



Connections

Safety Barbecue A SUCCESS

Belt Railway of Chicago held its annual Employee Safety Awareness Barbecue in the locomotive shop Sept. 2. The event recognized employees for working safely every day. Employees from all shifts enjoyed great food and music.

BRC hosted a number of vendors and community guests, including members of the Bedford Park Fire and Police departments.

Many retired BRC employees also attended. They reminisced about old times and discussed fond memories.

“It’s fun to come back and see our co-workers,” said Jerry Krashak, retired BRC employee with 40 years of service.

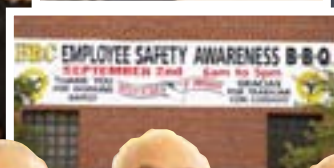
The barbecue is a way to solidify lasting relationships among employees, develop a connection between community representatives and the BRC, as well as promote safety.

Thanks to all volunteers who made the event a huge success.

Members of the Bedford Park Fire and Police departments attend the Employee Safety Awareness Barbecue.



Employees from all shifts enjoy great food.



President Pat O'Brien talks with employees.



From left, retirees Jerry Krashak, 40 years; Sam Distefano, 30 years; William Blonda, 40 years; and Edward Vojcak, 31 years, enjoy the day.



Students and their parents were receptive to the message.



Members of the BRC Safety Committee and BRC Police Department distribute fliers to alert students about the dangers of crossing the tracks.



From left, Chip Pew, state coordinator Illinois Operation Lifesaver, and Don Mytnik, BRC Safety Committee member, wait for the school children to arrive at the crossing.

COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

The Belt Railway of Chicago Police Department and Safety Committee teamed with Illinois Operation Lifesaver and hit the streets to spread its message of “Look, Listen, Live” to Mariano Azuela Elementary School students.

The first day of school for students was July 6, but this was no ordinary day. It was the first ever day of school at the new school, located just north of BRC’s east yard. Tracks cross routes that local kids may use to get to school.

“It’s important that we get the message out right away to the students,” said Sam Canerday, BRC police officer. “It’s our responsibility to make sure they understand the dangers of being near the tracks and how to safely cross them.”

Canerday said students ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade crossed the tracks that day. Some were escorted by parents and others were not. Informational fliers were distributed to people to take home.

“It worked out well,” he said. “Students were very receptive to the idea, and I think the parents appreciated our efforts.”

Take the message home

Belt Railway of Chicago employees are subject to the safety awareness message and apply the necessary precaution daily to avoid injuries. Outside of work, employees also are aware of the dangers associated with being around railroad tracks.

Share the knowledge with family, friends and local communities. Talk about the dangers around the tracks. Help promote the Operation Lifesaver message Look, Listen, Live.

Here are some tips to share:

- Always expect a train.
- Cross tracks only at designated crossings and remember to never walk or drive around lowered gates.
- Never try to outrun a train.
- Remember trains are three feet wider than the tracks.
- A train may be closer and moving faster than it appears.
- Trains cannot stop quickly. It may take a mile or more to stop.
- Once a train crosses, look again. Another train may be coming.

BRC welcomes guests with open arms

The City of Chicago received a request from the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma for a tour to gain insight to the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program program.

Tim Coffey, general counsel, secretary and director of Human Resources, recognizes BRC as a leader in the railroad industry and said it is more than happy to open its door to visitors.

“We are part of every tour because BRC is truly a ‘hub’ of activity and we are a microcosm of the rail industry,” Coffey said. “One swing around the property gives visitors an insight into how unique our operation is.”

BRC hosted nine people June 15 from the ports. The visitors were impressed by the operation and size of the hump yard.

The hump is the only bidirectional hump in North America. The efficiency and safety of employees also contributed to the ‘wow’ factor.

BRC also hosted 13 visitors from Thailand, including government officials and logistics experts. They are studying the development of a land bridge across southern Thailand. The bridge would connect a port on the Andaman Sea with a port on the Gulf of Thailand via a 90-mile railroad.

They hope to create a new freight gateway for Thailand and international trans-shipment from southeast Asia, providing an alternative to the sea route around the Malay Peninsula and through the Straits of Malacca.

The visit was a technical study for the steering committee supervising the study. They gained a technical understanding of the rail freight management and intermodal facilities in the Chicago area.

BRC welcomes opportunities to host visitors looking to gain an insight into how to safely and efficiently operate a railroad.

