

# Pride of the Northwest

## Employee Newsletter



### BNSF - We'll move your world

July 2003

## Jackson named general manager

Ron Jackson has been named general manager of the Northwest Division. His appointment took effect June 16.

Jackson, who served as assistant vice president, Merchandise and Grain Operations, succeeds Don Maze, who retired July 1.

The division welcomes Jackson and looks forward to continued success with his direction.

## Inside this issue

### 2 Longview Yard upgrade

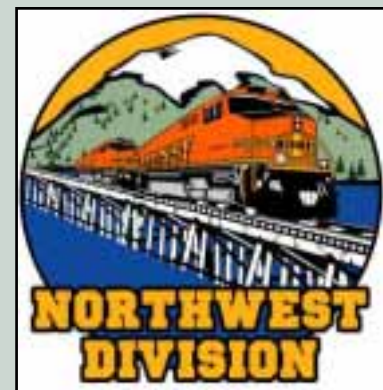
Longview MOW led the way on recently completed improvement projects at the yard.

### 3 Vancouver Mechanical

When an entire department reaches 218 days injury free, there's good reason to celebrate.

### 4 Boeing and the railroad

The aircraft maker announced its association with BNSF will continue well into the future.



## Division mourns loss of co-workers

Friendships dating back more than 30 years brought together seven BNSF employees on a charter fishing boat. The 32-foot craft capsized about 7 a.m. June 14 after it was struck by a huge wave while leaving Tillamook Bay, Ore. Only two of the friends survived.

Employees throughout the Northwest Division mourn the loss of co-workers: Steve Albus, Tim Albus, Larry Frick, Terry Galloway and Barry Sundburg.

Dale Brown and Dick Forsman survived the tragedy. Both men washed ashore on the rugged Oregon Coast, suffering from cuts and bruises.

As a group, the men had enjoyed the annual June fishing expedition for 10 years. They had fished in places such as the San Juan Islands, Alaska, Garibaldi and Tillamook Bay.

Steve Albus, 53, roadmaster at Ephrata, began his railroad career in 1967 on the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway. A Marine Corps veteran, Albus is survived by his wife, daughter, parents, two brothers, one sister and two grandchildren.

Tim Albus, 43, Maintenance of Way foreman, joined BN in 1988. Survived by his wife, three children, parents, two brothers and one sister, Tim Albus was active in his church, singing at weddings, funerals and birthday parties in Madras, Ore., where he lived.

Larry Frick, 61, Spokane, retired from BNSF in 2001 after a 33-year career. He hired on the Great Northern Railway in 1968 and worked as a safety and rules instructor at the time of his retirement. A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Frick is survived by his wife, three sons, six grandchildren, his father, two brothers and two sisters.

Terry Galloway, 46, MOW section laborer, joined Burlington Northern Railway in 1974. Single, he had recently moved from Madras to Portland to be nearer to his girlfriend.

Barry Sundburg, 52, joined GN in 1970. A resident of Cheney, Wash., he is survived by his wife, two daughters and two grandchildren.

Brown, welder, and Forsman, welding foreman, both work at Vancouver, Wash., B&B.

"This is a tragic loss for BNSF," said Jerry Avery, Vancouver roadmaster. "Our deepest sympathy goes out to all family members and friends."



Flags in Spokane and across the division were lowered to half staff in memory of the five BNSF employees who drowned in a boating accident on June 14.

From Ron Jackson, Northwest Division General Manager

## As our brother's keepers, we can work safely

I would like to take this opportunity to let you all know how excited I am to be a part of the Northwest Division. When I was presented the opportunity to return to the Pacific Northwest, I couldn't wait to get back to working alongside the employees of the Northwest Division. I had the pleasure of being here about 5 years ago and I leaped at the chance to return to a part our system and part of United States that is truly one of a kind.

I consider this Division one of the premier Divisions on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe System. The traffic that originates and terminates within the confines of the Northwest Division represents between 10-15 percent of the traffic handled on the system daily. Of course this encompasses all traffic types: intermodal, car load, grain and other unit type trains. From my perspective the future for growth is limited only by our

ability to handle our customers traffic safely and efficiently.

Of course none of the statistics mentioned above is as important as working accident and injury free. As professional railroaders we have a responsibility to our customers, the many communities we serve and most of all, to ourselves and our families to work in a safe work place and environment.

Unfortunately, the Northwest Division has recorded 40 FRA personal injuries year to date, which is the highest recorded for any one Division on the BNSF system. I believe that every injury is preventable!

As I mentioned earlier, I consider each and every employee on the Northwest Division to be a professional at

what you do be it in train service, maintenance of way, bridge and building, clerical, yardmasters, signalmen, mechanical as well as the officers of the Division.

We must be responsible for our own safety!

Also, we must adopt the "Be your Brothers Keeper" campaign. This campaign is designed to have employees look after one another and provide guidance and knowledge to our fellow employees in order to prevent injuries and accidents.

