



And so you asked...

Brothers and Sisters

By Al Zullo
President-Business Representative



Brothers and Sisters. I use the words loosely. At the April 18 meeting, a member reported on all the bickering and fighting going on among the membership. I call you brothers and sisters because that is what we are. Your Union is only as strong as you are. Your officers are only as strong as you are. The Eugene strike did more than get a reasonable contract. It became the start of our membership pulling together again. When we speak as one voice we are indestructible. When we speak with many voices we can be beat. Every member of the Union

has a right to voice their opinion, and they have a right to vote on Union matters as they please. I can remember the day when I was driving and all members were one. We waved at each other on the road, and we helped out each other when it was necessary. It seems like those days are fading away.

The member at the meeting who reported the problems also remembered the days when we really helped each other. If our leader was late, we would automatically pull up and tell him to head for the end of the line, and we would do his work and our work. That usually worked out really well because our leader was running late and we would be running hot. The rail operators who were at the meeting also expressed their dismay that bus operators weren't waving at them. We're all one, and we need to stay as one. As I said earlier, if we are one voice, we're unbeatable. Please pull it together. Start waving at each other, start working with all of your brothers and sisters. Stay solid.

C-TRAN

We may be running into a problem. They have decided to declare an emergency with the thought that they can destroy the Union contract by declaring an emergency. We will not allow this to happen. The first time that they try to break the contract we will be filing an unfair labor practice against them.

TriMet

Guess what. We have finally signed off on the contract. It seems to be all in order now. It is on the way to the printers. It should be in your hands soon.

Rogue Valley

I understand that management is taxing your insurance reimbursements. I'm checking with our tax people to see whether or not they can do that. If we find that they cannot do that, we immediately will be sending the District a letter telling them to stop. We'll go on from there.

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Oregon Senators can make or break CAFTA

By Jon Hunt
Vice President



On Friday, April 15, as union members joined a nationwide call-in urging members of Congress to oppose the expansion of NAFTA to Central Amer-

ica, Oregon's two U.S. senators expressed both misgivings and criticisms regarding the Bush administration's proposed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

Oregon is the only state with two senators on the influential 20-member Senate Finance Committee, which began hearings on the trade deal today. That gives our senators who represent a little more than one percent of the U.S. population a full 10 percent of the votes on the committee whose decision could make or break the Bush trade deal. So their comments on CAFTA have been widely reported in the media. And what they said indicates they're moving toward opposing the agreement.

Smith told an influential Capitol newspaper the day before that he was "truly undecided" on the Bush's administration's proposed Central American

Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). "I think the trade deficit is becoming so high and so alarming that any trade legislation is in jeopardy now," Smith told The Hill.

Also, during the Finance Committee hearing, Wyden delivered a stinging criticism of CAFTA's "egregious favoritism" to the U.S. pharmaceutical industry, the Associated Press reported that evening. "I'm one of the people you've got to get to have any chance of passing" the bill, Wyden told proponents of CAFTA. And because of provisions designed to protect the profits of U.S. drug companies for products sold to the CAFTA countries, he said, "You've got a long ways to go to convince me."

Under the terms of the "fast-track" trade negotiating authority that Congress narrowly approved in December 2001, trade deals like CAFTA cannot be amended and must be accepted or rejected as negotiated by the Bush administration. So Congress cannot do anything to change the provisions of the agreement, making Wyden's criticism and Smith's concerns all the more telling.

"CAFTA will further oppress workers, depress wages in Central America and cost jobs in the United States," AFL-CIO Executive Vice-President Linda Chavez-Thompson told a House subcommittee Friday. NAFTA, which

served as the template for CAFTA, destroyed nearly one million jobs in the U.S. during its first 11 years – including 9,720 jobs lost in Oregon, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

The CAFTA countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, plus the Dominican Republic) have a combined population the size of California and wages rates that average less than \$2.00 a day for 40 percent of their workers.

