WHO IS GOING TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS?

☑ A JUDGE
☑ A LAWYER
☑ A POLITICIAN
☑ NONE OF THE ABOVE

See page 9
ATU NJ Council, NJ Transit, NJ Transit Police team up for safety, security

The ATU New Jersey State Council has teamed with NJ Transit executive management and the New Jersey Transit Police to form a security and safety committee to improve the protection provided drivers and riders. The committee has also agreed to look at ways to improve communication with the public and the media to enhance public perception of bus operators and mass transit workers in general.

Atlanta members begin contract campaign

Local 732-Atlanta, GA, members are gearing up for a contract campaign to fight for improved pay and against possible cuts to their health care coverage. In addition, they plan to fight MARTA’s proposal to outsource their paratransit jobs. The local has held rallies and launched a radio ad campaign that features a female Iraq war veteran whose job as a paratransit driver could be cut if MARTA privatizes this critical service.

Saskatoon transit workers locked out

Saskatoon, SK, transit workers, members of Local 615, have stood strong despite being locked out by the city. At the crux of the dispute is retirement security and wages. The current pay scale is so low that many transit workers qualify for affordable housing public assistance, and the city’s latest offer would have left workers at the bottom of the pay scale in the province. At the same time Saskatoon city managers and the transit director recently received salary increases. As of press time, both sides were set to begin talks again.

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After six years without a wage increase, three-and-a-half years without a contract, and attempts to drive a wedge between African-American and white workers, the members of Local 788 - St. Louis, MO, ratified a collective bargaining agreement with their employer, the Bi-State Development Agency, also known as Metro.

“This is a historic day for all working people in St. Louis,” said Local President Mike Breihan (left). “By coming together, we stopped yet another attempt to strip workers in this city of the wages and secure retirement that they have earned day in and day out.”

The contract negotiations that began over three years ago foundered upon a management demand to replace the agency’s traditional pension plan (for new hires) with a 401(k). Local 788 refused to give up the pension, and Metro remained adamant – even rejecting a neutral mediator’s recommendation that Metro raise workers’ wages and keep their pension, with some revisions.

To jumpstart their fight for a fair contract and economic justice for all, Local 788 with the assistance of the International launched a comprehensive campaign to highlight Metro CEO John Nations’ efforts to silence workers and mislead the public while enriching himself.

Workers held demonstrations outside of Metro headquarters, near Nations’ home and at transit stops across St. Louis to engage riders and the public. The ATU 15-foot inflatable camel even made an appearance with workers chanting, “John Nations is a hump, we need to dump the hump.”

They teamed with community and labor allies and reached out to elected officials to ask for support. The St. Louis County Council passed a resolution demanding Metro reach an agreement with its workers that “preserves and protects the retirement benefits of Metro’s employees” while other elected officials wrote letters of support or joined transit workers to leaflet riders.

And then details of an incident surfaced about Metro negotiators’ attempts to divide the local in a way they would soon regret.
“Oreo cookie” union?
The transit agency’s mechanics are mostly White, and its operators are mostly African-American.

The agency had been attempting to exploit that racial difference by telling the white mechanics that they’d receive a better deal and better treatment if they abandoned their fellow union members. But the agency negotiators’ “divide and conquer” ploy wasn’t working. So, they apparently decided to do something they hoped would ignite tension among their own employees.

The agency returned to the bargaining table in July, saying they had a “gift” for each member of the local’s negotiating team — a recipe for Oreo cookies.

Race-baiting backfires
The race-baiting tactic backfired, helping to unite the entire Local together in its goal of getting a fair contract.

The incident moved International President Hanley to call on the governors of Missouri and Illinois (the states in which Bi-State operates) to remove Metro CEO John Nations.

“We thank all the riders, other unions, community partners and allies for their support in our fight. This is a victory for a better St. Louis and we could not have achieved it without them,” he said.

Damage done
Unfortunately, Metro’s belligerent approach did a lot of damage to the relationship between transit labor and management in St. Louis.

“Securing the agreement is a victory, but it doesn’t resolve the pain and outrage that the Oreo incident caused. This issue must be addressed,” says Breihan.

Settlement reached
Metro workers intensified their campaign with newspaper and radio advertisements.

Seeing members and their allies grow stronger and bolder, the Metro Board overruled Nations and came to an agreement with Local 788 that preserved Metro workers’ defined benefit pension plan, increased wages, and reduced healthcare costs for most employees.

Local President Breihan praised the support of labor and community activists who rallied to their cause.

Rally for Respect
The day after ratifying the contract, transit workers and their community and labor allies, including clergy and fast food workers, held a “Rally for Respect” at Metro headquarters.

“This is a great victory for Metro workers and working families across St. Louis,” says International President Hanley. “However, we will not stand silent and let Metro continue to get away with treating its workers with such disrespect and utter disdain.”
Winning a victory like Local 788 members did in St. Louis, does not happen accidentally. It required leadership, grit, and countless volunteer hours from members who understood that to win as individuals we need to work as a union. Transit workers in St. Louis realized their real power because they did the hard work required to unite, organize, and take action.

After six years without a pay raise and three-and-a-half without a contract, ATU Local 788 members had grown used to fighting in fits and starts. A tough bargaining session here. A bit of leafleting there. When August 2014, arrived, there was little faith that anything could roll back the years of abuse heaped on them by Metro CEO John Nations and his team.

But then they tried something new: a strategic campaign that united the membership and put increasing pressure on Nations with each passing day.

**Step 1: Start Organizing**

On August 18, with assistance from the International, they did a “property blitz,” visiting *every garage, shop, and unit* in the Metro Transit system to invite members to their first-ever *Unity Night*. For five days, 788 executive board members, volunteers, and ATU international vice presidents talked face-to-face with members *on every shift*, hearing their concerns and gathering their contact information. They also organized off-site meetings for retirees and members who had particular questions or concerns.

By the time Unity Night arrived on August 23, they had collected cards from more than 800 Metro employees, more than 50% of the affected membership! Using that information, they texted, robo-called, emailed, and spread the word on Facebook. A standing-room-only crowd of 350 members packed the hall that night to hear from a panel of community allies who stood ready to embrace 788’s fight as their own.

**Step 2: Take Action**

Next, they began phoning potential volunteers. During that Monday morning’s commute, Metro riders were greeted at four major transit centers by members armed with leaflets that highlighted Nations’ attacks on working people – both members and riders alike – and asked riders to call Metro.

That day, Nations issued a gag order telling members they weren’t allowed to leaflet on publicly-funded Metro property. Members returned the next day, chanting, “We Cannot Be Silenced.” Every time Metro tried to communicate with members after that, union leadership responded with bulletins, texts, emails, and more, letting people know what was *really* happening.

The cycle continued. With each passing day, more members stepped up to act, and leadership planned bolder and more creative actions. They inflated the 15-foot camel near Nations’ house at 6:00 a.m., surprising him as he drove to work. They picketed at Metro headquarters once per week with chants like, “Lies and tricks will not divide. Workers, riders side by side!” During rush hour, they held signs on an overpass over Interstate 64 that read, “RESPECT STL WORKERS.”

Combined with visits to elected officials to tell them about the infamous “Oreo” incident, the pressure from Local 788 and a growing chorus of riders and allies proved too much for Nations and the Metro Board.

**Step 3: Never Stop Organizing, Never Stop Taking Action**

While 788’s campaign earned them a contract, Metro has yet to discipline or terminate the senior managers responsible for attempting to racially divide their employees.

Just 12 hours after the ratification was announced, they mobilized 150 demonstrators for a *RALLY FOR RESPECT* outside of Metro headquarters.

In the weeks and months ahead, they plan to unite with their newfound allies to improve transit service and to join the broader fight for economic justice in St. Louis.
A first-of-its-kind study about attitudes toward transit use in the U.S. was released in September by TransitCenter, a philanthropy committed to improving transit through innovation. The study – *Who's on Board: The 2014 Mobility Attitudes Survey* – reveals that Americans from regions coast to coast think about and use public transit in remarkably similar ways. The report is the first to compare rider and non-rider attitudes by age, income, education, family status and ethnicity, and to examine both cities and suburban areas across various regions of the U.S.

