

CWA VOICE



The Communications Workers of America, Local 2202

Virginia Beach, VA

March/April 2003

Local 2202 Mourns the Loss of Past President Alfred E Cunningham

It is with much sadness, but with high regard that we announce the passing of our own brother and dynamic leader, Mr. Alfred E. Cunningham on Thursday, February 27th.

Al, as he was fondly known to many, served CWA Local 2202 from 1976 to 1984 as President. He was employed by the former C&P Telephone Company for many years until he retired as a technician.

A true humanitarian and philanthropist, Al will forever be remembered for his ever-so-giving character. Stephanie Pazur, CWA Local 2202 Secretary, recalls a moment during a past strike where Al so willingly took money from his own pocket just to help a fellow brother and sister out in order that they might care for much needed living essentials while out of work. Interestingly enough, several members indicated that while serving as our

Local President, Al Cunningham was responsible for the purchase of the condominium that houses Local 2202 today. It will be a difficult task to find a person that can match the unselfish giving, the gentle spirit, and the giant of a man that Alfred E. Cunningham was to those who knew him.



Alfred E. Cunningham and "Bootsie"
Past CWA Local 2202 President
1976-1984

Al, a native of Brooklyn, NY, not only had a love for his fellow man but also toward animals. His faithful dog, "Bootsie", would attest to the great love that this man had for a pet if he were able.

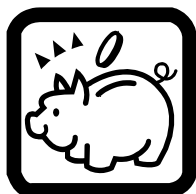
Al Cunningham will be surely missed by all who knew him. Survivors include his long-time friend, Alice W. Forrest. Survivors also include two daughters, Nancy Scott of Loveland, CO; and Ellie Holloway and her husband, Jimmy, of Gastonia, NC. Also surviving, a son, Robert Cunningham and his wife, Cindy of Virginia Beach. He leaves a sister, Patricia Randel, of Port Washington, NY and five grandchildren.

A memorial service was conducted on Monday, March 3rd in Al Cunningham's honor in Virginia Beach with our own incumbent President Scinaldi eulogizing. Those in attendance included District 2 VP Pete Catucci, Charles "Boots" Buttiglieri of Baltimore MD, Jack Dotson, District 2 Staff Rep, Carol Summerlyn, District 2 Staff Rep, and several members of Local 2202 Executive Board, members, and friends.

Memorial donations may be made in Former President Alfred E. Cunningham's honor by directing them to:

the Alzheimer's Association or the Virginia Beach SPCA

Remember: Verizon Employees qualify for employee matching through the Verizon Foundation



Attention College-Bound Members and their Families

➤ **2003 Local Scholarship Application included in this issue
Details inside**

("Balance" continued from previous page) Flexible and reduced work schedules are one option. Another would be additional excused time off for "family balance days." Allowing excused days to be taken in 1 or 2-hour increments could also help. California has legislation that requires employers to allow 48 hours a year to be used for any school-related activity. These are only a few of the solutions that allow for a win-win situation for both employers and employees.

On Organizing VIS Win Tentative Agreement

Following an epic organizing struggle and a 10-month bargaining mobilization effort, 1,700 Verizon Information Services (VIS) directory workers in the former Bell Atlantic/Nynex region have a tentative first contract to be ratified.

At press time, arrangements are being made for face-to-face meetings with negotiators to explain terms of the agreement, which covers twenty-one VIS offices in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The sales representatives, graphic artists and support personnel won union recognition a year ago after a prolonged legal battle with the company over terms of the CWA-Verizon card check organizing agreement negotiated in 2000.

The tentative agreement provides across-the-board base wage increases of 4 percent immediately and 3.5 percent each subsequent year, together with a substantially improved commission plan for sales reps.

For artists and clerical staff, the tentative agreement sets up a five year wage progression schedule. For some employees with salaries higher than the top progression rates, a "market range" salary category is created, with the top of the market range increasing by 1.5 percent a year. Market range employees will receive the annual percentage increase in their base pay, however those with salaries higher than the market range will be paid the annual increase as a lump sum.

