

UTU News

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The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

THE VOICE OF TRANSPORTATION LABOR

“The next federal railroad administrator must be qualified, unbiased and anxious to read, study, digest and enforce every safety law.” – *UTU International President Paul C. Thompson*

Negotiations update

The UTU and the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC) held an initial bargaining session Feb. 14 and 15.

The two sides reviewed each other's Section 6 notices. Both expressed a desire to reach an agreement expeditiously.

Section 6 refers to the section of the Railway Labor Act by which carriers and their unions exchange demands for contract changes.

Under the Railway Labor Act, contracts between railroads and their unions do not expire, but rather continue in force until changes are negotiated.

However, carriers are required to pay employees cost-of-living allowances (COLA) while these negotiations progress. The first COLA is to be paid July 1 if no new agreement is reached before then.

A second bargaining session between the UTU and NCCC is scheduled for March 14 and 15.

To stay current on negotiations, go to www.utu.org and click on "Rail Contract Negotiations" in the lower right-hand corner.

UTU crew members save the lives of two persons in separate incidents

Heroic UTU crew members make life-and-death difference

The heroic actions of two railroad crews, one working for the BNSF Railway and the other for the Union Pacific (UP), made the difference between life and death for two people in the western U.S. in January.

On Jan. 9, an alert UP crew working on the Roseville Subdivision spotted and rescued an unconscious woman lying face down in the snow. The crew, which included conductor Gary Garrett of Local 492 in Sacramento, Calif., not only rescued her from snowy conditions and a wind-chill factor of minus three degrees, but they observed what they believe were fresh mountain lion prints in the snow around her.

Meanwhile, a 29-year-old Pasco, Wash., man whose legs were severed at the knees by a train on the morning of Jan. 23, may owe his life to a three-man BNSF crew that included engineer Mike Reitz, conductor Xavier Valenzuela of UTU Local 324 in Seattle, Wash., and brakeman Mike Ayers, also a member of Local 324.

"The three of us were off the extra board and had never before worked together," said Ayers, who has been a BNSF employee for four years. "It was amazing how everything fell into place and the three of us worked together so well to do what we had to do."



The BNSF crew that saved the life of a man who lost both legs when he jumped off a train are, from left, Mike Ayers and Xavier Valenzuela of Local 324 in Seattle, Wash., and engineer Mike Reitz. (Photo by Jon Lundeen.)

Brother Ayers said his train had been waiting for a southbound to pass. Just as they began moving, they noticed someone on the ground who appeared to be waving. As they got closer, they saw blood everywhere and a severed leg lying between the rails.

"We stopped right there, scrambled down off the train, took a quick look, and immediately realized we had to do something fast or he wasn't going to make it," Ayers said.

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News & Notes

UTU, CN reach deal

MONTREAL – CN and the UTU announced Feb. 14 that they have signed a tentative labor contract covering approximately 2,600 conductors, assistant conductors, yard service employees and traffic coordinators in Canada.

Details of the three-year contract, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2004, are being withheld pending ratification by the UTU membership. In general, the agreement provides for wage, benefit and quality of work-life improvements.

UTU Vice President John Armstrong said: "We believe this tentative agreement successfully addresses a range of UTU issues, including work-life quality for our members. We're eager to return our focus to what our members do best – moving trains – and ensuring CN remains the leading railroad in North America."

Armstrong praised the efforts of UTU general chairpersons Rex Beatty, Bryan Boechler and Raymond Lebel in reaching the agreement.

Download S&T forms

UTU local secretary/treasurers can now obtain the Labor Organization Annual Report, Form LM-2, LM-3, or LM-4 software quickly from the U.S. Department of Labor's website, <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/olms/downloadpg.htm>. Keep in mind that the new Electronic Forms Package is 21 megabytes in size and a broadband internet connection (DSL, cable) is the preferred method for downloading. Those with a dial-up modem will likely experience considerably long download times. If you are unable to download the Electronic Forms Package, you may obtain the software on a CD by calling (202) 693-0123.

UTU safety team ready to roll

UTU members know too well that the railroad environment is unforgiving. When accidents happen, they too often claim a life or result in serious injury.

It is the job of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to investigate serious accidents. And, when the NTSB rolls, so does the UTU's Transportation Safety Team (TST).

As coordinator of the TST, J.R. (Jim) Cumby usually gets the first call from an NTSB official. Depending upon the location and nature of the accident, Cumby decides which members he will designate to assist the NTSB in its investigation.

Those dreaded calls come at any hour of the day and night. Like firemen, TST members must always have bags packed and be ready to roll.

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BLET loses suit; to pay damages

OTTAWA – The Canadian Supreme Court has rejected an appeal by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), thus affirming a lower court ruling that the BLET "breached its statutory duty of fair representation in negotiating three items of a collective bargaining agreement" with VIA Rail.

All avenues of appeal have now been exhausted by the BLET.

Thus, the BLET, now a division of the Teamsters Union, must pay as much as C\$230,000 each to as many as 230 former UTU-represented former VIA Rail conductors – a potential liability in the tens of millions of dollars.

Also, many of the adversely affected conductors and assistant conductors, who lost their jobs as a result of the BLET's failure to represent them in a fair manner, could be

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Around the UTU

News from around the U.S. and Canada

Local 84, Los Angeles, Calif.

Amtrak employees working on Metrolink are mourning the death of **Thomas Ormiston**, who was one of 11 people who died Jan. 26 in a commuter train derailment. (See separate story on cover of this issue.) Effective March 1, a control point was renamed in honor of the deceased member, said Local Chairperson **Keith Moore** and Secretary & Treasurer **Richard Albitre**. Proceeds from a memorial fund will be presented to Brother Ormiston's widow at the monthly meeting, set for 10 a.m. on April 18 at the Burbank Ramada Inn.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.

Members of this Union Pacific local wish all the best for **Eli Brown**, **Steve Carrizosa**, **B.C. Curtis**, **Duane Nixon** and **Al Thompson**, who recently retired, said Secretary & Treasurer **Fred G. Comeau**.

Local 286, North Platte, Neb.

Union Pacific employees and their spouses in December helped sponsor and participated in the annual 5k Jingle Bell Run, raising more than \$1,000 for the American Red Cross, said Secretary & Treasurer **John R. Hasenauer**. Among those playing key roles were Local Chairperson **Paul Fitzpatrick**, who coordinated the run, and spouses **Sherry Johnson**, **Linda Keith** and **Ronda Hasenauer**, who handled registration.

Local 331, Temple, Texas

Brass lanterns were presented to Local President **Montie Sims** and Secretary & Treasurer **Robert Gilmore** honoring their 20-plus years of service to the membership during this BNSF local's fourth annual Christmas party, said Local Chairperson **Curtis Wickliffe**. More than 200 attended the event, including retired General Chairperson **G.R. Neal** (GO-393), General Chairperson **Paul Tibbit** (GO-393) and State Legislative Director **Connie English**.

Local 528, Chicago, Ill.

The fourth meeting of the Tri-State Rail Conference will be sponsored by this Union Pacific local on Sat., May 14. Organized by General Chairperson **Jerry Kalbfell** and Local Chairperson **Dave Wells**, the meeting's location had not been determined as this issue reached deadline. For information, contact **Alan Schoo**, president of Local 1433, Elmwood Park, Ill., at (815) 222-6159, or send e-mail to schoofly@tbcnet.com.

Local 1138, Miami, Fla.

CSXT and Florida East Coast Railway employees in this local recently approved and sent to CSXT a resolution in memory of Brother **Cedric Jones**, who died Nov. 29, 2004, in a head-on collision between two CSXT freight trains. CSXT Local Chairperson **Yvonne Hayes** said the document calls on the carrier to regularly review CMC qualification records, implement changes in training, safety and work rules, and invest in radio and anti-collision systems. For a copy of the resolution, send e-mail to Hayes@YvonneRose@aol.com, or call Local President **Alan C. Watkins** at (305) 278-7342.

Local 1177, Willmar, Minn.

Retired former State Legislative Director **Willis Croonquist** was among those attend-

Engineer now wise to UTU's true value

She left the UTU and joined the other organization, chasing the illusion of greener pastures. But after nearly losing her livelihood, CSXT engineer **Rosalind R. "Roz" Pinckney** is back, a sadder but wiser member of Local 1011 who can testify to the value of top-shelf representation.

