



History Will Repeat Itself if you Choose to Ignore the Past

by Jimmy Padgett

In 1965 CWA was 280,000 strong under one umbrella and moving forward. Our members were informed, active and prepared. The company would honor the contract or pay the price in work actions, walkouts and strikes.

In 1966 I was a frame hop. I started at \$2 an hour, with no vacation, medical, dental or vision care. The pension plan was embarrassing. We had no EWP days, no ISP buy-outs and get this, women were kept inside where they belong (so the company thought). On the other hand terminations were unheard of.

Fast forward through the strikes, walkouts and contracts to 2005. The average pay is between \$20 and \$30 an hour, we have more benefits than most members choose to read about, full medical, vision and dental. Life insurance for you and your family. We've made progress in workplace safety and a have good pension plan.

We also have more terminations than ever, the company violates the contract whenever it can and we now have forced overtime.

How could we as a union move so far forward and then become so stagnant? The membership has become too complacent. Our members are choosing to let the company make their career decisions. They have become less active, less informed and less prepared. Member attendance at meetings is at an all time low and the company knows this, they count the number of red shirts on Thursdays.

What can you do? You might start asking where your check and benefits come from? If you thought "the company!" you're wrong. The answer is the Union (backed by the members) bargained them. The company didn't "give you" anything.

Involved? Try it you'll like it. The Union isn't just the officers and Stewards, it's the members. Attend a meeting or two, join a committee, wear red on Thursday, GET INVOLVED.

"Those who do not remember the past are doomed to repeat it"

George Santayana

It IS a Union Issue

by Ray Pomeroy

If it happens in a Union represented workplace it is a Union issue.

I recently had a discussion with a member who had an issue they wanted some advice on. While listening to the member's story another member overheard what was being said and loudly asked the person what they were doing and stated "it's not a Union issue". The person apparently felt intimidated or embarrassed and never finished telling their story. Did I mention that this happened off the job?

The member who interrupted was not only rude they were wrong. We are here to represent our members, help where we can and enforce our contract. If you have any kind of issue or problem you can bring it to a Steward or Officer. If we can help we will and if the company is within it's rights and following the contract we will tell you.

If you are being singled out, discriminated against, have problems off the job that are (or aren't) affecting the job we can help or direct you to someone who can, it's a Union issue. If management is violating or subverting the contract or if a co-worker is harassing or intimidating you, it's a Union issue.

While we do have some rank and file members who know the contract and are pretty good about staying informed and attending

meetings, most don't. It is completely unacceptable for anyone to pressure someone not to bring something to the Unions attention and unforgivable for them to start yelling "it's not a Union issue" at someone in a public place.

Uninformed people aren't the only problem. When someone brings an issue to our attention and then someone else comes up and says that's been happening to me for years and you haven't done anything about it, the first thing we have to ask is who did you tell? Did YOU INFORM the Union? If our members don't inform us and it's a situation our Stewards or Officers don't encounter, how are we supposed to know? You have to bring it to us.

Some things may be a problem for some people but not for others based on gender, stature, appearance or a hundred other things. For instance a five and a half foot, clean cut member may have a problem working in certain areas because they appear to be an easy target whereas a six foot plus member that looks like he eats nails for breakfast may never have a problem in the same area. If the six footer never perceives a problem and the five and a half foot member never tells a Union rep about it, we'll never know.

Doesn't mean it's not a Union issue.

Statement by CWA President Morton Bahr, Executive Vice President Larry Cohen and Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling on the actions at this years AFL-CIO convention

press release from the Nationals

This week, two unions decided to separate from the AFL-CIO, and a few others are considering that move. We won't know the effects of that decision for some time. But as union members, we do know that unity is important, today probably more than anytime in our history, because of the real challenges that working people in our country face every day.

CWA was a part of the nearly-year long discussion in the labor movement of issues and ideas, and the AFL-CIO adopted many of our proposals as it sought to reach an agreement with these unions. We proposed changes

based on the work we've been doing for many years, the unity of our CWA triangle: bargaining, organizing and political action.

No agreement was reached. Today, CWA will continue to build our union from the grassroots, building workplace representation and structures that enable workers to create their own organizations. We will continue to mobilize, with other unions and other allies, on the critical issues that unite us.

We're fighting to stop the concentration of economic power that enabled corporate

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

It's time to step up and be involved. We have a few dedicated stewards that are trying to handle the load. We need more of you to become involved for several reasons. First, the more coverage we have in the workplace the better the workplace will be. Second, when a few are handling the load of many burnout can happen quickly. Let's not forget that there is power in numbers.

