

# ATU Local 587 News Review

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VOL. XXXV, NO. 1

## The President's Report

by President,  
Paul J. Bachtel



### Social Media and the ATU

The Constitution and General Laws of the Amalgamated Transit Union were written to form a union based on pure democratic principles with local membership directing their officers through a monthly meeting cycle. Those few who chose to put forth motions during the monthly meeting cycle, run our Local from the floor of the meeting hall. It is pure democracy in action. It's not always pretty; occasionally the membership directs the Officers to take a particular position or action which does not reflect the greater will of the membership. Commonly, members vote on issues which do not affect their own classification but rather institute changes in a classification they know little about, such as Operators voting on a Vehicle Maintenance only issue. Nevertheless, as Officers, we must obey the directives of our membership given to us through our monthly meeting cycle.

If a particular issue is of such great importance, and we are aware it's coming to the forefront, we can poll the membership as is currently being done on an Operator senior-

ity issue. Internet polling through services such as Survey Monkey is the most affordable method of polling, but leaves out those who do not have internet access. Mail out polling, while more expensive, allows us to measure the will of the membership as a whole, a particular classification, or group of classifications. It is our most effective method of polling. In any form, polling allows your Local Officers to make decisions knowing they are enacting the will of the membership.

Our Recording Secretary is currently in the process of updating our webpage. It hasn't been updated since I built it in 2006, more than a lifetime for a webpage. One of the features we could add is the ability to individually login with an individual username and password. With individual login we could conduct polling via our own webpage, although again, that leaves out those who don't use computers and the internet.

I was surprised recently when one of our members, active in setting up Facebook group "King County/Metro ATU 587 employee forum," asked

me if I was upset with his actions. I answered no, far from it, it's the will of the membership I am seeking and Facebook is a wonderful tool to increase membership involvement and in doing so, measure its will. Another Facebook group, "Work Pals" has been instrumental in promoting the current Operator seniority issue. Social media networks such as Facebook are a perfect match for our ATU democracy. Please, take part in the online discussions or just read what's being discussed and please don't feel hesitant to contact a union officer to inquire about the meaning or intent of contract language. Disagree with the union office position? Good!! We learn far more from those who disagree than those who agree.

We are here serving you, you pay our salaries, and we want to implement your will. The best way for that to happen is for you to take part in the debate, offer your opinion, and direct your officers. You are the union!!

*In solidarity,  
Paul J. Bachtel, President  
Business Representative*



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**The Month at a Glance**

*Business of the Membership*

At the December 2011 cycle of membership meetings, the following business was addressed:

Motion: By Bill Clifford to purchase camping supplies and food for the Occupy Seattle not to exceed \$250.00.  
Motion carried.

Motion: By Clint DeVoss to proceed with charges against Brother Jordan Tchenev.  
Motion failed.

Motion: By Jason Leczo additionally, that for purpose of forced overtime Employees either at the Base or on the OBS Project shall be excluded from being forced to work at the other entity except in "extreme" emergencies as defined in the CBA.  
Motion carried.

**Note:** "Brother Leczo motion is in addition to the following motion: the that Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 587 (ATU) and its Officers are directed to notify King County and negotiate in good faith with King County involving overtime assignment in the On Board Systems (OBS) project Memoranda of Agreement (MOA). In negotiating in good faith with King County, ATU is further directed to seek a separation in the assignment of overtime between OBS project. Employees and Base Employees including Lead Employees to the extent that all Base Employees will be offered Base overtime

before Base overtime is offered to OBS project Employees and all OBS project overtime will be offered to OBS project Employees before being offered to Base Employees.

December pot draw winners are Dee Wakenight at the Charter meeting, Pam Thompson at the JTA meeting, Verita Alexander at the Afternoon meeting, Carlos Nufio at the morning meeting. Girard Claudia at the CTS meeting and next meeting the rolling pot will be \$175.00.

Congratulations to the following Holiday Turkey Draw Winners: David Earle, Karolyn Streck, Charles Miller, Chuck Lare, Rachel Price, Craig Anderson, Neal Safrin, Dan Santon, Jason Leczo, Osvaldo Fernandez, Jordan Tchenev, Gregg Running, Randy Steinman, Anthony Byers, Linda Anderson, Chris Burton, Darian Spence, Fiona Frisch, David Larabee, Carol Headley, Alice Lane, Troy McKelvey, Kyle Parrish, Ed Standard, Sandy Fangen, Kevin Erickson and Barbara Dixon.

*Executive Board Report*

December 27, 2011

The following officers were present: President Bachtel, Vice President MacAdam, Financial Secretary Neil, Recording Secretary Young, Linda Anderson, Eric Butler, Clint DeVoss, Bob Eash, Kermit Gipson, Ninus Hopkins, Andrew Jeromsky, Ray Mason, Chuck Miller, Michael Moore, Lisa Nault, Hal Poor, Neal Safrin, Michael Shea, Patrick Stevens; the following Officers were on vacation Vice President Sepolen, Ray Campbell, Dan Thorne and Dee Wakenight was out ill.

Motion: By Kermit Gipson to recommend that, membership pursues the grievance of Richard Wischman.

Motion: By Clint DeVoss to recommend that, the membership pursues the grievance of Mike Gallagher.

Motion: By Eric Butler to recommend that, the membership pursues the grievance of Symantha Cola.

Motion: By Paul Neil to set the grievance arbitration assessment at \$22.04 per member to be collected in 2012 for 2011 expenses.

Motion: By Judy Young that the Local, spend up to \$20,000.00 for the re-design of the Local website.

Motion: By Paul Neil to set the monthly dues At \$59.00 for members employed by public agencies.

Motion: By the Executive Board to maintain the current formula for Full-Time Officers salaries.

**Membership Meetings:  
Tentative Agenda**

**CHARTER MEETING**  
Thursday, January 5, 2012  
8:00 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #8  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**JEFFERSON TRANSIT**  
Monday, January 9, 2012  
7:00 p.m.  
Port Townsend Rec Center  
Port Townsend, WA

**MORNING MEETING**  
Friday, January 6, 2012  
10:30 a.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**CLALLAM TRANSIT**  
Tuesday, January 10, 2012  
7:00 p.m.  
Vern Burton Memorial Building  
Port Angeles, WA

**WEDNESDAY MEETING**  
Wednesday, January 11, 2012  
3:30 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**Among Topics to be Discussed:**  
Grievance and Arbitration Update  
**Unfinished Business:** None

**In Loving Memory...**

*"Love and desire are the spirit's wings to great deeds."*

~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

**Jeff Lindstedt**, a retired King County First Line Supervisor, passed away on December 20, 2011. Brother Lindstedt retired in September 1997. He joined the Local in August 1967.

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

ATU Local 587

**News Review**

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Vehicle Maintenance Position #1  
Vehicle Maintenance Position #2  
Vehicle Maintenance Position #3  
Facilities Maintenance  
Supervisors  
Special Classifications  
King County Units Outside KCM  
Transit Operator Position #1  
Transit Operator Position #2  
Transit Operator Position #3  
Transit Operator Position #4  
Transit Operator Position #5  
Transit Operator Position #6  
Transit Operator Position #7  
Transit Operator Position #8  
Clallam / Jefferson County  
Rail Representative

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KERMIT C. GIPSON JR.  
PATRICK STEVENS  
CLINT DE VOSS  
DAN THORNE  
MICHAEL SHEA  
ERIC BUTLER  
NINUS HOPKINS  
NEAL SAFRIN  
MICHAEL MOORE  
DEE WAKENIGHT  
LISA NAULT  
ANDREW JEROMSKY  
HAL POOR  
LINDA ANDERSON  
RAY MASON  
ROBERT EASH  
CHUCK MILLER

**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:

**Judy Young**  
c/o ATU Local 587  
News Review  
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, WA 98121

# January Labor History Calendar

Submitted by Bill Clifford

*Last January we looked at the genesis of the Seattle General Strike of 1919. This month we'll start looking more closely at events that involved Local 587 as we gear up to celebrate our 100th year representing transit workers in the Puget Sound area. If you have any interesting material or memories about 587's history, please contact me via the ATU 587 office.*

**1950**—Contract demands of ATU 587, included changing work week from 6 days on/2 days off to 6 days on/3 days off with same monthly pay guarantee, 3 weeks of vacation after one year, guaranteed holidays for all employees and across-the-board wage increases for all classifications. (*The Challenger*, Jan 1950, p 1)

**1 Jan**

**1966**— In a biannual ritual, New York Transit Workers' Union president Mike Quill routinely got a strike authorization vote for the end of TWU's contract on Jan 1. Traditionally, as transit-dependent NY revelers set out for their New Year's Eve parties, Quill would emerge from the proverbial smoke-filled room with NY's current mayor for a photo op, saving the day (with an agreement they had worked out weeks in advance). In 1966, Republican Mayor John Lindsay refused to play along. 35,000 transit workers struck at 8:02 AM, in a strike called jointly by TWU and ATU. The transit authority got an injunction against the strike that same day, calling for the arrest of its leaders by Jan 4. ATU leaders, John Rowland, William Magnus, and Frank Kleess were among the 8 arrested although TWU leader and founder Mike Quill was soon released to a hospital. On Jan 10, 15,000 strike supporters picketed city hall. Mike Quill was released from the hospital on Jan 25 but died on Jan 28.

**2 Jan**

**1806**—In *The Commonwealth v. George Pullis*, eight Cordwainers (journeymen shoemakers) in Phila-

delphia were convicted of conspiring to raise their wages. The court explicitly sided with the employers and fined each of the defendants \$8 plus the cost of the lawsuit.

**3 Jan**

**1917**—Tom Mooney trial for San Francisco Preparedness Day bombing. Mooney had been an organizer for the streetcar union in San Francisco (now ATU). His brother, also a streetcar union officer, helped coordinate his defense. See Jan 7.

**6 Jan**

**1878**—Carl Sandburg, born in Galesburg, Illinois. American poet, historian, novelist and folklorist and labor organizer.

