



Local Elections

It's once again time to elect your Delegate and Alternate to the CWA National Convention.

Your top three officers are automatic delegates and at our current level we are entitled to four delegates.

See Candidates on pg 3. For more info on the Convention come to a meeting and read your newsletter.

Alternate/Delegate Election info:

Nominations were held at the January 2008 Membership meetings
Ballots will be mailed out 2/12/08
2/22/08 is the last day for a duplicate ballot request
Duplicate ballots will be mailed on 2/25/08
Ballots will be counted on 3/10/08

VOTE! It's Not Too Late.

The following is from the Maryland State Board of Elections

A voter registration application may be submitted to your local board of elections or the State Board of Elections at any time. However, an application must be postmarked by **January 22, 2008, to vote in the Primary Election and October 14, 2008, to vote in the General Election.** If you submit a voter registration application during the period that registration is closed, your application will be held at the local board of elections and processed when registration reopens. For the 2008 elections, registration will be closed from January 23, 2008, to February 25, 2008, and October 15, 2008, to November 17, 2008.

CPS Award

The CPS award will be paid to eligible associates on **March 6 or 7** (based on employees' regular payroll distribution schedule) in a separate payroll check/advice.

The standard award amount is \$500 and the minimum distribution for the 2007 plan year is \$700. The actual CPS award amount will be determined based on company financial results for 2007 that will be approved by the Verizon Board of Directors in February.

2008 An Important Year for Our Members

by Ray Pomeroy

We've made it through seven years of an anti union administration and we're feeling the strain in the labor movement.

The NLRB isn't much help, OSHA is hamstrung and the FCC pays more attention to breasts on TV than what's good for consumers (and in turn what's good for our members).

The good news is we only have to survive one more year under the current administration. The bad news is we have to survive one more year under this administration.

While we can't do anything about the time left we have plenty to do to make the next four and hopefully the next eight better for ourselves, our families and our brothers and sisters in the labor movement.

At the top of the list is educating ourselves and our families and friends about the issues and the candidates. We all need to learn what their views are and what they will do to make our lives better.

Equally important is to get out on election day and VOTE! There is almost no good excuse, short of being in the hospital, for not voting. This holds true for any election but it is critically important in a Presidential election year.

We can't sit around complaining and doing nothing while we watch jobs go offshore, pensions disappear and healthcare costs skyrocket as successful employers push the lions share of the burden onto their employees.

Some of our members believe we shouldn't be spending time on political issues, I disagree. Political action is a large part of the CWA Triangle seen here.



The triangle symbolizes the three major programs of the union. None can stand alone. If the triangle is broken on any side, sooner or later it will be broken on every side.

Representation, day-to-day contract administration and collective bargaining, is the base of the triangle. Yet the other two sides - organizing and community and political action - are just as critical to our strength. Unless we build our union through effective organizing inside existing bargaining units, and by organizing unorganized workers and adding new units, we will continue to be disappointed at the bargaining table. Similarly, unless we have effective community and political action programs, we will not have the kind of popular and legislative support we need to bargain effectively.

We also have two big contracts to bargain this year.

The Verizon contract expires on August 2nd this year and we all know that getting a good contract from them is going to be tough. They would happily take away our healthcare and pension, our vacation and paid sick time and everything else in our contract. They will do all of this while paying their executives huge sums of money and selling their newest and shiniest product, FiOS, which will likely prove to be a very lucrative source of income in the very near future.

Our part in those negotiations will be to support our bargaining team no matter what. We'll do that through mobilizing and sacrificing, striking or working without a contract. Every single member needs to be prepared to do whatever it takes.

We need improvements in our contract, not the status quo! We need to gain improvements in Job Security, Contracting out (see job security), pay, vacations and healthcare. We aren't working for some fly by night outfit that's barely scraping by. We're working for a profitable company that has the resources to keep its shareholders and executives happy while still compensating its employees fairly.

We've earned the right to be treated fairly. Over the years management has instituted

E-mail Addresses

President: Denise Burns
 dburns@cwa-2107.org
EVP: Ray Pomeroy
 rpomeroy@cwa-2107.org
Sec-Treas: Dutchin Webster
 dwebster@cwa-2107.org
Northern VP: Jeff Savin
 jsavin@cwa-2107.org
Southern VP: James Padgett
 jpadgett@cwa-2107.org
Cingular VP: Vacant
 at&t@cwa-2107.org
Asst Sec-Treas: Sandi Burch
 sburch@cwa-2107.org
Editor: Ray Pomeroy
 newsletter@cwa-2107.org
General Mailbox
 2107@cwa-2107.org



LOCAL 2107 NEWS
 Published Monthly By
**Communications Workers
 Of America**
Local 2107
 Affiliated with the AFL-CIO
Officers:

