



Transportation Division News

Volume 51 • Number 2 • June 2019

International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers

Previsich to subcommittee: FRA has abdicated safety role

Testimony comes in wake of the agency pulling NPRM in late May

SMART Transportation Division President **John Previsich** appeared before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials to testify on the state of the railroad workforce.

Rather than use prepared written testimony for his opening statement, he delivered a response to the testimony given earlier in the hearing by Federal Railroad Administration Administrator Ron Batory. In his statement, President Previsich told the representatives about issues crucial to the rail labor workforce, including what he described as FRA's "abdication" of its safety oversight duties in the wake of its withdrawal last month of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding a minimum train crew size.

"FRA's decision to abandon railroad workers and the safety of the American public is devastating to me personally and to the people that I represent," Previsich said. "This FRA went back



SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich delivers testimony June 20 before the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials in Washington, D.C.

"FRA's decision to abandon railroad workers and the safety of the American public is devastating to me personally and to the people that I represent."

— Transportation Division President John Previsich

on all of the information, all of the studies, and all of the work of the prior administration and rescinded its notice of proposed rulemaking — rescinded the notice that

was going to guarantee a certain minimum level of staffing for trains carrying hazardous materials, three miles long, technology not yet in place to diminish or

displace any of the crew staffing people that are already there."

Previsich lent strong sup-

Continued on Page 5

Inside

- FRA attempts to derail state 2PC laws, **PAGE 3**
- GP Sellers: We need to get momentum for Safe Freight Act, **PAGE 4**

On the TD website

- John Previsich's testimony on video and in text.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRANSCONTINENTAL RR



This issue's centerspread on **Pages 6 and 7** features images and facts about the historic moment when the first railroad crossing the continent was established on May 10, 1869.

Around the SMART TD

Local 1294, Milford, Utah



Pictured, from left, Utah State Legislative Director Jay Seegmiller, former Local Chairperson Chris Barnes, Legislative Representative and Local Chairperson Derek Barnes, retired State Legislative Board Chairperson Roger Barnes, Secretary & Treasurer Dustin Thomas and Local Chairperson Cache Merriam.

Retiree **Roger Barnes** was recognized for his decades of service to the members of the United Transportation Union and SMART TD as a legislative representative and local chairperson for Local 1294 and as the longtime chairman of the Utah State Legislative Board.

Local 1687, Belen, N.M.

Just after midnight on April 11, BNSF Railway LCA Secretary and Local Trustee **Carlos Barela** sustained life-altering injuries while switching in the Belen Yard in New Mexico. Local 1168 Local Chairperson **Tanner Griffitt** and other local chairpersons have organized a GoFundMe account on Barela's behalf. The page states that due to the severity of his injuries that Brother Barela may never



Barela

be able to work or provide for himself or his family again. To donate to the online fundraiser that has been established to help Barela and his family, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/relief-and-aid-for-carlos-barela>.

Local 7, North Platte, Neb.



Local President **Calvin Songster** reports that members of his local purchased and donated a bicycle for the annual Guardians of the Children bike giveaway this spring. Vice Local Chairperson **James Courtney**, left, and Local Chairperson **Jaide Sutton** gave the bike away at the event.

Local 23, Santa Cruz, Calif.



Members of the local showed solidarity alongside striking University of California — Santa Cruz employees in mid-April.

Local 1929, E. St. Louis, Ill.

Sad news was reported out of Local 1929 (East St. Louis, Ill.) with the passing of Layla Lynn Thomas, the 2-year-old daughter of member **Craig Thomas**, after a sudden illness. Layla was rushed to the emergency room March 18 and diagnosed with Influenza A. Her condition developed into a rare condition called necrotizing encephalopathy. After more than a month in intensive care, she passed away April 23 with family at her side. Thomas, who just joined SMART Transportation Division in January, has not been with Kansas City Southern long enough to qualify for vacation, FMLA or personal time. An online fundraiser at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/u982sb-prayers-for-layla> has been established to assist Thomas and his family in this time of unimaginable grief. A donation of up to 30 personal leave days for members to help Thomas also has been established by General Chairperson **Sam Habjan** in cooperation with KCS.



Layla

"This will take quite some time for Craig to be able to return to work," said **Adam Zink**, 1929's local chairperson. "It would be great to have railroaders help him in his time of need."

GO-329 (Wisconsin Central)

General Chairperson **Brian Fattore** (GO-329) reported the ratification of a new contract for yardmasters with the Wisconsin Central Ltd. (former Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company). The agreement secures back pay increases of 2% in 2016, 2% in 2017 and 2.5% in 2018 and a pay increase of 3%, effective July 1 of this year.

Sons of member save child from drowning

The sons of member **Byron Watson** have been labeled as heroes after saving a 4-year-old girl from drowning while at a birthday party March 24 at the Santa Maria Beach in Santa Cruz, California. The boys' mother, Nicole, who was watching over her boys while they were swimming in the ocean, recounted the story. "I was watching my boys, but I looked away for a second and missed the boys seeing her drown. Rhys — he's 7 — said 'I think that girl is drowning' to Bryce, who is now 11, and Bryce said, 'No she's just playing.' And Rhys said, 'No, I saw her head go underwater.' And that's when Bryce jumped in the water. I saw him holding this girl above his head in the water and I saw this man, the girl's father, running, and he patted her on the back and water started coming out of her mouth." Both Byron and Nicole are really proud of the action their boys took. "I'm very proud of my boys. We try to instill in them the ability to care for others, and that's what determined the actions that they took. They live that out daily," Byron said.

"I'm super proud. I'm really proud of them and they're really proud of each other. I'm really proud that they were able to remain calm — they get that from their father — and save the girl," Nicole said. "Bryce has a new-found confidence in himself, so that's really cool." The 4-year-old girl (her name has not been released) was expected to make a full recovery thanks to both boys. Byron reports that both boys learned to swim when they were about 6 months old. Byron is a bus operator for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District and a member of Santa Cruz Local 23 since 2006.



In this photo courtesy of Nicole Watson, the Watson family, from left, Byron, a member of Local 23 in Santa Cruz, Calif.; Kesia, 7; Bryce, 11; Rhys, 7; and Nicole, enjoy some time in a pool.

FRA tries to negate our 2PC victory in Nevada

On May 15, it had looked as if the advocacy and hard work of SMART Transportation Division members and retirees, the Nevada State Legislative Board and a coalition that included Sheet Metal brothers and sisters, other rail unions and safety-conscious members of the public had paid off.

Then, in a notice officially published in the Federal Register on May 29, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) acted in an attempt to nullify all state legislation covering two-person crew requirements.

Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak's signing of A.B. 337 required that Class I and II freight trains being operated in the state have two crew members or the carriers would face steep fines.

The signing capped a massive effort by SMART TD members that spanned years in the face of carrier opposition.

