Delegates return Previsich to SMART TD presidency

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – John Previsich was elected president of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers’ Transportation Division on June 30, shortly after the opening of the union’s First Transportation Division Convention at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel.

Previsich, who had been elevated to the position of SMART Transportation Division President Oct. 1, 2013, was challenged for the office by members Mark B. Burrows, Scott Cole and Gary Reynolds. He received 434 votes of the 485 ballots cast.

Prior to the election, Previsich addressed the delegates about the need for an experienced hand to guide the Transportation Division as it faces a number of important issues.

“Efforts currently underway or about to begin are negotiations of our national railroad contract, the preservation of our health and welfare plans during implementation of the Affordable Care Act and defending our members from the loss of jobs due to planned cuts in coal usage,” he said.

“In addition, we will continue our drive to successfully pass a law that requires two qualified crew members on every train and we will also continue the fight to improve work-schedule predictability and fatigue management of our members in the transportation industry. These are just some of the initiatives currently underway and every day brings new challenges.”

SMART’s coalition partners include the Transportation Communications Union, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and the National Conference of Firemen & Oilers Service Employees International Union. All organizations were well represented at the event.

Speakers called upon New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo to intervene in the workers’ months-long dispute with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which oversees the LIRR. The SMART Transportation Division members and other unionized employees have been working under an open contract since June 2010. SMART members and the other unions can strike on July 19 under provisions of the Railway Labor Act, but have asked MTA to extend a 60-day cooling off period into September.

“The governor needs to step up, tell the MTA to take the lead in this long and arduous process, w e have informed the MTA that we don’t have a crushing blow to the economy of eastern Long Island,” said SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich.

“Continued on page 10”

Thousands turn out for Long Island Rail Road labor rally

More than 3,000 unionized Long Island Rail Road employees and their supporters rallied for a new contract Saturday, June 21, seeking to send a message to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Organizers were expecting about 2,000 people to attend the rally, but noted that they had exhausted their supply of rally T-shirts hours before the rally began.

“We had an awesome turnout,” Simon said. “The sign-in sheet stopped at 2,300 and people just kept coming, more than 3,000.”

“Continued on page 10”

Former RYA President Otto dies


Otto was born Aug. 24, 1922, in Wheeling, W. Va., graduated from Wheeling High School and attended Bethany College.

A member of SMART Transportation Division Local 515 at Albany, N.Y., Otto began his 45-year railway career as a clerk, quickly advancing to yardmaster for the Pennsylvania Railroad in Weirton, W. Va. He served as a local chairperson and a general chairperson for Pennsylvania Central yardmasters before being elected national president of the Railroad Yardmasters of America in 1971. He served in that role until his retirement – and the RYA’s merger with UTU – in 1985.

As national president, he negotiated 12 national agreements on behalf of RYA employees and their families, including wage increases, creation of a new dental plan and improved health benefits.

Otto is survived by his wife of 67 years, Kay, daughters Alison and Heather, son-in-law Mike Liddicoat and granddaughter, Kathleen Liddicoat. He was pre-deceased by his son, Alan Thomas (“Tim”) Otto of Chicago, who was also a yardmaster.

Current Alternate National Legislative Director John J. Risch III was elected the Transportation Division’s National Legislative Director and will assume the office Oct. 1. National Legislative Director James A. Stern announced his intention to retire Sept. 30 and did not seek re-election. Risch was opposed by the Transportation Division’s Utah State Legislative Director E. Jay Seegmiller of Local 166 at Salt Lake City. Risch won the election after receiving 285 votes of the 485 valid votes cast.

Incumbent Transportation Division Vice Presidents David B. Wier, John E. Lesniewski, John R. England, Doyle K. Torner and Jeremy R. Ferguson were returned to office by acclamation.

Due to the elimination of the position of SMART Transportation Division assistant president in 2013, Article 21B, Section 35, of the SMART Constitution provides for a successor to the president of the Transportation Division in the event a vacancy occurs between conventions. To provide for such a contingency, delegates elected Lesniewski to that position by acclamation.

“Continued on page 10”
Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.
Local Chairperson Harry J. Garvin Jr. reports that retirees Mike A. Cude and Cecie E. Poxon died May 25 and June 24, respectively. Cude retired from Union Pacific in 2009 after 46 years of service and Poxon retired from UP in 2005 after 28 years of service. Garvin also noted that Fred G. Comeau retired June 24 after 16 years of service. Former Local Vice President Ralph Rodley Jr. retired June 12 after 40 years, and Joe M. Fischer celebrated 50 years of service in April. In other news, Garvin reports that the Annual PSC/SMART-UTU Rail Golf Classic held May 19 went off without a hitch with 60 golfers in attendance. Cude was one of the participants.

