

THE SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL





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Visit unionplus.org



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The SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL

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WWW.BRS.ORG

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SOLIDARITY RALLY



On December 13, 2022, rallies were organized to bring attention to rail-related issues, including maintaining the current safe level of a minimum two-person crew in the cabs of locomotives, paid sick leave for workers, and an end to the carriers' Precision Scheduled Railroading 6

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COVER: Tri-Rail commuter train passes the Golden Glades, Florida control point in south Florida. The signal gang had just completed renewal of the location.

Photo submitted by Local 16 Member Josh Mularchyck.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

— *Michael S. Baldwin, BRS President*

Happy 20
New Year 23



Sisters and Brothers,

Happy New Year! With a new year brings new opportunity, we see this in every facet of the rail industry and all across labor. In 2022, the BRS learned who our friends were both politically and throughout the industry. It is now up to us to educate those who don't understand what Signalmen do each day to ensure the stability of the nation's economy and the safety of the rails for both its craft employees, as well as the traveling public and communities through which the rails traverse. It is up to all of us to educate legislators in Congress, as well as influence public support to understand the enormous pressure Signalmen endure day in and day out, and the skill required to perform our jobs.

The political landscape in Washington, D.C., has changed once again. There is new leadership on both sides of the aisle in the House of Representatives, as well as several new faces in the Senate. A longtime friend of the BRS and Rail Labor retired in 2022, Congressman Peter DeFazio of Oregon. While we have developed many valuable relationships on both sides, he was a champion for safety and a supporter of rail workers. We still have supporters, and your union is on the Hill each week meeting and educating Congress and congressional staff members on the importance of issues like sick days for all workers and important safety regulations. Your union is up to this task.

I also think much about organizing and growing the BRS, we need to ensure that new rail projects that are

being funded have union-represented labor forces on the ground. This is the best, and perhaps only, way to ensure that these lines are run with the utmost of professionalism, and installed with safety as a top priority. Of particular interest at the moment is the Brightline West project, similar to what Brightline is working on in Florida, a high-speed rail line running from Las Vegas to Los Angeles.

I believe that the labor movement must inspire people with a vision of what is possible.

— MICHAEL BALDWIN, BRS PRESIDENT

It is time to think about how the steps we take right now to protect our work and ensure rail safety will impact future Signalmen who are just graduating from high school and college and entering America's workforce? I think of

my grandchildren and wonder what type of challenges they will face as they enter the workforce in the future. As union leaders and union members, we must ask ourselves, "*What is our vision for the future of labor?*"

I believe the labor movement must inspire people with a vision of what is possible. Working families need a decent wage, but they also need the promise of a better world. For as long as unions have existed, workers have shown they'll fight for the future of their children and their communities, even when their own future seems in doubt. However, it takes a forward-facing vision to inspire this wave of commitment, idealism, and activity.

The ideas and visions for the future of Signalmen and the labor movement are worthless unless they reach the rank-and-file. We must educate our fellow union members as well as the public on the benefits that have been attained through collective bargaining and

how standing together, united as a union, will ensure we gain more. We need to remain united and show the adversaries all the ways in which union membership can attract quality workers. Without union protection, corporations that are motivated by large profits may sacrifice the safety and well-being of workers in order to make as much money as they can. It should be known that without unions, politicians could annul regulations that protect workers, which have taken years to achieve.

It is important that we stand together at this pivotal moment. I thank you for trusting me to lead this union at such a critical time.

In Solidarity,



Michael S. Baldwin — *BRS President*

HOUSEHOLD DATA — ANNUAL AVERAGES				
Median weekly earnings of full-time wage & salary workers by union affiliation, occupation, & industry	2020		2021	
	Members of Unions ⁽¹⁾	Non-Union ⁽²⁾	Members of Unions ⁽¹⁾	Non-Union ⁽²⁾
Total full-time wage & salary workers	\$1,144	\$958	\$1,169	\$975
OCCUPATION				
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	\$954	\$720	\$968	\$746
Production occupations	\$923	\$753	\$957	\$789
Transportation & material moving occupations	\$979	\$691	\$976	\$713
INDUSTRY				
Private sector	\$1,089	\$948	\$1,098	\$965
Transportation & utilities	\$1,215	\$912	\$1,199	\$934
Transportation & warehousing	\$1,138	\$849	\$1,147	\$883
Utilities	\$1,533	\$1,343	\$1,482	\$1,369

HOUSEHOLD DATA — ANNUAL AVERAGES				
Median annual earnings of full-time wage & salary workers by union affiliation, occupation, & industry	2020		2021	
	Members of Unions ⁽¹⁾	Non-Union ⁽²⁾	Members of Unions ⁽¹⁾	Non-Union ⁽²⁾
Total full-time wage & salary workers	\$59,488	\$49,816	\$60,788	\$50,700
OCCUPATION				
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	\$68,276	\$71,032	\$70,720	\$72,800
Production occupations	\$72,072	\$76,336	\$75,400	\$77,324
Transportation & material moving occupations	\$75,140	\$80,392	\$80,340	\$80,444
INDUSTRY				
Private sector	\$75,972	\$85,748	\$76,076	\$86,996
Transportation & utilities	\$89,596	\$81,536	\$92,040	\$84,916
Transportation & warehousing	\$71,656	\$69,004	\$69,472	\$73,632
Utilities	\$60,632	\$50,232	\$69,784	\$52,520

⁽¹⁾ Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.

⁽²⁾ Data refer to workers who are neither members of a union nor represented by a union on their job.

NOTE: Data refer to the sole or principal job of full-time wage and salary workers. All self-employed workers are excluded, both those with incorporated businesses and those with unincorporated businesses. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. Effective with January 2020 data, occupations reflect the introduction of the 2018 Census occupational classification system, derived from the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC). No historical data have been revised. Data for 2020 are not strictly comparable with earlier years. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria (values not shown where base is less than 50,000).



FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

James M. Finnegan, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

The New Year TRAINING, REPORTS, PER CAPITA, & FORMS



Local Recording-Financial, Financial, and Recording

Secretaries should all have access to our Engage database. Receiving access requires a short training session that lasts approximately one hour. If you still need access, please contact my office at (540) 622-6527 to set up a time for training.

Quarterly Dues Rates and Per Capita Tax Changes

Please remember that as we have a new National Agreement, in accordance with Article I, Section 134, the National Per Capita Tax rate is increasing for the third quarter of 2023. Local Secretaries, if your quarterly dues rate is changing because of the increase in National Agreement wages, please communicate the change to Grand Lodge. General Committees are also responsible for notifying Grand Lodge of changes in per capita tax rates. You may email the Membership Department at membership@brs.org or call (540) 622-6526.

