



NEWS

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BLET endorses Kerry



On February 27, the BLET Executive announced that it had unanimously endorsed John Kerry for President of the United States. Kerry, center, is flanked by Dick Gephardt (D-MO), left, and Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa, right. (AP photo/Charles Krupa)

The Executive Committee of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen voted unanimously to endorse Senator John F. Kerry for President of the United States.

The Executive Committee decision follows an online poll at www.ble.org in which a wide majority of BLET members chose Senator Kerry as their favorite among the Democratic candidates.

At the time of the BLET's endorsement, Senator Kerry had won 18 of 20 Democratic primaries and caucuses, and has a commanding lead in the race for the Democratic nomination. He has also won the en-

dorsement of the AFL-CIO and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

One of the major factors in the BLET's endorsement of Senator Kerry is his support for full funding of Amtrak.

"For 18 years in the Senate, John Kerry has been a friend of working families," said BLET National President Don M. Hahs. "We believe that he will continue to support working men and women and will provide the best opportunity for Amtrak's long-term survival."

On February 17, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters announced their en-

dorsement of Kerry at a rally in Milwaukee. The IBT, along with the 18 other member unions of the Alliance for Economic Justice, rallied with Kerry in support of job creation and workers.

"Working families need a fighter like John Kerry in the White House," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "With a President Kerry, we will develop a pro-worker agenda and defeat President Bush's assault on America's jobs and America's working families."

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TTD resolution calls for an end to remote control

The Executive Committee of the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department unanimously approved a policy resolution on March 7 that calls for an end to remote control train operations.

"It should now be clear, if there was any doubt, that remote control locomotives are dangerous and must be regulated or eliminated," the TTD resolution states.

"Rail safety standards will not fall victim to corporate shortcuts," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "We will continue to fight on behalf of safe locomotive operations for all workers."

The resolution is highly critical of the Federal Railroad Administration for its "foot dragging" and failure to develop enforceable safety regulations. So far, the FRA has only issued "recommended minimum guidelines."

According to the TTD resolution, "The problem is that these guidelines, as the name suggests, do not actually require carriers to adopt all the necessary

safety procedures and in general do not go far enough to ensure that this technology is implemented and utilized safely."

Don Hahs, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), an affiliate of the Teamsters Rail Conference, applauded the resolution.

"The safety of all railroad workers should be Priority One. But that priority is difficult to achieve with 'minimum guidelines,'" President Hahs said. "I applaud the TTD for its actions. It's time someone stood up for these workers instead of meekly giving in to every carrier demand."

According to the TTD, the FRA refused to act on the issue until prompted by Congressional action. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain and Ranking Democrat Ernest Hollings have asked the FRA to conduct a thorough safety audit of remote control locomotives.

"The direct interest and

See Remote Control, Page 8

BLET conducts planning session; VP Geiger to head new Trainmen Dept.

The Advisory Board of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a division of the Teamsters Rail Conference, conducted its first strategic planning session in late February. The Union's approach for collective bargaining, safety, and security were among key topics at the meeting. A significant point during the three-day session was the structure of the Trainmen Department within the BLET.

James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General

President, and Don Hahs, National President of the BLET, issued the following joint statement:

"The Trainmen Department will respond to the increasing demand we have received from trainmen since the merger of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Teamsters earlier this year. This new department structure will signal to workers within that craft that we have heard, loud and clear, their desire to have the powerful

representation provided by the Teamsters."

BLET Vice President Merle Geiger will head the department. "The Union is committed to preserving craft lines and protecting seniority for all trainmen," Geiger said.

"Assurances on maintaining contract provisions for trainmen are pivotal in demonstrating our commitment to the craft. We extend the same assurances and brotherhood to them as we

do all rail employees," said Don Hahs, National President of the BLET.

During the three-day strategic planning session, the Advisory Board focused on issues related to collective bargaining, remote control operations, railroad security, fatigue and safety.

"The IBT envisions a complete transportation union. Welcoming trainmen into our great union is a significant move toward fulfilling that vision," said General President Hoffa. •

BLET NEWS

IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Anthony C. Rodella, Jeffrey S. Bohler

Two members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen were killed in an accident on Saturday, February 21.

Engineer Anthony C. Rodella, 57, and conductor Jeffrey S. Bohler, 32, were killed in the collision of two Union Pacific freight trains in Carrizozo, N.M. Rodella and Bohler were both members of BLET Division 192 in El Paso, Texas. Brother Rodella joined the BLET in 1974 and Brother Bohler became a member in 2003.

The National Transportation Safety Board launched an investigation of the accident, assisted by the BLET Safety Task Force.

Rodella and Bohler's empty auto-rack train was en route from Mira Loma, Calif., to Kansas when it collided with a train carrying grain headed from Kansas to El Paso.

On behalf of the 30,000 men and women of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, BLET National President Don M. Hahs sent his deepest condolences to the Rodella and Bohler families. President Hahs has ordered the BLET flag to be flown at half-staff over the BLET's Cleveland headquarters in honor of the two brothers.

"I am deeply saddened by the deaths of Brother Rodella and Brother Bohler," said President Hahs.

"The deaths of their fellow workers impact the hearts and minds of all railroad workers, and I know that I speak for all the BLET members when I send my sympathies to these families."

The BLET Safety Task Force was established for the purpose of participating in accident investigations conducted by the NTSB with the goal of contributing to both the accident cause-finding phase, and the safety recommendation phase from the view point of locomotive engineers and trainmen.

Twelve members of the BLET have been killed in on-the-job accidents since 1999.

A special thank you to Carrizozo, N.M., from the BLET

The entire community of Carrizozo, N.M., came together during the aftermath the tragic train accident that occurred in Carrizozo on February 21.

During that time, the Carrizozo Heritage Museum selflessly opened its doors allowed its facility to serve as the Command Center for dedicated crews who worked so long and diligently in the aftermath of the terrible accident.

The Museum generously stayed open the entire time, providing shelter for all the crews, emergency workers, investigators, and everyone else involved in the accident cleanup and investigation. Local businesses also put forth special efforts to make food and

drinks available to the crews.

On behalf of the men and women of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, BLET National President Don M. Hahs offered his sincere appreciation and thanks to everyone in the Carrizozo community, especially the Carrizozo Heritage Museum, for their generous support, assistance and cooperation.

Special recognition and thanks go out to the following:

Carrizozo Heritage Museum

Roland & Vera Caster
Ray & Diane Dean
Van Shamblin

Rene Burton
Ann Buffington
Don & Barbara Culbertson
Cynthia Culbertson
Tyler Shropshire
Dick Bryant
Dorothy Forsythe
Polly Chavez

Carrizozo Joe's

Joe & Karla Organist

Four Winds Restaurant

Chris and Di

Pizzazozo

Fran Altieri

Theresa Cleary
Monica Wheeler
Barbara Ward

Dean & Nancy Lollar
Gail & Bill Yates
John & Star Ducharme (Vaughn, N.M.)

