BLET member Michael T. Callahan of Division 781 (Erwin, Tenn.) kept an important family tradition alive on November 17 when he worked as locomotive engineer on the 70th annual CSX Santa Train.

It was a moment of personal and professional pride for the 44-year-old locomotive engineer and great uncle, who were brothers. He and many other children of railroaders were allowed on the 110-mile route through Appalachian region and on time, he followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and great uncle, who ran the annual holiday train for many years during the era of steam locomotives.

Working in the cab together, his grandfather George Hatcher (engineer) and great uncle Ed Hatcher (fireman) ran the Santa Train 26 times on the former Clinchfield Railroad, a CSX predecessor line.

“It’s a family tradition,” he said. “I’m proud of that heritage.”

Santa Claus rides along the Clinchfield Railroad, a CSX predecessor line. He and many other children of railroaders were allowed on the special privilege of riding in the cab of the steam locomotive.

“It was a different era back then,” he said. “For some of the kids in the mountains, this will be the only time of the year we can bring our family to work and show them what we do.”

Justin Wilcox, Legislative Representative of Division 781, has been involved with the Santa Train for several years as a member of the Safety Team.

Continued on page 4

BLET Safety Task Force investigating two major incidents

Members of the BLET Safety Task Force are currently investigating two major accidents that have captured the attention of the entire nation.

On November 13, a Veterans parachute float collided with a Union Pacific freight train in Midland, Texas, killing four military veterans and injuring more than a dozen others. Safety Task Force member Jerry Bullard of BLET Division 312 (Big Spring, Texas) was on the scene to represent the BLET during the investigation.

In the days after the tragedy, the NTSB’s preliminary information showed that all signals at the grade crossing intersection were operating as designed normally. Later, it was reported in the San Antonio Express News that the driver of the parachute float began to cross the railroad tracks after warning bells, lights and crossing arms had been activated. The newspaper also reported that event organizers did not obtain a parade permit as required by city ordinance. The parachute float consisted of a flatbed truck pulled by a semi, with chairs strapped to the flatbed by nylon tie downs. Wounded veterans and their spouses rode on the flatbed truck throughout the parade route.

On November 30, a Conrail train derailed. Brothers Tom Hatcher (engineer) and great uncle Ed Hatcher (fireman) ran the Santa Train 26 times on the former Clinchfield Railroad, a CSX predecessor line.

“It’s a family tradition,” he said. “I’m proud of that heritage.”

Santa Claus rides along the Clinchfield Railroad, a CSX predecessor line. He and many other children of railroaders were allowed on the special privilege of riding in the cab of the steam locomotive.

“It was a different era back then,” he said. “For some of the kids in the mountains, this will be the only time of the year we can bring our family to work and show them what we do.”

Justin Wilcox, Legislative Representative of Division 781, has been involved with the Santa Train for several years as a member of the Safety Team.

Continued on page 4

BLET Safety Task Force investigating two major incidents

BRIDGE COLLAPSE AND HAZMAT RELEASE IN NEW JERSEY; VETERANS PARADE CROSSING FATALITY IN TEXAS

The Real Face behind today’s “Right to Work” push

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BLET, Teamsters collecting donations for Hurricane Sandy victims pg. 7

Register for News Flash email alerts at: www.ble-t.org
I n the days before writing this message, anti-
working class forces in Michigan showed America
just how little they think of the working class of this great nation.
On December 11, Michigan Gov-
ernor and former venture capi-
talist Richard Snyder signed a law that will make Michigan the 24th
state to encourage workers to free-
load the wages and benefits ne-
gotiated by the unions that rep-
resent them — and force their
co-workers to shoulder a disprop-
ortionate share of representation
costs — by refusing to pay union
dues or fees. This bill was placed
on his desk by a lame duck Pe-
rson to a specific request and can be used
to by union notified to the National President to be consid-
ered an "official communication." This is to
provide that the actual question(s) are
addressed, and ensures that when official
interpretations are made they have refer-
sence to a specific request and can be used
in future correspondence.
The volume of e-mails received makes
it impossible for the National President to
answer all unofficial communications.
Therefore, it is the policy of the BLET that
e-mails addressed to the National Presi-
dent will be reviewed and forwarded to
the appropriate officer or staff for a time-
ly response; however, an e-mail message is
not considered an official communication.
Moreover, anonymous e-mails and e-
mails that do not provide sufficient infor-
mation concerning the sender to en-
able National Division staff to confirm the
sender's membership status will not receive
any reply or acknowledgment. This poli-
cy is intended to allow the National Presi-
dent to be aware of the opinions and sug-
gestions of the membership, while at the
same time providing a timely response to
submissions for information, if a response is necessary, without need-
lessly expending limited BLET resources.
ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 22, 2010. #6