The agreement provides that management cannot shift benefit costs for the medical and dental plan---as it has done in the past---and guarantees no decreases in contributions to the cash balance pension and 401(k) savings match. It also locks in such benefits as the severance program, adoption assistance, tuition assistance, short-term disability, leaves of absence, basic life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance.

Other highlights include a grievance and arbitration procedure and creation of a Common Interest Forum to foster a dialogue over workplace disputes and concerns such as safety and health, work and family needs, and training and education opportunities.

Throughout their organizing and bargaining struggle---talks began last May---the VIS workers conducted widespread worksite activities including marching in to work together, informational picketing, organized phone calling to top VIS and Verizon officials, and wearing stickers and red shirts.

Frustrated by slow bargaining progress in the twenty separate sets of talks, the workers voted strike authorization and received the Executive Board's approval last October. The pace picked up shortly afterward when VIS agreed to bargain at the senior management level with leaders from CWA Districts 1, 2, and 13 to establish a model agreement.

Once ratified, the model agreement will apply to all twenty-one units (workers in Charleston, West VA recently became the 21st office to organize). Duration of the local agreements will vary from 32 to 44 months. And we welcome VIS to CWA Local 2202!

Verizon Fined \$5.7 Million

Verizon Communications must pay \$5.7 million to the federal government for marketing long-distance calling in some places in 2002 before receiving final regulatory approval.

Verizon admitted that on five occasions in nine states, it broadcast ads and sent customers direct mail solicitations offering long-distance service, even though the FCC had not given the go-ahead.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act lets regional phone giants sell long distance in their local territories, but only in markets that the FCC determines are open to competitors.

Verizon's chief marketing officer, Maura C. Breen, said that no customers received service prematurely, so Verizon did not make money from the situation.

(taken from The New York Times, March 5, 2003, AP

Change in Verizon RAMP Policy



Effective March 17th, Verizon implemented a *No Show Test Penalty*. Employees who are scheduled to take the UTB-R or a secondary test will incur a No Show Test Penalty if they fail to appear for the test because they are either "not ready to take the test, or "no longer interested in the job title requiring the test.

If a penalty is incurred, the employee must wait a specified period of time before applying for any job title requiring the UTB-R or secondary test for which they were scheduled. The penalty is six months for the first occurrence and twelve months for subsequent occurrences within eighteen months of a previous occurrence.

To avoid incurring a penalty, employees should Review the Job Brief and applicable test brochure before applying for an advertised job. After applying, employees must cancel their application *before* the job-advertising period ends if they are no longer interested in the job; and employees must notify their supervisor immediately if they are not interested in taking a scheduled test. The supervisor is responsible for contacting the Test Administration. To avoid a no show penalty, the test appointment must be cancelled by 4 p.m. on the day of the appointment.

Questions related to the RAMP process can be directed to the Verizon HR Helpline at (800) 925-3775.

**T H E P R E S I D E N T ' S
C O R N E R**



Dear Union Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to start by thanking all of our members in Verizon and VCSI who returned their bargaining surveys. The information that you have furnished has helped us in preparing our bargaining agenda for this August.

The top five issues on the survey were: job and employment security, base wage increase, health benefits, pension improvements and employment guarantees. The surveys collected from the rest of Virginia and all of District 2 read the same way. The just demands of economic and employment security are at the top of everyone's list.

The bargaining committee has met and discussed the information returned on the surveys. We are now in the process of formulating our demands and writing the proposals for this round of bargaining. The battle has begun, and the timeframe between now and August will be difficult at best. Again, it is your unity that will render a settlement that is equitable to all of us. This is the time to put our differences and personal agendas aside and come together as one union. Without your support, the union would not be able to produce a contract that you deserve.

Please keep in mind that our Job Stewards and Executive Board have volunteered for this undertaking. No one gets any extra pay, and in the event of a strike, no one gets any pay for the job that we are all doing. I want to thank them in advance for the endeavor before them. I am hopeful that you will thank them each time the occasion arises. They deserve your gratitude.

Shortly our local will begin to come out with briefing papers that will be passed out through our mobilization structure. These papers will contain very valuable information that will help you understand the union's position in this round of bargaining. They will also give you the latest information that is available to us.

