



# UTU News

**SMART**  
SHEET METAL, AIR, RAIL and TRANSPORTATION WORKERS

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The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

## Committees work to create new SMART union

In a joint message to members, the leadership of the UTU and the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association (SMWIA) pledged "to move forward and grow, and place all hostilities behind us" as the two organizations strive to cement a seamless merger.

The merger of the UTU and the SMWIA into the International Association of Sheet Metal Air, Rail and Transportation (SMART) Workers creates "new, vibrant and exceptional opportunities to organize the unorganized, become more efficient in our daily activities and make our highest calling the representation of the men and women of SMART," the leadership said.

In the first meeting of the UTU and the SMWIA leadership with senior staff in late January, the committees formed in November began the development of joint objectives "to ensure we all pull in the same direction, build trust in one another and use members' dues in the most efficient manner."

Initial goals established include:

- Acceleration of public knowledge of SMART's creation, especially through event staging, such as joint participation in rallies supporting collective bargaining rights. The two organizations will increase state activism efforts to slow and turn back efforts of anti-union lawmakers seeking to eliminate collective bargaining rights and impose right-to-work (for less) laws.

- Identifying opportunities for organizing the unorganized. This will be accomplished in the transportation area with the SMWIA's larger organizing staff assisting UTU organizers, and



At a recent SMWIA/UTU meeting are, from left, SMWIA Secretary Treasurer Joe Sellers Jr.; SEPTA General Chairperson Waverly Harris, who serves as chairperson of District 3 of the UTU's Association of General Chairpersons; UTU International President Mike Futhey; Long Island Rail Road General Chairperson Anthony Simon, who serves as chairperson of District 1 of the UTU's Association of General Chairpersons; SMWIA General President Joe Nigro; UTU Assistant President Arty Martin, and UTU General Secretary & Treasurer Kim Thompson.

leveraging the UTU's strong state presence through state legislative departments to create opportunities for organizing contractors in the sheet metal and air conditioning industries.

- Joint federal and state legislative activity in furtherance of laws and regulations beneficial to all SMART members.

- Maximizing the use of SMWIA training

facilities.

- Aggressive pursuit of federal grants to address safety and security issues.

- Focus on improving the quality of member health care insurance, at the lowest possible cost to members.

*Continued on page 10*

## NTSB urges action on speed-restriction compliance

WASHINGTON – Warnings of speed violations have been issued by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is urging unions, their members, carriers and the Federal Railroad Administration to work collaboratively to ensure compliance by train and engine crews with speed restrictions.

The NTSB action followed its investigation of five rear-end collisions where the NTSB concluded that crewmembers "failed to operate their trains at the required restricted speed."

Two of the rear-end collisions resulted in fatalities.

Said the NTSB:

"Signal systems provide for the safe separation between trains. However, there are times when trains are authorized to occupy the same sections of track. In these cases, safe train operations rely solely on crewmember compliance with the railroad's restricted speed requirements.

"Typically, these requirements include being prepared to stop within one-half the range of vision. Complete understanding of, and strict compliance with, restricted speed requirements are absolutely mandatory to prevent catastrophic train collisions."

Specifically, the NTSB urged the UTU and

the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen to educate their respective rail membership so that all involved recognize "the importance of operating their trains in accordance with restricted speed operating rules."

Additionally, the NTSB urged the UTU and the BLET to work collaboratively with railroads "to identify the potential for similar occurrences and to take appropriate mitigating actions."

The NTSB also urged railroads to "emphasize adequate training and ensure the compliance of train crews operating at restricted speeds."

The NTSB does not have regulatory authority, only investigative authority. Thus, the NTSB makes recommendations to carriers, labor organizations and the Federal Railroad Administration – the latter having regulatory authority over rail safety.

The five accidents noted by the NTSB were:

- Red Oak, Iowa, April 17, 2011, on BNSF;
- Low Moor, Va., May 21, 2011, on CSX;
- Mineral Springs, N.C., May 24, 2011, on CSX;
- DeWitt, N.Y., July 6, 2011, on CSX;
- DeKalb, Ind., Aug. 19, 2011, on Norfolk Southern.



UTU National Legislative Director James Stem, in commending the NTSB for its "diligence in helping to save lives," said, "Compliance with restrictive speed is a common-sense application of safety concepts when following another train. This is another example of operating rules that offer good advice."

### UTU member killed in switching accident

GARY, Ind. – Michael M. Shoemaker, 55, a conductor and member of Local 1383, was killed Jan. 30 in a switching accident at U.S. Steel's Gary Works here. Reports are that he became wedged between two freight cars.

Shoemaker, of Hobart, Ind., was a 10-year employee of Gary Railway, which is owned by U.S. Steel.

Reports indicate he was working as a foreman in a three-person conventional switching operation when the car he was riding "impacted the side of the standing equipment that the crew had placed" on an adjacent track, pinning him.

The accident is being investigated by the Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Shoemaker is the first UTU member to be killed in a rail accident in 2012. In 2011, there were 10 rail fatalities among UTU members; and 12 in 2010.

# Around the UTU

## Local 5, Kansas City, Mo.

BNSF Engineer Stanley Wofford was the winner of a drawing held by this local for a week's stay in a two-bedroom luxury cabin near Asheville, N.C. The raffle raised more than \$4,000 for the family of local member **Thomas Bleyenber**, who was killed in a railroad accident Aug. 15 in Kansas City, Kan.

## Local 95, Rensselaer, N.Y.



At a Dec. 15 celebration commemorating the tenth anniversary of Amtrak's Downeaster service in Portland, Maine, members of this local presented a check for \$190 to the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys For Tots Foundation, member **James Nawrocki** reports. Pictured, from left, are Vice Local Chairperson **Brian Labreck**, U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. **Martin, Nawrocki, Darella Fortson, Chuck Moyer** and **John Bolton**.

## Local 113, Winslow, Ariz.

State Legislative Director **Greg Hynes** recognized the efforts of the officers of this local after the entire class of 18 new hires last month signed pledge forms to contribute to UTU PAC. "I was completely blown away," Hynes said. "They collectively pledged a total of \$821.26 per month, with several of them pledging \$100 per month. I am exhilarated by the efforts put forth by these local officers, who lead by example." The 340 members of the local currently contribute \$3,201.63 per month.

## Local 199, Creston, Iowa

Conductor **Dennis C. Gross** retired Jan. 30 with more than 38 years of service, Local Chairperson **Billi Vavra** reports. Gross began his railroading career with Burlington Northern in 1973 as a maintenance-of-way employee. "D.C. will be missed greatly. He was a tremendous asset to our local," Vavra said.

## Local 527, Coffeyville, Kan.

The members of this local received a letter from the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys for Tots Foundation, thanking them for their generous donation of \$500 for its 2011 toy campaign to provide "joy and hope to millions of our nation's less fortunate children during the Christmas holiday season." This is the second year the members of the local have made this donation, Secretary & Treasurer **Sam Vail** reports.

## Local 528, Chicago

Members of this local are mourning the death of **Curtis A. Judice** Jan. 20, Secretary & Treasurer **Richard Gladkowski** reports. Judice retired May 30, 2010, after 32 years of combined service on C&NW and Union Pacific. He is survived by his wife, Luisa, and seven children. "We all will miss Curtis. Our condolences and prayers to his family," Gladkowski said.

## Local 564, Cleburne, Texas

This BNSF Railway local has changed the time and location of its monthly meetings, Local Chairperson **Kevin Kime** reports. Monthly local meetings will now be held on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at Pulido's Mexican Restaurant, 1029 N. Saginaw Blvd. in Saginaw, Texas.

## Local 898, Boston

Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad conductor **Thomas Booth** was recognized in a report by television station *WHDH News 7* after passenger and bride-to-be **Katelyn Peckman** arrived at work Dec. 20 and realized her engagement ring was no longer on her finger. The diamond in the center



Retired UTU member and conductor **Larry Sword** points to a Jan. 1 newspaper article in *The Columbian* about his unique contribution to a local charity.

## Keeping eyes on the ground leads to help for the hungry

A small donation to a local charity became a big deal for a retired UTU member after he was featured in the Vancouver, Wash., media for the quirky way in which he went about collecting his contribution.

As he was nearing retirement, former Union Pacific conductor **Larry Sword** decided to take up walking to get in shape. Putting into practice a UP safety slogan he had long before memorized, Sword was soon on his way to becoming a coin collector, too.

"Never put your feet where your eyes have not been," Sword said.

As it turned out, keeping his eyes on the ground soon led to money in his pocket.

