

MAY 2004

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ATU

LOCAL 587

# News Review

52

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VOL. XXVII, NO. 5



## The President's Report

# Training, COPE, and Retirement

By Lance Norton



Lance F. Norton

### Shop Steward Training

APPROXIMATELY THREE TIMES a year, shortly after each Transit Operator and Vehicle Maintenance shakeup, Local 587 conducts training for new shop stewards. In addition, we periodically provide advanced shop steward training and chief shop steward training.

In the spirit of cooperation, Local 587 has extended invitations to other ATU Locals statewide to attend our training. After our last training session, Dave

Plummer, President/Business Rep from Local 1384, Olympia, sent the following note, "...thanks for letting my folks attend your steward training. Both of my members thought it was well presented, challenging, informative and worth every minute of it. Both of them came away with an appreciation that we are all ATU in the state and that the grievance process works pretty much the same everywhere. Please tell whoever did the training my thoughts and Thanks. If it's okay, I would like to continue to send people to your training..."

Our shop steward trainers are Executive Board Officers Dee Wakenight, Paul Bachtel, and Neal Safrin. They provide interesting training that is never dull. If you've ever considered being a shop steward but didn't know how to go about it, simply send a note to Recording Secretary Jennie Gil after your next pick and tell her you'd like to be a shop steward or an alternate shop steward. Include a request for our next training session. If the training is on your regular workday we will take you off your work and pay your time loss. We also provide morning donuts and a box lunch. I can assure you that you'll come away from the training ses-

sion with a much better understanding of all that your union does for our members.

### ATU COPE

Thanks to your generosity Local 587 is the recipient of the 2003 Chairman's Award from our International. The Chairman's Award is the highest award COPE honor a local can receive, and the awards are categorized according to a local's size. Our local is in the category of locals with membership of over 1,501, which is the largest membership category.

Our current membership of

4100 members contributed over \$94,000.00 in 2003 to COPE. With your continued support we hope to top the \$100,000.00 mark in 2004. The ATU COPE is the largest transit worker Political Action Committee in the United States. COPE contributions support pro-labor, pro-transit candidates of all political parties who will fight to increase transit funding, preserve transit worker collective bargaining rights, preserve health and safety laws, as well as ensuring the safety and security of transit workers and passen-

Continued on page 6

**ATTENTION ALL PART TIME  
TRANSIT OPERATORS  
IMPORTANT PICK  
INFORMATION!!!**

**All Part-Time Transit Operators picking on Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, on the last day of pick, there is an afternoon Mariner's game at Safeco field. Please be sure to allow plenty of time to arrive at the pick room. Your pick staff does not want to have to pick for you!!!**

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# The Month at a Glance

## Executive Board Report

April 27, 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, Ray Campbell, Rick Gleason, Ninus Hopkins, Alan Huston, Paul Neil, Neal Safrin, Rick Sepolen, Brian Sherlock, Jeff Stambaugh, Bruce Tiebout, Dee Wakenight, Mike Whitehead.

Chris Daniels was on vacation, Joe Mangiameli was conducting business on the peninsula.

The following business was conducted:

- Motion by Paul Bachtel to adopt the proposed resolution to change Section 18.4 of the Constitution and General Laws with regards to active fifty year members, for submission to the International Convention.

- Motion by Paul Bachtel to donate \$300 to the Seattle Labor Chorus.

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to accept the following COPE endorsements:

- Mike Kriedler, \$500, Insurance Commissioner
- Mike Cooper, \$625, Lands Commissioner
- Pat Sullivan, \$625, 47<sup>th</sup> District, Position #2

- Ron Sims, \$625, Governor
- Labor Neighbor Program, \$1,000 donation
- Al O'Brien, \$625, 1<sup>st</sup> District, Position #1
- Laura Ruderman, \$625, Secretary of State
- Andrea Darvas, \$500, Superior Court #45
- Kathy Huckaby, \$625, Senator
- Barbara de Michele, \$625, 5<sup>th</sup> District, Position #1
- Jeff Griffin, \$625, 5<sup>th</sup> District, Position #2
- Margarita Prentice, \$625, 11<sup>th</sup> District, Senator
- Zack Hudgins, \$625, 11<sup>th</sup> District, Position #1
- Velma Voloria, \$625, 11<sup>th</sup> District, Position #2
- Margalyn Chase, \$625, 32<sup>nd</sup> District, Position #1

- Motion by Rick Sepolen to install two full service computers, a laser printer, and high speed internet access in the Executive Board Officer's office with all the appropriate software.

- Motion by Marc Auerbach to authorize up to \$2,000 from COPE funds to help pay for a poll regarding the 36<sup>th</sup> legislative district House race.

- Motion by Glen Travis to take Bill Clifford's grievance regarding part time operators doing special work to arbitration.

## IN LOVING MEMORY...

*Be open to your dreams, people. Embrace that distant shore. Because our mortal journey is over all too soon.*

— David Assael

**Vicky Skavland**, beloved friend, passed away Easter Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004, after a valiant fight against cancer. Vicky joined Local 587 as a Full-time Transit Operator in May of 1979, one class ahead of your humble editor. She was a wonderful friend, a humorous, supportive, playful person who remembered birthdays and special occasions. She was an active member out of East Base, and in fact spent al-

most all her career there with the exception of one shakeup when we got bumped to trolleys. She leaves a hole in the hearts of her coworkers, friends and family and will be greatly missed.

**Alvin Carnahan**, retired member, passed away April 20, 2004. Brother Carnahan joined Local 587 in January of 1942 when it was still Division 587. No further information available.