Shop employees take safety to new heights

Mechanical shop employees continue to excel on the safety front this year. Both the locomotive and car shops boast significant injury-free streaks.

“It’s really impressive, given the daily tasks they perform,” said Hugh Simon, mechanical superintendent. “They are focused on working safely.”

As of Oct. 1, locomotive shop em-

ployees had worked 1,667 days reportable injury-free while car shop employees pushed the bar beyond one year with 397 days.

“It’s a team effort and these employees really work well together,” Simon said.

The safety streaks can be attributed to experienced employees, good communication and watching out for each other. Employees also work to keep the shops

clean and clear of slip, trip and fall hazards.

Both shops have seen an increase in production this year. Locomotive work on the servicing track has picked up considerably.

“We’ve seen an increase, but it’s business as usual on the Mechanical side,” Simon said. “The attention to safety is phenomenal.”

Business increases, incidents decrease

Transportation employees have been making headlines this year. They have seen an increase in traffic and employee hours and a decrease in safety related incidents.

“It’s very commendable,” said Chris Gorski, assistant superintendent of transportation. “With the increase in business, they’ve managed to work safer than last year.”

Year-to-date there is a 50 percent reduction in reportable injuries compared to 2009. Human-factor derailments are down 8 percent and run through switches by BRC employees are down 19 percent.

Transportation employees see the value in good job briefings, which is why they make the most of every opportunity to discuss a task. Gorski credits solid communication as one of the main factors leading to the decreased frequency of incidents.

There is an added focus amongst Transportation employees to finish the year on a strong safety note. Preparations for the winter months ahead began in early September.

“We’ve been talking with employees about being prepared,” Gorski said. “We ask if they have well-conditioned studded overboots, proper clothing and all the PPE they need.”

Employees reviewed locomotive shut down rules for the winter and have taken an inventory on winter supplies such as salt and brooms. The caboose fleet has been overhauled, inspected and is ready for use.

“It’s better to over prepare for the conditions we may face.”



As winter approaches, BRC employees will be subject to cold, snowy and icy conditions. Preparation is the best way to stay warm and avoid slips, trips and falls.

Service Awards

40 years

July	Regina Cruse, Accounting
July	Robert Manypenny, Mechanical
September	Gregory Drozd, Transportation
September	Jeffrey Gingrich, B&B
October	Kenneth Lindsey, Transportation

20 years

August	Jan Tyrrell, Data Processing
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15 years

August	Feliciano Guerrero, Engineering
August	Victor Shell, Transportation
September	Sandra Granholm, Accounting
September	Francisco Gutierrez, Mechanical-Car
September	Paul Hesla, Mechanical
September	Matthew Ludwig, Engineering
September	Miguel Martinez, Transportation
September	Kevin O'Donnell, Mechanical-Car
October	Rommie Arnold, Transportation
October	Kirk Blanek, Transportation
October	Royal Gelder, Administration
October	Jose Jimenez, Mechanical
October	Michael Mallin, Transportation
October	Craig Mowery, Transportation
October	George Stalling, Transportation
October	Joseph Wanda, Transportation

EAGLE EYES

Belt Railway of Chicago employees have kept a keen eye on their surroundings this year. As professional railroaders, these employees have taken ownership of their jobs. It shows in their everyday actions. Their loyalty and good judgment prove they are willing to go above and beyond.

Thanks for the dedication to safety and BRC.

» George Miller and David Moro, June 18

Both employees were recognized by Canadian Pacific Railroad for the safe and efficient operation of trains from Galewood to Rockwell and Galewood to Calumet.

Teamwork and professionalism like this allows the BRC to keep good relationships with other railroads.

» David Johnson, Leon Jones and Jeff Votteler, July 6

Votteler's vigilant eye noticed a missing pin lifter from a railcar in the west class yard. He scanned the area looking for the

pin lifter and realized it was wedged in the retarder. He notified Johnson and set out the bad order car and notified Jones of the missing pin's location. Jones responded promptly to remove the wedged pin.

This display of teamwork allowed for only minimal delay and prevented an incident from occurring.

» Larry Rubner, July 13

Rubner reported a downed power line across track 35 east departure to 7 lead. The power line was still connected to the pole next to track 47 east departure.

