

THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER NEWSLETTER • DECEMBER 2003

Yes to IBT!

81% majority votes in favor of Teamsters merger; Merger effective January 1

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers have overwhelmingly approved a merger with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, joining the largest and most powerful transportation union in North America.

Ballots were counted on December 5 and election results certified by the American Arbitration Association. The vote in the United States was 81 percent in favor of merging and 19 percent against with 47 percent of eligible members voting, and the vote in Canada was 62.4 percent in favor and 37.6 percent opposed with 56 percent of eligible members voting.

BLE members in Canada will now be members of Teamsters Canada and will be a part of the Canadian Rail Conference.

"The membership has spoken and we are pleased with their decision to merge with the Teamsters," BLE International President Don M. Hahs said. "Our members will soon see the benefits of belonging to the largest, most powerful, and politically influential transportation union in North America."

The merger will become effective on January 1, 2004,

and the BLE will become the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), a division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Rail Conference.

"Today, two great unions begin a partnership to strengthen our ability to represent workers across the transportation spectrum," said Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa in a statement issued on December 5. "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 addition of "Trainmen" to the name of the new organization is a significant step, BLE President Hahs said.

"The doors are now open and the structure in place," he said. "Throughout negotiations, it was our intent and the Teamsters' intent to allow the new organization to represent trainmen under the umbrella of the IBT Rail Conference. We welcome trainmen with open arms."

The structure of the current BLE will basically remain intact, but some changes will be made as the BLET expands

to incorporate additional trainmen members.

"The IBT's current Locals and Joint Councils are pretty much autonomous under the International IBT, and the BLET will also have autonomy," President Hahs said. "We will continue to elect our own officers and have our own conventions."

Current members and any new members who join the BLET will be able to utilize the immense resources of the IBT, President Hahs said.

"There are a number of member services, which the BLE presently purchases from outside sources, that will now be available through IBT departments," President Hahs said. "It's a win-win for both organizations."

The BLE and IBT have already enjoyed a great deal of success in organizing shortline railroads throughout the United States. Over the past year, the two organizations have worked jointly as the IBT-BLE Rail Operating Employees' Council. The group has successfully organized seven different shortline properties since July of 2002, bringing nearly 700 new members into

See IBT Merger, Page 7

Yes to national contract

By a 62% majority, BLE members approved a new collective bargaining agreement with the nation's railroads on December 16.

An alternative compensation package was also ratified by a 60 percent majority of members who work for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.

The national agreement covers work rules and health & welfare. It includes general wage increases, a lump sum retroactive payment, and will, for the first time, provide short-term disability insurance starting in July 2004 for those covered.

"We were able to negotiate a reasonable contract in spite of facing several pattern agreements," Hahs said. "It provides long overdue wage increases for our members and will bridge us into the next round of negotiations, which will start in November 2004."

President Hahs said the agreement was a significant gain for post-85 members, and will "bring our post-85 members up to par

with our pre-85 members."

"The ratified agreement is the result of months of effort by members of the National Negotiating team and our general chairmen at the on-property level," President Hahs said. "I wish to thank those individuals: First Vice-President Ed Rodziewicz; Vice-President Paul Sorrow; Vice-President Dale McPherson; General Chairman Cleatus Roy (Southeast); General Chairman Gil Gore (West); General Chairman Tommy Roberts (East); General Chairman Larry Sykes (Norfolk Southern for health & welfare); and Mediator Sam Cognata of the National Mediation Board for his assistance. I also thank our attorneys Roland Wilder and Brother Tom Brennan."

As part of their alternative compensation package, members on the BNSF opted to bypass general wage increases to be paid in July 2004 in favor of profit sharing, which is linked to the company's profitability.

See New Contract, Page 8

Joint statement by President Hahs and President Hoffa

The following joint statement by IBT General President James P. Hoffa and BLE President Don M. Hahs was issued on December 5:

December 5 was an historic day for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE).

By overwhelmingly approving a merger with the IBT, members of the BLE will now share in the strength of the Teamsters while maintaining their autonomy and proud traditions. Our two great unions

are now united in building on our strong legacies, and creating an even more powerful future for transportation workers.

The merger will strengthen our efforts to ensure that our members maintain a strong political voice at the national and international levels and continued aggressive representation at the local level. We will share knowledge, expertise and resources to give all of our members the necessary support they need to negotiate contracts, organize new members and expand political action on their behalf.

Our two unions share a common purpose of transporting goods from manufacturers to consumers. We are creating a seamless transportation union. By joining together, we will strengthen our ability to represent workers across the transportation spectrum.

We hope that the decisive vote by BLE members will encourage other transportation and rail unions to affiliate with the Teamsters to ensure that transportation workers win the dignity and respect they deserve. •

PASSENGER NEWS BRIEFS

Amtrak sets record for yearly ridership

More than 24 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in Fiscal Year 2003, which ended September 30, the highest annual ridership ever experienced by the nation's intercity passenger rail service in its 32-year history.

Despite a number of adverse conditions this year, including a lagging economy that has hurt the travel industry overall, the Iraq war, the Presidents' Day blizzard, the Northeast blackout and Hurricane Isabel, Amtrak's ridership topped the previous record of 23.5 million passengers set in 2001 and was 2.7 percent better than last year's result of 23.4 million.

Long-distance trains showed substantial improvement over last year, with those in the Eastern region of the country improving ridership by 3.8 percent and those in the Western region improving by 6.6 percent. The most substantial increases were experienced by the Pennsylvanian (up 64%) due mostly to a change in routing; the Texas Eagle (up 20%); the Silver Meteor (up 15.2%); and the City of New Orleans (up 14.5%).

Amtrak attributed the overall positive results largely to its "back-to-basics" approach to winning over passengers, begun earlier this year.

Ridership on shorter distance routes in the West increased by 11.7 percent over last year.

(From Amtrak.com.) •

SEPTA budget cuts derail holiday train

Think of this as Christmas trimming, SEPTA-style.

'Tis nearly the season for the Magical Holiday Railroad to be making its run around the lobby of the transit agency's Center City headquarters in Philadelphia. In what is widely regarded as one of the most elaborate G-scale displays in the country, 10 model trains tootle along 1,000 feet of track, past snowy mountains 15 feet tall, twinkling pines, miniature Philadelphia landmarks, and hordes of life-size gawkers.

Or used to. This year, the whole kit and caboose will be sitting out the holidays in the Grinch's attic.

The savings for budget-

crunched SEPTA: \$40,000. A SEPTA spokesman said \$40,000 "is the cost of paying a bus driver for a year."

The five-year-old Magical Holiday display is the latest sacrifice to SEPTA's fiscal 2004 deficit, which has been whittled since spring from \$54 million to a still-formidable \$26 million. To forestall fare hikes and severe service reductions on real trains and buses, the agency has scavenged for economies, from halving tuition reimbursement for employees to shrinking cleaning crews at Center City stations.

The ax had hung over the little railroad since summer, as SEPTA searched for a corporate Santa to sponsor it. None came forward.

(From the Philadelphia Inquirer.) •

Congress approves \$1.22B for Amtrak

House and Senate bargainers have agreed to give Amtrak \$1.22 billion for the new year, close to what railroad officials say they need to keep trains running and maintenance projects on track.

The money was to be included in a compromise \$90 billion measure for transportation programs, the Treasury Department and several smaller agencies for the federal budget year that began Oct. 1.