Proud to be American and Proud to be Union” isn’t a slogan … it’s a way of life.

Denis R. Pierce
BLETNationalPresident
No Need to Rush to Avoid Fiscal Cliff

Working people sent a clear message on November 6: We do not want cuts to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid. We do want jobs, investment in infrastructure, such as rail lines and bridges, and higher taxes on billionaires.

They voted for candidates who supported these things even in races for the House of Representatives. Though Republicans still control the House, they lost the popular vote because they'd gerrymandered so many districts.

Unions supplied the boots on the ground that handed President Barack Obama victories in the industrial Midwest. In doing so, they proved they can beat CEOs and billionaires who spend huge amounts of money on their candidates and causes.

But the CEOs and the billionaires don’t give up. On November 7, they renewed their drive to seize every available penny from middle- and working-class Americans. Their goal is to get rid of the retirement and health benefits that ordinary people work all their lives to earn. They hide their intentions behind front groups with names like “Fix the Debt.” These groups, armed with dishonest lobbyists, work hard to create a phony crisis in Washington. After all, a crisis could convince politicians to do things that are extremely unpopular with the voters — like cutting Social Security benefits.

This phony crisis has a name: the “fiscal cliff.” The billionaires and CEOs would have you believe that terrible things will happen if Congress and the president don’t reach some sort of budget agreement by December 31. And it’s true that jobs would be lost if the spending cuts agreed to last summer aren’t modified.

There’s still time to negotiate an agreement in January or February. The advantage of waiting until then is that the politics will be more favorable to lawmakers who oppose cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

The fiscal cliff is nothing more than economic blackmail. Workers must not allow the billionaires to get away with it. Otherwise, they’ll wake up one day to find the system was slowly carved up, and when they’re too old to work the benefits they earned will be gone.

Fraternally,

James P. Hoffa
Teamsters General President

BLET VP John Tolman testifies at House hearing on Northeast Corridor high-speed rail

On December 13, BLET Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman testified in support of Amtrak and rail labor at a hearing before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee regarding high-speed rail and the future of the Northeast Corridor.

Vice President Tolman testified that Amtrak has done an excellent job of operating the national passenger railroad in spite of its budgetary and funding limitations. Any current and future work to improve the Corridor must include a professional, unionized work force of rail employees, he said.

“We think that Amtrak’s ‘Next Gen’ plan for the Northeast Corridor provides a template for a public-private partnership that is worth discussing if the partnership does not reduce the public interest — or the interests of BLET members and Amtrak’s other professional, skilled workers.”

The hearing, titled “Northeast Corridor Future: Options for High-Speed Rail Development and Opportunities for Private Sector Participation,” was chaired by Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.). Mica is a known opponent of Amtrak and supporter of privatizing the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak’s most profitable route,trak’s most profitable route. Mica has been criticized for frequently holding hearings to criticize Amtrak, fixating on the national passenger railroad at the expense of other, more pressing transportation issues.

Vice President Tolman also testified regarding the BLET’s firm belief that Amtrak should continue to be the rail service provider for the Northeast Corridor and across the United States.

“Amtrak has provided progressive, quality service despite many, many obstacles and continues to look for ways to increase train speed, reliability and service in spite of these obstacles,” Tolman said.

