WASHINGTON — Illinois State Legislative Director Joe Szabo, age 51, is President Obama’s choice to head the Federal Railroad Administration.

His March 26 nomination requires Senate confirmation.

The railroad industry already has signed on in support of the confirmation, with the industry’s chief congressional lobbyist, Ed Hubmer, saying Szabo “brings a wealth of experience in the railroad industry to this assignment.”

Rail industry support of the nomination is considered crucial to Senate confirmation.

UTU International President Mike Furhey emphasized that Szabo would be “the first FRA administrator to come out of the ranks of rail labor. It is a validation that this Ohio Department of Transportation administrator is a friend of organized labor.”

If confirmed, Szabo would become the 13th FRA administrator since its founding as a Department of Transportation agency in 1967.

Szabo would be the first FRA administrator to come out of the ranks of rail labor.

The FRA administers and enforces federal rail safety laws and writes and enforces federal rail safety regulations.

Szabo is a fifth-generation railroader. He hired out with the Illinois Central (now part of Canadian National) in 1976, where he worked as a yard switchman, road trainman and conductor. In 1987, he went to Chicago Metra when IC sold its rail commuter division.

In 1984, Szabo was elected secretary/treasurer of Local 1290, Chicago, progressing to delegate and legislative representative. In 1992, he was elected vice chairperson of the Illinois State Legislative Board, and in 1996 elected state legislative director. He also has been serving as a vice president of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

He also has represented the UTU on the FRA’s Rail Safety Advisory Committee, where he participated in the drafting of rail safety regulations.

In making the nomination, Obama said that as the UTU’s Illinois state legislative director, “Joe has provided vision and direction to rail safety and regulatory issues and worked with business and civic leaders in the advancement of freight and passenger rail service.”

Obama also noted that Szabo had served as mayor of the Village of Riverdale — a Chicago suburb — “where he managed more than 100 employees and a budget of $39 million serving 15,000 residents.”

The Senate’s assistant majority leader, Dick Durbin (D-lll.), said of the Szabo nomination, “I look forward to working with him to address our nation’s next round of rail innovation.”

The Journal of Commerce said Szabo “has a history of pursuing FRA penalties against railroads for (safety regulation) infractions that involve rail labor.”

Separately, Obama named Karen J. Rae, a transportation executive with nearly 30 years’ state and regional experience, as the FRA’s deputy administrator. That position does not require Senate confirmation. Rae will report to the administrator.

Rae is currently deputy commissioner for

Continued on page 10

Rail labor joins forces to aid Arkansas railroad crews

LITTLE ROCK — Railroad operating crews gained a new measure of safety March 10 after Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe signed into law a bill bringing contract carriers who transport rail employees under strict state safety standards.

The legislation — the Safe Transportation of Railroad Employees by Contract Carriers Act — was proposed to Arkansas lawmakers almost two years ago by former Arkansas State Legislative Director Don Beavers.

The bill was shepherd-ed through state legislature passage and signing into law by the governor by current State Director Steve Evans. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and the Arkansas AFL-CIO also helped in support of the law’s passage.

It applies to passenger contract carriers that transport railroad employees with a vehicle designed or used to transport up to eight persons, including the driver.

The new law imposes minimum driver-hiring qualifications and disqualification standards, establishes hours of service limitations for drivers, subjects drivers to drug testing, requires annual state DOT inspections of vehicles that transport rail crews, and requires DOT certification of weekly vehicle maintenance inspections and repair records.

Each vehicle is required to have fully function-

Continued on page 10

News and Notes

Officer loses leg in accident

Robert Kevin Spragg, vice local chairperson for yardmen in Local 1420, Memphis, Tenn., was severely injured March 2 at the BNSF Railway’s Tennessee Yard in Memphis. Spragg, 46 with 11 years of rail service, reportedly was struck by a cut of cars and lost his left leg below his knee. He is recovering in a local hospital.

Investigations are continuing.

Belden memorial ride set

The Scott Belden Memorial Motorcycle Ride, to benefit the UTU PAC, will be held Sunday, Aug. 16, at the New Orleans regional- meeting. Rental motorcycles are available from New Orleans Harley-Davidson, 1208 Lafayette St., New Orleans, LA 70112; (504) 362-4004. For more information, contact Louisiana State Director Gary Devall at (225) 383-5741.

Joe Szabo with President Obama

The UTU was well represented at the signing of the Safe Transportation of Railroad Employees By Contract Carriers Act. Seated is Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe. Directly behind the governor is UTU-endorsed bill sponsor Rep. Barbara Nix. Standing to the left of Nix is SLA Evans, AFL-CIO SFT Vice President, and former SLA Don Beavers. Second row, directly behind Nix, is Local 656 (Little Rock) Legislative Rep. Talmon Perez and AFL-CIO State President Alvin Hughes with other labor organization representatives.
Local 202, Denver, Colo.

On March 7, this local established a program to provide a $50 union supermarket gift card to each furloughed member of the local, State Legislative Director Local Secretary Rick Johnson reported. To receive a gift card, furloughed members must attend one local meeting per month. Meeting times are 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month and 10 a.m. on the third Thursday of the month at 1900 W. 38th Ave. “It is our intent to help, in this small way, to minimize the effect of these hard economic times on our members’ families in this time of need,” Johnson said. The gift card program will last at least four months.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.

