



**UNIFIED SYSTEM DIVISION
NEWSLETTER**
VOLUME 22 - October, November, December, 2013
Right to Work....code words for busting unions.



BARGAINING UPDATE
Getting Ready For The Next Round

July 23-26, 2013

President Freddie Simpson called all General Chairman in the United States to meet in Nashville, TN in order to start planning for the next round of bargaining. Committees were established for each major issue in National Bargaining. Those Committees are made up of General Chairman and Vice Presidents, General Chairman Louis R. Below is assigned to the Committee on Contracting Out as well as the Committee on Healthcare.

September 17-18, 2013

The Contracting Out Committee met in Chicago, IL. The Committee is made up of General Chairman, often assisted by a Vice Chairman, Vice Presidents and an appointed attorney who is on staff in Washington, D.C. The Committee laid out issues that were indigenous to each property as well as identify contracting out problems that are common among the various Systems and Carriers. National Division is already hard at work gathering contracting out information from each individual system that utilizes the contracting out database. Once the information is gathered the Committee will re-convene and lay out plans for the next round of bargaining.

Please Help!

There will be lots of information gathered in preparation for the next round of bargaining. The various Committees have their work cut out for them. Our wages, healthcare, working conditions and retirement are under constant attack. The very benefits that our predecessors worked so hard to bargain for are the same benefits that the Railroads now want to strip away. These are tumultuous times and it will take the collective effort of all of us to fight to keep what we have. While the railroad industry makes record profits those Railroad Barons expect you and I to take a cut in wages and benefits. We can not and will not sit idly by and watch that happen. What can I do you ask? If you see a contractor performing your work don't accept it. Report it to your union officers as soon as it happens. Contracting out of our work has been an ongoing battle. It will not go away. With your help we can fight to keep what is ours but your union officers can't do it by themselves. It will take the efforts of all of us.

Lastly, the Legislative Department has to be vigilant on Capitol Hill to prevent Congress from interfering with our Retirement. Just because we got Congress to back off on last years attack on Railroad Retirement doesn't mean that Congress won't try something else. Please help support our Legislative Department in Washington, D.C. While we will never match the dollars that are funneled to Congress by the huge Railroad Lobby and big business we can put up a fight by all of us contributing just a little. I urge each and every one of you to support D.R.I.V.E. (Democrat-Republican-Independent-Voter-Education) and give just a few dollars each month. Your dues dollars are not used by D.R.I.V.E. Only dollars that are freely contributed by you and I can be used.

"In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, as 'right-to-work.' It provides no 'rights' and no 'works.' Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining... We demand this fraud be stopped."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

UNIFIED SYSTEM DIVISION CONVENTION NEWS

The Unified System Division will hold its' Quadrennial Joint Protective Board Meeting in the city of Las Vegas, Nevada on October 27, 2014 through October 31, 2014. We are currently taking bids from several Casino/Hotel properties and will announce later what property gives us the best rates and facilities. The pertinent Bylaws regarding the convention are:

ARTICLE II – CONVENTIONS **JOINT PROTECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS**

Section 1 (a) The quadrennial meeting of the Unified System Division Joint Protective Board shall convene in regular convention during the last full week in October in such city as may be determined by the System Officers and approved by the Executive Committee.

Announcement of the selection of the convention site will be published in the newsletter at least one (1) year prior to the date the convention convenes. All special sessions of the Unified System Division Joint Protective Board shall be held at a location as determined by the General Chairman and approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) Any member of the Unified System Division who is in good standing and who meets the requirements set forth in Article XVIII, Section 9 of the National Division Bylaws, the provisions of the Merger Agreement between BMWE and IBT and the IBT Constitution is eligible for election to the position of General Chairman, 1st Vice Chairman Secretary-Treasurer and Vice Chairmen or other salaried positions coming under the jurisdiction of the Joint Protective Board. Members elected must remain in good standing to the time of assuming office and during their term of office. Maintenance of good standing shall be the same as defined in Article XVII, Section 7 of the National Division Bylaws.

