



Labor Day

by Ray Pomeroy

Why do our members get Labor Day (or any other holiday) as a paid holiday? If you work the holiday why do you get premium pay for working it?

In an informal poll of members of 2107 and 2108 I got answers like: "because we have jobs", "because it's a federal holiday", "I don't know" and "to celebrate labor", which isn't a bad answer. A few people, some of them with less than a years service, knew the real reason and we'll get to that shortly.

What is labor day?

Labor Day is a day set aside to pay tribute to working men and women. Labor Unions were the first to Celebrate Labor Day on September 5, 1882, when thousands of workers marched in New York City to demonstrate for an 8 hour work day and other labor reforms. It wasn't a "legal" holiday yet.

Labor Day is now the first Monday in September as designated by Congress and signed into law in 1894. The government, however, did not create Labor Day. It established the Holiday because of the workers' demands.

Internationally May 1st is considered Labor, or Workers Day.

May Day was officially founded in 1886, during a Chicago strike for the eight-hour workday. The American Federation of Labor's (AFL) delegate to the International Labor Congress in Paris proposed May 1st as International Labor Day in 1889. The proposal was adopted and May 1, 1890 was chosen as a day of demonstrations supporting the 8 hour work day, democracy and the workers' right to organize.

The late 1880's and the early 1890s were a time of labor unrest and large strikes in which the strikers often ended up battling federal troops as well as state militias, police

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Community Services

It's that time again. 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 the local office.

Bad Politics Can Hurt More than Your Pocketbook

by Denise Burns

Our District 2 Vice President, Pete Catucci, announced in March that he had been diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS affects as many as 30,000 Americans at any one time. It is a degenerative nerve disease whose symptoms include slurred speech and diminishing control over the use of hands and feet. More than 5,600 people within the United States are diagnosed each year.

At our CWA Convention in Toronto in July the most moving event was when Pete spoke. Delegates from District 2 joined Pete on stage as he asked for support for embryonic stem cell research, which has shown promise in the treatment of diseases that currently have no cure.

The following are excerpts from Pete's speech at Convention:

"The cure for almost all diseases lies in embryonic stem cell research. Scientific estimates indicate that over 100 million Americans would be cured of diseases that now affect them. Five types of cancer could be cured; ALS, MD, MS, Parkinson's, Lupus, Alzheimer's, Diabetes, Juvenile Diabetes, Sickle Cell Anemia as well. And they have

also made the blind see by injecting embryonic stem cells in the optic nerve."

"As a nation, we must wake up. There is a book out there—well, there's more than one - but one says, "The Cures They Don't Want You to Know About." I want you to guess how much is spent in the United States of America on insulin alone. It just happened to be in the Wall Street Journal, and it's \$1 billion a year. How about the billions and billions that are spent on other diseases?" If the pharmaceutical companies wanted this, it already would have been law."

"We are talking about using only -- ONLY-- frozen embryonic stem cells that are not needed for their original purpose and are being thrown away in a dumpster." Why embryonic stem cells versus adult? Well, embryonic stem cells are what they call "pluri potent," meaning they can turn into any cell in the body."

"There are five types [of ALS]. I have what they call Bulbar. It affects the speech first, swallowing second, and breathing third. I would like to read an excerpt to you from "Tuesdays With Morrie," written by and

(Pete on page 3)

In Memoriam

Our brother and friend, Al Schuitema passed away on July 29<sup>th</sup>. Al had been fighting cancer and other health problems for some time.

Al started his phone career at C&P Telephone in 1978. He was a steward in CWA Local 2108 for 10 years and was active on their Legislative and Health and Safety Committees.

In 1999 Al transferred to Local 2107. He became a steward and eventually an officer holding the offices of Northern Area Vice President and then Assistant Secretary Treasurer until he resigned because of his health. Al was very passionate about Unions. Al was also passionate about politics where they concerned labor and was our pro on the Legislative Committee. He was dedicated to all Union issues. He fought the good fight!

Al was a tireless worker, especially during contract negotiations and strikes. He was a

good example to the rest of us when it came to putting in the time necessary to do the job. Al put a lot of his own time into the issues.



He went to legislative events and sat in at the State House when the Legislature was in session. He went to Legislative conferences to represent our members and he spoke on the issues at our meetings. His enthusiasm and persistence to fight for workers rights was relentless.

Al was also a fun loving person and fun to be around.

He will be sorely missed by his CWA family.

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

*Denise Burns*

YOU want to file a grievance. Make sure you remember the time limits. Both Cingular (at&t) and Verizon have 30 days from the date of occurrence to present a grievance. If you have a question on what the occurrence date is, ask a steward or an officer. Don't wait until the last day. It doesn't give the steward a fair chance at investigating before having to present the grievance.

