolution was submitted by Brother Matt Parker, Chairman of the BLET's Nevada State Legislative Board. The resolution asserts that the best way to keep railroads safe is to implement new technology while at the same time assuring that trains continue to be adequately staffed and operated by a crew of at least two professionals.

The safety resolution also is critical of actions by the Federal Railroad Administration. Under the leadership of a

corporate-friendly appointee (former Conrail CEO Ron Batory), the FRA rescinded a proposed two-person crew regulation and took action to preempt states from passing their own train crew safety laws.

The resolution reads in part: "FRA's arbitrary and capricious action in this matter is to the detriment of the safety of the public, which the agency is responsible for protecting, therefore making the need to pass Federal legislation requiring freight train crews of at least two persons paramount."

Challenges to the FRA's actions are pending.

Brother Parker said many AFL-CIO affiliates in Nevada "are aghast at the possibility of freight trains operated by less

than two-person crews."

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said: "I thank the Nevada AFL-CIO for adopting this resolution, and I compliment Brother Matt Parker for his diligence on this issue."

A copy of the resolution and a Fact Sheet can be downloaded at www.blet.org/pr/pdf/Resolution_Final.pdf, and the full text of the resolution is printed below.

Before the 63rd Constitutional Convention of the Nevada AFL-CIO,
A RESOLUTION;

WHEREAS the safety of the public in regard to the risks associated with the transportation of freight by rail is best served by BOTH implementing new safety technology AND assuring that freight

trains continue to be operated by a crew of at least two professionals; and

WHEREAS to this end, the Nevada State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a member of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, fought for and successfully achieved legislation in the State of Nevada during the 80th Nevada Legislature requiring freight train crews of at least two persons; and

WHEREAS the success in achieving this legislation involved the outstanding support of the Nevada AFL-CIO and its affiliates; and

WHEREAS subsequent to such laws passing in Colorado, Nevada, and Illinois this year, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), under the leadership of a corporate-friendly appointee of the Trump Administration, took action serving no other purpose than to create preemption of the state laws passed addressing the issue of train crew size without otherwise addressing the issue; and

WHEREAS FRA's arbitrary and capricious action in this matter is to the detriment of the safety of the public, which the agency is responsible for protecting, therefore making the need to pass Federal legislation requiring freight train crews of at least two persons paramount;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Nevada AFL-CIO and its affiliates hereby commit to lending their support to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen as it fights to reverse the adverse action of the FRA and pass Federal legislation requiring freight train crews of at least two persons. ©©

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT ON BLET EDUCATION & TRAINING FUND

When delegates attending the BLET's Second National Convention in Reno, Nevada, established a dedicated fund for Education and Training in October of 2010, they stipulated that an accounting of funds be published in the first issue of the BLET's newsletter each year.

Specifically, members pay \$1 per month to fund and maintain a BLET Education and Training Department. Section 7 (g) — National Division Rules of the BLET Bylaws

(Pg. 27) reads as follows: "All members in active service, including those holding official positions with the carrier and those employed exclusively by the BLET, shall pay \$1.00 per month dues to establish and maintain an education and training fund, subject to the provisions of Section 29 — National Division Rules. Funds received from such dues shall be used for education and training classes and/or workshops for officers and members of the BLET." ©©

EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND BALANCE REPORT FOR 2019

FUND BALANCE AT JANUARY 1, 2019		\$340,369
REVENUES		
EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND DUES	\$370,877	
REIMBURSED EXPENDITURES	\$104,256	
TOTAL REVENUES		\$475,133
EXPENDITURES		
WAGES, TAXES, AND BENEFITS	\$336,379	
BUSINESS TRAVEL AND EXPENSES	\$49,795	
INFORMATION SERVICES	\$12,712	
GENERAL OFFICE EXPENSES	\$18,699	
EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE PURCHASES	\$0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$417,584
NET REVENUES EXCEEDING EXPENDITURES		\$57,549
FUND BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31, 2019		\$397,918

2020 BLET SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTORY

Each year, the BLET National Division compiles a list of scholarship opportunities available to the children of BLET members. Numerous financial aid opportunities are published here in the 2020 BLET Scholarship Directory.

The scholarship opportunities vary widely. The following comprehensive list provides members and their families with contact information for each scholarship program. The BLET National Division does not maintain its own scholarship program, so interested parties are advised to contact the individual scholarship providers listed below for additional information.

Those aware of additional scholarship opportunities not included in this Directory are urged to contact the BLET Public Relations Department at: Bentley@ble-t.org.



The 2020 BLET Scholarship Directory is as follows:

James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund

The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund (JRHSF) is now accepting applications, and the deadline is March 2, 2020.

The application process is completely online again this year. All applications must be completed through the online portal found on the Fund's website: <http://www.jrhmsf.org>. This JRHSF website outlines eligibility requirements and application procedures, and applicants must complete a brief registration process in order to access the registration area. Please use the "Key" JRHSF to begin the process.

