The Transit Reader

Who’s Got a Ticket to Ride?

By Katie Wilson

Last year 138 social service organizations throughout King County distributed over 1.4 million bus tickets to the people they serve: low-income youth, the homeless, the unemployed, refugees, veterans, seniors and people with disabilities living off meager social security payments.

King County’s pioneering ORCA LIFT program is a welcome relief for low-income riders who can afford $1.50 per ride, or $54 for a monthly pass. Still, it’s important to remember that less than ten years ago the off-peak adult fare was just $1.25, and economic conditions for the poor haven’t exactly improved since then. For people who are living on very low or no income, ORCA LIFT simply isn’t affordable all the time. These are the people who rely on tickets. They number in the thousands, if not the tens of thousands. And as of March 26th, many of these people found another challenge added to their already challenging lives: Metro bus service has been restructured around the new light rail line, which they can’t ride because Link Light Rail doesn’t accept the tickets.

Starting in January the Transit Riders Union urged Sound Transit and Metro to come up with a solution that doesn’t leave some riders with a second-class transit system. And when the Regional Transportation Action Coalition (RTAC) did file a petition and announced a public action for April 16th, the transit agencies announced they had figured out a short-term fix: a light rail day pass attached to two bus tickets, so that riders can use both systems and transfer between them.

It’s great that our voices are being heard now, but light rail access for ticket-holders has been a problem in South Seattle for years, and the transit agencies and elected officials have had years to anticipate how this year’s U-Link extension would solve the problem more definitively. One can’t help but notice the context of their sudden responsiveness: with Sound Transit 3 headed for the ballot this fall, they’re wary of public criticism.

It’s going to take concerted and ongoing pressure to make sure the needs of very low-income and no-income transit riders don’t recede into the background again.

A More Hospitable Seattle

By Hannah Long-Higgins

It is a typical Wednesday at noon — I am sitting in the lunchroom at the Westin hotel downtown Seattle, surrounded by housekeepers and dishwashers from all over the world. Badatu, a struggling single mother suffering from health problems, sits across from me. She tells me that her rent was just raised to $4,000 a month, a striking blow to a woman and family barely surviving. Badatu’s story is one of nearly 200 I have heard over the past several months as part of a labor union campaign to hold hotel owners, developers, and city politicians accountable for the consequences of rapid urban development on Seattle’s hospitality workers.

What began as an effort to quantify the displacement of Seattle’s downtown union hotel workers in the midst of Seattle’s housing crisis has turned into a story that is much larger and more complex than a classic tale of gentrification. Workers are moving to new geographic locations in search of cheaper rent, but those locations are not necessarily farther outside the city. Many are being forced to move remain in the same area and make other sacrifices, including living with others in confined spaces, in order to do so.

Justina Guzman, a housekeeping attendant at the Washington Athletic Club, shared her family’s story with me in the lunchroom.

“Four years ago all fifteen of us had to move in together in order to be able to afford housing.”

When I asked if she was worried about the possibility of having to move again in the next couple of years, she answered calmly, “I will only be worried if we start splitting, but if we keep living together it will be easier.” In her five-bedroom house, that’s three people per room, with two people sleeping in the floor. While housing options are few and far between for the average low-wage worker, inadequate public transportation is an added layer of stress to daily life. Seattle’s heavy-duty traffic makes for an unbearable commute downtown from south-end suburbs like SeaTac and Kent. And while regional light rail can transport some workers, many in the hospitality industry are confined to cars because they must be at work before or after morning or night service.

So what happens when the city cuts a bus line from, say, Kent to Seattle? In Justina Guzman’s world, the alternative route is a one-way commute that involves two or three buses and a travel time of up to 120 minutes, depending on traffic. At the end of a physically exhausting workday, this type of commute not only detracts from valuable family and rest time, but it can also be unsafe.

