BNSF restores network momentum following floods
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EVIDENCES OF SUCCESS
We will know we have succeeded when:

- Our customers find it easy to do business with us, receive 100-percent on-time, damage-free service, accurate and timely information regarding their shipments, and the best value for their transportation dollar.
- Our employees work in a safe environment free of accidents and injuries, are focused on continuous improvement, share the opportunity for personal and professional growth that is available to all members of our diverse work force, and take pride in their association with BNSF.
- Our owners earn financial returns that exceed other railroads and the general market as a result of BNSF’s superior revenue growth and operating ratio, and a return on invested capital that is greater than our cost of capital.
- The communities we serve benefit from our sensitivity to their interests and to the environment in general, our adherence to the highest legal and ethical standards, and the participation of our company and our employees in community activities.

BNSF Performance Measures

BNSF Units* Handled
Year-to-date through Aug. 29, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<td>System</td>
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* Carloads, trailers or containers

BNSF Reportable Injuries
Year-to-date through Aug. 22, 2011

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<td>2010</td>
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BNSF Units Handled
Quarter-to-date through Aug. 29, 2011

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<td>Agricultural car miles per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merchandise car miles per day</td>
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<td>Coal car miles per day</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermodal transit days</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Got a story idea?
Send story ideas to:
Corporate.Communications@BNSF.com
Our BNSF community has been tested this year with an unprecedented series of challenges. Fatal injuries, an uncertain economy, historic flooding and other service issues have required the very best of each of us.

The enclosed video, Rising Above, aptly describes our response to record flooding, and the message applies equally well in many other areas of our company. “Rising Above” is exactly what we have done and what we will continue to do, as we face the challenges of this year and work to realize our tremendous potential.

Sadly, this year we have lost eight colleagues who were fatally injured, four of those in August – Deborah Beeler, Tom Bleyenberg, Blaine Mack and Todd Burckhard. The loss of life is the most difficult thing we experience as a company. In addition to the system briefings we’ve already held, we’ll continue to review these incidents to be sure we understand contributing factors. As always, let’s focus on our commitment to absolute rules compliance and to taking responsibility for our own safety and that of our co-workers. Nothing is more important than returning home safely at the end of each workday. While improvements in our frequency and severity ratios indicate progress in reducing at-risk behaviors, the loss of co-workers makes it clear that we still have more work ahead to achieve our safety vision of eliminating all accidents and injuries.

During recent months, we have incurred some of the most severe flooding events in our history. As you watch the DVD and read the flood story in this issue, remember the sacrifice and dedication shown by countless BNSF people who worked around the clock to raise track and bridges, protect our operation and reroute up to a third of our trains during the worst of the flooding. Once again, I am incredibly proud of our response through all of these challenges.

By the time you read this message, we will have reopened the St. Joseph Subdivision, one of the last major portions of our track affected by the floods. Extreme weather, flooding and other issues have significantly impacted our service this year. Going forward, we must focus each day on regaining operational momentum and network velocity and delivering the high level of service that our customers deserve. We must invest the same energy in restoring our service performance that we invested in protecting and restoring our network.

Still, the horizon is not clear. The U.S. economy has continued to slow down, resulting in low year-over-year unit growth. As we restore service, we must maintain our focus on efficiency and strong cost controls. The article on the Expense Leverage Roadmap project in this issue outlines some efforts under way to enhance our processes and efficiency.

Even with the challenges we face in these uncertain times, I believe everyone would agree that we are fortunate and blessed to be where we are. We have a great company with talented, dedicated people, and BNSF provides an invaluable service to the global economy. In our Vision & Values, we describe ourselves as “tough-minded optimists” and “decisive yet thorough,” with a Vision to “consistently meet customers’ expectations.” I am confident in our ability to continue to grow and thrive as we serve our customers, our communities and our nation.
WATER is essential for all of life. But sometimes there can be too much of a good thing.
This spring, water – starting with lingering snowmelt, followed by heavy rains across the Northern Plains – caused tributaries to rise to record levels.

With track paralleling much of the affected Missouri, Mississippi and Souris rivers, BNSF has dealt with flooding many times before, including catastrophic floods on parts of the network in 2008 and 1993. But the 2011 flood is described as the most severe in BNSF’s recent history because of the length of time significant portions of the network were out of service.

“We’ve had difficult years before, but this flooding was different in two respects. First is the duration,” explains Sam Sexhus, vice president, Engineering. “The other is the breadth. It’s been over a large portion of our railroad for a long, long time.”

The trouble actually started last winter with record snows falling on already saturated ground. By early spring, heavy snowpack began to melt about the time unrelenting rains began – up to 8 inches in less than two weeks. The combination created the highest runoff in the Missouri River Basin since 1889, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Damaging Missouri River floodwaters swiftly began to rise on BNSF’s Northern Region in portions of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota, and then pushed downstream into BNSF’s Central Region, impacting portions of Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri. Meanwhile, the rising Mississippi River would periodically affect sections of the railroad as well.

To complicate an already difficult situation, the Corps of Engineers opened – and then reopened – dams to protect nearby communities. Then, in late June, the floods of 2011 were compounded when the Souris River in North Dakota broke 100-year levels. (See sidebar.)

From the front lines

Well before the waters rose, flood preparations had begun in earnest. Command centers were established in Minneapolis, Fargo, N.D., and, later, Lincoln, Neb. From these locations, teams mobilized crews, materials and machinery.

On the frontlines was Engineering, charged with preparing and protecting track where possible, and repairing and rebuilding track and bridges where flooding was unavoidable. Employees and contractors worked around the clock to move ton after ton of dirt to raise and fortify track and build protective berms and levees.

In all, some 20,000 carloads of rip rap and ballast were ordered, and hundreds of thousands of sandbags were filled.

“It takes an amazing amount of communication and coordination with a project of this scope. The various work groups came together, sometimes in unfamiliar surroundings, using massive-sized equipment in flowing water, snow, storms – all kinds of difficult environments,” says Sexhus. “And they did it safely. That’s the most important thing.”

But the water was relentless, threatening not only BNSF tracks but nearby communities. To help protect the city of Omaha, Neb., BNSF took a portion of the Omaha Subdivision out of service so a levee could be built over the tracks.

That was only the beginning of flood

Continued on page 6
rising tide, begins to restore network momentum

Be sure to watch the enclosed Rising Above DVD, which captures the efforts of BNSF people as they prepare for the floods of 2011 and the significant restoration efforts under way to get the network fully back in service.