"If we give countries with such a large low-wage labor pool, weak labor laws and a history of widespread abuses of workers' rights the benefits of special trade status with the U.S., we'll see another massive loss of middle-class jobs from this country," says Oregon AFL-CIO President Tim Nesbitt. "If our elected representatives care about preserving good jobs here in Oregon, they have to vote 'no' on CAFTA."

ACTION NEEDED: So far, only Oregon Representatives Peter Defazio, Darlene Hooley and David Wu have committed to vote against ratification of CAFTA. Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Greg Walden remain uncommitted, as are Senators Wyden and Smith. If you haven't yet made your calls to these members of our Congressional delegation, you can still do so by calling Senator Wyden at 503-326-7525 and Senator Smith at 503-326-3386.

ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

Laidlaw Portland Public Schools

As reported by
KATHY MITCHELL



I would like to wish the rodeo team good luck in their competition. The school year is winding down. There are a lot of changes ahead of us. The closing of certain schools will affect all of us, but we

will survive. Drivers, the company has issued the summer work sign-up sheet. You know that there is not enough work to accommodate everyone. If you sign up, you must be available for work when the company contacts you. The drivers' contract expires in August. Hopefully, we will be going to the bargaining table before then. Field trips are normally scheduled between routes. If you have a mid-day route, most likely you will not be offered a trip.

Five grievances are still pending a Step 3 hearing. The mechanics are looking for their 3.5% increase effective April 16th. That is the way to go, guys; enjoy your raise. Before getting angry,

you need to ask yourself, "Do I have a grievance? Has the company violated my rights or any portion of the contract? Were any labor laws broken?" When you are talking to me, I am going to ask you for proof or evidence of what happened. There is too much of the "he said she said" stuff. Let's be professional.

Laidlaw Corvallis

As reported by
CHRIS GROOMS/BOB MCGUIRE

No report given.

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What IS this?

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

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 • Obie Media Corporation • Valley Transit Association • Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc. (TriMet Lift, Portland) • American Medical Response Northwest (Multnomah, Clackamas and Josephine Counties, Oregon, and Clark and Cowlitz Counties, Washington) • Laidlaw Education Services (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



ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

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TriMet Merlo Transportation

As reported by
GREG MCGREW



Like the famous "shot heard around the world" that started the American Revolution; Operator Michelle Lawrence has fired a shot of her own that has reverberated around TriMet, and the repercussions have not yet been concluded. It seems that Michelle had a fare dispute with a customer just before the new fares went into effect. The customer called in a CSI. Michelle, like many other bus operators, felt justifiably outraged that she should have received a CSI for only doing her job as a fare informer, not a fare enforcer. Unlike most of us, Michelle wrote an e-mail to Fred Hansen describing the situation and her concern about getting complaints for doing her job. To his credit, Fred replied to Michelle that she did in fact do the right thing and commended her for a job well done. However, he did not address her first, real issue of receiving a CSI. The second issue for Michelle was inadvertent. In sending the e-mail, she mistakenly sent it to everyone in TriMet! For her error, Michelle was blasted by an avalanche of e-mails informing her that not everyone wanted to know about her problems. To be fair, not all of the e-mails she received were negative. A few were very supportive. Still, it is disturbing to me that some very senior and key employees of TriMet were dismissive of Michelle's issues.

In every organization it is important to know who your customers are. For the operators it is the passengers. For all of the rest of management, their key customers are the bus and rail operators and the bus and rail maintenance workers. If these key customers do not show up to go to work, all of management and their support staffs would be hard pressed to justify their jobs. So, as far as I am concerned, a healthy dose of reality in the form of an e-mail discussing an operator issue is a good thing!

A wise old fast food entrepreneur named Dave Thomas thought it was a very good idea to empty corporate headquarters once a year. He would have everyone from janitors and secretaries to vice presidents and the chief executive officer get out from behind their desks and go out to the restaurants and work. Many of those people learned to appreciate what it took to make the cash register ring. Still, it will be interesting to see if and when management takes steps to limit Union employee access in the e-mail system. It will take real courage for manage-

ment to resist limiting access.

