



# THE SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

VOLUME 99  
1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER 2018



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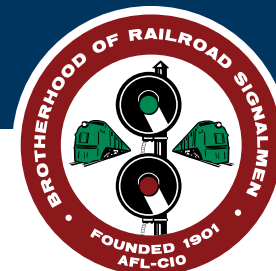
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# The SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

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## National Agreement

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## 52nd Regular Convention

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**COVER:** After a brief downpour, a rainbow forms in the distance at the County Trunk Highway T crossing, Astico, Wisconsin, on the Soo Line. Photo submitted by K.D. Huebner, Local 226 Member and General Chairman Soo Line.



## When Safety Is Considered A “Burden” — Working People Lose

Brothers and Sisters, it seems that some politicians these days are lending their full-throated support to deregulation on the proposition that all regulation is too burdensome and only serves to limit an industry’s ability to compete in the world’s economy. The current Administration has taken up this cry for deregulation and in applying it to the rail industry, it envisions a framework where railroads regulate themselves focusing on performance rather than safety. This is unfortunate, dangerous, and ignores the fact that the rail industry has a long history of struggling to ensure that it provides a safe work environment for its employees. Moreover, it has struggled to ensure that the public has access to a safe and efficient transportation system.

*It is each of our responsibility to be aware of the regulations that affect us at work, as well as our families at home, and properly assess the purpose those regulations serve.*

Everything that we do in this craft is guided by a regulation that was promulgated to improve public and employee safety. This Union and all of Labor fought decades for these regulatory improvements to be implemented. For example, as far back as 1972, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recognized that too many employees were being injured or killed by trains or moving equipment. In response, in 1974, it proposed a rule making that would provide these employees with adequate protection. But, it was not until Congress passed the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 1988 that meaningful discourse on providing protection for maintenance-of-way workers was actually authorized and enacted. Even then, it took until January 15, 1997, when Part 214 Subpart C Roadway Worker Protection was finally implemented before our members could have confidence that they were protected when they were directed

to work in the foul of a track. This snail’s pace approach to promulgating and implementing regulations in the rail industry is the rule rather than the exception. The same 1988 Act directed the Secretary of Transportation to enact standards and regulations regarding signal systems at railroad highway grade crossings, and Part 234 Grade Crossing Safety was not implemented until 1995.

Outside of our own on-track protection, regulations serve to ensure the safety of the public including our own families. Every test that we are required to conduct is based on a need identified within 49 CFR Part 234 — Grade Crossing Safety or 49 CFR Part 236 — Rules, Standards, and

Instructions Governing the Installation, Inspection, Maintenance, and Repair of Signal and Train Control Systems. The list of requirements in Parts 234 and 236 mandates the tests that a railroad must accomplish, using trained signalmen, in order to maintain a safe railway system, identifying and repairing any failures within the signal system. If deregulation were to take effect in this industry, it is unlikely that any railroad, left to its own discretion, would continue to view the periodic testing required by these Parts as necessary, even though these provisions are directly tied to the safety of the train crews, passengers, and the public. The business model pursues profit numbers, with human deaths considered a loss only due to the cost of the court cases and safety-based regulations as “burdens.”

Ironically, deregulation talks only occur when it is believed that public opinion can be swayed. This was made evident with the implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC), a federal regulation and requirement.

This was initially viewed by some politicians as another “burden” for the railroads, as they continued to grant the railroads further grace periods to install PTC. However, when national newsworthy railroad accidents continue to occur that PTC would have prevented, and this fact is brought to the attention of the masses, these same politicians are silent and would not dream of questioning the wisdom of installing PTC. These accidents have silenced many of the “deregulation” advocates as far as PTC is concerned, but that has and will not prevent them from carrying out their agenda of dismantling other safety-critical regulations when the public is distracted.

While I recognize that it may be true to some extent that regulation acts as a throttle on capitalism, regulation in the rail industry is necessary if we are to achieve our ultimate goal of providing a safe work environment for our membership. Moreover, regulations are a necessary safeguard and component in our duty to provide a safe transportation system for our nation. It is each of our

responsibility to be aware of the regulations that affect us at work, as well as our families at home, and properly assess the purpose those regulations serve. Whether it is the federally required tests we perform on the signal system, or the regulations that play key roles in the protection of our environment and the quality of the food our families consume; it is our responsibility to educate ourselves and ensure our regulatory protections before following the battle cry of deregulating these so-called “burdens” on profits.

In Solidarity,



W. Dan Pickett  
*BRS President*



*The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen  
Grand Executive Council is*

## *Accepting Resumés for Future Grand Lodge Representative(s)*

The role of the Grand Lodge Representative is primarily involved in the preparation of submissions for grievance resolution and other labor/employee related functions.

*President W. Dan Pickett will assign duties and duties may vary.*

**Qualifications:** Only active BRS members are eligible for appointment to these positions. Union activism is a fundamental quality. Successful candidates will be detail oriented and have strong writing, communications, and organizational skills.

Computer skills, including experience with Microsoft Office suite are a plus.

*If interested in submitting resumés for  
future openings, please send to:  
[wdp@brs.org](mailto:wdp@brs.org) or mail to the address below:*

W. Dan Pickett, President  
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen  
917 Shenandoah Shores Road  
Front Royal, Virginia 22630





# National Agreement

Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen President Dan Pickett announced that the union's members ratified the National Agreement. The BRS represents more than 8,000 members affected by the new agreement.

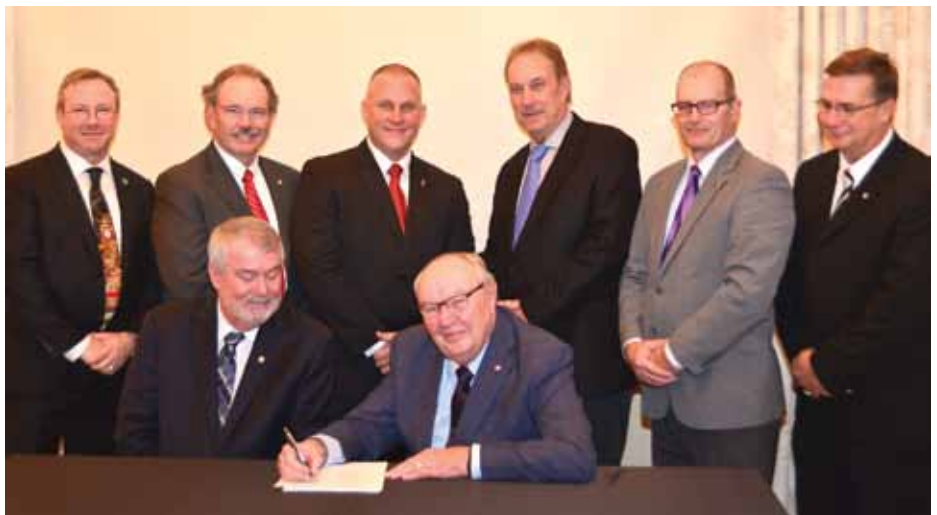
The BRS negotiated in this round of bargaining as a member of the Coordinated Bargaining Group (CBG), which represented more than 85,000 railroad workers, comprising 58% of the workforce. The CBG represents six rail unions: ATDA, BLET/IBT, IBB, NCFO/SEIU, SMART-Transportation Division, and BRS.

*"This round of bargaining brought its unique challenges, going from an arms-reach of an agreement back to square one following the 2016 presidential elections. As mediation was starting to stalemate, in the final hours we were able to get the Carriers to shift some of their positions and come to an agreement we felt was fair for our brothers and sisters. Although we desired to see no changes in health-care, we understood that such a position is difficult in today's culture; however, we were able to freeze the employee's monthly health and welfare contribution. A key to this agreement was taking the damaging work rule proposals off the table while securing real wage increases", stated President Pickett. "Joining the CBG coalition proved to be an effective strategy for our members in this round of bargaining, and I am proud that our organization was a member".*

The newly ratified agreement resolves issues such



On December 1, 2017, BRS President W. Dan Pickett signed the recently ratified National Agreement. The terms of the National Agreement will be implemented and effective beginning on January 1, 2018.



