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## Keep Your Eye on The Ball

by Ray Pomeroy

Our Verizon contract expires on August 2, 2008 at 11:59 PM and every member should be showing the company they support our bargaining team, every day until we get a contract. We should encourage everyone including the non-members (we only have a few) to support OUR bargaining team.

How do we show the company we are behind the union and will do whatever it takes? Start out by wearing RED on Thursday, every Thursday. No excuse is a good excuse, especially "I don't look good in RED", you look better in RED than you do on a picket line.

Keep your head in the game and don't let the company distract you from it. If you are in one of the workgroups that schedules events on Thursday and encourages you to wear your favorite football teams jersey or some other nonsense, don't fall for it. Show up wearing RED, preferably something with the CWA logo on it.

It's no accident that those little distractions generally occur on Thursdays. The whole idea of wearing RED on Thursday is to show management that we are unified and that we will do whatever it takes to demonstrate it. Show the company what's important to you!

The team logo we should all be wearing is at the top of the page and it's not affiliated with the NFL.

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## Verizon Settles With MOSH

by Ray Pomeroy

In March, Verizon was fined \$11,975 by MOSH covering 3 citations that arose from the investigation into the death of Marvin Benson, the Harmans Technician who was electrocuted on the job last year.

Under the settlement agreement The Company agreed to withdraw its notice of Contest and provide its employees in the State of Maryland whose job responsibilities require them to work in proximity to electrical power lines with power awareness training.

In exchange MOSH will rescind parts of the citations and the penalties, once the training is completed.

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## Verizon Business Follows Verizon Wireless' Lead

Gets Caught Unionbusting

from CWA

Stating that Verizon Business "has been interfering with, restraining and coercing employees in the exercise of the rights" guaranteed by federal labor law, the NLRB has backed CWA charges against the company on behalf of VZB workers seeking to organize in Pittsburgh and Monsey, N.Y.

"When this labor board, the most anti-union, pro-business board ever, cracks down on a major corporation like Verizon, it's damning evidence that the pattern of behavior is truly egregious," said CWA President Larry Cohen.

Complaints issued by NLRB regional directors in Pittsburgh and New York found that Verizon Business management:

- "threatened employees with layoff for supporting the union."
- "informed employees that Verizon Wireless, a related employer, had laid off employees because of their union activity."
- "engaged in surveillance of employees to discover their union activities," and made sure to give the impression that they were under surveillance.
- issued disciplinary warnings against union supporters for distributing union materials and authorization cards "while permitting nonunion solicitations and

distribution" in the workplace.

CWA Vice Presidents Jim Short District 13 and Chris Shelton of District 1 both condemned Verizon's actions, and Cohen has written to presidential candidates citing the complaints as evidence that "underscores all the more boldly why the Employee Free Choice Act is essential to restoring workers' organizing and bargaining rights."

A majority of Verizon Business technicians in New York and New England have signed unionization cards, as verified by U.S. senators and representatives and other leaders, and they would already have union representation if the Employee Free Choice Act were the law of the land.

The NLRB found that Verizon admitted that it had fired Verizon Wireless workers for union activity and used this boast as a threat to frighten the VZB workers. For years Verizon Wireless workers have faced a relentless employer campaign of coercion, surveillance, firings and even closing of entire offices to stamp out their efforts to win collective bargaining rights.

Separate NLRB hearings on these cases are set for Oct. 31 in Pittsburgh and Nov. 5 in New York City.

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## See The New Working Retiree Agreement at [cwa-2107.org](http://cwa-2107.org).

You can find it on the Contracts page.

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## at&t Members Getting Short Shrift

by Denise Burns

What's going on at your at&t work location?

We are finding out about things taking place in the stores that need to be dealt with and should never happen in the first place. Some of the issues need to be dealt with at a much higher level than store managers.

We used to have working relations meetings with "Cingular" management to deal with these issues and to find out what the markets short term plans were. Unfortunately, we haven't had a meeting in over a year. It has been far too long and the issues just keep mounting. You've been subjected to unfair treatment, untrained managers, favoritism,

and lack of accountability, and you've been used as scapegoats to name just a few of the things going on.

It's not because we haven't asked to have these meetings. We have asked several times. There just doesn't seem to be any follow through on the company's part. We know they're busy, so are we, but you can't tell me there hasn't been one day that this meeting could have been held in the past year (it's supposed to be quarterly).

I am beginning to think it has something to do with the fact that at&t management is

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**President's Point of View.....**

*Denise Burns*

At a recent membership meeting we were discussing how the companies, Verizon and at&t, intimidate the younger-newer members. How do we get across what is right and what is wrong to the newer members?

Overall you should know in many of the work locations the supervisors don't know as much or have as much experience as some of the workers. It doesn't mean they can't help you in some ways but they may not even know how to do the job their people are doing. Where this becomes a real issue, in both companies, is safety.

