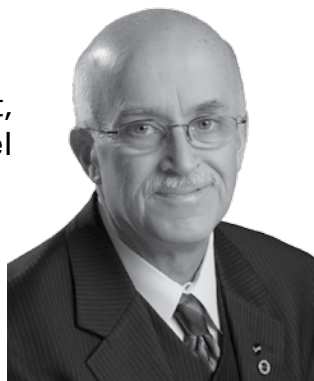


The President's Report

by President, Paul J. Bachtel



Life Isn't Fair

Neither is employment at King County Metro. The KCM Labor Agreement uses the word "fair" only twice and in the same context. The preambles in the Bus and Rail sections state in part, "Employees are entitled to fair wages and working conditions as provided in this AGREEMENT, including all protections preserved by law." Our members often cite the preamble in an attempt to argue an act being grieved wasn't fair, or in the opinion of a member, violates the law.

Our Union Officers look at our contracts and their enforcement from a different perspective. Although an unfair act by management is certainly prime motivation to pursue a grievance, numerous

other factors such as previous grievance &/or arbitration decisions, the collective good of the Union as a whole, and practical realities of law and limits in arbitration are used in making a decision to pursue, not just the interests of a particular member. A grievance is a violation of the Labor Agreement. Sometimes, the grievance is really simply a complaint. A complaint, even a valid one, which does not violate the Labor Agreement should not be grieved. If it's brought to the attention of Union Officers, it may be negotiated with management to a satisfactory conclusion.

Recently, I've heard a considerable amount of anger being directed towards our Vice Presidents for ei-

ther refusing to pursue a grievance to the next step in the grievance process, or urging the membership to vote "no" on a motion to pursue a grievance to arbitration. The anger is the result of the dichotomy in how each party, rank and file Member and Union Officer, evaluates the merits of pursuing a grievance.

If we pursue a grievance to arbitration and lose, we not only waste our limited resources, we run the risk on incurring a negative precedent that will be used against us for years to come. We also put a Member through a year-long process that promises false hope.

To address this dichotomy, we have entrusted our Vice Presidents with the authority to decide to pursue or not pursue a grievance on to the next step in the grievance process. Vice Presidents making unpopular decisions in this regard are often chastised by the membership for not doing what is perceived to be fair. It is then the duty of the Vice President to attempt to explain why a decision was made, often citing legal opinions from our at-

continued on page 11



APRIL LABOR HISTORY CALENDAR

Page 3

BEING ON THE FLIP SIDE

Page 4

STANDING MOTIONS

Page 4

SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Page 5

WISCONSIN, TIME STANDARDS, AND OTHER THINGS

Page 7

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Page 6

COPE - HOW TO PICK A CANDIDATE

Page 10

RUDE AWAKENING - #2

Page 11

EXAMINING WEB MD

Page 12

MERAA - DAY AT THE RACES

Page 12



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Judy Young, newly elected Recording Secretary, and Hal Poor, newly elected E. Board Officer. Thanks to those members who voted in this election, and to the candidates who participated to further the solidarity of Local 587. Election results are on page 5.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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**The Month at a Glance**

*Executive Board Report*

March 29, 2011

All officers were present with the exception of President Paul Bachtel and Executive Board Officer Michael Moore, both of whom were out on vacation. Just not with each other.

The following business was conducted:

Motion by Financial Secretary Paul Neil to donate \$300 to the April 2, 2011 rally in Blaine sponsored, by ATU Local 843.

Motion by Financial Secretary Paul Neil to donate \$300 to the April 4, 2011 rally in Seattle, sponsored by the MLKLC & CWA.

Motion by Financial Secretary Paul Neil to approve expenses up to \$2000 to support the April 8 rally in Olympia, sponsored by the WSLC to include, but not limited to, chartering of buses.

Motion by Michael Shea to send up to four members to the Meeting of the Minds 2011 Worker's Compensation Conference, May 19 and 20, 2011, to include per diem, one night's lodging, and lost wages.

*Business of the Membership*

At the March 2011 cycle of membership meetings the following business was conducted:

Motion that Amalgamated Transit Union 587 call on the King County Labor Council to call a Seattle Worker's Rights rally in solidarity with the workers in Wisconsin was approved.

Motion that those members newly employed at Clallam Transit in the newly created Paratransit Division, under contract with Paratransit Services, be allowed to

continue paying the International minimum per capita dues until the expiration of their labor agreement on 12/31/12.

The following members were March pot draw winners: Dee Wakenight at the Charter meeting, Bruce Tiebout at the Morning meeting, Darrell Finley at the JTA meeting, Jon Vander Woude at the Afternoon meeting. CTS pot draw winner was Kyle Parrish. CTS rolling pot draw of \$50.00 was won by Danny Smith. Next month's rolling pot will be \$25.00.

**Membership Meetings: Tentative Agenda**

**CHARTER MEETING**  
Thursday, April 7, 2011  
8:00 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #8  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**JEFFERSON TRANSIT**  
Monday, April 11, 2011  
7:00 p.m.  
Port Townsend Rec Center  
Port Townsend, WA

The newly elected Recording Secretary and Executive Board Officer Position #6 will be sworn in at the Charter meeting. Newly appointed Executive Board Officer for Clallam and Jefferson will be sworn in at the Clallam meeting.

**CLALLAM TRANSIT**  
Tuesday, April 12, 2011  
7:00 p.m.  
Vern Burton Memorial Building  
Port Angeles, WA

**MORNING MEETING**  
Friday, April 8, 2011  
10:30 a.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**WEDNESDAY MEETING**  
Wednesday, April 13, 2011  
3:30 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

**Among Topics to be Discussed:** Grievance and Arbitration Update; Brother Andrew Price will appear before the membership to request his grievance be taken to arbitration.

**Unfinished Business:**

Motion by Don MacAdam that all resolutions and letters brought forward by the membership shall without debate be submitted to the Executive Board for comment and published in the *News Review* the following month. All such letters and resolutions shall be in the form of a pdf or type-written. Resolutions or letters may not be altered by the Executive Board. After review by the Executive Board and publication in the *News Review*, the resolution or letter will be brought to the membership for discussion and put to a simple majority vote. Motion was tabled at the March Charter meeting, will be brought off the table at this month's Charter meeting.

**Oath of Obligation**

I, ....., in the presence of God and the members of this Union, do solemnly promise and pledge (without any reservation or evasion) to support the Constitution and General Laws of this Amalgamated Transit Union. I will keep myself in good standing by paying all dues, fines and assessments required. I will work to promote the best interests of this Union and encourage my fellow workers to become members of the same. I will not take the place of any member of this organization, or any other union worker who may be on strike or locked out. I will not reveal any private business to anyone not entitled to know the same. I will not engage in activity evidencing gross disloyalty nor in conduct otherwise unbecoming a member or see one wronged if in my power to prevent it. I will not appeal to any legal authority in matters pertaining to this Union until I have exhausted all means of redress provided by its laws. I will be considerate of others in word and action and will never discriminate against a fellow worker on account of race, disability, religion, creed, sex, sex orientation, age, disability, citizenship, or national origin. I also promise to promote the cause of trade union principles and defend freedom of thought, whether expressed by tongue or pen, with all the power at my command.

I understand there is nothing in this obligation that will in any way interfere with my political and religious rights or that will be in any way inconsistent with my duties arising from any of the relations of life.

This obligation I take upon my honor, and solemnly promise to keep the same, as long as I remain a member of this Union.

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

**ATU Local 587 News Review**

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

RAY CAMPBELL  
KERMIT C. GIPSON JR.  
PATRICK STEVENS  
CLINT DE VOSS  
DAN THORNE  
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NEAL SAFRIN  
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HAL POOR  
LINDA ANDERSON  
RAY MASON  
ROBERT EASH  
CHUCK MILLER

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

**WEINGARTEN RIGHTS STATEMENT**

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

**Letters to the editor**

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

Send letters to:

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

# April Labor History Calendar

Submitted by Bill Clifford

**Thru June 2011 "In His Own words: The Life and Work of César Chávez" exhibit at UW Allen Library.**

**1 April 1946**—A strike by 400,000 mine workers in the U.S. began. U.S. troops seized railroads and coalmines the following month.

