

VOLUME 106 • 1ST QUARTER 2025

THE SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL



For Members Only



PROGRAM	INFORMATION
Accidental Death Insurance	800-393-0864, unionplus.org/accidentinsurance
AT&T Discounts	unionplus.org/att , use discount code 3508840
Auto Buying Service	unionplus.org/autobuying
Auto Insurance	855-666-5797, discount code DJ7 unionplus.org/autoinsurance
Budget Truck Rental	800-561-1157, use discount # 56000127763, unionplus.org/budgettruck
Car Rental Discounts	unionplus.org/carrental
Avis	800-698-5685, use discount # B723700
Budget	800-455-2848, use discount # V816100
Dollar	800-800-4000, use discount # 3042236
Hertz	800-654-2200, use discount # 205666
Payless	800-729-5377, use discount # A071900
Thrifty	800-847-4389, use discount # 3042238
Cash Back Shopping	unionplus.org/cashback
College Program	unionplus.org/college
Credit Cards	800-522-4000 (to apply), theunioncard.com
Credit Counseling	877-833-1745, unionplus.org/creditcounseling
Debt Settlement	800-230-2541, unionplus.org/debtsettlement
Everyday Discounts	unionplus.org/discounts
Flower & Gift Discounts	888-667-7779, unionplus.org/flowers
Health Savings	unionplus.org/healthsavings
Vision	unionplus.org/vision
Hearing	unionplus.org/hearing
Dental	unionplus.org/dental
Prescriptions	unionplus.org/prescriptions
Homeowners Insurance	855-666-5797, discount code DJ7 unionplus.org/homeinsurance
Legal Services	unionplus.org/legal
Life Insurance	800-393-0864, unionplus.org/lifeinsurance
Medical Bill Negotiating Service	unionplus.org/billnegotiator
Mortgage Program	unionplus.org/mortgage
Moving Discounts	unionplus.org/movingvans
North American	888-813-9595
Pet Insurance	unionplus.org/pets
Personal Loans	unionplus.org/loans
Real Estate Rewards	800-284-9756, unionplus.org/realestate
Renters Insurance	855-666-5797, discount code DJ7 unionplus.org/rentersinsurance
Save My Home Hotline	866-490-5361, unionplus.org/savemyhome
Scholarship	unionplus.org/scholarships
Senior Term Life	800-393-0864, unionplus.org/lifeinsurance
Student Debt Navigator	800-393-0864, unionplus.org/studentdebt
Travel Program	unionplus.org/travel
Vacation Tours	833-382-3175, unionplus.org/tours

Program eligibility is contingent upon union participation.

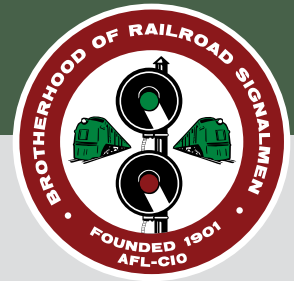
Customer service for Union Plus programs is U.S.-based.

Information accurate as of 1-30-2025

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NALC — Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

Each year, letter carriers across the country head out on their routes on the second Saturday in May to collect donations of non-perishable food items to benefit local food pantries throughout the United States3

DID YOU SERVE in a Branch of the Military?

If so, please send in your photo(s) so you may be included in an upcoming "special edition" of The Signalman's Journal. The issue will highlight BRS members who are veterans, reservists, etc. featuring your photos and honoring your service to our country5

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Signal Inspector Tim Singleton (B&O) captures a moment at RH West Interlocker as Signal Maintainers Kelly Tucker (left) and Dustin Jones (right), both Local 136 Members, repair and replace a GRS Model 5 power machine following a derailment.

Photo submitted by Tim Singleton, Local 94 Recording Secretary.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

— Michael S. Baldwin, BRS President

Happy
2025
New Year



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Happy New Year! As you may know, the BRS filed our National Section 6 notice and have begun bargaining with the National Carriers' Conference Committee for those that gave their proxy. We continue to be engaged in local bargaining with several Class I carriers and commuter railroads. Did you know that your Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is a legally binding contract between the railroad and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen that governs the terms and conditions of employment for Signalmen. Understanding and knowing your CBA is crucial to ensure fair treatment and protect your rights. While negotiating new CBAs, I hear a lot of focus on the wages and benefits portion, and those terms being fair are critical, but the work rules negotiated can be just as important. It is imperative that you understand your CBA and its provisions to ensure that you are being treated fairly, and to know what recourse you have if you are not.

A CBA outlines the rights and protections you have as a member of the BRS. This includes job security, seniority rights, grievance procedures, wages, benefits, and working conditions. By familiarizing yourself with the CBA, you can identify the specific protections afforded to you, and when those important protections are being ignored by the railroads. Knowing your rights helps you advocate for yourself, as well as your Brothers and Sisters, and ensures the CBA is not being violated.

A key component of a CBA is compensation, this is also the one we most commonly focus on. This includes salary scales, overtime rates, and travel reimbursements and per diems, but it also consists of healthcare benefits, vacation days, and any paid sick leave. These portions of the Agreement are negotiated on your behalf. It is your right and responsibility to vote on these benefits after negotiations; without a majority of the impacted membership approving the provisions, the Agreement terms are not implemented.

When conflicts arise in the workplace, such as disagreements with management, pay discrepancies, or other issues, the CBA provides a clear process for addressing these conflicts through the grievance process. Grievance procedures often include several steps to ensure issues are handled in a timely manner by both your Union Representatives and management, such as step-by-step guidelines for filing a grievance and the timelines, as well as any investigation procedures the carrier must follow to protect due process. By knowing how the grievance process works, employees can effectively use the CBA to resolve disputes and safeguard their compensation and work environment.

On the railroad, seniority often plays a crucial role in determining job assignments. Your CBA also includes provisions for how seniority rosters and furloughs are handled, often favoring employees with more seniority. Knowing your seniority rights can help protect you from not receiving proper consideration for your preferred job assignment. Having a solid understanding of these provisions ensures that you are aware of your position on the seniority roster(s); this is especially critical if restructuring ever occurs.

When Signalmen are knowledgeable about their CBA, they can be more effective in advocating for changes, participating in discussions, and being aware of the CBA's provisions; Signalmen contribute to the collective strength of their union. An informed railroader is a powerful railroader. If you have questions regarding your CBA, it is critical you reach out to your Local Officers and your General Chairman; the General Chairman interprets the Agreement on the property. In that same vein, if local management is trying to enforce a provision of the Agreement you believe is incorrect, your General Chairman will work with Labor Relations to solve the issue or have the Local Chairman file a claim. The Highest Designated Officer of each carrier is the only railroad official authorized to interpret the Agreement for your employer.

Your Union's Officers negotiate the CBA on your behalf, but that process involves significant back-and-forth with the railroads; they typically do not offer a fair agreement on the first meeting. It is important to be aware of ongoing negotiations; the outcome of negotiations impacts your working conditions, pay, and benefits. Understanding what is at stake in negotiations, educating yourself on the history of negotiations and the process, and staying informed about potential changes allows you to voice concerns or suggestions to your Union Representatives and cast an informed vote on the Tentative Agreement when the time comes.

