

CWA VOICE



The Communications Workers of America, Local 2202 Virginia Beach, VA

July/August 2003

Mobilization pays off

Avaya Wins Tentative Agreement

After several weeks of bargaining and intensive mobilization which began in early May, our Avaya brothers and sisters have a tentative agreement. A contract explanation meeting has taken place in our Local and we now await the results of a contract ratification vote which should occur by later July.

Our Local would like to acknowledge our Avaya brothers and sisters for all of their hard work and dedication that brought us to this point in winning a tentative agreement. Also; to those who gave their support and helped in any mobilization efforts to win a tentative agreement with Avaya.

Following are the highlights of the new tentative agreement with Avaya:

- ◆ 3 year Agreement
- ◆ 3% general wage increase each year
- ◆ \$400 ratification bonus
- ◆ 3% increase on the pension bands each year
- ◆ Elimination of the 102 pension band. Move all incumbents in to the 103 pension band effective immediately
- ◆ No medical premiums for active or retirees for the life of the Agreement
- ◆ 10% increase in Type B Dental procedures
- ◆ Improvements in other programs such as reimbursement accounts, other covered charges for retirees, savings plan, Avaya Performance Award and Care of Newborn Child/Family Care Leave
- ◆ Alliance/ETOP funding to continue
- ◆ Optional Termination Pay moved from \$30,500 to \$42,500 using the applicable termination schedule
- ◆ Establishment of a Retiree Advisory Committee to address retiree issues
- ◆ Town Upgrades for Atlanta, Denver, and the State of Ohio
- ◆ Voluntary Enhancement for all pension eligible employees who leave roll August 31st by applying an additional 12% to the applicable pension band for this window only
- ◆ Variable Workforce continues for at least 18 months. The no layoff provision continues to apply

CWA Local 2202 Annual Picnic
Sunday, September 14, 2003
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(see last page for details)

On Legislation

Overtime Pay Under Attack

There has recently been an attack on working persons right to receive overtime pay as guaranteed by the *Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)*. The incumbent administration proposed changes to the act that could effect more than 8 million white-collar workers—making them ineligible to receive pay compensation after working more than 40 hours a week.

The house you buy, the college that you send your child(ren) to, or the vacation that you go on—is a right that may be directly tied into your legal right to receive time-and-a-half pay after working 40 hours of work in a week. In fact, employees who make as little as \$22,100 annually could be reclassified as professional, administrative, or executive employees being exempt from federal overtime rules. Emergency medical technicians, cooks, social workers, and police officers are among the 8 million workers who could be reclassified and lose overtime pay.

The Economic Policy Institute (EPI), in its report “Eliminating the Right to Overtime Pay”, says that “many workers would face unpredictable work schedules and reduced pay because of an increased demand for extra hours for which employers would not have to compensate workers for”.

Additionally, while the White House sought to eliminate overtime, our anti-worker members of Congress have proposed five bills seeking to limit or restructure who qualifies for overtime. H.R. 1119 in the House and S. 317 in the Senate could allow employers to save money at their employees’ expense by having employees work overtime in exchange for a promise of time off (at some future, unspecified date under the employer’s control), instead of paying workers the time-in-a-half overtime pay they are entitle to under current law.

Because of the efforts of working families who sent hundreds of thousands of faxes and made thousands of calls to their representatives, House Republicans cancelled a scheduled June 5th vote on H.R. 1119 because they did not have sufficient votes for passage. The other bills, which have not received hearing dates, would exempt some occupations from FLSA minimum wage and overtime protections.

Protect Your Overtime Pay.

For more information, visit www.aflcio.org

Verizon Contract Expires on
08-02-03 11:59 p.m.

- ◆ **Strike? Local 2202 is ready to help!**
Find out how...see inside.



Dear Union Sisters and Brothers,

Since bargaining has begun for Verizon, our focus this month will be in that direction. It is evident that in order to win a good contract—it is

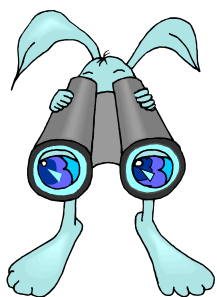
crucial that all members are supportive of one another and actively involved in the mobilization activities during bargaining. We must show the company that their selfish attempt to take us backwards is absurd. We have fought long and hard over many years to gain what wages, benefits, and working conditions that we now have. We must mobilize and express to the company that **“WE WON’T GO BACK”**.

While I will be spending most of the summer at the bargaining table, my thoughts and prayers will be with each and every one of you. I know that our mobilization structure is strong. We will as always keep you informed through our mobilization structure, the recorder, and our website as information becomes available.

