



Don't Let the Door Hit You

by Shannon Opfer

There are a few issues that need to be addressed among our membership.

If you remote garage and you are getting in your vehicle and driving to your work location prior to your start time, you are cheating yourself and the rest of us. If your supervisor calls a meeting or requires you to be somewhere else at a certain time, you need to be on the clock. If you were to get in an accident before you are even supposed to be working, do you think the company is going to say that's ok, don't worry about it? No. They will still suspend you even if you think you are doing them a favor. In fact, they could fire you for falsification of time if they wanted to. Don't be fooled. The company is looking for any excuse to lower the head count. Don't leave your location until you are signed in and on the clock. If your supervisor knows you are doing it, he or she is breaking the law. If you are working, you need to be paid.

If you are informed by a supervisor that an ECM is going into your file, make sure you read it. Many crews are being carpeted with blanket statements about numbers or absences, or who knows what. Without reading these statements, you have no idea what is going on. With this latest ECM, the discipline line has supposedly been removed but it is our responsibility to read what they are putting in the file. You also need to inform a steward if there isn't one in your crew. The

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at&t Mobility Strike Vote

by Shannon Opfer

A strike vote is being sent out to at&t mobility members. The strike vote doesn't mean that you will definitely be going on strike, it authorizes the bargaining committee to call a strike if they feel it necessary. A yes vote allows the bargaining committee to know that we support the work they are trying to do on the table.

You should be receiving your strike vote soon. Please follow the directions and return the ballot by 2/3/09. If you have any questions or concerns, please call your representative.

CWA-Initiated Broadband Bill Signed into Law

from the National

The Broadband Data Improvement Act, a key initiative of CWA's Speed Matters campaign, has become law.

CWA's Speed Matters Strategic Industry Fund campaign was the prime mover behind this measure, which requires the Federal Communications Commission to conduct annual studies on broadband deployment and adds a question to the federal Census on dial-up and broadband Internet use.

The legislation is the first step toward a national broadband policy that will bring true high speed Internet access to all Americans.

Senate sponsor Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) said, "we cannot manage what we can't measure. This bill will give us the baseline statistics we need in order to eventually achieve the successful deployment of broadband access and services to all Americans."

President Barack Obama has recognized high speed broadband as a critical element of economic development for the U.S., and supports the buildout of true high speed networks to fuel the nation's economic growth.

At a policy forum on Capitol Hill in December, CWA President Larry Cohen stressed

that investment in the deployment and adoption of true high speed broadband was critical to the nation's economic recovery.

"Creating quality jobs is the real stimulus our economy needs. We've seen what happened when people received a \$300 or so check – not much. Creating jobs, and the multiplier effect that produces additional job growth is what will help our communities and get out country out of this economic crisis," Cohen said.

A \$5 billion increase in broadband investment would create 100,000 new jobs in telecom and information technology in the year that investment is made, he said. In addition, a 7 percent increase in broad penetration would create 2.4 million new jobs throughout the economy, he added.

CWA has called for full funding of the Broadband Data Improvement Act, to help support and encourage state initiatives and private-public partnerships, as well as to identify barriers to broadband adoption in the states.

More than 50 organizations, including AT&T, Google and other companies, con-

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No Service is So Urgent...

by Shannon Opfer

A question being tossed around the garages lately is why? Why did they change the schedules? Why do they keep raising the numbers? Why did they eliminate the PEP plan only to replace it with a harsher plan?

Honestly? We're not sure. The company has come up with new rules and regulations as if they are trying to make it a hostile work environment. Oh, wait. They are trying to make a hostile work environment.

Why? Five years ago the company went on a hiring spree. They anticipated that FiOS would take off and they would need a bigger work force. This is true. Unfortunately they neglected to increase the budget. As it stands now, there is more work than we can handle, but no money to do our jobs properly. We have trouble getting the most basic supplies, overtime is not being allowed for depart-

ments that need it and everyone is being expected to do more with less.

They can't initiate a layoff without something major happening outside the company. So, if they make things impossible here, what are we going to do? How many of us have started looking for a new job? How many senior employees are thinking about retiring even though you aren't really ready to do so?

We can't tell you what is best for your life. All we can say is do your job to the best of your ability every day. **Make sure you are working safely.** Do not give anyone an excuse to look closely at you. But be prepared. It will probably get worse before it gets better. We want our members to have jobs here, but we want them to go home from that job safely everyday. Do not let anyone intimidate you into doing something unsafe because it may be faster. Safety is our responsibility.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

The at&t Mobility Orange contract expires on February 6th. Your strike authorization ballot is in the mail and must be returned by February 3. A yes vote will let at&t Mobility management know that you will not settle for what they throw at you but you will fight for what you deserve.