Knowing the ins and outs of your CBA is essential to protect your rights, secure fair treatment, and ensure that

you receive the compensation and benefits you deserve. Whether it's the grievance process, ensuring fair pay, or simply understanding your rights in the workplace, the CBA is a critical resource that can provide you with the knowledge and tools to advocate for yourself and your Brothers and Sisters.

In Solidarity,



Michael S. Baldwin — BRS President

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





FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

James M. Finnegan, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

The New Year MEETINGS, REPORTS, AUDITS, AND FORMS



Engage

Local Recording-Financial, Financial, and Recording Secretaries should all have access to our Engage (membership) database. Receiving access requires a short training session that lasts approximately one hour and can be accomplished virtually. If you still need access, please contact my office at (540) 622-6527 to set up a training.

Financial Secretary Training

The Secretary-Treasurer's office will be conducting Local Financial Secretary Training on March 24–26, 2025, and June 23–25, 2025, at Grand Lodge in Front Royal, Virginia. Each class is limited to 10 attendees. Please contact my office at (540) 622-6527 to register.

IRS Standard Mileage Rate Increases

Beginning on January 1, 2025, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups, or panel trucks) will be 70 cents per mile driven for business use, up three cents from 2024.

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

Locals must file with the Department of Labor (DOL) by **March 31, 2025**.

- 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, the report is completed, signed, and submitted online.

QR-1 Form for Q1 2025 (Due April 15)

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.

IRS 941 for Q1 2025 (Due April 30)

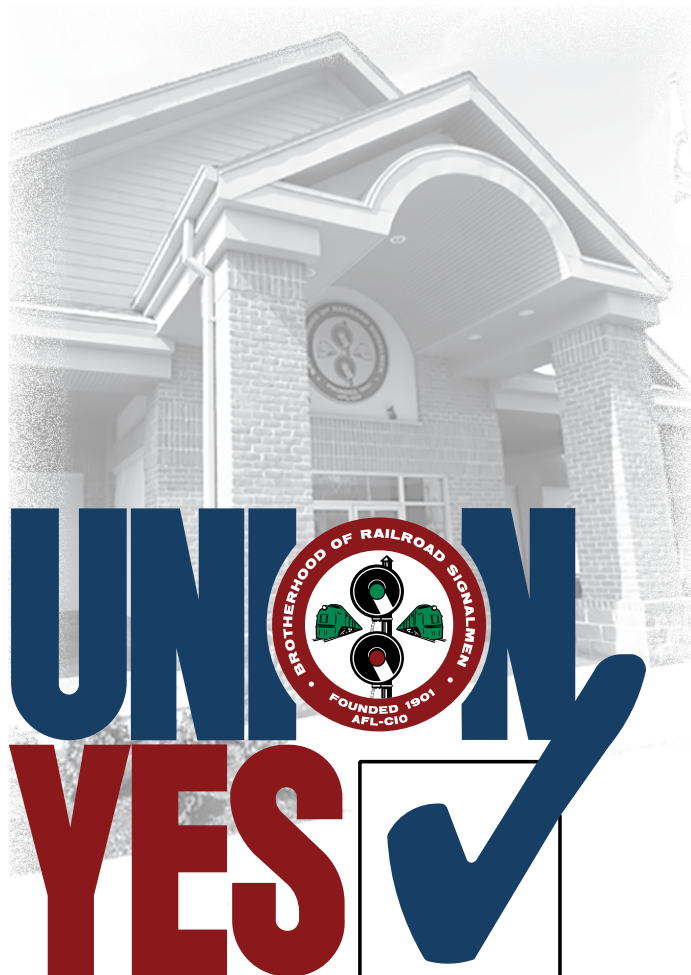
Employer's Quarterly (941) Federal Tax Return is for reporting federal income tax withheld. The form is available on www.irs.gov. These do not need to be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer's office but please do keep a copy for your Local records.

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**. **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.

All organizations that file **Form 990** or **Form 990-EZ** must now also electronically file those returns. This requirement is effective for tax years that begin after July 1, 2019. Since mailing a paper copy of **Form 990** is no longer an option, we have reviewed the IRS Exempt 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.

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 <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-year-2022-exempt-organizations-modernized-e-file-mef-providers-form-990>. If you have any questions or would like assistance on the new e-file requirement or the authorized providers list, please contact my office at (540) 622-6527. ■



★ DID YOU SERVE ★

*in a Branch of
the Military?*



If so, please send in your photo(s) so you may be included in an upcoming “special edition” of *The Signalman’s Journal*. The issue will highlight BRS members who are veterans, reservists, etc., featuring your photos and honoring your service to our country.

Name: _____

Local: _____

Branch of the military: _____

***Please email your photos to
tme@brs.org or mail prints to
the address below.***

*Also, we would love to display your
military unit patches at Grand
Lodge. If you would like your unit
to be included in this display, please
send your patch to:*

**The Brotherhood of
Railroad Signalmen**
917 Shenandoah Shores Road
Front Royal, VA 22630

Alcohol and Drug Testing

MINIMUM RANDOM TESTING RATES FOR 2025 REMAIN UNCHANGED

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced the minimum random testing rates for railroad workers in the year 2025.

Using data from DOT's 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 of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, 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 of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.

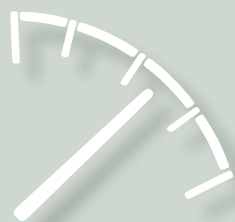
On June 12, 2017, Maintenance-of-Way (MOW) employees became subject to FRA random drug and alcohol testing. For the calendar year 2025, the FRA has set the initial minimum annual random testing rates for MOW employees at 25 percent for drugs and 10 percent for alcohol.

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 result 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.		

2025 STANDARD MILEAGE RATE

The 2025 standard mileage rate set by the IRS increased to 70 cents per mile, effective January 1, 2025.



Please use this rate when calculating mileage reimbursement on expense reports for 2025.

While gasoline is a significant factor in the mileage figure,

other items enter into the calculation 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. ■

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, 2025, this maximum will increase to \$202,900.

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



MIKE EFAW
*National
Legislative Director*

RAIL LABOR UPDATES

Challenges Ahead

As the 119th Congress begins its work, significant political and administrative changes are unfolding. These developments will have direct implications for the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) and Rail Labor as a whole. With Republicans now in control of both the House and Senate, the political landscape is poised for debates and decisions that could shape rail safety, labor policies, and broader legislative priorities.

Leadership Changes: Setting the Stage for 2025

House and Senate Leadership:

- **Speaker of the House:** Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA) was re-elected to lead the chamber.
- **Senate Majority Leader:** Sen. John Thune (R-SD) will head the Senate.

Key Committee Assignments:

Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee:

- **Chair:** Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX)
- **Ranking Member:** Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
- **Jurisdiction:** Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), rail safety, and other transportation issues.

Senate Appropriations Committee:

- **Chair:** Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)
- **Ranking Member:** Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
- **Jurisdiction:** Transportation Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee (THUD includes Amtrak), Labor Health and Human Services Subcommittee (LHHS includes NMB and Sec.130 program), and other labor-related matters.