Tolman testified that rail privatization in other parts of the world has led to systemic safety and reliability problems. He said the United States should learn from those mistakes and not attempt to privatize Amtrak — either in whole or in part.

Other witnesses included: Karen J. Hedlund, Deputy Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration; Joseph Boardman, President and CEO, Amtrak; Joan McDonald, Chair, Northeast Corridor Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission and Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation; Dr. Richard Geddes, Adjunct Scholar, American Enterprise Institute; and Perry Offutt, Managing Director, Morgan Stanley.

It was Rep. Mica’s final hearing as Chairman. Under House rules, he has allotted for serving as Chairman. He will be replaced by Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) in the next Congress.

Unions supplied the boots on the ground that handed President Barack Obama victories in the industrial Midwest. In doing so, they proved they can beat CEOs and billionaires who spend huge amounts of money on their candidates and causes.

BLET National President Dennis Pierce thanked Vice President Tolman for delivering the testimony.

“Vice President Tolman spent his operating career on the Northeast Corridor and is uniquely qualified to represent the BLET at the hearing,” President Pierce said. “I thank the members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure committee for giving the BLET an opportunity to share our thoughts, and thank Brother Tolman for the excellent job he did in representing the organization before the Committee.”

A copy of Vice President Tolman’s written testimony is available for download from the BLET website:

www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/
Tolman-Testimony-Congress-NECorridor.pdf

Register at www.ble-t.org to get Brotherhood news emailed to you.
Stay up-to-date with the latest Brotherhood news by going to the BLET website and signing up to receive BLET News Flash alerts via email.

The News Flash alerts are news articles from the BLET National Division website that are sent automatically emailed to you.

To register, just go to www.ble-t.org. In the lower right hand corner of the page, you will find an area to enter your email address to begin receiving the most current news from the BLET National Division.

It is a great way to keep informed on the most recent issues impacting your job, your contract and your Brother-
Local Chairmen complete advanced training

2012 SANTA TRAIN

"This area that the train runs through is so hurt from job loss and poverty that it breaks your heart to know that for many of these children the Santa Train will be all the Christmas they get," he said. "At the stops, workers riding the train get off and hand out bags filled with gifts, toys, candy, toboggans, gloves, coats, gift cards and much more. The go into the crowd and seek out those see who may not have gotten anything yet. I have witnessed little ones crying for Santa to throw them gloves or a coat, or calling 'all I want Santa is a toy.' It's a real eye-opener that we have people hurting this badly in the U.S."

Wilcox said that BLET and UTU mem- bers work up the Safety Teams, which arrive in advance of the train and provide protection at the stops, stretching out yellow caution tape and keeping crowds at a safe distance from the train.

“We keep people back as the train comes in for the stop and give the engi- neer comfort that everyone is in the clear so he can ease in for a good spot,” Wilcox said.

The Safety Team members who coor- dinate with the operating crew include:

- Tim Love, President of Division 78; Tony King, Division 78; Brother Wilcox; and John Hilemon of UTU.

Brother Callahan said he worked on the Safety Team for six years prior to run- ning the train this year. He joined the Air Force after high school and hired out in early 2000, earning promotion to loco- motor engineer in 2007. He joined the BLET on August 1, 2007.

He and his wife, Erica, and two sons: Gavin, 8, and Grayson, 4. They met him at the parade in Kingsport, Tenn., follow- ing the conclusion of the run. His older son Gavin volunteered to help.

"He gets a kick out of giving out bags," Brother Callahan said. "It also puts things into perspective for him and helps keep him grounded."

Completing the crew on the 2012 run was UTU member Bob Runnion, con- ductor, and UTU member Bobby Dug- ger, brakeman.


SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT FOR BLET DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFIT TRUST FUND

This is a summary of the annual re- port for the Brotherhood of Loco- motive Engineers and Trainmen Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund, 30-0225544/501, for 01/01/2011 through 12/31/2011. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benef- its Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The plan had two contracts with Metropol- itan Life Insurance Company to pay certain claims incurred under the terms of the plan for benefit premiums paid for the plan-year ending 12/31/2011 were $6,398,311.

