



PUBLISHED BY THE BLET, A DIVISION OF THE RAIL CONFERENCE, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

BLET relaunches Perrien Fund to assist members with Hurricane Harvey relief

On August 30, the BLET's National Division Advisory Board approved a recommendation from BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce to re-activate and expand its Gary Perrien Fund to provide financial assistance to members living in Texas and Louisiana who have been the hardest hit by Hurricane Harvey.

The Gary Perrien Fund was originally established by action of the delegates at BLET's Second National Convention in 2010. Brother Gary Perrien, then an active member serving on the Convention's Arrangements Committee, fell ill and the delegates passed the hat to assist in his recovery. In a televised report back to the convention from his hospital bed, Brother Perrien asked that the funds be used to help those more needy than him, leading the delegates and the Advisory Board to later create the Gary Perrien Fund. Brother Perrien recovered and retired in the years following the 2010 Convention.

As part of the expansion of the Fund, the BLET Advisory Board also authorized



Texas National Guard soldiers arrive in Houston, Texas to aid citizens in heavily flooded areas from the storms of Hurricane Harvey. Photo: Lt. Zachary West, 100th MPAD

President Pierce's request that \$20,000.00 be transferred from the Union's General Fund to the Perrien Fund as part of the associated fund raising effort on behalf of the Union's members harmed by the storm. "BLET members have suffered catastrophic losses as a result of the storm," President Pierce said. "The union move-

ment is built around members helping members, and the National Division is starting this fund raising program in an effort to help as many members who have suffered a hardship as is possible."

The Advisory Board has also asked all BLET General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions,

and individual members to make matching donations to at least double the size of its initial contribution. "We know that there are members who want to assist their Brothers and Sisters who have been harmed by the storm," President Pierce said. "One hundred percent of the money raised through this effort will go directly to as many members as possible."

In addition, the Advisory Board also approved President Pierce's recommendation that BLET make a matching \$20,000.00 donation to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund. "This fund was established to assist as many Teamster Brothers and Sisters as possible, and as fellow Teamsters we are proud to join in that effort," President Pierce said.

On behalf of the Advisory Board, President Dennis Pierce also thanked Brother Gary Pedigo, Chairman of BLET's Texas State Legislative Board, for reaching out to the National Division and requesting that action be taken to assist our BLET Brothers and Sisters in their time of need. Brother Pedigo reports that members from at least 10 BLET Division have been impacted by the storm, including members whose homes are a total loss.

To make an online donation to the Gary Perrien Fund, the National Division has established the following website to accept contributions from General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions, and individual members: www.ble-t.org/perrien

Also, checks can be made payable to the "Gary Perrien Medical Relief Fund" and mailed to:

**Perrien Fund-Harvey Relief
BLET National Division
7061 East Pleasant Valley Road
Independence, OH 44131**

Donations are not tax deductible.

BLET members impacted by Hurricane Harvey can begin the process of applying for Perrien Fund assistance by contacting Kelly Rowe of the BLET National Division at: rowe@ble-t.org. Only BLET members in good standing at the time of the disaster are eligible to apply for assistance from the Perrien Fund. BLET members living in certain Texas counties are also eligible to apply for assistance from the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund (see page 8).

"I must say it again, for over 154 years now, our Brotherhood has existed on the principle of members helping members," President Pierce said. "I challenge all our General Committees of Adjustment, State Legislative Boards, Divisions, and individual members to continue that tradition today by helping our Brothers and Sisters in Texas and Louisiana during their time of need." @@



BNSF NEEDLES SUBDIVISION

A westbound BNSF Railway intermodal train rolls through the Mojave Desert near Goffs, California, during a vibrant red sunset. Photo: courtesy Chase Gunnoe



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BLET PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY DENNIS R. PIERCE

BUILDING A STRONGER BROTHERHOOD

As this edition of the *Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen News* goes to print, it is appropriate to look back and reflect on this year's BLET Regional Meetings. In August, the BLET held a Regional Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, where approximately 335 members, family members and friends registered to attend. There were several moments that stand out from the meeting; one of the most rewarding for me was meeting BLET Division 226 member Sultan Holmes who serves in the National Guard.

Brother Holmes was in San Antonio as part of his service to our great Nation, and when he found out from his Local Chairman Sean Simon that the BLET Regional Meeting was in town, he made it a point to stop by and meet with the Officers and members in attendance. It is clear to me that we must do more to not only recognize our Brothers and Sisters who are on active duty, but also those who stand ready to serve if called upon.

An even greater resource to the Union movement are the BLET Brothers and Sisters who are military veterans, having served our country and then moved on to civilian life as railroad employees. Our Brotherhood benefits from the involvement of all members, but our military veterans bring with them tools that can only come from serving in the military and I, for one, believe that the BLET is stronger if veterans are more involved in it. My request of all of our military veterans is a simple one — we need your help and your involvement to make a better workplace for all BLET members, so please join us in our efforts.

That same message was echoed by CSX General Chairman Gary Best at our Regional Meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina,



At the BLET's San Antonio Regional Meeting in June, President Pierce met with Sultan Holmes, a member of BLET Division 226 who serves in the National Guard.

just a few short weeks ago, where again over 360 members, family members and friends registered to attend. The long line of military veterans in Brother Gary's family have sacrificed time and time again for our Nation, and his recognition of those veterans in the audience brought home to all in attendance just how important it is that we recognize their service. That service is what keeps us free to pursue the American Dream, something that we can never take for granted.

One of the other key components of the BLET's Regional Meetings is our Education and Training program. All combined at both Meetings, some 285 members and officers attended training classes put on by the National Division for Local Chairmen, Legislative Representatives and Secretary-Treasurers. Strong local officers and members are the backbone of a strong union, and it was truly

moving to see so many Brothers and Sisters take time from their busy schedules to get the training they need to make them the best that they can be.