"I was walking all around and I started to find money in theatre parking lots and around fast food restaurants," Sword said. "One time, I found 26 pennies in a parking lot that someone must have just thrown from their car."

After stopping at a local restaurant for his regular bowl of oatmeal and raisins, Sword decided to put his newly acquired change in the empty raisin container. Before long, Sword had 15 containers holding \$35.74.

While the amount wasn't much, "I just decided that I would give it to people in need," Sword said.

He took the 15 containers along with a note to Share, a Vancouver mission that aids the hungry and homeless. They took his note and story to the press.

Sword was featured in a Jan. 1 article in *The Columbian* newspaper and in a news report by *TV Fox 12* in Vancouver. "They aired the story two times that day," he said.

"As a rule, I've contributed regularly to the Portland Rescue Mission; when I found out there was a charity here – Share House – that's where I gave the donation. I gave them the \$35 and they can prepare a meal for about 95 cents apiece, so that's about 35 or 36 meals."

Part of the note that Sword gave to Share was posted on his Facebook page. It read: "It's a great feeling helping people who truly need it, especially around the holidays. Share House is providing a great service to the community. My hat's off to them and my hope is that whomever reads this will get involved with a service that provides for the less fortunate."

For more information about Share, visit [www.sharevancouver.org](http://www.sharevancouver.org).

of the ring was her mother's first engagement stone. About the time Peckman was returning to North Station to search for the ring, Booth saw the ring on the floor of his train as it was making its second trip to the station. The ring and owner were soon reunited. "It's definitely a miracle," Peckman told *WHDH*. "I'm just so happy."

## Local 951, Sheridan, Wyo.

At this local's Christmas party in December, members honored former Local President **Willie**

**Ford** for 40 years of service to the union, as well as Railroad Retirement Board representative **Ron Kaminski** for 37 years of service to the board and UTU members throughout the western United States, State Legislative Director **Stan Blake** reports. The state legislative board presented Kaminski with a travel book and atlas and the local presented him with a plaque. "Thanks, Ron, for all of your help with our retirements and good luck on yours," Blake said.



**Willie Ford**, left, holds a plaque presented to him by **Billy Montgomery**, right, during the local's Christmas party last year.

## Local 1081, Glendale, Ariz.

A memorial fund has been established for the family of member **Jeff Straub**, who died of a heart attack while at work last year, State Legislative Director **Greg Hynes** reports. Anyone wishing to make a donation can do so at any area Wells Fargo Bank branch by requesting the donation be deposited to the account of Tracy Straub of the Jeff Straub Memorial Fund. Hynes also credited the efforts of fellow member **Mark Laufer**, who tried desperately to revive Straub following the attack.

## Local 1177, Willmar, Minn.

This local recently held its 32nd annual Chili and Oyster Stew Feed, which was attended by both UTU and BLET members, according to Legislative Rep. **Brian Hunstad**. "We held a raffle, had presentations by UTUIA and UTU designated legal counsel, and talked about the importance of staying involved, informed and educated if we are to remain a strong and viable union," Hunstad said.

## Local 1327, Peach Creek, W. Va.

Former Local Chairperson and Secretary & Treasurer **Gail Porter**, 78, died Nov. 19, according to former President **Redford Scaggs**. "He was a fine man and he did a great job in both local positions," Scaggs said.

## CN (IC) GO 436, Collinsville, Ill.

Isabelle Hudson, 88, the wife of former General Chairperson **Bert E. Hudson** and the general committee office secretary for 10 years, died Jan. 4, General Chairperson **James Herndon** reports. She is survived by a son and two daughters. Interment was Jan. 8 at the Palestine Cemetery in Palestine, Ill.

## UTU day at Fonner Park

UTU locals from Nebraska and surrounding states will be holding their second UTU Blanket Day at Fonner Park in Grand Island, Neb., April 13, GO 953 Vice General Chairperson **Rich Mohr** reports. Last year, more than 60 UTU members representing 12 different locals attended the event. A blanket adorned with the UTU logo will be presented to the owner of the horse that wins the ninth race. Admission to the park is free. For more information and to confirm attendance, contact Local 7 Vice Local Chairperson **Cliff Gordon** by calling (308) 530-5766 or at [cgordonutue@hotmail.com](mailto:cgordonutue@hotmail.com), or Local 286 member **Ed Mueller** by calling (308) 530-6711 or at [meeko@kdsi.net](mailto:meeko@kdsi.net). Reduced room rates are available at the Midtown Holiday Inn in Grand Island. Mention code "United Transportation Union" when making a reservation at (308) 384-1330.

# FRA seeks safer passenger-rail cars

Improvements to existing passenger train emergency systems regulations have been proposed by the Federal Railroad Administration.

The improvements are aimed at helping passengers and passenger-train crew members better locate and operate emergency exits during evacuations, and to assist first responders in reaching trapped passengers more quickly.

U.S. passenger railroads, including Amtrak and commuter carriers, already have the most advanced passenger safety regulations on the globe. The Congressional Budget Office reported in 2003 that European and Asian nations impose lower crashworthiness standards than are imposed in the United States.

Specifically, the proposed new rules affect vestibule doors, emergency lighting, signage and markings for emergency entrances and exits, and rescue access. The new rules also require photo

luminescent materials to highlight emergency exit path markings, and require instructions for emergency systems operations and requirements for debriefing after emergency situations and simulations.

"The proposed new requirements are based on the latest developments in passenger train emergency system technologies and best practices," said FRA Administrator Joe Szabo.

UTU National Legislative Director James Stem said, "These amendments to the passenger train emergency systems rules are based on improvements in modern technology and the experiences of many years of operations."

The proposed new rules were recommended by the FRA's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee's (RSAC) Passenger Safety Working Group and its Emergency Preparedness Task Force, and incorporate three industry stan-

dards developed by the American Public Transportation Association.

UTU members participating in making the recommendations included District of Columbia Legislative Director **Willie Bates** (Local 1933), Long Island Rail Road Vice General Chairperson **Michael Denn** (GO 505), and retired Amtrak Local Chairperson **David Brooks** (Local 1470).

## LIRR general chair heads general chairs

**Anthony Simon**, general chairperson on Long Island Rail Road, has been elected to a four-year term as chairperson of District 1 of the UTU's Association of General Chairpersons.

District 1 is made up of some 190 railroad general chairpersons. Its purpose is to formulate concerted movements relating to wages, rules and working conditions of transportation service employees represented by the UTU.



Simon

Simon succeeds BNSF General Chairperson **Randy Knutson** (GO 245).

Simon, a member of Local 645, Babylon, N.Y., began his railroad career on LIRR in 1990. He was promoted to conductor in 1993.

He became interested in the affairs of his union and was elected Local 645 secretary in 1998, local secretary & treasurer in 2000, and general chairperson in 2007. He was re-elected Long Island Rail Road general chairperson by acclamation in 2011.

## UTU organizes MOW workers on M&NA

In its latest organizing victory, the UTU now represents maintenance-of-way employees on Missouri & North Arkansas Railroad, a Rail-America property.

Contract negotiations, led by UTU Alternate Vice President Doyle Turner, will begin shortly. Turner heads the UTU's shortline outreach program.

Rich Ross, the UTU's director of organizing, and International organizer Mike Lewis were commended by International President Mike Futhey for this 28th UTU organizing win over the past 48 months.

Missouri & North Arkansas Railroad operates some 530 miles of line in Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri, with trackage rights over Union Pacific and connections with BNSF and Kansas City Southern. Primary commodities include coal, grain, frozen foods, minerals, steel, chemicals and asphalt.

## CN completes merger of DM&IR, DW&P into Wisconsin Central

Canadian National has completed the merger of Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway and Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific Railway into its Wisconsin Central subsidiary.

CN said the merger, approved by the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, will make operations more efficient and customer focused.

In October, in preparation for the merger, UTU-represented conductors and brakemen employed by the three CN subsidiaries ratified an implementing agreement consolidating the three properties under a single agreement.

That new agreement provides for four stand-alone general committees under the jurisdiction of one general committee – with General Chairpersons **Matt Koski** (DW&P, GO 325), **Steve Haus** (DM&IR, GO 315) and **Saint W. J. Laurent** (DM&IR, GO 321) merging with General Chairperson **Ken Flashberger** (WC, GO 987).

"The merger reduces the administration costs associated with four general committees," said then-UTU International Vice President John Babler, who assisted with negotiations. "The implementing agreement satisfied both New York Dock, Article 1, Section 4, merger condi-

tions and the parties' Railway Labor Act Section 6 notices."

