

BMWED

BROTHERHOOD OF MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYEES DIVISION
of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

JOURNAL



Volume 125 ■ Number 2

www.bmwe.org

April-May-June, 2016

BMWED members rally around Healthcare NOT Wealthcare

Thousands of BMWED members nationwide took the first step in a Union-wide campaign to stand up for affordable and quality health insurance. Dubbed the "BMWED National Day of Action," members across all systems, federations and railroads proudly displayed "Healthcare NOT Wealthcare" stickers during work on Wednesday, June 8.

The pace of National Bargaining with the Class 1 railroad carriers has been gradual due to health insurance. It has been a sticking point in the past, and this contract negotiation is proving no different. The carriers argue that our current benefits — both our member contribution level and the quality of our benefit — fall outside of what they describe as the "mainstream" and they are eager to reduce them.

"Mainstream" to the railroads means healthcare plans that are comparable to what non-unionized workers suffer with. They include higher deductibles, higher employee premiums and co-payments. The Brotherhood stands against this.

On June 8, BMWED members were encouraged to take an initial step in protecting our benefits by proudly displaying the "Healthcare NOT Wealthcare" stickers on hard hats or personal clothing. The idea, originally inspired through the union's Communication Action Team (CAT), garnered the support of National Division and System/Federation officers

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Change of Address Request

Please remember to notify your System Office or the National Division of any change of address or telephone number. It is vital that this information be kept current. Railroad employers do not always provide this information to the BMWED. Phone numbers can be found at BMWED.org.

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April-May-June, 2016 ■ BMWED DIVISION JOURNAL ■ VOLUME 125 ■ NUMBER 2
The BMWED Journal is the official news publication of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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The BMWED Journal (ISSN 1049-3921/USPS 067460) is published bi-monthly – 6 times annually at 41475 Gardenbrook Road, Novi, MI 48375-1328. Periodicals postage paid at Southfield, Michigan and additional mailing offices.

ATTENTION POSTMASTER

Send address changes to BMWED, 41475 Gardenbrook Road, Novi, Michigan 48375-1328.

Subscription Price: U.S. and Canada—\$20.00 (U.S.) per year, in advance.

www.bmwed.org

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Melinda Murillo Receives Two Year Basketball Scholarship

Melinda Murillo is a Second Team NJCAA All-American point guard who just received a two-year basketball scholarship to the University of Central Oklahoma. She also happens to be the daughter of BMWED AT&SFF Local 0361 member, Sergio F. Murillo, who couldn't be more proud of his daughter's athletic accomplishments.

Brother Sergio works for BNSF railway, his daughter Melinda is the youngest sibling of the Murillo family and recently graduated from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College (NEO) with an Associate's degree in Sports Management and Physical Education. She spent her last three years at NEO pursuing her hoop dreams and was an integral part of the Lady Norse's starting lineup. Murillo was a member of the illustrious Lady Norse team that recently won the Region II Tournament and would advance to the second round of the NJCAA Women's Division 1 National Tournament in Lubbock, Texas. Along with earning all-Region II First Team honors, Murillo was also selected to the all-tournament team. She averaged 12.6 points and 3.5 rebounds and lead the team with 102 assists and 63 steals.

In February, Murillo was awarded the eighth annual Dixie Woodall Inspirational Award. "It is hard to describe the level of leadership that Melinda has taken on this year," said Head Coach Jim Rowland. "She is not only a role model and captain on the court, but she carries that responsibility off the court. The entire team looks to her for direction, advice, and even mothering. Her work ethic, commitment to excellence, and her high standard of morals and conduct makes her the perfect choice for the Dixie Woodall Inspirational Award."

Melinda recently signed with NCAA Division II University of Central Oklahoma. "She will continue playing basketball and getting her education at the University of Central Oklahoma where she was awarded a two year basketball scholarship," proudly states her father. "It will be great having her closer to home so that we will be able to come and see ALL of her games with all of the support from family and friends. We are hoping to have a packed gym house every game night!"

A big congratulations to Melinda on her scholarship and propitious basketball career. Also a big congratulations to Brother Sergio Murillo for raising such a motivated young women. Be on the lookout for the UCO Bronco's womens' basketball team in the upcoming years and cheer in solidarity with your fellow Brother. Go Broncos!



Melinda Murillo receives NJCAA championship plaque beside her proud Mother and Father.

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NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

The BMWED/SMART-Mechanical coalition held negotiations on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, with the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC) at Norfolk Southern's corporate office in Atlanta, Georgia.

