Executive Roundup
Looking ahead to the challenges and opportunities of 2012
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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.

Our Vision is to realize the tremendous potential of BNSF Railway Company by providing transportation services that consistently meet our customers’ expectations.

BNSF Performance Measures

BNSF Units*Handled
Year-to-date through Feb. 5, 2012

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<tr>
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<td>149,155</td>
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<td>System</td>
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</table>

* Carloads, trailers or containers

BNSF Reportable Injuries
Year-to-date through Jan. 29, 2012

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<tr>
<th>2012</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Got a story idea?
Send story ideas to: Corporate.Communications@BNSF.com

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A message from the Chairman and CEO

2011 tested BNSF’s strength and resilience

Challenging circumstances tend to bring out either the best or the worst in people. In 2011 BNSF’s people demonstrated the very best qualities in the face of significant adversity. I appreciate your considerable contributions to a successful year while overcoming these difficulties.

Together we faced continuing economic uncertainty, historic flooding on our network and other significant challenges. Sadly, we also experienced the loss of life, with nine of our colleagues fatally injured.

The year was not easy for any of us, but I am proud of how we responded to these difficult times. Rising Above was the theme of our communication following the catastrophic flooding this summer, and that message of determination, optimism and hard work sums up the year well.

In safety, the fatal injuries we experienced are a tragic reminder that we still have much work to do to reduce exposure and risk in our workplace. Nothing will have more positive impact on our company than the elimination of the loss of life on our railroad. We know we have the right safety processes in place, and the numbers indicate that we are making significant improvement. In fact, we set new records as our 2011 frequency was down 27 percent over 2010, and our severity decreased at a similar rate. To drive continued safety improvements, we need to maintain our focus on rules compliance, continue our commitment to eliminating all at-risk behavior, and take accountability for our own safety and the safety of our co-workers.

In addition to safety, the story for 2011 was the flooding that impacted our network along the Missouri River and further north, with high water peaking in July and August. The floods severed key lines at the heart of our network and impacted our coal and agricultural business, in particular. Up to a third of our trains were, at times, affected by re-routes as crews worked to maintain and rebuild critical parts of our infrastructure.

As the waters receded, we applied the same energy to restoring our service that we had to restoring our network. While we did not achieve our velocity goals, by the end of 2011 we were making good progress on several key velocity metrics. We also achieved a perfect Peak Season, handling 27,213 loads for UPS during the holiday season without a service failure. In 2012, we must continue our focus on meeting the expectations of our customers and our own high standards for service.

We had solid revenue performance in 2011, despite the uncertain economy. We achieved monthly revenue records every month except July and August, and we realized an all-time daily revenue record of nearly $73 million on November 30. Of course, those higher revenues were offset by significantly higher costs, reflecting the dramatic impact of the flooding on our network, inflation and higher fuel prices. We’ll provide more detail in late February, following the release of Berkshire Hathaway’s annual results.

Our volumes also increased by 3.3 percent for the year, and our projections for 2012 reflect somewhat greater confidence that the economy will continue to improve. However, our volumes are still short of our peak levels in 2006, and we don’t expect to reach those levels again until 2013.

Looking to the year ahead, we have a great opportunity to reflect on all we have accomplished together and the strength and resilience of our BNSF community. Let’s maintain our focus on safety, drive service improvements for our customers, control costs, and as always, improve reliability and productivity. I’m optimistic about the future because I have seen what we can achieve together.

Thank you.
As part of our planning process each year, we outline our major company initiatives around five strategic focus areas – People, Community, Franchise, Service and Return. These initiatives identify some of our top priorities as a company and influence where our leaders spend their time, balancing immediate needs with a longer-term view focused on continued growth and innovation.

For 2012, we are introducing several new initiatives and continuing many others. Some will be extremely visible, including those focused on safety or service. As always, we start with People and safety. Behavior-based safety has been a key People initiative for several years, and will continue this year. I am convinced that the elimination of fatalities and life-threatening injuries will have a more positive impact on the railroad than anything else we can do. To accomplish this we must look out for each other as well as ourselves (peer-to-peer). This initiative focuses on the processes that reinforce safe behaviors and rules compliance, including communication and training. We know we have the right safety processes in place, but we also know we have more work to do to improve consistency and achieve our safety vision.

Our strategic focus on Community emphasizes how we benefit the communities we serve. One Community initiative is continuing emissions reduction, which supports communities’ interest in improving air quality. Of all types of surface transportation, railroads have the least environmental impact, and BNSF takes this a step further by maintaining one of the youngest, most efficient locomotive fleets in the industry. We further reduce emissions when we improve our own efficiency and work with manufacturers to develop new fuel-saving technology.

In Franchise, we consider our network. A 2012 initiative is route optimization, where we continue to ensure that strategic capital investments and changes in service design improve the efficiency and capacity of our existing track structure. A good example of this is the plan within a plan that was used for the Sioux City and Marshall subdivisions before the potential of the Bakken shale region in North Dakota and surrounding areas was fully realized. In this case, investments were needed to serve coal traffic, but we also knew that they would be important if significant Bakken activity developed. As Bakken volumes increased dramatically, we were ready with the capacity needed for both our Bakken and our coal business.

With Service, we’ve sponsored Best Way initiatives for several years to identify and standardize best practices across our operation. These lay the foundation for continued improvement in velocity and service. We believe our continued focus on Best Way is one of the vehicles that will help us meet the expectations of our customers and our own high standards as we continue our velocity recovery. Under Service, we are also looking for ways to streamline our customers’ transaction experience.

For Return, we focus on the financial performance of the business. Naturally, our initiatives about efficiency and productivity fall within this area. Through these and initiatives such as economic regulatory policy and insource/outsource, we work to foster a positive operating environment and ensure that we are using the optimal mix of resources to get the job done with the cost controls and flexibility we need.

The year ahead of us will bring new challenges and opportunities. Our strategic focus areas, strategies and the associated initiatives help ensure that we have a clear roadmap to guide us. With your help, this strategic guidance and our strong focus on execution, we can be confident that the company will perform well despite the uncertainties before us.

Carl Ice on strategies and initiatives for 2012

President and Chief Operating Officer Carl Ice
Members of the Executive Team review the achievements of 2011 and provide their perspective on the year ahead.

Executive Vice President Operations Greg Fox

Q: What is BNSF’s safety focus for 2012? How can we address the importance of preventing fatal and life-altering injuries?

A: First and foremost, we must eliminate all fatal injuries. In 2011, our BNSF community experienced nine fatal injuries and 11 life-altering injuries. And we were deeply saddened by the loss of Tommy Touvell in early January this year. These tragic incidents will affect an untold number of people for years to come and are simply unacceptable. I’m absolutely convinced that we can operate this railroad without employee fatalities.

We know that we have the right safety processes in place, and the significant
progress we made in 2011 in reducing our injury frequency and severity numbers tells us that we’re doing the right things. Our railroad is a safe work environment, but it is also unforgiving. Rules compliance is the price of admission. Every one of us must take personal accountability for safe production for ourselves and our co-workers every day and in every work task.

The peer-to-peer safety is an essential step toward our goal of eliminating all fatalities and, ultimately, all injuries.

**Q. What progress has BNSF made in restoring velocity and service? What are we doing to ensure that we consistently meet customers’ expectations in 2012?**

**A.** BNSF faced unprecedented weather challenges in 2011, including catastrophic flooding. These events had a profound impact on our network and service. During the worst of the flooding, we were rerouting up to a third of our trains, while crews worked diligently to maintain, restore and rebuild key portions of our network.

