

CWA VOICE



The Communications Workers of America, Local 2202

Virginia Beach, VA

November/December 2003

CWA Members Ratify Verizon Contracts

Members of the Communications Workers of America at Verizon Communications ratified a five-year agreement, approving the contract with an 89 percent "yes" vote.

The agreement covers 60,000 CWA workers at Verizon operations from Maine to Virginia and safeguards jobs and job security, maintains the current quality health care coverage and fully paid premiums, and improves retirement security.

The contract provides for a compounded wage increase of at least 10.6 percent over the contract term, including cost-of-living increases, as well as an immediate 3 percent cash bonus (which was paid by a separate payroll check or direct deposit on October 24th) and annual profit-sharing bonuses that will give employees a minimum of \$3,000 over the life of the contract.

Separate agreements covering workers at Verizon Information Services, Verizon Wireless and Verizon Connected Solutions also were ratified, with approval votes of 95 percent, 96 percent and 66 percent, respectively.

This victory would not have been possible without the participation of each and every one of you, and you should be proud of your hard work and dedication, which resulted in our new contract. We thank you.



Local 2202 Receives An Appreciation Award

Our Local recently received an *Appreciation Award* from the March of Dimes for our participation in the 2003 Walk-America which was held in April.

Our CWA Local 2202 / Verizon team raised over \$4400 which includes a corporate match through the Verizon Foundation. A special thank you to all who participated in this effort.

Setting Your Course of Action

With the ratification of the new five-year contract with Verizon, our Union was able to renegotiate the Job Security letter. The JSL provides protection from layoffs, forced transfers or downgrades as a result of any company-initiated "process changes". Unless there is some kind of disaster within the next five years, we can plan that there will be no layoffs during the five-year agreement. Along with the JSL, the Union also bargained for an added incentive retirement package for our most senior members. As those persons retire, the company will have to backfill those vacancies through transfers and promotions.

With the recent EISP offering at Verizon, several of our members (and others) have chosen to leave the company. This will cause quite a void for those of us who are left behind, however, this may open quite a few doors for others. The question for anyone who may want to pursue these opportunities is, "Am I prepared to compete for those jobs?" In most of the companies that we represent, there are many bargained for educational opportunities made available to our members. Through the Tuition Assistance Program at Verizon, the company will pay for the classes that you will need to qualify for the jobs of the future. SBC and Avaya also offer similar tuition assistance options.

At Verizon, for the next five years, we know where we will work. What we do not know is what changes in technology are coming in communications and how those changes will affect our jobs. The only way to ensure that you will be in the running when the race begins is to *set your course of action* now. Start preparing for your future. Use *the bargained for benefits* that we have. There are classes made available through distance learning, traditional classroom settings, home-study programs, and even some in-house classes that the company may offer on paid time.

In this issue of the **CWA VOICE**, we have provided a few educational pursuits that are available to you as an employee of one of our represented companies. Many of our Job Stewards have been equipped to provide you with the right contacts to start you on your educational journey. See one of them today!

Why not make a New Year's resolution to invest in yourself—you'll be glad you did.

Joe Beirne Scholarships Available

The Joe Beirne Foundation is currently accepting applications for scholarships for the 2004-2005 school years. This scholarship, an annual tradition, honors the memory of the man who is considered the founder of the CWA, Joseph Anthony Beirne.

The Foundation's Board of Directors has approved the awarding of thirty (30) partial college scholarships of up to \$3,000 each, and the winners also will receive second-year scholarships for the same amount, contingent upon satisfactory academic achievement.

Eligible for the scholarships are CWA members and their spouses, children and grandchildren, including the dependents of retired, laid off or deceased members. Applicants must be high school graduates or high school students who will graduate during the year in which they apply. Undergraduate and graduate students returning to schooling may also apply.

Please note that ***beginning this year, applications will be made solely on-line*** by filling out and submitting an application form at the Foundation's website:

www.cwa-union.org/members/beirne

Applications will be accepted between November 2003 and March 31, 2004 – the final deadline. Early submission of applications is encouraged. The winners will be chosen by lottery drawings.

CORNER

**Dear Union Brothers and Sisters:**

With 2003 drawing to a close we must reflect back as well as go forward. This was a stressful year for many of us, with negotiations, PEP plans, GPS, forced overtime, and many other taxing changes that we have had to endure.