BMWED/SMART Mechanical's expert economist, Tom Roth, gave an in depth presentation regarding the "Big Four" Class 1 freight railroads' financial status. In summary, the demand for coal has been reduced on account of a glut of cheaper natural gas derived by fracking, coupled with a lessening of world demands for coal, particularly from China. Consequently, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, CSX, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific have experienced decreased volumes of coal shipped by rail. However, the railroads have been able to adapt their business model by fulfilling other shipping demands to moderate their losses in coal volume. He also observed that while 2015 revenue was a little off from the peak year of 2014, the railroads were still doing comparatively well and have been enjoying a historically prosperous run for over a decade. The concluding remark of economist Roth was

that the current financial and economic environments for the "Big Four" railroads are better than the last two rounds of national negotiations, even though 2016 will continue to see some structural readjustments in railroad operations.


The NCCC had no immediate comments regarding the presentation but did note that they desired to analyze the information and requested the sources of Roth's presentation. They further noted that they would provide a presentation regarding their position on the freight railroads' financial status at an unspecified future date.

Further negotiations are scheduled for the end of July 2016 as well as during September 2016. Although negotiations are proceeding slowly, we believe that the BMWED/SMART Mechanical initiatives on healthcare will assist the parties in reaching a voluntary agreement. For example, the TCU led bargaining coalition has joined us in the healthcare initiative and we are optimistic that the BLET led coalition will soon join as well.

You can now visit the BMWED on *Facebook* at **Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes**, and follow us on *Twitter* at **BMWEDIBT**.

DID YOU KNOW? 

No need to wait on the mail.
Your annual dues receipt is available online at:
www.bmwe.org
Sign-up for membership access and download yours at any time.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY? 

We want to hear from you! Do you have a special hobby or talent, hold public office, or have a story about yourself or a loved one that you would like to tell? Share your story with your Brothers and Sisters in the BMWED Journal!

Please send us your pictures and brief details along with a name, address and telephone number.

You may email, or send by U.S. Mail to:

CBallew@BMWE.org
Or,
BMWED Journal
c/o Clark Ballew
41475 Gardenbrook Road
Novi, MI 48375-1328





Perry K. Geller, Sr.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

The devastating impact of disappearing "defined benefit" pension plans

We hear a lot of talk about the "sluggish" rate of economic recovery since the great recession of 2008. Politicians and pundits have used this as political fodder to attack their opponents' position on trade agreements, tax and wage policies, healthcare, and "New Deal" programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

What we are not hearing much about is the devastating impact that disappearing "defined benefit" pension plans have on workers and the "sluggish" U.S. economy. Over the past 40+ years, more and more employers have abandoned and defunded defined benefit pension plans. Defined benefit pension plans are structured to provide a "defined" monthly benefit that does not rise and fall with the stock market. U.S. corporations have moved aggressively to shed their "defined benefit" pension programs in favor of "defined contribution" programs, such as 401(k) programs, in order to increase profits, fatten their bottom line, and put the burden of saving for retirement solely on the backs of wage earners.

The result of this shift has been devastating, and both the American worker and the American economy are paying a heavy price. Without defined pension benefits, many retirement age workers are forced to continue working well into their "golden years." They simply cannot afford to retire due to the uncertain income generated by the variable value of their 401(k) plan, which ebbs and flows with the whims of the stock market. And worse, many retirement age workers have no retirement safety net at all, except perhaps for their meager Social Security benefits.

The result of this paradigm shift is that older workers are forced to remain in the workforce longer and younger workers are forced to take menial jobs as they wait for older workers to vacate "career jobs." This has contributed greatly to the persistence of the "sluggish" economic recovery. Older workers don't have enough income to retire with dignity and security, and younger workers don't earn enough disposable income to stimulate spending and U.S. economic growth.

As U.S. corporations continue to shed their obligations under defined benefit pension plans, BMWED remains ever vigilant in our efforts to protect your defined benefit pension plan under Railroad Retirement. The "union difference" is a major factor in the preservation of defined benefit coverage for union members. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 72 percent of union workers participated in a defined benefit plan in 2005, while only 15 percent of non-union workers had such coverage. In 2005, the rate of access to defined benefit plans was almost five times higher among union than among non-union workers. Railroad employees are among the shrinking minority of American workers covered by a defined benefit pension plan through the Railroad Retirement Act. This is not by chance, but because BMWED and other railroad unions have been there to defend and protect these benefits each and every time they come under attack.

The Railroad Retirement Trust Fund has assets of approximately \$26 billion. These assets are managed by a joint trust, known as the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust (NRRIT). Established by legislation championed by Rail Labor in 2001, the NRRIT is managed by

a seven member Board of Trustees; three chosen by Rail Labor, three chosen by railroad management, and one independent member chosen jointly by the other six trustees.

