Each day when I arrive for work at the Union office, I cross paths with people coming from and going to the Puget Sound Labor Agency (PSLA) food bank. Many of them are disheveled and appear to have spent the previous night out of doors. It reminds me of how lucky I am to have been blessed with a loving family, a great job and the opportunity to serve our membership.

Through the October cycle of Union meetings, our membership passed a motion designating the PSLA as our preferred charity. The purpose of the motion was to memorialize current practice. Whenever the Union has decided to donate anything of value it has with rare exception been sent to the PSLA food bank. Each year, for as long as I can remember, the Union has also donated $1000 to the PSLA food bank in the early fall and another $1000 during the holiday season. Recently we began donating a smaller amount ($500) to each of the food banks in Port Angeles, Sequim, and Port Townsend.

The PSLA also provides a myriad of other services. Most notably, PSLA operates a Community Fund where local unions contribute money to a dedicated fund to help their own union members who happen to be down on their luck. PLSA employs social workers with the skills and expertise needed to provide financial counseling and allocation of a small amount of financial assistance to pay bills such as light and water. PSLA social workers have contacts within city agencies and can often delay the termination of utilities.

While serving in Union office I’ve learned of many sad circumstances where members were in need of financial assistance. If a call came in asking for help I’ve had to inform the caller that I’m not authorized to give away Union funds. All checks that I sign are either authorized by our bylaws, or have been approved by a motion of the executive board that was confirmed by our membership.

I don’t have a slush fund to spend at whim nor do I have the expertise of a social worker to decide where and when it would be appropriate. An opportunity recently arose to resolve this dilemma with demise of the Local 587 Support Group. The Local 587 Retirees Chapter and Support Group (formerly the Ladies Auxiliary) have long been funded with proceeds from vending machines located throughout King County Metro. With the demise of the Local 587 Support Group it was proposed and tentatively agreed that funds previously earmarked for the Local 587 Support Group will now be directed to the PSLA.

A tentative agreement to that effect can be found in Article 3, Section 11 of the 2010–2013 Tentative Agreement (TA) Book. PSLA will receive 15% of funds allocated to the ATU Local 587 Community Fund as a service fee and to fund the PSLA food bank which serves anyone in need. Social workers at PSLA will be making all decisions regarding which members are to be provided financial assistance and which are not. Your Union Officers will have some say in setting initial policies regarding financial assistance but will take no part in decision making regarding a particular member nor...
Executive Board Report
November 23, 2010

At the November 23rd Executive Board meeting, the following business was conducted:

Motion by Michael Moore: To select Judy Young to fill the open Executive Board position vacated by Randy Stevenson.

Motion by Michael Shea: To select Chuck Miller to fill the open Executive Board position for Rail.

Motion by Neal Safrin: To donate up to $500 to the King County Labor Chorus.  

Motion by Paul Neil: To retain Herman Lindsey to do the 2011 annual audit at a cost not to exceed $9,500.

Motion by Ray Mason: To donate $300 for the annual King County Labor Council.  

Motion by Ray Mason: To set the COPE incentive budget for 2011 at $40,000.

Motion by Rick Sepolten: That ATU Local 587 spend up to $2,500 for the 2011 COPE Lobby Day.

Motion by Paul Neil made prior to the November meeting:

The Executive Board was contacted and approved the list of locations and times for polling as well as teller shifts for the vote on 11/18/2010.

At the November cycle of membership meetings, no motions were acted upon.

The following members were November pot draw winners: Craig Anderson, charter meeting, Michael Marti, morning meeting, Alice Lane, JTA meeting, Robert E. Lee, Clallam County meeting and Anthony Engrisse at the afternoon meeting. The rolling pot draw of $550 at Clallam was lost by Susan Baxter. Next month it will be $575.

Membership Meetings:
Tentative Agenda

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

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

WEDNESDAY MEETING
Wednesday, December 8, 2010
3:30 p.m.
The Labor Temple, Hall #6
2800 1st Ave, Seattle, WA

Among Topics to be Discussed:
• Grievance and Arbitration Update
• King County Metro Negotiations
• Jefferson County Negotiations
• Unfinished Business

At the November 23rd Executive Board meeting, the following business was conducted:

Motion by Ray Mason: To donate $500 for the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration Committee.

Motion by Ray Mason: To set the COPE incentive budget for 2011 at $40,000.

Motion by Rick Sepolten: That ATU Local 587 spend up to $2,500 for the 2011 COPE Lobby Day.

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December Labor History Calendar

Submitted by Bill Clifford

1 Dec 1867 — WTO Day Two: World Trade Organization delegates in Seattle unable to meet on Nov 30 because of protests, attempt to meet again.

4 Dec 1867 — US: Grange is organized to protect farmers’ interests.

1998 — Hugo Chavez elected president of Venezuela on a platform of fighting corruption and improving the lot of poor Venezuelans through literacy campaigns, rural development and expansion of public health services.

8 Dec 1866 — American Federation of Labor founded.

9 Dec 1869 — Knights of Labor founded in Philadelphia, as a secret society open to all members of the producing classes except “parasites” including stockbrokers, gamblers, & lawyers.


13 Dec 1971 — Poland: General Jaruzelski imposes martial law for the next three years to suppress & destroy the 10-million strong Solidarnosc trade union. Workers’ movement, during which at least 10,000 activists are jailed. Dec 13 is now “Solidarity Day.”

14 Dec 1970 — Poland — Strikers begin in Gdansk, spread to Gdynia, Szczecin, other industrial centers. Riots topple the Communist government, but a new military regime takes power in its place. This movement lasts until February 1971 when it is recuperated by the reformed government.

1992 — Poland: 300,000 coal workers strike against “Solidarity” government.

