The President’s Report
by Lance F. Norton

TIME OUT

The day before Thanksgiving Wednesday, November 21st, after thirty-three negotiation sessions Metro and the Union decided to call a time out. Much progress has been made over the past few months however, the Union has economic proposals that remain to be settled.

I was asked just before leaving if the Union wished to file for mediation and I told the Metro CORE Team I would let them know. Should the parties feel further talks would be fruitless we then notify PERC that both sides are at impasse. PERC then assigns a mediator to help try and resolve the issues. This process is required prior to arbitration. Right now I remain optimistic that after a short cooling-off period both sides can return to the table and resolve these outstanding issues.

On to our other contract negotiations. Executive Board Officer Joe Mangiameli and our stewards at Jefferson Transit have scheduled a contract ratification vote in Port Townsend Saturday Night December 1st. Tentative agreements on all issues have been reached. Your Full-time Officers will of course be attending the informational meeting and ratification vote.

SPT (Solid Ground) contract negotiations will begin in mid December. In closing I wish to thank all the members who have called the office, sent e-mails and those I’ve seen out at the worksites for your encouragement and support. My Best Wishes to you all for a Safe Holiday Season and a Healthy, Happy 2008.

Regards to all...
Be Safe....
Lance Norton
The following business was conducted:

- Motion by Paul Neil to recommend pursing the grievance of Nancy Lambert for the membership’s consideration for arbitration.

- Motion by Jeff Stambaugh to recommend pursing the grievance of Derek Harris for the membership’s consideration for arbitration.

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to pay for lunch and transportation of Nan Lambert for the membership’s consideration for arbitration.

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to approve the bylaw change to Article XII, Section 1, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 of the bylaws of Local 587.

At the November 2007 cycle of membership meetings the following business was addressed:

- The membership voted to approve the bylaw change to Article XII, Section 1, 6 & 12 of the bylaws of Local 587.

- The membership voted to approve the bylaw change to Article XII, Section 1, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 of the bylaws of Local 587.

- The following members were November pot draw winners: Stephanie Ponder at the Charter meeting, Jim Hermanson at the Morning meeting, Ken Minish at the JTA meeting, Barb Dixon at the CTS meeting. CTS rolling pot draw of $100.00 was lost by Linda Bell. Next month’s rolling pot will be $125.00.

- Motion by Paul Neil to recommend the membership’s vote to approve the budget for the C.O.P.E. committee and any interested members meaning to attend the A.T.U.L.C. Lobby Day, costs not to exceed one thousand five-hundred dollars ($1,500.00).

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to set a budget for the C.O.P.E. committee of twenty-thousand dollars ($20,000.00) for incentives for 2008.

- Motion by Judy Young to donate five hundred dollars ($500.00) to the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration committee.

- Motion by Paul Neil to engage Herman Lindsey for the annual Local 587 audit at an estimated cost of $7,500.00 (same as last year).

For Letters to the Editor:

Letters and 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 that can be verified during working hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters must include numbers, addresses and phone numbers that can be verified during working hours. Letters that cannot be validated will not be published. All articles/letters must be forwarded to the Executive Board for final decision to publish. Send letters to: Paul J. Bachtel, Editor.

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Letters to the editor
Wake up and smell the coffee

By Dee Wakenight, Executive Board Officer

December 2007

Bus Driver’s Prayer

By Rick Harris

I’m waiting in the yard, ready to pull out
I’ve inspected my bus, no problems I can see
Ready to pick up passengers on my route
But before I go, let me pray on bended knee.

Help me as I drive my route today
to be friendly, courteous and always alert
Protect my bus and my riders; keep danger away
Help me to drive safely, so no one gets hurt.

Help me turn ‘the other cheek’
When angry words are directed at me
Remind me, at that time, ‘tis better to be meek
And be as helpful as I can be.

Help me to build up a trust between my riders and me
When they board my bus, they can feel at ease
Their ride will be smooth and trouble free
In my ability as a driver they will be totally pleased.

When my passenger’s stop is finally in sight
And I open the doors to let them leave
Let them look back on me with favorable delight
Knowing such good treatment they will always receive.

