



What's it Worth?

by Ray Pomeroy

How good is the tentative agreement our bargaining team has negotiated with Verizon?

I think it's very good. To the extent possible I'll try to break it down into raw numbers here. The numbers used here may not be exact but will be very close and I'm going to use a Cable Splicing Technician in 'B' scale for an example. We'll call him Chuck assume he's at top pay and give him a wife and kids for purposes of working in the all important healthcare numbers.

Upon ratification of the agreement Chuck's hourly rate will climb 3.25% to \$30.825 an hour. That's the "cash" rate, actual monies received.

According to our contract Chuck gets 4 weeks vacation, 4 excused days with pay, a floating holiday and 9 other paid holidays. If we consider your hourly rate what you get paid for actual time worked these bargained for benefits run the hourly rate to just about \$35.30 an hour.

We can run the math out a little farther by considering what Chuck's bargained for healthcare is worth. With a family we expect Healthcare benefits, not including dental vision and prescriptions, to be worth about \$25,000 in plan year 2009 and considering actual time worked again, this takes the

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at&t members

Thanks to Phil Pascoe, our steward from the Baltimore area, we now have several people that have stepped up to assist in mobilization-getting information out about at&t issues.

We can communicate best by email. If you have a personal email address send it to us with your name and work location to att@cwa-union.org. We will add you to our list. If you are interested in being a mobilizer you can let us know that as well. That means that you will deliver the information to others.

As an update we have not further information on the Benefits bargaining. As soon as we have any more information, it will be posted on the web and on our hotline 410 224-8003.

Verizon Settlement Provides New Union Jobs, Preserves Health, Security

from the National

The new tentative three-year settlement with Verizon reached on Aug. 10 achieves CWA's goals of creating union jobs, securing fully paid health benefits for both active and retired workers and boosting wages and pensions for 65,000 workers in the northeast and mid-Atlantic.

The settlement creates at least 2,500 new jobs by eliminating subcontracting in a number of job areas, converting 1,200 temporary and part-time jobs to permanent, and bringing additional FiOS jobs into the bargaining units. FiOS head end technicians for TV services are now represented and Verizon agreed that union techs will perform all installation.

In a breakthrough agreement, Verizon agreed to extend recognition to 600 former MCI techs at Verizon Business who have been seeking union representation for nearly two years, with strong support from CWA and IBEW members who have campaigned to "tear down the wall" between union and non-union parts of the company.

The settlement also guarantees that medium and small business commercial work will be done exclusively by union members, and the company agreed to bring new Verizon Business work equivalent to 200 new jobs to union-represented locations.

Verizon agreed to meet with CWA and IBEW leaders at least three times a year to discuss jobs issues. "This is an important step," said CWA President Larry Cohen. "We're not going to wait around and just talk about all the changes and new technologies and job issues every three years. We're going to make this a meaningful ongoing process."

The settlement preserves fully-paid health care premiums for all active and retired workers over the course of the contract. For new hires, retiree health benefits will be covered by a new defined contribution plan with the amount of contributions to be negotiated in each future contract.

In addition, Verizon agreed to work with the unions in a joint effort to achieve national health care reform with universal coverage, and to provide \$2 million a year to fund the project.

Wages and pension bands will increase by 3.25 percent immediately, 3.5 percent the second year and 3.75 percent the third, delivering a compounded total of 10.87 percent. The pact includes a COLA effective Aug. 1, 2010, that would apply to wages if the CPI exceeds 3.75 percent between May 2009 and May 2010. The pension lump sum cashout remains in the contract with no change in the formula for calculating the amount.

"This is a breakthrough agreement in many ways," said Cohen. "It creates new union jobs including major growth areas like FiOS, it takes a big step forward on health care and brings hundreds of Verizon Business employees the union rights they deserve." He said the settlement "provides a framework for growth at Verizon and a good standard of living with careers for our members."

Members of the combined CWA-IBEW bargaining committee, speaking for regional bargaining teams in the northeast and mid-Atlantic, stated: "The involvement and mobilization of tens of thousands of our members made a huge difference in these negotiations. All of us together showed our strength, our commitment, our determination to get the best possible agreement."

Membership Meetings

Local 2107 will hold a contract explanation meeting on August 25 at the Comfort Inn in Bowie, 4500 Crain Hwy (301 south just south of Rt 50).

Steve Holland, MD representative on the bargaining team, will be there.

The next regular membership meeting will be a combined meeting, also at the Comfort Inn in Bowie. We will be taking nominations for Local Officers/Delegate.

See page 3 for highlights of the election and campaign rules.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

I want to make sure our Verizon bargaining team knows that they bargained a great contract. For those of you that have your doubts, do the research. See what other companies are getting in their recent contract negotiations.