Labor Management Reporting: LM-2, 3, or 4

Locals **MUST FILE** with the Department of Labor (DOL) by MARCH 31, 2023.

- LM Forms must be filed within 90 days after the end of your local's fiscal year (12-month reporting period).
- Labor organizations with greater than

\$250,000 in annual receipts must file Form LM-2. Labor organizations with total annual receipts of less than \$250,000 may file Form LM-3, less than \$10,000 may file Form LM-4.

- The term "total annual receipts" means all financial receipts of the labor organization during its fiscal year, regardless of the source.
- LM reports for the year 2000 and later may be viewed and downloaded from the OLMS website at unionreports.dol.gov.
- The only accepted method of completing the LM report is the Electronic Forms System. The first step is to register online at the DOL website at <https://www.dol.gov/olms/regs/compliance/efs/efsintro.htm>. After registering and logging in, report is completed, signed, and submitted online.

QR-1 Form for Q1 2023 (DUE APRIL 17)

The Financial Secretary shall submit a quarterly report, QR-1, or a Profit and Loss Report and a Balance Sheet Report to the Local Board of Trustees, along with supporting documentation when requested, for approval. A copy of this report must be forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
 For reporting period ending _____
 Report unit number _____

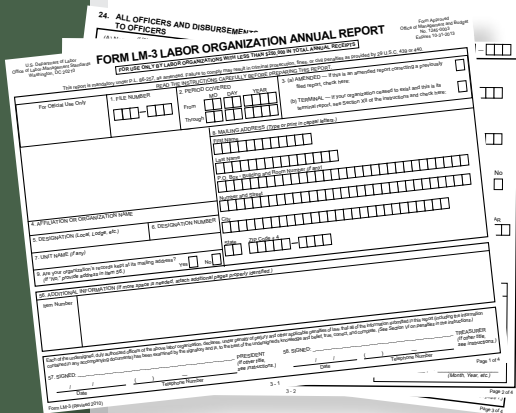
SECTION 1		SECTION 2	
Cash at start of reporting period		Cash at end of reporting period	
1. Cash on hand	_____	1. Cash on hand	_____
2. Cash in banks	_____	2. Cash in banks	_____
3. Total cash	_____	3. Total cash	_____
4. Total receipts	_____		
5. Total cash, receipts	_____		
6. Total disbursements	_____		
7. Net cash	_____		

RECEIPTS		DISBURSEMENTS	
8. Dues, membership fees	_____	14. Per capita tax:	_____
9. Fines, assessments	_____	(a) Grand Lodge	_____
10. Seniority retention fees	_____	(b) Gen Committee	_____
11. Interest	_____	15. To Officers:	_____
12. Other receipts	_____	(a) Gross Wages	_____
13. Total receipts	_____	(b) Deductions	_____
		(c) Net wages	_____
		(d) Expenses	_____
		16. To Employees:	_____
		(a) Gross Wages	_____
		(b) Deductions	_____
		17. Office & Administrative	_____
		18. Benefits	_____
		19. Contributions, gifts	_____
		20. Direct Taxes	_____
		21. Withholding taxes	_____
		22. Other disbursements	_____
		23. Total disbursements	_____

Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Date: _____

QR-1E Rev. 2012-1

The report (QR-1) is to be completed and forwarded to Secretary-Treasurer no later than the 15th of the month following the close of each quarter.



IRS 941 for Q1 2023 (DUE MAY 1)
 Employer's Quarterly (941) Federal Tax Return is for reporting federal income tax withheld. The form is available on www.irs.gov.

Organization Modernized e-File Providers list of authorized IRS providers. We found one provider, Form 990 Online (form990.org), that does not charge a fee to complete and e-file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ if gross receipts are less than \$100,000. Fees DO apply for gross receipts higher than \$100,000.

IRS 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N (DUE MAY 15)
 A tax-exempt organization must file an annual information return or notice with the IRS, unless an exception applies. Annual information returns include Form 990, Form 990-EZ and Form 990-N is an annual notice. Form 990 is the IRS' primary tool for gathering information about tax-exempt organizations, educating organizations about tax law requirements, and promoting compliance. Organizations also use Form 990 to share information with the public about their programs. Additionally, most states rely on Form 990 to perform charitable and other regulatory oversight and to satisfy state income tax filing requirements for organizations claiming exemption from state income tax.

There are multiple authorized providers listed, so feel free to research and choose a company to complete and e-file your return that best suits your needs. The list can be found on the IRS website at www.irs.gov/e-file-providers/tax-year-2019-exempt-organizations-modernized-e-file-mef-providers. If you have any questions or would like assistance on the new e-file requirement or the authorized providers list, please contact my office. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

TITLE 49: TRANSPORTATION

§236.5 DESIGN OF CONTROL CIRCUITS ON CLOSED CIRCUIT PRINCIPLE

All control circuits the functioning of which affects safety of train operation shall be designed on the closed circuit principle, except circuits for roadway equipment of intermittent automatic train stop system. ■

SOLIDARITY RALLY



A solidarity rally was held on Capitol Hill days after the December 2, 2022, federal imposition of a national rail contract on the BRS and three other unions, drawing support from the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department, multiple unions from inside and apart from the rail industry, a bipartisan contingent of U.S. Representatives and Senators, among others.

On December 13, 2022, rallies in multiple locations were organized to bring attention to rail-related issues, including maintaining the current safe level of a minimum two-person crew in the cabs of locomotives, paid sick leave for workers, and an end to the carriers' Precision Scheduled Railroading.

More than a dozen members of Congress addressed the rally, including: U.S. Representatives Donald Payne (D/NJ-10), Andy Levin (D/MI-9), Brian Fitzpatrick (R/PA-1), Don Bacon (R/NE-2), Jamaal Bowman (D/NY-16), Jesús "Chuy" Garcia (D/IL-4), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D/NY-14), John Garamendi (D/CA-3), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D/NJ-12), Pramila Jayapal (D/WA-7), Cori Bush (D/MT-1), Jimmy Gomez (D/CA-34), Rashida Tlaib (D/MI-13) and Ilhan Omar (D/MN-5) and U.S. Senators Bernie Sanders (I/VT), Elizabeth Warren (D/MA), and Bob Casey (D/PA).



Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), who took up the mantle of Champion for our fight in the Senate for railroad workers to receive at least 7 days of paid sick leave, speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol.



Congressman Jesus "Chuy" Garcia (D/IL-04), whom the BRS has always been able count on in the House of Representatives, speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022.

President of the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department – Greg Regan speaks to railroad employees at rail labor’s Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022.

President Regan has been a fierce supporter for rail labor in our fight for paid sick leave. President Regan has also been one of the most outspoken labor leaders on PSR, railroad employee protections, RUIA sequestration, and every other issue railroad workers have. We are lucky to have an advocate like President Regan in our corner. He has been there for us for every fight we have against the carriers.



Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor’s Rally at the Capitol.



Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D/NY-14), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor’s Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez is another example of how progressives pushed hard for railroad workers to get the paid sick time we deserve.



Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R/PA-01), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor’s Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Fitzpatrick is an example of a Congressman who knows the value of good jobs for the American people and works across the aisle to get good legislation passed. Congressman Fitzpatrick has been a solid vote for rail labor, and he worked hard in the Republican Caucus to try to get railroad workers the paid sick time we deserve. Congressman Fitzpatrick is an important ally for us being seated on the T&I Committee, and being assigned to both the Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, and the Highways and Transit Subcommittees.

SOLIDARITY RALLY



National Legislative Director M.L. Efaw meets with Senator Bernie Sanders (ID-VT) at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol. Brother Efaw worked closely with the Senator and his staff to get legislation for paid sick time for railroad workers crafted.



Congresswoman Ilhan Omar (D/MN-05), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congresswoman Omar is another member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) who came out to support rail labor's rally for paid sick leave.



Congressman Andy Levin (D/MI-09) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Levin is a former union organizer who knows the value of having a Union to advocate for the rights of employees. Congressman Levin is also a Co-Chair for the CPC.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TTD & SMART-TD



Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol.



Congressman Jimmy Gomez (D/CA-34), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Gomez, a former Union Organizer, understands the benefits of having a Union fighting for workers rights, and is a great supporter for labor from all sectors. Congressman Gomez is another member of the CPC that came out to support rail labor's rally for paid sick leave.



Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D/NJ-12), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congresswoman Coleman is another member of the CPC that came out to support rail labor's rally for paid sick leave.



Congressman Donald Payne, Jr. (D/NJ-10), Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials (RR, PL, & HM) Subcommittee was one of our most fierce champions for our fight in the House of Representatives for railroad workers to receive at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave. Congressman Payne speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol. As Chairman of the RR, PL, & HM Subcommittee, Congressman Payne fought on the side of rail labor at every turn, holding multiple hearings trying to drill down answers on why rail service has dwindled to its worst levels in history.

SOLIDARITY RALLY



Congresswoman Cori Bush (D/MO-01), who was one of our most fierce champions for our fight in the House of Representatives for railroad workers to receive at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave, speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol. Congresswoman Bush's staff kept in close contact with Brother Efaw throughout the process of crafting the legislation.



Congressman Jamaal Bowman (D/NY-16) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Bowman is another member of the CPC that came out to support rail labor's rally for paid sick leave.



Congressman John Garamendi (D/CA-03) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Garamendi is also a member of the CPC that came out to give his support at the rally.



Congressman Don Bacon (R/NE-02) speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol on December 13, 2022. Congressman Bacon is another member of the Republican Caucus that is a solid vote for rail labor. His Congressional District covers Omaha, Nebraska, and he has shown rail carriers he will stand up for what is right when it comes to railroad workers. Here he shows his commitment to rail labor by coming out to give his support at the rally.



Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D/WA-07), speaks to railroad employees at rail labor's Rally at the Capitol. The CPC fought hard to ensure legislation for paid sick time for railroad workers made it to the House floor for a vote. Congresswoman Jayapal is a Co-Chair for the CPC.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TTD & SMART-TD



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 & click on the Union Education Tab for more information.



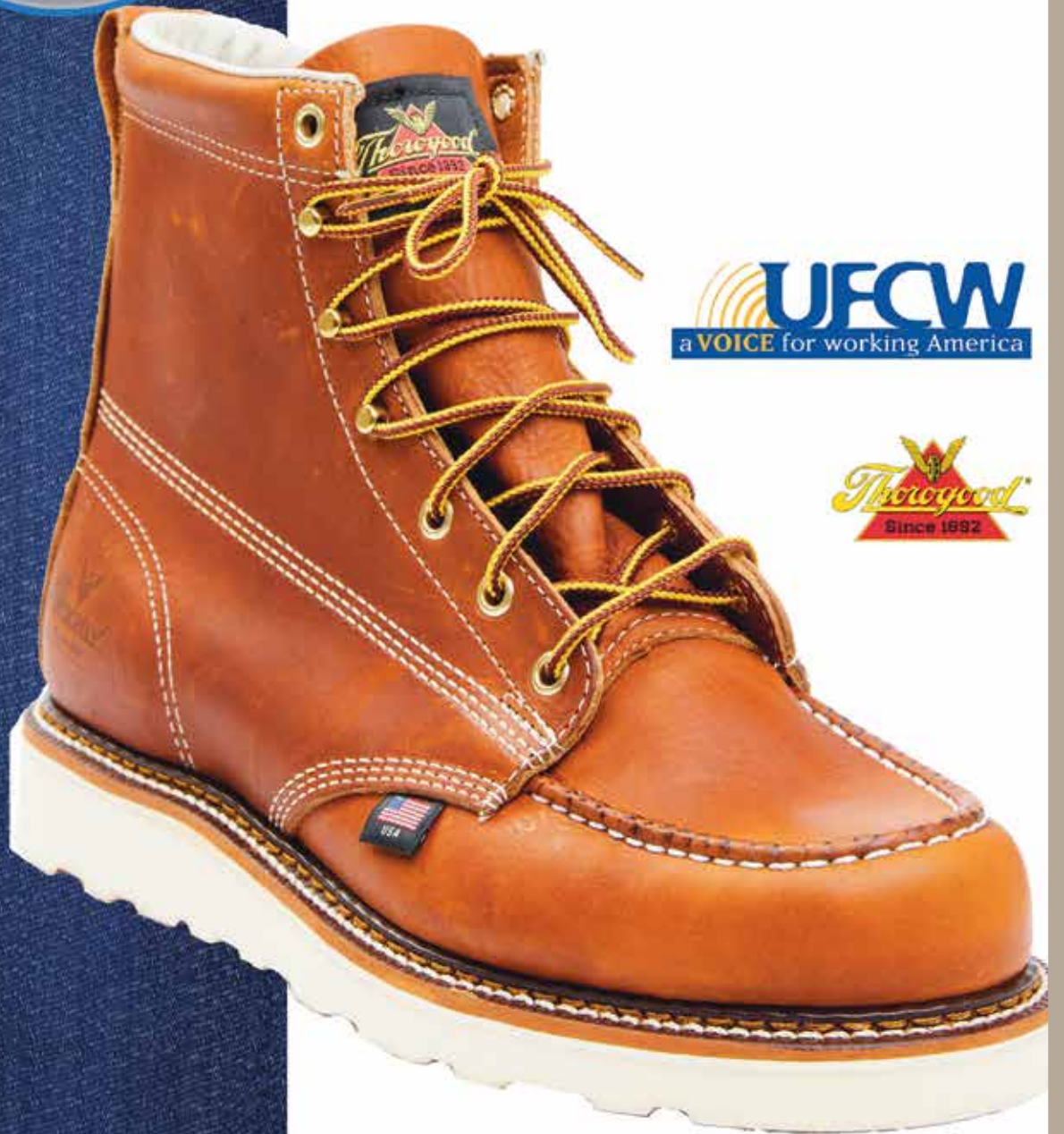
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UNION-MADE-IN-THE-USA **THOROGOOD WORK BOOTS**

