



And so you asked...

Your vote counts!

By Jonathan Hunt

President-Business Representative



I am sure I don't have to tell you that the votes of U.S. Congress politicians can profoundly affect our everyday lives.

When it comes to politics, the union mission is clear. Unions have the job of protecting working people and their families from harm. What this means is that while our union officers may not agree on social issues like war, abortion, stem cell research or gay marriage, we do agree that Union dues money should contribute to the campaigns of politicians who consistently vote in our members' favor when it comes to economic issues.

Historically, that has meant that ATU 757 supports both Republicans and Democrats in state politics, even though as individuals we may vote and contribute differently. As a result, ATU 757 is considered one of the most politically effective unions in state politics regardless of which party

(Turn to Back Page — 4A)

A get-together with the union family

ATU 757's annual picnic at Oaks Park



Suspense: Above, ATU members and retirees wait in the shade for their raffle ticket to be selected during the prize drawing.

Sudden hair loss: Right, TriMet Merlo maintenance Executive Board officer Kevin Kinoshita is still stunned after losing his hair for \$1,000. A big thanks to all of the ATU officers who shaved their heads to raise over \$1,000 for COPE and \$2,117.80 for Labor's Community Service Agency.

Couldn't do it without them: Below, ATU annual picnic volunteers.



VP's Report

By Sam Schwarz

Vice President



It's been a long month and a busy one too! TriMet is on a firing binge and continues to misinterpret the working and wage agreement. Since March 2004, when the working and wage agreement was ratified by the membership, the District has been hard at work looking for loopholes and ambiguous language to argue over.

At the request of many TriMet Merlo operators, I visited their garage to speak with them and address some of their concerns. One issue is their on-time performance being posted in the garage. Another issue is management's using FMLA and OFLA absences for some kind of attendance program or discipline. Page 24 of the Working and Wage Agreement Par. 1 is clear about protected time: FMLA or OFLA cannot be used for any discipline.

In Salem we still have a big issue with the general manager and soon it will be even bigger. The WHEELS operators and members are tops in my book. Like so many of our members, they are getting a raw deal. These members are fighters, and when the time comes we will be side by side.

Salem Area Mass Transit will be in (Turn to Back Page — 4A)

What IS this?

The four outside pages, plus Page 14, 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 • Lamar Advertising Company (formerly Obie Media) • Valley Transit Association • Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc. (TriMet Lift, Portland) • American Medical Response Northwest (Josephine County) • 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

Lane Transit District

As reported by
WALT BOYNTON

Again, a busy month! The ATU/LTD picnic on Sunday, July 23, which turned out to be one of the seven hottest days on record, was well attended by bargaining unit members, retirees and management. Thanks to Deb Bitterlich, Steve Rayack, Tom Shackelford, Lee Lasse, Greg Pedersen, Ron Slaton, Larry Harmon, Ilene Muggleworth, Mary Neidig and Mark Pangborn for all your hard work! I'm sure I left someone out, so thank you, too. Carl Faddis and two accompanists gave up some great tunes. Good food, good times!

The following weekend was LERC training for the Local officers at the University of Oregon. Deb took a class on Labor History II (World War I to present). Tom's class was Union Building: Getting More Members Involved. Lee and I took classes on Contracting Out of Public Work and Contract Costing with Computer Spreadsheets. Lee took a class on Using Values to Frame Union Messages, and I took a class on Learning the Basics of Employment Law. All of the classes were informative and helpful.

The class of five new drivers that began on June 6 started on their own on Aug. 6. Welcome, new Union brothers and good luck! The next day, Aug. 7 a new class of seven drivers started training. Welcome, Union sisters and brothers. We look forward to working with you!

Lee and Tom have been in the interview process to hire two new general service workers (GSWs) in the maintenance department.

Deb is still performing the work of two officers in watching the extra board and chairperson. The new extra board and mini extra board liaisons will be appointed this month at the executive board meeting in Portland. A customer service shop steward will also be appointed at that time.

We are having some problems with management on progressive discipline and the assignment of work. These issues should be resolved soon.

I met with Governor Ted Kulonogski in Springfield on his stop at the Springfield station to give several million dollars to LTD for the Pioneer Parkway start-up phase of EMX. We spoke personally and he would appreciate our Union's support. He told me that he did initiate the forming of the committee of local officials that helped us negotiate our last contract. I told him that he was not held in very high regard with the Union members in Eugene because he did not step in and help when we asked him to. I said we were told that it was Peter DeFazio who formed that committee. Ted said that they had both worked on getting that committee together. Even though the committee was not formed until after we were on strike, my vote is to support Ted for

re-election, endorsement only, as his opponent is not labor or transit friendly. This is hard for me, a registered Republican to say. But we don't want to shoot ourselves in the foot. I have always supported Peter DeFazio.