Our railroad is a safe work environment, but it is also unforgiving. Rules compliance is the price of admission. Every one of us must take personal accountability for safe production for ourselves and our co-workers every day and in every work task.

As the waters subsided, we knew we needed to apply the same energy to restoring service. Across our operation, we spent the final months of 2011 working to restore network velocity to a level consistent with our own high standards and our commitment to customers. By the end of 2011, we were making good progress on most of the velocity metrics we had identified, but our service was still not where we wanted it to be.

We were pleased to complete another perfect UPS Peak Season between Thanksgiving and Christmas without a single service failure while handling more than 27,000 units carrying 43 million packages. Considering all we faced in 2011, that perfect Peak was a notable achievement. We must build on the network momentum we’re seeing as we enter 2012 and focus on continuing to improve velocity and service levels.

**Q. What is our plan for capital spending in 2012? What are some of the major capital projects ahead?**

**A.** Once again, we will continue our significant investment in maintaining and expanding our network with a capital plan of about $3.9 billion for 2012. These capital dollars will support infrastructure reliability as well as our ongoing equipment and capacity needs. Our investments will also support some of our growth initiatives, including the dramatic increases in shipments from the Bakken shale region. We will also extend sidings at several locations to allow for longer trains and more efficient train movement, with a focus on improving the consistency of our intermodal service to the Southeast. In addition, we’ll continue our significant investments in positive train control (PTC) as we work toward meeting federally mandated deadlines.

Equally important is our effort to deliver cost savings that help mitigate the impact of inflation. Our objective each year is to improve efficiency to a point where we offset half to two-thirds of inflation. In 2011, we did not meet that objective due to the impact of the flooding and other factors, but we must work again to achieve that goal in 2012. Our short-term cost management efforts focus on right-sizing our resources to match traffic volumes. Over the longer term, we also continue to identify structural changes and improve standardization by applying processes and metrics to enhance efficiency and productivity.

**Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Tom Hund**

**Q. How would you assess our financial performance in 2011, especially given the floods and rising fuel costs?**

**A.** I believe we did a good job in 2011 in one of the toughest operating environments I have seen in my many years here at BNSF Railway. We started the year with record snowfall followed by record flooding, causing significant service outages and disruptions on our network. Despite all of this, we handled increased volumes compared with 2010 and will have a significant increase in revenue, as volume, rates and fuel surcharges were all higher. And while operating expenses will be up for the year, we are still able to pay $3.5 billion to our owner, Berkshire Hathaway.

We need to be flexible and ramp up our resources if volumes come strong, or tamp them down if we see a dip in traffic. Fortunately, we have a very experienced team that has done this many times in the past.
Q What are our greatest challenges to improved financial performance for 2012?

A Unless we experience a major weather disruption like we did last year, 2012 will start off with an easier comparison. But it will be filled with its own set of challenges. I believe the biggest challenge will be for us to be flexible given the economic uncertainty we will face. At present, we see volumes being somewhat higher this year, but with unemployment still stubbornly high, financial turmoil around the globe (remember we have a lot of import and export traffic) and an uncertain domestic political situation, we’re not quite sure what to expect. So we need to be flexible and ramp up our resources if volumes come strong, or tamp them down if we see a dip in traffic. Fortunately, we have a very experienced team that has done this many times in the past.

Q We’ve now been part of Berkshire Hathaway for almost two years. What has changed and what has remained the same?

A Warren Buffett told us that only a fool marries someone and then tries to change them. So Berkshire Hathaway’s investment philosophy is to buy good companies with good employees and let them do their jobs, and that is exactly what they have done with us.

Berkshire does not play an active role in running the railroad. They are involved as would be expected in the accounting and financial side of the business, to some degree. Generally speaking, even there, we consult with Berkshire but are left to make our own decisions.

The most significant change is that we no longer have public shareholders, so we no longer have an investor relations function.

I tell people I traded 10 trips a year to New York for four trips a year to Omaha!

Q What’s our marketing outlook for 2012? What do our numbers tell us about trends for the U.S. economy?

A We anticipate moderate growth in 2012, but we are watching the consumer very closely. Seventy percent of U.S. GDP is made up of consumer spending, and experts are forecasting GDP to be less than 2 percent in 2012. That means consumer sentiment will be a key factor. The holiday season was encouraging, so now we are watching to see if that trend continues.

We are fortunate to have a number of markets that have potential to outperform GDP, so we will be watching those markets carefully. Overall, our volumes are growing and, again, we are working to return toward the all-time high that we achieved in 2006.

Throughout 2012, we will continue to provide our customers exceptional service and work with them to capitalize on growth opportunities.

Q Do we expect our major 2011 successes to continue into 2012 – e.g., Bakken shale, domestic intermodal?

A Our top priority for 2012 is growth. And there should be opportunities to capture new business and grow existing business.

We will continue to see growth in some of the same areas that we did in 2011. Volumes in and out of the Bakken should continue to grow. We also anticipate growth coming from export coal and grain movements, domestic intermodal and automotive production.

Q Are we identifying new markets?

A The way we identify new market opportunities is doing what we at BNSF do best. We cannot predict the future, but what we can do is cultivate close relationships with our customers. Our customers are the ones on the front line; they are our best gauge of what is happening in the market. In addition, we keep a close eye on market trends and public policy decisions.

Q Volumes in and out of the Bakken should continue to grow [in 2012]. We also anticipate growth coming from export coal and grain movements, domestic intermodal and automotive production.

A Our recent success in the Bakken Formation is a great example. When those opportunities arose, we responded quickly and were able to provide service to a significant portion of that business.

It’s about being close to our customers, being nimble and constantly working to develop and maintain a strong network.

Q What is our export strategy for West Coast ports? Looking at imports, how will the doubling of Panama Canal’s capacity in 2014 impact West Coast trade?

A We work with our customers and our contacts at the ports to make sure they are aware of our ability to serve the export market and of our available capacity heading west. BNSF doesn’t necessarily market the West Coast. We work with
our customers to understand their export strategy and ensure that they know the value we offer for export goods.

Even after the completion of the Panama Canal, Asian imports will continue to come in through the West Coast. This is a function of market demand and superior port and rail infrastructure. The fastest and most direct route for Asian goods to the U.S. is through the West Coast. We do not anticipate any significant shift of business away from the West Coast.

Executive Vice President Law and Secretary Roger Nober

Q: What are the critical public policy issues for the rail industry this year, either with Congress or the Surface Transportation Board (STB) and other regulatory agencies?

A: This continues to be a very active time in the regulatory environment. As railroads become more profitable, they also become bigger targets for regulatory issues. But increased regulatory activity is something all companies face.

Currently, several important BNSF issues are in front of the STB, including the movement of hazardous materials (PIH/TIH); BNSF’s coal dust operating rule; the cost treatment of Berkshire Hathaway’s acquisition of BNSF; and several rate cases. This promises to be an active year.

But it’s not just economic regulatory issues that concern us. There are several important regulatory issues in front of the Federal Railroad Administration, including those concerning safety and PTC. We are also paying attention to some key environmental regulatory issues. In terms of legislative action in Congress, this is an election year, and we can expect less activity.