That measure also will clear the way for a 2.2 percent pay raise for members of Congress, bringing their salaries to more than \$158,000 a year.

Officials of Amtrak had initially said they needed \$1.8 billion this year to retain existing levels of service. President Bush proposed \$900 million, an amount the House approved.

After the Senate voted to provide \$1.35 billion, Amtrak President David Gunn wrote lawmakers that anything less would "seriously jeopardize the availability of service and continued operation of the national system."

The final compromise between the two Republican-run chambers underlined the clout wielded by Amtrak supporters. Though its busiest line runs from Boston and Washington, Amtrak serves 500 communities in 46 states.

Fatality at LIRR

A 17-year employee of the Long Island Rail Road was struck and killed by an east-bound train outside Copiague on October 20 while working on the tracks.

Joseph Boyd, 41, of Babylon, was an electric traction employee who worked as a flagman alerting his fellow crew members to oncoming trains. His crew was about to start work on the third rail on the tracks east of the Copiague station when he was accidentally struck. He was a member of IBEW Local 589.

(From Newsday.) •

MBTA to proceed with fare hikes

Following a unanimous vote by its Board of Directors, MBTA will increase bus, subway, commuter rail, and boat fares by an average of 25 percent beginning in January.

In a last-minute gesture, the board also promised not to hike fares again for at least two years. An MBTA official said the fare hikes will raise an estimated \$49.1 million in additional revenue annually and were necessary to maintain existing service.

(From the Boston Globe.) •

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003



MT. OLIVE PICKLE CO.
Pickles and relishes sold under the Mt. Olive and other labels, including the Food Lion and Harris Teeter supermarket "house" labels
► Farm Labor Organizing Committee

PICTSWEET MUSHROOM FARM
Fresh mushrooms and frozen vegetables with the Pictsweet label
► United Farm Workers of America

TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

ADAM'S MARK HOTEL
Hotel in Buffalo, NY
► International Union of Operating Engineers

BEST WESTERN-GROSVENOR RESORT
Hotel in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.; located at Disney World, but separately owned and operated
► Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON
Hotel in Waterbury, Conn.
► Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union

GRAND HOTEL MINNEAPOLIS
Hotel in Minneapolis owned and operated by the Wirth Companies
► Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union

HOLIDAY INN SUNSPREE HOTEL
Hotel in Kapaa, Hawaii
► International Longshore & Warehouse Union

NEW OTANI HOTEL & GARDEN
Hotel in downtown Los Angeles
► Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union

OTHERS

CF&I STEEL and OREGON STEEL MILLS, INC.
Steel, including rod, bar, rail, pipe and steel plate
► United Steelworkers of America

R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.
Cigarettes: Best Value, Camel, Century, Doral, Eclipse, Magna, Monarch, More, Now, Salem, Sterling, Vantage, and Winston; plus all Moonlight Tobacco products
► Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers International Union

BUILDING MATERIALS & TOOLS

JET EQUIPMENT & TOOLS, INC.
Auburn, Wash., distributor of "JET" brand metal- and wood-working power and hand tools for home and commercial use
► International Brotherhood of Teamsters

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

BIG LEAGUE THEATRICALS ROAD COMPANY
Performing the "The Music Man" and "Miss Saigon"
► Actors' Equity Assn./American Federation of Musicians

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION
BET cable television, Action pay-per-view, Bet on Jazz
► International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

ECHOSTAR DISH NETWORK
Satellite Television Service
► Communications Workers of America

FOOD & BEVERAGES

ALGOOD FOODS
Reeses Peanut Butter
► International Brotherhood of Teamsters

DARIGOLD/WEST FARM FOODS
Milk, cheese, dairy products
► International Brotherhood of Teamsters

DIAMOND WALNUT CO.
Diamond brand canned and bagged walnuts and walnut pieces
► International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Burlington Northern Santa Fe



Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway posted a third-quarter profit of \$203 million, up from \$192 million for the period ended Sept. 30 last year. The higher profit was attributed to increased truckload shipments, increased agricultural shipments, and some rate increases.

Freight revenues for the third quarter increased \$83 million to a record \$2.37 billion compared with 2002 third-quarter revenues of \$2.28 billion. Third-quarter freight revenues included increased fuel surcharges of \$22 million compared with the prior year. Consumer Products revenues increased \$48 million to a record \$929 million, reflecting continued growth in the international, truckload and perishables sectors. Coal revenues decreased \$24 million to \$511 million

Operating expenses of \$1.97 billion were \$76 million, or 4 percent, higher than the same period in 2002. Increases in operating expense were primarily driven by a \$45 million, or 21 percent, increase in fuel expense compared with the third quarter of 2002. BNSF's operating ratio was 81.8 percent compared to 81.6 percent for the same period in the prior year. •

Canadian Pacific Railway



**CANADIAN
PACIFIC
RAILWAY**

Canadian Pacific Railway reported a 45 percent increase in net income to \$95 million in the third quarter of 2003, compared with \$65 million in the same period last year (all figures in Canadian dollars).

Total revenues were \$904 million in the third quarter of 2003, compared with \$917 million in third-quarter 2002. Without the impact of foreign exchange, freight revenue would have grown by 5 per cent.

Grain revenue increased \$15 million, reflecting strong U.S. volumes and movement of a substantially larger Canadian crop. Intermodal revenue increased \$6 million, driven by solid West Coast imports. Sulphur and fertilizer revenues were up \$5 million, reflecting strong exports of sulphur and potash

Operating expenses were \$696 million in the quarter, up marginally over the same period of 2002, including the beneficial impact of foreign exchange. CPR's operating income was \$209 million, down 7 percent from the same quarter last year. Its operating ratio was 76.9 per cent, compared with 75.6 per cent in the same quarter of 2002. •

Kansas City Southern



Kansas City Southern reported net income of \$4.3 million for the third quarter of 2003, compared to net income of \$10.6 million for the third quarter of 2002. Consolidated revenues for the third quarter of 2003 were \$146.3 million, compared to \$138.9 million for the comparable 2002 period, a 5 percent increase. Operating income more than doubled to \$14.9 million compared to \$6.2 million during the third quarter last year. Consolidated KCS results were

negatively affected by lower earnings from Grupo Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana, S.A. de C.V. (Grupo TFM) and a reduction in other income.

KCS's equity earnings from Grupo TFM for the first nine months of 2003, decreased by approximately \$21.4 million, in part caused by a period to period reduction of \$18.4 million related to deferred tax benefits recorded by Grupo TFM. Also affecting the nine-month period was a \$9.0 million decrease in Grupo TFM revenues and an \$11.6 million increase in fuel costs.

KCS's third quarter operating ratio was 87.5 percent compared with 94.3 percent for the comparable 2002 period. •

Union Pacific Corp.



Union Pacific said its third quarter earnings fell 27 percent and acknowledged congestion bottlenecks, primarily on the West Coast.

Profits dropped to \$317 million in the 2003 third quarter compared to profits of \$437 million in the 2002 third quarter. However, UP noted that 2002 third quarter profits were inflated by a major real estate sale and a large tax settlement. Fuel costs were up \$50 million in the most recent quarter.

UP Chairman Dick Davidson told the Fort Worth Star Telegram that UP was too slow in replacing approximately 2,000 workers who retired or quit this year, leaving it short of train crews throughout parts of the system. The result was \$15 million to \$20 million in extra costs during the third quarter, Davidson said, primarily to pay extra for recalled train crews and also late charges to customers. He told the newspaper that UP planned to hire at least 1,000 train-crew workers by the end of this year and up to 2,000 more by the end of 2004.