There are two types of scholarship applications available: Academic Scholarships, which range up to \$10,000, and Training/Vocational Scholarships, which range up to \$2,000. Full details and eligibility requirements for each type of scholarship are available on the JRHSF website at the link above.

James R. Hoffa became a Teamster member in 1934 and served as General President for 14 years, and, in recognition of his tireless service to the union and its members, was honored as General President Emeritus for life. At the November 1999 General Executive Board meeting, then-General Secretary-Treasurer C. Thomas Keegel presented a resolution to establish the new scholarship fund. Assisting the sons, daughters and financial dependents of Teamster members with their educational goals is a tradition that we are proud to continue.

The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund is an independent organization established and registered as a tax-exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Fund is established solely to provide scholarships to the child or dependent

of a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and contributions to the Fund are deductible as charitable contributions to the extent permitted by law.

FOR GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE JAMES R. HOFFA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND, PLEASE CALL (855) 670-ISTS (4787) OR EMAIL: CONTACTUS@APPLYISTS.COM.

BLET Auxiliary and LECMPA Scholarship Programs

Established in 1991, the BLET Auxiliary Scholarship Program provides \$1,000 scholarships to qualifying students who wish to pursue higher education. The Auxiliary also offers two \$2,500 scholarships annually in collaboration with Locomotive Engineers and Conductors Mutual Protective Association (LECMA). The two \$2,500 scholarships are fully funded by LECMPA.

To apply for an Auxiliary Scholarship award, the applicant must be a son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter of a BLET Auxiliary member and a Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineer and Trainmen member (living or deceased), with each being a member at least one year. An exception has been made for those children of single-parent BLET members with at least one year of membership in the BLET and at least one year of membership as a BLET Auxiliary Associate Member. To qualify for the LECMPA-funded scholarships, the BLET member in the family must also be a member of LECMPA for no less than one year. Children of an unmarried BLET member who has been an Associate Member of the BLET Auxiliary for at least one year are also eligible.

In addition, applicants must be accepted for admission by an accredited university, college, trade school, or institute of higher learning. Recipients

are chosen on the basis of academic record, leadership, character, and personal achievement.

Important: For high school seniors entering an institute of higher learning for the first time, a copy of ACT or SAT scores and a current copy of cumulative grade point average (GPA) must accompany the application. For graduate students or students returning to an institute of higher learning, a copy of last term's (or most current) GPA must accompany the application. Applications submitted without these documents will not be considered.

The LECMPA-funded scholarships will be awarded to the two applicants who score the highest amongst those who qualify (by having one parent who is an Auxiliary member for at least one year, and one parent who is a BLET member and LECMPA member for at least one year). If an applicant meets the eligibility requirements for the LECMPA-funded scholarships but is not selected for one of the two \$2,500 scholarships, he/she will still be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship.

Completed applications must be received by BLET Auxiliary Secretary Lawana Poss no later than April 1, 2020. Applications received after that date will not be considered.

FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT LAWANA POSS (LWPOSS@GMAIL.COM). APPLICATIONS, INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, AND MAILING ADDRESS FOR SUBMISSION MAY BE FOUND ON THE AUXILIARY WEBSITE AT [HTTP://WWW.BLETAUXILIARY.NET](http://WWW.BLETAUXILIARY.NET).

BLET UP-Southern Region GCA

The BLET's Union Pacific-Southern Region General Committee of Adjustment (UP-SR GCA) offers annual scholarships ranging from \$750 to \$2,000.

Applicants must be the son, daughter, financial dependent or ward of a UP-SR GCA member in good standing per the BLET Bylaws starting with the 2020-2021 school year. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2020.

COMPLETE RULES, FULL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, AND AN APPLICATION CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.BLETSR.ORG OR BY CONTACTING UP-SR GCA SECRETARY-TREASURER SCOTT PIEKARSKI AT UPSRGCAST@HOTMAIL.COM.

California State Legislative Board

The BLET's California State Legislative Board (CSLB) will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating high school senior attending a college/ trade/ vocational school in 2020. The applicant's parent or guardian must be a member in good standing in a BLET division represented by CSLB.

Rules, applications, and deadline information are available on the Board's website, <http://www.cslb.ws/2019-scholarship>. The deadline is May 15, 2020.

Please direct any questions to CSLB Chairman Ryan K. Snow (rksnow1@att.net).

ALL APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO THE CSLB HOME OFFICE ADDRESS: BLET CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATIVE BOARD, 1207 FRONT ST., SUITE 20, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814. APPLICATIONS WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION CAN ALSO BE EMAILED TO [RKSNOW1@ATT.NET](mailto:rksnow1@att.net) WITH THE SUBJECT LINE "SCHOLARSHIP." THE ELECTRONIC VERSION MUST BE CONFIRMED BY RETURN EMAIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH 2019 CSLB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES.