Snooks & Anny McDaniel
Mozelle Harkey

Sturges Market Carrizozo Texaco Carrizozo Allsup's

Priscilla Mitchell
Mary Miglionico
Chris Dugger
Angelo & Ruby Vega •

UP remote control wreck in Texas highlights need for enforceable regulations

Don Hahs, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, issued the following statement in response to a remote control accident in Arlington, Texas, on March 11.

"On March 19, an article about a remote control train wreck appeared in the Fort Worth Star Telegram.

"An eyewitness told the paper that a Union Pacific remote control locomotive in Arlington, Texas, repeatedly backed up and rammed into an Auto Rack train until it derailed into the path of an oncoming freight train. In the article, a Union Pacific Railroad spokesman stated that the remote control operator was out of position to see the cars he was hitting.

"In the same article, a spokesman for the Union Pacific told the *Star Telegram* that the railroad 'has not had a single accident where it was the fault of the technology. They would have still happened with a human engineer.'

"I seriously doubt that the accident in Arlington would

have happened with a certified locomotive engineer in the cab. No engineer in his right mind would have backed up and repeatedly rammed into a standing cut of cars until it derailed.

Nor would this have happened if federal regulations had required head end protection.

"On March 12, an article regarding the safety of remote control locomotives was published in the *Toledo Blade* newspaper. BLET sources told the paper that point protection is routinely ignored in every day remote control operations. Federal Railroad Administration spokesman Warren Flatau responded by telling the paper that lack of point protection 'is a serious allegation' that will be investigated.

"The incident in Arlington, Texas, proves that the BLET's 'serious allegation' is correct. It is now time for the FRA to step up to the plate. It's time to stop investigating and start regulating.



According to eyewitness reports, this remote control engine backed up and repeatedly rammed into an Auto Rack car three times before the Auto Rack derailed.

"Proper point protection is one of the 'recommended guidelines' the FRA issued for remote control operations. It is becoming abundantly clear that railroad companies are regularly ignoring this and other 'recommended guidelines.'

"The railroad companies are playing a very dangerous game with remote control trains. The Auto Rack train in Arlington could very easily have been a chemical tanker. The oncoming freight train could very easily have been a high-speed passenger train. In short, the remote control wreck in Arlington could very easily have been much, much worse.

"Only enforceable federal regulations will put an end to this dangerous game." •

BLET members on CN's former GTW territory ratify new contract

CN and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) announced the ratification of a new labor agreement by BLET members on the railroad's former Grand Trunk Western (GTW) territory in the United States.

In contrast with traditional mileage- and rule-based wage systems dating back to the steam locomotive era, this agreement, effective Feb. 9, 2004, provides hourly wages, job guarantees and more flexible work rules for 250 current BLET members on the GTW through Aug. 31, 2005.

E. Hunter Harrison, president and chief executive officer of CN, said: "Our innovative, hourly-rated labor contracts for train and engine employees will make CN a more efficient, customer-focused railroad, while providing employees increased pay, job security and a better balance between work and home lives.

"To date, CN has secured hourly-rated labor agreements in the United States covering

1,930 T&E personnel – almost 85 per cent of this employee population."

BLET National President Don M. Hahs recognized the efforts of BLET Vice President Paul T. Sorrow and General Chairman John Karakian for negotiating the breakthrough agreement.

"The BLET, which recently merged with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, is at the forefront of negotiating groundbreaking labor agreements that boost the quality of life of our membership while, at the same time, increasing their levels of pay," President Hahs said. "More than 61 per cent of our membership at GTW voted in favor of this contract, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of Paul Sorrow and John Karakian."

The GTW's main line between Port Huron, Mich., and Chicago is a key link in CN's corridor between the U.S. Midwest, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. •



Madrid terrorist attacks a wake-up call

Hoffa, Hahs say American rail industry must improve security on passenger and freight trains

The tragic March 11 terrorist attack in Madrid on commuter rail lines must serve as a wake-up call to the United States regarding railroad security.

The railroads are not only potentially dangerous to the traveling public but also to communities across the country. Our nation's railroads, the largest carriers of hazardous materials, continue to route through-shipments of highly hazardous industrial chemical cargoes, such as liquefied chlorine, through dense urban cores of even the most vulnerable and visible High Threat Target Cities.

The federal government terms such high-hazard cargoes "potential weapons of mass destruction" (WMD), and very attractive targets for terrorists. A study by the Naval Research Labs reveals that 100 people per second could die if a terrorist were to blow up a tank car full of chlorine. If that tank car were

passing a crowded National Mall, 100,000 people could die in 1/2 an hour.

Despite FBI warnings indicating that our nation's railroads could be likely targets for terrorism, the Bush administration has left rail security up to their friends in private industry to adopt voluntary security measures. (Several high-ranking administration officials come from the rail industry including Vice President Dick Cheney, who served on the board of directors of Union Pacific Railroad until accepting the Vice Presidency.)

The rail corporations, left to their own initiatives, have implemented potentially dangerous cost-cutting measures that have taken trained professionals off of locomotives, created a fatigue crisis among rail workers, and inadequately addressed infrastructure maintenance, rail yard access and other matters of concern to rail workers and the public.

"We have tried repeatedly to warn the public and the rail corporations about the potential dangers on the rails."

— BLET National President Don M. Hahs

"Since 9/11, the United States has taken swift action to standardize heightened security measures throughout our nation's airports and airlines, but has left our nation's railroads virtually untouched," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President.

A 2003 Government Accounting Office (GAO) report concluded that it is unclear as to whether or not the rail company's own initiatives have effectively deterred terrorism because there are no federal standards.

"We have tried repeatedly to warn the public and the rail corporations about the potential dangers on the rails," said Don Hahs, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a Division of the Teamsters' Rail Conference.

"We hope that Madrid serves as a wake up call for standardized security measures on the U.S. rail system for the sake of passengers, rail workers and the general public." •

Important notice from President Hahs regarding remote control locomotives



February 12, 2004

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The BLET is currently participating in an important research study sponsored by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The research will involve the investigation of six remote control locomotive-involved incidents sometime in 2004. The study is being conducted by an independent, third party firm called Foster-Miller, Inc. They are a research organization that has conducted numerous other studies for the FRA. We are aware of the study and its methods, and support this research.

If you are contacted by a Foster-Miller employee to discuss your involvement in, or knowledge of, an incident that they have chosen to investigate, you are encouraged to be open with them and share any information you have. If Foster-Miller would like to interview you, they wish to speak with you on a one-on-one basis. They have asked us to not provide a representative from our organization to sit-in with you, in order to assure the confidentiality of the information you share. They have also assured our organization that they will not record personally identifying information (e.g., your name) with the data they collect from you. This is standard protocol to protect the identity of research participants in any study. Keep in mind that Foster-Miller is not interested in what any one individual or railroad does; they are interested in looking at the industry as a whole, in order to improve operations.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, or your potential participation, please feel free to contact our Washington, D.C., office at (202) 624-8776.