"All those guys getting caught up with the BLET," Pinckney said, "they better wake up and realize if they don't have the right people in their corner, they could be out of a job!"

Pinckney hired out in 1995, fresh out of the Air Force. She began her career in Tampa, Fla., got promoted to engineer in 1997, and worked out of Miami until a family hardship brought her to Atlanta in 1999, and then Charleston, S.C., in 2001.

"A company official told me he didn't want me there," Pinckney said. "So I transferred to Charlotte, N.C., and UTU Local 1011 in Hamlet, N.C., in 2003."

Pinckney felt the company was hostile and favored BLET members. "I thought BLET members were getting better breaks, so if I jumped from UTU to BLET, I'd be left alone."

But in June 2004, she was charged with not wearing safety glasses. "For the first time, I had to have BLET representation. My representative was unprepared, and argued for more discipline than the company wanted!"

A UTU yardmaster suggested she contact **Ray Cunningham**, the director of UTU's Human Rights Committee. "Ray advised me to enlighten the company's equal employment officer about the discipline I was receiving for a minor offense, and suggested I drop the BLET and come back to the UTU."

Shortly after returning to the fold, a switchman "gave me terrible car counts. I'm backing up, can't see, and I ran into a train and got injured. The switchman wrote a statement taking full responsibility, but charges were dismissed after a former BLET chairman, now a road foreman, had him write a new report. Then they came after me!"

"But Local Chairman **David Currence** from Local 1011 got Vice General Chairperson **Gerald Foster** (GO-851) to join him on the case, and for the first time, I wasn't alone. I had someone go to bat for me. At the investigation, I thought we won. But on Sat., Jan. 15, 2005, I got a letter saying the company had grounds to dismiss me. I'm 42, 10 years on the railroad, and I need to take care of my family!"

The following Monday, she contacted Foster and Cunningham. "On Wednesday, I had a letter telling me I wouldn't lose my job. If it weren't for the UTU, there's no doubt CSXT would have fired me."

ing the local's 20th annual Oyster Feed and Christmas Party, said State Legislative Director **Phillip J. Qualy**, who praised the local for its get-out-the-vote effort last year. Meanwhile, members have tripled their contributions to the town's United Way campaign, becoming the local leaders in the effort after decoupling from



"Roz" Pinckney

the program sponsored by BNSF. Harassment of local safety officers and orders to work during tornado warnings, followed by a billboard campaign trumpeting BNSF as a community leader but neglecting to mention the men and women who make the contributions, led to the decision to contribute directly.

Local 1252, Fresno, Calif.

This BNSF local has changed its meeting schedule, said retiree **Don Heffernan**. Members meet at 9 a.m. on the 15th of each month at the Marie Callender Restaurant at Cedar and Shaw Avenues, but when the 15th falls on the weekend, they meet on the Monday following the weekend. Meanwhile, best wishes go out to recent retirees **Manford (Bryce) Gebhart**, who served as yard local chairperson, and **Don Vanoni**, formerly president of the local.

Local 1379, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Members of this CSXT local offer their sympathy and condolences to **John Mateer**, whose wife, **Barbara**, passed away Feb. 19. Brother Mateer is vice general chairperson of General Committee of Adjustment GO-049.

Local 1477, Dearborn, Mich.

The Conrail Club of Beverly Hills, Fla., whose members are retirees from numerous UTU locals in Michigan, will hold its 18th annual picnic March 19 at Whispering Pines Park in Inverness, Fla. For information, call **Lee (Pete) Ball** at (352) 746-7125.

Local 1741, San Francisco, Calif.

Thanks to a favorable arbitration decision, school bus operator **Beverly McClinton** has been reinstated with full back pay, said Local President **Ange Belay**. Back at work after a year and a half, McClinton had been terminated by First Student just two weeks after she was chosen as chairperson and the union was certified on the San Rafael property. Meanwhile, longtime operators reached out to newer members, treating them to a potluck luncheon. The "seniority party" dispelled the notion spread by management that the senior drivers were lazy and snobbish, Belay said.

Local 1778, N. Vancouver, B.C.

A master index of all letters of understanding up to the date of sale of BC Rail is now on the website shared by this local and Local 1923 in Prince George, B.C., said Secretary & Treasurer **David Moorhouse**. Members of both locals are now CN Rail employees. Visit their website at www.utubc.com.

Local 1813, West Colton, Calif.

Local Chairperson **Rick Renna** is reminding members of this Union Pacific local that a retirement party is planned for 6 p.m. on April 6 at the Doubletree Hotel in Ontario, Calif. Also, a two-man scramble golf tournament will be held April 27 at El Rancho Verde Royal Vista Golf Course. For information, call Renna at (909) 946-8984, or send e-mail to Renna5@aol.com.

Local 1963, Louisville, Ky.

Retired member **Joe Alenduff** is again organizing an annual picnic for retirees in the vicinity of St. Petersburg, Fla. The event, set for Sat., March 19, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in shelter #15 in Ft. DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. For information, call (727) 522-6808 or send e-mail to joe.pat@knology.net.

Decorated UTU member dies in Iraq

Sgt. Mark Warren, 44, a member of UTU Local 473 in La Grande, Ore., and the Oregon National Guard, was found dead on Jan. 31 in Kirkuk, Iraq, according to a report published by *The Oregonian*.

The Oregon National Guard told the newspaper it could not provide information on Brother Warren's death until cleared by the Department of Defense. A family representative said the family had not been told how Warren died, and know only that it was a "noncombat" death. U.S. Army officials are investigating the circumstances behind his death, *The Oregonian* reported.



Warren

Brother Warren, a highly decorated member of the 3rd Battalion, 116th Armored Cavalry, was serving in Iraq along with his son, Lt. Chris Warren, who was in the same unit, said Local Chairperson Gary Vaughn of Local 473. Vaughn said the elder Warren also had a 12-year-old son.

Warren's unit was mobilized last summer and went to Iraq in late November, he said.

"He was working over there as a liaison between the Army and civilian contractors that provided services to our military," Vaughn said. "His job was to make sure that the infrastructure



was in place and in working order at the post, and that the standard of living was up to par for fellow soldiers."

Vaughn said Warren was a 25-year veteran on the Union Pacific and had worked as a conductor.

"He was a real professional on the railroad and strong supporter of our union," Vaughn said. "He voiced his opinion on many occasions."

"He was a nice guy, a real decent character," said Local Chairperson Steve Dreher, also a member of Local 473. "He worked the east pool out of La Grande. He definitely enjoyed the military and was geared up to go when he was activated."

Brother Warren enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1981, and joined the National Guard in 1990. In 2002, he was assigned as the noncommissioned officer in charge of officer training at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

Among Brother Warren's many awards were an Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Navy/Marine Corp Combat Action Ribbon, USMC Good Conduct Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon, Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal and Oregon Faithful Service Medal.

UTU donates \$13,000 to fight breast cancer

CLEVELAND – Members of the United Transportation Union gave a gift of life Jan. 31.

A check in the amount of \$13,000 was presented by the UTU to University Hospitals Health System in Cleveland to help fight breast cancer. The proceeds were generated through the sale of the cookbook, "Labor of Love for the Cure," which was compiled from recipes submitted by UTU members, their spouses and friends.

The project was the brainchild of International President Paul Thompson's wife, Roberta, who is a breast cancer survivor. Roberta was deeply affected by the deaths from breast cancer of Marcyle Hotzel, a friend and the wife of Dave Hotzel, retired secretary/treasurer and legislative representative of UTU Local 94 in Kansas City; and Betts Miller, wife of UTU's chief legal counsel, Clint Miller.

Roberta Thompson suggested the creation and sale of a cookbook to raise funds for breast cancer research. Those sending in recipes and other household tips were encouraged to include dedications and other remembrances of breast cancer victims and survivors and words of encouragement to others in similar situations.

UTU International President Paul Thompson presented the \$13,000 check to oncologist Beth Overmoyer of the University Hospitals Health System in Cleveland, who had treated Betts Miller.

The donation also marked the three-year anniversary of Marcyle Hotzel's death.

"This is a good day to celebrate the good that will come out of this," Overmoyer said in accepting the check. "It's a great legacy."

William Mountcastle of the University Hospitals Health System said the donation will help fund research at Case Western University's Comprehensive Cancer Center, which is one of only 36 institutions in the nation accredited by the National Institute of Health's National Cancer Institute. "This is wonderful for the UTU to donate this funding," he said.

