



National Association of Retired & Veteran Railway Employees, Inc.

NARVRE National Office

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NARVRE NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT —

From time to time we get inquiries on the effects on coal and what real affect it has on the railroad industry in general. First there is the real world and than there is the political debate that goes on behind the scenes. You will see the debate in Congress on a bill authored by Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-KY and Senator Joe Manchin, D-WVA.

HR 3826. What this is all about is a fight between coal producing states and the Obama Administration over coal emissions by power plants. The railroads and rail labor have taken no position on HR 3826 because they have no “dog in the fight.”

Is there concern over railroad retirement and the nation’s railroad’s hauling of coal. We are always concerned about any long-range effects on the railroad retirement system whether it is coal or anything

else. Railroads not only haul coal but Bakken oil, lumber, autos, grain products, perishables and trailer train products.

What this is all about is a debate over the Obama climate change policy and nothing more. Just recently the water was contaminated in the several counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Environmental Protection Agency just announced that Alpha Natural Resources (Alpha) one of the nation’s largest coal companies and 66 subsidiaries have agreed to spend \$200 million to install and operate wastewater treatment systems and to implement comprehensive system wide upgrades to reduce discharges of pollution from coal mines in Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Overall, the settlement covers approximately 79 active mines and 25 processing plants in these five states. This settlement resulted from lawsuits against Alpha and its predecessor company Massey Energy. There was over \$27 Million is fines applied as well.

The bottom line is this: railroads will continue to haul coal and its employees will continue to pay into railroad retirement. The fight is political and we are a third party.

— Tom Dwyer,
National President

From the National Legislative Director —

Rail labor organizations have been working Capitol Hill urging members of Congress to support H.R. 3040, The Safe Freight Act. This legislation will require that freight trains and light engines used in connection with the movement of freight must have a two-man crew with one locomotive engineer and one conductor. HR 3040 was introduced after the July 2013 deadly crude-oil train derailment in Lac-Megantic, Quebec, on the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway, Ltd, where 47 people died. That train accident had one crew member, working alone, and gave rise to this legislation, introduced by Representatives Michael Michaud and Chellie Pingree, both of Maine. A joint letter to Congress sent by BLET and Smart-TD noted that two-person crews are the norm in both the U.S. and Canada, and that the many tasks that must be performed by the crew of a freight train cannot be accomplished alone. The letter further points out that current Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations and railroad operating rules, dictate that a single person crew cannot make a Class 1

Convention News

The 2014 NARVRE Convention is rapidly approaching and it promises to be a very memorable and exciting event. It is being held at Embassy Suites in Old Sacramento May 18-20, 2014.

The convention will open on Sunday, May 18th, at 2:00 PM with a general meeting for all attendees. That evening is a get acquainted party hosted by the Moody Law Firm. Meetings on Monday start at 9:00 AM and our luncheon will follow at noon. The speaker will be Mr. Will Moody. The drawing for the “Early Bird” Special will be held at this luncheon. Afternoon meetings will commence at 1:00 PM and will include a memorial service for all our departed members from the previous two years. After the afternoon sessions end, we will celebrate “ALL ABOARD”. A vintage excursion train will come to the hotel and pick us all up. Make sure you have your identification badge and your “special ticket” to board the train...ride complements of Unit 65. After a trip up and down the river (approx.. 45min) the train will return us to the California Railroad Museum where we will enjoy self-guided tours, docents available, cocktails and

The time is here again as our 2014 Convention draws near. I seek your support of my candidacy for reelection as your National President. One can only do their best and be hopeful that the job was well done. I seek your vote at the convention this May. Thank you.
— Tom Dwyer

From the National Vice President —

Have you had enough of this cold weather, Winter getting you down? They say this is a record breaking Winter and you know you've got it bad when Alaska is warmer than we are in Northern Iowa. I personally don't subscribe to global warming nor global cooling, I really think this world goes through

changes, continuously, year after year, much like we, our bodies, do. Regardless, I have put more hours behind my snow blower this year than many years combined in the past. Enough already!

We need help from Area 7, North Western United States. We have been without an Area Director since the end of August 2013 and there is a great need to fill this position. If you have the desire and ambition to

From the National Secretary-Treasurer

Your National Office is busy preparing for the Convention in May. All Delegate and Alternates if you have not contacted the National Office with your intentions to attend the Convention, please do so as soon as possible. Your name will not be in the workbook as a delegate if you have not contacted the National Office by now. If you are in need of information about reservations or convention registration please contact our website <narvre.info> or Jackie Kuehl at 916-624-3614 or the National Office at 1-800-552-2588.

Attention all Sec/Treas: please

work to get the IRS 990-N report completed soon and send National a copy of the IRS acceptance form. Just forward that e-mail. Thanks in advance.

This week I will be sending out packets to all units that have delegates with printouts of all the Bylaw Amendments and Policy changes and Resolutions that have been sent in to be considered and voted on by our delegates and officers at the Convention. The delegates will also receive their personal credentials to present at the registration table when arriving at the convention.

— **Joyce A. Burton**
National Sec/Treas

Convention National Officer Elections will be held this year. The past two years have gone by fast since 2012. I will be running again for your National Sec/Treasurer, and would appreciate your support for 2015-2016.