With regard to GPS, the company claims it will not be used to discipline you, but be forewarned, it will. They know your every move and every time you're not moving; as well as your speed. Please be where you're supposed to be when you're supposed to be there. If there is something you must do, talk with your supervisor and get their permission before you do it.

Along with the PEP plan, the GPS is another way for them to reduce force. I can tell you that this trend will continue in the coming years. Changes within the companies represented by CWA are here to stay for awhile. The GTE management take-over of Verizon is in full swing and it seems as though their backward way of thinking will become our despair. These people are micro-managing management, and you know that saying about which direction stuff flows. Our fight will continue through this decade and beyond. Each day is a new twist, and each day we must be prepared to fight back. Many of our co-workers will be leaving the company with the EISP offer. I wish each of them the best, knowing that they will be missed.

Looking forward, we have a lot to be proud of in our contracts; keeping in mind that it's our job to make sure the companies live up to the negotiated language. It's our job to make sure we question each time they do not. It's all of our responsibility to keep our eyes and ears open daily and if anything is wrong, to report it to your job steward or to the union office.

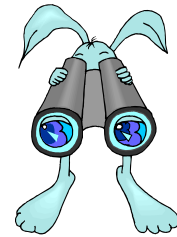
For now, it's time to enjoy the time of year that is upon us. To embrace our family and friends knowing that they are what is truly important in

CONGRATULATIONS!

To Adrienne Long and Terry Lewis who won the \$5.00 door prizes at the November 10th Membership Meeting.

Sharolyn Smith's name was drawn for the Pot-of-Gold worth \$110.10 at the November 10th Membership Meeting. She was not present to claim her prize. The Pot-of-Gold grows to \$132.12.

**JOIN US AT THE
NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2004
7:30 P.M.
IRONWORKERS HALL
5307 E. VIRGINIA BEACH BLVD
NORFOLK, VA**



Good Job!

*Sarita
Chandler
Stuart
located her
name in the
Sept/Oct*

*newsletter & got \$10.00 in
her pocketbook!*

*Locate your name hidden in
ALL CAPS in this issue—
Just call the Union Office at
(757) 456-2202 & we'll put
\$10.00 in your pocket too!*

**CONGRATULATIONS
SARITA!**

Many Thank You's...

By now, most of us have seen the effects that Hurricane Isabel had in this area. Many of our members have worked faithfully—and even around the clock in order to restore our customers phone service. For **what-ever** role you may have played in the rebuilding process, we truly **thank you**. Your work has not gone unnoticed. It is because of working persons—like you, that makes the communications industry excel to higher heights. Our hats are off to you!

**THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND
MEMBERS OF CWA LOCAL 2202**



*To All of Our Members and
Their Families
From
The Executive Officers
of Local 2202*

life; and to be thankful that we have the time to enjoy them.

I thank you for the honor you have given me to serve as your President. And I wish for each of you and your families to have a joyful, healthy, and peaceful holiday season, and a prosperous New Year.

In Unity,
Louie

**A
RESUME WRITING AND
INTERVIEWING SKILLS
WORKSHOP**

*will be hosted by our Local's
Community Service
and
Education
Committees*

*On Wednesday, December 3rd
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*

*This is an excellent opportunity for
those members who have or will
consider new career opportunities*

***Please hurry—as space is
limited!***

*To register:
Call the Union Office at
(757) 456-2202 or by e-mail on
Btaylor@CWA2202.org*

**Error on Verizon
Pension Worksheets**

The Union was notified by Verizon that there was an error on the worksheets sent to employees with less than 5 years of NCS. It was discovered that the worksheet was populated with an accrued pension benefit. As you may already know, employees are not eligible for pension benefits until they are vested at 5 years of service.



Technology Within Your Reach

BY PAULA TERVEER

**IT CCNA A+ NET
UNIX
HTML
XML**

Can you identify all the above acronyms? Not many of us can. Technology these days is changing so fast that few people can keep up with it all. This is where CWA/NETT Academy comes to the rescue. CWA/NETT Academy is a partnership between CWA, Cisco Systems and Stanly Community College. The goal of CWA/NETT Academy is to increase our technical knowledge and to make us more employable here at Verizon or elsewhere. Increasing your knowledge and skills lead to higher pay and better future job prospects.

