



## And so you asked

By Jon Hunt • ATU Local 757 President

I've been meaning to write about the issue of violence in the workplace for a while now, and as we've had at least a couple of incidents in the last two or three months, I think now's the time. We all know that incidents of hostility, violence and assault have been increasing everywhere in recent years. These incidents can have potentially devastating effects on those who have such unfortunate experiences. Even the threat of a confrontation is enough to distract us from performing our daily responsibilities to the best of our abilities. Unfortunately, the victim profile typically includes those who work in public services, handle money, deal with complaints, work alone, and work late. Any of

these sound familiar?

If you are assaulted, whether on or off the job, you should:

Contact the police. Request that a dispatcher or (if unavailable) a witness contact the police. You may be the only one at the scene and will have to report the incident yourself. Make sure a report is filed.

Stay at the location. Unless by necessity you must leave the location, i.e., you are being transported to the hospital, stay at the location where the assault occurred until the police arrive.

Identify witnesses. Identify all potential witnesses and try to get them to remain at the scene until police arrive. If witnesses

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## VP's Report

By Sam Schwarz • ATU Local 757 Vice President

This has been one of the busiest months for grievances and arbitrations at TriMet. We have settled over 20 grievances and held one arbitration. We are scheduling more arbitrations in the near future, and as of today we have saved the members over \$350,000 in arbitration costs. There have been several new terminations at TriMet and many intent-to-terminate letters have been sent out. With all the new assistant managers in place, it is extremely hard to get the same interpretation of the contract or policy. If you see that a new or different policy is being used, make sure your shop steward or Executive Board officer is aware of any and all policy changes.

Our TriMet members have received contract suggestion forms and are filling them out and turning them in to the union office. PLEASE only turn them in to the union.

At Washington County Lift (First Transit) we recently had three terminations. Les Green and I were successful in resolving two of the three without going to arbitration.

In Canby, we have two new grievances and two going to arbitration.

At Lane Transit we are dealing with some service cuts that are now down to only 4 percent from an original high of 27 percent.

The Union held its annual training session for Executive Board officers, shop stewards and liaison officers March 14 and 15. I enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with everyone.

In closing I would like to thank all of your union officers for all the work they do each and every day. Without their help we could not accomplish the many tasks essential to running the Union.

## ATU 757 Election 2009 info

If you are a member and a prospective candidate or interested person who would like to communicate with the Election Committee please do so by: **calling** 503-231-3563, **e-mailing** [atu757election@gmail.com](mailto:atu757election@gmail.com) or clicking on the "Election" button on the ATU web site at [www.atu757.org](http://www.atu757.org); or **writing** ATU 757 Election Committee, 1801 NE Couch, Portland, OR 97232

### Dates to remember

APRIL 20-26: Election Committee selected at April membership meetings.

MAY 1, 2009: Date candidates can unofficially declare their candidacy.

*The Union has asked employers to allow declared candidates on property May 1, 2009*

### Offices that will be up for election

Nominations for Union officer positions will be accepted at the Union charter meeting in Portland on Monday, May 11, 2009. The upcoming election for Union officers will be for a term of three-years commencing July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2009. To be eligible to run for Union office, members must be a member in good standing with the Union. Unless, the sole property officer, Shop Steward positions are appointed and are not subject to the election process. The following positions will be open for nomination:

#### Officers At-Large

President-Business Representative  
Vice President-Assistant Business Representative  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer/Recording Secretary

#### American Medical Response

Josephine County Liaison

#### Bend Paratransit Services

Liaison Officer

#### City of North Bonneville

Shop Steward

#### Canby Wheels

Liaison Officer

#### C-TRAN

Executive Board Officer  
C-TRAN Liaison Officer  
C-VAN Liaison Officer

#### First Transit Corvallis

Corvallis School Bus Liaison Officer  
Corvallis City Transit Liaison Officer

#### First Student (PPS)

Executive Board Officer  
Liaison Officer

#### First Transit (Tri-Met Lift)

Liaison Officer

#### Lamar Advertising Co.

Shop Steward

#### Lane Transit District

Executive Board Officer  
Chairman  
Secretary  
Maintenance Liaison Officer  
Extra Board Liaison Officer

#### MV Transportation Services, Inc.

Liaison Officer

#### Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc.