Your Union officers urge you to drive the speed limit and to not disobey traffic signals or other traffic laws because the schedules are tight! Remember, the CDL you lose will be your own! Take your needed breaks and stay hydrated for your health's sake. I know we are all trying to make it work, but sometimes with traffic, malfunctioning traffic signals, detours, customers not prepared as they board, and other obstacles that pop up, it won't always work until we get some tight schedule relief. We have busy times coming up soon with school starting. Stay healthy, stay together and come to the Union meetings! They are for you. If you have not been sworn in, come to a meeting and get sworn in. We all stand together at the swearing in of new members. Solidarity, sisters and brothers, solidarity!

TriMet Light Rail Transportation

As reported by
MICHAEL T. OLIVER

A longtime "thorn" has finally been pulled, and things will be better for future light rail operators (LROs). After receiving a rail certificate but not having an open slot to move into, newly appointed LROs were returned to the bus side until an opening appeared. In order to keep their certificate, they had to make a four-hour revenue trip each month. The problem was that they had to do it on their own time. After finishing a bus shift, we then had to do a revenue trip on the train or even on our regular day off. We would only get paid at straight time for this, and the Union would not grieve it because of past practice. But, lo and behold, along came Operator David Tipton and new Union leadership, and suddenly we have a reversal. From now on, revenue trips will be scheduled by station agents and if overtime is required, then time-and-one-half will be paid. Congratulations to David Tipton, Union President Jon Hunt, and Rail Manager Terry Dolan for a job well done.

Ralph Yoder lost his father, and Warren Kruppa lost his wife this month. We share their sadness and wish them the best in this time of torment.

Jay Jackson was a LRO, then a controller and now is an assistant manager, rail operations. Way to go, Jay. In his new position, Jay will still be working with operators, and we hope it will prove beneficial to all. Congratulations, Jay.

A new class of six students will begin on Sept. 5 with another one to follow in January 2007. Posting for controllers is up and should have your attention. If you are good as a LRO, then chances are you might make a good controller, give it a swing. "Give

dance a chance." To celebrate 20 years of MAX, a party is being held Saturday evening, Sept. 23, at the Gateway Elks Club. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. They are available from Spud, Sandy, Cheryl, Nick Weis and Mike Carter. Everyone is invited, and thanks to all the volunteers for their work.

My new pager number is 503-273-7340, or e-mail me at mtgbo2002@msn.com

WHEELS

As reported by
JOHN HARVEY

I would like to thank each and every one of you for standing together! Special thanks go to Phillip Carter. Phillip organized the rally backing WHEELS and its employees. Thanks again to all of you who put time in to save our jobs! We are not done though. Salem Area Mass Transit has plans to take the scheduling and call center away from WHEELS and move it to Del Webb. This makes no sense, since the call center works so closely together with dispatch to ensure that our riders have communication for such things as emergencies. Our schedulers work as a team to make sure that rides fit properly in the schedule. Moving the call center and scheduling to another location will cause major problems for dispatch. The scheduling will be done by individuals who are unfamiliar with our riders. Some riders take a little longer to board the bus; some need more care than others. The needs of our clients have to be known to schedule efficiently. A new company or employee will not know these things. We may need another rally to let Salem Area Mass Transit know that this idea is wrong and is not beneficial to our riders. In the survey that Salem Area Mass Transit had done at WHEELS, the recommendation was that the call center and scheduling stay together at WHEELS to keep everything running efficiently. Why does Jeff Hamm waste taxpayers' dollars on surveys that he doesn't listen to? This does not make sense.

Portland Public Schools

As reported by
RANDY SHAW

Welcome back to those of you who didn't have to drive. I hope you had an enjoyable summer. Maybe you'll have some interesting stories I can share in the Bulletin. They have to be printable (Mike "Two Dogs" Webb). I need to have my article in by the 12th of every month.

To those of us who had to drive, I hope you got some time off. I was able to take my fifth wheel trailer out a couple of times and had a very relaxing time. It would have been better if I had caught some fish, so that I could come back with good fish stories for Jim Walters. So, I stopped at a pay-to-fish and

limited out in trout. Don't tell Jim. It would spoil the story.

We had three Step 2 hearings this month. We won one and two are pending. We had one Step 3 that was settled to the driver's satisfaction.

Aug. 21 was our first negotiation session with the District. Remember, information that can be released will be turned over to the negotiation committee so they may keep you informed. The committee was formed after our last contract to try and control rumors so everyone gets the same information. I will have opinions on issues but will not discuss them until after the committee has released the information to everyone. So, please, do not ask me.

The District is trying to find office space for me and our shop stewards. This will allow you to have a place to come if you have a problem or just need to vent. We have had problems in the past with drivers who have bypassed their shop stewards and executive board officer by calling the Union office first rather than giving their own property Union officers a chance. I am asking you to give us a chance. Jon Hunt has instructed his staff to tell you to contact me first. If I can't help you, I will have someone from the Union office assist you. I can't do my job if I don't know what's going on. I think that is only fair, don't you?