Westin bartender Melody Swett opts to drive because she says, “There are no options on that one. The buses don’t run down there, and I never know when I’m going to get home. You have to go down to a dangerous area to get the bus. One guy got stabbed down there. I could get stuck until what, 5 in the morning?”

In the world of low-wage work, a lack of affordable housing and inadequate public transit options are in minutes of yelling and pushing and begging for more info, we discovered that our classmate had received the news through Twitter. We instantly went several other teachers asking for validation, but no one could confirm. They were all just as clueless as we were. Eventually a teacher asked the front office, and learned that it was true. Hillary was on her way.

Besides the administration, nobody in our school had been privy to this knowledge until it was too late to act on it. We, as students, should have a right to decide whether our school is used as a stage for a political candidate, especially if a lot of the students and staff do not think that Hillary has their best interests at heart.

We, as students, should have a right to decide whether our school is used as a stage for a political candidate.

PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH LONG-HIGGINS.

Continued as HOSPITABLE page 6

Continued as RIDER page 2

Hillary Visits a Seattle High School, and Student Resentments Surface

By Ifrah Abshir

It was a typical Monday at Rainier Beach High School. Most students, including myself, were drugging our feet from class to class, counting down the minutes until 2:50 p.m. Then, during third period, a classmate of mine shouted from the back of the room, “Hillary Clinton is coming to Rainier Beach tomorrow!” Instantly, the class swarmed her, asking for her sources. At our school we are very politically aware and have discussions about presidential candidates nearly every week. The news made us act as if we were two-year-olds forced to drink a bottle of energy drinks. After about five minutes of yelling and pushing and begging for more info, we discovered that our classmate had received the news through Twitter. We instantly went several other teachers asking for validation, but no one could confirm. They were all just as clueless as we were. Eventually a teacher asked the front office and learned that it was true. Hillary was on her way.

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The History of the Transit Riders Union

is a can be easily fixed. King County they apply for.
tickets that can be sold in a year, County also limits the number of for cash-strapped non-profits, and this discount it’s a large expense of $2.50, that’s $0.50. Even with a single-ride ticket with a face value twenty cents on the dollar – for a organizations purchase the tickets for to go around? Social service orga er their children’s transportation each adult. This doesn't even cov to provide them with bus tickets to come to classes at our office ev employment program are required to their fare when they don't have LIFT fare rather than the standard trolley busses. Now, as you know they share the tunnels with light rail. I was lost and needed help. I was really lucky that the passes were.

I know that today the reduced rate is $36.00 a month! From 1999's prices til now, it is an astronomical jump! I mean look at the difference in price! I was blessed because I had people show me around and then I was able to navigate my way through Seattle on the busses. That was 18 years ago and the bus has made my life easier and so much more affordable. I want others to experience the convenience of the LIFT card so they can’t be blocked from their appointments, doctor's appointments, and housing meetings to get a permanent place to stay. I had this lux- u- r y and it made all of the difference in the world.”

Survival should not be a luxury

As a case manager working with the chronically homeless I see the struggles people go through to simply get from point A to point B. Many of my clients have primary care providers at places like some organizations don't get all they apply for. This is artificial scarcity, and it can be fixed. King County should allow organizations to purchase more tickets at a lower cost, either by reducing the percentage of value they pay, or by changing 20% of the $5.10 ORCA LIFT fare rather than the standard adult fare. Although Metro cal- culates their 80% “subsidy” as an expense for budgeting purposes, it needs to be acknowledged that, for the most part, the people who use low-income tickets are not going to be pay- ing their fare when they don’t have tickets — they are going to be rid- ing with tickets that expire, or not partaking at all. By making tickets cheaper and more plentiful, Metro will not lose significant revenue.

Lower the cost and making more bus tickets available should be part of any adequate response to our Homelessness State of Emergency. With over 4,500 hu- mans being sleeping rough in King County and homeless deaths at an all time high, we need thou- sands more people losing their food stamps right now due to the reduction of workfare require- ments, we don't need to be squar- ing pennies out of the desperately poor. We need to be making sure that everyone can get to the places they need to go to survive and im- prove their lives.

