

# ATU Local 587 News Review

Visit online: [www.atu587.com](http://www.atu587.com)

VOL. XXXII, NO. 2

## The President's Report

by Lance F. Norton

### About Those Bylaws...



Over the past few months you have been inundated with numerous By-Law proposals. Primarily they have to do with adding a second Vice-President/Assistant Business Representative for Vehicle Maintenance and Facilities (Bus and Rail) and a new and improved Nomination and Election (by mail) process.

If you're planning to run for office in our next election, or if you're just thinking about maybe running for office, or if you're not running for office but will be voting in our next election even though you read the By-Law proposals, please take a few minutes and read the rest of my article.

In less than three months our Local will begin the process of electing our leadership for the next three years. In addition to an added full time officer, a second Vice-President/Assistant Business Representative-Maintenance, the nomination process and election will be under a new and improved format.

Each ATU Local is governed by its By-Laws and those By-Laws must conform with our International's constitution. In order to change our By-Laws, we must adhere to a

process that requires certain steps. First when a By-Law, either new or a change to an existing By-Law is proposed, it must be submitted to the Local's Executive Board and then to the membership for what is called a first reading. Not only is it required to be read at the Union meetings, it is also required to be published in the form of a posting on all Union bulletin boards for the entire membership to read (not only those attending the Union meetings). The reason for this requirement is that only a portion of a Local's membership attends regularly scheduled Union meetings. In 587 we usually average less than 4% of our membership of over 4000 attending the four meetings each month in our meeting cycle (Thursday night, Friday morning, Monday night in Jefferson County and Tuesday night in Clallam County). Not only are the new or revised By-Laws posted on each union bulletin board at every worksite (and there are over 50 union boards) but they are published in our monthly 587 News Review. The reason being is in the past some By-Laws had inadvertently failed to be posted when sent to that worksite or had been taken down.

Now back to the process. After

the By-Law is submitted to the Executive Board and to the membership for a first reading, there is no discussion of this By-Law either by the Executive Board or the membership. The next month the Executive Board discusses and votes on its recommendation to the membership. That recommendation is then forwarded to the membership through the posting of our agenda for our next meeting cycle. The By-Law or By-Laws are then discussed and voted on by secret ballot through the meeting cycle by the membership. If approved, they are sent to our International's office in Washington, D.C. for review through their legal department. We are then notified by the International if they approve or disapprove. If a By-Law fails International approval, the reasons are always explained to the Local on why it doesn't conform, either to our constitution or other legal reasons. If approved, they become part of our By-Laws.

Now, on to the changes in our Election of Officers. For the first time ever, we will be voting by mail. There are significant changes also in the nomination process as well. Some of the major changes, all of which have been approved by the

*continued on page 7*

BYLAW CHANGE PROPOSAL

**Page 3**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Page 4**

WINTER STORM '08  
LETTERS

**Pages 4 & 5**

STILL DREAMING OF A WHITE  
CHRISTMAS? BY MIKE WHITEHEAD

**Page 6**

OUT OF TOUCH MANAGERS

**Page 8**

YOUTH ELECTION NIGHT, NOV. 4  
BY MICHAEL MOORE

**Page 8**

ATU ELECTION TIME

**Page 8**



**AMALGAMATED • TRANSIT • UNION**

2815 2nd Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, WA 98121

NON PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SEATTLE WA  
PERMIT NO 1471

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**The Month at a Glance**

*Executive Board Report*

January 27, 2009

All officers were present except Recording Secretary, Paul Bachtel who is on Medical Leave.

Motion by Dee Wakenight to donate \$1000.00 to Ottawa Local 279 Strike Fund.

The following business was conducted:

Motion by Ninus Hopkins to donate a \$1000.00 to A. Phillip Randolph Institute.

Motion by Michael Moore to remove article submitted by Chuck Lare and Danna Daily so they may correct factual errors.

*Business of the Membership*

At the January 2009 cycle of membership meetings the following business was addressed:

The membership voted to approve the amendment to Article III, Sections 1 & 2; Article IV, Section 8; Article V, Section 1 and Article VI, Sections 3 & 5 of the bylaws of Local 587.

The membership voted to pursue the grievance of Carol Leak to arbitration.

The following members were December pot draw winners: Dustin Wood at the Charter meeting, Neal Safrin at the Morning meeting, Paul Hausmann at the JTA meeting, Claudia Girard at the CTS Meeting. CTS rolling pot draw of \$125.00 was won by Claudia Girard. Next month's rolling pot will be \$25.00.

The membership voted to approve the amendment to Article XIII, Sections 3 & 4 of the bylaws of Local 587.

The membership voted to approve the amendment to Article XII, Sections 1 – 17 of the bylaws of Local 587.

*Tentative Agenda*  
**Membership Meetings:**

**CHARTER MEETING**  
Thursday, February 5, 2009  
8:00 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #8  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**JEFFERSON TRANSIT**  
Monday, February 9, 2009  
7:00 p.m.  
Port Townsend Rec Center  
Port Townsend, WA

**MORNING MEETING**  
Friday, February 6, 2009  
10:30 a.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**CLALLAM TRANSIT**  
Tuesday, February 10, 2009  
7:00 p.m.  
Vern Burton Memorial Building  
Port Angeles, WA

**Among Topics to be Discussed:**  
Grievance and arbitration update

**Unfinished Business:** None

**Arbitration Update**

- Derek Harris:** Grieved cross classification work in King County Metro Vehicle Maintenance. Schedule Pending.
- Bill Wallace:** Grieved Metro's failure to observe the long-standing past practice of having a Local 587 member present when a vendor works on a Metro coach. Scheduled April 2009.
- John Ross:** Grieved improper benefits calculation at Seattle Personal Transit. Schedule Pending.
- Earl Mangold:** Grieved KC Metro discriminatory disability accommodation. Scheduled April 13 & 14, 2008.
- Iordan Tchernev:** Grieved termination for alleged gross misconduct. Scheduled February 25 & 26, 2009.
- Michael Murphy:** Grieved overtime not assigned pursuant to clear contract language. Schedule pending.
- Aaron Lewis:** Grieved Metro's failure to apply wage progression pursuant to clear contract language.
- Carol Leak:** Grieved termination for alleged violation of the Metro accident point system. Schedule pending.

