Local 95, Rensselaer, N.Y.

Mike Shaw, employed as a conductor aboard Amtrak’s Downeaster and resident of Standish, Maine, is campaigning to win a seat on the Maine Legislature. Hoping to represent residents of House District 102, Shaw is challenging incumbent Gary Moore, who is seeking a fourth term.

Local 161, Seattle, Wash.

Local President Brian Donald reported that co-worker and Vice Local Chairperson Kiki Garrison passed away last month following a courageous battle against cancer. “She touched the lives of all who knew her,” Donald said. Also, at the April monthly meeting, members approved a new local-dues structure after a lengthy and thoughtful discussion.

Local 240, Los Angeles, Calif.

Local Chairperson Harry Garvin reported that the following members have retired in the last few months from service with the Union Pacific: William J. Pizzuto, Head of the Steam Department; Donald Graham (41 1/2 years), Jimmy W. Fleenor (42 years) and Benny Volpe (44 years). “All of the members and officers of Local 240 thank them for their loyalty and dedication to this great union,” Garvin said.

Local 283, Portland, Ore.

President Steve Smith of this Union Pacific local recognized the uncompensated work of Vice President Ed Nicolai, Vice Local Chairperson John McKeown and Vice Local Chairperson Bart Doern by presenting them with knives with “UTU Local 283” engraved in the handles, reported Secretary & Treasurer Jack Coryell.

Local 453, Clinton, Ill.

Members of the local should make note of the new meeting place and time for local meetings, Secretary & Treasurer Lloyd R. Holman reports. Meetings will now be held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers’ Hall #146, located at 3390 N. Woodford St. in Decatur.

Local 465, Gillette, Wyo.

This BNSF Railway local lost a good friend, locomotive and union officer on March 25 upon the death of Donald Cass, said Local President Mike Montgomery. Cass, who was 70 years old, was planning on retiring soon.

Local 663, Bangor, Maine

Members of this New England Lines local are backing Local Chairperson David Higgins in his race to win the Maine House District 39 seat, which represents residents living in the Bangor area. Higgins narrowly lost election to the job in 2006 (by 18 votes out of more than 4,400 cast) and is said to be working hard to gain the post.

Local 811, San Bernardino, Calif.

Monnie L. McRae, a retired member of this BNSF local, passed away on Aug. 25, 2007, three days short of his 95th birthday. Son James A. McRae reported. James is also a retired UTU-represented yardmaster with 38 years of service.

Local 951, Sheridan, Wyo.

On March 7, member Carol Rosalez and UTU Auxiliary State Legislative Director Nancy Drummond met with Sen. Hillary Clinton as she campaigned in Wyoming prior to the state’s Democratic primary.

Primary in attendance at the campaign stop were Local Chairperson Bruce Drummond, members Hugh Miller and Larry Jacobson, retired member Red Reckard, and Local 465 President Bill Montgomery and Local 1168 Treasurer Mike Stufflebeam.

Local 1168, Clarion, N.M.

Members of this BNSF local presented a check for $500 to the youth services librarian at Clovis-Carver Public Library in support of their 2008 summer reading program, reported Legislative Rep. Randy Dunson. The program ran for the first week in June and runs through July 31. The donation will be used to provide prizes to the kids as they reach the required program goals. UTU member Benny Becanegra and his wife, JoNella, are strong supporters of the program and it was through their efforts that this donation was made, Dunson said.

The scoreboard in the outfield of Field 7 at the Merrill Complex in Raynham, Mass., honors the memory of deceased UTU member Stephen M. Parker.

UTU’s Parker will live on at his ‘field of dreams’

In honor of a fallen UTU member, the Raynham (Mass.) Youth Baseball Softball Association has renamed one of the fields at its Merrill Complex the Stephen M. Parker Field.

Parker, formerly of UTU Local 262 at Boston, Mass., died May 3, 2007, of a heart attack while his wife and brother were traveling with him for Amtrak. He had been riding on a forklift that was stuck and then drugged by an Amtrak train.

New England States Legislative Director George Garvin said Parker was an Amtrak employee for 31 years, was a former local chairperson. “He was a great family guy. He always remained active in local union activities up until his untimely death. He was survived on the railroad by his brother, John Parker, who is an Amtrak conductor,” Casey said.

For years, Parker had volunteered his services to RYBISA. An avid landscaper, Parker put his skills to use at the local ballparks. “Steve ran the field crew here for the 2000 Cal Ripken New England Regional Tournament,” said Bob McCabe, RYBISA president. “It rained every day of the tournament, but we never had a game rained out. You’d see him out here working on the field at night. He wouldn’t rest until the grass was exactly the regulation height of 1-1/2 inches. He also took on the role as head contractor for our new concession stand.”

Chris Bodensiek, Raynham’s park commissioner, said: “Steve was a friend and neighbor. He stayed with the league even after his kids were no longer involved because he gave to the community and asked nothing in return.”

Fellow Amtrak employee Ed Radovich also praised Parker’s efforts. “What a fantastic tribute to a wonderful guy. All of Steve’s friends at the railroad are very proud of him. He was the best, and his spirit of dedication to his family and his friends lives on as an inspiration to us all,” he said.

The scoreboard in the outfield of Field 7, now known as Stephen M. Parker Field, features a photo of Parker, along with his mantra: “Enjoy the game. Most of all, enjoy the kids. They are the reason for the season.”

On Raynham’s traditional opening day this year, players from every team in the league surrounded the infield at Field 7. Parker’s children, Kelly and Greg, threw out the first pitch in the first baseball and softball games.

“My dad was a family man,” said son, Greg. “This is a place he loved.”

Pictured, from left, are Clovis-Carver Library Director Marilyn Belcher, Local 1168 President Greg Blevins, Librarian Krissie Carter and former UTU member Benny Becanegra.

Local 1529, Walbridge, Ohio

Members of this CSX local have established a savings account to aid fellow brother Neil D. Emerson, who lost his left arm April 1 when he was struck by a moving railcar. Emerson, 23, is married with two small children. Anyone interested in donating to the fund should contact CanDo Credit Union, 113 S. Main St., Walbridge, OH 43465, or call (419) 666-3113, said Secretary & Treasurer Mike Obrock. “We are rallying behind Brother Emerson and his family in their time of need,” Obrock said.

Local 1904, Houston, Texas

For members who are unaware, the local has a Web site at www.utu1904.com, Port Terminal Railroad Association Vice General Chairperson Kenneth Rainer reports.

UTU Local 171 to host Tri-State Rail Conference

UTU International President Mike Fuhey will be among the guests attending this year’s Tri-State Rail Conference in Chicago on Saturday, May 17. The conference, organized by Chris Taus, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway local chairperson of UTU Local 171 at Aurora, Ill., will be held at the Stadium Restaurant, 4015 Algonquin Rd., in Rolling Meadows.

The conference will be from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., and is free of charge for all UTU members. Also scheduled to participate in the conference are UTU International Vice President John Bahler, Illinois State Legislative Director Joe Stabo, and representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration.

The first Tri-State Rail Conference was organized in late 2003 with the objective of promoting unity, strength, effectiveness and constructive relationships among UTU locals, their members and their officers in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. The conferences allow attendees to exchange information on common issues rail employees face.

Retired Local 1433 President Al Schoo, who organized the first Tri-State Rail Conference, said “I believe in relationships, action and union principles and this conference is the place to encourage those ideas.” For more information, call Schoo at (815) 222-6199.