

ATU Local 587 News Review

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VOL. XXIX, NO. 11

The President's Report

by Lance F. Norton



IMMIGRANT RIGHTS AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

ATU LATINO CAUCUS IMMIGRATION REFORM

Page 3

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Page 4

ASE CERTIFICATION

Page 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE TRUE COST OF WAL-MART

Page 6

COPE ENDORSED CANDIDATES

Page 8

ROMANIAN COUNCIL; A PROGRESS REPORT

Page 11



Recognizing A Hero

On a beautiful summer day this past July, Transit Operator Anthony Woods approached the zone at 3rd and Spring. Suddenly he heard from the back of his coach a person yelling, "He has a gun, he has a gun." Anthony immediately stopped his coach, set the emergency brake, put on the 4 way flashers, got out of his seat and proceeded to the rear of his coach. He grabbed the offender who had the gun, a loaded 9 mm pistol; put him in a bear hug forcing the pistol into the suspect's side with Anthony's hand on the pistol. Anthony then literally carried the person off the coach took him to the ground and called out for someone to call 911.

I'll quote from a few of the special commendations that came into Metro regarding Anthony's actions: "I was a passenger on a route 4 bus yesterday afternoon. The number 7 bus stopped abruptly in front of my bus. Several people came running out. I saw a metro bus driver on the back of a passenger. At first I believed that it was a fight taking

place amongst the passengers. I looked closer and saw that it was a driver. I jumped off of the bus and heard the driver yell, "call the police, someone call the police." No one would produce a cell phone. I ran up to the scene, bent down to the driver's face and said, I am on the phone with the police "Exactly what is going on?" What kind of help do you need? He replied, "He has a gun and I have it in my hand as we speak." I relayed that to the 911 operator and told her there was police now there on a motorcycle. I had a fresh water bottle filled with ice, and poured some on his (Anthony's injured hand) as we waited for the aid car to arrive. I got back on the #4 bus to go to Harborview only after making sure your driver was taken care of. This was a very scary episode for your driver as well as myself. I would not hesitate to do the same thing again. I learned the driver's name was Tony. I believe that you should give him a commendation and I would like to be there when he receives it. He, in my honest opinion

saved the lives of the young men on the bus, and I hope that I saved your driver by calling 911. It well deserves recognition, and I believe that he should be nominated also for (recognition) through the American Red Cross."

Another commendation read, "I was just coming out of my building 1111 Third Ave, when I observed the police arrest a passenger who had been carrying a gun and fighting with another passenger, but who had been disarmed by the driver. Everyone was talking about it. The driver saved lives. The driver is a major hero, and should be suitably acknowledged."

Excerpts from the investigating Detective are as follows: "As some of you are aware at around 1531 hrs. A passenger on the route 7 run 3 had a loaded 9 mm gun pulled on them by a 16 year old suspect demanding the passenger's digital camera. A fight ensued with the passenger trying to prevent the suspect from shooting him. The suspect was subdued by Operator Woods and handcuffed

continued on page 10

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The Month at a Glance

Tentative Agenda

Membership Meetings:

CHARTER MEETING
Thursday, November 2, 2006
 8:00 p.m.
 The Labor Temple, Hall #8
 2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

JEFFERSON TRANSIT
Monday, November 6, 2006
 7:00 p.m.
 Port Townsend Rec Center
 Port Townsend, WA

MORNING MEETING
Friday, November 3, 2006
 10:30 a.m.
 The Labor Temple, Hall #6
 2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

CLALLAM TRANSIT
Tuesday, November 7, 2006
 7:00 p.m.
 Vern Burton Memorial Building
 Port Angeles, WA

Among topics to be discussed:

Grievance and arbitration update, Light Rail and Streetcar negotiations and upcoming negotiations at Para Transit Services and MV Transportation.

Unfinished business

- Motion by Lori McInnis to donate \$800.00 to LELO worker –to-worker committee.

Arbitration Update

- 1. Earl Mangold:** Grieved failure to assign overtime as outlined in the CBA. Scheduled in October.
- 2. Regan Askew:** Grieved termination for alleged severe preventable accident. Arbitration held – awaiting arbitrator's decision.
- 3. Joseph Vaifanua:** Grieved termination for alleged under reporting earnings while collecting unemployment compensation. Scheduled in October.

In Loving Memory...

*Because I could not stop for death –
 He kindly stopped for me –
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
 And immortality.*
 –Emily Dickinson

Alan McCullough: Joined Local 587 April 09, 1987 as a Part-time Transit Operator, promoted to Full-time Transit Operator October 18, 1997 and transferred to Equipment Service Worker in August 2006. Brother McCullough passed away September 27, 2006 from complications during heart surgery. Brother McCullough will be fondly remembered by his coworkers throughout Metro.

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

Business of the Membership

At the October 2006 cycle of membership meetings the following business was addressed:

- The membership voted to donate \$10,000 to King County "Transit Now" initiative and \$5,000.00 to city of Seattle "Bridging The Gap" initiative.
- The membership voted to purchase three seats at \$50.00 each for the Coalition of Black Trade

Unionists CBTU workshop October 21, 2006.

The following members were October pot draw winners: Larry Drake at the Charter meeting, Lori McInnis at the Morning meeting, Jay Proctor at the JTA meeting, Ed Stanard at the CTS meeting. Rolling pot draw of \$75.00 was lost by Gary Lazore. Next month's rolling pot will be \$100.00.

Executive Board Report

October 24, 2006

All officers were present except for Vice President McCormick who was attending arbitration training in Washington D.C., Deb Stenoien and Brian Sherlock who were attending the Bus Con conference in Chicago, Jeff Stambaugh and Linda Anderson who were on vacation, Joe Mangiameli who was away on personal business and Ray Campbell who was ill.

The following business was conducted:

- Motion by Paul J. Bachtel to purchase a total of 35 \$25 gift certificates to be distributed by draw at the December cycle of meetings as follows: 10 at the Charter meeting, 5 at the Morning meeting, 3 at JTA meeting, 7 at the CTS meeting, and 10 at the retiree's Holiday luncheon.
- Motion by Chris Daniels to recommend pursuing the grievance of Richard Paddon for the membership's consideration for arbitration.
- Motion by Chris Daniels to renew our annual membership in Transportation Choices at a cost of \$500.00.
- Motion by Judy Young to donate \$2,000.00 to the Puget Sound Labor Agency (Food Bank). Donation to be distributed as follows: \$1,000.00 immediately and \$1,000.00 during

the holiday season. This is an annual donation and it's in the budget.

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to set the Executive Board meetings for 2007 the Tuesday of the week prior to the first Thursday of the month except in December of 2007. Executive Board meeting for December 2007 to be held December 18, 2007 so as not to conflict with the holiday week.

- Motion by Michael Shea to recommend pursuing the grievance of Roland McVay for the membership's consideration for arbitration.

- Motion by Judy Young to send in addition to the President, three full-time officers and one board officer paying travel, lodging, registration and per diem to attend the annual Executive Board meeting of the Northwest Conference and to sponsor one meal at a cost not to exceed fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00). This motion is in our budget.

- Motion by Paul J. Bachtel to recommend pursuing the grievance of Charles Gibson for the membership's consideration for arbitration.

- Motion by Paul Neil to authorize purchase of a safe at a cost not to exceed twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00).

ATU Local 587

News Review

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 Transit Operator Position No. 7
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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 15th of each month. Any submission from a member of Local 587 to the News Review deemed unprintable by the Recording Secretary shall be forwarded to the Executive Board for final decision to publish.

Send letters to:

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

Immigrant Rights and the Labor Movement

By Linda Averill

Hopefully members read the "Immigrant Rights Resolution" that was written by Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity (OWLS) and published in the September *News Review*. It will be motivated at the November union meeting. Hope to see you there!

The resolution was a collective product drafted by rank-and-file activists from several different unions. OWLS includes members of the Washington Federation of State Employees, Service Employees International Union, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Teamsters, ATU, and other unions. The resolution is designed to generate discussion and action by the labor movement in defense of immigrant workers.

