Inside UTU News

Volume 32
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June 2000

Welcome to the “Voice of Transportation Labor”

“UTU is proud to be the first international union to deliver major live events to its members and the world.”

- UTU Assistant President Byron A. Boyd, Jr.

UTU to make history with webcast of speech

President Little’s “State of the Union” speech to be on Internet

CLEVELAND – On June 12, the UTU will become the first major North American International labor union to webcast its annual “State of the Union” speech on the Internet. President Charles L. Little’s opening “State of the UTU” speech at the Reno, Nev., Regional Meeting will be available on the Internet for all UTU members, and other interested persons, to watch. In addition, the UTU’s new video, “The Power of One,” will also be webcast.

“The UTU is proud to be the first international union to use the Internet to deliver major live events to its members and the world,” said Assistant President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., who spearheaded the webcasting project. “Now, our 135,000 members, as well as the thousands of others interested in the UTU and its activities, will have the opportunity to see for themselves what we are all about.”

How to see webcast

The live webcast leading up to President Little’s “State of the UTU” speech will begin at 8:30 a.m. PDT (11:30 a.m. EDT) on Monday, June 12. In order to see it, you must do the following:

• Make sure that your computer has either Microsoft Media Player or RealPlayer installed. If you don’t already have this software, you should add it at least one day before the webcast. Links will be provided on the UTU website, www.utu.org, so you may download this software for free.

• Go to the UTU website, www.utu.org, and follow the directions to watch the webcast.

The webcast will begin at 8:30 a.m. PDT (11:30 a.m. EDT) on Monday, June 12. (See sidebar above for details on how to view the webcast.)

Driver comments sought

CLEVELAND – The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the UTU are seeking comments from commercial vehicle drivers on fatigue. The FMCSA is proposing to revise its hours-of-service rules to require motor carriers to provide drivers with better opportunities to obtain sleep with the aim of reducing the risk of drivers operating commercial vehicles while drowsy, tired or fatigued. Drivers should submit comments to Fatigue Reports, UTU Bus Dept., 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4256, no later than July 13, 2000. Please include your name, address and UTU local number. “This issue will be discussed during the Bus Department’s open chairpersons’ workshop at the UTU/UTUIA Regional Meetings, in mailings and in future issues of the UTU News,” Bus Department Vice President Bernie McNelis noted.

Drivers, aides vote UTU

CLEVELAND – A recent vote by 190 school bus drivers and aides employed by Laidlaw Transit was decided in the UTU’s favor by a more than 2-to-1 margin. Employees have already met with Chairpersons Karen Belcher and Jim Harford to discuss contract proposals. In other organizing news, the National Labor Relations Board has scheduled representation elections for drivers employed by Alex’s Transportation, who transport rail crews in six states. The Bus Department also has filed an election petition for school bus drivers, trainees and aides employed by Laidlaw Transit in Hesperia, Calif. A tentative date of June 23 has been set for an election.

Dividend clarification

CLEVELAND – The May issue of the UTU News featured an item about a UTUIA dividend increase. The dividend increase, from 6.0% to 6.25%, relates only to the interest-crediting rate for flexible-premium annuities, Traditional IRA annuities and Roth IRA annuities.

Amtrak begins peer counseling

Operation RedBlock, carrier agree on plan

CLEVELAND – Amtrak management and the Operation RedBlock Executive Committee last month agreed to fund and support Phase II Peer Counseling as a means of implementing the first program in the transportation industry that will result in full-time positions for union members to serve as peer counselors.

Operation RedBlock is a labor-developed and company-adopted drug prevention and intervention program. It emphasizes awareness, education and prevention via union member peer committees, and aims to change attitudes, to reduce the tolerance of nonusers to job-related drug and alcohol use, and to encourage users to seek assistance.

Conrail probe pays off big

UTU investigation leads to $3 million for workers

CLEVELAND – An audit of a major Conrail productivity trust fund by the UTU means that hundreds of former Conrail trainmen will split an additional $3 million later this year.

An investigation instigated by GO-687 General Chairperson Delbert Strunk into the total payments to a Conrail Productivity Sharing Trust Fund, now administered by Norfolk Southern Railroad, revealed a shortfall of approximately $3 million due to be paid to UTU-represented trainmen.

In December, Strunk’s committee noticed productivity payments to the fund lower than they believed should have been made. Strunk appointed Associate Chairperson E.R. Pickell

Continued on page 8

Continued on page 9
Local 84, Los Angeles, Cal.

Members are mourning the recent death of Amtrak and Metrolink Commuter Service conductor Carl Bryant, who lost his battle with leukemia on May 4, according to Secretary and Treasurer Richard J. Alibre.

Local 141, Jacksonville, Fla.

This newly chartered local is comprised of JRTS van drivers, who recently secured their first contract and elected officers and a local committee of adjustment (LCA). The LCA includes Chairperson Jim Forgone and Vice Chairpersons Jack McCullister, Harry N. Levin, Art Jones, Tom Mitchell, Don Davis and Judy D'aniels.

Local 168, Chicago, Ill.

Local member and Designated Legal Counsel Bob H. Arrington recently hosted a special meeting in Indianapolis, Ind., where investigator Steve Robbins addressed concerns of those working out of the newly established Amtrak crew base there, according to Treasurer Lee Channing. Meanwhile, the regular meeting for June has been rescheduled to June 21 to allow members to attend the UTU Regional Meeting in Reno, Nev. Flying for the first time in his life to attend the meeting will be Local President Tim Hargrave.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Cal.

