



**And so you asked...**

# Agreements reached

By **Jonathan Hunt**  
President-Business Representative



I am pleased to report that ATU has reached the following agreements:

### At Laidlaw Portland Yard:

Laidlaw Transit, Inc. (name changed from Laidlaw Education Services) and ATU 757 reached a new five-year agreement that was approved by members. The new contract runs from April 15, 2006 through April 14, 2011 and covers maintenance mechanics employed by Laidlaw under contract with Portland Public Schools.

The Mechanic A hourly wage rate will increase from \$16.96 to \$20.67 over the term of the new agreement representing a 20-percent

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# Financial Secretary's report

Tom Wallace  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Regarding the fall sign-ups for maintenance employees at TriMet, there are several issues that need to be looked at, about which we are

currently talking to TriMet. These are the relief body shop positions at Ruby Junction on swing and graveyard, facilities' sanitation trucks and their Ninth Street location, and the 4/10's at Merlo body shop. There are many more issues that your maintenance E-board officers are working on, and they need your assistance to get them resolved.

The Union has not approved these sign-up changes nor the post-

ing of the sign-up. President Jon Hunt is talking with Tony Bryant to resolve these issues before sign-up day. The best way to show your dissatisfaction with these changes is to let your supervisor and garage manager know that the changes are not going to work and why. I ask that the members in maintenance work with their Union officers to get these issues resolved.

I have been working with our auditor Herman Lindsey Jr., CPA, to complete the LM-2 report. It was sent to the Department of Labor on Sept. 27. We are currently working on our annual audit and the International six-month report. Should you have any questions about the Union's financials, please contact me at the Union office at [fstreasurer@atu757.org](mailto:fstreasurer@atu757.org) or 503-232-9144.

Meeting week has come to a conclusion as I am writing this article. There were great turnouts, and I would like to see these numbers

continue to increase. This month the members approved three grievances to go to arbitration and appointed 13 shop stewards. I want to welcome the new stewards to the Union, and I look forward to working with you on Union issues. Training is being prepared now, and you should be notified soon as to the date it will take place.

The members also approved the executive board's recommendation to uphold the election review committee's recommendation to dismiss the 15 separate challenges to the Union officer elections. The vote was yes 172 and 86 no. Should you have any questions on these actions, please contact the Union office.

Just a quick reminder to all the operators: You need to take the time to use the restroom facilities to take care of your needs.

# Area reports

By **Sam Schwarz**  
Vice President



ATU is currently in negotiations with Portland Public Schools, C-TRAN, American Medical Response Northwest Grants Pass and Rogue Valley Transportation District.

**TriMet:** We are still dealing with break issues at TriMet. Adding to the problem is the District's insistence that operators pull forward and announce the line and destination even if no passengers are waiting for the bus. Any new rule or revision of a rule may be grieved by the Union.

There will be new road reliefs and new pay for road reliefs in the January runs for Center and Merlo operators. Powell operators will not be relieving downtown.

We are working on the reduced workweek for both full-time operators and mini-runners. At least one should be ready to go in January 2007.

Welcome to Bruce Hansen, newly elected executive board officer at Merlo Garage.

**Salem Area Transit:** The transit initiative that will be voted on in November is very important to our brothers and sisters at Salem Transit. They need our help. Those willing to volunteer please call me at the Union office.

**Retirees:** I attended the 25th Anniversary banquet for the Retired Member Chapter, and it was a hit. Bill Wimmer, retiree president, did a great job in organizing and hosting the dinner along with other retiree board officers. Many of the retirees would like to see this as an annual affair.

# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

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



Jay Lynch and John D are no longer with us. Doug P will take Jay's place, and Mindy R will take John D's place. This means we are in for some changes, hope-

fully good ones.

We had a grievance for a wrongful termination. I am happy to say that this employee is back to work. If you have any concerns, please let me know.

**Portland Public Schools**  
As reported by  
**RANDY SHAW**



Welcome back to another fun-filled year of driving all of our little darlings to school. We made it through last school year without choking, hog tying

or roping any students to the hood of the bus. Remember, don't use duct tape; it's almost impossible to get the glue off. If you use any of these student management methods, you can always count on them to squeal on you, then you get to go talk to a supervisor.

