

Verizon Transgressions Impact All

The NLRB has backed CWA charges against Verizon on behalf of Verizon Business workers who are seeking to organize in Pennsylvania and New York. "When this labor board, the most anti-union, pro-business board ever, cracks down on a major corporation like Verizon, it's damning evidence that the pattern of behavior is truly egregious," **CWA President Larry Cohen** said.

Complaints issued by NLRB regional directors in Pittsburgh and New York found that Verizon management:

- "Threatened employees with layoff for supporting the union."
- "Informed employees that Verizon Wireless, a related employer, had laid off employees because of their union activity."
- "Engaged in surveillance of employees to discover their union activities," and made sure to give the impression that they were under surveillance.
- Issued disciplinary warnings against union supporters for distributing union materials and authorization cards "while permitting nonunion solicitations and distribution" in the workplace.

The NLRB found that Verizon admitted it had fired Verizon Wireless workers for union activity and used this boast as a threat to frighten the VZB workers. For years Verizon Wireless workers have faced a relentless employer campaign of coercion, surveillance, firings and even closing of entire offices to stamp out their efforts to win collective bargaining rights.

Why is this important to Local 2108 members? It reduces CWA's overall bargaining strength, which impacts our ability to bargain our contracts in Verizon Telecom. As CWA President Larry Cohen says above, it's pretty significant for this NLRB to come out with a ruling like this.

This is all part of the Verizon Plan to isolate and restrict the number of union represented workers it has employed. A blistering report from American Rights at Work denounces Verizon for interfering with workers trying to form unions, taking a "low-road" approach to what were once good jobs and letting service quality deteriorate for millions of customers. Their report, "Broken Promises: Verizon Neglects Its Commitment to Provide Good Jobs and Quality Service," details how the company has taken aggressive and illegal actions to stop workers from exercising their rights to associate and organize.

Harassment, bullying and other means of interfering with its workers' right to organize "is part of a pattern of anti-union conduct by the company" targeting not just Verizon Wireless but also the company's union-represented division, Verizon Communications, the report said.

As Verizon has moved from a landline to a largely wireless business, the report says it has become a "textbook example of 'double-breasting,'" a scheme by companies to keep any union-represented part of their business separate from non-union worksites. "Verizon created a wall between the approximately 97,000 employees in Verizon Telecom and the 35,000 employees at Verizon Business and Verizon Wireless," ARAW found.

Customers aren't treated much better, the report found, stating that Verizon has "shirked its responsibilities as a public utility, pursuing a race-to-the-bottom, low-road business model that is detrimental to both employees and customers."

The report sharply criticizes Verizon for failing to maintain or upgrade service for landline customers as the company spends its time and money instead on the more profitable fiber optic network known as FIOS.

"Under Verizon's current business model, tens of thousands of secure, well-paying jobs are at the risk of disappearing," ARAW concludes. "The consequences of Verizon's actions go beyond its workforce, as communities lose good jobs, and customers suffer poor service while missing out on the benefits of high-speed broadband."

"I encourage every CWA member to circulate this report widely among their friends, leaders in their community, and to elected officials in Congress," said **Jeff Rechenbach**, Executive Vice President and head of the National Telecom Office. "We cannot allow Verizon to continue to hide anymore behind assertions that it respects its workers' right to organize."

The entire "Broken Promises" report is available online at www.americanrightsatwork.org. We encourage our members to read and distribute this report, with the same enthusiasm and vigor the company would like us to use to **Sell One More**. Let's call it our **Sell No More** campaign.

From The President's Desk

A lovely thing about Christmas is that it's compulsory, like a thunderstorm, and we all go through it together.

Garrison Keillor

"Tis' the Season," or so goes the saying, "to be Jolly".

Well fa-la-la-la, let's see just how jolly Verizon intends to be in this season of giving. As you no doubt have heard, Verizon approached the Union and asked for early negotiations on the 2008 contract.

The Union agreed to attempt early bargaining with Verizon, however we made it clear it would be a waste of everyone's time should the Company come in expecting givebacks. We are not now, nor have we ever been interested in the strategy of retreat. Our interest has always been what is best for our members' in the long term.

We would be remiss in our duties if we didn't negotiate an agreement improving the wages, benefits and working conditions for our members. Yet, long term we must also keep an eye on the Company we are bargaining with and whether or not they can afford the contract we are negotiating.