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The value of plan assets, after sub- tracting liabilities of the plan, was $5,590,836 as of 12/31/2011, com- pared to $4,642,475 as of 01/01/2011. During the plan year the plan experi- enced an increase in its net assets of $928,361. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets, that is, the dif- ference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year or the cost of assets acquired during the plan year. The plan had total in- come of $928,799, including employ- ee contributions of $6,915,888, em- ployer contributions of $2,144,662, gains of $101,783 from the sale of as- sets and earnings from investments of $16,465. Plan expenses were $920,437. These expenses included $149,018 in administrative expenses and $8,101,418 in benefits paid to par- ticipants and beneficiaries.

YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed be- low are included in that report:

1. An accountant's report;
2. Financial information and informa- tion on payments to service providers;
3. Assets held for investment;
4. Transactions in excess of 5% of plan assets; and
5. Insurance information including sales commissions paid by insurance carriers.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of Brotherhood of Loco- motive Engineers and Trainmen, who is Plan Administrator, at 1370 Ontario Street, Standard Building Mazzanine, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702, (216) 241- 2630. The charge to cover copying costs will be $4.25 for the full annual report, or $0.25 per page for any part thereof.

You also have the right to receive from the plan administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the as- sets and liabilities of the plan and ac- companying notes, if any, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, if any, or a statement of the full annual re- port from the plan administrator; these two statements and accompanying notes, if any, will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for copying of these portions of the re- port because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan at 1370 On- tario Street, Standard Building Mazzanine, Cleveland, OH, 44113-1702 and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to Public Disclosure Room, Room N-1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of La- bor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20210.

Several BLET officers suc- cessfully completed the BLET Education & Train- ing Department’s Advanced Local Chair- man Workshop from September 30 through October 6, 2012. This workshop went into greater detail than regular Local Chair- man training classes, focusing on claim handling, writing, and in- vestigations. Among other assign- ments, members were given a top- ic to research and reported their findings back to the class. There also was a session on Duty of Fair Representation (DFR) and the Rail- way Labor Act (RLA). Addition- ally, members were required to write several appeal letters on cases han- dled out in class. A highlight of the class is when attendees par- ticipate in a simulated disciplin- ary hearing.

The workshop took place at the Conference Center of the Maritime Institute in Linthicum Heights, Md. Those in attendance particip- ated in a walkthrough of the Mar- itime Institute facilities, including their simulator.

BLET National President Den- nis R. Pierce and First Vice Presi- dent E. Lee Pruitt attended part of the workshop and delivered pre- sentations to bring those in atten- dance up to date on the business of the BLET National Division.

Presenters and class attendees at the BLET’s Advanced Local Chairman workshop, September 30- October 6, 2012, Seated, from left: National Vice President Marcus Ruff, National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert, Assistant Arbitration Director Doug Davidson; and Special Representative and Coordina- tor of Education and Training Ken K. Standing, from left: National Vice President Steve Bruner, New Jersey State Legislative Board Chairman Matt Kraynak, Local Chairman Brett Hobbs, Division 520 (Joliet, Ill.); James Logan Jr., Division 780 (Fort Worth, Texas); Ray Letcher, Division 349 (Salt Lake City, Utah); Dewey Brown, Division 267 (Ashville, N.C.); Lon Berke, Division 727 (Sterling, Colo.); Brian Baginski, Division 601 (Newark, N.J.); Mary Donch, Division 269 (Long Island, N.Y.); Scott Alex- ander, Division 523 (Chickasha, Okla.); C.R. “Rusty” Jones, Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.); and Diame- lance, Division 786 (Marcum, Ga.)
looking back, it’s hard to believe the members of your Executive Committee and Advisory Board were sworn in less than two years ago, on January 1, 2011. The past 24 months have flown by and events have unfolded so quickly that it feels like installation took place just yesterday. The year 2011 went by in a blur, and 2012 was no different.