18 Dec 2005 — Movement for Socialism candidate and coca workers union leader Evo Morales elected president of Bolivia, its first indigenous leader since the Spanish conquest.

20 Dec 1905 — Russia: Start of 11-day General Strike against Tsarist regime.

21 Dec 1921 — US: Supreme Court rules labor injunctions & picketing unconstitutional.

2010 — Full Moon 12:13AM: Be careful out there.

23 Dec 2012 — Great benchmark in Mayan calendar: “The Long Count cycle will return to the symmetry of the beginning.” Yet another end of the world.

25 Dec 1867 — England: “Mutitude’s Idle Day”: in opposition to miserable puritanism & the increasing centralization of authority, a Canterbury crowd clouted all the shops the public have obeyed the order to open for Christmas. They proceed to serve free mulled wine, pelt the local byzantine minister, & open the city jail. When the mayor is vanquished and his officers seen off, the crowd is dispersed by & some billeted republican soldiers desert & join in the fun. (After the Glorious Revolution, the Brits had outlawed celebrating Christmas).

1776 — New World: During the American War for Independence, General George Washington violates the traditional Christmas truce, leading a secret crossing of the Delaware River with 5,400 troops, hoping to surprise a Hessian force celebrating Christmas at their winter quarters in Trenton, New Jersey. The unconventional attack comes after months of Hessian feats for Washington’s army, the loss of New York City and of other strategic points in the state. At about 11 at night on Christmas, his army begins crossing the half-frozen river at three locations. 2,400 soldiers brave the freezing temperature, rain, & icy river, & reach the New Jersey side of the Delaware before dawn. The two divisions (some 3,000 men & important artillery) fail to reach the meeting point by the time of the attack. At approximately 8AM of December 26, his remaining forces, separated into two columns, reaches the outskirts of Trenton & descends on the unsuspecting Hessian. Trenton’s 1,000 Hessian defenders are groggy from the previous evening’s festivities & after months of decisive British victories throughout New York, underestimate the Patriot threat.

1910 — A dynamite bomb goes off at the Aljuneyn Ironworks in Los Angeles, where a bitter strike is in progress.

26 Dec 2010 — S Nicholas, Operator #122530 out of North Base, issued a 30-day suspension with termination to follow. Even though his route is known for an inaccessible schedule, Nicholas was appreciated for cheerfully pulling the all-nighter on holidays. In recent years management has tried to cut the “fat” from his schedule but worsening traffic and a growing population only created more OT.

Although well past retirement age, Nicholas signed up with this full-time schedule. Not known for his good eating habits (mostly sugar plums, milk and cookies) he was placed second in bronze level of Healthy Incentives. Their lifestyle coaches harassed him about his diet, smoking habit (always a pipe), sleep patterns, seat belt use (none) and considerable girth. In fact, he fits in only one style of coach, known as “the sligh,” one of the oldest vehicles in the fleet, the sligh lacks modern fly-by-wire controls and advanced mechanics but it is famous for its maneuverability, reliability and climbing power.

Nicholas was dogged by complaints about passing up “bad” crowds. Management put him on ESAP, assigning service auditors to secretly observe his performance. Nicholas’ latest round of trouble began with the service auditors’ reports. They noticed that he failed to block the wheels of his coach, that he displayed no destination signage and that his uniform was dirty with soot. The ESAP reports also say he was not following the ADA Stop Announcement script.

“most of the Operator’s stops were announced with an unintelligible, ‘Ho ho ho.’”

Despite millions of commendations, decades of service plus perfect attendance and accident records, management argues the discipline does not violate the Labor Agreement and is properly issued.

30 Dec 1998 — In support of the struggle against apartheid, ATU 587 President Dan Livinelle sends offer of support to the Transport and General Workers’ Union in Durban, Republic of South Africa.

Due to space constraints in last month’s issue of News Review, the rest of November’s Labor History is below as promised.

22 November 1999 — Organized by the ILGWU, 20,000 shirtwaist makers, mostly women & children, stage the first garment workers strike. Many picketers are beaten or fired. A judge tells arrested pickets, “You are on strike against God.” In the end, the garment workers win a pay raise and a work reduction to 52 hours of work per week.

23 November 1170[BC] — Egypt: First recorded strike—by laborers working on a pyramid—for better working conditions & pay. As Anna Louise Strong (see Nov 24) wrote: “They say the Pharaohs built the pyramids. Do you think one Pharaoh dropped one bead of sweat? We built the pyramids for the Pharaohs & we’re building them for you yet.”

24 November 1885 — Anna Louise Strong born in Seattle, Washington. Strong became editor of the Seattle Union Record when Harry Ault was arrested during the Seattle General Strike in February, 1919. She was elected to the Seattle School Board and joined the Chinese Communists during their long fight against the Japanese and Chinese warlords prior to World War Two.

25 November 1946 — St. Paul teachers, led by the local of women teachers, walked out of their classrooms in the first organized teachers’ strike in U.S. history. The 1,165 teachers and principals (they were represented by the union as well) stayed out until Dec 27 in what they called the “strike for better schools.” The walkout drew national attention to the plight of public schools, low teacher pay and difficult working conditions. The teachers won a number of reforms that improved the operation and governance of the schools.

1952 — George Meany becomes president of the American Federation of Labor following the death four days earlier of William Green

27 November 1898 — Silas Cool kills Metro driver Mark McLaughlin. McLaughlin was shot & killed at the wheel. His bus plunged off the Aurora Bridge, killing one passenger & injuring 33 riders.

29 November 1985 — South Africa: 34 black unions unite to form 500,000 member Congress of South African Trade Unions, in Durban. ATU 587 supported COSATU.