*Please notify the union office of any member's passing so that this information may be shared with the rest of our union family.*

## Business of the Membership

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

- Motion that Local 587 donate \$1,000 to support Save Our Transit in Spokane County.

The following members were April pot draw winners: Larry Drake at the Charter meeting, Don Burkholder at the morning meeting. At JTA, Troy McKelvey and Pam Thompson agreed to split the pot, being the only attendees. CTS pot draw winner was Claire

Schwarz. The Bushwhacker gift certificate was won by Jay Winters. Rolling CTS pot draw of \$25.00 was again won by Ed Stanard, two months in a row. Ed says he is going to win a big pot even if he has to win it one month at a time. Congratulations Ed! Next month's CTS rolling pot draw will be \$25.00.

The Seattle Chapter of the Latino Caucus postponed the drawing of their April raffle until the May morning meeting. The purpose of the raffle is to raise funds to start a scholarship for ATU 587 members.

## Tentative Agenda

### Membership Meetings:

#### CHARTER MEETING Thursday, May 6, 2004

8:00 p.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #8  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

#### MORNING MEETING Friday, May 7, 2004

10:30 a.m.  
The Labor Temple, Hall #6  
2800 1st Ave., Seattle, WA

#### JEFFERSON TRANSIT Monday, May 10, 2004

7:00 p.m.  
Port Townsend Rec Center  
Port Townsend, WA

#### CLALLAM TRANSIT Tuesday, May 11, 2004

7:00 p.m.  
Port Angeles Senior Center  
328 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Port Angeles

### Among topics to be discussed:

Contract negotiation updates for MV and Metro/King County, travel pay lawsuit update, COPE candidate endorsements, grievance and arbitration updates. Brother Bill Clifford will be requesting his grievance regarding Part-time Operators working special work be taken to arbitration.

### Unfinished Business:

No unfinished business for the month of April.

## UPCOMING AT LOCAL 587

**MAY 1, 2, 8 AND 9** – Part-time Operator pick, Central/Atlantic Base, upstairs quiet room. Please consult a seniority list for your pick time and date.

**MAY 3 thru 13** – Full-time Operator pick, Central/Atlantic Base, upstairs classroom. Please consult a seniority list for your pick time and date.

**MAY 6** – Vehicle Maintenance Lead Pick, in the new conference room at South Vehicle Maintenance. See your bulletin boards for further information.

**MAY 6** – Seattle Chapter of the Latino Caucus' annual Cinco de Mayo dinner to be held immediately prior to the Charter membership meeting, at the Labor Temple in Hall #8.

**MAY 13** – Shop Steward nominations open for Vehicle Maintenance and Transit Operators.

**MAY 18 thru 20** – Vehicle Maintenance pick. Please see your bulletin boards for more information.

**MAY 25** – Executive Board meeting

## ATU LOCAL 587

*News Review*

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Vehicle Maintenance Position No. 3  
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**BRIAN SHERLOCK**  
**RICK SEPOLEN**  
**RICK GLEASON**  
**NEAL SAFRIN**  
**BRUCE TIEBOUT**  
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**PAUL NEIL**  
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**NINUS HOPKINS**

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

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS STATEMENT

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

## Letters to the editor

Letters/contributions must include signatures, work ID number, addresses 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, Editor  
c/o ATU Local 587

News Review  
2815 Second Avenue, Suite 230  
Seattle, WA 98121

# License Renewal

**SHOP  
STEWARDS  
CORNER**

*By Ryerson Base Shop Steward Bill Clifford*

**T**HERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF INFORMATION about Medical Verification for Commercial Driver's Licenses lately, but it didn't fully prepare me for other changes in the procedure since the last time I renewed.

The first shock was the cost. My five-year license renewal cost seventy dollars (\$70) and they only take cash or check. My license included \$20 for a motorcycle endorsement, the straight renewal with CDL is \$50. The

receipt doesn't really itemize endorsement fees. But save it anyway, Metro still reimburses us for the CDL endorsement fee, \$20. The form is at the window.

On the subject of motorcycle endorsements, apparently the State will be requiring a separate endorsement for sidecars and three-wheeled vehicles starting in June. However, if you get your renewal before then, you can be grandfathered in. I never have ridden a bike with a hack, but now I am

*...it didn't fully prepare me for other changes in the procedure since the last time I renewed.*

## Come One Come All!

*By Dee Wakenight*

**O**N MAY 6, 2004, JUST PRIOR to the Charter union meeting, the Seattle Chapter of the Latino Caucus will be celebrating Cinco de Mayo with authentic Mexican food prepared by Leo & Elizabeth Godinez.

You are encouraged to join us as a member of the Seattle Chapter of the Latino Caucus; dues for the Local Chapter are only \$5.00 per year. We will be having a raffle at the dinner, the Charter meeting, and continuing at the morning meeting. Funds raised by the raffle & memberships will become the first scholarship to be awarded by the Seattle Chapter to a member,

child, or spouse of a member, for continuing education. Join us in achieving our goal. It is not necessary to be Latino to join; we need diversity to gain strength in understanding each other better.

Please join me in congratulating the newly elected officers of the Seattle Chapter of the Latino Caucus: Chair — Osvaldo Fernandez, Co-Chair — Dee Wakenight, RecSec/Treasurer — Lisa Nault.

