



# NEWS

MAY  
2004

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

## BLET calls for corporate reform at UP

Roughly 19 million shares (9.5% of voting shares) were cast in support of a Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) shareholder proposal at the Union Pacific Corporation's annual shareholders meeting in Salt Lake City in mid-April.

The BLET proposal sought to replace executive stock options with restricted shares that vest over at least three years. The restricted shares would be awarded based on operational performance measures disclosed to shareholders,



would yield no dividends or proxy voting rights before vesting, and must be retained for the executive's tenure with the company.

"With rampant reports of operational problems, staffing shortages, and remote control accidents at Union Pacific, the Board of Directors should be looking for ways to more closely link executive compensation with performance," said Don Hahs, National President of the BLET, a Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters' Rail Conference.

"BLET members have more at stake than most shareholders," said Mack Hunt, the BLET member who presented the proposal at the shareholder meeting. "It is important we demand accountability from management." Brother Hunt is a Union Pacific locomotive engineer and serves the Brotherhood as Secretary-Treasurer of Division 713 in Salt Lake City.

In addition to the BLET's proposal, shareholders had the opportunity to vote on another proposal introduced by the Laborers' Union which called on the company to disclose political contributions. •

## BLET lauds Congressman Capuano for support of rail safety, security

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), a division of the Teamsters Rail Conference, applauded Congressman Mike Capuano (D-MA) for making a statement of record in support of improved railroad safety and security measures regarding remote control locomotives.

At a hearing of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee on March 24, Congressman Capuano said that the operation of remote control trains has become a national security issue in light of terrorist attacks on trains in Madrid.

"What is clear, Mr. Chairman, is that in light of recent terrorist acts and the vulnerability of our rail system to potential attacks, the use of Remote Control Locomotives (RCLs) must be considered in a whole new

light," Congressman Capuano said.

He also said that lax federal oversight has caused remote control trains to become a safety risk.

"I am informed that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has issued 'guidelines' for using remote control devices, but they have turned out to be exactly that — guidelines — that in some cases have been loosely interpreted and in other cases completely ignored," the Congressman said. "I am told that these guidelines 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."

"Congressman Capuano has brought to light a serious safety issue in our nation's rail system. The use of RCLs is not only risky, but has also caused skilled operating employees to

be replaced by an electronic device," said James P. Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "No type of technology will ever replace the eyes and ears of skilled, dedicated rail employees."

BLET National President Don Hahs said that the FRA's failure to act on the issue has resulted in a decrease in the level of safety and security in the rail industry.

"Congressman Capuano's statement is a positive step toward creating mandatory, enforceable federal safety regulations in a segment of the rail industry currently lacking any federal safety rules," National President Hahs said. "Security of our nation's railroads should be a top priority, and I thank Congressman Capuano for bringing this potential secu-

See Capuano, Page 5

## BLET continues fight for remote control safety

Leadership of the United Transportation Union reinforced their reputation as a "company union" by jointly lobbying with rail carriers to block the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen's (BLET) efforts to improve the safety and security of remote control train operations.

Using false and misleading information, the UTU leaders also employed "scare tactics" in an effort to portray the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen in a negative light.

The BLET worked with Teamster and TTD lobbyists to craft language for an amendment that would boost the safety of remote control train operations. Currently, the operation of remote control trains in the United States is unregulated, creating a safety

and security gap in a time of increased terrorist threats.

The industry has also been plagued by a number of very serious remote control train accidents in recent months, including one accident where a UTU member's foot was amputated and another where a UTU member was killed.

The BLET amendment would have provided a safety net for workers by legislating improved training for remote control operators in the absence of enforceable federal safety regulations.

The UTU leadership, in an attempt to portray the BLET and its safety efforts in a negative light, issued a news release claiming that the amendment would cause UTU members to lose their jobs.

See Remote Control, Page 2

## SOFA Group issues safety statistics; 126 switching deaths since 1992

The Switching Operations Fatality Analysis (SOFA) Group has issued its safety statistics for the month of January of 2004.

According to SOFA, there were 11 "severe injuries" in switching operations in January, including two amputations. The SOFA Group issues regular safety reminders to help achieve its goal of eliminating switching injuries and fatalities. The group was formed

in February of 1998 at the request of the Federal Railroad Administration to review switching operations accident reports and to develop recommendations for reducing fatalities and injuries.

For the entire year, there have been two fatalities in switching operations. On January 14, a Norfolk Southern conductor with four years of service was killed when struck by a train he was

switching in Kankakee Yard in Kankakee, Ill. On March 10, a 46-year-old Metro North conductor (with 27 years of service) was killed when struck by his own equipment at Metro North's Stamford Yard in Stamford, Conn.

Since January 1, 1992, there have been 126 switching fatalities. Of those 126 fatalities, seven took place in the month of May.

According to SOFA, the average age of the victims in the seven fatalities is 47. The average length of service was 14.6 years with four employees having less than 2.5 years of service.

The BLET, a Division of the Teamsters' Rail Conference, is part of the SOFA Group, along with representatives from the Federal Railroad Admin-

See SOFA, Page 2

# BLET NEWS

## Whose side are they on?

### UTU partners with AAR to oppose remote control safety improvements

#### Remote Control

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In reality, there is a dangerous shortage of rail workers throughout the United States, particularly locomotive engineers, trainmen and conductors. The Union Pacific Railroad just announced plans to hire nearly 4,000 new workers this year alone.

Intelligent rail workers were able to see through the UTU leadership's false claim that jobs were at risk as a result of the BLET amendment. It was just another case of the UTU leaders using scare tactics that insult the intelligence of their own members.

Before the BLET amendment was even introduced, BLET leaders knew it would be withdrawn. The original intent was to introduce the amendment and attach it to a transit spending bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. Leaders of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure asked all legislators on the Committee to refrain from trying to attach any amendments to the bill because of its importance and the need to pass it quickly. As a result, more than 25 amendments were withdrawn, including the BLET amendment.

In other words, withdrawing the amendment had nothing to do with the efforts of the UTU.

Even though the amendment was never introduced, Congressman Mike Capuano (D-MA) agreed to read a statement into the record supporting the BLET's position on remote control. He criticized the Federal Railroad Administration for inaction, failure to enact enforceable safety regulations, and the threat this oversight poses to rail safety and national security.

The UTU leadership's efforts revealed something else that each and every railroad employee should know. For years, many have referred to the UTU as the "company union." A few years ago, for example, when the railroad carriers wanted to implement remote control technology without enforceable safety regulations, they turned to the UTU — their old friend who comfortably resides in management's hip pocket.

