

VOLUME 106 • 2ND QUARTER 2025

THE SIGNALMAN'S JOURNAL



For Members Only



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DIRECTORY

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS:

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

Mike Baldwin, President
(ext. 525) • msb@brs.org

Jim Finnegan, Secretary-Treasurer
(ext. 527) • jimfinnegan@brs.org

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

Justin Pier, Grand Lodge Representative
(ext. 567) • j.pier@brs.org

Jeremy Farr, Grand Lodge Representative
(ext. 568) • j.farr@brs.org

Matt Trujillo, Grand Lodge Representative
(ext. 531) • m.trujillo@brs.org

FIELD VICE PRESIDENTS:

Tim Tarrant, Vice President Commuter/Passenger
(ext. 528) • tmt@brs.org

Cory Claypool, Vice President West
(ext. 528) • clc@brs.org

Doug VanderJagt, Vice President East
(ext. 528) • drvanderjagt@brs.org

Kurt Mullins, Vice President Midwest
(ext. 528) • kmullins@brs.org

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS:

Quinn Norman, Vice President Headquarters
(ext. 528) • r.norman@brs.org

Mike Efaw, National Legislative Director
(ext. 528) • mle@brs.org

Chris Hand, Director of Research
(ext. 566) • c.hand@brs.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Mike Sullivan, Chairman
60 Oak Place, Babylon, NY 11702
(631) 432-4760

Andy Webb, Secretary
P.O. Box 304, Hohenwald, TN 38462
(931) 628-4129

Aaron Carter, Member
923 NE Woods Chapel Road
Lees Summit, MO 64064
(816) 564-8262

OFFICER EMERITUS:

W. Dan Pickett, President Emeritus

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STOP the CUTS



The spirit of solidarity and the strength of the Union Movement were on full display as the march surged through Wall Street. The BRS stands shoulder-to-shoulder with our Brothers and Sisters across the federal workforce..... 8

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A rainbow captured near milepost CA 486.0 on the CSX Railroad line in Milton, West Virginia. This stretch of track is part of the CSX Kanawha Subdivision, with Milton located at milepost CA 487. Rainbows typically form when sunlight passes through moisture in the air, creating a spectrum of colors.

Photo submitted by Local 136 Member Daniel "Joe" Bocook.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

— Michael S. Baldwin, BRS President

Bylaws

The Backbone of Our Organization

Sisters and Brothers,

If you have ever attended a meeting of your Local, you have probably heard the Bylaws discussed. This document is foundational to the operation and success of each Local; additionally, it provides accountability for the officers and members of each role in the union.

As a member, it is important to understand that Bylaws are the backbone of our organiza-

tion. They lay out the structure and rules that guide how we operate day to day — everything from how officers are elected, how meetings are conducted, the handling of finances, and the process to resolve internal disputes. Bylaws ensure there is consistency, transparency, and fairness in our decision-making, and they protect both the membership and the organization by keeping in line with legal and regulatory requirements. Without strong Bylaws, things can quickly become disorganized or even divisive, which can weaken our collective voice and effectiveness.

In addition to the Local Bylaws, each General Committee has Bylaws that govern how it functions. In both cases, the Bylaws lay out the list of officers (in line with the BRS Constitution), the pay of each officer, the jurisdiction of the Local or General Committee, the process for how grievances are handled, as well as the voting requirements on some Local Agreements.

The process of updating or amending the Bylaws is just as critical as the content itself. When changes are proposed, members are given notice and the opportunity to review and discuss them, ensuring that everyone has a chance to weigh in. This process includes submitting formal proposals, holding discussion periods to evaluate the impact of the change, and voting, typically requiring a majority or supermajority for approval. Once passed by the Local, the proposed Bylaws are reviewed by the Vice President of Headquarters to ensure they align with the General Committee Bylaws, the BRS's Constitution, and Department of Labor standards. The President then completes a final review and signs the Bylaws. The Local is required to sign and return the approved version, making it official. This process is designed to keep the BRS democratic and member-driven, ensur-



This process is designed to keep the BRS democratic and member-driven, ensuring that any change truly reflects the will of the body, not just a few individuals.



ing that any change truly reflects the will of the body, not just a few individuals.

If you are a Local or General Committee Officer and need a copy of your Bylaws or assistance in updating them, **please contact Quinn Norman, Vice President Headquarters**, at r.norman@brs.org, and he will be happy to assist you in revising.

In Solidarity,



Michael S. Baldwin — *BRS President*

General Committee Bylaws

ARTICLE III, SECTION 14

Each General Committee shall formulate such Bylaws as may be necessary for its government, provided such Bylaws are not in conflict with this Constitution and are approved in writing by the President.

Local Bylaws

ARTICLE II, SECTION 7

All Local Lodges shall be empowered to enact such Bylaws, rules, and regulations as are necessary for their government, but all such enactments shall only be valid when not in conflict with the provisions of this Constitution and after same have been approved in writing by the President.

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



FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

James M. Finnegan, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

Local Lodge Meetings

Local Lodge meetings form the roots of our organization. From them come the views and desires of our members, which guide Local Lodge, General Committee, and Grand Lodge officers in formulating policies to improve working conditions and quality of life for Signalmen. Further, all Local Lodges have their own respective issues, such as grievances, bylaw changes, and maintaining strong attendance at meetings. Hardly an event can take place at a meeting that does not affect every member in the Local. Those who fail to attend not only run the risk of missing out on decisions directly affecting themselves, but they also diminish the broader goal of the organization to improve the working conditions of all members. Just as governments are strong in proportion to the interest and support of their constituents, labor organizations progress according to the will of their members to give all their support to the most important activity of their organization — which is the Local Lodge meeting.

