



# THE SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

VOLUME 103  
2ND QUARTER 2022





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Treat your pets right and support working families. This list of pet products are made by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM).

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- » Beyond Natural Cat Food
- » Purina Pro Plan Cat Food
- » Purina One
- » Deli • Cat
- » Friskies
- » Purina Dental Life
- » Kit & Kaboodle
- » Petivity
- » Pro Plan Veterinary Diets
- » Whisker Lickin's

## DOG FOOD AND TREATS



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- » Anchor
- » Bella
- » Purina Busy
- » Purina Dental Life
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- » Purina Prime
- » Purina Veterinary Diets
- » The Pioneer Woman Dog Treats
- » Trekker's Dog Chews
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- » Nature's Recipe
- » Purina Beneful
- » Purina Dog Chow
- » Purina Pro Plan
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- » Veterinary Specialists and Emergency Services (Brighton, NY)
- » Cara Veterinary (southwest of Seattle)



# The SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

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## APPOINTMENT AT

### Grand Lodge

Jeremy Farr — Grand Lodge Representative ..... 5



## UNION BROTHERS

A special section dedicated to our Union Brothers and Sisters who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces ..... 6

## Coordinated Bargaining Coalition National Negotiations

Collectively, the CBC unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by the various Organizations' National Agreements, and comprise over 80% of the workforce who will be impacted by these negotiations ..... 11



## Agreements

SEPTA Members Reach Agreement ..... 12

Alstom/Bombardier Transportation

MOW Employees Join the BRS ..... 12

In Memoriams ..... 13, 23

Retired Signalman, Eugene T. Frazier

Joins Allegany College of Maryland Board of Trustees ..... 14

RRB Resumes In-Person Service ..... 15

Did You Know? ..... 3, 15, 23, 27

Tips to Help Keep Your Health on Track! — Heart Health ..... 18

Photos — BRS Local 56 ..... 30

Photos — Local 106 Union Training ..... 30

AFL-CIO Don't Buy ..... 31

Local 123 Meeting Highlights ..... 32

Local 243 Meeting Highlights ..... 33

From the President ..... 2

From the Secretary-Treasurer ..... 4

Railroad Retirement Board Questions & Answers ..... 16

Washington Report ..... 20



Continuous Membership ..... 22

Designated Legal Counsel ..... 24

Benefits Directory ..... 25

Obituaries ..... 26

**COVER:** Installation of bridge signal with multiple signals, on the Napa Subdivision, Union Pacific Railroad, in Glens Ferry, Idaho. Photo submitted by Local 111 Member, Louis Thompson.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

— Michael S. Baldwin, BRS President

# *Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service*



*Brothers and Sisters,*

As many of you may have heard, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) held a hearing regarding “Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service” on April 26–27, 2022. The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen were represented by our General Counsel, Rich Edelman. Mr. Edelman gave testimony, along with shippers, rail customers, other Labor Unions, as well as the carriers. We have been telling the carriers, as well as government officials on Capitol Hill, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Surface Transportation Board, among others, for years that “Precision Scheduled Railroading” and like operating models, all commonly grouped under “PSR” are a problem for safety of our members, the

traveling public, and communities that the railroads traverse. As the cries of Labor have fallen on deaf ears, the hiring crisis, furloughs, and unusually large number of railroaders leaving the rail industry all together are finally getting the attention they deserve because of the ongoing supply chain crisis in this country.

The facts are, while railroads have been pandering to their shareholders on Wall Street, adopting the new cost-cutting business model, PSR, they dramatically reduced the number of Signalmen they employed. Since 2016, the number of Signalmen employed by each of the Class I railroads has fallen by more than 25% on average. Greg Regan, TTD President, testified regarding the reduction in railroaders across all crafts, saying, “*While the elimination of jobs across all crafts of the freight rail network has undoubtedly contributed to operational breakdowns and service degradation... Railroads have long engaged in a con-*

*certed effort to cut headcount to the absolute bone. They have created a degraded safety culture that has driven away long-time employees, and in many cases second or third-generation railroaders, who have chosen to walk away from what were ‘jobs for life’ in previous generations.”*

At the hearing, the Class I railroads claimed they are trying to fill positions and are having a difficult time doing so; they forget the tens of thousands of jobs they cut before the pandemic in order to lower their “Operating

Ratios,” to continually boost profits and the value of their stocks and executive compensation. Additionally, as they hire new people, the existing, experienced, employees are leaving, so the railroads are not growing their workforces. Some less experienced workers have been forced into difficult

positions and provided little to no support since, in many instances, management is inexperienced in signaling.

Make no mistake, the railroads do not intend to restore anywhere near the number of jobs they cut. While they can hire new employees, those employees will not soon compare in skills to those who were furloughed or left the industry. Training for work as a Signalman normally takes two years to fulfill the basic carrier requirement, and it generally takes about 10 years for a new employee to become fully proficient.

A full-time union officer recently shared a text exchange between he and a Director of Signal Maintenance, requesting that a model employee with 16 years of railroad service be reinstated just after signing a letter of resignation. The Signalman had changed his mind, and the carrier felt it was in the best interest of the company to move forward with the resignation of a seasoned and

***Brothers and Sisters, this fight for safety and in opposition to the PSR and similar operation models is not over, please continue to reach out to Grand Lodge with what you see each day from deferred tickets and other violations to concerns about your fellow Signalmen and the pressure they are under.***

fully trained Signal craft employee. The true crisis is in the unprecedented number of Signalmen who retire early or quit mid-career. Until recently, it was almost unheard of for Signalmen to quit after acquiring seniority and becoming vested in the industry; the jobs were always considered good jobs with good benefits. This is only one example of the dire situation across the railroad industry and a small show of how serious the carriers are about keeping quality, trained employees.

Some of the carriers also testified to the STB about how valued their employees were, yet cited confidentiality with regard to negotiating the national contract; the fact is, they continue to drag their feet and bring no serious offers to the table. Recently the carriers attempted to entice employees with a \$600 loan spread over eight months which would be deducted from their backpay when an Agreement is reached. This is another example of carriers' disingenuous position — instead of offering a loan, carriers should offer employees what they are owed for their hard work while working through a pandemic and avoid prolonging Negotiations since the mediation board could view this as progress, dragging out Negotiations for years.

Our craft and railroad jobs in general, have been degraded by the carriers with respect to working conditions and by pressure to work fast, cut corners, and ignore or defer repairs. Signalmen have reported they have been pressed to work too many consecutive days of overtime, which is damaging to their family lives. They cannot, in good conscience, continue to perform work under pressure to cut corners, defer maintenance, skip steps, and not work to the standards they were trained, and met, through their careers, until recently. As a result, the quality and adequacy of rail service ultimately suffers. Because our members cannot do their jobs properly, as they were originally trained, there have been and will be negative impacts on service due to deferral of maintenance and repairs, slow orders on tracks, signals not functioning properly, crossing gates down, derailments, and delayed pickups and deliveries.

