SMART Constitution released on union websites

The International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers has released its first SMART Constitution following the conclusion of arbitration proceedings between its Sheet Metal and Transportation Division.

The arbitration was conducted by Georgetown University Law Professor and Arbitrator Michael H. Gottesman and his findings were released in December.

At the conclusion of the arbitration, the parties were able to reconcile differences in the interpretation of their former individual constitutions and complete the first SMART Constitution.

Both the constitution and the arbitration results can be found on the union’s websites at www.smart-union.org and www.utu.org.

In a joint message to the membership of the organization, SMART General President Joe Nigro and SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich released the following statement:

“This is a milestone for both the former Sheet Metal Workers’ International Association and the United Transportation Union, that have merged to become the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers. While our merger has been complete for some time, this document solidifies this great union and its membership under a single constitution.

“It is impossible to speak to the success in completing this constitution without acknowledging both the hard work and the frustration of those who participated in the creation of the document and the membership who have waited patiently throughout this long and difficult process.

“The path has led both of us to take positions on interpretation of our separate constitutions and the merger agreement. In getting there, as would be expected of your leadership, we examined and debated every constitutional section thoughtfully and in agreement. At times, it required the help of an outside arbitrator to clarify a particular issue. While this slowed the process, it must be remembered the parties were tasked with blending 100 years of separate cultural and operational methods into a single constitution that would govern our organization.

“Throughout this process, both of us have recognized that, in the end, what matters is the importance of having a document that serves the best interests of all the membership of SMART.

“So, we are jointly resolved to move forward as an organization under one constitution and ritual, with a single focus. We, as your leadership, are dedicated to working collectively to provide a transparent and accountable organization that will strive to provide fair representation to our membership and the efficiency of operation necessary to expand work opportunities for our members.”

SMART GO 505 prepares to strike LIRR

Following the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s Jan. 15 announcement that it is rejecting a proposed series of wage increases for unionized employees on the Long Island Rail Road, SMART Transportation Division General Committee of Adjustment GO 505 has signaled that its members are prepared to strike as early as March 21.

The wage increases and other recommendations were the findings of Presidential Emergency Board O’Connor and his findings were released in December.

In a joint message to the membership of the organization, SMART General President Joe Nigro and SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich released the following statement:

“This is a milestone for both the former Sheet Metal Workers’ International Association and the United Transportation Union, that have merged to become the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers. While our merger has been complete for some time, this document solidifies this great union and its membership under a single constitution.

“It is impossible to speak to the success in completing this constitution without acknowledging both the hard work and the frustration of those who participated in the creation of the document and the membership who have waited patiently throughout this long and difficult process.

“The path has led both of us to take positions on interpretation of our separate constitutions and the merger agreement. In getting there, as would be expected of your leadership, we examined and debated every constitutional section thoughtfully and in agreement. At times, it required the help of an outside arbitrator to clarify a particular issue. While this slowed the process, it must be remembered the parties were tasked with blending 100 years of separate cultural and operational methods into a single constitution that would govern our organization.

“Throughout this process, both of us have recognized that, in the end, what matters is the importance of having a document that serves the best interests of all the membership of SMART.

“So, we are jointly resolved to move forward as an organization under one constitution and ritual, with a single focus. We, as your leadership, are dedicated to working collectively to provide a transparent and accountable organization that will strive to provide fair representation to our membership and the efficiency of operation necessary to expand work opportunities for our members.”

NJT general manager: ‘Great job by all’

The head of New Jersey’s transit agency Feb. 3 defended the response to delays for thousands of fans leaving the Super Bowl by train.

About 33,000 people took the 7-mile ride between MetLife Stadium and the Secaucus rail station transfer, more than double the highest estimates made by organizers and transportation experts before the game. The Super Bowl was held Sunday, Feb. 2, at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

“I received an email this morning from New Jersey Transit Vice President and General Manager Kevin O’Connor, thanking our UTU/SMA RT members for a job well done,” said NJT General Chairperson Michael J. Reil- ly. “Our members of Local 60 in Newark, N.J., came out in force, as there were more than 70 extra assignments to be filled on both Saturday and Sunday. Not only did they come out, our crew members were exceptional in their duties and professional in every demanding situation.”

In a message to Reilly and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen General Chairperson Dave Decker, O’Connor wrote: “Just wanted to express my thanks to both of you, as well as to your members. We filled virtually every job on Saturday and Sunday and on Sunday carried an unprecedented 28,000 people to the Meadowlands and took out over 32,000. I spoke to many employees as I saw them on Saturday and Sunday and thanked them for their efforts, but of course that was only a fraction of the work force, so please pass this on to everyone. Great job by all and greatly appreciated. Thank you.”
Local 9, Slaton, Texas
BNSF Railway GO 20 General Chairperson Tom Pate reports that Local Chairperson David Fulton retired. “David held the chairperson position for 24 years. I just want to wish him well in the future and thank him for the many years of service he has given to the UTU. We all know the selflessness it takes to be a local chairperson for this many years and I didn’t want his involvement to go unnoticed,” Pate said.

