



Reverse Morris Trust

from the National

Legislation to close the Reverse Morris Trust tax loophole is before the Senate this week, and CWA members are working hard to get their senators on board. The House of Representatives closed the Reverse Morris Trust tax loophole last week as part of H.R. 4213, the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act.

CWA's Legislative Political Action Team has been coordinating contacts to key senators, looking for support for H.R. 4213, including phone calls and letters. District vice presidents and local union presidents are writing to their senators, pointing out that the Reverse Morris Trust "is a Wall Street scheme that allows big businesses to avoid paying taxes on the sale of company assets" and that closing the loophole would have meant hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue. Because of the Senate rule requiring 60 votes for legislation to be considered, CWAers are urging their senators to reject a filibuster and get the bill to the senate floor for debate. District 2 activists played a huge role in winning support from Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), a key member of the Senate Finance Committee.

The RMT tax loophole has enabled companies like Verizon to save millions of dollars in taxes from the sale of assets. H.R. 4213 also includes tax cuts and an extension of unemployment benefits.

The Reality of Safety

by Shannon Opfer

During one of those classes Verizon makes us sit through, we were forced to watch this safety movie called "It only takes a Second". This movie showed a bunch of scenarios around different work places. Someone left a file drawer open, someone else walked into it and tripped. Somebody got distracted while mowing the lawn, ran over their foot, that kind of thing. I remember thinking it was one of the funniest things I had ever seen, but then I have a twisted sense of humor.

Suddenly the other day it became all too real-

(Safety on page 3)

What does the Future hold?

by Shannon Opfer

So by now, all the decisions have been made. If you are taking the EISP, your paperwork should be in by now and you should be hearing whether or not it was approved. So for those of us that are left, what next?

Man, I wish I had a crystal ball. I have no idea. We already know there aren't enough people here now to do the work the right way. You are allowed 2 hours per trouble. If you can't fix it, then turn it back and they'll send someone else out. Don't waste your time actually trying to fix it, just rewire it. Tell people to switch to FiOS. That will solve everything. And god forbid you tell the customer the condition of the plant. Don't ever tell them that. Lie to them. But only about what the company tells you. If you were to lie to the customer for yourself, it's a customer mistreat and you can be terminated.

So now what? No clue. I assume we will be moved around. They will have to fill the holes that are left after the mass exodus. We can be moved to up to 35 miles over your current mileage. We have already seen some of these moves, but I'm sure they aren't

done. Logically, they can't be. So be prepared to be shaken up before long.

Also, watch your back. It follows that once people leave the payroll, they won't need as many supervisors. We saw this last time. Some supervisors might feel in order to make themselves look better, they need to crack down on us. If they make a name for themselves by getting us in trouble, they will. Verizon has created a work environment that resembles the plains of Africa. If someone senses weakness, they will pounce. It has become kill or be killed. Fun huh?

So what defense do we have against this? Each other! When we stand together, they can't take us down. When we stand and defend each other, they back down. I've been saying it for months, but its true. This is not the same company we were hired into. They don't care about their employees, they care about numbers. They want mindless robots to go out and do the work without complaint. Don't argue, just do it. This is why we have a union. If we don't start looking out for each other, who will? Remember, an injury to one is an injury to all. We are safer in a pack than we will ever be standing alone.

Worker's Compensation

from www.bsg-llp.com

We don't want to see anything happen to any one, but one of the unfortunate side effects of less employees could be more injuries and accidents. We shouldn't take it on faith that the company will take care of whatever needs to be done. You need to make sure that you are on top of the situation. Should you decide that you need a lawyer, members of 2107 have used Cliff Sobin and we recommend him. If something should happen, give him a call at 800-827-2667 or go to www.bsg-llp.com. Below is an overview of the Maryland Worker's Compensation Law.

The purpose of Workers' Compensation law is to protect and provide assistance to workers who are injured on the job. The law is designed to provide relief for those who are injured and an incentive to employers to have a safe work place so that fewer injuries will occur. An employee is entitled to benefits without regard to whose fault the accident

was but may not sue the employer for additional damages if the injury was the employer's fault.

Unfortunately, not all injuries are covered under Maryland law. How you were injured is very important. To obtain benefits you must have sustained one of the following: an accidental injury; an occupational disease; or a hernia.

Each of these injuries have specific definitions which you must understand to protect yourself. The benefits that you may claim include: Full payment for medical treatment from the doctor of your choice, money while you are unable to work; either totally or partially, money for any permanent disability you may have even if you can return to the full requirements of your job, vocational rehabilitation benefits if you cannot return to your job, reimbursement for prescriptions, mileage, and parking.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

With the crazy BS happening in the companies we represent I want to make sure you do not forget your rights at work. Too many times members go into a meeting alone with one or two supervisors.