HILLARY: Not selling it

If it is not all the color of people in that long line, which wrapped three times around in the parking lot and onto the road when we arrived at 4:30 in the afternoon. Many people were still in line as we passed through the long line, which wrapped three times around the expanding Link Light Rail it becomes
to fast and easy transportation systems, we don't need to be squeeze- ning pennies out of the desperately poor. We need to be making sure that everyone can get to the places they need to go to survive and improve their lives.

Katie Wilson is general secretary of the Transit Riders Union. An earlier version of this article appeared on the Seattle Transit Blog.
By Katie Wilson

On March 31st, SHARE (Seattle Housing and Resource Efforts), King County's largest shelter provider, closed its indoor shelter network and set up camp outside the King County Administration Building. With operating costs rising and their county funding cut entirely last year, SHARE was over $70,000 in debt. Without new funding, they couldn't reopen. When I visited the camp on April 7th with other members of the Transit Riders Union (TRU), the plaza was filled to capacity with mats and tents. TRU has worked in coalition with SHARE for the past three years. I have nothing but respect for what they have done over the past three years, minimum-wage staff and for the hundreds of homeless people who live in and run SHARE's shelters and tent encampments. They do immensely difficult and valuable work with scant resources, and they persist in the face of ignorance, malice, and the endless crises and conflicts that result from lack of stable funding. They persist because they believe in their work, and their persistence has created a sometimes messy but beautiful and remarkable community of the forgotten.

SHARE's model is about shelter and survival. It is about empowering people through democracy and self-management. SHARE gives hundreds of homeless people a safe alternative to the streets, and many use this stability as a springboard to jobs and housing — although SHARE's focus, much to the consternation of the political and non-profit establishment, is not on tracking those results.

Critics including the Seattle Times editorial board (April 7, 2016) demand that SHARE abandon their vision and adopt a fundamentally different model — one that is much more expensive, and that would not work for many of the people who thrive at SHARE. Even as the Times acknowledges that SHARE operates "at a cost that is a fraction of other government-funded shelter beds" they urge Seattle and King County to resist SHARE's call for adequate funding and parrot baseless accusations of "sketchy financial management".

SHARE has one enormous problem: underfunding. Demanding SHARE also conveniently distorts from the fundamental issue. The overwhelming reason why homeless people do not find homes is not a lack of case management. It is a lack of affordable housing. Whatever one feels about the adequacy of Seattle's plans to address the affordable housing crisis, significant relief for low-income renters is years away. In the meantime, over 4,500 are sleeping rough in King County and homeless deaths are at an all-time high. To keep people safe and alive and off the streets, what is needed is shelter. SHARE is providing shelter, they are doing it on the cheap, and it in a way that has proved life-changing for many disfavourized and disillusioned people. If King County is really serious about addressing our homelessness state of emergency, they should be making every effort to support SHARE's work. A longer version of this article appeared on The Stranger blog.

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JOIN THE Transit Riders Union!

Fill out the membership form below and help build a movement!

The Transit Riders Union is an independent, democratic, member-run union. We are workers, seniors and students; we are people with disabilities, low-income people, and people experiencing homelessness. We are organizing to make public transit affordable and accessible for all.

We know that a massive expansion of public transit is necessary to stop climate change, and we're building a movement to make it happen.

We believe in progressive taxation. Working and low-income people already pay for public transit through fares, sales tax, and flat car tab fees. Washington State has the most regressive tax system in the country — we simply can't build a true mass transit system, let alone fund education and other basic needs, until corporations and the wealthy begin to pay their fair share.

Do you ride public transit? Then you're a transit rider, and you belong in the Transit Riders Union! As a member, you have a voice and a vote at our monthly meetings, which take place on the 1st Monday of each month; 6:30 — 8:30 PM at the Labor Temple Hall 6, 2800 1st Ave. We have power in numbers and organization. Join us today!