"This law didn't pass by accident. It was the hard work of **Jason Doering**, our Nevada state legislative



Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak signs A.B. 337, which fined carriers for operating freight trains with fewer than two crew members, into law May 15.

director, and others that made it happen," SMART TD National Legislative Director **John Risch** said. "We all owe Jason and others who worked on this our thanks for keeping train operations safe in Nevada, for not just those who operate trains but for the public as well."

But FRA Administrator Ron Batory, in his agency's withdrawal of a notice of proposed rulemaking on

freight crew size, said, "this notice of withdrawal provides FRA's determination that no regulation of train crew staffing is appropriate and that FRA intends to negatively preempt any state laws concerning that subject matter."

FRA's action flies in the face of popular opinion in Nevada and the five other states whose residents favor safety over the will and wallets

of the carriers.

The Nevada law established fines of \$5,000 for a first offense, \$10,000 for a second offense within three years and \$25,000 for a third and all other offenses for Class I and II carriers that operate freight locomotives without at least two people in the cab. Hostling and helper services were not covered by the law, scheduled to take effect Oct. 1.

The FRA's attempts to negate the state laws and regulations would also include those in effect in Arizona, California, West Virginia, Wisconsin and in Colorado, which made a two-person crew requirement into law earlier this year.

FRA's action has not stopped our safety efforts in Illinois, where a law was on the governor's desk, and in Ohio, where a comprehensive rail safety bill that includes a two-person crew provision has been introduced in the state's House of Representatives with state Rep. **Michael Sheehy**, a SMART TD Alumni Association member, as a co-sponsor.

Local 1701, Montebello, Calif.



TD Vice President John England (second from left), Local Chairperson Cecilia Lopez and brothers and sisters from Local 1701 (Montebello, Calif.) gather outside the Montebello City Council's chambers during a meeting in March. About 31 members in total attended this meeting and spoke with city officials as the local was in the process of negotiating a new contract.

Local Chairperson **Beatriz Vasquez** (Montebello bus mechanics), at left in photo below, and **Cecilia Lopez** (Montebello bus operators) pose with SMART Transportation Division President **John Previsich** at the "Quad Quad" meeting held in Las Vegas in March. Vasquez and Lopez were among the three bus local chairpersons who attended the quadrennial meeting of GO-020. (Local Chairperson **Tim Parada** is not pictured).

Tom Pate, general chairperson of GO-020 said that Lopez and Vasquez impressed President Previsich with their hard work in helping to promote SMART TD in Montebello, including gathering a group from their local to attend a City Council meeting (top photo) as Local 1701 negotiated a new agreement with Montebello that received approval in mid-April.



For more from the "Quad Quad" meeting, see Page 9.

Local 61, Philadelphia, Pa.



Front row, from left, Ray Boyer, Anwar Bright and Mike Stevens, and, back row, from left, Nelson Pagon, Almeida Parham, Terry Tasker Sr., Christopher Williams, Bernard Norwood, Elliott Cintron and Martin Strom attend a meeting on April 16.

Terry Tasker, Sr., a 27-year member of the union and the chairman of Chapter 18 SMART Alumni Association of Delaware, attended Local 61's April meeting. Representing both State Legislative Directors **Jimmy Mallon** of Delaware and **Paul Pokrowka** of Pennsylvania, Tasker provided updates on state legislation as well as on the potential establishment of a SMART TD Alumni Association chapter in Pennsylvania.

Local 600, Cumberland, Md.



Tasker (see related item above) also met with Local Chairperson **Danny Strang** (LCA-049A) and railroad retiree Paul Reckley during his travels. This meeting included a discussion on the union's legislative efforts and starting a SMART Transportation Division Alumni Association chapter in Maryland.

From left, Paul Reckley, a railroad retiree; Local Chairperson Danny Strang (LCA-049A), and Terry Tasker, Sr.

SMART GENERAL PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By reaching out, we can get momentum on 2PC bill

In March, Colorado became the fifth state to have two-person crew legislation passed by its upper and lower houses and signed by its governor. In May, Nevada followed suit and became the sixth state to do so.

This year, Illinois, Minnesota and Maryland also saw houses in their legislatures pass similar bills – then Maryland’s governor again vetoed the legislation, for a second time, while the Illinois bill was on the cusp of action from their governor. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) decided to try to put an end to all the momentum generated by our actions in late May.

There’s a reason we talk about two-person crew legislation at length in print, online and face to face at our workplace and conferences. It is vital in safe-



By Joseph Sellers Jr.

guarding rail workers and the communities we transport material and passengers through 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This legislation addresses critical safety issues such as fatigue and access for first responders at rail crossing accidents and derailments that occur on a regular basis and threaten our foremost goal of ensuring every member comes home safe and sound to their families.

As local and state political leaders hear about the importance of rail safety, they begin to respond to these common-sense pro-

posals. We have made important progress in two-person crew legislation in a number of states, there is still much that needs to be done.

But the stark reality, especially after the FRA’s attempt to quash the laws established in six states, is that this rail safety legislation will not prevail across the land unless we all join the cause, make it our fight and not leave it to someone else. That includes each one of us communicating with our elected representatives and making them recognize the importance of this legislation to our safety and well-being. It also includes reaching out to our neighbors, family and community so they can understand this issue and the effect it has on their own safety.

We have made it easier to


act on this vital issue. On the federal level, H.R. 1748 was introduced to safeguard each and every state, county and local community. Text the words RAIL SAFETY to 21333 (message and data rates may apply). This will then prompt you with a series of talking points to review. Next, reply with the word NOW and you will be patched through to your congressperson’s office so they can hear from you directly over the phone about this important issue. After you are done, you will be sent a link to an online version of this action where you can send in your own letter, with pre-built writing points to start you off. Forward these to your friends, family and fellow workers. The more of us who take part, the stronger our efforts become, and the greater an impact we can make. For

those who may not know, each phone call a congressional office receives is weighed to be the equivalent of 25 emails about a particular issue. So, make certain you utilize every avenue of communication when contacting Congress.

I want to commend every local and member involved in Colorado and in Nevada on the passage, as well the other state-wide efforts to safeguard workers, passengers and our communities.

Despite the FRA setback, we can continue our charge. We will focus on the future by safeguarding the present for us and our families.

Faternally,



Joseph Sellers, Jr.
SMART General President

Bus Department News

A message from your Bus Department leadership



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As you know we will be having our annual regional meeting in San Diego, Calif., July 1-3. We in the Bus Department look forward to seeing you in our ever-evolving bus workshops. We want to make sure that our local leaders are getting the training needed to better care for their members.

The workshops will provide training that we believe is vital in handling labor management strife. We’ll discuss preparing cases for mediations and, of course, the latest bus legislation that affects your job on a daily basis. Some of that legislation will focus on what’s before Congress and new regulations coming from DOT and FMCSA.