Local 339, Jackson, Tenn.
President Bill Haslam May 20 announced the appointment of SMART Transportation Division Tennessee State Legislative Director Roger "Adren" Crawford to the Tennessee Council for Career and Technical Education. The TCTCE serves as an independent advocate for quality career and technical education programs and functions as an independent oversight body. It consists of 13 members appointed by the governor to serve in an advisory capacity to the Tennessee Board of Education, Tennessee Board of Regents, the governor and the general assembly. "I appreciate the commitment of these men and women and want to thank them for their willingness to serve the state," Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam said. "Tennessee will be well represented on these boards and commissions." Crawford also serves as the local’s chairperson, legislative representative and delegate.

Local 682, Richmond, Va.
President Michael J. Downer Sr. reports that Secretary & Treasurer Ryan J. Sandy and Local Chairperson Thomas J. Arsenault each were elected by acclamation in a special interim election held in June. Sandy is replacing Alex T. Goodmunday, who transferred to another local, while Arsenault is replacing former Treasurer Ceci L. Fineer and Secretary James M. Rainier, combining the two positions into one. Downer also noted that the positions of vice local chairperson in Local Committee of Adjustment numbers 1 and 2 are vacant and will be filled by elections this fall.

Local 800, Jersey City, N.J.
A former UTU foot soldier was killed when a train struck him in New York on June 13.

_price of colonel. Burge was a lawyer in Birmingham for more than 50 years. He loved representing people, and as an advocate, he had few peers. He was recognized as a Fellow by the Alabama Law Foundation, a designated legal counsel by the United Transportation Union and listed for years in The Best Lawyers in America. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Jeanneine (Kireen) Burge; children: Courtney Brown (Phil), SMART Transportation Division Designated Legal Counsel Frank Fletcher Burge (Mary), Claire Morgan, and Paul Allan, whom he also considered one of his children. A memorial service was held Monday, June 16, at Shades Valley Presbyterian Church in Birmingham.

Local 1626, Anchorage, Alaska
Alaska Railroad conductor Vern Gilliss presents a check in the amount of $500 on behalf of this local to Rob Hinneker to assist the old mining community of Sutton.

Former VP George Cahill dies
Former UTU Vice President George J. Cahill, 85, died June 3 after a courageous battle with cancer.

Around the SMART TD

Quick-thinking conductor saves fellow member's life
Local 674 CSX conductors Richard A. Price and Quincy D. Dobbs know firsthand some of the challenges that can come with the responsibility of working a route job. On May 28, Dobbs was critically injured in a switching accident outside the General Mills plant in Quincy, Ga., and it was all caused by a bird. Price reports that they were working a routine job, Dobbs was spotted checking it revealed outside the property. While doing so, he unwittingly startled a nesting killer, Price said. Dobbs quickly discovered that killer is a fearless defender of the nest. Its brown speckled eggs are camouflaged against the dirt and pebbles and as the bird sits on the eggs, it also blends in with the background. Once a nesting mother killer feels threatened, she immediately and instinctively begins an aggressive defensive display with flailing wings, hopping steps and an ear-piercing screech, “killdeer!” They have been known to stand their ground against approaching lawn mowers and have even diverted buffalo herds on the Great Plains.

The startled Dobbs soon lost his situational awareness and fell to the ground.
“Moments before I saw the nest, the next moment he was down and then the train hit him. Then I saw blood and bled to the engineer to stop and call an ambulance,” Price said.

Dobbs’ right arm was severed and his right ankle was shattered. He was bleeding profusely and Price now that he had to act fast to stop the blood or Dobbs would be gone. Both Price and the engineer used their CSX vests as tourniquets to stop the bleeding. Through these second and life-saving actions, Dobbs was stabilized until he was airlifted to the nearest hospital.

Price is no stranger to responding to serious medical emergencies. He has worked as an EM T for the Augusta and Richmond County Fire Departments and for Gold Cross EMS. Additionally, he spent a year in Iraq as a contract EM T/firefighter.

“Tm a real learning experience and it was great to work, firsthand and up close, with the local Iraqi people,” Price said.

Price reports that Dobbs survived his ordeal and is in good spirits as he continues rehabilitating.

Among the unpredictable hazards that can divert buffalo herds on the Great Plains.

Former VTU Designated Legal Counsel Frank O. Burke, 73, passed away June 17.

Cahill served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was an alderman from the City Point neighborhood of New Haven, Conn. He was appointed a member of the Connecticut Transportation Authority by Gov. John Dempsey and was appointed chairman of the Connecticut Public Transportation Authority by Gov. Ella Grasso. He was one of the 84 delegates of the Connecticut Constitutional Convention that revised the current Connecticut Constitution in 1985.

