BMWED

BROTHERHOOD OF MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYES DIVISION
Of The International Brotherhood Of Teamsters

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BMWED Voter Turnout Aids in Hoffa Slate Victory

Simpson Brings a Rail Conference Voice to IBT General Executive Board

With much praise and gratitude for the BMWED's participation in the recent IBT Election of International Officers, BMWED President Freddie Simpson proudly stood with the twenty-nine members of the 2006 Hoffa Slate as they declared "Victory" over the opposition in the November sweep of the one Canadian and four U.S. IBT voting regions.

As of November 22, and pending final certification of the election results by the Office of the Election Supervisor (OES) on or about December 13, the Hoffa Slate was declared to have received approximately 65 percent of the 265,719 votes cast. While, according to the OES, the total IBT voter turnout of approximately 18.5 percent is considered to be "about average" for an IBT election, *BMWED members turned out at a significantly higher percentage rate.*

Said President Simpson, regarding the results, "Our System Divisions and Federations returned their ballots at an overall average of nearly 23 percent. I'm extremely proud to note that five of our System Divisions/Federations came in at over 30 percent and that, of those five, the **Chicago & Eastern Illinois System Division** (C&EI) and the **Chicago & Northwestern System Federation** (C&NW) tied for the top spot with an impressive 36 percent ballot return from their members." "In the end," continued Simpson, "well over seven thousand BMWED Brothers and Sisters participated in this, our first, IBT Election."

With the Hoffa slate's victory, Simpson joins the IBT General Executive Board (GEB) as an *At-Large Vice President,* the first-ever from the Rail Conference. He will serve with twenty-three other At-Large and Regional Vice Presidents and with three IBT Trustees on the GEB. Together, with General President Hoffa and General Secretary-Treasurer Keegel, these International Officers are the IBT's "Governing Body" between conventions, much the same as our own National Division Officers serve the BMWED.

"I consider it a great honor to have been elected to serve with this distinguished Board," said Simpson. "I accept this position with a great sense of pride and look forward to representing all of the Teamsters Rail Conference (TRC) members. I thoroughly understand how important it is that the Rail Conference's "Voice" be one of unity and clarity as we participate in the decision making process with General President Hoffa and General Secretary-Treasurer Keegel."

When asked to comment on his campaign trail experiences, Simpson stated that his duties as President of the BMWED had prevented him from campaigning much, but when he did join with others on the campaign trail he was most impressed with the membership's overall support of the BMWE/IBT merger and of how they view the importance of our place within the organization. "It was an overwhelmingly positive experience," said President Simpson. "For me, I consider this to be the high point of my thirty-two year career as a Track Repairman and Union Officer and I pledge to do all I can to move the agenda of the Teamsters and the Rail Conference forward."

Teamster International Officers are elected to serve five-year terms. Under the provisions of the IBT Constitution, candidates for International Office must be nominated and seconded by delegates to the IBT Convention. In order to appear on the ballot as a candidate for the position of Vice President-at-Large, properly nominated and seconded candidates must thereafter receive at least 5 percent of the votes cast by the delegate body as a whole in Convention.

C&NW and UP Systems Vote to Merge

Unified System Division Approved by Joint Protective Boards

The Chicago & North Western (C&NW) System Federation convened its regular quadrennial Joint Protective Board meeting in Denver, Colorado on October 25, 2006. The Union Pacific (UP) System Division Joint Protective Board met simultaneously in a Special Joint Protective Board meeting at the same location. The primary order of business for these two bodies was to consider and act upon a merger agreement which would combine these two systems.

The twenty-seven C&NW System Federation Local Lodge Delegates and the nineteen UP Division Local Lodge Delegates separately and in a joint session approved the merger agreement by an overwhelming margin and established the **Unified System Division** of the BMWED. The combination of these two former Systems spans a geographic territory from Chicago to Seattle and the Los Angeles Basin representing 3,685 members and 50 Local Lodges.

The incumbent principal officers of the two former Systems were candidates for the Unified System Division Officer positions. All of the candidates were elected by acclimation demonstrating the appreciation of the offi-

See **MERGE** on Page 7

Delegates and Guests at Founding Unified System Division Convention

Brotherhood Awards 2006 BMWED Scholarships

The Brotherhood is pleased to announce the two winners of the 2006 BMWED Annual Scholarship Award. In mid-November, BMWED Scholarships were awarded to BMWED member Kevin Evanski from Scranton, PA and Ms. Cassidy Smith Bennett, daughter of BMWED member David James Rogez, from Woodward, OK. Each scholarship award is in the amount of $2,000.00.

Cassidy Bennett and David Rogez

Kevin Evanski

Brother Evanski is a member of Local Lodge 1551, Northeastern System Federation-BMWED. He began his railroad career on the Delaware and Hudson (D&H) Railroad in 1998 and is currently employed as a system equipment operator. In February 2006, he was elected Local Chairman of his Lodge. Kevin also created and maintains a web site for Local 1551 (***www.BMWED1551.org***) where members on the D&H can obtain information about the union and issues affecting members locally and nationally.

Brother Evanski is attending Penn State World Campus where he is pursuing labor related studies. He is on track to graduate in the summer of 2008 and looks forward to applying his educational experience towards helping his fellow members within the BMWED.

When asked about his role in the Local Lodge, Brother Evanski stated, "I have always liked to help people and I am thrilled any time positive outcomes are the result of my union work. Helping my fellow Brothers and Sisters gives me a sense of satisfaction and has encouraged me to take coursework in collective bargaining and industrial relations. As Local Chairman, I encounter different problems on the job every day and I am proud to help find solutions to those issues that affect my co-workers and the BMWED as a whole."

Brother Evanski first enrolled in college in 1993, right after high school. However, the financial burdens of paying college tuition and living expenses caused him to put his educational plans on temporary hold while he entered the workforce. Kevin was absolutely thrilled to learn that he would be the recipient of a 2006 BMWED Scholarship. He said, "This is absolutely fantastic, and I am really stoked. This will really help so much. All my coursework so far has been paid for with loans, so this is really awesome. I want to personally thank all the members of the BMWED for this honor, and I will do everything in my power to make them as proud of me as I am of them. Thank you BMWED Brothers and Sisters."