For the third quarter, UP reported operating income of \$592 million com-

Canadian National Railway



Canadian National posted a net income for third-quarter 2003 of \$294 million, an increase of \$34 million over net income of \$268 million in the comparable quarter of 2002 (all figures Canadian dollars).

Improved results reflect increased intermodal revenue, recovery in Canadian grain shipments, solid cost control, and favorable tax adjustments of \$30 million

Operating income for the quarter declined six per cent to \$454 million. Revenues of \$1,413 million were six per cent lower than the year-earlier period, reflecting the significant strengthening of the Canadian dollar, continued weakness in coal shipments and a slowdown in the automotive sector. Operating expenses declined six per cent to \$959 million, due to the translation impact of the stronger Canadian dollar on U.S. dollar-denominated expenses, and lower expenses for purchased services and material, and equipment rents. Partly offsetting the decrease were higher casualty and other expenses.

The company's operating ratio for the quarter was 67.9 per cent compared with 67.8 per cent for the comparable quarter of 2002.

Net income for the first nine months of 2003 was \$790 million compared with net income of \$778 million for the same period of 2002. •

CSX Transportation



CSX reported a net loss of \$103 million compared with net income of \$127 million a year earlier. The latest results included a \$145 million charge from a change in the company's estimate for injury liabilities as well as a charge of \$67 million for settlement of disputes related to the 1999 sale of the

company's international container-shipping assets. Excluding these items, CSX said it earned \$109 million compared with \$127 million a year earlier.

Revenue fell to \$1.88 billion from \$2.06 billion a year earlier. Surface Transportation revenue, which includes CSX's rail and intermodal units, was \$1.82 billion, up two percent from a year ago. Revenue and volume improved in all of the company's merchandise markets. Coal, auto and intermodal revenues were basically flat on a year-over-year basis. Total CSX revenues for the quarter were \$1.88 billion versus \$2.06 billion last year. The decline in Surface Transportation operating income essentially resulted from an overall lack of network fluidity, which drove increased equipment, employee, fuel and related service costs.

The railroad's third quarter 2003 operating ration ballooned to 88.3 percent, up from 87.3 percent in third quarter of 2002. •

Norfolk Southern



Norfolk Southern Corp. reported third-

quarter net income of \$137 million compared with net income of \$126 million in the third quarter of 2002. Third-quarter railway operating revenues of \$1.60 billion were even with third quarter 2002.

Intermodal revenues in 2003 set a third-quarter record at \$315 million and also a record for the first nine months, increasing to \$904 million compared to the same period a year earlier. Coal revenues improved slightly to \$372 million. Third-quarter general merchandise revenues declined one percent to \$911 million compared to the same period of 2002. Automotive revenues decreased 11 percent, primarily due to slowed manufacturing and model changeovers, while agricultural, paper and forest products and chemicals reported increases.

Operating expenses for the quarter remained unchanged at \$1.29 billion compared to third quarter 2002. For the quarter, the railway operating ratio remained unchanged at 80.5 percent compared with the same period of 2002. For the first nine months, the operating ratio rose from 81.4 percent to 82.5 percent.

pared to \$619 million for the same period in 2002. Revenue was a record \$3.0 billion, up 4 percent versus 2002.

"As in the first half of the year, fuel prices continued to be a drain on earnings, adding nearly \$50 million to third quarter expenses," said Davidson in news release. "On the plus side, however, we achieved record revenue of nearly \$3 billion — a four percent increase over last year."

Overall, third quarter commodity revenue was up 4 percent with three groups — Agricultural, Industrial Products and Energy — all achieving best ever quarterly revenue. Results as follows: Agricultural up 10 percent; Industrial Products up 7 percent; Energy up 6 percent; Chemicals and Intermodal were flat; and Automotive down 3 percent.

Earnings for Union Pacific's trucking company, Overnite Corp., fell 67 percent to 6 cents a share, from 18 cents a share in the third quarter last year.

For its first nine months, Union Pacific had net income of \$1.03 billion, a 7 percent increase from the \$963 million for the same period a year ago.

The railroad's operating ratio increased to 80.0 percent, an increase over the third quarter of 2002 (78.3 percent). UP's year-to-date operating ratio was 82.0 percent, up from the first nine months of 2002 (79.7 percent). •

Remote control fatality in San Antonio heightens worker safety concerns

On December 7, a 37-year-old employee in San Antonio was struck and killed by one of the two remote control locomotives he was operating.

This tragedy comes despite persistent warnings about the potential dangers of remote control technology and lack of training to operate the technology in the United States from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

"We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Brother Herstine's family and friends," said Don Hahs, International President of the BLE. "Jody Herstine had been a switchman at Union Pacific for only five years. Our hearts go out to

his grieving wife, Sara, and two children.

"While the National Transportation Safety Board will determine the specific causes of this accident, we hope that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and rail companies will heed our concerns before another tragedy occurs," he added.

The fatality came two days after an overwhelming majority of BLE members voted to merge with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

"This senseless death underscores the need for enforceable regulations to be adopted by the FRA to make remote

control operations safer," said James P. Hoffa, General President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. "What we have here is 21st Century technology used on a 19th Century infrastructure and 20th Century locomotives which carry tons of explosive and hazardous materials through our communities. One life lost, is one too many."

So far, 44 cities and counties across the United States have passed resolutions calling on the Federal Railroad Administration to adopt enforceable regulations to make remote control operations safer. •

Push for remote control safety continues

44 different communities enact remote control safety resolutions

As this issue of the *Locomotive Engineer Newsletter* goes to press, 44 communities have enacted remote control safety resolutions, each calling for improved safety regulations to govern the operation of remote control locomotives.

The most recent are: Allen Park, Mich.; Berwyn, Ill.; Irvington, Ill.; Melvindale, Mich.; Redford Township, Mich.; River Rouge, Mich.; St. Louis, Mo.; and Wamac, Ill. In all, 33 cities and 11 counties have enacted remote control safety resolutions.

Allen Park, Mich.

The Allen Park resolution asks the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to conduct a review of the safety of the technology.

Berwyn, Ill.

The Berwyn resolution, passed on August 12, bans the use of remote control within the city limits. BLE Division 32 (Berwyn, Ill.) member John Parypinski was instrumental in the passage of this resolution.

Irvington, Ill.

The resolution, passed by the Village President and Board of Trustees of Irvington, asks the FRA to develop comprehensive regulations for the use of remote control locomotives.

BLE Illinois State Legislative Board Chairman C.E. Way thanked BLE Division 24 (Centralia, Ill.) Legislative Representative Brad Pearson for his work on the resolution. Chairman Way also thanked William Irwin, Village Clerk of Irvington, and Mike Gaison, Village President, for their help.

Melvindale, Mich.

On November 5, the Melvindale City Council unanimously passed a resolution calling for the FRA to conduct a review of the safety of remote control.

Michigan State Legislative Board Chairman Greg Powell thanked the following people for their assistance in the passage of the Melvindale resolution: Brother Frank Battaglia, Legislative Representative of BLE Division 1 (De-

troit); Ray Hernandez, Legislative Representative of BLE Division 831 (Detroit); the BLE members who were involved; and the Melvindale Mayor, City Council and Fire Chief.

Redford Township, Mich.

On November 11, the Township of Redford's Council unanimously passed a remote control safety resolution.

