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## Focus on fatigue

### NTSB cites fatigue in fatal 2011 rear-end collision

The National Transportation Safety Board has determined that crew member fatigue was a major cause of a fatal rear-end collision involving a BNSF coal train and a standing maintenance of way equipment train in Red Oak, Iowa, that occurred on April 17, 2011.

Killed in the accident were BLET Division 642 President Tom Anderson, 48, and his conductor, UTU member Patricia Hyatt.

“Once again, this investigation draws attention to the dangers of human fatigue,” National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Deborah Hersman said in a statement. “The human body is not designed to work irregular schedules, especially during the circadian trough, when our bodies are at their lowest alertness.”

At its April 24 hearing in Washington, D.C., the NTSB determined that both crew members were asleep at the time of the accident. Representing the BLET at the hearing were Carl Fields, Coordinator of the Safety Task Force (STF), and Dan Lauzon, a STF Primary Investigator.

“The striking coal train conductor’s and the engineer’s irregular work schedules contributed to their being fatigued on the morning of the collision,” the NTSB concluded. “Based on the conductor’s and the engineer’s irregular work schedules, their medical histories, and their lack of action before the collision, both crew members on the striking coal train had fallen asleep due to fatigue.”

The NTSB also concluded that the absence of Positive Train Control (PTC) contributed to the accident, although it likely would have not prevented this particular accident, which occurred while the BNSF coal train was governed by restricted speed operating rules.

Additionally, the absence of crashworthiness standards for modular locomotive cabs contributed to the severity of damage to the locomotive cab of the striking coal train.

In responding to the release of the NTSB’s Report, BLET National President

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### Strike at Canadian Pacific Railway

Legislation forces 4,800 Teamsters Canada Rail Conference members back to work

SEE PAGE 6 FOR DETAILS.



## FRA issues Safety Advisory 2012-02 regarding restricted speed

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published Safety Advisory 2012-02 on April 25 to remind railroads and their employees of the importance of complying with restricted speed operating rules.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce strongly condemned the “blame the worker” tone of the Safety Advisory. He warned BLET members to be on alert as the Safety Advisory recommends that railroads “...increase the level of operational testing with regard to the operation of trains on main tracks at restricted speed.”

President Pierce said: “The NTSB, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the railroad industry should keep in mind

that railroading is a complex system of operations and simply laying blame at the feet of operating employees will not get to the root cause of these accidents nor will it prevent similar accidents in the future. Indeed, everyone can — and should — go much further than simply conducting additional and burdensome compliance tests on operating crews.”

The Safety Advisory is a follow up to the National Transportation Safety Board’s (NTSB) Safety Recommendation No. R-11-10, issued on January 12, 2012. It also comes on the heels of a NTSB hearing held April 24 regarding the fatal rear-end collision involving a BNSF coal train and a standing maintenance of way equipment train in Red Oak, Iowa, which happened on April 17, 2011.

“Railroad operating rules governing restricted speed require that train crews be prepared to stop within one-half their range of vision,” the FRA wrote in the April 25 edition of the Federal Register. “During the previous 12 months, the railroad industry has experienced six rear end collisions that resulted in four employee fatalities, [and] eight employee injuries.... It appears these six incidents may have occurred because the train crews did not properly identify and comply with block and interlocking signal indications that required operation of their trains at restricted speed.”

The Safety Advisory acknowledges that main line rear-end collisions are seldom caused by one single factor, but

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**BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** BY DENNIS R. PIERCE

# IT'S A GROUP EFFORT

**B**y the time this edition of the *Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News* reaches you, I will have passed a personal milestone as your National President. July 1, 2012 marks the two year anniversary of my elevation to BLET's highest office, and I am just as honored to serve as your National President today as I was when I first learned in June of 2010 that former President Paul Sorrow would be retiring.

A lot has happened since then, starting with BLET's Second National Convention in October of 2010, which was followed by our Union's first ever rank and file election of National Division Officers. Our membership voted in record numbers, and once the membership had spoken in that historic election, your current Advisory Board took office on January 1, 2011.

The team that you chose wasted no time jumping into the work of fighting for the membership. A new National Negotiating Team was assembled, and newly elected Vice Presidents were assigned to assist on properties throughout the country. The Executive Committee, as well as the entire Advisory Board, redoubled their efforts to ensure that your dues money is being managed in the best way possible and that the National Division is being operated in a manner worthy of your respect and pride.

By the end of last year, we were deep into national contract negotiations, but the Carriers would not budge from their demands that we accept a pattern set by another union. To resolve that dispute, BLET — along with 10 other unions — had to take its national contract dispute to a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) for the first time since 1990.

That contract dispute also led to the first national strike ballot since 1990, and with our mem-



ber-to-member Mobilization Network driving the turnout, we set another record on membership participation in that strike vote. While I know that many of you are still disappointed that BLET did not strike in that dispute, the strike was only averted because the membership overwhelming voted to settle the dispute based upon our negotiated improvements to the PEB recommendations. In the end, BLET's agreement included general wage increases well above and beyond those in the so-called pattern agreement and, as a result, our covered membership will receive a 4.3% general wage increase on July 1 of this year.