— **Respectfully, Joyce A. Burton**

Brothers and Sisters, I am Anthony (Tony) Padilla your NARVRE Area 5 Director from Unit 163 in San Antonio, Texas. I hereby very respectfully announce to you that I will be seeking the position of National Vice President at the upcoming National NARVRE Convention in May. This is the position now held by VP Lester Newton who has done an exemplary and commendable job during his term of office. After his announcement I called him to express to him that I gave it some thought and that I would take the challenge to be a candidate for VP. Having worked on the road with him, he gave me his blessing and support. I then made my announcement to President Tom Dwyer. With that in mind, I seek the vote of every Delegate to the Convention and thank you in advance for your support and ask for your vote. I encourage you to take a look at my bio on the NARVRE Website, Area 5 Director.

(<http://www.narvre.info/area-5-director.html>)

Since the last Convention in 2012, I have organized a Unit in Houston, El Paso and Laredo. I also visited many Units and Local Railroad meetings in my Area with great success during a time when your Railroad Retirement Pension was under siege by the U.S. Congress who were threatening to put the Railroad Retirement Pension under the Social Security Administration. In the end our membership, as done in the past, stopped the false information Congress was portending. It took a lot of work to educate and lobby the Congress by the NARVRE Leadership and members to set them straight regarding the facts. With that in mind I seek your vote at the upcoming National Convention in May.

— **Respectfully, Anthony (Tony) Padilla**

promote NARVRE and our purpose, please give me a call. My contact information is on the back of this Newsletter.

There is no frontal attack on our Railroad Retirement at this time, that I'm aware of, but this is not the time to take a nap, take our eyes off the goal nor pick a fight amongst ourselves. Staying dedicated to the purpose of NARVRE, always vigilant for the next encroachment, that's our plan.

Membership is or was my assignment. Team NARVRE, that's all of us, have tried very hard, some more than others. We spent a lot of time away from our Loved ones as well as a lot of money from our budget and as the smoke clears it looks like we don't have a lot to show for our effort. The good news is that some of our Units have grown in their effort and as for our informational meetings, most ended up with just an increase in our 801's. With Joy and Sadness, it is very disheartening when completing a informational meeting and signing up new members, enough for a Unit, but no-one will step up and be a leader or Officer. We got new members but have little chance of growth. We find this same situation in our established Units. The same Officers year after year and as time goes by, they get tired and burned out. Apathy sets in. DON'T LET APATHY SET-IN! Every NARVRE member needs to re- evaluate or rethink their commitment. Our job is to work together as a Team, not to sit and do nothing or let others do all the work. There is NOT one Officers position that is too difficult.

After talking with my Wife, Sharon, I have decided that I will not run for re-election as NVP for NARVRE. This has been a real eye-opening and learning experience for me and it's time for someone who has more energy, one who has a different twist, or maybe a different approach. Someone with a sharper Ax, to cut down a couple of trees so we can see the Forest clearer. Being the person who likes to share, here it is, take your turn! I leave you with a parting thought: There is no I in NARVRE. Join the Team or get out of the way.

— **Lester Newton**
NVP-NARVRE

(National Legislative Director from page 1)

air brake test, one person cannot act as a first responder when a collision at a road crossing occurs, and one person cannot inspect their own train when it breaks in two or derails, including when there is the possible release of hazardous materials. Federal Railroad Administrator Joe Szabo has made it clear that the FRA believes that federal regulation needs to be implemented on two-man crews. FRA's website has stated that the Rail Safety Advisory Comm (RSAC) is expected to make recommendations on train crew size and hazardous materials. As information, the aforementioned joint letter notes that the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the American Short Line and Regional RR Association

(ASLRRA) have sent memos to Congress opposing this legislation. In lieu of the obvious safety issues relative to a one-man train crew, as well as rail workers in our operating crafts paying into our retirement system, NARVRE is inclined to urge our membership to contact their members in Congress, and request that they support this important legislation, H.R. 3040. Also, please ask your Representatives to consider becoming a co-sponsor of "The Safe Freight Act", a bipartisan bill that will ensure that trains are operated safely everywhere in America. This bill will ensure that each train is operated by a crew of at least two people, to include a certified engineer and a certified conductor.

*****NARVRE Toll-Free #'s
To Congress -- 1-877-668-3864
& 1-877-668-3866 *****

(Convention News from page 1)

dinner, all hosted by the Moody Law Firm. The museum will be closed to everyone but our convention attendees.

The convention's final meetings will start Tuesday morning at 9:00 AM. During this session, the site for the 2016 convention will be selected. After adjournment, you may have lunch at Embassy Suites or at one of the many restaurants in Old Sacramento. The Will Moody sponsored cocktail party will start at 5:30 PM with our banquet to follow. Walter Barrows, RRB, will be our guest speaker for the banquet. Entertainment is to follow. Also, drawing for the train afghan and our "Grand Prize" drawing will be held.

