Sorrow assumes Presidency, becoming 22nd chief of BLET

Paul T. Sorrow became the 22nd Chief Executive of the oldest rail labor union in North America concurrent with the resignation of Edward W. Rodzwicz as BLET National President on November 13. Rodzwicz, who had been on a leave of absence since October 15, also resigned as President of the Teamsters Rail Conference and intends to retire. Upon assuming office, President Sorrow said “I look forward to serving the BLET membership as National President. Our Advisory Board and our staff, who are second to none in their ability and dedication, make for one heck of a team, and we are well prepared to face the challenges that lie ahead.” President Sorrow also thanked former President Rodzwicz for his service to the Brotherhood.

Sorrow was elevated to the Presidency from the BLET’s second highest office, to which he was elected on April 8, 2008. Prior to becoming First Vice President, Sorrow served for nearly 17 years as a Vice President, including a stint as Chief of Staff at the BLET National Division headquarters for several years during the mid 1990s. Before being elected to national office, Sorrow served for six years as Chairman of the CSX Transportation Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment.

President Sorrow’s railroad career began in 1965, with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. One year to the day after he went firing for the railroad, he earned his promotion to locomotive engineer in 1966. He joined the BLE in 1972, and served as local chairman of his Abbeville, S.C. local division from 1979-83. In 1983, he was elected to the office of Vice General Chairman for the Eastern Lines GCA.

The BLET Advisory Board will be convened in Cleveland on December 17 to fill the vacant office of First Vice President. See also President Sorrow’s message to all BLET members. pg 2

Let it Snow

This photo of a New England Central train by frequent BLE contributor Gary Knapp was recently judged to be one of the 100 greatest railroad photos of all time by the editors of Trains Magazine. The photo was published in a special collector’s edition of Trains published in late 2008.

“What a great honor to be included amongst the famed railroad photographers’ best photos to be enjoyed within this book,” Knapp said. The photo was shot in South Royalton, Vt., on Jan. 20, 2007. “I was all set-up for this photo, and it was so quiet I heard (train number) 324 blowing for crossings up in Randolph, then Bethel,” he explained. “Then Mother Nature smiled and silently started the snow. It quickly covered the ground and produced my favorite conditions — at night in the winter, with reasonable temperatures and heavy snow falling.”

North American Railway Foundation
NARF continues giving back to Rail Labor. pg 6

NMB Reform
BLET, Teamsters fighting to update Mediation Board rules. pg 5

Brotherhood Elections
Cole Davis reelected at NS; Vince Verna in Arizona. pg 3
BLET, UTU challenge responsibility to act in its best interest. We solicit your understanding, your support and most of all—your prayers.

We should never overlook or forget the fact that we are all in this together. This is not my Union nor does it belong to any individual or group of individuals. It is our Union and we are all entrusted with a responsibility to act in its best interest. We can do nothing and I suppose that the Organization, which is all of us, is our Union and we are all entrusted with a responsibility to act in its best interest. We can do nothing and I suppose that the Organization, which is all of us, is our Union and we are all entrusted with a responsibility to act in its best interest.

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The BLET and the UTU now have jointly asked the FRA to reconsider portions of their interim statement of agency policy and interpretation, which poses significant problems for train and engine service employees who are members of the BLET and UTU. "It is obvious that an employee who sleeps or commutes through an off-duty period be 10 consecutive hours undisturbed rest in that win- dow of time, the less work the employee can legally perform. This "continuous look back" approach also could result in more employees who are aware that they will be required to report for work in 10 hours rest + 3 hour call + 10 hours rest = 24 hours) Thus, the longer the call time, the worse the work the employee can legally perform. For assignments with an interim period of rest, the most an employee could ever work is 10 hours. For an unsigned (extra board) employee who is working on call, the call time further reduces the amount of work time proportionally. If they get the typical two hour call the initial period of release is rendered moot. The better solution would be to require a 10-hour call, which would permit 12-hour on-duty shifts, said the BLET and the UTU. "It is obvious that an employee who is aware that they will be required to report for work in 10 hours is best able to schedule their rest so that they arrive at work in the most alert condition possible. The best medical evidence available establishes what the labor organizations have known for years: that employees will be most alert just after they wake up," the BLET and the UTU told the FRA. "We contend that an employee who sleeps or naps as close to their reporting time as possible, within reason, is the best rested employee and therefore the safest."