Remember that we're all in this together and together we will prevail.

In Unity,

Louie

Congratulations!

To Charlotte Lewis and Pamela Kiernan who won the \$5.00 door prizes at the March 10th Membership Meeting.

Curtis Barnett's name was drawn for the Pot-of-Gold worth \$22.02. He was not present to claim his prize.

The Pot-of-Gold continues to GROW!

**JOIN US AT THE NEXT
MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON
MONDAY, MAY 12, 2003
7:30 P.M.**

**IRONWORKERS HALL
5307 E. VIRGINIA BEACH BLVD
NORFOLK, VA**



**GREAT JOB
EILEEN D. YOUNG**

Who located her full name in ALL CAPS in our last newsletter and won \$10.00.

**Locate your name in ALL CAPS in this one...
Call the Union Office on (757) 456-2202**

**The National Association
of Letter Carriers (NALC)
2003 Food Drive
Saturday
May 10, 2003**

The Need For Balance Between Work and Family

BY PAULA TERVEER

Trying to balance your time between work and family can be a real juggling act. Many of us have children, spouses and parents that need and deserve more attention than we can find time to provide. (Not to mention trying to find time to pursue an education or a hobby.) How often has the need arisen to stay home with a child too sick to go to school, but not so sick to warrant a trip to the doctor? How many field trips and /or school programs have you missed? How often have your parents needed assistance, but you were not able to provide it? How often have you put off your own doctor's appointments because it was too hard to get the time off? The faster we go the more behind we seem to get.

Now that the company has downsized, many of us are being forced to work even longer hours than be-

fore. In many departments it is next to impossible to get time off without being penalized or forced to use up all of our vacation days. Vacation time should be used for rest and relaxation, not to fulfill obligations or appointments.

It is past time for employers to recognize that more needs to be done to accommodate their employees personal and family needs. Employers that help their employees balance work and family life through flexible scheduling and family benefits have shown improvements to their bottom line. Absenteeism, tardiness, stress, turnover, and unproductive work time has been shown to decrease.

These types of improvements can be attained through bargaining and also through legislation. (see "Balance" on next page)



Please support our brothers and sisters in their annual project to benefit the local Foodbanks.

Place your non-perishable food items at your mailbox for pickup on May 10, 2003..

On Mobilization

Stay Unified Stay Strong

BY ALEX LONG



Here it is the month of March, and we already find ourselves drawing closer to full force bargaining which will likely begin around June, carrying us toward our contract expiration on August 6th. We as union members must realize the importance of displaying our unity during contract negotiations. We must be unified and must remain abreast of important issues as it affects our membership. Disseminating information to the membership will be done through our Local's enhanced web site, www.CWA2202.org, through our Local's newsletter, the *CWA VOICE*, through mobilization flyers and literature, through the Local's Membership meetings, and of course, by word of mouth through your union representatives. All Local union representatives, from the Executive Board to Stewards, will be sharing information with you as contract negotiations are in progress. While there will be many bargaining related questions that you may have, our union representatives will appropriately answer your questions or will provide you with an answer as soon as an answer is readily available.

While it is still too early to determine how our contract negotiations will result, we ask all of our members to prepare themselves **now** should a strike be inevitable.

One thing that we can do **right now** to enhance our mobilization efforts during contract negotiations is remembering to **WEAR RED ON THURSDAYS**. This shows our unity and makes a major statement to Verizon management. They will see our unity as we flood the offices and garages with our red shirts and outfits. We, as a union, have fought for and will continue to fight for decent wages, benefits, and the right to provide our families a decent lifestyle that we can be proud of and one that is well deserved. The wages that we have now and will earn in the future are due to a hard fought fight by us, the union, of which you are included. We are what makes Verizon a leader in the telecommunications industry. It is our unity and our actions as a union that have kept us above the going economic rate when comparing our jobs to comparable non-union jobs in America. Make no mistake about it, if it were not for our unity as a union, we would probably not be living the lifestyles that we live, nor would we be able to provide for our families as we do today.

