Honoring Wes Weis, President and CEO of Morristown & Erie Railway

ASLRAA mourns the death of Wesley “Wes” Weis, President and CEO of the Morristown & Erie Railway (M&E). The long time railroader died last week at the age of 78 and the funeral service was held today in New Jersey.

“Wes was always generous to me and to the employees at the Morristown & Erie. He was the guy that would give you the shirt off his back in an effort to help you. In the 17 years I knew him and worked for him he never once said no to an employee in times of need. To me that is the trait and quality of the person that you want to be associated with both personally and professionally,” said Chuck Jensen, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the M&E.

Beginning as a union electrician, Weis’ decades-long career included starting and operating a successful tower company in the New York area, and several radio stations. In addition to the M&E, he was also heavily involved with the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad and several other short lines.

Weis owned locomotives and passenger cars over the years and enjoyed going to railroad auctions as well as industrial auctions. He was an avid collector of Corvettes and in true Wes style would lend one to you if you ask!

Weis was an active participant in many ASLRA committees including the Small Railroad, Mechanical, and Passenger Committees. “Wes loved attending the meetings at the ASLRAA conventions and liked the interaction with his peers,” said Jensen.

“Wes was a fixture in the short line industry and a wealth of knowledge. His contribution to ASLRAA and the industry was expansive. He will be greatly missed by all,” said J.R. Gelnar, ASLRAA’s Vice President, Safety and Compliance.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests a donation to Local IBEW 164 Scholarship Fund, 205 Robin Road, Suite 315, Paramus, NJ 07652 OR to ARC of Bergen/Passaic, 223 Moore Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601.

ASLRAA Fall Regional Meetings Open for Registration

Join us for this year’s Regional Meetings! Topics will include Disaster Recovery, Technology Risk Management, Legislative & Regulatory, Marketing and much more! Hotel blocks close fast! Take note of the concurrent meetings and consider sending members of your team for training.
Central/Pacific Region Meeting - San Antonio, TX
Wednesday, September 11 - Friday, September 13.
ASLRRA’s Leadership Development Training - Regulatory Module is being offered concurrently.

Eastern Region Meeting - Columbus, OH
Monday, October 7 - Wednesday, October 9
FRA Drug and Alcohol Seminar is being offered concurrently.

Southern Region Meeting - Charlotte, NC
Monday, November 11 - Wednesday, November 13.
FRA Part 225 Incident/Accident Reporting Seminar is being offered concurrently.

Finance and Administration Seminar / General Counsel Symposium - Columbus, OH
Wednesday, October 9 - Friday, October 11.

Position Available: Director, Office of Safety Analysis
The FRA is looking for an executive to serve as the Director, Office of Safety Analysis for the Office of Railroad Safety. The Director is the principal program advisor to both the Deputy Associate Administrator and the Associate Administrator in advancing the mission of FRA railroad safety. More info:
https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/538902000

J.R. Gelnar Represents Short Line Railroads at Inaugural Meeting of Safety Transportation Security Advisory Committee
The Safety Transportation Security Advisory Committee (STSAC) held their inaugural meeting at Transportation Security Administration Headquarters on July 11. The Committee consists of 37 voting members and 14 non-voting members from various modes of transportation, five of which are railroad representatives. As this is a new committee, a Charter and Bylaws were developed and discussed with a final vote expected later in the summer. Tom Farmer, Assistant Vice President- Security, Association of American Railroads (AAR) and Polly Hansen, Director of Security and Emergency Management at American Public Transportation Association (APTA) were floor nominated for the chairman position. Officer nominations and voting will be concluded in the next few weeks. The duties of the Committee will be to provide guidance, direction and recommendations concerning security processes, procedures, standardization and scalability to the Administrator. The Committee will meet again in October.
Reminder: Final Small Business Administration Regional Regulatory Roundtable to be Held on July 19

The Small Business Administration’s Office of Advocacy will host four Regional Regulatory Reform Roundtables in July, with the final roundtable taking place July 19 in Burlington, Vt. All meetings are free and open to the public.