**7 Jan**

**1939**—Tom Mooney, a labor activist wrongly convicted of murder in the San Francisco Preparedness Day bombing in July 1916, was freed after 22 1/2 years in jail on false charges, granted an unconditional pardon by Governor Culbert Olson. By the time of his release, Mooney's unjust imprisonment made him one of the four best-known Americans in the world (along with FDR, Charles Lindbergh and Henry Ford). He enjoyed his fame only briefly, as he left prison in poor health and died only three years later. He spent those three years working for the releases of his codefendant (Warren Billings) and other political prisoners.

**8 Jan**

**2012**—Full moon. Scientists say a full moon has little effect on people. Tell that to the people who think it does. Be careful, as always.

**11 Jan**

**1946**—ATU 587 began a 4-day strike that gained Seattle the highest hourly wage in urban transit history. Strike committee members won national recognition for the humanitarianism, particularly for their transportation of nurses,

doctors and other critical workers in private cars. (*The Challenger*, Jan 1950.)

**13 Jan**

**1966**—NY Mayor John Lindsay capitulated to 35,000 striking TWU and ATU employees. Mediation resulted in a settlement 13 worth \$60 million, including a raise from \$3.18 to \$4.14/hour and pension improvements. This was the first test for the new Republican reform mayor, John Lindsay. By the time Lindsay ran for reelection in 1969 he had made peace with the city's public sector unions.

**14 Jan**

**1914**—IWW leader and songwriter Joe Hill arrested in Salt Lake City for the murder of a grocer. Scholar William Adler has recently produced evidence that Salt Lake Police had the murderer—who resembled Hill and had both a motive and a long criminal history—in custody, but chose to prosecute Hill because of recent major successes by the IWW in Utah. Hill was executed 21 months later despite international appeals for a stay of execution. Among his last words, "Don't mourn—Organize!"

**1945**—Seattle Labor School began classes at the Central School Building (7th and Madison). The Labor School also intended to coordinate the classes already taught by some affiliated locals in their own buildings via its extension service. Its board included UW professors, religious leaders and members of the Seattle Library Board. Among the classes offered were public speaking, parliamentary procedure, labor history, medical care and public health, propaganda analysis, interracial action and workshops in the arts. ATU 587 was represented by its newsletter editor, Fred R. Carlson. In 1948 Educational Director Ralph Gundlach was embroiled in the infamous Canwell hearings at the

UW. Gundlach was blacklisted and his wife, pioneering modern dancer Bonnie Bird from Cornish School of the Arts, moved to New York. The Labor School folded in 1949.

**17 Jan**

**1915**—Lucy Parsons (widow of 1886 Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons) led hunger march in Chicago, which featured the debut of Seattle songwriter Ralph Chaplin's famous labor song, "Solidarity Forever".

When the union's inspiration through worker's blood shall run,  
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun;

Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,  
For the union makes us strong.  
[Chorus]: Solidarity forever,  
Solidarity forever,  
Solidarity forever,  
**For the union makes us strong**

**1962**—Public sector unions received a boost in 1962 when President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10988, granting bargaining rights to federal employees. The pace of organizing among all public sector unions subsequently accelerated. EO 10988 was drafted by Ida Krauss who was earlier involved in drafting NYC's EO 49, achieving the same rights for municipal employees in NYC in 1958 and establishing a pattern for public employee labor rights. With conservatives now focusing their attacks on public sector unions, it's worth remembering why unions such as ATU 587 were created in the first place and how we have achieved the rights and benefits we have won.

**25 Jan**

**2012**—"Casino Women: Courage in Unexpected Places," Author Jill Jones, University of Nevada, looks at the female face of corporate gaming. Location: University Bookstore, 4326 University Way, N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105. 7pm-9pm

## Arbitration Update

- Ray Beltran:** Grieved forced upgrade. Settlement discussions underway.
- Christopher McClure:** Grieved suspension for alleged negligence in derailment, scheduled for February 28, 2012.
- Frederic Segelbaum:** Grieved termination for alleged gross misconduct, schedule pending.
- Thomas Miller:** Grieved failure of Metro to upgrade a Mechanic to Lead enabling skimming of Local 587 work by a Local 587 member working in a Local 17 capacity, schedule pending.
- Ernest Kirschnick:** Grieved termination for alleged violation of Metro policy, schedule pending.

## The COPE Report

Submitted by Sara Franklin

On Monday, January 9, 2012 the Washington State Legislative session will convene and is scheduled to last 60 days. Although a Special Session was called by the Governor in late November 2011 to address the state's budget crisis and how to reduce the \$1.2 billion deficit, the difficult task of trimming the budget further will continue during the regular session. When the Special Session adjourned on December 14<sup>th</sup> only \$480 million in cuts had been made. Anticipated deep cuts to education and public safety were temporarily spared, but the question remains will or can the cuts go any deeper? We will soon know the answer when Legislators return to Olympia in a few days.

The Transportation budget is separate from the General budget. In

order to address the specific needs of transportation, and by extension public transit, the Governor assembled a 30 member task force last summer called "Connecting Washington". They were specifically charged with developing a 10-year investment and funding plan addressing the statewide transportation system and present its recommendations to the 2012 Legislature. The purpose is to give the Legislature options to improve and maintain our current system. (Stay tuned for a list of those recommendations and the subsequent actions of your Legislators).

On November 29, PR Committee Chair Linda Anderson and I gave public testimony at the Connecting Washington Task Force meeting in

*continued on page 12*

# Letter from Metro Transit General Manager, Kevin Desmond



**King County**  
 Department of Transportation  
 Metro Transit Division  
 General Manager's Office  
 201 S. Jackson Street  
 KSC-TR-0415  
 Seattle, WA 98104-3856

December 13, 2011

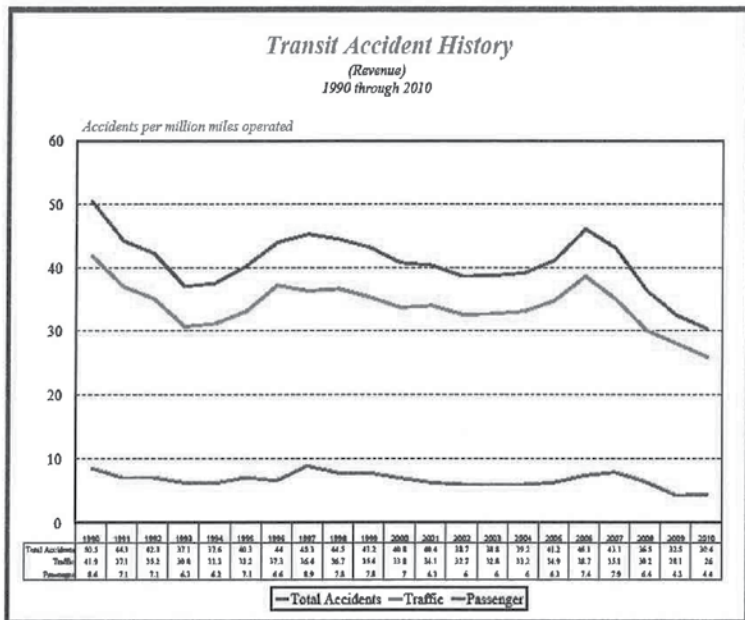
Paul Bachtel  
 President  
 Local 587  
 2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
 Seattle, WA 98121

Dear Paul,

I am writing in response to your article "Operator Fatigue" in the December issue of the ATU 587 newsletter. I would like to address some of the issues you raised from my perspective and let you know how Metro intends to address them.

I realize that the scheduling efficiencies project, mandated by the Council in the 2010 budget following the 2009 performance audit, has been a significant challenge for our fine Metro Transit Operators. The 2009 performance audit critiqued Metro for not managing our system to a level more consistent with other transit agencies. Metro had some of the longest average layovers in comparison with other properties. As a result, the County Council directed Metro to eliminate some \$12.5M in annual operating costs (125,000 hours) without cutting service for our customers. We did that carefully and methodically with constant monitoring and calibration. While a number of our service efficiency indicators have improved, on-time performance has declined somewhat in part as a result of these changes. Ridership has increased as well during 2011, adding another impact to schedule reliability, layover times and operator breaks.

It is clearly in our interest, as well as yours, to have schedules that are workable for drivers and that provide quality service for our customers. Consistent with the principles adopted by the Regional Transit Task Force and our new Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines, the County Executive proposed to make significant improvements in schedules in June 2012 by reinvesting 40,000 hours from service cuts. These schedule changes will prioritize service quality and a reduction in overcrowding where that is a problem. The following routes are designated for these investments: 5, 7, 8, 16, 21, 24, 27, 31, 33, 39, 43, 48, 49, 57, 60, 66, 68, 71, 72, 105, 106, 113, 119, 120, 121, 122, 124, 128, 150, 166, 169, 181, 182, 187, 205, 209, 224, 240, 255, 309, 311, 330, 358, and 373. These improvements are valued at approximately \$2.2 million annually. While I wish we were implementing these changes sooner, the process for identifying route cancellations and trip cuts takes time to work through the public process because the service reductions require Council approval.



Year-to-date 2011 statistics through October show total accidents at 31.1, traffic accidents at 25.9 and passenger accidents at 5.2 per million miles – a 6% overall increase, but still below historical trends. In addition, we have analyzed accidents by route and have seen no correlation between routes on which scheduling efficiencies have been implemented and increased accident rates. We will continue to monitor these statistics.

Finally, your comments about health concerns are well-taken. As you are well aware, King County's pioneering health plan has saved a lot of money over the past few years; and we do not want to perpetuate situations which will increase our costs in the future.

Together with ATU, we established the joint labor/management Scheduling Committee in the labor agreement as a response to concerns about scheduling changes. We have been sharing information with ATU about upcoming changes. We have responded to some issues as they have come up and reinvested annual savings of \$1.8M into some of

I would also like to respond to some of the other assertions in your article.

