

NOVEMBER 2002

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ATU

LOCAL 587

News Review



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VOL. XXV, NO. 11

The President's Report

Service Auditor's — Part 2 The Saga Continues

by President Lance Norton



Lance F. Norton

ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17TH, Vice President Glen Travis, Transit Operator/Executive Board Officer Paul Bachtel, Supervisor/Executive Board Officer Paul Neil and I met with Operations Manager Curtis Robinson and Acting Operations Administrator Bonnie Hanson, who, when not acting,

is Supervisor of Bellevue Base. This was our second meeting on ADA requirements for Operators announcing stops, connecting routes, landmarks, and the resulting excessive PR's that may have been written.

Frankly, I must admit I have become more confused after these meetings. Given the number of PR's (Performance Reports) written on Operators from Service Auditors, I was under the misunderstanding that Base Chiefs and Base Supervisors were Service Auditors when out there riding our buses monitoring Operators' performances. Not so, I was told. There is only **one** Service Auditor and that happens to be former Base Chief Bill Carr, now retired, working haltime for King County Metro. (Sorry we don't have a picture of Bill as many of you would recognize him, I am sure).

The one and only Service Auditor is supposedly, in most

cases, out there to monitor A.D.A. compliance. Of course the union has pointed out to management that our First Line Supervisors in the Instruction Department are specifically trained to do Operator ride checks, should complaints emanate from the riding public regarding an Operator's performance.

But to show you why this causes me confusion, let me outline the presentation they made when I asked about a particular individual's PR. We were given a copy of an Instructor's ride check generated because of a customer complaint or complaints. We were never shown these specific complaints, mind you. In the ride check by the Instructor conducted in June, the Operator's "...driving was for the most part satisfactory." However, the Operator's "...actions were consistent with an Operator placing schedule ahead of safety in the priority hierarchy." On one oc-

casional, according to the Instructor's report, the Operator had "...to stop suddenly when a vehicle in front of him braked suddenly..." on one particular avenue, the following distance was estimated at "...less than 6 seconds minimum for his coach type." According to the Instructor, the Operator's reading of the road was lacking when he followed the coach in front across an intersection and ended up partially blocking the intersection. The instructor stated in his report, "...these are the actions of an Operator concentrating on schedule."

In conclusion, the Instructor wrote the Operator's "...customer relations were satisfactory, questions were answered with correct information and demonstrated a professional friendliness towards the customers. During the ride check of ...[this particular Operator]... I

continued on page 10

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The Month at a Glance

Executive Board Report

October 29, 2002

The following officers were present: President Norton, Recording Secretary Gil, Linda Anderson, John Bellinger, Lisa Carter, Chris Daniels, Katherine Eckhardt, John Farrell, Ninus Hopkins, Dan Linville, Joe Mangiameli, Paul Neil, Mike Rochon, Brian Sherlock, Dee Wakenight, Mike Whitehead.

Vice President Travis and Paul Bachtel were attending the McWilliams arbitration, Financial Secretary Griffin and Shirley Walker were on vacation, Marc Auerbach was excused for Labor to Neighbor work.

The following business was conducted:

- Motion by Katherine Eckhardt

to donate \$500 to the Conrad Johnson Fund.

- Motion by John Farrell to send the four full-time officers to the Northwest Conference Executive Board meeting in Phoenix, AZ, January 9th through 12th, paying travel, lodging, per diem and registration.

- Motion by Mike Whitehead to spend up to \$200 to purchase up to 10 security devices for the Vehicle Maintenance union representative material storage areas.

- Motion by Ninus Hopkins to authorize a contribution of \$500 to the SPT Christmas holiday gathering.

Business of the Membership

At the October 2002 cycle of membership meetings the following business was conducted:

- Motion started at the September Clallam Transit meeting to contribute \$250.00 annually to the Clallam Paratransit Employee's Association, was finalized at the October Jefferson Transit meeting and approved unanimously by those attending

the meeting cycle.

The following members were October pot draw winners: John Farrell at the Charter meeting, Frank Tanner at the morning meeting, Paul Hausmann at JTA. CTS pot draw winner was Claire Schwarz. Rolling CTS pot draw of \$250.00 was lost by Nancy Vivolo. Next month's pot will be \$275.00.

Tentative Agenda

Membership Meetings:

CHARTER MEETING
Thursday, November 7, 2002
 8:00 p.m.
 IBEW Hall Auditorium
 2700 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

MORNING MEETING
Friday, November 8, 2002
 10:30 a.m.
 IBEW Hall Auditorium
 2700 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

JEFFERSON TRANSIT
Monday, November 11, 2002
 8:00 p.m.
 Port Townsend Rec Center
 Port Townsend, WA

CLALLAM TRANSIT
Tuesday, November 12, 2002
 7:00 p.m.
 Vern Burton Memorial
 Building, Port Angeles, WA

Among topics to be discussed:

Arbitration update, Sound Transit issues, Labor to Neighbor update.

Unfinished Business:

Proposed bylaw amendment for Article X, new Section 11 will be discussed and voted on.

Arbitration Update

- 1. Kenny McCormick:** Grieved failure to follow FLSA requirements for travel time for board/report/ATL operators. Grievance being held in abeyance while issue pursued in court.
- 2. Surronal Frank Tanner:** Grieved termination due to customer complaint and allegation of physical contact. Arbitration held July 17 and 18, 2002. Arbitrator ruled in favor of the grievant. Grievance final. Welcome back, Brother Tanner.
- 3. Patricia McWilliams:** Grieved termination due to suspended license. Arbitration held October 28 and 29, 2002. Decision pending.
- 4. Craig Phinney:** Grieved termination due to gross misconduct and inappropriate use of County email. Arbitration approved at the September cycle of meetings. Reinstatement proposal offered and accepted. Grievance final. Welcome back, Brother Phinney.
- 5. Gary Karpenko:** Grieved termination due to gross misconduct and inappropriate use of County email. Arbitration approved at the September cycle of meetings. Reinstatement proposal offered and accepted. Grievance final. Welcome back, Brother Karpenko.
- 6. Bob Martinsen:** Grieved termination due to gross misconduct and inappropriate use of County email. Reinstatement proposal offered and accepted. Grievance final. Welcome back, Brother Martinsen.
- 7. Carl Inman, et.al.:** Grieved improper assignment of overtime at Bellevue Base, Maintenance. Schedule pending.

In Loving Memory...

*Neither fire nor wind, birth nor death,
 can erase our good deeds.*

— Buddha

Robert Jackson, was killed on October 25th, 2002. Brother Jackson, ID #3406, joined Local 587 in July of 1991, going Full-time in December of 1995. He was an active member at the time of his death, having worked at Atlantic Base for many years. His death comes as a shock and is received with great sadness from those who worked with him and appreciated his kindness and quiet manner. He will be greatly missed.

Victor Mroz, passed away October 12, 2002. Brother Mroz

was a member since January of 1968. No further information available.

James Kennedy, passed away August 4, 2002. Brother Kennedy was a retired Seattle Transit Driver, and was 95 at the time of his passing. No further information available.

Demeter "Danny" Kis, passed away July 1, 2002. Brother Kis joined Division 587 back in May of 1946, and retired in 1987. He was 84 at the time of his passing.

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

ATU LOCAL 587

News Review

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 Transit Operator Position No. 2
 Transit Operator Position No. 3
 Transit Operator Position No. 4
 Transit Operator Position No. 5
 Transit Operator Position No. 6
 Transit Operator Position No. 7
 Transit Operator Position No. 8
 Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 1
 Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 2
 Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 3
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JOE MANGIAMELI
NINUS HOPKINS

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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 signatures, work ID number, addresses and telephone numbers that can be verified during office hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters are subject to editing and should be limited to 350 words or less. Not all letters can be published due to space limitations. Cut off date is the 15th of each month.