We recently surveyed Local and General Committee officers on the impacts of the new business model. A very large majority of respondents say they have been adversely affected, and it has impacted their ability to do their jobs safely. Additionally, we received statements from active members and officers, confirming the data received through the survey. The PSR operation model, lack of pay increases, coupled with inflation, while the railroads continue to make record profits have contributed to the mass resignations and early retirements; former BRS members who recently left the craft also provided statements to

demonstrate the above to the STB. While the railroads tout their hiring plans, even if they meet their goals in hiring, that will not mean they will have restored their workforces to what is necessary to satisfy the requirements for safe and adequate rail service.

Brothers and Sisters, this fight for safety and in opposition of PSR and similar operation models is not over. Please continue to reach out to Grand Lodge with what you see each day, from deferred tickets and other violations to concerns about your fellow Signalmen and the pressures they are under. We will continue to bring your concerns to the carriers, FRA, and STB.

In Solidarity,



Michael S. Baldwin — BRS President

# DID YOU KNOW?

The Brotherhood of  
Railroad Signalmen  
offers free email  
accounts to all  
members and retirees.

Get your free BRS email account today,  
by registering at [www.BRS.org](http://www.BRS.org)

Already registered on the BRS website?



You can still sign-up for  
an email account —  
simply go to the  
“Member Resources”  
page on our website to  
register for a FREE email address.



## FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

James M. Finnegan, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

# 7-Step Annual Audit

Article II, Section 52, of the BRS Constitution outlines the Local Board of Trustees' responsibility to perform an annual audit of the Local's finances:

*"Sec. 52. The Local Board of Trustees shall meet as soon as possible following the Board's election to examine the finances and books of the Local Financial Secretary. Thereafter, such audits must be made at least every twelve (12) months on a form prescribed by the Grand Lodge and a copy of such audit shall be furnished to the Secretary-Treasurer. If the report of the audit is not furnished to the Secretary-Treasurer annually, the Secretary-Treasurer may cause an audit and any costs associated with the audit, including travel costs, shall be borne by the Local Lodge..."*

If your Local needs a Trustee Audit Guide or assistance in conducting an audit, we are happy to help. Please contact the Secretary-Treasurer's office at (540) 622-6527.

### The 7-Step Audit

The 7-step audit focuses on four major areas: disbursements, receipts, assets, and compliance with the reporting requirements, as outlined below:

Steps 1 and 2 will assist you in determining whether the Local's disbursements have been properly recorded and whether they were issued for legitimate, approved union purposes. Steps 3 and 4 will help you determine whether the Local's receipts have been properly recorded and deposited into your Local's bank account. Steps 5 and 6 will aid you in accounting for your Local's assets (cash and equipment). Step 7 will help you determine whether your Local is complying with all requirements for financial reporting and recordkeeping.

- **Step 1** — Trace cancelled checks to the bank statements and disbursements journal.
- **Step 2** — Scan the disbursements journal and record unusual entries.
- **Step 3** — Trace employer dues checkoffs to the receipts journal and bank statements.
- **Step 4** — Confirm that receipts from all other sources have been properly recorded and deposited.
- **Step 5** — Identify all bank accounts, verify their ending balances, and review withdrawals/transfers.
- **Step 6** — Inventory fixed assets.
- **Step 7** — Confirm that annual financial reports for the latest completed fiscal year were filed on time, financial records were properly maintained, and ensure that all officers and employees who handle funds are adequately bonded. ■

United we stand,

# WORKING CLASS

# WORKING CLASS

divided we fall.

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## JEREMY FARR

# Appointed Grand Lodge Representative



**JEREMY FARR**  
*Grand Lodge Representative*

BRS President Michael Baldwin announced the appointment of Local 111 member Jeremy Farr as Grand Lodge Representative. He is currently assigned to the Brotherhood's Headquarters in Front Royal, Virginia.

Brother Farr began his railroad career in 2007 as an Assistant Signalman assigned to a Headquarter Construction Gang in Ogden, Utah. Upon completion of Union Pacific Railroad Signal Training in 2009, he was awarded a Signalman position on a Zone Construction Gang working on Union Pacific Railroad's Zone 2. In 2014, he was awarded a Zone Construction Gang Foreman posi-

tion out of Nampa, Idaho.

Throughout his career with Local 111, Brother Farr held the positions of Second Local Vice President, First Local Vice President, as well as Local Chairman at the time of his appointment as Grand Lodge Representative.

Brother Farr graduated from Fremont High School in Plain City, Utah, and also attended Weber State University in Ogden, Utah.

Brother Farr is looking forward to living in Virginia with his wife Emily and their children Sawyer and Salem. ■

## Belonging to a Union



What do my dues pay for?

The Union doesn't do  
anything for me!

What good is the Union?

These are all questions we may have asked ourselves or heard others asking. The truth is, "there is power in a union" and it takes the dues and involvement of all members to maintain that power, strength, and solidarity; a fundamental involvement includes an understanding from all members.

Sign-up at [WWW.BRS.ORG](http://WWW.BRS.ORG) & click on the Union Education Tab for more information.

# 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.



**WILLIAM DAILEY**

BRS LOCAL 57  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



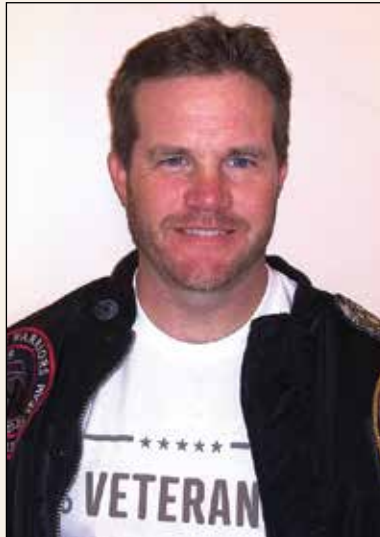
**CLIFFORD WARNER**

BRS LOCAL 193  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**EDWARD BICKAR**

BRS LOCAL 150  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**GRAHAM HANTZ**

BRS LOCAL 240  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**MICHAEL BALDWIN**

BRS LOCAL 138  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



# UNION BROTHERS



**C.W. CROSS**

BRS Local 206  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**GERARD CHEVETTE**

BRS Local 120  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY (SEABEES)



**DONALD POPPER**

BRS Local 1  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**ELMER DAUER**

BRS Local 40  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**GENE WEATHERFORD**

BRS Local 141  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**GUY GUENTHER**

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

# UNION BROTHERS



# Thank You

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& SISTERS WHO HAVE  
SERVED IN THE  
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WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
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WE ENJOY TODAY.



