

# ATU Local 587 News Review

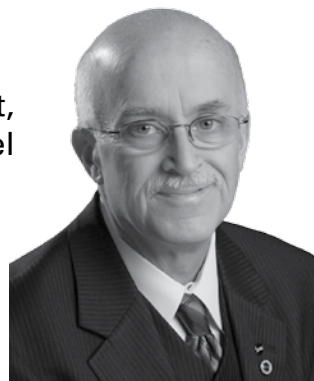
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VOL. XXXIII, NO. 9

## The President's Report

### 56th ATU International Convention

by President,  
Paul J. Bachtel



#### Why I'm Voting for International President Ron Heintzman

One of my responsibilities as President of Local 587 is to be ever vigilant in reminding our local membership we are not just a union that represents employees of King County Metro. Although those employees comprise approximately 90% of our membership, Local 587 also represents employees of Seattle Personal Transit (a paratransit provider in King County), First Transit (a paratransit dispatching service serving King County), Jefferson Transit Authority (a fixed route and paratransit provider in Jefferson County), Clallam Transit Service (a fixed route provider in Clallam County), and Clallam Paratransit Services (a paratransit provider in Clallam County).

In addition to representing employees of five small transit properties, Local 587 is also a member of a much larger organization, the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). The ATU is comprised of 190,000 members in 264 locals in the United States and Canada. The ATU is led by an International

President, an International Executive Vice President, an International Secretary-Treasurer, and 18 International Vice Presidents who form its General Executive Board. All of these International Officers are elected during the ATU's triennial International Convention. In addition to those elected at the Convention, the International employs appointed International Representatives who, like the International Vice Presidents, do much of the International's work throughout the United States and Canada. Members of the ATU Canadian Council also elect a Canadian Director to focus on specifically Canadian concerns.

Last fall, our Recording Secretary conducted a mail-out election so our members could choose Executive Board Officers for positions as International Delegates to the 56th triennial ATU International Convention. During the last week of September, our Full-Time Officers and those elected International Delegates will travel to Florida to take part in the 56th triennial ATU

International Convention which includes electing the next contingent of International Officers for a three-year term of office.

My first reaction to the thought of attending another International Convention was — I don't want to go. Who wants to go to hot Florida during hurricane season? Why Disney World? Besides, it's four weeks before the expiration of the King County Metro contract and not a time to leave town. After a little more thought, and a scolding from a former Recording Secretary, I soon remembered it is the duty of elected local officers to take part in the election of our International Officers. The service they provide is vital to the interests of Local 587. Our ATU International is our voice on Capitol Hill. The work of our ATU International office protects and supports current and future transit funding as well as worker's rights issues throughout the United States and Canada.

This particular triennial ATU  
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**The Month at a Glance**

*Business of the Membership*

*Executive Board Report*

August 24, 2010

At the August cycle of membership meetings the following business was conducted:

The membership voted to pursue the grievance of Cory Rigtrup to arbitration.

The following members were August pot draw winners:

Clint DeVoss charter meeting, Chuck Lare morning meeting, Carol Headley JTA meeting, Robert E. Lee Clallam meeting and Donald Smith lost the \$475 rolling pot at Clallam. Next month's rolling pot will be \$500

All officers were present with the exception of Ray Campbell and Ray Mason, who were conducting the Full-Time Operator pick and Michael Moore who was on vacation.

The following business was conducted:

A motion by Paul Neil, that the Executive Board recommend that the membership support the bylaw proposal by Chuck Miller, to change the bylaws Article III, Section 2, was not supported

**Membership Meetings:**  
*Tentative Agenda*

**CHARTER MEETING**  
Thursday, September 2, 2010  
8:00 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #8  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**MORNING MEETING**  
Friday, September 3, 2010  
10:30 a.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**WEDNESDAY MEETING**  
Wednesday, September 15, 2010  
3:30 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**JEFFERSON TRANSIT**  
Monday, September 13, 2010  
7:00 p.m.  
Port Townsend Rec Center  
Port Townsend, WA

**CLALLAM TRANSIT & PARATRANSIT**  
Tuesday, September 14, 2010  
7:00 p.m.  
Vern Burton Memorial Building  
Port Angeles, WA

**Among Topics to be Discussed:**

- Grievance and Arbitration Update
- King County Metro Negotiations
- Jefferson County Negotiations

**Unfinished Business:** Bylaw Change Proposal Vote

**Upcoming at Local 587**

- September 1 . . Rail Facilities Maintenance Pick
- September 2 . . Charter Meeting
- September 2 . . Bus Facilities Maintenance Pick
- September 3 . . Morning Meeting
- September 4 . . Labor Day!
- September 13 . Jefferson County Meeting
- September 14 . Clallam County Meeting
- September 15 . Afternoon Meeting
- September 21 . Executive board meeting

**In Loving Memory...**

*Our death is not an end if we can live on in our children and the younger generation. For they are us, our bodies are only wilted leaves on the tree of life.*

— Albert Einstein

**Lori Wheeler** joined us in 1983, working 24 years, first as a driver and then as a Customer Assistance Representative. Lori was a people person, who always enjoyed assisting the public.

We recently learned of the passing of **Anthony T Lee**. Anthony was a mechanic, born in 1934, who became a member at age 61. He retired last year.

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

**Arbitration Update**

1. **James Jones:** Grieved change in the VM vacation pick process. Arbitration hearing held June 28 & 29, 2010. Decision held in abeyance while settlement talks are underway.
2. **Mario Musni:** (Pigeongate) Grieved suspension for alleged violation of King County policy banning weapons in the workplace (slingshot); schedule pending.
3. **Paul Kriskov:** Grieved suspension for alleged use of Personal Electronic Device while operating a Metro coach. Held in abeyance pending resolution of an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaint. ULP hearing held July 07, 2010; decision pending.
4. **Jamie Bonnar:** Grieved the lack of a clerk overtime assignment process; schedule pending.
5. **Jon Salkeld:** Grieved issuance of a letter of expectation in violation of the discipline section of the collective bargaining agreement; schedule pending.
6. **Don Hutton:** Grieved a suspension for alleged third minor infraction in the same category; scheduled December 17, 2010.
7. **Richard Graf:** Grieved termination for alleged gross misconduct. Arbitration hearings held August 9-10; decision pending.
8. **Cory Rigtrup:** Grieved suspension letter of expectation for alleged falsification of a Metro document and violation of the King County policy on non-discrimination and anti harassment. Schedule pending.

**ATU Local 587 News Review**

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Minority Affairs Office  
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

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RANDY STEVENSON  
LINDA ANDERSON  
RAY MASON  
LUDWIG BECKER

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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 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:

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

# September Labor History Calendar

## Women Textiles and Labor Day

by Bill Clifford

### Sept 1

**1934**—Strike began in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, part of a national movement to obtain a minimum wage for textile workers. Strike lasted until the 23rd; Over 420,000 workers ultimately went on strike, and three workers were killed.

### Sept 2

**1965**—As women flight attendants testified before a House Labor committee about age discrimination, NY Representative James H. Schreuer asked the attendants to, “stand up, so we can see the dimensions of the problem.” In that era airlines fired most women flight attendants by age 35, when they are no longer considered attractive enough to fly. In the mid-1960s, activists among flight attendants were few in number and they challenged just one aspect of sex discrimination but their work blazed a trail amid widespread hostility to women’s rights.

### Sept 3

**1956**—Labor Day postage stamp was issued, the first US stamp honoring workers.

**1991**—Twentyfive workers died in a fire at the Imperial Food processing plant, Hamlet, North Carolina. 19 were single mothers. A nonunion plant, it had not been inspected by federal or state agencies in 11 years. Despite three minor fires earlier that year, despite obvious danger, fire exits remained locked. The Imperial Fire is reminiscent of the NY Triangle Shirt Factory fire nearly a century earlier. Do we still need a labor movement?

### Sept 5

**1882**—First American Labor Day observed. 30,000 workers marched in a parade sponsored by the New York City Central Labor Union.

**1887**—Labor Day is observed as a legal holiday in NY for the first time.

### Sept 6

**2010**—US celebrates Labor Day. Take it easy, but take it. (Most countries celebrate labor on May 1, in honor of the US Haymarket martyrs.)

### Sept 9

**1916**—Seattle’s Central Labor Council placed Keeney’s Seattle Empire Laundry on a seven-laundry list of “unfair” employers - cited for “abuse” of their women workers. They also claimed the listed laundries had together “successfully blocked any and all attempts to organize the laundry girls of Seattle.”

### Sept 12

**1934**—In response to textile labor strikes and agitation, National Guardsmen were put on duty in every New England state except Vermont and New Hampshire. 1,500 pickets battled state troopers in Connecticut and other confrontations in Fall River, MA., Lawrence and Lowell, and Lewiston, ME. But the worst was at Woonsocket, RI,

when at midnight 500 picketers let fly a barrage of bricks at the police and the crowd grew to 2,000. The National Guardsmen at the Rayon Plant fired 30 shots into the crowd, killing one and wounding others. Word spread and the angry crowd grew to 8,000. The governor sent in two more companies of Guards to quell the crowd and put the city under martial law and announced that, “There is a Communistic uprising and not a textile strike in Rhode Island.” The strikes, centered in the NE and the South, occurred all along the eastern seaboard. In Pennsylvania 47,000 struck. In Lancaster police charged that women strikers were attacking non-strikers with “old-fashioned hat pins”.

### Sept 14

**1929**—Ella May Wiggins and other workers were riding in the back of an old pick-up truck to a union meeting when local vigilantes, thugs, and a sheriff’s deputy forced the truck off the road and began shooting at it. Ella May was killed. When union organizers appeared in Gastonia, NC, textile workers flocked to the union. When the mill owners refused to recognize the union, a strike broke out in June.

Prominent on the union picket lines was Ella May Wiggins, a 29-year-old mother of nine children who had been working the night shift at one of the mills. When some of her children came down with whooping cough, Ella May asked the mill foreman to put her on the day shift so she could care for her sick babies. The foreman refused and Ella May was forced to quit her job. With no money for medicine, four of her children died. From this point on, she becomes a militant in the strike movement. Her songs, with the older melancholy of mountain ballads, helped cheer on fellow picketers.