President-Denise Burns
Secretary/Treasurer-Dutchin Webster
Executive Vice President-Ray Pomeroy
Vice President South-James Padgett
Vice President North-Jeff Savin
Cingular VP-Vacant
Asst Secretary-Treas-Sandi Burch
Editor-Ray Pomeroy
Assistant Editor-Matt Dement

(ISSN 0890-8532) Periodical Postage
 Paid at Annapolis, MD. 21401
 Office Located at:
 2441 Holly Ave
 Annapolis MD 21401-3116
 Phone: 410-224-0166
 Fax: 410-224-0165

Postmaster, send changes to:
 Local 2107 NEWS
 2441 Holly Ave.
 Annapolis, MD. 21401-3116



President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

Please make going to vote your priority on February 12. I hope that you have been following the issues that the candidates have been talking about. If you haven't, please get started now and be prepared by the time you vote.

Please ask yourself what candidate will help working people the most. Who will lead this country and help bring back, from decline, the middle class? Which candidate will assist in insuring that corporate greed doesn't ruin this country and destroy our jobs? Which candidate will help save and protect working people by allowing them to choose whether they want to be union without coercion from the corporate world?

I know many times I have brought up the importance of a union presence in the work place. I want you to try something. Imagine your job as it is today. Think of the health benefits, safety, good wages, profit sharing, tuition, family care assistance, EAP, grievance procedure, arbitration, etc. These are things that the Union has bargained. Now think about what your job would be like if you didn't have those things and you were an

at will employee. At will is just that, for any reason the company could let you go and what recourse would you have?

I bring this up again because we have a chance to bring this country back to work and to allow workers to have a say in their work place. We are fighting a huge battle and without some legislation to assist us we will continue to fight the same issues over and over. Let's get this country moving in the right direction, let's bring some work back to the US. Let's strengthen our country and our unions by electing someone that will protect our lively hoods.

Corporations need to succeed and make money but the people that do the work need to succeed as well. Think about where you are, where you want to be and what life could be like if the workers had the strength to change things.

"There is a direct relationship between the ballot box and the bread box, and what the union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be taken away in the legislative halls." Walter Reuther

Retiree Info

from the CWA Retired Members Council

The new Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) rule regarding retiree health care is a bit complicated and needs an explanation that is more clear and straightforward than the ones provided by the general public media.

1. A new Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) rule published December 26, 2007 authorizes the practice used by many employers (including CWA's employers) of taking Medicare into account when structuring health benefit packages.
2. The rule, in essence, allows employers to provide a lower level of benefits - or even no benefits at all -- to retirees who are Medicare eligible, and a higher level of benefits to those retirees who are under age 65 (Medicare eligibility age).
3. Employers who offer retiree health benefits generally coordinate those benefits with Medicare by offering supplemental plans. For those not yet Medicare-eligible, they offer a "bridge" benefit to cover health expenses until the retiree goes on Medicare.
4. The new ruling was made by the EEOC as an exemption to the Age Discrimination statutes.

5. The ruling was made in response to a 2000 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit that held that the Age Discrimination in Employment Act requires employers to spend the same amount on health insurance benefits provided Medicare-eligible retirees as those received by younger retirees. The decision is referred to as the Erie County decision because the employer involved in the case was Erie County, PA.
6. When the case was finally settled in March of 2002, Erie County equalized benefits by preserving the level of benefits for Medicare-eligible retirees and reducing the benefits paid to younger retirees.
7. The recent EEOC decision was made with exactly that scenario in mind - if employers were required to offer benefit plans of equal value, they would more likely choose the least expensive approach.
8. Employers are not required by law to provide health benefits to either active or retired workers.
9. The EEOC decision is lauded by many as the common sense approach to preserving the greater good for the greatest number. The

(Retirees on page 3)

(2008 from page 1)

dozens of policies and systems, like endless voice prompt loops, that have degraded service. They have reduced the workforce to the point that there is no way to keep up and it is only because of the friendly and knowledgeable members left, who deal with the customers personally, face to face or by phone, that they have any loyal customers left.

Our members built this company and they are the ones that keep it running. It's time Verizon treated them like the valuable asset they are but it's only going to happen if we remain strong and committed to supporting our bargaining team this year.

The same can be said for our at&t mobility members and by the end of the year we should be getting ready to bargain, or be bargaining, their new contract.

The Cingular "orange" contract expires in February and while we haven't any hint as to what might be in store yet we still need to be prepared to do what it takes.

That contract is only in it's second incarnation and there is plenty of room for improve-

ment. We will most likely be canvassing the members towards the end of the year to see what improvement they would like to see in the contract.

If you come to the meetings you know that we have some challenges at the local level this year also.

