



And so you asked

By Jon Hunt • ATU Local 757 President

On Jan. 21, 2009 ATU 757's former financial secretary treasurer was sentenced to six months of house arrest, one year in Federal Correctional Institution Sheridan, and three years of probation. At the hearing, I gave the following witness impact statement on behalf of our members:

My name is Jonathan Hunt and I am the president – business representative of Amalgamated Transit Union, Division 757, where Mr. Wallace was financial secretary treasurer from 1997 until 2007.

In his capacity as financial secretary treasurer, Mr. Wallace embezzled over \$450,000 from auxiliary accounts administered by the Union. The resulting damage only begins with the loss of this money. There exists at least the possibility that the Union will be compensated for these funds. The Union will never receive compensation for the hours in which Mr. Wallace's focus was on embezzling from, rather than in representing, his union brothers and sisters. Full time officer, as Mr. Wallace was and I am, is not an eight-hour-a-day job. It is a full-time career, and while we are fortunate enough to hold office, it must be our first priority. Time spent stealing from the Union is money, as well as time, stolen from the Union. Not surprisingly, Union affairs were left in utter disarray as Mr. Wallace devoted himself to embezzling and the painstaking concealment of his crimes.

During the years in which he was embezzling, Mr. Wallace was simultaneously providing erroneous information about the status of our accounts to the state, incurring additional penalties that we are still uncovering. The Union has been forced to pay for multiple accountants and lawyers to represent us in the wake of this loss. Copious staff time and energy as well have been lost to investigating and assessing the details and extent of Mr. Wallace's crimes, and then in attempted explanations and accounting to the appropriate state and federal public officials, affiliated unions and within our own membership. Lost compensation additionally includes the cost of two interim financial

secretary treasurers so the Union could continue operating during this crisis; it includes the expense of an extra election to fill Mr. Wallace's office, the cost of training a new financial secretary treasurer and the expense of the inevitable extra learning curves as a result of all this activity.

Less tangible but more devastating harm has been done to the Union's reputation and the reputations of those of us that are a part of it. Although Mr. Wallace operated entirely on his own, his crimes were committed over such a long period of time and affected so many different aspects of the Union that many feel as though this could not have happened without other officers and staff knowing and permitting it, if not downright colluding in it. Though exonerated through the investigation, doubts linger. We are hobbled in our ability to adequately represent members who no longer trust us.

Mr. Wallace's actions have affected people that are not even members of our, or any, Union. We have already lost organizing campaigns because this is the first weapon new management brings up in their campaigns against the Union. Our tragedy has been a boon to management in their efforts to convince their employees that rather than protect them, a union wants only to steal from them. There are workers who do not have better wages, benefits and adequate health care because of what Mr. Wallace has done. Our union suffers as well, as it is from our numbers that we derive strength and influence.

The Union understands that we can never be fully compensated for the losses we've sustained as a result of Mr. Wallace's actions. Nor do we believe that his crimes were undertaken out of malice. We are discouraged, however, by what has transpired since Mr. Wallace's crimes were uncovered in Febru-

ary 2007. While we have been shaken to the core, scrambling to resume everyday business, Mr. Wallace has returned to work, where he is, somewhat ironically, protected by his union. He works while our devastated Union struggles to prevent members, guilty of far less severe transgressions, from being terminated. In his communications and e-mails to the Union, he intersperses statements of remorse with haggling over the amount of money he should have to repay. For a repentant man, Mr. Wallace has a keen sense of what he may be owed by the Union he violated.

Mr. Wallace was liked and highly regarded by many people. He received a generous salary to represent the best interests of our members, and inspired enough faith and confidence that he was re-elected three times before his actions were discovered. Meanwhile he lied and embezzled funds from those he called brother and sister in the Union he was sworn to protect and defend, and he betrayed those of us who believed we had a friend and brother in him. Mr. Wallace made the decision to embezzle not once but nearly 200 times, over the span of many years, many transactions, and many elections. Our members' faith in the institution that represents them is gone, as well as our own faith in our capacity for good judgment. We are not looking to the court for vengeance, but for justice. We are reminded daily of all that we have lost by Mr. Wallace's actions, and we cannot move on if his sentence does not reflect the extent of our loss. We ask the court for a sentence that not only addresses the money taken from our accounts, but also one that recognizes that the emotional and financial impact of Mr. Wallace's actions will be felt by our members, our Union, and the entire labor movement for years to come.