The new school zone signs are going up - 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. school days, and there are still some old ones out there — 20 mph anytime. Watch for them and set a good example to the public.

If I have a baldhead when you read this, it means we sold all of our raffle tickets. I want to thank Jon Hunt for his crazy idea along with everyone else who bought a ticket. If I still have my hair, I want to thank everyone who didn't buy a ticket. Just kidding. COPE is a worthwhile cause, and I am proud to have participated. If you would like more information about COPE, contact me. For all of you who didn't make it to the ATU picnic you missed out on a lot of fun.

After 30 years, Shelley Widmer is going to turn in her bus key. How was that, Shelley? I didn't say you were retiring. Oh, darn it, I said it after all, didn't I? Have fun, kid, we will miss you!

TriMet Salaried Employees

As reported by
JIM FOWLER

I took office on July 1 and have been very busy. I'm finding out that I have much to learn. Fortunately, Shirley Block has been very helpful during this transition, and I appreciate now more than ever the work that she's done for us over the past three years.

I'm sure most of you have heard that one of our own, Jay Jackson, has been selected as the new assistant manager of field operations. The benefit of an inside hire is that at least he knows we have a contract. I'm not sure if I should give Jay my congratulations or condolences. I'm hoping that with his background he'll work with us in a produc-

tive manner.

It appears the way work is assigned for dispatchers and road supervisors is going to change. At some point in the near future this will be turned over to the station agents. Rumor is that there will be wholesale rule changes as to how the work is assigned and that is not what's going to happen. We do need to standardize some of our practices and get things in writing, but we need to sit down with management first--the Union and people from the affected department--to develop a plan for these changes.

The fare inspectors have been officially moved from field operations back to the finance department. Their new management team wants to have all the inspectors reporting to a central location. The operators' shack at the Rose Quarter has been modified to serve as a temporary office for the inspectors.

The Wackenhut invasion continues. During the week of July 30 their officers were observed checking fares and giving verbal instructions to rail operators. This is bargaining unit work and must not continue. I've spoken to Tim Garling about this issue and he states he will take care of it. We must all document the date, time and location of each occurrence and file a grievance every time we see Wackenhut doing our work.

Inspector Jaques Craner is retiring in September; have a great time, Jaques! We all wish you well.

TriMet Lift

As reported by
LES GREEN

Well, it is September and time to get back to normal and fall activities. I would like to welcome all the new drivers who are about to join the work force at Laidlaw Lift. You are about to see and experience how your training works in the field. Our new manager appears to be taking control, and I know we all wish him well in working with his staff as well as with 90 unique drivers.

It has been proposed that we have a drivers-only meeting. I would be happy to set this up; however, I need some input from all the drivers on what you want covered, so it is not just a social event. Let me know, or drop a note to Ken Briscoe.

On the darker side, we have some Step 1 and 2 hearings for current and former drivers which, at this writing, have still not taken place. I am hopeful that they will occur before you read this article.

Again, even if I sound like a broken record, cd, etc., take your breaks! Even if you have to call in to create a space in order to, do so!

Laidlaw Portland Public Schools

As reported by
KENDALL GREENAWALT JR

The dispatch building is getting a makeover. There have been more crosswalks added to the yard.

(Turn to Next-to-last Page — 3A)

ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 2A)

The picnic was fun. Congratulations to Stacy Corey; she won the trip to Mexico. To all of the drivers who didn't show up on Sunday, Aug. 13, we missed you!

I hope you all had a safe summer.

TriMet Merlo Transportation

As reported by
GREG MCGREW

Late July and the month of August was certainly a busy time at Merlo. We had a run-off election for executive board officer; the arrival of our new manager, Cornelius Booker, and the absorption and adjustment to his "unique" management style while assisting him in adjusting to life as it really is at TriMet. There was a good turnout of Merlo operators at the annual ATU picnic; and operators Charles Sanders and Steve Eckles get a tip of the McGrew topper for their outstanding work on the Rec N' Roll bus. A big thanks also goes to operators Patti Pellegrin, Tom Hall, Jeff Ackerson, John Jamison and Don Lund for their volunteering to serve the bus drivers of Merlo Garage as shop stewards.

There was a memorial service to the life of Diane Boothe, and a plaque was mounted in the Merlo report area. It is a fitting reminder that safety always comes before service.

So, what can you look forward to in the months ahead? Well, it will be sign-up all of the time; with Labor Day, Fall #2 and Winter, plus Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year holidays. Life off the mall also should provide some interesting moments. Somewhere along the way, TriMet will introduce its new direct supervision program. This is a novel idea that suggests that managers and supervisors should actually get out of their offices and vehicles to really manage and supervise the people assigned to them. Ideally, they should be looking to catch you doing something right and actually take the time to tell you so. As I say, this is a novel approach from their usual model of looking to bust your stones for some real or imagined infraction of the bus operators' guide. We will see what actually happens!

