Amtrak funding continues

President Bush on Feb. 15 signed a resolution that continues to fund most federal programs, including Amtrak, at fiscal-year 2006 levels through the end of fiscal year 2007, which ends Sept. 30.

The national intercity passenger railroad will receive $1.1 billion in fiscal year 2007, well below the railroad’s $1.6-billion basic request and $1.9-billion full request.

Amtrak’s full request included $100 million for a U.S. Department of Transportation-administered state corridor development program; $100 million for debt reduction; $50 million to help freight railroads address checkpoints that cause passenger train delays; and $25 million for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.

Amtrak also has asked Congress for $1.53 billion in funding for fiscal 2008, a nearly 18 percent increase from the $1.3 billion Amtrak is getting this year and nearly twice the amount proposed by President Bush.

The carrier says the increase reflects the need for infrastructure investments, including continued improvements on the heavily traveled Northeast Corridor.

In the funding request it sent to Congress, Amtrak said it had improved efficiency and increased revenues since reform efforts began at the government-owned corporation in 2005. Long-term debt has fallen from nearly $4 billion in 2002 to less than $3.5 billion, it said.

Amtrak’s request for operating funding is the same as what it received this year and in 2006; $485 million. The company characterized that as an improvement, saying it will be able to compensate for inflation by improving efficiency to the tune of $82 million.

Amtrak and its unions have been in negotiations for a new contract since August 2006, with little progress made.

FRA bumps reporting limit

Effective Jan. 1, FRA raised the monetary threshold for reporting certain railroad accidents/incidents from $7,700 to $8,200 involving property damage that occurs during calendar year 2007.

“This action is needed to ensure that FRA’s reporting requirements reflect cost increases that have occurred since the reporting threshold was last computed in 2005,” FRA said.

The FRA defines a “rail equipment accident/incident” as a collision, derailment, fire, explosion, act of God, or other event involving the operation of railroad on-track equipment (standing or moving) that results in damages to railroad on-track equipment, signals, tracks, track structures, or roadbeds, including labor costs and the costs for acquiring new equipment and material.

Lawmakers urge rails to end worker fatigue

Rail employee fatigue too often leads to deadly accidents – on and off the railroad – and it is time for a science-based regulatory approach to cure the problem, the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee said Feb. 13 at a rail subcommittee hearing investigating rail safety.

Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) promised legislation that will bring the century-old hours of service statute into the 21st century and assure that rail employees in safety-sensitive positions are properly rested. This approach has support from the Bush administration, with Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Boardman advocating giving regulators authority to measure, modify and monitor each carrier’s approach to reducing employee fatigue.

UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer cautioned against scraping the existing hours of service statute as Boardman proposed, urging, instead, that Congress retain the statute and give the FRA broad regulatory authority within the confines of the statute. Brunkenhoefer expressed concern that without a strong statute, future regulators, perhaps less concerned with rail safety than Boardman, might seek to dilute safety regulations aimed at reducing and eliminating employee fatigue.

Currently, railroads are the only mode of transportation where its federal safety regulator has no authority to adjust maximum hours of service and minimum uninterrupted rest periods. Boardman said the FRA would seek a consensus for such regulations through the Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC).

In comments that appear aimed at the railroads’ chief labor negotiator, Bob Allen, the subcommittee’s ranking Republican, Bill Shuster (R-Pa.), said it would be better if railroads and their labor unions could come to a negotiated agreement on safety issues because the federal government is likely to “screw things up worse.” Rail Subcommittee Chairperson Corrine Brown (D-Fla.) suggested labor and railroad negotiators “lock the door” and not come out until they reach agreement.

Brunkenhoefer earlier had explained that Allen has steadfastly refused to discuss safety issues at the bargaining table even though the
Local 194, Elkhart, Ind.  

The members of this Norfolk Southern local now have their own Web site featuring agreements, meeting dates, contact information and other useful data. View it at www.ounl194.com.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.  

This Union Pacific local offers condolences to the families of Joey Argusa, 24, and 35-year-old Jeremy D. Salinas, said Trustee Fred G. Comeau. Both passed away in December 2006. Brother Salinas was injured in an on-the-job accident and was in an induced coma for about a week. (See story on Page 3.)

Local 331, Temple, Texas  

This DN&F local enjoyed a holiday party in December that drew more than 150 active and retired members and their spouses, said Local Chairperson and Legislative Rep. C.L. Wickliffe. Honored were former General Chairperson Garland Neal and current General Chairperson P.W. Tlibb. Meanwhile, local chairpersons Bryan W. Mazza (yard), Wickliffe (conductors), Robert Goates (engineers) and John Hancock (brakemen) attended the quarterly combined Division Central Committee/Local Chairpersons’ meeting Feb. 6 in Spring, Texas. Addressed were fatigue, new-hire mentoring, train lineups, lodging conditions and held-away-from-home-terminal issues. The local also held it sixth new-hire labor agreement class, where Brett McDaniel took top honors; and marked the retirement of longtime Secretary and Treasurer Robert Gillmore, who held the post for more than 20 years, as well as other positions, including local chairperson for enginemen.

Local 469, Madison, Ill.  

An annual crappie tournament is being cosponsored by members of this local, who work for Conrail and the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, and members of Local 1846 in St. Louis, Ill., who work for the Union Pacific and the Alton & Southern Railway. Secretary and Treasurer John L. Payer said the event, to be held April 21 at Turkey Lake in northeast Missouri, will feature cash prizes and trophies, as well as a barbecue and refreshments. All UTU members are invited to enroll. For information, contact Payer at (618) 452-0775 or Local 1846 Secretary and Treasurer Rick Karraker at (618) 791-5600.

Local 492, Sacramento, Calif.  

The 36th annual retirement dinner for Union Pacific workers from this local and from Local 1570 in Roseville, Calif., will be held at 5 p.m. on March 24 at the Roseville Elks Club, said Local Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and Delegate Daryl M. Stinchfield. Tickets are $25, seating is limited and reservations are required. For information, contact Norm Lucas, secretary of the California State Legislative Board, at (916) 284-3737, or send e-mail to him at wbtrv@pacbell.com.

