After ten months of contract preparation, numerous negotiation sessions, then mediation, our membership ratified a revised Labor Agreement with King County Metro. I used the word revised rather than new for it’s not a new contract; it’s a continuation with changes to our current contract. Our Local will, in less than three years, return to the bargaining table with a list of issues some new and some we were unable to secure in these negotiations. As in any Labor Agreement, speaking as a Union Representative, we go in with great expectations as well we should.

Reality soon sets in and issues are prioritized. It is especially difficult when a labor agreement contains as many job classifications as contained in our contract. There are over eighty job classifications (including leads) in our Labor Agreement and that does not include the Light Rail and Streetcar positions. With those positions there are over one hundred represented positions.

To those members who voted no and had legitimate concerns and expectations I can only say I am sorry you felt the contract came up short. We have a very democratic Union open to all members to run for union leadership positions. Perhaps next year when we enter into Union Elections some of the most ardent critics will step up to the plate and be willing to run for office. We’ll see.

In closing I want to thank Vice President Kenny McCormick, Financial Secretary Paul Neil, Recording Secretary Paul Bachtel, and our Entire Executive Board for all their hard work over the past year. To the many members who called, e-mailed and in person expressed their appreciation for our efforts I can’t begin to tell you all how much your encouragement has meant at difficult times. THANK YOU ALL!

Regards to all…
Be Safe…

Lance F. Norton / Business Representative
Local 587
The April 2008 cycle of membership meetings the following business was addressed:

- The membership voted to approve a motion by Neal Safirin that ATU Local 587 endorses the following members who chose to run as delegates for the Democratic Congressional District Caucus, the State Convention, and the National Convention: John Boone for Senator Hillary Clinton; Dee Wakenight, Randy Stevenson, Paul Neil, and Claudia Meadows for Senator Barak Obama.

The following members were April pot draw winners: Michael Shea at the Charter meeting, Nathanael Chappelle at the Morning meeting, Troy McKelvey at the JTA meeting, Ken Milliser at the CTS meeting. CTS rolling pot draw of $100.00 was lost by Jackie Rooney. Next month’s rolling pot will be $125.00.

“The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds.”

— Abraham Lincoln

Willy Clinton: Retired former member passed away April 02, 2008. Willie was a Base Operations Chief at the time of his retirement and will be fondly remembered.
The Program

By Bic Sheaffer

O ne recent morning an op-
erator we shall call Jerome
(because he didn’t want his
real name, Curtis, to be used),
approached Gil, (who didn’t want
his real name, Jennifer, to be used,) who was punching transfers over
the trash can in the North Base
bullden; with consent, the follow-
ing conversation between them
was recounted by operator Irving
Dinglefield (who also wishes to
remain anonymous.)

Jerome: Good morning, Gil. You
look a little blue today; why the long
face?

Gil: Mornin’, Jerome. Oh, I guess
I’ve been a little depressed lately.

Jerome: What seems to be the
problem, amigo? Anything I can do to
help?

Gil: Well, it’s just that I feel like…
well…I feel my bus-driving profes-
sionalism slipping away, and I don’t
know how to get it back.

Jerome: Actually, I was about to
broach the subject with you, Gil. I
noticed that you haven’t been wear-
ing a tie or pressing your shirts and
trousers lately—that’s not like you.
What was the first indication you
had of this lapse in your heretofore-
laudatory performance as a paragon
of driver excellence?

Gil: Well, I guess it was a couple
months ago when I had a full, stand-
ing load—you know, one where
people are packed like sardines in
a 40-footer.

Jerome: Only too well.

Gil: Well, I decided to make a little
joke about the situation, so I got on
the PA system and announced, “If
anyone has to get married as a result
of being so tightly crowded together,
that’s not like you. What was the first indication you
had of this lapse in your heretofore-
laudatory performance as a paragon
of driver excellence?"

Gil: Well, I keep it low-key, and
I don’t want to ruin the fun for
anyone.

Gil: As I said, I noticed that you
hadn’t been sleeping well since “the inci-
dent.” Yes, please help me recover
my professionalism!

Jerome: I knew you’d accept the
offer, Gil, because you’re one of the
special ones. But a word of caution—it
won’t be easy—you’ll have to commit
to my program.

Gil: Your program? You have a
program? You mean you’ve helped
other drivers?

Jerome: Yes. Over the years I’ve
developed a seven-step program that
helps a driver regain that professional
edge—but before I’ll accept a new
student, I first evaluate the subject’s
past performance, character and such.
Some drivers are irredeemable and
aren’t worth my time. I know that
another of my “graduates” is getting
behind the wheel of a bus with the demeanor of a professional
and is once again an example of the
higher standard…well, to have con-
tributed to that.

Gil: Jerome, I would consider it an
honor to be taken under your wing.

Jerome: Gil, it would be my plea-
sure to lead you back to the eminent
domain of which you were once a part—that of excellence!

Gil: When do we start?

Jerome: Well, right now I’m wait-
ing for you to punch up so I can
go in to receive another commenda-
tion. When I’m finished with that, I’ll
get you started on the second step…in
the meantime, the first step is for you
to go upstairs and put some polish
on those shoes.

Gil: You bet, Jerome—I’m feeling
better already!

