

The SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

VOLUME 101 • 2ND QUARTER 2020





UNION PLUS CAN HELP

COVID-19 has impacted all of us, **Union Plus can help.**

Our Union Plus program partners have accommodations for members struggling during this public health crisis. Participants in our Union Plus Mortgage, Credit Card, Personal Loan, or Supplemental Insurance programs may be eligible for additional hardship assistance through the Union Plus Mortgage Assistance Program and Union Plus Hardship Help.

Visit **unionplus.org** and follow Union Plus on Facebook at **facebook.com/unionplus** for ongoing program updates and resources.

Be well and stay healthy,

The Union Plus Team

Learn more at unionplus.org



The SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

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WWW.BRS.ORG

VOLUME 101 • 2ND QUARTER 2020



DIRECTORY

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS:
917 Shenandoah Shores Road
Front Royal, VA 22630-6418
(540) 622-6522 • Fax: (540) 622-6532
signalman@brs.org

Jerry Boles, President
(ext. 525) • jcb@brs.org

Mike Baldwin, Secretary-Treasurer
(ext. 527) • msb@brs.org

Tim Tarrant, Vice President Headquarters
(ext. 528) • tmt@brs.org

Brandon Elvey, Vice President NRAB
(ext. 524) • b.elvey@brs.org

Kurt Mullins, Director of Research
(ext. 572) • kmullins@brs.org

Quinn Norman, Grand Lodge Representative
(ext. 573) • q.norman@brs.org

Chris Hand, Grand Lodge Representative
(ext. 566) • c.hand@brs.org

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
815 16th Street NW, 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20006

Mike Efaw, National Legislative Director
917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630
(ext. 528) • mle@brs.org

FIELD VICE PRESIDENTS:

Joe Mattingly, Vice President Midwest
400 Contessa Lane, Trenton, KY 42286
(270) 466-0405 • jlm@brs.org

**Jim Finnegan, Vice President
Commuter/Passenger**
917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630
(540) 622-6522 (ext. 528) • jmfinnegan@brs.org

Cory Claypool, Vice President West
917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630
(540) 622-6522 (ext. 528) • clc@brs.org

Doug VanderJagt, Vice President East
917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630
(540) 622-6522 (ext. 528) • drvanderjagt@brs.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Gus Demott, Chairman
P.O. Box 888, Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 938-0353

John McArthur, Secretary
P.O. Box 960639, El Paso, TX 79996
(775) 846-1794

Chris Natale, Member
60 Oak Place, Babylon, NY 11702
(631) 587-0024

OFFICERS EMERITUS:

V.M. "Butch" Speakman, Jr., President Emeritus
14212 Viola Place, Huntley, IL 60142

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A reconditioned Semaphore Signal,
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COVER: Installation of a new signal in Waterloo, Iowa.

Photo submitted by Matt Lydick, Local 97 Member.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

——— *Jerry C. Boles, BRS President*

FACING THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES WITH

DIGNITY & STRENGTH



Brothers,

This has been a tumultuous year. The country is turned upside down from the deadly novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and our craft has not been immune. Despite the pandemic and declaration of a national emergency, our members continue to show up each day to ensure the safety of the railroad for trains and the traveling public, alike. As has become the expectation in the precision scheduled railroading era, the carriers continue to expect Signalmen to do more with less.

Prior to the novel COVID-19 pandemic, there had been coordinated efforts to relax or completely remove critical safety regulations. BRS has been doing everything we can to ensure that the life-saving regulations you work under remain in place, as well as actively working to strengthen protective benefits for members that may be affected due to line sales or potential mergers. We are vigorously working toward the goal of ensuring any new rail transportation start-up will be granted the protections and covered under the Railway Labor Act (RLA), Railroad Retirement Act (RRA), Railroad Unemployment Act (RUIA), and the Federal Employee Liability Act (FELA). There are entities out there wanting these laws weakened or done away with altogether. Without these laws, our job becomes more dangerous, with harsher working conditions. These jobs become about increasing profits for the carriers and stuffing the fattened pockets of Wall Street.

The Association of American Railroads (AAR), American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRRA), and American Public

“I want to extend my appreciation to the Signalmen who go to work everyday, no matter the conditions faced, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.”

— JERRY BOLES, BRS PRESIDENT

Transportation Association (APTA), have combined their resources and jointly petitioned the FRA for relief from a multitude of safety regulations. The FRA granted the mega-coalition of railroads the requested relief from safety regulations that provide protection to their employees and the general public citing that, among other reasons, a potential shortage in staffing due to COVID-19 and compliance with all federal railroad safety regulations could significantly hinder their ability to operate.

The BRS, along with a coalition of Rail Labor submitted comments in response to the FRA's decision to grant the waivers and requested a hearing

on such. Rail Labor requested, simply, that the many furloughed members be recalled before waivers are granted. My office continues to monitor the situation and will update you as we receive a response.

Many of you are familiar with the CARES Act, which provides over \$2 trillion in relief as the nation deals with the COVID-19 virus. Provisions of the CARES Act provides direct payments to American households, an expansion of the unemployment insurance program, small business assistance, and protections that ensure emergency funding is not used for stock buybacks and CEO bonuses. The emergency funding bill includes over \$100 billion specifically for transportation through direct funding and loans/loan guarantees, along with a number of key provisions for the railroad industry. The CARES Act provides railroad workers with the following:

- An enhanced Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) benefit of \$1,200 per two-week period, in addition to regular RUIA benefits.

- Suspension of the seven-day waiting period for benefits provided under the RUIA.

Additional highlights of the CARES Act include:

- \$1 billion in additional funding to help Amtrak respond to the COVID-19 crisis. (\$492 million to the Northeast Corridor and \$508 million to support its long-distance service.)
- A requirement for Amtrak to provide Congressional reports if employee furloughs occur.
- \$25 billion in additional funding for transit agencies (including commuter rail) to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Relief checks up to \$1,200 per person and \$500 per child.
- \$5 million in additional grant funds to the RRB to administer benefits under the RUIA.

While the CARES Act is a step in the right direction, there are more improvements to provide critical assistance necessary to rail labor. We will continue to put forth maximum effort toward getting a number of other items applied and adapted for railroad workers and railroad unemployment.

These efforts are focused on:

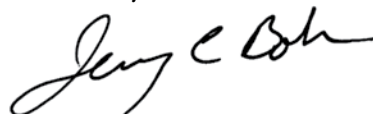
- Removing RRB benefits from the impacts of sequestration.

- Provide RRB with adequate funding to administer its programs.
- Parity for all railroad unemployment benefits.

There will most likely be at least one more COVID-19 package, if not more. The FAST Act is set to expire this year, and BRS is hoping surface transportation is a key focus in the next phase of Coronavirus relief. It is my belief that infrastructure is the best way to recovery, and BRS will continue to be at the table whenever it is discussed.

In closing, I want to extend my appreciation to the Signalmen who go to work everyday, no matter the conditions faced, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to recognize all the front-line workers — first-responders, nurses, doctors, grocery workers, truck drivers, and our fellow rail workers, to name a few — who continue to face this uncertain time with dignity and strength.

In Solidarity,



Jerry C. Boles — *BRS President*

DID YOU KNOW?

TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION

§234.223 GATE ARM

Each gate arm, when in the downward position, shall extend across each lane of approaching highway traffic and shall be maintained in a condition sufficient to be clearly viewed by approaching highway users. Each gate arm shall start its downward motion not less than three seconds after flashing lights begin to operate

and shall assume the horizontal position at least five seconds before the arrival of any normal train movement through the crossing. At those crossings equipped with four quadrant gates, the timing requirements of this section apply to entrance gates only. ■



FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mike Baldwin, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

COVID-19 LOCAL MEETING PROTOCOLS



We are continuously monitoring the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations, and we realize the impacts of this pandemic may require further guidance into the future. The BRS has adopted a policy as guidance for Locals on meeting protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local meetings are a vital component of our Brotherhood, and every effort should be made to keep them operational. Not only do local meetings allow us to conduct regular business, they serve as our forum to communicate with each other and to solve issues regarding the welfare of our Brothers and Sisters. The Grand Executive Council sincerely hopes this temporary policy will allow all BRS members the opportunity to participate in their Local Lodge meetings as we continue to stand united during this nationwide pandemic.

COVID-19 LOCAL MEETING PROTOCOLS

The BRS Grand Executive Council has established this temporary policy to ensure that BRS members have access to Regular and Special Meetings, as required by Article II, Sections 60 and 61, of the BRS Constitution.

The primary purpose of conducting regular and special meetings is for the transaction of business that legally and properly comes before it. Protocols to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 have been instituted in many states and localities, making it nearly impossible to conduct in-person Local Meetings. In response to these restrictions, the BRS encourages the use of video and/or audio conference calls to conduct Local Meetings remotely until the COVID-19 threat has passed.