UFCW Locals 688 & 717 make Union-Made-in-the-USA Thorogood Boots at the Weinbrenner Company in Wisconsin. Visit our website to find more union-made products and services at www.unionlabel.org



Early Retirement Plan Increases Maximum

The lifetime maximum benefit for each individual covered under the railroad employees National Early Retirement Major Medical Benefit Plan (UnitedHealthcare's Policy GA-46000) is adjusted each year based on the medical cost component of the Consumer Price Index. As of January 1, 2023, this maximum will increase to \$188,000.

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

Eligibility Rules

For Age Annuitants:

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

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

For Disability Annuitants:

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

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

Enrollment Is Necessary

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

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

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

AUDITOR'S REPORT

ON FINANCES

As provided for in Article 1, Section 68, of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Grand Board of Trustees caused the examination and audit of Grand Lodge financial records for the fiscal year July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, by certified public accountants. The firm J. Schaefer & Company, LLC was selected for the task.

GENERAL FUND

Summary Statement of Income, Expenses, and Capital

INCOME:

Per capita tax, initiation fees, dues, donations, refunds	\$ 5,645,040	
Sales of supplies, services, books, advertising, subscriptions	105,954	
Interest, investment gain (loss)	<u>(82,912)</u>	
		\$ 5,668,082

EXPENSES:

Salaries, payroll taxes, insurance	\$ 4,051,610	
Travel expenses	687,628	
Office expenses	418,396	
Association per capita, dues, subscriptions	131,159	
Attorney fees, professional services	261,601	
Depreciation	176,385	
Building expenses	137,822	
Convention, meeting expenses	1,506,024	
Signalman's Journal	91,358	
Allocation to Contingent Fund	<u>67,908</u>	
		<u>7,529,891</u>

NET INCOME (LOSS)

		(1,861,809)
CAPITAL — June 30, 2021		<u>11,464,315</u>
CAPITAL — June 30, 2022		<u>\$ 9,602,506</u>

CONTINGENT FUND

Summary Statement of Income, Expenses, and Capital

INCOME:

General Fund Allocation, investment gain (loss)	\$ <u>(589,436)</u>	
		\$ (589,436)

EXPENSES:

Convention credit	\$ —	
Bank charges	<u>562</u>	
		<u>562</u>

NET INCOME (LOSS)

		(589,998)
CAPITAL — June 30, 2021		<u>7,959,307</u>
CAPITAL — June 30, 2022		<u>\$ 7,369,309</u>

AUDITOR'S REPORT

ON FINANCES

The audit was completed and submitted to the Grand Board of Trustees on or before December 13, 2022. In a written report, the auditors stated:

“In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Brotherhood as of June 30, 2022 and 2021, and the activities and expenses for the years then ended in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in Note 2.”

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2022

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

	Combined	General Fund	Contingent Fund
Cash	\$ 3,383,235	\$ 3,198,959	\$ 184,276
Investments – fair value	11,508,540	4,323,507	7,185,033
Inventory	87,748	87,748	–
Accounts Receivable	–	–	–
Prepaid Expenses	96,988	96,988	–
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>15,076,511</u>	<u>7,707,202</u>	<u>7,369,309</u>

FIXED ASSETS

Land, Front Royal, VA	81,663	81,663	–
Building, Front Royal, VA	1,640,239	1,640,239	–
Land Improvements	8,643	8,643	–
Office furniture & equipment	164,759	164,759	–
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	<u>1,895,304</u>	<u>1,895,304</u>	<u>–</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ <u>16,971,815</u>	\$ <u>9,602,506</u>	\$ <u>7,369,309</u>

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –
Accrued payroll taxes	–	–	–
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>

CAPITAL

General Fund	\$ 9,602,506	\$ 9,602,506	\$ –
Contingent Fund	7,369,309	–	7,369,309
TOTAL CAPITAL	\$ <u>16,971,815</u>	\$ <u>9,602,506</u>	\$ <u>7,369,309</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	\$ <u>16,971,815</u>	\$ <u>9,602,506</u>	\$ <u>7,369,309</u>



Credit for Military Service Under the Railroad Retirement Act

Many railroad employees have served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Under certain conditions, their military service may be creditable as railroad service under the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA).

The following questions and answers provide information on how military service may be credited towards railroad retirement benefits.

Under what conditions can military service be credited as railroad service?

The intent behind the crediting of military service under the RRA is to prevent career railroad employees from losing retirement credits while performing active duty military service during a war or national emergency period. Therefore, to be creditable as compensation under the RRA, service in the U.S. Armed Forces must be preceded by railroad service in the same or preceding calendar year. With the exceptions noted later, the employee must also have entered military service when the United States was at war or in a state of national emergency, or have served in the Armed Forces involuntarily. Military service is involuntary when an employee is required by law, such as Selective Service System conscription or troop call-up from a reserve unit, to leave railroad service to perform active duty military service.

Only active duty military service is creditable under the RRA. A person is considered to have been on active duty while commissioned, or enrolled, in the active service of the Armed Forces of the United States (including the U.S. Coast Guard), or while ordered to Federal active duty from any reserve component of the uniformed Armed Forces.

What are some examples of creditable service performed by a member of a reserve component, such as the Army Reserve?

Any military service a reservist is required to perform as a result of a call-up to active duty, such as during a partial mobilization, is creditable under the RRA, so long

as the military service is preceded by railroad service in the same or preceding year.

Annual training duty as a member of a reserve component of a uniformed service is also considered active duty and may be creditable, provided the railroad employee service requirement is met. The period of active duty for training also includes authorized travel time to and from any such training duty. However, weekend alone or evening reserve duty is not creditable.

Active duty in a State National Guard or State Air National Guard unit may be creditable only while the reservist was called to Federal active duty by the Congress, or President of the United States. Emergency call-up of the National Guard by a governor for riot or flood control would not be creditable.

What are the dates of the war or national emergency periods?

The war or national emergency periods are:

- August 2, 1990, to date as yet undetermined.
- December 16, 1950, through September 14, 1978.
- September 8, 1939, through June 14, 1948.

If military service began during a war or national emergency period, any active duty service the employee was required to continue in beyond the end of the war or national emergency is creditable, except that voluntary service extending beyond September 14, 1978, is not creditable.