OVERVIEW of FLOOD IMPACT

- Raise track on Glasgow Subdivision
  - Missouri River flooding
- Track outage at Minot
  - Souris River flooding
- Raise track and construct berms on the Creston Subdivision
  - Missouri River flooding
- Track outage on Napier Subdivision
  - Missouri River flooding
- Track outage on St. Joseph Subdivision
  - Missouri River flooding
- Periodic track outages
  - Hannibal and River Subdivisions
  - Mississippi River flooding
countermeasures on the Missouri River.

Starting in early June, on the Creston (Iowa) Subdivision, crews gathered from a four-state area to build levees and raise track. BNSF was able to stay ahead of the rising water, eventually raising five miles of track up to 8 feet near Pacific Junction, Iowa, using a track-lifting undercutter that raises track 12 inches at a time (vs. most machines that raise track just a few inches at a time).

In addition, bridges were raised and seven miles of 6-foot-high berms were built to protect the main line. The effort kept the Creston Subdivision — a main east-west artery that has as many as 50 trains a day operating between Chicago and Denver — open and customer shipments moving. The Creston Subdivision was an especially critical line to save, because of its crucial role in moving coal from the Powder River Basin to points further east.

The strategic decision to keep the Creston Sub open paid off when on June 13 levee breaks took out first the Napier (Mo.) Subdivision and then the St. Joseph (Mo.) Subdivision. As a result, all through-freight traffic that would normally run between Lincoln and Kansas City, Mo. — about 50 trains a day — was diverted. Both subdivisions would remain out of service for more than two months, with the St. Joseph Sub opening first in early September.

Counterattack

With water taking out many parts of the BNSF system, multiple plans to counteract service interruptions went into effect.

Service Design and Performance teams charted multiple rerouting options, depending on train type and destination, and additional train crews were needed at reroute locations. At the peak of flooding, about 500 Transportation employees at affected areas temporarily transferred to reroute locations.

“We had a staggering number of places where we had to move people in and respond
and make some sort of a change to the operation, while we were also dealing with the damage," says Dave Freeman, vice president, Transportation. “Our crews recognize that, whether it’s coal, ag, intermodal or merchandise, every one of the cars we move is part of a customer’s supply chain. We have to keep all of them moving to some degree, because if we slow down some segment or some corridor, it’s going to have a significant impact.”

Mechanical also played a role in keeping trains moving. Because rerouting took trains hundreds of miles out of their normal route, thus decreasing velocity, more locomotives and cars were needed to haul the same amount of freight. Mechanical teams quickly moved railcars and locomotives out of storage and back into service.

Mechanical employees were also positioned on line to help with increased traffic due to the rerouting. “These are our ‘rapid responders’ – individuals from various crafts, responsible for either freight cars or locomotives. They’re out in vehicles and able to respond to a train when they’re notified that there is a service interruption,” explains Chris Roberts, vice president, Mechanical.

Signal crews played a big role, too, raising control houses and bungalows above the anticipated flood levels or moving them from along the right of way.

Throughout the floods, Marketing worked closely with customers, notifying them of embargoed traffic and reroutes.

**Restoring network momentum**

Typically, BNSF has about 1,500 trains on the network on a normal day. At the height of the floods, about one-third of these trains were affected by reroutes.

By mid-August, as floodwaters receded and more areas became fully operational, fewer than 20 percent of BNSF trains were being rerouted, but the effects were still being felt. For example, on the St. Joseph Subdivision, trains – about 80 percent of them carrying coal – were being rerouted south, from Wyoming through Denver to Amarillo, Texas, adding hundreds of miles to the route. The rerouted trains led to congestion on track and at terminals not designed to handle these volumes.

“The floods have had a devastating impact on our service and our velocity across our network. Our customers understand that impact, but many are frankly struggling with the duration, and they’re telling us, as they should, ‘You’ve got to restore service. You’ve got to restore velocity.’ And that’s what we owe our customers,” says Greg Fox, executive vice president, Operations. “We have not performed to our customers’ expectations or to our own standards. I think our challenge now is that we take the same energy we put into addressing the crisis into restoring service and velocity across our network.”

To help in the restoration, BNSF increased capital spending by about $300 million, a portion of which is going toward restoring the network. That includes extending and building five bridges in the Big Lake area on the St. Joseph Subdivision. The bridge construction will raise track high enough to restore service and reduce the risk of future flooding. And while no one wants to see flooding of this degree, BNSF has taken advantage of service outages to accelerate the pace for other capital projects, such as undercutting and positive train control-related Signal work, in Nebraska and North Dakota.

Once the St. Joseph Subdivision is back in early September, Fox believes that the network will begin to get back to normal, but improvements will be in a “step-level” fashion.

“This is a momentum-based business, and it will take time for us to restore momentum,” he says. “That won’t happen like a light switch, but as we’ve told our customers, it will get better, and they can count on BNSF people to make it happen.”
Transporting Bakken crude on our network is one of several growth opportunities at BNSF. From the time the crude is pumped to the time it goes into the pipeline, this valued commodity needs to quickly make its way into the nation’s oil supply, serving as an important domestic source for a product that helps fuel our economy. In recent months, BNSF has developed and increased volumes in emerging oil, gas, coal and wind energy sectors. (See related stories.)
At Stanley, N.D., transloading a 100-car unit train full of crude oil – 14 cars at a time – takes less than 24 hours, thanks to efficiencies built into the facility before it went on line in 2009. Once topped off, the train will journey to Stroud, Okla., where about 70,000 barrels of oil will be off-loaded into a 17-mile pipeline to Cushing, Okla., serving multiple markets.

From the time the first unit oil train moved on Dec. 31, 2009, volumes have steadily increased. Since mid-2010, BNSF has seen a 100-percent increase, and is now shipping approximately 52,000 barrels of crude each day in combined unit train and manifest train service from multiple origins and destinations. (Those 52,000 barrels – once refined – provide enough fuel to fill the gas tanks of about 66,000 automobiles each day.)

If you overlap the Bakken over our network, you see that we line up very well,” says Michael Bruce, director of business development, Industrial Products, noting that BNSF touches 16 of the top 19 oil-producing counties in North Dakota.

For now, the pipeline network isn’t growing fast enough to move crude out of the Bakken. New rail markets like St. James, La., and locations in California that have limited pipeline access are emerging and using rail to receive crude.

“Our success has really been our ability to go into a market that primarily used one form of transportation – a pipeline – and demonstrate the value that rail can provide,” Bruce says. “The pipeline industry is now talking about how rail will supplement their services. Rail has made tremendous progress over the last several years.”