Should you be contacted by Foster-Miller, your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Fraternally,

Don M. Hahs
National President

BLET gets shortline organizing win at Portland & Western

Operating employees at the Portland & Western Railroad selected the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen as their designated collective bargaining representative.

The National Mediation Board released election results on March 16 in Washington, D.C.

Nearly 60 percent of eligible voters selected the BLET, a division of the Teamsters Rail Conference, in what National President Don Hahs described as "a long, hard fought battle."

"Hopefully, this is one of many more battles that will be fought and won by the BLET," President Hahs said. "I applaud Tommy Miller, our Director of Organizing, for a job well done. I also thank our new Brothers and Sisters at the Portland & Western for choosing BLET."

Brother Miller thanked all the men and women who work for the P&W, including their spouses. He also thanked Delaine Morris, Guide for the BLET's Grand International Auxiliary, for making the trip to Oregon as part of the suc-

cessful organizing effort. Brother Miller also thanked Dave Tully of Teamsters Joint Council 37 in Portland for his assistance and help.

Including the Portland & Western, the BLET has successfully organized eight different shortline railroads in less than two years. These organizing victories have brought approximately 750 new members into the House of Labor.

The other shortline organizing victories include the New York & Atlantic Railway; the Great Western Railway of Colorado; St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad; Utah Railway; the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad; the Indiana Southern Railroad; and the Texas-Mexican Railway.

The Portland & Western (P&W) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Genesee & Wyoming Inc. It operates a 444-mile regional system and services more than 135 customers. It moves more than 60,000 cars of paper, steel, grain, forest products, chemicals, aggregates, fertilizers and consumer goods. •



BLET NEWS

50th community enacts remote control safety resolution

As this issue of the Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen News goes to press, 50 different communities in the U.S. have passed remote control safety resolutions.

A total of 36 cities and 14 counties have enacted safety resolutions. In addition, 16 different AFL-CIO State Federations have passed similar resolutions.

All of these resolutions call upon the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to adopt enforceable regulations to make remote control operations safer.

The operation of remote control trains in the United States is virtually unregulated. To date, the FRA has only issued recommended guidelines and not enforceable safety regulations. Railroad companies often ignore these guidelines in the day-to-day operation of remote control trains.

Most recent to pass city resolutions are: Central City, Ill.; Carteret, N.J.; and Toledo, Ohio. The most recent county resolutions are: Roanoke County, Va.; Harris County, Texas; and Greenup, Ky.

Central City, Ill.

The Central City, Ill., resolution was enacted on December 15. The BLET's Illinois State Legislative Board Chairman C.E. Way thanked Brad Pearson, Legislative Representative of BLET Division 94 (Centralia, Ill.), and Kenneth Buchanan, President of the Central City City Council, for their work on the resolution.

Carteret, N.J.

The Borough of Carteret, N.J., passed a remote control safety resolution on February 5.

The effort to pass the resolution was spearheaded by Ray Enriquez, Legislative Representative of BLET Division 660 (Los Angeles), members of the California State Legislative Board, and members of the New Jersey State Legislative Board.

In late January, the New Jersey Board was contacted by Brother Enriquez to advise that a resolution was going to be presented to the Carteret Council by Council President Ron Rios. Brother Enriquez, a member of the California State Legislative Board, works at the George Meany Center as a hazmat peer trainer. Council President Rios, a former peer trainer at the Meany Center, is a carman by trade and a member of the TCU.

"I am very proud of the coordinated efforts between members of the New Jersey State Legislative Board and the California State Legislative Board, which resulted in the passage of the Carteret resolution," California State Legislative Board Chairman Tim Smith said. "It is through coordinated efforts such as this one that we accomplish many things. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all those who have been involved in this new resolution."

New Jersey State Legislative Board Chairman Ken Michel also thanked those involved in the passage of the resolution.

"I would like to thank Brother Enriquez and Ron Rios for their commitment to the safety of the citizens of New Jersey and the Borough of

Carteret," said Chairman Michel.

Council President Rios said that the resolution would help to keep the borough safe.

"I feel compelled that we as a community cannot take safety for granted," said Rios. "I proposed this resolution to the Mayor and Borough Council not to be reactive but proactive. Remote control locomotives should not and cannot be used in our town."

Brother Enriquez thanked Brother Michel for his assistance in getting the resolution adopted.

"Ken Michel provided me with documents that were really beneficial," Enriquez said. "He provided me letters from Senator Jon S. Corzine and Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo that support our position on the remote control issue."

Toledo, Ohio

Toledo, Ohio, passed a remote control safety resolution on March 9.

Jim Ong, Chairman of the BLET's Ohio State Legislative Board, thanked several BLET members for their work on the resolution, including: Tim Hanely, Vice Chairman of the OSLB; Rodney Cutlip, BLET Division 385 (Toledo) Local Chairman; Tom Galloway, BLET Division 4 (Toledo) Legislative Representative; Don Rozick, BLET Division 385 Legislative Representative; and Bill Barber, Local Chairman and Legislative Representative of BLE Division 937 (Toledo). Chairman Ong also thanked Toledo Mayor Jack Ford; City Councilman Robert McCloskey; and Mayoral Chief of Staff Jay Black. He also noted the efforts of Roberta Stout, a resident of Toledo who worked tirelessly on this issue.

The resolution seeks to ban the transportation of hazardous materials by remote control and to prevent them from being operated over public or private highway rail grade crossings. Like many of the other safety resolutions, the Toledo measure calls for a ban on remote operations until effective and reliable protection at the point of movement is in place.

Roanoke County, Va.

The Roanoke County Board of Supervisors passed a remote control safety resolution on December 16.

The Board of Supervisors, acting on a request made by BLET Division 301 (Roanoke, Va.), cited the Board's long-standing position of being proactive toward public safety in passing the resolution.

The measure was sponsored by County Supervisor Mike Altizer, who expressed the need to have enforceable federal regulations regarding remote control locomotives.

"I cannot see how the Federal Railroad Administration can require a licensed railroad employee (an engineer) to operate a train under mandatory regulations, and then allow another employee (a remote control operator) to operate a train under voluntary guidelines," Supervisor Altizer said.

"Obviously, we're very pleased with the Board's decision for several reasons," said Division 301 Legislative Representative Michael Roop.

"Roanoke County becomes the first Virginia municipality to enact a remote control safety resolution."

Brother Roop recognized the efforts of Division 301 members Mike Worley, Gary Myers, Paul Paxton, and Frank Owens (retired) for their part in making the BLE's successful presentation to the Board of Supervisors.

The resolution is the result of many months of meetings with various members of the Board of Supervisors, providing them with an insight into the dangers associated with railroading.

Harris County, Texas

Harris County, Texas, unanimously passed a remote control safety resolution on December 16. It is the third largest county in the United States with a population of 3.4 million.

BLET Texas State Legislative Board Chairman Terry Briggs reports that the first meeting between the BLET and Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia (Precinct 2) was on October 31. Also in attendance were: Herb Yambra President of BLE Division 194 (Houston); Bob Tramuto, Designated Legal Counsel; Richard Shaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the Harris County AFL-CIO; and Dale Wortham, President of the Harris County AFL-CIO.

