

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS: BLET Auxiliary and IWC announce \$10,000 in awards

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN *Journal*

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PRESIDENT PIERCE'S MESSAGE

Moving ahead

After this historic election
we must come together
and go forward
in solidarity

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Ron McLaughlin
celebrates 62 years
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logo gear





BLET President's Message

BY DENNIS R. PIERCE, BLET NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Facing Tomorrow's Challenges

This edition of the *Journal* will go to press before we know the outcome of the November 6, 2012 National Election. For that reason, and although there is much at stake for working class Americans in this election, I have crafted this message to be pertinent no matter what the outcome is.

As I hope you have noticed, the BLET kicked off an aggressive campaign almost a year ago in an effort to change how unions and union-represented working class Americans are viewed. As I told Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) in my letter dated February 13, "[A]s union members, we represent a cross section of America. We are proud Veterans; we are Boy Scout Leaders; we are active in our Churches; and we are community activists for good causes all across this great country. We are the educators that teach America's children in their classrooms, we are the neighbors that Americans trust and depend on. We are also the police officers and the fire fighters that America relies on day in and day out. We are the bikers who do toy runs every Christmas for America's most needy. We are the dock workers that load and unload goods for the American people. We provide the labor to build and maintain the nation's railroads so those goods can get to market. And we are the engineers, train-



"Unions owe no one an apology for what we have accomplished to advance the living standards, wages and benefits for working class Americans."

men and truck drivers who keep our economy strong by skillfully delivering those goods to the American people. Our children babysit America's children, and because of the fair wages our Unions secure, our children are the students at any number of strong American universities. We are the proverbial guy or gal next door; we are the patriots who send their sons and daughters off to defend this great country whenever there is a need. You can count on one thing for sure: our united fight as union members for our piece of the American Dream is what makes us the patriots that we are."

On the heels of that letter came our "Proud to be American, Proud to be Union" campaign, which I am proud to report has been a tremendous success. At every meeting of

union members that I travel to, I see proud BLET members wearing our union colors. I also hear personal stories of the one-on-one positive impact that these Brothers and Sisters are having in their communities and amongst their friends and families. These proud union members are in the front lines of our battle to energize the working class of this country and to make it clear to all of America that labor unions are not the cause, but are part of the solution to this great nation's problems.

Unions owe no one an apology for what we have accomplished to advance the living standards, wages and benefits for working class Americans. That is true no matter how hard those trying to exterminate unions work to discredit our movement. But

here is what those corporate-sponsored anti-union groups don't know or understand. Although these union-haters try to single out union leaders with personal attacks, most of them have never been involved in a union and have no idea who we are or what we do. They don't understand that unions are not driven from the top down like their corporations are. They don't understand that the corporate philosophy of "the next time we want your opinion we will give it to you" doesn't apply in a labor union. They will never understand these critical differences between corporations and unions, and these important differences are the core of our strength.

In a labor union, every member has a voice and every member has the opportunity to be part of the union movement. For example, as I type this message we are in the middle of our triennial Local Division elections. This local election process is where energetic members generally get their first chance to move to the next level of union involvement. The desire of these proud union members to make a difference and to make our union strong is the back bone of our Organization, and it is also what makes us different from most other organizations. There is no CEO in a labor union who selects the next generation of the union's young officers; it is the members who owns that

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Journal

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High-speed honors

California Labor Federation awards Teamsters Rail Conference for "Furthering the Vision of High Speed Rail"

At the California Labor Federation's Solidarity Awards Dinner on July 24, 2012, the Teamsters Rail Conference and 10 other honorees were recognized with the "Furthering the Vision of High Speed Rail Award." The dinner was held in conjunction with the California Labor Federation's 29th Biennial Convention at the Westin St. Francis in San Francisco. California Governor Jerry Brown and U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis attended as special guests. The Teamsters Rail Conference Assistant to the Director David Cameron and BLET National Association of State Legislative Board Chairmen and California State Legislative Chairman Tim Smith accepted the Award on behalf of the Teamsters.

High-speed rail was a focal point of the dinner. Secretary Solis discussed how Gov. Brown's commitment to investing in job-creating and emissions-reducing infrastructure projects, like high-speed rail, will put California back on the right track. Republican Governors in Florida and Wisconsin turned down billions of dollars in high-speed rail grants just to make a partisan political point. They say they want to create jobs, but refuse to make the investments to do so.

"Our efforts to help make high-speed rail a reality will bring tens of thousands of jobs to Californians," said Rail Conference Director John Murphy. "Our success here is the result of diverse advocates uniting under the goal to put people back to work. It shows what we are capable of achieving. We need to keep the pressure on and continue to push forward."

"The Rail Conference has been working on this project, the largest construction in the history of the nation, for several years," said Rail Conference and



From left: Tim Smith, Chairman of the BLET California State Legislative Board; David Cameron, Teamsters Rail Conference Assistant to the Director; and Connie Leyva, President of the California Labor Federation.

BLET President Dennis R. Pierce. "It is enormously satisfying to see a successful conclusion to this stage of our work on this historic project. Now, the real work begins, getting the project built."

At the dinner, Gov. Jerry Brown discussed the high-speed rail project at length, discounting the notion that it's "too expensive" by explaining the actual math behind the project, what it would cost and how much revenue it would produce.

In addition to the Teamsters Rail Conference, 10 other honorees were recognized with the "Furthering the Vision of High Speed Rail Award." Those honorees were the State Building and

Construction Trades Council, California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers, Operating Engineers Local 3, Operating Engineers Local 12, Laborers' International Union, California Conference of Machinists, IBEW Ninth District, SEIU Local 1000, AFSCME United Domestic Workers and United Steelworkers District 12.

The California Labor Federation is made up of more than 1,200 AFL-CIO and Change to Win unions, representing 2.1 million union members in manufacturing, retail, construction, transportation, hospitality, public sector, health care, entertainment and other industries.

Unity conference 2012

During May, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters held its 2012 Unity Conference with a large gathering of the union's principal officers, business agents, organizers and rank-and-file Teamsters, meeting in the spirit of solidarity. The swearing in of General President Jim Hoffa and General Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall, along with the other newly elected International Union Officers, took place at the Unity Conference. Teamsters from all corners of the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico joined their newly inducted leadership at the ceremony.




Lobbying for rail safety

Sending a message on Capital Hill

Nebraska Senator Ben Nelson (D) met with members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) on June 7 to discuss the importance of Positive Train Control (PTC) and other rail safety related issues.

Pat Pfeifer, assistant legislative board chairman for Nebraska and a Union Pacific engineer, explained to the senator about how PTC could help save lives and create a safer workplace. Craig Gil-

christ, who at the time was Chairman of the Montana State Legislative Board Chairman, and D.B. Kenner, current Montana chairman, also met with staff members of Senator Max Baucus' (D-MT) office about PTC as well as rail transportation budget issues.

Brothers Pfeifer, Gilchrist and Kenner were in Washington, D.C., following the BLET's Education & Training Department workshop for legislative board chairmen. 



Seated, from left: D.B. Kenner, Pat Pfeifer and Craig Gilchrist



From left: Nebraska Senator Ben Nelson (D) with BLET member Pat Pfeifer. Brother Pfeifer is Local Chairman and Legislative Representative of BLET Division 88 (North Platte, Neb.).

Honoring a late Brother

Division 269 hosts 18th annual Bobby McCann Golf Tournament

The members of BLET Division 269 (Long Island Rail Road) held the 18th annual Bobby McCann Golf Tournament earlier this year to help raise funds for skin cancer research.

The tournament is named in honor of Bobby McCann, a late member of BLET Division 269 who passed away from melanoma as a young man. The Brotherhood has organized a golf tournament in his

honor, with proceeds being donated to the Schneider Children's Hospital in Long Island and the Skin Cancer Foundation.

A traditional part of the annual tournament, a member of the McCann family is invited to begin the event by hitting the first drive of the day. This year, the honor went to Tim McCann, Bobby's brother. He thanked everyone for coming out and for honoring his brother's memory. 📷



letters to the editor



"I can assure you that I will proudly carry my card with me at all time! Once again, thank you!"

— John W. Meyer, Division 292

Brother Pierce:

I wish to extend a very heartfelt thank you as I just received my membership card in the mail this afternoon.

I was a part of Local Division 292 when Brother Davis literally worked himself ragged trying to resolve the impasse created by the Wheeling & Lake Erie a few years back. With determination and skill he was successful.

I can assure you that I will proudly carry my card with me at all time! Once again, thank you!

John W. Meyer
Division 292
Beach City, Ohio

Dear President Pierce:

Many thanks for your outstanding editorial in the Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen Journal (Spring 2012). You framed the critical issue facing American labor in clear and convincing language. Your message should be required reading at the next meeting of every Division in the BLET. I would respectfully suggest that it be made available in reprint form as well. Although I am retired from the Long Island Rail Road for almost three years, I still keep in touch with many retirees; a small group of us meet for breakfast every Wednesday morning and there is also a monthly retiree lun-

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letters to the editor

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cheon. I will pass your vital message on to my fellow retirees, many of whom were not Locomotive Engineers and so would not have received your message.