**1 April 2011**—Campus Forum on Ethically Responsible Production and Consumption—5 panel discussions on the issue of sweatshops producing university-authorized logo wear

**Location:** Odegaard Library, Room 220, UW Seattle

**Time:** 12pm-6:30pm

**For more information, call 206-543-7946 or e-mail pcls@u.washington.edu**

**3 April 1917**—the International Brotherhood of Teamsters chartered the Seattle Laundry and Dye Wagon Drivers as Local 566

**4 April 1968**—Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated in Memphis while supporting the Sanitation Workers' Strike.

**5 April 1956**—Columnist Victor Riesel, a crusader against labor racketeers, was blinded in New York City when a hired assailant threw sulfuric acid in his face.

**8 April 1912**—ATU 587 chartered. (99 years old and still going strong.)

**8 April 1952**—President Truman ordered the U.S. Army to seize the nation's steel mills to avert a strike. Supreme Court rules the act illegal on 2 June.

**9-11 April 2010**—HONK! Fest West, 300 activist musicians take over the streets of Fremont, the Central Area, Georgetown and West Seattle Junction.

**12 April 1922**—Death of Thomas Burt, one of the first two Labor Party members elected to the British Parliament. Burt had served from 1874 until his retirement in 1918--38 years. The US is yet to elect its first labor representative to Congress.

**14 April 1930**—Over 100 farm workers were arrested for their unionizing activities in Imperial Valley, California. Eight were subsequently convicted of 'criminal syndicalism.'

**17 April 1905**—The Supreme Court held that a maximum hours law for New York bakery workers was unconstitutional under the due process clause of the 14th amendment.

**18 April 1912**—The National Guard was called out against striking West Virginia coal miners.

**18 April 2011**—Full Moon. Be careful out there.

**20 April 2008**—Former Para-

guayan bishop Fernando Lugo won election to presidency on a platform of addressing social inequality and recognizing indigenous rights. He was sworn in on August 15 in the first peaceful transition of power between parties in Paraguay's history.

**20 April 1914**—Colorado National Guard and mine guards burn tent camp of miners striking John D Rockefeller's coalmines near Trinidad Colorado. Two women, eleven children and three miners were killed. The women and children suffocated beneath their burning tent. Strike leader, Louis Tikas and two other miners were captured and found shot to death shortly later. Their bodies were left by the railroad tracks by the militia who refused to let them be removed for three days. The railroad workers local, whose members supported the miners, were finally able to bury the bodies.

The Colorado unions urged their members to arm themselves and the United Mine Workers issued weapons. Ten days of guerilla warfare resulted in much destruction around the mines and another 36 deaths. The number of people killed during the whole affair, which lasted about one year, was somewhere between 69 and 199. The striking miners were eventually starved out, without gaining recognition or any other demands.

However, federal hearings and investigations resulted in many

mining reforms including the prohibition of child labor and institution of the 8-hour day. Rockefeller hired labor relations experts who convinced him to improve working conditions and mine safety. The UMW bought the site of the Ludlow tent camp in 1916 and maintains a memorial there.

**21 April 2010**—Earth Day

**22 April 1526**—First American slave revolt.

**24 April 1999**—ILWU halts West Coast shipping in solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal

**27 April 1825**—The first strike for the 10-hour workday occurred by carpenters in Boston.

**28 April 1971**—OSHA establishes Workers Memorial Day

**29 April 1899**—When their demand that only union men be employed was refused, members of the Western Federation of Miners dynamited the \$250,000 mill of the Bunker Hill Company at Wardner, Idaho, destroying it completely. President McKinley responded by sending in black soldiers from Brownsville, Texas with orders to round up thousands of miners and confine them in specially built "bullpens". U.S. Army troops occupied the Coeur d'Alene mining region in Idaho until 1901.

## Arbitration Update

- Mario Musni:** (Pigeongate) Grieved suspension for alleged violation of King County policy banning weapons (slingshot) in the workplace. Settlement offered, approved and accepted. Grievance final.
- Paul Kriskov:** Grieved suspension for alleged use of Personal Electronic Device while operating a Metro coach. Grievance held in abeyance pending resolution of an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaint. PERC commissioner ruled in Metro's favor and Union filed an appeal of PERC commissioner's ruling. Union has also requested grievance be removed from abeyance and scheduled for arbitration.
- Jon Salkeld:** Grieved issuance of a letter of expectation in violation of the discipline section of the collective bargaining agreement; Metro has agreed to remove this and several other letters of expectation. Settlement offered and accepted. Grievance final.
- Cory Rigtrup:** Grieved suspension for alleged falsification of a Metro document and violation of the King County's policy on nondiscrimination and workplace harassment; hearing held December 17, 2010. Arbitrator ruled in favor of grievant, suspension overturned. Grievance final.
- Jimmie Dean:** Grieved suspension for alleged Gross Negligence in the performance of his job duties. Schedule pending.
- Jerry Rankin:** Grieved failure of Paratransit Services to provide contractually agreed upon benefits. Schedule pending.

## In Loving Memory...

*No one's death comes to pass without making some impression, and those close to the deceased inherit part of the liberated soul and become richer in their humanness.*

— Hermann Broch

**Steven Meyer,** Transit Operator, passed away February 5, 2011. Brother Meyer joined Local 587 as a Part-time Transit Operator in May of 2003, going full-time in March of 2006. He had hoped to become a Streetcar Operator. Brother Meyer was an active member, last out of Central Base. He was 52 at the time of his passing.

**John Perrin,** retired Information Distributor, passed away February 14, 2011. Members who attended Union meetings might remember John as the older fellow in the brightly tie-dyed shirts. John joined Local 587 in March

of 1980 as an Information Distributor. He was an active shop steward for many years, and his member file is full of grievances and memos filed on behalf of his coworkers in Special Classifications. John retired in March of 2000. He was 76 at the time of his passing.

**John Herrmann,** retired Transit Operator, passed away February 20, 2011. Brother Herrmann joined Local 587 in July of 1984 as a Part-time Transit Operator, and went full-time in April of 1988. He retired in April of 1998. He was 69 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.*

# Being on the Flip Side

By Jennie Gil

It's happened to every single one of us. The prospective passenger gets on the bus, usually with a sheepish look, and tell us he or she has forgotten their pass. It's on the dresser, in another purse, on their desk at work, in their other coat. While most of us inwardly (or outwardly sometimes) roll our eyes at the miscreant, we let the moment pass and drive on. Almost always said miscreant goes on to take their seat, benefitting of the public largesse and a transit system that has long cultivated a culture of permissiveness. For some of us the moment lingers on and builds on other such moments to eventually form a large pustule of resentment directed at the system, the public, miscreants in general, or the world at large.

That happened to me today. Only I wasn't the driver, I was the passenger. The moment my husband drove away after dropping me at the bus stop, I knew. In my head I could clearly see where my employee pass was, in the mesh pocket of my backpack, on the living room floor. I clearly remember admonishing myself when I stuck it in there two days before while getting off the bus, as I was pretty sure I would be separated from it the next time I rode. But my hands were full and I needed to free them just then so I could navigate the crowd. The following morning I drove in, forgetting all about it.

And there I was, standing at a 358 bus stop (the 358 no less!), pass-less in Seattle. I weighed the odds of the driver knowing, or at least recognizing me, against the inconvenience of calling my husband to retrieve said pass and bring it to me. I had been commuting by bus to the Union office for several weeks

and had rarely had a driver whom I did not know. But I had also been on the driver's side of this situation many times and had both inwardly and outwardly rolled my eyes and on rare occasion even made some snide remark to the hapless rider who found themselves in the pickle I was currently in.

Please don't think I had a sudden understanding of the humanity of passengers. It was not the first time I had been in this situation. I ride the bus often, and more than half the time not while in uniform. And my pass sometimes declines to accompany me. So I experienced that flash of understanding a very long time ago. And yet when I am the driver in this situation, I still experience the same irritation, still inwardly and sometimes outwardly roll my eyes. Although I will admit that the occasions in which I make snide remarks are far fewer.