Liaison Officer

#### Portland Public Schools

Executive Board Officer

#### Rogue Valley Transportation District

Liaison Officer

#### Salem Area Mass Transit

Executive Board Officer  
Maintenance Liaison Officer

#### Salem WHEELS

Liaison Officer

#### Tillamook Transportation District

Liaison Officer

#### TriMet

Center Transportation Executive Board Officer  
Center Extra Board Liaison Officer  
Center Maintenance Executive Board Officer  
Merlo Transportation Executive Board Officer  
Merlo Extra Board Liaison Officer  
Merlo Maintenance Executive Board Officer  
Powell Transportation Executive Board Officer  
Powell Extra Board Liaison Officer  
Powell Maintenance Executive Board Officer  
Light Rail Transportation Execut. Board Officer  
Light Rail Transportation Ruby Liaison Officer  
Light Rail Transportation Elmonica Liaison Off.  
Light Rail Maintenance Executive Board Officer  
Light Rail Ruby Maintenance Exec. Board Officer  
Light Rail Elmonica Maintenance Liaison Officer  
Monthly Rated Employees Exec. Board Officer

#### Valley Transit

Liaison Officer

## Amalgamated Transit Union - Division 757

Representing working men and women in Oregon and Washington at:

TriMet • Lane Transit District • Rogue Valley Transportation District • Portland Public Schools • Lamar Advertising Company (formerly Obie Media) • Valley Transit Association • Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc. (TriMet Lift, Portland) • American Medical Response Northwest (Josephine County) • Laidlaw Transit, Inc. (Portland Public Schools, Corvallis School District, Corvallis City Transit) • MV Transportation, Inc. • C-TRAN/C-VAN • Salem Area Transit • WHEELS • Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc. • Tillamook County Transportation District • ATU Retired Member Chapter



## What IS this?

The four outside pages are news from and about your Union. The other pages are produced by the Northwest Labor Press, and are about the labor movement as a whole.

# April Meetings

## Charter

Charter members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 20th, at the Salvation Army, Rose Center for Seniors, 211 NE 18th Ave, Portland (18th & Sandy Blvd, adjacent to the ATU office.) Charter day members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 21st, at Schoppert Hall, 1801 NE Couch, Portland.

## Salem Transit/WHEELS

Salem members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 21st, at the West Salem Branch Public Library 395 Glen Creek Road, Salem.

## Lane Transit

Eugene members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 22nd, and Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Thursday, April 23rd, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

## Corvallis Laidlaw City Transit/Schools

Corvallis members meet 7:45 p.m. Thursday, April 23rd, at Woodstock Pizza, 1045 NW Kings Blvd, Corvallis.

## Rogue Valley Transportation

Medford members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 23rd, at the Hampton Inn, 1122 Morrow Rd., Medford.

## Portland and Laidlaw School Bus Drivers

Portland School Bus members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, April 23rd, at Rigler School, 5401 NE Prescott, Portland.

## C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, April 26th, at the Laborers Hall, 2121 NE Andresen, Vancouver, Washington.

## Tillamook County Transportation District

Tillamook members meet 1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 26th, at 212 Main Street, next door to Beach Pancake House in Tillamook.

## AMR Northwest Josephine County, LAMAR Advertising and Valley Transit

See your liaison officers.

PLEASE NOTE: ATU members are invited to attend any of the above-listed meetings.

# Hunt

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have to leave the area, make sure that you or someone fully identifies them with address and telephone numbers.

Get a description of the suspect. If the suspect flees the area, make sure you get a good description and location of travel to provide the police when they arrive.

Increased heart rate, perspiration, confusion as to the sequence of events, difficulty answering questions, feeling disoriented and anger are some of the things you may experience at the time of the incident. Other symptoms may appear later: anxiety, fear, helplessness, loss of appetite, increased irritability, inability to concentrate and depression. Any or all of these symptoms can serve to reduce your effectiveness at work and at home. Not only does the incident affect your life, but it may well affect your coworkers, who can all too easily imagine it happening to them.

Even if you feel you are more or less coping after an incident of hostility, violence and/or assault, I recommend the services of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that are available to you. The EAP can counsel and assist you in debriefing the incident and provide

a perspective designed to return you, the victim, to a satisfying and productive lifestyle, such as that experienced before the incident.