Don't make his day. He has enough fun without having to talk to us. If you should lose control, save some duct tape for your own mouth, or call me before you go to see Bob.

It was good seeing everyone on in-service day. Smokey Stover was really surprised when I presented him with his plaque from ATU 757 for his past service as executive board member. I think Smokey thought we had forgotten him now that he is not in office. As far as that goes, our ATU officers wanted to be there for the presentation but couldn't make it. The office staff and executive board officers send their best. They're going to miss you, Smokey.

And how about Mama Leora. We will never have any peace and quiet now until her head shrinks back down to size. Just kidding, Lee. We all love

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**What IS this?**

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

# Amalgamated Transit Union Division 757

Representing working men and women in Oregon and Washington at:

TriMet • Lane Transit District • Rogue Valley Transportation District • Portland Public Schools • 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



# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 1)

you and appreciate all you and your crew do for us. Yes, Kay, that includes you. Now, quit blushing and bake the drivers some goodies (sugar free).

Management set up the shop stewards and me with an office downstairs in the piano lounge. We want to thank them. We now have a place for the drivers to come between routes if they have a problem.

I have been writing ATU grievances on behalf of our drivers when I see management is not following the contract, and have been having talks on some issues to correct problems before they become a grievance. Management has been working with me. They don't like grievances any more than we do. It's a start; we're making progress. Remember, my goal this year is to build morale, so if you or someone you know has a problem — even if it's not a Union matter — come see us and talk about it. We make a good buffer between other drivers, the staff and management.

We want to thank our other ATU members for the \$100 donation to our back-to-school safety rodeo. This year's winner was Julie Higgins. Way to go, Julie. You took the macho out of some of our members. We did things a little differently this year. Instead of giving out trophies we collected additional money and bought school supplies to donate to Rosa Parks Elementary. It's a new school in north Portland. They were very surprised and grateful for everything they received. They asked for me to share their thanks with all our members.

A special thank you to our two volunteers, Kim Miller and Sharon Pierce, who hit every sale and stretched every penny to buy as many supplies as they could. Without them we couldn't have pulled this off.

ATU has a college scholarship program. You'll find applications in the drivers' room; for details see Tim Norwood.

## TriMet Salaried Employees

As reported by JIM FOWLER

We finally got to Step 3 for the wrongful termination of OCC lead Denise Carthern, and even though we presented what I thought was a slam dunk case, the two managers who represented the District did not uphold the grievance; they let the termination stand. Even though we will now move toward arbitration, Denise could still be out for six months to a year or longer. This is yet another example of management trying to turn our grievance process into a farce.

MAX turned 20 years old in September, and as one of the original employees at light rail, I couldn't help but reflect back on how much fun we

had in the early days mostly because of the two outstanding managers we worked for, Bob Douglas and John Noga. It was a pleasure to work for good people who truly cared about their employees.

It looks like for now the fare inspectors will not all sign out of one location, and things will remain as they have been for you folks.

Finally, all of you on the street, please remain on Wackenhut watch and document and grieve any time you see them doing bargaining unit work.

## TriMet Lift

As reported by LES GREEN



Well, it has been a very busy start of the fall season even if it is officially summer. With the addition of hours and the lack of working buses the situation just seems to get worse with time, with no foreseeable end in sight. Many of our drivers are doing a second shift just to fill the additional routes and hours that our side has been given without any additional equipment.

In my eight years in paratransit, I have seen drivers work six days a week (and would work seven if they could) for months at a time. They then burned out for good since they have sacrificed their home life for work—or have worked so long that the exposure helped cause too many accidents, and they were gone from the service. Also, having multiple bosses does not help. No one wants to see this happen so just take this warning to heart when you give in to our dispatch for that second route or forgo a weekend for our paratransit service.

In closing, I hope all the TriMet drivers took the time to read the July/August edition of *In Transit*, our Union magazine, on paratransit drivers as it may give all drivers and Union members a good insight into the job your paratransit brothers and sisters do in our transportation system.

Be safe out there.

## Laidlaw Portland Public Schools

As reported by KENDALL GREENAWALT JR

Remember your Weingarten rights. Keep an eye on the Union board so you can be more informed. Your new liaison officer is Anna Tompte. I look forward to working with her. With your patience we will hold Laidlaw to a higher standard.

