

THE BEATINGS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL MORALE IMPROVES!

This seems to be what Lisa Stevens, VCSI Manager, believes to be the best way to motivate the technicians at Holladay-Tyler Place. That was the general consensus among the technicians who came out for the tailgate meeting on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at Local 2108.

Many of them explained that Lisa seems to believe if she simply yells at them enough she can intimidate them into working harder. While this may work in the short-term, fear and intimidation is never a successful way to motivate your workforce in the long run.

Many of the technicians who attended the tailgate talked about having enough of the way they are being treated and the lack of respect from management for the work they do, the hours they put in or the contract signed by both the Union and VCSI.

Conversations centered on the rights they have under the VCSI Agreement and what recourse they have should management continue treating them this way.

ARTICLE 1, Section 1 of the VCSI agreement reads in part ... "Its purpose is to promote efficiency of operations and provide for peaceful settlement of all labor disputes thereby assuring the timely and economical completion of work." Section 2 reads: "It is also the intent of the parties to establish and maintain harmonious relations among all parties to the



Agreement, to secure optimum productivity and to eliminate delays in the performance of the work undertaken." While we agree that these words sound good, they are meaningless if not taken seriously. While we can't make Lisa Stevens believe in those words, we do know how to do our best to provide for the peaceful settlement of a labor dispute. That process is spelled out in the VCSI agreement as well.

CONTRACT? WHAT CONTRACT? WE DON'T NEED NO STINKING CONTRACT!

That seems to be the attitude of Verizon management these days. Another topic of discussion that evening was Verizon's decision to assign FiOS installs (including the ONU/ONT) to VCSI technicians. If what the company decides to do is a violation of the contract, Their attitude seems to be, "well, if you don't like it Union, arbitrate the issue. In the meantime, we'll do whatever we want".

This is what they are currently doing with the Verizon core agreement. Under Exhibit V, Broadband Network Employment Security Provisions, any work associated with the Broadband Network which is before the TERMINAL/TAP/ONU must be performed exclusively by the CWA OTC represented employees. VCSI is permitted to perform work on the telephony and video portions of the broadband network which is beyond the TERMINAL/TAP/ONU.

In our opinion this is a clear violation of the contract. Yet, management has decided this is what they wish to do and we are left to challenge them through the grievance and arbitration process. Make no mistake, we are challenging them.

It's not that these technicians lack the ability to perform this work. We know they have the skills to do so. The CWA has negotiated a rate of pay for the work we perform. The rate we've negotiated for this type of work is above that of a Multi-Media Services Technician at VCSI. Many of these technicians would like the opportunity to move over to the core Verizon Communications and work for that higher rate of pay. One reason Verizon is doing this is because these technicians are paid a lower wage. Even if they get the same productivity out of them, the company is saving money.

Many of these technicians understood that message. They are well aware Verizon is attempting to divide and conquer our Union. They would like nothing more than for the Core technicians to get angry with the VCSI technicians and vice-versa.

Together, let's show the company how much they underestimate the strength of our Union by standing together.

From The President's Desk

Labor never quits. We never give up the fight – no matter how tough the odds, no matter how long it takes.

-- George Meany

The year is 1994 and the CWA is involved in informal talks, known then as the Alliance meetings, with the Bell Atlantic Corporation, talking about a variety of issues. Among the topics under discussion was a new subsidiary Bell Atlantic wanted to start known as Bell Atlantic Communications and Construction Services Inc. or BACCSI.

This new company would help to build the information super-highway of the future. They would be a fully separate subsidiary, operating at a lower wage structure. Bell Atlantic argued they needed this lower wage workforce to compete in the deregulated marketplace. The technicians working for BACCSI would work primarily on the customer side of the interface. They could perform work on the network side, but only from the F2 serving terminal into the house or, in other words, drop wire work. Yet even this was strictly limited to work on copper drops. The Union's main concern was to protect the work of the future at the higher pay rates within the core company. Any work to be done involving fiber optic cables of any kind was strictly off-limits to BACCSI. We knew this was potentially the network of the future and we intended to make sure we had exclusive rights to this work at the higher rate of pay. We worked too long and had come too far as union workers to sacrifice the gains we had made in our wages, benefits and job security.

