

UTU News

The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

WELCOME TO THE "VOICE OF TRANSPORTATION LABOR"

"These railroad conductors and engineers (in Wyoming) tell me that BNSF now requires their employees to work or be ready for work more than 400 hours a month. This policy seems to be something out of the early 1900's. These people need to be fully rested to operate our nation's trains safely. Policies such as these affect the safety of the public also, not just their employees."

-Tipper Gore to Minneapolis labor leaders, November 20, 1999



Unification Poster Inside:
Preserve All Crafts

News & Notes

Life insurance changes

With the implementation of the new NRC/UTU health and welfare plan on January 1, 2000, important changes in the delivery of life insurance benefits for active and retired UTU members covered under the plan also become effective. Active and retired employees of BNSF, Conrail, CSXT, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific now are covered by Minnesota Mutual for life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment benefits provided under the plan. In order to verify and/or update designated beneficiary information, call Minnesota Mutual toll-free at (800) 328-9442. Additional information about this important benefit can be obtained by calling the UTU International at (216) 228-9400, ext. 304.

Two election victories

The UTU Bus Department scored two more representation election victories last month as a fifth unit of van drivers employed by Renzenberger, Inc., selected the UTU as its collective bargaining representative, as did school bus drivers and aides working for Delco Transportation Co. in Darby, Pa. The latest unit of Renzenberger employees to join the UTU are from Shreveport and Lafayette, La., and Longview, Tex. Organizers Brenda Moore, William Koehn, David Lyall and Tom Bisignani were instrumental in the campaign, said Bus Vice President Bernie McNelis. In the effort to organize the Delco Transportation employees, McNelis credited the hard work of Director of Strategic Planning John Nadalin, Alternate Vice President Bus-East and General Chairperson Carolyn Scarsella, Pennsylvania Legislative Director Don Dunlevy, Ed Scott, and Bisignani for the 2-to-1 victory margin in UTU's favor.

Will MTA contract talks affect L.A.'s Democratic Convention?

"We are not about to allow our members to pay the price because the MTA has made mistakes which have put them in this precarious financial condition."

-General Chairperson James Williams

LOS ANGELES - Transit unions here, including the United Transportation Union (UTU), may be heading for a confrontation with cost cutters at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).

To top matters off, observers in Los Angeles worry that the resulting tensions could ripple right into next summer's Democratic National Convention.

The MTA's contracts with its unions, of which the UTU is the largest, expire six weeks before the convention is scheduled to begin on August 14.

The MTA's financial managers recently told the Los Angeles Times they hope to bring costs down by winning concessions from unions on such things as work rules and overtime pay, workers' compensation benefits, and contracting with private firms for work now

NMB Update

As this issue of the *UTU News* goes to press, both the UTU and BLE are awaiting a decision from the National Mediation Board regarding UTU's petition for a representation election on the Union Pacific Railroad. Access the UTU website at <http://www.utu.org> for the latest details.

performed by public employees. They cited a new study showing that the MTA spends 7% more on hourly bus operations than transit agencies in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago.

In a report to the MTA's board, Thomas K. Conner, chief of transit operations, wrote, "Union negotiations will be instrumental for developing a partnership between management and labor in order to reduce the MTA's hourly bus operating cost."

After a hearing at which Conner and others outlined a general plan of cost cutting that included reduced overtime, UTU spokesperson Goldy Norton told the Times: "They want

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BLE agreement okays remotes

BLE helps Montana Rail Link replace workers with remotes

CLEVELAND - The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) has agreed to help the Montana Rail Link replace operating employees with remote controls in some switching operations, a letter from the railroad's president says.

In a December 2 letter to Montana Rail Link employees, Daniel K. Watts, the railroad's president, said that its "labor organization" (BLE) is working with the carrier and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to develop operating plans.

"I realize," Watts wrote, "this decision is of great concern to MRL employees as it could eventually impact our current employment

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UTU fights for VIA Rail jobs

CN Rail agreement ensures wages, benefits continue

CLEVELAND and OTTAWA - The UTU has stepped in to make sure former VIA Rail conductors and assistant conductors, who belonged to the BLE, are not left out in the cold.

When a Canadian arbitrator mandated on November 26 that CN Rail accept the principles of the UTU/VIA/CN Transfer Agreement and allow former conductors and assistant conductors to return to CN Rail, the carrier started plans to appeal the decision on several grounds. One of the major grounds of CN's appeal is the alleged collusion between the BLE and VIA Rail to eliminate the conductor and assistant conductor craft and to use the Transfer Agreement to shift VIA Rail's lia-

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Around the UTU

News from around the U.S. and Canada

Locals 49 & 204, Pueblo, Col.

Local 49 Secretary and Treasurer **Raymond L. Cid** recently forwarded a message from the members of these two locals and their families thanking the UTU's delegates, officers and membership for "the generosity and compassion you have shown" which has "helped us financially and emotionally in our two-plus years struggle with CF&I/Oregon Steel.... For this, we are very grateful. We know with your continued support we will prevail."

Locals 262 & 1462, Boston, Mass.

The two locals shared a Christmas party at the VFW post in Dedham, Mass., last month, according to Local 1462 Chairperson **Joe Motte** and Local 262 Chairperson **Tom Driscoll**. Attending were Massachusetts State Legislative Director **George T. Casey**, Designated Legal Counsel **Robert T. Naumes**, and UTUIA Representative **Dave Murphy**.

Local 305, Lincoln, Neb.

Secretary and Treasurer **Bryan D. Dance** said there has been a good response to the fund set up to help **Leon W. Krusemark** and his wife and daughter, who recently lost their home and possessions to fire. To contribute, call (402) 486-1296.

Local 313, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Member **George P. Micka** recently achieved another milestone in his efforts to preserve the *SS City of Milwaukee*, a carferry that provided a shortcut across Lake Michigan for shippers looking to avoid congestion around Chicago. A non-binding referendum will allow the docking of the National Historic Landmark in the city of Frankfort, Mich., but the referendum is to be reviewed by the Franfort council. The ship can be seen online at <<http://www.carferry.com>>.

Local 469, Madison, Ill.

More than \$600 was raised for a fellow worker in need at last month's Christmas party, said Secretary and Treasurer **John I. Payer**. More than 300 attended the event, including members of **UTU Locals 1405** and **1388** (St. Louis, Mo.), and **1929** (E. St. Louis, Ill.). Attending were State Sen. James Clayborne, State Rep. Tom Holbrook, State Rep. Jay Hoffman, Madison Mayor Emeritus John Bellcoff, UTU Illinois State Legislative Director **Joe Szabo** and Assistant State Legislative Director **John Burner**, as well as UTU Missouri State Legislative Director **Larry Foster**. Sponsors were **The Midwest Railroaders** and Designated Legal Council **Lance Callis**, who are backing the upcoming annual Super Bowl Sunday poker tournament. For information, contact Payer at (618) 344-4519.

Local 587, Greenfield, Mass.

Springfield Terminal Railroad employees enjoyed a Christmas party last month where Local President **Tom Bergeron** served as chief cook and bottle washer, according to UTUIA Special Representative **Dave Murphy**. Attending were General Chairperson **Michael G. Maloof**, Massachusetts State Legislative Director **George T. Casey** and Designated Legal Counsel **Robert T. Naumes**.

Local 807, Tucson, Ariz.

Members are mourning the deaths of retired conductor **Wallace E. Cummins** and conduc-



Joseph A. Morris (left) is presented the UTU Brass Lantern Award by UTU General Secretary and Treasurer Paul C. Thompson at the 1999 UTU Regional Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Training efforts earn Brass Lantern Award

"I was a doubter at first," said conductor Joseph A. Morris, "but if I had to go back to paper, I think I'd cry."

Morris, a member of Local 1915 in Tracy, Cal., was referring to the electronic work report systems used by railroaders. His involvement with their development and in training others to use them brought special recognition at the UTU Regional Meeting this summer in Washington, D.C., where he received the UTU's prestigious Brass Lantern Award.

"I was totally speechless," said Morris of the moment when Paul C. Thompson (then a UTU International Vice President and now International General Secretary and Treasurer), called him onstage to receive the award.

"I had no earthly clue that this was going to be given to me," Morris said of the award. "It was the highlight of my career."