I believe Verizon, a healthy company whose stock has steadily risen over the last several months, has no excuse for doing anything but offering its employees a fair deal. Now more than ever Verizon needs everyone working toward the common goal of defeating the competition, the cable companies.

Perhaps that's why Verizon requested the early negotiations. Perhaps they are smart enough to recognize the last thing they need for the next few years is continuing strife with their labor force. The greatest advantage they

hold over the competition is their highly motivated work force. We are the better-trained, greater skilled workers who will keep customers coming to Verizon.



The only thing Verizon wants to talk about in this early round of bargaining is healthcare. It's not difficult to imagine why. Issues surrounding the healthcare crisis in the U.S. have reached epidemic proportions. More than 47 million Americans wake up everyday with the uncertainty of whether it will be the day they will go tens and possibly hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt because they lack health insurance coverage.

Like many large employers in the U.S., Verizon feels the pain in their bottom line. Yet, unlike other major employers like AT&T and even Wal-Mart, Verizon has refused to sign on to the coalition of corporate, labor and community service organizations calling for major healthcare reform in the United States. We need reforms making healthcare affordable and available to all people living in the United States, regardless of their economic circumstances.

The insurance companies like to spread the fear of what they term "Government run Healthcare". They want to have you fear the "nameless, faceless bureaucrats" who would control your access to healthcare. Yet, isn't that exactly what we have when we deal with the insurance companies? For each of us, insurance companies who are motivated by one thing only, profits, control our healthcare.

So now, we are engaged in bargaining with Verizon. Do you suppose they understand that bargaining is a little like Christmas? It's compulsory and we must go through it together.

The question here is:

Is Verizon feeling the spirit of the Holiday Season? In addition, is that spirit one of Ol' Saint Nick or Ebenezer Scrooge?

We have worked many years and have accepted smaller wage increases in order to obtain the healthcare coverage we have today. As a Fortune 13 corporation, Verizon needs to understand the answer to the healthcare problem is not to attack its workers with cost shifting and givebacks. The answer is to join with them to change our healthcare delivery system so no American ever wakes up in the morning wondering if today will be the day they lose everything.

In the meantime, here is hoping each of you has a safe and happy holiday season filled with blessings and joy.

In Solidarity,

Les

Communications Workers of America

2108 news

published monthly by
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RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

By Dennis Strout, President RMC 2108

At our Nov. meeting we added a paragraph to our bylaws.

Article 7 Sec. 1-Regular meetings Paragraph d. now reads as follows.

"In the event that inclement weather causes schools in Prince Georges County to be closed on a regular meeting date, the meeting shall be considered as cancelled."

Hopefully, this will clear up any questions as to the meeting being cancelled if it snows or the roads are extremely icy.

By now most of you are aware that the local is moving. I hope to have a map or at least good directions to hand out to the members at the December meeting to the new location. It sounds like it is easy to get to. Closer for some of us, a little farther away for others. Our December meeting will be our catered luncheon so everyone plan to attend.

The officers are busy planning meetings for the new year. We are also looking at what social events to plan. Our social events did not go over so well this year so we will be looking for ideas from the membership.

The Union and the Company entered early bargaining on the contract. At least one meeting has been held already. It seems that healthcare will be the main issue this year.

Pay attention to what's going on. Do not believe the rumors you hear. Get the facts.

This is an extremely short article. I hope to see you at the December meeting and, if not, at least a meeting next year.



RMC 2108

IDEARC Changes in the Works

IDEARC's Transition Services Agreements with Verizon will expire by year-end 2007. As they approach the New Year, that means more excitement and challenges as transitions unfold for Idearc Media and its employees. Here are a few highlights of some changes you have or will hear about:

Idearc Savings Plans

- Effective January 1, 2008, JPMorgan Retirement Plan Services will replace Fidelity Investments Institutional Services Company, Inc., as the record keeper for the Idearc Savings Plans. As a result of this change, beginning December 27, 2007, participants temporarily will be unable to change contribution amounts, direct or diversify investments in their individual accounts, and will be unable to obtain a loan, withdrawal or distribution from the plans. In addition, beginning December 27, 2007, participants will temporarily be unable to pay off a loan. This "blackout period", beginning December 27, 2007, during which participants will be unable to exercise these rights otherwise available under the plans, is expected to end during the week of January 6, 2008. The fund manager for the Idearc Savings Plans will be Barclays Global Investors.

