In the Line of Duty: Alexander T. Sassman

CLEVELAND, March 22 — Alexander T. Sassman, a member of BLET Division 692 (Tracy, Calif.), was killed in an on-duty motor vehicle accident near Fairfield, Calif., on March 16, 2015.

Brother Sassman, 51, was one of two railroad employees who were in the taxicab being transported from their train to their off-duty location when the accident occurred. According to media reports, the taxi was a 2006 Ford Crown Victoria that was traveling at an estimated speed of 60 to 65 mph northbound on I-680 just after 1 a.m. on March 16 when the driver lost control. The vehicle went airborne and overturned, rolling off the side of the highway and landing on a road that runs parallel to the freeway. Brother Sassman was pronounced dead at the scene. The cab’s second passenger, a conductor, survived but suffered major injuries. The cab driver also survived. The taxi was transporting the two Union Pacific employees from San Jose to Roseville.

Brother Sassman is survived by his wife, Destalee, and three sons: Chaim, 22, Liam, 17, and Jaze, 14. He hired out with the Union Pacific on June 12, 2004, and joined the Brotherhood effective February 1, 2006.

Brother Brian Carr, 1st Vice Chairman of the BLET’s Union Pacific–Western Lines General Committee of Adjustment, reports that a benevolent fund to help the Sassman family during their time of need has been established through U.S. Bank. Donations can be made at a U.S. Bank branch in your area, or mailed to: U.S. Bank, 1080 N. Hills Blvd., Reno, NV 89506 (phone: (800) 872-2657). Checks should be made payable to "Sassman Family Memorial."

“This is a sad reminder of how fragile life really is, and it breaks the heart of all railroaders to learn of this tragedy,” BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce said. “Locomotive engineers and trainmen face dangers not only while on on their trains, but also while deadheading and on the way to and from work, as well. Destalee, Chaim, Liam and Jaze are in our thoughts and prayers. On behalf of all members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, I extend our most heartfelt sympathies to the Sassman family.”

In lieu of a funeral, the family is planning a celebration of Brother Sassman's life. The date and location are yet to be announced.

Sunday, March 22, 2015
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