In the joint statement signed by BLET National President Paul Sorrow and UTU International President Mike Futhey, the FRA is asked to "reevaluate the long-standing 'fresh start look back' interpretation, which has served both safety and the industry well, and decline to adopt the proposed 'continuous look back.'"
Cole Davis reelected Norfolk Southern general chairman

Vince Verna elected Arizona Legislative Board Chairman

C ole W. Davis was reelected to his third term as Gen- eral Chairman of the BLET's Norfolk Southern-Northern Lines General Committee of Adjustment at quadren- nial meetings in Cleveland on September 30-October 2.

Brother Davis is a member of BLET Division 86 in Moberly, Mo. He first joined the BLET on January 1, 1984. This is his second full term as General Chair- man, winning elections in 2005 and 2009. He served a partial term after 2001.

First Vice-Chairman Bob Linsey was reelected by acclamation, as was Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Elmore. This is the third full term on the General Commit- tee for Brother Linsey, who first be- gan serving the BLET as a Local Chair- man in 1986. Also reelected by acclamation was Vice General Chairman Stephen Fogle, Division 292, who represents members on the Wheeling & Lake Erie property.

Also elected were: 2nd Vice Chairman Rodney Cuff, Division 38; Vice Chairman Ron Couch, Division 83; 4th Vice Chairman Dewayne Dehart, Divi- sion 548; and Alternate Secretary-Trea- surer Brian Mills, Division 273.

Thirty-three Local Chairmen were as- session representing the various Divi- sions and Local Committees of Adjust- ment on the Norfolk Southern-Northern Lines GCoA.

Numerous BLET National Division officers were in attendance, including: National President Paul Sorrow; Na- tional Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; Vice President & National Legislative Representative John Tolman; National Vice President Dennis Pierce; National Vice President and Arbitration Direc-

tor Marcus Ruet; and National Vice President Willard Knight.

Also in attendance were: General Chairman Jim Louis, Conrail SAA/CSX Northern District; General Chair- man Rick Finamore, CSX Northern Lines; General Chairman Kevin Peek, Norfolk Southern-Eastern Lines; 1st Vice Chairman Bill Thompson, Nor- folk Southern-Southern Lines; and Ohio State Legislative Board Chairman Tim Hanley. Ken Kroeger, Coordina- tor of the BLET Education and Train- ing Department and Special Represen-

tative, and Dan Cook, BLET Director of Benefits, were also in attendance.

Brother Doug Davidson, BLET As- sistant Arbitration Director, worked with Vice President Ruef to conduct a Section 3 Arbitration workshop for the delegates.

Retired General Chairmen Larry Sykes and Joe Frailey were also in attendance.

“I appreciate all those who attended,” said Brother Davis.

Representatives from railroad man- agement also attended the meeting, in- cluding: Joseph Burley, Director of Hu- man Resources, Wheeling & Lake Erie; Steve Budzina, Vice President of Labor Relations, Norfolk Southern; Mark Man- ion, Executive Vice President & Vice President of Operations, NS; John P. Rathbone, Executive Vice President, Ad- ministration, NS; and Donald Seale, Ex- ecutive Vice President and Chief Mar- keting Officers.

“I thank the outgoing officers and look forward to working with the incoming officers on our Executive Committee,” Brother Davis said.

Also in attendance were: Michael Burns and Paul Nowakowski of Meryl Lynch; Woody Taylor, who gave a pre- sentation of the Short Term Disability Plan; and Carl Senebach of the Wa- bush Hospital Association.

