

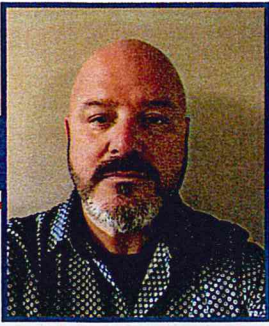


279 Bulletin

AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 279

**Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season
and a Happy New Year**

December 2023



President's Message

Clint Crabtree, President/Business Agent



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for your support and dedication, and I am confident that our Union would not be the same without it. We need to keep A.T.U., Local 279 strong and unified as we move into the New Year.

2023 has been a very busy year for our Local. We are currently in negotiations for a Collective Agreement for our Members with the Royal Canadian Mint, who have been without a contract since December 2021. I have also initiated the Bargaining process for Para Transpo. I am confident we will be able to negotiate a fair deal for all our Members at the Royal Canadian Mint and Para Transpo.

Your Union is aware of all the challenges everyone is facing, with the multitude of grievances A.T.U., Local 279 has had to file to protect our Members' rights. This Local Union will always be available to support our Members, no matter what challenges we face ahead. We need to stand united together!

We have a commitment from our employer to improve morale in our working environment. A.T.U., Local 279 has ongoing meetings regarding the morale working group, and they have been positive so far. There is a lot of work that needs to be done to instill confidence in our Membership and make OC Transpo a place we all once enjoyed working for.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Not only is this joyous season a time to be thankful for our family, friends, and health, but also an opportunity to express kindness and appreciation to our brothers and Sisters.

In Solidarity,

Clint Crabtree





Vice President's Message

Noah Vineberg, Vice President



Season's Greetings, Brothers and Sisters,

I wish to extend my absolute best wishes to each of you and your families. To the new Members who are experiencing your first winter and Christmas with us, welcome! You are joining a group of incredibly hard-working, devoted, and professional workers in an industry that is increasingly challenging. A special thank you to those who are working through these holidays; you are helping others celebrate with loved ones. I am very proud to be your elected A.T.U., Local 279 Vice-President, and I encourage each of you to participate, communicate and work with your Union for all our benefit. No issue is too big or too small; it's in all of our best interests when we use representation for meetings. The current Grievance Officers have demonstrated unparalleled devotion this year, working long days and evenings to accommodate the wide range of schedules and demands. Their representation in meetings maintains a standard and creates precedent going forward and serves as an essential tool in communicating the changing landscape of our work lives. I sincerely hope to see more Members participate in our meetings, our club nights, and the family events.

I welcome the opportunity to meet each of you personally. I look forward to this upcoming year working together. The past year has taught me a lot of valuable lessons about life, choices, career, and people. Since I was elected, it has been a very interesting and busy year. We do not get do-overs, so I am grateful to have learned from all of it. I am far better equipped and prepared to face challenges in years to come. I welcome and will embrace any opportunity. I have tremendous respect for the Members of our Executive Board and their hard work and their dedication to improving the work/life balance of all our members. I have had my perspective altered watching the devotion and hard work that goes into dealing with our employer and such a diverse and sizable workforce. I am equally impressed at the ability of our Members, who thrive and continue to show tremendous resilience in the face of much adversity.

Take pride in the fact that you truly are the face of transportation in this City. Whether you are delivering the service, maintaining the vehicles/equipment or property, or keeping the buses and trains moving safely, everyone plays an

integral role. The elderly, the children, the workers, the volunteers, and an increasing number of vulnerable people depend heavily on the service that you continue to offer in a courteous and professional manner. The public is becoming more educated and aware of the politics, budgeting and Management mishaps that make our ability to continue to bring high-quality service more difficult every day. In the face of all of it – you continue to deliver and impress. Thank you. I see you, and we will work diligently to make sure that everyone sees you.