The Trust Fund is projected to be solvent for decades to come, barring any sudden, unanticipated decrease in railroad employment or substantial loss of investment income. And because of Rail Labor's efforts in shaping the 2001 legislation, the railroad's contributions into the fund will rise automatically to a maximum of 22.1 percent from the current 12.1 percent if assets fall below projections. By contrast, rail employee contribution rates are currently 3.9 percent and are capped at 4.9 percent. Thus, the legislative amendments to the Railroad Retirement Act championed by BMWED in 2001 assures that the railroads remain responsible for making up the vast majority of any projected shortfalls going forward.

The average employee age annuity awarded by RRB to railroad annuitants in 2015 was \$45,660.00; and the average spousal annuity awarded was \$17,160.00. Compare that to the average 2015 benefit of \$22,080 and \$11,040 to age and spousal annuitants respectively under Social Security. That, my Brothers and Sisters, is just one example of the "Union Difference!"

Rest assured that the BMWED will continue its decades-long efforts to preserve this important "defined pension benefit" for every current and future member, and every BMWED retiree, so you can retire with dignity at age 60 with 30 years of service, and you can remain retired and financially secure during those "golden years" that we all have earned and deserve. That too is the Union Difference!

A Reminder on Holiday Rules

If you are a furloughed employee of a railroad covered by the U.S. National Agreement with at least 60 days of seniority or 60 calendar days of continuous service preceding a covered holiday, and if you had compensation paid by the carrier credited to 11 or more of the 30 calendar days immediately preceding the holiday, you may be entitled to pay for that holiday even though you are furloughed.

For detailed information contact your General Chairperson.

The complete list of holidays are:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (the day before Christmas is observed)
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve (the day before New Year's Day is observed)

2016 BMWED Scholarship Announcement; Enrollment Now Open

BMWED member and their dependents encouraged to apply

Pursuant to BMWED Resolution #38, reaffirmed by the 2014 BMWED Convention, two annual scholarships in the amount of \$2,000.00 each will be awarded in November 2016 to BMWED members or eligible dependents, with preference given to applicants enrolled or scheduled to enroll in an accredited college or university in the pursuit of labor-related studies. The annual scholarship award is designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of BMWED members and their dependents, and to assist them in obtaining a college education.

"This is an especially important benefit to BMWED families in light of the escalating cost of higher education," said BMWED President Freddie Simpson. "For many working families, the cost of a college education has become largely unaffordable. The BMWED scholarship is intended to help educate the future leaders of our nation and our unions, and will serve to strengthen Organized Labor's efforts to protect workers' rights and preserve the middle class."

ELIGIBILITY:

Applicant must be: (1) a dependent of a BMWED member in

good standing who is a high school senior enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited college or university, or a full-time undergraduate or graduate student enrolled at an accredited college or university; or, (2) a BMWED member in good standing enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student at an accredited college or university.

Preference will be given to applicants pursuing the study of labor-related subjects or pursuing a degree in labor-related subjects.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

To apply for the BMWED scholarship, an applicant must meet all the eligibility requirements and submit via mail the following: (1) A completed application form (available on line at www.bmwe.org); (2) Most recent academic transcript (if applicable); (3) College entrance examination, i.e., ACT and/or SAT scores (if applicable); (4) A list of extra-curricular, community service and/or union activities; (5) A statement of 300 words or less written by the applicant outlining his or her employment history and career goals; and, (6) A statement of 300 words or less written by the applicant explaining how the

BMWED has impacted his or her life.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Three (3) applications verified to meet all necessary criteria will be selected by random draw from the pool of applications received by the close of business on October 31, 2016. The selected applications will be copied and distributed to the BMWED Vice Presidents who will independently review and rank each application on a scale of 1 - 3, with 3 being the highest ranking and 1 being the lowest ranking. The two applicants garnering the highest aggregate rankings will receive notice of the scholarship award in November. Any tie in ranking score will be decided by the National Division President based upon his final review of the tied applications.

The BMWED Scholarship award check will be made out directly to the college or university where the award recipients are enrolled or accepted for enrollment. Upon notification of the award, it will be necessary for each recipient to furnish the National Division President with information to facilitate the issuance of the award check payable to the accredited college or university where the

applicant is accepted or enrolled. Application materials must be submitted by mail* (USPS or UPS only) and be received by BMWED at the address below no later than the close of business **October 31, 2016**. Faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Please submit to:

BMWED Scholarship
Attn: Rick Inclima
International Brotherhood
of Teamsters
25 Louisiana Ave., NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20001

An application form and a complete description of the application procedures and eligibility requirements can be downloaded from the Brotherhood's website at www.bmwe.org. Any questions regarding the BMWED Scholarship or application process may be forwarded via e-mail to BMWED Director of Safety and Education Rick Inclima at Ricki@bmwe.org or by calling 202-508-6449.