We are continuing our push to get everything in place to end operator assault once and for all. Making sure that our members get home safely is of the utmost importance for this organization,

and we will continue to push our lawmakers and our legislative leaders to see this through. We have also continued to monitor the autonomous vehicle legislation to ensure that there will be no job loss to our members and to keep the industry moving ahead with person-to-person interactions.

The Bus Department is focused on getting you the ever-changing rules in our profession as quickly as possible so we are prepared to handle them quickly and efficiently. For our school bus operators, we are now addressing unruly students on your buses. We know this is a problem because, for a lot of you, school districts and the carriers really have no protocol for dealing with this issue. Drivers are at the mercy of kids who disrespect them, fail to follow the rules and simply behave in a way that is unacceptable. There may be



Studivant

some who don’t experience this problem, but for many of our school bus members this is welcome news. We are pushing districts to remove unruly students from the buses, meaning that parents now have to drive their kids to school. We will not stop until this reaches every school district and school bus carrier that our members are employed by. We can’t eliminate all the stress from your daily routines, but we aim to make it as stress free as possible.

Again, I look forward to seeing you at the regional meeting and remember to always keep yourself safe so you return home to your loved ones.

As always, I remain,

Faternally,

Calvin Studivant
VP Bus Department
SMART-TD
216-630-0963

NEWS IN BRIEF

Coach USA is acquired by a private equity firm

A private equity firm has completed its acquisition of Coach USA and its subsidiaries, it was announced on April 15.

Both the bus carrier’s U.S. and Canadian operations were purchased for \$271.4 million by Variant Equity from prior owner Stagecoach Group plc.

DOT ordered to make rule covering LNG rail transport

An executive order signed by President Donald Trump on April 10 tasks the federal Department of Transportation with creating a new rule in a little more than three months’ time that permits super-cooled liquid natural gas (LNG) to be transported by rail.

Natural gas trade and rail carrier groups have lobbied for years for the ability to supply LNG to the northeastern U.S. via rail. Current Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) safety rules do not allow the transport of LNG in rail tanker cars.

President John Previsich delivers testimony before U.S. House of Representatives' rail subcommittee

Continued from Page 1

port to Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen President Dennis Pierce, who delivered testimony against Kansas City Southern's incursion of foreign train crews across the U.S. border into Laredo, Texas, a practice that is being challenged in court.

"Despite what you will hear from any industry representative, those crews are not certified to the American standard. The oversight that goes to certification of conductors and locomotive engineers in this country cannot be extended to those people," Previsich said. "What we have done here is the FRA has accepted industry comments of 'Don't worry about it. We're doing

the same there that we do here.' FRA has no opportunity for oversight, they can only take the word of the railroads, and the railroads have proved historically that they cannot self-regulate in the safety arena without oversight from the federal government."

President Previsich also targeted the current trend of Class I carriers implementing the so-called Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) strategy started by the late railroad CEO E. Hunter Harrison.

"It has nothing to do with precision anything," he said. "What it is, is hedge fund investors moving into an industry that was well-operated, well-funded, and well-maintained and harvesting



Those in attendance at the House subcommittee hearing June 20 in Washington, D.C., on the State of the Railroad Workforce included, from left: TD Alternate National Legislative Director Greg Hynes; TD National Legislative Director John Risch; BLET President Dennis Pierce; TD President John Previsich and Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen President Jerry Boles. Photo courtesy of the BLET's Bob Hagan.

money that should be going to future operations, capital improvements, investing in the industry and instead putting it into this month's bot-

tom line, lowering their operating ratios by reducing staffing and operations to the point that customer service is impacted, railroad

worker safety is impacted. "We are now doing more with less."

He also addressed questions posed by subcommittee members on subjects including Congress's role in helping to ensure a safe working environment, the national Safe Freight Act two-person crew legislation and the role of technology, including the future effects of automation on the railroad industry.

Video of President Previsich's testimony is available on the online version of this article on the SMART Transportation Division website (www.smart-union.org/td) as is a link to video of the full hearing that contains the testimony of all witnesses.

SMART Transportation Division 2019 budget

Pursuant to Article 21B, Section 16, of the SMART Constitution, below is the 2019 budget for the SMART Transportation Division

Fund	Jan. 1, 2019	Receipts and Other Additions	Disbursements and Other Deductions	Negative Funds Adjustment	Dec. 31, 2019 (Projected)
General	\$6,694,843	\$19,160,935	\$(18,621,981)	\$(834,329)	\$6,399,468
Education and Training	-	756,000	(733,430)	-	22,570
Maintenance of Membership	-	666,000	(1,326,429)	660,429	-
Public Relations	-	166,500	(340,400)	173,900	-
Strike	7,155,348	499,500	-	-	7,654,848
Convention	4,915,244	1,332,000	(4,787,497)	-	1,459,747
Total funds	\$18,765,435	\$22,580,935	\$(25,809,737)	-	\$15,536,633

State Watch

News from SMART TD State Legislative Boards

Georgia



Members appeared at the Georgia Capitol Building in Augusta in April to show their support for H.B. 190, the state two-person crew/locomotive cab defibrillator legislation. Georgia Legislative Director **Matt Campbell** was recognized for his leadership and work on the bill by the state's AFL-CIO earlier this year.

From left are Patrick Folsom of Local 1263; Dustin Little of Local 1910; Georgia State Legislative Director Matt Campbell; Jake Gohagen of Local 1031; Bernard Gray of Local 1033; and Matthew Wells, also of Local 1031 wait to meet with Gov. Brian Kemp.

Colorado



Colorado State Legislative Director **Carl Smith** attended a labor event with U.S. Rep. Dianna Degette and presented a SMART TD PAC check to her. Degette has been a co-sponsor of past versions of the Safe Freight Act, our national two-person crew legislation, and plans to sign on as a co-sponsor of the latest bill, H.R.1748.

New Jersey

Legislation that would require railroad operators to remove obstructive vegetation near railroad crossings is making its way through the New Jersey Legislature.

S. 3425 passed the state Senate by a unanimous 35-0 vote on May 15 and was under consideration in the state Assembly at press time.

"The safety of our workers and train engineers is of the utmost importance," said New Jersey State Legislative Director **Ron Sabol**. "Our economy runs more smoothly when we prevent problems before they can happen. Trimming back vegetation from railroad crossings will improve safety and decrease the number of potential accidents."

150 years of History: Celebrating the Transcontinental Railroad



This painting was ordered by Central Pacific President Leland Stanford who was displeased with the Golden Spike photographs because his face was blurred by movement and he did not occupy the prime center spot. He had himself centered in a full front position in the prime spot here with other dignitaries at a slightly lower level and workmen kneeling at his feet.



