UTU Blue Ribbon Committee recommends streamlining

By a unanimous vote, the UTU Board of Directors approved recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Committee to streamline the UTU International and significantly reduce its costs of operation. Delegates will now vote on whether to implement them as a change to Article 2 of the UTU Constitution.

The Blue Ribbon Committee observed that while the number of active dues-paying members has declined over time, there has not been a similar decrease in the number of full-time International officers.

In 1974, there was one full-time International officer for every 5,492 active dues-paying members; by today, there is one International officer for every 3,406 active dues-paying members. In Canada, there are three full-time International officers for 3,192 members.

The Blue Ribbon Committee recommended elimination of eight full-time International officer positions (six by abolishment and two by attrition), which would create a ratio of one full-time International officer for every 5,677 active dues-paying members.

Specifically recommended was that effective Dec. 31, 2007, four U.S. International vice president positions be abolished; and effective Jan. 1, 2008, two more U.S. vice president positions will be abolished through attrition.

If the Blue Ribbon Committee recommendations are adopted by the delegates, any U.S. vice president vacancies that occur for any reason between the time of adoption and Dec. 31, 2007, such positions will arrive up to the four vice president positions that abolish Dec. 31, 2007.

Also, effective Dec. 31, 2007, the Canadian legislative director and the two Canadian vice president positions will be abolished. Effective Jan. 1, 2008, a new full-time Canadian officer position of vice president legislative director will be established. If the proposal is adopted by the delegates, any vacancies that occur in the three Canadian officer positions prior to Jan. 1, 2008, the first two vacancies shall be subject to attrition.

“The purpose of this Blue Ribbon Committee was to insulate decision making from union politics and do the right thing by this organization,” said UTU International President Paul Thompson. “Hopefully, the membership will support this change.”

Delegates to vote on attriting officer positions

UTU News

The Official Publication of the United Transported Labor

“Don’t spit into the wind, don’t tug on Superman’s cape and don’t try to play one labor union off against the other. Through the veins of every brother and sister runs solidarity; and through solidarity, cooperative strategy, commitment and perseverance, we shall achieve victory.” – UTU International President Paul C. Thompson

Workload eased for treasurers

The UTU International is taking steps through computer technology to ease the work burden of local treasurers.

New computer programs will soon permit the International to communicate directly with carriers to ensure that changes in UTUIA and Discipline Income Protection (DIP) deductions are made promptly and accurately.

The Web-based technology will be put into effect for so-called direct-pay locals, where International union dues are being electronically credited to the International.

Changes to UTUIA and DIP deductions will be an overlay to the existing direct-pay process. The changes will become effective within the next 30 to 45 days.

“These changes will shift the burden from

Members share in relief funds

Almost $220,000 has been paid out to UTU members and their families adversely affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The payments from the UTU Hurricane Relief Fund were made possible by contributions from the UTU family, including UTU members, UTU locals, UTU general committees, UTU state legislative offices and the UTU International.

One of the largest contributions to the hurricane relief fund was $1,000 from retired UTU International employee Catherine “Dickie” Robertson in honor of her sister, Mary Glenn, who was a 56-year UTU employee until her death in March 2005 at age 87.

The UTU Hurricane Relief Fund was established in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita to assist unionized railroad and UTU bus drivers.
Heart attack in cab highlights crew size

A tight-knit group of BNSF Railway employees, members of Local 1177 in Willow, Minn., were dealt a recent death and at the same time wondering why the nation's major railroads would want to roll the dice with a national Section 6 proposal calling for one-person crews.

Shortly after noon on Dec. 27, 2005, 45-year-old engineer Leon Klinghagen and conductor Michael Vosika, both members of Local 1177, were aboard BNSF 8902, pulling into a siding in Linfield, Minn. Suddenly, Brother Klinghagen slumped in his seat, the victim of a heart attack.

"I wasn’t sure, at first, what was happening," said Vosika about his longtime friend. "He had no prior health problems, as far as I knew. I thought maybe he’d fainted or something."

Brother Vosika reacted immediately, taking control of the locomotive and bringing it to a stop while notifying the dispatcher via radio of the medical emergency.

"The dispatcher was great, and within five to 10 minutes, the police and an ambulance arrived," Vosika said. "They worked on Leon right in the cab and did everything they could."

Despite the paramedics’ efforts, Brother Klinghagen passed away, leaving behind a wife, four children, nine grandchildren, three sisters and two brothers. (He was preceded in death by one sister and a twin brother.)

"Obviously, something like this bothers you a lot," said the 58-year-old Vosika, who has been a UTU member since 1980. "I’d known Leon since he came on the railroad, going back to about 1994. I was at his house on Christmas Day, playing Santa Claus for his family. Leon was well known and very well liked."

Beyond the personal loss, the incident has caused UTU members to wonder if one person crews are safe. "Can one person run a train?" Vosika said. "What if the train had been in another location? What if the train had not stopped soon enough? What if the train had been in another spot and gone through the siding and into the path of another train? What if it was possible to save someone in a similar predicament, but no one was there to call for medical help?"

Then Vosika posed the question that haunts and bewilders the members of Local 1177:

"Why would the carriers create a situation that could leave someone suffering, maybe dying, alone on the floor of a locomotive?"

Local 794, Wellington, Kan.

This BNSF local recently honored conductor and engineer Richard D. Lusk, said Local Chairperson Kurt Kristendem, Brother Lusk retired in October 2005 after 42 years of service with the Santa Fe and BNSF.

Local 951, Sheridan, Wyo.

Members of this BNSF local held their annual Christmas party and awards banquet on Dec. 16, where Vice Local Chairperson Grover Sharp was lauded for his efforts in 2005, said State Legislative Director Terry Ungericht. Also at the event, UTU Auxiliary State Legislative Director Norm Druml was honored as volunteer of the year by the Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce. Guests included Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal, BNSF General Chairperson Randy Knutson (GO-245) and Railroad Retirement Board Representative Ron Kaminski.

