



MEMPHIS

# TRAFFIC TALK

FORMERLY RAIL 'N' ROAD

trafficclubofmemphis.com

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## *Speaker Meeting*

- Date: Tuesday June 10, 2003
- Reservation: by June 9, 2003
- Place: Holiday Inn Select  
Poplar and I-240  
Memphis, TN
- Time: 11:30 – 12:00 check in and lunch service  
Speaker 12:15
- Menu: Luncheon Buffet:  
Chicken/Beef/Rice/Potatoes/Seasonal  
Vegetables/Rolls/Tea/Coffee/Dessert
- Tariff: \$25.00 for Members and Guests  
\$20.00 for Life members, Students and educators  
\$30.00 for non-members

This month's speaker will be **Mike Archey** who will talk about **Six Sigma**, a quality program championed by GE and other major corporations.

**This Month's Quote:** Do not put your faith in what statistics say until you carefully considered what they do not say. – William W. Watt

## **President's Message**

WOW!! What a great golf scramble we had. Thanks to **Rick Marino** for all of his efforts in putting on what ended up being a record breaking scramble this spring. His tireless work was appreciated by all who participated. Thanks also go to **Memphis National** for their great support and cooperation in dealing with our group and us. Also, thanks to each and every one of those people and companies that sponsored a hole and those who donated door prizes for our post dinner drawing. Speaking of the dinner, it was so good to have something other than the normal BBQ or burgers and dogs afterward. Great menu selection Rick!!! Last but certainly not least, I want to thank **YOU**, the golfers who participated in this spring scramble. As you all were aware, we had several applications hit us on the last day to register and it created an overage of teams. Rather than asking a team or two to not participate, we asked for each you to be patient and to understand this potential problem and the possible slow pace it may create and each of you did that. We very, very much appreciate your patience and attitudes as you teed off by not being "teed off" at us. The pace ended up being about what a "normal" number of teams would have been anyway. **THANKS AGAIN** and we look forward to our fall event coming up in September!!!

Our nominating deadline passed on April for our TCI Person of the Year Award. We will end our two-year run of winning this award, as we did not enter a candidate for this year's competition. We ask that each of you strongly consider a possible candidate for next year as we hope to return to our winning ways once again.

Please remember that our **scholarship award program deadline of June 30** is approaching. Please make sure anyone you may know that would be eligible to receive an award submits his or her application by this deadline. The scholarship committee will meet in mid July to determine who the lucky recipients will be for this upcoming fall school year.

Our next meeting is a luncheon on **June 10<sup>th</sup>** at the **Holiday Inn Select** at Poplar and I-240. I look forward to the presentation by **Mr. Mike Archey**. I hope to see each of you in attendance that day!

After this meeting, we will pause during the months of July and August and return in September with our Fall Golf Scramble. ***I wish each of you a safe, great and restful summer and/or vacation during this period*** and I look forward to seeing each of you at the September event.

**Ken Opperman**

## **Golf Tournament**

Thanks to participants, sponsors, volunteers, and all those who made the golf tournament a hit. Here is where we usually recognize individually all of those persons and companies that made the golf tournament a smashing success. This year was such a success that we got a little behind in our paperwork and were not able to include a list in this month's Memphis Traffic Talk. But watch next month's issue, we will try to recognize all of the individuals that made the tournament such a tremendous success.

-Editor

## **New Members**

Welcome to the following new members:

Edward R. Rahn  
Sales  
Pacer Stacktrain  
1040 Crown Pointe Pkwy  
Suite 840  
Atlanta, GA 30338  
770-395-8220

Kells Walker  
Sales Manager  
Hub Group, Tennessee  
57 Germantown Ct.  
Suite 301  
Cordova, TN 38018  
901-752-5860

James P. Rogers  
Branch Manager  
Citicapital Trailer Rental, Inc.  
5115 Highway 78  
Memphis, TN 38118  
901-362-2043

Robert Haborkorn  
V.P. Sales  
16720 South Mozart  
Hazel Crest, IL 60429  
708-331-0094

## **Coming Events**

June 10	Mike Archey, GE Capital
September 9	Fall Golf Outing
October 14	Speaker Meeting
November 11	Election Night/Charles Stemolkas and Dennis Lipscomb, Coors Andy Cole, Exel Transportation Services
December 5	Christmas Party

## **Scholarship Deadline**

The Traffic Club of Memphis has a long history of supporting deserving students obtain higher education. This year's deadline for scholarship applications is fast approaching June 30. Additional information on scholarships can be found at the Club's website or by contacting Dennis Sweeney 901-948-8556.

## **Bylaws Change**

A Bylaws change for the Traffic Club of Memphis has been proposed and a vote will be taken at the next meeting. In the Bylaws, each time "Rail 'n' Road" is mentioned, that will be replaced by "the newsletter". This is to reflect the name change of the newsletter as well as any future changes.

## **HOUSE BILL WOULD LIMIT TRUCK SIZE AND WEIGHT**

New legislation was introduced May 22, 2003 in the House of Representatives which would change the regulatory control of the nation's roadways to the federal government, freeze truck lengths and weights and would prevent the use of long combination vehicles as currently permitted in several states. Known as the Safe Highways and Infrastructure Preservation Act (SHIPA), the bill is being promoted by a group known as the "Coalition Against Bigger Trucks" (CABT).

Proponents of SHIPA claim that legislation is needed to improve roadway safety through the decreased use of overweight truck operations. CABT claims among its members, several national coalition members such as the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and Rails to Trails Nature Conservancy. For more details on the CABT, you can visit their website at [www.cabt.org](http://www.cabt.org).

