Labor asks FRA to ban one-person rail crews

A petition for an emergency order prohibiting the use of one-person operating crews, including remote control operations, has been filed with the Federal Railroad Administration by the UTU and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

The petition, signed by UTU International President Mike Futhey and BLET National President Ed Rodzewicz, seeks to ban one-person rail crews currently in operation and to ensure remote control operations are performed by qualified personnel.

Not on our watch!

One-person rail crews?

One-person crews are industry attempts to increase profits at the expense of safety

at least one conductor on each train start, there currently are no federal safety regulations prohibiting use of one-person crews in yard or road operations.

One-person crew operations “have been nothing more than the industry’s attempt to reduce operating costs to increase profits, at the expense of worker safety,” says the UTU and BLET petition seeking the FRA emergency order.

The FRA is told in the petition, “The evidence shows that no conditions exist where a lone engineer or remote control operations are safe.”

The need for such an emergency order, says the UTU and BLET, is demonstrated by the May 10 accident on CSX in Selkirk, N.Y., which killed UTU-represented conductor Jeroq Bochke, who was working alone and using a remote control device.

“The workload associated with [remote control operations], while performing other safety-critical tasks, demands too much of a single individual, including loss of situational awareness,” says the petition.

There are numerous incidents of accidents, injuries and fatalities where railroads utilized one-person crews, and the injuries and deaths caused by remote and single-crew operations “have continued unabated since its inception in the early 1990s,” says the petition.

“This has been caused in part by the inaction of the FRA to a number of petitions filed both by the UTU and the BLET for emergency orders to prevent such operations.”

The petition says that while the FRA has reviewed the safety aspects of one-person crews, it “has really done nothing affirmatively to assure the safety of the employees in such operations.”

The UTU and the BLET also take “strong issue” with FRA conclusions that the safety records of remote control and conventional operations are “basically the same.”

Continued on page 10

UTU members work with FRA to craft new conductor-certification rules

The Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 provides that no later than April 2010, the FRA must conduct a rulemaking to determine the principles, elements and methods of conductor certification.

The FRA says it is now prepared to move forward on that rulemaking with the assistance of a Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) working group comprised of representatives from labor, the carriers and the FRA.

In response, International President Mike Futhey appointed a UTU team to join the RSAC Conductor Certification Working Group that will collaborate to create a consensus on the procedures to be applied in certifying conductors.

Appointed by Futhey to the RSAC Conductor Certification Working Group are:

- Retired Local 1470 Chairperson Director David A. Brooks;
- General Chairperson (GO 049) John Lesniewski;
- UTU Training Coordinator and Local 528 Legislative Rep. Ron Parsons;
- National Legislative Director James Stemp;
- Local 645 Chairperson Vinnie Tessitore;
- Attorney Larry Mann, UTU’s rail safety coordinator to UTU Designated Legal Counsel.

The UTU representatives are in agreement that certification conversely carries the risk of de-certification, and that their role includes building into the rulemaking safeguards from unnecessary burdens, and ensuring the rulemaking proceeds as intended by Congress in the Rail Safety Improvement Act.

Notably, the UTU representatives are in agreement that conductor certification will enhance the proficiency of UTU members, making them ever more professional and indispensable.

The UTU representatives to the working group said that collective bargaining, not the FRA rulemaking, would determine whether a certified conductor receives additional pay.

News and Notes

Safety task-force Web site now up

The UTU is asking for members’ suggesions on how to make their jobs safer, and has created a Web page to help that effort.

The page can be accessed from the lower-right side of the UTU home page at www.utu.org.

Stunned by a recent, sharp increase in rail-employee on-duty fatalities and career-ending injuries, UTU International President Mike Futhey has appointed a four-person task force to craft, in conjunction with the FRA, an action plan to reduce rail-employee risk while on the job.

Leading the task force is UTU Assistant Arizona State Legislative Director Greg Hynes, who will work with UTU Arizona State Legislative Director Scott Olson, Arkansas State Legislative Director Steve Evans and Michigan State Legislative Director Jerry Gibson.

Olson said, “If this task force is to be effective, it must digest concerns and suggestions of those who work in the yards and aboard trains. That is the purpose of the link on this page encouraging members to communicate directly with the task force.”