Railroad workers who voluntarily served in the Armed

Forces between June 15, 1948, and December 15, 1950, when there was no declared national state of emergency, can be given railroad retirement credit for their military service if they:

- performed railroad service in the year they entered or the year before they entered military service, **and;**
- returned to rail service in the year their military service ended, or in the following year, **and;**
- had no intervening nonrailroad employment.

How can military service be used to increase benefits paid by the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB)?

Railroad retirement annuities are based on length of service and earnings. If military service is creditable as railroad service, a person will receive additional compensation credits for each month of creditable military service and railroad service credit for each active military service month not already credited by actual railroad service.

Creditable military service may be used in addition to regular railroad service to meet certain service requirements, such as the basic 10-year or 5-year service requirements for a regular annuity, the 20-year requirement for an occupational disability annuity before age 60, the 25-year requirement for a supplemental annuity, or the 30-year requirement for early retirement benefits.

Can United States Merchant Marine service be creditable for railroad retirement purposes?

No. Service with the Merchant Marine, or civilian employment with the Department of Defense, is not creditable, even if performed in wartime.

Are railroad retirement annuities based in part on military service credits reduced if other benefits, such as military service pensions or payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs, are also payable on the basis of the same military service?

No. While railroad retirement employee annuities are subject to reductions for dual entitlement to social

security benefits and, under certain conditions, Federal, State, or local government pensions, as well as certain other payments, railroad retirement employee annuities are always exempt from reduction for military service pensions or payments by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Are the unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the RRB affected if an employee is also receiving a military service pension?

Yes. The unemployment and sickness benefits payable by the RRB are affected if a claimant is also receiving a military service pension. However, payments made by the Department of Veterans Affairs will not affect railroad unemployment or sickness benefits.

When a claimant is receiving a military service pension or benefits under any social insurance law for days in which he or she is entitled to benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, railroad unemployment or sickness benefits are payable only to the extent to which they exceed the other payments for those days. In many cases, the amount of a military service pension precludes the payment of unemployment or sickness benefits by the RRB. Examples of other such social insurance payments are firefighters' and police pensions, or certain workers' compensation payments. Claimants should report all such payments promptly to avoid having to refund benefits later.

Can proof of military service be filed in advance of retirement?

Yes. Railroad employees are encouraged to file their military service proofs well before retirement to expedite the annuity application process and avoid delays caused by inadequate proofs. Proofs can be mailed to an employee's local RRB field office, or placed in the secure lockboxes/door slots outside of an RRB field office's doors. (Lockboxes and door slots are checked daily.) Employee information will be recorded and stored electronically until an employee retires. All evidence brought or mailed to an RRB office will be handled carefully and returned promptly.

If employees do not have an official record of their military service, their local RRB office will explain how to get acceptable evidence. ■



MIKE EFAW
*National
Legislative Director*

Welcome TO THE **118TH CONGRESS**

At the beginning of a new Congress, the vote for Speaker of the House of Representatives is normally a mere formality. This year, however, a group of ultraconservative, far-right rebels upended

that vote, causing chaos at the Capitol. The floor votes reminded me of boxing matches from my younger days. It took 15 rounds of voting, major concessions from the leading candidate, and heated exchanges between the members of the majority, which almost saw fellow Republicans come to blows, to elect a Speaker. You must go back 164 years to find a vote for Speaker that took longer than this one. Normally, the first week of a new Congress is full of pomp, circumstance, and appetizers at swearing-in receptions. This year things were a little different, and the 118th Congress is off to an ominous start. Perhaps more important than McCarthy's fate as Speaker is what it will mean for the next two years, and whether Republicans can move forward as a functioning majority in the House, especially with the debt ceiling and government funding deadlines looming. As all of Washington watches, here are some insights and information on these issues:

Republicans

Most Republicans are frustrated at the 20-or-so members who lead the crusade against McCarthy, who has seemingly capitulated to a throng of their demands, including the ability for any member to call for a motion to vacate the Speaker's chair (per CNN) and for failing to lock down this vote in the two months since the election. They are still frustrated they did not perform better in the midterms, leading to the difficulty in the Speaker vote. Speaker McCarthy and his allies made so many concessions that moderate Republicans are concerned it may make it harder for the House majority to govern. The Speaker sets the House of Representative's agenda and oversees legislative business. The post is second in line to the presidency after the Vice President. It will be an interesting session of Congress, and it is possible we could see the House start each legislative day with a

prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and a vote on the fate of the Speaker.

Democrats

After over a decade of trying to negotiate with fractious Tea Party/Freedom Caucus Republicans, Dems are taking some glee in seeing the scorched-earth tactics unleashed on the prospective House Republican leadership. Democrats have praised former Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), who never brought a vote to the floor that she did not know the outcome of in advance, let alone 15 votes. However, those feelings are tempered when looking ahead at the potential for this sideshow to play out repeatedly over the next few years on more important matters, like the debt ceiling.

Senate

The Senate was able to clear the low bar of organizing and swearing-in new members, but there were also the optics of Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and President Joseph R. Biden appearing together in Kentucky to tout the infrastructure bill. When the Senate opens, some, including myself, expect that McConnell and his allies will try to "be the grownups in the GOP," especially on issues like the debt ceiling. However, he has his own troublemakers to deal with in his Caucus. Democrats, meanwhile, will almost certainly make overtures to Republicans on issues like housing, competition, drug pricing, and China, where some bipartisanship may prevail.

The Senate usually begins a new session with renewed calls for bipartisanship and doing the American people's business. While typically those rosy feelings deteriorate by the time the cherry blossoms bloom; some believe that most members of the Senate actually WANT to legislate, and we think there will be some bipartisan bills that get traction in the coming year.

The BRS will track legislation that is important and impactful to Signalmen through the 118th Congress. The best interest of our members is at the forefront of all our efforts on Capitol Hill. Remember to visit our website and follow us on Facebook. Have a great year! ■

Alcohol and Drug Testing

MINIMUM RANDOM TESTING RATES FOR 2023 REMAIN UNCHANGED

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced the minimum random testing rates for railroad workers in the year 2023.

Using data from Management Information System’s annual reports, the FRA has determined that because the industry random drug testing positive rate was below 1.0 percent for the last two years, the minimum annual random drug testing rate for the period January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, will remain at 25 percent of covered railroad employees. In addition, because the industry-wide random alcohol testing violation rate has remained below 0.5 percent for the last two years, the Administrator has determined that the minimum random alcohol testing rate will remain at 10 percent of covered railroad employees for the period January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

On June 12, 2017, Maintenance-of-Way (MOW) employees became subject to FRA random drug and alcohol testing. For the calendar year 2023, the FRA has set the initial minimum annual random testing rates for MOW employees at 25 percent for drugs and 10 percent for alcohol.