(c) At each meeting of the Unified System Division, Joint Protective Board Members or the Joint Protective Board Alternate members shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for every member in good standing, which he represents in his local lodge, as determined by the latest membership report available. Prior to the Joint Protective Board meeting the General Chairman will appoint a Credentials Committee, of at least seven (7) members, at least two (2) from each region, who will review eligibility and consider protests to determine the correct representation vote. This credentials committee will consider and resolve protests prior to the first vote taken at the meeting. Each System Division Officer shall be ex-officio members at all regular conventions and special meetings of the System Division, with all rights and privileges except the right to vote in the election of System Division Officers, unless they have been elected as Grievance Committee Chairman from their Local Lodge, or as an Alternate who is serving in the capacity of Chairman, at the Joint Protective Board Meeting. System Officers will be ex-officio members of all Grievance Committees, and Local Lodges, other than their own, with the right to speak but not to vote.

(d) The Unified System Division shall be made up of three (3) Regions. Region 1 will consist of the former Union Pacific System Division, Region 2 will consist of the former Chicago and North Western System Federation and Region 3 will consist of the former Pacific Federation.

Region 1 will be made up of four (4) districts which are defined as follows:

- District 1 – General Chairman or 1st Vice Chairman Secretary-Treasurer or Vice Chairman at large.
- District 2 – Eastern District (Omaha, Nebraska, Kansas City areas and Kansas west to Salt Lake City) Vice Chairman
- District 3 – Western District (Salt Lake City west to Los Angeles and north to Seattle and the Portland Terminal Railroad) Vice Chairman
- District 4 – Officer at Large to assist the General Chairman or 1st Vice Chairman Secretary-Treasurer within Region 1.

Region 2 will be made up of four (4) districts which are defined as follows:

- District 1 - General Chairman or 1st Vice Chairman Secretary-Treasurer or Vice Chairman at large.
- District 2 – Seniority districts 2, 4 and the former 4 and 6 areas Vice Chairman.
- District 3 – Seniority districts 3, 9 and the Belt Railway Company Vice Chairman.
- District 4 – Seniority districts 7, 8 and the E&LS Railway Company Vice Chairman.

Region 3 will be made up of the former Pacific Federation territory.

Region 3 – General Chairman or 1st Vice Chairman Secretary-Treasurer or Vice Chairman at large and One (1) Vice Chairman at Large.

(e) A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the Joint Protective Board will constitute a quorum.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

ARE YOU FURLOUGHED?

If you become furloughed do you know what to do? The 1st thing you should do is file for your Railroad Retirement Board Unemployment Benefits. To qualify for normal railroad unemployment or sickness benefits in the benefit year beginning July 1, 2013, an employee must have had railroad earnings of at least \$3,412.50 in calendar year 2012, counting no more than \$1,365 for any month. Those who were first employed in the rail industry in 2012 must also have at least five months of creditable railroad service in that year.

Application forms for unemployment and sickness benefits may be obtained from railroad employers, railroad labor organizations, any RRB office, or the agency's website at www.rrb.gov.

ARE YOU FURLOUGHED WHILE AN OUTSIDE CONTRACTOR DOES YOUR WORK?

After you apply for RRB Unemployment Benefits why sit there at home wondering when you're going to get called back to work! Take some time to report to your union that you are furloughed. Why? Well we write claims against outside contractors performing M of W work. Guess what? We need to know who you are when you're laid off so that we can use you for claims against the contractors. The Railroads often state that because there is full employment they shouldn't have to pay a time claim against a contractor. They don't have that argument when you are laid off and available to perform the same work that the contractors perform. Contact your nearest Vice Chairman and tell us if and when you become furloughed. Help us Help You.

WHAT DOES MY UNION DO FOR ME?

You hear it spoken out on the track. Your buddy complains about it all of the time. You wonder what you get for the union dues that you pay each month? The chart below is the 2013 breakdown of your benefit package. This benefit package was negotiated in your behalf by your union. Make no mistake! The Railroad Companies do not provide these benefits out of the goodness of their heart.