Missed by members of the local is Carl T. Rogoz, who died a victim of a heart attack suffered while on duty March 18, said Secretary and Treasurer Fred. G. Comeau. Brother Rogoz, a dedicated father with a profound love for his church and his model railroad club, was just three months away from retirement.

Local 471, Eugene, Ore.

The Fourth Annual J.C. A. Anderson Memorial Golf and BBQ Tour has been scheduled for August 7 at the Diamond Woods Golf Course in Monroe, Ore., according to Legislative Representative Greg Boam. The event, sponsored by Designated Legal Counsel Fred. G. Comeau, brings together all crafts, retirees, wives and children of members whose lives were taken while on duty. For information, contact Boam at (541) 461-5407, fax him at (541) 461-5428, or send e-mail to <wrlgad<relev.com>.

Local 492, Sacramento, Cal.

The Furlough Agreement applicable in the Roseville Hub and the Extra Work Rest Supplemental Agreement are available on the local's website in PDF format thanks to Chairperson and Vice General Chairperson Mike M. Mcguigan, said Secretary and Treasurer Daryl Stinchfield. Also available there are reports from the safety complaint database. View the website at <http://www.calweb.com/~wrlgad/utu492.html>.

Local 771, Needles, Cal.

Members working for Norfolk Southern send their sympathy and condolences to Vernon Gillian, whose wife Ruby recently passed away, according to Secretary and Treasurer Tom Radovich. Meanwhile, the local is planning to stage a picnic on August 26 and welcomes any ideas that will make it a memorable and successful event. The local also recently welcomed more than 20 new members to its ranks.

Local 1150, BNSF

Local Chairperson Fred Wade of Local 811, San Bernardino, Calif., and N. Robert Naworski of Local 1581, Bakersfield, Calif., who will soon retire, will be honored by the committee at a special event to be held Sunday night, June 11, at the Reno Hilton following the official Regional Meeting reception, according to General Chairperson D.D. "Bud" Davis.

Yardmasters

The Yardmaster General Chairperson Council recently met in Nashville, Tenn., where Chairperson J.R. Cumby (GO-542), Vice-Chairperson J. Eschmann (GO-340), and Secretary and Treasurer D.K. Turner (GO-547) were re-elected by acclamation to lead the group for the next four years. Sponsoring the meeting was Designated Legal Counsel Yanger, Jungbauer, Barczak, Roe and Vucinovich.

Monthly winner

This month's lucky winner of her choice of any item of apparel bearing the UTU logo is Gloria Burner of Local 1741, San Francisco, Calif., which represents Laulaul employees working in the San Mateo School District. These items are awarded every month by random drawing as a show of appreciation to the many members who have been supported by the UTU throughout the years.

Local 1137, Fargo, N.D.

BNSF brakeman William Loosmore, Jr., is proud to note that his son, Josh, a marathon runner scheduled to graduate high school last month, recently ran a 50-mile race to raise $2,000 for the Hospice of the Red River Valley, which needs $10,000 for operating expenses. Josh's grandfather, William Loosmore, Sr., a BNSF retiree and member of Local 853 in Spokane, Wash. Those who wish to help the cause should make checks or money orders payable to "Hospice of the Red River Valley," and send them to P.O. Box 10613, Fargo, ND 58103.

Local 1558, Bergenfield, N.J.

Local Chairperson Rich Deser is challenging a new medical form Bankroll Coaches drivers and mechanics are required to fill out when undergoing biannual physicals required by the Department of Transportation (DOT). International Vice President Bernie McNelis, director of the UTU Bus Department, along with Deser and UTU Designated Legal Counsel Larry McCallister, UTU/UTUIA vice president, are of the opinion and feel it may represent a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as requirements stipulated by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and DOT.

Local 1594, Upper Darby, Pa.

Contract negotiations led by Alternate Bus Vice President-East Carolyn Scarsella have begun for school bus drivers and aids working for Del-CO School Bus Company in Darby. Pa. Assisting are Ron on Konar, Ernie Davis and John Crossan.

Local 1637, Wishram, Wash.

The local's website, which serves employees of Burlington Northern Santa Fe, has received the CompuServe TrainNet Forum's Web Gem Award for excellence, becoming the second UTU local to win this distinction. Visit the website at <http://jsysworks.com/1637>.

Local 1895, Chicago, Ill.

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California

The UTU General Committee of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority had the highest percentage of TPEL contracts last year among all general committees throughout the state, reported Legislative Director James P. Jones. The LACMTA General Committee is made up of UTU Locals 1563, 1594, 1565, 1607 and 1628.

According to Jones, a recent "membership sign-up campaign" by General Chairperson James A. Williams was responsible for a significant increase in the state’s TPEL annual income. He added that the committee has decided to include a presentation on TPEL participation in its employee driver union orientation program for new hires.

"This innovative procedure is a first for any UTU general committee in California and shows the commitment of our officers and members to our TPEL program. Special thanks to Chairman Williams and his committee of adjustment for their tireless efforts at improving our TPEL program," Jones said.

Indiana

Governor Frank O’Bannon has signed into law H.B. 1316, which will require drivers who transport rail crew from location to location to obtain a passenger chauffeur’s license, meet certain physical and mental requirements, and limit the hours of service that drivers can operate on a daily and weekly basis.

The legislation also established a summer study committee which will address the need for safety inspections of the vehicles used to transport railroad employees.

Legislative Director James E. Carrico, who dubbed the legislation the "UTU Safety Bill," credited Assistant Director Thomas H. Enslie (490), P.R. E. Verhatch (1518), Chairperson Steve Filbert (1620) and Bruce Babitt (289) for the success in getting this law through both houses of the assembly.