Even in a supposedly strong union state like New York, all too many working people have been hoodwinked into supporting the economic and political agenda of the 1% by the incessant repetition of anti-union propaganda by the corporate media and their lapdog politicians. Your article stands out as a strong rebuttal to their lies and more people need to see and hear it.

Fraternally,
George Maccarone
Retired
Division 269
Long Island, N.Y.

BLET Editor's Note:
The following is a letter to Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI), who authored the infamous Ryan Budget that would gut Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits.

Mr. Ryan:
Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is William L. Hamm from Midlothian, Va., which is in the district that Eric Cantor represents. I am a retired CSX locomotive engineer, where I worked for a total of 39 years. Prior to my career on the railroad, I served four years in the Marine Corps. I am a Vietnam veteran serving 13 months in Vietnam.
In this letter, I will also include my letter to Cantor dated April 26, 2012, where I made myself perfectly clear about how I feel about your Budget Plan, in particular the Railroad Retirement

"I could go on but I would be spinning my wheels. You get the message — leave my Railroad Retirement alone. Keep your hands off money that is not yours. We active and retired railroaders need what we earned."
— W. L. (Sonny) Hamm, Retired, BLET Division 561

language. The Majority Leader has not as of this date responded to my letter. I know he is such a busy person running about the country doing his best to destroy the lives of millions of hard working Americans. I am sure by now you can read between the lines and figure out that I am not pleased with Cantor or you. I have one question of you. Did you read the Railroad Retirement Act before you made it part of your Budget plan? If you guys are successful in getting this budget as law, you will have destroyed all that I have worked for my entire life. If you take the time to read the letter that I sent to Cantor you will realize that without my railroad retirement pay, I will be broke just like so many millions of folks are in this country.
I am not going to dwell on this subject but I hope you have the decency to respond to this letter. I need to know if you really want to take a pension from hard working active and retired railroad workers and give it to the government so you people can buy one or two more jets to start another war. I hope that

you understand that the money in the Railroad Retirement fund is funded by railroad companies and their employees. Not one cent has been paid into our plan from the government.
I want to remind you that under President Bush, deficit spending topped \$7 trillion, over 14 million jobs were shipped overseas, pork spending exceeded \$7 trillion, healthcare premiums increased 647%, salaries for health insurance executives increased 371%, you Republicans squandered the Clinton surplus, and the debt ceiling was raised seven times. We were duped into two unfunded wars, but you want to take my railroad retirement and pay for those stupid wars. I know about war, I saw it first hand. Have you been there?
I could go on but I would be spinning my wheels. You get the message — leave my Railroad Retirement alone. Keep your hands off money that is not yours. We active and retired railroaders need what we earned. You people have destroyed our country, but do not destroy the families of railroad employees.

Believe me, there are many, many railroaders upset with this budget plan. While you accuse President Obama of being a socialist and wanting to redistribute the wealth, you seek to back door into a private pension fund and redistribute \$24 billion of wealth the American taxpayer did not pay one dime into in order to balance your budget and further your political career... talk about socialism! Railroaders will make a difference in some of your primaries because of you, just wait and see.

If you think this letter is distasteful, let it be known, I will respect you when you respond to my letter and let me know what your intentions are with the budget. I was taught to respect others but you folks in D.C. have not shown one ounce of respect to the American people. I am going to copy Cantor and my U.S. Senators from Virginia as well as President Obama with this letter.

From a true American,
W. L. (Sonny) Hamm
Retired
BLET Division 561
Richmond, Va.

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS
The Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Journal welcomes Letters to the Editor. Please include your name, address, BLET Division number, email address, and/or phone number on any submission. We reserve the right to edit your submission for grammar, punctuation, content and space considerations.

Address letters to:
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Or email: Bentley@ble-t.org



BLET First Vice President's Message

BY E. LEE PRUITT, BLET FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Union safety

A union-made Miracle on the Hudson - Proud To Be American Proud To Be Union

In September, I had the pleasure of hearing guest speaker Jim Hightower at the banquet of the 77th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting in Galveston, Texas. Mr. Hightower told the story of U.S. Airways Captain "Sully" Sullenberger, who saved at least 155 lives when he safely "water landed" his Airbus A320 on New York's Hudson River after it became disabled due to striking a flock of Canada Geese in January of 2009. All passengers and crew members survived.

The story of the "Miracle on the Hudson" was all over the news when it happened three years ago. It may be old news, but Mr. Hightower put a fresh spin on it that perhaps makes it more relevant today, in the midst of this War on Workers, than it was in 2009.

What wasn't in the news three years ago — but what Mr. Hightower emphasized in his speech to BLET members — is the fact that the training, which Captain Sullenberger received to safely land his plane on the water, was paid for by his union. That's right. The union. Not the company or its Wall Street stockholders, but by the airline pilots union. Captain Sullenberger was actively involved in his union and was the head of its safety committee.

Other union folks were also there to make the Miracle on the Hudson a union-



"In other words, the Miracle on the Hudson likely would not have happened without years of employee training provided by labor unions or their insistence upon federal safety regulations."

made Miracle on the Hudson. The flight attendants, who helped passengers safely evacuate the disabled airplane, used the training they received from their union. The ferry boat crews, who moved their boats to within four inches of the downed airplane's wings to help rescue passengers, were trained members of the Seafarers International Union. The firefighters and police officers who responded to the scene? Also union members.

In other words, the Miracle on the Hudson likely would not have happened without years of employee training provided by labor unions or their insistence


upon federal safety regulations. These efforts are similar to the BLET's support for training by the National Labor College, including providing instructors and trainers, and the Brotherhood's fight for safety as part of the Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee and on Capitol Hill.

In 2011, conservative politicians declared a "War on Workers" in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and several other states. Union naysayers like to blame unions for the economic woes in today's society. But the last time I checked, union folks weren't responsible for the reckless

gambles taken on Wall Street that nearly bankrupted our economy. As President Pierce has said, unions are not the problem — we are the foundation of the solution.

According to the latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics out of Washington, D.C., the percent of wage and salary workers who were members of a union was 11.8 percent in 2011. That was down from 11.9 percent in 2010. My question to you is this: How would such a small percentage of the population have such a hugely negative impact on the economy? The answer: We don't. We and our fellow union members are being made into scapegoats.

There's no question that America's economy has suffered in recent years. A strong middle class is key to an economic revival, and there can be no such revival without a strong middle class. There also cannot be a strong middle class without a vibrant union movement.

We are here to do our jobs safely and professionally. Would an underpaid, untrained contractor have been able to pull off the Miracle on the Hudson? I don't think so. Remember this the next time you hear someone bad mouthing unions. We are more important to the economic well being — and safety — of America than many people realize or seem to be willing to admit, these days. 



BLET National Secretary-Treasurer's Message

BY WILLIAM C. WALPERT, BLET NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

BREAD AND ROSES: Strike 100 years ago a call for subsistence, dignity

This year marked the 100th anniversary of the famous “Bread and Roses” strike, a landmark event in American labor history. While many BLET members may not be familiar with it, the strike has implications today as we continue the struggle to maintain our own bread and roses.

In 1912, a new state law went into effect in Massachusetts, which reduced the work week for women and children from 56 to 54 hours. The government’s intent was to give women more time at home and children more time at school. Businesses, however, used it as an excuse to cut wages. Average pay at the time was \$8.76 a week. When workers who were barely surviving on the old rate of received their first checks at the lower rate, it triggered a near riot and the great textile strike in Lawrence, Mass.

For nine weeks in a bitterly cold winter, about 20,000 workers — mostly women and children — challenged the mill owners. They faced a strike-breaking militia armed with guns and clubs, but the strikers were generally peaceful.

Why was a strike at a textile mill called the “bread and roses” strike? Partially because the reduced wages were



Federal troops block protestors during the 1912 Bread and Roses strike.


calculated as roughly the cost of three loaves of bread. Also, the strike was more about just wages and food. It was about dignity and respect. Some women strikers reportedly carried banners proclaiming “We want bread, and roses too,” symbolizing their fight both for subsistence and for dignity.

The tide turned against the mills when strike breakers came down too hard on the women. The violence became the topic of a Congressional hearing, and public sentiment turned against the

mill owners. The owners eventually returned to the bargaining table and the workers won most of their demands.

Today, we in the BLET are continuing the struggle for our own bread and roses. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen has been in existence for nearly 150 years because we have consistently and successfully maintained a high standard of living for our members. Our organization has time and time again secured contracts that provide our

members with good wages along with the dignity that comes from supporting their families.

The Bread and Roses strike was an important step in organized labor’s long struggle to gain benefits that many of us take for granted today. As America again faces an era of increasing inequalities of wealth, we can take inspiration from the workers of the “Bread and Roses” strike. 