Being a steward means many things. You are interested in what happens to you and your co-workers futures. You want to see justice and fairness in the workplace. You want to grow the union. You understand the importance that the union brings to the workplace. There is plenty of training for stewards that want to continue to grow with the union.

Since I have been an officer in this local times have changed. When I became secretary-treasurer we had around 470 members in the local. Now we have almost 900. We lost our AT&T/Lucent members and our VCSI members but have picked up Cingular Wireless and have the opportunity to grow adding the AT&T Wireless folks that are now part of Cingular. We won an election for Cavalier and are in the process of trying to get a first contract. These new groups know the value of being involved with the union. Our local is slowly growing.

The reason I mention all of this is that with the decline in membership overall for unions we have a hard road to fight for our rights. Being union helps in that fight but people need to stand up and say I have time to give to secure our wages, benefits, our retiree benefits and our families livelihoods. If no one stood up before you, you wouldn't have what you take for granted now. Back in the day a union fight was just that-people died for it. While we are not asking you to put your life on the line, we are asking that you give a little time to keep what we have and ensure we have a future.

If you can't be a steward, join a committee. Be active as a mobilizer! Don't wait for the next guy to take the lead because sooner or later there will be no one to carry on. Perhaps that's why the companies today give us such hard times, because they see the complacency and lack of commitment. Think about it! Attend a meeting, find out what is going on.

"Stripped to its essentials, what the labor movement is all about is power, the power for workers to confront management at the job site, across the bargaining table or in the political arena on equal footing. And it is that fundamental of gaining power, a power workers have only achieved through collective action, that is the basis of the union movement." Arthur Osborne

Nearly 1,200 New Cingular Members

Nearly 1,200 former AT&T Wireless employees join CWA in Austin, TX and Memphis, TN through card check recognition.

On August 11th 390 Cingular Wireless call center workers in Memphis, TN, gained CWA representation following a card check. More than 74 percent of the former AT&T Wireless workers signed cards supporting union representation. CWA members working as warehouse employees at Cingular's national distribution center in Memphis played an important role in the victory, meeting with the employees and explaining the benefits of union representation. Two dozen workers made up the employees' inside organizing committee at the call center. Major concerns of the workers are respect and changes in their benefits and working conditions. In January 2006, benefits for all of the former AT&T Wireless employees will be transferred into Cingular's benefits programs for un-represented employees.

This is the second call center where former AT&T Wireless employees have gained union representation with CWA since earlier this year, when CWA began helping assist the former AT&T Wireless employees get a union. Earlier this spring, call center workers at a Cingular call center in Jackson, Miss. gained representation with CWA. More than 22,000 of Cingular Wireless employees belong to CWA, and the company's merger with AT&T Wireless brought an additional 20,000 un-represented workers into the company.

756 Cingular Wireless customer service employees in Austin, TX., gained union representation with CWA on August 15. More than 63 percent of the former AT&T Wireless employees at the call center signed cards supporting representation with CWA Local 6132. Currently, there are 756 employees at

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CEOs to ruin their companies and the livelihoods of thousands of workers, and has given management free rein to contract out our jobs or move them overseas.

We're fighting for the issues that should unite us all – both unions and progressive organizations. These are: workers' rights, health care for all, fair pensions and retirement security and good jobs. Above all, we're fighting to restore real collective bargaining to workers in this country, which now is about the worst of any democracy.

This hard work continues every day: In the workplace, where workers face hostility and worse from management, in the board rooms,

where corporate executives all too easily shift thousands of jobs overseas or cut workers' pensions, and in government, where elected officials must act to restore workers rights and economic fairness.

The stakes have never been higher for working families, and that's why unity is so important.

In every democratic country around the globe, unions have joined together to establish national labor centers, because they realize that strength and solidarity are the way to change public policy. It's unfortunate that some unions in the United States are not moving in that same direction.

Can't Hear Me Now? Too Bad

from the National

It's not just Verizon Wireless employees who get the brushoff – or worse – from the company. Ivan Seidenberg, who is the chairman of Verizon Communications, says wireless customers who don't get good reception should just stop complaining.

In an interview with the San Francisco Chronicle, Seidenberg said that customers expect too much:

“Why in the world would you think your (cell) phone would work in your house?” he said. “The customer has come to expect so much. They want it to work in the elevator; they want it to work in the basement.”

Well, yeah. Isn't that the point of all those “Can you hear me now?” ads, where the test guy always gets a signal, whether out in the middle of nowhere or inside a building?

“Seidenberg said it's not Verizon's responsibility to correct the misconception by giving out statistics on how often Verizon's service works inside homes or by distributing more detailed coverage maps, showing all the possible dead zones.”

And if they decide to try it out, then find that they can't get reception when they need it? It'll cost them.