We didn't come to an agreement with Bell Atlantic during the Alliance talks. Then along came 1995 Bargaining with Bell Atlantic. The contract expired with the company fully expecting the Union to go on strike. We didn't meet their expectations. As in 2003 we worked without a contract. Unlike 2003, we worked without a contract for 5 and ½ months.

When an agreement was finally reached, one of the outcomes

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President Les Evans discusses issues with Verizon techs from VCSI. The tailgate meeting was held jointly between Local 2108 and Local 2336.

was the creation of a new subsidiary known as, you guessed it, BACCSI. Nine years went by and Bell Atlantic, now the Verizon Corporation, made no movement toward creating this new broadband network spoken of during the Alliance talks. BACCSI simply became the contractor of choice for the core company in assigning work to be done on the deregulated side of the network.

In 2004, the new Verizon Corporation finally announced the creation of a new broadband network. The contract language governing the work BACCSI, now Verizon Connected Solutions Inc (VCSI), could do is spelled out in the core contract under Exhibit V. This language reserves all broadband work within the network to be done exclusively by core employees. The work VCSI may do contractually is essentially the same, working within the customer premises.

It seems Verizon no longer likes those rules. Recently, Verizon announced they are conducting a trial in Montgomery County where they will be assigning VCSI to do work on the network side of the broadband network. Up to this time Verizon had abided by the agreement they signed back in 2003 and assigned this work exclusively to core employees.

When BACCSI first began operations back in 1996 many workers on the core side resented these technicians coming in and doing what they considered to be their work. We spent years educating our members to the fact that we had an agreement negotiated with the company for VCSI to be able to do this work and we shouldn't allow the company to divide and conquer us so easily. These workers are our Union Brothers and Sisters and we needed to unite with them against our common adversary, management.

The same holds true for today. These VCSI technicians are upset with the idea that they are doing the job of a higher paid job title and believe they deserve the same pay. Our core technicians aren't happy with the fact that the company is taking what they rightfully believe to be their work and giving it to VCSI.

We have processed a grievance up to and pending arbitration over this issue and hopefully at some point in the future we will receive the correct ruling through that process. What we can't allow management to do is start us fighting with one another. The common enemy here is Verizon management who has decided once more to ignore the contract because it is not convenient for them to follow it.

Let's remember that as we move forward together towards 2008 bargaining.

Les

RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

By *Dennis Strout, President RMC 2108*

At our May 9th meeting we elected two delegates to attend the CWA Retirees Conference and the CWA Convention to be held in Toronto, Canada beginning July 13th. The delegates elected were **Calvin Foster** and myself. **Barbara Eden-Balster** will be the alternate delegate. If for some reason either Calvin or I cannot attend she will be called upon to go in our place.

Many thanks to the election committee for doing a great job.

Verizon Shareholders Meeting

Calvin Foster, Kathy Harrison and myself went to the Verizon Shareholders meeting in Pittsburgh, PA. on May 3rd along with a full bus of local members. It was a long trip but it was worth it. Many union officers, members and activists from around the eastern seaboard attended. It seems Ivan Seidenberg doesn't think he is overpaid even though quite a few of the shareholders do. Mr. Seidenberg has collected \$110 million in wages, stock options and additional benefits over five years while the stock in Verizon has been stagnant.

Most of the shareholders propositions involved lowering CEO and board compensation and golden parachute restrictions. The fact that only one of them passed isn't really surprising, but every year, some of them get closer and closer to reaching a 50% tally. Maybe next year.

Pensions and Benefits

The AT&T board of Directors has approved a pension increase for October 2007 pension checks. This increase

will benefit more than 88,000 former legacy SBC, AT&T and BellSouth employees who retired prior to 1996 and who are currently receiving monthly pension payments of \$1,200 or less.

The increase will be paid to retirees receiving a monthly service or disability pension, or a survivor annuity. The increases will range from approximately 6.2% for those currently receiving the smallest monthly pension payments to 1% for the highest.

If you worked for Verizon you will not be getting a pension increase any time soon. In the last 14 years the cost of living has gone up 40%. Our pensions have gone up 0%.