**Note: Pursuant to Teamster policy, delivery of any package or mail by non-union carriers will not be accepted by the Teamster's shipping/receiving department. Therefore, to assure delivery please mail through the United States Postal Service [USPS] or United Parcel Service [UPS] only.*

Healthcare, From Page 1

and membership. On overarching goal of the "sticker day" was to have a large display of unity and simultaneous cooperation amongst members on all railroads and all regions of the country, forcing the carriers to take notice. We feel we accomplished that task.

"It is vitally important that we remain committed to sticking together on the health insurance issue," BMWED President Freddie N. Simpson said. "I am encouraged that so many of our Brothers and Sisters stood up on Sticker



Day. Sticker Day was so much more than slapping a sticker on your hard hat. It was a gesture of strength. It was a gesture of unity. It was a reminder to the railroads that we are watching, and that we are committed to protecting our health insurance benefits."

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Healthcare, From Page 5



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Around the Brotherhood

Brother Daniel Clark retires

BMWED Allied Fed Lodge 1035 Brother Daniel Clark (right) retired June 11. General Chairman Dennis Albers presented Brother Clark with a retirement plaque at a local lodge meeting in Evansville, Indiana. Congrats Brother Clark! We wish you the best in retirement.



Brother Charlie Shirley (Allied Fed) retires after 36 years of service

Brother Charlie Shirley retired May 1 after 36 years of dedicated membership to the BMWED Allied Federation. His brothers in Lafayette, Indiana threw Brother Charlie a retirement party at their regular lodge meeting in April. Congratulations Brother Charlie on your retirement and a career well-served!



BMWED Burlington System Division Lodge 2621 holds annual picnic

BSD Local Lodge 2621 held its annual picnic on June 4 in Palmyra, Missouri. Over fried fish and all the fixings, members discussed a wide range of topics with Vice General Chairman George Loveland, ranging from ongoing contract negotiations to local matters. Attendance at the picnic included new members all the way to longtime retired members.



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BurNor System Fed Brothers Crissman, Metzinger, and Jaragoske retire

Brothers Dave Crissman, Mike Metzinger, and Larry Jaragoske retired recently after long and distinguished railroad careers. The "Three Stooges" were sent off by the Brothers at BMWED Burlington Northern System Federation Lodge 2825 in Aberdeen, Minnesota with a celebratory cookout. Here's to a long and healthy retirement to all three of our Brothers. Congrats!



ATB, From Page 11


Brothers Capps and Thomas retire

BMWED Allied Federation Lodge 75 Brothers Benny Capps (left) and James Thomas (right) were presented with award plaques recognizing them for their recent retirements by Vice Chairman Roy Griffith in Clifton Forge, Virginia earlier this Spring. Congratulations to Brothers Capps and Thomas on your retirements!



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Brothers at BMWED Burlington Northern System Federation Lodge 2825 in Aberdeen, Minnesota



DEATH BENEFIT DEPARTMENT

REPORT OF DEATH BENEFIT CLAIMS PAID DURING JANUARY, FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 2016

NAME	CITY/STATE	LODGE/SYSTEM/RR	D.O.D.
HENRY J. COFFEY	MT VERNON, KY	0671 AF/LIFE	05/21/15
JOHN C. ELLWANGER JR.	POTTSTOWN, PA	2780 CRSF/LIFE	02/26/16
DONALD E. FRITZ	DELOIT, IA	0626 ICGF/LIFE	11/27/15
THOMAS G. GARCILASO	PALMER LAKE, CO	1517 USD/LIFE	08/26/15
LAWRENCE J. HAAKE	FAIRBURY, NE	1133 USD/LIFE	01/23/16
C. B. HARRIS	EASTLAND, TX	2286 AF/LIFE	12/20/15
W. A. HOUSE	HUNTINGTON, WV	1028 AF/LIFE	12/03/15
JOE N. MARTINEZ	FLORENCE, CO	1517 USD/LIFE	02/27/16
BILLY MC CLEAVE	CLAREMONT, IL	1069 ICGF/LIFE	01/20/16
LAWRENCE J. MORETTI	INDIANA, PA	0737 AF/LIFE	02/04/16
JAMES B. MORRISON	DONGOLA, IL	0017 ICGF/LIFE	01/30/16
JAMES C. RHOADS	LIMON, CO	0941 USD/LIFE	02/04/16
JAMES R. TROUP	MEADVILLE, PA	1234 CRSF/LIFE	01/29/16
JOHN YASENCHAK	PINE CITY, NY	0362 PENN/LIFE	02/08/15