**Surprising trends**

The survey, the largest of its kind, sampled nearly 12,000 people from a selection of 46 metro areas across the country, including a mix of “transit progressive” cities (such as Miami, Denver, Seattle, and Minneapolis) and “transit deficient” cities (such as Tampa, Dallas, Fresno, and Detroit) revealing several surprising trends about today’s public transit commuters:

- Riders of all ages and in all regions place the greatest value on factors like travel time, proximity, cost, and reliability above safety, frequency, and perks like Wi-Fi when choosing whether or not to take public transportation.
- There is a high demand for quality public transportation nationwide, but such infrastructure is often missing in the places where people currently live. There is also a high, unmet demand for neighborhoods with a mix of housing, retail, and commercial space.
- People with children are just as likely to use transit as people without children, when factors like place of residence and age are accounted for.
- Wealthy Americans want to ride public transportation too: In transit-rich “traditional cities” like New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, DC and Chicago, people with a $150,000 or greater salary are just as likely to ride public transportation as people with a $30,000 salary.
- Even though they grew up using public transit more than today’s youth, America’s Baby Boomers are mostly reluctant to use public transit now. Americans under 30 are 2.3 times more likely to ride public transit than Americans age 30-60, and 7.2 times more likely than Americans over 60.
- “Traditional cities” have the greatest share of transit users and commuters, followed by West Coast cities.

**Desire unmet**

“These findings provide concrete evidence of what many of us in the transit field have long suspected: there is a desire for reliable, quality transportation in communities across all regions of the U.S., and among riders of all ages, backgrounds and financial status,” said David Bragdon, executive director of TransitCenter. “Unfortunately, this desire is largely going unmet, to the detriment of many local economies. To serve – and attract – residents and workforces today and in the future, cities need to unite land use and transit planning to form comprehensive, innovative infrastructures that can support this demand.”

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**WHO’S ON BOARD 2014**

*Mobility Attitudes Survey*
Your choice: scary, or terrifying?

There was an era in our history when having a “(D)” listed after your name at the ballot box meant that you supported working families, and an “(R)” indicated there was a good chance you stood with big business. But the days of FDR have come and gone, and the lines have definitely blurred.

Now, there are Democrats who have been elected at all levels of government that are indistinguishable from their Republican opponents on issues that are near and dear to us, including privatization, collective bargaining, and funding for basic public services, including transit. We are battling some of them in the streets as we speak.

We must be proactive

By now, transit and school bus workers who are members of organized labor know that we must be proactive. Without question, our ability to win on key issues will depend on how well we can build broad coalitions with people and organizations that care about the same things that we do: providing safe, reliable and affordable transit and school bus transportation through sustainable wages and benefits for current and future workers.

By growing our tent, elected officials, regardless of party affiliation, will be held accountable for the votes they cast and the positions they take. We cannot rely solely on elected officials – regardless of party – to help us survive in these rocky times. However, politics is still incredibly important, and the people we elect this fall will be taking office at a critical time.

Trouble

Regular readers of this column know that the multi-year federal surface transportation bill – which will determine funding levels as well as other policy matters affecting transit, including safety – is on the Congressional agenda in early 2015.

If Republicans take control of the U.S. Senate (a real possibility), there is a good chance that transit funding will be cut and privatization will be highly encouraged, if not mandated. This spells trouble for ATU members and all working families.

There are also key governors’ races all over the nation in which wealthy right wing candidates are threatening to strip workers of every last drop of their labor rights. If you live in Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Florida, and other places, you know exactly what we mean.

Know where candidates stand

Therefore, while we would never tell you how to vote, it is important that you know where the candidates stand so that you can make informed decisions in the best interest of you and your family.

And while there’s certainly a time and place to debate some of the most important social matters of our time, we would encourage you to cast your ballot this November on issues that will have a direct impact on your ability to put food on the table, meet the monthly mortgage payment, and send your kids to school.

Are there Democrats who have let us down in the past? Without question. But all things considered this year, the alternative – during this Halloween season – is much too frightening.
The solution to your problem is in the power of your membership

The power of volunteers and members in general was on full display in St. Louis, MO, in September. With the assistance of International Union staff and officers, thousands of members of Local 788 “manned the barricades” in the fight for justice.

In mid-August, half the available staff of the International flew to St. Louis and helped organize a series of protests to call the question on a nasty boss. His pledge to ATU was that our members would not get out of negotiations without giving up their pensions. Six years of meetings – no contract. A year of “fact finding” – no contract. A strike threat – still no contract.

The Local was full of internal dissent and second-guessing, but no contract. But when the workers set aside their differences (many of which were created by the boss); when the members volunteered a few hours each reaching the public and picketing, after four weeks of protests and pressure, the Board of METRO reached an agreement with Local 788.

The Board then forced the agreement on an angry CEO. While the deal was not everything we wanted, it stopped the attack on our pension – DEAD. It provided wage increases where there had been none for six years. While some would argue it isn’t enough – it’s far better than what it was.

Behind this is a muddled story that includes, quite ironically, a long effort by the CEO to inject himself in union business. In other states, his actions would be illegal, but not in Missouri.

He personally tried to get our mechanics to leave ATU and had some members in maintenance confused enough to believe that they would be better off without the Union.

Oreo insult

Yes, this is also the place where the same management team called our union leaders “Oreo’s”. These are managerial perverts. Today they are defeated perverts.

I want all ATU members to know, if you are struggling with a vile management or some less than decent politicians, the solution to your problem is in the power of the membership – not a lawyer or a judge.

The real power is in mobilization of the rank and file and in reaching out to the riders of our systems. That has been the course we have been leading with, and we urge you to have this discussion at your union halls everywhere. I can tell you that it’s the only thing that will make the Union strong.

Saskatoon

We now turn our attention to Saskatoon, SK, where our members are locked out by the city. Again, this is an effort to eliminate retirement security also known as a pension. The ATU should be fighting to get pensions where we have none, but first we will have to defend them where they exist.

Thanks to the actions taken at ATU’s 2013 Convention, you will see much more action being taken by ATU International in these fights. We have resources to help you, but we need you to become more than members and be activists. Just come to a union meeting and tell your officers you want to volunteer.

Call your officers and offer to help. Send an email to them and let them know you are available. Join the ATU activists network by going to www.atu.org. You can sign up for electronic news that we send out every week! Now is our moment to come together as we did in St. Louis. Coming together equals victory. ✤
This is an interesting story about the building of the suspension bridge across the Niagara River right next to Niagara Falls in 1848. It was the first bridge to link Canada and the U.S. over the falls.

The engineers knew that for them to build the suspension bridge, they had to find a way to string a huge steel cable across the chasm. But the water was treacherous. They could not do it by boat. This was 1848, so they couldn’t do it by airplane either. How could they get this huge cable across?

As the story goes, a 10-year-old boy solved their problem. The engineers heard that the little local boy was an excellent kite flier, and they had him fly a kite with a strong thin filament, actually a thread.

The boy was such a good a kite flier that he was able to stand on one side, fly the kite really high, and then direct the kite so it landed on the other side where other engineers were waiting.

Once they had the kite, they had the thread going across the water. They then tied a stronger string to the thread and pulled that across.

Stronger and stronger

Then the ropes came, stronger and stronger. They sent across the first steel cable, a thin one – then a stronger one, and a stronger one – until they were able to string the support cable across the water. Once that cable was across, they could begin building the bridge.

Now, which was more important: the strong steel cable, or the thin string?

Maybe the strong one did the heavy lifting, but that thin string was as important as every other string, rope or cable.

All too often, especially during difficult contract negotiations, we find that there is a lot of internal bickering and fighting and factions among officers and factions of members, rather than a focus on protecting all our wages and benefits.

**Dialogue**

Within our locals we can have constructive debate about our differences. However, we need to put all internal bickering that is not constructive and differences aside. We are only as strong as our weakest links.

Local leaders also need to listen to all members. In part it is the dialogue of different ideas and the respect shown one another that makes us one in purpose. Our predecessors were able to do so.

Together, similar to a boy, his kite and engineers, they wove their ideas together and created the ATU and paved a path to the benefits we all enjoy today.

Please visit [www.atu.org](http://www.atu.org) for more information and the latest ATU news.
Every two years we say that the coming election is the most important one we’ve ever seen. And that’s really true! The next election is always much more important than the ones that are over and done with.

