I n mid-October, I sent a request to Transit Safety to schedule two Joint Safety Committee Meetings; one in November, and one in December. Shortly thereafter I received a call from a very nice Administrative Assistant whom I’ve known for years, giving me two dates to choose from in November for a one hour meeting. I informed her the Union would request at least a two hour meeting as we have a number of issues we’d like to discuss. She told me “I understand Lance, I’ll see what I can do and get back to you.” A few days later I received the following email:

“Lance, in reviewing the calendars regarding scheduling of our next JSC meeting, the only time available (for over an hour) would be on Wednesday, November 24, 2004 at 2:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. 1½ hours in length. This is the only time (over an hour) that is available. Would this be okay to schedule?”

In Defense of…

In my article appearing in the September issue of our News Review, I reported on a member who was terminated for what was defined as a “refusal to test” as a result of a shy bladder condition.

I replied back, via e-mail, and copied all management participants: the Transit Division Director, Deputy Director, Manager of Operations, Manager of Vehicle Maintenance, and Manager of Facilities. My reply was as follows:

“OK, if that’s the best I can get, I’ll take it, we’ll have our next Joint Safety Committee meeting on the 24th of November from 2:30 to 4:00 P.M. Only this time we’ll have it at the Union Office. All the managers know our address,… We’ll see you all then.

P.S: I guess I had the three S’s in the wrong order!”

By Lance F. Norton

...in the September issue of our News Review, I reported on a member who was terminated for what was defined as a “refusal to test”
Executive Board Report

October 26, 2004

The following officers were present: President Lance Norton, Vice President Glen Travis, Financial Secretary Paul Griffin, Recording Secretary Jennie Gil, Marc Auerbach, Paul Bachtel, John Bellinger, Sister Penn Adams, Kenneth Nelson, Brother Kevin Adams, Paul Bachtel, John Bellinger, Judy Young.

Joe Mangiameli was unavailable due to weather issues on the peninsula, Jeff Stambaugh was on vacation.

The following business was conducted:

• Motion by Neal Safrian to recommend taking Greg Muthersbaugh’s grievance to arbitration.

• Motion by Paul Bachtel to purchase twelve five cent remembrance boxes at a cost not to exceed $1,000.

• Motion by Rick Sepolen to authorize $500 to renew our membership with the Transportation Choices Coalition.

• Motion by Paul Bachtel to authorize $600 for a quarterly page ad and table for ten for the A.Phillip Randolph 2004 Awards Banquet.

• Motion by Paul Bachtel to purchase a total of 35 $25 gift certificates to be distributed by draw at the December cycle of meetings as follows: 10 at the Charter meeting, 5 at the Morning meeting, 3 at JTA, 7 at the CTS meeting, and 10 at the retiree’s Christmas luncheon.

Business of the Membership

At the October 2004 cycle of membership meetings the following business was conducted:

• Arbitration requests from Brothers Edward Young, Jerry Lavigna and Bill Reddler were approved by the membership.

The following members were

Tentative Agenda

Membership Meetings:

CHARTER MEETING
Thursday, Nov. 4, 2004
8:00 p.m.
The Labor Temple, Hall #8
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

MORNING MEETING
Friday, Nov. 5, 2004
10:30 a.m.
The Labor Temple, Hall #6
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

JEFFERSON TRANSIT
Monday, Nov. 8, 2004
7:00 p.m.
Port Townsend Rec Center
Port Townsend, WA

CLALLAM TRANSIT
Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2004
7:00 p.m.
Port Angeles Senior Center
328 E. 7th Street, Port Angeles

AMONG TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

Grievance and arbitration update, update on Metro negotiations status, policy changes within Metro on variety of issues, election 2004 update.

Unfinished Business:

There is no unfinished business for November.

SHOP STEWARD TRAINING

New Shop Steward training for all interested stewards and alternates is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17th, 2004. The training will be held at the Union office in the Executive Board room, at 2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230 between Broad and Clay. Training will begin at 9:00 a.m. and run until 5:00 p.m. Training is open to all stewards and alternates who have not attended a training session before.

An accurate headcount is necessary to determine the amount of materials your Shop Steward Committee needs to prepare, and to set up for lunch, which is provided. Please call the union office at (206) 448-8858 and ask staff to put you on the list for shop steward training, or send a memo requesting to be added to the list of attendees.

Detail time will be arranged for those who are scheduled to work on that day. If you need to be detailed in order to attend, please note that on your memo, or make sure to tell staff when you call to sign up, that you need to be detailed. All detail requests must be made no later than November 12th, 2004, by close of business.

In Loving Memory...

How long after you are gone will ripples remain as evidence that you were cast into the pool of life?

— Grant M. Bright

Carl Hahn, retired fifty year member, passed away June 21, 2004. Brother Hahn joined Local 587 in March of 1939 as a mechanic and retired in February of 1977. Brother Hahn was the father of Ross Hahn, Sheetmetal Worker out of North Maintenance. Please take a moment to extend your condolences.

Eugene Adams, retired fifty year member, passed away, no date given. Brother Adams joined Local 587 in December of 1947. No further information available.

Kenneth Nelson, retired member, passed away, no date given. Brother Nelson joined Local 587 in December of 1951. No further information available.

Billie Penn, retired Transit Operator, passed away first weekend of October. Sister Penn joined Local 587 in June of 1976. She was a long-time night driver, and known by many at Central Base, home of the Night Owls. She retired in July of 2001. She leaves behind many fond memories and will be sorely missed.

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King County Home Loan Program

By Paul J. Bachtel, Executive Board Officer

Every so often a mortgage broker contacts our union office attempting to access our membership lists. Some are Local 587 members promoting a sideline (or that of a friend or family member), some are representing private business interests and others are sponsored by an affiliated organization. They have all received the same answer, NO! Not access to our membership lists. At the local level at least, our officers have kept membership names and address files confidential.