Also provided by the agreement are general wage increases, additional personal leave days, up to eight new extra board positions, a reduction in the number of years to qualify for additional weeks of vacation, a new bid rule and priorities zones.

Additionally, the new agreement provides terminal protection for DW&P and DM&IR trainmen, preserves no-furlough clauses on each former property, reduces call windows to four hours, guarantees consecutive days off for extra boards and pools, and establishes an order of call when the extra board is exhausted.

"General Chairpersons Flashberger, Koski, Haus and Laurent played key roles in the negotiations, each recognizing the value of a negotiated settlement, and came to the negotiations fully versed on their respective agreements," Babler said in October. "They came prepared to make the tough choices that would best suit their members' needs in the short-term and long-term. They also did a remarkable job holding town hall meetings to inform members about the implementing agreement."



## Chicago South Shore members ratify new pact

UTU engineers, conductors and collectors employed by Chicago South Shore & South Bend, an electric-line passenger operation between Chicago and South Bend, Ind., have ratified a new two-year agreement.

The new contract provides for several favorable rules changes, certification pay for engineers and conductors, increased mentor compensation, a lump sum payment, preservation of a cost-of-living adjustment, and no increase in health-care insurance contribution.

International Representative John Babler, who assisted with the negotiations, praised General Chairperson **Tony Wojasinski** (GO CSS) and Local 1526 officers **Robert Kehoe** and **Kay Harmon** "for their efforts in never wavering in their goal to gain the best possible

agreement at a time that public funding for the operation is problematic."

Also praised was National Mediation Board mediator Walter Darr, "who guided the parties through interest-based bargaining, and whose and patience kept the parties moving towards an equitable settlement," Babler said.

## UTU needs your photos

The UTU International is seeking good railroad, bus and airline photos for its annual calendar and other uses.

High-resolution digital photographs should be emailed to "utunews@utu.org."

Printed photographs should be mailed to UTU News, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333.

## Watch hammer loops; they can cause injuries



The Federal Railroad Administration is calling attention to an injury where a conductor, while lifting the operating lever on a freight car, was dragged four car lengths after the lever became tangled in the hammer loop of his coveralls.

The FRA recommends cutting off the hammer loop on coveralls or securing the hammer loop to the pants leg so that it cannot create a hazard.

**“What does labor want? We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures.” Samuel Gompers, first president of AFL**

## UTUIA: Financially strong, and growing stronger

Congratulations go to Art Rayner, the United Transportation Union Insurance Association's man of the year for 2011.

Art was recognized for his sales and leadership performance – attributes that helped propel the UTUIA last year to one of its strongest financial performances.

The competition Art faced from our other dedicated and determined field service representatives demonstrated that the UTUIA is financially strong and growing. And the UTUIA will grow even stronger as our merger with the Sheet Metal Workers International Association into SMART will eventually allow



### International President's Column

By Mike Futhey, International President  
(216) 228-9400; [president@utu.org](mailto:president@utu.org)

lio is generally conservative, primarily invested in government and corporate bonds and companies with the highest credit ratings, with just 15 percent of assets invested in stocks and real estate.

Our field supervisors have been

stitution limits sales to transportation workers). The key to improving further the UTUIA's financial performance is growing sales volume, and inclusion of non-transportation workers represented by the SMWIA is essential.

As the UTUIA's financial performance improves from inclusion of SMWIA's 150,000 members and increased sales, product offerings can be widened.

As it has been for 135 years, the mission of the UTUIA, an insurance company owned by its trade-union members, remains the same.

It is to promote the general welfare of its members; disseminate information about life, health and annuity products that provide for the security of its members and their families; provide uncompromising service quickly, efficiently and professionally; and engage in volunteer activities through its local units.

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

For more information on the UTUIA and its products, including links to UTUIA field service representatives, go to [www.utuia.org](http://www.utuia.org).



Left to right are UTU Assistant President Arty Martin; President Mike Futhey; Art Rayner; GS&T Kim Thompson and Joe Sellers Jr., SMWIA general secretary treasurer.

150,000 additional trade unionists to join the UTUIA through purchase of insurance and investment products.

For 2011, the UTUIA's assets grew by \$3 million, its annual revenue topped \$17 million, and it produced a surplus (net income after costs are deducted) of almost \$2 million.

The UTUIA's investment portfo-

provided with new technology that better helps them provide insurance advice, while the number of UTUIA insurance products has increased.

The UTUIA is working to determine what changes in its constitution are required to make its products available to our new SMWIA brothers and sisters (the current con-



[utunews@utu.org](mailto:utunews@utu.org)

**Mike Futhey, International President**  
[president@utu.org](mailto:president@utu.org)

**Arty Martin, Assistant President**  
[asstpres@utu.org](mailto:asstpres@utu.org)

**Kim Thompson, General Secretary and Treasurer**  
[gst@utu.org](mailto:gst@utu.org)

**James Stem, National Legislative Director**  
[jamesastem@aol.com](mailto:jamesastem@aol.com)

**Contact the UTU:**

Phone (216) 228-9400; fax (216) 228-5755

**For the latest news, visit [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org); also, sign up on the UTU website to receive news alerts via email.**

## Support our Great Lakes Airlines pilots

Safety is job number one for UTU-represented pilots employed by Great Lakes Airlines.

Yet their current contract with the carrier is substandard in terms of working conditions and wages, and that daily puts pressure on their ability to fly passengers safely.

The image of airline pilots earning high wages and getting access to company-paid top-flight hotel rooms does not apply to our Great Lakes brothers and sisters.

Under the current contract with Great Lakes Airlines, pilots are the



### A message to UTU members from Colorado State Legislative Director Rick Johnson

having to sleep in passenger lounges in airports. Don't imagine. Just ask a Great Lakes pilot.

Their UTU Local 40 has been in negotiations with Great Lakes man-

In a recent poll of pilots, 97 percent supported a job action, but that is not possible until the National Mediation Board releases the parties from mediation.

Based in Cheyenne, Wyo., and with hubs in Albuquerque, N.M.; Denver; Los Angeles; Minneapolis;

The pilots fly 30-passenger Embraer and 19-passenger Beechcraft aircraft.

UTU members can help their brothers and sisters at Great Lakes Airlines by contacting city council members in the cities Great Lakes serves, and by contacting members of Congress.

The message is straight forward: For the safety of the flying public, pilots on Great Lakes Airlines deserve a contract that provides for a livable wage and appropriate accommodations at layover points to ensure they receive undisturbed rest.

To contact your congressional lawmaker on behalf of our brothers

**Great Lakes pilots are the lowest paid of any scheduled passenger airline in the U.S.**

lowest paid of any scheduled passenger airline in the United States.

On Great Lakes Airlines, a first officer can expect to make less than \$15,000 in the first year. These pilots are professionals with extensive training and expertise, and some of them are paid less than entry-level retail and food service jobs.

Imagine a pilot on food stamps, or

agement for more than two years, with negotiations locked down in difficult mediation under provisions of the Railway Labor Act, which also applies to airline workers.

Local 40 flight attendants, also represented by the UTU, recently ratified a new agreement, but negotiations dragged for – yes – 10 years! The pilots are hoping to reach an equitable settlement with Great Lakes Airlines more quickly.

and Phoenix, Great Lakes Airlines serves 48 of its destinations through federal subsidies provided by the congressionally created Essential Air Service program.

The airline is the nation's largest provider of Essential Air Services.

and sisters at Great Lakes Airlines, go to the following website: [www.contactingthecongress.org/](http://www.contactingthecongress.org/).

Then select your state, click on the names of your senators and representative, and you have the information needed to send an email or fax, or make a phone call.

**For the safety of the flying public, Great Lakes pilots deserve a contract that provides a liveable wage**

# State Watch

## News from UTU State Legislative Boards

### Arizona



State Legislative Director Greg Hynes recently met with Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (above, left) and Arizona Democratic Party Chairman Andrei Cherny (above, right) to discuss the new Arizona congressional districts and campaign strategies for 2012. Schultz is a Democratic congresswoman from Florida. "Arizona may be a battleground state in the upcoming national elections," Hynes said, "so I urge all members here to get involved in the process and to contribute to UTU PAC so their voices will be heard."

### Idaho

The Idaho Legislative Board has cleared the first hurdle in getting the "Ida Shield," a passive railroad crossing warning sign, erected on most crossings, State Legislative Director **George Millward** reports.

The Ida Shield is a red and white reflective sign, 18 inches long, that is fastened to the bottom of each railroad crossbuck sign post. It is used to warn motorists as they approach a railroad crossing that it is only protected by a stop sign, or is a passive crossing.