Speaking of ringing, that noise you've been hearing is the TriMet version of the "Gong Show." It seems that the district is on a binge of firing people. The latest was Bill Wagoner, the rail operator whose train collided with a Hillsboro fire engine. His case wasn't even heard by the accident appeals board before his verdict was written and delivered. Needless to say, your Union will fight this injustice and the many others that are being perpetrated on the rank and file.

On the lighter side, retirement kudos to Bill and Kathy Danforth who as you read this are motoring up the Alcan Highway to Alaska. We all wish them well in their new endeavors. Marking his annual April Fool retirement was Neil Burley, who treated the Merlo bullpen to posters and banners announcing the event. This year he went all out and treated his fellow employees to a dozen (that's two packages) of vending machine minidoughnuts. What a guy!

TriMet Powell

As reported by
SAM SCHWARZ



Three new terminations occurred in the month of March, which makes the term "March madness" mean exactly that — madness. We must rally behind our brothers and sisters who have been terminated unjustly and voice our concerns. I am willing to fight for any member who is punished unjustly and encourage other members to do the same. After investigating hundreds of grievances, I have found very little consistency in the way the District hands out punishment. Please join me in expressing our disgust over this misuse of power.

The Memorial Day sign-up starts April 12th, and the summer sign-up starts April 18th for runs that will start in June.

We are still working on the mini-run vacation grievance and should settle it shortly. This is a very complicated issue; it involves the two pay raises — one December 1st, and the other is on June 1st — plus longevity pay. So, if you get paid in advance for your vacation, you probably have money coming and maybe more vacation days.

The best of luck to all of our recent retirees.

MV Transportation

As reported by
TODD WATSON

TriMet has sent a directive to all Lift contractors that "all fareboxes on vehicles used in revenue service be emptied daily and contents reconciled

to the documentation of fare payment provided by operators." Our station manager on the property has interpreted this as part of our job description; therefore, we must drop the cylinders and turn them in to our dispatch window when returning from our route. This presents a real problem for us, another added responsibility when post tripping our buses. A lot of the fareboxes are old, and sometimes they put up a struggle when they are repositioned. Also, we are not compensated for this extra time, management saying that this is an easy task and shouldn't present any problems. If this is such an easy task, why is management trying to delegate this job to us, when they've done it in the past. I received no answer to that question, so that tells me they just don't want to deal with it. Hopefully, our grievance process will get this resolved soon.

TriMet Powell Maintenance

As reported by
DAVE KAY



We have had several pre-grievances this month and have managed to settle one issue. The others will proceed through the grievance procedure. Two Step 2 hearings were also held with one item deferred and one pending.

The new steps from the maintenance parking area are now installed and work and look good. To all parties involved, nice job!

The contract has gone to the printers!

Lane Transit District

As reported by
CAROL ALLRED



We are finally, seemingly, getting back to some sort of quiet and calm after the last 10 months of turmoil. Hopefully, over the next two years

we will manage to keep our unity and our resolve. I don't feel that we can let our guard down. The District will have to work hard to prove to us that they will not again subject us to the unthinkable two years from now when we begin to negotiate a new labor agreement.

We are in the process of getting the stop loss benefit of our medical plan in place and working well for any of the membership who might need to use this. If you have questions about any of your medical benefits—what the

Pacific Source explanation of benefits means; is Pacific Source paying the provider correctly; the VEBA account and how it works; or anything else regarding your medical benefits, please call me.

Be thinking forward to the summer and the upcoming bus rodeo. No firm date has been set for the rodeo as of this writing, and hopefully I will know more by the next issue of The Bulletin. The Union will provide prizes for the first, second and third place winners. The prizes are a jacket for first place, a shirt for second place and a hat for third place.

Remember, as the weather begins to heat up, to drink lots of water and take the time to use the restroom when you need to.

TriMet Light Rail Transportation

As reported by
MICHAEL T. OLIVER



Once again, I must warn all light rail operators: If you get a "see-me" note from an assistant manager you should inform me so we can go to this meeting together. It is your legal right to be represented, and I have done it dozens of times. You go to these meetings by yourself and you get intimidated and disciplined. You go with me and at least you have a chance; this especially applies to new people. Our rail rodeo happens on May 15 at 9 a.m.