Jerome: Oh, by the way, I noticed
that you’re punching all of your
transfers “peak, zone exempt,” when
I know that you drive one-zone
trips all day. Let’s not give away the
farm—punch them commensurate
with what folk’s pay—that’s part of
step four.

Gil: Ten-four, Jerome.

Jerome: Ten-seven, Gil.

The ATU Legislative Caucus met at the offices of
Local 587 to interview candidates for public of-
Fice. Candidates were queried on Transit Related
Issues, Workers Rights and Union Rights. The ATU
Legislative Counsel endorsements will available soon
followed by Local 587 endorsements in early May.
If you have a candidate you would like to be interviewed
please contact the union office with his or her name.

Your COPE Dollars at Work

Your COPE Dollars at Work

Pictured from left to right: Vice President Kenny McCormick ATU 587, President Dennis Antonelli ATU 1015, Mike Stites ATU 1765, Financial Secretary Patty Crs. ATU 1376, President Isaac Tate ATU 258, Executive Board Officers Linda, Anderson ATU 587, President Keith Morris ATU 843, Thoburn Tobin ATUS7, Jeff James ATU 843, John Suemes Political Coordinator ATU 757, Chief Shop Steward Randy Stevens ATU 587, President Karen Stites ATU 1765, Executive Board Officer Lisa Thompson ATU 587, Executive Board Officer Neil Saflof ATU 587, Executive Board Officer Roy Jennings ATU 757, Executive Board Officer Rick Sepelen ATU 587, Pamela Cron ATU Legislative Lobbyist, Executive Board Officer Chris Daniels ATU 587, Recording Secretary Paul J. Bachtel ATU 587 and President Lance Norton ATU 587.

Informational meetings

Pictured from left to right are Operator and Steve Chichester. The ATU Legislative Caucus met at the offices of
Local 587 to interview candidates for public of-
Fice. Candidates were queried on Transit Related
Issues, Workers Rights and Union Rights. The ATU

Informational meetings

Saul Saldana To Retire

Saul Saldana, our first, and thus far only, Lead
Upholsterer will be retiring May 31, 2008 after
28 years of service. Brother Saldana began his
career April 29, 1980 and plans on traveling
after retirement. If you’d like to stop by and
wish Brother Saldana farewell you’ll find him
leading his crew at the Component Supply
Center, South base.
If 4/10’s is “TOO Hard to Manage” Then “We Need New Managers”

By Mike Whitehead and Jeff Stambaugh

Washington State Department of Labor & Industries

Domestic Violence Leave for Victims and Family Members

The new law allows:
- Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking to take reasonable leave from work for legal or legal enforcement assistance, medical treatment or counseling.
- Family members may also take reasonable leave to help a victim obtain needed treatment or services.
- Leave is with or without pay.
- Family member includes child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person the employee is dating.
- All employers, public and private, except temporary staffing agencies, are covered regardless of size.
- An employee must give advance notice, when possible.
- Effective April 1, 2008.

What is the new law?
A new law passed by the 2008 Legislature allows victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking to take reasonable or intermittent leave from work – paid or unpaid – to take care of legal or legal enforcement needs or get medical treatment, social services assistance or mental-health counseling.

Family members of a victim may also take reasonable leave to help the victim obtain treatment or seek help.

An employee may choose to use sick leave and other paid-time off, compensation for time or unpaid leave time. The leave under this law is in addition to other rights to take leave available to employees under other regulations.

Is verification required?
An employer may require verification from an employee who is requesting leave. If so, an employee may provide one or more of the following:
- A police report indicating the employee or employee’s family member was a victim.
- A court order providing protection to the victim.
- Documentation from a healthcare provider, advocate, clergy, or attorney.
- An employee’s written statement that the employee or employee’s family member is a victim and needs assistance.

Family relationship may be determined by birth certificate, court document or other similar record or a statement from the employer.

What is L&I’s role?
L&I’s role is to inform employers and workers about the new law through outreach and education. Complaints filed by employees will be investigated and L&I will enforce job protection for employees who need this leave.

Additional information may be obtained by calling Janis Kerns at 360-902-5552 or e-mail to kerj2358@lni.wa.gov, or by calling L&I’s Employment Standards Program toll free at 1-866-219-7321. Updates regarding this new law will be posted on www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/FamilyCare

April 2008

Please allow your VM Board Officers to vent in this article, and by the way, this will be the first of several articles recapping our involvement in the 2008 negotiations. We will start with the issue of working conditions and what we called “alternative work schedules.”

In the beginning of the contract negotiations process one of the issues we asked for was 20% of all Pick positions in VM be posted as alternative work schedules. This request was defined as altering a start or stop time or allowing a shift request was defined as altering a working conditions and negotiations process one of the is issues we asked for was 20% of all...
Family Care and Family Leave Laws
October 30, 2007

State Laws
Family Care Act (RCW 49.12.265; WAC 296-130)
- Can use paid leave, such as sick Leave, vacation, holiday, PTO, and some short-term disability plans
- Use paid leave to care for sick family members: spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent with a serious health condition
- Includes care of a child <18 with a routine childhood illness or needed preventative care; also for disability of an adult child
- Includes short-term care of pregnant spouse during or after childbirth, as needed
- All employers who provide a paid leave benefit