VP's Report

By Sam Schwarz • ATU Local 757 Vice President

Snow and more snow! The worst snowstorm in 40 years. The drivers fought through the ice and snow and made it in. One operator told me it took him two-and-a-half hours just to get in, and for all his trouble, he was snowbound in

a bus, stuck in a snow drift for 16 hours.

This cannot happen, you say. Well, it did happen, and it happened to many operators. Our brothers and sisters in C-TRAN had paratransit operators pick up fixed route operators that could-

n't get in. We have to do a better job next time and have a real plan that includes food, bathrooms and a comfortable place to sleep.

As you are probably aware by now, TriMet, Salem, and Lane Transit are talking cuts. I am working with the scheduling departments at both TriMet and Lane Transit in hopes of a fix that will satisfy both the Districts and the union members. The Union will do everything in its power to prevent the layoff of any member. We are in negotiations with Wheels in Salem and the Salem members are looking at the contract that is in place in

Canby and would like to borrow some language from it.

First Student in Corvallis has some major scheduling problems, and we are trying to get the City of Corvallis to put recovery time in the runs so the operators can achieve their breaks. OSHA was riding some of the buses, and they are aware of the problems. Remember, it is your CDL, so don't try to make a bad schedule work by driving faster.

Just a reminder that some of the meeting dates have been changed, so check the Labor Press.

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.



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

By Evette Farra • Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Hello to all. This winter season is proving to be a whopper. Thanks for such a great job during the latest snow and ice event. I am proud of all of you who battled the elements in our commitment to excellence. There's no way to know for sure if we should be bracing for more, but if we get hit again, I am confident that our members will again prove their worth and reliability.

At the time of this writing, I am currently working on our six-month and one-year audits with our local's CPA, Herman Lindsey. The lo-

cal office is also working on nailing down some dates for the upcoming union election season, which, believe it or not, is only four-and-a-half months away. Whatever your political position in either the recent national election or our own upcoming local election, it's difficult not to be excited about what the future holds.

Also keep in mind that tax season is upon us. If you received any child/elder care reimbursement in 2008, your federal tax form 1099 will be in the mail soon. Gotta go. Busy busy. Take care.

February Meetings

NOTE: Most of this month's regularly scheduled meetings took place before publication date of the Bulletin. Members were notified via bulletin board postings and online.

Charter

Charter members met 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, at the Salvation Army, Rose Center for Seniors, 211 NE 18th Ave, Portland (18th & Sandy Blvd., adjacent to the ATU office.) Charter day members met 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, at Schoppert Hall, 1801 NE Couch, Portland.

Salem Transit/WHEELS

Salem members met 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, at the West Salem Branch Public Library 395 Glen Creek Road, Salem.

Lane Transit

Eugene members met 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, and Eugene day members met 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

Corvallis Laidlaw City Transit/Schools

Corvallis members met 7:45 p.m. Thursday Feb. 5, at Woodstock Pizza, 1045 NW Kings Blvd, Corvallis.

Rogue Valley Transportation

Medford members met 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at the Hampton Inn, 1122 Morrow Rd., Medford.

Portland and Laidlaw School Bus Drivers

Portland School Bus members met 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at Rigler School, 5401 NE Prescott, Portland.

C-TRAN/C-VAN

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8, at the Laborers Hall, 2121 NE Andresen, Vancouver, Washington.

Tillamook County Transportation District

Tillamook members meet 1 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8, at 212 Main Street, next door to Beach Pancake House in Tillamook.