### Sept 15

**1845**—The first mass strike of women workers for the 10-hour day took place when 5,000 women in the textile mills of Allegheny City and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania walked off their jobs. The strike was unsuccessful.

### Sept 16

**1845**—Male trade unionists of Allegheny City and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania today become the first male auxiliary when they protect women strikers from police attacks.

### Sept 17

**1934**—Southern employers met in Greenville, North Carolina, to ready their big counter-offensive to break the textile labor strikes and agitation that had occurred along the Eastern seaboard. An army of 10,000 National Guardsmen was mobilized in Georgia and the Carolinas, Alabama, and Mississippi, supplemented by 15,000 armed deputies. This week’s efforts to stampede strikers back to work failed miserably. The next day’s AP reported 421,000 on strike — 20,000 more than the week before.

**1938 Washington State CIO founded**

### Sept 21

**1913**—“Mother” Jones led a march of miners’ children through the streets of Charleston. Mother Jones attracted the country’s attention to the frequent violence during the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek strike in West Virginia during 1912-1913.

### Sept 27

**1875**—Striking textile workers demand bread for starving children in Fall River, Massachusetts.

## What to Expect During Our Search for a Fair Contract And What You Should Not Expect From Us

By Clint DeVoss, Executive Board Officer

As an Officer of Local 587, I am both legally and morally bound to represent each and every one of your interests, and well as the collective good of all our members. As we approach, contract negotiations many members, mostly in Vehicle Maintenance, have ask me what to expect from negotiations. As the Chairperson of the Research Committee, I perhaps have a unique insight into strengths and weaknesses of our bargaining position and therefore could answer in detail on what I think we should get out of our negotiations based on the factors as they are today. Unfortunately, given the fact that these are not normal economic times, what we should get and what we will get could be two completely different things. There are many factors that will determine what the contract terms are that we bring to you, the members, for your approval or disapproval.

The single biggest factor that will determine the outcome of contract negotiations is the economy and how it effects King County’s financial healthiness. The rhetoric of some of the Council’s members is less than helpful in King County’s search for

reasonable solutions to both their labor and economic problems, and merely creates an atmosphere that is not helpful to good faith bargaining.

From my viewpoint, it seems that the Council is hell bent on wrecking the negotiations before they start by drawing a line in the sand based on a faulty premise. While the Counsel’s political perspective is relevant to the extent that they can make negotiations difficult and drive ATU from the negotiating table to the arbitration table. In the end, the outcome of the terms and conditions that we receive should be determined by the statutory constraints and factors listed in RCW 41.56.492, not by playing out the negotiations in the forum of public opinion. Furthermore, if ATU is driven to it, we can use public opinion to our advantage in the same manner that some political figures at King County do. Fostering this type of acrimony is counter-productive for everyone; unfortunately, it is also sometimes necessary!

What you can expect is the best effort our collective minds can put together, to get the best terms we think we can get. This can come from the negotiation table or the

arbitration table as King County sees fit to drive us to.

What you cannot and should not expect is for us to give you detailed descriptions of the offers and counter offers made at the table. You can also not expect us to come to you with a proposal that is less than the best one that we believe we can get. As some of you know I have not always been on the union leaderships side when they have brought a proposal to us, and have been vocally against ratification.

Each of you must carefully consider what we bring back to you, if we can reach a meeting of the minds with King County. Often in the past one group or another has forced your union to go back to the bargaining table after we have reached a tentative agreement, by failing to ratify the proposed contract.

Please be aware that this tactic is very risky. Like it or not, your union is bound by the same collective bargaining laws that King County is. What this means is that it is an Unfair Labor Practice (Bad Faith Bargaining) if King County reneged on a tentative agreement, likewise your union could be held to the same standard.

# From Rails To Rubber

## 70 Years of Electric Trolley Buses in Seattle, 1940 – 2010

By Joshua C. Shields

Development of a trackless, externally powered electric vehicle began in the late nineteenth century in Europe. Just after the start of the twentieth century a short demonstration line had appeared on the east coast of the United States. In 1910 the nation's first commercial application of the trackless trolley started operation to the "Bungalowtown" housing development in Los Angeles. That line continued operation for the next five years.

By the 1930's trackless trolley technology had developed and standardized with the rubber tired electric vehicles starting to replace streetcars at transit properties around the country. The new trolley buses were more versatile, able to load and unload passengers at the curb and negotiate through the ever-increasing automobile traffic. Trackless trolley, trolley coach and trolley bus were all used interchangeably to describe the vehicles. The term trackless trolley became obsolete as the need to differentiate them from streetcars vanished. Electric trolley

bus or ETB has become the accepted modern day terminology.

In 1937 a demonstrator trackless trolley was brought to Seattle to garner support for the Beeler Plan to replace the city's debt ridden streetcar and cable car system. A demonstration loop was set up downtown and also a segment up the Queen Anne Hill counterbalance. On March 6, 1937 The Seattle Times reported the results of a race staged between the trackless trolley and a streetcar on the counterbalance, "the modern trackless coach embarrassed the Queen Anne streetcar last night making the 2,150 foot hill in less than half the time required by the streetcar." Seattle voters, still reeling from the Depression, rejected the plan. The Seattle Municipal Street Railway's financial problems and crumbling infrastructure remained.

At one point the Seattle Municipal Railway had to resort to IOU's and even nickels and dimes from the farebox to pay its employees. Seattle Mayor Arthur B. Langlie secured a \$10.2 million federal loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corpora-

tion in May of 1939 to retire the street railway debt and construct a new trackless trolley system. Management of the system was turned over to an independent commission and it was renamed the Seattle Transit System. The commission quickly ordered 235 new trackless trolleys, including 99 Brills to be built at Pacific Car and Foundry in Renton plus one Brill built at the J. G. Brill plant in Philadelphia, and 102 new motor-buses.

Seattle's conversion from rails to rubber was completed in short order. Motormen were trained to be trolley coach drivers at the Madison Street Cable Car Barn. Some of these motormen also had to obtain a driver's license as it had not been a requirement to operate a streetcar. The first trackless trolleys ran in revenue service on the 13 19th Avenue line on April 28, 1940. The Jefferson Street car barn, built in 1910, was converted to trackless trolleys and until the new Atlantic street barn was completed in early 1941 all the new trackless trolleys were parked at Jefferson and on the

streets surrounding the barn. The city's last streetcar trundled back to the car barn off the 19 Eighth Avenue Northwest line in the early hours of April 13, 1941. The new trackless trolleys were a natural with their ability to quickly climb Seattle's hills using the areas cheap and abundant hydroelectric power.

Gas rationing and war production jobs brought on by WWII caused transit ridership to surge at the new system. The Office of Defense Transportation allotted additional trolley buses to the city to meet the wartime demands in both 1943 and 1944 bringing the trackless trolley fleet total to 307 buses. It was not unusual for all 307 trolley coaches to be on the road at one time. Wartime demands literally ran the wheels off of the buses when some had to be sidelined in 1943 as no tires were available due to the wartime rationing of rubber products. Ridership reached an all time high in 1944 of 130 million riders. King County Metro's current ridership is 100 million riders annually.

During the post war years transit ridership dwindled both locally and nationwide as America's love affair with the automobile blossomed. Seattle's downtown streets were converted to one-way operation in 1955 requiring some changes in routing and overhead wire. The Seattle Transit System was receiving subsidies in 1956, but Seattle's trolley bus system continued to operate. The route 34 Harbor Island was converted to motor coach in 1957 but was offset by the electrification of the route 21 35th Avenue SW. In 1962 the entire Seattle Transit fleet was spiffed up to provide service to Seattle's Century 21 World's Fair. Additional overhead installed around the fairgrounds brought the system to an all time high of 100 street miles of two-way trolley overhead wire. Joining the trolley buses was an all new, futuristic form of electric powered transportation — the monorail.

In the late spring and early summer of 1963 Seattle Transit took delivery of a fleet of 100 diesel buses from Flxible of Loudonville, Ohio. The new buses were purchased to extend transit service north of 85th Street to 145th Street, an area that had been annexed by the City of Seattle nearly a decade earlier, and to utilize new roadways like the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the Fauntleroy Expressway. This brought the end of trolley bus service in the north end of the city and West Seattle. All 100 of the PCF-Brills and 75 Twin Coach trolley coaches were retired. A citizen's group calling itself COMET — Committee for Modernization of Electric Transit protested the trolley route abandonment's with an initiative to voters, which failed in 1964. The conversion of these routes to diesel saved the system half a million dollars annually in operating costs. The high costs to electrify route extensions and the lack of any new trolley buses on the

*continued on page 5*



Seattle Department of Transportation

### Electric Trolley Bus Fact Sheet

#### Electric buses comprise the backbone of King County Metro transit service in Seattle

- Fleet consists of 159 electric buses
- 14 routes use electric buses on 68 miles of Seattle streets
- Electric bus routes carry about 1/4 of riders in King County

#### Electric buses have environmental benefits

- Increased electric service supports Climate Action goals to reduce greenhouse gases
  - Power comes from 100% carbon neutral Seattle City Light
  - Saves hundreds of thousands of gallons of diesel each year
- Approximately twice as energy-efficient as internal-combustion buses
- Quietest transit vehicles available

#### Electric buses have unique operational characteristics

- Must slow down at turns and through switches in the overhead wire system
- Excellent hill climbing ability and acceleration

#### City of Seattle is investing directly in transit improvements

- SDOT is investing heavily in better speed and reliability for two major electric corridors
  - Rainier Avenue/Jackson Street (Route 7 to the Rainier Valley)
  - Market/45th (Route 44 from Ballard to the University District)

#### Costs for electric buses are comparable to diesel and hybrid vehicles

- Electric buses are more expensive but last longer
- Cost to maintain the network is estimated to be \$2.75 million per year, with maintenance occurring at a rate that prevents the need to ever completely replace the system
- A King County audit claimed a much higher incremental cost of operating trolleys (though still less than 2% of Metro's budget)

#### Electric buses are due for replacement in 2013-14

- King County is considering the replacement of electric buses with diesel hybrid vehicles
- King County will begin a detailed analysis of trolley alternatives in 2010, including system expansion which costs about \$4-6M per mile
- Decisions will be needed in 2011 for purchasing new fleet in 2013-14

#### Modern electric buses are much improved

- New trolleys such as those in Vancouver include off-wire capability (to detour around accidents and construction), air conditioning, low floors (wheelchair ramp instead of lift), and other state of the art features



Electric trolley buses, such as this one in Vancouver, B.C., draw electricity from overhead wires.