**JERRY COUSER**

BRS LOCAL 52  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**JIM FINNEGAN**

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



**TIM TARRANT**

BRS LOCAL 183  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



**JOHN FRIEL**

BRS LOCAL 239  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY



**JOHNATHAN NEAL**

BRS LOCAL 110  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



# UNION BROTHERS



**MICHELLE QUANTE**

BRS Local 183  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



**KURT MULLINS**

BRS Local 228  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY



**JUSTIN PIER**

BRS Local 161  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**KENNETH THUIROT**

BRS Local 56  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY



**THOMAS UMGELTER**

BRS Local 154  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



**LARS JANSONS**

BRS Local 56  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



# UNION BROTHERS



**RON FLYNN**

BRS Local 154  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY



**TRACY HURLBURT**

BRS Local 172  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



**WORTH ANDERSON**

BRS Local 110  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY



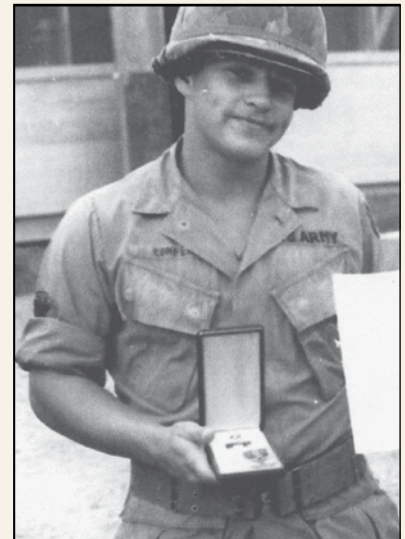
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BRS Local 56  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



**STACY WOODSON**

BRS Local 157  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES NAVY



**WAYNE CONFER**

BRS Local 40  
BRANCH OF THE MILITARY:  
UNITED STATES ARMY

## COORDINATED BARGAINING COALITION

# NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS



On January 24, 2022, after more than two years of bargaining with the major U.S. Class I railroads, the 10 Rail Unions bargaining as part of the Coordinated Bargaining Coalition (CBC) announced they had applied to the National Mediation Board (NMB) for the assignment of a federal mediator to assist in the negotiations.



As the CBC advised then, the carriers represented by the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC) simply were not bargaining in good faith. Having reported 4th quarter 2021 record profits, followed by 1st quarter 2022 record profits, the rail carriers continue to refuse to withdraw their demands for work rule and health and welfare concessions.



Adding insult to injury, the NCCC not only refused the CBC's request to bargain on wages at the mediated session, but they also then sent the CBC Unions a national proposal offering to pay lump sum payments of \$600.00 (maximum payment) in the remaining months of 2022 while the parties remain stuck in endless and unproductive mediation. The payments would have to be repaid from any backpay payments that may be in the ultimate national contract settlement. If there are insufficient backpay earnings to repay the lump sums, the employee will owe the employer the balance. All CBC Unions, responding in a united front, have rejected the latest NCCC proposal.



While waiting for a response to our recent request to the NMB that a proffer of arbitration be issued by the Board to move our contract dispute to the next level, CBC Unions participated in two additional days of mediated bargaining sessions with NCCC.

Once again, the nation's Class 1 rail carriers showed just how far removed they are from the realities their employees and shippers are experiencing. Without regard for the beating these rail carriers took in front of the Surface Transportation Board, and ignoring their continued record profit reports, the rail carriers continue to advance proposals at the bargaining table that they have previously been told are unacceptable to the CBC Unions and our members.

Due to the NCCC's refusal to negotiate a fair agreement in good faith, all CBC Unions again request that the NMB proffer arbitration to the parties to stop the endless delays by the rail carriers.

As we advised in January and April, we had hoped the involvement of the NMB would cause the industry to refocus on addressing the legitimate needs of the men and women whose labor generates their positive financial returns. That has not happened, and there is no indication that it will without allowing the remaining steps of the Railway Labor Act to play out to compel a favorable settlement. ■



Collectively, the CBC unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by the various organizations' national agreements, and comprise over 80% of the workforce who will be impacted by this round of negotiations. Visit [www.brs.org](http://www.brs.org) for more information.





# Agreements



## SEPTA MEMBERS REACH AGREEMENT

On January 25, 2022, the SEPTA Agreement Committee, consisting of Local Chairman Charles Eichman, Trustee Patrick MacNeal, Grand Lodge Representative Jason Harkleroad, and Vice President Commuter/Passenger Tim Tarrant reached a tentative Agreement which was overwhelmingly ratified by the SEPTA members represented by the BRS on February 23, 2022.

The short term agreement provided for GWI increases of 3% for 2022 and 2023, a pandemic attendance bonus (hazard bonus) of up to \$2,200, an additional personal day, paid maternity/paternity leave, and improvements to the Attendance Policy with no changes to the current Healthcare benefits. ■

*Congratulations to our Brothers and Sisters at SEPTA.*



## ALSTOM/BOMBARDIER TRANSPORTATION MOW EMPLOYEES JOIN THE BRS

March 23, 2022 —  
Alstom/Bombardier  
Transportation —  
Orlando, Florida

After a successful organizing campaign that began in the late fall of 2021, MOW Workers at the Alstom/Bombardier Transportation Company voted an astounding

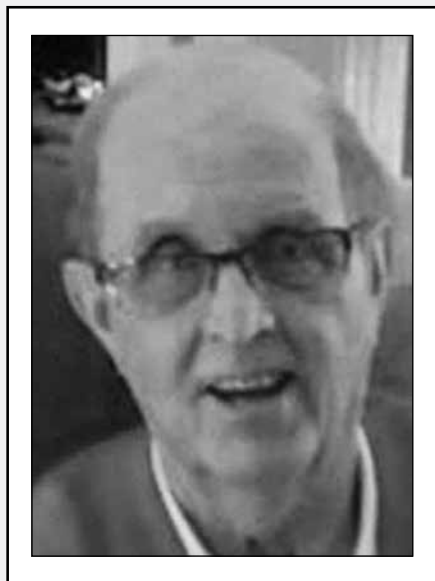
82% to be represented by the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen. Alstom/Bombardier operates and maintains the Sunrail Central Florida passenger rail system. The newest members of the BRS perform track maintenance and construction work on the 62-mile line. ■

*Congratulations on a successful campaign and welcome to the BRS!*





# *In Memoriams*

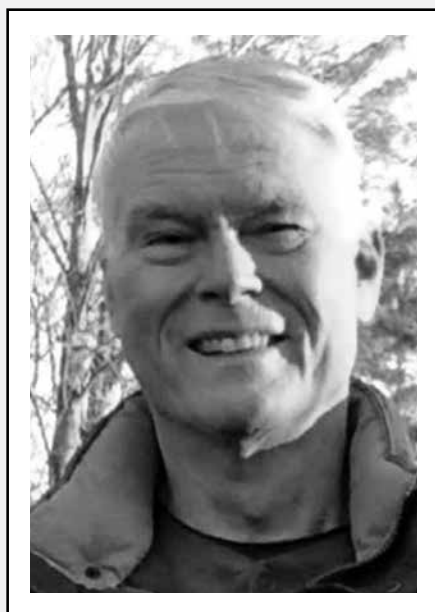


## **ROBERT C. BUCK • 1934–2021**

Robert C. Buck passed away on September 8, 2021.