So earlier this week when word of the BLET amendment leaked, the UTU once again played the role of company lap dog. The UTU signed a joint letter with the Association of American Railroads opposing the BLET amendment. The joint UTU-AAR letter supported the status quo on remote control and was sent to leaders of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

A copy of the letter is available at right so members can see how the AAR and its lap dog union, the UTU, work together so comfortably. A portion of the letter reads, "Experience has shown that remote control is safer than conventional operations." It's unbelievable that UTU leaders would agree to this statement when their own members are being maimed and killed by remote control operations, but sadly, they did.

In conclusion, the facts are clear: The UTU leadership claimed the BLET amendment would cause loss of jobs in an industry that needs to hire thousands of new workers, which is untrue. The UTU leadership claimed that the BLET amendment was withdrawn due to the UTU's political influence, which is untrue. And in the end, the UTU's leadership showed their true colors

March 23, 2004

The Honorable Don Young  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Oberstar  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Young and Ranking Member Oberstar:

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the United Transportation Union (UTU) are writing in opposition to an amendment by Congressman Capuano that would effectively prohibit the use of remote controlled locomotives. The amendment is expected to be offered during markup of the TEA-LU reauthorization.

The Capuano amendment would do nothing to promote railroad safety. The amendment would have the opposite effect since remote control is safer than conventional operations. Experience has shown that remote control reduces yard accidents and injuries. Train accident rates in Canadian rail yards have been cut by almost half over the past decade where remote control has been used. U.S. railroads have also experienced a decline in accident and injury rates using remote control compared to conventional yard operations.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is closely monitoring the use of remote control technology. FRA regulations already govern the training of employees operating remote control devices as well as device inspection. Moreover, FRA Administrator Allan Rutter has stated, "Based on safety data gathered to date, there is nothing to indicate that remote control operations should be banned from use."

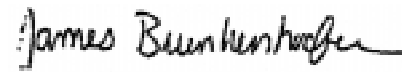
Remote control is not a safety issue — it is a collective bargaining issue involving a dispute over the assignment of work. In 2002, railroad reached agreement with the UTU over implementing the technology. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) challenged this agreement because it wanted the remote control jobs. After losing its challenge, BLE began claiming that remote control operations were not safe, seeking to usurp FRA's authority in this area. Ironically, BLE has signed agreements giving it control over remote control implementation on at least two large regional railroads. On these railroads, BLE is not challenging the safety of remote control.

AAR and UTU urge you to vote "no" on the Capuano amendment.

Sincerely,



Edward R. Hamberger  
President and CEO  
Association of American Railroads



James Brunkenhoefer  
National Legislative Director  
United Transportation Union

and provided clear evidence that they are in bed with the rail carriers. Instead of fighting for improved remote control safety, they are working jointly with the rail carriers against it. They do not appear to have the best interests of their members at heart.

The BLET had hoped to take the high road, but the UTU leadership has chosen to make political hay out of this issue in an attempt to portray the BLET in a negative light. We cannot and will not allow their misleading statements

and distortions go unchallenged.

The text of the letter is below. A copy of the letter with signatures reproduced is available on the BLET website as a PDF at: <http://www.ble.org/pr/pdf/aarutu.pdf> •

## Switching Operations Fatality Analysis Group issues safety data

#### SOFA

Continued from Page 1

istration (FRA), Association of American Railroads (AAR), American Shortline and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), UTU, and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Volpe Center. The BLET's representatives are: George Last, Colorado State Legislative Board Chairman; Tom Perkovich, Minnesota State Legislative

Board Chairman; and Rob Svob, Arizona State Legislative Board Chairman.

#### Five SOFA Lifesavers

Issued by the Switching Operations Fatality Analysis Group

#### Recommendation 1

Any crew member intending to foul track or equipment must notify the locomotive engineer before such action can take place. The locomotive engi-

neer must then apply locomotive or train brakes, have the reverser centered, and then confirm this action with the individual on the ground. Additionally, any crew member that intends to adjust knuckles/drawbars, or apply or remove EOT device, must insure that the cut of cars to be coupled into is separated by no less than 50 feet. Also, the person on the ground must physically inspect the cut of cars not attached to the locomotive to insure that they are completely stopped and, if nec-

essary, a sufficient number of hand brakes must be applied to insure the cut of cars will not move.

#### Recommendation 2

When two or more train crews are simultaneously performing work in the same yard or industry tracks, extra precautions must be taken:

#### Same Track

Two or more crew members are



# Houston, San Francisco pass safety resolutions

## List of communities asking FRA for enforceable remote control safety rules grows to 53

A total of 53 communities have enacted remote control safety resolutions, including Houston and San Francisco.

All resolutions call upon the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to enact enforceable regulations, as opposed to recommended guidelines, to make remote control operations safer.

The operation of remote control trains in the United States remains virtually unregulated. To date, the FRA has only issued recommended guidelines for remote control train operations. As opposed to federal regulations, which must be enforced, railroad companies often ignore the recommended guidelines in the day-to-day operation of remote control trains.

Most recently, the cities of Houston and San Francisco have passed remote control safety resolutions, in addition to San Francisco County. Thus far, 38 cities, 15 counties, and 16 AFL-CIO State Federations have enacted remote control safety resolutions.

### Houston, Texas

On April 14, the Houston City Council passed a resolution opposing the use of remote control locomotives within its city limits.

BLET Texas State Legislative Board (TSLB) Chairman Terry Briggs said "Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States. I commend the Council members and the Mayor for adding this city's voice to the growing number of other communities who are concerned about the safety of their citizens who live, work and go to school near where remote control is in use. This is an important contribution to the process that, hopefully, will lead to regulation of remote control

"Getting this resolution has been a long, difficult process," he continued. "We first started the idea of a resolution in Houston more than 18 months ago when Gil Gore, General Chairman UP Southern Region, authorized then-Vice Chairman Rodney Stutes to work in conjunction with the Texas State Legislative Board on this project. We began a process of coalition building between members of the city council,

other labor organizations, and community and civic groups. This process was primarily accomplished through the efforts of Herb Yambra, 2nd Vice Chairman, TSLB, and his wife Kathy, GIA Texas Legislative Representative, who worked with Brother Stutes until his untimely death in February of 2003. Since that time, Brother Herb and Sister Kathy have done the bulk of the work that was needed to get the resolution passed and they deserve the bulk of the credit.