Ms. Cassidy Smith Bennett was also awarded a 2006 BMWED Scholarship. Cassidy is the stepdaughter of Brother David James Rogez, a member of Local Lodge 2407 of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe System Federation-BMWED. Cassidy, a May 2006 graduate of Woodward High School in Woodward, OK is currently attending her freshman year at the University of Oklahoma. Cassidy graduated from Woodward High with numerous honors, including a No. 1 class ranking and a grade point average of 4.0.

While academically gifted and the recipient of many local, state, and national honors, Cassidy recognizes the sacrifices her parents made throughout the years to give her an opportunity to excel in academics. Cassidy said, "Some of the first friends I made in Woodward were children of other BMWED members who I got to know through union picnics and other events. We settled in Woodward because they have a wonderful school system and my stepfather could work his railroad job relatively close to home. There have been times throughout his career when he had to be away from home for more than a few days at a time. This has contributed to a strong family environment for me and my three siblings. It is no exaggeration to say that the BMWED has impacted literally every aspect of my life. My schooling, my friends, and my family have all positively benefited from this association with BMWED."

Cassidy's father, David James Rogez hired onto the Santa Fe Railroad in 1978 and is currently a ballast regulator operator with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe. When notified of his daughter's selection for the BMWED Scholarship, Brother Rogez said, "I am very proud of Cassidy and I can tell you how very appreciative and proud I am to be a member of the BMWED. The union offers a lot to its members and I am thankful for everything they have done for me and my family. With 5 children, having the union behind me and my family has made all the difference. I am thankful for the protection and security of my union and my union contract. Cassidy and I want to sincerely thank all the members of BMWED for this wonderful honor."

President Freddie Simpson congratulated this year's scholarship winners by letter stating, "Congratulations on your selection to receive the 2006 BMWED Scholarship Award. Your recognition of the role of Organized Labor as a voice for working families and a bellwether of the middle class is a tribute to your dedication and convictions. The BMWED has a long history of helping its members achieve the American dream, and we are particularly proud to be able to assist you and your family with this scholarship award. On behalf of the officers and members of the BMWED, please accept our sincere congratulations and best wishes for your academic success and in all your future endeavors."

The BMWED Scholarship program was originally established by action of the 2002 Grand Lodge Convention. The program has awarded one $1,500.00 scholarship annually to a BMWED member or dependent since 2002. By action of the First Regular National Division Convention held the week of June 19, 2006, BMWED delegates revised the annual scholarship award by increasing the number of BMWED scholarships from one to two, and by increasing each annual scholarship to $2,000.00.

The eligibility criteria, application procedures, and award selection criteria for the BMWED Scholarship is published each summer in the BMWED *Journal* and posted on our website at ***www.bmwe.org***. All members and eligible dependents are encouraged to apply for next year's 2007 BMWED Scholarship.

High school seniors who are dependents of BMWED/Teamster members are also eligible to apply for the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund. The Hoffa Memorial Scholarship is separate from the BMWED Scholarship and is offered to all eligible dependents of Teamster members. Applications for the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship for the 2007 - 2008 academic year are currently being accepted and can be accessed at ***www.Teamster.org.*** From the Teamster webpage, simply click on "resources," then click "students," then click "James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund" to access instructions, application forms, and eligibility requirements. The application deadline for the Hoffa Scholarship is March 30, 2007. For further information, see the article on the James R. Hoffa Scholarship Fund elsewhere in this edition of the *Journal*.

BMWE Division
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2007-2008 James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship

BMWED Dependents Eligible to Apply for 2007-08 Program Year

The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund awards scholarships annually to outstanding high school seniors. James R. Hoffa became a Teamster member in 1934 and served as General President for 14 years, and, in recognition of his tireless service to the Union and its members, was named General President Emeritus for life. In November 1999, General Secretary-Treasurer C. Thomas Keegel presented a resolution to establish the new scholarship fund to the General Executive Board. Thus began the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship.

One hundred scholarships will be awarded this year. Applicants compete in one of the five geographic regions where the Teamster parent/grandparent's Local Union is located. Thirty-one of the awards total $10,000 each ($2,500 a year over four years), where sixty-nine of the awards are a one-time $1,000 grant.

The children and grandchildren of BMWED members are eligible to apply for the 2007 – 2008 James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship.

This year's program is open to high school seniors graduating in 2007, who plan to attend a four-year college in the Fall of 2007. The applicant should rank in the top 15 percent of their high school class and have, or expect to have, excellent SAT or ACT scores. The applicant must be a son, daughter or grandchild of a Teamster member who has been in good standing during the 12 consecutive months preceding the application deadline of March 30, 2007. Furthermore, the Teamster member must not have been a full-time elected officer during the 12 months preceding the application deadline date of March 30, 2007.

Applications, detailed instructions, and eligibility information can be downloaded from the Teamster's website at ***www.teamster.org*** under Member Benefits. Applications are also available by contacting the BMWED Education and Safety Department at ***gkreie@bmwewash.org*** or 202-638-2135, X 14.

Applications must be received by the Scholarship Fund by March 30, 2007. Specific questions or requests for assistance regarding the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship program should be addressed to:

James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund
25 Louisiana Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 624-8735
E-Mail: Scholarship@teamster.org

Modest Cost of Living Adjustment Effective January 2007

The May 31, 2001 National Freight Agreement and the 1997 Amtrak agreements provide for cost of living adjustments (COLA) payable to BMWED members effective January 1, 2007. BMWED members working under the 2001 National Freight Agreement will receive an additional 8 cents per hour starting on January 1. BMWED members working for Amtrak will receive an additional 15 cents per hour on that same date.

Both Agreements provide a COLA, computed twice annually, that is based upon changes in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) using the year 1967 as a base. The last period measured by the Agreements was March 2006 through September 2006. In September, the CPI-W stood at 591.00 and in March it was 581.80. Under both Agreements, we can take credit for half of that increase between 591.00 and 581.80, which is 4.6 points. Using the Agreements' formula that each increase of .3 points in the CPI-W equals a 1 cent increase, the gross adjustment yields 15 cents per hour.