So, the next time you hear **anyone**, a non-member or management person (*that's right management—they make what they make because of us—it's all relative!*) say that "the union isn't doing anything for you"; just tell them to go out and find a comparable job making the pay you are without a union. It will likely not happen. If it was up to the company to decide on what our benefits and wages would be, we would be no where near where we are now. Ask our friends at Cox. So, stay unified, and we will stay strong.

Mobilization Efforts Jobs Not Greed

CWA will take its "jobs, not greed" message to shareholders at Verizon Communications' annual meeting on April 23rd in Fort Wayne, Indiana, as CWA members across Verizon territory gear up for bargaining.

Contracts expire August 3rd for Verizon East--- the New York, New England and Mid-Atlantic regions---and in 2004 and 2005 for Verizon West locations in the mid-west, southwest and California.

CWA is asking shareholders to vote for a resolution calling on the Verizon board to cap total compensation for executives—salary, bonuses, stock and anything else—at a level no more than 50 times what the average pay is for workers.

While the average pay of corporate CEOs soared from \$1.8 million in 1992 to \$6.1 million in 2000, Verizon's co-chief executives made even more than that in 2001: \$14.5 million for Charles Lee and \$13.4 million for Ivan Seidenberg. And those figures don't include their stock options, with estimated values in five years of \$32 million and \$27 million, respectively.

At the meeting, CWA members and activists—including District 4 locals attending the district meeting in Fort Wayne—will build support for shareholder action to limit executive compensation and to return Verizon's focus to quality jobs and quality service, not greed, by leafleting shareholders and in other mobilization actions.

CWA members and retirees who are now receiving their proxies from Verizon can support this effort by voting "**for**" the resolution, signing and dating the card where indicated and returning it and the return envelope to their local union offices. All proxies should be sent to CWA before April 16th.

Let CWA deliver your stock proxy to Verizon. Make it a vote to stop Verizon's corporate greed.

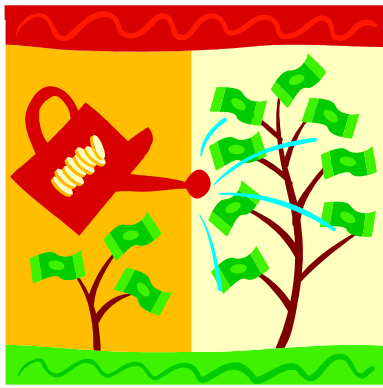
**Let's Mobilize and Show
Verizon that We Mean
Business.**

United We Stand Together We Win!

Red Tide Rising

BY CHRIS DAVIDSON

Spring is nature's form of resurrection, a time for new growth and prosperity. Trees grow additional branches to support more leaves that allow



them to keep growing. We marvel at the grandeur of a 150 or 300 year old tree, willing to protect it from a “developer” whose mantra is “all destruction is construction”. As new leaves grow on saplings and older trees, they provide more oxygen to supply man and the wild kingdom.

For the CWA it's not only a new year, but a contract year. That means double the growth, right? At least! After all, the Board at IBM voted to raise CEO pay and bonuses by 44%! Isn't spring great! Whatta spring break! There are some who fear growth. Perhaps he like me was eight years old with the foot-size of a twelve year old. Perhaps she hit that twelve year old growth spurt and for a little while, was taller than her school's basketball team.

Growth is a law of nature and “growing into it” is a fact of life. I can't tell you how happy I am now, to have a 6 foot 1 inch body to match my “size 12” feet...okay, size 13. I can hardly begin to tell you how happy I am that my union-negotiated wages have grown from \$307 to \$910 weekly! I'll bet you've grown into yours nicely too, huh. Its 2003 and like Corporate America loves to say, “here we grow again”.

Now, do you know how trees get to be so tall and wide? The answer is solidarity. Whether pine or redwood it takes a forest to grow a tree. Sound familiar? A forest is lush, dense, cool in summer, warm in winter, jointly and separately protecting its members from wind that can topple, or searing summer sun that yearns to scorch the soil and dry their roots.

Only time will tell as the days ahead unfold, if Verizon storms as the searing sun rolls across August skies. With the Spirit of the Lord in our hearts, solidarity, and the will to battle to the end, bottled water in hand, we will victor over the torch-bearers, axe-wielders, and saw-mongers. We will protect our young, our old, our sick, our weak.