One-person conductor-certification team

Brooks, Lesniewski, Parsons, Steen, Tessitore
Local 17, Marshalltown, Iowa

This local, which represents Union Pacific workers, has over the years been among the top 10 locals in the country in terms of average-per-member UTU PAC donations. That ranking was solidified recently when four members upped their UTU PAC pledges to the Double Diamond ($600 per-year) level. They are Local President Mark Woodruff, Local Chairperson and Delegate James Reeder, Local Legislative Rep. and Assistant State Legislative Director Bill Backoff, and member Steve Wilkins. At a recent local meeting, which featured State Sen. Steve Solder, the members heard a load of legislative accomplishsments made possible by their UTU PAC donations. “That is what prompted these four members to step up,” State Legislative Director Pat Hendricks said.

Local 30, Jacksonville, Fla.

Amtrak conductor Russell A. Denson and assistant conductor Eric A. Morrison were recognized by the crew after administering a charge from an automatic external defibrillator to revive a passenger in distress. The two were notified by a sleeping car attendant that a passenger was suffering what appeared to be symptoms of a heart attack. They used the AED to return the passenger’s heartbeat to a normal rhythm. “This another life saved thanks to proper training, proper equipment and professional competency of a talented crew,” Amtrak Chief Operating Officer William Crosbie said. “They’re an example of the great job our employees do every day throughout the system.” “It took the whole crew to do this... It truly was a ‘team’ effort from the sleeping car attendants to the dining car staff, all the way to the coach attendants,” Morrison said.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.

Retired conductor John H. Woodfalk told UTU News that a group of railroad retirees meets for lunch on the first Thursday of each month at the Hometown Buffet, 11750 Sherman St., City of Industry, Calif. Woodfalk said the group would like to see some new faces and that all retired UTU railroaders are welcome.


Retiree John Parrule, 91, was honored at the Lodge 838 Dinner, according to UTU member Mike Sternfeld of Local 1470 at Washington, D.C. Parrule hunted on the Pennsylvania Railroad in the 1950s and later worked as an Amtrak conductor. Former Amtrak management employee Michael Weinman said, “I always got a great deal of history out of talking to John. He was one of the old hands who worked the first Metroliners and are almost all gone. He never let his union membership lapse.” Parrule was a dues-paying member of the UTU Alaska Association at the time of his passing.

Local 1168, Clovis, N.M.

This BNSF Railway local has established a Web site through the UTU International at http://1168.utu.org containing local news, contact and other information. Members should also note that local meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 9 a.m. at the Elks Lodge at 218 N. St. James.

Local 1470, Edmonston, Md.

Local Chairperson David A. Brooks officially hung up his ticket punch and Amtrak uniform on April 30, fellow conductor and Local 1933 Chairperson Miles “Ray” Cunningham Jr. reported. Brooks worked out with the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1966 and joined Amtrak in 1983. He serves on the UTU’s Transportation Safety Team and had helped establish FRA rail passenger safety guidelines. He was recently named by International President Mike Futhey to serve on FRA’s RSAC Conductor Certification Working Group. “Dave was always very passionate about his job, as well as working on behalf of his fellow members,” Cunningham said.

Members maintain solidarity through tough times

In today’s troubled economic times, with likely thousands of railroad workers sent home in furlough status, the members of UTU Local 265 in Pocatello, Idaho, remain united by a single principle: solidarity.

More than 100 UTU members in train service in Idaho have been furloughed by the Union Pacific since February, but State Legislative Director George Millward said that the men and women of Local 265 have taught him a lesson about unity.

“One would expect that once furloughed, these men and women wouldn’t be around until a recall was made and their membership was active again. Not so here! Each meeting, the room is filled with active members as well as furloughed members. They all contribute to the meetings with concern for everyone here in the UTU family,” Millward said.

He said the UP has attempted to circumvent local agreements and has tried to call some of these furloughed employees to work in so-called emergency situations, but not in seniority order.

Millward’s son, Nathan, one of the furloughed UP employees, said he is grateful that the UTU negotiated an Auxiliary Work and Training Status agreement, but now the crew is trying to take that away, too.

“I understand how the railroad slows down at four times of each month at 9 a.m. at the Elks Lodge at 218 N. St. James.

Local 1741, San Francisco, Calif.

Two employees of First Student were reinstated with full back-pay after being fired by the company last year, Vice Local Chairperson Brock Estes reported. As noted in the January 2009 UTU News, Robert Newman, who had a perfect 24-year driving record, was fired after a minor rear-end accident. Kenney Bell was also fired after the company conducted an illegal background check. The union took both cases to mediation and won, but the company still refused to reinstate them. Local Chairperson Paul Stein said both members have won arbitration hearings and have been reinstated.