King County, on the other hand, has allowed one mortgage broker to mail out its ad to our home address files confidentially. The ad offers discount mortgage products to King County employees through the King County Home Loan Program. Recently, I was in the market to purchase real estate so I compared the mortgage products available through the King County recommended First Horizon Mortgage with a dozen other mortgage brokers in the phone book, online, and through large financial institutions.

For those of you who haven’t shopped for a mortgage before, it entails contacting multiple brokers and requesting a “good faith estimate” of what the mortgage will cost (closing costs) and the interest rate(s) on the loan(s) that will be charged. The length of the loan (term) and the interest rate(s) will determine the monthly payment. The closing costs are what you will pay to process the loan. Mortgage brokers are famous for including what are referred to as “garbage fees” to artificially raise the closing costs and issuing the loan at an high interest rate as (you will pay) the market will bear.

What’s amazing is most Americans spend many months searching for just the right home and then only a few minutes of shopping for the loan to finance what is possibly the biggest purchase of their lives. A small difference in loan costs can translate into tens of thousands of dollars over the life of the loan. Hopefully, you will compare numerous mortgage products in your next home purchase.

Back to the topic I started with. The King County Home Loan Program through First Horizon Mortgage did indeed give me the best price I could find for my home purchase. Although I found comparable loan prices/products, the King County Home Loan Program provided the best product for the lowest price by offering a discount provided by the real estate agent forgoing part of his/her commission to lower the closing costs. My loan officer and the loan processor were patient and pleasant in answering my never-ending questions. My real estate agent was outstanding in professionalism and timeliness in finalizing my purchase.

In sharing with you the positive experience I had with the King County Home Loan Program I still strongly recommend each member do as much comparison-shopping for your mortgage as you do for your home. Compare closing costs and interest rates with at least a dozen other mortgage brokers in what may be the largest purchase of your life.

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Arbitration Update

1. Kenny McCormick: Grieved failure to follow FLSA requirements for travel time for Board/Report/ATL operators. Grievance being held in abeyance while issue pursued in court.


5. Bill Clifford: Grieved Part Time Operators assigned to do special work. Schedule pending.


10. Edward Young: Grieved termination for severe preventable accident. Arbitration request approved by the membership at the October cycle of meetings. Schedule pending.

11. Jerry Lavigna: Grieved termination for severe preventable accident. Arbitration request approved by the membership at the October cycle of meetings. Schedule pending.

The Annual Union “Do-Buy” List

ARTWORK, POSTERS
BOOKS & GIFTS
Northland Poster Collective
Phone: 800-627-3082
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.northlandposter.com
Syracuse Cultural Workers
Phone: (315) 474-1132, ext. 2
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.syracusculturalworkers.com
Powell Books
Phone: 866-201-7601
SHOP ON LINE: powells.com
Union Communication Services (UCS)
Phone: 800-324-2545
SHOP ON LINE: https://sust10.pair.com/unioncommunicationServices.com
Really Big Coloring Books, Inc.
Phone: 800-244-2665
SHOP ON LINE: http://store.yahoo.com/big-coloring-books/bigcolor.html
The Union Shop
MSSalt Inc.
www.unionshop.com
1-888-864-6625

HOLIDAY CANDY
Ghirardelli Chocolate
Phone: 888-402-6262
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.ghirardelli.com
Beresby Chocolate U.S.A.
Phone: 800-434-7727
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.beresbychocolate.com
Russell Stover Candy
Phone: 800-777-0829
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.russellstover.com
See’s Candies
Phone: 800-347-7377
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.sees.com
World Candies
East NY Fancy Basket Co.
718-855-0538

CARDS, GIFT WRAP & CALENDARS
"Cloth Wrap" Wrapping Paper
SOLD IN STORES. This union-made wrapping paper isn’t sold under the "Cloth" name, but you can find it, none-the-less. With some exceptions for gift wrap sold under the Hallmark and American Greetings Names. Wrapping paper currently sold in Walgreens, Shopko, Pamida, Schnucks and United Hardware is produced by Gloo.
Brown & Bigelow
Gift calendars
CLOTHING
Union Jean & Apparel Co.
Phone: 877-692-9899
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.unionjean.com
Justice Clothing
Phone: (412) 661-0620
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.justice.com
No Sweat Apparel Co., Inc.
Phone: 877-972-7827
SHOP ON LINE: www.nosweatapparel.com
New Era Cap Company
Phone: 888-989-0145
SHOP ON LINE: http://neweracap.com
Excellor Sheepskin & Leather
Phone: 800-466-6603
SHOP ON LINE: www.leatheronalethic.com
USWork
Phone: 1-877-672-0675
Shop On Line: www.uswork.com/unionsmade

SHOES & BOOTS
Weinhreuser USA
900-426-0902
SHOP ON LINE: www.jearusa.com
Cape Shoe Co.
900-242-6535
http://capeshoecom
Red Wing Shoes/
Craftsman boots & shoes
900-733-9494
www.redwingshoes.com
Alan Shoe
Aiden of New England
508-947-3936
Aiden shoe: http://www.alanshoe.com
UNION-MADE COMPUTERS
Union Built PC, Inc.
Phone: 877-728-4696
SHOP ON LINE: http://www.unionbuiltpc.com/shopunion
Van Elgoit Information Systems
817-719-5985
http://www.unionmadecomputers.com

FLOWERS
Union Plus Flower Service
Shop online:
http://www.unionplusflowerclub.com

WINES
Charles Krug, Peter Mondavi Family, C. K. Mondavi & Family, & Sons Inc
707-987-2229
http://www.charleskrug.com
Chateau St. Michelle, North Star and Saddle Mountain
Woodinville, Washington
(425) 498-1133
http://www.st-michelle.com
Columbia Crest Grand Estates
(800) 475-2061
info@columbiacrest.com
http://www.columbiacrest.com
Frey Brothers
www.freybrothers.com
Chardonnay: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Syrah.
Gallo of Sonoma
www.gallosonnoma.com
Cabinet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Syrah and Sangiovese.
Banchoo Bazar, Dancing Bull
www란초보자라호
Gallo of Sonoma
Zinfandel, Pinot Gris, Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah
Scheid Vineyards
831-855-9990
http://www.scheidwines.com
Gruesser, Washington
509-786-5538
http://www.gruessers.com
St. Supery Vineyard and Winery
Rutherford, California
(707)963-4567
http://www.stsupery.com
Roederer Estate
S. Anderson Vineyards, Inc.
707-833-8463