Illinois State Legislative Board

The BLET's Illinois State Legislative Board is currently accepting applications for its Don Little Memorial Scholarship Fund, which was established in 2013.

One \$1,000 and two \$500 scholarships will be awarded to applicants whose parent or guardian is a BLET member in good standing with a BLET Local Division represented by the Illinois State Legislative Board. Applicants must be 26 years of age or younger.

Brother Don Little was a locomotive engineer with Metra commuter rail in Chicago and a proud member of BLET Division 294 (Bensenville, Ill.) for 35 years. Brother Little served for more than 10 years on the Executive Committee of the Illinois State Legislative Board and always had a dream of establishing a scholarship program for the family members of fellow Brothers and Sisters who belonged to divisions chartered in Illinois. Unfortunately, Brother Little passed away before his dream was realized.

In 2013, Paul Piekarski (Chairman of the Illinois State Legislative Board), Timothy Dunn (former Secretary-Treasurer of the Board), and several others helped make Brother Little's dream a reality.

Scholarship applications and all accompanying documents must be received by May 1, 2020. Specific eligibility requirements, detailed instructions and application forms are available for download from the BLET National Division website (PDF), www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/Illinois_SLB_Scholarship_2020.pdf

FOR QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THE APPLICATION, CONTACT JOYCE A. PIEKARSKI, ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY, AT (630) 963-6099 OR JOYCE.PIEKARSKI@GMAIL.COM.

Wyoming State Legislative Board

The BLET's Wyoming State Legislative Board (WYSLB) is again offering a scholarship program for the upcoming school year. First offered for the 2014 academic year, the scholarship deadline for 2020 is June 1, 2020.

Wyoming State Legislative Board Chairman Cory Runion said the Board will award either two \$1,000 scholarships, or, in the event of a single applicant, one \$1,000 scholarship each year to an immediate family member of a BLET member in good standing and holding membership in a Division chartered within the state of Wyoming. The scholarships will be awarded based on the application, along with the requested documentation, by the WYSLB scholarship committee.

Scholarship applications and all accompanying documents must be received by June 1 of each year. Specific eligibility requirements, detailed instructions and application forms (PDF) are available for download from the BLET National Division website, or can be requested from your Division Legislative Representative. Currently, the BLET has nine Divisions chartered in Wyoming — Division 31 (Bill); Division 207 (Casper); Divisions 44, 103 and 115 (Cheyenne); Division 94 (Gillette); Division 869 (Greybull); Division 142 (Rawlins); and Division 624 (Sheridan).

For questions of assistance in completing the application please contact your Division Legislative Representative.

INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORM AVAILABLE HERE (PDF), WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/WYO_SLB_SCHOLARSHIP_APP.PDF.

BLET Division 269

BLET Division 269 (Jamaica, Long Island, N.Y.) offers one \$500 scholarship to the children of BLET members who are already enrolled in college. Participation is limited to members of Division 269 only.

Winners are picked at random at the Division's Christmas party. For details, watch your Division 269's mobile app or contact Division Vice President Michael Garziano (516) 641-4041.

BLET Division 622

BLET Division 622 (Alliance, Neb.) offers two \$500 scholarships to the children or dependents of Division 622 members. Scholarship winners will be chosen at random during a Division meeting in August. Applications must be received by July 31, 2020.

FOR MORE SPECIFICS, PLEASE VISIT THE DIVISION 622 WEBSITE (WWW.BLET622.COM) AND SELECT SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION LINK. YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT DIVISION SECRETARY-TREASURER NEIL BURRI AT NBURRI@BLET622.COM.

BR&CF Scholarship Program

The Brotherhood's Relief and Compensation Fund (BR&CF) is pleased to provide opportunities for the sons and daughters of BR&CF members to participate in the Luther G. Smith Scholarship Program.

Children, including adopted and

step-children, of BR&CF members who are in "Good and Regular Standing," are eligible. Applicants must be 27 years of age or younger. Applicants may be current high school students who have applied for admission as full-time students in accredited post-secondary schools or may be attending or enrolled as full-time students in accredited post-secondary schools.

International President Jesse Taylor advises that 20 scholarships of \$1,000 each are awarded every year.

The BR&CF's 2019 scholarship program commenced on October 1, 2019, with applications due on March 2, 2020.

THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION IS AVAILABLE BY VISITING BR&CF'S WEBSITE AT WWW.BRCF.ORG.

Union Plus Scholarships

Union Plus awarded \$170,000 in scholarships to 108 students in the 2019 Union Plus Scholarship Program. Individual awards ranged from \$500 to \$4,000. The deadline is January 31 each year.

Rising education costs are making it difficult for many union families to afford the cost of tuition. That's one rea-

son Union Plus, which provides important consumer benefits to union members and retirees, offers a unique scholarship program. It has distributed more than \$4.5 million in scholarships to over 3,000 union members and their children since 1991. Recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor. A GPA of 3.0 or higher is recommended.