The following guidelines apply:

- A true and accurate record of Local Meeting proceedings will be taken in accordance with Article II, Section 25.

- Quorum requirements mandated in Article II, Section 59, remain in place. However, members in good standing attending the meeting via video or audio conference call are considered in determining a quorum. The Local President must verify the members in good standing.
- The notification requirements mandated in Article II, Sections 60 and 61, are applicable. The Meeting Notice must contain the date, time, and video or audio conference call information.
- Local Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Article II, Sections 62–64, and in accordance with the Ritual, Article II, Section 73.
- Rules of Order under Article II, Section 65, will continue to govern. To maintain order, members should identify themselves to the Local President and only speak when properly recognized. Special consideration must be given by the Local President to ensure any member who wishes to speak is recognized.
- A Local is free to choose which video or audio conference call platform best suits its need to conduct remote meetings. Please see the attachment with video or audio conference call platforms recommended by the BRS.

The BRS has adopted the following regarding Regular Meetings:

The quarterly meeting requirement, mandated in Article II, Section 60, of the BRS Constitution is suspended for first and second quarter Regular Meetings in 2020. Each Local Lodge may elect to suspend or reschedule first and second quarter Regular Meetings as it deems necessary. While this is an election year for many Locals, you may meet the requirements of Article II, Sections 15–19, by accepting nominations by mail, if necessary.

The BRS has adopted the following regarding Local officer nominations and elections.

As referenced in Article II, Section 15, of the BRS Constitution, *“The regular triennial nomination and election of officers of Local Lodges and Local Grievance Committees shall be held between January 1 and October 15 of the election year.”* While these nominations normally occur at regular or special meetings (with 30 days’ advance notice), we realize the nomination and election of Local Lodge officers may have to take place through the mail if in-person meetings are not an option. These **nominations may occur through email** to the Local Recording Secretary, as well.

Nominations by mail are also referenced in Article II, Section 15:

Any member who cannot attend the meeting may nominate the candidates of his choice for Local Lodge officers by writing the Local Recording Secretary of his Local Lodge and advising him of the names of his choice for nominees. Any such nominations must be in writing and mailed to the Local Recording Secretary. The Local Recording Secretary shall stipulate in the nomination notice the last date for receipt of the nominations which may be mailed in by the member who cannot attend the meeting.

Article II, Section 15, also outlines how a member can vote by mail:

*“If a member cannot be present at the election meeting, he may request the Local Recording Secretary to furnish him an official election ballot which will list the names of all nominees for Local Lodge officers and the date by which it must be returned...If a Local so desires, it **may utilize a certified electronic balloting process** to conduct its elections.”*

Please see Article II, Section 15, for information on ballots in which

an office has more than one candidate listed. Article II, Sections 16–19, contain additional information regarding how the election should be conducted. Should a Local decide that it would like to utilize electronic balloting, UnionActive, the internet service provider that Grand Lodge utilizes, provides websites with electronic election capabilities that are compliant with Department of Labor requirements. **All elections under Article II, including Local Chairmen and Committeemen, must be by secret ballot, except where a candidate for office is unopposed.**

Grand Lodge is aware that this is an unprecedented and fluid situation, and we will be revising the above guidelines as necessary. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact us at (540) 622-6522.



UNION BROTHERS



Thank You

THIS SPECIAL SECTION
IS DEDICATED TO OUR
UNION BROTHERS
& SISTERS WHO HAVE
SERVED IN THE
U.S. ARMED FORCES.
WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SERVICE & THE FREEDOMS
WE ENJOY TODAY



BRENDON T. THORNBURG

BRS Local 228
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
INDIANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



DUANE MCGEE

BRS Local 129
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES NAVY



BILLY B. LAND

BRS Local 8
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



GUY GUENTHER

BRS Local 84
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES MARINE CORP



JEREMY DUREE

BRS Local 82
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

UNION BROTHERS



LARRY BLANKENSHIP

BRS Local 110
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



KEITH HARDMEIER

BRS Local 20
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES MARINE CORP



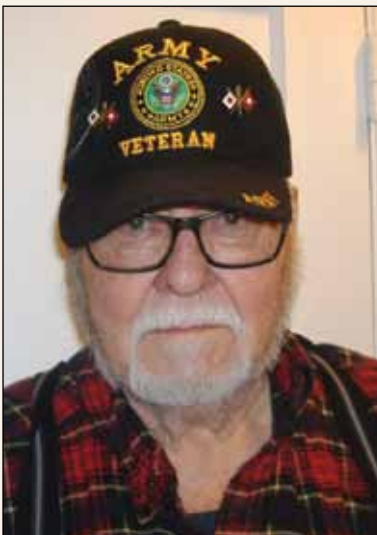
JOHN C. MCCALL, JR.

BRS Local 110
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



JOE RABINEK

BRS Local 31
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



MARTIN F. WHALEN

BRS Local 18
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



LONNIE BURNS, SR.

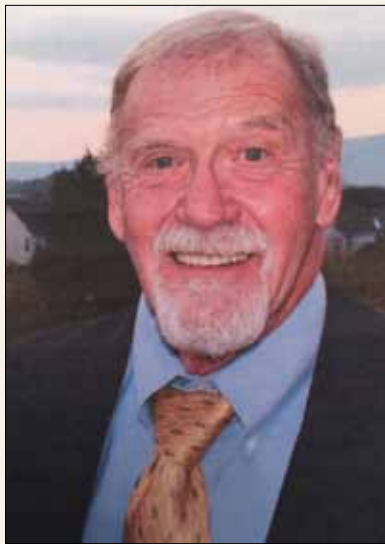
BRS Local 126
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

UNION BROTHERS



Thank You

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UNION BROTHERS
& SISTERS WHO HAVE
SERVED IN THE
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WE ENJOY TODAY



JOHN STOCK

BRS LOCAL 31
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



SHAWN ANDERSON

BRS LOCAL 225
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE



RICHARD SAMANIEGO

BRS LOCAL 156
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES NAVY



JOHN MORRIS

BRS LOCAL 56
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



HENRY GERTH

BRS LOCAL 39
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES NAVY

UNION BROTHERS



RICHARD REID

BRS LOCAL 236
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



JAMES NARBONE

BRS LOCAL 183
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE



LARRY HESTERLY

BRS LOCAL 129
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



ROBERT BURT



BRS LOCAL 93
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY



PAUL HAWKINS

BRS LOCAL 129
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES NAVY



PHILLIP O'LEARY



BRS LOCAL 102
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:
UNITED STATES ARMY

Agreements

PROVIDENCE & WORCESTER



On March 2, 2020, a new Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Providence and Worcester Railroad and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen became effective. After a long, difficult negotiations process the Agreement ratified by a sound majority. Below are some of the new provisions of the successful Agreement.

- Increased minimum pay rates for new and current employees, with clearly defined general wage increases.
- Overtime provisions for work beyond eight hours per day and forty hours per week.
- One-time signing bonus of \$5,750 (after taxes) for all active employees.
- Agreement to payment of previously accumulated comp-time.
- Improved 401(k) plan with match.
- Addition of five floating holidays per year.
- Clearly defined Scope Rule.
- New Job Classifications within the three defined Crafts, including three separate seniority rosters for each of the defined Crafts.
- Clearly defined Seniority Rules for each Craft.
- Improved contracting agreement with minimum workforce numbers by Craft, as well as furlough protections.
- A clearly defined Discipline Rule.
- A shorter Claims and Grievance process.

Congratulations to the members of Local 62. The BRS thanks all of those involved in the negotiation and ratification processes for your dedication and patience, without you none of this would be possible. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION

§236.310 SIGNAL GOVERNING APPROACH TO HOME SIGNAL

A signal shall be provided on main track to govern the approach with the current of traffic to any home signal except where the home signal is the first signal encountered when leaving yards or stations and authorized speed approaching such signal is not higher than slow speed. When

authorized speed between home signals on route governed is 20 miles per hour or less, an inoperative signal displaying an aspect indicating "approach next signal prepared to stop" may be used to govern the approach to the home signal. ■

Agreements

PADUCAH & LOUISVILLE RATIFY FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT



Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen represented members employed by the Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc. overwhelmingly ratified a new five-year contract on April 6, 2020.

The five-year Agreement became effective January 1, 2019, and provides annual wage increases of 2.75 percent, a \$500 signing bonus, and no retroactive health and welfare cost sharing. Other Agreement highlights include the ability to use one week's vacation in single-day increments for qualifying employees, carrier contributions into employee's 401(k) accounts, and annual increases to Signal Maintainer and Inspector meal per diems. Additionally, while out-of-pocket limits were increased for in-network services, current employee contributions, prescription co-pays, and deductibles

are frozen at their current levels during the term of this Agreement.