The bottom line is that we need to be active in public policy in ways that help create a regulatory climate that continues to allow us to earn adequate returns so we can invest and grow. We want a regulatory environment that encourages more investment in rail, not stifles it.

Q: What legal challenges is BNSF currently facing?

A: As I mentioned, as railroads become more profitable, they are becoming bigger targets for regulatory issues. The same is true concerning legal challenges.

For the past several years, we have had a large anti-trust matter – the Dust-Pro case concerning fuel surcharges – and it is pending. A second anti-trust case was filed against BNSF and Union Pacific by Oxbow Carbon & Minerals, LLC.

We need to be active in public policy in ways that help create a regulatory climate that continues to allow us to earn adequate returns so we can invest and grow. We want a regulatory environment that encourages more investment in rail, not stifles it.

Environmentalist activity continues in California concerning air emissions as well as the proposed Southern California International Gateway (SCIG). We also are seeing increased community activism in the Pacific Northwest concerning train traffic, coal dust and air emissions, as well as the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal.

We have been very successful in our permitting efforts and defending litigation concerning SCIG and the Kansas City Intermodal Facility (KCIMF). We recognize that how we litigate cases is a reflection of our reputation in the community. We must always be mindful that even in the midst of difficult litigation we are also members of the communities in which we operate.

Q: Are BNSF and the rail industry making progress in raising the public’s awareness of our role in communities and the economy? What more can we – or should we – do?

A: BNSF strives to maintain strong relationships with our communities – the communities where our employees live, work and play. We want to be active and engaged partners. Being good citizens in a community is not only a critical part of our company’s ability to operate and grow, it is also the right thing to do.

In recent years, we have seen the benefits of how being a good corporate citizen allows us to grow while still being sensitive to community concerns.

We have worked closely with communities on major projects, such as double tracking through the Abo Canyon, KCIMF, SCIG and many others. While these projects were not without controversy, we are able to communicate regularly with communities and resolve reasonable issues.

What can we do or should we do? Every problem that gets raised statewide or nationally starts locally. We need to be active and engaged in the communities where we live and work. We need to respect and understand community concerns. We need to give back to our communities.

The BNSF Railway Foundation is one way we support our communities. Employee involvement in local communities is another.

Every employee is an ambassador for BNSF. I continue to be impressed by the dedication and drive of our employees who help BNSF be a good corporate citizen.
Scot Stewart, Dispatcher, Fort Worth

From the Network Operations Center (NOC) in Fort Worth, 466 dispatchers help move trains over their assigned territories, with 24/7 coverage. Their job is to ensure that the trains and their crews as well as maintenance personnel are properly protected to safely and efficiently perform their daily functions in accordance with BNSF operating rules and federal regulations. The NOC is the company’s major centralized dispatch center, with four regional operations centers (see sidebar on page 11), for a combined total of 580 dispatchers working at BNSF.

One of these dispatchers is Scot Stewart. Stewart began his railroad career with Montana Rail Link (MRL) in 1992. He worked for MRL’s Track Department for a year before transitioning to the Signal Department, where he worked another three years. In 1996, Stewart hired on with BNSF as a dispatcher at Schaumburg, Ill. He began dispatching from the NOC in June 1997. While he doesn’t miss laying rail in the bitter Montana winter, Stewart values his experience in the field.

“Training to become a dispatcher can be intimidating at first,” says Stewart. “When you sit down at the beginning of your shift, rows of monitors are lit up like a Christmas tree. But, once you’ve completed training, you realize dispatching is about safely performing a variety of tasks and communicating clearly, while keeping everyone’s safety your No. 1 priority. Dispatchers are experts at focusing on the task at hand, understanding the state of the railroad and their own dispatching territories at any given moment, and identifying what each of those lights means.”

As dispatchers authorize train movements across the track in the safest manner possible, they communicate, update and make decisions with a variety of people – the adjacent or previous dispatcher, the chief dispatcher, train crews, the Engineering teams, van drivers and others involved in safely and efficiently moving freight across the western portion of the United States.

For Stewart, the bulk of his responsibility is around Belen, N.M., which is considered a relatively short 251-mile territory; however, Stewart confirms that “short” doesn’t mean “slow,” and says his territory is always busy. Belen serves as a refueling point in the southwestern portion of the United States and houses a Mechanical team that inspects trains for defects.

“They do a lot of switching at the terminal, too, so I spend a considerable amount of time during my shift coordinating with the trainmaster to ensure velocity goals are met and make things as fluid as possible,” he says.

Continued on next page
On cue, the Belen trainmaster sends Stewart an electronic message telling him that a train of empty flatcars goes on duty at 0810 [8:10 a.m.] on Main Track Seven. After clearly communicating the information back to the trainmaster to ensure that everyone is on the same page, Stewart lines the train for departure with a series of clicks.

“This used to be a lot more arduous a task,” he says. “Now, with the enhanced technology we’re using, lining a switch just takes a few clicks of the mouse.”

Indeed, the technology used to coordinate train movements has advanced dramatically in the last decade. The Train Management Dispatch System (TMDS) is a technology that, among other things, allows the dispatcher to communicate directly with track and signal personnel more easily. TMDS displays real-time rail traffic so, for example, a signal maintainer can view traffic remotely to see traffic patterns and train locations at any given time. When using an application called Smart Mobile Client (SMC), the signal maintainer can electronically request a window of time to the dispatcher. The dispatcher can approve or decline the request, depending on other activities planned on the track that day, and the types of trains that need to traverse the track within the granted timeframe.

Back at the NOC, Stewart must check off each detail of the request to ensure accuracy. As he does, he also communicates with the signal maintainer via radio so each can verify the details of the track work request, or track warrants, when issuing the authority through verbal processes.

Stewart double- and triple-checks the details, including the vehicle identification number of the signal maintainer’s truck, a Hy-Rail vehicle. The Hy-Rail vehicle is equipped with an HLCS (Hy-Rail Limits Compliance) communication device that reports its location to the dispatching system every 15 seconds. The Dispatching System generates an alarm to the train dispatcher if the vehicle exceeds its authority limits at any time during the work window. Stewart repeats the details of the track warrant over the radio one last time; after the signal maintainer does the same, then Stewart officially completes the authority.

It is a detailed process that requires a high level of focus, but Stewart would not have it any other way.

“There was a time when track workers jotted down the stretch of track they wanted

At the Network Operations Center in Fort Worth, 466 dispatchers help move trains over their assigned territories, with 24/7 coverage.

“You may have six different work groups that you’re watching on your territory but you have to focus on one thing at a time.”

– Scot Stewart
Dispatcher, Fort Worth
to work on and the names of those working, and that piece of paper was used to keep the track workers safe,” says Stewart. “Now you have a computer that generates blocking for authorities to keep track workers safe.”

With advancing technology comes greater accountability. Every button pushed, every radio and phone conversation, every piece of paper that flows through the NOC is logged and archived. If an incident occurs, all the related communication can be reviewed to ensure proper procedures are followed.

And there is a lot of communication to track. Along with the continuous back and forth with the trainmaster at Belen, Stewart is in constant contact with welders, signalmen, conductors, the chief dispatcher in the NOC and others. Stewart says that keeping track of all the activities across a territory is a big challenge for dispatchers; however, new technologies and rigorous training with a focus on clear communication prepare them well for the task at hand.