The Verizon pension fund is over funded but according to the powers that be they still can't give us an increase in our pensions. We have lost a lot of spending power but Verizon doesn't care. Not only that but now our health care is in jeopardy. In order to save money and increase its profits the company is looking at eliminating retiree health care benefits. We all spent years working for this company making it what it is today with the understanding that when we retired the company would provide us with a decent pension and health care. Now the company is trying to renege on its promise to us.

While some of us are old enough to qualify for Medicare a lot of us are not. Can you afford to pay for your own health care policy? I can't. This fight has just begun.



RMC 2108



Evans, Ruben Flores, Kenny Roach, Dennis Strout and Jenny Sylvester.

The JDRF is closer now than ever to finding a cure. Your donation will make a dramatic impact as JDRF moves life altering research out of the lab and into human clinical trials. Typically, more than 80 cents of every dollar donated to JDRF goes directly to worldwide research and education about research. It's not too late to contribute. Go directly to the JDRF website at: <http://www.jdrf.org/> then click the "Donate Now" button. Thank you to all who help out.

Make plans now to join with us next year and we'll see you then.

WALK TO CURE DIABETES

May 6, 2007 dawned with the temperatures in the 60's and not a cloud in the sky as several thousand walkers gathered in Washington, DC at the National Mall for the Walk To Cure Diabetes. They were joined by the team from Local 2108 and we couldn't have asked for a better day for the three mile walk.

While the totals are not yet available for the amount raised by the walk, the team from Local 2108 raised over \$3,500.

Along with all those who contributed we would like to thank the following individuals who joined Local 2108's team and participated in the walk: Gail Evans, Les

2007 CWA LOCAL 2108 SCHOLARSHIP GRANT

CWA Local 2108 is proud to offer scholarships to our members and their families. Please read the rules below, and call the Local if you have additional questions.

1. Three \$2,000 scholarships are available.
2. Available to members in good standing since last negotiated contract, their spouse and dependent children or dependent children of deceased members.
3. \$1,000 will be mailed directly to the institution per semester.
4. Student must take at least 9 credits per semester.
5. Must have a letter of acceptance to college or accredited learning institution with application.
6. Drawing at July membership meeting as a raffle.
7. Community Service Committee will screen applications.
8. Applications must be postmarked by June 30, of current year.
9. Resignation from the union will forfeit scholarship awards.

NAME: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY # _____

RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER: _____

ADDRESS: _____ HOME TELEPHONE #: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

MEMBER'S NAME: _____ WORK TELEPHONE #: _____

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

Broadband Data Improvement Act, S. 1492, An Important Step in Effort to Bring High Speed Internet to All

CWA applauded the May 24 introduction of Broadband Data Improvement Act, introduced by Senator Daniel K. Inouye, as a significant and necessary step in bringing high speed Internet access to every American.

In order for our country to move forward to ensure that a 21st Century Internet is available for all, we need key information and better data to help us get there. Senator Inouye's legislation will greatly improve the quality of that information, CWA said. Inouye is chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee.

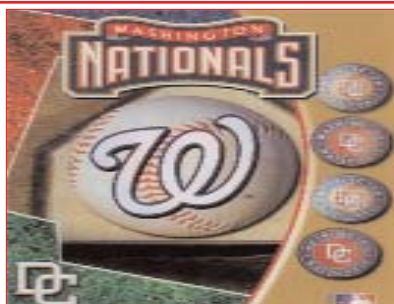
The measure, S. 1492, incorporates key provisions supported by CWA as part of the union's "Speed Matters" campaign, which calls on Congress to establish a national Internet policy to improve the quality, availability and affordability of high speed broadband service to every community.

Inouye's measure is a complement to the Broadband Census of America Act, introduced in the House of Representatives.

In testimony before the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet on that measure, CWA President Larry Cohen said, "we desperately need a national Internet policy to reverse the fact that our nation, the country that invented the Internet, has fallen to 16th in the world in high-speed Internet penetration."

"Unfortunately, we don't know the full extent of our problem because our data is so poor. We don't know where high-speed networks are deployed, how many households and small businesses connect to the Internet, at what speed, and how much they pay. Without this information, we can't craft good policy solutions. So we continue to fall farther behind," he told the subcommittee.