Conductors Robert C. Taylor and Gary Holland retired after 39 and 32 years of service, respectively, Local Chairperson Harry J. Garvin Jr. reported. “All the members of Local 240 wish them both many long years of happiness and retirement,” Garvin said.

Local 432, Champaign-Urbana, Ill.

Legislative Rep. Grady Crippen reminds all members of the local that meetings are currently held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Rock’s Bar and Grill, 25 E. Springfield Ave., in Champaign. Also, the local has established a Web site that can be found at http://0432.UTU.org.

Local 607, Thayer, Mo.

For the third consecutive year, members of this BN Railroad have made a generous donation to radio station KAMS’s Country Cares for St. Jude Kids radiothon, Local President Chris Skaggs reported. Members of the local, along with State Legislative Director Ken Menges, Auxiliary International President Carol Menges and UTU VIA Field Supervisor Steve White, met with representatives from St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., at the radiothon on Feb. 11 and presented a $250 donation.

Local 1081, Glendale, Ariz.

Pictured, from left, are Local Chairperson Tom Tate, U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor (D-Dist. 4) and Legislative Rep. Greg Hynes after the UTU team placed first on Saturday, March 21, and second on Sunday, March 22, during a golf tournament to raise funds for the Pastor campaign. The tournament was part of “sports weekend” fundraiser for the congressman, Arizona State Legislative Director Scott Olson said.

**Wis. legislative board to host railroad safety summit**

The Wisconsin State Legislative Board is conducting its third annual railroad safety summit on June 29 at the Ramada Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Stevens Point, Wis., according to State Director Jim Deneen. All railroad employees (all crafts) and their union representatives are invited to attend this daylong event, which will include discussions on track maintenance (National Labor College), new hours of service regulations (FRA) and an update on whistleblower protection (OSHA). RSVP to Wisconsin State Legislative Board at (608) 251-4120 or e-mail utualo56@gmail.com.

Local 1328, Louisville, Ky.

At the local’s February meeting, President Phil Culver presented the law firm Wettemark Holland & Keith investigator James Chappell with a commemorative brass lantern for all the great work he and his firm have done to assist Local 1328 and its members. “Brother Chappell is a lifetime member of the UTU and always goes the extra mile to help his brothers and sisters,” Culver said.

Local 1328 President Phil Culver shakes hands with Wettemark Holland & Keith investigator James Chappell with a commemorative brass lantern for all the great work he and his firm have done to assist Local 1328 and its members. “Brother Chappell is a lifetime member of the UTU and always goes the extra mile to help his brothers and sisters,” Culver said.

**Willmar retiree provides timeless words of wisdom**

People study history because history often repeats itself. The economics of today have put many in dire straits, but UTU retiree Elmond Eklad has seen bad times before and sees hope for the future.

Eklad was a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers and later the UTU. On Feb. 24, at Local 1177’s annual Chili Feed in Willmar, Minn., Eklad offered 60 active and retired members in attendance his words of wisdom.

“After the worst days of the Depression, we had good traffic out here by the 1940s. Traffic started to pick up in 1940 and 1939, but we kept working and hoped for the best. The trains were shorter and we had workers laid off, but they came to local meetings, kept in touch, and we helped them out,” said Eklad. “Then in 1940, when England was in trouble, we saw more traffic and the men went back to work. Once the war started, we couldn’t find enough good men to run the Great Northern."

“Hopefully, it won’t take another war to get the men back to work,” Eklad said. “Tell them to tough it out, the trains will fill out, and they’ll be back to work. They’ll make the back pay. We have always and we always will.”

“Elmond Eklad was one of those workers who was a true union man, who you really looked up to amongst the ranks,” said former UTU Minnesota State Legislative Director Willis Croonquist, who worked with Eklad from 1955 to 1980. “He was then, and is today, an honest man who did not drink, did not swear, and was a pleasure to work with.”

“But,” Local 1177 Legislative Rep. Brian Hunstad said, “legend has it that if you mentioned another rail operating union’s name around Eklad, all bets were off.”

“It’s really remarkable and a privilege to stand with a gentleman like Eklad, and to listen to the knowledge and the history of the railroad,” said Hunstad. “And when I see an old timer like that, make no mistake, as a member of the UTU, I’m proud of this union.”

Local 1252, Fresno, Calif.

Retired member Jim “Tanglefoot” Thompson, 94, passed away in February, according to retired former Secretary & Treasurer Donald Heffernan. “Thompson drank coffee from the same small drip pot he carried across Europe in WW II and then at home on every trip he made on the railroad. He never said ‘no’ when asked to help and never asked to be repaid for any help he gave,” Heffernan said.

Local 1336, Salt Lake City, Utah

Former Union Pacific General Chairperson Terri Kunz, one of the 40 men who worked to create the UTU, passed away Feb. 24. He was 94.

Kunz served on the committee that wrote the UTU’s constitution and bylaws when it was formed as a merger of five railroad brotherhoods in 1969. He is survived by his wife, Helen, and children Peggy and Gary.

Local 1440, Staten Island, N.Y.

This local representing employees of the MTAs Staten Island Railroad will celebrate a Union Night Out with the Staten Island Yankees July 18 at 7 p.m. at Richmond County Bank Ballpark, Secretary & Treasurer Vincent LaBella reported. Those attending will receive a free, limited edition Yankees ball cap and a game program.

