Season’s Greetings

Sweet and sour now on Business Development menu
Industrial Products’ Business Development initiatives have a way of becoming the next “big thing” at BNSF. Lately, environmental issues, including alternative sources of energy, have led to opportunities such as the Bakken Shale and the Alberta Oil Sands.

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Abo Canyon: The double-track challenge
The 4.5-mile double-track expansion through Abo Canyon has just begun and will continue over the next few years. The new track will help improve velocity through the canyon and eliminate the bottleneck on this section of BNSF’s transcontinental line.

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Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008: What does it mean for BNSF?
After a fatal California train collision in September, Congress passed legislation that will have broad industry impact. Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support, answers questions about the new Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 and changes that will affect BNSF and its employees.

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Partnering together to zero in on all types of risk
BNSF initiated new safety programs in 2008 that focused on identifying and eliminating at-risk behaviors. Next year, BNSF will continue to partner with employees to further reduce unsafe behaviors.

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1008:
A historic year

Historians are busy writing the book on the year 2008. The year will be remembered for widely fluctuating gas prices, the credit crunch that hit Wall Street and Main Street, and the foreclosure crises, all resulting in economic volatility. The presidential election, which drew record voters, will significantly shift the political landscape. Weather will get a chapter, as well, with floods and hurricanes causing extensive damage in the Midwest and on the Gulf Coast.

Before I review what those events mean for BNSF, let me start with safety. In 2008, sadly, we lost two members of the BNSF family who were fatally injured, and our overall safety performance is falling short of target. Despite these challenges, we believe we have solid processes in place for safety improvement. We are making progress on several fronts and have seen a decrease in the most severe incidents. We must continue our focus on reducing the variability of our tasks as part of our Safety Action Plans and on eliminating all at-risk behaviors. Together we can achieve our vision of an injury- and accident-free workplace. Nothing is more important than each and every one of you returning home to your loved ones safely.

The Railroad Safety Improvement Act, signed into law in 2008, will have a broad impact on the industry and railroad employees. Fortunately at BNSF, we’ve taken a leadership position with our ETMS technology, which has already been approved by the Federal Railroad Administration. One of our strengths is our efficient and responsive operation. This strength was evident as we coped with the many weather challenges of this year, including record flooding in the Midwest as well as the hurricanes that swept through the Gulf Coast. Our people handled these challenges, as always, with dedication and a focus on meeting customer expectations.

As we turn to other events of 2008, our railroad is not immune to national and global issues. Our business levels have been impacted by overall consumer demand and the economy. For the third quarter, our volumes were down about 1.5 percent in units, although revenue ton-miles did increase slightly, led by Coal and Agricultural Products. In the third quarter, we also achieved our best quarterly earnings per share in the history of our company, due to our strong franchise, improved yields and increased fuel surcharges. Increased earnings are important because we need to ensure the returns necessary to invest in maintenance and growth of our capital-intensive business.

We don’t know yet what our fourth quarter results will be, but to date, our freight volumes have continued to fall, reflecting the overall economic downturn. Although the outlook for next year is uncertain, one of our greatest strengths is the diversity of our franchise.

Looking ahead to 2009, we know we will see continued economic decline, though we still are uncertain about how severe it may be. As always, we are managing our business carefully for productivity and efficiency. But we also believe, given the extremely volatile economy, that we need to take additional steps to ensure the long-term success of our company. We are further reducing expenses, capital spending and hiring, while continuing the investments necessary to run a strong and well-maintained railroad. We have made the difficult decision to not have merit increases in 2009 for all salaried employees except for certain first-line supervisors. Given business levels, we also will be forced to furlough some of our scheduled employees.

We faced some difficult times in 2008, and we have more challenges ahead. But the strength and resilience of our people carry us through, in good times as well as in tough times. I am confident in the future of our company because I’ve seen what we can achieve together: Our goal will be to keep the railroad strong and prepare for the eventual recovery in the economy with a continued focus on safety, service, improved yields and cost control.

Thank you for the individual contributions you make each day that help BNSF succeed. Those efforts are especially important now, when we need to deliver even more value to our customers and to our nation through reliable and consistent service. You should be proud of the role you play and know that it makes a difference. I wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Matthew K. Rose
BNSF Chairman, President and CEO
Alberta Oil Sands: No sour deal

Not all the black stuff that comes out of the ground is the same. Most flows like “Texas tea” that can easily be pumped out of a well. Some, like the Alberta Oil Sands, must be dug up, heated, treated and processed. But in an oil-strapped world, producers are willing to take the commodity in just about any form — even “sour” crude, which requires more processing over conventional “sweet” crude. (See box.)

Heavy stuff

Oil sands are actually deposits of bitumen, heavy and viscous oil, which must be rigorously treated to convert it into crude oil before it can be used by refineries. Because it does not flow like conventional crude oil, the only way to get to the bitumen is to mine it or heat it.

The deposits at the surface are open-pit mined using shovels with buckets. Trucks that are three stories high and cost $5 million each are used to haul the bitumen to the on-site extraction plant. Here, the bitumen is separated from the sand, water and clay.

The reserves that are buried — from 200 to 1,300 feet deep — are recovered through what’s called “in-situ,” a process that injects steam into the deposits to heat the bitumen, allowing it to flow, much like conventional oil production.

Once the bitumen is separated, the real upgrading begins. This is where BNSF enters the picture.

Before bitumen can move through a pipeline to its destination, it must be blended with diluents (diluting agents) such as natural gasolene (not natural gas, which is a gaseous fuel) or butane, which are composed of lighter-weight hydrocarbons.

For the last two years, BNSF has been moving single carloads of diluents from U.S. refineries to the Canadian border (at Superior, Wis., Noyes, N.D., Sweetgrass, Mont., and New Westminster, B.C.). The inbounds are then interchanged with Canadian railroads, then moved to Edmonton, with the final move to the oil sands’ processing center via pipeline.

Last year, BNSF moved about 9,000 carloads of diluents for the project, with the majority of loads originating from the Gulf Coast, California and Kansas. This year, about 12,000 carloads are anticipated to move.

“A year ago, we knew this was going to be big, and the volumes are just now starting to take off,” says Keith Carney, market manager, Industrial Products. In addition to moving the diluents, BNSF has also transported turbines, other large machinery and pipes for use at the drilling sites.

Satisfying a worldwide appetite

How much bigger the Alberta Oil Sands project will become is subject to debate given the recent plunge in the cost of a barrel of oil. As crude prices fall, the costs associated with crude produced from the oil sands may delay or postpone construction by energy producers. But even with demand for gasoline lessening in the United States, analysts say the worldwide need for oil isn’t about to disappear.

“Historically, Canada’s oil has been recovered using conventional oil drilling,” says BNSF’s Genevieve Brazzell, sales manager, Industrial Products, Calgary. “There are a lot of known reserves in the Alberta Oil Sands — equal to about 173 billion barrels — but until now, there’s not been a need to go after them. We see the oil sands expanding well into the next decade because they represent a long-term, nearby and secure source of oil supply for the United States.”

The U.S. Energy Information Association backs this up, predicting that Canada will move from its current No. 7 position in the Top 10
world crude oil producers to No. 4 by 2015. (Saudi Arabia is now No. 1, followed by Russia, with the U.S. holding the No. 3 position.)

While BNSF’s moves of diluents will continue to grow with the projected demand, Brazzell and Jane Halvorson, who recently became manager, Business Development overseeing oil sands, are optimistic that outbound moves will develop for the bitumen blend.

“We’ll continue moving diluents, but there is opportunity to offer rail service as an alternative to pipelines to get the bitumen blend to the refiners,” says Halvorson. This virtual pipeline on rail would use privately owned tank cars operating between Alberta and Houston. Conservative estimates currently put the number of daily rail cars around eight or nine, starting next year, with upwards of 115 a day by 2015.

In addition to these potential moves, there are other opportunities associated with the Alberta Oil Sands. Byproducts from its production include petroleum coke, sulfur and asphalt—all commodities that are suited for rail.

Like any project, the key to this one’s success will be teamwork, says Halvorson. BNSF will need to consistently serve unloading and loading locations in the Texas Gulf. For unit trains to be effective, partnerships with the Canadian railroads will be needed at the gateways. And future dimensional shipments will require special handling by Operations.

But the potential of the oil sands is exciting, says Halvorson, even though they may look like clumps of dirt.

Contributed by Susan Green

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**Bakken Shale:**

**How sweet it is**

On the rolling plains of western North Dakota and eastern Montana, wheat, barley and beans are the fruits of the earth. But go below the surface—about two miles down—to the real riches of the region: the Bakken Shale, the largest continuous oil deposit in the lower 48 states.

