Vis is a listing of labor-friendly candidates as

The national-agreement negotiating teams from the UTU and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen met jointly last month with the National Carriers’ Conference Committee, which represents most of the major railroads and many smaller ones.

“This was an unprecedented show of operating-craft solidarity,” said UTU International President Paul Thompson, who sat beside BLET President Don Hahn, while other members of the UTU and BLET negotiating teams sat interspersed for the talks with the carriers.

Thompson termed the session “sufficiently productive to have caused us to schedule a second joint UTU/BLET negotiating session with the carriers for October.”

Negotiations Update

Congressional elections have direct consequences for each of us and our families.

This Election Day, Nov. 7, is going to be a test for labor. Those who control the new Congress seated in 2007 will have a direct influence on our job security, our health care, our pensions and our workplace safety.

If working families unite to vote for labor-friendly candidates, we can begin to reverse a legislative course that has adversely affected every working family in America.

However, we cannot accomplish that change in direction unless labor families vote, vote for labor-friendly candidates, and encourage friends and neighbors similarly to cast ballots for labor-friendly candidates.

The current congressional leadership has demonstrated itself to be anti-union. The Senate, for example, has consistently confirmed anti-union federal judges and regulators, while both the House of Representatives and the Senate have embraced legislation harmful to working families.

Consider some of the policies embraced by the current congressional leadership:

- Tax cuts for corporations and the rich;
- Privatization of Amtrak and the Social Security System;
- Export of jobs;
- Weakening of laws that protect workers’ rights to organize.

In the centrepiece of this issue of UTU News is a listing of labor-friendly candidates as determined by UTU state legislative directors and our national legislative office. The list is bi-partisan. The UTU supports its friends in both political parties.

“Congress should work for all Americans, not just the wealthy,” said UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer. “Working families deserve a Congress that builds opportunity and prosperity for all.

“Inflation-adjusted working-family income has been declining since 2001 as executive compensation has soared. Pension plans have been collapsing. And tens of millions of families have no health-care insurance.

“We can be sure that carrier executives and their families and friends will be going to the polls to re-elect their friends.

“Unless working families vote, and vote for labor-friendly candidates, we are going to face a Congress more committed than ever to destroying labor unions and the quality of life of working families.”

Help yourselves: Support labor-friendly candidates

New Amtrak head faces problems

Amtrak’s revolving-door presidency has ousted interim president David Hughes and replaced him with 46-year-old Alexander Kummant.

Hughes succeeded David Gunn, who was fired by the Amtrak board in November 2005. Kummant arrives as contract-renewal negotiations with Amtrak’s unions are in their seventh year, and handling of Amtrak trains by freight railroads continues to be rated as poor.

Unlike Gunn – and previous Amtrak presidents George Warrington and Tom Downs – Kummant does not arrive with a Northeast transit background. He has limited freight railroad experience at Union Pacific, but most of his career has been outside the railroad industry.

Kummant has held seven separate jobs with

Continued on page 10

UTU supports labor memorial

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Seventeen engraved bricks recognizing the United Transportation Union will be part of a $1.3-million labor memorial here.

The Spirit of Solidarity memorial includes a plaque honoring labor leader Eugene V. Debs, a founder of a UTU predecessor union.

The Spirit of Solidarity memorial is being constructed at the entrance to the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum. Ford and United Auto Workers President Owen Bieber are co-chairpersons of the Spirit of Solidarity.

The engraved bricks, representing and purchased by UTU locals and members, will be

Continued on page 10

News & Notes

Regional meeting dates

The dates and locations for the UTU’s 2007 regional meetings and quadrennial convention have been finalized.

The regional meetings will be held June 11–13 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, Mo., and July 16–18 at the Hilton in downtown Pittsburgh, Pa.

The tenth convention of the union will be held Monday to Friday, Aug. 13–17, at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa, 3555 South Ocean Dr., Hollywood, Fla.

Convention room reservations will be made through the UTU. Delegates will receive more detailed information within the next few months.

Watch the UTU News and the UTU Web site (www.utu.org) for more details as they become available.

Amtrak seeks addresses

Amtrak will be holding its annual benefits open enrollment between Oct. 23 and Nov. 10. Amtrak employees wishing to receive important information regarding their 2007 medical, dental, prescription, life insurance and flexible spending accounts should ensure their residential address is up to date with Amtrak.

Amtrak employees needing to update their address on file with the carrier should contact their local human resources office or call the Amtrak Benefits Service Center directly at (800) 481-4887.

UTU seeks the candidates who support you!
Local 1, Buffalo, N.Y.

Members of this local, which represents employees of Conrail, CSX and East Erie Commercial Railroad, are mourning the recent death of CSX Local Chairperson Joseph M. Kozma. The 59-year-old was a UTU member for 27 years.

Local 196, Beardstown, Ill.

The members of this BNSF Railway local now have their own Web site featuring pool checkups, copies of the monthly newsletter is available online, updates on safety meetings, links to BNSF resources, a roster of important phone numbers and a message board. View the site at www.utu196.com.

Local 243, Fort Worth, Texas

Members of this UTU Pacific local are mourning the death of Local President Gene Reynolds, 56, who succumbed to pancreatic cancer on Sept. 11, said Local Chairperson and UTU National/Regional Director Tony Ianuzzi, who also serves as UTU National Security Director. Reynolds was the guest of honor at the 2006 JRAS meeting in Seattle and had served as a UTU organizer and a BNSF switchman on the Missouri Pacific in October 1979. He served as a UTU organizer and UTU national field supervisor, and held the post of local president for four consecutive terms. He is survived by a son and two grandchildren.

Local 434, Kokomo, Ind.