During the convention, raffle tickets may be purchased for several raffle items which will be on display Sunday and Monday. Drawing for these items will be conducted Tuesday afternoon by our raffle committee and a list of the winners will be on each banquet table and may be claimed that evening.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION--If you have not yet registered at Embassy Suites, do so as soon as possible. Call Embassy Suites at 1-800-498-5237 and ask for the NARVRE discount rate. Make sure and use the NAV code to get our room discount. Remember all rooms are suites.

If you have not registered for the convention, please do by April 10th. Call

Deanna Gesdahl at 1-916-760-7474 or Jackie Kuehl 1-916-624-3614 for more information. We will be happy to send you a registration form if you do not have one. You may also order shirts and hats with the NARVRE logo on them. Even if you do not attend the convention, you may still purchase hats and shirts. Please call the above numbers for more information.

If you would like to purchase an ad for our souvenir program, please call

Deanna Janey at 1-916-684-9050 for more details. Ads must be in by April 15th.

VERY IMPORTANT REMINDER... If you register at Embassy Suites and for the convention, all schedule activities and meals are included except Tuesday lunch. This also includes free shuttle to and from AMTRAK and the Sacramento Airport (SMF). To order free shuttle service, please call 1-800-326-5000 when you arrive at the depot or the airport.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at your convenience...916-624-3614.

I would you thank everyone for their help and participation in our convention. I know it will be a great time for all!

Jackie Kuehl
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The White House has released it's FY2015 budget, which calls for increases in transit and rail programs by over 70 percent and establishes a new four-year \$10 Billion program to improve the nation's freight rail network. The full package calls for doubling the funding for investments programs (TIGER grants) and addresses an underfunded and broken infrastructure by bringing existing transportation systems to a state of good repair. It improves federal funding to replenish the Highway Trust Fund which is going broke. It addresses the obvious expiration date of October 1, when the current transportation policy (MAP-21) will expire, and envisions funding for a National High Performance Rail System to build on and improve a rail system for the future. NARVRE supports this overall vision that includes a 21st Century rail passenger service, but we've been here before, only to see it ignored or dismissed for to many years. The authorizing authority for Amtrak (PRIIA) has expired, and needs to be addressed, and this proposal from the President is a good place to start, but we realize that this is but a wish list full of proposals that will be hard to sell in today's Congress. We're overjoyed that Rep. Mica was forced out of the chairmanship on the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and hopeful that Chrm. Shuster will lead with all transportation venues in mind, to include rail passenger service. We are also aware of other potential problems in the House Subcommittee on Railroads, as Chrm. Jeff Denham (R-CA) has stated that he prefers that Amtrak legislation should stand on it's own, rather than be tied to or merged with a larger surface transportation measure. We cannot believe that this statement has the future of Amtrak in mind, so we will remain focused on the hearings he has scheduled in his committee. All of these transportation issues, to include both freight and passenger rail, will be in front of Congress. When you contact your Representative in Congress on any issue, your address tells them you are a constituent. Remind them of your membership in NARVRE, as that tells them you are active and will be voting.

— Gary M. Faley
Legislative Director

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How Medicare Pays For Surgical Procedures And Follow-Up Care

When a Medicare patient has a surgery or endoscopy, providers are paid in what is called a 'global fee', which accounts for specific services provided before and after the procedure. The before-and-after timeframe is called a 'global period,' or the 'global surgery package,' and it varies based on the type of surgery the patient has had.

The types of surgeries are broken into two categories: major and minor. An endoscopy is a minor same-day surgery. The global period for this procedure includes the same-day visits only. Other examples of same-day surgeries are debridement of the skin or nails and biopsies, etc.

For other minor surgeries, the global period includes the day of the surgery (including same-day visits) and 10 calendar days after the surgery. Some examples of minor surgeries are complex injections and removal of lesions, etc.

For major surgeries, the period is one day immediately before the day of the surgery (preoperative visits), the day of the surgery, and 90 calendar days after the surgery. Some examples of major surgeries are cataract removal, knee replacements, etc.

Global surgeries can be done in any setting, such as an inpatient hospital, outpatient hospital, ambulatory surgical center (ASC), and a physician's office. The global surgery package includes preoperative visits, intra-operative visits, visits for complications following surgery which do not require additional trips to the operating room, post-operative visits, post-surgical pain management by the surgeon, and some supplies such as dressing changes, suture or staple removals, etc.

Some services are not included in the global surgery package and are billed separately. These include the initial consultation or evaluation (this is when the surgeon makes the first evaluation to determine if surgery is required).

The global surgery policy was created to prevent Medicare payments being made for services that are related to the same surgical event. Global surgery categorizes and pays for bilateral and multiple surgeries, co-surgeons and team surgeons and consolidates payment when appropriate. When you receive your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN), you may see separate billing for the components listed in this article, as well as how Medicare paid for them.

If your doctor or provider bills separately for services that are included in the global surgery package, the service may be denied. Your MSN message for the denied service will be "The cost of care before and after the surgery or procedure is included in the approved amount for that service."

If you have any questions about your MSN, please call the Railroad Medicare Beneficiary Contact Center at (800) 833-4455. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET. You may also visit our website at www.PalmettoGBA.com/RR/Me and our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/MyRRMedicare.

— **Jennifer Johnson**.