

CWA Reaches Agreement with Verizon on One-Time Enhancement Offer

In a move designed to put the Unions (CWA & IBEW) on the defensive, Verizon announced a surplus of 12,000 employees across Verizon East from Massachusetts to Virginia. The announcement to the employees, coming at 5:10pm on Friday, February 26th, six days after the last layoff closed, stated that Verizon was in discussions with the Union about the surplus. That was a blatant lie! No such notification had come to the Union and no such discussions were under way at that point. This was a sneak attack designed to put the Unions off their game and for Verizon to take the upper hand. Fortunately for us, our leaders are smarter and our members are stronger than that.

In the opening round of the talks, Verizon placed an offer on the table of providing a one-time \$40,000 increase to the Voluntary Termination Bonus of \$10,000 that is already in the contract. However, this is how heartless this company is. The offer in their proposal would only have gone to those members who already have the Job Security Letter protection of no layoff, forced downgrades or transfers. Clearly their approach was, the hell with the people that aren't protected, we can do what we want with them anyway. Needless to say, the Union rejected that offer out of hand. Verizon was not willing to address the huge number of contractors, they refused to address job security for post August 2003 employees, they refused to give any laid off member access to jobs at Verizon subsidiaries, they refused to discuss an early retirement incentive and they refused to treat the EISP as a layoff. Verizon clearly stated that "It doesn't matter what we (CWA) do, it will not change our surplus number of 12,000". The only goal was to de-unionize Verizon.

Verizon then announced they were going forward with the original surplus declaration. During the timeframe when the EISP packages were supposed to be sent out to affected employees, negotiations were resumed and CWA was able to negotiate a "one-time" settlement to help Verizon alleviate the surplus. This agreement addressed issues Verizon was not willing to entertain in the original bargaining session. Included in this agreement:

One Time Supplemental Voluntary Termination Bonus (VTB): Those Employees who leave the service of the Company pursuant to the Offer shall receive a lump sum (VTB) amount of \$50,000, less taxes and withholdings in place of the usual VTB of \$10,000, in addition to the EISP payment and related benefits and continuation medical coverage to which the employee is otherwise eligible under the terms of the General Agreement.

Raising of Caps on EISP Payment: Those Employees with greater than 30 years of net credited service will have their EISP payment capped at forty years of service, rather than thirty years. An employee with forty years of service will receive an additional \$22,000 in the EISP payment.

Pension Band Increase: With respect to those Employees who leave the service of the Company pursuant to the Offer, the Verizon Pension Plan for Mid-Atlantic Associate ("Pension Plan") will be amended to change the Effective Date of the 3.75% pension band increase provided for in the 2008 MOU between the parties from October 1, 2010 to the first off-payroll date in connection with this Offer.

Lump Sum Interest Rate: The Pension Plan will be amended such that, regardless of the specific date on which an Employee leaves the service of the Company pursuant to the Offer, the determination of the interest rate and mortality basis used for converting such Employee's single life annuity to a lump sum amount will be based on the better of (a) the applicable interest rate and mortality basis as of such employee's elected pension commencement date following his or her actual separation from service or (b) the applicable interest rate and mortality basis as of a March 2010 pension commencement date, provided that such Employee's age will be determined in accordance with his or her elected pension commencement date rather than a March 2010 pension commencement date.

Waiver of Age-Based Pension Reductions for Early Commencement: The Pension Plan and the GTE Southeast Pension Plan will be amended such that Service Pension eligible Employees who leave the service of the Company pursuant to the Offer will not have the age-based reduction for early commencement, if any, applied to the calculation of their pension. So anyone under the age of 55 with less than thirty years of service will not have their pension reduced due to this provision.

In addition to financial incentives, the company agreed to the following:

- The Company agrees that prior to May 1, 2011 there will be no layoffs of any Consultant, Fiber Customer Service Analyst or Fiber Network Technician.
- If a minimum of 12,000 associates in the former BA footprint accept the incentive and leave the service of the Company or terminate their employment, no post August 2, 2003 hires will be laid off prior to May 1, 2011.
- The Company will provide incentive packages to Employees who are not part of the current declared surplus (Non-surplus Employees). The Company and Union will meet and confer regarding which, if any, Non-surplus Employees who have volunteered to separate employment will be accepted. The Company shall retain exclusive discretion to determine which volunteers, if any, will be accepted.
- Employees will place and transfer aerial copper cable, strand, and poles if the work can be performed with existing Company vehicles and equipment. This does not include work required by government entities. Employees will place copper cable inside conduit if the work can be performed with existing Company vehicles and equipment. These commitments shall be implemented no later than July 1, 2010. The Company does not intend to reduce its current level of vehicles and equipment that would be used to perform the work described in this Agreement prior to May 31, 2011. The Company further agrees to eliminate contractors performing Maintenance Administrator EVRC work in the Company by July 1, 2010.