Cahill served in the U.S. Marine Corps and later the reserves, attaining the rank of colonel. Burge was a lawyer in Birmingham for more than 50 years. He loved representing people, and as an advocate, he had few peers. He was recognized as a Fellow by the Alabama Law Foundation, a designated legal counsel by the United Transportation Union and listed for years in The Best Lawyers in America. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Sally, his sons, George Jr., Robert, Stephen and Michael, his daughter, Kathleen, 16 grand-grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

er Mike Araujo. Elected as the LCA’s first officers were Local Chairperson Michael J. Downer Sr., former Conrail General Chairperson Bob Belle, current Local Chairperson and New Jersey State Legislative Board Secretary John M. Allis and Party Murray. The photo was taken May 29 at a retirement luncheon for Murray, who has 44 years of service with Erie Lackawanna, Conrail and NJT. He was also a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen, a UTU predecessor union.

Local 756, San Antonio, Texas
Local Committee of Adjustment 9272 of this local representing the newly organized employees of Western Ry. Express, El Paso, Texas, held its first meeting May 18 at Golden Corral Restaurant in New Braunfels, Texas, according to Secretary & Treasurer
TD seeking rail contract proposals for Section 6 notices

The SMART Transportation Division is beginning the process of formulating Section 6 notices to be served on rail carriers negotiating under the umbrella of the National Carriers’ Conference Committee (NCCC), which will include proposals to increase wages, benefits and improve working conditions as mandated by the Railway Labor Act and the current national agreement. These Section 6 notices will be served on most of the nation’s rail carriers on or about Nov. 1, 2014, to become effective no earlier than Jan. 1, 2015.

The agreement provides for annual wage increases, retroactive to April 1, 2013, with a back-pay lump sum; establishes 5% certification step increases for each qualification of conductor, RCO and engineer, allowing new employees to reach a 9.5% percent rate within the first year of employment; provides an established rest day for extra board employees; and increases carrier-matching contributions to 45(k) accounts to $1,500, provides for carryover of sick days; limits employee health and welfare contributions to 12 percent of plan costs and freezes co-pays and deductibles for the life of the contract; improves working conditions and preserves guaranteed extra boards.

Wier, who assisted with the negotiations, congratulated DOTRA Acting Chairperson Ralph “Bud” Bigelow (Local 1438) and negotiating committee member Rick Garcia for the exceptional effort put forth in bringing the members’ concerns to the bargaining table and negotiating an agreement with significant improvements in wages and working conditions.

Bay Line Railroad workers say SMART Transportation

Employees of Bay Line Railroad based in Panama City, Fla., voted July 2 for representation by the SMART Transportation Division, Organizer Rich Ross reports. Of 91 eligible voters, 10 voted for SMART while three voted for no union.

“I thank CSX and Norfolk Southern new-hire class instructor Justin Humphries and Local 1291 Chairperson Jacob Lane for all of their hard work in this campaign,” Ross said. “I also want to recognize the efforts of SM A RT Transportation Division Headquarters in North Olmsted, Ohio. She truly put a lot of time and energy in bringing this organizing drive to a successful conclusion.”

Bay Line Railroad is a 103-mile short line freight railroad that interchanges with CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. Commodity transported by the carrier include aggregates, brick and cement, chemicals, coal, food and feed products, forest products, metallic ores and minerals, and steel and scrap. It was acquired by Genesee & Wyoming in 2005.

Oil Spell Defense Act,” that will encourage public first responders to respond and equipped with fire and disaster equipment.

Finally, H. F. 3172 appropriates transportation funding that has been traditionally spent on short-term, probabilistic projects that do not take into account projects that will divert hazardous material away from population centers in western Minnesota. H. F. 2881, the Railroad Crew Van provision, has also been introduced into law in advance of our current crew-van statutes, Quay said. “With our second Railroad Crew Van law passed in Minnesota; and Texas 2013, H.F. 2881 will raise standards for driver qualifications, carrier reporting of total hours of service, vehicle equipment standards and vehicle inspection requirements.”

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Minnesota Legislative Director Dave Brown had been the primary advocate for H.F. 2881 – the Crew Van law. “It was good to work with BLT Director Brown as we remained focused on passage of these laws to the final day of the 2014 session,” Quay said.

The SMART TD Minnesota Legislative Board also, on the last day of the legislative session, worked with State Rep. Jason Metz on the introduction of House File 3394, which would increase fines for trains that intentionally block grade crossings. Quay said train crews have reported that CN Railway train dispatchers continue to order train crews to not cut or open grade crossings.

The individuals above attended legislative hearings for, testified about, or worked in support of the passage of H.F. 3172, Minnesota State Legislative Director Phillip Quayl said. They are, from left, retired former Assistant State Legislative Director Dan Paradise (1614), Local President George Armstrong (650), Local Chairperson Randy Raskin (650). Minnesota AFL-CIO Legislative Director Jennifer Schaubach, Quay, Local Legislative Rep. Wayne Newton (600) and Local Legislative Rep. Matt Lallone (650). (Not pictured are member Mike Heffrnan (650) and Political Consultants Dean Mitchell, DFPM Research Group.)
Our membership can stand proud, but the task is not over

W e’ve built the foundation and our important heritage and traditions of this union. As strong as our union makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilizational movement was started.”

