



Common Sense

by Shannon Opfer

The principles of unions have always been clear. Equality. What hurts one of us hurts all of us. Its time to spread that message.

Across the nation, jobs are disappearing. People are being told that they are receiving pay cuts, but they should be grateful because they still have jobs. There are 5.4 people for every job opening according to government data. What can we as Americans, as union employees, as human beings do?

First, we should be grateful that we have the union to assist us. We all saw what the company did to their "loyal" management employees last month. Verizon wants to lead by terror rather than example. There is no question that they would love to do the same to us if they could. But that's the point isn't it? Our union is working to protect us from the corporate greed that is running this country right now.

Not that unions are all powerful. Right now in Pennsylvania, state employees who are union, are not being paid. They are still expected to go in to work every morning, but until the state settles a budget, they will not receive a pay check. Prisoners in the state system will continue to receive pay, but the correctional officers will not. Once the budget is settled, they will receive back pay, but how is that going to help them pay their bills now?

A big part of the problem is that unions are nowhere near as powerful as they were in the past. If we were once again a force to be

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Jurisdictional Waiver

At our meeting on 8/4, we will be having a vote to allow Denise Burns and Dutchin Webster to stay on as officers in 2107. Since their positions have been moved to the Chesapeake Complex in Silver Spring, they must obtain a waiver allowing them to maintain membership in 2107 for the remainder of their terms and any elected term thereafter.

The CWA constitution requires that both 2108 (waiving local) and 2107 (expanding local) vote on this matter. Members in good standing at the August meeting will be able to vote on this waiver.

Health Care Reform

by Denise Burns

What can you do to get Health Care reform in this country? Contact your congressional representative and the two Maryland Senators! Contact information below.

Our bargaining is hampered by the sky rocketing health care costs. It is our biggest fight at the bargaining table. Here are the facts: Last year we spent \$2.4 trillion for healthcare or \$7,900 per person, 52% more than Norway with the next highest price tag. Costs are soaring, premiums have doubled in the past nine years, three times faster than wages. Without reforming the health care system one of every five dollars we earn will be spent on healthcare within the next ten years; one out of every three in thirty years. Increases in emergency room care, more unnecessary tests, additional burdens shifted to the states along with less preventive care, less quality control, and less savings in overhead costs. 46 million Americans are continually without healthcare. 87 million have been without care for over a month in the last two years.*

Here are CWA's four Health Care priorities: Require employers to cover workers, cover pre-medicare retirees, provide choice of private or public plan, and do not tax health care benefits. When you call your represen-

tative tell them these priorities.

Even though you may think others will call YOU need to make the call too. This is a fight for our survival at the bargaining table. Wages are not keeping up with the cost of health care. Imagine if you had to pay \$7,900 for your health care. Remember costs keep rising every year. What would that do your household budget? I do not have that kind of money lying around. It would make a huge difference to my budget.

This needs to be done NOW. It can't wait. They are debating the bills as we speak. Help all of us and yourself. Take five minutes out of your day to save thousands of dollars a year. If you don't believe me I am sure you know someone that is paying for their benefits. Ask them how much it costs. You will be surprised.

Senators-Barbara Mikulski office 202-224-4654, Ben Cardin office 202-224-4524
If you don't know who your congressional representative is or need their contact number go to this site, <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>
enter your zip code + 4 and it will give you the information needed to call.

**Facts from The Hill's Blog roundup*

Beneficiary Designation

by Shannon Opfer

For some reason, Verizon is having a hard time keeping records about our beneficiaries. Records seem to be disappearing left and right. Letters have been sent out in some cases informing you that your beneficiary information may have been deleted. Whether or not you've received this letter, it might be a good idea to check and make sure that your records are up to date. Follow the directions below and make sure that your family is taken care of.

Online beneficiary designations provide a convenient way to keep track of your decisions, and are easy to update if you need to make a change.

To designate your beneficiaries for your life insurance and/or pension:

Go to Your Benefits Resources via About

You on the eWeb or at www.verizon.com/benefits. Click on the link labeled Review or Update Your Beneficiary Information Now! on the Action Needed page and follow the instructions.

To designate your beneficiaries for your savings plan:

Go to NetBenefits via About You on the eWeb or at www.netbenefits.com. Select "Your Profile" at the top of the page, then select "Beneficiaries" and follow the instructions.

Please make your designations online now to ensure that the benefits you've earned are provided to those you choose in the event of your death.

Remember, this ultimately comes down to your responsibility. Make sure that you check and see if your information is correct.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

Your local needs your help. Since Verizon has sold its buildings and is now packing most everyone into either Fairland or the Chesapeake Complex our local is shrinking. It doesn't help that they are moving techs around like mice in a maze.