Senate Judiciary Committee:

- **Chair:** Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)
- **Ranking Member:** Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL)
- **Jurisdiction:** Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA) and other labor-related matters.

House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee:

- **Chair:** Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO)
- **Ranking Member:** Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA)
- **Jurisdiction:** Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), rail safety, and other transportation issues.

House Appropriations Committee:

- **Chair:** Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK)
- **Ranking Member:** Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)
- **Jurisdiction:** Transportation Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee (THUD includes Amtrak, Surface Transportation Board, and National Transportation Safety Board), Labor Health and Human Services Subcommittee (LHHS includes National Mediation Board and Railroad Retirement Board), and other labor-related matters.

House Judiciary Committee:

- **Chair:** Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH)
- **Ranking Member:** Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD)
- **Jurisdiction:** Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA) and other labor-related matters.

The composition and leadership of these committees will be pivotal as Congress considers legislation affecting rail labor and safety.



Legislative

*Information,
Updates, & More!*



Trump Administration's Bold Agenda

The Trump Administration's agenda, guided by the Project 2025 framework developed by The Heritage Foundation, presents a sweeping plan to reshape federal governance. While it promises efficiency and accountability, many workers and labor advocates view the proposed changes with caution, concerned about the potential impact on fairness, worker protection, and the balance of power in government.

Project 2025 outlines significant shifts in federal agency priorities, with an emphasis on deregulation and a limited government approach. For the labor community, this raises questions about the future of workplace safety standards, collective bargaining rights, and enforcement of labor laws. Deregulation, while appealing to some, could mean reduced oversight in industries where workers depend on strong protections for their safety and well-being.

Aggressive plans of issuing multiple executive orders on day one, addressing areas like immigration and energy policy, suggest a fast-tracked approach to governance that may bypass traditional checks and balances. For labor, this could mean reduced opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue about policies that directly affect jobs, wages, and working conditions.

While the plan's advocates highlight its focus on efficiency, labor leaders urge a closer examination of its implications for working people. Strong protections, fair regulations, and robust enforcement are not just bureaucratic hurdles, they are essential to ensuring dignity and safety for all workers. The labor movement will need to stay vigilant and engaged as these proposals take shape.

The Influence of Project 2025

Key areas influenced by the project include:

1. **Deregulation Across Industries:** Aimed at reducing the scope and influence of federal agencies, this initiative seeks to roll back regulations affecting labor protections, environmental standards, and transportation safety.
2. **Immigration Overhaul:** Expanding on President Trump's first-term policies, Project 2025 emphasizes border security, stricter asylum policies, and reforms to legal immigration frameworks.

3. **Labor and Employment:** The project advocates limiting union power, repealing pro-worker regulations, and increasing flexibility for employers in areas like worker classifications and benefits.
4. **Energy Independence:** The project prioritizes energy dominance by encouraging fossil fuel production, reducing reliance on renewable energy subsidies, and streamlining permitting processes for energy infrastructure.

Implications for Rail Labor and Safety

For Rail Labor, the intersection of Project 2025 and President Trump's agenda poses significant challenges:

- **Regulatory Rollbacks:** Rules governing crew sizes, Signalman and Dispatcher certifications, and equipment maintenance may face repeal, raising concerns about safety standards.
- **Union Influence:** Efforts to reduce union power could undermine collective bargaining rights, altering the balance of labor relations in the rail industry.
- **Safety Standards:** Advocacy will be critical to counter efforts to weaken regulations that prioritize workers and public safety.

Strategic Response

The BRS must adopt a proactive stance to mitigate potential negative impacts. This includes:

- Enhancing the Signalmen's Political League's (SPL) advocacy efforts.
- Building coalitions with labor and industry allies.
- Leveraging technology and data to highlight the importance of maintaining strong safety standards.

By preparing for these shifts, the BRS can ensure rail workers' rights and safety remain central in the policy discourse.

Spotlight on Rail Labor:

David Fink, a fifth-generation railroader with over 45 years of industry experience, has been appointed to lead the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Fink comes off of Pan Am Railways, which had a less than stellar safety record. His tenure will likely involve balancing the Administration's deregulatory agenda with rail safety concerns. FRA rules, including those on two-person train

continued on page 10

WASHINGTON REPORT

continued from page 9

crews and Signalman and Dispatcher certifications, could be targeted for repeal—a move that would challenge the safety standards we’ve fought hard to establish.

Advocacy in Action: The Signalmen’s Political League (SPL)

The BRS’s political action committee, the Signalmen’s Political League (SPL), has been instrumental in supporting lawmakers who advocate for rail labor. During the recent election cycle, the SPL sponsored events and strengthened relationships with key congressional members. These efforts ensure our voices are heard on critical issues like rail safety and worker protections.

SPL in Focus:

- Sponsoring political initiatives.
- Attending fundraising events.
- Fostering direct dialogue with lawmakers and their staff.

This advocacy is essential for countering the railroads’ push for deregulation and ensuring protective measures for workers and the public.

Strategies for Navigating a Shifting Landscape — Strengthening Advocacy Networks:

BRS must enhance relationships with lawmakers and policymakers. This includes engaging with congressional committees overseeing rail safety and labor issues, such as the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. The SPL will continue to serve as a bridge to decision-makers in Washington, D.C.; however, these efforts require sustained financial support. Funding the SPL enables its participation in key political events and its ability to maintain active dialogue with influential policymakers.

Building Coalitions:

Partnerships with other labor unions and industry stakeholders will amplify the BRS’s voice. A united labor front is crucial for maintaining safety regulations, certification requirements, and worker protections. Adequate funding allows the SPL to collaborate effectively with allies, ensuring that our collective voice resonates strongly in Washington, D.C.

Leveraging Technology and Data:

Data and technology are invaluable for advocacy. For

instance, analyzing safety data strengthens the case for regulations like the two-person crew requirement and the Signalman and Dispatcher Certification Rules. Digital platforms can mobilize members, coordinate campaigns, and engage policymakers. These tools, however, require investment. Supporting the SPL financially ensures that we can deploy the best technological resources for our advocacy efforts.

Preparing for Legal and Legislative Challenges:

With a likely deregulatory agenda, the BRS must be ready to defend critical FRA rules in legislative and legal arenas. This requires legal expertise, strategic lobbying, and grassroots mobilization—all of which depend on sufficient funding. The SPL’s work in these areas is essential to protect worker protections and rail safety standards.

Legislative Victory: Ending Benefit Reductions with the REEF Act

The passage of the Railroad Employee Equity and Fairness (REEF) Act is a monumental victory for rail workers, and the role of the SPL in this achievement cannot be overstated. Signed into law on December 23, 2024, the REEF Act eliminates the 5.7% reduction in railroad unemployment and sickness benefits that had been mandated by sequestration under the Budget Control Act of 2011. This reduction, which resumed on May 10, 2023, had slashed maximum benefits from \$940 to \$886.42 over a two-week period. Thanks to the SPL’s tireless advocacy, these cuts have been reversed, and as of December 26, 2024, rail workers are receiving the full daily benefit of \$94.00.

