

AT&T Wireless, Wireline and DIRECTV Workers Walk off the Job

On May 19, 2017 AT&T workers who are members of Communications Workers of America (CWA) walked off the job, protesting AT&T's failure to present serious proposals that invest in good jobs with a future. During the three-day strike, a majority of AT&T wireless, wireline and DIRECTV workers fighting for their contracts were on strike.

The groups striking represent four different union contracts and include wireless workers in 36 states and DC. The groups involved are; Wireline workers in California, Nevada and Connecticut, DIRECTV technicians in California and Nevada and AT&T wireless workers resulted in the largest strike of retail workers at a national company in U.S. history.

"We will no longer stand by as AT&T hems and haws at the bargaining table, keeping its own workers from achieving the American Dream they once promised," said Dennis Trainor, Vice President of CWA District 1. "Despite being the largest telecom company in the country with nearly \$1 billion a month in profits and the CEO earning \$28 million, AT&T continues to pinch its workers' basic needs and stand in the way of high-quality service its customers pay good money for. This is a warning to AT&T: there's only one way out of this now—a fair contract—and we'll settle for nothing less."

While the three-day strike may have inconvenience customers in the short term, AT&T workers are committed to putting an end to unnecessary frustration and poor service because of AT&T's lack of investment in its core business. AT&T workers will return to work on May 22nd and have vowed to do what they have to do if AT&T violates their rights or if an open-ended strike becomes necessary.

AT&T workers are demanding that AT&T commit to bargaining that addresses wage increases that cover rising healthcare costs, job security against outsourcing, affordable healthcare, and a fair scheduling policy. Retail workers' take home pay has plummeted in the last year after AT&T unilaterally changed its commission plan. Workers are also protesting AT&T's pervasive outsourcing of jobs to low-wage contractors, which eliminates good jobs and hurts customer service. At a time when most Americans believe they are worse off financially than the generation before them, AT&T workers are taking a stand and making an example of the company.

As AT&T comes under fire for offshoring thousands of jobs, workers

Verizon Wage Schedules To Increase on June 18, 2017

CWA Local 2108 has received a number of inquiries about the next scheduled wage increase since the current bargaining agreement has not yet been printed. The next scheduled wage increase will go into effect on June 18, 2017. A 2.5% increase will be applied to all wage steps in all wage tables of the current collective bargaining agreement.

As a side note, corrected edits from our new contract language were given back to the Company to review last month and we are awaiting a final proof before the new agreement will be printed.

are rallying around new federal legislation that would penalize companies like AT&T who offshore call center jobs. Since 2011, AT&T has eliminated 12,000 call center jobs in the U.S., closing and downsizing call centers across the country. Rather than keeping those good-paying jobs here at home, AT&T has contracted with third party vendors operating in countries with low wages and weak labor protections.

A recent report from CWA shed new light on AT&T's sprawling web of 38 third-party call centers in eight countries that are driving low wages and compromising quality service for millions of AT&T customers. AT&T workers and CWA representatives met with call center vendor employees in the Dominican Republic earlier this month to learn more about what has happened to the jobs AT&T has shipped overseas and the anti-union backlash facing Dominican workers who attempt to improve conditions.

If you recall, these were almost the identical issues surrounding the Verizon strike last year. These issues continue to plague the telecommunications industry and we can absolutely expect to address these challenges again in 2019.



LABOR NIGHT AT
NATIONALS PARK

Friday, July 28, 2017 - 7:05PM



Washington Nationals –vs– Colorado Rockies

Tickets are \$15.00 each and will be sold on a first come/first served basis by calling the Local on 301-595-2108. Only a limited number of tickets are available. Call today !!

Sanders Organization Declares Job Freeze

Under current RAMP guidelines at Verizon, lateral job movement involving transfers and downgrades from one Directors group to another Directors group can be frozen for periods not to exceed 60 days. This means they have the right to deny any lateral or downgrade request once the freeze has been invoked. Once a lateral freeze has been implemented and the 60 day window has expired, the organization must allow lateral or downgrade transfers for at least 30 days immediately following the freeze timeframe.

