President’s Roundup
By Shirley Block

I want to thank all of the people who had confidence in me and once again cast your votes for me. We have a lot of work ahead of us in the next three years! Thankfully, we have a new Executive Board that is willing to roll up their sleeves and learn.

Being in ATU is a great privilege, because we’re all stronger together. I’m proud to say that there’s a lot of growth going on in every workplace we represent. The growth in Oregon and southern Washington is bringing more people to this region, and while that means more ATU members, it also means more challenges on the road – especially congestion.

With that said, we all need to be on our guard. Follow all your SOPs. Make sure to watch the speed limit, red lights, and stop signs. If you’re a TriMet Rail operator, make sure you watch for slow orders and follow all your train orders. And above all, BE SAFE, which means taking your breaks when you need them. Don’t just turn and burn, take the time you need to take care of yourself. And be careful during this hot, hot weather we’re having.

Finally, I’d like to welcome the newest members of ATU 757 to the union family: bus operators at Columbia Area Transit in Hood River have won their first-ever contract. Welcome to the Union, Hood River!

Vice President’s Report
By Jonathan Hunt

Greetings sisters and brothers!

I would like to thank all of our volunteers for our Annual Retirees’ Picnic! Special thanks to Eric Gruenwald and Terry Howard for their last-minute assistance. The pulled pork was a hit! Our general all-ATU picnic at Blue Lake was well-attended as well. We did things little different this year on prizes and food. As with changes gives us great opportunities. We’ve been getting good feedback on how we can make it better. Overall, we heard the food was good but lines were way too long, and next time we more water stations. We will be putting together a Picnic Committee to assist in making next years picnic a success! Thanks to all the volunteers and a special thanks to Danielle Bower and Sherri Duarte in our office for all of their contributions to the picnic. I’d also like to thank my wife Joyce and son Joshua who provided over 2,000 snow cones and cotton candy.

We won a ULP with TriMet over new hire orientation and another over seniority in Maintenance. Our maintenance officers will be meeting in the 2nd week of August to discuss the ULP that has been filed over bringing in outside hires. We will be working on a fair seniority system for those who are currently waiting to go on to a program, those who are currently in a program, and those who have been hired off the street. We will update the membership as new information is available.

Our folks at PPS are preparing for a possible strike, though by the time you read this, we’ll have had one more mediation session so take a look at our website for the latest update. Wages and benefits are still unresolved. Our folks at First Transit/TriMet LIFT are ready to go out on the strike line as well. We will be meeting with the employer at the end of September for what I believe will be our final opportunity to resolve outstanding issues before we take a strike action. Finally, we got our first contract victory on our newest organized group in Hood River.

ATU Summer Picnic Fun at Blue Lake Park
Greetings fellow workers. First off, I want to thank everyone for giving me this opportunity to be the new Executive Board Officer for Portland Public Schools Special Education Bus Drivers. I also want to thank Charisse for all the hard work she has done these past years. I don’t want to sugarcoat our current situation at PPS. We have been without a contract for over a year now as we negotiate a new one. Management has brought an outside lawyer to the negotiation table for the first time this year and on July 24th the School Board unanimously voted to implement a new wage scale that is not only less than what they last offered us but also takes away our longevity 25 step. This is insulting. They had a year to get a decent and fair contract signed with us and in the end they chose implementation. The good news is that while we might be angry with this decision, it has brought us as workers together. More than ever we are having conversations with each other, we are showing up to meetings, we are pulling together. I want to give a special thanks to my fellow workers Frank, Tim, and Beth who have spoken up during the public comment section of our School Board meetings. It’s been a long rough year and things might get harder before they get better but the amount of solidarity I’ve seen this last year has been inspirational! I’ll leave you the words from our fellow bus driver Beth Blumklotz: “We’ve been coming together, we have more power!”

Sisters and Brothers, the summer is flying by and I want to take some time to update you on what has been taking place.

On July 18, the ATU/LTD Pension Trustees met for our quarterly update. Plan performance has been steady and our funded percentage has increased to 70.9%. Back in 2012, ATU and LTD Management convened a Pension Workgroup to study our plan and develop a sustainable and meaningful retirement system for our members. In 2012 our pension was 54.6% funded and in the crosshairs for closure. Through hard work and tough decisions the workgroup developed a model that we incorporated into the 2014-2017 Contract.

