



**Special points of interest:**

- Local 689 speaks with WMATA General Manager, John B. Catoe
- Cardozo HS Students work with Metro
- Local 689 Organizational Chart!
- Local 689's Health Watch Focuses on Diabetes

Volume 8, Issue 1

April 2007

**ATU Local 689 Newsletter**

WE KEEP METRO MOVING

**Message from Local 689 President, Jackie L. Jeter**

*It's Such a Glorious Season of the Year*

Hello, how have you all been since I last wrote an article to you? I hope this one finds you well and in good spirits. Thank you all for the very kind words of encouragement concerning the last newsletter. We have a group of members who have promised their time and energy to help create our newsletter the best that it can be from the perspective of the officers and the members. Join me in thanking them for their dedication to this necessary task.

Spring is here and this glorious season of new growth has not come too soon. Longer days, new baby animals, warmer weather, flowers and green grass always serves to resurrect my spirits just at the right time. We made it through the winter. I have a number of issues that I want to bring to your attention, along with a few to just bring you up to date on so bear with me and I will take one at a time....

Our administration has entertained some lofty goals for ourselves that we would like to accomplish in the first three years of our term. This first set of goals, if followed by all of those elected, will develop the great representation all members deserve.

**Communication:** We are setting up a system which will allow us to communicate with you short term notice and long term notice. Let me take the long term notice first. Reading the newsletter is half of the solution, it's a way to reach all 10,000 members. But one of the chief complaints is the information is old or the event has already occurred. Our goal is to use this form of media to keep you posted on issues that will affect you in two months, or six months. We all know from working for Metro that we must plan our lives, timely activity announcements which appear periodically will help accomplish that goal. The entire membership can participate in union organized or sponsored activities and show its collective support. We can keep you informed of the political activities we are engaged in for the betterment of the International and the Local, , such as elections, grievance settlements, arbitrations, contract negotiation information, organizing campaigns, different demonstrations through out the labor community, and endorsement of political issues, etc...



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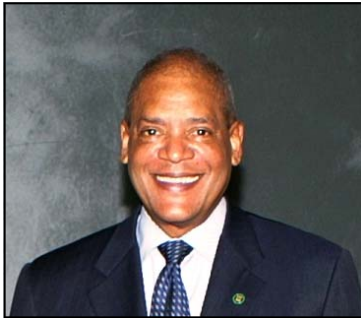
Now the short term notice ... There are events that we want and need your support. We may hear about them overnight but we don't have an effective way of communicating with you and requesting your participation. The Authority has the Intranet; they can literally push a button and send a message to 10,000 employees. They can communicate with you better than I do. The Union hasn't put a system into place that would provide timely information to our 10,000 members. This has got to change if we are going to more affective in representation, timely responses to sudden changes in our work environment, and building our confidence and strength as a Local. It takes a village. We all have to participate in the process. The reward is simple, we are more affective and you know where your dues money is going and what the local union is doing. Over time, not over night, you will become secure in the fact that you're not alone; your local union is a mouse click away. To accomplish this, here's how we can begin, we must actively continue to develop our e-mail address data base. To sign up just go to our web site, [www.atulocal689.org](http://www.atulocal689.org) and subscribe to the message board (it's free) or you can e-mail your address to [heatherkirk@atulocal689.org](mailto:heatherkirk@atulocal689.org) or [jackiejeter@atulocal689.org](mailto:jackiejeter@atulocal689.org), it's that simple.

Another goal that correlates with this is the amount of members that come to the union meetings monthly. It equals approximately 400 to 500 members, at the most. There's something wrong with this picture! As a union we are bombarded with a sea of bad information. If more don't start participating you can't complain about the outcome of anything. In your personal life you would never blindly give money monthly and not give a darn about where it's going, it's not logical. So why do you pay \$49.95; and it increases every year, and not care what is being done with the money you pay? Why do you waste your time with gossip about your union instead of finding out first hand? If someone told you that your bank or another financial institution was taking your monthly payment and instead of putting on your account they were putting on the company presidents' account you would be the first in line at the bank that day. It's your union, your money, and your responsibility. Think about this, our local has 7500 active members and 2500 retired; the minimum is making decisions for the maximum. We have got to change the picture! The individuals in a supervisory position, the ones that make you like Metro or hate Metro, the majority still pay union dues. Why, because as bad as they agree with you that may be, they want to have fall back rights (see Section 109 of the CBA) to come back to that position, that the protection they are provided through this bad union!! Now I ask, will every member come to the monthly meetings? No! Is there a way to get the information being discussed to all the members, so everybody is informed? YES! We are beginning to develop a format to bring the information discussed at the union meetings to different locations every month. We will report what was discussed and the resolution. Keep in mind, you won't be able to change any of the actions of the members who came to the actual union meetings but you will be informed about what they do instead of hearing the misinformation second hand. Here's how it will work, the meeting visit locations will be announced in the newsletter the month prior; accompanying that announcement there will also be a monthly summary periodical section in the newsletter. This will assist our retirees, our ill members and those who live and work in remote areas. The idea is different but I think it's worth an effort. Hopefully we can kick this off in June. It will also give me the opportunity to see you face to face.