**FRONT ROW:** (L-R) Jerry Boles, BRS Secretary-Treasurer; Dan Pickett, BRS President.

**SECOND ROW:** Mike Baldwin, Vice President West; Dennis Boston, Vice President Commuter, Passenger, Transit/Political Director; John Bragg, Vice President NRAB; Floyd Mason, Vice President East; Kelly Haley, Vice President Headquarters; Joe Mattingly, Vice President Midwest.





The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen was part of the Coordinated Bargaining Group (CBG), which represented more than 85,000 railroad workers during national negotiations.

as wages and health and welfare benefits. It includes expansion of the Managed Medical Care Program and health insurance cost containment provisions. The agreement contains no work rule changes.

President Pickett added, *"I must state that I am pleased that the interference in our ratification process by the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees proved ineffective. Our members asked the questions, understood the issues, and were not misled by the BMWED propaganda*

*machine. Union effectiveness is not measured by YouTube videos; it is measured by how you represent your members. The actions of the officers of this renegade union should come under close scrutiny by its members. We once worked very closely with the BMWED leadership; those days are over."*

Members can find more information regarding the National Agreement on our website at [www.brs.org](http://www.brs.org). ■

## DENVER TRANSIT OPERATORS OVERWHELMINGLY RATIFY

### *Union Shop Agreement*

After a successful organizing campaign that concluded in April of 2017, subsequent contract negotiations, and the ratification of their first agreement, employees of Denver Transit Operators (DTO) represented by BRS Local 243 were required to go through an additional election to determine if the newly ratified agreement could contain a provision requiring an all-union agreement or "union shop." This election, mandatory under Colorado State Law, requires that a majority of the members in the bargaining unit, or 75% of the votes cast, whichever is HIGHER, vote in favor in order to have an enforceable union shop provision. Failure to achieve this high threshold would result in Local 243 being subject to typical

right-to-work (for less) laws.

The State of Colorado Department of Labor held an election on February 7, 2018. The members of Local 243 voted overwhelmingly (45-1) in favor of having an enforceable union shop provision in their agreement. Congratulations Local 243 on an impressive display of solidarity.

Local 243 members include Dispatchers, Signal Maintainers, Operation Control Coordinators, Track Maintainers, Track Inspectors, Traction Power Technicians, Communications Technicians, and Facilities Maintainers. ■





## CONTINUE THE FIGHT FOR SAFE JOBS

# WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

On April 28, 2018, the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe jobs. This year we will come together to defend hard-won victories by working people from attacks by right-wing Republicans and business groups. We will commit to fighting until all workers have safe jobs and the freedom to form unions to seek a better future.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act and the Mine Safety and Health Act promise workers the right to a safe job. Unions and our allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality — winning protections that have made jobs safer, saved hundreds of thousands of lives, and prevented millions of workplace injuries and illnesses.

But our work is not done. Each year thousands of workers are killed and millions more injured or diseased

because of their jobs.

The safety and health gains we have won are now threatened. The Trump administration has launched an all-out assault on regulations. The president has ordered that for every new protection, two existing safeguards must be removed from the books. At the same time, Republicans in Congress have moved quickly to overturn new rules issued by the Obama administration. Agency budgets and enforcement programs are on the chopping block. The safety and health of workers and the public are in danger.

We must fight back. We cannot and will not let them turn back the clock and destroy the progress we have made to make jobs safer and save lives. ■





# BRS 52nd Regular Convention

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS • AUGUST 6–10, 2018

## ACCOMMODATIONS

The Westin Copley Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

Rooms are \$215 plus tax, per room, per night.

Please be advised that the special group rate of \$215 plus tax is available until Saturday, June 30, 2018, and any reservation request received after that time may be accepted on a space available basis at the prevailing hotel rates. The \$215 rate is for two adults and children. The rate for three registered adults is \$245 plus tax, per room, per night. The rate is \$275 per night with four adults in a room. Guests will need a credit card to make a reservation.



## DINING

*There are many dining options in and around Boston, below are just a few suggestions:*

**The Huntington:** Breakfast.

**Ingredients:** Breakfast, lunch, and quick bites.

**Starbucks:** Breakfast and lunch.

**Au Bon Pain:** Breakfast, lunch, dinner.

**The Friendly Toast:** Breakfast, lunch, dinner.

**Flour Bakery & Café:** Breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

**Fogo de Chao Brazilian Steakhouse:** Lunch and dinner.

**ShabuMaru:** Lunch and dinner.

**Stephanie's on Newbury:** Lunch and dinner.

**The Barking Crab:** (Boston's waterfront) lunch and dinner.

**Legal Harborside:** (Boston's waterfront) lunch and dinner.

**Boston Burger Company:** Lunch and dinner.

**Tresca:** (Boston's north end) dinner.

**Abe & Louie's:** Dinner.

**Mike's Pastries:** (Boston's north end).

**Atlantic Fish Company:** Dinner.

## THINGS TO DO

*Boston is a city rich in history! Below you will find a few ways to explore that, as well as activities and adventures to keep the whole family busy!*

- Freedom Trail
- Duck Boat Tours
- New England Aquarium
- The Paul Revere House
- Boston Children's Museum
- Skywalk at the Prudential Center
- Fenway Park, Home of the Boston Red Sox
- John F. Kennedy Presidential Museum & Library
- USS Constitution Museum
- Boston Public Library
- Boston Common
- Cheers

For more information visit: [www.brs.org](http://www.brs.org)

**You may book your room by visiting:**

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/book/brsconvention2018>

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- **When Will Congress Quit the Continuing Resolution and Get Down to Work?**
- **Tax Bill Overview**

## **When Will Congress Quit the Continuing Resolution and Get Down to Work?**

When H.R.22: Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law on December 4, 2015, by President Obama, it was the first long-term (five-year term) transportation spending bill enacted by Congress since 2005 when SAFETEA-LU was enacted (four-year term). Prior to that, infrastructure appropriations were made on a "kick-the-can" basis with continuing resolutions by enacting spending at current levels. During President Trump's campaign and early in his first year, he proposed over \$1 trillion in investments in our country's aging infrastructure. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives an Infrastructure Report Card every four years. In 2017, America's infrastructure GPA was a whopping D+; the estimated cost to improve it is \$4.59 trillion dollars over a ten-year period. Unfortunately, as we have seen with the Gateway Project in the Northeast Corridor, which was first unveiled in 2011, wherein a deal for the states to share funding with the federal government 50/50 has now been canceled by the current administration; politics is increasingly getting in the way of progress on real life solutions to aging infrastructure problems. If our lawmakers continue to kick the can down the road, it could lead to major commuter and transportation safety and efficiency issues. Continuing at a status quo appropriations level will not lead to progress.

Increasing the gas tax has been introduced as an option to boost the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). Currently, the gas tax is 18.4 cents per gallon of gasoline and 24.4 cents per gallon of diesel fuel. The HTF supports three main objectives, the Highway Account, which provides for road construction and other surface transportation projects, a Mass Transit Account, and the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund (LUST). The LUST Fund was created to address petroleum releases from federally regulated underground storage tanks and provides four major functions: oversee cleanups of petroleum releases by responsible parties; enforce cleanups by uncompliant parties; pay for cleanups at sites where the owner or operator is unknown, unwilling, or unable to

respond, or which require emergency action; and conduct inspections and other release prevention activities.