MUSIC
Vincent Bach
Saxophones, trumpets, cornets, flugelhorns, trombones, marching brass, baritone horns, tubas
Brands: Bach, Selmer USA, Buescher, Bundy Yamaha Piccolo, trumpets, trombones, clarinets
Selmer Co., Inc
Flutes, clarinets, harp clarinets, oboes, bassoon
Brands: Selmer, Buescher (for export)

JUKE BOXES
Rowe International
Brands: Rowe Encore, Nostalgia, and Starbord Nutbon
Anne Fecney
Music CDs, recorded music, live music, music performances. Her recordings include: “Have you been to jail for justice?”, “Heartland”, “Look to the left” and “Union Made”

TOYS AND GAMES
Tasco Industries
202-333-5549
Hasbro
Fisher Price
Goldn Family Entertainment
Activity boxes, cloth blocks for infants, commercial printing, games and puzzles.
Lobster Games
Games, gag gifts
Radio Flyer Wagons
Testor Corp.
Testor hobby kits, Testor hobby supplies

VACATION GET-AWAYS
UnionVacations.com
Phone Reservations: 888-864-0870
ON LINE RESERVATIONS:
http://www.unionvacations.com

NLI America “Pride of Aloha”
Phone Reservations: 1-800-327-7030 (ext. 6)
http://www.nli.com/voyage/pricing/index.htm
For a complete list of union-represented airline, go to www.unionlabel.org and drag on “Union-Made Products & Services” (upper left corner of screen).

You can also go to www.unionlabel.org and click on “Travel Planner” to find union hotels, restaurants and other travel related sites and services for states and cities across the country.

continued on page 3
Earlier this month in the beautiful city of Atlanta, Georgia, the International Bus Roadeo was held in conjunction with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Conference. For the second year in a row, Metro/King County Vehicle Maintenance members Leonard Emry, Ryan Stringfellow and Larry Fitzpatrick took First Place in the Maintenance Roadeo.

In the Maintenance event, forty-nine teams of mechanics compete in a series of timed, troubleshooting exercises. These forty-nine teams, winners of the maintenance roadeos in their various regions, represent the cream of the crop in the United States and Canada. The mechanic teams are charged with fixing mechanical problems such that they might encounter on the job, and the problems are intentionally rigged to make them harder to find and fix. There were five events involving drive train systems, vehicle air brake components, an air conditioning module, and a coach inspection. There was also a written test they had to take, and the combination of scores of all these events determines the winners. Not only did Brothers Emry, Stringfellow and Fitzpatrick win with the highest overall score, but they also had the top score in two of the six individual events.

In the Transit Operator competition, driving skills and safety practices are tested among drivers from around the United States and Canada. This year King County/Metro Transit Operator Michael Grady won the honor of participating. Michael has been alternating the win with Brother Don Brady for several years now. This year Brother Grady placed 47th out of 79 contestants in the 40’ bus competition. Not to be outdone by the Big Boys, Clallam Transit sent 587 member Curt Register, Brother Register, who has been a Transit Operator with CTS since 1984, competed in the 35’ bus division, placing 7th, which was the highest place achieved among all Washington State participants.

The amazing talent of the members of Local 587 never ceases to amaze me! Congratulations fel-las, to all of you, and high praises for those who had the courage to participate.

Local 587 Members Score Another Win!

By Recording Secretary Jennie Gil

SPOR TING GOODS
Winchester-U.S. Repeating Arms Co.
800.333.3298
http://www.winchester-guns.com

Carolina Hatters Inc.
616-724-4417
SHOPONLINE
http://www.carolinahat.com/pcid/

Top Flight Golf Balls
Top Flight, by the Callaway Golf Co.
800.588.9936
http://www.callawaygolf.com/

LocatorsDefault.aspx

PowerBilt Golf Clubs
Hillerich & Bradsby Co.
800-265-0525
http://www.powerbilt.com/dealers

TPS Hockey Sticks
800-265-0525
http://www.tphockey.com/dealers.asp

Louisville Slugger (Wood Baseball Bats)
Hillerich & Bradsby Co.
800-265-0525 or
customer.service@slugger.com
SHOPONLIN E
http://www.slaggergifts.com

Wilson Footballs
http://www.wilson.com/wilson/location/dealer

Click n’ Shop for the Holidays
New ULSTD Website Features All-Union Gifts
www.ShopUnionMade.org is open for business!

Union-made goods and services now are instantly available, online, for the public to see and buy. Current offerings include: clothes, shoes, computers, greeting cards and gift wrap, sports equipment, toys and games. Check the site frequently as the Department will add new items and gift ideas every day.

You can save money and jobs—www.ShopUnionMade.org can protect (and create) many thousands of good jobs.

U.S. consumers will spend $1 trillion between now and December 31. Imagine the impact if just a fraction of those dollars go toward union-made products and services. Here’s how you can help:

Spread the word about ShopUnionMade.org.

Pledge to buy at least one union-made item. Take the pledge and have friends and family do the same!

Matt Bates, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO Union Label & Service Trades Department said the all-union shopping site will be a year-round operation because that is what consumers demand.

“Shoppers spent $56 billion in internet sales last year, and on-line spending is doubling every two to three years. Every day we receive e-mails and calls from people who want to support good jobs by buying union-made goods and services. The web site will reach millions of people, 24 hours a day, with a quick convenient way to shop union,” Bates said.

“The public is ready for this. People have seen millions of good jobs disappear and they are looking for ways to take a stand and make a difference,” he added.