Local 1221, Tampa, Fla.

Members of this CSX local were saddened by the loss of Local Chairperson Frank Snyder, who passed away in early January following a brief illness, said CSX General Chairperson John Hancock (GO-851).

Local 1313, Amarillo, Texas

This BNSF local is inviting members and their spouses to two workshops featuring representatives from the UTUIA, Railroad Retirement Board and health and welfare providers UnitedHealthcare, Arista and Care (Temple, Texas), said Local President Joe Romo. The events will be held March 13 at 6 p.m. and March 14 at 1 p.m. at the Woodmen of the World Building, 4535 Canyon Dr., Amarillo, TX 79110. For information, contact Romo at (806) 622-2265 or Secretary Jenni Bart (806) 457-1597.

Local 1438, Lincoln Park, Mich.

Members of this local, which includes NS and Delay Connecting Railroad employees, were saddened by the recent passing of Legislative Rep. John L. Powell and State Legislative Director Jerry Gibson.

Local 1440, Staten Island, N.Y.

Members of this Long Island Rail Road local are mourning the death of James (Geech) Eugenio, who recently retired after 50 years of service, said Secretary Kevin J. Hughes.

Local 1778, N. Vancouver, B.C.

The winter issue of this CN local’s newsletter, Meeting Point, is now available on the Web site sharing the name. The event, set on the vicinity of St. Petersburg, Fla. The event, set for Saturday, March 18, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Ft. DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. Coffee and iced tea will be furnished. Participants are urged to bring two covered dishes to share, their own place settings and a cup. For more information or directions, contact Alenduff at (727) 522-6808 or send e-mail to bigwhitepolarbear@msn.com.

Local 1846, W. Colton, Calif.

This UTU local offers congratulations and best wishes to outgoing member Pete Black, who recently retired after 30 years of service, said Secretary Wade H. Wallace Jr., who recently retired, said Local President Richard Escamilla. Meanwhile, all are invited to participate in the 5th annual Coliseum Classic, set for June 12-15. The 15th year Escamilla will chair the event. For information about the four-day, three-night event, contact Brother Escamilla by calling (909) 795 6867 or send him e-mail at pres1846@earthlink.net.

Local 1963, Louisville, Ky.

Retired member Joe Thorne is again organizing an annual picnic for retirees in the vicinity of St. Peters, Fla. The event, set for Saturday, March 18, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. Coffee and iced tea will be furnished. Participants are urged to bring two covered dishes to share, their own place settings and a cup. For more information or directions, contact Alenduff at (727) 522-6808 or send e-mail to alenduff@tampabay.rr.com.
UTU wins court ruling on vacation, leave time

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The UTU and others in transportation labor were successful in turning back efforts by the nation’s rail carriers to use the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to trump contract provisions regarding vacation.

The UTU and others went to court to fight a decision by the railroads to force their workers to exhaust their paid vacation and personal leave days before they could take unpaid leave due them under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The UTU and others went to court to fight a decision by the railroads to force their workers to exhaust their paid vacation and personal leave days before they could take unpaid leave due them under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The UTU and others went to court to fight a decision by the railroads to force their workers to exhaust their paid vacation and personal leave days before they could take unpaid leave due them under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Brunkenhoefer reappointed to advisory panel

WASHINGTON, D.C. – UTU National Legislative Director James M. Brunkenhoefer has been reappointed to serve a three-year term on the Railroad/Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC), according to the Surface Transportation Board.

The appointment of Brunkenhoefer, who had previously served on the council’s executive committee as one of 15 selected by Chairman Roger Nober and announced in January, Brunkenhoefer was first appointed to the council by former STB Chairman Linda Morgan.

The council provides advice on regulatory policy and legislative matters to the STB chairman, the secretary of transportation and the Congress. It also provides a forum for the discussion of matters of concern to representatives of large and small railroads, shippers and the public.

The council’s membership includes representatives of large and small railroads, shippers and one public member.

In addition, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the three STB members serve as ex-officio members.

UTU wins court ruling on vacation, leave time

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A favorable decision by the Surface Transportation Board affecting carrier payments into the Railroad Retirement system has important implications for Amtrak and freight railroads.

The STB decision followed an earlier and similar ruling by the Railroad Retirement Board.

The decision directly affected American Orient Express, a so-called excursion company; but the reasoning in the decision is more far-reaching.

American Orient Express, or AOE, claimed it is not a common carrier and, as such, has no obligation to pay Railroad Retirement or rail unemployment taxes – that it is a land excursion company that owns vintage railroad coaches, diners and sleepers, and merely provides excursion packages.

AOE asserted that Amtrak, which pulls its excursion cars with Amtrak locomotives and operating crews, is the common carrier subject to the Railroad Retirement and railroad unemployment taxes.

If you're around someone who's sneezing or coughing, stay at least three feet away.

• If you think you were exposed to the flu, consider taking vitamin C to help build your immunity.
• Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water, rubbing your hands vigorously together. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. The soap combined with the scrubbing action can help dislodge and remove germs.
• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.

If you do come down with the flu, Pace said these points of “etiquette” will help prevent the spread of the infection:

• Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes if you think you’ve been exposed to contaminated surfaces. Viruses can enter your body through any mucus membrane, including the area around your eyes.
• If you’re eating out and the person who serves your food is coughing or sneezing, do not eat the food. Politely ask for a replacement or a refund.
The carriers’ claim that positive train control technology allows one-person crews is no more truthful than evidence of a tooth fairy. Carrier operating officers admitted PTC is years from reliability and safety implementation, and the FRA hasn’t studied the safety and reliability of reduced crew size nor its impact on an already highly fatigued workforce operating trains through congested areas carrying highly toxic hazmat.