The state of the economy being what it currently is, I see no reason to believe these incidents will decrease in frequency in the near future. While it is your employer's responsibility to maintain a safe workplace, it's up to us as employees to make sure they're on top of it and doing everything they can, and up to OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Administration), a federal agency, to enforce that responsibility.

There is no OSHA standard directly addressing workplace violence, but it has cited employers under something called the General Duty Clause before, which requires employers to provide a safe workplace. In order to prove to OSHA that a hazard exists, there would need to be a record including such things as grievances, workers' comp claims, health and safety meeting minutes, and complaints. What this means to you is: document, document, document, and keep your union officer in the loop.



# Secretary-Treasurer's Report

By Evette Farra • Financial Secretary-Treasurer

In March, I attended both informational sessions on retirement put on jointly by TriMet and ATU. For those thinking of working less before you retire, it could affect how much you receive from Social Security. According to Jeffrey M. Owens, President and Financial Advisor of The Business Planning Group, Social Security looks at the last 13 quarters (three years and three months) to determine the amount an employee will receive when they retire. Also, some TriMet members inquired about when the date that their time put in counts towards the 10-year vestment. Your time starts the first day of training.

The Executive Board pulled the winning ticket for the 50/50 raffle. Tickets were sold over the holidays and will be benefiting Labor's Community Service Agency. Patti Pellegrin had the winning ticket and has donated her portion of the raffle to Labor's Community Service Agency. Thanks, Patti.

Anyone who is interested in helping with the election, please be at the Charter meeting April 20 and put your name in for a position on the Election Committee. The vote for those positions will happen that night.

# Officer Reports

(From Page 16)



## First Student PPS

As reported by ANNA TOMPTE

My brothers and sisters, spring is here and the long cold dark winter is now in the past.

I want to remind you of a previous posting here about your Weingarten Rights: Keep them close should you need them!

We now have, once again, an Accident Review Committee to review any accident or incident you may be involved in. This is your right under the contract and will assist you in the process. We have had a number of accidents and it is extremely important to fill out all paperwork fully, and to take your time and get it right. (Just the facts) Take it easy out there and

keep an eye on everyone and the trees too.

I also want to encourage you all to get in to see John in the Training Department to be sure to keep your credentials up to date. If you have wanted to upgrade to the 84 PACs, now is a great time as summer is coming – see the training department. The same goes for you qualified drivers who need more time behind the wheel of the big buses – see one of our most excellent trainers. They are here to serve and support you.

I want to remind you to read your contract and to look for those things you want to see changed or deleted. I need your feedback so we can prepare for negotiations that are just a year away. Please cite the page, paragraph, your name and phone number so we can coordinate and understand what we need to change. I cannot emphasize enough that this is YOUR (our) contract.

The stewards and I are here to serve you!

# Retirees' Corner

The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in April: Wanda Adrian; Jeanette M Allen; Heidi J Anderson; Gale D Anderson; Joseph P Bachmeier; Katherine F Baugh; **Charles H Beaver**; Harold J Bussineau; Robert M Cummings; **David L Evans**; James D Finster; Glenn J Fuller; Ernestine R Fuller; Gladys R Givens; John D Green; Richard T Gross; Jose A Guerra Jr; **Delmer Guimont**; Dorothy G Guymon; Mildred E Haffey; Emery J Hofmann; William T Holm; Paul E Johnson; Michael A Jones; Carl D Klingner; John D Kuehn; Martha J Lawrence; Armand L Lemieux; John R Leslie; Roger J Lihs SR; Floyd R Linn Jr; Carl D Marino; Samuel J Miller; John W Miller; R J Millner Jr; Alvin R Mills III; Kerry L Montgomery; **Sam A Piro**; Vicki D Pollock; Maryann W Pratt; Mark A Probst;

James A Roberts; David L Rowe; Bobby L Scarborough; Richard B Schopmann; Julius F Schulz; Sharon L Schwarz; Joseph H Senn; Ava L Singleton; Sandra J Snyder; Terry L Spencer; **Herman M Stewart**; Michael S Stockwell; Thomas F Sweeney; Judith A Tallon; Jerry D Thatcher; Clinton F Townsend III; Emily A Trudell; Michael M Vernon; Jan J Wheeler. The names of the 50-year members are in bold type.

Next month's regularly scheduled ATU 757 Retired Member Chapter meeting is Wednesday, May 7, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at Westmoreland's Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd Ave. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9 a.m.

# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports



**First Transit  
TriMet Lift**  
As reported by  
LES GREEN

First I would like to say a "thank you" for the training that was held on March 14 and 15 concerning the science of working a grievance. The role of shop stewards working together along with their liaison officers plus the union board members can make this an unbeatable system. As usual, this refresher training course is needed by all of us from time to time to sharpen our skills to help all union members. Thanks again to our union officers and Susan Stoner (and of course the office staff) for making this vital function work.

All First Transit units have received a new and improved handbook from our parent corporation. This is now in the grievance process, as there appears to be a change in every other paragraph. I will keep you informed on the process of reforming the "new & improved handbook."

With the new handbook, we seem to be getting more selective enforcement, so I have put on the union board a copy of your Weingarten Rights. Please take the time to review them, as it could save your job!

Again, bathroom breaks are not part of your contracted 10-minute break, and if you have to go, you have to go. None of us want to injure our health and this is one of the quickest ways to do so. We have enough to worry about on the job without worrying about the health issues. Take care, and I will write more next issue.



**TriMet Merlo  
Maintenance**  
As reported by  
JEFF HUNT

No new pre-filings this month. The grievance about fabrication work being done at Powell garage looks like it will be moving on to the Step 3 panel at this time. I have not had a response on the two grievances at WES which are about taking away the ability to use a floating holiday when someone is off on vacation. The other is about not going by the right seniority list.

The big thing on my mind right now is sign-ups and all the things that can go wrong with them. It is a very stressful time, and I believe management has forgotten what it is like. We plan our lives around them, from choosing a shop close to where we live, to the shifts and days off that work best for our families. If you are a helper, there are five different shops alone to choose from or that you may be bumped to from the job you are in, not to mention the different seniority lists. Do you pass on a job as a cleaner in the hopes that you get the helper job that will work for you? Unfortunately, major aspects of our lifestyles hang in the balance until the last moment, and we are left to obsess over the rumors, wondering whether our source is good, or whether we are being toyed with by management.

We all accept this as part of the game of the sign-up and console ourselves with the knowledge that with time we will get more seniority and our choices will be easier. So when managers decide to arbitrarily redline the day off on a job or cut a job or sign up, it really gets under my skin, because I know that what feels like a small detail to management has an enormous impact on the daily lives of our members. Having the mechanics sign up back-to-back was one of the dumbest things to do. It was just asking for trouble, and sure enough, it was trouble. The first two sign-ups got pulled because management wanted to make changes to the sign-up, big ones such as cutting jobs that we had bid cards for. This sign-up is a very important one for all of us as we base our entire year's vacation on it. I will do my best to see that it is fair and go by the right seniority for sign up and vacation.

I would like to give a shout out to Lonny Fults for helping me out recently. Thanks, Lonny!



**TriMet Salaried  
Employees**  
As reported by  
JIM FOWLER

Last month I wrote about what I consider to be questionable fiscal decisions made by our management team over the past few years, and on the heels of that came a story in The Oregonian that TriMet had locked in diesel prices at well over \$4 a gallon for the next two years, a decision that could cost us over \$2 million. That was followed by another article stating that TriMet would use stimulus money to purchase a large number of bike lockers at around \$4,000 each. Well, I guess the homeless do need someplace to keep their cans and bottles.

I'm becoming increasingly frustrated with managers who are not empowered to make simple decisions about issues that have labor and management at odds. At one recent meeting to find a solution to an issue, the two managers at the meeting admitted they did not have the authority to make a decision. President Hunt, to his credit, immediately put a stop to the meeting and stated we would reconvene when someone who could make a decision would be there. So far no such meeting has been scheduled.

Speaking of frustration, we have been trying for the last two years to finalize SOP 700. This is the document that is intended to clarify how station agents assign work for controllers, dispatchers, and road and rail supervisors. We've had meetings involving representatives from the various groups in order to get a wide range of input. I guess a director who sat in briefly at our last meeting didn't like that we got hung up on an issue and decided we won't be meeting in that format anymore. I'm not sure what that means as far as completing this important work is concerned, but until we do know, as far as I'm concerned, we will not use SOP 700 as a guideline to assigning work. We will go by our contract language and past practice. I'm sure the grievances will increase dramatically.

