

UTU News

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The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

THE VOICE OF TRANSPORTATION LABOR

“For freight trains, the conductor and engineer work as a team. One member points out situations that may have escaped the other’s attention.” – *Federal Railroad Administration (see editorial, page 4)*

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News & Notes

NKCR workers pick UTU

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Train and engine service employees on the Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railway (NKCR) have chosen the UTU as their collective bargaining representative, according to information released last month by the National Mediation Board.

“We want to thank the dedicated employees on this short line for putting their faith and trust in the UTU,” said UTU International President Paul Thompson.

“This is the fourth property owned by OmniTRAX where the workers have sought to join the UTU, and we promise to deliver the quality representation they expect and deserve,” said John Nadalin, the UTU’s director of strategic planning, who coordinated the organizing effort.

The third short line in three months to join the UTU family, the NKCR operates approximately 559 miles of track in three states and carries a diverse mix of wheat, corn, coal and fertilizer.

Verify plan providers

All participants in the Managed Medical Care Program (MMCP) received a letter recently from the Governing Committee of the NRC/UTU Plan or the Joint Plan Committee of the National Health and Welfare Plan advising them of the plan requirements to use “In-Network Providers” in order to obtain maximum MMCP benefits.

It is very important that participants verify that the medical providers being used by them and their family members are, in fact, providers that participate in a network that has been approved by the plan.

In-network benefits are available under MMCP only for services rendered by providers in plan-approved networks.

Two retired officers pass

John F. Kalfas Jr., 82, retired former CSX general chairperson, and retired Missouri Pacific Upper Lines General Chairperson Charles I. Shelton, 86, have passed away.

Kalfas died Jan. 21 near Pittsburgh, Pa.; Shelton in Jefferson City, Mo.

Kalfas, a member of UTU Local 1379 in Pittsburgh, began his career as a conductor with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (B&O) in 1952. He served for many years as B&O, then CSX, general chairperson. He retired in December 1985 after a 44-year rail career.

A member of Local 933 in Jefferson City, Shelton worked for the MoPac for 41 years. He served as general chairperson from 1972 to 1975.

WE’RE BACK IN AFL-CIO!

The UTU rejoined the AFL-CIO Feb. 27 and UTU International President Paul Thompson was elected unanimously as a vice president on the federation’s executive council, which guides the work of the federation. Both actions took place at the AFL-CIO Executive Council’s winter meeting in San Diego.

Not since UTU Past President Al Chesser was similarly elected during the 1970s has a UTU president gained the honor of being elected an AFL-CIO Executive Council vice president.

The AFL-CIO is an acronym for the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, which merged in 1955 to form what is commonly known and widely respected as the House of Labor.

There are some 53 AFL-CIO-member international and national unions, representing more than nine million working men and women of every race and ethnicity and walk of life.

“This is one of the proudest accomplishments of my life, to bring the UTU – the union inspired by labor legend and uniter Eugene V. Debs – back into the AFL-CIO,” Thompson said.

“Re-affiliation with the House of Labor will benefit our membership as the AFL-CIO is the voice of the common man and the protector of middle-class America,” Thompson said. “We look forward to working within the federation with all of organized labor. Everyone should remember that the AFL-CIO

will always be the House of Labor. Above all, we must never, ever forget whom we talk for and who we represent: the working men and women of America.”

In welcoming the UTU back into the federation, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said, “Union workers earn 28 percent more each week than non-union workers and are much more likely to have health and pension benefits.

Unions give working people a voice in government. They represent working families before lawmakers, and make sure politicians never forget that working families voted them into office.”

Thompson said that “in this era of near-unbridled corporate greed, with employers encouraged and emboldened by anti-labor forces in the White House and Congress, uni-

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UTU files suit over rail training

The United Transportation Union on Feb. 24 asked a federal district court in E. St. Louis, Ill., to order the nation’s major railroads to honor a commitment to bargain collectively over issues of employee training.

Carriers named in the lawsuit are BNSF Railway, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific.

The carriers signed a letter of understanding on Aug. 20, 2002, agreeing that “at the earliest opportunity in the (current) national bargaining round, the matter of relating the existing service scales (entry rates of pay) in effect on each participating road to training and experience will be addressed.” The letter was attached to a new national agreement negotiated at the time and subsequently ratified by the UTU membership.

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Rail labor fights one-man crews

WASHINGTON, D.C. – BNSF Railway should not be permitted to operate trains with single-person crews until appropriate safety studies have been completed and regulations are in place, the Federal Railroad Administration was told here by rail labor Feb. 23.

The UTU, the BLET, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen told FRA that a request by BNSF Railway to extend its existing special waiver to operate an experimental version of positive train control (PTC) should not be granted until employee and public safety can be assured.

BNSF is seeking to expand operation of a pilot project called the Electronic Train Management System (ETMS) over 329 miles of track on its Ft. Worth and Red Rock subdivi-

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Around the UTU

Local 95, Rensselaer, N.Y.

Amtrak employees in this local were saddened by the Jan. 13 death of retired conductor **Norman M. Bonk Sr.** Working on the Lake Shore Limited in 1996, Brother Bonk disarmed a deranged senior who had discharged a handgun in a crowded coach. For his heroism, Bonk was awarded Amtrak's President's Award for Valor, said Local Secretary **James P. Kaufman**. Bonk, who began his career in 1962 on the Buffalo Creek Railroad, is survived by his wife and three sons. His brother **Richard Bonk** is a retired CSX yardmaster.

Local 265, Pocatello, Idaho

Members of this Union Pacific local are mourning the death of conductor **Robert C. Moss**, a 36-year UTU member who succumbed to a heart attack on the job while en route to Pocatello from Green River, Wyo., said Local Treasurer **Steven W. Wheeler**. He is survived by his wife and four children.

Local 934, Alliance, Neb.

In an effort to help keep high school students sober and off the road after their prom, the members of this BNSF Railway local have contributed \$100 to the Hemingford High School after-prom party, which runs from midnight to 4 a.m., said Local Steward **J. W. Bunce**.

Local 1033, Atlanta, Ga.

Members of this CSXT local are proud of 38-year member **Joe Horsley**, a conductor who saw fire coming out of a house on his way to work early one morning in February, said Local Chairperson **Billy Smith**. When he stopped to investigate, he discovered three people near the house suffering from third-degree burns over 50 percent of their bodies. Alerting authorities, he took the burn victims to a neighbor's house until help arrived.

Local 1252, Fresno, Calif.

Members of this BNSF Railway local offer best wishes to conductor **Clifford Henderson**, who recently retired after 44 years in train service, said **Don Heffernan**, retired former secretary and treasurer. Brother Henderson began his career on the old Valley Division, then worked on Amtrak when it first started, but soon returned to freight service. Meanwhile, members were saddened to learn that retired member **Harry Sandridge** lost his long battle with cancer in January, Heffernan said. Brother Sandridge began his career on the Southern Pacific and then moved to the Atcheson, Topeka & Santa Fe.

Local 1290, Chicago, Ill.

Members of this Metra local, along with Metra employees from Local 1299 (Chicago), will cohost the upcoming Tri-State Rail Conference, set to begin at 9:30 a.m. on April 1 at the Park Inn Harvey Hotel, 17040 S. Halsted St., Harvey, IL 60426, according to Local President **Jeff Fields**, who serves as secretary of the Tri-State Rail Conference Executive Board. All UTU members are encouraged to attend. Among those scheduled to be on hand will be UTU International President **Paul Thompson** and International vice presidents **John Babler** and **J.R. Cumby**, who will discuss the national rail negotiations and upcoming congressional elections. International vice presidents **Tony Iannone** and **Pat Drennan**, along with Long



A grateful Kyle George (left) meets the marrow donor who saved his life, Matthew Millward of Local 78 in Pocatello, Idaho.

Member receives through donating

As a qualified Union Pacific engineer, a college student, a vice local chairperson and the son of UTU's Idaho state legislative director, **Matthew Millward** faces new lessons daily. As a 24-year old, he's already learned that some of life's sweetest lessons come quite unexpectedly.