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Transit Riders Union Application for Membership

Member Information

Name

Address (Street, Apt. #)

Address (City, State, Zip)

Phone Number

Email

I prefer to be contacted by [ ] mail [ ] telephone [ ] email (choose one)

Choice one

YES

NO

Frequent Email List

Do you want to be added to our email list for announcements and discussion of TRU meetings? This list is private and not sold.

[ ] Yes [ ] No

Frequency of Dues Payment

[ ] Quarterly (Monthly Dues x 3) [ ] Annually (Monthly Dues x 12)

Total amount of first payment ____________________

(please turn over...)

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By Raise Up Washington

The Pacific Northwest has led the national movement to raise wages and fight income inequality that was sparked in Seattle, exploded in Seattle and Tacoma, and now has the promise to catch fire across Washington State. Raise Up Washington, a broad coalition of labor, faith, and community groups, has introduced I-1433 that will give over 700,000 workers a raise to $13.50 phased in by 2020 and allow one million workers the ability to earn paid sick & safe leave.

"For many this will mean no longer choosing between rent and childcare, between food and transportation. When we raise the minimum wage, we lift people out of poverty, and reduce dependence on social services and government programs. It's how we build a pathway to the middle class," said Michael Ramos, Executive Director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

The initiative was officially filed by Ariana Davis, a grocery worker from Auburn. Davis said, "Passing paid sick leave and raising the minimum wage would change my life and the lives of thousands of workers like me. It would make us healthier and more able to take care of our families and customers." I-1433 would take concrete steps to address racial and gender disparities that exist in our workforce. From the health care industry, to restaurants, professional social services and government programs.

Discrimination and systemic barriers have left 41% of African-American workers and 45% of Latino workers earning less than $13.50 per hour — double the rate of white workers — and the numbers are even worse for women of color. Raising the minimum wage will help thousands of people of color who now work in poverty earn more to provide for themselves and their families.

Raising wages and establishing paid sick leave doesn't just help workers; it helps small businesses. According to the Budget and Policy Center, raising the minimum wage to $13.50 would provide nearly $2.5 billion more in earnings annually in the Washington state economy. Low-wage earners immediately spend paychecks on necessities like food and clothing in their communities and local businesses throughout Washington will benefit. A study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that states that raised their minimum wage actually saw 50% faster job growth — and a stronger economy — than states that left their minimum wage stagnant.

The Raise Up Washington coalition is organizing in communities across the state to win the passage of this historic initiative. "This campaign is being fueled by hundreds of volunteers to gather signatures at public events and street corners in their own neighborhoods. We can only win when more people step forward and stand with us to reach our goal of 250,000 signatures by the end of June to place this on the ballot," said Jon Grant, Outreach Director for Raise Up Washington. "We are seeing overwhelming support for our initiative, but to make it a reality we need even more volunteers to give Washington a raise!"

To sign up and volunteer on with Raise Up Washington, visit http://www.rai

Auburn grocery worker, filed I-1433

The brand new Seattle Transit Map and Guide is here!

Seattle has long needed an easy-to-read and portable transit map. Now we finally have one! This map was designed by Oran V incent and produced by the Transit Riders Union in collaboration with the Seattle Department of Transportation.

It’s an invaluable tool for navigating Seattle’s increasingly integrat ed network of buses, light rail and streetcars. Line thickness and color intuitively emphasize high-frequency, all-day service. While app-based tools like One Bus Away and Trip Planner can help you figure out the best way to get from A to B, the Seattle Transit Map helps you visualize the transit system throughout the entire city, so you can discover new connections and destinations. It gives you the freedom to travel through the city with confidence without planning every detail of your trip in advance.

How can you get a copy, you ask? TRU has limited quantities available at our meetings and events — so check out the calendar on our website, https://transitriders.org/calendar. SDOT and Sound Transit may also have copies at their outreach events. You can visit http://seattletransitmap.com to order a poster version from Oran.