BRS members have access to Regular and Special Meetings; Article II, Sections 60 and 61, of the BRS Constitution, states the following:

Sec. 60. A Local Lodge may hold as many regular sessions at such times and places as it shall agree upon, but **every Local Lodge shall hold at least one regular session each quarter**, except in cases where special dispensation has been granted by the President. The Local Lodge will be required to notify all members by mail, electronic media, or combination of both of any regular meetings stating the time and place of the meeting.

Sec. 61. Special meetings of Local Lodges may be called (1) by the Local President when he deems such action necessary; (2) by the Local Recording Secretary in the absence or incapacity of the Local President; (3) at the written request of at least 10 percent of the

members in good standing (and not less than 25 percent with less than 100 members in the Local Lodge), but not less than five members in good standing when there are less than twenty (20) members in the Local Lodge.

A notice in due form of every special meeting shall be forwarded to each member in good standing by the Local Recording Secretary at least fifteen (15) days before date of such meeting. Such notices shall state the time, place, and purpose of meeting, and only such business shall be transacted as has been stated in the notice thereof.

Article II, Section 26, states:

Sec. 26. He shall promptly notify the Secretary-Treasurer of any and all changes in the elective officers of the Local Lodge and the place and the time of meetings.

Please notify membership@brs.org of any changes in your Local officers. Also, please send your meeting notices to michaela@brs.org, or you can mail your AR-1s and meeting notices to Grand Lodge at 917 Shenandoah Shores Road, Front Royal, VA, 22630.

The primary purpose of conducting regular and special meetings is for the transaction of business that legally and properly comes before it.

The following guidelines apply:

1. A true and accurate record of Local Meeting proceedings will be taken in accordance with Article II, Section 25.
2. Quorum requirements mandated in Article II, Section 59, remain in place. The Local President must verify the members in good standing.

3. The notification requirements are mandated in Article II, Section Nos. 60 and 61. The Meeting Notice must contain the date, time, and video or audio conference call information.
4. Local Meetings will still be conducted in accordance with Article II, Section Nos. 62–64; Article II, Section 73; and the Ritual.
5. Rules of Order under Article II, Section 65, will continue to govern. To maintain order, members should identify themselves to the Local President and only speak when properly recognized. Special consideration must be given by the Local President to ensure any member who wishes to speak is recognized.

Elections

Article II, Section Nos. 15–19, outline the procedures for electing Local Officers.

Sec. 15. All elections under this Article II, including Local Chairmen and Committeemen, must be by secret ballot, except where a candidate for office is unopposed.

The regular triennial nomination and election of officers of Local Lodges and Local Grievance Committees shall be held between January 1 and October 15 of the election year. Nominations for Local Lodge officers shall be made at any regular or special meeting of the Local provided at least thirty (30) days' written notice must be given each member by the Local Recording Secretary, advising him that the nomination for Local Lodge officers will take place at that meeting.

Any member who cannot attend the meeting may nominate the candidates of his choice for Local Lodge officers by writing the Local Recording Secretary of his Local Lodge and advising him of the names of his choice for nominees. Any such nominations must be in writing and mailed to the Local Recording Secretary.

The Local Recording Secretary shall stipulate in the nomination notice the last date for receipt of the nominations which may be mailed in by the member who cannot attend the meeting.

The elections for Local Lodge officers will take place at any regular or special meeting of the Local, a quorum not being required, provided at least thirty (30) days' written notice is mailed to each member at the

member's last known home address advising him that the election will take place at the meeting. If a member cannot be present at the election meeting, he may request the Local Recording Secretary to furnish him an official election ballot which will list the names of all nominees for Local Lodge officers and the date by which it must be returned. The member may then mark his ballot and enclose it in a plain ballot envelope and return it to the Local Recording Secretary in an envelope on which he has placed his name and return address, for counting at the election meeting. Where there are three or more nominees for a position, the member, if he so desires, may mark his ballot for the candidate of his choice in preferential order which will permit his vote to count in case of a tie or a run-off election at the meeting.

All elections for Local Lodge officers shall be at the officially designated election meeting. Write-in votes and voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

If a Local so desires, it may also utilize a certified electronic balloting process to conduct their elections. This electronic ballot must also be a secret ballot. (8/2018)

Sec. 16. Before election, the Local President shall appoint two tellers who shall receive and count the votes, the Local Recording Secretary keeping tally and announcing the result to the members.

Sec. 17. When nominations for any particular office have been properly closed, additional nominations for that office shall not be considered.

Sec. 18. Members in good standing shall be entitled to one vote for each office, and a majority of the votes cast shall be required for election to any office.

Sec. 19. Where there are more than two candidates nominated for the same office in a Local Lodge, and none of them receive a majority of the votes cast, a secret ballot will be promptly issued with the names of the two candidates who received the highest number of votes cast in the first ballot, and the candidate receiving the majority of votes cast in the second ballot will be elected. In the event that more than two candidates tie for the highest number of votes cast on the first ballot or any subsequent ballot, only the names of those candidates who tied for the highest number of votes cast will be placed on the next ballot. All elections will be by secret ballot, except where a candidate is unopposed for an office. ■



2025

RAILROAD SAFETY DAY

SIGNALMEN

BRING THE FIGHT TO CAPITOL HILL

Leaders and members of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS) joined more than 300 representatives from across the rail industry for Railroad Safety Day on Capitol Hill. The event marked a unified effort to meet with over 300 congressional offices and push for stronger safety standards, continued funding for the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), and protection of critical federal regulations that safeguard rail workers and the public.

BRS Delegates included Vice President East Doug VanderJagt, Director of Research Chris Hand, Grand Lodge Representative Justin Pier, and General Chairmen Carlton Everett, John Heise, and Dan Jacopino, along with Local President Damon Walker, joined other stakeholders from Class I and short line railroads, contractors, and suppliers to draw attention to the policies that directly affect the lives and livelihoods of American railroad workers.