Asked to be a bone marrow donor in 2004, he didn't realize he'd not only be giving, but he'd be receiving, too.

"When I was in high school, I was tested to see if I was a match for someone with cancer," said Millward, a member of Local 78 in Pocatello, Idaho. "I wasn't, but I was put on a registry, and I forgot all about it."

Six years later, Millward learned he was a match for someone with just two weeks to live. The only catch: The recipient and the donor would remain unknown to each other.

Millward underwent a procedure around Thanksgiving 2004 requiring him to take a course of medications, check into a hospital, and let his blood be filtered for the needed tissues. "The medicine causes an uncomfortable feeling, like having the flu and feeling growth pains in all your bones," he said.

"Six months after the procedure, the doctor told me the recipient was doing well," Millward said. "A year afterward, during a check-up, I was told I could find out about the recipient if I wanted. I signed some release forms and was given a name and phone number."

Around Christmas 2005, Millward and his wife of two years, **Melanie**, drove to Utah to meet recipient Kyle George, 35, his wife, Heather, and their children, a five-year-old and a set of two-year-old twins.

"That's when it really hit me," Millward said. "Before, he was just a stranger. Now, as I watched him and his wife play with their children and heard them express their gratitude, I was struck by the way we were able to help each other."

And how was Millward helped? "I suddenly realized the true importance of life, and especially of family," he said. "It really opened my eyes toward my family, how much they mean to me, and how much I had taken it all for granted."

Idaho State Legislative Director **George Millward** has his own thoughts about the matter. "I am so proud to have such a great son," he said, "a brave son who, in the hour of need, stepped up to the plate and became a hero."

Island Rail Road General Chairperson **Mike Canino**, will address commuter rail operations. Speaking about positive train control (PTC) will be state legislative

directors **Joe Szabo** and **Tom Dwyer**, who will be joined by Ill. State Rep. **Eddie Washington**, who is employed as a Metra conductor. For information, contact Tri-State Rail Conference Executive Board President **Al Schoo** at (815) 222-6159.

Local 1308, Bruceton/Hollow, Tenn.

Members of this CSXT local recently called a meeting to welcome new members into the fold, according to Tennessee State Legislative Director **Jerry Anderton**. Those attending included Local President **David Martin**; Local Chairperson **Jim Potter**; Anderton; Legislative Rep. **David Hampton**, and **Jerry Taylor**, **Bennie Akers**, **Greg Taylor**, **Ronnie Boyd**, **Joe Watkins**, **Brian Thompson**, **Justin Bates**, **David Cook** and **Clay Haynes** of the *Ford for Senate* campaign.

Local 1313, Amarillo, Texas

UTU members and their spouses are invited to a workshop presented by this BNSF Railway local featuring representatives from the Railroad Retirement Board and health and welfare providers UnitedHealthcare, Aetna, and Care (Temple, Texas), said Local President **Joe Romo**. The event will be held on two days, 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. Also attending will be UTUIA's **Steve Simpson** and a representative of UTU designated legal counsel. For information, contact Romo at (806) 622-2265 or Secretary **Jeremy Rock** at (806) 457-1097.

Local 1730, Richmond, Calif.

Congratulations have been earned by the members of this BNSF Railway local working in Richmond Yard, who have gone more than 400 days without an injury, and more than 90 days free of any reportable man-factor incidents, said Local Chairperson **J. V. Sullivan**. Included in the accomplishment are the extra-board engineers and the members working in the Oakland Port facility. Sullivan said the last such notable stretch was recorded in 1982.

Local 1846, W. Colton, Calif.

UTU members, their families and their friends are invited to participate in the annual West Colton Golf Club's Las Vegas Classic, set for June 12-15, said Local President **Richard Escamilla**. This is the 15th year Escamilla will chair the event. Those participating in the four-day, three-night event stay at Sam's Town Hotel & Casino and play two rounds of golf at Tuscany Golf Club. Buses will be provided to and from the golf course, and a banquet will be held on the evening of June 14. For information, contact Escamilla by calling (909) 795 6867 or send him e-mail at pres1846@earthlink.net.

Local 1963, Louisville, Ky.

Retired member **Joe Alenduff** is again organizing an annual picnic for retirees in 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 information contact Alenduff at (727) 522-6808 or send e-mail to him at jalen-duff@tampabay.rr.com.

DOT Secretary skeptical of one-person crews

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta says the matter of reduced train-crew size must be studied independently of new technology such as Positive Train Control (PTC).

In a meeting with officers of the UTU and BLET, Mineta said, “These two issues must be bifurcated.” As he spoke, Mineta used his right hand to make an up-and-down motion indicating a wall between the two issues.

Mineta hosted a more-than-60-minute meeting in his office with UTU International President Paul Thompson, UTU Assistant President Rick Marceau, UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer and BLET President Don Hahs.

Also attending, at the invitation of Mineta, was FRA Administrator Joseph Boardman.

The primary topic of discussion was rail labor’s concern that reducing the size of railroad crews will threaten public safety and national security.

The labor leaders explained how the major rail carriers are seeking to use experiments with various PTC technologies as Trojan horses to force single-person crews on freight trains even though there has been no neutral federal investigation into the public safety and national security implications of reduced train-crew size.

Mineta has first-hand experience with terrorist activity involving commercial transportation. He gave the order to ground all aircraft in the United States the morning of 9/11 after terrorists hijacked four commercial aircraft – two hitting the World Trade Center, a third crashing into the Pentagon and the fourth crashing in Pennsylvania and assumed to be targeting the White House or Capitol Building.

Thompson, Marceau, Brunkenhoefer and Hahs explained the safety role of an engineer and conductor on freight trains and cited language of an FRA report emphasizing that “one (crew) member points out situations that may have escaped the other’s attention.”

With freight trains carrying any number of deadly hazmat through residential and highly populated municipalities, there is the constant danger to the public and national security of terrorist activity as well as accidents.

That threat becomes more severe if there is just a single crew member, who could be incapacitated by a medical emergency, grade-crossing accident or other mishap, leaving an unattended train with no second crew member able to alert railroad dispatchers to halt all rail traffic in both directions and to communicate with emergency responders.

Moreover, a single crew member – even if not injured – would be unable to tend to such typical problems as broken air hoses and couplers, sticking brakes, shifted lading, dragging equipment and overheated axles.

All are tasks handled by the second crew member while the engineer remains at the throttle and in radio contact with dispatchers.



From left are FRA Administrator Joseph Boardman; UTU International President Paul Thompson; Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and BLET President Don Hahs.

Additionally, Mineta was provided with FRA data on the thousands of derailments, highway-rail grade-crossing accidents and trespasser fatalities each year that require securing of the train, flagging of crossings and immediate communication with dispatchers and emergency responders.

Another concern communicated to Mineta was the continuing problem of train-crew fatigue resulting from long hours, a frequent absence of rest days and round-the-clock availability requirements.

In fact, placing additional computer screens in the locomotive cab and more computer-associated tasks on the engineer could increase the number of engineer distractions and exacerbate fatigue problems.

Marceau stressed that allowing railroads to experiment with one-person crews without appropriate study and before new safety regulations are considered and implemented is inviting cataclysmic disaster.

Mineta acknowledged that it has long been federal policy in civil aviation that new regulations must be devised, fully studied and in place before changes in commercial airline operations are permitted.

UTU safety coordinators, CSXT managers sharpen skills

UTU safety coordinators from CSXT’s Northern Region last month refreshed their skills and exchanged ideas during an intensive, two-day leadership conference in partnership with a group of the railroad’s managers of operating practices and safety in Westlake, Ohio.

The conference and workshops were organized by UTU International vice presidents Roy Boling and Tony Iannone, along with CSXT Vice President-Northern Region Tony Tucheck. The sessions focused on working through safety issues in a positive manner.