This legislative victory underscores the importance of strategic advocacy efforts, particularly those led by the SPL. Through a combination of strategic lobbying, coalition-building, persistence, and relationship-building with lawmakers, the SPL played a pivotal role in ensuring that this necessary change was not only recognized but implemented. The SPL’s persistent lobbying efforts kept the issue of sequestration cuts in front of lawmakers, building support for the REEF Act across party lines. The SPL also worked to form coalitions with other labor groups and industry stakeholders, amplifying the voice of railroad workers and ensuring the bill gained the widespread backing it needed to pass.

The REEF Act also applies retroactively to May 10, 2023, meaning that affected workers will receive back pay. While retroactive payments require system updates, workers can monitor progress through the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) website. This aspect of the bill highlights the SPL's success in ensuring that the law addressed both the immediate issue and the financial strain caused by the sequestration cuts.

Additionally, the SPL's focus on educating its members and the public played a key role in rallying support for the REEF Act. By keeping rail workers informed and encouraging them to contact their representatives, the SPL ensured that lawmakers understood the importance of this issue to their constituents. This grassroots mobilization, combined with the SPL's ongoing engage-

ment with policymakers, was crucial in securing this legislative success.

In summary, the passage of the REEF Act is a direct result of the SPL's effective lobbying and advocacy strategies. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of organized labor and the impact that a well-coordinated political effort can have in achieving tangible benefits for workers. By eliminating the sequestration cuts, the SPL has once again demonstrated how strategic advocacy and relationship-building with lawmakers can lead to real, positive change for rail workers.

The Road Ahead: 2026 Midterm Elections

The upcoming midterms will be pivotal. Historically, the sitting president's party faces challenges, with the president's party losing House seats in 17 of the last 19 midterms since 1950. For Republicans, holding their slim 219-215 majority is critical. Democrats need only a small gain to reclaim control of the House. President Trump's confrontational style could energize opposition voters while mobilizing his base. The balance of power in Congress will significantly influence labor policy and regulatory oversight. Active participation in the SPL by BRS members will amplify the union's influence and reinforce its commitment to safeguarding rail workers' interests.

A Call to Action

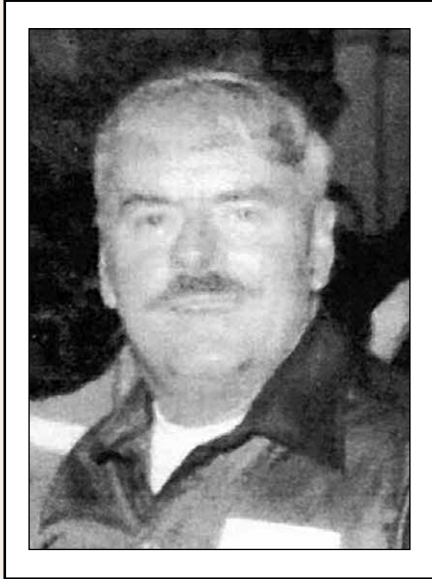
New policies and political dynamics demand vigilance, adaptability, and proactive engagement. By supporting the SPL—both financially and through active participation, BRS members can help shape a future that prioritizes safety, fairness, and the well-being of all rail workers. Stay tuned for future updates and insights in the next edition of *The Signalman's Journal* and be sure to keep up-to-date with what is happening by following us on all our social media platforms. Together, we will face the challenges ahead and continue to advocate for a safer, stronger future for all rail workers. ■

AFL-CIO
**GOOD JOBS.
SAFE JOBS.**

**PROTECT
OUR RIGHTS.**

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY
APRIL 28

In Memoriams



ROBERT E. BRENNAN 1933–2024

Robert E. Brennan passed away on November 19, 2024. Brother Brennan began his railroad career on the Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad in April 1952. He served as Local Chairman of Local 143. Most notably, Brother Brennan served as General Chairman of the Northeast General Committee. He was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his retirement. Brother Brennan is a U.S. Army Veteran. ■



RODERICK "ROD" "WILDMAN" J. KIDDER 1948–2025

Roderick "Rod" "Wildman" J. Kidder passed away on January 10, 2025. Brother Kidder began his railroad career on the Southern Pacific Railroad in October 1970. Brother Kidder served as Local Chairman and Local President of Local 121. Most notably, Brother Kidder served as Assistant General Chairman and Vice General Chairman of the BNSF General Committee. He retired from the Vice General Chairman position after 39 years of service. Brother Kidder is a U.S. Army and National Guard Veteran. ■



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

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Please notify Grand Lodge of the passing of BRS members.

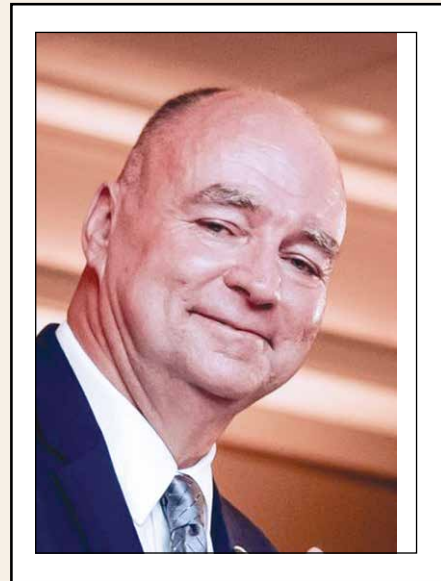
email: membership@brs.org

In Memoriams

MICHAEL “MIKEY” P. DUROSS, JR. 1968–2025



Michael “Mikey” P. Duross, Jr. passed away on January 13, 2025. Brother Duross began his railroad career with Conrail in October 2002. Brother Duross served as Local Chairman of Local 58, and, most notably, as Vice General Chairman of the United General Committee. He was an Electronic Specialist at Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, at the time of his passing. Brother Duross is a U.S. Army and Army Reserves Veteran. ■



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

Under MEMBERS click on the Training & Labor Education tab for more information

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, 2023, to June 30, 2024, 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	\$ 6,911,542	
Sales of supplies, services, books, advertising, subscriptions	47,214	
Interest, investment gain (loss)	<u>767,982</u>	
		\$ 7,726,738

EXPENSES:

Salaries, payroll taxes, insurance	\$ 4,502,765	
Travel expenses	771,708	
Office expenses	376,581	
Association per capita, dues, subscriptions	154,582	
Attorney fees, professional services	226,293	
Depreciation	151,721	
Building expenses	112,705	
Convention, meeting expenses	180,197	
Signalman's Journal	120,205	
Allocation to Contingent Fund	<u>70,868</u>	
		<u>6,667,625</u>

NET INCOME (LOSS)

		(1,059,113)
CAPITAL — June 30, 2023		<u>9,527,456</u>
CAPITAL — June 30, 2024		<u>\$ 10,586,569</u>

CONTINGENT FUND

Summary Statement of Income, Expenses, and Capital

INCOME:

General Fund Allocation, investment gain (loss)	\$ (61,163)	
		\$ (61,163)

EXPENSES:

Convention credit	\$ —	
Bank charges	<u>14,003</u>	
		<u>14,003</u>

NET INCOME (LOSS)

		(47,160)
CAPITAL — June 30, 2023		<u>7,076,506</u>
CAPITAL — June 30, 2024		<u>\$ 7,123,666</u>

AUDITOR'S REPORT

ON FINANCES

The audit was completed and submitted to the Grand Board of Trustees on or before December 3, 2024. In a written report, the auditors stated:

“In our opinion, the financial statements referred to below present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Brotherhood as of June 30, 2024 and 2023, and its activities and expenses for the years then ended in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting described in Note 2.”