Family Leave Act (FLA) (RCW 49.78)
- Applies only to women who are pregnant
- Covers employers with ≥ 50 employees within 75 mile radius, and employees with 1,250 hours in past year [same as FMLA]
- Is typically unpaid leave unless employer policy covers employee for paid leave
- FLA – Leave for disability due to pregnancy or childbirth is in addition to 12 weeks under either FMLA and/or state FLA for care of a newborn, sick spouse, parent, child, or other personal illness.
  - Pregnancy disability leave is typically 6-8 weeks determined by healthcare provider based on individual’s condition
  - Could include period of time before childbirth
  - See Human Rights Commission information below
- Those elements identical to FMLA will be enforced by USDOL

Sex Discrimination (RCW 49.60; WAC 162-30)
- Covers employers with ≥ 8 employees
- Pregnant employee covered/period of time before and after childbirth
- Pregnancy Disability Leave
  - Healthcare provider determines when employee can no longer work
  - Typically 6-8 weeks of leave; determined by healthcare provider based on individual’s condition
  - Entitled to same benefits that employer offers other employees on temporary disability leave
  - Entitles employee to return to same or similar job after leave

Federal Law: Family Medical and Leave Act [FMLA]
- Employers with ≥ 50 employees within 75 mile radius; employees with 1,250 hours in past year
- Unpaid leave – 12 weeks care of self or family member with serious health condition: includes spouse, child, parent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Laws</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Paid Leave (sick, vacation, holiday, disability)</th>
<th>Unpaid Leave</th>
<th>Family Members Covered</th>
<th>Pregnancy</th>
<th>Employer-Employee Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Care Act</td>
<td>L&amp;I</td>
<td>RCW 49.12.765</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent</td>
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<td>No size requirement</td>
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<td>RCW 296-130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Leave Act</td>
<td>L&amp;I</td>
<td>RCW 49.78</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>For pregnant employee only; Amt of time determined by healthcare provider</td>
<td>superseded by the FMLA where identical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex Discrimination (pregnancy disability)</td>
<td>Human Rights Commission</td>
<td>RCW 49.60</td>
<td>Only if employer offers benefits to others on temporary disability</td>
<td>Amt of time determined by healthcare provider based on individual’s condition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>≥ 8 employees no minimum employment</td>
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<td>WAC 162-30</td>
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<td>Federal Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Medical and Leave Act [FMLA]</td>
<td>USDOL, 29 CFR 825</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Child, spouse, parent, pregnant employee</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>≥ 50 employees in 75 miles If employee worked 1250 hours in previous 12 months</td>
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Washington ACORN

When ATU Local 587 member Jose Rosado’s mortgage increased by $400 dollars, he found himself struggling to keep up with his payments. What’s more, he wasn’t even notified that his mortgage had changed. Attempts to contact the mortgage company were fruitless. With no where to turn, Jose’s wife, Sara, got advice from a friend at work. Washington ACORN had helped Sara’s friend who was facing foreclosure. The Rosado’s went to Washington ACORN and got the help they needed.

When the mortgage crisis began to hit families hard, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), a community union, negotiated with 28 mortgage lenders to help families stay in their homes and adjust their mortgages to a more livable amount.

Washington ACORN began helping families facing mortgage foreclosure on January 28. Since that time we have helped more than 50 families stay in their homes and adjust their mortgages.

It was quickly discovered that many of the families coming for help were labor union families. Washington ACORN saw families from ATU 587, as well as Teamsters, Machinists, Laborers, IPTE, and Postal Workers. The mortgage crisis knows no boundary.

Washington ACORN has opened Working Families Prosperity Centers in Burien, Everett, and Tacoma, where families can come to get foreclosure help, free tax preparation, and benefit screening.

In addition to helping families facing foreclosure Washington ACORN is reaching out to help families ascertain whether or not they qualify for benefits that are available for families in need.

Here are some numbers that may surprise you:

- In King County: 48,000 eligible families are not collecting an estimated $54 million in food stamps.
- 21,000 people are missing out on $98 million in Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits each month.
- 25-30% of people without health insurance actually qualify for programs such as Medicaid or SCHIP but are not receiving it. Approximately 35,500 adults and children are missing out on $91 million worth of health care benefits.

ACORN estimates that there is as much as $2.4 billion in tax credits and benefits that could be coming to families state-wide, but folks are simply not aware of it.

Washington ACORN is here to help. There is no charge for our service. If you or someone you know is facing foreclosure or may need help with other benefits, please call 206-723-5845.

Kat Overman, Legislative/Political Director Washington ACORN

Automated Stop Announcers

We know that they are coming, although not exactly sure of when it’s supposed to happen. So I’ve made a list of features that the system should have (For our future reference).

The system should have a voice mode and, a digital display.

The voice system should have:

1. A choice of a male and female voices, with a Northwestern accent, of course;
2. A volume control with rear and front separation (fader);
3. A choice of three running programs;
4. The tourist mode, calling all stops and landmarks;
5. The commuter mode, calling all stops, (the major roads louder than the side streets);
6. The night mode, calling only major stops.

We should definitely be “high fidelity and surround”;
none of those scratchy speakers please.

The volume control should be “absolute control” over the system. After all we are the ones who have “absolute control” over the radio.

And finally the system should have an option for peace and quiet.

Furthermore, the driver should have “absolute control” over the system.

The sound should definitely be “high fidelity and surround”;
none of those scratchy speakers please.

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6. The night mode, calling only major stops.