Whenever you are required to meet with a supervisor-your first question is "what is this meeting about"? You should also ask if the meeting could lead to discipline in anyway. Depending on the managers' response you have a decision to make. If they are just meeting with you to cover a work process you should be okay. But, if at anytime it leads to questions and it seems to you it could lead to discipline, STOP THE MEETING and ask for your union representative. You do not have to answer anymore questions until the representative is present.

I have found at AT&T Mobility they often refuse to tell you what the meeting is about if it involves discipline. That should be a clue for you to ask for union representation. If they say you are not entitled to representation and you know it is discipline, just repeat your request and state that you won't answer any questions until you can talk to a union representative.

Understand that you have the right for representation in an investigatory meeting. These are called Weingarten Rights. Employees have *Weingarten* rights only during investigatory interviews. An investigatory interview occurs when a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend his or her conduct. If an employee has a reasonable belief that discipline or other adverse consequences may result from what he or she says, the employee has the right to request union representation.

Management is not required to inform the employee of his/her *Weingarten* rights; it is the employee's responsibility to know and request.

When the employee makes the request for a union representative to be present management has three options:
(1) it can stop questioning until the representative arrives.
(2) it can call off the interview or,
(3) it can tell the employee that it will call off the interview unless the employee voluntarily gives up his/her rights to a union representative (an option the employee should always refuse.)

Employers will often assert that the only role of a union representative in an investigatory interview is to observe the discussion. The Supreme Court, however, clearly acknowledges a representative's right to assist and counsel workers during the interview.

The Supreme Court has also ruled that during an investigatory interview management must inform the union representative of the subject of the interrogation. The representative must also be allowed to speak privately with the employee before the interview. During the questioning, the representative can interrupt to clarify a question or to object to confusing or intimidating tactics but they can't tell them what to say. He may advise them on how to answer a question. At the end of the interview the union representative can add information to support the employee's case.

"Only in America does the law allow management free rein to terrorize workers who seek to stand up for themselves." Thomas Donahue

New Stewards

by Shannon Opfer

We would like to welcome Mike Arscott and Scott Pruett as new stewards in Local 2107. They both have experience with stewardship from other locals and we look forward to working with them.

Now that everything is going to be up in the air, we need more people to step up and take an active role in the union. We can always use the assistance. Please call the hall and let us know if there is any way you can give us a hand. Your individual talents can be put to good use here.

What Next?

by Shannon Opfer

If you are leaving the payroll and need to have your employment verified, do not give out your bosses name and number. On applications, use the following number, 1-800-367-5690. If you are from AT&T, the code is 10535. If you are from Verizon the code is 10303.

If you are retiring, you are more than welcome to join the Retiree Club. Meetings are the second Monday of the month here at the hall at 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome. They would love to have you.

(Safety from page 1)

istic. One of my coworkers was placing a building terminal on a row of townhouses. He tested the metal box on the side of the building with his 188A and it tested fine. He placed his ladder against it and climbed up to screw the terminal to the wall. He came down one step to place the second screw. When he placed his weight on the lower step, it forced the cover plate of the electric box into the inside wiring. Somehow, it grounded out and a fireball shot out of the box, creating a half inch hole. He jumped off the ladder, scraping his arm and back rather badly. He also wound up with a slight burn on his stomach.

It was a fluke thing. He was incredibly lucky. I think we sometimes take our safety for granted. Even when you do everything right, something can still happen. If you take the time to put out all your cones and chocks, will that stop someone from running a stop sign and slamming into the back of your truck? Of course not. But maybe it will slow someone down when they see you up ahead in the road. So there is no reason for not doing everything right.

Unions had to fight to gain workplace safety. In the past, human life was secondary to getting the job done. If it were up to the company, it still would be. Instead we are required to wear hard hats and use safety equipment. We, myself included, tend to bitch about it. "Its hot. I don't need it, I'm sitting still. Those are pointless." Well as I learned the other day, its not so pointless. Even doing everything we are supposed to, people can still get hurt. Please be careful and remember, "It only takes a Second."

Heat Stress Survey

As summer heats up, CWA is asking outside technicians to take an online survey to help assess how many members have suffered heat stress symptoms and what employers are doing to limit exposure and provide training. The five-question survey is at http://www.cwa-union.org/pages/cwa_heat_stress_survey. Local presidents and staff will be receiving an e-mail about the survey and are asked to make sure that all outside technicians are notified.

Potentially deadly, heat stress is a growing concern for CWA's Safety and Health Department, which just published a new heat stress brochure. Copies can be downloaded here. It can be found on the Safety and Health webpage at www.cwa-union.org. For questions about the survey, contact Safety and Health Director Dave LeGrande at legrande@cwa-union.org.

Important Contacts for Retirees

by Shannon Opfer

Once you leave the payroll, you may still have questions about who to talk to with problems. All of this information is available on our website, but here are some numbers you might need.