Arbitration Update


2. Chrystie Beatty: Grieved termination for alleged unexcused absences as a result of sick leave use without accruals in King County Metro’s Rider Information section. Arbitration hearing held September 21, 2007, decision pending.

3. Edgardo Reyes: Grieved one-day suspension for alleged inappropriate use of sick leave. King County Metro forfeited grievance by failing to schedule a grievance hearing within the contractual time limits. The issue before the arbitrator will be management’s failure to implement the remedy sought following management’s forfeiture of the grievance. Arbitration held October 16, 2007. Decision pending.

4. LaMarcus Ford: Grieved termination for alleged gross misconduct. Scheduled in December.


6. Alofa Vaile: Grieved termination for alleged inability to work regularly. Scheduled in February.

7. Grace Johnson: Grieved management assignment of work out of classification at Clallam Paratransit Services. Settlement reached defining terms and conditions of future cross classification assignments and back pay award for grievant.


9. Vince Lee: Grieved King County Metro Maintenance Chief performing Local 587 bargaining unit work. Schedule pending.

By Dee Wakenight, Executive Board Officer

December 2007

Wake up and smell the coffee

D id anyone else watch 60 minutes on Veterans Day, November, 11? They addressed the “next generation” to be welcomed into the work force. The followers of the “gen x” have been given the name “millennium” The coming generation grew up with: “everyone winning a prize; everyone loves, values, and adores you for just being you. You are special.”

Martin Luther King Jr. County, (yes the name has changed as well also the logo) known to us as METRO, has a problem attracting and retaining employees. The average age of current employees is over 50. The current generation coming generation grew up with: “everyone winning a prize; everyone loves, values, and adores you for just being you. You are special.”

Perhaps there is someone on the executive board of the “millennium” the culture at the County needs to change.

Rumor has it that the county wants the transit union to fall in line with all the other unions in the county and just play nice. They are telling us that we are not special. Anyone could do this job. Why on earth should the county pay drivers, mechanics, and others so well? We don’t need job descriptions but perhaps the powers that be do.

The current working conditions include (but are not limited to):

• HEAVY traffic with a really big vehicle
• We do not always have access or TIME for the BATHROOM
• Schedules that are not realistic
• An attendance policy unheard of anywhere else, you can be 59 seconds late, not 1 minute
• 10 minute report time, to accomplish all prep, over 35 steps including safety items
• Limits placed on us by technology, radio system
• Insane ADA announcements
• Equipment which is NOT USER FRIENDLY
• Weather, it’s our fault if it rains, snows, foggy, icy whatever the weather does it’s the drivers fault
• Drivers are expected to know where EVERYTHING is and how to get there; if we don’t we are called everything but a child of god
• Stress, see above
• Customer complaints; many are far fetched to say the least
• Ride checks
• Medical problems see above
• Unhappy people, see above

There is much more, as every driver knows. How can the County possible think that it can attract and retain employees when these conditions are the norm? How do you attract replacement employees who believe they are special? When they get a job they expect the boss to adore them? Perhaps there is someone on the County Council who would like to see things improve for King County and for the transit union, like getting a fair contract. A fair contract means no takeaways. It means making the contract “special” so the “millennium” generation, our future employees, will be attracted to work at King County / METRO.

Rumor also has it that Ron Simms will not be running for reelection. He has been working very hard for Hillary for President. It would be reasonable to expect a reward if she is elected.

The Nation magazine has reported on a letter written by Teamster International President Jimmy Hoffa to the Hillary campaign about her choice of PR firms. The chosen firm specializes in UNION BUSTING. Check it out.

Perhaps the goal is not to negotiate a fair contract, but to get Ron Simms an appointment in Hillary’s cabinet. Ron would need to show her that he has the right stuff. That is he willing to do whatever it takes. Naturally WE get to pay the price. It’s time to wake up and smell the coffee.

