

Journal

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN



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Steam Days

Retired Division 182 member Bill Mullins gives a first-hand account of what it was like to work on a steam locomotive

King Coal

WHY COAL IS SO VITAL TO OREGON'S ECONOMY

Oil Train Disaster

QUEBEC DERAILMENT INFLUENCES U.S. REGULATIONS

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Celebrating our Heritage

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BLET President's Message

BY DENNIS R. PIERCE, BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Welfare reform

TIME FOR CHANGE AS CORPORATE GREED RUNS WILD AT WALMART

Having grown up in a small rural town in Nebraska where Walmart wiped out all of the mom and pop stores around the town square, I know firsthand how hard it is to avoid this monster company. Not only were countless small businesses crushed when Walmart came to town, countless employees of those small businesses were put out on the street at the same time. This didn't just occur in the small town I grew up in; it has occurred time and time again all across this country.

To add insult to injury, and even though Walmart is spending millions on a public relations campaign showing happy employees, Walmart is at the bottom of the food chain when it comes to the wages they pay and the benefits that they provide to their employees. In many communities, these are the same employees who lost their jobs at the mom and pop small businesses that Walmart crushed, and whose only chance at employment is now to take the pittance that Walmart offers.

I haven't set foot inside of a Walmart store in years, yet the mega-chain still manages to mistreat its employees, and at the same time, take money out of my wallet. How is this possible? It's called Corporate Welfare.



There are many ways in which taxpayers who do not shop at Walmart subsidize the store's corporate profits. One such way is Walmart's refusal to pay for its employees' health care. For example, if an "associate" needs to work 40 hours per week to qualify for Walmart's health care plan, then Walmart managers schedule workers to consistently work 39 hours or less per week. Those who don't qualify are forced to rely on government assistance for their health care benefits because their wages are too low for them to afford private insurance. So Walmart pockets the money that could be going to its employees while taxpayers — like you and me — foot the bill for their employees'

health care. In other words, we taxpayers are subsidizing Walmart's huge corporate profits, whether or not we shop at Walmart.

Recently, the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce studied Walmart's business practices. It revealed a study by the state of Wisconsin's Medicaid program, which estimated that a single 300-person Walmart Supercenter store would cost Wisconsin taxpayers at least \$904,542 per year, and possibly up to \$1,744,590 per year, or about \$5,815 per Walmart employee.

One of the more galling aspects of this out of control corporate greed is the fact that the Walton family is already so incredibly wealthy.

Walmart heirs are four of the 10 richest people in America. Their names and net worth are as follows: Christy Walton, \$35.4 billion; Jim Walton, \$33.8 billion; Alice Walton, \$33.5 billion; and S. Robson Walton, \$33.3 billion. None of the Waltons are entrepreneurs, and their fortunes are based on an inheritance from one of the chain's founders.

This corporate greed goes beyond just the company's owners. In the normal world of corporate America, the pay of an average Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is 300 times greater than the average employee, which is a crime against working class Americans in and of itself. At Walmart, the CEO's pay is 1,034 times greater, and Walmart's net income rose to \$17 billion last year. This is not a case of a company that cannot afford to treat its employees to a true living wage with decent benefits.

Walmart's wages are so low it's astonishing. In November, employees at a Walmart in Canton, Ohio, actually set up food collection bins in the employee break room to help "associates in need" prepare their Thanksgiving dinners. This perfectly illustrates the need for Walmart to pay its employees higher wages.

It is also noteworthy that Walmart is currently involved

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Journal

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS: BLET announces 2014 regional meetings

The BLET National Division has announced the dates and locations for the four regional meetings next year.

These meetings are beneficial to all BLET members in several ways, offering the opportunity for education and training, networking with fellow railroaders, time for family, and a chance for personal interaction with BLET National Division officers.

The dates and locations of the four regional meetings are as follows:



Cleveland Rocks: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is a major tourist attraction for Cleveland, which is the host city for the 2014 EUMA. **Photo:** Positively Cleveland

JUNE 15-19, 2014

87th Annual SMA

Savannah, Ga.

Arrangements Chairman D.C. Dickey, Local Chairman of Division 646, will host the 2014 SMA at the Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa in Savannah, Ga.



Photos: Savannah CVB

JUNE 29-JULY 3, 2014

74th Annual IWC

Minneapolis, Minn.

Arrangements Chairman David K. Brown, Chairman of the Minnesota State Legislative Board and Legislative Representative of BLET Division 517, will host the 2014 IWC at the Hilton Minneapolis.



Photos: Meet Minneapolis

AUGUST 4-8, 2014

76th Annual EUMA

Cleveland, Ohio

Arrangements Chairman Patrick Redmond, Local Chairman of Division 607, and Co-Chair James R. Blum, Legislative Representative of Division 526, will host the 2014 EUMA at the newly-renovated Westin Downtown Cleveland, which is within walking distance of BLET National Division headquarters.



Photos: Positively Cleveland

SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2014

79th Annual SWCM

St. Louis, Mo.

Arrangements Chairman Dave W. Grimes, Local Chairman of Division 42, will host the 2014 SWCM at the Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark Hotel. For more information, visit the SWCM website: bletswcm.org.



Photos: St. Louis CVB

DIVISION 746 HOSTS SUMMER PICNIC FOR FAMILIES, RETIREES

BLET Division 746 (Mandan, N.D.) organized and hosted a picnic for all active members, their families and retirees earlier this summer.

According to Myron Richter, President of Division 746, the active membership committed to hosting a picnic at their monthly meeting in December of 2012. At that time, Brother Bill Lipp, Division 746 vice president, volunteered to head up a picnic committee and organize it. At their monthly meeting in March, the members voted on a date and location for the picnic.

Richter credited Brother Bill Lipp along with Brothers Ryan Stevahn, Todd Davis and Jerry Kessel for working tirelessly on organizing the picnic. "They did all the work of getting the picnic off the ground while working as

long pool engineers for BNSF out of Mandan, N.D. The picnic was a huge success and could not have been done without the work these four put into it," Richter said.

The picnic was scheduled for two days to give as many members as possible a chance to attend. The turnout for the two days was very good, Richter said. "July 18 was very hot so things started out slow. In the evening when it cooled down families showed up faster than the food could come off the grills," he said. "July 19 had steady attendance. Retirees came and worked the grills for the picnic and socialized with the people they used to work with. Everyone had a great time."

Brother Richter noted that plans are in the works to host another picnic and make it even better next year. 📷



Active and retired members of BLET Division 746 preparing to fire up the grill.



Getting ready to play horseshoes.

BROTHERHOOD BOOKSHELF

BLET member co-authors Christmas book

VIRGINIA'S LEGENDARY SANTA TRAINS

By Donna Strother Deekens and Doug Riddell
Published by The History Press
ISBN: 978-1-62619-140-2

Just in time for the holidays, BLET members and their families are sure to have an interest in the new book *Virginia's Legendary Santa Trains*, co-authored by BLET

member A. Doug Riddell.

A member of BLET Division 14 (Washington, D.C.) and a retired Amtrak locomotive engineer, Brother Riddell's second book follows *From the Cab: Stories from a Locomotive Engineer*, which was published in 1999. Brother Riddell is also an accomplished photographer and magazine columnist.

Along with co-author Donna Strother Deekens, Brother

Riddell highlights the history of Virginia's Santa Trains. The story may be little known to those outside the Commonwealth, but in the 1950s, department stores around Virginia teamed up with rail lines to create a unique Christmas adventure for children — the Santa Train. Children from across the Commonwealth flocked to see and ride the trains, which were sponsored by such stores as Miller & Rhoads, Cox's Department Store, J.C. Penney, and others. These trains traveled the rails across Virginia with Santa Claus himself. Brother Riddell and Deekens recount the heartwarming memories of Christmases past and chronicle the history of these unique trains.

The book became available in October of 2013. Its 192 pages are filled with many black and white photographs. Brother Riddell reports that sales of the book so far have been better than expected, and that the publisher has begun a second printing. 📷



Santa takes a break from his busy holiday schedule to enjoy a meal in the Norfolk & Western dining car in December of 1950. Photo: Norfolk Southern Corp.



The Miller & Rhoads Santa Claus greets passengers in 1969. Photo: Ed Heath Private Collection



Division 14 member & co-author Doug Riddell. Photo: courtesy of the author

BLET member coauthors pictorial history book on famed Clinchfield locomotive



The No. 1 in Florida during her 2,231-mile round trip from Erwin, Tenn., to Tampa, Fla., in 1978. **Photo:** Fred Clark Jr.



Authors Mark Stevens and Alf Peoples. **Photo:** Brandon Hicks



A 7-year-old Alf Peoples in the cab of The No. 1 in 1958. **Photo:** Ruth Peoples Collection



The No. 1 at the Bristol, Virginia, Station in 1978. **Photo:** P.O. Likens Collection

THE ONE & ONLY

By A.J. "Alf" Peoples
and Mark A. Stevens
Published by STAR Publishing
& MASproduction
ISBN: 978-0-578-13016-3

She was called "Old No. 1." Still others dubbed her the "One Spot," while some simply referred to her as the "No. 1." Then there were those who called her "Rosebud."

But she has been, for much of her long and storied life, officially the "Clinchfield No. 1," and for those who heard her whistle blow through the Appalachian mountains and saw the plums of steam rise above her, she was something special.

She was the real-life little engine that could, and for the first time ever, a new pictorial history book is dedicated to the Clinchfield No. 1 and her celebrated life on the rails. BLET Member A.J. "Alf" Peoples of BLET Division 781 (Erwin, Tenn.) is the proud co-author of the 148-page hardcover book.

Brother Peoples joined the BLET on December 1, 1980, and is a past Secretary-Treasurer and President of Division 781. He and co-author Mark A. Stevens, a newspaper publisher, hatched a plan to publish the book in 2010 and have spent the last several years collecting photographs and researching material.

The book features hundreds of color and black and white photographs of the No. 1's career on the rails, many from personal collections that have never been published before. Included is a photo of 7-year-old Alf Peoples in the cab of the Old No. 1 in 1958.

The No. 1's history dates back to 1882. For many years, she served railroads as a workhorse. Her original number was the 423 for the Chicago & Indiana Central Railway. After her service seemed over in 1955, the town of Erwin, Tenn., bought her from the Clinchfield with






Crossing Copper Creek Viaduct in Virginia on an excursion in 1973.