# Trolley Overhead Damage

By Joshua C. Shields, Rail Supervisor

When I started driving trolley buses in the mid 1980's the special work speed was 5 mph as it is now yet again. Yes it was many times nearly impossible to attain — especially going uphill and trying not to get stuck on a dead spot. Ultimately a group of Atlantic Base trolley operators set up a committee to make improvements to the overhead and other operational issues. Fortunately when I worked as a Service Supervisor in the CBD and Capital Hill the Special Work speed was 10 mph — that provided a 5 mph buffer so Performance Reports were not issued until 16 mph or more. Even with that more liberal limit some operators blasted through the special work at 20 or even 25 mph! Service Supervisors monitoring coach speed, including trolley special work speed, use lidar. Lidar is very accurate; in fact these units will not display an anomalous speed reading.

Brother James Ybarra's article "I Can't Drive 5 100% of the Time" touched on many long standing issues with trolley bus operation. There was one key point the article missed however. The primary cause for the major upswing in trolley overhead damage is not attributable to the operators but the trolley buses themselves. The Kiepe current collection system (poles, shoes and retrievers) that the current trolley fleet is equipped with is the culprit. The previous fleet of electric trolley buses was equipped with Ohio Brass poles and shoes. It was not an uncommon occurrence for trolleys to suffer from bent trolley poles, broken trolley poles, trolley poles pulled out of the base, missing shoes, etc. These issues were dealt with as road calls from the Atlantic shop and had a cost. Some of these occurrences were just inherent with trolley bus operation and some were attributable to speeding and other deficiencies in proper opera-

tion. In order to reduce those costs Metro Vehicle Maintenance opted for the new Kiepe current collection system that utilized fiberglass clad poles. The Kiepe poles and shoes are almost indestructible. Unfortunately this selection of equipment had an unintended consequence, creating a marked increase in trolley overhead damage. Those old Ohio Brass poles and shoes were designed to give way rather than damage the overhead if possible. In other words those bent, broken, loose poles and shoes were actually saving the overhead. Since the Kiepe equipment has no give to it the overhead is now the part of the equation that gives.

For those brother and sisters operating trolleys here are some key things to remember:

Know the overhead; make a conscious effort to slow down through the special work.

Know where your poles are by watching the angle of your ropes.

Should the bus dewire **STOP IMMEDIATELY!** Blocking an intersection while putting your poles up is better than taking the wire down.

Never allow the coach to roll backwards through a dead spot even if you become stuck on it. Put your poles on adjacent live wire. If there is no adjacent live wire, pull your poles before attempting to roll back no more than a foot or two to get back under live wire. Remember that backing a coach is one of the most hazardous maneuvers that you can do with a bus.

Trolley bus operation is not for the faint of heart. The routes operate in the most congested areas of the city, in areas of limited clearances and these routes do the lion's share of transporting people in our transit system. Hopefully a little more realistic latitude can be given to the operators for what is one of the most demanding transit vehicles to operate.

## From Rails to Rubber, continued

market had sealed the fate of much of the trolley bus system.

In 1965 the 11 East Madison line was motorized followed in 1970 by the routes 3 North Queen Anne/Jefferson Park and 4 East Queen Anne/Montlake. This left the system just over fifty trolley buses to operate on just over 30 street miles of two-way trolley overhead wire. The continuing abandonments brought the system's management under fire. An independent study ordered by the Transit Commission concluded that trolley buses were superior in performance to motor coaches on Seattle's many hills and that operating costs were comparable except for overhead maintenance costs.

Financial problems continued to mount and every attempt was made to economize at the transit system. Jefferson Station was closed in 1970 and the remaining trolleys moved to the Atlantic Station. Seattle voters eliminated the independent Seattle Transit Commission in November of 1970 and control of the system was turned over to the city. The Seattle area economy was in a tailspin because of massive layoffs at Boeing, a result of Congress's refusal to fund the SST program.

On September 19, 1972 King County voters approved merging the city owned Seattle Transit System and the privately held Metropolitan Transit Corporation into a single, countywide transit system under the auspices of the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle. The newly formed Metro Transit began operation on January 1, 1973. Part of the new transit agency's plan was to completely rehabilitate and expand the city's trolley bus system. The Arab oil embargo in 1973 drove home the need for more transit as well as alternative fuels. As cars lined up at fuel pumps more passengers began to line up at the doors of the newly formed agency's buses.

On January 21, 1978 the scant remains of Seattle's electric trolley bus system were shut down to be

replaced by a totally new expanded electric trolley bus system. Most of the city's original trackless trolley routes to the south end, First Hill, Capitol Hill, and Queen Anne Hill would be electrified once again. By September 15, 1979 the first set of routes were back in trolley service. Additional trolley routes were brought back online, as overhead wire, power distribution, and new electric trolley buses were completed. The new system featured a feeder-less power distribution system that eliminated miles of unsightly parallel feeder lines, inductive switches in the overhead, and 109 new chopper-controlled electric trolley buses ordered from the AM General Corporation. The new overhead power distribution system and the new buses both had a number of bugs to work out making the new system very trying for riders and transit employees alike at first. By the summer of 1981 all of the trolley routes were up and running out of the Jefferson Base.

In 1981 a small but determined group of Metro Transit employees formed the Metro Employees Historic Vehicle Association - MEHVA to preserve, restore and operate representative examples of vintage trackless trolleys that had been recently retired. MEHVA registered as a non-profit, tax-exempt group and became the caretakers of the Metro Transit Historic Fleet. That collection now encompasses a streetcar, trackless trolleys, and motor coaches dating from 1919 to 1990 all of which operated in Seattle and King County.

Jefferson Base closed for the last time in 1982 with all the trolleys moving to Atlantic Base. Jefferson was razed to make way for athletic fields for nearby Seattle University.

Forty-six German built MAN articulated trolley buses joined Metro's fleet of 252 articulated diesel buses in 1986. The coaches were originally slated for the planned re-electrification of routes 15 and 18 between Ballard and West Seattle,

but those plans were scrubbed. The new buses were assigned to the routes 7 and 43, the most heavily patronized routes in the system. This fleet was removed from service for over a year while the manufacturer and Metro brainstormed a fix to the buses hopping on the center axles when stopping.

After several years of construction that had seemed to nearly gut Seattle's Central Business District the Downtown Seattle Transit Project was completed and the Seattle bus tunnel opened in September of 1990 providing a 1.3-mile underground short cut under downtown Seattle. Trolley buses that had been rerouted to First Avenue during the tunnel's construction returned to Third Avenue.

The bus tunnel introduced a totally separate trolley bus system for a new specific fleet of 236 Breda articulated dual mode buses. The buses operated off of trolley overhead while in the tunnel and switched to diesel propulsion once on the surface. While not the first installation of dual power buses it was the largest in operation at the time.

In 1994 the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle was dissolved as a result of a governance issue and public vote to merge Metro into King County government. Metro Transit became a division in King County's Department of Transportation. King County continued the commitment to clean, quiet electric transit with the electrification of the route 70 from downtown to the University District via the Eastlake neighborhood in September of 1997.

In 2002 and 2003 as part of a continuing commitment to provide electric trolley bus service, King County Metro Transit took delivery of 100 new Gillig "gliders" These unpowered coach shells were then fitted with the Alstom-rebuilt motors, propulsion controls and other components from the fleet of 1979 AM General trolleys. The Gillig trolleys were also fitted with Kiepe current collection equipment. This ultimate in recycling saved \$200,000 per coach, totaling \$20 million in

savings for the purchase of the "new" electric trolley bus fleet.

In 2004 the 236 dual-mode Breda coaches were replaced by hybrid buses in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel-DSTT. Trolley bus overhead in the DSTT was removed as part of the two year conversion project to ready the DSTT for Sound Transit's Central Link Light Rail that opened in 2009.

In 2007 the forty-six 4000 series MAN articulated electric trolley buses were replaced by fifty-nine Breda coaches that were converted from dual mode operation to straight trolley. The coaches, selected from those already repainted in Metro's current "Crayola" color scheme, had their Detroit Diesel power plants removed. The Ohio Brass current collection and Delachaux retrievers were replaced by the new Kiepe system. Additional upgrades were also made to the braking systems and driver's station, passenger seats were reupholstered and LED destination signs installed. This "new" trolley fleet was numbered as the 4200 series.

MEHVA, lacking space to preserve another trolley coach, assisted the Illinois Railway Museum in acquiring and preparing coach #4020 for preservation and operation at its Union, Illinois location.

In September of 2009 Routes 14 to Mt. Baker and 36 to Beacon Hill were both extended to serve the new Sound Transit Central Link Light Rail stations at Mt. Baker and Othello respectively.

For seventy years the electric trolley bus has played a major role in transporting the citizens of Seattle and King County. At present King County Metro Transit operates 159 electric trolley buses on 68 street miles of two-way trolley overhead. The entire fleet of electric trolley buses is slated for replacement in 2013 - 2014. King County Metro Transit is currently beginning a detailed analysis which will consider the purchase of a brand new fleet of electric trolley buses or eliminating the system in favor of diesel/electric hybrid buses.