That career began in 1968 when he hired on with the Southern Pacific (SP) as a brakeman. By 1972, he was promoted to conductor, a position he recently returned to after spending eight years traveling the entire SP, and later, Union Pacific, system with Federal Railroad Administration Representative Daniel Norris.

Morris was the first to file conductors' work reports electronically using the Grid Pad system. Because he adapted to it so well, SP asked him to become a trainer. He met FRA's Norris when SP asked the agency to participate in development of an electronic hours-of-service reporting system.

While a speaker at the three UTU Regional Meetings, Morris came to realize he wanted to spend more time with his growing family, and that he missed railroading, prompting his return to the rails.

tor **Robert L. Schuyler**, according to Treasurer **Michael P. Bording**. Brother Schuyler, 50, passed away in November following a brief but courageous battle with brain cancer. The 65-year-old Cummins reportedly died peacefully that same month at home in Tucson.

Local 1391, Lorain, Ohio

Set to close January 1, the local gathered for a Christmas party last month, according to Local Chairperson **Timothy J. Smith**. Members had been employed by the Lake Terminal Railroad until USS/Kobe Steel Co. terminat-

ed its service agreement with the railroad after 104 years, replacing it with a non-union operation. With assistance from UTU International President **Charles L. Little** and Assistant President **Byron A. Boyd, Jr.**, nearly all have since been hired by Norfolk Southern or CSX, and most will become members of Local 586 (Willard, Ohio). Those attending included International Vice President **Robert W. Earley**, Assistant Ohio State Legislative Director **Joseph A. Boda, Jr.**, and a number of members from Local 586, along with their Local Chairperson **Brian E. Mull**. Sponsoring the event were representatives of Designated Legal Counsel **Chattman, Gaines & Stern**.

Local 1405, St. Louis, Mo.

Ann Callis of Troy, Ill., 31-year-old daughter of member and Designated Legal Council **Lance Callis**, recently became the first female judge in the third judicial circuit in Southern Illinois, according to **John I. Payer**, secretary and treasurer of Local 469 (Madison, Ill.).

Local 1715, Charlotte, N.C.

Following elections, local officers now include President **James Shannon**, Vice President **Glennie Holland**, Secretary and Treasurer **Doyle Reed** and Legislative Representative **Greg Ashley**, Shannon reported. Members of the Board of Trustees include **Nannie Sturdivant**, **James Hinton** and **Betty King**.

Local 1741, San Francisco, Cal.

San Francisco (Laidlaw Transit) and San Mateo (A&E Transit) school bus drivers recently ratified their contracts, said General Chairperson **Jim Harford**, successfully achieving their objectives. The San Francisco general committee negotiated a 73-cents-an-hour pay increase to \$19.83 an hour, plus a five-hour-per-week increase in guaranteed hours. Office staff achieved parity with drivers, negotiating immediate pay increases of up to 32%. Meanwhile, the San Mateo general committee negotiated a 26% pay increase over three years, as well as significant improvements in benefits and contract language. Harford, who assisted the newly formed A&E general committee, offered special thanks to A&E Chairperson **Lloyd Beeker**, and to **J. David Lyall** (L-23, Santa Cruz, Cal.) and International Vice President **Bernie McNelis** for their assistance to the A&E committee.

GO-769 (Amtrak)

Roger M. Lenfest, Jr., elected the committee's vice general chairperson, was slated to take office January 1, 2000, when his predecessor, **C.A. Iannone**, vacates the position to serve his first term as UTU International vice president. "I hope to help strengthen the ties between all conductors and assistant conductors on Amtrak," said Lenfest. "General Chairperson Al Suozzo has put me in charge of discipline cases, my strong point, and I intend to pursue them to the greatest degree of success I can." Also assigned to represent the UTU in Operation RedBlock matters, Lenfest began his career as a clerk in 1967 on the Boston & Maine (B&M), became a B&M brakeman in 1970, was elected chairperson of Local 898 (Boston, Mass.) in 1977, and served as full-time B&M general chairperson from 1983 through 1989, when he exercised his seniority with Amtrak. He again was elected Local 898's chairperson in January 1999.

State Watch

News from UTU State Legislative Boards

North Carolina

Former North Carolina Assistant Legislative Director **Richard H. Westbrook Jr.** was elevated to North Carolina State Legislative Director last October following the resignation of **James A. Stem Jr.** (1129).



Westbrook

Westbrook has worked for the Norfolk Southern for the last 26 years, most recently as a yard foreman in Raleigh, N.C.

Besides his duties as legislative director, Westbrook also serves as vice chairperson of UTU General Committee of Adjustment 898 on the NS and as local chairperson of UTU Local 1129 at Raleigh representing engineers, conductors, trainmen and yardmen.

Minnesota

On December 1, members of UTU Local 1000 at Minneapolis, Minn., led an hour-long protest outside BNSF's St. Paul offices demanding an end to the company's "availability policy," reports State Director **John Smullen**.

Rail workers from various crafts and their



A sign hoisted by one of the participants at the UTU-sponsored protest rally outside BNSF's St. Paul offices illustrates the effects of the company's onerous "availability policy" when a union employee is ill.

Iowa



The UTU's Iowa Legislative Board was one of several select groups to serve as sponsors of the Iowa Democratic Party's 1999 Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner in Des Moines, which was attended by both Vice President Al Gore and his presidential primary opponent Sen. Bill Bradley, reports State Director Pat Hendricks. The Iowa Legislative Board, which was the only rail labor organization in attendance, was recognized for its support of the event and was honored with a special photo opportunity with Vice President Gore and his wife, Tipper. Pictured above, from left, are Local 17 Legislative Representative Bill Backoff, Tipper Gore, Local 867 Legislative Representative Steve Bovenmyer, Vice President Gore, and Legislative Representatives Steve Miller (228) and Larry Pearson (306).

family members were joined by U.S. Representative Bruce Vento (D-Minn.) as they marched peacefully in front of the offices, carrying signs which read "BNSF=Meatgrinder" and "Better Not Start a Family."

Vento brought cheers to the crowd when he remarked that "the railroads seem to have confused 1999 with 1899."

Arizona

Legislative Director **Scott Olson** reports that the Arizona State Legislative Board's quadrennial organizational meeting is planned for January 4-5, 2000, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Phoenix, Ariz.

Slated to attend the meeting are U.S. Repre-

sentative Ed Pastor, State Attorney General Janet Napolitano, State Senate Minority Whip Chris Commiski, Arizona AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Chuck Huggins, UTU Designated Legal Counsel **Lloyd L. Rabb**, and UTU Vice President **Dan Johnson III**.

Wyoming

On a recent campaign swing through Wyoming by Tipper Gore, wife of Vice President and UTU-endorsed presidential candidate Al Gore, Acting State Legislative Director **George Bagby** and other UTU representatives were afforded the opportunity to meet with Mrs. Gore to discuss the BNSF's controversial availability policy.

An appalled Mrs. Gore was quoted as saying that "this policy seems to be something out of the early 1900's. These people need to be fully rested to operate our nation's trains safely. Policies such as these affect the safety of the public also, not just their employees." (See quote, Page 1)

"We would like to thank Mrs. Gore for listening to our problems. She was very concerned about the safety aspect of the availability policy and the fact that family life for the modern day railroader is non-existent," Bagby said.



Pictured, from left, are Acting Wyoming Legislative Director George Bagby, Tipper Gore, Local 465 President Bill Montgomery and Local 1280 President Stephen Lovett.

Bus Department

By Bernie McNelis

Non-members: Stand up and join

Many of us are fortunate to work in states that allow unions to have a union shop or agency fee provision in their labor agreements. Then we have the right-to-work states, or as many people say, the "right-to-work-for-less states."

In case you do not know, there are 21 right-to-work states in the U.S. Under the laws governing our railroad-employed sisters and brothers, where union shop agreements are in place, all employees must maintain union membership or pay the equivalent amount of fees to the union. Our bus locals are not as fortunate. Bus locals can only sign up those employees who voluntarily want to join the union in those right-to-work states. Members in those states also have the right to give up their membership at any time. That's the law!

Non-members have no vote, they cannot run for office and cannot attend union meetings. There are many dedicated UTU members in right-to-work states who strongly believe in their union and support their beliefs by joining and remaining members of the union. I can assure those members your local representatives and the International appreciate that dedication and support.

Non-members still have to be represented by the union. Non-members reap the benefits of being unionized and the labor agreement, yet do not pay a dime in dues to support their union. I remind those non-members they do not have the benefits they enjoy because of the goodness of the company! You have the benefits and the protection of the labor agreement because of the union.