Photo: Ron Flanary Collection

plans to set her up for display, but that project fell through. After rusting and rotting away in the rail yard, the No. 1 was saved when Clinchfield Railroad General Manager T.D. Moore Jr. decided to restore her and have her guide special excursion trains.

It was an audacious plan pulled together by nearly three dozen railroad workers who, for two months in 1968, completely rebuilt the locomotive. After her days of celebrated excursion leader ended in 1979, she was retired to the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore, where she is a shining star in an extensive collection billed as the world's best.

"I do seem to have a close connection to the No. 1," Peoples said. "I have photos of me as a toddler aboard the Black Mountain No. 1 and then again as a boy when it was converted to the Clinchfield No. 1. I would never have thought growing up that I'd be the co-author of a book about her, though. I guess you never know where the rails will lead."

Copies of "The One & Only" are available for \$29.95 plus tax. To purchase a copy, send a check to the Elizabethton Star, P.O. Box 1960, Elizabethton, TN 37643. Add \$2.92 for tax and \$5 for postage for a total of \$37.87. If you'd like your book signed by the authors, please indicate so in the correspondence. You may also pay by credit card by calling (423) 542-4151. 


BLET Lobby Day on Capitol Hill

Legislative Representatives complete training, then lobby members of Congress

From September 22-27, the BLET Education & Training Department, in conjunction with the National Legislative Office and the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen (NASLBC), conducted a workshop for BLET Division Legislative Representatives at Teamsters headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The classroom portion of the course covered: computer skills (principles of letter writing and database management); regulatory affairs (reporting and documenting important issues); political affairs (the anatomy of elections, how a bill becomes law, communications skills, and

writing to politicians); and individual State Legislative Board bylaws.

After completion of the classroom training, attendees participated in a full day on Capitol Hill on September 26. The BLET lobbyists visited with legislators and staff from the U.S. House of Representatives to educate them on issues of importance to locomotive engineers, trainmen, and their families. Among the items discussed were: Amtrak; high-speed rail funding; the Railroad Safety Improvement Act; and the negative impact of sequestration on Railroad Retirement Sickness and Unemployment benefits. 



From left: Tyler G. Jones, Legislative Rep. of Division 740 (Pratt, Kan.); George W. Johnson, Legislative Rep. of Division 207 (Casper, Wyo.); and Vince Verna, BLET Director of Regulatory Affairs.



From left: Tom Hebert; Jason Stutz; Cong. Richard Neal (D-MA); BLET Vice President & National Legislative Rep. John P. Tolman; Christopher Roy; and Jason Wright.



Clockwise from lower left: Jason Wright, Coordinator of BLET Education & Training Dept.; Tom Hebert, Massachusetts State Legislative Board Chairman; Christopher A. Roy, Legislative Rep. of Division 57 (Boston); Cong. Bill Keating (D-MA), Jason C. Stutz, Legislative Rep. of Division 421 (Buffalo).



BLET *First Vice President's Message*

BY E. LEE PRUITT, BLET FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Making safety our top priority

MAJOR RAIL ACCIDENTS PUT THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY IN OUR INDUSTRY

In the United States and Canada, railroad safety has been a major topic of conversation in the media this year. Normally it's not something that you see on CNN or read about in your local newspaper. Unfortunately, it took several major accidents to turn the nation's interest to this most important topic.

On July 6, an oil train derailed in the town of Lac-Megantic, Quebec, near Montreal. The subsequent fire literally obliterated the center of that small town, and it turned the spotlight onto the issue of safely transporting crude oil by rail. Due to the rapid expansion of hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," drilling companies are producing more oil than they can ship through existing oil pipelines. The result has been a boon to the rail industry, with carriers adding trains to haul millions of gallons of the flammable liquid. Such was the type of train that derailed in Lac-Megantic. The derailment and explosion caused the Canadian government to implement new regulations to improve the safety of such operations, with the Federal Railroad Administration following suit to a lesser extent here in the United States. It prompted the BLET to lobby Congress to introduce legislation that would mandate two-person crews throughout the United States.



First Vice President Pruitt with retired Vice President Willard Knight

Other oil train derailments and fires occurred throughout 2013, all of them serious but not to the extent of the Lac-Megantic tragedy, which claimed the lives of 47 people.

On December 1, another major derailment happened near New York City. A Metro-North commuter train derailed and claimed the lives of four passengers. The media firestorm that ensued made certain that citizens from coast to coast knew about the plight of locomotive engineers and our struggles with fatigue, incorrect line ups, and ad-

equated rest periods. The spotlight inevitably turned to Positive Train Control and whether or not the technology could have prevented this derailment.

It's shameful that tragedies of this magnitude have to happen before safety improvements can be made. But that has been the history of our industry. In the early years of railroading, countless lives were lost due to inadequate braking technology. The introduction of the Westinghouse Air Brake improved safety dramatically, but it took a Congressional mandate to force the

industry to upgrade its braking systems. The industry fought it because it was "too costly."

We find ourselves in a similar situation today regarding the implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC). Thanks to the Rail Safety Improvement Act, the deadline to install PTC is the year 2015. The RSIA was passed in 2008, and the industry has had five years to get ready for the 2015 deadline. Unfortunately, it appears they have been dragging their feet and looking for excuses to delay the deadline. They are using the same tired old argument from 120 years ago — "too costly." They also say they can't obtain the necessary permits from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to install wireless transmitters quickly enough to meet the deadline. I could go on, but you get the picture.

Investigations into the accidents I mentioned here are still evolving, and preliminary determinations have been made regarding PTC and how it could have prevented most of the tragedies. These tragedies have now placed the spotlight on railroad safety and Positive Train Control. Let's hope this spotlight gives the industry nowhere to hide and finally puts an end to their efforts to delay the deadline for implementation. ☐

"It's shameful that tragedies of this magnitude have to happen before safety improvements can be made. But that has been the history of our industry."



BLET National Secretary-Treasurer's Message

BY WILLIAM C. WALPERT, BLET NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

A banner year for Education & Training

The year 2013 was a banner year for the BLET Education and Training Department, and we are hoping to grow and expand in the years to come.

When many members think about Education and Training, they immediately think of the formalized training workshops we host throughout the year. But this year we stepped up our game. I am proud to write that the BLET Education and Training has been involved in many other projects that reached all active and retired BLET members this year.

Throughout 2013, we hosted at least nine week-long training workshops. These were for Secretary-Treasurers, Local Chairmen, Legislative Representatives and General Chairmen. The workshops were all of the expanded variety — at least one full day longer than the 2012 classes — due to membership requests for more in depth training. We also hosted workshops at all four regional meetings throughout the summer and at various meetings of General Committees of Adjustment and State Legislative Boards. These workshops are a key element in maintaining the integrity of today's Brotherhood while at the same time securing our future by preparing the next generation of union leaders.

Outside of our classroom training, we provided a tremendous amount of informal

“Whether it is assistance by telephone or by email, or one-on-one training sessions at National Division headquarters in Cleveland, we went above and beyond the call of duty to help everyone who asked.”

training and assistance to BLET officers and members all year long. Whether it is assistance by telephone or by email, or one-on-one training sessions at National Division headquarters in Cleveland, we went above and beyond the call of duty to help everyone who asked.

Through these methods, we successfully trained hundreds of members throughout the year. Even though just a few hundred members have gone through the classroom training — the way I see it — we've actually helped thousands of members. The union officers who complete our training are able to go back to their Divisions (or General Committee or Legislative Board) and provide their members with better representation, improved contract enforcement, and more timely and accurate dues reporting.

But in 2013, we've taken a good thing and made it even better. This year, we've gone beyond the classroom training and have played a key role in the production of printed materials that have touched the lives of all active and re-

tired members throughout the Brotherhood.

We also worked collaboratively with the North American Railway Foundation (NARF) to provide all active members with their own personal copies of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) relating to rail operations. This summer, active members were sent two booklets in the mail, one that outlined CFR Title 49 Part 229, and one that outlined both CFR Title 49 Part 240 and Part 242. This is just another example of how Educa-

tion and Training works for all BLET members, not just those who attend our classroom workshops.

As part of our commemoration of our 150th anniversary earlier this year, all active and retired members

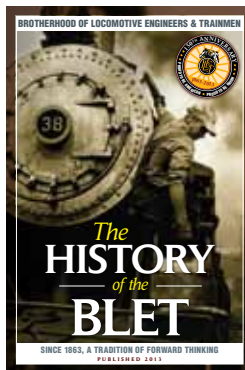
were mailed a copy of *The History of the BLET*. A tremendous amount of research, writing, rewriting, and editing went into the production of that book. I'm proud to say that the BLET history book was prepared and made available in part by the BLET Education and Training Department.

We achieved such a high level of success in 2013 thanks

to many collaborative efforts. In terms of classroom training, I wanted to recognize the efforts of Ken Kroeger, the now retired Coordinator of the Education and Training Department, as well as those of Jason Wright, our new coordinator.

I also would be remiss if I did not thank the members of my staff, Dr. Elaine Reese, Louise Reich and Walt Schmidt. We also worked with many other departments, including the President's Staff and the BLET Public Relations Department to produce several publications. This intricate interdepartmental collaboration would not have been possible without the leadership and foresight of National President Dennis R. Pierce. Along with the members of his Staff, President Pierce displayed the kind of aggressive leadership that helped make the year 2013 the great success that it was for the BLET Education and Training Department — and for all BLET members who are better informed, better educated, and have a stronger Brotherhood to protect their rights and their interests.

We have no intention, however, of resting on our laurels. In 2014 we are planning even more classes, offering fresh and updated curricula. We are looking to reach out to even more officers and members with a computer based training program in the near future. I have said many times that I think we have the best education and training program in all of rail labor—and it is even going to get better. ☐





Guest Columnists

BY JAMES P. HOFFA, TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT
& JOHN MURPHY, DIRECTOR, TEAMSTERS RAIL CONFERENCE

Seeking fairness for all union workers

In the last 30 years, America has gone from the world's biggest creditor nation to the one holding the world's largest debt. Unfair trade agreements have gutted American manufacturing and other industries. Millions of jobs have left our shores or disappeared. And the gap between the rich and poor has widened as our middle class has been stuck footing the bill for corporate welfare, bank bailouts and other bad policies that protect big business and punish working families.

Multi-national corporations have never been bigger and more influential in Washington than they are today. Companies like Wal-Mart and McDonald's are growing, but so are concerns about fair wages and working conditions. Big Teamster employers



like UPS, ABInBev and many others also have a global reach and as they become more international, labor must keep pace by coordinating with unions on a worldwide scale. What we need is a beefed-up global labor presence where unions work together on behalf of workers.