Among the UTU members attending were safety coordinators J.R. Wagner (Local 1881, Baltimore, Md.), Jerry Gibson (L-313, Grand Rapids, Mich.), George Feters (L-1917, Cincinnati, Ohio) and Linda Werline (L-1518, Indianapolis, Ind.). Also participating was New England Lines General Chairperson George T. Casey (GO-081), who also directs the UTU New England States Legislative Board, and CSXT General Chairperson John Lesniewski (GO-049).

Preceding the conference and workshop exercises was a legislative session, led by Alternate U.S. National Legislative Director James Stem, with assistance from Casey.

Gibson said the CSXT safety program has been in place for about six years. “This two-day event gave us a chance to revisit the purpose and foundation of the program and make sure we’re all on the same track and on the same page,” Gibson said.

“Besides revisiting our original training and getting back to the roots of our purpose, the sessions gave us an opportunity to hone our skills in adapting to different personalities and learning how to deal with them in a professional manner,” said Wagner.

“We have to do a better job of training our fellow members before more aggressive enforcement is pursued,” Wagner said. “We put a lot of emphasis on peer intervention for that very reason.”

When the safety program is run by labor and “employees take ownership of the program, we have the credibility we need to succeed,” Wagner said. “I believe the frontline employee is the key to safety. If someone’s being



Among those attending a joint, two-day UTU/CSXT safety conference were (from left) UTU International vice presidents Roy Boling and Tony Iannone; BLET General Chairman Tom E. Roberts; General Chairperson John Lesniewski (GO-049) and CSXT Vice President-Northern Region Tony Tucheck.

pushed beyond the limits of safety, I want to know about it.”

Wagner said the UTU safety coordinators participate in a conference call at least once a month with the railroad’s vice president assigned to safety issues to discuss items presenting difficulties.

The UTU safety coordinators will take their experience home and share it by attending local safety meetings and other district meetings, where they’ll report on what happened at the conference, Gibson said. “Our job is to assist the local teams with their safety efforts,” he said.

Participants gave high marks to UTU International vice presidents Boling and Iannone, as well as CSXT’s Tucheck. “These guys really believe in the value of a continuing education and giving us the tools to resolve situations,” said Wagner. “Sessions like these keep us sharp.”

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One-person crews? Crazy!

"Crazy" is the word conductors and engineers use to describe carrier attempts to reduce crew size to just one.

The FRA last month used 23 words, which the carriers would do well to read, mark and inwardly digest:

"For freight trains, the conductor and engineer work as a team. One member points out situations that may have escaped the other's attention."

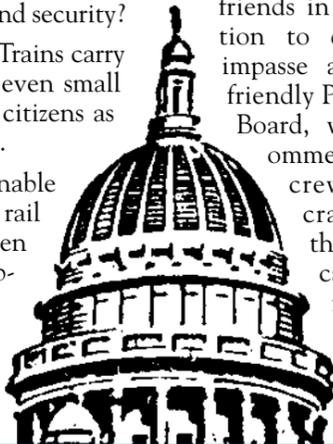
The FRA's comments came in a report of its Collision Analysis Working Group, which includes representatives from the FRA, carriers and labor – and came following exhaustive investigation of 65 train collisions over six years.

Good grief, what are carriers thinking in their headstrong dash toward greater profitability at the expense of public safety and homeland security?

Railroad trains are not bumper cars at an amusement park. Trains carry the most deadly hazmat known to humanity. The release of even small amounts of hazmat could wipe out dozens or more innocent citizens as trains roll day and night through communities across America.

With railroads already pushing crew members beyond reasonable human endurance, fatigue increasingly is cited as a cause of rail accidents. Removing a set of eyes and putting the entire burden of train safety on a lone engineer is nothing less than a prescription for a public calamity.

Each of us has an obligation to educate opinion leaders and decision makers on the dangers of reduced crew size.



WASHINGTON WATCH

By James M. Brunkenhoefer

Keep lawmakers out of our negotiations

This round of wage and rules negotiations between the UTU and most of the major railroads mirrors many previous negotiations that wound up being decided by a third party – Congress.

We have a long history of stalled negotiations being decided by a Congress controlled by Democrats; or where the House and Senate were controlled by different parties.



Brunkenhoefer

This round, we are facing a very different situation because it is the first time in modern history that Republicans have controlled the House, Senate and White House.

Railroad management has been jubilant – expecting a Republican-controlled National Mediation Board to release the parties on the carriers' timetable; a carrier-friendly Presidential Emergency Board to be created by the White House; and a Republican-controlled Congress to rubber-stamp those recommendations, cramming an anti-labor result down our throats.

But the UTU has been using a different playbook than in the past. After the carriers served Section 6 notices, the UTU filed a lawsuit asking a federal court to order the carriers to remove crew consist and FELA notices from the table because they are not proper subjects for national negotiations.

The carriers thumbed their nose at the court, expecting their Republican friends to take care of them through the

Solidarity's drumbeat

By Paul C. Thompson
International President

Solidarity does, indeed, equal victory.

The National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC) cried "uncle" in the face of a massive and unprecedented show of unity among all of rail labor, the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win Coalition, which includes the Teamsters' Union.

Indeed, the NCCC's chairman, Bob Allen, through half-truths, outright fabrications, flim-flammery, braggadocio and arrogance, accomplished what rail labor on its own has been unable to do for a century – bring us more closely together in the solidarity envisioned by Eugene V. Debs.

In a letter to the National Mediation Board, Allen agreed not to seek an impasse in bargaining with the UTU or the BLET until at least after a federal court rules on a UTU court case challenging the carriers' demand that locally negotiated crew-consist agreements be reopened at the national level.

The carriers earlier boasted they could count on Republican friends in the Bush administration to declare a bargaining impasse and create a carrier-friendly Presidential Emergency Board, whose anti-labor recommendations for reduced crew size would be crammed down our throats by the Republican-controlled and carrier-friendly Congress.

Now, the carriers are gagging on their

own greed and misplaced optimism in just how far their Republican friends would bend backwards to assist them in reducing crew size. Indeed, public safety and homeland security are no small matter to Congress.

In solidarity, the UTU, the BLET and others in rail labor have been walking shoulder to shoulder delivering a consistent message to White House officials and the Republican congressional leadership, which is fearful of losing its majority come November elections: Don't allow the carriers to drag Republicans into a fight over public safety and homeland security.

UTU and BLET members also let the Republican-controlled NMB know our views. For several days in early February, the NMB was receiving an average of one telephone call per minute from UTU and BLET members and retirees urging the agency to keep the parties at the bargaining table. An NMB official said faxes received (and which must be retained in NMB files) stood in a pile seven feet high. E-mails literally clogged NMB servers.

The UTU will continue working closely with the BLET as well as others in rail labor, the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win Coalition on issues of common interest.

In the meantime, Eugene V. Debs' words are echoing in a drumbeat of labor solidarity: "What can labor do for itself? The answer is not difficult. Labor can organize, it can unify, it can consolidate its forces. This done, it can demand and command."



Thompson

PEB process – anticipating Congress would pass a law ordering crew-size reduction and that would be that.

The carriers did not anticipate the push back that they received from Capitol Hill – Republicans as well as Democrats telling them not to go down such a path.

Congressional leaders from both sides of the aisle told the carriers that Congress already has enormous election-year problems; that Congress doesn't want a railroad labor problem dumped in its lap close to Election Day when a negotiated settlement is possible and while railroad earnings are setting records.

Indeed, the UTU – with help from the BLET and the AFL-CIO – made clear to every member of Congress what the railroads were up to. With your help, we flooded the NMB, White House and Congress with messages that the carriers and labor should remain at the bargaining table.

We will continue to make clear to every member of Congress, the White House and the NMB that the issue of crew size is not one that should be decided by politicians.

In fact, enabling the carriers to reduce crew size without a full and careful study of the impact on public safety and national security could be a calamity in the making.

The issue is far from one of simply jobs and carrier profits. It is one of homeland security.