You need to be especially alert at any organizing opportunities. Reach out to those people you run into that you know need to be organized. Some that I believe would benefit not only them but us as well would be any cable company (our competition), especially Comcast, any wireless company, or Verizon Business. Those are just a few examples, basically, the field is wide open. It doesn't have to be just the communications industry.

For AT&T Mobility members you have the advantage of knowing people that were with your company and now may be working at another place without a union. Talk to them and send them our way.

With EFCA on the horizon, no matter what part gets discarded in the bill, it is our time to shine. This is an exciting time for us to grow as Unions. We need the middle class to stay and that's what unions help to do. It will also help bring this nation back to a healthy economy.

In my time at CWA and the phone company, no matter what its name was, I have always been in this local. I don't want to see this or any other local get too small to maintain itself. We don't want to be swallowed up by another local and lose our local's distinction. Our local needs to flourish and maintain a

larger membership base to be able to participate in all the Constitutional required activities.

There are several ways for people to ask for a union and to get the information to us. Please give out the following information to those interested. CWA's main page on its website has an Organize Your Workplace button (http://www.cwa-union.org/organize/), CWA District 2's main page on its website has an Organizing Button (http://district2.cwa-union.org/contact.html), our website www.cwa-2107.org on the main page has "email us", and they can also call any of the above offices or directly to Lynette Snell at 301 572-6770.

If you or anyone you talk to have questions, before they want to go to one of the above, they can call the local office.

We have always been a diversified local. We had clerks, MA's Consultants, COT's, EA's, outside technicians, mechanics, sales reps, etc. It doesn't matter what the title is, we care about the people and this union. Adding other titles will give us just another avenue to expand our resources.

"Stripped to its essentials, what the labor movement is all about is power, the power for workers to confront management at the job site, across the bargaining table or in the political arena on equal footing. And it is that fundamental of gaining power, a power workers have only achieved through collective action, that is the basis of the union movement." Arthur Osborne

Summer Time Fun

by Shannon Opfer

The Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO, along with United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27 is offering discount tickets to the MD State Fair from 8/28/09 through 9/7/09. Tickets will be \$15, which includes admission, ride wristband and one additional free admission. Normal admission is \$8 per person and rides are individually priced. Hours are 10 am -10 pm on weekends, 12 pm-10 pm on weekdays.

AFL-CIO will also have a Day at the Races at the Timonium Fair Grounds. Tickets are \$6, and will include admission to the Fair and Race Track. Tickets for these events must be purchased in advance. Please call Bea Harris at the MBC at 410 242-1300 for information.

District 2 Mobilization

from the District

District 2 has formed a mobilization committee to better strengthen our grievance procedure. They met on 7/6 to discuss the sale to Frontier and what we should be doing to stop this unjust sale.

They also discussed Verizon's attacks on our members with scheduled forced tours and increase in suspensions. While it may not change things right away, we feel that having MD, VA, DC and WV coordinating tactics to fight Verizon will produce beneficial results.

We know that Verizon is not being consistent with their policies. We will be keeping track of this, and of managers who consistently harass our members.

Safety...and Jobs First

by Mike Parker

Recently nine mechanics were removed from our area, three agreed to take jobs in West Virginia and six left the company. Everyday as technicians we drive our company vehicles around with known safety and D.O.T. violations.

Well guess what, this is now costing people their jobs. Fleet said there was a surplus of mechanics, they were standing around with nothing to do. Eddie Miller stood outside the Annapolis garage and stopped 14 trucks that had various D.O.T. violations. We all need to do our job and call in the tickets for the repairs that need to be done, it will save some good Union paying jobs, and it will keep the cop from ticketing you for that blown headlight.

I know that will mean more work for mechanics in areas where the workload is already heavy, but then let the trucks sit. Management will eventually stomp their feet enough that Fleet will have to make changes. Everybody hates working off somebody's else truck, but we can't just sit around and do nothing anymore. The company's theme is do more, faster, and with less, and we're falling right in line with them. Bottom line, call a ticket in on anything that makes that vehicle unsafe to operate. It might save your life and will defiantly save a job.

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reckoned with, unions could come together from all areas and do something about these injustices. Maybe we could bring some of the power back to the work force instead of big business.

So, how do we do that? We need to pass EFCA. If we make it easier for people to join unions, we increase our own bargaining power. If we could bring the whole country to a standstill to fight for our rights, big business would have to listen. Why can't the middle class afford healthcare when CEOs make millions of dollars a year for doing nothing? How could they justify that if the whole country stops and says no, we're not going to allow this anymore?