Send letters to:

Jennie Gil, Editor
 c/o ATU Local 587
 News Review
 2700 First Avenue, Rm 204
 Seattle, WA 98121

Members Gather for Coffee, Donuts, and Accident Reporting Seminar

By Linda Anderson, Shop Steward Committee

TWO DOZEN RANK AND FILE members, Stewards, and Officers are better equipped to help all of us fill out accident reports after attending a workshop put on by the 587 Shop Steward Committee, and led by Frank Waynewood, Safety Officer at Metro's South Base. The two hour workshop was the first in a series of Saturday morning seminars on various topics, open to all members. Members from several departments within Metro attended, including Facilities, Vehicle Maintenance, and Operations. We had donuts left over, so we hope to see members from other properties and classifications at future seminars!

Frank did an excellent job of describing the duties of a Safety Officer, which go far beyond judging accidents. These duties include helping to make our jobs safer in the workplace in a number of ways, and occasionally assisting the County in settling claims by the public. He also clued us in to the numerous reports that make up an accident file besides the one the driver fills out. Frank described how these wend their way through the entire accident review process, how Stewards can help you to play an active, informed role in the process of your own accident.

This is by NO MEANS a COMPLETE or systematic list of all the important things to remember in dealing with an accident, but here are a few of the things we touched on.

SOME TIPS FOR WHEN AN ACCIDENT OCCURS

1. Get as many courtesy cards as you can. This frequently can assist you by corroborating your



Several members attended the seminar. From left to right, front row: Craig Anderson, Linda Anderson, South Base Safety Officer Frank Waynewood, Jim McKenzie, Dee Wakenight, Mary Newton and President Lance Norton. Middle row: Mia Segal, Lisa Nault, Richard Yount, Mechelle Penny, Michael Brancheau, Carolle Crabill, Edie Brown and Cathy Donalds. Back row: Lisa Carter, James Allen, Richard Hansen, Financial Secretary Paul Griffin, David Vestal (hiding behind Edie Brown) and Bob Tuttle. Not pictured: Paul Bachtel, Peter Scott.

report.

2. If someone falls on the bus, ask for their name, even if they say they are fine. Explain that you need it for your paperwork. It's important to document what really happened, because sometimes a claim will be filed later.

3. Don't forget to call the Coordinator or appropriate Supervisor.

4. Exchange information, but do not discuss the accident with anyone other than your employer representative, the Police or a Union Representative.

A FEW TIPS FOR FILLING OUT ACCIDENT REPORTS

1. Before you fill out an accident report, get a Steward to help you! Even Stewards get other Stewards to help them with their own reports. Why? Because when we ourselves are involved, an experienced second opinion helps us think better.

2. When in doubt, fill it out.

Any time you make contact with another vehicle, someone falls on the bus or in a bus zone, or someone complains of an injury (even if you didn't see it), fill out an accident report. The paperwork protects you and helps Metro track all kinds of things such as safety trouble spots and record-keeping in case of liability claims. If there is no resulting damage, the accident could be reclassified as an incident.

3. An accident is a blind accident only if you did not see it and have no independent knowledge of it. If the driver of another vehicle tells you just hit them, this is independent knowledge, so it is not a blind accident. However, read on:

4. Put down concisely what happened right before, during and after the accident, and check with your Steward to make sure that what you write comes across clearly. Don't put down things you assume happened as if you know

SHOP STEWARD'S CORNER

they are facts. If you didn't actually see something that's in one of the questions in the report, it's okay to put "I didn't see."

5. Think carefully about distances and speeds. 3-4 miles an hour is walking speed. 300 feet is a football field. Think in terms of bus or vehicle lengths. It's okay to put "I don't know," if you don't know, or "approximately" if you're not sure.

6. Request extra time from your Chief if you are too shaken to write the report immediately. Don't be too shy to request someone from the (Metro) Critical Incident Support Team to talk with.

7. Keep a copy of all reports and courtesy cards. If you have additional information, you have the right to amend the report later by writing a supplemental report. If you do this, be sure to include the number of the original report on the supplement.

APPEALING A DETERMINATION

If your accident is judged preventable and you wish to appeal, you may request a re-read. Contact your Supervisor or Chief, and a Shop Steward to help you with this process. After the re-read it may be possible to appeal farther, to the Accident Review Board. You have the right to see your accident file, including any reports of Police, Supervisors, Safety Officers, claimants, and any photos taken. You may present your own photos and measurements as well. For Metro employees, this information can be obtained from the South Training Main Office by phone at (206) 684-2812.

2003 Shakeup Dates

The following dates are projected dates for pick for a number of different classifications. Only information available at the time of publication is being presented. These dates subject to change should a major event occur that prevents the pick from occurring.

MV Transit

Pick is scheduled to occur November 8th and go into effect November 23rd.

Metro/King County Part-time Operators

Spring: January 4, 5, 11 and 12.
Summer: May 3, 4, 10 and 11.
Fall: August 16, 17, 23 and 24.

Metro/King County Full-time Operators

Spring: January 2 through 15.
Summer: May 5 through 15.
Fall: August 18 through 28.

Part and Full-time preview will occur the week prior to the beginning of pick, please watch your bulletins for further information. Part-time Restriction forms will be due the week prior to preview. The new shakeups will take effect February 1, June 7 and September 27, respectively.

Metro/King County Vehicle Maintenance

Spring: January 14 through 16.
Summer: May 20 through 22.
Fall: September 9 through 11.

Leads pick one to two weeks ahead of these dates, shakeup goes into effect same as Transit Operators outlined above.

Metro/King County Facilities Maintenance

Pick occurs February 27th and August 28th, **shakeup goes into effect** March 15th and September 13th, respectively.

Metro/King County CAO/RIO

Specific dates not available at this time. By contract the picks take place in January and July with implementation in February and August.

2002 ATU Latino Caucus Conference

by Cathy Donalds, Lisa Nault and Daniel Edminster

WE ARRIVED TO THE REMnants of hurricane Isadora. We were among the few who were enjoying the rain. There were the usual politicos from the area to greet and welcome us to Allentown. Bill Lindsay, President of ATU Local 956, Allentown, PA, the Honorable Roy Afflerbach, Mayor of Allentown, Armando Greco of the Lehigh/ Northampton Transit Authority, all extended welcome to all attendees. We heard from International Vice President Javier Perez, International Representative Ray Rivera and International Vice President Mike Siano. Then the most interesting part and perhaps most useful of the whole weekend occurred in the first of two workshops presented by NTI. NTI is the National Transit Institute, a federally funded agency that deals with issues regarding all facets of transit and are based at Rutgers University. Their mission is to develop training programs and conduct the training for transit agencies and/or transit unions. Now here is the really cool part. THE TOTAL COST OF DEVELOPMENT AND PRE-

SENTING THE PROGRAMS IS ... FREE. Yes, that's right FREE. All you have to do is call them and they will come and put on the seminar.

NTI put on programs regarding terrorism in transit and violence in the workplace. Terrorism in Transit basically scared the heck out of everyone in the room. The phrase that stuck in my mind was, "Before 9-11 this was lost and found, today it is a suspicious package." The second workshop on Saturday was regarding violence in the workplace. Both were excellent and worth the trip to Allentown.

We were given a presentation by Thomas Valenzuela of Valenzuela Capital Partners, a corporate sponsor of the ATU LC. He discussed what his firm does and how they would like to become involved in helping invest for our futures.

We had a workshop on Warranty Work Subcontracting by Larry Grayer, Associate Counsel for ATU International. Basically we need language in our contract to prevent the company from allowing outside workers to do the work that we have always done

just because there is a warranty from the manufacturer.

On Saturday we started out with a business session and then Congressman Patrick Toomey from the 15th district spoke, followed by Allentown City Councilman Julio Guridy and Pennsylvania State Representative Jennifer Mann. We had our second workshop from NTI and then concluded the meeting with the final business session.

There were 82 members registered for the conference and 13 additional membership applications for the year giving us a total membership in the Caucus of 95.