I pledge my support as well as the support of all the officers on the Northwest Division to work alongside of you in an effort to accomplish an injury free environment as well as an organization of trust and integrity. I look forward to meeting each of you in the near future and working together to make the Northwest Division the best Division on the system in all categories.



Ron Jackson

## New hires undergo remote control training

On June 16, training in remote control operations became part of the new hire conductors curriculum for 15 individuals. Tom Rowley, Seattle terminal superintendent, said each future new conductor class will include RCO.

A second group of new conductors begins training in July. Rowley anticipates 15 individuals in that group. A group of eight individuals completed training and were assigned in the Seattle area this spring.

The 38 new hires will be it for the year, Rowley said. Each of the 38 employees will be assigned a job immediately upon successful completion of their training, he said.

"We need these people to replace retirees and to handle new business," Rowley said.



These future conductors comprise the first group to receive Remote Control Operation training as new hires. Vic Renz, instructor, said the new hires will receive both classroom and on-the-job training in the use of remote control equipment. Standing, from left, Sean Greene, Josh Arnold, John Breugdenhil, Kim Asher, Mike Whitney, Chris Morgans, Owen Ross, Brandon Stuller, Fred Zwar, Brian Gustafson, Paul Cornell, Corey Last and Paul Hargrove. Kneeling from left, Greg Amer, Renz and Craig Townsend.

# Vancouver mechanical a safe work group

Although the Vancouver mechanical department had been injury free for 218 days on June 30, certain groups have not recorded a reportable injury since record keeping began.

Vern Peterson, general foreman, said no records of reportables can be found for the first shift assigned to Portland Willbridge or the third shift assigned to Portland East St. Johns.

“The department being at 218 days is cause for celebration,” he said. “Emphasis on safety briefings and good risk assessment by crews contribute to everyone's well being.”

The main key to safety success, Peterson said, is the alertness of each individual worker and the way they identify hazards and guard themselves from them.

The mechanical team includes Vancouver and Portland car repair, heavy and light; train inspections and repairs; and medium to heavy repairs at Vancouver car shop

Other work groups with notable injury-free days as of June 30 include:

Vancouver Rip Track, 218 days  
Vancouver heavy repair, 1,282 days  
Vancouver Yard, 1st shift, 525 days  
Vancouver Yard, 2nd shift, 300 days  
Vancouver Yard, 3rd shift, 2,971 days



Vancouver mechanical department reached 218 days injury free on June 30, but some individual groups have gone more than 8,200 days without a reportable injury.

Portland Willbridge, 2nd shift, 2,622 days  
Portland Willbridge, 3rd shift, 8,291 days  
Portland East St. Johns, 1st shift, 3,244 days  
Portland East St. Johns, 2nd shift, 249 days  
Portland Terminal 6, 238 days

# Longview Yard upgrade completed

Significant improvement projects at Longview provide for safe operation of man and machine.

Credit goes to the Maintenance of Way crew headed by Dan Mesford, roadmaster, who performed the work without breaking their stretch of injury-free days.

Longview MOW crew reached 1,063 days on June 30. TY&E employees there reached 493 days.

Workers installed 2,400 switch ties and cross ties in Longview Yard during a five-week period. They were followed by a division steel gang that laid rail on three tracks in the yard.

Project costs included \$152,000 for ties and \$221,000 for the rail work according to Wes Salzsieder, assistant roadmaster.

New walkways were installed in Longview Yard and at Longview Junction. New ballast was installed and

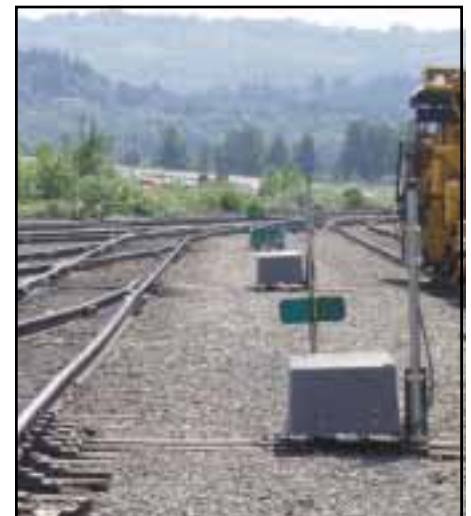
graded. About \$15,000 in rock was purchased for the upgrade.

Crews from Centrailia and Kalama assisted the Longview MOW. The project was completed quickly thanks to excellent cooperation between MOW, operating personnel and the steel gang. People went out of their way to accomplish this project, Salzsieder said.

Longview Yard handles a great deal of traffic on its 17 tracks, including switching for multiple industries and the Port of Longview, Salzsieder said.

Jeff Wright, Longview general manager, has initiated a solar switch project as well. Each switch on the lead in Longview Yard now operates by electricity. Division MOW workers installed the switches.

The new switches are far and away better than anything we had in this yard. TY&E has nothing but good things to



Solar electric switches were installed at Longview Yard. The switches can be operated by a hand pump in case of electric failure.

say about them, Salzsieder said.

Solar switches cost about \$6,800 each and 12 were installed this year. Wright hopes to do a similar number next year as funding allows.



