BLET, UTU support FMLA improvements

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and the United Transportation Union are jointly supporting a House bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to clarify eligibility requirements for railroad workers.

The Family and Medical Leave Act currently does not address the unique working conditions of railroad operating employees. Through no fault of their own, rail workers may not always meet the minimum criteria of 1,250 hours worked per year set forth in the current FMLA regulations.

Under the proposed changes to the FMLA, the time that railroad operating crews are required to be available for work will be included in the total hours worked per year, thus making them more likely to meet the FMLA eligibility criteria.

H.R. 5944, was introduced July 29 by Representatives Tim Bishop (D-NY), Bob Filner (D-CA), Mark Critz (D-PA) and Steven LaTourette (R-OH). The bill is the result of joint efforts by the BLET and the UTU. It has been referred to the House Education and Labor Committee.

"BLET Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman, the BLET State Legislative Board Chairmen, and their UTU counterparts all throughout the country worked very hard over the past year to get this legislation introduced," BLET National President Dennis Pierce said. "The next step will be to get this legislation passed and enacted so that it can begin to help our Brothers and Sisters who need to take leave but might not otherwise qualify."

The bill would clarify FMLA eligibility requirements with respect to railroad workers subject to hours-of-service limitations, accounting for periods when such employees must be available for work. In short, the proposed legislation would include this availability time when calculating railroad worker eligibility for FMLA benefits.

If enacted into law, the bill would allow employees to be eligible for

President Pierce praises members for strong participation in vote to retain direct elections

By a 72%-28% margin, BLET members voted on August 31 to retain direct one member one vote elections for National Division Officers when they rejected an initiative that would have provided for delegation election of National Division Officers.

The vote concluded an initiative introduced late last year by BLET Divisions 13, 98, 155 and 236, which proposed to restore to convention delegates the right to elect National Division Officers. This traditional method of electing the top officials of the Brotherhood was changed by an initiative vote in 2006. Pierce also said the increased turnout vindicated his decision to remain neutral in the vote and instead focus National Division efforts on getting members involved in the process.

"The National Division had complete confidence that the membership was more than capable of making its decision on the initiative without being told how to vote by their National President. The issue was decided by the wisdom of the members and our efforts going forward will be to encourage all members to exercise their right to vote later this fall when the election of our National officers takes place," Pierce added.

An Old Friend Returns

In a scene that can no longer be duplicated, a Union Pacific train travels through downtown Reno, Nevada, on February 12, 2002. Trains now travel underground via the 2.3-mile Reno Trench. The project cost approximately $282 million and trains no longer block intersections in downtown Reno.

Approximately 330 BLET delegates will travel to Reno for the Second Quadrennial National Convention, October 4-7, 2010.

We are especially interested in featuring BLET members and their volunteer activities outside of the railroad. If you have an interesting or unique hobby and would like to be featured in the Journal, please let us know!

Contact Journal editor John Bentley by email: Bentley@ble-t.org

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A recap of the 2010 IWC in Bismarck, N.D. pg 5

Register for News Flash email alerts at: www.ble-t.org

Reno to host BLET National Convention

The Journal will carry a variety of in-depth articles, guest columnists, and membership profiles.

The BLET is proud to announce the return of its quarterly magazine, Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Journal. The publication Journal was mailed from Washington, D.C., to active and retired BLET members nationwide on September 1.

The Journal will carry a variety of in-depth articles, guest columnists, and membership profiles.

For more information regarding the convention, visit www.ble-t.org/convention

Continued on page 3

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铁路运输商第二季度财务报告

BNSF铁路

BNSF报告了2010年第二季度净收入为6363百万美元，比2009年第二季度增长了38%。

CSX

CSX报告了2010年第二季度净收入为5382百万美元，比2009年第二季度增长了33%。

Norfolk Southern

Norfolk Southern报告了2010年第二季度净收入为8392百万美元，比2009年第二季度增长了39%。

Union Pacific

Union Pacific报告了2010年第二季度净收入为7114百万美元，比2009年第二季度增长了33%。
BLET mobilizes to help protect Amtrak

On July 29, BLET State Legislative Board Chairman Greg Powell scored a major victory for rail worker safety in July after a long battle for mandatory whistle posts.