AMR Northwest Josephine County, LAMAR Advertising and Valley Transit

See your liaison officers.

Retirees' Corner

The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in February: William M. Albrecht; Suzann I. Barnes; Brian V. Bilyeu; Clyde E. Brittle; Gary E. Bundy; Ronald R. Callahan; Clifford C. Clark; Edward E. Crumble; David O. Davis; Arnold Denton; Kenneth E. Dukes; Ted O. Fischer; Melvyn D. Goon; Billy A. Grover; Clifford R. Hall; L.G. Harvey Jr.; Arden D. Hatfield; Charles R. Havens; Raymond Hondl; Marilyn L. Jackson; Walter M. Jespersen; Richard L. Johnson; Richard E. Kell; David L. King; Timothy Lawrence; Lynn A. Lundstrom; James R. McKenna; Helen Nickum; Jean B. Olney; Marilyn J. Payne; Charles D. Pickard; James R. Pinckard; Richard C. Prather; Gary R.

Reagan; Donald G. Rowley; Robert A. Sandel; Fred J. Schultz; Derald R. Smith; Stephen L. Smith; William E. Smith; William A. Taylor; Terry D. Thaden; Jack V. Townsend; Tommy J. Vick; William A. Wardy Jr.; Mickey R. Whillans; Harlold M. Wymore; Rodger C. Zwetzig.

Next month's regularly scheduled ATU 757 Retired Member Chapter meeting is Wednesday, March 4, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at Westmoreland's Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd Ave. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9 a.m.

ATU Officer Reports

TriMet Center Transportation

As reported by SANDY GUENGERICH

I have watched everyone on the news driving and taking care of the people of Portland and doing a great job. I want to say to the new drivers who have never driven in the snow: Great job.

Now here comes the rain, and this puts a whole new spin on things. As most of you know, there was a lot of sand and gravel put on the road. This stuff can make you sick. First of all, more people get on your bus and start to cough and blow their noses and have no way of washing their hands. Next thing you know, it stops snowing and raining and the sand and gravel start to dry and cause a lot more dust to get in our buses. Every time you open the door the dust comes in causing sinus and breathing problems. You might want to get something like a small cleaning mask to cover your nose and mouth when this happens. I don't see this as being rude, you are trying to prevent other people around you from getting sick as well.

There are a lot of pot holes on the road now. You might find that they get filled with water and when you start to drive through them they may be deeper than you think. When you find unsafe ones, please let Dispatch know so we can prevent our fellow drivers from having something happen on their bus. We should always be there for all of our brothers and sisters.

Now I would like to write about something that affects all of us and our families: insurance, pensions, and beneficiaries. We find that over the years sometimes our lives change in ways that we have no control over. Maybe we get divorced or someone passes away and we never got around to making changes to our benefits because we think that things will work themselves out on their own. Well maybe they do, but remember, we are talking about your loved ones, so take the time to check who your beneficiaries are so they will be taken care of. Also, in our open enrollment time, you can find out about getting more life insurance for yourself.

We lost a great driver from Merlo Garage. Kenny Olds will be missed by all of us. One thing he liked to do with his beautiful wife was fire up his scooter and put a big smile on his face and ride their Harleys into the wind.

God bless you, Kenny. Ride to live and live to ride.



Merlo Transportation

As reported by BRUCE HANSEN

Well, we made it through the first snow storm of the winter. Great job to all the drivers, mechanics, MOW, rail operators, dispatchers, station agents, controllers, and helpers as well as the trainers and road supervisors for dealing with the long hours. I would like to point out that in these stressful times, it's easy to become more tense with our co-workers. Please just remember to take your time and space yourself out at the end of the lines and don't run on

top of each other. Don't spin your tires, as that is when you are more likely to throw your chains. Take your time and stay high on the road. Stay away from the curb. Again, great job to everyone. If you have any input to help things run smoother, let your union representative know so that we can all help each other improve service. Let management know how they can make it better for us as employees. They screwed the public; don't let them screw us too next time. If you are stuck on your bus or train for more than a reasonable time, please call your union representative. We may be able to help get what you need, whether it is sand or a chain crew. I would also like to thank Sam and Jon for helping take stuck drivers hot coffee and food during the storm. This is what it's all about: helping out where we can.