PAID JANUARY 1, 2016 TO MARCH 31, 2016	\$ 7,000.00
AMOUNT PREVIOUSLY PAID	\$45,521,807.75
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID TO DATE	\$45,528,807.75
NUMBER OF CLAIMS PAID - 14	

REPORT OF DEATH NOTICES RECEIVED DURING JANUARY FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2016

WILLIAM L. BISHOP	NEW CASTLE, DE	3075	PENN/NRPC	03/10/16
MARK A. BODENLOS	WAUWATOSA, WI	0410	USD/UP	02/26/16
MARION E. JONES	DADEVILLE, MO	0493	AT&SFF/BNSF	03/30/16
GARY W. MARCHAND	N ATTLEBORO, MA	0987	CRSF/KEOL	03/22/16
JOSEPH M. MARSH	SOMERDALE, NJ	3063	PENN/CR	01/16/16
GARY T. MILLER	TOWANDA, PA	0887	CRSF/NS	12/31/15
JEFFREY B. SMITH	WAKEFIELD, MA	0228	N E/NRPC	06/24/15

Healthcare, From Page 10



In remembrance: Brother Danny Russell

The Brotherhood is sad to acknowledge the passing of longtime Brother, Daniel "Danny" Eugene Russell. Danny passed away recently at the age of 68 in Henderson, Kentucky.

Brother Danny was a member of the Allied Federation Local Lodge 818. He was known to be one of the most dedicated union members and served as Secretary Treasurer for Local 818 for 18 years. Danny would run the meetings and took care of his fellow brothers while his wife Ruth did the paperwork. Danny also served in the U.S. Army for two years and in 2007 was able to retire from CSX railroad after being a trackman for 37 years.

Brother Danny's devotion to our union was so strong that his wife Ruth had him buried in his Local 818 shirt, BMWED cap and a union book. Even in eternal rest, Brother Danny demonstrated his passion for the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way and Union Solidarity.

President Fred Simpson knew Brother Danny for many years while working in Kentucky. "I mourn the loss of a fellow L&N member, a dedicated and loyal local and federation officer, and a friend," President Simpson said. "Brother Danny always advocated well for members and organized labor. He was a true Union Brother and he will be greatly missed."

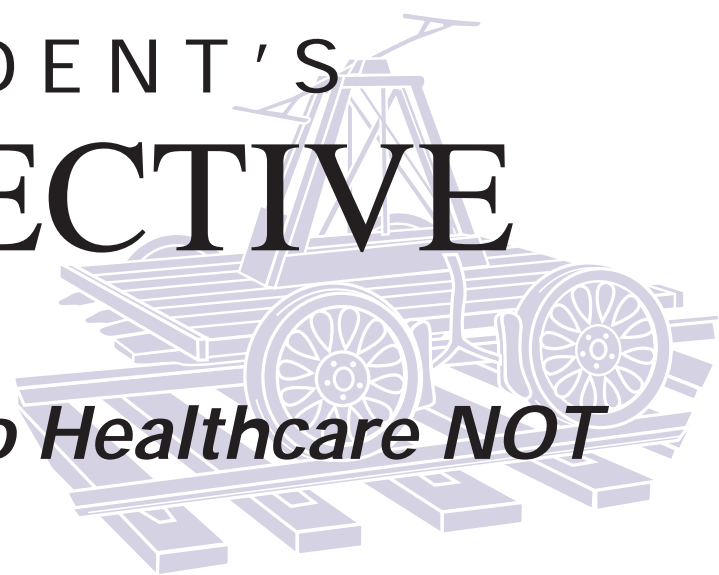
The BMWED sends its deepest condolences to Brother Danny's wife and extended family.



Freddie N. Simpson

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Unity is the key to Healthcare NOT Wealthcare



As your Brotherhood president, your recent displays of solidarity around the BMWED National Day of Action — “Sticker Day,” as most of us called it — is highly encouraging and fills me with pride.

Solidarity is our lifeblood as unionized railroad workers. It is, quite plainly, what makes us or breaks us. For generations now, membership in the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division has lifted many people into the ranks of the working Middle Class. It has provided financial security and a comfortable life for millions of Brothers and Sisters over the last 129 years. Our union has accomplished this, first and foremost, through solidarity. Our recent Sticker Day around the slogan “Healthcare NOT Wealthcare” is no different.