The event will also feature all-you-can-eat burgers, hotdogs, chicken sandwiches and sodas, and children 12 and under can run the base after the game. Interested members should send their name, address and telephone number, along with the number of tickets requested, to Local 1440 GCASIR, Attn: Thomas Wilson, 4 Court St., Staten Island, NY 10314. Tickets are $31 each and checks should be made payable to Local 1440 GCASIR. For more information, contact LaBel- la at (718) 662-3179.

Local 1813, West Colton, Calif.

The local has scheduled its 50th annual golf tournament for June 2 at Indian Hills Golf Club, 5700 Club House Dr., in Riverside, Calif. The cost is $75 and includes green fees with cart, barbecue lunch, prizes, a raffle and just a lot of fun, reported Local President Richard Acuna. Acuna is also coordinating a picnic that will include all Los Angeles service units from locals 1513, 1846, 240, 1770 and 1422 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on June 13 at Yuccaipa Regional Park, 3300 Oak Glen Rd., in Yuccaipa, Calif. A $7 parking admission fee includes parks, fishing at three lakes, free food, drinks and entertainment. There is a fee for the water park. Bring your families and come enjoy yourselves. For further details on either event, call Acuna at (909) 496-9581 or e-mail cbrace1813@verizon.net.

Local 1951, Albany, N.Y.

CSX yardmaster Michael Doherty will be running in his sixth consecutive Boston Marathon on April 20 to raise money for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. To sponsor Doherty, visit his page on Web site www.run1951.com/index2009 or e-mail him at mdoherty76@comcast.net. “I receive a lot of donations from my UTU brothers and sisters and many other CSX employees. If you’ll be in Boston on April 20, 2009, please come cheer on my DMFC teammates and me as we race towards the ultimate finish line: a world without cancer,” Doherty said.
Feds sue UP over drug smuggling

BROWNSVILLE, Texas – The Department of Justice has filed lawsuits against the Union Pacific, seeking $37 million in fines for not preventing the use of railcars to smuggle more than 4,200 pounds of marijuana and 262 pounds of cocaine from Mexico through California and Texas.

Up issued a statement last month, noting that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and not the railroad determines which railcars entering the U.S. and that the border patrol is “punishing Union Pacific for drug smuggling that the company has no ability to prevent.”

“Drugs traffic originates on Mexican railroads that Union Pacific does not control. When Mexican trains reach the U.S. border, CBP takes control of them (and bars) Union Pacific from inspecting or inspecting the trains except under CBP direction,” the statement noted.

Union Pacific further contends that CBP even penalizes the rail company after the railroad finds drugs that car owners did not suspect.

The railroad also contends that it cannot send its personnel into Mexico to inspect the railcars for drugs, because they would not be allowed to carry arms or use drug-detecting dogs. Personnel “would have no legal authority and would be forced to turn over drugs to unauthorized authorities in Mexico,” Union Pacific contends.

Amtrak workers to get back pay

Amtrak employees — including Amtrak represented and non-represented workers, including engineers, conductors and yardmasters — will receive 100 percent of their back pay on May 1, Amtrak President and CEO Wickliffe Boardman has announced, according to the “Employee Appreciation Day.”

Boardman told UTU Internationa

Amtrak is a commuter carrier in New York City’s Staten Island borough and is a subsidiary of New York’s Metropolitan Transit Authority, which also controls New York City’s subways and the Long Island Road. The Amtrak UTU Local 100 workers in all crafts on the SIR, including locomotive engineers, conductors, track workers, building and bridge workers, track cleaners and third-rail shop

Amtrak employees provided for a wage-increase agreement that was signed by representatives in 2008. Amtrak agreed to pay it out over two fiscal years.

Amtrak, so far, has funded some $428 million of the $737 million contract settlement, leaving a balance of $145 million. The remaining amount will be paid May 1.

UTU National Legislative Director James Stem has been working with Amtrak lobbyists to convince Congress to provide the necessary funding.

In a Feb. 17 letter to Congress, Boardman wrote: “Amtrak is committed to meeting our agreements, and holds the skills of its employees and the dedication they bring to their job in high esteem. To that end, we are meeting and intending to continue to meet, on a quarterly basis, with the unions’ leadership to ensure that we are communicating frankly and clearly with them. We hope that this will always be an open and productive relationship.”

In 2005, as federal railroad administrator, Boardman told Railway Age magazine, “Railroads must invest in human resources by hiring talented and motivated people and training them, as well as measuring the quality of that training and motivation to ensure incremental and continual improvement.” Boardman told Forbes: “On May 1, everyone will be paid their remaining back wages.”

The UTU continues aggressively pursuing with the National Carriers’ Conference Committee an equitable resolution of the entry-level rates-of-pay issue after an arbitrator ruled in January that the dispute be returned to the bargaining table.

While a daylong bargaining session in mid-March failed to produce a tentative agreement, it did add a new nighttime round of reducing member layoffs and protecting the incomes and benefits of those members who are laid off.

“Notwithstanding the impact of the recession on freight loads, we are approaching the peak employee-vacation season, and the carriers must soon comply with new hours-of-service regulations,” UTU Boardman said.

