



## And so you asked

By Jon Hunt • ATU Local 757 President

In early March, the ATU International asked me to participate on a panel presenting to a large, mixed national conference attended by labor and management representatives. Panel participants were to address the questions below and for the most part spent their time agreeing on tactics. I was the last to speak and took a different approach. I did it because I felt the other panelists were not discussing the elephant standing in the middle of the room – which was the current situation for those working in transit. I am pleased to report that the remarks below were repeatedly interrupted with applause from the labor representatives in the room.

The first question the panelists were asked was: “What are the top three workforce development issues facing your agency right

now? Training? New technology? Retirements? Absenteeism? Other?” In my answer to this first question I made the following points:

- The growth of the corporate mentality in transit. There is considerable talk about how generation X and Y lack “loyalty” to their employers. It is important to remember that loyalty was once a two-way street. Generation X and Y have seen, as children, how disloyal many employers have become. They have seen their family life disrupted and harmed by a heartless corporate mentality that has resulted in their fathers and mothers losing work unfairly. They have come to believe that they cannot count on fair treatment because they

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## VP's Report

By Sam Schwarz • ATU Local 757 Vice President

The big issue at TriMet is Wackenhut. Is TriMet hiring more Wackenhut to replace our members and do away with their jobs? Are the Wackenhut people being trained to check fares and write citations on TriMet codes and procedures? Union president Jon Hunt sent a demand-to-bargain letter to TriMet Executive Director Steve Banta, and a meeting took place at the union office. Present were Jon, Steve Banta, Jim Fowler and myself. More questions were raised about the letters that went out to applicants for fare inspector and how that process was being handled. Most of these questions were subsequently addressed in a letter from Steve Banta. Here is the response:

**(1) Has TriMet instructed Wackenhut to start code enforcement/fare inspection on**

**TriMet rail or bus?**

No.

**(2) Is it TriMet's intention to do away with the fare inspection department?**

No.

**(3) Did TriMet send letters to members who were selected for fare inspectors and tell them these jobs are no longer being offered?**

The District did send standard letters to applicants advising that decision had been made to suspend hiring for the position. No members had been selected. Although the department currently has two openings for fare inspector, only one fare inspector job was ap-

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## Officer Reports



### Portland Public Schools

As reported by  
**RANDY SHAW**

After 26 months of working without a contract, we finally got one. No, it's not the best, but we will continue to work together to improve it. The hardest part to remember is that we are negotiating for all of our members. We need a fair offer that benefits everyone, not just a selected few, and that is what we got. When you reach a tentative agreement, each side recommends approval, and then you, the members, have to decide for yourselves to accept it or not.

Ultimately we came out with a contract that was better than that of the DCU or other union groups that have already settled, so I think we made the right move leaving the DCU.

About the driver relief fund: What will happen to it now that we have a contract? Nothing is going to happen to it. Because we did not need it for a strike this time, it will stay intact to help our drivers.

Do not forget to save some of your stipend and retro pay to help pay for your three months' medical premiums in June.

I know it was our job, but everyone likes to get a pat on the back when he or she does a good job. I just want to take this opportunity to tell Jon and Sam thank you for all their patience, understanding, and help getting our contract. I want to thank all of our shop stewards, and all the volunteers who worked on this campaign. Good job, well done.

On March 10 and 11 Rose Jordan-Fairley and I, along with the Easter Bunny (yes, I look good with long ears and a fuzzy tail), had the pleasure of representing ATU while transporting children from Albina Head Start to International Vice President Ron Heintzman's farm (aka Farmer Ron) to see the animals and enjoy an Easter egg hunt. I would like to thank all the participants: Tri-Met, Portland Public Schools, Ron and his wife

Linda, their two daughters, and all the young ladies who gave up two days to make sure the kids had a great time. I cannot thank Ron and Linda enough for opening their home to show these children animals that some of them have never had the opportunity to see up close. Linda went the extra mile on crutches with a broken leg. Oh yes, we cannot forget the Easter Bunny. Even though he had trouble with his bunny hop, the kids loved him.