My point is: all elections are important. And this fall we have important elections taking place in both Canada and the United States.

Canadian Labour under assault

By now you are aware that the decades-long assault against unions in the United States has begun in Canada. The good news, however, is that many Canadian brothers and sisters are really having an impact by engaging in good old-fashioned retail politics on behalf of candidates that support Labour and transit.

The situation is the same in the United States. With the onslaught of conservative groups like ALEC working overtime to destroy unions and defund transit at the state, county and municipal levels, our local coalition building and political activism have become more important than ever.

With our natural allies we are fighting the lies and distortions pedaled by the enemies of working families and supporting candidates who will fight for us locally and nationally in both countries.

Control of US Senate at stake

Democratic party control of the U.S. Senate is at stake in this election. One has only to look at the record of the TEA Party partisans over the last several years to know what kind of nation we’d have if the GOP controlled both houses of Congress.

And, I don’t have to tell you how many times a handful of ballots have made the difference between the election of a local official who supports public transit and union rights, and one who doesn’t. And sometimes that is the difference between having a union job with good benefits and wage slavery.

So every member of this union – Canadian and American – has ample reason to get involved in these elections, and most important of all – vote.

Vote!

What I find incredible is the number of people who don’t vote and, in effect, hand the election over to a politician who will work against their interests.

If all union members joined in voting with all those who stand to lose by the election of anti-worker candidates it would be no contest – we’d win every time!

It’s particularly important for U.S. members to vote this year as regressive forces in state legislatures are currently doing everything they can to make it difficult if not impossible for minorities and the most vulnerable members of society to cast their ballots. We have to show that these new “Jim Crow” laws won’t work.

So, it’s up to you. Don’t sit on the sidelines and watch as your union rights and possibly your job is taken away from you.

Get involved! Fight back! I guarantee it will be one of the most worthwhile activities you’ve ever participated in.

P.S. Many thanks to all the locals and participants who made the ATU 2014 MS Golf Tournament a great success.

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.
ATU banners, flags, signs and leaflets had a high profile during the Peoples’ Climate March in New York City, as members were out in full force among the more than 300,000 marchers.

They were there to spread the word that riding public transit is one of the best and easiest ways to combat climate change. The march was held as world leaders were meeting in New York for a UN summit on the climate crisis. Organizers want governments to agree to an ambitious global plan to dramatically reduce global warming pollution.
In what some call a “bombshell” – an independent analysis commissioned by BART cites a “nearly universal lack of trust” as the main problem leading up to last year’s strike against the San Francisco area transit agency. Bay Area Collective Bargaining Report and Recommendations by Agreement Dynamics, Inc., does not solely blame either side for the strike, but maps out a course for the board to improve labor relations.

“At BART,” the report says, “a multitude of minor and significant mistakes, miscommunications, inaccurate assumptions, pervasive sense of mistrust, combative history, antagonistic tactics and feelings of victimization and futility all converged to poison the 2013 bargaining process.”

Lead negotiator choice a ‘mistake’

The report reveals that most board members believe hiring union-busting negotiator Tom Hock was a mistake:

“In retrospect, hiring Tom Hock as lead negotiator for BART was not in the best interests of the agency… little perspective was given to the board on how ATU or other unions would perceive his involvement. His style was rigid and disrespectful.”

But at least one board member said BART’s Grace Crunican and other management were to blame, thinking they could win the PR battle and the unions would cave. However that strategy backfired.

BART finally agreed to a settlement in the wake of a terrible accident in which two replacement track workers were killed by an oncoming train operated by another replacement worker with inadequate supervision.

Backing out of the deal

Local 1555 thought they had a deal. But, BART’s board refused to sign the contract because it included a family leave provision they said they hadn’t agreed to.

Hock claimed that he had signed the tentative agreement without reading it, setting up yet another confrontation between the parties. The report concluded:

“…while it is true that there were multiple opportunities for management to discover this mistake before the unions ratified [the contract], the responsibility lies with those who signed it without first reading it. The chief negotiator is, in our opinion, where the buck stops. Therefore, the person in that role is accountable.”

The local and BART eventually compromised on the issue, but the incident further alienated the agency and its workers.

Anatomy of a Strike?

The report, which might well be titled Anatomy of a Strike, is worthwhile reading for any ATU officer, as it provides a rare window into the internal thinking of management during a strike, as well as the misimpressions, and missteps that made a bad situation worse.

The full report can be found at: http://bit.ly/1nG4QSp
DC members pound the pavement against privatization

Local 689-Washington, DC, did something rather unique in their continuing campaign to put a halt to the creeping privatization that is growing like a vine throughout the nation’s capital. Instead of trying to get people to come to a rally – Local 689 members went to them, door-to-door, throughout Southeast Washington, DC.

The members warned residents about the growing problem of contracting out new lines to private companies, and proposals for new streetcar service that will lead to higher fares and service cuts for local commuters.

“We’re out here making the public aware that their tax dollars are being used to privatize the system and also to bring in a streetcar system that does nothing to enhance public transportation in the city of the District of Columbia,” said Local President Jackie Jeter.

ATU camel helps Grand Rapids members register voters

In Grand Rapids, MI, the ATU’s 15-foot inflatable camel attracted many to Local 836’s recent drive to register voters and encourage them to vote for candidates who support public transit.

“Transportation is vital to any and every community,” says Local President Richard Jackson. “It gets people to work, connects people with opportunity and provides upward mobility for people with no other options.”

The local commended the city on its recent launch of Michigan’s first rapid transit system – the Silver Line.

“We’re here to invoke positive change,” says Jackson.

Toledo members protest service cuts

The ATU camel also made an appearance in Toledo, OH. Hundreds of transit workers, riders and advocates attended a “Fix It, Fund It, Make It Fair” rally in downtown Toledo calling for fully funded public transit for the Toledo Metro area. ATU members from across Ohio as well as Detroit and Washington DC attended the rally.

Protesting the slashing of more than 400 hours of bus service to communities that have pulled out of TARTA, attendees called for a sales tax to fund public transit rather than the current property tax. Making matters worse, most of the available employment in the Toledo area is located in areas with no TARTA service, leaving those who can’t afford a car no access to these jobs.

“This is a critical community issue to keep growing our region,” said Carly Allen, Local 697-Toledo, OH. “The current form of transit funding is standing in the way of improving Toledo public transit, it’s making it worse. It’s time to ‘Dump the Hump’,” she said, referring to the inflatable camel at the rally.
Seattle drivers have little or no time for bathroom breaks

After the April defeat of a King County sales tax ballot initiative to help pay for bus service, riders can expect to see more crowded buses and tighter schedules with the pending service cuts to help meet the reduced budget.

It’ll also leave Seattle bus drivers with shorter rest times, leaving many to cross their legs to refrain from using the bathroom. Some drivers will have less than five minutes for a break and at many stations there is only one bathroom.

Safety

One retired member from Local 587-Seattle, WA, summed up the dilemma drivers face. “If the bus is running even slightly behind schedule, you can either go to the bathroom and be late for your next trip — with the possibility of customers complaining or supervisors saying, ‘How come you left late for your last trip?’” he said. “It’s a safety thing. Do you want people driving a thousand pound vehicle through traffic and be constantly worried about emptying their bladders?”

This is a matter of human dignity that many transit workers face across North America and ATU is working to come up with solutions to deal with it.

Seattle voters in November will consider another ballot measure imposing an annual $60 vehicle fee and a 0.1 percent sales tax increase to help fund transit. Hopefully it’ll pass giving everyone some relief.

Photo correction

In Transit incorrectly identified Local 1591-Broward County, FL President April Williams in a picture published in the July-August 2014 issue in the article “ATU more than transit.” The correct picture is at left. We regret the error.

The article featured how Local 1591-Tampa, FL, and Local 1464-Tampa, FL, have successfully represented municipal employees in their cities for decades. Despite their members’ different occupations, the issues they face are essentially the same as those all ATU transit workers and members deal with — wages, benefits, retirement security, fair treatment — the concerns of most workers across the U.S. and Canada.

There’s a big wide world out there, and it’s tough to keep up with all the events which can affect your profession and your livelihood. One of the easiest ways to stay informed is by visiting: www.atu.org.