C-TRAN/C-VAN

As reported by
ROY JENNINGS

I hope everyone who attended the ATU picnic had a wonderful time. I would like to thank Scott Miller and Cheryl Benson giving up their Sunday to help out. This year there were a lot of members from C-TRAN who won great prizes. Just some of this year's winners were Joe Hendrix, Reid Cooney, Noel Sawyer, Richard McHugh, Devlin Thomas, John Sannes, Linda Hedgecock, Steve Dixon, Sharon Stewart, Jim Collell and Eva Rosenbaum. If you weren't able to attend the ATU picnic,

well, not only did you miss having a chance at a great prize, but you also missed seeing me get my head shaved! Well, there's always next year, right?

Back in June, the facility maintenance manager here at C-TRAN physically assaulted a fixed route coach operator. Yes, you read that right. I said that the facility maintenance manager here at C-TRAN physically assaulted a fixed route coach operator! Julie DeBoever has finally finished the investigation.

Just so everyone knows, the so-called manager has maintained throughout, that he did not assault anyone. According to Julie's investigation letter, she agreed that the assault never happened. She has come right out and said that our Union brother is lying. But we know better!

After the C-TRAN manager physically assaulted our Union brother, the manager ran into the dispatch area and demanded that our member be disciplined. He then returned with other managers and supervisors who helped back him up. This manager was so unprofessional that not only did he start, contribute to and escalate the argument that ensued, he was so far out of control that a supervisor had to step in between him and our member.

Now, behind closed doors, some in management have stated off the record that how the facility maintenance manager handled this incident was not only shameful but was also very unprofessional. In fact, when I have asked other people if that is how they would have handled it, they have all said, "no." Apparently, there are a few honest professionals here at C-TRAN, because the rest are saying that not only did this so-called "professional" not assault our Union brother, but they have decided to discipline him as well. No, I'm not kidding; just this week the Union received notice that our Union brother was disciplined. C-TRAN has truly shown us what they think of their employees.

Apparently, it's okay for management here at C-TRAN to physically assault an employee and then find a way to discipline the victim, too! At C-TRAN, this is a brand new low blow even for them.

I only wish he would have assaulted me instead. No one should ever lay his/her hands on another person, let alone what C-TRAN calls a "manager." This is not the last you will be hearing about this issue. Apparently, we, all of us, need to make sure that we have lots of witnesses whenever we have any dealings with this so-called "professional." If Cliff walks up to you and starts talking to you, you need to inform him that since it's unsafe for you to continue to talk to him and since this conversation will lead to you being disciplined, you want a Union officer. Exercise your Weingarten rights!

Again, this is not the end of it. By the time you read this article, round two will have started. I'll keep you informed, I promise.

TriMet Center Transportation

As reported by
ALAN EISENBERG

No report given.

TriMet Light Rail Maintenance

As reported by
MICHAEL CONNER

Job cuts, no money in the budget, and watch out, here comes sign-up time again. TriMet maintenance management couldn't ever get their act together to get the Union the requested sign-up for facilities and the helpers together. Let's hope they figure it out in a timely fashion for the fall sign-ups.

With the change in MOW management, a much more efficient processing of labor management issues has evolved. If an issue arises, it seems to be dealt with in a much more business-like manner. Do not expect that this means that you will always get your wishes granted without going through the process, but it appears the employees' needs are being listened to with more respect.

As we are between contract negotiations this term, my attention is focused on contract enforcement. Please feel free to call me if you are seeing contract violations, past practice violations, or the District ignoring its own policies and SOPS, pay issues or FMLA issues. Even if it is not a Union issue, I will try and do all that I can to help or, at the very least, offer a sympathetic ear.

I hope that you and your families had an enjoyable and safe summer.

MV Transportation

As reported by
DENNIS TONG

The Union and MV Transportation, Inc. management are currently working on the resolution of grievances filed about the absence of 10-minute breaks provided for in our manifests. A concern that management has brought to the Union's attention is that only a fraction of the manifests returned at the end of a shift have any documentation about when a 10-minute break was taken by the operator. Therefore, to assure that our health and safety needs are met, we must provide the evidence (through accurate and consistent documentation) on our manifests that we are taking breaks, and, if not, why not (a short explanation, e.g., "I never had an empty bus from 1000 to 1300.") "I didn't want to be late for my next pick-up" is not a good excuse for skipping a break. Making schedule adjustments is the responsibility of dispatch. Your responsibility is to inform dispatch that you will be out of service for 10 minutes and that you will (by your best estimate) be running late for your next pick-up. If you receive a customer complaint regarding lateness, respond to management's questions about the situation with facts: e.g., "The travel time between these two points was unrealistic because of a traffic

accident; a certain passenger was extraordinarily slow because" or "I took a 10-minute safety break." It is possible that management will announce a master re-bid before my next report.

If you wish to have medical insurance coverage, are qualified by working for six months on a full-time bid job (35+ hrs) or by working on a part-time plus bid job (30-35 hrs) immediately inform the operations manager, Ron Klein. The only other time for qualified operators to sign up for medical coverage is during the open enrollment period in November.