While farming and ranching aren’t being replaced, a new crop—“sweet” crude—is creating an oil boom here because it is a variety preferred by refiners due to its low sulfur content, meaning less refining and associated costs.

The Bakken Shale (in green) is below parts of northwestern North Dakota, northeastern Montana, southern Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba. The Alberta Oil Sands (in orange) are north of Edmonton.

And BNSF is in a sweet spot, literally, with track overlaying much of the Bakken Shale. About two-thirds of the deposit is in western North Dakota, putting BNSF right at the source.

To accommodate rig construction, BNSF began moving drilling materials—pipes, casing, tubing, sand and clay—about four years ago. Currently, about 320 inbound carloads move via BNSF each month and about 170 more are anticipated each month as rig counts grow; in 2005 there were 21 rigs, today there are about 85.

But with more than 4,000 active wells already in the region, it’s what is coming out of the ground that holds such promise.

**Time to drill**

Formed 365 million years ago deep below the earth’s surface, the Bakken Shale was discovered in the 1950s. But it took recent spikes in gas prices and new horizontal drilling technology to finally make drilling economical. These factors, plus a desire to wean America off foreign oil imports, are fueling interest in the formation.

Trapped below in a thin layer of dense rock, the Bakken’s oil is tricky and expensive to capture. To extract oil from the Bakken, wells are drilled vertically to about 10,000 feet and then “kicked out” for as many feet horizontally using pressurized fluid and sand to break pores for the crude to flow for extraction.

In addition to crude, the Bakken also produces natural gas. About 148 million barrels of natural gas liquids are believed to be recoverable, according to a U.S. Geological Survey estimate.

With oil prices fluctuating, the demand for natural gas increasing and, at least in the short term, only modest new production coming online, the Bakken is an emerging growth opportunity for BNSF.

“Currently crude from the Bakken—about 180,000 barrels a month—is moved via pipeline, but the pipeline’s capacity is 203,000 barrels. Even with a proposed expansion project to add pipeline capacity, the rail opportunity is significant,” says David Polzin, director, Business Development, Industrial Products.

The crude oil, which BNSF began moving in July one car at a time, is transported in privately owned tank cars to transload facilities and refineries in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. BNSF’s origination point currently is at Minot, N.D., where the crude is brought for transloading via trucks coming from the well sites.

**A full-service station**

To fully realize the Bakken Shale’s opportunities, track expansion is under way or planned for several locations. For example, the North Dakota Port Services, a privately owned company that originally offered only intermodal services and now includes carload, is adding tracks in anticipation of needed capacity.

Meanwhile, a team from Marketing, Operations, Service Design and Government Affairs is working to very quickly find potential BNSF sites in this rural area for loading and unloading inbound and outbound commodities. Customers are also working with the team, with several of them drafting expansion plans of their own.

On the receiving side—mainly at Oklahoma, Kansas and the Texas Gulf Coast—current unloading facilities at the refineries have limited capacity to receive the railed volumes. Those limitations are also considered in the overall marketing plan. But the need for more energy is so great that the Industrial Products team believes the time to strike is now.

“The demand for Bakken Shale crude oil is there,” says Polzin. “We just need a consolidated site to get it all moving onto our network.”

Contributed by Susan Green

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Oil sands deposits are open-pit mined using shovels with huge buckets and three-story-high trucks.

Bakken Shale crude is currently moved via pipeline, but BNSF sees significant opportunity for the product to move by rail.
It’s a cold, foggy morning in October. The ground is wet and slippery from rain the day before. About 50 men and women huddle at 6:30 a.m. in front of a mobile trailer waiting for the morning’s safety briefing. The only light is from generators illuminating the neon orange and yellow safety vests and coats.

“OK, let’s begin,” bellows Bill Valerio, project supervisor. He lifts up a duffle bag. “You come to work prepared, you stay all day. You come prepared up a duffle bag. “You come to work, Valerio, project supervisor. He lifts vests and coats.

He continues the safety briefing, asking, “Everyone know how we signal to each other about an oncoming train?” Everyone nods, patting the tops of their helmets. “That’s right. We don’t want anyone hurt out here.”

“Our here” is Abo Canyon, about 30 minutes south of Belen, N.M. While Abo is pretty much in the middle of nowhere, it had been the focus of scrutiny in recent years as BNSF sought a permit to extend a second line through this portion of the Southern Transcon to accommodate growth in rail traffic. BNSF carefully addressed all of the concerns raised in the permitting process.

The double-track expansion through the canyon has just begun and is expected to be complete in the next few years. The 4.5 miles of new track will help improve velocity through the canyon and eliminate the bottleneck on this section of BNSF’s busy transcontinental line connecting Los Angeles to Chicago. A typical day sees about 80 trains through the canyon, but there can be more than 100.

“Right now, trains hold in the area for 30 minutes to one hour waiting for single track access,” says Nate Murray, general manager, Southwest Division. “Abo Canyon’s expansion will benefit the Transcon by improving staging. It’s one of the last major pieces of single track on the Transcon.” Two others in New Mexico are at Vaughn and Fort Sumner. Another benefit will be to train crews because it will allow them to tie up faster and get the rest they need sooner.

About 150 people are involved in the current phase of construction, but due to the sluggish economy, the pace of the $80-million project is slowing as demand for construction trucks is down. The end result will be improved train movement through the canyon, but for now, the emphasis is on safety and ensuring the integrity of the area’s environmental and cultural significance.

**Biggest toys in the sandbox**

For many of the workers, this is their first time on a construction site centered around an active train line and at an elevation of about 5,000 feet above sea level, with elements of dust and high winds. High bluffs create shadows and the area is prone to rock slides. Then there are the rock trucks. Huge, 85-ton rock trucks rumble through the area – one reason Valerio likes his job. “You get the biggest toys in the sandbox,” he laughs.

About half of the workers out here are “old hands” at this type of construction, he says. “The other half are a little nervous because they don’t know what to expect – the canyon, the elevation and the weather can be overwhelming. I tell my guys, ‘Don’t get complacent.’”

Mark Herrera is a grader operator who smooths the roads for the construction trucks. This is his third construction job for a railroad, but the largest in scope. “The number of people here to get the job done is surprising,” he says. He is especially proud to be a part of this historic construction.

“When I get to see a train run on this track, I can tell my kids I helped make it,” says Herrera, who is fascinated by trains and someday hopes to become a locomotive engineer.

Herrera’s terrain-grading job has a special importance – to keep the rock trucks running. “That’s because the trucks’ 9-foot-tall tires are treated like gold. In short supply due to the huge amount of worldwide construction, the tires are often shipped separately from the trucks and installed on location to reduce wear and tear, according to Lewis Ruder, senior manager, geotechnical engineering for BNSF in Albuquerque, N.M.

“The single biggest cause of tire blowouts is rocks,” Ruder says. “It’s not a one-time running over big, sharp rocks. It’s the continual running over rough terrain and rocks.” Because the area is full of shale, limestone and sandstone, if a tire blows, it could be weeks before a new one is on site.

**Preparing for a blast**

One of the big orders for the day is preparation for a 3:30 p.m. rock removal blast, one of many that will occur over the course of construction.

A pearl-like compound of ammonium nitrate and diesel fuel oil, which is primarily used in mining and quarry work, is mixed on site and used to fracture the rock. The compound is placed into a new one is on site.
Abo Canyon poses challenges due to the confines of the canyon, its curves, grades and limited access.

Concerns – and lots of them

There were several environmental concerns, which led to a lengthy permitting and investigative process. “Because the Abo Canyon project is in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ jurisdiction, there were a lot of environmental issues to work through to obtain the original permit, resulting in a substantial amount of investigation of local endangered species, flora and fauna issues as well as a very extensive study of archaeological resources. Because of the rich and varied history of the Southwest, there was significant interest from agencies and other interested parties,” says Ruder.

Adding to the cultural and environmental sensitivities of the area are the old campsites from the early railroad workers. “We conducted an environmental clearance for the cultural resources here in the canyon,” says William Penner, an archaeologist from Albuquerque. “It’s taken almost four years, working with the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Land Management, to ensure that we maximize the effects of the second-track project on archaeological and cultural resources.”

The archaeological significance in the area is twofold, says Penner. “The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, when they constructed the original line, had many large camps in the canyon. There were hundreds of individuals working here over the period of five years, and they left behind a record of cans and structures and various other things in the canyon. In addition, there are also prehistoric artifact scatters.”

In the area, about 25 masonry structures were found. Within some of those structures, old lanterns, toys and other odds and ends were found. One stone house, dating from the 1920s and about 5 feet tall with black powder cans forming the roof, is perhaps one of the most unusual structures.