## Whitefish Mechanical 10 years injury free

Whitefish Mechanical employees achieved 10 years of injury free work in May. The six-member department includes, from left, Dave Mengelos, laborer; Bill Langdon, foreman; Gerry Hunsinger, carman; Danny Winchell, carman; John Lemburg, carman. Norm Eaton, foreman, was not present for this photo.

## Deadhead softball team in first place

Vancouver's 2003 Deadhead men's softball team was a perfect 5-0 in league play the first half of the season, resulting in a first place showing.

Rob Leeling, yardmaster, coaches the team.

New additions to the team in 2003 which have helped solidify the Deadheads include Marshall Miller, Ryan Maxwell, Rob Preston, Ryan Moe from Wishram and an off-season acquisition from the River Rats team, Ron Rodriguez, Leeling said.



Boeing aircraft cabins regularly pass through Balmer Yard on their way from plants in Florida or Kansas to Boeing facilities in Seattle. The sections ride on specially-built flatcars and comply with height and width requirements to allow passage through tunnels and other restricted areas.

## BNSF, Boeing work hand in hand for success

Good news from Boeing Co. was announced in June. A long-standing association between BNSF and Boeing will continue well into the future, according to Tom Rowley, Seattle terminal superintendent. Good news from Boeing was announced in June.

Substantial portions of Boeing's new 7E7 jetliner will be built at the Frederickson composites factory south of Tacoma. The plant employs about 800.

Rail cars will transport any portion of the new airplane from Frederickson to final assembly points elsewhere in the

area, Rowley said. BNSF would also serve a proposed Boeing plant at Moses Lake, Wash.

BNSF uses a special two-car flat to transport airplane cabins from Boeing plants in Florida or Wichita, Kan., to the plant in Renton, Wash. The railroad transports a variety of body widths and lengths, from the 737 to 777, he said.

Increased Boeing business is not only good news for BNSF, but for the entire Seattle area as well, Rowley said. Boeing and BNSF continue to be among the largest employers in the Northwest.

## Mechanical crews achieve safe records

Mechanical employees at Auburn and Tacoma use safe work practices as evident from their safety records. Safe production is foremost in the minds of his crews, Gerry Jackl, mechanical foreman, said.

Auburn's five-man mechanical

team reached 9.5 years without a reportable injury on June 30. The team includes Floyd Hughes and Tom Blankenship, lead carmen, and carmen Richard Garneau, Tom Pfielfle and Steve Shove.

Three composite mechanics at

Western Fruit Express in Tacoma celebrate more than 2,000 days injury free, Jackl said.

The Tacoma roundhouse crew of nine reached 180 days June 30 and has had only one reportable injury in the last eight years.

# Kettle Falls MOW 1,419 days safe

The 19 Maintenance of Way employees in Kettle Falls celebrated 1,419 days injury-free on June 30. Keith Abeyta, roadmaster, praised the dedication and attention to detail demonstrated by each crew member.

Kettle Falls branch line covers two subdivisions and more than 231 miles of track. It enters Canada at three points: Waneta, Laurier and Danville.

Four of the MOW employees work in Canada.

The safety record supports the employees' desire to provide a quality product for customers, Abeyta said. About 21,000 tons of freight pass by the Kettle Falls depot each day on well-maintained tracks.

## Safety train gives insight to Operation Lifesaver issues

A safety train jointly sponsored by BNSF and other railroad entities made a successful journey through Washington.



Steve Mills

Newly painted locomotives featuring the BSNF Heritage II theme and Union Pacific's American Flag Classic paint scheme pulled the train.

The operation handled one passen-

ger car, a vintage 1948 Burlington California Zephyr dome car capable of seating up to 60 guests. Steve Mills, manager field safety support, coordinated rides with community leaders and law enforcement personnel along the route.

Stops were made in Vancouver, Kelso, Centralia, Tacoma, Auburn, Seattle, Everett, Marysville and Bellingham.

Multiple short train rides gave passengers a first-hand view of trespassers on railroad property and vehicles violating crossing warning requirements, Mills said.

Community turnout and involvement in Operation Lifesaver Program helped raise awareness of safety practices.

Officers issued a number of citations from the train while working with ground assist units. An area of particular concern was when officers viewed numerous Seattle Mariners baseball fans hurry past down crossing gates in an attempt to beat the oncoming train.

City officials also had an opportunity to view various railroad projects such as rail and steel gang activity and surfacing gangs, Mills said.

## Schwinof, Morgan recognized for signal work

Following a week-long quality assurance inspection, John Schwinof and Jeremy Morgan, signal maintainers, received recognition for outstanding service in inspection of signal equipment and testing procedures.