Remember, you are one of approximately 70,000 union members from Maine to Virginia whose contracts expire on August 2nd. You are definitely not alone. We are all in this fight together. Stay strong and continue the fight.

In Unity,

Louie



Agnes R. Agner

Did not locate her name in last month’s newsletter

Locate your name hidden in ALL CAPS in this issue—Just call the Union Office at 456-2202 & we’ll put \$10.00 in your pocket!

**JOIN US AT THE
NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON
THURSDAY, JULY 24, 2003
7:30 P.M.
IRONWORKERS HALL
5307 E. VIRGINIA BEACH BLVD
NORFOLK, VA**

-Last meeting before the Verizon contract expiration-

The Pot-of-Gold is getting heavy!
If you’re present you may take home
\$66.06



Verizon Offers Surrogate EISP

In an effort to reduce the declared surplus by Verizon, the union was able to solicit the names of persons wishing to voluntarily leave the payroll. Those persons who volunteered should have received their packages by June 17th. The company’s deadline to receive the completed packages was July 16th. The off-payroll date for those accepted by the company will be July 26, 2003.

If you have questions about the status of your offer, please direct them to your supervisor.

Data / “Policies” Requested About Payment for Witness-Subpoena

Mark Wilson, CWA Attorney, is requesting information or data on what *individual office policies or policy statements* are out concerning payments for employees who are subpoenaed as witnesses. Although the contract (Article 33, Sec. 1(c)) provides a pretty clear definition of who should be paid for service as a witness in response to a subpoena, if any individual offices, work groups, or departments have put out statements in this area, please make a copy and forward them to the Union Office immediately.

Do You Just Belong?

Are you an active member, the kind that would be missed, or are you just contented that your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the crowd, or do you stay at home and crab both long and loud?

Do you take an active part to help your union along, or are you satisfied to be the kind to “just belong”?

There is quite a program scheduled that means success if done, and it can be accomplished with the help of everyone.

So attend the meetings regularly and help with hand and heart, Don’t be just a member, but take an active part.

Think this over, Member, Are we right or wrong?

Are you an active member, or...

Do you just belong?

-Author Unknown

VIS CWA Members Celebrate Organizing Victory

It was a long haul but worth the V-I-C-T-O-R-Y! VIS (Verizon Information Services) is now organized and represented by the CWA. VIS members in our Local work out of the Corporate Blvd location in Norfolk.

On Friday, June 13th, our VIS members and Executive Board celebrated this organizing victory at the Holiday Inn-Select in Norfolk with light h'orderves, casual drinks, and lots of good fellowship.

We appreciate the mobilization efforts and the support from all that made this possible. Special accolades goes to Paul Ford and Linda Fischer, two VIS members who worked tirelessly in this organizing and bargaining campaign.

Vice President Carol Castillo will represent the VIS work group in grievances and other labor concerns.

Pictured are some attendees at the VIS affair



Give it Away, Give it Away, Give it Away Now!

BY CHRIS DAVIDSON

If there ever was a song that could describe the sense and sensibilities of corporate America, it's "Give It Away" by Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Allow me to preface by stating that not a single one of us in this country is doing without, that we didn't do without five, ten, or twenty years ago. Second, September 11th has nothing to do with the economic state of our country, nor Iraq, or Afghanistan. Thirdly, the seemingly huge deficit isn't to blame. It's my opinion that this "flat economy" is being "driven" by a three-pronged assault by self-effacing entities like Worldcom, Enron, Healthsouth, Global Crossing; the uncontrolled, exuberant corporate pay packages and price gouging of pharmaceutical and healthcare-less mis-management organizations on the citizenry and finally, the consequential fear and concern of each and every working consumer in this country, brought on by layoffs, bankruptcy, fraud, and retirement losses.

On August 2nd, our contract expires and a main negotiation dilemma



is cost-shifting healthcare charges to you and I. Recently, GE wanted to cry the blues like Verizon and other corporations are. Meanwhile they are "giving away the money" to their executives and board of directors. Perhaps GE and Verizon should go back to Jack Welch, Ivan Seidenberg, and Chuck Lee and ask them to help financially. Afterall, Human Resources in concert with the boards of directors "gave it away" with them,

hundreds of millions! But, as a famous writer once wrote: "The Rich are different from you and me."

