Preident’s Roundup
By Shirley Block

I am proud to say our retirees are getting involved with new-hire orientations, critical incident stress management (CISM), and employee recognition. I attended roundtable meetings on March 5th at Center Garage, and on March 12th at Powell at 5 a.m.

On March 14th we had Astoria negotiations. We are waiting for the employer to respond with their counter-proposal. I made them aware that the members voted the contract down, but the percentage. I also let them know if it does come to some sort of action, it won’t take place at Salem MV, it will be in front of Cherriots’ main office building in downtown Salem.

Now, Salem MV sent an email asking us to wait until they talk with their team and get back to us.

First Student lost their contract with Corvallis School District. We will now deal with Student Transportation of America. This will be the first time working with this group. I have certainly been doing my homework checking them out. I’m digging in the weeds to find out if they are bottom feeders, too.

I am hearing all kinds of rumors coming from TriMet’s management team saying they are bringing back Fare Inspectors. But in Labor/Management on March 13th, this was somewhat given to us in a different story by Laird Cusack, the TriMet lawyer. This is the man who wants to put names or numbers on all the operators. He also wants to have nameplates for the operators to display on buses.

My question to him is what type of discipline will come out if an operator forgets his/her plaque on the bus doing a road relief or at the end of their shift? Just another form of SIP.

Pull out the bat and strike. It’s tough to build trust when you really don’t know who to trust.

All employees throughout Oregon and Washington — you are the protectors of your CDL. Please follow the LAW.

MEMBERS IN ACTION
By Beth Blumklotz

ATT 757 Member
Portland Public Schools Special Education school bus drivers Jimmy Appelhanz and I spoke at the March 19 PPS School Board Meeting.

With negotiations upcoming, SPED drivers are looking forward to collaborating and building a bridge of open, honest communication with the District. We know we are an integral part of the Portland Public School system, and we love what we do. We care about the students we transport and their families. We will see if the District understands that our most vulnerable students deserve both consistency and quality drivers.

We want to settle a fair and equitable contract as expeditiously and amicably as possible. The process for last year’s negotiations left a feeling of distrust in the mouths of PPS drivers, causing many to quit. We should not have had to fight for every inch of what we received in last year’s contract.

TO VIEW THEIR COMMENTS GO TO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl-eo0le9Yq&index=2&list=PLJIZ3x2A46270A16Eb&ds. Comments begin at 31:35

Vice President’s Report
By Jonathan Hunt

Greetings, Sisters and Brothers,

I’d like to remind all our retirees who are on Medicare to check their statements. Medicare Part B premiums can increase from year-to-year. In November, the government sends you a breakdown of your Medicare costs. Please make a copy of that document and send it to the benefits department at TriMet. They will adjust your Medicare Part B reimbursement amount accordingly. If you would like assistance, please call the ATU office at 503-232-9144. We can fax or email your documents to TriMet.

I encourage every member who works at a property whose contract is expiring and opening for negotiations to take time to fill out and return a contract suggestion form. You can obtain a copy of this form by going to the ATU-757 website at www.atu757.org and downloading a form, asking your Union officer to give you a contract suggestion form, or by calling the ATU office at 503-232-9144 to request that a form be mailed to you.

We will be entering into contract negotiations with TriMet in September. We will be holding a meeting for union-represented TriMet members on Saturday May 4, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the AFL-CIO’s Oregon Labor Center to discuss those contract suggestions and formalize our proposal. The Labor Center is located at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. This is an opportunity to let your voice be heard regarding what you would like to see in the next contract. Please plan to attend this meeting. We hope to see you there!

We are in continued litigation with TriMet regarding contracting out our work, maintenance seniority, and outside hires. We also have contracts at the mediation level for First Transit Region 3 and MV Salem. We are in open negotiations with Tillamook, First Student Portland, Canby MV, and TriMet.

Again, if you haven’t already done so, please get your contract suggestion forms in. Thank you for all the hard work that you all do!
Hello, Brothers and Sisters.