I was also very moved by the comments and remarks that were made during the Opening Ceremonies of both Regional Meetings. While one Facebook post called our opening ceremonies "pomp and circumstance" in less than a flattering way, the message that was shared with all who attended was far from that; in fact it was just the opposite.

If there was one common theme that every speaker called for, it was their call for action by BLET members. Each of our Guest Speakers — former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro, U.S. House of Representatives Assistant Democratic Leader Jim Clyburn, Teamsters Eastern Region Vice President Sean O'Brien and retired AFL-CIO Executive Vice-

President Linda Chavez Thompson — spoke about the importance of members having a direct impact on their futures by getting involved in their unions. There cannot be an effective Union without active members, and our strength is definitely dependent upon a strong and active membership.

Our closed member-only meetings at both Regional Meetings also were well attended, and that portion of the meetings serves an equally important role. Our current BLET Bylaws, and even BLE's former Constitution, cautions all members to keep our internal deliberations private to the membership. It goes without saying that there are those in Corporate America working against our goals, and it is imperative that we have regular closed door member-only meetings so that we can freely discuss the issues that confront us on any given day.

That was the case at both Regional Meetings; the members present were given updates on the important issues of the day, including ongoing national freight contract negotiations, as well as the changing role of government and its impact on railroad operations. All members present at these meetings were given the opportunity to seek answers to the questions that they had, as well as the questions that their Brothers and Sisters back home had sent with them. The members present also provided your National Division officers with the benefit of their experiences so that we are current on what is happening in the workplace on each railroad. The information that we gathered at these meetings is just as important as the information that we shared. Taken together, this two-way exchange of information makes for a stronger union as we all work

together for our common goals.

Without diminishing the importance of our open and closed meetings, or our Education and Training programs, of equal importance is our chance at our Regional Meetings to come together as Brothers and Sisters in fellowship. Our railroad jobs are very unique; there are only about 40,000 Locomotive Engineers and 60,000 Trainmen in our great nation, out of a current national population of over 325,000,000 million Americans. We are a highly trained and specialized group, and I don't have to tell any you that in some cases, our family and friends will never understand what we do or why we are gone so much to do it.

BLET's Regional Meeting program is one place where you can come and be with not only your peers, but with other railroad operating employees who live the same life that you lead. Every time I attend our Regional Meetings, I come away reminded of the work that we must do, but also re-energized to do that work. As I said at both meetings, the outcome of any battle is never guaranteed, but the level of the fight necessary to prevail is guaranteed, and we need the involvement of all BLET members in that fight.

As our national freight contract negotiations enter the final steps of the Railway Labor Act, it is even more critical that all members get involved. Bargaining rounds are never easy, but this one has been especially difficult for many reasons. Join me; get involved and stay involved as we work to close the bargaining round out. The outcome very well may come down to the strength of the message that we collectively send to all participating in and watching the process. @

DENNIS R. PIERCE
BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

66 An even greater resource to the Union movement are the BLET Brothers and Sisters who are military veterans, having served our country and then moved on to civilian life as railroad employees. Our Brotherhood benefits from the involvement of all members, but our military veterans bring with them tools that can only come from serving in the military and I, for one, believe that the BLET is stronger if veterans are more involved in it. 99

BLET NATIONAL DIVISION ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Official 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 policy 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

PROPOSAL GETS SERIOUS ABOUT GOOD-PAYING JOBS

Jobs are a vehicle for economic opportunity. They should provide the pay and benefits workers around the country need to support themselves and their families. But increasingly that doesn't seem to be the case.

While unemployment has fallen in recent years, that's done little to help many hardworking Americans. Some 10 million people nationally remain unemployed or underemployed despite wanting to improve their job status. But many of the jobs created recently aren't full time, pay too little or don't offer necessities such as health insurance or retirement benefits.

That's why the Teamsters were

encouraged to see congressional Democrats in July roll out a new agenda that will focus on raising wages and improving jobs skills. It also stressed that workers should be treated fairly when it comes to job protections, health care, work-life balance and retirement.

To create good jobs that will fuel economic expansion, our country needs to have a well-trained workforce. The Democrats' "A Better Deal" proposal calls for an increase in registered apprenticeships and work-based learning programs by doubling federal funding for them. If Congress makes such programs a priority, young people and those currently out of work can benefit

from the increased government investment. That will raise wages while reducing the burden on various public assistance programs.

These are not new ideas. In fact, the Roosevelt Institute — on whose board I serve — raised many of them in a report released last year. But workers have needed someone to prioritize them. FDR was that leader in a previous generation. We can only hope those in charge now take the reins and follow through so workers and the economy can benefit.

Fraternally,

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL
PRESIDENT



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2018 FEES OBJECTOR POLICY

1. EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS

A. Any employee covered by a union or agency shop agreement in the United States has the legal right to be or remain a nonmember of the Union. Nonmembers have the legal right (1) to object to paying for Union activities not related to collective bargaining, contract administration and grievance adjustment, and to obtain a reduction in fees for such activities; (2) to be given sufficient information to intelligently decide whether to object; and (3) to be apprised of internal Union procedures for filing objections. Employees who choose to object have the right to be apprised of the percentage of the reduction, the basis for the calculation, and the right to challenge these figures.

B. To the extent permitted by law, nonmembers may not participate in Union elections as a voter or as a candidate; attend Union meetings; serve as delegates to the Convention, or participate in the selection of such delegates; or participate in the process by which collective bargaining agreements are ratified.

2. PUBLICATION OF POLICY

The fees objector policy shall be published annually in the BLET's newsletter in the month preceding the objection notice period and mailed annually to each objector. It shall also be provided to each new employee when s/he first becomes subject to a union shop agreement.