The Senate bill, in addition to seeking to improve the quality of federal broadband data collection, also encourages state initiatives that promote broadband deployment.



Take Me Out To The Ballgame

Join Local 2108 and a whole bunch of union friends and family at Labor Night with the Nats!

We are getting 100 tickets to the Washington National's home game against the **Colorado Rockies** on **July 20, 2007** with a start time of 7:05 p.m.

Tickets are **\$6** each, with \$1 dollar from each ticket going to the Community Services Agency of the Washington Metropolitan Council of the AFL-CIO. This agency provides assistance to area union members and their families during times of need.

Don't delay; sign up for your tickets today! Tickets are available on a first come first served basis. Money for ticket purchases should be sent to Local 2108.

CWA Local 2108 Members

Welcome New Members

Carl Brogden
Darrin Long

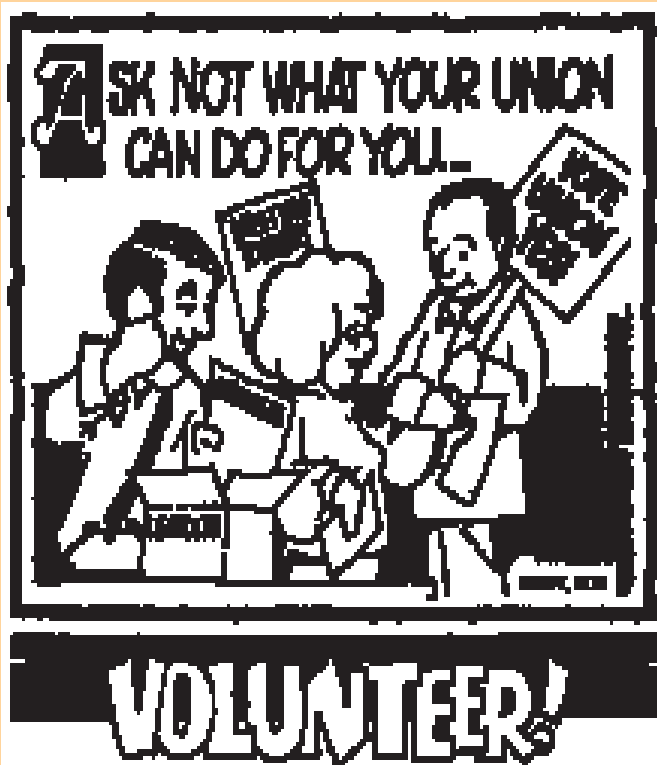
Ed Anderson
Donald Williams

Transferred Members

Carl Brogden
Lorris Watson

Retired Members

Vernice Wilder
Denise Isreal
Kenneth Wallace



Personals

We wish to extend sincere sympathy to the family and friends of:

Linwood Lee Johnson, grandfather of **Dana Arif** who died on January 3, 2007.

Ivan Wells, Sr., father-in-law of **Steve Hinnerman** who died on January 22, 2007.

Daniel Joseph Schaech, Jr., father-in-law of **Katherine Schaech** who died on March 16, 2007.

Marie Turner, grandmother of **Willa Parrish** who died on March 22, 2007.

Ellen Washington, grandmother of **Latonya Austin** who died on April 12, 2007.

Zertie L. Powers, mother of **Denise Powers Thomas** who died on April 13, 2007.

George Riedel, brother of **Shirley Specht** who died on April 25, 2007.

Charlie Gagliardi, husband of retired member **Mary Gagliardi** who died on April 26, 2007.

Rosa Romero, mother of retired member **Marilyn Smith** who died on May 2, 2007.

Jessie P. Abbott, grandmother of **Myesha Carter** who died on May 4, 2007.

Richard Hall, an active member who died on May 6, 2007.

Martha Woodard, sister of **Shirley Thomas** who died on May 7, 2007.

Frances Hawkins, grandmother of **Tunesia Plater** who died on May 8, 2007.

Ted Barkley, father of **John Barkley** who died on May 16, 2007.

Orioles vs LA Angels - AFL-CIO Night

Special upper reserved seating is waiting for Local 2108 union members and their families and guests at AFL-CIO Night with the Orioles at Camden Yards!