Weather, it’s our fault if it rains, snows, foggy, icy whatever the weather does it’s the drivers fault

Drivers are expected to know where EVERYTHING is and how to get there; if we don’t we are called everything but a child of god

Stress, see above

Customer complaints; many are far fetched to say the least

Ride checks

Medical problems see above

Unhappy people, see above

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Kevin Desmond
On Security
To the Editor,
I read with interest the article by North Base Shop Steward, Joshua Laff, in the November ATU newsletter in which he discussed the value of having security cameras on coaches, mentioned operator assaults and brought up the need to increase the number of Metro Transit Police. These points are important components in addressing the security of operators and customers at Metro. I wanted to take this opportunity to share information about the security improvements that have already occurred at Metro and update you on the improvements that are scheduled to be made in the near future.

I agree that the on-board security cameras can be a valuable tool in improving security on our coaches. We now have 110 functional security camera systems installed in our fleet and in 2008 we expect to more than double the number of buses with cameras by adding 140-160 more. If a specific route is identified as having a chronic security problem, Metro Transit Police will request that a coach with a security camera be assigned to it. Cameras can be a deterrent to crime and a valuable source of evidence. Over the last few years, security cameras have provided information that has directly led to arrests for crimes that have occurred on our coaches and there has been much positive feedback from operators regarding the program.

On the topic of operator assaults, I want to stress that Metro takes the safety of our operators very seriously. While even one operator assault is one too many, operator assaults for the first eight months of 2007 (100 assaults) are down when compared to the same period in 2006 (121 assaults). These assaults are often challenging cases to solve since the suspect who commits crime is frequently a stranger to the operator. With no known name, address, or even a good description, these crimes can be difficult to investigate. Considering these challenges, I think it is impressive that in the first eight months of 2007 assaults were made in 33 percent of the assaults where an operator was injured.

In his article, Mr. Laff brought up the topic of Security Incident Reports (SIRs). SIRs are extremely important to the security deployment at Metro. The Metro Transit Police (MTP) receives approximately 5,400 SIRs per year. Some of these reports describe a specific criminal incident that has occurred on board a coach. Other SIRs may discuss a security concern or suspicious incident which may or may not rise to the level of a criminal incident. No matter what the subject matter, each SIR is reviewed and entered into the SIR database. Information from this database is used to help identify specific routes, geographical areas and deployment times of our MTP deputies. Security Incident Reports that have viable suspect information are assigned for MTP follow up investigation. MTP may also deploy Metro deputies when there are multiple SIRs that describe a chronic problem even if there is no specific suspect information.

I appreciated Mr. Laff’s comment on the excellent quality of our Metro security. I also concur that we could use more Transit Police on our force. Since I arrived at Metro in mid-2004, the number of Metro Transit Police deputies has nearly doubled. Still, the 47 commissioned deputies are spread thin over our 24 hour service seven days a week. That is why in the 2008/2009 budget, I proposed another increase to our Metro Transit Police force by 11 deputies. If approved by the King County Council, these additional Transit Police officers will allow an increase in our presence in south King County and downtown Seattle.

Continually evaluating and improving the safety and security of Metro employees and customers has been and will continue to be of paramount concern. It is through information from operators, either directly or through SIRs, through feedback from our base security committees and from working closely with our Metro Transit Police that we will continue to make Metro an excellent place to both work and ride.

Sincerely,
Kevin Desmond
General Manager
Metro Transit Division

No Springs Attached

Alex D La Barba, Atlantic Base

Your bus seat has two shock absorbers that run parallel from front to back. Unlike your car’s, that operate straight up and down, where “an inch” of bounce moves the shock rod exactly “an inch” (a one to one ratio), the shock absorbers in our bus seats operate at a quirky “angle”. (See diagrams 1 and 2).

Diagram 1, shows the forces that operate on the two points of contact that the shock possesses, and the approximate operating angle. You can’t see this in motion as it is happening out of your sight, below your seat cushion.