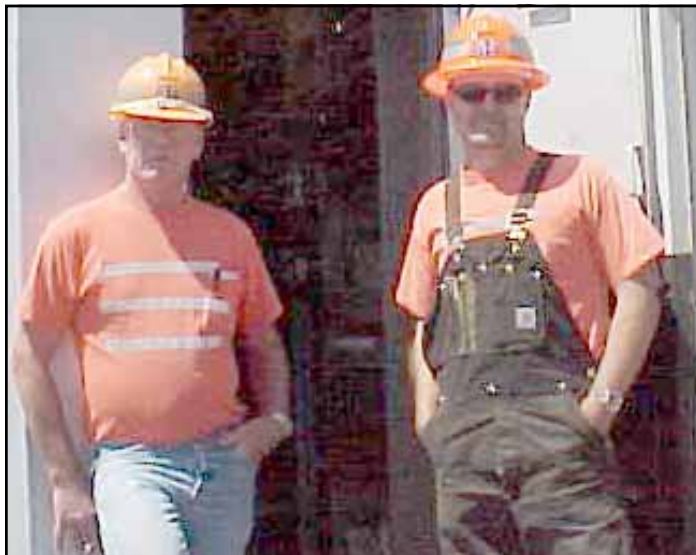
The two have responsibility for the Towal and Plymouth territories on the Fallbridge Sub, according to Bob Sutton, signal supervisor.

"They are outstanding employees who have brought their territories to a high level," Sutton said. "They put their training and expertise to good use while maintaining a safe and reliable signal system."

Schwinof and Morgan work with CTC signals along the single main line track along the Washington side of the Columbia River. Their area runs from Pasco to Wishram.

Because of the high traffic volume, proper signal operation is critical, Sutton said.

His friends and co-workers also congratulate Morgan on the birth of his son in June.



John Schwinof, left, and Jeremy Morgan, signal maintainers, were recognized during a quality assurance audit for outstanding performance in inspecting, testing and operating CTC signals.

This is your newsletter. If there is a story you would like to see in *Pride of the Northwest*, call us. In addition to on-the-job items of interest, tell us about human interest stories as well. For coverage, call Don Rabbe at the newsletter office at (BNSF) 458-7342; (bell) 402-475-6397; fax 402-475-6398; write to 339 South 9th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508 or e-mail [don@newslinkinc.com](mailto:don@newslinkinc.com). We'll write the story from your information, any photos you can provide will help.

## Anderson accepts promotion

The Northwest Division bids farewell to Steve Anderson, terminal superintendent at Vancouver. He begins his new assignment in July.

Anderson returns to the Maintenance of Way as the General Director Line Maintenance for the Northern and Southern California Divisions.

He will be headquartered in Stockton.

## Graevell retires

Max Graevell celebrated his retirement on May 30 by bringing in a caterer to provide a Mexican meal for his co-workers on the Pasco rip track. Graevell, a clerk for Pasco mechanical, began his railroad career in September 1965 on the Northern Pacific. He said he had no retirement plans except to enjoy life day by day.



## Farewell friends

The Northwest Division bids farewell to these recent retirees, thanking them for their years of service and wishing them a long and happy retirement:

- Charles Anderson, Conductor, Albany, Ore., 39 years
- Larry Bakken, Carman, Marysville, Wash., 41 years
- Jerome Bakshas, Brakeman, Vancouver, Wash., 31 years
- Ronald Byrd, Yardmaster, East Wenatchee, Wash., 38 years
- Bernard Gillin, Clerk, Seattle, 36 years
- Joseph Hough, Carman, Des Moines, Wash., 39 years
- Joan Rhoades, Clerk, Seattle, 32 years
- Ronald Ross, Clerk, Pasco, Wash., 35 years
- Michael Siddons, Yardmaster, Kent, Wash., 36 years
- George Skinnell, Clerk, Camano Island, Wash., 40 years



## Boots provided by traveling salesman

Ed Gundersen enjoys his job as a traveling shoe salesman. Representing Sound Safety Products, Gundersen travels to locations throughout the Northwest Division on a quarterly basis. BNSF has authorized his company to come onto their property and sell boots and safety items that have been BNSF approved. Employees may bring their boot vouchers to Gundersen's mobile store and buy them at the job site instead of shopping elsewhere. At his stop in Vancouver, Wash., Gundersen had a busy day as dozens of railroaders obtained new boots.



Photo courtesy Tom Rowley

LeRoy Hall received congratulations from Lynn Brady of Boeing Co. at his retirement celebration. Hall was instrumental in the growth of rail service to Boeing's Everett Assembly facility, including expansion of the Port of Everett dock and track changes to accommodate containers of components for the Boeing 777 and 767 aircraft.

## Hall retires after 37 years

LeRoy Hall, terminal manager at Stacy Yard, bid farewell to his friends and co-workers when ending his 37-year railroad career on June 1.

Among the many people attending a retirement party were managers from Boeing Company who presented Hall with a flight jacket.

"Leroy did excellent work for Boeing and BNSF," said Tom Rowley, terminal superintendent. "He was a big piece of the Seattle puzzle and will be hard to replace. He was well liked and a good man."

Hall began his railroad career in 1966 on the Northern Pacific Railway in Seattle. Assignments took him to positions in the operating department including trainmaster, terminal manager at Seattle and Everett and superintendent operations at Everett.