However, under the National Freight Agreement, the carriers can recover up to half of the year to year increase in health insurance costs from the COLA, provided that their recovery cannot exceed half of the COLA otherwise due to employees. In this case, year to year increase in health insurance costs equals 22 cents per hour; however the railroads can only get half of the 15 cents per hour COLA, which is 7 cents per hour after rounding. Therefore, the COLA actually received by BMWED members working under the National Freight Agreement is 8 cents per hour. Amtrak Agreements do not have a health insurance offset; however they have been open for renegotiation since January 1, 2000.

Centenarians

Belated "Happy Birthday" wishes to the following BMWED retirees who recently celebrated their 100th birthdays:

Jesus M. Padilla

A Topeka, Kansas resident, Brother Padilla celebrated his 100th birthday on October 17, 2006. He last worked for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Co. where he retired as a track laborer.

George A. Rumenapp

An Oklahoma City, Oklahoma resident, Brother Rumenapp celebrated his 100th birthday on October 16, 2006. He last worked on the Delaware and Hudson Railway Co. where he retired as a carpenter.

The BMWED extends sincere best wishes to all of our retired centenarians. Happy Birthday!

2007 H & W Premium Rates Set

The Cooperating Rail Labor Organizations (CRLO) and the National Railway Labor Conference (NRLC) met on October 31, 2006 with representatives of United Healthcare to set the monthly "premium" payments for the various health and welfare benefits provided to freight railroad employees subject to existing national agreements. The CRLO and NRLC have conducted this meeting annually since Presidential Emergency Board No. 219 imposed substantial changes to the National Health & Welfare Plan. The parties review proposed "premiums" set by the Plan's administrator, United Healthcare, and after discussion adopt the final "premium" costs which are designed to meet all expected claims during the next calendar year. As a result of that meeting, the monthly premium payments to be made by the carriers for each covered employee for calendar year 2007 are as follows:

Non Hospital Association Railroads (NHR)	
Other than on-duty coverage	$1057.35
On duty injury coverage	$ 17.61
Life and AD&D coverage	$ 15.11
Monthly inflow factor	$ 6.20
Administrative costs	$ 1.39
Hospital Association Railroads (HR)	
Other than on-duty coverage	$ 724.78
On duty injury coverage	N/A
Life and AD&D coverage	$ 15.11
Monthly inflow factor	$ 6.20
Administrative costs	$ 1.39
Early Retirement Major Medical	$ 47.01
Dental	$ 47.14
Supplemental Sickness Benefits	$ 36.06
Vision Plan	$ 10.70
Total NHR	**$1238.57**
Total HR	**$ 888.39**

The NHR payment rate for medical insurance increased 9.7% over the 2006 rates; while the HR payment rate increased 10%. The Early Retirement rates increased 1.4%; Dental decreased marginally by the rate of 6 cents per month; Supplemental Sickness increased by 6 cents per month and the Vision Plan increased by 4 cents per month. These are the gross amounts required to fully fund the Plan to provide the benefits established by the parties' collective bargaining agreements.

Under the May 31, 2001 National Agreement, BMWED represented employees began to directly contribute a share of wages to fund the National Health and Welfare Plan. These contributions were made in the form of cents per hour wage increases that were diverted to cover increases in medical insurance costs. Other Rail Unions adopted a method whereby a fixed amount was deducted from an employee's gross pay (before taxes). In both cases, the employees make contributions to fund their Health and Welfare benefits.

Effective January 1, 2007, BMWED members subject to the May 31, 2001 National Freight Agreement will have had 69 cents per hour in wage increases and cost of living adjustments diverted during the term of the agreement to pay for health care costs under the National Freight Agreement. Those diversions cumulatively cost BMWED members working at straight time a total of $120.06 per month in wages that otherwise would have been received but for the healthcare cost sharing provisions of the 2001 National Agreement.

Freddie N. Simpson

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

It has been quite a year for the BMWED, and there is much to be done in 2007. As this will be my last President's Perspective for 2006, I thought it would be appropriate to look back at what the Brotherhood and its members accomplished in 2006, and to also look forward toward the many challenges and opportunities that we will face in 2007.

First and foremost, none of us are happy that our national negotiations have not resulted in a fair and equitable settlement with the nation's railroads. Of course, the railroads have thus far not shown any inclination toward recognizing the contributions of Rail Labor in general, and BMWED members in particular, to the carrier's expanding bottom line. BMWED is not interested in further enriching the carriers' through concessionary negotiations and give-backs. What we are interested in is reaching a voluntary settlement that meets the financial and job security needs of our membership; a settlement that fairly reflects labor's significant contribution to the increasing profits of the industry.

As every member is aware, the carriers' early game plan was to roll us, and all of Rail Labor, into an industry-friendly Bush Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) while a Republican Congress was still in power. The fact that we have not been forced into a Presidential Emergency Board prior to the recently concluded mid-term Congressional elections is a tribute to the solidarity and strategy of the Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition (RLBC). At every critical juncture the solidarity and unity of the Coalition, with the full support of the Teamster's International, has been able to counter the carrier's game plan and thwart their efforts to steamroll us. Now, with the House and the Senate soon to be in control of the Democratic Party for at least the next two years, the carrier's original strategy for Congressional imposition of onerous recommendations from a Bush PEB has been further compromised.

As we head into the New Year, it is time for the railroads to get serious at the bargaining table and negotiate a just and equitable agreement. The Rail Labor Bargaining Coalition is committed to that goal and I appeal to the carriers and their negotiating team to enter 2007 with the purpose of reaching a fair agreement with the RLBC and all of Rail Labor. The financial picture of the industry has never been better and its prospects for continued growth and profitability are among the best of any economic sector in the United States. Given this reality, it is time for the industry to negotiate in good faith with Rail Labor and provide us our fair share for the stellar performance and profitability that we have delivered for the industry.

Our national negotiations are now at a critical juncture and it is up to the carriers to settle with the workforce whose toil has generated these record profits. It is my sincere desire to settle this contact in 2007 and move forward together to make the industry even more profitable; thereby guaranteeing jobs and good pensions for all of Rail Labor. However, let me also use this opportunity to caution the carriers not to test our solidarity and resolve. Rail Labor is ready to settle this contract fairly and peacefully. If this can not be done, then the BMWED and its RLBC partners will turn up the heat in every conceivable manner and exert every effort to obtain a just result for our members. Our members have demonstrated tremendous patience and resolve in this round, but this should not be taken by the carriers as a sign of weakness or lack of organization and solidarity. The carriers would do well to heed our call and settle this round in a manner that is fair to all. Failure to do so will ultimately affect the carriers' relationship with shippers, further disenfranchise its workforce, adversely affect carrier profits, and alienate members of Congress.

