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The Voice of Transportation Labor

“While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.” – Rail labor unionist Eugene V. Debs

Members approve merger with BLE

CLEVELAND, Ohio — United Transportation Union (UTU) members have voted by an almost six-to-one majority to approve a merger with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE). Meanwhile, the BLE is in the process of voting a second time on whether to merge with the UTU.

The BLE votes were to be counted Dec. 10 and the most up-to-date information on that balloting may be found at the UTU website at <www.utu.org>. If BLE members approve the merger, it would take place Jan. 1, 2002.

The UTU vote was certified Oct. 29 by the American Arbitration Association (AAA), which counted the ballots. Although the final date for receipt of ballots was Sept. 17, the final count of UTU ballots was delayed by a court action brought by three BLE officers, challenging the process by which the BLE polled its own members. The lawsuit was subsequently withdrawn and the BLE sent new ballots to its members, which will be counted by the AAA on Dec. 10. There was no legal challenge to the UTU voting procedures.

The UTU ballot count was 23,365 in favor and 4,146 opposed. A UTU-BLE merger would create a 185,000-member United Transportation Union-Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, which would be the bargaining agent for all unionized rail operating employees in the United States and Canada. The new union would vastly enhance our power and influence at the bargaining table, in state legislatures and provincial parliaments, and in the halls of national legislatures in Washington, D.C., and Ottawa,” Boyd said.

Big Sky Airlines’ membership up

BILLINGS, Mont. – While the airline industry has suffered severe losses as a result of the September terrorist attacks on the United States and the reeling U.S. economy, United Transportation Union membership at Big Sky Airlines has tripled since the pilots there joined the UTU in 1998.

After the Big Sky Pilots Association opted to merge with the UTU that year, union membership has grown from approximately 35 pilots to slightly more than 100 pilots and dispatchers. Pilot Ed Sand, vice local chairperson of UTU Local 15 at Billings, Mont., said the airline’s fleet has grown from four aircraft when he joined Big Sky about three and a half years ago to 16 aircraft today.

Growing along with the airlines fleet and personnel has been the number of destinations now

News & Notes

Time books, calendars due

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The 2002 edition of the UTU’s time books are now available. The books, one for railroad members, a second for bus and transit workers, are great for keeping track of time worked, runs completed, money earned and taxes withheld. Time books are being sent via UPS to all local secretaries and treasurers so they can be distributed to individual members at upcoming local meetings and at crew change points. Contact your local secretary or treasurer if you do not receive your copy. Additionally, the 2002 edition of the UTU calendar is being mailed to all current members of the UTU Retiree Program.

UTU supports winners

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In New Jersey and Virginia, the only two states holding gubernatorial elections last month, the candidates endorsed by the UTU’s state legislative boards were victorious. Democrats James E. McGreevey of New Jersey and Mark R. Warner of Virginia have both brought an end to eight years of Republican rule in their home states. New Jersey State Legislative Director Daniel O’Connell and Virginia State Legislative Director Richard Jeskey thanked members there for their support.

Meeting date changed

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The date of the 2002 UTU/UTUIA Regional Meeting scheduled for New Orleans, La., has been changed. The meeting will now be held Wednesday, August 14, through Saturday, August 17, 2002, at The Fairmont Hotel. Other 2002 Regional Meeting dates remain unchanged: June 9-12 at the Reno Mont Hotel. Other 2002 Regional Meeting dates remain unchanged: June 9-12 at the Reno Mont Hotel. The UTU quadrennial convention dates also remain unchanged: Monday, August 18, to Friday, August 22, 2003, at the Fontainebleau Hilton in Miami Beach, Fla. (This date printed in the November 2001 UTU News inadvertently listed the incorrect year.)

Boyd: “Fire most Amtrak bosses”

CLEVELAND, Ohio – If Amtrak is to survive and fulfill its intended mission as a national intercity rail passenger network, then a new management team with greater vision, initiative and ability must be in place, UTU International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., said.

In an opinion article shared with major newspaper editors across the nation, Boyd said of Amtrak’s current management team, “There is no vision at the top, no plan to translate increased passenger demand into more congressional support, no fire-in-the-belly desire to keep Amtrak operating on time and efficiently, and no understanding of how to operate a user-friendly system.”

Boyd’s comments came following a six-to-five vote by the congressionally created Amtrak Reform Council (ARC) that called for Amtrak personnel has been the number of destinations now

Continued on page 10

For the latest news on unification, negotiations and rail retirement, see the UTU website: www.utu.org

Continued on page 10
Local 84, Los Angeles, Cal.  
Members changed their bylaws to hold meet- 
ing on the third Monday of the month except in December, when they will be on the second 
Monday of the month, unless otherwise posted, 
said Secretary and Treasurer Richard Albritte. 
On odd months, the meeting will be held at 7 p.m. 
at Philippe’s, 1001 North Alameda St., 
Los Angeles, and on even months, the meetings 
will be held at 10:30 a.m. at the Ramada Inn, 
2900 North San Fernando Blvd., in Burbank.

Local 196, Beardstown, Ill.  
Representatives from the U.S. Railroad Retire- 
ment Board (RRB) will be on hand to explain 
the agency’s programs and the pending reform 
legislation when members meet on December 7. 
For more information, contact RRB representa- 
tive James L. McFadden at (217) 443-9747 or at 
decatur@rrb.gov.

Local 200, North Platte, Neb.  
Tramman’s Local Chairperson John Charbon- 
eau is urging all male UTU members at risk to take 
action now. Meanwhile, members are mourning 
the recent death of Solomon Thomas, Jr., and 
saying, “We notify all the 911 
train stops to keep people away from the dan- 
gers around a train. “We notify all the 911 
train runs have been made.”

Local 221, N. Little Rock, Ark.  
Congratulations go to Justin Stricklin, son of 
Union Pacific employee Richard H. Stricklin 
and his wife Kim, for attaining the rank of Eagle. 
Meanwhile, members are mourning the recent 
death of Arthur Fritter, Jr., and 
saying, “My son, a UTU member, may 
not have had any serious injuries in the 59 years the 
run has been made.”

