Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With the 2020 general election right around the corner, we are dedicating a large portion of this edition of the SMART-TD News to what may be the most-critical question we’ve ever been faced with: Who should serve as President of the United States for the next term?

Divided and contentious as this subject can be, I am asking that you take the time to read through this issue with an open mind, and think critically about what we have riding on the outcome of this election as unionized essential transportation workers.

In determining who SMART and its Transportation Division should endorse, first and foremost we listened to our surveys and emails, called to our offices, and wrote to us to express your viewpoints. Your opinions matter to us above all else.

With that being said, we also considered external sources and blocked out those that misrepresented the candidates and their intentions, or were biased towards one end of the political spectrum or the other. Problem is, there is an abundance of misinformation coming from all directions. In a world where it’s difficult to trust virtually every source of information, where should we turn?

Fortunately, in this election we have a race where both candidates have set precedent in the White House, President Trump as the incumbent with nearly four years of experience under his belt, and Joe Biden with eight years of experience as our former Vice President. We also examined the promises that each candidate has made on the campaign trail, and compared those to their actions while holding elective office. As the saying goes, actions speak louder than words.

Below are some examples that you can trust, because they are based on objective fact – no conjecture, no spin, no bias, and no BS:

**Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) appointments**

In March 2009, the Obama/Biden administration nominated Joseph C. Szabo for the position of FRA administrator, a career railroader, SMART-TD member and Illinois State Legislative Director. Brother Szabo was the first FRA administrator to come from a rail labor background, and he served until 2015 when the Obama/Biden administration appointed Sarah Feinberg to the position. Under Szabo’s tenure, accidents, injuries, and fatalities dropped to record-low levels, and the FRA improved its rules pertaining to fatigue mitigation and training requirements. Under Feinberg’s tenure, the FRA issued notice of a proposed rulemaking which would have required two-person train crews.

In July 2017, the Trump/Pence administration nominated Ronald Batory, the former CEO of Consolidated Railroad Corporation, for the position of FRA administrator. Within one year of Batory’s nomination, the FRA had begun allowing Kansas City Southern to utilize Mexican train crews.

SMART-TD member and Illinois SLB Retiree’s relationship with Joe Biden highlighted in DNC video.

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**THIS ELECTION IS PIVOTAL**

The winner of the Nov 3 presidential election will shape the transportation industry as it recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and determine the direction federal agencies take in dealing with our members’ safety for years to come.

John Greenberg

**By Jeremy Ferguson**

One candidate installed administrators primed to automate transportation jobs away.

One rode the rails with our members for decades on Amtrak.
border and operate trains into Laredo, Texas, SMART-TD and other rail labor unions were among the FRA to rectify this issue – a process which took more than two years to resolve. During that time, the Trump administration worked to roll back rail labor’s pleas to secure our southern border and prevent American jobs from being lost to foreign countries; both efforts were campaign promises of his. In May 2019, the FRA withdrew its proposed two-person crew rulemaking, claiming that research didn’t support implementing such a rule, and that two-person crews would unnecessarily impede innovation and automation.

More on two-person train crews, and National Mediation Board (NMB) appointments

With Mr. Batory leading the FRA and its withdrawal of the proposed two-person crew rule, the nation’s rail carriers saw new opportunities and in October 2019, eight (8) railroads filed a lawsuit against SMART-TD, attempting to bargain over crew consist on a national level. To better their chances, the railroads filed their lawsuit in the Northern District of Texas, which is notoriously one of the least labor-friendly courts in the country. The case was assigned to a Trump-appointed judge who in February 2020 ruled in favor of the rail carriers and ordered us to negotiate over crew consist, despite the fact that the NMB was the only place barring such negotia-tions. At the same time they filed the above lawsuit, the railroads turned to the NMB, requesting that they begin the process of forcing SMART-TD into binding arbitration as they tried to bargain over crew consist issues. The NMB is controlled by a 2/3 majority of Trump-appointed members, as follows:

- William J. figures, a former consultant and presi-dent of a company that rail-roads hire for mergers, acquisitions, time studies, cost analyses and traffic analyses.

Despite SMART-TD’s objections, in January 2020, the NMB granted the railroads’ requests voted in a 2/3 majority in favor of mov-ing forward with the binding arbitration process. In stark contrast to the above, Joe Biden has met with SMART’s leadership and committed to defending two-person crews. For more than 30 years, Biden commu-nicated regularly with representatives of SMART-TD. Despite the fact that the railroad companies include meal and restroom breaks, and they have allowed outsourcing of school bus drivers to third-party companies, union crews regularly make house calls to deliver countertops, including modifications to our Health & Welfare Plans and a legislative agenda that would help protect workers from cross-border solutions;

Tom Perez, a former civil rights attorney who dedicat-ed much of his efforts to pushing for rail yardmasters; constitutional and “pure nonsense,” and vowed that it will die before even getting to the White House. As previously noted, Joe Biden has met with SMART leadership and pledged his support for these issues.

Handling of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

Beginning in February 2020, before it was known that the virus had reached this country, we began making myriad preparations for a worst-case scenario, including modifications to our Health & Welfare Plans and a legislative agenda that would help protect workers from cross-border solutions; constitutional and “pure nonsense,” and vowed that it will die before even getting to the White House. As previously noted, Joe Biden has met with SMART leadership and pledged his support for these issues.

Handling of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

Continued on Page 3
Continued from Page 2

on the SMART-TD home webpage at www.smart-union.org/td/.

What about the booming economy and increased rail traffic?

As usual in the case, over the last decade the number of carloads originated by U.S. Class I railroads has fluctuated with the economy, usually varying by single-digit percentages from year to year. Despite this relative consistency, the railroads’ operating ratios and revenues have gone up by double-digit percentages, while at the same time tens of thousands of rail labor employees have been furloughed. This is mostly due to the fact that Wall Street investors have taken an interest in our nation’s railroads, and they are obsessed with so-called “Precision Scheduled Railroading” practices, which have resulted in (among other detrimental effects) the doubling and tripling of train length and tonnage, and thus, the reduction of crews. Under the Trump administration, the Department of Transportation, the White House, FRA, and the DOT President’s column: A look at what is a pivotal election for our industry and for our union

of proposal after proposal focusing guiding their actions as the nation works to recover from the devastation of the last four years. Your vote is a personal choice. I ask that you review the candidates on the issues and the side-by-side comparisons on who will actually benefit you and your family’s future.

There is too much at stake in this election to sit this one out. Text the words VOTE SMART to 21333 to check your registration status and, if you can, vote absentee/by mail as early as possible.

Thank you and stay safe! Fraternally,

Joseph Sellers Jr.
General President, SMART

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“Something is certain — on our current trajectory the rich will continue to get richer, while unionized labor and other hard-working citizens are left behind to pick up the scraps.”