Politicians from both major parties are conducting a vicious campaign to divide workers along lines of immigrant status and national origin. They want those of us who are U.S.-born to buy the lie that undocumented workers are the cause of our shrinking wages and benefits. But as a Boston Globe article recently pointed out, wages are shrinking because corporations are taking a larger chunk of the wealth we produce in the form of larger profits and CEO salaries. Since OWLS drafted the resolution, the attacks on immigrants have only increased.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) has conducted numerous raids across the U.S., busting into homes without warrants, wiping out the economies of entire towns — as happened in Georgia — and deporting thousands of workers who are here without papers. Some of the workers are citizens wrongly caught in the net. Many are longtime residents and taxpayers.

Simultaneously, U.S. Congress has approved a \$2 billion measure to build a border fence, supposedly to secure our borders. If built, it will be an environmental and humanitarian disaster, and result in even more deaths of immigrants during border-crossings.

In the next Congress, we can expect to see even more regressive legislation, such as making it a crime to even help a fellow worker or neighbor who does not have the proper papers.

Such repressive measures are what are really making all of us, U.S. and native-born workers, less secure. They are designed to create fear, intimidation, distrust and divisions. They also set the stage for Congress to further erode our civil liberties/rights like it did with the recent passage of REAL ID at, a de facto national ID program. Such an atmosphere is not conducive to organizing unions, speaking up

against poor working conditions, or going on strike for higher wages and better healthcare. Here, it should be noted that undocumented workers do have the right to organize unions. But if they risk being deported the second they start to unionize, it's highly improbable they will do so.

Who benefits from such an atmosphere? Big business. Who loses? We do.

The resolution by OWLS calls for practical measures our unions and the labor movement can take to help defend immigrant workers from these increasing attacks. We can join the growing movement to create sanctuaries for immigrants. Some towns are beginning to take that step, and the Washington State Labor Council has already embraced the idea. The Labor Temple, where our union holds meetings, is a good sanctuary.

We can educate ourselves and our families about the false promise of "guest worker" programs, where immigrants are brought in under the sponsorship of employers and are at their total mercy. Guest worker programs in the 1960s made it difficult if not impossible for the United Farm Workers to organize, and the same will be true for all of labor today. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is lobbying heavily and has support from both parties for such legislation. We have a lot of

educating and counter-organizing to do on this front.

We can call for open borders and unconditional amnesty, the opposite of walled militarized borders. If U.S. corporations can travel freely in search of cheap labor, workers should be able to travel freely in search of better wages. This is one aspect to building the kind of labor solidarity and internationalist movement that can actually stop the race to the bottom.

Labor has given millions of dollars to politicians, including a large number of Democrats who turn around and vote for anti-immigrant laws. It's high time we press our demands on them in the street, such as calling for an end to the ICE raids and putting the billions in taxpayer dollars currently spent on apprehension, detention, etc. into creating living wage jobs for all.

Our unions can help build the movement for immigrant rights and initiate campaigns to organize immigrants into unions. Justice for Janitors, the Coalition of Immokalee workers, and the huge May Day marches and strikes across the U.S. show that these workers are prepared to fight for their rights. Their enfranchisement and representation within the union movement will help turn things around and improve the status of all labor.

ATU Latino Caucus Comprehensive Immigration Reform September 2006

Submitted by Jose G. Guerrero, President ATU Latino Caucus
Printed as submitted (without edits)

WHEREAS, there is a growing consensus across America for comprehensive immigration reform, such reform must include an earned adjustment for immigrants currently working in the United States; create legal channels for future flow of immigrant workers; and reduce the vast backlogs in family-sponsored immigration; and

WHEREAS, current immigration legislation should protect all workers within our borders—both native-born and foreign- and at the same time guarantee the safety of our nation without compromising our fundamental civil rights and civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, the ATU Latino Caucus urges the support and advocates for a comprehensive immigration reform with principles that are set forth to appropriately recognize the significant contributions immigrants have made in this

country; and

WHEREAS, ATU Latino Caucus feels compelled to state clearly and unequivocally that legalization should not be obtained at the cost of generating future inequities, sacrificing the future wages, labor protections and working conditions of both US and future foreign workers in order; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Immigration Reform shall support keeping families together and treating immigrants with respect; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Immigration Reform shall reject proposals that criminalize hard working immigrants and their families who are in this country to achieve the American dream and or the people and organizations that come in contact with them; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Immigration Reform shall provide a realistic legal path to earned per-

manent residence and citizenship for those already within the United States; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Immigration Reform shall create an effective entry avenue for future immigrants with fully enforceable labor protections

BE IT RESOLVED, that the ATU Latino Caucus rejects shifting the blame of low wages or depletion of the middle class on the undocumented population but blames the loss of good union and non-union jobs on the Presidential administrations inability to stop outsourcing. The ATU Latino Caucus will continue to lead and mobilize for comprehensive immigration reform that will provide legal status for hard working immigrants, to create a legal means for future workers to come to United States; reunites families and secures our borders- while protecting native and foreign born alike; guarantee

civil rights; and continue to organize immigrant workers into unions and promote civic participation, including encouraging citizenship, voter registration and participation in the political process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ATU Latino Caucus rejects the fast track Congress approach has taken on the issue. A band-aid remedy is the last thing our broken immigration needs. The ATU Latino Caucus will continue to develop and conduct educational programs on immigration with any organization that advocates to protect immigrant rights and will mobilize its members throughout the United States and Canada to promote awareness of the current Immigration legislation. The ATU Latino Caucus will continue to work with organizations to achieve social and economic justice goals for all immigrants and their families.

So, do you like to fill out accident reports?

By Mike Lemeshko, Acting Supervisor, Transit Safety

Ask this question because I can't explain the significant rise in accidents this year. If you look at the accompanying accident summary, you will see that traffic collisions in 2006 are up 9.7% over 2005, passenger falling accidents are up a whopping 17.3 % and that overall, total accidents are up 10.8%.

The first step in solving any problem is recognizing that there is one. The types of collisions that are causing us difficulties involve some very basic driving skills. These include collisions with fixed objects, rear end accidents and sideswipes. Passenger falling accidents continue on an upward spiral. What are we doing that contributes to these accidents? What can we do to prevent them?

It is in all of our interests to prevent collisions and reduce the accident rate. That is why I have asked ATU 587 President Lance Norton to partner with us in the KC Metro Safety Section to promote safety awareness. In the coming months, I hope to see articles in the union newsletter from your officers, executive board members and members, who have suggestions, safe driving tips, opinions and solutions to our accident problem.

The Safety section will continue with our weekly safety awareness campaign to put the brakes on this trend. Watch for new posters and out-house journals each Monday. In addition, I have instructed the Safety Officers to spend two hours a week at transit centers, major transfer points and park & rides to promote safe driving practices with tips and suggestions and to get your feedback directly. We are also producing a video series called the "Two Minute Drill". Look for it at the Bases. Operators with years of safe driving will be talking about how they are able to consistently drive accident free.

I need to hear from all of you. Do you have a safety hazard on your route? A suggestion for improving our performance? An idea on bus design? Fill out a green card and turn it in! I promise that we will investigate and consider your ideas, and let you know the results in writing. If you have a general comment or are not satisfied with the response from your suggestion, feel free to e-mail me at michael.lemeshko@metrok.gov.

I want to thank President Nor-

ton for publishing this article. By working together, we can reduce or eliminate accidents and provide

our customers with the safest transit system in the world.

By the way, I know you dislike

making out accident reports. I know I did when I was an operator.