TriMet Center Maintenance

As reported by
CHAD MATHER

First of all, I would like to thank all of the people who volunteered for the picnic. Without your help it would not have been as successful. Another thanks to Kevin Kinoshita for donating his hair for \$1,000. His hair will go to children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment. The money raised will go to Labor's Community Service Agency. They are a nonprofit charity that takes care of Union members who are having a tough time. They make rent, electric, gas and utility payments for those who meet the requirements.

We have all been hearing a lot about some bus/rail maintenance merge. TriMet has not kept the Union informed at all about what is going on with this. In fact, they have gone out of their way to exclude Union officers from these meetings. A friendly reminder to all of you Union members, it is a common practice for desperate employers to include members in helping set something up, then saying that because you were included in the process the Union must agree. The big part of this problem is that the District picks people who are more company-minded and who don't understand the ins and outs of the contract. These people do not understand how a little decision may greatly affect another work group. If you are a member of one of these committees, please be careful and forward all of the information from these meetings to your Union officer.

Laidlaw Corvallis

As reported by
CHRIS GROOMS/BOB MCGUIRE

No report given.

TriMet Merlo Maintenance

As reported by
JEFF HUNT

I would like to say thanks to everyone who attended the ATU picnic. I am especially grateful to all of the volunteers. Next year, I hope to have a larger role in the coordination of events and charities.

By this time next month I hope to have a lot more to say as your newly appointed executive board officer.

TriMet Powell

As reported by
ROSE JORDAN

Powell operators are filing grievances about unfair discipline. I have been able to resolve or table many issues until management has given the right paperwork for disciplinary actions. Take a look at the Union board at Powell. It is displayed with bright colors to draw your attention to upcoming events. I will make sure it stays clear of clutter.

The ATU picnic went smoothly. The bingo was very structured thanks to those in my organization. I believe in fairness for all who chose to participate. Thank you for your cooperation. The gifts at bingo were of good quality.

I look forward to talking and being of great service to each and every one of you. I've received my ATU representative business cards and have passed out many. If you have not received a card, please give me a call or a note and I would be more than happy to give you one. My e-mail address is out of whack at this time. I hope to have it up and running soon.

Rogue Valley Transportation District

As reported by
TOM HENNEY

No report given.

TriMet Powell Maintenance

As reported by
KEVIN KINOSHITA

Since last month, things have not slowed down. I had another meeting with Tommye Gilbreath from the safety department to try and finalize the revised food policy. There was a lot of confusion with the original policy, and hopefully with this new policy we can start barbecuing again. Another subject that was brought up was having a lighter type of vest for the summer time, especially for the shaggers. The current vest will not allow much flow of air to cool you down, particularly on those "dog days of summer." I have spoken to Mike Grove and Greg Haley about this issue. Stay tuned for the outcome.

There was another incident with American Medical Response (AMR). An employee was injured on the job, and their request to go to the hospital of their choice was denied. This is the second time (that we know of) that this has happened. If this has happened to you, please let your Union officer know. This is unacceptable and very aggravating for the injured worker.

We have another grievance in the works for facilities maintenance. Apparently, upper management believes that when a subcontractor does bargaining unit work, the only fair remedy is to offer our Union facilities maintenance mechanics the work to finish the job on straight time. I don't think so! TriMet needs to know when a subcontractor violates our contract, we will not sit back

(Turn to Page 14A)

October Meetings

Charter

Charter members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, October 16, in the Machinists Building, 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. Charter day members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, October 17, at Schoppert Hall, 2001 NE Couch, Portland.

Salem Transit/WHEELS

Salem members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 17. The meeting location is undetermined at this time. Please refer to your Union message board for updated information.

Lane Transit

Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, October 18, and Eugene members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 18, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

Corvallis Laidlaw

City Transit/Schools

Corvallis members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, October 19, at the McKenzie Conference Center, Salsborgeon Suites, 1530 NW Ninth St., Corvallis.

Rogue Valley Transportation

Medford members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, October 19, at the Hampton Inn, 1124 Morrow Rd., Medford.

Portland and Laidlaw School Bus Drivers

Portland school bus members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, October 19, at Rigler School, 5401 NE Prescott, Portland.

C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, October 22, at the Laborers Hall, 2232 NE Andresen, Vancouver, WA.

Tillamook County Transportation District

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

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: Vote counts

(From Page 1)

is in the majority.

Our bottom line is simple. As representatives of working people, we look at proposed legislation and decide whether it would help or hurt the working people we represent. Then, we lobby for the good bills and try to stop the bad bills. This has been very difficult in recent years because the majority of those in Congress tend to support the interests of corporations over all other interests—including the interests of working people.

Many bills in the U. S. Congress this last session were bad for working people. I am telling you about five of them because most passed by just a few votes. Had just a few different politicians been sitting in Washington, all of these bad bills might have been defeated.