UTU cookbooks are still available and additional proceeds also will be



UTU International President Paul C. Thompson, second from left, presents a check in the amount of \$13,000 to Oncologist Beth Overmoyer of the University Hospitals Health System in Cleveland for breast cancer research. The money was raised through the sale of a cookbook containing recipes submitted by UTU members and friends. Also pictured are retired UTU member Dave Hotzel, left, and UTU General Counsel Clint Miller, both of whom lost spouses to the disease.

contributed to help fight breast cancer. The price of the cookbook is \$25 each, which includes shipping. To order, send a check payable to "UTU Cookbook" to the UTU, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250. Be sure to include your name, mailing address and telephone number.

"Together, we are helping to fund the research necessary to eradicate this dreaded disease," Paul Thompson said.

Hickman recalls activism in civil rights movement

Frank Hickman, a local chairperson with UTU Local 1175 in Duluth, Minn., as well as an assistant coordinator with the UTU Human Rights Committee, was 16 years old when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, but he was just old enough to do something constructive about it.



Hickman

"I was living in South Carolina at the time," said Hickman, "and anyone in the black community with a driver's license was enlisted to pick up people and take them to get registered to vote."

For his role in the civil rights movement's non-

violent response to Dr. King's assassination, Brother Hickman was thrown in jail. For many African-Americans, however, the struggle for rights had much grimmer consequences.

Hickman was among those who addressed that chapter of Black history at a labor program sponsored by the St. Paul Labor Speakers' Club, said Local Chairperson Dave Riehle of Local 650 in St. Paul.

Hickman was joined by other speakers from the labor and African-American communities during a panel discussion entitled "Memories of the Civil Rights Struggle — Fighting for the Prize."

"I went to jail four or five times," Hickman said. "In fact, I went three times in one day. Once word got out about what we were doing, every

time we went to pick somebody up, we'd get pulled over and arrested for something. It was usually only a \$12 fine to get out, and my dad would come to get me out of jail, but that's just one of the obstacles we faced."

Hickman also touched on a number of related topics during the program.

"I talked about my experiences and what the 1960s were like in the South," Hickman said. "I also spoke of my reaction to the slaying of Dr. King, my interactions with that group, and I tied it together with something about the role of blacks in the rail labor movement, how we've progressed and where we stand today. I also pointed out that the UTU is the only labor organization with a human rights department."

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It is time to regulate based on the law

New York Times articles exposing railroad safety problems and Union Pacific's (UP) chummy relationship with a former Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) chief prompted the Department of Transportation's inspector general to conclude the FRA "might be failing to fix the most persistent safety problems."

UP isn't the only carrier with chummy relationships. It just has more of them. Vice President Dick Cheney was on UP's Board of Directors. White House Chief of Staff Andy Card owes his job to former UP Chairman Drew Lewis. A former UP economist advises Senate Republicans on rail issues. The former chairman of the Surface Transportation Board now is a UP attorney.

UP also turned newspaper reporters into rail fans, sponsoring lavish trips aboard business cars, where alcohol and chilled shrimp cement special relationships with carrier officials.

Were there fewer chummy relationships, maybe there would have been fewer disastrous rail mergers and more attention paid to rail safety.

The New York Times embarrassed other newspapers. Maybe those articles also will energize those with power in government – and not already beholden to railroads – to say, "It's high time to regulate based on the law – not special friendships."

Robert Jamison, FRA's acting administrator – pending nomination and Senate confirmation of a permanent administrator – set a splendid example recently. He reportedly rejected BNSF's attempt to shoehorn one of its own choices into FRA's top safety job.

Tough cop needed

By Paul C. Thompson
International President

President Bush soon will nominate a new permanent administrator for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

Currently in charge is Acting Administrator Robert Jamison, who followed Betty Monro, who retired Dec. 31 under an ethics cloud.

The Department of Transportation's (DOT) inspector general (IG) confirmed a *New York Times* report that Monro was pretty chummy with Union Pacific's chief lobbyist, and that relationship might have dampened the FRA's enthusiasm to hold the railroad to the letter and spirit of laws ensuring employee and public safety.

DOT's IG said the FRA "might be failing to fix the most persistent safety problems."

Before a permanent administrator takes office, he or she must be confirmed by the Senate. That will permit senators an opportunity to ask tough questions about railroad safety and the federal agency responsible for enforcing safety laws – and to ensure a qualified, honest and tough cop is put in charge.

Until *New York Times* investigative reporters Walt Bogdanich and Jenny Nordberg focused sunlight on the nasty underbelly of railroad safety, influential newspapers read by lawmakers mostly ignored rail safety problems.

Perhaps that's because most reporters covering railroads have their own chummy relationship with the carriers. They accept railroad invita-

tions to hunting lodges and to ride business cars with CEOs, where they are wine and dined and provided a one-sided account.

Rail unions don't have hunting lodges or business cars. Maybe that's why reporters didn't often ask our opinion on rail safety. Bogdanich and Nordberg did. More important, they haven't been interested in riding business cars or imbibing cocktails and gobbling shrimp with rail execs, who have more than chit-chat in mind when they issue those invitations. Bogdanich and Nordberg have been interested solely in the unvarnished facts.

They wrote how track defects "repeatedly went uncorrected," how passenger trains were "sent down defective tracks at speeds more than four times faster than deemed safe" and of locomotives and freight cars "dispatched in substandard condition." When federal inspectors sought to crack down on safety lapses, they found themselves "under fire" from the FRA's top brass.

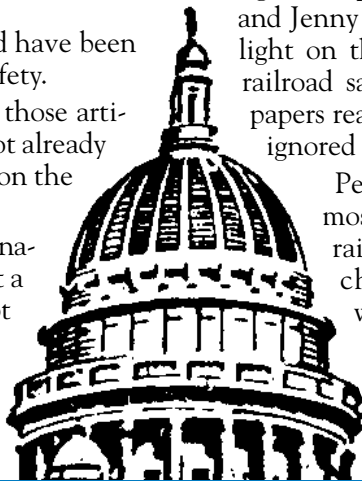
Bogdanich and Nordberg also told of problems with tank car maintenance and repair, the FRA's reluctance to investigate grade-crossing signal failures, and the railroads' chummy relationship with Operation Lifesaver.

With railroad safety problems now in the public spotlight, the Senate should insist the next federal railroad administrator be qualified, unbiased and anxious to read, study, digest and enforce every safety law.

It's time for an end to even the hint of an incestuous relationship between railroads and their safety regulator.



Thompson



WASHINGTON WATCH

By James M. Brunkenhoefer

Bush's Amtrak plan headed for derailment

The combination of a Republican president, a Republican House and Republican Senate has been most disappointing.

There are so many things that our membership needs to have improved. Unfortunately, they are just not on the president's or Congress' agenda. Worse, the Republicans have the votes to stop most legislation they want stopped.



Brunkenhoefer

This leaves working men and women on the defensive as the Republican Party's well-oiled and smoothly run machine – funded by corporate America – continues to churn out change after change that mostly hurts working men and women.

Now there appears to be a flaw in the Bush Administration's plans. I'm talking about Amtrak. It looks like this administration has not planned well. This is an unusual occurrence.

Amtrak does not make money, has never made money and will never make money. But why should anybody be surprised? If the Bush Administration would take the time to go back to the history books, they would find that was why for-profit freight railroads got out of the rail passenger business more than three decades ago. The private sector isn't expected to – nor should it – provide all services. As the old saying goes, "If you don't

learn from history you are condemned to repeat it."

Now the administration wants to bankrupt and eliminate Amtrak with the belief that states and the free-market system are sitting there waiting to grab hold of passenger operations. First, the freight railroads do not like Amtrak. Anyone who believes the freight railroads want several different passenger companies operating over their freight lines needs psychiatric help.

Also, something is very different about how the newly appointed (but not confirmed yet, by the Senate) Amtrak board of directors is dealing with the passenger railroad.

When various airlines faced bankruptcy, the most dangerous place to be was in the path of their boards of directors and the Department of Transportation, where the board members ran to beg for additional federal support such as tax cuts, grants and guaranteed loans to avoid bankruptcy.

The Amtrak board is doing just the opposite. They appear to be turning their backs on what has worked in other industries. They appear to be more concerned about carrying out the administration's policies than their own duties and responsibilities.