This bridge-building scene at Green River, Wyo., taken in 1868, is one of photographer Andrew J. Russell's grandest photographs. Temporary and permanent bridge structures over the Green River are shown in the foreground while the magnificent Citadel Rock rises high in the background. A work train is on the temporary wooden bridge at the right unloading stone for use on the permanent bridge supports rising on the left. The hazardous work was made even more dangerous by snow and ice as the Union Pacific crews worked right through the winter in their rush to beat the Central Pacific to Salt Lake City. The advance rail layers had moved westward toward the Wasatch Mountains and this photo shows the follow-up crews working on installing more permanent structures.

As the nation nears the ... anniversary of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad connection, it is an appropriate time for all of us to pause and reflect upon the feats of the more than 20,000 laborers who made the giant project possible.

Looking back ... it is clear that the real accomplishment was the back-breaking work of the men who graded and laid 690 miles of Central Pacific line and 1,086 miles of the Union Pacific road with hardly more than hand tools.

Through blistering summer heat and sub-zero cold, these men – many of them Chinese ... imported for the job and immigrant Irish – moved mountains, blasted solid rock, spanned mammoth gorges and set construction records that still stand. These heroic crews struggled across windswept plains and desolate alkali deserts, fighting Indians as well as nature, for a few dollars a day.

Let's remember these men now. Their individual names are lost to history and many died on the job. Truly, they were the "unknown soldiers" of the war to open the West by rail.

— Charles Luna, First UTU President

(This article originally appeared in the "Golden Spike Centennial Issue" of the UTU News, Vol. 1, No. 17, Apr. 26, 1969)

Transcontinental Railroad timeline

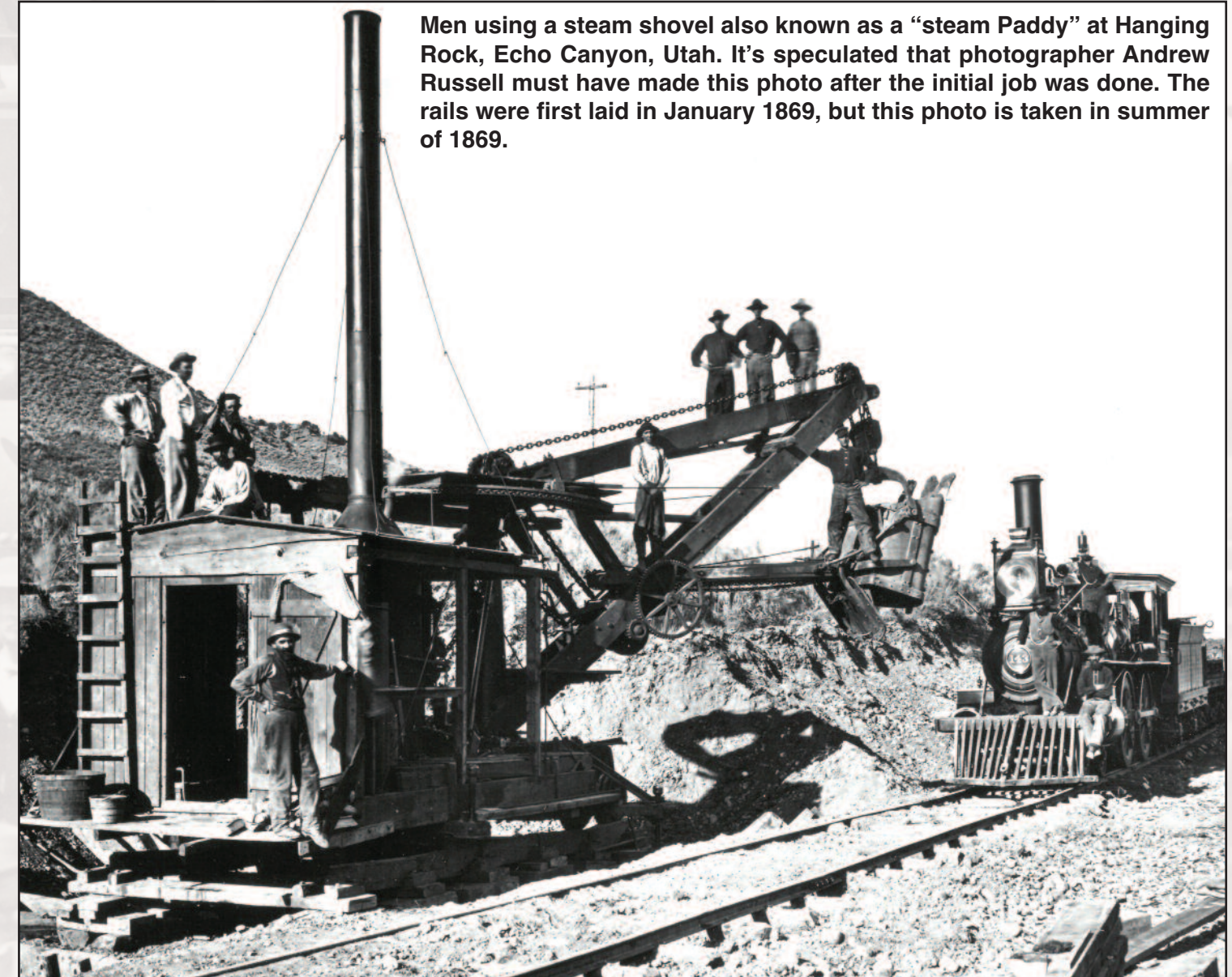
1862: In the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act of 1862, which authorized the construction of a new railroad line (the transcontinental railroad) extending from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to Sacramento, Calif., in an effort to unite the nation from east to west. Under the legislation, the Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) of California was authorized to build a rail line east from Sacramento and the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) was authorized to begin building a rail line west from Council Bluffs.

1863: UP and CP broke ground on the transcontinental railroad.

1865: UP laid its first rails, a year and a half after groundbreaking.

1869: On May 10, 1869, the first transcontinental railroad was completed at Promontory Summit, Utah, after navigating more than 2,000 miles of landscape. The Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad were joined together just six years after construction began. In a ceremony that was broadcast live via telegraph, a final golden spike was driven into the ground to mark the completion of the project. Following the completion of the transcontinental railroad, travel times between the east and west coasts were reduced from months to less than a week. (The golden spike was commissioned by David Hewes for the Last Spike ceremony. After the ceremony in which Leland Stanford tapped it into the ties, the spike was given back to Hewes since he privately owned it. Hewes donated the spike to Stanford University in 1892 and it is displayed at the Cantor Arts Center.)

In 1868, the art of laying rails depended on strong backs and good arm muscles.



Men using a steam shovel also known as a "steam Paddy" at Hanging Rock, Echo Canyon, Utah. It's speculated that photographer Andrew Russell must have made this photo after the initial job was done. The rails were first laid in January 1869, but this photo is taken in summer of 1869.