He also worked as director of network support for the Pacific Division General Manager and on the staff of the regional AVP at Seattle.

He and his wife, Susan, married 32 years, have two sons and four grandchildren. He plans to complete renovation of their retirement home in Manson, north of Wenatchee, and then enjoy fishing and sitting by the swimming pool with Susan.



Leroy Hall

# Kiehn will be missed by co-workers

Donald Kiehn ends his railroad career July 31, but worked his last day June 30. Taking vacation time, he hopes to become accustomed to not reporting to work for the first time in 38 years.

Kiehn joined the Great Northern Railway as a laborer at Hillyard March 20, 1965. In May, 1970, he completed his apprenticeship and became an electrician. When the Parkwater shop closed, he was assigned to Interbay Shops for seven years before returning to Spokane in 1994.

"I'll miss my co-workers a lot," Kiehn said. "I've been privileged to work with a great bunch of people over the years."

Judging by the turnout at a retirement gathering, his co-workers will

miss Kiehn as well. "Don's probably the smartest electrician in the Division," Jeff Jaeb, mechanical foreman, said. "Everyone likes him and we're all going to miss him and his expertise."

The work Kiehn enjoyed most during his career was rewiring locomotives at the Hillyard shop.

Retirement plans include working around his acreage in the mountains outside Spokane. He wants to spend some time fishing, noting that his boat hasn't been out of its garage for four years.

Kiehn will continue his hobbies of photography and computers. He enjoys computer graphics work and has restored numerous antique family photographs, transferring them to CDs and distributing them to relatives.

Married for 31 years to Elsie, the couple took a 10-year break and were remarried in February, he said. They have a son and two grandsons living in Seattle and a daughter, grandson and granddaughter living in Michigan.

Retirement also means moving for the Kiehns. The couple sold their property a short distance from their present location and moved into the house built by Elsie's father when she was a baby. They purchased the house from her mother in 1987 and she continued to live in it until her death in 1999.



Donald Kiehn

## Aho moves to Pasco

Vancouver mechanical foreman Joe Aho has been transferred to Pasco. Before leaving for his new assignment, Aho wrote this farewell letter to his co-workers:

It has been a great joy to work with the mechanical employees in the Vancouver and Portland area. You are a highly skilled and motivated group that takes great pride in your jobs.

When I started here as an apprentice carman, everyone helped me learn not only how to perform my duties but also what it meant to be part of this very proud team. When I was promoted to mechanical foreman at the service track, the employees made it very easy to learn about their operation.

Upon moving back to the repair track in October of last year, I was welcomed back as though I had never been gone.

As I move on to my new position in Pasco I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone for all of the knowledge they have shared and for all the effort they put into making our team as successful as it is.

I have become very close to many of you and will miss working with all of you. In parting please remember stay focused on safety, diligent in your duties, and know that I appreciate all that we have accomplished together.

Sincerely,  
Joe Aho

## Miller believes in Operation Stop

Randy Miller knows the benefits of Operation Stop first hand. The switch foreman at Tacoma East Yard has been in recovery for 14 years, thanks to an intervention similar to those done by Operation Stop.

"I believe in it," Miller said. "I know what it can be like to not have anywhere to turn. Operation Stop can be a life saver for someone looking for help."

Confidential help attracted Miller to the program. He considers it a positive thing that co-workers help one another and can do so without involving management. The personal, one-to-one contact can resolve many issues, he said.

Miller has been active in Operation Stop for several years, but didn't begin serving on the committee until 2003 when he was asked to fill an unexpected vacancy.

He joined the railroad in February 1977 as a trackman. He switched to train service in 1979 at Tacoma. He has held assignments in Spokane, Pasco, Seattle, and performed relief work in Richmond, Fresno and Barstow, Calif., as needed.



Randy Miller

# Bethel provides service with a smile

Humor helps Bob Bethel through his days as Spokane yardmaster. He takes his work seriously, but completes it with a smile. Getting tense or angry doesn't help anyone, Bethel said.

Spokane Yard handles a significant amount of traffic, he said. Through freight on main line tracks as well as building and terminating trains requires careful attention to details.

Trains come to Spokane from all directions, Bethel said. They arrive from Whitefish, Mont., Pasco, Wenatchee and Missoula, Mont. as well as Kettle Falls. Between 45 and 55 trains pass through Spokane each day.

Bethel wasn't certain of his career path in 1968, but he knew he didn't

want to continue as a delivery truck driver for a Spokane appliance store. One August day, he observed a long line of men standing outside the Great Northern Railway depot.

"Somebody said the railroad was hiring, so I got in line," Bethel said. "When I got to the depot door, they asked me if I wanted to be a fireman or a switchman. I didn't have a clue about either job."

He choose switchman and began work the next day. He has always been assigned to Spokane Yard and has never sustained an injury.

The first member of his family to work on the railroad, Bethel said he had no complaints. "I've enjoyed the rail-

road. It was a good decision to work here," he said.

Married, Bethel has three daughters, ages 37, 12 and 10 years old and a four-month-old granddaughter.