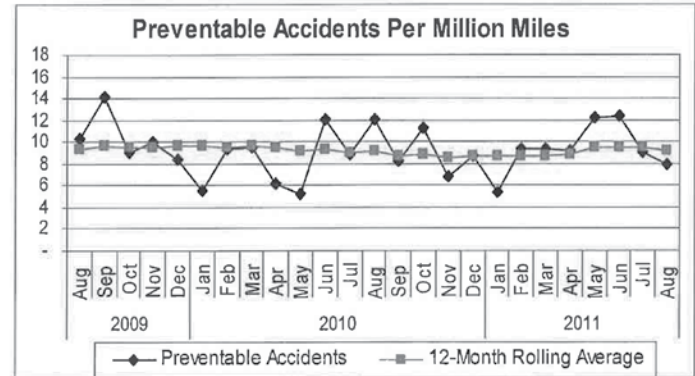
While you state that "Base planners report far fewer full-time operators seeking overtime," our statistics show that the number of overtime assignments for full-time operators rose steadily over the summer shake-up, the most recent period for which we have data. The number of assignments worked by ATL operators also rose, though at a slower rate. This is, in part, due to another audit recommendation that we use our existing workforce more, because incurring more benefit costs by hiring new operators is actually getting more expensive than using existing operators at overtime.

Despite your focus on September's year-to-year statistic, the long term trends on preventable accidents remain in good shape. While there can be big swings from month to month, the rolling 12 month average for preventable accidents per million miles has been quite stable during the past 2 years.

I would also like to respond to some of the other assertions in your article.

While you state that "Base planners report far fewer full-time operators seeking overtime," our statistics show that the number of overtime assignments for full-time operators rose steadily over the summer shake-up, the most recent period for which we have data. The number of assignments worked by ATL operators also rose, though at a slower rate. This is, in part, due to another audit recommendation that we use our existing workforce more, because incurring more benefit costs by hiring new operators is actually getting more expensive than using existing operators at overtime.

Despite your focus on September's year-to-year statistic, the long term trends on preventable accidents remain in good shape. While there can be big swings from month to month, the rolling 12 month average for preventable accidents per million miles has been quite stable during the past 2 years.



Additionally, we are in a period of historic low accident rates, which is a credit to our excellent workforce.

the routes with the worst on-time performance in the system last June (Routes 7/49, 8, 10/12, 16, 60, 120, 164/168, 224/251, and 358). Investment targets were influenced by feedback from your representatives on the Scheduling Committee. I believe this committee is the best and most constructive forum to address these issues.

We are also listening to operator concerns; and we do realize that it is frustrating to have to wait long periods for needed changes to occur. Over the next two years, we hope to reshape the system to be better designed to meet customer and operator needs in line with the principles agreed to by the Regional Transit Task Force. I believe our interests are aligned with yours; and I hope we can continue to work together to achieve the necessary changes. I'm willing to meet with you at any time to discuss the problems you hear about in our continuing effort to balance improved service quality with improved efficiency.

Sincerely,  
  
 Kevin Desmond,  
 General Manager  
 Metro Transit Division

- cc: Jim O'Rourke, Manager, Operations Section, Metro Transit Division, Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Jon Bez, Supervisor of Scheduling, Service Development Section, Metro Transit Division, DOT
- Linda R. Anderson, Badge 5730, M.S. CBA-TR-0100
- Ray H. Campbell, Badge 1750, M.S. SBA-TR-0100

## Rail Operator of the Shakeup

Chuck Miller was named 'Rail Operator of the Shakeup' for the Spring 2011 Shakeup. Chuck was presented with a certificate, a polo shirt denoting the award, and a day off of his choosing with pay, at an Employee Appreciation Day Luncheon on December 8, 2011.



Chuck Miller

Chuck Miller, 3363, has been an Operator with Metro since March, 1991. He was selected 'Operator of the Month' at Atlantic Base in June 1999. He moved from East Base to Link Rail in January, 2009. He represents all ATU 587 members at Link and Streetcar as the Ex-

ecutive Board Officer for Rail. This was the first time there has been a "Rail Operator of the Shakeup." Link Rail managers plan to continue the program and are currently soliciting nominations for 'Rail Operator of the Shakeup' for the Summer 2011 Shakeup.

# Maintaining Fairness In Our Union

Submitted by East Base Transit Operator David Freed

“Fairness.” That seems to be the watch-word when discussing seniority rights. But after reading the recent discussions on our seniority policy in the November 2011 *News Review* and the statements “for” or “against” a recent ballot to modify the current policy, “fairness” has no real meaning. It is only part of the Union’s propaganda to persuade us that they have not betrayed our trust. But as a Part-Timer, it is painfully clear that the Union considers us second-class members, who must always bow to the greedy demands of some Full-Timers. Indeed, the current seniority policy has gone so far adrift from the general idea of fairness that even full-time operators should be alarmed at the precedence the Union is setting. Like politicians, who give promises of pursuing the general welfare of all, but in the end dole out favors to special interest groups, our Union has caved in to the “wants” of certain members to the point of undermining the seniority system.

So what is this policy that undermines our seniority? In a nutshell, once you have your “ticket punched” as a Full-Timer, it is possible to transfer between the various classifications, enjoy the benefits of each, and return to any previous one as though you never left it. In other words, you can climb the ladder of any seniority list without actually “working” all the time in that classification. That’s a pretty sweet deal! But alas, I don’t think most members would call it a “fair deal.”

So how do we fix this flawed policy? I think we must first establish an acceptable definition of

“fairness” within the context of our work. From that point, we can generate a clear principle for instituting a seniority policy that is truly fair. But before we do this, let’s review the pros and cons of full-time work vs. part-time work. This will help us arrive at a clearer picture of what most believe is fair.

Starting with the pros of full-time work: full employment with full benefits; ample opportunities for OT; rapid wage increases; better job security; and opportunities to advance into other positions like supervisor and rail/streetcar operator. The cons of full-time: demanding work hours; must work weekends and holidays; difficult routes because of traffic and unsavory passengers. Now for the pros of part-time work: reasonable work hours; weekends and major holidays off; partial benefits and possibly full benefits; on average, less stressful routes with more congenial passengers. As for the cons of part-time: perpetual underemployment and partial benefits with low seniority; limited and fluctuating opportunities to work more hours; 6 years to reach the top of wage scale; more susceptible to layoffs; no advancement opportunities beyond full-time; and paying the same amount of union dues while earning less.

Full-Timers often speak of “paying their dues,” which, as I understand them, means they have served their time doing the undesirable work and have put in the years of being faithful employees—therefore they should now receive preferential treatment over others who have done less. With

this sentiment, I’m in complete agreement. But sometimes they use the phrase, “paid their dues,” as though it endows them with the right to determine how much others can receive from their employer, i.e. what Part-Timers are allowed to have in hours, wages, and benefits. But is this reasonable? Who endowed them with this right? If they think it is a matter of fairness, were they not paid for all the hours they worked? Didn’t they receive all the benefits of being full-time? And most important, as their seniority increased, did not the downside of being full-time slowly dissipate, so that there are fewer cons remaining? In my mind, they don’t need to play martyrs any longer, because many of them have reached the promise land, and can now have weekends off and more pleasant work. In short, the various cons of being full-time don’t remain forever.

But what of Part-Timers and the downside of their classification? For almost our entire membership, *the cons remain forever*. Yes, we can pick better work and gain a few more hours each shake-up, but unless you put in 20 years, you remain perpetually underemployed. And it is at this juncture we encounter the greatest duplicity among Full-Timers. For many infer that the cons of being full-time represents a greater hardship than the cons of being part-time. But in practice, we all know this is not true. For most Union members, being underemployed is worse than the temporary cons that Full-Timers must endure. This is evident by how many Part-Timers would like to become full-time, but can’t because they have yet to be given the opportunity or because personal limitations and obligations prevent them from doing so. Conclusion, Part-Timers also “pay their dues” by living with the problem of being underemployed while putting in the years of being faithful employees. Therefore they deserve preferential treatment over others who have done less than them *with regards to the downside of being part-time*.

Based on the facts I have reviewed and the prevalent disposition among Union members, defining “fairness” is not so difficult after all. For a person to have preferential treatment within his classification, he must be *putting in his time and working with the downside of that classification*, and thereby progressing up the seniority ladder. By doing this, he has earned the incremental right to have better options with regards to work assignments. But what of this current policy? According to it, a person who was full-time for five years, but only part-time for two, can return to the part-time classification with 7 years of seniority credit. That’s five extra years without actually serving with the downside of being part-time. Instead of *putting in his time being underemployed, he was fully employed*, but now gets 5 years more credit as though he had worked under the same conditions as the rest of that classification. *That is truly unfair!* Indeed, the recent ballot for changing the policy has been instigated by Full-Timers who have realized this scenario can be reversed, to the detriment of those who stayed full-time without interruption.

We have been asked to keep our options open as Union members. I agree with that sentiment. But not to produce options that essentially *gives to one member what he has NOT earned while taking away from another person what he has earned*. For a bureaucrat, the few people involved in the current policy is statistically insignificant. But for a Part-Timer, who is on the threshold of getting full benefits and/or the necessary time period to keep his second job, having one or two people inserted before him in seniority can be financially devastating. The Union is not a charity. It exists to maintain fairness. Let every person *earn* his or her seniority in every classification *by the time spent in each classification*. In short, a person can keep his or her former seniority, but it should be based on the time spent under that classification, and not some magical starting date that no longer has anything to do with “paying their dues.”



## AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 587

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CONFERENCE BOARD  
AMALGAMATED  
TRANSIT UNION  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY  
COALITION OF UNIONS

### Bulletin

December 14, 2011  
REVISED

**To:** Local 587 Members employed as Transit Operators by King County Metro  
**From:** Paul J. Bachtel, President / Business Representative  
**Subject:** Schedule Appreciation Day (SAD)

Local 587 is requesting your cooperation in demonstrating to King County Metro and our King County Council representatives how much we “appreciate” our unworkable schedules. Beginning in January 2012, and continuing throughout the coming year, Local 587 will be designating the Friday that follows the first Thursday of the month as “Schedule Appreciation Day”, or (more appropriately) “SAD” for short.

We chose the SAD schedule so that it corresponds with our monthly Charter meeting schedule, which calls for the Charter meeting to be held the first Thursday of each month. Presuming you attend the Charter meeting on that Thursday you may find yourself needing some rest the next day and therefore unable to work the SAD day. In an effort to maintain the highest levels of safety you may choose to call in sick.

You could also use these SAD days to schedule those doctor and/or dentist appointments you may have been putting off, taking the opportunity to utilize some of your hard earned sick leave accruals.

