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Locomotive

ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN NEWS

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Willard Knight new BLET National Vice President

Radek retires from Advisory Board

Willard E. Knight has been elevated to the position of National Vice President of the 59,000-member Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

He was elected by acclamation to the position of third-alternate vice president at the BLET's First Quadrennial Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2006. He was promoted to the BLET's Advisory Board on April 24 following the retirement of National Vice-President and Director of Arbitration Richard K. Radek.

"I look forward to serving the membership in the position I was elected unanimously to hold," Vice President Knight said.

Immediately prior to his elevation to the Advisory Board, Knight served as General Chairman of the BLET's Norfolk Southern-Eastern Region General Committee of Adjustment, a position he held for 18 years.

As Vice President, Knight will be assigned to assist the BLET's Norfolk Southern General Committees of Adjustment.

Knight's railroad career began in 1969 as a fireman on the Norfolk & Western Railroad in Portsmouth, Ohio. He earned promotion to locomotive engineer in 1972 and first joined the Brotherhood on

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New Vice President Willard Knight comes from the Norfolk Southern-Eastern Region General Committee of Adjustment.

AMTRAK'S CAPITOL LIMITED EAST BOUND AT THE PENNSYLVANIA-MARYLAND STATE LINE ENTERS ELLERSLIE, MD., IN MAY OF 2007. (PHOTO COURTESY BRIAN PAULUS, BLET DIVISION 14)



President Obama plans high-speed rail for U.S.

On April 16, the Obama administration released an in-depth plan regarding the establishment and implementation of a new world-class, high-speed rail system in the United States.

For members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, this is outstanding news. According to National President Ed Rodzicz, it is the BLET's position that all high-speed trains — regardless of the technology used — should be run by BLET-represented engineers.

The plan will help create permanent railroad jobs in these difficult economic times.

"A major new high-speed rail line will generate many thousands of construction jobs over several years, as well as permanent jobs for rail employees and increased economic activity in the destinations these trains serve," President Barack Obama said.

As stated in President Obama's Strategic

\$8 billion

will boost America's high-speed rail network and create permanent jobs for BLET members and other rail workers.

Plan, the government will undertake and complete two different types of projects. It will first work to expedite train services on corridors that already exist; those both ready to begin construction and/or those that need additional time before breaking ground. The second type of project will focus on developing new high-speed rail corridors modeled after prototypes found throughout Europe and Japan.

Under the plan, President Obama would use the \$8 billion allocated to him by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to jumpstart the program. The plan also requests an additional \$5 billion, which would be given out in five, \$1 billion annual increments to states by using a merit system. The President, Vice President,

and Secretary of Transportation are planning to use this competitive process to encourage states to develop their own high-speed rail systems. These separate corridors, which will range in distance from 100 to 600 miles, will earn the highest-achieving states federal aid in the form of grants.

Furthermore, the funding of these projects will be broken down into three specific tracks:

- The first track is concentrated on projects that are "ready-to-go" and have undergone all preliminary environmental and engineering works. These individual projects, focused on near term job creation, will be provided with grants for construction. Such projects include acquisition and improvement to already-existing infrastructure.

- The second track is for corridor programs, which are programs focused on the development of geographic sections for high-speed corridors. These projects

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New FRA chief

UTU's Szabo confirmed as FRA Administrator **pg 2**



FELA Directory

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Education & Training Dept.

Workshop for S-Ts in Vancouver **pg 6**

Train crew safety bill becomes law in Arkansas

Railroad workers in Arkansas will now ride in off-duty vehicles with a greater peace of mind, thanks to the combined efforts of the BLET's Arkansas State Legislative Board, their counterparts in the United Transportation Union and the Union Pacific Railroad. The three parties recently collaborated to secure passage of a law to improve the safety of off-duty transportation vehicles.

In early March, Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe signed House Bill 1318 into law. The "Safe Transportation of Railroad Employees by Contract Carriers Act" establishes improved safety standards for drivers employed by railroad contract carriers as well as the motor vehicles they use to transport train crews to and from off-duty locations.

The new law mandates hours of service for van drivers, drug testing for drivers, inspections of the vehicles and maintenance on the vehicles. It also mandates liability insurance of \$5 million dollars for each motor vehicle that transports railroad employees.

"There aren't many times you find two unions and the railroad working together," said Terry Todd, Chairman of the BLET's Arkansas State Legislative Board. "But our issues and the UTU's issues were almost the same — bad drivers, unsafe vans and a poorly-managed limo company."

Todd said the solidarity of the two unions helped to get lobbyists from the Union Pacific Railroad involved.

"We brought our issues to the attention of the Union Pacific Railroad and



showed them how unreliable their limo company was and how they were wasting money paying for services they were not getting," Todd said.

With the three parties united, it was just a matter of time before the legislation was passed.

"We were unopposed on all votes," Todd said. "This was for public safety."

Chairman Todd thanked James

Hoskins, Legislative Representative of BLET Division 182 (Little Rock) and Robert Lindsay, retired Division 858 (Pine Bluff) Legislative Representative, for their work on the legislation. He acknowledged the assistance of the Arkansas State AFL-CIO and also thanked the BLET members and their spouses who made phone calls and sent e-mails to lobby their legislators regarding this issue. @@

Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe, seated, signs the Safe Transportation of Railroad Employees by Contract Carriers Act.

From left: BLET Div. 182 LR James Hoskins, Jr.; Retired BLET Div. 858 LR Robert Lindsey; BLET Arkansas State Legislative Board Chairman Terry Todd; Arkansas AFL-CIO Jim Brewer; Representative Barbara Nix; Matt Fair, Arkansas AFL-CIO; UTU LR Talmon Preyer; UTU Arkansas State Legislative Director Steve Evans; Alan Hughes, Arkansas AFL-CIO; Rickey Belk, Arkansas AFL-CIO; and retired UTU Arkansas State Legislative Director Don Breavers.