Diagram 2, shows how the arm extends, and contracts, according to how the seat moves up, or down. The “inch left is the inches that the seat moves, straight up and down. The shaded area is the extension of the rod arm. Notice that it becomes wider as the arm rod travels upward. This is called “variable ratio” action. To understand this action, you have to understand that rod extension correlates to “resistance” levels. The more it extends when compared to the up and down movement of the seat, the more resistance it creates. In this case you will notice that the “resistance” increases as the seat travels upward. By the same token, when it comes down, it encounters less and less resistance. Add to that gravity and drivers weight. And so when you reach the very bottom of it, an eighth of rod extension affords an inch of seat movement. Wow!

This schematic is an exaggeration of the actual equipment but the principle is the same...variable ratios. This particular aspect makes the quality of the shock absorber in use imperative! A 90% efficiency would render this part ineffective.

Metro has no way in which to test shock absorbers accurately, and their attempts to do it by “feel alone” are a joke. The factory is sure, does the testing straight up and down, (one to one ratio) so we can’t use factory charts. I am sorry, but I have to go and lay down. My back “hurts” when I write this.
December 2007

In Memory of Mark

By Alex D. La Barba, Atlantic Base

It is this the time of the year when families gather to celebrate the various holidays. We should also consider our other family, the bus driving community, our brothers and our sisters in trade because many of us live our lives in quiet labor and demeanor, to later fade away into the land of the retirees. This is a long process, often taking thirty years or more. And because of this long span of time, we might lose perspective of the totality of our contribution. Yet, the work is there and it is real. We, the bus drivers of America move this country! And this effort of ours should not be underestimated nor treated lightly. This effort of ours should be treated with major considerations, yes sir! But, since our retirees had the tendency to flee to far away places and are never seen or heard of again until that moment of silence within the halls of the Labor Temple when it’s over, it is difficult, then, to gauge the immensity of our contribution to society.

Because our stories fade away with our departures to counteract this tacit silence, there is the rare tragedy that awakens us from the unconsciousness of everyday living. Sadly, but real, and if you personally know the individual, the experience can mark you for life. Mark MacLaughlin was taken from us in the midst of a career and while performing his duties. His legacy should duly serve us as a pondering point of reflection. Ask yourself my friends, “What is this life all about and why are we here?” “What is the purpose demanded and the sacrifice required from us? And will we receive just and fair treatment for our efforts?”

These questions come to my mind whenever I think of Mark. He did not live long enough to collect the “gold watch” and that condition is what binds us, all of us, to him. Because we are still waiting for our turn at the handshake but in the meantime, anything can happen. So let us take heart from the loss of this brother and let us consider his legacy to us.

In the context of our shared experiences we don’t want to idolize or to overstate the facts with unwanted sentimentalities. No, that would not be the fair thing to do. Mark was a fallible person like any of us, and there is the beauty of it. It is this humanity of the man we should all hearken to because he was an example of a driver that is slowly disappearing from the workforce. You may say that he was “old school”, fine with me. Mark was a free spirit and he was not afraid to make a decision when the need for one was there. He always had a smile and he would back it up with a supply of lollipops. He was the real McCoy. The kind of driver that Mark was is slowly disappearing due to the overbearing regulations that are clogging the common senses out of us. Nowadays drivers when confronted with a problem freeze on the spot unable to make any decisions out of fear of being wrong, and I ask you, what is so wrong about “being” wrong? So long as you act with good intentions. If you have a good heart my friends, then you should have no fears. This union should stand by you in such a circumstance, no doubt. The ultimate result from this homogenizing, by Metro, of our character and our resolve to act when action is needed, can only weaken us at the bargaining table, and that’s not good.

Mark was a big man “a troll of a man” but it was not his physical attributes that made the person, it was his free spirit. And true to it he made the bus his office and took pride in taking his customers to their destination. And I know of what I am talking about, I used to ride his bus to work when I was a part timer, the old 41 route, on a Breda. And if the freeway was backed up, well, he had the right detour ready to go. Needles to say I was never late for work, if he was on the wheel. His mind and his efforts were focused on the task at hand. That takes a bit of experience but also the will to make a bad situation better. I remember when Mary asked me to work his assignment, the week after the tragic incident. I told her that it would be an honor, and it truly was. And when some smartass pointed his finger, gun like, in my direction. I laid a boogey on his windshield for good measure. Mark lived and died a free man, in the proud tradition of his ancestors. That type of legacy, so long as there are good people around, and, willing to support it, will live forever, and rightly so. So thanks for the memories big guy. I know you are probably smoking up a diesel storm, up in the heavens. So take care good brother.