Local 265, Pocatello, Idaho
Former Idaho Assistant State Legislative Director and Local Delegate Shane Yarger, 56, died in his home on Christmas Eve. Shane was proud to support his family working as a conductor on the Union Pacific Railroad. He retired from the railroad due to disability and worked as an agent of the Cow Law firm. He is survived by his wife, Connie, daughters Cara and Lisa, son Jason, and six grandchildren.

Local 446, Cheyenne, Wyo.
Kara Clarke, daughter of member and engineer George Clarke, has been nominated to compete on the U19 United States girls’ soccer team this summer at the 2014 United World Games in Klagenfurt, Austria, Local Chairperson Tyler Thompson reports. Members of the local are assisting the family in a fundraising effort to raise money for the family’s travel expenses and accommodations. Enter Kara Clarke in the Search box at www.utu.org for more information.

Local 623, Clifton Forge, Va.
Local Treasurer Lee Baumgarten acknowledges President Eric Strasman, Vice President Dale Smith, Secretary Charles A. Brown, Local Chairperson Kimberly Wilhelm, Alternate Legislative Rep. David Stetson and Trustee Gary W. Hoke Sr. for their outstanding efforts in supporting the local and its members. “Each of these officers has dedicated a lot of time and energy in building a local union that our membership can always be proud of,” Baumgarten said.

Local 898, Boston, Mass.
State Legislative Director George Casey reports that Leo McDonald, a 40-year member of this local, has retired. McDonald, who began his career on Boston & Maine Railroad and later career on Boston & Maine Railroad and later worked for Amtrak and Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad, has served his local as chairperson since 1999 and delegate since 1999. “It has been an honor to work with Leo,” Pate said. “We all are going to miss his chairperson presence.”

Local 951, Sheridan, Wyo.
Retired former Alternate to the Executive Board Titus R. Shelby reports that former Local Secretary & Treasurer, Coster, 89, died Dec. 29. Shelby said Coster was a member of the U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division, serving in Italy during World War II. The 10th Mountain Division’s exploits in the Italian Alps were the subject of the 1996 film “Fire on the Mountain.” Shelby also noted that Coster was an amateur photographer, using just an old box camera, and he has retained a number of Coster’s early photographs. A November 1948 shot is below.

Local 1694, Barstow, Calif.
This BNSF Railway local has established a website at www.1694.org, webmaster and Local Delegate Lloyd N. Parker reports. The site provides members with contact information of their local officers and links to other important sites. Members can also sign up for an email address through the local.

Local 1689, Williamson, W. Va.
Longtime local officer Jimmie Browning announced his retirement, effective Jan. 31. Browning had served as local chairperson since 1975, local secretary-treasurer since 1996, and Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority’s Devon Station to take a SEPTA train to his Annapolis-to-New York City connection. He deposited eight quarters in the parking lot’s coin slotbox.

He went on to write on a NewsWorks column: “I really don’t want to get towed. As I pay the conductor the fare, I tell him of my call to SEPTA and my doubt about whether eight quarters will do. How can I avoid a tow? The conductor says. He’d do it for anybody. We talk more, and it turns out he … had stopped to slip two more quarters into the slot for No. 8.”

Assistant conductor’s favor renews former leader’s faith in man

The lyrics of a popular song that reached No. 1 on the U.S. Billboard chart in 1954 say “little things mean a lot.” And apparently they do to former Wall Street Journal reporter and NewsWorks contributing writer Richard Koening. Called to New York City on business at the last moment, Koening parked his car at the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority’s Devon Station to take a SEPTA train to his Annapolis-to-New York City connection. He deposited eight quarters in the parking lot’s coin slotbox.

He went on to write on a NewsWorks column: “I really don’t want to get towed. As I pay the conductor the fare, I tell him of my call to SEPTA and my doubt about whether eight quarters will do. How can I avoid a tow? He has the typical conductor’s air of brusqueness, yet he gives me a sympathetic ear. “You should be okay, if that’s what they told you. I’ll give you my cell phone number. Call me tomorrow if you’re still concerned.”

On his next pass through the carriage, the conductor hands me a ticket stub with his name scrawled on it. I write my parking-space designation, No. 8, on my business card and give it to him.

From New York early the next morning, I called Devon Station … I’m assured that my car will still be in Devon when I return, albeit with a ticket on the windshield. That evening, I find my Honda CRV in parking space No. 8. It is beautiful to behold. But the parking office seems to have got one thing wrong. There’s no ticket. I take my luck and go home.

The next day, checking voicemails I’ve neglected, I find one from the conductor. I return the call. Don’t think anything of it, the conductor says. He’d do it for anybody. We talk more, and it turns out he … had stopped to slip two more quarters into the slot for No. 8.”

At first, Koening wrote, “I really don’t want to get towed. As I pay the conductor the fare, I tell him of my call to SEPTA and my doubt about whether eight quarters will do. How can I avoid a tow? The conductor says. He’d do it for anybody. We talk more, and it turns out he … had stopped to slip two more quarters into the slot for No. 8.”

SEPTA assistant conductor James Gentile, center, with fellow Local 61 members Roman Darmohay, left, and Jason Taylor.

As I pay the conductor the fare, I tell him of my call to SEPTA and my doubt about whether eight quarters will do. How can I avoid a tow? The conductor says. He’d do it for anybody. We talk more, and it turns out he … had stopped to slip two more quarters into the slot for No. 8.”