The students selected for university, college, trade or technical school scholarships represent a wide sampling of backgrounds, union affiliations, goals and accomplishments. The selection process is very competitive since Union Plus receives over 5,000 applications each year. The Union Plus Scholarship Program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation, supported in part by contributions from the provider of the Union Plus Credit Card. You do not need to be a Union Plus Credit Card holder to apply for this scholarship.

VISIT THE UNION PLUS WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE: [@](http://WWW.UNIONPLUS.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS)

Learners Today. Leaders Tomorrow.

File Your Application
TODAY
for an Academic or Vocational Scholarship for Teamster sons and daughters!

Deadline:
March 2, 2020
www.jrhmsf.org

For the sons, daughters and financial dependents of Teamster members. Academic scholarship awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for high school seniors planning to attend a four-year college or university and Training/Vocational program awards of up to \$2,000 for use at community colleges and trade schools.



The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund

2020 Academic or Vocational Training Program Scholarships

Brown reelected General Chairman of BNSF (former C&S, CRI&P, FW&D) GCA

Bobby J. Brown was reelected by acclamation to his third term as General Chairman of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (former C&S, CRI&P, FW&D) General Committee of Adjustment at its quadrennial meeting in Amarillo, Texas, October 14-16, 2019.

A member of BLET Division 574 (Amarillo, Texas), Brother Brown has held continuous membership in the Brotherhood for over 40 years, having first joined the Organization on December 1, 1979. He hired out as a brakeman on the Santa Fe in 1970, moved to the Rock Island in 1972, then to the Fort Worth & Denver (FW&D) in 1977. He earned promotion to locomotive engineer in 1978, and in 1982 was elected to the office of Vice Local Chairman of his Division. He served in that position until he was elected Local Chairman in 1989, and served as Vice General Chairman and Alternate General Chairman until being elected General Chairman in 2011. He was then reelected by acclamation to the office of General Chairman in 2015.

Also elected at the 2019 quadrennial meeting were: 1st Vice Chairman Troy R. Martin, Division 430 (Trinidad, Colo.); 2nd Vice Chairman Billy H. Bonner III, Division 703 (Teague, Texas);



Officers, members and guests attending the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (former C&S, CRI&P, FW&D) General Committee of Adjustment quadrennial meeting in Amarillo, Texas, October 14-16, 2019.

3rd Vice Chairman Larry M. Yaws, Division 574 (Amarillo, Texas); Secretary-Treasurer Tim R. Williamson, Division 430 (Trinidad, Colo.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Trent B. Long, Division 703 (Teague, Texas). Elected to

serve as Trustees were: Joe R. Berlin II, Division 189 (Fort Worth, Texas); Aaron M. Wilkerson, Division 186 (Denver, Colo.); and Darrin K. Wheeler, Division 736 (Wichita Falls, Texas).

Representing the BLET National Di-

vision at the meeting were National President Dennis R. Pierce and National Vice President Michael D. Priester, who is the Vice President assigned to that property.

"I offer my congratulations to Bobby Brown and all officers of the General Committee of Adjustment," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "I thank them for their service to our Brotherhood, and I also thank the delegates to the general committee for their active participation in our Brotherhood."

Special guests included: Robby Cunningham, BNSF/ATSF General Chairman; Jeremy McFather, BNSF/ATSF 1st Vice Chairman; Chris Mosser, BNSF/ATSF Secretary-Treasurer; Jeff Thurman, BNSF/SLSF General Chairman; Randy Dumey, BNSF/SLSF 1st Vice Chairman; Kyle King, BNSF/SLSF 3rd Vice Chairman; Kent Psota, BNSF/MRL General Chairman; Jess Nelson, BNSF/MRL 2nd Vice Chairman; Vern Gordon, BNSF/MRL 3rd Vice Chairman; and Gary Pedigo, Texas State Legislative Board Chairman.

The BNSF (former C&S, CRI&P, FW&D) GCA represents approximately 450 locomotive engineers and trainmen belonging to six different BLET Local Divisions.®

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RRB Q&A: Working after retirement

Retirees, and those planning retirement, should be aware of the railroad retirement laws and rules governing benefit payments to annuitants who work after retirement.

The following questions and answers describe these railroad retirement work restrictions and earnings limitations on post-retirement employment, and how these rules can affect retirees engaging in self-employment.

Although the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) participates in information exchanges with other Federal agencies to identify unreported work and earnings to protect the integrity of its programs, annuitants are obligated to report post-retirement work and earnings. It is important to note that if annuitants fail to report post-retirement work and earnings, the Board may assess overpayments and fines. In some circumstances, law enforcement may consider the annuitant to have committed fraud subject to criminal and civil penalties.

