When this virus came to the United States, we as a country were not prepared, and neither were transit agencies. But, our members came together with our strong grit and a need to do our jobs and to work we went. We didn’t give up.

TriMet. Where to begin? Before I begin tearing into them, I want to say that I absolutely recognize that this situation is challenging. Getting PPE has been difficult for everyone, and no one was prepared. BUT, TriMet, our largest employer, has failed its employees. TriMet has been behind our other agencies from day one: refusing to switch to backdoor boarding, refusing to go fare free, limiting ridership after almost all of our other properties, spreading misinformation, making it difficult to use COVID-19 leave, so much that many members’ pay was delayed, and time after time after time prioritizing the bottom line over your health and safety. We were forced to spend our time fighting layoffs when we could have been focused on safety measures. It is a shame that members have felt so helpless that they have felt the need to bring in their own cleaner, or even their own shower curtains(!), to keep themselves safe, where their employer did not.

On top of all that, we have been told by First Transit that the layoffs our members are facing could have been avoided with a little help from TriMet. Their priorities are clear, and it is shameful. But, we will keep fighting.

We are in an unprecedented time. All schools are closed the rest of the year. Restaurants are shut. Almost all other businesses are closed or running under no-contact practices. In transit, we do not have that luxury; we must keep rolling. We are essential, YOU are essential. And though some of your riders are not essential, the service you are providing is. And you should be proud.

When this virus came to the United States, we as a country were not prepared, and neither were transit agencies. But, our members came together with our strong grit and a need to do our jobs and to work we went. We didn’t give up. We got stronger and put fear in our back pocket, put on our mask, gloves or sanitizer and do what we do best. Hoping everyone is being safe with this COVID-19 going on around the world.

Brothers and Sisters,

I want to start this month by saying this COVID-19 caught all of us by surprise. We have a lot of our members without jobs, some at home ill, with kids out of school, and some away from work taking care of family members. Just remember, though our circumstances are all different, we are in this together!

Salem Transit (Cherriots) was hit the hardest. They had to shut their doors completely for a couple of weeks. I’m proud to say by working together with them we were able to come back to deliver the service to the community and get our members back to work.

On April 17th we received notice that First Transit Regions 1 and 2 will be laid off on May 1 until further notice. Region 3 was partially laid off as well. For these members, please check our Facebook page and website for updates and information. We will continue working with First Transit to get everyone back to work as soon as possible.

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IATSE Members Donate Masks

Masks made and donated by our laid off brothers and sisters from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 28 were dropped off at Merlo, Center and Powell garages recently. If you receive one of these masks show your appreciation by posting a selfie on our Facebook page. The Local 28 represents about 400 stage (members and extras), wardrobe, and allied craft workers. They work shows in Portland at the Keller Auditorium, Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, Moda Center, Memorial Coliseum, and Newmark and Winningstad theaters.

Secretary Treasurer’s Report

Transit Workers are on the Frontlines

By Mary Longoria

Sisters and Brothers,

I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe as much as possible. I know transit workers are on the front lines of this pandemic as essential service providers across the country. Cherriots in Salem had to shut down after a few weeks into this pandemic due to employees and the community being infected with COVID-19 at a rapid rate.

Employers are unprepared to clean and sanitize their buses at the high level that is needed for this virus. Some employers have contracted out internal deep cleaning to save a dollar at the expense of our riders and operators. Employers who consider members that clean and sanitize our buses and trains as people that are expendable, need to take this time to reflect and remember that every job is important to safety and the well-being of our riders, workers, and communities.

Our members that have been impacted with layoffs are the members who work for an employer that is contracted out to private corporations. In my opinion, allowing Oregon taxpayer money to be used to contract to corporations that are for-profit for their shareholders instead of the best interest of the community is unacceptable. The bashing of the drum for Public-Private Partnerships is just another way to take Oregon taxpayer money and hand it over to corporations that don’t pay a living wage, undermine the collective bargaining agreement, and unions in general.

Currently we have about 500 members that have been laid off due to the pandemic. Contracted out transportation services, First Transit Regions 1, 2 & 3, are the people that transport our most vulnerable population, they have the most laid off members. We tried to work with First Transit and ATU International continues to negotiate with them to at least keep healthcare during this crisis. First Transit blamed it on TriMet, stating they won’t help them during this time.

The other group impacted is the First Student members. They take our children to and from school every day. It’s amazing that Portland Public Schools are taking care of their employees, but again, the for-profit company First Student says “no way,” they have no commitment to our community. ATU will continue to negotiate when members return to work and during their layoffs.