## Salem Area Transit

As reported by KEN RICHINS

Congratulations to Oscar Mabry for winning one of the jackpot drawings at the Union picnic last month. It was probably not as exciting as when he won the Hummer, but winning is always fun.

The United Way campaign has begun. I encourage you to consider dedicating your contribution to the Union Community Services.

Last May, the Yes For Cherriots campaign received a significant contribution from ATU's COPE fund. Also, Lane Transit and C-TRAN have recently received contributions from the fund. Once again, the Yes For Cherriots committee will be looking to ATU for a contribution to support the levy in November. These funds come from voluntary contributions from Union members throughout the nation. Since the success or failure of the November levy will have a financial impact on each of us, it is appropriate for members of Local 757 to make a cash contribution to COPE this fall.

We need volunteers on the week-end of Oct. 21 to distribute door-to-door flyers and set out lawn signs. During the week of Oct. 29, we need volunteers to hold signs on street corners around the community. Contact Gary Spore, shop steward, for details on where and when these campaign actions will meet.

## TriMet Merlo Transportation

As reported by BRUCE HANSEN

Thank you to all who voted. It's right into the lion's pit of scheduled meetings. I have been able to sit in on all reviews and appeals. Wow! What a process.

I look forward to the challenge and your continued support.

## C-TRAN/C-VAN

As reported by ROY JENNINGS



Now for the rest of the story. C-TRAN sent a memo to encourage all employees to check out all the information and remain objective in the assault case. I would ask, "How are employees to remain objective if they are not given both sides of the story?"

So, let's take a look at their so-called "investigation." It was done by Julie DeBoever. Julie is a manager in human resources along with the manager's wife. Julie and this manager and his wife are great friends. Can Julie remain fair and impartial? Is Julie the right

person at C-TRAN to do this investigation? In her findings Julie states that our member was going 30 to 35 mph in the C-TRAN parking lot. Did Julie take the word of her friend instead of checking this out? I would ask all the motorcycle riders here at C-TRAN if they would do 30 to 35 mph in the parking lot. Does this sound like a possible conflict of interest? Julie should have excused herself from this investigation. If C-TRAN truly wanted a fair and impartial investigation, they would have assigned an independent party to look into this very serious incident.

Julie's investigation determined that the assault never happened. Those are her words not mine. Was she there during the assault? Did she go back to the scene and recreate the assault? During our disciplinary investigation a manager, our Union brother who was assaulted, and our liaison officer performed a grievance scene investigation (GSI). We found from the GSI that from where C-TRAN's one witness was standing, it would be almost impossible for her to see the assault. A fair and impartial investigation would have found this out and reported that there was no evidence to support the accusation. But, alas, Julie stated in her report that the assault never happened. It sure sounds to me like she is saying that our Union brother is lying.

The memo doesn't mention the verbal altercation. This is where the manager engaged our brother a second time and escalated the incident. C-TRAN is mistaken when they said we didn't talk to the witness because we did. During the altercation this manager was being physically separated by a supervisor. It seems to me that he was out of control. If a driver would have acted like that so-called "professional," C-TRAN would have spared no resource to send us to anger management therapy and/or discipline us otherwise. I have been informed by a member of management that their manager has not been disciplined. If I'm mistaken, then C-TRAN should state that they have disciplined this manager. Otherwise, C-TRAN is telling us that if you're in management and act in this manner, they will not only cover it up but sweep it under the carpet, too. Maybe this is the rest of the story that C-TRAN doesn't want you to know.

What happens next time when this manager or anyone in management assaults an employee? What happens if they are injured? What happens if the employee just reacts and fights back? C-TRAN has spent hundreds of dollars putting together the Sept. 14 memo, but they want to take away from you a benefit that costs them only \$1.60 or less a month per operator. Maybe their priorities need to be rechecked. As the memo said, "This is a very serious accusation," and the Union does take it very seriously. C-

TRAN should take notice and do the right thing. C-TRAN has told us that we are professional drivers and that we are held to higher standard than other drivers. Shouldn't the so-called "manager" be held to a higher standard, too?

## TriMet Center Transportation

As reported by ALAN EISENBERG



How do we solve problems as drivers? Well, the first thing to do is to fill out the nefarious yellow card. I know you think they do nothing, but what it does is create a paper trail that can be referred to if we need to sit down with management to talk about it.