Bills in the U.S. House of Representatives

Bill No. 1 cut \$50 billion for health insurance for the old, poor and children, student loans and child support enforcement while granting \$70 billion in tax cuts for wealthy investors and businesses. This bill passed by only two votes. Someone who supported working families would vote "NO" on this bill.

Bill No. 2 authorized any international corporation registered in the country of Oman to sue state and local governments to overturn laws such as minimum wage, safety and health requirements for workers when that international corporation wants to bid on state and local contracts and jobs. This bill passed by only sixteen votes. Someone who supported working families would vote "NO" on this bill.

Bill No. 3 passed the estate tax cuts at a cost of \$755 billion. These cuts benefit only those whose estates will total more than \$600,000 but most of the \$755 billion in savings will go to the top 0.05 percent wealthiest in the country. At the same time, the bill will allow employers to reduce wages by the amount of tips collected by their employees. This bill passed by fifty votes. Someone who supported working families would vote "NO" on this bill.

Oregon representatives

Bill Number	1	2	3
Bluemenauer	*	No	No
DeFazio	No	No	No
Hooley	No	No	No
Walden	Yes	No	Yes
Wu	No	No	Yes

Washington representatives

Bill Number	1	2	3
Baird	No	No	*
McMorris	Yes	Yes	Yes

* = Did Not Vote

Bills in the U.S. Senate

Bill No. 4 attempted to change law to eliminate the right to overtime until 80-hours in two weeks rather than over 40-hours in one week. Excused employers who take in less than \$1 million in annual revenues from paying minimum wage, overtime, or equal pay to men and women doing the same job. Excuse businesses of any penalty for the intentional first violation of hazardous chemicals and pension fund rules, no matter how great the harm. This bill failed by 24 votes, in part, because members of unions and other groups flooded the U.S. Senate with emails. Someone who supported working families would vote "NO" on this bill.

Bill No. 5 increased the cost of Medicare B for retirees while increasing payments to doctors and private insurance companies. ATU 757 retirees use Medicare B which is used along with private insurance to lessen retirees' health insurance costs. This bill passed by 1 vote. Someone who supported working families would vote "NO" on this bill.

Oregon Senators

Bill Number	4	5
Smith	Yes	Yes
Wyden	No	No

Washington Senators

Bill Number	4	5
Cantwell	No	No
Murray	No	No

Schwarz: VP's Report

(From Page 1)

negotiations, and I know that Executive Board Officer Ken Richins has gone to battle more than once with Cherriots. Management is mistaken if they think they can pull anything over his eyes.

C-TRAN is getting ready to start negotiations, and for the most part, they will be dealing with one tough cookie, Roy Jennings.

The picnic was a huge success. I had a great time getting my head shaved. After all, it was for a good cause.

Strike of a different sort



ATU members employed by the Salem-area paratransit service WHEELS hold a one-day strike July 7, not against their own employer but to protest plans by Salem Area Mass Transit will give their employer's contract to a non-union bidder.

COPE contribution always a sure bet

By Mike Pucik
Political Coordinator

I want to start by thanking all of the volunteers who worked with me at the ATU picnic selling raffle tickets and signing members up for ATU COPE contributions. You all did a stellar job.

It seems the lure of winning a prize, or a large sum of money, is a very good draw to bring people to the ATU COPE booth. The idea of walking away with a prize of great value for only a dollar is a great feeling. All money collected through the raffles went to two great causes ATU COPE, and Labor's Community Service Agency. Labor's Community Service Agency helps union members in times of crisis. COPE works to ensure family-wage jobs with benefits so union members never end up in crisis. ATU COPE protects union jobs and union

benefits. ATU COPE helps elect government officials who are pro-labor and pro-transit candidates regardless of political affiliation. ATU COPE also supports pro-labor, pro-transit legislation.

If you have ever wanted to bet on a sure thing that carries almost one-million-to-one odds, then track down your executive board officer and sign up for a \$1.00 per paycheck (based on biweekly pay periods) automatic payroll deduction. Nationwide, in the last two years, ATU COPE has contributed over \$1.5 million to all levels of government. It is estimated that if all ATU members donate a minimum of \$24 per year, we can raise that to almost \$5 million. So, go ahead be a winner, find your executive board officer and sign up for ATU COPE. Your prize will be family-wage jobs with strong benefits, a safe work environment and lots of political clout, a guaranteed win.

