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# UTU News

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The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

## News and Notes

### Two die from injuries

Two UTU members, **Larry B. Green** and **Michel Ouellet**, have died as a result of injuries suffered on the job.

Green, 59, died March 2 after being hospitalized about four months in a semi-comatose state following a truck/train collision in McCurtain County, Okla. He was a member of Local 733, DeQueen, Ark.



Ouellet

Ouellet, 53, a CN Rail employee with 34 years of experience as a train conductor and member of Local 4 in Charny, Quebec, was killed Feb. 27 while replacing a knuckle on a train.

Green was an engineer for DeQueen & Eastern Railroad Co., which is a subsidiary of the Weyerhaeuser Co. According to reports, the collision caused Green to have a massive stroke from which he never recovered.

A log truck collided with Green's train Oct. 18. The truck was loaded with logs. The logs hit the cab of the train and struck Green. Two other railroad employees were injured but not critically. The truck driver was pronounced dead at the scene from massive injuries.

### IC members ratify pact

By unheard-of margins, UTU members employed on Canadian National subsidiary Illinois Central, which includes former Chicago Central & Pacific and Gulf, Mobile & Ohio lines, have ratified a new agreement retroactive to Aug. 1, 2006, and effective through July 31, 2010.

General Chairperson **R.W. "Red" Dare** (GO 433) said 76 percent of the 648 members eligible to vote returned ballots, and 80 percent of the ballots returned voted in favor of the contract, which extends the hourly rate agreement for conductors and brakemen.

"The hourly agreement provides extra-board employees the same three days off each pay period, and guarantees reliable and predictable schedules and days off for train crews," Dare said.

Dare said the "input" of UTU International President Mike Futhey "was invaluable. We couldn't have reached this agreement without his assistance."

Also receiving praise were General Chairperson **Tracy Bublitz** (GO 401), negotiating team members **William A. "Butch" St. John** and **Ronald G. Caldwell**, and International Vice President Robert Kerley, who was assigned earlier this year to assist UTU negotiators.

Futhey said that "jointly, with the carrier, we have addressed in the agreement a number of the concerns voiced by the membership, and issues beneficial to the membership will be addressed in an established labor/management conference committee. The continued patience of the membership, while this agreement was negotiated, paid off," Futhey said.

## UTU general chairs endorse contract

### The proposed contract contains these benefits:

- ✓ 17 percent general wage increase
- ✓ Continuation of a COLA
- ✓ Retroactive pay
- ✓ Increase in the meal allowance
- ✓ No change in work rules
- ✓ Contributions to yardmasters' retiree medical insurance
- ✓ Cap on health-care contributions
- ✓ Reduction in the waiting period for new-hire health-care coverage
- ✓ Arbitration of entry rates of pay

By a unanimous show of hands, UTU general chairpersons expressed support for the tentative national railroad agreement, which will be mailed to members by late May for a ratification vote.

This provides opportunity for local meetings to explain the agreement and respond to member questions.

More than 50 general chairpersons – representing affected members on BNSF, CSX, Kansas City Southern, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific and many smaller railroads – met in Houston March 25 to review the document and discuss with the UTU negotiating committee its provisions and application.

The tentative agreement is posted at [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org) along with agreed-upon questions and answers jointly written by UTU negotiators and the carriers.

"International vice presidents and general chairpersons currently are leading informational

meetings to assure members cast an informed ballot," said UTU International President Mike Futhey. "It is important that every affected member be fully educated on this tentative agreement."

While the tentative agreement does not obtain everything sought by members, it is a superior agreement considering the atmosphere in which negotiations transpired.

Beyond a 17-percent wage increase and no change in work rules, provisions include:

- Arbitration to settle the dispute over entry rates tied to training;
- Continuation of a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) during the next round of bargaining – a provision that put more than \$7 per day in our pockets while we were at the negotiating table this round. COLAs are an advance on retroactive pay and help ease the burden of higher fuel and

*Continued on page 10*

## UTU members ratify contract with Amtrak

UTU-represented conductors and assistant conductors on Amtrak have ratified a new agreement on wages, rules and working conditions retroactive to Jan. 1, 2000, and extending through Dec. 31, 2009.

The contract ratification ends eight difficult years of negotiation under complex Railway Labor Act provisions. The ratified agreement saves 400 assistant conductor positions, guarantees retroactive pay, provides additional general wage increases and avoids any work-rules givebacks.

By a 123-76 vote, members represented by General Committee of Adjustment 663 (GO 663) in Boston ratified their agreement, while members represented by General Committee of Adjustment 769 (GO 769) voted 910 to 170 to ratify an identical agreement.

GO 663, headed by General Chairperson **Bill Beebe**, represents Amtrak conductors and assistant conductors from New England south to New

York (but excluding New York City). GO 769, headed by General Chairperson **Al Suozzo**, represents Amtrak conductors and assistant conductors from New York City south to Washington, D.C., and all Amtrak conductors and assistant conductors assigned to non-Northeast Corridor passenger trains.

The UTU-ratified agreements mirror the pattern settlement reached by all other Amtrak craft unions, but are unique in having halted Amtrak's attempt to eliminate some 400 assistant conductors in a cost-saving effort.

Suozzo expressed his "sincere thanks" to UTU International Vice President Tony Iannone for his "effective assistance, patience and doggedness in one of the most difficult contract negotiations ever conducted with Amtrak or its predecessor rail-passenger operators."

Suozzo also praised the efforts, during negotia-

*Continued on page 10*





# Around the UTU

## Local 30, Jacksonville, Fla.

Officers and members of this Amtrak local are saddened by the passing of **Joseph O. Miller** last December, reports Local Secretary & Treasurer **David K. Lee**. "Miller had over 34 years of railroad service with CSX and Amtrak. He was responsible for bringing Operation Lifesaver to Jacksonville. He will surely be missed as a friend and co-worker," Lee said. Local 30 also congratulates members **Raymond Woodard**, **Richard Shuman**, **David Squibb** and **Paul Venter** on their retirements. "We wish them the best in life," Lee said.

## Local 281, Milwaukee, Wis.

Former Marine and UTU member **David Miles** will be participating in the Wounded Heroes Ride III from May 14-18 to raise money for the Wounded Heroes Foundation, Inc., reported GO 721 General Chairperson **Barry Abbott**. The foundation raises funds to assist wounded military personnel and their families on the road to recovery. To contribute to the foundation or sponsor Miles, visit the foundation's Web site at [www.wounded-heroesfund.net](http://www.wounded-heroesfund.net). Click on "How You Can Help" to make a contribution by credit card and enter "for David Miles" in the comment field.

## Local 650, Minneapolis, Minn.

The **Dennis Schломann** family extends "a very heartfelt thank you" to UTU members from locals all over the United States for the cards, donations and prayers received following Schломann's illness last year. Special "thanks" go to Mr. and Mrs. **Willis Croonquist**, State Legislative Director **Phil Qualy** and others for their help with the St. James benefit in September.

## Local 771, Needles, Calif.

This BNSF Railway local presented \$787 in cash, \$125 in retail store gift cards, and gifts to Linda Bason and her five children, along with a Christmas tree, after the devastating loss of the family's home and possessions to fire. The funds were collected from members and guests at the local's annual Christmas party after learning of the family's tragic loss, reported Secretary & Treasurer **Mike Matthews**.



Local 771 President K. Charles Anderson presents cash and gift cards to Linda Bason after a fire destroyed her home.

## Local 832, Superior, Wis.

Local Chairperson **Gary Rutledge** finished the 23-kilometer Kortelopet cross-country ski race at this year's American Birkebeiner event in Hayward, Wis., with a time of 2:10, Canadian Pacific GO 261 General Chairperson **James Nelson** reported. The Birkebeiner (or Birkie) is the largest, and one of the longest, cross-country ski races in North America. "I was hoping to make it under three hours, maybe two and a half, so I am really pleased with my time," Rutledge said. "We are proud of Gary for doing what other people only dream of or watch on television



Gary Rutledge



Local Chairperson Joshua Thurston has been awarded a scholarship to continue his studies of the bagpipe with the National Piping Centre of Glasgow, Scotland.

## Local chair's scholarship isn't just a pipe dream

Regardless of the task at hand, UTU member **Joshua Thurston** is a quick study. "Trial by fire," he says.