"The sign reflects the lights of the locomotive and it appears to almost flash because of its design," Millward said. "An Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT) rulemaking made the Ida Shield a recognized Idaho warning sign. Now, with help from the UTU, legislation has passed both the House and Senate transportation committees and will be voted on soon.

"The UTU has led the fight in getting this legislation passed and we thank all who have helped make it possible, especially the Pocatello Union Pacific/union safety committee, the IDOT, the Idaho State Police, and the Operation Lifesaver committee. I also appreciate the hard work of state legislative board member **Bricen Thompson** of Local 1058, Pocatello. Once this legislation is signed by Gov. Otter, our railroads, employees and public will be much safer at the state's 2,700 or so passive public crossings," Millward said.

### Kansas

The Kansas State Legislative Board held its 11th quadrennial reorganization meeting Jan. 5, Legislative Director **Ty Dragoo** reports. The following officers were elected to new four-year terms: Dragoo (L-1503), legislative director and board chairperson; **Chad Henton** (L-506), assistant legislative director; **Mike Piper** (L-

774), board secretary; **Charlie Ring** (L-707), alternate assistant legislative director, and **Sam Vail** (L-527), alternate secretary.

### Iowa



Left to right are Iowa Senate President Jack Kibbie, Sen. Mathis and Iowa State Legislative Director Pat Hendricks at Mathis' swearing-in ceremony.

In a 55 percent-43 percent victory, Democrat Liz Mathis defeated a Cedar Rapids businesswoman to win the special election in Iowa Senate District 18 last fall, Iowa State Legislative Director **Pat Hendricks** reports. "Hundreds of union members turned out prior to the election to do the work that helped bring about this crucial victory," Hendricks said. "At stake was collective bargaining rights for working families and issues such as unemployment benefits and workplace safety. UTU played a strong role in Sen. Mathis' election with a substantial UTU PAC contribution to her campaign."

## LACMTA Orange Line extension set to open this summer

Construction on the Orange Line extension in California's San Fernando Valley has reached 80 percent completion and is on schedule for an earlier opening this summer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) officials said last month.

The \$215.6-million project was initially scheduled to open in August, but now is on track to open in June, LACMTA officials said.

The project encompasses a four-mile extension of the San Fernando Valley Bus Rapid Transit line between Canoga Park and the Chatsworth Amtrak/Metrolink Station. It's the first project under the Measure R program to begin construction and will be the first to open this summer, officials said.

The project will include four new stations, three new or reconfigured parking lots, a new busway bridge over active railroad tracks, street improvements and landscaping.

### Great Lakes crews spreading wings over N.D.

JAMESTOWN, N.D. – Great Lakes Airlines crews represented by the UTU will soon be flying in and out of Jamestown.



The Department of Transportation selected Great Lakes Airlines to provide air service to Jamestown Regional Airport through the Essential Air Service program, which partially subsidizes flights to small communities with federal funds. The airport reported record passenger boardings in 2011.

Great Lakes is tentatively scheduled to take over from Delta Air Lines, the previous EAS provider, about March 12.

Great Lakes will offer 18 round-trip flights per week between Jamestown and Minneapolis, using 19-seat Beechcraft 1900 aircraft.

The UTU represents pilots and flight attendants at the airline, who are members of Local 40 at Denver, Colo.

### UTU officers Carrico, Beckius die

Two longtime UTU officials – **James F. Carrico Sr.** and **Robert Beckius** – have died.

Carrico Sr., 61, former Indiana state legislative director, died Jan. 4.

A member of Local 333 at North Vernon, Ind., Carrico started as a conductor with CSX in 1974 following discharge from the U.S. Army. He was a graduate of Indiana State University. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie Ann, son, James Carrico Jr., daughter, Alicia, and two grandchildren.

Beckius, 89, former general chairperson for Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, Colorado & Wyoming, CF&I and Utah Railway, died Dec. 27, 2011, in Gold Canyon, Ariz. After serving in the U.S. Navy, Beckius went to work with Union Pacific in 1958 and later Denver & Rio Grande. He is survived by his wife, Ellie, and sons Robert, Richard and Tim.

## Bus Department

By Bonnie Morr, vice president  
bonniemorr@sbcglobal.net

### Big pride in little victories

The UTU has gained a new First Transit property in Farmington, N.M., which is now in Local 1687 out of Albuquerque. Contract negotiations have begun.



Morr

We also are in the initial stages of organizing some 200 workers on a transit property and a light rail property in Southern California.

I am currently assisting Local 1741, whose members are employed by First Student in San Francisco, as they prepare for two arbitrations, including a discipline issue and a workers' compensation issue. In both cases, we are seeking reinstatement of the members.

With assistance from the UTU International Legal Department, we recently completed a trial at the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) over an unfair labor practice at a UTU property in Riverside, Calif., which had been closed without holding negotiations.

We are seeking from the NLRB a severance package for the 135 members who lost their jobs. Final briefs are due in mid-February.

**UTU victories only possible because of member involvement**

Alternate Vice President Calvin Studivant has been working with **Waverly Harris**, general chairperson at Local 1574 (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) on numerous grievances, and they have settled seven of 10 without having to go to arbitration.

At Local 1715, which represents drivers employed by Charlotte (N.C.) Area Transit System, a driver was reinstated with full back pay after Calvin Studivant defended the driver in arbitration.

In Washington, we are facing a battle with legislation introduced by the House Republican majority attacking transit operating assistance and pushing for privatization that would permit foreign-based operators to enter the U.S. market and access federal transit aid.

This legislation also attacks 13(c) protections of the Federal Transit Act that we worked so hard to protect. They require continuation of collective bargaining rights, and protection of transit employees' wages, working conditions, pension benefits, seniority, vacation, sick and personal leave, and other conditions of employment, as well as paid training or retraining, when federal funds are used to take over a transit operation.

The UTU National Legislative Office and other transit unions are working to halt this attack, and donations to the UTU PAC will provide additional assistance in this election year.

# 2012 UTU/UTUIA regional meetings now boarding!

The 2012 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.

UTU regional meeting registration and hotel information, as well as web links to make hotel reservations online, can be accessed by visiting [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org) and clicking on the "Meetings" box on the bottom of the UTU homepage.

All those attending the regional meetings must be registered in order to attend any planned social function. Children ages 11 and under who are pre-registered are complimentary. The registration form is printed on the 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, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333, by June 4 for the Portland meeting or by July 9 for the Memphis meeting or the registrant will be charged an on-site registration fee of \$200.

The pre-registration fee for the 2012 regional meetings is \$150 per member, spouse or child

over age 11, the same fee charged the last five years. Additional fees apply for the golf outings. You must make your own room reservations, and certain deadlines apply.

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

You may cancel your meeting registration 10 days prior to the first day of the meeting or the golf outing without penalty. Call the International at (216) 228-9400 or email [k\\_cashin@utu.org](mailto:k_cashin@utu.org) immediately regarding any changes or cancellations.



**Portland, Ore., June 18-20:** Hilton Portland Hotel, 921 S.W. Sixth Ave., Portland, OR 97204-1202, [www.portland.hilton.com](http://www.portland.hilton.com)  
**Reservations:** (800) 445-8667 toll free; (503) 226-1611 direct **Reservation code:** UTU **Room Rate:** \$139 single/double, plus taxes; rates good for three days before and after meeting, depending upon availability.  
**Reservation deadline:** May 14, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved **Parking:** \$27 per day valet; \$18 per day self park  
**Golf outing:** The regional meeting golf outing will take place Sunday, June 17, at the Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club in Aloha, Ore. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes golf, lunch and more.



**Memphis Tenn., July 23-25:** The Peabody Memphis, 149 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38103 97204-1202, [www.peabodymemphis.com](http://www.peabodymemphis.com)  
**Reservations:** (800) PEABODY toll free; (901) 529-4000 direct **Reservation code:** 721939 **Room Rate:** \$134 single/double, plus taxes; rates good for three days before and after meeting, depending upon availability.  
**Reservation deadline:** June 18, or until all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved **Parking:** \$15 per day valet; \$10 per day self park  
**Golf outing:** The regional meeting golf outing will take place Sunday, July 22, at Mirimichi in Millington, Tenn. The cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes golf, lunch and more.

## Avis Rent-a-Car offers discounts

The UTU has arranged with Avis Rent-a-Car to offer discounted rates to UTU members attending the 2012 regional meetings.