And, if you become a member of TRU or make a donation of $1 or more, we’ll be glad to mail you a map as a thank-you!
I receive lots of questions about disability and accessibility on public transit, so I’m dedicating this space to discuss things. Metro should do to be more accessible, how able-bodied riders can help, and what disabled riders should know about their rights. I will mostly focus on riders between opening the door and activating the lift or ramp, a mob of other riders barge past and start boarding the bus. If able-bodied riders exited through the rear door – yes, even if it’s behind you! – I could more quickly deploy the lift or ramp to accommodate disabled riders attempting to board or exit.

4. Let disabled riders board the bus before you

This is a pet peeve of mine: I pull up right in front of a chair user at a bus stop, but in the half-second between opening the door and activating the lift or ramp, a mob of other riders barge past and start boarding the back door. As space makes it easier.

The “Priority Seating” area at the front of the bus is designed for chair users who cannot go up steps board by a mechanical lift, which is fairly slow and cumbersome. Metro’s newer models are “low-floor,” with just a small gap from the curb to the bus floor, meaning many disabled riders can board unassisted, and others board via a much nimbler ramp. Metro is slowly phasing in additional low-floors, but it will probably take a few more years before this is 100% of the fleet.

3. New buses should have wheelchair areas that don’t require strapping in

Currently, RapidRide coaches are the only Metro buses outfitted with a space designed for chair users to ride unsecured. It’s rear-facing, so the momentum of the bus keeps the rider’s back to the wall, thus safe enough to ride without secured. This should be available on all buses. The biggest obstacle to this is King County’s topography. For example, on the in-bound C-Line, chairs must be secured if traveling from West Seattle into Downtown because of the steep uphill climb on Seneca Street. Metro should find innovative solutions to overcome this.

5. Be ready to fold and stow your baby stroller

Riders with baby strollers have two options: either fold it up and store it beneath your seat, or secure it in a wheelchair section. If you choose the latter, please fold it and move it out of the way if a chair user boards and needs that space. They prioritize in these spaces. Stroller users have priority over everyone else.

6. Don’t be a jerk

I’ve heard many people verbally complain about the slowness of boarding disabled riders. If you feel that this process lasts an eternity, just remember that it’s more like sixty seconds. So just take a deep breath, be patient and nice. And remember that almost everyone will spend part of our lives with a disability, so spread some good karma.

Know your rights

If a chair user cannot be accommodated, either because the spaces are full or the lift/ramp is broken and cannot be deployed (this is rare), Metro policy dictates that the driver call Metro’s Control Center, and doesn’t leave the bus zone until this has been communicated. In other words, drivers should not pass up chair users without stopping and explaining the situation.

As I mentioned earlier, you technically have the right not to have your wheelchair secured, but because of the rarity of this request and the bureaucratic time-suck, most drivers either don’t know or don’t want to do this. You have the right to secure your own chair, without the driver’s assistance, or to specify to the driver where to connect straps or hooks to your chair, so that you are the most comfortable and your chair is undamaged.

Everyone has the right to ask the driver to kneel the bus lower to the curb. Under no circumstances should the driver challenge your ability or need. We’ve all had trainings on “Invisible Disabilities.” If you need priority seating, you have the right to ask the driver to request that someone vacate a seat. Other passengers aren’t required to comply with this request, but they usually will.

Finally, you have the right to pay a reduced fare of $1. You can obtain your Regional Reduced Fare Permit at a Metro customer service center. You can call 206-553-3000 or visit metror.kingcounty.gov/app/accessible for more information and to find out what is needed to qualify.

If you would like to Ask a Bus Driver, please email Sam@transitriders.org.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVIE VANBRONKHORST

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The People Who Work in Seattle’s Hotels

Azieb, Banquet Server

"People are moving. Business is booming. You know, all the big companies are here. Amazon, Starbucks, Microsoft. So, in a way, I’m happy that it’s growing. But we are not keeping up, the lower people, we are constantly struggling.