After only two years of studying the art of bagpiping, Thurston has received a scholarship to attend the elite Piping and Drumming School at Shenandoah University's Northern Virginia campus in Leesburg, Va. The educational session will be presented by instructors from the National Piping Centre in Glasgow, Scotland.

Being of Scottish ancestry, bagpiping was not something totally unfamiliar to Thurston. "I always wanted to do it," he said. In fact, the scholarship that Thurston received was presented to him by the Scottish Foundation of the Virginia Highlands, an organization that promotes all aspects of and awareness of Scottish culture.

After taking lessons at Radford University, his mother Patricia's alma mater, Thurston's former instructor and now pipe major, Roy Knighting, invited him to join the Virginia Highland Pipes and Drums.

Started 25 years ago with just three pipers and one drummer, the Pipes and Drums has grown to a 25-member band, with members ranging in age from 18 to 74.

The band plays at a variety of events. "We do parades, Celtic festivals, graduations for colleges," Thurston said. "We played at Virginia Tech after the campus shootings there.

"People either like them or they hate them," Thurston said of his bagpipes. "You either dig 'em or you don't. But whenever I'm not railroading, I am usually bagpiping."

As a Norfolk Southern conductor since July 2005, Thurston's railroading career has been much like his musical one. After just two years in railroading, he was elected vice local chairperson of Local 706 at Roanoke. In February, he was elected local chairperson and assumed that position last month.

"I really want to try to make a difference and help inspire people to get reinvigorated about the UTU," said Thurston, whose father, Donald, also works in the railroad industry with CSX.

For more information about the Virginia Highland Pipes and Drums, visit the band's Web site at [www.vhpd.net](http://www.vhpd.net)

... the whole general committee is proud of your accomplishment and your friendship," Nelson said.

## Local 1138, Miami, Fla.

Local Chairperson **Yvonne Hayes** reports that members have voted to purchase two bricks at the National Workers' Memorial in the names of fallen local members **Cedric Jones** and **Kenny Steelman**, who died on the job. Groundbreaking for the memorial at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Md., is set for April 28. For more information about the memorial, or to purchase a brick, visit [www.nlc.edu/html/workers\\_memorial.html](http://www.nlc.edu/html/workers_memorial.html).

## Local 1188, Oklahoma City, Okla.

This BNSF Railway local held its holiday dinner for members and spouses at the Red Lobster Restaurant in Oklahoma City on Feb. 10, reports Local Chairperson **Kenny Fox**. The dinner, sponsored by the law firm of Rossi, Cox & Vucinovich, was originally scheduled for Dec. 18, but was changed due to bad weather.



Local 1188 holiday dinner

## Local 1397, Columbus, Ohio

This CSXT local will host its 59th annual Old Timers' Fish Fry on May 14, at 7 p.m., immediately following the union meeting, at 6 p.m., said Secretary & Treasurer **Robert Smith**. Members of the C&O/CSX Veterans' Club, as well as all active and retired UTU members, are invited to attend free of charge, with food and beverages supplied. Frying the fish will be Director of Strategic Planning **John Nadalin** and retiree **Jon Larkin**.

## Local 1608, Chatsworth, Calif.

This LACMTA bus local congratulates two fellow members who participated in the 26-mile Los Angeles Marathon on March 2, reports Secretary **Jack Dedrick**. Treasurer **Franz Von Kruger**, 64, completed the race in an impressive 4:22, and **Aldo Aleman** finished in 5:10. Both plan on running again in next year's marathon, Dedrick said.

## Local 1741, San Francisco, Calif.

On March 11, UTU-represented school bus drivers turned out in force to support the United Educators of San Francisco at their rally against cuts in education funding and proposed teacher layoffs, **Shane Hoff** reported. Their presence was noted by UESF representatives and State Sen. Carol Migden. Members carried a large banner identifying "UTU 1741." Speakers included Mayor Gavin Newsom and Superintendent of Schools Carlos Garcia.

## N.D. locals to host informational meetings

UTU locals in North Dakota will be holding their annual informational meetings for members from April 22-25, State Legislative Director **John Risch** reports. Guests will include UTU international officers, general chairpersons and representatives from the RRB and health-and-welfare benefit providers. "All members, retirees, and spouses are invited to attend any of these meetings at your convenience, regardless of your local," Risch said.

Meeting information is as follows:

- Tues., April 22: Local 1344; 1:30 p.m. meeting, free dinner to follow. Mandan Eagles' Club, Mandan, N.D.

- Wed., April 23: Locals 1137, 980 and 887. 1 p.m. meeting, free dinner to follow. Howard Johnson Inn, Fargo, N.D.

- Wed., April 23: RRVW, Local 1137. 6:30 p.m. free dinner, meeting to follow. Fry'n Pan Restaurant, Wahpeton, N.D.

- Thurs., April 24: Local 525. 2 p.m. meeting, free dinner to follow. Ramada Inn, Grand Forks, N.D.

- Fri., April 25: Local 1059. 1 p.m. meeting, 6 p.m. social, 7 p.m. retirement banquet. Vegas Motel, Minot, N.D.

For more information, contact Risch by phone at (701) 223-0061, by e-mail at [utu@bis.midco.net](mailto:utu@bis.midco.net).



Important announcement on health insurance

UnitedHealthCare announces new plans under GA-23111 for railroad employees and their eligible dependents (not eligible for Medicare)

The participating unions of the Cooperating Railway Labor Organizations, working with UnitedHealthCare (UHC), have announced three new benefit plans available under GA-23111 for railroad employees whose coverage may cease under their active-employee health-care plans, but who are not yet eligible to participate in Medicare.

Plans A, B and C will provide new options with different costs and plan designs, allowing members to select the plan that best suits their needs.

There is currently no Plan A available and those currently enrolled in Plan B will automatically be enrolled in the new Plan A.

Those currently enrolled in Plan C will automatically be enrolled in the new Plan C.

This action is being taken in order to avoid any potential lapses or discontinuation of coverage for those who may need it. If you do not wish to continue coverage under the new plans contact UnitedHealthCare at (800) 842-5252 to cancel or change your plan participation.

UnitedHealthCare will attempt to contact current Plan B participants by telephone to explain this change and allow for a retroactive termination of plan participation, should the need arise.

Special enrollment period: April and May 2008

Due to the addition of these three new plans, a special two-month open enrollment period is being offered for this year only. **The open enrollment period began April 1 and runs through May 31 with the coverage you select effective June 1, 2008.** After this 2008 enrollment period, the next open enrollment will be May 2010. **(Note that this 2008 expanded enrollment period also applies to other plans under GA-23111 such as Plan E and Plan F.)**

Plan design of Plans A, B, and C

Some of the services provided by these new plans are outlined below. Please review the accompanying chart for more details.

- ✓ Physician office visits and certain medical services
- ✓ Discount savings program – Prescriptions and other health and wellness purchases
- ✓ Inpatient hospital services
- ✓ Inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance abuse services
- ✓ Surgical procedures
- ✓ Outpatient rehabilitation services
- ✓ Durable medical equipment

While all of the benefits offered by each plan are the same, they differ in the following areas:

- ✓ Annual deductible
- ✓ Annual out-of-pocket maximum
- ✓ Percentage of eligible expenses covered
- ✓ Monthly cost

You pay a separate monthly cost for yourself and for your dependents. The monthly cost for your

dependents is inclusive of all of your eligible dependents (spouse, children under age 19, students age 19 to 25, and incapacitated children age 19 and over).

The monthly cost for each of the new plans effective June 1, 2008, is:

Plan A: \$250  
Plan B: \$325  
Plan C: \$400

Obtaining additional information on Plans A, B, and C

If you are interested in enrolling in any of the new benefit plans, please contact UnitedHealthCare at (800) 842-5252. One of UnitedHealthCare's customer-care professionals will be happy to provide you with the following:

- ✓ Additional information and an enrollment form
- ✓ Certificate of coverage (this document describes each benefit plan in detail)
- ✓ Answers to any other questions you may have

Those individuals currently enrolled in Plans B and C will receive direct communication about these plans in the near future.

**Current enrollees in GA-23111 Plans B or C need to take action**

Current Plans B and C will be replaced by these new options. If you are currently enrolled in Plans B or C, you need to select a new plan or the following will occur, effective June 1, 2008:

- ✓ **Current Plan B enrollees will automatically default to the new Plan A**
- ✓ **Current Plan C enrollees will automatically default to the new Plan C**

**Note:** Current enrollees in Plan B or C who do not wish to continue their participation in one of the new plans can contact UnitedHealthCare at **(800) 842-5252** to cancel their enrollment, or simply not pay the required cost associated with the new plans.