Metro Transit Accident Report Summary

	August 2006	August 2005	M-T-M % Change	Y-T-D 2006	Y-T-D 2005	Y-T-D % Change
ACCIDENTS						
Traffic	163	156	4.5	1131	1031	9.7
Frequency*	39.9	39.4	1.4	36.6	34.0	7.5
Accidents Per Day	5.3	5.0	4.5	4.7	4.2	9.7
Miles Per Accident	25,055	25,399	-1.4	27,355	29,396	-6.9
Passenger	32	24	33.3	210	179	17.3
Frequency*	7.8	6.1	29.4	6.8	5.9	14.9
Accidents Per Day	1.0	0.8	33.3	0.9	0.7	17.3
Miles Per Accident	127,624	165,094	-22.7	147,329	169,316	-13.0
Total Accidents	195	180	8.3	1341	1210	10.8
Frequency*	47.7	45.4	5.1	43.3	39.9	8.6
Accidents Per Day	6.3	5.8	8.3	5.5	5.0	10.8
Miles Per Accident	20,943	22,013	-4.9	23,072	25,048	-7.9
Preventable Accidents	47	49	-4.1	352	309	13.9
Frequency*	11.5	12.4	-6.9	11.4	10.2	11.6
% of Total Accidents	24.1%	27.2%	-11.5	26.2%	25.5%	2.8
Minor	46	45	2.2	336	291	15.5
Major	1	4	-75.0	12	18	-33.3
Severe	0	0	0.0	4	0	400.0
Non-Preventable Accid.	148	131	13.0	989	901	9.8
% of Total Accidents	75.9%	72.8%	4.3	73.8%	74.5%	-1.0
<i>*Accidents per million miles operated</i>						
FACTORS						
Coach Damage	\$59,030	\$71,026	-16.9	\$456,929	\$406,594	12.4
Number of Operators	2673	2642	1.2			1.2
Miles Operated	#####	#####	3.1	#####	#####	2.1
Passengers Carried	<i>THIS INFORMATION IS NOW BEING PROVIDED ON A QUARTERLY BASIS</i>					
Non-Rev. Accidents	8	9	-11.1	54	66	-18.2
INDUSTRIAL** <i>(Industrial information obtained from King County Safety & Claims)</i>						
Operations	42	35	20.0	286	285	0.4
Maintenance	11	12	-8.3	90	76	18.4
Power & Facilities	3	6	-50.0	29	32	-9.4
Other Transit	1	1	0.0	11	4	175.0
Total	57	54	5.6	416	397	4.8
<i>**Time loss & medical injuries through 08/2006</i>						
BUS HOURS						
Total Platform Hours	325,194	313,836	3.6	#####	#####	3.1
Platform Hours per accident	1,668	1,744	-4.4	1,836	1,974	-7.0

ASE: We Don't Need It

By Deb Stenoien

ASE stands for Automotive Service Excellence. It refers to the name of both a non-profit corporation and its proprietary testing and certification program for the automotive, diesel and light rail industries. The familiar blue shield signifies participation in this program. ASE has been in the business of developing and selling tests since 1972. Each test question undergoes extensive, rigorous statistical analysis for validity and to ensure it is "fair" and "job-related". Test questions are ASE's stock-in-trade and cost approximately \$387.00 per question to produce. These costs are recouped through test fees. Written tests are given twice a year at numerous locations throughout the United States. Candidates may take up to four regular (as opposed to recertification) tests per session. There are nine proposed new tests for transit technicians. Two of these tests are already available; the rest are still in production. At this time, the registration fee is \$32.00 plus test fees of \$26.00 per test. So, a mechanic wishing to have all nine certifications would have an out-of-pocket cost of \$330.00 spread over three test sessions on three different dates. This amount does not include any compensation for time spent studying or taking the test. ASE is continuously updating the tests and the certification is only good for five years. If wages become tied to ASE certification status, studying for and taking written tests will be a way of life for mechanics.

The ASE certification process is being promoted in the workplace as being "easy" and "everyone" will pass. ASE says the tests are "tough" and, on average, "one in three test takers will fail." After all, ASE is in the business of selling "excellence" to employers and technicians alike; if the certificates were easy to come by their product would be worthless in the marketplace. No doubt Metro Mechanics will score higher than the national average, but there will be some who cannot, or do not want to, pass the tests. Conceivably, for the first time, two mechanics working side by side on the same job would be on different pay scales. And this

division would be due not to differences in mechanical ability but to differences in test-taking skills. The ATU International is not endorsing ASE. In fact, collectively, ATU has a clear message to managers regarding ASE:

1. No testing without adequate on-site training
2. Provide full compensation for testing and training
3. ASE certification will not be used for discipline

ASE claims great benefits from their program and they cite employers who "point to ASE-certified technicians as being more accurate and productive in their work and have higher overall performance ratings." This contention begs the question: Is it the ASE testing that

leads to better performance or is it the training behind the testing that is the true cause for improvement? The ATU International believes it is "training, not testing, that's needed," and ATU International President Warren George is chair of the Community Transportation Center (CTC), an organization that helps to create labor/management partnerships to bring training, and funding for training, to transit properties across the nation. The CTC's publication *Measuring UP* details the gains directly attributable to training. Effective training programs can reduce labor costs significantly and raise employee morale at the same time.

Investing in training is smart and Metro management knows it. Unlike many transit properties, Metro has an extensive, in house, training

division. The Vehicle Maintenance Fleet Engineering Group has developed its own strong curriculum of classes as well as utilizing outside sources for training. They also know the value of peer-to-peer training to disseminate knowledge in the workplace. While more training is needed to enable mechanics to keep up with emerging technologies, ASE is not the answer. ASE is a national program attempting to service entire industries; Fleet Engineering is much more in touch with the actual on-the-job needs of Metro.

ASE also sells its program directly to technicians citing "personal pride" as one of the reasons for buying in. Metro Mechanics demonstrate "personal pride" in their work every day and don't need a piece of paper to prove it. Top quality on the job performance speaks for itself.

New Two-year Mechanic Apprenticeship Program

By Deb Stenoien, Gary Tveit and Steve Meyer
Union representatives on the Apprenticeship Committee

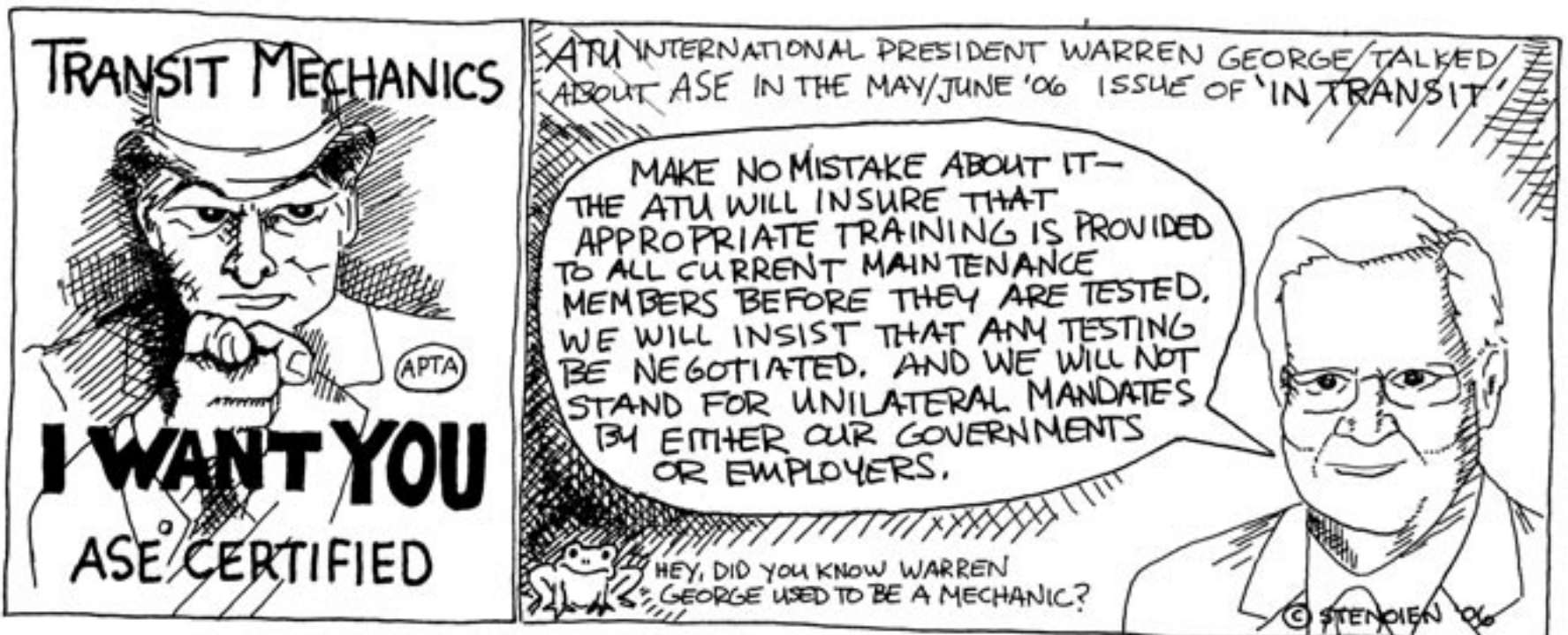
A team of ATU Local 587 VM negotiators and Metro have just concluded an agreement for a new two-year Mechanic Apprenticeship Program. This new program will be in addition to the existing, four-year Apprenticeship Program, which will remain unchanged. The four-year option is open to current Vehicle Maintenance employees and seeks those who have mechanical aptitude but no training or experience as mechanics. The new two year program is geared toward individuals who have completed a vocational school curriculum in either Diesel or Automotive Technology but have no on-the-job experience. Prospective candidates must have graduated from an accredited school within the last five years and will go through a selection process similar to the one for the

four-year apprentice program. Successful candidates will begin an on the job training program especially developed for the two-year track. At graduation, apprentices will be promoted to journey level Mechanic, earning 'C' step wages.