The Bargaining Committee consisted of General Chairman Brian Lowe, Local Chairman Danny Griffin, and Vice President Joe Mattingly. *"Local 46 members are to be commended for their professionalism, hard work, and unity displayed before, during, and after their contract negotiations. The vital safety sensitive services they provide day in and day out throughout the Kentucky Region of the Paducah & Louisville were key in reaching this agreement."* — Vice President Joe Mattingly.

The Paducah & Louisville is a Class II railroad that operates freight service between Paducah and Louisville, Kentucky, serving many industries including a military base.

SUMMIT SIGNAL, INC. RATIFY AGREEMENT

On January 29, 2020, a tentative Agreement was reached between Summit Signal, Inc., and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen. The tentative Agreement was ratified by a majority of ballots cast on March 13, 2020. Below are some of the new Agreement highlights.

- 15% General Wage increase through 2024.
 - 3% upon ratification for the current year.
 - 3% 1/1/2021
 - 3% 1/1/2022
 - 3% 1/1/2023
 - 3% 1/1/2024

- Per Diem when lodging is not provided increases from \$142.00 to \$165 dollars over the length of the Agreement.
- Per Diem when lodging is provided increases from \$40.00/day to \$50.00/day.
- Addition of Veterans Day to current Holidays.
- Increase in personal time from 16 hours to 24 hours.
- Addition of Grandparents and Step-Grandparents to Funeral Leave.
- Increase in show-up pay to four hours.

Thank you to all of those involved in the negotiations, and congratulations on a job well done.

SEMAPHORE

at Grand Lodge

In September 2016, BNSF Railway's Springfield Signal Shop reconditioned a Semaphore Signal and donated it to Grand Lodge. In the fall of 2019, our Grand Lodge Representatives drew up plans to install the Semaphore Signal, a weld shop built the reinforced frame work for the bolts that hold the Signal, the Representatives prepped the location and poured fiber mesh concrete. After a week of allowing the concrete to cure, the forms were removed and back-filled dirt around the slab. The Representatives assembled the Signal and bolted everything in place. We would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the BNSF Railway Springfield Shop for donating the Semaphore Signal, and everyone involved for completing the project. ■





Introducing myRRB

RRB.gov/myRRB



The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is pleased to announce the debut of myRRB — a new front door to its collection of online services. Previously known as Benefit Online Services, myRRB boasts a simplified, approachable design and integrates identity verification via login.gov to provide a more seamless and secure user experience. This marks the beginning of an exciting chapter for the RRB, using innovative solutions to meet the needs and expectations of the people it serves.

Like many agencies across the Federal government, the RRB is currently working through an extensive IT modernization initiative that will transform how it does business from the inside-out. The efforts will be ongoing over the next few years as the agency's core functions are brought into the 21st century, and in the process improve mission performance, expand service capabilities, and strengthen cybersecurity.

Those familiar with Benefit Online Services will notice that the same functions are still available through myRRB, and railroad employees who have been using a Pin Password (PPW) account to sign in may continue doing so for now. Because PPW account access will soon be phased out, employees are encouraged to start transitioning to the login.gov platform at this time.

What is login.gov?

Launched in 2017 by the General Services Administration, login.gov provides a single sign-on solution for government websites that enables citizens to access public services across different agencies using the same email address and password. Login.gov is currently helping over 15 million people keep their information safe across dozens of web-based government channels.

Why is the RRB using login.gov?

The RRB's partnership with login.gov allows you to conduct business quicker and easier than ever. The login.gov team created a system that meets the design, performance, and experience you are probably used to when signing in to check your email or bank statement. The RRB is also using login.gov to verify your identity and provide you with an extra layer of security to protect your personal information.

How do I access myRRB through login.gov?

Go to RRB.gov/myRRB and click on the button labeled SIGN IN WITH LOGIN.GOV at the top of the page. You will be directed to login.gov where you will be guided through the process of creating an account and verifying your identity — which takes about 20 minutes to complete. Once your identity is verified, you will be prompted to sign in to your account and then return to myRRB with instant access to our online services.

The next time you need to use myRRB, click on the same button to sign in with login.gov. After signing in to your account, you will be directed back to myRRB.

Need help with login.gov?

If you would like to learn more about the login.gov process, or if you experience problems while creating or signing in to your account, the RRB suggests browsing through the information available at login.gov/help. You can also request additional support from the login.gov team at login.gov/contact.

What's next?

As mentioned earlier, this is just the beginning of the RRB's concentrated effort to reshape the way it serves you. It's already making progress on the next phases of myRRB, which will introduce new self-serve options and add more enhancements to existing services. ■

Online Service Options | RRB.gov/myRRB

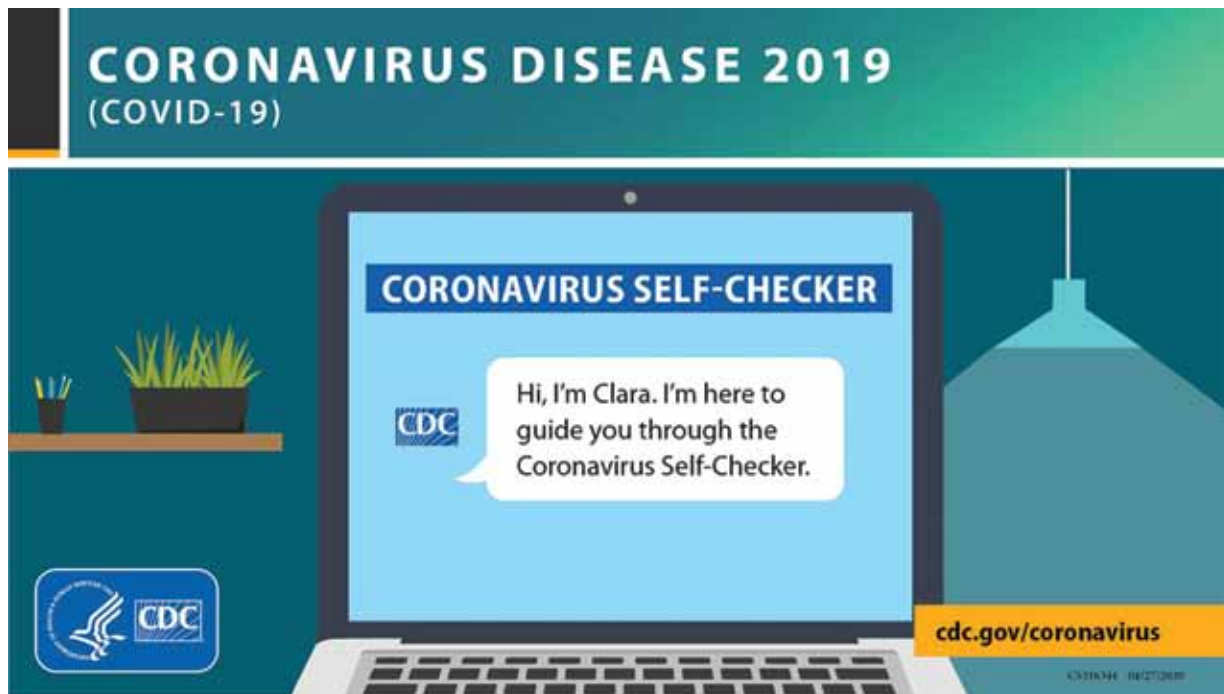
RETIREES

- **Request Documents** — If you lose your Medicare Card or need copies of personal documents from the RRB, you can submit a request to have any of the following mailed to you:
 - Replacement Medicare Card,
 - Duplicate Tax Statement,
 - Monthly Rate Verification Letter,
 - Service and Compensation History.
- **Online Bill Payment** — Pay your benefit bills with easy access to Pay.gov. Select the type of debt noted in the letter issued to you by the RRB:
 - Retirement/Survivor,
 - Medicare,
 - Unemployment/Sickness (for railroad employees).



EMPLOYEES

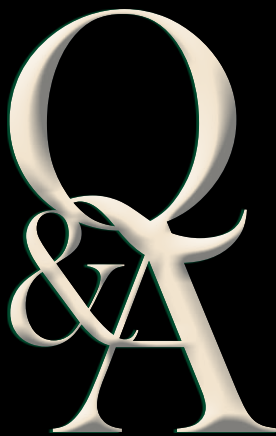
- Apply for Unemployment Benefits,
- Claim Unemployment Benefits,
- Claim Sickness Benefits,
- View RUIA Account,
- View Service and Compensation,
- Get Retirement Benefits Estimate.