To reserve a car, contact Avis at (800) 331-1600 and use the UTU's Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number: **D150699.**

For the Portland, Ore., and Memphis, Tenn., regional meetings, UTU members and guests can also reserve a car online. Visit the UTU website at [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org), select the "Meetings" link at the bottom of the UTU homepage, then select the appropriate regional meeting city.

When renting a car online, be sure to use the same Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number as listed above: **D150699.**

## Continental Airlines offers discounts

Continental Airlines is offering discounts of two percent to 10 percent off published fares to UTU members and others attending the Portland and Memphis regional meetings.

To receive the discount, call your travel agent or Continental Airlines MeetingWorks at (800) 468-7022 and provide the Z Code **ZMFX** for Portland and Agreement Code **556238**, and Z Code **ZMFW** and Agreement Code **158558** for Memphis. There will be a \$25 service fee collected, per ticket, for all tickets issued through MeetingWorks reservations or any Continental Airlines ticketing facility.

The service fee is non-refundable and applies to all itineraries, one way or roundtrip.

To avoid a service fee and receive an additional three percent discount, book your reservations online at [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com). Enter both the UTU's Z Code and Agreement Codes, with no space (ZMFX556238 for Portland, ZMFW158558 for Memphis), in the Offer Code box. The additional three percent discount applies to published fares only.

A direct link to Continental's online reservation system can also be found on the UTU's website by visiting the "Meetings" page.

## Continental Airlines

### Two regional meeting tours to be offered

The UTU is arranging two different tours of local attractions at both the Portland and Memphis regional meetings.

They will take place the day before, as well as the first day of, both regional meetings.

Tour fees are \$35 per tour for each registered attendee or guest, or \$75 per tour for each unregistered attendee or guest.

Details of the two tours in Portland and Memphis are still being ironed out and will be announced soon on the "Meetings" page of [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org). Select the "Meetings" link at the bottom of the UTU homepage.



## UTU REGIONAL MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

Registering before the regional meetings speeds sign-in procedures, helps organizers plan more accurately, and saves on meeting costs. **Each person attending the regional meeting, including family members and guests, MUST be registered in order to attend any event. Please note that these meetings last 2-1/2 days and conclude on the afternoon of the third day.** Registration fees are \$150 per person; children 11 years of age and under are complimentary. On-site registration is \$200 per person. All fees must be paid in U.S. funds. Canadian funds will be returned, possibly delaying your registration. If you have questions, consult your bank. Registration forms with payment must be received at the UTU International by June 4 for the Portland meeting and by July 9 for the Memphis meeting for all members, spouses and guests to be considered pre-registered.

Which regional meeting will you be attending?  Portland  Memphis

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 Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

Spouse registration  Portland  Memphis

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

Spouse/guest tour:  Sunday or  Monday (\$35/tour per registered spouse; \$75/tour per unregistered spouse)

Child registration  Portland  Memphis

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

Tour:  Sunday or  Monday (\$35/tour per registered child; \$75/tour per unregistered child) No. attending \_\_\_\_\_

Guest registration  Portland  Memphis

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

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

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

Meals: Day 1  Lunch  No meal Any dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day 2  Lunch  Dinner  Both  No meals  
 Day 3  Lunch  No meal

Spouse/guest tour:  Sunday or  Monday (\$35/tour per registered guest; \$75/tour per unregistered guest)

**Special needs?** (Circle appropriate responses): Registrant / spouse / child / guest is:  
 hearing impaired / visually impaired / in wheelchair / other: \_\_\_\_\_

Golf registration  Portland  Memphis

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

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

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

### Payment options

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. Make checks or money orders payable in U.S. funds to "UTU Regional Meeting" and mail to UTU Regional Meeting, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333. Persons who do not pre-register for the regional meeting but choose to register at the meeting site will be charged an additional \$50. Space on the tours is limited; reservations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

**UTU**  
*Alumni*

# UTU Alumni Association

**News, information for members of the UTU Alumni Association**

## UTU retiree jumps in freezing lake...willingly

Railroad yardmasters are said to have "ice water in their veins," meaning they are cool under pressure. In the case of retired Burlington Northern yardmaster **Jim Sofie**, however, he literally may have ice water in his veins.

Sofie, you see, hates the heat. He hates it so much he regularly swims in the ice cold waters of Lake Wenatchee in Washington state. He also prefers to take a cold shower every day.

Sofie's love of the cold prompted him in 1992 to form "Jim Sofie's Polar Bear Club," which each year sponsors a New Year's Day dive into the icy waters of Lake Wenatchee. Last year more than 125 people participated.



UTU retiree Jim Sofie, top, comes ashore after yet another "polar bear" swim. In photo above, some 125 people join Sofie for a refreshing swim in the freezing waters of Washington's Lake Wenatchee.

from Burlington Northern in 1994.

"A friend talked me into buying a cabin out by the lake and I discovered I loved swimming in the cold water. I swim every Friday morning at 7:30

a.m., regardless of the weather, from September until May. After I swim I go to the nearby coffee shop and sit there in my bathing suit and the people call me crazy," Sofie said.

Sofie awards T-shirts to those who qualify for his polar bear club.

"In order to get a shirt, you have to take three dives, and I mean get completely immersed, on three separate occasions after the first of December, and give me \$10," he said.

The youngest "polar bear" last year was five years old, and it was his third swim. "His mother held his arms and dunked him," Sofie said.

Anyone interested in joining Sofie and the others at a future New Year's polar bear swim in Lake Wenatchee should contact Sofie at (509) 763-2197 or [bigwhitepolarbear@msn.com](mailto:bigwhitepolarbear@msn.com).

### Oakland Old Rails to meet

The Oakland (Calif.) Old Rails Club's annual corned beef luncheon to commemorate St. Patrick's Day will be held Thursday, March 15. The luncheon, which includes corned beef and cabbage with all the fixings and the usual abundance of desserts, will be held at the Bjornson Hall, one block east of Fruitvale Ave. on MacArthur Blvd. Meeting starts at noon. Bring your own beverage if you don't drink coffee. The lunch is free to members of the Oakland Old Rails Club and membership can be obtained for \$25 at the meeting.

### He jumps in a cold lake every Friday, nine months a year

"I'm dedicated to bringing the pleasures of 'polar bearing' to local folks," Sofie said. "It would be safe to say agreeing to join this elite organization requires a lot of courage."

Sofie, 78, started railroading in 1952 at Everett, Wash., and worked 44 years, retiring

### Railroaders to picnic in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Retired member **Joe Alenduff** is again organizing an annual picnic for railroaders in the vicinity of St. Petersburg, Fla. The event, scheduled for Saturday, March 17, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Shelter 15 in Fort DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. Coffee will be provided. Participants are urged to bring two covered dishes to share, their own place settings and cups. All railroaders, their friends and relatives are welcome and encouraged to pass the word, Alenduff said. Take U.S. 19 South, or Exit 17 on I-275 at St. Petersburg and follow the signs. Parking is \$5, except for vehicles with disabled parking permits. For more information, contact Alenduff at (727) 522-6808 or email to him at [jalenduff@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jalenduff@tampabay.rr.com).

### UTU offers Pacific Northwest, Alaskan tours

Landfall Travel, the UTU Alumni Association's designated travel agent, has put together two tours for members: an eight-day motorcoach tour of the Pacific Northwest, and a seven-day cruise of Alaska.

The Pacific Northwest tour leaves from Seattle June 25 and ends in San Francisco July 2. Highlights include Mt. St. Helens, Portland, Columbia River Gorge, Newport, Redwood National Park and Pier 39. Prices start at \$1,949 per person double occupancy. Deposits are due by Feb. 25.

The Holland America cruise will depart from Seattle Sept. 8 and visit Juneau, Glacier Bay, Sitka, Ketchikan and Victoria, B.C. Prices start at \$879 per person.

Airfare for both tours is extra and can be arranged by Landfall. Certain other conditions apply.

For complete details call Landfall at (216) 521-7733, or view the UTU Alumni Association page at [www.landfalltravel.com](http://www.landfalltravel.com).