UnitedHealthCare GA-23111 Plans A, B and C benefit summaries

Benefit	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C
Monthly cost	\$250	\$325	\$400
Annual deductible	\$1,000	\$750	\$500
Annual out-of-pocket limit	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$7,500
Lifetime maximum benefit	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Inpatient hospital services* (includes maternity and inpatient mental-health and substance-abuse services)	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Surgical procedures (surgeon, anesthesiology and facility; ambulatory surgical center and outpatient surgical center)	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. 100 percent of eligible expenses without deductible for mammography and Pap smear	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. 100 percent of eligible expenses without deductible for mammography and Pap smear	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. 100 percent of eligible expenses without deductible for mammography and Pap smear
Medical services / physician's office visits	75 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for first 40 visits in calendar year; 60 percent thereafter	75 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for first 40 visits in calendar year; 60 percent thereafter	75 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for first 40 visits in calendar year; 60 percent thereafter
Outpatient mental-health and substance-abuse services	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. Limited to 30 visits per calendar year. Exception: calendar year visit limit does not apply to services for a child under age 21 with a congenital or birth defect	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. Limited to 30 visits per calendar year. Exception: calendar year visit limit does not apply to services for a child under age 21 with a congenital or birth defect	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible. Limited to 30 visits per calendar year. Exception: calendar year visit limit does not apply to services for a child under age 21 with a congenital or birth defect
Outpatient rehabilitation (physical, occupational, speech therapy and chiropractic)	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Allergy / acupuncture services	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Emergency room services	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Durable medical equipment*	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Prescription drugs (this benefit provides for a discount program; this is not insurance)	UnitedHealth Allies (UHA) Discount Rx Program: Discount savings averaging 25 to 35 percent or higher on commonly prescribed generic/brand name Rx's bought at a participating retail location or UHA mail-order service	UnitedHealth Allies (UHA) Discount Rx Program: Discount savings averaging 25 to 35 percent or higher on commonly prescribed generic/brand name Rx's bought at a participating retail location or UHA mail-order service	UnitedHealth Allies (UHA) Discount Rx Program: Discount savings averaging 25 to 35 percent or higher on commonly prescribed generic/brand name Rx's bought at a participating retail location or UHA mail-order service
Home health-care services*	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible, up to 30 visits per calendar year	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible, up to 30 visits per calendar year	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible, up to 30 visits per calendar year
Hospice facility*	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible
Skilled nursing facility (SNF)*	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for up to 31 days per stay in SNF	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for up to 31 days per stay in SNF	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible for up to 31 days per stay in SNF
Emergency ambulance services	50 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible in the event of an emergency	60 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible in the event of an emergency	70 percent of eligible expenses after satisfying deductible in the event of an emergency

\* Requires prior notification. Care coordination must be contacted to determine whether the purchase, rental of equipment (more than \$1,000) or services provided are medically appropriate.

# Happy 100th birthday, FELA

A railroader's most cherished workplace-safety assurance is the Federal Employers' Liability Act (FELA), which is 100 years old this month.

Railroading is among the most dangerous occupations in America. In an industry that too often puts profits ahead of safety, the FELA is a powerful prod to improved workplace safety.

"There should be legislation to secure pecuniary compensation to workmen suffering from accidents," said President Teddy Roosevelt in 1907 when urging Congress to pass the FELA.

Indeed, in the year leading up to the FELA's passage, 4,353 railroaders were killed, and 62,689 more railroad employees were injured, according to data reported in 1908 by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Years earlier, when viewing similar appalling data, President Ben-



By International President Mike Futhey

jamin Harrison declared, "It is a reproach to our civilization that any class of American workmen should, in the pursuit of a necessary and use-

predecessor unions, Congress passed, and President Roosevelt signed, the FELA on April 22, 1908.

The FELA made railroads liable if

## The FELA puts on railroads the costs of the legs, arms, eyes and lives it consumes in its operation

ful vocation, be subjected to a peril of life and limb as great as that of a soldier in war."

With encouragement from UTU

an employee injury or death results in whole or in part from the negligence of any of its officers, agents or employees, or from any defect or insufficiency in equipment or roadbed. Contributory negligence on the part of the injured worker does not bar a recovery under the FELA.

The Supreme Court observed that the FELA is intended to "impel the carrier to avoid and prevent... negligent acts and omissions."

The Supreme Court also upheld the right of unions to advise injured workers to obtain expert legal advice, and the right of unions to designate legal counsel possessing specialized knowledge in railroad operations and the FELA.

A listing of UTU Designated

Legal Counsel – attorneys who answer to the UTU – is provided at [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org), or may be obtained from local union officers or your general chairpersons.

The FELA also prohibits railroads from retaliating against employees who provide Designated Legal Counsel with factual information on injuries to fellow employees, or who testify in support of injured workers.

When the carriers and their anti-labor friends in Congress unsuccessfully attempted to repeal the FELA, the U.S. General Accounting Office in 1995 issued a report concluding that the FELA is an effective law, working as intended.

"The FELA was designed to put on the railroad industry some of the costs of the legs, arms, eyes, and lives which it consumed in its operation," wrote Supreme Court Justice William Douglas in 1948.

If you are injured on the job, the FELA and your UTU Designated Legal Counsel are the best friends you and your family have.

Carriers repeatedly have sought to have Congress repeal the FELA – each attempt blunted by the UTU, and with credit for the successful defense rooted in member contributions to the UTU PAC.

Join me in wishing the FELA a happy 100th birthday.

Even better, consider making a special contribution to the UTU PAC to help us continue our vigilance in defending the FELA.



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## McCain no friend of Amtrak, labor



**While the Democrats are fighting like the Hatfields and McCoys, McCain will use the next months to raise tons of money and heal the Republican Party.**



Enough already. I am afraid that I will wake up Election Day morning to a headline saying, "Democrats beat Democrats – McCain elected."

This presidential campaign is already more than a year old. Every move is analyzed, reanalyzed and over analyzed – not because there are any enormous differences between the two Democratic candidates, but because there are very few.

The media looks at every word said by the candidates and the campaigns, searching for conflict so that the networks can draw more viewers.



Brunkenhoefer

The news media gives no coverage to any differences between the two candidates because there is almost none.

The voters in the United States over the past decade have been divided 51 to 49.

Today, the Democratic Party is divided 51 to 49. John McCain cannot win this election, but the Democrats can sure lose it.

A McCain victory would make many moderates, progressives and liberals hearken to the good old days under George Bush. That is right. They will look on the Bush administration as being moderate.

Four more years of right-wing judicial appointments will guarantee there will be no fairness in the judicial system.

Amtrak employees hoping for retroactive payments instead could be walking the street looking for

a job or working for another non-union railroad that provides fewer benefits and pays lower wages.

McCain's anti-Amtrak statements would fill an encyclopedia.

John McCain has the reputation of being tough and a straight shooter. He gladly wears the badge of anti-special interests and anti-lobbyists.

I am sure he always thinks about it as he is going up the steps of some major railroad's private jet, flying to his next campaign stop.

Who do you think pays for these trips on private planes for McCain and his staff at a cost of thousands of dollars? It is corporate and special interests.

John McCain does not look on railroad CEOs and their planes as symbols of special interests – they are just his friends.

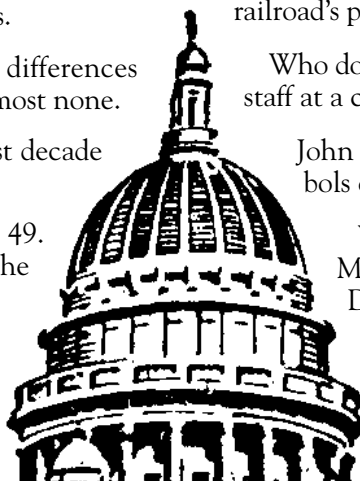
While the Democrats are fighting like the Hatfields and McCoys, McCain will use the next months to raise tons of money while the Democrats are wasting their ammunition on each other.

John McCain will use the next several months to travel across the country healing the fractures within his own party.