With all the different issues that the local deals with for the at&t members, I would think that most of you are fed up with the way you are treated and how your compensation has been reduced each time the company adjusts it.

While at&t Mobility is the only "Union" carrier in the US, it certainly isn't what I call, Union friendly. Apparently even having been grievance trained (several times) store managers still don't know how or what to do with the Union. Some are downright hostile while others are just clueless. Don't get me wrong, some of the managers work well with us, I am talking about the majority and most of this is dealing with grievances or just with issues taking place in the stores.

We get calls and emails from some locations but I know things happen in others we just aren't hearing about.

Scheduling seems to be a major issue and I find that most of the time management isn't adhering to the contract language. Everyone should report the issues they see in the workplace, it is up to you to police your contract. What is happening in one place may be a market issue we don't know about because we aren't hearing from enough people.

There are several stewards and a vice president for the at&t mobility members.

You can email 2107@cwa-2107.org or contact the vice president Phil Pascoe or any of the following stewards; Collin Caswell, William Joseph, Shayla Barries, Joe Grant or Regina Fletcher. Contact info can be found at www.cwa-2107.org on the stewards and officers pages.

Also, Phil and Collin are going to be our local bargaining contacts and will keep the local up to date. I am sure there will be mobilization activities and other things that will be asked of you, the members. Now is the time to stand up. Take an interest, have more input in your workplace. CWA at&t mobility members need to be unified going into negotiations with the company.

Please let Phil and Collin know what you can do to help. The best way to communicate your willingness to help is to email the local and we will put together a list to give to them. Put your contact information such as cell phone and email address (your personal info, NOT company). It is faster to put out information quickly by sending emails.

Bargaining for health benefits had to go to an arbitrator and we need to put up a good fight for this round of bargaining. Don't let the company take the upper hand, stand together and stay strong and unified for a better contract!

Bargaining info can be found at www.cwa-union.org.att.mobility.html There is a link on the Local 2107 website.

"One element remains essential - true and lasting solidarity. Solidarity remains the indispensable key to the future." Lane Kirkland

Community Service Committee

by Shannon Opfer

The Community Service Committee raised \$561.60 for Pediatric Aids with our Yankee Candle Fundraiser. Thanks to all who participated.

We had several fundraisers, including Joe Corby's sales, a fishing trip, and food drives. All the money from these projects goes to fund research for Pediatric Aids or the Community Service Fund which each local is required to donate to.

The CSC is planning on having several fundraisers throughout the year. Anyone interested in helping out should contact the hall.

Cold Weather Safety

by Shannon Opfer

During the winter months, its important to try and keep warm as best as we can. Working outside can be a challenge when the temperature drops and we need to be prepared for it.

Wear layers of clothing and stay dry. A cold wind can take the heat away from your body much faster than you would think. Do not ignore warnings from your body. Excessive shivering can be a sign that your body temperature is dropping. Most of this is common sense, but sometimes, we ignore the signs. Be careful and try to stay warm.

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sumer and public interest groups, state and local governments and Internet providers and users have signed on to the call to action to press for the development of a national broadband strategy.

Cohen has testified several times on Capitol Hill on how the U.S. is losing ground in the build out and use of true high speed Internet networks, compared with nearly every other industrial democracy.

“High speed Internet broadband is the critical infrastructure for the 21st century. It is the platform on which we will grow jobs and our economy,” Cohen said.

Speed Matters activists raised the issue at the national, state and community levels for more than two years and helped gain national recognition for the campaign’s Speed Test, which measured the download and upload speeds promised by Internet service providers.

Ramp Program Revisions

from the National

There have been several changes made in the RAMP process this year.

In conjunction with the January rollout of the new VZCarrers staffing system for associates, the company is also implementing enhancements to the Regional Associate Mobility Plan (RAMP) staffing process with the launch of VZCareers. Associates will find it easier to submit resumes (formerly PED) and to apply for posted positions. The RAMP Guideline had also been updated to reflect these changes and how they will be incorporated into VZCareers.