3. MAKING OBJECTION KNOWN

Objecting nonmembers must provide notice of objection by notifying the National Secretary-Treasurer of the objection in writing by first-class mail postmarked during the month of November preceding the calendar year to which s/he objects, or within (30) days

after s/he first begins paying fees and receiving notices of these procedures. The objection shall contain the objector's current home address. Each nonmember wishing to continue his/her objection from year to year must renew the objection each year as specified in this paragraph. Objections may only be made by individual employees. No petition objections will be honored.

4. MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CHARGEABLE EXPENSES

All objectors shall pay their fair share of expenses germane to collective bargaining including:

A. All expenses concerning the negotiation of agreements, practices and working conditions;

B. All expenses concerning the administration of agreements, practices and working conditions, including grievance handling, all activities related to arbitration, and discussion with employees in the craft or class (or bargaining unit) or employer representatives regarding working conditions, benefits and contract rights;

C. Convention expenses and other union internal governance and management expenses;

D. Social activities and union business meeting expenses;

E. Publication expenses to the extent coverage relates to chargeable activities;

F. Expenses of litigation related to collective bargaining, contract administration and internal governance;

G. Expenses for legislative and administrative agency activities to effectuate collective bargaining agreements;

H. All expenses for the education and training of officers and staff intended to prepare the participants to better perform chargeable activities;

I. All costs of strikes and other lawful economic actions.

5. DETERMINATION OF CHARGEABLE SHARE

The BLET shall engage an outside auditor to perform an independent audit of the records of the National Division annually. Based on this audit, the BLET shall determine the percentage of expenditures that fall within the categories specified in Section 4. The amount of expenditures that fall within Section 4 shall be the basis for calculating the reduced fees that must be paid by the objector. The auditing firm conducting the annual audit of the BLET National Division shall give an opinion concerning the adequacy of the escrow amounts maintained pursuant to Section 10, and later will verify the existence and the audits of money in any escrow account.

6. REPORT OF CHARGEABLE SHARE AND BASIS OF ITS CALCULATION

The BLET shall report the determination no later than September 30. This report shall include an analysis of the major categories of union expenses that are chargeable and nonchargeable. A copy of the report shall be sent to all nonmembers whose timely objections have not been revoked.

7. CHALLENGE PROCEDURE

Each person entitled to receive the BLET's report may challenge the validity of the calculations by filing an appeal with the National Secretary-Treasurer. Such appeal must be made by sending a letter to the National Secretary-Treasurer postmarked no later than October 31.

8. ARBITRATION OF CHALLENGES

A. After the close of appeals period, the National Secretary-Treasurer shall provide a list of appellants to the American Arbitration Association (AAA). All appeals shall be consolidated. The

AAA shall appoint an arbitrator pursuant to its Rules for Impartial Determination of Union Fees. The AAA shall inform the National Secretary-Treasurer and the appellant(s) of the arbitrator selected.

B. The arbitration shall commence by December 1 or as soon thereafter as the AAA can schedule the arbitration. The arbitrator shall have control over all procedural matters affecting the arbitration in order to fulfill the need for an informed and expeditious arbitration.

C. Each party to the arbitration shall bear its own costs. The appellants shall have the option of paying a prorata portion of the arbitrator's fees and expenses. The balance of such fees and expenses shall be paid by the BLET.

D. A court reporter shall make a transcript of all proceedings before the arbitrator. This transcript shall be prepared within 15 days of the close of the hearing and shall be the official record of the proceedings which may be purchased by the appellants. If appellants do not purchase a copy of the transcript, a copy shall be available for inspection at the National Division during normal business hours.

E. Appellants may, at their expense, be represented by counsel or other representative of choice. Appellants need not appear at the hearing and shall be permitted to file written statements with the arbitrator at the time of the hearing instead of appearing.

F. Fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the first hearing, appellants shall be provided with a list of all exhibits intended to be introduced at the hearing and a list of all witnesses intended to be called, except for exhibits and witnesses that may be introduced for rebuttal. On written request from an appellant, copies of exhibits (or in case of volumi-

nous exhibits, summaries thereof) shall be provided to them. Additionally, copies of exhibits shall be available for inspection and copying at the hearing.

G. The National Division shall have the burden of establishing that the reduced fees set forth in the report are lawful.

H. If the arbitrator shall determine that more than one day of hearing is necessary, hearings shall be scheduled to continue from day to day until completed. The parties to the appeal shall have the right to file a brief within fifteen (15) days after the transcript of the hearing is available, but in no case no more than thirty (30) days after the hearing closes. The arbitrator shall issue a decision within forty-five (45) days after the submission of post-hearing briefs or within such other reasonable period as is consistent with the rules established by the AAA.

I. The arbitrator shall give full consideration to the legal requirements limiting the amounts that objectors may be charged, and shall set forth in the decision the legal and arithmetic bases for such decision.

9. PAYMENT OF REDUCED FEES

Objectors shall pay reduced monthly fees based on the most recent report pending determination of the objection year's chargeable ratio.

10. ESCROW OF DISPUTED FUNDS

All monthly fees paid by objectors shall be placed in an interest bearing escrow account pending final determination of the chargeable share. Escrowed funds shall be disbursed to objectors and the Union upon issuance of the arbitrator's decision or fifteen days after the conclusion of the appeal period if there are no challenges to the determination. @/

SPECIAL NOTICE TO ALL BLET MEMBERS

Pursuant to Internal Revenue Service Notice 88-120, all BLET members are advised as follows: Dues, contributions or gifts to BLET are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. However dues may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses, except for that portion that is allocable to BLET's lobbying and political activities.

Keith Kerley elected by acclamation to serve as CSXT-Western Lines General Chairman

Keith Kerley was elected by acclamation to serve as General Chairman of the BLET's CSXT Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment at the GCA's quadrennial meeting in Gatlinburg, Tenn., on July 19, 2017.

A CSXT locomotive engineer, Brother Kerley has been a proud member of BLET Division 782 (Etowah, Tenn.) since October of 1998. Immediately prior to his election to the General Chairman's office, Brother Kerley served as Senior Vice General Chairman of the CSXT Western Lines GCA. Outgoing General Chairman Matt A. Thornton retired on July 18, 2017.