With the contract round behind us, the National Division next concentrated on the fight to right the wrongs that Corporate America and its bought and paid for politicians are heaping on working class Americans, in general, and BLET members, in particular. That effort started with marches in the streets of America, with the officers and staff of the National Division joining protests in cities like Columbus, Ohio and Madison, Wisconsin. And we have taken the lead in calling out political figures who push leg-

islation intended to help their corporate owners at the expense of BLET members and other working Americans.

At the same time we turned inward, starting with our "Proud to be American, Proud to be Union" campaign, an effort to increase the membership's pride in the union movement. At this writing, all members, active and retired, should have received their new membership cards. In addition, the BLET's Online Store has been completely restocked with new "Proud to be American, Proud to be Union" logo gear.

I share this with you to underscore that our effort has been a group effort. From our historic rank and file election of ND officers in 2010, to the national contract struggle in 2011, to our campaign to change the conversation in this country that unfairly demonizes union labor, our efforts are designed to maximize membership input and involvement.

I am pleased and encouraged by the fact that members all across the country are getting involved in their union, but I will not stop in our push to motivate membership involvement until all members get engaged. I will

also be the first to admit that not all of our members agree with the steps or positions taken by BLET in the past two years. However, even those members who may have differing views can take comfort in the fact that their voices are being heard and their comments are a part of the decision-making process. I welcome positive and negative feedback, because that is what comes from increased membership participation, and it is what ultimately makes us a stronger and more democratic union.

That brings me to the biggest hurdle we face today. I know that not all BLET members share the same political views, and as I have said before, every member is entitled to his or her own opinions. However, it is my duty as your President to share with you the truth about any politician that claims to share your views, but is working for a corporate sponsor to make it harder for you and all working Americans to have a shot at the American Dream. My advice to you in the coming months will be motivated by one deciding factor; we must elect political figures who will work for working class Americans and who will NOT

support corporate backed attacks on working class Americans and Labor Unions.

You may hear some say that when politicians go after public sector employees, it's not our fight. You might also hear some suggest that it's not our issue when politicians like Senator Rubio assault the collective bargaining rights of those who work under the National Labor Relations Act, because we are subject to the Railway Labor Act.

Although it may seem an extreme example to some, I am reminded of the comments of German Protestant Pastor Martin Niemöller at the end of World War II. After spending the last seven years of Nazi rule in a concentration camp, Niemöller said, "First they came for the socialists and I did not speak out — because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Trade Unionists and I did not speak out — because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out — because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me."

We are confronted now with similar "divide and conquer" tactics by Corporate America and their bought and paid for politicians. From the attacks on the public sector, to the very real attack on our Railroad Retirement system, no working class American is safe from the war to redistribute our nation's wealth to only a few. Join us this fall and help us to elect candidates who will support — and not attack — working class Americans and their labor unions. Join us as we work to return America to a government of the people, not just a government of the rich and powerful.

Fraternally,

**DENNIS R. PIERCE**  
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

“ I share this with you to underscore that our effort has been a group effort. From our historic rank and file election of ND officers in 2010, to the national contract struggle in 2011, to our campaign to change the conversation in this country that unfairly demonizes union labor, our efforts are designed to maximize membership input and involvement. ”

## BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

**O**fficial communications between BLET members and the National Division require a hard copy of the correspondence, bearing 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.

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 President will be reviewed and forwarded to

the appropriate officer or staff for a timely response; however, an e-mail message is not considered an official communication.

Moreover, anonymous e-mails and e-mails that do not provide sufficient information concerning the sender to enable National Division staff to confirm the sender's membership status will not receive any reply or acknowledgement. This poli-

cy is intended to allow the National President to be aware of the opinions and suggestions of the membership, while at the same time providing a timely response to the member's unofficial communication, if a response is necessary, without needlessly expending limited BLET resources.

**ADOPTED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO ON JULY 22, 2010. ©**



**GENERAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** BY JAMES P. HOFFA

# A SHOT OF JOBS IS NECESSARY PRESCRIPTION FOR AILING ECONOMY

**A**merica's labor market is sick. Forty-five million Americans — one in seven — are unemployed or underemployed. The same numbers are on food stamps. That isn't a coincidence.

The only way to cure this sickness is with a shot of jobs. We can do that by bringing back the jobs that fled overseas.

We lost more manufacturing jobs in the past 10 years than during the Great Depression. More than 50,000 manufacturing facilities have closed. And it isn't just manufacturing. Service jobs are going overseas as well — in aircraft maintenance, call centers, professional services, software engineering, administrative services and health care.

President Obama has administered some needed medicine to our weak economy. He saved the domestic auto industry and car sales are booming. He invested in infrastructure, putting millions to work. He reformed the financial industry, which will help prevent the kind of economic meltdown we suffered through in 2008.

But it wasn't enough to stem the hemorrhaging. In the past 10 years, U.S. multination-

als cut their work forces by 2.9 million in this country and hired 2.4 million overseas. That trend shows no sign of stopping. If our economy is ever to recover, our tax, trade and public investment policies must support good jobs at home.

U.S. companies actually get tax incentives to ship jobs overseas. Congress should get rid of those incentives — and soon.

There's something the U.S. Trade Representative could do to cure our sick labor market. He should immediately end negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal. It's just another job-killing giveaway to multinationals.

These issues won't capture as much media attention as the latest poll, the latest gaffe or what the candidates did or didn't do in high school. But these are the issues that American working families really care about.