SMART GENERAL PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Four more years of the same or a new path forward?

Brothers and sisters,

We face the most important election of our lifetimes. For the past four years, SMART members have kept America moving through thick and thin, including serving as essential frontline workers who have kept American freight and passengers moving during the past six months in the COVID-19 pandemic. At the most basic level, we decided again and again that as a country working on a functioning, effective government to keep us safe at work and our families safe when we return home. When the coronavirus hit and again, the Trump administration has shown that it will place the needs of wealthy corporate interests above the health and safety of working families.

By Joseph Sellers Jr.

For members working on Amtrak, the Trump administration repeatedly proposed cutting Amtrak funding by 50 percent. It told Amtrak to replace long-distance trains with bus service and refused to fund critical infrastructure projects that would keep Amtrak operating smoothly in the years to come. The bus? Lost jobs, including the announced furloughs of hundreds of our members. Members hauling our nation’s freight saw Trump’s Federal Railroad Administration support rail crews from Mexico operating on American rail lines without the mitigating safety and security standards. At the same time, his FRA reversed the all-important two-person crew rule originating during the Obama/Biden Administration — all the carriers can cut labor costs and jobs to the detriment of railroaders and the safety of the communities we travel through.

When the coronavirus first began spreading across the United States from the shores to the heartland, the Trump administration immediately granted a safety waiver to rail carriers they had rested requirements and equipment inspections — all in the name of profit, which the carriers did, in the midst of economic collapse. For bus and transit operators, the Trump administration has ignored calls to protect the jobs and safety of men and women at risk while doing their job, coupled with exposure to the public during a raging pandemic. This comes on top of Proposal After Proposal to cut funded transit funding — all once again in support of profitability over people’s lives.

Joe Biden’s record speaks for itself. He led the push to lower the retirement age for railroad workers and started the process to install a plan to establish two-person crew consist requirements for all rail carriers. Before the Trump administration reversed it. A Biden/Kamala Harris administration will remain focused squarely on what is mitigating in the lives of working families, with that focus guiding their actions as the nation works to recover from the devastation of the last four years. Your vote is a personal choice. I ask that you review the candidates on the issues and the side-by-side comparisons on who will actually benefit you and your family’s future.

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General President, SMART

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Out of a period of darkness, we can see a new dawn

By Gregory Hynes

I am not a political person. I am a union activist. And by union activist, I mean I have a job, and I use that job to help people. I use my job to help people by making sure they are treated fairly, and that their voices are heard. I use my job to help people by making sure that they get what they need, and that they are safe.

I believe in the power of the people. I believe that we can make a difference, if we work together. I believe that we can overcome any challenge, if we stand together. I believe in the strength of our union, and I believe in the strength of our members.

So, I ask each of you to do your part and VOTE. Susan B. Anthony reminds us “we must never forget our right to our freedom.” And I know who I am voting for. I believe that we need a leader who understands the people, who listens to us, and who is willing to fight for us.

By Gregory Hynes

National Legislative Director
SMART-TD
I still remember it as if it hap-
penned yesterday: the first time I voted for a Democrat. It ran so
contrary to what I had
heard growing up from a father
who despised unions and
Democrats equally and all they
stand for. His heroes were G.
Gordon Liddy, Rush Limbaugh
and Ronald Reagan. The word
“Democrat,” “liberal” or “union
worker” was used for those he
held in contempt and viewed
as someone who would take
away all he had worked for
and destroy the country he
loved.

I held my father’s views to
the point that I wrote a college
paper in my political science
class taught by a former Dem-
ocratic state representative,
exposing on the values of the
Republican Party. My pro-
fessor gave me a passing
grade because I had the
stones to write it and was able
to convey my message clearly.
He also told me something I
will never forget: “One day Mr.
Gibson, you will find that the
Republican Party is not for
anyone other than big busi-
ness and the elite. I wish you
well and hope you find yourself
in that group one day.”

I graduated college, worked
hard and became a small busi-
ness owner at a young age. It
was not until I began to have a
family did I start thinking about
regarding to our family life, safety,
employee ID number. The dis-

The state’s new legislative board was installed earlier this year, pre-COVID-19. Pictured, from left, are Assistant State Director Scott Bert of Local 1301 (Stockton, Calif.); Vice Chairperson Anthony Esparza of Local 1581 (Bakersfield, Calif.); Alternate State Director Trevor Hodges of Local 492 (Sacramento, Calif.); Chairperson Bonnie Meir of Local 23 (Santa Cruz, Calif.); Vice Chairperson Christine Ivey of Local 1765 (Santa Monica, Calif.); State Legislative Director Louie Costa of Local 1241 (Richmond, Calif.) and Secretary Robert Peck of Local 1570 (Roseville, Calif.).
Over the years, how many times have you heard the union only supports Democratic candidates? It might seem that way to many. The truth is SMART-TD only supports candidates who support our core issues. And, like the old adage, “the proof is in the pudding.” SMART-TD supports candidates of both political parties who support our members on key issues like two-person crew legislation, transit worker and bus driver assault legislation, safety at the workplace, the right to organize and negotiate fair wages and our crown jewel, Railroad Retirement.

Other issues — while important to our members — are not factored when it comes to our endorsement process. As part of our mandate in our Constitution and rituals, SMART-TD tracks the voting record and legislation sponsorship of each member of Congress. We only track votes that directly impact active and retired members. And the facts are clear. On transportation and labor issues, 226 out of 232 Democrat members in the U.S. House score an 85 or above with an average score of 94 (on a 0-100 scale, with 100 being perfect). On the other hand, 161 Republicans out of 250 have a score of 25 or below with an average of 16. Additionally, just 16 Republicans score 50 or above, with 10 being strong supporters by co-sponsoring two-person crew legislation. Bottom line — Democrats have an average score of 94, while the Republicans have an average score of 16. Those are the facts.

Our National Legislative Office and state legislative directors work hard to build relationships with both Republicans and Democrats. We have found that we win by addition, not subtraction or alienation. Consider, in the past three election cycles, SMART-TD PAC fund has contributed $881,000 to Republican candidates.

And yes, while we do contribute more to Democrats, the facts are Democratic members of Congress are more likely to support us on our core issues. We want relationships with Republicans, but if PAC and votes were investment capital, let’s review the rate of return. Think of PAC and your vote as a valuable commodity that candidates desire. Now suppose you had $1,000 to invest, and were told if you invest in Democrats you would get a yearly return of $10.39; which would you choose? Again, those are factual numbers based on averages.