Verizon notified CWA that effective **May 24, 2017** through **July 23, 2017** Wireline Field Operations, Mid Atlantic South, Potomac - Suburban Maryland, DC and Northern VA under Andre Sanders will freeze all lateral movements and downgrades of the Cable Splicing Technicians, Systems Technicians, Outside Plant Technicians and Services Technicians job titles to other director organizations.

As active and retired CWA members, we enjoy some of the best benefits in America. This is neither a gift from our generous employers nor is it a happy accident. It is by design. Lead CWA negotiators have always recognized the importance of a strong, comprehensive benefits plan--- one that keeps premiums and the cost of getting the care we need affordable so we can take proper care of our health, protects us from catastrophic medical expenses, and sets the stage for us to live in dignity in our retirement. That is why CWA has always made negotiating good benefits an integral part of our bargaining agenda.



As our contracts have expired over the years we have often found our benefits under attack by our employers. One of the major reasons it took a year of bargaining and a 49-day strike to reach an agreement with Verizon last year was due to their insistence that retiree medical benefits be removed from our contract as a mandatory subject of bargaining. Had we acquiesced to that demand, Verizon could have (and surely would have) made major cuts to (or possibly done away with altogether) retiree medical coverage shortly thereafter. Because of the collective strength of our membership, all of those who walked a picket line instead of returning to work and accepting whatever crumbs Verizon was willing to share with us, we maintained our excellent benefits package for our active and retired members, at premiums which are far less than any of my family members pay.

Because of the quality of our current benefits, I'm concerned that our members and retirees might not be paying enough attention to the attacks on healthcare, Medicaid and Medicare which are taking place in Washington at this time. It might be easy to think "That doesn't affect me", but it would be very short-sighted. Who believes that our active and retiree benefits are guaranteed beyond the expiration of our contract? If the cost of healthcare increases significantly, who thinks that our employers will just absorb the increase and leave our benefits intact?

I don't think the Affordable Care Act (ACA, aka Obamacare) was perfect. I think a thorough review of the plan could have resulted in changes being made to it that would have controlled costs, while still providing good coverage to Americans. The speed at which the Republican Plan was pushed through Congress, though, prior to it even being priced out by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), is appalling to me. After the bill passed the House, the CBO analyzed the bill and found that it will raise premiums for older, poor Americans by as much as 850%. A 64-year-old making \$26,500 annually who pays premiums of \$1700 under the ACA would have his premiums increase to more than \$16,000 under the Republican plan. While proponents of the plan point out that no one will be denied coverage under the plan, the fact that it allows premiums to skyrocket for those with preexisting conditions should strike fear in all our hearts. The CBO stated that anyone with a preexisting condition---even those who already have health insurance---could face steep premium hikes.

The mechanism to make this happen is a bit complicated. In essence, insurance companies would entice healthy people out of the community-rated market---which mandates that everyone pay the same rate, with no differences based on health status---by offering plans with cheaper premiums. Those new plans would be subject to underwriting, which means that they would likely be unaffordable for those with preexisting conditions, but would save money for those with no preexisting conditions. Sick people would remain in the community-rate plans, where prices would skyrocket. That would drive more healthy folks away from the community-rated plans, creating a downward spiral. While no one would be denied coverage, if the premiums cost half of their annual income, I'm sure many will lose their insurance due to the inability to pay. If they get sick or injured, their only option will be to go to an emergency room. Emergency room visits by the uninsured are very expensive, and drive up the costs for those with insurance so the hos-

pital doesn't lose money. (I'm not going to write about the idiot congressman who said the uninsured with cancer could just go the emergency room to get their chemo, because my preexisting condition of high blood pressure might make the top of my head blow off.)

The bottom line is, healthcare costs are going to increase greatly if the American Health Care Act (AHCA, aka Trumpcare) passes the Senate in its present form. We must reach out to our U.S. Senators and demand that they thoroughly research the AHCA and make the necessary changes to ensure that any replacement to the ACA provides good care that is affordable for all Americans. The former Acting Administrator of Medicare and Medicaid's one sentence explanation of Trumpcare was "A plan to give every millionaire a \$55,000 tax cut, and cut care for 32 million people to pay for it". We can't allow the ACA to be replaced by a plan that will cause millions of Americans to lose their healthcare coverage, will drive up costs and will discriminate against those with preexisting conditions.