**In Loving Memory...**

*"You can kill a man but you can't kill an idea"*  
— Medgar Evers

**Dereje Demeke:** Active member passed away December 26, 2008. Brother Demeke joined Local 587 July 01, 2004 as a Part-time Operator.

**Edward J. Ritchie:** Active member passed away December 08, 2008. Brother Ritchie joined Local 587 November 01, 1982 as a Part-time Transit Operator and promoted to Full-time Transit Operator July 13, 1984.

**Wes Moorehead:** Active member passed away December 28, 2008. Brother Moorehead joined Local 587 February 01, 1990 as a Part-time Transit Operator and promoted to Full-time Transit Operator April 17, 1992.

**Jayson D. Anderson:** Active member passed away January 14, 2009. Brother Anderson joined Local 587 April 11, 2008 as a Driver for Clallam Paratransit in Port Angeles.

*Please notify the union office of any member's passing so that this information may be shared with the rest of our union family.*

**YOU WORK FOR \$\$  
PUT YOUR \$\$  
TO WORK  
DONATE TO C.O.P.E.**

ATU Local 587 **News Review**

Published monthly in Seattle.

Official publication of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587, AFL-CIO, representing employees of Metro/King County, Clallam Transit, Jefferson Transit, Seattle Personal Transit, Clallam Paratransit, and MV Transit.

2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, Washington 98121  
Telephone: 206-448-8588.

Affiliations: Washington State Labor Council, King County Labor Council, Northwest Joint Conference Board, ATU Legislative Council, Olympic Labor Council.

**OFFICERS OF THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION, LOCAL 587:**

**LANCE F. NORTON** Pres/Business Representative  
email – lnortonpres@atu587.com

**KENNY McCORMICK** Vice President/Assistant Business Representative  
email – kmccormickvp@atu587.com

**PAUL B. NEIL** Financial Secretary  
email – pneilfinsec@atu587.com

**PAUL J. BACHTEL** Recording Secretary/  
Editor 587 News Review  
email – pbachtelrecsec@atu587.com

Minority Affairs Officer  
Transit Operator Position No. 1  
Transit Operator Position No. 2  
Transit Operator Position No. 3  
Transit Operator Position No. 4  
Transit Operator Position No. 5  
Transit Operator Position No. 6  
Transit Operator Position No. 7  
Transit Operator Position No. 8  
Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 1  
Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 2  
Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 3  
Facilities Maintenance  
Special Classifications  
Supervisors  
Clallam/Jefferson County  
SPT/MV

**RAY CAMPBELL**  
**NEAL SAFRIN**  
**MICHAEL MOORE**  
**DEE WAKENIGHT**  
**BRIAN SHERLOCK**  
**RICK SEPOLEN**  
**JUDY YOUNG**  
**LINDA ANDERSON**  
**LISA THOMPSON**  
**MIKE WHITEHEAD**  
**JEFF STAMBAUGH**  
**KERMIT C. GIPSON JR.**  
**ALAN HUSTON**  
**CHRIS DANIELS**  
**MICHAEL SHEA**  
**JOE MANGIAMELI**  
**NINUS HOPKINS**

**Web site: <http://www.atu587.com>**

**WEINGARTEN RIGHTS STATEMENT**

*I request to have a union representative present on my behalf during this meeting because I believe it may lead to disciplinary action taken against me. If I am denied my right to have a union representative present, I will refuse to answer accusational questions and any I believe may lead to discipline.*

**Letters to the editor**

Letters/contributions must include printed names, signatures, work ID numbers, addresses and phone numbers that can be verified during working hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters are subject to editing and should be limited to 1000 words or less. Not all letters can be published due to space limitations. Cut off is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Any submission from a member of Local 587 to the News Review deemed unprintable by the Recording Secretary shall be forwarded to the Executive Board for final decision to publish.

Send letters to:

**Paul J. Bachtel, Editor**  
c/o ATU Local 587  
News Review  
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, WA 98121

To: All Members of Local 587  
From: Recording Secretary Paul J. Bachtel

## Proposal To Change Bylaws — Article III Section 2

Submitted by Erin Clark

In accordance with Article XV, Section 2 pertaining to bylaw proposals, the following bylaw proposal will be published in the *News Review*, and will be voted upon at through the March cycle of Union meetings.