Everyone needs to join in and help their fellow brothers and sisters, especially if the dispute is not settled.

In August, SMART will be holding its first General Convention. This is a milestone for our union.

For the first time, sheet metal workers, conductors, engineers, yardmasters, bus operators, aviation workers, sign workers and shipyard mechanics will be meeting to adopt a constitution that will guide our actions for the next five years.

There will be open discussion to ensure all viewpoints are considered in crafting our consolidated future together. There are always differences in a democracy. That is what a union is all about. I’m not afraid of that. In fact, I welcome all ideas.

We have to make sure the best interests of our members are paramount in our deliberations.

All I ask from you, as a member, is one thing: get involved. This union is only as strong as its members make it.

This is your union. Treat it like so. Attend your local meetings. Stand up for your fellow members both in transportation and sheet metal. Stand up for all working families through the activities of your union. This is how the labor movement was started — by our forefathers standing up together, shoulder to shoulder.

We did that in Long Island. We will do it again elsewhere.

We’ve built the foundation and our important work in Las Vegas at SMART’s First General Convention will show that together, we can make it even better and stronger.

We all share the same cause. We all share the same great organization. We are all one union. We are SMART!

In solidarity.

Joseph J. Nigro
SMART General President

Joe Nigro
GENERAL PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

By Joe Nigro

with our foundation laid, let the building continue

I was honored to speak before the assembled delegates at the SMART Transportation Division’s recent convention in San Diego. The level of professionalism in putting together that important event and the solidarity shown by those assembled made me proud of my association with this great, united union.

I especially appreciated the chance to meet many of you, not just in San Diego but also while traveling the country. It has been a privilege learning from many of you about the operations of the transportation industry and the unique strengths you bring to this organization.

Several years ago, I was in Wisconsin and spoke to the protesters assembled in the state’s capitol rotunda that were standing up for their rights. I was just as proud to do the same when I went to Long Island to stand with the members employed there at the Long Island Railroad, where the same energy and passion were on display.

I was never as proud to see our Sheet Metal Division brothers and sisters there in Long Island, standing strong with the LIRR employees.

The unionized LIRR employees have worked without a raise since 1998. Two Presidential Emergency Boards have already found decisions in favor of them in the dispute with New York’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).

This International will do everything in its power to assist those members in their fight. Their battle belongs to all of us, and I encourage that voice comes from the delegate or delegates elected by the local to serve as their spokesperson.

Strong and united. As we continue to achieve the benefits of our merged organization, it is imperative that all delegates become familiar with the issues and challenges faced by every craft in our union.

Attendance at the First SMART General Convention is an opportunity to engage with our brothers and sisters to help craft a solution that will set the tone of this organization for generations to come.

“Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilizational work.”

Each and every delegate has a role to play in that dialogue. As legendary Green Bay Packers Coach Vince Lombardi once said, “Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilizational work.”

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check deception also passed in the House, but met its demise when State Sens. Gina Walsh (D-Dist. 13) and Scott Sifton (D-Dist. 1) led a filibuster against the bill.

In expectation of the Environmental Protection Agency’s new regulations on coal-fired power plants, the legislative board supported H.B. 1631, a bill introducing legislation to develop emission standards in the state through a unit-by-unit analysis of each existing affected source of carbon dioxide by the Air Conservation Commission. Dave Zimmerman – third vice president of SMART SMD and president of Local 26 – is a member of the Air Conservation Commission.

“The Missouri State Legislative Board testified at both the House and Senate hearings for this bill. It passed in the Senate with a 23-7 vote and in the House with a 129-14 vote,” Menges said.

“…but with the great bipartisan support we were able to receive, the governor has told us he will take a good look at the bill.”

Almost everyone said H.B. 1707, which specifies that crew members operating a train, including operations at railroad crossings, are not required to present or display a driver’s license to any law enforcement officer in connection with train operation. It was passed on the final day of the legislative session, Menges reports, and has been sent to Gov. Nixon’s desk for his signature.

“…that the 2014 Missouri legislative session has required constitutional majority needed to be sent to Gov. Nixon’s desk for his signature.

By Bonnie Morr, Vice-President-Bus bmorr@smart-union.org

An attack on one transit employee is an attack on all

Following an attack on a city bus operator last February in Olympia, Wash., an article on page five of the April 2014 edition of this publication from the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department called for the Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration to hold a summit on bus operator assaults. TTD, transit unions and public transportation leaders.