All of the economic improvements expected by working families will fall by the wayside if the Democrats don't soon recognize who is their true opponent.

John McCain is a strong opponent of trade unions and a national health-care program.

I hope that we wake up before it is too late.



**WASHINGTON WATCH**  
By James M. Brunkenhoefer



State Watch

News from UTU State Legislative Boards

Minnesota



The UTU has endorsed Al Franken for election to the U.S. Senate from Minnesota, State Legislative Director Phil Qualy announced last month.

“This is a gentleman that can win,” Qualy said. “This is a gentleman that can speak to our values and fight the hard fight in the U.S. Senate.”

Franken thanked the UTU members for their support and said he would always advocate for the rights of unions and working people. “I believe in unions,” he said. “Unions built the middle class in this country and have to rebuild it again.”

Franken hopes to win the DFL nomination to run against Republican incumbent Norm Coleman in November. He said that, if elected, he would work to overturn the policies implemented by President George Bush and Coleman that are undermining the standard of living for working families in the United States.

Kentucky



Members of the Kentucky Legislative Board convened recently to elect officers and conduct other business. Shown above, left to right, are Local 1190 (Ludlow) Legislative Rep. Andy Volpenheim, who also serves as secretary of the board; Local 1328 (Louisville) Legislative Rep. Brian Brock; Local 1315 (Covington) Legislative Rep. William J. Edelbroich; Local 1963 (Louisville) Legislative Rep. Glenn Hazelwood; Local 1310 (Loyall) Legislative Rep. Susan Rice; Local 1316 (Ravenna) Legislative Rep. Jon Pierce; Local 630 (Ashland) Legislative Rep. Rodney D. Bevins, who also serves as legislative chairperson; Local 376 (Louisville) Legislative Rep. Terence Tyrrell; Local 1567 (Corbin) Legislative Rep. Donnie Head, who also serves as assistant state legislative director; Missouri State Legislative Director Ken Menges; UTU Auxiliary President Carol Menges, and State Legislative Director David Miracle (L-573, Danville).

West Virginia



The West Virginia State Legislative Board has officially endorsed Joe DeLong for the office of Secretary of State in the 2008 election.

“Joe DeLong is a good friend to labor and to the UTU. We could never get our foot in the door before,” said State Legislative Director Mark Mewshaw, speaking of the access DeLong has provided to the political process.

DeLong, 34, the youngest person ever to serve as majority leader in the House of Delegates, was a former West Virginia University football standout.

Pictured above, from left to right, are Mewshaw, West Virginia House Majority Leader Joe DeLong (D) and Local 605 (Rafton) Legislative Rep. Jeff Greene.

Texas

At its recent reorganization meeting, the Texas Legislative Board re-elected all executive committee members unanimously. Re-elected were **C.M. “Connie” English Jr.** (L-489, San Antonio) as state director; **David M. Arterburn** (L-1313, Amarillo) as assistant state director; **Kenneth E. Holman** (L-1524, Houston) as chairperson; **David J. Bludau** (L-953, Victoria) as vice chairperson; **James M. Homan Jr.** (L-524, Palestine) as vice chairperson, and **Kamron T. Saunders** (L-508, Smithville) as secretary.

English also held a legislative workshop at

which he made a PowerPoint presentation to educate all local legislative representatives of their responsibilities to the membership.

During the workshop, English presented plaques to **Joseph L. Stubbs Jr.**, legislative representative of Local 773, Galveston, commending the local for having the largest total UTU PAC contribution in Texas during 2007, and to **Saunders**, legislative representative of Local 508, Smithville, commending that local for having the highest per-capita UTU PAC contribution in Texas during 2007.


Utah

State Legislative Director **F. Jay Seegmiller**, who nearly defeated Utah House Speaker Greg Curtis two years ago, is challenging him again.

Seegmiller, a Democrat, will run in Utah’s District 49 in Salt Lake County.

Curtis, a Republican, won by just 20 votes in 2006. Many voters were unhappy with him over his support for a professional soccer stadium in Sandy.

Seegmiller says his priorities include changing Utah laws on campaign finance and ethics in the legislature.



Seegmiller

Bus Department

By Vic Baffoni, vice president/director

v\_baffoni@utu.org

Our priority is always the safety of members

The safety of our members in the work place has been – and will always be – a priority of this union and its officers.

More and more, we are experiencing passenger assaults on drivers. Any environment where a bus operator fears for his or her safety is equally dangerous for riders and traffic sharing the highway, because when coach operators must concern themselves with possible assaults, they cannot fully concentrate on safe driving.

Some agencies are providing enclosures for drivers. In Washington, D.C., for example, where the number of assaults on bus drivers has tripled since 2002, a clear, plastic shield is being inserted between the driver’s seat and the fare box. Also, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is experimenting with an enclosure.

While some enclosures being tested protect drivers from assaults, they may block the escape route for the driver and/or passengers in the event of a collision. Protective enclosures should permit the driver to exit the bus quickly and without impeding the escape of passengers. We urge also that protective shields be manually operated and not be connected to the front frame of the coach, as such construction could cause the shield to collapse into or onto the driver in a front-end collision.

Driver safety is one of many issues I am discussing with local officers and members.

Recently, I visited locals 710 and 759 in Newark, N.J.; Local 1496 in Riverside, Calif.; Local 1584 in Lancaster, Calif.; Local 1589 in New Brunswick, N.J.; Local 1741 in San Francisco; and Local 1785 in Santa Monica, Calif. In these meetings, we also discussed their members’ concerns regarding the union. I am very impressed with the leadership of the locals and their desire to serve their memberships.

Finally, congratulations to General Chairperson Nelson Manzano and his committee in negotiating an excellent contract for members on the Red and Tan Lines in northern New Jersey. (See complete story, page 9)



Moving? Wrong address?

The UTU International pays hundreds of dollars a month to the U.S. Postal Service because many members do not let the union know they have moved. If you are planning to move, please inform both the UTU International and your local secretary of your new address at least six weeks in advance. You can update your address via the UTU Web site ([www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org)) by clicking on the “Address Change” button on the home page. You also can inform the UTU International by e-mail at “[directory@utu.org](mailto:directory@utu.org)” or phone at (216) 228-9400, ext. 336, or clip and mail the coupon below.

Please correct my address

Please clip the address label from this newspaper, attach it below, note the correct address and send to Directory Dept., UTU, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250. Please allow six weeks for address changes to take effect.

Attach address label here

Name

Local

Address

City/State/ZIP



# Union insurance products for union families

## Permanent and Term Life Insurance



**Protect your family's future today**

Life insurance provides a safety net for your loved ones after your death.

It replaces lost income so your family can continue the lifestyle they have grown accustomed to, without disruption. The death benefit can be used for things such as funeral expenses, paying the mortgage or rent, putting food on the table, medical coverage, and even a college fund. Life insurance ensures that your spouse and children will remain protected and cared for.

UTUIA is proud of its commitment to provide quality life insurance products to its members and their families. We offer both permanent and term insurance so that you can choose how to best protect your loved ones.

**Permanent Life Insurance – Ultimate Par**

Permanent life insurance provides guaranteed premiums, a guaranteed death benefit, guaranteed cash values and may pay dividends. It provides whole-life coverage up to age 100. At age 100, you will receive the death benefit plus any accumulated cash values.

Loan provisions allow you to borrow up to 90 percent of the cash value in your policy and optional benefits include: a Spouse Level Term Rider, an Accidental Death Benefit Rider and a Disability Waiver of Premium.

**Term Life Insurance – Ultimate Term**

Term life insurance provides low premium costs with a guaranteed, maximum premium. It also provides coverage for a specific period of time, up to age 75, and may produce accumulated cash values. Conversion privileges guarantee your approval to a whole life insurance policy, without medical review or underwriting, and a Disability Waiver of Premium is available as an optional benefit.

The United Transportation Union Insurance Association is proud of its long tradition of serving the members and families of the United Transportation Union.

This year, we celebrate 37 years of providing great insurance protection and service to the thousands of men, women and children who have placed their trust in us.

We are as committed as ever to continue to offer you solid protection at reasonable rates.

The UTUIA pledges to continue to conduct its business affairs for the benefit and security of its members and their families.

The UTUIA recognizes its obligations to its members and shall continue to strive to live up to the ideals of the fraternal benefit system.