### TriMet Salaried Employees

As reported by  
**JIM FOWLER**

It's been a busy month so far. On March 3, we had our first negotiating session with TriMet regarding giving Wackenhut more powers, specifically, to do fare inspection and to write cites and exclusions. Our position is that they should not be given more authority, and we presented past arbitration decisions and contract language to support our case. Mr. Banta said he would need time to study the documents and would schedule another meeting. As of March 17, another meeting had not been scheduled.

We are currently grieving the imposition of two last chance notices. In each of these cases they are the result of another member filing a complaint with management against the grievant. In most cases, last chance conditions will last anywhere from one to two years, however, one of these would have the grievant under these conditions for life. I don't think that's going to fly anywhere. But management will also write up grievance settlements and then decide to rescind them, so who knows what's next.

A grievance was filed for not calling in rail supervisors for lengthy service disruptions. The grievant felt that instead of having managers report to the incident that more supervisors should be called in to perform bargaining unit work.

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## 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.



## Secy-Treas Report

By **Evette Farra** • Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Back in October of 2007 at the AFL-CIO conference, a motion of a \$3 assessment fee for every member was presented on the floor, and it passed. What does that mean to you? I will send out a posting for the union boards with the letter I received from the AFL-CIO. By June, a one time \$3 fee will be

tacked onto your dues. All of this assessment revenue will go to AFL-CIO and not to the local.

I wish Terry Dolan well. Apparently TriMet is willing to cut off their nose to spite their face.

Hoping to see you at one of your April union meetings.

## April Meetings

### Charter

Charter members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 21, in the Machinists Building, 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. Charter day members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 22, at Schopert Hall, 1801 NE Couch, Portland.

### Salem Transit/WHEELS

Salem members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 22, at the West Salem Branch Public Library 395 Glen Creek Road, Salem.

### Lane Transit

Eugene members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 23, and Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

### Corvallis Laidlaw City Transit/Schools

Corvallis members meet 7:45 p.m. Thursday April 24, at Woodstock Pizza, 1045 NW Kings Blvd, Corvallis

### Rogue Valley Transportation

Medford members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Hampton Inn, 1122 Morrow Rd., Medford.

### Portland and Laidlaw School Bus Drivers

Portland School Bus members meet 6 p.m. Thursday April 24, at Rigler School, 5401 NE Prescott, Portland

### C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at the Laborers Hall, 2232 NE Andresen, Vancouver, WA.

### Tillamook County Transportation District

Tillamook members meet 1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 27, 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.

## ATU Local 757 Officers

President-Business Representative.....JONATHAN HUNT  
 Vice President-Assistant Business Representative .....SAM SCHWARZ  
 Financial Secretary-Treasurer/Recording Secretary.....EVETTE FARRA

### Executive Board Officers

TriMet Center Maintenance.....CHAD MATHER  
 TriMet Center Transportation.....SANDY GUENGERICH  
 TriMet Powell Maintenance .....DAVID KAY  
 TriMet Powell Transportation .....ROSE JORDAN  
 TriMet Merlo Maintenance.....JEFF HUNT  
 TriMet Merlo Transportation .....BRUCE HANSEN  
 TriMet LRT Maintenance .....MIKE CONNER  
 TriMet LRT Transportation.....MICHAEL T. OLIVER  
 TriMet Monthly Rated Employees.....JIM FOWLER  
 Lane Transit District (LTD).....WALT BOYNTON  
 Portland Public Schools .....RANDY SHAW  
 Laidlaw Education Services .....ANNA TOMPTE  
 C-TRAN.....ROY JENNINGS  
 Salem Area Mass Transit District.....KEN RICHINS