30 November 1999 — US: WTO (World Trade Organization) meets in Seattle, Washington amid massive ongoing protest. The WTO meeting broke down over opposition to proposed agricultural rules that threatened the economics of developing countries. President Clinton’s weak and tardy support for the overworked Seattle police may have provided cover for US agricultural interests that were also opposed to the new rules.

Proud To Be ATU
180,000 Strong
Don’t scapegoat bus drivers for a national transit-funding crisis

By: Nate Chappelle

Frankly, the average full-time driver would rather forgo overtime, because eight hours with no guaranteed breaks is a killer. The $58,000 they receive barely pays a mortgage these days. But almost half the driving force is 12 hours, with only 20 minutes guaranteed per day. And many live in poverty. If the County continues its takeaways, and speedup in the form of disappearing rest breaks, Metro will not be able to retain a stable workforce and public transit will deteriorate.

Like the rest of the public, transit workers want a quality public system that serves all people. Seattle and King County need more service, as anyone can see from our traffic-jammed roads—and it needs to be affordable, especially in hard times. The solution to Metro’s shortfall doesn’t rest in attacking transit workers, or in slashing bus service. The County needs to work collaboratively with the employees who have front line knowledge on how Metro can save money. Officials also need to push state and federal officials for stable funding, including a fix of the federal transportation funding formula.

Some service would be found by deferring projects such as the First Hill Street Car; at $150 million it duplicates existing service. Trim many of the $100 million+ and many of which make $100,000-plus annually.

In 1992, under almost the exact same union contract, Metro won top honors as the best bus agency in the U.S. The front line ranks haven’t changed that much. What have changed are the County’s takeover of Metro, and the decimation of stable funding sources. It is in the interest of the public and transit workers to unite and demand real solutions from transit managers and elected officials—so that Metro and public transit can survive and thrive as transit needs grow.

By: Nate Chappelle, 32-year Metro driver, elected as executive board representative from rail operations, and Everett Stewart, part-time Metro driver, former Galion, Ohio City Councilmember and Municipal Civil Service Commissioner

A Rail Operator’s Viewpoint

Michael Cooper, Rail Operator, 20062, Shop Steward

W ith the current recruitment list for rail operators about to expire and Sound Transit’s procurement need, more operators now and in the future, it’s important to know some of the issues specifically facing rail operators. We recognize there is not an absolute division between the needs of bus drivers and rail operators, as some in the right lane, the rights facing rail operators are in large part the same issues concerning bus drivers, e.g., issues dealing with seniority, discipline, breaks and recovery time. We also recognize there is a 40-year history of negotiations between Metro and Local 586, and, with the addition of Link light rail, we now have a dual purpose and new opportunities. Most bus drivers are still not familiar with rail operations, or the unique variety of technical skills and procedures used when operating a light rail vehicle.

The eight to nine week course for the train operator is intense and for most drivers it is more difficult if you don’t put in the extra time outside the classroom to study the coursework. The most recent rail class graduated just one of the original five invited. There are usually a variety of reasons why some people continue on in the program and others don’t finish the program. The most obvious discovery that most drivers learn the safety rules and procedures is very black and white. The work rules and train orders are very specific for operating the trains safely. It requires you to do the same maneuver the same way every time. I’ve heard some bus drivers (not anyone at Metro) say they have on occasion gotten to their terminal and didn’t remember going along the right part of their route. There is little likelihood that will happen while operating a train, as your attention is required at all times. While driving a bus is instinctive and intuitive, operating a train is not instinctive, nor intuitive, it is learned over time. These trains are not at all like the old waterfront street cars we once operated. We’ve all grown up driving cars and so we are familiar with that form of transportation. So as a bus driver, if you don’t set up a bus just right for a turn you may drive over a curve and keep going, which you would most likely get away with it. A mistake while operating a train will most likely be recorded or seen live in the Link control center. A communications center that is necessarily more formal and proper than the coordinator’s center on the busside.

Although, as a bus driver, there is some sense of anonymity even though there may be a bus full of passengers, your every move as a rail operator is subject to scrutiny. Now imagine the kind of pressure you would feel if as a bus driver you ran a stop sign and were placed on one year probation as a first offense. Our relationship with Sound Transit is evolving and many bus drivers have found new promotional opportunities here. But in fact for those of us hired as rail operators, it has been the union’s supervisor representative that has made promotional opportunities difficult. Only recently are there supervisor positions available for interested rail operators to compete along with bus side supervisors.

We have very experienced former bus drivers who jumped through hoops to qualify for rail operator positions, and, similarly, we have some good rail supervisors (former bus supervisors). I believe some supervisors had a bus side mentality that was initially a barrier to constructive feedback and with overall the right set of eyes, cars, and pedestrians on the tracks, trains and buses using the same tunnel at the same time and the effect one train problem has on the whole system, it forces the operators and Link Control Center to work even harder as a team. In addition, operating a train is very fatiguing, especially when you don’t get sufficient breaks at the Pine Street end of the line (0-15 minutes), and a very short break (10-20 minutes) at the airport, if you are on schedule.

Finally, as a result of Rail Operator Chuck Miller’s initiative to get the Union to change the current by-laws to reflect the development of rail, we will soon have a rail executive board representative for all rail operations. The membership has acknowledged this important change as it moves us closer to have our collective voices heard here at rail by our Union representatives, Metro and Sound Transit. Michael Cooper, Rail Operator, 20062, Shop Steward, Fall Shake-up
Recently attended Puget Sound Sage’s ‘Vision for Justice’ dinner. The honorees for this year were Ecolab, the first private contractor to join the city’s residential retrofit program, they signed up with Laborers Local 242, the Casa Latina’s Worker Defense Committee that’s composed largely of volunteers who have restored over $85,000 in unpaid wages back to employees in 2010, and the bus 42 campaign that worked to restore the route 42 with some success.