Local 338, Chattanooogas, Tenn.  
Greg Chambers was appointed vice local 
chairperson at the local’s October meeting. 
Meanwhile, members are mourning the recent 
death of Thomas and 50 to the importance of a getting a prostate 
cancer. Because symptoms 
might be ignored or may simply not be present, 
Charbonneau, along with Mike Worthen of 
Local 1117, Las Vegas, Nev., who both under- 
went radical surgery for the disease, are urging all 
male UTU members at risk to take action now. 
They note a PSA level of 0-4 is normal, higher 
scores should be considered suspicious, and a 
safety panel leader paves way for Santa 

Local 375, Edgemont, S.D.  
This year’s Christmas dinner will be held 
December 13 at the Seven Sisters Steak House 
in Hot Springs, Local President Robert D. Rizzi 
said, and sponsored by UTU Designated Legal 
Counsel Ron Barczak. A response to the reser- 
vation forms sent to members is requested. For 
more information, contact Rizzi, Peg Semler or 
Tim Archambau at (404) 404-0404.

Local 473, La Grande, Ore.  
Six members who have retired or will soon 
retire will be honored at a special party at 6:30 
p.m. on December 11 at the local’s headquarters 
on Adams Avenue in La Grande, said Secretary 
and Treasurer Larry J. Romine. Among those 
bestowed were Local President Steve Cuellar 
(who will preside at his last meeting a day later), 
Local Chairperson (E) Ben Davison, and Vice 
Local Chairperson (T) Darwin Gorell. Attend- 
ing was Local International Vice President 
Martin III and recently retired General Chair- 
person Lavon Nelson.

Local 807, Tucson, Ariz.  
Besides holding a blood drive arranged by Sec- 
retary Dan Hicks, members have made arrange- 
ments for those in the area to receive flu and pneumonia vaccines, with a clinic being held 
Saturday and Sunday, December 1 and 2, from 9 
a.m. to 5 p.m. at Carpenter’s Hall, 606 S. Plumer Ave., in Tucson, said Alternate Legislative Rep- 
gresentative Jim Turnbeaugh. The shots, arrang- 
ed by Hicks, Harvey Breen and Turnbeaugh, 
cost $15.

Local 1138, Miami, Fla.  
Conductor Noreen Edwards recently lost her 
husband to leukemia, and according to Dele- 
geate, Legislative Representative and State Leg- 
islative Director Ed Harrington, she and her 
two young sons need help. Donations may be 
made payable to Noreen Edwards at 7935 N.W. 173 
St., Hialeah, Fl. 33015.

Local 1374, New Castle, Pa.  
A spaghetti dinner, put together by Local 
Chairperson Sam Marino and the B&O Gener- 
al Committee (GO-49) to raise money for the 
Red Cross and the CSX Employee Disaster 
Relief Fund, drew more than 300 in late October 
and raised more than $3,565, which will be 
matched by the carrier. Those attending includ- 
ied International Vice President Tony Iannone, 
UTU Pennsylvania State Legislative Director 
Don W. Dunlevy, UTU Auxiliary President 
Edythe M. Walter, and Alternate Assistant to the 
President-Yardmasters J.R. Cumby, Marino, 
who is also the local secretary and treasurer, a 
delegate and a UTU organizer, offered gratitude 
to UTU Designated Legal Counsel William M. 
McVay, Marvin Barish, Chatman, Gaines & 
Stern, and Ahartini & Darby for making the 
dinner possible.

Local 1375, Philadelphia, Pa.  
The local’s sixth annual holiday celebration 
will be held Saturday, December 22, 7:30 p.m. 
at the Gladwyne VFW Hall (west on I-76 to 
Gladwyne exit, turn right under the bridge, 
then left on the end of the road), according to 
Local Chairperson and Secretary and Treasurer Eric 
Feld, who said active and retired members in the 
New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware area are 
invited. The event will be sponsored by Desig- 
ated Legal Counsel Coffey and Kaye.

Local 1438, Lincoln Park, Mich.  
members are mourning the recent death of 
Tony Rojas, said Local President Dennis J. 
Kernan. Meanwhile, the annual Christmas par- 
y was held November 26 and sponsored by Des- 
ignated Legal Counsel Harrington, Thompson, 
Acker & Harrington, Ltd.

Local 1594, Upper Darby, Pa.  
After denying there was a problem, SEPTA 
recently purchased two new buses, with eight 
more to arrive soon, said President and Local 
Chairperson Ron Koran, who noted the turn- 
around occurred after a local newspaper printed 
the facts presented by Delegate Tom Bisignani 
about the deteriorating and unsafe vehicles.

Local 1697, Lubbock, Tex.  
Members driving for Texas, New Mexico & 
Oklahoma Coaches, concerned about safety, 
were recently told if they block off their seats 
from passengers, they will get time off with no 

Local 1715, Charlotte, N.C.  
Local President James Shannon was recently 
presented with a plaque recognizing him as the 
Statewide Avenue Presbyterian Church Man of 
the Year.

Local 1933, Washington, D.C.  
Members have donated $500 to the Survivors’ 
Fund of the Community Foundation for the 
National Capital Region, said Delegate and Dis- 
trict of Columbia Legislative Director Steve 
Fritter. The money will be used to support the 
needs of those in the area affected by the Sep- 
ember 11 tragedy.
Alabama
State Legislative Director Ron Clements reported that UTU Local 622 at Birmingham, Ala., will be holding its annual “Jimmy Lee Dor-ough” Christmas dinner on Monday, December 10 at 6 p.m. at the Irondale Café in Irondale, Ala.

Anyone interested in attending the dinner should call Clements’ office at (334) 264-8758 so that the proper arrangements can be made.