ATU International has waived per capita tax payments for the months of April, May and June for laid off members. If you are laid off, don’t worry about any payments to the Local, you are taken care of and will remain in good standing.

To the families that have lost a loved one during this pandemic, my sympathy and condolences goes out to your families. No one expects to go to work and contract a deadly virus. For those that contracted the virus and have recovered, thank you, it shows the courage and dedication that transit workers have for the community they serve. We are public servants and are here for them.

Be Safe! In Solidarity!
The fogging machines are in and are being used at all three garages. There were some minor issues in the beginning, but most of the bugs have been worked out. An independent outfit has come out and did testing on the parts per million with the UV machines in the last two weeks. Each week we have been getting more and more buses fogged. Wiping down the overhead rail locations to possibly spray down the platforms. Originally TriMet wanted to drop their UV light to disinfect the buses. Stay tuned, hopefully I will keep it short this month since not much is going on at least that I am aware of to write about. Here is my info if you have any questions and need help. email:trimet0621@gmail.com cell: 503-890-4870 call/text. Stay safe.

Hello, Brothers and Sisters,

I want to praise everyone’s effort on the COVID-19 crisis. From cleaning and sanitizing buses, trains, facilities repairing revenue, non-revenue facilities maintenance, and a shout-out to all the drivers, road supervisors and everyone that is directly in harm’s way, you are greatly appreciated! I hope when this is past us, TriMet will realize what the Union has done for them to help keep people moving and take that into consideration when we get back to the table on contract negotiations.

The construction at Powell is slow moving but looks like progress is happening. The fuel house/wash rack is complete, but we are not using it at this time due to possible permit holds. We have some new Service Workers coming on in the next week. Hopefully this will help with the workload when they get up to speed.

Congratulations to the new Journey Diesel Mechanics that just graduated. Remember, if you are asked to meet or have a phone call with management/HR, tell them you would like to have union representation with you. Together we will stay strong and united!

Union Family,

We are facing a hardship that most of us have never seen in our lifetime. In these uncertain times we need to fight for our livelihood more than ever, or we will be left in the cold when our country “re-opens.” Our struggle now includes making

ATU LOCAL 757 OFFICER REPORTS

TriMet Light Rail & Center Maintenance

As reported by KEVIN KONOSHITA

The fogging machines are in and are being used at all three garages. There were some minor issues in the beginning, but most of the bugs have been worked out. An independent outfit has come out and did testing on the parts per million with the UV machines in the last two weeks. Each week we have been getting more and more buses fogged. Wiping down the overhead rail locations to possibly spray down the platforms. Originally TriMet wanted to drop their UV light to disinfect the buses. Stay tuned, hopefully I will have something more to write about next month on this topic.

Personal protective equipment has been coming in more frequently and is being disbursed to all garages. From the buyers to the storeroom employees, they’ve been extremely busy picking up supplies after hours, to delivering gloves and masks, as well as performing all their other work. Center stores has been on top of it!

TriMet is still terminating employees, as well as putting them on paid admin leave. Just because we’re in a pandemic situation doesn’t mean this will stop. Allegedly there are supplies being stolen and Transit Police is investigating. Sometimes it’s hard to keep time going during this COVID-19, please get hold of EAP (Employee Assistance Program). It’s here to help employees out with whatever issue you have, and it’s totally confidential. Neither TriMet nor the Union will receive the reason why you contacted them.

The apprentices for bus and facilities have been tasked to do other work besides their current apprenticeship program. The bus apprentices are being sent to Center, Merlo, Ruby and Elmo to clean buses and trains until May 29th. The facilities apprentices are being sent to various end of the line rail locations to wipe down touch points on the trains, and possibly spray down the platforms. Originally TriMet wanted to drop their apprentice pay to service worker pay while doing these jobs. There was no end date on when these apprentices were going back to class. Facilities apprentices were not going to be able to attend classes and TriMet wanted the diesel trainers to go back to the floor and turn wrenches. We now have an agreement with TriMet on a return date, keeping apprentice pay, attending PCC classes, and the trainers will not be working the floor.

We are still doing conference calls with TriMet every day. The issues that are brought up are the issues that you bring to us. Sometimes there are two meetings a day because both sides need time to discuss the issues. Safety is always being discussed. Thank you for all you do!

Mulligan’s Stew

As reported by TIM MULLIGAN

Hola, brothers and sisters!