And speaking of Congress, I want to congratulate the membership and all working Americans for turning out the vote on November 7 and restoring the Democratic Party as the majority party in both the House and the Senate. Many said it couldn't be done and that Organized Labor was no longer relevant in U.S. politics. We proved them wrong! And working class Americans throughout this great land proved them wrong! Organized Labor is still relevant and our political muscle helped deliver the Congress to the Democrats. Working families joined with Organized Labor throughout the land to say enough is enough and to chart a new course and direction for our nation.

BMWED looks forward to working with the new majority to bring about legislation that will assist working families struggling to make ends meet. Specifically, we will mobilize to quickly bring the issues surrounding our national negotiations

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Message from Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa

Working families have new reason to believe in the ability of their government to better their lives, as Teamster endorsed candidates across the country prevailed at the ballot box. I congratulate the victors and thank the thousands of Teamster members who invested countless hours over many months to help elect a pro-working families Congress.

Now is the time for action on issues such as universal health care, retirement security, the Employee Free Choice Act, fair trade agreements and rail security. This new Congress must reverse action on the Bush administration's misplaced priorities.

This election marks an opportunity to move our domestic agenda in a markedly different direction. It is an opportunity to cease the global race to the bottom resulting from the endless series of job-killing trade pacts passed by Congress. It is an opportunity to give all working Americans access to affordable, quality healthcare. It is an opportunity to raise the minimum wage. It is an opportunity to promote the rights of workers who want to join a union.

Over the years, I have had many conversations with Representative Nancy Pelosi and Senator Harry Reid about how Democratic control of Congress could directly benefit the lives of working Americans. I commend them for their leadership throughout this campaign and congratulate their success in electing Democratic majorities in the House and the Senate.

But the truly difficult task still lies ahead. I look forward to working with Rep. Pelosi and Sen. Reid to move our pro-worker, pro-union agenda through Congress. In particular, I commit that the Teamsters are willing to work overtime to help enact key provisions of Rep. Pelosi's "First Hundred Hours" plan, including a raise in the minimum wage and changes in the Medicare prescription drug program that will lower the cost of medications.

The votes of working families made a difference at the ballot box. We must now make sure this new Congress makes a real difference in their lives.

James P. Hoffa
Teamsters General President

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Perry K. Geller, Sr.

The holiday season in upon us and many of you, like most Americans, will spend the holiday's celebrating with family and friends. And, like many Americans, you will likely also be spending well above your holiday budget this season.

As the New Year begins, the holiday bills will surely follow. Thus, this is probably a good time to give yourself and your family a financial security checkup. And if you and/or your spouse are getting close to retirement, it is also suggested that you begin to prepare for those "golden years" by assuring your retirement benefits are ready when you are.

Financial experts agree that a periodic review of your finances makes good sense. Most experts advise that a yearly review is most appropriate in order to allow you and your family to make timely adjustments to your financial plan in order to meet your present and future goals.

The first step in the process is to review your financial goals and anticipated financial liabilities. Like most working Americans, each of us undoubtedly struggles with the rising cost of living. Gasoline, housing, insurance, college costs, food, medical expenses, recreation, and clothing all take a major bite out of our take home pay. The income of working Americans has not kept pace with inflation, and the vast majority of working families are feeling the squeeze of rising prices and stagnant wages. Thus, saving for the future is admittedly difficult, but a disciplined approach to saving can help you reach your financial goals. And remember, it is never too late to begin.

When contemplating a financial strategy, the fable of the tortoise and the hare comes to mind: Slow and steady wins the race. Basically, the earlier you get started, the better off you will be over the long term. For instance, if you are able to save $50.00 per month at 3.5% interest you will accumulate $17,444.05 in pre-tax dollars over 20 years. However, if you begin earlier and save $50.00 per month at the same 3.5% interest over 40 years, you will have accumulated $52,435.89 before taxes. This example points to the benefits of steady and disciplined savings and how compound interest adds substantially to your bottom line over the longer term. Experts also suggest that savings be supplemented by a diversified mix of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds as a hedge against inflation. However, many working families do not have the disposable income to invest in the financial markets, so a disciplined approach to savings is paramount.

But what if you can't save regularly? Experts are virtually unanimous in their advice that everyone should try to save at least a little each month. Saving just a little each month over the long term could provide a much needed financial cushion. However, many people do not have the discipline to consistently save. If you fall into this category, you may want to consider automating your savings and "paying yourself" on the same monthly schedule as you pay your other bills. This can be done through your bank by setting up a recurring transfer from your checking account to a separate saving account. Most people find that it is infinitely easier to save money that they don't actually see, so an automated transfer may be the best option.

Also, now may be a good time to reevaluate your mortgage and other debt to see if there is a way to reduce the amount of interest you are currently paying. Mortgage rates are still near historical lows and, if you have not already done so, it may be wise to consider the feasibility of refinancing at a lower interest rate. Also, check the interest rates you are presently paying on your credit cards. Some credit card companies and retail stores charge astronomical rates, and many charge variable rates that fluctuate based upon the prime rate, the Treasury Bill rate, or other economic indices. Because of these fluctuations, it is recommended that you review your credit card interest rates at least annually and get rid of your high interest credit cards. Also, experts highly recommend that you should always try to pay more than the minimum balance due each credit card billing cycle. Credit card companies love when you pay only the minimum balance due because that assures them maximum profits and assures you a perpetual balance due with little or no reduction in principle.

Financial planners also recommend that you build up an "emergency rainy day fund" separate and apart from your regular savings in order to weather unexpected emergencies such as unemployment, sickness, short-term disability, etc. Experts generally agree that an emergency fund should be enough to cover your living expenses for approximately six months. More is obviously better, but a six month emergency fund should be sufficient to get you through most short-term emergencies.