### ARTICLE III

#### OFFICERS

##### OLD:

**Section 1.** The regular officers of the Local shall be:

- (a) President/Business Representative
- (b) Vice President/Assistant Business Representative
- (c) Financial Secretary/Treasurer
- (d) Recording Secretary/Correspondent to *In Transit*

**Section 2.** Executive Board

- (a) Members of the Executive Board shall be elected from the membership within their respective departments as follows: ~~Eight~~ **Seven** Transit Operators, from which a representative will be appointed to each operational base; three members from the Vehicle Maintenance Department; one member from the Facilities Maintenance Department; one member from the Supervisors Department; one member from the Special Classifications; one member from the organized units within King County and outside the King County/Metro bargaining unit; one member from the organized units outside King County and outside the King County/Metro bargaining unit; and one Minority Affairs Officer from the membership at large.
- (b) Employees in the Transit Operations Department shall consist of the following: Full-Time Transit Operator, Part-Time Transit Operator, Waterfront Streetcar Conductors, the Operations Security Liaison, and Revenue Coordinator working for King County/Metro.
- ~~(c) Employees in the Vehicle Maintenance Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Vehicle Maintenance Employees in the current labor agreement with King County/Metro.~~
- (d) Employees in the Facilities Maintenance Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Facilities Maintenance Employees in the current labor agreement with Metro.
- (e) Employees in the Supervisors Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Supervisors and Schedule Section in the current labor agreement with King County/Metro.

- (f) Employees in the Special Classifications Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Rider Information Specialists, Customer Service Office Employees, and employees listed in Special Classifications with the exception of the Operations Security Liaison, as listed in the current respective labor agreements with King County/Metro.
- (g) Any member of the Executive Board, who in the future receives a promotion or demotion, must resign from the Executive Board within 60 days, if their new job title does not qualify them for Section 2(a). Vacancies occurring on the Board shall be filled for the un-expired term by a majority vote of the remaining members pending the next regular election. A notice must be posted within five days of the vacancy, and remain posted for at least ten days. At the next scheduled meeting of the Executive Board, names submitted for the vacancy will be reviewed and an appointment will be made to take effect at the next Charter membership meeting.
- (h) If a vacancy occurs for any reason in any of the following elected positions: President/Business Representative, Vice President/Assistant Business Representative, Financial Secretary/Treasurer or Recording Secretary, a special election will be held to fill the unexpired term. The special election will be held in compliance with Article XII of these Bylaws and Section 14 of the Constitution and General Laws of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

If a vacancy occurs within 90 days of the normal expiration of the term of office in the position of President/Business Representative, the Vice President/Assistant Business Representative shall preside and perform all duties pertaining to the office of the President until the regular general election is held.

If a vacancy occurs within 90 days of the normal expiration of the term of office in the position of Vice President/Assistant Business Representative, Financial Secretary/Treasurer or Recording Secretary, the Executive Board shall meet prior to the next regular Union meeting and select a member of the Executive Board to fill the unexpired term. The appointment must be approved by a majority vote of the members in attendance at the next regular meeting of the Local.

##### NEW:

**Section 2. Executive Board**

- (a) Members of the Executive Board shall be elected from the mem-

bership within their respective departments as follows: **Seven** Transit Operators and **One Rail Operator**, from which a representative will be appointed to each operational base ~~and Rail~~; three members from the Vehicle Maintenance Department; one member from the Facilities Maintenance Department; one member from the Supervisors Department; one member from the Special Classifications; one member from the organized units within King County and outside the King County/Metro bargaining unit; one member from the organized units outside King County and outside the King County/Metro bargaining unit; and one Minority Affairs Officer from the membership at large.

- (b) Employees in the Transit Operations Department shall consist of the following: Full-Time Transit Operator, Part-Time Transit Operator, Waterfront Streetcar Conductors, the Operations Security Liaison, and Revenue Coordinator working for King County/Metro.
- (c) Employee in the Rail Department shall consist of the following: Light Rail Operator, South Lake Union Street Car Operator.**
- (d) Employees in the Vehicle Maintenance Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Vehicle Maintenance Employees in the current labor agreement with King County/Metro.
- (e) Employees in the Facilities Maintenance Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Facilities Maintenance Employees in the current labor agreement with Metro.

- (f) Employees in the Supervisors Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Supervisors and Schedule Section in the current labor agreement with King County/Metro.
- (g) Employees in the Special Classifications Department shall consist of all job classifications listed under Rider Information Specialists, Customer Service Office Employees, and employees listed in Special Classifications with the exception of the Operations Security Liaison, as listed in the current respective labor agreements with King County/Metro.
- (h) Any member of the Executive Board, who in the future receives a promotion or demotion, must resign from the Executive Board within 60 days, if their new job title does not qualify them for Section 2(a). Vacancies occurring on the Board shall be filled for the un-expired term by a majority vote of the remaining members pending the next regular election. A notice must be posted within five days of the vacancy, and remain posted for at least ten days. At the next scheduled meeting of the Executive Board, names submitted for the vacancy will be reviewed and an appointment will be made to take effect at the next Charter membership meeting.
- (i) If a vacancy occurs for any reason in any of the following elected positions: President/Business Representative, Vice President/Assistant Business Representative, Financial Secretary/Treasurer or Recording Secretary, a special election will be held to fill the unexpired term. The special election will be held in compliance with Article XII

## February Trivia Question

*Who was the first Black Transit Operator hired by Seattle Transit in 1945?*

E-mail your answer to  
pbachtelrecsec@atu587.com

*The first person to submit the correct answer will receive honorable mention in the next edition of the News Review.*

## January Trivia Question Winner

**Jo Merrick**, Technical Information Processing Specialist III

January Trivia Question: What color was the Metro Transit Time Table in September 1991?  
Correct answer: Purple.