The outbound crude is not the only related commodity that means growth for BNSF. On the inbound side, materials to support drilling activities, like pipe and sand, are in demand as well. In fact, high demand for frac sand – used to open the fractures and allow oil and gas to rise to the surface – has led to discussions for using unit trains to keep job sites in steady supply. In June, BNSF held its first Sand Symposium with more than 80 shippers, receivers, transloaders and short line representatives to discuss this challenge.

“We know we have to collectively change this supply chain model,” says Group Vice President Industrial Products Dave Garin. “Growth is happening so fast that we have to find a way to increase our delivery capacity.”

To help ramp up for growth on delivery of crude, BNSF is adding more unit-train crude destination and origination facilities, like the one at Stanley. By the end of 2012, four such facilities will come on line and another five will be added by 2013.

“There are more than a dozen unit-train unloading facilities in various stages of development on BNSF, plus the two currently operating,” says Teresa Perkins, general director, Industrial Products. “We have a plan to eventually handle 730,000 barrels – or nine unit trains – of Bakken crude every day as the new loading facilities come on line.”

Tempering the growth news, however, is recent flooding in Minot, N.D., which presented a number of challenges for moving crude. Because tracks were washed out, trains to Cushing were rerouted west to Glendive, Mont., instead of through typical lanes to Galesburg, Ill., and Willmar, Minn. “Despite the challenges the floods created, our crude oil customers were very appreciative of how good a job we did keeping their shipments moving. The Operations team did an outstanding job of rerouting trains to accommodate them,” says Perkins.

Despite the rerouting that continues, Bakken growth is anticipated to continue long term. In addition to expanding facilities, BNSF has been hiring in North Dakota and Montana in part to gear up for continued strength in Bakken volumes; through May, nearly 400 new hires joined BNSF in this region, some due to attrition and some due to increased business.

Headingtonhe south, the Eagle Ford Shale Play is less developed than the Bakken oil and gas field, but it has received a lot of attention recently. Leasing and drilling activity have increased, with a number of horizontal wells believed to be in the thick of the corridor.

Named for a nearby town, the Eagle Ford Shale is located in south Texas and is ripe for...
producing long term. The fourth-largest play in the U.S., the formation produces between 4,000 and 12,000 feet and is desirable because it has no natural fracturing within the formation. The formation also has high yields of liquids throughout – attractive traits of plays that have longer life spans.

Current production is noteworthy; producing gas wells more than doubled to 158 from 2009 to 2010, and active oil wells surged from 40 to 72 in the same period, according to the Texas Railroad Commission. For its part, BNSF has been entrenched in a campaign to build a presence at Eagle Ford as a hauler of inbound frac sand and outbound crude.

“The reality is that BNSF doesn’t have as large a footprint into the Eagle Ford Shale, so we are working really hard to connect with partners and players there to make sure they know that BNSF is in the game,” says Diana Hill, general director, Gulf Product Sales.

So far so good. BNSF has experienced monthly increases since summer 2010. Inbound sand volumes to facilities in Hondo, Port San Antonio and Corpus Christi, Texas, as well as those originated to other locations, nearly topped 700 carloads in May, almost double the output from January.

A bright spot has been the Hondo facility served by the Hondo Railway, which interchanges with BNSF. Volumes of sand have increased significantly since BNSF initiated manifest service and began hauling a few dozen cars into Hondo in November. Outbound crude also has picked up. In June, BNSF experienced its highest-volume hauling month, with 200 cars of sand into Hondo and 53 cars of crude outbound from Hondo.

“That’s pretty incredible,” Hill says. “That’s been a major growth area for us. And we’re talking with additional customers about other potential opportunities for both unit and manifest of inbound sand and outbound crude.”

No matter the name – black gold, Texas tea, sweet or sour – the crude oil business is one future on which BNSF is counting. 

BNSF serves much of U.S. wind-generation territory and is supplying wind farms with needed components like blades, towers, nacelles (that house the turbine’s generators) and other dimensional cargo.

Government tax credits that give U.S. wind companies a boost in development are making wind’s cost per kilowatt hour now comparable with that of coal and natural gas. In fact, wind is becoming one of the most commercially viable sources of alternative energy for electrical generation.

In the last four years alone, the U.S. wind industry has added more than 35 percent of all new generating capacity, second only to natural gas, and more than nuclear and coal combined. Today, U.S. wind power capacity represents more than 20 percent of the world’s installed wind power.

BNSF has kept stride, and is participating in the development of the largest U.S. wind facilities, recently constructed at Pasco, Wash. BNSF made a significant investment last year by leasing a 34-acre parcel of land. The transload center is providing service to wind turbine manufacturers who ship components from their facilities across the country to Pasco for storage and loading to trucks for final delivery to wind farm projects.

“This investment gives us a strong foothold in the wind business in this region,” says Teresa Perkins, general director, Industrial Products. “The facility also helps us serve other customers in the Pacific Northwest as well.”

Pasco, which has barge access, is one of two ideal development sites, according to Manager of Business Development Jane Halvorson. Another is Casper, Wyo.
Like Pasco, Casper’s track arrangements are conducive to shipping, as there is ample land for oversize components. Both sites can also handle unit trains.

Since wind farms are project-based, the challenge is coordinating and balancing the carloads and unit trains to the sites. Once wind developers finish building at a site, they have little need to transport additional components or other materials there.

Currently, across the country, about 400 wind installation projects are under way, and many of these BNSF can serve either directly or through interchange. Published wind energy zones for the entire U.S. help the wind team anticipate the next project.

“We do a lot of research on growth areas and where the next wind farms are expected to go. It can be a bit unpredictable, given all the factors that go into wind farm development, including funding, government incentives, grid capacity and community support,” says Halvorson.

“Then, of course, sometimes the projects can get canceled.”

Halvorson says developers are currently accelerating plans to capitalize and complete projects before tax incentives expire (although they are expected to be renewed). In addition to Washington, Oregon and Iowa have been very supportive of wind development because they have set high renewable energy commitments, she says.

Looking ahead, developers will try to reach atmospheric wind levels previously untapped. To get there, the industry will need larger blades – up to 60 meters (196 feet) from current 45 meters – and taller towers, which means shipping logistics must be re-examined. Currently, unit trains of 89-foot flat cars are used to transport up to 7,000 feet of blades.

So how will BNSF haul the bigger blades and longer towers?

To find a solution, Halvorson says BNSF is working closely with manufacturers and developers on component size, shipping logistics and equipment options.

“As components are getting bigger, wider and longer, we ask that they work with us so we can continue to move their components by rail,” she says.

And that’s not just a bunch of wind.