MORE INFORMATION:
Bread and Roses Heritage website,
www.breadandrosesheritage.org



Guest Columnists

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

Romney's Latest Attack on Working Americans

Mitt Romney, the former Bain Capital President and CEO and Republican presidential nominee, again demonstrated how disconnected he is with average Americans by belittling the value and contributions of one of the last advocates for working men and women, labor unions. In his remarks at Lansing Community College, Romney blamed unions for job loss, the decline of American industry and the demise of American companies.

Mitt Romney is the last person that should be pointing the finger at anyone for the decline of American businesses and job loss. This nonsense is coming from a man who made his millions dismantling companies and putting countless numbers of middle class workers out on the street. He is nothing more than a parrot, repeating whatever talking points are put in front of him each day. This is not a man that should be in the White House as we continue down the path to economic recovery.

Romney panders to elite donors who want to dismantle social programs out of

pure greed. He believes that "Corporations are people" and should be allowed to spend whatever they want to influence government.

In his remarks in Lansing, Romney also made clear his support for right-to-work for less laws that are solely designed to hamstring labor unions and help drive down wages and benefits for workers so that big business can increase profits on the back of the middle class.

Right to work laws are not right for America's workers. In this time of rising health costs and dwindling wages and benefits, the last thing workers need is a president that wants to destroy the strong representation that unions provide. In Romney's America, workers would not be able to bargain for better wages, stronger work rules or affordable health care. Is that really what the 99 percent needs right now? I don't think so.

Fraternally,

JAMES P. HOFFA
TEAMSTERS GENERAL
PRESIDENT

Making High-Speed Rail a Reality - Starting in California

All eyes are on California. This past June, the California State Legislature approved \$2.6 billion in state rail bond funds to complement \$3.3 billion in federal funds, which will enable the state to begin the construction of California's High-Speed Rail system (HSR).

On behalf of our Rail Conference and all Teamsters, Tim Smith, BLET National and California Legislative Chairman, and David Cameron, Assistant to the Director of the Rail Conference, were actively engaged in a coordinated campaign to encourage the California Legislature to proceed with this groundbreaking project. They continue to fight to ensure the Teamsters have a central seat at the table for the largest construction project in the history of the country by meeting with the California High-Speed Rail Authority, the governor and his staff,

and state legislators. By participating in press conferences up and down the state, they are working to make this vital project a reality.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent on high-speed rail corridors around the country. In the Northeast and Midwest corridors, these expenditures have resulted in a significant increase in our Rail Conference membership. We will experience an even greater increase in our BLET and BMWED memberships in California after these bonds were approved in June.

In July, the California Senate approved the legislation and Governor Jerry Brown signed the bill on July 18, putting thousands of Californians back to work. It's our hope that with the appropriation of the bonds, construction of the first phase will begin by the end of the year.

With your help, we will make this historic opportunity a reality.

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

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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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Educating & Training our future leaders

WILLIAM C. WALPERT: BLET NATIONAL SECRETARY TREASURER

It was nearly 40 years ago that Bill Walpert began serving the Brotherhood, but he remembers it like it was yesterday.

“It was during a nominating meeting in 1977,” Walpert said. “C.W. Hubbard Jr., a 25-year member, stood up and said, ‘The future of this organization lies with its youth.’ He nominated me and I ended up winning the election.”

Since that day, Walpert has never looked back. He has taken to heart the charge of preserving the future of our organization. As Director of the BLET Education and Training Department, Walpert is ensuring the future of the Brotherhood by helping to guide, train, and strengthen the next generation of BLET leaders.

Indeed, countless elected BLET officers today trace the roots of their success to workshops conducted by Brother Walpert and the BLET Education and Training Department.

“I’d like to think I’m a proponent of securing a viable future for our members and this proud organization,” he said.

After being elected Local Chairman of Division 172 (Fort Worth, Texas) in

1973, Brother Walpert quickly climbed the ladder. He served three terms as local chairman, two years as first vice chairman and then general chairman of the St. Louis & San Francisco/Burlington Northern Santa Fe General Committee of Adjustment from 1984 to 1992. On July 18, 1996, he was elected to serve on the BLE Advisory Board as an International Vice President.

Walpert said every place he traveled in his early days as a BLET officer, he noted the desperate need for membership education and training.

“It was evident the membership craved complete and formalized training in all offices and at all levels,” he said.

Delegates to the BLET International Convention in 1991 amended the Brotherhood’s bylaws to establish a formal Education and Training Department. He became the department’s first and only Director shortly thereafter. In that capacity, he has helped train an entirely new generation of union leaders.

In the mid-2000s, Brother Walpert spearheaded a strategic initiative to convert monthly dues reporting by Secretary-Treasurers to a customized, state-

of-the-art online reporting system. The transition from paper to electronic reporting has been a major success for the Brotherhood and has helped save countless hours over the years by streamlining the reporting process.

The Education and Training Department came full circle two years ago, when delegates attending the BLET’s Second National Convention in Reno in 2010 voted to provide a dedicated funding stream for education and training. A major part of the plan is to use the funds to eventually develop an Education and Training Center at the BLET National Division headquarters.

Director of Education and Training is a full-time job, and Brother Walpert thanked Ken Kroeger, Coordinator of Education and Training, for his hard work and dedication over the years.

Brother Walpert also makes time to oversee another important department within the Brotherhood — the BLET Safety Task Force. The Safety Task Force was established in 1989 as the rail industry’s first union-based accident investigation and reporting team. The STF has investigated numerous accidents over the years.

WILLIAM C. WALPERT BIO **Title:** National Secretary-Treasurer **Railroad:** BNSF (St. Louis & San Francisco) **Member:** BLET Division 604 (Madill, Okla.) **Background:** Joined BLET on Nov. 1, 1973. Hired out in Fort Worth, Texas, 1973. Promoted to engineer, 1974. **Union history:** General Chairman, BNSF/Frisco GCA, 1984-1992. Alternate vice president, 1986-1991. Elected to Vice President in 1996, National Secretary-Treasurer in 2001; reelected by acclamation in 2006. Founder and leader of the BLET Education & Training Department. Heads the BLET Safety Task Force. As NST, he has custody of all BLET funds and directs the financial and record departments. **Personal:** Baseball fan who collects Mickey Mantle cards.

William C. Walpert
National Secretary-
Treasurer



“We lend an important component to National Transportation Safety Board investigations by providing insight on accidents from the engineer’s point of view,” said Brother Walpert, who acknowledged the dedication of STF Coordinator Carl Fields for helping to reenergize the department in recent years.


In a testament to his experience and expertise in the management of the BLET’s financial system, Brother Walpert was unanimously appointed to serve as a Trustee of the National Railroad Retirement Board Investment Trust (NRRIT) in May of 2011. The

NRRIT was established by the Railroad Retirement and Survivor’s Improvement Act of 2001, and oversees investments currently totaling approximately \$25 billion. As a Trustee, Brother Walpert helps to manage and invest Railroad Retirement assets, investing into a diversified portfolio in the same manner as those of private sector retirement plans.

“It is an important responsibility to know our investments are protecting the financial futures of not just BLET members, but all railroad workers in the United States,” he said. “We are making investments for today’s

railroaders, and those who haven’t even hired out yet. It’s a responsibility that I am extremely proud of, and one that I take very seriously.”

Brother Walpert first met his wife, Janet, when she was 16 years old. They were both working at a pharmacy in Springfield, Mo. They have been married since 1985.

Looking back over the past 40 years, Brother Walpert has seen many changes for the better in North America’s senior rail labor organization. “The BLET is on the right track and our course is steady for years to come,” he said. 



In Tucson, members Proud to be American, Proud to be Union

BLET AUXILIARY 28 BEATS THE HEAT TO CELEBRATE LABOR DAY



Members of BLET Guadalupe Auxiliary No. 28 in Tucson, Ariz., braved the 100-plus degree heat on September 3 to participate in the 2012 Pima Area Labor Foundation annual Labor Day event.

The theme for this year's event was "Red, White, and Blue — Union-Made Puts America to Work." Members of the Auxiliary set up a booth to sell red "Proud to Be American, Proud to Be Union" t-shirts. Members of the BLET and their families also participated, with all donning the same red t-shirts. They made up the single-largest union presence at Tucson's Labor Day event.

"One of the unexpected perks of Auxiliary 28's effort was the fellowship created when numerous members of BLET Division 28 and their families showed up to purchase the red shirts and then stuck around in the shaded area behind the booth to visit with one another," said Sereena Hogan, National Vice President of the BLET Auxiliary and member of

Guadalupe Auxiliary 28.

Many local candidates running for office in the November elections were on hand to visit with labor members and many visited the BLET Auxiliary's booth. Nick Johnson, a member of Division 28 and Chairman of the Arizona State Legislative Board, was on hand to meet with several candidates and discuss issues of importance to the BLET and its Arizona members.


Two new members join the Guadalupe Auxiliary that day — retired BLET member Henry Zappia and his wife, Joanna.