Chairman Powell thanked Brother Battaglia for his work in getting the Redford Township resolution passed. In addition to Battaglia, he thanked the other Legislative Representatives and members in the area for their work. He also thanked Kevin Kelly, the Township Supervisor, and the members of the Township Council for their efforts.

River Rouge, Mich.

The resolution, which unanimously passed on November 5, calls on the Federal Railroad Administration to conduct a review of the safety of remote control operations.

Greg Powell, Chairman of the BLE's Michigan State Legislative Board, thanked Brother Frank Battaglia, Legislative Representative of BLE Division 1 (Detroit), and Dan Cook III, a member of Division 1, for working to get the resolution approved. Chairman Powell also thanked the Mayor of River Rouge and the City Council for supporting this measure.

Wamac, Ill.

The resolution passed by Wamac, Ill., calls upon the FRA to develop comprehensive regulations for the use of remote control trains.

The effort to pass the resolution was spearheaded by Brad Pearson, Legislative Representative of BLE Division 24 (Centralia, Ill.). BLE Illinois State Legislative Board Chairman C. Edward Way commended Brother Pearson for his efforts. He also thanked Wamac Mayor Edward McGee and City Clerk Marian Suhl.

The resolution stated that the city of Wamac took action to ensure the public safety of its citizens, and seeks to prohibit railroads from using remote

control locomotives to transport hazardous materials.

St. Louis, Mo.

The Board of Aldermen in St. Louis, Mo., approved a remote control safety resolution on October 15. The Aldermen cited the amount of hazardous materials moving through their city as one of the reasons that they adopted the resolution. The resolution asks the FRA to review their policies regarding remote control operations.

Missouri State Legislative Board Chairman Mickey Gage presented the BLE's position on remote control locomotives to the Alderman. He was assisted by David Grimes, local chairman of BLE Division 42 (St. Louis). Chairman Gage's daughter, Sarah, also assisted with the presentation.

Total

The 33 U.S. cities with remote control safety resolutions are: 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.; and Allen Park, Mich.

Also, 11 counties have passed similar 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.; and Clinton, County, Iowa.

On the Internet

For a complete list of all state, county and AFL-CIO resolutions, visit the BLE website at:

<http://www.ble.org/remotecomtrol> •

10th AFL-CIO State Federation enacts RCO safety resolution

Wisconsin, Georgia pass resolutions in October

A total of 10 AFL-CIO State Federations have enacted remote control safety resolutions as this issue of the *Locomotive Engineer Newsletter* goes to press, the latest being Wisconsin and Georgia.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin AFL-CIO adopted a resolution calling for the State of Wisconsin and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to end the use of unregulated remote control locomotive operations within the state.

The Wisconsin AFL-CIO passed the resolution on October 23. It states, in part, that, "employees with as little as two weeks of training" as remote operators are controlling the movement of hazardous materials in "close proximity to our homes, schools, places of work, and hospitals."

Wisconsin AFL-CIO President David Newby said, "The Wisconsin AFL-CIO totally supports the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in their campaign to seek the end of the unregulated use of remote control locomotives."

Georgia

In late October, the Georgia State AFL-CIO unanimously passed a remote control safety resolution at its 47th annual convention in Savannah, Ga.

The resolution was submitted by Brother Raymond Taylor, Chairman of the BLE Georgia State Legislative Board.

As a result of the resolution, Georgia State AFL-CIO President Charlie Key sent a letter to FRA Administrator Allan Rutter, which read in part, "In addition to normal safety concerns of having an unstaffed multi-ton vehicle moving through traffic and rail yards, a major concern is that such vehicle can more easily become the target of a terrorist."

Also at the convention, Brother Taylor was re-elected to the office of Vice-President, 4th District, of the Georgia State AFL-CIO.

10 State Feds

In addition to Wisconsin and Georgia, eight other AFL-CIO state federations have passed remote control resolutions. They are: Arizona, Texas, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Missouri, North Dakota and Nebraska.

BLE, Tex-Mex sign landmark remote control agreement

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has reached a landmark contract agreement with the Texas-Mexican Railway that allows for the safe implementation of remote control operations and provides major pay raises.

"It's a good agreement," said BLE Tex-Mex General Chairman George Leyendecker. "There's nothing like it in the land."

The agreement, ratified by an 81 percent majority of workers, gives remote control assignments to both locomotive engineers and conductors. Job protections are written into the contract for both crafts, assuring that no current employees will lose their jobs or be furloughed due to remote control implementation.

"Not only did we reach an agreement with management regarding the implementation of remote control operations, it is our opinion that we established an operation that is vastly superior to the agreement that the Class One properties reached and implemented with the United Transportation Union," BLE International Vice-President Merle Geiger said.

"The BLE still has some very grave concerns over the manner in which remote control locomotive operations have been introduced into the industry," he continued. "The Organization still believes that the Federal Railroad Administration has not done its duty in setting forth regulations regarding the operation of remote control and in establishing the proper training of remote control operators. This Organization will continue in its endeavor to convince the FRA to do its job and to not continue to sit on the sidelines on this most important matter."

Geiger and Leyendecker were part of a successful negotiating team that also included Mike Clark, Juan Garza Jr. and David Snow — members of BLE Division 244 (Laredo, Texas) who work as conductors for Tex-Mex.

"With three conductors and two locomotive engineers on the Negotiating Committee, this was a total team effort," Brother Leyendecker said. "All credit and accolades should go to the

negotiating committee as a whole."

Vice-President Geiger explained the BLE/Tex-Mex agreement, which will allow remote control assignments to be handled much more efficiently than on the Class One railroads.

"What the BLE was able to accomplish in the Tex-Mex agreement is to return to the historic manner in filling these assignments," Vice-President

carrier will have the flexibility to use remote control crews to do traditional work, such as dogcatching, staging trains outside the terminal, and doing outside terminal work that requires a certified locomotive engineer at the controls of the locomotive."

Train crews will be compensated handsomely for their increased flexibility and efficiency. General Chairman

employee protection based solely on the implementation of remote control on the property," he said. "All employees on the roster at the time of signing receive said protection. Prior to any protected operating employee being furloughed, said employee will have the right to mark up as a brakeman to one of these Remote Control assignments. When an employee marks to the brakeman position, the Remote Control Assignment automatically reverts to a regular TSE and the assignment remains as such until the employee filling the brakeman position is able to hold a job elsewhere at which time the assignment will automatically revert to a Remote Control Assignment."

Vice-President Geiger recognized Tex-Mex General Manager James Riney and Labor Relations Officer Lynn Lambert for their efforts.

"For if not for their vision and courage in the face of pressure from other carriers, we would not have been successful in reaching this landmark agreement," he said. "There were certain people within the NCCC who stated that it would be a waste of time on the part of Tex-Mex management because they would never be able to reach an agreement with the BLE on remote control. Obviously we have proven that element wrong."

In addition to Brothers Clark, Leyendecker, Garza and Snow, Vice-President Geiger also thanked Tommy Miller, BLE Director of Organizing, for helping to get the agreement ratified. "His hard work in this endeavor proves, again, his value and commitment to our Organization," Geiger said.

Brother Miller, who helped to organize the Tex-Mex property last year, said unity was the key to success.