A COPY OF THE BILL IS ON THE BLET WEBSITE AT: <http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/HB1318.pdf>

BLET congratulates Szabo on FRA confirmation

On May 1, BLET National President Ed Rodzwick sent congratulations to Joe Szabo on his confirmation as Federal Railroad Administrator by the U.S. Senate.

"The BLET members, officers and staff who have worked with you over the years highly regard your integrity and dedication," President Rodzwick wrote, "and your past public service as Mayor of Riverdale, Illinois, displayed the leadership qualities that will be an essential element of your tenure as Administrator."

A fifth-generation railroader, Szabo, 51, is the first FRA administrator to come from the ranks of rail labor. He recently served the United Transportation Union (UTU) as Illinois state legislative director, and has worked closely with President Obama in the past.

In a letter congratulating Szabo, President Rodzwick wrote that industry-wide risk reduction programs are the cornerstone for taking safety improvements to the next level.

"Replacing the industry's 175-year-old

command and control culture with one that treats safety as a value" is one area of vital concern to BLET members, Rodzwick wrote.

The BLET President also said this is a time of great challenge and opportunity for the rail industry, particularly changes to the Hours of Service Act as well as the opportunity provided to the industry through President Obama's funding of high speed rail.

"Significantly changed work schedules will soon be upon us, the importance of the rail alternative finally has been acknowledged by appropriation of substantial public funds — particularly for high speed passenger rail — and a new generation of signal and train control technology will be implemented in much of the industry over the next several years," President Rodzwick wrote. "We are confident that, under your leadership, the FRA will play a pivotal role in the renaissance of the industry." @@

A COPY OF PRESIDENT RODZWICK'S LETTER IS AVAILABLE ON THE BLET WEBSITE AT: <http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/SzaboLetter.pdf>



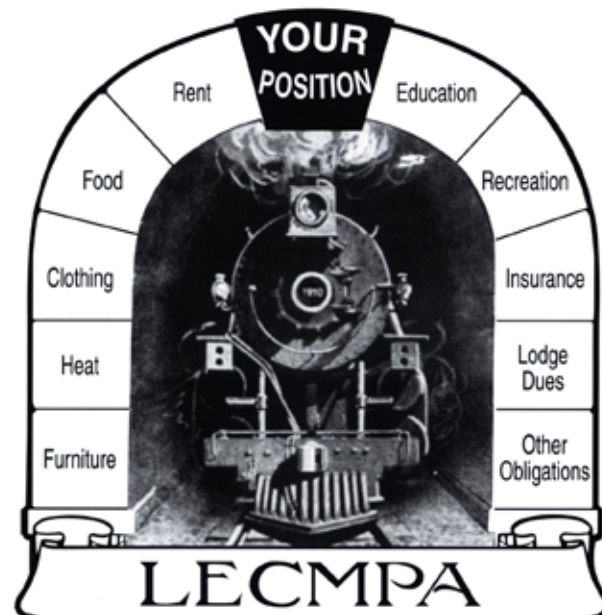
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WILLARD KNIGHT NAMED NEW BLET VICE PRESIDENT

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January 1, 1974. He is a member of BLET Division 511 in Portsmouth, Ohio. After joining the Brotherhood, he was elected Local Chairman of Division 511 in 1979, a position he held until he was elected General Chairman on January 1, 1992.

He also served the Brotherhood as a delegate to the 1996 quinquennial convention in Detroit, the 2001 quinquennial convention in Miami, and the 2006 quadrennial convention in Las Vegas.

As General Chairman, Knight was involved in Conrail merger negotiations in the mid- to late-1990s and has participated in all on-property agreements at the Norfolk Southern. Those agreements have provided wage increases, quality of life improvements and important job protections for the members he represented. The on-property agreement with NS was among the first in the country to tie membership wage increases to company performance. Most recently, he helped negotiate an agreement that contains an important scope rule that protects locomotive engineer jobs in the face of changing technology without sacrificing jobs in other crafts.

Vice President Radek retires as the senior member of the BLET's Advisory Board, having first won election to the office of Vice President in 1996. His railroad career began on the Chicago & North Western in 1965. He joined the BLE in 1974 and earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer in 1976. Soon after joining



Radek: Retires after 44 year railroad career.

the BLE, Brother Radek began serving as Secretary-Treasurer of Division 404 (Chicago) and was elected Local Chairman in 1978. In 1981, then-International President John F. Sytsma invited Radek to join the International staff and assigned him to the National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB) in Chicago.

Since 1982, Radek served as the BLE member to the NRAB and served as its First Division chairman or vice-chairman continuously since 1984. In 1987, he transferred to the BLE International Office in Cleveland. When the Arbitration Department was established in 1991, he was appointed to the post of BLE Director of Arbitration.

Following Radek's retirement, National Vice President Marcus J. Ruef will assume the Director of Arbitration duties. Vice President Ruef served as Assistant Director of Arbitration from January of 1997 to June of 2006.



Ruef: Appointed Director of Arbitration

"I welcome Willard Knight to the Advisory Board and know that he will do an excellent job of representing the membership," BLET National Vice President Ed Rodzwick said. "Likewise, Vice President Ruef will do an excellent job as Director of Arbitration.

"I heartily thank Brother Radek for his years of selfless dedication and service to the organization. Words alone cannot express the appreciation this organization has for Brother Radek. Over the years, countless members have benefited from his expertise in membership representation, protection, and in contract negotiations.