For the 2020 election cycle, we have recommended 23 Republicans and 349 Democrats. In a number of districts and states, we’ve made no recommendation. Our recommendation is based strictly on an incumbent’s voting record and sponsorship of legislation. If the incumbent is not a member of ours, we then look at the challenger (and their record if they are an elected official) and ask them straight up if they support us on our issues. Only then does a challenge get a recommendation.

While we are not attempting to minimize any member’s reason for supporting candidates of their choice, we simply encourage everyone to review the information provided by those who have taken the time to painstakingly construct a list of those sympathetic to our needs. Simply put, we must support those who support our families and union’s well-beings.

Above all, please register to vote and then take the time to do so. We simply ask that you strongly take into consideration the information provided.

Appeal victory: Trump-appointed judge’s attack on crew consist vacated

On Aug. 28, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit issued its decision in SMART-TD v. SMART-TD (Case No. 20-10162) concerning crew consist. This decision is a long-awaited victory for the union. The appellate court vacated the injunction that forced SMART-TD General Committees to bargain over crew consist, despite the existence of moratoria which bar such negotiation.

SMART-TD has always read those moratoria clauses to bar the service of Section 6 Notices to negotiate over crew consist until the last protected employee vol- untarily separated from service. Indeed, that is the very reason for their existence. But despite the long-standing nature of these clauses, the carriers presented a new and novel theory that the moratoria did not actually bar crew-consist negotiations. The carriers tested this theory by suing the union in October 2019 and moving for a preliminary injunction in December 2019. In their request for an injunction, the carriers asked a district court in Texas to force SMART-TD to bargain now in spite of the moratoria. That court issued its decision on February 11, 2020, finding that even though the dispute over the moratoria was minor, and no arbi- tral determination had been made, SMART-TD was required to bargain now.

Under the RLA, minor disputes must be resolved through arbitration, not Section 6 bargaining. In the 22-page opinion, the appellate court walked through the various bases on which an injunction can be issued in Railway Labor Act (RLA) disputes. The 5th Circuit Court found that none existed here. Rather, it concluded that the carriers had failed to exhaust the administrative remedy provided under the RLA arbitration regarding the moratoria clauses.

COVID-19 deaths continue to mount

SMART-TD has received reports of three confirmed deaths of an active member and two retirees attributed to the novel coronavirus since the last publication of the union newspaper and one member death that may also have been attributable but was not medically confirmed.

On Aug. 30, Rohan Johnson of Local 1715 (Charlotte, N.C.) passed away from COVID-19 at age 59. “He was known as dependable man that would help anyone in need,” BDU Department Vice President Alvy Hughes said.
NRAB, First Division
SMART-TD Vice Presidents David B. Wier, Jr. and Jamie C. Modesitt report that the Organization has received numerous favorable decisions from cases arbitrated at the First Division of the National Railroad Adjustment Board. Of the many cases that the Organization received sustaining decisions on from the First Division, the cases referenced below are of significant interest:

- In NRAB First Division Award No. 30294 (Bass, 2020), Union Pacific terminated a switchman for allegedly hindering the normal function of a safety device. In order to operate the windshield wiper controls, which were located above the right side window of the locomotive, the Claimant deployed the sun visor towards the front window. Under the guise of asserting that the Claimant intentionally hindered the function of the inward facing camera, the Carrier terminated his employment. Because the Carrier installed both the sun visor and inward facing camera on the locomotive, the organization argued that any obstruction of the camera’s view caused by the sun visor being deployed towards the front window of the locomotive was solely due to a design flaw by the Carrier. Arbitrator David Bass reasoned that the Carrier’s contention that the Claimant’s alleged misconduct fit within the prohibited parameters of General Code of Operating Rule (GCOR) Nos. 1, 23 or 1, 23.1 took “a bit of linguistic gymnastics.” Observing that the Carrier failed to produce substantial evidence to prove a violation of the cited GCOR Rules, Arbitrator David Bass reinstated the Claimant to service and awarded him full back pay. GO-953 General Chairperson Luke Edington progressed this case to the NRAB First Division. . . .

- In NRAB First Division Award No. 30277 (Bass, 2020), the Organization submitted a grievance to the Board concerning Union Pacific’s miscalculation of vacation benefits and entitlements owed to a trainman. The Claimant worked for Alton & Southern Railway Company – a wholly owned subsidiary of Union Pacific – from April 28, 2005 until March 2017. In March of 2017, the Claimant began working as a trainman on Union Pacific in Nevada. For vacation qualification purposes, Union Pacific excluded the time he worked for its subsidiary – Alton & Southern Railway Company. In this regard, Union Pacific attempted to treat the Claimant as a new employee for the purposes of quantifying his vacation benefits and entitlements. Noting that the Claimant’s paychecks from Alton & Southern were paid by Union Pacific, and heeding the fact that his Union Pacific employee number remained unchanged when he transferred from Alton & Southern Railway Company to Union Pacific, the Board concluded that the Claimant’s years of service at Alton & Southern Railway Company should be used to calculate his vacation benefits and entitlements at Union Pacific. GO-953 General Chairperson Luke Edington progressed this case to the NRAB First Division.

Public Law Boards
- In Public Law Board 7949, Award No. 1 (Moreland, 2020), CSXT terminated a trainman concerning remarks he allegedly made to a car officer while he was acting in the capacity of a Local Chairman. In overturning the Carrier’s disciplinary action against the employee, the Board recognized that an employee’s conduct while acting in the capacity of a union officer is beyond the reach of the Carrier for disciplinary purposes. Observing that it is impermissible for a Carrier to discipline an employee who is acting in the capacity of a Union Officer, the Board reinstated the Claimant to service and awarded him full back pay. GO-49 General Chairperson Rick Lee and International Vice President Jamie C. Modesitt handled this case before Public Law Board 7949.

COVID casualties of members, retirees reported

Continued from Page 6

Brother Johnson had been a member of the union since February 2012 and worked for the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). “A respectful, loving and caring husband, father, and friend,” his wife posted. “Was loved and will be sadly missed by many.”

The deaths of two retirees from COVID also were reported over the summer.

Retired brother Kenneth R. Jackson (New Orleans, La.), 73, of Brusly, La., died April 1. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War and a Union Pacific conductor and had joined the union in October 1973.

Retired brother Roy L. Jacobs, of Local 30 (Jacksonville, Fla.), 69, of Alma, Ga., died May 9. A retiree from Amtrak, Brother Jacobs was a conductor for the carrier for 40 years and joined the union in August 1973.

The death of active member John Delend Edwards, 56, on July 18 was not definitively verified as being COVID-19-related as test results were pending before he passed. The member of Local 445 (Norta, Ill.) known as “Big John” was a stand-out All-American basketball player known as “House” in college because of his size and his love for that style of music. He played semi-pro ball for the Chicago Fire.