Sister Merrick was the first person to correctly answer the December trivia question

# Letters to the Editor...

## SEND IN YOUR OPINIONS

Letters/contributions must include printed names, signatures, work ID numbers, addresses and phone numbers that can be verified during working hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters are subject to editing and should be limited to 1000 words or less. Not all letters can be published due to space limitations. Cut off is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Any submission from a member of Local 587 to the *News Review* deemed unprintable by the Recording Secretary shall be forwarded to the Executive Board for final decision to publish. Send letters to:

**Paul J. Bachtel**  
*News Review* Editor  
 c/o ATU Local 587  
 2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
 Seattle, WA 98121

## NOTICE TO ALL READERS

*Views and opinions expressed in News Review articles are those of the authors and not necessarily the official position of Local 587*

Dear Editor,

WOW!! I want to make sure that the mechanics and support personnel get a much deserved thanks for all the hard work and dedication during our Ice & Snow storms. I was amazed that they could fix and straighten out the coaches, no matter how jackknifed they became, chains wrapped around axles & just plain would not run, especially at 4:00 in the morning.

Thank You from all the Drivers!

Stephen E. Ford  
 Atlantic Base/Nights

*In our January issue, I requested members send to me any of their thoughts and/or experience during the storm of '08. Here are just a few of what I've received. Thanks to those who have sent and to those who will send. Names, routes, locations and times are withheld to protect the innocent.*

— Lance F. Norton

## Can we get some help out here?

Lance:

While I did not drive during the last snowstorm (great skill in selecting vacation), the common problem that I have always seen with Metro and snow is a lack of supervision. When Metro decides to put a reroute on or (especially) off, the D-car gets to go out and check it out.

Seems simple and good in theory. But one particular D-car has a very large area to cover all by himself. And since it takes a long time to get anywhere, He just can't get everywhere. Metro needs to put more cars out to check out and solve problems. Base Chiefs, Safety Officers, how about drivers who know what they are doing?

The coordinators are also overwhelmed. I have always been given the fact we only have 4 channels plus 1. While this may be true, we could have two coordinators per channel working together. One communicates with drivers on the radio and the other one listens, logs and makes phone calls.

In snow emergencies we need to work together. The coordinators need to communicate more with the drivers. What reroutes are in effect, which ones have been lifted. They are so busy putting out fires that they are not saving drivers from getting in trouble in the first place. Metro needs to put more people out on the road in a D-car like status and more people in the coordinator's office.

## What's the Protocol?

Hi Lance,

I have been with Metro as a part-time driver for nearly 30 years. When I got up on December 18th to

go work it was snowing (I live near Northgate), so I went to work and there was not as much snow at the base, but I asked one of the supervisors before I left if we were on snow reroute and he said no.

I went to my bus which was chained and drove out to my terminal and by the time I got out there I knew there were plenty of problems, I got stuck 20 minutes after starting my route. I felt bad for my customers that had to get out and walk to where ever they could find something that was running.

I called the coordinator and told him of my situation and he said he would put me on the list. After sitting for 4 hours, I called back and asked if he knew when I might get help. He responded he didn't know and I told him I was ready to abandon the bus. He said OK.

One thing I am curious about in this situation is the protocol for having to use the restroom in an area like where I was (completely residential, no public buildings anywhere). As far as I know there is no information in the book and it seems as though there is no policy concerning this.

I don't know what the answer is when these storms hit but it's fairly clear that articulated buses just are not able to get around in the snow. Supervisors and Chiefs talk about shuttles that are supposed to be out there but I never saw any.

I think the agency has to completely revamp the system and come up with a different plan for snow emergency. I work out of Central Base and I want to thank you for letting share my thoughts. Take Care

## Stuck buses, late buses, no buses...

I thought everyone did a great job

just having any buses out there. I got stuck twice, once for 8 hours, but given the condition of the roads and the poor handling characteristics of articulated coaches, I thought we did quite well.

The communication at Metro during these difficult days, however, was shockingly inept. Consistently the website said one thing, the Central Base window said another and control center had yet a third opinion of where we should be, where we should not be and where we should go next.

Unfortunately, some of the radio transmissions were sent over the driver PA, not asking us to pick up handsets and riders heard much of the confusion in real time. After a few days, I started making my own determinations about where to take the bus, from a safety standpoint, because no one seemed to have the Metro policy in hand.

I felt that Metro management at what level I can't say, seemed overwhelmed and incapable of making definite policy decisions, sent down the line of communication in a clear and concise way. If the snowstorm had been a war, we would not have survived the battle at the ground level.

I must say I was quite surprised at this lack of command leadership from the top. After I started running my own routes, with my own turn backs and snow revisions, I felt better about the challenges at hand and the challenges we were yet to encounter as the days wore on. Thanks Lance, for the chance to communicate these thoughts.

## Got Sand?

Lance,

On the plus side they beached most artics in a hurry.

On the negative side, we miss

sand. Even with a bucket of sand from under a seat, we could get ourselves, or blocking motorists unstuck. When we had sanders, Metro was like a fleet of 500 little sand trucks, working over the zones and hills every 15 minutes.

Communication was terrible, as always under adverse conditions. A steady feed from our channel (like the old radio system!) at least allowed drivers to develop a feel for conditions and answer some questions about what is running. As the radio system is right now, we are virtually blacked out. It must be possible for us to eavesdrop, because occasionally we still do overhear other calls by accident.

The 3600s were pathetic. No clearance for chains – sanders + computer traction control = no traction. The drivers who best stayed on the road were the ones who created their own snow routes.

Shutting down numerous routes for a week was a wild overreaction. And the instant declaration of partial holidays is an ugly precedent.

The first day of snow I chained up my old front WD van and got around fine. After the first I took off the chains and still no problems but I stuck to the flatter arterials.