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**Coal Still King**

As efforts persist to find alternative forms of electrical generation, coal, a longtime friend of the rail industry, keeps burning bright.

**Consider these stats:**

- In 2010, coal provided 45 percent of U.S. electrical generation, topping natural gas, nuclear power, hydro-electric generation and all other renewable energy.

- Most of the coal used to keep power plants humming came from the Powder River Basin, the largest reserve of low-cost hydrocarbons in the country, and a key player for BNSF. (More than 90 percent of the coal BNSF hauls originates from the PRB.)

- While electrical generation from coal dipped slightly since 2006, PRB production has held its ground and even ticked upward last year. The PRB accounted for 488 million short tons of production, up 1 percent to 43 percent of the nation’s total coal production.

- BNSF, which has maintained a strong PRB presence since the 1970s, has the lion’s share of coal tonnage from the region at 60 percent in 2010. More than 272.2 million tons – or nearly 51 BNSF trains per day – originated from mines in southwest Montana and northeast Wyoming.

Despite a slowing economy and challenges that include legislative pressures, PRB coal has long-term importance with its cleaner, low-sulfur content and estimated reserves of more than 200 years.

“Coal is important to our energy mix,” says George Duggan, vice president, Coal Marketing. “The reserves are large, with low and stable mining costs. Therefore, coal will continue to be important to both the U.S. electricity grid and BNSF for some time to come.”

Recent demand for PRB exports is creating new opportunities, as well as continued expansion of PRB use to the eastern United States, replacing Central Appalachian coal, Duggan says.

Last year, 6.4 million PRB tons were sent via BNSF to the Pacific Rim, compared with 1.3 million tons in 2008.

Such growth positions coal to remain a valuable piece of BNSF’s business.

“Even with growing use of natural gas, nuclear, hydro and the renewables, coal will fuel a large portion of electricity generation,” Duggan adds. “Coal is important and will continue to be important to BNSF and to the U.S. economy.”

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Whenever any of us plans a trip, we know we need to outline the route and have a roadmap to guide us. Roadmaps are important not only for a family planning a trip, but also for a business charting its future. With the Expense Leverage Roadmap project, BNSF is on a similar journey.

“One of our strengths at BNSF is our ability to continuously improve how efficiently we manage and operate the railroad. For a number of months, the Operations team has been reviewing its expenses and programs as part of the Expense Leverage Roadmap project. We are setting out to achieve several key objectives – reduce expenses and increase returns while also improving the service and value we offer customers,” says Greg Fox, executive vice president, Operations, who is leading the multiprojecte.

“During the recession, we were able to quickly adapt to reduced volumes, which enabled the company to lower expenses while we also worked on our service initiatives. Now, as volumes increase, we want to ensure that we maintain our market leadership across all areas of the company,” Fox explains.

The Expense Leverage Roadmap project is about looking for a better way to organize and deliver service, to design and execute processes, and to plan and manage functions, he says. Outcomes may result in reallocation of resources or, in some cases, may involve in-sourcing certain functions.

“There are no preconceived expectations,” Fox says. “Our primary objective is to improve service delivery and to ensure that we are operating as cost-efficiently as possible.”
The Expense Leverage Roadmap project started in Operations, which represents the largest employee group and accounts for most of BNSF’s expenses, but the same concept is being extended companywide. Departments across BNSF will be reviewing their programs and processes to enhance efficiency and results.

Looking out for roadblocks

One reason for the project is an economic reality that affects us all: inflation. Each year, inflation for non-fuel-related costs averages about $250 million at BNSF. While productivity improvements and cost control initiatives have historically offset half to two-thirds of inflation, there are always opportunities to drive additional cost savings.

“Given the unrelenting nature of inflation, continuous improvements in cost savings are a business imperative,” says Fox. “We’re at the point today where much of the low-hanging fruit has been picked and synergies have been realized. Now we need to examine every potential opportunity to improve our cost structure.”

The Expense Leverage Roadmap project kicked off in January with three key objectives:

- Develop a series of potential initiatives to realize savings.
- Maintain a focused expense management oversight process to ensure continuous improvement.
- The first objective involved dozens of cross-departmental discussions about major expenses. After this, the scope was narrowed and initiatives were analyzed to understand the size of the opportunities and to outline how to implement the improvements.

This analysis included looking at locomotive productivity, strategic fueling by location and efficient routing of locomotives for maintenance. In several cases, these objectives linked directly to the “Best Way” efforts currently under way. (See sidebar.)

“The Roadmap team will continue to identify additional opportunities as we move forward,” says Fox. “We have to all keep our focus on the goal of realizing savings that will allow us to stay the course for the next several years.”

The Expense Leverage Roadmap has already identified a number of potential productivity initiatives in the following areas.

Fuel is one of the largest expenses for BNSF. Last year, the company spent nearly $3 billion in this category, so it offers one of the largest potential opportunities for savings. One such opportunity is fuel pricing differentials.

Similar to the way drivers look for the best prices at the pump, BNSF also is trying to economically fill up locomotive tanks, which on average hold 5,000 gallons. A pilot project is under way on the Southern Transcon to fuel locomotives with the lowest-priced diesel. With a 5,000-gallon tank, the savings per locomotive can be significant.

Among the ways the company is reducing HPT is by increasing the use of distributed power (placing additional locomotives in the rear or middle of a train to allow for longer trains). Another is to strategically isolate excess power according to train type, subdivision and train direction. Combined, these practices help reduce HPT, which can have a significant impact on the bottom line; just a 1 percent average reduction in HPT across the system results in fuel efficiency savings of about $25 million annually at current fuel prices.

In addition, BNSF is minimizing fuel use...
by employing driver-assist technologies that prompt the engineer to choose the most efficient throttle setting. Currently about 1,100 units – or one-quarter – of BNSF’s road locomotive fleet are equipped with the technology. By end of year, another 300 units will be equipped, which are expected to improve fuel efficiency by up to 6 percent per train, depending on train type and territory.

Lastly, more AESS – Automatic Equipment Start/Stop technology – has been installed to reduce fuel use by idling locomotives, which can burn up to five gallons an hour. AESS automatically shuts off an idling locomotive under certain conditions and can restart the unit when necessary. Today, approximately two-thirds of the units used in yard operations and about 90 percent of the road fleet are equipped with AESS.

Across the system, 100 top-of-rail friction modifiers are being installed to lubricate rail, which improves fuel efficiency on trains and extends rail life – particularly in curves. These devices look similar to other existing wayside lubricators BNSF has installed, except that these apply the lubricant on the top of the rail, as opposed to the gauge face of the rail. The top-of-rail units, in combination with existing gauge face units, are expected to give BNSF a high rate of return.