"But we would be remiss if we did not recognize that this was a joint effort with many participants," Brother Briggs said. "Thanks must also go to Gil Gore and all his Vice Chairmen, including Dave Phillips. Bob Tramuto, Attorney for the law firm of Jones and Granger and Richard Shaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the Harris County AFL-CIO, both helped out immensely. Also, thanks go to Council Member Carol Alvarado, who carried the resolution for us."

Brother Briggs said that the supporters in Houston are too numerous to list, but the list includes all the participants and organizers of the rallies that raised public awareness of this issue, "especially all the BLET members who participated, and, therefore, assumed ownership of their Union's activities." Family members and GIA officers and members also participated and continue to be very supportive, he said.

Additionally, many local, state and federal elected officials, as well as community and civic groups showed their support of the resolution by calling or sending letters to the City Council.

"This could not have been done without all the cooperation, help and support of everyone in this coalition," he concluded. "In the end however, I think that those who knew him would agree that Brother Stutes is looking down in approval of the final outcome."

### San Francisco (city and county)

The City of San Francisco adopted a resolution on March 16 opposing remote control locomotives and calling on

### In Florida, another accident, another near miss



At the CSX terminal in Tampa in March 19, a remote control assignment working the north end of the yard derailed two box cars. The accident occurred when the RCO crew switched two cars into a track without properly securing. This resulted in a rollout to the lead where the assignment was switching. The derailed box cars came within inches of support beams to a highway overpass. This is the second accident in seven months by RCO assignments where this overpass was narrowly missed. The last one involved a loaded tank car in August 2003.

the FRA to develop comprehensive guidelines to govern operation of the technology. The same resolution was adopted by the county of San Francisco.

According to BLET California State Legislative Board Chairman Tim Smith, the passage of the resolution was the result of hard work by two BLET Division 65 officers, Legislative Representative Sean Morgan and Local Chairman Martin Jaeger.

"These two BLET officers represent the interests primarily of Amtrak and Cal-Train," he said. "They are an example of how our Brotherhood should work. As the saying goes, 'One for All and All for One' ...our battles are the BLET's battles, to fight together."

Chairman Smith also thanked the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Supervisor Sophie Maxwell for passing the resolution.

### Totals

In addition to San Francisco and Houston, 36 U.S. cities have adopted similar resolutions: Baton Rouge, La.; Detroit, Mich.; Shreveport, La.; Marysville, Mich.; Boston, Mass.; Cleveland, Ohio; Pine Bluff, Ark.; North Little

Rock, Ark.; Beardstown, Ill.; Bakersfield, Calif.; Woodbridge, N.J.; Maple Heights, Ohio; Alliance, Neb.; Evansville, Ind.; Dupon, Ill.; Durand, Mich.; Flat Rock, Mich.; Woodhaven, Mich.; Flint, Mich.; Sparks, Nev.; Commerce, Calif.; Clinton, Iowa; Montebello, Calif.; Saginaw, Mich.; Mankato, Minn.; Wamac, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; River Rouge, Mich.; Melvindale, Mich.; Redford Township, Mich.; Irvington, Ill.; Berwyn, Ill.; Allen Park, Mich.; Central City, Ill.; Carteret, N.J.; and Toledo, Ohio.

Also, 14 other counties have passed remote control resolutions. They are: Douglas County, Wisc.; West Baton Rouge Parish, La.; Point Coupee Parish, La.; Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Huron County, Ohio; Erie County, Ohio; Whitley County, Ky.; Unicoi County, Tenn.; Contra Costa County, Calif.; Knox County, Tenn.; Clinton County, Iowa; Harris County, Texas; Roanoke County, Va.; and Greenup County, Ky.

### On the Web

A complete list of remote control safety resolutions is available at: <http://www.ble-t.org/remotecontrol/resolutions.asp>. •

## SOFA

Continued from Page 2

prohibited from switching into the same track at the same time, without establishing direct communication with all crew members involved.

### Adjacent Track

Protection must be afforded when there is the possibility of movement on adjacent tracks(s). Each crew will arrange positive protection for (an) adja-

cent track(s) through positive communication with yardmaster and/or other crew members.

### Recommendation 3

At the beginning of each tour of duty, all crew members will meet and discuss all safety matters and work to be accomplished. Additional briefings will be held any time work changes are made and when necessary to protect their safety during their performance of service.

### Recommendation 4

When using radio communication, locomotive engineers must not begin any shove move without a specified distance from the person controlling the move. Strict compliance with "distance to go" communication must be maintained.

When controlling train or engine movements, all crew members must communicate by hand signals or radio signals. A combination of hand and radio signals is prohibited. All crew members must confirm when the mode of communication changes.

### Recommendation 5

Crew members with less than one year of service must have special attention paid to safety awareness, service qualifications, on-the-job training, physical plant familiarity, and overall ability to perform service safely and efficiently. Programs such as peer review, mentoring, and supervisory observation must be utilized to insure employees are able to perform service in a safe manner. •



# PASSENGER RAIL NEWS BRIEFS

## For new NJ Transit trains, a rough ride

With advanced technology and the latest amenities, NJ Transit's new rail passenger car was supposed to make commuting easier.

Instead, the model, called the Comet V (five), has produced tedious travel delays and routine aggravations ever since it started carrying New Jersey riders back in the fall of 2002.

First, there were computer glitches that caused the trains to shut down en route. Then came a nagging series of door malfunctions that riders say still have not been fixed.

On top of that, the very comforts that transit officials bragged about in a news conference two years ago have turned out to be less than comfortable. Take, for example, the Comet V's public address system. More often than not, it spews annoying static.

What else? The ticket holders are ripping the new red seats. The faucets in the restrooms do not work correctly. The windows leak. The electronic message screens sometimes announce the wrong station.

All this for rail cars that cost between \$890,000 and \$1 million apiece.

"It's some of the worst new equipment I've seen," said Bob Vallochi, general chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen. "They arrived dead on arrival."

NJT officials say it's normal for new rail cars to have kinks that need to be ironed out. After the manufacturer, Alstom Transport of France, provided a test model of the Comet V a few years ago, NJT crews found 260 things that needed to be fixed before the rest of the cars could be completed.

Once the trains started running on regular schedules, the railroad identified another batch of flaws that needed to be resolved. NJT has a list of 60 "modifications" that still need to be done, including things like the public address system and the doors.

At present, Alstom has about 25 employees at NJ Transit's various rail yards, working on improving the cars.

*(From the Star-Ledger.) •*

## TSA to test rail security at Maryland station

The government plans to use a suburban Maryland train stop to test the feasibility of security checks for rail passengers, a response to last month's deadly railway bombings in Madrid.