Local 1402, Dupo, Ill.
This Norfolk Southern local honored its recent retirees at its Christmas Party last year. From left, Local Chairperson Anthony Maldonado presents brass lantern to former Local Secretary & Treasurer and Legislative Reports William F. Braden (40 years of service), former President Ronald A. Sicinski (45 years) and Stanley A. Bazylko (50 years).

UP GO 577, Spring, Texas
Roy E. Davis and Charles F. Piland have been elected to the office of general committee secretary for the general committee secretary following the retirement of General Chairperson Larry R. Bumpers, Vice-General Chairperson Christopher “Shifty” Cogbill and the reports. Bumpers was elected to three consecutive terms and proudly served the membership of GO 577 for 11 years. Davis hired out in June 1994 and served three terms as chairperson of Local 1524 at Houston. He was elected GO 577 general committee secretary in January 2011. Piland hired out in June 1996 and was elected as vice chairperson of Local 1205 at Kingsville, Texas, in 2007 and chairperson in 2011. He has worked as a full-time office assistant of GO 577 since January 2012. “Congratulations go out to Larry Bumpers on his retirement and Roy and Charles on their elections,” Goodman said.

Local 445, Elizabeth, N.J.

Around the SMART TD

North Dakota locals holding meetings in April

North Dakota locals will hold their annual Spring Swing meetings April 23-25, State Legislative Director James M. Chase reports. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to learn about your benefits as a member and to visit with SMART Transportation Division officers, general chairpersons and representatives from UTU/A, the Railroad Retirement Board, designated legal counsel and health-and-welfare benefit providers. All members and their spouses are welcome to attend any of the three meetings. The first will be held at the conclusion of each meeting. For further information, call (701) 223-1001 or send email to utufnd@gmail.com. The schedule is as follows:

• Wednesday, April 23, Locals 887, 980, 1137 and 1137-RRV; 1 p.m. meeting at the Fargo Howard Johnson Inn, 201 3rd Ave. N., in Fargo; (701) 232-8850.
• Thursday, April 24, Local 525; 2 p.m. meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn, 430 James Ray Dr., in Grand Forks; (701) 775-6005.
• Friday, April 25, Local 1059; 1 p.m. at The Veggie Motel, 2315 N. Broadway Ave. in Minot; (701) 839-1020.

Around the SMART TD

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org

This Norfolk Southern local honored its recent retirees at its Christmas Party last year. From left, Local Chairperson Anthony Maldonado presents brass lantern to former Local Secretary & Treasurer and Legislative Reports William F. Braden (40 years of service), former President Ronald A. Sicinski (45 years) and Stanley A. Bazylko (50 years).
Yardmasters celebrate 95 years of solidarity

The yardmasters of the SMART Transportation Division celebrated a milestone in the history of rail labor last year, commemorating 95 years of union membership.

The original yardmasters’ union, the Railroad Yardmasters of America, was established Dec. 2, 1918. In 1985, the RYA voluntarily merged with the United Transportation Union.

“Over the past 95 years, our yardmasters have practiced and upheld the values of cooperation and teamwork that are cardinal principles of a good union,” the J.D. Martin General Council of Yardmaster General Chairpersons announced. “Due to the fact that we are members of a great labor union that share a common direction and a sense of community from which we draw our strength, we have been able to set and achieve our goals.”

The council meets regularly to discuss issues relevant to yardmasters today. It is named after Jerry D. Martin, who served as UTU’s alternate assistant to the president – yardmasters from 1996 to 2002.

At its most recent meeting, the council discussed a variety of topics including rates of pay, medical insurance, discipline and coordination, safety, job security, consolidations, the impact of technology on the craft, retirement and various federal regulations.

The council is also asking its fellow yardmasters to help. “We encourage you to get involved, ask questions and lend a helping hand to your fellow members when needed,” the council said. “When you have a problem, or are aware of a dispute, please make your union representative aware of the situation. No detail is too small. We appreciate your hard work and, together, we can achieve just about anything.”

To contact your general chairperson, visit www.utu.org and select “Contact UTU” from the pull-down menu under “About UTU” at the top center of the homepage. Click on rail general chairpersons for office and contact information.

April 11 is SMART Day at Fonner Park Track

A day at the horse races can be enjoyed by all SMART Union brothers and sisters at Fonner Park Race Track in Grand Island, Neb., Friday, April 11, at 3:00 p.m., Union Pacific GO 953 Vice General Chairperson Rich Mohr reports.

In attendance at this fourth annual event will be SMART General President Joseph Nigro and SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich. In past years, attendees included members from numerous locals in Kansas, Illinois, Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa and Wyoming.

“We sponsor the feature race of the day and present a SMART horse blanket to the owner of the winning horse,” Mohr said.

Weather permitting, a golf outing will also be held April 11 at 9:30 a.m. at Jack Rabbit Run Golf Course in Grand Island. The cost is $40. There should be ample time to play 18 holes, have lunch and still arrive at the race track in time for the first race at 3:00 p.m., Mohr said.

“We will be SMARTing the entire fan base,” Mohr said. “Weather permitting, we will provide for those who reply in advance.”