His spare time is taken up with soccer, softball, dance lessons, and all the other activities his younger daughters enjoy.

He recently sold his ocean-going boat, but looks forward to buying another when his daughters are grown and on their own.



Bob Bethel

# Cook's had a good ride at Spokane Yard

Spokane Yard has been home to Allan Cook since he joined the Northern Pacific Railway as a switchman/brakeman in August 1965. The first generation railroader said he was looking for work and NP was hiring.

"It's been a good ride so far," Cook said. He added that he has no immediate plans to retire.

Prior to the railroad, Cook attended



Allan Cook

college and needed a job to pay tuition. He applied to the NP in Tacoma, his paperwork was forwarded to Spokane, and he began working within days after applying.

He continued his education while working full time until being drafted by the U.S. Army. Trained as a scout dog handler in the infantry, Cook served in Vietnam. The railroad held his job for him.

When not working his present assignment as yardmaster, Cook said he enjoys chess, running and dabbling in the stock market.

# Strandberg a second generation machinist

Fred Strandberg, machinist, performs light wreck repair at Parkwater Diesel Shop, following in his father's footsteps.



Fred Strandberg

His dad, Robert, a machinist and supervisor at Spokane, retired in 1982 after 39 years of service and lives in Spokane.

"I enjoy this work," Strandberg said. "Locomotives come in with all sorts of damage and I get to help return

them to like new condition."

His basic knowledge of locomotive repair, combined with his troubleshooting abilities, helps the shop meet its goals. Being safety conscious helps him go home each day in good health, Strandberg said.

Strandberg graduated from high school in 1977 and joined the BN in Seattle as a laborer. He transferred to Spokane and worked on a B&B crew before completing his apprenticeship. Assigned to Alliance, Neb., for four years, he returned to Seattle, then back to Spokane in 1994.

## Sanderson retires Ends 33 year career

Yakima bids farewell to John Sanderson, MOW trackman, who retires after 33 years service. He began his railroad career on the Milwaukee Road in 1964 at St. Maries, Idaho.

When the Milwaukee Road closed, Sanderson worked as a lumberjack before joining the Washington Central Railroad. Since the 1996 merger with BNSF, he has been assigned as a grinder in Yakima.

# Nishimura knows OpStop benefits



Bill Nishimura

For 14 years, Bill Nishimura has chaired Operation Stop at Tacoma. He also directs the program for Auburn employees.

“I enjoy doing it because when people get into trouble, we can help get them straightened out and put back on the right track,” Nishimura said.

Operation Stop operates as an employee-based program designed to help employees gain awareness of alcohol and drug problems. Committee members receive training that helps them understand and recognize the symptoms of chemical abuse.

Every action in an Operation Stop intervention remains confidential. No information about the intervention or the employee’s individual problem is provided to management or any other employee.

Prevention begins when one employee cares about the health and well being of her/his fellow employee. To learn more about Operation Stop or to see how you can receive help, contact Nishimura or call the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-383-2327.

Four times each year, Nishimura and Operation Stop committee members sponsor a feed to raise funds for various charities. On June 11-12, organizers served breakfast and conducted a raffle. Proceeds were designated for Mary Bridge Children's Hospital in Tacoma.

He credited Dan Burns, terminal manager, with providing necessary support for Operation Stop activities.

“Without his involvement, we wouldn't be as successful as we are,” Nishimura said.

Other members of Tacoma Operation Stop team include John La Rosa, Randy Miller, Maynard Scott and Dan



Tacoma terminal headquarters proudly displays an Operation Stop sign.

Simmons.

Nishimura, locomotive engineer, volunteered with Operation Stop in 1985. Once aware of the benefits the program offers, he became one of its strongest proponents on the Northwest Division.

The first generation railroader joined Burlington Northern Railroad in 1972 at to Seattle as a locomotive fireman. He has always worked the Puget Sound area.

# Jackl celebrates injury free career

Military training in air conditioning and refrigeration allowed Gerry Jackl to enhance his railroad career as a journeyman electrician. His first assignments involved teaching co-workers how to repair refrigeration units on train cars.

After 23 years at the Tacoma car shop, most recently as mechanical foreman, Jackl retired on July 3. He represented the third generation of his family to work on the railroad. He did so safely, injury-free since joining the BN in 1972 as an apprentice carman.

Prior to joining the railroad, Jackl worked as an automobile mechanic and service manager. He spent three years

in the U.S. Army, including one year in Vietnam.

His grandfather made brake shoes for the Great Northern and his father was a locomotive painter for Northern Pacific. His father began at a pay rate of 35 cents an hour, then took a pay cut when the stock market crashed in 1929, Jackl said. He retired after more than 45 years service.

Married with two children and two



Gerry Jackl has worked injury free since 1972.

grandchildren, Jackl’s retirement plans include playing golf and completing improvement projects around his home.

## Thill says railroad is like family

The biggest and toughest decision of his railroad career faces Richard Thill this summer--when to retire. "I



Richard Thill

know I'm going before summer ends, I just don't know when," he said.