Fraternally,

**JAMES P. HOFFA**  
TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT



“There's something the U.S. Trade Representative could do to cure our sick labor market. He should immediately end negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal. It's just another job-killing giveaway to multinationals.”

**FRA ISSUES SAFETY ADVISORY**

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stressed that train crew members must maintain constant situational awareness while in the cab.

“[E]ven slight lapses in situational awareness, particularly when operating trains on ‘Approach’ and ‘Restricting’ signal indications can lead to tragedy,” the FRA wrote.

FRA also warned against the practice of “self dispatching.”

“Self-dispatching is the operation of a train based on assumptions about the locations of other trains. These assumptions are sometimes developed through overheard radio conversations among other train crew members.”

As part of Safety Advisory 2012-02, the FRA issued five recommendations to railroads. They are as follows:

1. Review with operating employees the circumstances of the six rear end collisions identified above.
2. Discuss the requirements of restricted speed and related operational tests at future instructional classes (and also as part of ad hoc coaching and briefings) for operating employees, with a focus on the railroad's absolute speed limit for such operations, as well as requirements that ensure the ability to stop in one-half the range of vision. Special emphasis should be placed on situations in which the range of vision is limited (e.g., curves).
3. Evaluate quarterly and 6-month reviews of operational testing data as required by Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) section 217.9, and, as appropriate, increase the level of operational testing with regard to the op-

**“The NTSB, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the railroad industry should keep in mind that railroading is a complex system of operations and simply laying blame at the feet of operating employees will not get to the root cause of these accidents nor will it prevent similar accidents in the future.”**

— DENNIS PIERCE

eration of trains on main tracks at restricted speed. A representative number of operational tests should be conducted on trains following other trains into an occupied block, particularly in high-density corridors. Operational tests should also include a review of locomotive event recorder data to verify compliance with restricted speed requirements.

4. Reinforce the importance of communication between crew members located in the controlling locomotive, particularly during safety critical periods when multiple tasks are occurring, including such activities as copying mandatory directives; closely approaching or passing fixed signals that require trains to operate at restricted speed; approaching locations where trains' movement

authority is being restricted; and during radio conversations with other employees or job briefings about work to be done at an upcoming location.

5. Review with operating employees the requirements of subpart C of 49 CFR part 220, and reinforce that the improper use of electronic devices during safety critical periods often leads to a loss of situational awareness and resultant dangers.

In his response to the NTSB Safety Recommendation No. R-11-10, President Pierce informed the NTSB that at least one BLET member is fighting to get his job back — with the help of his Local Division and his General Committee of Adjustment — after being dismissed for allegedly delaying his train by operating too slowly while

traveling at restricted speed, in order to avoid failing a banner compliance test the Carrier had set up just ahead of his train.

In warning BLET members to heighten their vigilance when operating at restricted speed President Pierce said, “The FRA was provided a copy of our response to the NTSB, and I am outraged the agency is recommending that railroads expose our membership to even further harassment when they do not toe the line to an ‘efficiency above all else’ mentality. All BLET members are urged to exercise extra caution when operating at restricted speed to protect their safety and their jobs, and I am directing all BLET Local Chairman to immediately notify my office if one of our members is charged by a carrier with delaying the train or otherwise operating too slowly when being governed by restricted speed.” @@

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**  
FULL COPY OF FRA SAFETY ADVISORY 2012-02: [WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/SAFETY\\_ADVISORY\\_2012\\_02.PDF](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/PDF/SAFETY_ADVISORY_2012_02.PDF)

BLET RESPONSE TO NTSB SAFETY RECOMMENDATION R-11-10 REGARDING RESTRICTED SPEED: [WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/NEWS/NEWSFLASH.ASP?ID=5243](http://WWW.BLE-T.ORG/PR/NEWS/NEWSFLASH.ASP?ID=5243)

## SIGN UP FOR BLET NEWS FLASHES!

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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 Brotherhood.

## CSX Eastern Lines: GC Tony Smith reelected by acclamation to sixth term

**G**eneral Chairman Tony Smith was reelected by acclamation to his sixth consecutive term of office at the fifth quadrennial meeting of the CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment in Troy, Ala., on April 24.

Brother Smith is a member of BLET Division 332 (Montgomery, Ala.) and first joined the Brotherhood on July 1, 1979.

Also elected by acclamation were: Vice General Chairman Warren E. Hinely (Division 903, Savannah, Ga.); Secretary-Treasurer Mike L. Tanner (Division 769, Sanford, Fla.); and 1st Vice General Chairman Gary D. Best (Division 498, Abbeville, S.C.). Additional elected officers include: 2nd Vice General Chairman Chris R. Hyde (Division 314, Rocky Mount, N.C.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Jeff M. Dziwulski (Division 309, Jackson-



**A proud legacy:** Only three men have served as General Chairman of the CSX-Eastern Lines (former Seaboard Coast Line) General Committee of Adjustment since its formation in 1967. They are, from left, **Marvin L. Geiger** (1967-1985), **Paul T. Sorrow** (1985-1991), and **Tony Smith** (1991-present).

ville, Fla.); 4th Vice General Chairman Otto G. Valdes-Castillo (Division 49, Miami, Fla.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Jason D. Wise (Division 435, Hamlet, N.C.).