When you fill out the statement of occurrence (you can download one from our website under forms) make sure you put the facts as they happened, who, what, where, when and why. Also, state what remedy you would like. The company doesn't see this statement. Your statement must be completely filled out. It has spaces for both your home and work address, we need both, as well as your contact numbers. These are very important because we may not have the most updated information and may need to contact you about the grievance.

Both contracts have a section on grievance procedures, Article 7 in the Cingular (at&t) contract and Article 12 in the Verizon contract. If you have questions about the procedure those articles should answer them. If you are still unsure ask your steward or officer.

If you see contractors doing our work or if management is docking your pay, if you are being placed on attendance plans or being disciplined (being written up or "put on counseling IS discipline), not meeting your numbers-PEP or SPR, if your schedules aren't posted on time, if you are a victim of or witness unfair treatment you should file a grievance. Those are just some of the issues that should be grieved. If you ever witness a contract violation it should always be grieved. Talk to your steward about any of the above and they can determine if you have a gripe or a grievance.

You are the eyes and ears in the work place for the stewards, officers and the District. If you hear of something happening that you think is wrong-you should let the Local know. When you give us information we need specific data and as much as you can give us. If you are given, or know of, new policies please notify us as soon as you hear about it.

It takes all of us to police the contract and to hold these companies accountable. Together, we do make a difference.

*"Alone we're nothing, together we're everything-it's the whole philosophy of Labor"*  
 Leon Davis

**Know What Chaps My Ass at Verizon?**

Denise's article is not an attempt to get you to file a grievance on every little thing, it is pointing out some of the things we are finding out after the fact that we have encouraged our members to grieve for years.

At Verizon some of our stewards are hearing from management that the union wants us to grieve every little thing to tie them up because our contract is up in a year. That is not true. We're busy enough with legitimate grievances.

The truth is the company is violating our contract more and more, the workforce has gotten drastically younger and less experienced and it is causing problems. The management force is also getting younger every day as the experienced supervisors tire of the way they are treated, the haphazard way that their superiors are running the company and the unreasonable demands put on them because of it.

We've heard every lie from management that you can imagine at one time or another, the

top one being "the union agreed to it", so when you hear management prattling on about what the union is doing, stand up and tell them 'my union wouldn't do that'.

If management persists in telling our stewards, or anyone else that we're filing silly grievances because our contract is coming up, or treating a grievance like it's too idiotic to entertain then they are inviting that kind of thing to happen.

In parts of the country, New York comes to mind, some crews won't talk to management without a Union Steward and they talk through the steward, not directly to them. About anything!

I see management trying to drive our relationship to that point with ignorant lies and suppositions. As far as I'm concerned if they can't deal with us based on the good will I thought we've built over the years then they can drive us all to the point where we won't have a crew meeting without a steward in the room.

*Ray Pomeroy*

*(Labor from page 1)*

and company goons. In 1894 President Grover Cleveland declared the Pullman strike a federal crime and sent 12,000 troops in to break it. 1894 was also an election year and according to the AFL-CIO, "As workers protested Cleveland's harsh methods, legislation was rushed unanimously through both houses of Congress to create a holiday for workers. Yet the symbolism of May Day was too strong for U.S. politicians. In creating an annual Labor Day holiday in September, Congress at the same time declared May 1 to be "Law Day"—paving the way for the Bush administration's Loyalty Day".

May Day was taken from the American worker.

Labor Day is a time to honor the workers who came before us and sacrificed so much for the things we now take for granted—especially those who lost their lives in the fight for justice in the workplace.

*"Labor Day differs in every essential way from the other holidays of the year in any country. All other holidays are in a more or less degree connected with conflicts and battles of man's prowess over man, of strife and discord for greed and power, of glories achieved by one nation over another. Labor Day...is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race, or nation."*

*Samuel Gompers,  
founder AFL*

*"Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."*

*Abraham Lincoln  
16th U.S. President*

Our members get Labor Day and the other holidays in our contracts off, or are paid a premium to work them, because our bargaining teams negotiated those items over the years. You can find the language on page 38 of the orange Cingular (at&t) contract and page 53 of the Verizon contract.

### Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is September 10.

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.

*(Pete from page 1)*

given to me by a CWA Newspaper Guild member, Mitch Albom: "ALS is like a lit candle: It melts your nerves and leaves your body a pile of wax. Often, it begins with the legs and works its way up. I'm backwards."

"You lose control of your thigh muscles, so that you cannot support yourself standing. You lose control of your trunk muscles, so that you cannot sit up straight. By the end, if you are still alive, you are breathing through a tube in a hole in your throat, while your soul, perfectly awake, is imprisoned inside a limp husk, perhaps able to blink, or cluck a tongue like something from a science fiction movie. The man is frozen inside his own flesh. This takes no more than five years from the day you contract the disease." Well, I'm hoping to break that record. And I will try to keep fighting for a cure."