“Notwithstanding the impact of the recession on freight loads, we are approaching the peak employee-vacation season, and the carriers must soon comply with new hours-of-service regulations,” UTU Boardman said.

SIR members form new general committee

UTU members working on Staten Island Rapid Transit Operating Authority — more commonly known as Staten Island Railway (SIR) — have overwhelmingly voted to form their own general committee.

They previously were represented by Long Island Rail Road’s general committee (GO SIR), now they will have their own general committee, GO SIR.

The SIR is a commuter carrier in New York City’s Staten Island borough and is a subsidiary of New York’s Metropolitan Transit Authority, which also controls New York City’s subways and the Long Island Road. The SIR UTU Local 100 workers in all crafts on the SIR, including locomotive engineers, conductors, track workers, building and bridge workers, track cleaners and third-rail shop

information credits and their seniority accumulation is just good business,” Boardman said.

“By paying to fully trained new hires, who are given the same responsibilities and accountabilities as of their trained peers, improves morale and lessens the likelihood that those new hires will depart the railroad.”

Although some railroads have scrapped entry-level rates for newly hired and fully-trained conductors and yardmasters that are given full responsibilities, it is the industry norm to pay them less for the first five years.

A second bargaining session over these issues is scheduled for late April. Representing the UTU at the bargaining table will be Boardman; Assistant President Amy Martin; International Vice President Robert Kerstetter; General Chairpersons John Hancock, John Lensiwicki and Jim Huston, and Alternate Vice President — East Delbert Strunk.

The carriers — BNSE Railway, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific — will be represented by their chief labor negotiators.

worker. All are members of Local 1440, Staten Island.

SIR mechanic Thomas Wilson was elected general chairperson and delegate. James Masaro was elected vice general chairperson of track and bridge building. David Jichowski was selected vice general chairperson for conductors and trainmen.

President of the local is James Brownell; vice president is Dennis Jackson; Vincent LaBella serves as secretary/treasurer.

.. The members petitioned UTU International President Mike Futhey for authority to vote on forming an independent general committee, which was granted. The members voted overwhelmingly in favor of autonomy.

Also supportive was Long Island Rail Road General Chairperson Anthony Simon.

General committee dues will not increase, Wilson said. “All dues money will now stay in house,” he said. “Now we will have a general chairperson on site to handle negotiations and my problem that way arise.”

“We will now be negotiating separately with the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority, which is the largest such agency in the world and an admirable forum looking forward to the challenge,” Wilson said.

“Our new team of union representatives has devoted a lot of their time to provide information to our members,” LaBella said.

Breaking news as it happens: Register for UTU News alerts

Information is power and your UTU is trying to give you as much information as it can, as soon as possible. Savvy members have learned that going to www.utu.org at least once daily to check the latest transportation news and any important new happenings within the UTU.

We want important UTU news to reach you even faster. So we are updating our special e-mail list by which UTU members may voluntarily sign up to receive e-mail on important UTU events. Register for our e-mail alerts by visiting www.utu.org and clicking on the “E-mail Alerts” tile on the UTU homepage. Be sure to double check your information for accuracy before sending your e-mail registration.

Your e-mail address will be kept confidential. It will not be sold, traded or given to any one else. You will not receive any solicitations to purchase anything as a result of registering.
We are urging railroads and their customers to join with us and others in rail labor to meet jointly to resolve, amiably and quickly, a long-simmering and too-often acrimonious quarrel over how railroads are regulated by Congress and the U.S. Surface Transportation Board.

This dispute threatens the long-term viability of the railroad industry, its ability to increase capacity and improve customer service, its image as the environmentally superior transportation mode, and its immediate ability to attract and invest federal stimulus funds for further productivity enhancements that will benefit rail customers, the carriers and rail labor.

This quarrel is fracturing congressional support for railroads, and its continuation will only further erode the industry’s ability to shift freight from the highways, expand commuter rail access and strengthen our national intercity rail passenger network to include high-speed rail options.

If this dispute is not resolved dur- ing the current session of Congress, we face a most unpleasant result of negative conversations dominating congressional hearings and crowding out the ability and willingness of Congress to focus on legislation to benefit carriers, their customers and rail labor.

A mutually mediated solution, with rail labor at the table, will ensure that rail customers make long-term choices to move more products by rail and create a win-win result for each vested interest.

We wish to create a workable and effective partnership among freight railroads, commuter railroads, Amtrak, rail customers and rail labor.

This is how we will best protect our job security, our wages and our benefits.

It is in each of our best and long-term interests for the rail industry to improve the quality and quantity of rail service and continue to provide good jobs and competitive wages

...and benefits to UTU and other rail labor organization members.

To this end, I have asked our national legislative director, James Stem, to reach out to the various stakeholders to begin the collective dialogue.

I am personally reaching out to other rail labor chiefs and carrier CEOs.

We intend to be the catalyst to resolve this dispute quickly and equitably – and well in advance of the start of contract talks with the carriers in November.

Of interest is a recent report by the Wall Street firm of Morgan Stanley, which said our initiative is likely to earn for rail labor a meaningful reward at the bargaining table.

Said Morgan Stanley:

“Labor is a key player in the regulatory debate. Rail senior management may need to offer unions something of value in labor negotiations as a quid pro quo for support in Washington. As a result, one-man crews are unlikely in the next round of negotiations, and we expect lab to push for a greater share of profits going forward.”