Local 607, Thayer, Mo.  

A UP Railroad workers from this local recently participated in a charity event with a local radio station and donated $250 to the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., said Local President Chris Skaggs. Local Chairperson Mike King (engineer), Local Chairperson Jim Holloway (conductors) and Shane Wilson, UTU representative for the Thayer Safety Committee.

Local 976, Shreveport, La.  

Members of this Union Pacific local now have their own Web site at www.untu976.org, said Webmaster Steve Cline. Though it’s a work in progress, members are invited to log on to access news, meeting information, the text of agreements and other links.

Local 982, Rochester/Syracuse, N.Y.  

Members working for CSX and New England Lines wish a speedy recovery to New England Lines conductor Kevin R. Venne, who was injured while relieving a train crew in the CSX yard in Syracuse, N.Y., said Local Chairperson Dave Murphy. Meanwhile, the local newsletter last month included information to help familiarize new employees with contract matters and claims, and included a post-accident-testing flow chart. For a copy of the newsletter, telephone Murphy at (315) 468-1867, or send e-mail to him at dmn123@aol.com.

Local 1043, Sparks, Nev.  

Members of this Union Pacific local are memorializing the death of retired conductor W.K. (Mully) Mulleneaux, who passed away Jan. 14 at age 73, said Local Chairperson and Nevada Alternate State Legislative Director Rod Nelms.

Local 1626, Anchorage, Alaska  

Members working on the Alaska Railroad have established a fund to aid Sean A. Janes and his wife and four children, said vice general chairperson George W. Huling. Brother Janes was seriously injured in a railroad accident in November 2006, suffering numerous injuries to his internal organs, as well as brain damage. Alaska Railroad workers aren’t covered by the Railway Labor Act, Railroad Retirement or FELA, said Secretary and Treasurer Mark Bear, so the family’s only source of income is workers’ compensation. Donations may be sent to the AlaskaUSA Credit Union, P.O. Box 198661, Anchorage, AK 99519-6613. Checks should be payable to Jenni Janes and directed to account #12964526 JANES. To learn how to donate electronically or by phone, call (888) 525-9094.

Local 1846, W. Colton, Calif.  

Members of this Union Pacific local recently learned of the death in December 2006 of retired conductor Darold D. Tucker, 65, said Local President Richard Escamilla. Brother Tucker’s health problems led to his retirement last summer. He began his career in 1959 with the Pacific Electric Railway, which became part of the Southern Pacific in 1961 and the UP in 1966. “We will all miss his fantastic roll-lys on our way to Yuma, Ariz...” Escamilla said.

Local 1963, Louisville, Ky.  

Retired member Joe Aldenuff is again organizing an annual picnic for railroaders in the vicinity of St. Petersburg, Fla. The event, set for March 17, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pt. DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. Coffee and tea will be furnished. Local 1963’s parking lot is limited, and club members are urged to bring two covered dishes to share, their own place settings and a cup.

All railroaders, their friends who are railroaders are invited to come and enjoy hot dogs and beverages. For information, contact Aldenuff at (727) 522-4808 or send e-mail to him at jalenuff@tampabay.rr.com.
The UTU International has received word of the deaths of two members: Jeremy Salinas and Angel Rodriguez.

Salinas, 35, a member of Local 240 in Los Angeles, Calif., was riding the point of a train at about 9:45 a.m. on Dec. 4 when a truck at a crossing slammed into him and pinned him against the car upon which he was riding.

According to Fred G. Comeau, trustee for Local 240 and formerly its secretary and treasurer, “It took 15 to 22 minutes for paramedics to remove the truck pinned on him. He was transported to the hospital and induced into a coma. After the doctors tried everything, his wife and family made the decision to remove him from life support.”

Brother Salinas died Dec. 11, 2006. He leaves behind a wife and two young children.

Rodriguez was a Union Pacific switchman at West Colton, Calif., and member of Local 240 and formerly its secretary and treasurer. He was killed hours after celebrating his 25th birthday.

Rodriguez and another man were shot early on the morning of Sat., Jan. 20, outside a party in Colton, Calif. Rodriguez died at the scene; the other man was shot several times and hospitalized in critical condition. A 17-year-old boy has been arrested in the crimes.

“He was at the wrong place at the wrong time,” said Local Legislative Rep. Richard Acuna. “Every guy out there knew him and liked him; he was real friendly with everybody. He was well liked by all his fellow members, friendly, outgoing, inquisitive and safe. He was from a bad neighborhood and was trying to better himself.”

Rodriguez was married and left four young children, Acuna said.

“Local 1813 is trying to assist Angel’s wife, Sally, and their four children,” Acuna said. “We have set up a memorial fund in his name.” Any donations should be sent to the “Angel Rodriguez Fund” at the Washington Mutual Bank, Riverside/Polley Branch, 780 Lomita Ave., Riverside, CA 92507.

The UTU supports its members in Canada. Each month, our brothers and sisters in the U.S. contribute some $100,000 to fund operations in Canada. Canadian dues do not cover the expenses of their operations.

Moreover, now that provisions of the UTU Constitution are being followed, the UTU International will start strike pay from the date the two Canadian vice presidents were properly assigned under Article 85 of the UTU Constitution.

If the proper procedures had been followed by the removed general chairpersons, strike pay would have already been paid.

As for whether the International has taken the side of Canadian National CEO Hunter Harrison, that is an allegation that belies the facts.

The UTU International fully supports its members on Canadian National and agrees with each of their concerns related to on-the-job safety and working conditions.

That is why the UTU International opposes agreeing to a cooling-off period as proposed by the carrier.

The UTU International does not want to see members go back to work on CN until our Canadian negotiators achieve a fair settlement at the bargaining table.

Salinas dies of injuries; Rodriguez by gunshot

Numerous questions have been submitted by members to the UTU International with regard to the Canadian situation. UTU International Paul Thompson responds to the questions below.