Agreements like the one I signed in September on behalf of the Change to Win coalition with an 8 million-member

labor federation in Brazil, called UGT, are the future of the union movement. As part of our alliance, we agreed to join together to increase workers' rights and to conduct exchanges to learn from one another's practices. We also agreed to support each other's campaigns and to link up, where appropriate, to fight for workers.

We all want our workers to be able to continue working in

safe conditions while receiving an honest wage. We also realize that trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership could lead to union jobs leaving our borders to places where children toil in sweatshops. No workers benefit from that arrangement.

Governments increasingly don't have workers' backs. But you know who does? Other union workers! It doesn't matter whether we are from the U.S. or another nation.

This is about fairness and that is something union men and women know something about.

Fraternally,

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL
PRESIDENT

Fighting for Amtrak, high-speed rail funding

In October, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) was up for reauthorization. The Rail Conference is working on many fronts to ensure our members' interests are protected. PRIIA reauthorizes and funds Amtrak.

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees went very different ways on Amtrak funding. The House approved

\$950 million for Amtrak. Amtrak President Joseph Boardman said this funding level "puts every one of our services at risk."

The Senate approved \$1.452 billion for Amtrak, an increase from this year and last year's levels. Boardman called this "a realistic and workable number."

We need to support our allies and put pressure our ad-

versaries on Capitol Hill.

Will you take a minute to tell Congress that you want full funding for Amtrak and high-speed rail? Please go to the Teamster website to send a message to your members of Congress: www.teamster.org/content/rail and click on "Ask Congress To Fund High Speed Rail And Amtrak. Or call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for

your member of Congress to urge them to support full Amtrak and high-speed rail funding.

Again, you can help by reaching out to your elected members by web link above.

JOHN F. MURPHY
DIRECTOR, TEAMSTERS
RAIL CONFERENCE
AND INTERNATIONAL
VICE PRESIDENT

About the Authors:

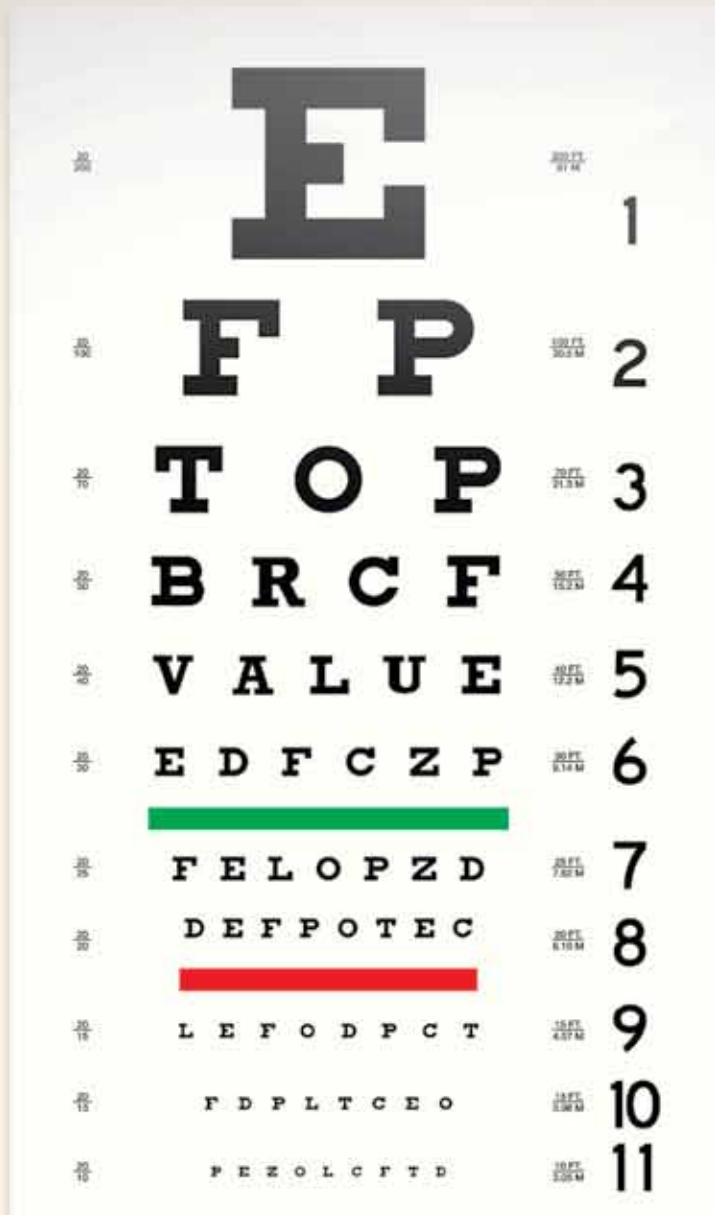


James P. Hoffa grew up on picket lines and in union meetings. He is the only son of James R. Hoffa, former General President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. On his 18th birthday, Hoffa received his own union card and was sworn in by his father.



John Murphy has been an Eastern Region Vice President since 1998. He spearheaded merger negotiations with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and now serves as Director of the Rail Conference.

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Guest Columnist

BY JIM DAYTON, BLET GENERAL CHAIRMAN
UNION PACIFIC-WESTERN REGION GCA

Coal exports benefit economy & environment



About the Author:

J.L. Dayton is a Union Pacific Locomotive Engineer and General Chairman for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen who has lived in the Portland area since 1977. He is a member of the environmental groups World Wildlife Fund, Environment Oregon and National Wildlife Federation. He has been a member of BLET Division 236 in Portland, Ore., since September 1, 1977.

"I am certain that the railroad employees who operate the trains that bring products to port would not see this as a victory for Oregon."

Earlier in May some environmentalists celebrated Kinder Morgan's decision against pursuing creation of an export terminal from a Columbia River port near Clatskanie.

The export terminal would largely ship coal, and because of that, Brett VandenHeuvel, executive director of Columbia Riverkeepers, was quoted as saying the Kinder Morgan decision "is a huge victory for the state of Oregon."

As a resident of Oregon for more than 3½ decades and longtime member of several environmental organizations, I respectfully disagree with this statement.

First, the Kinder Morgan decision represents the loss of jobs and economic development, in a portion of the state that has suffered greatly from the loss of timber industry and other natural resource industry based jobs. Second, the statement does a disservice to the broader aims of the environmental movement.

I am certain that the railroad employees who operate the trains that bring products to port would not see this as a victory for Oregon. Coal is one of many bulk commodities railroads and their employees successfully transport through the area, including logs, soda

ash, grain, potash and oil. Governor Kitzhaber has noted that the Oregon economy is dependent on its ports and that exports are one of the keys to reducing unemployment and boosting our economy. Developing this port would have reduced unemployment and boosted the economy, the same way coal export terminals in other parts of the country have increased opportunities for skilled trade workers.

The effort by the environmental movement to kill the export of low sulfur American coal to Asia from the PNW ignores certain facts about the air pollution in China. Six million tons of coal are used in China per day – much of this coal is produced from very small mines where there is no sorting, cleaning or washing, and it is high in sulfur. China is increasing its electric generating capacity at the rate of about 80 gigawatts per year and experts agree coal will continue to be the primary player in their energy grid.

One of the primary goals of the environmental movement is to reduce pollution levels. The proposed Northwestern export terminals would ship low-sulfur Powder River Basin coal, which provides a much more environmentally friendly al-

ternative to the high sulfur coal Chinese power generation currently relies upon.

Denying the Chinese access to this resource is not Green, because it forces them to continue using the higher sulfur alternative.

Coal opponents have also turned to demonizing trains as part of their campaign against these proposed terminals. They cite the diesel these trains use, ignoring the fact that trains are the most fuel-efficient mode of ground transportation. Every train effectively removes hundreds of diesel-burning trucks from the road.

Many would consider it ridiculous to protest the increased use of trucks on our roads. The same attitude should pertain to protesting increased train use, which actually is an overall environmental benefit, as well as a sign of a growing economy.

I am proud to be an Oregonian, proud to work for the railroad, and proud to support a cleaner environment for our children. For all of these reasons, I am supportive of the proposed export terminals in the region, and believe they represent a net benefit for both Oregon and the planet. I would ask those opposed to them to consider the bigger picture. 🗣️



Oregon Freight: Union Pacific 8262 pulls a westbound grain train through the Columbia River Gorge at Milepost 99.0 near Celilo, Ore., on May 18, 2012.



Photo: Reed Skyllingstad

A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT FROM A RETIRED BLET MEMBER

PART I
IN A SERIES

Steam Days

WORKING AS A FIREMAN ON A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

BY BILL MULLINS
Retired, BLET Division 182
North Little Rock, Ark.

I hired out on the Missouri Pacific Railroad in North Little Rock, Ark., during the steam engine days. I thought a little insight into those days might be interesting for today's members, especially to those who have never worked on steam engines. What follows is about first working as a fireman; working as an engineer is another subject, which will come later.

There may be some differences between where I worked on the Missouri

Pacific and other roads, but overall, most duties are similar.