Some of the other things we are working on include the issue of the eight-hour guarantee

on your RDO, as some managers don't think this exists. We have a grievance asking for double time in the OCS when you don't get relieved. There is still a question in Customer Service as to how our members will be paid when they fill in for a supervisor.

Lots of our members interviewed for the 15 field operations supervisor positions. By the time this article comes out, those hired should be out training. I believe nine were going to Rail and six to Road. Good luck to all of you.



**C-TRAN/C-VAN**  
As reported by  
ROY JENNINGS

This has been a busy month for grievances and arbitrations. As reported last month, four grievances were filed. Of these four grievances, three were settled in favor of our members without the Step "A" grievance hearing. On the other grievance, even though we could not reach an agreement with C-TRAN before the Step "A" grievance hearing, I am hopeful that by the time you read this article, we will have already reached an agreement in favor of our member.

After more than three years, the Union and C-TRAN have come to an agreement on one of our unresolved arbitrations. C-TRAN has agreed (in a non-precedent setting manner) to pay two of our members their sick time for calling in sick on a holiday.

On March 14 and 15, most of the shop stewards, liaison officers and I participated in two full days of union officer training. The training was on all kinds of subjects and was outstanding. I want to thank every union officer who attended, for not only participating but also for giving up their much needed weekend for the membership. It's standard for the Executive Board officer and sometimes the liaison officers to work during their weekends, but not our shop stewards. So again, thank you!

Per the wishes of the membership and with the help of members, we have started a newsletter designed to better inform the membership as to what is happening within your union here at C-TRAN. To save money, this newsletter will be sent out by e-mail. Once you get it, please pass it on. If you want a copy, please contact me or your liaison officer.

Check the Union boards for any upcoming meetings in April. Our next Union meeting is Sunday, April 26, 2009.



**TriMet Light Rail  
Maintenance**  
As reported by  
MICHAEL CONNER

As TriMet management is skewered over and over by the public for its failed fare collection system at Rail, someone had the idea that they should maybe come to the folks who probably have the most expertise and finally involve them in the process of trying to come up with a solution. The Union was approached by Steve Banta with an idea

to combine the communication technicians and fare technicians from two separate journeyman classifications into one classification. Long story, short story, Banta is trying to take a simplistic solution and apply it to a complicated problem. Whether this will work or not will depend on whether he takes seriously the discussions or was just giving the employees lip service to get the deal he wanted. We did get significant wage improvements for the fare techs and apprentices, an expanded training program, a lump sum payment for the communication techs and an additional assistant supervisor bargaining unit member position.

Welcome all to the new field technician position. Special thanks to Jon Hunt, shop steward Doug Baton, Center Maintenance Executive Board officer Chad Mather and communications technician Jeff Hunger for all their efforts in this task. Hopefully TriMet will live up to its part of the deal, and we will see some improvement in our public perception on fare compliance.

In Maintenance of Way, with signups approaching, I would have liked to see the addition and restoration of assistant supervisor jobs where we have had discussion on the issue. I guess as long as the operation keeps running as smoothly as it is though, the District sees no need to make that change after reviewing the sign up proposals. In the Rail vehicle shop, the battle continues over apprentice misuse and production issues. Even though District management continues to cut corners with its observance of collective bargaining rights, the backlog of preventative maintenance continues to grow in that area.

We will see how it goes with WES startup, but something to watch out for is the short line operator who is the contractor for TriMet operating WES. They have taken an interest in starting another of these operations for TriMet on the antiquated tracks between Forest Grove and Hillsboro. I do hope we do not end up with that happening, as Portland & Western Railroad look to make another raid on the TriMet treasury to improve its plant so we can watch contracted employees doing more of our maintenance and operators' work. We need to watch this one, as it looks like Portland & Western Railroad want to be power players for work that rightfully belongs to us.

With Local union elections fast approaching, remember that our union is only as strong as its members' involvement. This a great time to help have a say in your future in your career. I have found my job helping you the members to be one of the most rewarding things I have done. Get involved and have your voice be heard!

**Lane Transit District**  
As reported by  
BRIAN PASQUALI

The re-bid. That is all. But seriously, now that I have your attention my brothers and sisters, I have to admit it went well. It needed to happen for many reasons and those many reasons far outweighed the reasons for

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# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

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accepting the butchered initial vacation.