Retirees' Corner

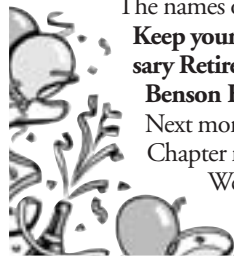
The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in September: Gerald A. Aaron, **Byron C. Anderson**, Sam L. Avery, Terry E. Bergland, Marian K. Chulos, Randall N. Conant, Donald G. Coombs, Charles R. Cummins, Donald W. Dunn, **Clyde H. Earl Sr.**, Richard T. Emra, Stephen E. Gillmer, Raymond A. Goff, Howard M. Green, Dale F. Helmer, Rolf E. Hermes, Robert J. Hoelt, Jimmy G. House, **Chester W. Johnson**, Linda K. Kallberg, Pauline Kelly, Karl Klotz, Victor M. Kuss, John D. Mitchell Sr., Stephen D. Orr, Simone V. Oviatt, Donald H. Phillips, Darrell R. Propst, Douglass M. Renfrow, Jerry A. Richardson, Leanna A. Robideau, Alvin F. Roder, Charles E. Rooney, Phillip J. Rotella, George C. Schmidt, Terry L. Scudder, Patricia A. Smith, William F. Strong, Kenneth M. West and Christy M. Yelton.

The names of the 50-year members are shown in bold type.

Keep your eyes peeled for mail regarding the 25th Anniversary Retirees' Chapter Celebration on Sept. 16, 2006 at the Benson Hotel.

Next month's regularly scheduled ATU 757 Retired Member Chapter meeting is Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2006, 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

(From Page 3A)

on our heels and say "okay."

If you would like to volunteer for any Union events, contact your officer and we will put you on a list. Some Union events we have may take an hour and others may be for the whole day. We have many different events throughout the year. A prime example of this is our ATU annual picnic. This year's volunteers were registering members, passing out food and beverages, calling bingo, distributing prizes and collecting money for COPE/Labor's Community Service Agency raffle tickets. Without the assistance of the volunteers, the picnic would have been disorganized. I want to thank all of the volunteers for their much needed help; every one of you did an awesome job.

A ceremony was held on Aug. 12 at Merlo Garage to unveil the Diane Boothe plaque. Diane was a TriMet operator whose life was taken away while on the job. If you have a chance to go to Merlo Garage, look for Diane's plaque on the wall in the bullpen.

Lastly, this year's annual ATU picnic did have some glitches. We will be going over what can be improved; if you have any suggestions, comments or recommendations, let your Union officer know. This year's grand prize was a 50-inch flat screen TV with surround sound. The winner was Harold Alt, a member of the retirees' chapter. We also had several different raffles: two were for COPE and one was for Labor's Community Service Agency, an agency that offers assistance to union members. Even though we didn't reach our goal of selling 15,000 tickets, the money raised was for great causes. To make even more money for the Labor's Community Service some of the officers and volunteers received a "special" haircut. I was one of them. A thousand dollars was pledged for my haircut alone. I would like to thank all of you who bid, made a contribution and/or pledged money. My hair will be donated to a children's organization to be made into wigs for ill children.

Salem Area Transit As reported by KEN RICHINS

I have been meeting with management in a series of Union/District meetings to see if there are any minor language changes or current memorandum of understandings that may be presented at the bargaining table as joint proposals. An example of a joint proposal that we have agreed to already is to change the titles of the District's managers that have changed since the last contract was signed.

It is not too late to submit contract issues for consideration to be included in the formal collective bargaining process. Formal bargaining will commence in October.

Here are the best ways to contact me if you don't see me at work: Home phone: 503-588-7510. This number is listed in the phone book. If no answer, please leave a message. Cell: 503-302-8219. Please leave a voicemail if no answer. It is helpful if you state your phone number s-l-o-w-l-y. Thanks. E-mail: KenRichins@comcast.net. Please

type "ATU 757" in the subject line. That's how I'll know it is not junk mail.

Note: Feel free to place a note in my employee mailbox in the drivers' room. You may write your message on the note or simply ask me to call you. Just leave your number and tell me the best times to call you.

Union office: You may always call the Union office: 1-800-797-4373, and they will contact me on your behalf.

The best time to call me at home is between 5 and 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 7 and 10:30 a.m. on weekends.

I am looking forward to serving you as executive board officer for the next three years. By the time this goes to press, Gary Spore, Harry McFadden and Clint Livingston should be officially appointed as shop stewards and extra board liaison officer.

To all of our members who are being laid off in September, please keep in touch. The easiest way is to send me an e-mail as referenced above and let me know you would like to be placed on my e-mail list. Also, if you have not yet

requested a withdrawal card, now would be a good time to contact Taylor at the Union office and request one. We fully expect to see you return to work in July.

Any member who would like to be involved in the campaign to pass the operating levy in November should contact me as soon as possible.

I have been in contact with Don Elznic, maintenance liaison officer, regarding our pending negotiation of a successor contract. Maintenance members serve a vital roll in the success, comfort and safety of everything that moves in operations. Accordingly, every issue in maintenance deserves the full attention of the Union leadership. The Union remains committed to change every instance in the contract that specifies "Transit Operator" to specify "Employee" so as to include maintenance workers in that benefit whenever it is appropriate. Other issues that remain in maintenance will not be neglected during this bargaining session. Remember, our new Union president was a maintenance worker.