Je vous souhaite, à tous, une nouvelle année exceptionnelle, remplie de bonnes nouvelles et de joie. Je vous encourage à continuer de faire preuve de sympathie et, surtout, d'empathie envers les autres. Nous avons tous des problèmes qui nous tracassent et, la plupart de nous traversons des périodes difficiles. Quand nous sommes justes et attentionnés envers les autres, l'impact sur eux, personnellement ou sur leur situation peut être incroyable. Cela ne coûte rien d'être gentil, c'est un cadeau que chacun peut se faire et dont tous peuvent profiter. Enfin, je voudrais vous exprimer ma gratitude. Cette année a été, pour moi, une expérience pas comme les autres et j'ai sincèrement aimé avoir l'opportunité de vous représenter et de défendre les intérêts des membres de la section locale 279 de l'ATU. Ensemble, nous sommes plus forts et ensemble nous réussirons.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année

Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año nuevo

ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਮਿਸ ਦੀ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਬਹੁਤ ਵਦਾਇਆ





Secretary-Treasurer

Chuck Fitzpatrick, Secretary-Treasurer



A Message from your Secretary-Treasurer,

Once again, Brothers and Sisters, the holiday season is upon us. Although our work schedules can be hectic, it is important to find time to spend time with family and friends.

The Annual Pocket Planner has been given out at the Bookings and sent out to all Members who did not receive one at the Booking. If, for whatever reason, you have not received your planner, please reach out to the Union Office. I would like to give a personal thank you to Donna Whyte for all the hard work she has done with getting the pocket planners to our Members and for all the volunteer work she does for A.T.U., Local 279.

If you have any questions pertaining to the By-Laws, Collective Agreement, or the International Constitution, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Union Executive Board, and we will do our best to clarify things for you. I would like to thank all those who have reached out to protect their seniority by staying a Member in good standing and keeping up with their union dues.

“ I would like to give a gentle reminder that if there are any changes in your life, such as address change, marital status and or a different job within the City of Ottawa, please advise the Union office as we are not always advised in a timely manner, and we would like to ensure that our Membership receives all correspondence promptly.

We have once again started Annual Union Events Such as the Retirement Dinner Dance to take place on Saturday, April 27th, 2024, the A.T.U., Local 279, Golf for CHEO Golf Tournament taking place on Saturday, June 8th, 2024, and last but not least the Annual A.T.U., Local 279 Picnic on Sunday, August 18th, 2024. These are all great events, and we hope to see you there.

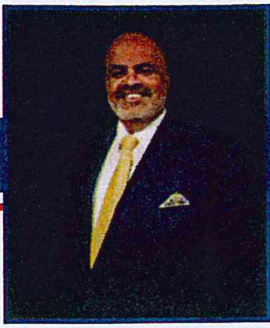
I want to thank Nancy Randall and Annie Qi, our office Support Staff, who help with the day-to-day tasks and ensure that things run smoothly.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

In Solidarity

Chuck Fitzpatrick





Transportation Division

Hariqbal Bal, Assistant Business Agent



Dear Brothers and Sisters

Reflecting on the challenges at OC Transpo this past year, disruptions to our schedules and working conditions due to CLC 30-minute break have added strain to staffing with the increased workload. The inconsistency in the 30-minute break rule across departments is disheartening, with incidents often resulting in discipline instead of constructive conversations.

The new discipline matrix is negative because it undermines fairness and due process. When disciplinary actions are predetermined, it eliminates the opportunity for an unbiased evaluation of the circumstances surrounding an incident. This approach disregards individual contexts, hindering the ability to address issues on a case-by-case basis. Fairness and equity are essential in maintaining a healthy work environment, and predetermined discipline erodes these principles, fostering a culture of mistrust and discontent among employees.