"This is what happens when we can be on the same page and all work together toward one common cause for the benefit of everyone," he said. "We have one of the best agreements in the country as far as remote control is concerned, and I thank everyone for participating in the meetings to explain the agreement in Houston, Laredo and Corpus Christi." •

**"It's a good agreement.
There's nothing like it in the land."**

— Tex Mex General Chairman George Leyendecker

Geiger said. "We have placed a qualified locomotive engineer in the Lead Remote Operator position and conductors will fill the Remote Operator position. On Tex-Mex there no longer are any 'yard assignments,' per se. Yard assignments on this property have been replaced by TSE (Traveling Switch Engines). In addition to performing work outside of terminal limits, they handle all of the switching formerly performed by yard assignments.

"BLE assignments will be much more productive than remote control yard operations under the UTU agreement. BLE members assigned to remote control operations will have a much greater flexibility in performing their duties."

With a federally certified locomotive engineer on the job, the Tex-Mex crews will have the flexibility to operate trains by traditional methods or by remote control, depending on which method is more efficient in any given situation.

"The operators under the BLE Agreement will have the flexibility to operate in the traditional mode when it makes sense to do so and will alleviate some of the safety concerns that we have with the remote control operations in place on the Class Ones," Vice-President Geiger said. "Further, the

Leyendecker summarized the pay issue by stating that some crew members could receive pay increases of 45 percent when they go into remote control operations. Vice-President Geiger explained in more detail.

"In exchange for the additional flexibility that the BLE Agreement gives the Tex-Mex, the carrier agreed to compensate the engineer and the conductor as though they were working conductor-only assignments under the UTU Crew Consist and TSE Agreements including all Crew Consist payments, Foot Board Yardmaster payments and Air Pay. The BLE has tapped into the UTU Crew Consist allowances for engineers," Geiger said.

"Payments will be based on the engineer and conductor seniority date. For Pre-85 employees that equates to approximately an additional \$100 per day in addition to the basic day. For Post-85 employees it equates to approximately \$40.00 in addition to the basic day. Further, both crew members will receive an additional 45 minutes at the daily basic rate of pay and the Lead Operator position will receive the Engineer Certification Allowance."

Vice-President Geiger also explained the superior job protections outlined in the Tex-Mex agreement.

"The BLE has established true em-

BLE to conduct three Local Chairman workshops throughout 2004

The BLE Education & Training Department will conduct three Local Chairman Workshops in 2004 with the first scheduled for January 18-23.

The January workshop will take place on the campus of the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md. The other classes are scheduled for March 21-26 on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign, Ill., and April 4-9 at the American Airlines Training & Conference Center in Dallas/Fort Worth.

Upon successful completion of the course, everyone will qualify for an \$85 per day stipend from the North American Railway Foundation. The stipends will be paid directly to the Secretary-Treasurer of the respective divisions.

Among other assignments, the workshops will include BLE organizational structure and functions, representing members at disciplinary and decertification hearings, union leadership skills, claim and grievance handling, and writing and editing skills. Participants also will learn how to effectively use the BLE arbitration database. A highlight of the workshops is when attendees participate in a simulated disciplinary hearing.

These classes are not just for new Local Chairmen, and the BLE encourages all Local Chairmen to

attend one of these workshops.

For the first time, Local Chairmen will have the opportunity to register for the 2004 workshops online through the BLE website at: <http://www.ble.org/lc>.

Also new for 2004 is a room reservation requirement. Members will have to sign up for their rooms in advance and provide a credit card number to reserve a room. Those who do not show up will be charged for the first night's stay.

And, because of the overwhelming response to past workshops, the 2004 workshops will be made available to only Local Chairmen or members of the Local Committee of Adjustment.

The BLE Education & Training Department presents these workshops in conjunction with the staff of the George Meany Center. Workshops instructors will include BLE General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert, BLE Vice-President Richard K. Radek, Assistant Director of the BLE Arbitration Department Marcus Ruef, Special Representative Ken Kroeger, and BLE Arbitration Department Manager Greg Ross. In addition, Donald Spatz, an adjunct professor from the George Meany Center, will instruct at the workshops.

The BLE pays the costs of books, equipment, tu-

ition and a Thursday evening graduation banquet. BLE members who attend are responsible for the cost of room and board, which varies based on the location of the workshop.

- January 18-23, 2004: George Meany Center (Silver Spring, Md.)

- \$152.50 per day for single room and board
 - \$107.50 per day for double room and board

- March 21-26, 2004: University of Illinois (Champaign, Ill.)

- \$660 per week for single room and board
 - \$500 per week for double room and board

- April 4-April 9, 2004: American Airlines Training & Conference Center (Dallas/Fort Worth)

- \$158 per day for single room and board
 - \$108 per day for double room and board

Registration for the 2004 workshops is on a first come, first served basis with class size limited to the first 25 who register through the BLE website. For more information, please contact Ken Kroeger of the BLE Education & Training Dept. at (216) 272-0986 or kroeger@ble.org. •

BLE NEWS

BLE, Grand Trunk reach tentative agreement

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has reached a tentative contract agreement for locomotive engineers on CN's Grand Trunk Western lines.

If approved, the contract would become effective February 2, 2004. Across the board, engineers would receive average pay increases of approximately \$12 per hour, bringing wages to \$33 per hour.

BLE International President Don Hahs recognized the efforts of International Vice-President Paul Sorrow and GTW General Chairman John Karakian.

Karakian said the BLE has been in negotiations with the carrier for the past year and a half, and said the success was a team effort.

"This was a total team effort of gigantic proportions," Brother Karakian said. "I want to thank President Hahs, Vice-President Sorrow, the entire International Division, all my Local Chairmen and all other members. Every little bit helped."

Karakian recognized all GTW Local Chairmen, specifically Terry Tindol (Division 33, Battle Creek, Mich.); Jerry Tibble (Division 122, Port Huron, Mich.); Vice-General Chairman Marty Tyler (Division 650, Durand, Mich.); Danny Harris (Division 812, Detroit); G.N. Faford (Division 850, Flat Rock, Mich.); and Dave Butler (Division 920, Pontiac, Mich.).

"This contract was the result of a lot of hard work and a lot of not backing down," Karakian said.

The contract provides protections for remote control operations, and stipulates that locomotive engineers must be used if a train is operated by remote control outside of existing switching limits or anywhere within existing switching limits faster than restricted speed. It also provides that if a train is operated outside of existing switching limits by any mode of operations (on board or off board computer, including GPS) then it must be operated by a locomotive engineer.

The agreement also contains a shortline sale/lease protection clause. In the event that GTW or any of its lines are sold or leased, employees cannot be furloughed. The company is obligated to absorb employees and provide jobs at the nearest terminal.

While the proposed contract does not provide for back wages, the company has agreed to pay the tab for all retroactive health and welfare expenses. As part of the proposed agreement the GTW members will fall under the national health and welfare contract and will begin making monthly health and welfare payments.

The contract also contains an opt-out clause, where the BLE can back out of the agreement by December 1, 2004.

President Hahs applauded Vice-President Sorrow, General Chairman Karakian and everyone else involved for bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion. •

Judge approves strike by Amtrak employees

Thousands of Amtrak employees are legally entitled to walk off the job for one day to protest President Bush's lack of support for passenger rail service, a federal judge ruled on December 11.

The unions "have not reached any conclusion on what they will do," said Richard Edelman, an attorney with O'Donnell, Schwartz and Anderson who represents the unions. He said the unions had won a significant victory with the ruling itself. "We are vindicated on the legal issues. We have the right to protest."

However, Amtrak spokesman Cliff Black said Amtrak attorneys had filed a notice of appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and would ask the court for an emergency stay if the unions set a date for the walkout.