I ask those non-members to stand up and support their union by becoming a dues-paying member and then becoming active in their local. We can all have an excuse for not joining. Join and make a contribution, not an excuse.

In unity there is strength.



Yardmasters

By Don Carver

What we can do to strengthen UTU

A new year! What will you do in the coming 12 months to strengthen the United Transportation Union so that it can better serve its members?

Last year was truly a year of challenges. We met those challenges head on and scored many victories for the yardmasters.

Yardmaster membership in the department was increased. Wages and benefits were improved.

The year ahead will be filled with challenges that will, in all likelihood, exceed those of last year.

Under the leadership of President Little and Assistant President Boyd, we will meet the challenges with success.

Each must pledge a greater dedication to unity, strength and cooperation.

If each officer and member will make this pledge, 12 months from now we will be able to comment on our victories in 2000.

December 15, 1999, I was privileged to attend the retirement dinner for Vice President Larry Davis.

His passion for and dedication to the membership are unsurpassed and were memorialized in testimonials.

The United Transportation Union is better as a result of his decades of unselfish service.

Larry possesses a unique blend of intellect, tenacity and humor that cannot be duplicated.

We wish Larry and Linda a long and happy retirement.



Charles L. Little, International President
Byron A. Boyd, Jr., Assistant President
Paul C. Thompson, General Sec./Treas.
James Brunkenhoefer, Nat. Legislative Dir.

The Year 2000

It would be an understatement to say that this will be a big year in rail and transportation labor.

First, we will be negotiating a new national rail contract that affects more than 45,000 members. Our goal is to get you a pay raise that rewards you for being the most productive rail workers in the world, and to get rid of, once and for all, the two-tiered pay system and entry rates. The year 2000 is a far different world than we faced in the early 1980's, and it's our turn – and our time! – to make things right and get our fair share.

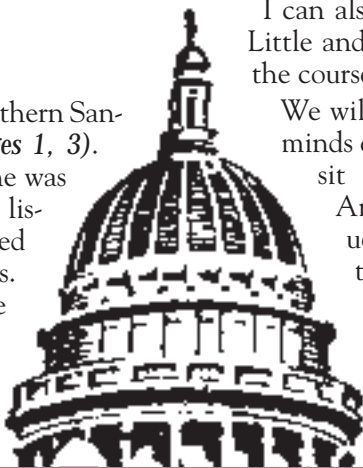
Second, we will be negotiating a new contract with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency that affects more than 4,500 transit members. This union will do everything it can do – and remember the Democratic Convention takes place in Los Angeles next summer when the current contract is up – to make sure our LACMTA members are treated fairly and appropriately.

Third, tens of thousands of our members now have healthcare choice. The UTU is the only rail-transportation union which offers its members working under UTU contracts the option of two national major health plans. The response from our eligible members (unfortunately, the other union is preventing many UTU-E members from participating) has been overwhelming.

Fourth, we will continue to push the unification of all historical operating crafts by seeking a final resolution to our petition before the National Mediation Board for a vote on the Union Pacific Railroad. We firmly believe that it will take the power of one union representing all of the historical operating crafts to be effective for you in the 21st Century.

Tipper for First Lady

Hats off to Tipper Gore who recently told the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad where to stick its Availability Policy (see pages 1, 3). After meetings with railroad workers in Wyoming, she said she was appalled by BNSF's much-maligned policy. Tipper could have listened politely and said little. Instead, she stood up and blasted BNSF management for a policy that is unfair to union members. This is the kind of person rail-transportation labor needs in the White House as First Lady at the beginning of the 21st Century. When the UTU and AFL-CIO endorsed Al Gore for president, we didn't know we'd be getting such a strong friend of labor in Tipper. Now we know.



Nothing dull about 2000

This much I can tell you: The year 2000 will not be dull.

As I write this column, word has just reached me that the Canadian National and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroads have announced a \$19-billion merger.

BNSF is at the root of many major labor problems right now, and I think labor and the shippers are just about "merged out."

So are railroad employees, and BNSF employees in particular who face a brutal and inhuman "availability policy."

CN just gobbled up the Illinois Central where things aren't as clean as CN likes to tell the news media. Expect to hear a lot more on this merger in the days ahead.

Besides dealing with the proposed CN/BNSF merger, the editorial to the left lists several major challenges the UTU faces in the first year of the 21st Century. There will be many more.

What is especially reassuring is that the UTU is in the best position in the last 20 years – both financially and professionally – to make the most of these opportunities.

I can also tell you this: Charlie Little and I will continue to stay the course.

We will continue to speak our minds on all rail, bus and transit issues around North America. We will continue to push for change that benefits UTU members, even if it angers some rail labor leaders who are more concerned about preserving their

own jobs than in protecting yours.

We will also continue to use our strong voice in Washington, D.C., to better your interests.

Over the last four years, the UTU has established itself in Washington as the most influential voice on rail and other transportation issues. Our TPEL is the top political action committee in our industry thanks to you. Now, we intend to use all of our clout for your benefit.

By all that is right, this newspaper would have been the first publication of the unified UTU and BLE. Many said it was the best and fairest unification deal they could recall.

Remember, it was negotiated with the assistance of former AFL-CIO President Tom Donahue and blessed by President John Sweeney.

Instead, we enter the year 2000 with more heated rhetoric.

Brothers and sisters, we would much rather enter this century building one powerful transportation union than fighting. But we think events in Canada at VIA Rail and elsewhere since the UTU has asked the National Mediation Board to sanction a representation election on the Union Pacific Railroad prove beyond a doubt that we are in the right.

Let me remind you that the BLE's top two officers, Ed Dubroski and Clarence Monin, signed their names to the Unification Agreement. The UTU didn't break its word.

We will continue to speak out when we feel it is right.

We are not afraid of the truth.



Byron A. Boyd, Jr.

WASHINGTON WATCH

By James Brunkenhoefer

Raise your right hand if you want to retire earlier

I want to run a little survey. Everybody in rail labor who opposes lowering full retirement to 55 years old with 30 years of service please raise his or her hand. Come on now, raise your hands high because I don't see anyone voting "no."

In fact, just to make sure, let me have a voice vote. All those who don't want a 55/30 retirement plan shout, "No." I guess the silence answers my question.

Here's the dilemma: Everybody would like to retire earlier, but it just isn't that simple. The first problem is getting and paying for healthcare coverage from age 55 until you are eligible for Medicare. I am sure that you would also want healthcare coverage for your spouse and other family members, too. So, you have to give serious thought to how much of your reduced pension check would go towards healthcare, and how that figures into the rest of your retirement plans.

There is also another dilemma. If the Railroad Retirement Board in Chicago started printing checks today and sending them out to an entirely new group of 55/30 retirees, the Railroad Retirement Trust Fund would run out of money in less than seven years. Not one dime to pay any pensions to anybody, even widows.

The only way this could be avoided would be to put more money into the trust fund. The math is real simple: if you have more people retiring sooner and drawing benefits for a longer period of time, then you deplete the fund. So where will the extra



money come from? You and the railroads. Under the BMW/BLE 55/30 plan, your retirement taxes would increase by more than \$4,000 a year, and you wouldn't get a pay raise.

In Washington, every time UTU has brought up the subject of 55/30, the railroads have been unmistakable in their answer. It would be easier to take guns away from NRA members than to get the railroads to voluntarily pay additional taxes.

To get 55/30, we will have to solve the major funding issue. If we can ever get that worked out and then get it signed, sealed, delivered and carved into law, then, and only then, can we start making our plans on how to enjoy our additional time.

Unfortunately, there is a vocal minority that wants to put the cart before the horse. Just like you and me, they really want the 55/30 option. They want it so badly that they overlook the critical funding problem. It appears that their attitude is, "All you have to do is say that you want it and you can have it." Somehow, some of our Brothers and Sisters conveniently ignore a key part of the equation – money.

UTU wants the earliest possible retirement available at the highest possible level of compensation, and we know that you need healthcare to feel secure and that our widows need to be taken care of. We know that you understand that one even semi-catastrophic health problem can wipe out everything you have ever worked for and that adequate healthcare is non-negotiable. We are working as hard as we can to find the solutions.