The keynote speaker was Attorney Richard A. Marcantonio, a managing Attorney for Public Advocates Inc. (http://www.publicadvocates.org). Public Advocates Inc. is a nonprofit law firm that fights poverty and racial discrimination by collaborating with grassroots organizations, and using both the media and litigation to advocate for fair government policies, equal educational opportunities, affordable housing, and transit equity for all. By mobilizing communities that were being marginalized due to their low income and status, the organization has helped them to recognize and use their collective power to shape public policy.

Mr. Marcantonio has fought to restore transit service to low-income riders in the California. He is co-counsel on Darensburg v. Metropolitan Transportation Commission on the behalf of citizens who’s bus service has been cut to inadequate funding. One of the reasons for the cuts in their bus service was that their light rail system was sucking up all the money. What I heard at this event confirms what I believe is happening locally. Here then are some quotes from Mr. Marcantonio combined with a few observations. “When buses run late, people lose their jobs.” When money is spent predominantly on transit infrastructure, the people lose. Agencies must keep operating their existing service. “Working families are connected to job opportunities.” If you fund T & D, you create 40% more jobs than when those funds go to Capitol investment alone. “BART tore the Oakland community apart.” Rail is a huge investment that creates fewer jobs than Transit. “Are all communities sharing equally in their transportation investments?” A smaller investment in Transit yields more long-term jobs and creates a connected community. “Buses are factories on wheels. Let’s organize them.” Light Rail is passing up potential passengers because there are too few stops, and because of a silent policy that keeps the ‘undesirables’ off of those precious trains.

Thank you to Sage and all the participants. In Solidarity, Andrew Jeromsky

Puget Sound Sage’s ‘Vision for Justice’ dinner

By Andrew Jeromsky, Executive Board Officer

Go for the gold.. never NEVER give up!

Brother Dan Boetcher, SB maintenance

Not to Worry

By Bob Rothwell / Retiree

Not to Worry
Letters to the Editor...

What’s not seen

Dear Paul,

I’m upset about what I see (and more so about what I don’t see) in the T/A. I understand we have to take one kick in the head — that being no COLA next year. So far all of the county unions except the sheriff’s deputies have agreed to the same. If everyone else is taking that I guess I can too. The bus drivers are taking a second kick in the head — the fact that our work has been ruined. At the recent shakeup I lost at least three years of seniority from the standpoint of the quality of work that was available to me to pick. Other drivers have estimated that they lost six years.

I’m not sure you and the rest of the Union’s leadership understand the level of resentment about this that exists in the bullpen. Maybe you do and you’re moving Heaven and earth to help us. If so you’re not communicating that to me. What do we have, cards that we can put in the schedule racks? And you want us to fill out OSFR’s? Remember that if I write an OSFR on a route (like you’ll receive in the mail from me tomorrow) I know damn good and well that I’m telling Management something that they already know. In the space of six months our work has gone straight into the toilet. Very little of what I’m hearing from the Union deals with anything other than money. Well, money isn’t everything! I keep hearing from the Union that schedules aren’t a contradiction. I think this is a cheap dodge that is being used to avoid dealing with the problem.

Sorry if I offending you but I think this needs to be said.

Sincerely,
Larry Moore

Op-Op

In the November issue of the News Review a letter by me which mistakenly attributes articles presenting divergent perspectives about freedom of religious expression (with a topical transit tie-in) to one frequent newsletter contributor. I understand we have to have valid point that could have been made was lost.

In your response, you cited this admittedly inaccurate letter of mine “as well as submissions on his blog” as cause to wonder if I take the same amount of care and skepticism to both Clinton DeVoss and Andrew Jeromsky.

These are two gentlemen whose writing, work for the union, and dedication to the profession I admire greatly, and it was never my intent to malign either one — merely to point out what I perceived was a contradiction in ideologies. While that contradiction does exist in general terms (we are a diverse union), I do not exist as an implied hypocrisy expressed by one individual in this instance.

In my defense (if indeed I deserve one for this particular blemish move), I spoke with the Recording Secretary prior to publication. He asked me to re-write the letter without the name of the individual whom I thought had authored both articles. He did not mention my error prior to publishing the letter as well as both Board Officers’ responses — neither of which pulled any punches in mentioning ME by name. Had the Recording Secretary simply picked up the phone and pointed out my error, I would have smacked my forehead, said “oh, crap!” or so much, and could have re-written a piece that made some valid observations about contradictory views on freedom of religious expression in a transit context.

Not only did I unintentionally offend two colleagues whom I admire, but any valid point that could have been written by two different people — Board Officers Clinton DeVoss and Andrew Jeromsky.

In a late night flurry of yit, TV, dog, cats, daughter and a flurry of online multi-tasking I impulsively fired off a letter to Recording Secretary Brian Sherlock to share my thoughts.

Regrettably, I mistakenly confused two different perspectives from two different individuals for contradiction from one author. This moment of adult onset autism on my part has led to a misunderstanding which I intend to now attempt to correct by offering my full and unqualified apology to both Clinton DeVoss and Andrew Jeromsky.

Meanwhile, I hope that both gentlemen will accept this my sincere apology and acknowledgement of my mistake of attribution in the November News Review: I accept their critiques as offered, and promise to try and do better.

Regards,
Jeff Welch
Central Base #13204

Union Member vs Union Member... Who Wins?

By Verita Alexander, Shop Steward

So how should you handle another co-worker who seemingly makes your job more difficult? You have many options.

While attending to shop steward duties I stumbled upon two operators who were filing paperwork against each other. Even the base chief felt that it was something that two adults should be able to work out. Sadly, our union has been seeing too way too much of this lately.