"I would also like to personally thank State Representative Linda Lawson, UTU Assistant General Counsel Dan Elliott, and the International for their assistance," Carrico said.

Ohio

At the Eighth Quadrennial meeting of the Ohio State Legislative Board, the following Executive Committee members were elected by acclamation: William J. Thompson (693), legislative director and chairperson; Joseph A. Bodis (693), assistant director; Luther Newson (1549), 1st vice chairperson; Billy Parker (454), 2nd vice chairperson; and David Otten (1962), secretary.

The Bus Department has several contract negotiations that are either underway or soon will be.

UTU’s largest general committee of adjustment, which represents the operators in Los Angeles, has begun negotiations and will face some very tough issues. I visited with General Chairperson James Williams and his committee as they were preparing for those negotiations and I can say that Chairperson Williams and his committee are well prepared to handle those negotiations and to meet any challenge the LACMTA may bring. The current contract expires on June 30, 2000.

The officers of Local 759 at O.N.E. Bus Company in Newark, N.J., are in the process of putting together their proposals and expect to meet with company representatives in the very near future to present them. Chairperson Joe Frierson and his committee surveyed their members for the upcoming negotiations and ascertain what changes they would like to see.

The current contract expires on July 1, 2000.

Local 1670 at Valley Transit Company in Harlingen, Texas, is also preparing its proposals for contract negotiations. Local Chairperson Tony Urbina, Jr., and his committee will be assisted by Alternate Vice President Percy Palmer. That contract expires June 30, 2000.

As in every negotiation, the committees need the support of their members. We may have differences, but during contract negotiations, and the time period that members must be united in support of their committee. Unity plays an important role in negotiations. Unity shows the company that the committee has the support of its members at the bargaining table, and that means strength to your committee.

Yardmasters

Yardmasters reach new agreement

The BNSF yardmaster committee, led by General Chairperson William J. Cobsen, has achieved an agreement that expands jurisdiction of the BN yardmaster contract to cover the entire system.

The agreement expansion includes newly established seniority districts to cover the territory that comprised the former ATSF property. Dedication and hard work bring positive results for the membership.

A tentative agreement also has been reached with the Norfolk Southern on a single-vote agreement for yardmasters. General Chairperson William B. Headrick, Jr., and General Chairperson Robert J. Cooper have negotiated a single agreement that will cover the yardmaster craft on the entire NS system.

The tentative agreement contains a training agreement which provides for a $15-the-day training allowance for yardmasters who train new yardmasters. Also, paid meal provisions are expanded systemwide. If meal periods are not allowed, pay in lieu is required. Calling procedures and exercise of seniority also have been clearly defined. The discipline rule has been revised to firm up procedures and to expedite the appeals process to achieve final resolution in a shorter time period. Yardmaster positions have been grouped into three wage-rate categories, from the existing 16 wage-rate categories, with varying amounts of basic daily rate groupings.

A membership ratification ballot has been distributed, which will be tallied at the International. We are confident the proposed agreement will receive the members’ support.

Also elected to the Executive Committee by acclamation were: Gary Elkins (792), Stuart Gorder (225), Joey D. Jones (490) and Larry D. Valentine (566).

Wyoming

At the state’s Democratic Party convention last month, Legislative Director George Bagby was elected national committeeman and will serve as a “super delegate” to the party’s national convention in Los Angeles later this year.

“Under the wise leadership of President Little, our union was the first large labor organization to endorse Al Gore for president. I urge all UTU members to at every level to become involved. The next president will possibly appoint three Supreme Court judges, so our mission is clear. We must have TPEL drives in every local and we must register new voters. Your vote will count in this election…and the job you prefer may be your own," Bagby said.

Bagby and the Wyoming Legislative Board defied the odds earlier this year and convinced both houses of the state legislature to pass a UTU-sponsored two-man train crew bill. However, Gov. Jim Geringer vetoed the legislation at the last moment.

After praising the efforts of Terry Uhl utcxt (915) and Vern Whitfield (866) in that legislative battle, Bagby said the state’s Democratic Party platform now includes support of two-man crew legislation.

Iowa

Legislative Director Pat H. Hendricks presents a UTU baseball cap to Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack, who addressed the members of the UTU’s state legislative board at the opening of the board’s 2000 quadrennial meeting. The cap was added to the Vilsack’s personal collection of caps on display at the governor’s mansion in Des Moines.

News from UTU State Legislative Boards
The Power of the Internet

By Charles L. Little

UTU is always looking for new ways to communicate with its members. One of the primary jobs of a labor union is to deliver important information in as many timely ways as possible in order to better inform you. Over the last four years, we have improved the UTU News, established the UTU website www.utu.org – as the No. 1 site on the Internet for rail-transportation news, produced award-winning informational videos, and have started publishing a series of “white papers” on issues of importance in our industry, beginning with Dan Johnson’s excellent “A Race to the Bottom.”

On June 12, the UTU is taking the next step in providing you with the latest information. As you read on page one of this newsletter, the UTU will become the first major North American international union to take the Internet to “webcast” live my annual “State of the UTU” speech from the Reno Regional Meeting.

I do hope you will join us either in Reno – or on the Internet as we highlight the “Power of One” theme at the first of our three annual Regional Meetings. In fact, we will also be webcasting our new “Power of One” video throughout the meeting.

