On July 27, 2007, CN’s president and chief executive officer made a tragic announcement. This is the text of that announcement:

I have the sad duty to inform you that our colleague Daniel Riels was fatally injured this morning during a switching operation in the Fulton, Kentucky Yard. Mr. Riels was a conductor who had been with CN for five years. He was 46, and from Dresden, Tennessee.
A tragedy such as this affects everyone in the company. I know you join me in expressing our deepest sorrow and condolences to Mr. Riels’ friends and family, including his brother James who works for us as a locomotive engineer out of the Fulton Yard.

We all have a passion for this industry, but it can be an unforgiving one. A tragedy such as today’s reminds us how crucial it is to perform every task, no matter how routine, with all the care and attention you can to ensure the safety of yourself and your colleagues.

E. Hunter Harrison

Daniel W. Riels was 46 and had been with the CN for over 5 years. He was preceded in death by his father, James D. Riels, and is survived by his wife Lisa and his children, Dana Anderson and spouse Titus, Maggie Lewis, Noah Riels and granddaughter Katelyn Anderson; his mother Shirley A. Bell and spouse Don; his sister Linda A. Gray and spouse Tommy; his brothers James W. Riels (CN locomotive engineer) and spouse Marta, Phillip F. Riels and Kenneth E. Riels, as well as his father’s widow, Mary Alene Riels.