Metro Employees Recreational Activities Association MERAAs New Years Eve Bash! Monday, December 31, 2007 Spirit of Washington Event Center (233 Burnett Avenue South, Renton, WA)

Party Favorites! 2008 Dear Prizes!

Social Hour w/ Hors d’Oeuvres 6:00pm - 7:00pm Buffet Dinner 7:00pm - 8:30pm


Dancing until 1:00am with Live Music by Goody Bagg Entertainment & D. Gerald Freeman!

$40.00 Per Person (includes party favors and champagne toast) Parking $4.00 (In City Center Garage)

$89 Special hotel rate provided by Renton’s Marriott Spring Hill Suites (300 SW 19th St.) Includes transportation to/from event. (Call 425-226-4100 and use Reference Code "NELWA")

Contact Your MERAa Rep for Tickets or Call 206-684-1978 or Visit www.meraaa.org
The Vice President's Report
By Kerry McCormick

Seasons Greetings

The Officers would like to extend warm wishes to all of our members and their families that you may all enjoy a safe holiday season.

Negotiations
The battle gone on. The most often asked question is how are negotiations going? The short answer is we have hit a road block and we will get around it, over it or through it! There are many problems. The Grinch would like to create a new transit where there are no rules to play by. We are working on not only building seniority, but you've already done that. They are managing Rights.

Operators currently have unrealistic schedules they are suffering through, which cause a lack of focus because you have other needs they must take care of. We are carrying more wheelchair customers and that takes more time. Where does the time come from? It comes out of the time you have to spend every time, because we're working coke rotations, only Management Rights.

Construction projects throughout King County (such as light rail, condominiums, streets/highways to name a few), without any real changes to schedules to accommodate the increase in ridership and the questions that come with them, the increase in assistance given to those with disabilities (or those who need it), the increase in deployment of the lift for wheelchair users (and others who ask) or traffic revisions etc., without any increase in time to use a comfort station or get something to eat has helped to create and continues to promote a less than desirable job situation.

The job market is making it harder to hire skilled trades' people. With all the factors working against our industry it is only reasonable that the Grinch must raise the stakes in order to attract and retain employees. The cost of everything has gone up in the King county area, and has made it almost impossible to find affordable housing to purchase.

Parity is what we are hearing during negotiations any time we ask for anything of monetary value. Money for years of service, but no one else has parity; well we should be the first. Health benefits when you retire, parity we want to be first. Shift differental, currently other Unions enjoy 10% AND 15% while we get 7.5% and $1.00. There is one area we would love to have parity and that is wages. I would like to have a 16% guaranteed raise equivalent to that the Chiefs received. The following is the increase in the form of a 12% raise during the life of the agreement and two 2% COLA. These are a few examples where we are worlds apart.

In talking to some of the members about other issues that would create a better work environment RESPECT from management was mentioned again and again. Respect is very much a very inexpensive change that would be greatly appreciated as it helps to promote an amicable relationship with our members as well as elevate morale. When I am respected it is easier to respect others! Respect commands respect!!!!

Local 587 has a history of fighting for referendums to help King County obtain funding for transit, unlike any other labor union. Yes! It is to our benefit to support these initiatives but not a requirement. Now would be the time to show the members of local 587 that we are appreciated.

We have a ton of rules and policies for our jobs we need to follow. Now is not the time to take risks performing your job duties, please follow the rules while we continue to negotiate. Beware of situations which could result in a PR being issued. During past negotiations members felt that management stepped up their efforts to discipline; but that can only affect you if you are doing something you shouldn't. Remember Safety, Service and lastly, Schedule. We have been here before and we will get through this.

Again Seasons Greetings

How Come
By Bob Rothwell #346

Cars, trucks, cabs, etc can park in bus zones so we can’t use them? How come cars, trucks, cabs, etc, can illegally park on the northwest corner of 1st South and King Street every day forcing the route 99 to go into on coming traffic to make the corner?