The Harris County AFL-CIO had enacted its own remote control safety resolution on September 24.

At the October 31 meeting, the BLE distributed informational packets to all the Commissioners. The BLE and Commissioners discussed the issue of remote control and resolutions enacted by other communities and AFL-CIO bodies.

After the initial meeting, Commissioner Garcia and Brother Yambra corresponded by telephone, e-mail, fax and in a continual exchange of safety information. Ms. Garcia and Brother Yambra met again in person on December 11, at which time she stated that the resolutions would be going for a vote in front of the County Commissioners on December 16.

"It's all history from that point," Chairman Briggs said. "The resolution was passed unanimously thanks to the hard work of Herb and Kathy Yambra, Commissioner Garcia, Bob Tramuto, Richard Shaw and Dale Wortham."

Brother Briggs also thanked all BLE members in the Houston area who worked on the project and participated in a remote control safety rally.

Greenup County, Ky.

On January 13, the Greenup County Fiscal Court in Greenup, Ky., passed a resolution condemning remote control train operations. The resolution passed after a CSX employee lost part of his leg in a remote control switching accident on December 15.

CSX employee Lloyd "Shane" Bishop, 29, was performing rail switching operations by remote control in Russell Yard in December when the accident occurred. One of his feet was crushed by a rail car, causing amputation above the ankle.

The Greenup resolution states, "We, the Fiscal Court of Greenup County, hereby, resolve that we are

acutely aware of the recent accident that occurred at the Russell Yards in December 2003... If we identify safety problems associated with the use of this technology, we will aggressively move to mitigate and furthermore, alleviate the use of remote controls at said yard."

Tommy Mayne, Chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen's Kentucky State Legislative Board, attended the Fiscal Court's January 13 meeting.

Brother Mayne reported the officers and members of BLET Division 271 in Russell, Ky., are deserving of praise for their hard work in lobbying for passage of the resolution. He noted the exceptional efforts of: Eddie May, President of Division 271; Tim Braden, Local Chairman of Division 271; Randy Sowards, Secretary-Treasurer of Division 271; Daniel Maynard, Legislative Representative; and Eddie Stump, Member of Division 271.

The December 15 accident in Russell happened just days after a Union Pacific worker was killed in a remote control switching accident in San Antonio.

On December 7, Union Pacific employee Jody Herstine, 37, was struck and killed by a locomotive that he was operating by remote control at a rail yard in San Antonio.

On the Internet

For copies of the resolutions passed by all cities and counties, please visit the BLET website at: <http://www.ble.org/remotecom> •

Strategic planning sessions to include General Chairmen, Legislative Chairmen

The National Division of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) will hold strategic planning sessions with all General Chairmen and all State Legislative Board Chairmen in the coming months.

The General Chairmen's meeting will be in Las Vegas on April 15-16. The State Legislative Board Chairmen's meeting will also be in Las Vegas during the week of May 17, which will coincide with the IBT's Unity Conference.

The meetings will focus on the organization's approach for collective bargaining, the new Trainmen Department within the BLET, remote control operations, railroad security, campaign issues, fatigue and safety, and other pertinent issues.

"Meetings of this type are extremely important," BLET National President Don Hahs said. "They will help us to plot the organization's current and future direction under the newly established Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters."

2003 FOURTH QUARTER

Burlington Northern Santa Fe



Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) reported record fourth-quarter 2003 earnings that were 13 percent, higher than fourth-quarter 2002 earnings.

Freight revenues for the fourth quarter increased \$185 million to a record \$2.46 billion compared with 2002 fourth-quarter revenues of \$2.27 billion. Fourth-quarter freight revenues included fuel surcharges of \$31 million compared with \$14 million in the prior year.

Consumer Products revenues increased \$123 million to a record \$969 million reflecting increased volumes in the international, truckload and perishables sectors. Industrial Products revenues rose \$51 million to \$542 million reflecting increased business in steel, taconite, clay and minerals in the construction products sector along with military, lumber and paper traffic in the building products sector.

For the quarter, BNSF's operating ratio was 80.6 percent compared with 80.8 percent for the same quarter in 2002. For the full year, BNSF's operating ratio was 82.1 percent compared with 81.3 percent in the prior year. •

Canadian National Railway



Profits at Canadian National Railway Co. motored higher in the fourth quarter after a difficult year of rising fuel costs and a surging loonie. CN posted fourth-quarter earnings of \$224 million (Canadian dollars). That compares with a profit of \$22 million in the year-earlier period.

CN's results are considered all the more striking given the challenges it faced. Higher corporate taxes in Ontario, higher fuel costs, a higher Canadian dollar compared with the U.S. dollar, and low grain volumes early in the year all poked holes in the company's earnings. Total revenues for the quarter dropped two percent to \$1.55 billion.

For the three months ended Dec. 31, the company recorded its best operating ratio ever at 66.1 percent. Operating ratio is a measure of operating costs as a proportion of sales. That means it spent the least of all railways in North America to move goods.

(With reporting from the *Montreal Gazette*) •

Canadian Pacific Railway



**CANADIAN
PACIFIC
RAILWAY**

Canadian Pacific Railway said fourth-quarter profit rose nearly 40 percent as freight volumes hit new records and commodity exports in the West saw unprecedented growth helped take the sting out of a rising Canadian dollar.

For the quarter ended December 31, CPR reported net income of \$175 million (Canadian), up from \$126 million in the same period a year earlier. For the full year, CP made \$399 million compared with \$496 million a year ago.

Operating income, excluding a loss on assets transferred to IBM Canada Ltd. under an outsourcing agreement, was \$226 million compared with \$238 million. In total, operating income was cut by \$24 million as a result of a stronger Canadian dollar. Revenue rose to \$963.5 million from last year's \$950.4 million.

The revenue gains were linked to a recovery in the commodity sector that began late in the third quarter as well as an improved grain crop and strong demand for coal and sulphur and a robust potash market.

It's fourth quarter 2003 operating ratio was 76.6 percent. For the full year, CPR's operating ratio was 79.8 percent, compared with 76.6 percent. •

CSX Transportation



CSX reported that its fourth-quarter earnings fell about 10 percent, mainly on a restructuring charge stemming from the planned firing of up to 1,000 managers.

In the three months ended Dec. 26, the railroad and transportation company posted earnings of \$123 million, compared to \$137 million a year earlier.

Excluding the restructuring charge, earnings were \$130 million. Revenues for the quarter were \$1.95 billion, down from \$2.06 billion a year earlier. The prior year included revenue of \$189 million from an affiliated company that CSX no longer owns.

CSX said in November that the layoffs will cost \$60 million to \$80 million, which would be charged over six months. For the full year, CSX reported earnings of \$246 million on revenues of \$7.79 billion. That compared to earnings of \$424 million on revenues of \$8.15 billion in 2002.