## IRAs and Flexible Premium Deferred Annuities

**These products are currently crediting 4.25 percent interest**

The **Traditional IRA** and **Roth IRA** are specialized savings plans authorized by the federal government to help you accumulate funds for retirement.

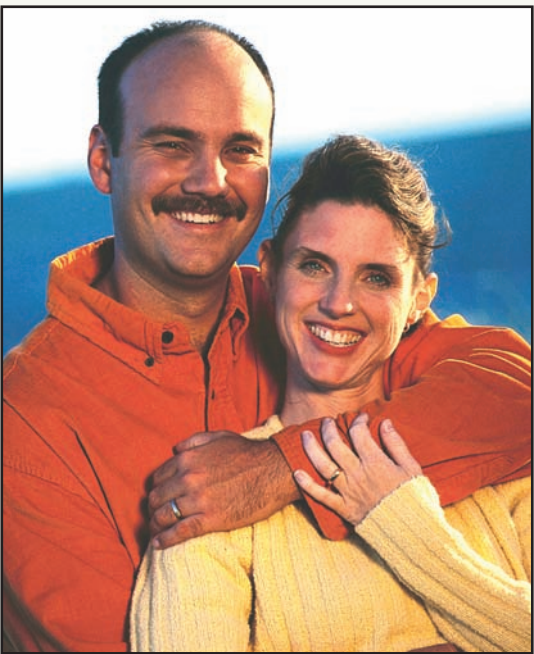
If you receive wage, salary or commission compensation, you may contribute up to \$5,000 to a Traditional or Roth IRA in 2008. If you are age 50 or older, you may contribute up to \$6,000.

Depending on your income level, and if you choose a Traditional IRA, you may be able to deduct some or all of your contribution on your federal tax return. The Roth IRA is not tax deductible.

While both IRA types allow for the tax-free accumulation of investment earnings over the life of the fund, the primary difference is that a Roth IRA allows you to contribute even after age 70½, and withdraw funds at retirement without paying any federal income tax. Depending on your particular situation, you may want the tax deductibility of current-year contributions (Traditional) or the exemption from federal taxes at retirement (Roth). Depending on your particular situation, you may want to alternate your contributions between the two from year to year.

The **Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity (FPDA)** is an insurance product. It has the same benefit as an IRA of having your investment earnings accumulate tax free until withdrawn. There are no limits on your contributions to an FPDA and any amount can be contributed at any time, subject to a \$25 minimum.

At retirement, you may choose to receive a lump sum, or as is more common, a series of periodic payments. We offer several options to best serve your needs. Upon death, the annuity value will be paid directly to your beneficiary, avoiding the expenses, delays and frustrations of probate.



## Accidental Death and Dismemberment

**New policy offers accident protection**

The UTUIA's new Accidental Death and Dismemberment Policy offers guaranteed approval for all active transportation employees!

**Three benefits levels to choose from**

Premiums for the new Accidental Death and Dismemberment Policy start at just \$6.50 a month.

- For just \$19.50 per month, our best plan provides all of the following benefits:
- \$180,000 for death caused by common carrier
  - \$90,000 for death caused by automobile
  - \$60,000 for accidental death
  - \$30,000 for dismemberment
  - \$60,000 for double dismemberment
  - \$600 per day for intensive-care confinements
  - \$60 per day for family lodging
  - \$30 per day for family meals
  - Up to \$1,800 for air ambulance transportation
  - Up to \$300 for surface ambulance transportation
  - Optional family rider covers your spouse and children and is available for as little as \$3 per month.

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

Remember, as a transportation employee, your approval is guaranteed.



### UTUIA Cancer Plan

**Available later this year**

It is estimated that about 1,444,920 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2008. Cancer will strike one out of every two men and one out of every three women. It is the second-leading cause of death, exceeded only by heart disease. And, one out of four people in the U.S. will die of cancer.

These statistics are alarming, but true. Cancer will affect the lives of many people, and the costs associated with cancer treatment can be devastating, not only to the person who is diagnosed with this terrible disease, but to their family members as well. Later this year, UTUIA will be offering to its members a new and upgraded Cancer Plan. The benefits include:

- First Diagnosis Benefit – \$1,000
- Hospital Confinement Benefit – \$300 per day
- Home Recovery and Convalescent Benefit – \$100 per day
- Extended Stay Benefit – \$600 per day
- Bone Marrow Transplant Benefit – \$15,000

Less than \$1.00 a day covers you and your entire family! There is no "lifetime maximum" on the money you can collect from this plan!

**NEW**

Complete, clip and mail the coupon below to have someone from our office contact you.

### Information, please

I would like more information on UTUIA's products.

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

04/08

## Disability Income Replacement Insurance

Today you are healthy and have the ability to earn an income. Tomorrow that may change.

**Disability Income Replacement Insurance** is one of the most critical forms of insurance you can own and yet it is one of the most overlooked.

Your most valuable asset is your ability to earn a living – how will your family manage if you are disabled for a prolonged period of time?

Don't wait another day!

We all need an income to buy food, clothing, pay the mortgage or the rent, pay for our children's education, and so much more.

In fact, your earning power has produced everything you have.

A serious accident or sickness can severely affect your ability to earn an income and maintain your standard of living.

Don't take that gamble. Let us help.

Our disability income plan can make all the difference.

We offer the flexibility of 6-, 12- and 18-month benefit periods, 30-, 60- and 90-day elimination periods and benefit amounts that will fit your budget.

Our policy is guaranteed renewable, which means we can never refuse to renew your coverage as long as you pay the premiums, whereas group disability plans can cancel your coverage if they choose.

Take the time to apply now before your health situation changes.

This is one of the best investments you'll make to insure your family's financial future.



Visit us on the Web at [www.utuia.org](http://www.utuia.org) and select the "Contact Us" button. This will allow you to locate the field supervisor nearest to you. You can then send e-mail or call by phone.

Call us, toll-free, at (800) 558-8842 and we will have a field supervisor contact you directly.



# UTU for Life

News, information for members of the UTU for Life program

## New Miami, Fla., chapter to meet

A new UTU for Life chapter is being established to serve retired members and their spouses in the South Florida area.



Brookins

The group will hold its inaugural meeting on Monday, April 21, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Original Pancake House, 9903 N.W. 41st St., Miami.

The chapter is being organized by **Kenneth Brookins**, a 43-year old retired conductor and former local chairperson off CSX and a member of Local 1138 in Miami, Fla.

An invitation has been sent to about 200 retirees living in the Miami area. Those wishing to attend the chapter's first meeting are encouraged to return to Brookins the post-card enclosed with the letter.

Brookins can also be reached by calling (305) 816-5826 or through e-mail at bigkb7544@aol.com.

## Former NS chair R.L. Mann passes

Former Norfolk Southern General Chairperson **R.L. Mann** has passed away. He was 82 years old.

Mann joined UTU-predecessor union, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, in 1962. He was elected chairperson of Local 971 in Crewe, Va., in 1970 and general chairperson of Norfolk & Western (now Norfolk Southern) general committee GO 680 in 1972. He retired from that position in 1986.

Mann came from a railroad family. His father, Leslie Edward Mann, worked in the yard at Crewe. His brothers, Edward Randolph and Richard Courtney, also worked on the railroad. His son, Leslie Early Mann, is currently working on the railroad as a yardmaster in Crewe, and his son-in-law, James B. Inge Jr., worked on the railroad as a clerk and dispatcher for many years, before becoming a Virginia state trooper.



Mann

## Want your stimulus payment? Here's what you need to know

Starting in May, the U.S. Treasury will begin sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million individuals.

Most taxpayers do not need to take any extra steps to receive these payments. However, some Railroad Retirement annuitants, Social Security beneficiaries, and recipients of certain veterans' benefits, who might not otherwise need to file a 2007 tax return, must do so to receive the stimulus payment.

**The return must show at least \$3,000 in qualifying income.**

Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits, the Social Security Equivalent Benefit (SSEB) portion of a Railroad Retirement Tier I benefit, certain veterans' benefits and earned income, such as wages and net earnings from self-employment that are includable in income.

**For people filing joint tax returns, only a total of \$3,000 of qualifying income from both spouses is required.**

A Form 1040A illustration on the IRS Web site ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)) shows the limited number of lines that need to be filled out by recipients of Social Security, Railroad Retirement and veterans' benefits who are not required to file an income tax return but are doing so to receive a stimulus payment. The key line for reporting 2007 benefits is Line 14a of Form 1040A. The

IRS has advised that while this line only mentions Social Security, Railroad Retirement annuitants should use this line even if their only benefits were Railroad Retirement or veterans' benefits. In addition, taxpayers in these groups should write the words "Stimulus Payment" at the top of the Form 1040A.