Another problem that has reared its ugly head is passengers yelling at you to do your job. If they persist in this type of disruptive behavior, then contact dispatch and let them know that you've got a problem child on your coach. We had a problem like this recently with a certain TriMet employee harassing drivers while the coach was in motion. This is unsafe and intolerable.

I would personally like to thank our brothers and sisters in maintenance for doing a great job in keeping a horribly aging fleet of buses on the road. Applause!

Stay alert, stay sharp and stay alive.

## TriMet Light Rail Maintenance

As reported by MICHAEL CONNER



As of this writing, the Union office has already received the REM mechanic sign-up, the facilities sign-up in regard to the maintenance

techs and the helper sign-up, which have unacceptable changes. We will be meeting with District management to work on these issues. As for the helpers who clean the platforms, be sure you thank your manager for the extra work that people who used to do that job received 40 cents more an hour. Maintenance techs can thank their manager for the pay cut now that they will be bumped back to helper where they may possibly bid their old job for which they received a higher rate of pay. The helpers who clean on the

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# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

(From Page 2)

platforms will now be expected to haul a machine around on a trailer (when they may have never backed a trailer in their life); furthermore, the machine will be operated around an open trackway with no protection from falling onto the trackway. Expect train delays if you're riding the train when this 900-pound machine ends up upside down in the trackway, and expect another visit from OSHA. Good luck, helpers. Facilities managers could care less about your health and safety by making you deal with garbage and operate machinery that is obviously not being used in the way it was designed. The Union will do all we can to resolve this problem with management.

Through the District's poor management there are not enough clerks or timekeepers. Beware of requests by management to folks who have worked as clerks to backfill when you have not currently bid the job. This would be a violation of the working and wage agreement. Let the Union know if you are asked to do this. It should be grieved.

The Union is currently also working on the issue of rail supervisors investigating rail incidents also doing troubleshooting and repairs that should be done by rail maintenance journeymen. If you think that they have exceeded what they should be doing, let me know. The District would much rather have them do it than call someone in on overtime. We need to set a strong line on this.

Work safely.

## MV Transportation

As reported by DENNIS TONG

The operators' monthly safety meeting was highlighted by food and drinks provided by the company as a means to settle a grievance regarding management staff driving routes that could have been made available to our members.

The settlement of outstanding grievances regarding the necessity for 10-minute safety breaks remains in abeyance while the company and the Union continue to educate operators about the importance of taking and documenting when the breaks are taken. During this past month, when the company began collecting information to verify that operators were taking breaks as required by the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) guidelines, the company's accident frequency rate (AFR) dropped to an admirable 0.93 per 100,000 miles driven! I hope this is not only a coincidence but also an affirmation of the best safety practices, which include actions to reduce the stress of trying to keep up with increasingly demanding schedules.

Our fall-winter master re-bid has taken place. All operators who are

starting their second six-month period of performing full time (35+ hrs) or part time plus (30-34 hrs) and who wish to sign up for health insurance must do so immediately (ask Ron Klein for the Kaiser enrollment forms).

In advance of the vacation sign-up for 2007, please submit your suggestions for a new and improved procedure to Clark or me as soon as possible.

Please check the Union bulletin board for a meeting notice for MV operators.

## TriMet Center Maintenance

As reported by CHAD MATHER



The service crew at Center Street is cowering in fear. Mark Nelson (service crew supervisor) has decided to rule with an iron fist: leveling discipline letters at employees, throwing chairs away at the fuel house, harassing people about how they are doing their job, and not allowing day trades. All of this has come from an outside consultant brought in by TriMet to help create a better and more cooperative place to work. When the consultant was brought in, they asked the service crew several questions and issued a report. When Mark Nelson got a copy of the report, he made sure that he let the service crew know that what they had said about him was "hurtful." This action by Mark Nelson is in clear retaliation for comments made to the consultant. All comments were made with the understanding that there would be no names attached and no retaliation. Well, we all know what kind of supervisor Mark Nelson is now. He alone has taken a crew that was on shaky ground and turned it into a group of people always wondering for what, why and when they will be written up. What a wonderful place to work. Thanks, Mark!

## TriMet Merlo Maintenance

As reported by JEFF HUNT

This month, I had three grievance hearings — one with facility maintenance over a bus mechanic doing facility maintenance work, which I was able to settle at the pre-filing, getting overtime pay for the senior plant mechanic.