The HTF has three long-standing sources of income:

1. Federal fuel taxes;
2. Other Federal taxes on truck users; and
3. Interest on invested balances.

Since the latter years of SAFETEA-LU (long-term transportation funding bill enacted in 2005), these sources have not yielded enough income to fully cover the HTF's ongoing expenses. To keep the HTF solvent, Congress has, on a number of occasions, passed legislation to transfer additional amounts into the HTF. According to the DOT, the opening balance of the HTF for FY2018 was down 19.4 percent from the previous year. The gas tax has not been increased since 1993 and is not adjusted for inflation. President Trump has said he is open to increasing the gas tax but some House Republicans have resisted the idea. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a pro-business lobbying group that is the largest in the country, has come out in support of the increase. Chamber President Thomas Donahue said, *"It's the simplest, fairest, and most effective way to raise the money we need for roads, bridges, and transit... Our leaders need to stop hiding behind the fallacy that this can't be done and just go do it... Without permitting reform, all the funding and financing you could dream of won't get the job done."*

## **Tax Bill Overview**

H.R.1: An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to Titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018 (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act) was introduced by Representative Kevin Brady (R-TX) on November 2, 2017. After a number of revisions, both the House and the Senate agreed to a final conferenced version on December 20, 2017; it was signed by the President on December 22, 2017. The changes enacted will not affect your filing of 2017 income taxes in 2018, but they will affect your take home pay beginning in January of 2018. On January 11, 2018, the IRS issued



new withholding rate tables for employers to use while completing payroll calculations. The IRS has advised employers to implement these new rates by February 15, 2018. The new tables reflect the increase in the standard deduction, repeal of personal exemptions, and changes in tax rates and brackets and are designed to produce the correct amount of tax withholding. The revisions are also aimed at avoiding over- and under-withholding of tax as much as possible. We advise you to pay special attention to your paystubs to be sure that the amount of withholding is appropriate for your respective situation. For resources concerning tax law changes, visit <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/resources-for-tax-law-changes>.

-Deductions for state and local income tax that were previously unlimited will now be capped at \$10,000.

-Standard deduction has been raised but the personal exemption was removed. For 2017, the exemption is

\$4,050 per person, which means a jointly-filing couple with 2 dependents would get an exemption of \$16,200 (4 people x \$4,050). This will not be available for 2018. The standard deduction increased to \$12,000 for singles and \$24,000 for married couples filing joint returns.

-Limits mortgage interest deduction to mortgages up to \$750,000.

-Elimination of penalty for individuals failing to maintain minimum essential health insurance coverage. This provision applies beginning in January of 2019. The penalty for not maintaining health insurance will drop to \$0. The general consensus is that this change will encourage healthy individuals to drop out of the market and leave room for health insurance companies to raise premiums on those with coverage.

-Increases child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

-The current 35% tax rate for corporations was lowered to 21%, the largest corporate tax rate cut in U.S. history. In addition, the alternative minimum tax (AMT) liability was ended for corporations but kept for individuals.

-Title II of the bill—Oil and Gas Program—mandates that the Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary will establish and administer a competitive oil and gas program for the leasing, development, production, and transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain and that 50 percent of the receipts from this program will be paid to the State of Alaska, and 50 per-

cent to the U.S. Treasury. It also mandates that the DOI Secretary conduct at least two lease sales in ten years under the oil and gas program. It designates that these areas have:

*“...highest potential for the discovery of hydrocarbons... The Secretary shall issue any rights-of-way or easements across the Coastal*

*Plain for the exploration, development, production, or transportation...In administering this section, the Secretary shall authorize up to 2,000 surface acres of Federal land on the Coastal Plain to be covered by production and support facilities (including airstrips and any area covered by gravel berms or piers for support of pipelines) during the term of the leases under the oil and gas program under this section.”*

Title II also mandates that the Secretary of the Department of Energy sell from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve 7,000,000 barrels of crude oil during the period of fiscal years 2026 through 2027, the proceeds of which will be deposited in the U.S. treasury. These mandates to the DOI and the DOE are for the purpose of offsetting the cost of the tax cut. The largest corporate tax cut in U.S. history is being funded by selling off protected lands and natural resources. ■

*Filing your 2018 federal incomes taxes in 2019  
will follow the mandates in H.R.1.*

### Key Provisions — Revised Tax Rates

<i>Married, filing jointly:</i>		<i>Single:</i>	
<b>If Taxable income is:</b>	<b>Tax:</b>	<b>Taxable income is:</b>	<b>Tax :</b>
Not over \$19,050	10%	Not over \$9,525	10%
\$19,051–\$77,400	12%	\$9,526–\$38,700	12%
\$77,401–\$165,000	22%	\$38,701–\$82,500	22%
\$165,001–\$315,000	24%	\$82,501–\$157,500	24%
\$315,001–\$400,000	32%	\$157,501–\$200,000	32%
\$400,001–\$600,000	35%	\$200,001–\$500,000	35%
Over \$600,000	37%	Over \$500,000	37%

# Early Retirement Plan Increases Maximum

**T**he lifetime maximum benefit for each individual covered under The Railroad Employees National Early Retirement Major Medical Benefit Plan (UnitedHealthcare's Policy GA-46000) is adjusted each year based on the medical cost component of the Consumer Price Index. As of January 1, 2018, this maximum will increase to \$162,500.

An important consideration for individuals thinking about retirement is health coverage after retirement. The information below summarizes the eligibility requirements under the National Early Retirement Major Medical Benefit Plan.

## Eligibility Rules

### *For Age Annuitants:*

- You apply for a 60/30 annuity for which you are eligible:
  - on or after the date you reach age 60, or
  - anytime during the three months before your 60th birthday, provided you continue working into the month before the month in which you turn age 60.

On the day before you apply for your annuity, you must be covered (other than under COBRA) under The Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan.

### *For Disability Annuitants:*

- You have a current connection with the railroad industry.
- You have applied for a disability annuity to which you are entitled.
- You are covered under The Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan (other than by COBRA) on the day before the latest of the following dates:
  - The date you reach age 60,
  - The date you became disabled, or
  - The date your railroad service equals 30 years.

If you retire and are eligible for GA-46000, you can also purchase supplemental coverage under GA-23111, Plan E. Generally, Plan E pays 70% of the expenses not paid under GA-46000 and has a lifetime maximum of \$500,000.

## Enrollment Is Necessary

When you retire, your railroad will not report you to UnitedHealthcare as a retiree eligible for GA-46000. You must enroll yourself and your family with UnitedHealthcare. You can do this in two ways:

- You can purchase GA-23111, Plan E supplemental coverage. Your eligibility for GA-46000 will be verified when your enrollment for that coverage is processed. ID cards for both GA-46000 and GA-23111 will be sent to you. A booklet explaining the Plan E benefits and an Enrollment form can be obtained by calling UnitedHealthcare.
- You can complete and return the "Retiree and Dependent Information" form found in the center of the GA-46000 employee booklet. Your eligibility will be verified and a GA-46000 ID card will be sent to you. You can obtain a GA-46000 booklet from your employer or union representative. ■

If you have any questions  
about your eligibility for  
**GA-46000**  
or the benefits provided  
under the Plan,  
Call UnitedHealthcare at  
**1-800-842-5252**



# Alcohol and Drug Testing

## MINIMUM RANDOM TESTING RATES FOR 2018 REMAIN UNCHANGED

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has announced the minimum random testing rates for railroad workers in the year 2018.

Using data from Management Information System annual reports, the FRA has determined that because the industry random drug testing positive rate was below 1.0 percent for the last two years, it has determined that the minimum annual random drug testing rate for the period January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018, will remain at 25 percent of covered railroad employees. In addition, because the industry-wide random alcohol testing violation rate has remained below 0.5 percent for the last two years, the Administrator has determined that the minimum random alcohol testing rate will remain at 10 percent of covered railroad employees for the period January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.

On June 12, 2017, maintenance-of-way (MOW) employees became subject to FRA random drug and alcohol testing. The FRA has set the initial minimum annual random testing rates for MOW employees at 50 percent of MOW employees for drugs and 25 percent of MOW employees for alcohol.