A retired member of this BNSF Railway local, Virgil R. Lindberg, was the guest of honor last month when the Minerville Country Village Museum hosted its annual Railroad Days celebration, which marked the 80th birthday of the museum’s CB&Q #507 Doodlebug, as well as Brother Lindberg’s 80th birthday, which actually was marked on May 19, 2006. Lindberg, once featured in the UTU News for his activism as a community volunteer, now lives in LaPlata, Mo., and makes the drive each year to volunteer as a conductor, the same job he held with the former Santa Fe Railway when he hired out in 1944. He retired in 1986, according to BNSF locomotive engineer Douglas Beckman, who is general manager of the Minerville Country Village and a member of Local 195 in Galesburg, Ill.

Local 1043, Sparks, Nev.

Members of this UTU Pacific local are mourning the death of conductor Leon Busch, 56, who lost his long battle with cancer on Sept. 11, said Local Chairperson and Legislative Rep. Rod Nelms, who also serves as assistant state legislative director. Brother Busch was a past local chairperson, legislative representative and delegate.

Local 1470, Edmonston, Md.

This local, which represents Amtrak conductors and assistant conductors, held a special memorial service Sept. 15 dedicated to railroad security that gave Local President Bill Link a chance to give special recognition to Local Chairperson Dave Brooks, who recently signed up more than 30 new UTU PAC members. Like father, like son, Vice Chairperson Dave Brooks Jr. signed up an additional 21 members, increasing the local’s monthly UTU PAC contribution to $1,900, said International Vice President Tony Ianuzzi, who noted the site is still a work in progress. Take a look at www.utulocal1470.org.

Local 1778, N. Vancouver, B.C.

The fall issue of The Meeting Point newsletter is now available on the Web site shared by this local and Local 1923 in Prince George, B.C., said Secretary & Treasurer David Moorhouse. Both locals represent Canadian National Railway employees. This issue includes a moving tribute to former National Legislative Director James Stem and special guest speaker Denise Krepp, who is counsel and committee coordinator on Homeland Security in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Local 1548, Indianapolis, Ind.

This CSX local now has its own Web site where members can get updates, check pay codes and schedules, and more, said Kyle Brooking, who noted the dangers to the public, other crew members and track and mechanical workers if we had one-person crews. Many disasters lie ahead if the railroads are allowed to pull this off. They are totally nuts!

Local 1549, Chicago, Ill.

Local 1923, Prince George, B.C.

The local, which represents Conrail, CSX and East Erie Commercial Railroad, are mourning the recent death of CSX Local Chairperson Joseph M. Kozma. The 59-year-old was a UTU member for 27 years.

Local 196, Beardstown, Ill.

The members of this BNSF Railway local now have their own Web site featuring pool checkups, copies of the monthly newsletter is available online, updates on safety meetings, links to BNSF resources, a roster of important phone numbers and a message board. View the site at www.utu196.com.

Local 243, Fort Worth, Texas

Members of this UTU Pacific local are mourning the death of Local President Gene Reynolds, 56, who succumbed to pancreatic cancer on Sept. 11, said Local Chairperson and UTU National/Regional Director Tony Ianuzzi, who also serves as UTU National Security Director. Reynolds was the guest of honor at the 2006 JRAS meeting in Seattle and had served as a UTU organizer and a BNSF switchman on the Missouri Pacific in October 1979. He served as a UTU organizer and UTU national field supervisor, and held the post of local president for four consecutive terms. He is survived by a son and two grandchildren.

Local 434, Kokomo, Ind.

A retired member of this BNSF Railway local, Virgil R. Lindberg, was the guest of honor last month when the Minerville Country Village Museum hosted its annual Railroad Days celebration, which marked the 80th birthday of the museum’s CB&Q #507 Doodlebug, as well as Brother Lindberg’s 80th birthday, which actually was marked on May 19, 2006. Lindberg, once featured in the UTU News for his activism as a community volunteer, now lives in LaPlata, Mo., and makes the drive each year to volunteer as a conductor, the same job he held with the former Santa Fe Railway when he hired out in 1944. He retired in 1986, according to BNSF locomotive engineer Douglas Beckman, who is general manager of the Minerville Country Village and a member of Local 195 in Galesburg, Ill.

Local 1043, Sparks, Nev.

Members of this UTU Pacific local are mourning the death of conductor Leon Busch, 56, who lost his long battle with cancer on Sept. 11, said Local Chairperson and Legislative Rep. Rod Nelms, who also serves as assistant state legislative director. Brother Busch was a past local chairperson, legislative representative and delegate.

Local 1470, Edmonston, Md.

This local, which represents Amtrak conductors and assistant conductors, held a special memorial service Sept. 15 dedicated to railroad security that gave Local President Bill Link a chance to give special recognition to Local Chairperson Dave Brooks, who recently signed up more than 30 new UTU PAC members. Like father, like son, Vice Chairperson Dave Brooks Jr. signed up an additional 21 members, increasing the local’s monthly UTU PAC contribution to $1,900, said International Vice President Tony Ianuzzi, who noted the site is still a work in progress. Take a look at www.utulocal1470.org.

Local 1778, N. Vancouver, B.C.

The fall issue of The Meeting Point newsletter is now available on the Web site shared by this local and Local 1923 in Prince George, B.C., said Secretary & Treasurer David Moorhouse. Both locals represent Canadian National Railway employees. This issue includes a moving tribute to former National Legislative Director James Stem and special guest speaker Denise Krepp, who is counsel and committee coordinator on Homeland Security in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Local 1548, Indianapolis, Ind.

This CSX local now has its own Web site where members can get updates, check pay codes and schedules, and more, said Kyle Brooking, who noted the dangers to the public, other crew members and track and mechanical workers if we had one-person crews. Many disasters lie ahead if the railroads are allowed to pull this off. They are totally nuts!

Local 1549, Chicago, Ill.

Local 1923, Prince George, B.C.

The local, which represents Conrail, CSX and East Erie Commercial Railroad, are mourning the recent death of CSX Local Chairperson Joseph M. Kozma. The 59-year-old was a UTU member for 27 years.
Members reach tentative pact on Grand Trunk

Ballots went out on Sept. 18 to some 400 UTU members working on the Grand Trunk portion of the Canadian National Railway, giving them an opportunity to vote on a new five-year pact, according to General Chairperson David Hiatt.