Representatives from the Railroad Retirement Board, the Federal Railroad Administration, United HealthCare and the UTU Membership Services Department also will be present to answer questions regarding health insurance coverage, pensions and other matters.

The annual dinner is named in honor of Dor-ough, “a dedicated and loyal member who rarely missed a meeting and demanded that the meetings be held in a proper manner, without excep-
tion,” Clements said.

North Carolina
The North Carolina Department of Trans-
portation has formed a new Rail Advisory Coun-
cil to promote and preserve the railroads operat-
ing in the state and UTU Legislative Director Rich-
ard H. Westbrook has been appointed to serve on the council.

Westbrook, who is the only member of the council to come from the ranks of rail labor, was appointed by Gov. Michael E. Easley.

Others appointed to the council include CSX Resident Vice President Lyman Cooper and Norfolk Southern Resident Vice President Dur-
wood Laughinghouse.

The council, which will be chaired by Chief Deputy Secretary of Transportation Gene Conti, will hold its first meeting sometime later this fall.

Arizona
Members of the Arizona Legislative Board met in Phoenix on November 13 to familiarize them-
self with the state and UTU Legislative Director Joe.

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self with the state and UTU Legislative Director Joe.

Legislative Director Scott Olson said the new system will enable the board to send e-mail and “instant messages” to officers and members at any location in the United States, including those on trains in the middle of the desert, where no cell phone service is available. Members will also be able to get emergency messages from their families at any time and will be able to respond via e-mail pagers.

“This is a step up into the twentieth century that moves us light years ahead of where we are today,” Olson said. All of the secure technology will come at a cost equal to or less than most normal rates for other internet service providers, Olson added.

Illinois
Legislative Director Joseph C. Szabo was among a select group of rail activists invited by Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) to appear with him at an October 28 news conference calling for increased congressional funding for Amtrak passenger and property security.

S. 1550 would provide Amtrak with $1.3 bil-
lion in supplemental funding which would be used to update the underwater tunnels that carry Amtrak and commuter trains into New York’s Pennsylvania Station and to hire an addi-
tional 300-plus police officers nationwide to help make sure firearms and explosives are not brought aboard trains or into stations.

“Sen. Durbin understands the security situation com-
pletely,” Szabo said. “It was clear from what he said during the meeting that his railroad background has given him a thor-
ough grasp of just what it takes to secure the perimeter of a railroad yard, as well as keep a rail-
road station under surveillance so that a would-
be terrorist does not endanger a train, its passen-
gers or its crew. The senator, his two brothers,
and both his partners worked for the old New York Central system in East St. Louis. I don’t think we’ve ever had a member of the U.S. Senate with his depth of understanding and experience in the industry.”

Although the news conference was called largely to address the post-September 11 securi-
ty situation, Szabo said Sen. Durbin also held a private meeting with rail activists focusing on passing the High Speed Rail Investment Act, known in the Senate as S. 250.

“The senator asked all of us to redouble our efforts to contact legislators and ask them to sup-
port and move this vital legislation,” Szabo said.

Oregon
State Legislative Director Delmer Hanson of Local 473 at LaGrande and Assistant Legislative Director Greg Boam of Local 471 at Eugene have been selected by the Union Pacific Railroad to serve as Olympic torch bearers for the upcoming 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Although the exact time and location at which the two will bear the torch is not yet known, Hanson will carry the torch bearing the Olympic flame on January 25 somewhere in or near Boise, Idaho, while Boam will bear the torch on Janu-
ary 22 in Eugene.

“We are both very honored and proud to be chosen,” Boam said.

In other news, Hanson thanked all of the leg-
islative representatives and UTU members for their hard work generating phone calls and con-
tacting their congressional representatives in support of the Railroad Retirement legislation.

“This past year, I have had the opportunity to attend meetings with each local and became familiar with the needs of our membership. With input from the legislative representatives and the help of the Oregon DOT, we were able to address many of the problems areas around the state and improve our working conditions,” Hanson added.

He also called on UTU members to maintain their level of involvement in the political process.

“A new election cycle is beginning. We will have many more elections in Oregon, including the election of a new governor. Please continue to stay politically informed and active. Remember that your TPEL contributions are a tax credit in the state of Oregon. If you are mar-
ried and file jointly, your tax credit is $100. Fil-
ing single, you get a $50 credit. Many thanks to all of you for your involvement and support.”

Our tribulations make us stronger
The year 2001 has proven the adage “for every action, a reaction” to be true.

Acts brought against our nation, intended to fragment and demoralize, have been met with the opposite reaction. Our nation, including our membership, has been united as never before. God, family and country are given a higher priority than in decades. Old Glory is flying higher.

Families and communities have been drawn closer, with a greater concern for one another. Acts of terrorism, intended to fragment and demoralize, have been met with the opposite reaction. Our nation, including our membership, has been united as never before. God, family and country are given a higher priority than in decades. Old Glory is flying higher.

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Update on national negotiations
by Byron A. Boyd, Jr.

UTU International President

This round of wage, rules and benefits bargaining with the railroads already is three years old and is certain to stretch into 2002. Because railroad labor contracts don’t expire under the law, existing contracts remain in force until revisions are ratified by the membership, imposed through binding arbitration or forced upon us by Congress. As in previous years, most of the carriers are coordinating their bargaining under the umbrella of the National Carriers’ Conference Committee, which bargains with about 13 labor organizations, including the UTU.

Although the UTU is farther along the path toward a negotiated settlement than most of the unions, the carriers did reach a settlement with the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes that has elements we cannot and will not accept. We all would have preferred a more prompt settlement of our issues to our liking. But, we cannot control events or the actions of others. We have to accept them. For example, before George Bush’s election to the White House more than a year ago, it appeared that the UTU was on an express track toward a new contract with substantial carrier concessions. When it became apparent that the Republicans were going to regain the White House, the carriers welched on a provision in the tentative agreement eliminating entry rates for brakemen, and little progress has been made since. More recently, the questions of the UTU-BMWFE merger and remote control operations have slowed bargaining. Also making a settlement more difficult is the BWME agreement on health-care costs that the carriers may call a pattern that is certainly not our pattern. The BWME agreement on health-care costs has been termed “concessionary” by its own leadership. Apparently the BWME had reasons for doing what it did, but that is not the course of action the UTU intends to take.