Sister Hogan, who spearheaded the event, thanked the BLET Auxiliary and BLET members who helped put the event together, including: Brother Johnson; Eric Bergman, President, Div. 28; Ron Sprague, Local Chairman, Div. 28; Jon Hurst, retired Div. 28 member; Kathy Hurst, President, Guadalupe Auxiliary No. 28; Jeanne McArdle, Guadalupe Auxiliary Member; and her husband, Ken Kroeger, member

of both BLET Division 28 and Guadalupe Auxiliary No. 28.

"The members of Division 28 provided the pop-up ramada and cold water," Sister Hogan said. "Retired Division 28 member Henry Zappia brought a huge fan and a generator to run it... this was a great as the temperature was about 100 degrees that day. Ron Sprague put out several messages to Division 28 members via e-mail prior to the event."

About 1,200 labor members and their families participated in the Labor Day event. All 28 local AFL-CIO member unions were in attendance, along with several Change to Win affiliates, including BLET.

"This was an Auxiliary event," Sister Hogan said. "I hope other BLET Divisions will view what we accomplished as an example of how an Auxiliary can help their BLET Division members in numerous ways, especially when the local division officers work together with the local auxiliary officers." 

Photos: courtesy of BLET Guadalupe Auxiliary No. 28



Photo: Jeff Wilhelm/The Charlotte Observer

BLET helps organize annual Labor Day parade in Charlotte

For the past 13 years, BLET member Ben Lee has volunteered to help organize the annual Labor Day Parade in Charlotte, N.C. But this year's parade was like no other.

This year, the parade took on a national significance as it was held just prior to the opening of the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte on September 3. It was a point of pride for Brother Lee and the many other BLET members who have participated in the event since 1999.

"Many parade participants and viewers immediately went to Carolina Fest, a festival put on by the DNC Host Committee," said Brother Lee, who is Local

Chairman of Division 166 (Charlotte, N.C.). For the past eight years, Brother Lee has volunteered as Chairman of the Charlotte Labor Day Parade.

Organized in conjunction with local labor organizations and the Southern Piedmont Central Labor Council, this year's parade honored the accomplishments of organized labor in America and in Charlotte and featured labor organizations, bands, political candidates, and community groups.

Brother Lee thanked the active and retired members of Division 166 who have volunteered over the years to help with the parade, including: Don Woods, Jim McLaughlin, Ira Alexander, Roger

Thomason, and the late Hector Denobili. "My wife Rose-Ann and daughters Mary and Serena worked hard on the parade, and Kim and Courtney Rogers, wife and daughter of member Marvin Rogers, were always there to help," Brother Lee said.

Lee hired out on the Seaboard Coast Line as a fireman in 1971, and he joined BLET Division 435 (Hamlet, N.C.) in 1972. He has served as Local Chairman of Division 166 in Charlotte since 1983.

"Always remember those who fought, suffered, and died for our worker rights, the 40 hour week, the weekends, retirement, and health care; and please never take it for granted," Brother Lee said. ☪

Photo: courtesy of Charlotte Labor Day Parade



2012 BLET REGIONAL MEETING PHOTOS

SMA 2012 JUNE 24-29 • ORLANDO, FLA.



IWC 2012 JULY 29-AUGUST 1 • BILLINGS, MONT.



EUMA 2012 AUGUST 19-24 • ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.





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Warren Hinely, CSX-Eastern Lines VGC, passes away

IT IS WITH DEEPEST REGRET THAT THE BLET NATIONAL DIVISION REPORTS the passing of J. Warren Hinely, Vice General Chairman of the CSX-Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment.

Brother Hinely, 65, died in Savannah, Ga., on September 25 following a lengthy illness. Brother Hinely was a member of BLET Division 49 (Miami, Fla.) and had held continuous membership in the Brotherhood since August 1, 1978.

As a young man Brother Hinely enlisted in the U.S. Navy and enrolled in Pilot School, then enlisted in the U.S. Army. After serving in the military, he earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in English.

He hired out on the railroad in 1973 and joined the BLET in 1978. In 1981, he was elected Local Chairman of



Long time friends: Retired BLET National President Paul Sorrow, left, with Brother Warren Hinely in 2009.

Division 49 in Miami. In 1992, he was elected Vice General Chairman of the CSX-Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment, a position he held continuously until his untimely passing. He

was most recently reelected by acclamation in April of 2012.

"Brother Hinely was a pillar of strength for many years and was a selfless and dedicated union officer," BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said "He will be truly missed by the officers and members of the CSX-Eastern Lines General Committee of Adjustment. On behalf of the entire Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, I extend our deepest sympathies to the Hinely family."

He is survived by his wife Cassie Michele Wright Hinely of Miami Springs, Fla., and numerous cousins.

Remembrances may be given to the American Cancer Society, 1930 Springfield-Egypt Road., Springfield, GA 31329. ☪

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

AS OF SEPT. 30, 2012

74 — K. L. Bolinger
269 — J. C. Erland
325 — R. B. Washington
387 — F. E. Brock
495 — G. A. Owen
598 — B. A. Dobbins
703 — T. L. Fogleman

AS OF AUG. 31, 2012

32 — C. O. Hughes Jr.
238 — S. M. Johnson
269 — W. C. Foley
301 — J. D. Walrond
383 — G. Mesa
482 — J. P. Boia
482 — N. L. Warfield
622 — V. J. McCabe
800 — B. Fiant

AS OF JULY 31, 2012

13 — L. H. Larson
79 — L. Veach
88 — W. L. Dauphin
228 — S. McCully
237 — E. M. Sauerwein
275 — E. A. Clayton Jr.
303 — K. J. Pittman
348 — J. H. Hamilton
370 — E. W. Bock Jr.
421 — P. M. Butterson
456 — B. R. Davis
456 — R. M. Gibson
498 — N. R. Sorrow

561 — M. F. Dunn
592 — J. S. Hall
592 — D. J. Hall
683 — R. E. Andreasen
683 — H. A. Sobieszcyk
781 — J. R. Counts
782 — W. S. Murphy
914 — D. A. Wilkinson
932 — J. D. Clark Jr.
937 — R. R. Wilson

AS OF JUNE 30, 2012

3 — F. A. DeNise
46 — M. C. Purrello
47 — D. R. Zimmerman
48 — A. Scott
101 — C. Bragg
118 — J. E. Byrd
134 — R. R. Parker
135 — D. N. Anderson
165 — G. M. Huddleston
183 — L. J. Doner
186 — M. B. Parrish Jr.
197 — J. Valle
216 — H. L. Ash III
228 — R. K. Smith
232 — S. C. Sheets
246 — F. J. Garland
253 — A. J. Gratto
271 — L. E. Herald
299 — E. Prosser Jr.
444 — R. W. Heeren
457 — D. M. Cremean
477 — J. C. Luyster

482 — T. E. Davis
532 — C. N. Regan
650 — W. A. Karas
700 — G. Momich
752 — C. J. Ingro
752 — P. P. Staats
757 — S. G. Sheterom Sr.
768 — E. D. Hornseth
782 — J. B. Bierley
871 — B. R. Sinclair

AS OF MAY 31, 2012

13 — W. G. Culp
88 — C. C. Fairley
197 — D. M. Gregg
203 — P. Cliburn
203 — C. C. Fenn
369 — N. D. Carlson
383 — S. K. Allen
531 — J. Hankton Jr.
622 — E. F. Hatzenbuehr
858 — L. B. Smith

AS OF APRIL 30, 2012

74 — D. L. Ford Sr.
77 — L. A. Paquin
96 — J. C. Hernandez
103 — J. R. Freeburg
121 — T. C. Shick
165 — M. E. McKim
216 — D. R. Beckerman
269 — G. H. Anselm
362 — R. M. Helling
383 — W. H. Secor

457 — E. D. Wagoner Sr.
549 — R. C. Olson
574 — G. L. Sides
590 — W. J. McMahon
782 — D. L. Faulkner
829 — A. C. Banks
830 — H. A. Gibson

AS OF MARCH 31, 2012

97 — R. D. Dow
198 — J. A. Allen
206 — H. M. Ballard
283 — P. A. Trainer
343 — R. G. Galbraith
373 — R. Geoghan
391 — K. M. Fett
494 — G. J. Windels
518 — R. A. Miller
598 — W. R. Peace
692 — J. T. White
762 — C. S. Barry
867 — P. D. Ohara
940 — A. D. Hinze

AS OF FEB. 29, 2012

114 — C. J. Lyman
125 — J. P. Olone
179 — C. W. Shields
269 — E. Focacci
766 — D. M. Myers
769 — J. C. Smith III

AS OF JAN. 31, 2012

28 — S. A. Hanson

28 — S. L. Steinke
52 — H. J. Handley
94 — C. L. Aman
96 — F. C. Cadell
96 — L. P. Pochocki
126 — J. F. McAmis
133 — R. A. Kaylor
171 — U. M. Brooks
278 — J. N. Wells
391 — G. P. Risinger
392 — M. L. Glover Jr.
421 — M. L. Doherty
480 — J. A. Schwartz
512 — B. C. Shafer
520 — G. D. Holmquist
573 — S. L. Bigler
597 — W. E. Evans
752 — J. F. Kennedy
752 — D. A. MacPhail
811 — D. G. Campbell

AS OF DEC. 31, 2011

57 — J. D. Mahoney
156 — D. B. Grissom
228 — J. G. Pyne
269 — R. J. Brown
294 — R. D. Miller
325 — E. F. Moorhead
491 — E. D. Pupkes
497 — A. M. Wilson
636 — J. R. Kelley
692 — D. A. Hogan Jr.
803 — L. W. Kitchens
811 — T. A. Valdez

Path to regression

Proposed Ryan Budget aims to stifle the middle class



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

We have all heard a lot in recent months about the Ryan Budget. The news has been filled with both positive and negative spin on what it contains, but I believe, in a budget named the “Path to Prosperity,” it is important to dig down to see what groups will actually prosper if this budget were to be enacted. The answer is — like many of the policies in recent years that have redistributed the wealth of this country to the richest among us — the middle class and the poor won’t be among the beneficiaries. This budget is more of the same — cutting taxes on the rich while slashing programs for the poor and middle class.