Also elected were: 1st Vice General Chairman David W. Engle, Division 463 (Corbin, Ky.); Eastern Regional Chairman Jason P. Cornett, Division 829 (Ravenna, Ky.); Western Regional Chairman A. Lee Tate, Division 129 (Nashville, Tenn.); South Regional Chairman Rod D. Crosby, Division 495 (Montgomery, Ala.); and North Regional Chairman John V. Pedro, Division 26 (Richmond, Va.). Elected by acclamation were: Secretary-Treasurer David P. Fitzgerald Jr., Division 781 (Erwin, Tenn.); and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer Kevin J. Townsend, Division 41 (Nashville, Tenn.).

The delegates also elected the follow-



Members and officers of the CSXT Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment attending their quadrennial meeting in Gatlinburg, Tenn., on July 19, 2017.

ing Alternate officers: 2nd Vice General Chairman Steven Kiser, Division 698 (Ashland, Ky.); 3rd Vice General Chairman Justin B. Dzan, Division 365 (Louisville, Ky.); 4th Vice General Chairman Michael S. Edwards, Division 781 (Erwin, Tenn.); and 5th Vice General Chairman Mitchell K. Turner, Division 101 (Hinton, W.Va.).

Representing the National Division at the meeting was National Vice President Gil L. Gore, who is assigned to the CSX General Committees.

"I congratulate and thank Brother Ker-

ley and all officers of the CSXT Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "I have every confidence they will do an excellent job of protecting the rights of BLET members. And on behalf of the entire Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, I am happy to extend best wishes for a long and healthy retirement to outgoing General Chairman Matt Thornton. Thank you, Brother Matt, for your years of dedicated service to our Brotherhood."

Additional special guests at the meeting included retired General Chairman Matt Thornton and Brother Rick Johnson, a retired member of Division 101 who served as Parliamentarian.

Brother Kerley hired out on CSXT in September of 1998, and has worked his entire railroad career on the AP/KD Sub Division between Etowah, Tennessee, and Corbin, Kentucky, primarily as a locomotive engineer. He transferred into engine service in November of 1999 af-

ter working as a conductor for just over one year. Although cut back to train service after completing the Apprentice Engineer program until 2001, he has held continuous membership in BLET Division 782 since October of 1998.

Prior to his election as Local Chairman in December of 2009, Brother Kerley served Division 782 in numerous elected offices over the years, including Alternate Legislative Representative, Vice President, President and Vice Local Chairman. In 2013, he was elected as the Senior Vice General Chairman for the CSXT Western Lines GCA, a position he held until he was elevated to General Chairman. Brother Kerley and his wife Tammy have been married for 30 years and they have one daughter, Hannah.

The CSXT Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment represents approximately 2,500 active members from 26 BLET Divisions who work for CSX, the Indiana Rail Road Company, and the Terminal Railway Alabama State Docks. ©

NEW ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY BLET

The BLET National Division provides all active and retired members with an Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) benefit at no cost to the member. The National Division is pleased to announce that as of June 1, 2017, this benefit is now being provided through Berkley Accident and Health Insurance Company, a top-rated insurer with an AM Best Financial Strength Rating of A+ (Superior). As of July 1, 2017, the \$4,000 AD&D policy previously provided by the BLET, through American Income Life (AIL), will be terminated.

The Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefit remains \$4,000 for every active and retired member. This benefit is now being administered by Cornerstone Benefits Management (Cornerstone). A beneficiary designation card will be mailed to all members in the coming weeks. If members wish to designate beneficiaries prior to the mailing, then they can do so online by completing a beneficiary designation form at <http://www.uniondisability.com/blet-ADD>. Completing and returning your beneficiary designation will not result in any contact

from Cornerstone, unless you request additional information.

In addition to the \$4,000 AD&D benefit, the BLET and Cornerstone are currently working to create a new suite of voluntary insurance products. These additional products are being created by the BLET to give active, dues paying members and their families an affordable way to minimize the financial hardship often resulting from an accident, illness or loss of a loved one.

These additional benefits will be available strictly on a voluntary basis to all active members and there is no obligation to purchase them.

The BLET-provided AD&D coverage is an important benefit for all active and retired members. Unfortunately, some active members and retired members, as well as their family members, may not be fully aware of this coverage. Therefore, BLET members are asked to post this notice at appropriate work locations on their property in order to help us get the word out regarding this benefit.

For more information on the policy or how to submit an AD&D claim, call Cornerstone at (847) 387-3555 or email info@uniondisability.com. ©



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BLET's DC State Legislative Board concludes 4th Quadrennial Meeting

On July 25, 2017, the BLET's District of Columbia State Legislative Board held its 4th Quadrennial Meeting at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Brother Herbert Harris, Jr. was reelected by acclamation to a fourth term as Chairman. Brother Harris is an Amtrak locomotive engineer and member of BLET Division 482 (District of Columbia). He has been a BLET member since 1997 and was first elected Chairman in 2005.

"The DC SLB will continue to advocate for a strong national passenger rail system," Chairman Harris said. "We are also committed to empowering our members to become active citizens on issues that affect safety and their families."

Also elected by acclamation during the convention were: 1st Vice Chairman Bruce K. Evans, Division 14 (Washington, D.C.); 2nd Vice Chairman Carlyle L. Smith, Division 482 (Washington, D.C.); Secretary-Treasurer Christopher S. Dort, Division 14 (Washington, D.C.); and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer William F. Broadus, Division 482 (Washington, D.C.). Elected by acclamation to serve on the Audit Committee were: Chris Edgerton, Division 482 (Washington, D.C.); Ryan Riddell, Division 14 (Washington, D.C.); and Todd Woollam, Division 14 (Washington, D.C.).