A whistle post bill, introduced by Chairman Powell, was signed into law by Governor Jennifer Granholm on July 1, 2010. The new law provides that, “A railroad shall erect and maintain a whistle post in advance of a public crossing or multiple consecutive crossings.” Federal legislation that went into effect in 2005 removed the requirement for mandatory whistle posts. After many reports of missing whistle posts, and the railroads’ reluctance to replace them, Chairman Powell took action to rectify this problem. Chairman Powell first introduced the whistle post bill in 2007, but said that the Michigan Legislature was slow to take action. He said rail labor solidarity helped make passage of the bill possible during this legislative session.

“With the lobbying help of the BLET Auxiliary and all other rail unions, we were successful,” Brother Powell said.

After the Bill was signed into law, Chairman Powell said that he hopes that this kind of legislation will be the catalyst to get the Federal Railroad Administration to find a way to make it mandatory throughout the United States. BLET National President Dennis Pierce congratulated Brother Powell on a job well done.

Michigan State Legislative Coordinator Tim Kelloz testified before Congress on a bill to require whistle posts. He said that the legislation would go a long way toward improving the quality of life for BLET members.

“While this problem does not impact a large number of BLET members, its impact on the members it does affect is so dire that it is vital that we get this legislation passed,” Vice President Tolman said.

The National Division and National Legislative Office used, among other communications, a communications network to disseminate information as quickly as possible throughout the organization. It is a grassroots effort to involve the membership in ongoing campaigns.

Whistle posts mandatory in Michigan
Priester reelected as Western General Chairmen conclude annual meeting

General Chairman Mike Priester (CP Rail/US/Metra North/Indiana Southern Railroad/DM&E Railroad) was reelected to a fourth term as Chairman of BLET’s Western General Chairmen’s Association (WGCA) at meetings held in Las Vegas, NV on April 20-22, 2010. He was elected by acclamation by the Association’s members.

Also elected by acclamation were First Vice Chairman Pat Williams (BNSF — former AT&SF), Secretary/Treasurer Rick Gibbons (BNSF — former STL-SF) and Alternate Secretary/Treasurer Keith Stauber (DM&E). The Association also elected Matt Wilson (BNSF — former CB&Q/GN/NP/SP&S/MRL) and Alternate Secretary/Treasurer Rick Gibbons (BNSF — former STL-SF), Secretary/Treasurer Bill Walpert and Vice President & National Secretary-Treasurer Keith Stauber (DM&E). In attendance were 17 General Chairmen and eight Vice General Chairmen, along with a host of speakers and guests. Presentations from the BLET National Division were made by National President Dennis Pierce, First Vice President Lee Pruitt, National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert and Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman. BLET National President Dennis Pierce, a former Chairman of the WGCA himself, congratulated Brother Priester on winning reelection.

Chairman Priester also recognized former WGCA Chairman and Vice President Gil Gore, as well as Vice President Willard Knight, who was attending his first WGCA meeting as a member of the Advisory Board. Rounding out the Advisory Board and also in attendance were Vice Presidents Marcus Ruef and Mike Twombly. Various law firms making up a portion of the BLET Designated Legal Counsel were also in attendance. They spoke regarding subjects such as worker’s compensation versus FELA, proof of fault, whistle blower legislation, deference as to remedy, harassment intimidation and a host of other issues.

The meeting concluded with Chairman Priester recognizing Vice Presidents Merle Geiger and Steve Speagle who will be retiring at year’s end. He extended the Association’s deep appreciation to both Brothers for their dedication to the membership, the WGCA and the BLET.

“Through their collective efforts, visions and professionalism, the BLET and the Advisory Board on which they serve is something all the membership should be very proud of,” Chairman Priester said.
Hundreds of BLET members and their families gathered in Bismarck, N.D., for the BLET’s 70th annual International Western Convention (IWC).