Austin, TX

A referendum will be held in Austin, TX, on Election Day, on whether voters wish to spend $600 million on a light rail transit (LRT) line, and $400 million on roads. “Proposition 1” deliberately bundles the two measures in order to entice residents who could care less about LRT to vote to reduce their traffic congestion.

Three mayoral candidates – Mike Martinez, Sheryl Cole and Steve Adler – favor the measure, while opponents Randall Stevens and Todd Phelps do not.

The anti-LRT candidates argue that the higher taxes will push residents out of the city, while proponents say that strong public transportation will actually make the city more affordable and do more to reduce congestion.

San Jose, CA

With massive population growth predicted over the next few decades, San Jose desperately needs to come up with a new transit plan that will integrate all the city’s transportation, reduce congestion, and improve air quality.
Two mayoral candidates – Councilmember Sam Liccardo and Supervisor Dave Cortese – support improving transportation and infrastructure, but there are differences between them. Liccardo strongly supports bringing the BART system south, while Cortese is more cautious.

Washington, DC

Streetcars are the issue in Washington, DC, and Local 689 has taken to the streets to fight them. At the crux of the dispute is the D.C. government’s plans to outsource bus service and force riders along the H Street corridor to take streetcars. They want the ability to use funds from Metro buses and trains to fund the streetcar.

The Democratic candidate for mayor, Muriel Bowser, voted against funding the entire 37-mile line proposed by the current Mayor Vincent Grey. Bowser has been vague on whether she wants to continue building the line beyond H Street after she takes office. In any event, it doesn’t seem like it will be one of her priorities.

Alameda County, CA

Alameda County is set to vote on a proposal to double the existing transportation sales tax and approve a $7.8 billion plan for the next 30 years. The plan reserves 30% of the increase for city and county streets, 20% for roads, and eight percent for bike and pedestrian projects.

Seattle, WA

Seattle voters will decide whether to approve a $60 car tab fee and .1% sales tax increase to prevent bus cuts. Local 587 has been engaged in a campaign to get this bill passed to prevent the service cutbacks.

Clayton County, GA

Clayton County will vote on a one-cent sales tax to raise about $46 million a year to pay for a mix of “local bus routes, paratransit, and either bus rapid transit or commuter rail” to connect with Atlanta’s MARTA system. ATU local 732 has been waging a campaign with community allies to get this passed.

Pinellas County, FL

A big fight is underway over the November referendum asking voters to pass a proposal to increase their sales tax by one-cent to fund the proposed Greenlight Pinellas project that will replace the Pinellas Suncoast Transit property tax.

Among other things, if passed, Greenlight would increase overall bus service by 65% throughout the county, create bus rapid transit lines on most major corridors, double the bus service in North County, and provide longer service hours to accommodate second shift workers and evening commuters.

Bus passengers ‘packing heat’ in Savannah

Bus drivers and commuters on Chatham Area Transit (CAT) in Savannah, GA, now have something more to worry about than getting to the bus on time. Officials recently announced that licensed gun owners will now be able to bring guns on CAT buses.

That’s because Georgia legislators passed legislation this year that expands gun owners’ rights to churches, schools, and government buildings.

Because CAT is run by the county, gun owners can bring their weapons on board. Not all riders are pleased.

CAT board members say that by following the law allowing passengers to carry guns their insurance might go up.
The heroic actions of Metro bus operator Clay Chinn, 627-Cincinnati, OH, may well have saved the lives of residents of an apartment building in East Price Hill that recently caught fire.

Chinn was driving his route when he saw smoke coming from an apartment building. He stopped his bus and, with the help of another Good Samaritan on the scene, went door to door in the building to see if anyone needed help to escape the fire.

He was able to help a woman on the second floor of the building evacuate as her apartment was filling with smoke. He continued to look for and alert residents until the police and fire department arrived.

‘We have this ability’

A Metro operator since 2004, Chinn modestly described his actions that day, saying, “We have this ability – we see someone in danger and we act. I didn’t think. I just did it. I can’t usually move that fast, but I didn’t feel a thing.” He was later treated for smoke inhalation.

This wasn’t the first time he has helped others while driving the bus. Several years ago, he helped get a woman and her children out of a burning car.

Mayor John Cranley presented Chinn with a mayoral letter of appreciation for his actions at a subsequent Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) Board meeting. SORTA also presented the driver with Metro’s STAR award, which stands for “Service That Attracts Recognition” given to employees who demonstrate exemplary service to Metro and the community.

Driver recognized for 32 years of accident-free driving

Veteran Cincinnati Metro bus driver Ronald Combs, 627-Cincinnati, OH, is having quite the year and to top it all off he is the recipient of the Safe Driver Award of Honor from the National Safety Council. After 32 years as a Metro employee he will soon be retiring while holding its highest internal safety record – safely driving millions of miles throughout his career.

Those eligible to receive the Award of Honor must have met the criteria of not having a preventable incident within the past 15 years or the last 250,000 miles of driving. In 2012, Combs was inducted into the National Safety Council’s “Two Million Mile Club” for driving two million miles without having an accident.

A 22-year-old is lucky to be alive after jumping onto DC Metro tracks, thanks to the quick thinking of a Metro train operator and transit police. The dramatic rescue was caught on video.

Transit police were called to the platform after receiving a report of a disorderly man who was harassing other riders. When approached, the man suddenly jumped off the platform onto the track while saying he wanted to die.

The transit police officers radioed for train traffic to be stopped, and along with others on the platform, they attempted to signal the train to stop by waving their arms. The train operator saw the activity and immediately activated the emergency braking system.

As the approaching train slowed down the distraught man made the last-second attempt to jump from the platform and was pulled out of the train’s path with no time to spare.

The ATU applauds the heroic action of the train operator and the transit police.
Utah Transit Authority dispenses millions in ‘sweetheart’ deals

Here we go again. A state audit of the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) has blasted the agency, alleging that the Salt Lake City system has spent millions in sweetheart deals, paid extravagant salaries and bonuses, and failed to plan well for $2.9 billion in maintenance costs from new rail projects. The audit also scores UTA for having a fare structure that may force the poor to subsidize the rich, and massive debt that might prevent restoring bus service that was cut to fund new train lines.

One incident that the audit reveals concerns $10 million the agency “prepaid” to a developer who was supposed to construct a parking garage. The contract was awarded just after the developer made a multimillion-dollar deal benefiting a UTA board member.

Parking garage never built

The parking garage was never built and UTA hasn’t gotten all of its money back.

UTA management has countered the audit with a report of its own, claiming that the questionable deals actually saved taxpayer money, that UTA executives are paid less than similar agencies, and that it has recently received an award as America’s best transit agency.

Transit workers and advocates are worried that the negative news about UTA may make voters less likely to support increasing taxes for new transit planned in the city.

New law creates transparency in Illinois transit agencies

A new law passed in Illinois will help prevent corruption in transit agencies by requiring them to post online information about public transit salaries as well as safety and budget information.

State Senator Daniel Biss, D, the primary senate sponsor of the bill, believes the law will help cut down on agency corrupt practices including patronage and fraudulent money handling.

“Mass transit in the Chicago area has struggled with governance, regional planning and transparency for many decades,” Biss says. “This world-class region deserves a world-class transportation network, not a scandal-plagued patchwork of agencies, and we can only get there by breaking down barriers that hamper coordination and allow unethical behavior to continue.”

“This is the first bill of many which will transform the way mass transit is managed in Northern Illinois,” says State Rep. Al Riley, D, the primary sponsor in the Illinois house. “It is critical that the public can trust the day-to-day operations of our publicly funded transit agencies and know they are ethical and transparent.”

The law passed nearly unanimously in both the Illinois house and senate.
GOP filibuster kills Paycheck Fairness Act – again

For the second time this year, a Senate Republican filibuster defeated the Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA). The legislation was designed to help women get equal pay for equal work by strengthening protections for workers who discuss their paychecks with each other and by requiring employers to prove their pay discrimination is based on a factor other than gender.

The AFL-CIO says the PFA would, “let wronged workers file class action suits,” and “strengthen the government’s ability to identify and remedy systematic wage discrimination.” Women’s groups calculate the median female worker loses $11,600 yearly to the discriminatory wage gap.

