



HOTLINE

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA LOCAL 2201

VOLUME 28, ISSUE NO. 3

March 2007

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Chris Lane

Executive Vice President

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Outside Plant South

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East

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Financial Admin Services

Bre Armbrust

Commercial Directory Services

David Vincent

UNION'S ONLY WEAPON...

Who makes up the Union? Is the Union an organization, like the AARP, that you send in your money to support issues that are important to you? Is the Union like a law office that provides representation or advice when needed for a weekly fee? In both cases, NO!

The Union is neither of these things and at the same time; representation, advice and lobbying are done to support the membership. How is that done? It is done by volunteers. Your co-workers who stand to become stewards or join committees to do the work that is necessary to maintain our rights and benefits. The truth is that we would have nothing without these volunteers stepping-up and doing this work on their own time, with no additional compensation. The Union is not an organization separate from the employees. It is certainly not a third party who negotiates on our behalf. The Union is **YOU!**

Since we were children we have been told that if we

want anything in life we have to fight for it. This doesn't change as we grow up. From the founding of our country to the rights and freedom gained during the civil rights movement there was a joining together of people to fight for what was right. Nothing has been given for free.

As employees, union

parent that Verizon has gone on the offensive. They want the Union out and the "flexibility" to move jobs and reduce expenses, like medical, pensions and retiree benefits. So, instead of working with their employees, management has chosen to fight. We all want our employers to do well but not at our expense.

To turn this tide we all need each other. Instead of asking what has the Union done for you, ask how we can join together and make the changes necessary to gain that respect. Ask how you can be a steward or part of the Steward's Army. Call the local about joining a committee or what can be done in your group to make it better.

It is going to take all of us to fight to retain what we have, let alone to grow. So when someone asks what does the Union do, ask them when was the last time they came to a meeting, passed out flyers or joined in on one of the mobilization activities. Tell them that they are the UNION and the only way to win is with help from **YOU!**



YOU!

members and citizens we deserve respect. We deserve fair pay and equal treatment. Yet, it does not come without a price. Unfortunately, it should be ap-

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Brothers and Sisters,

I hope it is becoming obvious to everyone with the recent attacks by Verizon, that

we are getting closer to bargaining and they have declared WAR.

Last month, our focus was on House Bill 1755, this month they declared impasse and implemented the new Regional Attendance Plan with no desire to work with the union to fix the problems. We see more and more contractors doing bargaining work, large business accounts leaving, and Verizon walking all over the broadband agreement by allowing contractors to pull fiber through thousands of feet

of inter-duct and saying it was incidental or an accident. The ultimate slap in the face was when Ivan Seidenberg responded to our National President Larry Cohen saying VZB was a separate company and that they would not recognize card check even though a majority voted YES for a union.

In response to all these attacks, we will continue to grow our stewards army, get more involved legislatively, challenge the company every step of the way when they violate our contract, and work hard to support the Employee Free Choice Act and organizing rights of all workers.

The Company takes for granted the strength of organized labor. Solidarity is a common word we use in the Union that even we sometimes take for granted. When members are educated, mobilized, and focused on