While we've achieved victories in removing the Collision Review Committee, Fleet Safety meetings and ATO points this year. Fundamental issues persist, such as the delay in placing the ATU279 logo on uniforms for over three years, adding more time to schedules and reducing passenger abuse. The increase in grievances has really revealed a lack of commitment and compassion from the employer. The Union's commitment to fight and stand together is crucial in advocating for the rights and well-being of its members. By maintaining solidarity, the union can effectively address workplace challenges, negotiate fair conditions, and ensure that the collective voice of its members is heard. This unity is a powerful force that fosters resilience and encourages positive change within the organization. As the Union continues to stand strong, it reinforces the principle that collective action is vital to shaping a workplace that respects and values its employees.

Our relationship with OC Transpo is strained, marked by outstanding grievances and unfulfilled promises, including the awaited overdue meetings with the new Mayor for bus schedule improvements and overall morale.

In our biweekly meetings with the GM, concerns about lack of time in the runs, deadheading, and interlining routes have been voiced, yet changes seem elusive. Essential issues linger, including the need for sufficient time for recovering between runs to ensure the next trip runs on time.

DRO/ERO Operators having consent work changes, with Management not following the collective agreement, not allowing Operators to book work, and forcing them on other shifts outside their current roles has deeply affected their morale, and the newest change of them being retrained on buses shows the lack of trust in Management and having the electric train ever operate smoothly.

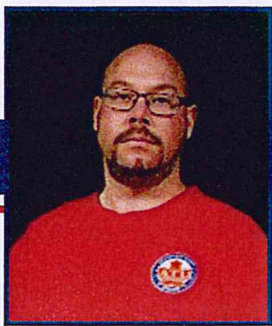
As we navigate these challenges, let's stay united and take pride in our daily accomplishments. This holiday season, prioritize quality time with loved ones, recognizing that coming to work or joining the workplace is not safe and has become nothing more than just a paycheck. The challenges we've faced at OC Transpo this year will most likely carry over to the next year.

Once again, please prioritize spending quality time with loved ones; remember that life extends beyond the workplace, and your health and well-being should be your top priority. I wish for everyone to embrace the fun of the season, relishing the moments with family and friends. Whether it's sharing laughter around the dinner table, creating cherished memories, or simply enjoying the warmth of companionship, these moments are invaluable.

Wishing you all a festive and joy-filled holiday season

Hariqbal Bal





Equipment Division

Jacques Racine, Assistant Business Agent



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to start by saying Merry Christmas to everyone and their families and for everyone to have a safe holiday season.

This year, we have had many ups and downs, and it felt more like a roller coaster than anything else. The Union has been trying to help everyone who has been affected by all the ups and downs. On a daily basis, we are pushing back against Management for not following the Collective Agreement and will continue to monitor and push back when the Collective Agreement has not been adhered to. I want to encourage Members to contact their Union Representatives if they feel or see that Management is breaking the Collective Agreement. The Union Representatives will then be able to help assist with the situation and determine if anything can be done and what steps are needed to help correct the issue or issues if needed. I would also like to remind Members that if you are working on buses that have come back from a vendor for repairs and there are issues with the workmanship, repair, or anything related to the vendor, please get in touch with your Union Representative so that we can look into the issue. The President (Clint Crabtree) and I have had bi-weekly morale meetings with Renée and her Senior Management team over the last two months. In those meetings, we discuss such things as money, overtime, shifts, sick leave, and morale. Those meetings will continue until morale is fixed within the Garage and OC Transpo.

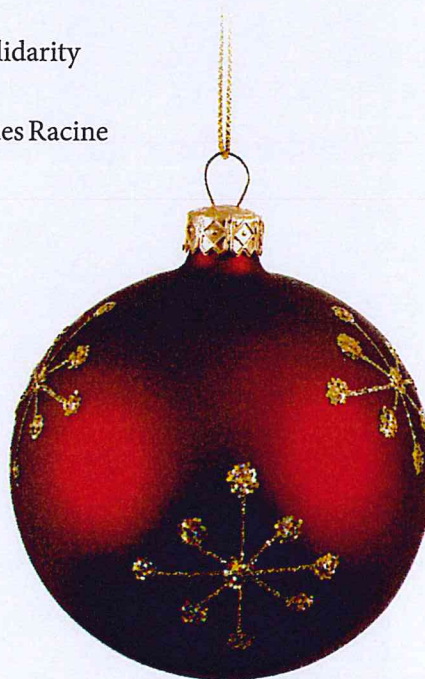
This coming year, all OC Staff will see a 2% increase to their wages on April 1/2024, and all licenced staff and Apprentices, on top of the 2%, will also receive a \$1.30 wage adjustment. The Union will not stop there; we will continue to push for an Evening premium and an actual Night premium for all staff and will continue to push for better wages and shifts. I want to remind Members that if you receive a Request to Appear from your Section