The AFL-CIO will target the peak of the holiday shopping season by promoting “Buy Union Week” Nov. 26 through Dec. 5. The newly-launched, all-union shopping site will be a cornerstone of that campaign.
Letters to the Editor...

East Base Staff Parking Lot

Letter to the Editor:

As an employee who works at East Base in Vehicle Maintenance, I would like to respond to the article on the East Base Staff parking lot.

We employees at East Base thought of the parking lot disruption as temporary because of the construction for the base remodel. The parking situation was difficult because relief cars (N.R.V.s) were placed in the upper employee parking area. Portables for offices for chiefs and the base supervisor were placed in the original N.R.V. parking lot. At the same time, Bellevue Base employees would park their cars at E.B. because of their parking problems. The contractors were also parking in our lot. So there was a shortage of parking all around.

2815 Second Avenue Suite 230 Seattle, WA 98121

Notice to all readers:

Views and opinions expressed in News Review articles are those of the authors and not necessarily the official position of Local 587

Send in your opinions:

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

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

The Three S’s

(Safety and Security are Secondary)

By Brian Sherlock, Executive Board Officer

T

hat is what management is telling both employees and the inevitable future victims of our poorly chosen coaches. Recent budget cuts send that message to families whose loved ones will be added to the list of needless fatalities. The same message goes to employees who are unlucky in rolling the dice by doing their best to operate fatally flawed equipment. They will take the blame and more often than not have their careers ended by accidents which could easily be prevented . . . by management. After a half-decade of foot dragging in removing unsafe mirrors, promises of change have yet again been broken. This time, the excuse is an accounting error amounting to only one quarter of one percent of the budget.

Base Safety Awareness Committees and Base Security Committees have also been axed in prevention of one percent of one security failure or one unseen pedestrian being struck could easily save more than the cost of getting our priorities and actions in line with the rhetoric to which management holds everyone but themselves responsible.

bad example for young drivers

Editor’s note: The following letter to the editor was submitted to the Seattle Times by Sister Ruth Wilson, in response to a letter she saw about a student’s scary driving-school story. To date Sister Wilson states it has not yet been printed.

As the mother of 4 Shorecrest graduates and a Metro Bus Driver I was appalled to read a Shorecrest student’s account of “Local teens scary driving school moments” (Times Oct. 4, 2004). The student recounts a bus cutting them off and his instructor flipping off the bus driver and saying he hates bus drivers. Great example there, Mr. Instructor! I wonder if the driving instructor is aware of the state law that says a vehicle is to yield to a bus pulling away from a bus zone. When teaching my children to drive I warned them to be prepared to stop and yield if they saw a bus stopped at a bus zone. As far as hating bus drivers . . . give them a break! They are just trying to get the 50-plus people on their bus to their destination, and that is 50-plus cars not in front of you. The passengers on the bus are doing you a service cutting down on traffic congestion, air pollution and gas consumption. So try to remember that when you have a bus in front of you, rather than the message of hate and rage this instructor was teaching.

Ruth Wilson, #3927 North Operations

Guest Editorial...

By Brian Sherlock, Executive Board Officer

1977 construction) in the middle of the floor. He asked the King County Engineer, “What is this doing back?” The engineer replied, “We’re trying to save money on the little things!” This sink was un-cleanable and rusted, and he was going to install it in the new cabinets.

Our day shift Chief and our Base Supervisor heard of this and personally went to a hardware store and purchased a new sink for our lunchroom.

Thank you for your respect! East Base V.M. employees appreciate what you did for us.

STORY #2 “C” Fold Towels! Facilities management has made the decision to remove “C” fold towels from all of Vehicle Maintenance and Facilities Maintenance employees in order to cut costs.

At the East Base Vehicle Maintenance lunchroom, employees go through one case in approximately two months. I walked into Opera- tions and found two cases against a wall with no posted notice asking for help in reducing usage. East Base Operations is allocated two cases per day, of which 95% end up in the cyclones unused. I’ve been employed at Metro for almost 25 years and “C” fold towels have always been available.

My question is this—are the stories discussed unfair (arbitrary, capricious, and unreasonable) or just a plain case of the sillys?

Carolyne Keogh, Upholsterer E. B. Vehicle Maintenance

Reserves sufficient to cover these issues are available, and even if management does not want to use them, borrowing could easily bridge until the next fiscal year. It is stunningly short-sighted not to recognize that preventing just one security failure or one unseen pedestrian being struck could easily save more than the cost of getting our priorities and actions in line with the rhetoric to which management holds everyone but themselves responsible.
Technological Change & Sick Leave Update and the EB parking...

By Jeff Stambaugh, Mike Whitehead, John Bellinger

In September of 2003 there were around 150 grievances filed from the classification of Mechanics, ET’s and ESW’s, with regard to impacts in the workplace from new technology. As part of the resolution Metro agreed to discuss this issue at (that time) the upcoming negotiations. A committee was formed of VM members from various classifications to study the impact of the new technology on the members. Kim Martin, Eric Rongren, James Jakeman, Sylvia Betts, Terry Hino, Bill Wallace, Nick Caraway, Leo Swan and Jeff Stambaugh served as this committee. They met and discussed several impacts and changes and how they affected different classifications.

Well, through some strange twist of the mighty County and political process we did not hold negotiations in the traditional sense. The County offered an extension on our contract, with the opportunity to make minor changes and clean up or clear up language that might have caused problems in the last three years. All the different classifications’ representatives would have this opportunity. So we in VM had a few meetings, we walked through a few minor word changes, and discussed existing MOA’s and if they should be new language.

As most of you know this technological change issue was one of two items (the other being sick leave language) left open for further discussion. After much thought and work an outline was put together with facts and figures with regards to how working conditions have changed and how they have affected our members. This outline was then presented to Metro’s bargaining team (Steve Grissom, Dennis Fingeon and Dave Levin). As of this writing we have had four meetings, made a few minor word changes, and discussed existing MOA’s and if they should be new language.