The reason I bring this up as a positive example to reflect upon is that with the most recent Contract, ATU and LTD again agreed to convene a workgroup to study COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) models for our retirees. The last COLA was $200.64 so since then, our retirees’ pension has eroded in value by 18% due to inflation. The Union looks at that as unacceptable. We want our retirees to enjoy their retirement years without the need to decide between groceries/medicine vs. fun times with grandchildren. I’m so excited, so grateful, so much so that I want to say thank you for participating in our elections. I am Terrance Howard and was elected as your ATU Executive Board Officer, I look forward to working with and for all of you. My information will be posted on our Union board, as well as the shop stewards. Anyone interested in becoming a shop steward please send a letter of interest to the ATU office by email. You can send it to President Block at president@atu757.org, and make sure you “cc” me so that I can follow up. Please feel free to call, email or text me anytime, although the fastest contact method is by text messages.

There are many things happening right now at Rail, please keep in mind that anything newly introduced and violated likely comes with some sort of discipline, whether it’s a letter of reprimand, retraining, or suspension once you’re informed. If you ever face any discipline, please contact me immediately. Remember — nothing about us without us. Once again, I look forward to serving, fighting, and working for you. Your Brother in solidarity, Terrance Howard, Semper Fi.

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters.

I would like to start by saying thank you for participating in our elections. I am Terrance Howard and was elected as your ATU Executive Board Officer, I look forward to working with and for all of you. My information will be posted on our Union board, as well as the shop stewards. Anyone interested in becoming a shop steward please send a letter of interest to the ATU office by email. You can send it to President Block at president@atu757.org, and make sure you “cc” me so that I can follow up. Please feel free to call, email or text me anytime, although the fastest contact method is by text messages.

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Greetings, Brothers and Sisters, I hope you are all enjoying your summer so far. It’s been hot so make sure you keep yourself hydrated and take your breaks. It was great to see everyone at the ATU picnic, it was a good time. Although the food line was a little long this year, everyone managed to still have a good time.

The Supervisors, Para-Transit dispatchers, and the Clerical Units have settled with C-TRAN over the dispute regarding CPI in their respective contracts. If you have any questions, contact myself or any of your Shop Stewards or Liaison Officers. On that note, I would like to congratulate Kevin Hogan (C-TRAN Liaison Officer), Tim Bennets (C-TRAN Steward), and Bonnie Woodring (representative staff Liaison Officer) on their elections to their respective offices. I look forward to working with them over the next three years.

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Hello, brothers and sisters. At our June 16 Executive Board meeting we had about 12 to 15 people from TriMet come to a meet and greet. Some of the people I knew, some of them I didn’t, but all in all it was a great experience. TriMet and the union are coming together as it should be. The butting heads system seems to be going away. I myself have had a great relationship with the garage manager and the supervisors. I still need a shop steward on each shift including the yard at Powell. The more the merrier! We will give you training and help you out along the way. If you are interested in becoming a shop steward, please contact me. An extra set of eyes and ears will help us out tremendously in the long run.

We are getting ready to start breaking ground on the new shop at Powell. Lots of outside contractors have been on property in the last couple of weeks, be aware of them – they may not know our rules of how we operate around the yard. Be safe! Have a great summer. In solidarity,
years and four months in a booming economy at full employment. According to First Group’s own website, their 2018 annual report informs shareholders that First Transit brought in just over $71 million in profit last year. At no point in contract negotiation has First Transit offered give out some sort of raise to hold you over until the contract is resolved. There is a reason for this. As long as there is no new contract, the company continues to make more money off your work, while you continue to be paid the same rate.

Like the last contract, First Transit is offering to give you insignificant raises while asking you to pay significantly more for health insurance. For those of you full-time employees hired after 2012, you pay four to five times what I pay for it. At no point should we as a union ever accept a proposal that divides our members into two classes of workers. Everyone should be paid the same scale and wages without the divisiveness of any class distinction.

We are now at the eleventh hour of this negotiation standoff. Our next and likely last round of negotiations will be September 25-27. From that, you will likely have a choice to either concede to the company’s regressive offer or take a stand for yourself, your co-workers and your family. Every day you work, you bring the company profit. Neither management nor shareholders perform revenue service. Between First Transit’s $71 million profit last year and the passage of the largest corporate tax cut in U.S. history, there is absolutely no reason why you can’t get a living wage and benefits. Ask your employer where the trickle down is, because you haven’t seen it. They have NO plan to give it to you.

We are all collectively the union and, we must all work together to take a stand and refuse to concede to a lower standard of living. With our tremendous power, we can make the company bend to our will. Now is the time to wield that power. Now is the time to become active and vocal. Now is the time to volunteer to assist yourself, and your fellow brothers and sisters. Please see myself or other leadership and ask how you too can become a part of this progress.