"His knowledge, experience and engaging personality cannot be replaced. He will be fondly remembered and sorely missed. On behalf of the 55,000 men and women of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, I say thank you, Brother Radek, and wish you all the best during your retirement." @@

>> FEDERAL EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (FELA)

A simple will

Michael's spouse Judy knew he had complained of a chest cold for over a week. He felt totally exhausted when he returned home from work every day. Later in the week, Mike's left arm became stiff and painful. He attributed it to the broadside hit he had received as a running back years ago in a high school football game.

The stress of working at the railroad had increased dramatically since a derailment had occurred earlier that week. He was constantly worried about his job. Two days later, Mike was found on the floor of the railroad's hotel bathroom. He died of a massive heart attack. He was only 57. He never took the time to get a simple will.

Judy and Mike's children had to contend with a lot of problems over the weeks following his death. A lack of a will only complicated their lives further.

A will gives the heirs directions. Without these directions, he is deemed to have died intestate. (He dies "without leaving to testify what his wishes were..." Black's Law Dictionary, 5th Edition, West Publishing Co. 1979).

Without a will, in most states Mike's property will be divided by a schedule of laws, not necessarily his wishes. In many states, a wife will take less as his living children inherit more.

If Mike died in an event that caused

YOUR CHECKLIST:

1. What type of will do you need? A simple will is a straightforward way of directing the distribution of assets. If, however, you wish to direct the transfer of property or establish guardianships for children a more complex will may be needed. An attorney in your area can best draft such an instrument.

2. How will you go about preparing your will? A basic will can sometimes be found on state bar web sites, or even sourced on the internet. A local attorney should be able to easily draft a simple will for a small fee. Be sure to ask what the fee would be in advance.

3. Who are your beneficiaries? Your executor or

executrix? If applicable, the guardian of your minor children?

4. Have you signed the will before witnesses? If you elect to create the will through a source such as the state bar, make sure you sign it in front of at least two adult witnesses. In some states, it is a good idea to have the will notarized.

a FELA claim to be made, in some states the personal representative of Mike has the cause of action or the right to bring a lawsuit. The personal representative may also be the final decision maker on whether to settle the claim and, if so, for how much.

A simple will can protect both the surviving spouse and the decedent's children. A will can appoint guardians for your children in the rare, but occasional, tragedy of the loss of both parents.

Although it is always best to consult an attorney about your specific circumstance, most often any will is better than none. Some states even provide a will on line. For example, the State Bar of California provides on its website the California Statutory Will for a simple will. (www.calbar.ca.gov/calbar/pdfs/publications/Will-Form.pdf)

Generally, a will is a summation, before witnesses, of who should inherit what, who should be a guardian of minor children, and who should be charged with seeing that the will is executed (Executor).

Often, it is smart to keep several copies. Do not leave all of them in a safety deposit box. Upon death, a safety deposit box is usually sealed until such

time as a Court enters an order allowing it to be unsealed and inventoried.

A simple will, although often overlooked, is as important as one's driver's license. Your loved ones will have endured enough without complicating their lives further.

If you have any more specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact the State Bar of the state of your residence or us at www.harpcallier.com.

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2009

Calendar & Events

June 7-12, 2009

82nd Annual Southeastern Meeting Association, Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Brother John Mason, Local Chairman of BLET Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.), is Chairman of the 2009 SMA in Gatlinburg, Tenn. It will be held at the Park Vista Hotel & Conference Center (705 Cherokee Orchard Road, Gatlinburg, TN 37738; Phone: (865) 436-9211). The room rate will be \$103 per night. To contact Brother Mason, call (865) 523-2684 email: scooterloco@comcast.net or LN67@comcast.net.

June 30-July 3, 2009

National Association of State Legislative Board Chairman

The NASLBC will hold its annual meeting at the Hyatt Recency-Penn's Landing just prior to the Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA). More information can be secured by contacting Tim Smith, NASLBC Chairman at: tsmith@sbcglobal.net; or Ken Kertesz, NASLBC Secretary-Treasurer, at: kkertesz@comcast.net.

July 5-9, 2009

71st Annual Eastern Union Meeting Association, Philadelphia, Pa.

Brother Sean Simon, Vice President of BLET Division 226 (Newark, N.J.), is Arrangements Chairman of the 2009 EUMA in Philadelphia, Pa. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing (201 S. Columbus Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19106; Phone: (215) 928-1234. The room rate will be \$169 per night. To contact Brother Simon, call (609) 558-6405 or email: EUMA2009@aol.com.

July 29-August 1, 2009

Military Railway Service Reunion

Organizers are planning a large reunion of MRS veterans who served during WWII and Korea, which will be held at Ft. Eustis, Va., as part of the Army's Transportation Corps week. Email Mark Metz for details: m-m-e@comcast.net.

August 9-14, 2009

69th Annual International Western Convention, Green Bay, Wisc.

Brother John Reynolds, Wisconsin Central General Chairman and member of BLET Division 209 (Green Bay, Wisc.), is Chairman of the 2009 IWC in Green Bay, Wisc. It will be held at Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Green Bay (2040 Airport Drive, Green Bay, WI 54313; Phone: (920) 494-7300). The room rate will be \$94 per night. To contact Brother Reynolds, call (920) 462-4509 or email: JReynoldsBLET@newbc.rr.com. Visit the IWC website at: <http://iwccb.org/>

September 13-16, 2009

75th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting, Kansas City, Mo.