In the past 20 years, we have seen a vast redistribution in wealth in this country, and this budget would further that trend. Income inequality has continued to grow with the richest 20 percent of families taking home 47 percent of all income and earning 10 times that of low-income working families. In the year 2000, there were about 72 million middle-class jobs in the United States, but today there are only about 65 million middle-class jobs (according to the Census Bureau, median household income in 2009 was \$49,084). Meanwhile, our population is getting larger.

This budget — through its cuts to the poor and working Americans — will continue to widen that gap. This budget attacks those most vulnerable to income equality; it widens the gap between the

children of the poor and the children of the rich. It reduces food stamps and other food-assistance programs that help with nutrition. It hurts public education and Pell Grants that help our children develop the skills they need to get ahead. It hurts Medicaid, a program which covers more than 25 million children, limiting the poor and children’s access to health care.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) estimated that the Ryan Budget would give millionaires a \$265,000 tax cut on top of the Bush tax cuts, even as 62 percent of its spending cuts come from government programs that help those with low incomes. CBPP’s Robert Greenstein said that it would “likely produce the largest redistribution of income from the bottom to the top in modern U.S. history and likely increase poverty and inequality more than any other budget in recent times.”

We all know that it is difficult, if not impossible, to get anything passed through both the House and Senate in this political environment, and this budget is no different. It will most certainly not be passed in its current form by the Senate in this Congress. But it is important to pay close attention to this budget because it provides a window in to the future playbook for the Republican Party if they retain the House and gain the Senate and White House in November’s election. It is likely just a minor sample of what is in store next year from Republicans. In fact, House Speaker John Boehner said on March 29 that the budget proposal put forward by House Budget Committee Chairman

Paul Ryan is a “real vision” of how Republicans would govern if they had more control of Washington.

It is clear that if this budget is the “real vision” of the Republican’s plans, we must work to stop it.

IMPACT ON RAILROAD WORKERS:

Much has been written by the BLET about the budget’s proposals for Railroad Retirement. In “Function 600” of the Ryan Budget’s report, the authors write that they “would conform Tier 1 so that its benefits would equal those of Social Security, with an estimated savings to taxpayers of \$2 billion over 10 years.”

What are the implications of this language? Enactment of this legislation would eliminate the Railroad Retirement Occupational Disability program, as well as the “60/30” provision for allowing early retirement for railroad workers at age 60 if they have 30 years of service. Under the legislation, the earliest these individuals could retire would be age 62, and that would be with a significantly reduced annuity. Annuities for spouses of these workers also would be negatively impacted in this manner. These provisions would negatively affect the annuities of almost 120,000 non-disabled employees, almost 90,000 spouses and over 62,000 occupationally disabled employees.

The Ryan Budget fundamentally misconstrues the relationship between Railroad Retirement and Social Security, and ignores the fact that all Railroad Retirement benefits above Social Security — whether Tier 1 benefits or Tier 2 benefits — are fully funded by railroad

RYAN BUDGET THREATENS RAILROAD RETIREMENT
For all info and news links, go to: www.ble-t.org/ryanbudget



Education and training: Attendees at the recent workshop for State Legislative Board Chairmen in Washington D.C.

workers and their employers; none of these benefits are funded from the general treasury. Therefore, no actual budgetary savings would result from enactment of this legislation.

The Ryan Budget also attacks two other key components of the American social compact in a way that would negatively impact active and retired railroad workers. Under current law, new retirees receive Social Security benefits based on the growth in wages. The Ryan Budget would set initial benefits based on the growth in prices, which over time grow at a slower rate. This would harm 70% of Social Security beneficiaries by cutting benefits by roughly 16% for the average new retiree in 2050 and 28% in 2080. These cuts also would affect Tier 1 Railroad Retirement benefits.

THE IMPACT OF MEDICARE CHANGES:

The Ryan Budget also would end Medicare as we know it. The Medicare eligibility age would be raised to 67. This, alone, would increase out-of-pocket health care costs by \$4,300 a year for

nearly one million individuals ages 65 and 66, and would leave early retirees with a two-year gap in their coverage.

If enacted, the Ryan plan would encourage seniors to purchase private health-insurance plans, which would undermine the current program. The proposal would cap spending on future retirees, offering them a set amount with which to purchase private health insurance on newly created federal insurance exchanges. It does preserve traditional Medicare as an option, but seniors could be required to pay significantly more for Medicare coverage if the program proved to be more expensive than the private plans.

Essentially, the Ryan Budget replaces Medicare's guaranteed benefits with a fixed contribution voucher payment that beneficiaries would use towards the cost of private insurance or traditional Medicare starting in 2023.

The amount of this voucher would be based on the second cheapest available plan in the area. There is no guarantee that this payment would cover enough

of a premium's cost to actually make the Medicare replacement health care affordable. In fact, it is far more likely that beneficiaries would be left with increased out of pocket costs, because the Ryan Budget caps the amount of the voucher at a half percent above Gross Domestic Product, which has been below the growth in health insurance costs in recent years. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that new beneficiaries could pay over \$1,200 more per year by 2030 and over \$5,900 more per year by 2050 under the Ryan Budget plan. It also would allow private insurers to cherry pick the younger and healthier beneficiaries, leaving Medicare with a disproportionate share of the oldest, sickest and costliest beneficiaries, driving up costs for the program and setting it on an unsustainable path.

Proponents of this plan are quick to defend this proposal by claiming that workers over the age of 55 will not be affected by the changes, but it will still impact millions of workers under the age of 55 who are counting on Medicare coverage in their old age.



IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION:

The Ryan Budget resolution proposes lowering spending for transportation (Function 400) from a FY 2012 total of \$88.6 billion down to \$57.1 billion in FY 2013, a reduction of \$31.5 billion, or 36 percent.

The proposal would eliminate funding for development of high-speed rail, stating “High-speed rail projects and any new intercity rail projects should be pursued only if they can be established as self-supporting commercial services. There are only two high-speed rail lines in the world that break even: one in Europe and one in Japan. Both are in areas that have unusually high population densities and extremely high gasoline prices.” This statement is, however, inaccurate because in both cases; only a portion of those systems break even, there are government subsidies for capital costs, and only the above the rail operations break even. The Ryan Budget report closely echoes the words of a *Wall Street Journal* editorial by Wendell Cox, a long time opponent of high speed and passenger rail (WSJ, January 31, 2010).

For more than 50 years, the United States has spent billions building and maintaining the best highway system in the world. As a result it is estimated that by 2055 there will be 400 million motor vehicles on our nation’s highways compounding the present gridlock experienced on some of our nation’s road ways. Congestion, delays and environmental concerns have prompted our nation’s leaders to now turn back to the railroads, with the foundations of the high-speed system being built. The Ryan Budget fails to note both the job creation benefits, direct and indirect, of building a high-speed system and the necessity to look to varying modes of transportation to move the growing population of this country around. The highway system in this country — built by the federal government and state partners — allowed the movement of goods and people around this country and was an epic engine for this nation’s growth over the past 60 years. High speed rail has the

“For more than 50 years, the United States has spent billions building and maintaining the best highway system in the world. As a result it is estimated that by 2055 there will be 400 million motor vehicles on our nation’s highways compounding the present grid lock situation experienced on some of our nation’s road ways.”

— JOHN P. TOLMAN

potential to do the same.

Instead, Ryan’s proposal trots out the same lines we have heard over and over again attacking passenger rail for the past 40 years. It must be self supporting and profitable, while ignoring the greater good that increasing modes of transportation would have. There are no rail passenger systems in the world that are not subsidized in one form or another.

At the same time, Amtrak and its workers, which have been the whipping boy over the past four decades, were not left out of the Ryan proposal. In a section entitled “Terminate and reform spending on ineffective, wasteful subsidies and underperforming programs,” the proposal “supports continued reforms for Amtrak — including limiting overtime for Amtrak employees — and reductions in headquarters and administrative costs for agencies.”

Limiting overtime for Amtrak workers was an issue first brought forth last year by Republicans on the Appropriations Committee who felt that employees on Amtrak were making too much money. It has now been incorporated into this proposal as a way of furthering the agenda of the Republicans against workers.