At the temperatures rise, here at Center Street we’ve been trying different ways to stay hydrated and cool. This year there were Gatorade bottles, water bottles and chill-it headbands. There was also a cooling bus in the yard for the shaggers as well as water and Gatorade. We also got more fans for the shop. It’s been a long time coming.

We have a lot of new hires recently and it’s not stopping any time soon. This just means more jobs will be opening up, check the boards for apprenticeship programs. Facilities was looking for another trainer as well as an electrician with a supervisory license. Besides the Powell Garage construction, watch for a fourth shop that’s in the works. There will be a class of diesel apprentices graduating in September and most likely they will be taking more apprentices into the diesel program. Watch for postings. The apprenticeship programs will have some changes coming in the near future.

A few of you may be getting letters from the BOLI stating that your personal information was sent to a third party, let your officers know about this.

We have our fall sign-up coming in August and to take effect in September, remember your vacation follows you to wherever you go. If you days off changed and you have signed vacation, make sure you change your days for your vacation to reflect you new days off. If you are having issues get with your officer on your new property.

Lastly for those who come to work every day and do your job: thank you very much. But for those who choose not do what you were hired for, you’re going to get caught and don’t be surprised when you get escorted off property.

Union Brothers and Sisters, I hope everyone had a great summer and I hope we are all geared up to get back to driving. Summer is over and it’s time to roll out the buses. I am writing on July 31st, so I really can’t say a whole lot because we have not had our start up meeting or dry run. But what I can tell you is, we have a new Manager. His name is Michael Legette. I have had at least two meetings with him so far trying to clean up a few loose ends. Time will tell.

We are still waiting on the check for the Driver Relief Fund. It was supposedly sent on June 9th. Come September the company will owe another $1,000. I am still working on this and a few other things.

I really hope everyone had a good time at the Union picnic and the First Student picnic as well. Well, that’s all I have for now. In Solidarity!

We seem to have more drivers using their cell phones while the bus is moving. I want to clear this up for everyone: If you do anything that triggers the Smart Drive and you get caught on your cell phone or doing anything you can be disciplined for, First can and possibly will use it against you. So be careful and please quit doing stuff that will get you in trouble. If you trigger Smart Drive anything on that part of the camera footage will be sent to First and they can use it against you and that my friends is LEGAL. So get out your handbook and make sure you know what the discipline is for each offense and smarten up before it’s too late to save your job. Cell phone issues are on the rise. If you continue to use your cell phones while driving be prepared to be unemployed! If you need to look at your cell phone or answer a call, keep your feet on the ground answer your call. No EXCUSES!

And for those that follow the rules, I thank you and say, keep up the great work. I look forward to serving you and your needs.

From Page 2

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I want to start my report this month by thanking the membership of ATU 757 for voting to re-elect me as your Financial Secretary-Treasurer. We’ve done incredible work over the last six years since I came into office, and I’m honored to represent you for another term to keep that momentum going, especially as we show our strength in the face of the Supreme Court’s ruling in Janus v. AFSCME that made every state in the U.S. “right-to-work” for public-sector workers.

To echo Shirley and Jon, I want to welcome our newest members to the Union: bus operators at Columbia Area Transit in Hood River just won their first contract, and they’re starting strong. Our lead union organizer and bus operator John Maher put it this way: “Being part of a union with the size and expertise of the ATU 757 gives CAT bus operators security in knowing that we now have control over our working lives. It means we can sleep easier at night knowing we have the support of thousands of our sisters and brothers across the country who share our hopes and dreams.”

Congratulations, new sisters and brothers, and welcome to ATU Local 757!

Finally, please put the Annual Labor Day Picnic on your calendars! We’ll be at Oaks Amusement Park (7805 SE Oaks Park Way, Portland) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, September 3. Come on down for fun, family, and food! And if you want to avoid the traffic to Oaks Park, just grab the FREE shuttle train at SE 4th Ave & Caruthers St.— check out the schedule online at https://www.atu757.org/save-the-date-annual-labor-day-picnic-2018/. And please stay tuned to our website for more information about where to find Local 757’s tables at the event.

Names in bold print above are our 50-year retirees – thank you for your service, sisters & brothers!

IN MEMORIAM: Victor Barrett, George O. Lepsey

The next meeting of the Retired Member Chapter will take place Wednesday, September 3rd, 9:30 a.m. at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd Ave, Portland.