## THE FINAL CALL

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

Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State	Local	Name	City/State
18	Matsler, James I.	Santa Teresa, N.M.	378	Kleinholz, Frank J.	North Ridgeville, Ohio	1007	Corcoran, Wayne J.	LaFayette, N.Y.
18	Scheiderer, John H.	El Paso, Texas	421	Pelyhes, James C.	Conneaut, Ohio	1043	Bucy Jr., Edmond H.	Carson City, Nev.
48	Moore Jr., John W.	Virginia Beach, Va.	427	Carlisle, Paul D.	McComb, Miss.	1043	Townsend, Albert B.	Oroville, Calif.
94	Ketner Jr., George M.	Mission, Kan.	440	Weimer, James B.	Urbana, Ohio	1075	Drake Jr., Leslie B.	Fairborn, Ohio
94	Yardley, James C.	Raymore, Mo.	445	Ficht, Raymond L.	Normandy Park, Wash.	1201	Drew, Charles H.	Bishop, Calif.
118	Thomas, Billy E.	Forest Hill, W.Va.	498	Gicking, John A.	St. Petersburg, Fla.	1216	Griffin, Wilbur G.	Overland Park, Kan.
195	Donaldson, Dudley M.	London Mills, Ill.	544	Summers Jr., Robert D.	Bozeman, Mont.	1221	Getschmann, Lindsay E.	Lakeland, Fla.
202	Martinson, Russell L.	Denver, Colo.	577	Talick, George	Freeburg, Ill.	1263	Watford, Bobby C.	Valdosta, Ga.
202	Mavrogianes, L.V.	Denver, Colo.	597	Amundsen, Alfred C.	Batavia, Ill.	1312	Perry, Hayne A.	Daphne, Ala.
202	Parker, Donald G.	Lakewood, Colo.	598	Bray, Michael T.	Bay Minette, Ala.	1313	Bodine, T.A.	Amarillo, Texas
211	Palipkonich, John R.	Sayre, Pa.	605	Mullen, Everett F.	Fairmont, W. Va.	1370	Jones, William D.	Brielle, N.J.
238	Wade, Richard G.	Ogden, Utah	656	Bolin, Grover C.	North Little Rock, Ark.	1390	Geortler, Joseph T.	Haddon Township, N.J.
243	Cassidy, Clyde A.	Greenville, Texas	772	Clay, Franklin D.	Russellville, Ala.	1393	Culligan, John E.	El Paso, Texas
243	Choate Jr., John D.	North Richland Hills, Texas	781	Mattson, Murray M.	Mooringsport, La.	1402	Feltmeyer, Billie D.	Dupo, Ill.
258	Warnock, Lyle J.	Davenport, Iowa	792	Lattie, Theodore	Somerset, Ky.	1470	Schreiber, Thomas W.	Sparks Glencoe, Md.
281	Strizel, Richard J.	Gilbert, Ariz.	807	Spelce, Ray	Yuma, Ariz.	1529	Mays, Charles	Toledo, Ohio
283	Anderson, Alden P.	Portland, Ore.	811	Haas, Norbert A.	Valley Center, Calif.	1548	Curtis, William E.	Indianapolis, Ind.
311	Thompson, William L.	Onalaska, Wis.	838	Kesil, William E.	Brick, N.J.	1548	Paul, Joseph W.	Indianapolis, Ind.
311	Alton, Icel V.	DeSoto, Wis.	886	Moroni, Louis E.	Kingsford, Mich.	1694	Wilds, Leo N.	Daggett, Calif.
312	Townsend, Paul W.	DeForest, Wis.	911	Olson, Carney C.	Mission, Texas	1814	Easler, Glen A.	Spartanburg, S.C.
313	Froehke, Robert L.	Wellston, Mich.	923	Ruppanner, Ray A.	Midland, Texas	1869	Aaron, Roland W.	Williamson, W. Va.
338	Nickens, Charles A.	Chattanooga, Tenn.	965	Pirkle, Rodney E.	Murphy, Texas	1883	Gerdes, Ralph B.	Watervliet, Mich.
349	Butler, Dennis L.	Corpus Christi, Texas	977	Kemper, K.D.	Yakima, Wash.	1973	Meinberg, Earl H.	Guntersville, Ala.

# Do not let cancer eat your life savings

Cancer is often a lingering disease that strikes all age groups. It may require repeated, extensive treatment, resulting in the person being unable to work, high hospitalization bills and loss of income.

**The National Cancer Institute reports that cancer will strike in three out of four families.**

UTUIA's Cancer Hospital Indemnity policy offers peace of mind. The benefits are paid directly to the policyholder to use as he or she sees fit: to help meet household expenses and other continuing expenses. This policy supplements regular hospitalization insurance, thereby protecting savings. *Some benefits may vary based on state of residence.*

With monthly premiums starting as low as **\$9 per month**, this plan fits into any budget.

*"I sold UTUIA cancer plans for years because I believed in the product and thought everyone should have the protection. Then, all of a sudden, there I was, confronted with cancer in my own family. Even with our great medical insurance, the out-of-pocket costs of cancer were significant. Now, having experienced cancer first hand, I believe even more strongly that everyone should include cancer insurance in their family's protection portfolio."*

– Retired UTUIA Field Supervisor Don Dysart



The American Cancer Society projects that more than 93 million Americans alive today will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetimes. That is the equivalent of every man, woman and child living in the red-shaded states above.

## UTUIA's Cancer Hospital Indemnity policy offers:

- ✓ **\$300 per day for hospital confinement**
- ✓ **\$600 per day in extended stay benefits**
- ✓ **\$100 per day for home recovery**
- ✓ **\$2,000 first diagnosis benefit for internal cancer**
- ✓ **\$15,000 bone marrow transplant benefit**

2/12



Call or email today:  
**(800) 558-8842**  
[utuiasales@utu.org](mailto:utuiasales@utu.org)

## Alcohol screenings, counseling now covered by Medicare

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that annual alcohol screenings, plus up to four brief face-to-face counseling sessions per year, are covered services for Medicare beneficiaries.

CMS has implemented this change based on a recommendation from the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), an independent panel of primary care providers and other non-federal participants charged with reviewing clinical preventive health care services.

Their research found that women who consume more than seven drinks per week, or more than three drinks per occasion, or men who have more than 14 drinks per week, or more than four drinks per session, were more likely to have elevated risks for many health problems.

Medicare will cover the annual alcohol screenings and counseling by the following types of providers: general and family practice; internal medicine; obstetrics/gynecology; pediatric medicine; geriatric medicine; certified nurse midwife; nurse practitioner; certified clinical nurse specialist, and physician assistant

Deductible and coinsurance do not apply, and these changes were effective for claims with a date of service of Oct. 14, 2011, and later.

For the behavioral counseling, Medicare beneficiaries (including pregnant women) who screen positive will be allowed up to four brief face-to-face counseling interventions per year.

Beneficiaries must meet the following criteria:

- Must misuse alcohol, but whose patterns of consumption do not meet the criteria for alcohol dependence;
- Are competent and alert at the time counseling is provided;
- Whose counseling is conducted by a qualified primary care physician or other primary care practitioner in a primary care setting. This would include a physician's office, outpatient hospital, an independent clinic or a state/local public health clinic.

Each of the four sessions must follow the USPSTF's requirements relayed in their 5-A's method:

1. Assess: this is when behavioral risk factors are discussed;
2. Advise: this means providing clear, specific and personalized behavioral change advice;
3. Agree: this happens when treatment goals and methods are selected collaboratively;
4. Assist: this is when self-help and counseling assist the participant achieve agreed-upon goals;
5. Arrange: this means scheduling follow-up sessions to provide ongoing assistance. It can be in person or by telephone.

If you have questions about this covered service, please call the Beneficiary Contact Center at (800) 833-4455 or for TTY, call (800) 377-4950. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET. You can also visit [www.PalmettoGBA.com/rr](http://www.PalmettoGBA.com/rr) and select the link provided under "People with Railroad Medicare."

## Former executive board member Ken Knorr dies

UTU local and International officer **Keneth L. Knorr**, 58, died Jan. 20.

Knorr was a member of Local 1031, Savannah, Ga.

He hired on with the Seaboard Coast Line, now part of CSX, in 1977.



Knorr

He served in a variety of local union offices for 29 years, and was president of Local 1031 for many years. He also served as local chairperson for the Savannah yard and road crews.

In 2010, he was appointed to fill a vacancy as alternate to the UTU executive board. In 2011, he was elevated to executive board member. He worked for CSX railroad for more than 30 years.

He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Nancy; his daughter, Meagan; son, Patrick; and his mother, Christine Knorr Flathmann.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Relentless Campaign, Savannah Christian Church, 55 Al Henderson Blvd., Savannah, GA 31419, or Hospice Savannah, P.O. Box 13190, Savannah, GA 31416.



# High-speed rail would bring jobs, prosperity

In 2008, California voters authorized a \$9.95-billion bond measure as a down payment for a high-speed rail project linking the Sacramento area (in northern California), the San Francisco Bay area and Los Angeles.