We are working on schedules. If you have a bad one, please let me know as soon as you can. We are looking at the 52, 76 and 78 routes. We have been able to get some help for the 78 by adding a bus as a tripper with your help. We are going to go around to all the garages, working on the worst ones first. So, any help you can give would be appreciated. We really need your input since you are the ones driving these routes. This will help make this a smoother process.

I would like to talk a little about what we are about to face at TriMet concerning the upcoming contract. It's hard to believe it is that time already. In the next couple months you will see a survey to help your union reps know what is important to you, the member. Please take the time to fill it out. In a time of such need we should rally together and get involved. We cannot do it without YOU! Remember YOU are the UNION. Speak your voice!

Jan. 9 we said goodbye to Warren Rukke. Warren spent many hours playing pool at the Merlo garage. On Jan. 10, we also said goodbye to Charles Havens, former Bus/Rail operator. On Jan. 11, we said goodbye to a dear friend to many, Kenny Olds. Kenny touched many people he may not have even known. He always had a smile and a wave for everyone. They will all be missed.

Please remember to drive the schedule and don't let the schedule drive you. Please remember to take your breaks.



TriMet Merlo Maintenance

As reported by JEFF HUNT

This month I have had five pre-filings. Two in the body shop are about mechanics at either shop doing fabrication work, i.e., building chain racks. It looks like TriMet will be paying the overtime part of the grievance, but is unwilling to do what it will take to fix the big problem, which is to add body shop jobs at Center and Powell.

One of my pre-filings is about assistants in Stores being asked to perform inventory control work because they have them doing someone else's work. The problem with a lot of the grievances that I have and will be filling is that TriMet has cut staffing so low that members are being asked or told to do more with less and get it done faster, as you have all seen.

(Turn to Page 11)

ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 2)

As I mentioned in a prior report regarding the atrocities that are going on in graveyard at Merlo, I met with the supervisor and the manager for a pre-filing to discuss the issues that we had with the way things were being done. I think the supervisor got the message.

I have one pre-filing from the snow and ice event that happened last month. Let me first tell you that all ATU members went above and beyond the call of duty, starting with operators being stuck for over 24 hours. You know why that happened? Because we did not have enough mechanics to get them unstuck. At Merlo we could not put a mechanic at each transit center. Not because mechanics called in sick or on vacation, but because they have just cut us so low. Which leads me back to my pre-filing on helpers rebuilding chains. Yes, they had helpers rebuilding chains. Helpers cannot use tools. This is a big no-no.

Sign-up is approaching and I would like to remind you to give me your bid cards.

Bend Area Transit

As reported by
VICTOR GILARDIN

During the past month, we have had three new Council members sworn in. The Council must look at the proposal for our transit. We are watching closely. Our transit issue is on the rear burner again. Our fate is unknown at this time. It's really difficult to wonder what the Council is going to do and if we the transit operators will be working after March.

We did win a case. One of our drivers did what they were supposed to do, but our supervisor wrote up the driver. I went in and battled for this driver. The write-up was dropped.

We are really doing well. We still have four grievances in the ballpark however.

Will talk more next time.



TriMet Salaried Employees

As reported by
JIM FOWLER

The big news in early January continued to be the December snowstorm. I won't dwell on it much except to say that the operators did a tremendous job in very difficult situations. I hope that management can work on ways to improve communication during these events.

I would like to thank our brothers and sisters from Customer Service for their huge showing at the January Charter meeting. They had a member who was asking for a grievance to go to arbitration, so Kim Ruffin got the word out to attend, and they really responded. They brought with them a very positive vibe of solidarity and gave real energy to the meeting. They also cleaned up on the gift cards that we had left over from the cancelled December meeting. Many of you expressed that you had a good time and plan to come to more meetings in the future. I hope you keep that pledge.