We believe that talking directly to you on the Internet on matters of importance is vital to the future well-being of our union. While we expect more than 1,000 people to attend our Reno meeting from June 12-14, we wanted to make sure that thousands of others have access to the same information. Today, people expect to be able to know what is going on immediately, and the UTU will be using the Internet more actively in the future to keep you up-to-date.

We are told that the UTU website is the most influential and most-visited website in the railroad industry. Every day, thousands of UTU members, members of other unions, media, Washington decision makers, carriers officials, and others check on www.utu.org to get the latest industry news and to find out what our position is on important issues.

Last summer we also promised to expand our education and training initiative to bring information to you where you live. In order to accomplish that goal, the UTU also will be using the Internet to make available many of our award-winning videos. That means you will be able to visit the UTU homepage and have access whenever you want, using our new “video-on-demand” capability. We believe this means the UTU will be able to provide this type of service to its members. And, unlike some other unions, we will not restrict access to our website. We invite all union members – no matter what union they belong to – to watch our videos whenever they want.

As the Internet becomes a bigger part of our daily lives, it will assume greater importance in our communications with you. As we have said repeatedly, the UTU is the premier transportation union of the 21st Century. By offering you live webcasts, video on demand, and other on-line services, we are doing what no other union in our industry is doing. There is a lot to be said for “The Power of One.”

And the gold goes to…

Congratulations to all involved in winning a gold medal for the UTU’s latest video, “Labor Unions and Railroads: Then and Now.”

This great video has been honored with a First Place Gold Camera Award at the U.S. International Film and Video Festival. Earlier this year, the video won a Telly Award after being selected for the honor from a field of more than 11,000 entries. This year, there were more than 1,600 entries from 30 countries eligible for a Gold Camera Award.

The UTU: The power in the transport labor movement

There is only one gold world today: the United States.

We all know that there are some countries that do not like the role that the U.S. plays as world leader, but their hostility cannot change the facts.

Today, in the transportation labor-union movement, the United Transportation Union, under the leadership of President Charles L. Little and Assistant President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., plays a similar role. We are the leaders. We always lead at the bargaining table and in every other forum.

UTU is the only organization whose membership enjoys the benefits of a broad based insurance program. UTU International is the only department of our union and it has grown to become the envy of all other transportation labor unions. UTU International provides additional evidence that shows the UTU sets the tone for the future.

There are likely to be a number of both strengths and weaknesses, but no one has policies, but all members of this great union.

The UTU legislative departments in both the U.S. and Canada are the class leaders in their field. They work cooperatively because what happens in one country has a definite impact on the other. UTU’s two legislative departments work together and have more victories than any other labor union with a similar operation.

UTU is the only labor union that has an organization that involves all aspects of our industry. In every facet of our union, there is respect for the future. Our biggest challenge is to seek improvements to the railroad retirement program.

Only one union has an operation comparable to our NTSB investigative department, under the leadership of President Charles L. Little and Assistant President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., plays a similar role. We are the leaders. We always lead at the bargaining table and in every other forum.

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No matter where you go in Washington, D.C., whether it is the Surface Transportation Board (STB), the National Mediation Board, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) or the halls of Congress, everyone wants to know what the UTU position is on any given issue. They ask us first. Most of the time, they don’t even ask what the other rail-transportation unions think.

At the Federal Railroad Administration, the UTU is involved in every facet of that agency, whether it is the development of the nation’s rail policy or working to improve the safety of America’s railroads. No other union has more people involved, and no other union has gained more respect from this agency.

The UTU is deeply involved in many areas that affect you. General Secretary and Treasurer Paul C. Thompson plays an active and vital role in our efforts to secure a better railroad retirement program.

Only one union has an operation comparable to our NTSB investigative department, under the leadership of President David Hadley. UTU International and our Rick Martin office seek improvements in fatigue management through collective bargaining. Vice President Bernie McNelis leads our Bus Department and his efforts have resulted in better contracts for bus members while gaining thousands of new members.

Last summer we also said that UTU was the first major North American international union to provide this type of service to its members. And, unlike some other unions, we will not restrict access to our website. We invite all union members – no matter what union they belong to – to watch our videos whenever they want.

As the Internet becomes a bigger part of our daily lives, it will assume greater importance in our communications with you. As we have said repeatedly, the UTU is the premier transportation union of the 21st Century. By offering you live webcasts, video on demand, and other on-line services, we are doing what no other union in our industry is doing. There is a lot to be said for “The Power of One.”
Following is an Apr. 24, 2000, letter from 11 railroad labor union officers to Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers President Edward Dubroski, who, with Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way officers, has attempted to spread misinformation about proposals to improve the Railroad Retirement System. This letter attempts to set the record straight.

Dear Mr. Dubroski: This is in response to your April 17, 2000, letter addressed to various railroad union leaders. You express “grave concern” about certain features of the proposed (Railroad Retirement) legislation.

You state that Section 105 “contains no cap on the amount of Tier II funds that may be privately invested” and you suggest that investment in equities should be limited to 50%. Apparently you are unfamiliar with the “prudent man” language incorporated in the very section you object to.

We are surprised at your suggestion that somehow not capping investments in equities at 50% could lead to, in your words, “disastrous consequences for all railroad workers.” Why is it then that BLE supported BMWE’s motion to increase the equity investment percentage in OA-23111 from 50% to 62%? Surely you didn’t do this believing that it would have “disastrous consequences” for the health insurance fund.