**Restoration of Respect:** I guess you all are saying, "What the #!?!\* is she talking about? Well, I'm glad you asked. If we are to grow and prosper collectively, we have to begin by respecting our differences and embracing our common interest. We have to change the way we negotiate contracts because there is no such animal as a 7,500 headed contract book. Every person can't have their own!! We must start by acknowledging that we must first have to have a single collective goal. We are one union family. We are going to stop separating ourselves into the senior members verses the junior members. Or maintenance verses transportation union. Or a craft union verses an unskilled member in a lower pay status. Union members defining union member's worth! How sad and we must stop this form of self discrimination, period. We allow ourselves to be divided and picked apart one classification at a time. There is no such thing as this is a bus operators union. Not here we are a multi-craft and classification union. The truth is that there are 2500 bus operators, 900 station managers and train operators, 3200 rail and bus maintenance, 600 plant and track, and about 200 clerical, where's the disparity? We must stop allowing negative people to govern our deeds or steps. Saying silly things like, maintenance is under represented when they have 16 representatives and three (3) of the top five (5) officers came from maintenance. Or stuff like, Northern is different and they want to deal with their own problems. No, right now Northern is having their share of problems with accidents, Northern is a part of Local 689; the accident is the issue, not Northern. If we need to question the accident policy and we do so because it's what needs to happen for all of the divisions, not one or against one. We must stop doing it to each other, getting a raise for transportation, but not for maintenance. All members of Local 689 and we all must find a solution together. Every month in an attempt to find out the problems that you have in the field. Log around the board room table and ask the shop stewards what is occurring at your loca-

# A Conversation with WMATA, General Manager John B. Catoe

By Fred Allen



Mr. John B. Catoe

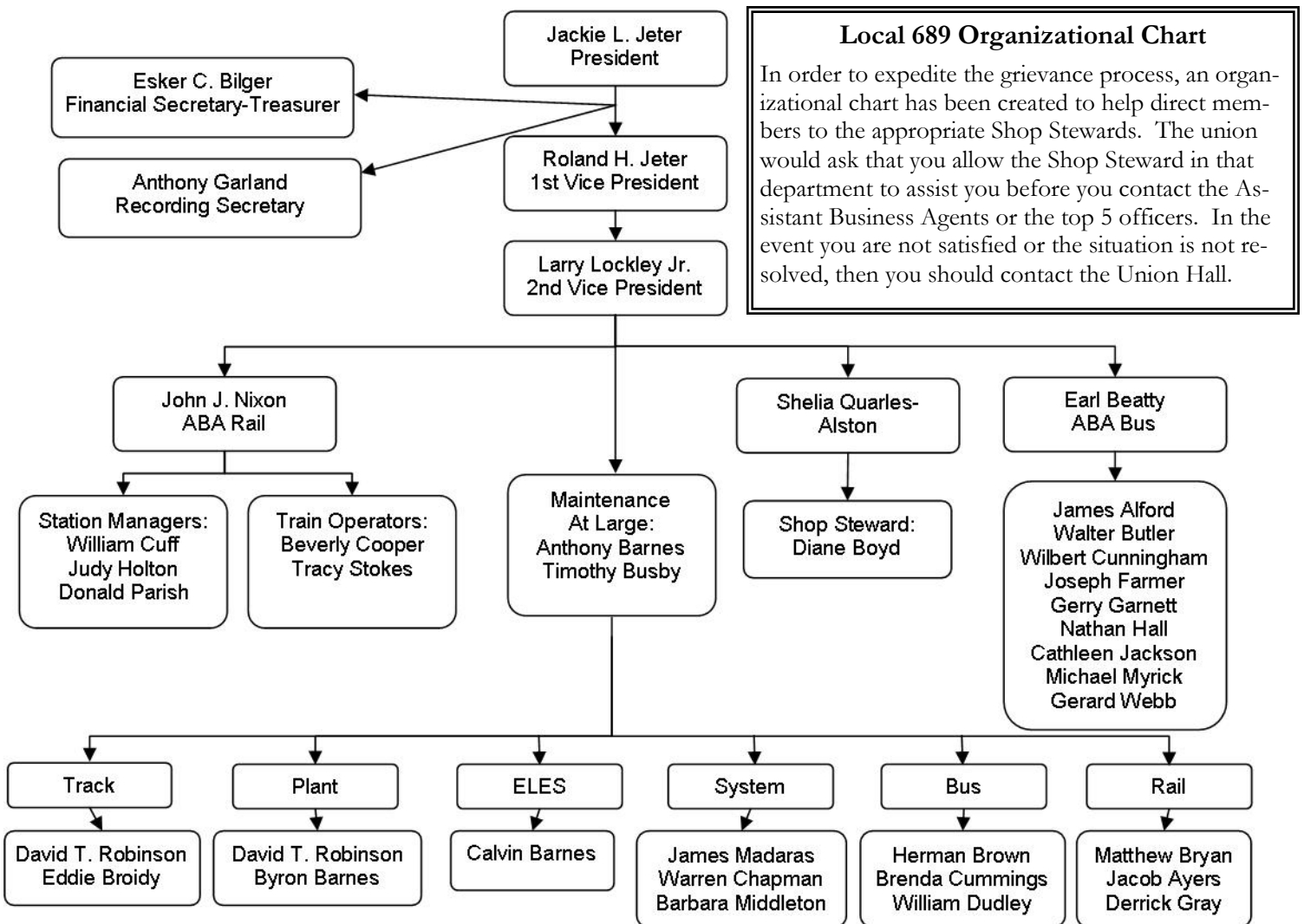
Perhaps you haven't had an opportunity to meet, hear or read any of Mr. Catoe's remarks. I've had that opportunity on two occasions. Mr. Catoe seems to be straight forward and up-front, with no hidden agendas and always straight to the point. He also has a vision on where he wants to take Metro as a transit company.