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce represented the National Division at the quadrennial session, along with First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and



National Vice President Gil L. Gore. President Pierce was assigned to all CSX General Committees during his term as a National Vice President, a post which is now filled by Vice President Gore.

"I congratulate all officers of the proud CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment," President Pierce said.



"Brother Smith has been a rock of stability since taking office 21 years ago. Members all along the CSX Eastern Lines benefit from having one of the most hard nosed and tenacious General Chairmen in the Brotherhood."

Also in attendance was special guest Paul T. Sorrow, BLET National President Emeritus. President Sorrow retired effective

July 1, 2010, and was assigned to assist the CSX Eastern Lines GCA for many years as a Vice President. He also served as General Chairman of the GCA for six years (1985-1991). In fact, he is one of only three men to serve as General Chairman of the CSX Eastern Lines GCA since it was founded in 1967. The other two are Marvin L. Geiger (1967-1985) and Tony Smith (1991 to present).

In addition to the election of officers, the delegates to the quadrennial session addressed key concerns of the membership and conducted business for the good of the order.

The CSX Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment represents approximately 1,300 members from 21 different divisions who work in six different states — Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. ©

**"I CONGRATULATE ALL OFFICERS OF THE PROUD CSX EASTERN LINES GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT. BROTHER SMITH HAS BEEN A ROCK OF STABILITY SINCE TAKING OFFICE 21 YEARS AGO. MEMBERS ALL ALONG THE CSX EASTERN LINES BENEFIT FROM HAVING ONE OF THE MOST HARD NOSED AND TENACIOUS GENERAL CHAIRMEN IN THE BROTHERHOOD." — DENNIS PIERCE**

## NS-Southern Lines GCA: Mark Wallace elected General Chairman by acclamation

**M**ark L. Wallace was elected by acclamation to serve as General Chairman of the Norfolk Southern – Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment at its quadrennial meeting in Knoxville, Tenn., on May 8.

The delegates also bid farewell to two long-serving and dedicated Brothers who announced their retirement at the meeting: General Chairman W. M. "Bill" Overton Jr. and 1st Vice Chairman & Secretary-Treasurer W. A. "Billy" Thompson.

Brother Wallace is a member of BLET Division 267 (Asheville, N.C.) and has held continuous membership in the Brotherhood since February 26, 1997.

Also elected by acclamation was Jerry G. Sturdivant of BLET Division 110 (Ludlow, Ky.), who will serve the GCA in a full-time capacity as 1st Vice General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer.

The delegates also elected the following officers to four-year terms: 2nd Vice

General Chairman Fred M. Cox, Division 52 (Baltimore, Md.); 3rd Vice General Chairman T. R. "Ty" Thompson, Division 423 (Tuscumbia, Ala.); 4th Vice General Chairman C. R. "Rusty" Jones, Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.); 5th Vice General Chairman Rodney A. Noakes, Division 199 (Danville, Ky.); and Alternate Vice General Chairman G. Scott Brown, Division 259 (Easton, Pa.).

The delegates also elected Regional Chairman to serve the membership, including: Coastal Region Chairman Duane C. Lance, Division 786 (Macon, Ga.); Eastern Region Chairman J. B. "Ben" Lee, Division 166 (Charlotte, N.C.); Southern Region Chairman Ty Thompson, Division 423 (Tuscumbia, Ala.); Central Region Chairman R. D. "Ronnie" Carter, Division 205 (Chattanooga, Tenn.); and Northern Region Chairman A. J. McElwee, Division 74 (Harrisburg-Enola, Pa.).

BLET First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and National Vice President Willard

Knight represented the National Division at the meeting. Other special guests included: Norfolk Southern General Chairman Bob Linsey (NS-Northern Lines); Norfolk Southern General Chairman Kevin S. Peek (NS-Eastern Lines); and 1st Vice Chairman L. Randy Fannon Jr. (NS-Eastern Lines).

"I congratulate General Chairman Wallace and all officers of the Norfolk Southern – Southern Lines General Committee," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "They have big shoes to fill following the retirements of Brother Overton and Brother Thompson, but I am confident they will do an admirable job. On behalf of the National Division, I thank Brothers Overton and Thompson for their many years of distinguished and honorable service to the Brotherhood and offer sincere best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement."

Brother Wallace follows in the footsteps of his father, Ray C. Wallace, who

served the GCA as General Chairman from 1986-2008. Immediately prior to his election as General Chairman, Brother Wallace served the General Committee as 2nd Vice Chairman. He has also served as Local Chairman and Vice Local Chairman of Division 267.

Retiring General Chairman Bill Overton had been serving as General Chairman since 2009. He has held continuous membership in Division 239 (Knoxville, Tenn.) since joining the Brotherhood on August 1, 1974. Retiring 1st Vice Chairman Billy Thompson has held elected office on the General Committee level dating back to the Conrail era. He has held continuous membership in Division 325 (Wilkesburg, Pa.) since joining the Brotherhood on July 1, 1977.

The BLET's Norfolk Southern – Southern Lines General Committee of Adjustment represents more than 3,000 active members from 47 different divisions. ©



**Seated, from left:** General Chairman Mark Wallace; 1st Vice Chairman & Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Sturdivant; 2nd Vice Chairman Fred Cox; 3rd Vice Chairman Ty Thompson; 4th Vice Chairman Rusty Jones; and 5th Vice Chairman Rodney Noakes.