The following represents the estimated value of cash and non-cash compensation accruing to Maintenance of Way employees with an hourly wage of \$22.86 working straight time hours only during the entire calendar year.

PAID BY THE CARRIER	PER YEAR	PER MONTH
Wages	\$47,548.80	\$3,962.40
Railroad Retirement Tier I & Medicare (7.65%)*	\$3,455.71	\$287.97
Railroad Retirement Tier II (12.6%)*	\$5,691.77	\$474.31
Unemployment (RUIA) (2.15%)**	\$362.49	\$30.20
Railroad Employees' National Health & Welfare Plan ***	\$16,204.32	\$1,350.36
Vision Plan	\$100.44	\$8.37
Dental Plan (GP-12000)	\$713.64	\$55.90
Retiree Health Plan (GA-46000)	\$1,668.48	\$139.04
Supplemental Sickness Benefits (GP-7000)	\$394.44	\$32.87
Off-Track Vehicle Insurance	\$5.40	\$0.45
Employee Cost-Sharing Health Insurance Contribution	-\$2,376.00	-\$198.00
Employee Railroad Retirement Tier I & Medicare (7.65%)*	-\$3,455.71	-\$287.97
Employee Railroad Retirement Tier II (4.4%)*	-\$1,987.60	-\$165.63
Total Employer Paid Cash, Non-Cash Compensation and Payroll Taxes Less Employee Cost-Sharing and Employee Payroll Taxes	\$68,326.19	\$5693.85

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD INFORMATION

Railroad Unemployment and Sickness Benefits To Increase Due to Adjustment in Sequestration Rate

Beginning October 1, 2013, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will reduce railroad unemployment and sickness insurance benefits by 7.2 percent due to federal budget cuts first implemented in March 2013. Since that time, these benefits had been reduced by 9.2 percent.

The adjusted reduction amount is based on revised projections of benefit claims and payments under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. It will remain in effect through September 30, 2014, the end of the fiscal year. Reductions in future fiscal years, should they occur, will be calculated based on applicable law.

The 7.2 percent reduction in railroad unemployment and sickness benefits will reduce the maximum daily benefit rate from \$68.00 to \$63.10. As a result, the total maximum amount payable in a 2-week period with 10 days of unemployment will drop from \$680.00 to \$631.04.

Certain railroad sickness benefits are also subject to regular tier I railroad retirement taxes, resulting in a further reduction of 7.65 percent. Applying the 7.2 percent reduction to these sickness benefits will result in a daily benefit rate of \$58.27, with a maximum 2-week total of \$582.77.

Under the previous 9.2 percent reduction, the maximum 2-week unemployment benefit was \$617.44, while the maximum for sickness benefits subject to tier I payroll taxes was \$570.21.

These reductions are required under the Budget Control Act of 2011 and a subsequent sequestration order filed by President Obama to implement the mandated cuts. The law exempted social security benefits, as well as railroad retirement, survivor, and disability benefits paid by the RRB, from sequestration.

In fiscal year 2012, the RRB paid \$11.3 billion in retirement and survivor benefits to about 573,000 beneficiaries, and net unemployment-sickness benefits of \$88.5 million to about 26,000 claimants.

New Benefit Year for Railroad Unemployment and Sickness Benefits

A new benefit year under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act begins July 1, 2013. The maximum daily benefit rate payable for claims under this Act increases to \$68 in the new benefit year. Benefits are normally paid for the number of days of unemployment or sickness over four in 14-day registration periods, so maximum benefits for biweekly claims would total \$680.

However, as a result of a sequestration order under the Budget Control Act of 2011, the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) reduced unemployment and sickness benefits by 9.2 percent effective March 1, 2013 which has been readjusted to 7.2 percent effective October 1, 2013. Please read the information above for the adjusted amount totals allowable for each claim period.

How long are these benefits payable?