This is no way to run a railroad. And I suspect that the Bush Administration is headed for its own derailment when it tries to push the plan through Congress. This is one issue that won't attract that many Republican votes in Congress.

Despite a Republican Congress, this plan won't get enough votes.

State Watch *News from UTU State Legislative Boards*

Missouri



Missouri State Legislative Director Larry Foster and wife Linda were recently invited by State Attorney General Jay Nixon and wife Georganne to inauguration ceremonies. The UTU was the only labor organization invited, Foster said. "Jay Nixon is a strong Democrat, a good friend and we support him," Foster said. "He was the sponsor in the state senate years ago when we tried to mandate that cabooses be used on every train. He's a strong labor person and sides with labor all the time. He has been the attorney general for about 12 years and he makes sure we don't get into any jams." Pictured above, left to right, are Georganne Nixon, Linda Foster, Larry Foster and Nixon.

North Dakota

A resolution declaring remote-control locomotive operations unsafe, promoted by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), has been defeated by the North Dakota Senate.

John Risch, UTU state legislative director, and Brian Sweeny of BNSF testified against the measure in testimony before the Senate Transportation Committee.

Risch said he was not happy testifying opposite the BLET. "It was the first time I have appeared in opposition to something that other workers have wanted. These fellows are my union brothers and coworkers, and it saddened me that we had to testify about something that is essentially a jurisdictional dispute between

two labor unions and the railroad industry.

"I don't like remote control locomotives. I wish they did not exist; I wish they were not used; and I wish they had never come into being on America's railroads," Risch said. "I don't like them because they eliminate jobs. The RCL debate is an issue of jobs and has virtually nothing to do with safety."

"The BLET lost on the issue of remote control because their leadership made some poor decisions. Their leadership demanded all or nothing and in the end got nothing for their members.

"That being said, when the resolution was brought up we were compelled to tell the whole remote-control story and when reasonable people hear that story the UTU is vindicated.

"I got no joy in working against legislation supported by another labor union. I would much rather work on legislation that has a positive effect on working people," Risch said. "This is not a time to gloat, rather it is a time to work to mend fences with our railroad brothers in the BLET."

New York

UTU members in New York facing the loss of jobs will benefit from an agreement negotiated with the help of State Director Sam Nasca.

For months, Nasca has been fighting efforts by the Canadian Pacific (CP) to cut jobs in his state. In January, the Surface Transportation Board ruled that the CP could stop running trains on a competitor's tracks between Buffalo and Binghamton.

The action was part of a swap of operations between the CP and Norfolk Southern (NS), which owns the tracks. NS will deliver freight to CP customers on the line.

The CP's action will eliminate about 30 jobs in Buffalo's SK yard, according to Nasca.

The ruling by the board came over union objections. "Our argument was this deal was a consolidation instead of a single transaction,"

Minnesota



UTU Local 1177 in Wilmar, Minn., and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recently cooperated at a conference on remote control operations, including a review of safety rules and a member feedback session. During this conference, discussion was centered on the safe operation of remotely controlled trains on the BNSF Twin Cities Division. "The UTU is helping the BNSF understand better operating practices and management philosophies," State Legislative Director Phil Qualy said. Above, left to right, are: David E. Peterson, conductor and Local 1177 safety committee member; FRA Motive Power and Equipment Safety Inspector Richard A. Leone and Assistant State Legislative Director Robert J. Pearson.

Nasca said. "Only one commissioner agreed."

The operations to be dropped involve a CP subsidiary called the Delaware & Hudson Railway, or D&H.

The swap of operations will result in fewer yardmaster and maintenance jobs as well as engineers and conductors, Nasca said.

Nasca said the chairpersons of the eight locals affected by the loss of jobs had ratified an implementing agreement with the CP. The deal will give the affected members "a rather lucrative package for relocating to another location on the D&H," Nasca said.

He said the pact also will provide a number of economic benefits, including a lump-sum payment, to members who choose not to move.

Bus Department

By Roy Arnold, vice president-director

Here today, maybe gone tomorrow

Most of our bus members have been with their companies for many years. We are seasoned employees.

We have the most experience and are often used to train new employees, provide expertise in union matters and ensure our employers' success through our skills and knowledge of the transportation business.

After years of dedication, loyalty and experience, we took home a paycheck that had a substantial portion going to Social Security. Now, with President Bush in office, we are being told these Social Security benefits may not be available in the future.

Some of us may be fortunate to have a nice retirement package built into our contract. But for the most part, that is not the case.

Many contracts I have assisted in negotiating do not have an elaborate retirement clause, and an employer will not put forth a great effort to make any major improvements on these.

As your vice president, it is my duty to recommend that when contracts are negotiated, we make a greater effort to improve our retirement benefits.

At your next union meeting, please take a few minutes to review your contract and see exactly what your retirement clause is. We need to have more communication on this matter because our Social Security benefits we think are here today may be gone tomorrow.

With the Bush Administration launching an attack on Social Security, this is a serious reality we must all face.

In the meantime, the UTU will be working hard on Capitol Hill to prevent the Bush Administration from succeeding in its efforts to destroy the foundation for retirement, which is a federally administered Social Security program.



Yardmasters

By J.R. (Jim) Cumby, vice president

The road to safety paved with training

It's no secret the road to safety and efficiency can be achieved through quality training.

Yet most of the nation's rail carriers treat yardmasters much like their infrastructure – limited investment, but great expectations of increased returns.

Too often, yardmasters are not advised of changes in collective bargaining agreements of crafts they supervise. It also is common to discover that traffic flow and/or train composites were altered without appropriate notification – yet the yardmaster is expected to handle every situation efficiently, even though often lacking benefit of proper training and complete knowledge of carrier operations.

Increased work loads because of additional business and fewer employees have increased stress levels of yardmasters. While the carriers' short-term solution is anger management classes, simply walking away from a situation does not solve the root cause.

Now is the time for carriers to invest in what they call their human resources and make a more honest effort toward providing the meaningful training to provide yardmasters the skills, technology and confidence needed to perform duties safely and efficiently every day.

To quote one of the carriers' favorite presidents, Ronald Reagan: "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

The UTU is doing its part. We began a journey toward improved safety and efficiency with CSX when we enhanced the Yardmaster Skills Update. It consists of a series of questions covering a variety of topics. The questions are developed by both the carrier and general chairperson. After successful completion of the exercise, the yardmaster receives a negotiated item (pay and/or time off).



Make plans now for 2005 Regional Meetings

The 2005 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.

This year, 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 can be free to explore and enjoy the many offerings of the Regional Meeting cities.

Neither Anchorage nor Orlando has been designated the joint U.S./Canadian Regional Meeting; Canadian members are free to choose the meeting that most 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 2005 regional meetings is \$150 per member, spouse or child over age 11. Additional fees apply for the golf outings and the spouse tour in Anchorage. You must make your own room reservations at one of the hotels listed, and certain deadlines apply.

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

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 Headquarters at (216) 228-5755.

Anchorage, Alaska, June 13-15, 2005

Anchorage Hilton, 500 W. Third Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501; www.hiltonanchorage.com
ALL ROOMS AT THE ANCHORAGE HILTON HAVE BEEN RESERVED.

The overflow hotel is the Howard Johnson Plaza, 239 W. Fourth Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501. ROOMS AT THE HOWARD JOHNSON PLAZA ARE GOING FAST; DO NOT DELAY.

HJ hotel reservations: (907) 793-5500, extension 2 (Guest Services). Members can also email claudi-ahjplaza@ak.net, refer to the UTU, give their names, check-in and check-out dates and credit card number to guarantee their reservation. Members will receive an email back with their confirmation number.

Other area hotels include the Days Inn (907-276-7226); Super 8 Motel (907-276-8884); Red Roof Inn (907-274-1650); Ramada Inn Anchorage (907-272-7561) and Homewood Suites Anchorage (907-762-7000).

Room rate: \$139 at Howard Johnson Plaza; rates good for three days before and after the meeting.

Reservation deadline: May 9, 2005, or as soon as all rooms being held for the UTU are reserved.

Parking: \$7 per night self/\$14 valet at Hilton; free in Howard Johnson's lot or \$2.50/day next door.

The **Sunday night welcome reception** will be held at the Anchorage Hilton from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All other meal functions and workshops will be held across the street at the Egan Convention Center.