Q: Why does the UTU call the strike by our brothers and sisters in Canada unauthorized, but the Canadian Industrial Relations Board found the strike to be legal?

A: These are two completely different issues.

As to the legality of the strike, the UTU International never took a position that the strike violated the Canadian Labor Code.

Canadian National Railway challenged the legality of the strike notice and the Canadian Industrial Relations Board ruled against the proposed strike.

What the UTU International said is that the four general chairpersons who were removed from office by the UTU Board of Directors failed to follow the UTU Constitution.

The UTU Constitution is a body of law that affects every member and every officer of the UTU. All officers are required to take an oath of office that they will abide by the UTU Constitution.

The UTU Constitution contains specific procedures that must be followed before a strike may be declared. Chief among them is that only the UTU International president may authorize a strike.

The general chairpersons took it upon themselves to authorize a strike. They were informed, in writing, on two occasions precisely what procedures are required under the UTU Constitution.

Instead of seeking to clarify and follow those procedures, they ignored the procedures and took it upon themselves to call a strike, which was a blatant violation of the UTU Constitution.

Had the general chairpersons followed the provisions of the UTU Constitution, it is almost certain that the international president would have authorized the strike. Indeed, the current Canadian negotiators are following the UTU Constitution and the International is 100 percent in support of the strike now that provisions of the UTU Constitution are being followed.

Q: If the UTU International supports the strike, why were the general chairpersons removed?

A: The general chairpersons were removed for specific violations of the UTU Constitution.

Specifically, the UTU Board of Directors cited the general chairpersons for engaging in a strike without requesting the assistance of the International president and without his approval of said strike in plain violation of Article 85, lines 9-21, of the UTU Constitution.

Also, the UTU Board of Directors cited the general chairpersons for negotiating with the TCRC (Teamsters) with respect to affiliation with that union, thus engaging in the prohibited conduct of dual unionism in plain violation of Article 41, lines 32-36 and 39-42, of the UTU Constitution, and Article 23, lines 21-24.

Under the UTU Constitution, only the UTU Board of Directors may consider and implement plans of unification, affiliation or merger with another labor union.

The UTU International has always supported our membership and their right to self help, but consistent with the provisions of the UTU Constitution.

Q: Why doesn’t the UTU International support its brothers and sisters in Canada; and why has the UTU International taken the side of Canadian National CEO Hunter Harrison?

A: The UTU International consistent-
Training vital to security

The latest weapon used by terrorists to kill civilians in Iraq is chlorine gas, which The New York Times describes as “fatal after only a few concentrated breaths.” The U.S. Naval Research lab says chlorine gas leaking from a single rail tank car could kill 100,000 people in a densely populated area.

Don’t sniff now, but chlorine gas is what railroads transport on most main lines and through population-density areas. One mishap and, well, remember Graniteville, S.C., and Macdonia, Texas?

When Association of American Railroads President Ed Hamberger told Congress Feb. 16 that, “Nothing is more important to railroads than the safety and security of their employees,” he shamelessly ignored that rail employees are not being properly trained to understand and deal with security threats.

The solution is improved employee training and fatigue mitigation. If railroads are not in the business of producing widows and orphans, then their chief labor negotiator, Robert Allen, should be at the table with the carriers.

The thanks we get for past help also includes arbitrary and aggressive discipline and insufficient training.

The DM&E wants us to support its federal loan request so it can compete head to head with BNSF and Union Pacific — to be one of the big boys.

But what do its employees get? They want us to stay on the porch. The DM&E wants us to accept health and welfare benefits below what are paid by the big boys.

The DM&E wants to prevent its employees from taking advantage of 60/30 retirement provisions by not providing the same bridge as the big boys.

And the DM&E wants to scrap work rules we obtained at a price in past negotiations, plus wants us to accept a wage package below the national average. The DM&E wants to force the UTU into a race to the bottom.

It wants to compete with BNSF and UP by having lower labor costs.

But once the DM&E starts competing with BNSF and UP for coal out of the Powder River Basin, it will be BNSF and UP who will demand similar labor concessions — only causing the DM&E to demand even more givebacks.

The DM&E pushes the UTU into a race to the bottom. But it’s a fool’s errand that hurts every union member.

The UTU always defends the carriers. It’s time now for the DM&E — and other railroaders in high cotton — to return the favor.

No longer will the UTU be a button the carriers press for support unless the carriers similarly do the right thing for their employees, who are entitled to wages, benefits, rules and working conditions that reflect the reality of the growth and success the DM&E promises its investors.

DM&E loan? No deal

By Paul Thompson
International President

The Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railway is seeking a $2.3-billion federal loan that is opposed by the UTU.

Historically, the UTU supported every railroad’s request for a federal loan, loan guarantee and economic deregulation.

When times were tough, we agreed to concessions. The carriers promised that when times got better, so would our compensation, job security and working conditions.

The UTU always delivered on its promises. Management did not.

The UTU supported economic deregulation and all that happened! Railroads cut the workforce by more than half and now demand one-person crews.

The UTU supported billions of dollars in federal loans and loan guarantees for the carriers.

After pocketing the cash, the carriers sold track to non-union short lines paying lower wages and benefits, and used a regulatory loophole to avoid paying labor protection.

The DM&E is not one of the most fiscally prudent railroads. But it is a race to the bottom.

The DH&E’s former parent, Mid-Continent Railway, was also a race to the bottom.

The race to the bottom is ugly — it’s a button the carriers press for support unless the carriers similarly do the right thing for their employees who are entitled to wages, benefits, rules and working conditions that reflect the reality of the growth and success the DM&E promises its investors.

Amtrak, rail safety, labor protections top our wish list

That is why we keep a good relationship with both parties.

In the Senate, we have one Democrat who is currently under medical care and unable to participate in the process. It appears that that will remain unchanged for much longer.

Thus, Democrats have only 50 votes and Republicans 49. And since it takes 60 votes to stop a filibuster in the Senate, you can see how precarious the Democratic majority is.

