



FORE TIMES

News for the Western Washington Taxicab Operators Association (WWTCOA) - Teamsters Local 117

Teamsters Local 117: 14675 Interurban Ave. S, Suite 307 • Tukwila, WA 98168 (206) 441-4860 • www.teamstertaxi.org



ELECTION 2013: Vote YES! for SeaTac Proposition 1

Edgewater and Waterfront Marriott OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

WWTCOA achieves success at 2 downtown hotels



Drivers #613 (Yellow) and #834 (Orange) outside of the Waterfront Marriott hotel.

For years, taxis vying for business at the Edgewater and Marriott Waterfront hotels in downtown Seattle have had to contend with town car drivers unlawfully stealing their fares. Independent town car drivers had secured a virtual monopoly on the hotels by directly soliciting customers, which is prohibited under the city's regulations, or by reportedly compensating hotel staff to arrange airport trips and other desirable fares.

Now, thanks to the work of the **Western Washington Taxicab Operators Association** (WWTCOA) in partnership with the Teamsters, times are starting to change.

In October, members of the WWTCOA Leadership Council met with the general managers of both the Marriot Waterfront and the Edgewater to discuss ongoing issues of favoritism and unlawful solicitation by town car drivers.

At both hotels, managers agreed to re-

train staff and post proper signage in front of hotels.

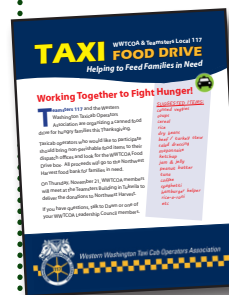
The Marriott Waterfront has hired a new town car service that will provide prearranged service for guests who specifically request a limo.

The hotel's town car service will now be the only one that can provide rides to hotel guests, which will prevent independent limo drivers from unlawfully

- soliciting fares.
- The Edgewater Hotel says it is taking similar steps to curb illicit behavior.
- Taxicab operators are now encouraged to use the taxi stands at both hotels. WWTCOA members should notify Teamsters 117 Business Representative Dawn Gearhart or a WWTCOA Leadership Council member immediately if there are any continued issues at either hotel. ●

TAXI FOOD DRIVE

Help Feed Families in Need!



Teamsters 117 and the Western Washington Taxicab Operators Association are organizing a canned food drive for hungry families this Thanksgiving.

Taxicab operators who would like to participate in the Drive should bring non-perishable food items to their dispatch offices and look for the **WWTCOA Food Drive** box. All proceeds will go to the Northwest Harvest food bank for families in need.

On Thursday, November 21, WWTCOA members will meet at the Teamsters Building in Tukwila to deliver the donations to Northwest Harvest.

If you have questions, call Teamsters 117 Business Representative Dawn Gearhart at 206-441-4860 ext. 1254 or contact one of your WWTCOA Leadership Council members. ●

Hospitality Class Coming Soon! Taxis Improving Customer Service

Following the results of the city's Demands Study, your WWTCOA Leadership Council is working with the **Hospitality and Visitors' Bureau** and **South Seattle Community College** to develop a customer service curriculum and course for members of the association. All WWTCOA members who take the course will be certified in customer service. Look for details on how to register on the WWTCOA website at www.teamstertaxi.org. ●



WWTCOA Members Tell Their Stories

**Aamar Khan
Cab #715**

"I was in an accident a few weeks ago that caused thousands of dollars in damage. The driver admitted fault but the insurance company denied my claim.

Because I am a member of the WWTCOA, I had access to an attorney at no extra cost who was able to get the insurance company to reverse its decision."

**Ranjit Dhillon
Cab #768**

"I bought a product to repair a leaky gasket on my cab. The product completely ruined my engine and I had to have it replaced, which cost me nearly \$3000. I went to the company, but they only offered to pay me \$300 for my expenses.

The Teamsters helped me. They were able to get the company to refund \$2500 to pay for my expenses."

**Yadwinder Singh
Cab #312**

"I've been a driver for 5 years and have never had an accident. When someone hit my cab, Yellow suspended my dispatch even though it wasn't my fault. I was out of work for nearly 6 weeks.

WWTCOA Leaders met with the Yellow Cab safety committee and told them they would take legal action if I wasn't put back to work.

Yellow reactivated my ID that same day."

**Ahmed Hussien
Cab #300**

"I had to have my transmission replaced. Less than a month later, the new transmission stopped working. The mechanic refused to honor the warranty and I was forced to pay to get my cab back on the road.

I worked with the Teamsters Legal Department to file a claim in small claims court. I won my case and was awarded \$1600 by a judge."

**Faize Kaifa
Cab #115**

"I'd been trying to get a wheelchair license for over a year, but not having any success. Then, the Teamsters stepped in.

They helped me tell my story to a judge who decided to grant me the license on a temporary basis.

Now I have secure employment and am able to support my family. I'm hoping to have a permanent license by Nov. 15."

THOMPSON RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP



On October 16, the community organization Puget Sound Sage hosted its 1st annual Union Leadership Award dinner. At the event, **Tracey A. Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters 117**, was recognized for her outstanding leadership on behalf of working families in Washington State. Tracey was specifically recognized for her innovative work in organizing Seattle's taxicab industry. **Congratulations, Tracey, and thank you for all you've done to support Puget Sound taxicab operators!**

Legislative Update

THE WWTCOA LEADERSHIP COUNCIL IS WORKING TO LIFT THE L&I MANDATE

This coming legislative session the WWTCOA Leadership Council will be working together with the Teamsters 117 Legislative Affairs Department to push a bill that would remove the mandate that requires taxicab operators to pay for their personal L&I insurance.

Local 117 Lobbyist Teresita Torres has been meeting with legislators over the issue and has identified Representative Cyrus Habib (48th District) as a prime sponsor for the bill.



Taxi drivers lobbying in Olympia during the 2013 legislative session

In order to pass this bill, it will be important for as many WWTCOA members as possible to make their voices heard in Olympia. If you want to participate in lobbying activities, contact Dawn or a member of your WWTCOA Leadership Council. Drivers who lobby will receive trainings so they are prepared to meet with State Representatives between January 9 and March 1, 2014. ●



WWTCOA Leadership Council members meet with mayoral candidate Ed Murray.

WWTCOA MEMBERS MEET WITH CANDIDATES AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

WWTCOA taxi drivers and owners have been meeting with Seattle City Council members to present our proposal for changes to the city's taxi regulations.

If you would like to participate in upcoming meetings, please talk to Dawn or your WWTCOA Leadership Council member. ●