The testing in New Carrollton, Md., is expected to begin by the end of May and last 60 to 90 days, Transportation Security Administration spokesman Darren Kayser said.

Kayser said the TSA is looking at a range of technologies and hasn't decided how many kinds of equipment to test or in what combination. An important question is how quickly machines can check people and luggage, he said.

The site was chosen because it presents challenges likely to be faced in screening railway passengers for weapons or explosives.

The platform is open to the elements and serves a mix of people, including rush-hour commuters and longer-distance passengers, Kayser

said. The agency intends to screen Amtrak riders and is in talks with the Maryland Transit Administration, which operates the MARC commuter rail system, about participating.

Easy access to railways makes them vulnerable to terrorist attacks. In 1995, cultists unleashed nerve gas in a Tokyo subway, killing 12. Recently, the FBI and the Homeland Security Department warned that terrorists might strike trains and buses in major U.S. cities using bombs concealed in bags or luggage.

The key problem in screening railway passengers is doing it fast enough so the trains can still run on time.

Amtrak spokesman Dan Stessel said the railroad is pleased the TSA is turning its attention to ground-based security. The agency spends the vast majority of its budget on aviation security.

"We will continue to work cooperatively with them in their efforts," said Stessel.

*(From the Associated Press.) •*

## SEPTA facing 'crisis' with \$70 million deficit

SEPTA officials are looking at a \$70 million deficit for its fiscal 2005 budget that its general manager, Faye Moore, calls "one of the greatest financial crises in the history of SEPTA."

The agency has proposed a \$920 million budget and has not asked for fare boosts or service cutbacks.

Not yet, at least.

What SEPTA is asking for is "long-term predictable funding," said agency spokesman Richard Maloney.

"We need a source of revenue from the state," he said. "Probably a tax, but it wouldn't have to be."

State legislators have not increased the subsidy to SEPTA in six of the past nine years, Maloney said. If the state had given the agency a 3 percent cost of living each of the last nine years, "we'd be hunky-dory," he said.

SEPTA will hold public hearings next month in the five-county area, urging citizens to lobby their state legislators to pass such a tax or subsidy.

Also, SEPTA officials will provide general information on possible options for the deficit, "including steep fare increases and significant service reductions," according to a news release.

The public hearings in Philadelphia will be held on May 20 at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the Pennsylvania Convention Center, located at 1101 Arch Street, Room 204.

Any comments or complaints can be sent through e-mail at opbud@septa.org or by mail to 1234 Market St., 10th floor, Philadelphia, Pa. 19107.

*(From the Philadelphia Daily News.) •*

## Report: Metro-North employees in pay scam

More than 40 Metro-North employees were found over the course of almost a year to have left work when they were supposed to be repairing and inspecting cars in an upstate New York railway.

Investigators with the MTA Inspector General's Office witnessed dozens of nighttime employees exiting the Croton-Harmon facility in Croton-on-Hudson during a 10-month probe. They headed to a pizzeria, bars or simply home, staying away for far longer than their 30-minute lunch break.

They escaped notice by having colleagues punch them out using a timeclock that is not monitored by a security camera, or after supervisors signed time cards with no departure time stamps, according to an Inspector General's report acquired under the Freedom of Information Act.

Most of the abuse occurred last spring and summer. In all, 42 people were found during that period to have collected more than 260 hours of undeserved pay, the report said. With employees at the yard each earning from \$15 to \$30 an hour not including benefits, the lost pay totals at least \$4,000.

*(From New York Newsday.) •*



## Golf Tournament • 64th Annual IWC

Paa-Ko Ridge Golf Club  
Albuquerque, N.M.

www.Paakoridge.com • Ph.: (505) 281-6000



**Date:** Wednesday, August 18, 2004  
**Entry Fee:** \$80.00/player  
**Format:** Four Man Scramble/Red-White-Blue

**Registration Deadline:** July 18, 2004  
**Includes:** Continental breakfast; Golf cart and range balls  
**Prizes:** Longest drive, closest to pin, etc...

**CHECK-IN/CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST — 7:30 a.m.**  
**SHOTGUN START — 8:30 a.m.**

### FOUR MAN TEAMS

List other players you would like to play with, or other players that you are registering.

| NAME     | HCP/AV SCORE | COST (\$80 per player) |
|----------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____        | _____                  |
| 2. _____ | _____        | _____                  |
| 3. _____ | _____        | _____                  |
| 4. _____ | _____        | _____                  |

TOTAL \$:

If you're a single, we will place you. Give at least a two-day notice if playing as a single. Registration deadline is July 18 and the maximum number of players is 120.

**Please mail this form, along with check or money order payable to "Rick Fuller," to:**

**Rick Fuller**  
2004 IWC Golf Tournament  
27 Blackberry Lane  
Los Lunas, NM 87301  
Phone: (505) 865-1395

**Golfweek Magazine:** Ranked Paa-Ko Ridge as one of the Top 100 Modern Courses in America (#23)  
**Golf Digest:** Ranked Paa-Ko Ridge as one of America's 100 Greatest Public Courses (#29)  
**Golf Magazine:** Ranked Paa-Ko Ridge as one of the Top 100 You Can Play in America (#43)

# RAILROAD RETIREMENT NEWS

## Benefits under Railroad Retirement, Social Security

Employers and employees covered by the Railroad Retirement Act pay higher retirement taxes than those covered by the Social Security Act, so that railroad retirement benefits remain substantially higher than social security benefits.

The following questions and answers show the differences in railroad retirement and social security benefits payable at the close of the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003. It also shows the differences in age requirements and payroll taxes under the two systems.

### 1. How do the average monthly railroad retirement and social security benefits paid to retired employees and spouses compare?

The average age annuity being paid by the Railroad Retirement Board at the end of fiscal year 2003 to career rail employees was \$2,000 a month, and for all retired rail employees the average was \$1,555. The average age retirement benefit being paid under social security was \$900 a month. Spouse benefits averaged \$600 a month under railroad retirement compared to \$440 under social security.

The Railroad Retirement Act also provides supplemental railroad retirement annuities of between \$23 and \$43 a month, which are payable to employees who retire directly from the rail industry with 25 or more years of service.

### 2. Are the benefits awarded to recent retirees generally greater than the benefits payable to those who retired years ago?