Fortunately, our existing contract contains a cost-of-living allowance clause that boosts paychecks twice annually to ease the impact of inflation. The COLA approximates lump-sum payments that have been part of new contracts. Lump sums have been larger than recent cost-of-living allowances because they made up for the previous unpaid COLAs and because inflation then was running at a higher level than it has been over the past few years. For now, we are better off with COLAs because they are rolled into existing rates, while lump sum payments are not.

We continue to pursue a new contract that contains adequate rate increases, brings all post-1985 employees to the level of pre-1985 employees and provides pre-1985 employees with a longevity payment. We also want to replace complicated compensation arbitrations with easy-to-understand trip rates in eliminating the dual basis of pay, which will not diminish existing rates of pay. We made elimination of arbitrations an objective because when Congress becomes involved in a bargaining impasse, the carriers have been quite successful pointing to arbitrations as impediments to productivity. The most difficult aspect of current negotiations is health care, whose costs have been rising by almost 20% annually. At this rate, health-care costs double in fewer than four years.

The UTU has an advantage over other unions in this area because we previously made changes to our separate health and welfare plan to help trim costs without diminishing the quality of service. We are again working with our own medical experts to determine what causes these costs to increase.

I told the carriers recently that it would be ludicrous for the UTU to agree to additional health-care cost sharing without more information on how and why those costs are increasing. The carriers’ health-care plans, which cost the railroads almost $3 billion annually, only now are being audited and that is as a result of UTU’s insistence.

Our negotiating team is working hard to reach a reasonable and realistic settlement that recognizes the full contribution to railroad profitability of train and engine service workers. We will not accept a flawed agreement in the interests of expediency.

UTU members follow tradition of service

Despite the attacks of September 11, our dedication to liberty remains undiminished, and our pride in UTU members and their families has never shined more brightly.

In the face of horror, members running New York’s trains and buses that day performed admirably. Members continue to prove the value of their services daily, keeping passengers, freight and the American economy on the move.

Food, blood and money from members across the continent aid devastated families, our sons and daughters are answering the call to defend our freedoms, and members in the military’s reserve branches stand ready to serve.

But transportation labor has been down this road before. During World War II, but it will never erode our memories of them, nor our debt to their sacrifices.

Defending those who are indefensible

Unions are families, where an injury to one is an injury to all. Injuries are not always caused by employers, however. Sometimes union members inflict injuries upon their brothers and sisters. And, we all wind up paying. Recently there have been instances where members have been accused of fabricating federal reports and pocketing cash fares. As a protective organization, your union is committed to defending accused members. There have been cases where the facts justified the charges and there was little that legal counsel could do to protect the member. When our members do something that is obviously wrong, we all suffer.

Sometimes the offense is seemingly innocent. Say a train is scheduled for 3 p.m., departs and you report ed off your previous run at 10 a.m. If you had reported off at 9 a.m., you could catch the 5 p.m. and return home earlier or avoid having to sleep on the road or gain additional wages. So, you falsify your log and report having gone off duty at 9 a.m.

To begin with, this honors a brother or sister who would have had that run had you not made a false report. But, the violation is more than a violation of company rules. It is a federal criminal offense under hours of service laws to file a knowingly false report. In fact, the Department of Justice can become involved in the investigation along with the Federal Railroad Administration.

When federal law enforcement officers do become involved in the investigation, they often interview motel clerks, van drivers and even wait staff at restaurants in an effort to establish the actual times you reported on duty and off. And, these individuals are not the only people who choose to break the law or rules. Please, do all that you can to discourage such conduct. It just costs you and your union-family brothers and sisters too much.
Success of your claim depends on you

by Paul C. Thompson
UTU International Assistant President

At the UTU International, we regularly receive letters on local safety issues and violations of our contracts with questions as to why the International does not become involved in all of these issues. The International is always there to help, but certain things are required before your International becomes involved. We are a union, and, as such, we work from the bottom upward.

Our constitution provides the very best tools for making the UTU work for each and every member. However, you, as a member, have just as much responsibility as your International to make sure the system is always working and the wheels do not stop turning.

Several months ago I discussed how each member should file claims for rule violations. The same is true of safety issues and other problems facing our membership on the local level. Each local elects representatives from its ranks for handling safety issues, rules violations and assistance in discipline procedures. In each of these situations, you, the member, and your local representatives are the ones that start the file on each case or incident. If not successfully resolved on the local level, all the facts you provide to handle the incident to a conclusion.

If not successfully resolved on the local level, all the information that each of you developed is forwarded by your local representative to the next level of handling. For safety issues, this would be the state legislative director and for rule violations, the general chairperson.

Once these issues are advanced to the second level of handling, the state legislative director and/or the general chairperson must rely upon the data and information presented in the file that is developed at the local level. If you and your local representative have provided sufficient information on the incident involved, doubt it can be handled to a successful conclusion.

If there is not sufficient information developed on the local level, then the chances of success become less. From the second level of handling on upward, we must depend upon the facts and information you have developed when the incident occurred.

If your state legislative board is unsuccessful in handling the problem to a successful conclusion, then the director may request our national legislative director and his department become involved in successfully disposing of the issue. If the general chairperson is unsuccessful in resolving the issue, he/she may request that an International officer be assigned to assist in handling the dispute or problem. This may include a conference with the carrier or submitting the dispute to binding arbitration. Each general committee under the constitution has complete autonomy so they, not your International, determine if and when an International officer is assigned to assist.