National President Dennis R. Pierce addressed the meeting and discussed the many issues facing the Brotherhood and organized labor.



From left: President Pierce, Chairman Herb Harris, and Vice President Tolman.

"I am pleased to offer my congratulations to Brother Herb Harris and all officers of the District of Columbia State Legislative Board," President Pierce said. "I also thank them for making the time to serve the BLET. These Brothers play a key leadership role for the passenger and commuter members in our Brotherhood."

First Vice President E. Lee Pruitt discussed on-going challenges and the usage of inward facing cameras on locomotives. Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman briefed officers on congressional



Members and guests attending the BLET District of Columbia State Legislative Board meeting on July 25, 2017. From left: Chris Edgerton, DCSLB Audit Committee; Timothy Craver, Virginia State Legislative Board Chairman; Chris Dort, DCSLB Secretary-Treasurer; Herbert Harris Jr., DCSLB Chairman; William F. Broadus, DCSLB Asst. Secretary-Treasurer; Carlyle Smith, DC SLB 2nd Vice Chairman; and Peter J. Sullivan, DCSLB Audit Committee.

and legislative issues, and the importance of the upcoming 2018 elections. Vice President Tolman also discussed Amtrak funding and operational issues.

Leif Dormsjo, Director-Department of Transportation, discussed the newly-completed state rail plan and on-going railroad expansion projects in the District of Columbia.

Also in attendance were: Timothy Craver, Virginia State Legislative Board Chair-

man; David Dinges, Maryland State Legislative Board Chairman; and David Dzidzienyo, Legislative and Political Director, Washington Metropolitan Council, AFL-CIO.

The District of Columbia State Legislative Board represents 225 active BLET members in the Mid-Atlantic region. The DC SLB is the only state legislative board comprised entirely of passenger and commuter locomotive engineers. ©

Open Enrollment Period Begins October 15, 2017!

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is proud to announce the open enrollment period for the TEAMStar Medicare Part D Program. This annual open enrollment period will begin on October 15, 2017 and end on December 7, 2017.

Teamster retirees and spouses who are currently enrolled in Medicare Parts A and/or B qualify for TEAMStar Medicare Part D coverage. Enrollment packets will be arriving in the mail soon. If you didn't receive an enrollment packet or need another one, please call us and we will send you one. Don't wait! The open enrollment period is for a limited time.

Enjoy the following TEAMStar Part D Program benefits:

- **Competitive union group rates** – TEAMStar Medicare Part D is not available to the general public. The rates and benefits are set by your union.
- **Union Preferred Pricing** – certain Preferred Generic drugs are available for as low as \$2 at a Union Preferred Pharmacy.
- **Coverage Options** – three unique plans that offer different levels of security to Teamsters.
- **Coverage through the donut hole** – if you select the Platinum Plan you can get coverage for most generics at a low copay after you get to the Coverage Gap.

To get additional information or an enrollment packet, visit our website at www.teamstartard.com or call 1-866-524-4173.

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*LE&CMPA #16 Monthly Premium	\$47.25	\$70.00	\$87.50	\$117.25	\$147.00
SMART - TD (UTU) Monthly Assessment	\$64.80	\$97.20	\$121.50	\$162.00	Not Offered

Apply today - www.brcf.org

BLET concludes Myrtle Beach regional meeting

On August 15, more than 360 members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and their families convened in Myrtle Beach, S.C., for opening ceremonies of the BLET's second regional meeting of 2017.

BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce called the meeting to order. After presentation of flags by members of the Color Guard from the Coast Guard based in Charleston, retired BLET National Vice President Paul L. Wingo delivered the invocation. Brother Wingo is a member of BLET Division 198 (Chattanooga, Tenn.) and he served as National Vice President from 2002 until his retirement in 2006. He has been a BLET member for 48 years.

President Pierce then welcomed all members, families and guests to Myrtle Beach. He introduced members of the BLET Advisory Board who were in attendance, and thanked National Vice President Jim Louis, Special Representative Matt Kronyak and Special Representative Jason Wright for their work in managing and organizing the regional meeting. President Pierce also recognized and thanked the regional meeting arrangements committee members who provided local support: Chris R. Hyde, Vice General Chairman of the CSX-Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment; Cecil E. Dubberly Jr., Local Chairman of Division 59 (Valdosta, Ga.); Kathy and Dino Raptis, a retired member of Division 12 (Fort Wayne, Ind.); and Chris and Steve Tuck, a retired member of Division 17 (Kansas City, Mo.).

President Pierce delivered remarks regarding the anti-union movement that exists in America and encouraged all BLET members to become involved to reverse this trend. He described H.R. 785, the national "right-to-work" law current in Congress, as the latest threat to organized labor.

"I am not exaggerating when I say that H.R. 785 is an attack on the labor movement unlike any seen in this country since Ronald Reagan wiped out the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization in 1981," President Pierce said. "The bottom line is this: the reason that anti-union/anti-worker politicians want unions to go away is because when unions go away, union contracts which provide greater wages, benefits and working conditions go away with them. Many of our



members do not realize that without a union and a union contract, there is no seniority roster or seniority district. Pay rates are decided by the boss, in many cases without regard to anything but personal favoritism and nepotism. There are no work rules that limit what you can be forced to do for a day's pay; insurance is only provided to the extent required by government, and if you complain about any of this, you are terminated without the hearing and arbitration process that your contract currently provides you.

"We need all hands on deck, and we need to educate our membership exactly how stark are the risks we face if we don't mount an historic struggle. But I can't do this job alone... I need your help to spread the word, and the help of every BLET member who is willing to pitch in and do their part."

President Pierce then introduced guest speaker Congressman James E. Clyburn (D-SC), who has represented South Carolina's 6th Congressional District since 1993. Clyburn was previously House Majority Whip, serving in that post from 2007 to 2011. As Assistant Democratic Leader, Clyburn is the third-ranking Democrat in the House behind House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer.