The guidelines have been updated to reflect the changes that have been made. They instruct associates and supervisors how to locate, prepare for, and apply for associate jobs. Access the guidelines at http://staffingservices.verizon.com/ramp_new/documents/RAMP+Guidelines_Final=09-02-08.pdf

New Future Link Courses

from the National

For Verizon employees

FutureLink is now offering CWA Associates four NEW FutureLink Home Study online courses:

- Computing Concepts (PED Qualifying Course)
- Introduction to PCs (PED Qualifying Course)
- Grammar (PED Qualifying Course)
- Effective Business Communication (Skill Enhancement Course)

Log-on to the FutureLink Web site at <https://cwa.vz-futurelink.net> to enroll. Just select HOME STUDY AND FUTUREPREP from the left-hand navigation and then click on FutureLink Home Study Courses for more on-site and online home study information. Also, don't forget to check out WHAT'S NEW on the FutureLink home page for other career planning information, including the new Video Hub Technician job title and VZCareers launch.

Forgot your password? Have a quick question? Call the FutureLink Call Center or click Live Chat in the left-hand menu and we'll be happy to direct you to the information you need.

- FutureLink: 1-800-497-LINK (5465)
- Home study courses - press 2.
 - Future Prep instructor-led courses - press 3.
 - To reach an on-site advisor - press 4.
 - To reach an online advisor or the Call Center - press 5.
 - To order a FutureLink packet - press 6.
 - For tuition assistance - press 7

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stewards can't be everywhere at once, and if something is going on that they need to know about, find them and tell them or call the hall. Without you telling us, sometimes we don't find out about things until it is too late.

Never sign anything. They cannot force you to sign your name to anything, and you shouldn't feel that you have to. When a letter is put in your file, they could be trying to skip a step. Usually the first step with discipline is a letter in your file. If you already have one, they can move right on to suspension. You are essentially being punished before you do anything because there is already a letter in your file.

When doing a DSL trouble, a new requirement is to require the tech to do a ping test. If you call before and there is no access, the center will take the job back. Then techs are being “gigged” for not doing the second call or the ping test. This could lead to discipline, so be careful. If the system isn't working the way it should, talk to your supervisor. If they are not interested in fixing the problem, call the hall.

A rework issue has come up also. If a job is “no accessed” due to no fault of the employees, they are getting a rework. This rework is held against you even if the NID is located in the basement or somewhere else that is customer controlled. The techs are then receiving a deviation, which could lead to discipline, all because the system isn't working properly, which is not the tech's fault.

These issues are just ways for the company to try and usher us out the door. They will do anything they can to lower their head count. Don't let yourself get caught in the crossfire.

Obama's First Hundred Days

by Shannon Opfer

Now that Obama has taken office, he has some tremendous challenges before him. The economy is first and foremost on everyone's mind. With the economy continuing its decline and unemployment on the rise, the country is looking for some quick fixes. With the economy however, there is no such thing as a quick fix.

We are not all going to wake up tomorrow to a perfect day. Things will take time to stabilize. We need to be supportive of our president and let him have a chance to at least try and improve conditions.

Within his first hundred days, Obama is seeking a temporary halt to the trials being

held at Guantanamo Bay. He also plans on dealing with the wars that the U.S. is fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another issue that we hope will be on the table is the Employee Free Choice Act. President Obama had said in earlier statements that he would try and get that passed within the first 100 days of his presidency. We can help to push that through by contacting our representative or senator and letting them know we support that legislation.

We hope that President Obama is able to make some of the changes that our country so desperately needs and that he will keep his promises to us and the rest of the nation.

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Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is February 9th, 2009
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.

Sympathies to:

The family of Local 2107 member Andrew Starun
Howard Simon in the death of his father
Larry Pilkerton on the death of his mother
Mike Parker on the death of his grandfather
Monique Mathis on the death of her father
Rob Hayes on the death of his grandmother

Congratulations to:

Kenny Mangrum on the birth of his grandson

Get Well to:

Ed McInturff

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

No meetings scheduled in February

03-03 Combined Membership meeting 6:30 pm

Other Meetings

01-28 Executive Board Meeting 1:00 pm
01-29 CSC meeting 4:00 pm
02-09 Retiree Meeting 10:00 am
02-19 Metro Balt Council 5&7 pm
02-24 CSC meeting 4:00 pm
02-25 Executive Board Meeting 4:00 pm
02-26 ACFC

Other

02-17 Newsletter deadline

Bargained for Holidays, Both Contracts

02-16-09 President's Day (Verizon only)

02/07/09 at&t Orange Contract Expires

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