How come trucks, cars, cabs, etc can park illegally on a two lane street, south bound, forcing traffic into one lane causing back ups at University Street and Alaskan Way because of the cars turning left onto University Street.

How come bicycle riders can come up through stopped cars to get in front of the bus and then make us follow them for blocks. How come we have to put up with valet parking people who step in front of the bus so they can let people in and out of cars or open the car doors in traffic stopping us while we almost run into them?

The route 99 is a nightmare when it comes to illegal parkers and we have to put up with it. How Come? The politicians want more money for transportation but don’t do anything now to keep us moving. How Come?

How come we load and unload in the street, southbound at Alaskan Way and Spring Street while folks park their cars in our bus zones and go into Ivar’s and eat.

How come I have to stop and let jaywalkers cross 2nd Ave., south of Yesler Street everyday on almost every trip?

How come South of Clay street on Alaskan Way, it says “no parking,” yet cars park there by the hour and it forces us to move to the middle lane causing a hazard.

It forces us to change the right lane from Alaskan Way to east bound Yesler Street says “Busses ONLY” but we wait behind cars everyday while they use the lane.

Amazes me how much we have to put up with while driving a bus and the “powers to be” don’t seem to care.

I bet you on other routes one can think of even more “HOW COMES.”

Why All of Metro’s 587 Employees Should Care That Part-Timers Got Screwed
By Joshua Laff, Chief Shop Steward, North Base

Imagine you’ve been working for KC Metro for at least ten years. During that time, you’ve not only built up seniority, but you’ve had a clear picture of what kind of work you’d be able to pick with that seniority. You’ve had a plan for your career and what income you can expect from it. That plan has influenced decisions about your home, your family, and your lifestyle. Your expectations are based on the work you see available to you three times a year. Your employer gives no indication your options will change for the worse, so your expectations seem reasonable.

Now, with no warning, your options get cut. You walk into the pick room and you realize with the options open to you, your income for the next four months is going to be reduced by 10%. You’re given no explanation from management, and no indication of what to expect from them four months from now. All you’re told is that, despite past practices, what they’re doing is technically allowed by the current contract.

This is what management did to our Part-Time Operators. They allowed our brothers and sisters to get accustomed to a certain amount of work. Then, when the numbers no longer suited Metro’s purposes, management pulled the rug out from under the PTO’s. No warnings, no attempt to work something out, just “tough luck.”

The length of Part-Time straight-through work was cut, giving PTO’s the choice between either a reduction in income or a complete alteration of the lifestyles they had spent years building up.

And don’t think for a second that they’d hesitate to do it to any other classification.

Management had other options for how to handle things. They could have sent notice to the PTO’s about an impending reduction in work. They could have openly shared what their long-term plans were to allow PTO’s to adjust their own long-term plans. They could have grandfathered PTO’s above a particular seniority to maintain a certain workload.

Everyone hears about planned cuts by Boeing and Microsoft long before they happen. These companies recognize a certain social responsibility to their employees. If you’re going to enact a business plan that will affect your employees’ financial survival, at least give them some notice. If nothing else, it’s polite.

The fact that management chose not to take the socially responsible route indicates to me that they’re unaware of its importance. And that indicates to me they’ll do it again to any classification in a heartbeat. Maximizing the opportunity to prove otherwise at the bargaining table. I will be paying close attention to what restitution Metro offers the Part-Time Operators before deciding what I think of any offer.
The Recording Secretary’s Report

By Paul J. Bachtel

CDL Suspensions

I

n last month’s News Review Vice President McCormick listed driving transgressions that could cause you to lose your CDL. This month I will expand on one of those many traffic offenses that could cause you to lose your CDL, “Committing 2 or more serious traffic offenses within a 3-year period of time.”

What are serious traffic offenses arising from separate incidents within a 3-year period of time?

Offenses in both non-commercial and commercial vehicles count, but the offense that triggers the disqualification must be in a commercial vehicle.

How long will my license be disqualified?

• 2 serious traffic offenses: 60 days
• 3 serious traffic offenses: 120 days

How do I re-qualify?