The digital display system should have:
1. Large HD letters, for legibility.
2. Red glow, to cause less reflection during night driving.

Other recommendations:

The sound should definitely be “high fidelity and surround”; none of those scratchy speakers please. The volume control should consist of a “real knob” if possible, because drivers should not have to go through a series of “three sets of windows” on the screen, to change the volume as the present radio system is set to do.

These techies don’t realize that we may be on the road, driving heavy equipment, when the need to change volume might arise. So let us be practical and effective with the right gadget at hand, a knob please.

And finally the system should come with an, on and off button in case that the passengers request a moment of silence which seems like a good and logical idea to me; an option for peace and quiet.

Furthermore, the driver should have “absolute control” over the system. After all we are the ones who have “absolute control” over the radio.

And finally the system should have an option for peace and quiet.

Feeling “Damned” about the Commute

Movement is a part of life. Herds Roam, Birds flock. Rivers flow. When life doesn’t, when buffalo no longer roam, grass can’t migrate, and rivers don’t flow, when life is made to stop, it gets sick or unmanageable and can eventually perish.

Our “automotive herds” and “roaming commutes” are no exception. We must take highways and roadways, and we depend on them. For instance in King County we must either take Interstate 5 or I-405 to get from the south to the north. This is true for all cities, and highways and roadways that are our means to movement.

We can’t when our commute is stopped, we get stressed, sick and eventually unmanageable. I see and experience this sickness everyday from honking to evolutions of road rage. This is Scary even dangerous, and leads to stress and sickness.

What are we doing? We’ve taken alternate routes. We’ve launched new highway and roadway improvement projects. We’ve even promoted transit which is a very good solution. However wonderful these solutions are, I can’t help but notice a diminished capacity for overcoming our stressors.

An Access rider recently re-mind me that life is about the “how” and not so much the “what”. “How” we’re and not what” we are doing in the midst of the doing that matters the most. “OWL we are behaving and living in the midst of the damned commute for instance that is most important. Feeling Good? Feeling Bad?

continued on page 7

Paul J. Bachtel
News Review Editor
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230
Seattle, WA 98121

Send letters to:

May 2008

Executive Committee, Seattle/ King County Chapter OWL

Sending “Damned” about the Commute

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continued on page 7

Paul J. Bachtel
News Review Editor
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230
Seattle, WA 98121

Send letters to:
Check Your Gun at the Curb

By Carl C. Jackson, Rail Operations Section

H ave you read the newspa-
per lately? Road rage is, is, well, all the rage, especially in places like Los Angeles. Driving on the freeways around here in Se-
tattle has always been a bit of a risk, but now it’s gotten absolutely dicey, and not that far removed from Los Angeles. One minute, you’re running-
ning your own business trying to get around the guy who’s plodding along at the posted speed limit, and the next minute someone’s trying to
make the evening news by putting a bullet or two in your head at 10 mph over the posted speed limit.

I’m not making light of this situation. Humor is not the proper response to the unsettling attacks that have occurred in the Puget
Sound area during the past few months. They’re about as funny as a tire blowout on SR-167 during the morning rush. Or an overheated engine on the floating bridge during the evening rush. Or a blown gasket on I-405 during the middle of the
night rush. As you can see, there is nothing funny, ever, about Puget Sound’s freeways. Not the bad road surfaces that cause you to skid in the rain, not the pot holes, not the broken concrete sections on I-5, as you south in the right lane, that can rattle your teeth and shake every

Angeles. One minute, you’re mind

freeway shootings, however, do not
improve ridership, at least not in an
taxi driver and trainees! Not a whole lot, I must admit. I was going to suggest that public transportation begins to look more attractive after you’ve had your windshield shot out on I-5 near Kent-Des Moines Road. Or, better yet, after your neighbor (the one with the teenage son who keeps you up all at hours with the “music” blaring on his stereo) has his windshield shot out on the same road!

Freeway shootings, however, do not improve ridership, at least not in an appreciable fashion. They do
prompt you to think, however, that getting in your car every day and sharing a narrow strip of asphalt with people who kill other people for sport or for pleasure or for no discernable reason is not good for your mental health.

And that’s a public service jingle in this somewhere. “You deserve a break today; take the bus or train, OK?” My apologies to the marketing folks at McDonald’s.

But those in public transportation rarely tout the fact that the traveling in buses and trains is much safer than traveling in cars. The transit and motorcoach industries almost never stress their inherent safety advantages. Safety seems to be a soft
buzz in the background, almost like pink noise. The question that comes to my mind: Why is safety such a weak sister to the other attributes of public transportation?

The school bus industry talks about safety every chance it gets. Maybe they do that because they are transporting our children. It’s a time-honored tradition to character-
ize school bus transportation as the “safest form of surface transportation.” The industry has earned the
right to make this claim because of its astonishing low fatality rate (fewer than 10 passengers per year and killed in school bus crashes), with approximately 24 million chil-
dren traveling to and from school 180 days a year.

Transit and motorcoach oper-
ations also have incredible safety
records. But you rarely hear about it. We talk about the need to pro-
vide communities with mobility solutions, about mitigating traffic congestion, about reducing air pol-
ution, about almost everything except safety.

Getting on a bus or train is safer
than getting in a car. You might not think about it that way, but it’s true.

Even in light of recent terrorist at-
tacks in Europe and Great Briton. In student transportation, they call the young passengers “precious cargo.” I think most adult passengers using public transportation are precious, in their own way.