During the analysis, the team considered whether the devices should be installed on railcars, on locomotives or along the track. The team determined that the wayside devices would be easier to install and result in more long-term savings than the railcar- or locomotive-mounted devices. Field testing is currently planned for the Kootenai River Subdivision in Montana, including a review of the spacing of the devices, before the program rolls out more broadly.

Best Way Engineering is about combining Track, Signal, Structures and other needed work to maximize track windows.

Best Way Engineering is a process that began with World Class Maintenance, progressing to Maintenance Excellence and now Best Way Engineering. This transition has been geared toward continuous improvement and follows the same overarching vision, which is to increase the reliability of the infrastructure, extend asset life and effectively use maintenance resources.

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In practice, the focus has been on identifying and prioritizing the work that needs to be done, scheduling fewer but larger track windows, committing to those windows and applying the necessary resources to execute all of the work. Best Way Engineering is about combining Track, Signal, Structures and other needed work, where feasible, to maximize these windows and take best advantage of the available track time. Even though this initiative started well before the Expense Leverage Roadmap project, it shares similar objectives and outcomes.

Mechanical has developed a locomotive productivity initiative called failure-to-shop that ensures that reliable locomotives are available when needed to meet customers’ expectations.

The initiative focuses on two main areas:

1. Working with Transportation and Locomotive Utilization teams to ensure that once a locomotive fails, it is routed to the closest repair facility. In the past, a locomotive in need of major repair would remain on the train until it reached a major repair shop destination. In the future, locomotives in need of major repair will be set out on line and picked up by another train to take to the closest repair facility.

2. Increasing the capability of BNSF’s locomotive repair facilities: This will enable Mechanical teams to repair more types of locomotives in more locations. In the past, many locomotive shops were only capable of performing work on a certain class or type of locomotive. “Often, locomotives in need of repair would wait several days just to move into a qualified repair facility,” explains Bruno Soto, shop superintendent, Alliance, Neb., one of the original locomotive repair shops.

How is the Mechanical team making this work?

- Mechanical is working with BNSF’s contract maintenance providers (GE/EMD) to add maintenance locations.
- Mechanical employees are being trained to repair different locomotive types.
- Mechanical employees are learning about the specific tools used to repair, and safety rules associated with, each locomotive type.
- Locomotive parts have been placed at multiple maintenance facilities.

With the failure-to-shop initiative and adding capabilities to repair facilities, locomotives will be transported and repaired at the closest maintenance facility, which will reduce out-of-service time. This will, in turn, improve locomotive availability.
Cell phones and texting: Know the risks and your state, local laws

Cell phones and other electronic devices help people stay connected with work, family and friends, but they also present significant distraction and risk, especially while driving.

In recent years, use of cell phones and other handheld electronic devices has been cited as the cause or a contributing factor in several high-profile incidents in the transportation industry. Ray LaHood, secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), has said that he would like such devices to be banned from the workplace altogether. In LaHood’s view, cell phones and other handheld electronic devices should be used in the workplace only when absolutely necessary for the job or in an emergency.

How serious is the issue of driving while texting or talking on a cell phone? Consider these 2009 statistics from the USDOT:

- Of those killed in distracted-driving-related crashes, 995 — or 18 percent — involved reports of a cell phone as a distraction. (National Highway Transportation Safety Administration)
- Drivers who use handheld electronic devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- Using a cell phone while driving, whether it’s handheld or hands-free, delays a driver’s reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of 0.08 percent. (University of Utah)

What are the rules?

First, under federal regulation and BNSF operating rules, employees are prohibited from using a personal cell phone or certain other electronic devices while on a moving train, except to respond to an emergency involving the operation of the railroad or encountered while on duty or as a communication device in case of a radio malfunction.

Second, federal regulation and BNSF safety rules and policies also prohibit texting while operating commercial motor vehicles (CMVs).

Additional expectations include the following:

- Be sure you know and obey local, state and federal laws and regulations for operating vehicles, both on and off company property; if they are unsure, employees should ask their supervisors for an explanation of any rule, regulation or instruction.
- Always comply with all rules and procedures listed in the BNSF Company Vehicle Policy and Procedure Manual for operating company or temporary replacement vehicles.
- Never text while driving a CMV. “Texting” includes manually entering or reading text from an electronic device, e-mailing, instant messaging, accessing a Web page or performing any electronic text retrieval or entry. Texting is permitted when the driver has stopped the vehicle off or to the side of the roadway and the vehicle remains stationary.

In BNSF’s territory, three states have an outright ban on use of handheld electronic devices while driving: Washington, California and Oregon. Three states ban cell phone use in certain circumstances: Illinois (in construction/school zones); Texas (school zones); and Utah (complete violation if committing another offense).

Many states have other bans restricting use based on age or license status (intermediate or learner, etc.). To learn more about state laws and for more information about distracted driving, visit the USDOT’s website: http://www.distraction.gov/stats-and-facts/#examination.

As always, safety must be the priority whenever a BNSF employee is on the job or behind the wheel. Even in cases where cell phone use or texting is allowed by the rules or by law, consider whether it is absolutely necessary. If the conversation can wait, then postpone it until you’ve safely reached your destination.

Cell phones and texting: Know the risks and your state, local laws
One of the recent patterns identified this year (through mid-August) is that nearly 20 percent of all accidents/incidents attributed to human error are related to non-compliance with restricted speed when required. Additionally, during the early months of 2011, a number of restricted speed violations occurred on BNSF, the most serious resulting in two employee fatalities at McPherson, Iowa.

A review of restricted speed equipment accidents indicates a common theme: crews likely not adhering to the requirement to be prepared to stop within one-half the range of vision.

Half the range of vision is related to depth perception. In the case of operating a train, it describes the crew’s ability to judge the distance from the front of their movement to an object ahead – such as another train. Gauging distance correctly and complying with restricted speed is a critical combination; non-compliance could possibly result in a collision.

“Whatever the reason, crews should not act on assumptions about what created the restricted speed condition. Their responsibility when operating a train at restricted speed is that they must be able to stop within half the range of vision, not within the range of vision,” says Darl Farris, director, Rules & Field Support.

Under the restricted speed operating rule, GCOR 6.27, train crews are required to operate their trains at restricted speed on main track under a number of circumstances, including when another train, an engine, railcar, workers or equipment are fouling the track ahead.

While movement at restricted speed must not exceed 20 mph, operating conditions may require train speed to be much slower when complying with the rule.