IF YOU PLAN ON APPLYING FOR THIS "ONE-TIME" ENHANCEMENT OFFER....

- You will be paid in lieu of unused 2010 vacation.
- You will not be paid for your floating holiday and 4 excused work days with pay. (Use them before you leave the payroll or lose them.)
- Schedule an eye exam for you and your dependents if you haven't had one in 2009 or 2010.
- If you have a class or classes approved through Tuition Assistance (TAP) prior to your off-payroll date, those classes will be paid for as long as you successfully complete them.
- Talk with several financial advisors about your options. The local will be holding seminars soon. (See Page 4)

A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go but ought to be.

Rosalynn Carter

In a move designed to sow the seeds of discontent among its Union-represented workers, Verizon released an e-mail message at 5:10pm on Friday, February 26, 2010 announcing talks with the Union over a 12,000 person surplus. No such notification to the Union had taken place up to that point. Union members immediately began questioning what was going on and what was going to happen.

The Union contacted the appropriate people in Verizon and within a short period of time discussions began. The Union leaders negotiating with the Company knew that as leaders, they had to take a longer view of where Verizon is heading as a company in order to best protect ALL of our members, past and present. As is the case in any bargaining situation, the two sides always agree not to make public the details of the negotiations because the very nature of negotiating is that things change. What's on the table today could be gone tomorrow. Following several weeks of trying to hammer out a deal, the Union negotiators walked away from the bargaining table without a deal in hand. This was done in large part to protect those of us who will still be working here after the dust settles on this one time offer.

In an attempt to bring pressure on the Union negotiators, Verizon (in a sneak attack), released to its employees and our members, some of the details of the negotiations. Of course, they released what made them look like the heroes of a situation where they truly are the villains. On top of that, they timed the release of the communication (Friday afternoon) to minimize the possibility of the Union having a timely response before the weekend. The goal here was to get the Union Leadership to blink first.

You know, in the game of chicken, it's all about who will blink first. Verizon did everything they could to get the Union Leadership to cave in to their demands. They have a much more efficient means of communicating rapidly with our members because they maintain an e-mail list where they can reach each of them instantly through their corporate communications network. Verizon communicated their side of the story and almost instantly got our own members questioning the motives of the Union Leadership. I received questions ranging from, Is the Union is just trying to protect itself financially? To, Why didn't the leadership put this question to a vote of the members?

Let me address both of those questions.

First, the question of Is the Union Leadership just trying to protect itself financially? That is simply not the case. The Union Leadership had to evaluate all of the factors involved in the offer from Verizon in order to decide whether or not to accept the negotiated agreement. Part of that evaluation included deciding if this is in the best interests of everyone as a whole, and if this was the best deal we could get. If it was only about the Union looking out for their own finances, without concern for the members we represent, then we would never have entered the negotiating process to begin with. Of course, it's easy for those of us not sitting at the bargaining table to second

guess, criticize and Monday morning quarterback the situation. We all tend to do that from time to time. Yet for the people sitting at the table, the people actually responsible for negotiating the best deal possible, it's not so simple. They have to use their best judgment to decide when the deal is right or wrong for the majority of the members we represent. That is no easy task and in this case, I believe they did an excellent job.



A number of members wanted to know why we didn't put this question to a vote of the Membership. I have been a CWA member for over thirty years. I have been in some sort of leadership position for about 28 of those thirty years as a Steward, Chief Steward and Local Officer. Each of those positions carried a certain level of responsibility. As a Steward the decisions you make may effect the people you work with directly. As a Chief Steward the level of responsibility increases and likewise, so do the effects of your actions and decisions. As a Local Officer your decisions may effect the entire Local Membership.

Representing the entire Potomac Region bargaining this agreement were the District 2 Vice President Ron Collins, and the elected bargaining representative from Virginia, Local 2201 President Chris Lane. We can't get all 10,000 bargaining unit members into a room to negotiate with Verizon. Each person would have a different agenda and a different set of priorities as to what is most important to them. The decisions our bargaining representatives have to make have an impact on the entire District 2 membership. As I stated earlier, their charge is to try and figure out what is best for all of the members. A tall task indeed!