Brother Buck began his railroad career on the Grand Trunk Western Railroad in March 1956. Brother Buck served Local 14 in the capacity of Local Chairman. He also served as Vice General Chairman, and most notably as General Chairman of the Northeast General Committee. Brother Buck

retired in 1995 after 44 years of service with the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. He was a Signal Foreman at Flint, Michigan, at the time of his retirement. ■



## **BILL E. BURTON, JR. • 1957–2022**

Bill E. Burton, Jr. passed away on April 23, 2022. Brother

Burton began his railroad career on the Clinchfield Railroad in May 1980. Brother Burton served as General Chairman of the Clinchfield General Committee. Brother Burton retired in 2015 after 33 years of service with CSX Transportation. He was a Signal Trainer in the Northern Region of CSX Transportation at the time of his retirement. ■

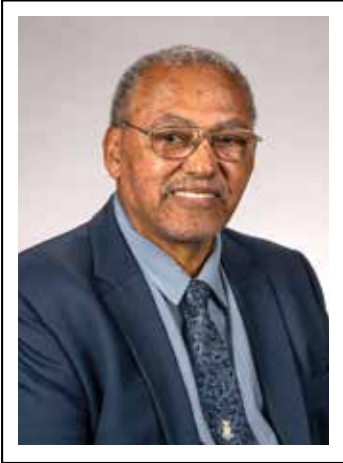


**Find us on Facebook**



# Retired Signalman, Eugene T. Frazier

## JOINS ALLEGANY COLLEGE OF MARYLAND BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Eugene T. Frazier, a member of the Cumberland City Council, has been named to the board of trustees of Allegany College of Maryland. He was appointed by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to fill the board position left vacant by Joyce Lapp who served

for more than two decades as a college trustee.

Lauded for being one of the “most accessible elected officials” by Allegany Magazine, Frazier was first elected to serve on the City of Cumberland’s five-person City Council in November of 2016 and subsequently reelected in November of 2020. He serves on the Council’s Human Relations Commission.

*“As a [ACC, now ACM] student, I got so much from this college — a great education, opportunities I couldn’t have imagined, and the chance to work with people who really became family. I know the college from the perspective of a parent, too, as two of my three children are [ACM] graduates. I’m honored to give back in this way and guide the college forward,”* said Frazier.

Frazier retired from CSX in 2015 after 33 years of service, including 21 years as a Signal Foreman. He served as the Chair and President of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen Local 31. Frazier was previously an independent monitor and a work experience Program Director for the Western Maryland Consortium. He worked for other large employers of note during the 1970s, including Kelly Springfield, where he was employed in the radial truck tire department and became an electrician apprentice; the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, and the Allegany Ballistics Laboratory. Frazier also owned EZ Maintenance, a professional services company, in the 1990s.

Frazier attended Allegany College of Maryland for one



Dawne D. Lindsey, Clerk of Circuit Court for Allegany County, officially swears in Trustee Eugene T. Frazier in early April 2022.

year before transferring to the University of Maryland. In 1975, he was part of successful efforts to revitalize and reorganize the local NAACP Chapter 7007. Frazier transferred back to ACM and earned an associate degree in business administration in 1978. He completed additional coursework at the college post-graduation. Frazier was an active leader on campus, serving as both Vice-President and President of the Black Student Alliance and the Student Government Association. While president of SGA, he represented the college at national, state, and regional conferences.

A life-long resident of Cumberland, Frazier serves in leadership roles on corporate and community boards, including Chessie Federal Credit Union, the Human Resources Development Commission of Allegany County, Tri County Council for Western Maryland, UPMC Western Maryland’s Community Advisory Board, and the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad Development Corporation. He is a member of NAACP 7007, and active in a variety of community causes as time permits. A cancer survivor, he is an active fundraiser for the American Cancer Society’s Real Men Wear Pink campaigns. ■

# RRB Resumes In-Person Service



**E**ffective April 25, 2022, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is offering in-person appointments at its nationwide network of 53 field offices.

Individuals can schedule appointments by calling the agency's toll-free telephone number, 1-877-772-5772, and speaking to a representative. If they experience a lengthy wait time on this call, they may be given the option of receiving a return call, although this feature is not available at all times due to large call volume. RRB representatives are available between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. each weekday, except for Federal holidays. For planning purposes, please note that the agency's busiest times are early in the week and during the first part of each month.

Customers can also reach out to individual offices by mail or fax, as well as by **sending a secure message** using the link on each field office's web page. Using **Field Office Locator** allows someone to access each office's web page and contact information.

While most business with the RRB does not require in-person service, but can be handled by telephone or in writing, the agency has also added secure lockboxes or door slots at the office entrances for customer convenience. These can be used if someone needs to quickly drop off documents without needing to communicate with a representative and will be checked on a daily basis.

Other options for obtaining services 24 hours a day without the need to talk to an agency representative include the automated menus available through the toll-free number and **myRRB** online. The following services are accessible through these avenues.

- Letters verifying retirement/survivor benefit rates;
- Service and compensation statement;
- Replacement Medicare card;
- Duplicate most recent tax statement (1099, 1099-R);
- General benefit information;
- Unemployment/sickness benefit application/claim status and payment information; and
- RRB field office addresses.

For certain automated phone services, an individual's social security number and/or railroad retirement claim number

are required. In addition, for certain unemployment or sickness application/claim information, a person must provide their social security number and the benefit PIN printed on the back of the provided claim form.

Railroad employees who have established a **myRRB** account can login and complete the following actions:

- Apply for and claim unemployment benefits;
- Claim sickness benefits;
- Check the status of their unemployment or sickness benefit claims;
- View their railroad service and compensation history; and
- Get an estimate of retirement benefits.

RRB offices have been closed to the public since March 16, 2020, three days after the coronavirus pandemic was declared a national emergency. Since that time, services have been limited to telephone and electronic communication, with agency employees continuing to process benefit applications and incoming mail. ■

## DID YOU KNOW?

### TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION §236.15 TIMETABLE INSTRUCTIONS

Automatic block, traffic control, train stop, train control, cab signal, and positive train control territory shall be designated in timetable instructions. ■





## RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

# Buyouts and Railroad Retirement Benefits

*Railroad employees frequently ask the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) how accepting a buyout from a railroad employer affects their future eligibility for benefits under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts. The following questions and answers provide information on this subject.*

### 1. Would leaving railroad work and accepting a buyout mean that an employee forfeits any future entitlement to an annuity under the Railroad Retirement Act?

As long as an employee has acquired at least 10 years (120 months) of creditable railroad service, or 5 years (60 months) of creditable railroad service performed after 1995, he or she would still be eligible for a regular railroad retirement annuity upon reaching retirement age, or, if determined to be totally disabled, for an annuity before retirement age, regardless of whether or not a buyout was ever accepted.

However, if a person permanently leaves railroad employment before attaining retirement age, the employee may not be able to meet the requirements for certain other benefits, particularly the current connection requirement for annuities based on occupational, rather than total, disability and for supplemental annuities paid by the RRB to career employees.

In addition, if an employee does not have a current connection, the Social Security Administration (SSA), rather than the RRB, would have jurisdiction of any survivor benefits that become payable on the basis of the employee's combined railroad retirement and social security covered earnings. The survivor benefits payable by the RRB are generally greater than those paid by SSA.

### 2. How are buyout payments treated under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts?

Buyout payments that result from the abolishment of an employee's job are creditable as compensation under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts. While the actual names of these employer payments may vary, the treatment given to them by

the RRB will depend upon whether the employee **relinquished** or **retained** his or her job rights. If the employee **relinquishes job rights** to obtain the compensation, the RRB considers the payment a **separation (or severance) allowance**. This compensation is credited to either the month last worked or, if later, the month in which the employee relinquishes his or her employment relationship. While all compensation subject to tier I payroll taxes is considered in the computation of a railroad retirement annuity, no additional service months can be credited after the month in which rights are relinquished.