The BRS used the occasion to advocate for provisions in the Railway Safety Act, emphasizing the need for mandatory use of defect detectors, limits on unsafe inspection practices, and stronger accountability measures for railroads that violate safety rules. Members also called on lawmakers to preserve 49 CFR Parts 234 and 236, the federal signal inspection standards that the rail industry has targeted for repeal.

"These regulations were put in place because lives were lost and lessons were learned," said Chris Hand, Director of Research for the BRS. "Weakening them for convenience or cost-cutting reasons ignores the history behind them. Technology has a place, but it cannot replace qualified Signalmen doing the work."

BRS Representatives also urged Congress to ensure full and stable funding for the RRB, the agency responsible for administering earned retirement, disability, and unemployment benefits for over 730,000 railroad workers and their families. The BRS pressed for \$170 million in FY26 appropriations and exemptions from hiring

freezes and reorganization policies that have severely strained RRB staffing.

The union also emphasized the importance of keeping all 53 RRB field offices open. Many rail workers rely on in-person assistance to file claims and submit original documentation. Field office closures would disproportionately affect workers in rural areas, adding unnecessary barriers to accessing earned benefits.

"The RRB is one of the most efficient and effective retirement systems in the federal government," said BRS National Legislative Director Mike Efaw. "It is funded entirely by railroad workers and the industry, not taxpayers. Congress has a responsibility to protect it and ensure it can continue to serve the people who built and sustain the rail system."





With Congress preparing to take up appropriations, tax policy, and early drafts of the next surface transportation bill, the timing of Railroad Safety Day was critical. BRS leaders made clear that their presence in Washington, D.C., was not ceremonial. It was a deliberate effort to ensure that Rail Labor remains at the center of policy decisions that will shape the future of rail safety and worker protections. ■



STOP *the* CUTS

On March 15, 2025, in New York City, over 5,000 individuals, including federal workers, labor union members, and representatives from various community organizations, gathered to protest the reckless



behavior and unprecedented job cuts being put forth by corporate interests. After gathering at Foley Square, the 5,000 plus participants took to the streets and marched down Worth Street, taking a left at Broadway, to head to Wall Street. As the march continued so did the momentum and outrage over unprecedented cuts to federal workers and vital programs. The spirit of solidarity and power of the Union Movement was on full display as the march descended upon Wall Street. The BRS stands shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters from the federal government and will not rest until this unjustified attack on workers is stopped. ■



STOP
the
CUTS





MIKE EFAW
*National
Legislative Director*

FROM THE GROUND UP:

Protecting Rail Workers' Benefits & Modernizing Safety Rules

As we move through the second quarter of 2025, our fight to protect the rights, benefits, and safety of railroad workers remains as urgent as ever. From defending our Railroad Retirement system to pushing for stronger national safety legislation, your solidarity and dedication continue to drive real change in Washington. This report highlights where the battles stand and where we go next, together.

Fighting to Keep the Railroad Retirement Board Strong and Fully Funded

Rail labor is in an active fight to preserve and protect the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), the agency that rail workers and their families rely on for retirement, disability, unemployment, and sickness benefits. The RRB is funded entirely by rail workers and the rail industry, not the taxpayer, yet the Board now finds itself in the crosshairs of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), a federal initiative tasked with digging into government agencies, scrutinizing spending, and seeking access to federal payment systems.

Even though no public tax dollars support the Railroad Retirement system, the RRB is being treated as if it were just a bloated federal bureaucracy. It's not. It's a self-funded, self-contained system, built and maintained by the rail industry and its workforce — and it works.

Congress must act to:

- Allow the RRB to use its Trust Fund to cover administrative costs so it can properly serve the people who paid into the system.
- Protect vital field offices from being shut down, especially in communities where in-person help is essential.
- Ensure timely delivery of earned benefits to retirees, disabled workers, and families.

- Preserve the independence and integrity of a system that Rail Labor fought to build and continues to support.

Closing field offices, underfunding operations, or limiting the RRB's ability to function is a direct attack on rail workers and retirees who earned their benefits through a lifetime of service.

We are fighting to keep the RRB strong, accessible, and fully empowered to serve the people who depend on it.

Congressional Action Needed on Comprehensive Rail Safety Legislation

Alongside protecting worker benefits, Congress must act decisively to pass Comprehensive Rail Safety Legislation that addresses ongoing risks and strengthens public trust in the industry.

In the previous Congress, the Senate Commerce Committee approved the bipartisan Railway Safety Act, co-authored by then-Senator J.D. Vance and supported by President Trump. This critical legislation advanced substantial reforms aimed at preventing catastrophic derailments and improving hazardous materials oversight.

Meanwhile, the House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Rail Subcommittee held a bipartisan hearing on the Railway Safety Enhancement Act, a measure that builds on the Senate's momentum to further bolster rail safety standards.

With bipartisan groundwork already in place, Congress must move swiftly to pass updated safety legislation that prioritizes workers, communities, and the integrity of the national rail system.

Establishing Strong Federal Regulations for Defect Detectors

One cornerstone of modern rail safety is the establishment of strong federal regulations for defect detectors — essential technologies that identify mechanical issues

before they escalate into major failures. Legislation must direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue comprehensive regulations covering:

- **Placement Frequency:** Standards for the regular positioning of detectors along rail routes.
- **Installation, Maintenance, and Repair:** Requirements to ensure devices are properly installed, maintained, repaired, and tested for accuracy and reliability.
- **Maintenance Records:** Mandatory documentation of service and performance histories.
- **Communication of Safety Alerts:** Immediate notification to railroad employees regarding detected defects or trends.
- **Corrective Action Protocols:** Clear procedures carriers must follow after receiving defect warnings.