An unsophisticated, but effective, crane grasps rock while stone finishers and masons wait below to lay the grout and put the stone into place.

SMART TD Alumni

News and information for our retirees and members of the SMART TD Alumni Association

Are you getting close to retirement? You can get the TD News & other benefits for just \$9 a year! Call 216-228-9400, email kcashin@smart-union.org or visit www.smart-union.org/td/alumni

Memorial fish fry for Eddie ‘Dobber’ Davis



SMART TD members, Savannah Railroaders and the family of late member **Eddie “Dobber” Davis** held their annual memorial fish fry in Clyo, Ga. Davis was a member of Local 1031, hiring with CSX railroad in 1977. **George Keeran** , an Alumni Association member from Local 1031, cooked while Local 1031 President **Jake Gohagen**, Georgia State Legislative Director **Matt Campbell** and the Savannah Railroaders group also took part in the event.

TD Alumni member receives French medal for WWII service

Retired Local 1823 (St. Louis, Mo.) trainman/brakeman **Eugene J. Harmack**, who recently turned 99, received the French Legion of Honor medal, along with two other World War II veterans earlier this year. The other two veterans honored were Glenn A. Harrison and Alfred C. Villagran.

France has been giving the medal to veterans for their service in liberating France from German occupation during the war. Harmack, Harrison and Villagran join the ranks of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, General Douglas MacArthur and Charles Lindbergh as recipients of this medal.

“Without these three gentlemen here today, the French flag that was flying in St. Louis in the early 19th century would not be flying here today,” said Guillaume Lacroix, consul general of France for the Midwest, at the ceremony, which was attended by more than

Continued on Page 9

THE FINAL CALL

Following are the names of recently deceased members who were active TD members or maintained annual membership in the SMART TD Alumni Association, according to reports received at SMART TD Headquarters. These brothers and sisters will be missed by their many friends and by fellow SMART TD Alumni Association members.

Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State
2	Fisher Jr., Harold	Ft. Wayne, Ind.	631	Green, Gerald E.	Brunswick, Md.	1177	Croonquist, Willis G.	Maple Grove, Minn.
2	Guss, Robert S.	Sandusky, Ohio	655	Wyrick, Walter T.	Princeton, W.Va.	1183	Clark, Kenneth L.	Port Huron, Mich.
9	Copeland, Donald R.	Lubbock, Texas	694	Hall, Harry F.	Dunsmuir, Calif.	1188	Armstrong, Richard G.	Yukon, Okla.
60	McMearty, Daniel	Harrisburg, N.C.	744	Newgent, Mancil E.	Lafayette, Ind.	1190	Stewart, John S.	Walton, Ky.
94	Wagner, Allen T.	Olathe, Kan.	783	Summers, Bobby L.	Gibsonville, N.C.	1201	Goff, Edgar A.	Portola, Calif.
117	Stockert, Larry J.	Vaughn, Mont.	800	Freeman, Thomas A.	Milbridge, Maine	1245	Charette, Joseph N.	Sugar Tree, Tenn.
145	Thomason, Gene	Columbus, Ohio	807	Smith, Elmo G.	Phoenix, Ariz.	1245	Pierce Jr., Troy L.	Sautee Nacoochee, Ga.
194	Rowe, Larry D.	Springport, Ind.	811	Halsey, Jack L.	Kingman, Ariz.	1328	Goforth, William H.	Clarksville, Ind.
202	Luciano, Stephen C.	Denver, Colo.	811	Ontiveros, Dennis H.	San Bernardino, Calif.	1358	Roberts, Louis E.	Danville, Ill.
206	Daly, Martin G.	Peru, Ind.	811	Rybak, Robert	Highland, Calif.	1365	Hart, Richard A.	Meadville, Pa.
281	Jacobs, Wayne W.	Caledonia, Minn.	891	Dean, Charles E.	Missoula, Mont.	1365	Kramer, Roy E.	Saegertown, Pa.
298	Bloom, Rick L.	Columbia City, Ind.	891	Thompson, Elroy M.	Vancouver, Wash.	1366	Tuttle, Wayne L.	Salt Lake City, Utah
298	Vandalsen, Stephen J.	Garrett, Ind.	903	Bell, Franklin D.	Jacksonville, Fla.	1386	Mick, Darrell R.	Parkersburg, W.Va.
300	Diggins, John N.	Newark, Del.	903	Summers, Robert J.	Louisville, Ky.	1393	Powers, Richard M.	Lakeland, Fla.
306	Lenning, Edwin C.	Pomeroy, Iowa	915	Dudley, William C.	Hurricane, W.Va.	1418	Holland Jr., James F.	Baden, Pa.
312	Wieczorek, Robert A.	Edgewater, Fla.	934	Brown, Melvin L.	Kokomo, Ind.	1518	Brown, Robert L.	Columbus, Ind.
313	Schutter, Eugene R.	Granville, Mich.	971	Millner, Leslie O.	Victoria, Va.	1518	Gaultney Jr., Walter E.	St. Jacob, Ill.
322	Fuller, John J.	Fond du Lac, Wis.	974	Oliver, Robert E.	Paris, Tenn.	1524	Frazier, Franklin T.	Hot Springs N. P., Ark.
376	Botkins, Dennis K.	Floyds Knobs, Ind.	974	Rogers, Thomas L.	Estill Springs, Tenn.	1525	Boucher, James E.	Paducah, Ky.
421	Fouts, Kenneth N.	Westlake, Ohio	977	Olson, Lawrence R.	Burbank, Wash.	1545	Tolbert, George W.	Hot Springs N. P., Ark.
426	Patterson, James A.	Spokane, Wash.	991	Morgan, Lawrence A.	Washington, Pa.	1565	Gwin, Richard M.	Ottumwa, Iowa
445	Jeffries, Vernon L.	Chillicothe, Ill.	1007	Gustke, Duane P.	Cato, N.Y.	1570	Method, Thomas E.	Applegate, Calif.
500	Roswell, Charles N.	Clifton, Colo.	1066	Depolitte, Ronald J.	Matairie, La.	1709	Vangieson Jr., Walter W.	Beaverton, Mich.
504	Randolph, James C.	Wheeling, W.Va.	1074	Roche, Gerald D.	Canonsburg, Pa.	1732	Rowlette, WM C.	Paradise, Calif.
524	Herrington, Rush L.	Palestine, Texas	1168	Hilburn Jr., Frank W.	Belen, N.M.	1770	Sperling, Paul L.	Los Angeles, Calif.
577	Plocinski, Kenneth A.	Florence, Ariz.	1168	Roach, Odis D.	Clovis, N.M.	1948	Dehil, John D.	Hinckley, Ohio
610	Brooks, Herbert E.	Pasadena, Md.	1172	Hogan, Fred T.	Bluefield, W.Va.	1963	Alenduff, Joseph Herbert	St. Petersburg, Fla.
610	Thompson, Richard C.	Essex, Md.	1175	Amundson, Roy E.	Duluth, Minn.			