The RRB considers the buyout payment a **dismissal allowance**, even though the employer might designate the payment a separation allowance, if the employee **retains job rights** and receives monthly payments credited to the months for which they are allocated under the dismissal allowance agreement. This is true even if the employee relinquishes job rights after the end of the period for which a monthly dismissal allowance was paid. However, supplemental unemployment or sickness benefits paid under an RRB-approved nongovernmental plan by a railroad or third party are **not** considered compensation for railroad retirement purposes.

### 3. Suppose an employee is given a choice between (1) accepting a separation allowance, relinquishing job rights and having the payment he or she receives credited to one month or (2) accepting a dismissal allowance, retaining job rights and having the payment credited to the months for which it is allocated. What are some of the railroad retirement considerations the employee should keep in mind?

Individual factors such as an employee's age and service should be considered.

For example, if an employee is already eligible to begin receiving a railroad retirement annuity, he or she may find it advantageous to relinquish job rights, accept a separation allowance, and have the annuity begin on the earliest date allowed by law. Any periodic payments made after that date would not preclude payment of the annuity because the employee has relinquished job rights.

On the other hand, some younger employees may find it more advantageous to retain job rights and accept monthly compensation payments under a dismissal allowance if these payments would allow them to acquire 120 months of creditable rail service (or 60 months of creditable rail service performed after 1995) and establish future eligibility for a railroad retirement annuity. Also, additional service months might allow a long-service employee to acquire 30 years of service, which is required for early retirement at age 60, or 25 years of rail service, which could help an employee maintain the current connection needed to meet the eligibility requirements for an occupational disability annuity or survivor annuity under the Railroad Retirement Act.

#### **4. How would acquiring 25 years of railroad service help an employee maintain a current connection?**

A current connection determination is made when an employee files for a railroad retirement annuity. (If an employee dies before applying for an annuity, it is made when an applicant files for a survivor annuity.)

The current connection requirement is normally met if the employee has railroad service in at least 12 of the 30 consecutive months immediately preceding the month his or her railroad retirement annuity begins. If the employee died before retirement, railroad service in at least 12 months in the 30 months before the month of death will meet the current connection requirement for the purpose of paying survivor benefits.

If an employee does not qualify as explained above, but has 12 months of service in an earlier 30-month period, he or she may still meet the requirement if the employee does not work outside the railroad industry in the interval between the 30-month period and the month the employee's annuity begins, or the month of death if that occurs earlier. Full or part-time nonrailroad employment in that interval can break the employee's current connection. Self-employment in an unincorporated business will not break a current connection. However, if

the business is incorporated the individual is considered to be an employee of the corporation, and such self-employment can break a current connection. All self-employment will be reviewed to determine if it meets the standards for maintaining a current connection.

A current connection can be maintained for purposes of supplemental and survivor annuities, but **not** occupational disability annuities, if the employee completed 25 years of railroad service, was involuntarily terminated without fault from his or her last job in the railroad industry, and did not thereafter decline an offer of employment in the same class or craft in the railroad industry, regardless of the distance to the new position. If all of these requirements are met, an employee's current connection may not be broken, even if the employee works in regular nonrailroad employment after the 30-month period and before the month his or her railroad retirement annuity begins, or, the month of his or her death. This exception to the normal current connection requirements became effective October 1, 1981, but only for employees who were alive on that date, and who left the rail industry on or after October 1, 1975.

#### **5. Would the acceptance of a buyout have any effect on determining whether an employee could maintain a current connection under the exception provision discussed in the last paragraph of the answer to Question 4?**

In cases where an employee has **no option** to remain in the service of his or her employer, the termination of the employment is considered involuntary, regardless of whether the employee does or does not receive a separation or dismissal allowance.

However, an employee who **chooses** a separation allowance instead of keeping his or her seniority rights to railroad employment would, for railroad retirement purposes, generally be considered to have voluntarily terminated railroad service, and, consequently, would not maintain a current connection under the exception provision.

#### **6. An employee with 25 years of service is offered a buyout with the option of either taking payment in a single lump sum, or receiving monthly payments until retirement age. Could the method of payment affect**

*continued on page 19*

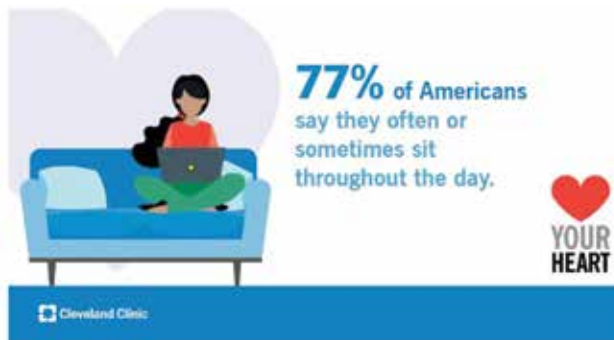
## HEART HEALTH

# Tips to Help Keep Your Health On Track!



*Roughly 40% of Americans Have Experienced at Least One Heart-Related Issue Since the Beginning of COVID-19 Pandemic*

A Cleveland Clinic survey finds 41% of Americans have experienced at least one heart-related issue since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, with top issues including shortness of breath (18%), dizziness (15%), increased blood pressure (15%) and chest pain (13%). In addition, about one in four Americans (27%) who have tested positive for COVID-19 report that their diagnosis has impacted their heart health.



As the world nears the two-year anniversary of the pandemic, Americans are facing consequences to their health habits that may have a negative effect on their heart health. According to the survey, sitting throughout the day is on the rise (+5 points in percentage of Americans who say they often do this) while walking throughout the day has declined (-4 points in percentage of Americans who say they often do this). Americans now say that they often or sometimes sit throughout the day (77%).

The survey also found that few Americans (22%) know that the Mediterranean diet is heart healthy, and about half of Americans (51%) do not currently follow a specific diet plan.

*“COVID fatigue is a very real thing — and for this year’s survey we wanted to see what kind of effect the ongoing pandemic is having on Americans’ heart health and in particular their healthy habits,”* said Samir Kapadia, M.D., chairman of Cardiovascular Medicine at Cleveland Clinic. *“We know 90% of heart disease is preventable*



*through a healthier diet, regular exercise, and not smoking, so now is the time to refocus on our heart health.”*

When it comes to genetics, 40% of those who have lost a family member to heart disease before the age of 60 have never been screened for the condition they lost a family member to, which jumps to 54% among millennials. Additionally, 34% of Americans feel that if they have a family history of heart disease, there is nothing they can do to limit the risk of developing that heart condition; however, physicians believe that early screening and treatment can save lives.

Finally, about one-third of Americans don’t know that the following factors can increase your risk of developing heart disease:

- Stress (33%)
- High Blood pressure (35%)
- Obesity (39%)
- Smoking/vaping (41%)

A positive survey result was that many Americans (77%) are familiar with their family history of heart disease and roughly two-thirds (65%) say they have had their blood pressure checked within the last six months.

The survey was conducted as part of Cleveland Clinic Heart, Vascular and Thoracic Institute’s “Love your Heart” campaign in celebration of American Heart Month. Cleveland Clinic has been ranked the No. 1 hospital in the country for cardiology and cardiac surgery for 27 years in a row by *U.S. News & World Report*.