For older workers and their families, the beginning of the New Year is also a good time to take stock of your retirement security. BMWED members are fortunate to be covered under Railroad Retirement once they become vested. However, many of us do not know how much our retirement benefits might be, what spousal benefits can be expected, and what are the eligibility requirements for survivor benefits. The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has a lot of valuable information on its website at ***www.rrb.gov.*** This is a good first stop for general information about

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Observance of Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve Holidays-2006

The National Holiday Agreement provides that the Christmas Eve holiday is "the day before Christmas is observed" and the New Year's Eve holiday is "the day before New Year's Day is observed". Since the Christmas holiday will fall on Monday, December 25, 2006, the Christmas Eve holiday will be observed on Sunday, December 24, 2006. Similarly, since the New Year's Day holiday will fall on Monday, January 1, 2007, the New Year's Eve holiday will be observed on Sunday, December 31, 2006.

This advice is similar to the information that was furnished to BMWED members and officers during the 2000-2001 holiday season in which these holidays were similarly situated.

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.

The complete list of holidays is:

- 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 Eve is observed)

For detailed information contact your General Chairman.

ROLL OF HONOR

60 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
Emery Bateman	BURNOR	0104	1946
Alvin L. Fay	BURNOR	0104	1941
William Mc Laughlin	N E	1743	1946
Carlton E. Scott	CRSF	0910	1942
Glenn Sharpe	BURNOR	0104	1945
Rodney A. Wheeler	ICGF	0654	1944

50 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
John H. Amoriell	CRSF	0910	1948
Gale H. Barfuss	BURNOR	0104	1955
Sam Compogno	BURNOR	0104	1948
Kenneth G. Johnson	DM&IR	1710	1956
Donald W. Marshall	BURNOR	0104	1953
Marion D. Mc Laughlin	AEF	1509	1951
Leonard W. Sevier	BURNOR	0104	1953
Ronald G. Shaul	BURNOR	0104	1953
Kenneth H. Smith	BURNOR	0104	1955
Kenneth Thomas	CRSF	0910	1947
Joe H. Wing	BURNOR	0104	1953
Jack Yeoumans	BURNOR	0104	1950

40 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
George W. Anderson	BURNOR	0104	1956
Arley M. Bischoff	BURNOR	0104	1960
W. E. Broadsword	BURNOR	0104	1959
Lewis E. Harrington	BURNOR	0104	1961
Eric W. Johnson	BURNOR	0104	1959
Larry A. Kunz	BURNOR	0104	1962
C. R. Meye	BURNOR	0104	1958
Kay Mita	BURNOR	0104	1955
Dennis Nettleton	DM&IR	1710	1966
Robert Prater	ICGF	1067	1966
Albert E. Schenck	BURNOR	0104	1955
Leroy K. Syth	BURNOR	0104	1963
Robert L. Zeller	BURNOR	0104	1957

30 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
Jeffrey L. Abernathy	BURL	0788	1976
Bruce P. Ahner	BURNOR	0104	1972
Ernest W. Ahner	BURNOR	0104	1969
Earl W. Aitken	CRSF	0910	1976
Chester Alexander	SOU	0619	1976
Randy S. Anderson	BURL	1105	1976
Dominic Aquilino	CRSD	2910	1976
Ronald L. Ayer	BURL	1105	1976
Robert M. Barker Jr	CRSF	0910	1975
Craig W. Barnes	N E	1718	1976
Ben R. Bartmess	UN PAC	0874	1976
Terrence J. Bradshaw	BURNOR	0104	1971
Thomas M. Burke	C&NW	2853	1976
Mark C. Butler	CRSF	0910	1976
William J. Calcari Jr	C&NW	2854	1976
Mike Casillas	UN PAC	0899	1974
Isauro R. Castillo	C&NW	1152	1976
George A. Cean	CRSF	0910	1975
John W. Chamberlain	BURNOR	0104	1976
Jack M. Cheek	UN PAC	0899	1973
William D. Christensen	C&NW	0437	1976
Christoph E. Coleman	BURNOR	0104	1974
Jose L. Correa	C&NW	0377	1976
Paul F. Delamater	N E	1632	1976
Gene F. Dickinson	UN PAC	0899	1974
Jerry B. Dickinson	UN PAC	0899	1971
Kevin M. Donohue	UN PAC	0899	1975
Charles E. Erwin	BURNOR	0104	1974
Steve L. Fields	BURNOR	0104	1973
William Flint IV	N E	0090	1976
Rodney J. Foland	BURNOR	0104	1974
Danny Folsom	SOU	0619	1974
Paul A. Fuller	CRSF	0910	1976
Christoph A. Gaddis	BURNOR	0104	1976
Lane R. Gillis	UN PAC	0874	1976
William M. Gordon	DM&IR	1710	1976
Carl G. Gravatt	AEF	1432	1976
Norman D. Hackbart	UN PAC	0899	1976
Dennis R. Harrison	BURL	1105	1976
Steven L. Hauenstein	BURNOR	0104	1976
David E. Hayes	CRSF	0891	1976
William R. Henderson	CRSF	0910	1976
Duane M. Hicken	CRSF	0910	1976
Gary T. Hodges	SOU	0627	1996
L. C. Holsendolph	SOU	0619	1974
Patrick T. Hopkins	CRSD	2910	1976
Rudolph E. Hose	N E	0090	1976
Dennis W. Jackson	BURNOR	0104	1971
Gary M. Kimak	CRSF	0891	1976
Jeffrey C. Kindle	C&NW	1152	1976
Kreig Knutson	BURNOR	0104	1975
Howard J. Lauzon	BURNOR	0104	1973
James A. Lemke	C&NW	0239	1976
Frank A. Leone	CRSF	0910	1971
Willie J. Lewis	SOU	0619	1971
John A. Mace	BURNOR	0104	1967
Fred Mata	UN PAC	0899	1973
Keith J. Matthie	CRSF	0910	1976
Floyd Q. Mc Carrell	BURNOR	0104	1976
John Merksick	UN PAC	0899	1971
Richard Merksick	UN PAC	0899	1976
Thomas D. Molloy	N E	1718	1976
Dennis P. Mullaney	BURL	1105	1976
Douglas M. Myrick	CRSF	0704	1976
Eddy L. Navarrete	UN PAC	0899	1974
Ray A. Nitche	UN PAC	0899	1975
Mark A. Onstot	BURL	1105	1976
Mike E. Pannell	C&EI	1003	1976
P. W. Patterson	ICGF	0017	1976
Kent E. Peterson	UN PAC	0899	1974
John D. Phillips	BURNOR	0104	1966
Arles B. Pierce	CRSF	0910	1976
Arie E. Poelstra	BURNOR	0104	1964
Robert W. Rabidue	BURNOR	0104	1970
Reuben R. Rangel	UN PAC	0899	1974
James E. Register	SOU	0619	1974
Russel D. Richardson	C&NW	0519	1976
William P. Roberson	UN PAC	0899	1975
Randy C. Rompel	BURNOR	0104	1976
Donnie L. Roth	UN PAC	0899	1975
Robert R. Sanders	CRSF	0910	1976
Roger D. Sharp	BURL	1105	1976
Douglas J. Shaw	N E	1718	1976
Jeffrey S. Shullette	CRSF	0910	1975
Rick D. Siers	BURNOR	0104	1974
G. M. Sirmans	SOU	0619	1976
Cecil J. Skiles Jr	BURNOR	0104	1969
Tom D. Staiert	BURL	1105	1976
James S. Stith	SOU	0619	1974
Gerald E. Suttle	ICGF	0017	1976
R. J. Swannack	BURNOR	0104	1969
T. O. Tripp	ICGF	0017	1976
Fred Vanderpool	N E	1632	1976
Francisco Vasquez Jr	UN PAC	0899	1974
Jesus T. Villagomez	BURL	1105	1976
David A. Vogt	UN PAC	0899	1974
B. J. Wallace	ICGF	0017	1976
Dennis Washington	ASF	0995	1976
Leonard A. Watson	BURL	1105	1976
Patrick M. Welch	UN PAC	0899	1975
Rick L. Wells	BURNOR	0104	1971
Dean A. Wendt	C&NW	1788	1976
Jimmy B. Whiddon	SOU	0619	1970
Jay R. Whitver	BURNOR	0104	1972
Ronnie W. Wiklund	BURNOR	0104	1968
Joseph D. Williams	UN PAC	0899	1976
Kevin O. Yates	BURNOR	0104	1974

