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The





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NION BROTHE

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

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COVER: Walking approaches for crossings in Mt. Holly, North Carolina.

Photo submitted by Timothy Menefee, Local 16 Local Chairman.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

— Michael S. Baldwin, BRS President



KEY STAGES OF THE **Negotiation Process**

Sisters and Brothers,

As I write, we have many BRS groups in various stages of contract negotiations; we face a unique set of laws governing our bargaining process, as Signalmen and railroaders, it is imperative that we understand what bargaining a contract under the Railway Labor Act (RLA) entails.

The RLA governs labor relations in the U.S. railroad industry, focusing on mediation and arbitration to prevent service disruptions. Under Section 6 of the RLA, there are formal declarations (notices) by either labor unions or the Carrier to initiate negotiations for amendments to existing labor agreements. The Section 6 notice addresses matters related to wages, benefits, and other terms of employment. Contracts under the RLA do not expire; they reach amendable dates, allowing for coordinated renegotiation efforts.

Negotiation Process Overview: Key Stages

Notice of Intent to Change Contract Terms (Section 6 Notices)

What Happens: Either the labor unions or the Carrier can issue a Section 6 notice to initiate negotiations. The notice must be followed by a reply and a negotiation schedule within 10 days.

When It Occurs: At least 30 days before the proposed negotiation start date.

Commencement and Continuation of Negotiations

What Happens: Parties meet to negotiate terms of employment including wages, benefits, and other conditions without a set end date. If agreement is not reached, mediation or binding arbitration may follow.

When It Occurs: Negotiations start within 30 days of a Section 6 notice.

Maintaining Status Quo

What Happens: During negotiations, no changes can be enforced by either side—this means no lockouts by management and no strikes or other job actions by unions such as the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS).

When It Occurs: Throughout the negotiation process.

Mediation to Arbitration

What Happens: If negotiations falter, the National Mediation Board (NMB) may step in to facilitate. The NMB dictates meeting logistics and can offer arbitration if mediation fails. The NMB may require the parties meet in smaller groups. Ultimately, once the Organization files for NMB's services, and the request is granted, the timeline for meetings and release from mediation is at the NMB's discretion. In short, the NMB has the ability to hold the parties in mediation indefinitely.

When It Occurs: Following unsuccessful negotiations.

Cooling-Off Period

What Happens: A mandatory 30-day period follows unresolved negotiations or mediation. This period helps mitigate potential strikes and promotes settlement efforts.

When It Occurs: After mediation and before arbitration or further action.

Presidential Emergency Board (PEB)

What Happens: When no movement is made in mediation, the PEB intervenes, offering solutions and a 60-day buffer to prevent strikes, ensuring continued negotiation and solution implementation. It is a common misconception that the President uses the RLA to prevent railroad workers from striking. In reality, it is the Commerce Act that grants the President the authority to intervene in railroad labor disputes to prevent strikes that could disrupt interstate commerce. *When It Occurs:* If the cooling-off period expires without resolution.

Ongoing Contract Validity

What Happens: Contracts under the RLA do not expire; they reach amendable dates, allowing for synchronized renegotiation efforts. Terms remain protected until a new agreement is ratified, ensuring no alteration to the existing conditions unless 10 days have passed post-conference without NMB intervention.

When It Occurs: Continuously, as contracts reach their amendable dates.

While it is ideal to settle all contract disputes during direct negotiations with the Carriers, it has become increasingly difficult to accomplish this. Many negotiations enter the mediation process with the NMB, few enter the PEB process, and even less are settled by Congressional legislation. Congress has the power to pass legislation that can mandate the resolution of disputes or provide additional mechanisms for intervention.

While bargaining under the RLA can be frustrating, it comes with advantages to rail workers, such as:

Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

The RLA strongly protects the rights of railroad workers to organize and choose their representatives for collective bargaining purposes. This is fundamental, ensuring workers can form or join unions without fear of interference, coercion, or retaliation from employers.

Prohibition of Discrimination

The RLA prohibits any discrimination against employees for their involvement in union activities. This includes protection from being fired, penalized, or harassed due to their legal union activities, ensuring a fair workplace environment.

Mediation and Voluntary Arbitration

In addition to setting up processes for dealing with disputes, the RLA encourages mediation as a primary route for resolving disputes before they escalate. Voluntary arbitration can also be entered into if both parties agree, providing a less adversarial route to dispute resolution than formal board proceedings or potential strikes.

Duty to Exert Every Reasonable Effort

Both parties—Carriers and Labor—are required by the RLA to exert every reasonable effort to make and maintain agreements and to settle all disputes. This duty stresses the law's emphasis on negotiation and mediation over confrontation.

If you have any questions regarding the RLA and how it impacts you, please reach out to Grand Lodge, we are here to assist!

In Solidarity,

Micha

Michael S. Baldwin - BRS President

STEPS OF THE RAILWAY LABOR ACT

STEP 1	Notice is served under Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act by either party.	STEP 9	Agreement reached through accepting binding arbitra- tion. If not, go to Step 10.		
STEP 2	Reply required within 10 days sets time/date of initial conference, which must be held within 30 days.	STEP 10	Self help strike, lockout — 30 days after NMB notifies both parties that proffer of arbitration was refused.		
STEP 3	Negotiations begin. No time limit.	STEP 11	NMB may notify President that it believes dispute will		
STEP 4	Agreement reached through negotiations, if not, go to		interrupt interstate commerce.		
JILF 4	Step 5.	STEP 12	President may appoint an emergency board if he/she		
STEP 5	Within 10 days after conferences end, either party may request National Mediation Board (NMB) mediation, or NMB may proffer mediation.		agrees with Step 11.		
		STEP 13	Presidential Emergency Board reports to President within 30 days.		
STEP 6	If mediation is not requested or proffered within 10 days; strike, lockout, or promulgation of new rules.	STEP 14	Agreement reached based on Emergency Board report, if not, go to Step 15.		
STEP 7	Agreement reached through mediation, if not, go to Step 8. There is no time limit on mediation; the NMB has the	STEP 15	Indefinite strike or lockout permitted 30 days after report issued. Agreement may be reached.		
	discretion to hold the parties in mediation indefinitely.	STEP 16	If no agreement, settlement can be legislated by		
STEP 8	NMB's proffer of binding arbitration is offered by NMB or requested.	JIEF 10	Congress.		



FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

- James M. Finnegan, BRS Secretary-Treasurer

National Signalman's Rate Increase National Health & Welfare Pharmacy Changes

National Signalman's Rate Increase

Effective July 1, 2024, the National Signalman's Rate increased to \$41.02 per the 4.5 percent General Wage Increase (GWI) provided for in the National Agreement mandated by Congress in December 2022. This is the last GWI of the Agreement. Financial Secretaries, please make sure you inform our Membership Department at *membership@brs.org* if and when your Local makes any adjustments to its dues rates.

National Health & Welfare Pharmacy Benefit Manager Change Effective January 1, 2025

Effective January 1, 2025, the Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) for all National Railroad Health & Welfare Plans will change from Express Scripts, Inc., to Optum Rx[®]. All covered plan members, including eligible spouses and dependents, will automatically be enrolled in Optum Rx. There is no need to take any action at this time.

Please note this is only a preliminary announcement. Additional information will be sent in the coming months, including information about how active prescriptions and prior authorizations will transfer to Optum Rx. In the meantime, the Cooperating Railway Labor Organizations and the National Carriers' Conference Committee have compiled the following questions and answers to help address the basic information regarding this change:

Why was this change made? — National Railroad Agreements reached in 2022 included provisions to jointly rebid health and welfare service providers to ensure the highest quality benefits and excellent customer service for all members. Pursuant to those Agreements, in 2023 the parties began the process of accepting bids for PBM services. After careful and thorough consideration, the Plan administrators jointly agreed to the change. The change in PBM vendors does not change any other collectively bargained drug copays or coverage.

Which Health & Welfare Plans will be transitioned to Optum Rx? — All National Railroad Health & Welfare Plans, including: The Railroad Employees' National Health and Welfare Plan; The SMART-TD Health and Welfare Plan; and the Railroad Employees' National Early Retirement Major Medical Benefit Plan.

When will I receive more information about this change? — You will receive welcome materials in the coming months, including information about how your active prescriptions and prior authorizations will transfer to Optum Rx.

Do I need to take any action to enroll? — No action is required at this time. Throughout the coming months, additional information, including new Optum Rx membership cards, will be sent to all affected Plan members. **To ensure that you receive this information**, **please make sure that both your employer and your labor union have your current mailing address on file**. Beginning January 1, 2025, your current Express Scripts card will no longer be accepted, and you will need to provide your pharmacy and/or provider's office with the new information from your Optum Rx membership card.

I have a current prescription drug benefit question. Who can I call? — Express Scripts, Inc., will continue to serve as your pharmacy benefit manager up until the transition's effective date of January 1, 2025. They may be contacted by calling **1-800-842-0070** — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Please note that Express Scripts representatives will not be able to answer any questions about the upcoming transition to Optum Rx.

Please contact my office at (540) 622-6527 if you have questions or concerns.

Guided Access to Excellent Surgical Care





2100 Ross Avenue, Suite 1900 Dallas, TX 75201

SurgeryPlus is an additional medical benefit that provides you with access to excellent and affordable care for many planned surgical procedures. In partnership with your healthcare plan, SurgeryPlus covers the most expensive costs associated with your surgery so you don't have to.

What does SurgeryPlus cover?

- Dedicated support and guidance.
- Access and care from our network of top-rated surgeons
- Consults and appointments with your SurgeryPlus surgeon
- Anesthesia, procedure and facility (hospital) fees
- Planned orthopedic surgical procedures, including knee, hip and spine surgery
- · Travel benefits may be available

How do I access the benefit?

If you have questions about the benefit, or if you or one of your dependents need surgery, make us your first call. To learn more, contact your SurgeryPlus Care Advocate today at (888) 726-0823.

Does SurgeryPlus cost me anything?

You're automatically enrolled in the benefit as part of the medical benefits offered by your healthcare plan at no additional cost to you.

Who will help me through this process?

Your benefit includes guided access from a SurgeryPlus Care Advocate who will:

- Provide personalized support throughout your surgical journey.
- Educate you on the benefit, with an understanding of your surgical need.
- Provide you with the resources to help you make the best decisions regarding your care, including how to find the best surgeon in our network.

How do I know if a spine or orthopedic surgery is covered?

Contact us at (888) 726-0823 or visit your portal to confirm whether your procedure is covered.

How do I find the right surgeon?

With an understanding of your healthcare needs, your Care Advocate will provide a list of the best surgeons in our network so you can choose the one that's right for you.

If I already have a surgeon, how do I know. If they are in the SurgeryPlus network?

Call your Care Advocate and they will be able to confirm whether your current surgeon is in our network.

What will my surgery cost?

We cover the most expensive costs associated with surgery, so there will be \$0 out of pocket expenses for your procedure when you use your benefit. To maximize your savings, call your Care Advocate as soon as possible to confirm the details of your benefit and what you'll be responsible for covering, if anything.

What happens after my spine or orthopedic surgery?

Your Care Advocate will follow up and ensure you received the highest quality care and schedule any post-procedure appointments.

What isn't covered by SurgeryPlus?

Testing, scans, imaging, durable medical equipment, and physical therapy expenses may not be included. However, coverage may be available through your medical plan.



Log in to your personalized SurgeryPlus portal: Scan the QR Code to understand what's covered!