The issue is that the hours I get off of work in banquets, sometimes there is no bus or I am too scared to go to the Park ‘N Ride. Think, in the middle of the night, 1 in the morning, if you find a bus by then…after certain hours it’s fine, I can take a bus, but banquet hours are crazy. Sometimes we have to be here at 5 in the morning, and there’s no bus to take me home. The earliest bus is 5:15am."

Jenice, Prep Cook

"It’s getting to the point where families have to live together in order to pay rent and make money. My daughter was on Section 8 but they sold her house. So then my grandkids were out on the street, and no, we don’t do that. So I decided…let’s get together. After work I have to catch a bus up the hill, go to the A line, and then catch the train. Or I can come down the hill. It takes me 2 hours to get to the bus that will take me home."

"It takes me 2 hours to get to the bus that will take me home."

Jenny, House Attendant

"If I didn’t get money from my daughter, I might have to get a second job. Even when I have 40 hours of work, I’m feeling so tired. If I work three or four days, I’m feeling ok if I have money. I need to spend a lot of time to work, to make the money, you know. No it’s the, you know, the bus fee. The bus fee is more expensive and I’m feeling it. Maybe 10, 8 percent of the money I have to take to pay my transfer you know, because the bus is very packed. The bus is public and should be affordable. The price of oil is going down but the price of the bus is going up, up, up.

Now, they say, always, global warming. They say we should take the bus, but how can we when the price keeps going up? Also, you know the parking is so expensive. Today it’s 6 dollars a day for employees."

Melody, Bartender

"I have to drive. There are no options that on that one. The buses don’t run down there, and I never know when I’m going to get home. You have to go down to a dangerous area to get the bus. One guy got stabbed down there. I could get stuck until what, 5 in the morning?

No matter what the economy does across the country, there’s so much residual money in Seattle that it will always be expensive. And we are a port city. We don’t get hit like the midwestern states economically, and these big businesses aren’t going anywhere. They are putting 1200 apartments in two to three buildings alone. Food’s getting a lot more expensive, especially meats. Because of all of the income in this area, higher specialty foods are coming in to this area and the price of everything is going up."

HOSPITABLE: Who deserves time to have a life?

I often ask workers how they do it, day after day. How do they work two full time jobs and endure a horrendous commute only to wake up a few hours later to do it all again? The answer is unwaveringly straightforward and always the same: “I have no choice.”

The success of corporate greed depends on a system in which some are ignored and seen as less-than human, or worse yet, not seen at all. In sharing their stories with the broader community, Local 8 members are making visible a system designed to be out of sight and out of mind. While many of these stories portray the difficult reality of being a hotel worker in downtown Seattle today, it is important to keep in mind that these union jobs are the better jobs in the industry. Still silent are the voices of non-union workers who bear the crushing weight of this modern day Gilded Age without the opportunity to collectively bargain for good wages, affordable health care, and job security. There has perhaps never been a more urgent need and tremendous opportunity to support organized labor and unionization in this city.

When I look at the photo of Badatu at the Westin, I am reminded of the resilience of the human spirit and the capacity a single story carries to drive social change. Now, whenever I pass a service worker of any kind on the street or in a hotel, I stop and take the time to see and appreciate all of who they are and what they bring to the table. And I wonder how they are surviving. I imagine their answers would be something along the lines of “we have no choice but to make it work.”

To read more worker stories, visit www.hospitableseattle.org.
Michael, Banquet Server

“Professionals need service workers, and service workers need professionals. If they keep pushing people farther and farther outside the city, like San Francisco, people without six-figure jobs are being forced out of the city. Who’s going to take care of the professionals if the service workers can’t live anywhere near the city? The mayor was just here at a lunch talking about how he wants to dedicate millions of dollars to create low-income housing. But this problem is way deeper than money. You have to have a plan. I ride the buses out of choice. And I hear these conversations everyday on the bus from the working class and poor people, I hear it from my fellow coworkers…people are moving further and further to the outskirts of town.”