The new two-year apprentices will be under the purview of the Apprenticeship Committee. The Apprenticeship Committee is a joint labor/management venture comprised of three Mechanics (all former apprentices) and three Managers (all former Mechanics) who oversee the current four-year Apprentice program. Management is acknowledging the value of Local 587 participation by including committee input into this new program.

The two-year track will have no impact on existing Mechanic senior-

ity or pick options. Four new spots will be added to accommodate the program. These spots will be day-shift with weekends off, two spots at Central Base and two spots at South Base. As the success of the program dictates, more spots will probably be added to facilitate growth, perhaps on other shifts. The initial selection process will be limited to current Metro Transit employees, however, Metro will eventually be recruiting directly from trade schools. Although the start date for this program has not been set, it represents an excellent opportunity for new trade school graduates and the recruitment will likely be very competitive. This will allow Metro to continue its tradition of attracting and retaining mechanics who are 'the best of the best'.



Letters to the Editor...

Enhancing Brother Griffin's Proposal

Dear Editor,

It was heartening to read Brother's Griffin's article on the special needs of our more seasoned drivers. Why not spread this good will to all the rank and file, Metro and our riders at large?

By eliminating the divisive and superfluous full-time versus part-time distinction in favor of a single seniority system, drivers would have an opportunity to work more or less hours depending on their individual circumstances. This would also afford more members the chance obtain full health care coverage. Simultaneously, the ATU would become a more inclusive and cohesive organization.

As for Metro, a single transit operator category would precipitously reduce the current driver shortage. In addition, the opportunity to

"downsize" provides an incentive for our older members to postpone retirement, thus addressing the impending demographic changes. Moreover, Metro would benefit from the retention of our most experienced operators.

Lastly, our passengers will be elated they no longer will be left at bus stops because of cancelled trippers. Sometimes doing what is right requires a little more "modesty."

Sincerely,
Joe Kadushin
Ryerson Base

Rebuttal to "Inconsequential Grievances"

I take issue with the October *News Review* article in the Letters to the Editor column titled "Inconsequential Grievances". In my opinion there is no such thing as an inconsequential Grievance. Certainly employment termination issues, safety, security and health issues take priority over lesser pressing issues, but to refrain from filing grievances of lesser importance is simply unintelligent

thinking. Myself having endured a grievance that expired because a former Union VP failed to pursue it beyond the step 1 level for other grievances more importance to him infuriated me to no end. Conversely my expectations of our Union officers are in fact to effectively and efficiently pursue all grievances regardless of how major or minor the issue.

Sincerely,
Frank Chaddock
North Base

In response to the OWLS Immigrants Rights Resolution

Dear Editor:

This is in response to the OWLS Immigrants Rights Resolution in the September *News Review*. While I am supportive of immigrants' rights, I think that we need to emphasize that the large number of immigrants and illegal aliens is a direct consequence of corporate globalization.

The intent of corporate globalization is to turn the planet into one big company town, where nations are dependent upon corporate controlled trade for their very survival. This includes the wholesale destruction of the infrastructure of Third World countries. Foreign manufactures flood the unprotected market causing local businesses to go under and be replaced by corporate owned maquiladora sweat shops. Highly subsidized western agribusiness decimates Third World farmers (the majority of the population) causing massive unemployment and loss of food self-sufficiency. Countries which were once able to feed themselves now must import food to survive (India, Mexico, etc.). Water is privatized. Education is privatized

(eliminated for most). Healthcare is privatized (eliminated for most). The IMF runs their economies for the benefit of the transnational corporate oligarches.

Throughout the Third World, the common people are resisting corporate globalization as best they can, however, their resistance is usually met with severe repression. Under these circumstances, in order to survive, large numbers of workers from Mexico and other Latin American countries are forced to migrate to the U.S. to escape the brutal consequences of corporate globalization. Here they work for low wages, usually sending money home (remittances) to help relatives survive. The World Bank and UN estimate total remittances worldwide at \$200 to \$300 billion per annum. In Haiti, remittances account for almost a quarter of total gross domestic product. In Mexico, remittances total over \$18 billion per annum, second only to oil as a source of hard currency. Large numbers of desperately poor people in Mexico and Latin America are dependent upon remittances from relatives in the U.S. (legal and illegal) for their survival. Most of the immigrants came north because globalization has destroyed their livelihood and they feel that they have no choice but to come to the U.S. to eke out a living and send money home. Many (most?) would return home if conditions permitted.

In view of the disastrous consequences of corporate globalization, it is essential that the labor movement takes a leadership role in vigorously opposing globalization. We must join together with environmental, social justice, and other groups to work to repeal NAFTA, CAFTA, and other so-called "free trade" agreements, and to eliminate the WTO, IMF, World Bank, and other instruments of corporate domination and control. Our future well-being depends upon it. In Solidarity, Keith Keller.

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 15th of each month. Any submission from a member of Local 587 to the *News Review* deemed unprintable by the Recording Secretary shall be forwarded to the Executive Board for final decision to publish. Send letters to:

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

NOTICE TO ALL READERS

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

Love it or hate it, Wal-Mart is costing our communities

By Rick S. Bender, President of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Edited for content by Recording Secretary Paul J. Bachtel

A friend recently asked me why unions hate Wal-Mart so much. He said that, while he wishes Wal-Mart employees made more money, he shops there occasionally and he doesn't like being made to feel like he is doing something evil. Here's what I told him.

Wal-Mart isn't evil. People who work there aren't bad people; they're just struggling to get by like the rest of us. People who shop there aren't bad people either; in many cases they are lower-income folks on tight budgets who are just hoping to find bargains. But we, as a society, have to recognize that Wal-Mart and

any other corporation that shares its business model are destructive. Their business model kills middle-class jobs, promotes a race to the bottom on wages and benefits, and costs taxpayers millions of dollars every year. And we, as a society, have the right -- and the responsibility -- to say, "enough is enough." If an oil corporation was able to beat its competition by polluting more and dumping more toxins into the air and water, we wouldn't allow it, would we? Well, organized labor and many others believe that what Wal-Mart is doing is economic pollution, and it's time to hold this giant corporation accountable for

the damage it's doing to our communities.

Wal-Mart's business model is to sell products cheaper by keeping its labor costs low. Despite all of its "happy associates" public relations campaigns, it's clear that Wal-Mart keeps labor costs low by paying workers less, providing fewer benefits, and aggressively opposing unionization.

There are costs to this strategy, like class-action settlements in wage-and-hour and discrimination lawsuits, expensive we're-not-so-bad public relations campaigns, and legal bills for fighting against the cities and towns that don't want its

stores in their neighborhoods. But despite this, its business model has succeeded and helped revolutionize the retail and grocery industries.

Revolutions usually happen when the people rise up, but in this case it's happened when the people in power clamped down.

Because the grocery industry has been almost completely unionized on the West Coast, people who work in supermarkets have led middle-class lives for decades. Most could afford to own a home, keep their families healthy, save enough to help send kids to college, and eventually, to retire. All of the stores provided

continued on page 7

On the Road Again...

By Humble Rank and File Member Jennie Gil

It is not often that a duly elected full-time union officer makes the choice not to run for re-election and steps back into their former position. My decision to do so received a wide variety of reactions from friends, coworkers and family members. A few even asked if I had gone off my rocker and some well-meaning folk cautioned me that things were definitely not like they had been when I last drove in 1998.

It has now been two months since my return to the humble position of Bus Driver. The question of how am I liking being "back in the trenches" and how things are going for me comes up again and again. I thought some of you might find amusement in the retelling of my transition back to the "real working world".

A Newbie All Over Again

I spent the first three days in re-training and had the good fortune of being assigned to Instructor Stan "The Man" Price. Stan was full of good humor, patience, kind advice and useful tips. Keep in mind there was only one bus in the system I was qualified on, everything else is new equipment, and there have been significant service changes in eight years. I would have to qualify on all the new equipment, and certainly on almost everything I had picked. Under Stan's guidance I felt quite comfortable behind the wheel by the end of the first day. Friends who had advised me when I made the decision to return had been right; the equipment is so much nicer, smoother, and easier to drive.