He contacted the east yardmaster, shut down his locomotive and safeguarded the area to prevent cars and people from entering. As a result, no one was injured and the problem was handled in a safe manner.

» Michael Curtin and John Spataro, July 27

Both noticed a break all the way

through the rail on track 11 on the west class yard, receiving. Curtin and Spataro notified their supervisor and a fix was made immediately. Their quick thinking eliminated a safety hazard.

» Andrew Thomas, July 28

Thomas acted to stop a run out on 37 east class yard. His quick action helped prevent a collision and possible derailment.

» Michael Petrunaro, Aug. 31

Petrunaro's keen eye helped locate potential safety hazards and track defects in the east and west class yards.

» Christopher Votteler, Sept. 29

While pulling rips, the cars came apart at the crest of the hump. Between a long flat car and a covered hopper, Votteler stopped the cars in the retarder preventing the cars from rolling away. His quick action eliminated a potential incident.



Employee Assistance Program

All of us experience personal problems during our lives. While we may be able to work through many of these on our own, there are personal concerns that require outside help to find true resolution.

The Employee Assistance Program is a prepaid employer benefit that provides voluntary, confidential counseling to you and your family to help solve problems that affect your personal life and work performance. Helping you and your family maintain a healthy, balanced work and personal life is what this program is all about.

To make an appointment or to receive more information, contact EAP directly at 800-905-0994. Evening sessions are available by appointment. An online library can be accessed at www.metroeap.com. User name and password are both **belrailway**.

'Ain't that Lucky'

By day, Gregory Stofferahn is a sheet metal worker and locomotive pipefitter. By night and weekend, he transforms in to Stobie Stofferahn, bass guitarist for the Jaywalkers Jam Band.

Stofferahn began playing bass guitar at 16 and has been slapping the strings for nearly 35 years.

"I love music," Stofferahn said. "It's my passion."

The Jaywalkers play gigs all around the Chicago area, mostly on the north and south sides and into Indiana. They schedule 50 to 60 shows a year.

Stofferahn and the band are finalizing their newest album "Ain't that Lucky." The album features a song with Kansas violinist David Ragsdale called "Daddy's Girl."

"It's a great album and we are really excited to get it out," he said.

Music takes on many forms for Stofferahn. Recently he won the gig to be the disc jockey at the Sept. 2 Safety Awareness Barbecue.

When he retires in four years, he plans on spending more time playing music.



Gregory Stofferahn, sheet metal worker and locomotive pipefitter

Check out information about the band at <http://www.jaywalkersjamband.com/>.



From left, Kelly Purcell, Clerical, and Mary Griffin, Clerical



Sandra Granholm, Clerical



Ruth Kester, Accounting

KEEPING BRC beautiful

Belt Railway of Chicago continues its efforts to maintain a clean, safe work environment.

Employees converged across the property Aug. 31 to pick up trash left behind. In all, nearly 40 garbage bags were filled during the two-hour event. Lunch was served at the end of the cleanup.

Discarding waste around the property effectively eliminates tripping hazards. Thus, it reduces the chance for incidents to occur. It also helps BRC maintain one of the cleanest yards in the country.

The BRC Safety Committee typically organizes two cleanup days a year. Employee dedication to keeping BRC beautiful is much appreciated.

A message from Pat O'Brien

As we near the end of the year, I want to take a moment to thank everyone for their continued hard work and dedication to working safely. Your efforts have once again made Belt Railway of Chicago one of the best railroads in the country.

The holiday season is upon us and it's one of the most exciting times of the year. It means quality time with family and friends, good food and lots of laughter. I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.

Remember to stay focused in the now and avoid mental vacations at work. Focus on the task at hand and not the trimmings for the turkey dinner.

Let's finish out the year on a positive note and set the stage for a successful and safe 2011.

Sincerely,
Pat O'Brien
Belt Railway of Chicago President

Avoid walking through the motions

It's easy to talk the talk, but walking the walk can be a different story. This holiday season, employees are asked to stay focused on the task at hand and avoid becoming complacent.

Belt Railway of Chicago has set a goal of zero injuries for the remainder of 2010. The help of every employee is needed to obtain this goal.

Here are tips to help keep minds in the now this winter:

1. Complacency can spread like a wild fire. Watching another employee take a short cut can lead to taking the same short cut. Alert the employee taking a shortcut of their unsafe act to help avoid complacency.
2. Job briefings may be the most repetitive act a railroader performs in a day, but also the most important part of each day. Avoid underestimating the value of an involved job briefing. Furthermore, increase the frequency of job briefings per day to ensure every employee is on the same page.