Railroad retirement at age 55? Things to consider

Editor's Note: Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen International President W. D. Pickett has sent this letter to rail union presidents and asked that it be shared with their memberships in order to further the debate on the future of the Railroad Retirement System.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are writing to provide you with an honest and accurate assessment of the discussions taking place this year with the carriers over railroad retirement issues. We believe this unusual communication is necessary to dispel the widespread confusion and misunderstanding about our position on the issues caused by the careless dissemination of misleading and incorrect information.

The current negotiations represent an unprecedented opportunity to make significant changes in the railroad retirement system for the benefit of current and past railroad workers and their families. This situation exists because the Railroad Retirement Account balance is growing day by day, thanks to the sacrifices in reduced benefits and major tax increases paid by rail workers and retirees over the last 18 years.



Pickett

The carriers want to capitalize on this situation we created. They want to modify the procedures used to invest the money in the Railroad Retirement Account. They believe that a significantly higher amount of interest revenue can be earned if part of these funds were invested in private equities. They believe this additional revenue would allow for a significant reduction in their railroad retirement tax payments.

Labor indicated a willingness to explore the issue of modified investment procedures so long as the carriers understood that they would have to assume the financial risk involved in any change in such procedures, and that any new revenue would be used to make improvements in the Railroad Retirement Act. Namely, labor wants a lower retirement age, improved survivor benefits, other necessary technical changes in the act, and lower direct and indirect employee contributions. The carriers agreed to discuss these issues.

We support reducing the retirement age

We are aware that a reduction in the age at which rail workers can begin receiving full annuities under the Railroad Retirement Act is important to almost everyone and is the most important change we can make. Let us state clearly and unequivocally that we support reducing the age for full annuities to as low as can be achieved while maintaining a solvent railroad retirement system. That includes a reduction to age 55 if that can be achieved while preserving and protecting the financial stability of the Railroad Retirement Account.

At the same time, however, everyone should be aware that no change of any kind could be made to the Railroad Retirement Act unless two conditions are met.

First, the change must be part of a package supported by both rail labor and management. Change can be made only through the legislative process, and in today's political climate Congress will make no change without the full and vigorous support of both parties. Even with joint support, success is not guaranteed.

The second condition is that the change must be part of a package that will leave the railroad retirement system in a stable financial condition. Under no circumstances whatsoever will we support any package unless there is clear and convincing evidence that it meets this second condition. Additionally, it has to be noted that the first step in getting a package through Congress is to get it approved by the House Transportation Committee. That committee is on record that it wants rail labor and management to agree to improve survivor benefits.

Rail labor is now engaged in a legitimate and necessary debate over what size retirement age reduction can be a component of a package that would meet both conditions necessary for enactment into law. Unfortunately, there are some who want to stifle that debate and dictate to all of us what we must do, regardless of the consequences. They will not succeed.

That debate must first acknowledge that a provision allowing employees with 30 years of service to retire at age 55 is enormously expensive.

Even with the additional revenue that would be achieved as a result of modified Railroad Retirement Account investment procedures, the 55 and 30 provision would bankrupt the railroad retirement system unless it were accompanied by a major railroad retirement tax increase of up to \$4,000

annually for each railroad worker.

Without management participation in that cost, workers would pay that increase alone. Even with carrier participation, employees would still have to pay a major part of that increase. We are unwilling to ask our members to pay a tax increase of that magnitude for a benefit that not more than one person in every four is likely ever to be in a financial position to utilize.

Carriers: The issue is not on the table

Another factor that must be weighed in our debate is that, at a meeting on August 31, 1999, rail labor informed the carriers that it wanted to discuss retirement at age 55 for employees with 30 years of service. The carriers brought that meeting to a halt and said the 55 and 30 issue was not on the table for them under any circumstance. They said they would not discuss it, and would not even agree to any further meetings with labor if we intended to bring that provision up again.

Perhaps the carriers are posturing, but one thing is clear. No crisis or deadline is forcing them to the bargaining table. Any package that does not produce some benefit for them in the form of a tax reduction will not get their support. The growing balances in the Railroad Retirement Account could force a future tax reduction without a labor and management agreement. If the carriers decide to wait for that possible eventuality rather than agreeing now to a package that has no benefit for them, and could even cost them money, the current negotiations would collapse. In that case, legislation would be impossible and there would be no change at all in the retirement age.

Thus, it does not appear that a package containing a provision for retirement at age 55 for employees with 30 years of service could meet either of the two conditions necessary for enactment into law. It would not have carrier support. Therefore, the package would not meet the first condition that it have joint support. Without joint support it could not be enacted into law. Moreover, since we are unwilling to ask all of our members to pay the massive new taxes the 55 and 30 provision would cost to secure a benefit for relatively few, we do not see how a 55 and 30 package could be assembled which would meet the second condition of preserving and protecting the financial stability of the railroad retirement system. We will not support a package that threatens the solvency of the railroad retirement system.

At the same time, we are convinced that a package could be assembled which lowers the retirement age and makes other improvements in railroad retirement while still securing joint labor and management support and protecting the financial stability of the railroad retirement system. Such a package of amendments could be financed by the additional revenue it raises from increased investment yield and would not raise anyone's railroad retirement tax.

We believe we should start working toward a package that restores full benefits at age 60.

Working to restore full benefits at age 60

We gave up this benefit as part of the sacrifices we made to shore up the railroad retirement system when it faced bankruptcy in the early 1980s. Because of our efforts, the system is in sound financial condition and it is entirely appropriate that this benefit now be restored.

Moreover, a provision to restore full benefits at age 60 leaves money for other important changes without need of increasing retirement taxes. Survivor benefits could be improved. This is a priority for many members and it would earn support in Congress. The vesting requirement for railroad retirement benefits could be changed from 10 years to 5 years. The railroad retirement maximum, which reduces benefits for spouses of many career railroad employees, could be eliminated. Other important changes could be included. We believe such a package is worth a strong and unified effort by everyone in rail labor.

More than anything else, it is time for everyone to face reality. A package that benefits almost everyone while raising no one's railroad retirement tax is obtainable. A package that is enormously expensive, requires massive new railroad retirement taxes from everyone, and benefits relatively few individuals, is not obtainable. It is clear where our efforts should be directed.

Fraternally,
W.D. Pickett
International President
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

the **POWER** *of* **ONE UU**

**One union with the power
to protect and preserve
all historical operating crafts**

**“We will never allow the dovetailing
of seniority rosters between the historical crafts.”**

“One tradition we hold sacred, and which is guaranteed in our Constitution, is preserving historical craft autonomy. So, let us say again that when the UTU wins a representation election on the Union Pacific Railroad – or any other railroad – the historical crafts of locomotive engineer, conductor, and trainman will continue unchanged. The only change is that one collective bargaining agent – the UTU – will represent all of the historical crafts, instead of two. You can take that promise to the bank. In fact, the BLE even acknowledged that fact at the NMB hearings in July.

“We will never allow the dovetailing of seniority rosters between the historical crafts. Seniority will remain as it always has been when the UTU becomes the sole union representing operating employees on the Union Pacific Railroad, or any other railroad. You can take that to the bank, too.”



Charles L. Little
International President



Byron A. Boyd, Jr.
Assistant President

Confrontation

Continued from page 1

that; whether they get it is another matter." Norton said that a strike during the convention "is something we certainly hope doesn't happen," but added, "there is no guarantee that anything could or won't happen."

Norton said reducing overtime costs would mean revising work rules that the unions fought hard to put into current contracts. "Work rules have always been very important to the UTU...very, very important," he said.

The UTU represents more than 4,350 MTA employees in Locals 1563, 1564, 1565, 1607 and 1608.

"We're prepared to negotiate," said James Williams, UTU general chairperson. "We are not about to allow our members to pay the price because the MTA has made mistakes which have put them in this precarious financial condition."

"UTU International supports our MTA members 110%," said UTU International President Charles L. Little. "We intend to let the Democrats and Al Gore know how important this contract is to our thousands of bus members in Los Angeles. We will do whatever it takes to make sure they are treated right and get a good contract."

The Times pointed out that a long history of contentious negotiations between the MTA

and its unions shows that transit strikes sometimes spill into July and August, even beyond. There have been eight transit strikes since 1960, including a 68-day strike in 1974 that began in August and ended in October, and a nine-day walkout in 1994 that dragged into early August.

The current three-year contract came together in 1997 during the second week of July, virtually on the eve of a strike. At the time, Gov. Pete Wilson considered ordering a cooling-off period that would have extended that year's tense negotiations into September.