State Watch *News from UTU State Legislative Boards*

Arizona



David Shearer, legislative rep. of UTU Local 807 in Tucson, recently presented a UTU PAC donation to Patty Weiss, Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress from Arizona's Eighth District. Weiss also is a well-known news anchor for a Tucson television channel. "David briefed her on our issues and she will be supportive of issues for all working men and women in Arizona," State Legislative Director Scott Olson said. "The UTU was first to support her and she has said she will never forget our early support. With the help from Arizona UTU members she will win a seat in Washington."

Georgia

Twelfth District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) has been appointed to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, a powerful committee with jurisdiction over America's surface transportation, aviation, freight and passenger rail, Coast Guard, inland waterway system, international maritime commerce, the Economic Development Administration, public buildings, and various environmental issues, according to State Legislative Director



Barrow

Danny Boyles.

"Georgia's 12th District has an extensive

road, rail, air, and sea transportation infrastructure that has to keep pace with the economic growth in our area," Barrow said. "I'm honored to serve on the Transportation Committee, and I see this as a great opportunity to keep our state and our region on the move."

In 2005, only one member of Georgia's congressional delegation sat on the House Transportation Committee: Atlanta-area Congressman Lynn Westmoreland. Neither of Georgia's two Senators currently serve on the Senate's Commerce Committee, which handles transportation issues. Barrow's appointment doubles Georgia's representation on the Transportation Committee, and provides a strong voice for the concerns of the entire state, Boyles said.

"Georgia is a vital transportation hub for the Southeast and for the entire country," Barrow continued. "Working with communities from across the 12th District and all of Georgia, I intend to make sure our state's transportation needs are met."

Last year, Barrow served on the Transportation Conference Committee, which was responsible for crafting the final version of the surface transportation bill (TEA-LU). That bill included more than \$280 billion in federal transportation funds, with \$34.6 million dedicated to specific transportation projects in Barrow's 12th Congressional District.

North Dakota

North Dakota State Legislative Director John Risch has arranged a series of special informational meetings for active and retired members in the Peace Garden State.

Expected speakers include UTU general chairpersons; Debbie Helbling, district manager of the Railroad Retirement Board's regional office in Fargo; Charlene Payne, customer service manager from United Healthcare, Risch and others.

"National negotiations, one-person crews and employee discipline will be some of the

North Carolina



Last month Democratic Party National Chairman Howard Dean was in Raleigh, and UTU State Legislative Director Dickie Westbrook was invited to attend a special meeting with him. "We had a round-table discussion about national politics and how the Democrats can win back the White House and Congress," Westbrook said. "It was a very interesting discussion. The UTU and the State Employees' Association were the only two organizations at the meeting, which represented organized labor."

topics covered," Risch said. "All members and spouses are invited to attend any meeting regardless of which local they belong."

The meetings will be held on the following dates: Locals 887 and 1344 in Bismarck on Tuesday, May 2, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the China Star, 1065 Interstate Ave.; Locals 980 and 1137 in Moorhead, Minn., on Wednesday, May 3, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Days Inn; RRVW members will meet on Wednesday, May 3, at 6 p.m. at the Northern Grill in Breckenridge, Minn.; Local 525 members on Thursday, May 4, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Ramada Inn, I-29 and Hwy. 2 W., Grand Forks, and Local 1059 on Friday, May 5, from 1 p.m. until at the Vegas Motel in Minot. For more information, contact Risch at (701) 223-0061, email utu@bis.midco.net, or talk to your local officers.

Bus Department

By Roy Arnold, vice president/director

We can learn from "The Duke"

John Wayne (1907-1979) was one of the best actors of his generation – and a character model, too.

Known as "The Duke," a bronze plaque on his headstone recalls his words: "Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. Comes into us at midnight very clean. It's perfect when it arrives and it puts itself in our hands. It hopes we've learned something from yesterday."

I'm reminded of those words as I visit with UTU locals. We all must provide for ourselves and also our families who look to us for guidance and leadership.

Whether we have many years of seniority on the job or are just beginning, it is valuable to take a minute each day to consider what we learned the previous day.

It could be about a brother or sister going through a difficult time and needing support or prayers from others; or simply a way to make others' jobs more satisfying and productive.

The farther we progress on the road of life, we tend to learn – as John Wayne did – to live each day as if it were our last and to treat other human beings with the same respect as we wish to receive.

I thank each of my brothers and sisters for their relentless dedication to UTU. As always, I am only a phone call away.



Yardmasters

By J.R. "Jim" Cumby, vice president

UTU scores hat trick because of unity

In hockey, scoring three goals is called a hat trick.

The UTU has pulled off its own hat trick.

Goal one: We are back in the AFL-CIO.

Goal two: We are shoulder to shoulder with the BLET and all others in rail labor, fighting as a team for better job security, wages, benefits, working conditions and safety. In fact, it was the end of costly hostilities with the BLET that made our long-awaited return to the federation possible.

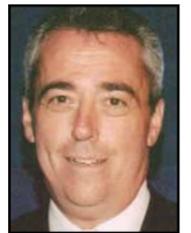
Goal three: The election of UTU International President Paul Thompson to the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, one of the highest honors a rail labor chief can achieve. The AFL-CIO Executive Council guides the daily work of the federation – nine million working men and women belonging to 53 separate labor unions.

We have more solidarity to celebrate. Train dispatchers on Union Pacific are now voting on whether to be represented by the American Train Dispatchers Association and enjoy the many benefits of union membership.

President Thompson wrote those currently non-represented dispatchers in February, pledging to support those dispatchers "in every way possible." Thompson said that once UP dispatchers join the ATDA, "it will be a new beginning ... filled with better job security, better pay and better benefits."

We haven't exactly opened a box of Cracker Jack and found a prize of a lifetime of health and happiness. But as brothers and sisters committed to improving job security, wages, benefits, working conditions and safety, we have four very special events to celebrate.

This solidarity will help at the bargaining table, in state legislatures and in Congress.



Make plans now for 2006 Regional Meetings

The 2006 UTU/UTUIA Regional Meetings have been designed to provide a grand sense of fraternalism, lots of worthwhile education, and tons of fun for the whole family.

This year, each Regional Meeting will run for 2 1/2 days, ending early on the afternoon of the third day. The evening of the first day has been left unscheduled so you, your family and friends can be free to explore and enjoy the many offerings of the Regional Meeting cities.

Neither Asheville nor Reno has been designated the joint U.S./Canadian Regional Meeting; Canadian members are free to choose the meeting that most interests them.

All those attending the Regional Meetings must be registered in order to attend any planned social function. Children ages 11 and under who are pre-registered are complimentary. The registration form is printed on the right.

A completed registration form listing each attendee, regardless of age, and complete payment in U.S. funds must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit

Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107, 30 days prior to the scheduled start of the meetings or the registrant will be charged an on-site registration fee of \$200.

The pre-registration fee for the 2006 regional meetings is \$150 per member, spouse or child over age 11. Additional fees apply for the golf outings. You must make your own room reservations at one of the hotels listed, and certain deadlines apply.

The \$150 registration fee covers the welcoming reception the night before the meeting, two lunches, one evening meal, a breakfast buffet and all workshop materials. Those wishing to attend only the workshops do not need to pay the registration fee. No one-day registrations will be offered this year.

You may cancel your Regional Meeting registration 10 days prior to the first day of the meeting or the golf outing without penalty. Please fax any changes or cancellations immediately to the UTU International Headquarters at (216) 228-5755.



Reno, Nev., the site of one of the UTU's 2006 Regional Meetings, offers something for everyone, including the Ponderosa Ranch, the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, museums, nature parks, and the "Fun Quest" and "Ultimate Rush" at the Reno Hilton. (Photo courtesy of the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority.)

Reno, Nevada, June 19-21, 2006 Reno Hilton, 2500 East Second St., Reno, NV 89595

<http://www.caesars.com/Hilton/Reno/Hotel>

Hilton hotel reservations: (800) 648-5080 toll free or (775) 789-2000 direct to the hotel.