We began 2012 with ratification of our national agreement, then we quickly shifted our focus to on-property negotiations at Union Pacific. That was followed by agreements at numerous other railroads, including: Great Western Railway of Colorado; Eastern Idaho Railroad; Grand Trunk Western; Connecticut Southern; Ohio Central/Columbus & Ohio River Railroad; New York, Susquehanna & Western; and Montana Rail Link. Additionally, our Amtrak Brothers and Sisters approved a new rail link. Additionally, our Amtrak Brothers and Sisters approved a new rail link. Additionally, our Amtrak Brothers and Sisters approved a new rail link.

We also activated our National Mobilization network for the all-important November elections. Much time was spent in advance of the election using the network to mobilize a large turnout of voters on November 6. Even though we as railroad workers, engineers and trainmen, were exercising that right this year. It was gratifying to see so many BLET members voting and the goods and services they provide, thereby helping our members to make choices as consumers to support American-made, Union-made products.

Countless hours were spent in Washington, D.C. in 2012, closely monitoring proposed changes to laws or regulations that might negatively impact locomotive engineers and trainmen. Much time also was spent lobbying on behalf of legislation to highlight other proud American unions and the meaningful of the season. We have learned to accept the fact that when we look around at what is happening in the American workforce today, it’s as difficult for them to miss out on these opportunities as it is for us to find thank you for your participation in our great Brotherhood. Let us take the time to focus on the important things in life — your health and family and friends. Your BLET Executive Committee wishes each and all nothing but the best during this holiday season and in the coming New Year. Fraternally,

DENNIS R. PIERCE
National President
E. Lee Pruett
First Vice President
William C. Walpert
National Secretary-Treasurer

Happy Holidays from the BLET Auxiliary!

The BLET Auxiliary National Officers and our members extend best wishes to the BLET National Officers and all our BLET Brothers and Sisters for a peaceful and joyful holiday season. Now that the National Election is over, we can rest our minds a bit and get down to the real meaning of the season.

This time of year is always hectic with traveling, shopping, and parties. Sometimes, those of us who live the railroad lifestyle don’t always have the best, most idyllic holiday season, but we do our best! We have learned to accept the fact that we will probably be attending parties to better protect rail workers who report unsafe workplace conditions. The wheels of justice sometimes move slowly, and it took many years to secure these new whistleblower protections. It is our hope that these whistleblower rights will help to one day finally stamp out management harassment and intimidation of our members.

Also throughout 2012, the members of your Executive Committee were privileged to attend numerous Brotherhood meetings, including important Division, State Legislative Board and General Committee of Adjustment meetings. Our Division Officers, State Legislative Board Chairmen and General Chairmen are some of the hardest working officers in all of Rail Labor and they deserve our thanks and appreciation. And as the year draws to a close, your Executive Committee would like to take the time to thank you for your participation in our great Brotherhood. Let us take the time during this holiday season to pause, catch our collective breaths, and reenergize ourselves for the coming year. Please take the time to focus on the important things in life — your health and family and friends. Your BLET Executive Committee wishes each and all nothing but the best during this holiday season and in the coming New Year. Fraternally,

DENNIS R. PIERCE
National President
E. Lee Pruett
First Vice President
William C. Walpert
National Secretary-Treasurer

2012 Auxiliary National Officers:

Serena Hogan
National Vice President - NLR
Linda D. Maher
National Secretary
Heidi Brand
National Treasurer
Gina Fordham
National Secretary - National Outreach Coordinator
Kathy Hurst
National Vice President - NLR
Darla Pient
National Chaplain
Lynna W. Poss
National Alternate Secretary
Terri Fleming
National Alternate Treasurer
Becky Schneider
National Past President

2012 Auxiliary National Officers:
BLET members ratify new contract at Montana Rail Link

by a better than 3-to-1 majority, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen ratified a new collective bargaining agreement with Montana Rail Link (MRL) on November 20. The agreement covers approximately 400 members.

The agreement provides for six general wage increases totaling 18.6 percent — a compounded value of 20.1 percent — over the life of the agreement, which runs through April 1, 2016. Members will also receive a $1,500 signing bonus. Wage increases were effective December 1, 2012, and include retroactive payments for all members.