**From left:** Vice President Willard Knight; Retiring NS-Southern Lines General Chairman Bill Overton; NS-Northern Lines General Chairman Bob Linsey; NS-Eastern Lines General Chairman Kevin Peek; and First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt.

# KCS General Chairman Sam Parker reelected by acclamation

**G**eneral Chairman Sam W. Parker was reelected by acclamation to his fifth consecutive term of office at the Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment's quadrennial meeting in Shreveport, La., May 15-17, 2012.

Brother Parker has held continuous membership in BLET Division 599 (Shreveport, La.) since he joined the Brotherhood on July 1, 1979. He was first elected General Chairman in 1996, and was subsequently reelected in 2000, 2004 and 2008.

Brother R. W. "Bud" Pickett of Division 599 (Shreveport, La.) was reelected to continue serving as 1st Vice Chairman. The following Brothers were reelected by acclamation: 2nd Vice Chairman Jim O. Fisher Jr., Division 612 (Nederland, Texas); Secretary-Treasurer David A. Spradlin, Division 573 (Greenville, Texas); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer David M. Grubbs Jr., Division 569 (Heavener, Okla.).

BLET National Division President Dennis R. Pierce attended the quadrennial meeting and made a presentation to the delegates on May 15. First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt and National Secretary-Treasurer William C. Walpert also addressed the delegates on May 15.

"It was my honor and privilege to address the Kansas City Southern officers and delegates," President Pierce said. "For many years, Brother Parker and the entire General Committee of Adjustment have done an excellent job of representing our Kansas City Southern membership."

Also representing the National Division were: Vice President Cole Davis; Special Representative Jim Bradford; Special Representation and Coordinator of Education & Training Ken Kroeger; and Special Representative and Director of Organizing Kent Confer. Brother Confer delivered a mobilization presentation to the delegates on May 17. Also in attendance as a special guest was Louisiana State Legislative Board Chairman Arlin Todd.

The Kansas City Southern General Committee of Adjustment represents more than 400 members from seven different BLET Divisions in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Kansas. ©©

**OFFICERS, DELEGATES AND GUESTS ATTENDING THE QUADRENNIAL MEETING OF THE KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT**



## National Labor College announces hazardous materials training

**T**he National Labor College's Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is offering two train-the-trainer courses this summer.

The Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program is building a nationwide pool of peer instructors to deliver hazmat training. This DOT-funded train-the-trainer course provides regional peer trainers with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver this awareness level hazmat training at their job-sites, union meetings and in their communities.

The dates are July 16-21 and July 22-27, 2012.

Completion of the five-day Hazmat Course or Online Course is a prerequisite to attend the July 16-21 workshop. It will be held on the campus of the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Md.

The July 22-27 course requires no prerequisites. It will be held at the NLC campus in Silver Spring.

For registration information, please visit the Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program website, [www.hazmatgmc.org](http://www.hazmatgmc.org). You may also email Henry Jajuga, Director, or Freddie Thomas, Administrative Services, or call: (301) 439-2440. ©©

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# Craddock elected CN-IC General Chairman

Clay E. Craddock of BLET Division 762 was elected Chairman of the Canadian National-Illinois Central (CN-IC) General Committee of Adjustment at the GCA's quadrennial session in Tunica, Miss., on May 22, 2012.

Brother Craddock has held continuous membership in Division 762 (Memphis, Tenn.) since he first joined the Brotherhood on October 1, 1980. Immediately prior to his election, Brother Craddock served the GCA as Second Vice General Chairman, a position he held since 2008.

Also elected were: First Vice General Chairman W.D. "Billy" Evans, Division 203 (Jackson, Miss.); Second Vice General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer Charles R. Lough Jr., Division 131 (Chi-

cago); Third Vice General Chairman Tim B. Dunn, Division 24 (Centralia, Ill.); and Fourth Vice General Chairman and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Tom P. Bloom, Division 114 (Waterloo, Iowa). Brother Evans also serves the Brotherhood as Chairman of the Mississippi State Legislative Board.

Alternate officers elected were: W.J. "Bill" Clayton, Division 315 (Clinton, Ill.); Second Alternate Vice General Chairman Lanie M. Keith, Division 593 (Meridian, Miss.); Third Alternate Vice General Chairman W.P. "Pat" Randolph, Division 512 (Belleville, Ill.); and Fourth Alternate Vice General Chairman J.S. "Shawn" Early, Division 8 (Slater, Mo.).

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce represented the National Division

at the meeting, along with First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt, Vice President Marcus J. Ruef, Vice President Steve Bruno and Vice President Cole W. Davis. Wisconsin Central General Chairman John Reynolds also attended the meeting.

"I congratulate these Brothers and thank them for their dedication to our Brotherhood," National President Pierce said. "I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of representing our Illinois Central members."

The delegates were honored to host two retired General Chairman who served the GCA for many years. Brother James L. McCoy served as Illinois Central General Chairman from 1986-1996 and John R. Koonce served from 1996-2011. Brother McCoy also served

the Brotherhood as an International Vice President from 1996 to 1999 and then as First Vice President, the union's second-highest office, from 1999-2001.

President Pierce also thanked outgoing General Chairman Mark D. Whitchurch for his dedicated service to the GCA as General Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer.