Without strong national standards, inconsistencies in the use, maintenance, and response to defect detectors could jeopardize the safety of rail operations.

Strengthening Testing Standards for Signal Systems and Highway-Rail Grade Crossings

Another critical pillar of safety reform is the regular and rigorous testing of signal systems, highway-rail grade crossings, and associated apparatus. All such systems must be governed by mandatory periodic testing schedules to ensure consistent, reliable operation. These sophisticated systems — combining electronic, mechanical, and computerized components — naturally degrade over time and must be frequently evaluated.

Importantly, no matter how advanced new technologies

become, they cannot replace the in-person inspections performed by experienced Signalmen. Only skilled Signalmen possess the location-specific expertise and historical knowledge of equipment that ensures comprehensive and accurate safety assessments. Federal law must recognize and reinforce the vital role of Signalmen in maintaining the operational integrity of our rail infrastructure.

Conclusion: A Unified Agenda for Rail Workers and Rail Safety

Passing Comprehensive Rail Safety Legislation must include both protecting the Railroad Retirement system and modernizing rail safety standards. By allowing the RRB to fully utilize its Trust Fund resources and enacting strong new regulations for defect detectors, signal testing, and hazard response, Congress can demonstrate an enduring commitment to rail workers, their families, and the safety of the American public.

The challenges are clear. The solutions are ready. Now is the time to build a safer, fairer system — from the ground up.

A Note to Our Members

While this report highlights several of the most pressing issues we're facing in Washington — Railroad Retirement, defect detectors, and safety legislation — we know these are not the only concerns on your minds. From job protection and automation to staffing levels, hours of service, and the role of new technology in the field, there are many ongoing fights that matter to us. Know this: the BRS is engaged on all fronts, and we will continue to represent your interests with strength, strategy, and solidarity. ■



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Information, Updates, & More!

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LOCAL 183 WORKS IN THE STATE CAPITAL TO ADDRESS METRA Funding Issues

Members from Local 183 along with hundreds of other Union members traveled to the Illinois State Capital to educate State Representatives of the impending funding shortages facing Chicago area transit including Metra, and to support legislation to address the shortage. Local 183 and the BRS belong to Illinois' Labor Alliance for Public Transportation (LA.PT), a first of its kind Transit Labor Coalition consisting of 33 different Unions dedicated to the safety and efficiency of public transportation across Illinois. These 33 Labor Organizations recognized the urgency of the funding shortages referred to as the fiscal cliff, and united to draft legislation to address the crisis.

The legislation proposes governance reforms and structural enhancements to the region's transit agencies, including Metra, and also includes recommendations on farebox recovery and potential funding solutions.



Each of the 33 Labor Organizations contributed to preparing and advancing the bill which included engaging with elected officials, providing legislative input, and educating the public. The BRS along with the LA.PT has been, and will remain, at the forefront of this fight.

March 5, 2025, was a great example of the power Unions possess when working together. ■



DID YOU SERVE

in a Branch of the Military?



If so, please send in your photo(s) so you may be included in the annual “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



St. Baldrick's
FOUNDATION

On Saturday, March 15, 2025, Brothers Burt Baird (Local 89) and Doug VanderJagt (Local 123) proudly represented their locals at the St. Baldrick's Pediatric Cancer Research event held in Youngstown, Ohio.

Their team, The River Rats, raised an impressive \$20,000+ toward the cause, contributing significantly to the event's total of \$56,171 raised for children's cancer research.

A special congratulations goes to Brother Baird, who raised \$8,196.14, making him the top individual fundraiser of the event.

Thank you to all who supported this meaningful cause and helped make a difference in the fight against childhood cancer. ■



**CONQUER
KIDS'
CANCER®**



Continuous Membership



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

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

50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Donald Brookman _____ 102

45 YEARS OF SERVICE

David Welch _____ 229
Dennis Heitert _____ 55
Richard Haywood _____ 183
Ronnie Speegle _____ 206

40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Salvatore Runci _____ 84

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Allen Shepard _____ 49
Bill Yates _____ 16
Bruce McVey _____ 16
Charles Stone _____ 16
Eddie Stewart, Jr. _____ 16
Harvey Strickland _____ 16
Holt Carlton _____ 94
Jim Bennett _____ 49
Kenneth Bland, Jr. _____ 206
Kevin Smith _____ 33
Korie Kinchen _____ 206
Mark Heck _____ 25
Marty Gray _____ 94
Randy Jividen _____ 77
Roger Coulter _____ 234
William Freeman _____ 53

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

J. Lane _____ 188
Bryant Quick _____ 119
Charles Hughes _____ 102
Charles Morris _____ 77
Darin Lockard _____ 106
Dave Osborne _____ 126
Dennis Myers _____ 182
Doug Klebe _____ 106
Edward Miretskiy _____ 102
Harry Smith, Jr. _____ 162
Helmut Steensen _____ 188
Jeff Lewis _____ 107
Jeffrey Schofield _____ 119
John Stahlman _____ 229
Michael Anderson _____ 129
Michael Tankersley _____ 77
Michaelene Meyers _____ 40
Phil Zielinski _____ 68
Robert Greene _____ 56
Shawn Schubring _____ 188
Wayne Sanders _____ 179
William Manfredi _____ 183

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Alex Trujillo _____ 156
Allan Mann _____ 89
Anthony Marrero _____ 56
Antoine Hairston _____ 68
Arthur Harkins _____ 120
Brett Stubblefield _____ 183