A brief synopsis: Most of us saw it coming on Tuesday. I really didn't see it myself until Wednesday, and began to question the District's bid room personnel at which point I was assured there was "no problem." By Thursday it was clear and many of you spoke out. Liaison Officer Carl Faddis answered the best as he could with the information we had. We simply had not yet made the decision to re-bid at noon on Thursday so all he could do was to simply explain we were aware and working on it, and that was enough for most of you. Thanks, Carl. As I had taken a day off (one off out of 12 on, as it were), I began dealing with the issue from home, and this worked fine. I apologize if it appeared that the problem was not being handled, but I assure you I was on it. On Friday I demanded a re-bid on behalf of the ATU. After a few logistical issues were ironed out regarding where to "re-start" it was agreed to do so.

And that's it, right? Problem solved? Wrong. This debacle exposed to me the flaws with how all bids at LTD have been run and controlled in heavy-handed fashion by operations officials. They forget: It's our bid! We should run it completely and get more of a say in run cuts and vacation slots, as our comrades on other properties do.

So this is not over, and we will be pushing for changes in the bid process. To see what those changes are and to suggest your own, visit: <https://atu-757-lane-county.blogspot.com>.

## MV Transportation

As reported by  
KATHLEEN BROWN

Hello, fellow operators! The month of April hopefully has finally chased away the winter weather, which hopefully brings increased ridership and more service hours and less route trimming. Do still ask for compensation when you are cut the day it happens, and if you are denied, continue asking until the end of the pay period. Document who you requested the compensation from, as well as the dates and times requested. If no make-up work is given by the end of the pay period and you come below your job classification, ask to be paid reasonable compensation for the lost hours. If you are denied, then make Cindy Russell and I aware of the situation so that we can conduct a proper investigation of the issue. We need MV transportation to realize that we intend to enforce the memorandum of understanding (MOU) added to the contract on July 2, 2008.

A number of Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) issues have arisen, and for a brief explanation of how to obtain the paperwork and who can use the paperwork, check the poster for qualification posted at the front entrance. The employer cannot punish you with attendance points, end your benefits, bidding rights, vacation and sick accruals or holiday pay. It is a violation of the law. The paperwork is distributed by the operations manager. You cannot be denied access to this paperwork. This also would be a violation of the law. There is also a

grace period in which you may produce the paperwork. If points are issued without the paperwork, they can be removed as soon as the paperwork is presented.

According to MV Transportation, due to the privacy of our customers, we will no longer be receiving our manifests by e-mail. Pre-routing is unpaid, and it is illegal for the employer to expect this of you, so do your routing ride-by-ride while you are on the clock. If on-time performance goes down due to this practice, so be it.

I want to give our Vice President Sam Schwartz a great deal of credit for all the work he has done for us and the excellent job he has done mentoring me. I also need to thank President Jonathan Hunt for the educational opportunities given to Cynthia Russell and myself.

Remember, the union is comprised of its membership, and the more we know of our rights, the stronger our solidarity. Until next month.



## Portland Public Schools

As reported by  
RANDY SHAW

I, along with Helen Goche from PPS, went to an ATU open forum hosted by fellow Executive Board Officer Rose Jordan. We found it very interesting, but we both felt that most of the drivers' concerns were TriMet issues. Therefore, in March I started our own open forum for school bus drivers. The idea behind this is that drivers can share their ideas, concerns, and yes their frustrations, with each other. This is not a Union-sanctioned meeting, but we do have their permission to hold the meeting. It will be held every month at 5:30 p.m. before our Union meeting at 6 p.m. My hope is to get all of these issues out in the open so we can take them to the Union and Management. This will only work if you, the drivers, attend and participate. Since most of us will be coming right from work and miss dinner, I will furnish refreshments.

We had one driver on administrative leave over a complaint, and had to meet with HR. We came out of the meeting with the driver returning to work. We had two grievances this month, and although both cases were settled with management, not everyone was happy.

I have worked very hard at morale at PPS and tried to make it more enjoyable to come to work. I am still hearing a few complaints through the grapevine: Drivers are not happy about this or that. That being said, if you have a problem, bring it to me and let us work on solving the problem together. In addition, if you hear something about another driver and you do not have all the facts, keep it to yourself. That is how rumors get started, and people get hurt when things are said that are untrue.