1 What are the basic railroad retirement work restrictions and earnings limitations that apply to post-retirement work?

Neither a regular railroad retirement annuity (whether based on age and service or on disability) nor a supplemental annuity is payable for any month in which a retired or disabled employee, regardless of age, works for an employer covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. This includes work for labor organizations. This is true even if the retired or disabled employee performed service for one day during the month, and includes local lodge compensation totaling \$25 or more for any calendar month. Regardless of the amount of salary, work by a local lodge or division secretary collecting insurance premiums is always considered railroad work and, therefore, no annuity is payable for any month in which such activity occurs.

No spouse annuity is payable in any month in which the employee's annuity is not payable, or for any month the spouse, regardless of age, works for an employer covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. A divorced spouse annuity is not payable for any month in which the divorced spouse, regardless of age, works for an employer covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. A divorced spouse can receive an annuity even if the employee has not retired, provided they have been divorced for at least 2 years, the employee and divorced spouse are at least age 62, and the employee is fully insured under the Social Security Act using combined railroad and social security earnings. A survivor annuity is not payable for any month the survivor works for an employer covered under the Railroad Retirement Act, regardless of the survivor's age.

Also, like social security benefits, railroad retirement tier I benefits paid to employees, spouses and divorced spouses, and tier I and tier II benefits paid to survivors, are subject to deductions if an annuitant's earnings exceed certain exempt amounts. These earnings deductions do not apply to those who have attained full social security retirement age.

Full retirement age for employees and

spouses is age 66 for those born from 1943 through 1954 and gradually increases to age 67 for those born in 1960 or later. Full retirement age for survivor annuitants ranges from age 66 for those born from 1945 through 1956 to age 67 for those born in 1962 or later.

Deductions for all annuitants, however, remain in effect for the months before the month of full retirement age during the calendar year of attainment. (The attainment of full retirement age does not mean an annuitant can return to work for an employer covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. As explained above, no annuity is payable for any month in which the annuitant works for a railroad employer, regardless of the annuitant's age).

Additional deductions are assessed for retired employees and spouses who work for their last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer (see question 3). Also, special restrictions apply to disability annuitants (see questions 5 and 6).

2 What are the current exempt earnings amounts for those non-disability annuitants subject to earnings limitations?

For those under full retirement age throughout 2020, the exempt earnings amount rises to \$18,240 from \$17,640 in 2019. For beneficiaries attaining full retirement age in 2020, the exempt earnings amount rises to \$48,600 from \$46,920 in 2019 for the months before the month full retirement age is attained.

For those under full retirement age throughout the year, the earnings deduction is \$1 in benefits for every \$2 of earnings over the exempt amount. For those attaining full retirement age in 2020, the deduction is \$1 for every \$3 of earnings over the exempt amount in the months before the month full retirement age is attained.

Earnings received for services rendered, plus any net earnings from self-employment, are considered when assessing deductions for earnings. Interest, dividends, certain rental income or income from stocks, bonds, or other investments are not generally considered earnings for this purpose.

3 What are the additional deductions applied to the annuities of retired employees and spouses working for their last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer?

Retired employees and spouses, regardless of age, who work for their last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer are also subject to an earnings deduction in their tier II and railroad retirement supplemental annuity benefits, if applicable, of \$1 for every \$2 in earnings up to a maximum reduction of 50 percent. The deductions in the tier II benefits and supplemental annuities of individuals who work for pre-retirement nonrailroad employers apply even if earnings do not exceed the tier I exempt earnings limits. Also, while tier I earnings deductions stop when an annuitant attains full retirement age, these tier II and supplemental annuity deductions continue to apply after the attainment of full retirement age. Work that begins on the same day as the annuity beginning date is not last pre-retirement non-railroad employment.

4 Can a retired employee's earnings also reduce a spouse's benefit?

A spouse benefit is subject to reductions not only for the spouse's earnings, but also for the earnings of the employee, regardless of whether the earnings are from service for the last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer or other post-retirement employment. An annuity paid to a divorced spouse may continue despite the employee's work activity. However, the employee's non-railroad earnings over the annual earnings exempt amount may reduce a divorced spouse benefit.

5 How do post-retirement work activity and earnings affect disability annuities?

Any work performed by a disabled annuitant — whether for payment or not — may be considered an indication of recovery from disability and must be reported promptly. Failure to report such work activity timely could result in overpaid annuities, which must be repaid, as well as severe financial penalties.

In addition, a disability annuity is not payable for any month in 2020 in which the disabled employee annuitant earns more than \$990 (\$950 in 2019) in any employment or net self-employment, exclusive of disability-related work expenses. If a disabled employee annuitant's earnings in a year (after deduction of disability-related work expenses) exceed the annual limit, the annuity is not payable for the number of months derived by dividing the amount by which those earnings exceed the annual limit by the amount of the monthly limit. Any resulting fraction of a month equal to or greater than one-half (0.5) is rounded up, increasing the number of months in which the annuity is not payable by one. For example, a disabled employee annuitant earns \$15,900 in 2020, which is \$3,525 over the 2020 annual limit of \$12,375. Dividing \$3,525 by \$990 yields 3.56. As .56 is more than one-half, the annuitant would lose 4 months of benefits.