For months, you have circulated misleading propaganda that only BLE and BMWE supported commissioning an “independent study” and that was one reason why you allegedly would not support the agreement. At the same time you were aware that all of rail labor commissioned an “independent study” by KPMG Associates on investment strategy for Railroad Retirement. BLE itself participated in that study, why is it then that you choose to ignore your own study, which states:

“The current assumption in the model uses an asset mix of 50% U.S. equities and 50% Fixed Income, which is a fairly conservative mix relative to other plans of similar size and nature. For instance, the average equity exposure of public funds with over $5 billion in assets is approximately 61%. The impact on increasing the equity allocation of the portfolio can be significant... Unfortunately, moving the portfolio from an initial asset mix of 50/50 (equities/fixed income) to 60/40 increases the rate of return from 8.2% to 8.4%.”

During discussion with the carriers, we relied on what KPMG called “a conservative asset mix and return assumption” – i.e., 50% in equities, producing an 8% return. That never meant we would not try to achieve higher returns based on a prudent investment strategy. After all, you continued an 8% return. That never meant we would not try to achieve higher rates of return. The ability to keep the fund solvent is precisely what the proposed bill reflects. We guarantee the fund’s solvency by getting the carriers to agree to absorb all future tax increases to keep the fund above “four times funding.” This is unprecedented, yet you never mention this fact in your public attacks on the agreement.

We then incorporated a “prudent man” standard in order to maximize investment returns to make future benefit improvements possible. In doing this we looked at other state and federal pension plans, for example, CalPERS is 67% invested in equities; the New York State Common Retirement Fund is 60% so invested, and the Florida Retirement System is 64% so invested. On the federal level, the Federal Reserve System Retirement Plan is 66% invested, and the TVA Retirement System is 62% so invested.

Thus, by trying to limit investment to 50%, the only result you can possibly have, if successful, is to lower rates of return for the Railroad Retirement fund and thereby prevent our members from getting future benefit improvements.

In your letter, you also profess shock that the proposed bill assumes investments from the Railroad Supplemental Account and the SSEB Account. Yet it was projected to invest those funds from the earliest discussions with the carriers. Again, the KPMG study reflects this:

“In both the actuarial reports and in the model, the ultimate balance necessary to fund plan benefits is a combination of the plan balance plus the SSEB balance. The SSEB balance is treated as an asset that can be used at any time. Since this asset is growing without any cash flow drain, the balance grows substantially over the years and dominates the ultimate balance used for benefits...”

In other words, for you to now suggest that the SSEB account balance not be invested is tantamount to saying that no improvements will ever be possible. The only other time we have heard this objection is from certain Congressmen who oppose the bill because they want to privatize Railroad Retirement.

Our agreement and proposed legislation adheres to the original premise: there will be no investment in equities of Tier I funds. We are extremely disappointed that you have chosen to spread misinformation and resort to scare tactics as part of your campaign to derail this Bill. If you succeed, you will have no one but yourself and the BMWE to thank for keeping the retirement age at 62, and for depriving surviving spouses of the improvements they so desperately need. You are attacking the prudent investment of funds in equities. You are only echoing those in Congress who are saying “no benefit improvements without privatization.”

We are fighting that battle, and your efforts are having the opposite effect.

Sincerely,

F. Leo McCann, president
American Train Dispatchers Department, BLE

Robert Roach, Jr., general vice president
International Association of Machinists

Sunny Hall, president, Transport Workers Union

Dan L. Davis, director of the Railroad Department
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

George J. Francisco, Jr., president
National Conference of Firemen and Oilers, Service Employees International Union

W. Dan Pickett, president, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

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Sincerely,

Joseph A. Stinger, administrative assistant to the president, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers

Robert A. Scad develletti, president
Transportation Communications International Union

Charles L. Little, president, United Transportation Union

Isaac Monroe, administrative assistant to the president, Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union

Don C. Buchanan, director of railroad and shipyard workers, Sheet Metal Workers International Association
Peer Counseling

Continued from page 1

UTU International President Charles L. Little offered congratulations to those who forged the agreement. "Amtrak has had peer counsel- ing on a part-time, voluntary basis for two years," Little noted, "and it works. The Red-Block Phase II Peer Counseling effort has the full support of the UTU." Little also drew attention to the goals of the program. "It is important to remember that it is not the intent of the Operation RedBlock program for its volunteers to become full-time counselors," Little explained. "Rather, they are full-time employees who, in the true spirit of trade unionism, are involved in helping co-workers maintain a healthy lifestyle," Little said.

Representing the Transportation Communi-
cation Union at the meeting, American Rail-
way & Airway Supervisors’ Association Presi-
dent Art D’Alessandro noted his organization also fully supported the effort as a realistic approach to a complex problem.

"All research evidence," D’Alessandro pointed out, "indicates that comprehensive pro-
grams, which support an initial treatment foun-
dation, and thorough relapse prevention plan-
ing, produce the most positive outcomes." Amtrak’s Employee Health & Wellness program, and RedBlock Director Robert Bonds said, "Full-
time peer counseling will allow our profession-
al staff to adequately handle upcoming prob-
lems that need attention, while effectively treating existing cases that require immediate and intense follow-up."

"Ed A dams, chairperson at Local 1732, San Jose, Cal., and an Operation RedBlock coordi-
nator, reminded the committee that together, Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration and the UTU have sponsored training for 47 peer counselors over the past three years.

According to UTU International Vice Presi-
dent Tony Janonne, the agreement has been a goal since 1988, and it couldn’t come at a better time. "Managed care has decreased the amount of treatment resources, in some cases has eliminated in-patient treatment, and in most cases has reduced the length of stay," Janonne said.