CSX's operating ratio, or ratio of costs-to-revenue, was 87.4 percent. That's an improvement from 88 percent the previous quarter. •

Kansas City Southern



Kansas City Southern reported net income of \$11.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2003, compared to \$57.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2002.

Excluding an adjustment in claims reserves of \$21.1 million, KCS improved its operating income from \$48.0 million in 2002 to \$50.2 million in 2003. Based on preliminary results, earnings at its Mexican railroad (Grupo TFM) were \$11.3 million in 2003 compared to \$45.8 million in

2002. This decline resulted primarily from a \$19 million reduction in the deferred tax benefit during 2003 compared to 2002 and the devaluation of the peso, which resulted in an approximate \$34 million decline in Grupo TFM revenues.

For the fourth quarter of 2003, KCS reported a net loss of \$6.2 million compared to net income of \$20.4 million for the same 2002 period. The decrease in net income was primarily attributable to an increase in claims reserves of \$13.5 million. Excluding this adjustment, net income for the fourth quarter 2003 would have been \$7.3 million and operating income would have been 2.9% higher than the fourth quarter of 2002. •

Norfolk Southern



NS reported a fourth-quarter net income of

\$52 million compared to \$129 million in the fourth quarter of 2002. The net income was reduced by two charges — a \$66 million charge for a voluntary separation program and a \$53 million charge to recognize the impaired value of certain telecommunications assets. Excluding these items, fourth-quarter income would have been \$171 million.

Operating revenues were the highest in the railroad's history. Fourth-quarter revenues were \$1.68 billion, six percent higher than the same period in 2002. For the year, revenues rose to \$6.5 billion, three percent higher than 2002 results. In the fourth quarter, intermodal revenues were a record \$335 million. For the year, intermodal revenues also set a record at \$1.2 billion.

The operating ratio was 86.6 percent compared with 81.8 percent in the same quarter of 2002. Without the cost of the voluntary separation program, the operating ratio would have been 80.3 percent for the 2003 fourth quarter and 81.9 percent for the full year. •

Union Pacific Corp.



Union Pacific's profit jumped 46 percent in the fourth quarter, helped by the sale of its trucking business. UP earned \$551 million (\$2.12 per diluted share) for the quarter ended December 31, up from \$378 million (\$1.41 per diluted share) in the same quarter of 2002.

The 2003 quarterly results include \$0.84 per diluted share, reflecting the recorded gain from the company's sale of its Overnite subsidiary, as well as earnings from Overnite's October operations. From continuing operations, the corporation earned \$1.28 per diluted share in the fourth quarter of 2003 compared with \$1.38 per diluted share in the fourth quarter of 2002.

For the year, net income increased to \$1.6 billion from \$1.3 billion in 2002. Revenue rose to \$11.6 billion from \$11.2 billion in 2002.

Fourth quarter commodity revenue showed an increase versus 2002. For the fourth quarter of 2003, intermodal revenues were up 13 percent, industrial products were up 9 percent, chemicals and energy were up 3 percent, agricultural

was up 2 percent, and automotive was up 1 percent.

Of particular note is the fact that employee productivity at Union Pacific increased 5 percent for the full year, reaching an all-time record high of 22 million gross ton-miles moved per employee.

The railroad also boasted of a 4 percent increase in total operating revenue for the full year, which reached a record of \$11.6 billion.

However, railroad Chairman Dick Davidson told the Fort Worth Star Telegram that its fourth-quarter results were hampered by a lack of enough workers. He said delays and other service problems cost the railroad up to \$30 million from October through December. He told the paper, "the problem was pure and simple — we didn't have enough people." He later told the Fort Worth newspaper that UP planned to hire as many as 3,200 train crew employees in 2004.

Union Pacific's operating ratio for the fourth quarter was 80.1 percent, which was the same as the 2002 quarter. For the full year of 2003, the railroad's operating ratio was 81.5 percent, compared to 79.8 percent in 2002.

PASSENGER RAIL NEWS

BLET calls for added freight, passenger rail security

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters Rail Conference responded to a March 22 announcement by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge to step up security in the passenger rail industry.

"It was but a small first step in providing for our nation's security," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "Unfortunately, it underscores this Administration's failure to address the potentially greater threat posed by hazardous materials routed

on rails through high target areas. The rail industry continues to put profits before security."

Since 9/11, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has focused on heightening security measures in the airline industry while entrusting rail security concerns to railroad companies. Left to their own initiatives, the rail industry has implemented cost-cutting measures that have replaced federally certified locomotive engineers with remote control technology and left

the railroad infrastructure - including rail yards, tracks, bridges and trestles vulnerable.

"It is critical for the Department of Homeland Security to re-evaluate its plan for the security of our railroad system — both freight and passenger," said Don M. Hahs, National President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), a division of the Teamsters Rail Conference. "Rail corporations have taken away the nation's first line of defense by reduc-

ing the number of trained professionals — our eyes and ears — off of locomotives."

The Department of Homeland Security's own strategic plan emphasizes employees — stating, 'Our most valuable asset is not new equipment or technology, but rather our dedicated and patriotic employees.' However, the agency has yet to devise or implement stringent security measures on the rail corporations. •

PASSENGER RAIL NEWS BRIEFS

Caltrain aims for June opening of 'baby bullet'

Caltrain soon will pull the trigger on the "baby bullet." The much-anticipated express trains will begin zooming up and down the Peninsula in June after two years of work, \$110 million, and some minor delays.

The launch will bring some of the most dramatic changes to the rail line in its 140-year history. Baby bullet service will shave the commute time between San Francisco and San Jose from 90 minutes to under an hour. At the same time, Caltrain will bring back weekend service, increase the number of trains it runs to the highest level ever, and totally rework its entire schedule.

Construction began on the baby bullet in July 2002 and is slated to wrap up in late April or early May. Caltrain will then inspect the work, familiarize its engineers with the new system, and set an exact date for the opening.

(From the San Mateo County Times.) •

Passenger rail to halt at North Station during Democratic convention

A major train station will be closed and an interstate highway through Boston's center will be shut down in the

evenings during July's Democratic Convention as security fears have worsened after the Madrid bombings.

The four-day convention, which starts on July 26, is taking place in the Fleet Center, which sits atop North Station. Boston police and the U.S. Secret Service said the station will be shut down on Friday, July 23 until the end of the convention.

Two subway lines, commuter trains to outlying towns and Amtrak passenger trains all use North Station, which serves about 24,000 commuters daily. Rail passengers will be ferried into the city from other stations by bus.

Interstate 93, a major artery which runs by the Fleet Center on Boston's northern tip, will be closed to its daily 200,000 drivers in the evenings, although no firm hours have yet been set.

Fear of attacks has grown in the wake the March 11 train bombings in Madrid, which killed 191 commuters and injured 1,500.

Many Boston commuters were unimpressed by the plan and some said they plan to take that week off to avoid delays and gridlocks on secondary roads into Boston.

The Republican Party will hold its convention ahead of this year's presidential elections at New York's Madison Square Garden. That arena sits above Pennsylvania Station, one of New York's busiest commuter hubs.