Please RSVP by calling either local 7 Vice Chairperson Cliff Gordon at (308) 510-5766 or at cgordon45@hotmail.com, or Local 286 member Ed Mueller at (308) 510-6711 or by email at meekolb1@bells.net. Special room rates are available at the Midtown Holiday Inn in Grand Island by calling (308) 384-1330. Mention code “UTU” or “SMART” when making a reservation.

SMART wins election by Brega bus operators

Bus operators employed by Brega Transport Corp. that provide service for Transport of Rockland in Rockland County, New York, have voted for SMART representation by UTU/SMART Transportation Division.

Of the eligible voters who participated in the election, 46 percent of SMART TD, 21 voted for no union representation and 11 voted for representation by another organization.

The vote brings 89 new members to the SMART TD’s Bus Department.

SMART TD’s Director of Organizing Rich Ross praised the efforts of Alternate Vice President – Bus and Organizer Calvin Studvant, along with Local 1994 officers Waverly Harris and Brian Caldwell.

SMART wins election by Brega bus operators

Bus operators employed by Brega Transport Corp. that provide service for Transport of Rockland in Rockland County, New York, have voted for SMART representation by UTU/SMART Transportation Division.

Of the eligible voters who participated in the election, 46 percent of SMART TD, 21 voted for no union representation and 11 voted for representation by another organization.

The vote brings 89 new members to the SMART TD’s Bus Department.

SMART TD’s Director of Organizing Rich Ross praised the efforts of Alternate Vice President – Bus and Organizer Calvin Studvant, along with Local 1994 officers Waverly Harris and Brian Caldwell.

FMCSA denies bus company’s CDL exemption

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has denied an application by motorcoach tour company Miami Nice Tours to operate bus tours in the United States by drivers who would be exempt from the commercial driver’s license (CDL) provisions of part 383 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

The SMART Transportation Division’s Legislative office in September offered written testimony to the U.S. Department of Transportation to deny Miami Nice Tours’ application for the exemption.

“The company sought to employ 50 European drivers to conduct approximately 87 motorcoach tours in the American marketplace,” the Division said.

While each driver would have been licensed to tour guides accompanying the group.

“The immeasurable diversity that already exists in the United States makes it only sense that we support Americans who drive them. To allow the importation of people with merit. If Miami needs someone who is fluent in a specific language, what they need is a tour guide accompanying the group.

“If this was an airline that transports diverse people in their planes on domestic routes, they would not be asking for a waiver to their qualifications so they could have a non-American pilot flying the plane.”

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
SMART Constitution is complete and we are moving forward

2014 is shaping up to be a remarkable year in the history of our union. The SMART constitution is now finalized and we are moving forward with the ongoing effort to merge our two organizations into one.

For those who have not yet viewed the arbitration decision or new SMART Constitution, they can be found on the Transportation Division’s website at www.utu.org by selecting merger under the Updates tab, or on the SMART website at www.smart-union.org using the search term “constitution.”

“Delegates to the Transportation Division convention are also delegates to the SMART convention and it is important that our delegates attend both conventions to convey the wishes of their members to the governing body.”

In addition to the integration, a number of other issues will demand our attention throughout the year. To begin, we will have two conventions this year—one for the SMART Transportation Division (formerly UTU) from June 30 - July 2, 2014 and another for the SMART organization from Aug. 11 - 15, 2014.

As advised in my Jan. 24 letter to all SMART TD officers, general chairpersons, state legislative boards and local unions, proposed amendments to the SMART Constitution’s Article 21B may be submitted by any subordinate body of the Transportation Division no later than March 2, 2014.

Both conventions are equally important. Delegates at the Transportation Division convention will elect officers to serve the Division in the upcoming term starting Oct. 1, 2014. In addition, delegates will debate constitutional amendments that are submitted to the Transportation Division for consideration. Delegates will also make recommendations on whether such amendments should be adopted or rejected by the delegates to the SMART convention.

Delegates to the Transportation Division convention are also delegates to the SMART convention and it is very important that our delegates attend both conventions to convey the wishes of their members to the governing body. If your local does not have a duly elected delegate and alternate delegate in place at this time, your local president or secretary should contact my office immediately at (216) 226-9400.

The Transportation Division staff stands ready to assist your local in ensuring your delegate or alternate will be seated at these conventions. In addition, Transportation Division locals may be entitled to have more than one delegate attend the SMART convention in August. Details on how to determine the number of delegates to which your local may be entitled and procedures for electing additional delegates will be published soon.

Another item of business in the coming year is the commencement of negotiations for a national rail contract. We will soon begin the process of formulating the Section 6 notices to be served on the carriers.

The process starts with input from our members in the field on what is important for a new contract, and that input is essential to the preparation of Section 6 notices that reflect the nation’s and members’ organizing efforts that have produced great results in both our short line and bus departments and our continued legislative success in fending off attacks on Railroad Retirement and Amtrak.

Overall, we look forward to the challenges that lie ahead and to the successes that we will continue to achieve on behalf of our members.

Let’s work together to put Fast Track on the slow track

Even with all the secrecy, there have been some leaks of what is inside the agreement. As many feared, the treaty has been geared towards reducing labor costs here and abroad, undercuts workers’ rights. Labor, environmental, health and banking regulations that could impact corporate profits are rendered ineffective by the treaty.