In another example of human contradictions, my daughter, who rides the bus everywhere, and frequently the same buses, does not carry schedules. It is far easier for her to call her mother (aren't cell phones handy!) and ask her to look up the schedule for the next bus. Irritated at being disrupted from whatever immensely important task I was doing, I yell at her for not being prepared ahead of time, and then look up the schedule for her, grouching and carrying on the whole time.

What's the flip side of this story? Those of you who recognize my girl-child, the next time she gets on your bus ask her how many times in the last month her mother has called her on the phone and said "I am standing at X street corner. Look up for me when the next bus comes by." And I don't feel at all sheepish

about doing this to her. I am sure I justify it with the thought that what I am doing at any point in time is far more important than what she is doing, and while I expect her to plan ahead, the weight of my responsibilities (usually to her) denies me the ability to do so.

What's my point? We are all subject to the same factor of human error. Every one of us exhibits the same human frailties of forgetfulness, not hearing someone clearly, not seeing a clearly displayed sign, being so full of our own self-importance or being in too big a hurry to bother being either prepared or informed. And while every one of us allows ourselves wiggle room for our own human error, we tend to expect oth-

ers, such as our spouses, children... and passengers, to be prepared, plan ahead, be informed, be alert, and not behave in ways which ultimately irritate us.

Remember that large pustule of resentment I referred to earlier? How about cleansing it from your system? Give yourself a break, folks. And give the next guy that acts like a moron one too. You probably acted moronically within the last 24 hours yourself. And to the 358 driver I had this morning: Thanks. You appeared cheerful and undisturbed when you simply said "OK" to my sheepish admission of being fare-less.

And you didn't roll your eyes. At least not outwardly.

## Did you lose something?

Judy Young and Jennie Gil

A gentleman walked into the Union office this month, bearing a slim, black 2011 pocket calendar. It has a gold embossing of the Earth, and a built-in gold ribbon page marker. He found it in Tacoma, somewhere near Point Defiance, in the street. After perusing its contents, he brought it to us as the Local's address is the only one entered in the personal data section.

After we looked through it, neither of us believe it belongs to an Operator. There are no notations such as those an Operator who is tracking their assignments or work hours would make. Mention of Metro appears every two weeks on a Monday at 5:30 p.m., which indicates to us a regular

appointment of some sort. Every Tuesday after the Monday Metro appointment carries a large X through it. The Metro staff breakfast that occurred on January 26<sup>th</sup> was also noted.

Jennie lost her calendar once and remembers the feeling of panic that lingered for a long time that she was forgetting some important meeting or date. If you regularly attend Hispanic Chamber meetings and something called JMAC once a month on Fridays, if your father's birthday is April 2<sup>nd</sup>, and have friends named Bonnie and Leona whose birthdays are July 11<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>, respectively, call us. We probably have your calendar.

## Standing Motions

By Bruce Tiebout

I was given the task of researching all the minutes the Union Office has available for any standing motions. Going back to 1982, with eight years of minutes missing, I have found 90. The Full-Time Officers and Executive Board Officers were given copies of the resultant eleven pages of motions.

Some of it made for interesting reading. Did you know that until 1983, the position of Recording Secretary was a half-time position? Some motions are obviously out of date — "11/4/82, Charter, Fellows — That a non-smoking area be set up for future meetings." Some have been forgotten over time — "4/24/96, Eboard, Harvey Johnson — That the covering of dues or membership fees for organizations recognized by this local shall be subject to the discre-

tion of the President in pursuit of the interest of the Local." Needless to say, it is a daunting task to separate out the wheat from the chaff.

A standing motion, by definition, is one that continues in effect until such time as the body [in this case, the members of Local 587] deems it no longer necessary and removes it. It is about time these moldy motions be addressed, and eliminated if they are no longer applicable. Look for a motion to eliminate some 25 outdated standing motions. Given the two-page length of the verbiage, the complete list of motions (including those outdated ones) will not be printed in the *News Review*. However, copies will be available at the cycle of meetings when voting will take place.

## KEEP YOUR ADDRESS CURRENT!

(A request from our Local 8 Union office staff)

Throughout the year Local 587 mails letters to our membership. The most recent mailing contained the King County Metro contract survey. With each mailing sent, the union receives a small percentage of letters returned due to improper address.

Local 587 maintains a database that in part includes the names and addresses of our King County Metro members. The King County Metro section of the database is updated monthly from data provided by King County Metro.

If you are a King County Metro employee and your name and address is not current with King County Metro, you may not receive union mailings. Please keep your name and address current with King County Metro.

# Wisconsin, Time Standards, and Other Things

By Executive Board Officer Clint De Voss

## Wisconsin

**A** massacre of the Labor Movement! For the few of you who do not know, the State of Wisconsin recently passed legislation that took away the ability of Wisconsin public employees to collectively bargain.

This is likely the greatest setback to public employees and other working people in the last 70 years. WE should be jumping up and down, screaming and yelling, NO, not in this state! Yet what I have recently seen is the usual complacency. During the Vacation Pick I even heard an employee bad mouthing the Union for getting involved in politics through COPE. What COPE does is to inform and support elected officials that support the betterment of workers, like us. In our own ranks we can see and hear individuals that bad mouth politicians that do not have the same "values" (read that religious values), are too liberal, and/or are not conservative. Who do you think supports laws and policies that help you have a better life? The answer is not the mouth pieces of business, the "tea bagger" conservatives. It is generally the liberals and moderates!

Be aware of what is going on in your Union., If you can't attend all the Union meetings get together with your co-workers, have a sign-up sheet, and rotate who goes. (A good idea from Andy Galbraith at CSC) This does two things; firstly it lets you be in the know about things that are coming up and secondly, it helps your co-workers who were not at the meeting stay informed.

Each of you needs to become involved. You can do this through COPE contributions that come out of your check, you can attend Union Meetings, you can be a Shop Steward, and generally support your Union and Labor leaning politicians. Wisconsin can happen here!

## Time Standards

Like it or NOT they are here! I cannot think of anyone that likes the idea, except maybe upper management and the clamoring uninformed public, crying for savings at our expense. What you need to realize is that management can do this without the Union's agreement. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) touches on this in Article 17, Section 2A, which states "METRO shall not adopt

time estimates contained in flat-rate mechanics books for scheduling or evaluation purposes. METRO work standards are exempted from this provision."

Clearly, this would be a losing fight if we go down that road. While none of the rank and file want "Time Standards", we will get them, and what we need to do is to make the best of the bad situation.

In order to make the best of this situation we need to insure that although "Time Standards" are going to be set, they need to be set at a reasonable level, with the variations that occur because of a variety of reasons. We have an ageing workforce, we have complex equipment that is found only within the Transit family, and setting standards that are not reasonable will result in additional costs and will increase injuries (always costly), breakdown rates, and ultimately lower customer satisfaction.

To make this work to our advantage we need to question the "average times" when they are iffy, and closely scrutinize them to make sure that they accurately represent how long it takes to do the jobs. Randy has stated that there will be no discipline resulting from these standards. I am sure that he means what he says and I am also sure some manager is going to try! So, when you are doing your job make sure that you document what you do, not just put your time down as a standard job.

## Vacation Pick

What a mess! Once again management did not listen when your Executive Board Officers told them that the computer program that they have had us use does function in the manner necessary so that we can do a good and fair job when you call in to choose your vacation.

Then there is the issue of King County putting restrictions that violate the Contract in the program.

*This is likely the greatest setback to public employees and other working people in the last 70 years. WE should be jumping up and down, screaming and yelling, NO, not in this state!*

Those of you (Leads, USW, TIPS III's and others) who could not pick time off because of other people off at the same Base, should file grievances. Because you were wronged! The Contract requires that vacation be picked by "Classification, system wide", NOT something else.

The long standing problem of "prime time" came up again. This is really a case of seniority verses equal opportunity. I do not have a good solution. Some of the solutions that have been put forward are limiting the length of time that can be picked during "prime time" months (July and August) to two weeks, three weeks, or something else. Or just limiting part of the "prime time" blocks to two weeks (the last 10 blocks to two weeks). Another idea was to have a Base pick in June based on "discretionary time" open at the Base (this idea was shamelessly stolen from a Base Supervisor, who mentioned this idea during Contract Negotiations).