We had reports from the officers and Executive Committee

regarding last year's activities. Both Northwest Representative José Villahermosa and Recording Secretary Jennie Gil mentioned the Seattle Chapter and the problems we have had in the last year. They both went on to say that the problems have been addressed and we are now running fine on our own. The ATU Latino Caucus Treasurer's Report shows that we are on solid financial ground.

The conference ended with a dinner dance complete with a 15 piece Salsa orchestra. There was just enough time to see a little of the country side and the Crayola factory before catching a plane back to Seattle.

A Visit to the International



Central Base Operator Taavi McMahon had the opportunity during this year's summer vacation back east to stop by ATU International Headquarters in Washington DC. The ATU is always happy to welcome its members to the International offices and show them around. Taavi and his son Tito stand with ATU Vice President Warren George on the left and ATU President James La Sala on the right. Taavi submitted this photo for printing two months back and he kept getting bumped due to lack of space. The editor would like to thank him for his patience and good humor while waiting for a sliver of space in the newsletter.

SEATTLE CHAPTER of the LATINO CAUCUS

WILL MEET ON

November 7, 2002

(just before the Charter meeting)

7:00 p.m.

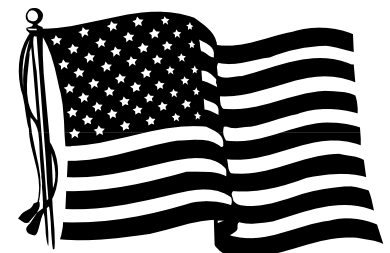
IBEW Main Auditorium

2700 First Avenue

between Cedar and Clay

November Holidays

**November 11th
is Veteran's
Day**



**November 28th
is
Thanksgiving
Day**

CISM Welcomes New Members

By Linda Davidson

THE CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS Management Team would like to invite the Executive Board and the membership of ATU Local 587 to join us in welcoming four new members to the team. Choosing four out of all the applications was a daunting task, as many very good people were interested in joining us this time. We hope that you will apply again when we have another recruitment.

The four new members are: East Base drivers George Bridges and Esther Hankerson; Ryerson Base mechanic James Busby; whom you heard from last month in the *News Review*; and North Base driver Ruth Wilson. They are ready to join the team in the duties of serving the membership. They have all completed their initial training which includes Basic and Advanced CISM, which they took last summer, and Peer Support, which they took in September, all of which was taught by instructors from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

Our heartfelt thanks to ATU Local 587 along with King County/Metro, whose generous support made it possible for the team to attend the training and conference this last September.

In addition to the new members' training, the more experi-

enced members refreshed their skills in the Peer Support and Advanced CISM classes. The conference brings together people who work in CISM from different industries. Each program seems to be set up a little differently and we are always looking for ideas to improve our system. It is always helpful to hear how other teams resolve their team issues as well as keep the skills of their team members sharp.

Speakers from related practices in mental health bring new information as it pertains to critical incident stress and continue to emphasize the need for care when

someone has been affected.

Many of our employees are alone when an incident occurs, so they sit down with one team member and have an opportunity to talk about what happened in a safe, confidential, and nonjudgmental environment.

Sometimes people need to express their anger about what has happened to them or how an incident was handled. Since we never share anything with management, it is a safe place to vent about what 'they' did or didn't do.

One on one Peer Support is by far the most common technique used by our team. We also call

these 'one on one Debriefings'. This is simply a semantic issue and no matter what you call it, you will sit down with one team member and have a chance to talk about what happened to you.

You will come away with information on what you can expect to happen now, and what things you can do to lessen the impact that this event might be having on you.

New information is constantly being made available, hence the need for ongoing training. We hope that you never need our services, but if you do, we'll do everything we can to be there for you.

Anniversaries can bring Recurring Anxiety

WE ALL HAVE BEEN HEARING A lot about what it is to experience the anniversary of a tragic event. September 11 will remain embedded in our memories as the date of the attack on America, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Along with those memories are sometimes feelings of sadness or anxiety, but with each passing year, those feelings will have less and less impact on us, especially if we acknowledge them.

There were many public ceremonies and public or private rituals to commemorate Septem-

ber 11. We do this to mark the passage of time in a meaningful way. A year has gone by. Many 'firsts' are now in the past, first birthday since..., first Thanksgiving since..., first Chanukah since, first Christmas since (the event).

As members of ATU Local 587, we have the anniversary of another tragic event looming on the horizon. At the end of this month, we'll see the fourth anniversary of the death of Mark McLaughlin go by. For some of us it will just be another day as it has been four years, after all. For others, especially those who

knew him well, it could mean sadness and/or anxiety for a few days around the date. We might even feel troubled without really knowing why, if we don't stop and remember for a moment. Acknowledge that it happened, and then acknowledge that it was four years ago.

If you are indeed still having strong reactions, around this date, it is probably time to seek out some professional intervention. There is nothing wrong with you, it is just time to find peace, and all of us can use a little help sometimes.

King County Labor Council Report

By KCLC delegate Bill Clifford

THE BIG CONCERNS OF THE KING County Labor Council this month are the upcoming elections, Bush's labor policy and the Iraq issue. Much related business was transacted.

KCLC delegates approved a request to endorse the construction of a new Technology Center at Renton Technology College. We also supported a motion to support the acquisition of the "Hat and Boots" property in Georgetown for the South Seattle Community College Duwamish Education Center's Apprenticeship Training Center.

COPE endorsements were approved to support the State Labor Council's Labor to Neighbor program, to support the Monorail campaign and to support Mary Fairhurst's bid for the State Supreme Court, Pos 3 (her opponent is Tim Eyman's lawyer). We also endorsed Connie Espe (48th), Al O'Brien (1st), Jeanne Edwards (1st), Tracey Eide (30th), Mark Milosocia (30th), Gregg Markley (30th), Judy Clibborn (41st), Dave Asher (45th), Laura Ruderman (45th), Debbie Jacobson (47th), Geoff Simpson (47th), Pat Sullivan (47th) and Ross Hunter (48th).

We contributed \$1000 to the "No on I-776" campaign (this is Eyman's attack on local MVET options), and \$5000 to the R-51 campaign.

The KCLC Board granted strike sanction to the American Guild of Musical Artists (the Seattle Opera chorus) against Seattle Opera. The Board also endorsed job actions at the Port of Seattle in support of ILWU Local 9s contract fight.

The KCLC Education Committee was granted support for an informative, education forum on the impending war against Iraq and its impact on working families, tentatively scheduled for December 4, at 5:30pm.

The biggest drama of the night came on a related issue. A motion from the floor requested KCLC support for the October 26 march and rally against war on Iraq. The Chair ruled this out of order because a central labor council, such as the KCLC, is prohibited by the AFL from taking a position on a matter of national policy before the AFL-CIO has done so. The maker of the motion challenged the chair's ruling and the chair's ruling was overturned. The motion was then

discussed and voted up. During the discussion it became clear that not one delegate or officer supports Bush's policy on Iraq, not even the chair who originally overruled the motion. Although not everyone agreed on every nuance, it was clear that all the union representatives present felt that Bush is using the threat of war to trample workers' rights in the US and to distract the voters from the economic problems his policies have aggravated.

Executive Director Steve Williamson added that he had already agreed to address the October rally, but this motion will bring the matter to the national office's attention.

Organized Labor Against War will have a Palestinian-American trade unionist address its next meeting (Oct 28, 7pm at the IBEW-2700 First Ave, in Seattle). OLAW meets the fourth Monday of each month at this location. OLAW can be reached at 206-600-4394 or at olawkc@yahoo.com.

The United Farm Workers recently opened an office in Ballard to promote its Fair Trade Apple Campaign. The UFW anticipates

signing an agreement very soon with an organic apple grower. Their apples will be labeled with a UFW seal stating "Finest Quality, Fair to Growers, and Fair to Workers." The plan is for the UFW to promote a premium apple with more of the consumers' dollar going to the grower and laborers and less to the middlemen. The UFW can be contacted by writing or visiting the Seattle Office, UFW, Attn: Rebecca Salda-a, 6512 23rd Av NW, Suite 329, Seattle, WA 98117. They are collecting pledge cards which state that the signer will endeavor to buy the Fair Trade apples and encourage their friends to do the same.