Yes, because recent awards are based on higher average earnings. For career railroad employees retiring at the end of fiscal year 2003, regular annuity awards averaged over \$2,625 a month while monthly benefits awarded to workers retiring at full retirement age under social security averaged about \$1,205. If spouse benefits are added, the combined benefits for the employee and spouse would approximate \$3,700 under railroad retirement coverage, compared to \$1,805 under social security. Adding a supplemental annuity to the railroad family's benefit increases average total benefits for current career rail retirees to over \$3,735 a month.

### 3. How much are the disability benefits currently awarded?

Disabled railroad workers retiring directly from the railroad industry at the end of fiscal year 2003 were awarded over \$2,240 a month on the average while awards for disabled workers under social security averaged almost \$925.

While both the Railroad Retirement and Social Security Acts provide benefits to workers who are totally disabled for any regular work, the Railroad Retirement Act also provides disability benefits specifically for career employees who are disabled for work in their regular railroad occupation. Career employees may be eligible for such an occupational disability annuity at age 60 with 10 years of service, or at any age with 20 years of service.

### 4. Can railroaders retire at earlier ages than workers under social security?

Railroad employees with 30 or more years of creditable service are eligible for regular annuities based on age and service the first full month they are age 60, and rail employees with less than 30 years of creditable service are eligible for regular annuities based on age and service the first full month they are age 62.

No early retirement reduction applies if a rail employee retires at age 60 or older with 30 years of service and his or her retirement is after 2001, or if the employee retired before 2002 at age 62 or older with 30 years of service.

Early retirement reductions are otherwise applied to annuities awarded before full retirement age—the age at which an employee can receive full benefits with no reduction for early retirement. This ranges from age 65 for those born before 1938 to age 67 for those born in 1960 or later, the same as under social security.

Under social security, a worker cannot begin receiving retirement benefits based on age until age 62, regardless of how long he or she worked, and social security retirement benefits are reduced for retirement prior to full retirement age regardless of years of coverage.

### 5. Does social security offer any benefits that are not available under railroad retirement?

Social security does pay certain types of benefits that are not available under railroad retirement. For example, social security provides children's benefits when an employee is disabled, retired or deceased. Under current law, the Railroad Retirement Act only provides children's benefits if the employee is deceased.

However, the Railroad Retirement Act includes a special minimum guaranty provision which ensures that railroad families will not receive less in monthly benefits than they would have if railroad earnings were covered by social security rather than railroad retirement laws. This guaranty is intended to cover situations in which one or more members of a family would otherwise be eligible for a type of social security benefit that is not provided under the Railroad Retirement Act. Therefore, if a retired rail employee has children who would otherwise be eligible for a benefit under social security, the employee's annuity can be increased to reflect what social security would pay the family.

### 6. How much are monthly benefits for survivors under railroad retirement and social security?

Survivor benefits are generally higher if payable by the Board rather than social security. At the end of fiscal year 2003, the average annuity being paid to all aged and disabled widow(er)s averaged \$980 a month, compared to \$855 under social security.

Benefits awarded by the Board at the end of fiscal year 2003 to aged and

disabled widow(er)s of railroaders averaged about \$1,335 a month, compared to about \$735 under social security.

The annuities being paid at the end of fiscal year 2003 to widowed mothers/fathers averaged \$1,280 a month and children's annuities averaged \$745, compared to \$645 and \$590 a month for widowed mothers/fathers and children, respectively, under social security.

Those awarded at the end of fiscal year 2003 averaged \$1,320 a month for widowed mothers/fathers and \$890 a month for children under railroad retirement, compared to \$650 and \$610 for widowed mothers/fathers and children, respectively, under social security.

The benefits to aged and disabled widow(er)s and widowed mothers/fathers at the end of fiscal year 2003 reflect the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001.

### 7. How do railroad retirement and social security lump-sum death benefit provisions differ?

Both the railroad retirement and social security systems provide a lump-sum death benefit. The railroad retirement lump-sum benefit is generally payable only if survivor annuities are not immediately due upon an employee's death. The social security lump-sum benefit may be payable regardless of whether monthly benefits are also due. Both railroad retirement and social security provide a lump-sum benefit of \$255. However, if a railroad employee completed 10 years of service before 1975, the average railroad retirement lump-sum benefit payable is \$960. Also, if an employee had less than 10 years of service, but had at least 5 years of such service after 1995, he or she would have to have had an insured status under social security law (counting both railroad retirement and social security credits) in order for the \$255 lump-sum benefit to be payable.

The social security lump sum is generally only payable to the widow or widower living with the employee at the time of death. Under railroad retirement, if the employee had 10 years of service before 1975, and was not survived by a living-with widow or widower, the lump sum may be paid to the funeral home or the payer of the funeral expenses.

The railroad retirement system also provides, under certain conditions,

a residual lump-sum death benefit which ensures that a railroad family receives at least as much in benefits as the employee paid in railroad retirement taxes before 1975. This benefit is, in effect, a refund of an employee's pre-1975 railroad retirement taxes, after subtraction of any benefits previously paid on the basis of the employee's service. However, an employee's benefits generally exceed taxes within two years; this death benefit is, consequently, seldom payable.

### 8. How do railroad retirement and social security payroll taxes compare?

Railroad retirement payroll taxes, like railroad retirement benefits, are calculated on a two-tier basis. Rail employees and employers pay tier I taxes at the same rate as social security taxes,

7.65 percent, consisting of 6.20 percent on earnings up to \$87,900 in 2004 and 1.45 percent for Medicare hospital insurance on all earnings.

In addition, rail employees and employers both pay tier II taxes which are used to finance railroad retirement benefit payments over and above social security levels.

Beginning with the taxes payable for calendar year 2004, tier II taxes on both employers and employees are based on an average account benefits ratio. Depending on that ratio, the tier II tax rate for employers will range between 8.20 percent and 22.10 percent, while the tier II tax rate for employees will be between 0 percent and 4.90 percent.

In 2004, the tier II tax rate on employees is 4.90 percent and on rail employers it is 13.10 percent on employee earnings up to \$65,100.

### 9. How much are regular railroad retirement taxes for an employee earning \$87,900 in 2004 compared to social security taxes?

The maximum amount of regular railroad retirement taxes that an employee earning \$87,900 can pay in 2004 is \$9,914.25, compared to \$6,724.35 under social security. For railroad employers, the maximum annual regular retirement taxes on an employee earning \$87,900 are \$15,252.45 compared to \$6,724.35 under social security.

Employees earning over \$87,900, and their employers, will pay more in retirement taxes than the above amounts because the Medicare hospital insurance tax of 1.45 percent is applied to all earnings. •



## Capuano

Continued from Page 1

risk to the forefront."

