

## Local 260 receive training from TWU

Forty union stewards from Local 260 received grievance training from the TWU's field instructors last May. The two-day training covered all the procedures and strategies for a successful grievance defense which will enhance the steward's representation skills.

As can be expected there was much heated debates. Field instructor Tony Noviello said his biggest joy is to see the spirited participation among the class members. He said he relies on class participation because it helps with the retention of the material, "Under this roof where union stewards and their leaders get together and discuss the issues that they deal with, to me that is the most rewarding part of this training," he said.

Local 260 steward Ron Pimble: thought the training was excellent; he said, "We need more training like this so we could better represent our members. Everything is not about kicking in the door and take over we need to be diplomatic and use strategy in many situations we face everyday." Pimble will now fine-tune what he does so he can be a better more effective steward with the training he received.

Other stewards felt more financial members should go through the training to get a better idea of how the union operates and the work of a steward. The training was open to both stewards and members but only stewards attended.

## President's Corner



I would like to thank my Staff, the Stewards and the Union Members who attended the 2 day International Stewards Training Seminar. Thank you for your attendance and for making the pledge to be for one another and to become united as one. Thank you for allowing me to be the voice for the Union and to be of service to you and your families. I would also like to thank Metro for allowing the Union Stewards Offices at the BOF's; the Executive Board for our Local 260 Education and Conference Center. Get on board the 260 Express, connect with us and wear your patch. UNION PROUD. See you at the next Union Meeting.

Your President,  
*Horace J. Marves*



## Transport Workers Union Local 260

2150 W. 18<sup>th</sup>. Street, Suite 104  
Houston, TX 77008  
Office: 713-864-4346  
Fax: 713-869-5655

# Local 260 EXPRESS



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## Metro Changes Necktie Policy

Neckties are now optional



**Michael Joseph**  
Fallbrook Bus Operator in his long sleeve shirt and no necktie.

It took about two years but after a simple request Metro has changed its uniform policy on the wearing of neckties, its now optional. No one can be happier than Michael Joseph, a bus operator from Fallbrook who has been with Metro for seven years.

Mr. Joseph initially had a conversation with Vice President of Operations Andy Skabowski about changing the necktie policy, making it optional. At the time Mr. Skabowski said it sounded like a good idea but he needed to discuss it with other senior officials before a decision could be taken. But Mr. Joseph persisted and kept bringing up the issue with union stewards and the Transport Workers Union Local 260 executive.

Mr. Joseph is not against ties but his argument is that while long sleeve can prevent burns on the arms during the summer, a tie served no useful purpose. Fast forward to February of this year when Metro's President and CEO Tom Lambert attended a function at the Fallbrook garage in company with Mr. Skabowski, with the tact of a skilled diplomat, Mr. Joseph brought the issue up once more. Mr. Lambert said the issue will be looked at and an answer will be given shortly. The matter was discussed and weeks after Mr. Joseph was informed it was a done deal, he was only waiting for the official Metro memo putting the changed policy on record.

That memo was sent out by on April 14<sup>th</sup>. by Robert Augustine, Sr. Director, Transportation Operations Department. The memo stated that with immediate effect when on duty, neckties will become an optional piece of the Metro Operator's uniform attire, when wearing long sleeve shirts, jackets, topcoats and sweaters.

Mr. Joseph views the change in the uniform policy as an accomplishment. He says he always felt the change was possible so he persevered till it became a reality. Asked if he had any other goals to achieve at metro, he smiled and said probably just to make it to retirement. As a financial member of Local 260, he says he has no interest in campaigning for a union position, "I think they have well qualified people in those positions, who are doing the best that they can. If asked to assist I will be happy to do so but not to serve on a regular basis it's not something I am interested in", he told the Express.

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### Contributors

Andrew Bruce  
Patrice Little  
J. Cruz Torres  
Horace Marves

### Newsletter Editors

Andrew Bruce - Editor  
R. Garrett - Co-Editor

### Transport Workers

#### Union Local 260

2150 W. 18<sup>th</sup>. Street,  
Suite 104  
Houston TX 77008

Phone: 713-864-4346

Fax: 713-869-5655

Future articles or ideas for articles may be submitted by fax to 713-869-5655.

## Training for TWU Stewards



TWU Field Instructors Tony Noviello & Barry Roberts

Local 260 stewards receiving Grievance Training



## Local 260 Union Meeting

Come, be informed and be heard on Saturday, June 28, 2014, at Harris County Central Labor Council, 2506 Sutherland, Houston, Texas 77023



I'm stumped, when non-contributing bargaining unit employees, would refuse paying union dues (what amounts to a cup of coffee a day), yet prefer to risk much more, by weakening their own bargaining/negotiating position (by non-participation), it doesn't add up in either dollars or sense.

For too long, dues paying members have subsidized the benefits that non-contributors enjoy, and yet, disingenuously declare—they don't need the Union. I have even heard comments, such as, "I don't believe in Unions"...as though they are financially independent enough to reject Social Security, refuse unemployment insurance, aid to dependent children, overtime after eight (8) hours, and holiday /anniversary/birthday pay... all made possible by the efforts of Unions/Local 260.

Employers are making attempts to reverse the gains that have been hard fought for over the years—at times, with the sacrifice of those who have made it possible for us to enjoy what we take for granted—today.

Whether they would truthfully admit it or not, non-contributors, owe it to Local 260's presence on the property, for receiving twenty percent (20%) more in wages, as opposed to working for an employer that lacks a Union presence.

Moreover, Unions offer the few remaining paths into the ranks of the middle-class; and it is no accident that the decline of the middle-class, in recent years, have a direct correlation, in the decline of Labor Unions. (Remember the 99% vs the 1 %.)

The irony is that those who refuse to pay dues (excuses are plentiful), weaken their own position, in terms of bargaining/negotiating power, because employer's, gauge strength in numbers; and if employees could rely on the beneficence of employers—there would be no need for Unions—but the reality is that employers prioritize, plans, pavement, and infrastructure—over people. "Priority in the budget process is proof positive."

There are no free rides—only dollars and sense.

Robert E. Garrett  
Secretary-Treasurer  
TWU-Local 260