John was a gentle giant who had an infectious laugh, nickname for everyone and a heart as big as his stature!” his family wrote in his obituary.

Brother Edwards joined the union in December 2008 and had a 25-year career with BNSF as a conductor, hostler, remote-control operator and as an engineer. He is survived by his sons Ryan, Scottie and Joshua.

SMART Transportation Division offers its sincere condolences to the families and friends and to the home locals of these union brothers. They will be missed but not forgotten.

As reported in the national emergency March 13, 2020, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Transportation Division has received reports of 13 confirmed members and retiree deaths from the virus.

Unions sue to block carriers’ modification of health benefits

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Aug. 5, 12 rail union locals and their families are covered by the NRC/UTU Plan and the Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan filed suit against the nation’s Class I railroad carriers in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

The suit asks the court to force the carriers to bargain in good faith with the unions over mandatory subjects of bargaining. The involved issues have been the subject of collective bargaining for decades and are part of the carriers’ bargaining notices served Nov. 1, 2019, pursuant to Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (RLA). At issue are carrier attempts to restrict access to certain medications and to forcibly reconfigure health care networks.

In addition to the SMART Transportation Division, the unions are: the American Train Dispatchers Association; the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen; the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; the Brotherhood of Railroad Signers; the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers, Mechanical Division; the International Brotherhood of Boiler makers; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; the National Conference of Fireman & Hostler Districts Local 3281; SEIU; the Transportation Communications Union/IAM; and the Transport Workers Union.

The carriers are: BNSF Railway Company; Kansas City Southern Railway Company; CSX Transportation; Grand Trunk Western Railroad Company; Norfork Southern Railway Company; Soo Line Railway Company; and Union Pacific. Also named in the suit is the National Railroad Labor Conference (NLRC), whose National Carriers’ Conference Committee (NCCC) is the designated bargaining agent of the railroads.
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* *A congressional race is not lost, the district has declared an incumbent candidate.*  * *A race is uncontested.*
Arizona Rep. Richard Andrade advanced through a challenge in his Demo- cratic primary Aug. 4 and is seeking re-election in November to a fourth term representing the state’s 29th District in Maricopa County. A third-generation railroader, Andrade hired out with the Santa Fe Railroad (now BNSF) in 1994 when he became a member of our union. He is a certified engineer and a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He serves on the state House’s Land & Agriculture, Public Safety and Transportation committees.

He first got involved as a union officer as the alternate legislative representa- tive for Local 1081 (Glendale, Ariz.) in 2002 and then later as legislative represen- tative, a position he holds to this day in the state Senate. “The values I bring to the Legislature are values I learned as a member of the SMART-TD union,” he told the SMART Transportation News for an article in November 2016. “From the very beginning of my career, it was the union that educated and empowered me to get engaged on issues that affect working families. It was the union that encouraged me to become active and contact our state and federal legisla- tures on issues that affect our jobs, such as retire- ment, benefits, safety issues and one-person crews,” he said.

On his campaign site, www.richardandrade.com, Brother Andrade discusses the importance of being pro-union — he also serves as a legislative vice chair- person on the Arizona State Legislative Board — and when voting as a state representative, he keeps labor issues in mind while considering legislation. “I saw how Unions contin- ually fight to protect our jobs, health care and many issues that affect its mem- bers, especially in a state that is not union or labor friendly,” he writes. “Why does big business need protection when they already have billions of dol- lars, while many middle class struggles to make a living? The gap widens between the wealthiest and middle class and the middle class continues to lose.”

Among the important issues he’s campaigning on during his re-election are education, health care and fighting against discrimina- tion of all kinds. “My covenant is to contin- ually fight for Working Families, Education, DACA and most importantly, Peo- ple’s Rights,” he writes on his website.

Minn. members seek state senate, local school posts

Minnesota SMART-TD members are stepping up in their communities with at least two seeking office at the district and local level in the upcoming Nov. 3 election.

Local 1000 (Minneapolis, Minn.) brother and Alternate Legislative Representative Brent Krist is running for Minnesota Senate District 15, and Assis- tant State Legislative Director Robert Dickerson of Local 64 (Waseca, Minn.) is running for school board.

“These are exciting times in Minnesota with these two members answering the call of public service,” Minneso- ta SLD Nick Katich said. The 2019-20 Minnesota Senate has been a road- block for SMART-TD and all organized labor, with bills such as two-person crew not getting passed.

“Unions are our best way to obtain a living wage and good benefits — I will sup- port and encourage more unionization in our district, and oppose any so-called right-to-work legislation,” said Krist.

He has earned the endorsement of the Min- nesota DFL, Minnesota AFL-CIO, and of course SMART-TD Minnesota among others. “Brent knows the ins and outs of Minnesota politics and will bring a special knowledge of our industry to the state Senate,” Katich said. “One of our bigger challenges as railroaders is explaining our industry to politicians and getting them to understand our issues. Brent will be able to bridge that gap with his future state Senate colleagues.”

Visit www.kristforsd 15.com to show your sup- port and to follow his cam- paign.

As Brother Dickerson and his wife Cara contemplated what the school year will look like for their children, he made the decision to enter the race for Waseca school board. “I’ve always wanted to be more involved in my commu- nity,” said Dickerson. “I was raised to value critical thinking and logic to solve problems. Education is such a fundamental part of our society that shapes how successful our children can be. From future earnings to the criminal justice system, it has been shown time after time our education system plays a large role in the rest of a child’s life, affecting us all.”

Early voting begins in Minnesota Sept. 18 and all members, active and retired, are encouraged to vote.

Those with questions can reach the SLB at sld@smart-td-minnesota.org or (651) 222-7500.

Wyo. SLD Blake runs for new term

Stan Blake, a member of SMART-TD Local 1857 (Green River, Wyo.) and the Wyoming State Legislative Director, has represented the state’s 29th District since 2007 and is looking to achieve another go-around. Currently the longest-serv- ing Democratic member of the Wyoming State Legisla- ture, he’s backed state two- person crew legislation and serves on the House Trans- portation, Highways and Mil- itary Affairs Committee and the House Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee.

Blake faces a challenge from a Lib- ertarian candidate in November. “Sometimes local office holders are the ones who really change things,” he encourages those who are considering a run for politi- cal office. “Run for city coun- cil, school board, college trustee. You could then springboard to a different office.”

Local 1074 member challenges Pa. incumbent

Rico Elmore, an Air Force veteran and member of TD Local 1074 (Freight Port, Pa.), admits he’s facing a “strong uphill battle” against a Dem- ocratic incumbent in Penn- sylvania’s 18th House Dis- trict.