There is a national fight brewing at PACCAR/Kenworth/Peterbilt over a lockout of UAW Local 1832 in Madison, Tennessee. Because PACCAR is headquartered in Bellevue we may see some action here.

The Labor to Neighbor campaign needs your help in numerous political campaigns between now and the elections. Principle activities are phone banking and walking precincts. Contact KCLC political organizer Adair Damman, 206-441-3473.

Letters to the Editor...

PERC Victory

Dear Editor,

In a time when labor victories are all too infrequent it was great news to receive such an emphatic decision from the Public Employment Relations Commission upholding the right of all Metro/King County employees to leaflet at Metro worksites in non-work areas on non-work time. We appreciate the support President Norton gave to this issue from the start and his article about PERC's ruling in the October *News Review*.

Once again, this resounding win shows the importance of rank-and-file leadership in our union. During the initial stages of this fight, former President Samet almost gave ATU's approval to a policy put forth by management that required employees to get approval from base chiefs before engaging in union leafleting. Moreover, Samet was avidly defended in his position by some apologists who said it was the best the union could do.

But a far greater number of ATU members were unwilling to have their rights compromised without a fight. Instead we spoke up and pushed President Samet to consult the membership on this vital issue. Many [members] wrote letters to the *News Review*, went to union meetings to speak and support resolutions on the right to organize, made phone calls or wrote letters to Samet, and engaged in other acts, large and small, to let him know how strongly they felt.

The organizing paid off. To his credit, Samet never signed off on Metro's overly-restrictive rules. Management was forced to unilaterally impose them and ATU went forward with an unfair labor practice complaint.

Metro's position was ultimately struck down and their regulations thoroughly repudiated by PERC as a form of prior restraint that would potentially chill union activism.

FOR Workers Activism and Rank-and-file Democracy (FORWARD) — an ATU caucus — was

founded out of this organizing effort and the initial successful fight to win a contract with a COLA. We mention this history because it illustrates how member caucuses and shop-floor activism can help keep our union on track and win workplace gains. Obviously, the right to leaflet and otherwise freely communicate at the worksite is essential to this, especially at Metro with our varied schedules. It is why we fought so hard for a strong decision.

We don't intend PERC's ruling to be an end, but an important tool in the ongoing effort to improve working conditions.

There are many issues to tackle. Some have been in the *News Review*: punitive implementation of the ADA; a flawed complaint system that now triggers surveillance of drivers by "service auditors"; inadequate safety and security programs; disparate treatment and discipline of employees based on race, sex, and sexual orientation. We invite all ATU members to get involved with FORWARD to work on these and other issues.

In solidarity,
Linda Averill, #8816
Nate Chappelle, #1719

Thank You

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I would like to publicly thank those of our union whose efforts, over the past two months, resulted in my return to work after suffering through a sobering experience and the loss of my job.

I'd especially like to thank our President Lance Norton, and Executive Board member Brian Sherlock. Their tireless efforts on my behalf brought about this successful resolution while at the same time dealing with a myriad of other pressing issues and problems. Their unwavering dedication to our membership, that I've personally witnessed over the past eleven years, is a testament to both their genuine concern for our union members and their selfless service.

I am grateful, too, to the many others of our union who have offered generous messages of support and encouragement. It's in difficult times when we learn who our true friends are. I will forever be grateful and always in your debt. To the solitary man that has no family, friends are everything.

Sincerely,
Rick Gleason, ID # 3455
Central Base

Calling Stops: Objections and Alternatives

Dear Editor:

Let me start by saying that I firmly support the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)...I don't know how I'd handle having to be stuck in a wheelchair and/or having to rely on others to do the things I think I ought to be able to do for myself. So I think that anything we can do to help them out a little is the right thing to do.

That being said, I believe that all people should work under the same rules of courtesy and conduct. If you want assistance from someone, ask, *courteously*. I don't read minds! And I don't think that I should be required to try to anticipate and correct the ills and inequities of the world, especially when it puts my job at risk.

Whoop! "Put my job at risk! What's that all about?" (Well let me try to explain...)

First off, the job as a Transit Operator is to ride the razor's edge. Few of us even count, anymore, how many lives we save by doing our jobs. Cars that cut us off and expect buses to be able to stop like Volkswagens, people who walk in front of buses, and/or into blind spots, people who expect drivers to be aware of everything that is happening on all sides of the bus, all the time. And somehow, we do. It astonishes me that more people aren't injured or killed around transit vehicles. That they are not is a testimony to the people who operate the vehicles...

But, in order to do this requires the ability to concentrate, to an almost super-human degree, on the job at hand. Anything that distracts me from my ability to concentrate on the job at hand puts my job, my vehicle, my passengers and myself at risk. I consider the requirement to read from an ADA card and make announcements into a microphone as I'm piloting my vehicle down the road at driving speeds to be ridiculous, and dangerous to the riding public. But drivers are currently being disciplined for failing to do this very thing, and our union is not responding with, (in my opin-

ion), the appropriate **outrage**.

See, I need reading glasses in order to be able to read with any clarity. This also means that when I am wearing my reading glasses, anything outside arms reach is blurry and indistinct. This includes pretty much everything outside of the bus. So, until Metro decided to exempt us from any accidents and/or fatalities which occur while we're making ADA announcements, I don't feel it's right or proper to be required to do the things which put the riding public at additional risk. And for which the drivers are held responsible. (Discipline for failure to call out ADA announcements is a reality folks!) And is issued for not making *enough* announcements as well as not making them at all. I think that the Union should be strongly against anything that increases the possibilities of drivers having accidents because of a management requirement to do something that increases the probability of that happening.

Oh, I'm told I'm not supposed to read the card as I am driving the bus. But, if I'm required to pull into a bus stop for every announcement called for on the ADA card, I wonder how the riding public is going to respond. And when I get called in to discuss my lack of on-time performance with my favorite base chief, will I have the backing of my Union? And how can I tell that I need to make an announcement without reading the card?

The way I see it, I can either operate my bus safely, or read the ADA cards. I choose the first option, especially when technology exists which does not require me to put my passengers at risk to meet some management directive.

...I've been informed that a system exists that allows the buses to read information from stationary transponders (like the ones currently being used by the bus locator radio system), that make automatic announcements of location (like those being currently required by the Metro ADA policy), and if drivers choose to assist their passengers by calling out stops and transfer points, and other items of interest, I would encourage them to do so. But, in this case, Metro has responded in an all too typical manner, which is to resolve a management concern by disciplining drivers. This is **wrong** and we should be outraged. Especially when the technology exists which makes it unnecessary.

Let me offer another alternative. According to an article in the Seattle Times on Monday, October 7, 2002, there currently **exists** and is **available for sale** Global Positioning System devices which can identify your location to within (at worst) 50 feet. The two devices identified in the articles are the PHAROS

SEND IN YOUR OPINIONS

Letters/contributions must include signatures, work ID number, addresses and telephone numbers that can be verified during office hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters are subject to editing and should be limited to 350 words or less. Not all letters can be published due to space limitations. Cut off date is the 15th of each month. Send letters to:

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NOTICE TO ALL READERS

**Views and
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official position of
Local 587**

Letters to the Editor...

GPS Portable Navigator, www.pharosgps.com, and the Magellan GPS companion, www.msgellangps.com. But, I know that others are available and the cost to provide everyone who has a disability pass and requires this type of assistance with their own private GPS locator would be less than that currently being expended to train and discipline the Transit Operators.

I don't know about you, but my job provides me with plenty of stress, thank you very much. I really don't need another management directive (and accompanying discipline) to help me out in that area.

As comedian Dennis Miller says at the end of his monologue, "But that's just me, I could be wrong."

