



Summer Safety Inspections

by Shannon Opfer

On June 4, 2009, 2107 held a truck inspection at Forest Drive. NVP Eddie Miller stood at the gates of the garage and went over the checklist that we should be checking everyday for our trucks.

Unfortunately we didn't fare all that well. There were 17 trucks with issues involving headlights and ladders. One truck was about to leave with its back doors wide open. There were also many running lights that were not functioning.

We all know that the company is pushing really hard for their numbers. That's fine, but we can't let our safety fall by the wayside in order to meet their numbers. If you get pulled over by a DOT officer, the fine goes to you, not the company if something is wrong.

Truck inspections don't really take that long. Get someone else to give you a hand and check both of your trucks. With two people it takes maybe five minutes. There is no reason for not doing it except laziness.

The company didn't ignore this inspection either. It was discussed what a good idea it was, and there might be a new trend coming out soon.

If you aren't sure what you should be looking at on your truck, it as simple as checking the DOT inspection forms that we are supposed to be turning in at the end of every shift. If you drive a van and don't fill those out, do a general walk around. Check your lights, signals, horn, and brakes. The truck that is assigned to you is your responsibility. That means checking the fluids, the tires, and do-

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Summer Discounts

by Shannon Opfer

The union has discount tickets to several local theme parks, as well as some further away. We currently have 1/2 price tickets for Six Flags America in Largo, Md.. We also have tickets for Morey's Piers and Beachfront Waterparks, in Wildwood, N.J.

If you are interested in these discounts or others that we may be eligible for call the hall. New offers pop up from time to time, so call and find out whats available now.

CWA: Getting Political

by Mike Parker

Could you imagine going into a contract negotiation with Verizon or AT&T and not having to talk about rising Health Care cost? Wouldn't it be great to just fight about bad working conditions or getting a bigger raise?

Well, that will never happen as long as we have private insurance companies running the show. The insurance companies dictate the cost because their profit has to be factored into the bottom line. Has your insurance company ever denied a claim and you've had to pay for the treatment. The insurance company makes these decisions all the time. Even with the great insurance Verizon offers I have spent a little over \$1500 this year in fees that Aetna has refused to pay. The more they deny, the more profit they make. In 2007 the C.E.O. of U.S. Healthcare, the parent company to a lot of smaller insurance companies, made \$127 MILLION. One man, \$127 MILLION. It's about time for something to be done.

President Obama wants the government to offer a competing insurance plan, one that will force the private insurance companies to lower their prices, stop denying claims, pay

for people with "pre-existing illnesses". The U.S. has the most expensive health care system and we are ranked in last place for the treatment we receive, but the insurance companies are some of the most profitable corporations in America. With all this talk of a competing health care plan, the political lobbyists for the insurance companies are out in full force. They are spending a ton of money trying to convince the politicians that there is nothing wrong with the health care system.

Eventually we will all be paying more for health care, so now is the time to take action. We are asking everyone to write a personal letter to your respective U.S. Congressman and tell them how important your health care is.

We should have the right to choose between a public or private insurance program. Almost all the other industrialized countries have a system like that in place. In Canada, they pay nothing for prescriptions. Americans can go across the border and pay pennies for the same thing that cost \$50 here. Tell your congressman about your elderly grandparent that has to choose which medi-

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CWA Members Keep the Heat on AT&T

from the National

While negotiations for all AT&T contracts continue – and some progress is being reported – CWA locals have been turning up the heat on AT&T, pushing back against the company's greed.

CWAers are turning up at golf tournaments, baseball games and other AT&T-sponsored events with a message that AT&T doesn't really want the public to hear: AT&T must stop corporate greed now.

CWA Local 4321 members turned up at the AT&T sponsored hot air balloon show in Coshocton, Ohio. They distributed flyers to get our message to the public about our fight for a fair contract with AT&T.

Local 6360 members wore CWA red shirts to AT&T night at the Kansas City Royals baseball game and handbilled the crowd before the game.

And the traveling billboard of Local 4320

was out in front at the AT&T-sponsored Memorial Golf Tournament in Dublin, Ohio, where Tiger Woods' presence made it certain that the public got the CWA message too.

In other actions, CWA Locals 6360, 6327 and 6450 held a big rally outside an AT&T location in Kansas City and got some picket line support from UAW members.

Members of CWA Locals 4100, 4310, 4320 and 4900 had some time on their hands so they checked out the latest at Apple Stores.

Members of Local 9421, along with retirees and other union supporters, held this week's weekly picket in Sacramento, with members spending their lunch hour making sure the public knows about AT&T's corporate greed.