I sat down with Mr. Catoe for an impromptu interview with a few questions concerning Local 689. Mr. Catoe's overall opinion of our union leadership is one of respect, acknowledging that everyone won't always agree, but there seems to be a willingness to work together. He also stated that he is not interested in balancing the budget on the backs of the workers!

Mr. Catoe stated that he wanted any part time operator's who wanted to be full time to have that opportunity. He is also in the process of reorganizing and has made it very clear that he will be expecting a lot from his Executive Leadership team and will not be expecting anything less.

Mr. Catoe did not have a five point break or mission statement. He only promised that in three years Metro would be the best transit agency in the country.

**"...in three years Metro would be the best transit agency in the country."  
-John Catoe**



## Metro Works with Cardozo High School Students

By Brenda Thomas



Cardozo High School Team!

The 2006-2007 District of Columbia Public School year began with an interesting twist. Ten seniors at Francis L. Cardozo Senior High School were selected to participate in the inaugural class of Electro Mechanical Technical Training Program (EMTTP) to convene at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's technical training center in Landover, Md.

Through partnership, DCPS, WMATA and DDOT have begun a technical training initiative that seeks to put good use the creative energy and spirit that exists right here in the local high schools. Admittedly, this area of study is not for everyone, but the students all put forth commendable effort at completing task and working in an adult environment. Some of the students have determined that further study in the field of electronics is their goal and others have determined that they would like to pursue a career with Metro in other disciplines.

**"If you think you  
can't, you  
won't!"  
-Cardozo High  
School Team  
Motto**

The participating students have all graduated a preparatory basic electrical and mechanical theory curriculum administered in the eleventh grade. Students with no previous formal exposure to this technical trade were introduced to:

- Magnetism and its potential to create viable forms of alternative transportation such as magnetic levitation trains. The students constructed working models of magnetically levitated, and wind power propelled, vehicles.
- Electrical circuit construction, operation and diagnosis. Through extensive lab exercises, the students configured electrical circuit types of used industry standard tools and techniques to diagnose circuit faults.

Prior to summer break, the students are encouraged to forego 'hanging out', and take on one of the many summer internships Metro has to offer. But it's the senior year, this year, when it all comes together. With the confidence gained through their previous studies, the students meet everyday at the Carmen Turner Facility in Landover, Md., the tackle more advanced curriculum and projects. It is a unique atmosphere that combines the classroom environment with the real world adult working environment. Safety, teamwork, project management, and business decorum all combined to create a well rounded participant.



The beginning project for the class was the construction of two electronically powered, single passenger go-carts. Since this was a "ground-up" project, the students were required to not only assemble the frame to specification, but they also had to construct the power train utilizing components such as motors, relays, potentiometer, switches, ect.