### Liaison Officers

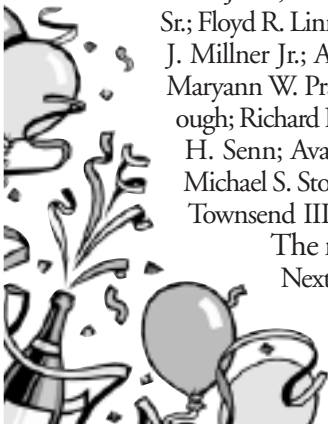
TriMet Merlo Extra Board .....STEVE ECKLES  
 TriMet Center Extra Board .....OPEN POSITION  
 TriMet Powell Extra Board.....KHRIS ALEXANDER  
 TriMet Ruby Junction .....DOUG "SPUD" HENDERSON  
 TriMet Ruby Junction Maintenance .....JOE RUFFIN III  
 TriMet Elmonica .....JASON CHOI  
 TriMet Elmonica Maintenance..... VACANT  
 SAT Maintenance.....DON ELZNIC  
 LTD Chairman.....DEB BITTERLICH  
 LTD Secretary .....TOM SHACKELFORD  
 LTD Maintenance.....LEE LASSE  
 LTD Extra Board .....CARL FADDIS  
 Rogue Valley Transportation District .....THOMAS HENNEY  
 Valley Transit.....NICK NOTARAS  
 AMR Southern Oregon-Josephine County ..... OPEN POSITION  
 Laidlaw Educ. Services (Portland School Bus) .....OPEN POSITION  
 Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc. (TriMet Lift) .....LES GREEN  
 Laidlaw (Corvallis City Transit) .....BOB McGUIRE  
 Laidlaw Education Services (Corvallis Schools).....CHRIS GROOMS  
 MV Transportation, Inc.....DENNIS TONG  
 C-TRAN.....SCOTT MILLER  
 C-VAN.....JIM COLLELL  
 WHEELS .....JOHN HARVEY  
 Tillamook Cnty. Trans. Dist. ....PATRICIA OSTRANDER-NICE

## Retirees' Corner

The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in April: Wanda K. Adrian; 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; 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; 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**; Maryann W. Pratt; James A. Roberts; David L. Rowe; Bobby L. Scarborough; Richard B. Schopmann; Julius F. Schulz; Sharon L. Schwarz; Joseph H. Senn; Ava L. Singleton; Terry L. Spencer; **Herman M. Stewart**; Michael S. Stockwell; Thomas F. Sweeney; 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, April 2, 2008, 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 1)

Another grievance was filed on the recent training of road supervisors. In the past, all road supervisor trainees received their training from road supervisors. This practice was changed with the last class. We are seeking to have that training returned to the road supervisor unit.

A grievance was filed on behalf of our members who work in Customer Service. It appears there was a need to have people selling tickets and passes and providing information out of the TriMet ticket office on Saturdays, but instead of offering overtime to our members, they brought in non-bargaining unit people to sell tickets and passes and provide information in the lobby of the TTO.

In other news, my old friend Terry Dolan has retired from his position as manager of rail transportation. Terry began his career at TriMet as a driver nearly 30 years ago. He then became a dispatcher and then one of the original 10 rail controller supervisors in 1985. For the past 14 years he has been in rail management. Terry has always been known as one of the most intelligent, knowledgeable, and fair-minded managers we had. His integrity could not be compromised and he will be deeply missed in this era of rapidly deteriorating management-labor relations.

Elizabeth Shipley from Customer Service was also retired in March. We all wish Elizabeth the very best in her retirement.



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

No new pre-filings this month. We had one Step 2 that was about managers and supervisors transporting parts. The grievance has been settled and they won't be doing it anymore without clearing it first through me. All Step 3s this month went well. All grievances were settled in favor of the union.

The helpers and mechanics will be having a sign-up April 22 and April 23. It will go into effect May 4.

I could not believe it when manager Bob Johnson told me that he wanted to hold vacation signup month-to-month or hold off on doing it until May when the new sign up goes into effect. Additionally, only one person would be allowed off at a time on either a floating holiday or vacation day, meaning that if someone was off on a vacation day, no one would be able to use their floating holiday. This is ridiculous. The Executive Board officers will be meeting with garage managers to discuss these issues and I am confident that this will be resolved to our satisfaction.

The picnic this year will be at Blue Lake Park on Sunday, July 13. We will need volunteers for all kinds of stuff: kid games, bingo, you name it. Rose Jordan, Evette, Chad and I all want your help. If you're interested, please call the union office at 503-232-9144.

Congratulations to Steve Jordan, the new Facilities Maintenance trainer.