The projected \$98-billion route subsequently won \$3.3 billion in federal grants.

But with California in the midst of a severe budget shortfall, voter opinion has turned negative. A recent poll found that 64 percent of registered California voters would reject the project if given a second chance to vote on it.

But don't assume the California project – or, for that matter, other high-speed rail projects – are down for the count.

While the dramatic increase in costs has imposed sticker shock on Californians, and while Congress

has cut off further federal funding for this and other high-speed rail projects, California Gov. Jerry Brown remains an ardent cheerleader, observing: "California's high-speed rail project will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, linking California's population centers and avoiding the huge problems of massive airport and highway expansion."

The former chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Jim Oberstar, now a private citizen, but still quite active politically, told *The Washington Post*: "The financial uncertainties facing California's high-speed rail project should not be read as an indictment of such rail development in America."

"High-speed, inter-city passenger rail can be successful, even profitable – as proven in France. The French national passenger rail system wrote a

check for \$299 million to the national government just before Christmas, and has returned \$780 million to the government over the last five years.

"Massive congestion is choking our major metropolitan areas, costing Americans \$110 billion a year in lost productivity and wasted fuel. We must invest in a passenger rail alternative. The longer we wait, the less livable our cities will become and the more expensive the alternatives will be. The French have proven that the concept can succeed. We should follow their lead and not give up on inter-city passenger rail."

## We must invest in a passenger-rail alternative to cars, airports

The UTU's National Legislative Office is among those educating members of Congress to the long-term benefits of high-speed rail investment. For example, the UTU is reminding lawmakers that that construction of America's Interstate highway system began slowly and had to overcome substantial initial opposition.

While legislation to begin construction of Interstate highways was passed by Congress in 1956, it was the culmination of two-decades of effort, with President Roosevelt the catalyst, much as President Obama is seeking to be the catalyst for nationwide high-speed rail.

"Patience and persistence achieved the goal of building Interstate highways," says UTU National Legislative Director James Stem. "Patience and persistence will achieve the 21st century goal of President Obama for a nationwide 17,000-mile network of high-speed and higher-speed trains to provide 80 percent of the American population access to train travel by 2036."

## Indiana passes right-to-work law

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Mitch Daniels has signed into law right-to-work (for less) legislation that outlaws union-shop agreements and prohibits union contracts that require those who decline to join the union from paying any fees for representation – essentially encouraging free riders and severely damaging the financial ability of unions to serve members.

Contracts covered by the Railway Labor Act are not affected; but union contracts covering bus and local transit workers are.

Indiana becomes the first manufacturing state in the Midwest to enact such a law, which is more common in the South. Twenty-three states have right-to-work (for less) legislation.

The Indiana AFL-CIO stated that the Republican majority in Indiana has "set our state upon a path that will lead to lower wages for all working Hoosiers, less safety at work, and less dignity and security in old age or ill health. Sadly, the passage of this bill not only means that workers' rights and ability to collectively bargain will be significantly weakened, it means that strong arm tactics, misinformation and big money have won at the Indiana statehouse."

Anti-union legislation signed into law by Ohio Republican Gov. John Kasich last year was repealed in a voter referendum supported by the UTU Collective Bargaining Defense Fund and union members throughout Ohio. That law sought to restrict collective bargaining rights.

In Wisconsin, there was a successful recall of two senators who supported legislation to curtail collective bargaining rights, and a recall of Gov. Scott Walker, an architect of the legislation, is underway.

It is expected that a voter referendum will be launched in Indiana to repeal the right-to-work (for less) law, and the UTU Collective Bargaining Defense Fund will participate in that effort.

For more information on the UTU Collective Bargaining Defense Fund, log onto [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org).

## UTU members ratify new agreements with Apache Railroad and Intermodal Services

UTU-represented employees on two properties – the Apache Railroad and Intermodal Services of America (ISA) – have recently ratified agreements with management.

The engineers and conductors employed by Apache Railroad in Arizona ratified a new three-year agreement providing for wage increases, certification pay, improvements in disability and life insurance benefits, an increase in the employer match for a 401(k) plan, substantial improvements in the health-care insurance plan, and a reduction in the employee contribution.

UTU Vice President John Previsich, who assisted in negotiations, praised the efforts of General Chairperson **Danny Young** (GO 017) for doing "an excellent job of bringing the concerns and wishes of his members to the negotiat-

ing table and working to obtain a positive outcome."

Apache Railroad is a shortline operating in Arizona between Snowflake and Holbrook. Its principal commodities include paper, pulpwood, wood chips, coal and chemicals.

Members employed by ISA, which does contract switching for Union Pacific at Joliet, Ill., and Chicago, recently ratified their first collective bargaining agreement with the company.

ISA voluntarily recognized the UTU as its transportation workers' bargaining representative in 2011.

The five-year contract provides for retroactive pay, a steep jump in hourly wages, a 401(k) plan, a health insurance plan, sick pay, paid vacation, and a discipline program requiring all investigations include the presence of a UTU representative.

Rich Ross, the UTU's director of organizing, and Vice President Paul Tibbit negotiated the agreement. "Paul met with ISA workers on all three shifts to learn their concerns, and brought these concerns to the bargaining table to produce an outstanding first agreement with ISA," Ross said.

## SMART union

*Continued from page 1*

- Coordinate publications and websites of the two organizations.

- Provide financial savings, increase members' services and reduce administrative expenses through a proficient structure by taking advantage of the financial strengths of each organization and comparing internal practices to determine how SMART might become more efficient and effective in its commitment to members.

- Coordinate information technology hardware and software improvements, link telephone systems, and share the numerous collective bargaining agreements and membership databases of the separate organizations.

- Answer member's questions regarding the separate constitutions, election of officers, conductor certification, contract provisions, application of the Railway Labor Act, National Labor Relations Act, Family and Medical Leave Act and equal opportunity laws.

- Ensure the senior elected leadership of both organizations participates jointly at UTU regional meetings and in the labor/management 2012 Partners in Progress conference in March.

"Combined as SMART, we create a large and powerful voice within the AFL-CIO and in advancing legislative objectives in Congress and state legislatures," said the senior leadership of the UTU and the SMWIA.

The senior staff of the UTU and the SMWIA will continue to work jointly at the committee level in furtherance of these objectives, leading up to the 2014 SMART convention and keeping members informed through updates published on the websites and in the UTU and the SMWIA publications.

"SMART exists to service the interests of our joint membership," the senior leadership said.

### Hannibal local aids Salvation Army



Members of Local 219, Hannibal, Mo., recently voted to make a generous donation to the Salvation Army locations in Hannibal, Quincy, Ill., and Keokuk, Iowa, Secretary & Treasurer Buddy Strieker reports. He said \$800 worth of non-perishable foods products were delivered in Hannibal, Quincy and Keokuk by Local President David Houchins, Local Chairperson Virgil Peters, Local Vice President Melvin McAfee and Local Chairperson Lance Sonnenburg. "We appreciate the good will of every member in the UTU that put forth efforts in helping the well-being of others in need around the holidays," Strieker said. Above, Houchins purchases bulk food items at the Kroger's grocery store in Hannibal, Mo., one of the last union-shop grocers in the area.

# CN, CSX, KCS, NS, UP report 2011 earnings

Note: In the earnings reports below, "operating ratio" is a railroad's operating expenses expressed as a percentage of operating revenue, and is considered by economists to be the basic measure of carrier profitability. The lower the operating ratio, the more efficient the railroad. Also, BNSF is now privately held. When it releases its 2011 earnings, they will be posted at [www.utu.org](http://www.utu.org).



## CANADIAN NATIONAL

Canadian National reported a nine percent increase in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010.

**Profit increase** 9%  
(2010 vs. 2011)  
**Operating ratio** 63.5%  
(2011)

The CN calendar-year operating ratio of 63.5 percent was a slight improvement over the 63.6 percent operating ratio for calendar-year 2010.

CN said "solid operational and service performance helped CN deliver exceptional financial results."

CN is primarily a Canadian railroad. Its U.S. holdings include what were formerly Detroit, Toledo & Ironton; Elgin, Joliet & Eastern; Grand Trunk Western; Illinois Central, and Wisconsin Central.



## CANADIAN PACIFIC

Canadian Pacific reported a 12 percent reduction in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010.

**Profit decline** 12%  
(2010 vs. 2011)  
**Operating ratio** 81.3%  
(2011)

The CP calendar-year 2011 operating ratio of 81.3 was a steep increase from the 77.6 percent calendar-year 2010 operating ratio.