Even though the FRA is currently conducting a safety audit on the use of remote control, as requested by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Congressman Capuano said he is concerned with evaluation of the results.

"I would encourage all members of the Committee to join me in watching with interest as the FRA compiles data related to these operations," he

said. "I am very concerned that the data that is collected will be evaluated objectively. The safety of the railroad's employees, the public and our communities depend on it."

The Executive Committee of the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department, representing 35 member unions, unanimously approved a policy resolution on March 7 that calls for an end to remote control train operations.

The BLET represents 50,000 active and retired members and is a Division of the Teamsters Rail Conference. •



# BLET NEWS

## 64th Annual IWC: Albuquerque, N.M.

### Members can win great prizes by completing early registration

Pat and Barbie Lynch and the members of BLET Division 446 (Gallup, N.M.) will host the 64th annual IWC in Albuquerque, N.M., from August 17-22.

Reservations can be made at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque (300 Tijeras NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102) 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.

In addition, members who register before June 6 will be entered into a drawing to win one of three prizes. First prize is a custom made-to-order leather briefcase. Second prize is a custom made-to-order western trophy belt buckle donated by Red Bluff Buckle Co. of Continental Divide, N.M. Third prize is a custom embroidered Carhartt jacket.

Activities available are a golf tournament, tour of Santa Fe, N.M., an all-you-can-eat steak and chicken breast dinner, and a banquet on the last night of the convention. The golf tournament will take place at the Paa-Ko Ridge Golf Club, voted one of the best new clubs in the nation.

Also available will be a variety of educational workshops for Local Chairmen, Secretary-Treasurers and Legislative Representatives.

Members with questions can contact Chairman Pat Lynch at (505) 870-7150 or <ptlynch@earthlink.net>.

#### IWC 2004

##### Tentative Schedule of Events

- August 17: Pre Registration; Possible casino night and/or team roping.
- August 18: Golf tournament (7 or 8 a.m.); Tour of Santa Fe (7 or 8 a.m.);

Mixer at the Hyatt, Route 66 theme (4:30 p.m.).

- August 19: Opening ceremony; Lunch; Afternoon closed meetings; Dinner at Los Amigos (all you can eat steak and chicken).

- August 20: Mtgs., workshops; Lunch; Dinner on your own.
- August 21: Meetings and workshops; Working lunch; Banquet.
- August 22: IWC delegates mtg; Possible trip to SW Indian Market.



**IWC Golfers**  
See Page 4 for registration form



### IWC 2004 Registration Form

#### 64th annual International Western Convention

#### Albuquerque, N.M. • August 17-21, 2004

#### Chairman: Pat Lynch

#### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Contact the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque at (505) 842-1234. Be sure to ask for the special BLET rate of \$99 per night for double occupancy rooms, which is good through July 4, 2004. After July 4, the room rate is \$199 per night.

#### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration cost is \$55 per person until June 6. After June 6, registration cost is \$75 per person. Those who register and pay in full before June 6 will be entered into a special drawing for one of three prizes — first prize is a custom made-to-order leather briefcase; second prize is a custom made-to-order western trophy belt buckle; third prize is a custom embroidered Carhartt jacket.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_ BLE Officer/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### These activities require an additional cost:

- August 18 (Wednesday), tour of Santa Fe, N.M., \$27 per person
- August 19 (Thursday), all-you-can-eat steak and chicken breast dinner at Los Amigos, \$20 per person
- August 21 (Saturday), banquet, \$10 per person

I plan on attending the following workshops:  Local Chairman  Secretary-Treas.  Legislative Rep.

#### Calculation of fees (please include payment with this form):

|  |                |                 |                 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Registration at \$55 per person (prior to 6/6/04): ..... | \$55.00/person | X No. of People | = \$ _____      |
| Registration at \$75 per person (after 6/6/04): .....    | \$75.00/person | X No. of People | = \$ _____      |
| Tour of Santa Fe, New Mexico: .....                      | \$27.00/person | X No. of People | = \$ _____      |
| All-you-can-eat steak dinner at Los Amigos: .....        | \$20.00/person | X No. of People | = \$ _____      |
| Banquet: .....   | \$10.00/person | X No. of People | = \$ _____      |
| <b>Total Amount Enclosed:</b> .....                      |                |                 | <b>\$ _____</b> |

**Please mail this form, along with check or money order payable to "IWC 2004," to:**

Brother Rick Fuller  
Secretary-Treasurer, IWC 2004  
27 Blackberry Lane  
Los Lunas, NM 87031

**For additional information:** Contact IWC Chairman Pat Lynch at: (505) 870-7150 or email: ptlynch@earthlink.net.

**Don't forget to register early to be eligible for the drawing to win special prizes!**

## Rail workers' anti-terrorism efforts aided by Senate action

The Rail Security Act of 2004 (S. 2273), approved by the Senate Commerce Committee, includes several provisions that are first steps in strengthening rail workers' ability to protect their passengers and the nation's rail industry from terrorist attack, according to AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department president Edward Wytkind.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), the bill provides rail workers with whistle-blower protections that prohibit retribution or retaliation by management



against workers who report rail security lapses. "The men and women who work in passenger and freight rail have a first-hand perspective on what is really happening in their industry. They must be able to share this with both management and law enforcement without worrying that it could somehow cost them their job," Wytkind said.

Additionally, the bill approved today requires Amtrak to adopt a system-wide security plan that includes measures to train workers on security awareness, emergency response, and pas-

senger evacuation training. It also provides funding to better secure tunnels, stations, and trains, as well as to hire additional security personnel.

"There are ways the bill can and should be strengthened, including a curb on the dangerous practice of remote control locomotives and improvements to the whistle-blower provisions.

"We intend to work with Congress over the coming weeks to do just that. We will not rest until all transportation workers are given the full protections and resources they must have," Wytkind said.

## 77th Annual SMA: Greenville, S.C.



### SMA 2004 Registration Form 77th annual Southeastern Meeting Association Greenville, S.C. • June 13-18, 2004



#### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Contact the Hyatt Regency at (864) 235-1234 or (800) 233-1234.

Be sure to ask for the BLET room rate of \$99 per night. Registration deadline for the BLET rate is May 10, 2004.

#### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration costs/activity fee is \$60 per person attending. All BLET members must pay \$20 SMA dues. There is also a \$45 per person golf tournament fee, which includes green fees, lunch, transportation and prizes.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_ BLET Officer/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ GIA Title & Auxiliary No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are interested in any of the following activities, please indicate the number attending so we know how many plan to participate.**

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Casino Night       | 4. _____ BBQ at Hyatt with entertainment      |
| 2. _____ Golf Tournament    | 5. _____ Fashion Show and Lunch               |
| 3. _____ Frankie's Fun Park | 6. _____ Banquet on Thursday with 1950s theme |
- (Please note that these are only some of the activities we have planned.)

Number of children attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be using the free day care service that will be provided? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### Registration Fees

- Activity fee: \$60.00 (All attendees 13 or older must pay the activity fee)
- SMA Dues: \$20.00 (All BLET members must pay SMA dues)
- Golf Tournament: \$45.00 per person (Includes green fees, lunch, transportation and prizes)

**Please mail this form, along with check or money order payable to "Roger Peace, Chairman 77th SMA" to:**

Roger Peace  
P.O. Box 6831  
Greenville, S.C. 29606

**For additional information:** Contact Brother Peace at: (864) 676-0229; or email: <csx1960@aol.com>.

Arrival Date: Sunday, June 13, 2003. Check out: Friday, June 18, 2003

Please print your name and division as clearly as possible on this form so that your name tag will be correct.

### Activities for the whole family at the annual Southeastern Meeting Association

There's something for the whole family at the 77th Annual BLET-GIA Southeastern Meeting Association in Greenville, S.C., from June 13-18.

BLET and GIA members will have the opportunity to participate in various educational workshops, such as Local Chairman, Legislative Representative and Secretary-Treasurer classes. In addition, representatives from the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board and United Healthcare will be on hand to answer questions.

Hosted by Brother Roger Peace and the members of BLET Division 598 (Greenville, S.C.), numerous social activities have been planned, including (but not limited to) a casino night, golf tournament, Frankie's Fun Park, a barbecue, a fashion show and luncheon, and a 1950s themed banquet on the last night of the convention.

There are numerous tourist destinations in Greenville, including the Cherokee Foothills, Paris Mountain State Park, various nature reserves, waterfalls, scenic rivers, and the Greenville Zoo. Greenville is also the home of baseball legend Shoeless Joe Jackson. Popular destinations for baseball enthusiasts include the Shoeless Joe Jackson grave site, the Shoeless Joe Jackson Memorial Park, and the Shoeless Joe Jackson Plaza Statue & Fountain. For more tourist information, visit [www.greenergreenville.com](http://www.greenergreenville.com)

Convention activities will take place at the Hyatt Regency, in the heart of Greenville's business and entertainment district. The deadline for hotel reservations was May 10. Members can still check on hotel reservations by calling: (800) 233-1234 or (864) 235-1234. Be sure to ask for the BLET rate of \$99 per night when calling.

Deadline for convention registration is June 15.

For more information, please contact Brother Peace at (864) 676-0299 or e-mail [csx1960@aol.com](mailto:csx1960@aol.com).

## BLET merchandise available

Brand new merchandise bearing the BLET logo is now available from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

Members can download order forms from the website, <http://www.ble-t.org/store>, to purchase union-made items such as BLET golf balls and towels, coffee mugs, hats, and t-shirts. The order form will be updated as new merchandise arrives.

To make room for the new merchandise, older BLE items are being sold at a discount of 10 percent or higher. These items — bearing the logo of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers — include sweatshirts, jackets, golf shirts and other merchandise. The

BLE merchandise is only available in limited sizes and quantities, and is being sold on a first come, first served basis. An order form is available at: <http://www.ble-t.org/store>.

All of the items available are union-made.



Ash gray t-shirts with BLET and Teamster logos.



Log on to [www.ble-t.org/store](http://www.ble-t.org/store) to purchase this red, white and blue BLET polo shirt.



# BLET NEWS

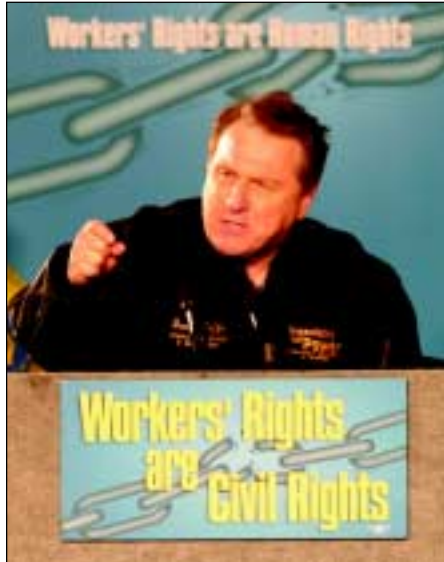
A message from IBT General President James P. Hoffa

## United we win!

I would like to welcome all BLET trainmen, conductors and locomotive engineers to the newly formed Teamsters Rail Conference. With the merger of the BLE and the Teamsters complete, we have begun a partnership that will strengthen our ability to represent workers across the transportation spectrum. The Teamsters have always had a vision for a seamless transportation union giving workers real power on the job and in the political arena. This historic merger brings us closer to our union's vision.

The Teamsters Rail Conference is here to represent you, the BLET locomotive engineer, trainmen or operating employee, on Capitol Hill and at the bargaining table. We will work for you to improve your workplace safety, your health and welfare benefits and to protect your seniority rights and craft lines. We will prove that being a Teamster means having the best wages and benefits in all of organized labor.

In the next few weeks you should receive a survey that is part of our "Safe Rails Secure America" project. We will use your answers to assess the safety and security of the nation's rail system. Please take the time to fill out these surveys once you receive them. Your



input is vital to our project and to improving safety in your workplace.

Through the unity of our efforts, we know we will continue to grow the Rail Conference and build our strength in the workplace, at the bargaining table and in the halls of Congress.

Remember, United We Win!

*James P. Hoffa*  
James P. Hoffa  
Teamsters General President

## Government, industry lax on rail security, AFL-CIO tells Congress

Saying that in the wake of both the 9/11 and the Madrid terrorist attacks, "our government and rail employers are still not doing enough to make rail transportation as secure as possible," AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department President Edward Wytkind urged Congress to support a comprehensive rail security agenda that "benefits from the insight of front-line workers and gives them the tools they need to help make our rail system as secure as possible."

Wytkind told a hearing of the House Rail Subcommittee on May 5 that "the Administration has done little to harden vulnerable rail targets, ensure the training of employees or provide the level of funding that is so desperately needed for training, new technology deployment and infrastructure improvements."