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2024

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	Combined	General Fund	Contingent Fund
Cash	\$ 2,149,574	\$ 2,003,811	\$ 145,763
Investments – fair value	13,772,804	6,794,901	6,977,903
Inventory	70,824	70,824	–
Accounts Receivable	–	–	–
Prepaid Expenses	51,654	51,654	–
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>16,044,856</u>	<u>8,921,190</u>	<u>7,123,666</u>
FIXED ASSETS			
Land, Front Royal, VA	81,663	81,663	–
Building, Front Royal, VA	1,553,504	1,553,504	–
Land Improvements	6,448	6,448	–
Office furniture & equipment	23,764	23,764	–
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	<u>1,665,379</u>	<u>1,665,379</u>	<u>–</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ <u>17,710,235</u>	\$ <u>10,586,569</u>	\$ <u>7,123,666</u>

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –
Accrued payroll taxes	–	–	–
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>–</u>
CAPITAL	\$	\$	\$
General Fund	10,586,569	10,586,569	–
Contingent Fund	<u>7,123,666</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>7,123,666</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL	\$ <u>17,710,235</u>	\$ <u>10,586,569</u>	\$ <u>7,123,666</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	\$ <u>17,710,235</u>	\$ <u>10,586,569</u>	\$ <u>7,123,666</u>

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

Charles Mitchell	110
Randol Ortiz-Cardova	62
Terry Giltner	72

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Christie Huynh	5
Don Lenox, II	102
Edward Jones	123
Enrique Gonzalez	102
John Costello	102
John Luu	5
John Malatesta	120
Justin Parker	111
Kendrick Blevins	77
L. Johnson	24
Michael Scott	228
Patrick Hannigan	129
Ray Coonce	156
Rusty Layne	110
Thanh Nguyen	5

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Anthony Inganamorte	56
Brent Wilkinson	42
Chris Allen	119
Craig St. John	18
Dale Benjamin	48
David Pereira	5
Derek Ellis	18
Garry Magnison	20
Gianfran D'Amore	183
Glenn Smith	8
James McGonigal	75
James Newman	18
Jesse Patterson	141
Jesus Rios	206
Joe Montiel	92
John Barry	5
Johnathan Williams, Sr.	206
Jon McLeod	106
Joseph Rogoski, Jr.	141
Kenneth Ross, Jr.	206
Kevin Barnes	179
Lawrence Troy, Jr.	106

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Lee Gravitt	188
Matthew Paulsen	8
Michael Anthony	119
Michael Musgrave	183
Michael Schaefer	8
Paul Byrd	121
Robert Stryker	8
Roy Verspoor	56
Stephen Tiberi	18
Steve Wyrick	161

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Alan Wachtin	56
Alex Arellano	121
Allen Hammitt, Jr.	77
Andrew Kontoh	84
Anthony Casper	8
Barton Bettilyon, Jr.	237
Bob Hanford	56
Bob Oldham	56
Bob Ramirez	234
Brian Atkinson	8
Cameron Burbank	111
Carl Thater	56
Chuck Fenton, Jr.	58
Cody Gracey	8
Craig Reddington	154
Curt Clough	81
Curtis Patterson	130
Darryl Evans	130
David Anthony	119
David Mejia	153
Dennis Smigiel	56
Dusty Yadon	141
Dwayne Baer	154
Edward Kusek	119
Efren Aldana, Jr.	119
Eric Machate	56
Eric Webb	174
Ersan Nalcacioglu	56
Frederick Bechman	14
Gerard DiGiuseppi	56
Greg LeMaster	234
James Crawford	99

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

James Harris	141
Jason Bosowicz	87
Jason Morris	141
Jeff Dunkerley	8
Jeff Linville	136
Jeremy Chappell	8
Jeremy Timmons	185
Jim Laur	174
Joe Garilli	56
John Brunner	119
John Castleberry	72
Jorge Lopez	153
Julio Alvarez, Sr.	108
Justin Cooner	141
Kevin Neidigh	152
Kyle Jager	141
Leo Wickham	155
Matthew Steele	56
Mike Bitoni	111
Mike Cammack	141
Mike Giangrande	56
Mike Kettler	141
Omar Malcolm	56
Peter Nortier	123
Ralph Angulo	156
Randall Shoenbroek	185
Ray Guillen	156
Ric Decker, Jr.	121
Ricardo Garcia	19
Ricardo Lara	99
Richard Kircher	234
Rick Schulz	154
Robin Freeze	119
Rod Nijim	229
Rodney Caldwell	143
Shannon Godejohn	99
Steve McCoy	141
Terry Van Buren, Jr.	8
Tim Peckler	229
Tom Gibson	56
Tom Johnson	174
Tony Izzo	56
Vincent Victor	206
Walt Ceron	156
Warren Wellington	56

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM “BILL” BARRACLOUGH, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 1**. Brother Barraclough retired in 2001 after 41 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Barraclough was a Signal Maintainer at Mifflin, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement.

JESSE L. BROADNAX—active member of **LOCAL 110**. Brother Broadnax had 17 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Broadnax was a Signal Maintainer at Hillsborough, North Carolina, at the time of his passing.

EDUARDO “EDDIE” CASTILLO—active member of **LOCAL 183**. Brother Castillo had 26 years of service with the Canadian Pacific Railway and Metra. Brother Castillo was a Signal Maintainer at Fox Lake, Illinois, at the time of his passing.

WILBURT L. COONCE—retired member of **LOCAL 156**. Brother Coonce retired in 2010 after 44 years of service with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Coonce was a Signal Maintainer at Hesperia, California, at the time of his retirement. Brother Coonce served as Local Chairman and Local Trustee.

HARRY R. DAILEY—retired member of **LOCAL 84**. Brother Dailey retired in 1997 after 40 years of service with the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company, Erie Lackawanna Railway, Conrail, and New Jersey Transit. Brother Dailey was a Lead Maintainer at Summit, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement. Brother Dailey is a U.S. Air Force Veteran.

JOSEPH “JOE” A. FREELING—retired member of **LOCAL 58**. Brother Freeling retired in 2016 after 42 years of service with the Reading Railroad and Conrail. Brother Freeling was a Construction Maintainer at Woodbury, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

HAROLD D. GARDNER—retired member of **LOCAL 141**. Brother Gardner retired in 2016 after 41 years of service with the Missouri, Kansas & Texas and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Gardner was a Signal Maintainer at the time of his retirement.

THEODORE “TED” E. MANESS, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother Maness retired in 1990 after 42 years of service with the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Maness was a Signal Maintainer at Southern Pines, North Carolina, at the time of his retirement. Brother Maness served as Recording-Financial Secretary and Local Trustee.