Then I spent the day in service with an instructing operator. The poor extra board operator who drew

the short straw was named Richard. Richard's input was invaluable. While I have been instrumental in writing and negotiating contract language and policy, Richard has been living it, his experience is current, mine was eight years old.

I was reminded of how much there is to deal with while motor-ing down the road: Issuing passes, transfers, calling stops, pulling in and out of bus stops, answering questions, opening and closing the doors, changing signs (I forgot on my first trip). Looking at the left side controls to make sure I hit the correct button to close the correct door brought about some close calls. I got yelled at by a lady who missed her bus. We were four minutes late getting to Northgate and got to watch her bus pull away. I felt bad, but such is life sometimes. She then yelled at both Richard and Stan, who was doing my first ride check at the time, bitched that they shouldn't put trainees on these routes and then told me I better learn to speed up.

We dealt with a sleeper in Lake City. Then downtown we loaded a guy with a bike that was bleeding from a bit of a small head wound. Never occurred to me this was anything other than gross, but the farther we got into town, the more uncomfortable Richard seemed, although he had left it up to me to decide how to handle it. When I did call it in, the coordinator immediately arranged for a coach change. All pointing back to Richard knowing "current", me still operating under "old". Current is that this constituted a biohazard (Loving Spouse, 16 year Operator out of Clallam Transit, came to that conclusion

immediately when I recounted the incident at home) but eight years ago I would have been told to write it up when I got in.

We loaded a wheel chair that, when we went to offload it, the strap would not come out of the guy's arm rest. It was downtown, beginning of rush hour, and we are blocking coaches on 3rd. Richard knew to cut the strap. Would not have occurred to me. At the end of the day I told Richard that all those things were staged, that one could not possibly have all those unusual incidents in one single day, much less one's first day back.

Getting Into the Swing of Things

I have been on my own for over eight weeks as of this writing. I haven't hit anything or anyone (knock on wood!). I have made all sorts of hilarious mistakes, though. I've forgotten a few times to kneel the coach when loading wheel-chairs. First day of shakeup was a hoot when I drove a New Flyer in service for the first time and while making the relief couldn't find the buttons to shut the door. It took me several seconds to remember what the handle was for. Being older and wiser also has its drawbacks. I now wear bifocals. I forgot them one day. Should have seen me trying to figure out my time points on a dark orange run card on a rainy day!

But I don't regret for a second having returned to driving a bus. To begin with, I honestly believe most members do not realize breadth and width of the job of a union officer. I drove all day and was done at the end of the day. I did not have to

answer voice mail on the way home, or make just one more call after dinner, or answer another email before going to bed. I didn't have to deal with internal or external politics. I didn't have to worry about things piling up on my desk because I ran late. Tomorrow's work will not be an accumulation of today's and yesterdays undone work. It will simply be tomorrow's work.

Second, I am proud of what I do. It is honest work. The people are still the people, the traffic is still the traffic, and the more things change, the more they stay the same. I have "gotten back on the bicycle", and I do what I do as smoothly as I ever did. It is fun, interesting, and different every day. Not to mention how much I like being back among my fellow drivers.

I can't believe they pay me to do this.

OBTW...

(...which means "Oh, by the way..." for those of you non-chatters and non-texters...)

I am currently enjoying 65/10 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. On my last trip there is a lovely young man named Ted. Ted is developmentally disabled. Every afternoon as he gets off the bus he asks me, from the back door since this is where he deboards every time, he asks me whether George will drive this bus again. He asks if I have seen George, and then he asks if he was good, meaning had he behaved properly during the trip. I always tell him yes, and he asks if I will make sure and let George know he had been good. George, whoever you are, Ted has been behaving well, and he misses you.

Wal-Mart, continued

good union wages and benefits, so they competed on a level playing field, based on the quality of their products and services. They still managed to sell stuff at prices consumers could afford, and they still made plenty of profit at the same time.

Then along came Wal-Mart and its low-road labor strategy, and all that has changed.

Now we have a race-to-the-bottom competition among the retailers and grocery stores that have survived. Tens of thousands of unionized grocery workers in Washington have either lost their jobs or are giving up their wages and health benefits so their employers can try to compete with Wal-Mart.

Love Wal-Mart or hate it, you, too, are a victim.

In 2004, about 3,200 Wal-Mart employees were on taxpayer-funded health plans because their company — the richest one on Planet Earth — chooses not to offer affordable health benefits. That subsidy cost state taxpayers \$12 million that year, by the legislature's estimate. Twice

that, if you include costs to federal taxpayers.

The good news is that Americans are starting to figure all this out. People are starting to see the link between companies like Wal-Mart and their tax bills, their rising health care costs, and the economic destruction of their communities.

On Labor Day, Sept. 4, a national bus tour called "Change Wal-Mart, Change America" concluded in Seattle. This tour, which began in New York City and visited 27 cities in 20 states, has educated many Americans about affordable health care, living wages, the outsourcing of U.S. jobs and corporate accountability.

Led by the United Food and Commercial Workers union, this campaign and bus tour was not just about Wal-Mart. The goal is to build a movement of millions of Americans who are ready to take our country back from multi-billion dollar corporations like Wal-Mart, so that America's working families can once again have affordable health care and economic security.

Why Bother, How Can I Make a Difference?

By Dee Wakenight

Through out history we have been shown the power of just one vote.

In 1800 Thomas Jefferson was elected President by one vote in the House of Representatives.

In 1824 Andrew Jackson won the presidential popular vote but lost by one vote in the House of Representatives after an Electoral College dead-lock.

In 1845 the U.S. Senate passed the convention annexing Texas by 2 votes (27/25)

In 1846 President Polk's request for a Declaration of War against Mexico passed by one vote.

In 1867 the Alaska purchase

was ratified by one vote, now it's a state.

In 1868 President Andrew Johnson was Impeached but not convicted, because the Senate was 1 vote short of the 2/3 majority required.

All this and more is available on the internet; I just typed in one vote @google and got over 1000,000 hits. We have seen over the years the difference that 1 vote makes. Our future is in our hands, we are the power for positive change. It makes me crazy when I hear someone say, "why bother, how can I make a difference?" The answer is simple, VOTE.

C.O.P.E. General Election

The members of the 587's C.O.P.E. (Committee on Political Education) have made the following endorsements for the upcoming General Election. The candidates we have endorsed and / or donated funds to

have, as an incumbent, a history of supporting transit, transportation, and labor issues. Or, as a candidate, they have expressed views that convinced the committee to support their elections efforts. As you see

from our endorsements, we provide a broad based level of support.

In 2007 if you would like to see the candidates of your choice supported by the committee, make sure he or she approaches us for an interview.

You never know.

Remember: The General Election is Tuesday, November 7, 2006.

*Rick Sepolen
Chairman of the 587 C.O.P.E*

Legislative Dist	Postion	Candidate	Party
1 (King, Snohomish)	1	Al O'Brien	Dem
	2	Mark Ericks	Dem
2 (Pierce, Thurston)	1	Jean Christensen	Dem
	2	Tom Campbell	Rep
3 (Spokane)	1	Alex Wood	Dem
	2	Timm Ormsby	Dem
6 (Spokane)	Sen	Chris Marr	Dem
	1	Don Barlow	Dem
7 (Ferry, Lincoln Okanogan, Pend Orielle, Spokane, Stevens)	1	Jack Miller	Dem
	2	Tim Knue	Dem
10 (Island, Skagit, Snohomish)	1	Zack Hudgins	Dem
	2	Bob Hasegawa	Dem
11 (King)	1	Deb Wallace	Dem
	2	Julie McCord	Dem
17 (Clark)	2	Mike Rechner	Dem
18 (Clark, Cowlitz)	2	Christine Rolfes	Dem
20 (Lewis, Thurston)	1	Kevin Van DeWege	Dem
23 (Kitsap)	2	Derek Kilmer	Dem
	1	Patricia Lantz	Dem
24(Clallam, Grays Harbor Jefferson)	1	Larry Seaquist	Dem
	2	Dennis Flannigan	Dem
26 (Kitsap, Pierce)	Sen	Jeannie Darneille	Dem
	1	Tami Green	Dem
27 (Pierce)	2	Rosa Franklin	Dem
	Sen	Steve Conway	Dem
28 (Pierce)	1	Steve Kirby	Dem
	2	Tracey Eide	Dem
29 (Pierce)	Sen	Mark Miloscia	Dem
	1	Helen Stanwell	Dem
30 (King)	Sen		
	1		
	2		