Unfortunately, there are politicians like NAFTA, they’re looking to give us a heavier dose of the same.

Fast Track authority for a new trade deal called Trans-Pacific Partnership is their newest proposal. What Fast Track does is give the White House the power to present Congress with trade agreements that lawmakers cannot amend once they are brought to a vote. For six years, this Trans-Pacific Partnership has been shrouded in secrecy and now its backers want to rush it through Congress.

“The Founding Fathers gave Congress the power over trade, but Fast Track eliminates the ability of your elected representatives in Congress to set trade policy and surrender sovereignty of our nation to international tribunals.”

Even with all the secrecy, there have been some leaks of what is inside the agreement. As many feared, the treaty has been geared towards reducing labor costs here and abroad, undercuts workers’ rights. Labor, environmental, health and banking regulations that could impact corporate profits are rendered ineffective by the treaty.

Contact us: news_td@smart-union.org
Phone (216) 226-9400; fax (216) 226-5755

John Previsich, SMART Transportation Division President
jprevisich@smart-union.org

James Stem, SMART Transportation Division National Legislative Director
jestem@smart-union.org

For the latest news, visit www.utu.org; also, register on the SMART TD website to receive news alerts via email.

Let’s work together to put Fast Track on the slow track

Recent news reports have been bleak when it comes to the status of working families in the United States. While much of the news focuses on unemployment and rightly so, there’s a relatively unknown, legal way that corporations are going to impact the job market and the wealth of manufacturing workers throughout the United States.

On the west side, the stock market has never been any higher; however, the wealth gap between the wealthiest one percent and everyone else has reached levels not seen since the 1920s and 95 percent of the new income generated in the past decade has gone to the top one percent. In fact, only 2.3 percent of the financial wealth generated by all Americans belongs to the bottom 60 percent. In addition, the median middle-class income of American families has fallen by $5,000 since 1999.

Fifty years ago, President Ronald Reagan promised the nation that throwing money at the rich would result in the prosperity trickling down to the rest of us. For 40 years, Americans have waited and have only seen their fortunes slide backwards.

On top of that promise, we were told that so-called free-trade agreements like NAFTA would open new markets for our products made here at home. What we got instead were more of our good-paying jobs disappearing overseas.

In addition, journalists and public interest groups, along with the majority of Congress, have been denied access to the text of this agreement. At the same time, 600 corporate advisors and lobbyists—including Wal Street bankers and companies like Wal-Mart—have been given access to it and are actually allowed to be involved in negotia-

This is a threat we can fight off, but only if we stand together. Do this for the good of SMART members and for the future world in which our children and grandchildren will live.
Colorado

Legislative Director Carl Smith reports that the American Legislative Exchange Council has placed dozens of their model bills before the Colorado General Assembly that are designed to cripple public education, attack the rights of consumers, attack unions and limit access to voting.

There is currently an Internet petition circulating requesting that the Governor’s House of Representatives and Senate to cease support of bills produced by ALEC. The petition exposes ALEC as a “lobbying group for its corporate funders, which develops bad legislation with corporate lobbyist and right-wing extremist input…”

“Brothers and sisters, this isn’t another attempt to ‘cry wolf,’ but the cry of the wolf, huffing and puffing to blow our houses down! As your SMART TD representative at the Colorado General Assembly, I’m here to tell you that ALEC is directly working to pass legislation which hurts us – sheet metal workers, airline workers, rail and transportation workers, as well as other workers in Colorado,” Smith said.

To view and sign the petition, go to: http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/expose-alec-in-colorado

Missouri

In an effort to educate the public regarding right-to-work legislation here, Legislative Director Ken Menges’ issue-oriented letter to the Jefferson City News Tribune was published Jan. 22.

Menges wrote that the right-to-work bill currently being punted around the state is bad for everyone, especially the middle class.

“Right to work — freedom to work — right to work for less — workers’ rights — fancy names that do not really reflect what they mean, but sound good to the press and on the ballot.

“Unions were born out of the disregard for workers’ rights. Unions corrected the wrongs of a good to the press and on the ballot.

“Why get rid of the existing system when it’s been working and will continue to work with the addition of F TC?”

In other news, Pokrowka and other SMART members attended a Jan. 28 rally sponsored by the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO to denounce House bill H.B. 1507 and Senate bill S.B. 1034, legislation introduced by right-wing extremists to make Pennsylvania a right-to-work state. He said the Koch brothers behind Wisconsin’s right-to-work legislation were in the state over the holidays and that Gov. Tom Corbett is in favor of the legislation.

Pennsylvania

In a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Legislative Director Paul Pokrowka has asked the agency to reject Norfolk Southern’s request to remove or modify existing wayside signal systems around the state.

Pokrowka said the reasons given by Norfolk Southern for the proposed changes are “to facilitate train moves and eliminate any potential nonconformity between the wayside signals and cab signals.”

“Also, since Positive Train Control is installed on this line, there will not be different signal systems competing with each other.”

Pokrowka said in his letter that F TC has not been installed yet and that the wayside signals need to remain in operation to maintain safety.

“We are opposed to taking the signals out because it’s an additional safety measure,” Pokrowka said. “Why get rid of the existing system when it’s been working and will continue to work with the addition of FT C.”