As of this writing the changes and clean up or clear up or any other name that might be used to resolve this issue were settled by a neutral arbitrator. We are sad to see that this issue at (that time) the upcoming negotiations. A committee was formed of VM members from various classifications to study the impact of the new technology on the members. Kim Martin, Eric Rongren, James Jakeman, Sylvia Betts, Terry Hino, Bill Wallace, Nick Caraway, Leo Swan and Jeff Stambaugh served as this committee. They met and discussed several impacts and changes and how they affected different classifications.

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Ratifying the Contract

On October 4th President Norton accompanied Executive Board Officers Paul Bachtel, Rick Sepolen, Chris Daniels, Alan Huston, Paul Neil, Jeff Stambaugh and Mike Whitehead, to a King County Council hearing. One of the Council agenda items was the vote to accept the 587 Labor Agreement. It was an interesting afternoon to see the Council at work with various issues. When the Council reached our agenda item it was impressive to hear the positive remarks from the Council directed at this local. Julia Patterson, District 13, who sits on the Labor, Operations and Technology committee started with positive remarks that set a tone that echoed through the chamber.

After our testimony Councilmember Dwight Pelz followed up with his observation of the pride he sees in our members, and that King County is proud to have us providing the service that we do. Council Vice-Chair Peter von Reichbauer added his kind words and a vote was cast. Nine council members were present and all nine voted to accept our labor agreement, so as of November 1st we have a new 3 year agreement. If you only retain one line from this article, please remember this: it is you, the 587 members that make this agency work, and that was recognized on this day by your Board Officers and the Honorable Members of the King County Council.

Permit to park?

Last off there is a cut-out permit available to all members, be they employees, staff, personnel, squad, crew, subordinate, team members, gang members, chief cook and bottle washers, or any other name that might be used by Metro East Base Management identifying you as a member of the Transit Team at that Base for that current pick. Hopefully with this permit you will be allowed to park in all lots that private cars are allowed to park in. If not, your VM representatives hope the mothers of the persons who are allowing this segregation to happen will read this article, be saddened by these actions, and influence them to do the right thing. (Editor’s Note: Rumor has it that the East VM Supervisor has already taken this affirmative step and instructed his chiefs and leads to park in the regular lot with the rest of the employees. If this rumor is true, hats off to you, Mr. N.)

VM “we are all in this together...”
What’s that Package Under the Seat?

By Carl C. Jackson, Atlantic Base Operations

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of attending the 28th Annual Public Transportation Conference. This year, it was in Yakima, WA. I didn’t know much about Yakima to start, but by the end of the conference, I was well acquainted with this nice little city in the lower middle of the state. I’ll get into that later.

The theme for this year’s conference was “Exploring Transportation Connections”. In reality, the emphasis was on the new transit security awareness and all that goes along with it.

There are many issues that have made themselves present in this “security” conscious 21st century land of ours. A lot of it starts with creating a safe work environment, from a security standpoint. Drivers and rail operators MUST be aware of any situation that deviates from the norm. Business as usual on buses in Seattle should become a thing of the past because it does have the tendency to mask any subtle plot that a terrorist might want to execute. Don’t allow yourselves the offhanded attitude that such things can’t/won’t happen here in the Puget Sound region; if any of you remember, the US Border Patrol intercepted a plot to blow up Seattle landmarks as well as bomb LA International Airport. A car packed with explosives in the trunk was stopped as it came off the ferry from Canada.

By way of this conference, I’ll pass along some of the important points and issues that were discussed:

• The Transit Watch Program:

  1. Part of a national program to increase security awareness on our buses and trains.
  2. Encourage the public and staff to be aware of what’s happening on our buses.
  3. Easily patterned after most Neighborhood Watch Programs.

• Roles & Responsibilities:

  1. Frontline employees must be aware of changes/imposition of security changes.
  2. Supervisors – offer support and help to operators in all situations.
  3. Managers – create rules & policies that support security awareness.

• When a transit vehicle has been left unattended:

  1. Look for signs of tampering in compartments, e.g. open compartment panels, both inside and outside.
  2. Any items attached with adhesive tape or magnets.
  3. Check under seats for hidden items – walk through your coach at terminal and layover areas.

While some of these topics would seem like common sense activities, we can no longer assume that common sense will prevail when an unidentifiable parcel or valise is found on a transit vehicle, in a terminal or at a layover area. If many of you do come across such items, call for help and remain calm!

Always err on the side of caution; have everyone evacuate the coach and move to a safe distance. DO NOT PLAY THE HERO! This is not a “Made-for-TV-Movie” scenario or script. Many people have lost their lives in the past year by not paying attention to the obvious changes in their work environment from day-to-day.

This edict is not a call to single out anyone that seems “suspicious” (let’s leave Pike Street out of this for now) by the way they act or speak, but there are behavior patterns that might indicate that the individual is on a different career path. Always try to use good judgment at all times when making any assessment of a peculiar situation.

Having said all of the above, it’s time to ask that our employer, our elected officials, and our labor unions all come together at the table with Emergency Response Managers and form a working committee that will draft a comprehensive emergency plan for our region. If such a plan does exist on paper already, then it should be made known to first-line employees so that we can understand its inner workings and be made to feel as stakeholders in the process.

The more we know, the better we can respond to disasters and help save lives.

As for the conference, it was not as well planned as I would have liked. At previous conferences, the host transit agency had shuttles that ran between the conference hall and the various hotels that were scattered around town. In this case, I had to drive my car from the hotel to the conference center and other venues, thereby bypassing the theme of the whole conference – Exploring Transportation Connections. Oh well, maybe they’ll get it right next year.

Metro Employee Recreational Activities Association (MERAAs) and King County

2004 Holiday Party

Saturday, December 4, 2004 • Downtown Hilton Seattle - Pacific Ballroom

1303 - 6th Avenue, Seattle, WA  98101

Social Hour: 6pm – 7 pm

Dinner: 7pm – 8:45 pm

Door Prizes: 9:00 pm

Entertainment and Dancing: 9:30pm – 1am

Get Your Tickets Early!