Within the canyon is rock art dating from 1400 to 1600 A.D., mostly of masks and abstract images of faces. BNSF has taken special care to minimize the effects of construction on these archaeological resources. “BNSF chose alternatives that had the least amount of impact on any of the sites in the canyon,” says Penner. “In the end, there were only 13 out of 54 sites that were partially or completely impacted by this project. Of those, we excavated four for their significance and their potential to have buried

material. We also looked at how blasting would affect some of the other masonry structures in the canyon – the rock shelters and other important archaeological resources. Because of that, we’ve undertaken a test blast protocol, which has basically laid out a way to analyze how blasting might affect these resources. BNSF is leading the way in this effort and the results, thus far, are that we’re not seeing adverse effects due to the blasting.”

The best route

Interestingly, from a design standpoint, the original engineers were very good at what they did when they selected the route through the canyon, which poses challenges due to the confines of the canyon itself, its curves, grades and limited access.

“They picked the best route,” says Ruder. “They really knew what they were doing.” It’s an amazing accomplishment considering the original developers back in 1905 didn’t have aerial photos, a Global Positioning System, huge machinery or computers.

Among BNSF’s engineering requirements for the project were that there be reduced curvature on existing alignment, where possible, and the existing alignment would be utilized as parts of both tracks with “swap-overs” where needed. The alignment also provides the opportunity to reduce rock fall hazards on the existing alignment by providing another track for trains to run on during maintenance.

According to Ruder, some of today’s construction will mirror what was done more than 100 years ago. For example, seven new bridges being built are a major concern both from a design standpoint and from a construction standpoint. These bridges basically mirror the opening and waterway capacity of the 100-year-old bridges on the original construction.

“The existing bridges were not designed for the level of today’s railcar loadings, but were designed for the greater live load of steam locomotives. With the increased axle loading on the average freight car today and, of course, the modern locomotive loadings that are now approaching the weight of the heavier steam locomotives – we’re kind of getting back to the loadings the old-timers were designing for to heavy steam power,” says Ruder. As with the older bridges, the new ones are being built with 100-year fatigue life design.

So what was old once is new again. When all of the blasting, grading, track laying, signaling and planning are done, BNSF will have a track built for the future, yet always keeping an eye on the past.

Contributed by Denise Ovalle

Now Open

In early November, the final stretch of new BNSF triple track over Southern California’s Cajon Pass officially opened.

Elsewhere on the Transcon, BNSF recently completed construction of a third main rail line through Cajon Pass, located between the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountain ranges, just north of the city of San Bernardino. The $90-million project adds almost 16 miles of third main track into the Los Angeles Basin and will increase capacity on the route from 100 to 150 trains a day.

Over the last four years, more than 300 BNSF employees and contractors worked on the Cajon Pass project. In that time, crews moved more than 1 million tons of earth, placed approximately 42,000 concrete railroad ties and laid more than 30 miles of steel rail. The construction of this track represents the first additional BNSF main track through Cajon Pass since the second line was constructed in 1913, nearly 100 years ago.
Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008: What does it mean for BNSF?

On Oct. 16, President Bush signed the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008. Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support, answers key questions about the Act and its impact on BNSF.

What were the key drivers for the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008?
Congress has been working on a safety reauthorization bill for several years. Each revision of the bill has included safety mandates for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and other rail safety programs. Over time, the bill was expanded to address a number of other issues, including positive train control (PTC).

One of the key drivers for approval of the bill – and the inclusion of specific deployment timelines for PTC – was the very serious Metrolink incident at Chatsworth, Calif., on Sept. 12, in which 23 people were killed and 135 were injured. Congress felt the urgency to act quickly and decisively in response. We should keep in mind, however, that despite these rare, tragic and high-profile incidents, the passenger and commuter injury rate for U.S. railroads is significantly lower than for most other forms of transportation.

What does the Act include?
The Act addresses many areas in addition to PTC, from hours-of-service requirements to additional safety, training and fatigue management programs. The Act also includes new mandates for Amtrak and the FRA, including extensive rule-making requirements for the FRA. The actual legislation itself is more than 300 pages of extremely dense, technical language. It was drafted and revised numerous times over many months before being approved by Congress and signed by the President. Some of the terms are clear and straightforward, while we’re still partnering with other railroads and union organizations to get clearer definitions from the FRA on some other areas.

What does the Act say about positive train control (PTC)?
The Act requires all Class I railroads and passenger railroads to implement a PTC system by Dec. 31, 2015, on all mainline track where intercity passenger railroads and commuter railroads operate, as well as on certain lines carrying toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials. We’re still calculating exactly what this means, but we estimate that the vast majority of our BNSF network will potentially need a PTC-type of system.

What are the implications of the PTC requirements for BNSF?
At BNSF, our version of PTC technology is the Electronic Train Management System (ETMS). BNSF has worked with Wabtec Railway Electronics since 2003 in developing this system, and it has been approved by the FRA. This collision-avoidance technology keeps a train within authorized limits on a track and under its maximum speed limit, using GPS data and safety-critical software to determine train location.

We plan to implement PTC technology by Dec. 31, 2015, as mandated by the Act, but we expect we will be able to accelerate that plan and, if financing is available, may implement PTC sooner on parts of our system. For instance, we expect to install the wayside devices needed to implement PTC in the Los Angeles Basin by the end of 2012. Of course, before we can do any of this, we need additional approvals and waivers from the FRA to proceed.

What about PTC interoperability standards?
Interoperability is one of our key challenges, because obviously many freight and passenger railroads share track and/or locomotives and must exchange and use information for PTC to work effectively. We’ve already addressed most interoperability hurdles working with the other Class I railroads. We will continue to work with the other major U.S. railroads on testing technology and ensuring interoperability.

What are the certification requirements for conductors?
The Act will require certification of all train conductors based on Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations to be prescribed no later than April 2010. The DOT will also review and consider requiring certification for certain other crafts or groups of employees.

What are the hours-of-service changes?
We’re working with union leaders, the FRA and others to clarify and reach consensus on the Act’s requirements and terminology. (See summary of the Act’s major provisions, Page 9.) At BNSF, we’re in relatively good shape, because we’ve been working hard to manage limbo time and crew hours of service. We’ve also implemented some progressive fatigue management programs, working with our labor unions. However, we’re carefully reviewing all of our crew management processes and agreements. It is very likely that we’ll have to make some changes to our operation.

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Transportation team focuses on safety

BNSF Transportation leaders, safety coordinators and labor leaders from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and the United Transportation Union (UTU) gathered for the group’s semiannual meeting in Fort Worth to discuss safety issues and improvements.

A discussion of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 dominated the latest safety coordinators’ meeting in October. (See Page 7 for details about the Act.) But attendees also heard a comprehensive safety update and learned about a new initiative for crew line-ups. Additionally, Greg Fox, vice president, Transportation, recognized a team of safety coordinators that developed and delivered a first-line supervisor (FLS) safety training course.

Addressing current safety

Noting a slight increase in year-to-date reportable injuries, Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support, outlined the current state of safety at BNSF. “We’ve experienced many safety successes this year, but we also saw a significant increase in injuries during July and August,” Schulze says. Importantly, however, the most severe injuries have decreased substantially this year. “I believe that we’ve put in place the necessary safety fundamentals,” Schulze says. “Even though our overall safety numbers are about the same as last year, we are seeing improvement trends and several pockets of safety excellence.”

Leaders also shared results of a safety assessment that used several survey tools to review the safety culture of the Nebraska and Northwest divisions, as a way to assess the overall BNSF safety culture. Based on the results, Fox notes, “To build a culture of compliance and commitment, we must have our employees fully engaged in the safety process. Clearly, our work here together helps us understand and drive important changes in our safety culture.”

Breaking down barriers

Breaking down barriers has been a common theme in both 2008 meetings. A group of eight safety coordinators and three safety managers developed and delivered an FLS safety program known as Safety With. Topics included an overview of the current labor safety agreements, a review of the Safety Issue Resolution Process and techniques for building relationships and improving communication.

Initially slated to be presented to a few FLS training classes, the program was so successful that Fox expanded the Safety With presentation to all FLS classes in 2008.

UTU Safety Coordinator Greg Hynes, Southwest Division, helped deliver the program. “We focused on presenting positive ways to change behavior rather than using negative methods,” he says.

At the meeting, Fox expressed his appreciation and presented each coordinator with a plaque.

Rolling into 2009

Attendees also heard about the new Best Way Line-up Accuracy Plan. A team from Crew Support explained how the initiative is designed to enhance quality of life for train crews and increase their ability to plan rest through improved communication.

The project introduces redesigned line-up screens that allow employees to control the amount and the timing of notifications they receive. They also can access information more easily and faster.