For more heart health information, go to: [cleveland-clinic.org/loveyourheart](https://cleveland-clinic.org/loveyourheart)

### **Cleveland Clinic Cardiac Care Program**

The Cleveland Clinic Cardiac Care benefit program provides access to high quality cardiac care at Cleveland Clinic, ranked by U.S. News and World Report as the nation's number one heart and heart surgery provider since 1995.

The Cleveland Clinic Cardiac Care Program may be available to employees and covered dependents in need of non-emergency heart surgery with primary health-care coverage provided under The Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan or The National Railway Carriers/United Transportation Union Health

and Welfare Plan. Please refer to your benefit information for your individual coverage.

The Cleveland Clinic Cardiac Care Program takes care of all the details, including travel arrangements and concierge service every step of the way. Your deductible and co-insurance (the amount you're required to pay after your deductible is met) may be waived for qualifying procedure(s). Travel, lodging expenses and a daily allowance for meals and other incidentals for the patient and a companion are also covered. Please refer to your benefit information for your individual coverage. ■

**Find out if the Cleveland Clinic Cardiac Care Program is right for you.**

**To learn more, call 866-441-5691.**

## **RAILROAD RETIREMENT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

*continued from page 17*

### **the employee's current connection under the exception provision discussed in the last paragraph of the answer to Question 4?**

If the employee had the **choice to remain** in employer service and **voluntarily relinquished** job rights prior to accepting the payments, his or her current connection would not be maintained under the exception provision, **regardless of which payment option is chosen**. Therefore, nonrailroad work after the 30-month period and before retirement, or the employee's death if earlier, could break the employee's current connection. Such an employee could only meet the current connection requirement under the normal procedures.

### **7. Is it always advantageous to maintain a current connection?**

While a current connection is generally advantageous for railroad retirement purposes, the costs of maintaining a current connection could outweigh its value, depending on individual circumstances. There may be other financial or personal factors involved besides railroad retirement eligibility and/or the preservation of a current connection, and these will vary from individual to individual.

### **8. Where can employees get more specific information on how benefits payable by the RRB are affected by a buyout?**

Individuals with questions about how buyouts affect their RRB benefits can send a **secure message** to their local RRB office by accessing **Field Office Locator at RRB.gov** and clicking on the link at the bottom of their local office's page. If a customer needs to talk to an RRB representative, they can call the agency's toll-free number (1-877-772-5772) between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. each weekday, except Federal holidays. However, customers are asked to be patient because of the increased call volume due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On April 25, 2022, RRB field offices will begin to offer in-person service on a **limited** basis and **by appointment**. To schedule an appointment, call 1-877-772-5772. Individuals should bring a photo ID when visiting a field office, and, depending on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the county in which the field office is located, may be required to wear an appropriate face mask. In such circumstances, if visitors do not have a mask, one will be provided for them. ■



**MIKE EFAW**  
*National  
Legislative Director*

- **FY23 APPROPRIATIONS**
- **SENATE RACES**
- **AGENCY NOTES**
- **FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT RULEMAKING**

## **FY23 Appropriations**

President Biden released his FY23 budget request on March 28, 2022.

The \$5.8 trillion budget request includes \$773

billion to the Pentagon, as well as \$18 billion to combat the effects of climate change. The House and Senate budget committees will propose budget resolutions, and the appropriations committees will allocate discretionary spending. Appropriations bills must be made into law by October 1, 2022, otherwise a continuing resolution will be needed. Below are some highlights from the President's FY23 budget request:

- **Federal Railroad Administration:**  
\$254M for Safety and Operations (\$14M above FY22), \$56M for Research and Development (\$13M more than FY22 enacted).
- **Amtrak:**  
\$3B is requested for Amtrak's base operating, capital, and debt service requirements, including \$1.2B for the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and \$1.8B for the National Network. In addition, Amtrak received \$4.4B from IIJA (\$3.2B for National Network and \$1.2B for the NEC) for a total of \$7.4B.
- **Federal State Partnership Grants:**  
\$500M in FY23 and an additional \$7.2B from IIJA.
- **FRA Restoration and Enhancement Grants:**  
\$50M in FY23 (\$50M above FY22).
- **CRISI:**  
\$500M in FY23 and an additional \$1B from IIJA.
- **Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) in LHHS:**  
\$131.6M (\$6.6M more than FY22 enacted). We will be lobbying appropriators hard for a higher funding level of \$151.409M or \$19.743M above the President's proposed amount, so that the RRB can attain the minimum 880 employees needed to

sustain critical benefits administration operations and simultaneously manage its rising hybrid IT environment costs.

- **National Mediation Board in LHHS:**  
\$15.113M to carry out the provisions of the RLA (\$400K above what FY22 enacted).
- **FTA:**  
\$16.8B for transit that will provide grant funding to local government, public and private transit operators, and other recipients (\$600M above FY22).
- **Capital Investment Grants (CIG):**  
\$2.9B (\$600M above FY22).
- **RAISE & Mega:**  
\$1.5B in FY23 (\$725M above FY22).

## **Senate Races**

There will be 34 U.S. Senate elections this year, although control of the U.S. Senate will hinge on just nine contests. Both Democrats and Republicans have their eyes on the key swing states of Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All are considered competitive by operatives and pollsters from both parties.

Democrats are playing defense in four of those states, while Republicans are seeking to keep five more. At stake for both parties are control of the Senate, and whoever holds power in January 2023 will determine what, if anything, President Biden can accomplish in the final two years of his first term.

## **Agency Notes**

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee met for a hearing on April 6, 2022, to examine reauthorization of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy testified.

On April 26–27, 2022, the Surface Transportation

Board held a hearing on Urgent Issues in Freight Rail Service. In this edition of the Signalman's Journal President Baldwin's article reviews the proceedings.

### Fatigue Risk Management Rulemaking

The Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Chair of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Donald M. Payne, Jr., (D-NJ) encouraged the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to finalize the fatigue risk management program rulemaking to mitigate railroad worker fatigue, a congressional mandate that is a decade late.

In the letter, the members wrote: *"After decades of studying the issue, the FRA has a clear understanding of the safety risks posed by fatigue: fatigue symptoms include falling asleep, slower reaction time, attention loss, performance impairment, and*

*increase error. A number of individual, environmental, and organizational factors can contribute to the likelihood of fatigue, such as general health and medical conditions as well as scheduling and other practices that affect opportunities for workers to obtain sufficient quality and quantity of sleep."*

They continued: *"The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that the Federal Railroad Administration issued in December 2020 required railroads to identify and evaluate fatigue-related railroad safety hazards in their systems, determine the degree of risk associated with each hazard, and implement mitigation strategies to reduce the fatigue that safety-related employees experience and reduce the risk of accidents, incidents, injuries, and fatalities where fatigue is a contributing factor. We believe that attendance policies that not only contribute to fatigue but also penalize workers for taking off when fatigued or ill simply cannot co-exist with any serious fatigue risk management program."*

The FRA also proposes to expand the Confidential Close Call Reporting System (C3RS) by encouraging the approximately 115,000 employees of the seven Class I freight railroads to report close calls and unsafe events through the program. This modification to C3RS will significantly expand available data and provide vital insights into the safety of the industry, allowing railroads and employees to learn from close calls and act to address preventable safety concerns before they can result in harm. Funding requested for FRA's Research and Development account will continue to build the science-based understanding of railroad systems and technologies, with particular focus on root cause analysis and development of countermeasures to prevent trespassing and grade crossing casualties, as well as accidents resulting from track, equipment, and other causes.