The IRS is also reminding taxpayers with Social Security, Railroad Retirement or veterans' benefits who have already filed but did not report their qualifying benefits on either Line 14a of Form 1040A (or Line 20a of Form 1040) that they may need to file an amended return in some situations to receive a larger stimulus payment. Taxpayers who already have filed but did not report these benefits can file an amended return by using Form 1040X.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program provides help to low and moderate income taxpayers. Call (800) 906-9887 to locate the nearest VITA site.

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program provides free tax help to people age 60 and older. As part of the IRS-sponsored TCE Program, AARP offers the Tax-Aide counseling program at more than 7,000 sites nationwide during the filing season. To find an AARP Tax-Aide site call (888) 227-7669 or visit the AARP Web site at [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).

## RETRENDO retirees to meet in Delmont

Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central and Conrail retirees living in western Pennsylvania are invited to a reunion dinner on Sunday, May 18, at the Lamplighter Restaurant on Route 22 in Delmont, Pa.

The event will kick off with a social hour at 3 p.m., with dinner to follow. The cost is \$18 per person.

The event, the 26th annual, is sponsored by The Retrenso Club, which stands for Retired Trainmen and Enginemen Social Club.

"In addition to retired trainmen and enginemen, retirees from other departments of the railroads are invited to attend this affair," said **A.V. "Jock" Powers**, organizer of the event.

Powers, a member of the UTU for Life program and member of Local 1948, Youngstown, Ohio, is a retired trainmaster who worked at Pitt Tower in Pittsburgh, Pa.

For more information, contact Powers at P.O. Box 325, Westmoreland City, PA 15692, or call (724) 863-1232.

## Two retirees honored for civil-rights activism

Two UTU retirees, **Thomas H. Mack** and **Clarence O. Baumgardner**, both of Local 655 in Bluefield, W. Va., were honored recently by Gov. Joe Manchin as West Virginians who played significant roles in the civil-rights movement.

Mack and Baumgardner, along with Local 655 member **Fennissee Trigg Jr.**, were part of a group who in 1971 fought, and were successful, to bring equality to rail hiring and promotion practices.

## THE FINAL CALL

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

Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State
2	Gordon Jr., John J.	Grafton Twp., Ohio	577	Hedrick, Larrie R.	Pekin, Ill.	1315	Bailey, James W.	Williamstown, Ky.
2	Sutphin, Thomas	Toledo, Ohio	645	Corley, Roy T.	Gloucester, Va.	1365	Gaus, Wilbert E.	Youngstown, Ohio
238	Oyler, Ronald J.	Ogden, Utah	645	McInerney, John F.	Rocky Point, N.Y.	1374	Morrison, Robert L.	Coraopolis, Pa.
243	Zuefeldt, Dan L.	Fort Worth, Tex.	783	Boone, Henry E.	Advance, N.C.	1390	Dopp, Francis G.	Salida, Col.
300	Salata, Nicholas	Schuylkill Haven, Pa.	800	Jordan, Robert J.	Westfield, N.J.	1393	Ueblhear, Victor J.	Jamestown, N.Y.
312	Stalka, Gerald E.	Winona, Minn.	811	Rice, William B.	Sonoma, Cal.	1423	Anderson, Stewart P.	Galesburg, Ill.
322	Gagan, Arthur J.	Green Bay, Wis.	867	Tucker, Richard G.	Edmonds, Wash.	1423	Tenhaaf, Harry E.	Monmouth, Ill.
322	Gingle, Francis L.	Green Bay, Wis.	1031	Thomas Jr., Claude E.	Savannah, Ga.	1433	Kleveno Jr., Alex F.	Lindenhurst, Ill.
386	Depka, Constantine J.	Kulpmont, Pa.	1081	Kizer Jr., John D.	Prescott, Ariz.	1445	Hagie, Richard D.	Neptune City, N.J.
440	Seyfried, John J.	Cincinnati, Ohio	1168	Callaway, Albert O.	Clovis, N.M.	1518	Bates, Thomas P.	Danville, Ind.
498	Pummer, William J.	Whitehall, Pa.	1190	Toadvine, C.R.	Jacksonville, Fla.	1563	Hamilton, Duncan Y.	Anaheim, Cal.



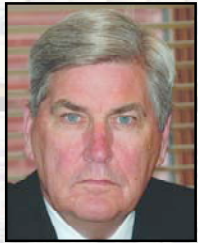
# MEET YOUR DESIGNATED LEGAL COUNSEL

There is no more dangerous work environment than on the railroads, where injuries too often are severe. The Federal Employers' Liability Act (FELA) makes railroads accountable for unsafe working conditions.

Railroads retain skilled attorneys to protect their interests. You also have access to skilled and experienced attorneys who understand the railroad industry, its safety hazards, and every aspect of the FELA. They are the UTU

Designated Legal Counsel, chosen for their special knowledge and experience. Their job is to represent you.

This continuing column introduces you to all of the UTU Designated Legal Counsel. For a complete listing, go to the UTU home page at [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org) and click on the blue tile "Designated Legal Counsel."



## EDWARD F. BRENNAN

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19 Bronze Point  
Belleville, IL 62226  
(618) 236-2121  
(800) 875-2123 toll free  
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## DONALD S. BRITT

The Crow Law Firm  
700 E Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-1209  
(916) 441-2980  
(800) 795-6555 toll free  
[lawyers@crowlaw.com](mailto:lawyers@crowlaw.com)

"Railroading is more than a job; it is a way of life with its own culture, challenges and dangers. UTU Designated Legal Counsel are selected for their strong legal skills, in addition to their thorough knowledge of railroads and railroading. Our understanding of railroading, coupled with our proven track records, make UTU Designated Legal Counsel uniquely qualified to represent your interests when injured."

"Every year, hundreds of railroad employees are injured on the job, but few consult a UTU-designated attorney. Instead, they talk to a railroad claims representative, which is not in their best interests. All UTU Designated Legal Counsel have a responsibility to protect your rights and see that you get the financial settlement you deserve under the FELA."

# THE UTU INTERNATIONAL STAFF: HERE TO SERVE YOU

## JOE SHIVAK

Joe Shivak is director of the UTU International Supply Department. Joe is responsible for the purchasing and distribution of all the materials used by the UTU and UTUIA as well as the operation of the mail room and print shop. "Everything comes in and goes out through my department," he said. Joe has been employed with the UTU since 1994. He can be reached at [j\\_shivak@utu.org](mailto:j_shivak@utu.org).



## BARBARA BLACKBURN

Barbara Blackburn is number one on the UTU International's seniority roster, having been hired to work in the Public Relations Department back in 1970. She now serves the membership by answering their many telephoned, e-mailed and written questions about Railroad Retirement benefits. Barb also is the union's pension benefits administrator, which means she handles all matters relating to employee pensions administered by the UTU and the UTUIA, including their transition into retirement and their health-care benefits. She also serves as a union steward for the Office and Professional Employees International Union and was a charter member of UTU Auxiliary Local 5.



## WADE ARNOLD

Everybody knows computers are user friendly, never crash and rarely need upgrading. NOT. That's why the UTU International and the UTUIA have Wade Arnold on staff. Wade is the union's computer technician and main-frame-computer operator. Employed since 2000, Wade answers calls from members and officers about personal computers; offers hardware recommendations; updates hardware, operating systems and software on the union's many computers; recovers forgotten passwords; maintains printers; services the union's e-mail, Web site and telephone-system computer servers, and generally keeps things humming.



(This feature will appear monthly in the UTU News.)



# UTU BUS LINES

News items culled from the UTU's Daily News Digest, posted every weekday morning on the UTU Web site, [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org).

## Teach children the ABCs of school-bus safety

It is important to teach children basic safety rules to be followed when boarding or exiting a school bus. Here are suggestions, courtesy of the U.S. National Safety Council:

- Always wait on a sidewalk until the bus comes to a complete stop and the doors open. Never wait on a street, road or alley;
- Make sure that the driver can always see you. Never walk behind the bus;
- If crossing in front of the bus, walk at least 10 feet in front of it, until you can turn around and easily see the driver;
- Pay careful attention to traffic, traffic signals and signs from the driver about when it is safe to cross the street;
- Use the bus handrail to climb up or down the steps.