Not even three hours after the word of the tentative agreement was out I was getting negative comments regarding the length of the contract and the amount of the raises. People need to open their eyes to the real world. Figure out how much per hour you are making with vacation and medical, dental and eye care figured into it. Look at the broad picture. Bargaining is about everyone not just a certain job title or location.

Yeah, we can say Verizon makes billions of dollars and they do. They don't have to give us anything and they don't. We bargain it and it is what it is because of the solidarity of the many. The whiners, criers and nay sayers are the blessed that don't know it. Nothing will make them happy and they will always have a comment about what is wrong. I ask them, when will it be right for you? Are you the only one that matters or are we a democratic society that looks out for each other. Majority, as they say, rules.

Here are several items in our Verizon Mid-Atlantic Associates' benefits package that are taken for granted by some.

- Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan
- Adoption Reimbursement Program
- Dental Expense Plan
- Dependent Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- Dependent Care Account
- Group Life Insurance Plan

- Health Care Account
- Income Security Plan
- Long Term Care Insurance Plan
- Long Term Disability Plan
- Managed Care Network and Medical Expense Plan
- Pension Plan
- Savings and Security Plan
- Sickness and Accident Disability Plan
- Supplemental Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan
- Supplemental Group Life Insurance Plan
- Vision Care Plan
- Dental Expense Plan for post-1989 Associate Retirees
- Managed Care Network and Medical Expense Plan for post-1989 Associate Retirees
- Life Insurance Plan for Associate Retirees
- Supplemental Life Insurance Plan for Associate Retirees

That is just the benefits package. Our committee also bargains for our Benefit Coordinators and Committees for Health Care, Family Care, Education, Contracting Initiatives, Marketing, etc. Wages, job security, job jurisdiction, limitation of work leaving the bargaining unit, bringing work and jobs back to the unit are just a few others. Have you looked at your contract lately?

I urge everyone to attend the contract explanation meeting. The ratification vote will be mailed out shortly after it.

"In the day of prosperity, adversity is forgotten and in the day of adversity, prosperity is not remembered." Aprocrypha, Ecclesiasticus 11:25

Verizon Contract Activities

by Denise Burns

I want to especially thank Amy Turner and Shannon Opfer for their diligence and patience during the last couple of months. There are many others that went above and beyond as well and it is greatly appreciated. I want to give a special thanks to Mike Parker, Rob Hayes and Mike Topolski for bringing the south together.

To most of local 2107's members you are to be commended for your solidarity and understanding. In bargaining we don't get a lot of the details because they can change so often. While we put out what we received I know at

times it wasn't much. But we hung in there together because it is and always will be the right thing to do. I applaud the members that held fast to the 8 and the gate or no voluntary overtime! For the few that felt the need to betray all their union brothers and sisters you should be ashamed and you should think about your selfish attitude. I am not talking about people that had incidental overtime. It is fair to say in our local it was a pretty small number that only looked out for themselves at a time when unity was needed the most. Greed is a terrible thing whether it is CEOs

(Negotiations on page 3)

CWA LOCAL 2107 ELECTION AND CAMPAIGN RULES

(worth from page 1)
hourly rate to \$49.07.

If Chuck contributes at least 6% of his earnings into his 401k plan (also bargained for), 6% equaling about \$3,850, he will get an 82% match worth about \$3,077 taking the new hourly total to \$50.77.

If Chuck only gets the minimum \$700 CPS payout his hourly rate has then reached \$51.16.

None of this includes any COLA raises, tuition assistance, the aforementioned dental, vision and prescription plans. It doesn't include paid sick benefits, disability benefits, if Chuck is in a FiOS crew it doesn't include his bargained for clothing allowance. It doesn't include adoption assistance, concession telephone service or mileage paid when he reports to a different location, 10% shift differential and it doesn't take into account overtime or the bargained for double time for over 9 hours worked.

All in all it looks like a pretty good contract. We didn't get everything we wanted and we dealt a couple of things away temporarily that, in the grand scheme of things, were pretty small but I think it's a keeper.

(Negotiations from page 2)

and their executives, or union members and those covered by a contract.

The other thing I want to mention is how people resign from the Union when the contract expiration is around the corner. None of us can afford to be out of work and not having any money coming in. Yes, we had time and we could have saved if possible. Sometimes it isn't possible. As Union officers we realize that. However, there are alternate means to offset the lack of a paycheck. Often people are in dire financial straits long before contract expiration. That is when they should be reaching out for help. We can refer people to different agencies or counselors or wherever to help the situation. Resigning is not the answer! By doing so you alienate the workers around you. When you start getting treated differently, and I hope you do, don't wonder why. You allow others to do the suffering while you get the rewards. At this point, there was no strike. How could you face your co-workers if you crossed those lines, member or not? It is a slap in everyone's face. Management doesn't see your betrayal as anything but betrayal. Management knows if you'll betray hundreds of co-workers you'll betray them. You do not get any respect from anyone for what you have done.