So far, MTA board members, several of whom worked to bring the convention to Los Angeles, say they believe potential labor problems will be solved long before Democrats convene in mid-August to pick their presidential nominee, the Times said.

Preliminary talks have already begun, including some conversation about the need to avoid any spillover that would affect the convention, which is seen as a huge economic stimulus to the region, generating \$150 million to \$190 million in direct revenue.

The last thing MTA officials want, they say, is for transit labor unrest to affect the expected 5,000 delegates and alternates, plus their families and friends, who will be in town for the convention.

"The unions are as interested as we are in putting this behind us by the time the convention comes around," said County Supervi-

sor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, head of the MTA board of directors. Burke was a guest speaker at the UTU's Regional Meeting in Los Angeles last year.

"Everyone has an interest in this convention coming off well," said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who also sits on the MTA board. "I don't think anybody's interest would be advanced by blowing up the convention in August."

Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan, who played a prominent role in bringing the convention to Los Angeles, also sits on the MTA board, as does County Supervisor Gloria Molina, a vice chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee.

A study by Altmayer Consulting of Pasadena compared the hourly costs of running an MTA bus with those of transit operations in other large metropolitan areas and found that costs in Los Angeles were 7% higher than in comparable cities during the 1998 budget year.

However, the study was not capable of making a firm comparison because conditions vary on different transit properties in different cities. For example, in New York the police provide protective services at no cost to the transit agency while in Los Angeles the MTA pays for its safety services.

In addition, MTA has the largest fleet of compressed natural gas-fueled buses, which are more expensive to operate and maintain.

BLE remotes

Continued from page 1

levels."

The use of remote-controlled locomotives in switching operations is expected to lead to the loss of scores of jobs for operating employees. The BLE represents all operating employees on the Montana Rail Link.

"It is absolutely astonishing that the BLE would willingly cooperate with Montana Rail Link management to put operating employees out of work because of dangerous remote control operations," said UTU International President Charles L. Little. "In the face of a possible representation election on the Union Pacific Railroad, the BLE has shown its true colors once again by colluding with Montana Rail

Link to put more union employees out of work in favor of unsafe and deadly black boxes."

About the safety of remote control operations, Little said, "UTU has campaigned actively against remote controls in North America and around the world. Lives have been needlessly lost because of remote controls in switching operations, and they are a danger to every operating employee. A study of steel railroads showed that they caused several fatalities. The BLE must be deep in management's pocket to agree that remote controls are safe and good for operating employees."

Montana Rail Link is a spin-off of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad created to cut costs by reducing employment levels.

Little added, "In essence, the BLE is saying that once it has helped the Montana Rail Link implement remote controlled operations, it

will then have a precedent to negotiate remote controls one day soon with Class I railroads that will cost thousands of more jobs. This is a preview of coming attractions for the operating employees on Union Pacific to consider if the NMB schedules an election."

At VIA Rail, Canada's equivalent of Amtrak, the BLE agreed to do away with the craft of conductors. That move cost about 300 jobs, and now engineers can be assigned any duty by VIA management, including operating a locomotive, carrying baggage, or even cleaning toilets.

At the Pacific Harbor Line Railroad (PHL) in California, BLE has also agreed to accept remote controlled operations. BLE says that it's okay for remote controlled operations at PHL because there had never been a craft or class of conductors or brakemen there.

VIA Rail

Continued from page 1

bilities to CN Rail.

On October 22, the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) found the BLE guilty of "improper collaboration" with VIA Rail to destroy the craft of conductor.

On November 26, VIA Rail advised, with the consent of the BLE, that it would sever its full employment relationship with the laid-off conductors/assistant conductors on November 29, which included wage entitlements, benefits and pensions, leaving them in a very precarious financial position.

However, the UTU quickly responded to protect the plight of these former BLE members, who previously had been UTU members. UTU reached an agreement with CN Rail to ensure their wages would be protected while the appeal process moves forward. UTU had the foresight to protect the interests of these members by ensuring the necessary protections were enshrined in the Transfer Agreement in March 1987.

"UTU stepped into the breach to make sure that these former BLE members were not left out in the cold," said UTU Canada Vice President W.G. Scarrow. "This agreement not only protects these former BLE members, but also mitigates a trickle-down effect on UTU members working on CN Rail."

In a December 3 letter, UTU General Chairperson R.A. Beatty wrote:

"As you will recall, a recent arbitrator's award allowed for the transfer of conductors and assistant conductors from VIA to CN.

"Unfortunately, VIA Rail and the BLE, in their zest to rid themselves of these highly qualified individuals, neglected to ensure basic protections.

"VIA Rail notified the conductors and assistant conductors that, as of 72 hours from the notification of the arbitrator's award, they would be cut off all wages and benefits. Given the shameful conduct of VIA Rail and the BLE in this matter, CN Rail and the UTU have agreed to take immediate actions to assist/represent these individuals.

"The parties, CN and the UTU, entered into an agreement without prejudice to protect the

conductors and assistant conductors, this even though the arbitrator's award is under appeal. We will keep you informed of any action taken in this regard."

Scarrow said that employees flowing back from VIA Rail would be placed on a "non-essential" board, and paid at the same rate that they were receiving at VIA Rail. They will continue to receive full wage and benefit protection. In addition, they will not displace UTU members on CN Rail. On the other hand, members on CN Rail will retain full rights to the positions they are now entitled to.

"The UTU had contested the release of the arbitrator's decision until such time that the parties could iron out the adverse effects, the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) directive, and the ongoing arbitration dispute regarding locomotive engineer training," Scarrow said.

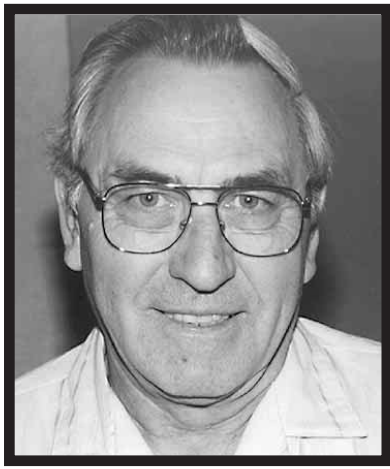
The BLE had put its support behind VIA Rail, and requested that the arbitrator release his decision immediately. VIA Rail is Amtrak's equivalent in Canada. The dispute arose because CN Rail refused to accept surplus BLE members, who were formerly UTU conductors and assistant conductors, from VIA Rail.

Voices: Do you use the Internet?



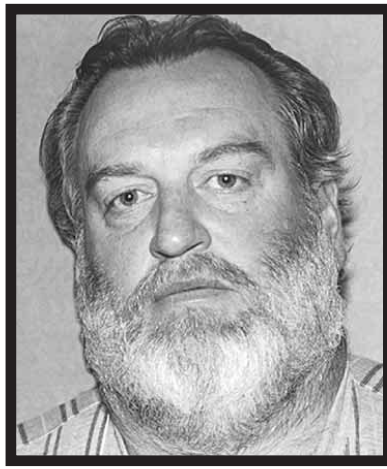
Keith W. Carlson
L-701, Vancouver, B.C.

"I'm a local chairperson for road conductors and trainmen on Canadian National. I use the Internet almost exclusively for union work, sending e-mail and checking the UTU and BLE websites. You probably get more information off the website than from any printed publications. By the time the print comes out, I'm already aware of the news from the website. You can also download arbitration cases from the UTU site without a password, which you can't do from the BLE site. I know for a fact a lot of BLE members go to our website for information."



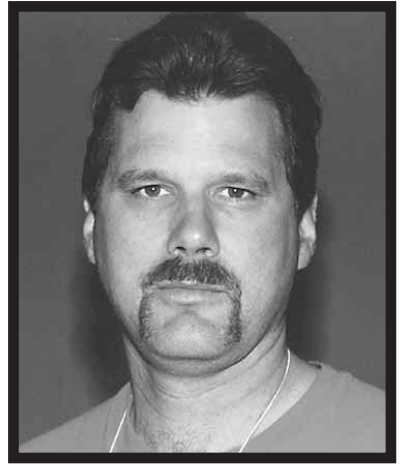
Larry Schweigert
L-1813, W. Colton, Cal.