20 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
Richard E. Bennett	CRSF	0910	1977
S. M. Blais	BURNOR	0104	1984
David Dishaw	CRSF	0910	1978
Gary L. Fleshman	UN PAC	0899	1986
Terry Fussell	SOU	0619	1984
Jerry H. Keeling	SOU	0619	1978
Leroy Mc Kinnon	BURNOR	0104	1986
Ralph D. Misita	BURNOR	0104	1979
Thomas D. Molloy	N E	1718	1976
Dennis V. Phillips	SOU	0619	1982
Harry S. Skoropat	SOU	0619	1978
S. M. Swilley	SOU	0619	1986
Kenneth E. Walshon	BURNOR	0104	1983
Gary R. Willman	C&NW	0721	1986
A. J. Youmans	SOU	0619	1985
James L. Zeigler	SOU	0619	1978
Ricky E. Zeigler	SOU	0619	1978

10 year MERIT AWARDS

LODGE NAME	MEMBER SYSTEM	NUMBER	SINCE
Scott H. Abbott	BURNOR	0104	1994
Gary R. Adams	BURNOR	0104	1991
Rodrigo Alegria	C&NW	1046	1996
Andrew J. Allen	BURNOR	0104	1994
Scott J. Anyan	BURNOR	0104	1996
Scott E. Armatis	BURNOR	0104	1990
Kenny D. Asleson	SOO	0019	1996
R. Bell JrC&NW	0410	1996	
B. W. Berglund	DM&IR	1710	1996
Gerald G. Berreman	BURNOR	0104	1990
Brian J. Blasingame	BURNOR	0104	1988
Marty J. Boresi	C&NW	0437	1996
Ralph S. Brooks	BURNOR	0104	1994
Jeff A. Bryan	ICGF	0017	1996
Marco A. Carrasco	C&NW	0377	1996
David A. Cerrito	N E	1718	1996
Richard J. Cobb	BURNOR	0104	1994
D. C. Cochran	ICGF	0017	1996
Chris A. Cooley	BURNOR	0104	1993
Michael M. Cooper	UN PAC	0899	1996
Dewayne L. Daniels	BURNOR	0104	1994
K. O. Dawkins	SOU	0619	1989
Heath L. Denisse	UN PAC	0899	1996
Daniel Diaz	C&NW	0377	1996
Elroy G. Dusbabek	BURNOR	0104	1991
Donald K. Ellis	BURNOR	0104	1992
Michael S. Elms	ICGF	0017	1996
David J. Evans	BURNOR	0104	1996
Timothy C. Fanning	BURNOR	0104	1994
Calvin K. Farley	BURNOR	0104	1996
Robert D. Fletcher	BURNOR	0104	1995
Jeffrey L. Fox	UN PAC	0899	1996
Steve G. Furukawa	BURNOR	0104	1996
Robert Galipeau	CRSF	0910	1987
M. J. Galvan	UN PAC	0899	1996
Mike E. Gekas	UN PAC	0874	1996
Gerald W. Gray	BURNOR 0104		1996
Bruce F. Grover	BURNOR	0104	1995
Michael S. Hagerty	BURNOR	0104	1996
Raymond C. Hansen	UN PAC	0899	1996
Gary G. Harover	UN PAC	0874	1996
Ronald C. Hart	BURNOR	0104	1990
Guy H. Hawks	BURNOR	0104	1996
Steven E. Hills	BURNOR	0104	1990
Robert A. Hinton	UN PAC	0899	1996
Gary T. Hodges	SOU	0627	1996
Michael S. Holland Jr	BURNOR	0104	1995
Keton D. Jackson	C&NW	1046	1996
Timothy A. Kelly	UN PAC	0899	1996
Renee M. Kerr	BURNOR	0104	1990
Terry R. Klein	BURNOR	0104	1994
Larry M. Kloster	BURNOR	0104	1990
Martin J. Kuntz	UN PAC	0899	1996
Stevie R. Lane	SOU	0619	1990
Kenneth L. Lonak	BURNOR	0104	1994
D. L. Lowe Jr	ICGF	0017	1995
N. K. Mason	ICGF	0017	1996
B. W. Maurer	ICGF	0017	1995
Murray Mc Donagh	CRSF	0910	1988
Brian W. Mc Glynn	C&NW	0437	1996
David L. Miller	UN PAC	0899	1996
Jesse R. Monroy	BURNOR	0104	1992
Eddie Neal III	C&NW	0377	1996
K. L. Nelms	ICGF	0017	1995
S. M. Newton	ICGF	0017	1996
Daniel R. Norman	BURNOR	0104	1990
E. Nunez	EJ&E	0358	1996
Ronald G. Owens	BURNOR	0104	1990
M. A. Perales	UN PAC	0899	1996
Rhonda M. Peterson	C&NW	0437	1996
Justin E. Pettey	UN PAC	0874	1996
Dennis A. Phoenix	BURNOR	0104	1994
Michael D. Pruitt	C&NW	0437	1996
Corey V. Richards	BURNOR	0104	1994
Chad D. Roland	UN PAC	0899	1996
R. B. Ross	ICGF	0017	1996
Travis L. Schultz	ICGF	0017	1996
David G. Shaul	BURNOR	0104	1994
Stanley L. Siegel	BURNOR	0104	1990
Rex A. Stauffer	UN PAC	0899	1996
Bret D. Steger	UN PAC	0899	1996
Hank J. Swanson	UN PAC	0899	1996
Eric R. Thill	BURNOR	0104	1992
Shane U. Thompson	C&NW	0342	1996
Shane U. Thompson	C&NW	0342	1996
G. L. Tucker	SOU	0619	1989
James A. Tyler	ICGF	0017	1994
Daniel D. Vega	UN PAC	0899	1996
Robert P. Walker	BURNOR	0104	1989
Steve A. Weller	UN PAC	0899	1996
Corey M. Wilbanks	FRISCO	0493	1996
Charlie Williams III	SOU	0619	1989
Joel D. Woodward	UN PAC	0899	1996
J. S. Wrightl	CGF	0017	1996
D. L. Zeigler	UN PAC	0899	1996