This impact of this budget proposal on railroad workers is deep, but it also impacts other working Americans, including the working poor.

IMPACT ON THE POOR:

I am always struck by these statistics: 25 percent of American workers earn a wage that puts them at or below the poverty line and 25 percent of American children live in poverty. These groups are assisted, although not enough, by a variety of government programs. These government programs are now on the chopping block in the Ryan proposal.

Programs that benefit the working poor are facing the brunt of the cuts in the plan. In addition, Ryan calls for turning over to the states responsibility for the major federal programs for the poor, including Medicaid and food stamps.

In fact, one-fourth of the spending cuts come from programs directly benefiting the poor, including:

- Eliminating the Social Services Block Grant program, which gives federal funding to states and cities to assist 23 million low-income children, seniors and disabled Americans by providing money for Meals on Wheels, child abuse prevention programs, child care centers and job training programs.

- Cutting \$5.4 billion by eliminating direct spending for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, making it the only banking regulator subject to the politicized annual appropriations process. Changing the agency’s funding “would likely lessen consumer protection while adding to the pressure of keeping to a low discretionary spending cap,” the memo states.

- Cutting \$36 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as the food stamp program, which provides aid to low-income Americans. Nearly 1.8 million people would lose federal food aid and about 300,000 students would lose free-school meals aid.

- Cutting \$11.9 billion by eliminating the Prevention and Public Health Fund, an account used to pay for cancer prevention and public-health programs.

Government programs for the poor are a critical way of ensuring income mobility, and as they get squeezed, so, too, do the life chances of those born at the



base of the income ladder. In this way, the Ryan proposal ensures that the gap between the rich and the poor gets wider and wider.

THE IMPACT ON EDUCATION:

Federal education and job training programs would be consolidated and “modernized,” the plan says. Federal job training plans will be reformed in reaction to what the report says is a “high amount of waste, fraud, and abuse that occurs in these programs.”

According to analysis of the proposal by outside groups, more than one million college students would lose their Pell Grants under the proposal. It would also make Pell spending discretionary, instead of mandatory, allowing further cuts down the line. Pell Grants, the largest source of federal financial aid, currently help more than nine million students afford college. Following last year’s budget standoffs, next year’s maximum Pell Grant of \$5,645 will cover just one-third of the average cost of college — the smallest share ever.

Most of these students will be hit even harder because the proposal will also allow the interest rate for federally subsidized Stafford loans to double and end student loan interest subsidies for those still in school.

These cuts are in line with Mitt Romney’s statement this spring that children should borrow from their parents to attend school. It would further stratify society into the haves and the have nots by making access to higher education more difficult for working families. Education is one of the best ways to move up in our society, and this bill with further limit access to education. No millionaire’s child will find that Ryan’s budget ends their hopes of a college education, but plenty of lower and middle income children will.

THE IMPACT ON TAXES:

Speaking of millionaires, the tax proposals contained in the plan also disproportionately benefit the wealthy and corporations. The tax cuts in Paul Ryan’s 2013 budget plan would result in huge

benefits for high-income people and very modest, or no, benefits for low income working households, according to an analysis by the Tax Policy Center (TPC).

The proposal calls for replacing the current tax structure’s six brackets with just two: a 10 percent rate for lower-income earners and a 25 percent rate for upper-income earners.

That would be a reduction from the current top rate of 35 percent. Ryan also wants to wipe out the alternative minimum tax. And he calls for lowering the 35 percent tax on corporate profits to 25 percent and granting U.S. corporations a blanket exemption on profits earned overseas, pushing more corporations to send American jobs to other countries. The proposal would pay for these cuts by eliminating middle class tax breaks for home mortgage interest, employer-provided health insurance and retirement savings.

According to the Center, in 2015, relative to today’s tax system, those making \$1 million or more would enjoy an average tax cut of \$265,000 and see their after-tax income increase by 12.5 percent. By contrast, half of those making between \$20,000 and \$30,000 would get no tax cut at all. On average, people in that income group would get a tax reduction of \$129, raising their after-tax income by 0.5 percent. Nearly all middle-income households (those making between \$50,000 and \$75,000) would see their taxes fall, by an average of roughly \$1,000, increasing their after-tax income by about 2 percent. The Tax Policy Center projected the tax cuts in Ryan’s budget would add \$4.6 trillion to the federal deficit over the next decade, even after extending the 2001 and 2003 Bush tax cuts, which would add another \$5.4 trillion to the deficit.

CONCLUSION

If this is the real vision of how the Republicans would govern if they had full control in Washington, I believe that this nation will truly be in trouble. Attaching working Americans and the most vulnerable, children, the sick and the elderly, further widening of the in-

come gap between the rich and poor, and attacking Railroad Retirement should not be how we envision the future of our society. The working men and women of this country are under attack, and this budget illustrates the roadmap that our corporate-backed opponents plan to take in the future.

We need to fight back now more than ever. As BLET National President Pierce wrote in his open letter to BLET members regarding this issue “Complacency is our enemy and anything but an all-out effort to continue to educate our members on who is trying to help them and who is trying to hurt them is a recipe for failure.”

It is clear that the Ryan Budget, and the roadmap it provides, is not the road that this country should be going down. We must not be sit back and allow the middle class of this country to be driven off a cliff, which is what will happen if we follow this map. We must stand up and tell our nation’s leaders that we will not allow millionaires to receive tax cuts and corporations to shield their profits overseas, that we will not allow our nation’s children to go hungry, that we will not allow our nation’s elderly to go without health care because of the expense, that we will not allow college to become only for the wealthy, that we will not allow Amtrak to be attacked, that we will not allow high speed rail to be slashed, and that we will not allow our Railroad Retirement to be touched.

Brothers and Sisters, it is time for us to stand up and fight. Yes, it is unlikely this legislation will go anywhere, but we’ve been shown the map for a future that does not lead us in the direction we want to go. This “Path to Prosperity” should just be one more log on the fire that leads us to rise up and take action. If you are not willing to stand up for yourself or if you want to be complacent because you believe this will not impact you, do it for your children and grandchildren. Ask yourself if this path is one that you want to lead to their future — a future of limited opportunity, lower incomes and greater inequality. If that isn’t what you want for them, now is the time to act. 🗣️

Mike Muscha dedicated to BLET-PAC fund



Mike Muscha proudly served as locomotive engineer on the CP Rail Holiday Train in 2011.

Michael R. Muscha, long serving Chairman of the North Dakota State Legislative Board, completed his Last Run for the Canadian Pacific Railway on January 20, 2012.

Brother Muscha was a strong supporter of the BLET-PAC throughout his working career and became well known for always having PAC brochures and registration forms on hand wherever he went. Through his persistence and profound dedication to the Brotherhood, he convinced countless members to voluntarily support the Organization's political efforts over the years.

Brother Muscha hired out as a yard clerk for the Soo Line on September 15, 1970, in Enderlin, N.D. He went firing on June 18, 1979 and earned promotion to locomotive engineer for the Soo Line on December 18, 1979. He worked for the Soo and CP Rail throughout his entire 33-year career.

After moving into engine service,

he joined Division 671 (Enderlin, N.D.), and he served his fellow Division members faithfully over the years. He held the offices of Alternate Local Chairman (1983) and then Local Chairman and Legislative Representative (elected in 1984 and 1986). He served as Chairman of the North Dakota State Legislative Board from 1989-1992 and from 1996-2012. He also served the National Association of State Legislative Board Chairman as Chairman of Region 4 from 1990-1992 and 1996-2012.


Brother Muscha is proud of his union service, but is also proud of his work as a locomotive engineer. One of his more memorable moments came when he worked as locomotive engineer of the famous CP Rail Holiday Train on December 16, 2011, on a run from Enderlin to Harvey, N.D.

He spent much time throughout his career striving to make the workplace safer for railroaders and the traveling public. In 1993, Brother Muscha was

honored with a Certificate of Appreciation for his efforts by Operation Life-saver, Inc.

Brother Muscha and his wife, Naomi, were married on October 23, 1971. The couple has four children (Kolby, Kristina, Kelly and Kamron) and 13 grandchildren. Their son, Kamron, works as a CP Rail locomotive engineer. Brother Muscha's brother, Larry, also works for CP Rail.

In his spare time, Brother Muscha enjoys hunting, fishing, backpacking, gardening, travel, and camper living along the Missouri River. He plans to spend more time enjoying these hobbies during his retirement.

Brother Muscha said he has many enjoyable memories throughout his long career. However, his fondest memories were his trip operating the CP Rail Holiday Train in 2011 and his final meeting as Chairman of the North Dakota State Legislative Board, which was attended by all the Brotherhood's top National Division officers. 

Former President Ron McLaughlin honored with 60-year membership pin

Retired BLE International President Ronald P. McLaughlin celebrated 62 years of continuous membership earlier this year. He first joined BLET Division 393 on January 1, 1950.

In April, BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce recognized Brother McLaughlin with a 60-year membership pin.