The carrier crusade to reduce crew size is all about further fattening already fat bottom lines and officer bonuses. The railroads also have infuriated their Republican friends in Congress by threatening to dump in their laps a rail-labor problem before elections. We may have fewer Republican friends, but even those not normally friendly to labor recognize that the UTU court case on crew count should be decided before Congress is asked to refile a labor/management battle. This is especially true now that the UTU/BLET partnership includes support from the AFL-CIO, other rail unions and even the Teamsters.

Indeed, rather than bashing a goodies-filled piñata with their bat, the carriers have opened a hornet’s nest. We have a carefully crafted plan to counter the carriers’ deceptive anti-safety and anti-employee strategy of using their friends in government to force a crew-size reduction. Your continued assistance making phone calls and sending e-mails, as requested by your local and general committee officers, is key to our success.

If you visit Washington, D.C., this spring, be sure to wear your wading boots and rain slicker to avoid the oozing slime coming from the Jack Abramoff political lobbying scandal.

Yes, we are a bipartisan union; and, yes, we have more friends in one political party than in the other. But the slop and slime is falling on members of both parties.

There will be a handful of Democratic lawmakers and their staff in Congress who take a hard fall on this; but there appears to be a bushel basket of Republican lawmakers and their staff involved in the scandal.

But recognize that the great majority of those in Congress and their staff had absolutely nothing to do with the Abramoff scandal.

I have never seen so much money as is involved in this political scandal. It is in the many, many millions of dollars.

It’s trail leads to posh resorts where members of Congress and some of their staff were jetted to by corporate jets; and it leads to cash from a Russian-owned energy corporation that allegedly was laundered through a London source and into a tax-free foundation where it was used to corrupt lawmakers.

The victims of this scandal include the perceived integrity of our entire political and legislative system. But the scandal is not new – just bigger than previous ones, such as Watergate or Teapot Dome.

Deplorable actions

By Paul C. Thompson
International President

You don’t spit into the wind, tug on Superman’s cape or try to play one labor union off against the other – especially if it means job reductions, reduced safety and a weakened Railroad Retirement system.

Through the veins of every brother and sister runs solidarity; and, through solidarity, cooperative strategy, commitment and perseverance, we shall achieve victory in this round of national negotiations with the major railroads.

I have participated in national negotiations more than 20 years, and this current round with the National Carriers’ Conference Committee, which represents the railroads, is the most deplorable. They have privately and separately promised the UTU and the BLET that each would become the surviving union if, among other things, each would testify against the other during Presidential Emergency Board hearings.

The carriers’ chief negotiator has been playing us like a banjo, with BNSF the most aggressive. Every labor negotiator, no matter what side of the table, learns early on that the only key to successful negotiations is honesty.

The carriers have not been honest. But rather than their deplorable whipsawing tactics driving the UTU and BLET further apart, they have brought us closer together.

The carriers’ claim that positive train control technology allows one-person crews is no more truthful than evidence of a tooth fairy. Carrier operating officers admitted PTC is years from reliability and safety implementation, and the FRA hasn’t studied the safety and reliability of reduced crew size nor its impact on an already highly fatigued workforce operating trains through congested areas carrying highly toxic hazmat.

The carrier crusade to reduce crew size is all about further fattening already fat bottom lines and officer bonuses.

The railroads also have infuriated their Republican friends in Congress by threatening to dump in their laps a rail-labor problem before elections. We may have fewer Republican friends, but even those not normally friendly to labor recognize that the UTU court case on crew count should be decided before Congress is asked to refile a labor/management battle. This is especially true now that the UTU/BLET partnership includes support from the AFL-CIO, other rail unions and even the Teamsters.

Indeed, rather than bashing a goodies-filled piñata with their bat, the carriers have opened a hornet’s nest.

We have a carefully crafted plan to counter the carriers’ deceptive anti-safety and anti-employee strategy of using their friends in government to force a crew-size reduction. Your continued assistance making phone calls and sending e-mails, as requested by your local and general committee officers, is key to our success.

If you visit Washington, D.C., this spring, be sure to wear your wading boots and rain slicker to avoid the oozing slime coming from the Jack Abramoff political lobbying scandal.

Yes, we are a bipartisan union; and, yes, we have more friends in one political party than in the other. But the slop and slime is falling on members of both parties.

There will be a handful of Democratic lawmakers and their staff in Congress who take a hard fall on this; but there appears to be a bushel basket of Republican lawmakers and their staff involved in the scandal.

But recognize that the great majority of those in Congress and their staff had absolutely nothing to do with the Abramoff scandal.

I have never seen so much money as is involved in this political scandal. It is in the many, many millions of dollars.

Its trail leads to posh resorts where members of Congress and some of their staff were jetted to by corporate jets; and it leads to cash from a Russian-owned energy corporation that allegedly was laundered through a London source and into a tax-free foundation where it was used to corrupt lawmakers.

The victims of this scandal include the perceived integrity of our entire political and legislative system. But the scandal is not new – just bigger than previous ones, such as Watergate or Teapot Dome.

Where is the outrage over Abramoff?

It was just a short eight years ago that we witnessed a different sort of scandal involving the President of the United States and a staff member. Millions of tax dollars were spent to investigate as the nation expressed moral outrage.

So where is the outrage today over the Jack Abramoff scandal?

I don’t sense that much outrage even though this scandal involves corruption of those who make our laws and threaten the fabric of our entire legislative system.

I don’t sense outrage over the fact that the same conservative Republicans who were so vocal in demanding impeachment of a Democratic president now are silent about the Abramoff scandal.

The nation should justifiably be outraged, while taking note that the overwhelming majority of those who work in government positions are honest and hard working.