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TREVOR SHATEK

BRS Local 226 Branch of the Military: United States Navy



BRANDON SIMMONS

BRS LOCAL 13 BRANCH OF THE MILITARY: UNITED STATES ARMY



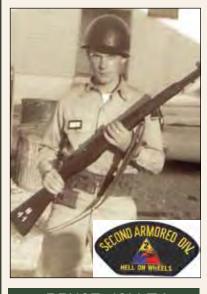
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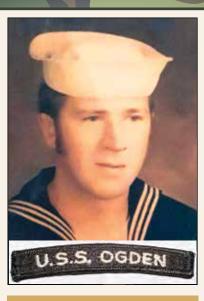
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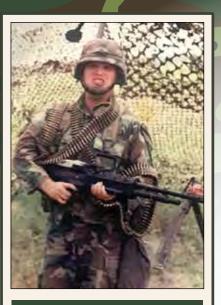
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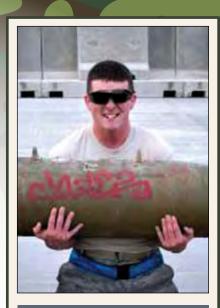
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MIKE SHRINER

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EDWARD WYLIE

BRS Local 56 Branch of the Military: United States Navy



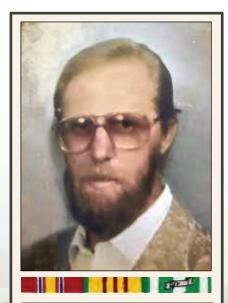
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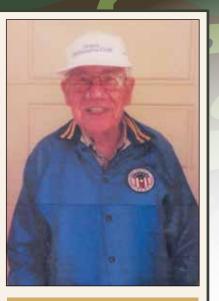
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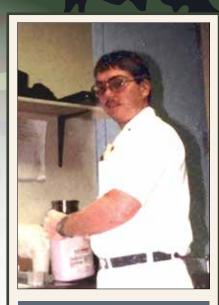
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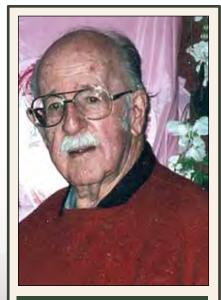
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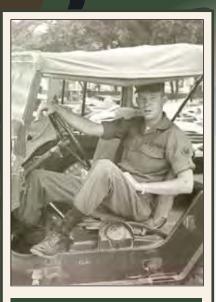
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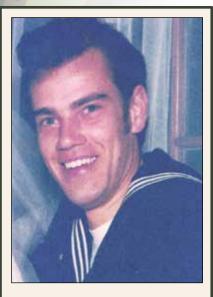
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LARRY SUHSEN

BRS Local 226 Branch of the Military: United States Navy



ROBERT O'DELL

BRS LOCAL 156 Branch of the Military: United States Marine Corps

VOTER REGISTRATION FAOS

Am I registered to vote?

- Many states let you check your registration status online.
- Most states will send you a voter registration card within a few weeks if you've successfully registered to vote or a notification if there is a problem with your application.
- Check with your state or territory election office for procedures for your location.

Where do I register?

- You can begin your voter registration online at *Vote. USA.gov.* Depending on your state's rules, the site can help you register online, download the Voter Registration Form, or find guidance for states and territories with different registration procedures.
- You can call your state or territory election office to have a mail-in voter registration form sent to you.
- You may be able to register to vote in person at public facilities, such as state or local voter registration and/ or election offices, the Department of Motor Vehicles, armed services recruitment centers, and state or county public assistance offices. Check with your state or territory election office before heading to any of these locations.

How can I find out what state I'm registered in? I have moved several times.

- You must register to vote in the state or territory where you legally reside. You cannot be registered to vote in more than one place at a time.
- If you don't know whether you're registered under your current legal address, check with your state or territory election office. Many states let you check your registration status online.
- When you register to vote in a new location, you'll be asked for the address where you were last registered to vote. Your new election office will send a cancellation form to your previous election office. Your voter registration record should always reflect your current residence.

How do I update my name or address for my voter registration?

- If your state has online voter registration, you can usually do this online.
- In most cases, you can use the National Mail Voter Registration Form to report a change of name or address. A few states and territories require you to use their state/territory form.
- Some states let you report a change of name or address by phone.
- Check with your state or territory election office for procedures in your area.

What party am I registered with?

- You may be able to find this information on your voter registration card or in an online voter registration look-up.
- You can contact your state or territory election office for help finding this information.
- It's possible that you're not registered with any political party, either because your state doesn't accept party affiliations or because you didn't indicate a party preference when you registered to vote. You can register to vote and participate in general elections and nonpartisan primary elections without ever choosing a party affiliation.
- In some states, you must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

When is the general election?

The 2024 general election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. If you cannot vote on election day, check with your local election office for information regarding early or absentee voting.

How to Research Candidates

When evaluating candidates for public office, it's important to decide what strengths you're looking for in a candidate, to research their positions on the issues, to learn about their leadership abilities, and to recognize any distortions in the information and opinions they express.

AGREEMENT

ST. LAWRENCE AND ATLANTIC RAILROAD **MEMBERS RATIFY AGREEMENT**

On April 30, 2024, a Tentative Agreement was reached between St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad (SL&A) and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen. After completion of the Section 6 negotiations, the Agreement was ratified and entered into effect on May 17, 2024.

Listed below are some of the provisions of the new Agreement.

- The Agreement provides a 20% wage increase through 2027.
- January 1, 2024 5% retroactive
- January 1, 2025 5%
- January 1, 2026 5%
- January 1, 2027 5%



- The ability to convert three (3) holidays to floating holidays.
- Increased standby pay to one (1) hour straight-time per each weeknight.
- Employee safety shoes and clothing allowance increase to \$400.
- Added stepbrother and stepsister to bereavement leave.
- Removed some employee 401(k) prohibitions.
- Reduced vacation qualifying years for fifth week of vacation to twenty-two (22) years.

Congratulations to the SL&A Railroad members and all those involved in the negotiations. Keep up the good work.