- Ceridian will provide payroll and employee recordkeeping services with transition beginning in late December 2007. With this change, all paychecks (and direct deposits) will occur on Fridays whether weekly or bi-weekly in payroll frequency.

- The last paycheck Idearc employees will receive via the Verizon Payroll system will be dated December 28, 2007. Idearc employees will be able to view and/or print that pay stub via the Payroll tab on VZ ESS until close of business on December 31, 2007. After December 31, Idearc employees will no longer have access to VZ ESS.

- In 2008, all live paychecks will be mailed to employees' home addresses instead of being distributed at work.

- In 2008, time will be keyed on Fridays, (one week before payday) instead of the Monday before payday.

- Beginning December 29, 2007, associates who currently enter per diem expenses such as mileage, parking, and meal allowances via the time and labor reporting system (CTLR) must submit expense reports via the new Accounts Payable (AP) system.

November 2007
News from Idearc

Idearc Savings Plans & Pension Plans have found a new home

Starting in January 2008, the new Fidelity Investments Retirement Plan will be administered by JPMorgan Retirement Plan Services. Associate Plans and 401(k) plans will continue to be managed by Fidelity Investments.

Member and spousal customer service

The transition to JPMorgan will result in several improvements to your retirement planning, including online account access that you can use from your desktop, laptop, and mobile phone.

The Fidelity Support Center will have a new focus: all savings plan investment choices. Starting in 2008, Fidelity's self-directed brokerage account feature will provide you with more than 100 investment choices.

Members of the significant changes to the investment tools we already offer you to better your savings plan and make your investment decisions. Starting in January 2008, you'll be able to view and print your pay stub on the VZ ESS system via the Payroll tab on VZ ESS until close of business on December 31, 2007. After December 31, Idearc employees will no longer have access to VZ ESS.

Check the transition to JPMorgan is complete, you'll have access to your savings and pension plan information—all from the same Web site. You'll benefit from a variety of new tools, including JPMorgan Retirement Group Analyst. This online tool gives you a comprehensive overview of your retirement savings and investment options. Start after the transition to JPMorgan, you'll have access to the new Fidelity Retirement Plan website, which provides you with self-directed account management features.

Please visit the News section about the changes with the help of the Idearc Support Team. A complete listing of changes is available at [www.idearc.com](#).

A Salute to Union Stewards

What is a Union Steward? As we welcome our newest steward's class to the ranks (see pictures below), we feel it's appropriate to give a brief review of what being a Steward means in our local.

First and foremost, a steward is a volunteer. There is no extra pay involved, just a guarantee of an extra share of grief, as well as the satisfaction of helping our members at work and in the community.

Stewards are problem solvers. Many workplace problems can be solved through informal meetings between the steward and management.

Stewards are communicators and educators, making sure co-workers know about our issues, problems and solutions. Stewards are often called upon to "school" management on how to manage, since management is often clueless about how to do their job.

Stewards welcome new members with union orientation, advising them of their rights and the responsibilities of working under a collective bargaining agreement.

Stewards file grievances and help discharge the union's legal obligation of Fair Representation. All problems must be handled fairly even if the worker is not a union member, is considered a trouble maker, has unpopular political beliefs or has personality conflicts with the steward or other union leaders.

Stewards are vital links to involve and mobilize workers for action to achieve common goals. This is an extremely important function as we begin Verizon bargaining.

Often a thankless job, in many respects the role of Union Steward is the most important one in our local, ensuring fair treatment of workers by the company day in and day out.

To all our stewards, experienced and new, **We Salute You!**

CWA
Local 2108

Local 2108 Members and their Guest are invited to attend a
HOLIDAY GALA
Friday, December 7, 2007
5:00pm to 11:00pm

Local 2108 Basement Meeting Room
4301 Garden City Drive
Landover, Maryland

Donations of \$3.00 or more will be collected
for the Community Services Agency

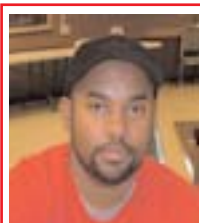
Hors D'oeuvres * D.J. * Drinks

Note: No Smoking Allowed In The Building

WELCOME NEW STEWARDS AND THANK YOU!