As you probably know by now, financial stability for most Americans is increasingly harder to obtain. With every passing year, more and more people are falling through the cracks. The U.S. Census Bureau measures median

personal incomes and adjusts them according to inflation. Since 2000, men in every age demographic are losing ground in “real wages,” by an average of 13 percent. What that means is the average male worker in the United States is making 13 percent less, when accounting for inflation, than they were in the year 2000. And women, down six percent on average over the last 15 years, can hardly be described as flourishing.

Unionized railroad jobs have not taken the brunt of this downward spiral — at least not yet. But we cannot pretend that what has happened to the non-unionized American working class is not applying downward pressure on us.

American railroad companies are profitable. Despite a “soft” economy and declining coal volume, Class 1 carriers have fine-tuned their operating ratios to new lows that in turn boost profit margins. Business is business, and the big railroads are not new to the game. Bean counters at all the carrier headquarters are keenly attune to any measures that

increase profitability. And one of those measures is lowering labor costs.

In this current bargaining round, the railroads are committed to bringing compensation and healthcare benefits — using their words — “in line with mainstream norms.” In particular, our health insurance is a primary target. Rest assured, myself and the rest of your Union officers recognize that the carriers want to chip away at our hard-fought, negotiated healthcare benefits. Months ago, we initiated plans to combat this attack. I believe, through hard work and the help of our expert consultants, we are making significant strides in shaving costs from the plan without weakening the benefits or coming out our members’ pockets.

I want to thank you all for your commitment to stand with us, and that includes attending local lodge meetings, staying involved and informed in Brotherhood matters, and your continued involvement in our Communication Action Team (CAT) program. All of your officers

at the bargaining table feel your support and it is vital if we are to be successful.

I know that wearing a sticker to work does not seem like a major accomplishment. Some critics say things like, “Kindergarten teachers give out stickers.” I understand the critique, but I truly believe that is looking at Sticker Day superficially.

A career in railroading comes with its challenges. This has always been true. It is a tough job. It can be, at times, a difficult job. It can also be a dangerous job, as we too often see firsthand. We are in this together, Brothers and Sisters. All of us.

The BMWED has been a thriving collection of railroad track workers for nearly 130 years. It is our unity that sustains our success. The photographs of members displaying Healthcare NOT Wealthcare stickers that are featured throughout this issue of the BMWED Journal illustrate just how wide-reaching and committed we are. We are a family, Brothers and Sisters, and I am optimistic for our future.



BMWED presents Disabled American Veterans with \$5,000 check

A recent donation from the BMWED of \$5,000 to the Bronx chapter of the Disabled American Veterans is going a long way in helping homeless veterans in the New York City borough.

Richard Castellano is with the D.A.V. He said the money from our Brotherhood has been extremely helpful in getting homeless veterans fed. The D.A.V. uses the funds to make sandwich lunches so that homeless veterans don’t go hungry, or worse yet, aren’t forced to steal food out of sheer desperation.

Castellano also said that some of the funding allows the group to build toiletry kits for homeless vets, consisting of new underwear, bathroom supplies, and toothbrushes.

Pictured presenting the D.A.V. Bronx chapter with the donation are BMWED Vice Presidents Seán Gerie and Roger Sanchez.





Continued on Page 16



Job Opening

Assistant to the President

BMWED National Division Headquarters is seeking applicants for the position of Assistant to the President. The position will be headquartered at the Brotherhood's National Division office in Novi, Michigan. Candidates must excel in their attention to detail and accuracy, be a self-motivated, organized independent person able to multitask.

Duties of the position will vary, and will be determined and assigned by the President.

If you are energetic, self-confident, motivated and well-organized, we would like to hear from you immediately. Benefit package includes health, dental and optical insurance. Salary is commensurate with duties.

Please send resume to:

BMWED-IBT
Attn: Freddie N. Simpson
41475 Gardenbrook Road
Novi, MI 48375-1328



Job Opening

National Division Auditor

The BMWED National Division is seeking rank-and-file applicants for the following position:

Job Title: National Division Auditor
Job Location: Novi, MI
Starting Salary: \$74,000.00
Starting Date: Immediate Opening

The responsibilities of a National Division Auditor include conducting local lodge audits, completing U.S. Department of Labor LM-4 Reports, assisting in the training of local lodge Secretary Treasurers and other duties assigned by the National Division Secretary Treasurer. Applicants should possess basic computer and accounting skills, be self motivated and be able to communicate well with others in a fast-paced work environment. Extensive on-the-job training will be provided.

The BMWED provides a relocation package, health and welfare benefits, life insurance, vision care, vacation, and other benefits. Active members hired to work for BMWED remain covered under the Railroad Retirement Act and most continue to accumulate railroad seniority during their full-time employment with BMWED.