Fifty-one Senate Democrats and one Vermont Independent, Bernie Sanders, voted to halt the Republican talkathon, but failed to get the 60 votes needed to succeed.

The GOP Senators killed the bill two days before the Labor Department officially released proposed regulations to order federal contractors to provide pay data breakdowns by gender and race, among other factors. The proposals opened for public comment on September 17.

Income inequality costing middle-class workers $18,000 per year

American workers have seen little to no real wage growth in the past three-and-a-half decades, and 2014 is no different, according to a new study from the Economic Policy Institute’s Raising America’s Pay initiative. In “Why America’s Workers Need Faster Wage Growth—And What We Can Do About It,” economist Elise Gould finds that real (inflation adjusted) hourly wages fell for most Americans in the first half of 2014, compared with the same period in 2013.

Of course, this is nothing new. The poor performance of American workers’ wages in recent decades — particularly their failure to grow at anywhere near the pace of overall productivity — is the country’s central economic challenge.

The paper examines the policy changes that have helped spur these wage trends by shifting bargaining power from the vast majority of workers to corporations and CEOs.

Key findings include:

• The vast majority of Americans have experienced disappointing living standards growth in the last generation — largely due to rising inequality.

• Between 1979 and 2007, more than 90 percent of American households saw their incomes grow more slowly than average income growth (which was pulled up by extraordinarily fast growth at the top).

• By 2007, the growing wedge between economy-wide average income growth and income growth of the broad middle class (households between the 20th and 80th percentiles) reduced middle-class incomes by nearly $18,000 annually.

• The large increase in income inequality that has blocked living standards growth for the vast majority has been driven by the failure of hourly wages for the vast majority to rise in line with overall productivity after 1979.

“Despite a recovering economy and growing productivity, employers are not putting anything more in their employees’ paychecks. Over the past 40 years, corporations, and their CEOs and lobbyists, have used public policy to stack the deck in their favor,” says Gould. “The only way to strengthen the middle class is to grow wages, and for that we need policies that deal workers a stronger hand.”

Read more: http://bit.ly/1oriMcc
Mississauga members walk to raise money for women’s cancer research

Ten women – members of Local 1572-Mississauga, ON – recently participated in “A Weekend to End Women’s Cancer.” They pledged to walk 36 km as part of the event held annually in Toronto and Montreal.

Minister of Heritage Shelley Glover said, “I…commend your union for its patriotism and support of this worthy cause.” In the end, they raised in excess of $13,000. ATU salutes these members and their local for their commitment to this great cause.

New health study: transit workers hurting

How have you been feeling lately? If you’re a transit worker you may have a negative answer to that question more often than your friends in other occupations.

That’s because according to a recent report from the Transportation Research Board, transit sector employees, and bus operators in particular, are more likely to have certain serious and chronic health problems, compared to other workers. The research suggests that there is a connection between working in transit and many health issues such as diabetes, stroke, musculoskeletal disorders, digestive problems, fatigue, and sleep disorders.

“How most of the health problems identified in bus operators,” the report found, “are affected by a combination of factors: lifestyle choices, genetics, and workplace and environmental conditions all contribute. Possible work factors include air pollution, sedentary work, schedule stress, and unhygienic and unsafe eating and restroom facilities. In addition, transit workers are often older and from groups that are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other health problems.”

The study evaluated substantive health and wellness programs throughout the transit industry and found that the majority of transit agencies’ health promotion programs consisted of a few isolated activities.

To be effective, the report says, “programs will address both health promotion and workplace health and safety concerns.” The report recommended many ways that transit agencies and unions can integrate health protection and promotion into their workplace.

How to fight exhaust fumes in bus depots

Diesel exhaust is a problem for thousands of transit workers who have worked in poorly ventilated garages throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Everyone can fight exhaust fumes

Two retired Staten Island ATU members found a way to fight back. They have sued Queens Structure Corp., who built the Yukon Avenue bus depot for unspecified monetary damages, alleging that inadequate ventilation in the structure caused them to get cancer. The civil complaint contends that their cancer was caused by exposure to diesel exhaust particles and fumes spewed by buses idling inside the massive depot.

The complaint says that the diesel buses were hard to start in cold weather, and that it was common practice to keep them idling for hours.

The retirees say that the company failed to install an adequate ventilation system.
The Amalgamated Transit Union 2014-2015 Scholarship Competition
In Memory of Joe Welch

The 2014 - 2015 scholarships are in remembrance of retired International Vice President Joseph Welch, who passed away on February 13, 2014.

After serving in the state National Guard and Marine Corps, Joe secured a job as a bus driver for the Syracuse Transit Corp., now known as CENTRO. Joe drove the bus until he was elected business agent for the union. In 1973, he was elected president of Local 580, and then in 1974, was elected business agent of that same Local.

In 1986, Joe reached the pinnacle of his career, where he stayed and flourished for 24 years, when he was elected as an international vice president for the ATU. He proudly served in this position, subsequently re-elected every three years, until he decided to finally retire in 2010, at the young age of 80.

Joe will be remembered for a profoundly generous and innately kind, smiling soul, always willing to give and to love, no matter what.

To download the scholarship rules and application, please visit: www.atu.org
Ray Wallace Scholarship awardees laud labor movement

The following received a 2014 ATU Ray Wallace Scholarship named in honor of the international secretary-treasurer who served the Union in that office from 1976 – 1989. Before becoming IST, Ray secured major gains for members throughout the South. He is remembered for his warmth, integrity, intelligence, and good sense.

KYLE J. DEVINE

Kyle J. Devine, the son of John Devine, 1056-Flushing, NY, began his studies at Harvard University this fall, majoring in Physics. He graduated from Deer Park High School in New York where he was valedictorian, and a member of the Math Team, the Student Council, and the Varsity Baseball team.

In his essay, Kyle wrote, “…the fight for workers’ rights does not belong in the by-gone era of robber barons and Standard Oil, but is a war that is central to the well-being of every worker…While states… fight an uphill battle to retain their rights as workers, we see the delicate scope of power between Labor and management swing in the balance.”

NATHALEE EWERS

Nathalee Ewers, the daughter of Garfield Ewers, 113-Toronto, ON, entered McMaster University this fall majoring in Life Sciences. A graduate of Pickering High School in Ontario, she excelled academically, and performed with the Concert and Jazz Bands, and played on the Girls’ Rugby and Basketball teams.

In her essay, Nathalee wrote, “…Another lasting effect organized labour has had on the nation is a rise in the number of female workers… This growth was a reflection of the increasing diversity of the organized workforce and attested to the fact that women’s concerns were being heard.”

SOLOMON P. IP

Solomon P. Ip, the son of Daniel Ip, 583-Calgary, AB, is majoring in Music, and Music Education at the University of Lethbridge. He graduated from Queen Elizabeth High School where he was an excellent student and member of the Choir Club, Drama Festival, Band, Musical Theatre and Yearbook Club.

In his essay, Solomon wrote, “Unions must still be a present force for the average worker to rally around to combat unsafe conditions, unfair wages and uncaring governments. Unions uphold human rights in today’s society by speaking out with a loud, collective voice against workplace injustices…”

SAVANNAH F. MAY

Savannah F. May, the daughter of Ronnie Hendrix, 1212-Chattanooga, TN, is attending the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. A graduate of Soddy-Daisy High School, she was a member of the National Honor Society, and Student Council. She says she is “driven and very passionate about becoming a lawyer.”

In her essay, Savannah wrote, “Organized labor created the United States of America we know today… [without unions] America would not be the land of dreams and ambition that it is today. Because of organized labor, the U.S. is a haven for people of all races and genders to seek opportunity and live the American Dream.”
RAHUL SYAL

Rahul Syal, the son of Harish Syal, 824-New Brunswick, NJ, has entered the New Jersey Institute of Technology, majoring in Computer Science. Rahul graduated from the Marine Academy of Technology & Environmental Science where he was a member of the National Honor Society, Math League, and Debate Club.

In his essay, Rahul wrote, “When workers come together and negotiate together, progress can actually result in terms of fair compensation. Unions have led to the implementation of minimum wage, degradation of discrimination in the workplace, and fair compensation regardless of gender.”