Let’s be honest, none of us are perfect. Which would you prefer? A) Your chief sitting you down and giving you a write up for a stop sign you ran in the base yard or B) a co-worker making you aware of a stop sign just in case you didn’t realize it was there. Doing things like this are a courtesy, no different than a Supervisor walking up to you and informing you of policy without paperwork being written. He/she doesn’t have to do this. And recently management has instructed supervisors to forego this courtesy and write up everything that is seen.

So how should you handle another co-worker who seemingly makes your job more difficult? You have many options. Whether it is someone in your classification or not (Operator vs Supervisor, VM vs Operator, Operator vs Operator, etc) it is very beneficial to build relationships with your fellow union members. If you have an issue with another 587 member and walking away is not a satisfying solution, please consider having a shop steward look over the situation with you. This is meant for the smaller, less severe instances such as a road relief leaving the “B” position, personality clashes between co-workers, gossip, etc. It can be a little easier to have a shop steward act as mediator rather than a base chief. Running to management and filing paperwork against a fellow union member should be a last resort.

Thanks for reading,
Verita Alexander
Atlantic Base Shop Steward
Reactions to the Task Force

(Just say NO to privatization)

Andrew A. Jeromsky
Executive Board Officer

The Regional Transit Task Force was formed in February 2010 “to consider a policy framework for the potential future growth and, if necessary, contraction of King County’s transit system”. Here is my synopsis of its findings and recommendations.

“In 2009 Metro carried approximately 112 million riders...Metro’s ridership has grown by roughly 2.3 percent per year in recent years (2001–2008), the highest growth rate among U.S. metropolitan transit agencies...For each year between 2000 and 2009, 93 percent or 94 percent of riders surveyed described themselves as either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’ with Metro’s services...”

“Metro is too important to fail.”

“Metro’s primary source of revenue (sales tax), the size of likely service reductions for transit service are needed given the dramatic fluctuations in revenues for transit service are needed...”

“The task force...”

“...recommendations...”

“...calls for aggressive expansion of local and regional transit, with between 80 percent and 100 percent increases in bus transit, plus 68 new miles of light rail.”

This is not worded strongly enough for me. It talks about explanations and exploration, leaving too much room for interpretation and prevarication.

“Sound Transit updated its long-term revenue forecasts in September 2010, predicting that funding levels for Sound Transit 2 will be down by 25 percent, or $3.9 billion.”

“The task force recommendations do not directly address the transit funding issue or all the money that’s going into Light Rail, and the resultant threat of privatization posed by Sound Transit.”

The Task force recommended that it is no longer possible to complete the entire Sound Transit 2 program within 15 years Voters had approved the $18 billion Sound Transit 2...”

“Even though the State Supreme Court struck down I-695, legislators were afraid they’d be voted out of office, so they implemented $30 tabs instead of reducing the MVET to a reasonable level. We’re still facing the repercussions of that decision.”

“...three characteristics for a successful long-term revenue strategy:...”

“Diversity of revenue sources...”

“The County Council has passed the buck about transit funding onto the task force, and the task force is sending it back to the council without a specific answer.”

Both bodies are refusing to just come out and say what needs to be done. To keep METRO SOLVENT, WE EITHER NEED TO START A NEW MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE TAX, OR STOP EXPANDING LIGHT RAIL, OR DO BOTH.

The buck stops here.

Seattle Holiday Lights Tour

Presented by the Metro Employees Historic Vehicle Association - MEHVA

Saturday, December 18, 2010

Departs from Central/Atlantic Base, 6th Avenue S. & S. Royal Brougham Wy at 7:00 PM

All King County/Metro Transit employees, their families and friends are invited on a special Seattle Holiday Lights Tour. Your personal guide will be Santa Claus, who will be taking time out of his busy schedule at the North Pole to escort us on a 3-hour tour of the best holiday lights displays in Seattle. Our restored fleet of historic buses from Seattle and King County’s past will transport you there as if you were riding in Santa’s sleigh.

Fares are $5 everyone, children 5 and under are free.

ORCA, METRO TRANSFERS, TICKETS OR PASSES ARE NOT ACCEPTED. PLEASE, NO FOOD OR BEVERAGES ONBOARD THE HISTORIC BUSES.
Hey Shop Steward

Rick Sepolen 101.

At one time or another the members we represent will believe that the agency has treated them unfairly. Most members will discuss this “dight” with a person in authority and be satisfied with the answer they receive. Then there are those who need to be reassured by a shop steward and will approach — Horrors! — you to discuss their situation. Being the trustee of a steward that you are, you will pull out the agreement and review the pertinent sections of the contract in question with them. The two of you will then decide whether or not to file a grievance. If it is a yes, having satisfied their concerns the birds will break out into song, the sun will... You know the rest.

Then we have those that are certain despite everything they have been shown or told continue to believe that a wrong must be righted. So what do you do?

Remember, every member has the right to file a grievance. They do not need your permission or that of a union officer to do so. They also do not need a signature from a union representative to on the grievance form. They do need you to help them fill out the form using those contract articles that closely relate to the issue at hand.

After completing this form let them know what they will need to present to management to demonstrate that this wrong should be righted. Or you can, have them call the Union office for advice.

As an experienced Union officer I will, of course, take it upon myself to deflect it back to you as quickly as I can. Not really. I will discuss their grievance with them, do some research, review any notes you may have provided and then let the member know my opinion. I will also contact you to keep you abreast of what is happening. If the member decides to continue he/she has the right to do so. Upon receiving the First-Step hearing summary, I will review the information presented and decide whether to continue the grievance on to the next step.

If you are uncomfortable with your knowledge of the contract try this: When you are in the bullpen and a discussion breaks out about contract language don’t bother joining in. Just listen to the arguments presented. Then when you get a free moment, look up the area in the contract that deals with the matter at hand. If you have questions about what you read please call an officer.