Elmore faces Robert Matzie, a well-funded Democrat and former mayor seeking his sixth term to represent the district north- west of Pittsburgh on Nov. 3.

But one thing Elmore has experienced that Matzie has not is the glutony of railroad carriers for profits. “The carriers are cutting corners, and the general public does- n’t know,” he said, cit- ing carriers’ desire to cut crew in favor of automation as an example. The fact that legis- lators in Pennsylvania have not advanced a statewide 2PC bill disappoints him and is something he’d work to change if elected.

Elmore, a member since May 2017, is currently on furlough from Norfolk South- ern as a conductor.
Rail employment has fallen drastically during August / September 2020

Every three years, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) issues a report that projects the financial health of the Rail Retirement pension plan. The most recent report, the 27th of its kind, came out in June 2018. In these reports, RRB projects the long-term solvency of the plan, established decades ago and intended to provide security for thousands of retirees and for current workers when it comes time for them to retire. The report takes into account things such as RR employment levels, the number of retirements and market returns.

The 2018 report put forth a number of scenarios that spelled out what the financial health of the plan and its benefits would be in forecasts of stable, declining or greatly reduced railroad employment levels, over the coming decades. RRB concluded that Railroad Retirement would only end up in a rough financial situation if employment was greatly reduced, and that wouldn’t be until 2047.

Two years later, we realize that RRB, through no fault of its own, didn’t factor in the reckless lust for profits its carriers have in the implementation of Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) and their desire to eliminate jobs through automation with the blessings of the incumbent president’s appointed administrators at the Department of Transportation and Federal Railroad Administration. The coronavirus hasn’t helped either, giving the carriers an excuse to further lough and cut in 2020 so they can still bring millions and billions of dollars in each quarter, even with the reduction in rail traffic the pandemic brought.

One Class I carrier estimates that it can perform 45 percent of its operations using one person in the cab. That means that the job of just about one out of every two conductors is considered to be expendable in their eyes. He or she can go find another line preferably in the Canadian Shield.

Continued on Page 12
Unionist Tasker: Biden showed integrity 50 years ago and still does
By Terry Tasker

I have known Joe Biden since 1970 when I was a young Delaware state trooper. I was assigned to investigate a burglary of a local business and subsequently arrested a 35-year-old man and his 10-year-old son. As it turned out Joe Biden represented the two individuals and, after meeting with Joe, it was decided all charges would be dropped with the understanding that, for the good of the 10-year-old child’s family, they would go through counseling. This is an example of how the former vice president conducted himself in 1970, exhibiting compassion and integrity toward others.

From nearly a half century ago to the present, I have observed Biden interact and support organized labor, especially the railroad crafts. He has even gone so far as to host barbecues at his residence and inviting the conductors to attend meetings. As to law enforcement issues, Biden has been an outspoken proponent of tougher crime laws by sponsoring the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act.

That’s one less family and empathy toward the victimized families. One of the most-important current issues facing today’s rail employees is the future of Railroad Retirement. On July 7, the chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board received a letter from the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Director of National Economic Council expressing concerns about investments made by the NRRI Trust. This is only the beginning.

If given a second term, we must keep two people in the cab of a freight train, a hole could be blown in the Railroad Retirement plan, which has already been rocked by job cuts the carriers attribute to the coronavirus but we know began with PSR.

That’s one less family and empathy toward the victimized families. One of the most-important current issues facing today’s rail employees is the future of Railroad Retirement. That means reduced benefits for future retirees (assuming they survive the carriers’ onslaught of PSR and their jobs aren’t phased out as they tinker with the industry).

Carriers attacked crew consist and won a battle in a Texas court in early 2020 thanks to an appointee of President Donald Trump. Fortunately the decision was vacated, but they are still pursuing a dream scenario of halving in-cab employment numbers with no regard to public or employee safety. They think lines of software coding can adequately replace conductors and the important role they play in operations and on occasion in saving lives. The code word the big railroads are using as an excuse to put people out of work is “innovation.” Keeping people in the cab somehow hampers their ability to apply technology, according to their arguments.

We are running out of chances. If the carriers are allowed to continue on their current course, aided and abetted by a Republican-controlled FRA that does not see a need to keep two people in the cab of a freight train, a hole could be blown in the Railroad Retirement plan, which has already been rocked by job cuts the carriers attribute to the coronavirus but we know began with PSR.

As employment falls, our pensions are placed in jeopardy.

Continued from Page 11 of work and the carrier can pocket the cash. That’s one less family and empathy toward the victimized families. One of the most-important current issues facing today’s rail employees is the future of Railroad Retirement. That means reduced benefits for future retirees (assuming they survive the carriers’ onslaught of PSR and their jobs aren’t phased out as they tinker with the industry).

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Here are the numbers: When the current president took office in January 2017, there were 128,147 Class I rail workers, according to the Surface Transportation Board (STB). The STB’s employment report for rail workers from May 2020 says that Class I railroads employed 118,880 workers. In January 2017, the RRB reported average railroad employment — the number of people paying into the system — was 225,000. (See the chart on Page 11). The RRB has reported average railroad employment in July 2020 (the most recent data available from RRB) at 181,000.

The RRB nightmare scenario for employment levels in the 2018 report had the industry losing 122,000 workers in 25 years. We’ve lost 44,000 in the less than four years this president has been in office.

If the carriers continue their employment cuts, Railroad Retirement will then join the ranks of underfunded pensions that sadly failed workers in the promise to provide during their golden years what railroaders had to work their whole careers to earn.

Making railroads great again must not have been part of the plan.

One of the candidates has pledged a second great Railroad Revolution in a video aimed directly at members of our union. One has overseen a hostile regulatory environment that lets carriers give out placebo masks during a global pandemic and turns a blind eye in the form of safety waivers in a time of national crisis.

Choose wisely.

Carl Cochran
and Kenny Menges,
SMART TD Alumni Association

Retiree Weaver featured in video on first day of DNC
Gregg B. Weaver, a retired member of SMART-TD Local 898 who rode with former Vice President Joe Biden many times during the long-time senator’s commute from Delaware to Washington D.C., was featured in a video presented Aug. 17 during the first night of the Democratic National Convention.

In the video, the former vice president’s respect and empathy toward the SMART members who served him as he traveled aboard Amtrak were highlighted. “I think he’s most comfortable around everyday, working-class people,” Weaver said. “He makes you feel like you belong.”
John Easley, Local 811, former vice president
Former United Transportation Union Vice President John L. Easley of Apple Valley, Calif., passed away Aug. 26 at age 87. A veteran of the Korean War, Easley joined the union in August 1961. Easley was elected a local chairman in the early 1960s, became a general chairperson in the 1970s and was elected UTU vice president in 1983 before his retirement in 1995.