Now is the time for such a summit. Every day, transit operators open the doors of thousands of public buses, hundreds of times per day. They welcome the public on board with a smile, a “good morning” or a “hello.” Oftentimes, they receive a similar response in return. But as we all know, that is not always the case.

Bus operator assaults are on the rise, causing unacceptable high rates of injury and worker anxiety. Numerous experts say that many of these assaults could be prevented by better operator training – teaching the operator to diffuse the situation. I feel it is going to take further measures than that to ensure operator safety and the time is now.

The TTD said transit agencies must evaluate new measures and new technologies being used successfully in parts of the country and abroad to protect drivers and I agree.

I would like to see changes in the ways the transit operator is protected. I would like to see shields that protect operators from possible physical assault, stricter laws that would make operator assaults felony crimes, and an increased presence of uniformed police or security officers on public transportation that would deter these types of crimes.

I realize all of these measures would require additional funding to transit agencies that are already cash-strapped, but at what point do we draw the line on operators being physically or emotionally maimed or killed? Is it too expensive to pay damages to the transit employee injured on the job or their loved ones than it is to prevent the crime itself? Is that the proper response?

I will continue to fight for stronger security measures for all transit operators and am asking each of you to contact your lawmakers and demand the same. Remember, we are all victims of violence each and every time a brother or sister is assaulted.

By Justin Ross, Bus Driver/Carson Ross

Washington

SMART Transportation Division Washington State Legislative Director Herb Krohn appeared on the cable television station Showtime’s documentary series “Years of Living Dangerously” May 12 in an episode entitled “The Governor.”

According to Showtime, the documentary series explores the human impact of climate change. In “The Governor,” correspondent Olivia Munn profiles what the show bills as the nation’s most climate-conscious governor, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, and reports on what he’ll do about the coal export depots in his state.

The show states as governor, Inslee is facing a well-financed campaign by the coal industry to build export depots that could ship 100 million tons of coal to Asia each year. Krohn was interviewed for his perspective in support of the export terminal issue.

“I appeared on the episode for maybe a few minutes, even though the actual filmed interview lasted almost three hours,” Krohn said. “It is docu-entertainment and has a very biased perspective. You can come out and protest and you can feel like you are doing something for the world. But, you are not accomplishing anything except costing American jobs,” Krohn tells viewers in the show.
First SMART Transportation Division Convention

General Chairperson Tommy Pate, Local Chairperson and Delegate Glenn Bay and Arizona State Legislative Director Greg Hynes, all of Local 1081 at Glendale, Ariz., greet each other in the foyer outside the convention hall.

Transportation Division President John Patrick Lanza with his wife, Kathy, at the banquet hall, Tuesday evening, July 1, at the San Diego Bayfront Hotel’s Indigo Ballroom.

Dellegates and West Virginia State Legislative Director Mark M Educación, at the Sunday evening reception, with the suite Director, concert crew and guests of Joe and Jerry, and two grandfathers, Preston, Idaho, and Northland.

Dellegates and Local Chairperson Raymond B. Holloway (712) assist at the head of the line to speak at one of the six microphones available to delegates on the convention floor.

Delegates Ray Q. Miller Jr. (72), James R. Holcomb (150) and Daniel W. O’Neil (1203) attend entry to the convention hall on the first day of the SMART Transportation Division Convention.

Delegates Robert H. King Jr. (1172), Richard Ross (1895), Samuel J. Nasco (318) and William A. Bulter (1268) were handed out for their accomplishments by President Previsich. They had served as delegates at 11, 12, 14 and 14 conventions, respectively. (Bulter was unavailable for this photograph.)

Members of the gallery note the convention proceedings from the rear of the convention hall. Only SMART Transportation Division delegates are allowed on the convention floor.

SMART Transportation Division Human Rights Coordinator Coordinator Ed E. Johnson (937) as center, Executive Board member Robert Rankin Jr. (1742) and Assembly Department Delegate, Charles M. King (96).

Delegates Luther “Pate” King Jr. (1172), Richard Ross (1895), Samuel J. Nasco (318) and William A. Bulter (1268) were handed out for their accomplishments by President Previsich. They had served as delegates at 11, 12, 14 and 14 conventions, respectively. (Bulter was unavailable for the photograph.)

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SMART officers and staff note for the opening of the national anthem by Ms. Jessica Lerner of San Diego.

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CONVENTION ATTENDANTS RISE FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE SONGS BY THE SAN DIEGO HIGHLANDERS PIPE BAND.

SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich, right, speaks with Minnesota State Legislative Director Philip Quade following the close of the First SMART Transportation Division Convention in San Diego, Calif.

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Members of the gallery note the convention proceedings from the rear of the convention hall. Only SMART Transportation Division delegates are allowed on the convention floor.