**Merlo Transportation**  
As reported by  
BRUCE HANSEN

This month I would like to talk about something that is becoming more and more common among union members: union members causing harm to one another, i.e., station agents, drivers, etc. More and more, we have been having conflicts between union members, and one or more union members decide to go to human resources. H.R. is the last place that two union members should take a conflict. If there is a conflict between two union members that you cannot resolve yourself, then you should discuss the matter with your shop steward or union rep to resolve it. When our members take our problems to management, none of us win. Everyone should understand that we have our good days and our bad days. Let's try to resolve our problems ourselves within the union.

So what is going on with TriMet management? Rumors are flying. The only one that we can confirm at this time is Bill Coffel and Terry Dolan's retirements. But all managers seem to be concerned for their jobs, for whatever reason. Why would this happen just before a contract is negotiated and the new green line light rail is open? This should concern each and every one of us.

This is a slow month, so not much to talk about. Just remember to stay safe and drive the

schedule, don't let the schedule drive you. I hope you all had a good spring break. Please remember to take your breaks.



**Lane Transit District**  
As reported by  
CAROL ALLRED

This last month has been a busy one. We had a Step 3 hearing concerning an unjust termination. Even after meeting twice, the District would not budge and bring this person back to

work. We will be taking an arbitration vote at the March meetings. So you will know which direction this is heading by the time you read this.

Brian P. is the new Extra Board/Mini Extra Board/EmX Extra Board Liaison. If you are on one of the boards and need help, please contact Brian.

We are going to be meeting with the District concerning Mini Extra Board issues. I am hoping this meeting will occur this next week. You all know my feelings about this issue; we don't want Mini in any area. We want everyone to have the opportunity for full-time work. But, we

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## Hunt

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- are nothing more than throwaway workers.
- The unbearable stress of the job. Numerous studies have determined that urban transit operators are disabled and die younger than people working in any other profession. Our Union processes the funeral benefits of our deceased members. We see that they are dying younger. Moreover, studies have shown and we have seen the death certificates that show many of the causes of death relate directly to the fact that the lack of restroom breaks kills transit drivers. Compared to the general population, they have greater incidents of diseases and cancers of the colon, bladder, kidneys, stomach and prostate.
- Security from passenger and public attack. In a climate where the customer is always right, transit operators have become the victims. Time after time an unreasonable passenger is rewarded with apologies and free bus passes when they should be held accountable for being rude and ill-mannered. Too often, no matter what the provocation, the bus operator is the one blamed and disciplined.

Another question to be answered by the panelists was: "A few years ago, APTA commissioned a study on how to make transit an 'employer of choice.' Do you have any ideas on how to make this a reality?" The points I made in response to this question were as follows:

The job has become so stressful that the focus should be on how to relieve that stress. Some ways to do that are:

- provide transit employees with supportive su-

pervision that stands behind them and keeps rules to a minimum

- provide adequate opportunities and locations to use the restroom
- stop constructing too-tight or hot schedules
- give transit employees a real, rather than a token, role in developing new approaches and procedures.
- today, front line managers approach discipline from a CYA angle. They are not held accountable when they treat an employee unfairly. When they act out of emotion, bias or prejudice, the result is unfair. Top management, however, protects them. Too often we see the supervisors who are respected by the workers lose their jobs while the ones who are hated retain theirs and get promoted. This means that an enormous disconnect has developed between top management and the workforce.
- provide health and fitness facilities, day care, elder care and other ways to lessen stress.
- promote from within the agency, and rank ability to respectfully work with others higher than loyalty to superiors.
- to attract and keep workers, transit agencies must respect their employees and treat them fairly and with dignity.

I don't know whether my comments changed any minds. I do know, based on the comments of labor representatives afterwards, that the problems faced by ATU 757 members who work in the transit field are the problems faced by their fellow professionals across the nation.

## Schwarz

(From Page 1)

proved for posting. As of this time, the Department of Fare Revenue does not have a timeline as to when or if the two positions will be posted.

**(4) Given the recent security issues at TriMet, when does TriMet intend to bring up our staffing levels?**

Staffing levels are currently under review.