Then there is the threat President Bush will use his veto pen, and a two-thirds majority in Congress is necessary to override a presidential veto.

The good news is that at least we do not have to look over our shoulders for what Congress will do to us. When Democrats in charge, those days are over.

It appears that the railroads and the other transportation companies are not as arrogant and cocky as they were just a few months ago, although not all of them have gotten the message that this no longer is a pre-November 2006 world.

We expect employers will fully recognize the reality of the new world as pro-union legislation piles up in the House and Senate.

Congress no longer stands to rubber stamp carrier objectives. For the first time in 14 years, labor is poised to accomplish some of its goals.
Indiana vs. Illinois

It started with some good-natured taunting via e-mail, and ended with the UTU PAC benefit.

Indiana State Legislative Director Tom Hensler, an Indianapolis Colts fan, and Illinois State Legislative Director Joe Stabo, a Chicago Bears fan, went head to head recently via e-mail about which favorite team would win the Super Bowl.

“You are talking smack,” Tom wrote. “Joe wrote, “You just know my Bears are going to win! A Colt is nothing but a young, weak animal waiting to be devoured by a big, bad Bear.”


“Opening day for Bear season in Indiana is Feb. 4, city slicker,” Hensler countered. “I am looking forward to having a bear skin rug in front of the fireplace. Even though Koala bears make a rather small rug I will enjoy it lying there anyway.”

The two agreed that the loser would donate $100 to the winner’s UTU PAC fund.

Stabo’s check is expected to arrive at the UTU International any day.

“I guess I talked him into this little match,” Hensler said, “but in the end we had fun with it and the members in Indiana will benefit. I guess Joe is still licking his ‘Bear’ wounds.”

“While the Bears were defeated, the real winners are the members in Indiana, and nationwide, who will benefit when, thanks to the UTU PAC, we elect people to office who understand the needs of working families, “ Stabo said.

Delaware

William Stone is the new state legislative director for Delaware. He took over the post from former director Nelson Scretty, who retired in January. Stone had been serving as alternate state legislative director. He also serves as local chairperson and delegate for Local 1378 in Wilmington, which serves members working for CSX. For 33 years, Stone has been employed as a conductor for the CSX (formerly Chessie/R&B&O), working out of Wilmington.

Minnesota

State Legislative Director Phil Qualy recently presented former BNSF General Chairperson Dale Snyder with a UTU Brass Lantern for the outstanding leadership and fine work he performed for his committee membership and the entire union.

The award was presented at the annual oyster feed held by Local 1177, which represents BNSF members working at Willmar; the event was attended by some 70 members and retirees.

“Brother Snyder’s work has set a high bar for the rest of the UTU,” Qualy said. “He has been a quiet, clean, and no-bull leader who has done well for our union.

“Please accept our UTU Brass Lantern with respect for a good watchman who has had one hell of a great shift on the lead,” Qualy said in presenting the award.

Texas

Texas State Legislative Director Connie England Jr. and members of the Texas Legislative Board Executive Committee have been working closely with the AFL-CIO and other groups to prevent the passage of House Bill 346, which would drastically restrict the semi-annual personal injury trials may be held.

The Federal Employers Liability Act is under attack in Texas and we are fighting back,” English said.

On a recent visit to Austin, members of the committee walked the halls of the Capitol to visit with all 181 members of the Texas Legislature to let them know the UTU’s position.

Progress to report in negotiations

Local 1697 in Lubbock, Texas, (which represents members working for Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma Coaches), with the assistance of the UTU International, has completed two full days of negotiations, with success in many areas, but still with a long way to go. More talks are scheduled for March and General Chairperson Greg Hansen is confident the local will reach a tentative agreement.

The UTU is also assisting PARSEC General Chairperson Albie Collie, Vice Chairperson Alvin Green and President Juan Ucanan in contract negotiations for members of Local 1900 in Miami/Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Brother Collie has a positive attitude and is optimistic a successful agreement will be reached.

Local 1589, in Somerset, N.J., representing members working for Suburban Transit, will be opening contract negotiations in the near future and has requested the assistance of the Bus Department, which will be there for them.

The Bus Department has assisted Local 1741 in an arbitration case involving wrongful termination of First Student drivers in San Rafael, Calif.

In addition, Local 1741 is going to FMCS provided mediation over huge increases in health insurance premiums that was passed on to the membership by the employer. (See article, page 11). It is the contention of the local that this was a direct violation of the labor agreement. I am confident that the local committee of adjustment, headed by General Chairperson Daine Johnson, with the assistance of President Angie Beloy and long-time member Paul Stein, will prevail. The Bus Department will assist if requested.

Railroads sidetrack hazmat training

In this post-9/11 era, the nation’s railroads are not doing their part when it comes to substantive and efficient training, especially relating to hazardous materials. Too often, the railroads’ idea of training is a division or superintendent’s notice, with no personal interaction with our members who most likely would be the first responders should a rail car be involved in a derailment and/or be leaking in a rail yard.

The Association of American Railroads reports that rail carriers transport some 1.7 million carloads of hazardous material annually. Although railroads agree they work to ensure employees are prepared to respond quickly and efficiently, they spend only token time on hazmat training.

In Texarkana, Texas, on Oct. 15, 2005, Union Pacific suffered a rear-end collision of two freight trains that resulted in the puncture of a tank car containing propylene, a compressed flammable gas. When the National Transportation Safety Board adopted its final report on this accident, it recommended that Union Pacific “implement measures to ensure that all of your field personnel understand and comply with your procedures for responding to hazardous materials incidents.” It was only after the fact that Union Pacific did any real training on hazmat in Texarkana.

Have you had yard-specific hazmat training? Do your yard have an evacuation plan? Is there a wind sock so you know in which direction to evacuate? If the answer is no to any of these, please contact your general chairperson and/or state legislative director for handling.

Railroad employees, and the innocent citizens in the communities in which we work, deserve this basic protection. Help us hold the railroads accountable.
The 2007 UTU/UTUA regional meetings have been designed to provide a grand sense of fraternality, lots of worthwhile education and tons of fun for the whole family. As before, 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 will be free to enjoy and explore the many offerings of the regional meeting cities.