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Charles Renfro _____ 8
Chris Martin _____ 72
Chris Stone _____ 72
Corey Taber _____ 72
Curt Pelky _____ 174
David Pharis _____ 46
Don Lutz, III _____ 229
Edward Serdynski _____ 226
Greg Watring _____ 72
Hugh Griffey, Jr. _____ 77
Jeff Anderson _____ 72
Jesse Sharp _____ 234
Jim Kovach _____ 35
Joe Clark _____ 143
Joe Hull _____ 72
Joe McIntosh _____ 141
John Fitzpatrick _____ 234
John Schmidt _____ 234
John Smith _____ 129
Justin Ratcliffe _____ 110
Kevin Lavin _____ 183
Kevin Peters _____ 234
Marc Miller _____ 156
Mike Lange _____ 72
Noel Pardoe _____ 72
Rohit Nanan _____ 56
Scott Cooper _____ 72
Steve Buback _____ 56
Steve Mitros _____ 18
Teresa Sharp _____ 234
Tylar Pinkley _____ 72

Regional Updates

In the Midwest

New Agreement on Evansville Western Railway (EWR)

Members of Local Lodge 46, working for EWR recently ratified a five-year Agreement covering 2026 through 2030. The Agreement provided 3% Gross Wage Increases (GWI) for 2026 and 2027, and 3.5% GWIs for 2028, 2029, and 2030. The Agreement provided an additional \$0.50 per hour differential for employees qualified on wayside detectors. Local Lodge 46 members kept their healthcare the same without changes and made no other concessions.

Events in the East

Providence & Worcester (P&W) Members Ratify Agreement

Members of Local Lodge 62, working for P&W ratified a new five-year Agreement on February 25, 2025. The Agreement consisted of an initial \$3.00 per hour raise for all employees in 2025, \$1.30 per hour raise in 2026, \$1.35 per hour raise in 2027, \$1.45 per hour raise in 2028, and \$1.50 per hour raise in 2029. The Agreement provides for increased CDL allowances, meal allowances, and shift differentials, as well as the addition of Car Shop Foreman and PTC-Certified Locomotive Electrician classifications. Additionally, the Agreement provided for extensions to the time limits for filing claims. Local Lodge 62 members will now have access to P&W's Parental Leave Policy, as well as improvements to the employer 401(K) match. Job well done by the P&W bargaining committee and to all the members on the P&W.

CSXT Agreement Reached

BRS members working on CSX Transportation have voted to ratify the tentative agreement reached on March 24, 2025. This Agreement, affecting more than 1,300 Signalmen, marks the first successful ratification of a local agreement in a round of bargaining that reflects a major departure from the traditional national process.

The results are as follows:

1,384 members were balloted.

838 (60.54% participation) ballots were received with the following results:

- 534 (63.72 % of Received Ballots) Yes, Approve
- 304 (36.27% of Received Ballots) No, Do Not Approve
- 0 (0% of Received Ballots) Spoiled Ballots

The five-year Agreement provides general wage increases totaling 17.5% (18.77% compounded) over the life of the contract. It includes changes to health and welfare benefits such as a maintained cap on employee contributions at 15% of the carrier's payment rate, enhancements to dental and vision coverage, increased opt-out payments, and the addition of a reduced-rate, HSA-eligible employee-only coverage option. Other updates include accelerated vacation accrual schedules, new vacation eligibility for recent hires, and the ability to carry over up to 20 days of unused sick leave for documented long-term illness. While the Agreement offers improvements in multiple areas, the vote also reflected that members continue to place a high value on securing meaningful time off to care for their health and well-being.

President Baldwin stated, *"This Agreement reflects the hard work of our Bargaining Committee and sends a clear message that Signalmen are not afraid to break from tradition when it's in the best interest of our members. We secured timely raises, major quality-of-life improvements, and long-overdue work rule reforms."*

The members comprising the BRS/CSXT Bargaining Committee included: BRS President Mike Baldwin, Vice President East Doug VanderJagt, and General Chairmen John Heise (Baltimore & Ohio General Committee), Andy Webb (Louisville & Nashville General Committee), Tim Caldwell (Northeast General Committee), Dan Jacopino (CSXT Northern General Committee), and Jason Skidmore (Southeast General Committee).

Commuter Corner

TransitAmerica Services Incorporated (TASI) Settles Outstanding Claims with Local 153 Members

In conference with top management officials from TASI, General Chairman Aaron Carter, Vice General Chairman Ron Garrison, Local Chairman Jorge Lopez, and Grand Lodge Vice President Tim Tarrant resolved several ongoing claims affecting Local 153 members. The settlement provided \$30,000 in payments to be divided by Local 153 members working for TASI; additionally, the claims protected work and positions covered under the Scope Rule of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Enforcement of the CBA is foundational to unionism and Local 153 members continue to do their part.

Local 53 Members Working for Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) Ratify Tentative Agreement and Begin Work on SEPTA Fiscal Cliff

Following several months of negotiations which included navigating a looming 213-million-dollar fiscal cliff for SEPTA, Local 53 members ratified a one-year tentative agreement on April 17, 2025. The Agreement provides for a 5% general wage increase and makes improvements to the Signal Failure Reduction Program.

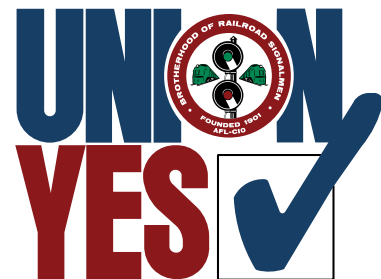
Local 53 members also joined community groups and other Labor Organizations at a rally to stop the SEPTA cuts and properly fund transit in Pennsylvania. SEPTA recently provided its plan that it deemed the “SEPTA Death Spiral,” wherein SEPTA will begin to systematically disable the system if state legislators do not provide adequate funding. The fiscal issues arose out of a lack of long-term funding and has been enhanced by the end of COVID-19 pandemic funding. The BRS will continue to be an active partner to secure adequate funding for the SEPTA system, as well as for transportation in Pennsylvania as a whole.