Its not just about us. We have it better than most, whether we admit it or not. That's what we need to tell people. Talk to your family and friends. Let them know about the benefits that are possible when you stand up and fight for yourself. Call your representatives. Tell them that this country needs help and EFCA is a step in the right direction.

AT&T Mobility Union Friendly-NOT

by Denise Burns

AT&T may be the only union wireless company out there but they certainly don't respect or want the union there. They antagonize, belittle, intimidate and threaten employees. Many of them ignore grievance requests even though I have been told they were trained at least three times. I guess they are slow learners.

Management at AT&T Mobility puts a lot of responsibility on its unionized workers but not many of them step up and take responsibility. Store managers seem to have a carefree job. From what I hear they are hardly ever in the stores and most of the time, unreachable. Not that it matters because from my view point they can't make any important decisions. Oh, don't get me wrong they make decisions but only on a higher ups ok, and only if it is something small. It is usually never in favor of the employee either.

I could go on forever with the problems in management but let's get down to it. Have you seen any changes in your management or work place? Do they treat you like you don't matter? Are they harassing you, threatening you or making your life a living hell? Are they changing their processes that were close to being worker friendly?

Here's what I know: they changed your scheduling system and now they "can't work with you on changes", they are making it so part time people or people that go to school have to make decisions either to quit AT&T Mobility or quit school, other

jobs etc. It doesn't matter if you have been there 10 minutes or 10 years, you're disposable. Why don't they just tell us how many people they want off they payroll? They don't want a trained, active and dedicated work force. They want to hire new people, train them, say they aren't doing a good job and either request they resign or fire them. People, think long and hard before you resign. You don't have any options at that point and they know it.

Let's talk about discipline. It doesn't seem to be across the board. Some stores are more lax than others. Some are straight by the book (their book) and some, well I don't know about the rest because I'm not hearing from you. I know it can't be all wonderful in any of the work places if they are following the same rules. Wake up-challenge them. Find out if your problem should be a grievance or if can be handled just by having a discussion. Most of the investigations that are done by security are done thoroughly and what I consider properly. When HR or management does them they do a terrible job.

You also need to watch out because they seem to pick out a person and go after them. They are picking you off one at a time and pitting you against each other. Don't fall into their trap. Help us help you.

I know all management is not like my description above but most of the ones I deal with or hear about are.

Keep us up to date on what is taking place in your work place. Techs, what's going on with you?

Something Rotten in the State of West Virginia

by Shannon Opfer

By now we have all heard of the sale of fourteen states to Frontier Communications. What you may not know is that right now Frontier is forcing its employees to take furlough days in order to not have layoffs. How on earth can a company on the verge of buying out another company not have the money to pay their employees?

The furlough plan is in place for Frontier's current West Virginia business, but it is supposed to end before the sale goes through.

According to the vice president of Frontier, "The transaction does not close until the March-April timeframe 2010 and the furlough program expires at the end of this year. So we're mixing apples and oranges here."

CWA is against this sale all together, citing the decline in service in other areas Verizon has sold off, as well as the loss of union jobs.

Recently the CWA filed an executive level grievance against the External Loans to West Virginia. Verizon is contracting out work because they have no one to do it as they had an unanticipated number of technicians retire on June 30. Well, of course people retired. Verizon is selling the company and employees wanted to get out while they could.

The sale has not been finalized or approved as yet. If you would like to keep up to date on what's going on visit www.verizonfrontiersale.org. Please remember, if we allow this to happen there, we're going to see it happening here before long.

Retirees Corner

There will be no regular meeting this month.
RMC meetings are held on the second Monday of every month.
Location to be announced

Congratulations to:

Collin Caswell on his marriage

Announcement

Due to the loss of members, Local 2107 will be relocating. Our new address will be:

1825 George Ave
Suites 4 & 5
Annapolis, MD 21401

We will be there by the end of August. More information will follow when it becomes available.

Discount Tickets

We have received discount tickets for Hershey Park, Dutch Wonderland, Busch Gardens, Sea World, Adventure Island, Water Country USA, and Sesame Place. If you are interested in any of these, please contact the hall.

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

08/04/09 Combined Membership 6:30 pm

Other Meetings

07//29/09 Executive Board 3:00 pm
08/20/09 Metro Baltimore Council 5&7 pm
09/17/09 Metro Baltimore Council 5&7 pm
09/18/09 MD Presidents

Other

07/26-07/31/09 Leadership Training
08/18/09 Newsletter Deadline
08/19/09 ACFC
09/10-09/12/09 Womens Conference
09/15/09 Newsletter Deadline

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