# A Part-Timer's Guide to the Contract, Part V

By Bruce Tiebout

## Section 8 - Overtime

If you work over eight hours in a day, you are paid at the overtime rate of time and one-half. On a daily, not weekly, basis, this eight hours does include neither qualifying pay nor holiday pay. The reason Metro does not pay PTTOs at overtime on a particular day to qualify is because the *when* of qualifying is optional. However, both qualifying pay and holiday pay are included in the 40 straight-time hours after which overtime pay is mandatory under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

## Section 9 - Special Allowances

Most of the special allowances are referenced to the appropriate paragraphs in the Full-Time Transit Operator article. These guarantee pay for activities like: ten minute report time; filling out reports for accidents, incidents, service, safety, and vandalism; filling out found tags; and, my favorite, getting paid five minutes per "Operator Request slip" for filling out a VM "Work Order" when an Operator "B.O.s" a coach for a mechanical problem. To be paid for most of these special allowances, Operators must fill out the FLSA Sundry Sheet. Pay for report time and filling accident reports is automatic.

When an Operator has to walk beyond the yard, or take a shuttle or regular service to get to his/her assigned coach, travel time is automatically paid. In the afternoon at North Base, tripper storage Operators will be paid extra, if authorized by the Dispatcher, when taking an earlier shuttle due to traffic on I-5. Such time will only be paid if the Operator fills out the Overtime Sheet.

Operators are not paid travel time back to the base if they walk or ride regular service (unless it's the North Base shuttle) to return to the base. The only exception to this is when "directed by METRO to return to the base to submit an accident or incident report or a found item." No one who doesn't already get travel time pay, gets paid travel time to travel back to the base to report being two minutes late to his/her relief point. That can be done on the next workday—even if it's after a three-week vacation and it's a hassle for base chiefs to deal with.

Except for work completed in 2:30 or less, work on any assignment completed AFTER the scheduled time off will be paid only if the Operator fills out the Overtime Sheet. If you are ten minutes late on a single 2:30-guarantee assignment that is 2:10 long, you do not get paid 2:40. Since filling out the Overtime Sheet is required in order to be paid, the time off is at the point when the Operator finishes filling out the Overtime Sheet, not the time the Operator gets off his/her coach or steps out of the relief car.

## Section 10 - Qualification

Again, appropriate, albeit sometimes long, paragraphs in the Full-Time Transit Operator Article are referenced. Paragraph A states that at each base, "in the Operators' reporting area," there is a list showing the amount of time the Training Section has determined will be the maximum time which

will be paid for qualifying on each route. Sometimes this time includes base routes. Sometimes this time is only for a round trip from a terminal. Sometimes this time makes no sense. Supposedly, "if the UNION disagrees with the amount of qualification time, the parties shall meet to resolve the issue."

There is a provision in 16.12.D for requesting a refresher course if an Operator "has not operated a trolley, dual mode, articulated, or motor coach, or in the tunnel for one year or longer." Such requests will not take effect for two days, so it won't change to assignment process for the next day.

The same paragraph states that:

"At each Operator pick, an Operator seeking coach qualification . . . may sign a list indicating his/her desire to qualify on equipment operating from his/her picked base. METRO will schedule training for such Operators within a reasonable length of time." For PTTOs this is handy for those who want to be available for as much work as possible on the ATL or for vacation reliefs. However, I haven't seen this list at a Part-Time Operator pick. When an Operator picks an assignment which requires coach/tunnel qualification s/he will have the training scheduled by METRO. In the case of a move-up, there may be a Metro-limited number of training slots.

A record of route changes, whether major or minor as determined by the Training Section, will be kept. "The most recent major change and the three most recent minor changes on each route will be identified by date in *The Book*." (Some routes, like the 554, list up to ten minor changes.) The listing of dates for changes required by 16.12.A. is important because 16.12.E. stipulates that an Operator may request disqualification "on any route which has undergone three minor changes since he/she last drove it [if ever]." By contract Metro is supposed see that, "all Operators will be disqualified when a route undergoes a major change."

There are limits to what routes a PTTO will be paid to qualify on in order to work the ATL. The Operator must first be qualified on the equipment/facility. Hence, the reason to sign up for such training at pick. "An Operator will be paid only on routes that can be assigned within his/her ATL availability." This means Metro doesn't have to pay an Operator who has limited him/herself to be off by 7:30pm on a route which never finishes before 7:31pm. Additionally, "an Operator must be available for such routes on the ATL three or more days per week in order to receive qualification pay." This applies every bi-weekly payroll period. If you aren't available for ATL assignments on Mondays and Fridays, then you put your name in the Layoff Book for no ATL on one of the Wednesdays, Metro doesn't have to pay you for qualifying during that two week payroll period.

## Section 11 - Uniforms

Unlike the maintenance sections which have a specific dollar amount, which has to be negotiated every

contract (for tool allowances), the uniform allowance for Operators is pegged to the top step Transit Operator wage. The current annual allowance is twelve times \$28.47 or \$341.63. The maximum amount which may be carried over past an Operator's anniversary date is 25 times the top step "that will be in effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> immediately following the effective date of this AGREEMENT." Currently, that is 25 times \$26.10 or \$652.50. This is a case of "use it or lose it" for those who never spend the money. Part of the uniform allowance may be used

by Operators to purchase Metro designated footwear (shoes). In theory, "all uniform items will be union made," but in this world's economy, that is getting more difficult (unless they have unions garment workers in Honduras and Mexico).

## Section 12 - Vashon Island Service

There are four assignments every PTTO pick which have the word "restricted" written where the picking Operators' names would go. They are for the route 119 - Vashon Island service which starts on the island

*continued on page 7*

## The Tale of a District

Submitted by Sara Franklin, COPE Committee Member

On August 17 primary elections were held in our state and now this election cycle will begin in earnest as the remaining candidates prepare for the November 2 general election.

Although all 435 seats in the House of Representatives representing all 50 states are up for re-election during this midterm cycle, several congressional seats are considered vulnerable or up for grabs. One of those targeted is Washington's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District now represented by Dave Reichert.

The home to Microsoft and Nintendo, the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District includes most of the Eastside (including such cities as Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Renton) and a great portion of the rural eastern parts of King and Pierce counties. The results of the 1980 US Census Bureau ranked Washington State 20<sup>th</sup> with a population of 4,130,000, an increase of 721,000 residents since 1970, therefore allowing the creation of the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. According to the latest known published figures from the

2000 US Census the population of the 8<sup>th</sup> District is 654,905 with the median income of \$63,854 and a diverse demographics.

The two candidates, incumbent Congressman Dave Reichert seeking his fourth term and former Microsoft Executive Suzan DelBene who is seeking political office for the first time are vying to win the 8<sup>th</sup> District that in recent years has been referred to as a "swing" district particularly during presidential elections. However, this year there is no presidential candidate on top of the ticket, so both Congressmen Reichert and Ms. Delbene will have to convince voters and union members they are in touch with the needs of the 8<sup>th</sup> District, be forthcoming about the challenges that it faces (job creation should be on the top of the list) and most importantly cast votes that support what they believe.

COPE supports candidates who will negotiate for good legislation and who have and will continue to fight alongside working men and women.

To: All Members of Local 587  
From: Recording Secretary Brian Sherlock

## Proposal To Change Bylaws Article III, Section 2

Submitted by Chuck Miller

Adding to Paragraph (a) the text shown in underscore:

Members of the Executive Board shall be elected from the membership within their respective departments as follows: Eight Transit Operators, from which a representative will be appointed to each operational base; three members from the Vehicle Maintenance Department one member from the Facilities Maintenance Department; one member from the Supervisors Department; one member from the Rail Section; one member from the Special Classifications; one member from the organized units within King County and outside the King

County/Metro bargaining unit; one member from the organized units outside King County and outside the King County/Metro bargaining unit; and one Minority Affairs Officer from the membership at large.

Re-numbering paragraphs (f), (g) and (h) to (g), (h) and (i), respectively.

Adding a new paragraph (f) as follows:

(f) Employees in the Rail Section shall consist of all job classifications listed under Rail Section and Streetcar Section in the current labor agreement with King County/Metro.

# Letters to the Editor...

## I Think Mom Would Understand

It has been said of me that I am one of the nicest, most thoughtful, cheerful, and helpful bus drivers around. At least that is what my Mom said.

A real trooper, I was always ready

### 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*

to help with a coach change or to fill a trip.

But lately, with the new leaner, meaner schedules I am so worn out at the end of my shift that regretfully it is doubtful I will be able to help out any more.

I think my Mom would understand. I hope you all can understand.

John "Bill Gates" Ranlett  
#2914 Bellevue Base

## The Washington Fallacy Center

Due to insufficient space in last month's *News Review*, my rebuttal to the Washington Policy Center didn't make the final draft. However, our fellow members certainly took the policy center to task, especially over its deliberately skewed facts

and figures. By cherry-picking and manipulating the numbers it used in its rant against drivers, the center impeached its claims, as well as itself. Further evidence of the WPC's lack of integrity can be found in its statement that: "Metro does not even require a high school degree to become a transit operator, yet there are now 243 who make over \$75k per year and 20 who make over \$100k per year. The skills needed to drive a bus do not generally require the qualifications that justify compensation within the six-figure range." The WPC is trying to subtly say that no bus driver deserves to earn \$75 or \$100K a year. We're just not skilled enough. This statement alone, and the fact that the WPC was willing to put it into print, destroys the center's credibility. I just wish that all the foes of labor unions and of the middle class were this stupid.

In Solidarity,  
Andrew Jeromsky,  
Executive Board Officer

**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:

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

# How to Skew the Numbers to Screw a Group

By Bruce Tiebout

In multiple articles in the last issue of the *News Review* and on a member's blog (unofficial), the Washington Policy Center (WPC) was taken to task for claiming that "Bus Driver Wages Grow Out of Control". Except for the President's Report, all blamed the WPC for the bad numbers. The numbers came from King County. As President Bachtel said, King County is trying to negotiate our contract in the media.

The numbers used are correct that in 2000, 2,663 Metro bus drivers were "compensated" a total of \$79,169,84.60. WPC calculated an "Annual Average Salary" to be \$29,729.57. What isn't mentioned by the WPC, and possibly couldn't be mentioned because King County didn't tell them, was that some of the "2,663 transit operators who received compensation" only received retro checks from a contract settlement and didn't actually work during 2000. On the last payday in December, 2000, there were 2,354 drivers working (35.8% PT) and another 114 on paid or unpaid leave (which includes Union Officers). Thus, over 300 drivers who received some compensation during 2000 were not working by the end of the year.