I do not know what a good and fair solution to this continuing problem is, there may not be one. More importantly, any change like this should be put before the VM membership for a vote. If you think have a solution please let your Officers know what your idea is!

## Sick Leave Abuse Letters

While Randy has decided to change the Letters and call "sick leave abuse" something else, the problems of identifying who is actually abusing sick leave (was that an oxymoron that I just used, how do you abuse a negotiated benefit???) remain. When managers are deciding who gets one of these nasty letters they have no realistic guidance on how to identify likely culprits, just the rigid guidelines that are out of touch with reality and are unsupportable based on the facts.

# Special General Election Results

The results of the March 29<sup>th</sup> General Special Election are final and certified:

(Note: Winning candidates are **BOLDED**)

Recording Secretary:	Votes
Jennie Gil	665
<b>Judy J. Young</b>	<b>802</b>

Executive Board Transit Operator Position #6:	Votes
Verita Alexander	415
<b>Hal Poor</b>	<b>461</b>

Special Election Committee

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# Letters to the Editor...

## Be Careful what you wish for!

**\*\*Editor's Note:** This letter is in response to the letter in the March News Review entitled "Be Careful what you wish for."

Dear Editor:

Last month, in Letters to the Editor, a union member argued that a grievance filed, "Frechin et al", for paid King County benefits for Part-Time Operators could lead to a push back from Metro which could "... have a more negative effect than the results of leaving in place any alleged (or actual) injustice."

Well, Metro is already pushing back. They've been pushing back at least since 2010 Summer Shake-up. They escalated in 2010 Fall Shake-up and are continuing in 2011 Spring Shake-up.

Remember in Fall 2010 after the contract settled, the Union, with help from rank and filers, launched the "Fix the Schedules/Support Riders/Support Drivers" campaign? This had to do with cuts to recovery times. ATU 587 members were detailed to pass out info and stickers to the public. Many Operators will testify their recovery times have been reduced.

Shopfloor587 supported a resolution to back grievances, filed in Feb. 2011, that called for paid King County benefits. The grievants, who are part-timers, had picked "scheduled" work under 4 hours (3:40 - 3:59). But in reality the work would take more than 4 hours to complete - for the entire 18 weeks of Fall Shake-up. We estimated about 140 PTOs impacted by this trend. We were wrong. By Spring Shake-up there were 193 operators in this range.

Shopfloor587 was at the PTO Spring Shake-up pick and we found three operators willing to file grievances on this issue.

Two of us work at North Base.

Last August, one grievant picked a 3:51 piece of work; my assignment was 3:52. We both had less than two years seniority, and hoped that by 2011 we'd have enough seniority to get a 4-hour assignment and paid benefits. By October 2010 I realized I already had a 4-hour assignment. I averaged 4:12, and my fellow grievant averaged 4:30.

Our grievance is based on contract language. Article 12: Benefits, Section 1, letter B, says, "All full-time Employees, part-time, assigned and on-call Employees who are regularly scheduled to work half-time or more...". Metro is stuck on the work "scheduled". Our grievance asserts that since Metro has cut the recovery times, the "scheduled" assignments are off - underrated and undervalued, and unfairly disqualifying members from benefits.

We then go to Article 12, Benefits, Section 1, letter F, says "For the purposes of this Agreement, 'half-time' shall mean 20 paid hours per week." We have payroll records to prove these assignments take more than 20 hours per week, and more than 40 hours per pay period. That equals 4 hours or more per day.

This exercise is not about getting benefits for one or two operators. It's about getting paid benefits for all PTO's who are doing work over four hours - in reality - and need to be made whole. It is also about preventing Metro from taking us down a slippery slope where no one qualifies for benefits, whether it is through undervalued work, expanding reduced weekday service, or other gimmicks to keep part-timers off benefits. We lost the First Step, hopefully will go to Second Step shortly. Thank you for your support. We will keep you posted.

Doug Frechin

## Thank You

To everyone at King County Metro, ATU 587, and especially my union brothers and sisters, your

kindness and generous support touches me more than I can describe here. Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Marty Randles #3816

## Customer Service = Customer Enabling?

We all have issues with the Complaint System. Yet this issue starts at the top (above the Chiefs) with unrealistic customer service ideals that do not apply to the current (part of) world we live in.

An annoying and large inefficiency that Metro has is its downright refusal to educate and train its riding public. One of hundreds of ways of educating the public is through a combination of the Complaint System and consistency. Instead of the Complaint System being used as a two way education process, it's a one-way stick to beat the fear of customer complaints into us.

A popular complaint category is "Missed Stop Boarding". It means the customer wanted your bus, might have seen you or the bus number as you pulled off, and they believe without a doubt that you must have seen them. Idealistically the communication that this customer should receive should sound like this, "Dear valued customer, myself as well as the Operator mentioned in your complaint are apologetic that you were missed. To insure that this does not happen in the future, please arrive at the stop five minutes prior to the bus's scheduled arrival time. Wear light colors and stand at the most visible area of the bus stop, which is usually near the reflective bus stop sign itself. We appreciate your input and help in keeping Metro efficient."

Metro has hundreds of working examples in the United States to learn from. Portland's usage of the ceiling of their buses to direct customers is very noticeable. Most of the materials on their buses educate the customer on how to ride and explains the benefits of complying to the customer. Atlanta has monitors and TVs on its monorail to educate customers. A bus driver from Chicago could not believe that we still had paper transfers! Visible enforcement of the Code of Conduct has been overly effective in the other cities, so why not ours?

I was a customer long before I came to this job and feel that Metro truly needs to work on these issues. Budget concerns abound, all of us have to make the necessary sacrifices, and the members of Local 587 are doing a great job of tightening up. The only thing that Metro has tightened is its squeeze on its employees via the Complaint System, worsening working conditions and other improprieties that have lowered morale.

With the difficult times ahead everyone including the customers

will have to assist in easing the painful hit of the budget crisis. I believe that there are a lot of changes ahead and we all need to pay attention and make sure that these changes do not harm us or our riding public.

Thanks for Reading,  
Verita Alexander  
Atlantic Base Shop Steward #21074

## Ability to Work

Dear Editor:

After reading [President] Paul Bachtel's newsletter article (Ability to Work) I just had to sit back and revel in what a wonderful agency we work for. Isn't this the agency that makes sure the disenfranchised have all their needs met? Whether it is the drunks, druggies or convicts, they make sure they get housing, food, health care, bus tickets (oh we love those day passes don't we)... you name it ..King County is there to give it out.

But their lowly employees? You know those employees like bus drivers that can't be a minute late, that sit in buses all day, not drinking water because there is no bathroom, joints aching because we cannot stand and stretch because we are stuck in traffic jams most of the day. Hard working and dedicated to go to work day after day. How does our great agency reward the hard work of these employees?? How about a pink slip if your body starts to wear out and you cannot get to work more than 85% of the time? I guess the moral of the story is to become a drunk or druggie or convict...

Ruth Wilson  
Shop Steward Central Base

## Brian Sherlock

Dear Editor:

I was very impressed with Brian Sherlock's last article as Recording Secretary. I appreciated that he took the high road and stepped down with class. We are all good at finger pointing but Brian did not. I can't imagine how difficult this was for him, and then to come back and face all of the questions from the operators. Coming back he could have had a pity party, or been bitter and withdrawn. Yet what I have seen is a man that is a true example of a committed union member. I have seen him on numerous occasions at North Base helping other operators or informing them of a union issue. With his usual passion he has been so helpful and encouraging to the operators. Thank you, Brother Sherlock, for your commitment to improving the working conditions those of us with ATU 587 and the example you have been of a faithful member.

Ruth Wilson  
North Base

### 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**

### SEND IN YOUR OPINIONS

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

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

# Letters to the Editor...

## The only constant in life, is change

We have all heard about the trouble faced by organized labor in Wisconsin. I'm sure we have mixed opinions as to whether or not it could happen here in Washington State. Believe it or not, trouble for us is already on its way and Senate Bill 5870 (rejection of collective bargaining agreement reached with state employees) is just the start. Whether or not this passes into law isn't the end of legislation like this. This kind of legislative attack on our collective bargaining rights, I fear, is unavoidable in our future.