Portland Public Schools operators ratified a new contract with a defined contribution on medical and a 7.5 percent raise for the length of

the contract, plus retro pay and a stipend.

The Wheels operators in Salem have several new issues, and the Wheels operators in Canby are slowly getting up to speed on their new contract.

At First Student, we have several new grievances and two new terminations.

At MV Transportation, we have demanded to bargain over the use of cameras. I would like to thank our members in RVTID for inviting me to their recognition banquet.

Congratulations to our recent retirees, and welcome to our newest members!

# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 15)

do have Mini runs and the Mini Extra Board, so the best we can do is try to make sure that the folks who bid this work are not used and abused. We need to particularly try to protect those working on the Mini Extra Board.

For several years, after the Mini Extra Board was assigned work, the District then pretty much followed the full time Extra Board rules. It now is apparent that the District doesn't want to follow ANY rules EVER with regard to the Mini Extra Board. The Union doesn't believe that is what the Working and Wage Agreement calls for.

We are hoping we can resolve this issue without having to file another grievance.

Vacation bid went really smoothly. I hope that we can get a better system for tracking personal vacation days. I know some of you were told by Ops that you had no days left and then found out that you did. Hopefully over the next year we can come up with a better way of tracking. Jill has been working on a new system, and I hope that will mean that Ops will have a more accurate account of what you have on the books.

In the meantime, it is also your responsibility to track when you spend a PVD or a Floating Holiday. Just write down the date you use one of those days on your vacation bid sheet so you have your own documentation of when you have taken time off. If you have this documentation, it is a lot easier for me to help you if you are told you don't have time coming and you are sure that you do.



**TriMet Light Rail Transportation**  
As reported by  
**MICHAEL T. OLIVER**

And out from the "Great Beyond" comes ... John Moore, Station Agent Extraordinaire and one of my favorite ATU Retirees. John says hello to all from Wyoming in the winter and California in the summer. (Or is it the other way around?) E-mail John at moore1555@hotmail.com

Lots of new faces and the usual confusion, but do not be confused by these things: If you are called (by letter or verbally) by management to come to a meeting, it is your responsibility to contact me and make arrangements for me to attend. Management is supposed to inform you of this, but many times that does not happen. Incident/Accident Reports: Please complete these forms with care and completeness. If possible get the help of someone with more experience to assist you. I prefer it be me because the Incident/Accident Report should be viewed as the first step in the disciplinary process. It is a vital form, and not enough attention is being paid to it. Call me or be square.

If we are signing for a holiday, then requests would go in the holiday book. If it is a "construction" sign-up, then requests would go in the request book. And if you want off for the sign-up (un-paid), then the request also goes in the request book.

An important reminder: If you are told by Control or a Supervisor to pump off a brake, you are paid \$10. If you pump off four brakes, you are paid \$20. If you extend or retract the bridge-

plate manually, you are paid \$25 for each instance. If you are told to manually move the pantograph up or down, you are paid \$100 for each movement. In order to complete this transaction successfully, you must obtain an Acid # from Control and fill out a time slip. That's it, and don't forget my 20 percent.

The Keeper Of The Keys has flown off on the back of a giant California condor. To Valhalla he is headed (along with the beautiful Cathie). His new project is to design a rail system between our own Milky Way and the star Centaurus A, a mere 10 million light years away. Piece of cake I say and safe journey. As usual write me at mtgbo2002@msn.com



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

Spring signup time is always a time of humility for all involved in trying to make the process go as smooth as possible. While there were very few problems with maintenance of way and the fare department, facilities maintenance, rail vehicle techs and helpers were not without problems. In facilities, the managers thought it would be a good idea to consolidate the Merlo and Elmonica Facilities, and moved the Elmonica rail plant mechanics to be based at Merlo. This was not a popular move for some of the techs, who made their issues known to me. As often is the case with that management group, their arrogance will probably supercede good sense. There is a good reason why we have people based at each facility, and I imagine the Elmonica facility will probably suffer.