“The labor movement stood up to the company and now they have to reevaluate their anti-union, anti-worker policies. These efforts have been a major victory for school bus drivers around the country,” Stein said.

On April 29 and 30, this BNSF Railway general committee presented an overview of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Temple, General Chairperson Paul Tibbit reported. On the first day, former UTU general chairperson and President Legal Bill Neilson and Steven Young explained the safety benefits of the act to railroad employees and the protections provided under the act to employees who reported unsafe working conditions and personal injuries. International Vice President John Previsich then provided the FRA’s interpretation of the act, followed by a group discussion on the practical application of the law. On day two, International President Mike Futhey addressed those in attendance, providing a state of the union and other information of interest to UTU members. Previsich then continued a dialogue on the safety act, as members of the general committee sought to apply the new law to their particular operating conditions and to hours of service.

BNSF Railway GO 393, Temple, Texas

Pictured, from left, are Gary Relic, Robert Groat, David Tiller, Michael Williamson, James Stuart, Lamoond Whitefield, A.T. Kite, Darrell Jones, Futhey, Curtis Wickliffe, Joe Joy, Joe Sealls, Office Manager Paul Neal, Tibbit, Deshane Cassel, Mike Wilson, Bobby Reid, Reggie Singleton and UTU Vice President John Previsich.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
Labour Secretary Hilda Solis

A four-term Democratic congresswoman from California, who received UTU PAC support. Solis’ father was a Teamster, and she says her family would not have succeeded “without the wages and protections my parents earned with the help of their union.”

Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez (nominated)

Mendez, a civil engineer, was Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano’s DOT secretary, and is past president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. His strengths are said to be in “innovative funding and financing of technology, infrastructure, research and planning.” He is awaiting Senate confirmation.

Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Szabo

UTU’s former Illinois state legislative director, Szabo is the first of now 13 FRA administrators to come out of the ranks of labor. Senate Assistant Majority Leader Dick Durbin (D-III.) said, “Joe Stobart understands better than most the long days, unpredictable schedules and sometimes hazardous working conditions that come with employment in the railroad industry.”

Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano

The Democratic governor of Arizona, and, previously, Arizona’s attorney general, she had been considered as a running mate in 2004 to presidential candidate John Kerry.

FRA Deputy Administrator Karen Rae

Rae previously was a senior official with DOTS in New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. UTU Virginia State Legislative Director Walter Yarthes says of Rae, “She is extremely knowledgeable and easy to work with. She always listened to the concerns of UTU members. The UTU had a seat at the table whenever railroad issues were discussed.”

New airline local elects officers

UTU’s newest local, Local 40, representing some 300 pilots and flight attendants employed by Great Lakes Aviation, has elected officers. They are: Kyle Thigpen, president; Janell Davis, vice president, and Mike Statwick, secretary/treasurer. The Board of Trustees are Steve Sulak, Paul Villery and Chris Johhan. The delegate is Stephanie Wagner. Jeff Gaines is the alternate delegate. Tony Lopez will serve as legislative representative. Terri Curtis as alternate legislative representative.

Railroad health plans win award

The national railroad health plans, including the UTU plan for its rail members, have won a top health-care industry award, which recognized the plans as demonstrating “an exceptional commitment to innovative health-care benefit strategies.”

The UTU demonstrated ingenuity in helping to devise this integrated approach to medical and behavioral health care, concluded the judges.

UTU Associate General Counsel Dan Elliott and Director of Membership Services Jeff Weisbarth served on the subcommittee that implemented the plan innovations. The 2009 Apex Award specifically recognized the plans’ programs that assist members – in conjunction with UnitedHealthcare, OptrumHealth and United Behavioral Health – in maintaining a healthier lifestyle to prevent them from becoming high-risk members in the future, or returning to a high-risk status.

The programs provide what is called an “integrated medical-behavioral-care approach to improving overall member wellness.”

An independent panel of experts from the health-care industry selects Apex Award winners based on innovative approaches to a specific health-care challenge.

DOL rescinds reporting demands

WASHINGTON – The Obama administration is rolling back rules requiring labor unions to report information about their finances and compensation, reports the Washington Times.

The regulation, known as the LM-2 rule, was at the heart of a lawsuit that the AFL-CIO filed against the Department of Labor last year.