Janonne also pointed out that UTU is now repre-
sented by eight peer counselors on the Amtrak system, including Gary C. “Moe” Carliqués and Natalie Smith (Local 136), New Haven, Conn.; Lee C. Hance (Local 169, Chicago, Ill.); Charles Cockrell (Local 1470, Edmon-
don, Md.); Gary Finnigan (Local 898, Boston, Mass.); Marie J. Attenberger (Local 117, Vancouver, Wash.); Ed Isaac (Local 1732, San Jose, Cal.), and Idris Rahim (Local 1933, Washington, D.C.).

Education

In addition to the information about peer counseling, the UTU also has announced that it will offer its training and informational videos online through "videos on demand" for educational purposes.

The UTU has signed an agreement with Akamai of Lowell, the foremost provider of high performance live-and-interactive events on the Internet, which will also allow the union to hold cost-effective, real-time web-
casts. In addition, UTU will use Akamai’s streaming media services to provide on-line education by making videos available over the Internet.

"We have made a commitment to use the Internet to better inform and educate our members," said Boyd. "This is the first step in an information revolution that will change how unions communicate with their members and the world. Naturally, the training and education of UTU members over the Internet is a major accomplishment. UTU also will use Akamai’s "Netpodium" service that permits live and interactive Web events to be seen on the Internet without a large investment in time and capital.

"Akamai is the top company in the world in providing these services to companies and organizations and the UTU is pleased to part-
take with them," said Boyd.

Little’s speech will be available after the webcast in archival form for later viewing.

Webcast

Continued from page 1

UTUIA scholarship winners chosen for 2000/2001

This year more than 1,500 students applied for a UTUIA scholarship, and below are the names of the students that were chosen. UPJ scholarship winners have received this money for the years of their choice, two years for post-high school education.

District 1

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont


District 2

Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania


District 3

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia


District 4

Indiana, Michigan, Ohio

Brandy N. Chester, granddaughter of Charles E. Bagley of Local 269, Garrett, Ind.; Michael A. Roth, son of William H. Roth of Local 586, Willard, Ohio; Danny Kozlowski, grandson of Raymond J. Kozlowski of Local 478, Cleveland, Ohio; James C. Norman, son of James A. Norman of Local 27, Cleveland, Ohio; Levi J. Graham, son of Louis V. Graham of Local 376, Louisville, Ky.; Bonnie J. Marr, daughter of Robert J. Marr of Local 1948, Youngstown, Ohio.

District 5

Illinois, Wisconsin


District 6

Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

Michael C. Tuman, son of Pat Tuman of Local 1697, Lubbock, Tex.; Heather V. Bell, grand-
daughter of Edward W. Browning of Local 1313, Amarillo, Tex.; David L. Lambert, grand-
son of Gilbert L. Lambert of Local 1042, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Leslie M. Hart, grand-
daughter of George T. Hart of Local 221, North Little Rock, Ark.; Justin M. Barr, grandson of Robert H. Wilson of Local 462, Pine Bluff, Ark.

District 7

Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota


District 8

Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah


District 9

Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming

Heather Gregory, daughter of Thomas J. Gregory of Local 324, Seattle, Wash.; David A. Howes, grandson of Boyd H. Howes of Local 265, Pocatello, Idaho; Jennifer C. Reid, daughter of Thomas G. Reid of Local 1574, Portland, Ore.

District 10

Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico

Patricia D. Adams (Local 1732, San

Jose, Cal.); Charles Cockrell (Local 117,

San Francisco, Calif.); Gary Finnegan (Local 898, Boston, Mass.); Marie J. Attenberger (Local 117, Vancouver, Wash.); Ed Isaac (Local 1732, San Jose, Cal.), and Idris Rahim (Local 1933, Washington, D.C.).

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**Kevin J. Knutson**

L-465, Gillette, Wyo.

“I’ve worked as a conductor and brakeman for BN SF for 21 years, and serve as vice president, vice chairperson, and training committeeman. I’m local 465. As far as I can remember, I’ve always voted UTU, not just because the union backs the candidates, but because Wyoming is the biggest Republican state I’ve ever seen, and I vote Democrat just to counter it. I’m a registered Democrat and always have been, but I don’t vote the party line just to vote a straight ticket. I look at newspapers and TV, and we talk about politics on the job, but my co-workers don’t influence my votes. I vote my own way.”

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**Conrail funds**

*Continued from page 1*

and Local 601 Chairperson D.E. Myers to audit the fund.

“The bottom line,” said Pickell, “is that there should be a large increase based on the productivity shares, and from this day forward the inclusion of 722 more trainmen contributing to the trust fund at no cost to them will also increase payments significantly.”

An audit conducted in April by NS’s Manager of Payroll Accounting M.W. Greene in Norfolk, Va., showed that the contributions of 722 trainmen were not paid into the fund, which caused it to be $2.97-million short. Pickell and Myers reviewed more than 1,000 train operating records. With interest, they caused it to be $2.97-million short.

Norfolk, Va., showed that the contributions of 722 more trainmen contributing to the fund at no cost to them will also increase payments significantly.

It is expected, according to Pickell, that Norfolk Southern will make the $3-million shortfall payment in either May’s or June’s monthly contribution and it will be dispersed with this year’s annual productivity disbursement in December.

“Sometimes you have to fight the carrier over a dollar,” said Pickell. “But this time, Norfolk Southern has been very helpful and worked with us to make sure we received what we were due in productivity fund payments. When labor and management cooperate on issues like this, in a fair and open manner, we all win. In this case, former Conrail UTU members won $3 million with interest.”