This suggestion from Local 587 is not a “work action” in the sense we intend to anger our passengers and/or public (who may very well be voting to approve long-term funding for transit in the near future). Rather, it’s intended as a wake-up call for those who don’t fully understand what it’s like having to forego using the restroom because your overly tight schedule has caused you to be late arriving to the terminal and thus faced with a large group of intending passengers who are now late to *their* intended destination (work or school or elsewhere).

Those of you without sick leave accruals or with challenged attendance records may decide it’s not in your best personal interest to participate in this demonstration of our appreciation. I hope to see the rest of you at the Charter meeting on January 5, 2012 (and the first Thursday of each subsequent month).

opeiu8afficio

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# Letters to the Editor...

## 587 Facebook

*Hello Brothers and Sisters,*

The time has finally come to put Facebook to better use than posting pictures from the last vacation. It is time for us to come together and discuss the issues that affect us every day on the job and in our union. A virtual bullpen and union meeting rolled into one. So the King County/Metro ATU 587 employee forum was formed.

We are here to support each other, answer questions, get out important information quickly, and maybe give a new perspective on your job. We want ALL classifications in the hope that as a whole we will be stronger in understanding each other and become one voice like never before.

We ARE NOT the place to discuss political philosophy, religious doctrine, or campaign for union office. Please feel free to post your thoughts, questions, or complaints while being respectful of each other.

This is a closed group only open to King County/Metro ATU 587 employees, current and retired (Metro management is NOT welcome). The forum is being run independent of the union and is not accountable to them or the officers.

You can reach us through Facebook. In the search bar, type in 'King' and you will see 'King County/Metro ATU 587 employee forum.' Click on it and on the next screen click 'ask to join.' A group administrator will ok the request as soon as possible. This is necessary to keep it a closed group. Now you are in and able to join the discussions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Together we can become one, ATU 587.

*In solidarity,  
The ATU 587 Forum  
David Farham  
Bellevue Base operator ID # 3932  
8750 NE 140th PL  
Kirkland 98034*

### 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:

**Judy Young**  
News Review Editor  
c/o ATU Local 587  
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, WA 98121

## Bathroom Breaks

In the September/October 2011 edition of "In Transit", the glossy magazine we all get from ATU in Washington, D.C (www.atu.org), there were two articles on Transit Operators and our bathroom breaks.

On December 09, 2011 I received a copy of an email/e-newsletter from ATU in Washington, D.C. (www.info@atu.org) with a two paragraph item titled, "ATU, TWU Join Forces to Fight Against Assault, for Adequate Bathroom Breaks".

I was glad to see this. I've been fighting with Metro on this issue since the middle of July. After two meetings with North Base Chief Barry Samet, on Friday, July 22, 2011 he presented me with a letter that said I could be charged with insubordination and theft of Metro funds if I continued to use the restroom at the Aurora Village Transit Center, at the end of my last Revenue Run, before returning to North base. The letter also said that I could go to the restroom at the end of my last Revenue Run at AVTC, provided I logged of the clock for that time and didn't include it in my entry on the daily overtime sheet. He then deducted one hour and 48 minutes from the previous nine days of that pay period.

I have been following that directive ever since, under "obey and grieve". A grievance was filed in a timely manner, and in the First Step Summary from Metro they agreed to pay me for all time spent at the end of my last Revenue Run at AVTC except for the time needed to go to and fro and in the restroom.

In my first meeting in July with Barry Samet he wondered why I couldn't "hold it" until I returned to North base, since it would only be 12 minutes longer? I said that by the time I reached the AVTC it had already been one hour 30 minutes since my last pee break opportunity, and that I could not wait that additional time. As a matter of fact, many times I had already been "holding it" for the 30 minutes before I even arrived at AVTC. His response to this was, "Well maybe this isn't the job for you."

I've been using the restroom at the end of my last Revenue Run since Spring Shake-up 2010 from Central Base when I did a last Revenue Run outbound #26 to Green Lake and would park and walk to the Starbucks and use the restroom before returning to Central Base.

Fall Shake-up 2010 North Base last Revenue Run #67 outbound to Northgate Transit Center, used restroom at NTC before returning to North Base.

Spring Shake-up 2011 last Revenue Run inbound #41 and I'd use restroom at Central Base before returning to North Base. By the way,

when I was doing this PM Storage Tripper #41 that I found on two different days bags of what appeared to be urine on the bus most likely left from the previous Operator.

It wasn't until the Summer Shake-up 2011 when I was doing the outbound #373 to AVTC that Metro made an issue of my having to go to the bathroom, and being compensated for it.

Here it is Fall Shake-up 2011 and I have an outbound #358 to AVTC. Most days it takes around an hour, so I'm able to "hold it" until I return to North Base, where I use the restroom, and I declare that time on my entry for daily overtime. Metro pays me to use the restroom at North Base, why is Metro not willing to compensate me at AVTC?

To my knowledge, I am the only Operator who is having to follow what I call the "Metro Mandate" of having to "log-off" at the end of my last Revenue Run to use the restroom before returning to Base.

I can be reached at North Base.

*Doug Frechin  
13467/Shop Steward/PTO*

## Ni en Defensa Propria

(not even in self defense)

It is believed in some circles that to be smeared in print is a form of flattery. I read Brother Jim Russell's Letter to the Editor in the December newsletter with amusement. Not only did he misquote me, but he went so far as to call me a liar. Given that the whole hullabaloo of the Operator seniority question has resulted in a referendum vote (hope all affected remembered to return their ballot), I felt compelled to correct the misinformation.

### I Stand Accused

In his Letter to the Editor Brother Russell states, "A former recording secretary, describing this invasion threat of part-timers, clearly implied that 55 of them could move from part-time to full-time, using their years of part-time seniority... But she lied." Brother Russell's letter then went off on a path I found hard to follow.

### What Got Left Out

Mr. Russell not only misquoted this former Recording Secretary, but he also left out about ¾ of what I actually said. What I actually said at the November Charter meeting was that according to pick records, just in the period from 1998 to the present, there were 55 instances of people moving from Part-time to Full-time and then returning to Part-time. That was 55 potential instances of people being able to move back to Full-time with unearned

seniority, and just since 1998. I went on to say that this information did not indicate how many of those 55 people were still working here.

President Bachtel stated that according to Union office records there are only eight such individuals who could move into Full-time, and I quote Brother Russell directly "using their years of part-time seniority." I believe President Bachtel stated that this number did not include the three individuals that just returned to Full-time in October. These three individuals slid into the Full-time seniority list as if they had never left. Two of the three had been Full-time Transit Operators back in the '80s, prior to the Union office's ability to track such events. And that was part of my point, which Brother Russell forgot to mention.

At the November Charter meeting I questioned the accuracy of the Union office records but was not able to continue the discussion further to determine how the Union office arrived at their information. Pick records within the Union office were not tracked in the same manner prior to this particular former Recording Secretary taking office in 1998, in fact, there is very little such information. I doubt they can produce such information without a lot of tedious and unnecessary work.

### 8, 80, or 800

Bottom line, it doesn't really matter what the number is. The point of contention is what it means to "earn seniority." Over 1,500 Full-time Transit Operators have made the conscious choice over the years to remain Full-time and climb up the seniority ladder, doing all the difficult and undesirable low seniority work to some day earn the right to pick more desirable runs, days off and vacation, and thus enjoy the fruits of their labor. Even one person "cutting the line" as it were, is a slap in the face of those who worked hard to get where they are.

Almost 500 people signed a petition objecting to this change allowing former Full-time Operators who returned to Part-time to "cut back in the line" as if they had never left. The key objection was the

*continued on page 7*

### 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*

# Letters to the Editor...

manner in which it was put into the contract, without the membership's full understanding of the impacts of this change. And that was 500 signatures obtained through a haphazard and largely uncoordinated effort. Certainly far more people attended the November meetings to discuss this, not counting the Vehicle Maintenance members who attended to flog their own.

But I started all this simply to correct the record, not to argue the issue. I did not lie. Brother Russell either misunderstood or did not clearly hear everything I said, or deliberately chose to ignore ¾ of it.

Lastly, allow me to point out one small factoid that has gone unnoticed thus far.

### Loose Lips Sink Ships

This whole seniority debacle would not have erupted in this manner had one person not felt compelled to brag about their seniority windfall. Loudly and across several days, one individual proclaimed their good fortune to any and all. One of the people in this individual's audience came to me to ask if this person was correct, were they truly getting seniority they did not earn, and if so, how did this happen. That is what started this ball rolling.

And now you know...the rest of the story.

*Jennie Gil*  
North Base Operator / ID# 1925

### Early Retirement

*Hi Paul,*

I just read your "President's report" in the December newsletter and thought I'd send you this comment.

1) Impossible schedules to keep. I was driving routes 71,72,73 through the tunnel; at overload on virtually every trip, and always late. In my last shakeup the run card gave me one minute more time to do a local outbound on the 73 than it gave me to do my previous outbound express trip on the freeway. Obviously impossible to do-I was often as much as 45 minutes late, and I rarely got through an evening without some verbal abuse from a passenger for being late.

2) A customer comment/feedback system that only values negative information. An example: During one recent month I got three commendations and one complaint. The commendations were barely acknowledged and, in terms of how that positive customer feedback affects an operator's employment, meaningless. The complaint was from a car driver who followed my bus into an intersection and then when the bus stopped on the other side of the intersection for some reason, a jaywalker, traffic, who knows, he was stuck in the intersection as the light turned red, so he filed a complaint that I was driving carelessly and Chief Margo Minnix sustained the complaint as careless driving-a serious determination that placed me one step down a path to termination. This is not how a well managed organization demonstrates that it values its employees. I had no preventable accidents in the previous eight years and my last ride check supervisor noted in his comments that I was an exceptionally skillful operator.

3) Poor security. Metro really doesn't give a damn, beyond lip service, about driver and passenger security. I was driving a route 73 express inbound when an intoxicated passenger loudly announced he was going to come up and punch me in the face. We had exchanged no

words nor had any other conflict. He just thought this would be amusing. I ignored him, as we drivers usually do-hoping the problem would go away, but he increased the loud threats: He was going to come up and punch (profanity) bus driver in the face. He was going to hit this (profanity) bus driver so hard he was going to knock him out. I called it in to the control center. The coordinator told me to stop and open all the doors. I stopped at the bus zone at Eastlake & Lynn, opened the doors, and announced we would be delayed a few minutes. The guy announced that since the bus was stopped he'd come up and knock my ass out now. So here he comes down the aisle. He's thirty years younger and bigger than me.