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

DOT AGENCY	RANDOM DRUG TESTING RATE	RANDOM ALCOHOL TESTING RATE
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)	50%	10%
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	25%	10%
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	25% Covered Service	10% Covered Service
	25% Maintenance of Way	10% Maintenance of Way
	50% Mechanical <small>Effective 3/04/2022</small>	25% Mechanical <small>Effective 3/04/2022</small>
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	50%	10%
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)	25%	N/A
NOTE: Employers (and C/TPAs) subject to more than one DOT Agency drug and alcohol testing rule may continue to combine covered employees into a single random selection pool.		

2023 Standard Mileage Rate

The 2023 standard mileage rate set by the IRS will be 65.5 cents per mile, effective January 1, 2023.



Please use this rate when calculating mileage reimbursement on expense reports for 2023.

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

ulation of mileage rates, such as depreciation, insurance, and other fixed and variable costs.

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

Railroad Retirement and Unemployment Insurance Taxes



The amounts of compensation subject to railroad retirement tier I and tier II payroll taxes will go up in 2023, while the tax rates on employers and employees will stay the same. In addition, unemployment insurance contribution rates paid by railroad employers will include a surcharge of 1.5 percent, down from 3.5 percent in 2022, due to an improved employment outlook since the beginning of the pandemic.

Tier I and Medicare Tax — The railroad retirement tier I payroll tax rate on covered rail employers and employees for 2023 remains at 7.65 percent. The railroad retirement tier I tax rate is the same as the social security tax, and for withholding and reporting purposes is divided into 6.20 percent for retirement and 1.45 percent for Medicare hospital insurance. The maximum amount of an employee's earnings subject to the 6.20 percent rate increases from \$147,000 to \$160,200 in 2023, with no maximum on earnings subject to the 1.45 percent Medicare rate.

An additional Medicare payroll tax of 0.9 percent applies to an individual's income exceeding \$200,000, or \$250,000 for a married couple filing a joint tax return. While employers will begin withholding the additional Medicare tax as soon as an individual's wages exceed the \$200,000 threshold, the final amount owed or refunded will be calculated as part of the individual's Federal income tax return.

Tier II Tax — The railroad retirement tier II tax rates in 2023 will remain at 4.9 percent for employees and 13.1 percent for employers. The maximum amount of earnings subject to railroad retirement tier II taxes in 2023 will increase from \$109,200 to \$118,800. Tier II tax rates are based on an average account benefits ratio reflecting railroad retirement fund levels. Depending on this ratio, the tier II tax rate for employees can be between 0 percent and 4.9 percent, while the tier II rate for employers can range between 8.2 percent and 22.1 percent.

Unemployment Insurance Contributions — Employers, but not employees, pay railroad unemployment insurance contributions, which are experience-

rated by employer.

The Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act also provides for a surcharge in the event the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account balance falls below an indexed threshold amount. The accrual balance of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account was \$112.7 million on June 30, 2022. Since the balance was below the indexed \$100 million threshold (currently \$137.9 million), but above the \$50 million indexed threshold (currently \$67.0 million), this results in a 1.5 percent surcharge in 2023. There was a surcharge of 3.5 percent in 2022 and 2.5 percent in 2021.



As a result, the unemployment insurance contribution rates on railroad employers in 2023 will range from the minimum rate of 2.15 percent to the maximum of 12.0 percent on monthly compensation up to \$1,895, an increase from \$1,755 in 2022.

In 2023, the minimum rate of 2.15 percent will apply to 80 percent of covered employers, with 6 percent

paying the maximum rate of 12.0 percent. New employers will pay an unemployment insurance contribution rate of 2.82 percent, which represents the average rate paid by all employers in the period 2019-2021. ■

Fill a Bag Help Feed Families



Bag healthy, non-perishable food items and place by your mailbox for your letter carrier to pick up and deliver to food banks and pantries in your community.

Donations Stay in Your Community

Second Saturday in May

Help Us Stamp Out Hunger.
Spread the Word.
Ayúdanos a erradicar el hambre.
Envía el mensaje.

 [Facebook.com/StampOutHunger](https://www.facebook.com/StampOutHunger)  [@StampOutHunger](https://twitter.com/StampOutHunger)

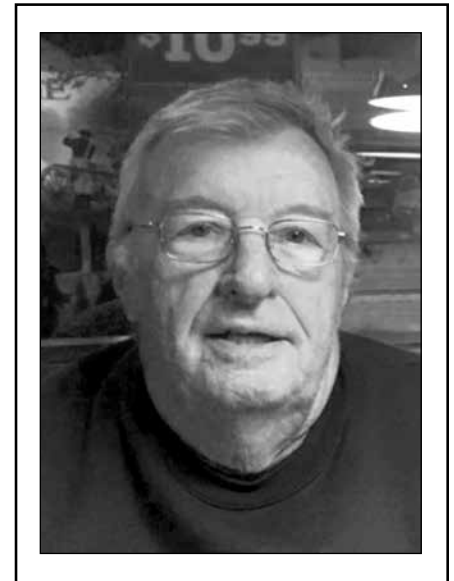
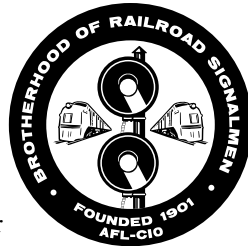
stampouthungerfooddrive.us



In Memoriams

DAVID O. SEMMENS, SR. 1943–2022

David O. Semmens passed away on June 28, 2022. Brother Semmens began his railroad career on the Pennsylvania Railroad in November 1962. Brother Semmens served Local 18 in the capacity of Local President and Local Chairman. Most notably, Brother Semmens served as Vice General Chairman of Amtrak General Committee. Brother Semmens retired in 2004 after 43 years of service with Amtrak. He was a Signal Foreman and Vice General Chairman at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Semmens is a U.S. Air Force Veteran. ■



ATDA VICE PRESIDENT RORY BROYLES



BRS is saddened to announce the passing of American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA) Vice President Rory Broyles on October 26, 2022. Brother Broyles had a brief but valiant struggle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).



Rory was born and resided in the Greater Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, area and was an avid fan of the Steelers, Penguins, and even the Pittsburgh Pirates. In 1998, he began his railroad career as a Train Dispatcher on the former Conrail, qualifying as a Dispatcher on the Pittsburgh Division in March of 1999. Following the breakup of Conrail, Rory subsequently became a Train Dispatcher for Norfolk Southern Railway. Rory was first

elected as General Chairman of the Norfolk Southern System Committee in 2007, and served in that capacity until his election as National Vice President in 2015.