A mtrak has always been a company whose time is coming, but now, I think, it’s fair to say that it has truly arrived.

Congressional passage of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act and the recent stimulus bill will give us an idea of the plans the country has for passenger rail.

Given the state of the highway and air traffic systems, and the past spikes in oil prices, it has come not a moment too soon. This is a tremendous opportunity for Amtrak to build on the solid performance our company turned in last year. We are truly the safer, greener and healthier transportation alternative, and we are going to turn our efforts to realizing that vision.

“We are truly the safer, greener and healthier transportation alternative, and we are going to turn our efforts to realizing that vision.”

A message to UTU members from Amtrak President Joe Boardman

Boardman envisions the future of Amtrak

By Mike Futhcy, International President

“This is how we will best protect our job security, our wages and our benefits.”

“One of the most important things management can do for our employees is to build a safety program that works.”

I think the establishment of cross-functional safety teams was a good start. We are going to expand and improve these teams, and develop a “risk-based” and “behavior-based” process. We need to work cooperatively to use observations to determine accident risk and develop strategies to reduce these risks with union-management field co-operation. I am confident that we can make some significant improve-
State Watch

North Carolina

State Legislative Director Richard Westbrook and his wife Janie (who serves as the state director for the UTU Auxiliary) recently attended a fundraiser for Rep. Heath Schuler (D-N.C 11th Dist.). Schuler serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which has jurisdiction over railroads, transit, Railroad Retirement, bus transportation and other issues, including transportation safety, vital to UTU members.

Former President Bill Clinton also was in attendance. Pictured at the event, from left, are Schuler, the Westbrooks and Clinton.

Florida

State Legislative Director Andres Trujillo has testified against a proposed state constitutional amendment that would require secret ballot elections among workers to decide if they want to form a union.

Federal law currently allows such elections, which are preferred by employers, or a second method known as card check, which is similar to a petition and is favored by unions. The law now gives employers the right to choose which procedure to use.

A bill pending in the Democratic-controlled Congress called the Employee Free Choice Act would do away with employer choice. It would require unions to be formed without an election if a majority of workers submit check cards.

In testimony before the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee, Trujillo questioned why business interests are suddenly so interested in the secret ballot issue.

“That’s because they control all the cards, and I would venture a guess that when democracy’s only safe if Walmart’s in charge,” he said. Trujillo said businesses are worried the federal legislation “will make it a workers’ choice, not Wal-mart’s or Home Depot’s.”

Kansas

Members of the Kansas Legislative Board recently attended the Annual Washington Day Event in Topeka. State Director Don Lindsey reports. The featured speaker was Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer. Lindsey and Assistant State Director Ty Douglass were invited to a private reception prior to the banquet and had an opportunity to visit with Gov. Schweitzer, as well as Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, who recently was confirmed as secretary of Health and Human Services in the Obama administration. From left to right are Chad Hinton (alternate assistant legislative director), L-506, Heringen; Lindsey; Ron Pauls (legislative rep.), L-477, Newton; Jay Helbhauser (alternate board secretary), L-94, Kansas City; and Douglass (L-1503, Marysville).

Georgia

The Georgia State Legislative Board sponsored a recent luncheon at the State Capitol in Atlanta held for the Working Families Caucus, State Legislative Director Howell Keown reports. Some 17 state senators and representatives were among the 50 attendees, Keown said. The caucus, a non-partisan voice for Georgia’s working families, was created to develop and promote legislation and policies that invest in workers, families and communities, and help Georgians achieve the American dream of security, prosperity, and equality. Shown at the luncheon are, left to right, Legislative Rep. Gary Whitte (L-1971, Atlanta); Assistant Director Tim Usery (L-1970, Fingerhald); Keown and Legislative Rep. Bernard Gray (L-1033, Atlanta).
Keep electing lawmakers who understand your needs.
You deserve a say in making laws.
Make your pledge to better government today.
Complete the pledge form below and mail it today.

UTU Political Action Committee Donation Form
United Transportation Union, 14690 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250

I, (please print) ________________________________ of Local ________________________________
pledge to give UTU PAC the amount indicated below annually to be sent on the 1st of the month
$25 per year $50 per year $100 per year $200 per year $500 per year $1000 per year
$1,500 per year $2,000 per year

$1,000 per year $2,500 per year $5,000 per year $10,000 per year $25,000 per year

This is a contribution to UTU PAC of ________________________________.

(please print) ________________________________ of Local ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

UTU PAC contributions are registered with the Federal Election Commission, 304 4th St. NW, Washington, DC 20446, and are available for inspection from that agency and appropriate state agencies. Contributions or gifts to UTU PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes.

Glen A. Lamm, Legislative Representative Local 1129
Bruce A. Prybylski, Legislative Representative Local 1129
George J. Milhearn, Legislative Representative Local 78
Randy D. Ufley, Legislative Representative Local 400
Robert W. Clay III, Legislative Representative Local 214

“UTU PAC is how we help elect—and keep in office—labor-friendly lawmakers whose doors and ears are always open to our national and state legislative directors. The UTU PAC is an investment in job security.”
—UTU International President Mike Futhey

“UTU PAC is essential to our achieving legislative goals at the state and national level to benefit our members and their families. A dollar- a-day contribution pays substantial dividends.”
—UTU National Legislative Director James Stem

Just a few of your UTU legislative representatives

Kerron T. Saunders, Legislative Representative Local 58
Roger A. Crowzell, Legislative Representative Local 59
William D. Yacullo, Legislative Representative Local 17

Top Ten UTU PAC Locals

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Average UTU PAC contribution per member per month in dollars for 2008

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<td>Marshalltown, Iowa</td>
<td>$2.31</td>
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All aboard for coastline cruise

Members of the UTU Alumni Association have spoken: They want to enjoy a full cruise along the eastern coast of New England and Canada, and the UTU is going to make it happen for them!