Alumni member honored by France with medal for his WWII service

Continued from Page 8

200 people. “France was no longer a country under Nazi occupation. ... You changed that, forever. And we are indebted to you.”

Harmack served as a communications operator in the 329th Regiment HQ Company, 83rd Infantry Division and fought in France and central Europe. At age 24, he fought in the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes forest in Belgium. Harmack received the Bronze Star for securing a vehicle trapped behind enemy lines and re-establishing communications with the Allies. He was awarded a total of five bronze stars, a combat infantryman badge and a good conduct medal for his military service.

“I can’t believe it happened. It’s a beautiful medal, and it’s a great honor. I’m very proud,” Harmack said after the ceremony.



Harmack

His family and friends, including fellow retiree and Alumni member **Norbert Shacklette**, also of Local 1823, joined in celebrating Harmack at the ceremony. Harmack has been a member of the UTU/SMART TD since July 1941 and a member of the Alumni Association since 2007.

The Legion of Honor, officially the National Order of the Legion of Honour or the Ordre National de la Légion d’Honneur in French, was created by Napoleon Bonaparte on May 19, 1802, as a general military and civil medal awarded based on merit or bravery.

The categories of distinction are as follows: Chevalier (Knight), Officier (Officer), Commandeur (Commander), Grand Officier (Grand Officer) and Grand Croix (Grand Cross). Men and women, French citizens and foreigners, civilians and military personnel can be admitted to any of the classes.

SMART TD congratulates Brother Harmack and thanks him for his military service.

UNITED AT THE ‘QUAD QUAD’



From left, Mike LaPresta, general chairperson of GO-001; Larry Miller, general chairperson of GO-386; SMART TD President John Previsich; Joe Lopez, general chairperson of GO-009; and Tom Pate, general chairperson of GO-020, all attended the “Quad Quad” meeting in Las Vegas in March.

Four general committees held their quadrennial reorganization meetings concurrently March 4 through 7 at the “Quad Quad” in Las Vegas, reports General Chairperson **Tom Pate** (GO-020).

All four general chairpersons were re-elected by their respective committees.

“This was a great effort by four committees to show unity among the committees,” Pate said.

Along with SMART Transportation Division President **John Previsich**, other guest speakers addressing the local chairpersons included SMART General President **Joseph Sellers Jr.** and National Legislative Director

John Risch.

Ten Designated Legal Council (DLC) attorneys led by DLC Chairman **Anthony Petru** provided information on injuries and the Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA).

General Chairperson **Jamie Modesitt** (GO-049) led a training session on investigation techniques for local chairpersons. The UTU-IA was also well represented and provided valuable services to our members along with a representative from United HealthCare.

All the committees involved give special thanks to GO-001 office secretary **Cindi Schmoldt** and other staff for their outstanding work in organizing this event.



In this photo courtesy of fellow SMART TD Alumni Association member Norbert Shacklette, Eugene J. Harmack receives the French Legion of Honor medal in a ceremony earlier this year.



Tom Pate, general chairperson of GO-020, submitted this photo of attendees of the “Quad Quad” meeting. Front row, from left, Luis Lopez of Local 1674; Bo Akina of Local 1241; Robin Gondeck of Local 1581; John Carmody of Local 113; Beatriz Vasquez of Local 1701; Cecilia Lopez of Local 1701; Tim Parada of Local 1701 and David Liddle of Local 1674. Back row, from left, GC Pate, Jason Schwartz of Local 464; Mike Marscher of Local 811; Audie Martin of Local 1168; Al Valenzuela of Local 1674; Troy Cavanaugh of Local 1313; Justin Schrock of Local 945; Norm Patterson of Local 9; Chet Hrycyk of Local 1494; Chad Yokoyama of Local 1687; Richard Gustin of Local 445; Bill Conwell of Local 794; Dempsey Lofton of Local 1081 and SMART TD Vice President John England.

Former general chairperson mourned

Russell “Dale” Hogan, 76, a former general chairperson and retiree of Local 933 (Jefferson City, Mo.), died April 20 after a battle with cancer.

He joined the United Transportation Union (UTU) after hiring on as a fireman for Missouri Pacific in January 1969. He later became an engineer and was elected general chairperson before retiring in July 1999 as a result of a disability.

“Our years of friendship and working together will always be important entries in my book of memories,” said former UTU President **Tom DuBose** in an online posting. “Dale remembered that justice is conscience, not just personal conscience, but the conscience of mankind. As I reflect back, Dale was not only an intelligent and amazing person but a giving person who in his own way was always searching for ways to make life better for others.”

Hogan remained active in the union upon his retirement. Under his leadership, his general com-



Hogan

mittee, which had formerly consisted solely of enginemen, consolidated with conductor, trainmen and yardmen committees to form a stronger group that is now under the umbrella of GO-569.

In July 2004, he was named to a nine-member blue-ribbon committee that looked at the UTU’s structure and offered recommendations on the consolidation and improvement of union operations.

“What stands out the most is not what he achieved, but how he lived his life,” DuBose said. “He moved through this world with confidence and an unshakeable love for his union and for his family. Dale will be profoundly missed.”

Hogan is survived by his wife of 58 years, Charlotte; daughter Lori; three grandchildren; a great-grandchild and other relatives.



Your photograph can be in the calendar!

We’re looking for photo submissions from SMART TD members and alumni of buses, light rail, planes or trains for the 2020 alumni calendar. Email your high-resolution horizontal photos to **news_TD@smart-union.org** or mail hard copies to the TD office along with details about what’s going on in the photo.

If your pic is picked, you get copies of the alumni calendar to share. **The deadline is Sept. 20!**

When taking photos, be sure to observe all rules and regulations regarding photography on your property.

Railroad Day on Capitol Hill

Members of SMART Transportation Division’s National Legislative Department in Washington, D.C., and legislative directors from multiple states took part in the Railroad Day lobbying effort May 8 in the nation’s capital.

Participants met with political leaders in an effort coordinated with industry groups to discuss restrictions on bigger trucks, the continuance of the tax credit for short-line and regional carriers and to ask Congress for funding toward the modernization of the Railroad Retirement Board.

Some state directors held additional appointments during the week to seek support of our three major national legislative efforts: H.R. 1139 — the Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act; H.R. 1748 — the Safe Freight Act to establish a national two-person crew law; and H.R. 2449 — yardmasters’ hours of service.