The event was arranged and hosted by: Co-Chairman Mike Muscha, his wife Naomi, and Division 671; and Co-Chairman Ron Huff, his wife Brenda, and Division 746.

The 2010 IWC was held July 13-17, and opening ceremonies began on July 15 with remarks by BLET National President Dennis Pierce and BLET Auxiliary President Becky Schneider. BLET member Margo Storsteen (Division 57, Boston), who serves as the BLET’s National Representative on the Teamsters Human Rights Commission, gave a presentation and solicited volunteers for the program. Human Rights administrators the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund, the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund, and various other membership benefit programs.

In the afternoon there was a BLET closed meeting where all the vice presidents had a chance to talk to those in attendance about their assignments and the many challenges currently facing the Organization.

In the evening, members enjoyed a dinner cruise on the Missouri River, which traversed the same stretch of river that the Lewis and Clark expedition used when they explored the west.

On July 16, members attended workshops for mobilization, Local Chairman (reading event recorders in the morning and the arbitration process in the afternoon), Legislative Reps, and Secretary-Treasurers. In addition, the National Labor College held a workshop on hazardous materials, and the Federal Railroad Administration conducted a question and answer session.

Besides the riverboat dinner cruise, members enjoyed various other leisure time activities, such as the annual golf tournament, a tour of Bismarck including the capital, Old Governor Mansion and the Heritage Center. There was a tour of the railroad museum, Fort Lincoln State Park, and the home of General George Custer and his 7th Cavalry.

The IWC concluded with a formal banquet on July 16. The 2011 IWC will be held the week of August 21 in San Luis Obispo, Calif. Mike Galvani, Local Chairman of Division 664, is the arrangements chairman.
Tim Smith reelected California State Legislative Board Chairman

Tim Smith was reelected as Chairman of the California State Legislative Board at the board’s Sixth Quadrennial meeting from April 26-29 in Santa Rosa, Calif.

Tim Smith has held the position of Chairman since 1998. He is a member of BLET Division 415 (Santa Rosa, Calif.), and he first joined the Brotherhood on June 1, 1975.

Also reelected at the meeting were: First Vice Chairman Darrel Azarcon, Division 692 (Tracy, Calif.); Second Vice Chairman D.D. Francisco, Division 739 (Bakersfield, Calif.); and Secretary-Treasurer Mike Holt, Division 692 (Tracy, Calif.). Brother Holt has served as the Board’s Secretary-Treasurer since 1985. Brothers Azarcon and Francisco have served in their positions since 1998 and 2001, respectively.

Oregon State Legislative Board reelects Chairman Palmer

Oregon State Legislative Board Chairman Scott Palmer was reelected by acclamation to a third term of office at the Board’s Triennial meeting at the Benon Hotel in Portland on May 17-19, 2010.

First Vice Chairman Don Strong of Division 216 (Portland) and Secretary-Treasurer Rob Armstrong of Division 362 (La Grande) were also reelected by acclamation. Mike Neale of Division 416 (Salem) was elected as alternate Secretary-Treasurer and Gary Quay, also from Division 362, was elected as Second Vice Chairman.

BLET Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the current legislation and political issues facing the BLET in Washington, D.C., and the states.

“Chairman Smith and his Board members have done a fantastic job of representing the membership in California for many years,” Vice President Tolman said. “I look forward to continuing to work with Tim and the officers of his Board.”

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Worthington reflected Chairman of Utah State Legislative Board

The Utah State Legislative Board held its quadrennial Meeting in Salt Lake City on May 26. Jeff Worthington was re-elected to the position of Chairman by the 11 Legislative Representatives in attendance.

Also elected were Mark Bleckert of Division 222, First Vice Chairman; Robert Rock, President of Division 713, Second Vice Chairman; Patrick Whalen of Division 349, Secretary-Treasurer; Gary Mayer of Division 661, Alternate Secretary-Treasurer; and John Sloan of Division 221, Michael Lasater of Division 51, and Robert Rock, Audit Committee.