Unfortunately, the brush of corruption is a broad one and wrongly touches even those not remotely involved. That should take a spotlight off of those who crossed the line.

Each of us has a civic duty to follow the Abramoff corruption story closely and understand how and why it occurred, and what safeguards might be imposed to ensure something of this nature does not happen again.
Illinois

Following a complaint from the UTU Illinois Legislative Board, the FRA said it would cite Norfolk Southern for the mishandling of an employee on-duty injury by a terminal superintendent in Decatur, according to State Legislative Director Joseph C. Szabo.

In a letter to Szabo, FRA Regional Administrator Laurence H. Hasvold said his investigators determined that the NS terminal superintendent violated the law when he failed to report an injury suffered by a switchman last year.

FRAs investigation revealed that after the NS terminal superintendent drove the injured employee to an emergency room for treatment he engaged in conduct designed to make the injury appear non-reportable.

“He denied the employee’s request to mark off in accordance with the physician’s instructions. Clearly, the supervisor was not knowledgeable about FRA reportable injuries and disregarded the physician’s instructions,” Hasvold wrote.

Hasvold told Szabo his office had recommended that NS be assessed a civil penalty (fine) for violating the law and that a “regional letter of warning” would be issued to the terminal superintendent regarding his failure to handle the injury properly.

“Our day – hopefully soon – the mistreatment of injured railroad workers will end,” Szabo said.

Maryland

The Maryland Senate override several vetoes of Gov. Bob Ehrlich on the first days of the session, and the one that gained the most attention was SB 790, the “Fair Share Health Care” bill, otherwise known as the Wal-Mart bill, according to State Director Larry Kasecamp.

“Three years ago we partnered up with the Maryland Health Care for All Coalition” to seek affordable health care for all Marylanders,” Kasecamp said.

“The bill passed in the 2005 session, but was vetoed by the governor,” Kasecamp said. “However, the legislature voted for the override and our coalition couldn’t be happier.”

“Now, major corporations such as Wal-Mart can no longer fleece the back of Maryland taxpayers by shifting their employees to the rolls of the state for their health care without consequence,” Kasecamp said.

Kasecamp said the UTU also is working to get measures passed that would establish a commission to study Southern Maryland transportation needs and to make it easier for residents to register and vote.

New England States

Two bills working their way through the New Hampshire legislature are of interest to UTU members, reports New England States Legislative Director George Casey.

House Joint Resolution 24 (HJR 24) supports the establishment of commuter rail service in the state while House Bill 1655 supports a commuter rail system to complement the I-93 expansion project, Casey said.

“HJR 24 is intended to find solutions to funding and management problems connected with restoring/extending commuter rail service from Massachusetts into New Hampshire,” he said. “Funding issues also have delayed and frustrated the extension of MBTA service on the Lowell Line 10 miles northward to Nashua, N.H. This would be the first incremental extension into New Hampshire, with a second phase reaching Manchester, which is about 20 miles further.”

UTU has testified in support of these bills and Casey said the New England Legislative Board is asking that all New Hampshire members call their legislators and ask them to support these legislative efforts.

Wyoming

Wyoming’s UTU Auxiliary state legislative director, Nancy Drummond, has been chosen as the Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce volunteer of the year, according to State Director Terry Ungricht.

“She has been active in the Chamber of Commerce for over 20 years, serves on the Sheridan school board, delivers meals on wheels to seniors, helps organize the MS Walk-a-Thon each year, and is the state vice chair of the Democratic Party. She has been especially helpful in counseling retired railroad workers and other retirees on the new Medicare prescription plans. The State of Wyoming and the United Transportation Union are fortunate to have her as one of our own,” Drummond is the wife of Bruce Drummond, local chairperson of Local 951 in Sheridan.

Idaho

Members of the Idaho State Legislative Board, along with UTU officers from Locals 78 and 265 (both in Pocatello), recently held a private meeting with Senate Minority Leader Larry Reid of Nevada when he was visiting the state, according to State Legislative Director George Millward.

Billward, along with Assistant State Director George Morton, said the group talked with Reid about the attack on the Federal Employers’ Liability Act by the rail carriers.

After the meeting, Reid spoke to more than 400 local Democrats on how to take back their government in the next election. UTU members who attended were Local 78 Legislative Rep. Todd Clement and his wife; Local 78 Vice President Matthew Millward and his wife; Local 265 Chairperson Greg Wilson and his wife; Local 265 member James Buffalo and his wife, and retired Local 265 member State Sen. A. Linn Whitworth and his guest.

News from UTU State Legislative Boards

Bus Department

By Roy Arnold, vice president/director

Yardmasters

By J.R. “Jim” Cumby, vice president

Fresh starts for the new year

Is your local thinking about a fresh start this new year? Make your resolutions effective and long-lasting by taking time to plan changes and ensure the goals are realistic. Reaching out to members for advice certainly will help the process and better ensure success.

Here are some things to consider in setting goals for the coming year:

• How often do you have meetings? Plan the meeting schedule around realistic expectations and recognition that members have competing family interests. Above all, give members a reason to attend union meetings.
• Does your plan to ease internal bickering that is normal within any group. Ensure members have opportunity to say what is on their mind and how they affect the member.
• Consider meetings where various contract provisions are reviewed to ensure understanding of what they mean and how they affect the member.

Make your resolutions effective and long-lasting by taking time to plan changes and ensure the goals are realistic and end with you at the White House to stack the deck against labor.

It starts in Congress and ends with you

For better or worse, what happens on the railroad first happens in Congress.

Only Congress can make changes to the Railroad Retirement and railroad unemployment acts.

Only Congress can protect (or scrap) the Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA).

Only Congress can change the Hours of Service Act and other laws affecting transportation safety.

And it is Congress that decides whether to impose recommendations of a Presidential Emergency Board.