All over the country organized labor and specifically public transit is under pressure to become more efficient and be better stewards of the public funds we survive on. In this political and economic climate we need to evolve or suffer the fate of all those who failed to do so in the past. I'm sure the folks in Detroit's auto industry did not want to change, but given the choice of the auto maker closing its doors or making concessions, the choice was obvious. The unions in Detroit had to make the tough choice to evolve, preserve jobs, and benefit the best they could considering the circumstances.

I don't want to see big changes like "time standards" any more than the rest of my brothers and sisters in VM. Unfortunately this is part of the process Metro needs to accomplish so they can receive more stable funding for transit, preserve jobs, and protect our pay and benefits. We need to realize that whether we like it or not change is coming and we won't be able to stop it. The establishment of "time standards" is part of this process and we have the opportunity to be in on the ground floor and establish "reasonable time standards" in good faith.

With that said I have a problem with the road we are heading down to establish these standards. No two people are going to complete the same job in the same amount of time. We the labor force understand this and hope that our voice is heard. We come to the table as a union to discuss this in good faith, but where is the good faith effort on the side of management? I'm not saying all of management is out for our blood... far from it. We do have some very good chiefs and supervisors at Metro but as with all job classifications there are some who are not so good and just looking for "time standards" to be a "bigger stick". You know it and I know it. I am just hoping that our new management sees that for what it is and corrects this attitude before it's a problem.

So where does this leave us, and where do we go from here? Well, in my opinion we need to be open to change, "evolve" so to speak. I am not saying we roll over like the family dog and just accept everything. No, we need to be diligent and observant to protect our way of life. But to survive in the new world forming in front of our eyes we must be willing to change our ways, to become more efficient, and improve our processes. We need to become better stewards of the public funds we survive on.

I fear that if we fail to evolve and use the mantra "that's the way we have always done it", our future will be at risk. As we have seen in the past, there are some things that are just out of our control. If we fail to be flexible and adapt, Metro may make changes worse than the prospect of having "time standards".

I'm sure not everyone will agree with my opinion in this matter. But where we all can agree is that the right to voice one's opinion and the free exchange of ideas are two tools we have to ensure

all of our voices are heard by both Management and our Union Leadership.

*In solidarity,  
John Custer  
East Base VM*

## Collective bargaining rights under attack!

**Editor's Note:** The following letter was sent to Senator Margarita Prentice and Representatives Hudgins and Hasegawa by Operator Mark A LaFalce, regarding Senate Bill 5405, which asks the legislature to strip Washington State Ferry Employees of their Collective Bargaining rights. You can read about the Bill online at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5405&year=2011>

*Letters to your representative can be sent via a link on the same web site. Brother LaFalce, your officers, and your COPE Committee urge you to do the same.*

Dear Senator Prentice, and Representatives Hudgins and Hasegawa:

I am writing out of concern about the alarming and overwhelming activities that are currently taking place in our government whereby the wellbeing of unions and its hardworking union members are being threatened and hastily blamed for the economic problems that we are experiencing in this country. I will not list some of the actual reasons that our economy has been put into a state of peril here but I will say that I believe as do many of my brethren that the bill 5405 and other bills like this one are nothing more than an attempt to break up unions and take advantage of an opportunity whereby public

sentiment can be garnered to oppose unions. I believe as many of my brethren that if we are not diligent about fighting bills like this unions will be dismantled causing further harm to our economy by putting thousands more people out of work or greatly decreasing their chances of securing decent living wages and benefits for themselves and their families.

I am a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) and I strongly believe that this country was built on the backs of hard working laborers, union and non-union alike, and if we are going to continue to build the economy back to healthy place, we need to make sure that all workers have the right to fair wages that are negotiated collectively. Individual bargaining for employees will weaken those employees' positions and ultimately put them at risk of losing their jobs.

This will also create unsafe working conditions for both the employee and in the case of the Washington State Ferry System, the public in which it serves.

Please do everything you can to make sure that unions stay strong so we can secure the lives of the hard working employees that will rebuild our economy with pride and perseverance.

I will be looking closely along with my union's COPE committee at bills like this and we will make sure that our voices are heard.

Thank you all for your valuable time concerning this matter.

*In solidarity with all Employees,  
ATU Union Member  
Mark A. LaFalce*

March 28, 2011

## We Are One Labor Rally

### FRIDAY, APRIL 8th at 12 noon

ATU Local 587 members will be taking a charter coach from 6th and Atlantic near Central Base at 9:00am for a trip to Olympia. The charter will be leaving Olympia at 2:00pm for anticipated return to Seattle at 4:00pm.

A limited number of courtesy details are available. Contact COPE Chair Judy Young at 206-448-8588 for more information. Requests for courtesy details and your reservation for your spot on the bus must be received by 4:00 p.m., April 5th. Any requests made after that time will not be honored.

The rally will be taking place on the Capitol Steps. Washington's working families are tired of being blamed and punished for the damage done by Wall Street banks and corporations.

Join thousands of public- and private-sector workers from all trades as we stand together as one and demand that lawmakers PUT PEOPLE FIRST! We want good jobs, we want our rights, and we want them NOW!

opeiu8aflcio

## Vice President Sepolen's Report

By Rick Sepolen



# Some Words For Shop Stewards

I am sure that in your capacity as shop stewards you hear questions such as the following: "When should I start reading the contract?" or, "I lost my license a year ago and have been driving on a license from another state? That won't be a problem, will it?" or, "I have a 'condition' that I don't want to talk Metro about. I need an hour off twice a week and I think they should pay. How do I get them to give me the time off?"

How would you, as a Local 587 shop steward, answer these questions? Talk amongst yourselves and see what answers you come up with.

Your newsletter has carried the Weingarten Rights on the bottom of page 2 of the newsletter for many years. Take the opportunity to review this information.

### Goals of a Union Steward

- Keep the members informed on union policies and union activities.
- Attend union meetings and union affairs. Encourage and bring the members from your department. Don't chide members for missing meetings. Think of other ways to communicate with them.

- Do not let personal likes or dislikes prejudice your actions as a grievance representative.
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records. Document, document, document.
- Do not promise, if you cannot deliver.
- Do not hesitate or stall. If you do not know the answer, admit you do not know. Then try to get the answer.

### Listening to Others

Listening is a skill. Unfortunately, we are far better talkers than we are listeners. But communication is a shared responsibility, both the speaker and the listener have an important part in it. One skill relies on the other.

In grievance handling, the shop steward needs to be able to listen and observe both the member and the supervisor. Much of what you need to know may be conveyed to you through body language or inference, not in direct speech. Here are some pointers on how to become a better listener and observer.

- Stop talking--you can't listen while you are talking.

- Ask questions--when you don't understand, when you need further clarification, when you want to show you are listening. But don't ask questions that will embarrass or show the other person up.
- Empathize with the other person--try to put yourself in his/her place so that you can see what he/she is trying to get at.
- Do not get angry or impatient at what is being said; it may prevent you from understanding.
- Get to the main points--concentrate on the main ideas and not the illustrative material. Examples, stories, or statistics are important, but usually are not main points. Examine them only to see if they prove, support, define the main ideas.
- Evaluate facts and evidence--as you listen, try to identify not only the significance of the facts and evidence, but also their relation to argument.
- Don't argue mentally, it sets up a barrier between you and the speaker.
- Listen to what they **didn't tell you**. Sometimes you can learn

just as much by figuring out what they didn't tell you as you can from what they do tell you.

- Avoid hasty judgments--wait until all the facts are in (or at least most of them) before making any judgments.
- Recognize your own prejudices--try to be aware of your own feelings toward the speaker, the subject, the occasion, and allow for these pre-judgments.

This is all food for thought. In the near future I will be announcing a shop steward training class. Look for the posting on your Union Bulletin Board and sign up.

### Important Information For Part-Time Operators

In grievance research by Bruce Tiebout, he found that at least one member who was improperly paid their holiday pay for New Year's Day. If you had a Reduced Week-day schedule on December 31, 2010, check your pay stubs and if you were NOT paid for your PICKED assignment, see your chief or file an Action Memo.

# Saying goodbye to an old friend

By Jennie Gil

"Fine as frog's hair" was always his response. Any time you asked Tom Jackson how he was doing, without fail that is what you would hear back.