"I don't own a computer, and I'm really not interested in owning one. I'm a switchman from the former Southern Pacific now working on the Union Pacific, and have been railroading nearly 38 years. I use a computer to see who's on a certain job, to check in-bound train line-ups, and to tie-up. If I didn't need to use a computer for work, I wouldn't use one at all. They're starting to control people's lives. I don't feel I'm missing anything by not being connected to the Internet. It's just another expense I can do without."



Shane Yarger
L-265, Pocatello, Idaho

"I work on the Union Pacific and first went online less than two years ago. I check the UTU International's website between each trip. It's a valuable tool and one of our best assets. I check the UTU Daily News Digest, and access the awards and contracts. Nearly every trip, I tell others who have no Internet access about the things I've learned online. What I like about the UTU's site versus the BLE site is that it's open to everyone. I think the UTU site needs a page where members can ask general questions, and the answers could be posted to benefit everyone."



Ian McFadden
L-23, Santa Cruz, Cal.

"I work for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, and we're very involved with the Internet. I've been online for eight years, and our local had one of the first UTU websites. It's an excellent way to promote labor. It's like having a complete library at your fingertips, as well as a portal to the entire world. I can reach other UTU locals, as well as ATU locals, which is helpful during contract time when I want to see what others have done. I like the UTU International's website, but the Supply Department information should be updated."

TPEL HONOR ROLL

Individuals who have begun contributing to TPEL or increased their donations to \$100 or more per year within the last two months.

Name	Local	City	Name	Local	City	Name	Local	City
PLATINUM CLUB (\$1,200 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Cochran, Robert A. 200 North Platte, NE			*Simone, William L. 830 Harrisburg, PA		
Boer, John H.	1376	Columbus, OH	Fletcher, Jeffrey L.	200	North Platte, NE	Carpenter, James W.	835	Bakersfield, CA
DOUBLE DIAMOND CLUB (\$600 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Gonzales Sr., J.R.	200	North Platte, NE	Cerda Jr., Daniel C.	835	Bakersfield, CA
Shelley, James P.	556	Tacoma, WA	Hampton, Chad	200	North Platte, NE	Reynolds, Blythe	835	Bakersfield, CA
DIAMOND PLUS CLUB (\$400 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Hinds, Kevin L.	200	North Platte, NE	Ruell, Derek M.	835	Bakersfield, CA
*Johnson, Carol E.	283	Portland, OR	Jorgensen, Kris	200	North Platte, NE	Wise, James H.	835	Bakersfield, CA
Tomten, James E.	311	LaCrosse, WI	Lawrence, Bryan J.	200	North Platte, NE	Womack Jr., Earl A.	835	Bakersfield, CA
*George, James	462	Pine Bluff, AR	Lawson, Justin	200	North Platte, NE	Wren, Ronald W.	835	Bakersfield, CA
Preyer, Talmon A.	656	N. Little Rock, AR	Leahy, Jeremy J.	200	North Platte, NE	Stafford, Paul D.	891	Whitefish, MT
Link, Roger L.	782	Asheville, NC	Macek, Brian L.	200	North Platte, NE	Pollard, Michael L.	942	Florence, SC
Williams, Byron A.	1785	Santa Monica, CA	Maseberg, Mark W.	200	North Platte, NE	Weaver, Stacy D.	942	Florence, SC
UTU Auxiliary Lodge	445	Roseville, CA	Mayberry, Jeb T.	200	North Platte, NE	*Mast Sr., Richard G.	945	Lajunta, CO
DOLLAR-A-DAY CLUB (\$365 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Merritt, Troy T.	200	North Platte, NE	Cooper, James R.	947	Chaffee, MO
Wilkins, Stephen C.	17	Marshalltown, IA	Schmidt, Jay L.	200	North Platte, NE	Pemberton, James L.	965	Dallas, TX
Skidmore, Charles	204	Pueblo, CO	Sedlacek, Anthony C.	200	North Platte, NE	Fender, Albert D.	998	Waycross, GA
Christian, Larry F.	781	Shreveport, LA	Sheldon, Raymond L.	200	North Platte, NE	Griffin, Patrick A.	1016	Enid, OK
Kreitz Jr., George	800	Jersey City, NJ	Simpson, Wade A.	200	North Platte, NE	Hinton, Alfonso L.	1016	Enid, OK
Watson, Clarence J.	855	Spokane, WA	Sloggett, Kent	200	North Platte, NE	Wiseman, C.M.	1016	Enid, OK
Bruce III, C.L.	1011	Hamlet, NC	Deherrera Jr., Melvin	204	Pueblo, CO	Spencer, Andrew L.	1129	Raleigh, NC
Corbin, Stephen M.	1011	Hamlet, NC	Wilson, Jeffrey K.	283	Portland, OR	Worsham, Gordon E.	1261	Atlanta, GA
Thigpen, James V.	1011	Hamlet, NC	Fritter, Gregg L.	303	Springfield, MO	*Carter, Richard D.	1289	Tulsa, OK
Ogelsby, Walter F.	1138	Miami, FL	Corbell, Linda	305	Lincoln, NE	Shand, James G.	1289	Tulsa, OK
*Kennedy, Edward C.	1375	Philadelphia, PA	Gomez, Angel L.	305	Lincoln, NE	Chelette, Joseph S.	1337	New Orleans, LA
DIAMOND CLUB (\$300 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Sindelar, Terrence J.	305	Lincoln, NE	Bauer, Edward H.	1388	St. Louis, MO
*Floan, George F.	5	Kansas City, MO	Gilbertson, Dennis L.	311	LaCrosse, WI	Weidman, Harley	1403	Kansas City, MO
Clark, Kent W.	31	San Jose, CA	Beesley, Jeffrey J.	322	Milwaukee, WI	*Walker, Sam F.	1458	DeQuincy, LA
Klein, J. Kevin	98	San Luis Obispo, CA	Cassity, James D.	349	Kansas City, MO	Asbell, Joseph D.	1502	Wildwood, FL
Baggett, Samuel A.	490	Princeton, IN	Hayes, Richard A.	394	Albany, NY	*Ferguson Jr., Howard	1532	Kansas City, KS
Calhoun Jr., Wm. R.	490	Princeton, IN	Radcliff, Anthony B.	464	Arkansas City, KS	McLaughlin, D.D.	1594	Upper Darby, PA
Colvin, Donald C.	490	Princeton, IN	Donnell, Patrick S.	490	Princeton, IN	Jackson, Sandra K.	1620	Elkhart, IN
Stuckey, Alan H.	490	Princeton, IN	Lewis Jr., Gary T.	490	Princeton, IN	Bouwens, Dennis	1626	Anchorage, AK
Gaona, John R.	835	Bakersfield, CA	Meade, Grant F.	490	Princeton, IN	Carbaugh, Larry L.	1626	Anchorage, AK
Montgomery, S.A.	835	Bakersfield, CA	Neyhouse, Daniel R.	490	Princeton, IN	Smith Jr., K.E.	1626	Anchorage, AK
Black, John W.	1245	Atlanta, GA	Sisk, Joseph D.	490	Princeton, IN	Koehn, William J.	1670	Laredo, TX
Pompa, Paul G.	1289	Tulsa, OK	Smith, Ryan	490	Princeton, IN	Stringer, Cherise A.	1785	Santa Monica, CA
*Kennedy, Edward C.	1375	Philadelphia, PA	Brown, Everett R.	496	Portsmouth, OH	Browning, Jimmie	1869	Williamson, WV
*Steiger, Gerald L.	1503	Marystown, KS	Crabtree, Warren M.	496	Portsmouth, OH	Lyons Sr., Gerald L.	1881	Baltimore, MD
Brownawell, G.D.	1532	Kansas City, KS	Roof, Marvin	496	Portsmouth, OH	Ehmann, Gregory G.	1928	Toledo, OH
Bottles, Raymond C.	1638	Cleveland, OH	Brown, Langhorne E.	511	Atlanta, GA	O'Donnell, Marjorie	1951	Albany, NY
*Miller, Donald Q.	1732	San Jose, CA	*Griner, Joseph N.	511	Atlanta, GA	UTU Auxiliary Lodge	16	Columbus, OH
GOLD CLUB (\$100 OR MORE PER YEAR)			Roach, Eric C.	511	Atlanta, GA	UTU Auxiliary Lodge	648	Alton, IL
Jolley, Darrell P.	2	Toledo, OH	Carter, Curtis W.	581	Green Bay, WI	UTU Auxiliary Lodge	655	Wickliffe, OH
Lee, Matthew L.	17	Marshalltown, IA	Schuessler, Michael N.	581	Green Bay, WI	Walter, Edythe	Aux793	Minerva, OH
Perez, Arturo E.	110	Laredo, TX	Smits, Steven F.	581	Green Bay, WI	UTU Auxiliary Lodge	800	Tucson, AZ
Ruiz Jr., Jose E.	110	Laredo, TX	Van Dyck, George M.	581	Green Bay, WI			
Silguero, Ricardo	110	Laredo, TX	Johnson, Troy L.	594	Mineola, TX			
Hankins, Del R.	115	San Francisco, CA	Blankenship Jr., T.V.	629	Roanoke, VA			
Birdwell, Jeff R.	200	North Platte, NE	Jones, Thomas M.	656	N. Little Rock, AR			
Bullock, Cort D.	200	North Platte, NE	Stafford, Micah I.	656	N. Little Rock, AR			
			*McKinney, Wayne O.	674	Augusta, GA			
			Lyons, Shawn M.	730	Great Falls, MT			
			*Rader, Carl E.	750	Knoxville, TN			
			Talley Jr., Jerry D.	781	Shreveport, LA			
			Thompson, DeWayne	781	Shreveport, LA			