Everybody is invited, especially "rubber wheel" operators. It's lots of fun for the kids, and light rail has exquisite cooks. The fun and the competition happens at Ruby Junction with our eight finalists: Mike DeCriscio, Laura Hanks, Corky Hemmingsen, Kim Luper, Dylan Ruark, David White, Dee Williams and RayRay Willman, good luck to all. Our next sign-up is Thursday, May 12th. The Rose Parade and the Starlight Parade will be the subject of the sign-up. Don't forget, if you want to work a holiday and it is your regular day off (RDO), you must sign the holiday book. Thanks for all of your e-mails to mtgbo2002@msn.com.

Portland Public Schools

As reported by
SMOKEY STOVER



We do not have a date to talk since the last time, which was in March. They are waiting to see what the Legislature does and for the school

board votes on April 11. After that, maybe we will get dates to talk. Did you know that the managers were going to get a 10 percent increase in December or January? It was cut to 6 percent, and now the board and the school district want all Union members to take a cut in pay. We have to wait and see what happens.

Don't let the rain get to you; it brings May flowers.

TriMet Salaried Employees

As reported by
SHIRLEY BLOCK



I would like to talk some this month about TriMet's little problem that seems to affect all of us. I am referring to the budget. I have heard from station agents over and over how many runs are getting dropped due to the shortage of operators. We are all aware of the run cuts that are coming up in June. I know about jobs that are not getting filled when people are retiring. We have the chief fare inspector recently retired, and I understand his job has been farmed out to at least three Union people and one got a large raise — the other two should complain. Bear in mind we won't forget the fact we have lost two dispatchers to other positions (scheduling and inspector) and one to retirement. I have been told we won't be posting because of the budget.

Let's talk a little about the supervisors. We have had two lead supervisors resign and no posting. But, you know, these are all Union jobs. Now, let's really talk dollars. If TriMet is so concerned about the budget, tell us why we have three highly paid directors in human resources (HR)? How many managers are in HR? I know many of us remember Mike Savage, director of labor relations; well, one man left and more than three replaced him. Instead of trying to work with the Union on discipline issues the District would rather go to arbitration to settle simple issues that are black and white in the contract, but again that is Ms. HR. We don't need a general manager when we have Ms. HR. I could go on complaining about this kind of endless spending. We all know which director of human resources is running the show. The sad part about this is no one in HR is willing to step up and say "Enough is enough." I can understand most of the pain a lot of our members are in because our jobs are our bread and butter. After over 23 years, I have never seen so many people in despair. We need help from management to take hold of human resources as of

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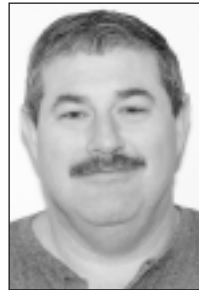
ATU Officer Reports

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now. There is nowhere to go for most of us who need the help.

C-TRAN/C-VAN

As reported by
ROY JENNINGS



As C-TRAN changes to their new fares, remember fixed route and paratransit operators are only "fare informers"; we are not "fare enforcers"! Make

sure that you take care of yourself, because it's not worth your life. Let C-TRAN worry about their new fare policy.

Last month, the Union filed five grievances on your behalf. Two were filed because C-TRAN had nonbargaining employees doing bargaining members' work. A grievance was filed because C-TRAN tried to change the way part-time to full-time vacation is accrued. Another was filed due to the part-time hours not being equalized. In addition, a grievance was filed because C-TRAN did not have just cause to find a member at fault for an accident.

A few weeks ago, two of our members were called into a manager's office and told that he was not pleased that they had filed grievances. Bad call! Remember, it's our legal right to file grievances; don't let management tell you, or intimidate you, into thinking otherwise.