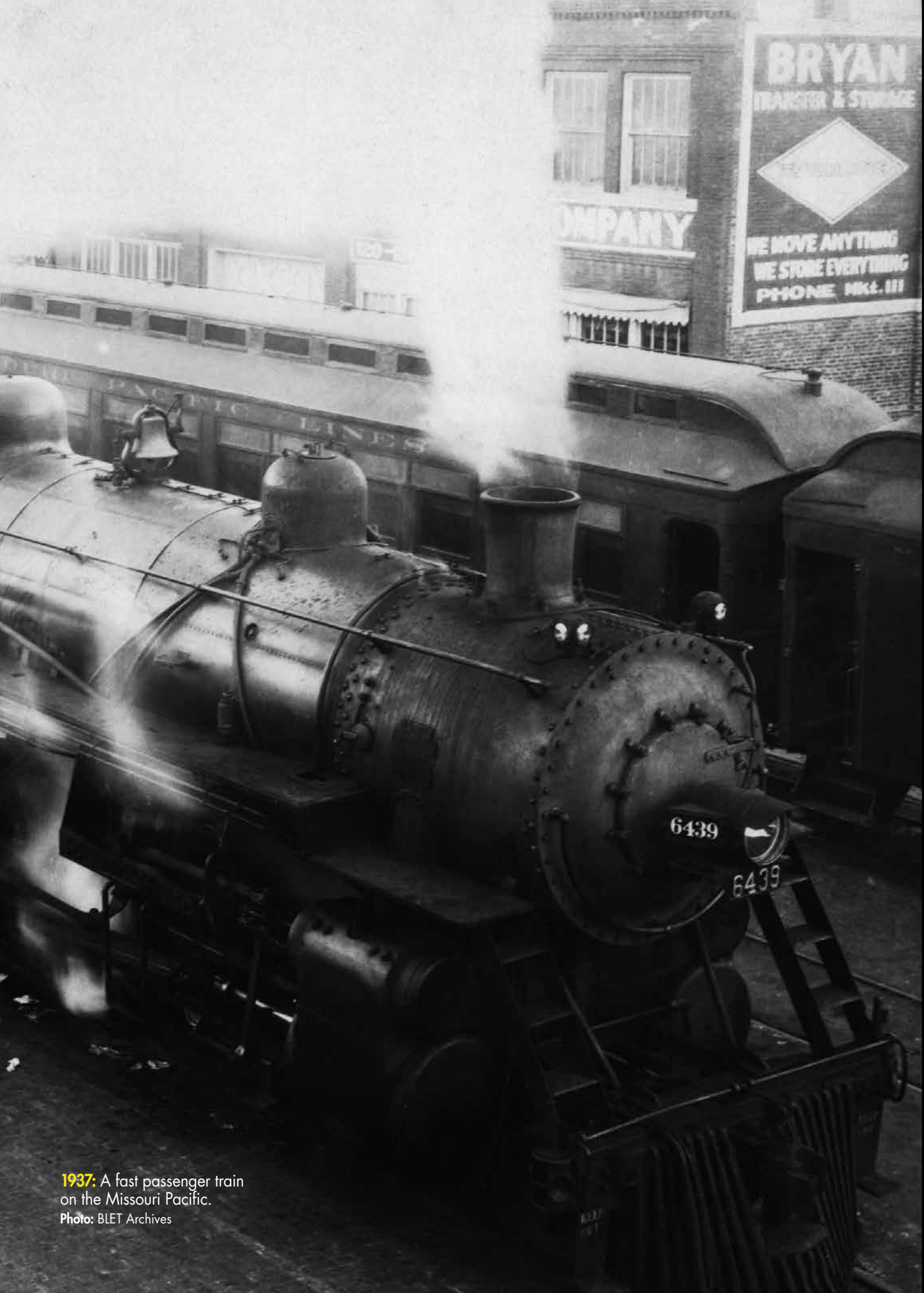
When called for a trip, we were given the time called for, engine number, train and engineer.

We found the engine on the ready track, which contained engines for other jobs as well. We would throw our "grip" in the gangway then go to the rear of the tender, climb up to check the water in the tank, check the coal and note that we had a long clinker hook in pocket of tender.

Back in the cab, we checked the can of drinking water for the crew. There

would be 50-pound block of ice to break up and wash off with the drinking water, then we would put the ice into the can of water.

Next, we checked that we had a red and white lantern (which burned oil) that had to be lit at sundown. These lanterns hung on the leg of the tank. Of course we made sure there was a shovel, coal pick, grate shaker bar, jet hook and short clinker hook on front of the tender. Additionally, there had to be two white flags, two green flags and one red flag; a full two-quart can of oil; a long neck oil can, which was used by the engineer



1937: A fast passenger train on the Missouri Pacific.

Photo: BLET Archives

A fireman leans from the cab of Missouri Pacific locomotive 1417.

Photo: BLET Archives



to oil around the engine; and a roll of “waste” (“waste” is cloth torn to shreds, which was used to wipe dust, your hands, gloves and used to soak in oil if need be to start fire in firebox). Also, we made sure we had a monkey wrench — it was about the only thing that was good for breaking up the ice. There was a rack that had to be full of fuses and a box of torpedoes.

Then the engineer would have you look at the class lights to make sure they would burn. If you were running as an extra train the lights had to be white, and if you were to run as section of a time card train they were to be green. If you running as a time card train the lights would not be on. The


white flags would also be placed in a holder by the lights, the same with the green flags.

The engineer would have the fireman see that the sand would run in front of drivers when he tested the sand valve. Also, we would make sure the bell would ring and that the rope was secured from the bell to the fireman’s side of the cab above the fireman’s head on the cab wall.

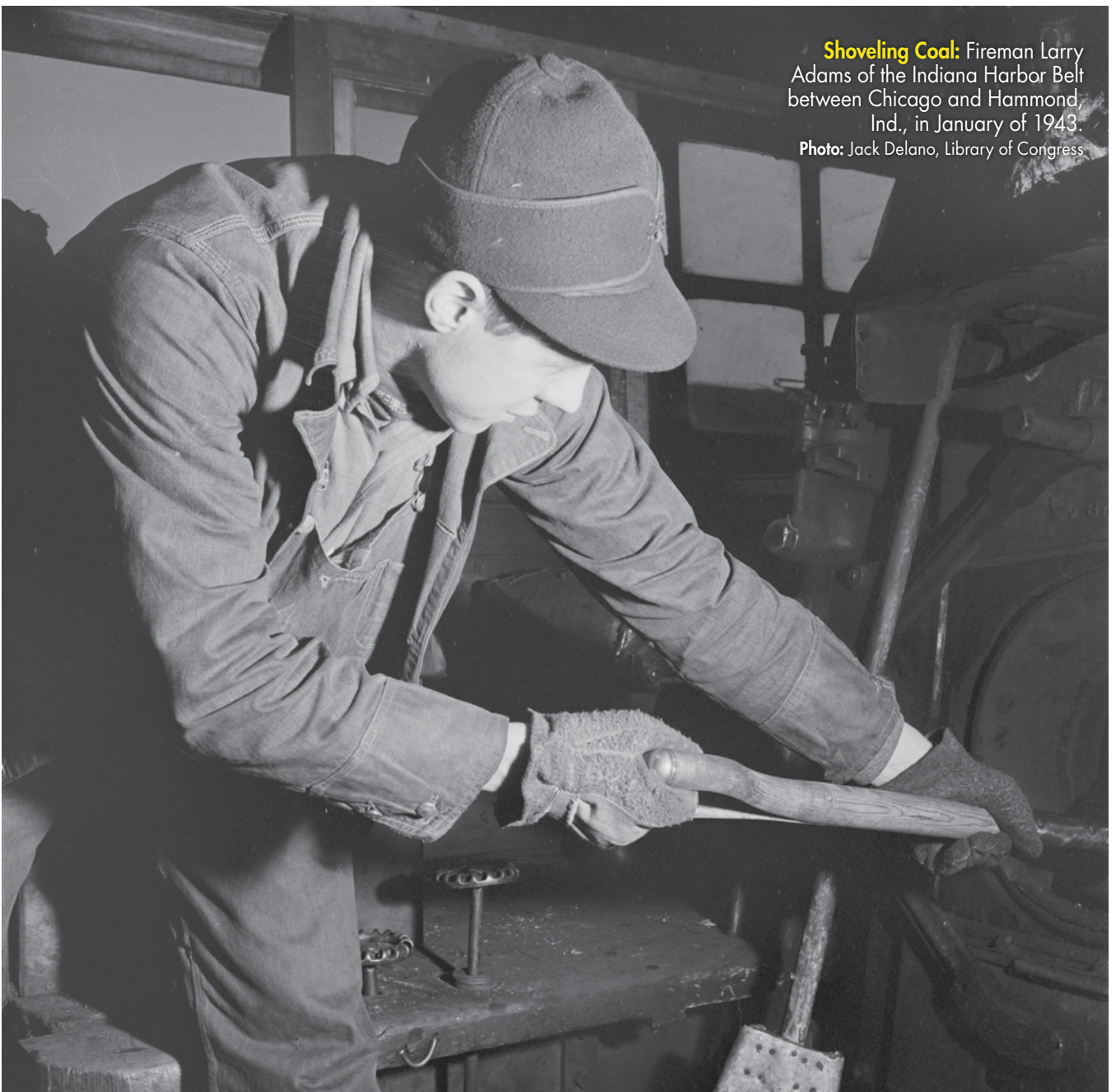
The firemen checked the stoker, making sure that all jets were open and that the distributing plate was secure. As coal fell on the plate the jets blew it off. Also the blower had to be working.

On an oil burner the water and oil was checked. In the back of the cab

was a large metal box full of sand. We had a “sand horn” that was placed in the fire door hole and a scoop of sand put in to clean the flues. The draft would pull the sand through the flues and clean them. We would do that about every 30 miles or so, depending on how the oil was burning and the engine steaming. The oil tank had a heater pipe to keep the oil hot and another pipe that extended almost to the bottom of the oil tank, which was used to stir the oil.

Some of this you may not understand because of the terminology used, but hopefully, this will help explain how it “used to be” when first working as a fireman in steam engine days. 

Shoveling Coal: Fireman Larry Adams of the Indiana Harbor Belt between Chicago and Hammond, Ind., in January of 1943.
Photo: Jack Delano, Library of Congress



AUTHOR'S BIO >>>



W.W. (Bill) Mullins, who celebrated his 86th birthday on October 12, served as Chaplain at BLET National Conventions in 1991, 2001 and 2006. He has been a member of BLET Division 182 (North Little Rock, Ark.) since January 1, 1973.

Mullins first hired out on the Missouri Pacific's Central Division (North Little Rock to Van Buren, Ark.) in November of 1947, but work was slim at that time. In August of 1950, he hired on MoPac's Arkansas Division when steam engines were still in use. He worked fireman's extra

board for several years, finally working up to a regular freight run. As a fireman, he protected boards in North Little Rock, Gurdon, Texarkana, El Dorado, Paragould and Memphis, Tenn.

Mullins earned promotion to locomotive engineer in December of 1965, and was again assigned to the extra board. As an engineer, Mullins worked jobs from boards in North Little Rock, Gurdon, Paragould and Memphis, Tenn. His last 10 years of service was on through-freight from North Little Rock to Poplar Bluff, Mo.

In November of 1953, Brother Mullins had a leave-of-absence from the railroad to work for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen in Cleveland under Ed Gilbert. He was Assistant Research and Education Director when he resigned in July of 1960. He returned to North Little Rock to resume his seniority on the railroad, which is where he worked until applying for retirement in 1989.

Mullins served three terms as Secretary-Treasurer of Division 182, and served as Legislative Representative one term prior to his retirement.