Head or Supervisor, it is the Member's responsibility to contact the Union to request representation for the meeting. The union only shows up to the meeting if requested by the Member, as some Members don't take the Union into their meetings, which is their choice. This year has also been plagued with issues with our Alstom Branch; we hope to get a fair contract decision from the arbitrators' ruling sometime in December. We have successfully gained many Members and increased the Alstom Membership with the addition of the Infrastructure Group. The Union is also negotiating with the Royal Canadian Mint, and we look forward to securing a great Contract for our Mint Members.

With the year coming to an end and the holiday season around the corner, I would like to say thank you to everyone for their support, and I will continue to work hard for everyone in ATU 279. I would also like to thank my four Grievance Officers for their hard work this past year. Steve Faubert, Sri Kanagalingam, Richard Clarke, and Daniel Dorion. Thank you, everyone, and have a great holiday season. Cheers

In Solidarity

Jacques Racine





Equipment Division

Srikanth Kanaglingam, Executive Board Member

I would like to wish all our hardworking A.T.U. Local 279 Members and their families, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

I also want to thank you for all your support, enthusiasm, and advice. I take pride in representing the Union with Credibility, Accountability, Compassion and Teamwork in all aspects. I want to let you know that I can be reached 24/7 if needed.

In addition, I would like to thank the Executive Board and the Office Staff for all their hard work and for their commitment and dedication to the Members of Local 279.

I would like to thank All the Maintenance Staff who stepped up and worked additional shifts to help

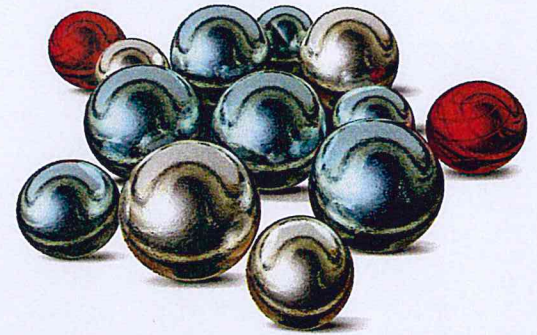
maintain safe and reliable service for the Public. As always, you have proven that A.T.U. Local 279 Members can and will always provide a level of expertise, knowledge, and hard work that can't be matched.

Moreover, I want to thank the team for attending all meetings and getting the results for the Membership and urge you to keep it up in the New Year 2024.

Together we fight, together we Win.

In Solidarity

Sri



Equipment Division

Steven Faubert, Executive Board Member



Dear Brothers and Sisters/ chers frères et sœurs

As we celebrate the holidays, I would like to take a moment to show my gratitude for your confidence in me as your Grievance Officer. Merci pour votre confiance and thank you for your dedicated work as ATU279 Members!

Don't forget to take some time out of your busy day to enjoy the festive cheer of these magical holidays! I look forward to working with you next year.

Heureux d'être là pour vous. Sincèrement,

Steven Faubert





Transportation Division

Nitin Datta, Executive Board Member



Season Greetings, Brothers and Sisters.

As the year is coming to an end, I would like to wish our ATU 279 Members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! I would also like to welcome our newest Members to the ATU 279 family and welcome our newest Grievance Officers, Michael Lewis, Stephane Blondin, Mary Sauve, and Shri Kanagalingam, to the Executive Board.