In the rail vehicle techs group, streetcar was the issue. The union attempted to make a fix on the problem with that signup without having to call for another signup. While satisfying some, unfortunately all were not happy with this. We felt having another signup would not change the outcome and would endanger a longstanding policy allowing a trigger for management at streetcar to be able to call for separate signups per the streetcar agreement. We wish we could have made everybody happy by doing it this way, but as so often is the case, this was not possible. We felt that it had the least negative impact on the group. Sorry to those who disagree with the process we used. There are also some problems with apprentices and the CCTV install that we will begin to address, first at the apprenticeship committee meeting, and then see where it needs to go from there. All apprentice issues and safety must first be discussed at the joint committee before we can file a grievance per arbitrator's orders in past issues.

The helpers are at this time scheduled to have another signup around the third week of April. There was an error committed on one of the signup sheet entries, and in order to be fair, we need to redo it. Since vacations will already be signed for, if you change supervisors and they do not honor your vacation you have signed up for when you do move to your new shop, be sure and let your officer know as they have to honor signed vacation even if you change shops.

Grievances are being settled and are moving for the most part to resolution, but there are still a lot of issues out there. Call me or talk to your

steward if you have any questions. The union is you, and we need you to help the officers make it work.



**TriMet Powell Maintenance**  
As reported by  
**DAVID KAY**

We have settled a grievance concerning an overtime callout issue, with our member being recompensed for her damages. Several others from Maintenance stores and facilities are moving forward.

The current information is that we will sign up again in late April. It appears the heavy rail training is going to start sooner than anticipated (the plan was June.)

Due to our reduced workforce and the District's claims that they are unable to control our use of sick, FMLA, OFLA and workers comp, they are demanding to reduce the number of vacation slots available. To combine the vacation slot with the floater slot equals one person off per day, period. The Local is not considering this option. All of the maintenance officers feel this is nothing less than penalizing the current workforce for mismanagement practices.

Due to the construction at Center Garage, we here at Powell got another 20 vehicles moved in. This amounts to 31 runs, and I am given to understand almost 100 operators (it's tight out here.) Please have some patience. There is an end in sight.



**WHEELS**  
As reported by  
**JOHN HARVEY**

I would like to thank all who attended the last Union meeting! It is important that you attend as many meetings as you can. Standing on the sidelines and voicing your opinion only goes as far as the person next to you. The ATU needs to know your problems and concerns. The monthly meetings are the place to bring any issues before the union. As always I am available for any issues, for those who are working or just cannot make it to the meetings.

The RFP was rewritten by Salem Area Mass Transit to the satisfaction of the ATU. This puts Wheels on an even playing field with any other bidders for the Cherrylift contract. (This is a good thing.) So, thanks to Ron Heintzman and Jon Hunt. If not for their efforts, our wages and benefits could have dropped substantially.

I am always available for any questions or concerns, on the RFP or any issue that may arise. Hope to see you all at the next meeting. Our meetings are held at the library in west Salem, behind Roth's IGA.



**TriMet Laidlaw Lift**  
As reported by  
**LES GREEN**

Well, another month has come and gone, and everything is the same in the family of paratransit and TriMet.

With that said, First Student (Laidlaw) Lift has completed a Step 2 with the outcome in our favor, but many outstanding issues are still out in left field with no end in sight. Contract talks are ongoing, with very little progress in the near future. I see a long and harrowing journey before a new contract that both drivers and management can accept is agreed upon, but that seems to be the case with all negotiations in the transit field these days.

Now for the main subject of this article. We lost a new driver this month because of a series of errors not only by the driver but also by management. Most drivers at First Transit know of the incident in question. We, as drivers, must remember that the only one who will protect us is ourselves. We must protect ourselves at all times. The afore-mentioned incident is one that could happen to any one of us at any time. If we are unsure of how to handle a situation concerning passengers, we must take the high road and, if we have to, take all the time we need to handle an unsure situation — schedule be damned. The safety of drivers and passengers is the most important responsibility we have, and schedule and dispatch can wait.

Again, I am getting complaints of dispatch, by design, working the new drivers way over their scheduled end time. If this happens to you, please advise dispatch that one half hour over your end time is all they can ask; no more!

And again, no going through caution lights or speeding to stay on our impossible schedules. We are paid by the hour, so there is no need for unsafe practices!