I got out of the seat and faced him, He grabbed my shoulder with his left hand and drew back his right arm to punch me. I grabbed the front of his shirt with both hands and dragged him out the front door and threw him to the side--then hopped back on the bus to close the door behind me. He was laying unconscious on the sidewalk. I hit the Emergency Alarm and called for an ambulance.

Ten minutes after my first call the police arrived. It took at least five minutes for the ambulance. Meanwhile I have the coordinator ordering me to get witness statements, passenger witnesses who were seated three feet away telling me they seen nothing; others yelling at me for knocking the guy out; one passenger actually got in my face; others were angry because they were being delayed and yelling at me. It was a zoo! I stopped a passing bus and transferred most of the passengers. They stepped over the guy's body as they exited the coach.

Three passengers stayed and gave statements in my favor. There

was also a camera recording for later review. And later another passenger sent in a comment of support for me and chastising Metro for not supporting the drivers and noting that she sees disruptions on the 71 routes all the time. The supervisor who responded was one of the good ones and he was helpful in advising me as to the best way to fill out the security incident report. We both knew that if the guy was seriously injured or dead Metro would sell me out in a heartbeat. The guy was still unconscious when they took him away to the hospital. I went home hoping he wouldn't die. Apparently he lived because I never heard anything about this incident again.

I returned to driving that route and while doing so I noted just how much verbal abuse and stress I tolerated everyday; most of it over the schedule. In your recent newsletter report you mentioned the extreme workplace stress that is imposed on operators now. I'll add that stress is cumulative and most drivers have accumulated the health diminishing effects of it far more than they realize.

To get through the workday an operator ignores the stress, refuses to acknowledge the stress, but it still takes its physical toll. I can tell you that after six months of not driving the bus I have lost weight without trying and my back no longer hurts. Google "transit operator stress" for an eye opener. After a few days, I researched my Social Security and PERS retirement benefits and, although it cost me a good deal of money in reduced benefits, I resigned my job. I decided that life is too short to put up with abuse, from Metro and passengers alike, if I have an alternative that allows me to live in a less stressful, more healthy manner.

*Maynard N. Jackson*

## So, Are You Thinking Of Running For Office?

The 2012 Officer Election will be here before we know it. Your Election Committee wants to be sure that every ATU Local 587 Union member interested in running for office in this election has all of the information they will need to participate.

All full time Officer and Executive Board positions will be open in this election. All Union members who have two years union membership in good standing may run for office.

The Election season officially starts with the Notice of Elections and Nominations letter. This letter will be sent to each Local 587 Union member at the most current address the Union office has on file. The letter will be mailed out on approximately January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. *It is important that each member keep their mailing address current and notify both their employer and the Local 587 office of any changes!* If you have

not received the Notice of Election and Nominations letter by the third week of January, please contact the Union office to verify that the Union has your current and correct address on file.

Those members who are considering running for office need to know a whole lot of stuff. We, the Election Committee are here to make sure that you get the information you need. We will be putting together Candidate Information Packets for all interested members. This packet contains important information that all potential candidates should know. This includes the special rules concerning union elections that candidates must follow. It provides information on the nominations procedure and nominations schedule. It provides information about the procedures for setting up a direct mail of campaign literature to members by candidates. It also provides instructions on how

to submit a candidate statement and photo for the Voter's Pamphlet, which the Election Committee will be mailing to all union members.

Election Committee members will be available during each of the five February cycle of meetings, starting with the Charter meeting on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will have the Candidate Information Packets available, and we will be happy to answer any questions

that our fellow union members may have about becoming a candidate for officer election.

See you there!  
**Your 2012 Election Committee**  
Alana Sorem  
Teri Allen  
Heather Raleigh  
Paul Tefft

*ElectionCommittee@atu587.com*

### Mission Statement

- To have a fair, impartial, and secure election for our membership by:
- **Complying with the requirements of the US Department of Labor, our ATU International Constitution and Local 587 Bylaws;**
  - **Upholding election rules and standards;**
  - **Educating the membership throughout the election process;**
  - **Providing reasonable opportunities for members to nominate candidates;**
  - **Ensuring fairness of campaigning; and**
  - **Conducting a transparent, accurate and timely count of the mailed ballots.**

## Vice President Sepolen's Report

By Rick Sepolen



# Workplace Conflict and Relationships

This is the first of two articles directed at Shop Stewards. These articles are the result of incidents that have occurred at bases throughout the King County Metro system.

The two topics are: Workplace Conflict and Workplace Bullying.

### Workplace Conflict

Not all conflict that stewards handle is with management. Conflict can arise within the union, too—within leadership circles, disputes with members, and clashes among different constituency groups within the union. How a steward responds can strengthen or undermine confidence in his or her leadership and affect membership solidarity.

Conflict isn't going away, nor should it. Conflict can be a source of learning, creative solution finding, needed change, and yes, relationship building. It tells you something isn't working. So fix it. If the issues are real, the conflict will persist until underlying concerns are addressed. While conflict may not be resolved in a way that gives everyone what

they want, it can be handled so that members feel acknowledged and respected in the process.

We all make strategy choices which influence behavior. Choosing a strategy that supports relationship building doesn't mean giving in. Learning to view ourselves as advocates for our concerns, rather than adversaries forcing positions, opens doors to new possibilities.

Many of us grew up playing tic-tac-toe. We learned early on to view the other side as our adversary. What one side wins, the other side loses. We succeed by outsmarting the other side and forcing them into a position where they must concede. To help them meet their needs or consider seriously their concerns is considered a sign of weakness.

Unfortunately these instincts don't work well when it's important to preserve respect and unity within the union. Viewing another member as an adversary gives us permission to disregard what they say, to discredit or belittle them, and perhaps to intimidate them so they'll yield. When tension heats up, we run the risk of getting caught up in the

argument, of being side-tracked by accusations, and of overlooking key information that might lead to the discovery of a solution that works for everyone. You have to learn from the others' perspective, add your concerns to the mix, and work together to resolve conflict.

When progress seems blocked, consider these techniques:

1. Like a puzzle, in a conflict, each side brings a piece of the solution. Conflict resolution is about discovering the pieces and finding a way to put them together. Using power to impose an outcome that only works for one side will be met with resistance and cause resentment. Even if the other side yields, the relationship is likely damaged. Instead, use power to bring the parties into the conversation, then work together to find the solution.

2. Conflict resolution is all about communication. Think dialogue, not debate. Stay alert to the underlying concerns that drive the dissatisfaction. This is key information. Letting each member tell his story lowers the tension level creating a willingness to listen.

3. Often both parties begin by declaring what's wrong and assert positions outlining what should happen. When this happens, stop.

Take a step back. It's too early in the process to focus on the outcome.

4. Now's the time to clarify underlying concerns driving each side's discontent. Once both sides understand the full range of concerns that successful conflict resolution should address, the stage is then set for solution finding.

5. Restate the issue as a problem solving question framed around concerns. Pose the following question: So what are we really talking about here? Framing the issue this way guides the parties into a problem solving mode, generating options until a solution is discovered. Even if one side is unable to have all their concerns addressed it's likely they will walk away with a realistic understanding of why and the knowledge that they were taken seriously and given a fair hearing.

Rick Sepolen

**Next month:** Bullying in the Workplace.

*The following is the fourth in a series of articles I am writing for the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of our handbook guide to the union. This is in preparation for our Centennial celebration in April 2012, and it will give the membership a chance to send me comments about the content.*

## The History of Local 587

Submitted by Andrew Jeromsky, 587 Handbook Committee Chair

There wasn't room in last month's *News Review* for this, the fourth chapter of my revision to our handbook guide to the Union. I've been publishing these chapters in our newsletter to herald our Union's upcoming Centennial celebration in April 2012. Thanks for reading, Andrew Jeromsky, 587 Handbook Committee Chair

### Political Action

In 1946, at a time when most unions had little in the way of health and welfare benefits written into their contracts and transit workers had only a \$50-a-month pension to look forward to when they retired, Local 587 spearheaded a movement to create social security benefits for municipal workers. The movement did take a number of years to catch fire, but persistence and the cultivation of political and labor allies paid off in 1956 when President Eisenhower signed the bill into law.

Local 587 also worked its magic in Olympia. Because of a housing ordinance that said municipal workers had to live within the city boundaries, some transit workers were faced with a choice of losing

either their homes or their jobs. When the city began enforcing this ordinance in 1951, Local 587's leaders reacted and quickly moved a bill through the state legislature that revoked this law.

That same year, the union was faced with losing its bargaining rights. A new transit commission had recently been created, but the city fathers forgot to give the commissioners any budgetary powers. The problem was mainly the result of bureaucratic oversight but it left the union without a management side to interact with. Once again, Local 587 hurried down to Olympia and, ironically, passed a bill giving the transit commission the authority to negotiate with its own workers.

The union's success at negotiating the best contracts in the industry had one drawback: Where do you go when you reach the top? In 1954 members approved a contract with the Seattle Transit Commission that paid them \$2.04/hr (the equivalent of \$17.21/hr in 2011). Local 587 drivers were now being paid the highest urban-transit scale in the US. (Highest when not adjusted for the cost of living in other cities). The 1955

contract increased driver salaries to \$2.18/hr, and brought the wages of the rest of the system's employees up to the same wage levels as in other city departments. A guarantee of 174 hours per month was also secured for all extra or group drivers who had completed five years of employment, but drivers were still having to wait 10 years before getting regular runs. Despite the poor working conditions and relatively low wages, every year the union had a tougher time squeezing another pennies-per-hour increase from the company.