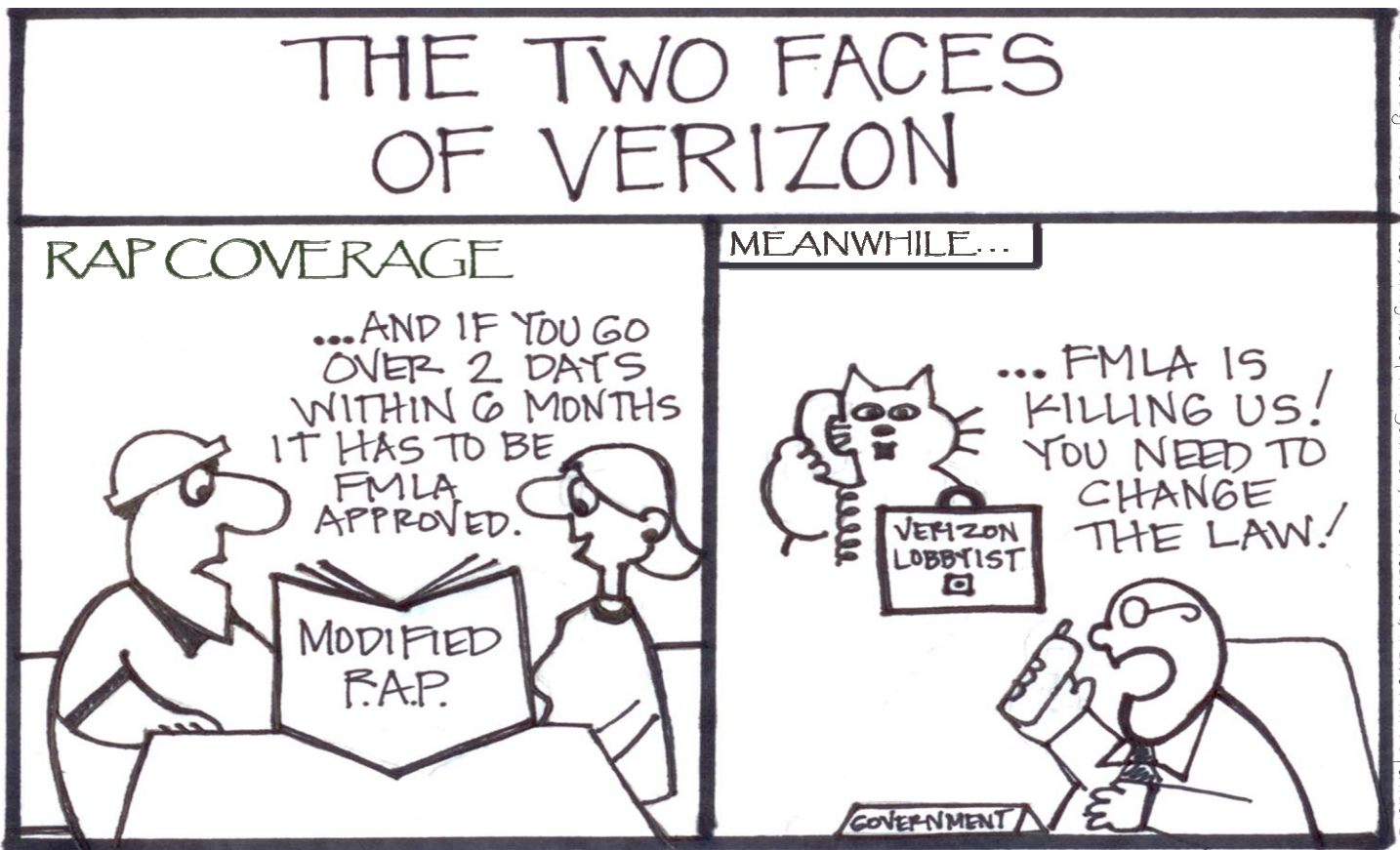
common issues the power of solidarity will be overwhelming. We now have more involvement at the local than I have ever seen before because we know that just paying dues isn't enough, being a member means helping out and doing more to secure our future. We are on the right path and if we continue to grow we will succeed at letting Verizon know that we are not backing down, we are in it to keep the rights we all have fought to have. Stay strong and always stand UNITED!

In Solidarity,

Chris Lane

President Local 2201

D2 VZ-SIF Coordinator



Illustrated By: Lauren Kinchel, daughter of Kim Johnson, Vice President, Inside Plant Operations

VERIZON'S NEW ATTENDANCE PLAN. . .

Did you call out of work today and go to the beach? Did you call your supervisor and blatantly lie about your health or your children's health just to go shopping? Verizon thinks you did.

On March 11th, Verizon implemented a new attendance plan that would allow up to four days, two days at a time, a year for any absence that was not covered under FMLA. This was a change from sixteen days, four at a time.

Verizon claims that they lose millions a year on absence and that there is blatant abuse. Well, you know what, they're right. They do lose millions a year and it may be hard to believe this but some people do abuse the system. We all could think real hard and name a few names of people we believe are abusing absence and FMLA. We may be right but there is a good chance we're wrong. Laws are put in place so that a person's medical info is private. Would you want to share your info with the entire office? That person that you swear called in sick to go shopping just might be battling breast cancer or have to take care of a child with a debilitating illness. Right or wrong many people feel embarrassed when dealing with an illness or they do not want to deal with the stigma of a condition like HIV. It certainly is not up to us to judge them.

Verizon, however, thinks that abuse is so rampant that if they impose strict rules on attendance then people will come to work. The problem is that it will push people to get FMLA certifications when it may not have been needed to deal with their situation. We all know that if there are abusers then they will abuse this new plan by using FMLA. It is in their nature. This new plan does not address the problem.

The Union has attempted to work with management in the past to improve attendance. Through the JCAC (Joint Com-

mittee on Absence Control) specific departments, with poor attendance, have been targeted with programs designed to address employees' problems. Programs such as slide tours, appointment time and increased flexibility to grant excused time were implemented. In almost all cases, when management did what they said they would do, attendance improved.