General chairpersons may request any International officer they desire to assist them and, in most instances, the officer requested will be assigned. It is easy to see how each of us must depend on the other in order to be successful in whatever endeavor we undertake. The general committees and the International depend upon you, the member, to provide us with honest and accurate facts. Believe me, if the facts are not correct, somewhere in the handling of a dispute the actual facts will be developed. You, as a member, must depend upon your general committee and your International officers to use the facts you provide to handle the incident to a conclusion.

I remember a childhood riddle that states it better than I can state it. It goes as follows:

If I can count on you, and you can count on me, just think what a wonderful world this will be.

Follow what I have set forth in this article, volunteer your services to your local chairpersons, local legislative representatives, attend your local meetings and, above all else, support your union, because the union is you. If you do this, I assure you that there will be a change for the better for all of us.

SOFa sees five steps to a safer December

LANSING, Mich. – In North America, December is the darkest month of the year, and from what UTU's Michigan State Legislative Director David H. Brickey has learned, that's especially true for UTU members.

“December is our worst month for severe, career-ending injuries, such as those that result in amputations,” Brickey said, “and the United Transportation Union wants you to return home safely.”

Brother Brickey has the statistics to back up his claim. Thanks to his ongoing work with the Switching Operations Fatality Analysis (SOFa) project, the rail industry now knows that, on the average, there is one fatality and about 11 severe injuries per month.

The SOFa studies, originally examining circumstances surrounding 76 fatalities occurring between January 1992 and July 1998, point to five steps rail workers can take to vastly improve their chances of returning home safely.

Brickey said these five points should be uppermost in rail workers' minds:

1.) Secure equipment before action is taken.
2.) Protect employees against moving equipment.
3.) Discuss safety at the beginning of a job or when a project changes.
4.) Communicate before action is taken.
5.) Mentor less-experienced employees to perform service safely.

“SOFa provides us an example of where working together with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), the carriers and with government can pay real dividends,” Brickey said.

The SOFa committee includes three representatives from the UTU, including Brickey, Minnesota State Legislative Director John Smullen, and Georgia State Legislative Director Danny Bylows, who was appointed when former Texas State Legislative Director Sam Arrington retired.

Also on the committee are three BLE representatives, two persons from the Association of American Railroads, one from the American Short Line Railroad Association, and two from the Federal Railroad Administration.

The panel's studies have yielded a number of revelations. “Most deaths have occurred on a Tuesday,” Brickey said. “June is the worst month for fatalities, and most deaths have occurred between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m., with another dangerous period between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m.”

The SOFa reports, one released in October 1999 focusing on fatalities and another in July 2001 on severe, career-ending injuries, can be obtained in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) from the FRA's website at http://www.fra.gov.

Metra LMC celebrates 18th anniversary

by C.A. Iannone
UTU International Vice President

CHICAGO – Metra, the Chicago-area commuter rail system, recently celebrated the 18th anniversary of its nationally recognized Labor/Management Committee (LMC), and the UTU was there to share in the program's long-running history of accomplishment.

The spirit of cooperation here led senior Metra management officials to meet with UTU International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., at the UTU Regional Meeting in Greensboro, N.C., last June. The success of that session led to a reciprocal visit to the Metra property in September by President Boyd and some of his staff from both Cleveland and Chicago.

“If a carrier is truly serious about programs like this,” Boyd said, “the UTU will work with them. Only through such openness and ongoing dialogue can labor and management seek to resolve issues that divide us.”

Formed in October 1983, the Metra LMC has benefited from the strong support of the various labor organizations, including the UTU, which has been a key player from the start.

In the 1980s, then-UTU International President Fred A. Hardin was part of a group of rail labor executives who gave the go-ahead to the program.
UTU officers and members were plentiful on Saturday night, Nov. 3, in Terre Haute, Ind., the boyhood home of labor activist Eugene Debs, for the presentation of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation Award to UTU Past President Al H. Chesser. Chesser became the third UTU president honored by the Debs Foundation. Former Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen President Ed Gilbert and former Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen and UTU President Charlie Luna previously received awards. Al’s award was presented by UTU International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., on behalf of the foundation. Al was cited for his lifetime of productive labor-union leadership. Celebrating the economic prosperity of union members today, Chesser reminded them, “Don’t forget your roots.”
Boyd lauds Chesser's efforts to unify rail labor

The following are excerpts from a speech presented by UTU International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., before the Eugene V. Debs Foundation Awards Banquet, Terre Haute, Indiana, honoring UTU Past President Al H. Chesser, November 3, 2001.

As America strikes back against its enemies, our national leaders have taken to quoting Winston Churchill who, with President Roosevelt, saved western civilization from another international terrorist. Following the allied victory, Churchill was voted out of office. But 50 years ago, in 1951, Britons, recognizing their mistake, re-elected Churchill to lead them.

So it is with organized labor in America. Yes, as a percentage of the private-sector work force, organized labor has been in the wilderness. But, there are signs the American worker again is recognizing the value of voting "union, yes."

Organized labor in general, and railroad unions in particular, are becoming essential to the American worker because workers again are understanding what Eugene Debs understood when he helped form the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen – the modern embodiment of Gene Debs' dream, salute you tonight for a lifetime of achievement and toil in the vineyards of rail labor. God bless you, God bless the union movement, and God bless the United States of America.

Chesser to Debs Foundation: “One rail operating union”

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. – Reaffirming his vision that “tomorrow be better than today,” United Transportation Union Past President Al H. Chesser, received the rank-and-file of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) to approve a merger with the UTU.

Chesser encouraged the “yes” vote as he accepted the Eugene V. Debs Foundation award for lifetime achievement, becoming the third UTU official to be honored by the prestigious Debs Foundation.

The award was presented to Chesser on behalf of the Debs Foundation by UTU International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., as hundreds of international labor officials looked on following a day of ceremonies at Debs’ boyhood home in Terre Haute, Ind.

Debs said in 1918 that the role of labor leaders should be to “plead the cause of the men and women and children who toil; to serve the working class.”

Ed Gilbert, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen, received the Debs’ lifetime achievement award in 1969.