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

Protecting Worker Safety LOCAL 60 — PATH

On June 18, 2024, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a decision that prevented the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) from placing workers within the 4-foot minimum clearance distance required by federal regulation to be considered "clear" and not fouling a track for a train. PATH's request applied to employees working inside the PATH tunnel system. PATH sought to extend a waiver that relieved them of the 4-foot minimum clearance requirement by permitting employees to clear on "bench walls" that did not provide the minimum clearance distance.

Following opposition by the BRS and other Rail Labor Unions, the FRA held a public hearing on April 3, 2024. At the hearing, BRS members along with several other Unions' members voiced their objections to extending the waiver. Issues noted at the hearing included the bench walls not being a safe clearing location due to factors such as height limitations that would require persons to stand on third rail covers just to access the bench walls, obstructions on the bench walls (cable runs), moisture from humidity and leaks on the bench walls, and the deterioration of the bench walls. The BRS recommended that PATH collaborate with the labor organizations to establish safe work procedures inside the tunnels, as has been achieved at other commuter rail properties with tunnels. Following the public hearing, top safety officials from the FRA participated in a site tour of the tunnels wherein BRS Union Officers were also present to physically show the officials the safety issues associated with extending the waiver.

Despite the FRA issuing a decision that prevented 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 continues to seek relief from common sense worker safety. It is now attempting to use an abstract waiver provision that places workers with less than the four-foot minimum clearance distance when a train passes. BRS vehemently opposes PATH's actions and will not rest until it abandons its unsafe actions.

The Fight for Key Safety Improvements LOCAL 183 — METRA

Metra in Chicago is an 11-line, nearly 500-mile commuter railroad serving Chicago and its suburbs. Many of its lines run both freight, passenger, and commuter rail. Metra is also one of the largest commuter rail systems that does not have a signal trouble desk. Starting in 2022, BRS Local 183, General Committee, and Grand Lodge Officers began pushing Metra officials to establish a signal trouble desk in the interests of public and worker safety. After 15 months of inaction, formal presentations on the additional safety and efficiency benefits associated with having a signal trouble desk were presented by the BRS to Metra's top management officials. Items presented included the additional layers of safety protection provided when removing and restoring signal and highway/rail grade crossing warning systems from service, troubleshooting support, efficiency on trouble calls, and more. Additionally, in April 2024, the BRS facilitated a site tour of the Long Island Rail Road signal trouble desk facility for Metra management so they could see for themselves the added safety benefits to the public and the workforce. The BRS continues to work towards the establishment of a signal trouble desk.

On Metra's Electric District wherein commuter trains are powered by 1500 V DC overhead catenary lines, many of the signals governing the movement of trains are located on dated catenary bridge structures. In many cases, these catenary structures are well over 100 years old, yet BRS members are required to access them regularly. The catenary structures contain several serious safety hazards including high voltage 1500 V DC catenary propulsion lines as well as high voltage 2300 V AC transmission lines that in many cases are located inches away from signal locations and worker access points without any protection. Additional hazards include unstable and deficient walkways, rotted railings, and a failure of Metra to require fall-protection where signal locations are over 35 feet off the ground. The fight for catenary structure safety has been ongoing, and, over the last three years, brought to the attention of the highest levels of Metra. The BRS believes workplace safety is the most important aspect in union representation and will not rest until Metra permanently mitigates these very serious and dangerous conditions.

Proposed Funding Level Will Severely Impact RRB Customer Service & Operations

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies has released its funding bill for fiscal year (FY) 25. When the Railroad Retirement Board's (RRB) budget for FY 24 was finalized (six months into the year), the approved budget was \$126 million, reflecting a \$2 million decrease from FY 23. The agency, already understaffed, was forced to implement a hiring freeze and make wholesale budget cuts. Although the Subcommittee stated that it was "[p]rioritizing funding for early education, childcare, child welfare, and programs for seniors and the disabled," it is allocating just \$100 million to the RRB — a decrease of another \$26 million, which represents an almost 21 percent reduction from FY 24.

The RRB's administrative budget is financed by payroll taxes paid by rail employees and rail employers. Funding is appropriated from the RRB Trust Funds and not from the U.S. Treasury's general fund.

The proposed \$100 million budget, a 21 percent reduction from the prior year, would be catastrophic for the RRB. With several years of reduced or flat budgets, the RRB has struggled to accomplish its mission. The House Appropriation Subcommittee's proposal would result in drastically reduced staffing and even more spending cuts. For our customers, this translates into the following:

- Longer telephone wait times, with peak season wait times of 2-2.5 hours and over hour-long wait times becoming the norm, as well as projected answer rates of only 30-35 percent of incoming calls;
- Field-office closures in railroad communities, and field offices with minimal or no on-site staff as well as reduced customer service hours;

- Longer application processing times, with processing times of 18 months or more likely;
- Indefinite delays for annuity corrections;



- An inability to sustain and improve our security posture against 21st century cybersecurity threats, putting the agency's data and benefits administration services at risk and curtailing our ability to meet federal security guidelines;
- An inability to move forward with our multi-year IT modernization plan, which has been fully supported by Congress and the rail industry. Failure to modernize will not only harm customers but be wasteful and risk our ability to meet federal mandates;
- Risk of failing to sustain basic operations of legacy information systems and applications; and
- An inability to improve our program integrity and risk management programs, and to facilitate multiple ongoing yearly audits.

A budget cut of this proportion will directly harm the rail employees and annuitants who have paid into the system their entire careers. The agency has requested that Congress fund the agency at \$172.331 million, because without a significant increase, the agency will not be able to provide the rail community with the customer services that it deserves. The current House proposal puts the agency at high risk of mission failure. ■

For reference, the agency's request level was \$172.331 million and the President's budget request was \$134 million.