STEW be back on the north side of the wall. I was coaxed back by the coronavirus situation (no cases in our Nayarit town). Health care was better and more affordable in the U.S. So, we came back over a month early. We actually caught the last SWA flight out of Puerto Vallarta. It’s a STRANGE NEW WORLD. Got to keep your 6ft. distance or one adult white sturgeon, which fishermen Dave Cortez and Mark Davey would know for sure. The Mexico and USA leaders were VERY slow to react on this serious problem. My wife, Ilana, and I immediately isolated from our local Nayart community with at least a 6ft. distance. We would meet for beach sunsets with other friends with at least 6 feet separation.

It’s 45 degrees colder here in the City of Roses. I walked the dogs in rain and hail, which is WAY different weather than Nayart. Even the two Mexican futbol teams I play on suspended games pronto. Ilana and I put ourselves in a 14-day volunteer quarantine once back in the USA due to our air travel. We signed up for produce delivery and got a few grocery store deliveries from my long time pal and Union brother David Rany. Plus, our Mysti Krewe mardi gras members provided deliveries. Great to see the community come together in this uncertain scenario we are presently in.

This gesture allowed us to stay out of stores. The dead battery in the 2010 Hyundai waited till after our confinement. Fortunately, the older 1984 Volvo and 1985 Chevy camper van started right up after recharging the battery and no jump. Older is better. RIGHT! All ye retirees. Though the cars sat and we walked everywhere, I was looking forward to attending the next Union meeting, but I am listening to Gov. Kate... Be Safe. Stay home! Hope no one was April FOOLISH and had a party or gathering during these social distancing times. I have two old college (U.Rhode Island) pals, one from N.C., and the other from Maine, that got corona. Maine pal was skiing in Montana during St. Pats and visiting Yellowstone and flew back and somehow got the virus. They and wives have recovered. I hope ST. PATS DAY was swell for all my past attendees at our annual party, such as Red Worland, Rex Fisher, Dennis Newcomer, Kevin Rotter and MANY more bros and sisters. I know for a fact brothers Koeller, Rooney and spouses, had a craic at a March 17th time. We canceled our Nayarit Paddys party and only my wife, myself, and a pal Mitch from Portland donned our green and sipped Guinness. Which BTW were probably the only two cans available in a 50-mile radius. Keep your space. Better spaced then sorry! Spaced as in safe separation not an altered mental state. Though one can’t get tested for that altered state in retirement.

Alright! Enough is enough. Hope to see the COFFIN DODGERS sooner than later. Fore! L2E! Terrible Tim aka STEW. Salud! Gracias to all the front-line workers battling this virus! We will BREAK ON THRU TO THE OTHER-SIDE! Peace! Solidarity!

TriMet Powell Transportation

As reported by KRIS ALEXANDER

I want to say happy retirement to TriMet Trainer Mary Hansen! She retired April 10, with 39 years at TriMet, which 30 of them were as a Trainer.

This month at Powell we had very few meetings and two terminations for time-loss and too many overSleeps (not related to COVID-19). These were violations from late 2019 that had been on paid leave for months. The Unions cancelled all non-urgent meetings and negotiations until at least mid-May. The sign-up process has been changed only due to the social distancing we should be following during this pandemic. The sign-up team and station agents and garage reps kicked butt and did a three week sign-up in five long days, but we got it done! The Union saved jobs and worked with TriMet to do run-cuts and bigger extra boards until this summer.

We have been getting more and more buses fogged. Sometimes there are two meetings a day because both sides need time to discuss the issues. Safety is always being discussed. Thank you for all you do!

Corvallis Transit System

As reported by TINA LEPAGE

John Oliver has been the Union Rep for CTS for many years. He has decided to retire from working with CTS, which has left a very big deficit in our union leadership.

I will be stepping in as the Liaison Officer. John assured me if I need help he will step up and help out, as will Rolando from the OSU Beaver buses here in Corvallis. Several of my fellow drivers have promised their help as well.

Hopefully, with all their help, we can and will re-energize our Union to be better. It will take all of us. Thank you in advance for all we will accomplish.

In Solidarity.

First Student Portland

As reported by ANNA TOMPTE

Union Family,

We are facing a hardship that most of us have never seen in our lifetime. In these uncertain times we need to fight for our livelihood more than ever, or we will be left in the cold when our country “re-opens.” Our struggle now includes making

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Sister and Brothers,

This is my communication to LTD’s Board of Directors.

Dear LTD Board Members,

I am writing to you for taking the time to hear my testimony last week. I appreciated the few Board members who reached out after, a simple gesture, but definitely noticed. Since the last time you heard from me, our Front-line workforce has gone through more changes that has impacted their lives. With the reduction to 6 day a week service, we had to reallocate our workers, necessitating a new job bid for work. This has resulted in a large amount of split days off, when normally workers are able to have at least 2 days off in a row for rest. Split days being an unavoidable outcome of this service level, it’s just another reason why our workforce needs to be recognized for their efforts.