The General Committee represents about 800 members from 19 different Divisions. The GCA also represents multiple railroads, including CN properties (Illinois Central, Chicago Central & Pacific, Cedar River Railway), Kansas City Southern properties (MidSouth Rail Corp., SouthRail Corp, Gateway & Western), and the IC Electric Division of Metra in Chicago. ©



Officers, delegates and guests attending the quadrennial meeting of the Illinois Central General Committee of Adjustment.

## Legislation ends major TCRC strike at CP Rail

Fatigue management, work rules and pension plans were core issues as 4,800 members of Teamsters Canada Rail Conference went on strike at Canadian Pacific Railway on Wednesday, May 23.

The Canadian government intervened in the dispute, passing legislation that forced TCRC members back to work on June 1.

CP Rail is drastically and unfairly trying to cut its workers' pensions by up to 40 percent while generously improving the retirement benefits of its managers.

"The drastic cut in pensions angered our members," said TCRC vice-president and chief negotiator Doug Finnon. "A pension plan is a deferred salary, not just money the company can distribute to its shareholders and managers without being accountable to anyone."

According to TCRC: "CP proposed significant reductions for TCRC's members. Meanwhile management within the same pension plan are scheduled for increases despite contributing nearly half of what our members contribute."

Rex Beatty, President of Teamster Canada Rail Conference, said: "CP management doesn't seem to be bothered by this flagrant inequality."

BLET National President Dennis R.

Pierce said the National Division is supporting TCRC in their efforts to obtain a fair and equitable agreement.

"The hypocrisy of CP Rail management is astounding," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "It is a sign that the War on Workers is spreading throughout North America. Our TCRC Brothers and Sisters have 100 percent of our support in their ongoing struggle against CP Rail."

TCRC accused CP Rail of negotiating in bad faith, never really working to find common ground. Instead, the railway dragged out the negotiations in hopes that the government would step in and force TCRC members back to work.

Back-to-work legislation made its way through Canada's parliament the week of May 28, and TCRC members were forced back to work on June 1.

On April 26, Teamsters announced that 95% of its members had voted to go on strike.

Teamsters Canada president Robert Bouvier offered an explanation on what is behind CP Rail's attempt to reduce pensions.

"I think there's only one reason they're asking for these concessions: to further enrich a handful of shareholders at the expense of workers. CP workers strike is in a way a battle for all Canadian workers." ©



Members of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference (TCRC) protest the introduction of back-to-work legislation in Ottawa.

2012

## Calendar & Events

**June 29, 2012**

### U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference

ROANOKE, VA.

The Railroad Retirement Board will hold free informational conferences to BLET officers throughout 2012. Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. At the Hyatt Place, 5040 Valley View Blvd., North NW

**July 15-16, 2012**

### Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERTT)

NATIONAL LABOR COLLEGE, SILVER SPRING, MD.

The amount and variety of radioactive material shipped by rail is expected to increase in coming years. With the increase in rail shipments comes the increased risk for rail incidents. A federal grant covers the cost of rail worker training to increase their knowledge of the transportation of radioactive materials. This training course is also available on August 17-18, 2012. For more information or to register online, please visit: [www.hazmatgmc.org](http://www.hazmatgmc.org).

**July 29-August 1, 2012**

### 72nd annual International Western Convention (IWC)

CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, BILLINGS, MONT.

Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Craig Gilchrist (Montana State Legislative Board Chairman, BLET Division 298) and Co-Chair D.B. Kenner (Division 195). At the Crown Plaza Billings (27 North 27th St., Billings, Mont. 59101, phone: (406) 252-7400). Contact Brother Gilchrist: [blecag@nemontel.net](mailto:blecag@nemontel.net); or Brother Kenner: [kennerdb@yahoo.com](mailto:kennerdb@yahoo.com). Please visit the IWC website: [www.bletiwcc.org](http://www.bletiwcc.org).

**August 19-24, 2012**

### 74th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA)

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.

Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Matt Kronyak (New Jersey State Legislative Board Chairman and Division 231 Local Chairman, the 2012 EUMA will be at Bally's (Park Place and the Boardwalk (1900 Pacific Ave.), Atlantic City, NJ 08401, phone: (800) 345-7253, [www.ballysac.com](http://www.ballysac.com)). Contact Brother Kronyak: [mcmkronyak@aol.com](mailto:mcmkronyak@aol.com) or (201) 978-6436.

**September 7, 2012**

### U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conference

ALBANY, N.Y.

Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. At the Albany Ramada Plaza, 3 Watervliet Avenue Ext.

**September 9-13, 2012**

### 77th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM)

GALVESTON, TEXAS

Hosted by Arrangements Chairman Jack Sweeny, Division 776 Local Chairman), the 2012 SWCM will be at the Moody Gardens Hotel (Seven Hope Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77554, phone: (888) 388-8484, [www.moodygardenshotel.com](http://www.moodygardenshotel.com)). Contact Brother Sweeny: [jrsweeny@coastal-link.net](mailto:jrsweeny@coastal-link.net).

**September 14, 2012**

### U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Informational Conferences

FORT WORTH, TEXAS AND RENTON, WASH.

Registration begins at 8 a.m. The program begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. In Fort Worth at the Crown Plaza Fort Worth South, The Fort Worth Room, 100 E. Altamesa. In Renton at the Holiday Inn, One South Grady Way.