“You may have six different work groups that you’re watching on your territory but you have to focus on one thing at a time. For instance, when you’re handling track authority for maintenance personnel, you have to make sure the task is completed safely before devoting your attention elsewhere,” he says. “Sometimes our co-workers may wonder why it takes a while for the dispatcher to get back to them. It’s because we need to check and double-check, listen and communicate clearly. In order to do our part to ensure the safety of our co-workers, it is essential that we as dispatchers do not sacrifice safety for speed.”

For Stewart, keeping everyone he talks to safe underlies his every action in the NOC. If he has a question or concern, he speaks up to be sure his co-workers are safe.

“I can go home satisfied knowing that I’ve done my part to make BNSF a safer place to work.”

JLT a cooperative effort between dispatchers, BNSF management

Dispatchers and BNSF management have forged a cooperative effort called the Joint Leadership Team, or JLT. The JLT gives member-selected representatives of the American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) and BNSF managers a forum where they can regularly communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual concern. The team consists of approximately 15 cross-functional employees who meet regularly to address work-related issues and find mutually beneficial solutions to improve safety performance, business performance and employee engagement at all dispatcher locations. The JLT began in 2008, and its members continue to address issues in an open and respectful manner today.

“JLT is a terrific venue for regular communication and cooperation to tackle issues that confront all members of the NOC and ROCs – both unionized and those in management – in a combined effort to solve safety, workplace and communications challenges,” says Bill Stuhldreher, superintendent, Corridor Operations, Fort Worth.

ROCs HELP KEEP RAILWAY ROLLING

Complementing the Network Operations Center are regional operations centers (ROCs) strategically positioned to work traffic-dense areas on the system, particularly where close coordination is needed with other railroads or commuter agencies. One is at Spring, Texas, near Houston; the second at Kansas City, Kan.; a third in San Bernardino, Calif., near Los Angeles; and another in New Westminster, B.C.

Typical of the ROCs is San Bernardino. Here dispatchers, chief dispatchers, managers and others control train and crew operations from the Los Angeles Basin through Barstow, Calif., east to Needles, Calif., on the Arizona border, and north to the Bay Area.

Opened in May of 1999 and operating 24/7, this ROC is shared with Union Pacific Railroad. The ROC also works closely with Metrolink dispatchers in nearby Pomona, Calif., responsible for commuter train operations throughout Southern California.

“The ROCs play an integral and supportive role within BNSF by providing field resources that both complement and expand the NOC’s efficiency,” explains BNSF Corridor Superintendent Bob Brendza.

“Locating dispatchers and managers near the geographical areas they control affords them the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with regional personnel,” he says. “This helps team members on both ends of the radio.”

Damaris Ripp is a dispatcher at the San Bernardino ROC, one of four regional operations centers that complement the NOC.
BNSF’s 2012 capital plan – approximately $3.9 billion – is robust, with the goal of maintaining and improving the network, investing for future growth opportunities and driving efficiency.

The largest component of this year’s capital plan is spending $2.1 billion on BNSF’s core network and related assets. BNSF also plans to spend approximately $1.1 billion on locomotive, freight car and other equipment acquisitions. The program also includes about $300 million for federally mandated positive train control (PTC) and $400 million for terminal, line and intermodal expansion and efficiency projects. BNSF’s expansion and efficiency projects will be primarily focused on coal routes to improve velocity and throughput capacity and the new intermodal facility at Kansas City.

Additionally, the investments will support dramatic growth in the Bakken shale region, as well as extend sidings at several locations to allow for longer trains and more efficient train movement, particularly intermodal service to the Southeast.
Since 2000, BNSF has invested more than $32 billion to ensure that the railroad’s infrastructure remains strong, to maintain and grow the value of the franchise’s capacity and to provide the nation’s supply chain with more efficient freight transportation. In line with past commitments, here are some of the major line and terminal projects expected to go in service in 2012:

Central Route
These projects will add capacity – about 10 trains a day – and improve velocity along these chokepoints:
- **Sand Hills Sub** – Construct nearly 10 miles of double track between Anselmo to Linscott, Neb.
- **Ravenna Sub** – From Grand Island, Neb., construct two miles of second main track west and nearly six miles of second main from Grand Island to the east

Northern Transcon
To provide additional capacity, BNSF has two projects under way in the north:
- **Glasgow Sub** – add one siding between Williston and Minot, N.D., to provide additional capacity for crude oil train growth
- **Casper Sub** – terminal project at Greybull, Wyo., will add track capacity for car supply

Southern Transcon
- **Clovis Sub** – Construct a new connection track between the Clovis and El Paso subdivisions at Belen, N.M., to allow El Paso gateway trains to bypass the Belen Terminal

Mid-Con
These projects will improve capacity on the line between Lincoln, Neb., and Willmar, Minn., increasing train speeds through those sidings to 35 mph and adding capacity for up to eight more trains a day:
- **Marshall Sub & Sioux City Sub** – Install remote control power switches and perform siding track upgrades
- **Sioux City Sub** – Construct a new siding with 9,500-foot capacity

To improve BNSF capacity and velocity for trains operating between the Midwest and the Gulf Coast and Mexico:
- **Fort Worth Sub** – At Tower 55 in Fort Worth, where BNSF and Union Pacific tracks intersect, planning is under way to construct a new north-south main track and a redesigned rail signal and interlocker system; to make improvements to bridges; and close and renovate several at-grade road and pedestrian crossings, and an underpass in adjacent neighborhoods. Construction is scheduled to start in the second quarter. The project is scheduled to be placed in service in late 2013 and is partially funded through a federal grant.

Southeast
- **Fort Scott Sub** – one siding project adds train capacity to support train volume growth
- **Avard Sub** – three siding projects will improve capacity and velocity for Southeast transcontinental trains
- **Cherokee Sub** – one double-track project and one siding project will support train volume growth and improve train productivity for both crude oil and intermodal volumes

Facilities & Structures
Among the new or ongoing building and structures projects under way this year:
- **Gavin Yard** (Minot, N.D.) – Install two new yard tracks for inspection and fueling of through trains and build enclosed car repair facility (See page 14)
- **Denver MOW Facility** – Construct a new 25,000-square-foot facility at 38th Street Yard
- **Plattssmouth Bridge** (Creston Sub) – Design and construct new river crossing at Plattssmouth, Neb., over the Missouri River
- **Burlington Bridge** (Ottumwa Sub) – Replace existing through-truss spans with new truss spans
- **Galveston Causeway Bridge** (Galveston Sub) – This Truman-Hobbs Act project replaces the existing bascule span, which has been declared by the U.S. Coast Guard to be a hazard to navigation, with a new vertical lift span.

A span of the new Galveston Bridge.
Today, the magic has been reignited. The nearby Bakken Formation is fueling growth for BNSF, which delivers inbound drilling materials as well as serves six crude-oil terminals – with more expected to come on-line in the next two years.

The oil business, combined with growing agricultural and intermodal traffic through BNSF’s Gavin Yard at Minot, has challenged the Mechanical team to keep the rolling stock available and reliable. To meet current and future needs, the new Minot Car Shop recently went into service, with a shop dedication on Jan. 26.

The first car shop to be built by BNSF in the past 30 years, this 24,500-square-foot facility is on the site of a former repair facility. In addition to the shop, two new mainline yard tracks were built for inspection and direct-from-truck fueling for a total investment of $30.4 million. With the new tracks, an additional six to eight trains can currently be inspected each day. On average about 33 trains operate through Minot daily.