Brother Mike Zenner, Secretary-Treasurer of BLET Division 130 (Kansas City, Kan.), is Hosting Chairman of the 2009 SWCM in Kansas City, Mo. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center (2345 McGee St., Kansas City, MO 64108; Phone: (816) 421-1234). The room rate will be \$139 per night. To contact Brother Zenner, call (816) 804-9107 or email: zmike5@kc.rr.com. Visit the SWCM website at: www.bletsbcm.org.

BLET FELA Directory

As of May 13, 2009

Your union has designated attorneys who are qualified to serve as counsel for BLET members in accordance with the Federal Employers' Liability Act (FELA) governing workplace accidents. In the event of an injury or death and before reaching any settlement with a railroad, members or surviving families should contact an attorney listed to get competent advice concerning their legal rights under the FELA. In addition, if you or any members of your family have questions concerning medical malpractice, product liability or other types of injury cases, please don't hesitate to contact one of these law firms for a consultation concerning your rights and remedies. @



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BLET AUXILIARY

You never know if tomorrow may come



By KATHIE BAILEY-TODD
BLET AUXILIARY

(KATHIE BAILEY-TODD IS THE WIDOW OF THE LATE G.Y. BAILEY WHO WAS KILLED IN DARK TERRITORY IN A HEAD-ON COLLISION ON SEPT. 15, 2005 IN SHEPHERD, TEXAS)

With the on-duty rail fatality rates up in 2008 and in the first quarter of 2009, now is the time to make sure that you and your spouse have all of your important paperwork in order, up to date.

One can never have enough information on hand in case something happens to our spouses that work on the railroad. I was unfortunate enough to have to put that information to use almost four years ago when my late husband, G.Y. Bailey, was killed while at work in a head-on collision in dark territory in Shepherd, Texas, on Sept. 15, 2005. Several years before his death, we had sat down with

BLET DLC Robert Tramuto of Jones, Granger, Tramuto, Christy and Halstead and compiled a list of information spouse's could use in the event their railroad worker was injured at work or God forbid, worse. Please make sure you always have this information easily accessible to your spouse at all times. We always think those types of tragedies happened to "someone else", yet in the blink of an eye, I became that someone else. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact any of your BLET DLC's - that's why they are here.

WHAT TO DO IF RAILROAD OFFICIALS OR CLAIM AGENTS CONTACT YOU TO INFORM YOU OF AN INJURY OR DEATH OF YOUR SPOUSE:

- Make ANY railroad officials or claim agents contacting you in person identify themselves
- Find out exactly where your spouse is located and what his/her condition is.
- Allow NO railroad representatives into your home.
- DO NOT volunteer any information. Make NO statements - verbal, written or recorded.
- If in public, get all needed information and walk away. Again, make NO statements.
- If a railroad official calls you on the phone, get the needed information and hang up. Again, make NO statements. Monitor all calls if you have Caller ID and

an answering machine.

- DO NOT sign anything.
- DO NOT accept anything from them.

After you have the needed information, have no further contact with ANY railroad officials or claim agents until after you have contacted a BLET Designated Legal Counsel. Make certain that the railroad official is informed that they are not to contact you or any member of your family from this time forward until you want to make contact with them.

At the hospital, DO NOT allow railroad officials or claim agents into the hospital room or treatment area.

Instruct railroad officials and claim agents to have NO contact with the patient, family or any medical personnel treating your spouse. Inform them that BLET Designated Legal Counsel has been notified. This will back them off very quickly.

DO NOT allow any railroad officials or claim agents to make ANY decisions concerning medical treatment or arrangements for your spouse.

Sign ONLY necessary medical forms from the hospital that are for the treatment of your spouse. Make NO statements to any medical personnel except in regard to the medical treatment for your spouse.

Make certain ALL medical personnel know of these instructions and abide by them. Insist that the Doctor/Patient con-

fidentiality be observed.

When and where you can, especially if your spouse has been medicated, make certain that your spouse gives a consistent history of the accident to each medical provider that may inquire. Consistency of the event is very important, as medical providers will be questioned by the railroad officials.

REMEMBER... Anything you say to a railroad official and/or claims agent will be used against you and your spouse in order to protect the railroad's interest.

PAPERWORK YOU SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE ON HAND IN THE CASE OF ANY INJURY OR DEATH:

- Names and phone numbers to your local division's union officers: Local Chairman, President, Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President, Chaplain.
- Names and phone numbers of the BLET Designated Legal Counsel members in your area can be found at www.ble-t.org
- All insurance policies: Health, Disability, Job Insurance, Life Insurance (make sure your beneficiaries are up-to-date from divorce, etc.)
- Your current wills. Everyone should have one, no matter what your age.
- Other important paperwork, such as a living will, DNR, power of attorney or organ donor information.
- Names and phone numbers of the BLET National Auxiliary Officers at [@@](http://www.bletauxiliary.net)

Education & Training Dept. holds NJ Transit workshop

BLET's Education & Training department joined with New Jersey Transit (NJT) to provide training to BLET members and NJ Transit managers alike at a workshop on March 31.

Seven rank and file BLET members along with seven NJT supervisory employees completed the training. The BLET members and NJ Transit managers are all members of various collaborative workplace committees, such as safety committees.

"BLET Labor Management Committee Representative Training gave our members basic skills to better represent membership issues directly with the carrier," said NJT General Chairman Rich Darcy said.