Last week, one of our Union members decided to meet with management without the Union being present. Afterward, our member came to the Union requesting our help. When asked if he had requested Union representation during this meeting, he stated that he didn't think he needed it. While investigating his case, it was learned that our member had severely hampered himself during his meeting. Management does not want you to request Union representation, and if you don't, you play right into their hands. By not requesting Union representation, management can and will say or do anything they want to you. Before you have a meeting without a Union Officer present, please ask yourself these questions, "Why would we ever want to do this? Will a supervisor or manager look out for my best interest? Does a supervisor or manager work for me? When push turns to shove, whose side will they be on, mine or management's?" Please protect yourselves; never, ever go into a meeting with management without a Union officer present. Remember, you have a legal right to Union representation. Management cannot take this away from you. Why would you ever want to give management a free shot at you?

On May 22 at 6 p.m., Irene from Associated Administrators will be at the Union hall in Vancouver to talk about the Union's medical retirement fund. All members are invited.

Salem Area Transit

As reported by
GARY SPORE



It appears that the District — in their pursuit to regulate the use of sick leave and control of absenteeism — is willing to forgo safety and have employees

drive and/or work around heavy equipment even when an employee is truly ill and should not work. It also appears that in this endeavor the District is willing to put their heads in the sand and state, "It is up to the employee to determine when they are well enough to drive." Does anyone think that with termination staring them in the face an employee will choose not to come to work?

Is the District oblivious to their responsibility to protect not only their employees but the general public at large? It is clear to this writer, no matter how much the District wants to spout about how much they care about their employees and the safety of the general public, it is nothing but rhetoric!

AMR Northwest

As reported by
JAMIE WILLIAMS



Congrats to Steve: Steve Polzel, Clackamas/SSD liaison, has successfully passed his paramedic test. Steve is an example of someone who started at the

company, worked in the ranks at SSD and then worked his way to a paramedic certification. He is also very dedicated to the workforce in trying to make AMR a better place to work with his willingness to serve in a liaison position.

Working conditions: Make sure that when you are faced with unsafe working conditions, you need to report the discrepancy as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor. If the condition has not been fixed in a timely manner, then report it again.

Untimely step increases: It has been brought to my attention again that people are having delays in getting step increases to show up on your paychecks. As I have stated before, you need to act like a bill collector and keep calling your supervisor or director

until it has been fixed. In the event the increase doesn't appear on time, it could take a couple of paychecks at the most before it happens.

Ignorance will not work: Just because you didn't know that the rule in the current policy existed and that operational procedures will not work as a valid defense to fight a discipline situation, it is advisable from time to time to review company policies. By reading and understanding the policies you could be saved a hardship down the road.

www.atu757.org: This website has been up and running successfully for over a year with a lot of helpful contact information. The collective bargaining agreement is also available on the website.

TriMet Light Rail Maintenance

As reported by
MICHAEL CONNER



It's time to celebrate; the Union and the District have signed the final draft of the contract and it's at the printers. So, if you had concerns, you can put them

to rest for another five years because it's done! Union officers and District managers are expected to soon sit down and discuss interpretation and implementation. Also, you can expect another round of the District and Union officers sitting down and attempting to settle some of the many grievances that have been filed over the last year. Hopefully, everyone will be happy with the outcome as it is always good to settle them sooner rather than later!

A common issue to all of rail maintenance is the use of FMLA. If the District does not follow the law, we need to know about it. We should not only file a complaint with BOLI but also file a grievance. FMLA issues are grievable contrary to what some people think. I myself have often been confused by the rules, but please ask and I will try to find out! By doing this we will help educate ourselves as well as TriMet management about how FMLA issues should be handled.

Once again I am back on days but have to work part of the weekend. I have 17 years here at the District and still can't get weekend off shift. Believe me, all of you with low seniority, I certainly understand your plight as I share your pain. Seniority is great if you have it, and even though I don't — and in the structure of the age of folks in the department I work in I will in the rest of my career gain very little — I still believe it is the fairest, best way to protect our rights and I support and defend the seniority system 100 percent.

Hopefully, we'll soon get some good weather to enjoy our vacation benefits, which the District has grudgingly provided through your right to collective bargaining.