### Leading The Fight For Better Working Conditions

1956 began sadly for ATU Local 587. On January 10, Samuel J Wallace, our first President, and one of the original organizers of Division 587, passed on. Survived at the time by his wife, two daughters, six grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, his legacy lives on in our proud local. The year ended on a sour note as well. While the Transit Commission had publicly

stated that because of their greater responsibilities, Seattle bus drivers were entitled to more pay than city truck drivers (whose rate was going to be \$2.33/hr in 1957) the commission still refused to pay bus drivers the \$2.43/hr they asked for.

Negotiations remained deadlocked over wages. This time the union offered to arbitrate but the company refused. Mayor Gordon Clinton intervened and was able to wring a \$.06 wage increase offer from the company. The union reduced its proposal to \$.20 (\$2.38/hr) and wanted the company to bargain in good faith. The union leadership said there was more than enough money squirreled away in transit's \$2.8 million reserve contingency fund to cover the increase. The company refused to budge and never showed up for the next meeting. On November 23, after working without a contract for 3 weeks, and at the beginning of the holiday shopping season, the membership voted to strike.

At first, the mayor was upset with the company's refusal to bargain in good faith. But when the Chamber

*continued on page 12*

## Vice President MacAdam's Report

By Don MacAdam



# What's Going on in Maintenance!

As I have no thrilling tales to recount this month, here is my report...

1. Terminations: Three in Facilities Nov. due to fist fighting in public. KIRSCHNICK termination: going to arbitration. Gallagher is requesting arbitration, also.

2. Arbitrations for V.M.: 7

3. Grievances: This month-20

4. New motion in the December meeting to give Mechanic overtime to Leads with regards to the O.B.S. project. I met with Mr. Winders today (12-13-11) in regards to concerns raised and proper protocols for future issues.

Last week before the vote, I had already notified Metro of my desire to modify the O.B.S. M.O.A. due to use of O.B.S. personnel being used as normal shop staff by inverse seniority & for upcoming snow schedule.

We should not set the precedent of giving Mechanic O.T. to leads first. Also, some mechanics were afraid to speak against this issue because of retaliation from Leads. (No guts no glory or O.T.)

5. Demand to bargain new time clock rules in rail: Accepted. There are lots of problems in Rail

6. The Automation project- first meeting last month: I have demanded to bargain Computers at N.M. "The train is coming through! Either get on or get out of the way!" So says a superintendent.

7. I plan invoke the technology change language for the automation project.

8. Miller grievance regarding upgraded leads to Chiefs doing both jobs: approved for arbitration. Trying to keep Chiefs from (skimming) taking our work.

9. Dispatchers grievance: Wischmann/Jones/Inman consistency in filling dispatcher's vacancies. Denied at third step. Preparing for Arbitration request.

10. Requested talks with Metro for pay increase for dispatchers due to forced upgrades & vacancies/responsibilities. They said no! I say yes!

11. Beltran (Running) Arbitration. I requested a pre-arbitration settlement hearing. Metro is requesting more time, again. Metro is addressing the problem, it seems, although very slowly.

12. McClure Rail grievance is going to arbitration. The pre-arbitration settlement was on 11-16-11. Settlement offered kinda. 10 people showed up for the pre-settlement hearing. One was from the prosecutor's office?

13. Acting Facilities Chief position? Seniority issue. Must be out by March 8, 2012.

14. Reduced work schedules for those close to retirement??

15. Sam Men U.A. grievance: U.A.

removed-settled

16. Chief/Supervisor Evaluations ready and on the Union web site.

17. Facilities want to absorb Millwrights. I received an M.O.A. from Metro on this subject; countered Metro's M.O.A.; new Union M.O.A. drafted. Next meeting the 12-19

18. Rumor Mill: a new V.M. publication in the 6th edition

19. Base visits: I found many happy and grateful Union members/employees!!!!

20. Upgraded leads/Temporary Chief...discipline meeting with Metro. Metro "unofficially" stated that they may move them out of 587 to 17 then demote them back when done.

21. The new lean A.B.T. system ...Accountable Business Transformation. As this may affect Special Purchasing Specialists and parts workers, we had a meeting on 12-14-11 to find out what's going on! Metro said "surprise!" There is a new software system being installed. No one can buy any parts "Is this a problem?" they asked.

22. Sick leave abuse policy: I have demanded to bargain the new policy.

Deceased: Isao "Pancho" Nakashima, Mechanic/Chief.

In December, I was serving as a waiter at the 587 retiree's luncheon. It was good to see a lot more V.M. retirees there than last year. After lunch, we have a drawing and give out a lot of envelopes with cash in them. I noticed that all the V.M. people had left before that event! The drivers said, "Thank you." A good time was had by all!

Saving the best for last: **In a rare move last December directly following the 3rd step grievance hearing for Mr. Sam Men, the Maintenance Employees at E.M. were distracted by their Supervisor entering Chief Marcel's office and closing the door; what ensued was a conference call from a Manager in which raised voices were heard and a heated conversation followed. Some noticed finger pointing going on. Later that day, Mr. Men was notified that his unexcused absence (requested due to a family emergency of 4 hours) would be removed and he could use the 4 hours of A/C time he had originally requested. Putting an end to one of the dumbest/time consuming /money wasting Chief decisions of the year! So WE thank you Mystery Metro Manager whoever you are!** And, I also thank the shop stewards who worked so hard to help a fellow Union member.

And, for all you who demanded it ...the worst base of the year 2011 was (drum roll) E.M.!!!! Yeah...I'm not surprised either, and 2012 is starting to look like it may be a clean sweep for E.M. for the last 3 years. Either

someone needs to leave OR get promoted out of there! The manager evaluations may point a finger at who that should be. So, to everyone working at E.M., I will send you more ink pens, grievance forms, contract books and Shop Steward training time. And, if we can get everyone who files a grievance to donate a nickel, we should be able

to pay for our health care benefits when we retire! So arise! Go forth and conquer! For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and the powers of darkness! May God Bless the United States, our Veterans, and Local 587!!!! (I think I need to calm down now and refill my prescription.)

And, **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

## Transit Riders Union — a Very Hopeful Sign

Linda Anderson, Executive Board, Public Relations Committee

On November 15, I had the good fortune to witness the official launch of the recently formed Transit Riders Union. It was a very successful kickoff, with about 70 Seattle area bus riders and several Local 587 members in attendance. ATU 587's own Atlantic Base Operator Nate Chappelle was a featured speaker, along with James Bible of the NAACP, and songs from local musician, Jim Page.

The Transit Riders Union (TRU) grew out of a campaign this summer to get the County to authorize car tab money to fund Metro and forestall service cuts for the next two years. The campaign, "Save Our Metro" was started by a handful of primarily low-income riders to give bus riders in the Seattle area an organized voice. Their mission is to empower transit riders to change society for the good of all, and to "fight to preserve, expand, and improve the public transportation system in Seattle and beyond, so that every human being has access to safe, affordable, and reliable public transit."

Speakers Katie Wilson, Chris Moble, and Scott Myers of the Transit Riders Union spoke compellingly about the drastic cuts to transit across the USA and world-wide. They warned that bus service is in danger all over. There are austerity measures in Europe, and public services everywhere, including transit, are being cut just when we need them most. They talked about how the tax burden has shifted from rich to poor, and stressed that transit riders need to push back. The Transit Riders Union can be part of the process of figuring this out, they said.

**587's Nate Chappelle was a featured speaker**

Brother Chappelle's message was one of encouragement but also of urgency. Nate said, "The only way things will change is when people

say, 'enough is enough'. We started with Rosa Parks, but now look around this room at the rainbow coalition we have here. I think this movement is moving faster than we think. People are getting active again—we've come full circle. We're working for the same things again: dignity, suffering, and equal distribution of wealth. Whatever we do affects us all."

But Chappelle also stressed that everything about bus service is political, and urged the Transit Riders Union to get active at the County Council level, not just with Metro. Whatever problems riders are experiencing in Seattle will spread to riders throughout the County, Nate cautioned. "People rely on the bus. If Metro doesn't get the money, if you don't get it together here in Rainier Valley, you'll all be left behind."

Local 587 Executive Board Officer Ninus Hopkins spoke briefly and eloquently about the need to include ACCESS riders and to remember to include the disabled and elderly.

**The bus is important to social justice, says James Bible**

Mr. James Bible, President of the Seattle/King County NAACP was a dynamic keynote speaker. Mr. Bible spoke passionately about his grandfather, who rode the bus just to start conversations about social justice with other riders. James learned that the bus is a place where you could generate conversation and social movements—something that doesn't happen between people in separate cars.

Mr. Bible believes we are at a point when people are beginning to say "things need to change for the good of all of us." He said that it's disappointing that the wealthy devalue so many things that are so important to all of us. To paraphrase Mr. Bible: of course the bus will be at risk in the minds of the wealthy. They don't think about how some

*continued on page 11*

# The Financial Secretary's Report

By Paul Neil



## Annual Dues Increase January 2012

The Local By-Laws provide in Article VIII "Dues and Assessments", Sect 1:

*"The dues for each member of Local 587 shall be based upon two (2) times the average hourly wage for represented employees in effect on January 1st of each year. The average hourly wage shall be computed by adding the top hourly wage of the lowest and highest represented job classifications, and then dividing this figure by two (2)."*

The top hourly wages on January 1, 2012 were \$46.94 for Senior Schedule

Planners at KCMetro. The lowest paid represented position is the Customer Service Representative for paratransit services at Clallam Transit at \$12.06 per hour.

Summing and dividing by two yields \$29.50 for the average hourly wage, 2 X \$29.50 equals monthly union dues of \$59.00 per member. This represents an increase of \$1.20 or 2.07% over the current dues of \$57.80. This applies to all members employed at public agencies.

The by-laws provide that mem-

bers employed at private employers shall pay the minimum dues set by the A.T.U. International which are currently \$48.90 per month and will be adjusted for inflation this July 1.

### Membership Meetings:

During some recent work site visits I spoke with a couple of members who were not aware that we now have a 3<sup>rd</sup> membership meeting in Seattle on the Wednesday following the Charter meeting at 3:30pm in the Seattle Labor Temple. This meeting

was added so more members could participate in the Union. Just like the other membership meetings it has a \$50.00 door prize and provides an opportunity for you to participate in your Union. Please come and attend one of the five membership meetings we hold every month.

Below is the report I read to the membership at the December cycle of meetings.