On April 29, 2022, President Biden announced his intent to nominate the following individuals to serve as members of the AMTRAK Board of Directors: David Capozzi, Anthony Coscia, Christopher Koos, Samuel Lathem, and Robin Wiessmann.

We will continue to track legislation that is important and impactful to Signalmen. The best interest of our members is at the forefront of all our efforts on Capitol Hill. Remember to visit our website at [www.brs.org](http://www.brs.org) and follow us on Facebook. ■



PICTURED ABOVE: President Mike Baldwin, VP Headquarters Quinn Norman, and National Legislative Director Mike Efaw with Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Pete DeFazio (OR-4).



# 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

Billy Villescass, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ 111  
William Jeffords, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ 16

## 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Randol Ortiz-Cardova \_\_\_\_\_ 62  
Timothy Adkins \_\_\_\_\_ 77

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Colby Watring \_\_\_\_\_ 72  
Darrell Frank, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ 33  
David Pollard \_\_\_\_\_ 98  
James Lauber \_\_\_\_\_ 183  
Jeff Abels \_\_\_\_\_ 42  
John Daigle, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ 72  
Kevin Smith \_\_\_\_\_ 33  
Richard Parrott \_\_\_\_\_ 141  
Robert Waterman \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
Steve Turner \_\_\_\_\_ 141  
Tim Ballenger \_\_\_\_\_ 110  
Tom Humenik \_\_\_\_\_ 130  
Udel Peets \_\_\_\_\_ 56

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Arthur Troiano \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
C. Stamford \_\_\_\_\_ 123

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

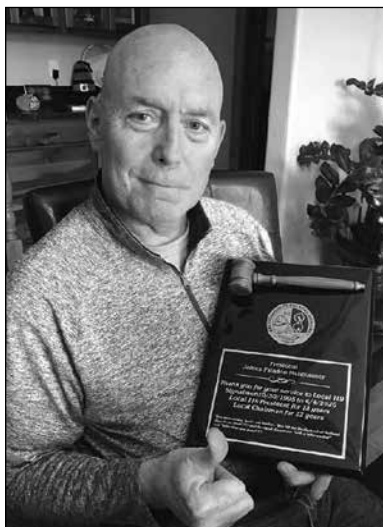
Charles Roberts \_\_\_\_\_ 31  
Chris Safford \_\_\_\_\_ 94  
Christopher Arvidson \_\_\_\_\_ 129  
Christopher Kuhn \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Corey Siegel \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
David German \_\_\_\_\_ 106  
David Ragland \_\_\_\_\_ 119  
Derrick Kerns \_\_\_\_\_ 18  
Devanand Ghulam \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Dick Keck \_\_\_\_\_ 8  
Edmund Gilbert \_\_\_\_\_ 18  
Eric Mongeon \_\_\_\_\_ 62  
Felipe Nevarez, IV \_\_\_\_\_ 185  
Ismael Olmeda \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Jacob Hewlett \_\_\_\_\_ 136  
James Kolar \_\_\_\_\_ 123  
James Tessier \_\_\_\_\_ 154  
Jeff James \_\_\_\_\_ 110  
Jeremy Huckabee \_\_\_\_\_ 129  
Joel Morris \_\_\_\_\_ 123  
John Abernathy \_\_\_\_\_ 98  
John Matyi \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
John Price, III \_\_\_\_\_ 18

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

John Rompala \_\_\_\_\_ 31  
Joshua Calvert \_\_\_\_\_ 137  
Keith Miller \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Mark Johnson \_\_\_\_\_ 48  
Michael Zeurcher \_\_\_\_\_ 24  
Paul Waite \_\_\_\_\_ 31  
Pete Cameron \_\_\_\_\_ 55  
Peter Parker \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Randy Racine \_\_\_\_\_ 94  
Raymond Hagen \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Richard Cook, III \_\_\_\_\_ 19  
Richard Miller \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Simon Ybarra \_\_\_\_\_ 19  
Stephen Banasik, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ 62  
Steve Denny \_\_\_\_\_ 25  
Timothy Davis \_\_\_\_\_ 94  
Todd Vyhnaelek \_\_\_\_\_ 119  
Tony Harris \_\_\_\_\_ 16  
Vasilis Hatzivasilis \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Victor Brand \_\_\_\_\_ 19  
William Angell \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
William Hamrah \_\_\_\_\_ 56  
Yahir Beniyah \_\_\_\_\_ 153

# In Memoriam

## JAMES “JIM” P. MUHLHAUSER • 1958–2022



James “Jim” P. Muhlhauser passed away on April 28, 2022. Brother Muhlhauser began his railroad career on the BNSF Railway Company in October 1995. He served Local 119 in the capacity of Local Chairman for 22 years and Local President for 18 years. Brother Muhlhauser had 27 years of service with the BNSF Railway Company, and was a Signal Inspector at Denver, Colorado, at the time of his passing. Brother Muhlhauser is a U.S. Navy Veteran. ■



PICTURED ABOVE: President Mike Baldwin and National Legislative Director Mike Efav with Congressman Mike Doyle (PA-18).

## DID YOU KNOW?

### **TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION §236.12 SPRING SWITCH SIGNAL PROTECTION; WHERE REQUIRED**

Signal protection shall be provided for facing and trailing movements through spring switch within interlocking limits and through spring switch installed in automatic block signal, train stop, train control or cab signal territory where train movements over the switch are made at a speed exceeding 20 miles per hour, except that signal protection shall be required only with the current of traffic on track signaled for movement in only one direction. ■

**NOTE:** Does not apply to spring switch installed prior to October 1, 1950, in automatic block signal, automatic train stop, or automatic train control territory.

# 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](http://www.mtandj.com)

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Rabb & Rabb, PLLC  
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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  
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[www.cavanaghlawgroup.com](http://www.cavanaghlawgroup.com)

## MARYLAND

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*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: Michael S. Baldwin, 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

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[www.yourtracktohealth.com](http://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 "Your Track to Health" only applies to employees under the National Health & Welfare benefits.)

### HEALTH & WELFARE PLANS

#### National Health & Welfare Plan — GA-23000

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

#### United Healthcare

1-800-842-9905

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

#### Retiree Claims — GA-46000

UnitedHealthcare

1-800-842-5252

#### Retiree Supplemental — GA-23111

UnitedHealthcare

1-800-842-5252

#### Aetna

1-800-842-4044

#### Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

Railroad Dedicated Unit

1-866-267-3320

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

### LIFE INSURANCE

#### MetLife

1-800-310-7770

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

### MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE BENEFITS

#### United Behavioral Health

For treatment, claims or inquiries call:

1-866-850-6212

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

ACCESS CODE: Railroad

### SUPPLEMENTAL SICKNESS BENEFITS

#### The Hartford

1-800-205-7651

<https://abilityadvantage.thehartford.com>

### VISION BENEFITS

#### EyeMed

Member Support

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

### DENTAL BENEFITS

#### Aetna

1-877-277-3368

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

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

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# OBITUARIES

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**WILLIAM O. CARLSON**—retired member of **LOCAL 87**. Brother Carlson retired in 2001 after 42 years of service with the Northern Pacific Railroad and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Carlson was a CTC Maintainer at Billings, Montana, at the time of his retirement.