## Accolades

What a wild December snow schedule we all shared. I wanted to take time to share some thoughts and give some accolades. Keeping chains on the buses and keeping artics from getting stuck was a challenge for the shop as well as for our excellent drivers. I really appreciated all of the drivers that encouraged the chain crews and kept smiling amid some chaotic conditions.

Both drivers and many passengers were kind enough to bring us chains

*continued on page 5*

**Storm Letters, continued**

that they found out along the road. For those drivers who did everything right, yet still lost chains, I want to let you know that we installed some brand new chains that proved to be defective from the get-go.

All of the downtown coordinators (except for one gal that always sounded overloaded and bothered) sounded calm, helpful and supportive even though we all knew that they were overloaded with an avalanche of calls. I have a lot of respect for the job they do so well.

Unfortunately there were also lots of things that did not go smoothly. We had a stack of radio problems at North Base. It's hard for me to imagine why drivers were not told that the password to use is their ID number. How does that lack of communication happen?

One of my favorite road snafus was a reroute between 200<sup>th</sup> and 185<sup>th</sup> using Wallingford. There is a traffic island in the middle of an intersection there that even in normal weather can't be driven around with an articulated coach. One fine morning, we had two artics jackknifed on both sides of the island when we arrived there. It took nearly three hours to dig them out.

A few short snow days later, coaches were still on that wrong-headed reroute. Also the Seahawk shuttle buses on Sunday were all High Floor artics. They got all kinds of stuck getting to the Northgate Transit Center. It seem to me that whoever decided to put artics out on the hills of King County all through this snow storm should be flipping hamburgers somewhere instead next year.

We have some incredibly hard working Vehicle Maintenance employees that worked constantly for the full two weeks. We all pulled, pried, dug, pushed, and threw chain after chain until we were worn down to our last few unbroken chains.

There were many unsung heroes. As an example, I call it above and beyond the call of duty when a mechanic leaves a warm shop truck after chaining coach after coach at the Northgate Transit Center to shovel dangerously icy stairs that seem to be nobody's responsibility. There were lots of tired 587 workers that after two solid weeks still managed to work diligently and safely.

Thanks to our North Base chiefs for all of the food they served us and for getting out of the way and letting us just "get 'er done." I take pleasure in telling my chief (our \$100,000 a year snow schedule cook) that come spring, he will be the only one in the shop as the rest of us will be burning our comp-time bank and playing in the sun.

I cringed as I read Kevin Desmond's "puff piece" in the P-I. Even with all of the poor planning by Metro management, he seemed to give himself and Greg Nickels a "B" which we all know is lacking an "S". With all of the high level planning that goes into the rare occurrence of

an earthquake or a terrorist attack, we apparently had no viable plan for a basic snowstorm?!

Ninety percent of my wrecker and shop-truck time was spent clearing articulated buses out of front yards, off of hills and out of intersections. The talk day after day by drivers, police, Supervisors and Vehicle Maintenance was why the powers that be were still sending these things out. It was over a week into the storm and the artics were still being run on routes where they had little chance of success. A decently run transit agency would have a plan to take artics off the streets on day one or day two. (they'll also take responsibility for poor planning)

**New Years' Resolution**

By Executive Board Officer Dee Wakenight

Are you one of the many folks who make a New Years' Resolution? If so, why not make one that will help all of us, during our work time? This will be easier than most typical resolutions because you will not have to give up anything that you actually like. This resolution should actually make everyone's life easier, reduce stress and improve the entire transit system.

Are you curious yet? Many folks, in a lot of different departments have all commented to me about this change in the method of operation which has occurred over the years. Collectively we have not been able to come up with a reason for this odd occurrence. Many people seem to have changed the way they op-

erate the service for the citizens of King County.

Many moons ago there was a standard for all operations in transit, bus drivers, maintenance, facilities, everyone in transit did the same thing. When you saw someone else, either driving, parked, performing duties, or even just walking down the street, we waved to each other. What has happened to the wave? We even smiled at each other while we were waving. Some of us even cared about our co-workers, wondering why they seemed to have a customer hanging over them as they failed to acknowledge our wave to them. We might even call the control center asking them to give our co-worker a call to check and see if

*continued on page 6*



**LARRY PHILLIPS**  
Metropolitan King County Council  
District Four

January 12, 2009

Lance F. Norton  
President/Business Agent  
Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 587  
2815 Second Avenue Room #230  
Seattle, WA 98121

Dear Mr. Norton,

*Lance*  
Please convey my sincere thanks and commendation to all ATU Local 587 members who serve the public as King County Metro employees. These individuals worked tirelessly to safely transport citizens to their destinations during the last weeks of 2008 despite the snow and severe weather that crippled our region.

Metro employees consistently demonstrate commitment to safety and customer service, but they went above and beyond during this severe weather by investing long hours, energy, and care in order to provide service. Metro operators battled slippery roads and crowded buses to transport often-frustrated riders to work and appointments, and provided exemplary customer service during hazardous conditions. On the streets and behind the scenes, vehicle and facilities maintenance crews, field supervisors, equipment operators, dispatchers, planners, schedulers, customer service representatives, and countless other Metro employees put in extra hours and hard work to provide service under extremely difficult conditions.

I commend the loyal and hard-working Metro employees represented by ATU Local 587, and appreciate their skill and commitment to serving the public, especially in times of hardship. Thank you in advance for conveying to these individuals my utmost thanks for their outstanding service.