The Verizon Benefit Center-1-877-4VzBens or www.verizon.com/benefits. You will need to enter the last four digits of your social security number and your date of birth. Then you can choose one of the options. They are Retirement, Savings Plan, Healthcare, and Life and Disability.

For the medical plans, you can call Aetna, Inc at 1-800-247-5482 or visit www.aetna.com. For the prescription drug plan you can call Medco at 1-877-877-1878 or www.medco.com. To receive coverage review for drugs listed in the SPD under "Medications that Require Coverage Review" call 1800-626-6270. To initiate a review for the drugs listed as requiring a lesser review in the SPD under "Medications That Require Coverage Review" call 1888-248-4670.

United Optical offers discounts to retirees. You need the code CWAR. Lasik discount information is available from Davis Vision at

1-877-999-7006 or www.davisvision.com. The HMO supplemental health and substance abuse treatment benefits MHN number is 1-800-777-7991.

For dental plans, you can call Metlife at 1-800-988-8331 or go to www.metlife.com/dental or Aetna at 1-800-843-3661 or www.aetna.com.

For survivor benefits whether its Basic Life or Supplemental Life, you would call 1-877-4VzBens or visit www.verizon.com/benefits. For long term care insurance call Mutual of Omaha at 1800-877-1052.

For information about the Verizon Savings Plan or the Pension Plan call 1-888-457-9333 or visit www.netbenefits.com. Other Pension plan contacts can be reached at 1-800-400-7242 or www.pbgc.gov.

For those of you who need the COBRA information you can call 1877-4VzBens or visit www.verizon.com/benefits.

If you need any further information you can call Sue Anderson at 1-888-324-4969. She is the Union Retiree Benefit Coordinator and should be able to help with questions. You can check our website for any other contacts you might need.

Don't Get too Comfy

by Mike Parker

Once all the dust settles after July 3, the real fun begins. Those of us that are left will be asked to pick up the pieces. I have heard management talking about back up plans, when key people that do a specific job function leave, who will fill the void. People will need to get trained to do the new work, but who will do the training? The people with the knowledge are gone in a few weeks.

Don't get too comfortable in your current job position. Just because you are an FIOS tech today doesn't mean you'll be one tomorrow. The company is slowing the FTTP build, in

fact some management says it may be stopping all together. If fiber is no longer being put in you won't need to do installs. In the past we could always count on the copper network because the state government regulates it. Well we all know where that's gotten us. To quote an area manager "It's cheaper to pay \$1 million in fines than to pay \$4 million in overtime to do the work".

In a nut shell just keep in the back of your mind that no matter how senior you are or where you live, the company can move us up to 35 miles further than we travel to our current work location, as I have learned while residing at my new garage at 935 V St.

Remember Joe Karsner

by Mike Parker

When I first started back in 1997 everybody was retiring and walking out the door with a big amount of cash and planning to invest it into the stock market. Some people used a guy named Joe Karsner to invest their money. I even went to one of his seminars and you would have thought he was the smartest man in the world. He talked a great game, said he could make you all kinds of

money, and had people seeing dollar signs. Well unfortunately it didn't work out so well. It turned out he was just an insurance salesman that was in way over his head. He cost a lot of people a lot of money. Most retirees that used him lost a good portion of their lump sum pension. I'm no financial expert, but please get lots of opinions from different professionals before you give your money to the next insurance salesman.

Retirees Corner

The next regular meeting will be July 12, 2010. RMC meetings are held on the second Monday of every month.

DirectSat Techs

If you are receiving this newsletter, that's because we have your address. If we don't have someone's address they need to either call the hall or email us their information so we can put them in our database. Get the word out for them to get in touch!

Get Well to:

Lynette Snell on a speedy recovery

The AFL-CIO Community Services of Central Maryland is holding their 26th Annual Charity Golf Classic Fundraiser. It will be held Friday, September 10, 2010 at Rocky Point Golf Course in Baltimore County, Maryland. The Golfer's fee is \$125 per player. Entry fee includes a continental breakfast, golf cart, and lunch. Check in will begin at 7:00 am, Shotgun will take place at 8:00 am. The format will be "Captain's Choice Best Ball- foursomes. Registration is limited to 144 golfers and is a first come first serve basis and must be accompanied by payment. If you have any questions please contact Diane Luthardt at 410-247-4898.

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

No membership meeting is scheduled

Other Meetings

- 06/23/10 ACFC
- 06/30/10 DirectSat Bargaining
- 07/11-07/16/10 Leadership Conference
- 07/26-07/29/10 CWA Convention
- 07/26-07/29/10 Legislative Conference

Other

- 06/20/10 Father's Day
- 06/25/10 AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards 7:05 pm
- 07/20/10 Newsletter Deadline

Bargained for Holidays

- 07/04/10 Independence Day AT&T Mobility and Verizon

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