Garth MacCoy
#1848, Bellevue Base

Spotters

Dear Editor:

I never thought that I would be writing a letter to the editor; however the events of late have forced me to. I am referring of course to the fiasco Metro has created under the guise of compliancy with the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act. ... When Sister Ilene Weber refused to accept her award because of this, you would have thought that King Co. Metro would have been so embarrassed that the whole ridiculous happenings would have stopped... The damage alone that blunder will cost them sets us back years in our trust, respect, and ...[credibility]...

... Are the disabled riders complaining about our people? No they are not, other than the predictable ongoing gripers. Are the **SPOTTERS** that they are sending out on the routes...limiting their observations to ADA specs? No, they are blatantly doing the work of our Instructors, and doing it in such a manner that it is a real slap in the face to them. If the Instructors don't file a class action grievance against King Co. Metro, then something is really wrong.

...Here we are working in one of the most disgusting and dangerous traffic patterns in the United States, and King Co. Metro starts this fiasco which is causing a lot of people to try and split their attention between the road and the supposed or imagined spotter. I happened to be very much involved way back when Management and Local 587 agreed that there would never be spotters on the coaches again. So much for their promises. They do it now, as I said, under the guise of compliancy of the ADA.

One driver who I know to be one of the most conscientious employees that we have, was driving his trip when a Base Chief boarded the coach. He asked her if she was checking ADA compliancy and she admitted that she was. He drove his trip letter perfect, made the proper announcements, and arriving at the P&R there were only the two of them on. He felt confident that he would have a letter perfect report, but did he? No, he had a point's deduction because he failed to announce the P&R even though there were only the two of them aboard...

... Shortly before I retired from full time, with over forty-seven years of service as a driver, I was asked to provide input to the pending plan of compulsory calling out of the stops. I submitted verbatim my many spiels for the trips that I drove. They thanked me and that was that. Returning a short while later as a part time driver, the first thing my peers asked me to look at was the cards pertaining to the calls for the various routes. After looking at a few of them I just shook my head.

For example... I referred to the downtown core as the "Shopping District". They in their infinite wisdom changed that to "Retail District". What do the myriad of wholesale shoppers do now that they have been omitted, especially if they are disabled. Non compliance by design.

Do they have any offering for mike-shy people of which we abound? ...Who is doing the work of the Base Chiefs and other Supervisors when they are out riding the trips and checking them... A rose by any other name is still a rose, and so is a **SPOTTER!** ... I hope the givers of the George Turner Award turned down by our sister have been briefed as to why she turned it down.

Perhaps the \$5000 per Gillig coach that King Co. Metro is alleged to have paid Gillig to remove the air conditioning and racks from the stock production coaches would have paid for the automatic announcement machines that have been available for years.

We abound in good talent on this property, let's nurture it, and not run it off. Quoting management, only 12% of the work force causes all the trouble. If the ratio of non compliance is higher than that, then why?

Sincerely and
fraternally yours.
Al Ramey #11124, South Base

More Thanks

Dear members of Local 587,

We would like to take a few

moments to thank all of the members and officers of the Local for their support of our arbitration requests. It was nice to see so many people take time out of their busy schedules to come down to the meetings and vote on our behalf. We would like to thank the Union officials for their professional expertise and speedy handling of a very delicate case. It was very reassuring to have such overwhelming support and phone calls during the whole process.

Sincerely,
Craig Phinney, Bob
Martinsen, Gary Karpenko.

Set The Record Straight

On March 1st, 2002 I filed a complaint with WISHA (L&I) concerning the lack of safety and security on the job as a Metro Operator.

This action was warranted since it is not a "Contractual Issue" according to Metro and our Union would not address the issue past a Step 2 Grievance.

After months of investigation, including but not limited to talking with operators, reviewing the Control Center procedures and records, and talking with management or supervisors, WISHA (L&I) levied fines against King County Metro totaling \$8,000.

The finding of WISHA (L&I) established and confirmed many points of concern long recognized by many operators in past years and also established that this is more than just a personal agenda of any one operator.

Since then I have gone before the King County Council on August 28th (the day the route 42 bus was hijacked) and also on October 16th. Several other operators joined me and testified also. I personally thank each one of them. I also spoke before the Transportation Forum in Burien on September 18th.

When I first began this endeavor many operators voiced the apathetic attitude of "nothing ever changes". I respond, "That is why nothing ever changes." The broken promises of Metro towards operators in the last 4 1/2 years is evidenced by over 752 operator assaults and over 850 passenger assaults.

I do not believe that safety and security should be a contractual issue but it should be a duty of King County and our union to ensure it is adequately provided. The actions I have taken and the time I have invested to this cause is because this "duty" has not been met,

while we are at risk, but they are not.

Contrary to the manufactured rumor that I "expect a cop on every bus," I dismiss it as a vain attempt at character assassination.

I do expect:

1. An adequately funded and dedicated Metro police force to be on the buses & in the county.
2. For cameras to be on the buses for prosecution purposes
3. For an aggressive Metro prosecutor to try violators of the code of conduct

4. For policy and procedures to be uniform from the top down instead of "selective response" in nature and practice when we call in for help or write-up SIRs'

5. For "The Book" and "The Code of Conduct for Metro Riders" to be uniform in policy and procedures instead of contradicting each other. (A violation of Article 4 Section 1(c))

6. For character assassination, harassment or intimidation tactics against operators by management or their designee(s) to cease. This is counter productive and is not part of the solution to solving problems within the system.

7. For the ride free area to be abolished and to implement a "one fare-pay as you enter" policy.

8. For the code of conduct for Metro riders to be "fully and correctly posted on all buses."

9. In that members on the Joint Steering committee (security) and base security committees are there to represent our concerns as operators - they should be elected by the rank and file membership of ATU 587 (the same as shop stewards).

10. That the elected committee members covered in item #9 be required to keep minutes of all security committee meetings (joint or at base level) and make said minutes available to all members of ATU 587

It is my understanding that King Count Metro has appealed the \$8,000 fine and that it will go the Appeals Hearing Board at the state level. The next step beyond that will be before the Washington State Supreme Court, I am told. As operators we are held accountable and responsible for our decisions and actions on the job. This same standard should also be applied equally to management, as leaders should lead by example.

In solidarity,
Glen Ruth #3490
South Base

Heck Frozen Over

My Salt Lake City Olympic Experience

By Doug Thomson

I HAD BEEN PLANNING TO GO down to Salt Lake City... when I first saw that the Salt Lake Olympic Committee (SLOC — say it often, say it loud — SLOC) wanted to hire about 800 transit bus drivers from all over the nation to travel to SLC to work during the Olympics in February 2002. In exchange for free travel, hotel rooms (shared with another driver), a uniform “you will be proud of, valued at over \$1100,” competitive wage (\$15 an hour), and “short hours so you can experience the Olympics,” we would use our vacation time during the Games and be expected to work up to 6 days in a row. So far for promises!

When I mentioned what I would be using my vacation on this year to people, most everyone asked, “Aren’t you excited about going?” most were surprised that I wasn’t. I knew I was going to work, but the adventure sounded better than the reality.

When I arrived on February 1, 2002 in SLC, I first had to go to the Team Processing Center to get my uniform and credentials. What mighty fine looking uniforms everyone is wearing was the first thing I thought. A custom-made ski jacket and vest of black, white, and a light purple, but called “Mountain

Blue”...Then I tried on samples of the uniform, and made my way to collect the pieces. Then the horror hit me. The man said “Sorry, you get to go down to the end of the line to get your uniform.” There, the bus drivers are issued this UGLY green windbreaker with the Olympic logo silk-screened on the back. “Sorry,” another woman said, “but we don’t have any vests for you. We will send them up to you later.” I left there angry, with a green jacket, one cheap baseball hat, one turtleneck shirt, one pair medium sized gloves (the other choice was 2X), and ski pants that were 5 inches too long. Not quite \$1100. Not even quite \$300.