A crew’s ability to stop short of items identified in GCOR 6.27 can be affected by weather, time of day, track grade/curve, train make-up, type of operation, etc. Crew members must consider these factors when determining an appropriate speed for compliance.

“On a train, you have to continually evaluate where you are and what you know about that location,” explains Bob Repola, general director, Operating Practices, and a former locomotive engineer. “The conditions can change quickly; there could be a curve, a tree-lined area or an obstructed view. As the locomotive engineer, that’s why it’s so important to know your territory. You have to know between here and there how far can I see – and can I stop within half the range of vision? In other words, am I moving at a safe speed?”

The most common reason why crews exceed the restricted speed rule on a main track, according to Repola, is they don’t think there is anything “up there” based on past experience. In other words, the way has always been clear for movement before.

“You can’t always say ‘always’ in the railroad,” says Repola. “That kind of thinking can get you in trouble.”

That’s also why in-cab communication is so important, says Kevin Wilde, director, Safety. “Both conductors and locomotive engineers should be able to converse in an open way about what they’re seeing – track conditions, signals, curves, the equipment ahead – and keep the dialogue going and not lose situational awareness.

“Yes, sometimes it’s a judgment call to decide if they’re operating the train at half the range of vision. But as professionals, they need to remember they are both equally responsible for the rules. When it comes to restricted speed, if you can’t guarantee yourself that you’re prepared to stop your train in half the range of vision, you’re in danger.”

Between 2007 and 2010, BNSF reduced its reportable equipment incident rate by 25 percent – from 3.3 incidents per million train miles down to 2.47 incidents. Focused on continuous improvement, BNSF carefully reviews each incident to identify and address accident trends.
Gary Ness,
locomotive engineer,
Gillette, Wyo.

What’s the most important thing to know when it comes to restricted speed?

You need to know your territory, especially when, like here in Wyoming, weather conditions can rapidly change. That way you know – even if you’re suddenly in a snowstorm – what’s ahead, including signal locations. And stay focused. You can’t look away even for just a few seconds. There’s a time and a place to elevate your focus, regardless of the time of day or how you feel. You have got to have that focus and know what’s going on when you’re operating at restricted speed.

What’s the most important thing to remember about half the range of vision?

Don’t go by the 20 mph rule – you may have to be at a much lower speed – even if that means you have to go 3 mph. You have to be at a speed that you’ll be able to stop. It can feel different, depending on which side of the cab you’re in, but that’s why it’s so important to have in-cab communication. Don’t be afraid to speak up, if you’re the conductor, and ask your locomotive engineer if he’s able to stop within half the range.

Ben Rose,
locomotive engineer,
Clovis, N.M.

How do you determine how to stop a train operating under restricted speed?

I need to know what my train consists of. Today my train is 16,000 tons, so that tells me what speed to be at that allows me to stop. It’s going to act differently from other trains. Being at this weight, it’s going to react really slowly, so I have to be a few steps ahead of what I think this train’s going to actually do. Something can come up really quick, and you have to be able to stop your train, so you need to be at a speed that allows you to do that.

What other factors do you consider?

Weather conditions, especially ice or snow, are important. Knowing your territory is very important, because you need to know whether you’re going downhill or if you’re going around a curve. Like a lot of things in life, you have to have a game plan.

Jason Spearman,
conductor,
Clovis, N.M.

What does restricted speed mean to you?

Restricted speed means knowledge of where we’re at in our territory and what’s going to happen. If something is ahead of us – if it’s obstructing our movement – we need to be aware of our speed so we can do everything in a safe and timely manner to come to a stop if we need to. Broken rail, people on the rail, anything that can hinder our movement is basically restricted speed to me.

What do you do in the cab when under restricted speed?

I just try to observe and help my engineer, basically to let us know, “OK, this is what we’re coming up on. This is where we’re at. We have this Form A, or Form B and so on.” I’m trying to help the locomotive engineer observe things that possibly he’s not seeing for himself.

I’ll tell him, you know, by the way, this is what we’re on, this is what we’re approaching, this is the speed we need to be. And then he starts taking [the steps] he needs to so we start de-accelerating our speed. If we have to stop, we have to do it in a safe and timely manner.

Billy Montgomery,
conductor,
Gillette, Wyo.

You are about to retire after 34 years. What are some words of advice you’d offer to a new conductor when it comes to restricted speed?

I can still remember being on a train years ago when the student engineer went around a curve. The signal there was always green. That day it was red, and he plugged the train. When the instructor asked him what he did wrong, he admitted he assumed it would be green. So the instructor asked him, did he assume he was also going to get home safely that day? That always stuck with me. Those signals are there for a purpose, and you should respect them.

We all want to go home safe. One thing I’ve learned over the years is that both the conductor and the engineer have to work together, to watch out for each other, and that means talking about what they see, calling out signals and staying focused.

When it comes to half the range of vision, what is the conductor’s role?

It’s important as a conductor to communicate with the engineer even if it’s a little intimidating. That means reminding him that we’re coming up on a curve, and if you don’t feel comfortable, then saying something. I have asked the engineer, “Have you got hold of this?” or “Is this what we’re supposed to be doing here?” You have to speak up, because a few seconds later if you don’t, that could make a terrible difference.
When you’re healthy, there’s no reason to go to the doctor, right? Wrong.

Going to the doctor isn’t just for taking care of problems – it’s also about preventing them. Getting annual preventive exams is the best way to catch a potential health problem before it becomes harder to treat and possibly life-threatening.

But many people – men especially – aren’t good about making this important yearly appointment. Research shows that men are 24 percent less likely to have seen a physician in the past year than women. (And it’s probably no coincidence that men are more likely to be hospitalized for preventable conditions than women.) At BNSF, less than one-third of our male employees got their preventive physicals last year.

“Like a lot of things we don’t want to do – rotating the car tires or cleaning the gutters – people come up with excuses for why they don’t see their doctor. They don’t have the time, it’s inconvenient, there’s no need, they’re uncomfortable, and, in many cases, they simply don’t have a doctor,” says Dr. Thomas Pace, assistant vice president, Medical and Environmental Health, and BNSF’s chief medical officer.

“While making the time and effort for an exam is a personal choice, it is an important one,” adds Pace. “Think about the possibility that one day you do get checked out, say at a health fair, and determine that you have a potentially serious condition like elevated cholesterol or high blood pressure. Having a relationship with a physician you know and trust will enable faster treatment and will make things less stressful. It will be easier for you to get an appointment, and it will be easier for your physician to treat you, because of an established medical history that will guide diagnosis and treatment.”