Neither Kansas City nor Pittsburgh has been designated the joint U.S./Canadian regional meeting; Canadian members are free to choose the meeting that interests them.

All those attending the regional meetings must be registered in order to attend any planned social function. Children age 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 2007 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, and certain deadlines apply.

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

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) 228-6795.

**KANSAS CITY, MO., JUNE 11-13, 2007**

**HYATT REGENCY CROWN CENTER, 2345 McGee St., KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 64108**

www.crowncenter.hyatt.com/hotels/index.jsp

Hotel reservations: (800) 233-1234 toll free or (816) 421-1234 direct to the hotel.

Reservation code: ‘UTU’

Daily room rate: $105.00 single/double, $130.00 triple/quadruple; rates good for three days before and after the meeting, depending upon availability.

Reservation deadline: May 7, 2007, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved.

Parking: Self park: $13.50 per night; valet park: $16.50 per night.

Golf outing: The UTU regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, July 15, at a golf course to be determined. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and much more.

The UTU regional meeting golf outing will be held on Sunday, June 10, at a golf course to be determined. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and much more.

**PITTSBURGH, PA., JULY 16-18, 2007**

**HYATT PITTSBURGH, GATEWAY CENTER, 600 COMMONWEALTH PLAZA, PITTSBURGH, PA 15222**

www.hiltondirect.com

Hotel reservations: (800) HILTONS (445-8667) toll free or (412) 391-4600 direct to the hotel.

Reservation code: ‘UER’

Daily room rate: $99.00 single/double, $119.00 triple/quadruple; rates good for three days before and after the meeting, based upon availability.

Reservation deadline: June 14, 2007, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved.

Parking: $10.00 per day.

Golf outing: The UTU regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, July 15, at a golf course to be determined. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and much more.

**UTU ARRANGES DISCOUNT AIRFARES, CAR RENTALS**

UTU members and others attending the 2007 UTU regional meetings are eligible to receive discounted airfares of two percent to 15 percent from Continental Airlines. To take advantage of the discount, call your professional travel agency or Continental Airlines MeetingWorks at (800) 468-7022 and provide the Z code “ZUCA” and agreement code “A000196.”

There will be a $10 service fee collected, per ticket, for all tickets issued through MeetingWorks reservations or any Continental Airlines ticketing facility. The service fee is non-refundable and applies to all itineraries, one-way or roundtrip. To avoid this service fee and receive and additional 3 percent discount, book your reservations online through Continental’s Web site, www.continental.com. Enter both your Z code and agreement code in the offer code box. The additional 3 percent discount applies to published fares only. The discounts are available to UTU members and their families to see, do, experience and enjoy. Also, the Pirates will be playing at PNC Park July 16-18.

Avis Rent a Car is offering discounted rates to those attending either regional meeting. To take advantage of these special rates, call (800) 331-1600. You can also reserve online at www.avis.com. The UTU’s Avis Worldwide Discount Number is D150699.

**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 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 registrations will be $250 per person. Canadian funds will be accepted, 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? *Kansas City* *Pittsburgh*

**Member registration**

Name

Local

Title (if any)

Home address

City/State/ZIP

Phone number ( )

Email

**Spouse registration**

Spouse name

Title (if any)

**Child registration**

Child name

Age

**Meals: Day 1**

Meal: [ ] Lunch [ ] Dinner [ ] Buffet breakfast [ ] No meal

**Meals: Day 2**

Meal: [ ] Lunch [ ] Dinner [ ] Buffet breakfast [ ] No meal

**Meals: Day 3**

Meal: [ ] Lunch [ ] Dinner [ ] Buffet breakfast [ ] No meal

**Special needs**

[ ] Diabetic

[ ] Celiac Disease

[ ] Other

[ ] Handicapped

[ ] Transport assistance

[ ] Spectator assistance

**Golf registration**

Golf registration: *Kansas City* *Pittsburgh*

**Payment options**

Check/money order enclosed (U.S. funds only)

Credit card [ ] VISA [ ] MasterCard

Card number

Exp. date

Total charged $_____

Signature

By checking the box, I understand that my name is being released to the meeting site.

**Checklist**

[ ] Self park

[ ] Valet park

**PITTSBURGH**

Pittsburgh isn’t just steel and weeds; it has a wonderful sports scene. Dance and theater fans will enjoy it, too! Along with free City Fan-dorning open evenings are arts, veterans, musicians and actors. There are world-class universities such as Carnegie-Mellon, Duquesne and the University of Pittsburgh, and a thousand and one other things for UTU members and their families to see, do, experience and enjoy. Also, the Pirates will be playing at PNC Park July 16-18.


Widow(er)s benefits sometimes reduced

By V.M. “Butch” Speakman Jr.

Widow(er)s who receive the monthly Railroad Retirement Board survivor benefits should be aware that reductions may be applied to their annuities under certain conditions.

The full retirement age for a widow(er)'s annuity is gradually rising from age 65 to 67, depending on the applicant’s year of birth. Full retirement age means the age at which a person can receive full benefits with no reduction for early retirement.

A widow(er) who received an annuity begins at full retirement age or later receives a reduced benefit amount unless the deceased employee received an annuity that was reduced for early retirement.

The Railroad Retirement Act sets the full retirement age for Tier I survivor benefits. The full retirement age is subject to reduction if any Social Security benefits are payable, even if the Social Security benefit is based on the survivor’s own earnings. This reduction follows the principles of Social Security law which, in effect, limit payment to the highest of any two or more benefits payable to an individual at one time.

In addition, the Tier I portion of a widow(er)'s annuity may be reduced for the receipt of any federal, state or local government based on the widow(er)'s own earnings record.

For more information about the reductions applied to a widow(er)’s or other type of survivor’s annuity, contact the nearest office of the Railroad Retirement Board by calling the automated toll-free RRB Help Line at 1-800-828-0772, or from the RRB’s Web site at www.rrb.gov.