Driving is not an exact science

By "A TriMet Merlo Operator"

First of all, I should like to tell you that I am offended by the above referenced letter which was distributed to all "Team Merlo" Merlo Operators. [The letter referred to by the author was a list of all Merlo Operators' names, the percentage of time they were purportedly on time and a direction to the low scorers to "review your records as shown here, then make adjustments, where necessary to improve your performance."] Those of us Bus Operators that are at the Merlo Garage are there because we CHOSE that garage. We were NOT assigned there.

I understand you want the Bus Operators to improve their individual performance. This is not an unusual request; however, the publishing of a listing of all the operators for everyone to see is definitely offensive. This leaves room for some operators to ridicule other operators, certainly not "Team" spirit. There are reasons why operators run either early or late. I have talked to some operators to see if there has been any background checking to see what the reasons for the bus running either early or late are; none that I talked to have been aware of any checking. I am therefore led to believe that this distribution is a warning letter or is the beginning of finger-pointing at who does their job and who doesn't.

This is the part I find most offensive. All of us operators with the exception of a very small percent do our job to the best of our ability. We are given a schedule and expected to follow it... What is not taken into consideration is we do more than just drive from point A to point B. We have to check fares, includ-

ing: Passes - 12 different kinds/styles not counting C-Tran; Transfers - valid for time, correct day code, correct zone, not to mention if the Youth or the Honored Citizen is actually valid; TVM tickets and passes - most of the time the print is either too small or the lighting in the bus makes it unreadable; Validated Tickets - All those numbers together are for the most part unreadable; AND collect fares and give receipts for all those that pay with cash fare. This is a ONE customer at a time process.

What you do not understand is in order for us to do our job effectively and keep the bus close to schedule on a regular day (assuming everyone shows up for work and we are not doing others' work) we have to cut corners somewhere. Normally it is the fare tickets that are not fully read, and if a passenger has a pass, they walk by the one that is paying cash fare and have to be called back. Also, because of the schedules being so tight, we have to cut corners in the driving to keep close to on time. This may mean:

- A. Running early at one point so we can be on time at another point;
- B. Moving the bus before all passengers have paid fare and moved behind the yellow standee line; or
- C. Exceeding the speed limit to make up for lost time.

One of the other things hampering our effectiveness is lack of operators. Runs are canceled when an operator does not show and there are not sufficient extra board operators to cover it. This means the bus that would normally follow the canceled run bus is doing twice the work. Like other departments in TriMet line workers are being cut while management staff is being

added.

If you want those of us at Merlo to improve our "score cards" then you have to give us the means to do so. This means (1) having an adequately-signed extra board; (2) fixing the schedules by adding more time so they are not so tight that one lift function causes a loss of 4+ minutes; (3) putting the traffic signal priority back into effect for us; (4) resetting the signals that cross the light rail so that the priority is light rail, bus, then traffic. Also helpful would be changing some of the stops so they are on the FAR SIDE of the traffic signal instead of the NEAR SIDE. Additionally, at the transit center, mainly Willow Creek, put the line 88 behind the line 52 inbound and move the line 48 to the outside where the outbound lines 47 and 52 are. A lot of time is wasted because when the line 88 comes in and customers can take either, you either leave them at the transit center for the bus they were really waiting for or you wait for them to stroll from the other end of the bus transit center. Maybe you should ride some of the lines that are high percentages early or late, and then you can see for yourself that most of us operators ARE doing our job to the best of our ability. If you want us to improve you have to GIVE us the resources to make improvements.

As a last comment, publishing our badge numbers and names I feel is an invasion of privacy and an attempt at public humiliation. That is the reason why when customers want to make commendations or concerns, they use the bus number as the ID for the operator.

Note: The above operator scored high on the Merlo manager's "benchmark" list.

Summer is upon us

Tom Wallace

Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Summer is still here and what a summer it has been. We have had record heat and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. This brings up another reminder that you need to drink plenty of fluids and use the restroom. The employers have stated that you can use the restroom when needed and that you may even go off route if necessary.

The TriMet retirement rate is currently \$64.33 per month, per year of service. As of September 1, 2006, it will increase to \$66.26 per month, per year of service. The rate for the current retirees will be adjusted March 1, 2007. The rate will be published in the near future.

The clean-up day scheduled for August 26, 2006 was cancelled. The sidewalks and building still need to be pressure washed and the exterior of the building needs a fresh coat of paint. I hope to reschedule another clean-up day soon.

The elections have been completed for TriMet Merlo maintenance and AMR Josephine County. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Jeff Hunt as the Merlo maintenance executive board officer and Sean Gartlan as the liaison officer at AMR JoCo. The executive board position at TriMet Merlo transportation is still up in the air. The votes were counted on the re-run and it was a tie. There were several ballots that did not count since they were missing a signature on the return envelope. The new ballots went out on Aug. 23 and will be counted on Sept. 12, 2006. Please return the ballot with your signature so that your vote will be counted.

If you have any questions about the Union financials, please contact me at 503-232-9144 or fstreasurer@atu757.org. Thank you for your support, and I hope you had a great summer.