Members of CWA Locals 4309 and 4340, joined by lots of retirees, spent their breaks and lunch hours "Practice Picketing" outside an AT&T location in downtown Cleveland.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

Anyone given discipline in any form should be grieving it. We let Verizon and AT&T Mobility get away with too much.

Stop worrying and being intimidated. Stop working off the clock. Document everything. Leave nothing to chance and cover your ass. Come to work on time (meaning be there a few minutes early so that you are ready to work at your starting time), be where you're supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to be doing. Do your safety checks! Work safe. Report the things that aren't safe. Don't work without the tools you need to stay safe. Don't share logins and passwords. If anyone tells you to use their code, it is a violation of the Business Code of Conduct (BOC). Anyone doing it is subject to termination. Don't take company property for your own. Don't give away your work to contractors. If you get a callout and you know it will be sent to a contractor if we don't go-someone needs to step up. If you work side by side with contractors let your stewards know. Don't forget that there is no FiOS tech and no Copper tech. You are technicians that work for Verizon, FiOS and Copper are what you work in.

If you have one of those managers that just can't seem to get supplies for you or the store, you need to go to the next level. If you don't feel comfortable doing that, contact a steward. Don't let management keep you from any type of productivity because they don't do their job. This also applies to having less vehicles. Let your manager hunt around for a truck while you pull your supplies to be ready when it is available. If you are told from an MA you have to finish your work even though you tell them, within the time limits, you can't stay, contact your manager. Your portion is done. If it is still on

your log when you are ready to leave, tell your manager to have it fixed before you return the next morning so you can be productive without wasting time.

What I am seeing at both companies is more rules and less flexibility. Scheduling is a problem for both. At one time, some managers would be lax with the rules and let things slide. From what I can tell it is a rarity now.

These are heartless corporations. They think of you only as producers. They keep pushing you to go higher and higher with the numbers they set, while eliminating more of the work force. You may be on friendly terms with your manager, but you still need to protect yourself. Don't look for them to protect you when it comes down to it. If you have something in writing from them we can almost believe it. They will do what they are told because they fear for their jobs more than you do. They have no protection. You at least have the ability to grieve an issue to fight their decisions. If you have kept everything documented it makes it easier for us to dispute what they claim.

I didn't go into great detail here but the bottom line is to work smarter, not harder. Document, document, document. Don't do your managers' work for them unless you are told to and paid for it. Help your brothers and sisters out when they need it. We are all in this together. Whether these corporations believe it or not, we also want them to succeed. *"I ask you leaders of labor; I ask you union members; I ask you young people who have yet to be tested: Why are you so weak? Why are you so self-serving? Why are you not outraged? Will all have to be lost before you awaken? How much is enough?"* Ron Benevento, IUE shop steward

Membership Cards

by Shannon Opfer

The new membership cards have finally come in. We will be handing them out in your work locations.

Correction: In April's newsletter, I quoted the Bell Systems slogan "No job is so important, and no service so urgent, that we cannot take the time to perform our work safely." I incorrectly called this Bell Atlantic's slogan. Sorry for the mix-up.

No Referrals

by Shannon Opfer

This latest contract made a provision in our healthcare that we would not need to get referrals anymore. That is not entirely true.

If you are in the Aetna health programs, you will no longer need referrals. If you use a different provider, you will probably still need them.

If you are not sure, check your policy. It doesn't cost anything to ask, and it could save you quite a bit.

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cine they can afford to take each month and which medicine they feel they could live without. Everybody has a story, please encourage family and friends to write letters also.

Congress is hearing from the insurance companies, they need to hear from us too. Where you live will determine who your Congressman is, mine in southern Maryland is Steny Hoyer. Don't let this moment pass us by, we will pay for it later, that is a fact.

AT&T Mobility: Pay Attention

by Denise Burns

Since AT&T Mobility continues to fire unjustly and avoid the grievance procedure, as often as they can, we have important information. If you are terminated for any reason, don't put down the store number for verification of employment. We don't know what the manager may say.

Any company should give out information stating that you were employed there for a period of time. They shouldn't be giving out any other information.

The third party service is used by various companies. If you are filling out an application whether it is while you are employed at AT&T Mobility or have been terminated, the contact information is 800 367-5690 code 10535.

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ing whatever needs to be done to keep yourself safe on the roads.

This is not just about leaving in the morning. We need you to work with us. It is not up to the union or the company to save your ass. It is up to you. **KEEP YOURSELF OUT OF TROUBLE.**

Do you know where every supervisor in this company lives? Where their children play ball or go to school? (I hope not, stalker.) When you're working, are you sure that no one is watching you? Of course not. You could be working next door to a supervisor's house. Wouldn't it be nice to hear that some second or third level saw you on the job and you were doing everything you are supposed to do and all your cones and chocks were where they should be?