(From Reuters.) •

MTA beefs up security

The MTA has nearly doubled its police budget over the last three years in an effort to beef up security at its sprawling transportation network, guarding against a terror attack.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority will spend \$91 million this year on payroll, training and equipment connected with its ever-growing police force — nearly double the \$52 million the agency spent before 9/11.

The MTA has increased the total number of officers over the last four years from 521 in 2001 to 723 by the

end of this year. The MTA now uses 692 uniformed and undercover officers to perform routine patrols around Grand Central Terminal and Penn Station.

The agency has also increased the number of cops assigned to securing the MTA's outlying system, which includes transit hubs, two regional rail lines, seven bridges and two tunnels.

To deter potential terrorists from unleashing an attack, the MTA is being helped by New York and Connecticut state cops who have been assigned to ride Metro-North and Long Island Rail Road trains over the past few weeks.

(From New York Post.) •

BLET JOB BANK

Indiana Harbor Belt

The Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Company is looking to hire approximately 10 federally certified Locomotive Engineers for current vacancies on its property.

Primary duties, responsibilities and qualifications:

- Must be highly knowledgeable in operating rules, NORAC rules, and Federal Railroad Administration safety standards;
- Must possess locomotive engineer certification in accordance with FRA regulations (CFR Part 240);
- Inspects locomotive before run to verify quantity of fuel, sand, water, flagging equipment, and other supplies, as required by federal regulations and carrier rules and policies;
- Complies with train orders, train signals and railroad rules and regulations to operate locomotive in an efficient manner following safety regulations and time schedule;
- Applies knowledge of territory, including terrain, grades, curves and grade crossings, in order to give prescribed warning signals and to otherwise operate train in a safe and efficient manner;
- Observes track to detect obstructions and to anticipate operating problems as required by federal or company rules;
- Remains constantly alert and maintains a state of readiness in order to respond appropriately to unusual conditions or circumstances;
- Schedule includes both day and night hours;
- Schedule has irregular hours with possibility of extended hours/overtime;
- Variable hours per week result in variable income level with no set minimum; and
- Work is frequently performed out-of-doors involving exposure to weather conditions.

Indiana Harbor Belt offers competitive salary and excellent benefits, including medical, dental, life insurance, 401(k) plan, tuition reimbursement, employee assistance program and credit union.

Send, e-mail or fax resume to:

Employment Officer
Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad
 2721-161st Street
 Hammond, IN 46323
 Phone: (219) 989-4923
 Fax: (219) 989-4823
 Email: Marykay.conley@ihbrr.com

(Equal Opportunity Employer)

BLET JOB BANK

Springfield Terminal Rwy.

The Springfield Terminal Railway Company is looking to hire six certified locomotive engineers for positions system wide (includes Maine, Connecticut and Massachusetts).

Specific information is as follows:

- Position(s) Available: Six (6)
- Location(s): System Wide: MA, CT & ME
- Pay Rate: 100% of current rate (\$22.46 per hour after qualifying).
- Days/Hours: Will vary (Must be able to work varied days and shifts).
- Requirements: Current Certification

Employer Contact:

Dave Nargy / Warren Bostwick
Transportation Dept.
Springfield Terminal Railway Co.
Iron Horse Park
North Billerica, MA 01862
Dave Nargy, Manager Crew Office: (978) 663-1122
Warren Bostwick, General Manager West: (978) 663-9326
Fax Resume to: (978) 663-1119

RETIREMENT & HEALTHCARE NEWS

2004 Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conferences

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board will offer free informational conferences for elected officers of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen throughout 2004. Additional conferences may be added to the list as dates and locations become available.

Registration for all informational conferences begins at 8 a.m. The programs begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m.

April 16 • Williamsburg, Va.
Williamsburg Hospitality House
415 Richmond Road

April 16 • Romulus, Mich.
Crowne Plaza Detroit Metro Airport
8000 Merriman Road

April 22 • Baldwin, N.Y.
Coral House, 70 Milburn Ave.

April 23 • Nashville, Tenn.
Wyndham Nashville Airport Hotel
1112 Airport Center Drive

April 23 • Salt Lake City, Utah
Best Western Salt Lake Plaza Hotel
122 West South Temple

April 23 • St. Louis, Mo.
Holiday Inn South County Center
6921 S. Lindbergh Blvd.

April 23 • New York, N.Y.
The New York Helmsley Hotel
Room: Knickerbocker D
212 East 42nd Street

April 30 • Eagan, Minn.
Yankee Square Inn, 3450 Washington Dr.
I-35E & Yankee Doodle Road

May 7 • Kansas City, Mo.
Embassy Suites Hotel
7640 N.W. Tiffany Springs Pkwy.

May 7 • Baldwin Park, Calif.
San Gabriel Valley Hotel
14635 Baldwin Park Towne Center

May 7 • Independence, Ohio
Holiday Inn — Independence
6001 Rockside Road (I-77 and Rockside)

May 14 • Little Rock, Ark.
Holiday Inn Airport
3201 Bankhead Drive

May 14 • Golden, Colo.
Holiday Inn — Denver West Village
14707 West Colfax Avenue

May 14 • Atlanta, Ga.
Ramada Inn & Conference Center
418 Armour Drive

May 14 • Altoona, Pa.
Ramada Inn Altoona PA, Ballroom A
1 Sheraton Drive, Plank Road Exit

May 21 • Billings, Mont.
Billings Hotel and Convention Center
1223 Mullaney Lane

May 21 • Mansfield, Mass.
Holiday Inn
31 Hampshire Street

June 10 • Ashland, Neb.
Mahoney State Park, Nebraska Room
28500 W. Park Highway

June 11 • West Des Moines, Iowa
Hampton Inn of West Des Moines
7060 Lake Drive

June 21 • Glendale Heights, Ill.
Ramada Inn
780 E. North Ave.

September 18 • Fort Worth, Texas
Holiday Inn South
100 East Alta Mesa Blvd.

November 5 • Charlotte-Pineville, N.C.
Holiday Inn Express
9825 Leitner Drive

November 19 • Metairie, La.
Holiday Inn-Metairie
3400 I-10 & Causeway Blvd.
South Exic 228

December 3 • Orlando, Fla.
Holiday Inn-Downtown
304 W. Colonial Drive

United Healthcare to hold open enrollment

During the month of May 2004, United Healthcare will hold an open enrollment under GA-23111.

During this open enrollment, any individual eligible for coverage under one of the GA-23111 plans can enroll and will be accepted for coverage without any medical underwriting or requirement of good health. There are no limitations on pre-existing conditions.

Enrollment in May 2004 will be for coverage effective June 1, 2004. Only those applicants who mail their Enrollment Form in May 2004, will be considered for open enrollment.

This open enrollment is being held:

- For persons already enrolled in GA-23111 who want to change their coverage from Plan D to Plan F (which has no prescription drug coverage) or from Plan F to Plan D. The next opportunity to change plans is scheduled for May 2006.