$40.00 per person

Garage Parking $5.00

$1000 Worth of Door Prizes To Be Given Away

Entertainment will be provided by “SHADES”

Dinner Buffet Menu

• Smoked Salmon Mousse with Cocktail Bagels • House Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette
  • Mediterranean Pasta Salad • Prime Rib • Northwest Salmon with Lemon Buere Blanc • Rosemary Chicken
  • Rice Pilaf, Roasted Gold Potatoes • Tomato Basil Fettuccine • Seasonal Vegetables
  • Assorted Cakes, Cheese Cakes & Chocolate Mousse with Raspberry Sauce
  • Regular & Decaffeinated Coffee & Teas

Tickets are available by calling the MERAA Hotline at: (206) 684-1978 or by contacting your MERAA Rep.
By 8:30 a.m. the morning of Saturday, September 25, 2004, members of ATU Local 587, family and friends gathered at Harvey Field in Snohomish to participate in the 2004 “Jump for Joy” to benefit the Sparrow Foundation Club. We had all been diligently collecting pledges and donations for this great cause. 100% of the money donated goes to terminally ill kids. When we signed up to jump we promised Sparrow that we would each raise $1000.00. Many of you now reading this were instrumental in achieving this goal.

Our greatest fear was realized that fateful morning. Fog! You can’t go up in an airplane if you can’t see where to come down. At noon when the fog had cleared, there were other folks who had booked space for that time, so we were basically bumped because of the weather. While most of our group rescheduled the jump for the following weekend, some of us chose to take the chance that a spot later in the day might open up. Angela Wick, my daughter-in-law who is a Part-Time Transit Operator at Metro, had signed up to jump with me. So together we waited.

Shortly after 6:00 p.m. Angela and I were included in the list of those in the last load of the day. This was my second skydive and Angela’s’ first so we were jumping tandem. I was assigned to the same instructor that I jumped with last year. His name is Gee. He said he remembered me but I believe it is like someone who rode the bus once a few years ago and thinks that you may be the nice driver that they remember. On my first jump I did a backwards summersault out of the plane. When he asked me what I wanted to do I said bigger, better, more.

It was decided that this time we would be the first pair out of the plane, and the camera man for my video would have to get out first so he would be able to capture the moment. Angela and her instructor would be the second pair to jump. I was right next to the roll down door.

By the time we jumped the day was crystal clear. We could see for miles, including Mount Rainier to the South and Mount Baker to the north, as well as all the fields and rivers, lakes and streams. As we neared the jump altitude my instructor asked me if I could get really small so we could do some summersaults. I can do this very well. Away we went. I couldn’t count but the video told all, we did 4 summersaults, then assumed the position for free fall. My camera man, Kelly, maneuvered over to us and shook my hand. What a rush, I had no idea that he would do this, it was fabulous. Oh no! We are waving good-bye to Kelly. This can mean only one thing - parachute opening. Suddenly I could hear sounds again. It is so quiet after free fall, peaceful, a chance to look around. As late as it was we are treated to the sunset in the west, the moon has come out early to say howdy in the east. Below there is a corn maze with its intricate twisting pattern. Other crops, rivers appearing as twisting ribbons, button-size lakes.

I got to steer. If you pull down really hard and fast with one hand you spin almost level with your parachute. I had 2 hands so I wanted to spin both ways; then my instructor wanted to show me something. When he dumped the air from the parachute, it was amazing. I was in awe of the entire trip. The ground approached rapidly. I don’t know how we did it but not only were the 2 camera-men on the ground already but so was Angela. She beat me down. Kelly was there asking me about my ride and I told him that I want to go again. Angela came over, we linked arms and looked at the camera and said, “Thank You for your Support”.

Without all of you this wonderful experience would never have happened and those kids would still be in need of vital medical care. Thank you all who participated, contributed, and encouraged us.

All photos courtesy of Skydive Snohomish

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By Executive Board Officer Dee Wakenight

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**Updated on Safety Harnesses in the Low Floor Buses**

Submitted by Bill Clifford

**Ed. Note:** In the October issue of the News Review, Bill Clifford wrote on the safety harnesses in the low floor buses. Following is the response from Warranty Admin.istrator Lynn Matteoni to Safety Officer Dale Lewis, who passed it on to Bill Clifford, who asked me to pass it on to the membership.

Please let Mr. Clifford know that I have notified the Prime Contractor of the fleet defect regarding the sensitivity of the seat belt mechanism. I have received information back and am aware of a pending redesign/refit that will be performed on the mounting bracket for the seat belt. It is important that the folks understand that there is nothing wrong with the mechanism itself, it is functioning correctly as designed to protect the driver. The locking mechanism is by design supposed to lock up at 15 degrees vertical. The current configuration of the design and installation of the mounting bracket is already at 15 degrees which is why the Operator movement is limited. The involved manufacturers are working on redesigning the mounting bracket which will geometrically change the seat belt configuration and minimize this lock up condition.

**Request for a “Direct to the Source” Response**

Submitted by Recording Secretary, Jennie Gil

**Editor’s Note:** In last month’s News Review, a question was posed to Operations Manager Jim O’Rourke regarding the new edict that Ryerson Base employees would be required to park in the new parking garage or suffer disciplinary consequences (sounds like my dad and the green beans). Mr. O’Rourke, showing true managerial qualities, responded as follows:

“My answer would be that this is a Ryerson issue and, thus, is under the purview of the Ryerson Supervisors (Abdul Alidina and Scotty Conyne). In addition, I asked your question about deliveries to the base and the answer I got is that those would also be done by parking in the garage, at least as long as further construction is underway on base property. There will be a hand truck available in the base. I don’t know how VM will deal with parts deliveries. Bicycle parking will be in the garage and lockers will be provided. I will monitor overall complaints about the situations, but I will leave solutions to problems to the judgment of base supervisors.”