The services we sell to the public do not always reflect the thoughtful and considerate thinking that goes on behind the scenes. In Metro’s case, we don’t push any deluxe services because we don’t have any –we’ve left that to Sound Transit. I’m sure many of you have seen the fancy highway coaches that are now run-
ning between Tacoma/Lakewood and Seattle. They are MCI Suburban – the same type of equipment that New Jersey transit has been running between suburban New Jersey cities and Downtown New York City for 40 years.

Some of the safest vehicles on the road because they are so solid and made just for that type of service. So, let’s push how well we do what we do, both to the public and for the public. The more we make our services attractive, the more riders we’ll attract and at that point, the more we won’t have to worry about people on the road checking their guns at the curb.

Letters to the Editor, continued

The next time our commute
commutes to a full stop, we might ask ourselves: How am I doing, and, how can I respond differently and feel better? When we do this, we might find that we feel better and discover that in the midst of that “damed commute" life is still moving.

David A. Johns #688685
MV Transportation

A Good Contract

Dear Fellow Members:

My name is Ken Brix. I am a

Ra-yerse Base Full Time Operator. I

started in the business in ‘91. Previ-

ous to that I worked at Bethlehem

Steel in West Seattle for 18 years. I

have seen my share of union con-

tracts and this is A GOOD ONE!!!

WOULD LIKE TO THANK LANCE

AND OUR UNION OFFICERS FOR

A JOB WELL DONE!!!

15 reasons why I voted yes on the contract.

1. It’s an improved offer in many ways.

2. It gives us some of the high-
est wages and benefits in the busi-

ness. Closing to $50 an hour in total

compensation. For a 40 hour work

week this works out to $120,000 a

year!!!
We have a new agreement! I would like to thank all the members who voted, both for and against the new contract. The King County council must now approve the new contract and then we can start working on the next contract scheduled for a vote two years from now.

As many of you know there were strong opinions on both sides and some feathers were ruffled during the ratification campaign. We were hearing arguments about this being a drivers Union, the Part-time Operators wanting more at the expense of the Full-time Operators, the OSS Coordinators making the same as the Senior Schedule Planners, Dispatchers making more than the Planners, nobody wanting the reorganization of CAO and RIO and there were more complaints about specific work groups issues not being addressed. This is not unique to these negotiations or Metro. Members brought up issues after the deadline to present new positions and we were unable to address those concerns. In the future we may want to get this input sooner, and work on which issues have a higher priority. Hind sight is always clearer and I am sure it will be even clearer two years from now. Let’s put this behind us and build on our solidarity for the next negotiations in 2010. We must stop looking at the differences and start looking at the things we have in common and build a force to be reckoned with.

During these negotiations Metro made arguments to dismantle the expired contract and we were successful in not allowing that to happen. In 2010 we will be better prepared, because we have seen how this session went. This was the first under Kevin Desmond and it was much different than any contract negotiations I had been a part of. The last contract was rubber stamped and we had no idea what to expect this time, but the further we got into it became clearer. This was an attempt to change our workplace to resemble other properties around the country. Metro asked for the shirt off our back and did not get it. We maintained most of what we had and I believe that is where the problem is. Many members view contract negotiations as win every time, but there are times when maintaining what you have is the better alternative.

Just imagine a workplace without rules and management’s rights is the answer to everything. Well some members think that is what we have now, but we are far from it. I believe even with the changes we still have one of the best contracts in the nation. Can it be better? Yes! We will have to work on making it better and it starts with each individual. If you have a run that does not have enough time, write it up. The public is complaining about overcrowded buses. If you see the contract being violated file a grievance if Metro refuses to stop.

We must start attending the King County Council meetings and making our voices heard. If we cannot get our issues addressed through normal channels then we must use our numbers to be heard at other venues. We asked for more money for schedules and were turned down. We fought to get more money through initiatives only to watch it go to other areas. Now that the contract is over lets work on improving working conditions not addressed in negotiations.

FROM: I-405 North
Take Exit 2 (Renton/Rainier Ave) Head North on Rainier Avenue to South 3rd and take a right. Continue on 3rd and take a left on Mill Avenue South. Continue on Mill and veer to the right, which is Bronson Way. City of Renton Library is on right. Liberty is directly after the library.

FROM: I-405 SOUTH
Take Exit (Renton/Enunclaw). Stay in the lane marked Bronson Way/City Center. The Road will veer to the right Bronson Way. Liberty Park is located on the left.
The Financial Secretary’s Report

Not Over Till It’s Over

By Paul Neil

"It’s not over till it’s over" is what I heard one of the opponents to the new contract say to someone after the vote count was over and the contract had past. The membership has spoken and the new contract will go into effect soon, but the passage of the contract does not mean that the reasons many members voted "NO" to one of the best contracts in the industry will go away.

Rail, Special Classifications, Supervisors and Facilities Maintenance sections all voted "YES" for both contract proposals. I believe they did so because management was willing to address at least some of their concerns. None of these sections got everything they asked for but they received enough so they could accept the contract. The other 2 sections voted "NO" in January.