The project, which will be rolled out in phases through early 2009, includes:

- Forward-looking line-ups for quicker access to information
- Threshold options that allow the employee to define when messages are triggered
- Lock-and-load crew deviations that add more flexibility

Michael LaCrue, Colorado Division BLET safety coordinator, says that he appreciated hearing the information firsthand.

Additionally, safety coordinators explained the job safety briefing (JSB) rollout, which will continue into 2009, and discussed solutions for other safety issues.

Pat Engebrecht, Colorado Division UTU safety coordinator, says that a committee is working with Transportation leaders to identify goals for 2009. “This meeting was positive and represents a step forward,” he says. “Everyone had a chance to share information and to listen.”

Employees can access a full report of the meeting on the System Safety intranet.

Staying safe during the holidays

The back-to-back holidays can impact schedules and add stress — both of which can affect safety. By adhering to proven processes, you can lower risk for injuries this season.

- If you aren’t sure about how to approach a task safely during inclement weather, ask your supervisor or an experienced co-worker.
- Know yourself well enough to manage your own stress levels.
- Be aware that some of your co-workers may also be coping with higher stress during the holidays. If you’re concerned about co-workers’ attention to the job, speak up to keep them and the work team safe.

At home

- When installing decorations, make sure any ladder you use is tall enough to reach the areas you need to reach. As you would at work, make sure you have the right tool for the job before you get started!
- Use outside electrical cords for outside lights and decorations. Tape cords down so that you and others don’t trip on them.
- Avoid overloading power strips. Putting too much stress on a power strip could result in electrical issues, even fires.
- Remember to blow out candles and turn off holiday lights before retiring for the evening.

Safety With: The back-to-back holidays can impact schedules and add stress — both of which can affect safety. By adhering to proven processes, you can lower risk for injuries this season.

- Break down barriers.
- Staying safe during the holidays.
- Addressing current safety.
- Rolling into 2009.
Major hours-of-service changes

- Employees must have at least 10 consecutive hours off duty during the prior 24-hour period. This applies at both the home terminal and the away-from-home terminal.

- If the time on duty, plus the time spent waiting for or in deadhead transportation, exceeds 12 consecutive hours, then the employee will receive additional time off duty (beyond the standard 10 hours) equal to the number of hours by which such sum exceeds 12 hours.

- Employees will not spend more than 40 hours per calendar month waiting for or in deadhead transportation from a duty assignment to the place of final release. However, only limbo time beyond the 12 consecutive hours on duty will count toward this cap. This limbo time cap is reduced to 30 hours, beginning Oct. 16, 2009.

- Employees who initiate an on-duty period each day for six consecutive days must have had at least 48 consecutive hours off duty at their home terminal.

- Employees at away-from-home terminals on the sixth day who work a seventh consecutive day into the home terminal will have at least 72 consecutive hours off duty at the home terminal.

- Employees who have spent a total of 276 hours in any calendar month on duty, waiting for or in deadhead transportation, or in any other mandatory service, will not return on or go on duty for the remainder of that month. Fewer than 1 percent of BNSF TY&E employees exceed this limit in a typical month.

- During a train employee’s minimum required off-duty period, a “railroad carrier, and its officers and agents, shall not communicate with the train employee by telephone, by pager, or in any other manner that could reasonably be expected to disrupt the employee’s rest.”

What does the Act mean for other safety programs?

BNSF will need to file a safety risk analysis report with the FRA for review. The Act also requires us to submit a variety of reports and plans that we already regularly generate – including an inventory of grade crossings on our system, reports of collisions and fatalities, reports on track and bridge inspections, and certain other data. Because we already track so much of this information, these portions of the Act will have a minimal impact.

Does the Act provide any funding for PTC?

The Act potentially provides some limited funding for safety technology grants that could include PTC as well as electronically controlled pneumatic brakes. This funding amounts to about $50 million per year starting in 2009; and, while the funds have been authorized through the Act, they have not yet been appropriated.

Employee safety tips

“All involved are prepared and aware of the lift, and where placement will be made.”

– Ann Gallant, crane operator, Braintree, Minn.

“The guys here pay attention to what they are doing, and management and crews communicate well. When everyone works together, you will get a good outcome.”

Kevin Hues, switchman, Pearl, Texas

Focus on Safety

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Got a story idea?
Send story ideas, suggestions and comments to bnsf.safety1@bnsf.com or call Gene Welander at (817) 352-1144.

SAFETY VISION
We believe every accident or injury is preventable. Our vision is that BNSF will operate free of accidents and injuries.

Going Around and Between Equipment

Review

S-13.1.1
Did you review the rule?
Before going between or working on the end-of-rail equipment, did you:
- Ensure that all crew members understand the work to be done?
- Wait for movement to stop?
- Wait for slack to adjust?
- Did you give a stop signal by forming an overhead “L” with raised arms?
- By radio, give a stop signal by moving a light from left to right.
- Did you review the clearance distances necessary for going between uncoupled cars?

Locomotives

S-13.1.1
Not coupled to rail equipment:
Did you notify all crew members by radio that you are going between or working on the end-of-rail equipment?
Did all crew members acknowledge their understanding by radio?
Coupled to rail equipment:
Did you announce by radio, “Going between,” or give the hand signal?
Did the crew member at the controls:
- Fully apply independent brakes?
- Center the reverser?
- Acknowledge by radio, “Set and centered,” or sound one long whistle?
- Was the locomotive attended until you announced, “In the clear”?

Crossing Tracks

S-13.1.3
Did you review the rule?
Did you establish a clearance of 25 feet between you and the end of standing equipment?
If you must cross in front of approaching equipment, is there sufficient distance for you to cross safely?
Do you know the rules for crossing between standing equipment that is not under blue flag protection within the limits of a designated Mechanical facility?

Remote Control Operations

System Special Instruction No. 23 A(c)

Did you inform each crew member of the work about to be done?
Did the Remote Control Operator (RCO) ensure the Remote Control Transmitter’s speed control was in STOP and the directional control was in NEUTRAL?
Did the RCO announce by radio “Set and centered”?
If you are the primary RCO, did you make the announcement?
Did you wait for each crew member’s acknowledgment?
After completely clearing the equipment, did you report, “In the clear,” or give a hand signal?
Partnering together to zero in on risk

Each work group at BNSF added several new safety programs in 2008. Building on the foundations established in recent years, teams across the system are paving the way for partnerships that focus on identifying and eliminating at-risk behaviors.

Why do people take shortcuts even when they’re aware of the safest way to accomplish a task? Answering that question touches on human factors, an area that safety experts say accounts for a large percent of all incidents. Or, as Dan Rourke, director, Safety and Rules, says, “Incidents and injuries can be correlated to the level of risk present. If you lower the risk, you lower the number of incidents and injuries.” Building on that foundation, each group is forging partnerships to further improve safety in 2009.

Strengthening foundations in 2008

Teams throughout Transportation and other areas focused on achieving consistency in their Safety Action Plans (SAPs). Safety coordinators also headed up a campaign to streamline the job safety briefing (JSB) process, encouraging Transportation employees to identify and discuss low-risk approaches to work practices.

Some divisions, like the Powder River Division, further concentrated on human factors. General Manager Sam Sexhus and his safety leaders hosted a safety conference that was geared to risk assessment and management. In one conference session, Rourke discussed team dynamics and decision-making. “Peer groups exert tremendous influence,” he says. “Essentially, each individual in a group can – and should – make the decision to stop an unsafe behavior, but they don’t always. That is the area we are targeting, choosing to make the safe decision,” he says.

Stopping unsafe behaviors was also emphasized by the Mechanical team in 2008. The group’s annual safety certification featured a video about an employee in the petroleum industry who took a shortcut and was seriously injured as a result. “The video sent a very powerful message that had a strong impact on our employees,” says Ron Hennessey, director, Safety, Mechanical. “We reinforced the importance of identifying hazards and thoroughly assessing risks before beginning each task.”

According to Craig Hill, vice president, Mechanical and Value Engineering, 2008 has been about fully implementing the Six Safety Basics of the SAP. “Each location performs a monthly assessment of their progress against full implementation,” Hill says. “Using our Barrier Identification Resolution System, we then develop countermeasures for any identified gap.”

The Engineering team implemented a Safety Excellence program that incorporated leadership training for first-line supervisors (FLSs). Dave Hestermann, assistant vice president, Chief Engineer – Central, says that Phase I targeted the “gold standard” in conducting effective safety meetings by establishing trust and credibility with employees while empowering employees to take safe actions.