Rep. Clyburn stressed the need for unity among all citizens of the United States, and discussed the right-to-work legislation currently pending in Congress.

"What I see going on against unions today is similar to the lawsuits I saw against the NAACP in the 1950s and 60s," Rep. Clyburn said. "These are lawsuits and rules designed to break the backs of unions. I've experienced this and can understand what is going on."

President Pierce then introduced Teamsters International Vice President Sean O'Brien, a fourth-generation Teamsters and member of Local 25 in Boston. He was recently appointed by Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa to serve as Director of the Teamsters Package Division, which represents more than 250,000 Teamsters at UPS and UPS Freight.

"We are fighting every day to protect our pensions, our health care, and for respect in the workplace," Brother O'Brien said. "You can't put a price tag on respect. Failure is not an option. We've got to get up and fight every day. If we don't fight today, then we will lose tomorrow."

Brother O'Brien also emphasized the importance of training the next generation of union members.

"We have to cultivate and educate the younger generation," he said. "Our goal, for everyone in this room, is to leave things better than we found them."

The next guest speaker was Sereena Hogan, National President of the BLET Auxiliary. Sister Hogan described the relationship between the BLET and the BLET Auxiliary, and how they often work hand-in-hand to fight for issues of importance to BLET members and their families.

The fourth guest speaker was BLET General Chairman Gary D. Best, General Chairman of the CSX-Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment. He said the BLET is one of the most well respected unions in the United States.

"The BLET has people fighting to hold the line all over this country," Brother Best said. "So the next time someone asks what the BLET is doing for them, you tell them the BLET has their feet planted on the ground, holding the line, and we ain't going nowhere."

National Vice President Gil Gore, the next guest speaker, spoke about the benefits of belonging to a union and the BLET in particular, which includes: higher wages, health and welfare benefits, pension, seniority, due process, a voice in Washington, D.C., Railroad Retirement, and the Federal Employers' Liability Act (FELA). Like Brother O'Brien, Vice President Gore discussed the importance of mentoring young members to become leaders and encouraged all BLET members to conduct themselves with dignity and honor. He received more than one standing ovation for his moving and emotional speech.

Walt Barrows, Labor Member of the Railroad Retirement Board, was the final speaker on the morning agenda. Barrows discussed the health of the Railroad Retirement system. He encouraged members and their unions to maintain constant vigilance to protect the Railroad Retirement system.

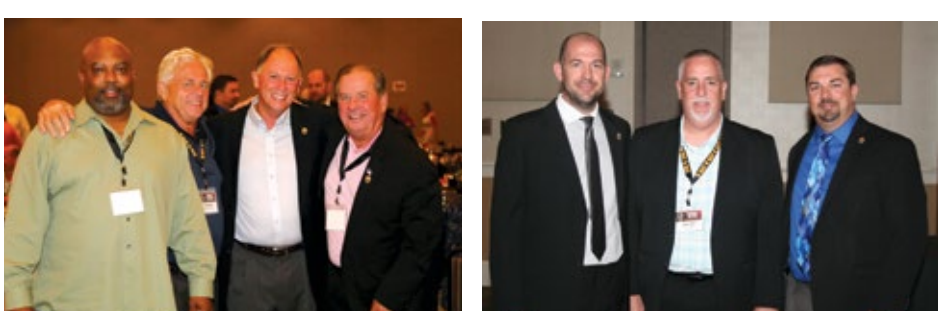
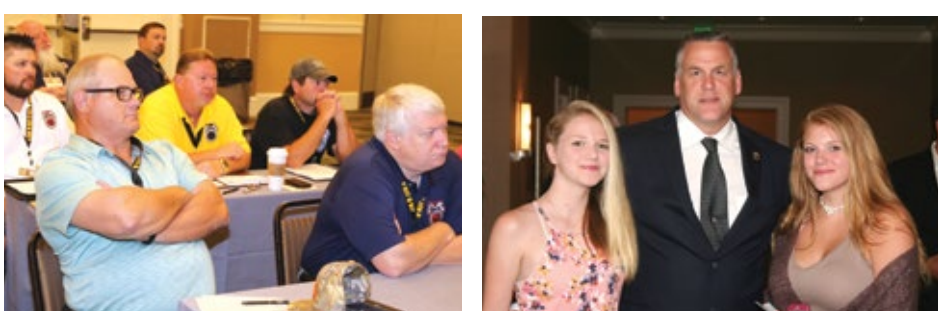
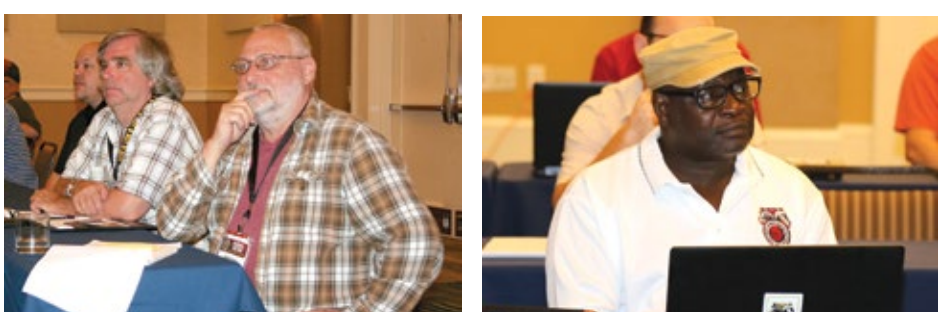
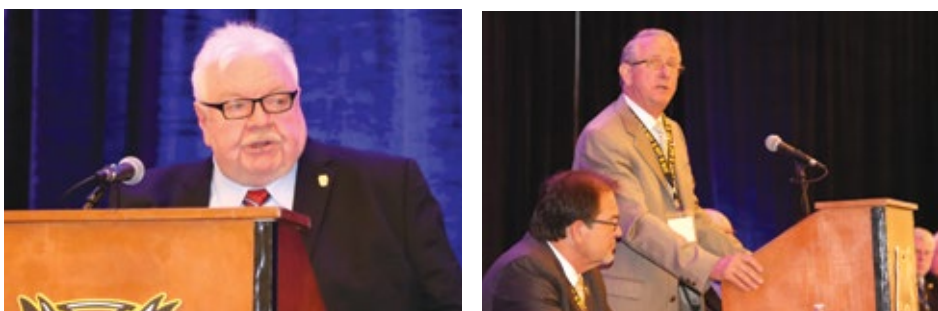
"We have a pension plan that is solvent and well worth fighting for," Barrows said. "Politicians need to keep their hands off it."