The DOL is rescinding the expansion of the so-called LM-2 rule, approved during the last days of the Bush administration, which required unions to report more information about finances and labor leaders’ compensation on annual reports.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
FELA: The railroad workers’ best friend

Railroads have long sought repeal of the FELA, but Congress remains unwilling, owing in large part to the strength of the UTU PAC.

The carriers also have included in their Section 6 notices a demand that we negotiate an end to the FELA.

Not on this administration’s watch!
The carriers assert that by going to a federal/state workers’ compensation system, injured rail workers would somehow receive better and faster medical treatment and be treated more fairly.

Really! According to The New York Times, which recently looked at one of those allegedly “better” systems for handling injured-worker claims, the alternative is a nightmare.

Said the newspaper: “They come to [the worker’s compensation board] seeking authorization for medical treatment and replacement wages — in short, a quick and fair resolution from a system set up to replace fractional court fights between employers and employees.

“What they find instead is a sub-basement of the legal world, a state-run bureaucracy...[where] claims are handled without protection or any hope of redress.”

When a worker is injured, the railroad’s goal is to protect its rights. The injured worker’s rights are protected by UTU Designated Legal Counsel, who know how to stand up to the railroad.

A listing of UTU Designated Legal Counsel can be found on www.utu.org (click on “Designated Legal Counsel” in the blue tile box on the left-hand side of the home page). A listing also may be obtained from local officers or general chairpersons.

We spend your hard-earned dollars carefully

The UTUIA, meanwhile, earned more than $302,020 from operations during the first quarter of 2009. The UTUIA remains strong, with more than $23 million in surplus, as recently validated through an annual audit.

As for the DIPP, premiums exceeded claims for the first quarter 2009, which boosted the fund’s balance. We continue monitoring this fund, as claims are tied directly to the level of carrier discipline.

Our international finances have withstood the effects of this recession and associated financial calamities far better than most organizations.

We have met — and continue to meet — with carrier officers to discuss what we consider to be arbitrary discipline that unjustifiably damages employee morale, impending our ultimate goal of providing world-class transportation services.

At the local level, we are assisting local treasurers through workshops, individual assistance and the UTU University to better equip them to carry out their duties in managing their local funds.

The financial state of the UTU is strong and secure, and we intend to keep it that way.

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Almost 18 months ago — from $2.1 million to $4 million, which is a 90-percent increase.

The General Fund pays for international operations, including employee wages and benefits, travel tied to assistance provided general and local committees of adjustment, and headquarters rent.

Among cost-cutting actions was the reduction of one full-time administrative officer in the Cleveland headquarters and redistribution of that work to headquarters staff and other International officers. We have gone from 15 full-time International officers to 11, which is more than a 25-percent reduction.

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Railroad workers’ best friend on the job often is one who never speaks a word, but is there 24/7.

That friend is the Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA), which has been protecting railroad workers for more than 100 years.

In the hands of UTU Designated Legal Counsel, the FELA is a powerful tool, forcing railroads to improve workplace safety.

As a Supreme Court justice said, “The FELA was designed to put on the railroad industry some of the costs of the legs, arms, eyes and lives which it consumed in its operation.”

The FELA gives railroad employees the right to recover damages from their employers for injuries occurring at work.

By Mike Futhey, International President

International President’s Column

No one spends someone else’s dollars as carefully as we spend our own.

The UTU International leadership is especially sensitive to the fact that members entrust us with their own hard-earned dollars, and every member rightfully expects their union to gain the most value for those dues money. We do not take this obligation lightly.

Since taking office in January 2008, we have instituted new cost controls and conservative investment policies that, even in the face of significant furloughs by railroad carriers and problems in financial markets, have made the UTU more efficient and financially secure.

The International’s General Fund, as detailed in the most recent GS&IT report, has grown since the Futhey administration took office

Separately, our strike fund has grown by 45 percent, to $2.7 million, and our convention fund is on track to have the necessary $7 million minimum on hand to pay traditional and contemplated costs of the eleventh quadrennial convention in 2011.

Total International funds have grown from $7.5 million, when we took office in January 2008, to more than $13 million, which is an increase of more than 70 percent.

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Arizona
State Legislative Director Scott Olson reports that the State Legislative Board is supporting the Merge Women in Politics group. “This is a labor-based group of women who work to teach other women about the elective process and help them prepare to run for political office. So far, six graduates of the program have been elected to local offices. Our state legislative board provided scholarships for two women to attend classes.”