Rogue Valley Transportation District

As reported by
TOM HENNEY



Attendance at our last meeting was shameful. The door prize from the February meeting went to Deanne, and in March it went to Roger.

Thank you both for your attendance of our monthly meetings. Please try to attend these meetings as they are your chance to talk about problems in our work-days.

New business: Coming up is our annual Union-sponsored picnic at Emigrant Lake. It will be Saturday, June 25, 2005 in Section D. We had a good turnout last year. You will get more information later. The sign-up sheet should be up in early June.

We are still having problems with our medical reimbursements being taxed. We will continue to try to iron out this problem with management.

Our company board-sponsored appreciation dinner was held March 19. The turnout was good, and fun was had by all. Congratulations to everyone who received Million Mile plaques and safety awards.

New route bids will be mid-April. We are now bidding for vacation dates.

TriMet Lift

As reported by
LES GREEN

No report given.

TriMet Center Maintenance

As reported by
CHAD MATHER



I am pleased to tell you that the rest of the money has come through from the snow and ice 2004. By the time you read this, you should have already received

your check and explanation. Thank God it's over.

I hate to keep harping on FMLA/OFLA, but until I get the grievance settled you need to use your OFLA days before your contractual days — unless you use your contractual days for your spouse.

The weather is turning nice finally, so have a safe and fun summer.

TriMet Center Transportation

As reported by
ALAN EISENBERG



Dear Brothers and Sisters, my heartfelt thanks to all of you for all you have done for me in my time of crisis. Now, back to the front, for those of you who

have been written up for speeding in a school zone fill out a white card on the bus it happened on. Find out what the plus or minus of that speedometer is and when it was last calibrated.

I just read a recent report from Stanford University about chronic pain and depression. Endless back pain and long lasting headache have a direct link to depression, and I know there are lots of us who take some kind of anti-depressant — and will talk about it — at TriMess. Keep writing up junky seats, front ends that shimmy like Jell-O and so on. These factors can lead to painful disorders. If you're taking a shot in the butt, then your spine and whole body are feeling the effects, especially the longer one drives. Pain sucks, and you can ask me about it anytime. Whole body vibration can cause hand problems, neurovascular changes, ischemic heart disease and hypertension. So take care of yourself, because you are number one.

It seems that TriMess has been testing a front driver's side mirror on the 2100s. Aha! So, now it's official that they know the problem exists because the ATU Local in Colorado Springs fought their district about right-side vision on (ycccchhh) Gilligs after a right-side fatality and won and got the driver's job back. Yea for unions! Next to go may be those high fareboxes — before someone gets killed and a driver's soul is tormented and a family member will be no more.

Next, when people complain about the Union they forget this is us, not them. Come to meetings, stand behind our brothers and sisters and, for gosh sakes, if you're having a problem with another Union employee, come speak to us first and not management. How would you like to be disciplined for some petty reason when it can be worked out without our members getting in trouble.

Drivers, let's stand strong and together. Stay sharp, stay alert, stay alive.

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May Meetings

Charter

Charter members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 16, in the Machinists Building, 645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. Charter day members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, May 17, at Schoppert Hall, 1801 NE Couch, Portland.

Salem Transit/WHEELS

Salem members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 17, at the Red Lion Hotel, 3301 Market St. NE, Salem.

Lane Transit

Eugene members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 18, and Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Thursday, May 19, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1116 South A St., Springfield.

Corvallis Laidlaw City Transit/Schools

Corvallis members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19, at the Salbasgeon Suites, 1730 NW Ninth St., Corvallis.

Rogue Valley Transportation

Medford members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19, at the Hampton Inn, 1122 Morrow Rd., Medford.

Portland and Laidlaw School Bus Drivers

Portland school bus members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, May 19, Whitaker Lakeside School Cafetorium, 5135 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the Laborers Hall, 2212 NE Andresen, Vancouver, Wash.