Operators voted "NO" in January by 54% but Voted "YES" by 60% in the second vote. Why the turn around? Probably because after the January vote management was willing to address some of the major concerns of Operators-System Wide Extra Board, the complaint system (which still needs work done) and Medical Arbitration. Management was unwilling to address 4 hour plus guarantees for some part-time trip- pers nor were they willing to address state of the schedules. Ridership is way up and on time performance is down which means no layovers. There is a back log of 20,000 hours of needed schedule maintenance that needs to be addressed now.

Vehicle Maintenance voted "NO" by 72% in January and by 79% in the second vote. This should be a wake up call to management that they still need to address the issues of concern to our members in this section—Flexible schedules, 4-10’s and increasing the shift differential to adjust for inflation. Your bargaining team hammered management on these issues but they were not willing to budge. It’s a very sad situation while on one hand this department wins praise nationwide as one of the best in the industry and on the other the people who do the work are so very angry and disappointed with their working conditions.

Your officers will continue to pressure management on these issues outside of the contract negotiations process.

Submitted by Paul Griffin,
Latino Caucus Treasurer

Cesar E. Chavez National Holiday!
Dia de Festividad Nacional por Cesar E. Chavez

Petition to President Bush and members of the U.S. Congress/Peticion a: Presidente Bush y miembros del Congreso

I call on the US Congress to establish an official federal paid holiday in honor of Cesar E. Chavez, the late President of the United Farm Workers, on his birthday March 31st. This should include a Cesar E. Chavez day of service-learning and community action./Yo apoyo la propuesta para que el Congreso establezca un dia oficial federal de festivo el dia 31 de Marzo, el cumpleanos de fallecido Cesar E. Chavez, Presidente de la Union de Campesinos de America. Esto deberá de incluir un dia de servicio-aprendizaje y acción comunitaria de Cesar E. Chávez.

Name (Signature)  E-mail  Address
Nombre( Firma)  Correo Electronico  Domicilio

The UFW & Cesar Chavez Foundation are supporting the campaign established by “Cesar E. Chavez, a National Holiday”—CA volunteer organization.

Put C.O.P.E. Donations to Work.
Vote Pro Transit.

Send signed petitions to UFW, Chavez Holiday, 4545 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave., Su. 2H, Los Angeles, CA, 90022

By signing this petition you are signing up to receive an occasional action alert from the UFW and/or Cesar Chavez Foundation.
We will never share or sell your e-mail address and you may unsubscribe from our list at any time.
Contract

Ratification – Retroactive Pay

With King County Contract negotiations complete we can now look forward to the inevitable traditionally challenging renegotiations of retroactive pay. In all my years of employment I have yet to see retroactive pay checks issued without a member having been overpaid over perceived payroll shortages. Payroll shortages and overages will no doubt occur and she should expect to look back at our payroll history to determine exactly what we are due. Retroactive pay will be issued on a date yet to be determined following the King County Council’s approval of the ratified agreement. I hope you’ve saved your pay stubs or, if not, have the ability to log on to Peoplesoft to download the requisite data.

The good news is KC Metro payroll may very well overpay our members when issuing retroactive paychecks.

I was overpaid slightly during the last (2001) retroactive paycheck. As is customary the Union has requested separate pay checks to alleviate over taxation of retroactive paychecks. Nevertheless, expect those checks to be taxed according to your current withholding allowances.

Equity Adjustments

An equity adjustment is a pay increase to a specific classification based on a change in working conditions or market conditions. If market conditions change a pay increase may be offered to keep current employees from leaving or entice new job applicants. Regardless of the reason, one classification, or section within a classification, receiving an equity adjustment is often perceived as unfair in the minds of coworkers.

The KC Metro division of our local is divided in five sections: Transit Operations, First Line Supervisors, Vehicle Maintenance, Facilities Maintenance, and Special Assignments. Each section is again divided into specific job classifications. Different sections have historically viewed equity adjustments from differing viewpoints. In Vehicle Maintenance and Facilities Maintenance the concept of ‘Trade Pay’ rules supreme where journey-person workers in a multitude of trades are paid the same. Agreeing to equity adjustments in journey level trade occupations could be viewed by some members as a violation of the traditional and historical negotiation protocol of Trade Pay.

In Facilities Maintenance we gained a 1.5% equity adjustment increase for Utility Laborers to help KC Metro retain current employees and attract new employees, we gained a 3% equity adjustment increase for Signage Stock Operators due to increased job requirements and we gained a 5% equity adjustment increase for Electronic Technicians based on a comparable worth study and KC Metro’s difficulty in hiring Electronic Technicians with the requisite radio experience.

In Operations we have a history of paying premiums or reductions such as artic premium or Van pay. A few members requested a 75 cent per hour premium. We gained a $2.00 per hour equity adjustment premium for System Extra Board Operators.

In the First-Line Supervision section the classification of OSS Coordinator and Senior Schedule Planner were at one time paid the same. In 2001 the Union negotiated an equity adjustment for Senior Schedule Planners. At that time KC Metro refused to also increase the pay for OSS Coordinators. The OSS Coordinators were not happy. In 2007 we negotiated an equity adjustment for OSS Coordinators bringing their pay level once again commensurate with Senior Schedule Planners.

In the Special classifications section we gained a 75 cent per hour equity adjustment in exchange for an agreement to reorganize the section and an additional 75 cent per hour premium for cross sectional assignments.