We hope to see you at the Charter Union Meeting & help us celebrate "Cinco de Mayo" on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Dinner will be served starting at 7:30 p.m.

covered if the opportunity comes up. By the way, you can renew up to 90 days before your birthday, so if this applies to you and you need to renew before September, you might want to renew early.

The other big shock was you need to provide documentation with your Social Security Account number when you go in to renew. This has to do with collecting delinquent child support. I found a tattered old SSA card in my wallet, but I know many people who

have removed any such cards from their wallet because of concerns about identity theft. On renewal day make sure you take yours with you. Also you might want to make sure you are paid up for the kids' support and have documentation to prove it.

Then they ask a bunch of questions about your license status: drunk driving convictions, multiple licenses, etc. You should know the right answers, but just in case: No, no and no.

## ARBITRATION UPDATE

- 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.
- Les Hoffman:** Grieved performance report regarding ADA stop-calling policies and procedures. Settlement reached in pre-arbitration discussions. Grievance withdrawn and final.
- Kelly Venable:** Grieved disqualification from SIT recruitment process due to use of an earned benefit. Arbitration originally scheduled for January 16, 2004, rescheduled for May 5, 2004.
- Janice Kennison:** Grieved termination from Seattle Personal Transit due to violation of company no-smoking policy. Arbitration held January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Decision pending.
- Vince Lee:** Grieved improper procedure for upgrade to temporary position. Arbitration scheduled for April 26, 2004 postponed indefinitely. Brother Lee has suffered an unrelated injury and is recuperating.
- Dana Cormeier:** Grieved termination due to alleged falsification of time entries. Arbitration held March 1 and 2, 2004. Arbitrator upheld termination. Grievance final.
- Ron Griffin:** Grieved improper separation from the position of Equipment Service Worker. Schedule pending.

## PRIDE MARCH 2004

*The Seattle Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Pride March will be held on Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004 beginning at 11:00 a.m. This year's march will include an entry (coach) from King County Metro Transit.*



*All employees are invited to participate in the march and walk alongside the coach. Participation is on a voluntary basis.*



*Operators and First-Line Supervisors are asked to please wear their uniforms should they choose to participate in the march.*



*Rendezvous at 10:00 a.m. in the eastbound bus stop (Routes 7, 10 & 11) on East Pine Street, between Harvard Avenue & Broadway Avenue, in front of the Egyptian Theater. The coach will be staged at this location until it is time to join in the march.*

# Letters to the Editor...

## Four-way Flashers

Dear Editor

There are lots of bigger issues around I could rant about (eg., healthcare costs, privatization and the bullpen vending machines) but here's one that we can certainly fix and that affects most bus drivers every working day: 4-way flashers.

Metro's "The Book" has exactly ten (10) reasons for using your flashers but let's simplify that to one (1). Use your flashers when you want the traffic behind you to go around you because you will be stopped for a while. (The flip side is don't use the flashers for a routine stop unless you are the only bus in sight.) The other nine (9) reasons are just variations and niceties.

Whether you want following traffic to go around depends on what that traffic is. If you are blocking a lane outside of the CBD and it's just a bunch of cars behind you, hit the 4-ways, let them figure it out. If there is another bus behind you, think about it. If you are stalling to cool off a hot schedule or will be otherwise taking some time, let the drivers behind you know, so they can lay back, go around or otherwise keep their schedules. But if you are simply servicing a crowded zone, don't hit that switch: we all may need to get in that zone.

Future rants about professional courtesy: not pulling to the head of the zone (I don't care if the passengers are all standing in the wrong place, make them learn how to board); not weaving in and out of the county and city zones on 2nd and 4th Avenues during rush hour (have some faith, it works if we all yield a little); and signaling right while in the CBD zones (come on, you should know better than to imitate CT). Then there's oncoming 8 1/2 foot-wide buses on 15 foot-wide streets: who should yield?...I don't know, but try something, pull in your mirror or drive up on the curb, but let's keep moving, OK?

In solidarity,  
Bill Clifford  
Ryerson Base

**P.S.** Service Quality has been sending out reminder letters to Operators observed wasting electrons on their 4-ways. In general, improper 4-way use is not a high priority for them but the Supervisors acknowledge that the 4-ways are flashing too much. We agreed that they should be disabled on the coach but you could call the Coordinator to get them turned on: that would be about the right frequency of use.

## Brother Donohue

**Editor's Note:** Brother Michael Donohue is a Radio Tech in Facilities Maintenance. He was recently diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease. It was a painful series of conversations between his sister and the officers here who assisted her in making arrangements for Michael to retire and be able to access all of his entitlements. This officer would like to thank our various counterparts within Metro who assisted in this endeavor. It is probably one of the more important facets of my job, I know without a doubt it is the most difficult.

Dear President Norton:

Thank you so much for your kind thoughts and prayers for my brother Michael Donohue. Lou Gehrig A.L.S is a devastating disease and you have been so kind and helpful in guiding Michael and I to the right people at King County and in your union office who can help us with all the paper work and questions. Everything went smoothly and we're almost done with the paperwork.

Michael wanted me to tell you he so appreciates all the union has done for him to give him a good life and how much he respects you for all your hard work. Michael wants to remain a union brother until he passes...

Thanks again for everything,

Donna Jennings

## Disability Retirement

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to thank Local 587 for the help and support that this local has provided me and my family. Thank you.

As of April 1, 2004, I have retired from Clallam Transit System of Port Angeles and Clallam County. My reason for retiring is a medical disability.

...My wife Susan and I are leaving on a European vacation this week. The money left in my retirement (457) account will pay for this trip. I state this because it was in part our Local 587 that helped get this retirement benefit started.