Do this a few times and you will be surprised at how quickly your knowledge of the contract will grow. Which means I won’t have to hear, “Hey, Vice President!!!” that often. See, always one step ahead.

As you can see, Hey steward ain’t too bad after all.

So what do you do?

For those stewards who have not been trained in the fine art of contract interpretation, I hope to schedule a two-day training session shortly after the first of next year. In the meantime here are a few suggestions for you:

- Whenever a hearing or sit with a member or visiting her/his supervisor remember to take notes. These notes may be very helpful to them in the future. Your chief steward should have copies of the Union note form or you can call us at the union office (206-448-8588) to have copies sent out to you.

- If you feel a meeting is spiraling out of control or you do not know what to say, you could mention you are taking notes and ask if they would like to have a break in the proceedings (your right as a union rep) and call the union office for advice.

- Remember, every member has a right to union rep in attendance. While we most certainly would like them to do so, it is not a requirement. Any employee may accompany a member into a meeting as a witness. A grievance hearing, however, is another thing and unless a member has waived his/her right to union representation a shop steward or union officer will attend.

- I hope this lends a bit of comfort and support and contributes to reducing the fear factor when you hear a cry for a shop steward.
As the Year Ends

The contract is done; winter and the Holidays are here. You cannot say it at Metro, so I will say it for you: MERRY CHRISTMAS!

It is the time of year to give gifts, so once again we have the undesired certificates AWARDS for worst base and worst write-ups of the year. This year, the second annual awards are based on a real year and not a few months. If you want a copy, you can go to the Union's web site and download them (atu587.com).

Although E.M. improved slightly, I must say that unlike charges caused way too many investigations. The chief story with Metro against one another has infected 587 Union members at things can only improve.

But hey, lawyers need a job, too. On a positive note, Mo is amazing! But, hey, lawyers need a job, too. On a positive note, Mo is amazing! But, hey, lawyers need a job, too. On a positive note, Mo is amazing! But, hey, lawyers need a job, too. On a positive note, Mo is amazing!

I happened to be sitting at home watching the news when there before my eyes was my chief standing in the doorway of his Metro office with his white shop coat on twirl the noose for the news camera and said, "I don't know what the big deal is...nobody got hurt!" For some reason that chief was gone for awhile after his news interview, the mechanic received a sizeable settlement along with therapy. However, the chief continued to wreak havoc for several more years.

What's Going On!?!?!

Lots going on, lots of decisions due, so as of now this is accurate:

- 18 grievances & 8 arbitrations.
- As I used this word for Union members, I will apply it to chiefs also, stupid: Two Grievances! One member written up for being 5 minutes late based on a clock that was 5 minutes fast! The second member was given a U/A because of the lack of paperwork. He worked in the proper documents the next time, but Metro lost one and issued another U.A.
- Mr. Marcel is E.M.'s involved in his 3rd or 4th investigation he threatens, for harassment by your Union & the Federal Government. (He will need Xena the "warrior princess" to help on this one.)
- James Smith (ESW) termination—Mr. Smith lost his license and turned himself into Metro as per the law and policies and was promptly terminated (thanks for being honest). Unlike other classifications that have some non-driving positions, there is, according to Metro, no place for him to go until his license is restored. I argued, unsuccessfully, in the contract negotiations for two non-driving positions for this type of situation. While Metro has made accommodations in the past, they were not willing to help in this instance. Is it strange that you get a second chance for drug abuse, but not for a C.D.L. loss?
- Probationary terminations! If you are a new Employee and you want to become a permanent Employee (and you are not a relative) you need to follow all the Metro rules to the letter!!! Breaks & start times to the minute; NO cell phone use; don't take time off. If Metro decides you do not have the "right stuff" you have no recourse except through litigation outside of Metro. I will be happy to send you some guidelines if you are in doubt.
- My apologies as last month as I was going to print The Fantasy World of Metro Management. The article was a little too angry and I was advised to put it on a shelf for awhile and let it cool off a bit.

Retirements: Good luck and glad you made it! Dave Hayward (aka Haywire) & Brian Baxter (aka Yak Yak).

Funerals We have lost too many good people lately…try and keep in mind that death has a pretty good success rate and be a little more appreciative and patient with people who rub you the wrong way.

The Fantasy Command

December 2010

Business as Usual or Another Day in the City

It was a cold, rainy day on September 19th as I arrived at the syndicate's compound. The beads of water made the razor wire glisten. I banged on the door opened. Two large enforcers emerged from the shadows. I had run into them before, Wally & Larry were their names. Their job was to keep people suffer...or disappear altogether...few were ever seen again. Their motto: "Don't take it personal, it's just business." I could tell by lookin' at them that they were just hoping I would do something... Crazy. I could tell they were packin' heat. I told them I didn't have a gun but of course they didn't believe me. "Hey be careful...this is my favorite suit! It cost a thousand bucks!" "The last person that messed with my suit suffered. But the guy with duck was not here to help this time. I was escorted to the 4th floor, the penthouse level. It was really nice, the concrete floor...nothing...concrete...I was asked again to state my business... Again I told them I was there to see the "Snake." The Snake arrived escorted by his two henchmen. (For whatever reason, the Snake called one "H" and the other "R." I never asked why.) The Snake looked at me, "I'm the Snake...I'm the Snake..." He motioned to H or R to take me up. "Let me talk to him alone." He said, "I knew you'd come!" I said, "Take the cuffs off!" The Snake nodded and the cuffs were removed. I said, "Let me talk to him alone." He said, "Then shoot me!" He paused. "If there is no cleanup crew had not left for the day, I would." he murmured. The Zing and I spoke quietly. He said, "The last guy that tried to help me is gone now. They told me continued on page 11
November 2010 Membership Meeting Report

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving Holiday! I hope everyone had something’s to be grateful for, I know I did. We have now signed a 10 year lease for our current office. We will be receiving 10 months of FREE rent next year as well as $100,000.00 in tenant improvements, which means we get new carpets, a paint job as well as some remodeling and the landlord pays for it. The whole process has taken about a year.