This month at Powell … no new grievances, BUT lots of SIP meetings. When you get a letter for a mandatory meeting with a date and time, 99% of the time your union rep is also scheduled to be there. Still double check with your Union Rep to make sure. If no rep shows up to the meeting, don’t do the meeting and ask the manager to reschedule.

TriMet contract negotiations will start around July, so please submit your suggestions. We will have a meeting on May 4th for members to come by and see the list of what we have, and ask questions about where we’re at going forward against TriMet.

Summer sign-up is right around the corner and we have had lots of retirees that won’t be signing. Congrats to them on their next adventure.

This month in accident reviews we had a high number of probationary-employee accidents that were not weather related. There were many right-side clearance problems. Remember to watch your mirrors as you are turning and pulling into and leaving stops.

I have put in a request for a safety report for the Park & Ride where we park, asking for a fence to be put in and to move the security booth to the south where they can see what is coming and going from the fenced area to make it more secure.

Well, that’s all I have for now. Until next time, stay safe and take your breaks!

ATU Local 757 Officer Reports

Hello, Brothers and Sisters.

Just a reminder, ATU 757 is trying to collect as many of your Contract Suggestion Forms as possible before Friday, April 19 (before the next Executive Board Meeting and Charter Meetings, the following week). We want you to have a voice in what you would like to have negotiated into our next contract.

We need to collect and organize the proposals that members submit prior to the start of negotiations, which will begin in late summer 2019. To view a sample of the Contract Suggestion Form and for more info, please visit the Union Board/ATU Case at the Center Garage.

Also note that the ATU Case at Center has been updated, and all content info for our Rep, Extra Board Liaison, and Stewards is up, as well as important and helpful info regarding rights and responsibilities and special opportunities for union members.

As far as the ATU 757 Contract Suggestion Form, there are two ways to access and submit it: 1) You can use the online fillable form. To access the online form, go to www.atu757.org, then to the link on the Home Page for the Contract Suggestion form. Fill out. Hit send… 2) For those of you who prefer to fill out a hard copy form, get a copy from one of your ATU Reps: Executive Board Officer, Extra Board Liaison or one of your Shop Stewards. After completing the form you can return it to the individual who gave you it, mail it to the ATU office at 1801 NE Couch St, Portland OR 97232, or fold it once long-ways and drop it through the vent in our ATU Phone Box at Center (gray locker with black lock and ATU/Hockey Flyer, located between computer stations and East Door) before Friday, April 19th, and I’ll take them to the ATU Office.

On another note, let’s remember to help each other out in the field: Use the ‘language’ we are able to use with our lights. Lots of Bus Ops out there are not letting their Brothers and Sisters know what their intent is, i.e. when they are going (or not). Which way are you going? Left? Right? When you’re servicing a stop, 4-ways on, when picking up a mobility device or bike, or ‘killing’ time (so your fellow Bus Ops know to stop further back). ‘Blocking’ for each other at tough stops, i.e. lay back, when another bus is trying to get out of a ‘pull-out’, so they can get back on route. Letting whoever got to a pinch point first, to get through, so you can both keep moving. Laying back at corners, so our fellow Bus Ops can make the turn.

When we do these things for each other, everyone’s days are easier and safer. We are also able to maintain a smoother flow, which helps us stay on time. When we forget to do those things (maybe because we’re running late), bad things like mirror strikes to both buses or body damage can happen. Safety. Service. Schedule. In that order. Help each other out. We are ATU family.

I hope everyone had a great Spring Break and that you all had time to rest and relax.

It’s only have about two months of school left, so let’s try to avoid objects and obstacles.

I am hearing talk about the medical. We still have not received word as to how it is going to work.

What I mean by this is do we still have open enrollment in September or do we lose our insurance for six months? No one is giving us a clear answer on this. We are still working on it and I am hoping to find something out soon.

We still have some grievances out there that we are trying to clear up. One is about the Sick Time Driver Relief Fund, and the other is about medical.

We received a document pertaining to sick time, but to me it just doesn’t look right. We will try to get a better understanding of it and will let all of you know the outcome when we get it (hopefully soon) on all of the issues.