Legislative Dist	Postion	Candidate	Party
31(King, Pierce)	Sen	Yvonne Ward	Dem
32(King, Snohomish)	Sen	Darlene Fairley	Dem
	1	Maralyn Chase	Dem
	2	Ruth Kagi	Dem
	Sen	Karen Keiser	Dem
33(King)	1	Shay Schual-Berke	Dem
	2	Dave Upthegrove	Dem
41 (King)	1	Dale Murphy	Dem
		Fred Jarrett	Rep
	2	Judy Clibborn	Dem
	Sen	Jesse Salamon	Dem
42(Whatcom)	1	Jasper MacSllarrow	Dem
	2	Kelli Linville	Dem
43(King)	Sen	Ed Murray	Dem
	1	Jamie Pedersen	Dem
	2	Frank Chopp	Dem
	Sen	Steve Hobbs	Dem
44(Snohomish)	1	Hans Dunshee	Dem
	2	John Lovick	Dem
45 (King)	Sen	Eric Oemig	Dem
47 (King)	Sen	Claudia Kauffman	Dem
	1	Geoff Simpson	Dem
	2	Pat Sullivan	Dem
	Sen	Rodney Tom	Dem
48 (King)	1	Ross Hunter	Dem
	2	Deborah Eddy	Dem
49 (Clark)	1	Bill Fromhold	Dem
	2	Jim Moeller	Dem
Supreme Court		Susan Owens	Non-Part

"YOU DECIDE". How you vote is a personal decision.

Your Union has carefully researched candidates' records and positions and believes that the candidates listed above are the best choices for working families.

LEADS... The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.

By Mike Whitehead & Jeff Stambaugh

As most of you know we have leads in VM, the classification started around 1980 with a hand full of members in the mechanic classification. Currently there are approximately 60 Leads in 8 classifications of the Labor Agreement. The concept of Leads appears simple yet the affectation is profound.

THE GOOD: Most of you know who they are. They are the ones who you respect, as they do you. An indicator to an outside observer is a Base where the turn over at pick time is minimal. The GOOD Lead works with his crew to get the work done, and it does. If there is stolid management at the base the GOOD Lead will run defense allowing the classification they lead to do their work in a positive professional manor. The GOOD Lead does the job, not always for the money, or the need to fulfill some absents of self worth, they take the job because they are a leader, a positive respectful person who has natural social skills. Some say if you hold up a mirror to a good lead they see themselves.....

THE BAD: Most of you know who they are. They are the ones you work with because you do not have enough seniority to pick something else. You can tolerate them most of the time; it's not a total love fest. Sometimes you need to go to management to resolve issues the Lead instigate (this only works when you

have tolerable management at your base). They regularly make some decision that makes you gasp, step back and think "What the \$*%@" . They sometimes feel the need to assign work, for they "Know Better" and think of you as lesser. Some say when they look into a mirror they see some one else....

THE UGLY: All of you know who they are. If you have low seniority and there are spots open at the Pick with good RDO's or on a normal shift they are part of the reason why. As you work with them you find them a cipher of bad management. You know their type, the ones often beaten up in public school. They have a need to prove their self worth that often is a goal unattainable. You continually find ways of working around them so you can get the job done. Daily you find yourself in wonderment, or talk quietly with coworkers wondering how they got the job. Some say when they look into a mirror, it will break...

The above ranting is just a satire exercise, ramblings if you wish, do we don't really have problems with some Leads, our Union Brothers and Sisters...or do we?

At our last VMLMRC management discussed Discretionary Time and how it was posted at the bases. As many of you told us not all Bases were on the same page as far as posting the information. Well management is looking at having a

template so all bases are consistence. This a good step in the right direction and we hope this task will get accomplished, time will tell. If they pull this off we can make many more suggestions.

The V.M. Employee of the Year is on some kind of promotional tour. The current title holder Brian "The ACE" Nussbaum was at CSC signing autographs. The line at lunch was a mile long and we are told all proceeds will go to a good cause. Rumor has it the good cause is buying Mike "Buckey" Buchanan VM's own combined charities representative a new suit or what ever \$7.36 will buy.

ASE Certification

We have not heard it ourselves, but rumor is our training department is encouraging our members to take the ASE Bus Technician Certification tests. The International ATU has stressed "No testing without training." Until the Union and Metro have negotiated how this will impact our members, we strongly



Brian Nussbaum – Vehicle Maintenance Employee Of The Year

encourage you not to take any of these tests. However, if you feel it is beneficial to you in some way to take the tests this is your business and no one else's, especially Metro's.

Technological Change Update,

I know it been a long time and we've all been waiting, but unfortunately we are going to have to wait some more. As of this writing there is a meeting scheduled the week of October 16 with the arbitration panel. I would imagine sometime within the next 45 days we will have a decision, if not, at least more information should become available.

VM, *Keep your sticks sharp and your fires burning.*

Treat me like one of the family...

By Dee Wakenight
For News Review

What does the word generic bring to mind? A Google search on the internet brought these results:

A drug which is exactly the same as a brand name drug and which is allowed to be produced after the brand name drug's patent has expired.

It is also called "a generic equivalent". A chemically equivalent copy designed from a brand-name drug whose patent has expired (typically less expensive and sold under the common name).

A classification of prescription that requires a lesser co-pay because of patent or cost of producing the drug.

A medicine with the same active ingredient, but not necessarily the same inactive ingredients, as brand name drug. A generic drug may be marketed only after the original drug's patent has expired.

What does all this mean to me?

Do you enjoy helping the pharmaceutical companies remain the most profitable enterprise in the nation? Historically when a patent on a drug it is about to expire, about 15 years, the company goes to court to try to keep the strangle hold they have enjoyed thus far intact. Normally they lose, then magically there it is, let's say Claritin D with an extra 3 grains of salt in the compounding, and viola, a new drug complete with 15 years or so of patent protection. Either we can buy the old Claritin over the counter, the "store brand generic", for less money, or have our Doctor write us a prescription for the newer better Claritin D. We all make this choice, I picked on Claritin because I have allergies and do take Loratadine, the active ingredient in Claritin. To be honest I haven't a clue as to what makes Claritin D different, my pharmacist compared it to adding 3 grains of salt so I stole the comparison.

Another little known fact is that prior to "approval by the FDA" there are very few people who have actually taken the drug, and almost no one who has taken it long term. An average test could have 10,000 people for 2 years. When it goes to market there are suddenly 2,000,000 people trying the drug for perhaps years. Some of these folks might even have other medications that they are taking.

Remember Fen-Fen, Vioxx, others? When you multiply drastically the number of people taking a medication, the possibilities for problems grow exponentially which is why we normally only hear about recall on NEW drugs. Most of the generic drugs have already been around for the 15+ years of patent protection, and have had thousands of folks taking them over the long term.

There is always the option of moving up the chain of treatment to the newer, faster, better, drugs but it is

rare for folks to trade down to the less expensive older drugs. Why not consider starting treatment with the tried and true, then if the results are not what they should be move on up the chain of treatment options. There is some comfort in looking at the warning and interactions and not seeing something worse than the cause you are getting the drug for. My personal favorite side effect is when it says in some rare instances it may cause death.

Some drugs are wonderful, and new. There is no generic. When I see my Doctor and there is the possibility of a prescription I ask "Would you give this to your family?" The first time I asked this, my provider took a couple of minutes and then told me no, there is an older drug with known side effects that would be tried first if it were for a family member. Then I asked to please, treat me like one of the family.

President's Report, continued

by a government agent until police arrived.

Reading the report it says Operator Anthony Woods sustained minor injuries and was later taken to Harborview Hospital to be checked out. Yesterday I filed the case charges on this incident. I charged the suspect with three felonies, attempted robbery 1, unlawful possession of a firearm 2 and assault 3. Please let Operator Woods know of the charges filed on the suspect. Great job by Operator Woods his quick actions prevented some one and possibly more from being shot!"