Supporting safety together in 2009

In 2009, all three work groups will offer safety training that builds on 2008 initiatives and that encourages employee ownership and commitment. Greg Fox, vice president, Transportation, says his team will continue to emphasize a partnership safety culture. “We’re committed to a culture of safety with our employees,” says Fox. Key elements in sustaining safety excellence for the group next year will center on:

- Rules compliance and employee commitment
- Strong safety-enabling systems that engage employees in the safety process and are “best in class”
- Aligning organizational systems in a way that considers the impact on the group’s culture and relationships

Additionally, safety coordinators across the system are working on measurable goals for 2009. Building on Phase I, the Engineering group will roll out a program on the “gold standard” for JSBs, which will include FLSs and, for the first time, craft foremen and inspectors. “Job safety briefings should engage all employees in discussing risk,” Hestermann says. “We really want to empower our scheduled leaders to lead those discussions.”

The Mechanical team will implement a Supervisor Safety Improvement Initiative next year, giving supervisors an opportunity to partner with employees to reduce or eliminate risk through process, tooling or facility improvements. The group will also continue focusing on work practice observations, which, according to Gary Hughes, safety assistant, Lincoln (Neb.) Diesel Shop, they’ve successfully used to help reduce risk. “Identifying low-risk behavioral, environmental and procedural approaches are critical in preventing injuries,” Rourke says. “We want employees to understand all risk, assess it and then make the safe decision. We’ve always emphasized risk identification and the need to ensure we take the safest approach, and we will continue that focus in 2009.”

WINTER VEHICLE OPERATION

Review

- Has the vehicle undergone a winter maintenance check that included:
  - Testing the battery and alternator?
  - Ensuring the cooling system contains a minimum of a 50/50 mix of anti-freeze solution and water?
  - Checking the windshield fluid spray system?
  - Checking the windshield wipers?
  - Checking for a full reservoir of washer solution?
  - Checking the windshield fluid spray system?
  - Making sure all belts and hoses are in good condition?
  - Installing studded tires or chains if necessary?
  - Measuring for adequate tread on tires?
  - Testing the battery and alternator?

- Have you planned your route and checked winter travel conditions along that route?
- Have you informed another person of your travel plans?

Readiness

- Have you checked the day’s forecast?
- Are you dressed appropriately?
- Do you have emergency supplies in the vehicle?
  - Extra blanket
  - Enhanced traction footwear
  - Snow brush, ice scraper, shovel, bag of sand
  - Nonslipperable food items
  - Installing studded tires or chains if necessary?
  - Measuring for adequate tire tread?

- Do you have good visibility through the windshield (no interior fog)?
- Do you have a cell phone with you?

Routine

- Have you performed a thorough job briefing on winter driving conditions?
  - Drive according to current weather conditions.
  - Keep a safe distance between you and the other driver ahead of you.
  - Avoid braking suddenly on ice or on other slippery surfaces, such as bridges.
  - On affected vehicles, calculate the effect of hy-rail on the stopping distance.
  - Avoid using cruise control on snow and ice.
  - Use turn signals and allow enough time/distance for other drivers to react.

- Have you turned on the vehicle’s headlights?
- Is your attention on driving?
  - Are you avoiding distractions (cell phone, reading)?
  - Are you ready to anticipate and react to other drivers?
- Have you engaged all-wheel drive?
Switch heaters can make or break operations

Whether they are on the prairies, in the mountains or deep inside the manmade canyons of big cities, switch heaters have a simple but important mission: to keep moveable switch points free of ice and snow, enabling BNSF to have one less weather-related problem.

Long before winter packs a punch, the ritual of preparing switch heaters begins. Each year, starting as early as September, every unit is checked to make sure it is working.

“We inspect everything from fuel source to switch point,” says Jim LeVere, assistant vice president, Signal, Fort Worth. His crews activate and test every device to make sure they will be ready for whatever nature will dish out. For gas heaters, leak tests are also performed.

BNSF has about 6,500 switch heaters, predominantly on the northern two-thirds of the system, and from Illinois down into Texas, plus the Raton Subdivision in New Mexico and in the Flagstaff, Ariz., area.

LeVere says one design does not fit every location or climate. “The majority are hot-air blowers running on propane or natural gas,” says LeVere. “These are the most effective in keeping wet snow and ice out of the switch points. Then there are electric models that use a resistance heater element located in the switch point. The third is a cold-air blower, which has a high velocity output of about 100 mph.” In a few locations, a few smudge pot and kerosene heaters are still on active duty.

Different types of switch heaters are activated in different ways. In some cases, a dispatcher can turn them on remotely, while others have automatic sensors with moisture and temperature settings programmed to activate the heater when certain conditions are reached.

Neil Heiden, a system electrical foreman in Willmar, Minn., cleans, inspects, starts up and maintains about 60 switch heaters on three subdivisions on the Twin Cities Division – Wayzata, Morris and Marshall – extending from Minneapolis to Breckenridge, Minn., and from Willmar to Sioux Center, Iowa.

With a deadline of November 1 to get all his switch heaters up and running, Heiden drives to each one to reactivate them. This reactivation is necessary because at the end of the cold season, the heaters are partially disassembled and parts carefully stored to protect them from being accidentally struck by wayside equipment and trucks.

Heiden says most of the machine, including the 1,000-gallon lineside fuel tank, stays in place throughout the year. When he arrives to reactivate one, he first makes sure that the ducting underneath the rails is clear. He then reinstalls the snow sensor head and then the control module, which contains the machine’s computer.

Heiden also has electric switch heaters in his territory. This type is used in installations where there is no room to place a large propane or LNG tank trackside.

“It’s bolted right to the rail,” he says. “When it’s working properly, any snow that hits it instantly melts.”

In western Nebraska, Bryant Quick, a signal inspector, ensures that switch heaters are properly working from Alliance, Neb., to Gillette, Wyo., in the Powder River Basin. Like Heiden, the switch heaters in his area must be reassembled, tested and up and running before the cold weather sets in. Crews won’t shut them down out here until the middle of May.

“It’s a harsh environment,” says Quick, adding that dirt, lighting and vibration combine to work against electronic component longevity. Coal dust is another major problem. Just like snow and ice, if coal dust is not kept clear of switch points, it can start to build up to the point that the switch won’t align properly.

“They [switch heaters and blowers] have made everybody’s life easier out here,” says Heiden. “We used to have section gangs out here with brooms and shovels all day long cleaning those things.”

Contributed by David Lustig

Old soldiers given new “home”

It saddened some to see BNSF transport 84 soldiers to their final resting place. “Those old soldiers fought long and hard for many years,” says Lt. Col. Dwight Davis, a commander with the U.S. Air Force. “They began fighting in 1961 and saw their last battle during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.”

The “old soldiers” are decommissioned M-60 battle tanks, which recently left an army depot in Anniston, Ala., on a BNSF train headed for the remote Melrose Bombing Range, north of Clovis, N.M. Airmen practice shooting land targets here, so when the range officer heard about the decommissioned tanks, he knew they’d be great target practice.

The military logistics team immediately called BNSF’s Industrial Products team and Account Manager John Pinard to see how BNSF could help. “Transporting equipment for the military has always been, and continues to be, an important part of BNSF’s business,” Pinard says. “While the military uses rail for many moves, the tendency is to use rail only where there is direct-rail service. Otherwise military personnel tend to gravitate toward trucks.”

Pinard partnered with Justin Hewitt, BNSF Logistics, whose team is experienced in packaging transportation solutions.

“For this move, we transported the tanks primarily by rail, then used specialty trailers to move the tanks to the bombing range, and then we provided powerfully built cranes to pull the tanks off trailers and set them in place,” says Hewitt.

The military requires a high level of security to transport any of its equipment. An added benefit that BNSF can provide is the Resource Protection team. In Clovis, the team is led by Joe Fiola, senior special agent, whose team was able to fill the security requirements.

Others at Clovis who helped make this move a success include Rick Smith, terminal superintendent; Eddie Taylor, trainmaster; Mark Bryant, terminal manager; Dennis Dutton, director; and the entire Transportation team.

Contributed by Andrea Scott
**The Marines and their thank-you photo**

A box of baseball caps brought smiles to the faces of U.S. Marines in the 4th Force Reconnaissance Company.

Eric Goodman, regional director, hub and facility operations, Kansas City, had asked a former co-worker how he and his colleagues could show support for troops in Iraq. The former co-worker, Maj. David McElliott, who was assigned to the Oakland, Calif., hub and is now on military leave in Iraq, asked for baseball caps.

“The soldiers had their regular uniform caps, but they missed the luxury of having a baseball cap to wear,” Goodman says.

He followed up with several hub managers: Ryan Perry of Oakland, Calif.; Michael Chilson of Kansas City; Meredith Brown, administrative assistant in Oakland, also assisted. The five gathered enough BNSF baseball caps to send to the troops. The troops responded with a thank-you photo.