After expressing the desire to create such a unique workshop, Brother Darcy conferred with BLET National Secretary-Treasurer Bill



Jim Gee, System General Road Foreman, NJT; Tom Haas, BLET; Fred Mattison, BLET; Bill Craven, BLET; Larry Brain, BLET; Rich Darcy, BLET GC; Ed Baksa, Superintendent, NJT; Tim Leiner, Asst. Manager Mechanical, NJT; Marcus Ruef, BLET VP; Dave Crossley, BLET; John Smolczynski, Sr. Training Coordinator, NJT; Dan Loeb, BLET; Al Zahn, Sr. Road Foreman, NJT; Ken Kroeger, BLET Training Coordinator; Stanley Bizukiewicz, BLET; Sean Dolan, Sr. Road foreman, NJT.

Walpert to make it happen. NST Walpert is Director of the BLET Education & Training Department.

Ken Kroeger, BLET Education & Training Coordinator, designed and presented the program as Instructor, and was assisted by General Chairman Darcy and Vice President Marcus Ruef. NJ Transit fully sup-

ported the workshop, making sure that all 14 class participants were available for the training. The NJ Transit made sure the participants had the day off from their regular assignments (with pay).

The class helped the students understand how to make the most productive use of meeting time by

organizing focused agendas, understanding rules of order, keeping things on track, and encouraging two-way communication. The class participated in effective listening and brainstorming exercises that facilitated improved communication. Most of the participants offered positive feedback about the class and felt that it

would help them to improve the functioning of their various committees.

VP Marcus Ruef commended both GC Darcy, who initially requested the training, and NJ Transit Superintendent of Operations Kevin O'Connor, who sponsored the attendance of the participants, for working together to improve labor management relations.

"This type of bilateral exercise is a positive example of labor and management working together at NJT to create a more functional workplace," Ruef said. "Hopefully, others in the industry will follow their lead."

Darcy was enthusiastic about the program's successful outcome.

"It created a pool of confident, proactive local rank and file committee men and women who will grow someday to lead the BLET on property and beyond," Darcy said. @@

OBAMA PLANS HIGH-SPEED RAIL FOR U.S.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 <->

will have already completed gathering background information and will have structured plans for reaching their corridor projections.

• The third and final track, referred to as planning, will emphasize the development of cooperative plans and agreements for state railways. Although the funds that will be used are not those appropriated un-

der the ARRA, this track is imperative in sustaining future corridor development.

Today, the only existing high-speed rail system in the United States is the Northeast Corridor, located between Boston and Washington D.C. In the plan, President Obama identifies 10 specific corridors, which could potentially receive federal funding. One such corridor is in California, which would link the northern part of the state to the southern, beginning in San Francisco and ending in San Diego. Additionally, a Chicago hub

network was included in the plan. Featuring Chicago as the hub, it would hit eight major cities, including Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, and St. Louis.

According to Vice President Joe Biden, the potential benefits of high-speed railways are endless. "Investing in a high-speed rail system will lower our dependence on foreign oil and the bill for a tank of gas; loosen the congestion suffocating our highways and skyways; and significantly reduce the damage we do to our planet [by reduc-

ing harmful carbon emissions]."

Overall, President Obama said the plan will revitalize the way Americans travel while aiding in the recovery of the economy. "My high-speed rail proposal will lead to innovations that change the way we travel in America," he said. "We must start developing clean, energy-efficient transportation that will define our regions for centuries to come."

The Federal Railroad Administration hopes to begin awarding grants by late summer, 2009. @@

Extended unemployment benefits coming to rail workers

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) into law on February 17, 2009. It contains two important provisions to assist BLET members during these troubled economic times:

1. EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The Act provides an appropriation of \$20 million to be used for payment of additional extended unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. The new law provides the temporary extended benefits to employees receiving normal unemployment benefits for days between July 1, 2008, and June 30, 2009.

- Railroad workers who previously were not eligible for extended unemployment benefits because they did not have 10 years of service may be eligible for benefits of up to 65 days within an extended period consisting of 7 consecutive 2-week registration periods.



- Railroad workers who previously were eligible for extended unemployment benefits of up to 65 days may now be eligible for benefits of up to 130 days within an extended period consisting of 13 consecutive 2-week registration periods.

- The latest date that an extended benefit period under these special provisions may begin is December 31, 2009, with payments stopping when the \$20 million has been expended.

The RRB will notify eligible indi-

viduals of their new rights to extended benefits and provide additional information about those benefits as soon as possible.

CLICK HERE FOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS:
[HTTP://WWW.RRB.GOV/RECOVERY/FAQ_EXT_RUIA.ASP](http://www.rrb.gov/recovery/faq_ext_ruia.asp)

2. ONE-TIME PAYMENT TO RAILROAD RETIREMENT BENEFICIARIES

Under the new legislation, a one-time economic recovery payment of \$250 will also be paid to most adults (including disabled adult children) who receive railroad retirement benefits.

- No action is required on your part to receive this payment.

- Only individuals who were eligible for railroad retirement benefits in November 2008, December 2008, or January 2009 will receive the special payment.

- All railroad retirement beneficiaries residing in the United States and U.S. territories, except children and Medicare-only beneficiaries, will receive this one-time payment. Payees receiving RRB payments based on a legal partition and/or garnishment are not eligible to receive this payment.

- You will only receive one \$250 payment even if you are also receiving social security and/or veterans benefits.

- The one-time payment will be issued separately and will not be included in your regular monthly benefit payment. It will be delivered in the same way you currently receive your benefit payment (check or direct deposit).

- Payments are expected to be issued in May 2009.

CLICK HERE FOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ONE-TIME PAYMENTS:
[HTTP://WWW.RRB.GOV/RECOVERY/FAQ_ERP.ASP](http://www.rrb.gov/recovery/faq_erp.asp)

Electronic Communications Policy

The policy currently in effect is that official communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence — with a signature — being received by the National President — to be considered an “official communication.”