The opening ceremony also included a memorial, during which the names of all BLET members killed in the line of duty since 1989 were shown in a solemn video presentation.

The August 15 afternoon session included a closed meeting for BLET members and an open meeting hosted by the BLET Auxiliary. Members took advantage of educational opportunities throughout the remainder of the week, completing specialized training classes for BLET Legislative Representatives, Secretary-Treasurers and Local Chairmen.

Next year, the BLET will host regional meetings in Monterey, California (June 18-22, 2018) and Washington, D.C. (August 13-17, 2018). More specific information is coming soon. @@





SAVE THE DATES! MONTEREY & WASHINGTON D.C. WILL HOST BLET FOR 2018 REGIONAL MEETINGS

JUNE 18-22
Monterey, California

AUGUST 13-17
Washington, D.C.

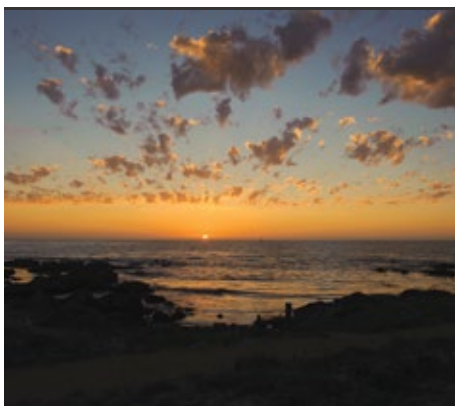


Photo: courtesy of seemonterey.com

Photo: courtesy of washington.org

The BLET National Division is hosting two regional meetings 2018, and they are as follows: June 18-22 in Monterey, California; and August 13-17 in Washington, D.C.

The Monterey regional meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency and the Washington, D.C. regional will be held at the Capital Hilton.

As with the 2017 regional meetings, the 2018 meetings will be arranged on a Monday through Friday schedule. Travel to the meeting, registration and a welcome reception for each of the two meetings will be on Monday (June 18 for Monterey and August 13 for Washington, D.C.). Meetings, training classes and other events will be scheduled throughout the remainder

of the week and will include a closing banquet on Thursday night. Travel home is on Friday for each meeting (June 22 for Monterey and August 17 for Washington, D.C.).

Per the BLET Bylaws, regional meetings are held "for the purposes of membership training, education and discussion of matters of importance to the membership." Additionally, the meetings are structured to include options for fellowship with other members and their families, entertainment, fun and relaxation.

More specific details will be announced at a later date. Registration information will be available online at the BLET National Division's regional meeting website (www.bletregionals.org). All members are encouraged to attend one or both of these regional meetings in 2018! ©©

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT

for BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN DISABILITY AND WELFARE BENEFIT TRUST FUND

This is a summary of the annual report for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Disability and Welfare Benefit Trust Fund, 30-0262584/501, for 01/01/2016 through 12/31/2016. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The plan has contracts with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to pay certain claims incurred under the terms of the plan. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending 12/31/2016 were \$6,119,458.

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$11,197,192 as of 12/31/2016 compared to \$10,371,597 as of 01/01/2016. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of \$825,595. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference 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 year. The plan had total income of \$7,368,045, including employer contributions of \$6,243,400, employee contributions of \$700,938, gains of \$40,800 from the sale of assets, and earnings from investments of \$382,907. Plan expenses were \$6,542,450. These expenses included \$422,992 in administrative expenses and \$6,119,458 to insurance carriers for the provision of benefits.

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 below are included in that report:

1. An accountant's report;
2. Financial information and information on payments to service providers;
3. Assets held for investment; and
4. 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 the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, who is Plan Administrator, at 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, OH 44131, (216) 241-2630. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$4.50 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 assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, if any, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, if any, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report 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 report 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 7061 East Pleasant Valley Road, Independence, OH 44131 and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington DC, or 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 Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20210.



**Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen News
Brotherhood Of Locomotive Engineers And Trainmen**

7061 East Pleasant Valley Road
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8/17

Photo of the Month: August 2017

NICKEL PLATE HERITAGE: Norfolk Southern's Nickel Plate heritage unit passes under a Pennsylvania Railroad signal bridge on June 20, 2017. Photo: taken by Brother Erik S. Reinert, a member of BLET Division 74 in Harrisburg, Pa.



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 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: 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.

Advisory Board July 2017 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, Independence, Ohio; 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; Coordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, Washington, D.C.; D.C. State Legislative Board mtg., Washington, D.C.; Legislative Representative class, Washington, D.C.; Vacation.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT E.L. (LEE) PRUITT: National Duties include but not limited to: Shortline Organizing Dept.; Trainmen's Dept.; National Publications Committee; National Legislative Board; Teamsters Rail Conference Policy Committee; PRAC; and National Negotiations; National duties, Independence, Ohio; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Coordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, St. Louis, Mo., and Cleveland, Ohio; BLET Regional Meeting, San Antonio, Texas; BNSF Town Hall mtg., Ontario, Calif.

NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER STEPHEN J. BRUNO: General supervision of Accounting Dept., Record Dept., Online Services Dept., Tax Compliance Dept.; Safety Task Force; PAC and FEC reports and filings; Implementation and training for BLET membership database/Union Track; Pension, STD, 457 plan Trustee; Division, General Committee and SLB monthly Trustee reports; Mtgs. with vendors and financial institutions; Coordinated Bargaining Group national negotiations/mediation sessions, Washington, D.C.; Independence Day; BLET nominations and elections, etc.

VICE PRESIDENT & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. TOLMAN: Assigned to BLET Washington, DC office; General office duties, telephone and correspondence communications; 2017 OneRail mtg., Washington, D.C.; BLET Legislative Representative training class, Washington, D.C.; BLET Legislative Representative Lobby Training Day, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.; Multiple receptions and office visits with members of Congress and the leadership of both the GOP and Democratic parties, Washington, D.C.

VICE PRESIDENT MARCUS J. RUEF: Vice Chairman, National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB); National Mediation Board (NMB) Arb. Adv. Forum; Department Head, BLET Arbitration Department; Assigned to Illinois Central, Wisconsin Central, Indiana Harbor Belt, Belt Railway of Chicago, Metra, GRR and Illinois RR; Vacation; Prepare memo to NRAB labor members; Assist GC Craddock, prep for mediation/arbitration, IC, Chicago; Assist GC Burns w/ claims conference and discipline submissions, IHB, Hammond, Ind.; Beta test case filing docket management system (CFDMS), NRAB, Chicago; Assist VGC Lough with rules submissions, Metra, Chicago; ROAR and electronic filing platform committee, NRAB, Chicago; Study dockets for 8-8-17, Referee Benn, NRAB, Chicago; Assist GC Graves w/ discipline appeal, BRC, Chicago; Assist GC Reynolds w/ Section 6 survey results and Section 6 notice, WC, Chicago; Review CFDMS help sheet and video, NRAB, Chicago.

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), Central Region, Southern Region; Tacoma Belt RR, Utah RR, Longview

Portland & Northern NO & Longview Switch, Portland Terminal; On duty at home office; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; UP-Western Region Article IX negotiations, Las Vegas; Commemoration of Great Railroad Strike of 1877 events at Baltimore, Md.; National Democratic Club fundraiser, Washington, D.C.

VICE PRESIDENT GIL GORE: Assigned to all CSX; Grand Trunk Western; Union Pacific-Southern Region GCA special assignment; Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) issues, CSXT; General office duties, paperwork, correspondence, emails, telephone calls, etc.; WGCA mtg., Las Vegas; Advisory Board mtg., Las Vegas; Harrison letter w/ CSX GCs; CSX-NL GCA mtg., Pittsburgh, Pa.; Trip rate dispute conference call; UP-SR GCA retirement dinner for GC Warren Dent; CSX medical quarterly update, New Orleans; GTW negotiations, Atlanta.

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, Great Western; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; Contract negotiations with MRL, assisting GC LaPrath, Missoula, Mont.; National Democratic Club fundraiser, Washington, D.C.

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, Delaware & Hudson), Cedar River, Louisville & Indiana, Huron & Eastern; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications, etc.; DM&E issues, assist GC Semenek; Huron & Eastern issues, assist GC Ladrig; Illinois Midland issues, assist GC Craddock; Tex-Mex issues, assist GC Hiese; KCS issues, assist GC Spradlin; Illinois Midland and MidSouth issues, assist GC Craddock, Springfield, Ill.; CP issues, assist GC Semenek, Calgary, Ontario; Soo contract issues, assist GC Semenek; National Democratic Club fundraiser, Washington, D.C.; Springfield Terminal and D&H issues, assist GC Moore; Louisville & Indiana issues, assist GC Hogan.

VICE PRESIDENT R.C. (RICK) GIBBONS: Assigned to: All Norfolk Southern General Committees; Wheeling & Lake Erie; Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern; New York, Susquehanna & Western; New England Central; Connecticut Southern; Western New York & Pennsylvania; Indiana & Ohio; RSAC/RSIA Fatigue Management Group; General office duties, telephone, email, correspondence communications; Vice President duties; On duty at home office; National Democratic Club fundraiser, Washington, D.C.; Connecticut Southern negotiations, assist GC Martin, Clifton Park, N.Y.

VICE PRESIDENT JAMES P. LOUIS: Assigned Amtrak; Long Island Rail Road; New York & Atlantic; Metro North; New Jersey Transit; PATH; SEPTA; Metra; Union Railroad; National Division Department Head, Education & Training Dept.; National Division Department Head, Internal Organizing, Mobilizing & Strategic Planning Dept.; Union Track mtgs. and training; Education & Training issues; BLET Regional Meeting planning; Independence Day holiday; WNY&P contract issues; LIRR contract issues, assist GC Sexton; WNY&P company mtg., Olean, N.Y.; SEPTA contract issues, assist GC Dixon; Vacation; BLET Legislative Representative Training Class, Washington, D.C.; Regional meeting prep., Independence, Ohio.

Teamsters offer disaster relief assistance in Texas

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is offering Disaster Relief assistance to members living in Texas after Hurricane Harvey damaged homes and property from August 25-27, 2017.

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 submit the forms. For questions, contact the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund office at (202) 624-8971.

Members living in the following Texas counties are eligible to apply: Aransas, Bee, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Goliad, Harris, Jackson, Kleberg, Liberty, Matagorda, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio, Victoria and Wharton.

Download the DR-4332 Request for

Help form from the BLET website: www.ble-t.org/disaster.

Be sure to include all requested documentation. The deadline to apply is November 15, 2017.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD

To help increase awareness of this valuable benefit, members who live and work in the affected areas are asked to print and post these Disaster Relief Notices at their places of work. Previous notices are archived on the BLET 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 Disaster Relief Fund office at the telephone number provided above. @



Photo: courtesy of Texas Military Flickr

**WWW.TEAMSTER.ORG/
BENEFITS/DISASTER-RELIEF**