• Pass the Commercial Driver License (CDL) written and driving tests.
• For a hazardous materials endorsement, pass a separate written test. (We also may require you to show us a letter from the Transportation Security Administration stating you passed their background check.)
• Pay a $20 re-qualification fee.

Can I appeal the disqualification?

You may request an administrative review.

Related laws

RCW 46.25.090(5)/Disqualification — Grounds for, period of — Records.

RCW 46.25.010(18): Definitions. WAC 308-100-130: Serious traffic violations.

How your employer may react to a license suspension will depend on bargaining unit, length of suspension and/or job classification.

The Revenue Patrols Are Out So Beware — Driving Fines For The State of Washington Have Increased

If you have noticed more WSP enforcement on the freeways, perhaps this is the reason why. Take care and be aware.

Driving Fines for the State of Washington

These fines went into effect on July 1st, 2007.

• HOV Lane - 1st time offense $1068.50 (Note: The sign posted on the HOV lanes that says $271 is now wrong (DOT is in the process of changing these signs). What is doubled; 3rd is tripled and fourth, your license is suspended for a year! (They are not playing around!)
• Incorrect Lane Change - $380.00 (not using turn signal or ‘cutting’ someone off)
• Blocking Intersection - $485.00
• Traffic light when yellow or run on yellow light - $111 with ticket and pictures of your license plate send to your home.

Cell Phone Usage in a Construction Zone - $570.00 (This fine is doubled, from the regular $285.00)

Passengers over the age of 18 not in a seat belt - Both the passenger and driver will get tickets for $181.00.

DUI - Instant ARREST! (The courts are now placing DUI’s on your driving record for a period of 10 years!)

Last but not least, you know that ‘whoops there I did it again’ (That person could go at least 5 MPH over the posted speed limit. Well, according to the WA. State Patrol, you are now allowed 3 MPH over, so watch your speed, my friends.

Due to time constraints as a result of King County Metro contract negotiations, Recording Secretary Paul Bachtel will not be making scheduled worksite visits. Scheduled worksite visits will resume following negotiations.

The job description of an Access driver is to drive a person safely to and from their destination, but none of my amazing coworkers feel that their job is over at that point. The unique position of Access drivers puts them in the first line of response when dealing with their fragile, elderly and disabled passengers.

They are the first to see when a person’s health is deteriorating and may need additional services. They are the first to see signs of the sadly all too common neglect and abuse that can occur. They all care deeply for their passengers above and beyond the requirements of their job. They carry phone numbers to senior and adult services, the Mayor’s office for senior citizens and Solid Ground.

They often act as impromptu caregivers insuring that their vulnerable passengers get started on a road to needed care. They often provide unofficial reports of a passenger’s well being to sons, daughters, grandchilden and other caregivers after the ride is over. Drivers have obtained police assistance when dropping a passenger and noticing their front door is suspiciously wide open. They have crawled in windows when hearing a passenger fainting calling from the bathroom having fallen and needing help. They often track down neighbors and relatives when a passenger is locked out of their residence. They have stopped their vans and rushed into crosswalks to help elderly folks who have fallen. They have creatively come up with seating arrangements for developmentally disabled passengers who need consistency and routine to keep the conflicts down. They have taken it upon themselves to learn bits of sign language, Spanish, Russian, what have you to assist with communication and ease a passenger’s nervousness going to a new place for the first time. They listen to the ailments, issues and chatter of all their passengers, becoming the thoughtful ear, the kind voice, the sympathetic listener-sometimes the only human interaction a person might be having that day. They put in long hours and often will volunteer a little more when they hear a passenger is stranded. The make safety stops when a diabetic passenger needs to eat a little bit so he passenger doesn’t risk choking. They make unscheduled pit stops when a passenger desperately needs a restroom. They will notice an over full catheter, a wheelchair with faulty brakes, an open wound needing dressing and alert the caregivers or other staff to insure the person is safe while traveling. They notice with concern if a usually vivacious passenger is confused or “a little out of it” and make sure the people at home know.