Thank you, your representation and input as a union has made Clallam Transit System a better place to work. The union dues I have paid, in my opinion, was money well spent. There is still more progress to be made and new challenges will arise. So, keep up the good work and thank you again for all that you have done.

Sincerely,  
Ted Kroh

## Single Fare System Now

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Most of the fare evasion on my routes is the result of underpayment, as opposed to non payment of the fare. We all experience it; the passenger who uses a transfer from another bus system for a 2 zone ride; or the 1.50 fare for 2 zones, and of course holding the transfer so you can't read the punches. Sometimes it's accidental, sometimes it's not. I certainly sympathize with the drivers who get annoyed when the "cheater" thinks they're pulling one over on us.

Currently Sound Transit is conducting a fare survey of the ridership. Some insider feel that the purpose of this is to create Sound Transit routes that strip the best paying service from the local systems and put the money in Sound Transit's pocket. Another development in the works is the regional smart card project. This is to create a transit-specific debit card that could be used on any of the 5 local systems, Kitsap, Everett, Pierce, King and Sound Transit and the Washington State Ferries.

We can turn this situation to our advantage and get our voices heard. Let's switch to a FLAT FARE SYSTEM NOW! Half our

ridership pays 2 bucks per trip as it is. Why not make it across the board? No more zones or peak fare times. Just \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for everyone else, period. The disabled would still use their pass. Let's face it, Tim Eyman's property tax initiative may pass and we could do with some extra revenue *and a lot less hassle!*

Imagine it, a passenger boards and asks how much the fare is. "Two dollars." I'm just going down the road. "Two dollars." I want to go downtown. "Two dollars." I want to go to Mars. "Two dollars."

No more "How far are you going?" "It's \$1.50 because it's peak time." "It was \$1.25 last night for two zones because it was off peak." "It's \$2.00 because your traveling through two zones." "CT transfers are only good for one zone." "Can you show me the fare punches please?" Etc. etc. With one fare all I need to do is look at the length of the transfer. Done.

The next question is whether each system should charge individually or allow one \$2.00 payment to cover all 5 systems. I favor the latter. Otherwise Sound Transit would use our separate system fares to encourage ridership on it's own routes which it intends to lengthen throughout the three county area, taking revenue from us! Separate fares discourage passengers from transferring between the individual systems and alienates the *union operated* systems from each other. Don't fall for Divide and Conquer. If all the transit systems united and charged a single \$2 fare (for the entire region) it would not only eliminate the stress of asking a passenger to pay more for a two system trip, but it would also encourage *uniting the 4 unions*. Remember when Community Transit nearly went under a few years back?...That could be all of us in a few years.

If you support having a flat fare system please sign the petition that will be left on the union bulletin board at your base. If the results are good our union will be able to forward this information to Rob McKenna, Chair of the Regional Transportation Committee, and Dwight Pelz, Chair of the Transportation Committee. The fare issue is currently being discussed by the various decision makers, so the time is ripe to make your work a little easier and possibly prevent your union job from disappearing.

Call Sound Transit at (206) 398-5405 for more information about the Puget Sound Fares Survey. You can read more about the 'smart' card in the March/April In Transit Newsletter.

Andrew Jeromsky, #8707  
North Base

### SEND IN YOUR OPINIONS

Letters/contributions must include signatures, work ID number, addresses 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

### 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*

# Guest Editorial...

## Change Begins With Each One of Us

M.O.S.E.S. Committee Update

**T**WO YEARS AND FOUR MONTHS I have worked on the issue of security on the buses. It began with a Step 1 grievance in January of 2002. Then our Union told me that they would not take it to Step 3 because they do not want it to become a "Contractual Issue." They also stated that the Union does not have the time, money, or people to address this issue, but I could run with the issue. So I did.

In March 2002, I filed a WISHA complaint on the issue of security. By August 2002 WISHA ruled in my favor and fined Metro \$8,000.00, which Metro appealed. In June 2002 I founded the Metro Operator Security Enforcement Committee; which drafted a Transit Security Resolution to take before Local 587.

By January 2003, the Executive Board passed the Resolution by a vote of 15-3 and presented it to the King County Council. By June 2003 the King County Council passed it's own Transit Security Resolution. Lastly, in February 2004, King County Metro agreed to and signed the WISHA Sidebar Agreement regarding security rather than face the cost of litigation in the Washington State Supreme Court. These were all victories concerning security, yet all of the work was done by but a few people.

I have been informed that we will eventually have a dedicated Metro Transit Police force. More KCSO officers are being added and SPD is being phased out. More coordination is being done between our KCSO force and the 39 jurisdictions we operate in. The Code of Conduct for Metro riders should be posted in English and Spanish by June.

Response times should be logged on EA situations no matter which police department responds. There are other changes coming on line also and the WISHA Sidebar Agreement will be monitored for compliance by the WISHA Compliance Officer quarterly for the next 5 years. There should also be a Comprehensive Security Plan in the King County Council coming out in June.

The last 2<sup>1/2</sup> years I have learned a lot. Mainly that if you want something done on security, you have to do it yourself. Waiting until you become another assault victim or just complaining accomplishes very little.

Secondly, Metro operators are an expendable commodity, easily replaceable by new part-timers in management's view. So why not be involved and do something constructive instead of apathetic?

Thirdly, Honor and Respect is hard earned. Having my face on a plaque is not a high priority if I cannot face myself honestly in the mirror.