“Minot is a key location for the railroad, and the inspection/fueling tracks and the new car shop will add significant capacity and help the yard handle the growing volumes,” says Mechanical Superintendent Larry Stover, Minneapolis. “It’s a big investment, demonstrating that we are committed to our customers’ current needs and future growth.”

The increasing volumes through Minot have created hiring opportunities as well. Last year, 90 new BNSF employees were hired. This year, at least an additional 60
will be brought on board, based on projected business volumes.

Ground was broken for the shop last May, about the time floodwaters from the nearby Souris River began to rise. Flooding made the construction difficult, according to Matt Heil, assistant general foreman, delaying the opening. “It’s been a long road, but we’re all very excited to see the shop finally open,” says Heil.

The new shop itself houses two 500-foot-long tracks that can hold up to five cars each. All car types, including tank cars and articulated five-pack intermodal cars, can be maintained and repaired at once. Other shop features include a state-of-the art air compressor, fiber optics, radiant heating and a 5-foot-thick concrete floor that essentially creates a jacking pad throughout the facility. Additionally, the offices, locker room and kitchen benefit from natural lighting and environmentally friendly construction. The new facility also gets the employees out of the frigid winter temperatures and high winds that are common much of the year.

Donald Eslinger, a carman since 1974, says that he and his co-workers are happy to not only get to do their work inside now rather than outside, they’re glad to see the workload increasing at Minot. At one time, only one road truck was needed to handle repairs. “There’s a lot of hiring and a lot of activity at Minot now – with more coming. It’s good to see the place so busy.”

Roger Nober, executive vice president, Law, and secretary, received an autographed license plate from Gov. Dalrymple.
2011 Safety Bells
Work teams recognized for safety excellence

Work teams with the best safety performance for 2011 were recognized with BNSF Safety Bell trophies on Jan. 20, when members of BNSF’s senior management traveled to Galesburg, Ill., and Lincoln and Alliance, Neb., to congratulate them firsthand. The teams and the categories, including a new Safety Bell recognizing a division with the best total injury frequency, are:

- **Best Division Frequency, Severity and Total Injury Frequency:** Powder River
- **Best Mechanical Frequency and Severity:** Galesburg Locomotive Shop and Corwith Locomotive Shop (shared)
- **Best Engineering Frequency and Severity:** Nebraska Division-Engineering
- **Best Reportable Equipment Incidents (REI):** California Division (bell to be presented later)

Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support, was among those congratulating bell recipients. He notes that in 2011, BNSF experienced record lows for both reportable severity and frequency. These significant reductions indicate that the right processes are in place. At the same time, nine employees were fatally injured last year, which had a devastating impact on the BNSF community.

“While we recognize these safety achievements, we must also reflect on the losses we suffered in 2011. Nothing will have greater impact than eliminating the loss of life on our railroad. Employees in these winning work groups, through their continued commitment to safety and their outstanding results, show that our safety vision of zero workplace injuries and accidents can be achieved,” says Schulze. “Many of the bell winners cited a strong peer-to-peer safety culture, where employees not only take responsibility for their own safety but that of their co-workers. Approaching others about safety is crucial to building a stronger safety culture.”

The new bell, Best Total Frequency, reflects the total injury rates for all injuries, including non-reportable injuries in addition to those reported to the Federal Railroad Administration. The 2011 honor went to the Powder River Division.

“Our safety vision at BNSF is to eliminate all injuries and accidents,” says Greg Fox, executive vice president, Operations. “We recognize that the best way to achieve an injury-free workplace is to eliminate all risk in our work activities. We want to emphasize the importance of understanding the causes of injuries, in addition to the outcomes, and this new bell is a natural next step in recognizing our progress together toward eliminating risk and exposure.”

The bells on the trophies came from locomotives that were once in service on BNSF or a predecessor railroad. Employees on these work teams also received Safety Bell lapel pins in recognition of their safety achievements.

Here are the teams and how they model safety:

**Powder River Division**

In addition to winning the newest Safety Bell for Best Total Frequency (2.31 for reportable and non-reportable injuries per 200,000 work hours), the Powder River Division also had the lowest frequency ratio (0.84 for reportable injuries per 200,000 work hours) as well as the lowest severity ratio (32.53), reflecting lost and restricted days due to reportable injury.

Division leaders point to an emphasis on partnership in this three-fold achievement. According to General Manager Steve Nettleton, they put the...
right focus on safety by having all the major functions – Transportation, Mechanical and Engineering – come together for a common cause and in a coordinated way. “The collaboration on this division is second to none. We work together to identify the issues that we need to address, then we put a process in place to achieve common goals and initiatives,” he says.

That process involves a cross-functional team made up of management and scheduled employees. Each team analyzes the risks associated with their assigned goal, then develops a program with processes and activities for their respective areas, followed by communication to their groups. “It’s important that every employee hears a consistent message so that they understand the goal – and the risks and their exposure,” says Nettleton.

Focus areas last year included reducing authority violations, vehicle incidents and speeding. All of these are issues that each work group could affect – and did. By the end of the year, the division had reduced authority violations by 40 percent from 2010 – well beyond the 25-percent goal. Vehicle incidents were down 50 percent and speeding incidents down 29 percent.

The real key, according to General Director Line Maintenance Craig Sloggett, is the commitment from everyone across the division, from the bottom up. “It’s been transformative, and our commitment to safety is stronger now than it’s ever been,” he says. “We also watch out for one another, and everyone here – employees and supervisors at all levels – will speak up if they see someone putting themselves at risk.”

**Nebraska Division-Engineering**

The Engineering employees – Track, Signal and Structures – on the Nebraska Division demonstrate a long-established commitment to a culture of safety. Under this, each understands that his or her personal safety is their top responsibility, with managers being safety leaders, engaging employees to “own” their safety plans.

“Safety is all about leadership,” says General Director Line Maintenance Tim Knapp. “From the beginning, we challenge each leader to be a better safety leader by engaging employees in creating and executing the plan.”

Last year, they succeeded, achieving both Best Engineering Frequency (0.32 per 200,000 hours worked) and Best Engineering Severity (0.54).

To keep the focus on the goal of zero incidents, the team has monthly meetings, training, team testing and auditing of vehicles and buildings. The team also attributes its achievements to “boots on the ground” and “no drive-by” efforts, where local leaders are committed to spending more time talking with employees, face to face. “When we see employees out working, we make it a point to stop and engage them, even if only for a few minutes,” says Knapp. “And employees themselves care about each other and watch their backs.”

Even when conditions are challenging, such as the floods last summer that severely affected the Nebraska Division, everyone has a chance to talk and provide input. “If anyone has a concern, we address those to ensure that we are all working safely, all the time,” says Knapp.

**Galesburg and Corwith Locomotive Shops**

Nothing says safety better than 0.0 when it comes to injuries – and that’s what both the Galesburg and Corwith locomotive shops achieved for Best Mechanical Frequency and Severity. The shops will share the bell this year.

At the Galesburg, Ill., facility, staying safe is a basic requirement in every task; for 11 of the past 16 years, the facility has been injury-free. The focus begins at the beginning of each year, as the shop establishes its safety goals and strategies. Last year, three strategies were aimed at keeping everyone injury-free:

1. 100% rules compliance 100% of the time.
2. Effective, quality supervisor-employee safety contacts and interaction.
3. Brother’s keeper and peer-to-peer safety interaction and support.