This Local has always expressed the importance of coming to work and urged members to call members, if there was abuse, to encourage a different behavior. Yet the truth is that people will get sick. Life happens to us all eventually.

Verizon attempted to push this attendance plan on us last May. The Union

GOT FMLA?

asked for it to be bargained and the Bargaining Committee and Verizon started to meet. For months there was a struggle just to get information out of the company. Finally, the Union submitted its first proposal. The Company did not even finish reading it, called for a break and then declared that bargaining was going nowhere and implemented the plan. This was the first proposal! Verizon never intended to be honest in their dealings with all of us. Some of the proposals that were suggested include:

- 10 days of sick time per calendar year to be used in full or half day increments. Any unused days would be eligible to receive a lump sum payment in lieu of those days.
- Tardiness not considered until after 15 minutes.
- An extended absence would not require steps to be jumped; such as going from Step 1 to Step 3 with 3 or more days absent.
- The removal of different standards for 6 months to five years and over 5 years.

As you can see, The Union has stressed flexibility in dealing with problems and Verizon only wants to punish any absence. They claim medical costs are rising and that they need relief, yet, we are forced towards the doctor for every little thing. While they push us to FMLA, they are, at the same time, lobbying the Government to change FMLA laws claiming wide-spread usage and abuse. They must think we are blind and can't see the game that they are playing.

On this issue, the Union has filed grievances and charges. This will not be enough. It will take all of us to force Verizon to deal with its employees fairly. This new plan is a symptom of a larger problem. It is one piece of a larger master plan that Verizon is implementing to drive a wedge between us. They want to pit employee against employee and while we are weakened, destroy our cohesiveness, our Union as a whole. This is not speculation. Verizon executive management has come out and said so in its investor meetings.

So, how do we fight it? Another article in this newsletter talks about the importance that you, the member, play in getting something done. That is the only way we can win this battle and any battle to come. If you

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(Continued from page 3)

are impacted by this new plan, tell a steward and file a grievance. If Verizon tries to hold you accountable to a "look back period", taking into account an absence before you were covered, it must be addressed. If management tells you that the Union agreed to the plan, we need to file charges. We must not tolerate the company lying, even when they are lying to their own management employees.

We all must play a part in mobili-

zations and any actions that show the Company that we are united and they cannot drive a wedge between us. If the Company wants a fight, then we will give it to them but, we must still remember that our success depends upon our employer's success. A bad management team does not mean we throw in the towel and run off to another employer, if we can. We have built this Company not Ivan and friends. We deserve the respect and rewards of a lifetime of hard work.

Encourage all of our co-workers to

come to work. If they are going through a difficult time, then support them. If you know that your friends are abusing the system, then scold them.

We all know that stricter discipline is not the answer. Verizon's actions have proven that they don't care for the employees, so we must band together and care for ourselves. We can win. This battle has just begun.

VERIZON PROXY STATEMENTS ARE NEEDED

Take a look at Ivan's pay to the right. Does he deserve it? Our technicians can't get tools or supplies to service customers but at least Ivan got his. Do you want to send him a message?

If you contribute to the 401k plan then you are an owner and should receive a proxy statement in the mail. A proxy statement is a ballot on how you want your ownership shares voted on issues. CWA suggests voting for the issues as outlined later. We will be visiting Verizon in Pittsburgh, PA on May 3rd. To make an impact and as a show of strength the union wants to bring as many completed proxy statements as possible. Please fill out your statement as indicated below and turn it in to a steward or the Local as soon as possible.

Proxy Instructions:

Verizon's annual meeting will be held in **Pittsburgh, PA**, on **May 3rd**. Proxies will be arriving in the mail shortly. To have the union deliver your proxy to Verizon:

1. Vote your proxy by placing an "X" in the For, Against, or Abstain box for each proposal and for each director. We recommend votes **FOR** proposals 4, 5, 6, and 7. We recommend votes **AGAINST** the following directors, who are members of the compensation committee, which sets executive pay levels: Carrión, Lane, Neubauer, Otis, Shipley, Stafford.
2. Sign and date the card where indicated.
3. **Bring back** your proxy card and the return envelope to your local or to one of the job stewards by **Friday, April 20th**.

CWA will be collecting and delivering voted proxies to the company. CWA is not asking for discretionary authority to vote proxies on behalf of its members. Please make sure you vote and sign your proxy

WHAT IVAN MADE!