AMR Northwest

AMR Northwest Washington County members meet 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Monday, May 9, at Tanasbourne/Haggens, 18000 NW Evergreen Pkway; Clark County members meet 6 to 9 a.m. Monday, May 23, at Starbucks, 78th St and Hwy 99, Vancouver; and Multnomah/Clackamas members meet 7 p.m. Monday, May 23, at Izzy's, 1307 NE 102nd, Gateway District. Note time change through October, night meeting is 7 p.m.

Tillamook County Transportation Dist

Tillamook members meet 1:00 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the Odd Fellows Hall, next door to the Bay City Fire Hall in Bay City.

Valley Transit

See your liaison officer.

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

ATU Officer Reports

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TriMet Merlo Maintenance

As reported by KEVIN KINOSHITA



The contract has been signed, and it is off to the printers! After many reviews by the officers and staff, it's finally done. This has been a very long and sometimes frustrating process, especially when dealing with the language that was agreed upon at the table. What may seem so simple in the contract, management will add their twist on what the language says. That is why we are having three sessions lasting two days each with a mediator and management so the language is adhered to. Since the new sign-up there have been a lot of rumors. All I can say is that until you see something on the board at each property don't believe everything that's floating around.

I attended the quarterly apprenticeship meeting for facilities maintenance. There were a lot of questions that were not properly answered or not answered

at all. There were safety concerns that have injured some of the apprentices. One of the questions that was asked is "What is the ratio of apprentices to journeyman mechanics?" No management personnel knew the correct answer. The reality is that each apprenticeship program has its own set of guidelines; unfortunately, it's the apprentices that suffer in the end. I haven't received any response from the manager about this issue, which seems like another stall tactic management uses when they don't want to respond to a safety concern.

We are still working on the storeroom longevity pay issues that should have been so simple to resolve. Once again, with all the high technology that TriMet has to offer it's still a mess. We requested all the documents for the storeroom personnel to see how they got paid. After many hours of going through everyone's paperwork, hopefully you will receive a check that will reflect the correct amount of pay.

The FMLA/OFLA is becoming more of a testing issue each time a member gets denied. A member recently turned in FMLA paperwork and it got denied because, TriMet said, "The 'meds' part was not on file, and this person hasn't turned in FMLA paperwork for over a year now." This statement

was blatantly false, because I helped this member fill out their FMLA paperwork just a month previous and got it approved for the same ailment. This is another example of you having to go through the hoops to get FMLA approved and TriMet having faulty FMLA recordkeeping. The best part of this story is that the employee made photocopies of their FMLA paperwork and didn't have to take time out of their schedule to go back to their doctor to get the same paperwork filled out again. The bottom line is TriMet has a poor recordkeeping system, and unfortunately the burden falls on the shoulders of the employee when there is a disagreement.

If you are off sick and not sure if you qualify for FMLA/OFLA, contact your Union officer when you return to work. You may qualify for FMLA/OFLA if your absence meets certain criteria. If the management tells you that you don't qualify for FMLA/OFLA, don't just accept their word for it; see your Union officer. That's why we have a Union.

Lastly, remember both the upcoming union industries trade show starting April 29 through May 2 at the Oregon Convention Center and in June the Union motorcycle poker run.

WHEELS

As reported by JOHN HARVEY



There has been much confusion about company policy and ADA laws. WHEELS Transportation is responsible to adhere to the ADA laws, not the employee.

The employee is responsible to know company policy and to follow it. If you are not sure what company policy is, then you need to have it clarified by a supervisor.

There is also some confusion on proper wheelchair loading and unloading. All wheelchairs are to be loaded on the ramp by backing them on, thereby placing the weight close to the bus. The only way this can be changed is with the approval of John DePierre, the transportation manager. If a passenger has a seatbelt attached to their mobility device, they may use it in lieu of a safety belt. However, it's the driver's responsibility to ensure that passengers are securely belted to their devices.

Zullo: And so you asked

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Portland Public Schools

We're still in negotiations there. We're hoping to end them soon. The District Council of Unions has already agreed for a couple of the craft units that their members will start paying part of their insurance premiums. Of course, our members — the bus operators — are \$25,000 a year people who cannot afford to pay anything out of their own pockets. We will be fighting this hard right to the end.

Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods:

As soon as John Canda calls me back in response to my two or three messages, we will try to get some dates set to finish your contract negotiations.

Laidlaw Corvallis

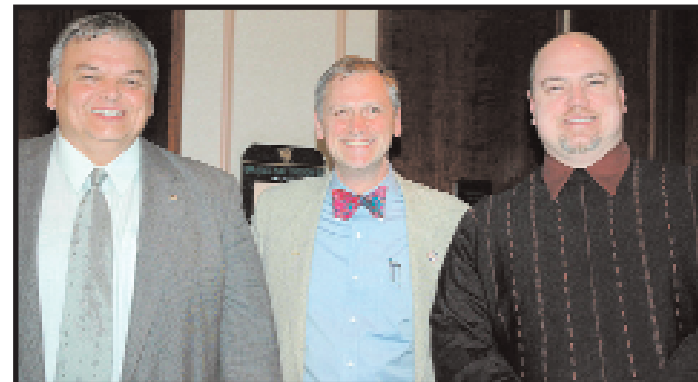
Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have ratified your contract. We're close to agreement but need to pick up some odds and ends. I'm sorry I won't be available for your next meeting, which is the April meeting. We will set a separate meeting to accomplish ratification.

Employee Free Choice Act

As you know, ATU 757 has been involved in organizing. There is a bill in the 109th Congress sponsored by Senators Edward Kennedy and Arlen Specter and Representatives George Miller and Pete King. It's the Em-

ployee Free Choice Act, which says when a majority of employees in a workplace decide to form a union they can do so without the bitter war employers now wage to block them. Every 23 minutes a worker is fired or discriminated against for exercising the basic freedom to decide whether to form a union. On paper U.S. labor laws give workers the legal right to form unions. But in the real world employers block that right day after day. So 57 million workers who want the benefits of union membership can't get them.

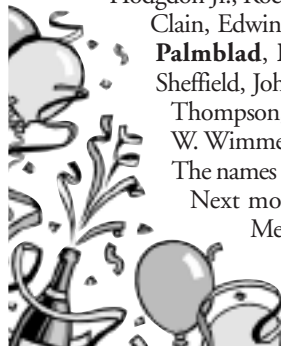
The Employee Free Choice Act is a commonsense approach to restoring workers' freedom to form unions. It would require employers to recognize the union once a majority of workers sign cards authorizing union representation. It also would provide for mediation and arbitration of first contract disputes and authorize stronger penalties for employers that violate the legal rights of workers seeking to form unions and negotiate first contracts. By the time Congress adjourned last year, 38 senators and 210 representatives had signed on as cosponsors of the Employee Free Choice Act. That's a good start, but we need far more supporters to win this fight for working families.



Congressman Earl Blumenauer met with Tom Wallace and Michael Pucik of Local 757 following the ATU's International Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, to discuss elements of the transportation bill being considered by Congress.

Retirees' Corner

The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in May: **Darrell W. Baker**, **Edward C. Becker**, **Barent B. Boicourt**, James W. Britt, James L. Bryant Jr., Arlet M. Caldwell Jr., Melvin R. Chamberlain, Ronald M. Driver, Gwendolyn J. Follings, Theodore A. Fry, **Joseph M. Griesenauer**, Fred L. Harris, **Jack K. Hasbrook**, Dennis G. Head, Valoris W. Hermann, John D. Hodgdon Jr., Rockne O. Lechelt, Tony A. Malar, Wanda S. McClain, Edwin H. McClincy, Larry C. Nelson, **Kenneth A. Palmblad**, **Donald T. Pattison**, Dave E. Sharp, John Sheffield, Johnny W. Shirrell Sr., Alan D. Smith, Eldon H. Thompson, Mary M. Walker, Peter E. Williams, Wilfred W. Wimmer and Judy L. Zullo.



The names of the 50-year members are shown in bold type. Next month's regularly scheduled ATU 757 Retired Member Chapter meeting is Wednesday, June 1, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. at Westmoreland's Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd Ave. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9 a.m.