**Train crew saves boy’s life**

Shortly after 1 a.m., Conductor Randy Peterson and Locomotive Engineer Steve Zurn, both of Casper, Wyo., headed through a sparsely populated area of Douglas, Wyo., on the Casper Subdivision. They blew the locomotive’s horn and watched for cars at the crossing ahead. To their horror, the men saw a boy on the tracks.

“As you go along, you are focused watching for certain things. When something like a child shows up, your blood pumps a little faster,” says Peterson.

Straight away, the train crew called Signal Maintainer Ron Rickabaugh, who had just pulled up to the crossing. The child was 200 yards south of the crossing, squatting on the end of the ties in the midst of ballast, and was covering his ears.

“When the trainmen contacted me, I was taken aback,” says Rickabaugh. “I immediately turned on the signal truck’s spotlight.”

To the immense relief of the crew, at the last minute the boy jumped away. Several long moments later, when the train had passed, Rickabaugh saw in the spotlight a young boy – barefoot and clad only in pajamas – begin to walk toward him. “It was unbelievable and a relief to find him in one piece,” recalls Rickabaugh.

The boy told Rickabaugh that he liked trains and was running away from home, but he refused to reveal his name. Rickabaugh called 911, and the boy was reunited with his family.

**Staley recognized for environmental excellence**

In early November, Lyle Staley, manager, BNSF Environmental Program Development, Topeka, Kan., was awarded the Association of American Railroads’ 2008 North American Environmental Employee Excellence Award at the 2008 Railroad Environmental Conference.

“Lyle has dedicated himself to advancing BNSF’s environmental initiatives in new and innovative ways,” says Mark Schulze, BNSF vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support. “His work in facility operations and spill prevention has resulted in successful programs that help in protecting the environment. Many of the programs under his leadership were originally developed for just one BNSF facility, but have now been implemented elsewhere on BNSF’s network.”

A 39-year railroad veteran, Staley was instrumental in leading BNSF’s certification for the American Chemistry Council’s Responsible Care Management System, a health, safety, security and environmental continuous improvement process that applies an integrated, structured approach to drive results in key areas. Staley also developed a database for estimating locomotive emissions that is used in meeting government requirements.

**Denver employees support area Boys & Girls Club**

Railroaders by day, they are superheroes, villains and cartoon characters by night – at least on Halloween. A few railroaders showed up as Bam Bam from The Flintstones, Catwoman and Indiana Jones when they helped with a fall festival/Halloween party at the Willey branch of the Denver Boys & Girls Club.

Twelve employees and guests helped with craft projects, a costume contest, games and a haunted house. BNSF donated extra craft supplies, treats and contest prizes. The employees have volunteered an average of one day per quarter at the club, which usually hosts 120 to 160 kids ages 6 to 17 each night.

At the recent activity, the employees were from Claims, Marketing, Government Affairs and Operations.

**Diversity Council sponsors day on the farm**

Employees and their families from across the Chicago Division came to Blackberry Farms Pioneer Village in Aurora, Ill., as part of the Chicago Diversity Council Family Day earlier this fall.

Throughout the day, employees and their guests explored the activities on the farm’s 54 acres. Farm animals such as sheep, pigs, chickens and turkeys were a big attraction.

Young children were treated to pony rides, while children of all ages enjoyed the carousel, miniature train and old-fashioned wagon rides.

During a picnic lunch, employees and their families got a chance to meet one another and make new friends. Diversity Council members volunteered throughout the day, greeted guests, brieﬁed them on safety and also collected canned goods to donate to Chicago food banks.

**Argentine employees walking to cure diabetes**

Argentine Diesel Shop employees took to the streets of Kansas City, Kan., this October to participate in the 2008 Walk to Cure Diabetes. Employees in this area have supported the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) for approximately 15 years.

The walk draws people together in a healthy activity for a worthy cause. It’s fun for families and builds camaraderie among company employees. More than 85 percent of JDRF’s expenditures directly support research and research-related education.
Elliott jumps back in time

Thomas Jay Elliott, traveling mechanic, volunteers his time jumping out of airplanes as a member of the World War II Airborne Demonstration Team based in Frederick, Okla.

The team’s mission is to honor and serve WWII airborne veterans. Elliott joined the team in 2005 after watching a demonstration at a local air show. “With several relatives that served and died during the war, I could think of no better way to spend my time than with some of America’s true heroes,” he says.

In 2007, Elliott completed his nine-day military-based jump school. Because most injuries occur on landings, members become certified only after achieving a safe parachute-landing fall. To test his skills, on his last day of training, Elliott had to add almost 180 pounds of gear and execute a proper parachute-landing fall.

Although Elliott has completed 17 jumps and looks forward to each new one, he says his biggest thrill is meeting WWII vets. “To be on the same plane with the guys who did it for real with bombs going off and guns being fired, and to see their faces – the joy, the energy and the rush – makes it all worthwhile.”

LPC drill a ‘great practice’

Logistics Park-Chicago (LPC) recently coordinated the facility’s largest hazmat disaster drill, involving the entire facility as well as the Will County Emergency Management and the Village of Elwood Fire Department.

“It went off without a hitch,” says Harold Kirkner, terminal manager. “We learned some issues about our emergency plan to work through, and it was great practice. The drill provided a great opportunity to test our emergency plans to make sure we have a process in place to keep our employees, contractors and customers safe while at LPC.” The drill simulated the conditions of a hazmat incident using a smoke machine and a dummy to represent an injured individual. Will County’s mobile command center was on site, coordinated the facility’s largest hazmat disaster drill, involving the entire facility as well as the Will County Emergency Management and the Village of Elwood Fire Department.

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Kirchner’s keen eyes

The Chicago Division commends Chris Kirchner, truck driver, Fort Madison, Iowa, for his recent actions in preventing a possible derailment. Kirchner was standing beside the track when he spotted a journal smoking on a passing train. He radioed the section man, who in turn notified the train crew.

“We’re supposed to look at trains for problems and notify someone as soon as possible,” says Kirchner, who joined BNSF earlier this year.

Zepeda has Saturday Night Fever

John Travolta look-alike Joe Zepeda, a Houston conductor, has been using his uncanny resemblance to his advantage for the past 12 years.

As a celebrity impersonator, Zepeda performs at special functions and events such as the opening of a Tinseltown Theater in Houston. He has mastered all of Travolta’s best dance moves and is so convincing that he was flown to South Korea to star in a Samsung commercial.

Zepeda has five costumes he uses to play the part. His favorite Travolta character is Vincent Vega from Pulp Fiction. The crowd favorite, however, is the character Travolta played in Saturday Night Fever.

Zepeda joined the railroad in 1998 in Galveston, Texas. When he’s not playing the part of a celebrity or working, he enjoys spending time with wife Tracy and coaching his five children’s sporting activities.

Special ride gives children passenger rail experience

A BNSF tradition that began nine years ago continued again in November with the operation of a special passenger train benefiting less-fortunate children, thanks to the efforts of Arizona-area employees. This year, children from Make-a-Wish, Arizonans for Children, Rise Children’s Services, Phoenix Children’s Hospital, and The Center for Burns and Trauma were represented.

The train, made up of 10 BNSF business cars and two locomotives, operated on the Phoenix Subdivision between Glendale and Matthie, Ariz. More than 400 people were on board. When they weren’t watching the view from the train, riders enjoyed face painters, balloon artists and other entertainment. Hats and wooden train whistles were provided along with drinks and snacks, courtesy of the Southwest Division. Ken Kyer, locomotive engineer and local chairman with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, was the organizer.

Preventing theft

For several years, BNSF has been battling pole line thieves who steal the copper to resell. According to Signal Supervisor Brian Schlutz, Pueblo, Colo., at least 15 miles of copper have been stolen from signal lines on a 30-mile stretch of rail from Colorado Springs, Colo., to Pueblo.

“The thieves come in and cut out chunks or sections of line. We have to go back and patch it up or string it back together at all times of the day. It’s a team effort to keep the signals running,” says Schultz.

Signal Maintainer John Walter recently helped prevent a thief. “I was walking down the pole line and looked up and saw the line wire moving in an interesting way,” Walter recalls. “I walked around a group of trees and saw a ladder.” Walter immediately called the local authorities. His call led to the arrest of one thief and the summonses of another.

Schaffer honored with Industrial Security award

Birmingham, Ala., Senior Special Agent and K-9 handler Bryan Schaffer recently took second place honors at this year’s Law Enforcement Excellence Awards from the American Society for Industrial Security. More than 80 agencies in three counties around Birmingham compete for these awards.

Schaffer was recognized for contacting and training nearly 300 citizens and 500 law enforcement officers on his territory over the past year. Schaffer says it is essential to work with local law enforcement to keep the public and railroad employees safe. He constantly works to spread the word about training available to them.