Anthony, Cook

“I used to live in Kent before Ballard. That was an hour and a half of two transfers. First I had to walk a mile to get to the first bus, and now I’m probably going to have to start doing that again. If I can’t get to work, how am I going to get paid, and how am I going to be able to have a place to stay?”

Nick, Cook

“I gave up my car to move to Capitol Hill. I got into a program that pays your rent for a year, but the housing is in Cap Hill, and there’s no parking in Cap Hill. Whenever I have to buy stuff is when it hits me harder. Just in everyday living, because I’m from Ballard originally and it’s getting expensive over there too. Just the cost of everything, especially moving here to Cap Hill, things are outrageously expensive.”

Yehuda, Banquet Server

“Lots of people are moving here to the city. Compared to thirty, thirty-five years ago there wasn’t too much traffic. Now it’s terrible. Even if I take the bus, for example, compared to the Light Rail, it takes me one hour. This is too much. So I always would rather walk twenty blocks to the train station and from there take the Light Rail. Parking here is six dollars a day for employees, so it saves me money, using Orca, because it’s subsidized. Sometimes I drive because my first Light Rail starts at 5:20am so I cannot catch it when I work early; so then I have no transportation. We talk about what we need to do to save money, and maybe in the future we need to leave and go to another state where it’s cheaper.”

James, Guest Service Agent

“I would love to live closer to downtown but rent is outrageous and parking is outrageous. I sold my car when I first moved here, and now I have no desire whatsoever to get a new one.”

Mirian, Cleaning Attendant

“Even to drive the traffic is really bad now. There are a lot of people coming here from other states. Perhaps they want a better future. You know, on the Discovery Channel they said Washington State is the third most expensive state now. The people who work in restaurants and hotels, the salary we have now, it’s not going to go up. Maybe a matter of cents, but not several dollars. We get a raise but it’s not enough according to the inflation. Everything is so expensive, the bus fare, rent, mortgage, etc. Whenever we have a chance to work extra we do because we need the money, but not always because people cannot be working all the time. When it’s busy we work extra for when the slow time comes. For people not young anymore it’s not good for the body and the health to work more than 40 hours a week. The work is physical…we don’t think too much but it’s physical and my body hurts.”

Tiblets, Server

“It’s not an easy life. I work two jobs and my husband does too. I do a hard job. I have four kids. My mom is a single mom. I finished high school and led a hard life. Now I try with four kids. My son, he does good job at school. I help him a lot. I’m not tired because of my family; I’m tired because of my job. In the morning, my friend drives me here. In the morning when I have to start at 5:30, there’s no transportation. So my husband gives me a ride. I’m not driving, I’m scared. And I can’t afford 5 dollars of parking a day.”

All photographs by Hannah Long-Higgens. To read more worker stories, visit www.hospitableseattle.org.
**Sound Transit 3, On Your Ballot This November**

This November voters in Pierce, King, and Snohomish counties will again have the opportunity to vote on the future of light rail in the region with the Sound Transit 3 package. The long range plan, which would run through 2041, would cost $50.1 billion over the life of the package, and would be funded by new and existing taxes, federal funding, and bonding.

The map below shows the proposed projects in the package. The Transit Riders Union has yet to take a position on the package, though we wholeheartedly support expanding transit in the region, there are some concerns with the timeline, funding sources, and design and order of completion of the projects. TRU will be taking a position soon, but we need your voice! Join TRU, and take note of the nearby decorative banner-like sign, one of many that mark the route. The designs are of local native plants.

Walk north to Barton St., turn right to follow the sidewalk to the crosswalk near the bus stop shelter. Note the twin pillars on your right that form an ornamental “gate.” Cross Barton St., then turn right then left at the first light (the main entrance to Westwood Village Mall). The Village is the former site of the Kiyoshi Tada family truck farm.