"The railroad has been good to me," Thill said. "I've had great people to work with and work for." He always had great bosses that helped him in his career, he said.

Railroading is in his family. His uncle was a shop superintendent at the Jackson Street Shop and his brother works as an electrician at Northtown. His wife's father and brother worked on the railroad at Grand Forks and he has a brother-in-law working at Interbay.

Thill, general foreman mechanical at Parkwater Shop, began his career in October 1966. He joined the Great Northern at the Dale Street Shops in St.

Paul, Minn., as an apprentice electrician. He earned his journeyman status in 1968.

In April 1971, Thill went to the GN headquarter office in St. Paul as an electrical draftsman. His career next took him to West Burlington Shops in 1974 as electrical foreman.

His next assignment was to Livingston, Mont., as electrical foreman in 1976. He moved to Hillyard as electrical foreman in 1977 and remained there until the shop closed. Thill arrived at Parkwater in 1982 and has been general foreman since 1998.

He wants to retire and spend more time with Patricia, his wife of 39 years. They have three children. Eric works as a MOW welder, Kristie and Mark also live in Spokane. Two grandsons, Aaron, 7, and Spencer, 4, complete his immediate family.

Retirement will allow time for fishing with his sons and grandsons.

"I've really enjoyed my life and the people around me who make up the railroad," he said. "We're more like a family because we all pull together."

## Pool pays off for O'Grady

Ron O'Grady can handle a cue stick. The Tacoma conductor led his team to a third place finish in the BCA International Pool Tournament in Las Vegas in May.



Photo courtesy Barbara Seeburger

There were 756 registered teams from throughout the world.

Third place brought a team trophy and a check for \$7,000.

Team members, in addition to O'Grady, included Gary Wallace, yardmaster at Kennewick; Ken Bower, Doug Enera, Rich Geiler and Scott Nelson.

O'Grady also competed as one of 1,830 entries in singles competition, finishing in 193rd place and winning \$250.

## Steamers strut their stuff one more time

Two of the largest operating steam locomotives in the United States can be found in Portland. Maintained by the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation, the locomotives were used in June for the grand opening of the Springwater on Willamette Trail.

The locomotives pulled a special passenger train to celebrate opening of the trail. The trail runs along the former Oregon Pacific Railroad right of way out of Portland.

Known as the American Freedom Train, the old Southern Pacific 4449 joined the former Spokane, Portland & Seattle 700 in the one-day event.

Springwater on the Willamette is a collaboration of



Photo courtesy Dale Birkholz

Southern Pacific 4449, right, and Spokane, Portland & Seattle 700, left, locomotives pulled passenger cars along the Springwater trail during grand opening festivities June 28th.

the Portland Parks and Recreation, Metro Parks System and ORHF.

Member organizations of the ORHF include: Friends of Oregon Railroad & Navigation

197, Friends of the Southern Pacific 4449 Inc., Pacific Railroad Preservation Association--Spokane Portland & Seattle 700, Northwest Rail Museum, Pacific Northwest Chapter of National Railway Historical Society, Brooklyn Action Corps, and Portland Parks & Recreation.

Information about the ORHF and the restoration and maintenance of the old steam locomotives may be found on the internet at orhf.org.



Photo courtesy James Aslaksen

# Bisson talks man out of jumping from bridge

Bill Bisson saved a life. The Maintenance of Way chief welder talked a man out of jumping from the Latah Junction Bridge near Spokane.



Bill Bisson

A train crew notified its dispatcher that a man was standing near the middle of the 3,872-foot span and appeared to be getting ready to jump. At the mid-point, the drop from the bridge to the ground measures about 300 feet, according to Jeff Chicks, Spokane roadmaster.

Police arriving at the scene were met by Bisson and outfitted with fall



Photos courtesy Jeff Chicks

Bill Bisson, chief welder, assisted police in rescuing a potential jumper from Spokane's Latah Junction Bridge.

protection. Bisson led them onto the span. As they neared the man, it became apparent he was intoxicated.

Bisson continued talking with the man, getting him to back away from the edge of the bridge and distracting him until police were able to grab and subdue him. Bisson then escorted the

rescuers and potential jumper off the bridge to safety and returned to his MOW duties.

The man received appropriate medical and psychological attention following the incident, Chicks said. Special recognition and a commendation letter were provided Bisson.

# Vancouver switch crew saves boy from harm

Switch crew 221 had a change in their job description recently. The Vancouver-based threesome changed from a yard job assigned to general switching into an emergency, temporary day care provider.

The crew, consisting of Pat Finn, foreman; Todd Jacobs, locomotive engineer; and, Terry Page, conductor, were moving their locomotive onto the NP pass, adjacent to Main One in Vancouver Yard, to pull a cut of auto-racks out of the pass.

As they prepared to pull the cut off

the pass, they noticed movement around the cars. Placing the locomotive in tie-down, they went to investigate and found a dirty and frightened young boy wandering around the cars.

They immediately guided the youngster away from the tracks to safety and notified the yardmaster of their find.