The agreement also governs numerous work rules and employee health and welfare benefits. The agreement maintains a provision that two locomotive engineers will remain in the cab on trains operating in road service, an important victory for MRL members. It also calls for various other improvements, including an increase in meal allowances effective April 1, 2013.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce thanked the MRL membership for their participation in negotiations and the ratification process. He also commend ed the members of the negotiating team for the commitment: BNSF/MRL General Chairman Matt O. Wilson; National Vice President Mike Priester; 1st Vice General Chairman Jerry LaPrath; Local Chairman Pat Ricci, Division 262 (Missoula, Mont.); and Local Chairman Paul Slater, Division 232 (Laurel, Mont.).

The previous contract expired in April of 2011. Brother Wilson thanked the MRL membership for staying informed throughout the 19-month negotiating process.

“I want to express my personal appreciation to our members on Montana Rail Link who stuck in there throughout this tough process and who appeared at all those union meetings during our many visits with their divisions, and particularly those who spoke up,” Wilson said. “Our membership not only fought for wages equal to those who work on the Class I railroads, but they also fought to preserve two engineers in the cab on trains operating in road service.”

An important side letter obtained by the BLET was a commitment from MRL to retain and maintain a number of engineers sufficient to cover all engineer and assistant engineer positions (including extra board positions) with qualified engineers, while having a modest surplus of qualified engineers available to meet peak service demands.

“This was a long and difficult process and I thank the actively involved MRL membership for their perseverance,” President Pierce said. “The negotiating team also deserves credit for the hard work to obtain a ratified agreement. This contract will help maintain the quality of life our members have earned through their professionalism, hard work and dedication to the craft.”

Headquartered in Missoula, Mont., MRL is a Class II regional railroad that consists of more than 600 miles of track serving over 100 stations in the states of Montana, Idaho and Washington. It connects with the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) at Laurel and Garrison, Mont., as well as Spokane, Wash. It connects with the Union Pacific Railroad at Sandpoint, Idaho.

Division 34 adopts two families for the holidays

For the eighth year in a row, the members of BLET Division 34 (Columbus, Ohio) are generously sharing their good fortune and helping those in need through their annual Adopt-A-Family program.

“We have given Christmas to 75 children over the years,” said Jeffrey L. Murray, President and Legislative Representative of Division 34. “It is an incredible blessing to be a part of this program and a tremendous honor to help promote it.”

This year, Division 34 is adopting two families and 13 total children.

THE DURR FAMILY

Andrew and Elizabeth Durr are a typical family struggling to support a large family in a tough economy. Andrew works at the Post Office and Elizabeth has been unable to find work due to a medical condition. The couple has six children of their own, but they added three more in spite of the increased financial burden.

Andrew and Elizabeth got word that a neighbor was in trouble. The father was sent to prison and, with no one to help with the three children, the mother turned to drugs. Children’s Services intervened and planned to split up the children into different foster homes, but the Durs stepped in and took in all three.

“Already struggling to support six children, they decided to welcome three more into their family,” Brother Murray said. “They did it because they know the importance of keeping families together.”

Their children are: Marissa, 10; Madison, 9; Jacob, 7; Myleigh, 4; Mallory, 3; and Brandon, 1.

THE ROBINSON FAMILY

Few hours after cheerleading at her high school’s homecoming football game, Courtney Robinson, 17, was rushed to the emergency room with seizures. Doctors found a cancerous brain tumor and four days later she underwent a nine-hour procedure to remove it. While it’s still too early to know the outcome, doctors have already prescribed an intensive program of radiation and chemotherapy. To make matters worse, on the very morning of Courtney’s brain surgery, her mother Crissy was served with divorce papers.

On a positive note, many local media outlets picked up on the story. Courtney and her family received a great deal of moral support from the community and their friends on social networking sites. However, she has an aggressive form of cancer and it is expected that her mother will have to deal with treatments — and astronomical medical bills — for quite some time.