“Seidenberg also defended the company's stiff cancellation fees and tighter return policy.”

For 10 years, Verizon Wireless has been fighting employees' efforts to have a voice on the job. Looks like the company doesn't want to hear from its customers, either.

(Continued from page 2)

the Austin center and in January the workforce is expected to reach 1,000.

The workers' campaign was led by a 40-person committee made up of volunteer employee organizers. Their goals in getting a union are similar to those held by other former AT&T Wireless employees who have gained CWA representation at Cingular – greater respect, a voice in their jobs, and a say in their benefits and working conditions.

The committee worked hard to communicate the advantages of union representation, distributing literature, answering co-workers' questions, and by publicly endorsing union representation on their literature. They also manned tables that they set up in the call center to talk with employees. A number of those involved in the campaign had tried to get a union when they worked for AT&T Wireless, but that company, unlike Cingular, did not respect its employees' right to form a union.

Cavalier

The Union has submitted a number of dates that we can meet with management to the company for bargaining. We are waiting for a response and will keep you informed of any developments.

**Cavalier Bargaining line
866 900-2107**

Leadership Conference

by Dutchin Webster

CWA District 2 holds a Leadership conference almost every year. This is a weeklong program to train future Leaders and Officers within the Locals of District 2.

This year the training was attended by Lamar Maddox, 1st year program, and Jeffrey Savin and myself, 2nd year program. The 1st year curriculum consisted of Public Speaking, Labor History, Worker Political Economics and Leadership & Leadership Development. The 2nd year curriculum consisted of Labor Law I & II, Safety & Health and Using the Internet.

Safety & Health was interesting because we covered topics such as Workplace Violence and Stress. These are issues we deal with regularly in the Local. In Labor Law we covered the NLRA (National Labor Relations Act). We also learned about how much money CEO's of big companies make and how they still want to continue taking money from our pockets. There was an assembly on organizing Verizon Wireless and how this is something we need to concentrate on now and in the future.

We had a special guest speaker, Dina Beaumont who is the Executive Assistant to CWA President Morty Bahr. She was very informative with stories from her over 50 years of involvement in the Labor Movement. This was a very educational program and I would like to thank District 2 and all of it's Local's for giving those who attended the chance to participate.

Local Elections

It's time once again for Local Officer Elections throughout CWA. National Officer Elections will be conducted at the CWA National Convention in Chicago in late August.

Nominations for Officers in CWA Local 2107 will be taken at the Membership meeting September 13, 2005 at Damon's of Crofton, at the corner of Rt 3 and Waugh Chapel in Gambrills.

Local 2107 Offices are:

President

Executive Vice President

Secretary Treasurer

Northern Area Vice President

Southern Area Vice President

Cingular Vice President

A motion will also be put to the membership to add the office of Assistant Secretary Treasurer.

Sympathies to:

Roberto Aguirre on the death of his father.
Harry Perrin on the death of his mother.
Tom Ward on the death of his son.
Tim Ward on the death of his brother.

Get Well to:

Darlene Walter, recovering from surgery.

Welcome Back to:

Sharon Clark

Verizon

Call MetLife for the Preferred Dental Program (PDP) to receive a list of dentists in your zip code area on 800 988-8331 or access MetLife at www.metlife.com/dental.

Call Davis Vision for participating providers on 800 999-5431 or www.davisvision.com. For Laser Vision Correction visit the web or call 877 999-7006.

We now have a Single Point Of Contact for benefits excluding the 401k. (To view beneficiary info for basic life and pension you must use the toll free number.) Using the internet you can log on to : <http://resources.hewitt.com/verizon>, use the eweb at: <http://eweb.verizon.com>, select "get hr benefit info" or call toll free 877 275-8947.

For your 401k go to www.401k.com or call 1-888-457-9333.

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

09-13 Damon's of Crofton 6:30 pm

Other Meetings

08-23 Executive Board Meeting 2:00 pm
09-12 Retiree meeting 10:00 am
09-23 Presidents Meeting

Other

08-22 Mobilization training D2
08-28 thru 08-31 Convention
09-19 MD State Council 10:30 am
09-20 Newsletter deadline

Retirees Corner

RMC meetings are held on the second Monday in January, February, March, April, May, September, October, November and December. Unless otherwise noted all meetings are held at the Local 2107 office at 2441 Holly Ave, Annapolis and begin at 10AM.

Community Services

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Combined Blood Drive with the Raddison Hotel on August 3rd. About 85 % of the people who donated blood were our members. The American Red Cross collected 36 useable pints. Our next drive will be November 2nd and hopefully we can have another combined drive.

We will be asking for craft donations for our December Craft and Poinsettia sale.

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