Everyone can help prevent spread of #COVID19

Clara, the Coronavirus Self-Checker, can help you decide when to call your doctor if you are feeling sick. **Start using Clara here** —

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/index.html#cdc-chat-bot-open>



Unemployment and Sickness Benefit Flexibilities Under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA)

During the Coronavirus Outbreak — Updated May 1, 2020

The RUIA provides for payment of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to eligible employees for days of unemployment and for the payment of sickness insurance (SI) benefits for days of sickness. Provided below are some frequently asked questions regarding those situations in which benefits are payable during the COVID-19 outbreak and based on the recent legislation passed by Congress. Please note that the answers to these questions are based on the assumption that the employee meets all necessary eligibility requirements. Instructions on filing for benefits are provided following the questions and answers.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

1. **Q:** If my employer furloughs me, am I eligible to receive UI benefits under the RUIA?
A: Yes. An employee furloughed by his employer is eligible for UI benefits.
2. **Q:** If my employer offers me the option to go on voluntary furlough, will I be eligible to receive UI benefits under the RUIA?
A: No. In order to be eligible for UI benefits, an employee must not have left work voluntarily.
3. **Q:** What if I have the option to accept a voluntary furlough under a negotiated agreement with my rail employer and rail union?
A: If your employer and union have negotiated a special COVID-19 relief plan that you are eligible to join that delineates rights of furloughed employees, you may be eligible for UI benefits.
4. **Q:** How does the RRB determine whether employees will be eligible for UI under a negotiated plan?
A: The RRB will consider an employee to be eligible for UI while the employee is furloughed under a negotiated plan if the negotiated plan is the only alternative to an employer-imposed furlough. In other words, where an employee chooses to participate in a COVID-19 negotiated plan that includes a period of furlough, rather than be subject to an employer-imposed furlough, the fur-

lough under the negotiated plan will be considered to be an involuntary furlough for purposes of determining eligibility for UI benefits. Whether a negotiated plan may allow for UI eligibility for employees is fact-specific and determined by the RRB. If you are involved in negotiating a plan and would like to submit it for review, please send it to: LAWGroupMailbox@rrb.gov. Please remember, even if a negotiated plan may allow for UI benefits, the employee must still meet all other eligibility requirements for UI benefits, including not using any paid vacation days or personal days for the period claimed.

5. **Q:** If a state or local order to shelter in place restricts me from reporting to work, will I be eligible for UI benefits under the RUIA?
A: Possibly. Because of the vital role the railroads play, most railroad positions are exempt from such orders, and therefore, most railroad employees would not be eligible for UI benefits and would be expected to report to work. However, if you believe your position is not exempt from the order, you may be eligible. On your UI application or claim, you should identify which order you believe prevents you from reporting to work. A decision on whether you are eligible for UI benefits will be made by the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB).
6. **Q:** If I decide to self-quarantine due to concerns about possible exposure to COVID-19, but am not experiencing any symptoms and have not been told

by my employer to refrain from reporting for work, am I eligible for UI benefits?

A: *No. Among the eligibility requirements for UI benefits, an employee must be available for work. An employee who opts to self-quarantine is not available for work.*

SICKNESS BENEFITS

7. **Q:** If my employer instructs me to quarantine and not to report for work due to exposure or possible exposure to COVID-19, will I be eligible for benefits?

A: *Yes. An employee who is quarantined is not available for work, and therefore not eligible for UI. However, if due to exposure or potential exposure to COVID-19 the employee is instructed to quarantine, the employee would be eligible for SI benefits. A copy of the instruction from the employer will serve as proof of the medical restriction. If the employee does not have a copy of the instruction from his employer, or if the instruction was not written, the employee may submit a completed RRB Form G-93 describing the direction received from the employer.*

8. **Q:** If I report for work but am sent home by my employer because of possible exposure to COVID-19 through a coworker but I am experiencing no symptoms, will I be eligible for benefits?

A: *Yes. See the answer to Question 7.*

9. **Q:** If I am experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and I am subject to instructions from a health care provider or public health official to quarantine, am I eligible for SI benefits during the period of the quarantine?

A: *Yes. An employee unable to work due to sickness is eligible for SI benefits. A copy of the quarantine instruction will be acceptable proof. If the employee does not have a copy of the instruction, or if the instruction was not written, the employee may submit a completed RRB Form G-93 describing his or her symptoms and the instruction. The completed RRB Form G-93 will only be sufficient proof for one claim period. After the initial claim period, the employee will need to provide a copy of the quarantine instruction.*

10. **Q:** If I test positive for COVID-19, am I eligible for SI benefits?

A: *Yes. If you test positive for COVID-19, you are eligible for SI benefits. Documentation of the positive test*

should be submitted with your SI application/claim and SI benefits will be payable until your doctor releases you to return to work.

CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT

11. **Q:** Are there provisions which extend the unemployment periods for which UI benefits can be paid?

A: *Yes. The CARES Act amends the extended benefits to be available to individuals who received normal UI benefits during the period beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2020. No extended benefit period under this provision will begin after December 31, 2020.*

- *An employee with less than 10 years of service will now be eligible to receive up to 65 days of extended benefits within 7 consecutive 2-week registration periods.*
- *An employee with 10 or more years of service would be eligible for an additional 65 days of extended benefits, for a total of 130 days within 13 consecutive 2-week registration periods.*

12. **Q:** Are RUIA claimants eligible for the enhanced CARES Act payments?

A: *Yes, IF the benefits are UI benefits. The CARES Act provides a \$1,200 recovery benefit to a qualified employee for any UI registration period beginning on or after April 1, 2020, but no later than July 31, 2020.*

13. **Q:** How do I know if I am an employee considered qualified for the additional CARES Act payment?

A: *You are eligible for the special CARES Act payment(s) for registration periods for which (1) you are receiving UI benefits or (2) you would be receiving UI benefits if you had not already exhausted UI benefits for benefit year 2019. The benefit year for 2019 began on July 1, 2019, and will end June 30, 2020.*

14. **Q:** Does the CARES Act include a provision to waive the 7-day waiting period for UI or SI benefits under the RUIA?

A: *Yes. The CARES Act waives the 7-day waiting period for both UI and SI benefits under the RUIA for any registration period that begins on or after March 28, 2020, and ends on or before December 31, 2020. (Note, this is the only provision of the CARES Act that applies to both UI and SI benefits.)*

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

continued from page 17

- 15. Q:** Will the RRB be able to pay eligible employees the additional UI benefits and eliminate the 7 day waiting period for both UI and SI immediately?

A: *No. However, employees will receive retroactive payments of additional monies in the future. The RRB is working diligently to make the necessary adjustments to its applications and systems so that we can pay employees the additional benefits and eliminate the waiting period as soon as possible.*

- 16. Q:** Will I lose benefits which would have otherwise been payable to me during the time in which the RRB updates its applications and systems to implement the CARES Act?

A: *No. If you are eligible for RUIA benefits, you should file as you normally would and benefits will be computed and paid using the rules existing prior to the CARES Act. Additional benefits due under the CARES Act will be paid retroactively once the RRB's systems are updated to properly implement the provisions of the CARES Act.*

- 17. Q:** Are the benefits payable under the CARES Act subject to sequestration, similarly to other benefits payable under the RUIA?

A: *No. Benefit payments issued under the CARES Act are not subject to sequestration. Normal UI and SI benefits as well as normal extended UI and SI benefits will still be subject to sequestration.*

- 18. Q:** What are PUA benefits?

A: *The CARES Act created a new temporary federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). In general, PUA provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals not eligible for regular unemployment compensation or extended ben-*



efits, including those who have exhausted all rights to such benefits.

19. **Q:** If I am not eligible for or have been denied unemployment benefits under the RUIA, am I eligible for PUA benefits?

A: *Possibly. The PUA program is administered by individual states, not the RRB. For eligibility information, and to find the application process in each state, visit the Unemployment Benefit Finder at <https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/UnemploymentBenefits/Find-Unemployment-Benefits.aspx>.*

20. **Q:** Is the RRB going to pay the one-time-only economic relief payment available to individuals with income of \$99,000 or less and couples with income of \$198,000 or less?