## NTSB SITES FATIGUE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dent Dennis R. Pierce said: "While we applaud the Board's acknowledgement of the unacceptable risks posed by crew fatigue, the Report published on April 17 should have expanded on the fact that the accident occurred during the circadian trough, and that the crew was operating into the direction of a rising sun. Any experienced locomotive engineer or trainman can tell you that these particular operating environments pose an identifiable risk when operating at restricted speed.

"The NTSB also failed to address the other issues concerning restricted speed operations — including harassment of crews for operating too slowly at restricted speed — that we raised in our response to Safety Recommendation R-11-10, which was issued in connection with this accident and four others," Pierce added. "And we remain unwavering in our opposition to NTSB's reiterated recommendation that railroads be required to install inward-facing video cameras and engage in constant surveillance of operating crews for disciplinary purposes." ©



At the NTSB hearing in Washington, D.C., on April 24, from left: Carl Fields, Coordinator of the BLET Safety Task Force; Jerry Gibson, UTU Safety Team; Deborah Hersman, NTSB Chairman; and Dan Lauzon, BLET Safety Task Force Primary Investigator.

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J.M. Robb  
International President





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6/12

**Photo of the Month: June 2012**

**MONTGOMERY'S RIVER WALK:** With a new crew on board, CSX locomotive 5007 departs the S&NA Yard and begins its journey to Waycross, Ga., on January 29, 2012. The train is passing underneath the new pedestrian bridge along the Alabama River Walk in Montgomery, Ala. *Photo courtesy: Frank Orona*



**Are you a photographer?** The National Division's Public Relations Department, which produces the Newsletter each month, has received numerous inquiries lately from BLET members volunteering to contrib-

ute 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: Bentley@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.

**BLET members**  
**unanimously ratify contract**  
**at Eastern Idaho RR**

For the second time in 2012, BLET members have unanimously approved a new contract agreement with a short line railroad.

In February, membership at the Great Western Railway of Colorado unanimously ratified a new contract. And in March, BLET members unanimously ratified a new agreement with the Eastern Idaho Railroad (EIRR).

The EIRR contract runs through March 31, 2016. The first general wage increase is 6% and is in addition to a signing/longevity bonus tied to ratification.

The negotiating team consisted of: Mike Twombly, BLET National Vice President; Adam Delgado, President of Division 113; and Jim Dayton, Union Pacific-Western District General Chairman.

The membership's health and welfare plan remains unchanged. In addition to pay, the BLET obtained an improved bereavement leave. Among other provisions, the agreement also governs seniority, crew requirements, a job preference system, calling, extra board, claims and grievances, days off, and holidays.

Negotiations started in 2009 and the final vote was unanimously in favor of the agreement. There are 12 members working for the EIRR. General Chairman Dayton reports that the Organization anticipates the number of BLET members to increase, as the EIRR is expected to hire more workers to handle projected increases in traffic levels.

The EIRR is a Watco subsidiary and has nearly 270 miles of mainline track. It started operating in late 1993 as one of the largest single short line spin offs in Union Pacific's history. It handles mostly agricultural products in the areas of Idaho Falls and the Snake River (from Buhl/Wendell to Minidoka), and moves about 35,000 carloads per year, and interchanges with UP at Idaho Falls and Minidoka, Idaho. ©

**CONTRACT HIGHLIGHTS:**

The EIRR contract runs through March 31, 2016. The first general wage increase is 6% and is in addition to a signing/longevity bonus tied to ratification.

**NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS:**

**MIKE TWOMBLY**, BLET NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT;  
**ADAM DELGADO**, PRESIDENT OF DIVISION 113  
**JIM DAYTON**, UNION PACIFIC-WESTERN  
DISTRICT GENERAL CHAIRMAN

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**Advisory Board March 2012 Activity**

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

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT DENNIS R. PIERCE:** National Division Office, Cleveland; General supervision of BLET activities; General office duties; Correspondence and telephone communications; Supervision of Office Administration; General Supervision of Special Representatives; President, Teamsters Rail Conference; Policy Committee, Teamsters Rail Conference; Change to Win meeting, Lincoln, Neb.; National Mediation Board mtg., Cleveland, Ohio; National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC) mtg., New Orleans; NS Eastern GCA mtg., Roanoke, Va.; General Executive Board (GEB) mtg. via teleconference; 23000 rate setting mtg., Washington, D.C.; NYWP negotiations, Washington, D.C.

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. "LEE" PRUITT:** National Duties include but not limited to: Director, Passenger Dept.; Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; PTC World Congress 2012, Orlando, Fla.; Secretary-Treasurer workshop, Jacksonville, Fla.; NASLBC mtg., New Orleans; UPRR negotiations, Beaumont, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Texas; UPRR negotiations, Pocatello, Idaho.

**NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER WILLIAM C. WALPERT:** General supervision of accounting dept., records dept., online services dept., tax compliance dept.; Education & Training Dept.; Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Safety Task Force; Meetings with vendors and financial institutions; Publications Committee; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; Trustee, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust (NRRIT); Secretary-Treasurer Workshop, Jacksonville, Fla.; RMA workshop, Cleveland; NASLBC mtg., New Orleans; NS-Eastern Lines GCA mtg., Roanoke, Va.; NRRIT mtg., Washington, D.C.

**VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN:** Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; BLET Security Officer; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications; Coordinate content of NLO website; Attended event for Congressman Ed Pastor (AZ); Spoke at rally regarding Right to Work & War on Workers with several BLET members, Phoenix, Ariz.; NASLBC annual meeting, New Orleans, La.; Norfolk Southern GCA mtg., Roanoke, Va.; Weekly DRIVE committee and legislative meetings, IBT, Washington, D.C.; Hearings, receptions, and various meetings with U.S. Representatives, Washington, D.C.

**VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF:** Vice Chairman, full NRAB; Labor Member, 1st Division; Labor Member, National Mediation Board Arbitration Advisory Forum; Director of Arbitration Dept; Assigned to Illinois Central; Wisconsin Central; Grand Trunk Western; Duluth Missabe & Iron Range; Elgin, Joliet & Eastern; Indiana Harbor Belt; and Belt Railway of Chicago; NRAB hearings w/ Referee Miller, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds with Duluth issues, WC; Assist GC Reynolds w/ negotiations and various issues, WC, Chicago; Mtg. w/ NMB, NRAB, Cleveland; Assist GC Whitchurch w/ negotiations, IC, Chicago; Assist GC Kaulins w/ negotiations, BRC, Chicago; Arbitration best practices webinar and Labor Members forum, Chicago; NS-Eastern Lines GCA mtg., Local Chairman workshop, Roanoke, Va.; Assist GC Whitchurch w/ negotiations, Memphis, Tenn.

**VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TWOMBLY:** Assigned to all Union Pacific GCAs (Eastern District, Northern Region (former C&NW), Western Lines (Pacific Harbor Lines), Western Region (Portland & Western, Eastern Idaho), Central Region, Southern Region (New Orleans & Gulf Coast); Tacoma Belt RR; Utah RR; and Longview Portland & Northern and Longview Switching; Eastern Idaho contract ratification mtg., Burley, Idaho; Vacation; Tacoma Rail Section 6 contract negotiations, Tacoma, Wash.; Union Pacific-Central Region claims conference, Omaha, Neb.; Union Pacific-Western Region PLB-7329, Omaha, Neb.

**VICE PRESIDENT WILLARD E. KNIGHT:** Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut South; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; Ohio Central; Grand Trunk Western; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, prepare for PLBs, etc.; Grand Trunk Western negotiations, Cleveland; NS-Eastern Region GCA mtg., Roanoke, Va.; WNYP negotiations, Washington, D.C.; PLB 7374, Cleveland, Ohio.

**VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE:** Assigned to all CSX; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) issues, CSX; General office duties, paperwork, correspondence, telephone calls, etc.; Conference call/web meeting with CSX GCs, re: DRC agenda; Conference call w/ GCs and SLBs, re: FELA policy; Mtg. w/ Alabama State Docks Local Chairmen and GC Matt Thornton, ASD negotiations, Mobile, Ala.; Dispute Resolutions Committee mtgs. and CSX business mtg. update w/ CSX GCs, Jacksonville, Fla.

**VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. PRIESTER:** Assigned to all BNSF (former ATSF, former C&S, CRI&P, FWD, former STL-SF, BNSF/MRL), Panhandle Northern, Missouri & North Arkansas, Montana Rail Link, Austin Western RR, Great Western; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, etc.; Mtgs. w/ GC Wilson and BNSF, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas; Panhandle Northern mediation, assist GC Holdcraft, Dallas-Fort Worth; Conference call w/ GC Wilson and M. Grey, Austin Western RR; Mtg w/ BNSF GCs and BNSF's J. Fleps, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas; PLB 7503 w/ GC Brown, BNSF, Chicago; PLB 5939 and PLB 7383 w/ GC Wilson, BNSF, Miami; Panhandle Northern contract rollout, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas.

**VICE PRESIDENT COLE W. DAVIS:** Assigned to: Kansas City Southern (MidSouth Rail, SouthRail, Gateway Western, Illinois & Midland), Texas Mexican Rwy.; CP Rail System/US (Indiana Southern, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern); Springfield Terminal (St. Lawrence & Atlantic, Montreal, Maine & Atlantic, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, correspondence communications, etc.; Assist GC Semenek w/ arbitration, CP Rail; Assist GC Parker w/ KCS issues; Division 426 mtg., Baton Rouge, La.; PLB 6884, assist GC Semenek, CP Rail, Chicago; Section Four Notice, assist GC Whitchurch and GC Parker; Assist GC Rodriguez, Tex Mex issues; Division 527 mtg., assist GC Parker, KCS, Pittsburg, Kan.; Huron & Eastern contract negotiations, assist GC Lorenz, Moberly, Mo. And Bay City, Mich.; KCS arbitration w/ GC Parker, Kansas City, Mo.; Cedar River RR contract negotiations, assist GC Whitchurch, Moberly, Mo.; Assist GC Moore w/ Springfield Terminal issues.

**VICE PRESIDENT STEPHEN J. BRUNO:** Assigned to various Rail Safety Advisory Committees (RSAC); Regulatory duties as assigned by the President; Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; Birmingham Southern; Telephone calls, correspondence, general office duties, etc.; Vacation; Union RR arbitration hearing, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Prepare Section 6 notice, Metra/CP, Chicago; Passenger Hours of Service presentation, LIRR, Hauppauge, N.Y.; NASLBC mtg., New Orleans; RSAC/FMP assistance, Washington, D.C.