These disability work restrictions apply until the disabled employee annuitant attains full retirement age which, as stated earlier, ranges from age 66 to age 67, depending on the year of birth. These work restrictions apply even if the annuitant has 30 years of railroad service. Also, a disabled employee annuitant who works for his or her last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer would be subject to the additional earnings deduction that applies in these cases.

6 Do the special earnings restrictions listed in question 5 apply to disabled widow(er) and disabled child annuitants?

The earnings restrictions listed in question 5 do not apply to disabled widow(er) s under age 60 or to disabled children. However, the annuity of an unmarried disabled widow(er) technically becomes an age annuity when the widow(er) attains age 60. Therefore, regular annual earnings restrictions (see question 2) apply beginning with the month the widow(er) attains age 60 and ending with the month before the month the widow(er) attains full retirement age.

All earnings in the year age 60 is attained are considered in determining excess earnings for that year. However, work

deductions may apply only beginning with the month the widow(er) attains age 60.

Also, if a disabled widow(er) works before full retirement age, this may also raise a question about the possibility of that individual's recovery from disability, regardless of the amount of earnings. Therefore, any work activity must be reported promptly to avoid overpayments, which are recoverable by the RRB and may also include significant penalties.

7 A railroad retirement employee annuitant is thinking of becoming a self-employed contractor or consultant, and might be providing services for a railroad or last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer. How would this affect his or her railroad retirement annuity?

It depends on whether or not the RRB considers the annuitant to be truly engaging in self-employed contracting or consulting, or whether the agency considers him or her to be functioning as an employee, and if so, who the RRB considers to be the actual employer for railroad retirement purposes.

If a retiree is considered to be functioning as a self-employed contractor or consultant, his or her annuity is subject to tier I earnings deductions for net self-employment earnings.

However, if a retiree is considered to be functioning as an employee of a railroad or railroad labor organization, rather than as a self-employed contractor or consultant, the retiree's annuity would be subject to suspension. If the retiree is considered the employee of a nonrailroad employer, the retiree's annuity would be subject to earnings deductions for nonrailroad wages, and to additional deductions if he or she is considered to be working for a last pre-retirement nonrailroad employer.

RRB determinations on contracting or consulting services take into account multiple factors which could be evaluated differently depending on the circumstances of the individual situation. Since no single rule covers every case, anyone requiring a determination as to whether contractor or consultant service is valid self-employment should contact the RRB for a determination well in advance of making a commitment so as to be sure of the effect on benefit payments.

8 How can people get more information about these railroad retirement work restrictions and earnings limitations?

More information is available by contacting an RRB field office. Field Office Locator provides access to every field office's street address and other information, and the option to email an office directly using the Send a Secure Message feature. The agency's toll-free number 1-877-772-5772 offers a menu of service options, including being transferred to an office to speak with a representative, leave a message, or find the address of a local field office. The agency also maintains a TTY number, 312-751-4701, to accommodate those with hearing or speech impairments. Most RRB offices are open to the public on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., except on Wednesdays when offices are open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. RRB offices are closed on Federal holidays. ©



Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen News Brotherhood Of Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen

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Independence, Ohio 44131

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VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 1 • January 2020

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS (ISSN 0898-8625)

is published monthly by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen,
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, Ohio 44131

USPS: 0002-244 ISSN: 0898-8625

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News — BLET Record Department,
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, Ohio 44131.

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Photo of the Month: January 2020

2019 HOLIDAY TRAIN: The 21st annual Canadian Pacific Holiday Train wrapped up its 2019 season in December, raising more than C\$1.49 million and collecting 238,393 pounds of food for local food banks and food shelves in the United States and Canada. In operation since 1999, the Holiday Train has raised more than C\$17 million and donated more than 4.5 million pounds of food for North American food banks. The railroad uses two GP20C 2200 series to pull CP's two Holiday Trains. **Photo:** courtesy Canadian Pacific Railway



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

images to the "Photo of the Month" section of the News-letter. 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 October and November 2019 Activity

In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE: National Division Office, Independence, Ohio; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of Office Administration; General Supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; Policy Committee, Teamsters Rail Conference; Tennessee State Legislative Board mtg., Nashville, Tenn.; UP-Central Region GCA mtg., New Orleans, La.; IBT General Executive Board mtg., Washington, D.C.; American Train Dispatchers Association General Assembly, Las Vegas; BNSF-CS-FWID-CRIP GCA mtg., Amarillo, Texas; Amtrak Western GCA mtg., Seattle; BLET Town Hall mtg., Seattle; Annual Long Island RR Retirement Dinner Dance, Woodberry, NY; BLET National Legislative Board mtg., Cleveland; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Vacation; Collective bargaining mtg., Washington, DC.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT: National Duties include but not limited to: Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; National duties, Independence, Ohio; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Vacation; Holiday; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland.

NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO: General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database/Union Track; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Union Track issues, testing, status updates, etc.; Triennial election oversight duties; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland;

VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN: Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; Mtg. w/ Dennis Pierce and General President Jim Hoffa, Washington, DC; United States Mexico Canada Agreements mtgs., Washington, DC; Tennessee SLB mtg., Nashville, Tenn.; Major lobbying effort with 25 BLET State Legislative Board Chairmen and several General Chairmen, visiting over 180 offices on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC; DSCC Senate Roundtable mtg., Washington, DC; Mtg. w/ Railroad Retirement Board, Washington, DC; BLET National Legislative Board mtg., Cleveland; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Various receptions and office visits with members of Congress and the leadership of both the GOP and Democratic parties, Washington, DC.

VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF: Vice Chairman, National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); National Mediation Board (NMB) Advisory Forum-Labor Member; Department Head, BLET Arbitration Department; Assigned to CN-Wisconsin Central, CN-Illinois Central, CN-Cedar River, Belt Railway of Chicago, Gary Rwy., Illinois Rwy., Indiana Harbor Belt, Metra (Chicago), CP Rail System/US (Soo), Indiana Southern RR, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern, Union RR; Draft award for circular; Study case material for DL 465; CP/Soo pre-Section 6 discussions; Assist GC Semenek w/ arbitration research and assist with 1st Division submissions, CP Rail, Chicago; Research STB FD 36321 (line lease) for GC Evans, IC, Chicago; Docket 49798, Referee Bass, NRAB exec. session; 1st Division adoption session, NRAB, Chicago; Metra Section 6 negotiations, Chicago; NRAB hearing, DL 465, Referee Phillips, Chicago; Assist WC, draft Section 6 notices; Draft annotations for Circular 1-90, NRAB; Study case material for DL 458; Assist WC, discipline appeals, Chicago; Assist WC w/ discipline appeals, Chicago; Annotate recently adopted awards, NRAB, Chicago; NRAB hearing, Referee Baggett-Hayes DL 458, Chicago; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Study dockets for DL 462, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ discipline appeals and related issues, WC, Chicago; Assist GC Semenek w/ discipline appeals, CP, Chicago; Holiday; Review case for NRAB hearing, Metra; Vacation; Holiday; Assist GC Evans w/ rules case submission, IC, Chicago; Prep for DL 462; Assist GC Burns w/ discipline appeal and rules case submission, IHB, Chicago; NRAB hearing, referee Vandagens, DL 462, Chicago; Revising circular index, NRAB, Chicago.

VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TWOMBLY: Department Head, BLET National Short Line Division and Organizing Department; Designated Representative of the BLET Short Line Department; Assigned to: CN-Grand Trunk Western; Springfield Terminal; Delaware & Hudson; St. Lawrence & Atlantic; New York Susquehanna & Western; Connecticut Southern (G&W); New England Central (G&W); Louisville & Indiana; Huron & Eastern; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Tacoma Municipal Belt Line Railroad; National Short Line Division (Local Division 16, Union Railroad, Belt Railway of Chicago, South Buffalo Railway, Western New York & Pennsylvania and Gary Railway); General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; On duty at home office; NYS&W

Section 6 negotiations, Cooperstown, N.Y.; Springfield Terminal Section 6 negotiations, North Billerica, MA; Wheeling & Lake Erie PLB 7906, Estero, Fla.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Tacoma Belt Section 6 negotiations, Tacoma, Wash.

VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER — Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CRI&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Great Western Railway of Colorado; Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Otter Tail; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Great Western Rwy. contract negotiations, assisting GC Cunningham, Denver; Division 344 mtg. w/ GC Cunningham, BNSF, Wellington, Kan.; PLB 7940 w/ GC Cunningham, Washington, D.C.; GC Bobby Brown General Committee mtg., Amarillo, Texas; 1st Division sessions w/ GC Cunningham, BNSF, Chicago; Vacation; Holiday; BLET Town Hall mtg., Seattle; Mtgs/ w BNSF Labor Relations and BLET GCs Cunningham and Thurman, Fort Worth, Texas; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; PLB 7927 w/ GC Psota and VGC Brandt, New York; Great Western Rwy. contract rollout w/ GC Cunningham, Denver.

VICE PRESIDENT R.C. (RICK) GIBBONS: Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees (Northern, Eastern and Southern Lines); Chicago, Ft. Wayne & Eastern; Indiana & Ohio (G&W); General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; Vice President duties; On duty at home office; NS-Northlines LOC workshop, Indianapolis; NS Labor-Management mtgs, assist NS GC Dehart, Fannon and Sturdivant, Atlanta; PLB 7159, PLB 7238 and SBA 1063, assist NS GCs Dehart, Fannon and Sturdivant, Estero, Fla.; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; NS-Southern Executive Mtg., GC Sturdivant, Cleveland; PLB 7663, GC Fannon, Norfolk, Va.; PLB 7574 and PLB 7668, assisting GCs Sturdivant and Dehart, Norfolk, Va.; Holiday; Attend mtg. of Division 316 w/ GC Sturdivant, Atlanta, GA.