DEATH BENEFITS

Report of Claims Paid during Sept. thru Oct., 2006

NAME	LODGE NUMBER	SYSTEM
LEONARD V. POLLEY	1664	NPW&LE
CLYDE P. BENSON	0091	BURNOR
EDWARD MEKO	3098	PENN
MARCOS ROMERO	2416	AT&SF
JAMES A. LUZADER	1300	AEF
LEO POWERS	0016	BURNOR
ANDREW J. JONES	0702	AEF
JOE BORINO	1402	UN PAC
CURLEY HYPOLITE	1176	MO PAC
FRANCIS D. WEAVER	0737	AEF
MAURICE C. HENRY	0036	CMSTPP
BASIL W. VOLK	1743	N E
PAUL E. VAUGHN	1600	FRISCO
DONALD V. ANDERSON	1965	CMSTPP
JOHN L. PALMER	0887	CRSF
CARL W. WHITED	0568	ASF
JACK TRIOLA	1176	MO PAC
CLIFFORD W. WRIGHT	2307	NPW&LE
ROY W. GASTON	0818	AEF
JOHN V. BEAN	2703	ASF
LENO CALDIERARO	1107	ASF
FRANK D. GUTIERREZ	1834	PACFED
EARL R. HOFFMAN	1957	CRSF
CLEO HOUSE	0564	MO PAC

PAID SEPT. 1, 2006 TO OCT. 31, 2006 .....$11,500.00
AMOUNT PREVIOUSLY PAID .....$45,071,307.
\TOTAL AMOUNT PAID TO DATE $45,082,807.75
NUMBER OF CLAIMS PAID - 23

PERSPECTIVE Continued from Page 4

to the attention of the new Congress. We will ask them to help level the playing field and foster an environment that will lead to voluntary settlement. We will lobby strongly for long-term funding for Amtrak at levels sufficient to settle the Amtrak agreement and improve Amtrak service and reliability. We will ask lawmakers to support pension reform that strengthens our Railroad Retirement and secures the pensions of millions of working Americans who face the prospect of losing their hard-earned pensions to corporate bankruptcy and reorganization schemes. We will support a long-overdue increase in the minimum wage, an increase in student loans and college grants, open and frank dialogue regarding the current health care crisis, an increase in funding and training for railroad security and safety, and an honorable end to hostilities in Iraq.

Of course none of these goals will be easily achieved and many, like health care and the war in Iraq, will test the resolve and ingenuity of our lawmakers, our system of government, and the citizens of our great nation. As we approach the New Year, I respectfully call upon President Bush and the newly elected Congress to heed the voice of the American people and work in a bipartisan manner to address the needs of our nation and the workforce that makes it run.

In closing, I wish to thank every member for their active participation in our democratic processes. You went to the polls in November; you elected your delegates to serve at the First National Division Convention; and you participated in the election of your Teamster International Officers. I am very proud to serve as your National Division President and am humbled by the overwhelming support I received in my run for Vice President-at-Large of the IBT. I pledge to each and every member my continued personal best efforts to represent your interests and those of the Rail Conference in 2007 and beyond. As we close out 2006, I extend to you and your family the very best this holiday season and wish you and yours a health, happy and prosperous New Year.

C&NW and UP Systems Vote to Merge Continued from Page 1

cer's efforts to reach a merger agreement and the depth of the support by the delegates for the merger. The Unified System Division Officers are: General Chairman, Wayne E. Morrow; First Vice Chairman Secretary - Treasurer, Kent L. Bushman; Region 1, District 2 Vice Chairman D. Joe Dean; Region 1, District 3 Vice Chairman, Charles R. Hogue; Region 1, District 4 Vice Chairman, David R. Scoville: Region 2, District 2 Vice Chairman, Rod D. Mulder; Region 2, District 3 Vice Chairman Stan W. Waldeier and Region 2, District 4 Vice Chairman, W. "Bill" C. Jorde.

Elected to the Executive Board were: Chairman Paul Chamberlain; Secretary Ron Hoffman; Members, Mike Gekas, Garry Purkey, Brandon Louis, Al Steffen and Jeff Rankin.

According to General Chairman Morrow, "This merger is not about bigger, it's about better representation for our Brothers and Sisters busting their butts on the rails." First Vice Chairman Secretary - Treasurer Kent Bushman added, "I'm convinced that the right thing was done for the membership. Vice Presidents Fenhaus and Tanner started this over 9 years ago."