Reservation code: UTU regional meeting, code UTUAC06

Room rate: \$92.00 single/double, plus tax; rates good for three days before and after the meeting.

Reservation deadline: May 29, 2006, or as soon as all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved.

Parking: Free

Golf outing: The golf outing will be held at 8 a.m. on Sunday, June 18, at the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course, 6800 Pembroke Dr., Reno; phone (775) 857-2892. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and much more.

Make your reservations early!



Asheville, N.C., Aug. 22-24, 2006

Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa
290 Macon Ave., Asheville, NC 28804

<http://www.grovetparkinn.com>

Hotel reservations: (800) 438-5800 toll free or (828) 252-2711 direct to the hotel

Reservation code: UTU regional meeting, code 67Y8RJ

Room rate: \$120 single/double, \$40 each for third and fourth persons. Room rates are good three days before and after the meeting.

Reservation deadline: July 22, 2006

Parking: Free

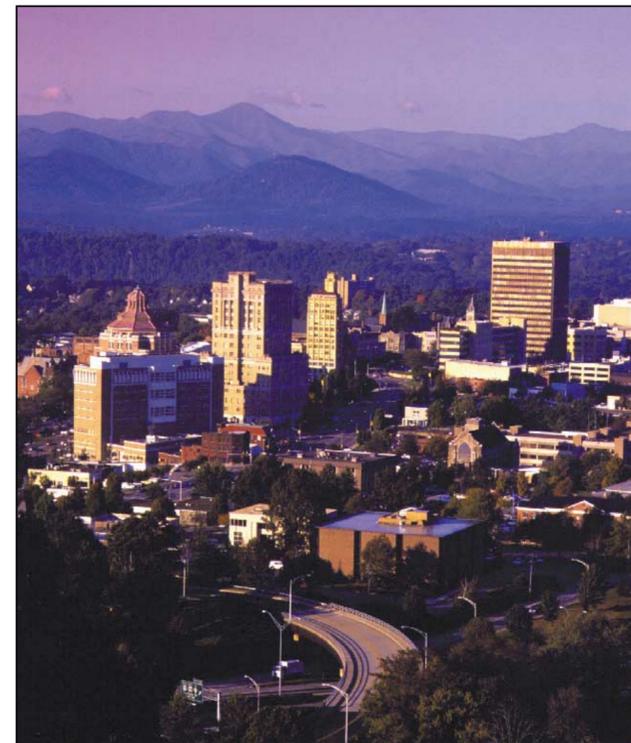
Golf outing: The UTU Regional Meeting golf outing will be held Monday, Aug. 21, at the The Golf Course at The Grove Park Inn. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes golf, lunch and much more.

UTU arranges discount airfares, car rentals

Continental Airlines is offering discounted airfares to both regional meeting cities. Members and guests who use Continental Airlines will get discounts from 2 percent to 15 percent off the published fare based on travel dates and other variables. By booking flights online at www.continental.com, members will also save an additional 3 percent and avoid the \$10 ticketing fee that is charged when flights are booked over the phone (800-468-7022) or through travel agents. To book online use reference number "VPRWJG" and "Z" code "ZSXG."

UTU members and others attending the Reno meeting also are eligible for a 10 percent discount off of all published, roundtrip fares from Frontier Airlines. Attendees should call (800) 908-9068 or (800) 243-6297 and refer to "shell number MC008F." Attendees may also use a travel agency by providing the agency with tour code G08F. The discounts are available from June 12, 2006, to June 25, 2006.

Avis Rent a Car is offering discounted rates to those attending either regional meeting. The Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) Number for both the Reno and Asheville meetings is D150699. The special discounts are available on a wide selection of vehicles and are good one week before and after the meeting. To reserve a car, contact Avis at (800) 331-1600. You can also reserve online at www.avis.com.



Asheville, N.C., is a place unlike any other. It offers art, architecture, history, adventure and cuisine that mixes mountain with modern, classic with country. From the Blue Ridge Mountains to the art galleries to eclectic shopping, Asheville offers much to those attending the UTU/UTUIA Regional Meeting. (Photo courtesy of the Asheville Convention and Visitors' Bureau.)

UTU Regional Meeting Registration Form

Registering before the Regional Meetings speeds sign-in procedures at the meeting site, helps organizers plan more accurately, and saves on meeting costs. These savings will be passed on to each pre-registered attendee. **Each person attending the Regional Meeting, including family members and guests, MUST be registered in order to attend any planned event. Please note that these meetings last 2 1/2 days and conclude on the afternoon of the third day.** Registration fees are \$150 per person; children 11 years of age and under are complimentary. On-site registration will be \$200 per person. All fees must be paid in U.S. funds. Canadian funds will be returned, possibly delaying your registration. If you have questions, consult your bank. Registration forms with payment must be received 30 days prior to the start of the meeting.

Which regional meeting will you be attending? Reno Asheville

Arrival date: _____ Departure date: _____

Transportation type: Automobile Air Other

Member Registration

Name _____ Local _____ Title (if any) _____

Home address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Phone number () _____ Email _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Spouse Registration Reno Asheville

Spouse name _____ Title (if any) _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Child Registration Reno Asheville

Child name _____ Age _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Child name _____ Age _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Child name _____ Age _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Child name _____ Age _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Guest Registration Reno Asheville

Guest name _____ Relationship to member _____

Home address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Meals: Day 1 Lunch No meal
Day 2 Lunch Dinner Both No meals
Day 3 Buffet breakfast No meal

Golf Registration Reno Asheville

Name _____ Handicap _____ Name _____ Handicap _____

Name _____ Handicap _____ Name _____ Handicap _____

(Golf fees are \$80 per golfer; include in total payment.)

Payment Options

Check/money order (U.S. funds only) \$ _____

Credit card VISA MasterCard

Card number _____ Exp. date _____ Total charged \$ _____

Signature _____

Should additional space be needed, make copies of this form and attach to the original. This form and payment of \$150 per person over the age of 11, plus golf registration fees of \$80 per golfer (if applicable), must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250, 30 days prior to the Regional Meeting. Make checks or money orders payable in U.S. funds to "UTU Regional Meeting." Those who do not pre-register for the regional meeting but instead choose to register at the meeting site will be charged a \$50 penalty fee.

UTU for Life

Cochran tapped for *UTU for Life*

Carl Cochran, retired former Florida state legislative director, has been appointed *UTU for Life* national coordinator by UTU International President Paul Thompson.



Carl Cochran

Brother Cochran, a member of Local 1138 in Miami, Fla., retired at age 65 in February 2005. Now he's anxious to get back in the saddle and go to work on behalf of retired members.

"Having worked in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C., I know the UTU needs us retirees as part of the team," said Cochran. "Our involvement for ourselves is just as important as the role we can play in helping active members – and that helps us by keeping our pensions solvent!"

Cochran cited the recent effort that successfully tapped into retiree power to blitz the National Mediation Board, calling for it to refrain from releasing the rail carriers from national bargaining.

"The local chapters of *UTU for Life* that meet regularly are very important to retirees," he said. "They give us a chance to stay in touch with each other and lend a hand when needed."

Cochran started his career in 1958 at the Jacksonville (Fla.) Terminal Company and went to the Seaboard Coast Line (now CSXT) in 1963. He held a number of local offices and became alternate state legislative director in 1980. He moved up to state legislative director in 1988, holding the post until he retired. Along the way, he helped organize the commuter rail operations at Tri-Rail, as well as the re-entry into the UTU of the Florida East Coast Railway and the Wisconsin Central.

He and his wife Karon, married for 42 years, have two daughters, Tammy and Bobi-Jo.

For information about the *UTU for Life* program, write to Cochran at 7935 N.W. 173rd St., Hialeah, FL 33015, call him at (305) 821-7015 or send e-mail to cochranutu@aol.com.



Paying back gov't made easier by secure Web site

By V.M. "Butch" Speakman Jr.