Valley Transit members approve new contract
The members of Local 1670 at Edinburg, Texas, who are employed by the Valley Transit Company, have overwhelmingly approved a new five-year contract that provides wage and mileage-rate increases in each year of the contract, along with a signing bonus, according to UTU Bus Vice President Vic Baffoni.

Valley Transit is a full-service bus company serving south-central Texas and northern Mexico, with intercity, charter, tour and transit operations.

The company has 50 daily schedules, as well as connections to nationwide travel on Greyhound Lines.

Baffoni said all of the employees’ work rules and benefits have also been preserved.

“I want to thank Acting General Chairperson Jorge Zepeda and Vice General Chairperson Vladimir Molina for their outstanding work in bringing this contract negotiation to a conclusion,” Baffoni said.

“This contract provides the necessary job security to our members during these difficult economic times.”

First Student bus drivers in San Mateo vote UTU
SAN MATEO, Calif., – Thirty school bus drivers employed by First Student here have voted for UTU representation.

These new members soon will become a local committee of adjustment within existing UTU Local 1741 in San Francisco.

UTU International President Mike Futehy congratulated Paul Stein, Local 1741 chairperson, for his efforts in helping to organize these First Student drivers in San Mateo.

UTU’s director of organizing, John Nadalin, worked closely with Stein in the organizing effort.

Officer elections and training sessions in grievance handling will be held shortly.

United States
All state legislative directors have been supplied with sufficient copies of the “2009 UTU Capital Guide” to distribute to each local legislative representative.

The Capital Guide is a 192-page compendium of facts about our nation’s government, including key telephone numbers and Web sites, selected agencies, elected officials and election schedules.

Local legislative representatives should contact their state directors to receive their copies.

Georgia

Brother Jim Finley of Local 1261, Atlanta, recently attended a labor breakfast with Rep. John Lewis (D) of Georgia’s 5th Congressional District.

“Congressman Lewis stated that he was very appreciative of the donation made to his campaign by UTU PAC and spoke very highly of labor and the UTU,” Finley said.

“I am saddened that I can’t be present to support the group members,” Lewis said. “I will support our Union PAC and our candidates, those who will fight for the right to organize and negotiate a fair contract.”

Finley works as a locomotive engineer for Norfolk Southern and serves his union brothers and sisters as the assistant state legislative director and as local president, delegate, local chairperson and legislative representative.

Utah
Quilt raffle benefits UTU PAC: The Auxiliary’s Salt Lake City Wasatch Lodge 136 is raffling a Rose rag quilt. All proceeds benefit UTU PAC. Tickets are $2 each or six for $10. For tickets write: Rose Rag Quilt, 83 Preston St., Kayceville, UT 84037. Make checks payable to “Wasatch Lodge.” The quilt will be on display at both regional meetings. Shown above with the quilt are, left to right, State Legislative Director Jay Seegmiller, quilt maker Sheri Stauffer, Lodge Secretary/Treasurer Cindy Milbourn and Auxiliary National Legislative Director Kathryn Hastings.

North Carolina
State Legislative Director Dickie Westbrook reports that UTU-crafted and endorsed legislation promoting safe walkways in railroad facilities has been approved by the House Transportation Committee. The legislation mandates a study of the need for safe walkways by the General Assembly.

“There is still a big difference between the two,” Westbrook said. “They can be similar and have a good ending, but if the bills are not similar, the bills will be dropped or will go to conference. This is a good example of how our UTU PAC money opens doors that lead to positive change in our workplace,” Westbrook said.

Montana
State Legislative Director Fran Marceau addresses delegates at the state’s AFL-CIO convention.

State Legislative Director Fran Marceau recently addressed delegates at the state’s 53rd annual AFL-CIO convention in Helena. The Montana AFL-CIO has nearly 38,000 members, a 20-percent increase in the past four years, Marceau said.

Jim McGarvey, former president of the American Federation of Teachers, was elected to another term as executive secretary. Marceau was re-elected to the group’s executive board.

Bus Department
By Vic Baffoni, vice president/director
vbaffoni@utu.org

Members helping members: That is the UTU way
Local UTU officers sacrifice much of their personal time, without compensation, to assist and serve their memberships, and they deserve recognition for their outstanding commitment.

That is what I intend to do in this month’s column.

Two such individuals deserving of recognition for their hard work and dedication are Lonnie Heston, president of Local 1496, Riverside, Calif., and David Ojeda, president of Local 1563, El Monte, Calif.

When the Teamsters initiated a representation drive on our members in Local 1496, who work for Ludlow Transit in the Riverside area, Lonnie spent hours explaining to his membership the many benefits and advantages of UTU representation and solidarity.