We elected them as leaders based upon their experience and skills. As our elected leaders we get to hold them accountable every three years when they stand for re-election. In the meantime, just like the United States of America, the CWA is a representative democracy. You elected me as your Local President and Convention Delegate to make decisions and take actions on your behalf. Likewise, if you don't like the decisions I've made or the actions I've taken, you too have the ability to vote me out and have someone else represent you. Just as it would be impossible to take a referendum vote of the citizens of the United States every time we wanted to pass a law, it is equally not viable to have members vote on every decision that is made on your behalf. We elect leaders to lead. It would certainly be politically easier to put everything to a vote of the membership. Then the people charged with making those decisions wouldn't have to lead at all. Any decisions the members weren't happy with they could simply say that's what the members decided. But then, they wouldn't be leading would they? Frankly, I'm glad we have leaders who are willing to lead and so from me I'd like to say a big **"THANK YOU"** to Ron and Chris for standing strong against what Verizon is attempting to do here.

What is it that Verizon is attempting to do? Their goal is to weaken the Union. Let's face it, our bargaining strength comes from our membership. The fewer union members we have, the less power we have at the bargaining table. The less power we have, the more difficult it becomes to get a fair contract.

So, what did we gain by walking away from the negotiating table? Well, from a personal standpoint, I gained a whole lot of heartache and hard time from members upset about not potentially getting a big chunk of money to walk out of here. But, I digress. Seriously, we gained a lot. A more detailed explanation is on page one so I'm just going to hit a few highlights.

1. No Layoff protection for almost 1,100 members in the Consultant, Fiber Network Technician and Fiber Customer Support Analyst job titles prior to May 1, 2011.
2. The return of bargaining unit work from subcontractors in the Outside Plant Technician and Maintenance Administrator job titles.
3. No increase in contracting before May 31, 2011.
4. The one time offer will be mailed to everyone. The Union will have the ability to work with the company for those people not accepted to receive the EISP to see if we can make them eligible.

Once again, I'd like to say thank you to Ron and Chris for a job well done.

Les

Communications Workers of America Local 2108
2108News
Published Monthly
 Printing Done In-House

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Recording Announcements

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VCSI	(301) 595-1826
Avaya	(301) 595-1834
SuperMedia	(301) 595-3072




The Closed Time Letter of Understanding in our contracts has provided 30 minutes of closed time per day to Consultants in all lines of business on Tuesdays through Saturdays (excluding the first business day after a holiday) since July 1, 2001. This closed time is used to perform productive work dealing with customer related issues.

Verizon abided by this negotiated benefit for years. (It seems pretty clear for contract language, doesn't it?) But at some point, some Junior-Einstein at Verizon decided that those Consultants who work part-time (less than 7.5 hours per day) would only be provided with HALF of the normal closed time. Verizon began scheduling Part-time Consultants only 15 minutes of closed time per day, and CWA filed an Executive Level Grievance (ELG) over the blatant contract violation.

The language in the contract excludes this provision from the arbitration process, so when Verizon denied the grievance, the CWA had to take the violation into court. It was at this point that the Company got serious and a settlement was reached between the CWA and Verizon. Now, all Consultants are to be scheduled the full 30 minutes of closed time on applicable days, even if they work part-time.

The only exception will be if a consultant takes time off work (vacation, personal time, etc.) after the schedule was printed and his or her closed time was scheduled during the time that he or she performed no work. In that situation, the consultant will not receive closed time on that day.

If you have any questions about this settlement, or are not receiving your full closed time allocation, please advise your steward or contact the Local Office.

Are You Pension Eligible?

Many members are under the impression that if your age and service add up to "75", you have reached the magic number for pension eligibility at Verizon. This is a myth. One that could have huge ramifications on retiree health and dental benefits. In order to be pension eligible, you must meet the following criteria:

<u>Years of Service:</u>	<u>Age:</u>
30	Any
25	50
20	55
15	60
10	65

If you leave before you are pension eligible, you are resigning, not retiring. You will have 6 months of company paid medical with the EISP but no dental or vision coverage unless you pay for it under COBRA. You are eligible for a deferred vested pension if you have 5 or more years of service, but it is much less than a pension.

Those members who are contemplating this package, should expect to receive the Voluntary Termination Bonus (VTB) about 30 days after they are off the payroll. EISP payouts valued at over \$10,000 are paid in either 48 equal monthly payments or half in approximately 30 days and the remainder in 48 equal monthly installments. EISP payouts valued at less than \$10,000 are paid in a lump sum.