Fourthly, I "got involved" because I got assaulted and I could tell when the words "care" or "consideration" were just empty words without any action to back them up when Brother Mark McLaughlin's death was reclassified and labeled as "just an isolated incident", by the Powers That Be. That is unacceptable.

I have done what I believe is the right thing to do and I invite any operator to come to the next MOSES Committee meeting and get involved. Almost 900 operator assaults in 6 years is unacceptable, no matter how much it is minimized. Stand and be counted.

Glenn Ruth #3490  
South Base

Moses-one@worldnet.att.net

**Editor's Note:** The President and Vice President's position regarding security on the bus is that security is **not** a negotiable issue. Our members are entitled to be safe and secure in the workplace and should not have to negotiate this to be so. King County Metro Transit is responsible to provide safety and security for its employees as well as the riding public. A grievance is not the proper forum for concerns on transit security. Investigations by the Department of Labor and Industries in response to complaints of violations of the Washington State Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) is the proper way to proceed, not a grievance. This is what the officers communicated to Brother Ruth when he began his

efforts several years back.

It was the Recording Secretary who made a statement something like what Brother Ruth expressed regarding the Union not having the time, money or people to address the issue. Said statement is out of context, and given that the conversation was quite long, and took place so many conversations ago she can no longer recall how it all went, nor what the statement was in response to. But given that it sparked Brother Ruth's efforts that eventually resulted in the Sidebar agreement summarized here, it really doesn't matter. It has accomplished what might have been her intention: to get something done. Thank you, Brother Ruth, for taking up the challenge.

**Editor's Note:** The Department of Labor and Industries and King County Metro entered into an agreement to settle the appeal between the two parties over a Citation and Notice issued to King County alleging WISHA violations. The Citation was a result of inspections by the Department, spurred by a complaint lodged by Brother Glenn Ruth. Below is the agreement in part. A copy of the full agreement is available at the Union office.

**F**OLLOWING THE ISSUANCE AND receipt of the Board's order, the parties agree that the following will become the final and binding agreement between the parties relating to Citation and Notice No. 305138158:

The date for abatement of the violations shall be extended from September 16, 2002 to June 30, 2004.

The Employer should increase the proportion of full-time officers on its transit police by shifting some of the resources currently expended on part-time policing by off-duty municipal officers. This should be done incrementally to determine the appropriate balance between the added productivity and flexibility of full-time dedicated officers and the benefits of using off-duty municipal officers.

The Employer shall deploy its security resources based on need as determined by evaluation of security incident reports by operators and other relevant information toward a goal of improving operator safety.

Service communications will continue to enter all security calls in the current format. This format will continue to show the time of the call and the time the call was cleared. All full-time King County Transit Police officers and all part-time Seattle Police officers providing security for the Employer shall be required to report to the King County Sheriff's Dispatcher the time a unit arrived at the scene of an emergency call to which it has been dispatched. The King County Sheriff's office shall provide reports on a quarterly basis to the Major in charge of the Transit Police Unit showing the follow-

ing information:

1. The type or code of the call.
2. The time the call was received by the dispatcher.
3. The time the call was given to a transit police unit.
4. The unit(s) responding.
5. The time the responding units arrived on the scene.
6. The time the call was cleared.

The transit police should establish partnerships with local law enforcement agencies to ensure prompt incident response and full sharing of transit-related crime data. When appropriate, the transit police shall request copies of incident reports from all municipal police or sheriff's departments, which respond to emergency calls from King County Metro Transit.

The Employer shall provide the Department with a written description of the processes and procedures used to review transit operation emergency alarm feedback forms and respond to them, including the methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of the response system. This is to be accomplished by June 30, 2004.

The Employer shall post the most basic requirements of its Code of Conduct in English and Spanish, the two languages most frequently spoken in the Seattle metropolitan area, on all Metro transit buses. Posting shall be accomplished by the abatement date herein - June 30, 2004. A copy of the sign to be posted is attached hereto.

Bus operators shall be notified in advance of any scheduled downtimes for the data radio system that currently included the Auto-

mated Vehicle Location System (AVL) and shall be notified as soon as possible for all radio system malfunctions. Service communications shall keep a record of all such AVL downtime and radio malfunctions, including the length of time the computer system was down or radio systems not fully functional.

The Employer shall develop and institute a training program for bus drivers to teach them how to handle de-escalate confrontational situations. The training program shall be delivered using the method or methods deemed by Metro training management as being the most effective and may include videotape scenarios, role playing, or practice sessions to ensure consistent quality examples. New bus drivers shall receive the training as part of their orientation program. All other bus drivers shall receive the training by December 1, 2005. Drivers shall be re-trained in de-escalation techniques once every three years.

To promote greater cooperation with municipalities outside of Seattle, the Employer is encouraged to explore the possibility of hiring police officers from these municipalities as part of its security and response teams.

The Employer shall update its Accident Prevention Plan and its written policies and procedures to include the procedures, policies and training set forth in this agreement by June 30, 2004.

The Employer further promises and agrees that all terms adopted in this agreement shall be fulfilled by June 30, 2004, except those terms with other completion dates.

## President's Report, continued from page 1

gers. Again many thanks to all for your continued support.

### PERS II and III Members

House Bill 2535 was recently signed by Governor Locke. It provides an option for early retirement that our members might be interested in.

*Brief Summary of the Bill* – This bill permits members of the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) Plans 2 and 3 to purchase up to 5 years of service credit. The bill also includes the School Employees Retirement System (SERS). The service credit may be purchased at the time of early retirement, at the full actuarial cost. A member purchasing service credit may pay all or part of the cost with a transfer from an eligible retirement account.