A: *No. The Department of the Treasury will be responsible for making those payments. Additional information regarding the one-time-only economic relief payments can be found at the following link: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/economic-impact-payments-what-you-need-to-know>.*

FILING APPLICATIONS/CLAIMS For Benefits During the National Emergency Due to the Covid-19 Virus

- Railroad employees should sign up for online access through myRRB at RRB.gov. Employees can **file for unemployment benefits as well as complete claims for both sickness and unemployment benefits online.**
 - Employees can create a myRRB account by visiting <https://rrb.gov/Benefits/myRRB> and clicking on the button labeled “Sign in with LOGIN.GOV”. (See page 14 for more information)
 - Establishing a myRRB account gives workers a head start in the event that RRB unemployment or sickness benefits are needed by railroad workers in the case of carrier furloughs or illness. A myRRB account permits users to have instant access to: apply for unemployment benefits, claim unemployment benefits, view Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act account info, claim sickness benefits, and view service and compensation.
 - The following information is needed to create a myRRB account through login.gov:

- A current, state-issued ID;
 - An email address;
 - Enabling two-step authentication;
 - Providing basic information such as name, address, and phone number;
 - Social Security Number (SSN);
 - Address verification.
 - Once the user’s personal information is verified, login.gov will provide a personal key that will be needed to gain access and make changes to the account. This key should be written down and stored in a safe place.
- Employees who need to apply for **sickness benefits** can print the necessary forms. **The Application for Sickness Benefits (Form SI-1a)** must be submitted with the first claim. **In lieu of the Statement of Sickness (Form SI-1b)**, employees may submit a copy of the quarantine instruction or a completed RRB Form G-93 describing the quarantine instruction. The documents should be mailed as directed below, or as noted, may also be faxed.
 - If mailed, the completed forms should be mailed to:

**U.S. Railroad Retirement Board
PO Box 10695
Chicago, IL 60610-0695**

- Due to the unique circumstances we are faced with, the RRB will accept sickness applications via fax, which will be reviewed on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The fax number is: 312-751-7185.

— IMPORTANT NOTE —

Employees who are filing or claiming via paper forms through the mail and are experiencing significant delays should contact the RRB by phone at 877-772-5772 or by using the public e-mail address SicknessandUnemploymentbenefits@rrb.gov. Please note: Do not include personally identifiable information, such as an SSN, as this e-mail box is not secure.



Executive Agencies & The Working Class



MIKE EFAW
National
Legislative Director

This is a surreal time we are living in. The country is engulfed in the worst viral outbreak it has seen in over 100 years. The economy is showing its fragility, health-care systems are overburdened, and Signalmen are essential in keeping the nation afloat. Many Americans have become hyper-partisan or disenfranchised in our government altogether. One thing is certain, our jobs are drastically affected by the government. Regulation and executive order have tremendous impact on Signalmen's safety and the work we perform. BRS is working diligently to ensure that we are well-represented on Capitol Hill and lawmakers do not forget us, the essential workers, in legislation. Executive agencies are responsible for enforcing the laws we work under. We need responsible executive agencies to ensure that the laws put in place to protect us are being adhered to. The heads of executive agencies are appointed by the President of the United States. Regardless of political beliefs, the current administration has made life as a blue-collar worker in America much more difficult and potentially more dangerous. With this being an election year, it is imperative to be informed of how the administration and executive agencies are treating the working class.

It is imperative to be informed of how the administration and executive agencies are treating the working class.

Congress and Executive Agencies

President Boles, for the second time in less than a year, sent testimony to the House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials. You may recall, in 2019 he testified before Congress on the state of the rail workforce. Already this year, he submitted written testimony concerning grade crossing safety. His testimony focused on how technology cannot replace a highly-skilled, qualified Signal Maintainer/Signalman, Signal Inspector, or Signal Technician. He also testified that relaxing or undoing crossing safety regulations is a step backwards and that less onsite testing and inspec-

tions will result in more catastrophes, not less.

Additionally, President Boles has joined other rail labor leaders in penning a number of letters to congressional leadership and different federal agencies to protect the rights, safety, and wellbeing of all our members and all railroad workers. He was involved in sending letters to Senate and House leadership and Committee members, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and the

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) informing them of the importance of protecting our members in many aspects of our work and our livelihood.

The Current Administration and Labor

Labor continues to encounter challenges to every effort to keep the hard-earned benefits and protections that further the rights and voice of working people. Corporations are not looking out for our best interest. We only have benefits such as a contract, health and welfare benefits, vacations, pension, etc., because the labor movement fought for them. Below are just a few examples of this Administration's barriers to giving the working men and women of our nation a voice to be heard and the ability to gain strength through collectively bargaining for rights in the workplace. An extensive list of these attacks, and some examples of work in a non-union environment, will be made available on the BRS website.

Executive Orders:

1. The Obama Administration issued Executive Orders and regulations requiring government contractor bidders to disclose labor law and OSHA violations before getting a contract as a way of not rewarding bad actors and supporting law abiding contractors—these were vacated immediately after President Trump's inauguration.

1. The Trump Administration's general mandate to eliminate regulations—agencies are to drop two existing regulations for every new regulation—many regulations, including FRA regulations, provide for worker safety and other worker rights; this Order will impede issuance of new regulations and result in elimination of existing ones.

National Mediation Board (NMB):

1. A Trump-appointed majority adopted a new rule to make decertification of unions easier under the Railway Labor Act (RLA). The change has been long sought by the so-called "Right to Work Foundation" and Chamber of Commerce, but it has been rejected twice since 1985 (including after an extensive hearing).
2. New NMB opened a field investigation on whether UNITE HERE obtained authorization cards by intimidation and misrepresentation when the union had cards from 76% of United Airlines food service workers—an investigation was opened based on absurd allegations by United, like:
 - Workers were confused by the name of the Union—UNITE HERE and name of the company United—the union promoted the confusion—this is so ridiculous you might wonder whether a legacy airline represented by an experienced law firm actually argued this, but it did.
 - Workers were not fluent in English, so they did not understand the cards and materials; however, the union used multi-lingual materials and cards and United communicates with employees in English, including in anti-unionization materials; lastly,
 - 76% signatures must have involved improper union influence, because the percentage was so high.

This is unprecedented. If interference is found, the Board routinely deals with these claims after an election by re-running it; the Board rarely does field investigations on interference—certainly not on such unsubstantial and poorly documented claims.

Delay is a tactic of employers to use the time to erode union support by threats, propaganda, and intimidation. The RLA has a mandate for speedy elections but fewer protections for organizing than National Labor Relations Act.

3. The NMB appointed by former President Bush issued a proposal to require unions to pay fees for arbitrating, with a desire to reduce the number of claims it would have to pay for arbitrating, despite the statute that requires the government to pay the cost of the neutral arbitrator, the parties pay for partisan arbitrators and advocates. Government pay for arbitration was part of a deal by which labor gave up the right to strike over arbitrable disputes in the RLA. The overall effect would be to reduce small claims which, cumulatively, cost carriers. Rail Labor beat back that effort.

There were initial indications that the Trump-appointed members of the NMB were considering fees for arbitration of cases when they are submitted to the Board. After meetings with Rail Labor, the Board has back-burnered the idea, but it remains a threat as other agencies keep pushing for it.

4. By a 2-1 vote, with Trump appointees in majority, the NMB ordered SMART-TD to participate in the creation of a Special Board of Adjustment to hear a variety of crew disputes under multiple CBA moratorium provisions, despite no on-property handling (which is required for creation of a Special Board) and being completely separate disputes.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Department of Transportation (DOT):

1. Administration requirements for eliminating two rules for every new rule will mean either no new rules and/or elimination of rules. Specifically, for rail workers, these rules are to protect your safety.
2. FRA allowed BNSF to do tests of automated track inspection, where work is done by machines. This data is not read by rail workers; track safety regulation on inspections are suspended during test; frequency of inspections is reduced, all while rail workers are using lines during test of the effectiveness of the technology—putting workers at risk. Suspension was allowed after months of communications between BNSF and the FRA, and without any notice to the public or BMWED (the union representing track workers).

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OBITUARIES

JOSEPH A. BADAN—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Badan retired in 2017 after 31 years of service with New Jersey Transit. Brother Badan was a Signalman at Orange, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

ROBERT P. BOHAN, JR.—active member of **LOCAL 8**. Brother Bohan had 42 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Bohan was a Hump Yard Maintainer at the time of his passing.

ROBERT H. BRYANT—retired member of **LOCAL 72**. Brother Bryant retired in 1999 after 30 years of service with the Missouri Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Bryant was a Gang Foreman at North Little Rock, Arkansas, at the time of his retirement.

DENNIS V. BUTENSCHOEN—retired member of **LOCAL 183**. Brother Butenschoen retired in 2009 after 40 years of service with the Milwaukee Road and Soo Line Railroads, Canadian Pacific Railway, and Metra. Brother Butenschoen was a Signal Maintainer at Fox Lake, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

GEOFFREY T. CHRISTIE—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Christie retired in 2008 after 33 years of service with the New York and Long Branch Railroad, Conrail, and New Jersey Transit. Brother Christie was a Lead Maintainer at South Amboy, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement. Brother Christie served as Local Trustee.

WILLIAM B. COUGHLIN—retired member of **LOCAL 5**. Brother Coughlin retired in 1992 after 40 years of service with the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad and Amtrak. Brother Coughlin was a Signalman at Springfield, Massachusetts, at the time of his retirement.