First and foremost-you should never do anything that is unsafe or puts you or your co-workers in harms way. Don't let anyone intimidate you into doing something stupid. This may be the only time that you can refuse to do something. Whatever your job title, safety should be first. Over and over again we hear from the Verizon techs that they don't have the safety equipment they need or it has expired and the company won't replace it. Well, you can't and shouldn't do your job if you don't have the proper safety equipment or training.

I have heard several reasons for the company not getting the proper safety equipment. Whatever the excuse-your life and health are more important. If you don't have what is required tell your supervisor. If you don't know what is required there are resources out there for you. They might be in different places but you should know they are there. There is a booklet called the "package 6" from the Bell Atlantic days you can refer to (it's normally used as a reference at safety rodeos), and you should be covered in your

initial training on some things. If you can't find something to assist you call a steward, if they don't know they will contact someone to find out. Don't attempt to do any work unsafely.

For people working inside safety is an issue too. I have seen management block stairwells with boxes or chairs. Ripped carpet, extension cords, non-ergonomic work stations, broken chairs and a host of other issues should be corrected promptly. If you report a safety violation to a supervisor and they don't respond let us know as soon as possible.

Beyond safety there is just the general intimidation supervisors can use against some employees. This seems to happen a lot in inside office jobs but can happen outside too. For instance, in sales there is always the threat of not making your numbers. If you need assistance how do you get it? Does the boss work with you to improve your skills or just write you up? Who do you go to if you think something just isn't right or you can't get the help from your boss. You can always call a steward for assistance. Sure you can use your co-workers but too many times they don't have the correct answer either.

The bottom line on this is, don't put yourself or your co-workers in harms way. Don't let supervisors or other workers intimidate you. If you need intervention to right a wrong or just to get the correct answer call your union representative.

*"The only thing worse than training employees and losing them is not training them and keeping them."* Zig Ziglar

(at&t from page 1)  
now running the business. How many things can you think of that have changed for the worse since you are now at&t?

I want to thank all of you who are calling us and keeping us informed about issues in the stores. We need more of you to start calling. We know there are issues in stores that we don't hear from and we can't help if we don't know. Also, it would help us to know just how fair or unfair things really are if we know what goes on in all stores and work places.

The more eyes and ears we have out in the work places the better we will be able to handle the issues, and to that end we will be training a few new at&t stewards within the

next week.  
Rank and File members shouldn't hesitate to call either. We can't settle all the issues but we can deal with most situations out there. Don't be afraid of management retaliation. It's rare, illegal and we will deal with that if it happens.

It would be helpful if, when you call and leave a message, you speak clearly and repeat your callback number. There have been numerous calls that we can't return because of a poor connection or just plain mumbling and talking too fast. We want to talk with you and deal with the problems, if we don't get back to a voice mail you left, please send us an email to att@cwa-2107.org .

*(Power from page 1)*

Ron Collins from CWA District 2 will be requesting that Verizon expand the training to all technicians across District 2.

This is a start but there will be much more to do. Our members, all of them need to be trained to understand the risks their jobs entail and what affect their actions, or inaction, can have on other people.

People rely on you to do your job safely, whether you're flagging, working in an aerial lift or designing the outside plant.

In all 3 of the aforementioned work operations, which is by no means inclusive of everything we do, someone besides yourself is at risk if you don't do your job properly.

The third one, designing the outside plant, takes as much or more thought and care as any of the others, if you leave out something important or misidentify something you're only risking someone else's life, not your own.

If you're an EA you shouldn't let a job out the door without any overhead lines noted and accurately identified. Don't put 13KV on every print just so "they'll look up" call and find out what it is if you don't know.

If you're working outside be aware that 40 inches is the MINIMUM clearance you and the outside plant need from primary power, know how and when to use your 188A voltage tester, your insulating gloves and blankets and your bond clamp. Know where to find the overhead voltage notation on a work print and who to call if it's not there.

Central Office personnel need to know what the power dangers are in the office, from powered ladder tracks to battery issues. If you don't know ask.

Cable Splicers who still use "breakdown sets" (there's still lead sheathed paper cable out there and nothings better) need to understand lockout/tag-out methods and procedures as should any one who works the terminals, x-connects and frames, both for the protection of others and themselves.

Buildings Mechanics should also understand Lockout/tag-out as safe methods of working around power.

Automotive Technicians working with high voltage ignition systems and generators also need to understand Lockout/tag-out as well as safe methods of working on these systems.

There are far too many safety subjects to cover here so if you have questions ask someone, if they can't help—wait.

## Think Verizon Should Get Billions of Taxpayer \$\$\$ to Abandon Its Customers?

It's Happening Now in New England. Let's Stop It There and Everywhere Else.

from Jeff Rechenbach, CWA Executive Vice President

Verizon is trying to sell its network in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine to FairPoint Communications. FairPoint is a tiny, undercapitalized outfit. Massive Verizon chose tiny FairPoint because it could avoid paying \$700 million in taxes on the \$2.7 billion deal by taking advantage of a tax loophole called the Reverse Morris Trust.