Youth movement

Younger members becoming today's union leaders



BY JOHN P. TOLMAN
VICE PRESIDENT & U.S.
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE
REPRESENTATIVE

I am writing this just after finishing a summer of travel to various Regional, General Committee and State Legislative Board meetings, and a Legislative Representative Workshop in Washington, D.C. At each stop, I noticed a generational shift in the organization. More and more younger members are becoming involved in the union's leadership. This is a fantastic thing for our Organization because as the saying goes: this is your union!

Member involvement is the lifeblood of our Brotherhood, and in order for our Organization to thrive for another 150 years, we need to continually challenge a new generation of members to become involved. This is why I was so encouraged over the past several months seeing the younger members stepping up to take their place in the BLET's leadership, and we need to do more to spur our members to get involved.

I have always tried to make the point that this union belongs to the members. It is your union — it is not exclusively mine, not exclusively anyone else's. It belongs to all members, and the members must be actively involved if we are to succeed in our mission.

The BLET was founded over 150 years ago by a small group of locomotive engineers who vowed to work in solidarity against the oppression of the carriers. By the Organization's very nature at that time, member involvement and full participation was key to the survival of the union and to the members' continued livelihood. They took an oath that if one of them were fired due to their partici-



Vice President Tolman presented commemorative watches to members who increased their giving to the BLET PAC fund to \$50 per month. Here, Tolman (center) thanks Gregory E. Jones, Local Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer of Div. 632 (Minden, La.), and R.W. (Bud) Pickett, Local Chairman of Div. 599 (Shreveport, La.).

pation in the Brotherhood, all would stand with him in solidarity. Today, solidarity continues to be our mantra — together we stand, divided we fall.

But today, many members — especially younger ones — do not know how to get involved.

The biggest key to participation in your BLET is to attend your union meetings, and to participate when you attend. Each member has the ability to influence the direction of the union through their individual participation. One of the best ways to participate in the direction of your union is to attend Division meetings. Division meetings provide each member with the opportunity to impact the direction of their union at the local level. Once you are involved and participating in the direction of your Division, another means of participation in the organization is to run for Division

office. You need to try to educate yourself; one way is through reading the By-laws, which can be obtained from your Division Secretary-Treasurer, and then ask questions.

I would also recommend that each member should take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the BLET, including workshops at both the regional meetings and the weeklong classes the National Division offers around the country for Local Chairmen, Legislative Representatives, and Secretary-Treasurers. These workshops are a part of the BLET's long-standing commitment to developing one of the most educated memberships of any labor organization. The Education & Training Department was founded in 1991, and over the past 22 years has grown by leaps and bounds. I have personally participated in these classes for nearly 20 years,



Jeff Wood, President and Legislative Representative of Division 26 (Richmond, Va.) with V.P. Tolman.



V.P. Tolman thanks James O. Fisher, Local Chairman of Division 612 (Nederland, Texas)

and I've seen the programs move forward beyond what I could have imagined when the department first began. The BLET's goal was to create a world class program in order to continually educate its members, and we have succeeded in this goal. Much of the credit should go to National Secretary-Treasurer William Walpert and the now retired Coordinator of the Education and Training Department, Ken Kroeger. Ken gave his heart and soul to this Organization, and, for me personally, he will be sorely missed. He developed this program with guidance from Brother Walpert, and was always extremely humble but thorough and dedicated. Jason Wright, the new E&T Coordinator, has some big shoes to fill, but I am sure he will do well because he is one of the bright, new, young members.

I was heartened by my recent travels. Seeing so many younger members who want to take an active role in the future of the Brotherhood was fantastic. These young members bring an energy and enthusiasm to their union that is exciting. When you take a look at the State Legislative Board Chairmen, there are over a dozen new chairmen in the last two years out of 39 Chairmen, which is significant. Now take a look at the General Chairman. There are close to a dozen new chairmen out of 42 — this also is significant. The new — in most cases the young — are stepping up to the plate

and taking charge. Knowing most of these leaders, I am personally pleased and feel we should all be assured they are a competent bunch with the Brotherhood's best interest first and foremost.

The Division level, as mentioned earlier, is where the current and future leaders all began their careers to take this union to the next generation. As I have said in the past and will continue to say into the future, this is your union and it is your obligation, our obligation, to make sure this Brotherhood is strong from now and into the future to leave a legacy for your children and grandchildren.

At the recent legislative representative workshop, I spent the week surrounded by members of our Organization who were interested and excited about learning more about the legislative and political process, and their role in that process. They relished the chance to come to Washington, D.C., and see the legislative process up close. Since the class, I have heard from many of these members about how great the experience was, and that they were lucky to be able to participate in it. The class coincidentally took place while Congress was debating and voting on measures that would lead to the shutdown of the government for the first time in 17 years, and so these members got to witness first-hand the legislative branch at what was quite frankly a dysfunc-

tional time in our nation's history, but they were still enthusiastic about the prospect of promoting the BLET agenda on Capitol Hill.

The leaders of our Organization 150 years ago could not have imagined the world that our Brotherhood functions in now. Facebook, Twitter, email, telephones and other technologies would amaze our original members, but are normal parts of our daily lives in 2013. And the young members currently moving into leadership roles in the BLET will continue to move our Organization into the future. There are many among us who would never imagined these technologies that are now commonplace. These members, who are moving into leadership roles in greater numbers, will serve to move the BLET forward.

The Brotherhood cannot move forward without the young members to step up and I am here to tell you they are "stepping up" and are developing and moving our Brotherhood. I urge you new and old members to contact our officers in leadership at any time. I encourage you be active: be involved run for office or at least be a good active member, who when called upon will vote, will make a phone call to further our goals and will fight for what's right for BLET members and other workers. This is your Union, your Organization: make it better by being diligent. 🇺🇸

Quebec derailment influences change in U.S. railroad regulations and legislation



BY VINCENT G. VERNA
DIRECTOR OF
REGULATORY AFFAIRS

There have been some significant developments on the Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) since the previous update in the *Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen Journal*. In the last regulatory and legislative articles we talked about some of the facts known about the Lac-Mégantic accident. Since then, we have had the emergency meeting of the full RSAC. The meeting was called by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to discuss four key issues related to the accident that occurred on July 6, 2013, on the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway (MMA). Transport Canada (the Canadian counterpart to the FRA), noted the following facts in a presentation to the committee at the Emergency RSAC Meeting:

- The train consisted of five locomotives and was 4,701 feet long and 10,287 tons, one box car as a buffer with 72 non-pressurized tank cars loaded with petroleum crude oil and left on a 1.2% grade. There was a fire on the lead locomotive (MMA 5017), which the fire department responded to and extinguished at 12:00 a.m. The train was then left unattended and it is thought to have begun moving again at 1:00 a.m. and ultimately derailed 1:15 a.m.;
- 47 people lost their lives, many of whom were at the Le Musi-Cafe, which was destroyed when the derailed cars exploded;
- Several tank cars derailed and released oil in the Chaudiere River. There



Photo: Associated Press

Rail tragedy: Emergency responders on the ground following the devastation in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec.

was extensive damage to the town center from other cars that caught fire causing several explosions;

- 2,000 people were evacuated from the surrounding area;
- 125 businesses were affected and 675 people lost their jobs;
- Despite the accident, there was a downward trend in accidents that existed on the MMA in the years from 2003-2012.

The last fact listed, regarding the downward trend in accident rates, runs counter to what our members know and what the accident in Lac-Mégantic demonstrates — the premise of a positive accident trend from the past does not lead to the conclusion that any railroad is currently overseeing a safe operation. It says nothing about the existing amount of risk contained in a particular railroad's work-

ing environment or their operations.

Unfortunately, we see the same flawed logic applied by the railroad industry and by regulatory agencies in the United States. These entities perpetuate the fallacy that an accident trend from the past selection of years (chosen by the industry) is indicative of the current and future states of safety in the industry. Shakespeare told us that “The past is prologue,” and history certainly informs us about how we ought to act in situations that are unfamiliar to those of us in the present, but wholly familiar to our predecessors. A great safety record is something to be proud of and happy about; however, it is nothing to rest upon and cannot be relied on as the sole basis for disregarding other safety concerns when looking at risk.

In response to the accident in Lac-Mégantic, Transport Canada issued an Emer-



Photo: Associated Press



Oil train disaster: The fire burned intensely for many hours following the oil train derailment in Lac-Mégantic on July 6, 2013. Much of the city's downtown area was completely burned to the ground.

agency Directive on July 23, 2013, that called for trains operating with a locomotive attached to one or more loaded tank cars transporting dangerous goods be operated by no less than two qualified people on a main track or siding. The FRA issued Emergency Order 28 (EO 28) and Safety Advisory 2013-06 with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). EO 28 is intended to address some of the human factors failures that may cause unattended equipment to be improperly secured to protect against a derailment situation similar to the one that occurred in Lac-Mégantic. However, BLET believes that FRA should have taken steps similar to the Emergency Directive issued by Transport Canada on July 23. EO 28 requires many steps to be taken by U.S. railroads and their employees. All members should have received a copy of this order, as it was required to be transmitted to you by September 1. If you did not receive a copy, please contact your Division officers and these officers will provide one to you.

The BLET National Legislative Office handles legislative, political and regulatory issues. We have taken a two-pronged strategy aimed at confronting the two-

person crew issue, hazardous materials transport and securement in both legislative and regulatory arenas. On the legislative and political front, Vice President and National Legislative Representative John P. Tolman and his staff have been visiting Capitol Hill to talk with members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate about an important bill — the Safe Freight Act or H.R. 3040, which was introduced by Representatives Michael Michaud and Chellie Pingree of Maine. This legislation was introduced in large part through Brother Tolman's hard work on the Hill. The bill currently has 13 co-sponsors and has bi-partisan support. It did not take long for the FRA to get the news and schedule the Emergency RSAC Meeting to take place on August 29. Three new RSAC Working Groups were formed at the meeting. The three working groups will handle issues relating to:

- Crew size;
- Train securement and operational testing for securement of rolling equipment; and
- Hazardous materials issues.