This is to provide that the actual question(s) are addressed, and ensures that when official interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

Due to the volume of e-mails it would be impossible for the President to answer all unofficial communications. Therefore, it is the policy of the BLET National Division Office that e-mails addressed to the National President will be reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response. In other words, an email message is not considered an official communication.

This will allow the President to be aware of the opinions and suggestions of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member, if a response is necessary. ©©

Correction

Due to a typographical error, the following members of BLET Division 57 were mistakenly identified as members of BLET Division 28 in the BLET PAC list that was published in the May 2009 issue: Gary David, Joey Joseph, John Keating, William A. Lander, Daniel Murphy, Daniel Proulx, Gary Richards and William Vail

Also, the following member of Division 57 donated \$10 per month to the BLET PAC throughout 2008, but was mistakenly left off the list: James Ripley



Vancouver S-T Workshop, February 2009

The BLET Education & Training Department conducted a workshop for Secretary-Treasurers in Vancouver, Wash., from February 23-26, 2009. Those in attendance are as follows:

Front row, from left: William Walpert, NST & Director of Education & Training; Bob Broka, Records Department, Director; and Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of Education & Training and Special Representative. **Second row, from left:** Steve Myers, ST Div. 443; Brian Kelley, ST Div. 64; Kenton Hastings, Alt. ST Div. 144; and Dave Estess, GCA ST Amtrak. **Third row, from left:** Joe Murray, Alt. ST Div. 446; Cary Qualls, ST Div. 392; Robert Pratt, ST Div. 758; and Christopher Dickey, ST Div. 255. **Fourth row, from left:** Michael Hamilton, ST Div. 238; Arturo E. “Eddie” Perez, KCS/Tex Mex GCA ST and ST Div. 244; Gary Hages, ST Div. 58; and Tyrone Miller, IL SLB Alt. ST. **Fifth row, from left:** John Wallace, ST Div. 595; Jeffrey Valentine, ST Div. 158; Bruce Roe, ST Div. 362; Walt Schmidt Webmaster; and Tom Preston, ST Div. 236 / GCA ST UP Western Region. **Last row:** Darrell Schandorf, ST Div. 462; Michael Briscoe, ST Div. 262; Luke Myers, ST Div. 727; Joseph Debartolomao, MA SLB ST; Patrick McDaniels, ST Div. 794; Todd Pollard, Member Div. 456; and Aaron Rinehart, ST Div. 842.



ELECTIONS

Brumbaugh elected Idaho State Legislative Board Chairman

Steve Brumbaugh was elected Chairman of the Idaho State Legislative Board at Triennial Meetings on April 4.

Brother Brumbaugh is a member of BLET Division 676 in Nampa, Idaho. He is a Union Pacific locomotive engineer who first joined the Brotherhood on January 1, 1996. He had previously served as Chairman from 1996-2002.

"My first priority as Chairman will be getting the legislators in the state to be concerned about railroad issues and labor issues," Brother Brumbaugh said.



Steve Brumbaugh

"This is a very 'red' state and we need to get these legislators to the point that they are not afraid to work with us. My other priority will be to increase the PAC funds in the state."

Brumbaugh replaces outgoing Chairman Mike Hysell, who did not seek reelection. Brother Hysell announced his intention to retire in July at age 60 with 41 years of service to the Union Pacific Railroad.

"The years I have served on the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairman and the Idaho State Chairman have been the best union experience I have had in my career," Brother Hysell said. "The respect and support I have enjoyed from Vice President John Tolman and all the Chairmen has made my time a rewarding experience."

Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman congratulated Brother Brumbaugh on his election and thanked Brother Hysell for his service to the board.

"Mike did an excellent job of representing the BLET in a state that is not particularly friendly to workers," Vice President Tolman said. "He worked hard and never complained about the difficulties he faced. 'I'm confident that Brother Brumbaugh will continue to work hard for our members in the state of Idaho and I congratulate him on his election.'"

The BLET's Idaho State Legislative Board represents the interests of more than 300 hard working Union Pacific locomotive engineers and trainmen. ©©

Mark Kenny reelected Amtrak General Chairman

Mark Kenny was reelected by acclamation to the office of Amtrak General Chairman at the General Committee's quadrennial meeting in San Francisco last week.

Brother Kenny is a member of Division 11 in New York. He joined the Brotherhood on March 1, 1981, and has served as General Chairman since 1998. Earlier this year, Brother Kenny also became Chairman of the Eastern General Chairmen's Association.

All other officers on the Amtrak General Committee were reelected by acclamation with the exception of Eastern Regional Chairman Ellen J. Scher, who retired from office. Those reelected were: Vice General Chairman C.A. McDowell; Midwest Regional Chairman S.J. Tuck; Western Regional Chairman

D.H. Hansen; and Secretary-Treasurer D.P. Estes.

Richard J. Nunziato was elected to the office of Eastern Regional Chairman to fill the office vacated by Sister Scher.

The General Chairman and other officers gave their regular reports to the delegates. In addition, BLET National President Ed Rodzowicz presented the delegates with an update on National Division business.

President Rodzowicz discussed the \$8 billion in stimulus money the Obama Administration approved for funding Amtrak and increasing high-speed passenger trains. He also brought the delegates up to speed on the legal challenge to the Department of Transportation's direct observation of urine testing, the Railroad Retirement trust fund, and the Federal Railroad Administration's

Emergency Order Number 26.

Tom Pontolillo, the BLET's Director of Research and Assistant to the President, gave a presentation on close call reporting systems, such as one currently being discussed for some Amtrak operations, and one that was recently agreed upon at New Jersey Transit.

Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman also addressed the delegates, providing an update on a variety of legislative and regulatory issues.

Bobby Bonds of the Amtrak employee assistance program gave a presentation on Operation RedBlock, the union-initiated, management supported program that uses the concept of peer involvement to prevent employee use of alcohol and/or drugs while on duty or subject to call.

"Congratulations to Mark Kenny and

all other members of the Amtrak General Committee of Adjustment who were reelected by acclamation," President Rodzowicz said. "This will be a challenging term of office for them, especially considering the \$8 billion the Obama Administration will invest in Amtrak and high speed rail.

"Also, I extend best wishes to Sister Ellen Scher on her retirement from office. On behalf of the men and women of the BLET, I thank her for many years of hard work and dedicated service to the BLET and our Amtrak Brothers and Sisters."

General Chairman Kenny was pleased with the meeting. "I want to echo President Rodzowicz in expressing my personal gratitude for Sister Scher's service to the BLET, and I also want to congratulate the delegates for their focus and hard work this week," Kenny said. ©©

Western General Chairmen elect officers

WGCA Chairman Michael Priester:

"I am humbled, but at the same time strengthened by my Brothers' continued trust and support in reelecting me as their Association Chairman."

In meetings in Las Vegas on May 1, the BLET's Western General Chairman's Association (WGCA) elected officers for a new term and concluded their annual business meeting.

Attendees re-elected Michael Priester to be their Chairman for another year. Also elected were Pat Williams as Vice Chairman, and Rick Gibbons as the Secretary-Treasurer.

Brother Priester serves as General Chairman of the CP Rail System/U.S. General Committee of Adjustment. He joined the Brotherhood on Feb. 1, 1972, and is a member of BLET Division 754 (Terre Haute, Ind.).

"I am humbled, but at the same time strengthened by my Brothers continued trust and support in re electing me as their Association Chairman," said Chairman Priester, who was first elected WGCA Chairman in 2007. "As always, I look forward to the tasks at hand and the opportunity to serve my

Brothers and Sisters."

The WGCA meets annually to give General Chairmen from the Western states the opportunity to discuss current problems and solutions. The meeting allows for interactive participation by all attending general chairman and vice-chairmen.

"Our discussions focus on the issues of the day, whether it be engineer certification, the current Hours of Service improvement legislation or everyday safety issues," Priester said. "The Association takes a proactive approach as a collective body to develop strategies to improve the railroad environment our members find themselves working in on a daily basis."

Attendees heard remarks by various speakers, including: BLET National President E. W. Rodzowicz; First Vice President Paul Sorrow; National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; and BLET Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman.

BLET Designated Legal Counsel made several presentations on topics ranging from on-track vehicle coverage to whistle blower legislation. DLC also sponsored a reception and dinner.

Representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration were present and answered numerous questions.

The chairmen were also briefed by Tom Pontolillo, BLET Director of Research and Assistant to the National President, regarding the pending implementation of changes to the Hours of Service laws.

Merrill Lynch representatives also spoke, with an update on the outlook for the economy and strategies for dealing with the difficult current economic climate.

Job insurance companies sponsored lunches or coffee service and included the Brotherhood's Relief and Compensation Fund, CPA Insurance, and the Locomotive Engineers and Conductors Mutual Protective Association. ©©

A message from
Teamsters General President
James P. Hoffa

Cross Border Battle

On March 16, the Mexican government announced that they will apply tariffs to 90 U.S. agricultural and industrial products from 40 states. This was done in direct retaliation to the wise decision of Congress and the Obama administration to terminate the North American Trade Agreement's (NAFTA) truck pilot program begun by the Bush administration.

The Teamsters have remained on the forefront of the fight against cross-border trucking with Mexico because we



know firsthand how unsafe they would make U.S. highways. We said all along that the program should be halted until the numerous safety, security, environmental

and driver-training issues were resolved. More than 15 years have gone by since NAFTA was passed, and still Mexico has failed to meet their end of the bargain – something the press seems to be missing.

Congress Halts Program

National publications are reporting about the Mexican tariffs, but many of the news pieces are missing the point. Few are actually talking about why Congress moved to halt the program. Instead, the publications are slanted toward the big-business concerns of potential trade wars with our Mexican neighbors.

Instead of applying tariffs to the U.S. exports, the Mexican government should consider better training for their drivers. They should consider that their drivers should not be driven to the point of exhaustion (there are no hours-of-service regulations for Mexican drivers). The Mexican government should consider sending their drivers in cleaner, safer trucks, not trucks with bald tires and emitting dirty diesel fumes into the air.

Serious Safety Concerns

Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) issued a statement after the Mexican truck announcement on tariffs, saying, "Congress shut down the pilot Mexican trucking program over serious safety concerns, and no trade agreement should obligate us to compromise our highway safety."

I could not agree more.

We stand with Congress for voting to ban unsafe Mexican trucks as part of the omnibus fiscal year 2009 appropriations bill. There is no doubt that while the Mexican government boldly applies their tariffs, they would be far better off raising their safety standards and meeting their obligations under NAFTA. In fact, a NAFTA panel ruled in 2001 that the U.S. can keep the border closed because Mexico does not meet safety standards.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Western Maryland Scenic 2-8-0 steam locomotive No. 734 at Helmstetter's Curve near Corriganville, Md. Photo taken in October of 2008 by BLET Division 14 member Brian Paulus.

Advisory Board April Activity

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

National President Edward W. Rodzicz — National Division office: General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Various correspondence & phone calls; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; IBT/CSX security meeting; Designated Legal Counsel meeting; General Chairman Tom Roberts retirement; Western General Chairmen's Association mtg.