The BMWED is an equal opportunity employer committed to cultural diversity and non-discrimination. Interested members are strongly encouraged to apply and become part of BMWED's future. Resumes should include details of your railroad work history, any union activity/union positions held, education and training history, and a sample of your writing skills (if available).

You may email your resume to michelleo@bmwe.org, or by U. S. Mail at:

Job Opening - BMWED
c/o Perry K. Geller, Sr.,
Secretary Treasurer
41475 Gardenbrook Rd
Novi, MI 48375





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QR Codes

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A Vice President Speaks

Successful Verizon strike proves that workers are stronger in a Union



Seán Gerie
Vice President – Northeast Region

Ask anyone and I think that they will agree, we are certainly living in the information age. We see it all around us every day and night.

It's getting harder and harder to remember a time without social media, texting, emails, search engines, and other norms of the digital age. We get up-to-the-minute updates on everything from sports scores to weather reports, untimely celebrity deaths to world news, and more. It seems as if each and every one of us is pretty much informed and up-to-date on everything going on in the world around us these days.

In spite of all of the information at our fingertips, I want to dedicate this column to some people that took part in a remarkable movement very recently. I would be willing to bet the vast majority of the public were exposed to very little information regarding the issue at all. Perhaps that very aspect — the overall lack of reporting of it — makes it all the more interesting when you stop to consider all of the elements of the story.

40,000 American workers stood together in an amazing demonstration of solidarity to beat back corporate greed and to stand up for themselves and their families — and in an indirect way — ALL of the working class people in America.

I am talking about the 45-day strike at Verizon that started on April 13, 2016. The communications giant sought ridiculous demands from their employees and the employees answered in kind. The result of that strike was a tremendous victory for the workers. It was a victory for ALL working men and women in the U.S.A.

Verizon posted total earnings of \$4.17 Billion dollars in revenue in the third quarter of 2015 alone. In addition, the wireless side of the business saw gains of 1.3 million postpaid subscribers during the same meager four month period.

In 2014, Lowell McAdam, Verizon's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, was reportedly paid OVER EIGHTEEN MILLION DOLLARS from Verizon.

The workers were expected to ignore these facts and just accept the company's position that the average Verizon worker had to agree to "give backs."

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) were presented with a long list of demands that included attacks on medical benefits, pension cuts, outsourcing of jobs, and more.

What sets this story apart and provides the great outcome? The answer is so simple that it might surprise you.

The Unions maintained incredible communication with their members and the members stood together as one and supported their Unions.

These workers knew what was at stake and they showed an incredible commitment to take on the fight together — AND THEY WON!

Not only was the company unsuccessful in eliminating jobs, the Unions got the company to agree to add more than 1,300 new jobs. The new contracts also provide for wage increases and pension enhancements among other issues.

I urge everyone to read more about this struggle here: www.cwa-union.org

It's not difficult for BMWED members to see the comparison between these workers and all of us in the railroad industry. It should serve as an inspiration to workers everywhere when they realize the magnitude of this victory for working class families.

This company had no problem paying their management hacks a king's ransom and they were quite comfortable reporting astronomical profits, but they wanted no part in settling a decent contract for the very people who made those profits possible.

Let's all think about how different the outcome would be if these workers had no Union protection?

And how bad would it have played out if the members not been informed and engaged? An uninformed worker is a dream come true for the bosses!

This strike prompted Erik Loomis (an assistant professor at the University of Rhode Island and a scholar of Labor history) to say this in his blog titled *lawyersgunsandmoney*:

"For me, the lesson is that if you don't support joining a Union, you are a fool because you are only hurting yourself."

What these workers at Verizon faced is just one example of how corporations routinely try to abuse and misuse their workers for the sake of higher profits.

How many workers face these same terrible situations and have no recourse because they simply do not enjoy the benefits of belonging to a Labor Union?

If you were to ask working people about reasonable expectations from their employers you could probably expect to hear the following: job security, a decent wage, good medical benefits, some financial stability for their golden years, safe working conditions, and dignity in the workplace.

None of those things should seem to be too much to ask for and yet it is largely unobtainable for a lot of working families.

Incidentally, it's also a pretty good description of what workers who belong to Labor Unions DO experience. Please think about that for a moment.

What's more, like our Sisters and Brothers at Verizon — WE HAVE A VOICE in our workplace. It is not pure coincidence that these workers saw these gains. They will enjoy those gains because they had a legal right to bargain and strike for them!

We could speculate as to why you probably did not get too much information on this story (Verizon just purchased AOL to the tune of \$4.4 Billion in June 2015) but I would rather you focus on the story itself and what it means to you as a working class person, and more importantly as a BMWED member.