The UTU recently aligned with Landfall American Express Travel to offer members of the UTU Alumni Association discount travel travel. This cruise is the first.

The cruise will be Sept. 26 to Oct. 3 aboard the Princess Cruise Lines Caribbean Princess.

Participants will enjoy a leisurely seven-day sail from New York up the coast and back, stopping at Newport, R.I.; Boston; Bar Harbor, Maine; St. John, New Brunswick, and Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Rates start at $400 per person (double occupancy) plus $295 in taxes and government fees; rates are subject to change, and restrictions apply.

For a complete itinerary and more information, call Landfall American Express Travel toll free at (800) 835-9233, e-mail travel@landfalltravel.com or log onto www.landfalltravel.com.

Landfall can also arrange airfares.

This cruise is open to members of the UTU Alumni Association; other UTU members, however, are welcome to join them.
Don’t gamble with your retirement money!

With the stock market fluctuating in value, now is the time to ensure a positive return on your money.

Bet on a sure thing. UTUIA is currently paying 4% interest on IRAs and annuities. Although that rate can change from time to time based on UTUIA’s investment earnings, you will never earn less than our guaranteed 3% interest rate.

Give us a call toll-free at 800-558-8842, or complete and return the coupon below to receive more information.

Information, please

I would like more information on the following UTUIA life annuities. Please print.

☐ Traditional IRA ☐ Roth IRA ☐ Flexible Premium Annuity

Full name: ______________________________ Date of birth: ______________________________

Address: __________________________ City: __________ State: ___ Zip: __________

Telephone number with area code: __________________________ Are you currently employed? Yes ☐ No ☐

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

North Dakota legislature passes bill limiting train whistles

RISMARK, N.D. – With the support of UTU’s North Dakota State Legislative Board, the legislature has passed a bill that limits the frequency of when locomotive personnel must blow their train whistles.

Train crews in North Dakota will no longer be required to blow their whistles at every private crossing. H.B. 1342 also requires that private crossings be marked with crossbucks and stop signs. Whistle posts will be removed.

If a land owner or someone with an interest in the area wants the whistle routinely blown at a private crossing, the law would allow for them to notify the railroad to put up whistle posts.

“What this bill does is align North Dakota law with federal regulations for public crossings. We are no longer required to blow the whistle routinely at every private crossing,” UTU State Legislative Director John Risch said.

“The overall goal is to give train crews some discretion as to when to blow the whistle at private crossings.”

Risch said the UTU is also in support of state senate bill S.B. 2338 that would provide funding for improved rail crossing safety with revenue designated to the state’s Highway Trust Fund.

“Currently, railroads in North Dakota pay $1.2 million annually in a special fuel tax that goes into the Highway Trust Fund,” Risch said. “It is totally inappropriate that railroads pay money into the fund to directly subsidize a competing industry.

“Consequently, we are working with the legislature to use some of the railroad fuel tax money for rail crossing safety, including quiet zones, improved electronic gates, and other upgrades.”

To voice support of S.B. 2338, Risch said UTU members in North Dakota should call the legislative telephone message center at (888) NDLEGIS (635-3447) or (201) 328-3373 and leave a message for legislators in support of S.B. 2338.

The UTU International Staff: Here to Serve You

BRENDA BARRON
Brenda Barron serves the UTU and UTUIA as secretary to General Counsel Clint Miller and Associate General Counsel Robert McCarty. She started in 1980 in the union’s Updating Department, then worked a number of years in the Accounting Department. She also served as secretary to now-retired Vice President Pete Patoureas. She has been in the Legal Department since 1995. “I type legal briefs and correspondence, do filing and keep the legal books current,” she said. “I also handle a lot of phone calls. There are a lot of deadlines and the work often is fast paced so the days go quickly. It’s certainly not boring.”

PATRICIA SCHMIDT
Patricia Schmidt is the assistant director of UTUIA’s Claims Department. She started in 1974 as a clerk in the Policyholders Service Department. Since then she has worked her way up through various assignments in the UTUIA, information technology and accounting departments. “My department handles accident and health, premium waiver, life and endowment claims,” she said. “In addition, I address and solve any questions that may arise in the department. It is gratifying to be able to help our members and their families during times of need.”

LISA POWERS
Lisa Powers is the UTUIA’s associate underwriter. She started in early 2007 after spending 13 years with Central Reserve Life Insurance. “I review applications along with required medical information, such as paramedical exams and medical records, against industry-standard guidelines, to determine the eligibility of insurance for those members applying for our disability income replacement insurance and/or life insurance products,” she said. “I enjoy working at UTUIA and facing the challenges and rewards that each day can bring.”