Results of the vote should be known in mid-October, Hiatt said. Those who will vote work on CN in Michigan, as well as in a Chicago terminal and in Toledo, Ohio. All are represented by General Committee of Adjustment GO-377.

The proposed contract would include a year and a half of back pay and would boost wages, Hiatt said.

“We didn’t give up any work rules and removed the penalties on the extra board guarantor,” Hiatt said.

“The proposed contract would deliver personal leave days for new hires, it increases held-away meal allowances, and includes reimbursements for passport expenses for those whose work takes them across the border between the U.S. and Canada.”

Hiatt also said the pact would improve health and welfare benefits.

The contract was open for negotiation last July. “We got a Harris COLA in the last contract, and I think it forced CN to talk with us a bit more quickly,” Hiatt said. Tentative agreement on the new pact was reached on Aug. 25.

Hiatt expressed gratitude to UTU International President Paul Thompson for his support, as well as International Vice President Carl Vahlidick, “who’s always a great help to us,” Hiatt said.

National health & welfare plan changes ahead

The annual health and welfare re-enrollment materials were mailed during the week of Sept. 18, and included with the usual material was an important announcement pertaining to plan changes affecting UTU members, which will become effective Jan. 1, 2007.

UTU members covered under The Railroad Employees’ National Health and Welfare Plan (formerly GA-23000) will have employee and/or dependent Mental Health/Substance Abuse (MH/SA) benefits administered by United Behavioral Health (UBH) effective Jan. 1, 2007. UBH replaces ValueOptions as the managed care company administering MH/SA benefits.

This change will not affect those UTU members and/or their eligible dependents covered under The National Railway Carriers/United Transportation Union (NRC/UTU) Health and Welfare Plan. ValueOptions will continue to provide MHSA manage care benefits under the NRC/UTU Plan.

In addition, effective Jan. 1, 2007, both the national plan and the NRC/UTU plan have authorized a new disease management program applicable to all UTU members and/or their eligible dependents.

This new disease management program is designed to give employees and dependents more information on health related issues as well as professional advice on personal issues or health conditions they may have.

Illinois pins hopes on Amtrak expansion

Amtrak trains will soon be chugging across Illinois more often thanks to a bigger state subsidy, and local officials said last month they hope increased service translates into economic growth.

State support for Amtrak is doubling to $24 million this year. The money will support seven round-trip trains from Chicago to St. Louis, Carbondale and Quincy, up from three trains now.

For the cities along those routes, more trains mean more connections to Chicago – something that can help local businesses and even attract new ones.

“We would definitely use that as a marketing tool to demonstrate a little more accessibility and convenience, both for the businesses and their customers,” said Charles Bell, manager of the entrepreneurship center at Quincy’s Great River Economic Development Foundation.

St. Louis will have three state-supported trains to and from Chicago, up from one now. Carbondale and Quincy each will have two, instead of one. In addition, Amtrak has other trains passing through those cities that don’t get any state support.

Nearly one million passengers used Amtrak lines subsidized by the state last year, setting a new record. The total was up 12.5 percent from a year earlier and 40.3 percent from 2003.

“Amtrak is an affordable travel option, and in many communities it’s the only form of public transportation,” Gov. Rod Blagojevich said in a statement.

Two new books will educate, delight railroaders

Thousands of new train and engine service employees are joining our ranks, many with no knowledge of railroad history, industry structure, the role of other crafts, equipment construction, and commonplace technology such as centralized traffic control. Railway Age editor William C. Vantuono has updated his illustrated book, “All About Railroading,” which is a primer for new hires and a valuable refresher course for veteran railroaders. At 112 pages, this basic training manual also can be used to help explain railroading to spouses and children. The second edition of “All About Railroading” is available for $26.95, plus shipping and handling, from Simmons-Boardman Books at www.traindataid.com, or by calling (860) 228-9670.

A great gift idea for Santa Fe Railway veterans, those working on today’s BNSF Railway or for history buffs interested in the changes brought by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, this unusual 236-page hardcover book by Don Harmon contains 654 color and black-and-white postcard images of depots and other Santa Fe facilities, as well as a section devoted to Fred Harvey enterprises. Postcards are arranged by topics, featuring engines, trains, and weather-related terms; roundhouses; depots; offices and facilities (arranged by state); reading rooms; and Fred Harvey hotels and restaurants. “Postcard History of the Early Santa Fe Railway” is available for $49.95 plus $7.05 for shipping, handling and postage from Harmon Publishing Company, P.O. Box 14606, Shasta Mission, KS 66205-4806. Call (913) 268-6149.

www.utuia.org

3
Take back Congress

By Paul Thompson
International President

Both major political parties are fond of quoting founding father and our nation’s third president, Thomas Jefferson.

Now, if only more lawmakers would read President Jefferson’s first inaugural address from 1801, in which he said, “A wise and frugal government shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.”

Does that sound like the Congress of the United States, which has been handing tax cuts to the rich while exporting jobs overseas?

Does that sound like the Congress of the United States, which has created policies to help corporate executives stuff their pockets with exorbitant pay and bonuses while $46 million Americans suffer without health-care insurance?

Does that sound like the Congress of the United States, which consistently declines to toughen workplace safety standards and fines for non-compliance?

Congressional leaders may embrace Thomas Jefferson, but they don’t honor his memory with their policies. It is a disgrace that the congressional leadership — supposedly elected of the people, by the people and for the people — would choose instead to work hard every day. Instead, Congress has been passing laws that

Only you can right the wrongs of Congress

If you believe Congress is doing nothing — you are wrong. Congress is very busy doing the wrong thing.

Significantly, Congress is not rewarding those who live by the rules and work hard every day. Instead, Congress has been passing laws that benefit a handful of special interests — their friends — at the expense of everyone else.