I was one of 75 drivers that agreed to arrive early to help get operations going and train the other drivers on the routes. I got to hear a lot of things early. Many of the drivers would now have to be working 14 and 15-hour shifts... The driving schedules were not ready, and throughout the whole time I was there, the drivers never knew more than 2 days in advance what their shift was to be. Sometimes they even messed up so badly that they had us working a 15-hour shift getting off at 3:00am, and on the next day’s schedule starting a 14-hour shift at 3:30am, with 30 minutes of to sleep. All those

Only 3 of the 40 buses sent from San Francisco had any heat. We avoided them in the morning when the weather was 10° below.

drivers did get shifts starting later in the day after they told someone about the mess up.

The buses...oh what prizes they were! Some were brand new. Cleveland sent 15 brand new Nova buses right from the factory for us to drive. However, most of the 700 buses were ones going to the scrapper after the games, 15 and 20-year-old piles of junk that were very scary to operate... I saw at least 5 a day on the back of tow trucks being sent back to the garage. Maintenance was a joke. Please don’t get me wrong; the guys in the shop did miracles with what they did have. But since you had such a variety of buses, parts were non-existent, except for common items like springs, bolts, and duct tape.

Only 3 of the 40 buses sent from San Francisco had any heat. We avoided them in the morning when the weather was 10 below.

...This was the beginning. No one mentioned the Utah income tax and forms we would need to complete for our taxes next year. None of the drivers were given any training

on buses they had never driven before. I spent a lot of time moving from bus to bus answering questions from other drivers, trying to help them find things like the parking brake release. The buses had no radio communication. When we broke down, it was up to our fellow drivers to let the staff at the park and ride know we were disabled, and send help.

Yes, I did have some fun there. Thank God for the Wasatch Brew-pub in Park City. If I wanted to take a later van back to Heber City, I would go and enjoy a couple of pints of Polygamy Porter (you can’t just have one). They got to know me on a first name basis. I also got to see a curling match and a game of women’s hockey with the Canadian team that went on to win the Gold medal.

However, that was just enough for me to keep my sanity. I did finally get to buy the uniform I should have gotten for free when I arrived, but I had to attend a liquidation sale on the Sunday of the closing ceremonies... It took 5 hours to get it, cost \$165 out of my pocket, but now I have something to be proud of. The best thing was that I bought an extra jacket, and sold it on e-bay for \$375.

Oh, and I finally got the solid black colored vest I should have gotten when I arrived. It was delivered to my hotel the day before I left, February 25.

Citizens of Utah... don’t expect to see me back. I can think of better places to spend MY vacation next time.



Doug Thomson, in front of one of his favorite buses to drive while in Salt Lake City, a California Golden Gate Transit coach, a 2000 RTS.

So...What Did You Pick?

By Recording Secretary Jennie Gil

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT rights we have as union members is that of seniority. Seniority is how we select our work, vacations, get assigned overtime, the list goes on. From a real basic standpoint, your seniority is based on your date of hire, qualification or promotion, depending on who you work for or what department.

All the 587 bargaining units select their work by seniority, although there are a couple small classifications within at least one bargaining unit that do not pick at all. Each different transit agency handles their work bids or picks differently, but all of them are either overseen or handled entirely by shop stewards and/or Executive Board Officers. The way each different classification picks varies somewhat depending on the layout of their work and the language specific to them in their respective bargaining agreement. Many things are similar, but like in so many other aspects of life, the differences are what makes us interesting.

During the last part of August and the first part of September, at least five Metro/King County departments conducted their pick, or as we call them here, their shakeups. Seattle Personal Tran-

sit also held their bid during this time. While I play a part in most of them, unless something goes really wrong my involvement is mostly limited to notification of a pick being held, or approval of the department's seniority list. The exception is the part-time pick, which Local 587 runs in its entirety. I visited three different picks while they were being conducted this month, mostly for the social aspect. What follows is a little flavor of what your fellow union members go through to select work for the upcoming shakeup. This account covers only Metro/King County members, I invite JTA, CTS, MV, and Clallam Paratransit to submit accounts of what their picks are like. Mike Johnston, a member at Seattle Personal Transit, has promised me an article on their bid and I look forward to receiving and publishing that soon.

Metro/King County Facilities Maintenance has 18 classifications listed on their pick sheets, leads included, for the approximately 150 employees in that department. They pick twice a year, in August and February. Their pick is conducted, start to finish, in one day, and their procedure is familiar to all of us at 587. The work is posted for review two

weeks in advance, employees within a work group are assigned pick times two minutes apart, and the County must make arrangements for each Employee to be available for their pick. They have two locations to pick at, Lake Union Facilities down by Gas Works Park and South Facilities in the South complex. The two locations are in constant contact by conference call, and as each employee shows up to either site to make their work selection, the two sites communicate with each other to keep the sheets current. Their picks are coordinated by

their Executive Board Officer Lisa Carter, with the assistance of shop stewards or other FM members.

Vehicle Maintenance has 25 classifications picking, divided up into three groups, Service and Labor, Trades and Crafts, and Leads, with just under 700 members total in the department, including a few here and there that do not pick. The lead pick takes place in a couple hours about two weeks prior to the rest of the VM pick. They hold their pick at Component Supply, although the lead pick is primarily conducted over

continued on page 12



While your part-time pick crew takes the process quite seriously, they also recognize that a little levity helps lighten what could be a stressful process. Here they prove their sense of humor by actually wearing the mouse ears they requested of the Recording Secretary while she was on vacation. From left to right, standing: Taavi McMahon, Leo Godinez, Paul Bachtel, Hal Poor, the Fairy Princess and Bruce Tiebout. Kneeling in front, left to right, Ben Apo, Debbie Green and Rick Sepolen.



Scoping out your work can be important to the success of a pick. Here Robert Dargan carefully reviews the postings at the Ryerson Vehicle Maintenance pick location, while Rocky Iovinelli confers with Terry Allen over his pick.



Executive Board Officer John Bellinger and Steward Nick Caraway oversee picking at Vehicle Maintenance's North base location.



Facilities Maintenance Shop Steward Linda Zettlemoyer holds up the seniority list for her department. She worked with [NAME] at the Lake Union Facility pick location.



How many remember this scene? It can put either chills or feelings of warm nostalgia in the hearts of any OSS Coordinator. This was a Full-time pick when they were held in the old Atlantic Base, circa 1985. How many of you in this picture are still here?

President's Report, continued from page 1

did not see actions that could be reason for a customer's complaint."

Now on August 27, 2002 this same Operator had the Service Auditor ride his coach and make the following comments in his report. "When I boarded the coach, it was running seven minutes down for the rest of the trip, it appeared to me that the Operator was driving at a leisurely pace with no attempt to catch up

or maintain a schedule. When I exited the coach he was then ten minutes down..." "The Operator's operation of the coach was very smooth and competent". "The Operator called approximately 25% of the required A.D.A. announcements and only 2 landmarks." In conclusion, the service auditor commended the Operator for "waiting while a senior woman carrying bags of groceries was running from a

half block away to catch the bus..." and also that the "...Operator responded good-naturedly..." to a question from another passenger.

Almost one month later in September, this Operator is issued a Performance Report for not complying with "A.D.A. requirements for announcing stops, transfer points and intersections as outlined in The Book page 652." Did I miss something

here?

The video cameras that are slowly being installed on our coaches also record audio. Perhaps someday we'll have an occasion to pull a tape, and on that tape we'll see one of our Base Chiefs happily sitting somewhere in the middle of our coach with a smile on their face humming, "...The wheels of the bus go round and round, round and round..."



Glen A. Travis

HOW HARD CAN IT BE TO TREAT employees with dignity and respect? How hard can it be to make each day at work pleasant and positive? If you make it a priority it can be done. From time to time, most workplaces have a day or two when it seems as though management is just out to get you. But for some it seems to be a daily routine. We have the sad misfortune to represent members who work under such management.