BRS members need to be aware that this notice sets the minimum random testing rates, and the railroads remain free under their own policies to conduct random testing at higher rates. The BRS reminds its members that many railroads have a zero tolerance policy when it comes to reporting to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In many cases, a positive test result will result in being placed out of service. ■

DOT AGENCY	RANDOM DRUG TESTING RATE	RANDOM ALCOHOL TESTING RATE
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	25%	10%
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	25% Covered Service	10% Covered Service
	50% Maintenance of Way*	25% Maintenance of Way*
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	25%	10%
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)	50%	N/A
United States Coast Guard (USCG)	25%	N/A

### \* Random testing for MOW employees began on 6-12-2017

**NOTE:** Employers (and C/TPAs) subject to more than one DOT Agency drug and alcohol testing rule may continue to combine covered employees into a single random selection pool.

Please note that USCG covered employees may be combined with DOT covered employees in drug testing pools even though the USCG is part of the Department of Homeland Security.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Title 49: Transportation

#### §236.55 DEAD SECTION; MAXIMUM LENGTH

Where dead section exceeds 35 feet, a special circuit shall be installed. Where shortest outer wheelbase of a locomotive operating over such dead section is less than 35 feet, the maximum length of

the dead section shall not exceed the length of the outer wheelbase of such locomotive unless special circuit is used. ■



## Railroad Retirement Spouse and Widow(er)s' Annuities and Public Service Pensions

*Railroad Retirement Act spouse and widow(er)s' annuities (including divorced spouse, surviving divorced spouse and remarried widow(er)s' annuities) are subject to reduction when social security benefits or dual railroad retirement annuities are also payable. Such railroad retirement benefits may also be reduced when a spouse or widow(er) is entitled to a public service pension unless certain exemption requirements are met.*

*Since the payment of railroad retirement spouse or widow(er)s' annuities can be affected by entitlement to certain other government benefits, such dual entitlement, if not reported to the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), can result in benefit overpayments which have to be repaid, sometimes with interest and penalties.*

*The following questions and answers describe how payments are adjusted by the RRB for spouse and widow(er) annuitants entitled to public service pensions.*

### **For social security or railroad retirement purposes, what is considered a public service pension?**

A public service pension is any periodic benefit payment, as well as lump-sum payments made in lieu of periodic payments, based on an individual's own employment with a federal, state, or local government unit. Some examples are pensions paid to teachers, police officers, and civil service personnel on the basis of age or disability. Full salary benefits paid to a retired or resigned judge under the Federal Judiciary Retirement System are also considered public service pensions.

Most military service pensions and payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs will not cause a reduction. A pension paid by a foreign government or an interstate instrumentality also has no effect on a spouse or widow(er)'s annuity.

### **How is the public service pension reduction applied to railroad retirement spouse or widow(er)s' annuities?**

For spouses and widow(er)s subject to the public service pension reduction, the tier I reduction is, under current

law, equal to 2/3 of the amount of the public pension. The amount of the public service pension is the current gross amount, before any deductions for income tax withholding, Medicare premiums, health insurance, or other benefits.

### **What is the background of the public service pension reduction in spouse and widow(er)s' annuities and how does it affect such payments?**

The public service pension reduction in social security and railroad retirement spouse and widow(er)s' benefits was brought about by 1977 social security legislation which also applied to the tier I benefits of railroad retirement spouses and widow(er)s. The tier I portion of a railroad retirement annuity is based on railroad retirement credits and any social security credits an employee has acquired. It is computed under social security formulas and approximates what social security would pay if railroad work were also covered by that system. Tier I benefits are, therefore, reduced in the same manner as social security benefits when certain other benefits are also payable.



### Are there any provisions that would exempt railroad retirement spouse or widow(er) annuitants from the public service pension offsets?

Generally, in order to be exempt from a public service pension reduction, federal, state and local government workers must be covered by social security throughout their last 60 months of employment with the pension-paying government entity.

The public pension reduction also does not apply to a spouse or widow(er) who filed for and became entitled to her or his railroad retirement annuity before December 1977, or to a spouse or widow(er) whose public pension is not based on her or his own earnings.

### Where can more specific information on how these pension offsets affect railroad retirement benefits be obtained?

Persons can contact an RRB field office for information as to how their public service pensions could affect their railroad retirement benefits via the agency's website, [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov), or by calling toll-free at 1-877-772-5772. Most RRB offices are open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., except on Wednesdays when offices are open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. RRB offices are closed on federal holidays. ■

## THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS UNION DATA Shows Working People on the Rise

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released its annual report on union membership, which found that the number of union members rose by 260,000 in 2017. This reflects critical organizing victories across a range of industries, which have reaped higher wages, better benefits, and a more secure future for working people around the country.

*"In the face of a challenging year, the power of working people is on the rise,"* said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

*"Together, we organized historic new unions, stood up to powerful corporations, and won higher wages. But today's data is more than numbers on a page, it's a growing movement of working people that can't be measured as easily. When more union members fill the halls of power, when wages rise and inequality shrinks, and when a growing number of people see that we can and will change the rules of this economy - that's when you'll know unions are on the rise."*

**Key Trends** — Workers in "right to work" states like South Carolina and Michigan are joining unions by the thousands.

Young workers continue to drive union growth. Since 2012, union membership among workers under 35 has continued to rise. Last year, they made up three quarters of new members.

Professionals and information industry workers continue to drive growth, reflecting key organizing successes by the Communications Workers of America; the Writer's Guild of America, East; the American Federation of Teachers; and the American Federation of Government Employees.

Recent victories are among workers across sectors ranging from media employees to charter school teachers and librarian professionals to the 20,000 doctors who joined unions in the last year. ■



In Partnership with AFSCME

# FREE COLLEGE BENEFIT



**BRS members and their families  
can earn an Associate Degree  
with NO out-of-pocket cost.**



## FREE COLLEGE BENEFIT FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

The Union Plus Free College Benefit offers working families an accessible, debt-free and convenient higher education opportunity. You, your spouse, children, financial dependents and grandchildren, can all take advantage of this exciting opportunity.



## ZERO OUT-OF-POCKET COST

Members and their families can earn an Associate Degree online, with no out-of-pocket costs. A last-dollar scholarship covers the difference between any Federal grants and your tuition, fees and e-books at EGCC.



## EASTERN GATEWAY CREDITS ARE TRANSFERABLE

Eastern Gateway Community College is a public, non-profit school in the University System of Ohio and is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Credits you earn can transfer to other schools, potentially saving you thousands of dollars.



**1-888-590-9009**  
**[unionplusfreecollege.org](http://unionplusfreecollege.org)**

*Free College is possible thanks to the early support and enthusiasm of AFSCME, who entered into a collaboration with Eastern Gateway Community College in 2016.*

FLY-BRS-FREECOLLEGE-L0118



# HIGHER EDUCATION IN JUST 4 STEPS



## APPLY TO EASTERN GATEWAY

Go to [unionplusfreecollege.org](http://unionplusfreecollege.org), select the "Get Started" button and complete the request information form with your contact and union information (for membership verification).



## COMPLETE THE FREE FAFSA

Complete the form online: [FAFSA.ed.gov](http://FAFSA.ed.gov) Eastern Gateway Community College school code: **007275** The FAFSA application is a requirement. If it's determined that you are not eligible for federal or state financial aid, a "last-dollar" scholarship will be applied to your remaining balance for tuition, fees and e-books.

Your FAFSA may be chosen for additional verification by the Dept. of Education. Compliance is required to receive the scholarship. Your enrollment advisor can help you with the process.



## SUBMIT YOUR TRANSCRIPTS

Submit your high school transcript or GED test score as proof of high school completion. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the school to:

**Email:** [online@egcc.edu](mailto:online@egcc.edu) (Subject: UnionPlus)

**Mail:** EGCC Admissions  
Attn: UnionPlus  
101 Federal Plaza East  
Youngstown, OH 44503

**Fax:** 330-480-0817 (Attn: UnionPlus)

If you have completed any college coursework, have the transcript sent to EGCC. Applicable college credits will be transferred to the new program.