Railroad Retirement annuitants and rail workers who have received an overpayment letter, debt notice or bill from the Railroad Retirement Board now have the option of paying these bills via the Internet by using the Department of the Treasury's new Pay.gov system, accessible through the RRB Web site at www.rrb.gov.

Pay.gov is a convenient and fast 24/7 alternative to mailing a check or credit card authorization form – and payments are credited up to two days sooner.

To access Pay.gov, go to www.rrb.gov and click on "Benefit Online Services (MainLine)." Pay.gov does not require

that you first establish an RRB Internet Services account.

After clicking either the "Pay Retirement or Survivor Bill Online" link, or the "Pay Unemployment or Sickness Bill Online" link, you will be taken to the appropriate collection form.

Both forms ask for a billing document number and an account number, which are found on the top half of the bill, notice or overpayment letter.

After entering the identifying information, users will be directed to the next page of the collection form where they can make a payment by debit/credit card or by authorizing a debit of their savings or checking accounts. The U.S. Treasury Department maintains Pay.gov as a secure Web site and ensures the safety of the personal and financial information transmitted.

Users providing an e-mail address will be sent a notification containing the tracking ID and confirmation of payment.

For more information about an RRB overpayment letter or other RRB debt notice, contact your nearest RRB field office. Addresses and phone numbers are available by calling the toll-free RRB Help Line at (800) 808-0772, or logging on to www.rrb.gov.

V.M. "Butch" Speakman Jr. serves as labor member of the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board.

New *UTU for Life* chapter in Lorain, Ohio

Retired members, spouses and friends in the Lorain, Ohio, area are invited to the inaugural meeting of *UTU for Life* Chapter 9, being organized by retired Lake Terminal Railroad General Chairperson **Tim Smith**.

The group will meet on Tuesday, March 14, at 10 a.m. at George's Restaurant on Route 57 in Elyria, Ohio.

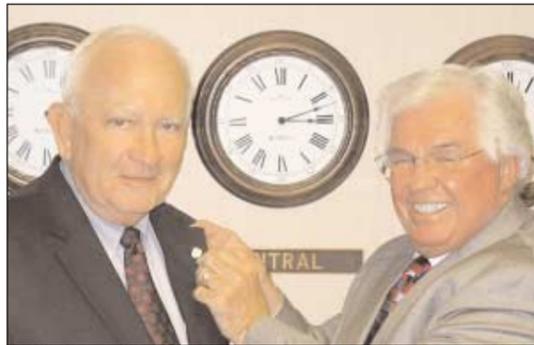
All retired members from all crafts are invited to attend, Smith said.

"Everybody was real concerned about the actions of the National Mediation Board," Smith said. "We also were concerned about the effect that a drastic reduction in employment would have on the Railroad Retirement system. That's why we decided to form this chapter – to keep everyone involved and informed."

Smith, a member of former Local 1391 in Lorain, Ohio, said the members of his local were always involved in the union and that it had the highest per-capita level of donations to the UTU PAC in the state.

"We were always a great local, and the guys are interested in getting back together again, to network and to stay involved," Smith said.

For information, write to Brother Smith at 3726 Winger Dr., Lorain, OH 44053, call him at (440) 960-1664, or send him e-mail at Tsmith017@centurytel.net.



UTU International President Paul Thompson (right) affixes a 50-year membership pin to the lapel of UTU Past International President G. Thomas DuBose, who reaches the five-decade milestone this month.

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
5	Burke, Albert R.	Kansas City, Kan.	446	Curtis, Albert F.	Cheyenne, Wyo.	1313	Thrasher, Harold H.	Pampa, Texas
138	Caprella, Joseph A.	Lima, Ohio	453	Cuccatti, J. D.	Roswell, N.M.	1334	Batton, J. A.	Mendenhall, Miss.
168	Pinson Jr., Joseph C.	Honea Path, S.C.	496	Conn, L.	Wheelersburg, Ohio	1366	Pulsipher, Brent L.	Hurricane, Utah
199	Killmon, Richard D.	Creston, Iowa	740	Henderson, Thomas L.	Portage, Ind.	1373	Rupp, Charles G.	Darby, Pa.
212	Ashley, Sinclair J.	East Greenbush, N.Y.	762	Orr Sr., Werby O.	Troy, Ala.	1379	Kalfas, John F.	Pittsburgh, Pa.
212	Schild, Roy H.	Schenectady, N.Y.	762	Veach, William M.	Selma, Ala.	1390	Collins, Robert	Jamaica, N.Y.
298	Dick, Roger J.	Fort Wayne, Ind.	768	Kmetz, George J.	Illioopolis, Ill.	1399	Kyle, Morgan N.	Rosedale, Ind.
240	Hyde, Thomas C.	Bloomington, Calif.	785	Payne, William J.	Paducah, Ky.	1400	Elliott, Edward A.	Bangor, Maine
243	Stewart, Richard G.	Fort Worth, Texas	933	Shelton, Charles I.	Hartsburg, Mo.	1422	Madden, John N.	Montebello, Calif.
258	Long, James F.	Davenport, Iowa	950	Bailey, Ernest E.	Batesville, Miss.	1445	Kaskauskas, Joseph	Toms River, N.J.
278	O'Brien, John W.	Bay City, Mich.	997	Balestrini, Leo	Sunbury, Pa.	1445	Yersevich, William G.	Linden, N.J.
305	Weston, Warren H.	Lincoln, Neb.	1003	Yow, William H.	Danville, Ill.	1502	Strickland Jr., Charles A.	Mount Dora, Fla.
313	Newberry, Donald J.	Newaygo, Mich.	1074	Lininger, Ralph E.	Connellsville, Pa.	1522	Reynolds, James P.	Orange Park, Fla.
324	Hostetter, O. J.	Kirkland, Wash.	1074	Stern, Joseph S.	Pompano Beach, Fla.	1532	Boston, Arthur W.	Independence, Mo.
386	Morin, Louis A.	Mohnton, Pa.	1075	Walker, William R.	Newport, Mich.	1582	Sebald, Elwyn C.	Phoenicia, N.Y.
407	Brown, Randall D.	Moore Haven, Fla.				1663	Braun, John G.	McCordsville, Ind.
						1929	Shadwick, James E.	Paducah, Ky.
						1971	West, Waymon L.	Greensboro, N.C.

If a tragedy strikes...

UTUIA can help!

What would you do if you were unable to work because of injury or illness? Do you have sufficient savings to pay your bills for six, twelve or even eighteen months?

UTUIA can help! With **Disability Income Replacement** insurance, you can protect your earning power and provide the necessary funds to maintain the quality of life you have come to enjoy.

UTUIA's **Disability Income Replacement** insurance will be there when you need it most. It cannot be canceled, regardless of the number of claims, as long as premiums are paid.

For more information, call us toll-free at **(800) 558-8842** for assistance from your UTUIA representative.



Information, please

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



Please print

Full name

Sex

Date of birth

Address

City

State

ZIP

Telephone number with area code

UTU local number

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

03/06



UTU BUS LINES

News items culled from the UTU's Daily News Digest, posted every morning on the UTU website, www.utu.org.

California plan needs more mass transit

LOS ANGELES – Saying new roads and highways won't do enough to relieve Southern California's notorious traffic congestion, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa last month called for more mass-transit projects to be included in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's infrastructure plan, according to the *Los Angeles Daily News*.

Nunez wants at least one-third of the proposed \$12 billion in transportation bond revenue earmarked for public transit, which could include busways or seed money for Villaraigosa's \$4.8 billion Wilshire Boulevard subway.

"The only way we can address the goal and outcome of reducing traffic congestion is not only by building more roads. It also comes down to the investment we make in public transit," Nunez, D-Los Angeles, said.

The legislature is debating putting a transportation bond issue on the ballot this year to help fund infrastructure improvements statewide.

But Los Angeles leaders complain there's too much emphasis on roads and highways, and not enough on the buses and trains that are at the core of L.A.'s gridlock-busting strategy.