Local 2108 will have tickets available to the Baltimore Orioles home game against the Los Angeles Angels on **June 29, 2007** with a start time of 7:05 p.m.

Tickets are **\$5** each and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the Local today to reserve your tickets or for more information (301.459.2108).

See you at "The Yard."



Bush Administration Agrees to Issue Safety Equipment Rule

In response to a lawsuit filed by the AFL-CIO and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), the Bush Administration has agreed to issue a final rule on employer payment for personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees. In 1999, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) first proposed a PPE rule that would require employers to pay the costs of protective clothing, lifelines, face shields, gloves and other equipment used by an estimated 20 million workers to protect them from job hazards.

"We applaud the decision to finally issue a final rule on employer payment for their employees' protective equipment," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. "This rule-making has taken far too long. We will be monitoring the Department of Labor's actions to make sure they honor this commitment and issue a strong, protective rule."

On January 3, 2007, the AFL-CIO and UFCW filed a lawsuit against the Bush Administration over its failure to finalize the payment for PPE rule. The court ordered the Bush Administration to respond to the lawsuit by March 19. On March 14, the Secretary of Labor filed papers with the court committing to issue a final rule in November 2007.

"This is a victory for workers who have suffered needlessly while awaiting action by the Bush Administration," said Joe Hansen, UFCW International President. "According to OSHA's own estimates, 400,000 workers have been injured and 50 have died while the rule has

been in limbo. We expect a strong final rule this November."

Workers in the meatpacking, poultry and construction industries, and low-wage and immigrant workers are most vulnerable to injury.



The rule was first announced in 1997 and proposed in 1999 by OSHA after a ruling by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission that OSHA's existing PPE standard could not be interpreted to require employers to pay for protective equipment. The rule proposed in 1999 did not impose any new obligations on employers to provide safety equipment; it simply codified OSHA's policy that employers, not employees, have the responsibility to pay for it.

In 1999, OSHA promised to issue the final PPE rule in July 2000. But it missed that deadline and has missed every self-imposed deadline since. The agency has failed to act in response to a 2003 petition by the AFL-CIO and UFCW and numerous requests by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus.

CWA Invades Verizon Shareholder's Meeting...Ivan Tap Dances on Issues

A proposal to give Verizon shareholders a more meaningful voice in executive pay decisions has won after a recount garnering 50.18 percent of shareholder votes. The measure was opposed by Verizon's top management. CWA has worked hard to ensure that this proposal passed. The Shareholder meeting was held in Pittsburgh, PA on May 3rd and attended by many of Local 2108's Officers and Chief Stewards.

The recount by independent election officials was needed because the vote was too close to call at the company's annual meeting in Pittsburgh on May 3. The proposal, which was submitted by **C. William Jones**, President of the Association of BellTel Retirees, requires Verizon to submit future executive compensation packages to a non-binding shareholder vote. It is the first time a "say on pay" proposal has won majority support at a publicly owned U.S. company.

Other resolutions by the AFL-CIO Reserve Fund on "Golden Parachutes" and the CWA Members' Relief Fund on "Compensation Consultants" also received very strong support from shareholders.

The AFL-CIO pointed to the record-high support as a strong indication that shareholders are clearly looking for a change in CEO compensation at Verizon.

Through retirement savings, America's working families are significant holders of Verizon stock. Union-sponsored pension funds have \$400 billion in total assets as institutional investors.

"The record vote by Verizon shareholders reflects the growing dissatisfaction by shareholders over unregulated and excessive CEO compensation," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka. "The question remains: **Will Verizon listen, respond and reach out to investors, or will it continue the status quo despite the record shareholder vote demanding change?**"



Local 2108 Chief Stewards gear up for the march through downtown Pittsburgh to deliver our message at the annual Verizon Shareholders Meeting.