Make it personal

So if you are one of those who isn’t good about seeing a doctor mainly because you don’t have one, here are some suggestions for picking your personal health care expert:
The following is a real BNSF railroader’s story, but the individual’s identity is being kept confidential to protect her personal health information—we’ll call her Megan. She asked to share this story because of the importance of preventive checkups and because she wants to encourage fellow employees and their family members to avoid what almost happened to her.

At 27 – divorced and raising a child alone – Megan was back on the exam table, hearing the diagnosis she most feared. The cancer was back, this time with a vengeance. After having surgery six months prior to treat cervical cancer, Megan now had to make a life-changing decision: have a hysterectomy or face a far worse prognosis.

“I always wanted to have four children, but I wanted to be around a long time for my son, who was 6 at the time,” she recalls. “The decision was difficult, but with the diagnosis and other medical conditions, I ended up with a total hysterectomy.”

The surgery saved her life, and today, 15 years later, Megan is cancer-free and continues to go for her annual well-woman exams. “I got the exams religiously even before my diagnosis,” she says, recalling her reason: “I had a cousin who was not good about getting her exams. In pain, she finally went to the doctor and was diagnosed with cervical cancer. At that point, she was beyond treatment. When she asked the doctor if her prognosis would have been different had she been getting exams, the doctor’s answer, without hesitation, was ‘yes.’ My cousin died about a month before her 30th birthday and left a 7-year-old daughter behind. It was heartbreaking, but part of the reason I made the decisions I did.”

While the surgery and treatments were difficult, helping Megan throughout the ordeal was her doctor. “I had an excellent relationship with my doctor, whom I had been referred to by co-workers and then did my research on him. I had been seeing him for years when the cancer was found,” she recalls. “I trusted him like a family member.”

So when he told her that she’d improve her survival odds by losing weight and taking medication for high cholesterol, she didn’t hesitate. Over three years, with a healthy diet and exercise regimen, she lost more than 125 pounds. Today, at 42, she no longer needs the medication and feels better than ever.

And she’s doing things that she never would have dreamed of when she was overweight. Now remarried, she and her husband go snorkeling, hiking and frequently travel. Her son, now 22, tells her how proud he is of her.

“I feel so, so much better, and I have spent some awesome years with my son and husband,” she says. Without a commitment to annual preventive exams, “I could easily have ended up like my cousin.”

Note: At a minimum, if you still don’t want a personal doctor, consider going to one of the medical clinics that conducts physicals. Also, visit BNSF’s Online Wellness Center for an array of programs, health-action tools and information resources. To access it, go to employee.bnsf.com. Click the Employee tab, then the Wellness sub-tab.
BNSF is pleased to announce a new community website – Friends of BNSF – open to anyone who is interested in or has ties to the company. This website offers exclusive content reserved for members only. Those who join can gain access to articles, documents, photos and videos, many of which aren’t available on BNSF’s primary website, bnsf.com.

**Friends of BNSF can:**

- View special news articles and videos from the BNSF communications team
- Explore a one-of-a-kind resource library packed with company information
- Download exclusive wallpaper, ringtones and a screensaver

“BNSF is reaching out to those who are interested in our company, especially rail fans and our retirees,” says John Ambler, vice president, Corporate Relations. “Railroading is a unique industry, and many people are naturally curious or enthusiastic about the role of railroads and their history. This website helps us tap into that interest. Friends of BNSF will allow us to keep the community informed about issues that are important to freight rail transportation and its role in the U.S. economy.”

In addition to hosting current news and information, the website will display treasures from BNSF’s extensive historical archives.

Members can explore the long history of the railroad and its predecessors through materials such as:

- Historical photos and videos
- Authentic maps and documents
- Classic brochures and advertisements

Membership at Friends of BNSF is free, but visitors are required to provide an e-mail address in order to join the site.

Friends of BNSF will be updated with new content regularly. Members can elect to receive e-mail notifications when new content is posted in their selected areas of interest.

Visit [friendsofbnsf.com](http://friendsofbnsf.com) to join and spread the word to your family, friends and neighbors!
Employees are reminded to “stay on track” and to be vigilant about reporting illegal and unethical behaviors or related concerns to a supervisor or the BNSF Hotline.

If you see something at BNSF that seems unethical or illegal, or that doesn’t seem consistent with the Code of Conduct or other policies, you have several options for reporting concerns, according to Corporate Audit Services. The first course of action should always be to discuss the concern with your supervisor. But if you aren’t comfortable doing that, the BNSF Hotline is always an option.

The BNSF Hotline – at 800-533-BNSF – provides callers a reliable and confidential way to report concerns 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. To ensure confidentiality, BNSF uses an independent third party to manage hotline calls. Callers can remain anonymous, if they wish.

“One of our greatest strengths as a company is our collective commitment to ethics and legal compliance,” says Matt Rose, chairman and chief executive officer. “Together, we can ensure an environment where we can talk openly whenever we have doubts about the appropriate course of action or want to report a potential violation.”

The BNSF Hotline is available to employees as well as contractors, vendors and others who want to report potential violations, including perceived fraud, illegal or unethical behavior, deliberate misreporting of accounting information, or other policy or rule issues.

Calendar winners named

Congratulations to the 2012 photo contest winners:

- Wes Carr, dispatcher, Fort Worth
- Daren Genau, locomotive engineer, LaJunta, Colo.
- Steve Grabman, dispatcher, Fort Worth
- Lance Lassen, dispatcher, Fort Worth
- Scott Marksbury, signal inspector, Hungry Horse, Mont.
- Andrew Matuska, conductor, Alliance, Neb. (for two photos, including grand prize)
- Todd Michel, conductor, Galesburg, Ill.
- David Miller, manager, Engineering, San Bernardino, Calif.
- Rick Mohorn, terminal manager, Chicago
- Shawn Peter, trainmaster, Alliance, Neb.
- Greg Speasl, signal maintainer, Essex, Mont.
- Gregory Weirich, locomotive engineer, Everett, Wash.

All BNSF employees receive a complimentary monthly photo calendar, which will be mailed to homes in October. Featured on the cover is the shot by Shawn Peter.

Enhanced Travel eX tool coming soon!

An enhanced version of the Travel eX tool will soon be available for all employees and includes several enhancements:

- A user-friendly, intuitive design
- Travel-booking and expense-management tools combined into one tool
- Single sign-on functionality when accessing the site through the intranet
- Drag-and-drop functionality
- Option to use a new mileage calculation tool
- Option to scan, upload and submit receipts electronically
- Simplified expense itemization when using new e-receipt functionality
- Ability to submit and approve expense reports using a Blackberry or other smartphone
As a community of 40,000 members, each of us can make a significant difference in the places where we live and work. Giving back – with our time, our donations and our talents – not only improves our collective community, it models the way for others to follow. Here are some of the stories of BNSF people who are doing the right thing and setting an example for all of us.