Nunez and Villaraigosa were joined by former Assembly Speaker Richard Katz and Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, who co-authored a resolution supporting mass transit.

School bus drivers 'terror war' recruits

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – You expect the bus driver who picks your kids up for school each morning to keep a close eye on them. But he or she could in fact be keeping a closer eye on you and your neighbors – just to make sure you aren't the type who would slip a bomb into a "Dora the Explorer" backpack and sneak it onboard, according to the *News Standard*.

This past summer, three school-bus-industry associations, in partnership with the American Trucking Association (ATA) and with funding from the Homeland Security Department, began training drivers across the country to spot potential terrorists while shepherding young ones to school.

Recent news reports note that bus drivers in communities across the country recently finished the training program and are now back on the road and on the watch for out-of-place activities and individuals.

Officially known as School Bus Watch, the effort is part of the broader Highway Watch initiative established in 2003 with grant funding from Homeland Security. The program is designed to broaden the government's counter-terrorist activities through the help of vigilant citizens.

According to the Associated Press, School Bus Watch leaders hope to train about 600,000 drivers across the country.

UTU-represented drivers vote on pact

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. – UTU-represented bus drivers who carry special education students for the county were voting as this issue of *UTU News* went to press on a new contract after nearly two years of protracted negotiations.

The vote comes just five weeks after the negotiating team at UTU Local 1741 in San Francisco told the county it wasn't happy with contractor Durham School Services' most recent offer regarding health benefits.

This will be the first contract for some 80 drivers, who provide busing services for about 650 special education students in the county.

"We believe this is the first labor contract reached on any Durham property in the United States," General Chairperson Ange Belay said.

Durham has been negotiating off and on with the UTU since being brought in by the county to manage the service in 2004.

"I want to commend all the Durham drivers who supported the UTU and who helped us hammer out this contract," Belay said.

"It's huge because our commitment was to have a contract and pay the bus drivers a fair wage," interim Superintendent Jean Holbrook said. "It gets things back on track and fulfills a promise that has been out there for about two years."

UTU is back in AFL-CIO!

Continued from page 1

ty among labor unions is absolutely essential to reverse the tide and prevent a return to those dark robber-baron ages when job security, a living wage, benefits and safe and humane working conditions were beyond the reach and even hope of the working class.

"Indeed, in this current round of national negotiations with railroads, with major carriers attempting to destroy our crew-consist agreements and run single-person trains carrying every form of deadly hazmat helter-skelter across the land, greater labor unity is an absolute essential," Thompson said. "We are fighting not only for transport-worker dignity and safety, but also for public safety and homeland security."

Thompson said the recent peace negotiated with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen made it financially possible for the UTU to rejoin the AFL-CIO. "Today, all of rail labor and organized labor is joined in solidarity to oppose the folly and safety and security threat of single-person train crews," Thompson said.

"Not only are the nation's rail carriers renegeing on the moratorium contained in our crew-

Welcome back! Celebrating UTU's return to the AFL-CIO are, left to right, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, UTU International President Paul Thompson, AFL-CIO Secretary/Treasurer Richard Trumka and AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.



consist agreements, but it has again been necessary to go back to the courthouse over the carriers' failure to honor a commitment contained in a side letter to our previous national agreement," Thompson said.

"In that side letter, the carriers committed to negotiate, at the earliest time in this round of negotiations, entry rates of pay tied to a training agreement. They have refused, once again

breaching another of their written promises.

"Our members should not be tied to entry rates once they complete their training," Thompson said. "The UTU has asked a federal court to force the carriers to honor their commitment. It is a sad day when the nation's railroads are earning record profits, yet refuse to honor written commitments to their workers."

One-man crews

Continued from page 1

sions in Texas. BNSF already has a waiver to operate ETMS on its 115-mile Beardstown, Ill., subdivision.

BNSF wants the FRA to grant it authority to operate ETMS-equipped trains with a single crew member.

"This specific waiver request is an underhanded attempt by BNSF to confuse FRA enough to ignore the severe ramifications of single-person operations to the overall rail safety equation," said UTU Alternate National Legislative Director James Stem. "The multiple safety functions of the second operating crew member are not replaced by ETMS." Stem was accompanied by UTU International President Paul Thompson, UTU Assistant President Rick Marceau and UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer.

Thomas Pontolillo, BLET's director of regulatory affairs, told the FRA, "We believe that the most effective positive train control is one that complements and supplements the work of today's two- or three-person train crew, and that PTC as a means of further reducing crew size will diminish – rather than enhance – safety." He was accompanied by BLET President Don Hahs.

Also testifying in support of the UTU and BLET position were Rick Inclima, director of safety for the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes, and Tim DePaepe, director of research for the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen.

"The waiver in question explicitly seeks removal of the second crew member, the important second set of eyes and ears, from the cab of the locomotive," Inclima said. "If allowed, it will remove the vitally important safety function that is fulfilled by the second person in the locomotive cab."

The FRA hearing into BNSF's waiver request came less than 24 hours after the FRA issued an 88-page report observing, "For freight trains, the conductor and engineer work as a team. One member points out situations that may have escaped the other's attention." That report, by

mine the impact on public safety and homeland security of single-person crews, the FRA was told. Railroads carry some of the most deadly hazmat known to humanity. Two- and three-person crews already suffer fatigue from long hours and limited rest days. ETMS and other versions of PTC require additional attention to interactive computer screens that could add further to fatigue and make the second set of eyes more critical.

Nor has there been appropriate investigation into the effect on main-line operations of single-operator trains involved in derailments, grade-

BNSF is seeking FRA approval to remove the second locomotive crewperson, the railroad team member that the FRA and carriers say can point out situations that may have escaped the other's attention.

the FRA's Collision Analysis Working Group, which includes representatives of the FRA, rail labor and carriers, followed an exhaustive review of 65 main-line train collisions between 1997 and year-end 2002.

The FRA was told by rail labor that BNSF's ETMS does not meet the core functions of a positive train control system, which is defined by the FRA as able to prevent collisions between trains, enforce train-speed restrictions and protect roadway workers. Indeed, even the more advanced core-function PTC system in use on the Alaska Railroad is operated by a minimum of two-person crews.

There have been no federal studies to deter-

crossing accidents, trespasser fatalities and injuries, or instances of broken air-brake hoses and couplers, sticking brakes, shifted lading, dragging equipment, overheated axles or hazmat releases, FRA was told.

Thousands of derailments and highway-rail grade-crossing accidents – and more than 1,000 grade-crossing/trespasser fatalities – occur annually, requiring a second crew member who, among other safety- and security-related duties, notifies emergency responders, instructs rail dispatchers to halt traffic in both directions, assists the engineer who might be injured, and breaks the train apart in order to clear a blocked crossing used by emergency vehicles, rail labor testified.

Rail training

Continued from page 1

The carriers, however, are refusing to schedule a meeting to discuss UTU's training agreement proposals, which the UTU told the court violates the carriers' Railway Labor Act obligation to make and maintain agreements.

"At a negotiating session under the auspices of the National Mediation Board on Feb. 16, the UTU presented the carriers with a full

training agreement proposal, which included relating existing service scales to training and experience," said UTU International President Paul Thompson. "But the carriers, through their bargaining agent, the National Carriers' Conference Committee, refused to agree to any date to meet and respond to the UTU proposal."

The Railway Labor Act, Thompson said, states, "It shall be the duty of all carriers, their officers, agents and employees to exert every reasonable effort to make and maintain agreements concerning rates of pay, rules and work-

ing conditions. By refusing to agree to any new meeting date in the current round of national bargaining with respect to UTU's training agreement proposal, the carriers have violated their duties under the Railway Labor Act."

The UTU asked the federal district court to "issue a declaratory judgment that defendants have violated their obligation" under the Railway Labor Act and to "issue mandatory injunctive relief requiring defendants to meet with respect to UTU's training proposal" as required by the letter the carriers signed on Aug. 20, 2002.