Verizon has sold the building at 2510 Riva Rd that houses a fair chunk of our membership and we still don't know what the end result of that will be. Right now it appears that by sometime in 2009 most of those members will be leaving the local. Because of that and other reasons we are having preliminary discussions with other locals about a possible merger.

In addition our office is slated to be demolished in the not too distant future to make way for a new 10 story building to be built on the site. Because of that, the building committee is meeting periodically to come up with a new place to do business. They are currently waiting to see what may come of the merger discussions which include a recommendation to maintain satellite offices locally.

(Retirees from page 2)

decision recognizes that retirees under age 65 have a greater need for employer-sponsored health benefits because they are not generally eligible for Medicare. Employees who have Medicare do not need as much health care coverage from their former employers as younger retirees do because Medicare is the primary carrier. Savings from providing supplemental coverage for older retirees allows employers to preserve health benefits for younger retirees.

10. AARP, which offers health insurance plans to individuals, opposes the ruling, calling it discriminatory, and will appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court.

Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is February 11.

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.



<http://www.unionplus.org>

CWADISTRICT 2 & 13 HEALTHCARE BENEFIT COORDINATORS

Medical, Dental, Vision, and Prescription issues relating to the payment of bills, providers, directories, medical necessity of services, forms and plan questions are handled respectfully by:

John Petrini for the Verizon Active Plan
Telephone (800) 627-0200
Fax (610) 566-3123
E-Mail john.d.petrini@verizon.com

Sue Anderson for the Verizon Retiree Plan
Telephone (888) 324-4969
Fax (973) 691-0865
E-Mail clara.s.Anderson@verizon.com

Sickness and Disability Absence, Family Medical Leave Absence, and Metlife related issues are handled by:

Paula Terveer for Verizon – Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington D.C.
Telephone (888) 571-7218
Fax (757) 667-6090
E-Mail paula.a.terveer@verizon.com

Victoria Kintzer for Verizon – Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey
Telephone (866) 248-4449
Fax (610) 921-4358
E-Mail – victoria.a.kintzer@verizon.com

Candidates for Delegate

Jeff Savin

I am running for Delegate to represent you at the 2008 Convention. Currently I serve as the Northern Area VP for our Local which keeps me actively involved in All grievances, problems, & issues in the Northern area.

I have been a member of Local 2107 for 17 years in good standing.

I work at the Riva Road building in Engineering on the 6th Floor where I have been an EA for 10 years, prior to that I was a Cable Splicer in Annapolis. I have been on the Legislative & Entertainment committees for the local. I would like to thank the membership for electing me in 2007 to act as their Delegate to convention in Canada. I have attended the "Legislative conference" in Washington, DC on three different years. As a Steward the local sent me to Leadership training at WVU in August of 2004 & 2005 to enhance my skills to better "Defend our Members in need of Representation".

As a Delegate I feel I can Represent the Local in a Fair and consistent manner.

Please Vote for Jeff to represent you as Delegate to convention!

"United in Solidarity"

Jeff Savin

Keith Kaler

My name is Keith Kaler and I am running for Delegate to the CWA National Convention. I am a Cable Splicer in Laurel and have been with Verizon for 9 years. I have volunteered to be a Union Steward and would like to represent you at the CWA National Convention in 2008.

Mike Parker

Hello, My name is Mike Parker. I am running for Delegate to the CWA National Convention.

I am a Cable Splicer in Waldorf and have been a member in good standing for 11 years. I have been a Union Steward for 5½ years and sit on the budget and building committees. I represented Local 2107 at the 2006 Convention.

This year is an election year for our National Officers and I would like the chance to help shape our future and the National Executive Board for the next three years. I also hope to gain experience and knowledge, so that I am better equipped to represent you in the future.

Please vote for me, thank you, Mike Parker.

Get Well to:

James Remington

Sympathy to:

The family of member Sybil Barrett who recently passed away Shirley Milton on the loss of her brother

Congratulations to:

Denise Burns on the birth of her grandson
Yolita Washington on the birth of her grandson

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

02/04	Northern Area	6:00 PM
02/07	Southern Area	6:30 PM

Other Meetings

01/30	Executive Board	
02/11	Retired Members Club	10:00AM
02/13	Stewards	6:00 PM
02/27	Executive Board	

Other

02/12	Primary Election day
02/12	Ballot Mail Out
02/19	Newsletter Deadline
02/21	Blood Drive Riva Rd

Negotiated Holidays-Enjoy!

02/18	President's Day
08/02/08	Verizon Contract Expires

Periodical Mail
POSTAGE PAID
at
Annapolis MD
ISSN 0890-8532

THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS of AMERICA LOCAL 2107
2441 Holly Ave
Annapolis MD 21401-3116
Address Service Requested