- For any individuals who were covered under any railroad health plan and were represented by a Railway Labor Union.

- For any individuals who are members in accordance with the constitution or by-laws of one of the participating railway labor organizations, when coverage under the employer group health plan which applies to them ends.

If someone you know meets the new GA-23111 eligibility provisions, open enrollment provides an opportunity for them to become covered. You may also enroll your spouse or eligible children

if they are not currently covered. In addition, open enrollment under Plans D or F is available for your parent or parent-in-law.

Anyone interested in enrolling should call the following phone number to obtain an Enrollment Form or get additional information:

- For persons eligible for Medicare, call (800) 809-0453.

- For persons not eligible for Medicare, call (800) 842-5252.

The next open enrollment is planned for May 2006. •

United Healthcare to issue new ID cards

In the latter part of April, BLET members covered by GA-23111 will be receiving new, laminated ID cards from United Healthcare. The cards will replace the paper card currently issued. In addition to being more durable, this new card has a magnetic strip on the back, which will allow medical providers to access UnitedHealthcare's systems to determine deductible or co-payment. The new card lists all of your dependents, so you can use one card for all family members. You will receive only two of these ID cards for your family. If you require more cards, please call the customer service number provided on the card.

There will also be a new identification number on the ID card, replacing the Social Security Number. With the increasing concern about identity theft, UnitedHealthcare has taken this step to maintain your privacy. You will also

see this new ID number on all correspondence and Explanation of Benefits we send you.

If you are *not* eligible for Medicare, you should point out your new ID number to all of your medical providers so they can submit bills to UnitedHealthcare under your new ID number.

If you are *eligible* for Medicare (covered under Plan D or Plan F), your medical providers will continue to use your current Medicare ID number (and not your new UnitedHealthcare ID number) to submit bills to Medicare. •

New website available for health care information, www.myuhc.com

United Healthcare has launched a new website, www.myuhc.com, to help answer membership questions and concerns about their healthcare coverage.

All site features are free once registration is completed. BLET members and covered dependents can use www.myuhc.com to conduct a variety of transactions that have traditionally required a phone call or letter.

Features include:

- Verify eligibility, deductible or copay;
- View your benefits;
- Confirm that a claim has been paid or has been received;
- Print a temporary ID card or order a replacement ID Card;
- Search for in-network primary care physicians, specialists and hospitals;
- Compare hospitals based on quality

and safety measures for procedures of interest to you;

- Find out the total cost of a treatment or condition in your area so you can plan for your health care costs;
- Take a free online Health Assessment to determine risky health habits and get a personalized action plan;
- Visit Optum Live and chat online with a Registered Nurse;
- Access your pharmacy, dental, or other benefits from the myuhc.com site
- View and print your Explanation of Benefits instead of receiving mail;
- Obtain in-depth information on health topics, procedures, and conditions.

Members will need to register at www.myuhc.com in order to have full access to all site features. •

Improved vision care benefits now available

The new BLET National Agreement provides an improved vision care plan. Members were formerly covered by the Railroad Employees National Vision Plan, but are now covered by the VSP Standard Plan. This new plan is automatically available for any member working under the National Agreement.

Among the improvements, the VSP Standard Plan increases frame allowances from \$75 to \$115, and pays for lenses up to 61 mm in full. The VSP Standard Plan also offers a more extensive network of providers.

A chart comparing the VSP Standard Plan with the former plan can be viewed on the BLET website at: <http://www.ble.org/pr/pdf/vsp.pdf> •

BLET NEWS

UTU evicted in Michigan

Non-affiliate thrown out of AFL-CIO building

Due to its unaffiliated status, the United Transportation Union (UTU) was evicted from its offices in the Michigan State AFL-CIO building in Lansing, Mich.

The Michigan AFL-CIO evicted the UTU's Michigan Legislative Board effective January 1 after requests from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Joint Council 43, IBT Local 614, and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

Brother Greg Powell, Chairman of the BLET Michigan State Legislative Board, notified the Michigan AFL-CIO of the UTU's unaffiliated status in late 2003. He and Dave Fernald, First Vice Chairman of the BLET Michigan State Legislative Board, also held meetings with members of the Michigan AFL-CIO

Executive Board.

Brother Powell thanked Cecil Powell, President of Teamster Local 614, and Bill Black, Legislative Representative of Joint Council 43, for their assistance. The two bodies passed a resolution to withhold funds from the Michigan AFL-CIO until the unaffiliated union was evicted from the premises.

In early 2002, the Western Nebraska Central Labor Council voted unanimously to evict UTU representatives from its headquarters in Alliance, Neb., due to the UTU's status as a non-affiliate.

The UTU withdrew from the national AFL-CIO on March 15, 2000, to avoid potential financial sanctions resulting from its constant raiding attempts. •

Kerry

Continued from Page 1

"We look forward to working with our next President — John Kerry — to create jobs, fix the health care system, negotiate fair trade agreements and protect workers pensions," Hoffa added. "Working families will play a pivotal role in the fall election and we look forward to placing a pro-worker President in the White House."

John Kerry has a 90 percent AFL-CIO voting record over an 18-year Senate career. He has fought to raise the minimum wage, cosponsored bills that would outlaw striker replacement and would provide workers with Family and Medical Leave to spend time with a new child or care for a family member.

He has helped beat back Republican efforts to gut OSHA, weaken worker safety rules and cut funds from worker training and employment programs. •

Remote Control

Continued from Page 1

involvement of the Senate Commerce Committee has already forced the FRA to take another look at RCLs and we hope that this time the agency will address the problems that transportation labor — led by the BLET and the Teamsters — has long identified," the resolution states.

The TTD, BLET and Teamsters, however, are already skeptical of the audit. The FRA's reliance on self-reporting of accidents by railroad companies could yield questionable results.

"It is well known that self reporting of accident/incident data by railroads has been problematic," the TTD resolution states.

For example, self-reporting gives railroad companies too much leeway in determining what accidents are reported, and the ambiguity of current reporting guidelines will not permit conclusive findings.

In addition, under current reporting guidelines, specific accident and incident reports can be modified by the railroads even after the safety audit is conducted by FRA and the initial report is given to Congress.

TTD represents 35 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries.

A copy of the resolution is available on the BLET website at:

<http://www.ble.org/pr/pdf/remotecontrol.pdf> •

APRIL 2004 CALENDAR & EVENTS

JUNE 13-17... 77th Annual Southeastern Meeting Association, Greenville, S.C.

To be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Greenville Commons, the 77th annual BLE-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association will be hosted by W.R. "Roger" Peace and members of BLE Division 598 in Greenville, S.C. Early bird reservations can be made by calling the hotel at: (800) 233-1234 or (864) 235-1234. Be sure to ask for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen discounted rate. Be sure to ask for the BLET room rate of \$99 per night. Registration deadline for the BLET rate is May 10, 2004.

AUGUST 8-12... 76th Eastern Union Meeting Association, Grand Island, N.Y.