ERICA J. YUEN

Erica J. Yuen, the daughter of Hong Ping Yuen, 589-Boston, MA, is studying at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a degree in Computer Science. Hong’s excellent academic record at Winchester High School was complemented by activities such as the Robotics and Math Teams, as well as Outdoor and Indoor Track.

In her essay, Erica wrote, “In the course of the fight for basic freedoms, organized laborers have demonstrated the basic fundamentals of American ideals – opportunity, freedom, and democracy – which ultimately allows the United States to be a highly respected nation.”

New officers receive ATU training

Newly elected local presidents and financial secretaries received ATU training to help them better fulfill their responsibilities to their members at the Maritime Institute Conference Center in August. Below, the officers stopped long enough for their “class picture” to be taken before they toured ATU international headquarters in Washington, DC.
Cleveland transit police working more closely with drivers

Our Cleveland members have endured more than their share of violent assaults in the last year, and there doesn't seem to be any let-up in sight. And the city’s Regional Transit Authority (RTA) police are now working in closer contact with drivers to help curb incidents with rowdy and violent riders.

Transit officers have been placed at two garages to serve as direct contacts for operators to report disruptive behavior.

Local President William Nix, 268-Cleveland, OH, says that previously, drivers’ incident reports to supervisors didn’t always reach transit police. “We’re trying to resolve that,” Nix says.

Nix believes assigning the officers to the garages will help make his members feel a little more at ease, “Because our members don’t feel safe coming to work with all these assaults.”

Also, some officers will now start and end their shifts at the garages – giving drivers another chance to report problems.

Transit police will also continue to ride buses and trains, and patrol parking lots, rail stations, and bus stops. And explosive-sniffing dogs will continue their work in the system.

Queens transit workers, Civic Congress call for more bus service

Bus service in Northeast Queens in New York City is still suffering from cutbacks made during the Great Recession. And despite some routes being restored, transit workers and the Queens Civic Congress called for more bus service at a recent meeting on the issue.

Local President John Lyons, 1179-New York, NY, told attendees, including MTA representatives, that mass transit stimulates the economy far beyond the jobs created in the bus manufacturing and mass transit fields. Local President Mark Henry, 1056-Flushing, NY, was also on the panel.

“Let’s face it — they’re not building subways in Northeast Queens,” Lyons said. “This is bigger than the MTA and the ATU.” He pointed out that investing in public transit is an “investment in communities,” but that under the federal transportation funding formula, 80% of the money goes to roads and highways while only 20% is set aside for transit.
Dallas paratransit members protest working conditions

Some things never change – and in the case of our Dallas paratransit members, that’s not a good thing. Local 1338-Dallas, TX, paratransit workers took to the streets to protest working conditions that they’ve complained about before with little success.

Local President Ken Day says they’ve been addressing issues including long hours and problems with benefits for years with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), contractor MV Transportation, and subcontractor Pursuit of Excellence.

“It’s just a variety of issues these employees have been having,” says Day. “They seem to get better for a little while. Once things quiet down, we seem to have a repeat of the same issues.”

Safety hazard

“They report to work sometimes around 4 a.m.,” says Day. “They work until 8, 9 at night, then report back first thing early in the morning,” he adds. “It’s a safety hazard.”

Drivers also report being told to pick up “add-on” riders that extend the time driving their routes and make it difficult to get passengers to their destinations (often doctor’s appointments) on time.

The service provided by MV Transportation isn’t any more popular with riders. Complaints came pouring in almost from the moment MV started providing the service. The company has been fined for its poor performance.
NYC mayor defends school bus provider grant program

“Safety” and “fairness” – those are the reasons New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio proposed a $42 million grant program to restore the wages city school bus employees lost last year when his predecessor stopped requiring employee protection provisions in school transportation provider contracts.

The program that was subsequently approved by the city council will provide grants to school bus operators to supplement what they currently pay experienced, senior drivers and matrons.

‘Unacceptable’

“We had an experienced workforce,” the mayor explained, “but because of the actions of the previous administration we were trending toward a much less experienced workforce. We found that unacceptable. We think only those who have worked with kids, know the routes, know the families, know the neighborhoods can best protect our children. So this is about safety. And also it was about fairness.

“In the middle of the school year,” he continued, “the contracting process was changed in a way that would inevitably lead to a great reduction in their wages and benefits. These are not high-paid workers. We expect them to protect our children and yet the modest pay and benefits they were getting were going to be greatly undermined. And as we saw that unfold coming into this year we realized it was unacceptable and action had to be taken.”

There has been some talk that the unique plan might spur lawsuits, but the mayor said he was not worried, as the program was on “very sound legal ground.”

Stockton members demand transit agency leaders’ removal

They haven’t been able to negotiate a contract in over a decade – relying, instead, on outside arbitrators. Now, in the midst of negotiations for a new contract, Local 276-Stockton, CA, has submitted a petition demanding the removal of the San Joaquin Regional Transit District Board and administration.

The petition states that the district has wasted millions of dollars on consultant and attorneys’ fees, while service has declined, and the needs of citizens and employees have been ignored.

“There’s a lot of money spent in the transit district that could be spent on transit instead of other things,” says Local President Alan Wagner.
La Solución a Su Problema está en el Poder de Su Membresía

El poder de los voluntarios y los miembros en general se mostró en completo despliegue en Septiembre, en St. Louis, MO. Con la ayuda del personal y los oficiales del Sindicato Internacional, cientos de miembros del Local 788 “sirvieron en las barricadas” en la lucha por la justicia.

A mediados de Agosto, la mitad del personal disponible del Sindicato Internacional voló a St. Louis y ayudó a organizar una serie de protestas para demandar que se pasase a la acción con respecto a un jefe desagradable. Cuya promesa a ATU fue que nuestros miembros no saldrían de las negociaciones sin abandonar sus pensiones. Seis años de reuniones –sin contrato. Un año de “determinar los hechos”– sin contrato. Una amenaza de huelga – todavía sin contrato.

El Local estaba lleno de disidencias internas y de críticas después de que pasaran los hechos, pero sin contrato. Pero cuando los trabajadores dejaron a un lado sus diferencias (muchas de las cuales fueron creadas por el jefe); cuando los miembros trabajaron como voluntarios unas pocas horas cada uno alcanzando al público y haciendo piquetes, después de cuatro semanas de protestas y presión, la Junta de METRO llegó a un acuerdo con el Local 788.

La Junta después forzó el acuerdo sobre un CEO enojado. Aunque el acuerdo no era todo lo que él quería, esto paró el ataque sobre nuestras pensiones – MUERTO. Proporcionó subidas de sueldos donde no había habido ninguna durante seis años. Aunque algunos argumentarán que esto no es suficiente – es bastante mejor que lo que había.

Detrás de todo esto hay una historia embarullada y confusa que incluye, bastante irónicamente, un gran esfuerzo por parte del CEO por introducirse en los asuntos del sindicato. En otros Estados, sus acciones serían ilegales, pero no en Missouri.

Él personalmente intentó hacer que nuestros mecánicos abandonaran ATU y tuvo a algunos miembros de mantenimiento lo bastante confusos para creer que ellos estarían mejor sin el Sindicato.

Insultos de ‘Oreo’

Sí, éste también es el sitio en el que el mismo equipo de gerencia llamó a nuestros líderes sindicales “Oreo”. Estos son gerentes pervertidos. Hoy en día ellos son pervertidos vencidos.

Quiero que todos los miembros de ATU sepan que, si ustedes están luchando para abrirse camino con una gerencia canalla o algunos políticos menos que decentes, la solución a su problema está en el poder de la membresía – no en un abogado o en un juez.

El poder real está en la movilización de las bases y en alcanzar a los que conducen nuestros sistemas. Esta ha sido la forma en la que hemos estado liderando, y nosotros les urgimos a ustedes a que tengan este debate en todas sus sedes sindicales. Esto comienza con usted siendo voluntario para ayudar a sus oficiales a desatar el poder que tenemos. Yo a menudo escucho de los oficiales que los miembros no quieren donar su tiempo al Sindicato. Puedo decirles que es la única cosa que hará fuerte al Sindicato.