VICE PRESIDENT JAMES P. LOUIS: National Division Department Head, BLET Education & Training Dept.; Department Head of the BLET Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Department Head, BLET Passenger Dept.; Assigned Amtrak; Keolis Commuter Services; Keolis Rail Services of Virginia, LLC; TransitAmerica Services, Inc.; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro-North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Union Track mtgs. and training; Education & Training issues; BLET Regional Meeting and Convention planning, Denver, Colo.; Assist GC Kenny w/ VRE and MBCR contract issues; WNYP investigation and appeal hearing, Olean, NY; Assist NJT GC Brown w/ Section 6 notices; Assist GC Hill w/ SEPTA contract issues; Amtrak GCA Western mtg., Seattle; Assist GC McCarthy w/ PATH contract issues; Annual Long Island RR Retirement Dinner Dance, Long Island, NY; Assist GC Kenny w/ Keolis contract issues; BLET Education & Training mtg., Cleveland; Vacation; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; 1st Division submission, assisting GC McCarthy, PATH; Holiday; Assist GC Sexton w/ contract issues, LIRR; BLET Secretary-Treasurer training class, Independence, Ohio; Assist GC McCarthy w/ PATH contract issues, Newark, NJ.

VICE PRESIDENT MARK L. WALLACE: Assigned to all Union Pacific GCAs (Eastern District, Northern Region (former C&NW), Western Lines (Pacific Harbor Lines), Western Region (Portland & Western RR, Portland Terminal), Central Region, and Southern Region); Utah RR; Longview Portland & Northern and Longview Switching; General office duties, telephone, emails, correspondence, communications, etc.; On duty at home office; Mtg. w/ UP, Cleveland, Ohio; UP-Central GCA mtg., New Orleans, La.; UP/BLET Hospital Association mtg., Las Vegas; Portland & Western mediation, Las Vegas; PLB 7332, Chicago; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Mtg. w/ UP and BLET GCs, Chicago; PLB 7173, Dallas; PLB 7813, PLB 7228 and PLB 7721, Chicago; Pacific Harbor Line/ Division 214 union meeting, Long Beach, Calif.; Mtg. w/ UP-Southern Region GC and VGC, Tulsa, Okla.

VICE PRESIDENT J. ALAN HOLDCRAFT: Assigned to all CSX Transportation GCAs (Eastern Lines, Western Lines, Northern Lines (Bombardier Transportation Services), Conrail Shared Assets/CSX Northern District); KCS-Kansas City Southern/Louisiana & Ark. RR; KCS-Texas Mexican Railway; KCS-Mid South Rail, South Rail, Gateway Western RR, Illinois Midland (G&W); General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Indiana Railroad mediation, Chicago; PLB 7655, Jacksonville, Fla.; SBA 1185, Chicago; Assist GC Billy Evans in negotiations w/ KCS on MidSouth/South Rail contract; Mtgs. w/ Indiana Railroad members regarding tentative agreement; PLB 7084; BLET Advisory Board mtg., Cleveland; Attend meeting of BLET Division 156 (Birmingham, Ala.) w/ GC Keith Kerley; Mtg. w/ GCs Keith Kerley and Gary Best, Etowah, Tenn.; Attend Division 569 mtg. w/ GC David Spradlin, Heavener, Texas; Attend Division 244 mtg. w/ GC Michael Ball, Rosenberg, Texas; PLB 7084, Chicago; PLB 6884, Estero, Fla.

News Briefs

STB: U.S. CLASS I WORKFORCE TUMBLES IN DECEMBER 2019

Class I as of mid-December employed 131,486 people in the United States, down 1.3 percent from mid-November's level and down 11 percent from December 2018's count, according to Surface Transportation Board (STB) data. The headcount for train and engine employees was 54,133, which is 14 percent lower than December 2018 and 0.92 percent lower than November 2019. The drop in employment levels comes as the na-

tion's railroads deploy "Precision Scheduled Railroading" (PSR) in an effort to cut costs.

AAR: RAIL TRAFFIC DOWN IN DECEMBER 2019; YEAR-OVER- YEAR TRAFFIC DECLINES 5 PERCENT FROM 2018

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) reported U.S. rail traffic for the week ending December 28, 2019, as well as volumes for December 2019. U.S. railroads originated 928,102 carloads in De-

cember 2019, down 9.2 percent, or 93,788 carloads, from December 2018. U.S. railroads also originated 990,934 containers and trailers in December 2019, down 9.6 percent, or 105,239 units, from the same month last year. Combined U.S. carload and intermodal originations in December 2019 were 1,919,036, down 9.4 percent, or 199,027 carloads and intermodal units from December 2018. Total combined U.S. traffic for the first 52 weeks of 2019 was 26,704,974 carloads and intermodal units, a decrease of 5 percent compared to 2018. ©©