According to David Andersen, general foreman, employees at all levels are engaged in the development of the Safety Action Plan, and the plan is executed using the Leadership Model. “As leaders, it’s our job to prevent unsafe behavior before it occurs. Everyone ‘walks the talk’ of the Leadership Model and understands that’s how we do business at BNSF – especially the communication part.”

Andersen says the shop’s success is also due to the dedication and professionalism of the employees. “The credit is theirs, and I consider it an honor to be a member of this team.”

The 100 Mechanical employees assigned between the Corwith and Clyde locomotive facilities near Chicago take great pride in their safety record; Corwith has been injury-free for four years and Clyde has gone nearly five years without an injury.
Focus on Safety

Last year, both facilities set these injury goals: zero frequency and zero severity. “We achieve the goals by continuing to emphasize peer-to-peer communication as well as supervisor-to-employee interaction,” explains Jack Frank, general foreman. This engagement ensures that people are looking out for one another and taking time to correct co-workers if they’re not making safe decisions.

In addition to peers and supervisors being engaged, the employees commit to staying focused, says Frank. “Safety is about personal awareness and keeping your head in the game.”

California Division

The California Division received the 2011 Best Railway Equipment Incidence (REI) bell, meaning that the team of more than 2,300 employees had the lowest, or best overall, derailment performance across all departments and all train types.

Last year the division set a goal to reduce REIs by 15 percent over 2010. This goal was surpassed with the division reducing REIs by 18 percent, thanks largely to having the lowest derailment rate for yard activities of any division, including those caused by human factors, mechanical or engineering factors. The division was also among the best in reducing derailments of merchandise trains and intermodal trains and had the second-lowest REI-related costs of all derailments.

According to General Manager Mark Kirschinger, the division’s REI-reduction performance reflects a concerted relationship-building effort. “We have been focused on establishing and maintaining – and at times rebuilding – relationships with our crews,” says Kirschinger. “Dignity, respect, honesty and accountability are the cornerstones of our relationships. This foundation has allowed us to build upon the culture of commitment BNSF is continually developing.”

That commitment, coupled with a goal of identifying and eliminating risk before an incident can occur, is how the division was able to drive down REI, he says, noting: “Essentially the REI reduction occurred as a natural consequence of our relationships and the personal responsibility of our crews. If they see a potential risk, they speak up to their co-workers.”

When it comes to engaging employees, supervisors support peer-based programs that focus on behavior-specific changes. Employees look out for each other, double-check and ask questions, and then re-brief if necessary.

Kirschinger also credits the strong derailment reduction to other teams that support the division – including Maintenance of Way, the Regional Operations Center in San Bernardino, Calif., and the Mechanical team, which ensures the dependability of rolling stock. “Wayside detectors installed at key locations in California also allow us to identify issues before they become problems,” he notes.

Kansas Division team ‘rules’

Congratulations to the six-member team from the Kansas Division that brought home Rules Scholars gold at the end of the Rules Scholar competition on Jan. 25.

Second place went to the Gulf Division, while third place went to the Twin Cities Division. All three divisions were in the top three in the same competition in 2011.

The competition, in its 12th year, gives teams of first-line supervisors from across the system a chance to test their knowledge of safety and operating rules. The cross-functional teams include supervisors from Transportation, Engineering, Mechanical and Dispatching.

“Knowledge and 100-percent compliance to our operating rules are vitally important to employee safety,” says Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support. “Supervisors understand and take seriously their role in ensuring employee safety. The knowledge they utilize and share on a daily basis can help to reduce injuries and save lives.”

Rules Scholars winners from the Kansas Division are pictured with BNSF leaders following the competition. Front row, left to right, are: Jeremiah Thomas, Gary Cooper, Chrystal Tonkin, Chris Kleman, James Hetherington and Jack Renick. Back row, left to right, are: Greg Lawler, general manager, Kansas Division; Chris Roberts, vice president, Mechanical; Sam Sexhus, vice president, Engineering; Greg Fox, executive vice president, Operations; Dave Freeman, vice president, Transportation; Tom Hund, executive vice president and chief financial officer; and Carl Ice, president and chief operating officer.
Winners of 2012 Safety Drawing Contest named

Dakota Sheperd, 17, daughter of David Sheperd, assistant director, Maintenance Schedules, in Fort Worth, was the grand prize winner for the 2012 Safety Drawing Contest. Her endearing pencil sketch of a family circle clinched the top prize.

Sponsored by Labor Relations and Safety, the contest focused on the themes of “Safety for Us” and “Bee Safe for Me.” The contest was open to children, grandchildren or other dependents of BNSF employees and retirees.

Continued on page 20
In addition, two entries were awarded Honorable Mention/Judges’ Award for their creativity. Those awards went to Kacie Boniface, 12, daughter of Dennis Boniface, locomotive engineer, Lafayette, La., and August VanCleave, 13, grandson of Kevin Piper, locomotive engineer, Lincoln, Neb.

Each age-group winner and Honorable Mention/Judges’ Award recipient received a prize.

There were 231 entries submitted for this year’s contest, which promoted that working injury-free benefits employees’ families as well as employees themselves.

“Every day, we focus on safe production as we work toward our vision of creating a workplace with zero incidents or injuries,” says Mark Schulze, vice president, Safety, Training and Operations Support.

**Ages 3 and younger:** Amber Neill, 3, daughter of R.A. Neill, locomotive engineer, Winslow, Ariz.

**Ages 4-6:** Madison Gresham, 6, daughter of Kevin Gresham, road foreman of engines, Wichita, Kan.

**Ages 7-9:** Elizabeth Tidball, 9, daughter of Lowell W. Tidball, locomotive engineer, Edgemont, S.D.

**Ages 10-12:** Chloe Thomas, 12, daughter of Charles Thomas, manager, Environmental Remediation, Fort Worth.
“Nothing is more important than returning home safely at the end of the workday to our families and loved ones, and the entries did a great job of illustrating some of the reasons why it’s so essential for us to eliminate at-risk behaviors and to speak up anytime we see a co-worker putting himself or herself at risk.”

**Ages 13-15:** Colton Sheperd, 15, son of David Sheperd, assistant director, Maintenance Schedules, Fort Worth

**Ages 16-18:** Hannah Goble, 17, daughter of Jim Goble, manager, Marketing, Fort Worth

**Honorable Mention/Judges’ Award:** Kacie Boniface, 12, daughter of Dennis Boniface, locomotive engineer, Lafayette, La.

**Honorable Mention/Judges’ Award:** August VanCleave, 13, grandson of Kevin Piper, locomotive engineer, Lincoln, Neb.
This is the year you’ve resolved to take charge of your health, beginning with making physical exams an annual tradition.

At this exam, besides getting the basics – height, weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, etc. – your health care provider may also prescribe certain screenings. With these tests or procedures, your doctor is trying to find serious diseases early when they are most treatable.

Which screenings you need – and when – depends on a variety of factors, including age, gender, health, family history and choices you make that can affect your health. Your health care provider will be able to guide you on the screenings you need, but you can also be informed before your visit so you know what to ask and expect. A number of online resources can help (see box at bottom of opposite page). Be aware that there are a few screenings that the medical community is re-evaluating for ideal frequency – and others that you should consider talking about with your provider. Here’s a short list of some that are “on the radar, overlooked or misunderstood.”