In January the dispatchers went to a four-10

format on an experimental basis. If the program is successful, it may be carried over to the next sign-up and might be tried in other departments.

Rumor has it that management will implement a hiring freeze due to the rough economy. This may ease the burden on the bus trainers who are now busy with the new Mall training. The rail trainers have also been extremely busy with completing Certifications and Type 4 training and gearing up for the Green Line opening. Michael Oliver and I are working on the issue of training assistants at Rail. They are performing the same work as the training supervisors but are making substantially less money. This situation needs to be corrected.

We continue to have problems in Field Ops with the Outlook Red Book. If any of you encounter difficulties of any kind please let me know.

The saga of the fare inspector agreement seems to just go on and on. Now there are rumors that two of the inspectors who went to supervision might go back to inspection, and even a rumor that all of the inspectors who went to supervision might be given the chance to return to inspection. I hope that at some point we can put this thing to bed.

Over the next few months you will be receiving contract suggestion forms. I hope all of you will take the time to fill these out so that your Union leadership will know what you want in the upcoming negotiations.



C-TRAN/C-VAN

As reported by
ROY JENNINGS

Here it is February 2009. Just a little over nine years ago, we were all concerned about Y2K. At C-TRAN much has changed. A senior full-time operator was making \$17.20 an hour, while a senior full-time paratransit operator was only making \$12 an hour. The paratransit dispatchers were making \$20 an hour, while administrative assistants and passenger service representatives were only making \$11 and \$12 respectively.

Operators are now able to go to their own doctor to take their DOT physicals. Contact your Union officer for more information.

C-TRAN and the Union have been able to work together to settle more and more grievances without filing the paperwork. Even grievances that have already been filed have been settled. Hopefully we can continue this process.

I want to thank everyone who helped out with the snow and ice event in December. As I'm writing this article, I'm currently in my Executive Board meeting and we're discussing what happened at TriMet! There were TriMet operators who were left on their buses without food or bathrooms for 12 to 22 hours! There were even Union officers here at C-TRAN who were called due to TriMet operators being forgotten. This is not rocket science. Besides taking care of our customers, we need to be taken care of too. Even though we here at C-TRAN did such a superior job over TriMet, there is always room for improvement.

Before you go to anyone with an open door policy, please talk to your Union officer first!

Mark your calendar, as our next Union meeting is this Sunday, Feb. 8.



TriMet Light Rail Maintenance

As reported by
MICHAEL CONNER

Another year, another snowstorm, and another management-led event that failed. As management cloistered in the Command Center, the front line forces worked their hardest to keep the system running. But as with any army whose leadership cuts and runs and leaves the troops to fend for themselves, no matter how hard we work, there is only so much that can be done before things drastically deteriorate. Once again we had employees who worked outrageously long hours with no breaks, no food, and no communication from the supervisors and managers who were warm and cozy in the Command Center and seemingly forgot about those who were in the elements or dealing with broken down equipment. Management's idea of caring was to provide us canned chili after being out for hours on end and give us a camping mattress to sleep on so we could take a few hours break before hitting it again.

Not to worry though: It is rare the snow flies in Portland. Soon, just like every snowstorm, it will fade from management's mind and be only a memory, at least until next November when snow is again forecast. Then the managers will look at the employees who ask how the snow and ice is to be handled with that same glazed-over look they get every snow event.

Will management ever get it? You cannot increase the size of the system and simultaneously cut the forces that maintain it, and then when an emergency arises, question why things worked out so badly.



TriMet Powell Maintenance

As reported by
DAVID KAY

We have a new grievance arising from our snowstorm. This deals with working out of classification. As of this writing a pre-filing meeting has not taken place, so more on this later.

On other issues, an outstanding grievance will be moved to Step 3. The issue is management doing bargaining unit work. A tentative agreement was reached, but was amended by TriMet management about the person I was dealing with, which nixed the agreement.