The UTU has made arrangements at the Anchorage Regional Meeting for a **spouse and guest luncheon train tour** on Tue., June 14, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The trip will take spouses and guests aboard an Alaska Railroad train to Hunter, Alaska, and back, with lunch on the train included. The cost of the trip is \$25 per guest, and seating is limited; don't be left behind.

The **golf outing** will be held Sun., June 12, at the Anchorage Golf Course, 3651 O'Malley Road, Anchorage; phone (907) 522-3425. The course is located at the base of the Chugach Mountains, overlooking the Anchorage-bowl area with breathtaking views of Cook Inlet and Mt. McKinley. There will be a 5:45 a.m. pickup at both hotels with a 7 a.m. shotgun start. Rental clubs are available. The cost is \$80 per golfer.



From shopping to theaters to history to outdoor adventure, Anchorage offers a wide range of activities to visitors. (Photo courtesy of the Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau.)



There is magic in the air, day and night, at the Magic Kingdom, EPCOT and all the other attractions in Orlando. (Photo courtesy of the Orlando Convention & Visitors Bureau.)

Orlando, Fla., July 18-20, 2005

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, 1000 W. Buena Vista Dr., Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830

Hotel reservations: (407) 939-1020, option 2

Reservation code: UTU

Room rate: \$93 per night plus tax for single/double; additional persons age 18 or older: \$15 per night. One- and two-bedroom suites are available from \$186 to \$465 per night. Room rates are good four days before and after the meeting.

Reservation deadline: June 14, 2005

Parking: Complimentary

The **golf outing** on Sun., July 17, will be held at Disney's Lake Buena Vista Golf Course, with an 8 a.m. shotgun start. This course is one of a select few that have hosted a PGA Tour event, an LPGA Tour event and a USGA event. The course, rated four stars by *Golf Digest*, is located near the Downtown Disney® shopping and entertainment district. The cost is \$80 per golfer.

Discount airfares available to Regional Meeting cities

UTU has made arrangements with Alaska/Horizon Airlines for members, family and friends to receive discounted air fares to the Regional Meeting scheduled for June 13-15, 2005, in Anchorage, Alaska.

The discounted fares are available on flights taken from June 9 through June 18, 2005.

UTU also has arranged with Northwest Airlines and Continental Airlines for discounted airfares to both Anchorage and Orlando, Fla., site of the Regional Meeting set for July 18-20, 2005.

To inquire about reservations on Alaska/Horizon, call the Group Department toll free at (800) 445-4435 and refer to Code CMA0700.

(Call even if Alaska Airlines does not serve your city; various alternative arrangements are available.)

To make reservations on either Northwest or Continental call (800) 328-1111 and refer to World File Ticket Designator number "NM52A" for Anchorage or "NM52B" for Orlando.

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? Anchorage Orlando

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 Anchorage Orlando

Spouse name _____ Title (if any) _____

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Child Registration Anchorage Orlando

Child name _____ Age _____

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Child name _____ Age _____

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Child name _____ Age _____

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Child name _____ Age _____

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Guest Registration Anchorage Orlando

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

Anchorage Spouse Tour (include an additional \$25 with your registration fee)

Golf Registration Anchorage Orlando

Name _____ Handicap _____ Name _____ Handicap _____

Name _____ Handicap _____ Name _____ Handicap _____

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

Payment Options

Check/money order (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 and Anchorage train tour fees of \$25 per rider (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.

UTU for Life

Colorado chapter gains momentum

As the *UTU For Life* organization continues to grow, retired switchman **Art B. Kent** is determined to make sure it has a presence in western Colorado.



Art Kent

"I've been going to local meetings and helping guys with their retirements, and a number of people asked me if I'd host a *UTU For Life* chapter," said Brother Kent, who belongs to Local 500 in Grand Junction, Colo.

As this issue reached deadline, the Grand Junction chapter was set to meet at 10 a.m. on March 8 at the Mesa Mall Community Room in Grand Junction. "I recently learned some interesting information about the Railroad Retirement death benefit, so I intend to make sure members are aware of it when we meet," Kent said.

Kent began his career in 1966 on the Denver & Rio Grande Western (D&RGW). He served as local chairperson for 30 years with Local 200 in North Platte, Neb., and retired from the Union Pacific in 1999. Along the way, he married, and has two children and eight grandchildren.

"I was a safety representative for 25 years," Kent said, "and have been involved with Operation Lifesaver for about five years."

Helpful in organizing the Grand Junction chapter has been **Pete A. Via**, a retired conductor, member of Local 500 and another veteran of the D&RGW. "He's getting the word out, and helps get the meeting room ready."

Kent remains optimistic about the future of the Grand Junction chapter. "Two years down the road, I expect we'll be well established and have our own picnics and other events."

For information, call Kent at (970) 434-5806 or (970) 261-3840, or send e-mail to artk1234@aol.com. To learn how you can set up a *UTU For Life* chapter in your area, call the UTU International at (216) 228-9400.



RRB now charges fee for genealogical search

By V.M. "Butch" Speakman, Jr.

In the process of providing retirement benefits, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) maintains records that deal primarily with the administration and payment of these benefits. For the purpose of genealogical research, the RRB will provide information on deceased persons from these records for a fee.

Persons interested in obtaining copies of the Railroad Retirement Board's records for use in their genealogical research should be aware that the RRB did not begin maintaining records of all covered rail service until 1937.

Therefore, if a person did not actually work in the rail industry after 1936, he or she would not be listed in these service records. Nor would the agency generally have any pertinent records of persons whose rail service was performed on a casual basis and/or was of short duration. Also, the RRB's records

are only on persons whose employers were covered under the Railroad Retirement Act. Employers such as street, interurban or suburban electric railways are not covered by Railroad Retirement.

The agency's service records are kept by the

railroad employee's Social Security number; when requesting copies of these records, it is preferable to provide this number. In some cases, if a Social Security number is not available, having the employee's full name, including middle name or initial, and complete dates of birth and death may be of some help in determining whether we have any records of that person.

The fee for searching the RRB's records is currently \$27 for each employee on whom records are requested and is payable before any search is attempted. It is not refundable, even if the information requested cannot be located or if the file has been destroyed.

A check or money order made payable to the Railroad Retirement Board should be sent with the request for genealogical information to the Office of Public Affairs, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611.

Generally, the RRB requires 30 to 60 days to reply to genealogical inquiries.

Persons researching the genealogy of a railroad employee may also want to visit the RRB's website, www.rrb.gov, which includes links to some other sources of genealogical information.

V.M. "Butch" Speakman Jr. serves as labor member of the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board.



V.M. Speakman

UTU For Life chapter meets in Arkansas

The first meeting of the *UTU For Life* chapter in the vicinity of Rogers, Ark., was slated to be held as this issue reached deadline.

Hosted by **Eugene Anders** of Local 1433 in Elmwood Park, Ill., the event was to include a buffet brunch at the Clarion Hotel in Bentonville, Ark., and a guest speaker from the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board.

All retired UTU members, their spouses and guests are invited to join Brother Anders as he launches this chapter of *UTU For Life*, an organization designed to help retired members stay in touch with each other, learn about

things happening at their former workplace and stay informed about current events that affect retired individuals.

For information about the *UTU For Life* chapter being hosted by Brother Anders, write to him at 601 S. 12th St., Rogers, AR 72766, call him at (479) 621-5651, or send him e-mail at eugeneanders@sbcglobal.net.