As recently as earlier this year, the railroads thought they had you in a vise and if the UTU didn’t capitulate at the bargaining table, their friends in Congress would take care of the job for them.

Many carrier executives believed God to be on their side and the side of anti-union conservatives, and that anyone who didn’t support the conservative agenda was evil.

The chummy relationships between anti-union conservative lawmakers and carrier executives were fueled by big-money contributions. Many carrier executives held personal fundraisers and delivered hundreds of thousands of dollars into the pockets of lawmakers.

Not surprisingly, some carrier execs or railroad board members — and many of the carriers’ personal friends — found themselves in positions of great authority within the government, where they could personally make decisions that ultimately benefit the carriers. Must I say more than: Dick Cheney?

The fact that those decisions destroyed your quality of life and family relationships mattered not a bit. Higher profits, bigger bonuses and additional stock options were what mattered.

But greed got the better of many of these people, and the public outcry is about to sink the ship of greed and good-buddy relationships.

Union members can send the ship of greed to the bottom by helping to elect labor-friendly candidates.

Contact the UTU:
via telephone at (216) 228-9400
via fax at (216) 228-5755
via e-mail at utunews@utu.org

WASHINGTON WATCH
By James M. Brunkenhoefer

Those who want to see you out of work will be voting. Will you?

You cannot let this happen.

If, for any reason, you think you will not be at home to vote Nov. 7, you need now to apply for and obtain an absentee ballot. Otherwise, ensure you do vote on Election Day. Be a pest and encourage everyone you know to vote.

We will not tell you how to vote, but hope you will vote for UTU-endorsed candidates. (See pages 6 and 7.)

Remember: Those who want to see you lose your job are definitely voting. Those who want you to pay higher health-care costs are definitely voting. Those who believe the boss needs a raise and you don’t will definitely come out to vote.

If you don’t vote, then you should be afraid — very afraid — of the outcome.
that many foreign countries had only one name on their ballot.

News from UTU State Legislative Boards

Florida

The Florida State Legislative Board has established a Web site. The address is www.utufloridastatelegislativeweb.org.

“The Web site is a work in progress, with additional documents and improvements coming soon,” State Legislative Director Andres Trujillo said. “Additionally, we will be adding news and documents as they develop to keep the site current on relevant issues of interest and importance to members.

“If you find a problem or an error within it, please contact our office at (305) 819-7796 or e-mail me at fltrujilloUTU@aol.com.”

Indiana

Indiana State Legislative Director Tom Hendler recently attended a fundraiser for 9th U.S. Congressional District Candidate Baron Hill at which he met former President Bill Clinton. “Like Clinton, Baron Hill has the endorsement of the UTU,” Hendler said. “Hill is a strong supporter of the UTU and also is a friend of Amtrak and rail passenger service. We urge members in the state to support him.” Above, from left, are Clinton, Hendler, Hill and wife Betsy.

Michigan

Michigan State Legislative Director Jerry Gibson has lit a fire under members in the state with a letter recently mailed them.

“Let there be no mistake: We are in an ongoing battle for our rights and livelihoods,” Gibson wrote. “The real question you need to ask is: How do I save MY job and who can and will fight for OUR issues? The answer is: by donating NOW to your state’s PAC fund and allowing your state and national legislative directors the opportunity to defend your rights and privileges! The lines have been drawn; the time is NOW that we as individuals must do our part to ensure our job security.

“The carriers are hoping you won’t contribute, because then they automatically win! You are saving them hundreds of thousands of dollars for additional billions.

“Please do your share: Vote for those candidates that are endorsed by YOUR union. The job you save may very well be your own!”

Colorado

Colorado State Legislative Director Rick Johnson is urging members in the state to support Bill Rit- ter for governor. “This picture was taken on a rented Colorado & Wyoming engine at a recent fundraiser for Ritter,” Johnson said. “The mem- bers in Colorado contributed hard-earned UTU PAC funds to Ritter. He is a former construction trade-union member and Denver district attor- ney. He is now running for the highest office in Colorado and has earned UTU’s support because of his strong union values, his dedication to working families, and his vision for the future of the state.” Above, left to right, are Johnson, Ritter and Assistant State Legislative Director Charlie Skidmore.

North Carolina

North Carolina State Legislative Director Dickie Westbrook recently completed a week-long hazardous-materials course at the National Labor College in Silver Springs, Md.

The course was the “Hazmat Transportation Chemical Emergency Response Training at the Awareness Level,” Westbrook said.

“The week-long course was offered to union members in the rail industry through a federal grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the North American Rail- way Foundation.

“Eight UTU members completed the class, which included three college credits.

“Other union members attending the class were from the BLET, BMWEF, and the TCU. A big portion of this class, including myself, are planning to go back for a week-long ‘Train the Trainer’ course next month,” Westbrook said.

Above, left to right, are Robert Goldsbary (LC, L-385, Cinnaminson-Haddon, N.J.); James Ashby; Joe Rassa (L-454, Baltimore, Md.); John Whitaker (L-1106, Rocky Mount, N.C.); Yvonne Hayes (LC, L-1139, Miami, Fla.); Alex Bowles (L-1081, Glendale, Ariz.); Jerry Westbrook.

Bus Department

By Roy Arnold, vice president/director

10 reasons to vote for friends of labor

Election Day is Nov. 7.

Which party controls the Senate and House of Repre- sentatives is going to make a meaningful difference to every union member and every union family the next two years.

If each union member – and members of their family, as well as their friends – votes for union-friendly candidates, we will see an end to the anti-union policies that are making it so difficult for working families to survive today.

Here are 10 reasons to cast a ballot for the union-friendly candidates re- commended by the UTU. Share them with others at work. Discuss them with family and friends.

1) Job security.
2) Affordable health-care insurance.
3) Workplace safety.
4) Preservation of Railroad Retirement and Social Security.
5) Workplace privacy.
6) Support for Amtrak.
7) Respect for the role unions play in America.
8) A Senate that won’t rubber stamp White House nominations of anti-union federal judges and regulators.
9) Regulatory agencies not controlled by the carriers.
10) An end to policies that encourage the export of jobs.