Rory worked tirelessly for not only the members of the ATDA but also the Brothers and Sisters of other labor organizations, including the BRS, and he was admired and respected across the industry. Throughout his tenure as a union officer, Rory's unwavering dedication and support for organized labor was unparalleled and his endeavors will leave an enduring mark. *While the BRS has lost a friend, Brother, and labor leader, rail labor will carry on in Rory's honor because he would have wanted nothing less.* ■

OBITUARIES

TIMOTHY “TIM” M. CATON—active member of **LOCAL 94**. Brother Caton had 29 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Caton was a Signalman at Line of Road, at the time of his passing. Brother Caton is a U.S. Army Veteran.

ROBERT D. CHRISTENSEN—retired member of **LOCAL 135**. Brother Christensen retired in 1994 after 44 years of service with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, the Chessie System, and CSX Transportation. Brother Christensen was a Signal Maintainer at Richmond, Indiana, at the time of his retirement. Brother Christensen served on the Local Grievance Committee. Brother Christensen is a U.S. Army Veteran.

LARKIN CLEMONS, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 157**. Brother Clemons retired in 2001 after 33 years of service with the St. Louis Southwestern Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Clemons was a Signal Inspector at Tyler, Texas, at the time of his retirement. Brother Clemons served as Local Trustee. Brother Clemons is a U.S. Air Force Veteran.

LEONARD COLE—retired member of **LOCAL 10**. Brother Cole retired in 2002 after 33 years of service with the Erie Lackawanna Railway and CSX Transportation. Brother Cole was a Signal Maintainer at Kenton, Ohio, at the time of his retirement.

MARK L. COMBS—active member of **LOCAL 94**. Brother Combs had 25 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Combs was a Signal Technician at Cincinnati, Ohio, at the time of his passing.

THOMAS “TOMMY” J. GILLAN, SR.—retired member of **LOCAL 18**. Brother Gillan retired in 1981 after 31 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central Transportation Company, Conrail, and Amtrak. Brother Gillan was a Signal Maintainer at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Gillan is a U.S. Army Veteran.

JOHN J. GROSSO—retired member of **LOCAL 119**. Brother Grosso retired in 2002 after 42 years of service with the Colorado Southern Railway and BNSF Railway Company. Brother Grosso was a Signal Maintainer at Trinidad, Colorado, at the time of his retirement.

DANNY L. GUILL—retired member of **LOCAL 71**. Brother Guill retired in 2019 after 10 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Guill was a Signal Maintainer at Evansville, Indiana, at the time of his retirement. Brother Guill served as Local Vice President. Brother Guill is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

DAVID C. HANDLER—retired member of **LOCAL 57**. Brother Handler retired in 2010 after 32 years of service with Conrail. Brother Handler was a Construction Foreman at Newark, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement. Brother Handler served as Local Trustee.

JAMES “RICHARD” R. LAIRD—retired member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Laird retired in 2003 after 31 years of service with the Southern Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Laird was a Signal Maintainer at Atlanta, Georgia, at the time of his retirement. Brother Laird served as Local Chairman. Brother Laird is a U.S. Army Veteran.

QUINN R. MUSCH—active member of **LOCAL 239**. Brother Musch had 7 years of service with the Canadian National Railway. Brother Musch was a Signal Maintainer at Solon Springs, Wisconsin, at the time of his passing.

MARC “WOODEN SHOES” J.A. NAGTEGAAL—retired member of **LOCAL 18**. Brother Nagtegaal retired in 2007 after 31 years of service with the Penn Central Transportation Company, Conrail, and Amtrak. Brother Nagtegaal was an Electronic Training Instructor and Signal Foreman, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement.

CHARLES E. PURRY, SR.—active member of **LOCAL 183**. Brother Purry had 23 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad and Metra. Brother Purry was a Signal Maintainer at Milwaukee West Line, at the time of his passing.

STEVE L. WALLACE—retired member of **LOCAL 110**. Brother Wallace retired in 2013 after 19 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Wallace was a Signal Maintainer at Knoxville, Tennessee, at the time of his retirement.

MICHEAL K. WILLIAMS, JR.—active member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Williams had 10 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Williams was a Signal Maintainer at Moundville, Alabama, at the time of his passing.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Please notify Grand Lodge of the passing of BRS members.

email: membership@brs.org

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Proposed Amendment Referendum by Local Lodge

On January 14th, 2023, at the first quarter meeting of Local 129 at the Oasis Convention center in Springfield, MO the local voted and passed the following proposed amendments as allowed by section 130 and 133 of the Constitution of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalman. The proposals should be published in the next issue of *The Signalman's Journal*.

Proposal I

The election of officers should be done after the proposed Constitutional Amendments are voted on. This allows the delegates to see where the officers stand on important issues before they run for reelection.

Article 1, Section 18, of the BRS Constitution currently reads:

Officers, Election of

Sec. 18. The officers shall be elected at each regular Convention. The election shall be the first order of new business.

Amend Article 1, Section 18, of the BRS Constitution to read as follows:

Officers, Election of

Sec. 18. The officers shall be elected at each regular Convention. The election shall take place after all proposed Constitutional amendments have been voted upon.

Proposal II

Sections 7 and 8 need to be amended to allow the union to thrive with the best possible candidates in leadership. As it stands now, if you are not willing to uproot your family and move to Virginia, you cannot hold these positions. We decrease our candidate pool exponentially by continuing to have this restriction.

Article I, Section 7, of the BRS Constitution currently reads:

Headquarters of Grand Lodge Officers

Sec. 7. The President, Secretary-Treasurer, and one designated Vice President shall be located at the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen Grand Lodge headquarters. Relocation of Grand Lodge headquarters shall be made only upon

unanimous approval of the Grand Executive Council and the Grand Board of Trustees. (8/2002)

Amend Article I, Section 7, of the BRS Constitution to read as follows:

Headquarters of Grand Lodge Officers

Sec. 7. The President and/or one Vice President and the Secretary-Treasurer shall be located at the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen Grand Lodge Headquarters. Relocation of Grand Lodge headquarters shall be made only upon unanimous approval of the Grand Executive Council and the Grand Board of Trustees.

Article I, Section 8, of the BRS Constitution currently reads:

Sec. 8. The headquarters of the regional Vice Presidents shall be at locations designated by the Grand Executive Council and, when so established, shall not be changed except upon approval of the Grand Executive Council. Such approval may be overridden by unanimous vote of the Grand Board of Trustees. Each full-time Grand Lodge officer shall reside within a reasonable commuting Article I 3 distance of his headquarters. The headquarters of members of the Grand Board of Trustees shall be at their respective homes. (7/2002)

Amend Article I, Section 8, of the BRS Constitution to read as follows:

Sec. 8. The headquarters of the Grand Board of Trustees shall be at their respective homes. The headquarters of the President and Vice Presidents shall be at a point designated by a majority of the General Chairman they represent except with the ability, at their own option, to utilize Grand Lodge as their headquarters, providing they reside within a reasonable commuting distance.