## ENROLL IN CLASSES

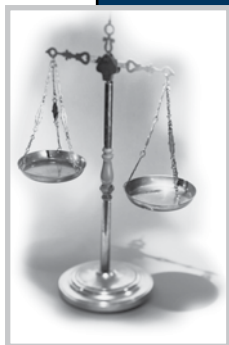
Work with an enrollment advisor to enroll in classes.

**1-888-590-9009**  
**[unionplusfreecollege.org](http://unionplusfreecollege.org)**



*The Higher Education Benefit covers the cost of tuition, fees and books after any PELL or other federal grant, or employer reimbursement is applied. The remaining amount will be cleared with the Free College scholarship. As long as your financial aid file is complete, there is no cost to the student and students are never asked to take out any loans.*

# BRS DESIGNATED COUNSEL



*When Signalmen suffer a work-related injury or illness, BRS members or their families are encouraged to determine their rights and benefits under the Federal Employers' Liability Act before agreeing to any settlement with the railroad employer. The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen has designated the attorneys listed in this directory to serve as qualified counsel for BRS members in employee injury cases covered by FELA.*

*Attorneys are listed by state and are designated to serve BRS members living or working in the general region of their offices. Designation of FELA counsel is by authority of the BRS Executive Council only.*

*BRS members are encouraged to provide information regarding FELA cases, including criticism or commendations regarding the service of designated counsel, and information on injuries and settlements. This information, which will be used in the continuing evaluation of this program, should be sent to W. Dan Pickett, President, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, 917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630-6418.*

## ALABAMA

**W.C. Tucker, Jr.**  
Maples, Tucker & Jacobs, LLC  
2001 Park Place North  
Suite 501  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
Tel. (205) 322-2333  
[www.mtandj.com](http://www.mtandj.com)

## ARIZONA

**Lloyd L. Rabb, III**  
Rabb & Rabb, PLLC  
7442 N. LA Cholla Blvd.  
Tucson, AZ 85728  
Tel. (520) 888-6740  
(800) 354-3352  
[www.1stinjurylaw.com](http://www.1stinjurylaw.com)

## ARKANSAS

**Chris Christy**  
Law Office of H. Chris Christy  
201 W. Broadway Street  
Suite G12  
North Little Rock, AR 72114  
Tel. (501) 454-3949

## CALIFORNIA

**Jay A. Kaplan**  
Kaplan Law Corporation  
400 Océan Gate  
Suite 1125  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
Tel. (562) 372-0506  
(800) 552-7526  
[www.kaplanlawcorp.com](http://www.kaplanlawcorp.com)

**Anthony S. Petru**  
Hildebrand, McLeod & Nelson  
Westlake Building  
350 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza  
4th Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Tel. (510) 451-6732  
(800) 689-7066  
[www.hmnlaw.com](http://www.hmnlaw.com)

## COLORADO

**James K. Vucinovich**  
Rossi Vucinovich PC  
3801 E. Florida Avenue  
Floor 4  
Denver, CO 80210  
Tel. (303) 759-3500  
(800) 325-4014  
[www.railroad-injuries.com](http://www.railroad-injuries.com)  
  
1000 Second Avenue  
Suite 1780  
Seattle, WA 98104  
(866) 357-RAIL (7245)

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**Larry Mann**  
Alper & Mann, PC  
9205 Redwood Avenue  
Bethesda, MD 20817  
Tel. (202) 298-9191  
(800) 747-6266

## FLORIDA

**Howard A. Spier**  
Rossman Baumberger Reboso  
& Spier, PA  
9155 S. Dadeland Boulevard  
Suite 1200  
Miami, FL 33156  
Tel. (305) 373-0708  
(800) 775-6511  
[www.rbrlaw.com](http://www.rbrlaw.com)

## ILLINOIS

**Daniel Petro**  
The Petro Law Firm  
One North LaSalle Street  
Suite 3150  
Chicago, IL 60602  
Tel. (312) 332-9596  
(800) 472-5729  
[www.petrofelalaw.com](http://www.petrofelalaw.com)

**Daniel J. Downes**  
Ridge & Downes  
101 N. Wacker Drive  
Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Tel. (800) 572-1136  
(800) 624-2121  
[www.ridgedownes.com](http://www.ridgedownes.com)

## MARYLAND

**P. Matthew Darby**  
Berman, Sobin, Gross,  
Feldman & Darby LLP  
Heaver Plaza  
1301 York Road  
Suite 600  
Lutherville, MD 21093  
Tel. (410) 769-5400  
(800) 248-3352  
[www.bsgfllaw.com](http://www.bsgfllaw.com)

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Robert T. Naumes**  
Naumes Law Group, LLC  
2 Center Plaza  
Suite 620  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel. (617) 227-8444  
(844) 826-8445  
[www.naumeslaw.com](http://www.naumeslaw.com)

## MICHIGAN

**Arvin J. Pearlman**  
Sommers Swartz, PC  
1 Towne Square  
Suite 1700  
Southfield, MI 48076  
Tel. (248) 356-5000  
(800) 272-5400  
[www.sommerspc.com](http://www.sommerspc.com)

## MINNESOTA

**Randal W. LeNeave**  
Hunegs, LeNeave  
& Kvas  
1000 Twelve Oaks  
Center Drive  
Suite 101  
Wayzata, MN 55391  
Tel. (612) 339-4511  
(800) 328-4340  
[www.hklaw.com](http://www.hklaw.com)

6035 Binney Street  
Omaha, NE 68104  
Tel. (402) 341-2020

**Gregory T. Yaeger**  
Yaeger & Weiner, PLC  
2701 University Avenue SE  
Suite 202  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Tel. (612) 345-9797  
[www.yw-law.com](http://www.yw-law.com)

## MISSOURI

**Gene C. Napier**  
Hunegs, LeNeave & Kvas  
1712 Main Street  
Suite 266  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
Tel. (913) 484-3884

**Drew C. Baebler**  
The Baebler Firm, LLC  
60 Crestwood Executive Ctr.  
St. Louis, MO 63126  
Tel. (314) 270-9900  
[www.raillaw.com](http://www.raillaw.com)

## NEBRASKA

*See Minnesota*

## NEW YORK

**Marc Wietzke**  
Flynn & Wietzke, PC  
1205 Franklin Avenue  
Garden City, NY 11530  
Tel. (516) 877-1234  
(866) 877-3352  
[www.felaattorney.com](http://www.felaattorney.com)

## OHIO

**Andrew J. Thompson, Esq.**  
Shapero | Roloff Co., LPA  
1350 Euclid Avenue  
Suite 1550  
Cleveland, OH 44115  
Tel. (216) 781-1700  
(800) 321-9199  
[www.shaperoroloff.com](http://www.shaperoroloff.com)

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Michael J. Olley**  
Coffey, Kaye, Myers & Olley  
Two Bala Plaza  
Suite 718  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004  
Tel. (610) 668-9800  
(800) 334-2500  
[www.ckmo.com](http://www.ckmo.com)

## TEXAS

**Weldon Granger**  
Jones, Granger,  
Tramuto, & Halstead  
[www.jonesgranger.com](http://www.jonesgranger.com)

**Robert M. Tramuto**  
10000 Memorial Drive  
Suite 888  
Houston, TX 77210  
Tel. (713) 668-0230  
(800) 231-3359

## UTAH

**Brent O. Hatch**  
Hatch, James & Dodge, PC  
10 West Broadway  
Suite 400  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
Tel. (801) 363-6363  
[www.hjdllaw.com](http://www.hjdllaw.com)

## VIRGINIA

**Willard J. Moody, Sr.**  
The Moody Law Firm, Inc.  
500 Crawford Street  
Suite 200  
Portsmouth, VA 23704  
Tel. (757) 393-4093  
(800) 368-1033  
[www.moodyrllaw.com](http://www.moodyrllaw.com)

**C. Richard Cranwell**  
Cranwell, Moore & Emick, PLC  
111 W. Virginia Avenue  
Vinton, VA 24179  
Tel. (540) 904-1621  
(888) 635-6304  
[www.cranwellmoorelaw.com](http://www.cranwellmoorelaw.com)