BRS Members at Local 183 in Chicago Begin Contract Negotiations at Metra as Part of a Coalition of Rail Labor Organizations

On April 1, 2025, BRS members working for Metra in Chicago joined the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division-IBT, the International Association of Machinist & Aerospace Workers, District Lodge 19, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and SMART–Mechanical in serving a joint Section 6 Notice to begin bargaining. The BRS Negotiating Committee encompasses representatives from the Local, General Committee, and Grand Lodge levels and will work diligently towards negotiating an Agreement that recognizes BRS members lifesaving work, as well as the heavy responsibility all Rail Workers take on in performing their work.

Long Island Rail Road Needs to Bargain in Good Faith (Locals 56 & 241)

The Long Island Rail Road Bargaining Coalition (LIRRBC) has attempted to bargain in good faith for the last two years, yet the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) still refuses to recognize the coalition or bargain in good faith. The five labor unions which represent the majority of the LIRR’s workforce, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS), International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), and the Transportation Communications Union (TCU) have been engaged in mediation for over a year, yet the LIRR is still delaying and attempting to stifle bargaining. ■



TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER



The BRS Honors the Fallen at Arlington

On April 18, 2025, the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen honored the memory of America's fallen service members by placing a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Held in advance of Memorial Day, the ceremony served as a solemn reminder of the sacrifice made by those who gave their lives in defense of our nation.

Representing the BRS were four veterans: Local 8 Chairman Robert Fegler, BRS President Mike Baldwin, Vice President Midwest Kurt Mullins, and Grand Lodge Representative Justin Pier. Each brought not only their union leadership but also their personal connection to



military service, making the moment especially meaningful.

"This wasn't just a ceremonial duty, it was personal," stated BRS President Mike Baldwin. "As veterans, we understand the cost of service. We carried with us the memory of those who never made it home, and we honored them on behalf of every Signalman who has worn the uniform."

The Brotherhood is proud to stand in remembrance, not just as union members, but as veterans and Americans, honoring the values of sacrifice, service, and solidarity that connect us all. ■



OBITUARIES

DAVID “DAVE” S. ANANIA—retired member of **LOCAL 31**. Brother Anania retired in 2020 after 33 years of service with Amtrak and CSX Transportation. Brother Anania was a Signal Maintainer at Hanover, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Anania served as Local Vice President.

DAVID C. GRUBER—retired member of **LOCAL 52**. Brother Gruber retired in 2000 after 30 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central Transportation Company, Conrail, and Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Gruber was an Electronic Technician at Columbus, Ohio, at the time of his retirement.

JEROME “JERRY” P. HENNING—retired member of **LOCAL 13**. Brother Henning retired in 1999 after 42 years of service with the Louisville & Nashville and Seaboard Coast Line Railroads, and CSX Transportation. Brother Henning was a Signal Foreman at Savannah, Georgia, at the time of his retirement. Brother Henning served as Local President and Recording-Financial Secretary. Brother Henning is a U.S. Army Veteran.

NELSON HERNANDEZ—active member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Hernandez had 10 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Hernandez was an Electronic Tech Inspector at Highland Park, Illinois, at the time of his passing. Brother Hernandez served as Local Trustee.

CHARLES W. HIERHOLZER—retired member of **LOCAL 206**. Brother Hierholzer retired in 2010 after 39 years of service with the Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Hierholzer was a Signal Foreman at San Antonio, Texas, at the time of his retirement.

RICHARD “SCOTT” S. JARMAN—active member of **LOCAL 111**. Brother Jarman had 18 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Jarman was a Skilled Lead Signalman on Zone Gang 8373, at the time of his passing.

WINSTON A. JOHNSON—retired member of **LOCAL 110**. Brother Johnson retired in 1984 after 43 years of service with the Southern Railroad. Brother Johnson was a Signal Maintainer at Greensboro, North Carolina, at the time of his retirement. Brother Johnson served as Local Chairman.

CHARLES B. LEE—retired member of **LOCAL 121**. Brother Lee retired in 2014 after 36 years of service with the Fort Worth and Denver Railway and BSNF Railway Company. Brother Lee was a Signal Maintainer, at the time of his retirement. Brother Lee is a U.S. Air Force Veteran.

STEPHEN “STEVE” F. MARKO—active member of **LOCAL 120**. Brother Marko had 19 years of service with Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad Company and Keolis Commuter Services. Brother Marko was a Signal Maintainer at Ayer, Massachusetts, at the time of his passing. Brother Marko is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

CHARLES L. MARTIN—retired member of **LOCAL 31**. Brother Martin retired in 2000 after 36 years of service with the Western Maryland Railway and CSX Transportation. Brother Martin was a Signal Maintainer at Baltimore, Maryland, at the time of his retirement.

MARK “JULIO” T. MOREL—retired member of **LOCAL 208**. Brother Morel retired in 2014 after 34 years of service with the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and CSX Transportation. Brother Morel was a Signal Maintainer at Waverly, Tennessee, at the time of his retirement. Brother Morel served as Local Trustee.

GARY “CUZ” L. POURCIAU, JR.—active member of **LOCAL 141**. Brother Pourciau had 30 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Pourciau was an Interlocker Repairman at Livonia, Michigan, at the time of his passing.

ROBERT C. ROSE—retired member of **LOCAL 213**. Brother Rose retired in 2012 after 36 years of service with Conrail and CSX Transportation. Brother Rose was a Signal Maintainer at the time of his retirement. Brother Rose is a U.S. Air Force Veteran.