The second one related to an accident form that TriMet changed to fit their form that is filed with OSHA. We were able to get it changed back to the way it really happened.

The third one has not yet been settled — a termination for which the punishment was too harsh.

Merlo maintenance is going through some big changes. The shop will be closed on Saturdays, giving the mechanics and helpers Saturday Sunday off or Friday Saturday off. We did pay a price for this. We lost all of our 4-10 shifts, as well as three positions.

A mechanic from Center will come to help the operators with pull-out on Saturday mornings. We will be more like Powell, having the west side mechanic start at 4:30 a.m. to help operators in the yard and one starting at 11:30 to help with road reliefs.

Please help me welcome Geoff Durant, Keith Hildebrand and John Stainbrook to the diesel apprenticeship training program.

Also, congratulations to Ed Whitaker and Steve Jordan, who are the new Merlo shop stewards.

## TriMet Powell

As reported by ROSE JORDAN-FAIRLEY

Greetings, brothers and sisters. Powell Garage is continuing to go forth with numerous grievances. Fred Hansen is still denying operators leave of absence for various family matters. Extra board operators are being overworked past their 12-hour limitation, which is creating a tremendous problem of being unsafe. Management has been notified that they are no longer to use mini-runners under any circumstances to fill runs that can't be covered by full-time operators.

If you are driving the number 72 bus lines, Clackamas layovers have changed and are in place. You are being required to check your buses at the new layover point.

The Union is aware that regular operators are not being relieved on their regular work shifts and are being paid overtime at their regular rate. On page 40, section d of your working and wage agreement, it states how you should receive pay for no-relief operator. Please take the time to know what your rights are. I will continue to keep you abreast of current events.

## Rogue Valley Transportation District

As reported by TOM HENNEY



We are still waiting to see if management is going to agree to any of our negotiation requests. We may have to go to mediation or arbitration to get a new contract passed.

Only time will tell.

The construction on Ford Road has

made getting to and from the barn very difficult. Hopefully, it will be finished soon.

Anyone who was laid off should be sure to request withdrawal cards from the Union in order to protect your union standing. A special "thank you" to Jon Hunt and everyone who came to the boat trip. It was enjoyed by all who attended.

## TriMet Powell Maintenance

As reported by KEVIN KINOSHITA



The food policy is finally revised; we can start having barbecues again. I've talked to Tommy Gilbreath from safety, who acknowledges that we can cook indoors with the stoves and ovens even though the policy says cooking must be done outdoors. This will come in perfect for an end of the sign-up barbecue. If a barbecue doesn't work for your shift, you can always get it catered or order out and have someone pick up the food.

Recently, I attended a first aid/CPR class, along with other assistant supervisors and senior mechanics. The class was very informative because some of the techniques have changed a lot. We also practiced on the AED system, which is the automated external defibrillator for cardiac arrest victims. This machine is small, manageable and will guide you step by step. I would encourage everyone to participate in an updated class for first aid/CPR. The one in which we participated was held by the Red Cross. The more employees who get certified the quicker response and accurate treatment will be given to the injured individual.

As everyone knows every department at TriMet is running short on the number of its employees. It's been a very rough road. Even more retirements will be coming up before this contract is up. Runs are being canceled on the transportation side because there are not enough drivers. Also mini-run drivers are working past their allowable hours to work. The list goes on and on.

There is some relief in the maintenance department with a new hire orientation class for 11 new union employees beginning on September 18th. Another three new employees will be starting their class after the Thanksgiving holiday. Recently, there was a posting for three more diesel apprentices and two laborers. Stay tuned and keep an eye on the board for more job openings.

The fall maintenance sign-up is going to be an attention-grabbing one.

The shocking news is that Merlo Garage will be closing on Saturdays. The good news is that everyone at Merlo will have some of their weekend off. Part of the reason why the sign-up is confusing is that the sign-up draft changes from day to day. There is a high likelihood that Powell graveyard mechanics/helpers will not have a supervisor in time for the fall sign-up. For the Powell graveyard mechanics/helper sign-up, Mike Groves' name will be shown as the supervisor, although he will not be the supervisor on the shift. The assistant supervisor will probably be the acting supervisor.