## WASHINGTON

*See Colorado*





# BENEFITS DIRECTORY

INSURANCE | CLAIMS | GROUP POLICIES | INFO  
HEALTH | RAILROAD RETIREMENT | PLANS  
PHARMACY BENEFIT

## UnitedHealthcare

### **National Plan** — GA-23000

Managed Medical Care Programs (MMCP) &  
Comprehensive Health Care Benefit (CHCB)

**1-800-842-9905**

[www.myuhc.com](http://www.myuhc.com)

### **Retiree Claims** — GA-46000

UnitedHealthcare

P.O. Box 30985

Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0985

**1-800-842-5252**

### **Retiree Supplemental** — GA-23111

UnitedHealthcare

P.O. Box 30304

Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0404

**1-800-842-5252**

## Aetna Healthcare

Aetna

3541 Winchester Road

Allentown, PA 18195

**1-800-842-4044**

[www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)

## Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

Railroad Dedicated Unit

P.O. Box 890381

Camp Hill, PA 17089-0381

**1-866-267-3320**

[www.bcbs.com](http://www.bcbs.com)

## Life Insurance

MetLife

P.O. Box 6122

Utica, NY 13504-6122

**1-800-310-7770**

[www.metlife.com](http://www.metlife.com)

## Vision Service Plan

EyeMed

Member Support

**1-855-212-6003**

[www.eyemedvisioncare.com/railroad](http://www.eyemedvisioncare.com/railroad)

## Union Plus

Mortgage (Wells Fargo) • AT&T Discount

Credit Card • Scholarships and much more

[www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org)

## Mental Health and Substance Abuse Benefits

For treatment, claims or inquiries call:

United Behavioral Health

**1-866-850-6212**

[www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com)

Access code: Railroad

## Supplemental Sickness Benefits Under Group Policy No. R-5000

Aetna

P.O. Box 189145

Plantation, FL 33318-9145

**1-800-205-7651** • Fax: 954-452-4124

You may file online at: [www.wkabsystem.com](http://www.wkabsystem.com)

Company identifier: RR

## Dental Benefits under Group Policy No. GP-12000

Aetna

P.O. Box 14094

Lexington, KY 40512-4094

**1-877-277-3368**

[www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)

## Managed Pharmacy Benefit Express Scripts

Retail pharmacy network provides medication  
for acute, short-term care.

Mail-order prescription service provides  
medication for chronic, long-term care.

UnitedHealthcare Plans GA-23000 and  
GA-46000

**1-800-842-0070**

[www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com)

## Railroad Retirement Board

**1-877-772-5772** — Automated Help Line

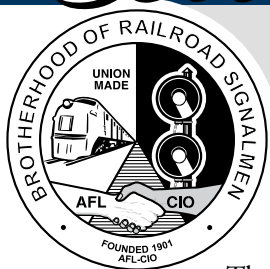
[www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov)

## Railroad Info — Your Track to Health

[www.yourtracktohealth.com](http://www.yourtracktohealth.com)

(Note: Information on this site does not  
apply to Amtrak employees)

# Continuous Membership



*The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, in recognition of BRS members' contributions to the Signalman's craft and their dedication to the principle of trade unionism, has established a Continuous Service program to honor longtime BRS members. Continuous Service lapel pins are presented to members every five years, beginning with their 25th year of membership.*

The following is a list of the active members who recently received Continuous Service pins in recognition of their years as BRS Members:

## 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

GL Peterson	8
TE Campbell	49
DE Selby	49
BJ O'Bryan	67
RG Hughes	121
CC Haywood	183
JE Abbott	185

## 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

BW Rock	5
JR Keen, Jr.	16
RH Brown	48
TR Clark	55
TP Diven	65

## 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

JK Sheehy	72
MJ Wannat	102
MG Garrett	106
WF Jones	121
P Jody	172
MA Morris	172
LJ Mullins	176
KD Harris	183
LO Carraway	208
PR Danaher	225

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

RL Bolesta	16
FS Eddins, Jr.	16

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

RJ Nagle	18
ES Van Pelt	84
MC Armstrong	102
RL Ross	120
TO Winterrowd	129
JR Rivera	153

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

JT Carman	8
SW Copeland	16
TK Fornshell	16
BL Hines	16
WO Mitchell	31
EJ Marshall	33
BR McCool	33
GL Sanner	33
JR Skinner	33
MD Alkire	65

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

EL Mitchell	72
DL Roulston	72
TW Wooten	72
HJ Buhrman	81
GL Hals	87
PD Elrod	106
TB Wolsleben	119
KD Land	121
BK Wallace	121
RS Pippin	129
WD Holmblad	154
MW Hughes	155
CS Lassiter	155
CA Walker	155
KF McInerney	156
BJ Fasching	173
CE Rowden, II	188

## DID YOU KNOW?

### TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION — \$236.339 MECHANICAL LOCKING, MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

Locking and connections shall be maintained so that, when a lever or latch is mechanically locked the following will be prevented:

(a) *Mechanical machine*—(1) *Latch-operated locking*. Raising lever latch block so that bottom thereof is within three-eighths inch of top of quadrant.

(2) *Lever-operated locking*. Moving lever latch block more than three-eighths inch on top of quadrant.

(b) *Electromechanical machine*—(1) *Lever moving in horizontal plane*. Moving lever more than five-sixteenths inch when in normal position or more than nine-sixteenths inch when in reverse position.

(2) *Lever moving in arc*. Moving lever more than 5 degrees.

(c) *Power machine*—(1) *Latch-operated locking*. Raising lever latch block to that bottom thereof is within seven thirty-seconds inch of top of quadrant.

(2) *Lever moving in horizontal plane*. Moving lever more than five-sixteenths inch when in normal position or more than nine-sixteenths inch when in reverse position.

(3) *Lever moving in arc*. Moving lever more than 5 degrees. ■

## WHAT IS HEART DISEASE?

# Tips to Help Keep Your Health on Track!



Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. More than 600,000 Americans die of heart disease each year. That's one in every four deaths in this country.

The term "heart disease" refers to several types of heart conditions. The most common type is coronary artery disease, which can cause heart attack. Other kinds of heart disease may involve the valves in the heart, or the heart may not pump well and cause heart failure. Some people are born with heart disease.

### Are you at risk?

Anyone, including children, can develop heart disease. It occurs when a substance called plaque builds up in your arteries. When this happens, your arteries can narrow over time, reducing blood flow to the heart.

Smoking, eating an unhealthy diet, and not getting enough exercise all increase your risk for having heart disease. Having high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes also can increase your risk for heart disease.

Having high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes also can increase your risk for heart disease. Ask your doctor about preventing or treating these medical conditions.

### What are the signs and symptoms?

The symptoms vary depending on the type of heart disease. For many people, chest discomfort or a heart attack is the first sign.

Someone having a heart attack may experience several symptoms, including:

- Chest pain or discomfort that doesn't go away after a few minutes.
- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck, or back.
- Weakness, light-headedness, nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), or a cold sweat.
- Pain or discomfort in the arms or shoulder.
- Shortness of breath.

If you think that you or someone you know is having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately.

### How is heart disease diagnosed?

Your doctor can perform several tests to diagnose heart disease, including chest X-rays, coronary angiograms, electrocardiograms (ECG or EKG), and exercise stress tests. Ask your doctor about what tests may be right for you.

### Can it be prevented?

You can take several steps to reduce your risk for heart disease:

- Don't smoke. CDC's Office on Smoking and Health website has information on quitting smoking.  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)
- Maintain a healthy weight. CDC's Healthy Weight website includes information and tools to help you lose weight.  
[www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html)
- Eat a healthy diet. Tips on reducing saturated fat in your diet are available on the website for CDC's Division for Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity.  
[www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html)
- Exercise regularly. Visit CDC's Physical Activity website for more information on being active.  
[www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html)

Prevent or treat your other health conditions, especially high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.