MICHAEL MARIANO—active member of **LOCAL 62**. Brother Mariano had 2 years of service with the Providence & Worcester Railroad. Brother Mariano was a Locomotive Mechanic at Worcester, Massachusetts, at the time of his passing.

STEPHEN D. MARSHALL—retired member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Marshall retired in 2012 after 34 years of service with the Central of Georgia and Norfolk Southern Railways. Brother Marshall was a Lead Signalman on a System Gang at the time of his retirement. Brother Marshall served as Local Chairman and Local Trustee.

CHARLES “BONE” “BLACK” A. McDAVIS—active member of **LOCAL 68**. Brother McDavis had 12 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother McDavis was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his passing. Brother McDavis is a U.S. Army Veteran.

JESSE P. MONTGOMERY—retired member of **LOCAL 71**. Brother Montgomery retired in 2001 after 25 years of service with the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Montgomery was a Signal Maintainer at the time of his retirement.

WILLIAM J. MORRIS, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 208**. Brother Morris retired in 2015 after 17 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Morris was a Signalman at the time of his retirement.

TOMASZ J. PALKON—active member of **LOCAL 62**. Brother Palkon had 18 years of service with the Providence & Worcester and Genesee & Wyoming Railroads. Brother Palkon was a Locomotive Mechanic at Worcester, Massachusetts, at the time of his passing. Brother Palkon served as Local Trustee.

GARY R. REMREY—retired member of **LOCAL 108**. Brother Remrey retired in 2000 after 43 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway and Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Remrey was a Lead Signal Maintainer at Nelson, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

WILLIAM J. SAMPSON, JR.—active member of **LOCAL 33**. Brother Sampson had 10 years of service with the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Sampson was a Signalman at the time of his passing.

ROBERT “BOB” E. STIPEK, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Stipek retired in 1999 after 25 years of service with the Chicago & North Western Railway and Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Stipek was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

LANNY “LD” D. WALKER—retired member of **LOCAL 141**. Brother Walker retired in 2001 after 32 years of service with the Texas & Pacific Railway and Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Walker was an Electronic Technician at Fort Worth, Texas, at the time of his retirement. Brother Walker is a U.S. Army Veteran.

CLAUDE M. WALLS—retired member of **LOCAL 1**. Brother Walls retired in 1997 after 37 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central Transportation Company, and Conrail. Brother Walls was a Maintainer Test C&S at Altoona, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Walls served as Local President. Brother Walls is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

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
(855) 617-9333
www.mtandj.com

F. Tucker Burge, Sr.
Burge & Burge, PC
2001 Park Place
Suite 1350
Birmingham, AL 35203
Tel. (205) 251-9000
(800) 633-3733
www.burge-law.com

ARKANSAS

Chris Christy
Christy • Ferguson
201 W. Broadway Street
Suite G12
North Little Rock, AR 72114
Tel. (501) 758-0278

CALIFORNIA

Jay A. Kaplan
Kaplan Law Corporation
1901 Avenue of the Stars
19th Floor
Century City, CA 90067
(800) 552-7526
www.kaplanlawcorp.com

Anthony S. Petru
Hildebrand, McLeod & Nelson
5335 College Avenue
Suite 5A
Oakland, CA 94618
(800) 447-7500
www.hmnlaw.com

COLORADO

Jeffrey Chod
Chod Law Office
P.O. Box 17727
Denver, CO 80217
Tel. (314) 541-5862
www.chodlawfirm.com

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Larry Mann
Alper & Mann, PC
9205 Redwood Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20817
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(800) 747-6266

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Howard A. Spier
Rossman, Baumberger,
Reboso, & Spier, PA
9155 S. Dadeland Boulevard
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Miami, FL 33156
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www.rbrlaw.com

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Petro & Harrington, LLC
150 S. Wacker Drive
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Chicago, IL 60606
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www.petrofelalaw.com

Daniel J. Downes
Cavanagh Law Group
161 N. Clark Street
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Chicago, IL 60601
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www.cavanaghlawgroup.com

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P. Matthew Darby
Darby Law Group, LLC
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Hunt Valley, MD 21030
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www.darby-lawgroup.com

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Robert T. Naumes
Naumes Law Group
2 Granite Avenue
Suite 425
Milton, MA 02186
Tel. (617) 227-8444
(844) 826-8445
www.naumeslaw.com

MICHIGAN

Benjamin J. Wilensky
Sommers Swartz, PC
1 Towne Square
Suite 1700
Southfield, MI 48076
Tel. (248) 746-4024
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www.sommerspc.com

MINNESOTA

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

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

Drew C. Baebler
The Baebler Firm, LLC
11878 Gravois Road
St. Louis, MO 63127
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www.raillaw.com

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Marc Wietzke
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Garden City, NY 11530
Tel. (516) 877-1234
(866) 877-3352
www.felaattorney.com

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Shapero | Roloff Co., LPA
1111 Superior Avenue East
Suite 1310
Cleveland, OH 44114
Tel. (216) 781-1700
(800) 321-9199
www.shaperoroloff.com

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Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
Tel. (610) 668-9800
(800) 334-2500
www.ckmo.com

Don P. Palermo

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

TEXAS

Weldon Granger
Jones Granger

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

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500 Crawford Street
Suite 200
Portsmouth, VA 23704
Tel. (757) 393-4093
(800) 368-1033
www.moodyrllaw.com

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James K. Vucinovich
Rossi Vucinovich, PC
1000 Second Avenue
Suite 1420
Seattle, WA 98104
(425) 646-8003
(866) 357-7245
www.rvflegal.com

WISCONSIN

Nicholas D. Thompson
Casey Jones Law Firm
3520 Cherryvale Avenue
Suite 83
Appleton, WI 54913
Tel. (612) 293-5249
www.caseyjones.law

BRS members are encouraged to provide information regarding FELA cases, including criticism or recommendations 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.*

BENEFITS DIRECTORY

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

Your Track to Health

www.yourtracktohealth.com



Whether you want to better understand your plan and coverage, access a form, add a dependent, or research retirement benefits, it's easy to find the information you need on this site.

(NOTE: Information on this site only applies to employees under National Handling.)

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

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

LIFE INSURANCE

MetLife

1-800-310-7770

www.metlife.com

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United Behavioral Health

For treatment, claims or inquiries call:

1-866-850-6212

www.liveandworkwell.com

ACCESS CODE: Railroad

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The Hartford

1-800-205-7651

<https://abilityadvantage.thehartford.com>

VISION BENEFITS

EyeMed

Member Support

1-855-212-6003

www.eyemedvisioncare.com/railroad

DENTAL BENEFITS

Aetna

1-877-277-3368

www.aetna.com

MANAGED PHARMACY BENEFIT

Express Scripts

Retail pharmacy network provides medication for acute, short-term care. Mail-order prescription service provides medication for chronic, long-term care. UnitedHealthcare Plans GA-23000 and GA-46000.