Are equity adjustments fair? Should the Union leave money lying on the table by demanding an increase for all employees knowing it won’t be obtainable through either negotiation or arbitration? If we had not argued for and obtained an increase, the Senior Schedule Planner in 2001 would then have been able to obtain an equity increase for OSS Coordinators in 2007. What about Transit Operators; with such a large classification equity adjustments are unheard of!

I heard many complaints regarding line adjustments and with all due respect to the concept of Trade Pay, I have a great deal of trouble leaving money on the table. And no, I don’t believe it’s fair, it’s the reality of living in a free market economy.

Issues Yet Unresolved

The official negotiations may be over but a number of issues remain unresolved.

On KC Metro’s agenda is a plan to take a look at the transit operator classification with hopes of finding a reorganization that will meet with membership approval. That’s a very tall order with all sorts of questions surrounding seniority, protection of overtime, availability, utilization of the part-time work force, utilization of retirees, etc.

We have worked under the current system of part and full-time work rules with very few changes for over 30 years. Our members have built their lives around the work rules. It will be interesting to see what will come of this endeavor.

On the Union’s agenda are several Vehicle Maintenance issues. Many of our Vehicle Maintenance members expressed great dissatisfaction with ratified agreement in the areas of pay, work schedules and flexible shifts. Also in dispute is the installation of bus wrap advertising; who will install it and/or where will it be installed? KC Metro has backed itself into a corner by signing a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to the effect that the Union to bring bus wrap advertising installation in house and almost simultaneously signing an agreement to subcontract the work through a nonunion vendor. It will be interesting to see KC Metro try to explain its way out of this one. Vehicle Maintenance members have expressed their dissatisfaction by filing grievances over a multitude of issues. Most notably cross classification assignment of work. Morale in Vehicle Maintenance has plummeted to an all time low and the resolution of these issues will be the catalyst that defines the future relations between our members in Vehicle Maintenance and Vehicle Maintenance management. If the parties fail to reach an equitable compromise outside intervention will be necessary. In that event, the only question remaining will be what action must the Union take to force intervention?

Contentious Negotiations

You might think I am referring to contentions between Union and KC Metro. Not so, I’m referring to the high level of contention between a small group of union dissidents and the Union leadership during negotiations. Your officers and the executive board are faced with the dilemma of how to make informed decisions throughout the negotiation process. It is not the responsibility of the Recording Secretary to determine what information is kept confidential or publicly released during negotiation. That decision is the responsibility of the executive board and core negotiating committee.

During this most recent negotiation I responded to member claims that the Union was keeping secrets from its membership. Nothing could be further from the truth. As Recording Secretary I published every document modified during negotiation including all changes to the union contract, Light Rail and Streetcar language negotiated to date and all MOA’s modified through negotiation. I published at a level heretofore unseen both in paper format and on our website. In fact, one of the greatest issues of membership contention, the debate surrounding customer complaints, was based on a rewritten MOA. During the terms of past Recording Secretaries changes...
to MOAs weren't published. Some have said I published too much information leading to contentions surrounding complicated legal issues. I beg to differ. I believe our membership should review all documents modified through negotiation even if they contain complicated legal issues. That's the right thing to do.

So what wasn't published and why? Below are a couple responses to the questions I answered regarding initial negotiation information; confidential in the sense that the information wasn't released publicly in the form of newsletter publications or bulletin board postings but was available at Union meetings or upon membership request.

- Survey Results: survey results are used as the primary basis of formulating the Union's bargaining position. Other data such as issues that had been grieved, information provided from members on issues they found to be of particular importance and contract language gleaned from other labor agreements was also factored into our bargaining position. We escaped this discussion of negotiation position published? Negotiation is often a process of slowly and strategically making proposals. Although there are always occasions when the Union leadership formulates a complete proposal and presents it to management on day-one of negotiation, that strategy is most often utilized in less seasoned labor agreements. The KC Metro labor agreement is well seasoned, long and complex and it is therefore a much better tactic to undertake a process of slow and strategic making proposals. Slow and strategic proposals require the Union to keep its bargaining position confidential throughout negotiation. Nevertheless, President Norton did answer all questions regarding our bargaining position though our monthly meeting cycle, by phone and through in person contacts.

- Protected Positions: I had requested to publish both the Union and KC/Metro's protected positions. Protected positions are the documents that define what issues will be forwarded to interest arbitration should the parties fail to reach settlement. Publishing both the Union and KC/Metro's protected positions was discussed by the Officers and Executive Board and a decision was reached not to publish for a number of reasons. First, the Union's protected positions as presented in a concise and bold format much the same as the tentative agreement currently at the worksites. It contains every proposal that the Union formulates for negotiation. To publish the document and distribute it to the worksites would run approximately $10,000 and provide the membership with only the protected position, not the current status of negotiations. The Union's protected position is available for membership review in my office. Second, KC/Metro's protected position consisted of a list of contract cites without any clear definition of KC/Metro's intent before an arbitrator. Publishing a list of contract cites would provide little help to the membership without any useful information. It would not be in the best interest of the Union to have your Union Officers elaborate on their impressions of KC/Metro's protected position. Remember, protected positions are those positions that will be forwarded to interest arbitration and it is in our best interests to allow our lawyers to determine when and how they present the Union's position before an arbitrator.

The claims that your Union officers were keeping secrets were unfounded. Any member could have (and some did) review any and all contract documentation. The information will be maintained for the review of your next contract committee three years hence and any member may review any and all contract documentation upon request.