* = Retired Member

Discount fares to meetings

UTU members planning to attend one of the union's Regional Meetings this year should know that discount air fares to the Regional Meeting cities have been arranged by the International.

The 2000 Regional Meetings are:

June 12-14 in Reno, Nevada
July 10-12 in Birmingham, Ala.
August 28-30 in Minneapolis

Members wishing to inquire about discount air fares to Reno, Nev., or Birmingham, Ala., should call Southwest Airlines toll-free at 1-800-433-5368. Identify yourself as with the UTU and refer to I.D. Code G0530 for Reno or I.D. Code G0540 for Birmingham, Ala.

Those inquiring about discount air fares to Minneapolis should call Northwest/Continental Airlines toll-free at 1-800-328-1111 and refer to Code: World File NMPFR.

*For the lowest fare, a Saturday night stay is required.

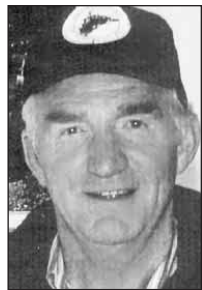
Monthly winner

This month's lucky winner of his choice of any item of apparel bearing the UTU logo is **Victor F. Polich** of Milan, N.M. Brother Polich is a retired member of Local 113 in Winslow, Ariz., which represents workers employed by the BNSF. These items are awarded every month by random drawing as a show of appreciation to the many members who have supported the UTU throughout the years. Congratulations to Brother Polich!

Senior News

Retiree pays tribute to Newfoundland Railway

As a retiree who worked for the now-defunct Newfoundland Railway when it made its last run in 1988, and as a member of a family that included 25 railroaders across three generations, Brendan Dicks felt that his knowledge of the past could probably fill a book.



Brendan D. Dicks

He was right, and the book he wrote, *The Railway Ties... That Bind*, presents a symbolic journey from Port aux Basques to Humbermouth Station that pays tribute to the traditions, history, culture, equipment, and most of all, the people who built, ran, and ultimately dismantled the Newfoundland Railway.

A member of the UTU Retiree Program and Local 713 in Halifax, N.S., Dicks is a founding member of the Railway Society of Newfoundland. The group created a static museum display at a former station that now features two locomotives and assorted pieces of rolling stock that once thundered across the island. Secretary and treasurer of the society, Dicks said about 8,500 tourists visited the station in the past year alone.

"The book is a natural extension of my experiences and my family's involvement with the railway," Dicks said.

His grandfather, Samuel, who began rail service in 1904 as an engineer, helped lay parts of the narrow-gauge line that his descendants, three generations later, would help dismantle.

His five sons and six grandsons went to work on the railway, including Brendan Dicks, who began as a brakeman in 1961, became an engineer in 1975, and eventually retired as an employee of Canadian National in 1996.

Dicks joined the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and later served as secretary and treasurer of UTU Local 1350 (now consolidated into Local 713) from 1979 to 1985, as well as local chairperson when his services were needed from 1990 to 1991.

Those interested in obtaining a copy of his book, which includes 220 pages of text and 330 photographs, can contact Dicks by writing to him at 257 Humber Rd., Corner Brook, NF A2H 1H6, by calling (709) 634-5658, or by sending e-mail to <brendanddicks@hotmail.com>.

Prescription drug prices fuel rising senior healthcare costs

The average Medicare beneficiary in 1999 spent as much on prescription drugs as on physician care, vision services and medical supplies combined, according to a report released last month by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Meanwhile, a study published last month by Families USA, a group advocating the addition of a prescription drug benefit to Medicare coverage, found that prices for the drugs most often used by seniors are rising far beyond the rate of inflation.

According to the AARP report, older Americans last year spent an average of about 19% of their incomes, or more than \$2,400, on health care. That total included out-of-pocket expenses not covered by Medicare, such as money spent on drugs, eyeglasses and dental care.

The AARP, which also supports adding drug coverage to Medicare, released its report at a news conference in Des Moines, Iowa, where the presidential nominating process begins this month. Democratic presidential candidates Al Gore and Bill Bradley both have

already referred to the AARP report while renewing their calls to add a drug benefit to Medicare.

The AARP report noted that out-of-pocket health costs for a quarter of seniors will reach \$3,000 or more, excluding the costs of home healthcare and long-term nursing care.

Spending on prescription drugs represents about 17% of seniors' out-of-pocket health costs, the AARP said, and is the single largest component of health costs after insurance premium payments.

The AARP study also found that those with Medicare supplemental insurance policies, also known as Medigap policies, spent an average of \$3,250 on out-of-pocket health costs, partly because of the cost of Medigap premiums.

According to Families USA, the wholesale prices for 50 prescriptions commonly filled by seniors in 1998 rose 6.6%, more than four times the year's 1.6% overall inflation rate.

Between January 1994 and January 1999, prices for the same prescriptions rose 25.2%, more than double the 12.8% overall inflation rate for the five-year period, the report said.

The consumer advocacy group also said median profits reported by drug companies examined in its report hovered around 20% in 1998.



CN Pensioners notes new benefits available

Members of the CN Pensioners' Association will be the beneficiaries of some new discounts this year, according to the organization's Executive Secretary Don Thomas.

Choice Hotels Canada, Inc., Canada's largest lodging chain with a global network of more than 3,800 locations, is offering association members a minimum 15% discount at eight of its subsidiary lodging establishments, including Comfort Inns, Clarion Inns and Econo Lodge.

Meanwhile, for members in Alberta and British Columbia, London Drugs is offering enrollment in their Enhanced Pharmacy Services program, while GAN Canada is offering all members an opportunity to participate in a group insurance program.

For more information about these benefits and others, contact Thomas by calling (613) 352-1121.

R. M. Darsie dies

Richard M. Darsie, 68, a longtime general chairperson for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen (BLF&E) and the UTU on the former Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad (C&NW), passed away November 13 at his home in Roseville, Minn., according to Dave Riehle, chairperson of Local 650 in Minneapolis, Minn.

Brother Darsie began his rail career as a fireman on the Omaha Railroad at age 23, and joined BLF&E Lodge 450 in August 1954.

He is survived by his wife, Rosemary, a son, and two daughters.

THE FINAL CALL

Following are the names of members of the UTU Retiree Program who have died recently, according to reports received at UTU International Headquarters. These brothers and sisters will be missed by their many friends and by fellow UTU Retiree Program members.

Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State
2	Rehberg, Herman F.	Toledo, OH	338	Payne, Earl E.	Tracy City, TN	832	Scoville, Howard W.	Stevens Pt., WI	1400	Major, Marcel J.	Island Pond, VT
6	McReynolds, Buddy L.	Kingman, AZ	504	Kaczmarek, Joseph P.	Flushing, OH	832	Thompson, Thomas M.	Superior, WI	1517	Bastin, Beacher V.	Cincinnati, OH
6	Whiteside, Eugene W.	Indianapolis, IN	511	Hairston, Angus E.	Loganville, GA	904	Hilderbrandt, John E.	Evansville, IN	1570	Dittner, Lavern E.	Harbor, OR
150	Durdan, John	Troy, MI	527	Hoppes, Glenn R.	Parsons, KS	927	Rack, Bernhard	Indian River, MI	1614	Darsie, Richard D.	Woodbury, MN
194	Holmes, Paul V.	Orlando, FL	556	Benson, James C.	Tacoma, WA	1007	Crabtree, Donald J.	Nedrow, NY	1736	Bengtsson, Erik A.	Waterford, WI
202	Decker, Dean L.	Denver, CO	650	Elvin, Walter E.	Worthington, MN	1035	Embry, James K.	Plant City, FL	1917	House, Wilbur D.	Wellston, OH
215	Kell, James R.	Chambersburg, PA	653	Schultz, Clarence	Matteson, IL	1058	O'Brien, James E.	Nampa, ID	1917	McKenzie, F. D.	Cincinnati, OH
215	Stewart, Arden L.	Mechanicsburg, PA	694	Young, Garry L.	Dunsmuir, CA	1081	Short, Eugene T.	Ferndale, CA	1929	Campbell, Ivan O.	Alton, IL
233	Oswood, Donald C.	Bg. Stone Cty., SD	734	Tickfer, James D.	Niles, MI	1241	Reese, Earl L.	Miles City, MT	1947	Houton, Paul	Lake Charles, LA
291	Williams, Paul A.	Conneaut Lake, PA	762	Brown, Edgar B.	Montgomery, AL	1294	Roberts, Stanley C.	St. George, UT			
300	Lynch, Bernard J.	Lester, PA	772	Belue, George D.	Florence, AL	1376	Akers, Louis C.	Batavia, OH			

UTUIA Scholarship: The Key to Success

A message from UTU International
President Charles L. Little

Education is the key to success. The key to an education can be a United Transportation Union Insurance Association (UTUIA) scholarship.

With college enrollment time upon us, we strongly urge all eligible persons to take a few minutes to fill out the UTUIA scholarship application form printed below and apply for a UTUIA scholarship. It will be one of the smartest things they ever do.



This is the 27th year UTUIA is making available 50 continuing \$500 scholarships for its members and the sons, daughters and grandchildren of its members. We are very proud of our scholarship program, a pride that comes from helping thousands of students over the years.

We realize the amount awarded, \$500 a year, doesn't meet the full cost of the recipient's education, but in this way we can help a larger number of students with educational costs. They may use the scholarship money for tuition, learning materials or other related expenses.

UTUIA scholarship winners will receive the full amount of the award each year for up to four years of undergraduate study as long as they maintain a satisfactory academic record.

With a UTUIA scholarship, we hope to give the recipient the opportunity for a full-time education instead of a part-time education, day school instead of night school, higher education instead of basic training.

We are proud also in knowing that UTUIA scholarship recipients are enrolled in some of the finest and most prestigious colleges and universities in the world. We also can point proudly to the many achievements of past scholarship winners who have contributed so much to our great nation.

UTUIA is proud and happy to provide these scholarships for they are an opportunity for achievement. The success of deserving students is our success and the benefits are boundless. The key to success is education, and the key to education is a UTUIA scholarship. Take a minute to apply for the chance of a lifetime.

As the saying goes: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

Charles L. Little

Charles L. Little
International President



DISTRIBUTION

Fifty continuing \$500 scholarships are awarded each year upon verification of enrollment for the fall term. The scholarships are prorated according to the number of UTU and UTUIA insurance members in each of nine districts. Names of the 50 scholarship winners for the academic year 2000-2001 will be drawn at UTUIA Headquarters in Cleveland after the March 31, 2000, deadline for submission of applications.

ELIGIBILITY

Requirements for a scholarship applicant are that he or she be at least a high school senior or equivalent; age 25 or under; be a UTU or UTUIA-insured member, the child or grandchild of a UTU or UTUIA-insured member, or the child of a deceased UTU or UTUIA-insured member (if member is deceased please include date of death). UTU or UTUIA-insured member must be a U.S. resident.

Applicants also must be accepted for admittance or already enrolled for at least 12 credit hours per quarter or semester at a recognized institution of higher learning (university, college or junior college, nursing or technical school offering college credit). Graduate schools are not included. Families of full-time International officers are not eligible.

AWARDS

Scholarships are awarded on the basis of chance, not grades. A UTUIA scholar, however, is expected to maintain a satisfactory academic record to keep the scholarship for the full four years.

ADMINISTRATION

The UTUIA Scholarship Committee decides whether individual scholarships should be continued or discontinued. Each successful applicant must provide annual proof of eligibility on or before a deadline set by the scholarship committee to qualify for a continuing award. The day-to-day management of the program is handled by the office of the UTUIA General Secretary and Treasurer.

INVEST IN THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

The UTUIA Scholarship Program is an open program. All eligible students, regardless of previous grades or future plans that don't happen to include college, are strongly urged to apply, to take five minutes to invest in the chance of a lifetime, the chance for a better future.

APPLICATION FORM 2000-2001 UTUIA SCHOLARSHIP

(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT)

STUDENT'S NAME _____ BIRTH DATE _____
(LAST) (FIRST) (M.I.) (M/D/Y)

MEMBER'S NAME _____ UTU Local # _____
(LAST) (FIRST) (M.I.) or
UTUIA Local Unit #

ADDRESS OF MEMBER _____

OCCUPATION _____

EMPLOYER _____

STUDENT'S RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER _____

COLLEGE YEAR, 2000-2001 Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Signature of Student

Signature of Member

(Please include date of death if member is deceased; Please leave address label attached to back of application)

Applications must be received **no later than March 31, 2000.**

Please submit **only one application per student.** Incomplete, photocopied or duplicate applications will not be accepted.

The application form printed on this page is the official UTUIA scholarship application form and is the only one you will receive. If you need another application form, request one from the address below. Please include your UTU local or UTUIA local unit number with your request.

Complete the form above, cut it out (leaving address label on reverse side, if possible), and mail to:

UTUIA Scholarship Program
United Transportation Union Insurance Association
14600 Detroit Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44107-4250

UTUIA Scholarship Districts

District	Scholarships
1 Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont	5
2 Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania	5
3 Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia	8
4 Indiana, Michigan, Ohio	6
5 Illinois, Wisconsin	4
6 Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas	5
7 Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota	6
8 Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah	8
9 Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming	3



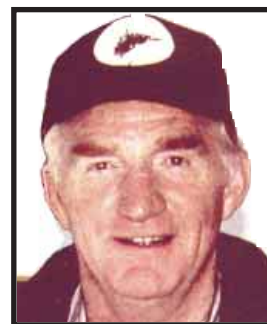
UTU News Look Inside



1 General Chairperson James Williams says mistakes made by the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Administration shouldn't be taken out on UTU members.



3 Tipper Gore, wife of UTU-endorsed Presidential candidate Al Gore, expresses concern for UTU members working under the BNSF's Availability Policy.



10 Retiree Program member Brendan Dicks of Local 713 felt that his knowledge of Newfoundland's railroad operations could probably fill a book. He was right.

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The UTU News is now available in a web-optimized format that includes all pictures and text. Look for it and the UTU Daily News Digest at www.utu.org

ULTIMATE PAR...

Providing the Flexibility Your Family Needs

UTUIA is proud to provide a permanent whole life policy that lets you choose the length of your premium paying period – whether its one year or 30!

Unlike other whole life insurance, the flexibility of ULTIMATE PAR is in the premium-paying period. This policy can be created to allow premiums to be paid for shorter durations than the lifetime of the insured. A limited premium-paying pattern allows you to make payments during the period when your earning power is high and relieves you of payments during later years when income decreases, such as at retirement.

Under a limited premium-paying pattern, you can create a policy which is paid-up with a single premium, or the premium can be spread over any number of years you select.

ULTIMATE PAR is especially suited for adults who wish to create a paid-up policy as quickly as possible, or to parents or grandparents who wish to provide a paid-up policy for their children or grandchildren. Make your own choice about the schedule of your premiums by choosing UTUIA's ULTIMATE PAR.



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Information, Please



I would like more information on UTUIA's ULTIMATE PAR policy. (Please Print)

Full Name _____ Sex _____ Date of birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone Number with Area Code _____ UTU Local Number _____

If the information is for someone other than yourself, please provide full name, sex, date of birth, and relationship of the person for whom the information is requested on the line below.

Full Name _____ Sex _____ Date of Birth _____ Relationship _____

Complete and mail to: UTUIA Sales Dept., 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250

1/00