*Background* – A vested member of the PERS or SERS Plans 2 & 3 may retire with an unreduced defined benefit at age 65. At retirement in Plan 2 a member receives 2% of the their final average salary for each year of credited service. In Plan 3, a member

receives 1% of the their final average salary for each year credited service, and may withdraw his or her accumulated member contributions and earnings.

A member of PERS or SERS Plan 2 may apply for early retirement after 20 years of credited service beginning at age 55. A member of PERS or SERS Plan 3 may apply for early retirement after 10 years of credited service beginning at age 55. If a member in Plan 2 or Plan 3 applies for early retirement with less than 30 years of service, his or her benefit actuarial reduction typically averages about 8% per year. That means that they would receive a reduction in their benefit of 8% of the full benefit for each year they retired early. A member who applies for early retirement with 30 or more years of service has his or her benefit reduced instead by 3% per year.

Members of PERS and SERS generally have the opportunity to participate in deferred compensation plans. These plans permit an individual to place a portion of

salary into a special account, pre-tax. The Department of Retirement System (DRS) operates a deferred compensation program consistent with the Federal tax requirements of 26 United States Code section 457, commonly called a "457 Plan", in which employees of the state, counties, municipalities and other political subdivisions may participate. King County also has a deferred compensation plan. Individuals may also be able to deposit funds into accounts with preferential tax treatment such as Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA).

In recent years, changes in federal law have liberalized the rules on the transfer of funds between tax-deferred accounts, including government defined benefit pension plans such as PERS and SERS, and deferred compensation accounts such as 457, 403(b), and 401(K) plans. Many state and local government pension plans have subsequently provided the opportunity for members to transfer funds, including funds from tax-deferred accounts, into these plans to add up to five years of service credit to a members defined benefit.

*Summary of the Bill* – A member who applies for early retirement in PERS or SERS Plan 2 or 3 may, **at the time of retirement**, file an application with the DRS to purchase up to five years of additional service credit. The cost of the additional service credit is the actuarial equivalent value of the resulting increase in the members benefit.

The member may pay all or part of the cost of the additional service credit with an eligible transfer from a qualified retirement plan. The DRS shall adopt rules to insure that all purchases and transfers comply with the requirement of the Federal Internal Revenue Code and regulations.

*Note* – Additional purchased service credit is not regular membership service credit, and may not be used to qualify a member for the 3% per year early retirement reduction available to members of PERS and SERS Plans 2 or 3 with 30 years of service.

For more information call the Department of Retirement Systems 1-800-547-6657.

Regards to all  
Be safe  
LFN



Jennie Gil

RECOGNITION IS A LOVELY THING. All of us go through our daily routine and most days work, play or carry on our family responsibilities to the best of our ability, despite the day's challenges and obstacles. And once in a while recognition comes, even if its in a simple form. Your child says "That was an awesome lunch today, Mom!" A passenger walks to the front door to get off the bus to thank you for waiting for them, when they could have gotten off by the back door. Its small potatoes, but its recognition nonetheless.



Lisa Carter and President Norton at the Women in Trades Show, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004.

## From The Recording Secretary's Desk

# A Bit About Us

By Jennie Gil

This month I want to extend congratulations and honorable mention to several individuals whose work and dedication has reaped them recognition.

### Washington Women in Trades

#### Union Activist Award, 2004

Former Executive Board Officer Lisa Carter was awarded the Union Activist for 2004 award from Washington Women in Trades at their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary trade show April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Washington Women in Trades was founded in 1978 for women working in the trades to gather and share information, and they sponsor an annual trades fair where employers can recruit women for trades work. Lisa was nominated by fellow Facilities Maintenance Carpenter Susan Mulvihill, in recognition of her fair and accurate representation of their interests while serving on the Executive Board.

Lisa has been a Carpenter in Facilities Maintenance since 1991. She was appointed to the Executive Board in November of 1999, and was re-elected to the position in June of 2000. At the time of her interview for appointment to the position, Lisa stated to the Executive Board that her aim was to make sure the contract was applied fairly and equally across the board. Lisa was wonderful to work with on the Executive Board. She has continued to be active in the Union since

choosing not to run for re-election, she has volunteered to be shop steward every shakeup, and has been a resource and support for current Executive Board Officer for Facilities Maintenance, Alan Huston.

### Clallam Transit Employee of the Year



Nancy Vivolo, Clallam Transit's Employee of the Year.

Congratulations to Nancy Vivolo, Clallam Transit's Employee of the Year. Nancy was nominated by more than one fellow coworker, with nominations saying she is always eager to take on responsibilities and always does the job with a smile. Nancy, a Transit Operator for CTS, has served her coworkers as an instructor teaching proper wheelchair securement and ADA requirements. She has been a Local 587 member and Clallam Transit employee since 1995, had perfect attendance in 2003, and eight years safe driving.

### Vehicle Maintenance Employee of the Year



Atlantic Base Dispatcher and Vehicle Maintenance Employee of the Year Teri Allen, with President Lance Norton.

Teri Allen is the proud recipient of this year's Vehicle Maintenance Employee of the Year award. Teri began her career at King County in 1982 as a Utility Service Worker, and was promoted to Equipment Service in 1986. She is currently an Equipment Dispatcher at Atlantic Base, having been promoted to that position in July of last year. Teri has served as a shop steward on and off over the years and served on the Vehicle Maintenance contract negotiations committees during the last labor negotiations. Teri is the only the second woman to receive this recognition in Vehicle Maintenance.