LOCAL 183' ANNUAL SOLIDARITY GOLF OUTING

It was a picture perfect day for golf, but this day provided so much more. BRS members both active and retired showed up to make Local 183's Annual Solidarity Golf Outing a huge success. The day started with coffee and donuts, followed by 18 holes of golf with contests for the longest drive and closest to the pin. After golf, a great meal of Chicago favorites was provided followed by solidarity and unity. It's always a good day when retired members get to spend quality time with active members who have followed in their footsteps, and continue to build the Union Movement on the foundation they built.

The BRS commends Local 183 and their planning committee for putting on another golf outing of unity, solidarity, and fun for the members of Local 183. Events like this help ensure the union movement is alive and well in the next generation of workers.





WASHINGTON REPORT



National

Legislative Director

Developments Affecting Rail Inside the Beltway



LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL UPDATES

Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2024: A Controversial Step Forward

The Railroad Safety Enhancement Act

of 2024, introduced by Congressmen Troy E. Nehls (R-TX-22) and Seth Moulton (D-MA-06), has stirred significant discussion within the labor community. This bill, which builds on the Railway Safety Act of 2023, incorporates additional provisions, notably to the BRS, increasing funding for the elimination of hazardous railroad crossings.

While not the only provision we have issues with, the BRS has expressed concerns to the authors of the bill regarding this increased funding. The BRS argues that while eliminating dangerous crossings is important, this focus might overshadow other critical safety improvements needed throughout the rail system, especially in rural areas where new crossings or upgrades to existing ones may save lives.

The BRS's neutral stance on the bill reflects our desire for a more holistic legislative approach. The BRS is advocating for comprehensive regulations covering all wayside safety devices, including stringent regulations for their maintenance, upgrading, and replacement. We believe that without such measures, the safety improvements proposed by the bill will be incomplete and may leave critical safety gaps.

Ongoing Legislation Review

- 1. Railway Safety Act of 2023: This bill aims to enhance rail safety regulations but has experienced limited progress. Continued advocacy is necessary to push this important legislation forward.
- 2. **REEF Act:** Focuses on the sequestration of unemployment and sickness benefits. There have been no recent updates or changes.
- **3.** American High-Speed Rail Act: Addresses funding and other aspects of high-speed rail projects. This bill has seen little movement recently.
- 4. Railroad Retirement Act Amendments: No new developments have been reported regarding this legislation, which is another key issue for railroad workers.

Leadership Change in House Rail Subcommittee

U.S. Representative Frederica S. Wilson (D-FL) has been appointed as the ranking Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, succeeding the late Representative Donald Payne, Jr. (D-NJ). With her extensive legislative experience from both the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate, Wilson's new role could significantly influence future rail-related legislation and oversight.

Political Shifts: Supreme Court Ruling and Presidential Race Developments

• **Supreme Court Ruling:** The Supreme Court has issued a groundbreaking ruling affirming that former President Donald Trump is immune from federal prosecution for actions taken while in office. This decision, which extends presidential immunity, has delayed the start of Trump's criminal trial and sets a new precedent regarding executive power. The ruling expands presidential power by extending immunity from criminal prosecutions to former presidents for their official conduct.

• **Presidential Race Developments:** In a dramatic political shift, President Joe Biden announced his withdrawal from the 2024 Presidential race. Biden's decision follows struggles in the polls and concerns within the Democratic Party about his ability to effectively campaign. With Biden stepping down,

Vice President Kamala Harris ascends to the top of the Democratic ticket. Harris faces a challenging political landscape, inheriting a map where Biden was trailing in key battleground states.

These updates underscore a period of significant change in both legislative and political arenas. For labor organizations and workers, including the BRS, these developments have profound implications for policy, safety, and representation. The focus on comprehensive safety regulations, especially concerning wayside safety devices, remains a critical area of concern for ensuring the highest standards of rail safety.

LONG ISLAND FEDERATION OF LABOR EVENT, AFL-CIO



BLET General Chairman Kevin Sexton, Vice President Commuter/ Passenger Tim Tarrant, and Grand Board of Trustees Member Mike Sullivan.









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:

45 YEARS OF SERVICE

Kevin Banks	55
Robert Lichtman	102

40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Dale Crawford _	 106
Ray Salois	 _ 5

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

102
102
53
5
53
161
120
156
20
33
183
119
119

30 years of service

Art Hovel	108
Billy Willard	16
Brian Stanek	129
Charles Allen	
Daniel Claeson	
David Howard	
David Perkins	
Earl Mauger	
Eddie Brown	234
Gregory Asbrand	81
Jack Bargione	
James Fuller	
Jim Soden	
John Norris	141
Joseph Almasy	174
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30 years of service

Joseph Blair	234
Kenneth Labedz	81
Larry Davis	176
M. Brilz	119
Marcos Moreno	162
Mark Meurling	120
Michael Morrissey	
Paul Cagnina	120
Reggie Elliott	129
Robert Bohner	72
Robert Schnoor	
Scott Sutherby	
Stanford Taylor	
Steven Traynham	16
Thomas Haselden	16
Thomas Sandefur	
Todd Brown	
Troy Fraley	176
Victoria Bristol	84
Willie Perry, Jr.	