This year is also the inaugural year for the "CLERKBOT007" That is the name of the robotic arm designed and constructed by the students with the help of Metro partner divisions such as PLANT and OPAS at CTF. The "CLERKBOT007" was entered in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) regional competition held at the United States Naval Academy on March 15-17. Students who participated in this event are exposed to many institutions that can help them further their education in the sciences through scholarships. But the main aim of the event is to foster gracious professionalism amount the next generation of leaders. You may find the team motto is quite interesting, "If you think you can't, you won't!" We place all our support behind the Cardozo team in their quest to be the best!

## Information about the 55th Annual ATU International Convention

*By Trevieta Haley*

**D**uring the April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2007 union meetings the membership will be nominating 25 candidates for the elections which are scheduled in May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup> to determine the delegates who are to attend the 55<sup>th</sup> annual ATU International Convention.

The Convention will be held in September on the 17<sup>th</sup> thru the 21<sup>st</sup>. The primary function of the delegates is to cast their votes to elect the international officers. The offices consists of, international president, international executive vice president, international secretary-treasurer, and 18 international vice presidents.

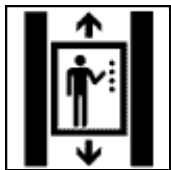
The opportunity is a privilege because it is where the elected delegates collectively have the capability to direct the future of the unions as this arena is where our constitution and general laws are created. The delegates can vote on resolutions which are motions for change within our constitution and general laws, incidentally it is the only forum where any changes or amendments can be formulated.

The elected delegates can be appointed to various committees which include:

- Appeals Committee
- Balloting Committee
- Credentials Committee
- General Executive Committee
- International Presidents Committee
- Secretary-Treasury Committee
- Resolutions Committee
- Ritual and Condolences Committee
- Rules and Orders Committee
- Security and Safety Committee
- Committee on Political Education (C.O.P.E.)
- The Laws Committee

These committees are established as a beneficial tool to improve and solidify our place in the workforce environment. Therefore it is vitally important that the elected delegates are aware of the significant responsibility that their position represents.

It is crucial that we become educated about our union on a local as well as an international level. Please support the union and know that an educated voter is our best worker.



### Inside ELES *By Curtis Field*

Throughout the existence of our Transit system, some 30 plus years, the elevator/escalator department have only been around for 16 years.

The department has faced its ups and downs and now looks forward to our future. Our success has enabled us to achieve the goals of taking over more than 3/4 of the railroad and provide vertical transportation to our customers with 95% availability. With new technology changing every day, the new training facilities purpose is to provide more extensive training to our apprentice as well as mechanics on elevator/escalator equipment.





## Local 689 Health Watch!

*This month will focus on diabetes.*

*For more information, facts, healthy recipes and other useful health information please visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)*

### Facts:

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors such as obesity and lack of exercise appear to play roles.

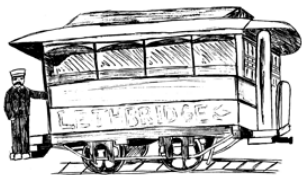
There are 20.8 million children and adults in the United States, or 7% of the population, who have diabetes. While an estimated 14.6 million have been diagnosed with diabetes, unfortunately, 6.2 million people (or nearly one-third) are unaware that they have the disease. Although diabetes is widespread disease with not apparent direct cause, there are some steps one can take to lessen the risk.

### Prevention:

Pre-diabetes is a serious medical condition that can be treated. The good news is that the recently completed Diabetes Prevention Program study conclusively showed that people with pre-diabetes can prevent the development of type 2 diabetes by making changes in their diet and increasing their level of physical activity. They may even be able to return their blood glucose levels to the normal range.

While the DPP also showed that some medications may delay the development of diabetes, diet and exercise worked better. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5-10% reduction in body weight, produced a 58% reduction in diabetes.

The Diabetes Pyramid gives a range of servings. If you follow the minimum number of servings in each group, you would eat about 1600 calories and if you eat at the upper end of the range, it would be about 2800 calories.



### A Blast from the Past!

The following are excerpts from an informational brochure on the application procedure for Street Car/Bus Operators from Capitol Transit Company dated February 15, 1942!

- “Beginners are now being paid 68 cents to 78 cents an hour. After a year’s service, 76 cents to 86 cents an hour is paid and there is a week’s vacation with pay.”
- “Applicants must be between the ages of 21 and 55, about 5 feet 7 inches to 6 feet 2 inches in height (in shoes), and weight in proportion, the minimum weight being 140 and the maximum 225.”
- “Employees must join the union and pay the required initiation fee and monthly dues.. At the present time, the initiation fee is \$12.00 and dues are \$2.00 a month.”