I remember TJ Jackson from back in the days when women drivers were still a novelty, back when it was commonplace to sit in the bullpen in between two people smoking cigarettes, back when The Book was a skinny plastic binder with pages you put in or took out with each passing shakeup. He was a constant presence at East Base, and one of the first union officers I ever came in contact with.

Tom hired on as a Full-time Transit Operator in 1977, right around the time the face of Local 587 changed and the new contract allowed for Part-time Transit Operators. He was active in his union fairly early on. He served two terms as an Executive Board Officer, from 1982 through 1988, and then continued his work

at the base level as a steward until his retirement in May of 2002.

A lot of the language in the Operators' sections of the King County labor agreement lead back to TJ's involvement, even after he returned to be a rank and file member. He worked many a Part-time pick, and was among the Executive Board officers instrumental in getting Metro's fledgling Part-time Operators the right to pick instead of having their work assigned to them arbitrarily, which is how it worked when this fresh-faced, naïve 21 year old hired on in 1979. Incidentally, the only way the Union could secure that right was to pay for it ourselves. 32 years later, we still do.

His file was an interesting trek through Local 587 history, and there was a particularly large amount of correspondence regarding a grievance he filed, in conjunction with eight other members, against Metro's Supplemental Procedures to its

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program. Tom and his fellow grievants' efforts ultimately resulted in changes to contract language that eventually settled the issue. This was prior to the federal government sticking their nose into the business and instituting the current drug and alcohol legislation we lumber under, taking it out of the negotiations arena.

When Tom retired in 2002 he and his wife Karen moved to Reno,



Left: Executive Board Officer Tom Jackson in 1984. Right: Tom in full party mode at his retirement back in 2002. (From the Local 587 archives).

Nevada, and lived an active and happy life in their community. He spent a life standing firm for what he believed in, and standing firm next to the people he loved.

He will be missed greatly, but he leaves a piece of him within the pages of our labor agreement. We should all be so dedicated to leave such a legacy.

## Vice President MacAdam's Report

By Don MacAdam



# The Undiscovered Country

The new contract became official 1/22/11. There are many new corrections to the old contract that will benefit you, the Union Employee. Then, there are the New Items...things we have not done before...things that make some of you nervous. And, as I woke up one morning at 1:57 A.M. thinking about the changes, I can understand the anxiety. I had a shop steward tell me, "I'm old. I don't want any changes." However, we will be making changes in the days to come. I tend to be one of those "plan for the worst, hope for the best" kind of people. Your Union Officers have carefully tried to divine our Transit future, so we will have to wait and see if we were right.

By now the tool and boot checks have been issued. We have also met with Metro on 4/10s, bus wraps, and time averages study. We made allowances for this in negotiations so that we could try new things without having to be stuck with them forever. Now, for the first time, we have a 90 day cancellation period and if executed, we go back to original 2010 contract language. How will all this end? Will we reject or approve the new changes? This is up to you in Maintenance. And, I work at your direction. We are living in a difficult period. I have heard it said several times, "America has never been in this position before." So, we will have to remain flexible to help out Metro when they need help, but Metro must also realize that we have our limits and help us out when we need it like when Mr. Boon saved many Maintenance jobs back in the 90s.

While we are relatively a small part of the Union & Metro, our responsibility is ginormous! You in Maintenance are the ones who keep the wheels safely turning! You are the ones who provide clean and safe coaches for the public and our brother & sister drivers! You E.S.W. are the ones who quickly replace B.O. coaches in the field & assist mechanics with inspections and service the coaches. You Mechanics are the ones who find ways to modify and repair all these different types of coaches to make sure we have enough coaches for sign out. You are the ones the training department comes to for solutions. And, your solutions have been shared across this United States. However, we cannot work without the Millwrights and Facilities Department maintaining all our bases and properties, and they must maintain several different types of certifications to get their jobs done.

Rail Maintenance is another amazing department, as well as the E.T.s and Radio sections. I think most of them were hired away from N.A.S.A.! Our jobs have varying degrees of difficulty, but "We are the BEST at what we do!" We have the highest ratio of coaches per mechanic in the country, but we can only do so because of the support of the rest of Maintenance. I am proud of what Maintenance has accomplished over the decades. Metro has won several awards because of our ability to evolve and change to meet new challenges and technologies. You are the Best!!! And, I am proud to represent you!

I was reminded of one of my quotes, "50% of Metro Maintenance is ready to fight at the drop of a hat! The other 50% are ready to fight at the thought of dropping a hat!" We need to keep our priorities in line; we need to remember that we work for and to support our families. And most importantly, we need to remember what is worth fighting for! And choose our battles wisely, and not waste our time on useless arguments that really do not matter or accomplish anything other than produce hot air. My goal is to keep maintenance working and to protect all the items we have fought for in our contract. But, I cannot do it alone...this is your Union and it is your fight, and your responsibility, also. As it is said in the military "we fight for the man on our left and on our right". When we forget this, we are easily overcome by adversity.

### What's Going On!

Musni (Pigeon gate): Settlement reached and signed off.

Salkeld, Nesbitt, Kelly: Letter of Expectation settlement accepted. Letter removed from file.

P. Post: Forfeiture by Metro has gone to Prosecutor's Office.

C. Rigtrup arbitration: arbitrator's award received, suspension will be withdrawn.

J. Dean: arbitration being scheduled.

Active Grievances: 24

Member vs. Member investigations ongoing.

\*\* I have invited V.M. Manager Randy Winders to the Wednesday 4/13/11 3:30 P.M. Maintenance Union meeting to answer questions from maintenance workers on time standards averaging and other related topics.

\*\*Chief Success story\*\* Walt Slade retired 3/11/11. Walt worked his way up from Mechanic. He was known for being fair & tough. He was highly respected and treated

*...most importantly, we need to remember what is worth fighting for! And choose our battles wisely, and not waste our time on useless arguments that really do not matter...*

Employees with the same regard. Walt was voted one of the "Best Chiefs in the system" in 2010!! We are all going to miss Walt!

On Board Systems project (OBS) is such an elaborate bus info system it will actually record the number of times a driver breaks wind and change the appropriate amount of interior cubic feet of atmosphere to nullify any negative effects and alert the Control Center. In addition, it will record and send the following info: speed, braking, acceleration and turning "G" forces, engine fluid levels, record position within 30', plus various cameras and sensors. We have not yet concluded negotiations with Metro on how this information will be used with regard to discipline. We are also addressing Metro's request for an M.O.A. on the project for installations in maintenance.

\*\*Some members took advantage

of the new Article 17, Section 13 a-c when their day shift training class was cancelled. (The new CBA is on the 587 web site.) Those employees, who were on swing & grave, were allowed to go home with no loss of pay. As we had not used this before, once Metro was reminded of the new language they corrected the time for affected mechanics.

Pigeon Gate: During the grievance process, Rail Management was given documents by the Union for pigeon control and bio-hazardous waste created by pigeons, but has not sought to protect their workers as they have not yet been provided with safety gear or training to protect them from the biological hazard.

The street car aka S.L.U.\* derailed but as they had no equipment to get the train back on the tracks, Light Rail came to the rescue. I am embarrassed and proud at the same time!?

## A Truly Dedicated Employee of the Year



Some wonder what it takes to be "Employee of the Year". This is the dedication required. Vehicle Maintenance's Employee of the Year Bob Martinsen's service truck broke down. He quickly improvised and found a new Atlantic 5. He was thus spotted all over Seattle helping our Brother and Sister Transit Operators however he could!

# The Financial Secretary's Report

By Paul Neil



## War Has Been Declared on YOU!

War has been declared on your paycheck, your benefits and your pension. You and your family are apparently living too well, so you need to be

brought down a notch or two. In Ohio and Wisconsin public workers have been stripped of their right to collective bargaining. They will not have to complain about what is

in their contracts because they will not have one. Efforts to do the same thing are occurring in several other states including Washington. What can you do fight this?

in Blaine, starting at 2:00pm. The second opportunity is April 4 at Martin Luther King Park, located at 2200 Martin Luther King Jr. Way in Seattle, from 5:30-7:00pm. Your third opportunity is April 8<sup>th</sup>, at the State Capitol at noon. It is critical that there be a big ATU presence at these events. We are looking to organize carpools to the rally at the Peace Arch, and hope to have a bus to take participants to Olympia. Check your Union board for more information or call the Union office.