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

Huston Kitts Sr., 71, retired Va. SLD, dies

Former UTU Virginia State Legislative Director Huston W. Kitts Sr., of Christiansburg, Va., passed away Jan. 26, 2007. He was 71 years old.

A member of Local 48 in Norfolk, Va., Brother Kitts began his rail career as a grade employee on the Norfolk & Western Railway and joined Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen Lodge 492 in November 1956. He retired as a Norfolk Southern conductor March 29, 1995. He became state legislative director in 1976, and held the post until his retirement.

Kitts played semi-pro baseball for a number of years, and served on both the national and Virginia transportation safety boards.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah “Sallie” Sratzsch; a daughter, two sons, three grandchildren, two brothers and his former wife, Eloise Kincaid Kitts.

IUTU for Life, UTU PAC pay dividends to retired members

Anyone who joins the UTU for Life program or contributes to UTU PAC is a winner. But four retired members are especially noteworthy because their names were chosen in a pair of drawings connected to contests boosting these two programs.

John J. Roy of Local 598 in Mobile, Ala., recently received a wall clock created by noted railroad artist H.L. “Scotty” Scott III when his name was drawn from among those who joined the UTU for Life program in 2006 or renewed their memberships in that year.

Vincent Gonzales of Local 544 in Havre, Mont., won his choice of one of the UTUwatch showcases on the UTU Web site when his name was drawn from among retirees who donated $100 or more to UTU PAC in 2006.

The second- and third-place winners in the UTU PAC drawing, who received their choice of jackets bearing the UTU logo, were William H. Brown of Local 490 in Princeton, Ind., and James E. Stubblefield, a member of Local 591 in Whitsett, Mont.

“I keep my membership in the UTU for Life program to support my union,” said Roy, who started his career as a switchman on the Alabama State Docks Terminal and retired as a yardmaster in 1989. “The union helped me make my wages and improved our conditions.”

“I think it’s important for everyone to support UTU PAC,” said the 64-year-old Brown, who began as a conductor on the Southern Railway in 1970 and retired on disability in 2000. “When we get a politician on our side, we have to keep him off.”

“UTU PAC is what got us the 30/60 retirement,” said Gonzales, 75, who started his career on the Northern Pacific in 1956 and retired in 1993. “I believe in what it does for active and retired members.”

Proud of his union and nostalgic for his days on the railroad, Sue Lewis wrote to Harvey V. Western of Local 832 in Superior, Wis., displaying the certificate which accompanied his UTU 50-year membership pin.

UTU News

www.utula.org

www.utu.org
If only knowing the future was this easy...

Prepare today, provide for tomorrow

Some say there are no guarantees in life. But there is one guarantee in life for all of us; we will all one day breathe our last breath. Nobody knows when this inevitable event will occur. It’s going to happen whether you choose to think about it or not.

Are you prepared?

By securing a life insurance policy TODAY, you’re providing for tomorrow. You’re preparing for final expenses that will need to be paid and providing financial security for your loved ones upon your demise.

At UTUIA, we know about preparing. Our agents have devoted months to studying the ins and outs of life insurance so that they can assist you in determining which policy would most benefit you and your loved ones. Our agents will take the time to explain the different types of life insurance available at UTUIA. They will discuss and calculate, at no cost or obligation, an insurance plan prepared exclusively for you.

Call toll-free (800) 558-8842 now for a free, no-obligation quote.

Discount tours offered UTU for Life members

The UTU is offering two exciting travel opportunities for members of the UTU for Life program.

They are a trip aboard the luxurious Rocky Mountaineer train across Canada and a national parks tour. The opportunity to take discounted trips with fellow UTU members is one of the many benefits of membership in the UTU for Life program.

The trips are being coordinated by Gone With The Wind Travel, the program’s official travel agency.

The Rocky Mountaineer train trip includes two days aboard the spectacular Rocky Mountaineer, including passage through the Fraser Canyon and spectacular Rogers Pass; a motorcoach tour of Banff and Banff National Park; a visit to Vancouver; Yoho National Park, and a visit to beautiful Calgary, Alberta.

Rocky Mountaineer Rail Vacations include all the elements you need: rail journey, accommodations, attractions, sightseeing tours, luggage handling and transfers. Vacations are non-escorted, giving you the freedom to explore on your own.

Tour start dates from Vancouver (eastbound) begin Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from April 2-Oct. 12.

The national park tour includes Las Vegas; the Grand Canyon National Park; Monument Valley; the Painted Desert; Lake Powell and the Glen Canyon Dam; Bryce Canyon National Park; Rainbow Bridge; Zion National Park; the Mormon Temple at St. George, Utah.

These trips are available only to UTU for Life program members. If the trips do not sell out, other UTU members will be permitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Also, all first-time travelers will receive a rebate of their annual UTU dues ($9) plus an additional $9.

For complete details, for airline tickets or to make reservations call the UTU’s designated travel agent, Marcia Nuzzo, at Gone With The Wind Travel, toll free at (800) 886-4989, or at (216) 221-2121, or via e-mail at marcia@gwwtwebmail.com. For more information, click on the UTU tile at www.utu.orgwww.utuia.org

Members’ children need our assistance

The children of two UTU members need our help.

They are Victoria Love Houston, the two-year-old daughter of Brian and Valisha Houston, and Kevin Driscoll, the 16-year-old son of Tom and Dianne Driscoll.

Houston, legislative rep. of Local 750 in Knoxville, Tenn., and secretary of the Tennessee Legislative Board, is a Norfolk Southern engineer. Driscoll is local chairperson, legislative rep., and delegate from Local 262 in Boston and secretary of the New England States Legislative Board. He is employed as a conductor on CSS.

In early 2006, Victoria underwent surgery in Boston to remove a bowel obstruction that turned out to be a malignant tumor. Her entire lower intestine had to be removed. She is undergoing chemotherapy while awaiting a transplant. She has been transferred to Children’s Hospital in Cincinnati for continued treatment.