Proposal III

The ability to recall an elected officer is a necessary safeguard in any organization, at every level. If general membership is unhappy with the leadership in place, they should have the ability to recall those officers. This amendment would give us the ability to do so, under the same process as amendments to the constitution by local lodges.

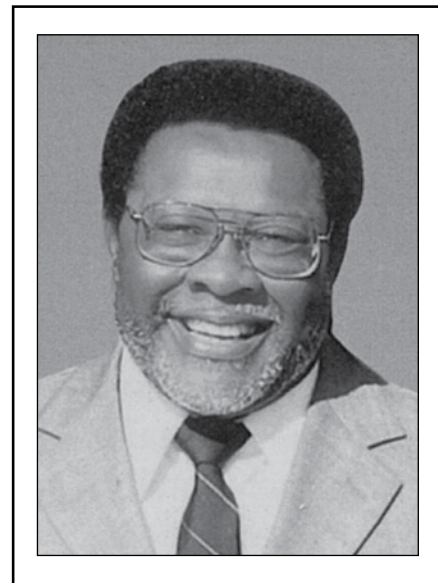
In Memoriam

GROVER EDWARD PANKEY 1948–2022



Grover E. Pankey passed away on November 12, 2022. Brother Pankey began his railroad career on the Southern Pacific Railroad in March 1992. He was a Signal Maintainer, Signal Foreman, Manager, and Safety Officer. Most notably, Brother Pankey served as General Chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad General

Committee from 2004–2008. Brother Pankey retired in 2009 after 17 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Pankey is a U.S. Air Force Veteran. ■



To be added to Article IV
of the BRS Constitution as follows:

Recall of Officers

Sec. 60. Any Local Lodge in good standing, and by a majority vote of its members present, may submit a motion of recall for removal of any officer of the Grand Lodge; such proposals to be prepared in duplicate, one copy to be deposited with the Grand Board of Trustees and one to be forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer. The Secretary Treasurer shall publish such motion for recall in the next

issue of "The Signalman's Journal," and if same is then endorsed by five Local Lodges in good standing, no two of which are in the same state, territory, or province, and such endorsements are forwarded in writing to the Secretary Treasurer, he shall submit such proposal to a general referendum vote of the Local Lodges. Each Local Lodge shall be allowed 60 days from the date of such submission for the return of its vote. Before any recall shall become effective, it must be approved by a majority vote of the Local Lodges submitting the result of their vote to the Secretary Treasurer. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

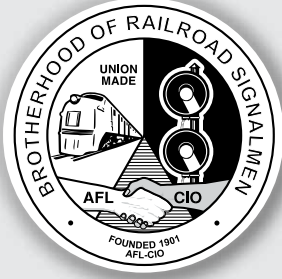
The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen offers
FREE email accounts to all members and retirees.

Get your free BRS email account today, by registering at www.BRS.org
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.



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

Mark Morris _____	172
Michael Papp _____	14
Roy Brown _____	48
Todd Clark _____	55

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Edward Van Pelt _____	84
-----------------------	----

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Andy Bielanski _____	183
Bennie Hines _____	16
Brian White _____	129
Bruce Wallace _____	121
Chris Cavanaugh _____	16
Chuck Rowden, II _____	188
Clay Walker _____	155
David Hutchinson _____	16
Gary Sanner _____	33
Gordon Hals _____	87
Jeff Skinner _____	33
Jeffrey Rozanski _____	183
Joseph Alvarado _____	16
Kevin Land _____	121
Kieran McInerney _____	156
Larry Boren _____	71
Nona Nash _____	185
Paul Elrod _____	106

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Robert Atkinson, Jr. _____	141
Williams Holmblad _____	154
Wilson Six, Jr. _____	141

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Brad Seggerman _____	14
Brian Birks _____	43
Brian Crist _____	136
Brian Nichols _____	8
Bruce Bookhout _____	75
Bryan Kovach _____	94
Carl Aldridge _____	188
Charles Allen _____	176
Damon Walker _____	216
Dan Quinlan _____	194
David Miglets _____	109
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Rolando Barros _____	5
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Shawn Kidd _____	2
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Tyone Haynes _____	56
Waylon Davis, Jr. _____	173
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Railroad Retiree Earnings Limits Increase

Railroad retirement annuitants subject to earnings restrictions can earn more in 2023 without having their benefits reduced due to increased limits indexed to average national wage increases.

Like social security benefits, some railroad retirement benefit payments are subject to deductions if an annuitant's earnings exceed certain exempt amounts. These earnings restrictions apply to those who have not attained full social security retirement age. For employee and spouse annuitants, full retirement age varies depending on an individual's year of birth, and is age 67 for those born after 1959. For survivor annuitants, full retirement age also varies, and is age 67 for those born after 1961.

For those under full retirement age throughout 2023, the exempt earnings amount rises to \$21,240 from \$19,560 in 2022. For beneficiaries attaining full retirement age in 2023, the exempt earnings amount, for the months before the month full retirement age is attained, increases to \$56,520 in 2023 from \$51,960 in 2022.

For those under full retirement age, the earnings deduction is \$1 in benefits for every \$2 of earnings over the exempt amount. For those attaining full retirement age in 2023, the deduction is \$1 for every \$3 of earnings over the exempt amount in the months before the month full retirement age is attained.

When applicable, these earnings deductions are assessed on the tier I portion of railroad retirement employee and spouse annuities, and the tier I and tier II portions of survivor benefits.

All earnings received for services rendered, plus any net earnings from self-employment, are considered when assessing deductions for earnings. Interest, dividends, certain rental income, or income from stocks, bonds, or other investments are not considered earnings for this purpose.

Retired employees and spouses, regardless of age, who work for their last pre-retirement non-railroad employer



are also subject to an additional earnings deduction, in their tier II and supplemental benefits, of \$1 for every \$2 in earnings up to a maximum reduction of 50 percent. This earnings restriction does not change from year to year and does not allow for an exempt amount.

A spouse benefit is subject to reduction not only for the spouse's earnings, but also for the earnings of the employee, regardless of whether the earnings are from service for the last pre-retirement non-railroad employer or other post-retirement employment.

Special work restrictions continue to be applicable to disability annuitants in 2023. The monthly disability earnings limit increases to \$1,150 in 2023 from \$1,050 in 2022.

Regardless of age and/or earnings, no railroad retirement annuity is payable for any month in which an annuitant (retired employee, spouse, or survivor) works for a railroad employer or railroad union. ■



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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.

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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

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.

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Cap (black)		11.00	
Cap (blue)		11.00	
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