Personals :

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

Toinette Marie Jeffers, sister of **Lawanna Aiken**, who died on November 6, 2009.

Tommy Rodriguez, father of **Sharon Kemper** who died on May, 10, 2009.

Bobby Flemings, father of **Demetria Flemings** who died on January 23, 2010.

Charles H. Steckler, III, father of **Charles H. Steckler, IV** who died on February 26, 2010.

Robert Wise, a retired member who died on March 2, 2010.

Sylvester Anderson, father in law of **Sheila Anderson** who died on March 17, 2010.

Silvestre Faustino, father of **Winifredo Faustino** who died on March 21, 2010.

Benjamin White, grandfather of **Karen White** who died on March 29, 2010.

Erdy H. Dytianquin, brother of **Lenita Whitney** who died on March 29, 2010.

Mary Louise Steckler, mother of **Charles Steckler, IV** who died on March 31, 2010.

Robert L. Anderson Jr., aka "Whoodie", nephew of **Marie Brice**, died on April 10, 2010.

Cassandra Anderson, an active member who died on April 14, 2010.

Jean Langville, mother of **LeaAnne Langville**, who died on April 18, 2010.

Congratulations to:

Tiffany Allen on the birth of her daughter, **Carlia** on January 12, 2010.

Welcome New Members

Transferred:

- Sabrina Staley**
Sylvia Shropshire
- Carl Brogden**
Joseph G. Jackson, Jr.
- Don Kurz**
Steven Lewin



2010 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.

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

NAME: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER _____ SCHOOL ATTENDING _____

ADDRESS _____ HOME NUMBER _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ WORK NUMBER _____

As our daily lives become filled with many choices and surprises (whether we are ready or not), there is one thing that happens regularly every month that we can look forward to. This is our Retiree meeting of course. Easy choices, what and how much for a delicious lunch. Pleasant surprises, such as information helpful for retirees and more.



RMC 2108

Last month we were presented with a short Seminar on Estate Planning & Social Security Disability for CWA members by David Galinis. He and his partners have helped CWA members with many legal matters. The information was well received. He can be reached at (301) 670-7030 for more information.

Do yourself a favor, come and meet old and new friends, hear about the activities, retiree news and much more.

Janice Crowe has a bus trip to the National Cathedral for a Stained Glass Tour on May 26, 2010 11AM to 6PM. The cost is \$48.00 per person. For information Call (410) 533-5370.

Remember, we meet the second Wednesday of every month at 11:00am. See you there.

Calvin C Foster Jr.
 President RMC 2108



**ARE YOU CONSIDERING TAKING
 THE EISP OFFER?**

If so then consider this. If you are retirement eligible this is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Are you financially ready to retire? You owe it to yourself to make sure. Local 2108 has arranged for the following Financial Planning Seminars:



Wednesday, May 19 - 6:00pm - David Walter from RBC Wealth Management
 Saturday, May 22 - 10:00am - Bob Pedrick - Chartered Advisory Group Inc.

Please RSVP to (301) 595-2108 by Monday, May 17, 2010 for which session you'd like to attend.

MAY 2010

5	Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am Local Office, Beltsville, MD
5	Finance Committee Meeting - 4:30pm Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9	Mother's Day
12	Retired Members Chapter Meeting, 11:00am Local Office, Beltsville, MD
12	Membership Meeting - 6:00pm Local Office, Beltsville, MD
19	Financial Planning Seminar - 6:00pm Local Office, Beltsville, MD
22	Financial Planning Seminar - 10:00am Local Office, Beltsville, MD
31	Memorial Day - Union Negotiated Holiday Local Office Closed

JUNE 2010

2	Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am Local Office, Beltsville, MD
2	Finance Committee Meeting - 4:30pm Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9	Retired Members Chapter Meeting, 11:00am Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9	Membership Meeting - 6:00pm Local Office, Beltsville, MD
20	Father's Day
25	AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards - 7:05pm Baltimore Orioles - vs. - Washington Nationals

ATTENTION:
 Membership Meeting : May 12, 2010 - 6:00 pm, Local Offices
 RMC Chapter Meeting : May 12, 2010 - 11:00 am, Local Office
 FIND US ON WWW.FACEBOOK.COM - Local 2108

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 LOCAL 2108
 10782 Rhode Island Avenue
 Beltsville, MD 20705-2513
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
 ISSN: 0162-248X