Washington

SMART Transportation Division Washington State Legislative Director Herb Krohn reports that a two-person rail crew bill has been introduced in both houses of the state legislature. H.B. 2718, introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Larry Haler (R), has 26 sponsors. S.B. 647, introduced in the Senate by Sen. Jan Angel (R), has 16 sponsors. The bills can be read at http://www.leg.wa.gov/pages/home.aspx by entering the bill numbers.

He said the bill is also watching H.B. 1620, the Contract Crew Hauler Transport Safety Bill, and H.B. 1621, the Workmaster Hours of Service Bill.
FRA to commence rulemaking process on cameras in the cab

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has issued an In-Depth Risk Assessment (DIRA) to help ensure railroad employees to federal regulations regarding maximum authorized train speeds. The FRA has noted that rulemakings to ensure railroads comply with speed restrictions through enforcement of new operating regulations, procedures, and effective implementation strategies.

"Safety is our highest priority, and this new rule will bring railroads back into line with the rest of society. Limiting speeds is a common sense approach to driver fatigue that minimizes the risk of train collisions. We will continue working with railroads to ensure they are following the new rules."

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is working with railroad carriers to ensure compliance with the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads and to also conduct separate railroad inspections with specially equipped lead motor vehicles that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The current rail inspection standards require a maximum of any line and are to be conducted on a random basis. The new standards will require an inspection every 250 miles, and will be conducted on a random basis. The new standards will also require railroads to identify and reduce hazards that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.

The new FRA inspection standards are designed to ensure that railroads are following the new rules. The FRA has issued a Final Rule that is effective on May 1, 2014, and will require railroads to reduce speed limits on railroads that operate over track segments for the purpose of inspecting the equipment. The new FRA inspection method focuses on identifying hazardous conditions that could lead to an accident. Data is collected in real-time.
The Oakland Old Rails Club brought 2013 to a close with its annual Christmas dinner held Dec. 10 in Oakland, Calif., that was attended by more than 35 festive club members.

Vice President Richard Scholl of Local 239 at Oakland said, “We gathered to share a turkey and ham dinner, complete with all the trimmings and some wonderful desserts. This event is always free to all of our dues-paying members.”

“As our membership grows older, we are having fewer people at our meetings and functions. I would like to invite all the newer retirees to come join us at our monthly meetings and share with us your friendship and your stories,” Scholl said. “When railroaders get together, the tales get taller and usually a little spice is added.”

“We have four or five luncheon meetings each year, free to all of our dues-paying members, and an annual dinner in the spring.”

The club meets from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Son of Norway Center, 2258 MacArthur Blvd. in Oakland.

For more information about the Oakland Old Rails Club and a photo album of current and former members, visit the club’s website at oldrailsclub.com.

The Railroad Retiree Club of Pennsylvania is seeking some new blood and is welcoming all railroad retirees and their family members into the fold. The club meets regularly the third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. at the West End Fire Company at 118 Chester Rd. in Enola.

Volunteers to serve as club officers are needed if the monthly meetings are to continue.

The group has recently taken up bowling every Thursday at 1 p.m. at the ABC East Lanes, 1001 Eisenhower Blvd. in Harrisburg. The bowlers like to spend time socializing and have lunch together once a month outside of the club’s regular meetings.

The club features monthly speakers at its meetings and bingo when speakers are unavailable. The group holds a 50/50 drawing at each meeting, as well as a raffle for gift certificates to Hoss’s Steak and Sea House. The club also held a Christmas party Dec. 4 at the Robert H. Hoke American Legion Post 272 in Harrisburg.

Although there will be no meeting in February, the next several meetings are scheduled for March 19, April 16, May 21 and June 18. A picnic is scheduled in lieu of the July meeting, with the date yet to be determined.

Happy birthday, centenarians!

The Railroad Retirement Board has notified SMART that the following members have reached the 100-year milestone in 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Name</th>
<th>City/State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1188 Harlan, Bobby J.</td>
<td>Royston, Ga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1227 Dawson, Howard B.</td>
<td>Bluefield, W. Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1238 Harris, Wallace R.</td>
<td>Sandusky, Ga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1245 Merritt, Roy</td>
<td>Mohave Valley, Ariz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1252 Self, Carl D.</td>
<td>Henderson, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1291 Maze, D.C.</td>
<td>Granite Quarry, N.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1344 Kocourek, Donald J.</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1361 Every, Roy C.</td>
<td>Bakersfield, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1366 Palfreyman, Kent B.</td>
<td>Minong, Wis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1379 Ambruso, Richard M.</td>
<td>Tyler, Tex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1402 Grissom, Elmer W.</td>
<td>Artleboro, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1404 Williams, Selma</td>
<td>Kasilup, Mont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1420 Smith, Gary H.</td>
<td>Newbury, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1431 Ambrose, Richard M.</td>
<td>Florence, S.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1477 Mclaren, Sebastian</td>
<td>Sheldon, Wyo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1557 McNeil, Robert W.</td>
<td>Canastota, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1563 Smith, Will</td>
<td>Liverpool, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1722 Kotz, Weldon E.</td>
<td>Lafayette, La.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770 Nunn, Hubert D.</td>
<td>Raton, N.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
Risks may be eligible for death, dismemberment insurance; family members might be due funds

Active and retired railroad employees covered under The Railroad Employees’ National Health and Welfare Plan or The NRC/UTU Health and Welfare Plan may be eligible for Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefits from MetLife.