CP said, "We exited 2011 having made meaningful progress on the three pillars of our multi-year plan: driving growth, expanding network capacity to safely and efficiently support higher volumes and controlling costs."

Canadian Pacific is primarily a Canadian railroad. Its U.S. holdings include Class I Soo Line and regional railroad Delaware & Hudson.



## CSX

Despite reductions in agricultural, chemical, coal and intermodal shipments, CSX reported an 11 percent increase in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010.

**Profit increase** 11%  
(2010 vs. 2011)  
**Operating ratio** 70.9%  
(2011)

The CSX calendar-year operating ratio of 70.9 percent was an improvement from the 71.1 percent operating ratio for calendar-year 2010.

For the fourth quarter 2011, the CSX operating ratio increased to 71.5 percent from 70.0 percent for the fourth quarter 2010.

CSX Chairman Michael Ward told investors, "Our performance in 2011 has set a strong foundation for growth."

CSX operates some 21,000 route miles in 23 states and the District of Columbia.



## KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN

Kansas City Southern reported a 26 percent increase in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010.

The KCS calendar-year operating ratio was 70.9 percent versus 73.2 percent for calendar-year 2010.

For the fourth quarter 2011, the KCS operating ratio was 71.6 percent, an improvement from fourth quarter 2010.

The railroad said 2011 was "the first time in our railroad's 125 years we attained over \$2 billion revenue and two million carloads."

KCS operates some 3,500 route miles in 10 states in the Central and South-Central U.S., as well as Kansas City Southern de Mexico, a primary Mexican rail line.



## NORFOLK SOUTHERN

Norfolk Southern reported a 28 percent increase in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010.

The railroad's calendar-year 2011 operating ratio of 71.2 percent was a one-percentage point improvement over calendar-year 2010.

NS said it "achieved all-time records for revenues, operating income, net income, and earnings per share during 2011, and set fourth-quarter records for revenues, net income, and earnings per share."

Norfolk Southern operates some 20,000 route miles in 22 states and the District of Columbia.



## UNION PACIFIC

Union Pacific reported an 18 percent increase in profit for calendar-year 2011 versus calendar-year 2010, citing improvements in "core pricing."

**Profit increase** 18%  
(2010 vs. 2011)  
**Operating ratio** 70.7%  
(2011)

UP's calendar-year 2011 operating ratio of 70.7 percent was but one-tenth of one-percent off its record 70.6 percent operating ratio for 2010. UP's operating ratio of 68.3 percent was a record fourth-quarter low, and almost two percentage points improved from its 2010 fourth-

quarter operating ratio.

UP said it still had 1,030 employees on furlough at year end – down from 1,500 at year-end 2010 and well below the 4,200 on furlough at the end of 2009.

"We expect continued slow but steady economic growth in 2012," Union Pacific CEO Jim Young said.

Union Pacific operates some 32,000 route miles in 23 states in the western two-thirds of the U.S.

## Railroads find gold by hauling oil, natural gas

A lot is being written about reducing America's dependence on foreign energy; and increased domestic exploration of crude oil and natural gas is paying meaningful dividends to railroads – and, by extension, to their workers, whose jobs, wages and benefits are being made more secure.

In North Dakota, where the Bakken Shale reserve is being drilled, some 450,000 barrels of crude oil daily are being pumped, so much that pipelines are at capacity and BNSF and Canadian Pacific (Soo Line) tank cars are originating up to 300,000 barrels of crude oil daily to refineries along the Gulf Coast. In fact, the state estimates that, as drilling expands, railroads could be hauling as much as 700,000 barrels of the black gold in tank cars.



In Canada, CP and Canadian National are hauling increased quantities of crude oil from the Alberta tar sands south across the border, destined to refineries along the Gulf Coast – a 1,700-mile rail route through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas.

Union Pacific, which is sharing in the southbound haul of crude oil, also reports sharp increases in drilling and construction materials headed north.

Kansas City Southern is gearing up for southbound loads of crude oil to Texas and Mexico, where new refinery terminals are under construction.

As for natural gas drilling, the Marcellus Shale field, stretching underground from Ohio to Pennsylvania and into West Virginia, is providing CSX and Norfolk Southern with sharp increases in carloads of sand, cement, drilling rig parts, chemicals, pipe and rock headed to the drillers. As natural gas drilling increases, even more carloads are in store for CSX and NS, which serve the Marcellus Shale region.

NS says it has quadrupled the number of carloads of materials headed to drillers, growing to a current 24,000 carloads annually in just two years, while

CSX is hauling some 13,000 cars annually of materials to the drillers. There is also a smaller backhaul of waste and debris.

NS said it has hired – or is hiring – an additional 200 conductors to handle the increased business.

Then there is the growth of ethanol, which has soared from two billion gallons of production annually to 13 billion gallons over the past 10 years – much of it moving by rail. Federal law requires all gasoline to include a 10 percent blend of ethanol, and European nations are increasing their imports of ethanol from the U.S.

## UTU Counsel Clint Miller to retire

UTU General Counsel Clint Miller will retire Nov. 1 at age 65. Until then, he will relinquish his daily office duties and serve as a consultant, on an as-needed basis, to International President Mike Futhey and the legal department staff.



Miller

Miller has been a fixture in the UTU legal department for 27 years, 21 of them as general counsel.

"I have enjoyed my 27-year tenure with the UTU, and my work on behalf of rail labor over the past 32 years, because the job has permitted me to have a role in making the lives of working people better," Miller said. "I have been fortunate in working for the UTU and have served with the finest officer corps at every level, and the finest employees in all of transportation labor."

UTU International President Mike Futhey said: "In Clint Miller, the UTU has had a lawyer with the best interests of the membership at heart, and we look forward to the continued availability of his consulting services until his Nov. 1 retirement."

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## UTU develops training for Amtrak conductors

The UTU has developed a three-hour training course for Amtrak conductors to teach them how to react in a variety of situations.

The course was recently introduced to some 50 Amtrak instructors, who will present the course to the more than 8,000 Amtrak conductors over the coming year.

Leading the efforts for the UTU is Bruce Feltmeyer, who heads the UTU Education and Training Department.

“In a survey conducted in 2010, Amtrak employees expressed a desire for more training, especially training in emergency situations,” Feltmeyer said. “They said that they are asked to deal with unruly and disruptive passengers, and that they are not trained to handle such situations. They also were confused as to how and when to seek Amtrak police, or local police, assistance.”

In early 2011, Amtrak awarded a contract to the UTU to develop a program to address these concerns, Feltmeyer said. The UTU, working with experts, developed a three-hour program for Amtrak trainers, and guidebooks and other related materials for those receiving the training.

The course contains four “modules”: one for station awareness; one for on-board train crews; one for on-board attendants and one based solely on situational awareness techniques.

“The scenario-based training depicts actual events that can happen aboard trains or in stations,” Feltmeyer



UTU Education and Training Department Director Bruce Feltmeyer, center rear, at Amtrak’s “train the trainer” seminar. Front, from left, are Daniel Collins, CASE Consulting; Mary Ann Lorimer, Amtrak director of police administration and public affairs, and Steve Masters, Amtrak director of operating practices. Rear, from left, are Brian McDonough, Amtrak security awareness strategist; Feltmeyer, and Ron Frazier, CASE Consulting.

said. “We believe this training program will help Amtrak on-board personnel cope with these situations, should they arise. I believe this training will create considerable interest among Amtrak conductors.”

Feltmeyer said the UTU is considering expanding this type of training to other UTU members working in commuter rail, bus and aviation occupations. Anyone interested should contact Feltmeyer at [b\\_feltmeyer@utu.org](mailto:b_feltmeyer@utu.org).

## Photo of the month

The UTU International is always looking for good photos, and awards UTU gear to monthly photo winners.

The UTU seeks photographs or digital images 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, 24950 Country Club Blvd., Suite 340, North Olmsted, OH 44070-5333.

High-resolution digital photographs should be in the JPEG format and emailed to “[utunews@utu.org](mailto: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 photo is by retired BNSF conductor **Mike Yearley** of Local 627, Wymore, Neb. This trio of BNSF power was standing ready at the north end of the departure tracks in the carrier’s Murray Yard in North Kansas City, Mo.



Please recycle

## Inside this issue of the UTU News:



Retired member changes world with loose change. See page 2.



Hammer loops on work pants can cause big injuries. See page 3.



UTU regional meetings set for Portland, Memphis. See pages 6/7.



UTU retiree Jim Sofie loves to take a polar-bear plunge. See page 8.