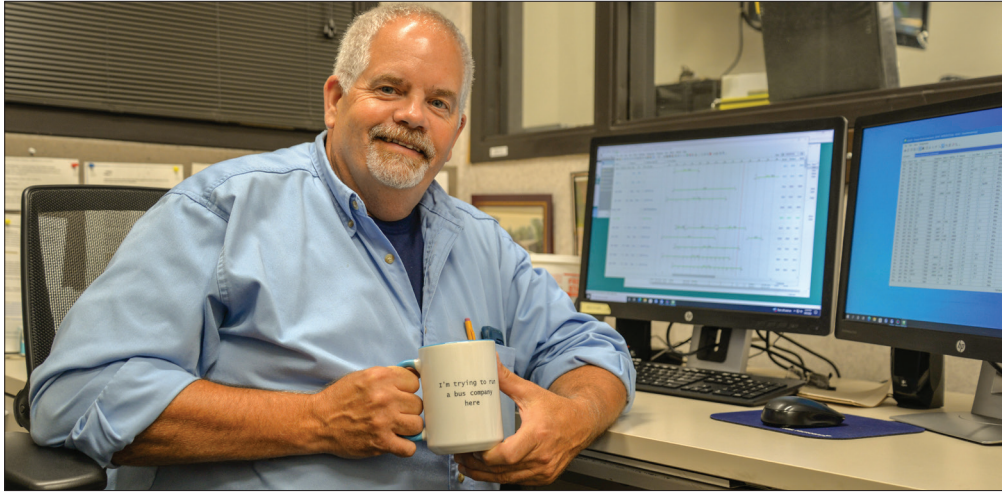


INSIGHTS

Metro Transit's weekly employee newsletter

Sept 16, 2022



There were a few things **Tim Bell** tried to uphold during his 35-year career in transit – pay attention to detail, see the good in those around you, leave the place better than you found it. During his tenure as a dispatcher, he also did his best to support the operators who greeted him each day. “The one thing I always thought as a dispatcher was that my number one job was to help operators succeed,” he said. Tim’s commitment to his work and his co-workers made it hard for him to retire. But on his last day on the job, at Ruter Garage, he had plenty to look forward to. Immediate plans included moving to northern Minnesota, spending more time with family, and traveling the country with his wife. “My stop’s come up and I’m ringing the bell,” he said. “It’s time to end this chapter and start a new one.” Read more at metrotransit.org/greatpeople.

Training bus heads to garages to sharpen mechanics’ skills

A retrofitted bus intended to teach mechanics a new skill or hone existing ones is now traveling to garages. “Everyone learns differently, and this bus helps us apply multiple techniques to help mechanics learn,” **Jake Maalis**, technical trainer said.

The lessons taught include not only fundamentals, but new technology that mechanics need to master as new buses enter the fleet, including electric buses. “We help mechanics better read schematics, wiring diagrams, and use ‘ladder logic’ to troubleshoot problems,” Maalis said.

Onboard, trainers can lead classroom training at computer stations and desks before tackling complex issues hands-on. Trainers bug the bus with issues mechanics must diagnose and troubleshoot.

“Diagnosing an issue with a circuit can sometimes feel like following one noodle through a large bowl of spaghetti,” Maalis said. “With good training, mechanics are able to diagnose problems more efficiently and with fewer headaches along the way.”

The bus is capable of training up to 4 employees at a time and will rotate to all garages.

Bus Technician Apprenticeship: Applications for a new bus technician apprentice program are being accepted through Friday, Sept. 30. This program was developed in partnership with the ATU Local 1005 and is open to current employees and others who want to develop their skills. Participants will have three years of paid, on-the-job training and classroom instruction. For more information, email technicians@metrotransit.org.

Sharing my thanks, and encouraging you to share yours

From General Manager Wes Kooistra

Let’s take time to be thankful for all the good things that are happening in our lives and in our work.



Regularly practicing gratitude, researchers have found, helps us become kinder and more compassionate and can even improve our physical wellbeing.

So, I want to take this opportunity to share my appreciation for some of the many positive things happening here at Metro Transit.