Vice President Western Region Dave Tanner's response to the merger was, "These two systems have made a choice to move forward into the future. With their combined resources they will increase service to the membership. I congratulate them on making this difficult and right decision."

Vice President Northwest Region Leon Fenhaus stated, "While it is correct that this process began more than 9 years ago, the officers are to be commended for remaining focused on achieving the goal that was accomplished. I believe this merger will bring about benefits for the members greater than the obvious. I hope that what these two bodies have accomplished will serve as an incentive and model for other Systems to merge."

President Simpson congratulated the officers and hailed the merger. "I congratulate the Officers and Joint Protective Board members for consummating this merger within the BMWED. Establishment of the Unified System Federation is the culmination of years of work that will pay strong dividends to the membership through consolidation of services and improved representation. It just proves once again that reasonable men and women can work in harmony for the greater good of our members and our union."

REPORT Continued from Page 5

your retirement benefits. For specific information about your Railroad Retirement benefits, you are encouraged to contact the nearest Railroad Retirement Board Office. A list of RRB offices is available on the Board's website or by consulting your local phonebook or directory assistance.

As working Americans, we all realize how difficult it is to save and invest our hard-earned wages. But it is important that we do so for the financial stability and security of our families and loved ones. In closing, I want to extend from my family to yours our very best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year. Then, on January 1, make it your New Year's resolution to give your family a financial checkup and stay on track toward financial security in 2007.

BMWED National Division Retirees

Please join us in celebrating the recent retirements of the following members of our Union family who served this Brotherhood for so long and so well. For their many years of service to this organization, we are forever grateful.

Gail Meisel

With her retirement on October 1, 2006, Sister Meisel completed over 25 years of dedicated Grand Lodge/ National Division service.

Gail became employed at the Grand Lodge offices in 1981. Gail faithfully executed the responsibilities of numerous clerical positions but has held only staff positions since 1984. These included positions in Personnel, Financial Services, and as Controller. She was appointed to the position of Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer in 2001, the position she held at the time of her retirement from our Southfield, MI offices.

"I love being retired and being my own boss," says Gail. Not being one who likes just sitting around, she plans to run a business from her home part-time. Gail looks most forward to "Family" time with her brother, sister, daughter, and three grandchildren who all live near her.

David Rich

With his retirement on October 1, 2006, Brother Rich completed nearly forty years of dedicated service to both the Pennsylvania Federation and Grand Lodge/ National Division offices.

David became employed as a member of the Pennsylvania Federation's office staff in January of 1967, where he loyally performed the duties and responsibilities of his craft. Twenty years later, in January of 1987, he was appointed to the position of Grand Lodge/National Division Auditor, the position he held until his retirement.

David looks forward to spending his retirement years in the company of his wife of twenty one years, Rachel.

Report Cites Need for Quality Hazmat Training

On November 15, the Citizens for Rail Safety (CRS) released a new report on the state of hazmat training for rail employees. A need for quality training was the main conclusion of the report that cited the shortcomings of current training programs provided by rail corporations.

CRS sponsored a panel discussion about the report in Washington, DC. Panelists included John Tolman from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET); Thomas Williams, mayor of Norwood, Ohio; Rick Inclima, BMWED Director of Safety and Education; and Wendell Davis of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAF). Prior to the panel discussion, guest speakers Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) and Rep. Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA) spoke about rail security and safety issues and the importance of training.

"We need security plans and security training for rail employees," said Rep. Thompson. "It baffles me why the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) has failed to act. We need to ensure our rail workers get the training they need."

The report, written by the National Labor College (NLC), outlines the ingredients for quality training programs. "We've trained over 20,000 rail employees across the United States," said Brenda Cantrell, Director of the Rail Workers Hazardous Material Training Program at the NLC. "Often our students tell us how they learn more about hazardous materials in the first few hours of our class than they do after years of working on the rails."

"Our members are an untapped resource," Inclima said. "We need to ensure that rail employees and other first responders, such as firefighters, are trained to collaborate in emergencies. Our members know best about how to safely access railroad property. They are an invaluable resource to emergency responders."

"The most critical time after any rail accident is the first few minutes," Tolman said. "Rail workers are always the first responders in those situations and we need to have quality training in order to know how to respond and save lives."

The CRS report can be accessed at ***www.citizensforrailsafety.org*** or at ***www.bmwe.org***.

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division
of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters
10 G Street NE Suite 460 Washington, D.C. 20002-4298 (202) 638-2135

Freddie N. Simpson
President

Perry K. Geller
Secretary-Treasurer

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Thanks to your help, Election 2006 was a resounding victory for the Democratic Party and our BMWED key race endorsed candidates listed in the last issue of the *Journal*. Democrats won a decisive majority in the House and a one-vote majority in the Senate. Of the 36 Governors' races, the Republicans lost 20. Only one of our endorsed candidates (Phil Angelides – CA Gubernatorial) was not elected.

At this writing votes are still being counted in close House races, however, the outcome of these races won't affect the Democrats' majority in Congress. Right now Democrats hold 232 seats and Republicans hold 199 seats, excluding four House seats where the outcome is not called.

For the first time since 1994 Democrats control the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate. More important, we now control the legislative agenda. The days of anti-labor committee chairmen are over. We are also excellently positioned for the 2008 Presidential election. Remember, it is the President that appoints the heads of agencies such as the Surface Transportation Board, the Federal Railroad Administration, the National Mediation Board and Amtrak.

The Democratic victories on November 7 were a result not only of commitments from the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the Democratic Senatorial Committee, and huge sums of PAC dollars, but more important, from a whole lot of work from a whole lot of GOTV activists like you who tirelessly worked the phones, knocked on doors, and talked with members about the importance of their votes. The Teamsters, the AFL-CIO, and the Change to Win organizations came together with a well-organized strategic plan in place long before the first campaign speech was ever delivered.

On behalf of National Division President Simpson, I thank you, the unsung heroes, for your dedicated and tireless help. It made a tremendous difference, and you should be very proud that the voice of working families was heard loud and clear.

In solidarity,

Danny Gates
Director of Government Affairs

VICE PRESIDENTS
J. Randy Cook
Leon R. Fenhaus
Roger D. Sanchez
David D. Tanner
Henry W. Wise, Jr.

Freddie N. Simpson
PRESIDENT

Perry K. Geller, Sr.
SECRETARY-TREASURER

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