Charles Luna, a president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, architect of the UTU’s formation and the UTU’s first international president, was honored posthumously by the Debs Foundation.

Debs’ “hur and cry was to all of labor that you are doing the wrong thing” by having “too many unions,” Chesser said. “You should be in one organization because you have to fight the big organizations,” was Debs’ drumbeat message, Chesser said.

A single UTU-BLE would make it “easier to negotiate” because then the operating unions would “negotiate from strength,” he said.

Chesser hired on in 1941 as a brakeman on the Santa Fe in Amarillo, Texas, and joined the BRT. In 1945 he was elected secretary-treasurer and legislative representative of his local, a post he held until 1956 when he was elected Texas state legislative director.

In accepting his lifetime labor achievement award from the Debs Foundation, Chesser said, “I hope my efforts have made a small difference. The UTU has been my life.”
### Social Security reform panel to offer alternative approaches

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A White House Social Security reform commission is expected this month to offer a report outlining alternative ways to set up private investment accounts, even though congressional backers would prefer a recommendation on a specific program design.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a former Democratic senator from New York who co-chairs the panel, said the bipartisan panel created by President Bush will not offer a single plan.

Instead, it will present alternative approaches to reaching the president’s goal of creating private investment accounts allowing workers to invest part of their Social Security taxes in stocks and bonds.

Historically changes affecting the Social Security program have affected the Tier I portion of Railroad Retirement benefits, but given the pending legislation designed to reform the rail retirement system, it remains unclear how changes affecting Social Security will influence railroad benefits.

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Thomas (R-Cal.) said whether Congress moves next year on the Social Security legislation depends largely on the commission’s recommendations.

Critics of the commission said the panel was trying to “muddy the waters” to avoid trouble for Bush on a politically sensitive issue. Others argue that private accounts will draw money from the system and force deep cuts in benefits.

Some members of Congress who back private accounts said they would prefer the commission develop an overall plan, saying that would help move the debate forward.

Private accounts face strong opposition from labor groups and their Democratic allies, and many observers do not see lawmakers tackling the issue next year, when the two parties will be fighting for control of Congress in the November elections.

### Panama Canal cruise pricing reduced

A limited number of cabins at a recently reduced price have been made available to active and retired UTU members wishing to participate in the UTU Travelers’ Club’s upcoming Roundtrip Panama Canal Cruise aboard Princess Cruise Line’s Sun Princess.

This unique fraternal travel opportunity, set for March 6 through March 16, 2002, provides a twist on the traditional 10-day cruise of the canal, offering the convenience of sailing from, and returning to, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

With cabin prices now starting at just $1,322 per person (based on double occupancy), this Love Boat adventure gives everyone a chance to experience Grand Class cruising, where big-ship choice combines with small-ship intimacy to create an experience unlike any other.

Pampered guests will embark from Ft. Lauderdale and set sail for arrival on March 8 in Cozumel, Mexico. From there, travelers will head to Grand Cayman. After a day at sea on March 10, participants will dock once more.

Meanwhile, the Railway Museum Committee was formed when CN abandoned a station in town,” Sirman said. “The town refurbished the station and used it for offices and a seniors’ center.” In 1989, the locomotive was moved just west of the station, and restoration was begun.

“I talked CN into selling us an old baggage car for a dollar,” Sirman said. “Then, in 1994, we secured some space in the renovated station for a dollar,” Sirman said. “Then, in 1994, we secured some space in the renovated station for offices and a seniors’ center.” In 1989, the locomotive was moved just west of the station, and restoration was begun.

“This unique fraternal travel opportunity, set for March 6 through March 16, 2002, provides a twist on the traditional 10-day cruise of the canal, offering the convenience of sailing from, and returning to, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

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Pampered guests will embark from Ft. Lauderdale and set sail for arrival on March 8 in Cozumel, Mexico. From there, travelers will head to Grand Cayman. After a day at sea on March 10, participants will dock at Limón, Costa Rica. On March 12, the ship enters the Panama Canal. Returning through the same locks, the ship cruises to Cartagena, Colombia.

To receive a brochure and reservation form, write today to: UTU Travelers’ Club, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250. To learn about various upgrade options and airfares, call Lakewood Travel Bureau toll free at 1-800-726-9294. (From Canada, call 216-221-9294.)

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

#### The Final Call

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<th>Local</th>
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<td>145</td>
<td>Flagg, Ellen W.</td>
<td>Columbus, OH</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>Hayden, Joseph H.</td>
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<td>219</td>
<td>Johnson, Jr., Everett W.</td>
<td>Center, MO</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>Hayes, Kenneth G.</td>
<td>Friendly, WV</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>Tomlinson, Arthur S.</td>
<td>Fultonville, NY</td>
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**Will the economy affect your holiday spending?**

**Wayne Brown**
L-769, Alexandria, Va.

“I've been on the rails for 28 years, I'm a UTU engineer and proud of it, working for Norfolk Southern. I'm going to spend conservatively, but I'm not going to spend freely and try to make every dollar count, and we'll get on with our lives. We'll have a big family meal, we'll get together and rejice and laugh, and we'll talk about family things. I'm looking forward to a good holiday season and will make it one, regardless. I have my health, my family is healthy, and you can't buy that. It's the most important thing. I have a lot to be grateful for, and one great union backing me up.”

**Carroll Harley**
L-674, Augusta, Ga.

“I'm a conductor for CSX, and I’ve been a railroad employee for 28 years. This year, the economy will affect my spending drastically. I won't spend as much as we would if we weren't, as I believe, in a recession. My family and I will curb our holiday spending because the economy is in turmoil. I don’t think we know how bad it is because we make a good living on the railroad. I have two grand-kids we’ll buy for, and we’ll still have a big Thanksgiving dinner at my home. It won’t affect my spirits because we have close family ties, and we always bond together at the holidays.”