The BLET National Division and the National Legislative Office are coordinat-

ing to fill the necessary positions on the new RSAC Working Groups and developing our next steps in supporting H.R. 3040. Progress on both the legislative and regulatory fronts was slowed for several weeks by the government shutdown; however, BLET is undeterred in its commitment to make safety gains through better legislation and regulations; and we will continue to report changes as they develop. The initial Working Group meetings were scheduled for October 28-30 in Washington, D.C. The full RSAC met again on October 31 to get an update regarding the Working Groups' activities during the prior days. Ongoing discussions regarding crew size will be contentious as the carriers and their lobbying group, the Association of American Railroads (AAR), will attempt to conflate the installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) and the discussion of a regulatory mandate over crew size. The major bone of contention is that the BLET opposes mixing up the two issues. It's our firm belief that discussion of PTC issues in the Crew Size Working Group will only fail to give the issue of crew size the proper weight it deserves, and will only serve as a distraction. ●

May 29 a special day for Division 77's John E. Springer

May 29 has special significance to Brother John E. Springer of BLET Division 77 (New Haven, Conn.).

He was born on May 29, 1952. He was hired out on May 29, 1970. And he retired on May 29, 2012.

Brother Springer hired out as a fireman on the former Penn Central Railroad on May 29, 1970. He worked on the Hudson Division in the 72nd Street Yard on the spareboard. He earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer during the summer of 1974. He first joined the Brotherhood on November 1, 1970.

He worked for Conrail following the bankruptcy of Penn Central in 1976. On January 1, 1983, he went to work for Metro-North for about two months. He resigned at the end of March 1983 and went back to work for Conrail, where he flowed back and forth between Conrail and Amtrak for four years. It wasn't until 1987 that Brother Springer gained enough seniority to hold a regular run on Amtrak.

It was there that he stayed until retirement. He safely completed his Last Run on Amtrak train 170 from New Haven to Boston on May 29, 2012. He operated engine #917 and the train consisted of seven cars.

Brother Springer and his wife, Sandy, were married on February 6, 1974. Now that he is retired, the couple is living in their RV. They have taken it as far west as Montana and plan on wintering in Florida. "We will get back to Connecticut this spring and leave again to see other parts of this great country," he said.

Springer's hobbies include fly-fishing, something he enjoys doing over 100 times a year, and he loves sightseeing and singing in Karaoke bars. He also likes railroad history and reading.

During retirement, Brother Springer has become involved with the Rail-



During retirement, Brother Springer volunteers at the Railroad Museum of New England.



Division 11 Local Chairman Jack Cawley congratulates Brother Springer at his Last Run.

road Museum of New England as a volunteer Locomotive Engineer. He made his certification run at the end of October, 2013.

Brother Springer would enjoy

hearing from any BLET Brothers or Sisters who would like to share their fly fishing experiences. Please write: John E. Springer, 261 Airline Road, Clinton, CT 06413. ☎

Bud Brothers retires after 41 years at Penn Central, Conrail and NS



Bud Brothers, right, receives a congratulatory handshake from Brother Pat Maher, his former Local Chairman.

Richard V. (Bud) Brothers Jr. of BLET Division 607 (Cleveland, Ohio) safely completed his Last Run on January 2, 2012, ending his railroad career that began in 1970.

Brothers hired out on the former Penn Central railroad as a fireman at Collinwood, Ohio, on June 9, 1970. He earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer in May of 1975 and first joined the Brotherhood on October 1, 1989. He worked as an Engineer for the next 35 years as the bankrupt Penn Central Railroad became Conrail in 1976. In 1999, Norfolk Southern purchased the portion of Conrail

where Brothers worked.


Brothers retired as a Norfolk Southern Locomotive Engineer. His Last Run was Yard Job BF-14 between Norfolk Southern's Motor Yard and Twinsburg, Ohio.

Brothers comes from a large railroad family. Both of his grandfathers worked in the industry, and he followed in the footsteps of his late father, Bud "Big Jack" Brothers, who worked as a Locomotive Engineer for the New York Central, Penn Central and Conrail.

Over the years, Brothers always helped recruit new hires to join the Brotherhood and served as a role mod-

el for safety to the younger Engineers. Prior to his work in the railroad industry, Brothers served in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam for four years.

His hobbies include fishing, boating and swimming. He is also a handyman who enjoys fixing things around the house. He plans to spend more time with family and doing all of the above during retirement. Brothers also plans to take college courses at Lakeland Community College.

"Bud used to love joking around," said Pat Maher, his former Local Chairman. "Bud reports that he had a great time over his career and will miss the guys now that he's retired." 

Former Union Pacific General Chairman Tim Donnigan retires

Former BLET General Chairman Timothy J. Donnigan retired from active duty with the Union Pacific Railroad following a railroad career that began 39 years ago.

Brother Donnigan had served as General Chairman of the BLET's Union Pacific-Western Region General Committee of Adjustment for eight years at the time of his retirement in 2008. He hired out as a clerk for the UP in Pocatello, Idaho in 1974. He transferred to engine service and went firing for UP on February 21, 1977, and earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer on March 7, 1978.

He joined BLET Division 228 (Pocatello, Idaho) on November 1, 1977, and has held continuous membership for the past 36 years. Brother Donnigan served the Brotherhood and its membership in numerous elected offices over the years, including: Local Chairman of Division 228 (1982-1986); General Chairman of the former Utah-Idaho Railroad (1987-1991); First Vice Chairman of the UP-WR GCA (1991-2000, full time from 1997-2000); and General Chairman of the UP-WR GCA (2000-2008).

Brother Donnigan also served on the BLET National Division Arrangements Committee for Third Quinquennial International Convention in Cleveland (1991); the Seventh Quinquennial International Convention in Miami (2001); and the BLET's First National Convention in Las Vegas (2006). Following retirement, he served on the Arrangements Committee for the BLET's 150th Anniversary Celebration in Detroit (May of 2013).

Prior to serving the Brotherhood on a full-time basis, Brother Donnigan's last Engineer assignment was in pool freight service between Pocatello and Nampa, Idaho. One of his two most memorable runs came in the summer of 1993, when he worked as Locomotive Engineer with a young



Brother Donnigan during the national anthem on May 8, 2013, while working as a member of the Arrangements Committee during the BLET's 150th Anniversary Celebration in Detroit.



Brother Donnigan in the cab during the 1990s.

man named Brian Housley, who was made an Honorary Locomotive Engineer through the Make A Wish foundation. "He was an incredible child who had a profound impact on my life," Donnigan said. The other was watching his father seated behind the control stand of a nearly over-speed

70-mph freight train.

Born in Turin, Italy, in 1956, Brother Donnigan was adopted by his loving parents and brought to the United States in 1959. He follows in the footsteps of his grandfather Matthew Donnigan, who worked for the Missouri Pacific as a machinist-steel specialist in St. Louis, and his father, George Donnigan, who worked for Mo Pac and Union Pacific as a clerk at various locations. Also, his brother Stephen works for the Union Pacific as a carman at Pocatello.

His hobbies include fishing, photography, Native American history, America's national parks, and the union movement.

"I always strive to be a worthy diplomat for our distinguished craft and for our proud union," Brother Donnigan said. 🇺🇸

Division 11's Gannon a BLET member since 1970

Brother Michael Gannon of BLET Division 11 (New York, N.Y.) reached Honor Roll status in 2013 with 43 years of consecutive membership in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

On September 9, 1969, Brother Gannon went firing for the Penn Central railroad in New York City. He earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer for PC on July 1, 1974.

Brother Gannon joined the Brotherhood on May 1, 1970, and has held continuous membership in Divisions 501 and 11 ever since. His Last Run was on July 2, 2010, operating trains 2107 and 2170 between New York's Penn Station and Washington, D.C.

During his 41 years with Penn Central (1969-1976), Conrail (1976-1983), and Amtrak (1983-2010), Brother Gannon earned a reputation throughout the Northeast as an extremely safety-conscious professional. He has been recognized several times for his contributions to rail safety. In 2010, he was the winner of Amtrak's Northeast Division-West Environmental and Safety Award of Excellence. In 2003, he was a member of the Sunnyside Safety Committee,



Brother Mike Gannon

which earned the distinguished Amtrak President's Achievement Award.

Gannon mentored countless engineers through his role as engineer instructor. He taught student engineers the finer points of operating a locomotive safely, but more importantly, he instilled the younger generation with a pride in the BLET. In fact, many of those younger engineers followed in his footsteps by taking active leadership roles within the organization.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, Brother Gannon held numerous elected offices within the Brotherhood. He represented his Division on the Executive Committee of the New York State Legislative Board from 1983 through 2010. He also served as

President of Division 11 and was a member of the Division 501 Local Committee of Adjustment. He may be best remembered for serving as Division Legislative Representative of Divisions 501 and 11 for 28 years (1982-2010).

After his many years of service, Gannon received a 40-year BLET honor pin from National President Dennis R. Pierce at the Eastern Union Meeting Association convention in 2010.

He earned a Bachelor's Degree from Fordham University in 1995, where he was a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society. In 1985 and 1987, Brother Gannon earned certificates in Railway Labor Law and the Railway Labor Act after completing summer training courses at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

Brother Gannon's interests include gardening, local history and civic issues. He is a member of the Douglaston Garden Club, 2nd Vice President of the Douglaston Civic Association, and a Trustee in the Douglaston & Little Neck Historical Society. He has traveled extensively, visiting Argentina, Brazil and Antarctica. 🌐

Div. 404's Pinion reaches 45-year Honor Roll

Brother Joseph R. Pinion, BLET Division 404 (Chicago), achieved Honor Roll status with 45 consecutive years of membership in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

Brother Pinion hired out as a brakeman in Chicago for the Chicago & Great Western Railway in 1963. He went firing in April of 1967 and earned promotion to Locomotive Engineer for the Chicago & Great Western on April 16,

1968. He joined the Brotherhood on April 16, 1968, and has held consecutive membership ever since.

Prior to working in the rail industry, Brother Pinion served in the U.S. National Guard at Marks, Miss., from 1955-1960.

His last run came on December 20, 2001, as Locomotive Engineer of a passenger train between Chicago and Geneva, Ill. He operated a passenger F7 locomotive. When he retired, he re-

ceived commendations for a perfect 40-year record — accident free and injury free.

He was re-married on October 24, 2009, and has two children — David E. and Cynthia L. Pinion. He also has one grandchild. Brother Pinion comes from a railroad family. He has two brothers and two sisters who all worked for the railroad.