"We have the hammer, and now it's a question of whether or not we want to swing it,"

said BLE International President Don Hahs.

The unions arguing for the one-day strike are the Transport Workers Union, BLE, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, National Council of Firemen and Oilers (SEIU), and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union.

Amtrak chief executive David Gunn had insisted that if the railroad did not receive \$1.8 billion in federal subsidies, critical infrastructure on the line would be in jeopardy and "on any given day something could fail," leading to a nationwide shutdown. A congressional conference committee agreed to give Amtrak an annual subsidy of \$1.22 billion.

Gunn has since said he can live with the lower figure, partly because costs have been cut faster and revenues are rising faster than expected.

(The Washington Post contributed to this report.) •

Van de Water confirmed at NMB

Read Van de Water was unanimously confirmed on December 9 by the United States Senate to serve as a Member of the National Mediation Board. Ms. Van de Water was nominated by President George W. Bush and will replace Frank Duggan.

Ms. Van de Water served as the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs at the U.S. Department of Transportation from 2001-2003. She previously was the founder of Carson King Consulting, which she managed from 2000-2001. From 1997 to 1999, she was the legislative counsel for international trade and investment with The Business Roundtable and, from 1991 to 1997, she was legisla-

tive counsel and director of government affairs for Northwest Airlines. She also was employed on Capitol Hill as an appropriations associate and legislative assistant to Congressman Tom DeLay (Texas) from 1987-1991.

BLE President Don Hahs congratulated Ms. Van de Water on her appointment and said he was looking forward to working together.

A native of Charlotte, N.C., Ms. Van de Water graduated from the University of the South (Sewanee) in 1986. She received a master's degree from The George Washington University and her J.D. from The Georgetown University Law Center. She was sworn in on December 11. •

BLE Job Bank Amtrak

Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corp., is recruiting Locomotive Engineers to work out of the following locations: Lincoln, Neb.; Denver, Colo.; Carbondale, Ill.; and Little Rock, Ark.

Duties include the safe operation of diesel-electric locomotives, complying with train orders, wayside signals, railroad operating rules, special instructions, and federal, state and local regulations to transport passengers and equipment safely and efficiently.

Locomotive Engineers perform equipment and air brake tests as required. Job involves working alone and apart in physical isolation while integrating activities with others. Engineers must make timely and critical decisions under stressful situations to safeguard lives and property.

Candidates must have a current Class I Engineer Certificate and must currently be working as a Locomotive Engineer with one year of service. Any candidate whose driving record indicates a conviction for an alcohol or substance violation, or a refusal to submit to testing in connection with a moving violation within the past 36 months, will be automatically disqualified. Candidates must be able to report to their Crew Base within a 2-hour call.

Resumes may be forwarded to Amtrak Human Resources Department, 525 West Van Buren St., Chicago, IL 60607, faxed to (312) 880-5174, or e-mailed to Kosbourne@amtrak.com

Amtrak is an equal opportunity employer: EOE, M/F, D/V

IBT/IBLE scores another organizing win over UTU

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters/International Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Rail Operating Employees Council (IBT/IBLE) scored another joint victory as it successfully organized employees at the New York & Atlantic Railway.

A majority of workers chose the IBT/IBLE over the United Transportation Union as their designated collective bargaining representative. The National Mediation Board certified the election results on November 20.

The New York & Atlantic is the latest in a string of shortline victories for the IBT/IBLE, which has successfully organized more than 600 new members since last year.

In addition to the New York & Atlantic, the IBT/IBLE has organized six other shortlines since August of 2002, including: the Great Western Railway of Colorado; St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad; Utah Railway; the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad; the Indiana Southern Railroad; and the Texas-Mexican Railway.

Brother John Tolman, Assistant to the International President, helped coordinate the New York & Atlantic organizing drive. He thanked Bob Evers, Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) General Chairman; Mickey Quinn, LIRR Vice Chairman; and Gary Lockel, Division 269 Local Committee of Adjustment. Don Carman is the Local Chairman on the New York & Atlantic property.

"This victory would not have been successful without the diligent and persistent efforts of Local Chairman Don Carman," BLE International President Don M. Hahs said. "I welcome the new members and sincerely appreciate the efforts of everyone involved, particularly Brother Carman."

The New York & Atlantic operates 269 route miles and is headquartered in Glendale, N.Y. It operates mainly in New York State, specifically Nassau and Suffolk counties, Brooklyn, and Queens. It connects with the Canadian Pacific Railway, CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. Its major commodities include lumber, paper, building materials, plastic, food products and recyclables. •

BLE delivers safety message at Detroit's LaborFest

Members of the BLE participated in Detroit's LaborFest, a celebration of labor's heritage, on September 13.

The event was organized by the AFL-CIO in lieu of a Labor Day parade and was held at Detroit's Ford Field, the union-built home of the Detroit Lions football team.

"(LaborFest) is a new approach, and exciting new way for working families to celebrate our heritage, show our strength, and protect our future," said Mark Gaffney, president of the Michigan State AFL-CIO.

Representing the BLE at LaborFest 2003 was Michigan State Legislative Chairman Greg Powell, who set up a booth to educate members of the community about the railroads' use of unmanned locomotives.

Brother Powell stumped relentlessly on this issue. After listening to his presentation, more than 1,000 attendees signed a petition favoring regulation of the controversial practice of operating locomotives by remote con-

trol. Many were flat out stunned that a locomotive would be operated by anyone other than an engineer in the cab.

"This is a terrific venue for educating the public," Powell said. "We are trying to get comprehensive legislation and regulation enacted by Congress regarding unmanned locomotive operation. Our goal here was to educate the public and bring about this legislation.

"There is obvious public support out there on this issue. In just a few short hours we collected over 1,200 signatures supporting this cause. This is truly a safety issue with the carriers acting in a reckless manner by implementing their measures without a comprehensive training and certification process in place. Every citizen in this state, all states, is entitled to safety when it comes to railroad operations."

Community members who visited the BLE booth also heard a pitch for continued support of Amtrak. Members of TCU volunteered their time and effort to show solidarity in the issues of unmanned locomotive operations and Amtrak support.

"I want to thank everyone who participated and helped at our booth at Laborfest 2003," Powell said. "Brother Dan Cook III (BLE Div. 1) and his fiancé, Adrienne Davis, worked hard to inform LaborFest attendees and gather signatures, as did Brothers Frank Bataglia (BLE Div. 1), Dave Fernald (BLE Div. 2) and his wife Sue, Charlie Allen (BLE Div 19), TCU members Cliff Neumann and Terry Seska. We also had a real strong effort for Operation Lifesaver thanks to Sister Eileen Devine (BLE Div 286). I also want to give a very special



Front, from left: Greg and Kristy Powell. Back, from left: TCU member Cliff Neumann; BLE member Dan Cook III and fiancé Adrienne Davis.



From left: Michigan Lt. Governor John Cherry visits with Brother Powell at the BLE booth.

thank you to my wife Kristy who helped not only at LaborFest but also for her untiring support and dedication.

"We look forward to participating in LaborFest 2004 and working on issues to bring about a safe and fair workplace and community."

Many other issues were trumpeted at LaborFest, including the right of workers to organize, health care and Free Trade Agreements that affect workers in North America.