Habitat honors BNSF

Scott Meyer, director of administration, and Hermelinda Guardiola, director, Human Resources, represented BNSF at a “Corporate Team 2008” home completion and dedication ceremony in Albuquerque, N.M., recently. The BNSF Foundation donated to the Greater Albuquerque Habitat for Humanity during the past three years, and employees were part of a team made up of several corporations in the Albuquerque area that worked on the home.

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Signal Maintainer John Walter recently helped prevent a thief. “I was walking down the pole line and looked up and saw the line wire moving in an interesting way,” Walter recalls. “I walked around a group of trees and saw a ladder.” Walter immediately called the local authorities. His call led to the arrest of one thief and the summonses of another.

Schaffer honored with Industrial Security award

Birmingham, Ala., Senior Special Agent and K-9 handler Bryan Schaffer recently took second place honors at this year’s Law Enforcement Excellence Awards from the American Society for Industrial Security. More than 80 agencies in three counties around Birmingham compete for these awards.

Schaffer was recognized for contacting and training nearly 300 citizens and 500 law enforcement officers on his territory over the past year. Schaffer says it is essential to work with local law enforcement to keep the public and railroad employees safe. He constantly works to spread the word about training available to them.

Habitat honors BNSF

Scott Meyer, director of administration, and Hermelinda Guardiola, director, Human Resources, represented BNSF at a “Corporate Team 2008” home completion and dedication ceremony in Albuquerque, N.M., recently. The BNSF Foundation donated to the Greater Albuquerque Habitat for Humanity during the past three years, and employees were part of a team made up of several corporations in the Albuquerque area that worked on the home.
Giving in the true spirit of the holidays

Especially during difficult economic times, the joy of giving to those less fortunate has even greater significance. Across BNSF, employees are digging into their pockets to provide for others who are struggling to fulfill basic needs, much less buy holiday gifts. In some cases, BNSF people are helping to stock food banks, and in others, they are providing warm winter clothing as well as “wish list” items to children, families and seniors. The following stories exemplify Team BNSF’s spirit, clearly demonstrating that at BNSF, we do more than just pass through communities we serve — we play a vital role in every community we touch.

Even before trick-or-treat night, St. Paul/Minneapolis, Minn., employees were thinking ahead to cold winter months as the Twin Cities Diversity Council kicked off an Annual Coat Drive.

From Oct. 27 to Nov. 21, new and gently used adult coats, gloves, mittens, scarves and hats were donated by employees. In addition, boots were added to the drive, with everything going to Harbor Light, the largest homeless shelter in Minneapolis. Five extra-large bags were filled from the collection. In addition, the council added a food drive to their efforts this year.

Northtown (Minneapolis) General Office Building (GOB) also put up an annual Angel Tree, a Salvation Army initiative, “decorated” with the wish lists of children, from infants to 18 years old. The Engineering Department handles the project, but all departments are encouraged to participate. This year, 30 wish lists adorn the tree.

South of the Twin Cities, other Angel Tree drives are under way, including the Kansas City Diversity Council’s effort to help 300 people in need, with wish lists hung on Christmas trees in various BNSF locations in the K.C. area.

In the Lone Star state, employees at Fort Worth headquarters as well as those in nearby terminals and the hub participated in the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree drive. This year, more than 900 “angels” (children and seniors) were helped by BNSF employees.

One new tactic this year was to host early “adoptions” building by building. The wish lists of angels that weren’t adopted were later hung on Christmas trees throughout campus.

Long before the angel selection process, volunteers helped set up family boxes to store gifts. A few headed to area malls to ring bells or assist shoppers in selecting angels. Says Michelle Pierce, assistant manager, Coal Planning: “I’ve adopted angels before and helped sort gifts, but going to the mall was such a great experience. I didn’t realize how much thought people put into selecting just the right angel. One girl started crying when she read what her angel wanted – which of course made me cry!”

Beverly Regan, administrative coordinator, and Jana Sparkman, manager, Customer Support, have co-chaired the Fort Worth drive for 10 years. “How can you not do it? The angels don’t have a Christmas if they don’t have us. You read their wish lists, and they want such basic needs: shoes, a winter coat, sheets and blankets,” says Regan. “Our employees are very responsive to the needs and generous in their donations.”

Once employees return wish list items, sorting begins with the goal of making sure all of the angels get presents on their lists. Cash donations are used to purchase items not covered. To supplement the donations, the committee organizes fundraisers. This year, two blue-jeans days were held, plus there were chances to win several prizes. A number of employees participated in a poker run, donating all the proceeds.

Once the lists are checked off, the bags are loaded into boxes and taken to the Salvation Army center. Employees volunteer by assisting families who are picking up their gifts.

Elsewhere in Texas, 36 roundhouse employees competed against 46 carmen to see who would collect the most canned food for the food bank in Amarillo.

“The competition is to help those less fortunate than we are, especially around the holidays,” says Ismael Utrías, safety assistant, Mechanical.

This is the first year the food drive has been tried.

In the end, the roundhouse employees were the victors, but families throughout the Texas Panhandle are the ones who really came out ahead.

West Quincy, Mo., employees also gave to those less fortunate this holiday season through a food drive.

Employees were invited to place donations at crew rooms in the local depots through the week of Thanksgiving. Food was given to the Quincy, Ill., and Hannibal, Mo., Salvation Army.

“We’re fortunate to have good jobs with good benefits,” says Virgil Peters, conductor and United Transportation Union local chairman, who led the food drive.

“With the economy as it is this year, it is beneficial for us and the general public in our communities to help take care of those who are less fortunate.”

Each year the Topeka, Kan., Technology Services employees support the community’s Adopt-a-Family campaign, organized by the United Way of Greater Topeka. The program allows area residents in need to submit a list of items they would like for Christmas.

Fundraisers include jeans day, cook-offs and a “penny war” contest between groups in which every penny is worth one point while silver coins or bills are negative points based on their value (i.e., a quarter is minus 25 points). At the end of the campaign whoever has the most points (or least negative points) wins. The prize for the winning group is to determine the fate of the losing group.

After the money is raised, employees shop for presents, wrap them and arrange delivery. Money is also set aside to provide a Christmas dinner. In 2007, more than $45,000 was raised and seven families were adopted.

Also in Topeka, several departments in the GOB purchase Christmas gifts for the The Villages, a local nonprofit that operates homes for abused, neglected or abandoned children.

Employees shop for gifts based on wish lists, then wrap and deliver the presents prior to Christmas.

Evident, Okla., employees will give local needy children a Christmas to remember by donating toys in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program.

Eldon Grogan, switchman, heads the campaign. This is his first year involved in the program, although he became interested in it while he served in the Marine Corps. “It’s a worthwhile project,” he says. “The goal is to gather toys for underprivileged children so they can have a nice holiday.”

The Midway Terminal in St. Paul also participates in Toys for Tots, encouraging employees to donate toys and money used to purchase appropriate toys for donation by diversity council members. Packages are placed beneath a tree at the terminal and will be added to community donations at mall drop-off boxes.

Other BNSF locations participating in Toys for Tots include Hobart (Los Angeles), Lincoln, Neb., Seattle and Tacoma, Wash.

About 600 Marines will have gifts to open this holiday season, thanks to the generosity of more than 100 individuals and businesses, including BNSF.

This is the fourth year for “Operation Santa,” which contacted Mike Reagan, conductor and Fort Scott, Kan., Safety Committee chairman, for support.

The Springfield Division donated hand warmers and gift cards to the organizer to purchase gifts. Each Marine receives cards, a stocking filled with candy and food, plus another package containing hats, gloves and socks. Every platoon receives gifts for 30 to 50 Marines to share, with wrapped holiday goodies, games, CDs, DVDs, disposable cameras and large containers of snacks.
South Seattle Intermodal took up a canned food donation to benefit the Renton Child Care Center, a nonprofit, state-subsidized facility that helps low-income families by providing child care and meals for children ages 1 to 12. The center feeds and cares for up to 50 children per day. For many, it is the only meal they eat all day.

Joan McNabb, manager, hub operations, and Dennis Gustin, director, helped organize the drive, the first for the facility. “I stumbled upon the center a couple of years ago and noticed a lot of young people who looked like they could use a hand. So I started helping out by making donations and then so did Dennis. This year he suggested that we open the giving to others,” says McNabb.

Collection boxes were placed throughout the facility for nonperishable food items as well as diapers, cleaning products, blankets, etc. Cash was also accepted. As of Thanksgiving, the drive had received a great response. “People want to help,” says McNabb, noting that she anticipated surpassing a goal of $300 and 100 cans of food. “We all need to be reminded that even though times are tough, we’re very lucky. The center is so grateful for every little thing, so I think they will be shocked to see what’s been collected.”