Please remember that just because you think something is not right does not necessarily make it a grievance. Management and I have worked out many problems that are not grievance issues. Keep in mind that your ideal resolution to your problem may hurt the rest of the drivers. You will never know unless we talk

about it, and come up with the best solution for everyone.



## Merlo Transportation

As reported by  
BRUCE HANSEN

All right, major things going on right now. Portland police department in the downtown corridor has informed our road supervisors that they will start writing citations for running yellow and red lights in the downtown area. So, keep your eyes on the lights. If you approach a stale light in the downtown area, be ready to stop. This could help you avoid a moving citation or a SOP. We will be returning back to the mall soon. Prepare yourself for the ongoing obstacles that we will be encountering.

Many of our probationary people are having accidents and then being told by management that they don't have the right to appeal. We thought we had this cleared up before but, apparently we don't. If you are on probation and you have an accident, you do have due process.

Once again we are losing our concentration and hitting many fixed objects — things like cars and poles. This is usually caused by a driver trying to be courteous so the passenger does not have such a big step to get on or off the bus. Please remember: when in doubt, stay out. Remember to do everything possible to help if you stay out by lowering the bus or offering the ramp to assist the passenger. If this is done, then you have done everything possible. If the passenger falls, then you have done everything reasonable.

Here at Merlo we have received the new buses and they are being put in service, but there are some problems with them. Some of the problems are glare. Make sure you have your light switch on night mode to reduce the glare. Also, buses are stalling due to fuel issues. At times the rear doors will not close all the way and you have to shut down the bus to reset the back doors. Now, some positives on those buses: power-assisted steering, cornering lights on both sides and additional turn signals for better visibility.

Once again, employees continue to go to managers regarding their own time loss issues. This does you no good. Recently, someone went in on their own and was placed on goals. When I received the goals letter I went into the ASM office, only to find out that 16 hours had fallen off two days after being placed on goals. In most cases this employee would have never been placed on goals because of the time that was about to fall off. So, please do not try to go into managers on your own. That is why you have union reps, so use them.

Remember to drive the schedule do not let the schedule drive you, and remember to take your breaks. Hope you had a good spring break and drive safe.



## TriMet Powell Maintenance

As reported by  
DAVID KAY

It was an interesting trip to St. Cloud. The new Flyer factory is a huge facility and quite an experience in and of itself. The weather was also a factor, with all of three days above freezing, and some days almost 30 below zero as a high. We have 40 new coaches in town as I write, with some already in service. There are some interesting new features, but in the end they are a 40-foot bus and almost identical to what we have now.

We have two new grievances in the works. One dealing with "work out of classification" was due to helpers. Steam cleaners being used on the chain repair tables is moving forward.

The second was concerning the contracting out of our work. After investigation this was withdrawn as an agreement for this work was found. What did come to light was a contract let by TriMet that was not included in the Maintenance Assistance Fund monies. This contract is worth almost \$45,000 and has now been properly applied.

We have reached a grievance settlement with the District concerning contractors doing our work. Steve Banta agreed that contractors will be accompanied by bargaining unit personnel while working on the property. While this seems like a done deal, the next question concerns a mechanic who is working with the contractor being assigned another task with the contractor. Round 2 to follow.

With Working and Wage Agreement talks about to open, contract suggestion forms have been mailed to all TriMet members. Please take a moment and give us your suggestions. Over the last six years, I have heard many good suggestions from many folks. Now is the time to bring them forward.

In the months before negotiations begin, work group meetings occur to read and prioritize all suggestions and finalize a proposal to present at the bargaining table. If you do not participate in this process, we cannot second guess. We must use what we have. Also if many members are concerned with the same issue, this will raise the priority.

This past weekend, ATU sponsored a training session. Stewards Martina Hartley, Joyce Hartung and Kevin Kinoshita and I attended. Saturday was filled with information for our shop stewards and refreshers for Executive Board officers. We covered topics of "just cause" grievance investigations, accident reporting, and the roles of stewards in the ATU organization. Feedback was very good, as was turnout. Almost 80 stewards, liaisons and Executive Board officers were present.

Sunday was an executive officer workshop on collective bargaining dos and don'ts and a general overview of the process. With six properties entering negotiations this year (TriMet included), this was very good information for all concerned.

It appears the rumor mill has already fired up. Be aware your stewards and I will be your best source of accurate information on any important subject. Also, management is listening, so do use discretion on what and to whom contractual items are discussed.