Recipients of the trust fund include protected former Conrail trainmen who hired on prior to the effective date of the crew consist agreement (amended). Under the trust fund agreement, trainmen can receive up to 46% of their annual salary.

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**Capitol Hill**

L-744, Frankfort, Ind.

“I usually follow the union’s recommendations to the letter, because I think the union is looking out for our best interests. I’m sure some of the legislative directors know all the candidates’ views, and they’ve recommended the ones that will ensure the quality of life we deserve. Our local legislative representative keeps us well informed, too. I’ve worked for LACMTA as a bus operator for 25 years, I’m vice chairperson of my local, and I’m registered Democrat. But if a candidate is pro-union, the party affiliation doesn’t matter to me. Everyone should vote because our vote represents our voice.”

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**Carroll Knutson**

L-465, Gillette, Wyo.

“I’ve worked as a conductor and brakeman for BN SF for 21 years, and serve as vice president, vice chairperson, and training committeeman. I’m local 465. As far as I can remember, I’ve always voted UTU, not just because the union backs the candidates, but because Wyoming is the biggest Republican state I’ve ever seen, and I vote Democrat just to counter it. I’m a registered Democrat and always have been, but I don’t vote the party line just to vote a straight ticket. I look at newspapers and TV, and we talk about politics on the job, but my co-workers don’t influence my votes. I vote my own way.”

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Retirees who have worked for the railroad for the last 20 years or more can look forward to a welcoming reception and special events as they near retirement.

The U.S. Rail Retirement Board (RRB) recently announced the retirement of 1,050 railroad employees who have been with the railroad for at least 10 years. These retirees are eligible for a special retirement celebration, which includes a reception, breakfast, and a farewell message from the RRB.

The 1,050 retirees represent a wide range of ages and job classifications. The oldest retiree is 82 years old, and the youngest is 52. The most common job classification is locomotive engineer, followed by yardmaster and conductor.

The special retirement celebration will take place on the last day of the month in which the retiree's 60th birthday falls. The celebration will include a reception, breakfast, and a farewell message from the RRB. The retirees will receive a certificate of recognition and a special lapel pin.

The retirement of these 1,050 employees is part of a larger trend of retiring railroad employees. The average age of retirees is increasing, and the workforce is becoming more diverse.

The RRB is committed to ensuring that all retirees have a smooth transition to retirement, including access to benefits and services. The agency also provides a variety of programs and services to help retirees stay active and engaged in their communities.

The RRB encourages all retirees to plan ahead and prepare for their retirement. This includes providing for their financial needs, staying active and engaged in their communities, and staying connected with fellow retirees.

For more information on the special retirement celebration, please contact the RRB at 1-800-728-8999 or visit the agency's website at www.rrb.gov.
Each Regional Meeting lasts a full three days, with the President’s Banquet on the evening of the third day. The $125 advance registration fee per member or guest includes: Sunday welcome reception; Monday lunch and evening buffet dinner and entertainment; Tuesday lunch and evening theme reception and entertainment; Wednesday lunch and evening Presidential reception and banquet, as well as all training workshop materials. On-site registration is $175 per member or guest. Your name badge will be your admission ticket to all events and festivities.

New this year are one-day registrations for those members who would like to attend the Regional Meetings but can’t spare the time away from work or family. The cost of a one-day registration for any day is $50. Payments for individual events, such as lunches and tours, can be made at each meeting. Also new this year are registration procedures, with separate registration forms for members and guests. Additionally, credit cards are now being accepted for payment of Regional Meeting fees. At this time registration is not available on the UTU website.

Make all checks (U.S. funds only, please) payable to “UTU Regional Meeting.” Send your completed forms to UTU Meeting Registration, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250. You may cancel seven full days prior to arrival with no penalty. Please fax any changes or cancellations immediately to the UTU International at (216) 228-5755.

**June 12-14, 2000**

**Reno Hilton**
2500 East Second St., Reno, NV 89595
Hotel direct reservations: (775) 789-2126
Toll-free reservations: (800) 648-5080
Room reservation deadline: HAS PASSED
Rooms still available at prevailing rates
Self parking: free; valet parking: tip only

**July 10-12, 2000**

**Sheraton Hotel**
2101 Civic Center Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35203
Hotel direct reservations: (205) 394-5000
Toll-free reservations: (800) 325-3535
Reservation code: UTU Regional Meeting
Room rate: $109 single/double; additional person $20
Room reservation deadline: Extended to June 16, 2000
Parking: self $7 per day; valet $12 per day, both with in/out privileges

**August 28-30, 2000**

**Minneapolis Hilton and Towers**
1001 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403
Hotel direct reservations: (612) 397-4999
Toll-free reservations: (800) 445-8667
Reservation code: UTU Regional Meeting
Room rate: $99 single/double; $105 triple/quad
Room reservation deadline: July 20, 2000
Parking: self $12.50 per day; valet $20 per day, both with in/out privileges

**August 28-30, 2000**

**Minneapolis, Minn., golf outing**
Date: Sunday, Aug. 27, 2000; registration deadline Aug. 17
Place: Majestic Oaks Golf Club, Ham Lake, Minn.
Tee-off: 7:30 a.m. shotgun start

**Golf at Regional Meetings**
Arrangements have been made for golf outings in each of the UTU/UTUIA Regional Meeting cities. They are held the Sunday before the start of each meeting at challenging local golf courses. A registration form is printed at right. Please make date of the registration deadline for each golf outing. The registration fee, $80 per golfer for each outing, includes the greens fee and golf carts, lunch and round-trip transportation to the course from the host hotel.