In times like these, this focus seems to first go to quantifiable data like financials or ridership. These are extremely important, don’t get me wrong, but an equal amount of consideration must be on the human cost to those who are continuing to serve the community in a dangerous time like today. No other workforce besides healthcare has been hit harder by COVID-19 than transit. To date, over 100 front-line transit workers have passed due to COVID-19 and thousands more have been infected. This is the reality that our front-line has to face every day. They must worry about their health and their family’s health. We know that transit workforce demographics place our workers at heightened risk of complications due to COVID-19. LTD has been responsive in attempting to mitigate risks, but my members cannot work from home. We understand the community needs us, that is our calling, and we will report and not let them down.

I have heard multiple stories from our Operators and other workers on how this pandemic has affected them personally. Some are heartbreaking, some are harrowing, but all need to be heard. I have included their write-ups in the attachments to this email. I implore you to read each and every one of these experiences to help you understand what has been going on day to day here at LTD. I had a bus operator tell me the other day that his wife was told not to report to her work because her husband was a transit worker.

Like I said in my testimony before, LTD has been successful in its response to COVID. Why? We have a strong labor partnership, we have a management team that’s not afraid to lead, and most importantly, we have the most incredible workforce that I have ever had the luck to develop. Our employees are truly mission driven and have answered the call at every turn. Even our retired workforce is contributing, please see the LTD Sewing Team attachment. Just awesome stuff, truly.

This brings me to my request. You, as the Board, must direct LTD Management to cooperate with the ATU to develop ways to recognize this incredible effort. LTD, through coordination with ATU, are currently shines stars in the industry, setting the example that others are looking towards. The Union could Demand to Bargain over these impacts, sure. Typically, that avenue is available but that will negate the partnership our two organizations share. The energy we can create and continue to build by working cooperatively will be much more than any settlement created out of positional bargaining. It’s rare that a Union would request the avenue that I am proposing, but in response to this pandemic, it’s the prudent choice as we search for a brighter future. I have included the letter drafted by ATU International for reference. It lays out priorities of the ATU, but locally, we are able to work within our relationships with our Employers.

Thank you for your time and effort. It’s not lost on me that your duties are voluntary and the burden of this crisis is heavy. I am always available as a reference if you’d like to hear from the perspective of the nearly 250 ATU members at LTD. The eyes of an Operator, Public Safety Officer, Bus Detailer, Customer Service Representative, Mechanic, Inventory Technician, Service Worker, Station Cleaner, and even the Tire Specialist are at your disposal. A three-minute public testimony slot, in these times, simply doesn’t do our experiences justice. ATU would welcome a slot on the agenda if the Board is open to it.

Greetings and salutations, Brothers and Sisters!

Two months ago, most of us would have never guessed that we would be facing the outbreak of a global pandemic that has gripped the world in fear. Nevertheless, that our home state of Washington would be the frontlines of this outbreak. Our lives both at home and here at work have drastically changed. This is an unprecedented event in our lifetime, and we are working hard on your behalf to keep you safe here at work so that you may safely return home in the evening to your families.

Your ATU officers at C-TRAN have been laboring diligently and tirelessly on your behalf to ensure that C-TRAN is taking the necessary steps to keep you safe. I would personally like to thank Kevin Hogan, Jill Carrillo, Gail Bennett, and the numerous Shop Stewards for all the work they have been doing on your behalf.

I know that some of the requests from the ATU to C-TRAN have been slow to come to fruition, and we understand your frustration. Believe me, we do. Remember, ATU officers here at C-TRAN are out in the field behind the wheel of the buses, on the platforms, working customer service windows, dispatch, fuel supervision and much more. We share your concerns. We have been working non-stop to protect the health and safety of all our members. As you know, this situation is very fluid and is changing every day. We are trying very hard to keep the members updated and informed on any changes that occur as we get them. If you have any questions, please call any of your Union Officers or Shop Stewards. We are working diligently to keep everyone employed during this unprecedented crisis. I am in communication frequently with C-TRAN Executive Staff since this State of Emergency has begun. I am also giving frequent sit-downs with our Local’s President, Shirley Block, VP Jon Hunt, and ATU International Representative Dennis Antonelli. They have been quick to respond to any questions, assistance, and requests we have had.

We are currently working with maintenance to develop an automated plexiglass driver’s (sneeze) shield that will be installed and operational (on low-floors), and a shower curtain device on high floors (a little hokey but it is functional), for when we resume front door boarding and fare collection.