“I congratulate Brother Worthington and the rest of the board on their successful meeting,” BLET National President Dennis Pierce said. “Jeff has done an exceptional job. I’m sure he’ll continue to work to make the Brotherhood a better place.”

BLET Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman represented the National Division at the meeting, giving a presentation to the attendees on current legislative and political issues affecting BLET members.

“I would like to thank Brother Tolman for attending our meeting,” Worthington said. “The group was really impressed with his presentation and we are very grateful that he took the time to be a part of our Quadrennial.”

Also attending the meeting was Mike Muscha, Chairman of the North Dakota State Legislative Board. Brother Muscha urged everyone in the group to support and expand the BLET-PAC.

Democratic State Senator Karen Mayne, who works on crew var legislation for the BLET, was the special guest speaker. She spoke about growing up in a Union family with her father and the legislation she puts forth for labor in the legislature. “Representative Mayne gave an update on legislation that she has been able to pass that has everything to do with labor,” Worthington said. “Even though we live in a very ‘RED’ state, she has had tremendous success crossing the aisle and getting the Republicans to vote with her on bills.”

Utah State AFL-CIO President Jim Judd also spoke to the delegates. Judd gave a presentation on what the labor movement in Utah is doing politically and thanked the Utah BLET State Legislative Board for all of the support that they have given over the years.

“I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Jeff on his re-election and thank him and the Utah State Legislative Board for their work for the members in the state,” Vice President Tolman said. “I would also like to thank everyone inviting me out to what may be one of the most beautiful states in the union.”

O B I T U A R I E S

Former GIA President Lillie Mae Parker passes away at age 98

Lillie Mae Parker, long-time member and President of the Grand Ayatollah International Auxiliary (GIA) to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, passed away peacefully on June 30, 2010, at the age of 98.

She was Grand President of the GIA for 10 years, and held numerous GIA international offices over the years. She was one of the founders of Auxiliary 189 (Emily Denny) and a loyal member for more than 65 years.

She served as president of Auxiliary 189 for several terms, and served as Auxiliary Chair for the Southwestern Meeting Association.

She was born on October 3, 1911, in Hartsville, Ala., and attended school in Union Grove, Ala., until 1934, when she married Hobart Parker, a locomotive engineer. They moved to Birmingham in 1935, where they made their home until Sister Parker moved to Huntsville nine years ago to be closer to her family. Sister Bettye Dollar, the current President of Auxiliary No. 189 and long-time neighbor, said that Sister Parker was a “hard-working member of the GIA,” and was even responsible for recruiting Sister Dollar into the GIA.

BLET Auxiliary National President Becky Schneider said Sister Parker “was well known and revered throughout the Auxiliary and the BLET.”

On behalf of the National Division, President Dennis R. Pierce extended condolences to the friends and family of Lillie Mae Parker.

“While I did not have the pleasure of knowing Sister Parker, I do know that she contributed a great deal to the Brotherhood over the years,” he said. “She was a dedicated leader and a wonderful example of the greatest generation in America. On behalf of all the 59,000 men and women of the Brotherhood, I extend deep sympathy to the family and friends of Lillie Mae Parker.”

Expressions of condolences may be sent to Sister Parker’s daughter, June Smith, 2608 Sandalhaven Drive, Hampton Cove, AL 35763.

Honorary Member Bill Purdie, 1915-2010

Bill Purdie, Master Mechanic Steam Engines for the Southern Railway, and one of the few individuals to hold the coveted title “Honorary Loocomotive Engineer” from the BLET, passed away on July 22, 2010. He was 95 years old.

Purdie was one of only 16 Honorary Members in the 147-year history of the BLET. He was an icon of the steam locomotive preservation movement and one of its pioneers in the 1960s and 70s.

He received the rare Brotherhood honor on May 25, 1979. He was nominated by BLET members R.E. Branton, Southern Railway General Chairman; A.F. Zimmerman, BLE Vice President; and Hugo Lackman, Division 194.