Participants in the effort included D.C. office Chief of Staff **Jenny Miller**; Alternate National Legislative Director **Greg Hynes**; National Legislative Director **John Risch**; Georgia State Legislative Director **Matt Campbell**; Arizona State Legislative Director **Scott Jones**; Pennsylvania State Legislative Director **Paul Pokrowka**; Washington State Legislative Director **Herb Krohn**; Virginia State Legislative Director **Ronnie Hobbs**; Iowa State Legislative Director **Jim Garrett**; Kentucky State Legislative Director **Jared Cassity**; New Jersey State Legislative Director - **Ron Sabol**; Washington, D.C., Legislative Director **Willie Bates**; D.C. Alternate Legislative Director **Jarad Jackson**; and Oregon State Legislative Director **Glenn Carey**.



A trio of SMART TD state legislative board members pay a visit to Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger of Virginia. From left are Washington D.C. Alternate Legislative Director Jarad Jackson; Spanberger; D.C. Legislative Director Willie Bates and Virginia State Legislative Director Ronnie Hobbs.



National Legislative Office Chief of Staff Jenny Miller took this picture of the union’s contingent for this year’s Railroad Day on Capitol Hill, which took place May 8. Front, from left, Alternate National Legislative Director Greg Hynes; Georgia State Legislative Director Matt Campbell; National Legislative Director John Risch; Arizona State Legislative Director Scott Jones; and Pennsylvania State Legislative Director Paul Pokrowka. Back row, from left, Virginia State Legislative Director Ronnie Hobbs; Washington State Legislative Director Herb Krohn; Iowa State Legislative Director Jim Garrett; Kentucky State Legislative Director Jared Cassity; and New Jersey State Legislative Director Ron Sabol.



Georgia State Legislative Director Matt Campbell meets with U.S. Rep. David Scott of Georgia’s 13th District. As a result of the meeting, Scott, already co-sponsoring H.R. 1139 and H.R. 1748, agreed to co-sponsor H.R. 2449, the Yardmasters Hours of Service Act.

Be heard!

Contact your congressional representatives through the **SMART TD Legislative Action Center (LAC)** to tell them to **DO THEIR JOBS** and **PROTECT AMERICAN WORKERS**.

Using the LAC online is quick and easy: Just visit www.smart-union.org/td and click on the “Take Action on Capitol Hill” button under “Important Links.”




We’ll bring the news to you if you share your news with us!


Get in touch with the TD Communications Department at news_TD@smart-union.org and let us know about anything you’d want to share in the newspaper, on the Web or on social media, and stay up to date with union happenings through the paper and through the TD web and social media accounts.



Forms, links and news: www.smart-union.org/TD

 SMARTTransportationDivision

 SmartUnionWorks

 SMART Transportation Division

 SmartUnion

SMART Army in action in Virginia

For the second straight year, SMART Army activists in Virginia banded together to make a difference in a number of events as part of the Month of Community Action. Here members who helped prepare Little League fields in Crewe, Va., pose together after helping to make Opening Day in April a successful one.



FMCSA launches site about drug test database

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has launched a web page that provides information about the Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, a database to be launched in early January 2020. The database's purpose is to track and identify "drivers who are not legally permitted to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) due to drug and alcohol program violations," the FMCSA said. FMCSA says on the website

at <https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov> that registration with the database will open in the fall and all operators who hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) or commercial driver's permit (CLP) must comply with the requirement in order to continue working in a safety-sensitive role. More information, including frequently asked questions, is available at the Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse website listed in the preceding paragraph.

UTUIA congratulates 2019 scholarship winners!

Dear Members,

Each year, the UTUIA randomly selects 50 candidates to receive a four-year college scholarship valued at \$2,000 per year. Over the years, UTUIA has provided millions of dollars to deserving young men and women across the country and we are proud to have played a role in their success. Below you will find a listing of this year's winners. Please be aware that we have 50 Trade School Scholarships available as well. We are proud of our 150-year history of service to our fellow brothers and sisters of transportation and look forward to another 150 years of service and benevolence.

You can find more information about qualifying for scholarships and becoming a member of UTUIA by contacting your field supervisor or by going to our website at www.utuia.org.



Laugel

Fraternally,

Ken Laugel

Ken Laugel
President, UTUIA

College scholarship winners

- DISTRICT 1***
Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., N.Y., R.I., Vt.
Lillianna Shank, granddaughter of **Samuel Hale** of Local 1290, Goshen, Ind.; Ethan Cregan, grandson of **Raymond Bender** of Local 792, Navarre, Ohio; Neja Garrett, daughter of **Sidney Holmes** of Local 1957, Silsbee, Texas; Naomi Knappenberger, step-daughter of **Rocco DiGilio** of Local 498, Lehighton, Pa.; Jeremy Silkowski, son of **Douglas Silkowski** of Local 168, Peotone, Ill.
- DISTRICT 2**
Del., D.C., Md., N.J., Pa.
Luke Kopriva, grandson of **Ronald Kopriva** of Local 1418, Ambridge, Pa.; Lillian Malley, daughter of **Chris Malley** of Local 830, Mechanicsburg, Pa.; Gillian Iula, daughter of **Michael Iula** of Local 60, Cedar Grove, N.J.; Johnathan Kempton, son of **Howard Kempton** of Local 60, Landing, N.J.
- DISTRICT 3**
Ala., Fla., Ga., Ky., Miss., N.C., S.C., Tenn., Va., W.Va.
Madylin Campbell, granddaughter of **Johnny Campbell**, Columbia, Mo.; Russell Whitaker, son of **John Whitaker** of Local 1106, Fleming Island, Fla.; Rebecca Gibbons, granddaughter of **John G. Daniels** of Local 1831, Rock Hill, S.C.; Gregory Frolo, grandson of **Thomas Maynard**, Venice, Fla.; Kylie McDonald, daughter of **Jimmy McDonald** of Local 1011, Rockingham, N.C.; Bryce Sox, grandson of **Paul Yon** of Local 793, Columbia, S.C.; Alexis McAdams, step-daughter of **Kevin Carter** of Local 1245, Rockmart, Ga.; Rachel Griffin, daughter of **Charles Griffin** of Local 942, Florence, S.C.
- DISTRICT 4**
Ind., Mich., Ohio
Jacob Rahm, son of **Chad Branham** of Local 586, Sulphur Springs, Ohio; Taylor Sauerwein, daughter of **James Bresler** of Local 1816, Oregon, Ohio; Jordan Beahr, daughter of **Earl Beahr** of Local 145, Bellville, Ohio; Marvin Watts, son of **Dorothy Gasiorowski-Watts** of Local 284, Cleveland, Ohio; Alexis White, daughter of **Jason White** of Local 225, Tiffin, Ohio