David Paray, Local 650, former general chairperson
Brother and former General Chairperson David Paray of St. Paul, Minn., passed away Aug. 12 at age 74. He was the last Omaha Firemen’s general chairperson of the Chicago, Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway (C&NW), later Union Pacific, which merged with GCA 225. Brother Paray served for many years as a dedicated advocate of the members of his home local and as vice general chairperson on GCA 225 until his retirement.

Last year, Local 650 also reported the passing of retired C&NW-Omaha General Chairperson Paul Bauch. "Brothers Paray and Bauch performed outstanding work to protect workers and contracts. They led our efforts in Minnesota during multi-contract negotiations under Presidential Emergency Order 219 in 1980s," said former Local Chairperson and labor historian David Rieih. "PEB 219 was a long and difficult negotiation process. The UTU remained united in its support of the C&NW. GCA Paray and Bauch led our efforts from the picket lines. SMART-TD has sent fraternal condolences to both the Paray and Bauch families.

Willard T. Pearl, Local 204, former vice president
Willard Pearl, 86, of Pueblo, Colo., a former vice president of the United Transportation Union, passed away on Aug. 24. Pearl joined the union in September 1956 and was a switchman on the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad from 1957-1971. He was Local 204’s (Pueblo, Colo.) chairperson from 1962-1971. He then was elected general chairperson and served from 1972-1983. He served as a vice president from 1984-1995, when he retired.

Geoff Andersen, 32, helped avert Casselton disaster
Geoff Andersen, the engineer trainee who helped separate ethanol cars to avert a major rail disaster in 2013, passed away Aug. 12 from an undiagnosed heart condition at age 32. Andersen was a member of Local 525 in Grand Forks, N.D., who was named firefighter, tank car, and disassembled tanker cars to prevent a fiery derailment in Casselton from getting worse.

The union faced a number of fiscal challenges at the time, Hakey said, and DuBose resolved those during his single term, leaving UTU on better financial footing than before. DuBose also was involved and served as secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO TTD.

After his 1995 retirement, the former president continued to maintain a relationship with the union and lent his support to a tentative national rail contract negotiated in 2011 that won approval.

"After Tom retired, he would sit at the Alumni table at the regional meetings with Kenny Menges or myself," Cochran said. "Our members would enjoy Tom telling the history of our union.

Former President G. Thomas DuBose is survived by his two children, Mark DuBose (Margaret), Marty Lee (KD), and three grandchildren, Matthew DuBose, Kristin Lee, and Ben DuBose.

Condolences to Brother Pearl's family and friends and all those who knew him.

After retirement, Pearl continued to donate to the union's political action committee as a platinum-level contributor. Brother Pearl was also a member of the local Masons, Eagles, and Elks Lodge.
Local 1741, San Francisco, Calif.

In this photo courtesy of GCA/LCA Secretary Meghann Adams’ Facebook page, members of Local 1741 demonstrate outside the San Francisco City Hall on Aug. 20.

In reaction to the San Francisco Unified School District’s (SFUSD) decision to lay off about 260 school bus drivers effective Aug. 31 on the cusp of the new school year, SMART-TD members organized a large protest in front of City Hall.

Drivers, dispatchers and staff were given little notice about the sudden cuts and assembled Aug. 20 to speak out against the cuts. “This is unconscionable. Despite preserving the wages and benefits for drivers and staff since shelter-in-place began in March, it is at this critical point that SFUSD has decided they will no longer pay until the SFUSD has decided they will no longer pay until the school district is underpaid, non-unionized workers. This is another blow to the proud union town of San Francisco. “We are graduates, parents and grandparents of graduates from SFUSD. We are immigrants. We are working families representing the entire spread of diversity found in the Bay Area. We have served the city of San Francisco for 50 years. And we do not think it too much to ask that the city find a way to provide for us for a few months so that we are able to return to the job that we are proud to do.”

The protest was attended by hundreds of union members and received coverage from multiple media outlets, including Bay Area television stations and newspapers.

No one was injured in the fire, as fortunately the family members were all outside of the house when it happened. In late June and later on television and discussed their efforts to fix up the caboose that they both said they worked aboard during their careers. Once restored, the caboose will be displayed at Black River Landing, a riverside site that hosts concerts and a transportation center for Lorain, a Cleveland suburb of about 64,000 people.

Glass retired in 2009 and Dembiec in 2018. Both worked for CSX, which donated the caboose. “You have to be of a certain age to even remember cabooses being on trains,” Dembiec told the newspaper’s Carissa Woytach. “So, to be able to bring that to younger people, they understand what it’s all about when they get it in their toy train set.” The pair also were interviewed by Spectrum News in late July about the same project. To learn more about the restoration project or to donate toward the effort, visit www.loraincaboose.org.

Around the SMART TD

Retirees help restore caboose

Two retired members of Local 284 (Cleveland, Ohio), Don Glass and Jim Dembiec, are participating in the restoration of an old Baltimore & Ohio caboose that is to become a permanent fixture at a venue in Lorain, Ohio.

Glass and Dembiec were interviewed for an article by The Chronicle-Telegram newspaper in Elyria in late June and later on television and discussed their efforts to fix up the caboose that they both said they worked aboard during their careers. Once restored, the caboose will be displayed at Black River Landing, a riverside site that hosts concerts and a transportation center for Lorain, a Cleveland suburb of about 64,000 people.

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Local 1067, Virginia, Minn.

Brother Matt Bryant of Local 1067 (Virginia, Minn.), his wife and their three children lost their house in a fire Aug. 14 and could use some help as they attempt to rebuild their lives.

Bryant, 34, a conductor with Canadian National, was furloughed in late May and had returned to service Aug. 10. Just four days later, he, his wife, and their three children saw their home in Carlton, Minn., destroyed.

A fire on Aug. 14 destroyed the home of Local 1067 member Matt Bryant and his family, from left, Matty; wife Jenna; Emma; and Grace. Follow the QR code at left to donate online.

Please follow the QR code with your smart device to assist the Bryant.

Local 1344, Mandan, N.D.

Retired 1344 President Frank Leingang crafted the flag.
A boy’s life was saved Aug. 14 and a potential tragedy averted thanks to the fast-thinking actions of Mike Bobrosky III, a member of Local 1006 (Brownsville, Pa.).

That morning, Reese Pearson, 9, who has autism, ran off from his home in Morgan Township, Pa. His mom immediately called police, according to reports to KOKA TV-2 in Pittsburgh, and authorities began to search the remote wooded area for Reese.

Down the hill from the home traveling the Norfolk Southern line toward Waynesburg, Pa., conductor Bobrosky and his engineer were traveling southbound. As their train approached Wayne Tunnel near Waynesburg, Bobrosky said he saw something fouling the track ahead.