Yardmasters

By J.R. “Jim” Cumby, vice president

Not voting? Then do not complain

It has been said that “a citizen of America will cross the ocean to fight for democracy, but won’t cross the street to vote in a national election.”

I remember, as a youngster, reading in my “Weekly Reader” that many foreign countries had only one name on their ballot. Naturally, the same person’s name appeared on the ballot each election. They called it a democracy, we call that a dictatorship.

I did not give it much thought then, and many people do not give it much thought now. Yet, this has relevance to each one of us. This is because, notwithstanding serious economic and other issues affecting us and our families, many Americans do not vote.

When we fail to cast a vote, we might as well have but one name on that ballot. And even though we do have multiple names on our ballots, failing to cast a vote gives others an opportunity to make ballot-box decisions for us.

Each of us should be taking an interest in every candidate’s stance on issues important to us. In congressional elections Nov. 7, we certainly should be taking measure of whether the candidate is union friendly.

We also have LCA elections coming up. Each of us should be taking an interest here, too, and casting a vote for the person you think will best rep- resent you.

Whether the opportunity is a congressional election or a local election, never forget the battles fought and blood spilled to earn that right to vote.

To preserve our democracy, we have a duty to be informed and to cast an informed ballot.

Make your vote count. Your vote does make a difference.
These candidates deserve your vote!

**Congressional Recommendations**

**Alabama**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 3: Terri Sewell (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 4: Roby (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 5: Steve Moulton (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 6: Robert Wm.办好 (R)*

**Arizona**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: David Schweikert (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Martha McSally (R)*

**Arkansas**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Rick Crawford (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Warren Polynice (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 3: Bruce West (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 4: Thomas Massie (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 5: Thomas Suozzi (D)*

**California**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Della Diamond (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Henry Waxman (D)*

**Colorado**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Diana DeGette (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Jared Polis (D)*

**Connecticut**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jim Himes (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Rosa DeLauro (D)*

**Delaware**
- Senate: Tom Carper (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Vern Goldsborough (D)*

**District of Columbia**
- House of Representatives: At Large: Eleanor Holmes Norton (D)*

**Florida**
- Senate: Bill Nelson (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Alan B. Mollohan (D)*

**Georgia**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Sam Ervin (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Hank Johnson (D)*

**Hawaii**
- Senate: Brian Schatz (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Tulsi Gabbard (D)*

**Idaho**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Walt Minnick (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Michael C. Simpson (R)*

**Illinois**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jerry W. Nadler (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Sandy Stickney (D)*

**Indiana**
- Senate: Richard Lugar (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Tim Walz (D)*

**Iowa**
- Senate: Chuck Grassley (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Dave Loebsack (D)*

**Kansas**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Kevin Yarney (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Dalton Conley (D)*

**Kentucky**
- Senate: Rand Paul (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Ed Whitfield (R)*

**Louisiana**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Steve Scalise (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: John C. Bel Edwards (D)*

**Maine**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jared Golden (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 2: Bruce Poliquin (R)*

**Maryland**
- Senate: Barbara Mikulski (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Steny H. Hoyer (D)*

**Massachusetts**
- Senate: Edward Markey (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Joe Kennedy (D)*

**Michigan**
- Senate: Debbie Stabenow (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: John Delaney (D)*

**Minnesota**
- Senate: Amy Klobuchar (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jim Hagedorn (R)*

**Mississippi**
- Senate: Roger Wicker (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Trent Franks (R)*

**Missouri**
- Senate: Claire McCaskill (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: William Lacy Clay (D)*

**Montana**
- Senate: Jon Tester (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: D.spd. McMenamin (D)*

**Nebraska**
- Senate: Ben Nelson (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Dave Reichert (R)*

**Nevada**
- House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Dina Titus (D)*

**New Hampshire**
- Senate: Jeanne Shaheen (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Carol Shea-Porter (D)*

**New Jersey**
- Senate: Bob Menendez (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Bill Pascrell (D)*

**New Mexico**
- Senate: Martin Heinrich (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Michelle Lujan Grisham (D)*

**New York**
- Senate: Chuck Schumer (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Niki Tsongas (D)*

**North Carolina**
- Senate: Kay Hagan (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Tom Perriello (D)*

**North Dakota**
- Senate: Heidi Heitkamp (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Earl H.indi (D)*

**Ohio**
- Senate: Sherrod Brown (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Bill Johnson (R)*

**Oklahoma**
- Senate: Jim Inhofe (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: James Lankford (R)*

**Oregon**
- Senate: Ron Wyden (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jeff Merkley (D)*

**Pennsylvania**
- Senate: Pat Toomey (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Tom MacArthur (R)*

**South Carolina**
- Senate: Lindsey Graham (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Mark Sanford (R)*

**South Dakota**
- Senate: Bill Fawley (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Kristi Noem (R)*

**Tennessee**
- Senate: Lamar Alexander (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Michael Burgess (R)*

**Texas**
- Senate: John Cornyn (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Ron Paul (R)*

**Utah**
- Senate: Mike Lee (R)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Jim Matheson (D)*

**Vermont**
- Senate: Patrick Leahy (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Peter Welch (D)*

**Virginia**
- Senate: Mark Warner (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Gerry Connolly (D)*

**Washington**
- Senate: Maria Cantwell (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Denny Heck (D)*

**West Virginia**
- Senate: Joe Manchin (D)*
  - House of Representatives: Dist. 1: Nick Rahall (D)
When retired conductor Bill Stewart decided to start a chapter of the UTU for Life program in the Wildwood, Fla., area, he figured renewed contact and regular meetings would produce something good. He just didn’t consider how quickly the effort would make a difference.