Saskatoon

Ahora estamos girando nuestra atención hacia Saskatoon, SK, donde nuestros miembros están bloqueados por la ciudad. De nuevo, este es un esfuerzo para eliminar la seguridad de la jubilación/el retiro que también se conoce como una pensión. El ATU debería estar luchando para conseguir las pensiones en los sitios donde no tenemos, pero primero tendremos que defenderlas en los sitios en los que existen.Gracias a las acciones que se tomaron durante la Convención de ATU del 2013, usted va a ver mucho más acción en estas luchas, llevada a cabo por el ATU Internacional. Tenemos recursos para ayudarles, pero necesitamos que ustedes se conviertan en algo más que un miembro, y que sean activistas. Sólo vengan a una reunión del sindicato y digan a sus oficiales que quieren ser voluntarios.

Llaman a sus oficiales y ofrézcanse para ayudar. Envíenles un email y díganles que están disponibles. Únanse a la red de activistas de ATU mediante ir a www.atu.org. ¡Pueden registrarse para recibir las noticias a través de correo electrónico que enviamos cada semana! Ahora es nuestro momento para estar unidos como hicimos en St. Louis. Ir juntos es igual a victoria.

Visite www.atu.org para obtener más información sobre las últimas novedades de ATU.
Ideas, el respeto nos hace uno en propósito

Esta es una historia interesante sobre la construcción en 1848 del puente colgante que cruza el Río Niágara, justo al lado de las Cataratas del Niagara. Fue el primer puente para unir Canadá y USA sobre las cataratas.

Los ingenieros sabían que para que ellos construyeran el puente colgante, tenían que encontrar una manera de extender un cable de acero enorme a través del abismo. Pero el agua era traicionera. No podían hacerlo con un barco. Esto era en 1848, así que no podían hacerlo por avión tampoco. ¿Cómo podían colocar este enorme cable por encima del río?

Según cuenta la historia, un niño de 10 años resolvió su problema. Los ingenieros habían oído que el chico pequeño de la zona era muy bueno haciendo volar cometas, y le pusieron a hacer volar una cometa con un fuerte filamento delgado, un hilo realmente.

El muchacho era tan bueno volando cometas que era capaz de ponerse en un lado, hacer volar la cometa realmente alta, y después dirigir la cometa para que aterrizara en el otro lado en donde los ingenieros estaban esperando..

Una vez que tuvieron la cometa, tuvieron el hilo cruzando por encima del agua. Después ataron una cuerda al hilo y tiraron de ella haciéndola cruzar.

Más fuerte y más fuerte

Entonces las cuerdas se hicieron más fuertes y más fuertes. Después enviaron por encima del río el primer cable de acero, una delgado – después uno más fuerte, y otro más fuerte – hasta que fueron capaces de extender el cable de soporte a través del agua. Una vez que ese cable estuvo al otro lado, ellos pudieron empezar a construir el puente.

Entonces, ¿qué fue más importante: el cable de acero fuerte, o la cuerda delgada?

Quizás el más fuerte hizo el trabajo pesado, pero esa cuerda delgada fue tan importante como cada una de las otras cuerdas, sogas o cable.

Con demasiada frecuencia, especialmente durante negociaciones difíciles de contratos, nos encontramos con que hay gran cantidad de disputas y luchas internas y divisiones entre los oficiales y divisiones entre los miembros, en lugar de centrarse en proteger todos nuestros sueldos y beneficios.

Dialogo

Dentro de nuestros locales podemos tener debates constructivos sobre nuestras diferencias. Sin embargo tenemos que dejar a un lado todas nuestras disputas y diferencias internas que no son constructivas. Somos tan fuertes como nuestros eslabones más débiles.

Los líderes locales tienen también que escuchar a todos los miembros. En parte, es el diálogo de las ideas diferentes y el respeto mostrado del uno hacia el otro lo que nos hace uno en propósito. Nuestros predecesores fueron capaces de hacerlo así.

Juntos, parecido a un muchacho, su cometa y los ingenieros, ellos tejieron juntos sus ideas y crearon el sindicato ATU y pavimentaron un camino para los beneficios de los que todos disfrutamos hoy en día.

Visite www.atu.org para obtener más información sobre las últimas novedades de ATU.

Las votaciones de la mitad de la legislatura en US y las elecciones provinciales en Canadá, están ya aquí.

Cada dos años decimos que las elecciones que se acercan son las más importantes que hemos visto nunca. ¡Y es realmente la verdad! Las siguientes elecciones son siempre mucho más importantes que aquellas que han pasado y se han terminado.

Mi punto es: todas las elecciones son importantes. Y este otoño vamos a tener importantes elecciones, tanto en Canadá como en los Estados Unidos.

La Fuerza de Trabajo Canadiense está siendo atacada

A estas alturas, usted es consciente de que el largo ataque de décadas contra los sindicatos en los Estados Unidos ha empezado en Canadá. Las buenas noticias, sin embargo, son que muchos compañeros y compañeras canadienses realmente están creando un impacto, involucrándose en la buena y anticuada política de bases (encontrándose con
los votantes uno a uno) en nombre de los candidatos que apoyan a la Fuerza de Trabajo y al tránsito.

La situación en los Estados Unidos es la misma. Con la embestida de los grupos conservadores como ALEC que trabajan tiempo extra para destruir a los sindicatos y liquidar el tránsito a nivel de municipio, condado y estado, nuestra construcción de alianzas y el activismo político a nivel local se han convertido en más importantes que nunca.

Estamos luchando contra las mentiras y las distorsiones difundidas por los enemigos de las familias trabajadoras junto con nuestros aliados naturales y los candidatos que nos apoyan y que lucharan por nosotros a nivel local y nacional en ambos países.

El control del Senado de los Estados Unidos está en juego

El control del Senado de los Estados Unidos por parte del partido Demócrata está en juego en estas elecciones. Uno tiene sólo que mirar el historial de los partidarios del TEA Party durante los últimos años, para saber el tipo de nación que tendríamos si el GOP controlara ambas cámaras del Congreso.

Y, no tengo que decirles cuantas veces un puñado de votos ha significado la diferencia entre la elección de un oficial local que apoya el transito público y los derechos de los sindicatos, y uno que no lo hace. Y a veces esa es la diferencia entre tener un trabajo sindical con buenos beneficios y la esclavitud salarial.

Así que cada miembro de este sindicato – Canadiense o Americano – tiene razones abundantes para involucrarse en estas elecciones, y lo más importante de todo – votar.

¡Voten!

Lo que encuentro increíble es el número de personas que no votan, y que de hecho, le entregan en bandeja las elecciones a un político que trabajará contra sus intereses.

Si todos los miembros del sindicato se uniesen, para votar junto con todos aquellos que van a salir perdiendo con la elección de candidatos anti-trabajadores, no habría competencia – ¡ganaríamos todas las veces!

Votar este año es particularmente importante para los miembros de los Estados Unidos, ya que las fuerzas reaccionarias en la legislatura del estado están haciendo actualmente todo que pueden para hacer difícil, si no imposible, que las minorías y los miembros más vulnerables de la sociedad puedan emitir sus votos. Tenemos que mostrar que esas leyes nuevas de “Jim Crow” no funcionarían.

Así, que ustedes deciden. No se mantengan al margen y vean como les arrebatan sus derechos sindicales, y posiblemente sus trabajos.

¡Participen! ¡Defiéndanse! Les garantizo que será una de las actividades que más vale la pena de entre todas en las que hayan participado alguna vez.