Wytkind was sharply critical of the rail industry's long-standing opposition to federal mandates, saying, "we need to ensure that security is not left to the whims of individual carriers or cut when profit margins get tight. We must ensure a basic level of security and asking railroads to follow certain basic requirements, such as employee training, is not unreasonable." He also decried the misuse of unregulated remote control locomotives, which pose a security risk.

In his testimony on behalf of 35 AFL-CIO transportation unions, including the BLET, Wytkind outlined a number of initiatives that ensure "workers are brought into the process and are treated as valued partners," including:

- Mandatory and rigorous security

training for employees;

- Strengthened whistle-blower protections against harassment, as "a rail worker should not have to choose between doing the right thing on security and his or her job;"

- Federal regulations governing the use of remote control locomotive technology, which "put profits ahead of safety," especially when transporting hazardous materials in and around train stations and rail yards; and

- Increased security regarding access to rail facilities, unattended trains, and preventing intruders from entering locomotive cabins.

Testimony from the May 5 hearing, is available for download on the BLET website at:

<http://www.ble-t.org/pr/news/security.asp>

## MAY 2004 CALENDAR & EVENTS

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

To be held at the Hyatt Recency 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.

### AUGUST 8-12... 66th 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](http://Marriott.com/houmw).

## Advisory Board March Activity

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

**International President Don M. Hahs**—National Division office: General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; AFL-CIO Executive Council mtgs., Miami, Fla.; Mtgs. w/ Cong. Dick Gephardt, Steny Hoyer (D-Md., Minority Whip), Piloni, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka; Association of Legislative Board Chairmen mtg., New Orleans; Mtg. w/ Gary Curry regarding disability, Los Angeles; Attend family business.

**First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodziewicz**—Assisted President in general operation of National Division Office; Vice President assignments; Special Representative assignments; AFL-CIO mtgs.; National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen mtg.; South Buffalo contract-mediation; General office duties; Various correspondence and telephone; Shortline Department; Organizing Department.

**General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert**—General supervision of BLET financial, record depts.; ND office; BLET Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Local Chairmen's workshop, Philadelphia, Pa.; Secretary-Treasurers' Workshop, Dallas, Texas; AFL-CIO Executive Council mtg., Miami, Fla.; S-T Workshop, Chicago; National Legislative Board mtg., New Orleans; LC Workshop, University of Illinois, Champaign, Ill.

**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**—ND Office; BLET 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; Local Chairmen's Workshop, Philadelphia; Metra/BRC/EJ&E mtgs., Arlington Hts., Ill.; L/M Conf. remote control, BRC, Bedford Park, Ill.; L/M quarterly mtg., CN/WC, Green Bay, Wis.; Section 6 mtg., EJ&E, Joliet, Ill.; Section 6 mtg., Metra, Chicago; L/M mtg., CN/IC, Homewood, Ill.; NRAB arbitration, various, Chicago; Mtgs., re: Metra pedestrian accident, EJ&E safety and RCO NARR, EJ&E; Local Chairmen's Workshop, Champaign, Ill.; E&T Planning mtg./Remote Control, EJ&E executive committee, BRC/EJ&E, Bedford Park, Ill.; NMB Section 3 sub comm., various, Washington, D.C.; FRA Part 240.409 dockets this month: EQAL 02-52, 01-16, 02-67, 03-31, 01-26, 01-23.

**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; BLET National Bargaining Cmte.; PLBs 5604, 5681, 5721, 6040, 6281, 6589; UP work/rest projects; RSAC positive train control cmte.; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; CN trackage rights impl. agreement, Duluth, Minn.; CP contract proposals to LC, Shakopee, Minn.; Mtgs. w/ UP; re: trip rates, contract matters, Omaha; Contract negotiations for Birmingham Southern, Birmingham, Ala.; Transportation Research Forum, Evanston, Ill.; BLET-Indiana RR PLB, Florida.

**Vice-President & U.S. Nat'l Legislative Representative Raymond A. Holmes**—Washington D.C. office; General office duties, telephone, correspondence; Operation Lifesaver PDU mtg., New Orleans; AFL-CIO Executive Committee mtgs., Miami; National Legislative Board mtgs., New Orleans; Arkansas State Legislative Board mtg., Little Rock, Ark.

**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; LC training seminar (ST, D&H, SLA, Utah Railway, NS), Philadelphia; Contract mtgs. w/ GC Martin, NYS&W, Binghamton, N.Y.; Mtgs. w/ GC Parker and GC Koonce (KCS, Gateway Western, Midsouth, Southrail), Kansas City, Mo.; Division 930 (KCS) and Division 8 (Gateway Western) mtgs., Kansas City; General office duties, research, correspondence.

**Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle**—Assigned to BNSF, MRL, PHL; General office duties; Mtgs. w/ BNSF GCs, LCs, Minneapolis; Mtgs. w/ GC Pierce, LC, carrier officers, BNSF, Decatur; Mtgs. w/ GC Pierce, GC P. Williams, Fort Worth; Public Law Board, Fort Worth; Div. 214 mtg., Mtg. w/ PHL, Long Beach, Calif.; Div. 647 mtg., Phoenix; Mtgs. w/ carrier on ID run, Phoenix; Wabash Hosp. Assoc. mtgs., Decatur; Public Law Board, Fort Worth.

**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; Prepare position document, cajun helper arbitration, UPWL; PLB 6279, 6280, 6281, 6282, New Orleans; STD, paper, filing, calls, UPRR-Tacoma Belt; LA basin negotiations, WPWL-WR-CR-SR, Redlans, Calif.; Assisting GC Donnigan, UPRR, EIRR, PTRR, Pocatello, Idaho; Division 197 special mtg., San Antonio.

**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; Public Law Board, Norfolk, Va.; IC&E agreement ratification mtgs., Divs. 117, 200, 266 and 393; Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation hearing on railroad security, Washington, D.C.; AFL-CIO TTD conference call on rail security; Special project w/ TTD, re: rail security concerns from BLET members; Two special mtgs. of Div. 423; Special joint mtg. of Divs. 198 and 205; Special joint mtgs. of Divs. 210, 646 and 786, Macon, Ga.; General office duties, study and prep. for PLBs.



**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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VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 3 • MAY 2004

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS (ISSN 0898-8625)  
is published monthly by the  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen,  
1370 Ontario Street, Cleveland, OH 44113-1702.  
Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, OH.

**POSTMASTER: Send address changes to**  
Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News — BLET  
Records Department, 1370 Ontario Street, Mezzanine  
Cleveland, OH 44113-1702.

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE  
PAID AT  
CLEVELAND, OH