We have a lot of political concerns coming up, and we need volunteers. Some of the volunteer actions will be visiting neighborhoods, phone banking, getting the word out on labor and transportation issues. This is your chance to help out. Show your support. If you would like to volunteer for any ATU activities, get with your officer, who will take your information down and put you on the volunteer list.

Lastly, all of the maintenance officers recently met and discussed upcoming issues, such as grievances, terminations, the unfair labor cases, MMIS, apprentices in rail, bus and facilities, apprentices working by themselves, facilities, upcoming openings in the storeroom, OSHA inspections, streetcar and sign-ups for rail, bus, facilities and stores. These are a lot of issues, and we will be coming up with solutions.

## Lane Transit District

As reported by WALT BOYNTON

Please join me in welcoming our newly appointed officers, Carl Faddis, extra board liaison officer; Lora Rangel, mini-extra board officer; and, of course, the reappointment of Lanier Lobdell as customer service shop steward. We all as officers can use your assistance as more eyes and ears as to happenings at the workplace. We try to keep up on what is happening, but if you see or hear of and situations that you think we should be aware of, please let one of us know. We all are the Union, not just the officers.

The schools should be in session by the time this report is printed. Remember to take your breaks as scheduled, and let us know of any problems you are having with your schedules. Watch those school zone speed limits! And, of course, watch out for the kids. You know, the ones that like to cross in front of the city bus after deboarding. We have a whole new crop to educate!

Football shuttles went well for the first two games, and how 'bout them Ducks! A good time to earn some extra overtime and the more of us who

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## 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, 1801 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 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 18, and Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Thursday, October 19, 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, Salsageon 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: Agreements reached

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total increase or an average of 4 percent per year. Mechanic B and C wages will increase by the same percentages.

The new contract adds five weeks' vacation after 20 years' service. Effective in the third year of the agreement, six weeks' vacation after 25 years' service will be added.

Under the old contract, sick leave days were earned based on hours worked. The new agreement provides that sick leave will be earned based on eight-hour days. The new contract will also allow sick time use in one-half day increments.

The annual boot allowance was increased to \$150 over the term of the new agreement.

### At Walla Walla, Washington:

ATU 757 and Valley Transit Association of Walla Walla have reached a deal on a new three-year contract. The new agreement runs from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009 and covers both transportation and maintenance operations.

The new agreement increases the top pay for an operator after three years' service from \$15.38 to \$18.00 an hour by the end of the contract. A

maintenance Mechanic 1 will see their hourly wage rate increase from \$18.56 to \$22.62. In addition to base pay, both operators and maintenance employees are eligible to longevity increases and certification pay.

Operators under the old contract had three longevity steps: one each at 10, 15 and 20 years. In the last year of the contract the employer will add a 25-year step, increasing the hourly rate to \$20.19. The hourly Spanish-speaking premium increases from \$0.25 an hour to \$0.50 an hour for operators who learn to speak "bus lingo" Spanish. The employer provides and pays for the Spanish program.

Maintenance mechanics under the previous agreement had three longevity steps: at 4, 8 and 12 years. The new contract adds a 16-year step. In addition to longevity steps, mechanics also qualify for ASE certification premiums, which were increased from \$0.60 an hour to \$0.75 for mechanics with three to four ASE certifications. For those mechanics with five or more ASE certifications, the hourly premium increases from \$0.70 to \$1.00 for a total premium of \$1.75. For a mechanic with 16 years' service and five or more ASE certifications, the hourly rate increases from \$22.62 to \$24.37.

Other significant maintenance of benefits and new benefits for which the new contract provides are health and welfare. Employees may now choose from four medical, vision and dental plans offered through the State of Washington medical plans. An employee choosing the most expensive plans to cover his/her family will pay a monthly premium of \$7. Those employees covering their children will pay a monthly premium of \$1, and those covering their spouse only will pay \$3.

In addition to and over and above the insurance plan coverage, the employer has agreed in the new contract to provide a \$200 term-of-agreement vision hardware reimbursement for all employees.

The new contract also increases the mechanic tool allowance from \$550 to \$650 a year by the end of the contract. The maintenance employee shoe allowance increases in the new agreement from \$150 to \$300 during the life of the agreement. The operator shoe allowance increases from \$125 to \$160. The employer also agreed to join the State of Washington deferred compensation plan, in which employees may participate on a voluntary basis.