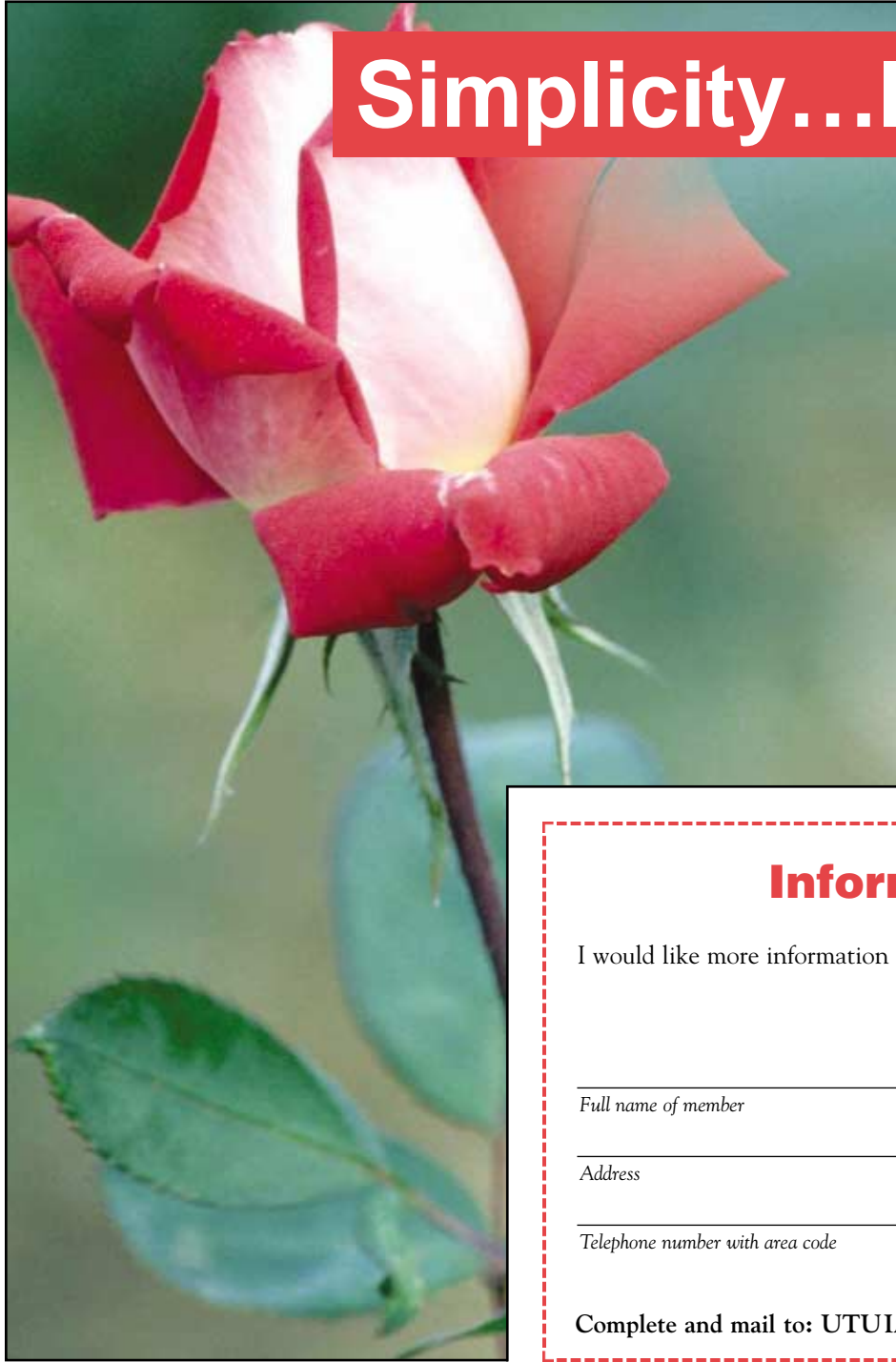
To learn how the UTU International can help you start a chapter in your town, write to UTU For Life, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250, or call (216) 228-9400 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

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
6	King, Wayne H.	Indianapolis, Ind.	605	Auel, Carl W.	Washington Pa.	1445	Grom, Frank C.	Naples, Fla.
212	Distin, Robert L.	Ravena, N.Y.	610	Chop, John J.	Colmar Manor, Md.	1445	Scislowski, Waclaw Y.	New Port Richey, Fla.
283	Burros, Rudolph I.	Portland, Ore.	610	Harris, J.B.	Folsom, Pa.	1473	Powers, John R.	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
292	Sherman Jr., John F.	E. Syracuse, N.Y.	663	Gibbs, Robert H.	Sutton, Vt.	1473	Wetzel, Edwin M.	Braintree, Mass.
300	Carroll, John F.	Port Richey, Fla.	663	Goodwin, Ernest C.	Whitefield, N.H.	1518	Kirby, John R.	Louisville, Ky.
369	Sim, David R.	St. Thomas, Ont.	706	Carter, John W.	Lynchburg, Va.	1524	McCarron, John W.	Houston, Texas
339	Donaldson, Clyde B.	Haleyville, Ala.	769	Spencer, William W.	Martinsburg, W. Va.	1529	Toeppe, William J.	Toledo, Ohio
386	Steffen, William H.	Haddon Heights, N.J.	792	Tucker, Vernon F.	Brunswick, Ohio	1532	Mulvey, John	Kansas City, Mo.
432	Williams, Robert A.	Marinette, Wis.	1059	Karpenko, Delmer M.	Minot, N.D.	1548	Buchanan, Roy S.	Casselberry, Fla.
440	Fisher, Clarence K.	Xenia, Ohio	1129	Turner Jr., Melvin B.	Bridgeton, N.C.	1574	McVay, Mervin L.	Lincoln City, Ore.
446	Smith Jr., Verlia	Carpenter, Wyo.	1138	Vanarsdall Jr., Hugh O.	Port Orange, Fla.	1831	Conway, James B.	Melbourne, Fla.
473	Anderson, Charles O.	Sandy, Utah	1293	Hagen, Gerald A.	Altoona, Wis.	1881	Cole, Richard K.	Emmitsburg, Md.
506	Rowley, John Q.	Wichita, Kan.	1374	Shaffer, David J.	Struthers, Ohio	1917	Foster, Wendell E.	Lebanon, Ohio
535	Scott, Benny A.	Macon, Ga.	1378	Colonna II, George A.	Fruitland, Md.	1918	Litton, Curtis A.	El Paso, Texas
573	Strunk, Charles W.	Somerset, Ky.	1383	Lyon, Harold W.	Savoy, Ill.	1928	Huffman, Edwin M.	Deming, N.M.
577	Nelson, Morris E.	DeKalb, Ill.	1393	Abplanalp, William H.	Sumter, S.C.	1971	Prior, Roger	Summerville, S.C.
602	Albright, Josiah E.	Northumberland, Pa.	1438	Holland, Charles E.	Detroit, Mich.			

NOTE: Erroneously included in this listing recently were Kenneth Hilsabeck of Local 1233, who resides in Ryley, Alta., and Bernice King of Local 439, who resides in Greenville, Texas.



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Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone number with area code _____ UTU local number _____

Complete and mail to: UTUIA Sales Dept., 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250 03/05

UTUIA Constitution amended by referendum

Article 9 of the UTUIA Constitution was amended by mail referendum on Nov. 18, 2004, to read as follows:

"The Officers of the UTUIA shall be an International President, who shall be Chairman of the Board of Directors, an Assistant President, a General Secretary and Treasurer, a Comptroller and a National Legislative Director.

"The Board of Directors shall consist of the above-named Officers, plus three other insured members of the UTUIA, who shall be elected by the Grand Convention. Officers and Board Members shall be elected for terms of four years. Vacancies between sessions of the Grand Convention shall be filled by the Board of Directors.

"The Board of Directors shall meet annually on a date fixed by the International President, upon call of the International President or upon call of a majority of all Board Members.

"A Committee of the Board of Directors to be known as the Executive Committee, consisting of the International President, the Assistant President and the General Secretary and Treasurer, shall be vested with authority to handle administrative and interim matters, issue new policies, declare dividends and, from time to time, issue rules, regulations and premium rates.

"All actions of the Executive Committee shall remain in full force and effect unless disapproved by the Board of Directors.

"For just cause Officers of the UTUIA may be removed from office by at least a 75% vote of all Board Members."

Tania Pietrangelo: Proof of the American dream



Tania Pietrangelo, an administrative assistant in UTU's Washington, D.C., national legislative office, is living proof of the American dream.

Born in Brazil, Tania recently became a U.S. citizen after scoring a perfect grade on her examination in American history and government.

She is shown above receiving her certificate of citizenship from an official of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Tania met her husband, Tony – an American-born nuclear engineer – near her home town after earning a degree in public relations from a Brazilian college. Marriage followed and Tania emigrated to the U.S. in 1981. After four years of college, during which she traveled three hours each way, teaching herself English seemed a snap. It was. Not only is Tania now fluent in English, she considers English her first language.

The Pietrangelo's eldest daughter, Thais, is studying journalism at Columbia College in Chicago, and daughter, Tiara, is a high school student in Northern Virginia.

Tania is coming up on her fifth anniversary with the UTU, a job she cherishes because of her ability to assist in legislative initiatives that help members. "I became an American citizen because I want to be part of the decision-making process in this country," Tania said. "I love America. My life is here. This is home."