**Editor’s Note:** The response regarding deliveries raised some eyebrows. I can just see Delicor or other food service vendors humping that stuff across that ramp in the freezing rain in January, and trying to get into that little elevator. It also raises questions as to the safety of your hammy Recording Secretary in delivering several stacks of newsletters under the same conditions, and whether or not Local 587 could recover damages from King County should she fall and suffer an on the job injury in those circumstances. Which raises even further concerns about the safety of the employees of Ryerson Base themselves, given the uncovered walkway, the steepness of the stairs, etc. etc. And since the base has decreed that parking will be in the garage or penalties will be incurred, then it makes any injury occurring on that walkway or stairs to be a covered L&I injury. But I think we should let WISA deal with that. Below is the response submitted by Ryerson Base Supervisor Abdul Alidina.

**TO Jim O’Rourke**

**FROM: Abdul Alidina**

**SUBJECT: Parking Garage Response**

Every base is unique. Historically, Ryerson Base has allowed vehicles to travel through the yard in order for disabled and Operator-of-the-Month operators to park next to the building. In addition, Ryerson Base has been very liberal allowing employees to be dropped off at the door. Over a period of time this practice has developed into some employees regularly driving up to the building, running in to sign-in, and then moving their vehicles to the designated parking lot. However, circumstances have changed. There are number of issues related to employees driving through the yard. However, two of the major concerns are employee yard safety and demands of the Homeland Security Department.

The yard safety is obvious given the unfortunate tragedy, which occurred in the Central Base yard. The conditions at Ryerson are much worse due to employees speeding through the yard in their private vehicles. Sometimes the drivers of these vehicles are spouses or friends, in which case, Metro has very little control in gaining their compliance to observe the 15MPH yard speed limit. Furthermore, anticipating the pedestrian traffic flow from the sky bridge to the building will create even more hazardous conditions for employees walking through the yard. There has been a great demand from the employees to address these concerns. Secondly, after 9-11, the Department of Homeland Security has provided very specific guidelines to the Transportation industry. One of the guidelines is with respect to non-operational vehicles parking next to operations buildings.

The other major concern is the business needs of the Base. Employees who, at the last minute, drive up to the base, sign-in, and then park their vehicles, often leave the base late. Ryerson Base has the highest percentage of base delays in the system. This seriously impacts good customer service delivery. If this practice continues where employees park their vehicle in the new garage, after signing in, the base delay problem would become even more egregious. That simply not acceptable.

The Ryerson management staff in response to these and other concerns has actively been discussing these issues with employees and local union leadership. The conclusions were obvious that we could not allow private vehicles to speed through the yard, jeopardizing the safety of our employees. The availability of the parking garage is fortuitous in helping to resolve this problem and the decision was obvious, as well.

Once the decision was made and communicated to the local union leadership, it was important to also communicate this decision to the employees. A flyer was posted at the base and at the pick informing operators of the impending change. Our hope was that advance notice would allow operators to make an informed decision when picking.

In summation, there are four things to note:

1. This change brings Ryerson into compliance with the other bases where employees are not allowed to drive their private vehicles through the yard.
2. It meets a business need of reducing base delays.
3. It enhances employee safety.
4. It satisfies Homeland Security requirements.

The bottom line is that this decision protects employees safety and security and was established in the interest of everyone working at Ryerson Base.

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2. It meets a business need of reducing base delays.
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4. It satisfies Homeland Security requirements.
I t is not wise to look a gift horse in the mouth, and I hope we do not close the door on open, written, and published communication between Metro management and the members of Local 587. On behalf of the members, your Officers are appreciative that both Operations Manager Jim O’Bourke and Ryerson Base Supervisor Abdul Aldina took the time to respond to the question we posed. But... With all due respect to the two managers in question, we have some objections. First of all, we were stymied by Mr. Aldina’s stating that Metro management staff had been actively communicating these issues with the local union leadership, and that once the decision was made it was communicated to that same local union leadership. Until we received Mr. Aldina’s letter, it was the first we in this office had heard of this. After a little digging, we can only conclude that by “local union leadership” Mr. Aldina must have been referring to Executive Board Officer Judy Young and Shop Steward N. Jackson. As such, we have both stated they have had at least one conversation with Mr. Aldina about this issue.

I did some careful (although informal) analysis of Mr. Aldina’s assertion that this policy will bring Ryerson into compliance with other bases. The base is allowed to bring their private vehicles into the base yard. Given my role as “paper girl,” I am quite familiar with all the bus yards and parking lots in the system, and with their traffic patterns. I also frequently observe various private vehicles in the yards at different locations. So with all due respect, Mr. Aldina, I beg to differ with your statement for the following reasons. At East Base, the disability parking requires those vehicles to drive through the yard. Ditto for the Atlantic and Central Maintenance disability parking, visitor parking, and employees of the quarterly/year parking. While that same specialized parking at South does not require the vehicles to “pass through” the yard itself, it does require private vehicles to share the same entrance with departing and arriving coaches. And Central/Atlantic Operations (at least half a dozen parking places in the back of the building, again requiring those private vehicles (there are no parking signs reserving those spaces for County vehicles) to traipse through the Central yard, either facing the North side of the building because Part-time pick staff uses them during pick for ease of loading and unloading pick material. With regards to the Homeland Security and Security guidelines, give me a break! Let’s just look at North Base, where the parking lot sits directly over half the bus yard and abuts directly against the Operations building. Some of Central/Atlantic’s parking is also next to the building. Refer back to the previous paragraph regarding both disabled and employee of the quarter/year/shakeup parking for some of the other bases. Sorry, Abdul, that one just doesn’t wash.

Mr. Aldina goes on to address the issue of Safety, contending the new policy will enhance employee safety. To quote my friend Maynard N. Jackson: “Safety First” is a little like bombing Iraq to get Osama bin Laden, “Safety First” being Metro’s counterpart to “current” (President Bush’s cry for patriotism. If one looks at the garage structure and the (uncovered) walkway across E-3 and, most especially, where it drops what will be the groups of pedestrians coming in for the various sign in clusters, one has to ask where the safety is. It would have been far safer to have either extended the walkway to reach the building itself, or, at the very least, the end of the building, rather than to the outside of the bus lane of travel. So Operators still have to cross the yard to get to the window. In addition, Ryerson Operators have voiced concern over their security in the parking garage. Is there going to be someone either patrolling the yard or monitoring (from somewhere other than the Ryerson window on a security camera) entrance and egress to that parking lot? So to use “safety” as a justifier here also falls somewhat short. In fact, I find it much less safe and secure...