The Mechanics’ Contract expires in April and is up for negotiations. Please get me your contract suggestions as soon as you can so I can look them over and make notes.

In Solidarity.

Brother and Sisters,

February and March have been flying by. The bid memo has garnered a ton of responses. I appreciate hearing from each and every one of you who reached out. We’ll take all the responses and discuss our options going forward with management to hopefully improve our current process for operators to bid work.

I had the privilege of sitting in on my First Student Portland Board Meeting and Charter Meetings, as of February 15, Policy 351, the Customer Comment Policy, is in effect. C-Tran and the Union worked on this policy for several months, although at the very end we could not come to a complete agreement. Accordingly, the Union did not sign off on the policy. Reminder, with the implementation of Policy 351, all members’ files were wiped clean of all retained comments and complaints, and everyone started February 15th with a clean slate.

I would like to remind everyone as well if you are coming up on your driver’s license renewal, there are certain requirements you need to meet to get your renewal. You must have a government issued birth certificate, valid U.S. Passport, permanent resident card, certificate of naturalization, certificate of citizenship, or a consular report of birth abroad. If you cannot provide one of these upon renewing your CDL, you will not be allowed to renew your CDL. If you don’t have your CDL, you do not drive. Also, remember upon renewing your CDL, turn in your CDL reimbursement

Greetings and salutations, Brothers and Sisters.

I hope everyone has been able to enjoy some of this nice weather we have been blessed with recently. I am writing this on Transit Driver Appreciation Day, so I would like to begin with a great big shout-out to all the drivers here at C-Tran for all the hard work and dedication they have for public transit!! You folks are the best!!

C-Van drivers, I just recently had the displeasure of walking past one of your vehicles in the C-Tran admin parking lot where a driver was unloading a passenger using the lift with the operator nearby, and what appeared to be other passengers on board. Why am I mentioning this you may ask? It’s because as I was walking by on the way to the meeting this vehicle was in the process of regenerating the exhaust. The fumes were so bad my eyes watered, I started coughing. It was not a pleasant experience. I was lucky! I was just passing through the fumes, but the operator and passengers were captive and could not remove themselves from this situation. I have heard about this problem on several occasions, but until experiencing it for myself, I was unaware how bad it was. This is completely unacceptable for our operators, employees, and passengers to be exposed to this daily. This needs to be fixed! Damn the regulations! We can’t be poisoning our passengers and operators. C-Tran needs to fix this now!!

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Turn to Page 11
paperwork.
The new bid is coming soon. The Fixed Route lay down is the week of April 1st and bidding starts the week of the 8th. It is the same service as has been on the road currently (yes again). For those of you looking for a little shake-up, there will be several changes coming in the fall service change. There will be several route changes and additional service hours to be added.

Also, one last thing…take your rest breaks. If you need to use the restroom, stop your vehicle in a safe location and do so. Do not let the schedule dictate your needed rest breaks. If you find yourself at the point of needing to be relieved be sure you articulate clearly to dispatch you it be physical or mental duress.

If you don’t show up and participate, you don’t get stronger! Have a great month everyone. Ever forward, in solidarity, I cannot thank you enough for all fighting for rail operators, there are a few issues that I have my sights set on trying to get resolved. First, new operators are being punished too severely. Probation should be a time of learning how to operate your train. Management is taking this opportunity to move operators down the discipline trail. They believe that just using a bigger stick will solve all the problems that the newest of us are facing.

Operating the train is a HARD job; one that no one takes lightly.

Secondly, the new train orders are slowly making their way into existence. With what I have seen, it is going to make things easier to keep track of all that is going on out on the alignment.

The last thing I want to talk about is CALL BOARDS. There are some fundamental problems with a few locations that are having continual problems. Most all of them are involving the vertical boards, where they are out of sight and hard to see. We are trying to work through a few different avenues to get some locations changed to be more visible, as well as to get the vertical call board changed back to the more visible horizontal board.