The AFL-CIO has set up a toll-free HealthCare Hotline to put you in touch with your U.S. Senators. Please call 1.888.865.8089 today, and speak with both of your Senators. Let them know you are opposed to any replacement to the ACA which will take away health-care benefits for millions and give tax breaks to millionaires.

The healthcare changes we fight for today could very well determine the healthcare we are able to negotiate in 2019.

In Solidarity,

Marilyn

Union-Made in America Father's Day

Celebrate your dad in solidarity style this Father's Day by getting him a gift that sports the union label. Check out some union-made Father's Day gift ideas:

Don't forget to text MADE to 235246 for more union-made-in-America product lists.

- Hugo Boss (UNITE HERE)
- Jim Beam® (United Food and Commercial Workers [UFCW])
- Joseph Abboud clothing (UNITE HERE)
- Klein Tools (Boilermakers [IBB])
- Knob Creek® whiskey (UFCW)
- Louisville Slugger (UAW)
- Naturalizer shoes (UFCW)
- Old Spice (UFCW)
- Pierre Cardin cologne (UFCW)
- Red Wing Shoes (UFCW)
- Spalding basketball (Machinists [IAM])
- Stella Artois beer (IAM)
- Timex watches (IAM)
- The Union Boot Pro (UFCW)



If you're thinking of splurging, spring for some game-day tickets so you can watch your favorite baseball players, who are members of the Major League Baseball Players Association, and make sure dear old dad gets a heaping cup of ice cold beer. Many are produced, such as Anheuser Busch, Miller, Coors, Leinenkugel's and Natural Light by our brothers and sisters in the CWA-IUE, IAM, Teamsters, the IBT, the UAW, and the IUOE.

As we roll into the "dog days" of summer, we need to guard against two types of safety issues that commonly affect technicians: overexposure to the sun and heat illness.

Overexposure to the sun's rays can lead to sunburn, premature aging of the skin, immune cell disruption, skin cancer, cataracts and other eye problems. Sunburn can occur at any time of the day but chances increase between the hours of 10am and 3pm.

Technicians can take basic precautionary measures to help prevent sunburn like increasing their intake of non-alcoholic/non-carbonated beverages, wearing light colored, loose fitting clothing, utilizing shade if possible and wearing a hat and sunglasses. Use of a sunscreen with an SPF rating of at least 15 is also recommended.

Heat-related disorders or illnesses that may be caused by work in hot environments include heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Heat Rash

Heat rash, commonly referred to as "prickly heat," may develop when one's sweat is not easily removed from the skin's surface by evaporation. Sweat ducts become blocked and sweat glands inflamed, resulting in a skin rash. Heat rash, an extremely uncomfortable condition, can be prevented by taking periodic breaks and through proper personal hygiene.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are painful, intermittent muscle spasms that occur during or following hard physical work under hot conditions. The muscle spasms are the result of an excessive loss of salt in sweat without adequate replacement. Spasms may develop even though there may be adequate water replacement. Those muscles used in performing the work are usually affected. Heat cramps may occur during or after work. An effective method of prevention is drinking salted liquids or eating salted food. Workers with heart problems or on a low sodium diet should notify their employer or supervisor of their medical condition. In addition, employees with such medical conditions should consult a physician.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is caused by the loss of body fluids through sweating, the loss of salt, or both. This condition is characterized by profuse sweating, giddiness, weakness or fatigue, headaches, nausea, rapid weak pulse, fainting, and, in more serious cases, by vomiting and loss of consciousness. Workers suffering from heat exhaustion will have cool, moist skin and a pale, flushed complexion with a normal or slightly higher than normal temperature. A person suffering heat exhaustion should rest in a cool location and drink plenty of liquids. Mild cases may result in spontaneous recovery with such treatment. Severe cases may require medical care for several days. Workers with heart problems or on a low sodium diet should inform their employer or supervisor of their medical condition. Also, such employees should consult a physician before working in hot environments.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the most serious illness associated with work in hot environments. Heat stroke occurs when the body's heat regulation mechanisms break down. The characteristics of heat stroke are a high body temperature (105 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or more), little or no sweating, and hot, dry, flushed skin. In addition, workers suffering heat stroke may become delirious, confused, convulsive, or comatose. Heat stroke can often be fatal.