“On behalf of all your BLET Brothers and Sisters, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations for your continuous membership record in our Brotherhood,” President Pierce said. “Thank you for your contributions to the Brotherhood over your years of membership and leadership.”

After serving in the U.S. Marine Corps in San Diego (1946-1948), President McLaughlin began his career as a fireman on the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (The Milwaukee Road) on October 16, 1948. He earned his promotion to locomotive engineer on October 20, 1952.

From 1955 to 1996, he held various elected offices to represent the membership for 41 consecutive years. From 1955-1960, he served as his Division Secretary-Treasurer. From 1960-1980, he served his Division as Local Chairman. From 1980-1986, he served as General Chairman of the Milwaukee Road. From 1986-87, he served as Vice President, and from 1987-1991, he served as First Vice President. He was elected to the Brotherhood’s highest office on August 22, 1991, during the BLE’s Fifth Quinquennial Convention.

In addition to the 60-year pin, President McLaughlin is also the proud owner of 25, 30, 40, 45 and 50-year BLE membership pins.

His father, J.H. McLaughlin, also served as General Chairman of the Milwaukee Road GCA, from 1951-1966. Both men were noted for their skill in negotiations.

He and his wife Barbara had four



White House Honors: President McLaughlin (far right) and his wife Barbara (far left) with Bill and Hillary Clinton at the White House.

sons: Gregory, Brian, Mark and Kevin. The couple has eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Son Gregory was a Soo Line locomotive engineer for 25 years.

During the 1950s, President McLaughlin played semi-professional baseball as an outfielder. He received offers from the Yankees and Red Sox to join their lower-level farm teams, but declined, in part, because he did

not want to give up his railroad career.

President McLaughlin, who will turn 83 years old in November, remains a very capable and enthusiastic golfer.

“I have enjoyed my entire railroad career on the train (33 years) and the BLE offices I held after that,” President McLaughlin said. “The BLE is a great organization and I hope it stays that way forever. A locomotive engineer is a great occupation.”

Elliott a proud BLET member for 71 years

For the past 71 years, Brother James M. Elliott of Division 325 (Wilkesburg, Pa.) has been a loyal and dedicated member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen. He has held continuous membership since first joining the Brotherhood on October 10, 1941.

Brother Elliott, 92, entered into engine service and went firing for the Pennsylvania Railroad on March 10,

1941. He earned promotion to locomotive engineer on June 12, 1950.

A proud veteran, Brother Elliott spent four years in the South Pacific during World War II as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps.

His last run came on September 25, 1979, as a Conrail engineer between Kiski Junction and Altoona, Pa. His retirement became effective on June 1, 1982.

Pat Maher retires injury-free after 42-1/2 years

Patrick T. Maher of BLET Division 607 in Cleveland remained injury-free throughout his 42-1/2 year railroad career, which concluded with his retirement effective January 2, 2012.

Brother Maher hired out as a fireman on the old Penn Central Railroad in Cleveland on June 16, 1969, eventually earning promotion to engineer in August of 1975. Through mergers and acquisitions he also worked for Conrail and Norfolk Southern. He first joined the BLET on September 1, 1978. Maher served the members of his Division for many years as Local Chairman. His Last Run was on December 30, 2011.

The good members of Division 607 turned their annual Christmas party into a retirement celebration for Brother Maher. He was presented with a plaque and many other expressions of thanks for his four decades of service. Several visiting dignitaries attended the event to honor Brother Maher, including: National Secretary-Treasurer Bill Walpert; Vice President Cole Davis; General Chairman Bob Linsey; and Special Representative Ken Kroeger.



Pat Maher at his retirement party with National Vice President Cole Davis.

Retired National President Paul Sorrow and retired National Vice President Steve Speagle were also on hand to wish Brother Maher a happy retirement.

Brother Maher comes from a railroading family. His father, George Maher, worked as a New York Central locomotive engineer during his career, which spanned 1906-1958. His cousin, Bill Maher, was a locomotive engineer for NYC, Penn Central and Conrail. His career spanned 1941-1992.

He and his wife Linda have two children, Philip and Lindsey. The couple maintains dual residency in Ohio and Hawaii during retirement. He is an ac-



General Chairman Bob Linsey presents a plaque to Brother Maher

tive participant in a golf league and works in the community, both in Hawaii and Ohio. He travels to various BLET regional meetings throughout the summers with Linda, who serves as National Secretary of the BLET Auxiliary.

Brother Maher is a 4th Degree Knights of Columbus member and a Eucharistic Minister at Saint Noel Church in Willoughby Hills, Ohio, and at Sacred Heart Church in Wainae, Hawaii.

“The 42 and a half years were a blur,” Maher said. “The good, fun people I worked with on the railroad made my career go by fast.”

Randolph spent 20 years as Local Chairman of Division 7

David A. Randolph of BLET Division 7 (Lafayette, Ind.) safely completed his Last Run for CSX on November 11, 2011, concluding a railroad career that lasted nearly 43 years.

Brother Randolph hired out as a fireman on the Monon Railroad in Lafayette, Ind., in 1969. He went firing on April 1, 1969, and earned promotion to locomotive engineer in July of 1971. He has held continuous membership in the Brotherhood for over 42 years, having joined Division 7 on February 1, 1970.

His Last Run came on a unique date



Randolph hired out in 1969.

— 11-11-11 — as a locomotive engineer between Monin and Lafayette, Ind.

He has been a dedicated and loyal

union Brother for decades, having served his Division as President and Secretary-Treasurer throughout his career. He is perhaps best known as Local Chairman of his Division, a position he held for 20 years (1982-2002).

He and his wife Bonnie were married on March 21, 1971. The couple has two children and three grandchildren.

His hobbies include model railroading, photography and gardening. He will devote more time to these interests now that he is retired. However, his primary plans are to spend more time with his family.

Elsberry celebrates 40-year injury-free career at Norfolk Southern

Randy G. Elsberry, a member of BLET Division 120 (Kansas City, Mo.), ended his 40-year railroad career injury-free when he officially retired from the Norfolk Southern on January 4, 2012.

Brother Elsberry hired out as a switchman for the Norfolk & Western in Moberly, Mo., in 1972. He went firing in July of 1974 and earned promotion to locomotive engineer for the N&W in September of 1976.

He first joined BLET Division 86 (Moberly, Mo.) on July 1, 1985, later transferring to Division 120 in Kansas City on December 8, 1993. A dedicated union member, Brother Elsberry served as Secretary-Treasurer of Division 120 from January 1, 1994 to December 31, 2011.

Brother Elsberry safely completed his Last Run on January 3, 2012, work-



Brother Elsberry completed his Last Run for Norfolk Southern on January 3, 2012.

ing as a yard engineer in Norfolk Southern's North Kansas City yard. He was assigned to Job DK03 and worked in engine NS 4630.

He and his wife Susan have been married since December 19, 1970. They have

two daughters and two grandchildren.

During retirement, Brother Elsberry plans to enjoy time riding his motorcycle and is looking forward to spending more time with his daughters and grandchildren in Florida. 📍

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 PAGE 2 <->

right. There also is no top down directive as to who should hold key positions in our Local Divisions; again, it is the membership's right to select their own representatives and leaders. This bottom-up structure was forged in the crucible of struggle during the 1930s, and is what created the foundation for the legacy American unions have built since that time.

Fully harnessed, this grass roots power is what makes us something that no corporate-backed union-hater can ever exterminate.

When we all pull together, we not only have the strength to fight these attacks on our way of life, we have an opportunity to participate in deciding what is important to our great nation. We have a say in whether or not this is truly a land of opportunity for all working class Americans, or if the opportunities are only there for the well to do. With a common voice speaking a single message, we can ensure that our children and all future generations have opportunities for decent jobs that provide true living wages with real benefits. This is the core of the American Dream and we

owe no one an apology for working to see that these opportunities exist for future generations of Americans.

Regardless of the outcome of the election on November 6th, you have my personal commitment that the BLET National Division will continue in its effort to keep our union strong, and in doing so, to help strengthen the working middle class of this great country. That is where the differences between us and our corporate-backed attackers are so critical. Contrary to their top-down corporate philosophy, I will continue to attend meetings with BLET Brothers and Sisters all across the country,

asking for your opinions and ideas. I will continue to push more and more members to become involved and to play an active role in our grass roots effort to make our union stronger.

As I have said since becoming your National President, I need your personal involvement and help in this endeavor if we are to succeed. As BLET members, we are all part of something much larger than any individual member ... something we can truly be proud of. It will take a mutual effort from all of us to preserve and advance our union's proud 150 year history, and I hope you will join me in that effort. 📍



BLET Auxiliary & IWC awards \$10,000 in scholarships



BY LINDA D. MAHER
BLET AUXILIARY NATIONAL SECRETARY


The scholarship program is one of the most important endeavors the BLET Auxiliary undertakes each school year. It is with great pride that I announce that the BLET Auxiliary and the International Western Convention awarded 10 \$1,000.00 scholarships for the 2012-2013 school year.