Elections favor-friendly lawmakers obviously is a priority. Anti-labor conservatives are in charge, no working family is secure.

There are two ways to protect our interests in Congress. One is by registering to vote and voting – and that also means encouraging all family members, friends and neighbors to register to vote and then cast ballots for labor-friendly candidates.

The second way to protect our interests is to contribute to the UTU PAC, which helps fund the election campaigns of labor-friendly candidates.

Want evidence of UTU PAC’s value? Consider the election of UTU congressional friends that Congress will not roll over for carrier-friendly PEB recommendations should the freight railroads in national negotiations convince the National Mediation Board and White House to stack the deck against labor.

The power of the ballot box can only work for us if we get out the vote and support labor-friendly candidates.
What’s in the red area?

Some of the most empowering elements delivered by your UTU Web site can be found along the left-hand side of its home page, in the blocks titled “Knowledge Store.” Want to read the UTU Constitution? This is the place! Members remain part of the family, and they can keep abreast of current events by checking the gray area on the right-hand side of the UTU’s home page. If you’re a local secretary or treasurer, and you haven’t visited this page, you’ll find it a friend or your local library to log on and investigate, it’s well worth the effort to click on the major headings found in those two areas to see what’s available. Those items can help you become an integral part of the organization that secures your job and your family’s welfare. Below is a few of the items you’ll find in the red area.

WASHINGTON UPDATES

More often than not, the UTU flexes its muscles through the legislative process. This area at the top of the red area offers resources for understanding the political process and becoming involved. Click “Washington Updates” to see a page highlighting current issues and alerting you to pending legislation that may directly affect you and your family. Want to write to the UTU’s national legislative director or one of your elected representatives in Congress? Just click on “Contact UTU” and another one click on “Contact Congressional Staff” to send that letter. Clicking on “Washington Updates” also gives you access to the UTU Human Rights Committee? Just click on “Human Rights” and another one click on “Human Rights Committee” to learn more about this committee and the work it does. Members can obtain important details about their unique needs? You can make those arrangements here!

CONTACT UTU

Want to send a letter to an International officer or a certain department at the UTU’s international office? Want to contact your state legislative director? Need to contact your local’s general chairman? Looking for a way to write or call the members of the Transportation Safety Team? Turn here. No issue’s more important to the UTU than your issue’s more important to the UTU than your safety. Click on “Contact UTU” and another one click on “Contact UTU” and another on the listing you want brings you the information you need to send a letter, file a complaint, or make that phone call.

AWARDS/AGREEMENTS

Clicking on “Awards/Agreements” takes you to a page providing links to a vast array of important documents, agreements and protective conditions, as well as providing a searchable database of thousands of arbitration awards affecting the various crafts represented by the UTU. This item is almost like having a law library at your fingertips. And there’s more – because if it’s not available in the UTU’s database, we provide a link from here to the National Mediation Board’s Knowledge Store. Want to read the UTU Constitution? This is the place!

UTU FOR LIFE

The UTU Web site is designed by generations, and further progress will be secured by future generations. Retired UTU members remain part of this family, and they can make the most of their relationship through the UTU’s Life program. Click here to learn about this program, to find a list chapter that meets regularly, to discover ways to participate in a network of contacts, to access the latest news affecting pensioners. A link to the Retirement Reconciliation Board can also be found on this page.

Make the most of your computer – and your union membership – each day by visiting www.utu.org, the UTU’s home on the Internet! Why? Here’s a sampling of just a few features and highlights – but don’t be afraid to click and explore!

What’s in the blue area?

Like the red area, the blue area contains information and resources that help UTU members at their jobs and at home in their homes. By taking full advantage of the features on the UTU Web site, members can create a stronger union that operates more efficiently and effectively. Below are some of the resources contained in the blocks titled the blue area of the UTU’s home page. While there’s much you can do and find yourself through the UTU Web site, don’t hesitate to contact us for help. The UTU’s national staff stands ready to assist you with prompt, first-class service!

HEALTHCARE

Click on “Healthcare” and you’ll get a page with links to companies that provide medical, dental, vision, prescription drug, mental health/life/long-term care and insurance benefits under the nationally negotiated benefit plans. This page also includes toll-free telephone numbers and links to benefit descriptions. But there’s more! Healthcare news stories from our daily news digest are collected here for ease of access along with columns written by UTU Medical Consultants Dr. Norman K. Brown, M.D. Also, the latest alerts from health and welfare providers, as well as information for those on disability or preparing for retirement, can be found here.

SECRETARY/TREAS. NEWS & TOOLS

If you’re a local secretary or treasurer, and you haven’t visited this page, you’re doing things the hard way! This page provides access to the computerized bookkeeping program, Winstar 2000, a variety of forms that are frequently used by local treasurers, and links to other important or useful Web sites. There’s also a link to an e-mail box where you can submit questions regarding your duties. Make sure you click on “Keep It wild and free!” to stay up to date, and note the handy checklist of reports that should be filled.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

This union and its predecessors fought for and obtained federal laws making transportation occupations safer. Each year, thousands of lives and tens of thousands of workers are injured, and some are killed, on the job. Click on “Transportation Safety” to learn about hazards in your workplace and how to prevent accidents. Included are special sections on fatigue, a link to the UTU Transportation Safety Team, another comprehensive list of summaries of news and newsmakers, and links to safety-related agencies and resources. Also included is a link to the Switching Operations Fatalities Analysis (SOFA) working group.

UTU GEAR

Like the red area, the blue area contains information and resources that help UTU members at their jobs and at home in their homes. By taking full advantage of the features on the UTU Web site, members can create a stronger union that operates more efficiently and effectively. Below are some of the resources contained in the blocks titled the blue area of the UTU’s home page. While there’s much you can do and find yourself through the UTU Web site, don’t hesitate to contact us for help. The UTU’s national staff stands ready to assist you with prompt, first-class service!