- DISTRICT 5**
Ill., Wis.
Lindsey Lester, daughter of **Scott Lester** of Local 445, Knoxville, Ill.; McKenna Vrbovsky, daughter of **John Vrbovsky** of Local 653, Joliet, Ill.; Dylan Bakr, son of **Ashraf Bakr** of Local 577, LaSalle, Ill.; Shawn Klein, son of **John Klein** of Local 577, Elhurst, Ill.
- DISTRICT 6**
Ark., La., Okla., Texas
Hunter James Roe, son of **Robert Roe** of Local 1337, Ponchatoula, La.; Madelyn Bernard, granddaughter of **Marvin Corzine** of Local 1501, Denham Springs, La.; Dymon White, daughter of **Dimetrius White** of Local 1066, LaPlace, La.; Melanie Anne Gassaway, granddaughter of **Charles Gassaway** of Local 656, Cabot, Ark.; Stetson Loyd, grandson of **Garland Neal** of Local 1593, Temple, Texas; Mark William Nokes, grandson of **Charles Gassaway** of Local 656, Temple, Ark.
- DISTRICT 7**
Iowa, Kan., Minn., Mo., Neb., N.D., S.D.
Kole Parks, grandson of **James Parks**, Local 306, Manly, Iowa; Shelby Gunther, daughter of **Michael Gunther** of Local 305, Lincoln, Neb.; Logan Jensen, son of **James Jensen** of Local 1177, Redwood Falls, Minn.; Megan Kirkland, daughter of **John Kirkland** of Local 1503, Marysville, Kan.; Cayden Dannenmueller, son of **Darrell Dannenmueller** of Local 947, Chaffee, Mo.; Madyson Spencer, daughter of **Corey Spencer** of Local 1177, Willmar, Minn.
- DISTRICT 8**
Ariz., Calif., Colo., Nev., N.M., Utah
Andrew Ruiz, son of **Fernando Ruiz** of Local 1608, Los Angeles, Calif.; Ashley West, daughter of **Christopher West** of Local 1629, Glendale, Ariz.; Cameron Rhodes, grandson of **Richard Rhodes** of Local 204, Pueblo, Colo.; Brett Russell, son of **Kevin Russell** of Local 1043, Fernley, Nev.; Kimberly Park, granddaughter of **Patricia Hampton** of Local 238, Ogden, Utah; Chandler Culberth, granddaughter of **Robert Sanchez** of Local 1168, Clovis, N.M.; Angela Ramirez-Chetto, daughter of **Angel Ramirez** of Local 1563, Monrovia, Calif.; Nicholas Lopez-

- Zapata, son of **Efren Lopez** of Local 1563, Los Angeles, Calif.; Samantha Atayde, daughter of **Samuel Atayde** of Local 1563, Los Angeles, Calif.
- DISTRICT 9**
Alaska, Idaho, Mont., Ore., Wash., Wyo.
Katelyn Kruse, granddaughter of **William Drew** of Local 891, Lolo, Mont.; Jaylynn Boe, daughter of **Kyle Boe** of Local 257, Douglas, Wyo.; Melanie Ruth Doughty, daughter of **Melvin Doughty** of Local 446, Cheyenne, Wyo.

Note: After drawing all districts, all remaining applications were combined and drawn from to ensure that the maximum number of scholarships are awarded regardless of district affiliation. *UTUIA received no applications from District 1. Winners for District 1 were selected from remaining applicants. Members listed without a local are deceased and a local number could not be confirmed.

Trade School Scholarship winners

Kolby Winderweedle, step-son of **Mark Stevenson** of Local 782, Hendersonville, N.C.; Allison Everson, daughter of **Cory Everson** of Local 311, Bangor, Wis.; Ashton Scoggins, daughter of **Chadwick Scoggins** of Local 931, Pelzer, S.C.; Jordyn Marshall, granddaughter of **Eugene Binnebose** of Local 1177, Alexandria, Minn.

UTUIA wishes all winners luck in all of their future endeavors. Congratulations!



Photo of the month

SMART Transportation Division is always looking for good photos and your picture can be featured on this page as a Photo of the Month.

SMART TD seeks photographs or digital images of work-related scenes, such as railroad, bus or mass transit operations, new equipment photos, scenic shots, activities of your local or photos of your brothers and sisters keeping America rolling.

Printed photographs should be mailed to SMART TD, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333.

High-resolution digital photographs should be in JPEG format and emailed to news_td@smart-union.org. We prefer horizontal photos.

With each photograph, please include your name and SMART local number, the names of the persons in the photo (left to right), where the photo was taken, and other pertinent information.

All photographs submitted become property of SMART.

Remember to review your employer's policies regarding use of cameras on the property or during work hours.



Brannon Velau, the wife of Local 771 (Needles, Calif.) member Theodore Velau III, submitted this photo of a BNSF consist crossing above the Colorado River into Arizona (note sign marking the California-Arizona border) on the Needles Subdivision.

‘GONE GREEN’ IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE



Members of the SMART TD Membership Representatives team ran the last paper billing May 16, marking the completion of a record-keeping transition from paper to full electronic billing. Marking the occasion and holding examples of the phased-out green-bar billing materials are, from left, **Paula Grant**, **Kim Dissell**, Billing Audit Supervisor **Michael Vega**, **Amanda Casale** and **Greg Hengesbaugh**.

VP John England attends the LACMTA Bus Rodeo



Vice President John England, left, takes a photo with Bus Rodeo winner Nelson Zapata from Local 1607 (Los Angeles, Calif.).

David Liddle, legislative representative and local chairperson of Local 1674 (Los Angeles, Calif.) submitted photos of TD Vice President **John England** at the Los Angeles MTA's Bus Rodeo in late March.



England, center, also met with Los Angeles-area officers. At left is Vice Chairperson Quintin Wormley (GCA-875) of Local 1565 (West Hollywood, Calif.) and Pedro Lara Jr., treasurer of Local 1563 (El Monte, Calif.).

FRA releases latest SOFA report

The Federal Railroad Administration's Switching Operations Fatality Analysis working group (SOFA) – which has three SMART TD representatives – has released its switching fatality and severe injury update for the fourth quarter of 2018.



SOFA reported a total of 17 severe injuries for the fourth quarter, bringing 2018's annual total to 68. Of those severe injuries reported in the quarter, one resulted in amputation. None of the incidents were fatal.

For the year, there were eight amputations. When combined with the first three SOFA quarterly reports, the group counted three switching-related fatalities in 2018. SMART TD had seven member fatalities last year.

In 2017, SOFA reported 68 severe injuries and nine amputations.

DOT final rule clarifies ‘opioids’

The U.S. Department of Transportation published a final rule April 23 that makes technical corrections to regulations governing drug testing for safety-sensitive employees to ensure consistency with recent amendments made to DOT's "Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs," which recently added requirements for testing for oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone and hydromorphone.

According to the release from DOT, the new changes to the department's regulations make it necessary to refer to these substances, as well as morphine, 6-acetylmorphine and codeine by the term "opioids" rather than "opiates."

This final rule amends the term in the FAA, FTA and PHMSA regulations to ensure that all DOT drug testing rules are consistent with one another and the mandatory guidelines for the testing program.