Last month, notices went out to retired members within a 50-mile radius of Wildwood inviting them to the first meeting, set for Oct. 25 at the Olé’ Coffee House on State Route 301 in Wildwood (across from the CSX/Amtrak rail depot). Among those attending the event will be UTU for Life Coordinator Carl Continenza and Florida State Legislative Director Andrés Trujillo.

Stewart received a reply to the invitation from the widow of retired member Ralph Reighard.

“She needed help with her Medicare Part B,” said Stewart, a member of Local 30 in Jacksonville, Fla. After explaining things to her over the phone and directing her to the Railroad Retirement office in Tampa, Fla., “she called back 30 minutes later to tell me I was a lifesaver,” he said. “She got her problem solved, and all she could say was, ‘God bless the UTU.’ This one phone call made my efforts worthwhile.”

The 66-year-old Stewart was 22 when he began his railroad career in 1955. After working for Burlington Northern, but cold weather chased him to Florida, where he became an engineer on the Seaboard Coast Line. Taking a buy-out in 1986, Stewart missed railroading and went to work for Tri-Rail, where he stayed until retiring in 2005.

For information about the UTU for Life chapter he’s starting, contact Stewart by calling (352) 637-5403, or send him e-mail at saundraa@earthlink.net.

RRB describes appeals, reconsideration process

Those claiming Railroad Retirement, disability, or survivor as well as unemployment or sickness benefits from the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) have the right to appeal unfavorable determinations on their claims through a three-stage review and appeals process within the RRB.

Those dissatisfied with the initial decision on their claims have 60 days from the date of the initial denial notice to file a written statement requesting reconsideration from the RRB unit that denied the claim. In cases involving overpayments, requests for waiver of recovery of the overpayment must be filed within 60 days of the date of the overpayment notice.

While a request for reconsideration of an initial decision must be in writing, it does not have to be on any specific form. The appropriate form for waiver of recovery of a benefit overpayment is ordinaril enclosed with the overpayment notice.

If appellants disagree with the reconsideration or waiver decision notice to file an appeal with the agency’s Bureau of Hearings and Appeals, which is independent of those units responsible for reconsideration decisions.

Finally, if not satisfied with the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals’ decision, an appellant may further appeal to the three-member board 60 days from the date of the notice of the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals’ decision.

Failure to request reconsideration or to file an appeal within the allocated time period will result in forfeiture of further appeal rights. In those instances, the RRB refers the case for the delay, such as serious illness or a death or serious illness in the appellant’s immediate family.

Appellants who dispute the board’s final decision may file a request for review outside the board with a U.S. Court of Appeals.

For more information about the appeals process, contact the nearest office of the Railroad Retirement Board. The address and phone number of the office serving your area may be obtained by calling the automated toll-free RRB help-line at 1-800-808-0772, or go to the RRB website at www.rrb.gov.

Bill Stewart

The address and phone number of the office of the Railroad Retirement Board.

UTU for Life chapter meets early success

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 fellow UTU for Life members.

Local Name City/State Local Name City/State Local Name City/State
1 Kosma, Joseph M. Depew, N.Y. 528 Balkwill, W. H. Woodstock, Ill. 1299 Taylor, Joseph E. Morgan Park, Ill.
2 Smith, Frank C. Clyde, Ohio 544 McLarson, Paul L. Lauriat, Mont. 1312 Pendleton, Benjamin L.
3 Vande, Zona, Ind. Terve, Harte, Ind. 577 Busman, John J. Roselle, Ill. 1344 Nelson, Eugene R.
4 Baster, Hubert H. Rainelle, W. Va. 622 Russell, J. T. G. Trussville, Ala. 1344 Warner, Arnold F.
5 Elliott, Marshall Terve, Harte, Ind. 632 Hughes, John R. Ocoee Mills, Fla. 1361 Silva, John
6 Long, Frederick C. Rochester, Ind. 651 Blanks, Ronald S. Myrtle Beach, S.C. 1393 Sison, John C.
7 Hesketh, Millard R. Oakland, Calif. 744 Dunahay, Lowell V. Elida, Ohio 1393 Zapka, Anthony W.
8 Cherney, Gerald J. Tomahawk, Wis. 769 Hicks, Robert C. Lynchburg, Va. 1403 Scott, Jackie D.
9 Beran, John T. Lincoln, Neb. 819 Van Horn, Leon K. Ponta, Calif. 1422 Hollis, Barry J.
10 McCollun, Donald J. Hollern, N.Y. 827 Thomas, Har. A. Thompson, Pa. 1423 Pentrod, Richard P.
11 Holtz, Robert H. Shawneeville, Ohio 903 Murphy, John T. Jacksonville, Fla. 1458 Miller, James A.
12 Beeler, Howard J. Parkville, Md. 904 Poola, Neilmeibah Jacksonville, Fla. 1477 Worrick, Daniel E.
14 Luttrell, Clark E. Sharonville, Ohio 1020 Piplica, Nick Jacksonville, Fla. 1509 Chriski, Horn T.
15 Eley, Joel R. Fullerton, Pa. 1038 Irve, Bert A. Sarasvill, Wash. 1518 Sigrist, John.
17 Rand, Mark R. Fontana, Calif. 1129 Mann, Selveia L. Holly Springs, N.C. 1575 Yanes, Gert C.
18 Schissel, Gary E. Karlsbad, N.M. 1138 Blackstone, Joseph H. Parkeville, Okla. 1578 McNally, Robert W.
19 Kuptz, Gerald E. Washington, D.C. 1299 Taylor, Joseph E. Williams, David J.
21 Thomas, Jackie D. Independence, Mo. 1403 Scott, Jackie D. Toms, David A.
22 Thomas, Clifford W. San Antonio, Texas 1422 Hollis, Barry J. Toms, David A.
23 Poole, Nehemiah Jacksonville, Fla. 1477 Worrick, Daniel E. Toms, David A.
24 Sheldon, John F. Toms, David A. 1558 Sigrist, John. Toms, David A.