UTU heros

Continued from page 1

Luckily for the injured man, Ayers had spent 21 years in the Navy and Reitz, formerly a member of Local 324, had been in the Air Force during Operation Desert Storm. "We both had some first-aid training," said Ayers, "but until you see something like this, no amount of training can really prepare you.

"Mike got a nylon drawbar strap and cut it in half to make a pair of tourniquets while I talked to the victim," said Ayers. "He told me he had hitched a ride aboard the train and fell under the wheels when he tried to jump off."

Several aid units were dispatched, and three firefighters with medic training arrived first and started running down the tracks. The train crew unhitched the lead locomotive to meet them partway. The firefighters stabilized the man and loaded him onto the lead locomotive's rear plat-

form. The locomotive then carried him to a waiting ambulance.

"It was like something out of a horror story, but I guess the guy's doing okay," Ayers said. "It took all three of us to do this."

UP crew sees person lying in the snow

Having a professional crew alert to their surroundings was also a credit to the UP in early January when engineer Venson Smith, engineer-trainee Tommy Johnson and conductor Gary Garrett of Local 492 in Sacramento came upon an unusual situation as they exited Knapp Tunnel in Blue Canyon, Calif.

"We saw someone lying in the snow in a very remote area, showing no signs of movement," said Garrett. He told the crew to stop, and he and Smith hiked back in deep snow. "We saw mountain lion tracks, and they went right up to the person. We could see it was a woman and she was breathing."

After the two got her conscious, she told them

she lived in a cabin in the mountains, and had left to get help for her dog. She remembered seeing a light brown animal.

"She said she got hit in the head by a branch, but there were no trees anywhere around," said Garrett. "From the prints left in the snow, we could see she had taken one step off the track, and down she went."

Garrett said he and the other crew members theorize the mountain lion had taken a swipe at her just as the train came out of the tunnel, spooking the cat and probably saving her life.

While Garrett and Smith tended to the woman, Johnson had called the train dispatcher and requested emergency assistance. After paramedics from the forestry department arrived, the crew helped get the medical personnel and the woman back to the road crossing about five miles away.

"I understand where the media is coming from, but I personally don't like being in the limelight," said Garrett. "We didn't do anything someone else wouldn't have done."

BLET loses

Continued from page 1

allowed to train as locomotive engineers and regain their full train-service seniority.

The BLET appealed to the Supreme Court a judgment of the Federal Court of Appeal upholding an earlier decision of the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB).

These damages upheld by Canada's Supreme Court flow as retribution following the CIRB's finding of serious violations of Canadian labor laws by the BLET with the compliance of VIA Rail. The BLET and/or VIA Rail are liable for the payments on a basis yet to be determined, said the CIRB. The CIRB will now determine

the precise amount that must be paid by the BLET and VIA Rail.

In September 1997, VIA Rail moved to combine the crafts of conductor and locomotive engineer into a single craft and bargaining unit of "operating engineer." VIA Rail said it recognized and understood its responsibility to train all affected employees so that they might meet the qualifications of the new single craft. VIA Rail promised to treat all employees equally. However, the BLET and VIA Rail later negotiated a very different result.

Following this 1997 decision, the CIRB directed that there was to be a representation election amongst the two operating crafts. The BLET was successful and gained exclusive bargaining rights for this new single craft.

The vote turned, in part, on BLET promises to provide craft autonomy, separate committees of adjustment for former conductors and assistant conductors, equal access to engineer training, and assurances that those conductors and assistant conductors not promoted to positions of locomotive engineer on VIA Rail could flow back to prior positions within the UTU's ranks at Canadian National Railway.

Following the representation election, a new contract was negotiated between the BLET and VIA Rail covering the new craft of locomotive engineer.

The result of this contract was that all conductor positions at VIA Rail were immediately eliminated with the concurrence of the BLET.

UTU safety team

Continued from page 1

The UTU's TST includes – in addition to coordinator Cumby – David A. Brooks, Local 1470; Stephen T. Dawson, Local 811; John England, Local 1674; Thomas P. Dwyer II, Local 311; Steve Fritter, Local 1933; James P. Haddon, Local 565; Steve Reveley, Local 117; Robert Strzelczyk, Local 489, and Curtis A. Wall, Local 1035.

The UTU's TST often provides crucial assistance to NTSB investigators. Team members also assist NTSB investigators in locating crew members and others familiar with the territory where the accident occurred as well as the motive power, equipment and signal systems in use and characteristics of track and rail operation, as well as railroad rules in force. TST members also have special knowledge of hazardous materials that are hauled by railroads.

As requested by NTSB investigators, TST members offer their own knowledge.



UTU Transportation Safety Team Coordinator J.R. (Jim) Cumby and National Transportation Safety Board member Debbie Hersman.

Since the UTU's TST was created in 1995, team members have been chosen for their demonstrated knowledge in the various railroad crafts. Team members are respected by NTSB investigators for their detailed and extensive knowledge of all facets of railroad operations – and, especially,

their impartiality in relating that knowledge.

The UTU's TST also performs another important service, one that benefits UTU members. A UTU member involved in an accident can demand that a TST member or union officer be present during questioning to serve as a witness. TST members can also assist UTU members in ensuring that a UTU officer is present should railroad officials seek to question a UTU member – and that railroad officials not violate terms of the UTU contract with that carrier.

If the NTSB has any fault, it is that the railroad is the only form of transportation that does not have a separate NTSB department, Cumby said. "It is time for railroads to have a separate department within the NTSB and be cut away from the pipeline division."

UTU International President Paul Thompson said he agrees and would instruct National Legislative Director James Brunkenhoefer to work with Congress to provide the necessary authorization and funding for a separate railroad department within the NTSB.

UTU officer wins praise for aiding family of member

Too often the extra effort put forth by UTU officers and members is overlooked. That is not the case with Local 500 Chairperson Tom Holley.



Crouse

Holley, of Grand Junction, Colo., recently won praise from Aubrey C. Woodward, president of the local, for the work he did after the unfortunate accident that claimed the life of BNSF Railway conductor Mike Crouse in December 2004.

Crouse, 44, the married father of a six-year old daughter and two stepsons, was killed as he prepared to do a roll-by inspection of a UP train. He was struck by the train and killed.

Woodward's letter to Holley praises and thanks him for his efforts to aid the family following the incident.

"All of us in the UTU extend our sympathy to Brother Crouse's family, to you and all members of the BNSF committee who knew and worked with Mike. He will be missed," Woodward said.

"It has come to my attention and made mention by several people how your leadership and caring made a positive influence on the Crouse family. Your help with locating insurance benefits, and in general, your being there for many details will be remembered by Mike's family for a good long time. Your efforts went above and beyond the call of duty.

"Your actions under the most difficult of circumstances have brought credit to the UTU at the local level and to the entire UTU. All of us in Local 500 are in awe of your leadership," Woodward wrote.

UTU For Life program adds benefits

Official travel agency offers exciting getaway packages

The *UTU For Life* program has officially designated Gone With the Wind Travel of Cleveland, Ohio, as its new travel agency and the company has already announced two great travel opportunities for program members.

Gone With the Wind Travel is a full-service agency that opened in 1991. Agency employees have personally experienced many of the cruises and tours that they offer, so they can speak to you with firsthand knowledge and insight about their packages to assist you in making your travel plans.

The agency incorporates the latest technology, including Internet access to all products and the ability to offer the lowest available prices. The company prides itself on customer service and will attend to each and every detail to ensure you a worry-free vacation.

To welcome *UTU For Life* members, the agency will refund your \$9 *UTU For Life* membership fee, plus give you another \$9, when you book your first trip with them.

Beside the travel opportunities the agency offers, the company will gladly work with *UTU* members to satisfy any of their travel needs.

To contact Gone With the Wind, call toll free (800) 886-4989 (locally dial (216) 221-2121), or visit their website at <http://www.gonewiththewindtravel.com>.

Alaskan Cruise

Gone With the Wind Travel is currently offering the perfect trip to take before the *UTU* Regional Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, June 13-15, 2005: an **Alaskan Cruise**. The cruise departs Vancouver, B.C., on June 5 and arrives in Anchorage on June 12, just in time for the Regional Meeting.