Of those 2,663 compensated drivers, 21 had total annual compensation in 2000 of \$0.01 - one penny. Another 18 received two cents. There were 63 transit operators who received total compensation in 2000 of less than \$1.00. Do you think they might have been only receiving a retro check? I knew that you would. In 2000, 175 drivers received less than \$1,000 in annual compensation. In 2009, that number was just 15. Yet, those 175 drivers were counted when calculating the "Annual Average Salary". If you didn't count drivers who made less than \$1,000, the numbers would look like:

	2000	2009	% Growth
Metro Bus Drivers	2,488	2,835	13.95%
Total Gross Wages	\$79,130,347.60	\$134,803,892.20	70.36%
Annual Average Salary	\$31,804.80	\$47,549.87	49.51%
Top Step Wage	\$20.21	\$27.10	34.09%
Minimum Pay for PTTO	\$8,600	\$12,400	43.88%*

\*minimum increased from 2:20 to 2:30.

If you didn't count drivers who made less than \$6,000 (1/2-year salary for new Part-Time Transit Operators), the numbers would look like:

	2000	2009	% Growth
Metro Bus Drivers	2,252	2,789	23.85%
Total Gross Wages	\$78,338,070.18	\$134,658,289.857	71.89%
Annual Average Salary	\$34,786.00	\$48,281.93	38.80%

Versus the chart from WPC derived from the numbers supplied by King County:

	2000	2009	% Growth
Metro Bus Drivers	2,663	2,850	7.02%
Total Gross Wages	\$79,169,848	\$134,810,069	70.28%
Annual Average Salary	\$29,729.57	\$47,301.78	59.11%
Top Step Wage	not included	not included	not included
Minimum Pay for PTTO	not included	not included	not included

Another part of the original WPC chart showed the increase in the number of drivers making over \$75K and over \$100K. What is missing is the change in the number of people making less than \$10,000. According

to the number King County supplied to the WPC, there were 602 transit operators who received less than \$10,000 in 2000. In 2009, that number was 143. What might account for such a change? We know (as I previously mentioned), but King County probably didn't tell the WPC, that a lot those low amounts from 2000 were for drivers who were only paid via a retro check for previous work. From the summer of 1999 until the end of 2000, there was a net gain of 183 Part-Time Transit Operators (793 to 976, or 23%). That means that in 2000, there was a large increase of drivers making bottom step wages (\$14.45/hr).

Over the same length of time from 2008 to 2009, there was a net gain of 78 Part-Time Transit Operators (921 to 999, or 8.5%). Approximately 500 (~50%) of the Part-Time Transit Operators were making top step by the end of 2009. Back in 2000, that number was 341 (~35%). This is not an example of out of control wages, but just stabilization in the numbers of PTTOs and, because PTTOs are not yet reaching 30 years of service credit for retirement; an increase in the number of PTTOs at top step, and an increase in the amount of vacation PTTOs are accruing.

According to the numbers the WPC received from King County, between 2000 and 2009, the number of service hours increased from 3.24M to 3.55M. Based on the "Total Gross Wages" reported by King County to the WPC, the per hour cost increased from \$24.40 to \$37.96 (55.57%). However, the average number of hours per bus driver increased only from 1,218/yr to 1,246 (2.27%). During this time, the top step pay increased 34.09%. The definition of full-time is 2080 hr/yr. Something doesn't add up. Could it be that the service hours don't include those hours Metro Transit Operators spent driving Sound Transit service, but the Total Annual Wages includes those hours? Could this also be true for contracted service for sporting events, etc.? Could it be that King County can't get the numbers right?

While the Washington Policy Center prides itself on the accuracy of its numbers, the numbers King County gave them for 2000 gave a false low number for "Annual Average Salary" and skewing the numbers for the percentage increase claimed. Although the Director of WPC's Center for Transportation Mike Ennis claims that the numbers came from "official government sources," he may not have known that those King County sources were using him as a sacrificial pawn to try to negotiate the next contract in the media.

## Part-timer's Guide, continued

before any ferry. There is a mini-base on the island where the buses spend the night. There are two am trippers (which start by 4am) and two pm trippers (which run as late as 9:50pm). Leonard (Pat) Engrissei, because has been driving a 119 every shake-up since before 1990, is guaranteed to be able to pick one of the four trippers. The other three slots are picked by seniority from among PTTOs who: maintain a residence

on Vashon Island; and have not "had more than one unexcused absence or two misses of any kind (including unexcused absences) during the previous twelve months." There was a point in time when the base chief in charge of Vashon service at that point in time, did not know these rules existed.

Your base chief isn't your best source for contract interpretation; your Union is.

## Vice President Sepolen's Report

By Rick Sepolen



### Greg and Rick go to Olympia (Sorta!)

When I first started at Metro Transit (not, mind you, King County Metro) they had just completed the switch over from horse drawn coaches to the new fangled diesel powered vehicles. In those simpler days if your personal insurance company wanted a copy of your driving record, they would receive just that; a record of accidents, tickets, etc. that occurred in your personal vehicle.

Fast forward to just the other day. Operator Greg Goebel called me about a minor, but frustrating situation. He has been notified that his insurance rates were due to increase because of accidents on his driving record. "What accidents?" sez he. "Those on your *combined* Washington state driving record." sez Big Insurance. "Huh?" sez he. And thus begins the journey of Greg and Rick.

For the past couple of years with each renewal of his personal insurance Greg has had to battle the information found on the DOL's combined driving abstract. As you may know the state Department of Licensing (DOL) divides your driving record into two sections. One reflects your personal driving record and the other (if you have a commercial license) your commercial driving record. When reviewing your policy your insurance company would order a copy of your personal record to determine how to set your premiums. Then the state, in its infinite wisdom, decided to combine the two records thus the title 'Combined Driving' record. Your insurance company, either directly or through a third party vendor, would request the combined record to interpret your driving history as well as your potential for future accidents and tickets.

For some time Greg has been forced to request copies of both his commercial and personal records in order to prove that his personal record is better than it first appears on paper. Being a mild manner pit bull, our Greg decides to contact the DOL and see what he can learn and do about changing and improving this reporting process.

Greg's encounter with a representative at the DOL turned out to be informative. Well, sort of because she gave him all sorts of incorrect information.

There is no distinction between non-commercial and commercial driving records

Lacking a coding system on the complete abstract explaining the difference between personal and commercial leads to huge misinterpretation by insurance companies and their third party representatives

Employers and insurance companies can look back 10-15 years not the 3 allowed by law.

'At fault' commercial accidents can be charged to your personal vehicle insurance.

According to the law, Greg attempted to explain to her, the two records are distinct but can be mixed on the combined record. Information is kept three years not 10-15. And, finally, commercial accidents should not be charged on your personal insurance.

Remember, I described Greg as being a mild mannered pit bull? Following his conversation with the DOL, Greg found two citations, WAC 308-1-4-145 and RCW 48.30.310 which specifically prohibit insurance companies from getting combined abstracts.

So Greg gets his DOL record and persuades his insurance company that there is no need to increase his premiums. Still he continues to face the uncertainty of having to do this record review with each future renewal.

Remembering back to those horse drawn days, I began to wonder if Greg was being a bit dramatic. During those early days I had a commercial accident assigned to my personal record. I requested a letter from Metro that I was able to present to the insurance company to block an increase. Online at [www.dol.wa.gov](http://www.dol.wa.gov) I order my combined driving abstract from the DOL. Whoa, Nelly!

Shortly before assuming the position of Vice President, I had two up close and personal encounters between a couple of right side mirrors and some tree limbs. On my Metro accident report I claimed the limbs were ambulatory and ran into the path of my coach, but Safety disagreeing. Then there was the trucker who continued on after taking off my left side mirror.

Sitting proudly on a copy of my combined DOL record were the three accidents. Mind you, I have not had an accident in my personal car for over 20 years, but it sure looked like these accidents may have occurred while driving my personal vehicle. I then ordered a copy of my commercial record. Again, the three accidents were properly recorded. Taking this one step further, I requested a copy of my personal record to discover that those pesky tree limbs were on the move again landing smack dab in the middle of my personal record. (See, Safety, I was right, they were mobile and moved into my path of travel.)

When I called DOL I received the same run around, but not quite as much misinformation as Greg did. Armed with my letter from KC Metro I went to my insurance agent in a proactive move to prevent future premium escalation.

So what can you do to prevent having to endure the trials and tribulations of Greg and Rick? Once a year get a copy of your personal driving abstract and make sure that the information is correct. If

one of your commercial accidents has strayed over to your personal record, immediately contact Metro and request a letter that you can present to your insurance agent demonstrating that the accident was job related.

I have brought this problem to the attention of the 587 COPE committee to put some political muscle behind finding ways to improve the way information is displayed on the combined driving record. Stay tuned.

For those of you who can't wait...  
**WAC 308-104-145**

Driving record abstracts — Release to insurance companies.

For purposes of RCW 46.52.130, an abstract of driving record provided to an insurance company that has insurance in effect covering a person's employer or a prospective employer shall exclude any information pertaining to the person's operation of a noncommercial motor vehicle. The abstract provided to the insurance company that has insurance in effect covering the person, or the insurance company to which the person has applied, shall exclude any information pertaining to the person's operation of a commercial motor vehicle. The abstract provided to the insurance company shall also exclude any information

except that related to the commission of misdemeanors or felonies by the individual pertaining to law enforcement officers or firefighters as defined in RCW 41.26.020, or any member of the Washington state patrol, while driving official vehicles in the performance of occupational duty. As used in this section, "commercial motor vehicle" shall have the meaning defined in RCW 46.25.010(6).

**RCW 48.30.310**

Commercial motor vehicle employment driving record not to be considered when.