As for those who choose to be felled, who cross our line, who fail to support, who fail to join, who “jones” and freeride, Verizon is waiting for them. Waiting to strip their bark, sheer their branches, wilt their leaves, grind out their stump and roots, and mill their trunks into the green-back paper that seduced their eyes and reduced their very size. In our eyes and the eyes of our union-nation we will not feel sorrow or pity for them. For they knew better—they chose poorly. In Solidarity...

Happy 10TH Birthday FMLA

Signed into law on February 5, 1993, by then President Bill Clinton, the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), provides leave and job security for working persons to care for themselves and certain family members as they cope with certain illnesses; or to care for the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child (and this applies to both women and men). The Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA) now celebrates its 10th Anniversary.



The FMLA, as it is intended, allows persons utilizing it to return to their same or equivalent job after caring for certain family and medical situations. In other words, an employer such as Verizon is not able to simply progress an employee through its stringent attendance plan leaving no other alternative but to dismiss when a person is legitimately certified under the FMLA. Can you imagine working under some of Verizon's management without the protection of FMLA?

Well, it has not been an easy road for our friend, the FMLA. Some of our conservative government officials and corporations, like Verizon, continue to argue to allow a *more flexible FMLA*. They want to minimize the act by excluding certain illnesses that should and have been covered under the act. Our conservative friends even want to adapt legislation that would provide for “Comp time” in lieu of overtime, which would further make most of our lives miserable. This could provide more loopholes for a company like Verizon to make certain pay decisions for their employees—like making a decision to take comp time versus sick pay treatment.

There are some champions in our government, as well, who has introduced legislation to greatly enhance the FMLA to benefit working people. Included in this legislation is the expansion to include employers with 25 or more employees to be covered under the act and not just 50 or more. Also included is legislation to amend to allow states to provide six weeks of paid leave under the act.

Celebrate the FMLA by continuing to lobby against the minimization of the act by companies like Verizon.



Let's Make 'em see RED
Wear RED on
Thursdays

Surviving and Thriving in a Digital World

How much do you really understand about the digital world we live in? Go online and, with just a few mouse clicks, you can find the weight of your body on Mars, the latest research on Alzheimer's Disease, or a tasty recipe for cheesecake! But what kind of resources did it take to get that recipe to you and what would happen if those systems broke down? How would it affect access to your bank records or your medical records?

It used to be that technical savvy was important only for scientists, engineers and some craftspeople. Today, everyone's work and home life is influenced by computers in ways we don't always realize, from the moisture-sensor in your new clothes-dryer to the independent suspension in your car. Somewhere, someone is still typing out letters on an old IBM Selectric typewriter and staring suspiciously at the blank computer screen across the desk, but most of us send letters to friends via email and write school papers and work reports with word-processing software.

Basic technical skills are necessary to help us understand the world. Do you remember the concerns about the so-called EDWARD S TERRY "Millennium Bug" that was going to crash computers worldwide at the turn of the new century? It certainly seemed important but nothing much happened. If you did not understand what the fuss was about, you have some catching up to do—because in the Digital Age, people who understand and embrace technology will have a great advantage over people who don't. The pace of change is accelerating and those who don't move forward with it risk getting left behind.

The CWA/NETT Academy is the perfect way to get up to speed on the digital world. The programs cost far less than similar courses elsewhere, are available for college credit, and you can complete them on your own schedule. Here is a sampling of what's available:

- ◆ **Introduction to Computers**—Topics include the impact of computers on society, ethical issues, and hardware/software applications, including spreadsheets, databases, word processors, graphics, the internet, and operating systems.
- ◆ **Microsoft Word 2000 Core**—Topics include preparation of a variety of documents and mastery of specialized software functions. Upon completion, students should be able to work effectively in a computerized word processing environment.
- ◆ **Microsoft Excel 2000 Core**—This course introduces basic spreadsheet design and development. Topics include writing formulas, using functions, enhancing spreadsheets, creating charts, and printing.
- ◆ **Mathematics Refresher for Telecommunications**—ALEKS is a fully automated math tutor that interacts with you individually. ALEKS develops and maintains an assessment of your current knowledge and always teaches what you are most ready to learn.