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**LAURENCE J. EICH**—retired member of **LOCAL 154**. Brother Eich retired in 2011 after 37 years of service with the Burlington Northern Railroad and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Eich was a Signal Maintainer at Cambridge, Minnesota, at the time of his retirement.

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**WILLIAM K. FOREHAND**—retired member of **LOCAL 110**. Brother Forehand retired in 2021 after 27 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Forehand was a Signal Maintainer at Greensboro, North Carolina, at the time of his retirement.

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**ROBERT F. HARRINGTON**—retired member of **LOCAL 225**. Brother Harrington retired in 2002 after 33 years of service with the Penn Central Transportation Company, Conrail, and CSX Transportation. Brother Harrington was a Signal Maintainer at Buffalo, New York, at the time of his retirement.

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**GLENN A. HERBIC**—retired member of **LOCAL 157**. Brother Herbic retired in 1991 after 45 years of service with the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad and the St. Louis Southwestern Railway. Brother Herbic was a Signal Maintainer at McFarland, Kansas, at the time of his retirement. Brother Herbic served as Local President. Brother Herbic is a U.S. Marine Veteran.

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**JAMES “JIM” H. HOLMSTEDT**—retired member of **LOCAL 8**. Brother Holmstedt retired in 2006 after 32 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Holmstedt was a Signalman at North Platte, Nebraska, at the time of his retirement. Brother Holmstedt is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

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**ROBERT “BOB” J. KAPUSCINSKI**—retired member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Kapuscinski retired in 2014 after 40 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Kapuscinski was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

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**WESLEY B. KINCAID**—retired member of **LOCAL 8**. Brother Kincaid retired in 1995 after 44 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Kincaid was a General CTC Maintainer at Cheyenne, Wyoming, at the time of his retirement. Brother Kincaid is a U.S. Army Veteran.

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**LARRY KUYKENDALL**—retired member of **LOCAL 206**. Brother Kuykendall retired in 2012 after 34 years of service with the Houston Belt and Terminal Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Kuykendall was a Signal Gang Foreman at Houston, Texas, at the time of his retirement.

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**JERRY J. LITTLE**—retired member of **LOCAL 129**. Brother Little retired in 2001 after 33 years of service with the St. Louis–San Francisco Railway and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Little was a Lead Signal Maintainer at Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the time of his retirement.

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**CHRISTOPHER “CHRIS” M. MILLER**—retired member of **LOCAL 158**. Brother Miller retired in 2011 after 39 years of service with the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Miller was a Signalman with the Southern Region Construction Gang at the time of his retirement.

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**DANNY K. MILLS**—active member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother Mills had 9 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Mills was a Signal Maintainer at Norlina, North Carolina, at the time of his passing.

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**NORMAN D. MOORE**—retired member of **LOCAL 161**. Brother Moore retired in 1995 after 44 years of service with the Panhandle and Santa Fe and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railways. Brother Moore was a Signal Inspector at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, at the time of his retirement. Brother Moore is a U.S. Army Veteran.

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**BARRY C. NOBLE**—retired member of **LOCAL 1**. Brother Noble retired in 1992 after 36 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Penn Central Transportation Company, and Conrail. Brother Noble was a Signal Maintainer at Altoona, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Noble served as Local President. Brother Noble is a U.S. Army Veteran.

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**RANDALL “RANDY” S. PETERSEN**—retired member of **LOCAL 188**. Brother Petersen retired in 2007 after 42 years of service with the Northern Pacific and the Burlington Northern Railroads and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Petersen was a Signal Inspector at Bonners Ferry, Idaho, at the time of his retirement. Brother Petersen is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

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**DOUGLAS “DOUG” T. REES**—retired member of **LOCAL 228**. Brother Rees retired in 2002 after 32 years of service with the Norfolk & Western and Norfolk Southern Railways. Brother Rees was a Signal Maintainer at Toledo, Ohio, at the time of his retirement.

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**TYLER “DEWEY” E. ROBINSON**—active member of **LOCAL 94**. Brother Robinson had 6 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Robinson was a Signalman at the time of his passing. Brother Robinson served as Recording-Financial Secretary.

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**JAMES “JIM” M. SCHUHRKE**—retired member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Schuhrke retired in 1996 after 41 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway. Brother Schuhrke was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his retirement. Brother Schuhrke is a U.S. Army Veteran.

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# OBITUARIES

**ROBERT “BOB” W. SORENSEN**—retired member of **LOCAL 183**. Brother Sorensen retired in 2011 after 43 years of service with the Rock Island Railroad and Metra. Brother Sorensen was a Signal Testman at Blue Island, Illinois, at the time of his retirement. Brother Sorensen is a U.S. Army Veteran.

**TERRY “GENO” E. THOMPSON**—retired member of **LOCAL 237**. Brother Thompson retired in 2010 after 37 years of service with the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad. Brother Thompson was an Assistant Track Patrolman at Mingo Junction, Ohio, at the time of his retirement.

**LAWRENCE “LARRY” S. VERJINSKI**—active member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Verjinski had 14 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Verjinski was a Signal Maintainer at Jefferson Park, Illinois, at the time of his passing. Brother Verjinski is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

**TERRY W. WORLEY**—active member of **LOCAL 178**. Brother Worley had 29 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Worley was a Signalman at Line of Road, at the time of his passing.

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](mailto:membership@brs.org)*



## 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 so 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. ■





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Mantle/Desk Clock		136.00	
Magnet		6.00	
Keychain/Bottle Opener		4.00	

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Cap (camo/orange)		20.75	
Cap (black)		11.00	
Cap (blue)		11.00	
Cap (grey)		11.00	
Cap (black dye sub)		18.00	
Cap (brown diamond plate)		18.00	
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Service T-Shirt (burgundy)								18.00	
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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)								44.00	
Oxford Dress Shirt (grey)								44.00	
Oxford Dress Shirt (white)								44.00	
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# PHOTOS



BRS Local 56 — Throughout the year, Local 56 hosts multiple family-friendly events and Union nights, such as Islanders, Knicks, Ranger, and Mets games; plus, good old fashioned demolition derby nights, and exciting figure eight races. Union Night at the Islanders Arena is always a great success! ■

## LOCAL 106 • • • • • UNION TRAINING



On March 5–6, 2022, Amtrak General Chairman Dave Ingersol, Assistant General Chairman Keith Johnson, and Grand Lodge Vice Presidents Tim Tarrant and Brandon Elvey gave a training course on unionism and the claims process to Local 106's Midwest Division. The meetings were well attended and took place over a two-day period. If you are interested in having this type of training at your Local, contact Grand Lodge. ■





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

# MEETING PHOTOS



## Local 123 Meeting

Lansing, Michigan



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# MEETING PHOTOS



## Local 243 Meeting

Denver, Colorado







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– Chelsea T.  
Free College student

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