Salary	-	\$2,100,000
Non-Equity Incentives	-	\$4,252,500
Stock Awards	-	\$13,125,018
Perks	-	\$734,400

Perks include—

<i>Personal jet use</i>	\$177,000
<i>Deferred compensation</i>	\$311,000
<i>Bonus life insurance</i>	\$218,000

Total 2006 Compensation

\$20,211,918

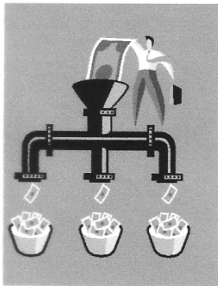
COMING SOON: FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT SERIES



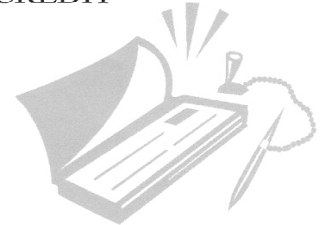
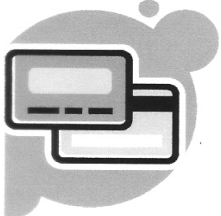
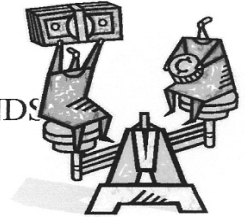
BROUGHT TO YOU FROM THE CWA LOCAL 2201 EDUCATION COMMITTEE



ARE YOU STRESSED? ARE THINGS NOT FEELING SECURE? ARE YOU REALIZING THE COMPANY IS GOING IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION- WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT INCLUDE YOUR CURRENT JOB? THE CONTRACT WILL BE UP IN 2008. WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING? A FINANCIAL PLANNER- JOHN B. BENNETT WILL BE HERE TO HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MONEY BECAUSE ... "A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY". HE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:



- UNDERSTANDING YOUR 401K
- LEARN ABOUT IRA's, MUTUAL FUNDS, STOCKS, BONDS
- LIFE INSURANCE- TERM VS. WHOLE LIFE
- LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE
- RETIREMENT OPTIONS
- FINANCIAL GOALS, PLANNING & TIPS
- BUDGETING TOOLS
- UNDERSTANDING CREDIT, CREDIT SCORES & CREDIT REPORTS
- COLLEGE PLANNING FOR YOUR CHILDREN
- ESTATE PLANNING
- TAX PLANNING
- HOMEOWNERSHIP VS. RENTING



4/25/07 – 1st session – Managing Debt – Setting priorities, Making a Budget, Paying Yourself first

5/23/07 2nd session – Retirement Planning

Sessions held at 6pm at your local 2201 office at 5809 Lakeside Ave.



GET READY..SET GO.. ON THE TRACK TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Important Numbers**Verizon Benefits Center-**

877.275-8947

CWA Retiree Health Care Benefit-

888-324-4969

Aetna US Healthcare-

800-247-5482

Medco Health Prescription-

877-877-1878

MetLife Dental Plans-

800-988-8331

Aetna DMO-

800-843-3661

Davis Vision LASIK Network-

877-999-7006

MetLife Insurance-

800-638-4228

Marsh@Work Solutions-

800-336-9427

Mutual of Omaha Long-term-

800-877-1052

ADP COBRA (Does Billing)-

800-891-0535

Fidelity Investments-

888-457-9333

United Healthcare (pre 12/31/89)-

800-334-4515

GOV. KAINE & HB1755 - WHAT NEXT!

On Tuesday, Mar. 26, Gov. Kaine vetoed HB 1755, the change to the Utilities Transfer Act. All the work that you have put in for the past month and a half has come to fruition. You all should congratulate yourselves for doing the impossible. It shows what we can do when push comes to shove and we all rally around a problem.

A short time ago it would have been an impossible thought that this could be turned around. It generally takes months to get the resources and support to make a change to any bill let alone one that had already passed one house and was set to breeze through the other. Verizon, however, forgot who they were dealing with. Union members are used to fighting against impossible odds, especially when the fight is the right thing to do and will negatively affect our friends and communities.

The fight is not over yet. This bill will now go back to the House of Delegates and the Senate to vote on the veto. Anything more than a 2/3 vote will override the veto. It is imperative that we contact our Delegates and Senators again to advise them to sustain Gov. Kaine's veto

and kill this bill that Verizon has tried to sneak past its employees and customers.

We know that you have already called once, some of you multiple times, but you must contact them again. The veto session will be on **April 4th** so we do not have long to get our message across.