District 2 has "Strike Out ALS" bracelets for a donation of \$5.00 each and will be sponsoring ALS walks locally. You will see the logo "For Pete's Sake" in Vice President Catucci's honor as the walks are held.



Local 2107 will be walking in the ALS walk on October 21<sup>st</sup> in Washington, DC. If you are interested in joining us on the walk or for more information on the bracelets please contact the local office. To learn more about ALS or about the ALS walks, go to [www.alsa.org](http://www.alsa.org).

### This One Could Affect You

by Ray Pomeroy

The AFL-CIO is asking us all to contact our congressman and ask them to support and co-sponsor the Re-Empowerment of Skilled and Professional Employees and Construction Tradesworkers (RESPECT) Act (H.R. 1644) which is urgently needed to protect the collective bargaining rights of workers in a wide range of occupations. Some of our own members could be affected by the recent "Oakwood" decision of the NLRB which was enacted to comply with the Supreme Courts "Kentucky River" decision.

Under the National Labor Relations Act, supervisors are excluded from it's protection. (i. e. not eligible to be a union member) Under Section 2(11), there are 12 indicia permitting an employee to be classified as a supervisor.

If an individual, in the interest of his/her employer, has the authority to either:

- \* Hire
- \* Transfer
- \* Suspend
- \* Lay Off
- \* Recall
- \* Promote
- \* Discharge
- \* Assign
- \* Reward
- \* Discipline
- \* Adjust Grievances
- \* **Responsibly direct other employees**

"ordinary professional" or "technical" judgment in directing another employee may not be used to establish supervisory status under the Act. The Court further held that the correct interpretation relates to whether these professional and technical decisions are involved in the exercise of any of the 12 supervisory functions set forth in Section 2(11) of the Act."

Three cases that the NLRB selected to revisit the definition of Supervisors:

- \* Oakwood Healthcare Inc., 348 NLRB 37
- \* Golden Crest Health Care Center, 348 NLRB 39
- \* Croft Metal, Inc., 348 NLRB 38

The lead case in the Kentucky River Trilogy was Oakwood Healthcare. In a 3-2 decision, the NLRB focused on 3 of the 12 criteria for determining Supervisory status:

- \* Assign
- \* Responsibly Direct
- \* Independent Judgment

The Oakwood decision maintains that employees can be considered supervisory if they have supervisory authority for as little as 10-15 percent of their time on a regular basis.

Under the RESPECT Act two minor modifications to the NLRA: it would (1) Delete the words "assign" and "responsibility to direct" and (2) Define supervisor to be an employee who has supervisory authority for at least 50% of his or her work time.

Call your representative today.

According to the OPEIU's website, under the "Kentucky River" decision:

"The United States Supreme Court instructed the NLRB to clarify the distinction between supervisors and employees. In Kentucky River, the Supreme Court rejected the NLRB's argument that the exercise of

**Get Well to:**

Sandy Hamilton recovering from surgery.

**Congratulations to:**

Lisa Gilchrist on her wedding.

**Attention at&t Members**

Check your hours and make sure your RSM isn't removing time from it. If they are, let us know.

Sales reps-we are trying to find out how many of you haven't been to formal training. Please email us at Cingular@cwa-2107.org or call us on 410 224-0166 to let us know if you haven't been to formal training and are on the sales floor.

We also want to know how changes to sales are being covered. Does your RSM have meetings, send an email or just hand you a piece of paper? Is there any one-on-one instruction?

These are just a few things we need to know now. We will be sending out a survey within the next month to get more information from you.

We are having an at&t steward training in September. If anyone is interested in becoming a steward and hasn't sent in their steward application, please send it by August 31 so we can include you in the training. You will receive a letter with more details prior to training. The steward application is on our website on the forms page, just print it, fill it out and fax it to us.

**Dates to Remember**

**Membership meetings**

09-11 Combined Meeting 6:30 pm

**Other Meetings**

08-29 Executive Board Meeting  
 09-10 Retiree Meeting 10:00 am  
 09-14 Presidents Meeting 10:30 pm  
 09-20 Metro Baltimore Council Meetings 5 & 7 pm  
 09-26 Executive Board Meeting

**Other**

09-03 **LABOR DAY** (a union negotiated Holiday)  
 09-10 Safety Meeting 9am  
 Retiree Meeting 10am  
 09-12 Baltimore City Election  
 09-18 Newsletter deadline  
 09-24 thru 09-25 at&t steward training  
 08-02-08 **Verizon Contract Expires**

**FYI**

Verizon is still shrinking the Union by any means possible. We have received 13 more EISP notices. This time the surplus target in District 2 alone is 252 more members. That isn't including the members listed on the EISP's for PA and NJ. Wake up, who's next?

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