(It is suggested that UTU-represented school bus drivers clip this item and make copies to share.)

## Red and Tan drivers ratify new contract

UTU-represented shuttle-bus drivers employed by Red and Tan have ratified a new contract with the company.

The drivers, members of Local 710 in Newark, N.J., shuttle airport passengers and employees around the grounds of the huge Newark airport.

According to General Chairperson **Nelson Manzano**, the drivers negotiated improvements in pay; a higher starting rate for new drivers; a retroactive-wage payment and quarterly wage increases.

The drivers also were able to maintain the same health-care benefits they enjoyed previously in the face of determined efforts by the company to reduce them.

Manzano said he appreciated the efforts of Alternate Vice President-Bus-East Richard Deiser; Vice General Chairperson **James Powell** and Secretary/Treasurer **Jose Rivera** for their hard work during negotiations.

## Public-transit ridership at 50-year record

U.S. mass-transit ridership rose to its highest levels in a half century last year as higher gas prices and crowded roads led to more use of buses, subways and commuter trains, the American Public Transportation Association announced last month.

Americans took 10.3 billion trips on public transportation last year, an increase of 2.1 percent from 2006 and the highest ridership in 50 years, the group said.

Light rail, which includes streetcars and trolleys, led the increase, with ridership rising 6.1 percent in 2007, driven by surges in New Orleans, Denver, St. Louis and Philadelphia.

Commuter-rail ridership rose 5.5 percent, led by Nashville; Santa Fe, N.M., and Harrisburg, Pa.

The largest commuter-train service, New York's Long Island Rail Road, had the most passengers in almost 60 years, according to the organization.



# UTU, BLET members cooperate to identify sources of fatigue

Train- and engine-service employees are now working to help their unions, the FRA, themselves and their families better understand their work-schedule related fatigue issues.

The UTU and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen are cooperating with the FRA in a fatigue-awareness project, which began last month.

The independent study, sponsored by the FRA and conducted by FRA contractor Foster-Miller, is asking about 800 train- and engine-service employees nationwide, who were randomly

It also asks participants to record how long they worked each day, whether there was limbo time or a period of interim release during the workday, how they feel during the workday and when they report for work, and if they feel sleepy when they finish work.

Those who complete and submit their diaries and questionnaires to Foster-Miller will receive a \$75 gift certificate as thanks for participating in the survey.

The purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding of work/rest schedules and sleep

safety concern of the UTU," Alternate National Legislative Director James Stem, who has been coordinating the project on behalf of the UTU with the FRA and the BLET, said. "An analysis of the work schedules of our operating crews is a necessary component of resolving the safety issues associated with 24-hour, seven-day operations.

The program has the full support of UTU International President Mike Futhey.

## Contract

*Continued from page 1*

grocery prices while new agreements are being negotiated;

- An increase in the meal allowance;
- Contributions to the yardmasters' supplemental retiree medical insurance program;
- Reduction in the waiting period from 120 days to 30 days for new-hire health-care coverage.

The UTU also led the way in gaining a provision to recalculate health-care insurance cost-sharing if Congress passes a form of national health care.

"Many members have questioned why we didn't obtain in our national agreement certain provisions that the BLET obtained in system agreements," Futhey said. "The answer is that those BLET provisions are in system agreements. UTU general committees of adjustment similarly can negotiate system agreements that piggyback the national agreement, but members should not look at the BLET system agreements without considering what the BLET had to give up to obtain those provisions."

Futhey said, "The BLET system agreement on BNSF, for example, provides for eventual full attrition of the engineer craft as the technology becomes available. That is not something I would ever care to negotiate."

**This agreement provides us with significant wage increases, with no loss of work rules, plus other valuable provisions.**

Assistant President Arty Martin explained that "we gained arbitration of the entry-rates issue, which will begin 30 days following contract ratification – and it will be by arbitrators we will have a hand in choosing, and with our negotiating team making our case.

"If we reject the agreement, it is highly unlikely that a Presidential Emergency Board appointed solely by President Bush will address the issue," Martin said.

UTU General Counsel Clint Miller and National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer agreed, with each explaining that once a pattern is established in national negotiations – as is the case with this round of negotiations – there is no record of a PEB straying from that pattern.

UTU International Vice President Tony Iannone, who participated in the Amtrak negotiations, reported that a PEB in those talks recommended following the pattern reached between freight railroads and other crafts.

"The bottom line," Futhey said, "is that this agreement will provide our members with significant wage increases, with no loss of work rules, plus other valuable provisions."

**Some 800 randomly selected train and engine-service employees have been asked to fill out detailed work/sleep diaries to help the unions and FRA better understand the fatigue issues that affect many railroad workers...and their families**

selected from both unions' databases, to fill out work/sleep diaries for two weeks.

Participants received a small diary in the mail, where they are now recording their work and sleep times and noting how well they slept and how alert they feel each day.

They also will fill out a companion background survey.

The diary also asks participants to record when they slept, how easy it was to fall asleep, how easy it was to get up, and how well they slept. It also asks participants to note any naps they take.

patterns of train- and engine-service employees, and to look at the relationship between these schedules and how alert or sleepy they feel.

Results from the completed study will be reported to the UTU, the BLET and the FRA. Foster-Miller will delete the names of all participants once the data has been compiled and participants have received their gift certificates.

Results of the survey will be published on [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org) and in the *UTU News*.

"Fatigue and impaired judgment from irregular and unpredictable work schedules is a major

## Railroad accidents decline for third consecutive year

The number of train accidents across the U.S. declined for the third consecutive year, according to preliminary 2007 data released last month by U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters.

Comparing the preliminary full-year 2007 data to 2006, Peters stated that last year railroads had 406 fewer train accidents nationwide, or a 13.7-percent reduction. California (down 46), Texas (down 45) and New York (down 30) led the way among the 34 states that experienced reductions, she said.

Also, last year the number of high-way/rail grade crossing incidents fell by 6.9 percent and grade-crossing fatalities decreased by 8.1 percent, to 339. And, trespass fatalities, the number-one cause of all rail-related deaths, decreased by 6.2 percent, to 486.

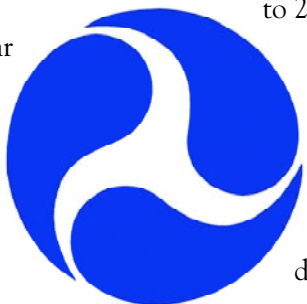
FRA Administrator Joseph Boardman said that in 2007 the FRA added two new automated track-inspection vehicles to its fleet, enabling the agency to triple the number of track-miles inspected annually; announced approval of new positive train-control (PTC) technology for deployment in regular freight rail service; issued a proposed rule to encourage expanded use of safer electronically controlled pneumatic (ECP) train-braking systems, and undertook several wide-ranging grade-crossing safety initiatives.

Thus far in 2008, the FRA issued a final rule designed to reduce common operating-practice mistakes that result in nearly half of all human-factor caused train accidents. And, later this year, the FRA said it intends to issue a proposed rule to strengthen the design standards and structural integrity of tank cars that carry hazardous materials, Boardman said.

Peters praised the railroad industry for making important contributions toward improving rail safety and for its continuing cooperation with FRA's safety programs.

"Our strong focus on improving rail safety is

achieving significant results for three years running now," Peters said, noting there have been 833 fewer train accidents, or a 24.6 percent reduction, when comparing the period from 2004 to 2007.



FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

Peters stressed that some of the safety gains are attributable to aggressive implementation of the FRA's National Rail Safety Action Plan first launched in May 2005. The plan focuses on the most frequent, highest-risk causes of train accidents; optimizes the use of data to target federal inspection and enforcement resources; and accelerates research initiatives that hold promise to mitigate the greatest potential safety risks.

"We are targeting our safety activities on specific problem areas," Boardman said, highlighting that the two leading causes of train accidents – human error and track – have declined 28.8 percent and 15.7 percent, respectively, since 2004.

## Amtrak

*Continued from page 1*

tions, of UTU National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer, Alternate National Legislative Director James A. Stem Jr. and Local 1470 (Edmonston, Md.) Chairperson **David A. Brooks**.