Also from one of our Transit Police Officers who responded to the scene in an e-mail to Major Carol Cummings the following. "The purpose of this e-mail is to bring attention to the very heroic actions of the coach operator Anthony Woods. The suspect was fighting with the two victims of the attempted robbery at the back of the bus. The victims were yelling "he's got a gun" while fighting with the suspect, Anthony had the presence of mind to safely stop the bus and the fortitude to intervene in the robbery. He was able to wrestle the suspect off of the bus and hold him down until the suspect was taken into custody. Anthony was slightly injured in the incident,

but because of his intervention nobody was seriously hurt. Anthony had no way of knowing that this gun was fully loaded with a bullet in the chamber. I have no doubt that if Anthony had not intervened, that round would have been fired and God knows where it would have ended up. Anthony deserves the highest of praise for his intervention in this incident."

These heroic actions undertaken by Brother Anthony Woods were recognized by our Local's membership by the presentation of a plaque awarded to Anthony at our Charter Meeting October 5, 2006 which read: The Officers and Members of A.T.U. Local 587 present to Anthony Woods this plaque in recognition of your heroic actions July 20, 2006.

Metro recognized Anthony's actions with a letter in his file. The following are excerpts from that letter. After briefly describing what occurred they state: "While these circumstances are heroic on your part and helped to prevent someone from being shot, your actions failed to follow security guidelines set forth in Section 4, Page 580 of the Book, Assault Prevention. Under assault prevention, Section 4, 3 A through H operators are to follow specific guidelines to prevent assaults on



Left to right: Minority Affairs Officer Ray Campbell, President Lance Norton, Operator Anthony Woods and Vice President Kenny McCormick

themselves as well as passengers.

1. When possible remain seated.
2. If an operator observes suspicious or unusual behavior of customers on their coaches, notify the coordinator immediately.
3. If an assault is taking place hit the E.A. (Emergency Alarm).
4. If necessary, use the coach P.A. System.
5. Open both doors to avoid trapping the individuals.
6. Generally, operators are not to approach customers. Finally according to this section Operator Security, Section 4.3H: When using these guidelines never risk your safety or the safety of your customers. If you have any questions about your safety or that of your customers, call the coordinator first. In any case where

you have the slightest doubt, call the coordinator. Explain the situation and wait for advice from the coordinator.

Anthony, please follow these operational procedures in any future incidents. Please remember your role is that of a peacekeeper, not an enforcer."

Well, there you have it. That's the recognition Anthony received from Metro for his allowing his instincts to kick in on July 20, 2006. Had he remembered what the Book said I wonder what the body count would have been. One last thing. The Union objected to this letter being placed in Anthony's file and Metro finally did agree to remove it.

Regards to all...

Be Safe.

Lance F. Norton

The Recording Secretary's Report

By Paul J. Bachtel



Grievance Wanted

Workers compensation time loss is a state prescribed payment intended to partially replace your lost wages when you're off work due to an on the job injury and is not intended to fully replace your take home pay. The amount you receive depends on your marital status, number of dependants and other earned income, and ranges from 60% to 75% of adjusted gross pay. (Adjusted gross pay for the purpose of calculating time loss is calculated using overtime-straight for all hours worked at the overtime rate.) The collective bargaining agreement between ATU and KC Metro provides (for full-time employees only) a supplemental payment to replace the difference between an employees net pay (not including overtime) and state prescribed time loss payment.

The supplemental payment language provides for 100% net pay replacement (based on straight-time wages) for the first 60 work days missed, then 90% of net pay replacement (based on straight-time wages) for the next 60 work days missed and finally, 80% net pay replacement (based on straight-time wages) for the next 140 work days missed for

a total 260 work days. (260 work days = approximately 365 calendar days = 1 year)

The longer an employee is off work due to industrial injury the less supplemental payment he/she receives, therefore the Union negotiated contract language that entitles an employee to make up the difference in declining supplemental payments by using the employees choice of earned accruals, sick leave, vacation leave, and/or AC time.

KC Metro has now redefined the intent of this contract provision to only allow an employee the use of earned accruals after ALL supplemental payments are completely exhausted, not partially exhausted as was originally intended by Union and Metro when the contract language was negotiated. KC Metro's new and redefined intent of previously negotiated contract language completely invalidates the original intent of the provision. In addition if you are off work more than 260 work days KC Metro may terminate your employment for inability to work regularly thereby never allowing you use of your sick leave accruals.

If you are currently receiving

Metro is doing all in its power to limit Industrial Insurance and sick leave expenses ...

supplemental payments and have been off for more than 60 work days you are entitled to use your sick leave accruals to supplement your supplemental pay. If Metro denies you your right to use your sick leave accruals to supplement your supplemental pay please contact me at the Union office for help in filing a grievance.

The grievance should cite article 12, Section 9, Paragraph "E", page 60 of the collective bargaining agreement. "If an employee exhausts supplemental payments, he/she may use sick leave, vacation leave or AC time in lieu of Metro's supplemental payments, as provided in Paragraph B. If such employee is working an alternate assignment, such payments will be at the hourly rate of the alternate work assignment."

The original intent of the Union and Metro was to allow employees access to their own accruals to supplement declining supplemental payments. Metro is now contending this language only applies after All supplemental payments are exhausted. If that were true (and it's not!) why would the second sentence in the above cited contract language call for payment to be made at an alternate work assignment wage (Light Duty). Metro's argument is simply not credible. Metro is doing all in its power to limit Industrial Insurance and sick leave expenses by reinterpreting long standing contract language. It's up to you to stop them. Grievant Wanted - File At Union Office.

Romanian Council; A Progress Report

By Paul L. Griffin, A.T.U. Ambassador

The reputation of the ATU precedes us no matter where we go. Our reputation motivated the transit union representing the METRO (that means underground train system) of Bucharest, Romania to model their union after our own. "Uniunea Sindicatelor Libere Metrou" as their union is known in Bucharest represents over 5000 transit workers and has been led by Ion Radoi since the fall of communism in 1989. Ion Radoi is a major public figure in Bucharest as he also has been elected to the Romanian Senate. In addition to the affiliation with our union Ion Radoi is working on an association of unions similar to our AFL-CIO here in America. He truly understands the value of speaking with one very loud single voice.

For some time now our International has been assisting in the creation and functioning of an ATU-Romanian Council. We here at ATU Local 587 have also participated in a small way of assisting our brothers and sisters in Romania. Recently I hand delivered a gift from our local of \$1,000 to Ion Radoi in support of the ATU-Romanian Council. They made it clear that we are friends and they welcomed me even though I have no official capacity with Local 587 any more (Except as self proclaimed ATU Ambassador).

They took me to the almost finished office where the ATU-Romanian Council will conduct business. As a practical matter they will move some of the union business out of the makeshift office they occupy in one of the underground rail stations to the new office. The whole process will be a welcomed and healthier environment than what they now occupy.

One of the major topics of discussion was the pending International Convention in Las Vegas next September 2007. It is a forgone

conclusion that Ion and his board of officers will be invited to attend the convention. They also are planning to bring their wives. At the last Northwest Conference we had preliminary discussion of treating our Romanian friends to a tour of the Pacific Northwest. We certainly don't want them to think that the glitz of Las Vegas represents all of America. They would very much like to see what we have here in the Pacific Northwest and how we live and work.

Our next ATU International Convention is scheduled in Las Vegas beginning on September 15th and ending on September 21st, 2007. Quickly, the plan would be to fly from Las Vegas to Portland, take a tour by bus for about a week, and leave by direct flight from Seattle back to Romania. Now it is up to our International Union to participate in co-coordinating this adventure and to assist in the expense. Perhaps the Northwest Conference, ATU Local 587 and ATU Local 757 in Portland, Oregon will share in some of the expenses of co-hosting this trip to the Pacific Northwest. It's not just a question of money - it's a question of spreading good will and being good hosts.

All great events require planning and lead time. I will personally be contacting our International to encourage them to provide additional monies. We can do no less.