1-800-842-0070

www.express-scripts.com

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Automated Help Line

1-877-772-5772

www.rrb.gov

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www.unionplus.org

SIGNALMAN'S STORE



BRS WATCHES — Gold BRS logo on the face.

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

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

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

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

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

MAIL PAYMENT AND ORDER TO:

BRS Online Store
P.O. Box 220690
Chantilly, VA 20153
(703) 788-2566

ITEM DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
BRS Flag (3' x 5')		85.00	
BRS Flag (2'x3')		54.50	
Golf Balls (pack of 3)		10.50	
Coffee Mug		8.00	
Pocket Watch		94.50	
Wrist Watch		120.00	
Mantle/Desktop Clock		136.00	
Magnet		6.00	
Keychain/Bottle Opener		4.00	

HATS	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Cap (camo/orange)		20.75	
Cap (black dye sub)		18.00	

APPAREL	S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
NEW—Union Proud T-Shirt								\$20.00	
NEW—Golf Shirt (black w/logo)								50.00	
NEW—Golf Shirt (blue w/logo)								50.00	
NEW—Golf Shirt (sage w/logo)								50.00	
NEW—Golf Shirt (rust w/logo)								50.00	
NEW—Golf Shirt (olive w/logo)								50.00	
NEW—Half Quarter Zip								55.00	
Navy Windshirt								57.50	
Black Wool & Leather Coat								201.00	
Black Canvas Coat								90.00	
Brown Canvas Coat								90.00	
Grey Sweatshirt								31.50	
Navy Softshell Jacket								96.50	

CLEARANCE	S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
Service T-Shirt (burgundy)								18.00	
Service T-Shirt (grey)								15.00	
Golf Shirt (black w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (navy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo)								37.50	

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____ CERTIFICATE # _____

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.BRS.ORG

SIGNALMAN'S STORE



NEW

UNION PROUD T-SHIRT



DESIGN ON BACK
OF SWEATSHIRT



GREY SWEATSHIRT



NEW

QUARTER ZIP



NEW

GOLF SHIRT (BLACK)



GOLF SHIRT (BLUE)



GOLF SHIRT (SAGE)



NEW

GOLF SHIRT (RUST)



GOLF SHIRT (OLIVE)



BROWN CANVAS COAT



**BLACK WOOL
& LEATHER COAT**



**NAVY SOFT
SHELL JACKET**



BLACK CANVAS COAT



CAPS



POCKET WATCH



WRIST WATCH



MANTLE CLOCK

Commuter Updates

BRS Requests Release From Mediation as Long Island Rail Road Continues to Stifle Bargaining (Locals 56 & 241)

After unproductive meetings in Washington, D.C. and a steadfast refusal to bargain in good faith, the BRS requested release from mediation on November 8, 2024. The parties met on seven separate dates and despite every effort by the BRS and the coalition of Unions on the Long Island Rail Road Bargaining Coalition (LIRRBC) to bargain in good faith, negotiations remained unproductive. The Unions in the LIRRBC are the BRS, TCU, IBEW, IAM, and BLET. The BRS and LIRRBC are dedicated and will continue the process in order to provide its members with the best agreement possible.

Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) Unsafe Working Conditions Addressed (Local 60)

Despite the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issuing a decision that prevented the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) from placing workers within the four-foot minimum clearance distance required by federal regulation to be considered “clear” and not fouling a track for a train, PATH continued to seek relief from this commonsense worker safety. BRS and other Labor Unions opposed PATH’s actions and scheduled a meeting to address safety concerns with officials from PATH, the FRA, and affected Labor Unions. The result of this, and subsequent meetings, was that PATH abandoned its request for relief and rescinded its Rule that permitted workers to use areas with less than the required four-foot minimum clearance distance. Safety is a core principle of a union and the BRS will always fight for a safe workplace.

Contract Negotiations Begin at SEPTA in Philadelphia (Local 53)

Members of Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) Local 53 working for Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in Philadelphia began contract negotiations on October 10, 2024. The BRS Negotiating Committee which encompasses representa-

tives from the Local, General Committee, and Grand Lodge levels will work towards negotiating an agreement that recognizes the lifesaving work and responsibility our members take on every day they perform work.

The BRS is fully aware of the 240-million-dollar budget shortfall that is approaching in June 2025. If action is not taken in the Pennsylvania State Legislature, massive service cuts, fare hikes, and other cost cutting measures will likely take place. The BRS is adjusting its negotiating strategy and will not rest until our members get a fair contract.

SunRail Orlando (Local 16) Ratifies Three Year Agreement

After several months of hard-fought negotiations with TransitAmerica Services Incorporated (TASI), BRS members at SunRail ratified a new three-year Agreement. The Agreement provides for General Wage Increases (GWIs) and “wage adjustments” that, when compounded, average 18% over the term of the Agreement, as follows: Effective June 1, 2024, a 4.5% GWI with a \$1 per hour wage adjustment with full retroactive pay. On the official ratification date, a \$1 wage adjustment, followed by a 3.5% GWI on June 1, 2025, and another 3.5% GWI on June 1, 2026.

Additionally, the Agreement provides for a \$1 per hour CDL allowance for any member who possesses a CDL, along with an increase in the per diems for maintenance crews working other than regular shifts to \$1.50 per hour. There were also increases in the per diem rate to \$55 per day, the boot allowance to \$250 annually, and the addition of an annual prescription glasses provision of \$200. The Agreement also provided for an additional tier to the PTO Agreement for 14 years of service which grants 24 PTO days.

The Negotiating Committee consisted of Vice President Commuter/Passenger Tim Tarrant, General Chairman Jason Skidmore, Vice General Chairman Bill Yates, and Local Chairman John Rodriguez. The BRS congratulates Local 16 members working for SunRail on a hard-fought Agreement.

Work Continues on Metra Safety Issues

On January 6, 2025, Labor Representatives from BRS, IBEW, and BMWED met with Metra Engineering Officials to continue work on catenary structure safety issues at Metra. Since the September 6, 2024, meeting, Labor Representatives have been working together to mitigate safety hazards which included a site visit with FRA and Metra Officials. Currently, bucket trucks and “tower cars” are available for BRS Signal Department employees to use when required to access signal locations on catenary structures. The parties are also collaborating on designing a safer catenary structure model which will include the use of wider ladders and walkways, modern fall arrest systems, and electrical safety initiatives.

Local 120 Bay State (Keolis) Ratifies Tentative Agreement

On February 10, 2025, following contract negotiations that included the BRS working in a coalition with eight other rail unions and a large rally for rail workers, BRS Members in Local 120 ratified a five-year Agreement with Keolis.