"We're going to take advantage of this great gathering of working families in downtown Detroit to educate and agitate on the issues we care about, including the right to organize," Gaffney said. "Millions of workers in this coun-

try want to join unions and bargain for a better standard of living, but they are being denied their fundamental rights by illegal and unfair employer tactics. We intend to put the right to organize at the top of our nation's agenda."

Universal access to quality, affordable health care was also a major theme of LaborFest '03. "It's a disgrace that 41 million people in this country have no health insurance," said Michigan AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Tina Abbott. "Many of our members work in the health care field, and we see first hand the human tragedy caused by our nation's health care crisis." •

(Article submitted by C.H. Allen of BLE Division 19.)

Regional meetings set for 2004

BLE and GIA members who are making vacation plans for next year may wish to consider attending one of the Brotherhood's four regional meetings.

Whether its educational opportunities, hearing about the latest issues from International officers, or the pleasure of socializing with fellow railroaders, each 2004 regional meeting offers something for everyone.

BLE members can participate in hands-on workshops for Local Chairmen, Legislative Representatives and Secretary-Treasurers. GIA members may also attend one of the informative meetings planned with United Healthcare and/or the Railroad Retirement Board. In addition to these educational opportunities, various social events are also planned as part of each regional meeting experience.

Typically, a golf tournament and banquet are part of the festivities. While specific details are not yet finalized, the dates and locations of next year's regional meetings are listed below.

SMA — June 13-17, 2004

The 77th annual South-eastern Meeting Association will be held in Greenville, S.C., at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Greenville Commons. Brother W.R. "Roger" Peace and members of BLE Division 598 in Greenville, S.C., will host the event. Early bird hotel reservations can be made by calling: (800) 233-1234 or (864) 235-1234. (Be sure to ask for the discounted BLE rate.)

EUMA — August 8-12, 2004

The 66th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association will be held in Grand Island, N.Y.

Jim and Janet Louis and the members of Division 421 will host the 2004 EUMA at Grand Island's Holiday Day. August 8 is the 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 Louis at: louisble@adelphia.net or (716) 695-0789.

IWC — August 17-22, 2004

Pat and Barbie Lynch and the members of BLE Division 446 (Gallup, N.M.) will host the 64th annual International Western Convention in Albuquerque, N.M. Reservations for the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque (330 Tijeras NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102) can be made by calling: (505) 842-1234.

SWCM — The week of September 13, 2004

Local Chairman G.Y. Bailey and the members of BLE Division 62 will host the 69th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting in The Woodlands, Texas, a suburb of Houston. His wife, Kathie Bailey, will serve as GIA chairperson for the event.

Reservations can be made by calling The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel and Convention Center at: (281) 367-9797. The address: 1601 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands, TX 77380.

Members with questions can contact Brother Bailey on his cell phone or by e-mail at: (281) 250-7629 or gybailey@sbcglobal.net. •

BLE, Teamsters merger approved by 81% majority

IBT Merger

Continued from Page 1

the House of Labor.

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

BLE would be the first railroad union under the new IBT Rail Conference, and others may follow. Other AFL-CIO affiliated rail unions have contacted the IBT regarding possible mergers, and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees is currently in merger discussions with the IBT.

It is expected that rail workers will be able to negotiate stronger contracts by presenting a united front

under the IBT Rail Conference.

On February 26, 2002, the BLE Advisory Board unanimously approved a motion that allowed the BLE Executive Committee to explore a possible merger with the Teamsters. On September 6, 2002, the BLE and IBT announced the appointment of four joint committees charged with the task of drafting a Merger Agreement for the two organizations, and formal discussions began on October 3.

"I thank all members of the joint committees for their diligent work in preparing the merger documents," President Hahs said. "None of this would have been possible without their hard work to create documents that were acceptable to the membership."

BLE NEWS



Members of the BLE Board of Appeals were on hand to observe as employees of the American Arbitration Association tabulate ballots in the BLE-IBT merger. Standing is D.A. Myers of the BLE Board of Appeals-East and a member of Division 447.

IBT Merger

Continued from Page 1

The four committees were Constitution & Bylaws, Legislative, Finance and Canada.

The Constitution & Bylaws members were: Ed Rodzwick, First Vice-President & Alternate President (Committee Co-Chair); Leo McCann, President, American Train Dispatchers Department, BLE; Paul T. Sorrow, Vice President; Dale McPherson, Vice President; Larry Sykes, General Chairman, Norfolk Southern; Tony Smith, General Chairman, CSXT; Gil Gore, General Chairman, Union Pacific; Rick Gibbons, General Chairman, BNSF; Mark Kenny, General Chairman, Amtrak; and Bob Evers, General Chairman, Long Island Rail Road.

The Legislative Committee members were: Raymond Holmes, BLE Vice-President & U.S. National Legislative Representative (Committee Co-Chair); Jim Keele, Kansas State Legislative Board Chairman; George Newman, Massachusetts State Legislative Board Chairman; and Tim Smith, California State Legislative Board Chairman.

The Finance Committee members were: Bill Walpert, General Secretary-

Treasurer (Committee Co-Chairman); Paul Wingo, International Vice-President; Jim Nelson, Secretary-Treasurer BNSF-Northern Lines General Committee of Adjustment; and Steve L. Christian, Secretary-Treasurer, Arkansas State Legislative Board.

The Canada Committee members were: Gilles Hallé, BLE Vice-President & Canadian Director (Committee Co-Chairman); and George Hucker, BLE Vice-President & National Legislative Representative-Canada.

The BLE Staff was extremely helpful as well, in particular Chuck Anderson, Mo Morrow, Bob Broka and Harry Volpe.

Brothers Tom Brennan, BLE Staff Attorney, and John Tolman, Assistant to the International President, coordinated the activities of the committees.

The BLE conducted a poll of its membership in the spring of 2003, which revealed that a 78 percent majority of the membership favored a merger with the IBT.

On July 10, 2003, the BLE Advisory Board unanimously approved the merger documents. Ballots were mailed on October 20.

Founded on May 8, 1863, the BLE is the senior rail labor organization in North America. •

our members money. They'll get paid like they should be paid."

In the first year of the BNSF alternative compensation contract, members would see a maximum profit sharing of 6% of their annual earnings for 2004 and a maximum of 8% for 2005 and thereafter. Members have the right to opt out of the profit sharing after the first year. •

New Contract

Continued from Page 1

The BLE's four General Chairmen on the BNSF worked together on the alternative compensation package — Dennis Pierce, Austin Morrison, Pat Williams and Rick Gibbons.

"We entered into profit sharing and are hopeful our members will realize even more in earnings potential under this new agreement," said BNSF General Chairman Dennis Pierce. "This is the first BNSF system-wide agreement ratified by the entire merged property, and it was made possible through the concerted efforts of all BNSF General Chairmen and International Vice-President Steve Speagle. We will continue our combined efforts as we look forward to the next round of negotiations.

"I also wish to thank President Hahs and members of the National Negotiating Team for getting this round of negotiations closed out."

"I'm glad we were able to put this round to a close," General Chariman Williams said. "The alternative compensation package we believe will make

DECEMBER 2003 CALENDAR & EVENTS

JANUARY 18-23, 2004... Local Chairman Workshop at George Meany Center, Silver Spring, Md.
Conducted by representatives of the BLE's Education & Training Department and staff members from the George Meany Center. See page 5 of this issue for more details.