And now, our Top Story...and then some!
Museum visitors learn from retiree

When Conrail engineer Ronald E. Fox retired at age 62 back in July 1987, he thought he was finished with trains. But on most Wednesdays and some Saturdays, you can find the 80-year-old fox on the Pennsylvania Railroad's (PRR) Monongahela Division, hauling gondolas and hoppers past the steel mills and through the small towns of southwest Pennsylvania.

The towns are smaller than they were, but that's because they're only models, as are the trains he's been running as a volunteer since November 1992 at the Miniature Railroad and Village exhibit at the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh, Pa.

“My youngest son was in electronics school and volunteered at the museum,” said Fox, a member of Local 1006 in Brownsville, Pa. “He took me to see the railroad display. When we were done, they asked me what day would be good to be in charge of the exhibit, and off the top of my head, I said ‘Wednesday.’”

The museum would be hard-pressed to find a better person for the job. Fox began his career on the PRR in February 1947 on the fireman’s extra board. He joined the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen and, in five years was promoted to engineer.

Fox’s on-the-job experience gave him the historical background he now draws on when teaching young museum visitors about the coal mines, steel mills, glass houses and chemical plants that defined that neck of Pennsylvania.

“Kids come in from schools in groups, and they ask a lot of questions about what it was like to work on the rails then, Fox said. “But they mostly want to know how fast the miniature trains can go, and if I can make them reach 60 mph.”

UTU for Life

The UTU for Life program has arranged for its members a pair of unforgettable trips aboard a number of the nation’s most scenic and historic railways. The trips will be held in late June in Colorado and in mid-October in the Napa Valley of California.

The first is a nine-day tour that begins in Denver and includes visits to Colorado Springs, Vail, Estes Park, the Colorado Railroad Museum, the Royal Gorge Bridge and Park, the Mesa Verde National Park, Arches National Park, the Rocky Mountain National Park as well as rides aboard the Pike’s Peak Cog Railway, the Royal Gorge Route Railroad, the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad.

UTU for Life members wishing to travel together are encouraged to take the tour that departs Denver June 25, but other dates are available.

The second trip is an eight-day tour of San Francisco and the Napa Valley, and includes a ride aboard the Napa Valley Wine Train.

The package includes a tour of Golden Gate Park, Twin Peaks, Fisherman’s Wharf, a cruise across San Francisco Bay, visits to Carmel and Sausalito, tours of the Roche Winey, the Vienna Winery and Italian Marketplace, a wine-blending seminar at Ravenswood Winery, a visit to the Solano de San Francisco Mission and the Burren Center in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Retired former general chair J.R. Burge dies

John R. Burge, 92, who served as general chairperson (GO-892) for Southern Pacific yard workers in San Francisco from July 1955 to January 1976, passed away Nov. 9, 2005.

As a member of the Switchmen’s Union of North America (SUNA), Brother Burge was one of 10 from his union who joined with 10 members from each of three other unions – the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen and the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen – to form the 40-person unification committee that wrote the agreement clearing the way for creation of the UTU.

A member of Local 1043 in Sparks, Nev., Burge began his railroad career working for the Southern Pacific Railroad in May 1937, first as a brakeman and then a switchman, and joined SUNA Lodge 274. He retired in January 1976.

Burge is survived by his wife, Marjorie, a daughter and a sister. His only son, John Jr., passed away in August 2001.

THE FINAL CALL

Following are the names of recently deceased retirees who maintained annual membership in the UTU For Life program (formerly known as the UTU Retiree Program), according to reports received at UTU International Headquarters. These brothers and sisters will be missed by their many friends and by fellow UTU for Life members.

Local Name City/State Local Name City/State Local Name City/State
113 Rogers, Nollie E. Winson, Ariz. 610 Pachalla, Laverne L. Englewood, Fla.
168 Tarnoff, Frederick J. Lawton, Mass. 624 Bryan, Ozzie. Pommele, Ohio
225 Geiger, John L. Greenspring, Ohio 632 Myers, Frank. Pimental, N.J.
239 Castlemann, William A. Moderno, Calif. 674 Kirkland, William W. N. Augusta, S.C.
240 Hyde, Thomas C. Bloomington, Calif. 792 Hill, Don E. Alliance, Ohio
256 Deckneck, Raymond R. Surprise, Ariz. 793 Wheeler, Martin L. Charlotte, N.C.
229 Bland Sr., Paul D. Leland, N.C. 891 Patterson, Henry E. Columbus Falls, Mont.
312 Mierle, John J. Farm Da Rae, Wis. 982 Page, James L. Madison, N.Y.
367 Baker, Richard E. Omaha, Neb. 1053 Lidie, Joe M. Ruidoso Downs, N.M.
395 Vogl, Kirt, Beaver Manor, N.Y. 1054 Moore, Forrest C. Omaha, Neb.
440 Berger, Ronald J. Cincinnati, Ohio 1074 Boggs, Alfred D. Cooperstown, Pa.
469 Medvik, John L. Marble Hill, Mo. 1077 Cotman, Lawrence A. Freeport, Pa.
507 Walters Robert O. Fort Worth, Tex. 1101 Bland Sr., Paul E. Leland, N.C.
557 Haskins, Elbert J. Greentield, Mass. 1312 Pendleton, Cecil E. Milwaukee, Wis.
594 Avery, Cecil A. Minneola, Tex. 1346 Casey, Roy Q. Nashville, Tenn.