What Could Have We Done Better?

The following is just the opinion of your Recording Secretary. I believe the primary duty of Union Officers during a term of office is to negotiate improvements to the labor agreement. The huge majority of our membership doesn't get involved at work and pays little attention to their Union other than during contract negotiation when the majority is focused on improvements to wages, benefits and working conditions.

In the recent negotiation and almost without exception each classification requested equity adjustments based on a belief wages were not consistent with other workers performing similar duties. The Union office answered these calls for classification wage increase by having our research committee compare wages at comparable properties. Often the wage comparison cited by individual members were comparisons with others performing similar tasks but not at comparable properties. Comparable properties are other transit agencies of similar size and makeup. The problem with wage comparison with others performing similar tasks but not at comparable properties is in the fact if it isn't reflective of the data interest arbitrators utilize to analyze wages. I suppose one could argue a specific classification such as Vehicle Maintenance mechanics in public transit as a whole are paid less than heavy diesel mechanics in other industries but that encompasses comparing overall compensation across industry lines. I'm told by our legal counsel interest arbitrators do not have a history of making such comparisons.

To forge new ground in wage comparison and to answer the question of what we could have done better I suggest that negotiation of an ongoing union committee dedicated to the creation and maintenance of a database comparing wages, benefits and working conditions among comparable properties and across industry lines. With the generation of this data we could better answer members claims of low wages and develop the research material needed to push wages beyond present limits in interest arbitration.

What Comes Next?

Latter this year the Union will be comparing King County's proposed benefit package with what our benefits committee finds available on the open market. The contract states "benefits for 2010 will be the same unless modified by the Labor-Management Insurance Committee...in which case the Union may negotiate alternate benefits." During worksite visits prior to the ratification vote I heard numerous calls for an open and candid approach to renewing our benefit package. I will do all I can to meet this call by publishing as much benefit information as possible in the News Review.

In closing I'd like to thank all those who voiced support through negotiations, those who voiced opposition and had a better idea, the officers and staff of Local 587 for their forgiveness through trying times and the membership as whole for providing me the opportunity to serve as your Recording Secretary.
SAFETY: The longest standing issue on the South Base Safety Committee agenda is lighting in the yard. People with light meters have measured the light levels in the yard at night and pronounced South Base as the darkest in the system. Some suggestions to remedy the situation have been, vests, paint the buses a lighter color so they reflect the light, lighten the color of the operators uniforms, (so we no longer match the color of the buses) or even increase the amount of light. The last option has a price tag. No one could possibly want to repeat tragedy, so King County what are you going to do?

SERVICE: Recently Kevin Desmond attended a meeting of the South Base Security Committee. Kevin informed those in attendance that we would be continuing with ORCA. This would solve the problems we were having with fare collection, et al.

Some in attendance tried to recommend the system currently in use in Las Vegas as user friendly. The fare box issues transfers and or 24 hour access pass, the driver does not have the paper transfer problems that we have here. The fare box issues and verifies the transfers / 24 hour access passes, signage, announcements, and the on board destination sign for the hearing impaired. This system actually works well for people from all over the world.

Kevin also informed those in attendance that we only needed to be patient for a short time, WHEN the 174, 194 go away, there will be a lot more assets available to Metro.

When Sound Transit starts service, Dec 09, to Sea-Tac Airport, we, Metro will stop the routes 174 & 194. Part of creating Sound Transit was the agreement that there would be no competing service. When the train goes to the airport from Downtown, there will be no busses doing the same run. It matters not that the bus would be 20 minutes faster have no scenery of the famous Rainier Valley, and perhaps even be safer. There will not be a choice on public transit to Sea-Tac Airport from Downtown Seattle. You will take the train.

SCHEDULE: In the old days, when Metro was a stand alone agency there was a budget for Schedule Maintenance, the industry standard seems to be 3% – 5% of service hours.

King County has set a budget for schedule maintenance at ½ %. What this means in the real world is that for all the service in King County there is about one eight hour day of service available, for all bases to share, to fix those runs that are impossible to maintain.

There have been times when the reliability of service was important. The bus came when it was scheduled to and arrived when it was scheduled. For this to occur it is necessary to take into account: traffic at specific times of the day, is it possible for the bus to make the lights, get by the school, or factory, make the connection, hit the traffic light green, you get the idea of the complexities of determining the time for the schedule. Schedule maintenance is an art. there were times when it was known that the bus could not physically make it from point A to point B in the allotted time so there were “Supps” to provide service. Supps, supplemental service was considered a patch until the actual problem could be adequately addressed. Before we were a part of King County the Supps worked until the schedule could be rewritten to reflect the necessary changes so the service once again became reliable for our customers. Perhaps King County will once again come to believe that reliability is a component of public transportation.

It’s easy to blame the faceless machine at the County for our scheduling, service, and safety problems. With a little information it may be possible to return the three S’s to the prominence they enjoyed prior to the “merger”.

| MAY 01 | Charter meeting |
| MAY 02 | Morning meeting |
| MAY 05 | Jefferson Transit Authority meeting |
| MAY 06 | Clallam County meeting |
| MAY 27 | Executive Board meeting |
| MAY 31 | First day of new shake-up for KC Metro Full-time Operators and Vehicle Maintenance members |
| JUNE 02 | First day on new shake-up for KC Metro Part-time Operators |