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
Amtrak announces capital improvements

WASHINGTON – Amtrak has released a list of capital projects to be funded by $1.3 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The highlights of the list include railroad and locomotive restoration to augment the current fleet; projects to bring Amtrak stations into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); passenger and maintenance facility improvements, and track, bridge and signal replacements and upgrades.

The investment package is broken down into two separate accounts: one for railroad and station capital projects funded at $454 million and one for security and life safety projects, funded at $450 million.

For a detailed list of projects, go to www.amtrak.com and click on “Inside Amtrak,” then “Other Reports.”

Following are examples – not a comprehensive list – of some of the projects to be performed with ARRA funding.

**Railcars and locomotives**

Amtrak shops in Beech Grove, Ind., will rebuild 20 out-of-service Superliner and one Viewliner railroad ($19.3 million) and 15 locomotives ($13 million) and the Amtrak shops in Beat, Del., will rebuild 60 out-of-service Amfleet railcars ($58.5 million). This equipment can be used throughout the Amtrak system.

**Other station projects**

Replacement of the existing Auto Train passenger station in Sanford, Fla., ($10 million)

There is no more dangerous work environment than on the railroads, where injuries too often are severe. The Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) makes railroads accountable for unsafe working conditions. Railroads retain skilled attorneys to protect their interests. You also have access to skilled and experienced attorneys who understand the industry, its safety hazards, and every aspect of the FELA. They are the UTU Designated Legal Counsel, chosen for their special knowledge and experience. Their job is to represent you. This continuing column introduces you to all of the UTU Designated Legal Counsel. For a complete listing, go to the UTU home page at www.utu.org and click on the blue tile, “Designated Legal Counsel.”

Meet your UTU Designated Legal Counsel

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<th>Former One Bus GC Frierson dies</th>
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<td>Former One Bus General Chairman Joe Frierson passed away March 5. He was 56. Frierson, of Local 710 in Newark, N.J., served as general chairman from 1999 to 2003. He joined the UTU in 1990. “Joe was a devoted member and officer and he will be missed by his fellow members,” UTU Bus Vice President Vic Bafoni said.</td>
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**Hazmat training at regional meeting**

Rail workers interested in learning about how to respond to hazardous-materials incidents are encouraged to attend a special seminar prior to the San Francisco regional meeting.

Certified trainers from the rail workers’ hazmat training program, all members of the UTU, will conduct the seminar. The hazmat first response seminar will begin at 8:30 a.m. and covers duties of first responders, hazmat regulations, communications, chemical procedures, hazard classifications, resources for health and safety activities, and railroad security.

Because space is limited, participants must complete the sign-up form and a seminar fee. A $25 registration fee is required, which will help cover the cost of program materials.

Checks should be made payable to the “UTU.” Please keep payment for this semi-

Enroll, send your name, local number, e-mail address and telephone number, along with payment, to UTU Hazmat Program, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107.
Regional meetings offer education, fracternalism

The 2009 UTU/UTUIA regional meetings have been designed to provide a broad range of fraternalism, lots of worthwhile education and tons of family fun. 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 explore and enjoy the many pre-program activities and regional meeting sites.

UTU meeting registration and hotel reservations can be made online by visiting www.utu.org and clicking on the “Meetings” link in the top menu bar at the left-hand side of the utu.org homepage. All those attending the regional meetings must be registered in order to attend any planned social function. Children ages 11 and under who are pre-registered are complimentary. The registration form is printed on the next page.

The pre-registration fee for the 2009 regional meetings is $150 per member, $125 per spouse or child age 11 or under. Additional fees apply for the pre-fee. You must make your own room reservations, and certain dead-

The $150 registration fee covers all workshop materials; a wel-

Reservation code: “United Transportation Union”

Daily room rate: $139 single/double, plus tax; rates good for three days before and after the meeting, depending upon availability

Reservation deadline: June 4, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved

Parking: Valet park: $49 per night (see other parking options on www.utu.org)

Golf outing: The regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, July 5, at the Lake Tahoe Golf Complex in Alameda. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and more. See www.utu.org for details.

New Orleans, Aug. 17-19
Sheraton New Orleans
500 Canal St.
New Orleans, LA 70130
www.sheratonneworleans.com

Hotel reservations: (888) 627-7033 toll free; (504) 595-6552 fax
Reservation code: “United Transportation Union”

Daily room rate: $99 single/double, plus tax. Room rates are good for three days before and after the meeting. Based upon availability

Reservation deadline: July 17, or until all rooms being held for UTU are reserved.

Parking: $30.00 per day

Golf outing: The regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, Aug. 16, at the Stonesthridge Country Club in Gretna. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, lunch and more. See www.utu.org for details.

Discount Airfares, Car Rentals

Continental Airlines and JetBlue Airways are offering discounted airfares to UTU members and others attending the San Francisco and New Orleans regional meetings. See the UTU Web site, www.utu.org, for details.

The UTU also has arranged with Avis Rent-a-Car to offer discounted rates to UTU members attending the 2009 regional meetings. To reserve a car, contact Avis at (800) 331-1600 and use the UTU/Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number: D150699. Or reserve online at www.
avis.com.

Two Spousal Tours Set

The UTU is arranging two different tours of local attractions at both regional meetings. The tours will take place on the day before the main meeting day, as the first of each regional meeting. Fees are $35 per registered spouse, guest or child, or $60 per unregistered spouse, guest or child. Check out www.utu.org for complete details.