DENNIS A. CRANFORD—active member of **LOCAL 155**. Brother Cranford had 14 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Cranford was a Signal Maintainer at Spokane, Washington, at the time of his passing.

WALLACE R. DAY—retired member of **LOCAL 9**. Brother Day retired in 1992 after 43 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway. Brother Day was a Signal Maintainer at Escanaba, Michigan, at the time of his retirement.

BRIAN W. DOHERTY—active member of **LOCAL 120**. Brother Doherty had 31 years of service with Amtrak and Keolis Commuter Service. Brother Doherty was a Signal Construction Foreman at Somerville, Massachusetts, at the time of his passing. Brother Doherty served as Local Chairman, Recording-Financial Secretary, and Local Trustee.

RICHARD H. DRAXLER—retired member of **LOCAL 93**. Brother Draxler retired in 1989 after 44 years of service with the Erie Railroad, the Erie Lackawanna Railway, and Conrail. Brother Draxler was a Signal Maintainer at Elmira, New York, at the time of his retirement. Brother Draxler served as Local Trustee.

W.V. ENDECOTT—retired member of **LOCAL 129**. Brother Endecott retired in 1987 after 41 years of service with the Frisco-Burlington Northern Railroad. Brother Endecott was a Signal Maintainer at Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the time of his retirement. Brother Endecott served as Local Chairman.

ANDREW C. GRAYSON—retired member of **LOCAL 56**. Brother Grayson retired in 2017 after 30 years of service with the Long Island Rail Road. Brother Grayson was a Signal Inspector at Ronkonkoma, New York, at the time of his retirement.

JOHN G. HOLLIS—retired member of **LOCAL 56**. Brother Hollis retired in 2002 after 28 years of service with the Long Island Rail Road. Brother Hollis was a Signal Inspector at Babylon, New York, at the time of his retirement.

DONALD L. HORNING—retired member of **LOCAL 31**. Brother Horning retired in 1984 after 37 years of service with the Western Maryland Railway and the Chessie System. Brother Horning was a Signals and Communications Maintainer at Cumberland, Maryland, at the time of his retirement. Brother Horning served as Local Trustee.

PAUL M. IRACI—active member of **LOCAL 56**. Brother Iraci had 12 years of service with the Long Island Rail Road. Brother Iraci was an Assistant Foreman in Speonk Gang 57 at the time of his passing.

MICHAEL E. JAMES—retired member of **LOCAL 68**. Brother James retired in 2012 after 37 years of service with the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad and Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother James was a Signal Maintainer at Kankakee, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

BRUCE A. JOHNSON—retired member of **LOCAL 168**. Brother Johnson retired in 1996 after 42 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Johnson was a Signal Inspector at St. Paul, Minnesota, at the time of his retirement.

DONALD R. LARSEN—retired member of **LOCAL 154**. Brother Larsen retired in 1996 after 43 years of service with the Northern Pacific Railroad and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway. Brother Larsen was a Signal Maintainer at Superior, Wisconsin, at the time of his retirement.

CURTIS E. LEE—retired member of **LOCAL 126**. Brother Lee retired in 2002 after 35 years of service with the Southern Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Lee was a Signal Maintainer at Bowie, Arizona, at the time of his retirement. Brother Lee served as Local Chairman.

BILLY MCWHITE—retired member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother McWhite retired in 2013 after 37 years of service with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother McWhite was a Signalman at Jacksonville, Florida, at the time of his retirement.

OBITUARIES

JAMES S. MITCHELL—retired member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Mitchell retired in 2014 after 40 years of service with the Central of Georgia and Norfolk Southern Railways. Brother Mitchell was a Signalman at District Gang C of Georgia at the time of his retirement. Brother Mitchell served as Local Vice President.

ROBERT NAVARRA—active member of **LOCAL 102**. Brother Navarra had 29 years of service with Amtrak. Brother Navarra was a Signalman at Linden, New Jersey, at the time of his passing.

ALBERT L. ORENDORFF—retired member of **LOCAL 185**. Brother Orendorff retired in 1981 after 21 years of service with the Kansas City Southern Railway Company. Brother Orendorff was a Signal Maintainer at Shreveport, Louisiana, at the time of his retirement.

ROGER A. ORT—retired member of **LOCAL 72**. Brother Ort retired in 2013 after 40 years of service with the Missouri Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Ort was a Yard Maintainer at North Little Rock, Arkansas, at the time of his retirement.

KENNETH L. OVERHOLT—retired member of **LOCAL 8**. Brother Overholt retired in 1988 after 22 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Overholt was a CTC Maintainer at Green River, Wyoming, at the time of his retirement.

TONY A. PERRY—retired member of **LOCAL 10**. Brother Perry retired in 2017 after 40 years of service with Conrail and CSX Transportation. Brother Perry was a Signal Maintainer at Crestline, Ohio, at the time of his retirement. Brother Perry served as Recording-Financial Secretary.

GARY J. REYNOLDS—retired member of **LOCAL 104**. Brother Reynolds retired in 1980 after 12 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Reynolds was a Signal Maintainer at Los Angeles, California, at the time of his retirement.

ROBERT N. RIEDER—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Rieder retired in 1998 after 41 years of service with the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company and the New Jersey Transit. Brother Rieder was an Assistant Signal Foreman at Orange, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

ROBERT J. SAUL—retired member of **LOCAL 60**. Brother Saul retired in 2012 after 40 years of service with the Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation. Brother Saul was a Signal Shop Repairman at Jersey City, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

RODERICK D. SHININGER—retired member of **LOCAL 94**. Brother Shininger retired in 1989 after 45 years of service with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Shininger was a Signal Foreman at Willard, Ohio, at the time of his retirement.

JAMES M. “MICKEY” SNOW—retired member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother Snow retired in 2005 after 32 years of service with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Snow was an Electronic Signal Technician at Atlanta, Georgia, at the time of his retirement. Brother Snow is a U.S. Navy Veteran who served in the Vietnam War.

MARK A. STECKI—active member of **LOCAL 8**. Brother Stecki had 44 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Stecki was a Signal Maintainer in Nebraska at the time of his passing.

DAVE C. STUCKEY—retired member of **LOCAL 43**. Brother Stuckey retired in 1994 after 30 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway. Brother Stuckey was a Signal Maintainer at Boone, Iowa, at the time of his retirement. Brother Stuckey is a U.S. Army Veteran.

MICHAEL J. SWINDELL—retired member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother Swindell retired in 2011 after 41 years of service with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Swindell was a Signal Maintainer at Ludowici, Georgia, at the time of his retirement.

WALTER B. WALLACE—retired member of **LOCAL 77**. Brother Wallace retired in 2007 after 35 years of service with the Norfolk & Western and the Norfolk Southern Railways. Brother Wallace was a Signal Maintainer at Starkey, Virginia, at the time of his retirement.

C.B. WHAM—retired member of **LOCAL 110**. Brother Wham retired in 1992 after 36 years of service with the Southern Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Wham was a Traveling Signal Maintainer at St. George, South Carolina, at the time of his retirement. Brother Wham served as Local President and Local Chairman.



IN MEMORY
*of those who
are forever
in our hearts.*

EDITOR'S NOTE:
Please notify Grand Lodge of the
passing of BRS members.
email: membership@brs.org

WASHINGTON REPORT

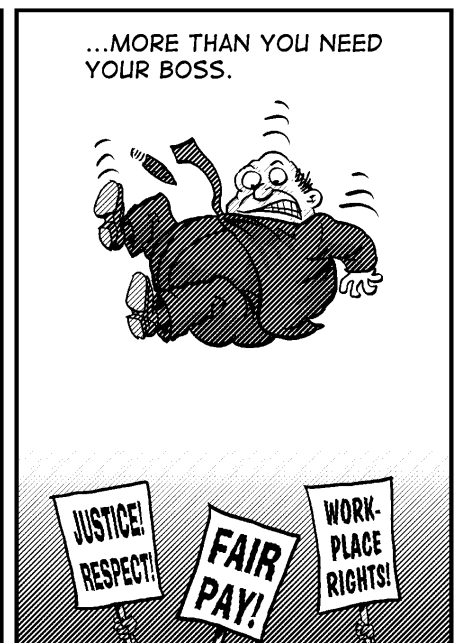
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3. FRA is promoting technology across the board, and offering regulatory relief for railroads that use technology to replace workers.
 4. FRA sided with Kansas City Southern (KCS) in a dispute with the BLET over KCS allowing Mexican train crews to cross the border to go into Laredo Yard, eliminating use of American train crews who would previously take trains over at the border. BLET sought Administration protection of American jobs, but it received no help. KCS is now pushing brake testing by Mexican workers.
 5. DOT reneged on commitment funding for the Gateway Project for repair and replacement of tunnels and related bridges between New Jersey and New York. This project is planned to fix and replace long-outdated infrastructure and infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The Gateway Project is essential for Amtrak and all of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. This project is also a source of much work for Maintenance-of-Way and Signalmen. When Congress—with a Republican majority—was preparing a multi-agency appropriations bill, Trump threatened a veto if it contained any funds for the Gateway Project. The compromise does not block the funding, but leaves it in serious doubt.
- company-controlled, arbitration where class action or even multi-employee group arbitration is prohibited and decisions are non-disclosable.
2. DOL is now promoting voluntary employer compliance with wage and hour laws, by self-audit, rather than enforcement.
 3. It overturned fiduciary rule that required investment advisors for retirement funds to act in the best interest of the employee/account holder, which prevents self-dealing. This Administration's DOL allows finance companies to have conflict of interest and put their interests first (like investing in stocks the company holds over stocks more advantageous to account holder).