If it is felt that a worker is suffering from heat stroke, immediate medical treatment is necessary. Immediate steps should be taken to lower the victim's body temperature. This can be done by moving the individual to a cool area, soaking the worker's clothes with water, and fanning the body. If possible, the individual should be put into or immersed in ice and wrapped in cold, wet sheets. Following treatment at the workplace, the victim should be taken to a hospital or similar medical facility. Since severe heat stroke may result in brain damage, early recognition and treatment are essential.

Personals

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

Eugene Laubach, father **Craig Laubach** who died on March 7, 2017.

Scott Laubach, brother of **Craig Laubach** who died on April 18, 2017.

Charles Cunningham, father of **JoAnne Herman** who died on April 18, 2017.

Darius Duane Miller, son of **Dwayne Streeter** who died on May 4, 2017.

Leo "Larry" Lorditch, a retired member who died on May 5, 2017.

Henry E Thomas, Jr., father of **Janice Salters-Hicks** who died on May 8, 2017.

James Kline, brother of **John Kline** who died on May 15, 2017.

Ronald A Crews, brother of **Rob Willis** who died on May 10, 2017.

Tommy Eader, a retired member who died on May 19, 2017.

New Member

Lyndon Higgins

Transferred Members

Justin Thrun Myron Willis

Congratulations to Recent Retirees:



Margaret McHugh
Cynthia Curtis
Cindy Howlin
Mark E White



RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

For those of you who may not have heard, CWA members working at AT&T went on strike May 19, 2017 for three days to protest the lack of progress at the bargaining table. As I write this article, they have gone back to work and bargaining is continuing. We want to let our brothers and sisters know that we will be there to support them in the event they go back on strike. They are fighting the same battle we fought at Verizon just last year. The attack on workers in the telecommunication industry never ends and we will show our solidarity to our CWA family at every round of negotiations.



RMC 2108

Our next RMC meeting will be on June 14, 2017 at 11:00am. Come and enjoy a great lunch and catch up with old friends!!

Calvin C Foster Jr
President- RMC 2108

Start Planning your Retirement Strategies with Nettworth

Local 2108 Calendar

Don't put this off!!!

RETIREMENT CHECKLIST

1. Get my RPS (Retirement Preparedness Score)
2. Find out how interest rates will effect my pension lump sum
3. Register for a Nettworth workshop to learn more about retirement planning
4. Allocate my assets
5. Work with an experienced professional to design a comprehensive retirement plan
6. Put together a Social Security income strategy
7. Learn about 5 non-financial keys to a happy and fulfilling retirement

COMPLIMENTARY MEAL

FOR ALL CWA MEMBERS AND SPOUSES

Benefits Workshop
 July 11th - 6:30pm, Lake Presidential Club, 3151 Presidential Golf Club Dr, Marlboro
 July 13th - 6:30pm, Ruth's Chris, 106 Crown Park Ave, Gaithersburg
 July 20th - 6:30pm, Ruth's Chris, 301 Severn Ave, Annapolis
 Aug 23rd - 6:30pm, Elks Lodge, 2210 Old Washington Rd, Waldorf

Social Security Workshop
 July 15th - 10:00am, CWA Local 2108, 10782 Rhode Island Ave, Beltsville
 July 19th - 6:00pm, Elks Lodge, 2210 Old Washington Rd, Waldorf
 Sep 26th - 6:30pm, Ruth's Chris, 106 Crown Park Ave, Gaithersburg
 Sep 27th - 6:30pm, Ruth's Chris, 301 Severn Ave, Annapolis

Retirement Preparedness Workshop
 Aug 10th - 6:30pm, Ruth's Chris, 106 Crown Park Ave, Gaithersburg

Hosted By: NettWorth Financial Group
 Scott Ferguson, Financial Advisor*


REGISTER ONLINE:
www.nettworth.net/marylanddcvirginia
 Or Toll Free: (877) 534-2860

Seats are limited. You must register to attend.

JUNE 2017

- 7 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:30am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 7 Finance Committee Meeting - 4:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 14 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 14 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 18 Father's Day



JULY 2017

- 4 Independence Day
Local Office Closed

- 12 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 12 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative, officer or steward to be present at this meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Membership Meeting - Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 6:00pm RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 11:00am




2108News

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Marilyn Irwin - President
 Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President
 Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer
 LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President
 Matt Klingman - Vice President

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