Verizon Pension Cash-Out

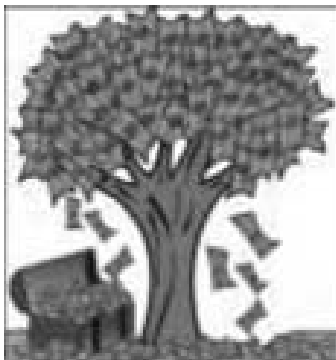
Recently, we've received a number of calls concerning upcoming changes in the pension cash-out option of the Verizon pension plan. The questions have centered on the replacement of our current GATT rate cash-out formula. In many of the instances a financial planner told the member the change would become effective January 1, 2008, advising them to consider retiring with the cash-out option prior to that date. One even went so far as to tell our member beginning in 2008 he would begin having a co-pay for his retiree medical. He was incorrect on both counts.

We had **Bob Patrician**, CWA research specialist, review the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and compare the new law to our language and the Verizon Pension summary plan document. Bob's findings are below:

Article 6, Section 12 of the pension plan document describes in detail the terms of the pension cash-out for those who separate from service after 9/30/2003.

6.12 (c) (2) (c) lists three separate sets of assumptions and states "The lump sum payable to a Window-Eligible Employee who elects a Service Pension or a Deferred Vested Pension cash-out shall equal the greatest of the amounts determined using the assumptions in (i), (ii) and (iii) below." The three assumptions relate to interest rate, mortality and the age of the recipient for purposes of the calculation.

It then goes on to describe those three sets of assumptions as follows:



(i) GATT (what we currently use)

Interest Rate: GATT amount using the 30-year Treasury security rate published by the Federal Reserve for the 2nd calendar month preceding the first day of the calendar quarter when the pension commences. Mortality table: as described by the Secretary of the Treasury according to the

Internal Revenue Code section 417(e). Age: in whole years and months on the 15th day of the middle month of the calendar quarter when the pension begins.

(ii) PBGC (Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation)

Interest Rate: 120% of the applicable PBGC rate for the month prior to the calendar quarter when the pension begins. Mortality table: Non-Insured Unisex Pension 1984 (UP84) Age: in whole years and months on the 15th day of the middle month of the calendar quarter when the pension begins.



(iii) GATT (based on a new formula defined by the Pension Protection Act of 2006)

Interest Rate: Applicable interest rate according to IRS Code 417(e). Mortality table: as described by the Secretary of the Treasury according to the Internal Revenue Code section

417(e). Age: in whole years and months on the 15th day of the middle month of the calendar quarter when the pension begins.

Therefore, with the passage of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 the change which people are worried about comes into play as the third set of assumptions above "(iii) GATT". However, even with that change in the law, the governing language in the plan is the "shall equal the greatest of the amounts determined using the assumptions in (i), (ii) and (iii)" language. The plan document anticipated the new law and merely adds an additional calculation in determining which of the three is the greatest amount.

For those members who will be eligible for retirement prior to the contract expiration in August 2008 please keep in mind, that the cash-out option expires with the contract expiration date of August 2, 2008.

This is in contrast to previous contracts when the cash-out option was in place until the end of the calendar year in which the contract expired. This doesn't mean we won't continue to have a cash-out option. It simply means the cash-out option, like everything else in our current contract, is subject to renewal through the bargaining process.

Local 2108 Union Calendar

June 2007

- 6 Chief Steward Meeting 9:00am
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 13 Retired Member Club Meeting 11:00am
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 13 General Membership Meeting 6:00pm
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 17 Father's Day
- 27 Stewards Meeting 6:00pm
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 27-28 Blood Drive
Calverton Business Office, Beltsville, MD
- 29 AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards
O's vs Los Angeles Angels 7:05pm



July 2007

- 4 Independence Day
Local Office Closed
- 4 Chief Steward Meeting - Cancelled
- 11 Retired Member Club Meeting 11:00am
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 11 General Membership Meeting 6:00pm
American Legion Post 268, Wheaton, MD
- 16-17 CWA 69th Annual Convention
Toronto, Canada
- 20 Labor Night with the Nats
Nats vs Colorado Rockies 7:05pm

GIVE BLOOD !!

2007 Chesapeake
Blood Drives

August 7 & 8
November 6 & 7

2007 Calverton
Blood Drives

June 27 & 28
September 26 & 27
December 12

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See Page 6
"Say-On-Pay"
Passes at Verizon
Meeting...

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