ANDREW A. SALVEMINI—retired member of **LOCAL 56**. Brother Salvemini retired in 2004 after 30 years of service with the Long Island Rail Road. Brother Salvemini was a Signal Foreman at Babylon, New York, at the time of his retirement.

ROBERT “BOB” J. SEIFERT—retired member of **LOCAL 68**. Brother Seifert retired in 2017 after 44 years of service with the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad. Brother Seifert was a Signal Maintainer at the time of his retirement. Brother Seifert served as Local Trustee.

RICHARD M. SORENSEN—retired member of **LOCAL 152**. Brother Sorensen retired in 2009 after 38 years of service with the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Sorensen was a Signal Maintainer at the time of his retirement.

ANTHONY M. SPALLA, SR.—retired member of **LOCAL 20**. Brother Spalla retired in 1991 after 35 years of service with the Burlington Northern Railroad. Brother Spalla was a Signal Maintainer at Ferryville, Wisconsin, at the time of his retirement. Brother Spalla is a U.S. Army Veteran.

IVAN “WADE” W. UPSHAW—retired member of **LOCAL 129**. Brother Upshaw retired in 2007 after 28 years of service with the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway, Burlington Northern Railroad, and BNSF Railway Company. Brother Upshaw was a Signal Maintainer at Paola, Kansas, at the time of his retirement.

DONALD J. VANWORMER—active member of **LOCAL 80**. Brother VanWormer had 24 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother VanWormer was an Electronic Signal Technician at Selkirk, New York, at the time of his passing.

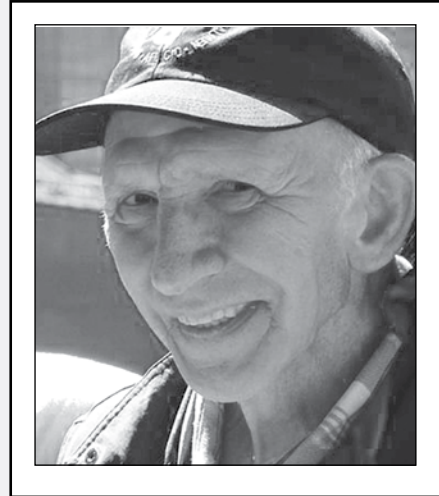
MARCO A. VERA—active member of **LOCAL 19**. Brother Vera had 20 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Vera was a Signal Maintainer at Beaumont, California, at the time of his passing.

In Remembrance

JOHN MELVIN GAIGE 1947–2025



John Melvin Gaige passed away on January 28, 2025. Brother Gaige began his railroad career with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad (SCL) in July 1997. He served as Local Chairman of Local 16. Most notably, Brother Gaige advocated for union protection and benefits in a state where “right to work” laws prevailed. He retired as a Lead Signal Maintainer at Miami, Florida, in 2016, after completing 19 years of service with SCL and CSX Transportation. ■



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

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

BRS DESIGNATED COUNSEL

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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.

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OHIO

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WASHINGTON

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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.*

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Coffee Mug		8.00	
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Wrist Watch		120.00	
Mantle/Desk Clock		136.00	
Magnet		6.00	
Keychain/Bottle Opener		4.00	

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Cap (black dye sub)		18.00	

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

AT THE ISLANDERS ARENA



On March 4, 2025, the NY Islanders hosted BRS Locals 56 and 241 for their annual union night at UBS Arena. Not only did the BRS build several new

interlockings to accommodate train service to the new arena, but each year the Islanders graciously host BRS members in a premier seating section with family and friends and a group photo on the ice.

Typically at least 50 guests attend union night, and this year BRS Locals 56 and 241 were happy to host our friends from Grand Lodge, including Vice President Commuter/Passenger Tim Tarrant, and Vice President NRAB Brandon Elvey, as well as National Legislative Director Mike Efaw.

We would love to host our brothers and sisters from other locals and properties at these events. Be on the lookout for the next event this summer — the annual union night at Riverhead Raceway. *Join us for a fun night of racing, horsepower, and union solidarity.* ■



MEETING PHOTOS



Local 16 Meeting

Boca Raton, Florida



Local 89 Meeting

Lewisburg, West Virginia



Pictured from left to right: Matt Neely, Brad Nicely, FELA Investigator Benny McKnight, Bill Duncan (retired General Chairman), Keith Richmond, Al Mann, Ryan Witt, Scott Bradberry, and Tim Okes.

MEETING PHOTOS



LIRR General Committee Meeting

Melville, New York



The Long Island Rail Road General Committee (LIRRGC) held its quadrennial meeting on March 3, 2025. The meeting covered current events including ongoing contract negotiations, work safety issues, and claim strategies. There were also various guest speakers that provided valuable information on member benefits,

as well as State and Local elected officials who were educated on the current round of negotiations. The LIRRGC also held elections, wherein General Chairman Mike Sullivan was reelected by acclamation. *The BRS congratulates Brother Sullivan and the rest of the LIRRGC officers on their re-elections.*

MEETING PHOTOS



Local 106 Meeting

Gap, Pennsylvania



Local 228 Meeting

Fremont, Ohio



FIND US ON FACEBOOK



MEETING PHOTOS



Local 183 Local Officer's Training • • • • •

Tinley Park, Illinois

Metra Local 183 in Chicago held its 2nd Annual Local Officer's Training on February 26, 2025. The training, provided by BRS Vice Presidents Tim Tarrant and Brandon Elvey, covered bargaining under the Railway Labor Act (RLA), and reinforced key provisions such as the benefits of Belonging to a Union from

the first training. Additionally, Brian Shanahan, the Rail Coordinator for the International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers (IAM), led a session titled Bargaining to Organize which went over the tools Union Members can use to be successful in coalition bargaining. BRS Designated Legal Counsel Dan Petro

also led a session on how to protect BRS Members' rights. Following the training, Local 183 held a special meeting regarding the upcoming contract negotiations which provided the members an opportunity to have their voices heard on contract requests, as well as ask questions about bargaining under the RLA. ■