Thank you for all of the raffle tickets purchased at the regional meetings along with your mulligans at the golf tournaments (we golfers all know how important those are!). We also thank the members who have so graciously funded annual memorial scholarships, auxiliaries who make yearly donations, as well as the auxiliaries that give money for memorial donations. We appreciate all that the BLET does for us in making this program one of the most cherished gifts

that we give to our students who benefit immensely from their generosity.

This year, we especially thank our Canadian sisters in Auxiliary 469 "Sunalta," in Calgary, Alberta, Canada for donating \$500 towards the IWC scholarship fund.

While at our Executive Council meeting in June 2012 we voted to donate \$1,500 to the IWC, giving the IWC a total of seven scholarships to award this year.

In 2011, the International Western Convention (IWC) delegates authorized the distribution of four scholarships. The Auxiliary administers the yearly scholarships for the IWC and has been doing so since 2003. We receive applications, which have the same requirement qualifications as our scholarships, with one exception. The parents of the IWC applicants do not have to be a member of the BLET Auxiliary in order to be eligible to apply. 

APPLY FOR NEXT YEAR'S AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The BLET Auxiliary Scholarship Program provides \$1,000 scholarships to the sons or daughters of both Auxiliary and BLET members, with at least two years of concurrent membership. Requirements to qualify for a BLET Auxiliary scholarship also include the applicant's acceptance or enrollment in an accredited university, college, or institution of higher learning. Recipients are chosen on the basis of academic record, leadership, character and personal achievement.

Established in 1981, the scholarship program was set up with a strong financial base and the number of scholarships awarded continues to grow with each passing year.

Recently, several Regional Meeting Conventions have donated one or more scholarships to the Auxiliary in addition to donations from BLET State Legislative Boards, General Committees of Adjustment and the BLET National Division. Individual Auxiliaries and members have also held fundraisers to help, or have donated gifts for raffles.

Deadline for the 2013-2014 scholarship program is April 1, 2013.

APPLICATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM YOUR LOCAL AUXILIARY SECRETARY, OR BY VISITING: WWW.BLETAUXILIARY.NET



This year's 2012-2013 scholarship recipients are:



MARK WILLARD
EUMA SCHOLARSHIP
LEONA A. LOUIS MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Ken and Kathy Willard, Ken works for Canadian National and is a member of Division 122 (Port Huron, Mich.) and Kathy is a member-at-large with the BLET Auxiliary. Mark is a junior at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.



TYLER DERBISH
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Mark and Donna Derbish, Mark works for Amtrak/Metrolink and is a member of Division 20 (Los Angeles, Calif). Tyler is a freshman at University of Redlands.

ALEXANDER G. EVANS
SWCM SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Jim and Nancy Ev-



ans, Jim works for Kansas City Southern (KCS) and is a member of Division 527 (Pittsburg, Kan.) and Nancy is a member of Helen Gould Auxiliary 235. Alex is a junior at Pittsburg State University.



KATELYN E. EVANS
JOHN O. & BRENDA CASTEEL
SCHOLARSHIP

The daughter of Jim and Nancy Evans, Jim works for KCS and is a member of Division 527 (Pittsburg, Kan.) and Nancy is a member of Helen Gould Auxiliary 235. Katie is a senior at Pittsburg State University.

RACHEL McWILLIAMS
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The daughter of Robby and Kathy McWilliams, Robby works for Union Pacific and is a member of Division 664 (San Luis Obispo, Calif). Ra-



chel is a sophomore at California University, Fresno.



THOMAS C. SLOCUMB
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Christopher and Cheri Slocumb, Christopher works for BNSF and is a member of Division 398 (San Bernardino, Calif). Thomas is a freshman at Cal State University, San Bernardino.



HANNAH K. STINSON
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The daughter of C. Michael and Lori Stinson, C. Michael works UP and is a member of Division 228 (Pocatello, Idaho). Hannah is a freshman at University of Utah.

HA FAI (FRANKIE) TANG
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Clarence and Wai



Logan, Clarence works for BNSF and is a member of Division 727 (Guernsey, Wyo.). Ha Fai is a freshman at Pennsylvania State University.



ROGER B. WICKHAM
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Walter and Cindy Wickham, Walter works for UP and is a member of Division 228 (Pocatello, Idaho). Roger is a freshman at Brigham Young University.



AUSTIN SCHARFF
IWC SCHOLARSHIP

The son of Gerald and Rita Scharff, Gerald works for the BNSF Railway and is a member of Division 104 (Spokane, Wash). Austin is a freshman at University of Puget Sound.

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

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.

PROUD TO BE AMERICAN ★ PROUD TO BE UNION



Hooded Sweatshirt

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 new 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



Proud to be American T-shirt (red)

Join in on our new campaign and 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 new 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



Proud to be American T-shirt (athletic gray)

Join in on our new campaign and 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 new 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

BLET embroidered Hoodie – BLT-0116

100% cotton athletic gray hooded sweatshirt featuring an embroidered BLET logo in traditional colors. Union/USA made.

Available in sizes large to 3X:
L-XL \$30.00, 2X \$32.00, 3X \$33.00

BLET Leather Money Clip Wallet – BLT-0115

Handsome topgrain leather wallet that is slim and functional. Features a money clip with a debossed BLET logo on the inside flap as well as an organizer for credit cards. **\$18.00**

BLET Mantle Clock – BLT-0117

This clock features your BLET logo in 18kt gold plating with polished highlights and museum quality rosewood. The movement is made in America. Requires AA battery. Hand crafted and assembled by a union work force, your clock will be a lasting memento for years to come. **\$129.00**

CLOCK ENGRAVING \$10.00

Engrave up to four lines of text on a brass plate for your desk clock (ex: name, retirement date and local number). Note: 20 characters maximum per line.

Color Block Hat – BLET-0114

Brought to your store by popular demand is the newest ball cap addition. Color block front panels and trimmed contrast fabric

create an interesting look along with a full embroidered BLET logo on the front panels and visor edge "pulling for you."

One size fits most: \$20.00

The Weekender Windshirt (burgundy) (navy)



King Louie's newest windshirt is made out of deluxe microfiber and is nylon lined for an easy fit. Side pockets and knit V neck for a comfortable feel.

Available in sizes M thru 3X:
S - XL \$50.00, 2X \$52.00, 3X \$54.00

BLET Belt – BLET-0110

A classic military style belt design that is adjustable to both sides. The belt buckle will show off nicely whether you wear it

with the logo side or reverse it for a solid black look. One size fits most. **\$15.00**

White Men's watch – BLT-0106

The everyday, anytime watch. Your BLET logo is captured on a white dial encased in a gold plated case and the matching gold band is USA made stainless steel by Spiedel. Wear it with pride! **\$86.95**

White Ladies watch – BLT-0107

The everyday, anytime watch for ladies. Your BLET logo is captured on a white dial encased in a gold plated case and the matching gold band is USA made stainless steel by Spiedel. Wear it with pride! **\$86.95**

Men's Retiree Watch

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. **\$86.95**

Ladies Retiree Watch

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. **\$86.95**

WATCH ENGRAVING \$10.00

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

YOU CAN ALSO SHOP FOR BLET ITEMS ONLINE:

Go to teamstersmerchandise.com and click on "BLET"

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Mark your calendars for 2013 BLET regional meetings

BLET members looking to combine educational opportunities with family fun should consider attending one of the Organization's four regional meetings in 2013.

These multi-day meetings combine the best of the Brotherhood — education and

training, networking, and family fun — all in one place. The meetings provide an excellent opportunity for members to meet face-to-face with their elected Brotherhood officers. Members will be able to reminisce with old acquaintances, make

new friends, and brush up on their union representation skills.

Monitor the BLET website for updated information. Tentative dates and locations for the 2013 regional meetings are listed below. See you in 2013!



Richmond skyline:

The 2013 SMA will be held in Richmond, Va.

JUNE 23-28, 2013

86th Annual Southeastern Meeting Association (SMA)

RICHMOND, VA.

Arrangements Chairman Troy Bryant, Local Chairman of Division 532, welcomes all BLET members to historic Richmond/Short Pump, Va., for the 2013 SMA. More details to come.

JULY 14-JULY 18, 2013

73rd Annual International Western Convention (IWC)

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Co-chairmen Luis Chavez Jr., Local Chairman of Division 283 and Oscar Burrola, Local Chairman of Division 839, welcome all BLET members to the Hilton San Francisco Financial District Hotel for the 2013 IWC.

JULY 28-AUGUST 1, 2013

75th annual Eastern Union Meeting Association (EUMA)

BALTIMORE, MD.

Arrangements Chairman Fred Cox, Local Chairman of BLET Division 52, welcomes all BLET members to Baltimore for the 2013 EUMA. More details to come.

AUGUST 25-29, 2013

78th annual Southwestern Convention Meeting (SWCM)

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Arrangements Chairman Arlin Todd, Chairman of the Louisiana State Legislative Board, welcomes all BLET members to the Loews New Orleans Hotel for the 2013 SWCM. More details to come.