FEBRUARY 8-11, 2004... Secretary-Treasurer Compliance Class, Kansas City, Mo.
At the Four Points Sheraton near the Sheraton Kansas City Country Club Plaza. Make hotel reservations by calling (816) 753-7400. Register for the course online at www.ble.org/st or contact Ken Kroeger at: Kroeger@ble.org or call (216) 272-0986. During the three-day session, members will learn proper record keeping techniques, computer applications, and minute-taking. They will also learn methods for filing various Department of Labor and Railroad Retirement reports, as well as Federal tax returns.

FEBRUARY 22-25, 2004... Secretary-Treasurer Compliance Class, George Meany Center
At the George Meany Center in Silver Spring, Md. Room registration is automatic when you register for the course. Register s for the course online at www.ble.org/st or contact Ken Kroeger at: Kroeger@ble.org or call (216) 272-0986.

MARCH 7-10, 2004... Secretary-Treasurer Compliance Class, Dallas, Texas
At the American Airlines Training and Conference Center in Dallas. Call (800) 777-6464 for hotel reservations. Register for the course online at www.ble.org/st or contact Ken Kroeger at: Kroeger@ble.org or call (216) 272-0986.

MARCH 14-17, 2004... Secretary-Treasurer Compliance Class, Chicago, Ill.
At the Chicago City Center Holiday Inn. Call (312) 787-6100 for hotel reservations. Register for the course online at www.ble.org/st or contact Ken Kroeger at: Kroeger@ble.org or call (216) 272-0986.

MARCH 21-26, 2004... Local Chairman Workshop at University of Illinois, Champaign, Ill.
Conducted by representatives of the BLE's Education & Training Department and staff members from the George Meany Center. See page 5 of this issue for more details.

APRIL 4-9, 2004... Local Chairman Workshop in Dallas/Fort Worth
To be held at the American Airlines Training & Conference Center and conducted by representatives of the BLE's Education & Training Department and staff members from the George Meany Center. See page 5 of this issue for more details.

UPCOMING 2004 Regional Meetings... SMA, IWC, SWCM, and EUMA
See Page 7 of this issue for dates and locations.

Advisory Board November Activity

By action of the delegates at the Fifth Quinquennial Convention, summaries of BLE Advisory Board members' activities are published monthly:

International President Don M. Hahs—International Office: General supervision of BLE activities; General office duties; AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department (TTD) Rail Conference meeting; TTD Executive Board meeting; Mtgs. w/ BLE National Negotiating Team and National Carriers Conference Committee to resolve final outstanding issues of national contract; Holiday.

First Vice-President & Alternate President Edward W. Rodzwick— Assisted President in general operation of ID office; Various correspondence and telephone calls; Vice President assignments; IBT/BLE Town Hall mtgs. in Cheyenne, North Platte, Lincoln, Omaha, Minneapolis, St. Louis and Little Rock; South buffalo Railway contract negotiations; General office duties; Holiday.

General Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert—General supervision of BLE financial, record depts.; ID office; BLE Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; meeting at AFL-CIO headquarters concerning new LM reports; meeting with Canadian Director and VP Gilles Halle concerning Canadian issues.

Vice-President Paul T. Sorrow—Attended Div. 86 mtg.; Assisted CSX SAA/Conrail GCofA in arbitration (SBA/PLB); Served as Board Member of SBA1063, NS-Northern Lines; GTW negotiations and mtgs. w/ CN; Assisted NS Northern Lines in preparing for Wheeling & Lake Erie negotiations; Assisted NS, CSX and GTW committees with various issues.

Vice-President Richard K. Radek— ID Office; BLE Decerification Helpline services; Director of Arbitration Dept; National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Indiana Harbor Belt; METRA; Bell Rwy. of Chicago; Paducah & Louisville; Chicago Central & Pacific; NRAB mtg., Chicago; IHB Exec. Committee Mtg., Div. 683 mtg., IHB/UP, North Lake, Ill.; 240.307 hearing prep., Metra, Chicago; Toussaint hearing & settlement conf., Metra, Chicago; Div. 394 mtg., BRC, Alsip, Ill.; Section 3 (Labor) Cmte.; NRAB arbitration, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; CN-W L/M mtg., WC, Green Bay, Wisc.; Eng. Training Program mtgs., Metra; L/M (VP's) follow-up mtgs., CN/WC, Chicago; FRA Part 240.409 dockets this month: EQAL 01-16, 98-84, 00-84, 01-27, 01-18, 01-29.

Vice-President Dale McPherson— CP Rail; Port. Term. RR; Longview Portland & Northern; Longview Switching Co.; Indiana RR; Missouri & Northern Arkansas RR; Utah Railroad; UP Eastern Dist.; UP former CNW; BLE National Bargaining Cmte.; BLE/IBT Constitution & Bylaws Cmte.; PLBs 5604, 5681, 5721, 6040, 6281, 6589; UP work/rest projects; RSAC positive train control cmte.; General office duties; Mtgs. w/ GC Delano, DMIR, Duluth, Minn.; Mtg. w/ Wabtec officials, Washington, D.C.; Preparation & hearings for PLB 6040, Denver.

Vice-President & U.S. Nat'l Legislative Representative Raymond A. Holmes— Washington D.C. office; General office duties; EUMA, Baltimore; AFL-CIO Admin. mtg.; TTD/Rail Div. Mtg.; Advisory Board meeting, Cleveland; International Association of Legislative Board Chairmen, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; Mark-up for Rail Safety and STB Authorization bills; Cong. Young event (R-AK).

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; Indiana Southern RR; New York, Susquehanna & Western; St. Lawrence & Atlantic Rwy.; Assist GC Leyendecker, Tex Mex, Laredo, TX; BLE-IBT informational mtg., Fort Worth, TX; Preparation for Public Law Boards 6695 (I&O) and 6647 (KCS); Holiday; General office duties, research & correspondence.

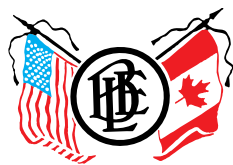
Vice-President Stephen D. Speagle—BNSF/MRL assistance; Conference call w/ BNSF general chairmen, "on property;" Mtg. w/ GC Gibbons & conference call w/ BNSF GCs, Moberly, Mo.; Div. 86 mtg., Decatur; BNSF on property negotiations, Decatur; Preparation & hearings on PLB 6041, Chicago; Conference call w/ BNSF & BLE GCofAs on vacations.

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, filing.

Vice-President Paul L. Wingo Jr.— Assigned to NS-Southern and Eastern Region GCofAs; Iowa, Chicago & Eastern GCofA; Meridian Southern; BLE Security Officer; Work on consolidating various Norfolk Southern agreements; Attended meetings of BLE Divisions 205, 165 and 899; IC&E mediated negotiations, Washington, D.C.; Rail security project; General office duties.

Vice-President & Canadian Director Gilles Hallé—Ottawa Office; CN Pension Board mtgs., Montreal; CROA Office of Arbitration, Montreal; CN-East GCofA mtgs., Grand-Mere; Mtgs.-Sherbrooke/Montreal; Mtgs.-Cleveland.

Vice-President & National Legislative Representative-Canada T. George Hucker—Ottawa Office; National Legislative Board-Canada; Teamsters merger mtgs. in Toronto, Sarina, Schreiber, Vancouver, Kamloops, Winnipeg, Chapreol, Kenora, Brandon; CPR Pension Plan admin. mtg., Toronto; BLE LTD presentation mtg., Toronto; AAR NARAP mtg., Chicago; Division 583 retirement party; CPR H&S senior policy, Montreal; Teamsters government affairs office, Ottawa.



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