### How is it treated?

If you have heart disease, lifestyle changes, like those just listed, can help lower your risk for complications. Your doctor also may prescribe medication to treat the disease. Talk with your doctor about the best ways to reduce your heart disease risk. ■



# OBITUARIES

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**GEORGE A. AKULIS**—retired member of **LOCAL 75**. Brother Akulis retired in 1998 after 38 years of service with the Delaware & Hudson and Canadian Pacific Railroads. Brother Akulis was a Signal Maintainer at Nineveh, New York, at the time of his retirement. Brother Akulis served as Local Recording Secretary. Brother Akulis is a U.S. Army Veteran who served from 1961 to 1963 in a tank division in Germany.

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**N.E. BEESON**—retired member of **LOCAL 55**. Brother Beeson retired in 1993 after 43 years of service with the Wabash Railroad and Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Beeson was a Signal Maintainer at Danville, Illinois, at the time of his retirement. Brother Beeson served as Local Trustee.

---

**THOMAS A. BOLES**—retired member of **LOCAL 174**. Brother Boles retired in 1992 after 38 years of service with the Chicago & Eastern Illinois, Missouri Pacific, and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Boles was an Electronic Technician at Chester, Illinois, at the time of his retirement. Brother Boles is a U.S. Army Veteran.

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**JAMES A. CAMPBELL**—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Campbell retired in 2005 after 10 years of service with New Jersey Transit and Amtrak. Brother Campbell was a Signal Maintainer at Hammonton, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

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**MICHAEL A. CASTALDI**—retired member of **LOCAL 106**. Brother Castaldi retired in 1987 after 37 years of service with Amtrak. Brother Castaldi was the Downs Section and Test Maintainer at Downingtown, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Castaldi is a U.S. Army Veteran who served during WWII.

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**FREDE L. CASTLEBERRY**—retired member of **LOCAL 172**. Brother Castleberry retired in 1988 after 38 years of service with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. Brother Castleberry was a Signal Maintainer at Yucca, Arizona, at the time of his retirement. Brother Castleberry served as Local Recording-Financial Secretary.

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**GERALD L. CATHELL, JR.**—retired member of **LOCAL 31**. Brother Cathell retired in 2016 after 30 years of service with the Baltimore & Ohio Railway and CSX Transportation. Brother Cathell was a Signal Inspector at Keyser, West Virginia, at the time of his retirement.

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**M.W. DAHLSTROM**—retired member of **LOCAL 154**. Brother Dahlstrom retired in 1999 after 42 years of service with the Northern Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railway Company. Brother Dahlstrom was a Signal Inspector at Grand Forks, North Dakota, at the time of his retirement.

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**WILLIAM M. DEAREN, JR.**—retired member of **LOCAL 182**. Brother Dearen retired in 2008 after 35 years of service with the Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Dearen was a Relief Maintainer at El Paso, Texas, at the time of his retirement. Brother Dearen served as Local Chairman.

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**FRENCHY S. HILL**—retired member of **LOCAL 208**. Brother Hill retired in 1992 after 39 years of service with the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway; Louisville & Nashville Railroad; and CSX Transportation. Brother Hill was a Signal Maintainer at Ringgold, Georgia, at the time of his retirement. Brother Hill served as Local President.

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**MARION "BUCK" G. HUDSON**—retired member of **LOCAL 18**. Brother Hudson retired in 1996 after 41 years of service with the Pennsylvania and Penn Central Railroads, Conrail, and Amtrak. Brother Hudson was a Signal Test Maintainer at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement.

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**PHILIP F. KAMINSKI**—retired member of **LOCAL 225**. Brother Kaminski retired in 2007 after 38 years of service with the Penn Central Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Kaminski was a Foreman at Buffalo, New York, at the time of his retirement. Brother Kaminski served as Local President.

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**STANLEY A. KIRKEENG**—retired member of **LOCAL 156**. Brother Kirkeeng retired in 1995 after 24 years of service with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. Brother Kirkeeng was a Signal Maintainer at Cadiz, California, at the time of his retirement. Brother Kirkeeng is a U.S. Navy Veteran who served during the Korean War.

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**GEORGE A. KNOTHE**—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Knothe retired in 1981 after 40 years of service with the Erie and Erie Lackawanna Railroads, and Conrail. Brother Knothe was an Assistant Signal Inspector at Paterson, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement. Brother Knothe served as Local President and Local Chairman.

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**BERTRAM F. PENNELL**—retired member of **LOCAL 115**. Brother Pennell retired in 1986 after 39 years of service with the Maine Central Railroad. Brother Pennell was a Leading Signal Maintainer at Richmond, Maine, at the time of his retirement.

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**HENRY T. REEVES**—retired member of **LOCAL 11**. Brother Reeves retired in 1989 after 45 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Reeves was a Signal Maintainer at Americus, Georgia, at the time of his retirement.

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**OLEN B. ROSS**—retired member of **LOCAL 71**. Brother Ross retired in 1986 after 43 years of service with the Louisville & Nashville and Seaboard System Railroads, and CSX Transportation. Brother Ross was a Signalman at Nashville, Tennessee, at the time of his retirement. Brother Ross served as Recording-Financial Secretary and Local Trustee. Brother Ross is a U.S. Navy Veteran who served in the South Pacific Theater during WWII.

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**LAWRENCE J. SMITH**—retired member of **LOCAL 119**. Brother Smith retired in 2002 after 22 years of service with the Burlington Northern Railroad. Brother Smith was a Signalman at Alliance, Nebraska, at the time of his retirement.

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**ROBERT B. WYATT**—retired member of **LOCAL 57**. Brother Wyatt retired in 2016 after 36 years of service with Conrail. Brother Wyatt was a Technician Specialist at Oak Island Yard, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

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## THE LARGEST ONE-DAY FOOD DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY

# Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

On Saturday, May 12, 2018, the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) will work to “Stamp Out Hunger” during its annual national food drive.

It's easy for you to

make a difference. Simply place non-perishable, non-breakable food items near your mail box for your letter carrier to pick up on May 12.

Over the last 25 years, the NALC has conducted an annual nationwide food drive using the unparalleled postal networks, letter carriers collect non-perishable food donations as they deliver mail along their postal routes. This drive has successfully helped feed the hungry in over 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. Food banks literally circle the second Saturday in May on their calendars because they know NALC workers will be filling their shelves with much needed donations. All donations stay within the local area where they are donated; and, with the need for

food assistance at all-time high, union workers and their families are encouraged to support NALC in this effort to help others.

The 25th annual food drive in 2017 collected 75 million pounds, the third-highest total in the event's history. Combined with 2016's record of 80.1 million pounds, made for a two-year total of 155 million pounds — the highest back-to-back total in the drive's history.

The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive began with, and has continued to work toward, a singular goal over the years, to help those in need in our own communities. This mammoth food drive takes more than a full year to plan and organize, it's one of the toughest days of the year, but it's also one of the most gratifying.

Remember, the people who need help are not unlike your own family, immediate or extended. They are working families, the elderly and children. They are the families of those actively serving in the military. They are single parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, parents dealing with a child's serious health condition and families in which a parent has lost a job. These are folks doing everything ‘right’, often working more than one job, but still unable to make ends meet. ■

## 2018 Standard Mileage Rate

The Internal Revenue Service announced the mileage rates for 2018.

The 2018 standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service will be 54.5 cents per mile effective January 1, 2018. Please use this rate when calculating mileage reimbursement on expense reports for 2018.

While gasoline is a significant factor in the mileage figure, other items enter

into the calculation of mileage rates, such as depreciation and insurance and other fixed and variable costs.

The mileage rate is used to compute the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business use in lieu of tracking actual costs. This rate is also used as a benchmark by the federal government and many businesses to reimburse their employees for mileage. ■

# SIGNALMAN'S STORE

**BRS WATCHES** — Gold BRS logo on the face.

**CAPS** — Adjustable headband. Many different styles and colors available.

**NAVY WINDSHIRT** — 100% polyester microfiber with 100% nylon taffeta lining. Includes side seam pockets.

**OXFORD SHIRTS** — Long-sleeve dress shirts contain a double yoke, button-down banded collar, and dress placket with pearl-tone buttons. Constructed from a blend of 60% cotton and 40% polyester material.