- Thank you to everyone who had a hand in providing service to and from the Minnesota State Fair. We had a remarkable turnout, providing more than 220,000 rides, more than doubling our ridership from last year. Planning for next year’s fair is already underway, and we hope to offer more service than we have these past few years to meet the returned demand.
- Thank you to all those in Human Resources and across the organization who continue to help us recruit, hire, and welcome new staff. Thank you especially to the managers who continue to put in extra time to interview operator candidates at the Instruction Center and to everyone who is helping us introduce our new technician apprentice program this fall, including our ATU partners.
- Thank you to everyone in Finance who helped realize our vision of bringing a Universal Transit Pass program to the University of Minnesota, and to all those who are supporting our growing Student Pass and College Pass programs. We are fortunate to have so many young people who can and want to use transit to get to and from school and other opportunities. Ridership around the University of Minnesota has been remarkable.
- Thank you to our staff and partners who helped us successfully introduce our first micro transit service last

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weekend, bringing affordable on-demand service to several North Minneapolis neighborhoods. Piloting Metro Transit micro is an important next step in our shared effort to help people get around without needing access to a vehicle.

- Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported our recent racial equity training, which concluded today. I know that conversations about race are not always easy, but to become a more equitable employer and service we must be willing to acknowledge and commit to addressing racial disparities.
- Thank you to the Council Members for supporting police officer wage increases. We are already seeing more applicants for vacant police officer positions.
- Thank you to all you who planned and developed the contracted security pilot. This pilot started Saturday at the Franklin Avenue Station and we hope to add Lake Street Station soon.
- Thanks to everyone who is contributing toward the implementation of our Strategic Plan. Progress is being made across all the goals and core elements, and the regular progress reports to the Transportation Committee have been greatly appreciated by our Council Members who can see their priorities put to action.

Of course, this list could go on. Good things are happening here every day, often without notice or fanfare.

As we move forward, my hope is that you, too, will take greater notice of all the positives in your lives, both here at work and at home. We have a lot to be thankful for, and a lot to gain from sharing our thanks with those around us.

On the Clock/Off the clock:
Operator John Waldo

Lives: South St. Paul
Garage: East Metro
Years of Service: 10

How did you come to work at Metro Transit and what do you do?

Being a bus operator is a second career for me. While working as a medical coder, I had two kids. My wife and I decided that I would be a stay-at-home dad. After my kids reached a certain age, I decided to go back to work and gave bus operations a try. I spent about three years as a school bus driver, then I graduated to Metro Transit in 2013.



CUSTOMERS TELL US HOW WE'RE DOING

"A shining example"

East Metro Operator **Terry Hubbard** recently received a commendation for his customer service.

In an era where it is easy to become the negativity that surrounds us, Terry was positive and helpful. He shows genuine concern, finds joy in his service and performs his job duties with enthusiasm. Terry is a shining example.

Paul U.

What are your favorite activities when you're working or "On the Clock"?

I know why I do what I do: The people I serve. Many think this career is just about driving a bus, but when you provide a public service, it's truly about the people. Lots of people walk around carrying scars and wounds who just need to be shown a little kindness and gratitude – something different than what they might be used to. When they climb onboard my bus, it doesn't take much to brighten someone's day and it helps make my day great. It's free and easy to do, and it helps set the expectation of how we should act onboard transit.

What are your favorite activities when you're not working or "Off the Clock"?

In 2016, my wife and I discovered a love of marathons. We joined a group called Team World Vision that raises money and runs in marathons. We had no idea what we were getting into at first, but we supported their cause of bringing clean water to Africa. Eight marathons later, we plan on doing more. My favorite was the Chicago Marathon, where we ran with over 40,000 people. Our goal isn't to win but helping others inspires me to keep running, one step at a time.

Congratulations to these employees who celebrate anniversaries in August

45 years

- Scott Thompson, Senior Planner

30 years

- Paul Cruz, Stockkeeper, Green Line
- Bruce Howard, Director-Marketing and Transit Information
- Daniel Abramowicz, Relief Mark-Up Dispatcher, Ruter
- Carl Rice, Train Operator
- Scott Wahnoutka, Operator, South

25 years

- Daniel Dickson, Cleaner, East Metro
- Barry Clark, Cleaner, Heywood
- Wayne Dalida, Operator, Ruter

To celebrate a milestone in Insights, email insights@metrotransit.org.



The Insights newsletter is published weekly. For more information, visit Insights on MetNet. A link can be found on the homepage. Feedback and story ideas can be sent to insights@metrotransit.org.