On a snowy Wisconsin Saturday in early March, over 100,000 thousand people turned out to tell Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker to stop his attack on workers, middle class jobs, and our right to bargain for a better life. ATU locals turned out in force, and International Vice President Janis Borchardt marched with them. Photo supplied courtesy of former 587 member Taavi McMahon

First remember: *“What can be won at the bargaining table can be lost at the ballot box.”* So be a diligent voter and citizen come election time. Governor Walker in Wisconsin did not run on a platform of Union busting, so ask candidates about that. Seriously consider voting for those candidates endorsed by your Union. The ATU 587 COPE committee interviews and supports candidates who support labor and transit issues, regardless of political party.

Second, be involved in *your* Union. Come to the monthly membership meetings. Volunteer to help out at the summer BBQ or other Union sponsored activity such as Lobby Day. The Union is only as strong as its members want it to be.

Third, come and participate in the rallies this month to support Unions and public employees. The first rally is on April 2 at the Peace Arch Park

Fourth, give to C.O.P.E. (Committee On Political Education). Nothing speaks louder to politicians than hard, cold cash. All of the properties represented by ATU 587 have voluntary payroll deduction programs to give to COPE. Please step up and give what you can. Personally I have been donating 1 hour's pay each month for the last 20 years, and that is what I recommend to all members who are employed full-time.

Preserve your livelihood, folks. War has been declared on you. Fight back!

## Financial Secretary's March 2011 Report

(as reported at the March cycle of membership meetings)

In the month of February 2011, we reported 15 new members to the ATU International. Two are employed at Metro, one at Seattle Personal Transit, ten at First Transit and two at Jefferson Transit. This brings our total active membership to 4,186. This represents an increase of 101 members compared to this time last year when we reported 4,085 active members

### Bills:

All financial figures are subject to the review of the Executive Board. Our February total income was \$248,261.40, an increase of \$3,997.79 or 1.6% compared to February 2010.

Per Capita payments totaled \$57,869.40 for the month, an increase of \$2,687.30 or 4.9% over the same period last year.

Other bills for payroll, rent, legal, etc totaled \$204,751.47, an increase of \$12,914.29 or 6.7% over the previous February. This amounts to a deficit of \$14,359.47 for the month compared to a deficit of \$2,755.67 for February 2010. The reason for the increase in expenses is primarily related

to holding the special election and increased legal bills for ULPS.

### My activities for the month:

I attended lobby day on February 9<sup>th</sup>. We had a larger group this year than last, but we always have room for more.

We are taking bids from three contractors for the remodeling of the Union office. The work will be paid for by our landlord as part the negotiations of our new lease.

Herman Lindsey, our outside auditor, was here from 2/21-2/23 assisting me.

Along with VP Sepolen, Bob Eash, Ludwig Becker, Bruce Tiebout, Robert E. Lee and Ed Stanard, I met with Clallam Transit management to bring Clallam Paratransit in-house starting March 31<sup>st</sup>! This is very exciting and has been a long term goal of the Union. Those members will finally have an employer who will treat them with dignity and respect, and they will start receiving a greatly improved medical plan and a PERs pension from their first day as CTS employees.

## COPE Committee

**\*\*Editor's Note:** Looking at your voter's pamphlet trying to decide who among all these strangers to choose to represent you in municipal, state and federal positions? In light of upcoming elections this fall for local and county positions, your 587 COPE Committee offers the following:

## How to Pick a Candidate

By COPE Committee Member Sara Franklin

Choosing a candidate who represents your issues and will be the best person for the job is just as important as casting your vote. So here are a few helpful suggestions:

1. Decide what you care about and what character you want in a leader.
2. Take a close look at all campaign information and literature.
3. Ask how others view the candidate.
4. Rate the candidates on how they campaign.
5. Examine where the candidates get their money from to pay for their campaigns
6. If the candidate is an incumbent, find out how they performed while they have been in office. Did they support and legislate on issues you support and care about?
7. Does the candidate support a pro-labor, pro-union and pro-transit agenda?

*To All: I wanted to share some insight I had a few years ago when I first wrote this article. It's funny how the more things change, the more they stay the same. Enjoy the read.*

# Rude Awakening – #2

By Carl C. Jackson, South Lake Union Streetcar

In the early Fifties, America awoke to a transportation crisis. The nation's highways were in terrible shape, and there were not enough of them. Thirty-five years earlier, it took an 82-vehicle military convoy 62 days to cross the United States; the state of the roads had not changed much between then and the early 1950's. There had always been other national priorities, but late in 1956 all that was about to change.

With the arrival of Dwight Eisenhower as President, transportation came off the back burner in a hurry. Remember, before it was President Eisenhower, it was General Eisenhower. If it's one thing that the Army is really good at, it's the art of moving men and materials quickly and efficiently from point "A" to point "B"! Finally, here was the influential someone who knew from personal experience how vital efficient transportation could be both in peace and in war. As a U.S. Army Major, he once led that very same 82-vehicle convoy in its painfully slow trek from coast-to-coast, and was now determined to set matters right. Result: The 45,000-mile Interstate Highway System, called by the American Society of Civil Engineers "one of the greatest public works projects in history."

However, after the massive effort involved in creating the Interstates, America rested on its laurels.

Now, it is time for another rude awakening. Since the completion of the Interstate Highway System, nearly fifty-five years ago, vital transportation issues have been left idle on the shelf. Witness the debacle of Amtrak. How could an industrialized society such as America NOT have an interstate

passenger rail system that is fast, responsive to the needs of its travelers, and well run? No wonder the Europeans laugh at us as a society. We should be ashamed of ourselves. Sporadic attempts by Federal and State governments to initiate high-speed rail, urban transit expansion, and other essential projects have not even begun to meet the 200 percent increase in miles traveled by Americans since 1960.

The need for better urban and intercity transportation has become a deep thorn in nearly every local politician's side as well as a threat to the economic health of most states, and the nation as a whole; a far greater threat than an unbalanced budget.

Travel, particularly to work, always seems to take longer than it should, but American trips now seem the longest of any industrial power. On much of the neglected Interstate highway network (along which only two/fifths of the pavement is rated as "good" by most measures) postponed work has added to the congestion because most municipalities are now playing "catch-up" with necessary repairs and upgrades. Traffic volumes have grown by a factor of 20 – almost 50 percent since 1975.

Because of this neglect (and an accompanying failure on the part of local, state, and federal governments to provide for supplementary transportation modes) there now exists a transportation crisis that may be even worse than the first. Because now it's not just a question of travel or transporting freight to existing locations, but of servicing the largely different topography of new population clusters and jobs that was itself created by the In-

terstate system. In other words, the Interstate Highway System that was created to expedite the movement of people and goods has become the problem that it was designed to alleviate! For most commuters, the trip is an increasingly painful one; sitting in traffic, breathing loads of concentrated carbon monoxide (witness the famous LA Smog), increased fuel consumption, extended wear & tear on the family vehicle, higher insurance premiums, etc. The loss in gainful employment opportunity and productive time is becoming dangerous to wage earners, job seekers, and employers alike. As an example, when considering the purchase of a new home, one of the prime variables is commute time. If there is no public transit option, then a possible new home purchase in a highly desirable locale – away from an urban center, now falls out of consideration because the extended commute time becomes prohibitive in terms of wasted productivity.

There will not be another Eisenhower to sound the alarm and create the necessary national consensus for better transportation this time. However, with the studies for the

first real U.S. high-speed rail projects finally underway, the situation is the most promising in recent memory for people in high places to wake up and start another massive transportation project – the way it was done before, after the FIRST rude awakening. From the day President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the *Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956*, the Interstate System has been a part of our culture—as construction projects, as transportation in our daily lives, and as an integral part of the American way of life. Every citizen has been touched by it, if not directly as motorists, then indirectly because every item we buy has been on the Interstate System at some point. President Eisenhower considered it one of the most important achievements of his two terms in office, and historians agree.