Sincerely,

*Larry*  
Larry Phillips, Councilmember  
Metropolitan King County Council, District Four

cc: Kevin Desmond, General Manager, King County Metro Transit

N:\LPCorrespondence\2009\Union\norton\_2008stormresponse\_lx.doc

516 Third Ave, Room 1200, Seattle, WA 98104-3272  
(206) 296-1004 TTY/TDD (206) 296-1024 FAX (206) 296-0370  
e-mail: larry.phillips@metrokc.gov

# Still dreaming of a White Christmas?

By Michael Whitehead, VM Executive Board Officer

If you are reading this you made it through the snow schedule, a fun and joyous time in VM...NOT. After 29 years at this Agency, I am still impressed with the high degree of professionalism that comes out in each and every 587 member when we go to snow schedule.

During this magic holiday snow the news reporters had a field day reporting the conditions and telling the public to stay home and not risk going out, yet we the 587 members continued our obligations to this Agency by either camping out at the Base or taking on the elements and adverse conditions traveling home (and yes we do have lives outside this agency) only to return back to the Base.

It is sad that some of the media criticize the service that was provided by this Agency. They obviously did not make it to a base and observe the extreme work that was asked to be preformed by this membership.

The "White Christmas" we experienced here is not what Irving Berlin and Bing Crosby had in mind in the 1942 classic "Holiday Inn" so in the box above is a revised version that is more fitting for the experience we endured:

I hope all of you had a chance to read the e-mail from the Honorable Julia Patterson Chair of the King County Council, if not here is the text:

*First, I wish you and your family all the best as we approach the end of*

*I used to dream of a White Christmas  
Until I started working for Metro  
Now I've learn of Snow Schedule  
And having no life  
While listening to bus tire chains in the snow*

*I used to dream of a White Christmas  
With every Christmas card I write  
Now I work 12 hours a day  
7 days a week  
Laying in slush cutting away chains that are wrapped tight*

*I'm dreaming of a White Christmas  
Hell no I' am dreaming of Hawaii  
I hope they grant me some AC  
And my family again I can see  
Gee, I wish my knee pain would go away from me*

*I am dreaming of making it another day  
With every bus that I chain  
I hope some day soon life will be merry and bright  
And that I make it through the night*

2008. And secondly, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for your dedicated work this year, but especially for your efforts during the past few weeks of working under extremely difficult conditions. I understand that many of you have been working continual 10 to 12 hour shifts, some even sleeping in the bases or staying in the shops rather than trying to get home and back in the snowy weather. I am sorry for those who missed holiday celebrations with family and friends. But please know that your dedication is truly admirable. The residents of

King County are fortunate to have employees of your caliber working diligently to keep Metro Transit operating.

*I hope the year ends on a less hectic note for you and that 2009 starts uneventfully! Again, many thanks for all that you do.*

This type of encouragement goes a long way for us King County Employees, taxpayers and voting citizens. In 2009 we will again negotiate the Employee Medical Benefit package. There have been some articles in the newspapers submitted by some of

the King County Council members questioning why we do not pay more of our health cost. It appears it is not enough that an overwhelming majority of 587 members jumped on the Healthy Incentives Program in an effort to better our health. We currently pay hefty Co-pay's and deductibles, yet some on the King County Council want more out of us, by requiring us to co-pay premium costs. I believe the County currently gets an excellent return on their investment. We 587 workers proudly represent the County, stepping up when the work is needed the most. Sometimes people get hurt, all of us are wearing out our bodies doing the work that is required of us. Having affordable health care will allow us to continue being there for whatever the extreme emergency, Snow, Earthquakes, Pandemic out break or terrorist attack, we will do what is necessary to assist, and transport the community we serve, we are a valued investment, BANK ON US...

In closing is wish to share some pictures sent to me from co workers that feel we 587 members could use our combined talent to modify some current equipment, in an effort to better handle the extreme snow conditions we just experienced, thus better serving the community, ***I can proudly say we are an impressive and talented bunch...***

*"Keep your chain cutting sticks sharp and your fires burning in the Snow"*

## "Extreme Emergency ATU's"

Prototype "All Terrain Units". Modified Buses designed to "Hammer Down" and get the public moving.



## New Years', continued

they were OK.

When driving the same work on a regular basis, you know who you should be seeing and where. When there is a difference you make a mental note. In the old days it didn't stop there, you actually knew how long to wait before you did something about it. Sometimes it meant that at the terminal you saw them and asked "what's up", "need some help", or some other helpful phrase, to show that you gave a rip about your co-worker and would assist if possible.

When you have other things besides "your stuff" to worry and or care about the stress level seems to decrease for everyone. So the question seems to be: do you want to endure your time at work, or actually enjoy it?

The choice is yours, to wave and smile at co-workers or not to wave. To give a rip about others, or to wallow in your own private stuff, and remain miserable.

With the New Year comes a chance for a new outlook, the choice is yours to make. Now about that New Year's resolution....

## The Vice President's Report

By Kenny McCormick



# Black History Month

During black history month, we celebrate the accomplishments of black inventors, scholars, scientists, athletes, and entertainers. This year in 2009, all Americans can join in celebrating the fact that America will be viewed in a different light as it lives up to its true commitment as a melting pot for the world. The synergy generated by the grassroots campaign of Barack Obama has united people of all races in this country. It has given hope to not just Americans but has inspired people around the world.

In 2008, America reached a milestone as it elected its 44th President. The idea envisioned by Dr. Martin

Luther King Jr., that *we as people will no longer be judged by the color of our skin, but by the content of our character*, has been given a resounding affirmation. I recall election night as the television media showed people in this country and around the world celebrating this historic event and the pride on the faces of Americans of all races. Finally, the myth is dead that you have to be a Caucasian male to be elected to the office *President of the United States*. America looked beyond the color of Barack Obama's skin to see the ideas that he stands for.