ON THE RADAR

Prostate cancer screening: Routine screenings are generally recommended for men age 40 and older who have a defined risk of prostate cancer, such as African-Americans and anyone with a first-degree relative with prostate cancer. But recent studies raise questions about the need for routine prostate cancer screening for men age 50 and over who are not considered higher risk. You should talk with your doctor and ask for more information. Like any test, the more informed you are the better.

Cervical cancer screening: According to guidelines issued by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, women should have their first cervical cancer screening at age 21 and can be rescreened less frequently than previously recommended. Most women younger than age 30 should have a Pap test every two years. After three normal Pap test results in a row, a woman age 30 or older may have Pap tests every three years.
Mammograms: A recommendation from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force ignited controversy in 2009 by stating that mammograms are not routinely needed for women in their 40s and should be reduced from annually to every two years for women between ages 50 and 74. Studies on appropriate frequency continue while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention looks for a clear-cut answer to what screening frequency is best. How often you get mammograms should be an individual decision based on a discussion with your doctor of all the pros and cons. Of course, if you have had breast cancer or other breast problems, or have a family history of breast cancer, you might need to start getting mammograms before age 40 – or you might need to get them more often.

THE MISUNDERSTOOD

Colonoscopy: This is the procedure used to see inside the colon and rectum to detect inflamed tissue, ulcers and abnormal growths, including early signs of colorectal cancer. While the idea of this procedure may be uncomfortable, the patient does receive a sedative and the procedure is not as uncomfortable as many think. With the sedative you’re given, you’ll not likely remember the procedure. Routine colonoscopies should begin at age 50 for most people – earlier if there is a family history of colorectal cancer.

* Body mass index (BMI) is a ratio of your weight to height. To find your BMI, use the online calculator: www.nhbisupport.com/bmi.

THE OVERLOOKED

Sleep apnea: An estimated 18 million Americans are affected by sleep apnea, most commonly middle-aged men who are overweight. People with sleep apnea stop breathing briefly, dozens and sometimes hundreds of times, while sleeping. Signs of sleep apnea include snoring and excessive sleepiness while awake. If you exhibit these signs or fall into the high risk group (body mass index of 35 or greater*) your doctor can refer you to a sleep specialist who can do tests to establish the diagnosis or rule out sleep apnea.

Depression: This is a common but serious illness, which is why talking about emotional health is so important. If you have constant feelings of sadness or hopelessness – feelings that interfere with daily life and cause pain for both you and those who care about you – don’t ignore them. Talk to your doctor, who can determine if medications or a medical condition may be causing the depression. If not, the next step is a psychological evaluation. Like many illnesses, the earlier treatment begins the more effective it is.

Checklist for the checkup

To make the most of your next checkup, be informed. Know what screenings you may need. A good resource is http://www.ahrq.gov. Also, be ready to provide as much information to your health care provider as possible.

“The talking part of the exam – the time you ask your doctor about your health and what kinds of tests you need – is just as important as the exam itself,” says Dr. Michael Jarrard, BNSF medical officer.

Consider your family history before going to the doctor’s office, he advises. This includes any health conditions you’ve had as well as those of your close relatives. Family history is important because it identifies risk factors such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer.

“Talk to your parents about their conditions, or those of their parents. Talk to your siblings, and write the information down or diagram it on a family tree,” Jarrard says, and recommends one available on the BNSF intranet at http://bnsfweb.bnsf.com/departments/hr/benefits/pdf/preventive-care-manual.pdf. “People tend to forget, even about their own personal health history. Really give this some thought and do the work ahead of time instead of quickly completing a form in the doctor’s office,” he says.

Fill out paperwork fully and honestly. Many physicians can email forms that you can print at home or complete online. This will give you time to thoroughly and honestly provide information that the doctor needs. If you can’t have the paperwork ahead of time, don’t rush through and just check boxes, Jarrard says. And be honest, “If there was ever a time, this is the person you need to be totally honest with,” he adds.

Write down a list of issues and questions to take with you. This is especially true if your time with the doctor is limited. Be sure to know what screenings or tests your doctor may perform. Consider asking “What screenings do I really need?” and “When will I get the results, and what will they tell me?”

Ask about coverage. Many doctors will recommend a slew of tests, some of which are not covered by insurance as preventive services. Before or during your visit to the doctor’s office, ask if the test is covered as part of the preventive exam. If not, ask if it’s really necessary. You may have to pay for these extra services.

Will my plan cover it?

Exempt employees: Look for the “Easy” button on the Benefits homepage. All A and B rated tests are covered at 100 percent by BNSF plans.

Scheduled employees: Call your medical plan provider at the number on the back of your insurance card to determine what your costs will be under your plan.

For more information about health screenings and when to get them, visit http://www.ahrq.gov or http://bnsfweb.bnsf.com/departments/hr/wellness/Resources/self_care.html
It was the year U.S. troops invaded Cambodia, the Beatles broke up and the Kansas City Chiefs last won a Super Bowl. It was a year that also witnessed a major rail consolidation when on March 2, 1970, Northern Pacific Railway (NP) merged with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, the Great Northern Railway, and the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway to form Burlington Northern Railroad.

That was a day that Dolly Hudak, general clerk, Northtown (Minneapolis), remembers well. She was of an impressionable age – having begun her career with NP less than a year before at the age of 17.

“Quite a few Great Northern employees integrated with our NP office,” she remembers. “There was a lot of bickering back and forth at first. Everyone wanted to do things their way. We all got past it and ended up friends in the end.”

Even though she was young, Hudak was wise in the ways of railroading. Her grandfather worked for the Soo Line Railroad and her father was a yardmaster for NP. But they were not too keen on Dolly following in their footsteps.

“My father didn’t want me working here,” she says. “I’m not sure if it was because of all the men working here or what.”

But Hudak didn’t let her father’s reservations deter her.

“My dad’s best friend, who worked for NP as a switchman, drove me down to the depot to apply without telling my dad,” she recalls.

Hudak started her career on the railroad shortly thereafter and has spent all 43 years at Northtown. In that time, she has tried her hand at crew hauling, material hauling, refueling company automobiles, payroll and clerking for the terminal. For the past six years, she has worked as an administrative assistant in Engineering. The opportunity to transition between jobs within the railroad is one reason she has stayed her entire career.

“Crew hauling was a lot of fun because you get to meet all of the different train crews. I’m a people person, so I enjoyed the one-on-one communication,” she says. “But I think my favorite [job] would have to be when I was working in the freight office handling demurrage charges. That’s where I had the best time.”

Over the years, Hudak has experienced changing technology firsthand.

“Used to, we had to take all of the information about a rail car – the shipper, the type of car, what was in it, the weight, where it was going, who it was consigned to – and key-punch all of that data onto individual IBM cards. Then we would print off a train list and bring it to the conductor with the cards. A rack clerk would then arrange the cards into different cubbyholes on the rack near where switchmen switched out cars in the yard. One time I tripped and dropped 150 cards. There was no way to line them up but to go out in the yard and walk the entire train. It was quite a process compared with now, when everything is done electronically.”

Hudak, who retired in January, is one of the last clerks of NP lineage to work for BNSF. (Mary Stock, another clerk who started her career with the NP in 1966, is still working.) Just because Hudak is retiring does not mean she will stop working. She loves animals and will continue to work with the local humane society, where she has volunteered for nearly 30 years.