We want a real, well maintained highway infrastructure that Americans can be proud of, not a patchwork of beat-up "freeways" that will not sustain us into this century. Demand more from the people you vote into elected office. It is YOUR life and you are paying for it in more ways than one.

## President's Report continued

torneys and previous arbitration decisions. Regardless of the logic of the decision, if the membership doesn't perceive a decision as fair, the Vice President takes a political beating. A previous Vice President commented that any Vice President of this Union can only survive a few terms in office before the membership throws him/her out based on a perception that his/her decisions were not fair.

There are times when I have voted to pursue a losing grievance on to arbitration based simply on principle, or when I knew the membership was demanding to have an issue pursued win or lose. However, I only vote for arbitration when I firmly believed the Union as a whole would not incur a negative precedent.

I ask that you understand that

your Vice Presidents agonize over the grievances you file, especially when someone's job is at stake. They research past grievance and arbitration decisions and seek, at times, multiple legal opinions before making a decision. Please have respect for difficulty of their decisions and try not to personalize your anger.

It's appropriate to be angry over mean spirited and/or incompetent management decisions, but let's direct the anger in the appropriate direction, at the miserable scoundrels in our human resources division who, with lack of conscious, support the unethical decisions of the low level managers they serve.

In solidarity,  
Paul J. Bachtel  
President /  
Business Representative

## Upcoming at Local 587

- April 6<sup>th</sup> Nominations close for Shop Steward for KCM Supervisors and Special Classifications
- April 8<sup>th</sup> We Are One Labor Rally, Capitol Steps, Olympia
- April 7<sup>th</sup> Charter Meeting
- April 8<sup>th</sup> Morning Meeting
- April 11<sup>th</sup> Jefferson County Meeting
- April 12<sup>th</sup> Clallam County Meeting
- April 13<sup>th</sup> Afternoon Meeting
- April 14<sup>th</sup> Elections for Shop Stewards for KCM Supervisors and Special Classifications
- April 26<sup>th</sup> Executive board meeting

## WORK SITE VISITS

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

April 15 <sup>th</sup> Friday	South Operations Component Supply Center South Vehicle Maintenance	4:00 am – 6:00 am 6:00 am – 6:30 am 6:30 am – 7:00 am
April 21 <sup>st</sup> Thursday	South Facilities	5:30 am – 6:30 am
April 27 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	Seattle Personal Transit South Lake Union Streetcar Link Light Rail	5:00 am – 7:00 am 11:00 am – 1:00 pm 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

# Examining Web MD

By Bill Clifford

I try to honor the intent of most of our rules, policies and instructions, even if I don't follow them to the letter. But sometimes the devil gets in me and I try to follow a Metro directive to its absurd conclusion.

Having had a bellyful of WebMD's crappy user interface and intrusive questions, I am following President Bachtel's suggestions in the January newsletter. I got the paper copy of the Wellness Assessment and sent it certified mail with signature confirmation to Arizona (\$7 and change). WebMD sent their "analysis" back before the Post Office could confirm the signature. As you may have seen by now, the WebMD analysis is computer-generated nonsense. Obviously, no informed human took a peek at my private health info (I hope).

WebMD suggested I share this regurgitated information with my doctor, which is redundant as that's where I got the information in the first place. Since I had already scheduled an appointment for something else, I brought my WebMD assessment along to the Polyclinic.

At the end of my appointment I brought out the assessment. My doctor glanced through it, then snorted, "This is not worth a thing and its conclusions about your health are wrong in a couple of particulars." Asked why he thought that, he said, "WebMD is run by a bunch of pharmaceutical companies and all they want to do is push prescription drugs."

To see if my doctor was right I googled WebMD when I got home. He's not. WebMD is worse than that.

WebMD's executives ARE mostly from pharmaceutical companies. According to *Business Week*, WebMD CEO Wayne Gattinella pulls down nearly \$1million per year from WebMD alone, is on the boards of 11 other companies and has been affiliated with People's PC and HLTH Corporation. Other WebMD board members are affiliated with Martek Biosciences, American Shared Hospital Services, Par Pharmaceuticals, Roberts Pharmaceutical Corporation, ESP Pharma, CareInsite, Vivus Inc, Synetic, Questcor Pharmaceuticals, Oceana Therapeutics, Well-spring Pharmaceutical, etc.

Martin Wygod is a big dog; he made \$2 million last year at WebMD, not counting \$6 million in stock options. As is fellow board member Herman Sarkowsky. Both Wygod and Sarkowsky invest in thoroughbred racing. You might recognize Sarkowsky's name from his former associations with the Portland Trailblazers and Seattle Seahawks.

Board member Joseph Smith oversees the legal department, especially the Department of Justice investigation into WebMD's Medical Manager business. He must be busy. By late 2005 fourteen WebMD executives in South Carolina had been indicted for fraud, money laundering and tax evasion in a scheme to

inflate earnings by \$16.8 million. A New Jersey WebMD exec agreed to pay back \$8.1 million related to an illegal \$21 million kickback scheme. The Department of Justice is still investigating.

The irony of this accounting fraud is that WebMD's core business is health care management, especially billing and information management. WebMD's parent company has been through many names, including Healthon and Emdeon but now it is also known as WebMD. Emdeon/WebMD's board of directors leans heavily toward information management executives and venture capitalists. They want the government's hands out of health care and its eyes off Wall Street.

For example, parent corporation board member Dinyar S. Devitre donated \$6,400 to promote Reshma Saujani's campaign for Congress

(14th District, NYC). Saujani is a photogenic 34 year-old Wall Street insider who tried to knock off the incumbent: union-supported, moderately reformist Carolyn Maloney. Maloney upset Wall Street with her successful bills to increase protection for credit card users and to stabilize the financial industry. According to *The Village Voice* Saujani has been an officer in three large financial institutions, Carret Asset Management, Blue Wave, and Fortres, that collapsed under the weight of ethically suspect deals. Saujani raised \$1.3 million and garnered support from Democratic heavyweights such as Hilary Clinton, but lost by 60%, spending \$200 per vote. (In all fairness Maloney spent \$100 per vote. The 14th District represents Wall Street.)

According to Emdeon's website: "Emdeon understands how to deliver solutions that best impact the flow of

information for all parties to increase efficiency and maximize profitability. By connecting information intelligently and making key administrative processes easier, Emdeon simplifies the business of healthcare for everyone."

This refers to billing and medical records. Your medical records. What do you suppose happens to the personal information you are posting on the WebMD website? Do you think it is filed away under "confidential?" Your own mother couldn't access this information without your written authorization. Did you sign a HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) release when you gave your personal health information to a 3 billion dollar corporation (Gurufocus.com's projection for 23 Feb 2011) dedicated to selling you drugs and maximizing healthcare profits?



**Metro Employees Recreational Activities Association (MERAA)**

**137<sup>th</sup> Run for the Roses**  
**Emerald Downs (View Room)**  
 2300 Emerald Downs Drive • Auburn, WA 98001

**Saturday, May 7, 2011**

**\$30.00 per person (limited availability)**

**Price Includes:** Admission, Buffet (menu below), Official Program, Tip Sheet, Seating in the View Room, Shared Use of Clubhouse Seating, Sales Tax & Gratuity. All sales are final and non-refundable.

**Event Schedule:**

**11:30 am ..... Gates Open**  
**1:00 pm ..... First Post**  
**1:30 pm ..... Buffet Served (until 3:30pm)**

**Menu:** Assorted Cheeses with Crackers and Crostini; Crudit  Tray w/ Buttermilk Ranch & Roasted Pepper Dips; Carved Sirloin of Beef w/ Henry Bain Sauce; Chilled Shrimp w/ Cocktail Sauce; Fried Catfish w/ Creole Tartar Sauce; Chicken & Sausage Gumbo; Dirty Rice; Andouille Mashed Potatoes; Buttered Vegetable Medley; Emerald Green Salad w/ Assorted Dressings; Southern Three Potato Salad; Seasonal Fruit Tray; Rolls & Butter; Strawberry Shortcakes; Assorted Cakes, Pies, Cookies & Bars

**Contact your MERAA Rep for Tickets:**

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**Or Call the MERAA Hotline at (206) 684-1978**  
**Visit us at [www.MERAA.org](http://www.MERAA.org)**