**GOLF SHIRTS** — are constructed from wrinkle resistant, snag-proof, fade resistant material.

**CANVAS COAT** — Made of 100% cotton canvas with BRS colorlight logo embroidered in red and green. Available in black or brown.

**WOOL/LEATHER BRS JACKETS** — Heavyweight wool shell, nylon lining, with leather sleeves and collar. Embroidered four-color BRS emblem. Available in black only.

**SAFETY KNIT BEANIE** — Made of 100% acrylic with 3M Reflective Thread Band, approximately 8½" long. Lime green/reflective, one size fits all.

**Make check or money order payable to:**  
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

**MAIL PAYMENT AND ORDER TO:**  
Signalman's Store Fulfillment  
4801 Viewpoint Place  
Cheverly, MD 20781

ITEM DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
BRS Flag (3' x 5')		85.00	
BRS Flag (2'x3')		53.50	
Golf Balls (pack of 3)		9.75	
Coffee Mug		8.00	
Pocket Watch		94.50	
Wrist Watch		115.50	
Mantle/Desk Clock		132.00	

HATS	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Cap (pink)		16.00	
Cap (black w/colorlight on brim)		18.00	
Cap (black w/BRS on brim)		14.00	
Cap (black)		11.00	
Cap (blue)		11.00	
Cap (gray)		11.00	
Safety Beanie (lime green)		17.00	
Cap (black dye sub)		18.00	
Cap (brown diamond plate)		18.00	

APPAREL	S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
Signal Graphic T-Shirt								14.00	
Union Strong T-Shirt (navy)								16.00	
Union Strong T-Shirt (charcoal)								16.00	
Golf Shirt (black w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (navy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo)								37.50	
Oxford Dress Shirt (blue)								48.00	
Oxford Dress Shirt (gray)								48.00	
Oxford Dress Shirt (white)								48.00	
Navy Windshirt								60.75	
Black Wool & Leather Coat								195.00	
Black Canvas Coat								85.00	
Brown Canvas Coat								85.00	

CLEARANCE ITEMS	S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
Black Sweatshirt (quarter zip)								35.00	
Blue Jacket								53.00	
Available sizes in un-shaded boxes								<b>TOTAL</b>	

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ CERTIFICATE # \_\_\_\_\_

ORDER ONLINE AT [WWW.BRS.ORG](http://WWW.BRS.ORG)



# SIGNALMAN'S STORE



CHARCOAL



NAVY

## UNION STRONG T-SHIRT

Graphic Shown Imprinted on Back of Shirt



BLUE



WHITE



GRAY

## OXFORD SHIRTS



## GRAPHIC T-SHIRT



## WRIST WATCH



## BROWN CANVAS COAT



## BLACK WOOL & LEATHER COAT



## BLACK CANVAS COAT



## POCKET WATCH



## WINDSHIRT



BURGUNDY\*



BLACK



NAVY



STEEL BLUE

## GOLF SHIRTS (\*Women's sizes available in Burgundy only)



## SAFETY KNIT BEANIE



**\$35**

## CLEARANCE ITEMS

Black Sweatshirt ..... ~~\$42.00~~ \$35.00

Blue Jacket ..... ~~\$63.00~~ \$53.00



**\$53**



## FLAG



## ASSORTED CAPS



**NEW  
Designs**



## MANTLE CLOCK

# AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS



## HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

### SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

Please support the workers in these hotels by continuing to boycott the following properties:

- New York: Hilton Albany
- ANCHORAGE, AK: Hilton; Sheraton
- CALIFORNIA: Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Hyatt Regency Sacramento, Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf San Francisco, Hilton Long Beach, Le Meridien San Diego, Hilton LAX—*This includes the Crowne Plaza Hotel LAX, Yokoso Sushi Bar, the Landing Restaurant, Century Taproom, and the Boulevard Market Cafe.*
- SEATTLE: Grand Hyatt Seattle and Hyatt at Olive 8 Seattle

## OTHER

**SUBMITTED BY Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)**

- Reynolds American, Inc., Vuse e-cigarettes

## FOOD

**SUBMITTED BY United Steelworkers (USW)**

- PALERMO PIZZA

**SUBMITTED BY Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM)**

- Mondelez International Snack Foods (those made in Mexico)

## LEGAL

**SUBMITTED BY American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees**

- Gleason, Dunn, Walsh & O'Shea
- McDonald, Lamond, Canzoneri and Hickernell

When some labor disputes with businesses cannot be resolved, the AFL-CIO supports its affiliates by endorsing their boycotts. A boycott is an act of solidarity by voluntarily abstaining from the purchase or use of a product or service.

## POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

### THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:

- All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union.
- Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.
- Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.
- The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.
- Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

*(These guidelines were adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)*



# NATIONAL AGREEMENT MEETINGS

POOLER, GEORGIA — LOCAL 16 .....



READING, PENNSYLVANIA .....



.....

OREGON, OHIO



.....

LEBANON JUNCTION, KENTUCKY







# NATIONAL AGREEMENT MEETINGS

## CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE • • • • •



## CHICAGO, ILLINOIS • • • • •



## MADISONVILLE, KENTUCKY • • • • •



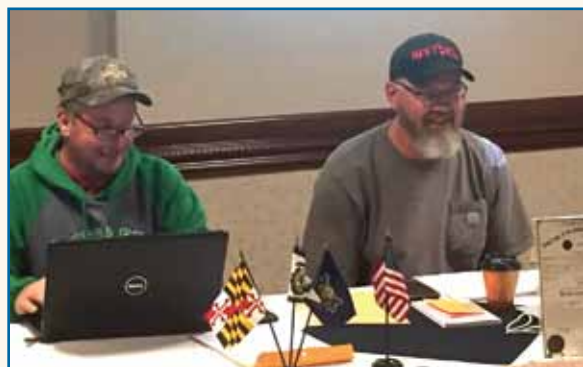


# NATIONAL AGREEMENT MEETINGS

FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA — LOCAL 138 . . .



BRIDGEPORT, WEST VIRGINIA . . .



WESTVILLE, NEW JERSEY . . .





# MEETING PHOTOS



## IC General Meeting

Marion, Illinois



## Local 132 Meeting



## Local 216 Meeting

Sandusky, Ohio





# PHOTO CONTEST

## WINNERS FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER 2018



*Signal Maintainer Gerardo Monge of Local 19 replaces a broken back-ground on a signal mast in Desert Hot Springs, California on the Union Pacific, Yuma Subdivision.*

*Photo submitted by: Isaac Andrade, Local 19 Local Chairman.*



*Johnny Velasco of Local 188 responds to a troublecall due to snow and frost covering signal lenses on the BNSF Railway, Northwest Division.*

*Photo submitted by: Johnny Velasco Local 188 Local Chairman.*



*PTC upgrade on the Paducah, Kentucky North Watts CP (Chiles Subdivision), including installation of new signal equipment and a 2-tier double stack top wall climbing up a 30' embankment to the rail. The work performed utilized multiple excavators, Hy-rail trucks, and several ground men from multiple locals.*

*Photo taken by: Foreman Kenny Hamm, Local 191.*

*Photo submitted by: Local 107 Recording-Financial Secretary Kyle Orr.*

*Left to right: Josh Jenkins, Local 107; Shane Tullis, Local 191; Julius Garner, Local 107; Kyle Orr, Local 107; Tim Crews, Local 191; and TR Windham, Local 107.*

MASSACHUSETTS

CHARLES RIVER BOSTON

2018

BRS

BACK  
BAY



REGULAR CONVENTION

SIGNALMEN

AUGUST 6-10

FREEDOM TRAIL

MAYFLOWER

"THE BAY STATE"