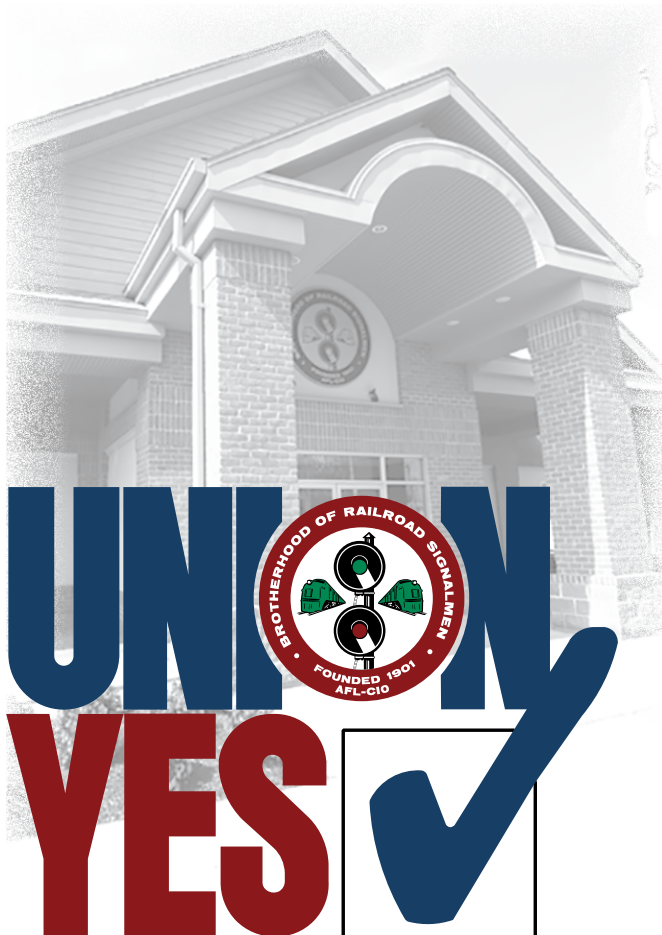
Compounded, the five-year wage package provides for a 33% increase in wages over the term of the Agreement, as well as improvements to the Vacation Agreement. The Agreement also provides for a long overdue allotment of three paid sick days, the addition of Juneteenth as a recognized Holiday, and improvements to bereavement provisions. While there were modest increases in the healthcare cost sharing, the increases are not retroactive and will not become fully implemented until the final GWI and wage adjustment in 2027.

The BRS congratulates the members of the Bay State Local and commends them for their solidarity during the rally, and for their resolve during a difficult contract negotiation. The Negotiating Committee consisted of Vice President Commuter/Passenger Tim Tarrant, General Chairman Keith Johnson, Assistant General Chairman Chris Cook, and Local Officers Kevin Sheehan, Eddie O'Connor, and William Salemme.

BLET Members at New Jersey Transit Inch Closer to a Strike

After exhausting every step for negotiating under the Railway Labor Act, including several years in mediation and two Presidential Emergency Boards, BLET members will be legally permitted to go on strike after midnight on March 22, 2025.

After the second Presidential Emergency Board that rejected the BLET's final offer and instead recommended New Jersey Transit's final offer, a final 60-day cooling off period started which ends on March 22, 2025. The two sides continue to talk in the hopes of reaching an agreement and averting a strike. BRS Local 84 members are encouraged to reach out to their General Chairman or Grand Lodge for guidance as the potential strike looms. ■



NTSB Investigators Visit BRS Grand Lodge

On December 3, 2024, the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) welcomed Rail Branch Chief Ruben Payan and Accident Investigator Brett Johnson, both from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), to BRS Grand



Lodge in Front Royal, Virginia. The resulting session presented an in-depth overview of the NTSB's railroad incident investigation process. Moving forward, BRS union leadership aims to foster a better understanding of how railroad accidents are analyzed and resolved, with a focus on enhancing safety across the industry.

During the discussion, Payan and Johnson delved into detailed scenarios of past investigations, offering insight into the challenges and solutions that have shaped the industry's safety standards over the years. Their expertise illuminated the intricacies of incident analysis and underscored the importance of collaboration in preventing future accidents.

The event concluded with an engaging discussion, where BRS attendees contributed their field expertise on signal systems. The BRS offered practical suggestions to help refine the NTSB's investigative methods, with topics ranging from the intricacies of signal maintenance to the operational challenges faced by Signalmen in the field. This productive exchange underscored the critical role that signal systems play in rail safety and demonstrated the value of collaboration between investigative authorities and industry professionals.

The BRS is proud to have had the opportunity to share

its unique perspective and looks forward to continuing to support efforts to improve rail safety nationwide. ■

Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

— *Our Dedication Extends Beyond the Tracks* —

As Signalmen, we are not just committed to excellence in our craft; we're equally passionate about enriching and supporting the communities we call home.

We would like to showcase the strength and compassion of our Brotherhood. Share your stories and photos of giving back — through community service or the moments where you have made a difference.

*Signalmen are not only leaders on the rails
but also champions in their communities.*

Send photos and stories to info@brs.org

Attention: Justin Pier

MEETING PHOTOS



Local 123 Meeting

Portland, Michigan



BRS Vice President East Doug VanderJagt (left) and General Chairman Tim Caldwell (right) swear in Local 123 Officers.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Local Chairman (Signals) Josh Hanes, Local Trustee Craig Stamford, Local Trustee Dale Ferguson, Recording-Financial Secretary Mike Cook, and Local President Mike Dittman.



Local 16 Meeting

Boca Raton, Florida



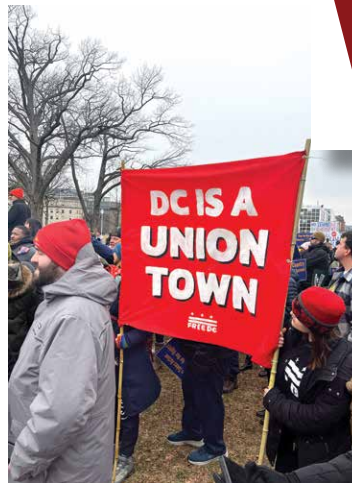
RALLY PHOTOS



Save Our Civil Service Rally

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO (AFGE)

WASHINGTON, DC — In a massive show of solidarity, a crowd of hundreds of federal workers, AFL-CIO affiliated union members including the BRS, and Congressional allies gathered on February 11, 2025, at Upper Senate Park to rally to “Save Our Civil Service.” Hosted by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).



MEETING PHOTOS



Union Pacific General Committee Zone Meetings



UPGC — ZONE 2
Portland, Oregon



UPGC — ZONE 3
City of Industry, California



BNSF Construction Startup

Kansas City, Missouri



PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 1ST QUARTER 2025



The Bonners Ferry Signal Crew upgrading an existing crossing with new gate mechanisms, gate adapters, wiring, and LED lights on the BNSF Railway Northwest Division, Lakeside Subdivision, M.P. 119.54, Mesa, Washington, Mesa Street.

Members of Local 188 — Foreman Kyle Cartwright; Signalmen Brad Webb, Mike Black, and Casey Williams; and Corey Ohland (not pictured) inside the bungalow performing wiring changes.

Picture submitted by Johnny Velasco, Sr., Local 188 Local Chairman.

PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 1ST QUARTER 2025



“The Buzzard’s Nest View” — A buzzard sits atop a signal ladder at CP 107 in Riverdale, Illinois, on the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad.

Photo submitted by Nick Seymour, Local 3 Local President.

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- John Heise, BRS B&O General Chairman

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*Beneficiary Accidental Death Coverage not available in Texas or California.