“The separation during treatment in Boston has been very hard on the family. Cincinnati is still a long way from Knoxville, but it’s much easier to travel there than it is to get to Boston,” Houston said.

Kevin, a skateboarder and Patriots fan, was seriously injured in January in an automobile accident. He currently is undergoing extensive and expensive treatment at Spaulding Rehabilitation’s Brain Trauma Center in Boston.

UTU members in Knoxville have established a fund to assist the Houston family. Those wishing to help should send contributions to the Victoria Love Houston Fund, New South Credit Union, 3161 N. Mall Rd., Knoxville, TN 37924.

“Tom Driscoll is a dedicated union officer and great guy, and our hearts go out to him, his wife Dianne and Kevin’s five older brothers,” New England States Legislative Director George Casey said. “Anything our UTU brothers and sisters can do to help this family would be greatly appreciated.”

Donation checks made out to “Kevin’s Cause” should be sent to Sovereign Bank, 175 Centre St., Pembroke, MA 02359.
Fatigue

Continued from page 1

Carriers had signed an agreement several years ago promising to do so. In fact, after the carriers and labor agreed to language (in another area of safety) that was enacted into law by the Illinois legislature, the carriers then sued in federal court to overturn the law.

Rep. Grace Napolitano (D-Calf.) chided the railroad for lack of formal employee training aimed at assuring employees understand the dangers associated with sleep deprivation and science-based methods to manage their fatigue.

Boardman

Also testifying was Tom Pontitillo, director of regulatory affairs for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, who said, “There is no question in our minds that safety degradation because of fatigue is a ticking time bomb in the rail industry.”

Additionally, sleep scientist Steven Hursh, a consultant to the FRA, explained that sleep during daylight hours is not as restorative as nighttime sleep, and that as workers shift from days to nights, their internal body clocks, known as circadian rhythms, “get out of sync with sleep demands.”

Under the statute, rail employees subject to hours of service limitations may be kept on duty up to 12 hours followed by only a single 10-hour rest period; and then be called back to work a second time for another 12-hour shift within a single 24-hour period. Moreover, carriers may—and often do—require train crews to remain in the locomotive cab (to maintain locomotive security) for four, six or eight hours more after their 12-hour shift, followed by 10 hours off duty, at the end of which they can be ordered to begin another shift.

Oberstar said, “can and has kept railroad operating crews effectively on duty for well over 12 hours; and, in the case of the Union Pacific engineer involved in the 2004 Macclona, Texas, accident (which killed three), 22 hours (12 hours on duty and 10 hours of limbo time).”

Oberstar observed that if a carrier ends an on-duty shift just one minute before the 12-hour maximum, the carrier is required to provide only an eight-hour rest period—even if additional limbo time is involved—before ordering a train crew back on duty. “Since the required eight hours of off-duty time includes commuting, leisure and personal time, the duration of any period available for sleep could be even less than that,” Oberstar said.

During questioning by subcommittee members, Brunkenhoefer said, “Our membership lives in jet lag for their 10-year career. They don’t know when they will be called to duty, how long they will be on the job, or when they will go home. The result is divorce, troubled children and destruction of family values.” He asked that legislation be enacted to eliminate limbo time and prohibit carriers from calling train crews during their minimum rest periods.

Brunkenhoefer also thanked UTU officers on BSNF for their help with timely and beneficial data on fatigue and rail safety.

Canada

Continued from page 1

“It should be clearly understood,” Thompson said, “that we have always supported our membership and their right to self help, but consistent with the provisions of the UTU Constitution.”

Removed from office and suspended from UTU membership were General Chairpersons Rex Beatty (GO-105), Bryan Boechler (GO-129), Raymond Lebel (GO-121) and Sylvia Leblanc (GO-759).

Also suspended by the UTU board were full-time Vice General Chairpersons Gary Anderson, Roland Hackl and James Robbins. The four CN general committee officers were secured by the UTU.

The general committee officers may appeal to the UTU Executive Board their removal and suspension of UTU membership. If the appeal is not successful, elections for new general committee officers will be conducted.

In the meantime, Armstrong and Sharpe will remain in control of the affected general committees. The four removed officers are not eligible to hold other UTU posts owing to having their UTU membership suspended.

The UTU Constitution, ratified by the UTU membership in Canada as well as in the U.S., is an internal code of conduct that all UTU officers take an oath to uphold.

Specifically, the UTU Board of Directors cited the removal of the general chairpersons for engaging in a strike of the Canadian National in Canada “without requesting the assistance of the International president and without his approval of said strike or an in plain violation of Article 85, lines 9-21, of the UTU Constitution.”

Also, the board cited the four removed general chairpersons for “negotiating with the TCRC (Teamsters) with respect to affiliation with that union, thus engaging in the prohibited conduct of dual unionism in plain violation of Article 41, lines 32-36 and 39-42, of the UTU Constitution, and Article 23, lines 21-24.”

Under the UTU Constitution, only the UTU Board of Directors may consider and implement plans of unification, affiliation or merger with another labor union.

“arrested” orders to begin another shift.

It is truly unfortunate that our UTU members in Canada were given to suffer by these actions in violation of the UTU Constitution, Thompson said. Also, the board cited the four removed general chairpersons followed the UTU Constitution and sought the assistance of the International president as required by our constitution, the membership would not have been on picket lines without the full support of the International.

“It appears from the evidence that Mr. Beatty, and perhaps the others...[sought] to steer UTU Canadian members into the Teamsters Union and receive positions with the Teamsters, and payoffs to their general committees of as much as C$150,000,” Thompson said.

Moreover, Mr. Beatty accepted C$660,000 from Canadian National Railway, which Beatty admitted to only after I discovered its existence following a slip of the tongue by Beatty,” Thompson said.

The evidence shows that Beatty, and perhaps others, sought to steer UTU Canadian members into the Teamsters Union in exchange for full-time jobs with the Teamsters and other payoffs.