First step was to hire a Real Estate agent to work on our behalf. Next step was to decide whether to rent or buy. We looked a buying first since that is the most time consuming. We applied for a loan to see how much we could borrow and we also toured about a dozen properties between the ship canal and Spokane St. From this group we narrowed it down to 4 properties to take a second look at. Bottom line was the properties we could afford to buy right now were dumps and were basically tear downs.

Once we decided that buying was not an option we concentrated on leasing. We toured several build- ings in the area and took bids from 3 properties. At this point I thought we would end up moving to another building in the lower Queen Anne area but our current landlord finally broke down and gave us an offer we could not refuse.

I want to thank the members of the relocation committee (Executive Board members Michael Moore and Dan Thorne) as well as Rob Nielsen our agent who really listened to what our needs were and negotiated a very good lease for us.

Below is the report I read at the November cycle of membership meetings:

Membership Meeting Report:

In the month of October 2010, we reported 40 new members to the ATU International. 35 are employed at METRO/King County, 4 at First Transit and 1 at Seattle Personal Transit (SPT). This brings us our total active membership to 4189. This is an increase of 9 members compared this time last year when we had 4130 active members.

Bills: This October was a 2 paycheck month while last October was a 3 paycheck month so most financial figures are lower when comparing year to year. All financial figures are subject to the review of the Executive Board. In October total income was $248,044.22 which is a decrease of 79,116.07 or 27.6% compared to last October.

Per Capita payments totaled $56,689.30 for the month of October which is an increase of $1,020.80 over the same period last year. Other bills for payroll, rent, legal, etc totaled $186,465.83 which is a decrease of 653,912.43 or 22.4% over the previous October. This amounts to a surplus of $4,889.09 for the month compared to a surplus of $46,113.53 for October 2009.

My activities for the month:

• Still proceeding with finding new office space. We are almost ready to sign a new lease with our current landlord for a 30 year lease.
• KC Metro negotiations are for the most part complete and I will be recommending a “Yes” vote.

President’s Report, continued

will we interfere in the decisions of social workers at PSLA. How soon financial counseling and/or funds will be available will be announced by our financial sec- retary at a later date.

I have long believed that as an organization Local 587 has been remiss in not dedicating a larger portion of our revenue for charitable purpose. We currently receive a little over 3 million dollars in annual revenue and only donate $3,500 to area food banks (we also dedicate a small amount of money to community events); that’s approximately 0.001 of our revenue. I think it’s time we make charitable giving a separate line item in our budget and will be asking our budget committee, executive board, and membership to consider how much to give and where to allocate those funds when drafting and adopting the 2011 budget.

Happy Holidays In solidarity,
Paul J. Bachtel
President / Business Representative

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Finally, we get a solution! King County would like you to know that many months of working on the schedules didn’t work. The problem is that the Council had no idea what kind of mess they would create. The problem is obvious and difficult to get into contract language: The problem is the obvious and difficult to get into contract language: Transit planning should be left to transit planners. In their defense, I believe that the Council had no idea what kind of mess they would create.

The software vendor Hastus had a far larger role in shaping the audit results than anyone truly familiar with making our system work. The Council got the impression that a magic wand — make that a computer joy stick — could be waved and make the revenue shortfall go away. Just a little minor tweak here and there could allow them to avoid service cuts and the political fallout that might shorten their careers in office. The little problem is that Seattle is the most educated city in our country. People here can actually read schedules and their complaints had driven the previous shape of our service by demanding that the schedules actually mean something. The Council target of having up to 10% of routes start late (yes, you read that right — 10% start late) will not meet the standards of our community, whose jobs will be on the line if they’re late up to 10% of the time.

If one of our members was late that often, the Council and Executive would not reverse their termination by insisting that being on time 90% of the time is perfectly acceptable in transit. I hope that the 30,000 cards we handed out so far, in the opening salvo of our efforts to assist the public in getting good transit will not give them the uncomfortable feeling that they need to get out of the way of our excellent group of schedulers and planners. Ignoring their advice has never worked, is not working, and will be reversed.

Sound Transit

I’ve been curious for quite some time about the appearance of an unhappy marriage between Sound Transit and their sub-contractor KC Metro. Bad blood and a long series of exceedingly poor managerial decisions have previously defied explanation. As we’ve come to know their board members and managers, some have been good to deal with and reassuring about their intent. They led me to suspect that the fly in the ointment had flown out of the King Street Center. However, after several years of examining this question, I’ve come to believe that, although we’ve failed to find a candidate for sainthood in the Ivory Tower, Sound Transit is being managed by a group with almost no rail experience and, perhaps, a seriously Freudian case of, excuse me, “Service Package Envy.” I’ll leave you with just one example: can you imagine a single business school on this planet, or any other, who would suggest having two managers doing each of the same top operational jobs? I don’t mean teams working cooperatively, to prevent the kind of stupid decisions that have occurred so often; I mean two people doing exactly the same job, stumbling over each other, working every bit as well as the fitting of two bodies into one chair has ever worked for business purposes. I want to reassure you that I would never even allude to the only good reason for two people occupying one chair. But that just could be what results from this kind of Sound Transit management.

On a happier note, from the bottom of my heart, I wish you all a very happy holiday season. I can think of no one who deserves it more than you, our hard-working and delightful brothers and sisters.
A Report From The ATU International Convention 2010

By Linda Anderson, Executive Board

I attended the ATU International Convention at the end of September, and took notes. There were several highlights for me. Here are two of them.