Many considerations go into how people vote; some union members may have other priorities they find most compelling, and when voting you have to weigh all your concerns. This recitation is not attempting to minimize anyone's strongly-held beliefs, but the intent is to balance concerns. Please do not assume that the ultimate choices you make do not affect your livelihood, your benefits, your union, and its ability to effectively represent you. ■

Department of Labor (DOL):

1. It reversed the government position in the Janus case and supported the effort to overturn precedent on union security and represented employee obligation to cover the costs of bargaining and representation for public employees. It reversed position on an issue at the Supreme Court in EPIC case on whether employees can be bound by individual employment contracts mandating private,



In Memoriam

WALT LAUER • 1926–2020



Walt Lauer passed away on March 5, 2020. In 1944, Brother Lauer began his railroad career in the signal department with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in Lincoln, Nebraska. Brother Lauer spent many years in signal maintenance; his last being a Signal Inspector with the Burlington Northern Railroad. Brother Lauer served former Local 103 in the capacity of Local Chairman. Additionally, he served as General Chairman of the Burlington Northern General Committee, as well as Chairman of the Grand Board of Trustees. Brother Lauer was appointed to Grand Lodge to serve as the Director of Research. He then went on to be appointed Vice President of Headquarters in 1984, a position he remained in before retiring in 1991. Brother Lauer is a U.S. Navy Veteran and served in WWII.



DID YOU KNOW?

TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION

§236.308 MECHANICAL OR ELECTRIC LOCKING OR ELECTRIC CIRCUITS; REQUISITES

Mechanical or electric locking or electric circuits shall be installed to prevent signals from displaying aspects which permit conflicting movements except that opposing signals may display an aspect indicating proceed at restricted speed at the same time on a track used for switching movements only, by one train at a time. Manual interlocking in service as of the date of this part at which opposing signals on the same track are permitted simultaneously to display aspects authorizing conflicting movements when interlocking is unattended, may be continued, provided that simultaneous train movements in

opposite directions on the same track between stations on either side of the interlocking are not permitted.

Note: Relief from the requirement of this section will be granted upon an adequate showing by an individual carrier to allow opposing signals on the same track simultaneously to display aspects to proceed through an interlocking which is unattended, provided that train movements in opposite directions on the same track between stations on either site of the interlocking are not permitted at the same time. ■

BRS DESIGNATED COUNSEL

ON-THE-JOB INJURY | FELA | RAIL LABOR | INFO | LAW
RAILROAD SIGNALMEN | EMPLOYEE RIGHTS | CLAIM

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 (FELA) 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.

ALABAMA

W.C. Tucker, Jr.
Maples, Tucker & Jacobs, LLC
2001 Park Place North
Suite 1325
Birmingham, AL 35203
Tel. (205) 322-2333
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

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 Oceanside
Suite 1125
Long Beach, CA 90802
Tel. (562) 372-0506
(800) 552-7526
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.bmnlaw.com

COLORADO

Jeffrey Chod
Chod Law Office
P.O. Box 17727
Denver, CO 80212
Tel. (314) 541-5862
www.chodlawfirm.com

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

ILLINOIS

Daniel Petro
Petro Law Firm
3400 W. Stonegate Blvd.
Suite 2360
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
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(800) 472-5729
www.petrofelaw.com

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Chicago, IL 60606
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(800) 624-2121
www.ridgedownes.com

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Feldman & Darby LLP
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Lutherville, MD 21093
Tel. (410) 769-5400
(800) 248-3352
www.bsgfllaw.com

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See Minnesota

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Flynn & Wietzke, PC
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Garden City, NY 11530
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(866) 877-3352
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

PENNSYLVANIA

Michael J. Olley
Coffey, Kaye, Myers & Olley
Two Bala Plaza
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Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
Tel. (610) 668-9800
(800) 334-2500
www.ckmo.com

Don P. Palermo
Palermo Law Offices
111 North Olive Street
Media, PA 19063
Tel. (215) 499-2957
www.palermolaw.org

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Weldon Granger
Jones, Granger,
Tramuto, & Halstead
www.jonesgranger.com

TEXAS

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

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Brent O. Hatch
Hatch, James & Dodge, PC
10 West Broadway
Suite 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
Tel. (801) 363-6363
www.hjdlaw.com

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Vinton, VA 24179
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(888) 635-6304
www.cranwellmoorelaw.com

WASHINGTON

James K. Vucinovich
Rossi Vucinovich PC
1000 Second Avenue
Suite 1780
Seattle, WA 98104
(866) 357-RAIL (7245)
www.railroad-injuries.com

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:
Jerry C. Boles, President, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA 22630-6418

BENEFITS DIRECTORY

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

Your Track to Health

www.yourtracktohealth.com

Whether you want to better understand your plan and coverage, access a form, add a dependent, or research retirement benefits – it's easy to find the information you need on this site. (*NOTE: Information on this site does not apply to Amtrak employees.*)

UNITED HEALTHCARE

National Plan — GA-23000
Managed Medical Care Programs (MMCP) &
Comprehensive Health Care Benefit (CHCB)

1-800-842-9905

www.myuhc.com

Retiree Claims — GA-46000

UnitedHealthcare

1-800-842-5252

Retiree Supplemental — GA-23111

UnitedHealthcare

1-800-842-5252

AETNA HEALTHCARE

Aetna

1-800-842-4044

www.aetna.com

HIGHMARK BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
Railroad Dedicated Unit

1-866-267-3320

www.bcbs.com

LIFE INSURANCE

MetLife

1-800-310-7770

www.metlife.com

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE BENEFITS

For treatment, claims or inquiries call:
United Behavioral Health

1-866-850-6212

www.liveandworkwell.com

ACCESS CODE: Railroad

SUPPLEMENTAL SICKNESS BENEFITS UNDER GROUP POLICY NO. R-5000

Aetna

1-800-205-7651 • Fax: 954-452-4124

You may file online at: www.wkabsystem.com

COMPANY IDENTIFIER: RR

VISION SERVICE PLAN

EyeMed

Member Support

1-855-212-6003

www.eyemedvisioncare.com/railroad

DENTAL BENEFITS UNDER GROUP POLICY NO. GP-12000

Aetna

1-877-277-3368

www.aetna.com

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

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www.express-scripts.com

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1-877-772-5772 — Automated Help Line

www.rrb.gov

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Union Plus Mortgage Company • AT&T Discount
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www.unionplus.org

Continuous Membership

The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, in recognition of BRS members' contributions to the Signaller'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:

45 YEARS OF SERVICE		35 YEARS OF SERVICE		30 YEARS OF SERVICE		25 YEARS OF SERVICE	
PS Clement	53	SN Woods	31	VP Thomas	25	TA Namuth	8
MJ Fech	119	DL Roberts	33	JE Bennett	49	MA Meyers	40
		S Runci	84	DD McIntyre	49	RR Greene	56
40 YEARS OF SERVICE		RL Key	141	AB Shepard	49	GE Maddox	56
		JO Herren	158	JA Rogers	51	P Zielinski	68
WA Ludlow	18			KM Blevins	77	C Hughes	102
AJ Govednik	20	30 YEARS OF SERVICE		RG Jividen	77	BL Quick	119
BL Watkins	31	JP Avin	16	HL Carlton	94	GD Osborne	126
DG Welch	34	RE Deal	16	TD Childers	94	MK Anderson	129
DJ Heitert	55	SL Gaspar	16	MA Gray	94	KL Pincheon	129
CC Neel, Jr.	72	TC Harrison	16	PJ Aguirre	141	RL Parrott	141
LM Perry	77	KJ Koch	16	MT Smith	147	WA Sanders	179
AJ Costa	108	EC Stewart, Jr.	16	WJ Hill	154	DG Myers	182
JL Pratt	132	CE Stone	16	KW Bland, Jr.	206	A Burgos, Jr.	183
KD Shires	141	HW Strickland	16	JM Foster	206	JC Kaessinger	188
RB Haywood	183	WR Yates	16	K Kinchen	206	SL Schubring	188
MA Parsons	206	WJ Kosylo	18			HF Steensen	188
RJ Speegle	206	MR Heck	25			ES Krauzowicz	225
						JM Stahlman	229
						TJ Hannahs	237

The RRB Reminds Customers to Avoid Scams



The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is reminding its customers to use caution and common sense to avoid being the victim of a telephone or email scam. Should there be some type of issue with an individual's account

or benefits, the RRB will typically communicate with that person by sending a letter through the U.S. Postal Service. Such written notices contain contact information specific to each notice.