When an individual applies for a policy of casualty insurance providing either automobile liability coverage, uninsured motorist coverage, automobile medical payments coverage, or automobile physical damage coverage on an individually owned passenger vehicle or a renewal of such policy, an insurer shall not consider the applicant's commercial motor vehicle employment driving record in determining whether the policy will be issued or renewed or in determining the rates for the policy. An insurer shall not cancel such policy or discriminate in regard to other terms or conditions of the policy based upon the applicant's commercial motor vehicle employment driving record.

## The Station

### A New, Operator-Friendly Coffee Shop

From your 587 Public Relations Committee  
By Andrew Jeromsky



An Operator friendly coffee house recently opened on Beacon Hill near routes 36, 38 and 60. It's called 'The Station' and is located on 16<sup>th</sup> Ave South, directly across the street from El Centro de la Raza, and is just north of the Beacon Hill Light Rail Station. Owner Luis Rodriguez knows that Operators run on tight schedules, so he has set up self-serve drip coffee at the counter. Waiving the usual price of \$2, Luis lets drivers help themselves to a cup of fresh brewed, locally roasted coffee for only \$1. You don't even need to wait in line to pay, just put a dollar into the tip jar on your way in or out. Luis will even let you run a tab, if you arrange it with him beforehand. It makes for two fast ways to pay, especially helpful when you're running in to use the first class restroom. (*The Station* has applied to become an official Metro comfort station).

Luis has created a transit-theme based coffee house, decorated with street signs, and drawing upon the positive experiences he has had while riding Metro and Light Rail.

With his delectable treats, free wi-fi and Local 587 plaque, Louise hopes that Operators will feel welcomed. The Public Relations Committee thanks "The Station" for supporting our members!

# Vice President MacAdam's Report

By Don MacAdam



## Pigeon Gate and other stories

*"You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy. We must be cautious."*

— Obi-wan, Star Wars, Episode IV

### Pigeon Gate!! The Untold Story

The station was quiet. The chief had the time, the opportunity and the motive...now was the time to act! Who could stand against her and her power? Her managers and the Metro Council would never know; even those nosey 20/20 people would not dare oppose her.

The deed was done. It had been too easy, but no one was the wiser and only she alone knew the truth. Only she was aware that the Tukwila Train station was now different. Changed from its original purpose to protect and transfer the public to (even now as I know the truth it is hard to put the words to paper)...the truth is, to watch a pigeon! There I've said it! And, I can tell you do not believe me, either. I was as skeptical as you, until I watched the video file.

So what we have is, even by Rail's own words, a very good employee who used to work in the Tunnel and transferred to Rail, doing what he has always done—scaring pigeons to keep them from nesting so that they do not poop on people going about their lives. The city of Seattle warns of the diseases that these birds carry. They warn of how to keep the pigeons away or how to kill them if that should become necessary. The Rail Chief had a security camera repositioned and zoomed in to watch a nesting pigeon. The feathers hit the fan when the bird did not return to its nest, the chief reviewed past footage to see what had happened, and found that the good employee had scared the bird off with what they deemed a dangerous weapon (their reaction might lead you to think he'd fired a bazooka!). Rail admitted no birds were killed, and they did not need approval to watch pigeons with the surveillance cameras. The Employee was given two weeks off for his actions. Was the chief given any time off for altering the security cameras? NO! Has the Camera been reset to protect the public & rail property? Or is it looking for other birds?

### The Grievance Hearing

Your Rights as when to have a grievance hearing: Many of you are not aware that if you have a grievance hearing YOU have the option (not Metro) of scheduling the grievance during your normal shift or within 1/2 hour of your normal shift start or stop time.

### What's Going On!!!

\*August 10 we completed the R. Graf arbitration with guarded optimism. I expect Mr. Graf to be back to work so this 25 year employee can retire in 1 1/2 years.

\*P. Post—Metro forfeited the

grievance and though contacted by our attorney, still refuses to honor the labor agreement.

\*Cory Rigtrup will proceed to arbitration for his 5 day suspension.

\*Next month we may be voting on arbitration requests for M. Kelly and J. Dean

\*Letters of "expectation" (which are discipline and not allowed as per our contract): Metro pulled out of the Operations arbitration process. However, there has been no improvement for V.M. so we will most likely be headed back to arbitration on this.

\*Meetings With the new V.M. Supervisor, Mr. Winders, are still helpful.

**Retirements:** Alex Babak, USW, 20+ years; Bruce Hargin, Maintenance Machinist, 30+ years; Joe Smolar, Mechanic 30+ years.

**Negotiations:** proceeding O.K. so far.

\*The City is broke but they will be spending 4 million plus for solar operated trash compactors? This will send forth an 85# bag of garbage. There should be a lot of new O.J.Is.

\*Worst base of the Month: I was going to give it to Ryerson, but they are trying to deal with the O.T. problems. N.M. appears to have employee unrest. I will try to reveal next month why the worst base was delayed.

### A Little History

Ninety-eight years ago, Local 587 came into being. The average wage was 22 cents an hour. The average worker made between \$200 & \$400 dollars a year. Life expectancy for men was 47 yrs. There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S. and 144 miles of paved road. Sugar was four cents a pound, eggs 14 cents a dozen & coffee 15 cents a pound. Only two out of ten could read write. Only 6% of all Americans graduated from high school. The flag only had 45 stars. Because of the Union, in 1919 most street railway systems went to a 6 day work week. (Canadian unions won this first.)

Because of the Union, in 1920 the 8 hour work day was established. (Canadians were first here also.)

### Results of the Manager Evaluations

The Good the bad & the ugly: This evaluation is not scientific by any means. It is a compilation of information from Employees who are human. I have been forced, at times, to form a personal opinion of what the intent of the evaluator was or to convert language into an acceptable format. Some evaluations were discarded for various reasons. Over 800 forms were given out to Maintenance.

Local 587 Maintenance Metro Manager Evaluation 2010												
Best Chiefs												
Name	Q1 knowledge	Q2 contract	Q3 money	Q4 helpful	Q5 respectful	Q6 comm.	Q7 equally	Q8 arrogant	Q9 mean	Q10 work	Q11 happy	Q12 CPR
C. Clark	4.2	4	4	4.6	5	4.8	5	N	N	N	N	Y
R. Mudge	4.5	4.5	4	4.5	5	5	5	N	N	N	N	Y
W. Slade	4.5	4.5	5	5	5	4.5	5	N	N	N	N	Y
Worst Chiefs												
Name	Q1 knowledge	Q2 contract	Q3 money	Q4 helpful	Q5 respectful	Q6 comm.	Q7 equally	Q8 arrogant	Q9 mean	Q10 work	Q11 happy	Q12 CPR
J. Marcell	1.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
R. Harper	1	2	1	1	1.5	1	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
M. Mizra	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Y	Y/N	Y	Y	N
Best Supervisors												
Name	Q1 knowledge	Q2 contract	Q3 money	Q4 helpful	Q5 respectful	Q6 comm.	Q7 equally	Q8 arrogant	Q9 mean	Q10 work	Q11 happy	Q12 CPR
L. Ward	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	N	N	N	N	Y
E. Kourdahi	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	N	N	N	N	Y
C. Nornang	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	N	N	N	N	Y
Worst Supervisors												
Name	Q1 knowledge	Q2 contract	Q3 money	Q4 helpful	Q5 respectful	Q6 comm.	Q7 equally	Q8 arrogant	Q9 mean	Q10 work	Q11 happy	Q12 CPR
B. Lillquist	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
H. Kilborn	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

### NOTES:

Q3 Effective at saving Metro money?

Q6 Effective communication skills?

Q10 Is more work accomplished when manager is gone?

Q11 Workers are happy when manager does not show up?

Q12 Would you be likely to give manager C.P.R. if needed?

### EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

#### Chiefs:

C. Clark—fair professional manager, has not lost touch with employees, respectful, good person, fair, great manager, good to work for.

R. Mudge—highly respectful, knowledgeable, smart, decent, humble.

W. Slade—fair, humble, respectful, good person.

#### Supervisors:

L. Ward—fair, easy to talk to, not threatening, respectful.

E. Kourdahi—pleasure to work for, in touch with employees, fair, courteous, takes time to talk to employees, respectful, good person, always calm and concerned.

C. Nornang—good person, respectful.

#### Chiefs:

J. Marcell—egomaniac, control freak, makes derogatory comments, arrogant, disrespectful, dumb,

worthless, cheat, liar, useless.

R. Harper—makes derogatory comments.

#### Supervisors:

H. Kilborn—no technical experience, not a people person, makes CSC a hostile place to work.

\*Rail & Facilities did not return enough forms to draw conclusions. But, in Rail they like Evan Inkster & Jose B. Facilities like Robin A. & dislike Peggy.

#### Conclusions

There was less than a 50% return rate on the evaluations. Many responses appeared to be quite emotional. I was surprised in some areas. I did not list the third worst Supervisor because it appeared that something recent must have sparked the placement in that category.

Various reasons I heard for the forms not being returned were: I thought it was a joke, the forms were thrown away by managers, I was afraid to fill one out and or the directions were not understood or followed.

Everyone who filled out an Evaluation form should be aware that I was the only one that read them and that there were never any copies made and all the Evaluation forms have been destroyed by me personally. All that remains is the data.

# TRANSIT WORKERS ENDORSE LEGISLATORS WHO VOTE PRO TRANSIT

## The Financial Secretary's Report

# August 2010 Membership Meeting Report

By Paul Neil



Almost a century ago on April 8, 1912 Division No. 587 of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees of America was chartered. The name has changed over the years and we now spell employee with two e's but the cause remains the same: To work together to improve the wages, benefits and working conditions of all members. Currently we are negotiating contracts for our members employed at Jefferson Transit and at King County METRO Transit.

Both of these public agencies are currently facing significant financial

issues and both are looking to our members to help solve those problems by degrading benefits, working conditions and wages. The Union's goal naturally will be to at least maintain and if possible improve those areas. How to reconcile these seemingly irreconcilable positions?

The agencies just like private businesses tend to be concerned about the short term—this year and next year at the most. The Union takes the long view. We do not just look at this month or this year but next year and the years after. We have what we have now because those who signed our charter almost

a century ago were thinking about those who would follow them in the future and we need to do the same. Both sides will need to be open minded and creative in seeking solutions.