2023 has been quite a year for ATU Local 279 Members, with Request to Appear letters going out regarding attendance. The City has also increased their rate of discipline with the new matrix's policy, against which the Union has filed a grievance. This new policy has further affected the Union's ability to maintain a good working relationship with Management.

The City keeps talking about absenteeism as the reason for high cancellation and missed trips. The truth is they do not understand. I've been hearing it clearly from the Members, one reason is the unrealistic schedules. I have brought this issue forward at committee meetings with upper Management, and not much gets done about it. The Members and our customers are suffering due to many routes running late, which, in turn, leads to trip cancellations.

The City claims morale is subjective. I say morale is the foundation of success. Healthy morale leads to engaged employees and company success. Going into 2024, Management needs to understand what motivates individual employees, understand individual goals and priorities of employees which, in turn, will boost morale.

Every chance I get, I have pledged that I would always make myself available to you by regularly visiting garages, discussing your needs, and concerns. I can be reached at 613-799-1404. I will continue to fight for what's right, and make sure your voices are heard. Experience, competence, and credibility matters through our changing times. Always remember to drive safe, safety should always prevail. Please know your rights when faced with unsafe work, and don't let anyone push you when it relates to your safety. You're the front-line workers, the heroes, so be proud of yourselves, just

as I am. I am proud of all of our hard-working Members and everything you do to make this City run.

Who moves this City?

"We do"

Who moves this City?

"We do"

Who moves this City?

"We do"

Who loves this City?

"We do"

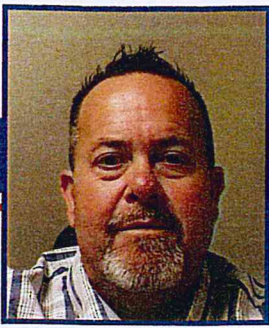
"Union that never sleeps."

Lastly, please look after your mental health, it affects how we think, feel, and act. For your information CRTC has also implemented the new 9-8-8 number for Mental Health Crisis, and Suicide Prevention. It was launched Nationwide on November 30th, 2023.

Stay United Together.

Proud to be A.T.U.





Para Transpo Division

Barry Low, Executive Board Member



First, I'd like to thank each of you individually for your hard work and dedication in making Para Transpo a better service for our customers, who are the most vulnerable in our Community. It takes a special person to do this job, and each and every one of you are special, and it doesn't go unnoticed. We're out of a Contract at the end of the month and looking forward to bargaining with the City of Ottawa, trying to get better benefits, better money, and better working conditions.

We have all been overworked each and every day, moving people through our community and making their lives better. Scheduling is a number one priority for the Operators of Para Transpo. If we all stick together and work together to resolve this situation, we're all in. Unfortunately, there's no quick resolution to fix this. The Company has done a lot of hiring in the last year and a half, with many more to come in the future, including this month. This should all Alleviate some of the problems we have day to day. There are so many resources available for Para Transpo, and unfortunately, the City of Ottawa gives direction to OC Transpo. So, we all have to work with what we have and do the best we can for now. Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 279, is working collaboratively with The City of Ottawa and making a lot of changes that are better for everyone, including the customers, the Operators, and the way the system is run. We must ensure we're not pressured into hurrying to try and keep up with the schedule.

I see some good things in the future, including newer vehicles and a new Contract. The Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 279, has already secured unlimited overtime on Saturdays and Sundays for the last year and a half and also extras every day, Monday to Friday.

So you may want to start sending an email to myself at b.low@atu279.ca to start getting things ready for negotiations and what you would like to see.

Lastly, we may be coming into another pandemic, or at least very high numbers for flu/COVID-19 again. Check up on family Members, neighbours or even friends you haven't heard from. Make sure they're OK. Maybe they need a meal. Drive safe, and have a happy holiday with your family.





Transportation Division

Mary Sauve, Executive Board Member/Transportation

The Christmas season is near, and we can't wait for the festivities to begin. The spirit of Christmas binds everyone together, and it is a perfect time to let your near and dear ones know how much they mean to you.