It is a well-known fact that most of us will not work for the same employer for 30 years and then retire. So it is essential that we make ourselves as employable as possible. Statistically, those who can retire will need to work somewhere else for a few more years.

Whether you are new to the company or ready to retire, CWA/NETT has course offerings to ensure up to date skills and certifications that will lead to higher paying jobs as well as job retention. But it is up to us as individuals to make sure we have the skills we need to be successful. All it takes is a little time and a computer.

The courses are offered on-line through Stanly Community College. Taking classes on-line allows you the flexibility to attend class and do homework when it is convenient for you. The classes that are offered fall mainly in the IT (Information Technology) field. But more classes are being added as interests arise. CWA/NETT Academy offers:

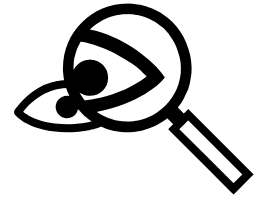
- Intro to Computers
- Math (basics for computers)
- Microsoft Office Certifications
- UNIX
- IT essentials (A+)
- Fundamentals of Voice and Data Cabling
- Switching and Routing (CCNA)

Lab work is required for these courses and the lab is located at our Union Office on Newtown Road. The lab is available for you to use anytime. Tim Scarry and Terry Lewis have been through intense training and are available to assist you in the lab. The best part of all is the cost of tuition is covered through Tuition Assistance. For those who do not have tuition assistance, grants and scholarships may be available through CWA/NETT Academy. For more information go to our website at www.cwa2202.org or call the Union Office on (757) 456-2202.

CWA STILL WEARS RED ON THURSDAYS

Global Positioning System Is Here

BY KATHY HILLMAN



Recently the company invited union officers to take a look at what GPS can do. It is amazing. GPS can track our every move. It can tell what time we leave the storerooms, at what speed we are

going and our direct path. GPS tells when we get to our first customer, and when we stop by the cross-box at the end of the day. It tells how long we are parked and where. It tells when we go to the Central Office and how long we spend there. This “eye in the sky” tells our every last move. It’s up and running and it’s working.

Of course, the company is still sticking to it’s guns that this is just a necessary tool to increase productivity and that it will not be used for disciplinary action. Because of GPS we will not stray far from our own Central Office areas. The days of passing another tech and waving as we drive from one part of town to another are over. The company wants us to believe that GPS will save a lot of time and money.

What is really going to happen with GPS is that we will all be under a magnifying glass. Every minute will be questioned. Why did it take you so long to do this or that? Why were you here and not there? The company has never realized that there are hard working honest technicians out in the field doing everything they can day in and day out to please our customers in a copper plant that has been deteriorating for years. The company does not realize that we are professionals here to do an honest days work for an honest days pay. What does this GPS say about how Verizon feels about our integrity?

Unfortunately, GPS isn’t going anywhere. It’s here to stay and Verizon is ready to use it. If a supervisor feels that a job has taken you too long, or that you made a needless move, you could be under scrutiny. Please remember your rights for union representation. There is never a need for you to in there alone. It is your right.

We are all in this together, and we will all make it through another of the company’s needless ploys in the name of productivity.

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER WEINGARTEN

- ◆ You have the right to union representation during any meeting with management where you feel that disciplinary action may be taken against you
- ◆ The choice of a union rep in your area rests with you not the manager

Know Your Fellow Member

Louis Plummer

BY BYRON "CHUCK" TAYLOR



Fishing, hunting, and being a natural born labor advocate is what our Avaya Job Steward Louis Plummer enjoys doing. Louis Plummer, a 36 1/2 year Senior Customer Service Engineer, says "I enjoy encouraging our younger members to look at the benefits and wages—especially Avaya employees—and compare them to like non-union people". And yes, we can certainly attest when making the comparison that our bargained for wages and benefits weigh a whole lot more than our non-union counterparts.

A wealth of information, Louis Plummer began his career down at Southern Bell as a Cable Helper in Atlanta, GA. He moved on to join Uncle Sam's forces in the United States Marines and returned to Ma Bell at C&P Telephone as a Cable Splicer. After a series of events, Louis eventually became employed with AT&T in Bristol, TN which led him to be employed with Lucent Technologies leading to his current job with Avaya.