The BLET’s Norfolk Southern-North- ern Lines General Committee of Ad- justment represents more than 2,600 members from 30 different BLET Divi- sions. The membership consists primar- ily of locomotive engineers and train- men on the Norfolk Southern and Wheeling & Lake Erie railroads who live and work in Ohio, Indiana, New York, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Vince Verna elected Arizona Legislative Board Chairman

Vince Verna was elected by acclamation to serve as Chair- man of the Arizona State Legislative Board during Triennial Meetings on October 5. Brother Verna is Local Chairman of BLET Division 28 (Tucson, Ariz.). He joined the Brotherhood of August 1, 1995.

“I would like to thank our Board for allowing me continue to represent the members in our state on legislative and regulatory issues related to safety,” Broth- er Verna said.

Also during the meeting, Nick John- son was elected Vice Chairman and Steve Whitman was reelected by acclamation to the office of Secretary-Treasurer. Broth- ers Johnson and Whitman are both mem- bers of BLET Division 28.

The following Legislative Representa- tives were in attendance as delegates: Dick Kolomitz, Division 134 (BNSF, Winslow, Ariz.); Shawn Turley, Division 647 (Pheo- nix, Ariz.); Kevin Onembo, Division 123 (Phoenix, UT).

The meeting was well-attended by sev- eral BLET officers, including: Vice Pres- ident & National Legislative Representa- tive John Tolman; California State Legislative Board Chairman Tim Smith; North Dakota State Board Chairman Mike

Muschu; Union Pacific (Western Lines) General Chairman Bill Hannah; BLET Special Representative Ken Kroeger; and BLET Auxiliary National Legislative Rep- resentative Serenea Hogan.

U.S. Congressman Ed Pastor from Arizona’s 4th District addressed the at- tendees.

“For our area, there is a lot to be proud of in their Legislative Rep- resentatives in Arizona.”

In January of 2009, Brother Verna was serving the Board as Vice Chairman when he was promoted to the Chairman’s job following the resignation of Brother Bob Svob, who resigned to prepare for retire- ment. Following Verna’s promotion, Brother Davis was elected to fill the Vice Chair- man’s job.

The BLET Arizona State Legislative Board represents more than 500 mem- bers. 
**BLET, Teamsters support reform to National Mediation Board voting process**

Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa applauded the National Mediation Board’s proposal to reform the voting process for union elections at airlines and railroads.

The NMB is proposing that a union be certified if a majority of the employees who vote support it.

The rule now requires a majority of all airline or rail workers to vote in favor of union representation to be certified as a union.

“Anyone who’s been involved in an organizing campaign at a railroad or an airline knows that the deck is stacked against workers who want to form a union,” Hoffa said. “The current voting process is an obstacle that was deliberately created to discourage workers from exercising their right to form a union.”

The NMB is a federal agency created in 1934 under the Railway Labor Act to oversee the National Mediation Board, the federal agency established in 1934 under the National Labor Relations Act to oversee union elections at railroads and airlines.

# Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA)

**What you should know about your spouse’s rights to stop railroad harassment**

An important message to the spouses of all railroad workers

You are no doubt aware of the harassment, intimidation, and threats made by railroad supervisors against employees who have been injured; who have filed an injury report; who have sought medical attention; or who have reported unsafe tools, equipment, or conditions.

Many of your spouses have been victims in the past of this harassment and intimidation. Your spouses may have been removed from duty for a period of time or even fired for exercising their legal rights. Individuals have been reluctant to speak up “on the record” concerning safety violations or unfair treatment for fear of being fired, disciplined or otherwise being retaliated against by the railroad. Now, Federal law provides railroad workers with tangible legal protections and remedies for certain types of harassment and retaliation.