**Reno, Nev., golf outing**
Date: Sunday, June 11, 2000; registration available on site
Place: The Golf Club at Genoa Lakes, Genoa, Nev.
Tee-off: 8 a.m. shotgun start

**Birmingham, Ala., golf outing**
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2000; registration deadline June 30
Place: Oxmoor Valley, Birmingham, Ala.
Tee-off: 8 a.m. shotgun start

**Minneapolis, Minn., golf outing**
Date: Sunday, Aug. 27, 2000; registration deadline Aug. 17
Place: Majestic Oaks Golf Club, Ham Lake, Minn.
Tee-off: 7:30 a.m. shotgun start

By registering in advance for the UTU/UTUIA Regional Meetings, you will speed registration procedures at the meeting sites and help organizers plan more accurately. Additionally, personalized name badges and information kits will be waiting for you upon arrival.

Which Regional Meeting will you be attending?
☐ Birmingham  ☐ Minneapolis

UTU Local __________
Name ____________________________

Title (if any) ____________________________

Name for Badge (if different) ____________________________

Home address ____________________________

City/State/ZIP ____________________________

Daytime telephone number (          ) ____________________________

How will you be paying?  ☐ By enclosed check  ☐ By credit card

Circle type of credit card VISA  MasterCard

Credit card number ____________________________

Expiration date __________ Amt. charged __________

Signature  ____________________________

On-site registration is $175 per member or guest

**Guest Registration Form**
To be used by spouses, children and guests of UTU members attending a Regional Meeting.

Which Regional Meeting will you be attending?
☐ Birmingham  ☐ Minneapolis

Name ____________________________

Name of Member Local __________

Address ____________________________

City/State/ZIP ____________________________

Relationship to member ____________________________

**Golf Registration Form**
Which golf outing will you be attending?
☐ Birmingham  ☐ Minneapolis

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________ Local __________

City/State/ZIP ____________________________

Handicap or average 18-hole score ____________________________

All courses require soft spikes, collared shirts and proper attire. The format at all golf outings will be scramble/best ball. All foursomes will be established by draw from a handicap pool; no pre-arranged foursomes will be considered. Foursomes will be made up of one golfer from each of four classes: A, B, C and D. Please complete the form and send it with your registration fee (payable to “UTU”) by the applicable deadline to UTU Regional Meeting Golf Outing, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not hallucinate.
New VISA® card for UTU members

UTU and National City Bank have created exciting new credit cards for UTU members.

Active and retired UTU members in the U.S. and Canada, as well as family members and friends, can choose from four new credit cards, each of which offer great savings and additional benefits.

- The Prime Rate UTU VISA Platinum and Classic VISA offer the lowest rates available. Both cards have an introductory 3.9% APR for six months on purchases and balance transfers. The rate then goes to the Prime Rate, currently 9% APR. The cards also have an interest-free grace period if the balance is paid in full each month. There is an annual fee of $35 for the VISA Platinum and $25 for the Classic VISA.
- Other options include the UTU No Annual Fee VISA Platinum and Classic VISA, which offer the convenience and acceptance of VISA with no annual fee. Both cards have an introductory 3.9% APR for six months on purchases and balance transfers; then the interest rate is Prime +4.9%, currently 13.9% APR. The cards also have an interest-free grace period if the balance is paid in full every month.
- The VISA Platinum cards also have additional benefits: $250,000 travel accident insurance, automatic rental car insurance and emergency travel assistance services.

National City Bank will soon be sending all UTU members in the U.S. and Canada information describing the new credit cards with the opportunity to apply by mail or telephone.

With UTUIA’s DISABILITY INCOME REPLACEMENT Insurance, You Won’t Have to Worry About This!

UTUIA recognizes your need to replace disability with the ability to meet never-ending obligations when an accident or illness strikes. Our unflagging commitment to provide the best Disability Income Replacement insurance has made UTUIA the association to rely upon for affordable disability income insurance.

For more information, please complete and return the coupon below or telephone toll-free 1-800-558-8842 for the name and telephone number of your UTUIA representative.

Information, Please

I would like more information on UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement insurance.

(Please Print)

Full Name: ____________________________ Sex: __________ Date of birth: __________

Address: ____________________________ City: __________ State: __________ Zip: __________

Telephone Number with Area Code: __________ UTU Local Number: __________

Complete and mail to: UTUIA Sales Dept., 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250
One Union with the Power of UTUIA to Put Financial Security in Your Life

Only one union in the rail-transportation industry – the United Transportation Union – puts the power of one of America’s largest fraternal insurance associations to work to protect the financial security of you and your family.

Here is the success of UTUIA:

➢ UTUIA has more than $695 million of insurance in force, covering the lives of thousands of union families.

➢ UTUIA has more than $220 million in assets, and is the only fraternal insurance company in the rail-transportation industry.

➢ UTUIA has more than $34 million in surplus, providing the assurance of paying benefits when you need them most.

➢ UTUIA paid more than $18 million in benefits to certificate holders in 1999.

➢ UTUIA has more than 56,000 accident and health certificates in force.*

➢ UTUIA has more than 35,000 life certificates in force.*

➢ UTUIA provides more than $60,000 annually in college scholarships to the children and grandchildren of UTU members, and has done so for 28 years.

Join the power of UTUIA and help it make a difference in the future security of all union families.

Special Unity Poster #8: Display this poster to show your support for unity among UTU and BLE members

(Note: * denotes certificates in force at 31 December 1999.)