SMART Transportation Division Human Rights Coordinator Coordinator Ed E. Johnson (937) as center, Executive Board member Robert Rankin Jr. (1742) and Assembly Department Delegate, Charles M. King (96).

Committee attendants rise for the presentation of the Salute by the San Diego Hihglinders Pipe Band.

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SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich, right, speaks with Minnesota State Legislative Director Philip Quade following the close of the First SMART Transportation Division Convention in San Diego, Calif.

The new logo of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers is displayed in lights on a wall of the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel during the Sunday evening welcome reception. The new logo will be printed prominently on union materials in the coming months.

SMART General President Joseph Nigro, center, greets Delegate and General Chairperson Luther “Pate” King Jr. (1172), left, and Delegate and Local Chairperson Thomas M. Leonard (320) following the convention proceedings on the final day.

Delegates Guillermo Rosales (1607), Reuben G. Ford (1346), Kevin Wendell Woods (924) and Adhi S. Reddy (1785) speak together following the conclusion of the convention proceedings. Rosales and Reddy were elected to alternate vice president – bus and vice president – bus positions, respectively.

Bus Department Delegate Michael J. Byrne (1558), Paul S. Sears (1741) and Eduardo Montesino (23) attend the Sunday evening welcome reception outside the San Diego Bayfront Hotel’s Indigo Ballroom.

Delegate and General Chairperson Luther “Pate” King Jr. (1172), left, and Delegate and Local Chairperson Thomas M. Leonard (320) following the convention proceedings on the final day.

Delegate and West Virginia State Legislative Director Mark M Educación, at the Sunday evening reception, with the suite Director, concert crew and guests of Joe and Jerry, and two grandfathers, Preston, Idaho, and Northland.

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SMAPT SMART Transportation Division President John Previsich, right, speaks with Minnesota State Legislative Director Phillip Quade following the close of the First SMART Transportation Division Convention in San Diego, Calif.
Retired conductor Shacklette shares rail history with students

Retired member of Local 1823 Norbert Shacklette looks fondly back on his days on the railroad. Now, he’s using the knowledge gained from 42 years on the railroad to teach fourth-grade students its history at a newly restored depot in Bismarck, Mo.

The Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation and the Bismarck Depot Preservation sponsored May 23 the Historic Preservation, N.Y. Community Art Program for the fourth-grade students of Bismarck Elementary. Shacklette, along with retired engineer Mark Sturgeon, shared the history of the railroad in Bismarck with the elementary school students.

“I thought it was rather successful,” Shacklette said of the event. “I would like to think that each one of them absorbed something from our program.”

Shacklette said that he would be interested in conducting the program again, explaining that he’s been interested in railroad history since grade school, when he first learned to ride a train.

“When you’ve got a golden opportunity like that, you want to preach a little bit about Operation Lifesaver,” Shacklette said. “I told them the railroad is a dangerous place and you want to make sure that they understand that the railroad is not a playground.”

He proudly showed the students his old ticket punch from when he worked on Amtrak. He used it to punch pretend tickets that had been given to the children by Liz Bennett, President of the Bismarck Depot Preservation and coordinator of the event.

Shacklette also keeps himself busy these days by staying active in the State Historical Society of Missouri and is a published author of books pertaining to the history of Missouri’s railroads.

“I had this idea that I wanted to produce a DVD about the history of the Missouri Southern Railroad, so I went over to see what kind of information the historical society had. That’s where I met Mr. John Bradbury, who helped me co-produce a DVD,” Shacklette said.

“The railroads have a rich history in the creation of this country and are still a very vital part of the United States,” Shacklette added.

Shacklette retired from the railroad in 2002 after 41 years and 10 months of service. During his tenure there, he was an active member of Local 1823 at St. Louis and held many local officer positions. He served as secretary & treasurer, alternate legislative representative, legislative representative, assistant local chairperson and legislative chairperson of the Missouri State Legislative Board from 1980-1984.

Shacklette, who is also director of operations support at the United Transportation Union headquarters, has been very active in the Auxiliary of the United Transportation Union, having served on the Auxiliary Scholarship Board until 2013. He is currently the treasurer and delegate of her local lodge.

Social Security closes offices as baby boomers age

Even as millions of baby boomers approach retirement, the Social Security Administration has been closing dozens of field offices, forcing more and more seniors to seek help online, according to a congressional report released June 18 and obtained by The Associated Press.

The agency blames budget constraints. As a result, seniors seeking information and help from the agency are facing increasingly long waits, in person and on the telephone.

The closings come as applications for retirement and disability benefits are soaring, a trend that will continue as aging baby boomers approach retirement.

The agency has been encouraging people to access services online. It has upgraded its website in recent years, including secure connections to the Social Security Administration’s online services and apply for benefits. In 2013, nearly half of all retirement applications were filed online.
UTU Alumni Association calendar

SMART needs your photographs for UTU Alumni Association calendar

The SMART Transportation Division is seeking quality railroad, bus and airline photos, taken by its members, for placement in its annual calendar and other uses.