25 years of service

Adam Gutierrez	183
Akemi Kuroda	18
Andres Rivas	56
Bill McFarland	
Bill Wiabel, Jr.	183
Brian Coady	
Brian White	130
Charles Campbell, Jr.	237
Chaylan Cross	183
Chris Baker	237
Curtis White	
D. Whitely	
Darrin Poore	
Ed Grant, Jr	
Fidel Hernandez	
Greg Hoyer	1
Guido Palacios	183

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Herman Moore	33
James Hansen	183
James McLennan	
Jason Bird	183
Jason Green	92
Jeffrey Roesch	20
Jeremy Anderson	183
Jeremy Hinkle	2
Joaquin Escobedo	92
Jon Byles	237
Jon Good	68
Jonathan Quinlivan	56
Keith Cotten	110
Keith Matusek	183
Ken Brister	183
L. Vanlandingham	16
Laurence Sherrod	13
Lorenzo Dumas	183
Mark Kendryna	183
Matt Morganti	60
Mike Collopy	183
Moses Tillmon	183
Nicholas Alcantar	183
Noel Pagan	183
Paul Platt	56
Ricardo Haddon	183
Rich Clark	60
Richard Reynolds	110
Ron Porus	183
Ryan Ebbitt	31
Ryan Murzyn	183
Sam Colbert	183
Sandy Mitchell	110
Scott Morrison	237
Sherman Davis	106
Steve Palermo	183
Terry Jeffries	234
Theodore Wendeln	234
Tom McGhee	
Tony Muniz	
Walter Williams	183



ELIGIBILITY — Current and retired members of participating unions, their spouses, and their dependent children (as defined by IRS regulations). At least one year of continuous union membership by the applicant, applicant's spouse or parent (if applicant is a dependent). The one-year membership minimum must be satisfied by May 31, of the scholarship year.

APPLICATION TIMELINE — Applications are available starting in mid-June, and a complete application must be received on or before 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on January 31, of the scholarship year. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD AMOUNTS — Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2025. Students may re-apply each year.

AWARD DATE — The Scholarship Committee will determine recipients of scholarship awards by May 31 each year. During the first week of June award recipients will be individually notified by mail, and all applicants will be sent an email with notification that the award list is posted. Please note that due to the volume of applications we cannot provide any information on the status of an application before award announcements are made.

OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS The students selected for university, college, trade or technical school scholarships represent a wide sampling of backgrounds, union affiliations, goals and accomplishments. The selection process is very competitive since we receive thousands of applications each year.

To receive mobile text alerts about education-related deadlines and information, text STUDENT to 22555.

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OBITUARIES

FRED A. BOSWINKLE—retired member of **LOCAL 68**. Brother Boswinkle retired in 2015 after 41 years of service with the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad, Conrail, and the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Boswinkle was a Signal Maintainer at Hammond, Indiana, at the time of his retirement. Brother Boswinkle served as Local Chairman and Recording-Financial Secretary.

HUGH P. CAMPBELL—retired member of **LOCAL 18**. Brother Campbell retired in 2023 after 36 years of service with Amtrak. Brother Campbell was a Safety Liaison at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time of his retirement. Brother Campbell served as First Vice President, Local Trustee, Local Chairman, General Committee Trustee, and Vice General Chairman.

LEE M. DAVIDSON—retired member of **LOCAL 16**. Brother Davidson retired in 2018 after 29 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Davidson was a Signalman at Tampa, Florida, at the time of his retirement.

ARTHUR G. FOGNANI—retired member of **LOCAL 24**. Brother Fognani retired in 2006 after 20 years of service with the Denver and Rio Grande Western, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Fognani was a Signalman at Grand Junction, Colorado, at the time of his retirement.

RICHARD J. HEISLER—retired member of **LOCAL 154**. Brother Heisler retired in 1997 after 44 years of service with the Great Northern and Burlington Northern Railroads, and the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Heisler was a Signal Maintainer at Devils Lake, North Dakota, at the time of his retirement.

HOWARD "SKIP" F. HUSTON—retired member of LOCAL 104. Brother Huston retired in 2002 after 30 years of service with the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Huston was a Signal Maintainer at Los Angeles, California, at the time of his retirement. Brother Huston is a U.S. Marine Corps. Veteran.

RICHARD "RICK" L. JACKSON—retired member of **LOCAL 72**. Brother Jackson retired in 2008 after 37 years of service with the Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Brother Jackson was an Electronic Signal Technician at Jefferson City, Missouri, at the time of his retirement. Brother Jackson is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

JOHN W. KELLEY, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 238**. Brother Kelley retired in 2015 after 39 years of service with Conrail and CSX Transportation. Brother Kelley was a Test Maintainer at Washington, D.C., at the time of his retirement. Brother Kelley served as Local Trustee.

PHILLIP "PHIL" E. KOMANSKI—retired member of **LOCAL 183**. Brother Komanski retired in 2011 after 42 years of service with the Illinois Central Railroad and Metra. Brother Komanski was a Signal Testman at Chicago, Illinois, at the time of his retirement.

DAVID "CHRIS" C. MILLS—active member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Mills had 25 years of service with the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Mills was a Construction Gang Foreman at the Southern Western Lines District at the time of his passing. Brother Mills served as Local Chairman.

DENNIS "COWBOY" C. OSBORNE—retired member of **LOCAL 94.** Brother Osborne retired in 2015 after 18 years of service with CSX Transportation. Brother Osborne was a Signal Foreman at the time of his retirement.

ROBERT "MITCH" M. ROE—retired member of **LOCAL 136**. Brother Roe retired in 2005 after 30 years of service with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway and CSX Transportation. Brother Roe was a Signal Maintainer at South Shore, Kentucky, at the time of his retirement. Brother Roe served as Recording-Financial Secretary. Brother Roe is a U.S. Navy Veteran.

EDGAR R. SANDERS, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 49**. Brother Sanders retired in 1993 after 42 years of service with the Alabama Great Southern Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railway. Brother Sanders was a Signal Maintainer at Warner Robins, Georgia, at the time of his retirement. Brother Sanders served as Local Chairman.

GEORGE A. SCHISLER—retired member of **LOCAL 155**. Brother Schisler retired in 2006 after 40 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Schisler was a Signal Maintainer at Hinkle, Oregon, at the time of his retirement. Brother Schisler served as Local First Vice President and Local President. Brother Schisler is a U.S. Army Veteran.

DORRANCE W. SEAMAN, JR.—retired member of **LOCAL 56**. Brother Seaman retired in 1998 after 25 years of service with the Long Island Rail Road. Brother Seaman was a Signal Maintainer at Babylon, New York, at the time of his retirement. Brother Seaman is a U.S. Marine Corp and U.S. Navy Veteran.