### Honorable Mention

I went to dinner with my parents and a visiting relative a

*continued on page 8*

# Vehicle Maintenance

## Don't Believe Everything You Read! Just believe this...

By Executive Board Officers Mike Whitehead, John Bellinger and Jeff Stambaugh

**A**ROUND SEPTEMBER OF 2003 members in Vehicle Maintenance filled approximately 150 grievances regarding technological changes and the impact in the workplace. The handling of the grievances varied from base to base, supervisor to supervisor, with only one common response,

**DENIED.** Once again the grievance process was manipulated by management with the intent to suppress the issue rather than use the process to resolve. Many members expressed their discontent to us in regard to the handling of the grievance process, for any questions that were asked by our members went unanswered.

The technological grievance, as many of you know, had to do with the new hybrid bus and what possible impacts it might have on working conditions. In talking to the members there seemed to be two issues that had members worried. One, that members hope we are not getting another "Breda type bus" and two, a letter sent to the Union discussing possible staff reduction of mechanics due to the Breda bus going away and the new hybrid coming to Metro.

The grievance had two parts in the remedy. The first part asked for a committee be put together to look into the impact of working conditions. The second part asked for a 5% raise for all affected classifications. After some time Metro

approached the Union with an offer to put together the committee, satisfying the first part of the grievance. With regard to the second part of the grievance, any additional pay will be discussed at the upcoming collective bargaining negotiations. Now keep in mind that if this grievance went to arbitration, an arbitrator would see there is no language that was violated in regard to pay. The only language violated was Metro not contacting the union to discuss impact. With this in mind, President Norton agreed to resolve the grievance and support the committee proposal.

The committee consist of: four mechanics, Leo Swan from R.B., Kim Martin from C.B., James Jakeman from S.B. and Nick Caraway from CSC; Bill Wallace from S.B. representing E.T.s, and your three E-Board officers. As of this writing we have had our first meeting and will continue with the task at hand while keeping you informed.

With that said we have talked to many members who read with anger the V.M. staff notes posted at their bases dated March 18,2004. The notes go on to say that the technological change grievance has been withdrawn. **We believe what V.M management meant to say is that they wish the Union would withdraw the grievances but in fact the grievance was resolved with respect to the rem-**

**edy to the first part.**

On to another issue..... If you were asked to define in one word what the Union does for you, it would be representation. This is the fundamental responsibility of our Union, or any Union. This representation is ever encompassing in the day-to-day aspects of our jobs. From the basic representation of being at a meeting with a member and management to negotiating a labor agreement, this is what your dues buy you, what you should expect. So when the Vehicle Maintenance Staff records dated July 24, 2003 came out stating "*Executive Board / union reps are not to be paid for attending grievance hearings*" with regard to first step hearings, there was a problem.

First, one would wonder why, why challenge a practice that has taken place for over twenty-five years. We looked into member's files of grievance responses from management and there is an overwhelming amount of documentation that shows the practice existed, so again why the unilateral change? Operations was not enforcing this new rule nor was Facilities so how come VM?

After some conversations at VMLMRC and at the E-Board, grievances were filled. The grievances were perused thru second step with the same response, *management finds no contract violation.* The Labor Agreement

states, "*Time spent by Employees adjusting grievances and /or pursuing arbitration is not working time and shall not be compensated. However, if a Step 1 grievance hearing is held during the Employee's normal working hours, the Employee will not suffer a loss in compensation.*" And here is another part to pay attention to *Grievances shall be heard during management's normal working hours unless stipulated by both parties.* (ARTICLE 5 Section 1 E.)

After much discussion between Metro and the full time officers, a letter dated January 24,2004 was sent out from Vice President Travis to the grievant. In the letter the Vice President explains that the grievances will not be pursued and that an accord has been reached with Metro. The agreement in the letter stated, "*Metro will return to the previous practice regarding union rep pay for first step hearings.*" So if any members or shop stewards find this problem manifesting again, please contact your VM or full time Officers.

In closing we wonder why the lack in communication from management, why the adversarial positioning. Maybe that's why we need management... to resolve the issues.... yea that's it .....do you think.....

*VM- We keep trying to make the difference.....*

## The VM contract committee.



**H**ERE IS THE VM CONTRACT committee. Members are (from left to right) **Donnetta French, Gary Cook, Mike Rochon, Jeff Stambaugh, Sylvia Betts, John Bellinger, Mike Whitehead and Mike Paulson.**

The committee had their first meeting April 19th to review the VM surveys and see how they pertain to Article 17 of the labor agreement. Once this information is gathered the committee incorporates the changes into a draft that will be taken to Metro management for negotiations.

If you have any questions please talk with the committee member at your base as they will be soliciting information from you that will form the foundation for your next contract.

# The View from the Buses

By John D. Love

Retirees' Corner

I RECEIVED A NOTE FROM **MEL Laboyne** down in Yuma, Arizona, he is enjoying seeing retirees and some not-so-retired. A quick list of several is **Dick Heil, Jim Vaughn, Don Gerding, Howard Loss, Don Kneebone, Greg McClellan** and **Tom Spell**. I attended the breakfast at Denny's in Burien on the 21st of February and was pleased to see several retirees that I had not seen since I retired in 1987, **Jerry Raver** and **Roger Caldwell** to name a couple. The attendance at this breakfast is improving by the month. Twenty-two was my count before I had to leave.