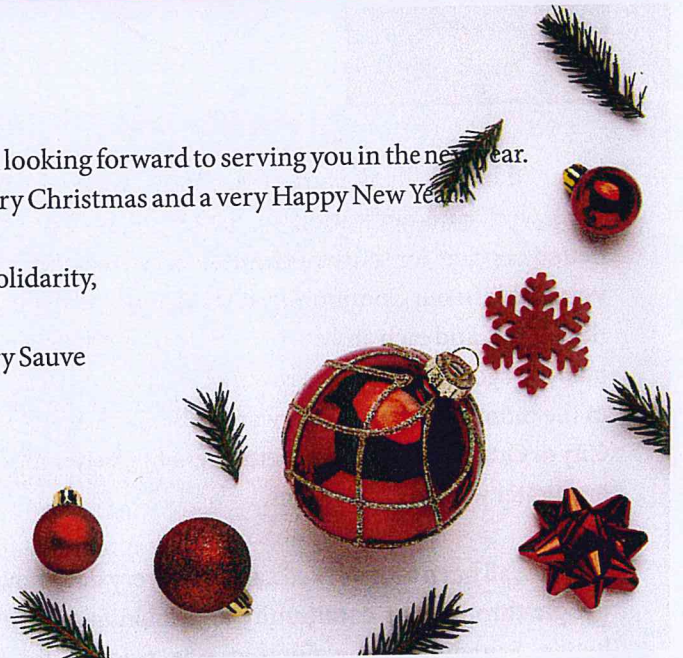
We have all put in much effort and patience in the past year. It has been very trying, but we made it through the year! We are all hoping for a better year in 2024.

I hope you can spend time with family and friends over the holiday season. May the Christmas spirit bring you peace, joy, and everything you desire.

I am looking forward to serving you in the new year. Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

In Solidarity,

Mary Sauve



Transportation Division

Stephane Blondin, Executive Board Member



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I would like to express my gratitude for your commitment and hard work. Since becoming the Grievance Officer, assisting Operators on a daily basis has been very fulfilling. Thank you all for your dedication.

Alors que les Fêtes approchent à grands pas, je tiens à vous exprimer ma gratitude pour votre engagement et votre travail. Depuis que je suis devenu agent des griefs, aider les opérateurs au quotidien a été un parcours enrichissant. Merci à tous pour votre dévouement.

A friendly reminder to all Members, please check your bus at the end of the line. In recent months, there have been instances of passengers sleeping on the bus, leading to their return to the Garage.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

This holiday season, remember to cherish precious moments with your family. I wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year filled with happiness and prosperity!

Cette saison des fêtes, n'oubliez pas de chérir les moments précieux avec votre famille. Je vous souhaite, ainsi qu'à vos proches, un joyeux Noël et une nouvelle année pleine de bonheur et de prospérité

In Solidarity,

Stephane Blondin





Royal Canadian Mint

Daniel Drouin, Executive Board Member



Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to start by thanking each and every one of you for the hard work that you have put in all throughout the year, I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with.

We are currently in contract negotiations, and I am confident that we will reach a settlement sooner than later.

I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In Solidarity,

Daniel Dorion



Alstom

Richard Clarke, Executive Board Member



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to thank the Membership for all their support over this past year. It has been my pleasure to represent the Members of Alstom as the Executive Board Member. I have been learning a lot in my new role, and I am looking forward to learning even more in the years to come.

I would also like to thank everyone for their patience over this past year as we fight to get a new Contract. As that chapter ends and we look forward to new challenges I will continue to fight for every Member to continuously improve our working environment.

As the representative of a smaller group within A.T.U., Local 279, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the rest of A.T.U., Local 279, for their support in helping my Members and myself through this past year does not go unnoticed. We really appreciate all the help and support you give us.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!

In Solidarity,

Richard Clarke





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