Constitution and Bylaws

The nomination and election of Local 2107 delegates and alternates to Convention will be conducted in accordance with the Communications Workers of America Local 2107 Bylaws.

Eligibility to Hold Office

As provided in Article XII in the Local 2107 Bylaws, only members of the local in good standing shall be eligible to vote or hold office.

Nomination Notice

A nomination notice will be posted in the union newsletter and mailed to the last available known address of each member.

Nomination Meeting

Nominations for the officers/delegates will be accepted from the floor at the September meeting.

Date: September 30, 2008

Time: 6:30

Place: Bowie, MD

Nomination Acceptances

A candidate must accept or decline nomination if present at the nomination meeting.

Any nominee not present is required to send written notification to the Election Chair by October 7, 2008 at 12PM.

Campaign Restrictions

Federal law prohibits the use of any union or employer funds to promote the candidacy of any person in a union officer election. This prohibition applies to cash, facilities, equipment, vehicles, office supplies, etc., of CWA

We should be united every day, if we were our lives would be easier.

Having said that I want to address the issue of what other locals may or may not have done during contract negotiations. Our executive board stood 100% behind the bargaining team who were bargaining on our behalf.

What other locals, or their members, did or did not do is on them. Calls into the local about issues regarding other locals were forwarded to those locals. I can't tell you what happened after that. Any time concerted actions are taking place and other locals don't participate, it reflects on all of us. However, you can remain proud of standing up for your and your union brothers and sisters rights.

Local 2107 and any other union, and of employers whether or not they employ Local 2107 members. Union officers and employees may not campaign on time paid for by the union. This also includes the use of company voice mail and email.

Federal law also provides that candidates must be treated equally regarding the opportunity to campaign and that all members may support the candidates of their choice without being subject to penalty, discipline, or reprisal of any kind.

Voter Eligibility

As provided in Article XII of the Local 2107 Bylaws, only members of the local in good standing shall be eligible to vote or hold office.

Election Notice

A notice of election will be mailed to the last known home address of each Local 2107 member on Monday, October 14, 2008. Election notices will also be posted in the October newsletter.

Tally of Ballots

Ballots will be counted by the Election Committee on November 11, 2008 beginning at approximately 5:00 p.m. at the Local 2107 hall.

Write-in votes are not permitted in the election as provided by Article XII, Section 4, Paragraph E of the Local 2107 Bylaws. The candidate who receives the majority number of votes cast will be declared elected.

A complete list of election and campaign rules will be given to all nominees.

Don't get into the mind set if they aren't following along why should I. Be the better person. Be the leader.

In the mean time we need to motivate everyone to participate in our job actions no matter what they are. Think of mobilizing as if we are going to war. The more that participate the more likely we are to win. All selfishness needs to go out the window when we are fighting for our rights at work. We don't ask that everyone become best friends but we do ask that they stick together in our struggles in the workplace.

When this contract is ratified we will have almost three years to try to save for the next one. Put away anything you can no matter how small.

Congratulations to:

Sandy Hamilton on the birth of her granddaughter

Sympathies to:

Cheryl Jones death of her father

Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is September 8th.

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.

Laurel Technicians, according to the company, were responsible for turning back 80% of the FiOS work being turned back at the end of the day in Potomac during our 8 and the gate initiative.

You seriously got the company's attention, as you well know.

We can't begin to express our gratitude for those numbers and I want **everyone that participated, no matter their location**, to know that I am proud to count them as fellow Union Members.

Ray Pomeroy

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

08-25	Contract Explanation	7:00 pm
09-30	Combined Membership	6:30 pm

Other Meetings

08-26	Executive Board	2:00 pm
08-26	Election Committee (ballot mail-out)	
08-28	CSC	3:00 pm
09-08	Retiree	10:00 am
09-15	Election Committee (ballot count)	5:00 pm

Other

09-03	Election Training D2 office	10:00 am
09-04	DOL training Richmond	9:00 am
09-11 to 09-13	Customer Service Conference	
09-12	AFL-CIO Golf Tournament	
09-16	Newsletter deadline	
09-19	2100 & 2107 Fishing Trip	

Bargained for Holidays

09/01/2008 Labor Day

02/07/09 at&t Orange Contract Expires

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