First Vice-President and Alternate President Paul T. Sorrow—Performed various duties in Office Administrator capacity; Various duties assigned to First Vice President; Various correspondence and telephone communications; General supervision of Special Representatives; CSX rail security mtg.; Wage/Rules Core Group mtg.; CN Hours of Service mtg.; Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtg.

National 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; Standard Building operations oversight; Election Rules Committee mtgs., Cleveland; Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtg., Las Vegas; Short Term Disability Trustees mtg., Las Vegas.

Vice-President Merle W. Geiger Jr. — Assigned to: Kansas City Southern; Texas Mexican Railway; MidSouth Rail; SouthRail; Gateway Western; CP Rail System/US; Utah Railway; Indiana Harbor Belt; Belt Railway of Chicago; Great Western Railway; and Panhandle Northern Railway; HR 2095 mtg. w/ KCS and GCs, Irving, Texas; Imp. Agree. Mtgs. w/ KCS and GC Clark (Tex Mex), Houston; Contract mtgs. w/ Great Western Rwy., Windsor, Conn.; Western General Chairmen's mtg., Las Vegas; Holiday; Correspondence, research and general office duties.

Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—Assigned to Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Montana Rail Link, Pacific Harbor Line, Missouri & Northern Arkansas (M&NA), National Wage/Rule Committee; General office duties; Conference call, re: Elections Committee; Mtg. w/ Federal Railroad Administration, Fort Worth; Mtg. w/ BNSF, Decatur; Mtg. w/ BNSF and GCs, Decatur; PLB 7092, Fort Worth; Wabash Hospital Assoc. finance committee mtg.; Executive Session, PLB 7166.

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; UP-Eastern District; Assist National President with preparation for 2010 national negotiations, Washington, D.C.; PLB 7282, Assisting GC Young, UP-ED, Chicago; 2008 RISA meeting, assisting all UP GCAs, Omaha, Neb.; Western General Chairmen's Assoc., Las Vegas; Las Vegas to W. Colton ID negotiations, UP-WL and UP-WR, assisting GCs Hannah & Dayton; General office duties, paperwork, filing, telephone calls.

Vice-President & National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman — Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General

Office Duties, telephone, correspondence; Coordinate content of NLO website; ATD mtg., Las Vegas; RSAC and AAR Washington, D.C.; High speed working group task force; Attend locomotive standards working group, Washington, D.C.; Lunch mtg. w/ AAR on antitrust; Attend several lobbying mtgs. on the Hill; Mtg. w/ Senator Reid, Hon. Harry Teague, Chairman Bennie Thompson, (Senator Burris' office), Senator Sherrod Brown and John McCracken, Washington, D.C.; NARP reception, Washington, D.C.; Monthly State Legislative Board Chairmen's conference call; Western General Chairmen's mtg., Las Vegas; Various fundraisers.

Vice-President Marcus J. Ruef — Assigned to Amtrak; Port Authority Trans Hudson (PATH); Long Island Railroad (LIRR); Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA); New Jersey Transit (NJT); MNR; Norfolk Southern-All General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; and NYAL; Prep. for PLB 7238, NSE; ND Officers Election Rules Committee mtg. via conference call; Signing ceremony for C3RS IMOU, NJ Transit, Newark, N.J.; Assist with prep. for PLB 7238, NSE; Further appeal for Div. 54 LC, NS/W&LE; Conference calls, re: GC Workshop and Election Rules cmtc.; Review statistical summary for OT dispute settlement, Septa; Prep. for arbitrations in Norfolk and HOS mtg.; PLB 7159, 7238, SBA 1063 and HOS mtg., Norfolk, Va.; Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtg., Las Vegas; Arbitration Department mtg. & related issues, Cleveland; Travel, paperwork, correspondence, phone calls.

Vice-President Dennis R. Pierce — Assigned to all CSX General Committees — Eastern Lines, Western Lines, Northern Lines, Conrail (SAA/CSX-Northern District) — and Indiana Rail Road, Alabama State Docks; Special projects, BNSF GCofAs; General office duties; Rail safety/Hours of Service mtgs. w/ CSX labor relations and CSX-N, CSX-W, CSX-E and Conrail GCAs, Jacksonville and Atlanta, Ga.; SSA dispute resolution cmtc. mtgs. w/ CSX labor relations and CSX-N, CSX-W, CSX-E GCAs, Jacksonville and Atlanta, Ga.; National Wage team subgroup mtg., Washington, D.C.; IBT/BLET/CSX security mtg., Washington, D.C.; BLET Division 421/382 joint mtg., Buffalo; General Chairman T.E. Roberts retirement, Buffalo; Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; Wage Team Subgroup mtg., Las Vegas.

Vice-President Mike Twombly — Assigned to Delaware & Hudson; Springfield Terminal; St. Lawrence & Atlantic; Montreal, Maine & Atlantic; Union Railroad; Birmingham Southern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; South Buffalo Rwy.; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern; Indiana & Ohio; Indiana Southern; Louisville & Indiana; Meridian Southern; Talleyrand Terminal Railroad; IC&E Local Chairman workshop, Bettendorf, Iowa; Louisville & Indiana negotiations, Louisville, Ky; IC&E conference call; Vacation; Western General Chairmen's Assoc. mtgs., Las Vegas; General office administration.

Vice-President Willard E. Knight — Newly-elevated to BLET Advisory Board; Assigned to: Norfolk Southern (Northern Lines/W&LE), Norfolk Southern (Eastern Lines), Norfolk Southern (Southern Lines); Assisted Norfolk Southern Eastern Lines Vice General Chairman in GCA office; Attended Division 714 monthly meeting.



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