Employees working holidays under the old contract were paid straight

time in addition to holiday pay. The new contract provides an increase in holiday pay for employees who work a holiday to time-and-one-half on Christmas day and News Years' day. The new agreement adds stepchildren the funeral leave provision.

There were also significant changes to sick leave payouts. Under the old contract if employees had a balance of at least 360 hours at the time of retirement or separation, they were paid at 25 percent of their regular pay up to a maximum of 240 hours. The new agreement increases the maximum payout to 960 hours at 50 percent of their regular pay.

The employer agreed to establish a VEBA account for employees, and will allow them to convert sick leave over the maximum cap to be converted into VEBA. Employees will also be able to convert up to 40 hours of vacation to VEBA each year for all vacation leave exceeding 80 hours. VEBA is an individual medical savings account that belongs to the employee, has no carryover limitation, and the money put in and taken out is tax free.

Other changes were made to contract work rules but they included no takeaways or losses.

# ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

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sign up, the fewer of our fellow drivers are force canceled.

Please come to the Union meetings and keep informed. Solidarity, sisters and brothers, solidarity!

### Laidlaw Corvallis

As reported by  
**CHRIS GROOMS/  
BOB McGUIRE**

No report given.

### TriMet Light Rail Transportation

As reported by  
**MICHAEL T OLIVER**



the first time in five years that Merlo has elected an officer, and we are glad it is one of Bruce's experience. Best of luck to him. We also welcome the new

officers for light rail: As liaison officer for Elmonica we congratulate Jason Choi, who is beginning his second three-year commitment, and his shop steward CJ Henderson. CJ has plenty of union experience down south and will bring all of that to bear in his new job. At Portland Streetcar we have Dylan Ruark as the new shop steward. Dylan comes from a family involved with unionism and will be a help with the ever-expanding force at PSC. Last but not least we have the Mayor of Rockridge, Doug (Spud) Henderson as the liaison officer at Ruby Garage. With all of his community involvement we are lucky to have Spud on our side, and he is back for more. At his side is the lovely and efficient Mrs. Nancy Desrochers Hawkins. Nancy, newly married to Ed, was appointed shop steward at Ruby Junction by an overwhelming vote. These folks are the ones to go to when you get in trouble. Know them and how to get in touch and use it. We must also congratulate Jim Fowler on his election as executive board officer representing the salaried workers (also known as white shirts). Jim has a history at light rail, and I welcome his help, understanding and expertise.

We must bid a sad but fond adieu to Brandi Monks. Brandi is headed

back to bus, where she can sign shifts that will enable her to take care of her twins. Brandi was a first-class light rail operator, and her bright and cheerful smile will be missed. Don't let anyone on the bus side say we never did anything for them. But, then again, we give and sometimes take away. Add Dwayne Morrison to those returning to bus. Dwayne has been promoted to station agent, and look out bus side.

He spent a busy three years as the shop steward at Elmo and now goes on to bigger and better things. In all seriousness though, we will miss his humor, golf stories (read lies), and his unmistakable and infectious laughter. Good luck to you. Please do not e-mail me at mtgbo2002@msn.com.

## Retirees' Corner

The following retirees will celebrate birthdays in October: Jobie J. Adams, Keith T. Boos, Boni Boyd-Cook, Gloria J. Brown, Paul E. Burgett, Jack M. Callahan, Kenneth A. Chase, Garnet W. Christian Sr., Curley Clark, Joseph J. Coleman Jr., Vester J. Crist, Virginia M. Eskola, Byron L. Estes, Benjamin E. Fain Jr., Frank L. Farrell, Jerome D. Gerard, Gary E. Gilgan, Roy L. Goodenough, Merle D. Hanson, William Keinath, Raymond C. Kersey, Joseph J. LeBarron, Gary D. McClanahan, James D. Nelson,

Robert H. Payment, George R. Paynter, Wayne M. Reynolds, Sybil M. Rickett, Bettye L. Smith, Robert M. Smith, Theodore P. Sofranko, Jo-ann Sweeney, Richard B. Swope, Harold A. Taylor, James H. Unruh, Douglas Watson and Chris E. Yost.

Next month's regularly scheduled ATU 757 Retired Member Chapter meeting is Wednesday, November 1, 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.