Management has informed us that for the Fall Shake-Up, all the bus schedules at King County METRO have been reworked to make them more "efficient" as a response to the audit conducted last year that said there was too much layover time in the schedules. What Operators need to do in response is very simple:

1. Drive just as you were instructed to when you started: In a

SAFE, courteous manner. Your job is not to make a bad schedule work. Your job is to get your passengers safely from point A to point B as expeditiously as possible consistent with safety and service. I am not saying to "dog" your schedule to run late, just drive as you have been instructed by the company. Remember: Safety, Service, Schedule.

2. If your schedule is not working then fill out an Operator Service and Facility Report (Green Form) every day your schedule does not work. If you want a schedule changed for Spring Shake-Up then you need to fill out this form during the first 2 weeks of the Fall Shake-up. If Scheduling gets them any later they will have to wait until Summer Shake-Up to change the schedule.

Below is the report I read at the membership meetings in August:

### Membership Meeting Report

In the month of July 2010, we reported 13 new members to the ATU International. All are employed at METRO/King County. This brings are total active membership to 4176. This is an increase of 52 members compared this time last year when we had 4124 active members.

#### Bills:

All financial figures are subject to the review of the Executive Board. In July total income was \$247,611.95 which is an increase of \$6,328.61 or 2.6% compared to last July.

Per Capita payments totaled \$55,537.10 for the month of July which is a \$17.10 decrease over the same period last year.

Other bills for payroll, rent, legal, etc totaled \$183,319.36 which is a decrease of \$24,618.64 or 11.8% over the previous July. This amounts to a surplus of \$8,755.49 for the month compared to a deficit of \$22,208.86 for July 2009.

#### My activities for the month:

Still proceeding with finding new office space. We have asked 3 landlords to present us with Requests for Proposals or RFP's. We have also asked for and received moving estimates.

Attended an LRC meeting at Clallam Transit on July 13th.

Attended with all the other Full-time Officers KCMetro negotiations. Negotiations are proceeding as well as can be expected.

Congratulations to Marvin White on being selected Metros Operator of the year.

## The Hazards of Not Dying Quickly

By Paul J. Bachtel, ATU Local 587 President

However you come to terms with the inevitable, there are a few issues of paramount importance. Having previously served a term as the Union's Recording Secretary responsible for answering healthcare questions, and having prepared for the possibility of my own death during recent surgery, I've become intimately familiar with a few pitfalls of not dying quickly. If you die quickly and you've prepared the requisite documents (Last Will and Testament, Health Care Directive, Health Care Power of Attorney, and Durable Power of Attorney), your loved ones will have all they need to complete your final paperwork. If you linger too long before passing and/or haven't prepared the requisite documents, your family may be in for a difficult time.

If you had a stroke today and as a result weren't capable of managing your own affairs, who would be making decisions regarding your care? Your family who would be following your Health Care Directive, or a hospital administrator? Think it can't or won't happen to you? Sit in my chair for a while and you'll soon come to the realization it happens to all of us; if not to us personally then to one of our family members. Please complete the requisite documents as soon as possible. If you can't afford the \$500 an attorney will charge for document preparation, you can always find less expensive alternatives on the internet such as [www.free-legal-document.com](http://www.free-legal-document.com).

If you suffer a health catastrophe before retirement, your employer provided insurance policies don't

automatically continue until you die. If you exhaust all of your protected leave, your employer will stop paying your insurance premiums. You will have the option to continue your insurance policies by self paying the premiums. However, you may not be prepared for the amount of the bill. A recent check at King County Metro revealed that for a single person on King Care Gold, the monthly premium is \$641. If you do not have adequate savings to pay your health care premiums, your insurance coverage will lapse and the hospital bills will quickly erode any assets you may have, including retirement savings or life insurance intended for your loved ones.

If you purchase life insurance through King County Metro, you'll have to self pay the premiums when FMLA coverage ends. If you don't pay, the policy terminates. When you run out of protected leave, KC Metro will issue you a non disciplinary medical termination from employment. That's a nice way of saying you're fired because you can no longer perform the essential functions of your job. If this happens, you will only have 31 days in which to convert your employer-provided insurance policy into a personal policy. **Miss the 31-day deadline to convert your employer-provided policy into a personal policy, and the insurance company will cancel your policy on the 32<sup>nd</sup> day.** Be prepared to pay a much higher premium for life insurance. Your employer-provided policy is a low cost term policy, but the insurance company will require you to convert it into a whole life policy at

a much higher rate. For example: a 62 year-old male purchasing four times the employer-provided base life insurance amount of one times his salary. His premiums may be as high as \$1000 per month to continue this \$300,000 life insurance once his policy has been converted to whole life. After all, if you've been terminated from employment, the insurance company will no doubt presume you may be dying and the insurance company doesn't want to pay the face value of the policy to your beneficiaries. This is one of the reasons I purchased my supplemental life insurance on the open market, not through KC Metro.

Last and most importantly, you must select someone to manage your affairs when you become incapacitated, i.e. the person named in your durable and health care power of attorneys. When you're severally ill, you most likely will not be able to make all the decisions regarding your care nor insure your insurance policies are converted and paid in full.

Make sure the person you select to manage your affairs is aware of your employer-provided insurance policies and the need to contact the employer's disability service coordinator and the Union office.

I know for many, contemplating death isn't easy, but if you're like me and have worked hard for your retirement savings, I'm sure you would rather see them go to your loved ones, not to hospitals or insurance companies.

In solidarity,  
Paul J. Bachtel

# The Recording Secretary's Report

## The Pick

By Brian Sherlock



I have gotten a lot of email and calls about the availability of pick documents. For shakeup after shakeup, Metro has continued to fail in their obligation to deliver the work to the Union by the date required by contract. Both the Union and Metro occasionally need some understanding and assistance with making the pick happen, but the number of these problems continues to grow. For this shakeup the scale is again unprecedented.

The core issue is a combination of edicts from on high that have not been thought through, failure to cooperate with the Union, failure of planning between Metro divisions and serious understaffing in scheduling. Starting with scheduling, the workload has multiplied and that group is unable to reshape the system, turn out the run cut and create the run cards and other documents needed in a timely and

accurate fashion. These folks are the crème de la crème and neither skill, nor intelligence, nor dedication is the problem. Metro simply must properly staff this vital group to begin meeting contractual and functional obligations. The problem has gotten so bad that the Full-Time run cut was only supplied the day prior to the pick preview. Other vital information has yet to be received (as of nearly three weeks after it was due). With many thousands of pages of pick information, it is extremely important that we get the work on time so I can post it on the web for our members to examine. The number of reduced service days, when no Bellevue School days, no Lakeside, no Boeing days and blue moon days are simply too complex to decipher in a few minutes in the pick room. There are large spread sheets with thousands of numbers and as many as three different run

cards for just one assignment. Our members need time to decode it all. Metro has created this quagmire and needs to be responsible in making it understandable by the time Operators are forced to make a selection.

The problems get far worse. This shakeup, Metro decided to create separate run cards for emergency schedules, like serious snowfall or similar events. When this plan was brought to the Union, the work was to be selected by seniority. This would be no problem. However, shortly before the pick, Metro unilaterally decided that picking by seniority would be inconvenient and it would be easier for them to simply attach the emergency run cards to regular Full-Time run cards, never mind that the times are not the same, the routes are not the same and much of the equipment will not be the same. The logic explained to me was that picking the new additional run cars

would be complex, requiring more time than is given for Operators to decipher the cards and select what would work for them. The beauty of this plan is clear: Operators will be forced to select runs that will not work. Operators who have always chosen work that avoids the tunnel will suddenly find that attached is work that goes into the hole. It gets better; training does not even have the funding required to instruct all these unqualified operators to drive unfamiliar equipment or dance with trains in the tunnel. I also hear that there are more pieces of emergency work for some bases than there are available operators. What we have is a snow job, violating seniority and failing to provide the Union the work as required, failing to properly

*continued on page 12*

## President's Report, continued

International Convention also offers an even more compelling reason for attendance. The ATU International has long been governed by an International President elected from an east coast local. Following the retirement of International President Warren George, for the first time in ATU history, the General Executive Board appointed an International President from a west coast local and an International Executive Vice President from a Canadian local. This certainly raised some hackles on the east coast. From the e-mails and political propaganda being circulated, this 56<sup>th</sup> ATU International Convention should prove to be the most contentious ATU International Convention in history.

ATU International politics are often governed by word of mouth. The majority of ballot casting local elected officers are only familiar with International Vice Presidents assigned to work in their districts and will no doubt vote for or against candidates based on familiarity. That certainly can be said for the Officers of Local 587. Our recent experience has been with former

International Vice Presidents Ron Heintzman and Don Hanson, both greatly appreciated and highly respected International Officers. Don recently retired and we will miss his dedication and hard work as an International Vice President. Ron was recently appointed by the General Executive Board to the position of International Executive Vice President, replacing the retiring Mike Siano, then to position of International President following the retirement of International President Warren George.

Although it's true that I, like most if not all local union officers, am only personally familiar with the work of one of our current International Officers, who in my case is Ron Heintzman, I'm convinced he's the best leader in the ATU. His accomplishments as President of Local 757 Portland Oregon are legendary. Ron also chaired our Local 587 Rail negotiations and assisted Local 587 in renegotiating some of our smaller contracts. The gains we achieved under Ron's leadership and the mentoring he provided our Lo-

cal Officers will long benefit our membership.

While serving as President of Local 757, the ATU International recognized Ron's talents and work ethic and promoted Ron to International Vice President. He was so successful at working with Pacific Northwest union leaders, that the ATU International office assigned

Ron to work all over the United States. So now you know why even though I'm not happy about traveling to muggy Florida later this month, I'm also eager to go so I, as your elected President, can cast your ballot for Ron Heintzman for ATU International President.