**What types of activities does the Statute protect?**

The legislation was passed in August 2007. It provides specific Whistle-Blower protections for railroad workers pursuant to Title 49 U.S.C. Section 20109. The law provides that a railroad may not discharge, demote, suspend, reprimand, or in any other way discriminate against an employee for assisting in any investigation or providing information as outlined in Section 20109.

This protection extends to any railroad worker providing information to a supervisor or other person who has the authority to investigate, discover, or stop the conduct in question. The federal protection also extends to a worker who refuses to violate, or who refuses to help violate, a railroad safety requirement.

Most significantly, this law also protects workers who report a work-related illness or injury to the railroad in a step further, file a lawsuit for personal injuries pursuant to the Federal Employers’ Liability Act, or agrees to testify in such a suit. Finally, the new protections also apply when a worker refuses to work in what he or she believes to be a hazardous situation or reports that hazardous condition.

**What are your legal rights if your spouse has been a victim of railroad harassment?**

If an employee believes that he or her rights pursuant to this new law have been violated or that they have been a victim of railroad harassment and intimidation, there is a procedural requirement that first must be met. Before allowing a suit to be filed, the law requires that a complaint be filed with the Secretary of Labor within 180 days of the alleged violation. The complaint will be forwarded to the Whistle-blower Department of OSHA. This requirement is absolute and, if it is not adhered to, no suit will be allowed.

The Secretary of Labor will have an opportunity to investigate and/or rectify the situation within 210 days. If this matter cannot be administratively resolved within 210 days, the employee may then file a federal lawsuit and is entitled to a jury trial. A worker may seek a “right to sue” letter from the Secretary of Labor before the expiration of 210 days, which would bestow upon them the right to sue.

**What damages are available?**

Damages include:

1. reinstatement with the benefit of your spouses’ rights
2. any back pay with interest;
3. damages including compensation for any special damages sustained as a result of discrimination, including litigation costs, expert witness fees, and reasonable attorney’s fees; damages may include punitive damages in an amount not to exceed $250,000.00.

Your spouse would be entitled to a jury trial and the jury would be allowed to consider all evidence germane to this issue, including the past conduct of the railroad and the consideration of all other instances of job discrimination and harassment contrary to the Statute. With this legislation, no railroad worker should be afraid or reluctant to file a Report of injury or pursue his or her remedies under the law.

**How to legally protect your spouse:**

1. If your spouse is injured or needs assistance in filing a Personal Injury Report, immediately call his local chairman and one of the attorneys designated by the BLET.
2. If you wish to prevent the railroad from interfering in the medical treatment of your spouse, please contact one of the designated attorneys immediately.
3. If your spouse believes that he or she is a victim of any type of threat, harassment, or intimidation by the railroad for pursuing certain rights as set out by the Statute, please call one of the designated counsel for an immediate consultation to see if the Act applies, and if suit could be filed.

Members of the BLET and attorneys on your list of Designated Legal Counsel worked diligently to pass this Federal Act. It is in place for the benefit of your spouses and every railroad worker in the country. It is important for you to have knowledge of this new remedy and to utilize when necessary.

Submitted by:
John P. Kujskowski, Kujskowski & Associates, P.C. 1313 Park Plaza Drive, Suite 2 O’Fallon, IL 62269-1764 Ph: (618) 622-3600 or (800) 624-4571 Fax: (618) 622-3700 www.kujskowskiassociates.com

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**Calendar of Events**

**2009**

**March 21–26, 2010**

The Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program will conduct a hazardous materials transportation/chemical emergency response training program at the National Labor College, Silver Spring, Md. For registration details, call Henry Jajuga, (301) 439-2440, or email hjajuga@nlc.edu.

**May 2–7, 2010**

The Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program will conduct a hazardous materials transportation/chemical emergency response training program at the National Labor College, Silver Spring, Md.

**June 13–18, 2010**

83rd Annual Southeastern Meeting Association, Cincinnati, Ohio

Hosted by Jerry Studworth and the members of BLET Division 617 and Division 746. The 2010 IWC at the Radisson Hotel Bismarck (605 E. Broadway Ave., Bismarck, N.D. 58501. Phone (701) 253-6000. Rate: $89. For details, contact Brother Studworth by email: jstudworth1@gmail.com.