What these workers did was send a loud, clear message to their employer that they were not going to just be pushed around. They stood up for their families and they stood United as ONE. And they WON!

It is up to each and every BMWED member to carry that same sentiment AND to put that attitude into action by supporting Our Union.

Because I have news for you — there is a topic of conversation going on in every corporate boardroom in America in the wake of this strike.

Here's what those bosses are saying:

"Only a fool would not support joining a UNION."

LOCAL LODGES

Please notify the
BMWED National
Division of the passing of
any retired BMWED
member.

Call (248) 662-2660
extension 636.



ASF lodge meeting attendance setting new records

BMWED Affiliated System Federation General Chairman Jack David and Vice Chairmen Johnny Long and Justin Blankenship are excited about the participation they have consistently seen at Local Lodge meetings across their entire system so far this year.

The officers of the ASF report that attendance at local lodge meetings is breaking records that haven't been approached in decades. Many lodges are holding meetings where as many as 70 members attend. The involvement of Brothers in the union seems to be contagious, which bodes well for our Brotherhood's future.

Adding to the excitement is the

enthusiasm young members have in attending lodge meetings on the ASF. Young members will move our union forward and their contributions to the BMWED are not lost on General Chairman David.

"The young members are the future of this Brotherhood and after witnessing the recent turnouts this year at lodge meetings, I can say our future is bright," Brother David said. "Everyone is concerned with the current ever-changing problems in the railroad industry. With the help of the active local union members, we will be able to take on any challenge that is presented to us."



Lodge 2703 (above)

Lodge 599 568 (below)



Lodge 1464



Lodge 551

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Sign up for BMWED News Alerts and get the latest news sent directly to your email account. To sign up, visit the BMWED webpage at www.bmwe.org, or send your name and email address to: dyack@bmwe.org, along with a request to be added to the BMWED News Alert list.





BSD secures BMWED-IBT D.R.I.V.E. Award

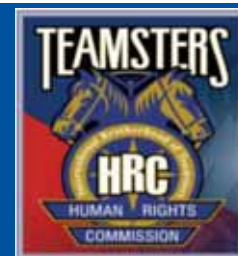
A DRIVE Award for the "SYSTEM WITH THE HIGHEST DOLLAR AMOUNT PER CAPITA" was presented to the Burlington system Division on March 11, 2016 by President Fred Simpson and Director of Gov. Affairs Charlie

Hogue during the system's march training seminar. Great job, BSD members!

Learn more about the Teamsters Human Rights

Commission and how you can participate. Contact BMWED Vice

President Roger Sanchez at (281) 354-4812 or by email at lodge1507@aol.com.



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Lodge 571

You can now visit the BMWED on *Facebook* at **Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes**, and follow us on *Twitter* at **BMWEDIBT**.





Earlier this year, the BMWED Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Frisco System Federation filled a vacant Assistant General Chairman position by electing Brother Vernon VanAusdall. Brother VanAusdall was an ATSFFF Executive Board member, so he was replaced with the election of Brother Jackson Powell to the E-Board. Congratulations to Brothers Vernon and Jackson.

Pictured in the ATSFFF group photo are (from left to right): Jackson Powell, Gary Marquart, Donald Lee, Nicholas Haiston, Rex Proctor, David Taylor, Jeffery Fry, Jason Laster, Vernon VanAusdall, Randy Lunow, and Shane Lindsey.





Survey on Occupational Risk Reduction Coming Soon



BMWED will soon conduct a Brotherhood-wide research study to address the long-standing absence of high quality data reflecting the nature, frequency, severity and socio-economic consequences of occupational risk and its impact on BMWED members.

In the coming months, every BMWED member and several thousand retirees will receive a mailed letter with important information about this study and survey. Your participation in the comprehensive survey is absolutely vital, so please take the time to complete it. After that, a select team of highly credentialed academic and medical researchers will thoroughly study the issues identified by BMWED respondents.

The survey is totally confidential. We will not ask for your name so your responses will contain no identifiable personal information. Neither the union nor railroads will see your survey responses. Only our researchers will see them under the strictest medical and ethical protocols.

The information derived from the study will be used by BMWED in the regulatory, legislative and collective bargaining arenas to improve safety and health conditions and reduce occupational risk.

Please fill out and return your survey; it is vitally important to you, your family and your fellow Brothers and Sisters. Thank you!

Change of Address Request

Please remember to notify your System Office or the National Division of any change of address or telephone

number. It is vital that this information be kept current. Railroad employers do not always provide this information to the BMWED. Phone numbers can be found at BMWE.org.





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Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division
41475 Gardenbrook Road
Novi, MI 48375-1328



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and additional offices



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