The basic Medicare Part B premium will rise next year to $93.50 a month, an increase of $5, while more affluent beneficiaries would have to pay a new surcharge, from $12.50 to $68.60 a month, depending on their incomes, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The surcharge applies to 1.5 million people with annual incomes exceeding $80,000 for individuals or $160,000 for married couples filing joint tax returns.

Medicare officials said the standard premium for 2007 was lower than they had predicted. In May and again in July, they estimated that the monthly premium, now $88.50, would climb to about $98 in 2007.

Part B of Medicare covers doctors’ services, diagnostic tests and outpatient hospital care for 40 million people who are 65 and older or disabled. It shot up from $37 to $50 from 2003 to 2006.

The premium is set each year to cover about 25 percent of projected spending under Part B. If Congress had eliminated the cut planned for doctors and frozen their Medicare fees in 2007, it would have required a further increase of roughly $1.50 to the monthly premium.

Congress established the surcharge under a little-noticed provision of the 2003 law that added a prescription drug benefit to Medicare.
For more information, please complete and return the coupon at right, or call toll free (800) 558-8842 for a free quote.

### UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with a illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### Information, please

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

Please print

**Full name**

**Address**

**City**

**State**

**ZIP**

**Sex:** Male Female

**Telephone number with area code**

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

Individuals who have contributed to UTU PAC or increased their contributions to UTU PAC or increased their donations to UTU PAC to $100 or more, per year, during the past four years

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.

---

### UTU PAC Honor Roll

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

---

### Got Stress?

UTUIA’s Disability Income Replacement Insurance Can Help!

When you are faced with an illness or accident, the last thing you need is the worry over how you will pay the mortgage, car payments, credit card bills, and other necessities. Sure, your health insurance will cover the medical bills, but how will you pay everything else?

Having a Disability Income Replacement insurance policy can provide you and your family peace of mind should a tragedy strike. It replaces lost income when you are unable to work due to an accident or sickness, helping you on your road to recovery.

Apply for Disability Income Replacement insurance today.
in contract negotiations with Amtrak since August 2000. Amtrak continues to struggle for annual federal funding in the face of Bush administration attempts to eliminate federal subsidies and privatize Amtrak.

Kummant will be called upon to deal with the continuing deterioration in relationships between Amtrak and its host freight railroads, over whose trackage most Amtrak trains operate.

Hughes, before he departed, said on-time performance of Amtrak trains on freight-rail tracks dropped by 50 percent since 1999 even though federal law requires that Amtrak trains receive “preference” over freight trains.

According to the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP), more than 100,000 Amtrak passengers were delayed more than four hours in June, with the most delays occurring on CSX or Union Pacific tracks.

In August, Amtrak’s vice president of operations, William Crosbie, said UP was “in violation” of UP’s obligations as a host Amtrak railroad.

Crosbie said that 84 percent of Amtrak trains operating over Amtrak tracks were more than two hours late, and 66 percent more than four hours late.

NARP says freight railroads are “failing” to properly maintain existing track used by Amtrak and are also engaging in “loopy” dispatching, “whether due to inexperience, incompetence or negative attitudes toward Amtrak trickling down from top management.”

Crosbie and CSX frequently cite the need for “cooperation” and implied that the host railroads should contribute to the costs of track maintenance that most Amtrak trains use. However, the railroad labor unions believe that the host railroads should pay for the maintenance of track used by Amtrak.

“Whether you are talking about Amtrak, NARP, or the railroad labor unions, the issue is clear – the host railroads must shoulder their fair share of the cost of track maintenance,” said Amtrak Vice President of Operations, William Crosbie.

In response to the issue, UP and CSX have both made commitments to improve on-time performance, but labor leaders remain skeptical of the host railroads’ ability to meet their obligations.

The recent delays have caused significant customer inconvenience and have led to calls for improved on-time performance. The labor unions believe that the onus for improved performance lies with the host railroads, who must take a greater role in maintaining track used by Amtrak.

“In the past, when railroads were privatized, the host railroads have neglected track maintenance, leading to delays and decreased on-time performance,” said UTU Vice President for Labor Relations, Bob Wiesa. "We want to see improvements and accountability from the host railroads. It is their responsibility to ensure that track maintenance is properly funded and executed.”

The labor unions believe that if the host railroads take their obligations seriously and provide adequate funding, Amtrak can operate more reliably and provide better service to its passengers.

The union has filed grievances with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the National Mediation Board (NMB) to address the issues of track maintenance and on-time performance. The labor unions will continue to work in partnership with Amtrak and the FRA to ensure that track maintenance is properly funded and maintained, and to improve performance for passengers.
L.A. MTA to announce new route maps

The $3-billion-a-year Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority will finally release in December a long-awaited plan, dubbed Metro Connections, which officials predict will save the MTA millions of dollars and create a more efficient system.

Critics, however, fear the plan will inconvenience regular riders.

While all of the proposed changes, which will be rolled out through 2008, have not been made public, the MTA has announced it hopes to eliminate several redundant bus routes and shorten those that exceed 20 miles.

Officials say shorter routes will make it less likely that buses will get stuck in traffic. Agency planners believe that eliminating redundant routes or those with low usage will save money. And adding shorter, more manageable routes that take riders directly to major destinations will also attract customers.

“We are trying to achieve two things at the same time: improve the system for the users and achieve efficiencies,” said Adi Arieli, an MTA consultant.

“The idea was, why don’t we take a look and see the paths where the people want to travel even if they are not going to be down the street.”

No decisions can be finalized, however, until public hearings are held. Critics complain that the hearings so far have failed to attract the public.

“Critics complain that the hearings so far have failed to attract the public, the MTA has announced it hopes to eliminate several redundant bus routes and shorten those that exceed 20 miles. Officials say shorter routes will make it less likely that buses will get stuck in traffic. Agency planners believe that eliminating redundant routes or those with low usage will save money. And adding shorter, more manageable routes that take riders directly to major destinations will also attract customers.