ASHWIN J. SHAH—retired member of **LOCAL 102**. Brother Shah retired in 2014 after 28 years of service with the New Jersey Transit and Amtrak. Brother Shah was a C&S Signalman at Linden, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement.

JAROLD "JERRY" B. SITTON—retired member of **LOCAL 161**. Brother Sitton retired in 2000 after 44 years of service with the BNSF Railway Company. Brother Sitton was a Signal Maintainer at La Junta, Colorado, at the time of his retirement.

HAROLD M. STEINER—retired member of LOCAL 84. Brother Steiner retired in 2011 after 32 years of service with the New Jersey Transit. Brother Steiner was a Signal Inspector at Woodridge, New Jersey, at the time of his retirement. Brother Steiner is a U.S. Marine Corps. Veteran.

DARNELL TALBERT—active member of **LOCAL 130**. Brother Talbert had 3 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. Brother Talbert was a Signal Maintainer at Berkeley, Illinois, at the time of his passing.



The Thomson Foundation *Financial Assistance for Daughters of Deceased Railroad Employees*

John Edgar Thomson was the third president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and led the company from 1852 to 1874. Although John

Thomson never had children of his own, he often pondered on the difficulties of orphaned girls. In that era, a fatherless boy could usually get a trade school education or find employment; a girl had little opportunity for either.

In his will, Mr. Thomson dedicated a portion of his estate in the form of a trust fund for the education and maintenance of female orphans of railway employees whose fathers may have died while in the discharge of their duties. After his death in 1874, the trust fund was established for the daughters of men killed in railroad service. Subsequently, The John Edgar Thomson Foundation was founded when Mrs. Thomson opened a girl's boarding school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in December of 1882.

Today, the Foundation continues its objective by providing aid to a substantial number of girls throughout the United States in the form of financial assistance and healthcare benefits. To be eligible, the employee must have been actively employed by any United States railroad at the time of his or her death; the cause does not need to be work related. Eligibility is also dependent on the daughter and the surviving parent remaining unmarried. Family income and expenses are also considered when determining eligibility.

The monthly allowance made under the grant may cover the period from infancy to high school graduation, and in some circumstances to age 24, to assist the grantees that are pursuing a higher education. The Foundation also offers special healthcare benefits.

Funding for the work of the Foundation is completely independent of any railroad. It neither solicits nor receives funds from the public. ■

Further information and applications may be obtained by writing to:

The John Edgar Thomson Foundation 201 S. 18th Street, Suite 318 Philadelphia, PA 19103 Telephone: (215) 545-6083 Fax: (215) 545-5102 • Toll free: (800) 888-1278 Email: *sjethomson@aol.com* Website: *www.jethomsonfoundation.com*

DON G. THOMAS—retired member of **LOCAL 10**. Brother Thomas retired in 1991 after 44 years of service with the Pennsylvania Railroad and Conrail. Brother Thomas was a Signal Maintainer at Delphos, Ohio, at the time of his retirement. Brother Thomas is a U.S. Army Veteran.

ROBERT "BOB" M. WORK—retired member of **LOCAL 80**. Brother Work retired in 1991 after 34 years of service with the New York Central Railroad and Conrail. Brother Work was an Electronic Specialist at Selkirk, New York, at the time of his retirement. Brother Work served as Recording-Financial Secretary. Brother Work is a U.S. Navy 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

BRS DESIGNATED COUNSE ON-THE-JOB FELA RAILLABORI INFO LAW INJURY RAILROAD SIGNALMEN 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

ARIZONA

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ARKANSAS Chris Christy

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

CALIFORNIA Jay A. Kaplan

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

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DISTRICT OF Columbia

Larry Mann Alper & Mann, PC 9205 Redwood Avenue Bethesda, MD 20817 Tel. (202) 298-9191 (800) 747-6266

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ILLINOIS F. Daniel Petro

Petro & Harrington, LLC 150 S. Wacker Drive Suite 2400 Chicago, IL 60606 Tel. (312) 332-9596 (800) 472-5729 www.petrofelalaw.com

Daniel J. Downes

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MASSACHUSETTS

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Arvin J. Pearlman Sommers Swartz, PC 1 Towne Square Suite 1700 Southfield, MI 48076 Tel. (248) 356-5000 (866) 520-1649 www.sommerspc.com

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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 commendations regarding the service of designated counsel, and information on injuries and settlements.

This information, which will be used in the continuing evaluation of this program, should be sent to:

Michael S. Baldwin, President Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen 917 Shenandoah Shores Road Front Royal, VA 22630-6418

Attorneys are listed by state and are designated to serve BRS members living or working in the general region of their offices. Designation of FELA counsel is by authority of the BRS Executive Council only.

BENEFITS DIRECTORY

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.)

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UnitedHealthcare **1-800-842-5252**

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www.unionplus.org



 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{BRS}}\xspace$ WATCHES — Gold BRS logo on the face.

CAPS — Adjustable headband. Many different styles and colors available.

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

OXFORD SHIRTS — Long-sleeve dress shirts contain a double yoke, button-down banded collar, and dress placket with pearl-tone buttons. Constructed from a blend of 60% cotton and 40% polyester material.