CWA National should run major-market ads showing the companies that want to cost-shift and compare it with pay and severance packages of their respective CEOs to the music of "Give it Away". Hey, let's include the "fat cat middle-man" HMOs and drugmakers too! And the politicians that protect them over the citizenry. When Executives lifestyles are featured in the *W.S.J.*, *Town & Country*, *Robb Report*, *Southern Living*, *Architectural Digest*, and other periodicals, while they seek to lessen the life and lifestyles of employees, it smacks of immoral and ill repute. "The Rich are different from you and me." On August 4th—chant "give it away, give it away now!" Solidarily...

*Need Something Notarized?
Look no further...*

*Contact your
Local's Community Services Committee
at (757) 456-2202
*No charge to union members**

On Bargaining We Won't Go Back!

It's late June and we are now off to full-swing bargaining. Currently, at the bargaining table, Verizon is having a difficult time understanding what the definition of a *fair contract* really is. The company defines a "*fair contract*" thus far as "*regression, living far below economic cost-of-living standards for modern day, and living far beneath the standards that pioneer union brothers and sisters fought hard and long to gain*". The company has proposed changes in our contract that will literally take us back decades. With the company proposing issues such as the ability to transfer jobs, a reduction in the layoff allowance received, and the removal of contractual protections related to the Bell Atlantic-GTE merger—we know that they have a plan to restructure the company in a major kind of way with a catastrophic number of workers losing jobs behind it. For those who have taken advantage of the bargained for tuition assistance plan, the company has even proposed changes in this area. Your job, your health care, your pension, and family's livelihood are at risk. The brothers and sisters who went before us and fought and earned the benefits we enjoy today are even at risk of paying for their healthcare coverage. We cannot allow this to happen! We must mobilize and send a strong message to Verizon that "WE WON'T GO BACK!"

The use of a strike is one of the last tools that we use to get our message across to the company; and hopefully a positive strike vote will tell the company that we will sacrifice our paychecks for a fair and decent contract. MOBILIZE, MOBILIZE, MOBILIZE!

For the latest bargaining reports go to our Local's website at:

www.cwa2202.org

For all bargaining reports go to the National website at:

www.cwa-union.org

or

Call our recorder on:
(757) 499-8499

Strike? Local 2202 is ready! At Your Service BY BYRON "CHUCK" TAYLOR

Counting from July 1st, there are exactly thirty-three days until the Verizon contract expires on August 2nd. With this said, Your Local will be "*at your service*". The entire mobilization structure is there to disseminate information regarding bargaining, mobilization activities, and services that are available for members as we approach the possibility of a strike situation.

We will attempt to explain some of the benefits that the union will provide in the event of a strike.

Strike Benefits:

The CWA Members' Relief Fund was established by the 1990 CWA Convention. Its' funding is maintained by an allocation of ¼ hour of basic wages per member per month's allocation from union dues withheld from your check on a monthly basis. This is the fund that is used to pay members who perform their picket duties.

The CWA Members' Relief Fund provides a striker benefit of \$200.00 per week beginning with the 15th day of a strike and \$300.00 per week beginning with the 29th day as long as assigned weekly picket duties are performed. Also; after the 29th day of a strike, our Local Strike Fund will begin to distribute \$50.00 per week to each eligible member. If there are medical conditions that would require special arrangements in order to complete your assigned picket duties or if you are not able to walk a picket line—contact your Mobilizer immediately. Additionally; many of our members live on the Peninsula and prefer to picket on that side of the water, if this applies to you—please contact your Mobilizer in order that we may coordinate with the Peninsula Local for your picket assignment.

In order to receive a striker benefit, each eligible member must complete a **Striker Certification Form** and forward it to the Union Office. For your convenience, that form is included in this newsletter and can be mailed or dropped off at the Union Office or given to your Steward or Mobilizer.

If you are on vacation any week of a strike, you are not entitled to receive strike payments. Strikers who receive vacation pay during any week of the strike are not suffering any loss of wages for those particular week(s). Also; if you are on the company's disability program when a strike begins, it is not necessary for you to perform strike duty since the company will pay you.

In some instances, employers may pay health care benefits through the end of the month in which a strike begins, however, we are uncertain how Verizon may handle a possible strike situation. CWA's Defense Fund insures that *necessary and urgent medical and dental care* will be provided to you and your dependents in case Verizon stops medical coverage in a strike situation.

Food assistance has been arranged through the local FoodBank organization with distribution to begin after the first week of a strike (distribution location TBA).

For those on strike who prefer to find temporary or part-time employment, several temporary agencies have been contacted by the Local. Also there are Job Services packets available in the Union Office to register with the VEC for employment. Call the Union Office at (757) 456-2202 for information regarding these benefits.