Back on our snowstorm: I guess/hope TriMet figured out what happens when maintenance has been cut to the bone. No bodies! Many of us worked ridiculous amounts of overtime in an effort to maintain service levels and rescue our fellow workers. Well done all! To my brothers and sisters marooned in stuck vehicles: My apologies for the lengthy delays experienced by many of you. Hopefully now you know part of what was going on, and I assure you maintenance was doing its best.

By the time this article has printed, I will be away. I have agreed to take a team to St. Cloud,

Minnesota to inspect new buses at the New Flyer plant. I am scheduled to return on Feb. 27. Should questions arise, your stewards are available — Kevin Kinoshita, Joyce Hartung, or Martina Hartley — or a call to the union office at 503-232-9144 will provide aid.



First Student PPS

As reported by
ANNA TOMPTE

My brothers and sisters, this is the year of Munity and hope for our nation and our yard. Time is an asset we must use wisely in preparation for the negotiating of our contract. I ask each of you to help all of us prepare for this important event by reading your copy of the bargaining agreement.

As you are aware, our contract is up next August, and we need to start writing things out and discussing what we want in our new contract

I would also like to try again to set up some meetings, just with the stewards and me preferably, possibly on a Saturday afternoon, once a month, to discuss things that are changing. We really could use a lot more bodies at our meetings, but I do appreciate all the members who do attend.

Please pay attention to your payroll spreadsheet and be sure to get all your pay for your hours. Any questions should be directed to your stewards and/or officers. The stewards and I are here to serve you!

If you or someone you know has a concern about something or needs something, let me or one of the shop stewards try to help.

The Safety Exercise "Roadeo" team would like to thank all the people who have contributed their time and money to help with the fundraising. They haven't reached their goal yet but are confident that they will. Anyone interested in competing, judging or just wanting to fine tune their driving skills is welcome to join the team practices — every Saturday at 9 a.m.

MV Transportation

As reported by
KATHLEEN BROWN

Hello everyone! The New Year is off to an interesting start. First of all, I would like to welcome and congratulate Cynthia (Cindy) Russell, our new shop steward. She is a great asset to the ATU membership, bringing knowledge of the contract and a passion for what is right. Welcome, Cindy!

Very soon we will open contract negotiations. Hopefully everyone is geared up with ideas. Cindy and I will make forms available upon request for your contract ideas. All suggestions will be taken into consideration.

At this time we have some grievances open regarding attendance points and seniority violations that have occurred during the winter weather. We are working on this problem and it has now entered the phase of Step 2 in the grievance procedure. This grievance is an ATU grievance.

(Turn to Page 12)