David, a friend of Lonnie’s, volunteered to help and came to Riverside and gave to the members of Local 1496 the perspective of another local on how to work together and resolve internal issues.

This willingness and commitment to assist fellow officers and members, to help them identify, improve and advance their mutually beneficial goals for the betterment of all, is very important to labor-union members everywhere, and especially to those working for Ludlow Transit.

It also forms the foundation of the UTU and its predecessor labor organizations; it is upon this foundation that the UTU has built 40 years of strength.

If you are seeking a solution to a problem in your local, or are looking for information and advice on better serving your fellow workers, you always have brothers and sisters ready to assist. Together, nothing can stop us.
Insurance Coverage

Employees of railroad workers to the national health and well-being employee assistance program, and that it does to erase hangover.

Any person can be an alcoholic. He/she can be anyone, from any group or social class. Symptoms of alcoholism:

Alcohol abuse

- Anyone can be an alcoholic. He/she can be anyone, from any group or social class.
- Symptoms of alcoholism:
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Retiree Gray named 2009 railroad person of the year

UTU Alumni Association member Don Gray of Local 1720, Pontiac, Mich., has been selected as the 2009 Railroad Person of the Year, in conjunction with Durand (Mich.) Railroad Days.

Gray was hired by Grand Trunk Western Railroad in 1950. During his employment, he worked on the main line as a switchman and as a yard and road conductor. He was employed by the railroad for more than 41 years before retiring in 1990. While with the railroad, Don saw the transition from steam to diesel.

He was the secretary and treasurer for the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen (a UTU predecessor) for more than 20 years.

Gray is a long-time volunteer for the Huckleberry Railroad and for the Durand Union Station, where he is a board member. He is also a second member of the Michigan Historical Train Museum. Don is active in the Red Cross, the Alzheimer Association, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, the Model A Script Region Club and is a lieutenant commander in the Civil Air Patrol.

Alumni Association member Don Gray at the Durand, Mich., Union Station.

Gray was nominated by his three daughters "who feel he possesses all the right qualities for railroad person of the year. He has one grandson, one granddaughter and one great-granddaughter who are very proud to have their father, grandfa- ther and great-grandfather named railroad person of the year for 2009."

Two members celebrate 100th birthdays

Two UTU members—Clarence B. Anderson and Frank G. Brown—have been recognized for being centenarians.

Anderson is a retired member of Local 1554, Ogden, Utah. He was last employed by the Ogden Union & Railroad Depot Company as a switchman-brakeman. He retired in 1974.

Brown is a retired member of Local 1571, El Paso, Texas. He retired in 1974 as a conductor for the Archison, Topkea & Santa Fe Railway, now part of the BNSF Railway.

The Railroad Retirement Board sent congratulatory letters to both UTU members.

Over the last four decades, the number of people reaching 100 years of age has increased almost tenfold, so that now one in 50 women and one in 200 men reach this age, according to the Social Security Administration.

RRB says trust fund is solvent

Responding to questions about the financial health of the Railroad Retirement and railroad unemployment trust funds, the labor member of the Railroad Retirement Board on May 4 issued an assurance that "we see no immediate cause for concern, even with the economic conditions our country now faces."

"Labor member of the Board. Speaksman said a more complete statement would be issued along with the chief actuary's annual valuation of the trust fund in June."

As for unemployment and sickness benefits paid to rail workers, Speaksman said the law provides "necessary safeguards that will ensure the integrity of the benefit," even under adverse economic conditions.

For example, Congress recently appropriated $20 million to extend payment of railroad unemployment benefits.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/State</th>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Winters, Charles W.</td>
<td>Plainfield, Ind.</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>Knight, Charles R.</td>
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<td>Smith, Carl R.</td>
<td>Deltona, Fla.</td>
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<td>LeClere, Paul</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>Mikrut, Norbert E.</td>
<td>Chicago, Ill.</td>
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<td>Powers, John P.</td>
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<td>Arvada, Colo.</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>Harral, Roland P.</td>
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<td>Wall Jr., Charles E.</td>
<td>Collingswood, N.J.</td>
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<td>MacGillivary, John D.</td>
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<td>Harmon, Earl M.</td>
<td>Baltimore, Md.</td>
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<td>Campbell, Delve E.</td>
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<td>Pierce, Charles A.</td>
<td>Pine Bluff, Ark.</td>
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<td>Bryan, Alfred L.</td>
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<td>Jett, James W.</td>
<td>Owensville, Ind.</td>
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<td>Burton, Lloyd E.</td>
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<td>Merrrell, Wallace E.</td>
<td>Centralia, Ill.</td>
<td>1066</td>
<td>Reardon St., James R.</td>
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<td>598</td>
<td>Carnathan, Joseph W.</td>
<td>Daphne, Ala.</td>
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For more information about the UTU Alumni Association, visit www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
NOTICE OF PRIVACY POLICY

The reason we collect information about you is to better serve your needs. Having accurate information permits us to provide you with an appropriate range of insurance products.