Ask:

- "What you are working with?"
 - "What you are doing?"
 - "Where you are going?"
 - "What could go wrong?"
 - "Who works with or near you and where they are?"
3. Eliminate the 'it won't happen to me' attitude. Everyone's mind has the ability to wander. A lack of recognition that it 'could happen to you' could lead to an incident.
 4. Begin each day by asking:
 - "Am I committed to working safely today?"
 - "Am I committed to avoiding the trap of complacency?"
 - "How will I stay focused?"
 - "What actions will I take if I feel myself becoming complacent?"
 - "If I see a co-worker being complacent, what will I do?"

This newsletter appears under direction of The Belt Railway of Chicago. To include information, call Joe at the newsletter office, 1845 S 11th St., Lincoln, NE 68502-2211. Phone 402-475-6397. Readers also can submit articles via e-mail at joe@newslink.com. This material is intended to be an overview of the news of The Belt Railway of Chicago. If there are any discrepancies between this newsletter and any collective bargaining process, insurance contracts or other official documents, those documents will govern. The Belt Railway of Chicago continues to maintain and reserves the right, at any time, to alter, suspend, discontinue or terminate all plans and programs described in this newsletter. This newsletter is not an employment contract or any type of employment guarantee.

Talented Newcomers

The Belt Railway of Chicago has seen a significant increase in traffic in 2010, calling for all hands on deck. All furloughed employees have been called back and nine new switchmen have been hired.

Chris Gorski, assistant superintendent of transportation, said the increase in business is a result of the economic turn around.

“The prospects moving forward look pretty good for the BRC,” he said.

Please join Belt Railway of Chicago and the Transportation Department in welcoming the newest talent, who joined the team Sept. 9.

Ronald Morin Jr.	switchman
David Reese	switchman
Kenneth Steinbrenner	switchman
Robert Talchik	switchman
Andres Tapia	switchman
John Wantiez	switchman,
	Clerical transfer
Scot Wilczak	switchman
Aurelio Zavala	switchman
William Zokal	switchman

The Administration Department also added a couple new faces. Please join BRC in welcoming talented newcomers.

Justin Liston	Extra Board clerk
Danielle Strauss	Extra Board clerk

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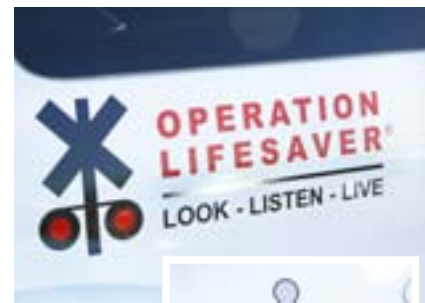
DUAL MESSAGE

Belt Railway of Chicago’s Police Department recently revamped the look of one of its squad cars.

“It’s the first time here that the police cars have a dual message on them,” said Sam Canerday, BRC police officer.

The car features a new Belt Railway of Chicago Police decal along with the Operation Lifesaver Look, Listen, Live decal. It promotes both safety awareness and the police presence. The idea behind it is that prevention is the best deterrent.

Another squad car is currently having the new decals attached.



The decals on the squad car promote a dual message.

Welding training



LEFT: From left, Mark Walztoni, mechanic, car, takes advantage of the experience by listening intently to Jerry Roe, instructor. RIGHT: From left, Pedro Bahena, locomotive mechanic, car; Bill Niemann, machinist, locomotive; Karl Doyle, machinist, locomotive; Jerry Roe, instructor; Jose Jimenez, machinist, locomotive; and Mark Walztoni, mechanic, car.

Mechanical Department employees were trained in metal inert gas welding Aug. 23 - 27. Four locomotive and two car shop employees participated in the eight-hour daily class.

MIG welding is a process where a continuous wire electrode is fed through a welding gun.

“The continuous feed actually is faster than the stick welding,” said Hugh Simon, mechanical superintendent. “It will increase production in both shops.”

Jerry Roe from M&W Welding Consultants was the trainer. The small group allowed each individual to have one-on-one time with Roe.

Simon said the employees were very attentive and eager to learn the new skill. Many questions were asked throughout the course.