“We were coming around a bend. He was in the middle of the gauge inside the tunnel, and we dumped it into emergency,” he said. “It was inches.”

After the train stopped, they alerted authorities, who had been searching for Reese for quite some time, and coaxed him aboard the locomotive.

The hungry boy received a ride to the next crossing from railroad workers. Authorities were waiting and reunited Reese with his worried mother.

The alertness of Bobrosky and the action he and his engineer took saved a life that day and serves as yet another example of how having two people in the cabs of freight trains makes a difference in safety, contrary to carriers’ arguments.

“It was a right-hand curve—I saw him way before the engineer,” Bobrosky said. “If it was a one-man crew, I don’t know if the train would have stopped.

“It made a difference having two on the crew.”

Local 937, Mart, Texas

The actions of Brother Matthew Ugochukwu of Local 937 (Mart, Texas) helped save a fellow Union Pacific employee as the men were preparing for work, it was reported on the UP employee website.

Ugochukwu, a conductor, and engineer Alan Everett were going through their job briefing paperwork on July 23 when Ugochukwu stepped away for a moment to put something in the trash can. Returning to Everett, who had begun to eat his meal, Ugochukwu noticed that Everett was gesturing and that the veins on the side of his neck were protruding.

“I knew that something was wrong,” Ugochukwu said. The conductor stepped behind Everett and began performing the Heimlich maneuver on the engineer.

After Ugochukwu’s fourth attempt at dislodging it, a chunk of food that was obstructing Everett’s airway came out.

It took a few moments for both men to realize that a potentially life-altering incident had been averted.

A Christian, Ugochukwu said that it was an act of God that he was there and that he was able to act in a focused manner to help Everett.

“It could have been worse,” Ugochukwu said. “We need to be in pairs doing our job. If he had been alone, it could have been a totally different situation.”

“I feel very strongly about it. The nature of our work—requires a lot of mental impact and not only that—there’s a lot of physical too, with no scheduled job hours. What happened to Mr. Everett could have happened to any of us.”

Both men work with the Texoma Service Unit in Fort Worth. Everett has more than 14 years of service with the carrier and Ugochukwu more than nine.

Ugochukwu’s quick thinking was praised by more than 50 comments on the UP article reporting on the incident, including one that was attributed to CEO Lance Fritz.

Local 898, Boston, Mass.

Local 898 Legislative Representative Dave Stevenson and his wife, Gena, packed up their 3-year-old and 8-day-old newborn in mid-July and headed three hours north to Bath Iron Works in Maine where 4,300 Local 898 IAM machinists were on strike.

With the approval and support of New England State Legislative Director Chris Weldon, Dave purchased 15 pizzas for picketing workers and to help support their effort.

Bath Iron Works employees voted overwhelmingly to strike June 21 and the hard-fought nine-week strike ended Aug. 23 with the Union winning protections against expanded subcontractor use at BIW and more seniority protections.

The Local 898 members and officials greatly appreciated the support from SMART-TD, Stevenson said.

Nomination rules, election procedures for fall local elections have been released

SMART Transportation Division members are reminded that elections are scheduled to be held this autumn to fill the three-year Local officer positions described by SMART Constitution Article 21B, Section 56.

Positions include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, Collector (where applicable) and the three-member Board of Trustees. In addition, any existing vacancies (except for those in the positions of Delegate or Alternate Delegate) should be addressed during these elections.

As per the Constitution’s Article 21B, Section 57, nomination meetings are held in October, with election tabulations conducted in November. Special instructions are provided below for Locals unable to hold a nomination meeting due to COVID-19 related restrictions.

Winning candidates assume their offices on January 1, 2021. If they are filling a vacancy, however, they may take office immediately.

Candidates must garner a simple majority of valid votes cast to win election to applicable Transportation Division office. (A simple majority can be thought of as 50 percent of votes, plus at least one more vote.)

The process begins

For the Local’s Secretary or Secretary-Treasurer, the election process begins with an effort to update the membership roster, ensuring accurate addresses are on file for each member. Our Constitution’s Article 21B, Section 49, requires each member to keep the Local Secretary and Treasurer advised of his or her current home address. At the same time, U.S. Department of Labor regulations and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) require the Local to take steps to update addresses in advance of an election.

Members can update their address by contacting their Local Secretary, or can do so on the homepage of the Transportation Division’s website at www.smart-union.org/td.

If your Local conducts a floor election, where voting takes place at a physical location rather than by mail, it’s important that your address is up to date. Your Local Secretary (or Secretary-Treasurer, as the case may be) needs to mail a notice to all active members of the local to advise them, at least 15 days in advance of tabulation, that an election is to take place. The notice will indicate when and where voting will take place.

Postcards for this purpose are available for purchase from the Transportation Division’s Supply Department.

Even if your Local conducts a floor election, where voting takes place at a physical location rather than by mail, it’s important that your address is up to date. Your Local Secretary (or Secretary-Treasurer, as the case may be) needs to mail a notice to all active members of the local to advise them, at least 15 days in advance of tabulation, that an election is to take place. The notice will indicate when and where voting will take place.

Nominations

The Secretary must post a notice at least 10 days in advance of the October nomination meeting indicating when and where nominations for affected positions will take place. They need not mail this notice directly to members.

Nominations may be made by any member in good standing from the floor at the nomination meeting, indicating when and where nominations for affected positions will take place. They need not mail this notice directly to members.

Nomination rules and procedures for fall local elections have been released.

Nomination rules, election procedures for fall local elections have been released.

Nomination rules, election procedures for fall local elections have been released.
Nomination rules, election procedures announced for fall’s local officer elections

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ing information pertaining to the nomination process of a nomination meeting, the notice should set a specific date and time whereby nominations will be closed, and must in the case of the local Secre-
ty’s pertinent contact information along with instructions for submitting written nominations. In situations were regular meetings cannot be held, it is permissible for the Secre-
tary to accept nominations submitted in writing, via hand delivery, text, email, and/or USPS mail.

With respect to choosing a deadline for nominations, typically, this would be determined by the members present at a regular or spe-
cial meeting of the Local. Where it is not feasible to hold such a meeting, the Local President, Secretary, and Treasurer should all agree on a nomination deadline that works best. As noted, the minimum manda-
tory notice for nominations is ten (10) days. However, given the circumstances, we recommend giving more notice. Most Locals choose a time period that is closer to thirty (30) days in advance.

If only one member is nominated for a position, that member can be declared elected by accla-
mentation.