Everyone knows that train order violations are serious. There is not one single operator that has had a violation that doesn’t see this. More discipline will not solve the fundamental issues that still persist after every call-board violation. There are some solutions in the future, but this is the only solution I am seeing from management right now. This needs to change.

Keep an eye out for some information on the CMS testing.

Lastly, there has been an increase in speeding violations. Please keep your speed DOWN. Your schedule is only a tool. When you get to the end of the line, always take care of yourself. A bad schedule will not be fixed by speeding or by cutting your break short. TriMet will fix nothing as long as they think it is working. It is only when they see there is a problem will they actually fix things. Thanks again for all your support. Only together can we make light rail better.

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In Oregon, having a union at work means an extra $4,701 a year, and better benefits

A new report out from the University of Oregon’s Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) attaches local numbers to something most people already know: Union workers have better pay and benefits than nonunion workers. Looking at Oregon workers, LERC’s Lina Stepick and Mark Brenner analyzed statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau using a methodology developed by the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education.

They found that — all other things being equal — Oregon workers covered by a union contract earn 11 percent more than nonunion workers, are 17.5 percent more likely to get health insurance through their job, and are 41 percent more likely to have an employer-provided retirement plan.

In dollar terms, they found that being covered by a union contract adds $4,701 per year to an Oregon worker’s annual income, on average. With close to 300,000 union members, that union differential could account for an additional $1.4 billion in income in the pockets of working Oregonians in 2017. And that’s just the impact on members: Other research has demonstrated that unions also increase wages for nonunion workers, Stepick and Brenner note, particularly when they’re able to establish industry-wide standards for wages and benefits.

The report also found that union workplaces have a smaller gender pay gap. For Oregon, the gap between the average pay of men and women is 18.7 percent in nonunion workplaces, but only 5.3 percent in unionized workplaces.

Wage differences between union and nonunion, and between women and men, can be due to other factors, like differences in experience, education, and the industry in which they work. To isolate out the “union” effect, Stepick and Brenner controlled for those demographic and industrial characteristics using a statistical method known as regression analysis. The data came from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey, and they pooled data from 2011 to 2017 in order to ensure a sample size large enough for statistical analysis. In their sample, about 16.5 percent of workers were union members or covered by a union contract.

Happy Spring Brothers and Sisters!

As we move into the spring and summer months, please remember that schools have field trips this time of year. There may be 100 kids waiting for a light rail train or for a bus. Some of these situations can cause safety issues for both the operators and the kids. If you see a group of children, please make sure to slow down.

I know that it takes extra time to board children. I see many kids that are so excited to take the bus or train that they just can’t wait to get to the vehicle. Please remember that these are our future riders. Let’s take care of them and make their experience a happy one.

This is also construction season. I believe there are more than 70 construction sites — both small and large — going on this spring and summer. These include major construction to small paving jobs. Please slow down for their safety and yours. Let dispatch know if you are being delayed from a construction zone. Your communication helps in two ways. Dispatch will know why you are running late and they can then notify other drivers of the issue.

Please remember… do not let the schedule run you; you run the schedule. I know that everyone wants to make sure that people get to their destination on time, but we must also take care of ourselves. Make sure to take your breaks and stay hydrated.

Just another reminder that TriMet negotiations will be starting soon. You can put in a proposal form that is available on our website at www.atu757.org or you can contact the office or your officers for the forms.

United We Stand!

Amalgamated Transit Union - Division 757
Representing working men and women in Oregon and Washington at:

TriMet • Lane Transit District • C-TRAN/C-VAN • Salem Area Mass Transit District • MV Canby • MV Salem • Rogue Valley Transportation District • Bend Extended Area Transit • Cascades East Transit • Tillamook County Transportation District • Valley Transit Association • First Transit Regions 1, 2 and 3 • City of North Bonneville • Portland Public Schools • First Student Portland • First Student Corvallis • MTR Corvallis • Lamar Advertising Company • Columbia Area Transit • Hood River • ATU Retired Member Chapter • Sunset Empire Transportation District, Astoria • CC Rider