"It was a long and tortuous ordeal, but we persevered through dedication, persistence and teamwork," Suozzo said.

Iannone and New England States Legislative Director **George Casey** had praise for Beebe and his negotiating skills. "Bill Beebe has more experience negotiating with carriers than virtually any current labor-union officers," Casey said, "and his skills are extremely valuable to our members."



## Regional meetings offer information, fraternity

The 2008 UTU/UTUIA regional meetings have been designed to provide a grand sense of fraternalism, lots of worthwhile education and tons of fun for the whole family.

As before, each regional meeting will run for 2 1/2 days, ending early on the afternoon of the third day. The evening of the first day has been left unscheduled so you, your family and friends will be free to explore and enjoy the many offerings of the regional meeting cities.

Neither Denver nor Nashville has been designated the joint U.S./Canadian regional meeting; Canadian members are free to attend the meeting that interests them.

All those attending the regional meetings must be registered in order to attend any planned social function. Children ages 11 and under who are pre-registered are complimentary. The registration form is printed on the right.

A completed registration form listing each attendee, regardless of age, and complete payment in U.S. funds must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107, 30 days prior to the scheduled start of the meetings or the registrant will be charged an on-site registration fee of \$200.

The pre-registration fee for the 2008 regional meetings is \$150 per member, spouse or child over age 11. Additional fees apply for the golf outings. You must make your own room reservations, and certain deadlines apply.

The \$150 registration fee covers all workshop materials; a welcoming reception the night before the meeting; two lunches; one evening meal, and a breakfast buffet. Those wishing to attend only the workshops do not need to pay the registration fee. No one-day registrations will be offered.

You may cancel your regional meeting registration 10 days prior to the first day of the meeting or the golf outing without penalty. Please fax any changes or cancellations immediately to the UTU International at (216) 228-5755.

DENVER, COLORADO

JULY 7-9, 2008

HYATT REGENCY DENVER AT

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER

650 15TH ST., DENVER, CO 80202

www.denverregency.hyatt.com

**Hotel reservations:** (800) 233-1234 toll free; (303) 436-1234 direct; (303) 486-4450 fax

**Reservation code:** "UTU"

**Daily room rate:** \$120 single/double, \$145 triple, \$170 quad, \$160 Regency Club; rates good for three days before and after the meeting, depending upon availability

**Reservation deadline:** June 3, 2008, or until all rooms held for the UTU are reserved

**Parking:** Self park: \$21 per night; valet park: \$26 per night

**Golf outing:** The golf outing will be held on Sunday, July 6, at the Evergreen Golf Course. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and more.

NASHVILLE, TENN.,

AUG. 18-20, 2008

GAYLORD OPRYLAND RESORT

2800 OPRYLAND DR.,

NASHVILLE, TN 37214

www.oprylandhotels.com

**Hotel reservations:** (866) 972-6779 toll free; (615) 889-1000 direct; (615) 871-7741 fax

**Reservation code:** "N-UTU8"

**Daily room rate:** \$125 single/double, \$20 each additional person. Room rates are good three days before and after the meeting, based upon availability.

**Reservation deadline:** July 15, 2008, or until all rooms held for UTU are reserved.

**Parking:** \$12.00 per day; \$20 valet.

**Golf outing:** The UTU regional meeting golf outing will be held Sunday, Aug. 17, at the Gaylord Golf Springs in Nashville. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes transportation, golf, lunch and much more.

Airfares, car rentals

The UTU has arranged for discounts on airfares and car rentals for the regional meetings. Go to the UTU Web site, [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org), and click on "Meetings" for details.

UTU REGIONAL MEETING

REGISTRATION FORM

Registering before the regional meetings speeds sign-in procedures at the meeting site, helps organizers plan more accurately, and saves on meeting costs. These savings will be passed on to each pre-registered attendee. **Each person attending the regional meeting, including family members and guests, MUST be registered in order to attend any planned event. Please note that these meetings last 2 1/2 days and conclude on the afternoon of the third day.** Registration fees are \$150 per person; children 11 years of age and under are complimentary. On-site registration will be \$200 per person. All fees must be paid in U.S. funds. Canadian funds will be returned, possibly delaying your registration. If you have questions, consult your bank. Registration forms with payment must be received 30 days prior to the start of the meeting.

**Which regional meeting will you be attending?** ☐ Denver ☐ Nashville

Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation type: ☐ Automobile ☐ Air ☐ Other

**Member registration**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_ Title (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

**Spouse registration** ☐ Denver ☐ Nashville

Spouse name \_\_\_\_\_ Title (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

Tour: ☐ Spouse/guest tour (\$25 per registered spouse; \$50 per unregistered spouse)

**Child registration** ☐ Denver ☐ Nashville

Child name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

Child name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

Child name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

Tour: ☐ Spouse/guest tour (\$25 per registered child; \$50 per unregistered child) No. attending \_\_\_\_\_

**Guest registration** ☐ Denver ☐ Nashville

Guest name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to member \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: Day 1 ☐ Lunch ☐ No meal  
Day 2 ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner ☐ Both ☐ No meals  
Day 3 ☐ Buffet breakfast ☐ No meal

Tour: ☐ Spouse/guest tour (\$25 per registered guest; \$50 per unregistered guest)

**Golf registration** ☐ Denver ☐ Nashville

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_

(Golf fees are \$80 per golfer; include in total payment.)

**Payment options**

Check/money order enclosed (U.S. funds only) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Card number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Total charged \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Should additional space be needed, make copies of this form and attach to the original. This form and payment of \$150 per person over the age of 11, plus golf registration fees of \$80 per golfer (if applicable) and spouse/guest tour fees (if applicable), must be received at the UTU International Headquarters, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250, 30 days prior to the regional meeting. Make checks or money orders payable in U.S. funds to "UTU Regional Meeting." Those who do not pre-register for the regional meeting but instead choose to register at the meeting site will be charged a \$50 penalty fee.



# This month's winning photo:

The UTU Public Relations Department awards UTU gear to the union member who submits the best photograph during the previous months.

The winning photo will be published in the *UTU News*. Exceptional photographs will be included on the UTU Web site.

The UTU would like to see photographs or digital photographs of work-related scenes, such as railroad, bus or mass transit operations, new equipment photos, scenic shots, activities of your local, or photos of your brothers and sisters keeping America rolling.

Printed photographs should be mailed to UTU News, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107.

High-resolution digital photographs should be in the JPEG format and e-mailed to "utunews@utu.org".

With each photograph, please include your name and UTU local number, the names of the persons in the photo (left to right), where the photo was taken, and all other pertinent information.

All photographs submitted become property of the UTU.

Remember to review your employer's policies regarding use of cameras on the property or during work hours.



*This month's winning photograph was taken by Harold Wayne Blake, a retired Conrail conductor with 47 years of service and member of Local 860 in Middleport, Ohio. This photo of an out-of-service Chessie System caboose was taken in Rainelle, W. Va.*

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## Bates makes history as UTU's first Afro-American legislative director

In a historic and proud moment for the UTU, William "Willie" Bates was elected in March as the first African-American legislative director in the 140-year history of the union and its predecessor organizations.

Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) attended the swearing-in ceremony. Bates succeeds Steve Fritter, who retired. Both are members of Local 1933.

In 1992, Bates was elected local president, and vice local chairperson in 2000. In 1981, he hired on as a conductor on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad (now part of CSX), and in 1986 moved to Amtrak between Richmond, Va., and Washington, D.C.

"I am honored by the confidence placed in me to serve as a catalyst for improved railroad safety," Bates said. "The UTU provides each of us with better working conditions than we could achieve individually."

National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer said, "I am confident Brother Bates will do a similarly impressive job as Steve Fritter, and I am looking forward to working with him."

Brunkenhoefer praised Fritter as "a legislative director



Walter "Willie" Bates, left, with Steve Fritter outside the UTU's national legislative office in Washington, D.C.

who accomplished an awful lot behind the scenes, and who was especially skilled in delivering during periods of turmoil."

Bates said, "I have big shoes to fill. Steve always went above and beyond, and will be missed enormously."

## Inside this issue of the UTU News:



Joshua Thurston will chanter, drone about bagpipes. See page 2.



SLD Jay Seegmiller throws his hat back into the ring. See page 5.



UTUIA insurance protects union workers, families. See pages 6, 7.



Barbara Blackburn: Number one at the UTU. See page 9.