Local Name City/State Local Name City/State Local Name City/State
1136 Peak, Everett J. New Castle, Pa.
1176 McClintock, Verizon Grove City, Ohio
1186 Hall, Cole J. Nashville, Ohio
1390 Ackerman, Robert A. Toms River, N.J.
1421 Mekemson, John E. Hamilton, Ill.
1458 Vez, Frederic D. Baltimore, Md.
1462 Griffin, Edward F. Lincoln, I.I.
1470 Valentine, Ralph P. Strasburg, Va.
1638 Brane, Edward L. Rodgers, Mich.
1765 Schlooth, Gerald F. Cleveland, Ohio
1800 Talia, Nicholas Watse, Ind.
1846 Cerven, Robert L. Benton, Ark.
1923 Vetus, Marvin L. Apple Valley, Calif.
1923 Vetus, Marvin L. Fort St. John, B.C.
2106 Prince Gorge, B.C.
2163 Williams, Thomas R. Avon, Ind.

NOTE: Expiration date included in this listing recently was Charles Czajkoski of Local 1382, who resides in Milwaukee, Wis.
With UTUIA
You Won’t Have to Worry About This!

If you or your spouse died, where would the money come from to replace the lost earnings caused by death? You may have a mortgage, credit card debts, automobile loans, children to raise and other major expenses.

The answer is an insurance policy that provides the cash to pay off these debts while providing additional money for living expenses.

Our Ultimate Term and Ultimate Par policies are flexible. You tell us how much coverage you need and UTUIA will custom design the product for you. Complete the coupon below for more information, or call toll-free at (800) 558-8842 for assistance from your UTUIA representative.

For more information, please complete and return the coupon at right or telephone toll-free (800) 558-8842 for assistance from your UTUIA representative.

Information, please

I would like more information on UTUIA’s Ultimate Term and Ultimate Par policies.

Please print

Full name

Sex

Date of birth

UTUIA local number

Address

City

State

ZIP

Telephone number with area code

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

UTU PAC Honor Roll

Individuals who have begun contributing to UTU PAC or increased their donations to $100 or more, per year, during the past four months

Name

Local

City

Name

Local

City

Chan, Roger

934 Alliance, Neb.

Chattab, Harry A.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chandra, M. N.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chasen, Martin

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, G. C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Ronald

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Sheng Yen

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, William C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Woei-Eh

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Yoon

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Ah Liang

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Alvin Y.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Albert Y.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Andrew

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Anthony

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Benjamin

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, K. C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, K. L.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, K. L. S.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, L. W.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Michael Y.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Pak Y.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Philip

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Philip C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Philip W.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Philip W. W.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Philip W. W.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, Stephen

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Cheng, William L.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, D. W.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Frank

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Frank C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Frank C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Frank C.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, Franklin

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.

Chen, H. Q.

911 Minneapolis, Minn.
The Blue Ribbon Committee is past Presidents Al Chesser and Tom DuBose; retired Assistant General Secretary & Treasurer Thompson. The committee recommended that its first objective would be to address the number of full-time International officers that would provide quality representation for the active dues-paying membership of UTU.

Our review of International officer assignments and GS&T annual reports clearly indicates that there is insufficient work to support maintaining the current number of full-time officers. Moreover, the current ratio of full-time officers to active dues-paying members further indicates a large disparity compared to the UTU historically. Utilizing the GS&T annual reports starting in 1974, and including the following year's convention action for officer reductions via attrition, a full-time officer-to-member ratio was determined. Based on the current update of that ratio, the committee used the active dues-paying membership numbers reported from local treasurers' August 2005 audited billings. The ratios are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>181,237</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1:5,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>159,869</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1:4,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>129,531</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1:3,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>107,778</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1:4,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>91,276</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1:4,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>76,518</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1:4,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>76,208</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1:3,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>65,494</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1:3,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>68,124</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1:3,406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the loss of representation rights for Canadian Pacific members in Canada, a separate review of the Canadian operation and cost was also done. Currently, the UTU represents approximately 3,196 full-time dues paying members in Canada. To support that operation, there are three (3) full-time International officers, an office and two staff employees. Based upon all the data that the committee reviewed, and the immediate financial relief that is required to reduce the International's operating cost, the committee recommends that a total of eight (8) full-time International officer positions be eliminated. At the current membership level, the full-time officer to dues-paying members would be one officer for 5,671 members. In addition, for U.S. vice presidents, except for the Bus Department, there should be no particular craft designations. The elimination of the officer positions should occur in the following manner:

Effective Dec. 31, 2007, the Canadian leg-islative director and the two (2) Canadian vice president positions will be abolished. Thereafter, effective Jan. 1, 2008, a new full-time Canadian officer position of vice president/legislative director will be established. Effective Jan. 1, 2008, and including the current full-time Canadian officer complement, the first two (2) vacancies shall be subject to attrition.

This will result in a full-time International officer complement, effective Jan. 1, 2008, as listed below:

•International president
•Assistant president
•General secretary/treasurer
•National legislative director
•Vice presidents
  •Eight U.S. vice presidents (subject to attrition six);
  •One Canadian vice president/legis-lative director
  •One vice president (Bus Department)

The committee will continue to review other facets of the International's operations to make further recommendations that fall within our assigned task.
Proofing negligence under FELA

An exception to the requirement for proof of negligence under FELA exists when an injury occurs because the railroad has violated either the Safety Appliance Act or the Locomotive Inspection Act.

The Safety Appliance Act relates to railroad cars and their safety devices and requires devices such as couplers, power brakes, grab irons, etc., to be free from defects. The Locomotive Inspection Act requires that the railroad keep its locomotives and tenders in proper and safe condition.

If the violation of either one of these laws causes injury to an employee, proof of negligence is not required and the railroad is strictly held at fault.

When you have a question about whether an action of the railroad was negligent that caused you injury or whether proof of negligence is required, contact a UTU Designated Legal Counsel. Go to www.utu.org and click on “Designated Legal Counsel” on the left side of the page; or ask your local union officers for the list.