UTU Gear for your holiday shopping needs

It’s not too early to begin your holiday shopping and the UTU Web site is just the place to start, without ever leaving your home or going to a busy shopping mall. Just visit the UTU Web site at www.utu.org and click on the UTU Gear tile.

All of the UTU items featured there are sold through American Products and are either union made or are made in America.

All items carry a 100-percent-quality guarantee against defects in materials and workmanship. Volume discounts on customized orders are available to UTU locals and committees. Watches and clocks carry a two-year manufacturer’s warranty against defects.

All of the featured items can be ordered by credit card directly through the company’s secure Web site, or by calling the company’s toll-free telephone number: (800) 272-5120.

UTU members may also download and print a custom order form that can be mailed to UTU Merchandise.com, 1603 North Clinton Ave., Rochester, NY 14621.

All orders will be processed within days of receipt.

Prices are shown in U.S. dollars. Canadian members should make payment by check in U.S. funds. When using credit cards, transactions will automatically be billed in U.S. funds. Apparel prices may vary depending on size. Visit the UTU online store for complete details about prices and available sizes.

UTU Buses Lines


DHS grants millions for transit safety

The Department of Homeland Security last month awarded $191 million in grants to defend bus lines, transit systems and ports from terrorists, increasing funding for major urban areas in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic states whose funds were slashed earlier this year in a controversial decision.

New York received $25.7 million in security grants, up from $6.6 million last year. Baltimore was granted $4.8 million, up from $1 million; and Hampton Roads, which received none in 2005, was awarded $3.5 million.

Los Angeles and Long Beach, Calif., which received $12 million, down from $24.2 million; Houston at $11.6 million, down from $35 million; and San Diego at $139,837, down from $8.6 million.

The grants included $13 million for commuter rail, bus, and ferry systems; $9.5 million for bus companies and $168 million for ports. In July, the DHS awarded $123 million for transit systems; $7.2 million for Amtrak; $4.8 million for trucking companies; $25 million for chemical plants, and $84 million for critical infrastructure, such as water and electrical systems.

American Public Transportation Association spokeswoman Virginia Miller said the $13 million is helpful, but the industry has identified $6 billion in security needs. Together with grants announced in July, the DHS has released $199 million this year to protect critical facilities such as rail systems, nuclear plants, dams and stadiums.

Rockland Coaches employees ratify pact

A new three-year contract delivering wage increases and “excellent health-care benefits” has been ratified by Rockland Coaches employees, represented by UTU Local 1558 in Bergenfield, N.J., according to General Chairperson Rich Deiser.

Approved by a 149-to-18 vote, the pact benefits some 250 workers, including bus operators, shop personnel, dispatchers and clerical employees. The contract is retroactive to July 1, 2006, with raises totaling 8 percent by July 1, 2008, Deiser said.

Voting on the property, which is a division of Coach USA, was conducted under the auspices of Federal Mediation & Conciliation Services Commissioner Guy Serota. The outcome was announced Sept. 12, Deiser said.

Deiser, who also serves as alternate vice president of the union (east), offered the local’s gratitude to UTU International President Paul Thompson for his support, as well as International Vice President Roy Arnold, director of the union’s bus department.

“I want to thank Roy for his invaluable advice and assistance in breaking an impasse which had twice resulted in the membership voting overwhelmingly against the company’s proposals,” Deiser said.

Also earning Deiser’s praise and thanks were the members of the local negotiating committee, including Local President Helaine Parsons, Shop Vice President Styverson and Bob Panaroti.
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 month.

This month’s 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.

FRA investigating the death of Alton & Southern switchman

Family members said Mardie Olden had found his dream job as a switchman with Alton & Southern Railroad when he was hired six months ago, but it ended tragically Sunday, Sept. 10, according to this report by Denise Hollinshed published by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Brother Olden was a member of UTU Local 1929 in East St. Louis, Ill.

The Federal Railroad Administration along with Alton & Southern and East St. Louis Police are investigating an accident in which Olden was fatally crushed between two trains.

Railroad officials said the accident happened at 11:30 p.m. Sept. 10 while Olden was switching locomotives from one track to another.

Olden, 44, of Belleville, was pronounced dead at 12:51 a.m. Monday in the emergency room at Kenneth Hall Regional Hospital in East St. Louis, according to McCarthy said.

Mike McCarthy, spokesman for Alton & Southern, said the railway was still trying to piece together exactly what happened in the rail yard when the trains came together and crushed Olden.

McCarthy said investigators have not found anything from one track to another; it’s basically a simple move,” McCarthy said.

“McCarthy said Olden was very well thought of.

“Olden was a conscientious worker,” he said. “It will be a big loss for us. We are a small railroad, and he was a big part of it.”

Olden’s older brother, Lindsey Olden, 52, of Belleville, believes his brother’s inexperience may have sealed his fate.

He said friends who worked at the railroad told him his brother had been making mistakes and should have been pulled off that job.

He wants a thorough investigation into his brother’s death.

“I want the truth,” Olden said. “In a six-month span my little brother shouldn’t have been doing what he was doing. Simple as that.”

Investigators worked to solve the mystery of Olden’s death by recreating the scene where he lost his life.

Olden was repositioning three locomotives in the Alton & Southern railroad yard at 1000 N. 22nd St., East St. Louis, when the accident occurred.

“We put the locomotives where they were and are re-creating the move that were made” before the tragedy occurred, McCarthy said.

McCarthy said investigators have not found anything to suggest there was a mechanical malfunction.

But, he would not say whether the facts were leaning more toward human error.

After all of the investigators share information, they will come to a conclusion of the probable cause of the accident, McCarthy said.

Inside this issue of the UTU News:

Please don’t ask John Hasenauer about one-person crews. See page 2.

Member Al Nash draws some conclusions about Election Day. See page 5.

Corrine Brown, and others, deserve our vote. See Pages 6 and 7.

Retiree Stewart stewards retire in central Florida. See page 8.