The non-personal public information that we collect about you varies according to the products, services or benefits you request, and may include:

- Information we receive from you on applications or other forms, such as name, address, Social Security number, assets and income;
- Information about your transactions with us, our affiliates or others, such as name, address, Social Security number, policy coverage, premiums and payment history;
- Information we receive from consumer reporting agencies, such as a credit history.

We may share the above non-personal public information we have about you with the United Transportation Union. Sharing this information assists us in:

- Processing the payment of your insurance premiums;
- Maintaining your insurance policies in force;
- Providing you with better customer service.

We may share the above non-personal public information we have about you with persons or companies that perform services on our behalf and to other financial institutions with which we may have joint marketing agreements.

We may share this non-personal public information with affiliated or non-affiliated third parties as permitted by law. We do not disclose personal medical information about you except as permitted by law or as you may authorize.

We restrict access to non-personal public information about you to those employees who need to know that information in order to provide products or services to you.

We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to guard your non-personal public information.

This privacy policy applies even if you no longer have any policies or a relationship with us.
RRB explains extension of jobless benefits

Members laid off from railroad carriers and who have exhausted – or nearly exhausted – their railroad unemployment benefits are concerned as to when the extended benefits enacted into law by Congress will begin to be paid.

The short answer, says the Railroad Retirement Board, is no later than June 30.

The reason for the delay, according to the board, is that while Congress authorized the extended unemployment benefits for rail workers and appropriated the funds, the process for making the payments is different than making so-called normal unemployment benefits.

Specifically, while so-called normal railroad unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Fund are funded solely by the carriers through payroll taxes, the extended benefits are funded solely through a special $20 million appropriation contained in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Before it can pay the extended benefits, the RRB says it must first “develop, test and implement totally different processing and accounting systems,” and that the effort is “an agency priority.”

In fact, the RRB sent letters on April 24 to potentially eligible railroaders explaining extended unemployment benefits eligibility, and providing an explanation as to the delay in making the payments.

Motorcycle ride at N.O. regional meeting

The Fourth Annual Scott Belden Memorial Motorcycle Ride, to benefit the UTU PAC, will take place Sunday, Aug. 16, before the start of the New Orleans regional meeting.

The ride will begin at 8:00 a.m. from the host hotel, the Sheraton New Orleans regional meeting.

Participants will ride up the Mississippi River through Antebellum country with a lunch stop mid-day, returning in ample time for the welcome reception Sunday evening.

Please contact Louisiana State Legislative Director Gary Devall at (225) 235-7101 (e-mail: utulegis@bellsouth.net) or CN/JC Associate General Chairperson Butch St. John at (901) 237-0419 (e-mail: williamstjohn@earthlink.net) to register.

There is a $50 registration fee per driver and $25 fee per rider; each registrant will receive a commemorative, limited-edition T-shirt. Fees will be collected on-site.

Motorcycles can be rented from Crescent City Rentals, 6015 Airline Dr., Metairie, LA 70003; (504) 609-7849; www.crescentharleyrentals.com.

 Mention the UTU when renting.

Rental motorcycles can be picked up Saturday, Aug. 15, at 3 p.m., and returned Sunday, Aug. 16, by 3 p.m., with only a one-day charge applying.

Note the dealer will not provide rentals on Sunday, Aug. 16, and will only be open beginning at 3 p.m. Sunday for return of the rentals. Rentals must be picked up on Saturday.

The Sheraton New Orleans has secured parking for the storage of all motorcycles.

UTU offers valuable hazmat training

UTU members who work around hazardous materials are encouraged to attend an all-day workshop prior to the San Francisco regional meeting to learn more about working safely with dangerous substances.

Trainers certified by the National Labor College – North Carolina State Legislative Director Dickie Westbrook, CSX Vice General Chairperson Yvonne Hayes and CSX District Safety Chairperson and UTU Organizer Billy Moye – will conduct the training.