FELA Update

By Mark Allen
Coordinator of UTU Designated Legal Counsel

The Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) was enacted by Congress in 1908 to give railroad employees the right, under federal law, to recover damages from their employers for injuries occurring at work.

However, generally, there must be proof of negligence on the part of the railroad that caused or contributed to the employee’s injury. Simply put, this means that the railroad must exercise reasonable care for the safety of its employees. The railroad must provide its employees with a reasonably safe place to work. Its failure to do so is negligence.

The duty to provide a safe place to work includes the furnishing of safe tools and equipment, the selection of proper methods to do the work, the furnishing of sufficient help, and the adoption and enforcement of proper procedures. The railroad may also be negligent if it fails to adopt and enforce safety rules and practices, or by allowing unsafe practices to exist. The fact that unsafe practices and customs are standard in the industry is no defense.

The duty to provide a safe place to work includes the furnishing of safe tools and equipment, the selection of proper methods to do the work, the furnishing of sufficient help, and the adoption and enforcement of proper procedures. The railroad may also be negligent if it fails to adopt and enforce safety rules and practices, or by allowing unsafe practices to exist. The fact that unsafe practices and customs are standard in the industry is no defense.

The United Transportation Union Insurance Association is looking for two special persons, a man and a woman, to honor as its 2006 Volunteers of the Year.

Do you regularly volunteer at a hospital or nursing home? Do you lead a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop or work with the handicapped? Are you involved in some other activity that benefits those in your community? If so, we would like to know about it.

A panel of judges at the UTU International will review all submissions and select the 2006 Volunteers of the Year.

The individuals selected as UTUIA Volunteers of the Year will each receive a $500 U.S. Savings Bond and a plaque of appreciation from UTUIA.

Additionally, they will be honored at the 2006 UTU/UTUIA Regional Meeting nearest their homes (all expenses paid by UTUIA).

Also, 20 runners-up will be selected to receive certificates of appreciation for their volunteer efforts.

Deadline for submission of nominations is Monday, April 3, 2006. The outstanding individuals will be notified by registered mail, and certificates of appreciation will be forwarded to runners-up as soon as possible.

The decision of UTUIA judges is final. Previous nominees may be nominated again; however, former Volunteers of the Year are ineligible to receive awards.

The Volunteers of the Year program is an opportunity for the men and women of the UTUIA to let their fraternal lights shine.

It also provides an opportunity for UTUIA to recognize its volunteers for their outstanding contributions to others.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.

The nomination forms should be mailed to UTUIA Volunteer of the Year, Attn.: Tony Martella, UTU/UTUIA Fraternal Coordinator, 14630 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

Do not forget to include a separate sheet of paper describing the applicant’s volunteer activities.
This month’s winning photo:

The UTU Public Relations Department awards UTU gear to the union member who submits the best photograph during the previous months.

The winning photo will be published in the UTU News. Exceptional photographs will be included on the UTU website.

The UTU would like to see photographs or digital photographs of work-related scenes, such as railroad, bus or mass transit operations, new equipment photos, scenic shots, activities at your local, or photos of your brothers and sisters keeping America rolling.

Printed photographs should be mailed to UTU News, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.

High-resolution digital photographs should be in JPEG format and e-mailed to utunews@utu.org.

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

All photographs submitted become property of the UTU. Remember to review your employer’s policies regarding use of cameras on the property or during work hours.

This month’s winning photograph was taken by Lester Erickson, a UP conductor and member of Local 492, Sacramento, Calif. It shows a UP train in a siding in the Sacramento River canyon between Lake Shasta and Dunsmuir, Calif.

UTU, BLET join forces to fight carriers over one-person crews

Setting past differences aside, the BLET and UTU are working together on a campaign to ensure a successful outcome to the current round of collective bargaining.

In a joint letter to members of both organizations, UTU President Paul Thompson and BLET President Don Hahs strongly criticized carriers for using past differences between the two organizations as a wedge to reduce crew size.

The carriers, involved in national negotiations with the UTU, include BNSF, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific.

Reducing crew size puts the lives of all rail workers and the general public in danger, Thompson and Hahs said.

New technology promised by the carriers is years away from implementation and is unreliable. Reduced train crews would mean already fatigued crew members would be forced to work under even more demanding conditions on trains carrying some of the most deadly hazardous materials.

Reduced crew size also would seriously threaten the financial security of the Railroad Retirement system and the well-being of tens of thousands of retired railroad families.

The AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department, the Teamsters’ Union and other rail labor organizations pledged to support, on Capitol Hill, the UTU/BLET joint campaign to oppose crew-size reduction.

They also indicated support for the UTU federal court case challenging the right of the carriers to force the UTU to negotiate nationally on crew-consist agreements that were made on a carrier-by-carrier basis.

As part of the joint campaign, UTU, BLET and other labor organization members and retirees are being urged to telephone and fax members of the National Mediation Board and White House officials urging they not be handmaidens to the carriers who want to break off productive negotiations in an effort to force a carrier-friendly Presidential Emergency Board.

Carriers have boasted that their friends in the Bush Administration have promised them an anti-labor PEB, and conservative lawmakers would use those anti-labor recommendations to craft a law imposing a new contract for train and engine service employees.

Forced reduction in crew size to one person would virtually assure the destruction of the conductor and brakeman crafts and would be devastating to the Railroad Retirement System as tens of thousands of train operating positions were abolished.

Already, influential members of Congress have joined the UTU/BLET campaign, telling the NMB to keep the carriers at the bargaining table.

Continued on page 10

Inside this issue of the UTU News:

Leon Klinghagen was not alone in his final moments. See page 2.

The UTU’s Web site is a sight to see, and read, and learn from. See page 6.

When you get on this train you let out a little wine. See page 8.

UTU retiree Fox just can’t stay away from trains. See Page 8.