Special Agent John Ross arrived after being notified by the trainmaster of the crews' discovery. He heard that the crew had learned the boy's name was James and he was three years old.

While Ross talked with the boy to gain more information, Ted May, hostler helper from Job 225, approached with a woman who was a neighbor of the boy's grandparents. Apparently he had been missing about one hour and the grandparents were frantically searching for him.

Ross placed the boy in protective custody and drove him and the neighbor back to the grandparents' house. Thanks to the alertness of BNSF employees, the three-year-old is back at home safe and sound.

# Salzsieder: Railroad is a good place to work

"The railroad's a darn good place to work," Wes Salzsieder, assistant roadmaster at Longview, said. "I enjoy it very much."

Salzsieder, a first generation railroader, arrived in his career by accident. The Longview native was working as a cabinet maker when a friend who was a roadmaster asked if he would be interested in working on the railroad. To



Wes Salzsieder

humor his friend, Salzsieder asked for an application.

He filled it out and got called a week later by Burlington Northern to come to work. He started in March 1976 as a laborer on

a tie gang. He spent six years on gangs before arriving in Longview. In 1992, he was promoted to his current job.

Married, Salzsieder spends time away from work with his family which includes one daughter, one son and one granddaughter.

He recently purchased a motor home which he and his wife plan on using extensively, he said.

# Mechanical personnel mark safety record

The mechanical department reached a huge milestone on their journey to perfection May 17 when Pasco and Wenatchee car and locomotive personnel as well as Yakima car employees completed one year injury free.

Don Hust, general foreman, oversees the team consisting of 97 car and locomotive employees in Pasco, five in Wenatchee, and three in Yakima. The group also includes 14 supervisors.

Mechanical personnel inspect in- and outbound trains.

## Northwest Division Safety Performance

as of July 7, 2003

Safety Statistics:	2003	2002	% Change
Injury Frequency Ratio	2.41	2.86	-15%
Lost/ Restricted Severity Ratio	53.77	88.00	-39%
Reportable Injuries	40	48	-17%
Non-Reportable Injuries	68	47	+45 %
Human Factor REI's	75	51	+47%
Total incidents	157	114	+38%
Reportable Injury By Craft:	2003	2002	% Change
Transportation	20	30	-33%
MOW - Track	8	11	-27%
MOW - Signal	4	2	+100%
MOW - Structures	2	3	-33%
Mechanical	5	4	+25 %
Other-Clerical-Taconite	1	0	+100%

Division days without reportable injury - 10

Date	Group	Injury	Last Injury Description	Location
06-26-03	TEY	Strain	Train struck Auto	Toppenish

Injuries by department head

	2003	2002
Jacobson	0	0
Hein	0	2
Davison	4	0
Ness	2	5
Peterson	0	1
Anderson	3	2
Eoff	2	2
Hust	0	2
Rowley	6	6
Boyce	3	3
Perry	0	3
Thil	1	1
Ellstrom	1	6
Kayser	1	3
Bounous	3	3
Froscheiser	7	6
Structures-Borg	2	3
Signal-Abbey	3	1
Signal-Holten	1	1
Division Admn	1	0
	40	50

Injury Frequency Ratio

System	Division	Ratio
1	Kansas	1.42
2	Montana	1.52
3	Twin Cities	1.72
6	Nebraska	1.81
5	Southwest	1.89
8	Springfield	1.95
4	So. California	2.02
7	Chicago	2.05
9	Gulf	2.14
10	Northwest	2.41
11	Powder River	2.63
12	Texas	3.05
13	No. California	4.80

SAFETY TEAM FOCUS  
Movement of Equipment (T, E)  
Operating Vehicles (M)

CONGRATULATIONS!  
JUNE F/R = 1.57

Pasco repairs freight cars. Yakima and Wenatchee carmen repair cars online and have developed a maintenance program on wood chip



While performing a wheel inspection, a carman documents defects.

cars to provide better customer service and increase safety.

In the last 12 months, they repaired 250 wood chip cars.

Wenatchee employees also service locomotives at the locomotive facility.

"This is a very big accomplishment," Hust said. "It is a great team and people have done a great job."

Frequently, work takes place in the field where crews operating road trucks adjust doors, change wheels or replace couplers.

Part of Mechanical Zone 1, overseen by Rick Collins, superintendent field operations, the group makes job briefings, risk assessment and work practice observations an important part of their daily routine.

Most employees have more than 20 years of experience, according to Hust.

"We are a very experienced group," Hust said.

Also, Hust credits a great work ethic and a commitment to excellence.

As of July 1, the groups completed 410 days injury free.



Mechanical employees inspect a locomotive, above left, bulkhead flat car, above, and safety appliances on a boxcar, left.

**Pride of the Northwest** appears under the direction of the division general manager, BNSF Northwest Division, 2454 OCCIDENTAL AVE S STE 1A, SEATTLE, WA 98134-1451. For coverage of events, call the newsletter office, (BNSF) 458-7342, (bell) 402-475-6397, fax 402-475-6398, e-mail don@newslinkinc.com or U.S. mail information to 339 South 9th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508.