## Congratulations to All Metro Retirees!!

### September 2006

Candice E .Hill

### December 2006

Shelia Moton  
Michael Bell  
Eric Barlow  
Than Nghe  
Otis Choice  
Floyd Crawford  
Thomas Parham  
Louis Pew  
Shirley Twitty

### January 2007

Colonel Barnes

### January 2007 cond't

Eric Butler  
Franklin Coleman  
Cedric Davis  
Robbie Gill  
Stephen Hans  
Lucille Jackson  
Broocksie Jenkins  
Eugene Joseph  
Richard Kahler  
Wayne Miles  
Lawrence Moreland  
Geoffrey Reed

### February 2007

Fred Martin

### February 2007 cont'd

Thomas Nelson  
Patrick Barrett  
Mary Robey  
Jacqueline Wade  
Thomas Dunlap  
Cheryl Butler  
Vernon Winn  
Jorge Yabar  
George Earley  
James Logan  
Gregory Coates

### March 2007

### ATTENTION ALL METRO RETIREES!!

**Please note the recent changes to the Retirees' luncheons:**

At the March 29th luncheon retired members and retired members spouse membership passes will be available for the fiscal year 2007-2008.

1. Retired Members (Three Luncheons): \$20.00
2. Spouse Members (Three Luncheons): \$23.00
3. Guest (Per Luncheon) :\$10.00

#### **Date for Luncheons:**

1. March 29, 2007
2. July 26, 2007
3. October 25, 2007
4. March 27, 2008

The Associations Officers and Board Members ask that you reserve your place no later than the Friday prior to the luncheon.

Please call any of the following to reserve:

Maxie Stallworth: 202-889-7165  
Frederick Taylor: 301-350-5626  
Bernice Barnes: 240-678-8257  
Floyd Seymore: 703-360-2887  
Richard Storty: 301-602-3288  
Ted Parrish: 301-499-3124  
Carolyn Stieff: 301-649-2418  
James Stieff: 301-649-2418

### OBITUARIES

**WITH SADNESS WE ANNOUNCE THE  
PASSING OF OUR FELLOW  
LOCAL 689 MEMBERS**

#### January 2007

Rene Arce  
William Fisher  
Lenward Hamlett  
Ashby L. Higdon  
David W. Hodge  
Robert L. Kline  
James W. Lewis  
John J. Schools

#### February 2007

Willie G. Chandler  
Paul D. Diggs  
James W. Lewis  
George H. Mills Sr.  
Calvin Peace  
John S. Roberts  
Cleave I. Shrewbury  
Julius C. Tarrence  
Ray D. Williams Sr.

#### March 2007

Clarence J. Bussard  
Ted K. Wade

• **Attend Your Union Meetings!**

- 1st Tuesday Evening of Each Month @ 8:00 p.m.
- The Following Wednesday Morning of Each Month @ 10:00 a.m.

The meetings are held at your Union Hall:

2701 Whitney Place  
Forestville, MD 20747

Phone: 301-568-6899

Fax: 301-568-0692

Health and Welfare: 301-568-2294

E-mail: [unionhall@atulocal689.org](mailto:unionhall@atulocal689.org)

Newsletter E-mail:

[newsletter@atulocal689.org](mailto:newsletter@atulocal689.org)

Visit us on the web!  
[www.atulocal689.org](http://www.atulocal689.org)



## LOCAL 689 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elections for Alternate Delegates to the Amalgamated  
Transit Union International Convention for 2007  
will be held at the May Union Meetings.



May 1st, 2007 at 8:00 p.m. &

May 2nd, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

### Congratulations to the Northern Wizards Basketball Team!!!

They beat Four Mile to win the Championships, 67 to 56!  
Congratulations to the Northern Wizards!



### 2nd Annual Meet and Greet

For all Metro Employees, Bikers and Friends!

A Benefit for The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation



Sunday, June 3, 2007

11:00 a.m. to dusk

Blob Park, 8024 Blob Park Road

Jessup, MD

Donation: \$5.00

Bike and Car Show

(\$5.00 registration fee until 3 p.m.)

Vendors, Biker Games, 50/50 raffle and Music by DJ AL-V

#### President:

Jackie L. Jeter

#### First Vice President:

Roland Jeter

#### Second Vice President:

Larry Lockley Jr.

#### Financial Secretary- Treasurer:

Esker Bilger

#### Recording Secretary:

Anthony Garland

#### Executive Board

##### Members:

James Alford

Shelia Quarles-Alston

Anthony Barnes

Earl Beatty

Herman Brown

Matthew Bryan

Walter Butler

Timothy Busby

Wilbert Cunningham

Joseph Farmer Jr.

Gerry Garnett

Nathan Hall