Alvina Rice



Rob Willis



Bernadine Alexander



Michelle Bradley



Monica Jones



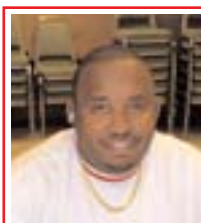
Tony Meeks



Brian Beddoe



Carolyn Tomlinson



Craig Headley



Chris Holland



Sean Holder

CWA Local 2108 Members

Welcome New Members

Richard Johnson

William Bell

Transferred Members

Sharon Byrd

Dale Straw
Retha Woodberry

Vallorie Coley

Elbert Thompson
Emerald Wallace

Ruben Flores

Matthew Verdin
Donald Jernigan

LaPreia Terry

Kevin Kelly
Craig Spence

Sean Holder

Arthur Schofield
Marcus Simpson
Ricky Harrington
Walt Walker

Richard Johnson

Frederick Johnson
Aaron Phelps
Lamont Howard
Troy Davis
Lane Smothers

Kevin Bennett

Glenn Miller

Retired Members

Mary Fields

Personals

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

Ida Mae Wade McCall, grandmother of **Lango Flanagan** who died on August 23, 2007.

Ethel V. Waddell, mother of **Fayette Myers** who died on October 14, 2007.

Jeanette Morris, mother of **C. Alfie Morris** who died on October 27, 2007.

Enrique Vidal, father of **Jorge Vidal** who died on October 30, 2007.

Congratulations to:

Joanne McCray and Don Chisley on the birth of their daughter **Jameerah Imani Chisley** who was born on November 5, 2007

We're Moving....Soon...

We suppose you've heard that Local 2108 is moving, leaving our home in Landover for the past twenty plus years, and moving to Beltsville (10782 Rhode Island Ave). There's still a lot to do inside the 3 suite facility just north of US1, but everything is moving as planned. Hopefully by January 2008, it will be ready for us to move in. We'll have offices, a membership meeting area, and more room than we have at Garden City Drive, plus IT'S OURS!

Stay tuned to this newsletter and our website for further pictures and developments. Hope to see you at our Grand Opening!



Verizon Bargaining Begins

CWA and Verizon began bargaining on November 19, 2007, with the union and the company exchanging initial demands.

Administrative Director to Vice President Pete Cattucci, **Ron Collins** issued an opening statement that the Union's goal in this round of bargaining was not only to make gains that reflect our members' contributions to a successful corporation, but to also secure the future for our members.

District 13 Vice President **Jim Short** spoke to of cost to our members when jobs are lost and stated that the union is not interested in a contract extension. "Our members' needs and concerns must be addressed in this round of bargaining."

The Company then put their **sole** demand on the table, **Health Care give-backs**, which the company had indicated earlier was the **only** issue they were interested in bargaining early.

The Company's proposal includes:

- employees paying part of the medical premium on a weekly basis;
- annual deductibles on prescription drugs;
- additional cost for not using mail order prescription drugs;
- additional cost for out of network pharmacies;
- increased cost of mail order pharmacy; HMO's will have drug cost increased;
- the MCN will cost now, out of pocket maximums would increase, increase in co-pays for doctor visits, penalties for failing to pre certify hospital visits;
- MEP-PPO eliminated;
- increased costs to members for HMO's;
- In addition, the company demand included the elimination of retiree healthcare for workers hired after 8-3-08.

The Union in response presented a comprehensive list of demands including:

- proposals for improvements to all aspects of our pension and salary plans;
- job security and future jobs;
- improvements to all aspects of our health care coverage;
- and the elimination of onerous company practices like the Regional Attendance Plan and mandatory overtime.

As we go to press more meetings are scheduled. For the latest in bargaining new go to www.cwalocal2108.org.

DELEGATE ELECTION GUIDELINES

Nominations will be held for Local 2108 **at-large delegates** to the CWA International Annual Convention at the **January 9, 2008** membership meeting. Nominees and those who nominate them must be members in good standing of our Local. Nominees must be present to accept the nomination, or must provide a signed letter of acceptance to the chair of the Election Committee prior to nominations. In the event that the membership meeting is cancelled due to a snow emergency declaration in the county where the meeting is scheduled, nominations will be rescheduled for the next regularly scheduled membership meeting on February 13, 2008.

Candidates may submit a picture to the Local by December 14, 2007 to run in the January 2008 issue of the **2108News**. Ballots will be mailed on January 25, and counted on February 15, 2008. A declared snow emergency may delay ballot mailing and/or counting.

Candidates may have use of the Local's facilities for the purpose of mailing campaign literature to the membership beginning 30 days prior to nominations being scheduled. As

membership list labels will no longer be printed, any candidate who wishes to mail campaign literature should furnish their envelopes or flyers to the Local. Within four business days the Local will print the names and addresses on the material. The Local will not furnish envelopes or postage. This and all other expenses are to be borne by the candidates.