She notes the effort has been a great team-building exercise, with a little bit of competition between the different groups. The managers of each group will be invited to help with delivery on Dec. 17.

BNSF Performance Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BNSF Units Handled</th>
<th>Year-to-Date through Nov. 23, 2008</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>2,244,716</td>
<td>2,199,870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural Products</td>
<td>974,742</td>
<td>911,054</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>1,424,467</td>
<td>1,401,333</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer</td>
<td>4,273,236</td>
<td>4,545,006</td>
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<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>8,917,271</td>
<td>8,107,289</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BNSF Stock

12-month view through Nov. 24, 2008

2008 BNSF Velocity Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-to-Date through Nov. 23, 2008</th>
<th>4th Qtr. Goal</th>
<th>Actual QTD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locomotive miles per day</td>
<td>360.4</td>
<td>295.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural car miles per day</td>
<td>185.8</td>
<td>261.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise car miles per day</td>
<td>128.7</td>
<td>136.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal car miles per day</td>
<td>302.2</td>
<td>299.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermodal container transit days*</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermodal trailer transit days*</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*With these measures, the lower the number, the better.

Locomotive data is measured as miles per day.

Agricultural, Merchandise and Coal active car cycle data is measured as miles per day on the BNSF system.

Intermodal is based on average time between cut-off and departure or interchange delivery. Includes units in business segments 3 0 (International Intermodal) or 3 2 (Domestic Intermodal) and that traveled on train symbols M, P, Q, S, or Z and that have car kind K or V. Container service includes units with equipment type K (containers); trailer service includes units with equipment type V (vans).

BNSF Reportable Injuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-to-Date through Nov. 23, 2008</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>710</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The St. Louis Safety Committee adopted three families through the Circle of Concern community charity program to help during the holiday season. The 2008 holiday adoption program forwarded a list of requests from these families, and safety committee members sold raffle tickets for $10 each to raise $1,000.

In Kansas City, a 17-year-old tradition makes many young ones’ wishes come true as approximately 100 children from different shelters will be treated to a special ride on Dec. 13. The passenger train carries children from the Argentine Yard to the Topeka, Kan., depot, providing lunch, face painting, coloring and gifts for the children before returning to Kansas City. About 40 people are involved in making the Kids Christmas Train happen, from Diversity Council members to volunteers to a group that coordinates with the shelters. Planning begins in the summer with fundraisers, including auctions, chili feeds, and clock and Afghan sales.

Also on Dec. 13, BNSF volunteers will operate the 5th annual Santa Steam Special into the Vancouver, Wash., terminus. The SP&S #700 steam locomotive will pull decorated vintage passenger cars into Vancouver’s yard office/depot complex to meet hundreds of excited children anxious to view the train and visit with Santa.

Santa will provide each child with a stocking filled with gifts and treats. A new BNSF diesel locomotive will also be on display with BNSF’s K9 unit. The Washington State Operation Lifesaver trailer will also be featured. Community volunteers will provide Christmas music and BNSF will serve hot chocolate, cookies and cake to the public. A toy drive, co-sponsored by BNSF, the U.S. Marines and Clark County Sheriff’s Department, will be included in the festivities. More than 2,000 people attended last year’s event as this has become the largest community Christmas event hosted by a railroad in the Pacific Northwest.
holes about 10 feet apart. Once detonated, they create a fault line at the edge of the excavation by loosening up as much as 10,000 yards of rock in a single blast. Everyone must be well out of the blast area prior to detonation. Each move, person and action is carefully recorded, communicated and double-checked for safety. Nothing is left to chance.

Leaving nothing to chance or assumption underscores this construction project. Years and years of community and city meetings, permit processes, and developing engineering and environmental plans have finally culminated in the start of construction for the double-track project.

Concerns – and lots of them

There were several environmental concerns, which led to a lengthy permitting and investigative process. “Because the Abo Canyon project is in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ jurisdiction, there were a lot of environmental issues to work through to obtain the original permit, resulting in a substantial amount of investigation of local endangered species, flora and fauna issues as well as a very extensive study of archaeological resources. Because of the rich and varied history of the Southwest, there was significant interest from agencies and other interested parties,” says Ruder.

Adding to the cultural and environmental sensitivities of the area are the old campsites from the early railroad workers. “We conducted an environmental clearance for the cultural resources here in the canyon,” says William Penner, an archaeologist from Albuquerque. “It’s taken almost four years, working with the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Land Management, to ensure that we minimize the effects of the second-track project on archaeological and cultural resources.”

The archaeological significance in the area is twofold, says Penner. “The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, when they constructed the original line, had many large camps in the canyon. There were hundreds of individuals working here over the period of five years, and they left behind a record of cans and structures and various other things in the canyon. In addition, there are also prehistoric artifact scatters.”

In the area, about 25 masonry structures were found. Within some of those structures, old lanterns, toys and other odds and ends were found. One stone house, dating from the 1920s and about 5 feet tall with black powder cans forming the roof, is perhaps one of the most unusual structures.

Within the canyon is rock art dating from 1400 to 1600 A.D., mostly of masks and abstract images of faces. BNSF has taken special care to minimize the effects of construction on these archaeological resources. “BNSF chose alternatives that had the least amount of impact on any of the sites in the canyon,” says Penner. “In the end, there were only 13 out of 54 sites that were partially or completely impacted by this project. Of those, we excavated four for their significance and their potential to have buried
It’s time for high school seniors to apply for college scholarships, including those offered through the BNSF Foundation Scholarship Program. Once again, the BNSF Foundation will award up to 35 scholarships, $2,500 each, for the 2009-2010 college year. A direct Web site link is available again so applicants can electronically fill out an application request. (Details included below.) Here are answers to the most frequently asked questions.

When are applications due?
Applications for the 2009-2010 BNSF Scholarship Program must be postmarked no later than April 1, 2009. Requests for applications will be accepted starting Jan. 1, 2009.

Who is eligible?
The program is available to current high school seniors who are the dependent sons, daughters or stepchildren of full-time BNSF employees or retired, disabled or deceased employees of BNSF or its predecessor companies. Full-time employees must have at least two years of service as of Jan. 1, 2009, and must still be employed by BNSF when winners are selected in April. Retired, disabled or deceased employees must have completed the two-year requirement prior to ending their service with BNSF.

How many scholarships are available?
Up to 35 scholarships, $2,500 each, will be awarded for full-time students in four-year colleges/universities in the United States. With satisfactory academic progress, the scholarships are renewable for three additional years. Twenty-five scholarships will be awarded through International Scholarship and Tuition Services (ISTS), and up to 10 through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). (The 10 BNSF Foundation Merit Scholarship winners will be selected by the NMSC.) If not all NMSC scholarships are awarded, the balance will be converted to ISTS scholarships.

What information is required?
For the scholarships handled by ISTS, winners are selected largely on the basis of academic merit, in addition to consideration for past academic performance, leadership and participation in school and community activities, and an essay. ACT or SAT scores are acceptable. Guidance counselors routinely supply the required test scores on the high school records accompanying the applications.

Who is eligible for National Merit Scholarships?
To be eligible, students must take the PSAT in their junior year. Therefore, seniors this year should have taken the PSAT in 2007 when they were juniors to qualify for the program sponsored by the NMSC. The NMSC then notifies sponsors, such as BNSF, about award acceptances and provides scholarship certificates for presentation to winners.

Can more than one scholarship be awarded to an individual?
No. A student cannot win more than one scholarship funded by the BNSF Foundation. Since neither award is guaranteed, it is recommended that National Merit Finalists apply for the scholarships handled by ISTS. However, students who do win Merit scholarships are automatically withdrawn from consideration for scholarships handled by ISTS.

How do I get an application?
To obtain an application and descriptive brochure, please complete and return the application request form by March 1, 2009. You may request an application starting Jan. 1, 2009, by either mailing or faxing in the request. You may also request an application or apply directly online by accessing the following Web site: https://www.applyists.net and following the instructions. You will be asked to use the access key BNSF.

NOTE: The application must be postmarked no later than April 1, 2009.

What is the contact information?
- Mail: BNSF Scholarship Program* c/o ISTS P.O. Box 23737 Nashville, Tenn., 37202-3737
- Fax: 615-320-3151
- Web site: https://www.applyists.net
- E-mail: https://www.applyists.net/EmailRequestForm.asp

*ISTS will not be able to provide applications until Jan. 1, 2009.

Request for BNSF Scholarship Application
Please send an application for a BNSF scholarship and a brochure to the high school senior listed below.

(Please print)

First Name   Middle Initial    Last Name
Street Address
City               State                  ZIP
Home Telephone Number
E-mail Address