A note from **Curtis** and **Sara Hicks** down in Arizona reported they

were going to meet 17 other rigs in Rocky Point, Mexico. While in Casa Grande they spent several hours with **Danny Kylo** and his wife

## Casual Meetings

While waiting to pick up pills at the Group Health pharmacy I ran into

**Johnnie Moir**. This was the second time that I have met Johnnie in Group Health. I have spotted several retirees there. When you are retired Group Health becomes a gathering place as the older we get, the more likely we are to need their services.

I received **Tom** and **Mary Lile's** itinerary. They will leave Bakers-

field, California April 4<sup>th</sup> and work their way north through California and Oregon, then to Washington on or about April 30<sup>th</sup>. It will be great to see them while they are in the Northwest.

I want to welcome **John Sloane** to the ranks of the retired. John lives in the Bothell area and is welcome to attend the retiree breakfast at Mr. Bill's every Tuesday and the monthly breakfast at Firdale Village on the first Saturday. John retired January 31, 2004.

**Bill** and **Billie Daniels** were in the Northwest from Taylor, Arizona to welcome a great grandchild into this world. Bill is the Constable in Taylor, he was elected in their last election.

I had the privilege to attend the annual meeting of the Seattle Metropolitan Credit Union on April 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year and was seated with **Don Zier** and his wife **Norma** for a very nice breakfast that the credit union puts on every year. Don has had some medical problems in the past, but he appears to be on the road to recovery. It was so nice to be seated with folks that I had something in common with.

## Binnacle List

I received a call from **Harry (Gordie) Gordon** and he informs me that he has gone through a procedure involving his heart. He said that he feels better and that he may surprise us with a visit one of these days. It is always good to hear from Gordie.

## For your information

I have been receiving E-mail and phone calls concerning my letter to **Mary Norris**, Pension Board Member, for inserting my letter into the last ARSCE NEWS. I would sug-

gest that each one of us retirees write to the Seattle City Council members and Retirement Board Members and express your thoughts on the retiree receiving a Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA). I have received several comments from retirees expressing their thoughts on present living conditions.

## TAPS

I found **Walter Jess's** obituary in the P.I. of February 7, 2004. Walt retired June 8, 1977 and was 87 years old at his passing. I was saddened to see in **Signe Moen's** obituary in the Seattle paper. Signe was the wife of **Roy Moen**, retired driver. I received a note that **Donald Meyer** passed away. Donald was 79 years old and passed away 1/20/04, I don't know when he retired. I received notice that **Carl Kluth** and **Dean Dray** also passed away. Carl passed December 23, 2003 and Dean on October 3, 2001. I remember Carl when he was on the extra board at the old Dearborn station. Dean retired June 1, 1973 and was 91 years old when he passed away.

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

Keep in mind, if you have news you want to share with others E-Mail me at—[Dennerle1@juno.com](mailto:Dennerle1@juno.com)  
That's all for now.  
John

## A Bit About Us, continued from page 6

couple months back. Uncle Art had come into town on a Greyhound from Vancouver, and was left to tend for himself as my folks were away for a few days. One day that week he rode a bus from Kenmore to Lake City trying to get downtown. He shyly asked the driver to maybe give him a little information about the system, at least as much as he was going to use during that week. Uncle Art said the driver was the most wonderful transit person he has ever encountered in his many years (I think Art is in his late 60s). Art is a devout transit rider, he had a stroke some years back and no longer drives. He raved on and on about this driver and all the information this driver gave him, a perfect stranger from Alberta. He spoke highly of how the driver treated his passengers, greeting each one individually, and always having something unique to say to each of them as they departed. He wanted to know how to get a commendation letter to the driver as he was so impressed with him.

The driver was Dick Jensen.



*Dick Jensen, recently retired from the ranks of Full-time Transit Operator, last out of North Base.*

Brother Jensen recently retired after providing this kind of unrecognized service for over thirty years. I have always liked Dick and often laughed at his Sven and Ollie jokes. I hold a special spot in my heart for those who treat my family with kindness. I know very soon I will be putting him back on the seniority list as a Part-time Operator. Enjoy your retirement, Brother Jensen.

To the rest of you, remember to pass on a kind word once in a while. Even for the little things. It can make a world of difference.

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL METRO TRANSIT CARL OWENS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP TOURNAMENT

**SATURDAY, JULY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2004**  
**TALL CHIEF GOLF COURSE**  
**8:00 a.m. shotgun start**

**Entry fee: \$52.00 for 18 holes**  
**\$40.00 for 9 holes**

**Entry fee includes Tee Prize and Steak dinner**

Deadline for all entry forms is July 9<sup>th</sup>, limit is 108 players so sign up early. Entry forms received by June 5<sup>th</sup> will receive preferred foursomes.

For questions and concerns contact:  
Dave White • (360) 794-6968  
Sponsored by MERA

## Retiree Picnic

**June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

**11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Lower Woodland, Stove 6**

Hot dogs, drinks and condiments will be provided.  
Please bring a side dish if you are able.

**At present we have two north end Retiree Chapter meetings.** The first Saturday of each month we meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Colonial Pantry in Firdale Village in Edmonds. Every Tuesday at 7:00 a.m. we meet at Mr. Bills at 130<sup>th</sup> and Aurora.

**We have a south end meeting** at the Burien Denny's at 148<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South. That meeting takes place the third Saturday of each month, at 8:00 a.m.

The picnic and meetings are a chance to meet with old friends. Mark your calendars and come join us.

Dave Carter  
Secretary/Treasurer, ATU 587 Retiree Chapter