Brother Pinion's hobbies include traveling and motorcycles. 🌐

The BLET publishes Last Runs for members who have retired, and recognizes members with 40 years or more of membership in Honor Roll articles. If you are planning to retire soon, please let us know! For details, contact: John Bentley, Editor, Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Journal, Email: Bentley@ble-t.org, 1370 Ontario St., Mezzanine, Cleveland, OH 44113-1702

PRESIDENT PIERCE MESSAGE

CONTINUED FROM
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in a stock buy-back program valued at \$7.6 billion annually. All that a stock buy-back accomplishes is to put more money into the pockets of its owners. It has no benefit for Walmart's employees or customers; it just consolidates the ownership of the company into the hands of the heirs of company founder Sam Walton. Analysts have determined the profits spent on the buy-back could instead be used to give all its employees a raise of \$5.83 per hour ... boosting average hourly pay to \$14.89 per hour. In application, this would mean that Walmart's employees, the majority of whom make less than \$25,000.00 per year, wouldn't have to rely on charity to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with their families.

On top of all this, and for the sole purpose of protecting the wealth that those who run Walmart have accumulated, Walmart is notoriously anti-worker and anti-union. During a recent attempt at organizing in Texas and California, a Walmart spokesperson went on television and unlawfully threatened workers if they went on strike. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) upheld these charges. Walmart also unlawfully threatened, disciplined and/or fired workers at stores in Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio and Washington for engaging in legally protected strikes and protests. At stores in California, Florida, Missouri and Texas, Walmart was guilty of illegal surveillance of workers

“I haven't set foot inside of a Walmart store in years, yet the mega-chain still manages to mistreat its employees, and at the same time, take money out of my wallet. How is this possible? It's called Corporate Welfare.”

in addition to threats, discipline and termination.

Walmart has also devastated America's manufacturing industry. In the early 1980s, imports accounted for only about 6 percent of Walmart's total sales. But 20 years later, 80-90 percent of Walmart's shoes and housewares were made in China, and 80 percent of its apparel comes from China. It's estimated that the United States lost 133,000 manufacturing jobs to China between 2001 and 2006, and this is in large part due to Walmart's legendary pressure on manufacturers to provide cheap products that allow Walmart to make more money.

Over the years Walmart has crushed its competition over the backs of its workers to the extent that they are not going away; we are stuck with them, like it or not. But what we can do to change them into a company that actually treats its American workers with dignity and respect is three fold. I know that the first step is one that not all of us can do, but when it can be done, we must stop contributing to the wealth of those who mistreat the American working class by taking our business elsewhere. We live in a consumer driven economy, and it is crystal clear that there is only one thing that Walmart's owners recognize, and that is profits. Walmart can run commercials 24 hours a day claiming to treat employees

well, but the facts don't match the ads. Until Walmart truly changes the way it treats its workers, I will not set foot in its stores, and I ask you to join me in exercising our collective right as consumers to support companies that support working class Americans.

The second step is to support Walmart workers and help them get the union protections, pay scale and benefits they need and deserve. It has been said that a rising tide lifts all boats, and it is true that union pay scales raise all pay scales. However, it is also becoming clearer and clearer that a lowering tide has the same effect when it comes to the pay scale all across this country. Walmart is so big today that its poverty wages are being used to drag down all pay scales and access to good benefits. It would be very shortsighted for any of us to think this “lowering tide” phenomenon cannot reach those of us whose wages and benefits are well above the Walmart standard.

Finally, it is way past time that the corporations of this country are allowed to use taxpayer money to pad their fortunes. This corporate welfare obscenity is being allowed and advanced by many of the same politicians who claim that taxpayer money should not go to working class Americans when they are in need. The week after Thanksgiving, Tea Party favorite Rand Paul (R-KY) said on national

television that providing unemployment benefits for more than 26 weeks was a disservice to the involved working class Americans. I think that we all know that those who have been unfortunate enough to lose their jobs in our downturned economy would disagree, but where are the likes of Rand Paul when it comes to corporate America receiving taxpayer money and putting it in their own pockets? We know where they are; the master they work for is not the working class of this country, it is their corporate benefactors.

Through our merger with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, I know there are many activists and union leaders who are actively trying to organize at Walmart stores across the country. In November of 2013, there were no less than nine job actions throughout the United States where Walmart workers walked off the job to protest their poverty wages. Like I said, I know it's hard to avoid shopping at Walmart all the time, but we can and must support Walmart's workers and their efforts to unionize.

You might think you're saving a few dollars here and there by shopping at Walmart — if you don't count the extra taxes you're paying to support its low wages / no benefits business model — but ask yourself this: Is it really worth it when you consider the big picture and the negative impact the store's business practices are having on the working middle class of this great country? That working middle class is what made America the greatest, and I ask you to join me in working to keep it strong. 🇺🇸

BLET mourns loss of Div. 42 President Brian Wheeler

BRIAN D. WHEELER, PRESIDENT OF BLET DIVISION 42 (ST. LOUIS, MO.), passed away on October 16, 2012, following complications from a rare



Brian D. Wheeler

blood disorder known as myelodysplastic syndrome.

Brother Wheeler, 61, was born on September 27, 1951 and was a Union Pacific locomotive engineer. He first

joined the Brotherhood on October 1, 1976. Under Wheeler's leadership, Division 42 became much more active in the St. Louis community. Brother Wheeler spearheaded numerous food drives to help the poor around the holidays.

"Brian Wheeler was a dedicated

and hard working union Brother," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. "He was one of a kind and will be sorely missed. On behalf of the National Division, I extend my deepest sympathies to Brother Wheeler's friends and family members and to our railroad family in Division 42."

Brother Wheeler is survived by his wife, Marsha, two children, Aaron Wheeler and Amber Richardson, and one grandson, Sawyer Richardson.

The family has requested that memorials in memory of Brian D. Wheeler may be sent to the "SWCM Scholarship Fund" at the following address:

Norman Baker
SWCM Treasurer
6009 Woodview North
Sherwood, AR 72120-4129

This information is based upon reports filed by the Secretary-Treasurers of the various BLET Divisions

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2013	AS OF JULY 31, 2013
11 — W. D. Fleming	11 — J. S. Doatch
48 — A. G. Coddington	44 — L. V. Capozzoli
158 — R. G. Martin	65 — J. R. Wadstrup
204 — W. E. Grogan III	86 — M. W. Osvalld
265 — R. S. Rogers	263 — B. C. O'Brien
272 — J. A. Snogans	353 — P. R. Gibson
	456 — G. L. Moots
	482 — J. M. Carter
	491 — A. D. Parr
	502 — P. J. Van Horn
AS OF AUGUST 31, 2013	AS OF JUNE 30, 2013
3 — T. A. George	28 — R. G. Winkler
44 — F. P. Martinez	197 — J. P. Silva
153 — L. E. Myers	502 — C. K. Sullivan
202 — R. J. Dahl	622 — D. M. Parsons
269 — J. J. Hill	
285 — L. J. Tackitt	AS OF MAY 31, 2013
457 — E. J. Geoffrion	125 — J. A. Floyd
518 — R. H. Bosse	153 — R. C. Hatcher
623 — J. F. Sutton	192 — R. E. Durant
646 — G. W. Middlebrooks	197 — M. L. Dresch
664 — E. J. Block	301 — G. D. Saunders Jr.
842 — C. E. Fricks	312 — V. J. Gobbi
899 — C. B. Burrow	357 — F. A. Habegger
937 — K. S. Vas	

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BLET regional meetings offer great opportunities for fun, fellowship, and education



BY KATHY HURST
2ND VICE PRESIDENT/
ASSISTANT LEGISLATIVE
REP., BLET AUXILIARY PRESIDENT,
GUADALUPE AUXILIARY No. 28,
TUCSON, ARIZONA

Why go to a regional meeting? You might think, "I'm not a union officer, what would I get out of it?" Well, I am here to tell you... lots! The very first International Western Convention (IWC) I attended was here in Tucson when my husband was president of Division 28, back in 1990. Truthfully, I went to support him. It never occurred to me that I might enjoy it, but I did. I met other spouses there and it was really interesting just to see the generational differences. One of the older ladies asked how we younger ones (hey, it was a long time ago!) liked getting up in the middle of the night to cook breakfast. Sereena Hogan and I looked at each other and simultaneously said, "I don't do that!" We both worked full time and, when our husbands were called to work in the middle of the night, we did not get up with them to see them off. At that time, neither Sereena nor I knew anything about the Auxiliary, which was then called the Grand International Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (GIA).

Eight years later, in 1998, the IWC was held in Tucson again and Sereena's husband Ken Kroeger was the chairman of the committee that organized the convention. He asked Sereena to serve as co-chair to organize the Auxiliary activities and that was when she and I decided to start a local Auxiliary here in Tucson. Our Auxiliary members had fun planning the activities for the spouses at the convention and arranging for



On behalf of the BLET Auxiliary, National President Anita Caruso presented a commemorative gavel to BLET National President Dennis Pierce at the BLET's 150th anniversary celebration in Detroit on May 8, 2013.

speakers for our meeting. We were pretty much feeling our way around in the dark because we didn't know all that much about the Auxiliary (GIA) or what we were supposed to do at a convention. We planned some great activities and speakers, however, and it all came together very well. Every convention offers an array of educational workshops for the BLET members in attendance to help them learn how to better perform the duties of their elected positions. All BLET members and Auxiliary members are invited to attend these classes. If you are a BLET spouse whose husband has served, or is serving, as an officer, either on the local level or on a General Committee of Adjustment, then you know there is a lot to these positions. Having the opportunity to attend the class and find out more about it can be very enlightening, and give you some perspective of what holding BLET office entails. If your spouse is a passionate union officer, it's hard not to get caught up in the activities of the union.

One of the most important experiences I have had at these conventions is hearing from attorneys who special-

ize in the Federal Employers' Liability Act with respect to railroad employees. They often give presentations explaining what steps a spouse needs to take should her (or his) loved one be injured or killed on the job. This is vitally important information that we as spouses often don't get anywhere else. The attorneys also give presentations on other information that is important for railroad families, such as the importance of carrying enough uninsured/underinsured liability coverage on our auto insurance policies in case our spouses are involved in an accident while being transported to or from the work site by a contract van driver.

There are also informative presentations the conventions on such topics as radiation safety and transporting of hazardous materials. I think this is important for all of us to be informed about the cargo that is moving through our communities via rail. At regional meeting workshops, we learn what is — or is not — being done to protect our spouses who work as part of the train crews as well as the communities at large where such dangerous cargo travels.