MEETING PHOTOS



Local 243 Meeting

Denver, Colorado



Meet & Greet — Winchester Public Schools

Winchester, Virginia

Grand Lodge Representatives Justin Pier and Matt Trujillo engaged with seniors from Winchester Public Schools at a Speed Networking Event hosted at the Emil & Grace Shihadeh Innovation Center in Winchester, Virginia. This event provided undecided seniors with insight into potential career paths, including opportunities in the railroad industry. ■



MEETING PHOTOS



Local 236 Meeting

Camden, New Jersey



Local 18 Meeting

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



TRAINING PHOTOS



Local Chairman Training

MARCH 2025

Front Royal, Virginia



Local Financial Secretary Training

MARCH 2025

Front Royal, Virginia

MEETING PHOTOS



Commuter/Passenger General Chairmen's Meeting Deerfield Beach, Florida

On April 30–May 2, 2025, the BRS Commuter/Passenger General Chairmen held their third annual meeting at Deerfield Beach, Florida, to continue to discuss coalition bargaining, future funding issues, and safety concerns on the nation's Commuter and Passenger Railroads.

The two-and-a-half-day meetings had representatives from the FRA, SMART, Transdev, and the International Transportation Learning Center (ITLC).

President Baldwin and Vice President Tarrant opened the meeting with an update on current events impacting Commuter and Passenger members and how the BRS is working to address them. A roundtable discussion led by FRA's Director of Safety Karl Alexy focused on safety concerns for Commuter and Passenger Railroads, regulatory concerns, and what direction the FRA will be taking under the new administration. Townhall discussions were also held wherein the group discussed how to turn our

biggest challenges into successes, becoming more involved in the fight for proper funding for public transportation, working with other Labor Organizations on common goals, and leveraging grievances into work rule wins. The BRS Director of Research Chris Hand led a sobering discussion on regulatory issues, and Representatives from the ITLC reported on cost effective ways to provide quality signal training to all members. The meeting concluded with a roundtable discussion with the General Manager for Transdev in South Florida on how to be effective in securing rail work for BRS members, as well as a tour of new, cutting-edge signal and highway-grade crossing warning system equipment BRS members are installing on TriRail.

This meeting provided for all Commuter/Passenger General Chairmen from across the country to come together and work collectively to solve common problems and offer the best representation possible to the membership. The BRS will continue to have the Commuter/Passenger General Chairmen's meeting annually. ■



MEMBER PHOTOS



Local 106 Meeting New Orleans, Louisiana

Amtrak is a nationwide operation and the BRS has members in the Northeast, Midwest, and even a three-person team in New Orleans. On April 25, 2025, Vice President Commuter/Passenger Tim Tarrant along with General Chairman Keith Johnson, and Vice General Chairman Chris Cook came to New Orleans to meet with BRS members and inform them of the benefits they have by belonging to the Union. The two-hour roundtable discussion covered BRS benefits, the different functions of the Local, General Committee, and Grand Lodge, as well as defining the elements of a successful grievance and what the members can do to uphold the terms of the Agreement. ■



RALLY ■ RALLY ■ RALLY ■ RALLY ■ RALLY

From Philadelphia to Pittsburgh to Allentown, even to Camden, New Jersey, trains, buses, light rail, and trolleys provide transportation for workers, students, senior citizens, and more. In fact, every dollar invested in mass transit returns four times the economic benefit, including thousands of good paying Union jobs across Pennsylvania and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue.

Due to a lack of long-term funding and the end



of the COVID-19 Pandemic funding, SEPTA and the entire state of Pennsylvania face a severe budget shortfall, and the State Legislature must act. If not properly funded, the Pennsylvania Transit Systems will be systematically dismantled leading to tens of thousands of job losses, hundreds of millions of dollars in loss of tax revenue, diminished property values, and the loss of transportation for hundreds of thousands of people who rely on it to survive.

On May 13, 2025, BRS members joined Unions from across Pennsylvania, traveling to the state capital to make their voices heard. In a powerful show of unity, BRS members stood side by side with union members and advocates to send a message to lawmakers to properly fund Pennsylvania Mass Transit. ■

PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 2ND QUARTER 2025



Signal Maintainer and Local 80 Member, Bill Dardanelli captured an elevated view of Selkirk Yard while working atop a cantilever mast. The photo looks east, showing the hump yard lead, the hump tower, and a passing train in the foreground. Selkirk Yard is one of the larger yards in the CSX network. The image highlights the yard's complexity and the critical role of Signal Maintainers in ensuring safe and efficient rail operations.

PHOTO CONTEST

WINNERS FOR 2ND QUARTER 2025



In Yuma, Colorado, on the BNSF Railway, a Signal Maintainer, Signal Inspector, and crew carried out a tie replacement project focused on the headblock ties supporting an M-23 power-operated switch machine. The procedure involved removing deteriorated timber ties and installing new headblock ties to maintain structural integrity and ensure proper alignment and functionality of the switch assembly.

This type of maintenance is critical to the safe and reliable operation of mainline and yard track infrastructure, especially at locations where powered turnouts are subject to frequent operation and heavy train movements.

Replacing headblock ties helps prevent switch misalignments, relay failures, and track circuit issues, which are essential for maintaining signal system integrity and minimizing service disruptions.

Photo submitted by Michael Fech, a retired Signal Maintainer and Member of Local 119.

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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.