Louis has been a faithful member of our Local and has served as a Job Steward handling Avaya employees for approximately two years.

Louis was born in Newport News, VA and spent most of his youth in Norfolk, VA. Having had no formal union ties in his family, it is remarkable that Louis looks to spend his life after Avaya as a full-time labor advocate promoting the benefits of unionism.

While speaking to Louis about education options that are available to employees, he mentioned that he is a supporter and a part of the Alliance Team. The Alliance Team is the Avaya/ AT&T tuition assistance program set up to assist employees in their efforts to enhance their careers through education. "I encourage people to take advantage of all the training made available to them...as I did", says Louis Plummer.

Louis shared with us that his favorite movie is Matewan, a pro-union story about a town in West Virginia.

Louis Plummer now resides in Isle of Wight County with his wife, Barbara Ann. After this conversation, we are sure that his family including his three girls, his son, and two grandchildren (a boy and a girl) are thoroughly

educated in union activism and worker rights.

We at CWA Local 2202 are proud to have Louis Plummer, the worker advocate, as a part of this Local. For all you do—we truly thank you.

December 10th International Human Rights Day Workers' Rights Are Human Rights

Today, America's workers have lost our work-place freedoms. When workers try to form a union, employers respond with campaigns of intimidation, coercion and misinformation-and federal law fails to address this outrage. It's gotten so bad that three times as many workers want a union - some 42 million - as have one!

Enough is enough! U.S. workers and their unions are launching a campaign to help workers regain the basic human right to form unions to improve their lives.

On December 10, 1948, Eleanor Roosevelt and delegates from four-fifths of U.N. member states ratified the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Along with such other important rights as freedom of speech, assembly and religion, the Universal Declaration guaranteed the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively.

What better way to celebrate than to share with all of our family and friends right here in Hampton Roads telling them about the importance of workers rights. Organized celebrations will occur on December 10th at various locations throughout the country. Washington, DC will host the celebration closest to our area. For more information about this event go to our National website at www.cwa-union.org.

Give a 'Gift' that keeps on giving!

Many of our employers like—**Verizon, Avaya, & SBC offer an easy way to give to Health and Human Service agencies or the United Way in our local communities.**

The Labor Emergency Assistance Fund provides assistance to fellow unionists. You may designate directly to this fund through payroll deduction by indicating designation code #1865

To make a contribution through payroll deduction—contact your designated HR person or call the union office for more information.

On Holiday Safety

Tis The Season To Be Jolly

BY ALMERIA GRANT

Almeria Grant is a Communications Rep and member of this Local who works in Federal Systems

Now that the time has been set back, it gets darker sooner, and 'celebration time' is knocking at the back door. Here are some good safety tips that will help make your holiday season much more enjoyable and YOU—not a VICTIM.

Many of us are on the go shopping, traveling, and celebrating with family and friends during this time of the year. It is very easy to become overwhelmed and *not* be as *safety-conscious* as we would normally be.

Please remember...

...while shopping at the malls...

- ◆ Park in well-lit and well-trafficked areas.

- ◆ Lock all car doors.
 - ◆ Keep packages out of sight in your vehicles.
 - ◆ Stay alert. Do not become distracted.
 - ◆ Limit cell phone usage.
 - ◆ Do not carry large amounts of cash. Use one credit or debit card.
 - ◆ Carry purse close to your body and do not put purse in your shopping cart.
 - ◆ Do not overburden yourself with packages.
 - ◆ When you return to your car, have your keys handy, get in quickly, and lock all doors.
- ...while on-line shopping...
- ◆ Shop with known, reputable firms.
 - ◆ Make sure you understand all shipping charges, taxes and delivery dates.

(see "Tis the Season" on next page)

(“Tis The Season” continued from previous page)

Provide personal information sparingly. It is not necessary to give vendors your SSN# or drivers license #.

- ◆ Only use secure servers. Look for an unbroken key or padlock at the bottom of the browser window and a URL that begins with https, not just http.



“...thieves and muggers are also on the lookout for good ‘discounts’—YOU! Be safety-savvy to make sure that their discounts aren’t at your expense.”

The holidays are a time for giving, sharing, cheer and fun. Do not be caught with your guard down for you may become a crime victim. *“Tis the Season to be Jolly”*. Remember thieves and muggers are also on the lookout for good ‘discounts’—YOU! Be safety-savvy to make sure that their discounts aren’t at your expense.