The scheduled elections held this autumn offer an opportunity to fill other vacancies which may exist. If the vacant position is a Local Committee of Adjust-
ment (LCA) position, only members of that LCA are eligible to make nominations for the position. All eligible voters can vote in that election. In locals having more than one LCA for different crafts, the sec-
retary will provide a separate ballot for all eligible vot-
ers of each craft working under the jurisdiction of the committee involved. Any member in good standing with seniority in one of the crafts represented by the LCA may be a candidate for an office in that LCA.

Eligibility

To be eligible to vote, all dues and assessments must be paid within the time frame specified by the con-
stitution. Article 21B, Section 49, indicates dues are to be paid in advance, before the first day of the month in which they are due. Eligibili-

ty to make nominations or to be nominated is similar. This means, for example, if the nomination meeting is in October, the nominator and the nominee must have paid all dues obligations prior to October 1. To vote in November, a voter must have paid all dues obliga-
tions prior to November 1. Those in so-called E-49 status are eligible to run for office, but they cannot make nominations and they cannot vote. If elected, accept-
ance of pay from the company or the union creates a dues obligation.

Elections

As previously noted, candi-
dates must garner a sim-
ple majority of valid votes cast to win election. When it comes to handling elections, the Board of Trustees, instructions on the ballot should be included above the candidates’ names telling the voter: “Vote for three candidates.” Each member of the three-
member Board of Trustees must be elected by a major-
ity of votes cast, a require-
ment which frequently results in the need for runoff elections. The rule of thumb in such runoffs is that for each open position, which must be filled, two can-
didates will compete. For example, if nine candi-
dates run for a position on the Board of Trustees, and 200 valid ballots have been cast and counted in the first round of the election, each successful candidate must receive at least 101 votes. If no candidate receives at least 101 votes, a runoff must be held.

The runoff would include two candidates for each open position. In the above example, this means the three candidates with the lowest vote totals are dropped from the ballot, and the names of six candidates appear on the runoff ballot. If, in the runoff, only one can-
didate attains a majority of votes that means one of the three positions was filled, and there remain two Trustee positions to fill, with five remaining candidates. Of those five remaining can-
didates, the candidate with the lowest vote total would be dropped from the ballot, and another ballot would be issued with four candidate’s names (because there are two positions to be filled).

More information

Members are encouraged to consult Article 21B of the SMART Constitution for additional information regarding elections. Unless an item within Article 21B directs you to a further stipulation outside of Article 21B, only the provi-
sions found within Article 21B are applicable to Trans-
portation Division elections. The Local election process is addressed directly by Arti-
cle 21, Section 57.

Election information and guidelines have been dis-
tributed to all Transportation Division Local Presidents and Local Secretaries, as well as to General Chairper-
sons, State and District Legis-
lative Directors and Trans-
portation Division Interna-
tional Officers.

Members can consult their Local Labor Council or the LCA for this information, or they can visit the Transportation Divi-
sion’s website at www.

smart-union.org/tt, click on Local Toolbox and on the resulting page, click on “Elections.” Special Circular No. 35 describes the constitu-
tional provisions involved in the local elections this autumn, and the pamphlet entitled “How to Hold Elec-
tions for Local Officers” gives practical, hands-on election guidance and includes samples of nomina-
tion and election notices that can be posted. The leaflet entitled “Special Instructions Related to COVID-19” pro-
vide guidance when gather-
ing restrictions are in place.

Local officer positions

The following is a brief description of the duties of the various Local officer positions.

The Local President pre-
sides at all local meetings, and to Local, enforces the provi-
sions of the Constitution and bylaws of the Local and exercises general supervi-
sion over the Local’s affairs. The President ensures that Local officers respond to inquiries from the Interna-
tional, and with the Secre-
tary and Treasurer, forwards all reports required by feder-
al, state or local laws. The President may speak on any subject before the Local, but may vote except, in case of a tie, casts the deciding ballot. The Local Vice Presi-
dent succeeds the Local President and fulfills the remainder of the three-year term if the Local President resigns, retires, becomes incapacitated, dies, or for some reason cannot fulfill the requirements of the position. Also, if the Local President cannot attend a Local meeting, the Vice President presides at regu-
lar Local meetings.

In most Locals, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer have been combined. The Local Secretary keeps an accurate record of all Local proceedings, receives all communications, con-
ducts correspondence and is in charge of the Local seal and Local records. The Secre-
tary performs the duties of the Local Treasurer in Locals that do not provide for the separation of the offices of Secretary and Treasurer.

The Treasurer receives all monies due to be collected by the Local and provides receipts, except in cases where the Local maintains the office of collector. The treasurer holds and keeps secure all Local funds and is bonded. The Treasurer also keeps an accurate account of all receipts and expendi-
tures of the Local on forms provided for that purpose. The Treasurer shall also remit all monies due the International to the General Secretary-Treasurer each month.

In a few instances, Locals of 50 or more members maintain the office of Collect-
or. The Local Collector receives all money due the Local and provides receipts. Prior to the first day of each month, the Collector reports to the Local Treasurer all the money received during the current month and gives the amount collected to the Local Treasurer.

The Local Board of Trustees supervises the financial affairs of the Local. Upon approval by the Local, the Board has authority to rent, lease, or purchase property, office equipment or other necessary supplies. The Board meets in January of each year for the purpose of auditing the annual report of the Treasurer and verify-
ing bank balances and cash on hand.

Questions?

There are many provisions not covered by this article. Each Local has its own jurisdiction over candidates’ rights and per-
mitted means of campaign-


ing. Those with election questions are urged to call the Transportation Division office at 216-228-9400. It’s always easier to address issues in advance than after the fact.

COVID concerns cancel annual rail reunion dinner

Retiree Harry Garvin reports the Rail Reunion Dinner traditionally held at Sierra Lakeside at Fontana, Calif., has been canceled this year because of COVID. It would have been the 20th annual event. Follow the QR code on the books for Nov. 5, 2021,” Garvin said.

Retired Amtrak conductor Weaver featured in video presented at DNC

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Weaver has had a long relationship with the former senator and vice president, even introducing Biden and former President Barack Obama as they took a train ride to their first inauguration in January 2009, an event that was featured in the February 2009 issue of the SMART-TD News. Another instance of Biden’s concern came after he heard that Weaver had had a heart attack, Weaver recalled in the video. “I was in a barber shop in New York City and the phone rings,” Weaver said. “And sure enough, it’s Vice President Biden asking how I’m doing — wanted to know the whole story. Kind of funny that you’re talking to the Vice President of the United States, but if I would have told the people in the barber shop, I don’t think they would have believed me.”

“I’m not saying it like it was — I’m anything spec-

cial. Everyone was special to him. We have heroes all over this country … the average guy is important to him.”

Follow the QR code with your smart device to watch the video featuring Brother Greg Weaver.