Oftentimes the convention planning committee schedules fun activities for the spouses and their families to attend. There might be a fashion show, a shopping trip, or maybe a guided museum tour or a trip to the local brewery. And there is always a golf tournament at each convention that is open to all in attendance. In 2011, I had the pleasure of attending the Southwestern Convention Meeting Association's (SWCM) convention in El Paso, Texas, where the proceeds from their golf tournament went to support the Auxiliary Scholarship Fund. We, as Auxiliary officers and members, truly appreciate the opportunity to build our scholarship fund so that we can offer aid to more students who are sons and daughters of BLET and Auxiliary members. Fundraising activities for the Scholarship Program take place at all of the regional conventions.

Each year, there are four regional conventions held. The 2014 convention schedule gives us many great opportunities to choose from. The first one is the Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA) in Savannah, Ga., June 15-19. The next is the International Western Convention (IWC) in Minneapolis, Minn., July 29-July 3. Third is the Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA) in downtown Cleveland, Ohio, August 4-8. And finally, the Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM) will take place in St. Louis, Mo., September 7-11. I hope that each of you will consider attending one of these conventions. You might even think about planning a vacation around one — go to the regional meeting and stay to explore the area. To find out more details about each of this year's regional conventions and how to register, go to the BLET website at www.blet-t.org/info/meetings. 📍

ABOUT THE AUXILIARY:

The BLET Auxiliary exists to support the interest and welfare of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) Auxiliary and railroad families, especially the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and the organizations of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Rail Conference, our members and their families throughout the United States. Learn more about joining the Auxiliary at: www.bletauxiliary.net

BLET Auxiliary welcomes new National Secretary Lawana W. Poss

BY ANITA J. CARUSO

AUXILIARY NATIONAL PRESIDENT

On behalf of the BLET National Auxiliary, I invite you all to welcome our new National Secretary Lawana W. Poss. Lawana was elected to the position of Alternate Secretary at our last convention in October 2010. Linda Maher, who has served as National Secretary for almost three years, has resigned for personal reasons as of August 1, 2013.

Sister Lawana's husband Mike is an engineer with Norfolk Southern Railroad. For many years, Brother Mike was Secretary-Treasurer for BLET Division 696 (Atlanta, Ga.). Today, he is Secretary-Treasurer for the Georgia State Legislative Board. Lawana currently serves as Auxiliary State Legislative Representative for the state of Georgia.

Sister Lawana is blessed to have three beautiful children and three extraordinary grandchildren, with number four due early in 2014. Growing up in a railroad family, Lawana and Mike's children learned to be patient, flexible, punctual, and dependable, and they always knew that, just because someone is not always there, it does not mean they do not care.

Sister Lawana has been an Auxiliary member-at-large for many years, and recently took the opportunity to become more involved. For the past two years, she has served as the Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer for the Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA). Beginning in 2014, she will assume the position of Auxiliary Chairperson for the SMA.

Sister Lawana served as the SMA member-at-large delegate at our Na-



From left: Anita Caruso, Jewell Graben and Lawana Poss. In addition to her new duties as National Secretary, Sister Lawana has also replaced Sister Graben as the BLET Auxiliary Co-Chair of the Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA).

tional Convention last fall, at which time she ran for the Alternate Secretary position. She is delighted and more than honored to serve as the new BLET Auxiliary National Secretary. She is quite aware that this position will have many new challenges, and she is more than willing to face them. She is grateful to have the opportunity to assume her position on the Executive Council and said that she is "blessed beyond belief" to have the opportunity to work with and learn from the current National Officers.

National Vice President/NLR Serreena Hogan, National Treasurer Helen Brand, National 1st Vice President/NOC Gina Forman and I wholeheartedly welcome Sister Lawana. We are confident that she will do a wonderful job in the position and will be a great addition to the Executive Council. 📍

PURPOSE:

The overall purpose of the Auxiliary shall be to provide support and promote issues that effect the health, safety, welfare and quality of life of railroaders and their families, to promote higher education with the families of its full members, to give assistance to widows, widowers, sisters and brothers, when needed, especially during times of duress, and to render assistance whenever and wherever needed to further our mission.

GET READY FOR WINTER!

Kendall Jacket

Stay warm and comfortable while looking stylish in this soft cotton micro poplin jacket. It has a quilted lining and a full zip with front snap closures. Contrasting collar adds detail to a sturdy jacket you will wear with pride. It features a full embroidered BLET logo on the left chest.

Available in black in sizes large to 3X. L-XL \$64.95, 2X \$66.95, 3X \$68.95

Cumberland Jacket

Heavyweight canvas work jacket with thermal lining. Hood with drawstrings and full zip front, large side pockets with an added inside pocket. This jacket is rugged and sturdy and will stand up to a hard day's work.

Available in spice in sizes large to 3X. L-XL \$67.95, 2X \$69.95, 3X \$71.95

Stocking Cap

Show your union pride wearing our newest addition — the classic stocking cap. 100% acrylic knit with a fold-over cuff that proudly displays an embroidered BLET logo in the center.

Available in black. One size fits most. \$6.95

Fired Up Long-Sleeve T-shirt — BLT-0150

Let's get fired up! Shout your union pride with our newest long sleeve pocket tee. Dark ash tee with BLET logo screened on the pocket. Features a full-color back design and a complimentary sleeve imprint. You will be proud to wear this BLET t-shirt!

Available in sizes medium to 3X. M-XL \$19.95, 2X \$21.45, 3X \$22.95

Hooded Sweatshirt

— BLT-0120

It has never been a better time to show your pride in America and your Union! Shout it out loud while you cozy up in our new 80/20 blend Union made hoodie. It features a full screen print of our Proud to be American logo and a one color image of the BLET logo.

Available in sizes: medium thru 3X Med-XL \$27.50, 2X \$29.95, 3X \$30.95

150th Weston Polo Shirt

— BLT-0146

Stylish and sleek is this polo shirt, which has moisture wicking properties to help keep you cool and comfortable. It features a full-embroidered 150th logo on the left chest.

Available in black; sizes medium to 3XL. \$35.00

150th Anniversary Ball Cap

— BLT-0143

The perfect addition to your cap collection — this is definitely one you will wear with pride. This six-panel 'prostyle' cap has contrasting visor that complements a gold sandwich visor. The colors complement the full color embroidered logo on front while the side shows our 150-year dates and the back boosts our 150th anniversary. A buckle slide closure completes this cap. **\$20.00**

150th Collectors Edition T-Shirt

— BLT-0145

This is a must-have addition to your BLET wardrobe. 100% cotton black tee with a full colored left chest screen-printed 150th logo and a full color back screen print that features the past and the present of our heritage.

Available in sizes Medium to 4XL. \$15.00

Proud to be American T-shirt

Available in red (BLT-0118) and athletic gray (BLT-0119)

Sport your Union Pride in our newest addition to the BLET gear. 100% cotton Union made t-shirt with a full back screen print of our Proud to be American logo. The front features a one color image of the BLET logo.

Available in sizes: medium thru 3X Med-XL \$10.00, 2X \$11.25, 3X \$12.50

Ladies Cut T-Shirt

Union Pride never looked so good! For the ladies, a t-shirt that is flattering and cute. Cut for a woman is this 6.1 oz 100% cotton tee. It features the full back Proud to be American logo and the one color image of the BLET logo.

Available in red in sizes medium thru 3X Med-XL \$12.00, 2X \$13.50, 3X \$15.00

Men's 150th Limited Edition Time Piece

— BLT-0148

This watch is a true treasure that you will pass on to loved ones for years to come. The dial is a gorgeous acid-etched rendition of the 150th logo. To make your watch truly special, we have numbered the backs of the watches. Only 500 men's watches will be manufactured, so engraved on the back you will see 1 of 500, 2 of 500 etc. This makes each watch truly a special keepsake. Engraving is available for an additional cost of \$10.00 per watch. (Women's watch also available, product number BLT-0149) **\$100.00**

150th Anniversary Coffee Mug

— BLT-0144

Recycled acrylic coffee mug in earthy red color with a curved handle that conforms to your grip. A screen-printed full color logo is proudly shown on the front. Grab a pair — these won't last. **\$8.00**

150th Anniversary 12-Pack Cooler Bag

— BLT-0142

This functional and sturdy cooler bag can be used for many things. Great for your lunch, or snacks and drinks for your kid's soccer game.

Insulated with a heavy-duty leak proof lining, sturdy 600D fabric that is easy to wipe off while showcasing the 150th logo on the front. **\$15.00**

150th Anniversary Clock

— BLT-0147

This special timepiece will be a treasured keepsake for years to come. What a wonderful way to celebrate 150 years strong! Embossed 150th logo dial placed on a sturdy rosewood and brass mantle clock. It also comes with a gold plate that is placed at the bottom of the clock and includes 4 lines of engraved type. (NOTE: 35 characters per line max. All engraving is done in capital letters for optimal viewing.) This is a limited item and will not be around forever. Be sure to get yours soon! **\$139.99**

Men's Retiree Watch — BLET-0117M

This handsome classic watch is the perfect gift to honor the dedication and service of your retired member. Stylish black dial is surrounded by gold accents with a crisp gold band. Finish it off with a customized engraved back to show your appreciation. **Ladies style available (BLT-0117L) \$86.95**

WATCH ENGRAVING \$10.00

Engrave up to four lines of text on the back of your watch. Note: 20 characters per line.

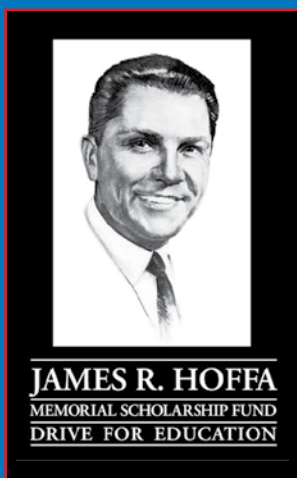
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Teamster households now have access to a leading brand of tax preparation software, TurboTax, at a discount of up to \$20 off the price of Federal products. A portion of the price paid for the TurboTax product will be donated to the James R. Hoffa Scholarship Fund.



TurboTax products feature:

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- Forms automatically filled out using your answers; and
- 100 percent accurate calculations guarantee

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New Santa Train Book

Santa climbs aboard the observation car of a Norfolk & Western overnight streamliner en route back to the North Pole, 1950. (Courtesy: Norfolk Southern Corp.). Retired BLET member Doug Riddell, Division 14 (Washington, D.C.), has co-authored a new book titled "Virginia's Legendary Santa Trains." SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE DETAILS.



A ticket for the Miller & Rhoads Santa Claus Train, 1964.

Photo: Lewis Parks Private Collection