They will be assisted by North Carolina Assistant State Legislative Director Glenn Lamm and Local 762 (Montgomery, Ala.) President Dale Barnett Jr., both regional peer trainers from the National Labor College’s hazmat program.

“UTU members will learn more in this workshop than the railroad will teach them in their entire career,” Westbrook said. “We will condense almost everything from a five-day hazmat course into an eight-hour course.

Attendees will learn to use the federally mandated emergency response guide; how to respond when dangerous chemicals are present; how to identify hazmat-carrying rail cars; the most effective way to react to leaks and spills; how chemicals affect the human body; FRA rules and jurisdiction versus OSHA rules and jurisdiction, and how to protect themselves and others in the event of a hazmat emergency.

Training will be held at the regional meeting hotel, the Westin St. Francis, on Sunday, July 5, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Participants must commit to attend the all-day session. A $25 registration fee covers the cost of program materials.

Checks should be made payable to the “UTU” and should be kept separate from regional meeting registration fees. On-site registration will be held if there is space available.

To enroll, send your name, local number, e-mail address and telephone number, along with payment, to UTU Hazmat Program, 14600 Detrol Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107.

Meet your UTU Designated Legal Counsel

There is no more dangerous work environment than that on the railroads, where injuries too often are severe. The Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) makes railroad companies 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 railroad 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.”

JAMES K. VUCINOVICH
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(425) 646-8003
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jvucinovich@roicspc.com

Congratulations to the UTU on 40 years of progress through unity. RCWF is celebrating as possible. For more than 40 years we, as all other Designated Legal Counsel, have aggressively represented UTU workers and their families in personal injury claims against the railroads. FELA is your own special compensation law. By hiring UTU Designated Legal Counsel, you get skilled and knowledgeable attorneys who you can trust and who best understand the law.

EDWARD S. COOK
Cook, Hall & Lampros LLP
1230 Peachtree St. N.E., Ste. 3700
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 872-8100
(888) 988-0110 toll free
ecook@coochall.com

Many railroad workers believe their right to recover for work-related injuries is governed by workers’ compensation statutes. Not true. Injured railroaders are protected by the FELA, which gives them the right to sue for lost wages; out-of-pocket medical expenses; compensation for pain, suffering and the loss of life’s pleasures, and any scarring or disfigurement. The FELA entitles railroad workers to have their claims decide by a jury.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
Regional meetings offer education, fractalism

The 2009 UTU/UTUIA regional meetings have been designed to provide a grand sense of fractalism, 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 scheduling of the first day has been left unscheduled so you, your family and friends will be free to explore and attend activities at your own pace during the regional meeting site.

UTU meeting registration and hotel reservations can be made online by visiting www.utu.org and clicking on the “Meetings” link in the live 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 last page.

The pre-registration fee for the 2009 regional meetings is $150 per member, spouse or child 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, three lunches and one evening meal. Those wishing to attend only the workshops do not need to pay the registration fee. No one-day registrations are offered.

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, 10 days prior to the scheduled start of the meetings or the registrant will be charged the on-site registration fee of $200. You cannot 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) 288-0758.

SAN FRANCISCO, JULY 6-8
WESTIN ST. FRANCIS
335 POWELL ST.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102
WWW.WESTINSTFRANCIS.COM

Hotel reservations: (800) WEST1N toll free; (415) 397-7000 direct; (415) 774-0154 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 Churchill 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) 525-3500 direct; (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 Stonebridge Country Club in Gretna. The cost is $80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, 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’s Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number: D150699. Or reserve online at www.avis.com.

TWO SPICE TOURS SET

The UTU is arranging two different tours of local attractions at both regional meetings. The tours will take place the day before or the day 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.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org

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/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

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

Golf registration form: (800) 331-1600 or on the UTU Web site, www.utu.org, for details.

Name __________________________ Handicap Name __________________________ Handicap

Name __________________________ Handicap Name __________________________ Handicap

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

Payment options

Forgot payment $ __________ $ __________

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 spouse/guest tour (if applicable), must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4520, 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.
The UTU Public Relations Department awards UTU gear to the union member who submits the best photograph during the previous month.

This month’s winning photograph was taken by Lisa Allmon, a member of Local 303 in Springfield, Mo. This photo was taken on the BNSF’s Thayer North Subdivision, which runs between Springfield, Mo., and Birmingham, Ala., Allmon said.

Please recycle