We all must gain a renewed sense of purpose. Let us strive to educate our children so that our

country recaptures its competitive edge for creating solutions to the world's problems. As we invest in education, it will pay dividends for our future. Let us become a beacon of hope as we tackle tough issues like global warming. If we do not stop polluting the earth, we will all perish. Let us rebuild our country's infrastructure and retool our factories so American workers can compete and lead the way with new technologies. These were some of the tactics employed during the early 1900's in this country and it helped America rebound and get back on its feet. It is with great hope that all Americans, including Barack Obama strive for, a

renaissance in this country.

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy said in his inaugural speech on January 20, 1961, "*ask not what your country can do for you, —ask what you can do for your country.*"

During the 60's, our country was involved in the Vietnam War and racial tension was very high as the Civil Rights movement progressed. This country never really embraced the renaissance that JFK, MLK, RFK, and countless others envisioned for this great country. It is with great hope that America dares to dream again and it will take the efforts of all of us to make it a reality. YES WE CAN!!!

## The Financial Secretary's Report

By Paul Neil



# Changes in a New Year

A new year and a new President for the country. I continue to be amazed by the broad support President Obama continues to receive. I remember seeing bumper stickers calling for Bill Clinton's impeachment before he was even sworn in and I am sure there were similar types of sniping for George Bush, also before he had a chance to screw things up. When you have an election, there should be

an acknowledgement by everyone that the individual who won is the legitimate holder of whatever the office is and should be given reasonable support by everyone, otherwise issues cannot be addressed.

So far President Obama has made, at least in my opinion, a great number of good decisions on appointments. Primarily he has chosen individuals who are politically in the middle of the road and

are viewed as pragmatic and competent. Let's hope the era of staffing the government with third rate political hacks is over. The nation needs a government that provides the vital public services taxpayers are paying for, not an employment agency for ideologues.

Here at Local 587, your officers need your help. As most members are aware, a very small number of members regularly attend the

monthly membership meetings. We need a greater number of members to attend and participate at the regular monthly meetings. Who knows, you might win the pot draw. Last month I saw Claudia Girard at a work site visit before the Clallam meeting and she was not sure if she would attend but I urged her to come. She did and then won both the regular, as well as the rolling pot draw at the meeting.

## President's Report, continued

membership, are as follows:

The primary election will be held on the first King County/Metro payday in May and the General (or final election) will be held on the first Thursday in June.

The Local's Election Committee, consisting of three members plus an alternate, will in addition to election security also produce and distribute ballots, instructions and the voter's pamphlet.

In order to be nominated for any position, a member must either be present at the nomination meeting and accept the nomination or, if not present, submit to the Recording Secretary in writing a willingness to accept a nomination for a position

for which nominated, This must be received by the close of nominations at the last meeting in April or written self-nominations must be received by the Recording Secretary by the beginning of the last meeting of the Local in April.

Members may self-nominate at any of the meetings in April or written self-nominations must be received by the Recording Secretary by the beginning of the last meeting of the Local in April.

A member can only be placed in nomination for one position. The acceptance of any nomination automatically declines all prior nominations. If a candidate accepts a nomination and then declines that

nomination, she/he cannot again be nominated for that position.

Candidates' submissions to the voter's pamphlet must be submitted to the Union office no later than the close of business two days after the last meeting in the meeting cycle.

A ballot, instructions, a voter's pamphlet and double return envelopes will be mailed to the last known home address for each member in good standing at least 15 days before the ballots are due back.

A post office box shall be rented in the city of Seattle. Balloting shall be by mail with ballots due back in the post office box by the close of business at that post office on the day of the election. The ballots shall

be picked up from the post office at the close of business on the day of the election by the Recording Secretary, in the presence of at least one member of the Election Committee and any observers, and returned immediately to be counted in the presence of the membership.

In closing, once again, please make sure Local 587 and your employer have your current home address. Thanks!

Regards to All...  
Be Safe...  
Lance F. Norton  
President/  
Business Representative  
Local 587

# Out of Touch

Submitted by Ruth Wilson, North Base Operator

It is so unbelievable how out of touch King County Managers are with their customers and the true reality of what really goes on out on the street. When King County Metro Management allowed huge numbers of school kids to board buses with the commuting public I thought this was the worst decision I had witnessed in my 30 plus years working here.

But what happened on December 29,30,31<sup>st</sup> when managers in their infinite wisdom decided to declare regular working days "Partial Holidays" they really took the cake in not understanding their customers. Not only did they make this decision without proper notification; Christmas Eve? Yep, lots of riders to hear the notification on Christmas Eve, right? **WRONG!**

They also did not take into account all the people that actually work for a living. I wish these managers could have been out at Northgate Transit Center and watched the fury of the hundreds of

commuters being passed up by bus after bus because the buses were all overloaded before they even got to the Transit Center.

After these faithful commuters had endured 2 weeks of unreliable Metro service because of the snow I could just imagine how relieved they were to show up at the Transit Center Monday, after the Christmas holiday weekend, thankful their Metro buses would finally be on schedule. But, alas, those wise all-knowing managers decided it was more important to cancel forty five trips on the route 41, a major commuter route...**FORTY FIVE TRIPS!!!**

On a regular work day!!! Who in their right mind would do this? I can see canceling a select number but to cancel all trips like it was the Friday after a major holiday was outrageous and the riding public sure let the drivers know. Never in all my years here have I seen such angry furious passengers and I don't blame them for being angry. Many of us called the coordinators and went to our base

chiefs asking...**Begging...**for more trips to be added. But nothing was done. The mantra from management was that it was a "safety" issue.