They do all this while navigating the notorious Seattle traffic, negotiating schedule changes with a harried and busy dispatch, keeping their eyes on the road, their ears to the traffic reports, making intricate routing decisions all to get their passengers safely and on time to their appointments.

I am honestly amazed by the Access drivers I work with. Everyday brings a new story; some with tears, some with giggles, but all with an extra touch of humanity. That is why I keep working here. 
The View from the Buses

By John D. Love

A note from Mary Norris, Pension Board member, indicates the COLA appears to be a reality. A letter will be sent out to retirees concerning the COLA.

At the last Andy’s (8/8/07) I was pleased to see several retirees we had not seen for quite awhile. These lunches are a great way to gather and visit with other retirees.

John and Nikki Daniels are moving towards the Southwest. They are planning on buying a home in the Rockford, Texas area.

Dave Carter
9266 31st Place NE
Lake Stevens, WA 98258
206-910-8311

A note from Bob Bangs informs us that retired Transit Operator Glenn Norris has suffered a stroke and is to remain in the hospital for several days where he is receiving physical therapy.

Taps

I received word that Bob Stewart passed away in Las Vegas. I have no other info on what happened to Bob. Gary Gribble passed away after a two year battle with cancer. The ATU has awarded death benefits for May/June to Hazen C. Lindsley, Alan McCullough and Neil Myren. I only knew Neil when he came to Seattle Transit during the merger with Metropolitan Transit in the early 1970’s. Chuck Moulton lost his wife of many years. I was saddened to receive word that Wayne Dahl, retired driver, has passed away. Wayne was 65 years old when he died.

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

That’s all for now~ John

Seattle Holiday Lights Tour

Presented by the Metro Employees Historic Vehicle Association — MEHVA
Saturday, December 15, 2007
Departs from Central/Atlantic Base, 6th Avenue S. & S. Atlantic St. 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 2½-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 for adults, $4 for seniors (65 and over) & $4 for children (2-11).

Metro Transfers, Tickets or Passes are not Accepted. Please, No Food or Beverages Onboard the Historic Buses.

MEHVA HOTLINE: (206) 684-1816
Mail Stop CAB-TR-0350
www.mehva.org

December 2007

RETIRES CHRISTMAS DINNER
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2007
Reception: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Lunch: NOON – 2:00 p.m.

THE BURIEN ELK’S LODGE
14006 1st Avenue S • BURIEN, WA

The cut-off date for reservations is Friday, December 7, 2007. Please call or write the following to make your reservations and include your name and number of people attending, also include your menu selection of either Prime Rib or Chicken Cordon Bleu.

Your annual $5.00 Local 587 Retiree Chapter fee for 2007 is now due. Mail your check to:

Dave Carter
9266 31st Place NE
Lake Stevens, WA 98258
206-243-8504

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2008 Pick Schedules

KC METRO OPERATORS 2008 PICK SCHEDULE

Spring pick for KC Metro Part-time Operators January 05, 06, 12 & 13

Spring pick for KC Metro Full-time Operators January 07 through 11 & 14 through 18

Spring pick for KC Metro Operators effective February 09, 2008

Summer pick for KC Metro Part-time Operators – April 26, 27, May 03 & 04

Summer pick for KC Metro Full-time Operators – April 28 through May 02 & May 05 through May 09

Summer pick for KC Metro Operators effective May 31, 2008

Fall pick for KC Metro Part-time Operators – August 16, 17, 23 & 24

Fall pick for KC Metro Full-time Operators – August 18 through 22 & August 25 through 29

Fall pick for KC Metro Operators effective September 20, 2008

KC METRO FIRST LINE SUPERVISER 2008 TENTATIVE PICK SCHEDULE


Fall pick for KC Metro First Line Supervisor’s September 23, 2008.

Upcoming at Local 587

DECEMBER 06 Charter meeting
DECEMBER 07 Morning meeting
DECEMBER 10 Jefferson Transit Authority meeting
DECEMBER 11 Clallam County meeting
DECEMBER 18 Executive Board meeting
DECEMBER 28 Deadline to turn in Part-time AM, PM and Group D restriction forms