“All in all, it’s been a great job,” Hudak reminisces. “I’m going to miss the railroad – and especially the people.”
Friends of BNSF membership approaches 30,000

More than 28,000 people have joined Friends of BNSF, including more than 2,000 BNSF employees and 2,000 retirees, since the website launched last September, far exceeding BNSF’s goal of reaching 10,000 members by the end of 2011.

Friends of BNSF is a special members-only website for rail advocates and BNSF enthusiasts. The site offers registered members access to historic railroad photos and videos, free downloads and company updates. Much of the content on the site hasn’t been published anywhere else.

Vice President John Ambler says the Corporate Relations Department is exploring further use of social media at BNSF. “Similar to other types of social media, the Friends website is a way for us to build an online community that is informed about and engaged in our company and our industry. It offers interactive features including comments and user ratings, and we’re planning to add more of these,” he says. The company also has a presence on Twitter and Linked In, and recently launched a Friends of BNSF page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FriendsofBNSF.

Since the launch of Friends of BNSF, many positive comments have been received from members, including:

Absolutely one of the best PR sites in American Industry, anywhere! Your “Friends of BNSF” webpage and company magazine are so rich in information, positive spirit and historical perspective, they brought a lifetime of memories, bold dreams and American pride full circle for me in just a few hours of reading. Truly inspired work!
– Mike from Springfield, Va.

WOW, very glad I discovered and joined this site, it really is terrific. I especially enjoy the historical archives as well as all the contemporary news about BNSF. Thanks for creating a really wonderful railroad site.
– George from Danville, Ill.

The People’s Kind of Railroad: ATSF exhibit on display at Topeka

An exhibit on the history of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (ATSF) is currently being held at the Great Overland Station Museum in Topeka, Kan. The exhibition – The People’s Kind of Railroad – spans the Santa Fe’s entire 152-year history, from its creation in 1859 to its operation today as a part of BNSF Railway.

On display at the exhibit are original Santa Fe documents and artifacts such as early maps, stocks and bonds, travel brochures, artwork, items bearing the Santa Fe logo, advertising posters, photographs and more. Even the original charter of the Santa Fe Railway following its reorganization in 1896 is available for viewing.

The exhibit was curated by noted railroad historian Peter Hansen and is organized into three modules. “The Santa Fe and Topeka” explores the relationship between the railroad and the town in which it was founded. “The Santa Fe and Kansas” examines the impact of the railroad on the state’s population and agricultural growth.

Finally, “The Santa Fe and the Nation” showcases the impact the Santa Fe has had on the nation through its legendary Super Chief passenger service, military service during World War II and more.

The People’s Kind of Railroad will run through March 2012.
**BNSF employee, son assist community after tornado**

Bryan Schaffer took the usual precautions most people take when threatened by severe weather.

Schaffer, senior special agent, BNSF Resource Protection, also worked with local BNSF leaders from Birmingham, Ala., to Amory, Miss., to warn employees about severe weather and to help ensure their safety.

“About 4 a.m. Jan. 23, a storm really hit with heavy rain and lightning,” Schaffer recalls. “A few minutes later, I heard a sound that I first thought was a truck coming up the road. When the power went out, I realized it was a tornado.”

Schaffer’s family — including his wife, two children and BNSF K-9, Faust — huddled in the hallway.

Once the tornado passed, Schaffer and his 14-year-old son, James, immediately went outside to check for damage, then went back into the house, where Schaffer turned on his sheriff’s radio.

“Call after call reported people trapped in or under their homes, injured or missing,” he says.

He and his son knew they had to help, so they made their way through storm debris and found a lone deputy blocking a busy highway intersection. The two took over for him and worked that intersection for just over 12 hours.

The Schaffers were relieved just after sunset by a neighboring county’s deputies.

“I could not have had a better partner working beside me,” Schaffer says. “James never complained, worked traffic like a pro and did everything I or any other officer asked him to do.”

**Employee stays calm under pressure**

Brent Gatton, track inspector, credits on-the-job safety training for his ability to remain calm and think under pressure in an emergency.

After finishing his inspections for the day, he was driving near Keokuk, Iowa, toward his office. As he rounded a corner, a man flagged him down. A woman was pinned beneath her vehicle and her young daughter was inside.

Gatton retrieved a track jack from his vehicle, but the jack was too tall. He dug a hole to accommodate the clearance. His plan worked, and the vehicle’s pressure was taken off the woman so she could be freed.

While they waited for emergency responders, Gatton offered the woman water and assured her.

“Thoughts raced through my head, but they all came together and I knew what I had to do,” Gatton recalls.

**Marching for a cure**

This spring, Elizabeth Kautz, switch foreman, Vancouver, Wa., will take part in her third Seattle Susan G. Komen 3-Day for the Cure in support of her mother, Norma Ruzsa, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009.

“She’s an incredible lady with tremendous strength,” she says. “I’m happy she’s back to her normal routine.”

Each participant must raise $2,300 for the Walk for the Cure. Kautz says a lot of work goes into fundraising, and she must prepare herself mentally and physically for the event.

Last year, Kautz was joined by her husband, Locomotive Engineer Daryl Kautz.

**Taking the Polar Plunge**

A new tradition started last year for Northtown (Minneapolis) employees: jumping into a frigid lake to raise funds for the Minnesota Special Olympics Team.

The second annual Polar Plunge will take place March 3 in Minneapolis.

“It costs a lot of money for individuals to participate in the Special Olympics,” says Doug Wagner, Northtown, Diesel Shop superintendent, who plans to participate in the plunge.

“There are jerseys and equipment they have to buy, and many of them have to pay for their own travel.”

Money raised by each BNSF participant is combined to show Northtown’s total contribution. Additionally, the BNSF Railway Foundation has donated $5,000 to the team. Visit www.plungemn.org for more information.
Next year may seem a long way off, but now is a good time to grab your camera and start taking photos for the 2013 calendar contest. We’re always looking for good seasonal shots, and now is the perfect time to snap a scenic snow shot that might make it into next year’s calendar. And with spring just around the corner, get ready to capture some nice green foliage!

In addition to considering the season, you should also remember the following:

- Photos must include a BNSF train; only the newest paint scheme will be accepted.
- Horizontal pictures work best for the calendar’s format.
- Using a digital camera that captures at least eight megapixels is recommended. Pictures should be in focus.

- Employees can submit up to three photos for consideration. Each photo should be named and have its own entry form.
- Each entry should include both a digital photo on a disk or thumb drive and a color printout of the image.
- Pictures may include BNSF employees working on the railroad. Photos depicting BNSF’s broad geographic coverage and the various commodities we handle are also appreciated.

Be watching for BNSF News articles with full details about the contest. Information, including the entry form, can also be found on the Communications page of the BNSF portal or at http://www.bnsf.com/assets2008/pdfs/2013_photo_contest_entry_form.pdf.

The deadline for submissions is July 2, 2012.

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**BNSF College Scholarship Program applications due April 2**

College-bound high school seniors who want to apply to the BNSF Railway Foundation Scholarship Program need to complete and submit applications no later than April 2, 2012.

The Foundation will award up to 40 scholarships of at least $2,500 each for the 2012-2013 college year, with up to 10 available through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation at $5,000 each.

Program details and the online application can be accessed by going directly to the International Scholarship and Tuition Services (ISTS) link: https://aim.applyists.net/BNSF.

**Note:** Since the Foundation is not able to keep track of students’ progress or the completeness of an application, applicants should follow up with ISTS by sending an e-mail to: contactus@applyists.com.
BNSF Wellness

Your health matters

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