He was chosen because of his dedication to the revival of the steam locomotive on the Southern Railway, and your extremely important part in the successful operation of passenger trains over the past several years. You have also been instrumental in providing nostalgic pleasure to the hundreds of thousands of older Americans who have fond memories of steam power and its accomplishments.”

Purdie gratefully accepted the nomination. “I am honored to become a part of an organization that began with steam railroading and has continued to be an integral part of our nation’s heritage. Thank you for this great honor, which I shall cherish always.”

Purdie began his career with Southern Railway in February 1936, as a machinist’s helper in Pegram Shops in Atlanta; then served as machinist’s apprentice and later roundhouse foreman.

Purdie was an avid preservationist with steam began in 1968 with a call from then Southern Railway President W. Graham Clayton Jr. Clayton’s vision was to operate steam locomotives over Southern’s eastern line. Purdie was one of the few individuals to know what a steam locomotive was. The program was so successful that it evolved into nearly year round train excursions throughout the southeast and beyond.

Purdie professionalized the control over steam.

During the 70s and 80s, the steam locomotives under Purdie’s supervision appeared in several Hollywood productions including “Fools Parade,” “Coal Miner’s Daughter,” and “Minstrel Man.”

Other Honorary Members throughout the BLET’s 147-year history include former FBI Director Edgar Hoover; Hollywood producer Jay Sommers; and railroad artist Howard Fogg.

Brother Purdie’s family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Southwestern Railway Museum, Duluth, Ga.

OBITUARIES

Brotherhood Obituaries

February-July 2010

4 — E. M. Timbers 212 — E. H. Running
24 — J. L. Davison 122 — J. F. Morgan
30 — H. W. Cain Jr. 252 — A. W. Kohler
56 — D. W. Siegfried 198 — C. B. Rightmire
107 — B. E. Venable 166 — B. E. Venable
121 — W. C. Sauer II 238 — E. L. Ramsey
244 — T. W. Gill 344 — L. E. Redgate
246 — A. Stroman 325 — J. W. Crandall
269 — W. W. Koehler 322 — J. W. Koehler
325 — J. W. Koehler 336 — "Fools Parade"
352 — A. R. Stevens 370 — "миФы"s Parade"
344 — F. E. Godwin 392 — W. M. Hamilton
386 — R. L. Langlois 416 — "R. L. Langlois"
416 — J. S. Mangold 435 — S. W. Sauer II
460 — W. S. Rausch 468 — W. S. Rausch
488 — A. C. Phillips 518 — A. C. Phillips
662 — R. V. Miller 683 — F. J. Catalano
699 — B. E. Venable 708 — B. E. Venable
940 — G. E. Hurtya
Securing high-speed rail future

I am looking forward to addressing your national convention in Reno, Nevada in October. As with our International convention you have a unique opportunity every four years to plan for the future direction of the union.

VP President Barack Obama in office we have seen some powerful initiatives coming from the White House. First, and foremost, is their focus on the development and building of high-speed rail. Earlier this year President Obama announced that $8 billion would be distributed for high-speed rail projects. This is the first administration in many years to follow through with allocating funds. The administration recognizes that in order for high-speed rail to become a reality it will take input and coordination with the skilled locomotive engineers, trainmen, maintenance of way workers and other unionized rail workers that daily keep our rail system in top shape.

High-speed rail is a crucial investment in our future. I look forward to continuing our work with the Obama administration to preserve jobs and expand work opportunities for our rail members.

Workplace Safety

We continue to learn about the vulnerabilities of our rail system to vandalism or even terrorist attacks. Our Rail Conference published the “High Alert 2” report this year to document the results of safety and security surveys completed by our members in the BLET and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED). We have shared the results with the Transportation Security Administration, seven Class I carriers, Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration and key members of Congress.

We will continue to keep tabs on the conditions you work in every day. This is the value of belonging to the Teamsters Rail Conference. Our combined strength legislatively and strategically will help keep the priorities of union members at the forefront of union leaders.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
Teamsters General President