As much as I hate to say it, I was glad to see the Laidlaw group of managers go. Due to their corporate policy-makers and the less than courageous managers that implemented those policies, Laidlaw failed miserably at creating a work environment that our members could feel secure and happy with. Laidlaw failed King County, and they failed our members.

Some of you may remember an old movie by Mel Brooks, *Young Frankenstein*, where Gene Wilder comments to a gravedigger on how awful it is to be digging in a cemetery in the middle of the night. The gravedigger replies, "Could be worse. Could be raining." And then the skies open up and it begins to pour. I was hopeful and optimistic when MV Transportation secured the bid for service, ousting Laidlaw and their negative style of managing employees. I believed nothing could be worse than Laidlaw. Well, it's begun to pour.

MV Transportation has succeeded in creating a work environment that even goes beyond that of the one Laidlaw nurtured. Since MV took over control of the service contract, things have gotten worse. Man-

agers still wield a heavy hand of discipline for minor infractions and issues. Many members feel they are treated with disrespect and hostility, some say they are being harassed. Members continue to be terminated for minor accidents. Even though we have been assured and promised that management and the Union would sit down and create a new and more reasonable safety and accident policy, nothing has changed and no effort has been made to achieve change. MV continually makes promises it doesn't keep.

What is even more difficult to understand is that they continue to fire members for the same types of accidents we have already had before an arbitration panel and prevailed on. Why? It seems to me that these managers just don't get it. It is as though they think the Union and the membership are all stupid and will roll over and accept this treatment.

Recently MV Transit managers attempted to sideline a member because she was expecting her first child and her doctor submitted physical restrictions to her work duties. She needed to not push and pull heavy wheelchairs while at work. MV said they could not accommodate her and did not offer any adjusted work assignment; they sent her home and told her not to return until she could fully carry out her duties. In fact, they did not even **attempt** to find any alternate work for her or make any adjustments to her assignment. We filed a lawsuit and forced MV to take a closer look at what Washington State Law Against Discrimination had to say. It wasn't the managers at MV that finally saw the light however, it was some high paid attorney they forgot to consult with before the first decision was made that educated them on the facts. Even though we attempted to help them with this, they refused and took it to the point of being sued. Go figure?

The Vice President's Report

Can It Get Any Worse?

By Vice President Glen Travis

I'm sure that this won't be the end of the trials and challenges we face with this group of managers. It's my hope that the corporate hierarchy in California will wake up soon and make some changes with the local management team. I want to send a strong message to the local managers at MV Transit. We are here ready to work with MV to assure professional, safe

service for those in the community who need us. Local 587 members in all our represented bargaining units are committed to providing this service to our communities. We want to be treated with respect; we deserve a non-hostile workplace with fair and safe working conditions. It's time to change! If one looks at history, it can teach you something. Remember Laidlaw?

It's a Contest!



First person to name all the folks in one of these two pictures, including date, occasion and location, wins a \$25 gift certificate for Larry's Market. Extra points if you can tell us where they are now.



Paul Griffin

The Financial Secretary's Report

Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Metro/King County Members

by Paul L. Griffin

ON NOVEMBER 1, 2002, members working for Metro/King County will receive their annual COLA adjustment as negotiated in the labor agreement. The cost of living adjustment as outlined in Article XIV, Section 2, pages 68 & 69, for the one year period ending and reported in October 2002 is **1.13 percent**, based on the U.S. Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, and subsequent revisions (all cities figure; 1992-1984 = 100).

However, Paragraph D of Article XIV, Section 2, reads... "The base wage for each classification shall increase by at least 3% on November 1, 2002... The base wage for the cost of living

adjustments, shall be the top step wage in effect October 31, each year, for that classification. Other steps in the wage progression for each classification will be recalculated according to Section 1, based on the adjusted top step." Therefore, the increase in wage rates for November 1, 2002, is greater than the cost-of-living, thus constituting a "real" raise relative to inflation.

A list of all represented job classifications at Metro, the Base Wage of these classifications used for computation of the COLA adjustment, the Cost-of-Living adjustment in cents per hour and the previous top hourly wages, have been sent out for posting on all Union bulletin boards. Kindly note that there are some classifications that received wage increases post-negotiation prior to calculating the COLA adjustments and may not be accurately re-

flected on this list. Any member working in one of those adjusted classifications who is having trouble calculating their COLA adjustment should contact me for assistance. If your bulletin board does not have the adjustment list posted, please contact Recording Secretary Gil and one will be sent out.

If you are not currently at the top pay step for your job classification, multiply your current step percentage times the new top hourly wage for your job classification to calculate your new hourly wage. Your Shop Stewards and Executive Board Officers have been provided with a chart of step percentages and rates if you have further questions.

The paycheck you receive from Metro on Thursday, November 21, 2002, will be the first that reflects your new hourly wage, and will include hours you worked from November 1st on,

at the new rate. Shift differentials are **not** included in the figures shown, and should be added to your rate of pay, if applicable.

One additional note: for any Utility Service Workers who are **not** at top step, it is possible that you have been paid incorrectly over a period of time. If you have opted to drive, as outlined in Article 17, Section 2, Paragraph C, and are supposed to be receiving the additional .70¢ per hour for doing so, you **must** check your pay stubs. That .70¢ is supposed to be a premium added to your current wage rate, **not** added to the top step wage rate **prior** to the calculation of your current wage rate. Any member who thinks they have not been properly paid that premium, please contact your chief, myself, or Recording Secretary Gil for assistance in correcting the problem.



Jennie Gil

The Recording Secretary's Report

The Value of Caucuses

By Recording Secretary Jennie Gil

to bring an International meeting to their location?

The Allentown Chapter in turn took that same concept and spread it locally. They did something that to my knowledge has never been done before by a host local or host chapter. They in turn promoted the ATU as a whole, and they did it publicly. The Chapter strongly lobbied their city officials for support and promotion of the conference. They participated in various high profile community activities that gave them exposure and through them, gave the ATU International exposure. They were interviewed several different times by local papers that were then circulated widely through the internet. One such story was picked up by the national wire and it got to the ATU International. They then put a link to the story on the International Web site.

The workshops that were set up for the conference were also inclusive and of interest to all ATU members. The Allentown Chapter felt that the events of



International Vice President Javier Perez, ATU Latino Caucus President José Guerrero (Local 241), Valenzuela Capital Partners President Thomas Valenzuela, Canadian Rep. Fitzroy Boyd (Local 583), Latino Caucus Recording Secretary Jennie Gil, Midwest Rep. Antonio Velez (Local 308), Northwest Rep. José Villahermosa (Local 758) and Northeast Rep. Ed Figueroa (Local 1056)

EACH YEAR DURING "CONFERENCE season," many ask why we have minority caucuses, some wonder whether or not these are divisive, or serve any purpose. The answer to this question is many-faceted. It depends on who you ask or what you expect as an answer.

September 27 through 29 marked the 13th Annual Latino Caucus Conference. This year Local 956 in Allentown PA hosted the Conference. Much work went into lobbying the body of the whole whilst in Toronto the year prior, to convince them why anyone would go to Allentown, when there were so many other choices. The Allentown Chapter of the Latino Caucus worked hard to extol the virtues of their local and their city. But chief among the many reasons the Executive Committee of the Latino Caucus urged concurrence with the invitation on the part of Local 956 was that the Latino Caucus puts much emphasis on promotion of participation of their membership within their locals and within the International as a whole. What better way than

September 11, 2001, and their impact on the transit industry around the country, were still uppermost on many of our minds. They contacted the National Transit Institute and invited them to present a workshop developed in response to last year's attack, *System Security and Awareness for Transit Employees*. In response to much discussion on wanting to include issues from different classifications represented throughout the country and Canada, the Executive Committee requested that the International present a

maintenance workshop on warranty work and outsourcing of such work.

What does this have to do with minority caucuses and minority issues? In the words of International Vice President Mike Siano, "No one will stand up and champion people like a caucus." The ATU Latino Caucus serves to champion the ATU and all its members, and it continually reminds all its members that our main mission is to work together for the success of the ATU as a whole.