“This is a particularly heart-wrenching story to me,” Brother Murray said. “This happened in my hometown and Courtney’s mom Crissy was a dear friend of mine in high school.”

Since the father left the Robinson family, their only form of income is child support. In addition to Courtney, Crissy has three more children: Lexxy, 15; Taylor, 12; and Mikaela, 9.

A HELPING HAND

After helping so many children over the past seven years, Brother Murray and the members of Division 34 are soliciting donations to help the two families and 13 children in 2012.

None of this would be possible without the support we have received from outside individuals and organizations,” Murray said. “People like you! This program began because God com- pelled many of us to get involved and it has evolved into something magical.”

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce thanked Brother Murray and the members of Division 34 for their generosity and dedication to the Adopt-A-Family program. President Pierce noted that the National Division presented a check for $500 to the Adopt-A-Family program, as it has been done for the past several years.

“This is a worthwhile cause and I am proud to again support Division 34,” President Pierce said. “It is especially heartwarming to see the generosity of railroaders during this time of year. We have been blessed and, with the economy the way it is, it’s incumbent upon us to lend a helping hand to those in need.”

Division 34 adopts two families for the holidays

If you desire to help next year, you may contact Brother Jeff Murray by email, Murray3@hotmail.com, or you can make a donation to:

BLET Division 34
11374 Edginton Ave.
Pickerington, OH 43147

Please make checks payable to Divi- sion 34 and put “Adopt-A-Family” in the memo line.

BLET members ratify new contract at Montana Rail Link

www.ble-t.org

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Transportation workers protecting each other since 1910.
HURRICANE SANDY

BLET, Teamsters seek help for members impacted by Hurricane Sandy

The BLET New Jersey State Legislative Board, in conjunction with Teamsters Joint Council No. 73, is soliciting donations to help the victims of Hurricane Sandy. “As you are aware, thousands of families in New Jersey within the jurisdiction of Joint Council No. 73 have sustained physically and economically from Hurricane Sandy,” wrote Alphonse Rispoli, President of Joint Council No. 73. “One of our members lost his life and Teamsters’ homes have been destroyed; and many are homeless, without food and shelter. All need our help.”

Brother Matt Kronyak, Chairman of the BLET New Jersey State Legislative Board, is asking BLET members who wish to help to consider making a donation to the Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank/Sandy Relief Effort. Brother Kronyak helped to coordinate a food drive to help those in need.

The Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank is a charitable 501(c)(3) corporation, which has been authorized to provide economic as well as physical assistance to all Teamster and BLET members and their families in their recovery from losses suffered by Sandy.

Donations should be made payable to “Joint Council No. 73 Food Bank / Sandy Relief Effort” and mailed to the Joint Council office at: 150 Morris Ave., Suite 204, Springfield, NJ 07081. Questions should be directed to Joint Council President Rispoli at (973) 467-9100, or to Brother Kronyak via email, mkronyak@aol.com.

If you are a BLET member living in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York or Rhode Island, then you may be eligible for financial assistance from the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund if you have suffered a loss due to Sandy. Information about how to apply for aid is available on the BLET website, www.ble-t.org/disaster.

Additionally, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board is offering aid to all railroaders who may be out of work due to Superstorm Sandy. Information about how to apply for aid is available on the BLET website, www.ble-t.org/disaster.

That information is also available here on the BLET website: www.ble-t.org/page/NEWS/newsflash.asp?id=5363

TEAMSTERS OFFER SANDY DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE IN RHODE ISLAND

The Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund is accepting applications for assistance from members who live in Rhode Island after Superstorm Sandy caused major damage to homes and property on October 29, 2012. Available from the BLET website are Teamster “Disaster Relief Alert Notices” and “request for help” forms. If you live in the affected area and experienced a loss due to this FEMA-declared major disaster, please download and fill out the forms. For questions, contact the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund office at (202) 624-8971.