Memphis employees donate to less fortunate

Every other month, Memphis Intermodal Facility (IMF) employees take part in a community project designed to reach out to those less fortunate, through donation of time or goods.

Employees recently gathered food for the FedEx House, which opened in January as a home-away-from-home for families with children being treated at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital.

Staples such as peanut butter and jelly, cereal, water and crackers were donated by employees. “This project was a great success, and it was inspiring to see such a great group of people come together to help our community,” says Michael Kutscher, IMF supervisor and project coordinator.

Surviving the Joplin tornado, helping others

The tornado that hit Joplin, Mo., on May 22 directly or indirectly affected many BNSF employees. Many also reached out with a helping hand shortly after the disaster.

Steven Garcia, Springfield, Mo., lowboy driver, and his wife, Stephanie, traveled from their home to Joplin after the tornado struck to check on Stephanie’s father, Harold, who was in the hospital.

As they were leaving Joplin to return home, they found an elderly man walking along the road, draped in a soaking wet blanket. They learned that the 86-year-old man was a native of New Zealand with no close friends or family in Joplin. His chiropractic office and home had been destroyed by the tornado. The Garcias provided the man, Geoffrey Hilton, with food and clothing, and arranged for him to stay in a camper behind Stephanie’s parents’ house.

Bob Bradley, surfacing gang foreman, grew up in Joplin and had never before seen such a storm. His home was spared, but his in-laws were not so fortunate; their home was destroyed. The displaced couple now lives with Bradley and his family.

“When I look around and see all the devastation, I think how lucky they are to still be here,” Bradley says.

Support from colleagues poured in almost immediately.

“I received calls from colleagues as far away as Fort Worth’s dispatching center, and I’ve had many co-workers offer help if we need anything,” Bradley says. “It means a lot to me and my family to know so many people care, and to have a company that actually cares about its employees. It makes me feel proud to be a part of it.”

When switchman Chris Brown of Temple, Texas, went to Joplin to help with relief efforts in the aftermath of the tornado that devastated the community, he took much-needed supplies with him. The Temple team donated a pallet of water and six cases of crew packs to aid in the efforts.

In addition, the BNSF Foundation donated $100,000 to the American Red Cross for ongoing relief efforts for those affected.

Making a wish come true

It all began when young transportation enthusiast Justin Bonny shared his wish to see train operations with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that gives hope, strength and joy to children with life-threatening medical conditions. The foundation contacted BNSF, which went about making his wish come true.

Suburban Services Terminal Manager David Leahy presents a Burlington California Zephyr passenger train set to Justin Bonny. Leahy took up a collection among Suburban Services to purchase the gift for the boy. From left are Justin, his parents, Kristin and AJ, and Leahy.
“Justin wanted to ride on a BNSF train and be a conductor for the day,” says Terminal Manager Clayton Johanson. “We jumped at the opportunity.”

Justin has centronuclear myopathy, a genetic condition that prevented his muscles from developing. It affects everything from his ability to eat to moving his eyes.

BNSF Suburban Services, in conjunction with Amtrak and Metra, made Justin and his parents, AJ and Kristin, guests of honor during National Train Day at Chicago’s Union Station May 7.

A conductor’s cap tilted atop his head, bib overalls, brass lapel pin and an engraved ticket punch held firmly in his hand let passengers know Justin was more than just a greeter; he was their conductor for the 45-minute ride.

Teaching children well

As assistant den leader of Pack 328 and Cub Scout project coordinator, Superintendent Corridor Operations Bill Stuhldreher is dedicated to teaching children how to help those in need.

This spring, he oversaw the annual donation of nonperishable food to the Roanoke, Texas, Food Pantry. Eighty to 100 Cub Scouts of Pack 328 in Trophy Club, Texas, distributed fliers and gathered food items from door to door. Stuhldreher’s 9-year-old son, Chase, also participated.

In all, they donated 3,777 items and 354 hours of volunteering.

Since 1885, the Santa Fe Railway (now BNSF) has had a relationship with the Laguna, a Native American Pueblo whose reservation is near Abo Canyon, N.M., where BNSF recently opened a 5-mile section of double track.

The relationship was sealed more than a century ago, when the two parties had a verbal agreement called the “Flower of Friendship.” The agreement allowed the railroad to come through Pueblo lands as the company was building track to the west. In exchange for right of way and use of water, the railroad would provide employment and rail transportation for Laguna Pueblo members.

approximately 350 Laguna Pueblo members on July 31. The ride was organized by Executive Director Bob Munguia, State Government Affairs, with the idea of renewing the friendship and to discuss plans on “how to continue to water the flower.” Additionally, a formal dinner was held that evening on the BNSF business cars with the leadership of the Laguna Pueblo and BNSF.

Munguia worked closely with Laguna Pueblo Governor Richard Luarkie to organize the events. When Luarkie planted the seed for the possibility of a train ride, Munguia, with the assistance from Passenger Operations and the Southwest Division, made the train ride happen.

Because the Laguna Pueblo, as well as other pueblos/tribes in the area, helped BNSF obtain the necessary permits to begin the Abo Canyon project, Luarkie was invited to the project dedication on Aug. 3.

“Because of the historical pueblo rock art in the canyon, approvals had to be obtained from a number of pueblos/tribes in the area. There is no question that the Flower of Friendship agreement with the Laguna Pueblo facilitated their approval,” says Munguia, adding, “I believe that continuous watering of the Flower of Friendship will benefit the Laguna and BNSF as we deal with issues of mutual interest in the future. We’ve been neighbors for a long time and will continue to be neighbors long after those of us currently in leadership positions for the Laguna Pueblo and BNSF are gone.”
BNSF’s 5-mile, $85 million Abo Canyon, N.M., double track is officially open, with the first train moving over the track in June. An engineering feat, the project took more than 10 years and involved excavation through rugged canyon rock by blasting more than 500 times to clear an opening. Additionally, the project involved constructing nine bridges that, altogether, totaled more than 3,000 feet; erecting 7.3 miles of game fence to protect wildlife, including the Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep; and preserving nearby Native American rock art, dating back to 1400 A.D. The new main line will help eliminate bottlenecks on this section of the 2,200-mile “Transcon” connecting Los Angeles to Chicago.