Jo Strang, Senior Vice President of Safety & Regulatory Policy at the ASLRA represented short lines at the July 16 meeting in Maine.

The purpose of the meetings is to enable small businesses to discuss which federal agency regulations are burdensome and should be considered for reform or elimination. The Office of Advocacy is looking to identify regulatory issues for small businesses, gather information on businesses’ first-hand experiences with troublesome regulations and educate participants as to the ways the Office of Advocacy and Small Business Administration can help small businesses.

Follow the link above for more information or to register for the meetings. Those unable to attend the roundtables can still submit comments and concerns through a form on the website.

Position Available: Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Railroad Safety

The FRA is looking for an executive to serve as the Deputy Associate Administrator (DAA) for the Office of Railroad Safety. The DAA is the principal advisor to the Associate Administrator in advancing the mission of FRA railroad safety. More info: https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/538901700

STB Nominee Michelle Schultz Notes Vital Role of Short Lines in the U.S. Economy

On July 10, the Senate Commerce Committee advanced by voice-vote approval the nomination of Michelle Schultz for a seat on the Surface Transportation Board. Schultz had been renominated for the post this year after her nomination was not considered in the previous congressional session.

In response to a questionnaire the Commerce Committee provides nominees, Schultz stressed the importance of rail networks to the nation’s economy, and her view on the STB’s role in regulating the industry. “For certain areas across the country, short line and regional railroads are the only way shippers can access the national freight rail network. Short line railroads serve a vital role to the U.S. freight rail network. As the economic regulator of the rail industry, the Surface Transportation Board has discretion to tailor its regulatory activities to meet the nation’s changing transportation needs. This discretion would include taking into account the integral role that short line railroads play in the national freight network.”
ASLRRRA Welcomes New Member

Purify Fuel, Inc., based in Houston, Texas, has developed and is marketing a patented combustion catalyst that utilizes nanotechnology to optimize fuel combustion to save fuel, reduce emissions and protect engines without equipment modifications or disruption in operations.

Our Contact: Vice President Jay Fountain

ASLRRRA Announcements

ASLRRRA Members have access to a number of resources on our website, and most are available as direct downloads. Check out the Safety & Compliance and Member Resources tabs. You’ll need to login with your username and password in order to gain access to these materials, most of which are available free to ASLRRRA members.

1. Compliance Templates – more than a dozen template programs are available for parts of 49CFR, plus additional programs on Alertness and Fatigue, Program and Record Keeping Requirements, and a Contractor Safety Program.
2. Training Videos – we have training videos on Drug & Alcohol Signs and Symptoms and Post-Accident Toxicological Testing
3. Live and On Demand Webinars – review the list of upcoming live webinars on our website and check out nearly 80 recorded webinars that are available in our On Demand Resource Library.

Register Now!
ASLRRRA 2019 Regional Meetings

CENTRAL PACIFIC
San Antonio, TX
September 11-13

EASTERN
Columbus, OH
October 7-9

SOUTHERN
Charlotte, NC
November 11-13
ASLARRA Webinars

How Short Line and Regional Railroads Can Shift to Digital - 7/31/2019

CloudMoyo’s Ashok Madhavan will outline the need for a cultural shift in railroads to adopt a safety-first approach and show how the industry can leverage technology to build a strong safety culture.

Marijuana and CBD - New Drug Testing Issues - 8/7/2019

Many state laws legalizing marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) use have created confusion, and states’ laws are now impacting non-DOT testing programs. This presentation will review the federal regulations, current issues around marijuana and CBD, and address evolving state measures.

Click here for more ASLARRA events.

Industry Events

University of Wisconsin Announces Railroad Courses for Fall 2019

The UW-Madison College of Engineering Professional Development program has announced the following courses for Fall 2019. Click the title of the course for more information. Questions? Contact Program Director Dave Peterson at dmpeter5@wisc.edu.

- Fundamentals of Railway Train Control and Signaling
- Fundamentals of Railroad Bridge Inspection
- Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety

Click here for a listing of industry events.

Views & News is published by American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact Amy Krouse, editor, with questions or comments.