So what’s left? I would be willing to bet one of the major drivers here (pardon the pun) is the issue of base delays. It is my understanding that Ryerson Base has the highest incidence of base delays in the system. It may be Mr. Aldina’s conclusion those running late drive into the yard, sign in, and then have to get back to the building. The new policy is to get to the employee parking lot by that time they get to their bus they are late leaving. Mr. Aldina states this as one of the areas he hopes to address with this policy. I will admit that the configuration of the Ryerson base yard and surrounding area is a little different than that of all the other bases. It is possible at most of the other bases to drive up to the door without going through the yard. But applying the same principle to the Bellevue base drivers, where one can approach the front door quickly coming off SR 520, running down the hill and turning into the base without actually going through the yard, one would think that Bellevue’s base delay rate would be at least as high as Ryerson’s, especially since it takes at least as long to drive back around to the Bellevue employee parking lot. But Mr. Aldina, you will never be able to overcome base delays and traffic tie-ups that cause Operators to cut their sign-in too close. You can’t physically stop a car from going through any gate a bus can use, and you don’t have the staff to write up every driver who does it. If an Operator who is running late is given a choice between a sure-fire miss and the possibility of a PR for driving their car through the yard to sign in, which do you think they are going to choose? And then there is picking up paychecks, getting in the layoff book, dropping off newsletters, picking up election materials, etc. etc. Why not accommodate these somehow? At all other bases one can get reasonably close to the building, park for a couple minutes to run in and out, and then be on their way. But given the configuration of Ryerson Base with the front of the building either facing the north side of the bus yard or facing Fourth Avenue, depending on your perspective, there is no other choice than to drive through the yard. It seems to me a traffic cut-out or maybe base drive-way right at the Fourth Avenue entrance would make more sense.

It seems to me a traffic cut-out or maybe base drive-way right at the Fourth Avenue entrance would make more sense.

What it comes down to is that once again Metro has instituted a policy with the heavy hand of discipline as consequence in order to address a problem for which they do not have an explanation. And then they wrap it up in the wrapping paper of “Safety” or “Home- land Security.” I fail to see how this policy is to do anything but cause other ways to solve problems. But this seems to be all we know. What is it they say about the devil you know or the devil you don’t know?

With regards to the Homeland Security and Security guidelines, give me a break! Let’s just look at North Base, where the parking lot
A Funny Thing Happened on My Way to…

By Recording Secretary Jennie Gil

It has taken me some time to think this one through. Breach in security. Wow.

S
curity is such a devious word. It is so vague and subject to each individual’s perception of the world or environment around them. Lately security has become the big buzzword among us, in our workplaces, transportation centers, schools, and any other place where more than two people congregate for almost any purpose whatsoever. It is also, consequently, becoming a source of some of our daily inconveniences.

Take, for instance, some of the new policies implemented around King County Metro, such as the requirement that we all visibly display our ID badges when on County premises. Employees are supposed to question the presence of any individual on County premises that does not “appear to belong there”. This office has been told that due to new Homeland Security guidelines, there will be no non-operational vehicles allowed next to operations buildings (or at least at Ryerson Operations base). Yet bus after bus travels through the tunnel, directly under the city of Seattle every single day, loaded with people whom no one has screened or checked. Thousands of people walk into and out of the various tunnel stations all day long with nary a question of whether or not they belong there. So those most impacted by these new policies and guidelines are everyone who works here. And how much safer are we? Who are we really being protected from?

Deliveries Interrupts

One of my duties as Recording Secretary is to deliver the monthly issue of our News Review. Since April of 1998 when I took office, unless a schedule conflict or massive work load requires me to assign the duty to someone else, every month I drive around in my personal vehicle to every single worksite within the County, as well as our other bargaining units, delivering the newsletter. This has always been one of my favorite tasks as it puts me in potential direct contact with most of the entire system every month. But for that very same reason it can be quite time consuming. Usually my only opportunity at work site visits, it can take me up to or more than a full work day to cover just the King County portion of my “paper route.”

“Paper route” consists of well over one thousand sites, dozens stops, climbing in and out of the car, unloading stacks of newsletters. Most Operations bases employ well over three hundred members. Paper bundles are heavy. I get as close as I can to each delivery site to 1) reduce the load I have to carry, and 2) reduce the time it takes to do so. Since 9/11 there have been some impact on the process, but due to a variety of circumstances, I did not see how much it was being affected until last month.

One of my stops is inside the tunnel at IDS (the south end of the tunnel where the Tunnel Facilities building is located). For years I have always driven in, parked next to the building, run in and dropped a stack of papers in the lunch room and driven back out. Almost immediately after 9/11, that changed. A guard shack appeared at the entrance of the tunnel. And then a King County Sheriff car or a Metro Transit Police car appeared opposite to the guard shack, as reinforcement, I suppose. I have no objections to stopping to identify myself, and I always did so. I was also instructed me a couple more times where I was going and why. He then told me to proceed to the next security station. OK?

I proceeded up towards the tunnel entrance where I encountered the same guard shack and guard, and the same County Sheriff car I have seen every month. The guard at the guard shack must have recognized me and gotten the word from Tunnel Control, because he waved me on through. I parked by the building, left my papers, and got back in my car. As I was leaving, the tunnel supervisor approached me in the little cart they use to get around in the tunnel. He was surprised I had returned and asked if I had returned in, he was under the impression I was to be detained at the second guard shack and he was to meet me there, get my load of newsletters and take them into Tunnel Facilities himself. OK?

I then went on with my delivery...