**July 13–17, 2010**

70th Annual International Western Convention, Bismarck-Mandan, N.D. Co-Chairs Mike Muscha and Ron Huff and the members of BLET Division 617 and Division 746. The 2010 IWC at the Radisson Hotel Bismarck (605 E. Broadway Ave., Bismarck, N.D. 58501. Phone (701) 253-6000. Rate: $89. For details, contact Brother Muscha by email: locoeng671@mlgc.com.

**August 8–12, 2010**

72nd Annual Eastern Regional Meeting Association, Pittsburgh, Pa. Hosted by Tom and Sue Caruso, Division 335, the 2010 EUMA will take place at the Sheraton Station Square Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pa. (300 West Station Square Dr., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219-2000. Phone: (412) 261-2000. Rate: $155). For details, contact the Carusos at: EUMA2010verizon.net.

**September 12–16, 2010**

75th Annual Southwest Convention Meeting, San Antonio, Texas. Hosted by Russell Eby, Local Chairman of Division 197, SWCM 2010 SWCM will take place at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, on the River Walk at Paseo del Arco. The 2010 SWCM will take place at the Sheraton Station Square Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pa. (300 West Station Square Dr., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219-2000. Phone: (412) 261-2000. Rate: $155). For details, contact Brother Eby by email: rally@gnrnet.net.
The North American Railway Foundation

Giving back to rail labor

The North American Railway Foundation (NARF) gives back to organized labor in many ways, including the sponsorship of educational workshops like this training class for BLET Local Chairmen. NARF provided a “per diem” for these BLET Local Chairmen to help offset their meals and lodging costs. The BLET Education and Training Department conducted the workshop, which was held November 8-13, 2009, at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Md.

Front row, from left: William Waddle, NST & Director of Education & Training; Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of Education & Training & Special Representative; Scott Berger, Local Chairman Div. 489 (CSX Western Lines); Jon Toumanian, Local Chairman Div. 398 (BNSF-ATSF); Eric Stumpf, Local Chairman Div. 20 (Amtrak); Dan Salcido, Local Chairman Div. 197 (UP Southern Region); Neal Schipper IV, Local Chairman Div. 940 (BNSF-C&O/GN/NP/SP/SP&S); and Marcus Ruel, Vice President and Director of Arbitration.

Second row: Serena Hogan, BLET Auxiliary 1st Vice President and Legislative Representative; Harvey Benn IV, Local Chairman Div. 169 (CSX-Conrail); Richard Reeves, Local Chairman Div. 238 (BNSF-C&O/GN/NP/SP/SP&S); Charles Blankenship, Local Chairman Div. 301 (NS-Eastern Lines); Nathan McCallister, Local Chairman Div. 101 (CSX-Western Lines); Gerald Stakely, Local Chairman Div. 375 (NS-Southern Lines); Kim Casagrande, Local Chairman Div. 480 (NS-Eastern Lines); and Jason Wise, Road Local Chairman Div. 435 (CSX-Eastern Lines).

Third row: Duane Lance, Local Chairman Div. 786 (NS-Southern Lines); Kevin Barker, Local Chairman Div. 106 (NS-Northern Lines); Richard McGowen, Local Chairman Elect Div. 867 (CSX-Conrail); Ray Letcher, Local Chairman Div. 349 (Union Pacific-Western Region); and Scott Ethington, Local Chairman Div. 374 (UP-Western Region).

Fourth row: James Wood, Local Chairman Div. 443 (UP-Western Region); Jon Beehlke, Local Chairman Div. 174 (WIC); Kyle Donze, Local Chairman Div. 294 (Metra-CR); Michael Stout, Local Chairman Div. 155 (NS-Northern Lines); Michael Poirier, Local Chairman Div. 144 (Amtrak); and Doug Davison, Assistant Director of Arbitration / Labor Member-NRAB.