Visite www.atu.org para obtener más información sobre las últimas novedades de ATU.
In Memoriam

Death Benefits Awarded July 1, 2014 - August 31, 2014

1- MEMBERS AT LARGE
   JOSIE PAULINE CLARK
   JACK ERWIN MC CORMICK
   MARY E MILLER
   DOYD LAMONT
   DONALD LEROY PAUL
   JAMES PUCKEY
   PAUL M SCHURLE
   JOE GRAYER WHITE

22- WORCESTER, MA
   JOHN A FOWLER

25- DETROIT, MI
   ROBERT L ADAMS
   JULES M BREWSTER, JR
   JAMES L DALTON

85- PITTSBURGH, PA
   LEWIS J BECKWITH
   JAMES C BOYLE
   LEWIS J BECKWITH

113- TORONTO, ON
   WILLIAM H ATKINSON
   HELMUT H BAUER
   SERAFIN DASILVA
   NICK V FURLANO
   JULIO R GONZALEZ
   RONALD J GAY
   LEONARD HARRISON
   WALTER HAUNSCHILD
   STEVE L HAYWOOD
   WILLIAM LAMKREE
   MALCOLM MC CORMACK
   FREDERICK C MOURSOU
   HUGH H ANDREW
   HEINZ W SCHOLL
   ROBERT R SEIDLE
   STEVE J SHERIDAN

192- OAKLAND, CA
   STANLEY J EDWARDS
   KENNEY H HILL
   RENEE HERNANDEZ
   ANDREW J JEFFERIES
   MICHAEL A POLASKI

241- CHICAGO, IL
   DORIS E ADAMS
   SPENCER BENNETT
   TYRONE G BULGREN
   ERNEST DITTENHOUSE
   MITCHELL M FLOWERS
   ALAN J CORMAN
   ALTON L HAYES
   EDWARD J HENNESSY
   FRANK J KOSTREVA
   ROBERT MATTHEWS SR

GERRIA MC MILLEN
   A D MERRICK
   RUSSELL STEVENS
   DARNELL WARD

256- SACRAMENTO, CA
   ERNEST DURAN GUERRA

265- SAN JOSE, CA
   MICHAEL E PERRY

268- CLEVELAND, OH
   WILLIAM KUBAS

279- OTTAWA, ON
   RANDY J BARRETT

308- CHICAGO, IL
   DELMUS A ALLEN
   MITCHELLE E GRAY
   EARL JONES JR
   WILLA J OAKLEY
   SAMUEL A POLLOCK
   LEONARD E THOMAS

382- SALT LAKE CITY, UT
   RUSSEL T SWARTZ

416- PEORIA, IL
   DONALD R HORNBY

425- HARTFORD, CT
   XIA DAM

568- ERIE, PA
   EDWARD L BOGAN

569- ELMONT, NY
   W RAY ANDERSON
   CHARLES E COOK
   OREST P MAGEROWSKI
   RYAN N UPHAM

582- ROCHESTER, NY
   PETER A STOCKTON

583- CALGARY, AB
   BLAINE A ROBBIN
   HAROLD LOPES SIMONS

587- SEATTLE, WA
   CAROL J CUMMINGS
   BILLY R DISHMAN
   HERMOSO G CURAY
   ROYCE K RICE
   JOHN C WEISE

588- REGINA, SK
   DONALD JOHN GARVE

589- BOSTON, MA
   SANDRA L BENDERS
   ANTHONY J BOTHELLO
   HENRY A CURTIS
   GUY A DOW
   DIANE C FANNING
   PAUL M HURLEY
   JOHN S KELLY
   MICHAEL D KENNEDY
   EZKIEL M MAE
   DANIEL N MAHONEY
   LAURENCE J M MC CARTY
   JUNIOR A MC CARTY
   FRANCIS P MC CORMACK
   RICHARD J O'REILLY
   CORNELIUS H P O'VULIAN

MICHAEL F RODRIGAN
   ARTHUR J ROSSI
   JAMES P SCHRAFFT
   ALBERT B TURCO

591- HOLL, QC
   ERNEST DITTSWORTH

615- SASKATOON, SK
   MICHAEL E GUESS

628- COVINGTON, KY
   JAMES R TOADAVIO

685- BIRMINGHAM, AL
   ANTHONY J KELLY
   ROBERT L WHYNOTT

689- WASHINGTON, DC
   JAMES W ALLEN JR
   CARSEY A BOGGEEN JR
   GEORGE D BROWN
   WELDON BROWN
   RY P CARTER
   ROBERT H COBB

694- SAN ANTONIO, TX
   OSCAR PHILLIP FREEMAN
   GEORGE HERNANDEZ

713- MEMPHIS, TN
   LUTHER L HALL

714- PEORIA, IL
   DONALD R HORNBY

725- BIRMINGHAM, AL
   ROBERT L WESLEY

726- STATEN ISLAND, NY
   BOUZKRI BOKHALFA
   CARL CARBONE
   ROBERT B ROBEBROOK

732- ATLANTA, GA
   KELLY R SWARTZ

757- PORTLAND, OR
   RALPH S MC CARTHY
   STEPHEN L STRICK
   JACK G TOWSEND

788- ST. LOUIS, MO
   GEORGE T FRANK
   WILLIAM GARNER

819- NEWARK, NJ
   JOHN F BACK
   ANTHONY BRIDGEFORTH

DOROTHY B DEMER
   MELVIN HARDGROVE
   TIMOTHY LEWIS
   FRANK MC CANTY
   WILLIE RODGERS

820- UNION CITY, NJ
   TOMMY JOHNSON
   DONALD F SELLS

821- JERSEY CITY, NJ
   ANTHONY L PASSARD

824- NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ
   THEODORE HARR
   DONALD ROBERT IVIE
   ROBERT J NEIL

825- ORADELL, NJ
   STEPHEN KOUKOULIS
   AMANDA MITCHELL
   JOSUE R RIVERA

842- WILMINGTON, DE
   ETHEL L PARLE

846- ST. CATHERINES, ON
   GORDON BRADY

880- CAMDEN, NJ
   JOHN CROMLEY

956- ALLENTOWN, PA
   ERNEST P VESSELS

998- MILWAUKEE, WI
   BERNARD H BINON
   EDWARD RITCHIE JR

1001- DENVER, CO
   LESLIE R MECHEN
   ALONDRA SHAKES
   THOMAS W FISHER
   WILLIAM J WOODS

1005- MIAMI, FL
   KATHY J NISTLER

1026- DES PLAINES, IL
   CHARLES W MULLALLY
   ANTHONY WHEATLEY

1101- NEW YORK, NY
   MARGARET ARMETTA

1225- NASHVILLE, TN
   CHARLES S TAYLOR

1277- LOS ANGELES, CA
   ENRIQUE BRIONES
   JOSEPH D CATALANO

1287- KANSAS CITY, MO
   GEORGE H HAWKINS

1300- BALTIMORE, MD
   THOMAS C BROWNLEY
   STEPHAN BURLEY
   CHARLES SMITH

1321- ALBANY & TROY, NY
   ROBERT J HARRISON

1338- DALLAS, TX
   LLOYD H JONES
   BOBBY G NELSON

1342- BUFFALO, NY
   HELEN M EMPIC

1345- READING, PA
   EFRAIN CAMACHO

1363- PROVIDENCE, RI
   DAVID M CALKINS

1374- CUYAHOGA, OH
   SANDY ELIZABETH GALLAGHER

1395- PENSACOLA, FL
   SHARON K MENDOZA

1505- WINNIPEG, MB
   RONALD R TAYLOR

1532- SPRINGFIELD, MA
   STANLEY J FJIJ
   REINALDO GUZMAN

1572- MIDDLETOWN, CT
   BRIAN LYONS

1573- BRAMPTON, ON
   HOWARD PALMER

1575- SAN RAFAEL, CA
   ROBERT L FLIPPEN
   VIRGINIA SIMPSON-WOODSON

1576- LYNWOOD, WA
   DAVID L KEMPER

1624- PETERSBURG, ON
   DONNA SMITH

1700- CHICAGO, IL
   RICHARD J ANGEL
   RUBY T KNOWLES
   WAYNE RICHARD VANCE

1733- VERNON HILLS, IL
   HURLEY BARKER
   MARIE CHRISTINE LA PORTE
   BORIS ROZENFELD

IN TRANSIT   | www.atu.org
WHAT RIDERS CARE ABOUT?

- Safe Equipment
- Good Schedules
- Heat in Winter
- Air Conditioning in Summer
- Bug Free Bus / Train
- Short Headways
- Reasonable Fares & Funding

WHAT TRANSIT WORKERS CARE ABOUT?

- Safe Equipment
- Good Schedules
- Heat in Winter
- Air Conditioning in Summer
- Bug Free Bus / Train
- Short Headways
- Reasonable Fares & Funding

WHAT THE BOSS CARES ABOUT?

- Few or None of the Above

SO, DO YOU NOW THINK WE SHOULD VOLUNTEER TO ORGANIZE OUR PASSENGERS?