THE
BUS
PROJECT

Driving to Make a Difference

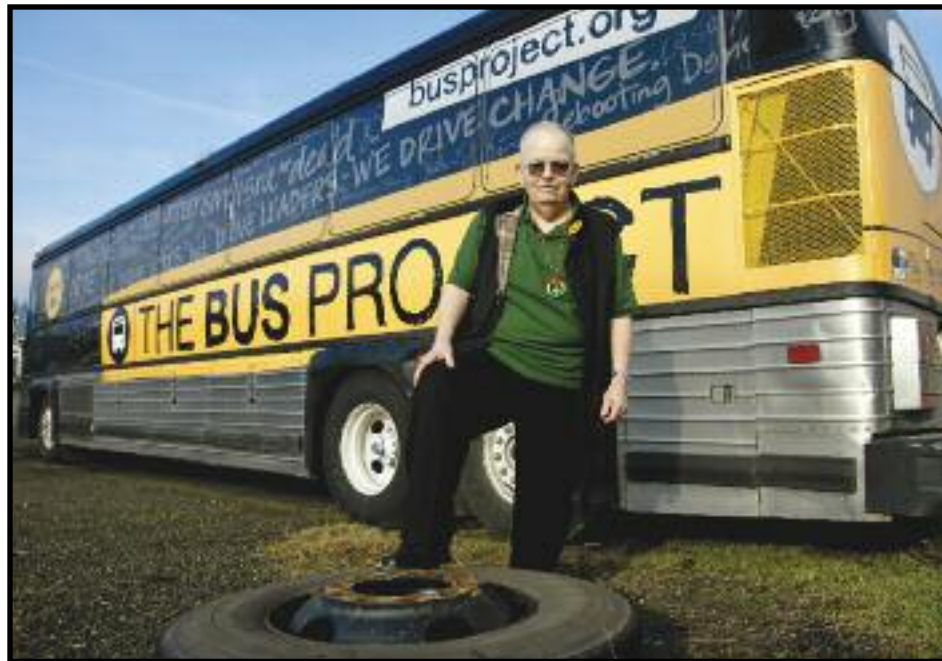
By **Ben Fain, Jr.**

Retired ATU Local 757 member

In December 2001 at a family Christmas gathering, a young nephew of mine sidled up to me and sheepishly asked if I would drive a bus for a group he belonged to. I thought nothing of it at the time. I was then busy driving for TriMet Transit District in Portland, Oregon, with representation by ATU Local 757, and packed his request away in my "long-term" memory. The following January I went on to retire. After 26 years of service at TriMet, completion of their Master Operator Program, and having received the 31-year National Safety Council safe driving award and the million mile club award (no preventable accidents), it was clearly time to move on.

But unbeknownst to me, my nephew had been busy spreading the word about my years pushing the pedal. And the group he belonged to was not only in need of a driver to bus them around, but the bus itself was central to their entire organization.

That's when the call came from the Bus Project (www.busproject.org). The young man on the other end of the phone explained that they weren't public transit (but were in favor of that sort of thing). Rather, the Bus Project was a group of energetic young folks who had bought a bus so they could drive around the state, knock on doors, register people to vote and generally engage folks to participate in our democracy. They had the bus, but no bus



driver. I was intrigued, and after only a few months of my so-called retirement, I decided it was time for me to step up.

They set out that year with the goal to knock on 30,000 doors, no small feat. Well, they didn't do their planned 30,000, rather they blew that goal out of the water and knocked on over 70,000 doors. Every Saturday, the Bus would fill up with young volunteers, many of them participating in their first political activity, many going on to a lifetime of service (there are now a full three state legislators serving in the Oregon House who got started on the Bus).

Since the inception of the Bus Project, the Oregon Legislature has grown into a progressive majority, better representing what the Bus likes to call its Six Es: Education, Environment, Economic Strength, Equal Rights, Election Reform and 'Ealth Care (without the 'h').

And how influential was the Bus on that legislative shift? Let me share with you the Jeff Barker story. In Oregon's 2007 Session, the Legislature voted to approve renewable energy standards, a 20 percent increase in school funding, and 17-year-old voter registration. Passing these bills was contingent on a one-seat majority in the House. One of those members

was Jeff Barker, who won his seat by less than 40 votes. During his race the Bus Project sent hundreds of young people to walk in his district, each knocking on well over 40 doors, Barker's margin of victory. The end result? Those young people got to go home and say, "Hey Ma, I helped change history."

In the seven years I've volunteered with the Bus Project, I've seen it move from a loosely organized group to a highly polished vehicle with several new innovative programs, including the young leadership program *PolitiCorps*, the Halloween get-out-the-vote effort *Trick or Vote* and the alternative candidate forum *Candidates Gone Wild*.

I am so very thankful to have had the work experience driving a semi-truck and passenger bus — both good union jobs — that empowered me to share what I do with these amazing young folks.

My work with the Bus Project has inspired me to organize some of my own passions as well. Starting in August '05, I organized a weekly Peace Vigil in Beaverton, Oregon, with growing participation and numbers. Anyone is welcome to join or start their own vigil, and I encourage them to email washpeace@yahoo.com to get involved.