The calendar is mailed annually to members of the UTU Alumni Association as one of the benefits of Alumni Association membership.

High-resolution digital photographs should be emailed to “news_TD@smart-union.org”.

Printed photographs should be mailed to SMART TD News, 14950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333. To be included in the 2014 calendar, photos must be received by Oct. 1.

Be sure to include the photographer’s name and local number, the name(s) of the person(s) in the photograph (left to right) and any other pertinent information, such as the date and location where the photograph was taken.

Due to federal or state regulations or company restrictions on employees’ use of personal electronic devices, including cameras, on company property or while on duty, all members are advised to always follow their employers’ guidelines on the use of such devices.

All members whose photographs are selected for use in the calendar will be named underneath the picture and will also receive copies of the calendar.

For more information about the UTU Alumni Association, visit the SMART TD homepage at www.utu.org. From the pull-down menu under “About UTU” at the top center of the homepage, select “UTU Alumni Association.”

Retired UTU members, as well as those individuals nearing retirement or interested in pension and other issues affecting transportation-labor families, are invited to participate in this voluntary program.

All photographs submitted become property of SMART.
Delegates return Previsich to SMART TD presidency

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Election results for two additional vice president positions were as follows:

The vice president position on the Transportation Division Officers: Simon were returned to office. Candidate Robert J. Keeley received the fewest votes. Board of Appeals members Dale B. Barnett Jr., Tessa R. Buddle, Del A. Simpson, Alvy Hughes, and candidate David W. Patenaude were elected by acclamation. Executive Board members Stephen T. Dawson, Steven C. Mavury, Michael N. Anderson, Robert Resendez Jr. and Phillip J. Craig were elected by acclamation.

In the election for the office of Alternate to the Executive Board by acclamation. A member of SMART Transportation Division Local 31 at San Jose, Calif., Previsich began his transportation career with Southern Pacific Transportation Company, where he commenced work as a train-service operations employee in San Francisco. He later transferred to engine service and achieved certification as both a railroad conductor and locomotive engineer. Previsich started doing work as a local union officer in the mid-1980s. Thereafter, he moved into a system-wide position as a general chairperson in the early 1990s, followed by his election to UTU International vice president in 2007. He was re-elected in 2011, elevated to the position of assistant president in 2012 and assumed the responsibilities of the general secretary and treasurer position on Jan. 1, 2013.

Having a special interest in transportation-industry safety issues, Previsich is the SMART Transportation Division representative on the Federal Railroad Administration’s Rail Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) and has served on numerous subcommittees associated with RSAC.

In addition, he is a cabinet-level appointee to the National Freight Advisory Committee, a group that reports directly to the secretary of transportation on MAP-21, a program charged with assisting in the development of administration policy on a national freight plan for the 21st century.

Thousands turn out for Long Island labor rally

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we will not settle for anything less than the fair agreement that our members deserve.

“We have made our intentions very clear—we will not agree to anything that we feel is trying to force us and the members of our coalition. This show of solidarity will send a message to MTA and the governor that our members and the union coalition are standing firm in our resolve to not settle for less than the fair and respectful contract to which our members are entitled.”

Besides SMART General President Joe Nigro and Secretary-Treasurer Joe Sellers, the rally was attended by Transportation Communications Union President Robert Scondellitti and Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen President Dan Pickett.

“If Gov. Cuomo doesn’t intervene, union members will be waiting for him in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada,” Nigro said. “We will only stand with politicians who stand with working families.”

Also attending and offering their support were U.S. Rep. Tim Bishop (D-Dist. 1), State Sens. John J. Flanagan (R-Dist. 2) and Carl L. Marcellino (R-Dist. 5), Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone and Town of Babylon Supervisor Richard Schaffer.

Addressing the rally attendees, Bishop said, “They’re not looking for a handout, they’re not looking for a giveaway, they’re not looking for a handout, they just want to let the collective bargaining process work. The unions have made it very clear that they would accept the results of (PEB 245’s) rulings. The MTA refuses to accept those. We’ve got to move forward here.”

“If Suffolk County is here to stand with you,” Bellone said.

Bishop also presented a letter to MTA Chairman Thomas F. Prendergast from a bipartisan group of congressional representatives whose constituents would be affected by a work stoppage. It was signed by U.S. Reps. Peter King (R-Dist. 2), Steve Israel (D-Dist. 3), Carolyn McCarthy (D-Dist. 4), Gregory W. Meeks (D-Dist. 5), Grace Meng (D-Dist. 6), Hakeem Jeffries (D-Dist. 8), Jerrold Nadler (D-Dist. 10), Carolyn Maloney (D-Dist. 12), Joseph Crowley (D-Dist. 14) and Bishop.