Utu Regional Meeting Registration Form

Registering before the regional meetings speeds sign-in procedures, helps organizers plan more accurately, and saves on meeting costs. Each person attending the regional meeting, including family members and guests, MUST be registered in order to attend any event. Please note that these meetings last 2 1/2 days and conclude on the afternoon of the third day. Registration fees are $150 per person; children 11 years of age and under are complimentary. On-site registration is $200 per person. All fees must be paid in U.S. funds. Canadian funds will be returned, possibly delaying your registration. If you have questions, consult your bank. Registration forms with payment must be received at the UTU International 10 days prior to the start of the meeting for the member/spouse to be considered pre-registered.

Which regional meeting will you be attending? □ San Francisco □ New Orleans

Arrival date: ___________________ Departure date: ___________________

Transportation type: □ Automobile □ Air □ Other

Member registration

Name __________________________ Title (if any) __________________
Home address ____________________________________________

City/State/ZIP ______________________ Email _______________________

Phone number ( ) ______________________

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

Spouse registration □ San Francisco □ New Orleans

Spouse name __________________________ Title (if any) __________________

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

Spouse/guest tour: □ Sunday or □ Monday ($35 per registered spouse; $60 per unregistered spouse)

Child registration □ San Francisco □ New Orleans

Child name __________________________ Age __________________

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

Child name __________________________ Age __________________

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

Child name __________________________ Age __________________

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

Child name __________________________ Age __________________

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

Tour: □ Sunday or □ Monday ($35 per registered child; $60 per unregistered child) No. attending

Guest registration □ San Francisco □ New Orleans

Guest name __________________________ Relationship to member __________________

Home address ____________________________________________

City/State/ZIP ______________________

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

Spouse/guest tour: □ Sunday or □ Monday ($35 per registered spouse; $60 per unregistered spouse)

Golf registration □ San Francisco □ New Orleans

Name __________________________ Handicap __________ Name __________________________ Handicap __________

(Golf fees are $80 per golfer; include in total payment. Please provide names of others if foursome.)

Payment options

Check/money order enclosed (U.S. funds only) $ __________________________
Credit card □ VISA □ MasterCard __________________________
Card number __________________________ Exp. date __________________________

Total charged $ __________________________

Signature __________________________

Should additional space be needed, make copies of this form and attach to the original. This form and payment of $150 per person over the age of 11, plus golf registration fees of $80 per golfer (if applicable) and sports age and under are complimentary. Must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250, 10 days prior to the regional meeting for the member/spouse to be considered pre-registered. Make checks or money orders payable in U.S. funds to UTU Regional Meeting. Those who do not pre-register for the regional meeting but choose to register at the meeting site will be charged a $50 penalty fee.

San Francisco, July 6-8
Westin St. Francis
335 Powell St.
San Francisco, CA 94102
www.westinstfrancis.com

Hotel reservations: (800) WESTIN1 toll free; (415) 397-7000 direct; (415) 774-0124 fax
Reservation code: “United Transportation Union”

Daily room rate: $139 single/double, plus tax; rates good for three days before and after the meeting, depending upon availability

Reservation deadline: June 4, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved

Parking: Valet park: $49 per night (see other parking options on www.utu.org)

Golf outing: The regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, July 5, at the Chick Ciecoga Golf Complex in Alameda. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and more. See www.utu.org for details.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
UTU's Delbert Strunk scores for new hires

Some of UTU's newest members are suffering during this economic recession; many haven’t worked enough days to qualify for Railroad Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Often having left non-railroad employment and paid out of their own pockets for training for their first railroad job – only to be furloughed – many of these new hires have had the economic winds and optimism knocked completely out of them.

Strunk, who also is first alternate International vice president – East, convinced NS to suspend application of a contract clause that required newly hired, and then furloughed, employees to be terminated permanently following 365 days of consecutive furlough.


Now – and through Oct. 31, 2010 – new hires with fewer than three years of service who have been furloughed, or are furloughed, by NS on Strunk’s general committee, will not be permanently terminated by NS if their furlough extends for 365 consecutive days.

Thus, even if their furlough extends for 365 consecutive days, they will be called back to work in order of seniority without having to go through the rehire process – and they will accrue seniority for that time on furlough.

Some 600 new hires on Strunk’s general committee will benefit.

Strunk’s agreement was the first on NS, and he is working with other UTU general chairpersons to help them gain similar agreements.

“Our newest members should know that the UTU is totally committed to protecting every member’s rights, whether a 30-year veteran or a new hire,” Strunk said. “This is a small step to ensure a prosperous and fulfilling career on Norfolk Southern for new employees.”

UTU International President Mike Futhey credited general committee autonomy – guaranteed under the UTU constitution – for giving general chairpersons significant leeway to find creative ways to help members.

“The best ideas often are born at the general committee and local level, and then are shared with others,” Futhey said. “We all benefit from this creativity and the autonomy of general committees.”

Inside this issue of the UTU News:

- UTU retiree Elmond Eckblad provides words of wisdom. See page 2.
- Kansas legislative board members meet and greet. See page 5.
- UTU retiree, wife, live full time in motorhome. See page 8.
- UTU offers Alumni scenic East Coast cruise. See page 8.