I know everyone has been anxious about moving forward to a new bid, and as I write this, we will be moving forward with a vote to extend the current service bid through Saturday, August 1st. We truly believe a reduced service bid would not be in the best interest of the members at this time.

I would like to thank all the C-Van Operators who have stepped up and volunteered to serve as temporary VSW workers sanitizing our buses, you are greatly appreciated. As well as all our co-workers in the maintenance departments, we appreciate the work you are doing to keep us safe. Thanks!

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the work you do out there on the frontlines. Our community needs us, and we are proud of the work each and every one of you are doing. Remember, if you are experiencing a cold and cough, fever or any flu-like symptoms and think you are becoming ill, stay home and in isolation is the best way to protect yourself and others from exposure. We encourage our members to do everything you can do to keep yourself and your family. Keep up the fire, stay safe! In solidarity, ever forward.

Hello, Brothers and Sisters,

As I watch this COVID-19 Pandemic play out, it is of great concern to watch TriMet’s slow and incomplete movement to action, to both protecting its workers, as well as the community they serve.

As of April 21, these are the national numbers on COVID-19. Confirmed Cases: 802,583, Deaths: 44,575. Of those numbers, nearly 100 public transit workers have died, and of that number, 25-30 have been ATU members. Needless to say, this is real and this is the most serious pandemic any of us has seen in our lifetime.

Public Transit Workers are definitely essential frontline workers: Bus and Train Operators, Mechanics, Field Techs, Maintenance, Service Workers and Support Services have all been putting their lives on the line, to get other essential frontline workers to where they need to go. We all work together to keep things running normally, or at least as normal as can be expected right now.

So, how are things in our corner of the world? TriMet has been slow to respond. Ever since this deadly virus really began its run of death and destruction, it is only recently, in the last week or two, that TriMet has provided Personal Protection Equipment (PPE’s). Before that, they had just given operators a 2 oz. bottle of hand sanitizer, and a small packet of wipes, which were for grease and not antibacterial. The fact that TriMet has contin-

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ed to charge some, but not all riders (Cash vs Hop Card & Phone App) leads to problems and dissent on the bus, not to mention possible virus transmission.

Generally, it sounds as though Portland and Oregon have been doing better than some other areas, to keep this vicious virus from spreading more. I applaud Gov. Brown for the “Shelter in Place” order, and everyone who has been taking this seriously and following safety suggestions.

I know this is a tricky and delicate talk to have, between ATU 757 and TriMet, as we are also in the middle of contract negotiations, but this is an opportunity for the two entities to work together. This is the way the TriMet was intended to operate, and as a result, ran as a cohesive and unified unit. We were loved by the community and voted a top agency on a national level. Why does the upper management continue to subvert that environment? Frontline workers, support staff, and middle management, would all generally prefer to work together for the common good, rather than have to haggle over every little thing. Upper management does make so much extra work for everybody else, which causes stress, conflict, and apathy. Maybe that’s the intent. All told, we will continue to the professionals that we are, regardless of the level of acknowledgement or resources we receive.

One last thing. Many of the runs are ahead of schedule right now. Please find places to kill time that are not going to impede your fellow family, and friends.

To all our Brothers and Sisters in transportation, as well as all the other trades and public services and essential frontline workers...

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Happy rails friends!

I hope this note finds you well during these uncertain times. There are a few things on my mind this month. First, when you have a meeting scheduled that is outside of your work times, let me know. We can get it rescheduled so it will be closer to your work time. With some of you being on the Extra Board, you won’t know this until the day before. If you don’t let me know, often it can get overlooked.

Unfortunately, TriMet is still behind almost every other agency in the area in making sure operators are protected. Our Union is working hard to make sure we are keeping the ball rolling on this critical matter.

I am writing this to you on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, 4/22/2020. With the climate more and more out of whack, it seems as though we need a constant reminder that this is the only Earth we have, not just once a year. The importance of efficient mass transit has always been a key part of keeping our Earth livable and our community clean. By moving millions of people, we make a huge impact on all those around us. Thanks for making a difference!

If you have any questions about anything that is going on, please reach out to me or one of the property officers. Thanks for all you do and all your support. In solidarity.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Kevin Raymond; Robert Schance; Jackie White; Daniel Wilson

Retired Members’ Chapter Meetings are canceled until further notice.

THE FOLLOWING RETIREES ARE CELEBRATING MAY BIRTHDAYS:


IN MEMORIAM:

Andrew Amado; Jo-Ann Sweeney

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MEETING NOTICES

Depending on Gov. Kate Brown’s "Stay At Home" order, your Executive Board will make a determination on holding May meetings as soon as possible.