The View from the Buses

Retirees' Corner

By John D. Love

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING dinner with several retirees at the Anthony's Home Port at Des Moines Marina. Those in attendance with myself and my wife **Betty** were **Ken and Judy Teague, Lonnie and Andrea Sewell, Jerry and Ruth McGuire, Del and Pat Larson** and **C.P. and Ruthie Larsen**. It was agreed that this group would meet several times a year. All had a good time.

I got e-mail from **Curtis and Sara Hicks**. They were in Limon, Colorado and would be in Denver the next day. They left home August 3, 2002 and have been to Lake Itasca, where the Mississippi River starts. They will be back home after they have visited Kolowna, Chilliwack, Hope, and Vancouver, B.C.

I received a call from **Bob Rothwell (active)**. Several years ago Bob gave a lady from Transit some memorabilia, but has not seen it on display. He was wondering if the lady would contact him as he has some other items to donate. If the lady is still with Transit, Bob is the operator of the Waterfront Streetcar, or the lady can contact me and I will see that Bob and the lady meet. While I am on the subject of memorabilia I would love to see someone either retired, active, or Local 587 to take the lead and establish a display of our Transit memorabilia. I know that there is a lot of memo-

abilia out there and someone should be out there saving it for future generations enjoy before it ends up in a garage sale after we are gone.

Vic Kaufman and wife Ann are leaving for the East Coast (Maine) for the changing of the fall colors. They may be back sometime in November. My wife and I had a nice visit with **Eddie Haw** and family friends on the 21st of September to help him celebrate his 80th birthday. Eddie is very active in our efforts to acquire a COLA for all retired city employees.

BINNACLE LIST

My good friend **Eddie Haw** has had some medical problems recently, but he has had a great recovery. My last conversation with him he said that he is back to his previous condition. If you see Eddie up and about, wish him well. **Cliff Bourassa** was in Northwest hospital for about 10 days to run some tests. I received a note from **Joe Kramer**, now from Nevada, informing me that he has had a triple bypass and is doing fine. Joe has returned to his job of hauling tourists to the Grand Canyon. It was good to hear from Joe. I heard from **Mike Rossner** and he informed me that he had spent some time with **Lee Logsdon**. Lee has been laid up with MS and is confined to a chair. Lee wants to say hello to other retirees and would enjoy a

visit from any that are up his way. Any one wishing to contact Lee, please contact the union office at 206 448-8588, or send me an e-mail.

TAPS

This article appears to be full of gloom and doom, with all the deaths lately. **Bob Stoehr, Jim Walker** and **Danny Kis** all passed away within three weeks of each other. I received a packet of newspapers articles from **Lenora Stoehr** in Minnesota, extolling some of **Bob Stoehr's** accomplishments the few years after he returned to his home state. Bob was a doer. There is not enough room in this paper to repeat the tributes to his memory.

Danny Kis passed away in Astoria, Oregon, on July 1, 2002. Danny was 84 years old, and retired in 1981. He was known for his reporting to work in the early morning. He would kick the garbage can in the bullpen and scare the living daylights out of those that were almost asleep.

I received a phone call from **Marjorie Lee**, widow of **Vern Lee**. She informed me that **Vern** had passed away on June 1, 2002. Vern had cancer and suffered from Alzheimer's and would have been 84 had he lived until August 17th. Vern retired January 1, 1982 and moved to Beverly Hills, Florida some years back. He was a Navy Veteran during WWII and received several commendations.

I received a call from **John Otis**, nephew of **Walt Hatch**. Walt passed away on the August 14th. Walt was almost 93 years old and retired January 3, 1971. He was living on Whidbey Island when he passed away. Walt was a ballroom dancer, loved music, was an outstanding driver and was well respected by his fellow bus drivers.

I received a note from **Sylvia Betts**, Technical Information Processing Specialist III, informing me that **Kenneth Tate**, South Base Operator had passed away from cancer. Ken was medically retired due to an accident he was involved with while driving a bus.

In addition to the above mentioned passings, the following members have also left us: **Jay C. Adams**, age 88, 7/23/02, **Edward J. Jenson**, age 95, 4/28/02, **James L. Kennedy**, age 95, 8/4/02, and **Elaine K. Walker**, age 62, 6/6/02.

Our sympathies go out to those families that have lost loved ones. We should remember that the survivors need support in their time of sorrow and we should extend that support to the best of our ability.

If you have news you want to share with others, drop me a note at the union office or e-Mail me at Dennerle1@juno.com

That's all for now.
John

Pick, continued from page 9

the phone. The rest of the VM pick takes almost three days, again with employees within a work group having assigned times and the shifts being posted in advance for review. The County makes arrangements for each Employee to be available for their pick, and VM members have four pick locations: East, North and Ryerson bases and at the South Training facility. The VM Executive Board Officers handle their pick with the assistance of shop stewards staffing each of the four locations, all four locations being tied together by phones. Here communication among the four locations is critical, as in FM, because person #1 might be at North and person #2 at South and all involved need to know what #1 picked so #2 does not accidentally pick the same thing.

This shakeup VM had an additional surprise to contend with. The VM Training department, officially known as Fleet Engineering, has been working on a computerized version of the pick. The new process was supposed to be done in conjunction with the old tried and true paper and phone method this shakeup, but due to miscommunication some-

where along the line the VM Executive Board Officers found they were going live on this program with no parallel for backup. Kind of like tightrope walking with no net. While it caused some initial consternation and gnashing of teeth, it seems to have gone relatively smoothly and it is expected most of the little bugs or annoyances can be corrected before January.

The Part-time Operator pick is handled almost entirely by the Union. Management produces the runcut and turns it over to Local 587, two Executive Board Officers are selected to coordinate the pick, and six crew members to assist. Set up alone takes about three days worth of work. Much is done with the runcut to ensure it is in compliance with the contract and ready for posting. The Part-time pick takes place over two weekends, and there is only one pick site, Central/Atlantic. There were over 1,000 Part-time Operators on the seniority list for last pick. Sometimes it's a challenge to set up the pick and complete it within four days, due to the number of folks picking. The days can get to be pretty long with so many

people going through every two minutes as the only way to accommodate an increase in Part-time Operators picking is to lengthen the day, and the only scheduled break is a 40 minute lunch. The Part-time pick has added complications in that the contract allows for Part-time Operators to restrict themselves to a.m. or p.m., depending on needs they might have in other employment, school or daycare.

One similarity between Facilities Maintenance, Vehicle Maintenance and Part-time Operators is that their work is set together with their regular days off (RDO's), in what we used to call the "block pick". The Facilities Maintenance and Vehicle Maintenance shifts are preset with corresponding RDO's and Part-time Operators all have week-ends off. The Full-time Operator pick is a little more complicated as they have an open pick. Its like building a sandwich. First you pick your RDO's and then you build your work around it. And there are other limiting factors. You can't mix day work and night work, all work must be picked at the same worksite, if you pick regular work you have to pick all regular work, if you are going to pick the extra board or report, it must be one or the

other for the full work week. There is also a contractually required minimum number of hours off between each piece of work, as well as between your Friday and Monday, and between your regular work and any overtime tripper you may pick. There were almost 1,700 Full-time Operators on the last seniority list, and the pick takes nine days to conduct, with each Operator coming through every two minutes to make their selection. The pick is conducted by an army of First Line Supervisors under the close watch of an OSS Coordinator and two Executive Board Officers who watch for seniority, contract violations and pick for individuals who do not make it in.

For some the pick is just another thing to do once every three or four months. For others, it is exciting, the opportunity to change work locations, shifts, or routes, the opportunity to increase one's hours or decrease one's workload. There are those who fuss and fret over pick, who find it a highly stressful event. On very rare occasion, people quit over the results of a pick. Regardless of which one of those you might fall into, I am sure there is not many who have never greeted a coworker with those familiar words: "So...what did you pick?"