Additionally; our Local has recognized that every single member has a unique situation and may require confidential consultation in areas where specific help is needed. Recognizing this need, our Local has equipped a team of Union Counselors who will be available for confidential assistance during a strike in our Union Office at 154 Newtown Road; Suite B-1, in Virginia Beach. The schedule for this benefit will be announced at a later time.

Strike FAQs

Can I be disciplined for going out on strike?

NO! Regardless of your status (member, non-member, permanent, term, temporary, 120-day retiree, new hire, summer hire) you cannot be disciplined for going on strike. It is a violation of the Labor Management Relations Act for an employer to do so.

How will I know if we are on strike?

Check the Local's website www.cwa.2202.org or call the recorder at (757) 499-8499. If your tour starts at midnight Saturday night, plan on going to work. Make sure the Union Office has your contact numbers. 24 hour offices will have picket lines set up immediately. If the strike starts during the day, Stewards and Mobilizers will notify you. If you work alone or are isolated, make sure the Union has your contact numbers.

What are the other things that might happen instead of a strike?

1. If we don't settle, the clock may be frozen. The negotiators decide to stop the official clock before midnight. This usually occurs when the bargaining committees are close to a settlement. If the clock is still frozen on your next assigned tour, report to work as usual. You will still be working under the terms of the current contract.
2. In the past we have worked without a contract. Most provisions of the current contract stay in effect, except that the company may not accept grievances, stop payroll deduction of union dues, and makes our lives unbearable.
3. The existing contract can be extended until a settlement is reached.
4. If we go to work without a settlement, we must intensify our already relentless and vigorous mobilization efforts.

Can I work for a competitor during a strike?

There is some confusion on this issue. If you choose this option, you do so at your own risk.

Will health care benefits be cancelled?

At the end of the month the company can cancel your benefits. However, they will have to cancel everyone's, including scabs. You will have to be covered until the company offers COBRA. In all past strikes, CWA has guaranteed to take care of health care emergencies.

Can I collect unemployment compensation?

No, not in Virginia. Help elect more worker friendly candidates.

How much money will the Union give us?

The National Union will release \$200.00 per striker per week beginning with the 15th day of a strike. This amount will be increased to \$300.00 per week beginning with the 29th day of a strike. The Local Strike Fund distribution will be \$50.00 after the 29th day of the strike. **You must perform your strike assignment to qualify for either.**

What if I have a condition that won't allow me to picket?

Strike duties include working in the Union Office, delivering refreshments to picketers, and others.

What are some rules for picket lines?

1. The picket line must keep moving. No law says how fast it must move.
2. We cannot stop traffic from crossing the picket line.
3. No taunting scabs. There is a thin line between taunting and freedom of speech.
4. Take directions from your picket captain.
5. Report to your picket assignment on time every day scheduled.
6. Wear red or a CWA logo while on the picket line.

What should I do if the media approaches me for a statement?

Be cordial and direct them to the Union Office.

What happens if I am on benefits or get very sick during the strike?

If you are on benefits, you will stay on benefits during the strike until the doctor clears you to return to work. Remember to continue to deal with ARC (Absence Report-

ting Center), be sure to follow the rules, and stay in touch with the Union. If you get sick after the strike starts, you are on strike. Call the Union Office **immediately** if this happens.

-reprinted from a CWA Local 2222 Mobilization handout

Don't Forget...

Wear Red on Thursdays!

CONDOLENCES

To our members, retirees and their families who were known to have lost loved ones thus far this year.

Gillian Cobb	Husband
Charlene Rhodes	Father
Johnnie Wright	Sister
Twanna Williams	Grandmother
Al Cunningham	Self
Marion Trueblood	Husband
Arline Curtis	Sister
Ann Varn	Mother
Tim Walter	Stepmother
Denise Gray	Father-in-law
Sharon Fenner	Grandfather
Carolyn Clayton	Uncle
Chuck Taylor	Child
Dave Dipiano	Father
Liane Kineman	Grandmother
Christopher McCullough	Father
Erica Hart	Mother
Ebony Jenkins	Father
Kathy Wolf	Brother-in-Law
Robert Taylor	Sister
Lisa Marshall	Father
Janet Jones	Step-Father
Scott Mansfield	Grandmother
Iris Gurganus	Mother
Nancy Ross	Grandmother
Bobbi Sgueglia	Brother
Mikisha Vargas	Grandfather
Diniece Bobbitt	Self

Happy 20th Anniversary CWA RMC!