Jim and Janet Louis and the members of Division 421 will host the 2004 EUMA at Grand Island's Holiday Inn. August 8 is check-in date; August 11 is the annual banquet; and August 12 is check out. Rooms are \$99 per night. For reservations, call (800) HOLIDAY, or (800) 465-4329 (use group code "BLE"). For more details, contact Arrangements Chairman Jimmy Louis at: louisble@adelphia.net or (716) 695-0789.

AUGUST 17-22... 64th Annual International Western Convention, Albuquerque, N.M.

Pat and Barbie Lynch and the members of BLET Division 446 (Gallup, N.M.) will host the 64th annual IWC in Albuquerque, N.M. Reservations at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque (300 Tijeras NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102) can be made by calling: (505) 842-1234. The BLET room rate is \$99 per night. The deadline for this rate is July 4. After July 4, any rooms still available will be \$199 per night. The IWC is encouraging members to register early for the 2004 convention. A \$20 registration discount is being offered to those whose registration forms are postmarked by June 6, 2004. Members who register before that date will pay \$55; members who register after that date will have to pay \$75.

The Week of SEPTEMBER 13... 69th Annual SWCM, The Woodlands, Texas

Local Chairman G.Y. Bailey and the members of BLE Division 62 will host the 69th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM) in The Woodlands, Texas, a suburb of Houston. Kathie Bailey will serve as the GIA Chairperson for the convention. Early bird reservations can be made by calling The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel and Convention Center at: (281) 367-9797. The hotel address is: 1601 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands, TX 77380. More hotel information is available at: Marriott.com/houmw.

Advisory Board February Activity

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

International President Don M. Hahs—International Office: General supervision of BLE activities; General office duties; CRLQ meetings, Florida; Designated Legal Counsel meetings; IBT strategic planning sessions, Washington, D.C.; Advisory Board Meeting, Washington, D.C.

First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodziewicz— Assisted President in general operation of ID Office; Vice President assignments; Special Representative assignments; CRLQ mtgs.; Rail Labor Division/TTD mtg.; NCCC mtg.; Designated Legal Counsel mtg.; IBT/Advisory board mtg.; BMWE mtg.; Organizing Department; Short Lines Dept.; Various telephone calls and correspondence.

General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert—General supervision of BLE financial, record depts.; ID office; BLET Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Secretary-Treasurers' Workshop, Kansas City, Mo.; Financial meeting with IBT; Designated Legal Counsel mtgs., Carlsbad, Calif.; CRLQ mtgs., Miami, Fla.; Strategic planning mtg. w/ IBT, Washington, D.C.

Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—Public Law Board 6619; Advisory Board mtg.; Grand Trunk Western contract discussions; Wheeling & Lake Erie Section 6 negotiations; Worked on issues involving SBA 1063; Assisted GTW, CSX and NS Northern Lines w/ various issues.

Vice-President Richard K. Radek— ID 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; Paducah & Louisville; Chicago Central & Pacific; METRA training agreement mtg., Hammond, Ind.; General assistance, remote control & negotiations, BRC/IHB, Alsip, Ill.; Division 582 mtg., Joliet, Ill.; Contract (H&W) negotiations, EJ&E; PLB No. 6603, general assistance, claims, EJ&E, Chicago/Joliet, Ill.; Advisory Board mtgs. & IBT mtgs., Washington, D.C.; FRA Part 240.409 Proceedings this month: EQAL 02-01, 02-30, 02-45, 02-52.

Vice-President Dale McPherson — CP Rail; Port. Term. RR; Longview Portland & Northern; Longview Switching Co.; Indiana RR; Missouri & Northern Arkansas RR; Utah Railroad; UP Eastern Dist.; UP former CNW; BLE National Bargaining Cmte.; BLE/IBT Constitution & Bylaws Cmte.; PLBs 5604, 5681, 5721, 6040, 6281, 6589; UP work/rest projects; RSAC positive train control cmte.; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; NCCC/BLE mtgs., Miami; CN mtgs., re: DMIIR merger, Miami; CP contract negotiations w/ GC M.D. Priestner, Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.; CN/DMIR implementing agreement negotiations, St. Paul, Minn.; Strategic planning conference w/ IBT, Advisory Board mtg., Washington, D.C.

Vice-President & U.S. Nat'l Legislative Representative Raymond A. Holmes — Washington D.C. office; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; CRLQ meetings; Wyoming Legislative Board meeting; Alabama Legislative Board meeting; Designated Legal Counsel mtgs., San Diego; Strategic planning mtgs. w/ IBT, Washington, D.C.; Advisory Board mtg., Washington, D.C.; Receptions for: Cong. Sandlin (D-TX), Pascarell (D-NJ), Edwards (D-TX) and Boehlert (R-NY).

Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr.— Assigned to: Kansas City Southern; Gateway Western; Midsouth Rail; Southrail; Texas-Mexican Rwy.; Springfield Terminal; Delaware & Hudson; Indiana & Ohio RR; Contract negotiations on NYS&W w/ GC Martin, Oneonta, N.Y.; Mtgs. w/ GC Koonce, KCS (Midsouth, Gateway Western & Southrail), Cocoa Beach, Fla.; Strategy mtgs., BLET-IBT, Washington, D.C.; Advisory Board mtg., Washington, D.C.; General office duties, research, correspondence.

Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—General office duties; Attend Div. 655 mtg., Fargo, N.D.; Div. 69 mtg., Grand Forks, N.D.; PLB 6659; Section 6 negotiations for PHL, Long Beach, Calif.; Wabash Hospital mtg., Decatur; Mtg. w/ MRL and attend Div. 262 mtg., Missoula, Mont.; Div. 232 mtg., Billings, Mont.; Div. 672 mtg., membership organizing mtg., Memphis, Tenn.; Mtgs. on trip rates, Memphis, Tenn.; Advisory Board mtg., Strategy session w/ IBT, Washington, D.C.

Vice-President E.L. "Lee" Pruitt — Assisted general chairmen & members of: UP-Western Lines; UP-Western Region; UP-Central Region; UP-Southern Region; UP-Tacoma Belt; General office duties, telephone paperwork; Mtgs. w/ UPWL GC Hannah, re: Shortage of engineers, vacation assignments, Omaha; Article IX arbitration w/ UPCR GC Rightnowar, Chicago; Mtgs. w/ Roland Wilder, short term disability, Washington, D.C.; IBT strategy sessions, Advisory Board mtg., Washington, D.C.


Vice-President Paul L. Wingo Jr. — Assigned to NS-Southern Lines and Eastern Region GCofAs; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern GCofA; Meridian Southern; BLET Rail Security Officer; Attend meetings of BLET Divisions 301, 448, 239 and 899; Security project; Advisory Board mtg., Washington, D.C.; Strategy mtgs. w/ IBT, Washington, D.C.; NS Central Division special project; General office duties and preparation for Public Law Boards.

SAFETY TASK FORCE HOTLINE

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LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN NEWS

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

A Division of the Rail Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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John V. Bentley Jr., Editor
www.ble.org • (216) 241-2630
Kathleen Policy, Associate Editor

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