While proponents of SHIPA maintain that heavier trucks cause more accidents, studies have shown that by increasing truck weight, this actually reduces the number of trucks needed to haul the same amount of goods, thus reducing highway accidents.

Although the League has not reviewed the language contained in the measure, it is believed to be identical to legislation that was introduced in the last Congress (H.R. 3132). The League is preparing its own letter in opposition to SHIPA and is preparing to work with other interested groups which share this position.

## **Train Crews**

The people who work on trains: The members of a train crew: who they are and what they do

(by Andy Sperandio and Kevin P. Keefe)

The people who work on trains have a variety of jobs. Each member of a train crew has a very specific function.

Since train crews do most of their work beyond the observation of supervisors, their duties, responsibilities, and often even their actions are carefully prescribed in the railroad's operating rulebook. Railroad operating rules are a subject unto themselves, but it's often said that every rule in the book is there because somebody tried to do something "the other way" and proved that it wasn't such a good idea.

While some crew members - primarily the engineer and conductor - are required on all types of trains, other positions are unique to either passenger trains or freight trains. For most of the 20th century, freight train crews consisted of five men: a conductor, two trainmen or brakemen, an engineer, and a fireman. Today most road freights operate with just two crew members, a conductor and an engineer. Many local freights that deliver and collect cars along their routes also have one trainman, and some have two, to help with the "ground work" of throwing the track switches and uncoupling the cars.

Here's a look at the different responsibilities of train crew members. The first four descriptions of a train crew's duties are based on the Pennsylvania Railroad's "Rules for Conducting Transportation" of October 28, 1956.

### Conductor

Despite the image of the eagle-eyed engineer with his hand on the throttle, the conductor is the boss of a train crew. He reports to the trainmaster, his immediate management superior, and in operating his train he takes instructions from yardmasters and train dispatchers.

The conductor is responsible for the safe, prompt movement of the train, and for the care of its cargo and equipment. He is also responsible for the actions and safety of the crew, and for reporting any condition that interferes with safe train movements.

In practice this includes knowing what the train is carrying and observing prescribed precautions for hazardous materials, perishables, or any other freight that requires special handling. The conductor is responsible for the accuracy of the consist - that is, that each car is supposed to be there, and its accompanying paperwork is correct.

The conductor must be assured that every car in the train is in good operating condition before starting out, that loads are secure, and that the air brakes are connected and working throughout the train. He supervises the train's over-the-road operation and is responsible for the train operating in accordance with all rules, timetable authority, signal indications, and speed restrictions.

Radios have replaced hand signals with flags and lanterns for communicating with the engineer while the train is under way. When each train had a caboose, however, the conductor had another instrument of authority - an air brake valve by which he could stop the train if necessary.

## Trainmen

Trainmen, or brakemen, also report to the trainmaster, but follow the instructions of the conductor and of "others with proper authority." They're responsible for the caboose identification markers, or the electronic rear-end device. They also have responsibility for protecting the train, which means "flagging" behind and ahead whenever the train is exposed to collision.

The trainmen handle throwing switches, coupling and uncoupling cars and engines, and setting and releasing hand brakes when cars are set out or picked up (that is, subtracted from, or added to, the train). While the train is moving they keep a lookout for potential hazards on the train itself: "hotboxes" (overheating journals), dragging equipment, or shifting loads.

When a caboose is used, usually the senior trainman rides in it. Historically, he was called the flagman or rear brakeman. The other trainman, the "brakeman" or "head brakeman," rides the engine.

## Engineer

The engineer and his assistant (the fireman) are in a different chain of command than the rest of the crew. The engineer's immediate management supervisor is the road foreman of engines - the official charged with overseeing the safe and efficient operation of locomotives. The engineer must nevertheless obey the instructions of trainmasters, yardmasters, dispatchers, and even of roundhouse foremen in locomotive facilities. Of course, he must also obey the conductor of his own train, and be ready to take over the conductor's responsibilities in case the conductor is incapacitated.

Veteran railroaders say that anybody can run an engine, that it's running a train that takes skill and experience. The engineer must manage not only the power of his locomotive but also the coupler slack, momentum, and braking of all the cars coupled behind it. He controls the automatic air brakes on each car of the train by reducing pressure in the train's brake pipe. Before the control information - a pressure wave - reaches the rear of a long train, the brakes on the head end begin to respond. Factor in grades, curves, and speed, and this becomes a task requiring very fine judgment.

Most diesel-electric locomotives also have a secondary braking system called dynamic braking. It switches the electric traction motors to work as generators, and converts part of the train's kinetic energy - its momentum - into waste electrical energy. Dynamic braking helps the engineer control a train's speed on downgrades, but in terms of slack action its effect is just the opposite of the air brake.

Of course, while all this is going on the engineer must also observe whatever movement authority governs his train - timetable, signal, or track warrant - watch the track ahead and the train behind, see that his locomotive is running safely and efficiently, blow whistle or horn signals for grade crossings, and plan ahead for stops to switch or to meet other trains.

## Fireman

In steam days, the fireman did what his job title implies: stoked the fire and maintained steam pressure in the boiler. With dieselization that side of his job disappeared. Early diesel-electrics sometimes required attention on the road, but they soon improved to the point of needing little care except at terminals. The fireman still had responsibilities as the engineer's helper, especially in watching the track and signals ahead and in relaying signals from trainmen. Firemen were also apprentice engineers, allowed to run the train under the engineer's supervision and expected to learn enough to be ready for eventual promotion. Railroad managements quickly decided to phase out their firemen once the steam engines were gone, but only in recent years has the fireman's job been eliminated.

THE TRAFFIC CLUB OF MEMPHIS

# Memphis Traffic Talk

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