Members living in Rhode Island’s Newport or Washington counties are eligible to apply. Download “REQUEST FOR HELP” FORM HERE: www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/R1_disaster_relief_111612.pdf

The deadline for application is January 31, 2013. This alert follows previously announced Superstorm Sandy-related notices for Connecticut, New Jersey and New York, which are archived on the National Division’s website, www.ble-t.org/disaster.

Also, members are advised that the BLET National Division does not administer this program. Questions regarding the application process, pending applications or other inquiries should be directed to the Teamsters Human Rights Commission at the telephone number provided above.

2012 Calendar Events

PLAN AHEAD FOR 2013

June 23-28, 2013
86th Annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)
RICHMOND, VA.
Arrangements Chairman Troy Bryant, Local Chairman of Division 532, welcomes all BLET members to historic Richmond/Short Pump, Va., for the 2013 SMA. More details to come.

July 14-17, 2013
73rd Annual International Western Convention
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
Hosted by Co-chairmen Luis Chow Jr., Local Chairman of Division 283 (Oakland, Calif.) and Oscar Burrell, Local Chairman of Division 839 (Richmond, Calif.), at the Hilton San Francisco Financial District Hotel for the 2013 IWC. www.iwc2013.org

July 28-August 1, 2013
75th Annual Eastern Division Meeting Association (EUMA)
BALTIMORE, MD.
Arrangements Chairman Fred Cox, Local Chairman of BLET Division 52, welcomes all BLET members to Baltimore for the 2013 EUMA. More details to come.

August 23-29, 2013
78th Annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCMC)
NEW ORLEANS, LA.
Arrangements Chairman Arlin Todd, Chairman of the Louisiana State Legislative Board, welcomes all BLET members to theLewis New Orleans Hotel for the 2013 SWCMC. More details to come.

SAFETY TASK FORCE HOTLINE

(800) 306-5414
Report major accidents when they happen.

The BR&CF is the least expensive protection when disciplined for eligible occurrences. We are affordable. You could save up to $672 each year. A BR&CF membership offers you the best price, value and service. To apply for membership... act today... ask a BR&CF member where you work for an application or visit our web site at www.brcf.org or call us toll free at 800 233-7080.

LECMPA and UTU rates are accurate and effective on date of print.
SPiRiT Of NAShviLLE:
its way from Nashville to Atlanta.

Are you a photographer?
from BLET members volunteering to contribute their
Public Relations Department, which produces the News-
Photo of the Month: December 2012

Advisory Board September & October 2012 Activity
In accordance with the BLET Bylaws, summaries of BLET Advisory Board members’ activities are published monthly:

VICE PRESIDENT MATT TWYMAN: Assigned for all Ocean Pacific GCA’s (Eastern District, Northern Region) and CRI&P’s (Western Region) to the Baltimore, Maryland; Indiana & Ohio; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; and Missouri-Kansas-Nebraska Conferences.

VICE PRESIDENT MARVIN MCGOVERN: Assigned to all CSX Union Pacific Southern Region GCA special assignment.

Proud to be AmericAn    Proud to be union

Spirit of Nashville: CSX and locomotive 4589, known as The Spirit of Nashville, idles at dusk in front of the old Union Station in downtown Nashville, Tenn. Built in 1890, the former railroad station was sold many years ago and is now the home of an upscale hotel. The intermodal train is on its way from Nashville to Atlanta. Photo courtesy of FEH, BLET (North Providence, R.I.)

Photo of the Month: December 2012

VICE PRESIDENT WILLARD E. KNIGHT:

VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER:

VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE:

Available in black. One size fits most

Cumberland Jacket

Are you a photographer? The National Drones’ Cleveland Publications Department, which produces the Newsletter each month, has received numerous inquiries lately from BLET members volunteering to contribute their images to the “Photo of the Month” section of the Newsletter. If you’d like to submit a photo for consideration, you may call Editor John Bentley at (216) 241-2630, ext. 248, or you can email BentleyJ@ble-t.org.

Please note only high resolution images can be used. Members are also encouraged to review their employer’s policies regarding the use of cameras and other electronic devices while on duty.

SPiRiT Of NAShviLLE:
its way from Nashville to Atlanta.

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