**Andres Trujillo**
L-1138, Miami, Fla.

“I’ve been working on the Florida East Coast Railroad for about four-and-a-half years. I’m working as a conductor right now, but I’m also a qualified engineer. We have one seniority roster for all operating crafts. My wife and I have three children. We traditionally spend whatever we have available for spending, and we’ll be doing the same thing this year, so it won’t really be any more or any less. I think people are affected by the press. If it says things will be bad and people won’t be spending, there’s a snowball effect. But I think you get a bit of confidence in the future by being a union member.”

**Andre Parson**
L-1678, Minden, La.

“I’m a conductor, and this January, it will mark eight years that I’ve been working for the Kansas City Southern. I think business may slow down a bit, but there will still be freight move. I feel a bit better and have a bit more confidence because I have a union job. I think everything will work out for the better in the long run. My wife and I usually take care of the holiday spending, and she knows what to spend and what not to spend. I do my best to stay out of it. We have a two-year-old girl and a six-year-old son, and we’ll have a lot of fun at Christmas.”

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**TPF HONOR ROLL**
Honoring members who have begun contributing to TPF or increased their donations to $100 or more per year within the last two months.

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**Your efforts are working**
Maybe you have wondered whether your telephone calls to lawmakers are effective. Here is evidence that those calls are effective.

— Cong. J.D. Hayworth (R-Ariz.) is one of the most conservative members of Congress, receiving 100% ratings from the American Conservative Union. As you know, political conservatives such as Senators Pete Domenici (N-M.) Phil Gramm (R-Texas) and Don Nickles (R-Okla.) have worked persistently to kill Railroad Retirement reform. Yet Hayworth, who holds a Republican leadership position and who sits on the House Ways and Means Committee, has primary jurisdiction in the House over Railroad Retirement, recently took the podium to address his fellow House members to explain his support for Railroad Retirement reform. It was no accident that Hayworth decided to support Railroad Retirement reform.

Scott Olson, UTU’s legislative director in Arizona, and Steve Coffey, president of Local 1081 and a member of Arizona’s legislative board, developed a plan to influence Cong. Hayworth. They encouraged UTU employees and retirees in Arizona to call Hayworth’s office at least every other day to register support for Railroad Retirement reform. As National Legislative Director James Brunkenhofer has pointed out, congressional offices keep count of calls and letters, but not names, so multiple calls from a single individual are counted simply as telephone votes supporting or opposing an issue.

In fact, the telephone calls encouraged by Olson and Coffey in support of Railroad Retirement reform exceeded 61,000 by Hayworth’s own count. The telephone calls overwhelmed Hayworth’s staff in Arizona and Washington, D.C. Indeed, Hayworth himself picked up the telephone to Olson and said, “I am going to support Railroad Retirement reform. Just stop those telephone calls.”

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**Voices:**

Telephone calls and letters, but not names... so multiple calls from a single individual are counted simply as telephone votes supporting or opposing an issue.

**Scott Olson and Steve Coffey**
UNION NEWS

Continued from page 1

Boyd recently wrote BLE President Don Halls to correct what Boyd termed “misinformation” about the proposed merger circulating within the BLE. Boyd said many of the arguments opponents of the merger are using are “arguments based upon interpretation, rather than fact.

“For example, the UTU’s decision to sign the carriers’ letter of intent regarding implementation and utilization of remote control technology goes to the heart of why our two great unions must merge,” Boyd said.

“Negotiating an equitable agreement for the implementation of remote control technology, fully protective of train and engine service workers, is absolutely essential. Indeed, after the UTU signed the letter of intent, and the BLE agreed to re-ballot its membership on the question of a BLE-UTU merger that will protect historical craft autonomy, I notified the carriers that the UTU would not enter into negotiations until the BLE rank and file had an opportunity to vote on the BLE-UTU merger,” Boyd said.

“The purpose was to assure that, if this merger is approved, there is protection of all train and engine service employees.

“It is through merger, and merger alone, that we can fight the carrier-induced race to the bottom that has savaged rail labor for more than a generation,” Boyd said.

Amtrak bosses

Continued from page 1

to draw up a plan for its own liquidation because Amtrak has failed to wean itself from federal subsidies.

The ARC vote is expected to fuel congressional opponents of Amtrak who want it to earn a profit while Congress continues to provide huge subsidies to other forms of passenger transportation.

“The issue is not about reaching financial self-sufficiency, but reaching where the passengers are,” Boyd said. “The issue is one of commerce, mobility and the future.

“The Amtrak Reform Council has arrived at the front door of Amtrak with serious accountability issues. While there can be debate over a number of issues the ARC raises, there can be no debate over the mismanagement of Amtrak.

“Congress just handed the airlines $15 billion in subsidies to keep them flying,” Boyd said.

“And that is on top of federal aid ensuring ‘essential’ rail service to small towns around the nation.

“Taxpayers also subsidize highway construction and maintenance as well as commuter rail and bus operations. In Western Europe and Japan, intercity rail-passenger subsidies are immense.

“But, America’s intercity rail-passenger carrier, Amtrak, whose passenger rolls are growing, is being told to shut down because its trains don’t turn a profit.”

Boyd blamed Amtrak’s management for not taking the subsidies issue to Congress as forcefully and successfully as the airline industry has done, and for not developing appropriate plans to put Amtrak trains where the passengers are and at more convenient times.

“Amtrak’s top managers were culled from transportation and commuter operations, where it is assumed that commuters ride trains out of need,” Boyd said.

“What is needed at Amtrak are managers who understand that there needs to be a customer-friendly, nationwide, intercity rail-passenger network, and not an extended commuter system.

“Amtrak management does not understand its own role. Amtrak, as it is currently managed, structured and funded, is not capable of delivering the improvements in intercity rail-passenger service that are required for it to be a viable national rail system.

“If Amtrak is to survive, prosper and serve, we need a proactive Amtrak management team that is fit, willing and able to work for a viable national passenger rail network. And we need that new team now,” Boyd said.