Sources: National Crime Prevention Council



National CWA Training Program

Through a partnership with Cisco Systems and Stanly Community College, CWA brings its’ members IT training on-line that eventually leads to industry certification. CWA/NETT offers CISCO Academy courses over the internet such as IT Essentials I (A+), Cabling (voice and data cabling), CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate), and Fundamentals of UNIX. Other courses offered: Pre-Algebra-Algebra, Fundamentals of Electronics, and Microsoft Office programs such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access.

The 10-16 week, web-based program includes hands on labs (12-16 hours) at CWA Locals for some courses with a proctor. The labs allow students to apply what they learn to the technology directly. Students submit assignments, take tests and keep in touch with their instructor over the internet. Through web-based learning, the MICH-AEL M HISER course schedule is flexible, and students can work around their job schedules.

In May 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded a \$3 million grant to CWA and its’ partners that will fund almost 1,000 scholarships for CWA members who do not have tuition reimbursement programs with their employers. The scholarships pay 100% of training expenses for Academy courses, including the certification exam. Other courses like Microsoft Office and Introduction to Computers are available, but would have to be paid for by the member or negotiated through his/her employer.

CWA/NETT has a lab at Local 2202 at 154 Newtown Road, Suite B-1, Virginia Beach, VA. To learn more about what CWA/NETT has to offer, go to www.cwanett.org.

CWA *the Union for the Information Age*

VZ-LIFE

Life Initiatives For Employees

You can get help with personal problems, and daily life challenges through **VZ-LIFE** (Verizon Life Initiatives For Employees), an *Employee Assistance and Work/Life Services Program* for Verizon employees and their families. **VZ-LIFE** is administered by ValueOptions, an independent firm with a nationwide reputation for excellence in the field of Employee Assistance and Work/Life services. This valuable service is available 24 hours a day. 365 days a year.

(800) 845-0632

www.verizon.com/life

Another bargained-for benefit brought to you by CWA

Welcome New Members

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

Juanita Harris

Ryan Holladay

Some of Our Represented Employee Contacts for Tuition Assistance by Company

AT&T, Lucent & Avaya

Bargained-for Benefits Provider:
The Alliance

The Alliance supports individual efforts to develop career and personal growth and enhance employability through continuous learning experiences.

Alliance AD Contact: Victor Haburchak

E-mail: haburcv@employeegrowth.com

Phone: (301) 577-1900 ext. 12

Cell: (703) 298-2755

SBC

Employees of SBC can contact the HR rep in their organization responsible for tuition processing, or contact:

Tuition Assistance Office
6301 Colwell Blvd., Room 215
Irving, TX 75039
(800) 220-4819

Verizon (formerly Bell Atlantic South)

Employees can contact the Plan Administrator Future-Link @ CAEL, (800) 497-LINK
Employees can also check the FutureLink website at: www.vz-futurelink.net Enter user name **verizon**, and password **10000**.

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

*The Executive Board of CWA Local 2202 Wish You A Merry Christmas
And A Prosperous New Year!*



CWA Local 2202 Retired Member's Club

BY BETTY CARPENTER

- ❖ *The Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 16th at the Chesapeake Conference Center with a 'special musical entertainer' beginning at 11:00 a.m. (luncheon at 12:00 noon)*
 - ❖ *Installation of new President, Jackie Miller, and new Secretary, Iris Perry will take place also*
- This function is for all members of the Club & their guests with reservations through the Club telephone caller.*

CONDOLENCES

To our members, retirees, and their families
who were known to have lost loved ones

Tryggue Frugard	Father
Trenita Whitehurst	Brother
Denise Gray	Husband
Kaily Frugard	Grandfather
Julie Barton	Grandfather
Shasta Jones	Grandfather
Rasheedah Bilal	Father
Aimee Elswick	Grandfather
Linda West	Mother
Shawna Yeaton	Grandmother
Brenda Baines	Brother
Daniel Strickland	Father
Sara Wheatley	Mother
Myrtle Vick	Husband

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 Telecom, Inc.
(757) 456-2202

Recording: (757) 499-8499

Website: www.cwa2202.org

E-mail: CWA2202@exis.net

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