## Financial Secretary's December 2011 Membership Meeting Report

### New Member Applications submitted to the ATU International in November:

In the month of November 2011, we reported 9 new members to the ATU International. 1 is at Jefferson Transit, 5 are at SPT and 3 are at King County METRO. This brings are total active membership to 4064. This is a decrease of 136 members compared this time last year when we had 4200 active members.

### Bills:

All financial figures are subject to the review of the Executive Board. In November total income was \$287,294.52 which is an increase of \$79,720.63 or 38.4% compared

to last November. The primary reasons for the increase are last November KCMETRO members paid the Grievance Arbitration Assessment while this November they paid a full months dues and in addition this year we needed to deposit the Short Term Disability check through our account rather than KCMETRO paying them directly.

Per Capita payments totaled \$57,518.38 for the month which is a decrease of \$276.72 or 0.5% over the same period last year.

Other bills for payroll, rent, legal, etc totaled \$198,443.98 which is an increase of \$38,766.14 or 24.3% over last November. The increase in expenses is almost totally attributable to paying the STD premium. This amounts to a surplus of \$31,332.16

for the month compared to a deficit of \$9,899.05 for November 2010.

As of the end of November, the figures for this year compared to last are: Income up 3.2%. Per capita's up 3.4%, all other expenses are up 3.1% and the surplus is \$127,323.59 this year versus \$123,266.39 or a 3.3% increase over last year.

### My activities for the month:

Went on 4 base visits at North, Ryerson, Central and Atlantic bases. At all bases I spoke with members in both Operations & Vehicle Maintenance.

Saturday November 19 I joined the other officers in sorting food from the food drive. Thank you to Judy Young for managing that!

On Wednesday of this week interview candidates to replace Mary Kennedy who retired as one of the Unions secretaries. All of the candidates were tested by an employment agency for their knowledge of various office software programs such as Word, Access, Excel and Outlook. Starting Monday Tiffany Kennedy will start working in the office.

On Tuesday 11/29 I attended a Rail LMRC.

On Thursday 11/17 President Bachtel and I meet with Suzanne Mode of OPEIU Local 8, which represents our office staff, to review our new Employee Policy Handbook. Suzanne had met with our staff members previously and had several suggestions.

## Annual Grievance Arbitration Assessment

Each grievance that the Union pursues to arbitration (the last step of the appeal process) must be approved by the membership at our monthly union meetings. The membership decides whether each grievance should go to arbitration or not. The membership **also** pays the costs of those approved arbitrations annually, on a per capita basis, as required by Section 21.15 of the International Constitution and General Laws. In addition, Workers Compensation attorney fees are included as provided for in our Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 5.

During 2011 Local 587 paid a total of \$48,379.39 for the 14 grievances the membership voted to take to arbitration and \$41,186.34 in workers compensation attorneys' fees for a total assessment of \$89,565.73 to be collected in 2012.

To determine how much each member will be assessed, the total assessable cost of \$89,565.73 is divided by the total active membership and is then rounded to an even number.

Total assessable costs:	\$89,565.73
Total active members:	4064
Cost per member:	\$22.0388
Rounded to an even number:	\$22.04

The arbitration assessment this year is \$22.04. A notice will be sent to the members at each property informing them of when the Grievance Arbitration Assessment will be deducted. Attached is a list detailing the expenses of each Grievance Arbitration and Workers Compensation case.

Please note that one of the guiding principles of Local 587 is that an injury to one is an injury to all regardless of job classification or work location. A demonstration of this principle can be found on the list of arbitrations. Of the three most costly arbitrations in 2011 the most costly is for Transit Operator Paul Kriskov at Metro/King County concerning the unilateral implementation of the Personal Electronic Device policy, the second for a Mechanic at Metro/King County and the third most costly being for two members wrongly terminated by First Transit.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the Union office.

### 2012 Grievance Arbitration and Workers Compensation Expenses

Grievance Arbitrations	Workers Compensation
Beltran, Ramon \$ 1,090.05	Alexander, Charlene \$ 1,195.70
Dean, Jimmy \$ 4,838.00	Bailey, Suzanne \$ 1,658.14
Graff, Richard \$ 334.80	Boyle, James \$ 1,185.13
Higbee, Roger \$ 2,667.05	Burgess, Suzanne \$ 2,578.04
Jackson, Patricia \$ 5,490.25	Carter Dave \$ 42.00
Jones, James \$ 1,819.65	Culcleasure, Shelton \$ 1,083.69
Kirschnick, Ernie \$ -	Davis, Lillette \$ 2,175.04
Kriskov, Paul \$ 16,732.52	Dent, Cynthia \$ 804.79
McClure, Christopher \$ 472.50	DiMartino, Peter \$ 731.58
McShane, Lisa \$ 157.50	Edwards, Tommy \$ 1,939.02
Miller, Tom \$ 17.50	Gregory, Cynthia \$ 42.69
Musni, Mario \$ 420.00	Griffin, Paul \$ 42.69
Nelson, Marcella \$ 5,490.25	Holden, Evon \$ 1,359.85
Rankin, Jerry \$ 455.00	Jackson, Regina \$ 254.51
Rigtrup, Cory \$ 8,394.32	Klasen, Greg \$ 142.40
TOTAL \$ 48,379.39	Larson, Michael \$ 2,113.16
	Leak, Carol L&I \$ 1,797.11
	Lyons, Russell \$ 1,160.42
	Mac Adam, Don \$ 4,230.42
	Manley, Craig \$ 787.86
	Mathis, Porter \$ 42.69
	Rettmer, Robert \$ 1,083.35
	Reyes, Jocelyn \$ 579.78
	Schultz, Tyler \$ 5,876.27
	Swenson, Jeff \$ 1,634.62
	Washington, Paulette \$ 4,126.14
	Watson, Vicki \$ 112.00
	Zabolusky, Gary \$ 2,407.25
	TOTAL \$ 41,186.34
	Grand Total \$ 89,565.73
	Active Members 4064
	Per Member Charge \$ 22.04

# Looking to the Future

By Clint DeVoss, Executive Board Officer

In the up-coming years we have many challenges facing us, both as public employees and union members. What we need most to get us through the possible troubled times ahead is to embrace a concept the French call "solidarité". What the French define solidarité to mean is "mutual sacrifice for the common good." (Time Magazine) As I said in my last article each of us has our own unique interests and needs. To fulfill those needs we need to work together and not against each other. Over the next few years we could and likely will see issues dealing with layoffs, reduction or elimination of our collective bargaining rights, and the specter of privatization.

Solidarité does not mean that you have to give up anything or subordinate your needs to your co-workers. It merely means that you need to occasionally make the choice that will serve all the members best over time. Looking at the big picture is often hard to do, and requires that you look at reality, not what you want reality to be. "Selective perception" is our inclination to ignore information that is contrary to what we believe. "Subjective perception" is our tendency to see things in a manner that we are comfortable with rather than as it really is. (These concepts were also

shamelessly stolen from a different Time article)

Unions in general and many of our members continue to ignore the painful facts about the economy and how it will impact each and every one of us in the future. King County simply does not have the deep pockets that it once had. King County cannot continue to pay for substandard and inefficient work practices, and may not be able to even continue at the present level of service. This does not mean that our work place should or needs to become a sweat shop, it means that we have to look at what each of us is doing and work with King County to fix the problems while at the same time continuing to giving King County an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.

When I walk into a work site and some of our members are telling me what a horrible place this is to work and they are getting "screwed" I have to mentally roll my eyes. I agree with you that things are not perfect, there are problems, and you should, in turn, agree that the situation is not as bad as some folks would like us to think it is. In many respects we have a good workplace and very good benefits. We should be thankful for that and we should work on fixing the real problems

not go off chasing windmills and fighting battles that we are doomed to lose because we have lost touch with reality. That these same people that are complaining the loudest continue to work in this horrible place speaks volumes.

Together we can make our future better. Making our future better starts by making sure that our facts are correct and analyzing them when we make decisions that effect our future well being. When King County, lawmakers, or the media are taking actions that go against our best interests, knowing the facts is critical. No one person or group knows all the facts, and the person or group that comes to the table with the most complete factual picture has a big step up in getting what they want. The other crucial factor to get what is wanted is listening to what the other side is saying; often they will have a valid point even when they have the facts wrong. Sometimes they are even right. Blindly crying that we must have it our way each and every time will not achieve results that will stand the test of time. We need to look at the problem; both the outside problems and internal problems.

There are solutions. Some of those solutions require us as a group to bite the bullet and acknowledge our

own short comings and problems. In less than 2 years some of us will likely face layoff, those that will not face layoffs will see a big step backwards in your ability to work when and where you want too. Layoffs will affect everyone, ignoring that fact and the fact that we need to take action now to reduce the impact of what could come. Just hoping that the economy turns around in time to save us from this possible outcome is not good enough. We need to act in concert with each other to formulate and work toward the best result possible, and start doing it right now.

Each of us needs to understand that bad times seem to be in our future and we need to take action now to prevent those bad times from being worse than they may have to be. We need to act with "solidarité", each of us realizing that others have needs that must be met and not trying to walk away with all the chips at our brothers and sisters expense. Each of us needs to be able to walk away a winner.

We, as a union and as individuals have decisions to make that will affect our future well being. Please make them wisely, with the big picture in mind, and with a little thought to the best long term outcome that can be gotten.

## Transit Riders Union, continued

people take their kid to the hospital on the bus, people go to school on the bus, and some people make a living driving the bus. Maybe what should be thought of as fundamental will not be taken away from us if we form groups like this.

Mr. Bible said, "The power of the bus is way underestimated. We don't let people slip through the cracks when we know them. We get to know each other and we stay human on the bus. I can't say enough about what the bus means and will mean for those to come."

### Metro funding and transit justice

Transit Rider Union organizer Chris Mobley outlined the many reasons for good public transit, such as pollution reduction in our air and in Puget Sound, the high cost of driving cars. He pointed out that poor neighborhoods, like the International District, where "the average income is \$13,000 per year," depend on the bus. One of the TRU's goals is to keep the growth around transit stations and corridors affordable. He pointed out that Metro is on life support, and our State Legislature is broke. At a time when corporate profits and income of the rich are up, the top 1% pay only 2% of their incomes in taxes and fees, while those at the bottom pay 17%, Mobley said. We need to reform the tax structure in a way that will be fair and fund transit for all.