“Early in 2006, I began receiving reports indicating that certain UTU general chairpersons in Canada had contacted the Teamsters and offered to deliver the UTU Canadian membership to that organization in exchange for guarantees that they would receive full-time jobs with the Teamsters and their committees would receive payoffs from the Teamsters of up to C$150,000,” Thompson said.

Each of these facts is documented in a 62-page package available at www.utu.org and by clicking on the button, “CN strike update.”

That package also was mailed to all UTU members in Canada as well as UTU international officers, general chairpersons and state legislative directors.

To keep current on this and other UTU issues, go to www.utu.org.

Close calls

Continued from page 1

Examples of close calls could be as minor as employees lifting objects that place them at risk for minor injuries, or more serious events, such as a train operating in non-signaled, or dark, territory proceeding beyond its track authority, or a train crew member’s failure to properly test an air brake before leaving a yard, which could lead to a runaway train.

The pilot project at the UP yard in North Platte began Feb. 1, 2007, and FRA plans to extend it in the coming months to other yards, including BNSF Railway’s yard in Lincoln, Neb., and the Canadian Pacific facility in Fortage, Wis.

Close-call data will be taken for five years to permit researchers enough time to collect a sufficient number of incidents for thorough analyses.

Importantly, a review team will evaluate the reports as they are received in order to make safety recommendations for those that require immediate attention. FRA is also currently in discussion with commuter railroads to launch a fourth pilot project location.

Boardman said the close-call project is one of the key elements in FRA’s National Rail Safety Action Plan, a comprehensive effort designed to reduce the causes of train accidents.

The UTU and others in transportation labor also are asking Congress to strengthen whistleblower protections nationwide so that rail employees are not forced to choose between their livelihood and intimidation when reporting safety defects or concerns.
Fired railroad workers win right to appeal

Transportation Security Administrator Kip Hawley last month sought to blunt Democrat allegations that his agency had neglected rail and mass transit security while focusing most of its attention on the terrorist threat to aviation.

“Effective measures are in place” to protect rail systems, Hawley said in appearance before a House Homeland Security subcommittee.

Awards the government provides for all the security personnel in the aviation sector, “most of the people in the rail and transit environment are paid for locally,” he explained, adding that in the case of these systems, federal aid comes in the form of sharing information and technical assistance, and “does not include direct financial support.”

Top subcommittee Democrats, however, skewered TSA for failing to produce the comprehensive rail mass transit security plan mandated by the 2005 White House executive order.

“It is three years overdue,” said Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.).

According to Jackson, 12 workers were

Some had been hired by railroad contractors as part of work-release programs. Some had convictions for crimes that they said had nothing to do with terrorist activities, such as drunk driving.

The Department of Homeland Security is expanding its efforts to secure critical infrastructures, including railroads and ports.

As a result, an increasing number of workers are finding that they must pass background checks to get security badges if they want to keep their jobs.

Ed Hamburger, president of the Association of American Railroads, told a congressional panel last month that the industry would give workers the right to appeal, something only their employer could do in the past. He also said the industry would make the appeals process clear to workers.

The Transportation Security Administration, a part of the Department of Homeland Security, also issued guidelines outlining which crimes could disqualify workers from getting security badges, something that had been unclear. The TSA says ex-felons should be given a chance to keep their jobs if they could prove they have turned their lives around.

Civil rights activist Jesse Jackson, who took up the cause of the fired workers, said he was pleased with the guidelines and the appeals process.

“These guys can’t afford lawyers,” said Jackson. “They’re just thrown back to the wolves.”

According to Jackson, 12 workers were rearraigned after publication of an Associated Press story about the firings.

TSA chief defends bus, transit security

The members of UTU Local 1741 in San Francisco have filed a grievance against Laidlaw Transportation after being suckered-punched by health-care premium increases that in some cases increased more than 760 percent in one month and wiped out some of their paychecks.

Some bus operators to quit.

The local drive school buses for the San Francisco public schools. Laidlaw has the contract to provide bus service to the school system and employs the bus operators.

The local filed a grievance against Laidlaw, claiming the health insurance premium increase violated their contract, and proposed an expedited mediation.

“Laidlaw can raise the rates, but contractually, not until September,” said Local President Ange Beloy. “But Laidlaw is not interested in an expedited mediation.”

Top subcommittee Democrats, however, served TSA for failing to produce the comprehensive rail mass transit security plan mandated by the 2005 White House executive order.

“It is three years overdue,” said Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.).

“Laidlaw can raise the rates, but contractually, not until September,” said Local President Ange Beloy. “But Laidlaw is not interested in an expedited mediation.”

Top subcommittee Democrats, however, served TSA for failing to produce the comprehensive rail mass transit security plan mandated by the 2005 White House executive order.

“It is three years overdue,” said Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.).
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.

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 44107-4252.

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.

Please recycle.

This month’s winning photograph was taken by Stephen Noyes, a member of Local 1525 in Carbondale, Ill. “This picture was taken Oct. 28, 2006, at Hazleton, Kan.,” Noyes said, “on the BNSF Transcon route between Wellington, Kan., and Amarillo, Texas. This is a westbound stack train headed for California.”

UTU officer working on degree from National Labor College

Smarter is always better. Just ask CSX conductor Yvonne Hayes.

Hayes is taking time from her busy work and union-representation schedule to earn a twin-major college degree from the National Labor College.

The National Labor College, located in Silver Spring, Md., offers a bachelor of arts degree with majors in various areas of labor studies. During the 2006-2007 academic year, NLC will offer more than 70 week-long labor education classes in areas such as arbitration, organizing, negotiations, safety and health, union building and leadership development.

(The NLC offers hazard training programs that many UTU members have attended.)

Hayes, who serves as vice general chairperson and local chairperson for Local 1138, which represents CSX workers in the Miami, Fla., area, said that at NLC “you can take classes that enable you to be an integral part of building your union; those same union-building classes can start you on the path to finishing the bachelor’s degree you have always yearned for.

UTU members and others who are interested in pursuing educational opportunities should visit the UTU News, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.