For more information, go online to www.cwanett.org or call the Local Union Office at (757) 456-2202.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Wear a blue ribbon to show that you care...and help us make sure that it doesn't hurt to be a child. For more info, call 1-800-CHILDREN or your Comm.Svs Chairperson.



Support the
Local 2202 & Verizon Team
April 27, 2003

Contact the
Community Svs Committee
To find out how
(757) 456-2202



21st Century Training for CWA Members



Courses and programs:

- **Computer Technology**
- **Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)**
- **Associate of Science Degree in Telecommunications**
- **Full Service Computer Lab at Local 2202, Virginia Beach**

For more information go to www.cwanett.org/netpro

A joint partnership of the Communications Workers of America; Cisco Systems; the National Advisory Coalition on Telecommunications, Education and Learning; and Stanly Community College

Know Your Fellow Member

Keith Long

BY BYRON "CHUCK" TAYLOR

"I like to help any way that I can", says Keith Allen Long, a some three year Verizon Service Technician of Rugby Street. Keith is an active Job Steward whom has served our Local in this capacity for almost a year now. Regardless of time in this capacity, Keith radiates with



confidence and assurance when he tells us that he just "looks forward to helping people and keeping people informed". These are two very basic but too very much overlooked principles for some people. An effective Job Steward has to keep his work group informed. And Keith Long apparently works hard at doing just that.

Keith, a seventeen year Navy man, is from Uhrichsville, Ohio; and is happily married to his wife, Nancy. They have two boys, Ryan, 17, and Zachary, 5.

Keith has a true compassion for people and for the community at large. Not only does Keith contribute to the Community Services Committee at our Local, he also devotes a priceless gift of time as a foster parent for the City of Norfolk Court.

At his leisure, being a true sportsman, Keith enjoys bowling and coaching football and other sports.

On a final note, we asked Keith to tell us what he would say about being a CWA member. He left us with this, "...it has allowed me the opportunity to have great benefits with the company and a better sense of job security."

Local 2202 appreciates Keith's willingness to help and his keeping the membership informed. Keith this accolade goes out to you! We thank you!

Local 2202 Announces Scholarship

Being a member of Local 2202 now means that you or a member of your family can win \$500.00 to put toward the cost of higher education.

Local 2202 members in good standing, their spouses or partners, and the children of Local 2202 are eligible to apply. Applicants must be at least either high school graduates or high school students who will graduate during the academic year in which they apply. Second year on and graduate students returning to school may also apply.

The award will be made payable to the institute of higher learning, which may be a university, a two or four year college or trade, technical or professional school.

The deadline for completed scholarship applications will be Thursday, July 24, 2003. The winner will be chosen by lottery at the July 24th General Membership Meeting. Several alternatives will also be chosen in the event the winner declines or is deemed to be ineligible.

To apply, simply complete the application on the next page and return it to the union office by Thursday, July 24, 2003. Only one application per union member will be accepted.

***FYI* Please note that our July Membership Meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, July 24th**

New Administrator for Verizon STD

In a letter dated March 16th, to the CWA from Ron Williams, Executive Director Verizon Labor Relations, we are advised that effective on April 14, 2003, the administration of short-term disability (STD) benefits will be handled by Metropolitan Life (MetLife). The short-term disability administration is currently handled by CORE, INC. The company expects MetLife to begin on April 14th with new STD claims and will handle existing STD claims beginning on April 21st.

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
CWA2202@exis.net

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Executive Vice President
Secretary-Treasurer
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CWA VOICE

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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

CWA Local 2202 Scholarship Application

Applicant's Name _____

Relationship to Member _____

Member's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Applicant's SSN _____

Name and Address of College, University, Trade or Professional School

Applications must be received at the Local Office, by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 24, 2003.
The winner will be chosen by random drawing at the July 24th Membership Meeting.
Mail or drop applications off at:

**CWA Local 2202
154 Newtown Road; Suite B-1
Virginia Beach, VA 23462**