The first is a sort of “state of the union” speech given by the outgoing International President, Ron Heinzman. Mr. Heinzman stressed that privatization efforts are under way in various states, where state legislators and transit boards are being lobbied to privatize transit nationwide. The ATU International wants to tell the locals to notify them the minute there are such efforts, in order to counter them aggressively.

Mr. Heinzman also stressed that if the Republicans take control of Congress, under John Boehner, there will be no funding for mass transit. Obama and the Democrats have passed some bills for transit even in these tight economic times. He talked about raids on ATU locals by the Teamsters. After a long fight, the ATU International has secured an agreement with the Teamsters to stop the raids. Richard Trumka, head of the AFL-CIO helped ATU in this effort. If the Teamsters do not abide by this agreement, ATU will not sit idly by. We will fight back—it’s a two way street. Ron Heinzman stressed that we need to make sure that workers know that what we are offering and what we provide is better representation and follow-through for our members.

Another highlight for me was remarks that were made by Ed Wytkind, President of the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Dept.

Wytkind said that defeating McCain was important because McCain has been one of the biggest privatizers of all time. And if the Republicans take control, they will once again try to repeal our protections under 13C. Wytkind praised Obama for revising the debate about the importance of mass transit, and for the Recovery Act which directed billions to mass transit. He asserted that not one dime for transit would have come from Sarah Palin.

Wytkind pointed out that all the talk about big government versus small government obscures the real real choice: are we going to be a nation of builders, or a nation of borrowers? In the past we put together a transportation system second to none and it made our country number one. What happened since then? Since then we have been told to not do the hard work of making sure to invest in the future, just keep driving on our choked highways, let roads and transit deteriorate. We have been encouraged to deregulate, borrow, and consume, and as a result we have gone from the world’s biggest lender to biggest borrower, and let transit systems fall into crisis. Transit should be a growth industry! And when we don’t invest in transit, who gets hurt?—not the wealthy, with the biggest tax cuts and biggest garages. No, the people who get hurt are the tens of millions who built this country and ride transit to work.

Wytkind said it’s time to stand up and point finger at those who really got us into this economic ditch, and make this country a nation of builders again. It’s time to fight for operational funding for transit, and that when we tell people this they will support us. People do not support the Wall Street CEO bailouts, or outrageous oil profits, but they do understand building highways and transit. The people get it, but not Wash DC. People understand bus drivers need safety benefits, protection from privatization. We’re fighting for skilled workers and safe transit.

This rebuilding will take long term commitment—our parents and grandparents did it, we need to go forward and do it too. Obama said we will not rebuild the middle class if we do not rebuild the labor movement. Wytkind said, “Obama is willing to lose the election rather than with his soul. When’s the last time we had a president who did that?”

In closing, Wytkind encouraged us all to “stand and fight...to bring prosperity to all Americans not just those with wealth and power.”

So You Voted, Now What?

Submitted by Sara Franklin

O n Tuesday, November 2nd union members across the country, in every state voted by mail or at their polling station to elect candidates to serve in local governments, State Houses and the 112th Congress. The labor community from flight attendants, to school teachers, to transit workers did member to member education by volunteering to knock on doors and making calls to our union brothers and sisters on behalf of those candidates, who are pro-labor and will effectively legislate for working men and women. During this General election period I had the fortunate opportunity to participate in the 2010 WSLC Labor Neighbor Program which is a grassroots political action effort staffed by union members. My schedule consisted of doorbell from Bothell to Puyallup and phone banking in the evenings at a designated Union call center. In addition I did transit work site visits and speaking at Charter meetings of our sister ATU locals. I worked with members from other locals who were visited and worked tirelessly to GOTV (Get Out the Vote). It was a rewarding and exciting experience.

Washington State, we were successful in our efforts that initiatives I-1082 and I-1100/1105 did not pass. Our hard work and votes also secured the re-election and the new election of many pro-labor, pro-union and pro-transit candidates.

So what’s next? It’s very simple......

Stay Involved. If you have not been involved, now is your time. Exercising your right to vote is not meant to be the final solution to any election, but the start of a broader message that your voice has consequences.

We just don’t give our vote away.....

WE EXPECT RESULTS!

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

• Find out who your elected Representatives are in your Legislative and Congressional District and communicate with them regularly as you follow their progress representing working men and women. This information can be found at www.leg.wa.gov

• Get involved in your Legislative/Congressional District

• Attend the Martin Luther King Labor Council and ATU 587 Charter meetings that occur monthly

• Attend your local City or County Council meetings

• Sign-up to attend ATU 587 Lobby/Legislative Day in Olympia (to be announced)

• Read the ATU 587 “News Review” and visit the COPE webpage at www.atu587.com for regular updates and announcements.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO VOLUNTEERED AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO CARRIEMEYERS AND DON MEADOR OF LOCAL 843 BELLINGHAM!

Critical Incident Stress Management and the SAFE-R Model

One of the concepts the CISM Team learns from the training provided by the Union and Metro management, is the use of the SAFE-R model. S represents Stabilize. Stabilize the individual and the situation. A represents Acknowledge. Acknowledge that there is a crisis. Acknowledge that there is professional and confident help available. F represents Facilitate. Facilitate discussion in a one-on-one intervention. Facilitate problem solving. Facilitate a plan for the individual. E represents Encouragement. Encourage acceptance of the event. Encourage utilization of resources.

Encourage use of coping skills. And finally, R represents Recovery or Referral. The individual recovers from the event, or is referred to a higher level of intervention.

If you have had an upsetting incident, don’t hesitate to call the CISM Team. We care, and we can help.

The CISM Message Line is 206-263-3761.