I have put considerable time and physical presence into both activities. The rewards have been huge. Inspiration by young, motivated, politically activated friends has kept me moving. The respect and love I have received is pay-back many times larger than the effort expended. Did you know they even made a shirt with my face on the front? It reads "Ben Fain is my co-pilot." Happy to oblige.

Get on the Bus!

ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 11)

ance and it covers every driver who was pointed, lost holiday pay or had an issue with a seniority violation. Please let Cindy Russell or me know if you have an issue so that we can add your name to the grievance.

Another important item: Always take a good look at your paystubs for discrepancies. Make sure that MV is taking out the correct amount of union dues. A recent audit was conducted, and a few errors were found. Remember, when you change your status as a full-time operator to part-time or vice versa, the amount of union dues will change. Stay safe, everyone.



TriMet Light Rail Transportation
As reported by
MICHAEL T. OLIVER

It became clear last week when I was doing the vacation signup that there exists confusion in the ranks: Seniority begins when you leave the mini-run status and are moved to the full-time status. The clock starts to tick the date of the transfer

of status, not your date of hire or any other date. After one year of full-time you get one week; after two years full-time you get two; after five years three; after nine but less than 15 four; after 15 but less than 24 five; after that six weeks till infinity. My apologies to Len Farey and Neil Berlin, among others, but the WWA stands.

Another class will graduate this month, and we welcome them. We should be getting around six new LROs this month, so be on the look-out and help them in any way possible.

We lost one of our honored retirees the day after Christmas. Charles Havens, former LRO and husband of Martha Robinson Havens, succumbed to complications from diabetes, and he will be missed.

Please check your paychecks and make sure you are receiving the correct rates, \$25.08 and \$37.62 for OT. It's your money, and the only one to look for mistakes will be you. The Elmo location for the signups has been iffy as of late. The light rail mechanics are learning the ins and outs of the Type 4s, so Training Room 6 has not been available to us. The scuttlebutt on the Type 4s is that they are very "electrical." We shall be getting them soon.

The weather was the worstest, and some of us did better than others, but it was hard for all. I was on a Blue Line, and it took four hours to get

from Government Center to Cleveland. My hats go off to the folks, (women and men), who were out there keeping the switches operating — a thankless, freezing job. If it had not been done I could not do mine. And then, three hours late, stumbling past the West gate, I'm met by a beautiful woman with a big smile and even bigger switch iron, cleaning Switch 67, oh happy days. Send mail to mtgbo2002@msn.com

Lane Transit District
As reported by
BRIAN PASQUALI

Hello, Brothers and Sisters. The overwhelming significance recent days have had for the civil rights movement is pretty astounding. On Martin Luther King Day at LTD, months of collaborative work by an organized community committee came to fruition with a ceremony in honor of Rosa Parks and Wiley Griffin here at the Downtown Eugene Transit Station. Rosa Parks was honored with the dedication of a lifesized statue. And Eugene's FIRST transit operator, an African American, Wiley Griffin, was remembered with the unveiling of a plaque. Over 100 years ago, Wi-

ley was the operator of a horse-drawn trolley. Union Officer Debbie Bitterlich served on the Parks/Griffin committee spending countless hours putting the event together with LTD and other members of the community. The ATU was among the financial contributors to the project as well. The statue and plaque are now prominent features of Eugene station.

Only a day after the ceremony and MLK day, President Barack Obama took the oath of office in a moving inauguration ceremony in Washington, DC. Maybe it is the "audacity of hope" that Obama has spoken of, maybe it's the eight years of wreckage that the former administration has rendered, but these events seem to be symbolic that we are once again moving in the right direction, not only for the United States but for the human race.

Please be on the lookout for the soon-to-be-released ATU of Lane County blog site, which by the time this article is published will be up and running. It will more or less be an extension of our monthly item in the ATU Bulletin pages of the Northwest Labor Press, but with more rapid and locally centered information. In addition, there will be polling questions posed on a regular basis, a Q and A section, an events calendar, and a place for drivers to submit postings, all in an effort to better serve you, the member.