Walking north down the center toward the back of the mall, turn right to follow the artificial streamway (not part of Longfellow Creek), at the end turn left around the corner, then left at the next corner, and right at the first crosswalk, to walk to the north entrance of the mall (Trenton St.). Cross Trenton St. and climb the stairs to the S.W. athletic field complex. Follow the eastern fencing to the north end, then turn right walk down Thisstile St. crossing over to the West Seattle F-Patch, below Chief Sealth high school and a second “gate” trail on the left (west side) leads around the gardens and then left along the line of the creek. Turn right, emerging at 24th Ave and Elmgrove St. Walk straight ahead (east) on Elmgrove St, just past 22nd Ave, note a path on the left that leads up to Delridge Way.

*(Friendly alert: the parsley-like plants growing here and elsewhere are Poison Hemlock. This is the Socrates plant, use caution. Not a contact poison, but dangerous if ingested. Wash hands before eating trail mix or PBUs. It grows to 4-7 feet with white umbrella-spoked flowers, has a strong musty smell. Look-alikes under 12 inches with pink flowers are not a serious threat.)*

When you reach Delridge Way turn left, follow the sidewalk to Kenyon St. Note the control box on the opposite side of Delridge Way has a painted design of sockeye salmon. Turn left, walk down to streetend gravel trail and bridge over the creek, then turn right at 24th Ave. Walk the sidewalk to Webster St. The deep hollow at your right is Webster St. Detention Pond. Turn right, when turn left, follow the sidewalk past the Seattle Police Department building all the way to Myrtle St. Turn left then right on 23rd Ave. In about two blocks spot stairs on the left, leading to a bridge over the creek at 24th Ave. Again turn right, and shortly reach Willow St. Jog left to locate the next section. Note a large stump on the bank of the creek (on your right), a remnant of the ancient forest logged in the late 1800s.

When the trail runs into 24th Ave, continue straight ahead to junction with 25th Ave. Jog right, crossing over to the next “banner” marking more creekside trail (about two blocks). At a “Y” the left side goes to a trailmark at Graham St. streetend. Turn right, walk east to Delridge Way and a “gate” at the Graham St. bus stop. Stairs lead back down to the lower trail (small washout), turn right, then left into the wide marshland of the Longfellow Creek Greenspace, looking much like a beaver pond.

Emerging at Juneau St. turn left, and walk to street end. The trail continues on the right across from the power substation. Continue some distance north at a confusion of trails, all lead to Brandon St., the eastern one to a “gate”. Turn right, then left at 26th Ave. Cottage Grove Park is on the east side and Greg Davis Park is on the west. Trails at the western end of this park explore the creek but are not on the main route.

Follow the “banners” north along the east side of 26th Ave all the way to the Delridge Community Center Complex. At Genesee turn left (downhill), spot a banner on the north side at the top of a steep stair leading down to the creek. Turn right, shortly cross the evocative Salmonbone Bridge and just beyond that look up on your left to the delightful Dragonfly Pavilion. The trail continues a little further to Yancy St. and a final “gate”. Turn right, cross the creek one last time to the de facto northern end of the trail. Turning left at 26th Ave and right at Andover St. brings you to the nearest bus zones (Metro 120) on Delridge Way.

**Destinations: Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail**

*Metro 21, 120, Rapid Ride C*

Mixing streetside and streamside trail, this 4.2-mile route traces Longfellow Creek from its source almost to the outlet on Elliot Bay. Begin at the information kiosk located just south of the bathrooms on the west side of Roxhill Park. The park is on a seadge peat bog and is the source for Longfellow Creek. Walk downhill to the semi-circle of stone benches. Study the fuzzy map and take note of the nearby decorative banner-like sign, one of many that mark the route. The designs are of local native plants.

*GET THERE: Metro 21, 120, Rapid Ride C. Jump off at Westwood Village Mall. Roxhill Park is south of the Metro Bus Zones on Barton St. across from the west end of the mall.*

—Pauline Van Senus