The Local postage machine may not be used to affix postage to the envelopes. Arrangements for use of the Local facilities should be made with the Chair of the Election Committee, **Frank Walker**, who can be contacted through the Local office on 301.459.2108. Use of the Local's facilities and campaigning may not be done on union-paid time.

A complete copy of the Local 2108 Election Committee Rules are available on our website: (www.cwalocal2108.org), by mail or by calling the Local.



Shoddy, Dangerous Goods From China Fill Store Shelves, Raise Consumer Fear

Food, clothing, toys, tires, appliances, auto parts, computers, tools—today America runs on Chinese goods. America's \$202 billion trade deficit with China continues to widen, leaving China awash in U.S. dollars and America deeply indebted to a nation intent on dominating world trade.

Job losses associated with the U.S. China trade imbalance are estimated at some 2.1 million through 2006. Information released by the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission noted with alarm that job losses to China had doubled in the years following its admission into the World Trade Organization in 2001. The serious economic implications of the US-China trade deficit have been recently overshadowed by new concerns over product safety.

A LITTLE LEAD IN YOUR TEA

While the U.S. has been exporting jobs to China, China has been exporting all manner of dangerous and shoddy products to the U.S. Suddenly a flood of alarming news stories reveal that Chinese authorities exercise little or no supervision over production practices. Seemingly benign products contain all manner of dangerous substances, from toxins and diseases in seafood products to lead in toys and tea. A recent report by National Public Radio, for example, showed that a Chinese herbal tea producer sped up the process of drying tea leaves by running over the leaves with trucks. The leaded gasoline used by Chinese vehicles literally dumped thousands of pounds of lead into the tea. Folks who believe a little cup of herbal tea might give them a healthier life are, ironically, poisoning themselves.



WHY SHOULD CHINA CARE

But, why do Americans think China should be any more careful about what we consume than our own government? The Bush White House responded to the threat by setting up an "interagency task force" to "study" safety issues and to present recommendations. Meanwhile, the Administration continued to press for cuts in both domestic and import inspections of food products. All the toy product recalls that have taken place were so-called "voluntary" actions agreed to by the industry. And, to make matters worse, food industry lobbyists allied with Bush political appointees in the Department of Agriculture are stalling implementation of a six year-old law that would require manufacturers to list the country of origin for ingredients in all food products sold in the U.S.

Here are some other details regarding food and product safety that may give you cause for alarm.

TOO MUCH INFORMATION?

From applesauce to canned zucchini, every packaged product sold in America lists carbs, protein, fat, sugar, salt content and calories. But—consumers are not likely to find where those ingredients originated. Since 2002, by law, food producers have been required to include the country of origin on packaged products. But, the industry dominated U.S. Department of Agriculture has failed to compose "rules" to put that law into effect. They have until 2008 to do so.

Meanwhile, lobbyists for food and soft drink companies are arguing that so many ingredients used in packaged food and beverages come from so many far-flung sources it will be "nearly impossible" to trace them. U.S. consumers have become impatient with those excuses, especially in the face of a spate of reports that contaminated products are slipping into the U.S. in large quantities.

The reason? Out of hundreds of thousands of imported food products approximately 20 percent are listed on USDA computers for review, and only 1 percent of those are actually inspected.



Local 2108 Union Calendar

December 2007

- 1 Breakfast With Santa - 9:00am - 12 noon
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 5 Chief Steward Meeting - Cancelled
- 7 Holiday Gala - 5:00pm - 11:00pm
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 12 Blood Drive
Calverton
- 12 Retired Member Club Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Landover, MD
- 12 General Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Landover, MD
Childrens Hospital 50/50 Drawing
- 25 Christmas Day - Local Office Closed

January 2008

- 1 New Year's Day
Local Office Closed
- 2 Chief Steward Meeting - 9:00am
Local Office
- 9 Retired Member Club Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office - Landover, MD
- 9 General Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
American Legion Post 268, Wheaton
Delegate Nominations Tonite!
- 25 Delegate Ballots Mailed

VERIZON CONTRACT EXPIRES IN 8 Months...

ARE YOU READY?

START SAVING TODAY!

Wear RED on Thursdays!

Visit Local 2108 On The Web: www.cwlocal2108.org

Verizon's Transgressions... See page 1

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