What about the safety of trying to operate overloaded coaches stuffed with more passengers than reasonable because of compassionate drivers trying to accommodate the very frustrated passengers? I had a passenger fall and hurt her elbow while passengers were unloading from an overloaded coach at Convention Place.

She was trying to move to allow others to deboard. When pulling into stops downtown and trying to pick up passengers it was unbelievably unsafe as the hordes of passengers were so angry and anxious to get on the coach they were pushing and shoving and stepping off the curb. It was a nightmare and Metro is saying they are going to do this next year??? Absurd.

If they could have witnessed the passengers' faces as they begged to get on route 54 coach after route 54

coach, already was full at Virginia. It was painful to watch. And did those of you driving through the tunnel see all the dust pollution in University Street Station? It was unbelievable. I called the coordinator and he said he would have it investigated. A week went by with the dust only getting worse everyday.

I saw passengers covering their faces with cloth. When some of us went to our base chief to complain we were referred to as "Prima Donnas" by the chief. Again, proof they have no idea what the passengers and drivers were dealing with. What is going on with this company?

They are more concerned about patting themselves on the back for saving money by **NOT** providing quality service; oh, but they sure want to spend the money on their little toys like Orca, things that are a huge waste of money for the service they will provide the riding public. Lets get back to doing what we are mandated to do...**PROVIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.**

# Youth Election Night

Submitted by Michael Moore, Executive Board Officer

On November 4, 2008 a Historic Election took place in America. Most people will remember for rest of their lives, where and what they were doing at that time when it was announced Barack Obama would become the First African American elected President of the United States.

I was hosting Youth Election Night at the Royal Esquire club.

The Royal Esquire Club is the oldest African American non-profit social club west of the Mississippi. The Club's motto is to serve the community with integrity, pride, dignity, and to provide a place for social events and community gatherings. All men are welcome to apply for membership to the club but must be sponsored by a full member, there are also social memberships and anyone can be a social member, but you must agree to the rules and the principals of the club.

The Executive Board of the Royal Esquire voted to have Election night for a few dignitaries and members. The decision was brought before the full membership of the Royal Esquire to tell what the Board had decided to do on Election night. I suggested that we invite the community and have youth election night in our main hall, since their event was in one of the small rooms at the club. The Executive Board was against it but the full membership voted to amend the decision and hold the event in the main hall.

The President of the Royal Esquire asked who would be willing to help me with the event since I suggested it. No one volunteered, I found out later that the members did not want to watch a bunch of unruly kids, and wanted to play it safe

because they were afraid that they may start a fight or something.

So I did nothing, because without the support of the members what could I do alone?

The President contact me a few weeks before the event and ask me where was I with the event. I asked him how I could do it alone, without the support of the membership.

He said people are calling asking if we were doing something for the kids too, and could they bring their family members down. We had just two weeks before the event and nothing was planned, the president asked me

what would we need, I told him we would need at least three big screen TV's and a game system and some food and drinks for the kids. The President said that we could use the TV's in the sports lounge and he had a game system, and the kitchen crew can prepare the food and drinks. The President put the event on the web site and a few members said they would be willing to help.

I went to some of the high schools in the neighborhood and community centers, and posted up Flyers and talked to people about the Youth Election Night at the Royal Esquire

Club. On November 4, the club was full of people it was a wonderful night, people were hugging each other and crying because Barack Obama had won the Presidential Election the First African American to do so. I called my Aunt who is eighty years old and asked what were her thoughts, and she believed that we shall overcome some day and never thought for one moment that an African American would ever become President of the United States and she was glad to see it in her life time and she hoped that I never doubted it.

# Make Your Vote Count

The 2009 election of the ATU 587 Officers will be by MAIL-IN ballot election only. Therefore, for you to be able to vote; ATU 587 Election Committee ask that you please take the time to complete a personal update form at your work-site or email the Election Committee at [electioncommittee@ATU587.com](mailto:electioncommittee@ATU587.com) to update your address.

Because this is a mail-in ballot election, there are very tight deadlines and anyone choosing to run for office must pay close attention to these deadlines. Also all members need to mail their ballots in time for them to be RECEIVED at the designated election post office box by the date of the election. If a ballot is not received through the mail by the deadline it will not be counted. There is absolutely no provision for receiving hand delivered or late ballots.

We are using an outside contrac-

tor to count our ballots. This company is TrueBallot who are experts in providing election services to labor unions and other organizations. TrueBallot will be mailing out the ballots based on the mailing list provided by the ATU 587 Election Committee. TrueBallot will then generate and mail a secret ballot for each member based on his or her job classification and/or work unit. This technology will help us run a secure and accurate election, for example tracking each ballot to make sure not more than one ballot is counted per member. We will provide both a secret envelope to insert the ballot and a postage-paid (Business Reply) envelope to return the ballot by US Mail.

Please remember these following important dates:

Candidate instruction packets will be available during the March

Cycle of Union meetings.

Nominations will be accepted during the April cycle of Union meetings; the final date is Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> in Port Angeles.

Candidates' statements are due Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at the Union office before 5:00 PM. — **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Completed Ballots for the Primary Election must be received at the PO BOX by Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Many members made comments in the last *News Review* regarding how important it is to have good representation from our Union Officers in these days of economic uncertainty. Your part is to make sure your vote counts. And the first step is to have your correct mailing address. This will assure you receive your ballot.

Thanks...  
Your Election Committee