With the dramatic increase in “robocalls,” in which automated dialing systems can disguise their source or even impersonate other numbers on caller ID, the opportunities for fraud and identity theft increase. The danger is not limited to the telephone, as scammers also use email as a means of obtaining personal information or money from unsuspecting recipients, often by impersonating a government agency.

While the RRB may request certain personal information over the phone to verify a person's identity, RRB employees will never use threats to obtain information or demand payment in exchange for some official action. Similarly, they will not ask for a credit card number or demand payment in the form of cash, money orders, or gift cards. Asking for these types of payment is typical of a fraud, as these transactions are difficult to trace and often non-refundable.

If anyone pressures you to provide information or money over the phone, assume the call is fraudulent and hang up.

In addition to some of the previously described threats, emails often appear to be legitimate through use of seals or letterhead. And while misspellings or grammatical errors may indicate that an email is from a scammer, people should not assume that the lack of them makes an email legitimate.

There are steps that individuals can take to protect

their personal information from fraud. These include the following:

- If you get an inquiry from someone saying they represent a company or a government agency, hang up and call the phone number on your account statement, in the phone book, or on the company's or government agency's website to verify the authenticity of the request. (You will usually get a written statement in the mail before you get a phone call from a legitimate source, particularly if the caller is asking for a payment.)
- Store your social security card in a secure location and avoid carrying it with you.
- Shred documents that list personal information, including social security numbers, Medicare numbers, and bank/credit card information.
- Maintain strong passwords for online accounts and use anti-virus software.
- Avoid opening emails, links, or attachments from unknown sources.
- Promptly review any bank or investment account statements and notify the account manager of any unauthorized transactions as quickly as possible.
- If you answer the phone and the caller — or a recording — asks you to hit a button to stop getting the calls, you should just hang up. Scammers often use this trick to identify potential targets.

People should be particularly vigilant in the coming months, as scammers often impersonate employees of the Internal Revenue Service or state tax collection agencies during income tax season.

If you receive a suspicious phone call, simply hang up. Likewise, if you receive a questionable email, delete it without clicking on any links or opening attachments. If the caller or sender is impersonating an RRB employee, please report this behavior immediately to the RRB's Office of Inspector General by phone at (800)772-4258 or email at hotline@oig.rrb.gov. ■

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.

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	
Cap (black dye sub)		18.00	
Cap (brown diamond plate)		18.00	

APPAREL	S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
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	

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ CERTIFICATE # _____

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.BRS.ORG

SIGNALMAN'S STORE



CHARCOAL



NAVY



BLUE



WHITE



GRAY

UNION STRONG T-SHIRT

Graphic Shown Imprinted on Back of Shirt

OXFORD SHIRTS



BROWN CANVAS COAT



BLACK WOOL
& LEATHER COAT



BLACK CANVAS COAT



WINDSHIRT



BURGUNDY*



BLACK



NAVY



STEEL BLUE

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



ASSORTED CAPS



FLAG



POCKET WATCH



WRIST WATCH



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:

- 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)

- Palmero 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.)*

MEETING PHOTOS



Local 71 Meeting Madisonville, Kentucky



TRAINING PHOTOS



Local Chairmen's & Local RFS Training

Grand Lodge, Front Royal Virginia — March 2020 • • • • •



TRAINING PHOTOS



PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 2nd Quarter 2020

Members of BRS Local 188 make repairs to a slide fence after a major snow event in the Cascade Mountains in Washington State. The Signal crew consisted of: Kevin Agarpao, Edgar Holland, along with Ellensburg crew Signalman Nick Eldredge. Photo taken by Local 188 member Shane Taft.

Photo submitted by Kevin Agarpao, Signal Maintainer, Local Chairman, and Local President of Local 188.

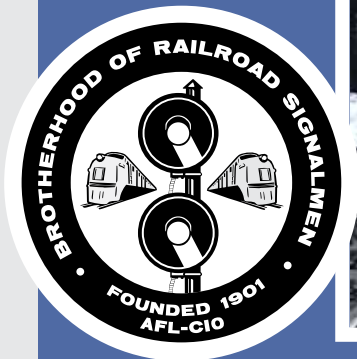


PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 2nd Quarter 2020

Rail grinder working on the Detroit Lakes Subdivision of CP Rail, in Henning, Minnesota.

Photo submitted by Trevor Shatek, Signal Maintainer and Local President of Local 226.



Photo of a double rainbow that was taken at the Twin Bridges Road Crossing, on the CSX Florence Division, Tarbaro Subdivision.

Photo taken and submitted by Ken Barber, Signal Maintainer and Member of BRS Local 16.



DO BUY

These vehicles are made in the United States or Canada by members of the UAW and Canada's Unifor union, formerly the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). Because of the integration of vehicle production in both countries, all of the vehicles listed as made in Canada include significant UAW-made content and support the jobs of UAW members. However, vehicles marked with a single asterisk (*) are also produced in Mexico.

All heavy-duty Chevrolet Silverados and GMC Sierras will be built in Flint, Michigan, only. Light-duty Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra regular cabs are produced in Mexico only. Vehicles marked with a double asterisk (**) are the crew cab versions of the Chevrolet Silverado light-duty and GMC Sierra light-duty trucks. Those are assembled by UAW members in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and also in Mexico.

When purchasing a vehicle marked with a single or double asterisk, it's important to check the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). A VIN beginning with "1" or "4" or "5" identifies a U.S.-made vehicle; a "2" identifies a Canadian-made vehicle; a "3" identifies a vehicle made in Mexico. Not all vehicles made in the United States or Canada are built by union-represented workers. Vehicles not listed here, even if produced in the United States or Canada, are not union made.

2020 UAW Union Built Vehicle Guide

UAW CARS

- » Cadillac ATS
- » Cadillac CT4
- » Cadillac CT5
- » Cadillac CT6 (excluding plug-in hybrid)
- » Cadillac CTS
- » Chevrolet Bolt (electric)
- » Chevrolet Camaro
- » Chevrolet Corvette
- » Chevrolet Impala
- » Chevrolet Malibu
- » Chevrolet Sonic
- » Ford Mustang
- » Lincoln Continental

UAW TRUCKS

- » Chevrolet Colorado
- » Chevrolet Medium-Duty Silverado
- » Navistar (regular and crew cab)
- » Chevrolet Silverado Light Duty (crew** and double cab only)
- » Chevrolet Silverado Heavy Duty
- » Ford F Series
- » Ford F-650/750
- » Ford Ranger
- » Ford Super Duty Chassis Cab
- » GMC Canyon
- » GMC Sierra Light Duty (crew** and double cab only)
- » GMC Sierra Heavy Duty
- » Jeep Gladiator
- » Ram 1500 (classic model — DS)*
- » Ram 1500 (new model — DT)*

UAW SUVs/ CUVs

- » Buick Enclave
- » Cadillac Escalade
- » Cadillac Escalade ESV
- » Cadillac Escalade Hybrid
- » Cadillac XT4
- » Cadillac XT5
- » Cadillac XT6
- » Chevrolet Suburban
- » Chevrolet Tahoe

- » Chevrolet Tahoe (police)
- » Chevrolet Tahoe (special service)
- » Chevrolet Traverse
- » Dodge Durango
- » Ford Escape
- » Ford Expedition
- » Ford Explorer
- » GMC Acadia
- » GMC Yukon
- » GMC Yukon Hybrid
- » GMC Yukon XL
- » Jeep Cherokee
- » Jeep Grand Cherokee
- » Jeep Wrangler
- » Lincoln Aviator
- » Lincoln Corsair
- » Lincoln Navigator

UAW VANS

- » Chevrolet Express
- » Chevrolet Express (cut-away)
- » Ford E-Series (cut-away)
- » Ford Transit
- » GMC Savana
- » GMC Savana (cut-away)

UNIFOR CARS

- » Cadillac XTS
- » Chevrolet Impala
- » Chevrolet Impala (police)
- » Chrysler 300
- » Dodge Challenger
- » Dodge Charger

UNIFOR SUVs/CUVS

- » Chevrolet Equinox*
- » Ford Edge
- » Lincoln Nautilus

UNIFOR VANS

- » Chrysler Pacifica
- » Dodge Grand Caravan