For eligible active employees, the death benefit is in most cases $20,000, and there may be an additional AD&D benefit that could pay up to $16,000. For eligible retired employees, the death benefit is $2,000.

Most employees filled out a designated beneficiary form when they began work for a participating railroad and MetLife urges employees and retirees to keep this form with their other important papers.

If you need to update your beneficiary form, or if there is doubt as to whom you designated, it is recommended that you complete a new form and send it to MetLife.

A beneficiary form, as well as a copy of the full summary plan description book, can be found at www.yourtracktohealth.com. There is a direct link to that web page from www.utu.org. Hovering over the “Healthcare” tab on the SMART Transportation Division home page will provide you with a drop down menu for “Your Track to Health.”

Select “Life” in the gray box at the bottom of the page, then select “NRC/UTU Plan.” You can also obtain information about this benefit by calling MetLife toll-free at (800) 310-7770.

This is a very important benefit for all eligible active and retired railroad employees covered under the national health and welfare plans, although many employees, especially retired employees, may not be fully aware of it.

We urge you to post this notice at appropriate work locations on the property and remind all retirees with whom you may come in contact that they should contact MetLife to inquire about their eligibility for the $2,000 death benefit.

Widowed spouses and children may also be due life insurance benefits if the deceased spouse or parent was eligible for the insurance, but the family members were unaware of the coverage.

The insurance policies were originally issued by Travelers Insurance Company, but MetLife began administering the program in 1995.

To file a claim, a potential beneficiary must be able to provide the name, birth date, Social Security number and death certificate of the worker, as well as the name of the railroad company for whom the deceased worked.

UTUIA offers protection against accidental death and dismemberment

UTUIA policy offers guaranteed approval for active transportation employees

UTUIA’s accidental death and dismemberment policy includes all these benefits for only $19.50 per month:

- $180,000 for death caused by common carrier
- $90,000 for death caused by automobile
- $60,000 for accidental death
- $30,000 for dismemberment
- $600 per day for intensive-care confinements
- $60 per day for family lodging
- $30 per day for family meals
- Up to $1,800 for air ambulance transportation
- Up to $300 for surface ambulance transportation
- Optional family rider for your spouse and children

This policy provides benefits for accidents only. These benefits are not available for sickness. Some benefits provided under the optional family rider are less than those provided to the policyholder.

For details, mail the coupon at right or call or email the UTUIA.

Some benefits may vary based on state of residence.

Information, please

I would like more information on UTUIA’s accidental death and dismemberment plan.

Call or email today:
(800) 558-8842 or sales@utuia.org

Alternate Director Risch appears on labor radio show

SMART Transportation Division’s Alternate National Legislative Director John Risch appeared on America’s Work Force daily labor radio program Dec. 23 to discuss Pen's support for Amtrak and other issues.

America’s Work Force is the only daily labor radio program in America and has been on the air since 1993, supplying listeners with useful, relevant input into their daily lives through fact-finding features, in-depth interviews, informative news segments and practical consumer reports.

Through the support and participation of the labor community, America’s Work Force radio program features regional, national and international labor leaders and advocates, as well as politicians, civic leaders and industry professionals discussing issues important to the labor movement.

To listen to Risch’s interview, visit http://awfradio.com/blog. Select the Dec. 23 show from the calendar on the right-hand side of the homepage. Risch’s interview can be heard in the second half of the one-hour show.
The National Transportation Safety Board Jan. 13 issued its preliminary report in the Dec. 30, 2013, derailment, collision, fire and explosion of a Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway train carrying crude oil that struck a derailed BNSF train on a parallel track that was carrying grain in Casselton, N.D.

According to the report, a westbound BNSF grain train derailed 13 cars at milepost 28.5 near Casselton. The grain train consisted of two head-end locomotives, one rear distributed power locomotive and 112 cars. One of the derailed cars, the 45th car from the head end, fouled a parallel track. An eastbound BNSF petroleum crude oil train operating on the parallel track collided with the derailed car that was fouling the track when it derailed the head-end locomotives and the first 21 cars of the train. The petroleum crude oil unit train consisted of two head-end locomotives, one rear distributed power locomotive and 106 cars.

After the collision, the two crewmembers on board the petroleum crude oil unit train exited the lead locomotive unimpeded before triggered tank cars ignited. The crew from the grain train was not injured.

Local emergency officials coordinated a voluntary evacuation of about 1,400 people from Casselton. No injuries to the public were reported.

The accident occurred on the BNSF KO Subdivision where two trains were governed by the signal indications of a traffic control system. The maximum authorized speed for freight trains in the accident area was 60 mph. Event recorder data from the two locomotives of both trains, as well as recorded data from the signal system, were examined to determine train speeds and signal aspects prior to the collision. The grain train was traveling about 28 mph when it went into an emergency brake application. The petroleum crude oil unit train was traveling about 43 mph when the train crew initiated an emergency brake application. The train was traveling about 42 mph when the collision occurred.