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

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

WOOL/LEATHER BRS JACKETS

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

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

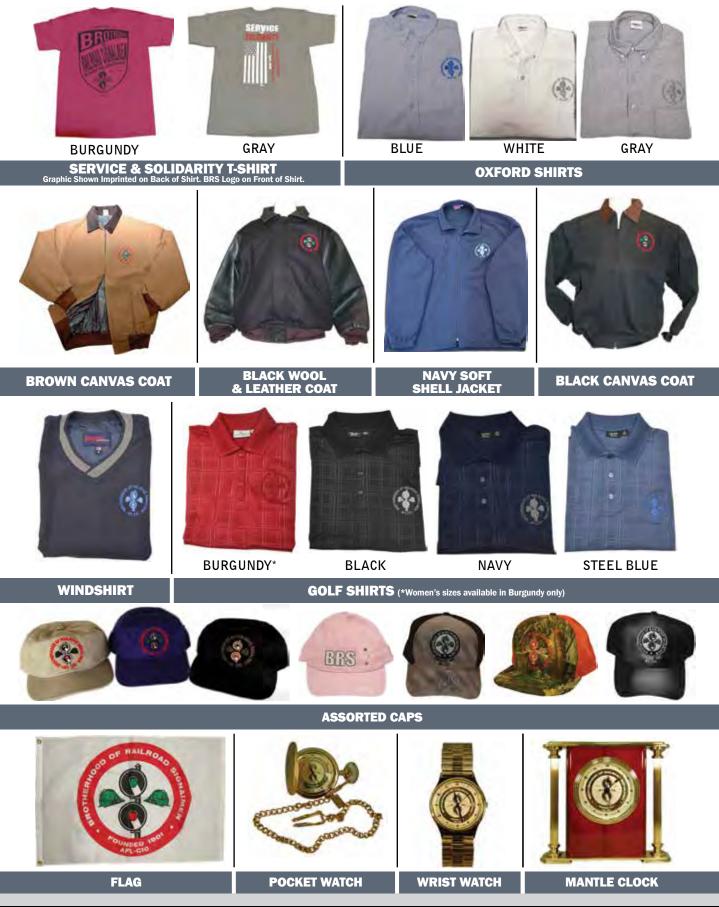
MAIL PAYMENT AND ORDER TO:

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

ITEM DESCRIPTION				Q	UAI	NTI	TΥ	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/Desk Clock								136.00	
Magnet				1				6.00	
Keychain/Bottle Opener								4.00	
HATS				Q	UA	NTI	ΤY	PRICE	TOTAL
Cap (pink)								11.00	
Cap (camo/orange)								20.75	
Cap (black)								11.00	
Cap (blue)								11.00	
Cap (grey)								11.00	
Cap (black dye sub)								18.00	
Cap (brown diamond plate)								18.00	
Black Knit Hat								11.00	
APPAREL	S	Μ	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	PRICE	TOTAL
Service T-Shirt (burgundy)								18.00	
Service T-Shirt (grey)								15.00	
Golf Shirt (black w/logo)								27 50	
Gon Onn C (black W/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo)								37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo)								37.50 37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo)								37.50 37.50 37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo)								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue)								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey)								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white)								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 44.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white) Navy Windshirt								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 44.00 57.50	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white) Navy Windshirt Black Wool & Leather Coat								37.50 37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 57.50 201.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white) Navy Windshirt Black Wool & Leather Coat Black Canvas Coat								37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 44.00 57.50 201.00 90.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (women's burgundy w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white) Navy Windshirt Black Wool & Leather Coat Black Canvas Coat Brown Canvas Coat								37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 44.00 57.50 201.00 90.00 90.00	
Golf Shirt (burgundy w/logo) Golf Shirt (navy w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Golf Shirt (steel blue w/logo) Oxford Dress Shirt (blue) Oxford Dress Shirt (grey) Oxford Dress Shirt (white) Navy Windshirt Black Wool & Leather Coat Black Canvas Coat Brown Canvas Coat Grey Sweatshirt								37.50 37.50 37.50 44.00 44.00 44.00 57.50 201.00 90.00 90.00 31.50	

NAME				_
STREET				_
CITY		STATE	ZIP	
PHONE	_ EMAIL		CERTIFICATE #	
	ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.BRS.ORG			

SIGNALMAN'S STORE



MEETING PHOTOS



Local 97 Meeting

Hammond, Indiana









FRA-BRS Meeting Louisville, Kentucky



MEETING PHOTOS







Local 226 Meeting

Oconomowoc, Wisconsin







MEETING PHOTOS









Local 102 Meeting • • • Metuchen, New Jersey









PHOTO CONTEST WINNER FOR 3rd Quarter 2024

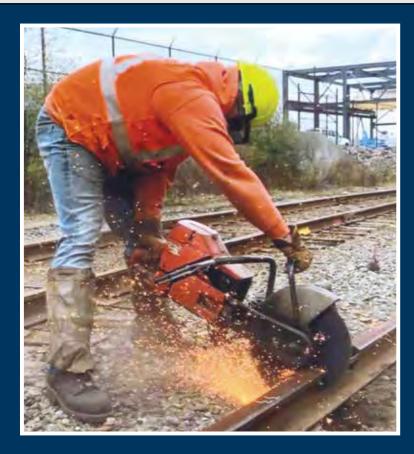


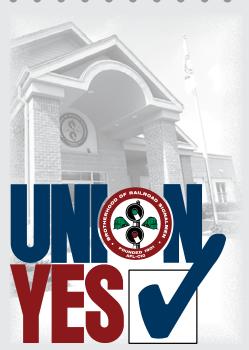
Photo of Track and Signal Department Member Bryan Siekierski cutting rail on the Providence and Worcester Railroad Northern Rail Division.

Photo submitted by Bryan Siekierski, Member of Local 62.



Local 239 Meeting Proctor, Minnesota





WITH BIG SUPPORT COMES BIG INCENTIVES!

SPORTS HERVIS

LIAN

6 INCENTIVES TO CHOOSE FROM!

Since 2013, the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) calendar program has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for community-based conservation projects and for worthy union causes.

Barnett Explorer XP370



HOW IT WORKS

- Union Locals donate to the USA and receive bundles of 50 or 100 calendars
- 2 Locals can sell calendars to raise \$10 per calendar
- **3** Locals receive incentive items with bulk calendars *guaranteed*
- **4** Union members who get calendars can use them to enter:

USA's 2-Guns-A-Week Sweepstakes (that's 104 chances to win a firearm!)

LEARN MORE AND GET YOUR USA CALENDARS! UnionSportsmen.org/calendar-2025-usa