In solidarity,  
Paul J. Bachtel

## Bulletin

August 15, 2010

To: All Local 587 Members  
From: Paul J. Bachtel, President / Business Representative

Subject: **King County Metro Contract Negotiations Update**

Negotiations are heating up. In addition to their usual duties, your Full-Time Officers, all of whom are on the Core Bargaining Committee, will be consumed with negotiations for at least the next two months. Please have patience when trying to reach an Officer. In the last 30 days:

- Following presentation of the Union proposals to the Metro bargaining team, Union subcommittee members attended Core Bargaining Committee negotiations to hear the Metro proposals.
- The Union and Metro met to identify issues worthy of subcommittee negotiation. The Union subcommittees will now meet with their Metro counterparts in attempts to hammer out draft proposals for presentation to the Core Bargaining Committee.
- The Core Bargaining Committee is now walking through the contract, paragraph by paragraph and line by line, reviewing each

to determine whether either side has a proposal or whether each paragraph can be tentatively agreed to with current language. In any paragraph with at least one proposal by either side, we will negotiate a change in language, withdraw the proposal(s), or set the proposal(s) aside for later negotiation or interest arbitration.

- Metro has provided most, if not all, of the information requested by the Union's economist. I am now awaiting his evaluations.
- The parties jointly sent a letter to PERC requesting a mediator join our negotiations in October if there are issues at impasse.
- The Core Bargaining Committee is scheduled to meet approximately two days per week through the month of October.
- I will be publishing monthly negotiation updates with additional updates when warranted. Thank you for your support and participation.

## WORK SITE VISITS

*Paul Bachtel, President, will be visiting various work sites during the month of September. Below is a list of times, dates and locations.*

September 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	South Operations Component Supply Center South Maintenance	4:00 am – 6:30 am 6:30 am – 7:00 am 7:00 am – 7:30 am
September 7 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	South Facilities	5:30 am – 6:30 am
September 17 <sup>th</sup> Friday	Seattle Personal Transit South Lake Union Streetcar	5:00 am – 7:00 am 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

# The View from the Buses

*Retirees'  
Corner*

By Bob Morgan, Retired First-Line Supervisor

## Nicknames.

Most of us have had one at one time or another, like myself, Bob is the nickname for Robert. Well there were also nicknames that most of you didn't know that you had. I'm not sure when it started but most probably before I was born for sure. Both Seattle Transit and Lakeside/Metropolitan employees were given these nicknames. Sometimes they were due to a situation that had occurred, or as with some, just because. I realized this practice was going on while attending the payday Thursday "Choir Practice" at the old Meatmarket Restaurant across the street from what is now Ryerson Base, around 1977 or so.

People were referring to others by names I hadn't heard before, so I asked Arlene Tupper who they were talking about. She then told me that most everyone had a nickname at Transit. Some knew theirs; others were oblivious that they even had one. I remember the late Dave Dellplain who was a coordinator prior to becoming an officer of Local 587, calling me "Marvel" during our radio exchanges. Later I found out the reasoning for that name was the fact that I got to road jumps and coach changes a little quicker than most thought was possible. As I became friends with more in supervision and even management I learned of more of these nicknames.

July of 1980, I along with 35-40 others, became intermittent supervisors. Now I learned even more names. But where did they originate? Well, it was primarily from a few within supervision I would find out. Bill Hewitt, A.D. Clark, and later, Mark Hartman. Oh, I bestowed a few on some people but those three came up with most of them for sure.

Some were, well, kind of obscene. Most were actually not that way though. I actually had two nicknames, one was O'Bob and the other Bobalo. O'Bob was bestowed upon me by Dan Sheppard and Howie

Nelson. Why? Well, Dave Dellplain had been elected as a Union Officer and there was a move up in the control center. What was left was the double-double back block. I, of course, refused to take the shift and the Union continued down the seniority list. The closer they got to the bottom of the list Howie and Dan would walk by me and shake their heads, sigh and say "O'Bob," your gonna get that shift. Never did, but the nickname stuck. Within two years A.D. placed the moniker of Bobalo on me. It also stuck, so today depending on who I talk to or converse with via e-mail it is one or the other.

Some of you may wonder what a double-double block is...well in the case of the control center it was this: Wednesday/Thursday 9PM to 5 AM Friday/Saturday 1PM to 9PM and then Sunday was 5AM to 1PM. In other words you were off work from 1PM Sunday until 9PM Wednesday.

Towards the end of the 1980s these 8 hour double backs were changed to 10 hours off. Didn't work that well in the block system used by supervisors in establishing RDO's and was changed sometime later to 1 eight hour double and a ten hours off if you could make it work in the block. I, for one, would like to have been able to create a double-double prior to my retirement. Why? Just crazy I guess. And of course a longer RDO.

So what were other names, well here are a few: The Dog (Sheepdog), The Baptist, Little Man with the Master plan, BSD, LSD, LCS, C Tad, The little General, Ajax, Augerman, Brutus, Lil Beaver, Roundman, Rabbi, Krebs, Slow Wally, Spider, Wash, Watash, Nellie, Camacan, McAllister, Freddy Jackets, J.J., Kato, Mac, Carlton, Mim Tack, Marathon Man, Wammers, Zippy, Skippy, Madman, Dr. Mad, The Doctah, The Talker, King David, Dollar Bill, Sexy Remy, Beagle, Bull Elephant, The Bush, Biggy Smalls, The Drut,

The Godfather, and one that most any 1st liner will remember if you were working in the early to mid 80s...Yendor Yar, Master of the Universe. That one was SPECIAL!

Another thing I learned while working in the Control Center was new language. Well we changed the way a word was pronounced. It wasn't antique, it was AnnteeQ. Debris was DeBress. Car fire on the Freeway...CAR-B-Q. Right up to the time I retired if I said Phoenix in front of Mark Hartman, he would yell at me, then I pronounced it "properly" Pahoenix. See, we were just a little crazy, but sometimes it made the job easier for sure.

Somewhere around 1984, a chief sent out a memo which stated that "The Control Center has the perception a being a fun place to work". It was, but we had to tone down some of the language used (off air of course ) so as not to offend anyone. So swearing became "Aardvark, Swastika, Parallelogram, Hippopotamus, and so on. Oh yeah, don't forget "Sandy Beaches!"

One more thing...Do any of you remember the daily 7:13 AM time check? There is a story behind that. The coordinators after work would go from 821 2nd Ave to 713 2nd Ave for a few spirits at Dooley's. Bill Hewitt started making the 713 time announcements around 1981, so if you ever wondered why, that was the reason.

Was remembering the different labor contracts while I was working at transit. The funny thing was that when the earlier contracts were settled, the word got out that it was done over drinks at the Bush Garden Restaurant. Nah I thought, they really didn't do that, did they? 1986 or so, Neil Peterson leaves as the Executive Director of Metro. During the roast at the J&M he recounted the negotiations at the Bush Gardens and his hangover the next day. Well this was one rumor that was true I realized. With all

the lawyers involved today, doubt something like that will ever occur again.

Heard that Gary Grout, retired from Facilities, had a pacemaker installed recently. Saw him at the July lunch at Goldie's and he looked none the worse for wear and said he was back to normal almost immediately after the procedure. Also at the lunch, Pete and Anne Cameron, up from Depot Bay, Or. Was good to see them both. I've also failed to mention the volunteer work that Vic Kaufman has been doing. Vic retired many years ago as a Base Chief at Central. He volunteers at both USO and as a Blue Blazer at Sea-Tac Airport. He has got me interested in the Blue Blazer job and I'm getting info on it as I write this, hey need to find something to do with all this time! Also Ken Teague, retired chief from Service Quality, does volunteer work in Sultan delivering meals to the elderly. I know there are others who volunteer their time, if you are one of them, be proud as you are helping others.

My wife and I will be staying with the Roger Cadys at their B.C. place in late August. Even though I'll submit this prior to the visit, I'm sure it will be wonderful as usual.

The 2nd Wednesday lunch is still at Goldie's on Airport Way S though there is in the works a plan to move it to another location further south, and try to find a place in the north end to have a lunch on alternating months. I'll write of this as soon as it becomes official. Otherwise remember the two breakfasts: 1st Saturday of the month at Barlee's East of Aurora at 205th at 7:30 AM. On the 3rd Saturday of the month at the Burien Elks at 8:30 AM. Comments, suggestions for future articles or other news on retiree's, contact me at [morganbobsue@comcast.net](mailto:morganbobsue@comcast.net).

Thanks for reading and we'll see you soon, from the Buses.

## "The Pick," continued

negotiate changes in work rules and failing to competently manage.

### Unhealthy Incentives – Unhealthy Negotiations

The JLMIC (Joint Labor Management Insurance Committee) has been the venue for negotiating how King County insurance benefits are delivered to both management and "managed" employees. Just as we have had serious legal issues with Metro changing policies without negotiating, our County Executive, who I have previously supported, has apparently decided to make Healthy Incentives a blatantly cynical tool to reduce costs, ignoring

agreements reached at the JLMIC. I am stunned that good faith is being abandoned for a slash and burn approach to those who dedicate their careers to civil service. Due to everyone, management and employees alike, finding that WebMD was like sorting your health and finances in a room of funhouse mirrors, proof of good faith attempts to complete the Healthy Incentives program was to be sufficient grounds for successful appeal of not getting gold. Now, we hear that earnest but unsuccessful effort is to be answered with serious economic penalties that say clearly, if we can screw you, we will.

Similar threats to fair and legal negotiations are presented by public statements and directives of the County Council and Executive that limit the ability of those at the table to come to a negotiated settlement best reflecting the needs of Transit.

Metro management is far more aware of what is required to run the Metro system than those attempting to impose these constraints. Despite my criticisms, top Metro managers are, without exception, highly intelligent, capable and informed. It is abundantly clear, in press coverage, that their hands are being tied at a time when their talents are most needed. The council and Exec should abandon the top-down administration of a system they don't understand and let transit

management negotiate for the long term interests of transit. Similarly, they should let them implement service in the best interests of the region. The extent to which the County Council and County Executive constrain management's options is the measure of how much of the decision-making is political when the issues are not and how much policy is being driven by fear, headline-grabbing falsehoods and micromanagement of appearances as the top priority.

**Proud To Be ATU  
180,000 Strong**