On Tuesday, May 20th, our Local's Retired Members' Club (RMC) celebrated its 20th Anniversary. The Celebration was held during the RMC's regularly scheduled meeting at the VFW on Bartee Street in Norfolk. In attendance at the meeting was Louie Scinaldi, President CWA Local 2202, Paula Terveer, Executive Vice President CWA Local 2202, and Chuck Taylor, Vice President-Private Sector CWA Local 2202.

The RMC had their first meeting in May 1983 with seventeen members attending the initial meeting. The RMC's membership



has grown over the years with several of its Charter Members still participating. You definitely will not find our Local's RMC sitting around doing nothing—they're involved JASON A MANI in various recreational and leisure activities from bowling to going on trips through the year! And a very special group of RMC members take pride in our Local by working on the Newsletter Committee assisting by getting this publication ready for mailing to all of our members. So you see—some of us definitely have a lot to look forward to when we finally retire!

CONGRATULATIONS & WARMEST REGARDS TO OUR LOCAL'S CWA RMC!

CWA RMC CHARTER MEMBERS

Ray Floyd
Mildred Gordon
Annie Simmons
Margaret Authement
Mabel O. Hobday
Betty L. Whitmen
James D. Reade
John H. Glass
Mildred L. Arline
Doris Edwards
Arline Curtis
Marion Trueblood
Dorothea Klein
Ed Wright
Elizabeth C. Sawyer
Doris G. Perry
Beatrice S. Gary

Attention RMC Members:

*Our next scheduled meeting will be on
September 16, 2003.*

- ◆ *membership dues are due by our next meeting or payable on that date in order to continue receiving the CWA news.*

Joan Bivens, RMC-CWA Treasurer

CWA LOCAL 2202

Representing members at
Avaya,
Norfolk Bureau of Emergency Services,
Portsmouth Police Communications Division,
VCSI,
Virginia Beach Bureau of Emergency Services,
Verizon Communications,
Verizon Information Services (VIS),
SBC Telcom, Inc.,
(757) 456-2202
Recording: (757) 499-8499
Website: www.cwa2202.org
E-mail: CWA2202@exis.net

President
Executive Vice President
Secretary-Treasurer
Vice Presidents

Louie Scinaldi
Paula Terveer
John Wills
Carol Castillo
Audrey R. Collins
Kathy Hillman
Alex Long
Regina Roberts
Byron "Chuck" Taylor

CWA VOICE

is published bimonthly by CWA Local 2202
Editor: Byron "Chuck" Taylor
Reporter: Chris Davidson

**CWA MEMBERS' RELIEF FUND
STRIKER CERTIFICATION FORM**

Local _____

Bargaining Unit _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

PHONE (Home): _____

E-Mail:

EMPLOYER: _____

WORKSITE: _____

STEWARD'S NAME: _____

I certify that I am eligible to receive strike benefits under the rules of the Members' Relief Fund. I understand that if I am found ineligible under the rules, I will return any payments I am not entitled to.

Eligibility Verified

Striker's Signature

Date

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO
Local 2202
154 Newtown Road, Suite B-1
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Norfolk, VA
Permit No. 198

Welcome New Members

*A big welcome to new members
and transfers to our Local*

Kea C. Crim
Shirley V. Bynum
Joan Tinsley
Antonio Jones
Charles Lowell
Robert Rollins
Isaac Miller
Lisa Wiedenhoef
Jacob Jones
Rasheedah Bilal
Shirley Brown
Kia Reid
Toni Baldwin
Holly Williams
Kimberly France
Tiffany Dendy
Linda Terry
John Butler
Gina Reynolds
Gerald T. Austin
Denise M. Green

CWA LOCAL 2202 ANNUAL PICNIC

WHERE: CHESAPEAKE CAMPGROUNDS

WHEN: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2003

TIME: 1:00 P.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M.

(Food will be served from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.)



Hot Dogs
Hamburgers
Chicken and all the fixings
and more...

Also

Fun, Games, & Pony Rides

Music by Astro DJ's

Magic Show

Face Painting

Volley Ball

*(Free to CWA Members and
their families and guests)*

Chesapeake Campgrounds

693 South George Washington

Hwy

Chesapeake, VA 23323

(757) 485-0149

Toll Free 1-888-584-2267

OPEN ALL YEAR

*Located 2 miles south of
drawbridge in Deep Creek on U.S.
17. Chesapeake Campground is on
the North-South Inland Waterway.*

**MOBILIZE,
MOBILIZE,
MOBILIZE!
TELL VERIZON
"WE WON'T GO BACK"**