Scott Myers, of the TRU, continued the theme of transit justice and how to achieve it. Most bus riders were unaware that their bus service

was in jeopardy this summer, he noted, unless they were contacted by some organization. What would happen if the interests of riders were represented in proportion to their numbers? That's what the Riders Union is working for.

### Learning from the experience of labor unions

"We learn from the history of labor unions that recognition of the interests of poor and working people doesn't come from polite entreaty," Meyers said. "We aren't belligerent yahoos or ignorant brats. We seek to cooperation with politicians, but failing that, we will go to other means. Most of all we seek to organize from the bottom up."

### What's next for the Transit Riders Union?

The Transit Riders Union is an all-volunteer organization with virtually no funding, and they are looking for all kinds of help. They hold regular Monday night meetings and maintain a website, and they are currently looking for more organizers. If you would like to help, with either time or money, please see the TRU's web address at the end of this article. One of their first projects is a rider survey to better understand the needs and concerns of transit riders. Although the Transit Riders Union has started in the Seattle area, they hope to someday have chapters or sister groups in other cities throughout the region.

ATU Local 587 wishes the Transit Riders Union every possible success!

The Transit Riders Union and the riders who attended the launch

had lots of praise and appreciation for ATU 587; especially our bus drivers. We at 587 look forward to a cooperative relationship with the members of the TRU as they grow and develop their goals and agenda.

We are sure to be working together toward the common goal of funding and maintaining a healthy transit system which serves our riders well.

For more information: <http://saveourmetro.org/>

**To: All Members of Local 587**  
**From: Recording Secretary Judy Young**

## Proposal To Change Bylaws Article X, Section 5

Submitted by Bruce Tiebout

**In accordance with the Article XV, pertaining to bylaw proposals, the following proposals will be published in the News Review, read into the records at Executive Board Meeting and subsequent cycle of membership meetings and will be voted upon through the February cycle of Union meetings.**

**ARTICLE X  
MEETINGS -  
Section 5. All Meetings  
Adjournment Time**

**Current Language:**

Section 5. The regular charter meeting's adjournment shall be declared at 10:30 p.m. and the morn-

ing meeting's adjournment shall be declared at 1:00 p.m. It shall require a two thirds majority of the members voting to extend the time.

**Proposed Change:**

Section 5. The regular charter meeting's in King County adjournment shall be declared **adjourned at 10:30 p.m. two hours and 30 minutes after convening** and the morning meeting's outside King County adjournment shall be declared **adjourned at 1:00 p.m. 90 minutes after convening**. It shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the members voting to extend the time.

## Retirees' Corner

# The View from the Buses

By Bob Morgan, Retired First-Line Supervisor

Greetings to all and here is hoping your Holiday was wonderful...

No stories this month as there are to many other items to mention.

## Retiree Bus Pass

As has been written here prior, this is still an ongoing issue with retiree's use of bus passes. Many thanks to Rodney R. Moore, retired 1st line, for taking the lead on this and for trying to get KC Metro Retiree's the benefit we assumed we would have upon retirement. This is also a contract issue as outlined in the contract Article 12, Section 8, Page 63 "Each current/retired employee is eligible for an annual Transit pass," which should and has in the past be good on Metro, Pierce, Community, and Sound Transit, Link, and Sounder Service.

According to an e-mail Ron received from Kevin Desmond, General Manager, this is no longer a practice that is being recognized by other agencies and the retiree's pass is only good on METRO, period! So if a retiree lives on Mercer Island how to they get off the island, as there is no Metro service operating on/off the island currently and for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Desmond also noted that due to the current budget situation it isn't financially possible for KC Metro to fund retiree passes to other agencies.

Also note that communications between Ron and King county was reviewed by there labor relations and their answer was that "there are no provisions that a retiree pass can be used outside of Metro service." The communication also mentioned, "due to the recent \$20.00 annual fee for the Congestion Relief Charge to preserve current service

levels it is highly unlikely that anything will be done for any increase for retiree passes and where we can use them."

Oh and another note, according to info I've received all retirees will need to have new passes re-issued after January 1st 2012. All old passes will be void after that date.

## Retiree's working part time

I know many retirees who have come back to Metro to work P/T. It started out that you could only work a maximum of 867 hours a year. Then the state created a bank that was 1900 hours that the retiree could draw from, say maybe 200 extra hours a year, until the bank was depleted. Well the state has apparently canceled the 1900 hour bank and the 867 threshold is back. When I retired in 2006 my representative at DRS stated, "You can work up to 1500 hours a year as long as you take 3 months off every year." This provision has also been done away with according to sources. Obviously this will change some retiree's outlook as to whether they stay as an employee or not.

## Pension funding for Pers 1

As most of you who read this column know I ranted at the state for eliminating the COLA for Pers/Trs 1 retiree's. The following shows what is within the pension laws and the amount of all funds within the state. Also note this report shows that our state is one of only four whose pension plans are not in any danger of collapsing due to budget, etc.

The link is as follows: <http://www.tre.wa.gov/documents/pensionFundingReform.pdf>

Read especially pages 6-7 concerning Pers 1. But it is an overall informative read.

Also note that the Retired Public Employees Council (R.P.E.C.) filed along with the W.E.A and the State Employees Union a suit against the state for holding back our COLA's in Pers 1. Feel this won't even make it to a court date for 12-18 months, so don't hold your breath waiting for a quick resolution.

## Other stuff...

Well the Holiday Retiree's Dinner in December was, as usual, a great time for all. Great seeing everyone from the past and some new retiree's as well. My former boss in the Control Center, A.D. Clark came and he looked great. Also Pete/Anne Cameron came up from Depoe Bay, OR to attend. Good seeing many others including John Fabre, Bob Rothwell, F. C. Smith, Josie Brown, Frank Falsini, Del Larson, T. J. Robertson, George Wirth, Tom Edwards, George Toulouse, Hillary Lucas, and Jerry Johnston who retired on the same day as I did. Also many more and I'm sorry if I failed to mention your names here. A big THANK YOU to Dave Carter, Al and Ruth Ramey and all the officers and various e-board members, especially Lisa Carter, who helped make this an annual event we all look forward to.

Sad news, Mike Rounds who retired as a senior scheduler maker died in October due to injuries sustained in an ATV accident at his place outside of Wauconda, WA last summer. When I needed to talk to Mike about a schedule issue and call his phone at work he would answer "Scheduling, Rounds House," always made me smile.

Also heard that Laurie Camara, chief at North Base, is leaving at the

end of January, hopefully. Laurie and I go back a ways. She started as an operator around 1974, then advancing to TIO, CAO along with 2 other jobs before making chief some years back. A lot of transit knowledge going out the door. Welcome Laurie to the life you deserve.

Mark Hartman just got back from the Big Island of Hawaii. Said he played 9 rounds of golf while there, some with the Brad Kitteridges' who were also on the island.

Heard from Dan Sheppard that it has been clear but cool in Yuma, hmm.

Also heard that recent retiree Dick Verzani is working for the Buckeye, AZ school district as a driver and has a run that goes out some 80 miles a day! He also said he had lunch recently with Ken Haven, Carol Neff, and Mike Callahan in the area west of Phoenix. He also stated that he and wife, Kathy, are attempting to finish the back yard at his residence.

George Richter let me know he also spent some time in the Phoenix area visiting retirees.

George Toulouse advised that he had, in the last few months, been to Thailand, Viet Nam and Cambodia, doing some exploring, some with Jerry Johnston.

Also talked with Tom and Chrissy McDaniels at the Holiday Dinner. I thought they would have already headed to their winter home in Tucson but they are in the area until after Christmas, so as you read this they may already be in warmer weather.

Not much else to report this month. Hope all have a great New Year!

Want to send an idea or any info regarding other retiree's for a future article [morganbobsue@comcast.net](mailto:morganbobsue@comcast.net), just put "from the buses" on the remark line.

## History of 587, continued

of Commerce and other downtown businessmen became worried by the loss of Christmas shopping revenues, they pressured the mayor to end the strike in any way possible. Instead of going after the company, the mayor took 587 to court. Even the Seattle Times sided with the union, chastising the Transit Commission for refusing to arbitrate and suggesting that transit should have a permanent equipment subsidy to carry on its mission.

Nevertheless, a court injunction declaring all public employee strikes illegal was quickly issued. The judge threatened to levy a hefty fine on the local and jail its leaders if the union wouldn't call it quits. The case was appealed to the State Supreme Court who, in a practically unprecedented special Saturday session, upheld the lower court's

ruling, and the ten-day strike was broken.

Although our members returned to work (in large measure to prevent all future public employee strikes from being outlawed), they were far from beaten. Local 587 had tricks of its own up its sleeve. First, the officers refused to sign the labor agreement foisted upon them. Then 10 months of no-cooperation followed, punctuated by several slowdowns and a refusal to work overtime. By doing so, the transit workers made their point. Two years later, Local 587 was able to get most of what its employees needed at the bargaining table.

The bargaining problem was being compounded by the fact that towards the end of the 1950's, Seattle Transit was once again operating in the red. Pay-as-you-go transit had

been in a long slow decline since the war years, and local politicians didn't want to go to the voters for a fare increase, let alone a permanent subsidy that would put the system on secure financial footing. It was on this backdrop throughout the 50's, that an Attorney named Jim Ellis

was busy laying the groundwork for the creation of a single metropolitan government that would finally have that subsidy, and would eventually take over public transit in King County. That new agency would come to be known as Metro.

## The COPE Report, continued

Olympia. We re-emphasized the benefits of public transportation that has stable funding, accountability, and the support of communities. ATU locals across the state have already suffered devastating cuts resulting in the loss of service and subsequently the loss of jobs among their members.

Your COPE and PR Committees are working hard to represent and

speak in the best interest of all our members, but we need your help to make sure our elected officials continue to hear from more 587 members. February 7, 2012 is ATU 587 Lobby Day in Olympia and the COPE Committee invites you to join us as we lobby about important transit issues that affect us ALL.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR SIGNUP FORM IS JANUARY 23