Photo: BLET Education & Training Dept.

Electronic Communications Policy

The policy currently in effect is that official communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence — with a signature — being received by the National President to be considered an “official communication.” This is to provide that the actual question(s) are addressed, and ensures that when official interpretations are made they have reference to a specific request and can be used in future correspondence.

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

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

The North American Railway Foundation (NARF) is a non-profit operating foundation which was formed by the Brotherhood’s Relief & Compensation Fund (BR&CF). NARF’s mission is to give back to BR&CF members, organized rail labor and citizens at large by engaging in projects with other non-profit organizations and/or endeavors that nurture and support rail technology, safety, education and history in the United States and Canada.

Examples of the projects that NARF has engaged in include:

- An annual computer equipment project that supports leaders of organizationally involved rail labor units (Divisions, Locals, State Legislative Boards and General Committees within the organized rail labor community) by providing some of the computers and related equipment they need to accomplish their work;

- Supporting organized rail labor educational classes involving leaders of organizational units by providing a “per diem” amount to help offset meals and lodging costs for participants;

- Supporting Rail Hazmat and Radiological training classes taught by the National Labor College for the benefit of all organized rail labor crafts;

- Supporting various long term exhibitions within rail museums across North America to encourage rail education within an expanded audience of visitors and to emphasize the role of rail labor in the history of railroading;

- Supporting high speed rail educational initiatives through various media avenues; and

- Many other projects such as grade crossing improvements, preservation of historic rail photos, documents and artifacts and exhibitions depicting the history of rail labor and equipment.

NARF funds projects, like those above, with the investment earnings it generates from a permanently restricted endowment. It must spend the majority of these earnings on an annual basis and NARF must not use these funds to engage in any political or lobbying activities. NARF does its best to select projects that satisfy the application requirements and offer the most benefit and positive results for everyone involved.

Some of the benefits that BLET members can see from NARF’s projects above include:

- Assisting with computer equipment to organizational unit leaders which frees up some of the unit’s resources, reduces the amount of dues necessary to provide this equipment and helps the unit’s leaders with efficiency, security and logistics;

- Offsetting meals and lodging costs associated with attending leadership training classes makes the decision to attend these classes a little bit easier, freeing up a unit’s resources and/or leader resources while obtaining the training and networking necessary to help their unit’s efficiency and effectiveness;

- Helping to keep members educated and aware of HAZMAT and Radiological dangers that they face every day and how they can handle dangerous situations safely if they do occur;

- Enhancing the public’s understanding of the roles that railroading and railroaders play in their daily lives; and

- Preserving the rich history of railroading and railroaders for future generations.

NARF will continue fulfilling its mission for generations to come… trying to make a positive difference to BR&CF members, organized rail labor and citizens across the United States and Canada.

Philip J Sullivan II, CPA Executive Director North American Railway Foundation

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Transportation Workers protecting each other since 1910

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National Secretary-Treasurer and President Paul T. Sorrow move into the year 2010. Our history for words to inspire us as we have survived and prospered. The Organization has endured many other, can take comfort in knowing that our more than 146 years of history behind us. We for our Brotherhood, but we have more ing but the best in the coming year. Our best and most sincere wishes for not-py and healthy holiday, and we extend employee of the Brotherhood a safe, happy and healthy holiday, and we extend to each and every member, officer and employee of the Brotherhood a safe, happy and healthy holiday, and we extend our best and most sincere wishes for not-ing but the best in the coming year. It has been a long and difficult year for our Brotherhood, but we have more than 146 years of history behind us. We can take comfort in knowing that our Organization has endured many other, more difficult trials over the years, and we have survived and prospered. In looking ahead, let us look back upon our history for words to inspire us as we move into the year 2010. Fraternally and sincerely,