NTSB investigators have completed the on-scene work near Casselton. The investigation is continuing at NTSB headquarters in Washington.

Preliminary results of the investigation include the following:

- Twenty-one cars from the petroleum crude oil unit train derailed along with the two lead locomotives. Twenty of the tank cars were carrying petroleum crude oil; one was a hopper car carrying sand.
- Of the 20 tank cars that derailed, 18 were breached (punctured).
- Initial estimates are that more than 400,000 gallons of crude oil was released.
- From Jan. 1-3, investigators interviewed the train crews and first responders.
- A broken axle and two wheels were shipped to the NTSB materials laboratory in Washington for further evaluation and analysis.
- Locotive event and video recorders were also sent to the NTSB materials laboratory for further analysis.

The parties to the investigation include the Federal Railroad Administration; the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; BNSF; the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers, formerly known as the United Transportation Union; the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen and Trinity Rail Car.
Membership in Alumni Association doesn’t cost, it pays

The UTU Alumni Association was created in 1976 to serve the retired members of the United Transportation Union.

The program has over the years been called both the UTU Retiree Program and the UTU for Life program. This program has no relation to life membership, which is awarded when a member retires in good standing.

The UTU Alumni Association is a voluntary, money-saving program for transportation retirees from all crafts. Members enjoy the many benefits shown below. It is under the direction of retired Florida State Legislative Director Carl Cochran, who works every day to make sure the program serves the retired members of this union.

As a retired state director, Cochran is also in touch with state and national lawmakers who hold sway over Railroad Retirement. He is an important aide to SMART’s Legislative Department in protecting and improving this vital program.

Retired UTU members in the U.S. and Canada, as well as those individuals nearing retirement or interested in pension and other issues affecting transportation-labor families, are invited to participate in the UTU Alumni Association.

With annual dues set at only $9 (U.S.) per year, membership in this fast-growing program doesn’t cost – it pays!

Check out the UTU Alumni Association page on www.utu.org.

The Alumni Association offers these benefits:

• The SMART Transportation Division News, covering items of interest to retired and active members, including developments affecting Railroad Retirement pensions;
• Automatic listing in The Final Call, the notice of recent deaths carried in the SMART Transportation Division News, as shown on page 8;
• A UTU Alumni Association baseball-style cap with embroidered logo;
• An annual full-size SMART TD wall calendar, featuring beautiful transportation photos;
• Membership in the nearest Alumni Association chapter. There are 13 chapters currently holding meetings throughout the U.S. and Canada;
• Discounts on car rentals from National Car Rental in the U.S. and Canada;
• Discounts at popular lodging chains, such as Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, Days Inns, Red Roof Inns, and Super 8;
• Discounts on cellular telephones and services from AT&T;
• An important documents folder for keeping insurance policies, stock certificates, and personal records organized;
• A 41-page UTU/UTUIA Assets Manager to keep track of financial information;
• A 36-page UTU/UTUIA Medical Manager for important medical information;
• Automatic enrollment in the UTU Travelers’ Club, which sponsors world-wide excursions at affordable, group rates.

UTU Alumni Association application

(Please print)

Name

Address

City
State/Province
ZIP

Phone

Email

I wish to join the UTU Alumni Association. Enclosed is a check or money order payable to “UTU Alumni Association” in the amount of $9.00 (U.S.) for one year’s dues.

Return with check to UTU Alumni Association, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Ste. 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333

GO 505 delivers gift for autism services

Officers and members of SMART Transportation Division General Committee of Adjustment GO 505 on the Long Island Rail Road Dec. 18 delivered a $5,000 check to support a program for autistic children in the Town of Islip, N.Y.

The donation adds to the committee’s yearly commitment to autism services in the local community, which is proud to serve with reliable and safe transportation.

As reported earlier this year, GO 505 sponsors a golf outing annually to raise funds for Autism Speaks and autism services in Long Island, N.Y. Autism Speaks is a leading autism science and advocacy organization dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism.

While supporting research to assist in the continued efforts to aid families affected by autism, SMART leadership of the committee was determined to set additional funds aside to give to families in the local community, General Chairperson Anthony Simon said.

Simon, Vice General Chairperson Vinnie Testitore and Local Chairperson Michael Denn met with Town of Islip Councilman Anthony Senft Jr. to learn about a new program in the community called Inclusive Sports and Fitness (ISF). The program, founded and managed by Alexander Lopez, utilizes mentoring and therapeutic principles inherent in sports to foster positive personal, social, and physical growth in an inclusive way for all children.

“On behalf of our railroad union members, we are pleased to assist in getting this program expanded to assist more children in our community. SMART members are proud to give back to the neighbors we serve,” Simon said.

SMART Transportation Division GO 505 officers Anthony Simon, Vinnie Testitore and Michael Denn present a check to Alexander Lopez, with the support and appreciation of Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone and Town of Islip Councilmen Senft and Flissien. Also pictured are Inclusive Sports and Fitness volunteers and children enrolled in the program.

www.utu.org / www.utuia.org
This photo was taken by Local 1594 (Upper Darby, Pa.) member and bus operator Michael Russo. “This is a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) bus on Route 104 in West Chester, Pa., during a layover at West Chester University,” Russo said.