While Verizon walks away with taxpayer money, consumers and the economy will suffer because highly leveraged FairPoint will not be able to invest in a high speed internet infrastructure - which limits millions of customers to the information dirt road, rather

than the information superhighway.

This is just the start – Verizon has already announced its intention to sell off other regions.

Congress shouldn't subsidize Verizon's attempt to sell off our jobs and our access to high speed internet.

Act Now to Save Your Job! Call Congress and Your Senators at 202-225-3121

Tell them: No Taxpayer Money for Selling off Networks! Make the "Reverse Morris Trust" Tax Scheme Illegal to Protect Good Jobs in Telecoms.

## Term Employee Arbitration

from District 2

CWA and Verizon have reached a settlement in an arbitration case wherein the Union challenged the "work completion" of several term employees in Maryland and further resolves the larger issues involving the CSSCs and the use of term employees on the Company's "FiOS" initiative.

The Union has long been aware of the uncertainty and strain "Term Employee" status can cause hard working men and women and their families and decreasing the number of term employees and the time employees may be held in "term" status has long been a priority for the Union.

The specifics of the agreement pertaining to the use of term consultants in the CSSC in the Potomac Region for the company's "FiOS" initiative for the next 30 months are as follows:

- The number of Term Consultants in the region shall be Capped at 400.

## Union Plus Scholarship

Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$2.4 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their secondary education. Over 1,700 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education. The Union Plus Scholarship Program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation.

You can find the application at: <http://www.unionplus.org/>, use the Education link at the left of the page.

- Any Term Consultant employed by the Company in excess of the 400 Cap will be reclassified immediately to Regular Full Time Status by seniority.
- All Term Consultants employed in accordance with the terms of this settlement shall remain as Term Consultants for no longer than 21 months. On or before the conclusion of the 21<sup>st</sup> month of service, any and all Term Consultants who are rated "meets all" shall be reclassified to Regular Full Time Status.
- The Company will provide to the Union, on a monthly basis, a listing of each individual employed as a Term Consultant in the Consumer Sales and Service Centers in the Potomac Region associated with the "FiOS" initiative.

**Union Plus® Home Heating Oil Discount**

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visit [unionplus.org/heatingoil](http://unionplus.org/heatingoil)

or call **1-800-660-0691**

This program is only available in NY, CT, RI, and NJ. WEB-03/05

## Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is October 8.

RMC meetings are held on the second Monday of every month. Unless otherwise noted all meetings are held at the Local 2107 office at 2441 Holly Ave, Annapolis and begin at 10AM.

**Community Services**

We are asking for craft donations for our December sale. Help us make this an outstanding year. All proceeds go to Pediatric Aids. If you have a donation or questions please call Robin Coiro on 443 436-5340 or call the local office.

**Verizon**

Medical, Prescriptions, Dental & Vision issues relating to payment of bills, providers, directories, medical necessity of services, forms, plan questions, retirees:

**John Petrini 800 627-0200 Fax: 610 566-3123**

FMLA, SADP, CORE issues:

**Bill Sonnik 888 571-7218 Fax: 304 264-4189**

Retirees:

**Sue Anderson 888 324-4969 Fax: 973 691-0865**

**at&t**

Payroll:	800-345-6211
Disability: Gates McDonald –	866-453-2837
Benefits, FMLA or 401K: Fidelity –	877-421-5225
Tuition Reimbursement: Acclaris –	866-203-9358
Employee Assistance Program:	800-287-9009
Prescription Service Caremark	800-388-2085
VSP Vision Care	800-524-0910
Tuition Assistance	866-242-6587

**Dates to Remember**

**Membership meetings**

10/08	Northern Area	6:00 pm
10/09	Southern Area	6:30 pm
11/05	Northern Area	tba
11/07	Southern Area	tba

**Other Meetings**

09/26	Executive Board Meeting	tba
10/02	Multi Local Officer meeting	10:30 am
10/08	Retiree Meeting	10:00 am
10/30	Executive Board meeting	tba
11/13	Retiree meeting	10:00 am
11/27	Executive Board Meeting	tba
11/27-29	Verizon Bargaining meeting	
12/10	President's meeting	10:30 am

**Other**

09/24-09/25	at&t steward training
10/14	ALS Walk Baltimore
10/21	ALS Walk Washington DC
10/23	Newsletter deadline
10/31-11/2	District 2 Conference
11/02-11/4	MD/DC AFL/CIO Biennial Convention
11/04	Daylight savings time ends
12/04	Newsletter deadline
12/07	Christmas Sale
08/02/08	<b>Verizon Contract Expires</b>

**Negotiated Holidays-Enjoy!**

11/12	Veterans Day (Verizon)
11/21	Day After Thanksgiving
11/22	Thanksgiving Day
12/25	Christmas

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