It read in part: “As members of Congress representing districts that would be unduly impacted by any disruption of Long Island Railroad (LIRR) service, we are writing to express our concern regarding the ongoing labor dispute between the MTA and LIRR employee labor unions. We encourage the MTA to accept a proposal from the involved employee labor unions to extend the current ‘cooling off’ period for an additional 60 days.”

U.S. Rep. Tim Bishop (D-Dist. 1), right, on stage with General Chairperson Anthony Simon, holds up a copy of a letter signed by 10 U.S. representatives representing districts that would be unduly impacted by any disruption of Long Island Rail Road service, asking MTA to accept a proposal from the unions to extend the current ‘cooling off’ period for an additional 60 days.
WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has reinvigorated the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME) since the new system for medical exams was implemented, and is working to widen availability of medical professionals who perform commercial driver physicals and for tracking of driver medical certificates. The new program, which was required by federal law and addresses four National Transportation Safety Board recommendations, sets baseline training and testing standards for medical professionals who perform commercial driver physicals and for tracking of driver medical certificates.

The USDOT medical examination looks at a range of conditions to assess a driver’s ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle, including cardiovascular, pulmonary and respiratory and muscular functions, vision, and hearing. To meet the needs of professional drivers throughout the country, there are certified examiners in every state, and dozens or hundreds in most cities that can be located by visiting the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners’ online database. The online database is easily searchable so drivers can schedule their medical certification exams online and receive their certification in the mail. Medical professionals who perform these exams have a thorough understanding of DOT fitness standards and are able to ensure that commercial drivers meet the health requirements necessary to operate on our highways and roads, thereby strengthening safety for every traveler.

The new program also increases average transit spending by nearly 70 percent over FY 2014 enacted levels, which will grow federal investments in all surface transportation modes – and allow it to grow as a safe, cost-effective, environmentally friendly and efficient way to move people and goods. The proposal increases average transit spending by nearly 70 percent over FY 2014 enacted levels, which will enable the expansion of new projects that improve connectivity (e.g., light rail, street cars, bus rapid transit, etc.) in suburbs, fast-growing states, cities, small towns and rural communities, while still maintaining existing transit systems. The Grow America Act proposes a potential, $5.1 billion increase in requirements to address passenger transit’s maintenance backlog to reduce bus and rail system breakdowns; create more reliable service, and stop delays that make it harder for commuters to get to work. The proposal also includes the innovative Rapid Growth Area Transportation Act, which is designed to help states grow funds for high-speed rail projects in specific areas, and to enable states to grow their rail programs where they can.

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OSHA launches campaign to prevent heat illness

It is getting hotter throughout the country. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has launched a national campaign to prevent heat illness in workers. Each year, thousands of workers experience heat-related illnesses and many even die working in the heat. This is preventable. That is why OSHA needs your help in raising awareness about the issues and resources available from OSHA.

Learn more and find OSHA’s educational and training resources to download free in both Spanish and English at www.osha.gov/heat.

OSHA’s smartphone application calculates the heat index based on your current location, gets a risk level and provides recommendations to prevent heat illness. Join the 130,000 others taking steps to prevent illness and download the app today.

This year OSHA is focusing on acclimatization, the physical change that the body undergoes to build tolerance to hot environments by gradually increasing exposure by small increments.

Learn more and find OSHA’s education and training resources to download free in both Spanish and English at www.osha.gov/heat.

OSHA has found that in recent years, the lack of acclimatization led to serious heat illness or death in 74 percent of OSHA citations. Heat illness prevention programs, which can help prevent illness and death, were absent or missing elements such as acclimatization or providing potable water. New and temporary workers are even more at risk for heat-related illnesses.

Please help spread the word however you can by tweeting or posting on Facebook using #WaterRestShade (OSHA has sample posts in its new Social Media Toolkit), or by speaking and sharing resources with your friends, family, coworkers, employees, employers and community members.

Workers have the right to a safe workplace. The OSH Act protects workers who complain to their employer, OSHA, or other government agencies about unsafe or unhealthful working conditions or environmental problems.

If a worker has been punished or discriminated against for using his or her rights, such as raising health and safety concerns including those related to excessive heat, or filing a complaint, he or she must file a complaint with OSHA within 30 days.

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For other valuable worker protection information, such as workers’ rights, employer responsibilities, and other services OSHA offers, visit the OSHA Workers’ Page.

Inside this issue of UTU-SMART News:

- Quick-thinking conductor saves fellow member’s life. See page 2.
- First SMART Transportation Division Convention photo highlights. See pages 6 and 7.
- SMART needs your photographs for UTU Alumni Association calendar. See page 9.
- Retired conductor Shacklette shares rail history with students. See page 8.
- OSHA launches campaign to prevent heat illness.