On a personal note I find Romania to be a delightful place to visit. Some features are as modern as anyplace. However they have a history we cannot even conceive in this country. Churches in regular use for 500 years or more. Buildings un-occupied and falling apart since World War II for lack of proof of ownership standing next to brand new buildings. Romania is an emerging market set to join the European

Union in the near future. Consequently there are new banks and hotels popping up like weeds. And the traffic . . . They're all in a hurry and constantly blowing their horns. Rush hour starts about 6:00 a.m. in the downtown area and doesn't let up until 10:00 p.m. or later. Depending on how long dinner took. Eating is a major social event in Romania. None of this "quick bite" and turn the house like restaurants here in America. Real estate prices are sky rocketing and have no rhyme or reason. Capitalism is alive and well. So is corruption and witch hunt investigations. A residual from the communist time and secret police. Security is supplied by military personnel packing machine guns. Bucharest has two airports. One is domestic flights and the other is only international flights. No co-mingling. Even though the average standard of living is less than in America I found the people to be optimistic and friendly. Learn a few words in Romanian and they will roll out the red carpet. Even people in stores and shops are thoroughly entertained by Americans trying to use a little Romanian. And they delight in try-



Left to right: Constantin Dumitrica, VP; Marian Baragau, VP; Florin Crisu, General Secretary; Ion Radoi, President; Marinela Bratu, translator; Paul Griffin, ATU Ambassador



Left to right: Constantin Dumitrica, VP; Marinela Bratu, translator; Marian Baragau, VP; Florin Crisu, General Secretary; Paul Griffin, ATU Ambassador; Nichifor Ghita, VP; Ion Radoi, President

ing out their English which is more England English than American English. All in all, a great undiscovered tourist destination. Just make sure your passport is secure and backed up as pick-pocketing is an honorable profession and growth industry.

Our ATU bond of Solidarity with our Romanian brothers and sisters is a tangible presentation of sharing history and good will and promoting peace with the rest of the world. We can do no less as we are all, truly, in this together.

Advanced Steward Training

For Chief Shop Stewards & Executive Board Officers

WHEN: WEDNESDAY – NOVEMBER 8th 2006

WHERE: UNION OFFICE
2815 SECOND AVENUE #230
BAY VISTA OFFICE BLDG
BETWEEN BROAD & CLAY

TIME: 9am to 5pm

Advanced Steward Training is a 1-day session
Chief Shop Stewards please call the Union office if you would like to attend no later than 4pm on Wednesday, November 1, 2006

Casual attire

*Boxed lunches will be provided

Parking available in underground garage

Upcoming at Local 587

NOVEMBER 2 — Charter membership meeting

NOVEMBER 3 — Morning membership meeting

NOVEMBER 6 — Jefferson Transit membership meeting

NOVEMBER 7 — Clallam Transit membership meeting

NOVEMBER 4 — Scheduled re-pick at MV Transportation and Seattle Personal Transit

NOVEMBER 28 — Executive Board Meeting

Healthy Incentives for KCM Management, Pt 4

By Joshua Laff, Atlantic Base Shop Steward, Licensed Massage Practitioner, Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences

This article is the fourth in a series examining working conditions for Transit Operators, and why the King County Council and Metro management (hereafter KCM) should be taking steps to change those conditions. My goal is to continue to demonstrate that if KCM is serious about reducing healthcare costs, unhealthy working conditions need to be remedied. This article will be revisiting the issue of Comfort Stations. For my initial article on that, please see the August 2006 issue of *The News Review*.

I had the opportunity to speak with Jim Kost last week. Jim is the Construction and Comfort Station Coordinator. Amongst other projects, he's the primary person in charge of arranging our Comfort Stations. During our dialogue Jim gave me an understanding of the process he goes through to make these arrangements. Examining that process reveals to me opportunities for KCM to assist it.

First, Jim needs to be notified that there is a problem. While it seems he is aware of most of the problem routes, Jim gets most of his information from Comfort Station feedback cards that are (supposed to be) at all of the bases. Jim also told me about a request he received from one of the managers to focus on a solution for the route 17. This suggests to me that management can be not only a source of information, but also an influence on solutions. Regardless, if you've complained to a Base Chief about Comfort Stations, but never filled out one of the feedback cards, I strongly suggest you fill one out, regardless of whether or not you think someone else has.

Once Jim knows about a need for a Comfort Station, he has several options that he pursues, usually in the same order. The first choice is to try and "rent" space from a business nearby the terminal. When available, this is usually the easiest solution. Tracing the route 17 situation as an example, the terminal for this route is in a completely residential neighborhood; there's nowhere to rent.

In cases where renting space isn't possible, he and his team look at the area surrounding the terminal for possible locations to place either a portable unit or a permanent structure. The complications of this can be significant. Both require community acceptance, and most communities find the structures – whether brick or plastic – unsightly. While a constructed unit might be more acceptable, it also requires plumbing and metered electrical access which is not possible in some areas. In addition to neighborhood approval, Metro also requires approval from the jurisdiction (city or county) where the proposed site is in. Obviously, in cases of county jurisdiction, KCM should certainly be able to support such structures.

In cases of city jurisdiction, KCM has opportunity to assist the process through dialogue between the governments. Looking at the route 17, the surrounding land is owned by homeowners with expensive properties and a scenic view of Puget Sound. Even if they would approve a structure figuratively in their backyard, no one would approve one literally so.

The next and pretty much last option Jim has available is trying to get the terminal changed. The difficulty of this varies depending on several factors. First, this also requires jurisdictional and neighborhood cooperation. If the proposed location and routing is already associated with another route, that cooperation comes a bit easier. However, Service Planning must also be onboard with the changes. They tend to be more supportive if the travel time of the route will remain about the same. Otherwise, increased routing time may mean needing to add an extra bus into the service loop. This is where the route 17 currently sits. Jim has proposed a routing change that places the current terminal in the neighborhood east of the current 48 terminal. In the late morning, it takes 71 minutes to get from White Center (route 23) to Loyal Heights. If proposed routing changes for a comfort station increase that to 85 minutes, the currently scheduled recovery time is too short. In order to maintain 30 minute service, another bus would need to leave at the currently scheduled departure time instead. Adding another bus, and its Operator, can be very costly, which is why Service Planning resists changing the terminal. Even so, Jim feels optimistic about the future of getting such changes made. The process is lengthy and time consuming, but he feels good about the cooperation and success rate so far, and feels the other departments are increasing their understanding for the need of comfort stations.

To maintain perspective, I remind the reader what that need is. Lack of adequate bathroom facilities on a repeated and extended basis can lead to a number of short- and long-term medical conditions (described in my August article), which cost King County money in the form of healthcare costs (and sick leave). Whereas KCM has demonstrated by the Healthy Incentives program their interest in exploring ways to reduce those costs, I recommend they look at work conditions, such as a lacking of Comfort Stations, which contribute to those costs.

Reviewing Solutions

I hope my article so far has conveyed my impression that Jim is definitely interested in solving Comfort Station problems and has a real handle on the situation. He

and his co-workers are definitely very busy, though, with many more construction projects on a much larger scale. I therefore still support all of the suggestions I made in the August article. I do think budgeting money will help in these areas, such as rerouting terminals or putting "comfort station travel time" into the run cards (such as was suggested for the route 42). In fact, this latter solution could solve the community / jurisdiction difficulties of relocating the terminal.

The question is, how much sway does the manager in question have over the situation? I assume it's no big deal for him to suggest a route needs attention, but can he swing budgets? Based on my experiences at Ryerson Base, I think the route 17 is a great one to try and get a comfort station for. Jim told me that the Service Planners haven't said, "No," they've just indicated his proposal requires another bus, i.e. increased money. Is that a process the already

involved manager can expedite?

Jim also suggested forming an Operator group, representing each of the bases, which he could meet with once a shakeup. This could provide fresh perspectives for solutions, as Jim isn't always as familiar with the areas surrounding the terminals as we drivers who are in those neighborhoods every day. I'll be looking into trying to help Jim get something like this set up. Hopefully, there will be other Operators that feel this is a concern that merits our collective attention, dialogue and resources, and are interested in working cooperatively towards solutions to our difficulties. In the meantime, suggestions can also be made on the Comfort Station feedback forms.

Finally, I will continue to see what other information I can find out about the process, and await any insight that KCM might be willing to volunteer on the matter.



Metro Employee Recreational Activities Association (MERAA's)

2006 Holiday Party

Saturday, December 9, 2006

Doubletree Hotel

Maxi Lounge and Restaurant

18740 International Blvd. South

Seattle, WA 98188

Reception: 6pm – 7 pm

Buffet Dinner: 7pm – 9 pm

Door Prizes: 9:00 pm

Entertainment and Dancing: 9:30pm – 1am

Only 300 Tickets Available! Get Your Tickets Early!

\$30.00 per person

\$1000 Worth of Door Prizes To Be Given Away