Be where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there. Do your job. Be safe. At the end of the day, the one who is going to pay the most for not being safe is you and your family. Don't put yourself or your union in that position.

Skycreek Problem Reporting

by Shannon Opfer

In a recent meeting with Chris Childs, Miriam Wiesel mentioned that there was a phone number that techs can call to report problems with the Skycreek Service. Below is the process that she sent us.

How a tech can report a trouble on a Skycreek call for analysis by Verizon and Skycreek.

- 1) In order to get into the Trouble Report Menu, the tech will need to end the call with 1,1.
- 2) If the call is dropped from the remote end, then a prompt will say, "call ended" and the tech will have up to 3 seconds to enter 1,1. Once the prompt for the 4 digit number starts it is too late to hit 1,1.
- 3) Tech will hear call ended. Then the tech will be presented with the trouble report menu
- 4) Tech will be given 5 options
 - a. Press 1 for Low Audio Volume
 - b. Press 2 for One Way Audio (tech to customer audio path not audible)
 - c. Press 3 for Cross Talk
 - d. Press 4 for Static
 - e. Press 5 for Other
- 5) After the tech makes their selection it will bring them back to the prompt to place another call.
- 6) The prompt the tech selects will be added to the call log. It will be a new field attached to the end of the log. If you have any further problems with Skycreek, or with this process, please call the hall and let us know. If they are going to write people up over this policy, we better make sure it works.

by Shannon Opfer

Summer is here and its not all bbqs and beaches. It brings on its own challenges to our safety.

Be aware that black widow spiders love to hang out in our handholes. Be careful if you are opening one for FiOS or FTTP. They crawl into the ducts, or make webs right on the bottom of the lids.

Mosquitoes and ticks are out. The company should provide you with insect repellent as well as wasp and ant killer. Make sure you are using it as directed and be careful how you store it, as aerosol cans are not meant to be kept in high temperatures.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are also a concern. Watch yourself and coworkers for

Summertime Blues

by Shannon Opfer

It isn't really even summer yet, and we're already facing a trouble load that is through the roof. What happens next? Forcing! I love summer.

This is just a reminder of the forcing policy as laid out in the contract in a letter of understanding on page 159. It is in the old contract as well as the new. Hopefully we will be getting new contracts sometime soon.

First of all, they cannot force anyone without asking for volunteers first. Once they have asked everyone who is qualified to do the job they need done and they don't get volunteers, they have to follow the procedures on forcing.

According to the contract, we can be forced for no more than eight hours of overtime per week. It does not say that they can't force you in if you have 4 1/2 hours. That may have been policy in the past, but we've all seen that the past doesn't mean anything anymore. If you are going to be forced that day, they have to let you know 2 1/2 hours before the end of your tour. Any voluntary overtime DOES count toward the 8 hour cap. You can't be forced a sixth day two weeks in a row except in an emergency.

If they are forcing, supervision is supposed to accept all reasonable excuses if you can't work. If you have a reasonable excuse, and they don't accept it, call the hall. Please make sure it's a reasonable excuse though. If you don't want to miss your favorite T.V. show, we're not going to be able to help.

Warm Weather Safety

signs of either of these issues. The company should provide us with ice and sunscreen. If you can't get these things, speak to your supervisor. If they can't help, call the hall.

Of course, now that school is out, children will be around more. Be careful when driving through neighborhoods. Kids playing in the street are not always as aware as they should be, so it falls to us to look out for them.

My personal downfall every summer is poison ivy. It is out in force this year and seems to worse than ever. Again, the company provides us with a wash to use.

If you have any safety concerns or issues, talk to your supervisor. If they can't help, try a steward, or call the hall. Be safe out there.

Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting is July 13, 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:

Steve Dolce on the death of his son.

Congratulations to:

Shannon O'Connor on the birth of her daughter

Get Well to:

Mitzi Turner recovering from surgery

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

No meetings scheduled in July

Other Meetings

- 06/30/09 at&t Mobility Steward
- 07/06/09 Executive Board
- 07/13/09 Retiree
- 07/16/09 Metropolitan Baltimore Council
- 07/29/09 Executive Board
- 08/20/09 Metropolitan Baltimore Council

Other

- 06/22-06/24/09 CWA Convention
- 06/24-06/25/09 Legislative Conference
- 07/04/09 Bargained Holiday
- 07/15/09 ACFC
- 07/21/09 Newsletter Deadline
- 07/26-07/31/09 Leadership Training
- 08/18/09 Newsletter Deadline
- 08/19/09 ACFC

Bargained for Holidays, Both Contracts

- 07/04/09 Fourth of July
- 09/07/09 Labor Day

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