The legislature is not in session so it is best to contact them in their home office. Some contact numbers are:

House of Delegates Information Office:**(804) 698-1500****Senate Legislative Information Office:****(804) 698-7410****Constituent Hotline (Not working when not in session):****1-800-889-0229****Find Your Legislator:****<http://conview.state.va.us/whosmy.nsf/main?openform>****SUBMISSIONS FOR HOTLINE**

Remember to send in your submissions for the HOTLINE to Suzanne @ the Local. She can be reached at 804 266-2201 or editor@cwa2201.org. Any fax submissions should be sent to 804 266-8572. This would include any articles, ideas for articles, condolences, congratulations, corrections and any questions or complaints that you might have. The HOTLINE goes out to the entire membership and is the best way to get your message out.

NEW MEMBERS

CWA Local 2201 would like to welcome the following people who have joined our union.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Pamela Bowlds | Channel Kennedy |
| Isaac Bragg | Charles Lawson |
| Jamie Carnley | Matthew Lowrance |
| Will Durette | Russell Martin |
| Robert Duval | Anne McGonigal |
| Seth Eley | Joshua Meade |
| Nicholas Gardner | Anthony Miles |
| Timothy Hall | Michael O'Neil |
| Garth Henkel | Harry Pachmayr |
| Kenneth Johnson | |

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO COULD USE A UNION?

While things could always be better, we have pretty good wages and benefits because of our union contracts. A lot of people we care about don't have things like job security, annual raises, grievance procedure, paid benefits and pension plans.

We, as members of CWA, have to face the fact that while our families, friends and neighbors work in conditions that are worse than what we have as CWA members, there will always be pressure to decrease our benefits. We will continue to compete with

workers whose employers have sacrificed the worker's standard of living to increase their company's profits.

If more people don't join unions and fight with us to improve working conditions, it is only a matter of time before our working conditions deteriorate. We need to increase our membership in CWA for us to be strong enough to keep what we have and gain what we need in the future for all our members! Our strength is in our numbers!!!

We are looking to talk to workers who need a union. Their information will be kept completely confidential. While it is illegal to fire someone for trying to form a union, we would never take any chances. If you know of someone who would be interested in learning more, please have them call Chris Flock at 804 690-6448 or the local at 804 266-2201. We can help the people you care about in organizing a union in their workplace and gaining the benefits they deserve!

COMMUNITY SERVICES CORNER

Can you believe spring is here? Everyone is busy enjoying the nice weather and doing some yard work. This brings up our current project. The Community Services Committee and the Women's Committee are partnering up to clean up Albert V. Norrell and plant some flowers. We are hosting a Pampered Chef Party at the local on March 29th at 6:00 PM to raise money to fund this event. The date and time of the event will be announced later.

Our committee is also working on sponsoring a bowl-a-thon to raise money for the Children's Hospital. We are looking to set a date this spring.

We are also going to be participating in the heart walk again this fall helping The American Heart Association stamp out heart disease. We had such a great time doing this last year and hope to have even more representation from our local this year. The event is being held again this year at Richmond International Raceway and is scheduled for November 3, 2007. I would also like to thank those that walked last year.

We are still selling the cookbooks. If you have not received a copy and would like to, please email me at unityinthecommunity@cwa2201.org or

call the local at 266-2201.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the following people: Althea Henderson, Shavette Johnson, Cindy and Jason Nelson for volunteering their time to be a part of this wonderful committee. We had our first meeting on March 15th and they brought so many great ideas and excitement with them! Again thank-you!!

-Missy Duff

-Community Services

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 5, 2007 Inside Plant Operations (IPO) Job Steward Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 5, 2007 Equity Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 5, 2007 Executive Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Local Office.
- April 9, 2007 East Job Steward Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Joe’s Inn, 6512 Mechanicsville Turnpike.
- April 16, 2007 Operator Services/Repair Services (OS/RS) Job Steward Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Local Office.
- April 17, 2007 Financial and Administrative Support (FAS) Job Steward Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Local Office.
- April 17, 2007 Outside Plant South (OPS) Job Steward Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Shoney’s Oxbridge Square Shopping Center.
- April 18, 2007 Commercial and Directory Services (CDS) Job Steward Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 18, 2007 Idearc Job Steward Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 19, 2007 Women’s Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 19, 2007 Community Services Committee, 6:00 p.m., Local Office.
- April 24, 2007 Health & Safety Committee, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 24, 2007 Outside Plant North (OPN) Job Steward Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Local Office.
- April 25, 2007 Education Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 26, 2007 Organizing Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Local Office.
- April 26, 2007 Fredericksburg (FRED) Job Steward Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Pizza Hut.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Next Membership Meeting:
Thursday April 12th, 6pm at the Local Office

Retiree’s Membership Meeting:

Wednesday April 11th, 12pm @ the Local Office

RICHMOND CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Thursday, April 5th
231 East Belt Blvd
Richmond, VA

Communications Workers of America
Local 2201
5809 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23228

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