Paul T. Sorrow
President and
William C. Waldert
National Secretary-Treasurer

125 YEARS AGO: “Attention, application, accuracy, method, punctuality and dispatch are the principal qualities required for the efficient conduct of business of any sort. These at first sight may appear to be small matters, and yet they are of essential importance to human happiness, well-being and usefulness. They are little things, it is true, but human life is made up of little acts which constitute not only the sum of human character, but which determine the character of nations.” — Peter M. Arthur, Grand Chief Engineer, Locomotive Engineers Journal, November 1884

100 YEARS AGO: “In our great family of the B. of L.E. we have greater opportunities for good than most of us realize. Our institution is built upon the foundation of faith cemented with charity — faith that each will perform his obligated duty; that duty judged by the standard of right, tempered with charity. A little thought and a little kindness is often worth more than any other gift.” — Charles H. Salmons, Editor and Manager, Locomotive Engineers Journal, December 1909

75 YEARS AGO: “Every Brotherhood Engineer holds his membership sacred, because the name Brotherhood descends from divine heritage. And, in our birth, our very beginning, courageous engineers steeled with affection for their fellow men, clad in the armor of fraternity, strove to better the work day of their profession and occupation in this great realm of labor, taking unto themselves a title in the labor world, internationally known as the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. There is no East or West, no boundary to the North or South — just Brotherhood. We live in the pride of our history, and with the sense of responsibility in the performance of our duty towards our Brother-ehood.” — W.W. Dorsey, Grand Chaplain, Locomotive Engineers Journal, June 1934

Happy Holidays from the BLET Executive Committee!

Dear BLET Brothers and Sisters:

During this festive time of year, we wish each and every member, officer and employee of the Brotherhood a safe, happy and healthy holiday, and we extend our best and most sincere wishes for not-ing but the best in the coming year.

Fraternally and sincerely,

Paul T. Sorrow
President

BNSF and BLET reach tentative agreement

In early November, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and the BNSF Railway announced they had reached a tentative agreement on a five-year contract that would run through Dec. 31, 2014. “It is an honor for me and for the four BLET general chairmen to be able to present to our members a proposal that gives them the security of a five-year agreement, additional income and additional time off without a single giveback or rule change,” said National Vice President Matt Wilson (BNSF-MRL) for their General Chairmen Rick Gibbons (former STL-SF), Austin Mersinon (former C&S/CR/PFPW), Pat Williams (former AT-SF) and Matt Wilson (BNSF-MRL) for their hard work in negotiating the agreement.

“The agreement reflects a great effort on the part of the General Chairmen and the BLET negotiating team to arrive at what we view to be a fair settlement of wage/rules in the midst of what is labeled by some to be the worst eco-nomic recession in American history since the Great Depression,” Sorrow said. “We expect things to continue to improve going forward.”

Merry Christmas from the BLET Auxiliary

As the Christmas season approaches we are reminded of the importance of family, friends, and loved ones in our lives. During this holiday season, please hold close in your heart those who cannot be with us — our loved ones who keep the railroads running, our family and friends who have depart-ed this life, and our troops serving overseas. Even with all of life’s trials and tribulations, we still have so much to be thankful for.

On behalf of the National Auxiliary, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and blessed holiday with best wishes for a bright and prosperous New Year!
Photograph of the Month

December 2009
CSX's Santa Claus Special makes its annual trip through Appalachia.

Dustin Grizzle
Photo:

Americans would give back some – not all – of the tax cuts they received this past decade. Families earning more than $1 million will pay more under the tax reform bill that passed in the House on November 26, 2009.

The Senate wants to tax middle-class Americans – of the tax cuts they received this past decade. That would raise $426 billion to pay for it, in part, by increasing the cost of health insurance reform. That's not in our members' interest.

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Class American

Health Insurance Reform

Reform Without A Tax on Middle-Class Americans – of the tax cuts they received this past decade. Families earning more than $1 million will pay more under the tax reform bill that passed in the House on November 26, 2009.

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