Normal unemployment or sickness benefits are each payable for up to 130 days (26 weeks) in a benefit year. The total amount of each kind of benefit which may be paid in the new benefit year cannot exceed the employee's railroad earnings in calendar year 2010, counting earnings up to \$1,718 per month, the same amount as in calendar year 2009.

If normal benefits are exhausted, extended benefits are payable for up to 65 days (during 7 consecutive claim periods) to employees with at least 10 years of service (120 or more cumulative service months).

How does a person apply for, as well as claim, unemployment benefits?

Claimants can file their applications for unemployment benefits by mail or online.

To apply by mail, claimants must obtain an application from their labor organization, employer, local RRB office or the agency's website at www.rrb.gov. The completed application should be mailed to the local RRB office as soon as possible and, in any case, must be filed within 30 days of the date on which the claimant became unemployed or the first day for which he or she wishes to claim benefits. Benefits may be lost if the application is filed late.

UNIFIED SYSTEM DIVISION WEB SITE INFORMATION & UPDATE

The new Unified System Division Web Site, <http://www.usdbmwed.org/index.cfm>, has been up and running for a couple of years now. We went on-line with the new site last July 2011 and we are very proud of the progress the site has made as well as the new look and design. The USD web site is a product of Union Active and Union-America.com who are Teamster Brothers and Sisters of the Graphic Communication Conference. The site is maintained by 1st Vice Chairman\Sec. Treas. Galen E. Owen. It makes us very proud to say that our web site is made in America by Union Members who are part of our Teamster Family.

HOW DO I NAVIGATE THE WEB SITE?

Some of you may not know how to navigate the site to find the information you are looking for. The box below left is a snapshot of the "Member Resources" section that can be found on the left hand side of the web site home page. Hovering your mouse over a menu, title or image will open up that item to an article, document, chart or link to another web site which then allows you to reach the information you need. You will also know when a menu item links to another item when your mouse changes from a pointer to a pointing hand.

From this:



To this:



Whenever you see a small triangle on the top of a menu or on the side of a menu, as in the pictures below, that's your clue to click on that menu to open up another sub menu. **As an example**, move your mouse over the Pay Rates box and it changes color as well as underlines the title. It also opens up another menu so you can choose what particular pay rate you're looking for. (See the boxes below for an example.) From there merely move your mouse to the box you wish to open and left click your mouse. You'll then open up the pay rate you're looking for.

Member Resources	
Member Home	
Member Address Change	
USD Newsletters	
Member Benefits	▶
Local Lodges	▶
Rosters	▶
Pay Rates	▶
Forms	▶

Rosters	▶	
<u>Pay Rates</u>	▶	UP Division Rates
Forms	▶	UP System Gang Rates
Retirement Information		C&NW District Rates
Member Directory		SP District Rates
Officers & Staff		BRC Rates
		PTRC Rates

The above information is but a brief sampling of what's available on your web site. The news information is constantly changing. We have direct news feeds from the BMWED National Division as well as other direct news feeds from the Teamsters. We will be posting information that is important to you and your job as it becomes available. We also want to hear from you. We would like to post pictures of Lodge meetings and events. If you have an interesting story about a member, active or retired, please send it along. We'll try to include it in our next newsletter and on the web site. Please send your pictures and information via email to Galen E. Owen at: bmwed2000@yahoo.com

Send by regular mail to: **Galen E. Owen, 1st Vice Chairman\Sec. Treas., P. O. Box 305 Trenton, MO 64683**

VERY IMPORTANT REMINDER

Recently some UPRR employees have forfeited their seniority in the classification because they bid down in class from their assignment prior to the passing of 90 calendar days of their assignment to that position. It is extremely important that you acquaint yourself with and understand Rule 22 of the UPRR\BMWED Agreement. This is especially important if you are working on a Consolidated System Gang pursuant to Appendix T of that agreement. Please review the rule below as well as the entire agreement. Your job is at risk if you do not know your agreement.

Mr. Galen E. Owen
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