Amtrakacey

Continued from page 1

served by Big Sky.

Originally a regional commuter airline serving 11 cities in Montana and Washington state, Big Sky now serves destinations in Arkansas, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas and Washington. The airline also has a hub in Dallas and a number of the pilots reside in that area.

Although there has been a slightly high attrition rate in recent years among pilots seeking to move on to larger airlines, Sand said that has changed as a result of the events of September 11.

“Of the pilots that has happened as a result of 9-11 is that there are thousands of pilots on the streets who were laid-off from the big airlines,” Sand said, “because of decreased air travel and staff cutbacks. But movement to larger airlines has more or less stopped since the terrorist attacks.

Although Big Sky has experienced a slight decrease in passengers since September 11, none of its pilots or dispatchers has been furloughed.

Sand explained that due to the remote location of some of the cities that Big Sky serves, the company receives a federal government subsidy to maintain what the industry terms “essential air service.”

When the Airline Deregulation Act was enacted in 1978, Congress feared that communities with relatively lower traffic levels would be abandoned by carriers shifting their operations to larger, more lucrative markets. To ensure a minimum level of service to communities that might be adversely affected, Congress established the “essential air service” program. As a result, the federal government, along with the affected communities, provide a subsidy to airline companies to continue air travel service.

Sand said that about 50% of Big Sky’s service falls under the EAS program, while the other fifty percent is the company’s own business.

“We bring people in early in the morning to Billings and then they leave on the major to other destinations throughout the United States,” Sand said.

“The terrorist attacks of September have raised concerns with Sand and his fellow pilots and they are hopeful the aviation industry and the federal government will act accordingly.

“We believe security screeners (at airports) should become federal employees. That would do more than anything to improve security,” he said. “I personally support the plan offered by the Democrats to make those screeners federal government employees.”

Sand said that increased security at his home terminal in Billings has obviously been stepped up and he and the other pilots there welcome their presence.

“Even the employee parking lot has a security guard now,” he said.

As for sealed cockpit doors, which many of the larger airlines have been installing, Sand said it wasn’t likely to happen on their planes.

“We have a curtain separating us from the passengers,” he said.

Big Sky’s fleet is made up mostly of Fairchild/Dornier SA227 Metro 3 and Metro 23 series aircraft. Both aircraft are essentially the same. They are 19-seat, all-weather pressurized, turbo-prop aircraft. They typically operate at an altitude of 15,000 to 24,000 feet a speed of approximately 280 mph.

While security may be the priority for Big Sky pilots right now it is not their only concern.

“We could lose up to $10 million in the current Bush budget,” Sand said, referring to cuts in “essential air service” funding. That would likely translate into route closures and job losses.

Sand, who received his flight training in the U.S. Air Force flying A-10 Thunderbolts, said it is almost time for the local to begin negotiations on a new contract. They will also be holding local elections soon as former Local Chairperson Tom Witten was recently promoted to the position of director of flight operations for Big Sky.

“Tom is a great guy and he is still supportive of the union,” Sand said.
UTU members in the Indianapolis and Chicago areas recently were invited to meet with UTU officers to be informed about the status of contract negotiations, Railroad Retirement legislation, the UTU/BLE merger and other issues. The rank and file membership had the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers on any subject that affected them and their families.

Indianapolis

International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., at podium, takes a question from the floor.

Designated Legal Counsel Dillon Hoey, at podium, welcomes members to the event.

Members listen as International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., answer a question.

Chicago

Left to right: Herman Boruta (L-313), NS General Chairperson Delbert Strunk, Designated Legal Counsel Dan Downes; Richard Ross (L-1895), and Jeremy Ferguson (L-313).

Left to right: Mike Spencer (L-1494), Designated Legal Counsel Dan Downes, and Wal- ly Sattler (L-620).

Illinois State Legislative Director Joe Yarbrough, at podium, introduces International President Byron A. Boyd, Jr., and Assistant President Paul C. Thompson.

UTU members gathered at the Chicago “shootout” learn about union activities.

“Shootout” Scrapbook
Best Wishes for a Happy Holiday Season

On Behalf of the Officers and Employees of the United Transportation Union,
We Wish You and Your Family the Most Joyous of Holiday Seasons.

Dan E. Johnson
General Secretary/Treasurer

Byron A. Boyd, Jr.
International President

Paul C. Thompson
Assistant President

Don E. Johnson
General Secretary/Treasurer

Information, Please

I would like more information on UTUIA’s ULTIMATE PAR policy. Please Print.

Full Name of Member | Sex | Date of birth
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Address | City | State | ZIP
--- | --- | --- | ---

Telephone Number with Area Code | UTU Local Number
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Please provide full name, sex, date of birth, and relationship of the child for whom the information is requested on the line below.

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Parents…Grandparents…
This Christmas, Give a Gift that Will Last a Lifetime

Have you ever stopped to think about what you could have done with the money you spent on Christmas gifts in the past? If you’re like most parents and grandparents, you go overboard. But what usually happens to those gifts? Do they end up in the corner, rarely played with — or worse yet, broken? Why not give your little ones a lasting gift this Christmas?

“The best thing I gave each of them was a paid-up $25,000 life insurance policy.”
— Willis G. Croonquist
Local 1177, Willmar, Minn.

Permanent life insurance is a wonderful way to provide a lifetime benefit for your youngsters. What better way to show them you care? Permanent life insurance is very inexpensive at young ages, and premium-paying choices are endless, since premiums can be paid in one easy payment or over just about any period of time you select. Give a gift that keeps on giving by returning the coupon below, or by calling toll-free, 1-800-558-8842, for assistance from your UTUIA representative.

Retired UTU member Willis G. Croonquist and his wife, Rita, pose for their annual Christmas photograph with their seven grandchildren. The Croonquists gave each of their grandchildren a gift that will last a lifetime: a paid-up, $25,000 life insurance policy from the United Transportation Union Insurance Association.

12/01