By Mark Allen
Coordinator of UTU Designated Legal Counsel

I frequently hear about injured railroad workers who are confused by statements made to them by railroad claims department persons or supervisors that if they don't see doctors chosen by the railroad, their medical bills won't be paid.

Let's be clear. You have the right to see a doctor of your own choice.

You have your own insurance plan and can submit payment for the medical bills to your own insurance carrier.

If some railroad official or claims-department person says, "We won't pay the bills" unless you see a doctor of THEIR choice, it means simply that the claims department will not pay for it.

It does not prevent you from using your own insurance to see a doctor of YOUR choice.

In my experience, hurt workers often are sent to doctors

or clinics that the railroad uses on a frequent basis. Many times, such doctors or clinics seem to be more interested in returning the injured worker back to the job than in doing a thorough diagnostic evaluation to determine what injuries the worker might have.

While a speedy return to work is a goal upon which we all can agree, it also is of great importance that a worker have confidence that his or her doctor will pay attention to the worker's problems, and will make a sincere effort to find out what is causing the pain or symptoms before sending the worker back on the job.

No one wants to risk additional injury or aggravation because a doctor who cares more about getting referrals from the railroad rushes an injured worker back to the job too soon.

Don't be misled by "we won't pay for it" statements. If you are not satisfied with the railroad's choice of doctors or if you don't have confidence in them, take out your insurance card and go to the doctor of your own choice.

UTU now offers job listings, publications online

In its continuing effort to inform and assist members and those seeking union representation, the UTU has made available online a variety of UTU publications and has added a direct link to the Railroad Retirement Board's railroad job list.

UTU members and others can now click on the "About UTU" tab in the red menu bar on the far-left side of the UTU homepage and find links to the Railroad Retirement Board's railroad job list.

Visitors can also click on the "UTU Publications" link to view and print out six different UTU publications.

The Railroad Retirement Board's (RRB) rail-

road job list provides information about job vacancies reported to the RRB's field offices. Individuals who are interested in a particular vacancy may request additional information and assistance from their local RRB office.

An RRB representative will find out whether the job is still open and assist in referring the applicant to the hiring official. The field office representative may also have information about other job vacancies reported to the RRB.

The online UTU publications include:

***How to Protect Your Rights When Injured on the Job**

***Getting a Message to Congress**

***Progress Through Unity**

***Why You Should Join a Union (for bus and transit workers)**

***Transportation Occupation Handbook**

***You Are Hereby Notified**

These publications explain how to protect yourself and your family if you are an injured railroad employee, how legislation advances through the Congress, a history of the UTU, your rights as a union member, a discussion of UTU member benefits and UTU organization and services, and the role of a union representative in protecting union members who have been summoned for investigation.

'Why not just take the damned thing out?'

By Dr. Norman Brown
UTU Medical Consultant

"Why not just take the damned thing out?" asked a woman recently, referring to her husband's prostate, which contained proven but low-grade cancer by biopsy.

His urologist and I were treating this man with cancer-suppressing injections (Lupron) with the belief that he would live longer and more comfortably this way.



Brown

Before looking at some promising advances in prostate cancer management, please consider with me the far and away most common prostate disorder – benign prostate hypertrophy, or BPH.

The prostate gland surrounds the urination tube from the bladder to the penis and secretes a sexual lubricant, although it is not required for sexual function.

BPH affects most men to some degree, as we get older, as the prostate gland enlarges into and narrows the urination tube. This narrowing of the passage leads to gradually increasing difficulty starting and completing the urination process, in turn causing frequent urination, day and night.

Several medications improve the symptoms of BPH, but at times surgery, and even a newer laser vaporization technique, to open the channel, is necessary, and normally not a major procedure.

Now returning to our man with low-grade prostate cancer, why not surgery?

Surgery could, indeed, be helpful, but several important reasons make us all think twice.

First, any operation is stressful, saying nothing of expensive.

Second, a cure might not be possible, while a low-grade cancer could spread only slowly.

Third, control of urination, starting and stopping the flow, may be upset by surgery.

Finally, sexual performance may be impaired or even ended. This couple did in fact consider this aspect important when they had the information.

Radical surgery, especially in younger men, can be completely curative. Newer methods of sparing the nerves often help preserve sexual function after surgery.

Detecting early prostate cancer is getting better every year.

Your doctor will first feel the back of the prostate with his gloved finger through the rectum. Any hard or nodular areas may be suspicious and need a sample piece taken with a needle biopsy by a specialist. This procedure is not painless, but is an office procedure.

Your doctor will likely test your blood for Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA), much as women in your family may have mammograms and pap tests for cancer screening every year or two.

The good news is that PSA testing, while not perfect, is improving. The bad news is that prostate cancer in its early stages is completely without symptoms, so unfortunately feeling just fine does not mean you always are fine.

And if surgery does not prove to be curative for prostate cancer, radiation and chemotherapy have been very helpful, with men living many years comfortably with the disease.

So, please give yourself and your doctor the best chance of detecting prostate cancer early by going in for a visit once a year. And if benign prostate enlargement (BPH) is giving you symptoms, your doctor can help you with this, too.

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 of 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 the 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 retired member **Frank Ginty**, a member of Local 1672, New London, Conn. It shows a Connecticut DOT passenger train, operated by Amtrak, along the Shore Line between New Haven and New London. The livery is of the former New York, New Haven & Hartford, which was merged into Penn Central in 1969. New Haven passenger service was later taken over by Amtrak and Metro North.



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Disabled member shares story to improve prognosis for others

By his own account, disabled former Canadian Pacific engineer John Brandt, 59, is a happy man. He just hopes his experience can help others.

Brandt recently left his home in Minnetonka, Minn., and headed to Washington, D.C., to attend the National Orthopedic Surgeon's Convention as a guest.

While in the nation's capital, he met with lawmakers to show them how funding for orthopedic research can make all the difference in a person's life.

Brandt was injured Nov. 26, 2002, in the only rail accident he ever had in a 37-year career.

"The doctors were ready to amputate my left arm," he said. "But Dr. Richard Kyle was chief orthopedic surgeon at Hennepin County Medical Center, where I had been taken. He realized I still had nerve function and feeling in my fingers, even though the muscles, bones and arteries were crushed when I got pinned between a locomotive and a rail car."

Brandt underwent 10 hours of surgery that day, and then four more operations.

He was "fitted with a titanium rod through his humerus and a pedicle flap (a piece of tissue left attached to the injured area that provides a blood supply during grafting) over his left latissimus dorsi muscle," according to a newsletter issued by the surgeons.

"This muscle helps extend, adduct, and rotate the arm and move the shoulder forward and backward.

"He also received an artificial artery and skin grafts."

In plain English, Brandt still has his left arm.

"I have pain all the time, but I can live with it," he said. "I don't have much strength from shoulder height and up. I can't play golf. But I work out three days a week to build some strength, and I can baby-sit my granddaughters. I would say it's a happy ending."



Brandt

A member of Local 911 in Minneapolis, Minn., Brandt held a number of union posts in his career, including secretary/treasurer, delegate, local chairperson and general chairperson from 1976 to 1984 on the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern.

When the property was purchased and committees were merged, he became vice general chairperson, a post he held when the accident happened.

"I just want our lawmakers to know what the surgeons could do for me," Brandt said. "This is so important, and not just for people in industrial accidents.

"With so many soldiers coming home with similar injuries, it becomes even more relevant that this research gets funded."

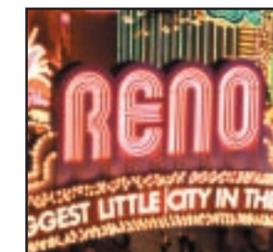
Inside this issue of the UTU News:



Member learns it's just as good to give as to receive. See page 2.



UTU state officer meets DNC Chairperson Howard Dean. See page 5.



The biggest little city in the world gets ready for the UTU. See page 6.



Carl Cochran named coordinator of UTU for Life. See Page 8.