Holland America Veendam

The Holland America Veendam (right) is grandly proportioned and designed to carry fewer passengers than other ships in her class to offer guests an extra measure of space. Enjoy the two-tiered Rotterdam Dining Room, with a grand sweeping staircase, and suites with private verandas for airy, outdoor relaxing and sunning. Multiple lounges provide choices for leisurely evenings. A wide teak deck affords ample room for strolling and deck chairs for those who wish to sit and watch the sea roll by.

Prices start as low as \$854 for an inside cabin or \$1,124 for an outside cabin. Port taxes, transfers and airfare are additional.

Rocky Mountaineer® Train Trip

"Spectacular." "Fantastic." "A journey we will always remember!"

That's what everyone says about a trip on the Rocky Mountaineer.

Now, you too can experience this phenomenal journey. Gone With the Wind Travel invites the members of *UTU* to visit the Canadian Rockies.

Only have a few days to explore the most spectacular scenery in the world? This five-day package is a perfect short break in the Canadian Rockies.

Highlights of Your Vacation:

- Two days aboard the spectacular Rocky Mountaineer in your choice of RedLeaf Service or GoldLeaf Service.
- Motorcoach tour of Banff townsite, including a ride on the Banff Gondola. Then on to Calgary.
- **Day 1: Vancouver Arrival** – Arrive in Vancouver and spend time exploring this scenic city on your own. Admission to The Lookout atop Vancouver Harbour Centre with spectacular views of the city, mountains and ocean is included. Overnight in Vancouver.
- **Day 2: Vancouver to Kamloops** – Travel aboard the Rocky Mountaineer from Vancouver to Kamloops in the interior of British Columbia. Enroute, you will pass through the fertile Fraser Valley and the scenic Fraser Canyon.

Alaskan Cruise Info

- Length:** Seven days
- Cruise ship:** Veendam
- Itinerary:** **June 5** – Depart Vancouver, B.C., 5:00 p.m.
- June 6** – Cruise the Inside Passage
- June 7** – Ketchikan, Alaska, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- June 8** – Juneau, Alaska, 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- June 9** – Skagway, Alaska, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- June 10** – Cruise Glacier Bay
- June 11** – College Fjord
- June 12** – Seward, Alaska, 8:00 a.m. transfer to Anchorage by bus or train

Discount room rates at many North American hotel chains

UTU For Life program members can now take advantage of special discounts of from 10 to 20 percent off the standard room rates at a number of North America's most popular hotel chains.

Advanced reservations are required and the offer is subject to availability. Some blackout dates may apply. The discount is off the regular room rate and cannot be combined with any other discounts, offers or special promotions. Discounts may vary by location and time of year.

Members can get a 13% discount on standard rooms at Red Roof Inns throughout the country. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-RED-ROOF (800) 733-7663 and providing the CP number CP530011.

Members can save from 10 to 20 percent at each of the other hotel chains listed below by calling (877) 670-7088 and providing ID number 64816.



ACOR hotels

Save 13%



Save 15% to 20%



Save 15% to 20%



Save 15% to 20%



Go anywhere. Stay here.

Save up to 20%



BUILT FOR BUSINESS®

Save 15% to 20%



Save up to 20%



Save 10%



Save 15% to 20%

One of the canyon's true highlights is Hell's Gate, where you will watch water torrent past the canyon's walls at its narrowest point. Upon leaving the Fraser Canyon, the train will follow the Thompson River to the city of Kamloops. Overnight in Kamloops.

• **Day 3: Kamloops to Banff** – Continue your journey eastwards to the Canadian Rockies. First, you will travel through vast ranchlands to Shuswap Lake. Next, pass Craigellachie, where the "last spike" was driven completing the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885. Beyond Craigellachie is Rogers Pass, with its tunnels, glistening glaciers and snow-capped mountains. Before crossing over the Continental Divide into Banff National Park, the train will travel through the unique spiral tunnels in Yoho National Park, a remarkable engineering achievement. Overnight in Banff.



Rocky Mountaineer

• **Day 4: Banff to Calgary** – On this morning, a sightseeing tour shows you the highlights of Banff townsite before an afternoon transfer to Calgary. Among the points of interest are visits to Banff Gondola, Bow Falls, the Cave and Basin Centre, Surprise Corner and the Hoodoos. A visit to The Calgary Tower is included, where you can view the city and the Rocky Mountains in the distance. Overnight in Calgary.

• **Day 5: Calgary Departure** – Your vacation ends with check out from your Calgary hotel.

The 2005 package tour start dates from Vancouver (eastbound) begin Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from April 16 to Oct. 20.

Prices start as low as \$779 per person for Red Leaf Service and \$1,219 per person for Gold Leaf Service.

Rocky Mountaineer Rail Vacations includes all the elements you need – rail journey, accommodations, attractions, sightseeing tours, luggage handling and transfers. Vacations are non-escorted, giving you the freedom to explore on your own, with the comfort of knowing that all arrangements have been made for you. Friendly assistance is never more than a phone call away.

Call Gone With the Wind Travel for complete information.

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 website.

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 44107-4250.

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 **George Landrock**, a member of Local 117 in Vancouver, Wash. The photo shows a BNSF grain train in the Columbia River Gorge near Skamania, Wash.



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MARCH 2005

ISSN 0098-5937

Published monthly (except for combined months of December/January and July/August) by the UNITED TRANSPORTATION UNION, 14600 DETROIT AVE., CLEVELAND, OH 44107-4250 • Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, Ohio, and additional mailing offices • Paul C. Thompson, International President; Daniel E. Johnson, General Secretary/Treasurer • This publication available on microfilm from UMI, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 • **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to UTU News, 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107-4250.**



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3/05

Volume 37
Number 3

March 2005



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The Official Publication of the United Transportation Union

Two UTU members killed in separate railroad accidents

Two UTU members, Thomas M. Ormiston and Conce P. Campbell, were killed last month in separate accidents.

UTU member and conductor Ormiston was among the 11 people killed Wed., Jan. 26, when two Metrolink commuter trains collided in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendale. Some 200 were injured, five critically.



Ormiston

Later that afternoon, Campbell, a member of UTU Local 811 in San Bernadino, Calif., was killed in a switching accident after he reportedly slipped under a BNSF train at Terminal Island, a container-transfer area.

Los Angeles police said Campbell, 52, the father of seven adopted children, died at the scene. A UTU member, Campbell was working under a BLET contract with a private switching company.

Ormiston, 58, was a member of UTU Local 84 in Los Angeles. He previously was a Southern Pacific conductor. A second UTU member, conductor Reginald B. Taplin, also a member of UTU Local 84, was not physically injured. Metrolink crews are employed by Amtrak, which operates Metrolink under contract.

Prosecutors have filed multiple murder charges against Juan Manuel Alvarez, 25, of Compton, Calif., who is alleged to have parked the automobile on the Metrolink tracks in a suicide attempt that he subse-

quently abandoned. Alvarez told police he had left the vehicle and watched the derailment. The murder charges as filed make Alvarez eligible for the death penalty, said the *Los Angeles Times*.

Members of UTU's Transportation Safety Team (TST) were sent to the accident to assist investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board.

Metrolink officials said a southbound Metrolink commuter train, pushed by a locomotive and heading to downtown Los Angeles, hit the Jeep Grand Cherokee parked on the tracks near the Glendale station.

The front cab-car of the commuter train was vaulted into the air after hitting the automobile and crashed into a stationary Union Pacific maintenance-of-way train and then into a northbound Metrolink commuter train. Ormiston was in the final car of the northbound train.

A memorial fund has been established for Brother Ormiston. The fund is held at the Bank of America. Any person or local wishing to make a contribution may do so at any Bank of America branch. Signify the Thomas M. Ormiston Memorial Fund, account number 04313-05922. (If you are making the donation outside of California, please inform the teller that the account is a special savings account set up in California, branch #431.) Donations (made payable to the Thomas M. Ormiston Memorial Fund) also can be sent to Local 84 Secretary/Treasurer Richard Albitre, 2370 Cardinal Dr., #22, San Diego, CA 92123. The last day donations may be deposited will be April 11, 2005.



Inside this issue of the UTU News:



UTU's Transportation Safety Team assists the NTSB. See page 1.



"Roz" Pinckney learned the hard way the value of the UTU. See page 2.



Local 500 member Art Kent works for UTU retirees. See page 8.



UTU for Life members are eligible for discounts. See page 11.